Street food vendors in Indonesia: Conflicting representations under Covid-19

by

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We acknowledge and respect the peoples the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions on public life had a significant impact on street food vendors in Indonesia, with reports suggesting that vendors' incomes decreased by 50% on average during this period. In the wake of the pandemic, scholars and organizations published statements and rolled out programs to support vendors or correct vendors' behavior in light of changing requirements relating to the pandemic. These interventions aimed, among other things, to reduce the risk of vendors spreading the COVID-19 virus. They also hoped to support vendors as they navigated state imposed restrictions on street food vending and changes to customers' spending behavior. These statements and programs were informed by assumptions about street food vendors, such as that street food vendors help low-income consumers access food, contribute positively to employment and the economy, practice poor food hygiene, and are negatively impacted by state policies restricting street food vending. This thesis explores how these assumptions compare with street food vendors' self-understanding. It also asks how assumptions about street food vendors informed interventions in street food vending before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. Drawing on 39 interviews with street food vendors, as well as program documents and public statements from relevant organizations, this thesis examines how street food vendors and the scholars and organizations involved in vendors' activities represented vendors and the challenges they faced during the pandemic. It concludes that street food vendors understood themselves and their experiences differently than pertinent scholars and organizations, and in many cases their needs were not addressed by programs and policies supported by scholars and organizations. This thesis suggests that often taken for granted understandings of street food vendors appearing in academic literature and commentary from pertinent organizations should be considered critically, and the ways in which these representations inform interventions in street food vending should be carefully examined.

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List of Abbreviations

APKLI	Assosiasi Pedagang Kaki Lima Indonesia (Association for Indonesian Street Food Vendors)
BPOM	Badan Pengawas Obat dan Makanan (National Agency for Drug and Food Control)
BPS	Badan Pusat Statistic (Central Bureau of Statistics)
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease (19)
ILO	International Labour Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
PKL	Pedagang Kaki Lima (Street food vendor)
POLDA	Regional Police (Polisi Daerah)
POLRI	Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia (Police Force for the Republic of Indonesia)
Satpol PP	Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja (Civil Service Police Unit)
Sembako	Sembilan Bahan Pokok (Nine Essential Materials)
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organization

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Dedication

To Papa Dave and Grumpa Dee. While I won't get to celebrate my graduation with you, I will enjoy a Rum and Coke (don't worry, it won't be Diet Coke) and a cold Bud Light in your honour

Chapter 1: Introduction

In April 2020, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) announced that the COVID-19 pandemic and related health measures would negatively impact low-income consumers' food security. The organization also suggested that street food vendors would be crucial for distributing affordable food during the pandemic (FAO, 2020). In late 2021, student researchers involved in this research asked Bu Diann,[1] how the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted her customers' food security (I. ketahanan pangan). Bu Diann was a young mother of two selling vegetables from a stall on the roadside in South Tangerang, Indonesia. She shook her head and did not know how to respond to the question. She did not know what "food security" (I. ketahanan pangan) meant. However, she suggested later in the interview that the women who bought vegetables from her had run out of savings and reduced food spending in the months after the pandemic began. She also claimed to help support her community by allowing customers to buy food on credit, even though she knew they would not likely have the money to pay her back (Respondent 37).

Around the same time, representatives from the Civil Service Police Unit of Indonesia (Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja Indonesia (Satpol PP)) suggested that "reckless" street vendors were spreading the virus causing COVID-19. According to the representatives, vendors needed to be educated on hygiene practices, and vendors who failed to follow strict health measures would be summarily evicted from their vending spaces. When research assistants working on this project asked Pak Ari, a middle aged man selling chicken soup from a cart, if his food hygiene practices had changed since the COVID-19 pandemic began, he was offended. "As a food vendor, I'm always careful to serve clean food," he insisted. Pak Ari explained that his food-handling practices were more than sufficient and always had been. He also proudly informed the research assistant that he had been vaccinated and was helping to reduce the spread of the virus, not contributing to it (Respondent 29).

[1]Respondents' names have been changed to protect participants' privacy. The term "Bu" or "mother" is an honorific used for women older than oneself or at the age when they may have children. This thesis also uses the terms: "Pak/Bapak" which means "father," or "sir," "Mba" meaning "older sister" and used to address a young women, and "Mas" used to address a young man. While "Bu" and "Pak" are used in standard Indonesian across the country, "Mba" and "Mas" are Javanese terms used largely on the island of Java.

The above examples illustrate how street food vendors in South Tangerang responded to ideas about street food vendors commonly repeated in scholarship and by organizations involved in vendors' activities. Pertinent scholars and organizations frequently repeat familiar, if often conflicting, assumptions about street food vendors. Street food vendors are good for food security. They provide cheap meals to low-income consumers in convenient locations. Street food vending also employs millions of people worldwide. However, street food vendors practice poor food hygiene and disrupt public order. This has led governments around the world to implement policies that restrict street food vending operations and ban vendors from selling in certain locations. Influential scholars and organizations like the Association for Indonesian Street Food Vendors (APKLI) suggest that these policies are harmful to vendors and the customers that rely on vendors for affordable food. These assumptions appear in academic articles, expert commentary, and program documents published by organizations working with street food vendors.

With a few exceptions, scholars and organizations involved in street food vending do not ask how street food vendors understand themselves, their needs, and the challenges they face, much less if they understand them in *these* terms. Pak Ari disagreed with ideas about himself and his work. While Bu Diann and the FAO described similar phenomena, they used notably different vocabulary. Were the FAO and Bu Diann describing essentially the same thing? Or does their use of different vocabulary suggest a more serious disjuncture between their accounts? What would happen if we took a step back and asked how street food vendors understood their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic without starting from the assumption that concepts like food security, hygiene, employment and state restrictions on food vending were appropriate for describing vendors' experiences? What might we learn about how street food vendors' self-understandings differ from those of scholars and pertinent organizations? And how might these findings help inform more nuanced understandings of street food vendors and their needs? The thesis that follows explores the disconnect between representations of street food vendors by scholars and organizations, and vendors' self-understanding.

Street Food Vendors[2] in Urban Java

With a population of around 280 million, Indonesia is the world's fourth-most populous nation and the most populous Muslim-majority country. Over half of the population of Indonesia lives on the Island of Java, where the Java and Sunda ethnic groups make up the majority. Java is the most densely populated island in the world, with around 152 million inhabitants, according to the 2020 Indonesian census (BPS, 2021). Research for this thesis took place in South Tangerang, located in the Jabotadabek[3] metropolitan region on the island of Java. Street food vendors are a ubiquitous part of life in Indonesia in general, and in urban Java in particular. Street food vendors appear in popular fiction, such as Indonesian youth films like *Too Handsome (Terlalu Tampan)* (2019), where the protagonist Kulin and his friends eat noodles together after an evening of playing sports (Kalangie, 2019). In the film *Geez and Ann (Geez dan Ann)* (2021), the male protagonist Geez demonstrates his generosity by helping a dessert vendor whose cart is stuck in the sand (Rizki, 2021). Indonesian author Eka Kurniawan's critically acclaimed novel *Man Tiger (Lelaki Harimau*) (2004) recounted Anwar Sadat's last morning drinking coffee with friends at a street stall which sold hot drinks. In these works, street food vendors blend into the background. They are a natural part of the life in urban Java with which it is expected an urban Indonesian audience would be intimately familiar.

Figure 1. Kalangie. 2019. *Kulin and his friends eat noodles sold by a street food vendor after a night of sports in* Too Handsome (Terlalu Tampan*)* [Screen Shot by author, 2022]

[2] For the purposes of this research, the term "street food" designates food sold from mobile carts and blankets or tables set up on the street, as well permanent and semi-permanent stalls selling food and offering seating in public space such as on roads and sidewalks.

[3] The greater metropolitan area around the current Indonesian capital Jakarta is referred to colloquially as Jabotadabek and includes the districts of: **Ja**karta, **Bo**gor, **Ta**ngerang, **D**epok, and **Bek**asi.

Street food vendors offer various prepared meals and grocery items in convenient locations and cater to a wide range of customers. Vendors frequently gather around offices, schools, and transit stops to sell prepared meals and snacks. This makes them popular among low- and high-income commuters alike (Malasan, 2019). Street food vendors also sell raw ingredients and groceries such as fresh produce, rice, and processed snacks near residential areas and shopping centers at low prices (Faradiba, 2013). A 2015 paper by Minot et al. suggested that across income levels, at least 30% of households' food spending in urban Java is used on street food, with the proportion of expenditures at these businesses increasing as income decreased.

Figure 2. Photo credit: Ulfianti. 2021. *Kaki lima vendors selling cakes from a cart on the side of the road in South Tangerang* 2021.[4]

[4] This photo was taken by Tini Ulfianti, a project research assistant from Syarif Hidayatullah Universitas Jakarta.

Street vendors of both prepared meals and groceries frequently source their ingredients from food markets. Many vendors have long-term relationships with their suppliers that allow them to purchase ingredients at low prices in return for repeat patronage (Malasan, 2019). This allows vendors to offer food at relatively cheap prices compared to prices paid by single-household customers. Other vendors source their ingredients from larger street food vendors or have it delivered by suppliers.

Figure 3. Photo credit: Ulfianti. 2021. *A warung operating selling vegetables and snacks in South Tangerang*

Street food vending can be a part-time or full-time occupation, and there is significant variation among vendors. Malasan (2019) demonstrated that some street food vendors in Bandung, Indonesia operate their businesses on the side while pursuing a different career. Newberry (2006)

also suggested that mothers in urban Java frequently operated small vending operations outside their homes while minding children. These women did not consider food vending their occupation and made only a small profit to support a primary breadwinner. Other vendors operate their business full-time throughout the year and rely on it as their primary source of income. Many of the participants in this research reported that street food vending was their primary occupation, and spent long hours engaged in this work.

While street food vendors in urban Java are officially required to register their businesses with their local branch of the Civil Service Police Unit (Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja (Satpol PP)), many do not register or operate with a license not issued in their name. Vendors operating informally often do not have access to government aid or social support services as they do not report a taxable income or have local residence permits. Coverage in local news outlets suggests that street vendors are also frequently targeted by Satpol PP, which seeks to evict them from public space to clean up and modernize cities (Pelitabanten, 2019).

Street food vendors also compete with big-box stores and other new commercial food retailers. Since the early 1990s, observers have expressed concern about a "retail transition" which will cause "traditional" food operations to be driven out of business by supermarkets, hypermarkets, and convenience stores (Drakakis-Smith, 1990; World Bank 2007).[5] A 2015 survey by Minot et al. of consumers in urban Indonesia and later work by Soma (2018) reported that many consumers in urban Indonesia shopped at grocery stores for goods like baby formula and dairy products. However, while this "retail transition" has been well documented across Asia and Africa, scholars in Indonesia and elsewhere demonstrate that street-vended foods remain popular across income levels (see World Bank, 2007; Crush and Young, 2019). Both Minot et al. (2015) and Soma (2018) suggested that even high-income consumers continue to frequent street food vendors for their cheap and convenient options.

[5] The idea that there are "traditional" and "modern" forms of exchange is long standing and was popular in scholarship on street food vending into the 2000s. "Traditional" forms of exchange such as vending food on the street with or without a license, were contrasted with "modern" forms of exchange such as selling food from sanitized supermarkets and convenience stores. In reality, there is significant overlap between "traditional" and "modern" forms of exchange. For example, scholars around the world have observed that "traditional" street food vendors often shop at modern retailing establishments and sell goods in front of and sometimes on behalf of "modern" retailers (see, for example, Bromley, 2013).

Street food vendors are also increasingly using new technologies like online food delivery applications, which took off in urban Java in the mid-2010s. The first platform to enter the market was Jakarta-based *Gojek*, which began in 2010 as a motor taxi service and first offered food delivery services under the name *GoFood* in 2015 (Gojek, 2022). This was followed shortly after by *GrabFood*, a food delivery service offered by the Malaysia-based taxi service *Grab* (Azizah, 2022). Before this, vendors arranged food delivery with regulars over the phone. Today many vendors continue to sell food informally over WhatsApp, offering delivery services to their immediate area. These informal selling strategies bypass the 20% commission and delivery fees attached to formal applications.[6] While it is not necessarily clear that these online platforms help vendors increase profits, the applications expose vendors to wider markets and help them compete with larger businesses already registered on delivery applications.

Figure 4. *An online advertisement for Grabfood*. [Eng. Here comes Grabfood (Beta). Enjoy the taste, quick delivery!] [Screen Shot by author, 2022]

Research Process[7]

During the COVID-19 pandemic, strict public health measures were implemented in countries around the world, including Indonesia.[8] In many cases, these restrictions led to forced closures

[6] In an article on food vending in Singapore, Tan (2021) suggested that vendors selling low-priced meals frequently failed to make a profit from online sales as fees on these applications were too high.
[7] A detailed overview of the research process and the challenges associated with conducting research during the Covid-19 pandemic can be found in Chapter 3.
[8] A thorough discussion of Covid-19 related restrictions in Indonesia can be found in appendix D.

of street food vending businesses and the food markets many vendors sourced from. Simultaneously, work from home orders and school closures kept customers inside and reduced the number of meals eaten out. This thesis set out to explore the impacts of the pandemic on street food vendors in South Tangerang, Indonesia by conducting interviews with street food vendors and consulting scholarship and commentary from organizations involved in street food vending. It quickly discovered that scholars, organizations, and street food vendors themselves accounted for vendors' experiences of the pandemic differently. This thesis then compared these different accounts of street food vendors and their experiences during the pandemic. Representations of street food vendors provided by scholars and organizations in public commentary and program documents were examined alongside vendor' self-representations given through interviews coordinated for this project.

Research began by monitoring news coverage, briefs from international organizations, and rapidly emerging academic publications discussing the pandemic in Indonesia and Southeast Asia more broadly. These sources provided an overview of the developing situation and brought attention to some of the key issues scholars and organizations believed street food vendors faced during the pandemic. These issues often revolved around vendors' role in promoting food security and employment or the economy, vendors poor food hygiene, and the impact of state restrictions on street food vending. To facilitate comparison, this thesis focused on representations of vendors that touched on these four categories. It analyzed material from one state organization, the Civil Service Police Unit (Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja (Satpol PP)), the police unit in charge of public order and enforcing regulations concerning the use of public space. It also analyzed representations of vendors by one public street food vendor organization, the Association for Indonesian Street Food Vendors (APKLI), which advocates for vendors' rights. Finally, this research explored representations of street food vendors by three UN agencies: the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the International Labour Organization (ILO), all of which operate programs to promote and educate street food vendors internationally. The organizations selected for analysis were all involved in street food vending and had a public online presence, whether through self-operated websites or frequent public commentary delivered through news outlets and official sources.

Representations of street food vendors by the above organizations were then compared to vendors' self-representations. As the pandemic prevented the author from travelling to Indonesia, it was arranged that Indonesia-based research assistants from the Syarif Hidayatullah Universitas Jakarta would interview street food vendors in South Tangerang on the author's behalf. Interviews were semi-structured and ranged from a few minutes to close to an hour depending on vendors' willingness to discuss research questions and time available. Interviews explored how street food vendors described themselves, their needs and their challenges during the pandemic as they related to food security, employment and the economy, hygiene, and restrictions on street food vending. It quickly became evident that street food vendors did not prioritize the same issues that appeared in expert commentary published in news outlets, briefs by international organizations and academic articles. The thesis that follows considers the implications of the disjuncture between these two sets of representations—namely those of scholars and organizations on the one hand, and vendors themselves on the other.

Representation

This section briefly addresses key ideas about representation drawn upon throughout the thesis. Importantly, it argues that there is no single correct way to represent street food vendors. Rather, representations of vendors are located in time and informed by the representer's unique presuppositions and plans for the future. This approach allows for multiple, potentially equally valid, accounts of street food vendors and their experiences. It also allows this research to focus, not on the accuracy of these representations, but on how they are formed and the kinds of intervention in street food vending that they inform.

In arguing that there is no single correct way to represent street food vendors, this section suggests that a representation can never capture a subject all the ways it is, but rather represents it *as* something. The representer "selects, rejects, organizes, discriminates, associates, classifies, analyzes and constructs" the reality that they perceive for the subject they are representing (Goodman, 1968, 8).[9] They must decide which attributes are relevant and how to communicate

[9] This idea emerged from scholarship on truth and representation, such as Heidegger's '*as* structure.'

this to an audience. This choice is not inconsequential. Representations are not separate from plans of action or intervention. By representing something in a certain way, one lays the groundwork for engaging with the world in a certain way (Hacking, 1990).

For example, by representing street food vendors *as* street food vendors, this thesis chose not to emphasize vendors' roles as parents, community members, amateur musicians, aid recipients, or other identities vendors or scholars and organizations might claim for vendors. This decision impacted the resulting research plan and the language used to discuss participants. A different project could have engaged with the same participants and instead represented them *as*, for example, adults living in urban Java—and studied literacy rates or explored the number of people with local residence permits. These studies may have asked serious questions about education levels, workforce opportunities, or access to government services. However, they would not likely discuss concepts like food hygiene.

Likewise, when organizations represent vendors *as* practicing poor food hygiene and contributing to foodborne illnesses, projects to promote vendor hygiene naturally follow. Representations of vendors *as* contributing positively to the economy may instead lead organizations to offer financial credit or other supports for vendors and their businesses. These two representations are not mutually exclusive. Vendors can both practice poor food hygiene and support the economy. However, this example illustrates that different representations of vendors inform different plans of action and intervention in street food vending.

Representations inform action, but representations are also informed by experiences and exposure to different ideas. Indonesian author Ariel Heryanto explored how changing systems of representation and language usage in Indonesia affected how Indonesians perceived themselves and their needs. Heryanto argued that the Western influenced Indonesian language, [10] and terms that grew out of it, such as "Development" (I. *Pembangunan)*, helped to create a way of thinking about the world that differed from ways of thinking that could be communicated using regional

[10] The Indonesian language was "made from without" (Heryanto, 1990, 27). It was no one's mother tongue, but was created with western influences to facilitate communication between the various linguistic and ethnic groups in Indonesia during the country's unification.

ways of speaking. In line with newly promoted terms like "Development," people came to compete for "scarce" resources and their understanding of what they needed to be successful, such as high incomes and access to formal education, were changed by "Development" projects (Heryanto, 1990, 35). These projects influenced Indonesians' presuppositions and informed what they believed they could and should hope for. Heryanto's work followed a tradition that included authors like Gramsci and Foucault, who argued that the discourse people are exposed to informs the way they understand and engage with the world.

Ideas about street food vendors portrayed in literature and news media also help to establish frameworks for discussing and writing about vendors. Representations of street food vendors by scholars and organizations are built on these frameworks. These frameworks are consequential as they help inform what scholars, organizations, and vendors believe they can and should want for vendors. Vendors no longer need to be consulted about these taken-for-granted assumptions. For this reason, this thesis argues that even the most self-evident representations of street food vendors should be approached carefully and the assumptions that underpin them should be reflected upon critically.

Research Questions

Earlier in this chapter, it was suggested that street food vendors and the scholars and organizations working with vendors do not account for vendors' experiences in the same way. This introductory chapter also aimed to demonstrate that representations have implications for decision-making, and assumptions that underpin representations of street food vendors should be considered critically. This research addresses three main sets of questions.

- First, *how did scholars and pertinent organizations represent street food vendors and their challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic?*
- *Second, how have street food vendors understood their own experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic?* What major challenges did they face and what did they need to overcome these challenges?

- *Finally, what are the regularities and disjunctures between these two sets of representations—namely, those of scholars and organizations on the one hand and of vendors themselves on the other?* Given the disjuncture alluded to earlier, what consequences follow for positive intervention? How might we improve on existing programs by attending to vendors' self-understandings?

Structure of Thesis

This thesis consists of seven chapters, including this one. This chapter introduced the research context and the questions guiding this project. The second chapter summarizes existing academic literature on street food vending and representation. It explores the history and character of assumptions about street food vendors and how they are reproduced in contemporary literature on street food vending. Chapter three describes the research process and details the methods and materials that inform the research. It also introduces and provides context on the research area. The fourth chapter explores representations of street food vendors by organizations involved in vendors' activities. This chapter introduces the organizations analyzed and discusses their involvement with street food vending in Indonesia. It then examines the terms organizations use to discuss street food vendors and summarizes how these organizations represent vendors needs and challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Chapter five explores vendors self-representations. This chapter draws from interview results to explore how street food vendors describe their experiences during the pandemic in relation to food security, employment and the economy, hygiene, and restrictions on street food vending. It also compares these results with representations of street food vendors discussed in chapter four. It asks why these representations differ and what consequences the resulting disjuncture has for street food vendors and interventions in street food vending. Finally, this thesis closes with a chapter discussing the implications of this research for scholarship on street food vending, and suggests avenues for further study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

How did themes like food security, employment and the economy, hygiene, and restrictions on street food vending enter academic literature on street food vending, and how have they been reproduced in contemporary literature? This chapter presents a detailed review of literature on street food vending in Indonesia and a survey of key trends in the wider scholarship. It concludes by discussing approaches to representation in literature on street food vending.

This chapter explores four themes in literature on street food vending, beginning with the theme of food security. Literature discussing this theme suggests that street food vendors help low-income consumers access food by providing affordable options in convenient locations. This assumption appears frequently in academic literature but is rarely discussed critically, and is often repeated without supporting evidence. The second theme in literature on street food vending is street food vending's role in employment creation and the economy more broadly. Literature discussing this theme suggests that street food vending is an important source of employment and promotes economic development. This claim is supported by UN agencies and development scholars, who suggest that street food vending helps the poor and uneducated earn a "livelihood", decreases unemployment, and supports the economy. Third, this chapter explores the theme of hygiene. Scholarship addressing this theme suggests that street food vendors practice poor food hygiene and must be educated on hygiene practices. A review article by Arabhale et al. (2019) suggested that 85% of journal articles on street food vending focused on vendor hygiene, indicating that food hygiene is the most common topic in literature on street food vending. Finally, this chapter considers scholarship discussing restrictions on street food vending. This body of literature argues that restrictions on street food vending have adverse effects on street food vendors and the customers that rely on them. This argument appeared in briefs responding to the pandemic (FAO 2020, Battersby, 2020), and a substantial body of literature published prior to the pandemic suggested that restrictions on street vending were harmful (see for example, Crush & Young, 2019).

Food Security

Literature on street food vending frequently suggests that street food vendors offer affordable food in convenient locations. This helps low-income consumers access food. While it is difficult to identify the origin of this idea as it appears in the literature, it has figured prominently in literature on street food vending since the 1970s. It appears, for example, in Keith Hart's 1973 work on the informal economy, and McGee and Young's 1977 study of street vending in Southeast Asia. A 2007 World Bank Report on Indonesian food markets and the street food vendors that purchase from them, as well as more recent surveys of Indonesian consumers by Minot et al. (2015) and Soma (2018) suggested that households, especially low-income households, purchase street food instead of buying food from grocery stores because street food is convenient and sold at affordable prices (see also Faradiba et al.; 2013; Rapunzel et al., 2017). As street food vendors buy ingredients in bulk and often at quantity and loyalty discounts, groceries and meals prepared and sold by street food vendors can be similarly priced or even cheaper than food prepared from scratch by single-family households. Households struggling to afford bulk groceries or who do not have refrigeration can also purchase food from vendors in small quantities rather than travelling further distances to buy in bulk from markets or grocery stores (Clark, 2013; Milgram, 2013; Turner, 2013).

The relationship between street food vendors and food access for low-income households is often described using the term *food security.* The concept of *food security* entered the policy field in 1943 during World War II. It emerged from American political dialogue championed by President Roosevelt around security and "freedom from want" (Shaw, 2007, xi). The term aims to combine the physical conditions of hunger and malnutrition with the socioeconomic factors restricting people's access to food. According to the FAO:

> food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO, 2020).

Literature on street food vending published prior to the pandemic suggests that street food vending has a close relationship with food security.[11] For example, Crush and Young (2019) suggested that low-income consumers in South Africa who purchased food from street food vendors were less *food insecure* than low-income consumers frequenting supermarkets because they did not have to travel long distances or buy food in bulk. Authors around the world have made similar claims about the relationship between street food vendors and food security (see, for example, Milgram, 2013; Skinner & Haysom, 2016; Tawodzera, 2018; Crush & Young, 2019).

Evidence for these claims is frequently drawn from consumer statements. Some authors, including Minot et al (2015) and Soma (2018), have conducted household surveys reflecting food spending habits. These surveys indicate that households, especially low-income households, spend a large proportion of the money that goes towards food on street food. Other projects discuss anecdotal interviews with customers to argue that customers value street food vendors for their low prices or convenient services (see, for example, Clark, 2013). Few academic articles explore how vendors view their relationship with customers.

The idea that street food vendors contribute positively to consumers' ability to access food appeared frequently in the literature on street food vending during the pandemic (see, for example, Battersby, 2020; Guha et al., 2020; Verma & Mishra, 2022). In a paper on street food vending and Covid-19 in China, Zhong and Scott (2020) suggested that access to street food vendors during the COVID-19 pandemic "bolster[ed] low-income households' food security" (137). Similar findings were also noted by authors working in Southeast Asia, such as Pham et al. (2021) and Duong & Thanh (2022) in Vietnam, Turner et al. (2021) and Langill et al. (2021) in Thailand, Laos and Vietnam, and Gaterak et al. (2021) in Thailand. According to Duong and Thanh (2021), street food vendors play an important role in "allowing urban residents access to essential items during a global crisis, especially with regards to food provisioning" (Duong &

[11] While the relationship between street food vending and food security appears to be well established, it is not equally clear what exactly food security is. In his 2005 article on food security in Indonesia, Lassa indicated that food security had become a catch-all for scholars studying anything from poverty and the socio-economic dimensions of hunger to agricultural and soil science (Lassa, 2005). Authors such as Jones et al. (2013) have attempted to establish what food security measures but conclude that the term covers various indicators and is broadly understood to be "important" (97).

Thanh, 2021, 499). Meanwhile, Gaterak et al. (2021) observed that street food vendors provide "convenient, delicious and cheap meals" (Gaterak et al., 2021, 927).

While strong evidence exists to support these claims, this evidence was frequently deployed uncritically in introductory paragraphs with little supporting evidence, and authors did not explore the validity of this claim in their research area. During and prior to the pandemic, academic articles focusing on other topics relating to street food vending, such as food safety among street food vendors, almost invariably claim that street food vendors support food security (see, for example, Abrahale et al., 2019; Battersby, 2020). However, after briefly citing a source to support this idea, authors often move on without discussing it in detail (see, for example, Rakha et al., 2022). When sources are cited, the relationship between the point made and the sources cited is not always self-evident, and the same source is rarely used in more than one article. In the significant body of literature published during the pandemic where this claim appeared, no two authors cited the same source on street food and its relationship with food security.

Employment and the Economy

Literature on street food vending also suggests that street food provides employment opportunities for the poor and uneducated and promotes economic growth. This assumption is built on decades of scholarship. Keith Hart's 1973 work, which introduced the term "informal economy", argued that street vending was an important source of employment and contributed to real GDP in developing countries, despite often going unrecognized by governments (Hart, 1973).[12] McGee and Yeung's 1977 study of street food vending in Southeast Asia and Tinker and Cohen's *Street Foods as a Source of Income for Women* (1985) also suggested that street food vending was a valuable form of employment. Meanwhile, in his seminal work on street food vendors and public policy, Bromley (2000) claimed that street vendors were "an integral part of the economy" and their work contributed "to sustaining themselves and their dependents"

[12] The term "informal economy" designates employment activities not formally recorded (Hart, 1973). This term continues to be used frequently in academic literature on street food vending. However, it has received criticism for being overly dualistic and failing to recognize the overlap between "formal" and "informal" activities (see Kusakabe & Gisele, 2010; Bromley, 2013; Crush & Young, 2019).

(4). More recent scholarship in Indonesia also expresses this idea (Handoyo, 2013; Malasan, 2019).

Frequently accompanying the idea that street food vending provides employment opportunities and promotes the economy, is the suggestion that street food vending is one of few options available to low-income households (see Pham et al., 2021; Nasution et al., 2021; Peimani & Kamalipour, 2022). For example, in a piece on street food vending in Vietnam, Thailand, and Laos during the COVID-19 pandemic, Turner et al. (2021) suggested that street food vendors lack "the formal education and skills necessary to secure 'modern' urban employment" (484). In Surabaya, Nasution et al. (2021) suggested that street food vending was vendors' "only source of livelihood" (162). The term "livelihoods"[13] is intrinsically linked to poverty and an un-skilled, poorly educated workforce (de Haan, 2011). Studies exploring street food vendors and their livelihoods frequently describe vendors as possessing little or no education and as unable to find work outside of street food vending (see for example Hart 1973; Bromley, 2000; Crush and Frayne, 2011; Langill et al., 2021). However, some scholarship from Indonesia suggests that vendors engage in street food vending on the side and that it is neither their only source of income nor their most important. This scholarship also suggests that street food vending is taken up sporadically by seasonal agricultural workers, who use it to help make ends meet during inactive periods in the agricultural calendar (see, for example, McGee & Yeung, 1977; Newberry, 2006; Malasan, 2019).

Many scholars describe street food vending as a "last resort" employment option. Evidence from past economic crises suggests that economic difficulties lead more people to seek their "livelihoods" from street food vending. Aswicahyono *et al* (2009) suggest that the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis and the fall of the Suharto regime led to a rise in the number of street vendors in Indonesia. When state and corporate employees became un- and underemployed, they turned to street food vending with its lower barriers to entry. Elsewhere in Southeast Asia, Gisele

[13] "A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets, and activities required for a means of living" (Serrat, 2008, 1). The developing field of "livelihood studies" and the "livelihoods approach" to exploring poverty, championed by scholars working in anthropology, geography and development studies, suggests that researchers should approach poverty by examining the "factors that constrain or enhance livelihood opportunities" for the poor.

(2000) explored the sensational stories of stockbrokers in Thailand who began selling sandwiches on the side of the road after the Asian financial crisis left them destitute.

Like the assumption that street food vendors help low-income consumers access food, the idea that street food vending is a good source of employment appears frequently in literature on street food vending that discussed other topics. Articles focusing on topics such as the impact of state restrictions on street food vendors, for example, often deploy this idea uncritically and sometimes without providing or discussing references (see, for example, Bhowmilk, 2010). This remained true during the Covid-19 pandemic. In the introduction to their article on street food vending in Surabaya, Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic, Nasution et al. (2021) explained that street food vending is "believed to be one of the sectors able to provide employment opportunities for the poor" (144). Similar observations were made by Ridawati (2022) in their work on street food vending in Indonesia and online food delivery platforms. Estimates of the number of street food vendors in Indonesia or their income levels are weak, at best,[14] and are not referenced by the above authors. Elsewhere in Southeast Asia during the pandemic, Turner et al. (2021) noted that "street food vending continues to support tens of thousands of urban households" in Vietnam, Thailand, and Laos. However, no evidence or means of measurement were provided for this estimate.

Hygiene

Another central assumption in scholarship on street food vending is that street food is unhygienic. Scholarship on street food vending has drawn links between street vendors and poor hygiene in countries around the world, including Indonesia (see Gasen et al., 2001; Molin Cortese et al., 2016). Before the pandemic, authors studying street food vending published more on food hygiene among street food vendors than any other topic. Abrahale et al. (2019) reviewed 441 journal articles on street food vending and observed that over 85% of articles explored vendors' food safety or food hygiene practices. According to the authors, only 31% of articles included substantial discussions of food availability/food security, the next most common topic

[14] In 2015 the Corporations, Micro Businesses, Industry and Trade Service (I. Dinas Koperasi, Usaha Mikro, Perindustrian dan Perdagangan) estimated that there are at least 56 000 vendors in the district of Jakarta, but this is believed to be a significant underestimation (Elyda, 2015).

in the literature on street food vending (Abrahale et al., 2019). Scholars in Abrahale et al. (2019)'s review employed a variety of approaches to studying street food vendor hygiene. Some tested the food sold by street vendors for microbes, toxins, and particulates or explored vendor compliance with food safety standards (see for example, Gasem et al., 2001; Rahman et al, 2018). Others reviewed training programs on food safety or conducted interviews with vendors to test their knowledge of food hygiene practices, generally concluding that they were unsatisfactory (see Omemu & Aderoju, 2008; Shafiee et al., 2017).

It is difficult to pinpoint a source for the idea that street food vendors practice poor hygiene as it appears in the literature. However, it has been circulating in pseudo-academic work for over a century. This assumption even appeared in Henry Mayhew's 1861 treatise on London street markets (Mayhew, 1861 [Kelley, 2019]). Poor food hygiene among vendors was also mentioned in early oft-cited works on street food vending, such as Bromley (2000) and Bhowmilk (2005). This assumption, like the two assumptions explored in the preceding sections, is often repeated without justification or further discussion (see, for example, Nasution et al., 2021).

Evidence of this can be drawn from academic literature on street food vending during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, during the pandemic, Gaterak et al. (2020) reflected that street food stalls in Thailand were considered "one of the main places of health and safety concerns" (928). In Egypt, El-Latief and Abouelenein (2020) explained that "street food vendors with poor personal hygiene and inadequate information on food safety could be the source of foodborne pathogens, especially the Coronavirus (COVID-19)" (372). Neither author discussed the origins of these claims or drew on evidence from their specific research area to prove that these claims were applicable to vendors in their study. Interestingly, a recent publication discussing vendors' knowledge of food safety suggested that some vendors are aware of food safety standards and strive to offer clean and healthy foods (Guha et al., 2020). Similarly, Musa (2017) explored street food vendors' perceptions of their own food hygiene, and suggested that vendors believed that had satisfactory knowledge of food safety practices. However, Musa concluded that municipal officials, who believed vendors lacked food safety knowledge, had a more complete understanding of vendors' food hygiene. While vendors only had their own experiences of food hygiene to reference, municipal officials referred to expert commentary and

academic scholarship to support their account of vendor hygiene. With the exception of these works, few projects explore how vendors perceive their own food hygiene.

Restrictions and Street Food Vendors

The final assumption frequently appearing in scholarship on street food vending, is that state-imposed restrictions on street food vending have negative consequences for street food vendors. A developing body of scholarship explores how the Indonesian government restricts street food vending operations. Joshua Barker (1999) explored how, under New Order[15] government programs such as the National Discipline Movement (I. Gerakan Disiplin Nasional)[16], street food vendors were repressed to achieve "the orderliness of the modern city"' (Barker 1999 [Malasan, 2019, 55]). During this time, officers would patrol the city and expel vendors from parks and sidewalks (Malasan, 2019). More recently, Lim and Padawangi (2007) explored how street food vendors in Bandung were evicted from a newly renovated city square when they were believed not to conform with the modern image the city was trying to project. Similarly, Handoyo (2013) explained that street food vendors were evicted from Jalan Menteri Supeno in Semarang to help Semarang city become "a center for international trade and services" (252). Similar government actions have been explored by authors writing on street food vendors elsewhere in Southeast Asia, including Singapore (Mele et al., 2015), and Vietnam (Turner, 2013). Restrictions on street food vending frequently include projects to evict vendors from public spaces reserved for other purposes or relocate them into indoor shopping centers. They also include efforts to restrict vendors' operating hours or mobility. These restrictions are believed to disconnect vendors from their customers and force them to vend in undesirable spaces (see, for example, Skinner, 2015; Turner et al., 2021).

The idea that governments impose harmful restrictions on street food vendors appeared in McGee and Yeung's seminal work on street food vending in Southeast Asia (McGee and Yeung, 1977). It was also the main topic of Bromley's oft-cited article on street food vendors and public

[15] The New Order (I. Orde Baru, OrBa) was the period of Indonesian politics from 1966 to 1998. During this period President Suharto acted as head of state.
[16] The National Discipline Movement was one of many campaigns carried out by the Public Order (I. Penertiban Umum, Tibum) division of Satpol PP during the New Order. Officers from the Public Order division descended on urban streets en masse to "increase discipline" by clearing street food vendors (Barker, 1999, 103)

policy (Bromley, 2000). Bromley compared arguments for restricting street food vendors and arguments for supporting street food vendors. He concluded that the arguments against street food vendors, including their poor food hygiene and disruptive occupation of public space, were "trivial" compared to arguments for supporting street food vendors, such as vendors' ability to provide accessible food and employ the poor. Bromley's work argued that government restrictions on street food vending were harmful and unwarranted. Some Indonesian scholars, however, suggest that restrictions on street food vendors are necessary. For example, Handoyo (2013) argued that vendors should be evicted and their behavior corrected by the state to improve management of public space.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Battersby (2020) argued that restrictions on street food vending negatively impacted vendors. The author suggested that any public health measures needed to consider vendors' important social and economic contributions to urban life. In Indonesia, Nasution et al. (2021) examined how street food vendors in Surabaya responded to state-imposed public health restrictions. They concluded that vendors' incomes were significantly impacted by public health orders that kept office workers and school children, vendors' clientele, from leaving their homes. The authors argued that vendors also struggled with restrictions on mobility and curfews that reduced vendors' operating hours. In Vietnam, Duong & Thanh (2022) suggested that public health restrictions directly impacted street food vendors and their businesses. Meanwhile, Gaterak et al. (2020) in Thailand argued that street food vendors were "inevitably impacted" by the lockdown policy and closure of the country (927). These authors suggested that restrictions should recognize the important role that street food vending plays in distributing food and employing the poor, and should be designed to reduce the impact of restrictions on vendors and their customers.

Discussion

This chapter highlighted key ideas in the literature on street food vending. It summarized some of the ways in which scholars have described street food vendors as good for food security and employment but practicing poor hygiene and targeted by harmful policies. It also highlighted the uncritical replication of assumptions about street food vendors. This was not done to argue

against these assumptions, but rather to show how unsubstantiated claims are repeated as part of a larger set of assumptions regarding food vendors. This scholarship influenced how the author understood street food vendors and impacted the questions this project was able to ask about street food vending in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic. The following chapters explore, among other things, how ideas about vendors appearing in scholarship often differ from those held by street food vendors themselves. This thesis also aims to illustrate that representation of street food vendors are powerful and help to shape how scholars, organizations, and governments understand street food vendors and their needs. The next section summarizes literature on representation and its relationship with street food vending.

Representation

The preceding section of this chapter summarized recent literature on street food vending in Indonesia and beyond. It was a useful starting point for understanding street food vendors and the obstacles they faced during and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this literature should be understood not as a body of objective *facts* but as a series of *representations* available in public-facing literature published by scholars for an educated international audience. Literature exploring representations in street food vending is limited but has produced some interesting work in the past two decades.

Importantly, Nova (2003) explored representations of indigenous[17] female street vendors in Tijuana, Mexico. She examined how these vendors were represented by merchants, municipal authorities, middle-class citizens, and anthropologists. She then compared these representations with self-representations by indigenous female street vendors. Nova found that representations of indigenous women as unlawful outsiders whose culture prevented them from taking advantage of opportunities outside of street vending allowed municipal governments to simultaneously evict indigenous women who vended on the streets, and exclude them from opportunities in the broader economy. Nova also observed that anthropologists claimed indigenous women preferred

[17] Nova used the term "indigenous" to refer to members of ethno-cultural communities which trace their roots to populations who lived in Mexico prior to the arrival of Europeans. Most of the women in Nova's study are migrants from Mixteca, a poor rural region in Southwestern Mexico.

to work in the informal economy for its flexibility. These academics also suggested that indigenous women worked with their children because child labour was "an indigenous tradition" (260). Indigenous female street vendors in Nova's study instead suggested that organizations and scholars involved in their activities had a poor understanding of their motivations and needs. These women worked in the informal economy and required their children to help them vend out of necessity, not preference or tradition. However, merchants, municipal authorities, middle-class citizens and anthropologists controlled the narrative about indigenous female street food vendors, and discourse about the women was developed without their consent.

Another thoughtful exploration of representation and street food comes from Klein (2013). Klein examined how residents of Yunnan, China described the food they cooked. The author explored how these descriptions compared to representations of Yunnan cuisine in regional campaigns to promote local food cultures. A campaign launched by the Governor of Yunnan promoted Yunnan regional cuisine, or "Dian cuisine," as "green" and "natural." However, food vendors and other residents of Yunnan reported that there was no such thing as Dian cuisine. They produced normal "Chinese" food. Klein and his research assistants discovered that representations of Yunnan food promoted by the campaign differed from those of Yunnan residents, and as a result the campaign was largely unsuccessful among locals.

In Indonesia, work exploring street food vendors and representation is limited to a 2013 study of "street food vendors' vernacular visual identity" by Wardani et al. (2013). The authors examined how street food vendors in Surabaya represented themselves through printed banners and signs hung around their vending spaces. They suggested that these banners incorporated elements from different cultures, including Javanese, Arabic, Dutch, and, more recently, globalized "western" influences. Wardani et al. (2013) focused on how street food vendors' self-representations in the form of banners improved vendors' engagement with domestic and foreign tourists. The study did not discuss other ways vendors might represent themselves, such as the vocabulary used to speak about their experiences. They also did not explore how these representations compared to representations by other groups, such as government bodies and scholars.

Prior to the pandemic, a small but growing body of literature also explored identity in street food vending. Scholars examined how street food vendors represented themselves and negotiated their identities in relation to outside forces, such as new technologies, city infrastructure and administration, and "western" influences (Etzold, 2016; Crossa, 2016; Renwick, 2018). However, in much of this work the idea of "identity" is only vaguely defined and frequently references visible markers, such as clothing and advertising. This work does not discuss how street food vendors are represented by other sources, such as academia or government, or explore the implications of these representations.

Scholarship on street food vending and representation remains limited. Some projects, such as Nova's and Klein's have examined how street food vendors and local street foods are represented by scholars and government bodies, while other projects have explored how street food vendors represent their identities with visible markers like banners and clothing. With the exception of Nova's 20 year-old study of indigenous female street vendors in Tijuana, there have been no projects exploring how representations of street food vendors by scholars differ from street food vendors' self-representations and the implications of this disjuncture. Building on Nova's work, this thesis aims to explore the consequences of the disjuncture between representations by scholars and pertinent organizations and vendors' self-representations. How do these groups represent vendors, and what affect does this have on vendors? To explore this question, textual analysis of organizations involved in street food vending is contrasted with vendors' self-representations as they appear in 39 interviews with street food vendors in South Tangerang, Indonesia. The next chapter summarizes the research process and discusses the context in which research was conducted.

Chapter 3: Research Process

The thesis that follows is a study of street food vendors during the pandemic, and the different ways vendors have been represented. It was informed by textual analysis of program and policy documents from organizations involved in street food vending in Indonesia, and 39 interviews with street food vendors in South Tangerang, Indonesia conducted between October 2021 and February 2022.

Street Food Vendors

All but two of these interviews took place in the district of Pamulang on the outskirts of South Tangerang City. Pamulang is a densely populated low-middle-income residential district. Many of Pamulang's residents commute elsewhere in South Tangerang or to the nearby mega city of Jakarta for work, but the district has a popular shopping center and several educational institutions, including two small post-secondary institutions. The remaining two interviews were conducted with vendors in South Jakarta, a relatively well-off city in the special administrative region of Jakarta, the current capital of Indonesia.[18]

Street food vendors in Pamulang sell prepared and unprepared foods, including sweet snacks, full meals with rice or noodles, protein and vegetables, and groceries, such as raw vegetables, grain staples, sugar, and processed snacks. Vendors located near schools or office complexes frequently cater to students and office workers. They offer prepared meals and snacks that can be eaten on the go. Vendors in or near residential complexes cater to households buying food close to home. They sell prepared meals, snacks, and raw ingredients used to prepare home-cooked meals. Vendors selling near food markets sell both prepared meals and raw ingredients. These vendors offer refreshments to shoppers and purchase goods from market vendors for resale in more convenient locations, saving people time navigating busy food markets.

[18] In January 2022 the Indonesian government passed a bill to relocate the Indonesian capital city to East Kalimantan to combat overpopulation and environmental degradation in Jakarta. The relocation of the capital was first proposed in 2019, and will officially begin in 2024.

Interviews were conducted with two groups of street food vendors: kaki-lima[19] operators (street vendors selling from mobile carts) and warung operators (street vendor selling from semi-permanent stalls and inside buildings).[20] These categories reflect the terms vendors use to describe themselves and were decided upon in conversation with local research assistants.

Kaki lima operators sell food from a cart. Their operations are generally small, and only one or sometimes two people are involved in sales, though more can be involved with preparing food. Malasan (2019), for example, demonstrated that some vendors' entire families and sometimes neighbours were involved in purchasing ingredients from traditional markets and preparing vegetables and spice blends used in meals sold by street food vendors. Kaki lima operators interviewed sold meals such as fried chicken and soup, snacks and cakes, and beverages. These vending operations were located in areas conveniently accessed by customers, including near schools, offices and residential complexes. Some vendors moved several times daily to service different customer bases, but others remained in the same location throughout the day. Kaki lima operators also frequently sell near other areas with high foot traffic, such as shopping centers and train and subway stations.

In Indonesian legislation, kaki lima operators are referred to as PKL (pedagang kaki lima, Eng. Five leg vendor) (Act 125/2012). The definition of PKL offered by the Indonesian government in Act 125/2012 concerning the Ordering and Empowering of PKL is: "operators of vending businesses whose facilities are mobile or immobile, who use the infrastructure of the city, social facilities, public facilities, land or buildings owned by the state and/or privately that are temporary/not settled" (Act 125/2012, 1). The constant here is that vendors' place of business is temporary. The Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP) is responsible for overseeing street food vending operations. Regulation around street food vending is set out by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, with each district publishing their own set of regulations. The PKL interviewed for this project were located in South Tangerang City and are regulated under the Regional Act for the District of Tangerang Number 8/2014 concerning the Ordering and Empowering of PKL.

[19] Popular wisdom suggests that the term kaki lima, which means "five leg", comes from the vendor's two legs, the two poles carts rest on and the wheel vendors use to push the cart. Other theories claim that the term comes from the Dutch colonial area, when state legislation allowed vendors only five feet of road space from which to vend.
[20] A chart with more detailed vendor demographic information can be found in appendix C.

Figure 5. (Right) Photo credit: Ulfianti. 2021. *A kaki lima vendor selling meatballs and soup from a mobile cart in South Tangerang*

Figure 6. (Left) Photo credit: Ulfianti. 2021. *A kaki lima vendor selling frozen desserts from a mobile cart in South Tangerang*

Interviews were also conducted with warung operators. The defining feature of warung operators is that they are stationary rather than mobile. There is no separate legislation for warung operators, who are generally treated as either kaki lima operators or restaurant owners, depending on their size and location. Warung vary in size and offer anywhere from one type of meal, such as fried chicken, to several meal options and a mix of meals and groceries. Others specialize in providing fresh vegetables, and staples like rice or processed snacks. Their place of business can be a permanent structure, such as the owner's home, or a tent set up and taken down daily. Seating is often offered on streets and sidewalks. At some warung, sales are carried out by a single person, but many warung operators employ additional staff and/or family members to help with sales. As one of our participants suggested, the primary benefit of operating a warung rather than a mobile cart is that people always know where to find you (Respondent 30). When

referring to interviews, this thesis does not differentiate between kaki lima and warung operators unless specifically relevant. Generally, warung and kaki lima operators reported similar impacts from the pandemic. While warung operators often had higher incomes on average, they reported that the pandemic had reduced their incomes in similar proportions.

Figure 7. Photo credit: Ulfianti. 2021. *A warung operator selling meatball soup in South Tangerang*

Vendors generally worked long hours, especially if the time required to shop and prepare food was taken into account. Many arrived at their vending space early in the morning (as early as 4 am) and operated until late in the evening. However, working hours included time for extended breaks and afternoon naps. Most vendors reported that they shopped for ingredients once a day after they finished their selling activities and then prepared food either after shopping or in the morning before beginning work. While many vendors sourced their ingredients and food for resale from traditional food markets, others reported purchasing from a larger street food vendor in their area or receiving deliveries from agents.

Barriers to entry for street food vending are believed to be relatively low, and anyone with enough start-up capital to purchase food for resale can become a street food vendor. However, the level of education vendors reported was higher than expected. While four respondents reported having only attended primary school, all of these vendors were at least thirty years of age, with younger vendors typically indicating a higher level of education. Two vendors had even received some post-secondary education, and several had attended high school or high school equivalents.

The majority of vendors reported being from the Island of Java.[21] Around half of these reported that they were from the greater metropolitan area around Jakarta, including South Tangerang, and many came from the district of Pamulang. Others were from East and West Java, and only two vendors reportedly came from outside of Java. Government aid is frequently distributed at the community level, and frequently only official residents registered with neighbourhood administration are eligible for government aid. This likely limited some vendors' access to social support during the pandemic. While some vendors did report receiving government aid during the pandemic, many did not receive anything despite qualifying as low-income households.

Textual Analysis

Textual analysis was undertaken to better understand how pertinent organizations represented street food vendors during the COVID-19 pandemic. Over half a dozen national Indonesian organizations support programming involving street vendors to some extent, and several international organizations fund and advise projects around street vending in Indonesia.[22] Organizations analyzed were selected based on how central street vending was to their mandate/mission and/or the number of projects on street food vending they were involved with, their reach (i.e. representation in different countries/regions/districts), and the availability of online material outlining their objectives and/or chronicling their activities. Special attention was

[21] When asked where one is from in Indonesia, it is common to respond with one's ancestral home town and not place of birth or residence. Residence permits were not verified.
[22] Pertinent organizations not included in this study include: StreetNet; Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WEIGO); PD Pasar Jaya; Food Task Force (Satuan Tugas Pangan: Satgas Pangan); Corporations, Micro Businesses, Industry and Trade Service (Dinas Koperasi, Usaha Mikro, Perindustrian dan Perdagangan Kabupaten Semarang); and, Alliance of Indonesian Market Vendors (Aliansi Pedagang Pasar Seluruh Indonesia (APPSINDO))

paid to organizations working with street vendors who sold food. However, most programs and policies by Indonesian state and public organizations were designed to address street vendors more broadly and did not focus on street *food* vendors. One state organization, one public organization, and three UN agencies were selected for review. These organizations are introduced in more detail in chapter four. They are as follows:

State Organization:

- Civil Service Police Unit (Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja (Satpol PP))

Public Organization:

- Association for Indonesian Street Vendors (Assosiasi Pedagang Kaki Lima Indonesia ((APKLI))

UN agencies:

- The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO);
- The World Health Organization (WHO); and,
- The International Labour Organization (ILO)

Each organization analyzed represented their views and outlined their goals through a unique combination of documents and public commentary. Where applicable, attempts were made to standardize the kinds of documents selected for analysis, but this was not always possible. Documents selected included: vision and mission statements, lists of functions and tasks, annual updates, program summaries, training documents, and comments given to news outlets. When reviewing these documents, special attention was paid to statements relating to street vendors and food security, employment, hygiene, and restrictions. Under the theme of "food security," any media produced by the above organizations that discussed street food vendors and their role in distributing food to low-income consumers was analyzed. Under the theme of "employment," media relating to street vendors and employment, as well as the economy more broadly were analyzed. Under "hygiene," media that discussed street vendors' hygiene and food safety practices were discussed. For the category of "restrictions," media either prescribing restrictions on street food vending or advocating against restrictions was analyzed.

Limitations

This step in the research process relied almost exclusively on online sources. The author was unable to observe or interview representatives from the above organizations in person. This limited material available for analysis. Furthermore, by restricting the analysis to four themes (food security, employment/economy, hygiene, and restrictions), topics that were not captured in these categories were inevitably left out of the analysis.

Interviews

Due to pandemic-related travel restrictions, the author was not able to travel to Indonesia and interact with vendors directly. Instead, interviews with street food vendors were coordinated in collaboration with Syarif Hidayatullah University Jakarta. These interviews aimed to ascertain how street food vendors understood themselves and their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Two students from the University, one female and one male, conducted interviews on the author's behalf. The interviews were recorded and shared with the author as audio files over a secure UVic Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) approved Microsoft Teams group. 39 interviews were completed between October 2021 and February 2022. Interviews were semi-structured, conducted face-to-face at food vendors' places of business and varied in length, with the shortest interviews less than three minutes and the longest over 45 minutes. Interview length depended on participants' willingness to engage with research assistants and available time. Research assistants engaged participants in conversation during non-busy periods, but interviews were cut short if customers arrived and participants became too busy to continue the interview. Interviews were conducted with individual vendors or groups of vendors who worked closely together depending on vendors' preferences. All vendors interviewed were adults aged 22 to 65. Research assistants were provided with a list of research questions relating to food security, employment and the economy, hygiene, and restrictions on street food vending. They also collected basic demographic information and information on the impact of the pandemic on vendors' incomes and their customers. After asking a set of basic questions, research assistants were instructed to adapt their questions and "go off script" if this made communication with participants smoother.[23] Once completed, research assistants uploaded recordings of the

[23] A list of interview questions/talking points can be found in appendix B.

interviews to the secure Microsoft Teams group. After reviewing the interviews, the author scheduled meetings with the research assistants to discuss results and adjust interview questions as needed to better reflect the situation in the field. For example, as COVID-19 related restrictions on street food vending were adjusted, questions were added or removed to reflect the changing situation.

Limitations

While in-person interviews were indispensable for exploring how street food vendors understood their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic, interviews only indicated how vendors described their experiences in a specific context and for a particular audience. Interviews were relatively short, and research assistants did not have time to build deeper relationships with participants. Participants may have felt uncomfortable sharing personal information with research assistants. For example, some older participants politely declined to share their educational history with research assistants, and others hesitated to share detailed income information. Interview results were also not verified. In original research proposals, it was suggested that income could be verified by comparing vendors' responses to their sales documentation. This proved impractical, given the informal and short interview style adopted in the final research design. This is problematic, not necessarily because participants might have responded in bad faith, but because they were sometimes unsure of the answers themselves. For example, several participants gave rough estimates of their income or reported that someone else, such as a child or spouse, was in charge of the money.

Ethical considerations

This project received ethical clearance from the University of Victoria's Human Research Ethics Board on September 2021. The author confirms that participants' identities have been and will be kept confidential and that all research documents containing identifying information have been and will be handled confidentially. The author also confirms that participation in the research was voluntary and that consent was secured for all participants. Wherever direct quotes from participants are used, names are anonymized.

Indonesian to English Translation

This thesis references interviews conducted in the Indonesian language and program documents and legislation written in the Indonesian language. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations were completed by the author.

Chapter 4: Institutional representations of street (food) vendors during the COVID-19 pandemic

This chapter explores how organizations involved in street food vending represented street vendors and their challenges and needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. For reasons cited in the previous chapter, this chapter focuses on representations of street food vendors by the Indonesian Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP), the Association for Indonesian Street Vendors (APKLI), the Food and Agricultural Organization, the World Health Organization, and the International Labour Organization. It analyzes texts and public commentary from these organizations which discuss street vendors and their needs and challenges during the pandemic. In particular, it explores texts and comments referencing street food vendors and food security, employment and the economy, hygiene, and restrictions on street food vending. Chapter five will analyze how these representations compare to vendors' self-understandings as expressed through interviews. This research found that each organization represented vendors differently, but touched on at least one of the four themes discussed in this thesis. It also found that street food vendors are largely disarticulated in texts and public commentary. Vendors often appear in photos and news articles published by or about these organizations, but with the exception of APKLI, organizations rarely offered dedicated programming for street food vendors.

Street vendors, the Indonesian state and the Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP)

This section explores how institutions within the Indonesian government represent street food vendors. In particular, it examines how the Indonesian Civil Service Police Unit (Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja (Satpol PP)) represented vendors during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, Satpol PP was involved in administering street vendors operating in public space and frequently gave quotes to news outlets concerning street food vending. Satpol PP officials explained that street food vendors risked spreading the Covid-19 virus and were, therefore, subject to strict hygiene requirements. Organizations like Satpol PP contribute to the assumption that street food vendors are disruptive and unhygienic, one that underlines a great deal of programming and scholarship on street food vending around the world.

Despite being part of many people's day-to-day life in Indonesia, and ostensibly an important source of employment and an avenue for food distribution, the Indonesian government does not have a designated program addressing street food vendors. Some state organizations run programs that involve street food vendors, but these are not extensive. While the office of Micro and Small Businesses and Corporations (Dinas Usaha Mikro Kecil Menengah dan Koperasi) is occasionally referenced in news articles relating to street vendors (Nufus, 2021), the organization very rarely makes public statements, and there is no mention of street vendors on their webpage (Kemenkopukm, 2022). Some government officials made statements relating to street vendors during the pandemic. For example, the Governor of Bangka Belitung, Erzaldi Rosman, observed that street vendors continued to "ignore health protocols" during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, statements from government officials were few and far between, and even Rosman deferred to Satpol PP and the vendor organization APKLI for a more up-to-date analysis and response to the situation (Provinsi Kepulauan Bangka Belitung, 2021).

Satpol PP is an organ of the regional government. It is separate from the Regional Police Force (Polisi Daerah (Polda)), which is responsible to the Police Force of Indonesia (Kepolisan Negara Indonesia (Polri)). According to a Satpol PP website for the city of Tangerang,[24] Satpol PP's responsibilities include: assisting the mayor by maintaining peace and "order" (I. tertiban),[25] and protecting the "people/society" (I. masyarakat) (Satpol PP Pemerintah Kota Tangerang, 2022). It is also responsible for enforcing Regional Acts (I. Peraturan Daerah) and Acts from Regional Leaders (I. Peraturan Kepala Daerah). Violations of both regulations carry a maximum sentence of six months and/or a Rp50,000,000 fine. Satpol PP's activities surround public space and ensuring its use meets regional standards. It monitors activities like public drinking, drug use, gambling, and selling in unauthorized spaces. As street vending is not a criminal offence, it is not regulated by Regional Police (I. Polisi Daerah (Polda)). Polda is responsible for investigating

[24] The city of Tangerang is a separate municipality from the city of *South* Tangerang, where interviews took place. However, both cities are part of the larger District of Tangerang. The Satpol PP branch of South Tangerang does not have detailed information concerning its vision and mission on its website. Vision and mission statements are regulated by the central Satpol PP office and are the same in each branch.

[25] Van Langenberg's keyword analysis recognized order (I. ketertiban) as a key word of the New Order state in Indonesia. The term, linked to the law-and-order dimensions of state power, was used at the birth of the New Order state when President Sukarno instructed then Major General Suharto to effect the restoration of "order" following the supposed coup of September 30, 1965, following which Suharto took power and remained president until 1998.

criminal offences such as theft and physical violence. The organizations operate separately, but Satpol PP is authorized to borrow personnel and equipment from Polda for activities requiring increased resources, such as large scale campaigns to evict street vendors from public space (Sriyono, 2021).

While Satpol PP doesn't directly reference street vendors in its vision and mission statements, news articles about street food vending frequently feature comments from Satpol PP representatives. Social media and blog posts also suggest that Indonesians associate Satpol PP with street vendors. For example, a blog post on Bangka Belitung's government website titled *Come on, let's get to know Satpol PP*, begins by suggesting that "many of us may already know Satpol PP as the police [that evict] street vendors" (Ikom, 2017). Satpol PP monitors street vendors to ensure public space is used in accordance with relevant legislation and does not disrupt the "people/society". When vendors are found to be disruptive or "reckless" (I. nekat), Satpol PP officers are responsible for evicting them to bring order to the area (Act 125/2012). Satpol PP officers are also responsible for educating and empowering vendors through training and other support programs.

Food Security

Food security is an important policy objective in Indonesia, but it is not reflected in the Indonesian government's approach to street food vending. Indonesian citizens' right to accessible food is guaranteed in the Act concerning Food of 2012 (Act 125/2012).[26] The importance of "food availability for the people" (I. *soal persediaan makanan rakyat)* was expressed much earlier in a speech by President Sukarno in 1952 (Sukarno, 1952, 15). In an article titled *Food security discourses in Indonesia: feeding the bangsa,* Neilson and Wright (2017) suggested that the ramifications of "Sukarnoist ideals of food provisioning" are still present in contemporary food politics (135).[27] Food provisioning was also discussed by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono during his second term in office starting in 2009, as well as by

[26] Here "food", *pangan*, is defined as "products designated as food or drink for human consumption."
[27] During his three decades as President, Suharto was considered more successful than his predecessor Sukarno in reaching national food self-sufficiency, and in 1980 achieved self-sufficiency in rice, an accomplishment that was announced by the FAO to be his most important achievement in office.

current president Joko Widodo (Jokowi), who wrote about the topic on his Facebook page (Lassa and Shrestha, 2014).

Statements by Sukarno, and later Bambang Yudhoyono and Jokowi, would appear to indicate that the Indonesian government has long been concerned with feeding its people, or at least wishes to be seen as such. However, most state programs and initiatives around food provisioning and production are designed to target agriculture and stop once food leaves the farm or reaches the market. Those programs that do deal with food at the consumer level are largely concerned with food prices. An example of this can be observed in the state-owned organization Bulog. Bulog's main function is controlling the price of rice by legislating price floors for farmers and price ceilings for consumers (Bulog, 2022).[28] During crises periods such as the COVID-19 pandemic, state organizations are also involved in distributing food aid. Food aid in the form of "sembako boxes"[29] was distributed during the pandemic. These boxes contained food items believed to be essential, including rice and cooking oil. They were distributed by local neighbourhood leaders and administrators, as well as by uniformed Satpol PP officers.

While the Indonesian government sponsors several programs to promote food accessibility in Indonesia, it does not recognize street food vendors as playing a significant role in food distribution. While regional regulations concerning food availability and nutrition exist at even the local level, the Regional Act for the City of South Tangerang concerning Food and Nutrition does not include food retailers of any kind in their list of "actors in food businesses" (Regional Act, 2019). Where scholarship on street food vendors emphasizes the important role street food vendors play in promoting low-income consumers' access to food, the Indonesian government does not appear to recognize this supposed connection.[30] As a result, this project was unable to

[28] A state concern with food prices can also be observed in state organizations such as the Police Food Task Force (I. Satuan Tugas Pangan Polri) (Satgas Pangan), which monitors the price of foodstuffs sold daily in traditional modern markets (Satgas Pangan, 2022), and Pasar Jaya, the state-owned market organization which updates food price information on their website (Pasar Jaya PD, 2022). While interning at the Center for Indonesian Policy Studies, the author monitored food prices in online supermarkets across Southeast Asia. The relationship between high food prices and food insecurity appears to be a central concern in Indonesian civil society as well as government.

[29] The term sembako refers to the nine essential culinary materials: rice, cooking oil, vegetables and fruits, sugar, beef/chicken meat, eggs, milk, kerosine/cooking gas, and iodized salt. Sembako is an abbreviation of "nine essential foods" (I. **sem**bilan **ba**han po**ko**k).

[30] A separate set of organizations and legislation do exist to address traditional food markets. According to former presidential candidate Subianto Prabowo in the introduction to a book titled *Save Traditional Markets (I.*

find evidence of Satpol PP representatives commenting on the relationship between street food vendors and food security or availability.

Employment

While Satpol PP and the Indonesian state did not suggest that street food vendors and food access/security were linked, the idea that street vending is an important source of employment and contributes positively to the economy was well reflected in comments made by Satpol PP representatives during the COVID-19 pandemic and was discussed in Indonesian legislation prior to the pandemic. Act 125/2012 concerning the Ordering and Empowering of Street Vendors recognizes street vendors as economic actors operating in the informal sector (Act 125/2012, 1). This Act was the first government legislation to recognize that street food vendors contributed to the economy. Following Act 125/2012, Regional Acts governing street vendors were ratified nationwide. Regional Act 8/2014 for South Tangerang concerning the Ordering and Empowering of Street Vendors likewise acknowledges street vendors as important economic actors and suggests that successful street vendors "support economic development" (Regional Act, 2014, 1).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Satpol PP representatives acknowledged that street food vendors had a right to make a living by vending in public space. However, they also suggested that these rights were conditional. Agus Henra, the head of Satpol PP in the city of Tangerang emphasized that vendors "are allowed to vend so long as they don't disrupt others," keep off the sidewalks, and follow health protocols (Irfan, 2020). The phrase, "allowed to vend so long as…" (I. boleh berdagang/berjualan, asal…), comes up frequently in quotes from Satpol PP officials. In April of 2021, the head of Satpol PP in the City of Bandung, Rasdian Setiadi, for example, invited seasonal vendors to sell their goods in Bandung, provided that they followed "strict health protocols." A news article on this story published in *Times Indonesia* was titled *Satpol PP Kota Bandung: Pedagang Takjil* ***Boleh Berjualan, Asal****…(Eng. Satpol PP City of Bandung:*

Selamatkan Pasar Tradisional), traditional markets are a symbol of Indonesian culture and deserve to be protected from modern shopping patterns (Prabowo, 2011). As traditional markets are owned and overseen by the state, they are also believed to be cleaner and safer than street vendors. The legislation governing traditional markets allows market operators to evict street vendors with poor food safety who vend too close to markets and/or disrupt traffic around markets (Internal Affairs Act, 2012).

Seasonal vendors can vend, so long as…) (Sugriwa, 2021). When vendors break the rules, Henra insisted that Satpol PP "reminds/warns" (I. ingatkan) them in a "humane way and for the common good" (Irfan, 2020).[31]

Satpol PP and the Indonesian government recognized street food vendors as important economic actors. However, the role they play in promoting the economy was conditional. They were good for the economy "so long as" they follow the right rules and allow themselves to be guided by government legislation and Satpol PP.


PERISTIWA DAERAH

Satpol PP Kota Bandung: Pedagang Takjil Boleh Berjualan, Asal...

Iwa Ahmad Sugriwa

Rabu, 07 April 2021 - 16:35 | 23.36k

Kasatpol PP Kota Bandung, Rasdian Setiadi. (FOTO: Humas Pemkot for TIMES Indonesia)

TIMESINDONESIA, BANDUNG – Jelang bulan Ramadhan, Satpol PP Kota Bandung mempersilahkan pedagang musiman seperti pedagang takjil untuk berjualan. Tapi, Satpol

Figure 8. Sugriwa. 2021. *Satpol PP Kota Bandung: Pedagang takjil boleh berjualan, asal….* [Satpol PP City of Bandung: Seasonal vendors can sell, as long as…]

Hygiene and Restrictions

The idea that street vendors are unclean and create disorder is captured clearly in the official legislation governing street vendors. The second sentence of Act 125/2012 reminds the reader that "the increase in street vendors impacts the esthetics, cleanliness and functioning of infrastructure and facilities in urban areas as well as disrupts traffic" (Act 125/2012, 1). Street vendors in South Tangerang are regulated by Regional Act 8/2014 concerning the Ordering and

[31] The term "humanis" (Eng. humane), is also used to described police action to control prostitutes and criminals, and its use in this circumstances lumps street vendors in with this group.

Empowering of Street Vendors. This Regional legislation does not directly claim that street vendors are a threat. However, note b) of the introduction to this document, suggests that street vendors need to be controlled and guided for "an environment that is safe, orderly, healthy, clean, and beautiful" (Regional Act 8/2014, 1). In other words, without guidance from the state, vendors create an environment that is not safe, orderly, healthy, clean, and beautiful.

With the exception of Satpol PP, government bodies do not appear to address vendor hygiene in any great detail. Indonesia's National Agency for Drug and Food Control (I. Badan Pengawas Obat dan Makanan, BPOM) and municipal public health offices (I. dinas kesehatan) are involved in promoting and monitoring food hygiene standards. However, these organizations rarely interact with street food vendors. BPOM's main function is to monitor the quality and safety of food and drugs products produced for domestic consumption and export. The organization works alongside industrial food and drug producers, rather than food vendors. BPOM does offer some trainings on food hygiene which are available to street food vendors. However, the same training is also provided to housewives and does not target street food vendors specifically (Ellinda-Patra et al., 2020). Municipal public health offices monitor food hygiene standards among local food vendors. They issue certificates of hygiene to food businesses including catering companies, and restaurants. However, they do not interact with street vendors, many of whom are unregistered and likely to undertake the complicated application procedures required to secure certificates of hygiene (Public Health Office, 2023).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, street vendors were first and foremost described by Satpol PP as a threat to public health, and their hygiene was a matter of serious import for Satpol PP. In March of 2020, Budi Salamun, the head of the Satpol PP office for the subdistrict of Tanah Abang, was quoted in an article by Indonesian newspaper *Jawa Pos* saying that street vendors who continued to operate during the pandemic were "reckless" (I. nekat). Street vending was unclean and could "excite a crowd," which would cause the COVID-19 virus to spread, he said (Jawapos, 2020). A similar claim was captured in a June 2021 video containing statements from the head of Satpol PP for the district of Bogor, Agus Ridhallan. In the video, Ridhallan stands in front of group of street food vendors and reads a prepared statement to the camera, saying that

"this area has the potential to create a cluster of COVID-19 cases" because "people don't follow health protocols" (Ayuningtas, 2021).

The idea that vendors are unhygienic appears to be tied in to understandings of vendors as disruptive and needing to be ordered. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Satpol PP represented street vendors as threatening public order and smooth traffic flows. Ensuring smooth traffic flows is a priority for Satpol PP. It is also a priority for other bodies in Indonesia's security apparatus, such as the Police Force of Indonesia (Kepolisan Negara Indonesia (Polri)). The third item of POLRI's mission statement after detecting crimes and protecting the public is "maintaining the orderliness of traffic" (POLRI, n.d.). In an interview published in Pelita Banten, Al Fachry describes street vendors who fail to follow legislation and disrupt traffic as "reckless" (I. nekat) (Pelitabanten, 2019). This is the same term used by Budi Salamun in March of 2020 when he described street vendors who continued to vend during the pandemic (Jawapos, 2020). Street food vendors have been represented by the government and law enforcement as disruptive for decades. Under the New Order period's National Discipline Movement (I. Gerakan Disiplin Nasional) and other campaigns to "clean up" urban areas, street food vendors were represented as disrupting "the orderliness of the modern city"' (Barker 1999 [Malasan, 2019, 55]).

Figure 9. Ayuningtas. 2021. *Video clip of vendors protesting as their stalls are dismantled* [Screen Shot]

Satpol PP representatives, who are cited as authorities more frequently than other government representatives or institutions, represent street vendors as a problem. Satpol PP representatives

showed limited concern for street food vending as a source of employment, and this concern was conditional on vendors following strict guidelines. Vendors were represented either as spreading the COVID-19 virus, or as disrupting traffic and public order. Chapter five discusses how representations of vendors as disruptive and unhygienic informed restrictions on street food vending during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Street vendors and the Association of Indonesian Street Vendors (APKLI)

As a representative of the Indonesian government, Satpol PP spoke of and to street vendors. The Association of Indonesian Street Vendors (I. Assosiasi Pedagang Kaki Lima Indonesia, APKLI) claims to speak *for* street vendors. This section explores how APKLI representatives represented street vendors, specifically kaki lima operators, during the COVID-19 pandemic. APKLI is a public organization that advocates for street vendors' rights. Commentary by APKLI representatives echoes the idea that street food vending is an important source of employment and that restrictions on street food vending impact street food vendors negatively.

Public organizations such as APKLI register with the Indonesian government and are formally regulated under Presidential Act/2013 concerning Public Organizations (I. Organisasi Masyarakatan (Ormas)).[32] The term "public organization" was chosen to describe APKLI instead of NGO or the Indonesian translation Ornop (Organisasi Non-Pemerintah), as NGO has been associated in Indonesia with foreign powers and "anti-government" sentiment.[33] While APKLI maintains a somewhat tense relationship with the government, it is officially registered with the state and is eligible for state funding. According to the updated 2013 Act concerning Public Organizations, all public organizations, including APKLI, are required to espouse the state's national ideology, Pancasila[34] (Presidential Act, 2013). However, public organizations are also

[32] "Ormas" are notably different from "GONGO" or "government-organized nongovernmental organizations," such as the women's organization PKK (Pemberdayaan dan Kesejahteraan Keluarga, Family Welfare Programme).
[33] In 1983 Professor Emil Salim, Minister for Population and Environment commented on the unfitness of the term NGO to refer to public organizations, especially as public organizations in Indonesia were eligible for financial support from the government. Public organizations initially embraced his ideas (Eldridge, 1996), though more recently, some groups have espoused the "anti-government" connotations of "NGO" and used this title enthusiastically (Antlöv et al, 2008).
[34] This is a reiteration of a 1985 New Order policy.Pancasila is widely understood to be the foundational ideology of Indonesia. It was laid out in the 1945 Indonesian constitution and consists of five (panca) principles (sila). These are: Belief in One God; Just and civilized humanity; The unity of Indonesia; Democracy guided by the inner wisdom

often associated with gang activity and/or political activism and are known for publicly supporting political candidates. APKLI supported conservative presidential candidate Subianto Prabowo in the 2014 presidential. The leader of APKLI's central office, Ali Mahsum, publicly denies this, despite making frequent comments to news outlets supporting Prabowo (Marhaenjati, 2014; Gibbens et al., 2017).

Large-scale public organizations like APKLI are active at the national as well as local level, with city and district-level branches required to register with their local Satpol PP office. All street vendors are encouraged to join APKLI through local branches, though Gibbens et al. (2017) suggests that few actually do. A list of local public organizations is available from district Satpol PP offices or Satpol PP websites. The information available on the Satpol PP website in South Tangerang was last updated in 2013 (Satpol PP Tangerang Selatan, 2013). This outdated list recognizes Desman Ariando as the head of APKLI for the City of South Tangerang. More recent articles published by news outlets during the pandemic suggest that Ariando continues to head APKLI in South Tangerang (Antara Banten, 2020). These local branches are overseen by a national office in Jakarta, where Ali Mahsum is acting leader.

According to Ali Mahsum, APKLI was created in the early 1990s in Yogyakarta. Among AKPLI's key accomplishments is Act 125/2012 concerning the Ordering and Empowering of Street Vendors. This Act was published following years of lobbying by APKLI representatives and was the first official legislation recognizing street vendors' role in the national economy. However, APKLI representatives have since expressed dissatisfaction with how Satpol PP has used the Act to justify unnecessary evictions of street vendors (Gema Pos, 2021). There is no home page, clear vision or mission statement available from APKLI or its local branches. However, the South Tangerang APKLI branch is frequently referenced by news outlets and has been active during the pandemic. A 2021 interview with Ali Mahsum uploaded to YouTube also outlines the goals and aspirations of APKLI (Gema Pos, 2021). Meanwhile, an outdated but thorough website for the Jakarta branch of APKLI includes a list of objectives and activities carried out by APKLI members until mid-2010. There is some evidence that vendors engage

in the unanimity arising out of deliberations among representatives; and, Social justice for all the people of Indonesia.

with APKLI and use their social media platforms to communicate with fellow street vendors. An unofficial Facebook page with the handle "Asosiasi Pedagang Kaki Lima Indonesia" and APKLI's logo as its profile picture is posted to several times a day with links to news stories on topics such as food price increases, Satpol PP activities, and other issues of concern to street vendors. However, the vast majority of posts appear to come from one member, and it is not clear what this member's affiliation with APKLI is (Facebook, 2022).

Where Satpol PP was interested in the problems vendors caused, APKLI discussed the problems vendors faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. In a virtual press conference in July 2021, the head of the APKLI office in Yogyakarta, Mohlas Madani, described the plight of street vendors in an interview later published to Antaranews. According to Madani, street vendors in his district were unable to make a profit, and in many cases operated at a deficit during the pandemic (Antara, 2021). In a separate interview, Muhar Rozi, the head of APKLI in the city of Bengkulu, suggested that street vending was the "sector most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic." Street vendors' incomes decreased, and many closed their businesses because of the pandemic (Noya, 2021).

Figure 10. Penabanten. 2021. *A photo taken on the occasion of a visit from APKLI's leader Ali Mahsum to the District of Tangerang's APKLI branch*

Food Security

APKLI serves street vendors generally and does not differentiate between food vendors and vendors of other goods and services. No mention was made to food vendors or their role in providing accessible food to the public in any of the APKLI representatives' public statements before or during the pandemic to the author's knowledge. However, APKLI does actively support vendors by providing food and other basic services to vendors free of charge. This is a reversal of the relationship described by scholars, where street food vendors provided the poor with food. Here, rather than feeding the poor, street food vendors are the poor being fed.

Figure 11. Noya. 2021. *APKLI representatives distribute aid to a street food vendor in a 2021 article on the COVID-19 pandemic*.

Employment

APKLI members represent street food vendors as essential to what they refer to broadly as "the people's/society's economy" (I. ekonomi, ekonomi masyarakat/kemasyarakatan). As productive

economic actors, street vendors contribute positively to Indonesia's economy. Before and during the pandemic, street vendors were described by APKLI representatives as "pillars of the economy" (I. pilar ekonomi). In a 2021 interview on the origins and aspirations of APKLI, Ali Mahsum identified APKLI's second major goal as convincing the Indonesian government that "street vendors can't be separated from the economic machine of Indonesia" (Gema Pos, 2021). In December 2020, the general secretary of APKLI, H. Lalu Winengan, described street vendors as one of the "pillars of the economy that can remain active in the middle of COVID-19" (SuaraNTB, 2020). The sentiment that street vendors were "pillars of the economy" and able to survive through difficult times remained key to APKLI officials' statements throughout the pandemic. In January 2022, as pandemic-related restrictions on the economy began to loosen, the newly appointed Head of Activities for APKLI, Hery Haryanto Azumi, announced that street vendors were returning to the streets. In his inaugural speech, he claimed that "the return of street vendors is a sign that the people and the economy are healing after two years of being impacted by the pandemic" (Rasheva, 2022).

According to APKLI, street vendors are inherently beneficial for Indonesia. They are economic actors with a mission and "human dignity" (I. martabat kemanusiaan) (Gema Pos, 2021). Scholars suggest that street food vending benefits the economy, but also argue that vending is a last resort option for employment. APKLI representatives focused on the benefits vendors brought to the economy, and suggested that it was a dignified option for employment. Representations by both scholars and APKLI differ notably from Satpol PP's stance on street food vendors and employment. Satpol PP representatives recognized that street food vendors contributed to the economy, but this contribution was conditional on vendors following strict rules.

Hygiene

While Satpol PP represented street vendors as a threat to public health during the pandemic, APKLI represented vendors as key players in the fight against the virus. APKLI did not comment on street vendor hygiene but discussed how street vendors were willing and excited to receive vaccinations and support government health protocols. For example, the head of APKLI in the City of Bengkulu, Muhar Rozi, recognized the potential risk posed by street food vendors,

who frequently interacted with members of the public. Street vendors "frequently come into contact with crowds," he said. Rozi claimed that the pandemic was the "shared responsibility of the government and the people, including us [street vendors], and we [the people] need to shoulder the responsibility together to reduce the burden." He went on to say that street vendors and APKLI cannot be lazy and need to work together to follow the government's advice and protect the community (Noya, 2021). Likewise, Jafrizal Sofyandi of APKLI in the province of Kepulauan Riau made his support for the government's vaccination program known in an August 2021 interview. Sofyandi suggested that street vendors were excited to "help the government slow the spread of the virus and help the economy recover" (Kepripedia, 2021).

This is in stark contrast to statements from Satpol PP and scholars, who suggested that vendors spread the virus. To be clear, APKLI was not arguing that vendors did not spread the virus. They recognized that vendors interacted with the public and could potentially contribute to spreading the virus, but APKLI representatives focused on the idea that vendors supported the fight against the virus rather than on whether vendors were exposed to and spread the virus (Kepripedia, 20201). "Just because it's the pandemic, it doesn't mean selling activities can stop," APKLI representations from Palembang reflected. For this reason vendors were working with the government to reduce the risk of street food vending activities (Fornews, 2021). APKLI, Satpol PP and scholars may not disagree on whether vendors spread the virus, but they framed vendors' response to this challenge differently.

Figure 12. Kepripedia. 2021. APKLI kepri dukung pemerintah tekan penyebaran virus corona [APKLI supports the government against the spread of Covid-19]

Restrictions

APKLI argues that restrictions on street food vending are enforced arbitrarily, and the state does not recognize the value street vendors provide. Among APKLI's core aims is "uplifting the human dignity of vendors." Ali Mahsum claims that before APKLI's advocacy activities, the government thought of street vendors as "the garbage of development" (I. sampah pembangunan) (Gema Pos, 2021). According to Mahsum, the government considered street food vendors backward and uncivil, something left behind by a modernizing Indonesia. This resulted in state programs that did not recognize vendors' humanity and took away their right to vend in public space. In 2017 the head of APKLI for the City of South Tangerang, Desman Ariando, called out Satpol PP officers for unfairly evicting vendors from space to which they had a legal right. He claimed that Satpol PP was not following Regional Act 8/2014 and failed to clarify zoning restrictions for street vendors (Bentatangsel, 2017). Representatives of the Tangerang city branch of APKLI made similar comments the following year (Portrettangerang, 2018). APKLI's

campaign against street vendor evictions led to the popular APKLI endorsed slogan "Empowerment, yes. Eviction, no." (I. Pemberdayaan, yes. Pengusuran, no.). This slogan appeared on APKLI's social media accounts, and APKLI officials were quoted in news media using the phrase. Notably, APKLI used the word "pengusuran" (Eng. Eviction) to describe Satpol PP's actions against vendors, while Satpol PP used the term "penertiban" (Eng. Ordering).

According to Satpol PP and the Indonesian state, street vendors were disruptive and spread the COVID-19 virus. APKLI, on the other hand, suggests that street food vendors are not disruptive and that their hygiene is, if not good, then not particularly problematic. Instead, the organization argues that the Indonesian government, and Satpol PP in particular, disrupt street food vendors with unfair restrictions. This keeps vendors from effectively carrying out their role as "pillars of the economy".

Street Vendors, FAO and the UN

Organizations involved with street vending in Indonesia also exist beyond Indonesian borders. In particular, various UN agencies sponsor initiatives around street food vending. While UN agencies are not as closely tied to *Indonesian* street vendors as Satpol PP and APKLI, they play a key role in representing street vendors in Indonesia and elsewhere to a broader international audience. This section explores representations of street vendors by three UN agencies. The first is the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), which reflects the UN's stance on street *food* vendors. The other two organizations, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and World Health Organization (WHO), are also involved in monitoring, advocacy and support activities involving street vendors. Each agency has a unique history, but they all developed alongside the UN and share the UN's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which replaced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015.

The UN's programming and outputs influenced much of the language used to discuss street vendors in academic literature today. For example, the term "informal economy" was coined by Keith Hart in 1973 during ILO-funded work on unemployment in Ghana (Hart, 1973). This term describes unrecorded employment activities and is frequently used to discuss street food vendors,

who often operate without formal registration. More recently, this term has been criticized for being overly dualistic and failing to recognize the overlap between activities in formal and informal economies (Transberg-Hansen, 2013). However, it is still used by UN agencies including the ILO and is widely applied by scholars working in development (see, for example, Crush and Frayne, 2017). "Food security" was also created by a newly established FAO in 1945 (Shaw, 2007). This term frequently appears in publications by FAO and other UN agencies (Alimi, 2016; Crush and Young, 2019). It has also received criticism for being too vague and lacking a clear definition, but continues to be used widely (see Lassa, 2005; Jones et al. 2013). There is significant overlap between scholars writing on street vending independently and those contributing to UN publications. Several scholars referenced in oft-cited academic literature on street vending, including Nirathon (2006; Yasmeen and Nirtathon, 2014)) and Kusakabe (2006, 2010), have also collaborated with the ILO, for example. This suggests that UN agencies may contribute directly to discourse on street vending utilized by established and otherwise independent scholars in ways that Indonesian organizations do not.

FAO is the specialized agency of the United Nations most closely associated with food and food security. The organization aims to "achieve food security for all and make sure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives" (FAO, 2022b). Like the Indonesian government, the agency prioritizes food production (agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, etc.), over food retail. Of the agency's five "flagship publications,"[35] three focus exclusively on food production, and the remaining two mention food retailing only briefly and street food vendors not at all. However, the scale of the agency is such that it also sponsors some of the most comprehensive international initiatives around street food such as the *Food for the Cities* initiative, which saw the most activity in the late 2000s and early 2010s.

[35] These flagship publications are: The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA) (https://www.fao.org/publications/sofia/en/), The State of the World's Forests (SOFO) (https://www.fao.org/publications/sofo/en/), The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) (https://www.fao.org/publications/sofa), The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) (https://www.fao.org/publications/sofi), and The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets (SOCO) (https://www.fao.org/publications/soco/en/).

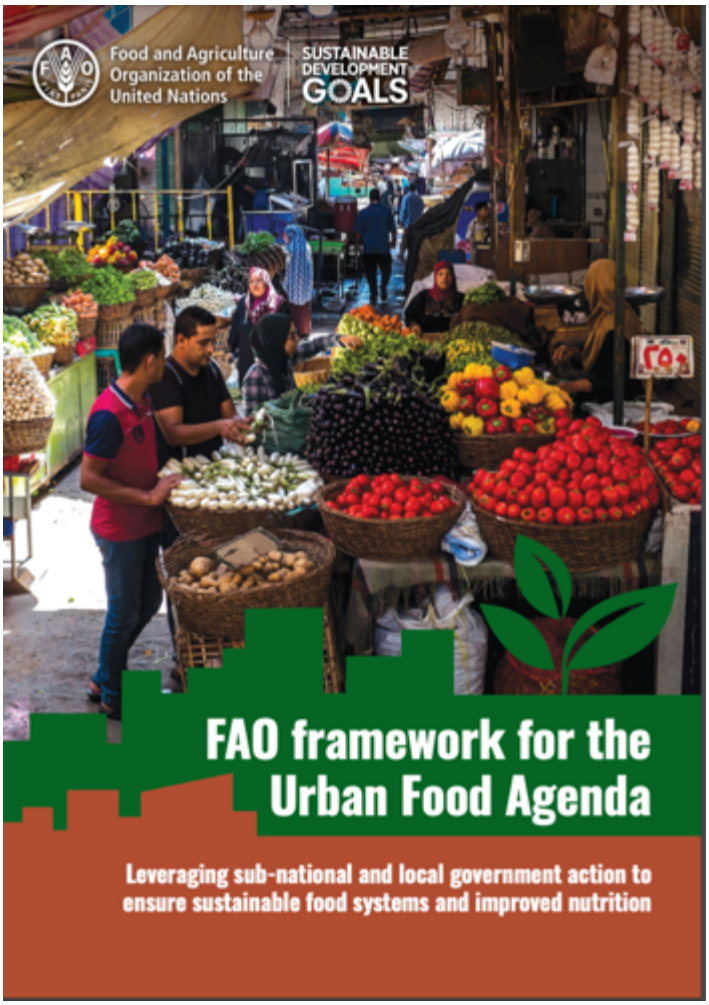

Figure 13. FAO. 2019a. *Cover of FAO* Framework for the Urban Food Agenda

Figure 14. FAO. 2019a. *Page 7 of FAO* Framework for the Urban Food Agenda.

The WHO is a UN agency tasked with improving health and preventing disease. It operates nutrition and safe food initiatives, including street food programming. The WHO produces publications on street food, mainly through the joint WHO-FAO Codex Alimentarius program. This programme establishes food safety standards for actors "across the value chain", including safety standards for street-vended foods (Codex, 2017). The WHO regional office in Europe also sponsors a project titled *FEEDCities,* which supports affordable street food initiatives including through street vended food in urban areas in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. However, the program does not operate in Southeast Asia (WHO, 2017). ILO is the UN agency tasked with monitoring and promoting employment standards. ILO projects in the 2000s and mid-2010s suggested that street food vending was an important source of employment, but the organization has since published rather little on this topic (ILO, 2010).

Food Security

The FAO defines street food as "ready-to-eat foods and beverages prepared and/or sold by vendors and hawkers especially in streets and other similar public places" (FAO, 1990, 2022). Street food was a key issue in FAO's *Food for the Cities* initiative. However, FAO has stepped back somewhat from projects around street food vending in the last decade, with the 2019 *Framework for the Urban Food Agenda* mentioning street food vendors very rarely (FAO, 2019a). Interestingly however, street and/or market food vendors appear in nearly every photo accompanying the agenda. Images of street food vendors also appear frequently in FAO's annual flagship publication, *The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets,* and on the organization's webpage. Though they are often relegated to an unqualified place in larger "food systems"[36] and do not receive direct attention, the pervasive presence of street food vendors as a visual symbol of urban food and food security in FAO publications suggests that the organization recognizes a close link between street food vendors and FAO's mandate of achieving global food security.

[36] The "food system" is another term popularized by the FAO. It refers to all "food products" and the "societal and natural environments in which these diverse production systems are embedded" as well as activities involved in the "flow of goods through the different stages of the core value chain" (FAO, 2019a). The term can be used to study everything from agriculture to food marketing and retailing.

While the FAO doesn't necessarily foreground street food vendors in their work on urban food security, when they do mention street food vendors, they are unequivocally linked to food security. In a set of technical guidance notes on urban food systems, nutrition and healthy diets from 2019, the FAO describes food retailers, including street food vendors and food service outlets, as "essential actors" (FAO, 2019b). Similar comments were made earlier in FAO training documents for food vendors, including a 2009 training document on good hygiene practices in Africa. The introduction of this document begins by claiming that street food vendors are "essential for providing poor consumers with access to cheap food" (FAO, 2009). FAO's *Food for the Cities* program included detailed information about food vendors on their website and in program reports. In an infographic on street food vending and hygiene, street food vendors are described as providing "a source of inexpensive, convenient and in some cases nutritious meals" (FAO, 2022a). If vendors are properly trained and the quality of their food assured, they can "provide adequate and inexpensive nourishment for many urban inhabitants" (FAO, 2022d). Compare this to Indonesian food security legislation, where street food vendors (and other urban retailers) are not considered "actors in food businesses", let alone "essential" actors (Regional Act, 2019a).

WHO and ILO likewise acknowledge that street food vendors provide accessible food to low-income consumers. A joint FAO/WHO 2017 document titled *Regional code of hygienic practice for street-vended foods in Asia* suggested that "street-vended foods are appreciated not only for their wide variety, unique taste, [and] easy availability but also for food security for the low cost" (Codex, 2017, 2). Documents published under WHO's urban food program *FEEDCities* state that street food "represents a large proportion of out-of-home food consumption and is an important source of inexpensive food" (WHO, 2017, 1). A 2019 document likewise indicates that "street food provides a very accessible and inexpensive dietary source for millions of consumers" (WHO, 2019, 1).

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is understandably more concerned with street vending's role in employment than food security. However, the organization does acknowledge street vendors as important for facilitating the distribution of goods and services, with occasional references made to food in particular. For example, in the organization's 2006 report on *Policy*

issues in street vending published by the ILO, the authors suggest that street vendors play an important role "in service provision—providing cheap food for the urban poor population and improving market access in residential areas" (Kusakabe, 2006, 8).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, street food vendors were again closely linked to food security. By April 2020, FAO had published a report titled *Urban food systems and COVID-19* which discussed the impact of the pandemic on food access and availability (FAO, 2020). In this report, the FAO suggested that disruptions to street food vending would be detrimental for the households that relied on vendors for their meals. The FAO explained that "poor urban residents can only afford to buy food in small quantities", and this food is generally sourced from street food vendors (FAO, 2020, 1). In a 2022 publication from FAO titled *COVID-19 pandemic impacts on Asia and the Pacific,* the organization claimed that street vendors played a "critical role" in "food distribution and marketing" (FAO, 2022b, 66). A 2021 ILO document on *Prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 in the informal economy* indicates that "many street and market vendors are engaged in informal food markets that play an essential role in ensuring food security in many countries" (ILO, 2021, 8).

Neither the Indonesian government nor APKLI mentioned street vendors and their relationship with food distribution and access. While the Indonesian government does represent "food security" as a major priority, they leave street vendors out of food policy. The above UN agencies, however, represent street food vendors as an important source of food for consumers, and their statements echo claims made by scholars discussed in the literature review.

Employment

UN agencies also frequently comment on street food vendors' role in improving the economy and providing employment for the poor. The International Labour Organization (ILO), in particular, promotes this idea. An example of this can be found in the ILO's 2006 campaign exploring street food vendors and their ability to employ the poor. Kusakabe (2006) suggests that street food vending "can be a sponge that absorbs large numbers of surplus labour." Street food vendors have positive affects "on poverty, employment, entrepreneurship, [and] social mobility"

(Kusakabe, 2006, 3). Since its 2006 campaign, the ILO has not published any major reports on street food vending. However, when mentioned, street food vendors and "the informal economy" more broadly are understood to play an important role in employment creation. For example, in 2012 briefings on poverty and employment opportunities for youth in the Philippines, the ILO suggests that street food vending is an important source of employment for the young (ILO, 2012). ILO projects have also explored regulatory frameworks around informal employment and suggest that street vendors and other informal workers are "essential to the economy" (ILO, 2013).

The idea that street food vending is important for the economy and employment was also repeated frequently during the COVID-19 pandemic by the ILO and other UN agencies. In a 2020 report on employment in the Philippines during the pandemic, the ILO suggested that street food vendors would be among the groups most affected by the pandemic. This was disastrous for the vendors who relied on street food vending for an income (ILO, 2020). A 2020 FAO brief on *Urban food systems and COVID-19,* also claimed that millions of people relied on "employment in the food retailing industry," and the COVID-19 pandemic would impact these individuals significantly (FAO, 2020). In a brief on employment and the informal sector, the FAO also suggested that the COVID-19 pandemic would have "significant impacts in terms of unemployment and underemployment for informal workers," including food retailers (FAO, 2020, 1). However, UN agencies also suggest that vendors have low education levels, describing them as "often poor and uneducated" (WHO, 1996, 2), and having "poor literacy and skills (FAO, 2023b).

Like APKLI and scholars writing on street food vending, UN agencies, and the ILO in particular, represent street food vendors as contributing positively to employment and the economy. While the ILO focuses on this topic, organizations like the FAO also repeat this assumption (FAO, 2020).

Hygiene

In many of FAO's publications, street vendors are represented as a major public health challenge. In particular, street food vendors are represented as practicing poor food hygiene and

spreading foodborne illnesses. This stance can be traced back as far as 1988 with a report on FAO's first "Expert Consultation" on street foods held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. In this report, unruly and unhygienic street food vendors were described as obstacles to "modernization plans" in developing countries in Asia (FAO, 1990). FAO's *Food for the Cities* initiative, represents food vendors as bad for city order and cleanliness, echoing the arguments put forward by Satpol PP and the Indonesian government (FAO, 2022d). A *Food for the Cities* factsheet on *Ensuring the Quality and Safety of Street Food* claims that most vendors are "untrained in hygiene practices" and operate in unsanitary environments (FAO, 2013c). In early commentary on street food vendors, the WHO also independently recognized the "potential for microbiological and chemical contamination in street food vending" (WHO, 1996, 1). Meanwhile, recent documents for FAO and WHO's joint Codex Alimentarius program suggest that "every street food vendor, helper or food handler should undergo basic food hygiene training", as most vendors do not generally practice good food hygiene (Codex, 2017, 7).

During the pandemic, FAO didn't represent street food vendors as the major threat to public health that Satpol PP did. However, FAO representatives were cautious of street vendors. In briefs published immediately following the announcement of COVID-19 as a global pandemic, FAO suggested that street and market vendors could be "a medium through which the virus spread" (FAO, 2020).

Restrictions

While UN agencies did advocate for some caution and control of vendors during the pandemic, they also suggested that restrictions on street food vendors would impact vendors negatively. The issue of state-imposed restrictions on vendors occupied a rather minor place in UN agencies' policies until the COVID-19 pandemic, when it resurfaced as a serious issue in need of remediation. Prior to the pandemic, comments on state-imposed restrictions included complaints that governments frequently employed "a rigid approach [to regulate vendor hygiene] based on repression" (FAO, 2009, 1). An even earlier ILO publication suggested that, as street food vendors "are seen [by governments] to occupy 'public' land and disturb order in 'public spaces'" they are often restricted unfairly (Kusakabe, 2006, 32). These ideas were not often repeated again until the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, in FAO's 2020 brief on the COVID-19 pandemic, the agency announced that the restrictions on street food vending associated with the pandemic was "disrupting urban food systems worldwide" (FAO, 2020, 1). For households relying on activities in the food system for employment, including street food vendors, "policies to limit the effects of the virus such as lockdowns, or physical distancing [could] spell disaster." Moreover, "efforts to reduce the activities of small food outlets or open markets for public health reasons compromise people's capacity to buy food" (FAO, 2020, 1). In a 2022 publication from FAO titled *COVID-19 pandemic impacts on Asia and the Pacific,* the organization claimed that "COVID-19 restrictions undermin[ed] the critical role played by street vendors and street stalls involved in food distribution and marketing" (FAO, 2022b, 66). Disruptions to street food vendors caused by the pandemic were presumed to negatively impact the poor's ability to access food. This is in line with the commentary by scholars discussed in the literature review. It is also more closely related to APKLI's stance on state involvement with street vendors, namely that restrictions on street vending are arbitrary and disruptive.

Discussion

While each organization analyzed represented street vendors differently during the pandemic, they all touched on at least one of the four themes explored in this thesis. Before and during the pandemic, FAO and other UN agencies represented street vendors as contributing to improved food access for low-income consumers. UN agencies, and to a lesser extent Satpol PP, also recognized the role street vending played in employment creation. Meanwhile, according to APKLI, street vendors served the economy and supported the government's efforts to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Both Satpol PP and the UN agencies represented street vendors as threatening public health through poor hygiene and disruptive behavior.

Interestingly, all four of the major themes appearing in academic literature on street food vendors discussed in this thesis also appeared in commentary by UN agencies, while each Indonesian organization reflected only one or two of these themes. In particular, the assumption that street food vendors play an important role in providing accessible food to low-income consumers did not appear in documents or commentary by either Indonesian organization.

The following chapter will explore how street food vendors understood their experiences, needs and challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic. In particular, it will examine how vendors' understandings of their experiences compared to those of organizations discussed above and scholars discussed in chapter two.

Chapter 5: Street food vendors and the COVID-19 pandemic

To review briefly, this thesis addresses three main sets of questions. First, *how did scholars and pertinent organizations represent street food vendors and their needs and challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic? Second, how did street food vendors understand their own experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic?* What major challenges did they face and what did they need to overcome these challenges? *Finally, what are the regularities and disjunctures between these two sets of representations—namely, those of scholars and organizations on the one hand and of the vendors themselves on the other?* And, finally, in light of this line of questioning, what consequences follow for positive intervention? How might we improve on existing programs by attending to vendors' self-understandings?

This chapter will answer the second and third set of these questions by drawing on interviews with street food vendors and exploring how interview results compare to representations of vendors by relevant scholars and organizations. As discussed in chapter three, 39 interviews were conducted with street food vendors in South Tangerang, Indonesia and ranged in length from a few minutes to close to an hour. This chapter is particularly interested in how vendors interviewed represented their experiences in relation to food security, employment and the economy, hygiene, and restrictions on street food vending.

This research found that street food vendors understood themselves and their needs and challenges in varied ways. Their self-understandings often did not conform to understandings of street food vendors held by scholars or organizations who represented themselves as working with, and on behalf of, street vendors. Rather, vendors only commented briefly on topics that scholars and organizations considered important for vendors. Vendors comments also frequently reflected different understandings of street food vending than those expressed by pertinent scholars and organizations. It follows that interventions in street food vending by organizations discussed in this research were frequently informed by understanding of street food vendors not shared by vendors. This chapter suggests that representations of vendors discussed in chapter four, informed interventions in street food vending that vendors may view as irrelevant or even harmful.

Street Food Vendors During the Pandemic

There appears to be a significant degree of consensus among scholars and organizations that the COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected street food vendors in Indonesia and beyond. An early summary of media reports in Indonesia suggested that street vendors lost a major source of their income following the pandemic and the resulting reduction in consumer buying power (Ikhsan and Virananda, 2021). This was later corroborated by Nasution et al. (2021) in a study of street food vendors in Surabaya during the pandemic. In studies conducted in Thailand, Vietnam and Laos, scholars observed that street vendors' incomes had decreased drastically and that many street food vending operations had gone out of business (Gaterak et al, 2020; Pham et al., 2021; Tuner et al., 2021). Scholars working elsewhere in the world made similar observations (see Arsene et al., 2021; Guha et al., 2021).

Organizations involved with street food vendors in Indonesia likewise observed that vendors were impacted negatively by the pandemic. APKLI representatives suggested that street vending was the "sector most impacted" by the pandemic (Noya, 2021). They claimed that vendors could not make a profit and, in many cases, operated at a deficit (Antara, 2021). UN agencies, most notably the FAO, argued that COVID-19 disrupted "urban food systems" and "undermined the critical role street vendors played" (FAO, 2020, 2022a). Among the organizations surveyed, only Satpol PP did not appear to comment publicly on the pandemic's adverse effects on street vendors.

The following sections suggest that vendors understood their experiences of the pandemic in varied ways that frequently differed from accounts provided by scholars and organizations. However, the vast majority of vendors agree that the pandemic had a drastic impact on street food vendors. One of the first vendors interviewed for this project, Pak Hadi, was taking his lunch break with two friends when research assistants for this project asked if he had a few minutes to speak about the impact of the pandemic on his business. Pak Hadi was 38 and had been vending traditional cakes on the side of the road for over a decade. He proudly informed the research assistants that his cake recipe had been passed down from his parents. The research

assistants began by asking Pak Hadi some basic demographic questions, which he answered politely. When asked about the profit he made selling cakes, he became animated. "Profit, well, that's hard to determine, miss," he said, shaking his head:

> The thing is, during the pandemic season, you know, sometimes having enough to eat is already something to be grateful for. I'm grateful if I can feed my children and wife. [...] During the pandemic, I only sold half as many cakes as usual, you know (Respondent 3).

One of Pak Hadi's friends, who also sold traditional cakes in the area, nodded along and added that he, too, suffered during the pandemic. The friend explained that he was behind on his children's school tuition payments and did not think he would be able to pay off his debt. All three friends said their income had decreased by at least fifty percent since the beginning of the pandemic (Respondent 3, 4, 5).

Bu Dewi sold chicken porridge nearby. She was 28 and had some post-secondary education. Bu Dewi had a sense of humour. When asked about her family history, she laughed and said her family was Muslim on their KTP (identity card) only.[37] She also giggled when asked about her work schedule. "I get tired in the evening," she laughed. "I don't sell anything after 7 pm." When describing her experience of the Covid-19 pandemic, she grew more sombre:

> I would just open, wait, during the pandemic, one, sometimes one person would come. […] I would purchase my food and wait, but the people just weren't there (Respondent 31).[38]

All except five of the 39 vendors interviewed reported that their income decreased during the pandemic. Of those who did not report a decrease in income, one reported an increase in income,

[37] Indonesian citizens are required to indicate on their KTP (Katu Tanda Penduduk) (Eng. Identity Card) which of the six officially recognized religions they follow: Islam, Christian, Catholic, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism.
[38] Vendors like Bu Dewi continued to pay for inventory as long as they remained open. Both Pak Hadi and Bu Dewi reported that they decreased the amount of ingredients they purchased, and Bu Dewi said she stopped selling breakfast and focused on lunch and dinner, the more popular meals (Respondent 3, 31). Other vendors similarly reported decreasing the amount of ingredients they purchased (Respondent 26, 35), but their food still went bad before they could sell out.

one reported no change, and three vendors were new to working as street food vendors and had no reference point. Vendors reported that their income decreased by between 30% and 90%, with the majority reporting decreases ranging from 30% to 50% of pre-pandemic income levels.[39]

Food Security

Scholarship on street food vending suggests a link between street food vendors and food security. While not all scholars used the term food security in their work, they frequently acknowledged that street food vendors provided affordable food in convenient locations. This was acknowledged during the pandemic by scholars working in Southeast Asia (see, for example, Pham et al., 2021; Turner et al., 2021). Previous scholarship in Indonesia and by Indonesian authors has also suggested that street food vendors sell affordable food to low-income consumers (see Minot et al., 2015; Malasan, 2019).

The FAO claimed that the pandemic could "spell disaster" for poor urban residents who relied on street food vendors. According to the organization, street food vendors "provide adequate and inexpensive nourishment for many urban inhabitants" and play an important role in maintaining urban food security (FAO, 2022a, 1). Both scholars and UN agencies expressed serious concern, suggesting that it would be difficult for vendors' customers to access food. APKLI and Satpol PP, however, did not suggest that street food vendors were important for distributing food to low-income households. Rather, they represented street food vendors as beneficiaries of food aid. These organizations appeared to suggest that street food vendors were fed by the state and public organizations. They did not represent vendors as feeding the public, as UN agencies claimed.

Street food vendors understood their relationship with food security and their customers in less explicit terms than either scholars or organizations. Bu Diann, who we heard from in the

[39] These numbers are based on vendors' self-reporting and are not independently verified. Reporting standards were also not consistent. Some vendors reported profit, while others reported total earnings over periods from daily to monthly. Other vendors were only vaguely aware of their income, as they either did not measure it regularly, or someone else, usually a wife or child, handled the money (Respondent 27, 30). Vendors typically reported the impact of the pandemic on their business as a ballpark figure—"profit decreased by about 30%," "I earned around 50% less," etc.—and these estimates were not confirmed through a review of sales or other documentation.

introduction to this thesis, had just put down her crying infant when one of this project's research assistants began a conversation with her. Bu Diann was 24 and had chosen to start selling vegetables from a warung when she was 20. As a vendor, she was able to bring her children to work while she helped support her immediate family of seven. Despite the hardships she faced during the pandemic, which saw her income cut in half, she recognized that her customers were suffering as well. Bu Diann explained that during the pandemic:

> income was small, and getting a bit of money was tough. People buying [from me] were also in debt. Before the pandemic, regular people's interest in buying vegetables was greater […] after the pandemic women/mothers are saving on expenses like shopping at vegetable sellers, and only getting the vegetables and spices they need and nothing else.

Bu Diann was one of the few vendors who continued to offer sales on credit to her regular customers during the pandemic. She explained that her customers:

> probably just don't have the money [to pay me back], what with conditions like this. I know they won't pay me back, but I sell to them on credit anyway. We help each other (Respondent, 37).[40]

Vendors like Bu Diann agreed that the pandemic had negatively impacted customers' ability to purchase food. However, at no point did she suggest that she was unable to provide her customers with food. Vendors like Pak Hadi, Bu Dewi, and Bu Diann all assured the research assistants that they continued to sell during the pandemic, largely at the same prices and in the same locations.[41] Pak Hadi explained that he continued to offer cakes in his usual spot, but his customers never came (Respondent 3). Bu Dewi spoke of "waiting" whole days for sometimes one customer to stop at her stall (Respondent 31). Bu Diann's vegetables were still available, only her customers struggled to afford vegetables or pay off their debts. Several vendors

[40] Other vendors also reported that fewer customers were able to pay off the debts they'd accumulated, but only one other vendor continued to offer sales on credit (Respondent 35, 38, 39).While the elimination of sales on credit has been a gradual process described elsewhere in Indonesia (Reuter, 2018), for some of the vendors interviewed, the COVID-19 pandemic triggered the end of sales on credit (Respondent 38, 39).

[41] While, as will be discussed shortly, some state-imposed health restrictions impacted some vendors negatively, this did not stop most vendors from serving food in their usual locations at their usual prices.

observed that their customers "rarely went out" (Respondent 1, 16, 25), or suggested that people were "afraid" to be outside (Respondent 16, 23-26, 29). Mas Agus, a young vendor selling fried chicken, explained, "people just didn't want to meet with us" because no one wanted to catch COVID. "They're afraid, of course" (Respondent 23). Pak Ari, who also sold fried chicken from a stand near an office building, suggested that some customers were "mistakenly suspicious" of vendors, believing unfairly that vendors spread the COVID-19 virus. He wanted his customers to "see that they have nothing to worry about, and buy from me again" (Respondent 29).[42] Street food vendors interviewed did not represent themselves as playing an essential role in promoting customers' "food security" or helping them access food. Rather, vendors suggested that they relied on their customers, and were negatively impacted by customers' reduced spending behavior. When asked directly, Bu Diann was one of many vendors who did not know what food security (I. ketahanan pangan) was, let alone believe that street food vendors helped promote food security among low-income consumers (Respondent 15, 21, 23-26, 31-33). By offering to sell food on credit, Bu Diann explained that she was acting out of a personal desire to help her community—one that was not shared by other vendors interviewed, who no longer offered sales on credit.

Compare vendors statements with comments made by scholars writing during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as Duong and Thanh (2022), who believed that street food vendors play an important role in "allowing residents access to essential items during a global crisis, especially with regard to food provisioning" (499). UN agencies likewise, suggested that many street food vendors "play an essential role in ensuring food security in many countries," and due to restrictions on street food vending during the pandemic "food insecurity and poverty will increase" among vendors' customers (ILO, 2021, 8). On this basis, UN agencies supported various programs to promote street food vendors and educate governments on the important role street food vendors play in improving food security. FAO's 2019 *Framework for the Urban Food Agenda* advises governments on procedures for monitoring and controlling urban food systems to help improve food security for vendors and their customers. FAO "provide[s] national

[42] The idea that customers were avoiding street food vendors out of fear or suspicion was supported by the World Bank's household monitoring report, which suggested that consumers of all income levels in Indonesia were more afraid of getting sick than losing their employment or paying for food for at least the first several months of the pandemic (Purnamasari & Ali, 2020).

and particularly local decision makers with a holistic understanding of how food systems work" through conferences and forums, as well as training material to inform government engagement with food vendors (FAO, 2019, 24). In Indonesia, the FAO also sponsors nutrition days, meant to raise awareness about the nutritional quality of street-vended foods among ministry representatives and public organizations, and encourage ministry to work with street food vendors to improve local food security (FAO, 2023).

These interventions were designed to assist governments working with vendors and educate them on the "role vendors play in maintaining food security" (FAO, 2019, 24). They were informed by an understanding of street food vendors and their relationship with customers that vendors themselves did not appear to share. The question here is not whether street food vendors help customers access food. Projects around the world suggest a strong link between accessible food in urban areas and street food vendors (see, for example, Minot et al., 2015; Crush and Frayne, 2019), and programs supporting vendors on this basis may benefit vendors and their customers in Indonesia and elsewhere. However, this research suggests that—from the perspective of street food vendors themselves—vendors relied on their customers and not the other way around. These different representations are not incompatible, but they do highlight different ways of understanding vendors and their relationship with food security. This disjuncture raises questions about the most effective course of action to effectively address the needs of vendors and their customers as they relate to food security. What are the consequences of programs built on understandings of vendors and their activities that are not shared by vendors? Is it possible to take into account vendors' self-understandings while simultaneously acknowledging the contributions of expert commentary and celebrating the relationship between vendors and food security? Having highlighted the disjuncture between representations, further research could explore the consequences of this disjuncture and methods for engaging with vendors more meaningfully while respecting and nuancing expert commentary.

Employment

Scholarship on street food vending suggests that street food vending is an important "source of employment" and is good for economies. Scholars writing in Southeast Asia during the COVID-

19 pandemic referenced this frequently (see Gaterak et al., 2021, Duong & Thanh, 2022), while Indonesian authors suggested that street food vending is believed to "provide employment opportunities" (Nasution et al., 2021, 144). Scholars also understood street food vending as a low-barrier employment opportunity through which low-income households could earn a living.

Satpol PP, generally concerned with controlling, not promoting, street vendors, recognized that street vendors have a right to earn a living selling in the streets and can contribute positively to the economy. However, this right was represented as largely conditional, with street food vendors only allowed to operate in public space if they followed certain rules. APKLI representatives described vendors as "pillars of the economy" and believed that street food vending was one of the few industries that continued to employ people during the pandemic. Early ILO publications referred to street vending as "a sponge for unemployment", and later UN documents suggested that street food vending employed the poor.

Some street food vendors readily acknowledged that street food vending was a beneficial source of income. In speaking of their work, Pak Hadi and Bu Dewi both exclaimed "thank god, my work helps meet my daily needs" (Respondent 3, 37). Bu Wanida, a middle aged mother of two, suggested that her work provided supplemental income that helped support her family (Respondent 25). Mas Agus, a young man with no children, suggested that his work helped support his parents (Respondent 23). Most vendors emphasized "meeting daily needs" and supporting families (Respondent 3, 16, 20, 23, 25, 31, 37).

In some ways, however, street food vendors' understanding of their experiences differed greatly from those of scholars and organizations discussed in this research. For example, street food vendors did not discuss their role in the "economy." Scholarship on street food vending has argued that vendors "are an integral part of the economy" (Bromley, 2000), while APKLI's leader Ali Mahsum suggested that "street food vendors can't be separated from the economic machine of Indonesia" (Gema Pos, 2021). Even the official Indonesian legislation regulating Satpol PP's engagement with street vendors recognizes that vendors "support economic development" (Regional Act, 2014, 1). The ways in which vendors represented their work in

conversations with research assistants were not tied to its relationship with the economy, while organizations built projects to promote vendors on this assumption.

In 2016, APKLI officials in the City of South Tangerang announced a financial credit program for street vendors. This program aimed to "stimulate the economy of all Indonesia" (Bentatangsel, 2016). At the inauguration of new APKLI officials in January 2022, the Bone district head of APKLI suggested that his main goal was to "promote the economy" by providing training and financial credit to street vendors (BoneBerita, 2022). Both the national and regional legislations concerning street vendors frequently referred to Satpol PP's duty to "empower" street vendors so they could effectively "support the economy". In Act 125/2012 activities to empower vendors included "counselling, training, and social leadership" and "leadership and technical skills" development (Act 125/2012, 6). There appears to be little publicly available evidence that Satpol PP does in fact carry out these activities. However, during the pandemic Satpol PP representatives frequently toured street food vending sites and offered "advice" to vendors. For example, in July of 2021, while emergency restrictions were in place, the head of Satpol PP for the city of Batu, Nur Adhim, explained that he "instructed his officers to patrol and monitor the conditions of street vendors." Officers informed vendors of new restrictions like early closures and ensured that they followed health protocols (Malang Times, 2021). These projects were all justified by claims that vendors promoted the economy and should therefor receive support.

The contrast between vendors' desire to "make ends meet" and APKLI and Satpol PP's goal of "supporting the economy" highlights different ways that vendors and organizations view vendors and their activities. Financial credit from APKLI and effective "training" from Satpol PP—if this does indeed exist—may simultaneously "support the economy" and help vendors "make ends meet". However, this is one example of how representations of vendors with which vendors do not necessarily agree are used to inform programs in street food vending. There are several, potentially more problematic, examples of how representations of vendors and their relationship to employment and the economy differ.

For example, scholars deliver sweeping claims like street food vending is vendors' "only source of livelihood" (Nasution et al., 2021, 6) and vendors lack "the formal education and skill necessary to secure 'modern' urban employment" (Turner et al., 2021, 484). Early publications from the WHO suggested that street food vendors were "often poor and uneducated" and had few other options for employment (WHO, 1996, 2). More recent UN sponsored programs refer to vendors as having "poor literacy and skills" (FAO, 2023). While street food vending is represented as a low-barrier-to-entry employment opportunity benefitting low-income households and uneducated vendors, many street food vendors chose to become vendors for personal reasons despite relatively high levels of education.

Bu Dewi, for instance, had some university-level education, and chose to operate a street food vending business because she was able to bring her children to work with her (Respondent 37). Another vendor, Mas Huddin had a post-secondary diploma in hospitality and decided to open his own jelly dessert business because he wanted to be creative with his work (Respondent 8). He left a job working in hotel restaurants shortly before the pandemic began to start his business. Mas Huddin's jelly business was called "Jelly Potter," and he themed his colourful deserts after spells in *Harry Potter* (Respondent 8). Street food vendors interviewed had relatively high levels of education. Two of the 39 vendors interviewed reported having some post-secondary education, and several others had attended middle school or high school equivalents.

Other vendors chose to operate street food vending establishments because of their history working in the industry. Pak Saladin, a 35 year-old South Tangerang native, opened his mobile meatball and soup business in 2020 during the pandemic. A research assistant was surprised to hear his business was new and exclaimed, "wow, but [your cart] is already so busy!" Pak Saladin explained that "people came quickly because [my food] is already so good." He later revealed that he worked with a grocery store before starting his business. When asked where he sourced his ingredients, he explained that he sourced from the same food markets his parents had sourced from when they sold meatballs.

> [My family members are] already regulars at the market. We've been regulars since my

parents sold meatballs. […]. My siblings, they all sell meatballs, too (Respondent 27).[43]

Another vendor who had recently opened a street food vending business had done so because he was taking over his older brother's cart (Respondent 1). Many other vendors who had recently (within the last 5 years) started their vending operations had previous experience working with siblings or older family members (Respondent 1, 3, 4, 18, 23, 27). Pak Hadi, for example, was proud of his family recipe, which had been passed down from his parents, who also sold cakes (Respondent 3).

Some scholarship on street food vending in Indonesia and elsewhere has reflected that street food vending is taken up by vendors of diverse backgrounds and for various reasons, such as caring for children or interest in the culinary industry (Newberry, 2006; Malasan, 2019). However, the idea that street food vending is a low-barrier to employment opportunity for uneducated vendors continues to appear in academic literature as well as some UN program documents. While perhaps not directly harmful, these assumptions neglect to take into account vendors' self-understandings, and perpetuate ideas about vendors that ignore the variety of legitimate reasons people take up street food vending.

This thesis is not arguing that vendors do not contribute to the economy or that lack of employment opportunities in other fields does not lead some individuals to seek out opportunities in street food vendors. It would be overly simplistic to suggest that street food vendors have a more accurate understanding of their role in the economy than scholars. It would also be unrealistic and perhaps overly romanticized to assume that all vendors chose to become street food vendors for purely personal reasons. However, further research could explore whether there are practical implications to vendors' suggestions that they do not contribute to the economy and take up street food vending for a variety of reasons. The assumption that street food vendors contribute to the economy, though not necessarily incorrect, is often repeated without evidence or nuance. This research could provide an opportunity to start from the

[43] As regulars vendors frequently have access to quantity and loyalty discounts.

beginning and explore if, rather than how, vendors contribute to the economy while making room for competing understandings of the relationship between vendors and the economy.

Hygiene

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about significant concerns relating to street food vendors' hygiene. An early review of hygiene and disease transmission in Indonesia by Purnama and Susanna (2020) suggested that street food vendors could spread the virus causing COVID-19. The association between street food vendors and poor hygiene is a long-standing one and is arguably the most common topic in scholarship on street food vending (Abrahale, 2019). Meanwhile, Satpol PP suggested that "reckless" street food vendors could transmit the COVID-19 virus if not properly controlled. UN agencies sided with Satpol PP and suggested that street food vendors practiced poor food hygiene and needed to be educated through FAO and WHO campaigns. APKLI instead argued that vendors supported the "fight" against COVID-19 by consenting to vaccination campaigns.

Street food vendors interviewed often had strong feelings about their food hygiene and how it should be addressed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Bu Wanida was a talkative mother of two who was happy to share community gossip with the project's research assistants. She sold chicken porridge and struggled significantly during the pandemic. She explained that some days during the worst of the pandemic, she didn't make any money at all. Her lack of sales, however, had nothing to do with her food hygiene. She explained that "preparing food for ourselves, we have to be clean, even more so for other people." She was adamant on this point, and said that she hadn't needed to change her hygiene practices during the pandemic because she already practiced very good hygiene (Respondent 25). Pak Ari explained that "as vendors, we need to keep our space clean", suggesting that this was common knowledge. His tone indicated that he found it offensive to suggest otherwise (Respondent 29).

During the pandemic, some vendors took food hygiene more seriously. Bu Siti was a mother of three operating a warung selling fresh vegetables on the side of the road with her husband. Prior to the pandemic she employed staff to help at the warung, but had stopped doing so during the

pandemic to reduce costs. When asked if she paid more attention to hygiene during the pandemic, she responded that she did. “Very much so,” she said:

> It’s important because COVID-19 poses a real threat. We can’t be lazy about this (Respondent 26).

She made sure people could wash their hands and always wore masks when they visited her stall (Respondent 26). Pak Ahmad and his wife, who sold traditional cakes, also assured interviewers that they paid “more attention to hygiene in [their] business” during the pandemic (Respondent 15). Another young male vendor acknowledged that “customers like the place clean” and endeavoured to provide a sanitary eating environment (Respondent 1). Many vendors reported that they washed their hands more often during the pandemic and wore masks, partially due to increased demands for hygiene by customers (Respondent 1, 2, 9, 15, 18, 19, 22-26, 38). Bu Wanida also proudly reported that “all vendors have been vaccinated,” even though many people in the community were nervous about vaccines (Respondent 25). While two of 39 vendors interviewed responded that they had not been vaccinated, the overwhelming majority reported having received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. This is significant, as interviews were conducted at a time when vaccination rates in Indonesia were still low. By October 2021 when interviews began, only around 22% of Indonesians had been fully vaccinated (The Associated Press, 2021).

Vendors interviewed suggested that they had strong food safety knowledge and some vendors adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic by improving their food hygiene practices. Other projects have reported similar findings. In their study of female food vendors in India during the COVID-19 pandemic, Guha et al. (2021) also claimed that, even without any prior training, vendors were very conscious of hygiene and viewed it as a requirement for operating street food vending businesses. Contrast this with comments from scholars, who suggested that street food vending establishments were “one of the main places of health and safety concerns” (Gaterak et al., 2021, 928), and “street food vendors with poor personal hygiene and inadequate food safety information could be the source of foodborne pathogens” (Latief & Abouelenein, 2020, 372). Similar claims were also made by Satpol PP representatives, who suggested that vendors “don’t

follow health protocols" (Ayuningtas, 2021), and the FAO, which suggested that there was a "gap between food safety standards and vendors' knowledge" (FAO, 2022a, 66).

Representations by Satpol PP depicting street food vendors as disruptive and unhygienic, discussed in chapter four, necessitated activities to bring "order" to vendors, including by evicting them from public space. In a video filmed in June 2021, the head of Satpol PP Bogor, Agus Ridhallan, reads a prepared statement to the camera explaining that over a hundred street vendors have been evicted to halt the spread of the COVID-19 virus (Ayuningtas, 2021). As he speaks, the video cuts to footage of Satpol PP officers dismantling kaki lima carts and warung stalls while an elderly man and a young woman holding a child protest. Evictions justified by claims that street vendors spread the virus and failed to follow hygiene requirements continued throughout the pandemic (Ari, 2021; Malang Times, 2021). As late as August of 2022, Satpol PP officers in Lampung Utara distributed letters to street vendors warning them to follow COVID-19-related health protocols or else their vending spaces would be dismantled (Radarkotabumi, 2022).

UN agencies likewise assume that vendors practice poor food hygiene. When established in 1983 the FAO/WHO expert committee on food safety decided that:

> the committee must: a) educate the persons involved; b) improve the environmental conditions in which trade is practiced; and c) provide the essential services to assist street food vendors in assuring the safety of their wares (WHO, 1996, 1).

Over two decades later a publication by the joint FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius repeats this notion in its last section where it states that "every street food vendor, helper or food handler should undergo basic food hygiene training". This training is designed to be provided by governments, and training material is meant to be accessible in the local language (Codex, 2017, 7). A recent example of training is a capacity building project which offered training and "food safety kits" to 600 vendors in Chandigrah, India (UN, 2023). The FAO also publishes informational texts on street food vendors and food hygiene to be shared with governments and

the public, such as a 2022 infographic titled *Food safety is everyone's business in street food vending* (WHO, 2022).

Street food vendors believed that they already practiced good food hygiene. However, representatives from Satpol PP and UN agencies suggested that vendors practiced poor hygiene and interventions such as eviction campaigns and hygiene programs were informed by this assumption. Street food vendors were not consulted, and based on interview results, did not believe they, or their customers, would benefit from these interventions. None of this is to say that street food vendors *do* have good food hygiene. The significant body of literature that suggests otherwise should not be discounted based solely on vendors' accounts (see, for example, Gasem et al., 2000; Omemu & Aderoju, 2008; Shadiee et al., 2017; Abrahale et al., 2019). However, it does suggest that street food vendors were reticent to acknowledge the possibility of hygiene problems, while scholars and organizations did so readily. At best, interview results suggest that street food vendors interviewed may have considered training on food hygiene irrelevant and evictions based on the threat vendors posed to public health unnecessary. Perhaps tellingly, program documents for recent UN "capacity building" activities in India that offered food safety kits and related training to street food vendors, reflect that constraints on the program included vendors' "reluctance to attend trainings". The program suggested that vendors were attracted to the program by "incentives" including free medical checkups, rather than a desire to undergo training (UN, 2023).

Instead of hygiene training, street food vendors wanted more customers, something Satpol PP and UN interventions in street food vending did not, and perhaps could not, address. Some street food vendors also suggested that customers were "mistakenly suspicious" of vendors, or that they were "afraid" of visiting street food vendors due to concerns that vendors spread the COVID-19 virus (Respondent 16, 23-26, 29). Customer surveys by Mei-soon et al. (2021) and Wachyung and Wiweka (2021) acknowledged that customers tried to avoid street food vendors because they were concerned about vendor hygiene during the pandemic. Street food vendors believed that customers' reticence to buy from them had a significant impact on their businesses. Satpol PP and UN agencies' participation in discourse on street food vending could have promoted the idea that vendors practiced poor hygiene, and as a result negatively impacted

vendors' businesses. Given that street food vendors do not view food hygiene as a major issue, are there other areas that scholars and organizations can focus their efforts that might better support vendors? Or, if we assume that vendors do practice poor hygiene and this needs to be rectified to improve public health, are there more effective ways to engage with vendors on questions of food hygiene? Further research would be needed to explore the implications of the disjuncture between different representations of street food vendors and their food hygiene.

Restrictions on street food vending

In an article published shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic began, Battersby (2020) discussed how South African street food vendors and their low-income consumers were targeted unfairly when the government ordered city-wide lockdowns. These lockdowns prohibited food vending anywhere other than at supermarkets and, Battersby argued, discriminated against street food vendors, many of whom were racialized immigrants. The author drew on decades of work showing that state restrictions on street food vending were a significant concern for vendors in South Africa (Battersby, 2016; Crush, 2011; Crush & Frayne, 2017; Skinner, 2008, 2015, 2016). Similar restrictions were commented on by authors around the world, including in Indonesia and several Southeast Asian countries (see Nasution et al. 2021, Gaterak et al., 2020; Pham et al., 2021; Turner et al., 2021, Duong & Thanh, 2022). These authors suggested that restrictions on street food vending negatively impacted vendors and made it difficult for them to earn a livelihood and feed their low-income customers.

It will be recalled that Satpol PP represented restrictions on street food vending as necessary to protect the public from street food vendors. APKLI, on the other hand, suggested that restrictions on street food vending were detrimental to street food vendors. UN agencies, likewise, argued that street food vendors and "urban food systems" were disrupted by state-imposed restrictions, which could "spell disaster" for street food vendors and their customers.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, restrictions on street food vending in Indonesia included curfews, hygiene requirements, social distancing measures, and mobility restrictions.[44] Some street food vendors did not accept these restrictions willingly or uncritically, and voiced their discontent with state-imposed restrictions on street food vending. However, while work-from-home orders and school closures appeared to affect their businesses significantly, restrictions that directly limited street food vending like restrictions on mobility and operating hours, affected vendors unevenly. For several vendors, these restrictions were described as serious challenges. However, other vendors reported that restrictions had little impact on their businesses.

Pak Ah Ching and his wife sold fried snacks from a cart on the side of the road. When asked about restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, Pak Ah Ching explained that mobility restrictions:

> really impacted us, they really did. […] There were fewer people [buying from us]. And we couldn't go into [housing] complexes. We couldn't go into complexes, and movement was really limited around the villages too (Respondent 16).

Every morning Pak Ah Ching would take his cart into housing complexes and set up for several hours at a time before moving on. During the worst of the pandemic, observation stations were set up in neighbourhoods. If COVID-19 cases in the neighbourhood passed a certain threshold, mobile vendors like Pak Ah Ching were not allowed in or out of the housing complexes without permission (Respondent 16). Another vendor reported that "early in the pandemic, complexes were closed and I couldn't enter" (Respondent 24). However, these experiences were only reported by two of 39 interviewees, despite all vendors being asked about the impact of restrictions on their activities.

Some vendors also reported struggling with restrictions on operating hours. Beginning in January of 2021, newly implemented restrictions limited vendors' hours of operation, with most vendors

[44] Covid-19 restrictions on public life, such as office and school closures, did have a significant impact on street food vendors. As vendors' customers stayed home and lost their incomes, fewer customers purchased from street food vendors. This section is particularly concerned with restrictions directly targeting street food vendors, not restrictions on public life more generally.

required to close by 7 pm. Over the following months, curfews were instated limit from 7 to 10 pm depending on the number and severity of COVID-19 cases in any given area. Curfews were in place until mid-2022 and were variably enforced by Satpol PP. Traditional food markets, where most street food vendors reported sourcing their ingredients, were also required to close as early as 7 pm.

Bu Wanida explained that she had to reduce her operating hours during the pandemic.

> Because of the rules for the virus, I had to have everything cleaned up by 10 pm. […] Before, I could stay open and wait for customers until midnight without a problem. I don't get it, we need to make money, but the restrictions make it difficult (Respondent 25).

Other vendors reported that they had been forced to stop work as early as 7 pm, before they were able to sell all their food (Respondent 23, 37, 40). This was not reported by all street food vendors, however. Pak Agung, who had been selling meatballs and chicken soup from a cart for over a decade, suggested that his operating hours hadn't been impacted by restrictions. Rather, he'd deliberately chosen to reduce operating hours during the pandemic in response to receiving fewer customers. Instead of serving lunch and dinner, he only served dinner, which was available from 5 pm until midnight (Respondent 17).

The concerns voiced by Pak Ah Qing and Bu Wanida above are serious and do reflect an important challenge which some vendors faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, of the 39 vendors interviewed, only the seven referenced above suggested they were affected by restrictions on their business. Research assistants were instructed to ask every vendor interviewed about restrictions on their businesses, and most vendors suggested that restrictions on their business operations were generally not a major concern. Pak Hadi, for example, responded that "the school closures impacted my business, but I never had to close early and didn't have any trouble selling from my usual location" (Respondent 3). Bu Diann explained that

> I could vend from this location for as long as I wanted. It was just that my customers

weren't buying from me (Respondent 31).

Several other restrictions were also imposed on street food vendors during the pandemic, and many of these did not appear to affect vendors. During the pandemic, several food markets in the South Tangerang area from which vendors typically sourced ingredients were temporarily closed after cluster cases of COVID-19 were discovered among market vendors. Bu Siti explained that she and her husband were regulars at one of these markets, and had no trouble accessing their suppliers during the pandemic. "Getting food is easy; it's only selling it that's hard," she said. While several vendors reported sourcing their ingredients late into the night or very early in the morning, not a single street food vendor suggested that the pandemic caused any supply chain or sourcing issues. "It was easy to find ingredients," several vendors commented when asked about their purchasing behaviours during the pandemic (Respondent 8, 9, 14, 15, 25, 28, 31, 34, 36). No vendor reported that the traditional market (or in some cases larger street food vendor)[45] they sourced from had been closed during the pandemic. Bu Citra followed this up by saying that she wasn't concerned even if the market she frequented did shut down. Her family had been sourcing from the same suppliers for a long time.

> Because we're regulars, we'd definitely be informed if [our suppliers] shut down. We already have a plan in case [the market] shuts down (Respondent 19).

Interview results above suggest that some street food vendors were seriously impacted by restrictions on street food vending activities. However, these vendors were in the minority. Compare this with how scholars and organizations represented street food vendors' experiences of state-imposed restrictions. Authors such as Battersby argued that restrictions on street food vending would have a drastic impact on vendors (Battersby, 2020). APKLI representatives were concerned that Satpol PP regulation of vending space was unclear and that the government did not show the necessary respect for vendors. The idea that restrictions on street vendors harmed vendors informed APKLI lobbying campaigns against state restrictions. The APKLI slogan "Empowerment, yes. Eviction, no." for example, is based on the idea that evictions, and

[45] Around a quarter of the vendors interviewed did not shop at traditional markets, instead getting their food through agents or from street food vendors selling bulk groceries with whom they had longstanding relationships.

restrictions on street vending more generally, unfairly impact vendors. This slogan and the assumptions behind it continued to appear in APKLI commentary during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, the head of APKLI for the city of Pangkalpinang reflected that "I respect and would like to remind [the government] that regulations are not a solution" to the problems associated with street vending during the COVID-19 pandemic (Hammer, 2021). Mohlas Madani, head of the Yogyakarta APKLI office, asked the government to reconsider plans to restrict vendors in the popular Malioboro road. He said the government should "reconsider because [the restrictions] would impact vendors who are just beginning to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic" (Arista, 2022). Lobbying on the part of APKLI also led to the original 2012 Act regulating street food vendors, in which the state recognized for the first time that street food vendors contribute positively to the economy and should not be arbitrarily evicted (GemaPos, 2021).

Projects to address restrictions on street food vending would not necessarily be helpful for many of the street food vendors involved in this research. This is not to say that street food vendors in other contexts do not view state restrictions on street food vending as a major challenge facing their work. However, it does suggest that commonly applied ideas about vendors are not applicable to all street food vendors. Moreover, representations of vendors as suffering due to state imposed restrictions on street vending may overshadow other issues facing vendors. If this project had, as originally intended, focused on the impact of COVID-19 restrictions on vendors and their customers, it would not have adequately addressed accounts of vendors' experiences that did not recognize restrictions on street food vending as a major challenge during the pandemic. Further research is required to critically explore the relationship between vendors and restrictions on street food vending in different contexts to develop a more nuanced understanding of the situation.

Discussion

This chapter examined the ways street food vendors themselves responded to questions regarding their experience of the pandemic, noting that many of the concepts emphasized by scholars and organizations were conspicuously absent from vendors' commentary. This research was limited

to interviews with 39 vendors in South Tangerang, who offered unverified commentary on their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is not a representative sample of street food vendors more generally and is not directly applicable to other contexts. However, it does highlight how claims about vendors by scholars and organizations, which are often leveled at vendors in different spaces without considering local contexts, differed from street food vendors self-understandings. This chapter also aimed to bring attention to how representations of street food vendors helped inform intervention in street food vending which the vendors interviewed often did not believe necessary.

Some interventions informed by assumptions that vendors did not share likely directly harm vendors, such as vendor evictions carried out by Satpol PP. Similarly, hygiene training may be poorly received by vendors, who did not recognize its value. However, it may not be equally clear to a reader why representations of vendors as good for food security and the economy are problematic. Programs to offer vendors financial credit or lobbying efforts to reduce restrictions on street vending also do not appear particularly nefarious, and may indeed benefit vendors. If these representations and interventions are not obviously harmful, then why do they matter? This section argues that representations of street food vendors that do not adequately consider vendors' own accounts of their experiences help to silence vendors. Scholars and organizations create a narrative about street food vendors without adequately consulting vendors, often by representing vendors as subordinates needing guidance. To inform and justify interventions in street food vending, organizations discussed above represented vendors as uneducated and needing support, and themselves as in positions of authority able to respond to vendors' needs.

For example, Satpol PP represented vendors as "reckless" and unhygienic, and suggested that Satpol PP needed to correct vendors' behavior. Satpol PP needed to guide "reckless" vendors by introducing restrictions on vending, and threating vendors with evictions if they did not comply. The organization also claimed to provide training to "empower" vendors to overcome their disruptive and unhygienic ways. Guiding the people is a well-established role for officials and government institutions in Indonesia,[46] and the idea that Satpol PP acts as a guide and protector

[46] The term *Bapakism* (Eng. Father-ism), which emerged from Clifford Geertz's oft-cited work on Javanese culture, suggests that the Indonesian government treats citizens as clients who need to be guided and protected (Irawanto,

of the "people/society" (I. masyarakat) is part of the organization's core history. Satpol PP's full title is Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja (Eng. Civil Service Police Unit). *Pamong* "refers to the guardian, guide, teacher", while *Praja* identifies the state or place where the king lives. *Pamong Praja* are the guardians and guides of the king's realm, the "protectors of the people" (Langenberg, 1986, 11).[47]

APKLI also represented itself as an authority on street vending and offered guidance and protection to vendors. APKLI established that vendors were beneficial and worth supporting by representing street food vendors as an important part of the "people's economy." They then suggested that vendors were negatively impacted by restrictions and deserved special assistance. The organization provided support by offering financial credit programs and assisting vendors through food distribution programs. It also supported vendors by rallying against state-imposed restrictions on street vending. APKLI representatives appeared to believe that vendors needed APKLI's support to overcome obstacles to running successful businesses.

UN agencies, meanwhile, reflected that vendors needed support and education, mainly in the area of food hygiene, to be successful. According to these agencies, vendors had little education, and poor knowledge of food hygiene. Vendors needed guidance from UN agencies to meet their potential and effectively feed low income consumers, and provide employment opportunities. UN agencies provided support through direct training, or education to governments who train vendors on the UN's behalf.

2012). During the Covid-19 pandemic, Arif and Nugroho (2020), suggested that the Jokowi government was reluctant to share information about the pandemic with the public because the government was acting as a "father figure", and preventing citizens from panicking (1).

[47] The term "people/society" (I. masyarakat) has a history of its own. During Indonesia's New Order period, "masyarakat" served as a model of governance where the Indonesian government saw itself as responsible for guiding the "masyarakat," which needed to be "informed, educated, and enlightened for the good of the national development process" (Menteri Penerangan, 1981 [Kitley, 2000, 81]). Today the term is still used to describe an Indonesian people that need to be "developed" and "empowered." Five of the first ten results in a Google Scholar search of "masyarakat" include the phrase "*Pemberdayaan Masyarakat"* (Eng. Empowerment of the People) (Suharto, 2008; Noor., 2011; Maryani, 2018), or "*Pemgembangan Masyarakat"* (Eng. Development of the People) (Machendrawaty & Safei, 2001; Nasian, 2014) in their titles. These Indonesian language publications suggest that the "people/society" still need the support of scholars and civil society to be "empowered" and "developed".

However, while the above organizations suggested that they were able to support vendors and this support was necessary, vendors did not appear to have an interest in what Satpol PP, APKLI, or UN agencies said or had to offer. When asked if they had ever interacted with these organizations, all vendors interviewed responded that they had not. Vendors did not appear to recognize the organizations discussed above as authorities on street food vending. While some vendors may have been uncomfortable discussing Satpol PP for fear of retaliation from the organization, there was no self-evident reason why they would avoid mentioning APKLI or UN agencies in conversations with research assistants. This does not mean that interventions advocated by these organizations were without consequence. Representations of street food vendors inform assumptions about vendors that are taken for granted and repeated by scholars and organizations whose actions have a direct impact on the lives and businesses of street vendors and their customers. Organizations involved in street food vending frequently represented street food vendors as needing support and guidance. Consequently they represented themselves as authorities in a position to provide this support and guidance. In this way, intervention in street food vending was morally justified and did not require vendors' permission. Ideas about street food vendors were also repeated without complaint or input from vendors.

A similar pattern was noted in Tijuana, Mexico by Nova (2003). In her 2003 piece on representations of indigenous female street food vendors, Nova suggested that representations of indigenous female street vendors by scholars, government bodies and domestic indigenous advocacy groups also represented female street vendors as patients needing support and guidance. These representations helped justify programs to support and control vendors. Representing themselves as authorities precluded the need to discuss assumptions with vendors or allow vendors to tell their own stories. This took away vendors' agency and voice and allowed organizations to intervene in street vending in ways that vendors did not believe beneficial (Nova, 2003).

Without wishing to drawing too close a parallel to influential scholarship in this area, the idea that representations of groups as patients in need of support is linked to power and takes away patients' voices is a long-standing theme in post-colonial studies pioneered in the 1970s (Said, 1978). In his work on agency and identity in India, Ronald Inden highlighted the link between

representation, agency and power when he discussed the processes that support and perpetuate colonialism. Inden suggested that colonialism was an attempt to make autonomous groups into patients that could be "variously pacified or punished, saved, reformed, or developed" (Inden, 1990, 19). Through representations in academic and public discourse, scholars, states, and institutions built up and then took for granted and reproduced assumptions about the colonized that justified colonization on moral and ethical grounds. These representations were created and reproduced by organizations that represented themselves as authorities and effectively silenced the voices of the colonized. Projects to save or reform the colonized were therefore able to be carried out without the input of the would-be colonized. Similar arguments appeared in Edward Goldsmith's oft-cited 1997 work *Development as Colonialism* (Goldsmith, 2002 [1997]), as well as more recent projects like Duffield and Hewitt (2013) and Langan (2018), which argued that development programs perpetuated colonial practices. While it would be misleading to suggest that organizations involved in street food vending in Indonesia are "colonizing" vendors, they control the narrative about street food vendors by creating and reproducing the often taken-for-granted assumptions about vendors that appear in scholarship and program documents.

It would be unhelpful, and in most cases incorrect, to suggest that these organizations were deliberately trying to "subjugate" vendors or even that they did not respect or appreciate vendors (Said, 1978, 9). Rather, these organizations were acting partially out of a paternalistic desire to support vendors. In her work, Nova draws from Mary Jackman (1994), who argued that paternalism is "discrimination without the expression of hostility" (Nova, 2003, 265). Jackman explained that "affection, far from being alien to exploitative relations, is precisely the emotion that dominant groups wish to feel towards those whom they exploit" (Jackman, 1994, 10). By expressing affectionate for vendors, organizations can impose their own agendas on vendors in order to "help" them. Moreover, to refer back to Indonesian author Ariel Heryanto, discussed in the introduction, the systems of thought individuals are exposed to also significantly impact how they can understand and represent the world (Heryanto, 1990). When organizations and scholars reproduce ideas about street food vendors, they are not necessarily aware that these ideas are part of a discourse about street food vendors that is perpetuated by scholars and organizations without input from vendors and consequentially helps to subordinate vendors. Indeed, this was precisely the author's position at the start of this project.

To overlook the process by which the relationship of subordination between colonizer and colonized, Orientalist and Oriental, street food vendors and authorities on street food vending, were and are reproduced would be unhelpful for understanding how relationships of power are formed. It would not adequately prepare us to confront the continued complicity of this process in academia and among organizations involved with street food vendors. Moreover, it would not help to explain why the disjuncture between organizational representations of vendors and vendors' self-representations matters. This disjuncture matters because it is born of and perpetuated by uneven power relations and reproduces assumptions about street food vendors that may not help vendors. Street food vendors interviewed did not suggest that organizations involved in street food vending in Indonesia possessed any great influence over vendors. In many cases, vendors did not even appear aware they existed. However, these organizations monopolize the discourse on street food vending. They contribute to narratives about vendors that scholars and organizations accept without needing evidence, and they inform research projects like this one.

The concluding chapter highlights how academic literature on street food vending represents street food vendors as individuals needing guidance and allows scholars to make recommendations for intervening in street food vending without input from vendors. This chapter also suggests different ways scholars might approach street food vending moving forward.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

The first chapter of this thesis featured two anecdotes about street food vendors in South Tangerang, Indonesia. In the first story, Bu Diann, a mother of two who sold vegetables, did not know what the term “food security” (I. ketahanan pangan) meant. However, she did endeavor to support her community by selling food on credit, despite knowing many of her customers would not pay her back. She did not seek to improve her customers' “food security”, as street food vendors are often represented as doing by scholars and UN agencies. However, by allowing customers to purchase food they otherwise would not be able to she could be understood to have increased their access to food and consequently their food security. The idea that street food vendors improve customers’ food security frequently informs academic literature and UN programs to support street food vendors. Whether accurate or not, it reflects an understanding of street food vendors and their activities imposed on vendors by outside authorities and fails to take into account the ways in which vendors perceive their own activities.

In the second story shared, Pak Ari was offended to be asked about his food hygiene. He suggested that he had always practiced good food-handling practices and did not believe he needed training to improve his food hygiene. If we take Pak Ari’s word for it, training programs around food hygiene, such as those promoted by UN agencies, would not have benefitted him. Even if we suppose he was not telling the truth or did not know better, would it not be possible to create programs that included greater input and active participation from vendors as a step toward better hygiene? Vendors also likely consider eviction campaigns and warnings by Satpol PP, which suggested that street food vendors failed to follow health protocols and consequently spread the virus causing COVID-19, as unnecessary and unfair. As this thesis has argued, representation matters. Representations create and reproduce assumptions, which help to naturalize a specific course of action, potentially at the expense of the groups being represented.

This research began with a straightforward question, *how has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted street food vendors in urban Indonesia?* This project sought to answer this question by asking vendors about the challenges they faced during the pandemic. Initial research proposals for this project assumed that these challenges were, among other things, state-imposed restrictions and

poor food safety knowledge, both of which negatively impacted food security and employment in urban Indonesia. However, few street food vendors represented state-imposed restrictions as a major obstacle to their businesses or understood their activities selling street food as good for food security or employment. This thesis has attempted to explore the disjuncture between these two sets of representation and explain why it matters.

The first chapter introduced the research and discussed street food vending in urban Indonesia. It also explored some key ideas about representation. It suggested that there are multiple, potentially equally valid, ways to represent the world. When one represents, one represents subjects *as* something. Representations are not separate from plans for action, and the language chosen to discuss vendors has consequences for how scholars and organizations intervene in street food vending. This chapter argued that representations of street food vendors are varied, and are informed by assumptions about vendors that are often taken for granted.

The second chapter summarized scholarship on street food vending in Indonesia and beyond, and discussed scholarship on representation in street vending. The first section of this review was organized around the themes of food security, employment and the economy, hygiene, and restrictions on street food vending. It summarized scholarship on street food vending that addressed these themes and suggested that this literature contributes to widely held assumptions about street food vendors. The second section of this chapter discussed scholarship on representation in street vending. While literature on this topic is limited, some projects have explored the relationship between street food vendors and representation. This thesis aimed to build on this body of literature, offering a critical perspective on its applicability to the situation in Indonesia.

Chapter three discussed the research process. It explained that this research was informed by 39 interviews with street food vendors in South Tangerang, Indonesia, as well as textual analysis of program documents and public commentary given by organizations involved in street food vending. This chapter explained that representations of street food vendors by vendors, scholars, and organizations were compared to explore how they differed. This chapter also introduced the

research context and provided demographic information for street food vendors in South Tangerang.

Following this, chapter four helped answer the first research question: *How did scholars and pertinent organizations represent street food vendors and their challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic?* The organizations in question all represented vendors' needs and challenges differently. Satpol PP suggested that street food vendors spread the virus causing COVID-19 and were disruptive. APKLI argued that vendors contributed positively to the economy, struggled significantly during the pandemic, and were targeted unfairly by state restrictions. Meanwhile, UN agencies claimed that vendors were good for the economy and food security, but were also a potential threat due to their poor food hygiene.

In chapter five, these representations were compared with street food vendors' self-representations. Chapter five helped answer the second and third research questions: *how have street food vendors understood their own experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic?* And, *what are the regularities and disjunctures between these two sets of representations—namely, those of scholars and organizations on the one hand and of the vendors themselves on the other?* This chapter discussed the results of 39 interviews conducted with street food vendors in South Tangerang during the COVID-19 pandemic. Street food vendors interviewed described their experience in various ways, but frequently did not understand themselves in the same terms as the scholars and organizations that spoke both about vendors and on their behalf. Few vendors described themselves as contributing positively to food security, employment or the economy, or practicing poor food hygiene. Many vendors also did not report being negatively impacted by state-imposed restrictions on vending activities. Instead, they described their lack of customers as one of the main issues they experienced during the pandemic. This chapter also suggested that representations of street food vendors informed interventions in street food vending, many of which vendors did not believe were necessary. It found that organizations consistently suggested that vendors needed control and support from a more informed other. This resulted in a narrative about street food vendors that represented vendors as subordinates and was based on ideas about vendors that vendors did not agree with, but had no voice to argue against. Consequently,

vendors' responses suggested that many vendors saw organizations' efforts to intervene in street food vending as irrelevant or harmful.

The purpose of this chapter was not to suggest that scholars and organizations necessarily represented vendors incorrectly. With research tools like surveys, textual analysis, and equipment to test microbes present in food, scholars and organizations are indeed able to answer questions about street food vending that vendors themselves cannot. However, these questions are not selected arbitrarily. Ideas about vendors, repeated across authoritative platforms, help determine which questions scholars and organizations can ask about vendors, and the answers to these questions guide intervention in street food vending. The problem is not that scholars and organizations are incorrect, but that they may be engaging on issues that vendors may not view as important.

Chapter five was important for understanding how organizations involved in street food vending represent street food vendors and the kinds of intervention these representations informed. However, this thesis has not yet explored how representations of street food vendors by scholars inform recommendations for intervention in street food vending. While scholars do not directly intervene in street food vending, they do inform projects in street food vending carried out by governments and public organizations more broadly. They also collaborate with organizations like the UN to report on street food vendors and their needs. What kinds of intervention does scholarship on street food vending in Southeast Asia during the pandemic advocate for? How does it relate to interventions by pertinent organizations discussed in chapters five?

This concluding section briefly reviews scholarship on street food vending in Southeast Asia during the COVID-19 pandemic referenced throughout this thesis. By focusing on scholarship in Southeast Asia, this chapter closely examines assumptions held by scholars working in and around Indonesia. Articles selected include Nasution et al. (2021); Tuner et al. (2021); Gaterak et al. (2021); and Duong and Thanh (2022). The selected works feature interviews with street food vendors and discuss their experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic. This section looks specifically at the concluding paragraphs of the articles selected. In their concluding paragraphs, the authors reflect on their aspirations for their research subjects. This is where authors prescribe

and suggest programs to control and support street food vendors. The pragmatist philosopher Richard Rorty suggested that we should "skip lightly past the predictions and concentrate on the expressions of hope" in conclusions (Rorty, 2000, 174). A reader can learn a great deal about an author's assumptions and hopes for intervening in the world by examining their conclusions.

Some authors writing on street food vending in Southeast Asia concluded that street food vendors needed to be controlled and guided. In their conclusion, Duong and Thanh (2021), for example, suggested that:

> vendors should receive health safety guidelines, masks, sanitizers or soaps, and a map of water points. Such guidelines and supports would help street vendors ensure compliance with health and safety measures (9).

Gaterak et al. (2021) suggested that "food vendors should be required to be educated on relevant information about health and hygiene." The authors also claimed that their research could be useful to relevant authorities:

> as a guideline for planning actions or finding solutions to basic problems, economic development work, and what vendors need during [an] epidemic (931).

In this example, Gaterak et al. (2021) suggest that their work, and scholarship more generally, can have measurable impacts on vendors and the organizations working with vendors. Other authors suggested that vendors needed to receive financial and other forms of support. Turner et al. (2021) suggested that vendors be supported through better access to emergency funds. The authors encouraged:

> governments, funding agencies and NGOs to take this opportunity to consider how […] street food vendors could best be supported in their pursuit of livelihoods in urban locales, while also acknowledging the important role they have played in allowing urban residents access to essential items during a global crisis, especially with regards to food provisioning (499).

Likewise, Duong & Thanh (2022) argued that street vendors should be provided with food assistance, housing subsidies, and cash grants. The "government should streamline the application procedure and increase the effectiveness and outreach of relief or aid to vendors" (13). Nasution et al. (2021) suggest that more knowledge about what vendors need could "indirectly help the government in reducing the acceleration of the increase in the number of poor people due to the pandemic" (168). The authors hoped that "more research" on street food vendors would further help the government support vendors.

The aspirations reflected at the end of these articles suggested that street food vendors should be supported and guided. Based on interviews with street food vendors conducted for this project, it isn't clear that the measures suggested—such as training vendors on hygiene and informing government intervention in street food vending—would help vendors overcome the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Vendors did not report receiving training of any kind, and certainly did not claim to want training from outside organizations. Both scholars and organizations represented vendors as needing to be supported, but in both cases it was not clear that vendors wanted this for themselves. This project aims to draw attention to this disjuncture. It also seeks to remind the reader that inadequately considering how vendors needs may differ from common assumptions about vendors can have detrimental consequences for street food vendors, whose voices are often lost in the process of re-presentation.

However, this project does not seek to discredit scholarship on street food vending or to suggest that scholars publishing on the topic are, to borrow from Said, "part of some nefarious plot" to subjugate vendors (Said, 1978, 9). The thesis recognizes that scholars and pertinent organizations often have valid arguments and can, but do not always, intervene in street food vending in meaningful ways that benefit vendors. It does argue that representations of street food vendors needing support and guidance are created in a specific context to achieve specific results. Scholars are sometimes explicitly aware of this and carefully ensure that academic publications are framed to reflect certain themes. Projects exploring food security and street food vending, for example, do not ask street food vendors about their food security. They rarely expect vendors to know what this term means or to comment on it meaningfully. Instead, they ask questions such

as those suggested by the FAO in its Food Insecurity Experience Surveys (FIES). This includes questions like: "During the last twelve months, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources, you had to skip a meal?" (FAO, 2023b). These results are then simplified and translated into the specific language of food security to communicate, not with participants, but with an educated international audience. This implies that research participants do not know how to express their experiences in terms that an international audience would understand. They need a scholar, a translator, for this task.

Andrea Cornwall's well-received 2007 piece on "buzz words and fuzz words" used among development writers reflected rhetorically:

> why, after all, should language matter to those who are *doing* development? As long as those involved in development practice are familiar with the catch-words that need to be sprinkled liberally in funding proposals and emblazoned on websites and promotional material, then surely there are more important things to be done than sit around mulling over questions of semantics? (Cornwall, 2007, 1 [emphasis in original]).

Cornwall suggested that scholars in all disciplines *should* mull over questions of semantics. When findings are repackaged for an international audience using vocabulary and ideas popular in a discipline, they leave out what participants have actually said. Like Cornwall, this project suggests that words, and the representations they inform, do matter. Representations of street food vendors are too often oversimplified and become generalizations that are accepted uncritically (Cornwall, 2007., Cornwall & Eade, 2010). Scholars inadvertently suggest that vocabulary like "food security" and "livelihoods" is better at describing vendors' experiences than the vocabulary used by vendors. This is not without consequence. These terms inform readers and have real impacts on the kinds of questions researchers do and are able to ask about street food vendors. They also privilege the accounts of scholars over those of vendors.

Some organizations working with vendors have begun to take more nuanced approaches to supporting vendors. For example, program documents for a recent project to support capacity building and address street vendor hygiene in Chandigrah, India discuss activities to elicit

feedback from vendors. The project claimed to consider vendors' self-reported needs when designing program activities (UN, 2023). Some scholars working with street food vendors have also adopted participatory research methods and aimed to engage with vendors in more nuanced and meaningful ways (see, for example, Musa, 2017). This should be recognized and celebrated. However, these steps appear to be preliminary. Participatory research by Musa (2017) on vendor hygiene, for example, presumed to take a participatory approach to addressing food hygiene in street food vending, but in reality conducted traditional interviews with street food vendors. Initial research questions and the methods used to answer these questions were decided upon prior to research being conducted and were not considered in discussion with vendors. Meanwhile, capacity building activities in Chandigraph explored the best methods to train vendors on food hygiene by reflecting on vendors self-reported needs. However, it did not ask vendors if training on hygiene was necessary or useful for them.

Instead of relying on representations of vendors as good for food security, of street food vending as a last resort option for employment, of vendors as practicing poor hygiene, or of state-imposed restrictions as negatively impacting vendors, it is worth asking in each instance if these assumptions are valid in the research context. Do street food vendors help low-income customers access food in this space, and what happens if vendors disagree? Will framing a project as reducing unemployment through training or financial credit programs benefit vendors in this specific research area? Do vendors believe they need education on food hygiene, and what happens if they do not? Is it worth the time and effort to create initiatives to reduce the impact of state-imposed restrictions on vendors in this area? And, importantly, can this project really help? Is it fair to represent this organization as an authority capable of enacting change, and what might the consequences of this kind of representation be?

This project explored four popular themes appearing in academic literature and commentary by pertinent organizations working with street food vendors in Indonesia and considered how they related to street food vendors' self-understandings. It found that vendors did not describe themselves as important for food security. They did not suggest that they contributed positively to the economy or that street food vending was a last resort form of employment. They also did not acknowledge that they practiced poor hygiene, and few vendors reported being seriously

affected by state-imposed restrictions on street food vending during the pandemic. These findings are significant and can inform more nuanced understandings of street food vending. However, they are specific to the research context and should not be applied to other areas without adequately considering how vendors needs and experiences differ in different contexts. Many widely held beliefs about street food vendors also remain untested. For example, a large body of scholarship argues that women choose to work as street food vendors because this allows them to work from home and/or care for children (Newberry, 2006; Clark 2013). Scholarship on street food vending also frequently suggests that online food delivery platforms benefit street food vendors (APPSINDO, 2021; Ridawati, 2022) while anecdotal evidence from this project suggests that they do not.[48] Future projects could explore the different ways scholars, organizations, and vendors understand street food vending in relation to these themes to inform more comprehensive understandings of street food vendors' experiences and needs in these and other contexts.

[48] When asked about online food delivery platforms, only a handful of vendors believed these platforms helped increase sales. Many vendors suggested that these apps were too expensive or that they received more customers from in-person business.

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Appendix A: Human Research Ethics Board Certificate of Approval

University of Victoria
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Certificate of Approval - Annual Renewal

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:	**Richard Fox** (Supervisor)	**ETHICS PROTOCOL NUMBER** Expedited review - delegated	**21-0253**
PRINCIPAL APPLICANT:	**Maeve Milligan** **Master's student**	ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE:	23-Sep-2021
UVIC DEPARTMENT:	**Pacific and Asian Studies PAOR**	APPROVED ON:	23-Sep-2022
		APPROVAL EXPIRY DATE:	22-Sep-2023

PROJECT TITLE: **Street economies, food, and Covid-19**

RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS:
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DECLARED PROJECT FUNDING:
SSHRC, UVic
President's Research Scholarship, UVic
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DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:
tcps2_core_certificate.pdf - 11-Jun-2021
Informed Consent.docx - 12-Jul-2021
Observational:interview Checklist.docx - 12-Jul-2021

Conditions of approval

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the protocol.

Amendments
To make changes to the approved research procedure in your study, please submit "Amendments" or "Annual renewal with amendments" form. You must receive research ethics approval before proceeding with your amended protocol.

Renewals
Your ethics approval must be current for the period during which you are recruiting participants or collecting data. To renew your protocol, please submit a "Request for Renewal" form before the expiry date on your certificate. You will be sent an emailed reminder prompting you to renew your protocol about six weeks before your expiry date.

Project Closures
When you have completed all data collection activities and will have no further contact with participants, please notify the Human Research Ethics Board by submitting a "Notice of Project Completion" form.

Certification

This certifies that the UVic Human Research Ethics Board has examined this research protocol and concluded that, in all respects, the proposed research meets the appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria's policies for research involving human participants.

Appendix B: Suggested Interview Questions/Talking Points

Basic demographic questions

- Name
- Age
- Education
- Religion
- Monthly before and after the pandemic (only if they're willing to answer!)
- Number of people in family
- Length of time in food vending (Or length of time associated with food vending)
- Have you been vaccinated?

PPKM/Restrictions

- Are you mobile? Was your mobility impacted by the PPKM?

- Were your hours of operations impacted by the PPKM? How?

Online

- Are you online? Did you start this during the pandemic?

- Has it been helpful?

Customers

- Who are your customers? Office workers, people going to school, people just living in the area?

- How long were there fewer customers because of the pandemic? When did this start, when was it the worst, and when did it start getting better?

Food security and loss of income

- Street food makes it easier for people to get food at cheap prices and reduce hunger in communities. What do you think about this? Is it true?

- Do you think your business helps reduce hunger? What would happen if you weren't there anymore?

- Do you think your work helps people access food?

- Do you know what 'ketahanan pangan' means? If so, what does it mean to you? What about 'swasembada pangan/beras', or 'kedaulatan pangan'?

Income/Employment and the Pandemic

- Did the pandemic have any impact on your ability to buy food for your family or cover other costs?

- What about other vendors? Did they experience the same things? Did some people stop selling food and start doing something else?

Hygiene

- Have you changed your food hygiene practices during the pandemic?
- How did customers respond to the pandemic? Did they ask you to change your food hygiene practices?

Concluding questions

- Could you tell me a little bit about what you experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic as a food vendor, or in your personal life that impacted your experiences as a food vendor?

- If the restrictions were hard on you, what do you think might have made it easier for you during the pandemic? What did you need?

Appendix C: Participants' Demographic Information

Respondents	Food Vended	Age	Place of Origin	Highest Level of Education	Type of Business	Vaccination Status
Respondent 1	Tempe Mendoan	40	Pamulang (South Tangerang), West Java	-	Warung	-
Respondent 2	Pondeng Icecream	22	Pamulang (South Tangerang), West Java	SMP	Mobile Cart	-
Respondent 3	Kue Ape (Traditional cakes)	38	Bogor, West Java	-	Mobile Cart	-
Respondent 4	Kue Ape (Traditional cakes)	33	Bogor, West Java	-	Mobile Cart	-
Respondent 5	Kue Ape (Traditional cakes)	43	Bogor, West Java	-	Mobile Cart	-
Respondent 6	Coconut Water	24	Pamulang (South Tangerang), West Java	-	Warung	-
Respondent 7	Fried Chicken	22	Central Java	SMA	Gerobak Keliling	-
Respondent 8	Jelly Desserts	35	-	Hospitality Diploma (post-secondary)	Warung	-
Respondent 9	Dumplings	40	Yogykarta	-	Warung	-
Respondent 10	Dumplings	-	-	-	Mobile Cart	-
Respondent 11	Chicken Soup	-	-	-	Mobile Cart	-
Respondent 12	Soup, Meatballs	-	Medan, Sumatra	SMG	Mobile Cart	-
Respondent 13	Tofu	-	-	SMP	Mobile Cart	-
Respondent 14	Chicken Porridge	65	-	-	Mobile Cart	-

Respondent 15	Traditional Cakes (several varieties)	40	Pamulang (South Tangerang), West Java	SMA	Warung	Yes
Respondent 16	Empek-empek (fish cakes)	31	-	SD	Mobile Cart	Yes
Respondent 17	Chicken Soup, Meatballs	49	West Java	SMA	Warung	Yes
Respondent 18	Padang food (several varieties)	55	-	SMA	Warung	Yes
Respondent 19	Bean porridge	-	-	-	Mobile Cart	Yes
Respondent 20	Traditional Cakes	-	Brebus, West Java	SD	Mobile Cart	Yes
Respondent 21	Krupuk (shrimp puffs)	-	-	-	Mobile Cart	-
Respondent 22	Meatballs				Mobile Cart	No
Respondent 23	Fried Chicken (no rice)	30	-	-	Motorbike	Yes
Respondent 24	Grilled Bread	30	Bogor, West Java	SMP	Mobile Cart	Yes
Respondent 25	Coconut rice and grilled snacks (morning), grilled chicken (afternoon(	41		SMU	Warung	Yes
Respondent 26	Fresh vegetables	-	-	SMA	Warung	Yes
Respondent 27	Chicken soup, meatballs	35	Pamulang (South Tangerang), West Java	-	Mobile Cart	No

Respondent 28	Fresh Vegetables	25	-	SMA	Warung	Yes
Respondent 29	Fried Noodles	43	Malang, East Java	SD	Mobile Cart	Yes
Respondent 30	Fried Rice	55	Sumatra	-	Warung	Yes
Respondent 31	Fresh Vegetables	24	-	S1	Warung	Yes
Respondent 32	Porridge	35	-	SD	Mobile Cart	Yes
Respondent 33	Fresh Vegetables	23		SMA	Warung	Yes
Respondent 34	Fresh Vegetables	25	-	SMA	Warung	Yes
Respondent 35	Fresh Vegetables	24	-	SMA	Warung	Yes
Respondent 36	Fresh Vegetables	-	-	-	Mobile Cart	Yes
Respondent 37	Fresh Vegetables	41	-	-	Warung	Yes
Respondent 38	Fresh Vegetables	-	-	-	Warung	Yes
Respondent 39	Fresh Vegetables	-	-	-	Warung	Yes

Appendix D: Covid-19 Restrictions in Indonesia

Early Restrictions

In the period from March to April 2020, the Indonesian government began to implement travel restrictions and recommendations for public behaviour. During this period, restrictions were primarily limited to foreign nationals travelling to Indonesia, and Indonesian nationals were encouraged not to leave the country. The Ministry of Health published a series of guidelines to inform workplaces, schools, and individuals on best practices for protecting themselves from the virus. However, while encouraged, these were rarely enforced. The province of Banten also published a series of guidelines designed to inform citizens about best practices. Recommended behaviours included wearing a face mask if coughing or sneezing and using hand sanitizer.

Large Scale Social Restrictions: Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar (PSBB)

Travel restrictions and informal guidelines proved ineffective in preventing the spread of the Covid-19 virus. On March 31st, 2020, the first series of official restrictions on public life, known as Large Scale Social Restrictions or PSBB, were announced. The PSBB were in effect for seven months until they were replaced in January, 2021. While later restrictions were imposed largely by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Menteri Dalam Negeri), provinces were responsible for administering their own PSBB. The provincial PSBB legislation for Tangerang and South Tangerang, Provincial Regulation 16/2020, was published by the Governor of Banten on April 15th, 2020 and came into effect on April 18th, 2020 (Provincial Regulation 16/2020).

PSBB were relatively lax compared to later restrictions and didn't include details which would become commonplace later, such as restrictions on operating hours for essential retail businesses. However, they were sufficiently shocking and kept many people inside. Surveys from the World Bank suggested that it was during this period that households were most likely to report avoiding activities outside of the home out of fear of contracting Covid-19 (Purnamasari & Ali, 2020).

Provincial Regulation 16/2020 explains that all persons must a) follow a clean and healthy lifestyle (Perilaku Hidup Bersih dan Sehat); and, b) wear masks outside of the home. Restrictions on public activities include the cessation of all in-person education at schools and other learning institutions. Whenever possible, office workers were required to work from home. However, manufacturing businesses were permitted to continue operating so long as strict health protocols were put in place and workplaces closed for at least 14 days if cases were found. Places of worship were permitted to continue operating with strict health protocols.

During this period, businesses providing prepared food were prohibited from offering dine-in services. These businesses were instead encouraged to offer takeaway through online platforms or via telephone. While providing take-away, food businesses were required to ensure physical distancing of at least one meter between customers, practice hygienic food handling, provide facilities for hand washing, and forbid workers who were sick from entering the workplace. Marketplaces were also allowed to operate with strict health protocols. Violations of PSBB were strictly monitored by the Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP). While workers in manufacturing continued to leave home for work and purchase meals out, office workers and students were no longer purchasing from street food vendors who typically clustered around schools and office buildings during meal times.

Community Activities Restriction Enforcement: Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat (PPKM)

On January 11th, when the PSBB had been in effect for seven months, a new series of restrictions were implemented to respond to rapidly increasing case numbers going into the new year. The PPKM were announced on January 6th, 2021 (Instruksi Mendagri 01/2021). They were administered not by provincial governments as the PSBB had been but through instructions from the central government's Minister of Internal Affairs. In a speech given by Luhut Penjaitan, the Indonesia Minister of Maritime and Investment and the man in charge of administering the PPKM, it was explained that the PPKM were a top-down approach meant to standardize restrictions across the country (Arbar, 2021).

All areas with a Covid-19 death rate and case rate above the national average and/or over 70% bed occupancy rate in their ICU were required to follow PPKM. Under the PPKM, 75% of non-essential offices were required to work from home, all educational services were carried out online, and places of worship were restricted to operating at 50% capacity. Restaurants and businesses selling prepared food were allowed to operate at 25% seating capacity and encouraged to offer online delivery as often as possible. Restaurants and businesses selling prepared food were also required to close by 19:00 WIB. While this allowed street food vendors to offer some seating, the earlier closure times were problematic for vendors who typically opened from early in the morning to late at night.

Micro Community Activities Restriction Enforcement: Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat Mikro (PPKM Mikro)

On February 9, 2021, the PPKM were amended, and the word Micro (Mikro) was added to their title (Instuksi Mendagri, 3/2021). Like the PPKM, PPKM Mikro were administered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. However, the PPKM Mikro introduced restrictions to be carried out at the neighbourhood level. Neighbourhoods were ranked from Green to Red based on the number of new cases and hospitalizations in the community, and restrictions were imposed accordingly. Pos Komado (Posko) were set up at the community level to track cases and enforce restrictions. This allowed individual neighbourhoods to monitor their own caseload and restrict when and which residents were allowed to enter and exit the neighbourhood.

In Green Zones, where no Covid-19 cases had been detected in the last 7 days, the PPKM Mikro allowed offices to operate at 50% capacity. Online schooling continued to be required, with some temporary loosening of restrictions. Essential sectors were allowed to operate at 100% capacity as long as strict health protocols were followed. Restaurants and food businesses were allowed to increase their capacity to 50%, but only until 21:00, and takeaway was still strongly encouraged. In Yellow Zones, 1 to 5 cases had been reported in the last 7 days, and routine testing and isolation of cases and their close contacts was required. In Orange Zones, 6 to 10 Covid-19 cases had been detected in the last 7 days. Here cases and their close contacts were isolated, and places of worship, children's play areas and non-essential public facilities were closed. In Red Zones

more than 10 cases have been detected in the last 7 days. Cases and their close contacts were isolated and monitored, and places of worship, children's play areas and non-essential public facilities were closed. Gatherings of more than 3 people were prohibited, and entrance and exit from the neighbourhood was strictly monitored. According to Instructions from the Minister of Internal Affairs, PPKM Mikro were carried out in cooperation with the head of the neighbourhood community, the Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP), the Family Welfare Program (PKK), and youth and religious leaders. The PPKM posed new challenges for food vendors as moving between neighbourhoods became significantly more difficult. Workers and students also continued to stay home.

Emergency Community Activities Restriction Enforcement: Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat Darurat (PPKM Darurat)

The PPKM Darurat (Emergency PPKM) were officially legislated on July 2nd and came into effect on July 3rd, 2021. They were a response to rapidly increasing Covid-19 cases and hospitalizations in Java and Bali. PPKM Darurat ended not long after being introduced on July 20th, 2021, to be replaced on July 21st, 2021.

The PPKM Darurat divided regions across Indonesia into four Levels, with regions in Level 4 being the most seriously impacted by Covid-19. In July 2021, the greater Jakarta region, including South Tangerang, was categorized as Level 4. Under Levels 3 and 4, all office workers were required to work from home. Supermarkets and traditional markets could operate at 50% capacity and were allowed to remain open until 20.00 WIB. Dine-in services of any kind were prohibited and takeaway services were required to close by 20.00 WIB. Schools, places of worship, and public facilities were all closed to the public and required to offer 100% of programming online. PPKM Darurat did not significantly change the kinds of restrictions street food vendors were facing.

Community Activities Restriction Enforcement Level 4, 3, 2, and 1: Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat Darurat (PPKM Level 4, 3, 2, dan 1)

PPKM Darurat proved to be the most short-lived series of restrictions. On July 21st, 2021, the PPKM Darurat were replaced by PPKM Levels 3 and 4 (Instruksi Mendagri, 22/2021). Actual restrictions changed very little once PPKM Darurat were replaced by Levels 3 and 4, but the name change allowed the central government to create a ranking system that accounted for areas not currently in emergency situations by placing them under PPKM Levels 1 and 2. During this series of legislation, PPKM Mikro were still in place, though they were overridden by region-wide restrictions. When first announced, most of Java and Bali were under PPKM Level 4, but by August 28, 2021, many administrative zones, including the city of South Tangerang, had been reduced to Level 3 status. On October 19, 2021, South Tangerang was again demoted to Level 2 status, and more privileges were afforded to citizens.

PPKM Level 4 was announced for Java and Bali on July 20th, 2021. During PPKM Level 4, all educational services were required to be completed online, and 100% percent of non-essential workers were required to work from home. Supermarkets, traditional markets, and essential shops were permitted to operate at 50% until 20.00 WIB. Food and drink vendors were not permitted to operate dine-in services but could still provide takeaway. Public transportation was permitted to operate at 70% capacity maximum, and while private cars, motorbikes, etc. may operate, users must show the card they received when vaccinated. On September 7th, 2021, the vaccine card requirement would be replaced with a requirement to show the PeduliLindungi app, which recorded health and vaccination status.

While PPKM continued to differentiate between Levels 1 to 4 from late July 2021 to May 2022, the restrictions in these levels changed over this 10-month period. By May of 2022, under level 3, activities in the non-essential sector could operate at 50% capacity, as opposed to 25% in the November restrictions. Meanwhile, supermarkets and traditional markets were permitted to operate at 60% capacity instead of 50% until 21:00. Prepared food vendors could operate until 21:00 at 60% capacity instead of 50% as previously, with customers allowed to stay for up to 60 minutes. Public facilities could operate at 60% capacity with health protocols in place, and places of worship were only allowed to operate at 50%. Under Level 2 the non-essential sector can operate at 75% office capacity. Supermarkets and traditional markets were allowed to operate until 22:00 at 75% capacity, with supermarkets and hypermarkets still required to use the Peduli-

lindungi application. Places of worship could operate at 75%, as well as public facilities like parks, private facilities like gyms, and cultural activities. At Level 1, offices in the non-essential sector could operate at 100%. Supermarkets and traditional markets could operate at 100% capacity with no time restrictions, though supermarkets still needed to review Pedulilindungi apps. Prepared food vendors could operate at 100% capacity, but only until 22:00, with restaurants operating similarly but required to review pedulilindungi apps. Places of worship could operate at 100% with strict health protocols, as well as public facilities, gyms, and public transportation, and weddings. By May 2022, despite the continued presence of restrictions, communities in Indonesia had begun opening up. Street food vendors reported that customers were more willing to leave their homes and purchase prepared meals.