

# Challenges Faced By Women Street Vendors: A Case Study of Ranchi District

Dr. Puja Mishra

*Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Usha Martin University, Ranchi, India*

**Abstract: - This paper aims to study the involvement of women in unstructured market of street vending. It also aims to understand the socio- economic characteristics of the women street vendors and the level of challenges faced by them on a day to day basis which affects their efforts to sustain the livelihood through street vending.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Women street vendors are contributing a good amount to our society. These women have chosen street vending as the source of their livelihood as they wanted to contribute their family financially. Apart from this the entry and exit barrier in this trade is also negligible and the amount of capital and skill required is also very less. These women work very hard to earn their livelihood. But they have to face several challenges every day in order to sustain in this trade.

These women have poor social protection and their working condition on the streets expose them to a variety of health and safety issues. According to a study done by ILO it is found that about 85% of these street vendors have to face health hazards. These hazards include diseases like migraine, acidity problem, increased depression, high blood pressure, increased blood sugar and alike. Apart from these health problems women street vendors also have to face problems related to sanitation.

The women street vendors also complain about the inadequacy of space, threat of eviction and the problem of security. The respondents were expecting government to take action and provide them hygienic, well organized and secure market place.

## II. OBJECTIVES

- To find out various challenges faced by women street vendors
- To find out the working condition of women street vendors
- To recommend suitable ways to improve the condition of women street vendors running their business in Ranchi district

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

As the activities undertaken by women in the informal sector start to become more profitable, they are often gradually taken over by men. The women remain in the subsistence level activities. Men are able to move beyond subsistence to accumulate capital for more ambitious projects. (Horn 1994)

The income of street vendors ranges from rupees 50-100 for males and rupees 35-40 for females. They are persecuted by the municipal authorities and the police. The working condition of street vendors is very poor and most of them lead a very hard life. They work for more than ten hours a day to earn a very small amount. (Sharit Bhowmik 2001)

In the central district of Mumbai, many former mill workers and their wives are compelled to become street vendors. Many of them have migrated from rural areas. It was due to ease of entry and the limited requirements that they have entered the market of street vending, as finding money for larger business was difficult. Arranging capital through savings or loans is difficult for the poor. (Ighelm and Masuku, 2003)

Many people have no alternative but to enter the informal street vending. These people are forced to do so as they cannot find job in the formal sector, or they earn insufficient money elsewhere, or they have a large household to look after or a combination of any of these. (Akimboade, 2005)

Generally street vendors face four common challenges: economic pressure, socio-cultural challenges, adverse political conditions and operational challenges. (Tambuman, 2009)

## IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used descriptive method to explain the challenges faced by women street vendors, as it describes the actual situation in its true form.

The study used schedule and interview method as the main tools for collecting data, as a majority of respondents were illiterate and thus were unable to fill up the questionnaire on their own

. The sample frame consisted of women street vendors of Ranchi district specially targeting the lush market areas such as Lalpur market, Booty more market, Morabadi haat, Harmu market, H.E.C market and Namkum market. The chosen

respondents were involved in selling vegetables, fruits, fish, tea and fast food.

A sample size of 50 women street vendors was taken and to choose the unit non-probability judgmental sampling method was used.

The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative data. Frequency and percentage distribution was used to analyze the data being collected.

The questions were divided into two parts. The first part asked questions related to the demographic factors of the respondents while the second part consisted of questions related to work and work related challenges faced by those women street vendors.

## V. DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of data is done on the basis of responses collected from the questionnaire. The first portion of the questionnaire contained questions related to respondent's demographic factors. The second portion contained questions related to respondent's work related challenges and their expected solutions.

### 1. (a) Age

Majority of respondent were above 25 years of age. 3 (6%) of respondents were between 16-20 years, 12 (24%) were in the age group 21-30 years, 20 (40%) of them were of 31-40 years, and 15 (30%) were above 40 years.

### 1. (b) Marital status:

It is observed that most of the respondents were married, their number being 26 (52%), 3 (6%) of them were single, 17 (34%) were widowed and 4 (8%) of them were divorced.

### 1. (c) Work experience

In response to total work experience it was found that 33 (66%) respondents had a work experience of more than 5 years, 12 (24%) of them had an experience of more than 1 year but less than 5 years, while 5 (10%) of them had an experience of less than 1 year.

### 2 (a) Types of street vending

After collecting the data it was found that amongst a total of 50 respondents 27 (54%) were selling vegetables. 9 (17%) were selling fish, 15 (30%) were selling tea and food, while 3 (7%) were selling some form of craft work.

### 2. (b) Is there adequate demand of their products?

It was seen that out of a total of 50 respondents, 27 (57%) respondents answered that yes they do have a demand related problem. While 23 (43%) of them stated that they do not have any such problem.

2. (c) Access to workplace amenities such as toilet facility, availability of water, storage and alike.

A majority of respondents i.e., 43 (87%) of them said they do not have such facilities .while 7 (13%) of them said they have some of these facilities

2. (d) does the government protect the rights and interests of women street vendors?

The majority of respondents agree that the government protected the rights and interests of women street vendors. 14 (27%) of the respondents said government strongly protected their interests. 16 (33%) said government protects their interest most of the times. 3 (7%) of the respondents were confused and had no idea. 10 (20%) of them said government never protects their interests, while 7 (13%) of them said government protects their interest only some of the times.

2. (e) Are they being harassed or abused by the concerned city authorities ?

Most of the respondents 34(68%) answered that yes they are being harassed by the concerned city authorities while 16(32%) of the respondents told that they are not being harassed by the city authorities.

2. (f) Do they feel safe and secure while working late hours in the market ?

More than half of the respondents 27 (55%) replied that they do not feel safe and secure while working late hours. 23 (45%) Of the respondents told that they feel safe and secure even while working late hours in the market

2 (g) do they suffer from any occupation related health disorders?

The respondents answered this question can be summed up into three major categories first: 36 (75%)of them said that yes they are suffering from one or the other occupation related health disorders. Around 12 (27%) of the respondents answered that they do not have any idea, as they have not undergone through any health check-ups. While 2 (3%) of the respondents told that they do not have any health related problem.

2. (h) What could be the remedial steps to improve the condition of women street vendors?

27 (54%)of the respondents said that their condition can be improved by the help of government. 8 (16%) respondents said, it can be improved by the help of NGOs. Third; 15 (30%) of them said that it can be improved only through their associations.

## VI. CONCLUSION

It can be summed up that out of a total of 50 respondents, majority of them were of more than 20 years of age. Most of the respondents had a total work experience of more than 5

years. Amongst whom a majority were engaged in selling vegetables and fruits. In addition the major challenges faced by them were lack of basic amenities. And threat to their market existence that is decreased demand for their goods. These street vendors also faced challenges related to the inadequacy of space, sanitation and work place security. However these respondents also stated that they receive some form of help from the government. They also stated that they have faith on their government and they are keenly looking forward for their support and guidance

#### VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Government should provide these street vendors an appropriate permanent place for their business.
- They should be provided with basic amenities for the market place.
- Proper training for running their business smoothly should be provided.
- Women street vendors association should be formed.

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