



Research Article

PERFORMANCE AND PROBLEMS OF WOMEN VEGETABLE VENDORS IN SAURASHTRA REGION

TRIVEDI S.M.*, KHUNT K.A., BHARODIA C.R. AND BHATT J.D.

Post Graduate Institute of Agribusiness Management, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh, 362001, India

*Corresponding Author: Email - trivedishilpa@jau.in

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Abstract: The present study was confined to four districts viz. Junagadh, Gir Somnath, Porbandar and Amreli. The sample size was of 80 women vegetable vendors comprised of 20 from each district. The primary data were collected through the well prepared questionnaires. The collected data was analysed using performance index based on minimum wage rate and mean income earned. The study reveals that, women vegetable vendors are able to earn more than prevailing minimum wages in Gujarat for unskilled labours. Majority of respondents performed moderately and no women shown poor performance. Majority of the respondents were facing the problems of starting of purchase early in the morning, no social support and time consuming in their order.

Keywords: Vegetable marketing, Vegetables Vendors

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Introduction

Progressive development of the nation is the ultimate goal of any country which can be derived through the economic, social and cultural development of people. In India, agriculture is the livelihood occupation for the majority of the people. Women are largely involved in vegetable marketing and generate additional income to support their families. Hence, the economic and social development of women is of great importance in any developmental strategy. But, then also women's socio-economic status remains poor. Vegetables constitute an essential part of the daily diet in India and are in great demand round the year from the most section of the population. The commercial value of the vegetables in terms of direct consumption, processing as well as trade has risen substantially in recent years [1]. The business of vegetable vending is very tiny, requires low investment and quickly rewarding. In every corner of India, women are dominating the business of vegetables vending. Hence, it assumes due importance to study the socio-economic aspects, economics and marketing aspects of this tiny but multidimensional activity [2-6]. Keeping this in view, the present study is carried out with the following specified objectives.

Objectives of the Study

To examine the performance of women vegetables vendors
To identify problems faced by women vegetables vendors

Materials and Methods

The present study was confined to four districts viz. Junagadh, Gir Somnath, Porbandar and Amreli. The sample size was of 80 women vegetables vendors comprised of 20 from each district. Four vegetable markets of district place i.e. Junagadh, Porbandar, Gir Somnath and Amreli city were selected for the survey. The primary data were collected through the well prepared questionnaires. The collected data was analysed using various tools as given below:

Performance index based on minimum wage rate declared as per the circular of Government of Gujarat, No. L.C.6/1/2016 1045 to 1155, 29-09-2016

In this criteria, the performance of women vendors were classified as under:

Low Performance : Net Earning < Minimum Wage

Medium Performance: Net Earning = Minimum Wage

High Performance: Net Earning > Minimum Wage

Performance Index based on Mean Income Earned

For calculating this index, first per day net income per woman vendor was worked out and then mean income was estimated. The maximum and minimum score limits were obtained by the following formula:

Low Performance = < Mean – S.D.

Medium Performance= Mean ± S.D.

High Performance= > Mean + S.D.

Results and Discussion

Social Profile of Women Vegetables Vendors

The details of social profile of women vegetable vendors are given in [Table-1].

Age composition

In all, the age of women vegetable vendors were between the 19 and 80 years. The analysis of age groups indicates the human resources at different stages of vegetable vending. It is seen from the table that the maximum proportion (42.50 %) comes under the old age group, i.e. above 50 years, followed by middle age group, 36-50 years, (35 %) and young age group, (22.50 %) up to 35 years (22.50%). Across the markets, the highest percentage of young (55%), middle age (60%) and old (70%) were found in Gir Somnath, Junagadh and Amreli markets, respectively.

Marital status

The marital status of the women shows that 68.75 percent respondents were married and 25 percent were widows. Among the respondents, only 5 women (6.25 %) were unmarried.

Performance and Problems of Women Vegetable Vendors in Saurashtra Region

Table-1 Social Status of Women Vegetables Vendors in Saurashtra Region n=80

| 0 | Junagadh | Gir Somnath | Porbandar | Amreli | All |
|--|----------|-------------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Age of the women Vegetables Vendors in Years | | | | | |
| Young Age - Up to 35 | 4 (20) | 11 (55) | 3 (15) | 0 (0) | 18 (22.50) |
| Middle Age - 36 to 50 | 12 (60) | 3 (15) | 7 (35) | 6 (30) | 28 (35) |
| Old Age - Above 50 | 4 (20) | 6 (30) | 10 (50) | 14 (70) | 34 (42.50) |
| Marital status of the women | | | | | |
| Married | 18 (90) | 13 (65) | 14 (70) | 10 (50) | 55 (68.75) |
| Unmarried | 1 (5) | 3 (15) | 1 (5) | 0 (0) | 5 (6.25) |
| Widow | 1 (5) | 4 (20) | 5 (25) | 10 (50) | 20 (25) |
| Category of the women | | | | | |
| General | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 1 (5) | 0 (0) | 1 (1.25) |
| OBCs | 19 (95) | 19 (95) | 19 (95) | 20 (100) | 77 (96.25) |
| SCs | 1 (5) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 1 (1.25) |
| STs | 0 (0) | 1 (5) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 1 (1.25) |
| Education of the women | | | | | |
| Illiterate | 12 (60) | 9 (45) | 17 (85) | 18 (90) | 56 (70) |
| Up to Primary | 7 (35) | 6 (30) | 2 (10) | 2 (10) | 17 (21.25) |
| Up to Secondary | 1 (5) | 5 (25) | 1 (5) | 0 (0) | 7 (8.75) |

Note: Value inside parentheses indicates percentage)

Table-2 Per Day Net Income Earned by Women Vegetable Vendors (Rs. / Person)

| Particular | Junagadh | Gir Somnath | Porbandar | Amreli | All |
|--------------|----------|-------------|-----------|--------|---------|
| | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. | Rs. |
| Qty. sold | 37.94 | 74.50 | 43.93 | 27.22 | 45.90 |
| Gross Income | 1154.27 | 2527.79 | 1346.03 | 810.68 | 1459.69 |
| Total Cost | 768.34 | 1621.74 | 920.68 | 518.43 | 957.30 |
| Net Income | 385.93 | 906.05 | 425.35 | 292.25 | 502.39 |

Table-3 Performance of Women Vegetables Vendors based on Minimum Wage n = 80

| Indicator | Junagadh | Gir Somnath | Porbandar | Amreli | Total |
|------------------------|----------|-------------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Above Minimum Wages | 14 (70) | 18 (90) | 13 (65) | 10 (50) | 55(68.75) |
| Equal to Minimum Wages | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0.00) |
| Below Minimum Wages | 6 (30) | 2 (10) | 7 (35) | 10 (50) | 25 (31.25) |
| Total | 20 (100) | 20 (100) | 20 (100) | 20 (100) | 80 (100) |

Note: Value inside parentheses indicates percentage)

Table-4 Performance of Women Vegetables Vendors based on Performance Index n = 80

| Indicator | Junagadh | Gir Somnath | Porbandar | Amreli | All |
|--------------------|----------|-------------|-----------|----------|------------|
| High Performance | 1 (5) | 11 (55) | 2 (10) | 0 (0) | 14 (17.50) |
| Medium Performance | 19 (95) | 9 (45) | 18 (90) | 20 (100) | 66 (82.50) |
| Poor Performance | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0(0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) |
| Total | 20 (100) | 20 (100) | 20 (100) | 20 (100) | 80 (100) |

Note: Value inside parentheses indicates percentage)

Table-5 Problems Faced by Women Vegetables Vendors

| Problems | Junagadh | Gir Somnath | Porbandar | Amreli | All | Rank |
|------------------------------------|----------|-------------|-----------|---------|------------|------|
| Starts early in the morning | 14 (70) | 20 (100) | 14 (70) | 16 (80) | 64 (80.00) | I |
| No social support | 16 (80) | 13 (65) | 14 (70) | 14 (70) | 57 (71.25) | II |
| Time consuming | 10 (50) | 14 (70) | 14 (70) | 12 (60) | 50 (62.50) | III |
| Physical and mental strain | 15 (75) | 8 (40) | 13 (65) | 10 (50) | 46 (57.50) | IV |
| Shortage of funds | 10 (50) | 7 (35) | 12 (60) | 16 (80) | 45 (56.25) | V |
| Bringing and loading vegetables | 7 (35) | 12 (60) | 7 (35) | 8 (40) | 34 (42.50) | VI |
| Market place is far from residence | 2 (10) | 8 (40) | 10 (50) | 12 (60) | 32 (40.00) | VII |
| Competition with male vendors | 14 (70) | 6 (30) | 1 (5) | 4 (20) | 25 (31.25) | VIII |
| No union for protection | 1 (5) | 0 (0) | 1 (5) | 4 (20) | 6 (7.50) | IX |
| Any other | 3 (15) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 2 (10) | 5 (6.25) | X |

Note: Value inside parentheses indicates percentage)

Category

The details regarding the category of selected respondents revealed that all the markets have shown uniform result. Overall, 96.25 percent of the women belong to Other Backward Castes (OBCs) and only one respondent belongs to general castes, one belongs to Scheduled Caste (SC) category and one belongs to the categories of Scheduled Tribes (STs). Thus, OBC caste dominate in vegetables vending. This may be due to low level of financial requirement and immediate return features of the business of vegetables vending.

Education

Literacy is considered as an indicator of development. Government is taking concerted efforts to increase the literacy level of people especially the marginalized. The data revealed that the literacy level in the selected region of study was 30 percent only. This is much lower than the female literacy rates both at the national level (65.46%) and state level (70.73 %). Across the districts, Gir Somnath's literacy level is the highest (55 %), followed by Junagadh and Porbandar. The lowest literacy rate is observed in Amreli district (10 %).

Regarding the level of literacy, 21.25 percent of the respondents had only less than 8 years of formal education and only 8.5 percent received up to 12 years of education.

Performance of Women Vegetable Vendors

The details regarding net income earned by women vegetable vendors is given in [Table-2]. The results reveal that on an average net earnings of women vegetable vendor were Rs. 502.39. The highest earnings were at Gir Somnath district (Rs. 906.05) followed by Porbandar (Rs. 425.35) and Junagadh (Rs. 385.93) district. The lowest earnings were at Amreli district (Rs. 292.25).

The performance of women vegetable vendors is described in [Table-3]. The data indicates performance of women vegetable vendors on the basis of their daily earnings. In Gujarat, the prevailing rate of minimum wage for unskilled labours is Rs. 86.20 + Rs. 20 special allowance *i.e.* Rs. 96.80, around Rs. 97. It reveals that overall 68.75 % of women earns more than prevailing minimum wage rate while 31.25 % of them were not able to earned minimum wage. Amongst the four markets, women from Gir Somnath district (90 %) were earn more than minimum wages, followed by Junagadh (70 %) and Porbandar(65%). However, 50 percent of women from Amreli district were not able to earn minimum wage. The performance of women vegetable vendors based on performance index is given in [Table-4]. It reveals the performance of women vegetable vendors based on Performance Index. It reveals that, majority of respondents (82.50 %) performed moderately and 17.50 percent showed high performance. No women shown poor performance.

Problems Faced by Women Vegetables Vendors

The various problems faced by the women vendors are mentioned in [Table-5]. It can be observed from the table that majority of the respondents were facing the problems of starting of purchase early in the morning (80 %), no social support (71.25 %) and time consuming (62.50 %) in their order. But looking to across districts, major problems found different *i.e.* in Junagadh, no social support (80 %) and maintaining house and vegetable vending is physical and mental strain (75 %); in Gir Somnath, starting of purchase early in the morning (100 %) and vending is time consuming (70 %); in Porbandar, starting of purchase early in the morning (70 %), no social support (70 %) and in Amreli, starting of purchase early in the morning (80 %) and shortage of funds (80 %). Thus, it can be inferred that time of auction of vegetable needs to be rescheduled in favour of women vegetable vendors. Problem of shortage of fund is moderately faced by the respondents in all districts except Amreli. Hence, initiative of acquisition of funds at reasonable rate needs to be taken either by nationalised bank or cooperative credit societies all the district places.

Conclusion

In India, women constitute around 50 % of its population. So, the development of women is inevitable for the development of India. From the study it is concluded that, OBCs category dominating the vegetable vending business. Women adopt this business after marriage because it is their family business. Though, literacy level is very low in women vegetable vendors, they are able to earn more than prevailing minimum wages in Gujarat for unskilled labours. On average net earnings of women vegetable vendor was Rs. 502.39. It varied from Rs. 292.25 (Amreli) to Rs. 1216.17 (Gir Somnath). The business of vegetable vending is time consuming and extends from early morning to late evening. Women vegetable vendors effectively balance between their working and social life. However, early starting, long working hours creates problem for them and they feel physical and mental strain. Thus, women vegetable vendors are very important part of the informal sector in the country as they are not only a source of self-employment but also provide affordable and convenient service to the society. They deserve support not only they are part of unorganized sector but also they are productive and serve an economic purpose. However, the efforts of Government are either not enough or may not be reached up to them due to their illiteracy or unawareness. Efforts should be make for wide awareness regarding prevailing policies and programmes for them.

Suggestions

NGOs and social activists should come forward to provide some informal education to the women vegetable vendors, so that they can understand their rights and duties. Special efforts should be made by the Government to provide them vocational education.

Self-help groups, by providing micro credit to women vegetable vendors, should solve the problem of shortage of funds. Otherwise, they have to borrow from moneylenders at high rates of interest.

Financial Institutions, especially Banks, should provide information and create awareness amongst the women vegetable vendors regarding procedures and benefits of saving and borrowing from financial institution.

Application of research: The study shows the performance of women vegetable vendors and problems faced by them

Research Category: Agri Business Management

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