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## **SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF WOMEN VEGETABLE VENDORS IN TIRUCHIRAPLLAI TOWN DURING COVID 19 PERIOD (MARCH - JUNE)**

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### **Abstract**

*Selling the vegetable is the common unorganized sector which does not need any skill and education and it is easy for the women to do it. In Tiruchirapalli town there are more than 300 vegetable vendors selling vegetables in and around the Rock fort town. Out of which majority of them are women selling vegetables. In this paper the researcher made an attempt to know the problems which are all faced by the women vegetable vendors during the lockdown period. Both primary data and secondary data have been collected for the study. Primary data have been collected from the 50 women vegetable vendors using questionnaires' method. In and around Rock fort town is the heart of the city and majority of the shopping has been carried out here. So, that the place has been taken and convenient random sampling technique has been used for collecting the data. Due to lockdown they suffer a lot and only few of them having pulling cart and use it for their sales. The municipal authority shifted the market place. Due to this they suffer a lot. This is the main reason for this study. The in depth analysis of the socio economic facets of the women vegetable vendors in Tiruchirappalli town has led to the unambiguous conclusion that their economic condition is really deplorable during this situation and there is a action plan required to improve their condition.*

**Keywords:** women vegetable vendors, lockdown period, Tiruchirappalli town

### **Introduction**

Women vegetable vendors are render a valuable service to Tiruchirapalli town and this is the major income to their family also. This business requires a very low capital and skills. Apart from this the entry and exit barrier in this trade is also very low. Due to the main reasons most of the vegetable vendors chooses this occupation for their livelihoods. This business gives a marginal income to their

family and they run their family with great difficulties. Due to covid 19 lockdown the business was affected in a large extend and they face a lot of difficulties. The municipal authority allotted a place to sell their vegetables. Some of them are having cart and they sell their vegetables in and around the Rock fort town. Due to this situation government helps them by way of providing loan with low rate of interest.

There are some initiatives made by the government for their upliftment, even though they are facing several challenges in order to run their business. The findings of the study reveal that the women street vendors need adequacy of space, threat of eviction and the problem of security. They also expecting government to take action and provide them hygienic, well organized and secure market place.

### Review of Literature

Chen, Martha Alter; Joann Vanek and Marilyn Carr (2004). In this sector women are having more oppurtunties than the men. Nearly 60 percent of them engaging in the business.

Sekar, (2008). Street vendors are having more problems like insecurity harassment in public place. etc

Channamma K C (2010). Mahileya Dudime: Ekaroopateya Prashne, Working Paper No.249, Women are mainly found a lot in the street vegetable vending activity. They sell perishable goods like vegetables, fruits and flowers with addition to the other disadvantages associated with the informal sector, the easily perishable nature of items sold also makes women vendors more vulnerable in the street vending activity.

Puja Mishra, "Challenges Faced By Women Street Vendors: A Case Study of Ranchi District (2018) 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.

Trivedi S.M.\*, Khunt K.A., Bharodia C.R. And Bhatt J.D "Performance And Problems Of Women Vegetable Vendors In Saurashtra Region", (2019) 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. 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.

Unnamalai.T "Women Vegetable Vendors' Socio Economic Conditions and Working Environment in Tiruchirapalli Town"(2017) 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 Rock fort town has been selected as a sample unit and 100 women have been selected as sample size for this study.

### Research Gap

Previous studies analyzed about the problems of women vegetable vendors in Tiruchirappalli and other states. This study is made an attempt to know the problems faced by the women vegetable vendors during the lockdown period.

### Importance of the study

India is an agrarian in nature. Now there is a deep fall in the income from agricultural industries and the economic development of our nation mainly depends upon the agricultural sector. Women workers are take part in the agricultural and allied activities. Like this women play a vital role in marketing of agricultural produce. They generate additional income to their family by way of selling vegetables. Usually women vegetable vendors are facing a lot of problems; In addition to that they face problems during the lockdown period. They are having poor income at the same time the products they are selling are perishable in nature. 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. In and around Rock fort town there are more than 500 street vendors. Out of which more than 300 are selling vegetables, greens, potato, tomato, onion and ginger. More than 60 percent of

them are women. The present focuses only the problems which are all faced by them during the lockdown period.

### Objectives of the study

The main aim of the study is to find out the problems faced by the women vegetable vendors. Along with the following objectives are framed.

1. To know the demographical profile of the women vegetable vendors.
2. To know the socio economic status of the women vegetable vendors
3. To know the problems faced by the women vegetable vendors
4. To know the specific problems of women vegetable vendors during the lockdown period.
5. To offer some suggestions

### Methodology of the study

Both primary data and secondary data have been collected for the study. Secondary data have been collected from the websites, journals and books. Primary data have been collected from the respondent those who are selling vegetables in and around the Rock fort town. Percentage analysis, chi square test and ranking technology have been used for the study.

### Hypothesis of the study

1. **Ho:** There in no relationship between their personal profile and their overall status of their life.
2. **Ho:** There is no relationship between the Age and the problem faced by them.
3. **Ho:** There is no relationship between the Age and the problem faced by them.

### Limitations of the study

The study has some limitation and the limitations are listed below.

1. Only 50 respondents have been selected for the study.
2. The study has been done only in the Rock fort Town. Vendors from no other area are not taken.
3. The data have been collected for 10 days only.(10 June – 20 June 2020)

### Results and discussions

The finding from the primary data of the study has been consolidated and given below. In and around Rockfort town there are more than 3500 vendors are functioning. Out of which nearly 300 vegetable vendors are having permanent place to sell their vegetables. Out of which nearly 150 women vegetable vendors are selling vegetables and they are having regular customers for their produce.

1. 14 percent of them are the age group of 30 -40, 68 percent of them are from the age group of 40 -50, 11 percent of them are the age group of 50 -60 and 7 percent of them are the above the age of 60. (34) Majority of them are from the age group of 40 -50. Due to their family situation and need of money they opt the profession.
2. Only 7 of them are studied up to higher secondary level. 42 Of them are school dropout and 1 of them completed their graduation. Majority of them are the school dropout. So, that they forced to choose the business.
3. 92% of them are married, 6% of them widows and 2 of them are unmarried.
4. 97% of them living in nuclear family system.
5. 93% of them are living in rental houses and remaining of them are

own house with thatched roof and they are not having sanitation facility.

6. 78 percent of them sitting and selling their products 4 percent of them are selling their goods by walk, remaining of them using cart to sell their products.
7. They wok minimum of 10 hours in a day.
8. 76 percent of the street vegetable women vendors are getting a monthly income of upto Rs.5000, 22 percent of them getting an income of Rs. 5000 to 10000,only 2 percent of them are getting more than 10000.
9. 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.

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.

#### Problems faced by the respondents during the covid lockdown period

Table 1  
Problems faced by the women vegetable vendors

Sl.No	Particulars	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Dis Agree	Stongly Dis Agree		Total	Rank
1	Price fluctuation	22	15	3	3	7	50	198	VII
2	Warehousing problems	26	14	5	4	1	50	218	III
3	Sudden fall in demand	39	8	1	1	1	50	235	I
4	Credit facilities	12	13	7	9	8	49	177	VIII
5	Financial	32	5	2	6	5	50	215	V

	problem								
6	Difficult to access their regular customer	22	14	5	6	3	50	208	VI
7	Low income	32	9	5	2	2	50	221	II
8	Place of selling	26	15	1	5	3	50	216	IV

Sources: Primary dat

The problems which are all faced by the respondents are carried out and the rank has been given according to their weightage. There is a sudden fall in

demand and they are not able to store their products. Due to this reason they got very low income.

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

	Age	Monthly Income	Monthly expenses	Monthly savings	Health Condition	Social Relationship	Overall Status
Age	1						
Monthly Income	0.58	1					
Monthly expenses	0.52	0.24	1				
Monthly savings	0.21	0.34	0.65	1			
Health Condition	0.12	0.67	0.15	0.43	1		
Social Relationship	0.07	0.66	0.54	0.56	0.34	1	
Overall Status	0.39	0.80	0.42	0.77	0.65	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

2. **Ho:** There is no relationship between the Age and the problem faced by them.

3. **Ho:** There is no relationship between the Age and the problem faced by them.

Sl.No	Variable 1	Variable 2	Table value	Table value	Calculated Value	Result	Inferences
1	Age	Problems Faced By the respondent	$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$	1.265	32.34	Null hypothesis Rejected	No relationship between the variables
2	Income			1.265	24.22	Null hypothesis Rejected	No relationship between the variables

The null hypotheses have been rejected. There is no relationship between the age and income of the respondent and the problems faced by them. Irrespective of the age and income all the respondents are faced the problems occurred due to covid.

### Suggestions

1. Street vegetable women vendors can be trained to prevent their produce because of its nature. If the government make necessary steps to train them to prevent their vegetables it may be useful for future also.
2. The government provides Rs.1000 those who are having ration card. But it is not enough to lead their life. The government can assist them financially by providing loan or at the subsidies the rate of interest.
3. Even though a separate market place is located in the town, the place cannot be easily accessible. They can permit them to continue their business in their usual area.

### Conclusion

The in-depth analysis of the socio economic conditions of the street vegetable women vendors in Tiruchirappalli town has been made with the sample of 50 respondents. This situation is affected them in a large extent. Government made some measures to upgrade their life. But they are not sufficient to them to lead their usual life. Already there are in a pathetic situation and the pandemic situation affected

hugely. They are also facing the financial problems and in the clutches of the money lenders. If the government allows them to do their business in their usual place and support financially they will slowly recovered from this situation.

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