

A Study on Marketing Performance of Women Fish Vendors

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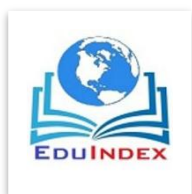
Abstract

The paper highlights the present marketing situation as well as socio economic condition of head loading fisher women. In their day to day life, they encounter so many challenges related to marketing field such as lack of transport facilities, toilet facilities, portable water facilities, undefined working hours and working days, sexual harassment, uncertain bargaining, gender discrimination, fear of loss and so on. Especially in the case of gender discrimination and sexual harassment they tackle it boldly, which is handled with their mental courage. In the marketing field the male fish vendors treat them as their equal competitors. Which represents that the female fish vendors have been empowering themselves competes with their male counterparts. This study surveys the various costs incurred by the women fish vendors for the single time fish vending and also important available fish species and their prices during the different seasons. Furthermore this research also highlights the volume of daily transaction of women fish vendors and their preferable marketing places for different species of fish. Their educational range starts from illiterate to secondary level and their economic support is more considerable to their families. The study area for this research is Periyakadu, which is a mini hamlet in Kanyakumari district. For the purpose of analysis Percentage, Likert scales are used.

Keywords:

Introduction

Fishing sector plays an important role in the development of economy. It enhances the economy by generating employment, eradicating poverty, increasing the foreign exchange by means of export and also provides nutritional security. In India fishing is one of the major



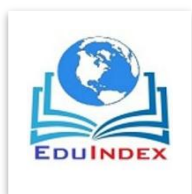
industries in the state of the coastal region. India is in the second position among largest fish producing countries in the world. The fishing sector covers not only harvesting of fish but also marketing and preservation. Fish marketing means to make fish available to the consumer at the right time in the right place. There are two types of marketing namely direct and indirect marketing. In the direct marketing the fish farmer directly sells to the consumer without any interference of middle men. This type of marketing takes place occasionally. On the other hand in the indirect market there is involvement of some intermediaries such as auctioneer, wholesaler, and retailer and finally the head loading vendors. Mostly the fishermen do not sell the fish directly to the final consumers. Because marketing that requires special skill. Fishes are perishable in nature, and it cannot be kept for a long time. Fish farmers leave marketing to intermediaries. These intermediaries bridge the gap between the producers and the final consumers. Among these intermediaries head loading fish vendors play an important role in the marketing field. Compared to the men, the number of women fish vendors engaged in marketing at the neighbourhood is more than men. They contribute to the local economy by means of household income and nutritional security to the consumers. They sell the fish in different forms such as fresh fish, preserved fish and dried fish. The fresh fish are acquired by the women fish vendors in auction on the basis of size, category of the fish immediately after the arrival at the sea shore. Preserved fish are normally stored in boxes. The dried fish is mostly unsold fish which are preserved in sunlight and sold in the weekend market. The women fish vendors prefer different places for marketing such as conventional market, door delivery, street side hawking, road side vending, fish landing centres or harbour. Some fish vendors offer the service of cleaning and slicing facilities at no or least additional service charges

Limitation of the study

The study period covers only three months. It is very short period. Moreover there is deviation in the income, expenditure and the volume of transaction at different periods. The fish vendors sell fish keeping rate of the fish according to the demand of the day. Standard rate for the weight of the fish is not done by the women fish vendors. But for the convenient of the study approximate weight of the fish and its rate are taken into consideration.

Statement of the Problem

The women fish vendors are naturally forced to this occupation by the poor family condition and the helplessness. They face so many challenges in their marketing career. The working conditions are very poor. They are physically as well as mentally affected due to lack of sanitation facilities, improper storage facilities, lack of transportation facilities and so on. Moreover they are charged for marketing the fish whether they incur profit or loss in business. Their working hours are uncertain, depends upon the catch for fishermen, demand, festival and auspicious occasions in the society. Another foremost problem of marketing the



fish is uncertainty or price fluctuation. Furthermore most of the women fish vendors in this community are uneducated or under educated, So they have lack of awareness about mobile phone to get the quick information regarding the availability of fish at cheaper rate and the demand for fish in the particular market.

Significance of the study

This study identifies the challenges faced by the women fish vendors. In addition it manifests the present situation of women fish vendors in the particular area and their activities in the marketing field. Though they have low level of education, this research expresses their empowerment in the marketing field

Objectives of study

This study proposes the following objectives

1. To find out the volume of operation of head loading fish vendors per day.
2. To analyse the price variation of fish species during the lean, middle, peak seasons

Methodology

The study is conducted on the basis of primary as well as secondary data. The primary data is collected from the sample respondents through well structured interview schedule. The schedule is pretested by pilot study and necessary corrections and cross checks made to structure the interview schedule. The secondary data is gathered from published articles, book, websites and other sources. Simple random sampling technique is adopted to construct the study. In the study area of Periyakadu 50 samples are selected who pursue their business as head loading fish vendors. For the purpose of analysis Percentage, Likert scale is used.

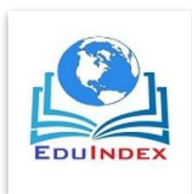
Results and Discussion

Socio-Economic condition

Generally head loading women fish vendors in India is still poor and they live in below poverty line. The following table expresses the socio-economic condition of sample respondents.

Table 1: Socio-economic condition

Sl.No	Variable	Categories	Respondent	Percent
1.	Age	35-40	6	12
		41-45	27	54
		46-50	13	26



		Above 50	4	8
2.	Education	Illiterate	1	2
		Primary	17	34
		Secondary	32	64
3.	Experience in marketing (in year)	Below 5	7	14
		6-10	29	58
		11-15	11	22
		Above 15	3	6
4.	Income (per month)	Below 4000	19	38
		4001-8000	28	56
		Above 8000	3	6
5.	Expenditure (per month)	Below 6000	3	6
		6001-12000	9	18
		Above 12000	38	76

The above table highlights that 54 percent of the respondents belong to the age group of 41-45, 64 percent of the respondents are educated up to secondary level of education and 2 percent are illiterate. Moreover in the concept of experience 58 percent has been engaging for about 6-10 years. Income and expenditure of the sample respondents represent 56 percent receive an income of 4001-8000 and 76 percent of the respondents' expenditure is above 12000. It is inferred that the expenditure of the respondent is more than their income.

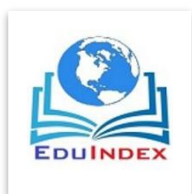
Prices of most selling fish species in different seasons

The below table expresses that the price of most selling fish species in different seasons during the year 2018-2019. These prices may not be accurate value but to the nearest value. The prices fluctuate day to day.

Table 2: Prices of important fish species for per kilogram

Sl.No	Name of fish	Seasons and prices per kg		
		Lean season	Medium season	Peak season
1.	Commerson's Anchovy (Nethali)	80	60	45
2.	Indian Oil Sardine (Chalai)	75	50	30
3.	Mackerel (Ayila)	250	130	50
4.	Tuna (Soorai)	160	120	80
5.	Ribbon fish Chavalai	250	140	60

The above table reveals that Mackerel, Tuna, Ribbon fish demand high price with compared to Commersons Anchovy and Indian Oil Sardine. Moreover Commersons



Anchovy and Indian Oil Sardine easily sell by fish vendors in the market. Because this price level fits to the poor as well as middle class people.

Volume of transaction

The below table depicts the volume of transaction of women fish vendors per day .

Table 3: volume of transaction

Sl.No	Amount in Rs	No.of respondents	Percentage
1.	Below 300	15	30
2.	301-600	26	52
3.	601-900	7	14
4.	Above 900	2	4
Total		50	100

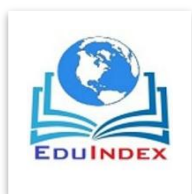
The table expresses that 30 percent of the sample respondents' volume of transaction is below Rs.300 and 52 percent of the sample respondents' volume of transaction is Rs.301-600. These are the most of the sample respondents' scale of transaction. Moreover only 4 fish vendors' transaction is above 900.

Most preferable marketing place

The below table depicts the most preferable marketing places on the basis of their convenient, profitable and so on in the Likert scale.

Table 4: Most preferable marketing place

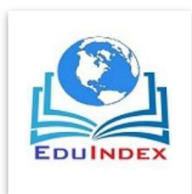
SI. No	Marketing place	Mean score	Rank
1	Fish landing centre or harbour	3.34	II
2	Door delivery	3.3	III
3	Street hawking	3.16	IV
4	Road side vending	2.94	V
5	Conventional market	3.9	I



The above table highlights the mean score by using Likert scale, in which the first rank is obtained by conventional market. Fish landing centre or harbour has the rank of second. The third rank is scored by door delivery and fourth, fifth ranks are given to Street hawking and road side vending.

Findings of the study

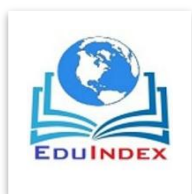
1. All the women fish vendors belong to the Christian and fishing community.
2. In this study 6% of the sample respondents are widow. So they are the sole earner of the family.
3. Ramanputhur, Irulappapuram, Vadasery, Mattuchandhai, Athikadai, Puthoor, Kathar market, Eathamozhi are the important marketing places for these women fish vendors.
4. The women fish vendors require enough energy to call the customer at high pitch voice and to make the bargaining with customers.
5. Though women fish vendors are higher in number, men only earn more profit than women because they have two wheelers for marketing fish. So they can easily manage demand and supply. In short both men and women purchase the fish at same rate in a particular place, if there is less demand in a particular market men can shift to another market easily by means of two wheeler, but it is hard to women because they have to pay much amount for transport.
6. Gender discrimination is very common in all markets. Men also feel the women, as their equal competitors, which denotes women empowerment.
7. Most of the fish vendors had been used the polythene cover to parcel fishes. By the government restriction they now use the newspapers.
8. Women fish vendors prefer private transport to go for purchasing as well as selling the fish, as it suits them to carry their product from landing centre to market. After selling the fish they prefer public transport to reduce the transport cost.
9. Among the sample respondents 22% take no leave for vending. Sunday is not a working day for harvesting the fish. Some fish vendors go for marketing the dry fish, this dry fish is either derived from unsold fish or purchased in the market.
10. Generally certain days of week Friday, Sundays and Tuesdays are considered least demand days for fish products. As fish has been very much regularly consumed; the customers prefer to avail meat on festival days. The volume of transaction on these specific days would be low.



11. Ban period has minor impact on their business that Chinna Muttom and Muttom (Japiar) harbours are within the distance of about 35 km. The ban period for these harbours are vary.
12. The women fish vendors have to pay market fee for each market. This amount is very from market to market. Every day they visit two or three markets when the fish is unsold in one.
13. The women fish vendors faced so many challenges in their marketing field, they try to provide better education to their younger generation.
14. For a single time earning they have to pay labour cost for porters, market cost, transport cost, toilet fee, freezing cost, Mahimai (the amount pay for purchasing the fish at this village).
15. The marketing fee each market varies and starts from Rs.10. In the case of labour cost for porter every woman fish vendor should pay to the porter for carrying the fish from the fish landing centres or harbour to the vehicle spot.
16. In some occasion all the simple respondents start their working operation in the early morning and complete nearly 2 p.m.
17. In the case of sanitation, only two markets (Vadasery, Mattuchandhai) have sanitation facilities which belong to the municipality. They are charged to avail the facilities. Moreover no markets have drinking water facilities, 36 per cent of the women fish vendors always carry drinking water with them. But some markets have municipality pipe to wash the vessel.
18. Only 38 per cent of the sample respondents have mobile phones.
19. In the marketing field they encounter lot of problems such as health problem, financial problem, sanitation problem, uncertain working hours, heavy work burden and so on. Sexual harassment is encountered by 28 per cent of vendors. They reveal that it is very common in the marketing field and have to tackle very boldly. It depends on their courage and mental strength.

CONCLUSION

This study may be very helpful to the local authorities and the policy makers to find out the present situation of head loading Fisher women. In the marketing field they face lot of difficulties such as uncertain working hours, working days, burden of heavy load and so on. They encounter challenges in the marketing field and there is no record for drop out in this business. This represents their poverty as well as their empowerment both mentally as well as physically. Furthermore most of the markets do not have basic facilities such as toilet



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facilities, drinking water facilities, drainage facilities and so on. Therefore the government organisations and non-government organisations may find the welfare better facilities to enable the women fish vendors function in marketing efficiently.

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