

Women Entrepreneurship among Selected Street Vegetables Vendors in Lunglei, Mizoram- Challenges and Problems

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ABSTRACT

The word “Entrepreneurship” is the prosperity of mind in taking or facing risk with confidence to either achieve the predetermined objectives or aims. A male dominating country, India, majority of the women are producing home need items by staying at home without earning any penny, they are considered to be sitting at home and take care of the family or do other work at home. In the field of entrepreneurship, women are having great opportunity for doing their business with each of their respective skills. From the study it will be known whether the women entrepreneurs are working for the sake of backing up the family income or working a hard in real in order to support the family or herself. This study helps to find out the socio-economic origins and characteristics, various problems faced as well as motivational factors that encourage women to start up their street business. The study is based on both primary and secondary data by circulating questionnaires and reading articles and journals. Through this paper, it is planned to find out the motivational factors, problems faced while starting up enterprise and other barriers face during operations of these women entrepreneurs. Questions regarding their personal background, family background, qualifications and status were also asked as to get clear information.

Keywords: *Women entrepreneur, street vendors, motivational factors, problems.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is the accomplishment of setting or building up new business, taking it on financial risks in the aim of profit and revenue. Entrepreneurship in India has crossed a long journey since the early times to the emergence of manufacturing enterprises in the pre independence times followed by the successful entrepreneurial pursuits of the leaders of Indian Industry. The Government of India has defined woman entrepreneur as one who possesses and least 51% of the employment produced in the enterprise to a woman. Women entrepreneur can be defined as a woman or group of women who start, organizing and combining the factors of manufacture, operating the enterprise and undertaking the risks and handle economic doubt involved in successively a business enterprise.

Street vending is one of the world’s oldest and most widespread occupations. Cross and Karides, 2007 observed that though the micro commercial operated by street vendors are struggling, they are not at the distant of the society. Rather, street vendors not only participate in commercial exchange and urban politics, but also shape the organisation of cities. Street vending as a profession has been in existence in India since ancient time. However, the number has increased manifold in recent

years. Street vendors may be motionless in the sense that they occupy space on the roadways or other public as well as private spaces, or may be mobile (Bhowmik, 2005). According to Kathleen Staudt (1996) street vendors use public space for commerce and trade. Many people can do this sort of income generating work without degrees and large amount of capital.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the socio-economic backgrounds and characteristics of women entrepreneurs among the street vegetable vendors.
2. To identify the motivational factors that encourage the women entrepreneurs to start their street business.
3. To find out the challenges and problems faced by the women entrepreneurs in Lunglei.

3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The street market in Lunglei provides a wide array of goods and markets on Saturday are particularly spread out on the street. Some roads are either blocked or jammed for vehicular traffic to enable smooth selling of goods on the streets. Despite of all these crowded vegetables selling place, women have ambitions and courage to run their own street business. Hence, the study helps to know each of the women street entrepreneurs about their weakness, problems, and their status about their business.

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Mizoram is a predominantly tribal occupied state hidden in the north eastern corner of India and industrially backward where majority of the population dependent on agriculture as their occupation. In Lunglei, local street market plays a crucial role in livelihood security and is in the centre of local commerce. There is a need to know the conditions of women entrepreneurs among the street vendors as well as their problems faced or the opportunities they have.

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter aims to review and present some of the relevant data and findings from journals that are related to the emphasis of this study. The reviews will deliver a deep vision into the subject matter, modifying the need of the study and its significance in the current day.

- According to Cross and Morales (2007), street vending reduces overhead costs of rent and conveniences is ideally matched for low-skilled employment and fits with a new ideology of entrepreneurship.
- Street vending is an important option for people, as it necessitates minor financial input and basic services and skills, though the income is low (Bhowmik 2007).
- Through the detailed and careful study of the character traits, potentials, qualities, performances, and practices of B.D. Gareware, the author has illustrated the living example of a successful entrepreneur and the important attributes required for success.
- Vengotanakro and Chozule (2006) conducted a study on women vegetable vendors in four villages in Nagaland suggesting a better implementation of policy and development plans for tribal women.

- Cohen et al and Tinker (1985) observed that religious beliefs have a strong influence on the operation of women enterprises in the informal sector.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used primary and secondary data for collecting information from women entrepreneurs among street vegetable vendors in Lunglei. Primary data have been collected from 30 number of women entrepreneurs through a structured questionnaire and secondary data is collected from websites, research articles, and several journals.

Sampling technique- Percentage method

Sample size – 30

Sample area- Lunglei, Mizoram.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

According to Wenneker's research in 1999, women are globally considered as weaker gender in terms of physical as well as emotion, therefore there is several prospects opening a develop business professionals as an area is still quite unexplored and more attention is required.

PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

- Generally, women do not have much property in their name in order to operate security from outside as they have less belongings so faced **financial problems** as banks and bankers even think and reflect some women as less credit worthy.
- Due to shortage of raw material and essential contributions women entrepreneurs have **scarcity of raw materials** in different contributions.
- Mostly women entrepreneur does not have a great administrative set up as to advance in a huge amount of money for campaigning as well as advertisement. Hence, they must feature a **stiff competition** for vending their products ultimately this kind of contest conclude in the insolvency of women enterprises.
- Not like other men, women flexibility in India is highly limited due to many reasons. A single or independent woman asking for room is still looked upon doubt for the society due to **limitations of mobility**.
- Mainly a women's duty is to take care of the children and other associates of the family (**family ties**). For a married woman, she needs to have an acceptable balance between her business and family.
- Because of **lack of education** women are having less knowledge of business, technology, data and market information. Moreover, lack of education results low achievement, less motivation among women and creates problems for them in the setting up and starting of business initiatives.
- Women have disadvantage with regards to male reservations about a women's part, skill and capacity, role and are treated consequently. In **male-dominated** Indian society, women are not treated equal or same to men and this become a barrier to women entry into business.

7. MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS

One of the motivational factors of women entrepreneur in India among rural people is to improve the quality of their life of children and to share their contributions by working on their own in order to overcome family economic burden. Adjusting, managing and planning all the household and their business life is also one of the factors. When the husband, who is the main bread earner of the family died, there is no other option for the mother, hence, women need to start their own business despite of all their other service and duties in keeping the household and family together.

CHARACTERISTIC ROLES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR

- Women entrepreneurs who are knowledgeable, smart, imaginative, creative and have the right organization influence, support and services.
- Innovative women have further ability to work hard because their imaginative ideas come to a fair play where hard work is needed to build up an enterprise.
- Women entrepreneurs usually have an intention to fulfil their dream and their aim is to make their dream transferred into an idea enterprise.
- Decision to take risks like willingness to step up with new idea and ability of planning in making calculations and forecasting estimations

8. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

SOCIO ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF STREET ENTREPRENEURS

Though the literacy rates were quiet high in Lunglei, 16.7 percent of the respondents attained only primary level education, about 40 percent completed middle school. Majority of the entrepreneurs were in the age between 41-40 years and most of them are married women.

Main occupation of the family was agriculture for 80% of the family and earned less than 60,000 annually and barely sustained their livelihood from this form of business activity. Interestingly, the present study observed that street entrepreneurship is an important avenue for women with low educational qualifications. In the absence of gainful employment in the formal sector, this form of business activity has significant implications for poverty alleviation for the under privileged tribal women in Mizoram.

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS

22 of women entrepreneurs in the present study depend on their business for sustaining a livelihood. For 21 of the respondents, Unemployment arises as one of the most important motivating factors that has determined their entry into entrepreneurship.

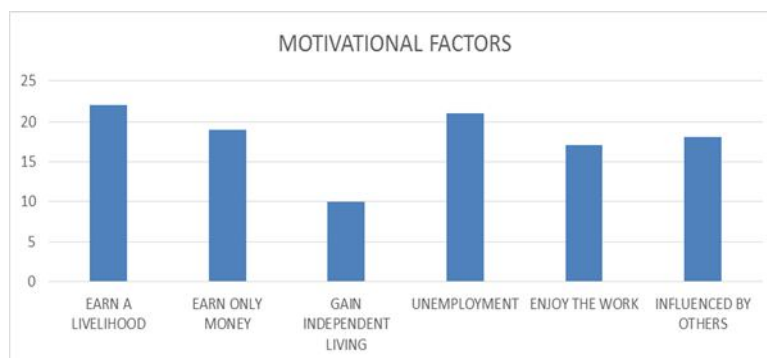


FIG 1

9. PROBLEMS FACED-

1. INFRASTRUCTURE

53.3% of the respondents' faced infrastructure problem because of **high cost of transport**, and 23.3% of them said it is due to the **lack of space for selling** vegetables.

2. MARKETING

50% of women street vendors are facing problems in marketing as there are **low terms of payment to suppliers**.

3. FINANCE

40% of them have finance problems as they **lack fixed capital** for their business.

4. PERSONAL PROBLEMS

60% of women faced personal problems as they are engaged in **dual duties**, most women must work in the household too. Hence, they usually face problems when it comes to multiple works. On the other hand, 8% of the **husbands and family object** them to do their street business.

10. FINDINGS

- Most of the women (respondents) started their business between the year 2006-2013, where 33.3% of them started in the year and one in 2012 and another one in 2013. These women entrepreneurs were mostly in the age group of 41-50, having a middle school qualification at the most.
- 60% of them are married women, 7 women among the street vegetable vendors are widowed and 5 of them are either divorced or separated. 100% of them claimed as Christians.
- The family size of these women is mainly between 5-10 members and their main occupation is agriculture, having the annual income between the range of 40,001-60,000 as per 66.7% of the respondents
- 22 of these women entrepreneurs started their business because they want to earn a livelihood, 21 of them started because they were unemployed. Moreover 19 of them get motivated to do this business as they want to earn money alone.
- From 30 respondents, 16 of them, 53.3% face problems as there is a very much high cost of transportation. Where 23.3% of these women said there is lack of space for selling. And

50% of the respondents said there is a problem when it comes to terms of payment to the suppliers in their marketing.

- 12 of the women, 40%, faced financial problems as they have lack of fixed capital. Lack of working capital and high rates of interest were also other problems they faced.
- 60% of the women entrepreneurs, faced personal problems as they have dual duties, because mainly women have multiple works including household chores. Besides, some of these women get objection from their husband as well as their other family members in doing their street vegetable selling's.

11. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- As the research area is across other state, it is impossible to physically go and meet the women entrepreneurs, hence it takes a time and cannot be taken more of the response from afar.
- Just because they are literate, most of these women are not well educated. So, they have to answer the questions with the help of their children, friends or help from others.
- Some of the women street vegetable vendors are unaware of such research and neglect or rejects to give response saying it as a waste of time or needed to answer it.

12. SUGGESTIONS

Government can give personal support to these women entrepreneurs who are doing small street business in order to earn their living. They can give loans with low interest and make low cost of transportation for them as well. Government as well as the society can also help them by giving them more space for selling their vegetables as most of them are facing problems; lacking space for selling, lack of seats etc. Street entrepreneurship in Aizawl has emerged as an important occupation for alleviation of poverty and the government should recognize and provide support to such entrepreneurs.

13. CONCLUSIONS

Transportation and carriage related were the most significant problems faced by these women entrepreneurs which led to marketing disorders as well. Lack of fixed capital and lack of working capital emerged as the main finance related problems. There is a need to provide efficient, regular subsidized transportation to the entrepreneurs and formulate strategies to deal with their financial constraints by promoting micro finance schemes among the vegetable vendors. From the observation of Cohen et al; the global success of micro finance programs has demonstrated that economically active, low income women like street vendors are credit worthy and can effectively use credit and savings services to improve their lives.

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