

Women Vegetable Vendors' Socio Economic Conditions and Working Environment in Tiruchirapalli Town

***Dr.T.Unnamalai**

*Assistant Professor & Head, PG & Research Dept. of Commerce, BDU College, Kurumbalur, Perambalur

The term unorganized sector which means the vast numbers of people those who are engaged in different forms of employment without any registration. These forms normally include home-based work (preparing eatables and domestic workers), self-employment (e.g., selling vegetables), employment in household enterprises, small units, on land as agricultural workers, labour on construction works and many other forms of casual or temporary employment. In Trichirapalli district majority of them are selling vegetables, preparing eatables, agricultural labours and domestic workers. Tiruchirappalli lies at the heart of Tamil Nadu. It is administered by Municipal Corporation established as per the Tiruchirappalli City Municipal corporation act 1994. The total population of Tiruchirappalli as per 2011 census is 2,713,858. The population of street vegetable women vendors is expected to be around 3,500 operate within the 65 ward corporation limits. Most of the street vegetable women vendors are selling goods like fruits, vegetables etc. They have pattern of selling the goods in sitting position, bicycle, and trolley walking and door to door. They sell their goods and spend 12 to 14 hours daily. With this background street vegetable women vendors from Rockfort town has been selected as a sample unit and 100 women have been selected as sample size for this study.

Introduction

Indian economy is to a great extent characterized by large number of people working in unorganized sectors as unorganized workers; transitional nature of the Indian economy, disparity in education, skill and training are some of the major factors abetting such a large concentration of workers in an area most vulnerable to exogenous economic vicissitudes. Women working in the unorganized sector deserve a separate mention as they are much marginalized. Indian population equally comprises men and women. The role of women in the economic development of the country especially in rural area, and more particularly in agricultural sector is formidable. In spite of the fact that women have proved their mettle in every walk of their life, women are treated as second-class citizens in India. According to Indian Labour Organisation's estimate, the value of unpaid household work in India in a year constitutes 25 to 39 percent of Gross National Product (GNP).

Scope of the study

The study is confined to the women workers working in the unorganized sector in Tiruchirapalli district of Tamil Nadu. The study presents exploitation of women workers at the work spot in unorganized sector. The study analyses the level of exploitation among women workers in unorganized sector. The study also attempts to identify the factors, which encourage exploitation of women workers in unorganized sector in Tiruchirapalli district. The study could have been attempted either from the side of the employers who are exercising exploitation over women workers or from the angle of the women workers who have been exploited by their employers. Since studying exploitation of women workers from the angle of the women workers is much impressive in resolving exploitation, the study attempts to study the level of exploitation from the angle of the women workers who are engaged in unorganized sector.

Statement of the Problem

The unorganized sectors are considered to be an important factor of the trade association in the world. In Tiruchirapalli Town majority of the householders depends upon the services of the street vegetable vendors. The reason behind is that they can purchase fresh vegetables and greeneries from them. In this sense their services are very productive. At the same time their economical status is very pathetic because they are not developed in their life status. The factors which are playing important roles enhancing street vendor are social, ethical, legal, and economic. The present study is dealing with various aspects of street vendor's socio-economic conditions and quality of life in the heart city of Rockfort Town in Tiruchirppalli district.

Objectives of the study

The present study focuses on women vegetable vendors in Tiruchirapalli district of Tamilnadu is undertaken with the following objectives.

- i) To know the level of socio economic conditions of the women vegetable vendors in Tiruchirapalli Town.
- ii) To know the factors responsible for to carry out the job as their profession of selling of vegetables in Tiruchirapalli Town.
- iii) To know the problems encountered by the women vegetable vendors in Tiruchirapalli district.
- iv) To suggest suitable recommendations that would enhance their life of women vegetable vendors in Tiruchirapalli district.

Methodology of the study Both primary data and secondary data have been collected for the study. The primary data relating to socio-demographic profiles of women vegetable vendors in Tiruchirapalli Town and the methodology adapted for data collection was interview schedule. Secondary data were also collected from related publications and websites. Percentage analysis, Correlation test, Ranking method and ranking method and chi square test are used to test the hypotheses.

Limitation of the study The followings are the limitations of the study.

- The primary data collected only for one month period (February 2017).
- The data have been collected from the women those who in and around Rockfort Town In tiruchirapalli district. Data have been collected from 100 women vendors only.

Hypothesis of the study

Ho: There in no relationship between their personal profile and their overall status of their life.

Review of Literature

Previous studies have been made related to this topic and findings of the studies have been consolidated and presented here. But the present study attempts to study the street vegetable women vendors of Tiruchirapalli Town. The main reason for the study is to know the economic condition of the women vendors in urban area. The main focus of this study is to examine the problems of the street vendors in the urban areas. The scope of this study is not only to explore the street vendors but also to consider the legal status of vendors. In this aspect the research gap found and made an attempt to give suggestions to improve their economic conditions.

1. Karthikeyan R. & Mangaleswaran R. (2013), "Quality of Life among Street vegetable women vendors in Tiruchirappalli City, Tamil Nadu, India, Street vegetable women vendors are the integral part of human society. These people are to be looked after by the individuals, group and communities. Even though they have this type of occupation, their day to day life is not safe. Government should take active role to implement the policies effectively which they have made. Hence, the government should look in to the problems of the street vendors' each and every corner of life. As professional social workers, it is our duty and obligation to work for the well being of the Street Vendors.

2. Monisha. S & Rani Pl (2016) , "Women Working In Unorganized Sector-A Conceptual Study" states that India's Labour Legislation and its Employment Relation for the Next Decade Women household workers have a double burden and there is greater demand for their skills as caregivers and service workers outside but they also work inside doing the same work which is unpaid. (Shirley Pryce, 2010). There are various reasons for pitiable conditions of women in unorganized sector The Central and state government had launched many schemes for providing support to women but there are not sufficient to overcome the problems of women workers in unorganized sector. There is need of effective implementation of these schemes and laws for empowering the women workers.

3. S. Vijaya Rani(2016), "Women In Unorganized Sector – Women Vegetable Vendors in Tiruchirappalli – A Socio Economic Study states that Women street vegetable women vendors are very important part of the informal sector in the country; they are not only a source of self employment to the poor cities and towns, but also a means to provide 'affordable' as well as convenient services to a majority of the urban population. The importance of this sector cannot be undermined, especially considering that the government does not have the capacity to provide jobs to the millions of unemployed and underemployed women in India. The efforts taken by the government is not enough, and also not reached the women vegetable vendors, because of their illiteracy and ignorance. So, the government has to take steps to make wide propaganda regarding the policies and programmes of the government.

4. Bhuvaneshwari. M & Ramya.R,(2016) "Challenges Faced By Women In Unorganized Sector" Scavengers are the people who make our surroundings clean healthy and hygienic but as a human

being they are not at all been respected. The perception about moving out if given chance is only if they are paid more than what they actually earn. They have very strongly and firmly internalized the fact that anybody who once takes up the job of sweeper remains as a sweeper always especially when one belongs to a scavenger's family. Although, when it comes to their children they are convinced that changes are needed especially in educational status for which they are sending their children to school. Thus, the conclusion of the study is that the scavengers working and living conditions in their educational qualification of their children should improve. It will be ensure the development of a future generation of the scavengers.

5. Azadeh Barati, Rooh Ollah Arab & Seyed Saadat Masoumi(2016) , “Challenges and Problems Faced By Women Workers in India” Women workers are often subject to sexual harassment then the Government should put strict rules for these types of crimes , also public transport system sometimes danger for woman and Government should put more Inspection. Traditionally people think that men should only work and gain money and women should work as house hold, but The financial demands on the Indian families are increasing that's why women also should company in gaining income for families. Therefore a fundamental change is required in attitudes of employees, family members and public.

Findings of the Study from Primary Data

The finding from primary data for the socio economic conditions of the street vegetable women vendors in Trichirapalli district have been consolidated and presented here.

- In Tiruchirapalli town varied activities of street vending are taking place. Vegetable selling is done by major street vegetable women vendors followed by fruit selling. Researcher finds more than 75 per cent of street vegetable women vendors are selling vegetables and fruits. This is the main reason for the study.
- With the help of primary data, it is observed that 72 % of the respondents are from the age group of 40 - 50. 6% of them are from the age group of 20-30, 8% of them are from the age group of 30 - 40, and only 14% of them are in the age group of above 50. Researcher finds only a very low percentage of youngsters are involving in selling vegetables in street.
- Only 7% of them studied up to their higher secondary level, 1% of them completed their degree and remaining 92% of them are school drop outs.
- 91% of them are married
- 97% of them are living in nuclear family system.
- 86% of them are living in rental houses and remaining of them are having own house with thatched roof and they are not having proper bathroom and toilet facilities.
- 32 percent of them are sitting and selling their products in a particular place, 2 percent of them are having bicycle to sell their goods, 29 percent of them are selling by walk, and remaining 37 of them are having trolley to sell their vegetables.
- In Trichirapalli they work longer hours than the 8 hour work schedule of normal individual workers. 78% percent of them spend more than eight hours working on the street. Of which 34 four percent of them work 11-12 hours in a day, while nineteen percent of them work for 9 – 10 hours. Sixteen percent of the vendors said they work between 8 to 9 hours and 12 – 14 hours in a day. This time does not include the time they spend to travel, buy the goods and reach their workplace.
- 61 percent of the street vegetable women vendors are getting a monthly income of upto Rs.3000, 32 percent of them getting an income of Rs. 3000 to 5000, 4 percent of them are getting 5000-7000 and remaining 3 percent of them are getting more than 7000 as their monthly income.
- With regard to the monthly expenditure of the street vegetable women vendors it is observed that they spend low on various requirements. Since expenditure is a crucial factor of economic welfare the lower expenditure leads to low consumption, lower welfare and low standard of living.
- With regards to their savings almost all of them save their money in the form of chit funds. At least 10 percent of their income they try to save for their future needs.
- In the study area almost all the street vegetable women vendors borrow from others according to their capabilities. They lead their life only with borrowing. This shows their inability to come out of the clutches of money lenders and indigenous bankers. They are debt ridden and reeling under depth trap. Even though the government introduced micro credit system the vendors are borrowing with money lenders also.

- 78 per cent of the street vegetable women vendors take treatment in government hospitals and 19 per cent of the street vegetable women vendors take treatment in private hospitals. This shows the success of the free medical insurance schemes adopted by the Government of Tamil Nadu.
- 88 per cent street vegetable women vendors are not getting any assistance from Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). This show the street vegetable women vendors are not in the focus of the NGOs.
- 92 per cent of the street vegetable women vendors feel the prices of the essential commodities are very high and they are not able to lead their life in a peaceful way.
- 55 per cent street vegetable women vendors feel happy with the performance of Trichy Corporation, the State Government of Tamil Nadu and the Union Government.
- 86 percent of them are having awareness about the government schemes for their upliftment of their life status.
- 37 percent of them are having bank account.
- It is very much encouraging that all most all of them are giving education to their children irrespective of their gender.

Main factor influence to become vegetable vendors

- The journey of the women vegetable sellers began from the poverty which forces them to work for the livelihood of themselves and their families. The main reasons for come to the job due to domestic violence's, drunken husband, divorce and not find to go for any jobs. Their situations forced them to sell the vegetables in the streets.
- 78 percent of them are having regular customers.

Problems and how they react to their problems

- During the rainy season 63 per cent of them borrow from others to meet their daily needs and 37 percent of them spend from their savings. During rains, they are pushed to withdraw their business, which leads to borrow or dilute their savings. This implies lack of occupational mobility and lack of alternative employment to the street vendors.
- Majority of them believe the astrology and it shows their illiteracy and superstition are indivisible factors.
- Working hours is high
- The vegetables are perishable in nature and they are not having the preservative methods like warehousing facilities. It leads them heavy loss during the rainy season.

Sl.No	Particulars	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Dis Agree	Stongly Dis Agree	Total	Rank
1	Heath problems	55	31	2	9	3	426	I
2	Capital	58	21	4	12	5	415	II
3	Competition	47	27	11	12	3	403	III
4	Social security	63	11	3	11	12	402	IV
5	Credit facilities	41	37	1	12	9	389	V
6	Seasonal condition	39	32	1	14	14	368	VI
7	Warehousing problems	37	26	6	21	10	359	VII
8	Price fluctuation	28	31	7	13	21	332	VIII

Through the findings of the study it is concluded that the vegetable street vendors in Tiruchirappalli town face social, economic and health problems. Their family background is not supporting one; it won't support them psychologically, physically and economically. They don't even have the facilities to

look after their health problems. They are totally ignored by the society and the government, their work is not recognized. But their contribution to workforce to the Tiruchirapalli is considerable.

Ho: There in no relationship between their personal profile and their overall status of their life.

Testing of Hypothesis

	Age	Monthly Income	Monthly expenses	Monthly savings	Health Condition	Social Relationship	Overall Status
Age	1						
Monthly Income	0.62	1					
Monthly expenses	0.52	0.45	1				
Monthly savings	0.34	0.34	0.65	1			
Health Condition	0.32	0.67	0.15	0.43	1		
Social Relationship	0.07	0.76	0.54	0.56	0.34	1	
Overall Status	0.39	0.80	0.52	0.87	0.55	0.82	1

With the above table, it is observed that the overall status of their life is positively correlated with their income, savings, expenses, health conditions and their social relationship. They are having good repo with their consumers and majority of them are having regular customers.

Suggestions

In the light of the foregoing analysis and findings, the following suggestions can be made to improve the conditions of the street vegetable women vendors.

- Sustained and continuous efforts are needed to improve the education, health and employment conditions of the street vegetable women vendors. The government can create a separate ministry or a special cell under the Ministry of Labour to look after the welfare of the workers in the unorganized sector under which the street vending falls.
- Street vegetable women vendors can be trained in food preservation methods. And they can be provided with a common chilling warehousing to preserve their unsold vegetables.
- The government can assist them financially by providing loan for their business activities at free rate of interest. Also government can extend the subsidy to the street vendors, especially for vending perishable items.
- Even though a separate market place is located in the town, the place cannot be utilized during the day time. If it is opened during the day time also they need not be sell their vegetables in the street. The area of the market should also be extended.

Conclusion

The in-depth analysis of the socio economic conditions of the street vegetable women vendors in Tiruchirappalli town has led to the unambiguous conclusion that their economic condition is really pathetic and there is comprehensive action required to improve their social and economic condition. The Government of Tamil Nadu has introduced a lot of schemes to enroll the students to the schools such as the noon meal scheme, free books, notebooks, bags, chapels. These schemes attract the children’s of the street vendors and enroll them and continue their studies. The smart card provides old age persons to get assistance from the government. The distribution of free rice scheme, free LPG connection Electricity tariff of 100 units at free of cost is another path breaking scheme of Tamil Nadu Government. The needs of food, clothing, shelter, education and alternate employment opportunities are not accomplished by the vast majority of the street vendors. The government would formulate tailor made programmes to suit and address the specific needs of the street vendors. The women formed SHG’s and with the emblem or the Trade mark of the SHG, their status will raise, because in this area the functions of SHG are very successful and many of the organizations allowing to run hotel, canteen,

and sell their products during their office hours. With multidimensional approach from NGO's automatically the quality of their life can be enhanced.

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