

**SOCIO – ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN  
VEGETABLE VENDORS IN AIZAWL CITY:  
A CASE STUDY**

**(A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE  
DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN ECONOMICS)**

**BY**

**LALCHHANHIMI**

**TO**

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**&**

**INFORMATION SCIENCES**

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# I

## MIZORAM UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

**Dr. Lalhriatpuii**  
**MZU, Tanhril-796009**

**09436152046**  
**0389-2330708**

### CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, “**Socio-Economic Status of Women Vegetable Vendors in Aizawl City: A Case Study**” by Lalchhanhimi has been written under my guidance. This dissertation is the result of her investigation into the subject and was never submitted to any other University for any research degree.

## **II**

# **DECLARATION**

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I, Lalchhanhimi, do hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form the base of the award of any previous degree to me or to do the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the dissertation has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/ Institute.

This is being submitted to the Mizoram University for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Economics.

**(LALCHHANHIMI)**

**(PROF. LIANZELA)**

**Head**

**(DR.LALHRIATPUII)**

**Supervisor**

### III

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**(LALCHHANHIMI)**

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## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Mizoram is a small state lying approximately between 21.58'N to 24.35'N latitude and 92.15'E to 93.29'E longitude. The total geographical area of the state is 21,087 sq.km., constituting about 0.64 percent of the total area of India (Statistical Handbook, 2015). It has a strategic location having international boundaries with Myanmar in the east and south, Bangladesh and of Tripura in the west. Further, the state is bounded by the Cachar district of Assam and Manipur in the north. Mizoram has about 404 km length of international boundary with Myanmar and 316 km length with Bangladesh.

The topography of Mizoram consists predominantly of mountainous terrain of tertiary rocks. The mountain ranges run north to south direction in parallel series. These ranges are separated from one another by narrow and deep river valley with only a few and small patches of flat lands lying in between them. The terrain of Mizoram is young and so the geomorphic features do not show much diversity in the formation of the landforms. Most of the landforms observed are of erosion nature.

The drainage system of the state consists of a number of small rivers and streams. Most of them are of ephemeral nature, depending on monsoon rains. Their volume and level fluctuate greatly in dry



## 1.2 THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN MIZORAM

**Background:** Although the condition of women in Mizoram is comparatively better than in other states of the country, yet, the position of the women in the traditional Mizo society was not much different from that of the position given to women elsewhere in the country.

The traditional Mizo society is based strictly on what is known as extreme patriarchal society of institution in which women are reduced practically to second-class citizen or slave. Within the narrow sense of the marriage contract as per the customary law, woman can be bought or sold by fixing a nominal bride's price amounting to about ₹ 400 to ₹ 500 only. Besides if a man has a child with a girl outside the wedlock, he has to pay a pittance of the bastard's price of ₹ 40 only.

Women do not have practically any saying in all the decision making whether at home or outside. They are supposed to contribute in the process of procreation and it is their duty to rear and nurture the children in addition to the daily household or domestics' works. They are not supposed to have any independent religious loyalty, but they are required to follow the religion of their husbands. Discrimination against women is still prevalent even in church and other social organizations. Women are, till today, not eligible to

become church elder or pastor of the church. They never occupy the top position in any social institutions or NGO's.

One of the most important discrimination against women in Mizo society is the right of inheritance. Strictly according to the customary law, women are not entitled to any inheritance to family or ancestral property. If there is no son in the family, the family property including the ancestral home should go to the nephew of the father, as the daughters including the mother of the family cannot keep the family property after the death of the family father. This is an extreme case of deprivation for women.

### **Status of Women in Mizoram in Some Selected Areas**

#### **(a) Education:**

Before the coming of the Missionaries into their land Mizos did not have written language/written scripts. All are in oral form. It was J.H.Lorraine and F.W.Savidge, the Missionaries who came to Mizoram and who took it upon themselves to develop the Mizo language into writing, introducing the Roman script. The Missionaries adopted education as the most important means of spreading Christianity and within a short period of 50 years a significant percentage of the population of Mizoram became educated.

Mizoram was a late starter in the field of education. Only in 1948 Mizoram could produce High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) candidates. In that year, in all there were 23 candidates (Mizo), out of which 11 were females. This is amazing considering that women have to struggle hard for continuing their education. Importance of literacy should never be ignored. Its contribution to the life and well being of the people deserved our attention. Literacy rate of Mizoram is third next to Kerela and Lakshadweep in the country. The following table shows the literacy rate of Mizoram and India over the past five decades.

**Table 1.1: Literacy Rates**

*(In percentage)*

**MIZORAM**

**INDIA**

Year	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
1971	53.79	60.49	46.71	34.45	45.95	21.97
1981	59.88	64.46	54.91	43.56	56.37	29.75
1991	82.27	85.65	78.60	52.11	63.86	39.42
2001	88.49	90.69	86.13	65.38	75.85	54.16
2011	91.58	93.72	89.40	74.04	82.14	65.46

*Source: Census of India Reports, 1971-2011*

Mizoram has done quite well in literacy percentage as compared to her neighboring states. Out of the total literacy (91.58%) of the state, male literacy is 93.72 and female literacy is 89.40. The national literacy is 74.04, of which male literacy is 82.14 and female literacy is 65.46. Mizoram has done quite well in the field of literacy in general and women literacy in particular. This has a far-reaching effect in the position and status of women in the society.

**(b) Work Participation:**

Until recently economic role of women did not attract much attention in Mizoram because much of women's work is done at home or outside the formal economy. It is now clear that the economic role of women cannot be isolated from the process of development, so the need is to better understand the issue. Women constitute a significant part of the workforce in Mizoram. But their participation in the process of economic development is not given due importance. Employment of women is a matter of vital importance for their economic empowerment. The following table shows the distribution of main workers in Mizoram.

One of the important aspects of female participation in the work sphere in Mizoram is the concentration of female workers in

the primary sector that is, cultivators and agricultural laborers. Not only that the percentage is quite high but also in the agricultural laborers it has shown an increasing trend. This force one to think that lacks of employment opportunities forces the female workers to concentrate in the agricultural and allied activities.

Work place discrimination occur between men and women who have equal productivity and tastes for working conditions, receive different wages, treatment and access to jobs. Employment and earning patterns lay out a consistent picture of women predominantly occupying low-paid jobs and working less than men given after adjustment for difference in tastes and productivity-related characteristics. These patterns are viewed as evidence of discrimination.

Women also supply a major portion of labor in the production of cash crops. But there is discrimination against women. While women are usually responsible for the strenuous job if weeding and transplanting, men control and production of commercial crops and derive profits by selling such crops. With an increase in the density of population land becomes more and more sub-divided and fragmented. So women are required to walk longer and longer distances, as they have to move from one field to another.



Due to resource constraints and riskiness of financial investments women in female-headed households are forced to remain engaged in traditional modes of economic activity. As result their productivity stagnates while that of men continues to rise. Since they are generally restricted to low-productivity informal sector employment and have to bear higher dependency burdens, they invariably remain poor and malnourished and do not stand a strong chance to obtain formal education, healthcare, or sanitation. In fact, the economic, welfare of women and children within poor families depend to a considerable extent on the economic status of women. This means that just as per capita income is an inadequate measure of absolute poverty; household income is a poor measure of individual welfare. The reason is that distribution of income within the household may be quite unequal.

Many women run small family businesses, called micro enterprises, which require very little initial capital and often involve the marketing of food articles and handicrafts produced under the domestic (rather than factory) system. No doubt women's limited access to capital leads to higher rates of return on their tiny investments. But the unbelievably low capital-labor ratios confine women to low productivity undertakings.

It is obvious that in successive census, concept of worker has been changing and some do not get a comparable data of women and their exact contribution to economic work. There is an exclusion of a whole range of activities performed by women, the unpaid economic activities; their contribution in work through domestic sectors, their long hours of household work remains unaccounted. The productivity of women in Mizoram is high as compared to the average Indian women; vegetables markets, petty shop etc. are run by them. They have an immeasurable contribution in the sustenance of family, shaping the destiny of the people and of the society. All these issues need proper investigation. The contributions of women must be accounted and treated as essential factors in the economic growth of a country.

**(c) Decision making in the Society:**

In a deeply communitarian society like Mizoram where social life is free, and men and women mixed together freely, it is not possible to make rigid distinction between male and female in work areas. It is therefore, possible for an outside observer to think that in Mizoram there is no distinction between men and women as stated by N.Chaterjee when she states that the interdependence and the mutual appreciation of each other's position and responsibilities "appears to point out that the status of women in their society was in

no way inferior to that of men and hence suffered none of these derogatory and discriminatory treatment as may be found in some of the more advance societies”. This judgment is not correct in the sense that when compared with the social life of traditional Hindus and Muslims, Mizo society is indeed free so far as the mixing up of men and women are concerned. But the fact is that in spite of all their social freedom and their significant contribution in the family, Mizo women are not liberated and they are regarded as subordinate to men and they are very much discriminated against in various aspects of life. Many examples may be pointed out concerning women whose earning is controlled by their husbands and ill-treated by them in spite of their earning and women who do household work but are subsequently divorced by their husbands.

Regarding the number of women working under the government and quasi-government organization in the State is also very small. There are 21.13 per cent women employees out of the total 85.06 per cent government employees as on March 2005 in the State. At the critical decision-making levels, the percentage of women is still very low. Out of the total sanctioned posts of 4,071 Group ‘A’ officers there are only 722 women Group ‘A’ officers.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, unless there are more women at the critical decision-making level and higher civil services, numbers would always

remain an area of concern. The challenge to ensure that de jure participation is also de facto participation continues, and this primarily calls for a range of supportive interventions. There is a need to encourage and provide new opportunities and new role models in decision making structures. Therefore, it can be said that Mizo women continue to suffer discrimination in the decision-making and occupy a lower status as compared with men. Women's equal participation in the decision-making process, policy-making, planning and administration is extremely important to ensure their equality while participating in the development process. It is therefore, necessary to do something so that women's participation in decision-making can be improved to cause women's development in the society.

**(d) Village/City Administration:**

Similarly villages are governed by Village Council; very seldom a woman is given membership in the governing authority and membership in the Village Council level administration. Women need to be empowered to be able to take part in the level of village/town administration. But the Core Committee-Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyaan (PMSA) in their State Charter of Demands submitted to the Government of Mizoram and to the Government of India in October 2008 included 33 per cent seat reservation for

women as per the 73rd and 74th CAAs. They also demanded to provide 33 per cent seats reservation for women in the Village Council Act and the same must be included in the party election manifestos to cause women empowerment in Mizoram. The General Election to Village Council, for a term of 2009-2012, held in February 2009 could have more women contestants of total 84. Out of this, 34 women were elected this time, which is the highest number ever recorded of women VC Member in Mizoram. In this election there were 557 Village Councils having 2071 VC seats within six districts of the state. This increasing number of women VC Members is due to the intervention of the Core Committee of Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyaan (PMSA) to women at maximum number.

**(e) *In Politics:***

The Mizoram Municipalities Act was legislated in 2007. But this Act does not provide for reservation of seats for women. Therefore, the Committee demanded reservation clause to be inserted by amending the Act and even met the Chief Minister to take positive action at earliest. The Government of Mizoram was very serious with this demand. Accordingly, the Review Committee of the Mizoram Municipalities was set up by the Government of Mizoram to review the Mizoram Municipalities Act of 2007. Mainly

based on the recommendations of the Review Committee, the Mizoram State Legislative Assembly amended the Act and clearly inserted the Reservation Clause of Article 243T provided by the 74th CAA. Moreover, the Core Committee of PMSA had submitted representations to all the leaders of the political parties for fielding woman candidate in the 2009 MP election on their party ticket.

Immense contribution by the women to the state economy, church and social activities, but they shy away when it comes to politics, assembly elections in particular. Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (MHIP), the state's biggest women's body and other women NGOs in Mizoram have given full moral support to the Core Committee's initiatives to have politically empowered women in the state. Since this is the case in the state of Mizoram, the women of the state especially women NGOs like Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyaan, All Mizoram Women Federation and Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl are putting pressure to the political party leaders to make room for women by reserving seat and by nominating women with party ticket. As a result, in the recent Hrangturzo Constituency By-election 2014 Ms. Vanlalawmpuii Chawngthu was given party ticket by the Mizoram Congress Pradesh. She contested in the By-election to Hrangturzo Constituency along with other male contestants. Fortunately, she won this election by getting 6721 votes

casted in favor of her. Thus, Mizoram State Legislative now has another woman MLA after 27 years in the history of Mizoram. She became the first and only woman elected member from Congress Party of Mizoram since the inception of the Party in the state.

It is imperative that women need to have their hold; they need empowerment and strong support in different social organizations, village/town/municipal levels administration and politics. Verbal encouragement will be of very little help, we need to give those responsibilities and opportunities, and then only empowerment will work. At the same time, on the part of women too it is necessary to accept responsibilities and learn to develop self-esteem, to claim that they are able and can do it.

The position of women in the Mizo society needs to be improved in certain fields, particularly in political field. Unlike their counterparts in the plain areas, Mizo women do not enjoy the rights and privileges provided by the constitutional amendments due to non-implementation of Panchayati Raj System and Nagarpalika in the state. Although women constitute half of the population, their participation in political life has been neglected all along. Therefore, women should be increasingly involved in the decision-making process at all levels. This involves greater participation of women in political leadership. The political parties should also realize that the

issues pertaining to women are not the issues to be dealt with by women only. They are to be discussed and decided at the national level. The parties must ensure larger proportion of seats at least 33 per cent to women. Reservation of seats in Parliament and Assemblies for women must be ensured through constitutional amendment. Women's issues should also be included in party manifestos. It has been accepted that the involvement of women in the politics and decision-making is a necessary step for a sound democratic society.

### **1.3 ECONOMIC TOPIC WHERE GENDER MATTERS**

After decades of work aimed at achieving equality between men and women, after the adoption of numerous international resolutions and instruments and after the passage of national legislation seeking to attain this goal, it seems that there has been progress towards the elimination of sex discrimination in employment. In general, women's working conditions have improved, as has legal environment for creating greater equality, job mobility has increased, wage gaps have narrowed access to education has become easier and work schedules are more flexible (Bell Carolyn Shaw 2002). All these factors have contributed to a



lessening of the constraints affecting female jobseekers and workers. Questions remain, however, as to the evidence of improvement.

**a. Labour Force Participation**

The labour force participation rate is an indicator of the overall level of labour market activity and its breakdown by sex and age group provides a profile of the distribution of the economically active population within the country. It is calculated by expressing the number of persons in the labour force as a percentage of the working-age population.

In every country for which information is available, women are less likely than men to participate in the labour force. This reflects the fact that demographic, social, legal and cultural trends and norms determine whether or not women's activities are regarded as economic, with the result that women experience greater difficulty obtaining entry to the labour market than do men. Furthermore, in addition to overcoming the numerous educational, institutional and cultural barriers which may prevent them from gaining access to the labour market, most women must also deal with the competing demands of housework and childcare.

Unlike men's labour force participation rates, which are high in all countries, there is great cross-country variation in women's rates. Women's low labour force participation rates can be attributed to

cultural factors. In some countries for example, the education of young women and women's work outside the home are often discouraged, owing to strict sex segregation for reasons of religion and marriage ability. Cultural practices and high fertility rates also play a large role in limiting women's economic opportunities. In developing countries, it is women's large share in agricultural work that accounts for their high labour force participation.

For majority of countries, the gap between women's and men's labour force participation rates narrowed between 1980 and 1997. This stemmed both from declining male rates and from rising female rates. Decreasing employment in the male-dominated industrial sector may have led to a reduction in the labour force activity of older men. The increase in women's labour force participation reflects, among other things, their rise in educational levels; the growth of the service sector, which includes industries in such areas as healthcare and retailing where women have particularly high representation and changing norms and laws concerning women's economic roles.

While economic development often brings about an increase in women's labour force participation, the question of whether women stake a claim to their country's growing wealth ultimately depends on that country's commitment to women's economic

equality with men. This commitment is reflected in anti-discrimination policies with respect to work, property and contracts, policies to assist families in meeting their responsibilities, and policies to ensure a minimum living wage and decent working conditions.

**b. Flexibility of Female Occupations**

It seems clear that women's responsibility for housework and child care affects the types of jobs many women prefer, since job flexibility in terms of hours (or part-time jobs and relatively easy entry/exit/re-entry enable women to combine work and family responsibilities more easily. On this gender theories and neo-classical theories agree.

However, there are two possible reasons why female occupations tend to be flexible in terms of hours and labour turnover. It could be that women gravitate towards occupations with these characteristics (either because of women preferences and characteristics and/or because employers prefer to employ women in these occupations) as explained by economic theory. Or it could be that occupations become 'female', because of the sort of sex stereotyping with flexible working conditions emerging as a consequence of the fact that these are "female" occupations.

Although neo-classical economic theory holds that the preferences of women and employers are responsible for the concentration of women in flexible occupations, feminist theory does not support such an unequivocal conclusion, since both the possibilities noted above are consistent with it. While family responsibilities can be expected to increase women's preferences for flexible occupations, the stereotyping of certain work as suitable for women can be expected to affect the types of occupation open to them.

The empirical analysis provides evidence indicating a high degree of consistency between the sex stereotyping of an occupation and the feminine stereotypes. It supports the conclusion that the flexibility and low pay associated with many typical 'female' occupations are due, to a large extent, to the fact that these are 'female' occupations. There is no reason to consider any occupation as inherently either more or less flexible.

**c. Equal Pay For Work of Equal Value**

In a number of countries legislation now requires equal pay for women performing work of equal value or of comparable worth to that performed by men in the same establishment. The aim is to prevent management, or trade unions and management acting

together in collective bargaining from discriminating against women in female –dominated jobs by fixing lower wage levels for them.

In the post-independent India we had series of laws passed for the upliftment of women. The legislations have been brought out in order to give equal rights and privileges with men, eliminate discriminations against women, remove inequality between the sexes, and remove external barriers coming in the way of their self-realization and development. Equal Remuneration Act of 1976 guarantees women an equal pay for equal work. The constitution of India guarantees certain fundamental rights and freedoms such as protection of life and personal liberty. Indian women are the beneficiaries of these rights in the same manner as the Indian men. The constitutional recognition of equal status for women and progressive legal enactments has undoubtedly empowered Indian women with judicial equality.

It has been established that female-dominated jobs or occupations pay relatively lower wages than male-dominated ones, so that both men and women in an occupation are paid less the greater the proportion of women employed in that occupation(Derek Robinson 2002). This crowding effect is more marked for men than for women. Average pay for both men and women in one occupation might be lower relative to average pay in occupations with a larger

proportion of male workers, but within each occupation the crowding hypothesis should have no impact on the relative pay of men and women within that occupation. Discrimination theory seeks to explain whether, and if so why, employers choose not to employ women in certain jobs where they could have the same value of marginal product as men and presumably at wages lower than those men are currently paid, despite the probable concomitant increase in effective or acceptable labour supply and reduction in wages of both men and women.

It is necessary a matter of judgment whether two jobs are of comparable worth or require the same skills and abilities. An element of subjective or value judgment will always be involved and on occasion the application of comparable worth analysis means imposing one set of values for the components of different jobs dissimilar to the values adopted by the persons who set the original pay levels.

Economic theory would conclude that in the absence of any market imperfections or demand-side discrimination, the pay gap between men and women with the same value of marginal product in the same location would be zero. Even in the highly restrictive case, however, a comparison of male and female pay may not be sufficient to establish the existence of discrimination. There can be real

differences in the value of marginal products of men and women doing the same work, this has long been recognized as typically true for jobs which require physical strength. The presence of an occupational wage gap can therefore only be regarded as a first indication that wage discrimination may be being practiced against women.

#### **1.4 LABOUR THEORIES**

The operation of a market in a capitalist economy tied to private concentration of ownership of productive enterprise is essentially exploitative. The purpose of production is to ensure that the cost of production including the cost of labour is exceeded by the value of the product. This surplus value over cost is what goes to ownership that is the capitalist. The resultant effect is a chain of inequality and poverty. This is reflected in a hierarchy at work, in earning and in society.

Stratification in the labour market is justified because the employers pay women workers less than others, and creates group of flexible low paid workers who can be moved in and out of employment as and when needed.

Based on the broad ideas of feminist school several theories have emerged in recent times in an attempt at capturing the

experience of women in the labour market. These theories on labour market, focusing attention to the status of women emphasizes on diverse aspects of discrimination in the labour market on the basis of gender. For instance, according to the Neo-classicalists and the Marxists, family constitutes the basis for women's position in the labour market. The entry of women into the labour market as well as their earnings and status is determined by their status in the society. On the other hand the radicals and the advocates of the dual system theories, who come under the institutional labour market school, consider the political factors to play the dominant role in determining the role of women in the labour market. Another group of economists assign cultural factors, i.e., the process of socialization prior to the entry into the labour market, which determines status and position in the labour market.

However, the feminist economists consider patriarchy to be the only factor, which plays a crucial role in governing the position of women in the labour market. They emphasize the need for understanding gender relations and their interconnections with other social relations. Feminist argue that it is women who is trapped in the stratification process and is the most vulnerable resource in the labour market. Accordingly different labour theories have been



discussed to show whether gender-neutral treatment exists for women in the labour market.

- **Human Capital Model**

Neo classical economics assumes that workers and employers are rational and that labour markets function efficiently. According to this theory, workers seek out the best paying jobs after taking into consideration their own personal endowments (e.g., education, experience), constraints (e.g., young child to take care of), and preferences (e.g., a pleasant work environment). Employers try to maximize profits by maximizing productivity and minimizing costs to the extent possible, but because of competition and efficient labour markets, employers pay workers their marginal product. Neo classicalists argue that since men spend more time in the labour market, they acquire greater experience and hence the difference between men and women in terms of the job status as well as wage differentiation. Due to their household responsibilities women chose those jobs, which require less time and skill in the labour market.

- **Dual Labour Market Theory**

Institutional and labour market segmentation theories also rely on well-established economic thought and neo-classical logic. Their starting point is the assumption that institutions, such as

unions and large enterprises, play an important role in determining who is hired, fired and promoted, and how much they are paid. Institutional theories also begin with the assumption that labour markets are segmented in certain ways. And while each labour market segment may function according to neo-classical theory, it is difficult for workers to pass from one segment to another.

The best known is dual labour market theory, this theory, associated with the name of Hartmann (1969), attempts to combine the Marxist and the feminist views to examine labour market discrimination. In other words, capitalism combined with patriarchy is the factors responsible for the segregation. In the patriarchal society, men accentuate this segregation by keeping the higher paid jobs for themselves. This is possible mainly due to better organizing power of men in comparison to women. Consequently continuance of discrimination benefits capital as well as patriarchy simultaneously. Women therefore are pushed into jobs of low status requiring less skill and less pain. They are, therefore, expected to bear a greater degree of responsibility in a patriarchal system. Though critics point out that analytical separation between capitalism and patriarchy is extremely difficult but for the purpose of examining gender discrimination the labour market theory highlights a crucial angle for such discrimination.

- **Cultural Theories of Labour Market**

Rubery and Tarling, Openheimer and Mathhaei, the main proponents of this theory argue that since the social and cultural values of women differ from that of men, the position and status of women too based on this socialization process too differ from that of men. Jobs are chosen as well as assigned on the basis of their masculine or feminine behavioural traits. Tradition imbibed in culture is also accepted as an important determinant of the difference of status in the job market. Consequently the theory assigns factors outside the labour market to play the pivotal role in the determination of status in the labour market.

In this connection, several studies maintain that males and females themselves prefer to maintain sex segregation in the labour market. None of them prefer to venture into domain of the others, nor do they encourage entry of the members of the other sex into their type of jobs. This theory, however, provides only a partial explanation of the factors responsible for segregation of labour market on gender line. However, the basic idea of the theory goes against the tenets of feminist since they consider such ideas to further strengthen the labour market segregation based on cultural division of the society on gender line.

- **Statistical Discrimination Theory**

Another economic theory related to labour market segmentation is the statistical discrimination theory. This is based on the assumption that there are differences, on average, in the productivity, skills, experience, etc., of distinct groups of workers (such as men and women), and high search and information costs associated with recruitment and promotion decisions. In such circumstances, it is argued, it is rational for employers to discriminate against groups of workers (such as women) when differences, on average, between the abilities of persons from different groups (e.g., men and women) cost less to sustain than the decision making costs associated with identifying suitable individual workers of either sex. Statistical discrimination theory thus provides an explanation for how some occupations are almost entirely male even though many individual women have greater ability, more education, etc. than many individual men.

- **Female Marginalisation**

The basic idea of this theory is based on the contribution of a number of writers (Eisenstein Hartmann and Varghese), who are proponents of Marxist and socialist feminist school as well as radical school. The idea of the theory emerges from the capitalist system of modern production process, which progressively marginalized

women form production. In contrast radical feminists (Benn and Gans, 1983) consider patriarchy, a feature of the biological aspect of man rather than the system of production, to be behind marginalization. These theories thereby have attempted to integrate the system of capitalism and patriarchy to be governing the type and nature of marginalisation in the labour market.

The marginalisation thesis has been enriched further by feminists who have assigned cultural and sociological factors for female marginalisation in work place. However, the difference lies in their perception of the process. It will, therefore, be pertinent to highlight the various forms of female marginalisation.

First, the female work participation rate falls due to the exclusion of women from productive employment and thereby a concomitant fall in their respective share of wage and salary. Secondly, marginalisation may imply pushing the women workers to the margin in the labour market with un-important jobs. Consequently there may be overcrowding of women in jobs at the margin.

Marginalisation thesis therefore for the first time focuses attention to a variety of factors responsible for work participation in the labour market, which is totally biased against women as against one factor as accepted in the other theories.

According to this theory there are two labour markets, the primary and secondary labour markets. The primary labour market comprises of unionized or professional job, with high wages, benefits, good working conditions and chances for advancement. It is generally close to external competition or highly limited by qualifications. Man predominates in this job.

The secondary labour market is characterized by the low wage with few benefits and open to external competition. It is here that women are marked by their presence in significant numbers. Women operate in this sector as part-time with unstable jobs in this market. The large pool of unemployment workers keep wages down in this labour market and poverty, low income, low status is generally associated with the situation in the labour market.

## **1.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

- **Concept of Work**

The populations that are endowed with the capacity and willingness to work constitute the labour force and those who are actually engaged in activity or work are included in the work force. Therefore the number of people who are actually included in the workforce depends greatly on how 'work' is defined. The two most

important sources from which the concept of work can be available are the census reports and NSSO (National Sample Survey Organisation). 'Work' or 'employment' may be broadly defined as labour participation in 'gainful activities'. Gainful activities according to NSSO are those activities, which are perceived for pay, profit or family gain or that which add value to the national product. This normally results in production of goods and services for exchanged and that the activities in the agriculture in which a part or whole of agricultural produce is used for won consumptions and does not go for sale are considered gainful.

The Census of India on the other hand defines work as participation in any economically productive activity. Thus, according to the census an adult woman who engaged in household activities but is not engaged in other productive work to supplement the family income may not be considered as a worker. Thus, though the definition given by NSSO is more liberal in its approach as compared to the census definition, both the surveys excludes many gainful activities, particularly of women in our country and leave them outside the definitional frame of 'work effort' (Choudhury,1992).

It follows therefore, if measurement of work is directed towards income earning approach, definition of work can capture only those who are in

- wage and salaried employment
- self-employed in manufacturing, trade, commerce, transportation etc.;
- Self-employed in cultivation and household industries for profit.

- **Definition of Work: A Feminine Perspective**

The concept of 'work' evolved with the evolution of men and its importance can be traced by its mention in almost all the religious scriptures- in the books of the Genesis in the Bible, the Koran and the Gita. Work in all religious practices existed as a function of achievement towards fulfilment of materialistic needs as well as to display one's own skill.

But as society broke open, the door of religious dogmas towards a more serious contemplation of division of labour, of money economy, work as a notion has undergone many changes (Moddie 1989). Though originally work was identified with duty or God's command, it did not have much economic significance in the modern capitalist sense of the terms and was essentially undertaken to maintain law and order in the states. The process of capitalization of the market, industrialization and technological development



required that wealth be transferred into the hands of not the capitalist class or owners, but into the hands of those who toil to work, so that the wealth that accumulated would enable productivity to increase and hence profit (Moodie, 1989). The neo-classical theorist treats work as not leisure but a source of deviation from the time that could be utilized for other activities without being a source of utility or disutility in its own right (King1990).

In orthodox analysis however, work is an input and it incurs a cost upon its supplier who are compensated by higher or lower wage rates depending upon the intensity and extent of sacrifice. Marx too regarded work as a form of self-realisation and emphasized that people needed to view work as an end in itself, which had also been supported by other green economists like Schumacher and other radical- Marxian economist. Work in the modern day context may be defined as a purposeful activity involving time and effort of a person generally performed to meet the expectation requirement of others or one's own. This is done usually to obtain an exchange value and recognition of one's effort and labour both for men and women alike.

For women workers, the definition of work could be more aptly put as a form of giving, as bestowing service to others, without

considering their own interest. Rousseau's interpretation of women was that women ought to be weak and submissive to men and in pursuing the direction of nature, they ought to act in concert, but they should not be engaged in the same employment (Wollstone, 1975).

It was thus due to this variation in the concept of work, that in the field of the women's studies; women's work has emerged as an important area of research, debates and discussion. Woman's studies and women's concern state that it would be wrong on our part to assume that the traditional concept of work has changed. They argue that such traditional view and ideologies still hold good for women, though religious scriptures don't segregate women's work, yet strict code of conduct and work ethics are mentioned which have been imbibed into dictates the pattern, nature and type of work a woman ought to perform.

It is generally accepted that almost all societies consider as the principal bread earner in the family. Therefore all men who are physically and mentally capable of doing work are expected to offer their services and are considered as workers.

On the contrary, to regard women as worker is governed a large extent by the patriarchal pattern of the society and also is

largely governed by the stage of economic development of the society in question. While both men and women perform work which are necessary for the economic upliftment pattern of the household, and women along with men spend long hours exercising their labour but, it is unfortunate that while men's work get recognized and valued women's work remain unaccounted and is often not compensates in terms of payment or wages (Ghosh and Mokhopadhyay, 1989).

For women worker work is mainly performed to basically carry out the following functions:

. To carry out the daily household routine chores like washing, cooking, sweeping, cleaning and child rearing.

.. To provide helping hand with other members of the family so as to supplement the family income

... To work for the household as well as to work independently to earn wages.

Conventional definition of work puts the first groups as non-workers and the third as workers.

While the first two categories of work put the first two groups as non-workers, only the second group is considered as workers in

spite of the fact that the first two categories of work by women provide invaluable services to the household as well as enable other members of the family to eke out a living. For example women's labour services within the household provide opportunity to her husband and other male members of the family to be gainfully employed.

However, in majority of the cases, it is observed that while women's work remain unrecognized and undervalued this also results in a monotonous functioning of their work which does not relieve them from their daily drudgery. Recognition and estimations of women's work is necessary because the happiness and well being of a person is promoted when their work is elevated to activities which gives them pleasure (Nussbaum and Sen, 1993). Thus work needs to be valued and accordingly wages need to be paid so as to add incentive to the work in the form of increased capabilities and productivity. An economic man or woman robbed of these genuine rights leads to a decline in productivity.

The right to work is accepted as a fundamental right to live and to be able to earn one's own livelihood. According to Marx, behind the right to work stands the power over capital, the appropriation of the means of production. Historically, the right to work has remained

absent in the formal discourse of political and economic theory. In the modern bourgeois' society, the very right to life of the vast multitude is based on the possibility of finding work. Even the Universal Declaration of Human Rights open with the affirmation that 'all men are born free and equal in dignity and rights'. The law in India prevents any type of discrimination against women on grounds of sex. However, all such statements are mere facts on paper and are isolated from the real life situation both in the rural and urban sectors where women are not only paid less but their contribution towards national income are in major cases neither recognized or estimated and therefore this aspect of women's right remains a misnomer, thereby affecting their overall efficiency and productivity.

Increase in productivity always pays in terms of contributing to the national exchequer and the quality and quantity of production. There has been a serious lack of attempt on the part of policymakers to narrow the gap between workers who work for pay and the workers who work but their product do not enter the market, as it is not estimated. A majority of women falls in the category of non-workers. It is important for policy makers to take into the consideration that incentives in the form of wages, benefits when

added to work lead to increase in productivity, job satisfaction and a desire to improve the standard of living and quality of life and remove the biasness that exist in the society in the form of gender discrimination.

Apart from the concept of work the other terms and concepts that will be used extensively by us and shall form the basis of our entire investigation would be as follows:

- **Concept of Gender**

Gender is a concept that deals with the roles and relationships between men and women, which are determined by the social, political and economic context and not by biology, and it is socially constructed. In other words, “gender is a concept, a condition, a category and a component”, gender is not a synonym for the word women and does not imply that all women are alike. While social and economic structures disrupt homogeneity, women share experiences, strengths and obstacles that bind them together as a group. Gender is a fundamental aspect of personal and social identity and a biological, psychological and cultural construction of paramount importance for people everywhere. In addition gender is often a criterion for social stratification and different political

treatment as well as a favoured symbol for expressing essential values and beliefs.

- **Concept of Status**

The rank or a place or position of the individual occupying it, in the prestige-hierarchy of the group and community at large, in terms of various rights associated with it is its social status. Status is purely a relation term which means that each status exists through its relation to one or more other statuses, for example, husband and wife. Wife has no status without husband and vice-verse. The status may be manifested or dormant.

In many groups, an individual has many statuses. Not only has that, even in any one single group itself, a person held more than one status. This multiplicity of statuses is sociologically designed as status-set.

The sum total of the statuses that we occupy is known as a status-set. The status-set locates an individual in relation to the multidimensional network of social system that makes up the system we live in.

- **Gender Relations**

Gender relations are ways in which a culture or society defines rights, responsibilities, and identities of men and women in relation to one another. Gender identity is a psychological state that reflects the inner sense of oneself as being male or female based on culturally determined set of attitudes and other attributes usually associated with masculinity or femininity.

- **Empowerment**

Empowerment is the process of generating and building capabilities to exercise control over one's own life. Mahajan (2001) in her study on empowerment of women has highlighted three aspects which need to be adhered to a) equality of rights between women and men must be enshrined as a fundamental principle, b) women must be regarded as agents and beneficiaries of change, c) through the endangered development model, policies have been formulated to widen choices for both men and women but what is required is that equal opportunities be made so as to make a choice exists for both men and women.



- **Concept of Women's Right**

Women's right movement essentially is an effort to bring equality of women with men in all aspect of society and a claim to all rights and opportunities enjoyed by men in the institutions of that society.

### **1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To study the economic contribution of women vegetable vendors in Aizawl city.
2. To analyse the effectiveness of vending for women empowerment.
3. To examine the health implications of women street vending within the study area.
4. To identify the problems faced by women vendors and to suggest measures to tackle the problems.

### **1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. Are the women vegetable vendors financially included? Do banks play a role in providing sources of finance for the vendors?
2. Are there any proper weights and measure controls of vegetables in Aizawl city?

## 1.8 METHODOLOGY

The study was based on primary and secondary data. The unit of analysis of the propose study was the individual women vegetables vendor in Aizawl city. Static vendors who had specific space for the activity (though the space is not officially recognized by the government) were the respondents for this research. Structured questionnaire based on the objectives of the study was prepared and personal interviews were also conducted.

### *Primary Data*

For the purpose of the study five market clusters, namely, Bara Bazaar, Bawngkawn Bazaar, Thakthing Bazaar, Treasury Bazaar and Vaivakawn Bazaar were chosen within Aizawl City on the basis of the volume of women vegetables vendors. Since the total population of each of the clusters was unknown, a 'quota' was fixed in order to draw a sample. During this stage, the quota of size had been fixed in each cluster (area) based upon the volume of trade in each area.

The number of street vendor in Bara Bazaar market is the largest as compared to the other four selected markets; therefore the sample size was 40. From Thakthing market a sample size of 20 was taken and from the Treasury market 20 samples was composed. The

area of Vaivakawn market and Bawngkawn will have 18 respondents each. A total of 116 samples were drawn purposively from the five mentioned markets. The study only dealt with women who are selling vegetables. The collected data were analyzed using relevant statistical tools.

### *Secondary Data*

Secondary data was obtained from both published and unpublished sources like magazines, journals, e-resources, and books etc. for collecting necessary information. The data collected were analyzed using relevant and appropriate statistical tools.

The study was conducted to have an insightful knowledge about the socio – economic status of women vegetable vendors in Aizawl City and also to suggest measures for the improvement of their work environment.

This chapter draws relevant literatures related to the research area to throw lights on the various issues of women and vending.

Cohen (1984)<sup>1</sup> pointed out that many street food vendors are women and many of these women are heads of households. In some cities this is the dominant activity for women, akin in economic importance to subsistence agriculture for rural households. It requires skills that many women already have, minimal capital outlays, and trading in street foods allows for an accommodation of women's other responsibilities as reproducers and managers. Recognition of the importance of this activity for women suggests that gender aware actions might be advantageous. Avoiding the displacement of women with the introduction of new technologies and food seems a recurrent need, while working through nutrition and hygiene programmes would seem to provide another natural area for reaching women food processors. Otherwise an integrated approach that recognises the role of both men and women is advocated. Thus, the conditionality of a loan should reflect both sexes' access to resources.

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<sup>1</sup> Cohen, Monique (1984), '*Women and the Urban Street Food Trade : Some Implications for Policy*', Working Paper No.55

Draper (1996)<sup>2</sup> pointed out that street food trade expansion is linked with urbanization and the need of urban populations for both employment and food. He further highlighted that there are a number of aspects of street foods which make them promising vehicles for micronutrient fortification. He reviewed information on the availability, cost, and consumption of street and snack foods in developing countries and assesses the potential for fortifying these foods with micronutrients as a means of preventing and controlling micronutrient deficiencies.

Bhowmik (2001)<sup>3</sup> highlighted that the income of street vendors are more or less the same in all the cities. Their incomes range from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 for males and Rs. 35 to Rs. 40 for females. In all the cities, despite the fact that street vendors provide various types of services, they are persecuted by the municipal authorities and the police. Bribery is the only way most street vendors can survive in their trade. The working conditions of the hawkers are very poor and most hawkers lead a very hard life. They work for more than ten hours a day to earn their meagre income.

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<sup>2</sup> Draper, A (1996), 'Street Foods in Developing Countries : The Potential for Micronutrient Fortification', *London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine*, April.

<sup>3</sup> Bhowmik, SK (2001), 'Hawkers and the Urban Informal Sector : A Study of Street Vending in Seven Cities', *National Alliance of Street Vendors of India*, May.

Corruption, in the form of bribery and extortion, eats into the earnings of these people and reduces their income further. The main reason for corruption lies in the fact the street vending is illegal in almost all cities. This gives a lever to the municipal authorities and the police to extort money from the vendors. Municipalities should seriously think of alternative solutions. Legalising vending by providing licenses will solve many of the problems. Bribery and corruption will decrease, the municipalities will earn more through license fees and street vending can also be regulated.

Rheinlander (2006)<sup>4</sup> investigated the practices and perceptions of food quality, food safety and hygiene among street food vendors and their customers and to suggest viable future hygiene initiatives. During a three months field study, a qualitative data was collected. The field activities included extensive participatory observations and interviews, general observations on various markets, urban farms and vending places. Furthermore, interviews and focus group discussions with street food customers and interviews with various key – informants were conducted. The data was analyzed using a multi – dimensional approach focusing on

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<sup>4</sup> Rheinlander, T (2006), '*Street Food Quality – A Matter of Neatness and Trust*', Public Health Institute of Public Health Science, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, December.

the five main dimensions of social, hygienic, nutritional, aesthetic and functional dimensions of food quality.

Teka (2009)<sup>5</sup> initiated the objectives of analyzing fruit and vegetable marketing chains. Specifically the study attempts to assess structure-conduct-performance of fruit and vegetable marketing, analyze market supply determinants, and analyze the institutional support services of extension, input supply and credit. The study also analyzes profitability of fruit and vegetable production and marketing and identifies problems and opportunities in fruit and vegetable production and marketing. Cobb Douglas (logarithmic function) econometric estimation procedure was employed to identify factors that determine market supply of the farm households in the area. The potential benefit is under challenges of imperfect marketing. The market conduct is characterized by unethical practices of cheating and information collusion that led to uncompetitive market behaviour. Therefore some corrective measures are required by the government as well as institutions like cooperatives. The weak extension support and limited seed supply system largely hinders production and productivity of the crops

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<sup>5</sup> Teka, AG (2009), '*Analysis of Fruit and Vegetable Market Chains in Alamata Southern Zone of Tigr : The Case of Onion, Tomato and Papaya*', Haramaya University, October.

under study. On top of this, limited accessibility of chemicals, fertilizer and credit are other key constraints of production and marketing. Therefore it is essential to take some improvement measures by the government as well as private sectors.

NIDAN (2010)<sup>6</sup> found that the proportion of female vendors was higher in the past but this has been decreasing since the past decade or so in Patna. The main reason was that they were afraid of the harassment they faced from different quarters, such as the males, the police and the municipal authorities. In fact most of the female vendors were mobile vendors because they felt that this was a safer way to ward off harassment. Moreover they were reluctant to sit in a market place or a fixed spot because most other vendors were males. In fact 96% of the female vendors stated that lack of protection was the main problem they faced in their work. Lack of basic facilities such as toilets and crèches for their children was another major problem. At an average, vendors had to work for 12-14 hours a day to earn their meager income.

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<sup>6</sup> NIDAN (2010), 'Study on Street Vendors at Patna (Bihar)' *Study Report on Street Vendor*.



May (2010)<sup>7</sup> highlighted that across the developing world, women in the informal economy, unprotected by government provisions and exploited by patriarchal structures, work relentlessly to earn a living for themselves and their families. Within these treacherous conditions, the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) emerged and developed into a powerful force in India and beyond. Drawing on social movement theory, she put forth a three - phase framework that allows one to theoretically understand SEWA's emergence. The three phases – providing selective incentives, creating a common identity and shared purpose, and ensuring continuity – each depend on both organizational inputs and environmental factors.

Geetika (2011)<sup>8</sup> pointed out that the phenomenon of economic development is a composite of several factors, which may not necessarily have economic connotations. The contribution of human resource to economic growth of any country cannot be overemphasized, especially in a country like India which is still reeling under the pressures of its mammoth population and limited

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<sup>7</sup> May, OT (2010), 'The Path to Women's Empowerment : Understanding the Rise of the Self – Employed Women's Association', *College Undergraduate Research Electronic Journal*, University of Pennsylvania, September.

<sup>8</sup> Geetika, et.al (2011), 'Women Working in Informal Sector in India : A Saga of Lopsided Utilization of Human Capital', *International Conference on Economics and Finance Research IPEDR*, Vol.4, IACSIT Press, Singapore.

capital resource. The Indian economy can well be studied in two distinct sectors, organized and unorganized (informal). The widespread informal sector in the country is a major contributor to its development but at the same time it is plagued by several problems such as no proper service rules, no wage rules and no possibilities of career advancement. Another notable fact is that as many as 94% of total women workers work in the informal sector in India but they have to face gender discrimination which is almost inexistent in formal sector. Besides, their contribution in terms of income generation turns out to be less than their male counterparts, which means almost half of the population, contribute to less than half to the national income. The paper highlighted the lopsided utilization of human capital and its fall outs.

Saha (2011)<sup>9</sup> stated that street vendors in Mumbai are among the most deprived sections of the self employed workers. The working life of vendors is explained in terms of their financial conditions and the extent of indebtedness, the amount of bribes they have to pay in order to sustain themselves in the market, their working hours, the issues of public space utilisation, and the legal aspect of their activity. It has been seen from his study that their

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<sup>9</sup> Saha, Debdulal (2011), 'Working Life of Street Vendors in Mumbai', *The Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, Vol.54.2.

entire existence and nature of activities are extremely informal and are trust-based. The study is exploratory in nature and their situations have been explained with the help of both quantitative and qualitative paradigms. He shows that the street vendors borrow from moneylenders not merely for their economic activity but also for social security purposes at an exorbitant rate of interest, which, in turn, leads them to fall into a debt-trap situation. It has been further found that that they have extremely long working hours, which have been continuously increasing over the years. Further, they enjoy neither safety nor security at the work place as they face constant harassment from the local authorities. Hence, the current working hours of the vendors and the safety and security conditions in their workplace, together with extensive rent-seeking by local authorities, contribute to a deteriorating working environment as well as economic deprivation for street vendors.

United Nations (2011)<sup>10</sup> highlighted that all of the available evidence and analysis suggests the pressing need to develop a strategy for mainstreaming gender in market place development and governance. Women market traders need to have a voice in any and

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<sup>10</sup> United Nations (2011), 'Pacific Markets and Market Vendors', UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, UN Women Pacific, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, July.

all initiatives that concern their place of work. Part of the way forward lies in considering market trading as real and valuable work, rather than a devalued feminized occupation with associated lower prestige and reduced possibilities for upward mobility. More specifically, markets need to form a central focus of town planning efforts, including the development of safe and hygienic marketplaces with adequate sanitary facilities. Women need to be directly involved in these efforts. Women market vendors particularly need support to organize, educate and empower themselves to proactively engage in dialogue with the city and town councils that are most often responsible for supervising and managing the operations of Pacific Island markets.

Ray, CN (2011)<sup>11</sup> pointed out that majority of street vendors are illiterate or educated at primary level, low skilled and poor economic conditions. Street vending, though it provides job opportunity and means of livelihood to the urban poor, Urban Local Bodies consider it as illegal activity so far. The study found migration to be strongly correlated as almost three – fourth of vendors have migrated to Surat from and within Gujarat. The study

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<sup>11</sup> Ray, CN. et.al (2011), ‘Vendors and Informal Sector : A Case – Study of Street Vendors of Surat City’, *Centre for Urban Equity, CEPT University*, Working Paper – 15, November.

recommended :- The appointment of a representative of SMC (Surat Municipal Corporation), who will maintain the health and hygienic condition in those areas after registering all the hawkers engaged in vending of different commodities; Issuing of photo identity card to all hawkers. This can stop increase in number of vendors in near future.

Millman (2012)<sup>12</sup> investigated the ways in which the selling and utilizing of medicinal plant remedies intersects with conceptualizations of cultural identity, traditional gendered knowledge systems, and with the socio – economic realities of vendors and consumers. He highlighted that women vendors often establish a more intimate interaction with their clients than their male counterparts. He further showed that though the costs of upholding a medicinal plant store in city markets is not insubstantial for vendors who receive no governmental support, the high costs of purchasing pharmaceuticals in comparison to these medicines allow for vendors to operate with steady business. Data were collected through semi – structured interviews with market vendors of medicinal plants. He also studied the ways in which political policy

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<sup>12</sup> Millman, H (2012), ‘Marketing Medicines : Conceptualizing Cultural Identity and Livelihood among Market Vendors in Asuncion, Paraguay.’, *The University of Guelph*, April.

has worked to disenfranchise small farmers and to continuously encroach upon wild plants.

Mohapatra (2012)<sup>13</sup> stated that low income women workers, especially in the informal sector form one of the most vulnerable groups in the Indian economy. The reasons for their vulnerability are - (a) irregular work, (b) low economic status, (c) little or no bargaining power, (d) lack of control over earnings, (e) need to balance paid work with care for children and homework, (f) little or no access to institutional credit, training and information, and (g) lack of assets. Unequal gender relations play a very important role in defining their insecurities. Given their vulnerable status at home and at work, income generation alone may not improve the socio-economic status of women attached to the informal sector. Their economic empowerment needs to go along with political empowerment, which could improve their bargaining power both in household and at work. This means that organizing women workers in the informal economy could have beneficial impacts on their work and their life if such organization combines voices representation along with access to resources such as credit and information- a

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<sup>13</sup> Mohapatra,K.K (2012), 'Women Workers in Informal Sector in India : Understanding the Occupational Vulnerability', *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol.2 No.21; November.

holistic strategy that provides political empowerment allied with economic empowerment. Results suggest that a highly visible percentage of occupational group irrespective of their monthly average income, continue to face multiple constraints which otherwise compel them to live a life full of compromises.

Mulkikar (2012)<sup>14</sup> pointed out that the study on the women of the rural areas is to bring together an extensive amount of information on various entrepreneurship and women's development programmes introduced in India. The objectives of the study included, understanding the working style and manner of operation of these women entrepreneur for creating a market for their products. The methodology followed was of convenient sampling and the respondents were interviewed on, one-on-one basis. FGD's (focus group discussion) of customers/consumers were also organized to get the feedback on the attitude and behaviour of these women agricultural vendors and also on the parameters of reliability, cost efficiency and quality of the products being offered. Empowering women entrepreneurs is essential for achieving the goals of sustainable development and the bottlenecks hindering their growth

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<sup>14</sup> Mulkikar, J.N. et.al (2012), 'Opportune and Effective Marketing of the Rural Women Entrepreneurs', *Voice of Research*, Vol.1, Issue 2, June.

must be eradicated to entitle full participation in the business. Promoting entrepreneurship among women is certainly a short-cut to rapid economic growth and development.

Onyango (2012)<sup>15</sup> highlighted that street vending is the sub – sector of informal businesses that operate in urban spaces meant for other uses. He further stated that street vending was believed to be absorbed by modern sector with time but instead it has grown to providing alternative jobs to a large urban population who cannot get formal employment. To analyze his study, he used Purposive Sampling and Multistage Sampling techniques. His study concludes that street vendors identify the locations where they vend on their own without any guideline. The main recommendation through his study is that there is a need to guide planning of street vending to integrate them in urban land use.

Palaneeswari (2012)<sup>16</sup> in his study examined the empowerment of women by addressing two dimensions: economic empowerment and personal empowerment. One hundred and fifty

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<sup>15</sup> Onyango, JO (2012), 'Dynamics of Street Vending Phenomenon in the Kisumu Municipality, Kenya.' *International Journal of Arts and Commerce*, Vol.2, No.4, September.

<sup>16</sup> Palaneeswari, T. et.al (2012), 'Empowerment of Rural Women through Self-Employment – A Study with special reference to Thiruthangal in Virudhunagar District', *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Management Studies*, Vol.2, Issue 6, June.



women involved in self-employment from a rural area Thiruthangal. The analysis indicates that self employment not only helps the respondents to generate additional income but also enables them economically independent and self-sufficient. The study reveals that income, expenditure and savings of the respondents before and after self-employment differ significantly. Women involved in self-employment felt independence and their sense of determination helps them to achieve success in their endeavour. The study concludes that a change has to be brought about not only in the status of women but in the attitude of the society towards them. Priority has therefore necessarily to be given to changing image of women, from a passive onlooker and recipient, to that of a positive doer and achiever.

Tillerman (2012)<sup>17</sup> explored the livelihoods of formal, semi-formal and informal female food and beverage vendors in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The research questions centre on why the livelihood strategy of food or beverage vending is undertaken, what livelihood constraints this type of vending brings, how coping strategies are utilised by the vendors and which livelihood assets are

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<sup>17</sup> Tillerman,E (2012), *‘Women Vendors in Dar es Salaam : Surviving or Climbing the Livelihood Ladder? Exploring the Livelihoods of Women in the Urban Food and Beverage Vending Sector in Tanzania’*, Lund University.

important in this urban context. The study aimed to increase the contextual understanding of livelihoods. The theoretical framework is based on the urban livelihoods framework which is a useful approach to explore how key contextual factors interact with livelihoods. Since the poor have very limited opportunities to strategically reduce vulnerabilities, the role of agency should not be overestimated. The main findings reveal that women vendors draw primarily on labour assets and social capital in order to construct livelihoods. However, engaging in food or beverage vending is in itself not sufficient for securing livelihoods or even survival. This could be explained by external livelihood constraints such as increased competition from other food/beverage vendors—constraints which reduce individual revenues. Seasonal price fluctuations increase operation costs for vending and decrease the flow of customers resulting in declining incomes. The women vendors draw on social support through informal loan and credit taking as a substitute for financial resources in order to make ends meet. The importance of labour assets and social capital in the urban context is in general consistent with previous research. In addition to previous research, this study has revealed that informal vending space in residential areas, accessed through private contacts and social capital, is an important livelihood asset. By avoiding vending

in public spaces such as by main roads, visible streets and around market areas, the women vendors avoid bribe payments and police harassments which decreases livelihood constraints.

Gadi (2013)<sup>18</sup> stated that in developing countries like India, street – food vending is a common part of urban lifestyle due to high unemployment and limited work opportunities. The study further revealed that vendors usually congregate in overcrowded areas where there are high numbers of potential customers such areas being prone to basic sanitary facilities. The study indicated that food contamination was mainly due to poor water quality and hygiene during food preparation, peeling of fruits and preparation of food long before consumption, and crowded, dusty vending location.

Basumatary (2013)<sup>19</sup> examined the personal profile, family profile, migratory status, living, working and economic conditions of the women vendors of the towns of Kokrajhar district. Due to low level of education, women vendors were not able to participate actively in decision making process. Therefore equal access to

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<sup>18</sup> Gadi .C, et.al (2013), 'Study of Hygienic Practices of Street Food Vendors in Allahabad City, India and Determination of Critical Control Points for Safe Street Food', *The Allahabad Farmer Vol. LXVIII*, January, No.2.

<sup>19</sup> Basumatary,R (2013), 'Socio Economic Status of Women Vendors in Towns of Kokrajhar District', *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Volume – I, Issue – IV, April.

education for women and girls should be ensured. The findings also revealed that all of the women vendors had no proper shelter for work and were compelled by poverty to work. The entry of women vendors into the labor market has not yet had the effect of relieving them of a share of house work. Women vendors work longer hours in order to fit all their work and still do not get due respect. Voluntary organizations can work towards making improvement in their health status, educational attainment and general welfare.

Mthombeni (2013)<sup>20</sup> focused on the impact of vegetable sales on household income of hawkers in the Limpopo province. A stratified sampling technique was used. Multiple regression analysis (linear, semi – log and double – log) was used. The study showed the degree of significance of different variables that have an impact on hawkers’ vegetable sales. Vegetable hawkers generate enough income from their sales to live above the poverty line. She recommended the establishment of new markets and to improve the existing market infrastructure and to provide proper sanitation and clean water to avoid unhygienic situations in hawkers’ markets.

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<sup>20</sup> Mthombeni, DL (2013), ‘Impact of Vegetable Sales on Household Income of Hawkers in the Limpopo Prvince of South Africa’, *University of South Africa*, June.

Kumburu (2013)<sup>21</sup> investigated whether there is a relationship between demographic characteristics and income generated from women vegetable vendors on roadsides. The study also ventured to examine the role of vegetable vending on income generation and employment creation. The study concluded that there was a positive, though not strong, correlation among demographic characteristics and income generated from vegetable vending. This implied that there could be other factors that influence income generation. In addition, women roadside vegetable vending plays an important role in employment creation and income generation. Lack of knowledge, poor working environment and lack of capital are among challenges affecting vegetable vending. Provision of better working environment through education about working in groups to enable women access various sources of capital which require borrowers to organize themselves in groups could be one of the solutions.

Acherjee (2014)<sup>22</sup> pointed out that the study has been taken up to identify the empowerment and socio – economic characteristics of women vendors related directly or indirectly to the

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<sup>21</sup> Kumburu, NP. et.al (2013), ‘Women Roadside Vegetable Selling in Kalimantan : The Relationship between Demography, Income Generation and Employment Creation’, *Journal of Co-operative and Business Studies*, Vol.1, Number 1.

<sup>22</sup> Acherjee, SK, et.al (2014), ‘Skills and Participation of Women in the Urban Vegetable Market : The Distribution and Characteristics’, *International Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 4, Issue 2, February.

business and also for identifying the main confinements of vegetable vending in the area. He found that many women vendors were educated less or more, their cause of termination being non – availability of school near residences, poor economic condition and lack of interest. His study served the purpose of the skills of women in the small business sector and the women participation in the urban vegetable market. He denoted the economic instability of the women vegetable seller in the state of the economic meltdown of the country and the internal power of women in combating the adverse economic condition.

Roever (2014)<sup>23</sup> stated that street vendors are one of the three urban informal groups who form the focus of the Informal Economy Monitoring Study (IEMS). Official statistics show that street vendors make up between 2 and 24 percent of total urban informal employment in African, Asian and Latin American cities and that the majority of street vendors are women. The study found that drivers related to urban governance are the most significant for street vendors. Quantitative data confirmed that insecure workplace conditions affect many vendors, especially those who work in the

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<sup>23</sup> Roever, S (2014), 'Informal Economy Monitoring Study Sector Report : Street Vendors', *Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing*, April.

street rather than in markets. The study also found that licensing and regulatory restructuring affect working conditions for street vendors.

Sharma (2014)<sup>24</sup> in his study revealed that a substantial sector of street vendors in Jammu deserve to take benefit of the Public Distribution System (PDS) system. His study stated that majority (76%) of street vendors in Jammu does not take benefit of purchasing ration and kerosene oil at cheaper rates from rations depots. The case being the fact that majority of the street vendors migrate from other states. The study also highlighted that one of the obsessions of street vendors and their organizations is of trying to negotiate with the authorities for space to run their business. In fact, his study concluded by stating that in most cases street vendors have to survive in a hostile environment though they are essential service providers.

Njaya (2014)<sup>25</sup> sought to investigate the nature and operations of street food vendors including socio – economic features

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<sup>24</sup> Sharma, A (2014), 'The Social – Economy of Street Vending in Jammu and Kashmir : The Case of Jammu City', *IRC's International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Social and Management Sciences*, Volume 2, Issue 3, July – September.

<sup>25</sup> Njaya, T (2014), 'Operations of Street Food Vendors and Their Impact on Sustainable Urban Life in High Density Suburbs of Harare, in Zimbabwe', *Asian Journal of Economic Modelling*, 2014, 2(1) : 18 – 31.

influencing street food vending spatial distribution and its impact on the local environment and urban life within the context of substantial development. Data were collected through field notes, in – depth personal interviews, direct observations and documentary reviews so as to triangulate the evidence. The study showed that street food vending, far from being a hindrance to progress and sustainable development, is in fact the basis of an alternative street economy which is people friendly and with the necessary institutional and infrastructural support could be both environmental - sensitive and energy conscious. Although street food vending is illegal, it significantly helped to reduce unemployment, increased incomes of vendors and provided urban dwellers with inexpensive and varied indigenous meals. What is needed to advance the position of street food vendors is to strengthen their capacities and skills through training, credit, information and infrastructure so as to enhance their competitiveness and productivity.

Ganguly (2015)<sup>26</sup> stated that the livelihood issues for the farm women are earning incredible importance in the realm of inclusive growth with gender consideration. It is interesting to note that access

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<sup>26</sup> Ganguly, A. et.al (2015), *'Estimation of Vegetable based Livelihood of the Women from Entrepreneurs : A Socio Economic and Institutional Analysis'*, West Bengal State University, Barasat, September.



of farm women to the family income is being impaired by male hegemony (Danso G. et. al, 2004), operational complexity, community attitude and retrenched accessibility to agricultural marketing and above all inability to derive excess time out of heavily loaded domestic chores to deal with on farm entrepreneurial activities (Githamma, 2007). With this back ground they examined the status of livelihood of farm women from a score of socio economic and institutional variables to highlight the role characteristics of farm women in vegetable enterprises. It has been elicited that the variables family size, income of the respondents have discernible impacts, marital status, house type have got direct or indirect effect on farm women vendor's entrepreneurial behaviour.

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

India, today, offers a lot of opportunities to women, with women having a voice in everyday life, the business world as well as in political life. Nevertheless India is still a male dominated society, where women are often seen as subordinate and inferior to men. The change from a position of utter degradation of women to a position of equality is not a simple case of the progress of women in the modern era.

To uplift the status of women, many legislations pertaining to women were enacted after independence. The enacted legislations and many other emancipatory actions of the social reformers have no doubt raised the status of women in India but still much is to be done in this field. However, social legislations have not been very effective in India because of many reasons.

One important reason is that most of the women are not fully aware of the measures adopted by the state for their upliftment and even if aware they do not use them because of the old social values that are still persisting. Legal or legislative sanctions alone cannot bring any substantial change in the downtrodden position of women

unless there is a marked change in their attitude and consciousness of men and women both. In this regard, their illiteracy is one of the great hindrances.

According to the 2011 Census, 34 per cent of women are still illiterate in India. Even literate women also do not exercise their right of equality wherever it is required. Thus, the status of women has been raised in the eyes of law, but they are still far from equal to men in every sphere of life. In practice, they continue to suffer discrimination, harassment, humiliation and exploitation in and outside home.

Theoretically, women might have been given more freedom but in practice, they still suffer many hardships, inhuman dignities and unworthy treatment everywhere. Within the home, she is still not treated at par with her male counterpart. Barring a few urban educated families, a baby girl is never welcomed with as much éclat and happiness as a baby boy.

### **3.2 WOMEN STREET VENDORS IN SELECTED CITIES IN INDIA : AN OVERVIEW**

Vendoring is quite a common occupation for women all over India. To understand the socio – economic conditions of women vendors, this chapter is devoted to present studies conducted in selected cities in India.

#### **(a) Bengaluru**

Bengaluru (capital of Karnataka) is one of the cities in the country that wants to emerge as a world class city. It is a major hub for information technology and other allied services such as Business Process Outsourcing (a sophisticated name for the mundane call centers). In such upper end surroundings the lowly street vendor becomes an eye sore. The city therefore does not have a tolerant view towards street vending. Earlier Bengaluru had a municipality. Later, as the city grew, this was upgraded to Municipal Corporation. This body is known as Bruhath Bengaluru Mahanagar Palike (BBMP). There are adjoining urban areas that fall under the municipality. Street vending is controlled by three of the departments of BBMP. These are, revenue department, estates department, which looks after the corporation's property, and the

health department. Each department claims to have regulatory powers over street vending.

The work distribution of the street vendors showed that 48% were mobile vendors. The males in this category had pushcarts while the females carried their goods in baskets on their heads. The vendors who squatted on pavements and other public places comprised 52%. Hence there was an almost equal distribution between static and mobile vendors.

The street vendors, like in other parts of the country, are mainly male. Seventy percent of the sample comprised male vendors while 30% were female. The females were mainly engaged in sale of vegetables and other perishable items such as fish. Most of the vendors (66%) were married whereas 18% were unmarried. The rest were widowed or divorced. These were mainly the female vendors.

The income level shows that most vendors were above the poverty line in terms of daily income. If ₹ 140 is taken as the minimum in urban areas, we find that 78% earned more than that. 49% of the street vendors earned between ₹ 141 and 220 a day while 29% earned more than ₹ 221 per day.

A factor influencing their income is the sources of capital for running their enterprises. More capital would mean better profits as they can buy more goods for sale. However this is easier said than done because the sources of finances are limited. As street vending is largely regarded as an illegal activity, the vendors are unable to get institutional loans. In other words, no bank or other recognized institution will be willing to loan them capital for their business. A little less than half the street vendor (47.5%) invests their own savings as working capital. Another 35.5% take loans from money lenders. The other sources include loans from friends (11.5%), relatives and others.

The customers, when asked about the positive and negative aspects of street vending gave mostly three answers for the positive side. These were, the rates were affordable and they sold a wide range of goods. The vendors were easily accessible and the consumers saved their time in marketing. Some consumers stated that the goods sold, especially perishables like vegetables and fish, were fresh.

**(b) Bhubaneswar**

Bhubaneswar is the capital of Odisha in Eastern India. The average literacy rate in the city was 74%. Orissa is one of the few states in the country that has accepted the National Policy for Urban Street Vendors. This in itself is positive sign as very few states have shown any concern for the street vendors. Bhubaneswar was one of the two states in the country that had actually included street vending in its urban plans. The other state was Manipur. The Town Planning Act of Orissa provides that 3% of the pavement space should be reserved for street vendors.

The existing street vendors are permitted to squat and sell their wares in the demarcated zones. The vendors who operate from the zones have to pay a social charge which is non- refundable. On being allotted the spot for vending, the vendor has to pay a stipulated fee to the municipality. The municipal authority provides yearly licenses to the vendor.

The vendors of each zone have formed their committee with elected office bearers. These committees are mainly set up to articulate the problems of vendors in their zone.

Street vendors in Bhubaneswar, as in most cities, sold a range of items that were needed by the consumers. Nearly 30% of the vendors sold perishable goods whereas 41% sold household items and 19.5% sold leather goods. Hence we can see that non-perishable goods were more popular among the street vendors. An overwhelming majority of the vendors (91.5%) were males. Women constituted only 8.5%.

The positive side of street vending was that 53% of the sample earned between ₹ 141 and 220. At the same time 35% earned between ₹ 71 and 140 and 4.5% earned between ₹ 21 and 50 daily. If we compare these earnings with street vendors in other cities we will find that Bhubaneswar's earnings are higher. This is possibly because the National Policy has been implemented here and the street vendors operate with considerable degree of freedom.

An overwhelming majority (92.5%) live between 1-4 kms. from their place of work. A small number walk down while 48% of them cycle to their place of work. The more interesting part is that 46% have their motorcycles for travel. This certainly shows an improvement in their level of living. In their housing there is improvement as compared to street vendors in the other cities. Majority of the street vendors (62.5%) stayed in permanent



structures (*pucca* houses). This is the only city where a majority of street vendors stay in permanent structures. Another aspect of housing is that most of the street vendors lived in rented houses (71.5%) whereas only 28.5% owned their houses.

All in all, street vending in Bhubaneswar is a tough job. It was seen that 74% of vendors spent 10-14 hours a day on their work while another 18.5% spent more than 15 hours a day. This is certainly a tough job.

Another weakness of the Bhubaneswar vendors is that most of them were yet to be familiar with institutional credit. In fact the situation has not changed much. The only difference is that a majority (74.5%) depend on their own resources for their working capital. The next highest is borrowing from money lenders (19.5%). Loans from cooperative banks constitute only 3% whereas 2.5% of the vendors take advances from the wholesalers. However, the street vendors of Bhubaneswar were more informed than those in other cities. Interestingly, 64% were aware about the hawking zones and where all they existed and 55% were aware of the National Policy. This shows that their unions or the bureaucracy (though less likely) have made them aware of these important landmarks for street vendors.

Customers, when asked about the positive and negative aspects of street vending the most prevalent reply in favor was they felt satisfied buying from them. The other reasons were rates were cheap, products were fresh and buying from them saved time to go to regular markets.

**(c) Delhi**

Street Vendors contribute largely to the city economy, subsidizing the need of the people, making life of marginalized section of society, affordable to a large extent. However, they faced increasing assaults, hostile surroundings and a very competitive market due to increase in organized retail sector as well as in discount-shops.

The literacy level among the street vendors is very low, however, this is not universal as even graduates are found vending on streets due to lack of gainful employment opportunities in the formal sector. They spent more than 10 hrs a day in vending or related work to earn their livelihood in grueling conditions, which leave them with no personal or family life.

Vendors have to face atrocities on the daily basis from the government officials (Municipal and police officials). They earn

enough to satisfy their hunger, however, less to save anything for their future. It came in to notice that most of the vendors have large families (number of dependents) to feed and save nothing or very less.

The uncertainty of income due to the frequent removal/evacuation of markets makes their life more miserable. Most of them take money from money lender on higher interest rates in order to buy the goods. Vending is a business, which demands capital investment and returns are equally proportionate to the capital invested, however, majority of vendors land up in this business due to the flexibility of capital needed for vending thus income is also less for most of the vendors.

Women specifically face much more disastrous situations. As they are the home makers and have the customary duty to feed their family, their day starts early in the morning with household work and then their struggle for earning the livelihood begins. They have often been teased, abused or sometimes beaten by their male counterparts at the vending location, many times just to show the superiority of man over woman. In order to fulfill the responsibility of a care taker for their children they usually bring them to vending place which means diversion of attention, resulting in less sales,

lesser incomes, lower standard of living and consequent lesser chances to combat these circumstances in future.

The earning of a woman vendor is observed to be lesser than a male vendor, also, major part of her income is devoted to family needs. This could mean that they work harder than a male but due to the fact that they have less control over their earnings.

Most of the vendors migrated from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh and they started their professional life with this vending activity. However, in many cases after much probing it came into notice that the major reason for choosing vending as an option is that it requires less skill and capital.

Most of the big trade unions working for the rights of vendors in Delhi that were interviewed confirmed that only 10%-15% of the total members are women. Also, they highlighted the fact that the women vendors are less visible and it is difficult to organize them due to the social constraints. Thus, making it obvious that most vulnerable vendor i.e. women vendors who needed to be protected most, are not yet organized or less organized. Furthermore, the majority of trade unions' executive committee does not represent the substantial number of women vendors and a woman does not hold a decision making positions in the trade unions.

Trade Unions in Delhi do not charge much as membership fee from the vendors and are actively advocating for the vendors. Majority of hawker's association works for the rights of the vendors in Delhi; they also represent them in the Zonal and Ward vending committees in Municipal Corporations of Delhi (MCD) which work for the implementation of the National policy in Delhi. They do fight for vendor's legal rights and against the harassment from the police and MCD officials.

Delhi is undergoing drastic physical changes in the name of development and need of the hour is to ensure that the vendors get their due share in the development spree. Although the central government has adopted the National Policy on Street Vendors in January 2004, so far none of the cities have implemented it effectively. According to municipal laws it is illegal to vend without a license issued at the sole discretion of the municipalities. Yet, the municipalities in India have stopped issuing licenses to street vendors' decades ago, consequently trapping more than 1 crore vendors in India in a web of illegality, thus making vendors and street hawkers easy targets of extortion rackets. MCD is developing schemes for the vendors; however, the quest begins on the implementation process of the same. During the study it became

quite evitable that no zonal MCD office is taking scheme and its contents seriously such as democratic functioning of zonal and ward vending committees. Vendors were always vulnerable but tough attitude of officials and cumbersome process of getting rid from atrocities, make them all the more vulnerable to extremity of harassment.

#### **(d) Hyderabad**

On November 1, 1956, Hyderabad became the capital of Andhra Pradesh. After becoming the capital, the city slowly started to shun the shadow of a princely state and gain importance politically, geographically and economically. People from various parts of the state started settling and investing here. The city is administered by the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, the local government of the city of Hyderabad. The Hyderabad Corporation and the Secunderabad Corporation were established in 1950 via the Hyderabad Corporation Act. In 1955, the Hyderabad Municipal Corporation Act merged the Municipal Corporation overseeing Hyderabad and neighboring Secunderabad.

In Hyderabad, there were more males than females engaged in street vending and most of them do not prefer mobile vending. They would rather be found static at one place, in some cases near

their home in peripheral areas of Hyderabad. They mostly sell products such as flowers, fruits and vegetables.

An interesting fact emerging from the marital background of the women vegetable vendors is that a lesser percentage of unmarried girls engaged in street vending compared to unmarried males. Most of the vendors in this city have never been to school, and those who attended did not complete their secondary education.

More than 64% of the women vendors were engaged in selling non-perishable goods. Vendors selling non-perishable products do not have to go to wholesale market everyday; they keep the stock of the goods. 35 per cent of the respondents were engaged in selling perishable items.

About 29 per cent of the women vendors were engaged in selling eatables and drinks. Some vendors sell both eatables and drinks. 17% of the vendors were engaged in selling fruits and vegetables. In fact, more women vendors were involved in selling fruits than vegetables. Most of the vegetable vendors have got permanent place for vending in different areas. About 13% of the women vendors were engaged in selling fancy items.

There are vendors who have been in the same occupation for 20-25 years and some for more than 30 to 35 years. Some of them have been vending at the same location. Most of them are selling the same products which their parents used to sell.

More than 58% of the street vendors living at different locations from the vending place walk down with their goods. 20 per cent of them travel by bus to reach their work place. More than 20 % of the vendors use either cycle or motorized vehicle.

Women vendors narrated their troubles of travelling by bus while carrying their goods. They have to face the ire of the bus conductor and passengers who shout on them and use foul words. Still bus remains their choice for the reasons of cost saving.

There is no doubt that vending offers a source of employment to the urban poor who otherwise find various, often inhibiting entry barriers into the labor market or in self-employment ventures. To earn a handsome earning as an employee, one needs to be better educated or skilled. A wage laborer in a shop can be fired any time. Moreover, it will be almost impossible for a poor person to own a formal shop in the city. Huge security deposit, advance rent (up to a year), high rent, infrastructure cost, incubation period before the income starts accruing, creditworthiness, legal and contractual paper



work, etc. make it beyond their means. The flip side, however, is the low earnings, despite high profit margins, because of low investment. Moreover, cost of living in a city is very high. There is always the inclination to involve children in the work. While the life goes on, the street vendor finds herself/himself trapped into a vicious cycle of poverty. Lack of any social security often reinforces this poverty trap.

The daily earning of the lowest quartile of the women vendors is up to ₹ 125 only whereas for the highest quartile of earners, the figure is more than ₹ 200. Generally mobile vendors earn less than static vendors because they enter into the market with less quantity of goods. The income of street vendors fluctuates on a day-to-day basis. The fluctuation can be up to twice the amount of their lowest earning a day.

Their long hours of work are also accompanied by lack of basic facilities such as water and sanitation, making their work more difficult. Availability of drinking water is a serious problem in some of the areas where public source of water is not available. Some of them bring a bottle of water from home but that proves acutely insufficient during summers. Public toilets are not available in all areas. Even where they are available they are normally dirty and

unhygienic. It is not surprising that many women suffer from urinary tract infections.

Most of the vendors use their own money as working capital. As a large number of women vendors are in vending for more than 5 years, they have been able to make some savings and use the money to run their business.

Maximum number of the vendors reported paying bribe to the police or municipal officials every day. The amount of bribe ranged from ₹ 10 to ₹ 30 everyday. The amount depends on the locality (high, medium or low earning locality) and items of vending. Some of the vendors denied paying any money to the police or municipal officials but they accepted that policemen never pay for the goods they take from them.

#### **(e) Imphal**

Imphal is the capital of the state of Manipur, in North East India. The street vendors in Imphal are concentrated in the Khwairamband (main) Market. According to the 2011 India census, Imphal has a total population of 268243, where 130,735 are males and females constitute 137,508. The male literacy rate is 95.08% while the female literacy rate is 86.77%.

A unique feature about Imphal is that, unlike the other cities, there are more women vendors. The survey showed that 88.5% of the vendors are women. They also are the main earners in their respective families.

Manipur has progressive laws for street vendors. Its Town Planning Act makes provisions for 10 street vendors and three shops for every 1,000 population living in housing societies (see earlier survey of seven cities). However it was found that the municipalities have started to harass the vendors in the city. A case on how women vendors through their prolonged action for three years were able to resist and became victorious in the struggle against the municipality's plan of building a super market in the place of the main market was given.

The survey shows that not much has changed in this respect. The area continues to remain dirty posing a health hazard to the women vendors and the municipal authorities keep collecting the blockage tax. The other major problem is eviction. The vendors not having license are frequently evicted and they have to run from pillar to post to get a place to sell. They are usually the main earning member in the family and decrease in income as displacement has a

negative effect on the food intake in the household. The vendors also complained of bribes they have to pay to the authorities.

Evictions and harassment take place only in the main market perhaps because it is a profitable area to work in. There are hardly any evictions or bribe taking in the areas outside the market. In other words, vendors work without harassment in areas outside the market.

The vendors are older women who perhaps took to vending because of economic problems in the family. Their income data shows that a majority (55.5%) earn less than 100 a day. This amount is dangerously hovering around the poverty line. There are 72% who have between 3 to six dependents in the household. The percentage of street vendors earning between 101 to 200 rupees a day is 33.5%. Hence we can see that most street vendors lead a hand to mouth existence.

What makes the vendors vulnerable is that most of them sell perishable goods. Hence they need time to sell these. If they rot because of eviction or because the vendor is unable to sell, she faces losses. The study shows that only 1.5% of the vendors sell non-perishable food.

Since the vendors are mostly women, they prefer to remain in one place in the market for selling their wares. The study shows that only 5.5% of the vendors are mobile. The rest (94.5%) are static.

The age of their business is another aspect that shows vulnerability of these vendors. It was found that 63.5% of the vendors are in this trade for less than 10 years. In other words they started working as vendors from the age of 25 or above. This late entry into business could indicate that they were forced into street vending because of survival problems of the family.

Sources of credit are also another aspect of vulnerability in which only a section of them have used their own savings to start their business. This accounts for only 17% whereas only 1.5% of the vendors have taken loans from co-operatives. At the same time 64.5% have taken loans from the money lender.

The vendors have to spend long hours at work. Most of them spend between 8 to 11 hours a day in their trade. And some work for 12 to 15 hours a day. Hence vending is hard work and the compensation is quite low. Maximum of the vendors paid bribes to avoid eviction temporarily.

It was seen that though Imphal has rules for street vendors these are frequently violated by the authorities. The government proudly proclaims that it has accepted the national policy. However the tales of the vendors there show that there is a difference between acceptance and implementation.

**(f) Indore**

Indore is the largest city in Madhya Pradesh. Its population in the 2011 Census of India was 3,276,697. The city attracts migrants from other parts of the state who are poor. These people come to Indore to seek gainful employment. They are agricultural laborers, small farmers and crafts persons who have been displaced by machine made products. These people seek employment in the informal sector as low paid unskilled labor. Many of them take to street vending as it requires low capital and low expertise. They collectively form the urban poor. There is another section of workers who have joined the ranks of informal self-employed workers. These are the former textile workers. These people, due to lack of employment opportunities, become street vendors or work in small establishments in order to eke out a living.

A significant fact is that the state of Madhya Pradesh is one of the few states that have a policy for street vendors which are in line

with the national policy. One expects that street vendors in this state are better off than in other states because the policy would give them protection from evictions and other forms of harassment.

The existence of the policy does not prevent vendors from being evicted. They are mainly evicted because of urban development projects. The Bus Rapid Transport Scheme (BRTS) introduced under JNNURM has caused maximum displacement. Another major problem facing vendors is that the numbers are large but spaces allotted are not sufficient. As a result many vendors operate from non-hawking areas in the city. The municipal authorities swoop down on them and make them pay fines ranging from ₹ 70 to ₹ 150. Most vendors earn around ₹ 100 a day so these fines become heavy.

The income of the vendors was low. An overwhelming majority earned less than ₹ 100 a day. This is lower than the minimum wage for unskilled workers. The vendors are mainly static in the sense that they vend from fixed places on the pavement. This is the trend in most places.

Most of the vendors sell perishable goods such as vegetables, fish and fruits. Some of the women vendors have been in this

profession for 10 years or less, and some for less than 20 years and also some have been vending for more than 20 years.

There were vendors who travelled by cycle, motorcycle, auto rickshaw, bus and train. However the majority of the vendors travel by foot to save money.

In Indore it was found that maximum of the vendors used their own savings as capital for their venture. The next largest source of capital is through advances given by the wholesalers and there are some vendors who took advances from the wholesalers.

#### **(g) Jaipur**

Jaipur is the capital of Rajasthan. It is the largest city in the state with a population of 3,046,163 in 2011 Census of India. The city is divided into 12 zones or wards as designated by Jaipur Development Authority (JDA). Of these six zones are in the main city where most of the street vendors are concentrated.

The vendors can be found in large numbers in areas that are what we understand as 'natural markets'. These include areas near schools, colleges, railway stations, university and temples and even near airport. The temples provide places where weekly markets are held.



Street vendors who have been operating for a long period of time can get their goods on loan and at low or zero interest. The new comers do not get loans at low interests. The market wholesalers (medium or small) do not provide goods on loan to the new street vendors. They set up their business by procuring loans from their kins or friends at high rates of interest at 50 to 60% per annum. This market is a formal set up which gets products from all over the country. Many large farmers depend on this market for sale of their products. However a major part of the market's product is marketed by street vendors. Hence we can see that the existence of this wholesale market depends on street vendors who market these products to the consumers. The street vendors are directly and indirectly supporting many people's livelihood.

As in most cities of India, in Jaipur too, the majority of the vendors were males. Needless to say, the females are at the lower end of the vendors. They earn less because they come from poor families and they take to street vending because they have no other means of supporting their families.

The earnings of the street vendors are not too high. In fact they hinge at the lower level. An overwhelming majority earn between ₹ 100 to ₹ 200 a day. This is not a high amount. These low

incomes are a result of the socio-economic status of the street vendors. They belong to lower castes/classes which does not give them access to credit as they do not have guarantees. Their low educational standards too, contribute to their low earnings.

The vendors lived mainly in walking distance from their place of work. All of them lived in slum settlement and out of this most of them lived in rented accommodation and only a few owned their own homes. These vendors mostly sold household products such as utensils, plastic goods etc. And there are some vendors who are selling vegetables, fruits, fish and food.

Most of the vendors travel by foot to their place of work. Though most try to stay a few kilometers from their place of work, some walk more than 5 kms one way to reach their workplace and a few of them used bicycle and buses.

A small number had used their own savings for running their business. These were small street vendors. Maximum of them had taken loans at high rates of interests from money lenders or their relatives and friends. Hence we can see that there is an acute need for enabling these vendors to access institutional credit so that they can increase their business.

Street vending is no cake walk as we have seen. These people work for 15 hours or more to earn a modest living. Moreover they face other hazards from the municipal authorities who take away a portion of their earnings as bribes or, even worse, confiscating their goods. It was found that bribe taking was less in Jaipur as compared with other cities.

#### **(h)Lucknow**

Lucknow is the capital city of the most populous state in the country, namely, Uttar Pradesh. Had this state been a separate country, it would be the eight most populous states in the world. The street vendors constitute an integral component of the urban-economy in the city of Lucknow.

The National Policy on Street Vendors in India clearly states about the formation of Town Vending Committees (TVCs) for every ward in the cities. The formation of town-vending committee has still not materialized in majority of the wards in the city in spite of a number of protests and rallies by the unions of street-vendors in the city. There have been a number of deliberations and promises to implement the policy but still evictions and insecurity form an integral component of the challenges faced by the street-vendors in Lucknow.

The weekly markets constitute an integral component of vendor retailing in the city of Lucknow. Primarily, due to huge middle class customer base who prefer to buy weekly supply of fruits, vegetables, and other groceries at a relative cheaper price. A large number of vendors in the city of Lucknow who are involved in weekly markets participate in the markets in different localities on different days. The key problem that comes in the weekly market in Lucknow is that of the lack of any specific places for vending, thus the roadside stall often lead to traffic congestions, the brunt of which is sometimes borne by the vendors.

Also, the number street-food vendors in Lucknow are relatively quite high as compared to other similar cities. They also constitute one of the most vulnerable sections of the vendors as they have to often face the atrocities of the authorities in various forms. There is no proper licensing mechanism for street food stalls and generally police harass them either on the grounds of being in a non-vending zone or with issues of food-safety.

In overall analysis, the street-vendors in Lucknow as of now face a lot of problems and the recent protests have raised their concern to a significant level. There are chances that some substantiate measures will be taken for their benefit but immediate

action is not visible, also the upcoming general elections have sidelined the issues of street-vendors and there is not much immediate action to be seen most probably.

The consumer base in the city of Lucknow is very heterogeneous and the large middle class working population is generally seen to be in interaction with the street-vendors irrespective of their incomes. Unlike other metros even the upper class forms a huge consumer base for the street-vendors for their day to day needs especially for fruits, vegetables, groceries etc. in the absence of any major organized retail network. A total sample of 51 consumers was selected for gaining an insight into the customer perspective.

#### **(i) Mumbai**

Mumbai, formerly known as Bombay, is the capital of the state of Maharashtra. The city attracts migrants from all over India and, in turn, makes the city a collection of many communities and cultures as it has business opportunities, as well as its potential to offer a higher standard of living. According to the 2011 census, the population of Mumbai is 12,442,373. The city contains the country's largest slum population, as 60% of the city lives in slums.

The common reasons behind adoption of street vending as a livelihood strategy are- for some of them this is a source of additional income for the family, for most however, this is the sole source of income for the household; many migrants have taken up vending as the only means of earning a livelihood because it offered easy entry into the market; most of the vendors failed to get jobs in other sectors because of low levels of education and low social status; vending is an independent way of earning a livelihood. Most of the vendors liked to be self-employed rather than work under other people for low wages; as an occupation, vending requires low investment, and therefore appeals to the urban poor; many of those who have lost their jobs in the private sector due to closure of factories or retrenchment also took up vending; the low wages in the formal sector and the informal nature of job therein forces some of the workers to divert to this activity where though informally, they have greater prospect of earning a higher income level. There was a predominance of male vendors over the female vendors among the street vendors. Most of the vendors earn between ₹ 141-350 per day. During this time, ₹ 146 was the minimum wage for unskilled workers in the state.

Many vendors were found to be remitting a substantial portion of their earning to family members living in far-off towns and villages. Vendors migrated few decades ago in search of opportunities. Now, they have to support their families back home. Some of these families survive on the money remitted by the vendors. Most of the vendors live in permanent homes while the rest live in temporary shelters.

A major portion of the vendors walk to their place of work. This is a preferred mode of transport for two reasons: the vending activity is carried out in places located in close proximity to their homes and the vendors are so poor that they cannot afford to spend on available transport facilities. A small number of vendors do not pay rent for storage and store the goods at their place of vending, whereas some stored their unsold products at rented places.

Vendors require capital for running their business. The requirements for capital are met from various sources like personal savings, loans from money-lenders, borrowing from friends and borrowing from their relatives. The bribes the vendors have to pay to the police or to the Bombay Municipal Corporations (BMC) eat away a major portion of their already impoverished incomes as most of them are forced to make bribe payments.

## **(j)Patna**

Patna is the capital of the Indian state of Bihar and it is located on the southern banks of river Ganga. The city has long been a major agricultural centre of trade; it's most active exports being grain, sugarcane, sesame, and rice. It is also an important business centre of eastern India. According to Census of India 2011, the total population in Patna city is 1,684,222.

It was found that a major portion of the vendors in Patna have received formal education but the highest percentages have studied till the upper primary standard. Maximum vendors are earning a daily income of ₹ 71-119 and there are some who are earning ₹ 120-140, ₹ 141-220 and also ₹ 221-500. Almost 95% of these mothers were full-time home-makers.

Many vendors are found to be remitting a substantial portion of their earnings to support a large number of members back home. These vendors live in permanent homes of their ownership, temporary structure and rented house. Most of the vendors sell vegetables, flowers, fruits and fish. Some vendors sell household



utensils, stationary items, plastic items, cosmetic products and leather goods.

A major portion of the vendors travels to work on foot. The rest travel by bicycles, while others take train, bus or even auto services to reach the place of work.

The vendors' capital requirements are met from various sources like personal savings, loans from money-lenders or borrowing from friends and relatives, group savings, wholesalers and co-operatives credit.

There are a number of hazards that the vendors face. The top two hazards are threats of eviction by the municipality and bribe payment. The vendors pay around an average of Rs.10 daily as bribes. Vendors unanimously reported that they do not get back goods which are confiscated by the municipal authorities. A large number of eviction drives are conducted and the confiscated goods are not returned. This situation portrays the ruthless attitude of the municipal authorities towards vendors in the city.

The second hazard is the distances involved in getting to work. Most of the vendors live at a distance of 1-2 kms from their workplace, so they prefer to walk. Some vendors live at distances

ranging from 2-10 kms from the workplace and have to take vehicles to work.

The survey has starkly revealed what happens to the poor sections of our society. Even after working for twelve to sixteen hours per day, they don't manage to earn enough to lead a decent life. Moreover, a greater slice of the impoverished income is snatched away from them by the police or the local leaders. Their incomes show a pattern of increase but due to accompanied expenditures which are also on the rise, there has been no change in their lifestyles. The state government used to issue tenders for revenue collection, whoever collected the highest revenue, could obtain tender for the next year. For increasing their collection, the civic authorities would take high taxes from the vendors. On one hand the government harps about improving the living conditions of the poor by giving them special facilities and on the other hand they take away so much from them adding on to the vendors' miseries.

## Conclusion

As seen from this chapter, in all the selected cities the socio – economic conditions of women vendors have a similar pattern in

which it can be seen that their daily income is low in all the cities and their work environment is far from satisfactory. They faced tremendous threats from the authority regarding the eviction of their work-place. A large number of eviction drives are conducted and the confiscated goods are not returned to them. The need of the hour is to closely monitor the working of Municipal Corporations in every city of India.

#### **4.1: BACKDROP**

Vegetable vending is one of the common sources of income for the uneducated and unskilled women in Aizawl City. There are more than 20 vegetable markets in Aizawl City, from which we randomly selected five vegetable markets as stated in the Methodology. This chapter presents the empirical analysis on the socio – economic status of women vegetable vendors in Aizawl City. The ages of the women vegetable vendors vary. Out of the total respondents, 43 of them are in the age group 50 years and above. Only 3 of them are below 30 years. This shows that the older women, who have less knowledge of the modern world technology, used vending as the main source of earning. From the field survey conducted it is seen that most of the women vegetable vendors do not attain high educational qualification. 39 respondents studied up to high school level, 36 of them till middle school, 37 of them till primary school and the rest 4 of them studied till higher secondary level. Out of 116 respondents 77 women vegetable vendors are married and the rest 39 are widows. These women vendors, because of their monthly income, participate in the decision makings at home. Majority of them, i.e. 55 respondents' average sale per day is more than ₹ 2000. Also, 99 percent of the women vegetable vendors are members in the women vendors' organization of their market

place. It is also noteworthy that their family members helped whenever necessary and support them in their business. Their sitting place of their activity is officially recognized by the State Government. They paid a rent of ₹10 per day for their vending seat.

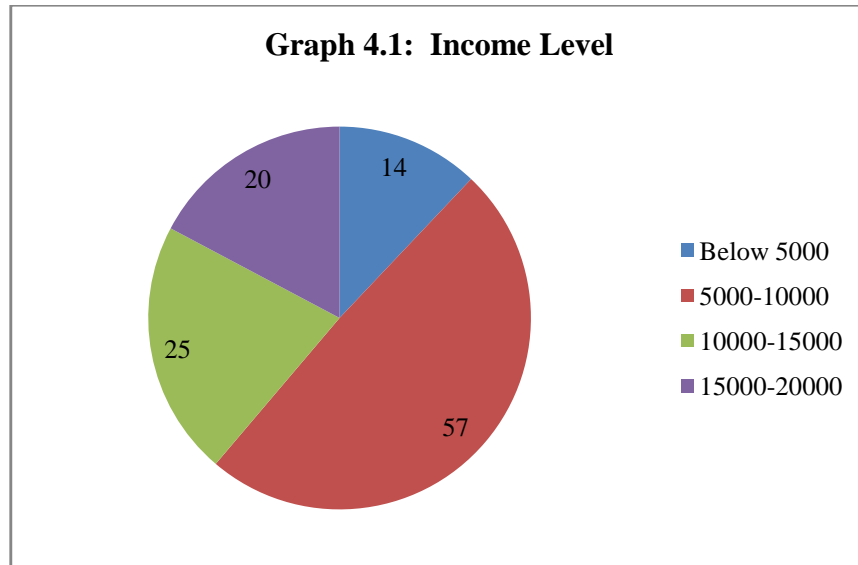
#### **4.2: INCOME PATTERN AND SOURCES OF FINANCE OF WOMEN VEGETABLE VENDORS**

We require money to meet our daily needs. Money plays a vital role in our lives. The monthly income of an individual shows the kind of life-style he lived. If a person is the sole earner for the family, his responsibility is very high to his family. The following table shows the monthly income of the women vegetable vendors.

**Table 4.1: Monthly Incomes of the Respondents**

<b>Monthly Income (₹)</b>	<b>No of Respondents</b>	<b>Sole earner</b>	<b>Not sole earner</b>
Below 5000	14	55	61
5000-10000	57		
10000-15000	25		
15000-20000	20		

*Source: Field Survey 2016*



The above table and graph presents the monthly income of the respondents in which 14 women earned below ₹ 5000.00. 57 respondents earned ₹5000.00 – 10000.00. The other 25 women vendors earned between ₹10000.00 – 15000.00 incomes a month. The remaining 20 respondents earned ₹ 15000.00 – 20000.00 a month. From this table it can be seen that women vegetable vendors in Aizawl earned ₹ 5000.00 – 10000.00 a month. Out of the total 116 respondents, 55 women are the only bread winner of the family and given their monthly income which range from ₹5000.00 – 10000.00, it can be concluded that, their monthly income is quite low to sustain their families taking into account the cost of living in Aizawl City.

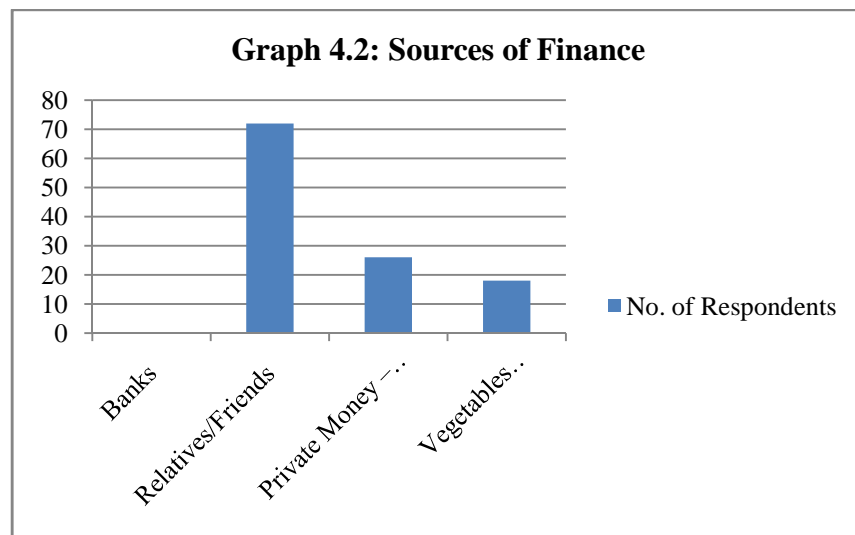
In order to run any kind of business, the first requirement is capital, without which it is difficult, in fact, impossible to run

business efficiently. The women vegetable vendors also need some kind of financial support for vendoring. In order to fill the shortage of their financial gap, very often they borrowed from different sources. In order to analyze their main sources of finance, the following table is presented.

**Table 4.2: Sources of Finance**

Sources of Finance	No. of Respondents
Banks	0
Relatives/Friends	72
Private Money – lenders	26
Vegetables Commissioners	18

Source: Field Survey 2016



Out of the total respondents, it is surprising to know that none of them avail any kind of financial support from Banks. This is due to the difficult procedures for applying loans in Banks. 72 women vendors borrowed money from their relatives in times of need whereas 26 respondents get their financial support from private money lenders. The other 18 women vendors rented money from vegetables commissioners. From the study, we can see that most of the respondents rented money from relatives and friends than any other sources of financial support. It may be concluded that when their own funds from their daily turnover is less than their requirement, maximum of these women vendors borrowed from their relatives and friends.

#### **4.3: WORK ENVIRONMENT**

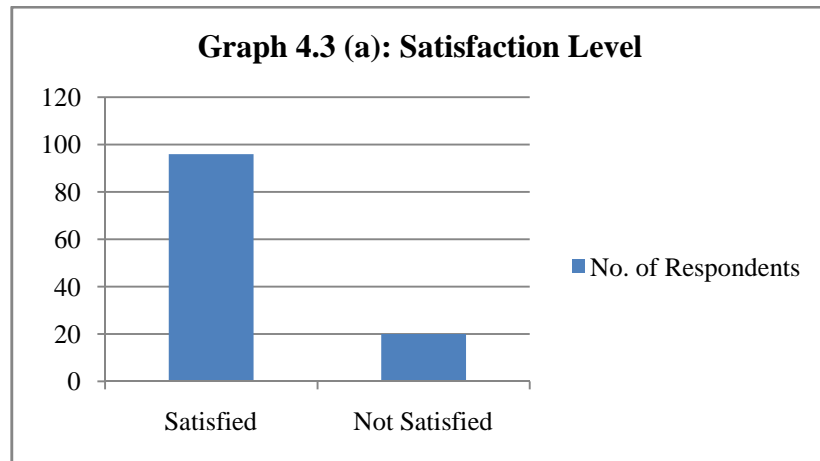
Another important pre - requisite condition to run any kind of business is the satisfaction level. If an individual is not satisfied with his current occupation, be it private or government job, it will surely affect his output level. Same is the case with the women vegetable vendors. The following table and graphs shows how the satisfaction level and the vending hours differ among the respondents.



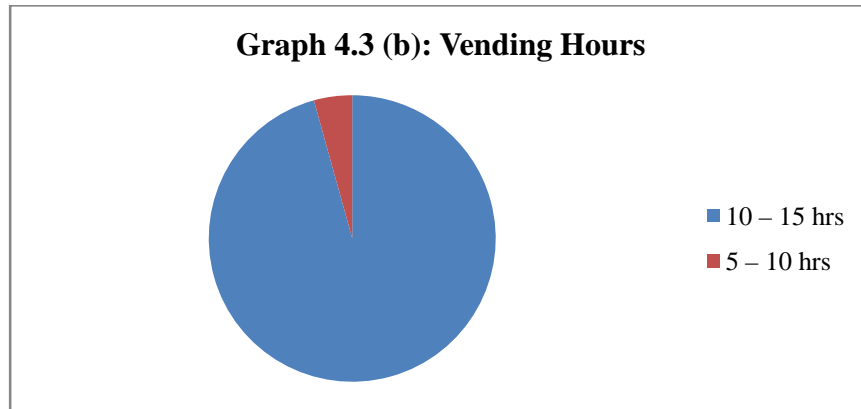
**Table 4.3: Level of Satisfaction**

<b>Satisfaction Level</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Vending Hours</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>
Satisfied	96	10 – 15 hrs	111
Not Satisfied	20	5 – 10 hrs	5

*Source: Field Survey 2016*



From the above table and graph we observe that most of the women vendors are pleased with their job as vegetable vendors. Only 20 out of 116 respondents are not satisfied as a vegetable vendor. These women, though not content with their job continue to vend because of the requirement of less capital and as there is no bar for educational qualification. One can conclude that those who are satisfied as vegetable vendors are much more hard - working.



Graph 4.3 (b) graphically represent the vending hours of the women vegetable vendors in Aizawl City. 5 respondents spend 5-10 hours vending and the rest 111 respondents used 10-15 hours for vending.

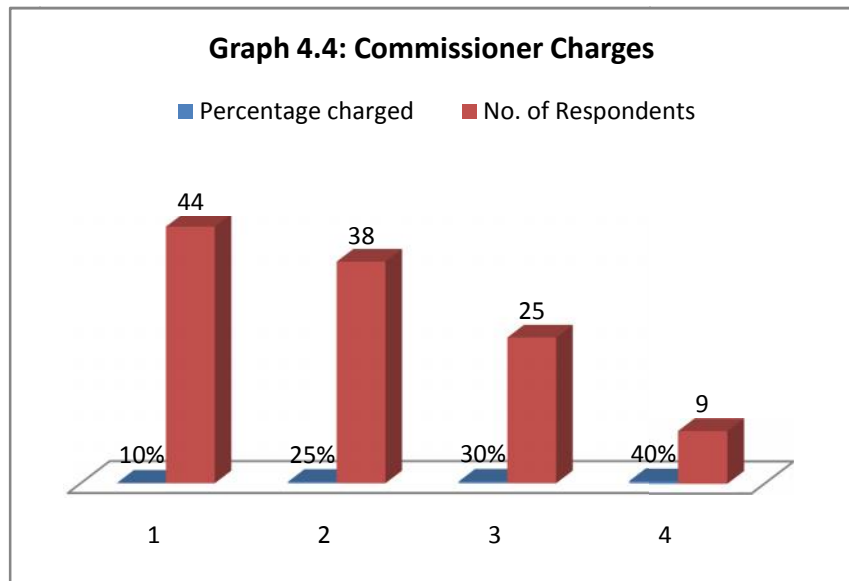
#### **4.4: RATE CHARGED BY PRIVATE COMMISSIONER AGENTS**

Another necessary condition for vending is from “where did they get vegetables to sell?” and “is it their own product or through commission?” by the women vegetable vendors. It is rather surprising to find out that hundred percent of the respondents get their product through commission. The next table, Table 4.4 shows the charges the vegetables commissioners charged them for selling their vegetable products and is depicted graphically too.

**Table 4.4: Percentage Charged by Private Vegetables Commission Agents**

Percentage charged	No. of Respondents
10%	44
25%	38
30%	25
40%	9

Source: Field Survey 2016



Out of the total respondents, only 9 women vendors say that they are charged 40% of their products by the vegetables commissioners. 25 of them stated that for commissioning them, they are charged 30% and 38 of them declared that 25% were charged

through commission. The rest 44 respondents affirmed that they are charged 10% of their products by the vegetables Commissioners. It may be concluded that more than 35 percent of the total respondents are charged 10% through commission and the profit they earned from vending are used to suffice their daily requirements of livelihood by these women vendors.

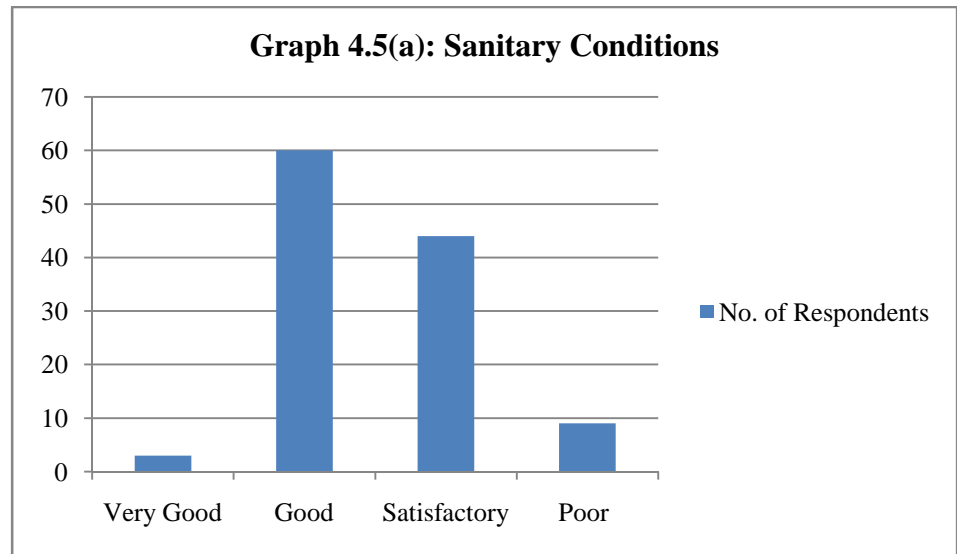
#### **4.5: HEALTH AND SANITATION**

Availability of toilet in the market place and the health problems faced by them are another important feature for the women vegetable vendors to continue their trade resourcefully. The sanitary condition of the toilets in the market place may also affect their health problems in one way or another. An unhealthy person's work-force will indeed be less than the healthy ones. The following tables and graphs highlighted these two factors.

**Table 4.5: (a) Sanitary Conditions**

<b>Sanitary Conditions of Toilets</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>
Very Good	3
Good	60
Satisfactory	44
Poor	9

*Source: Field Survey 2016*

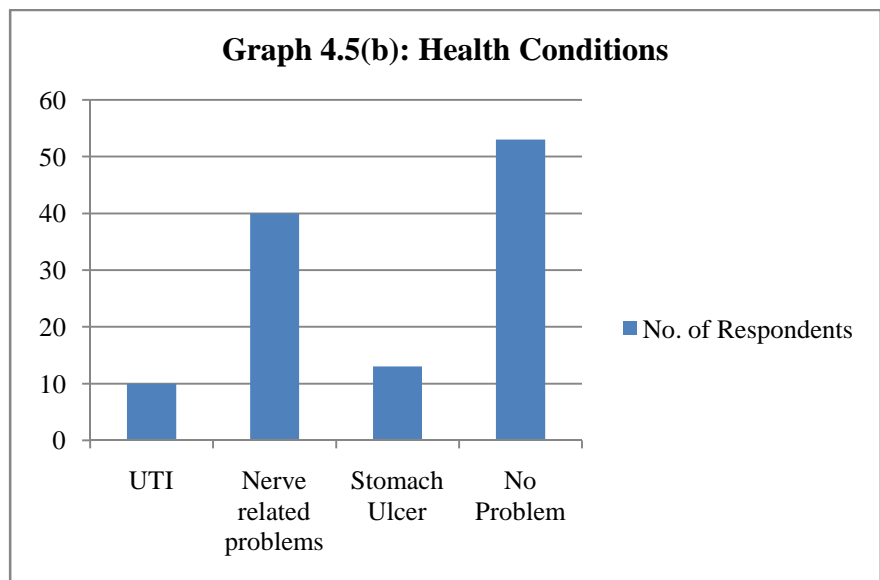


Toilets are available in all the five market places but the sanitary conditions differ. There are 3 respondents say that the sanitary condition of their toilet is very good. The other 60 respondents, majority of them stated that the sanitary condition of their toilet is good. The numbers of women vegetable vendors who feel that the sanitary condition of their market is satisfactory are 44. The rest 9 respondents think that the sanitary condition of their toilet is indeed poor.

**Table 4.5: (b) Health Conditions**

<b>Health Problems</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>
UTI	10
Nerve related problems	40
Stomach Ulcer	13
No Problem	53

*Source: Field Survey 2016*



Out of the total respondents, 53 of them do not face any kind of health problems because of street vending. The rest 63 women vegetable vendors do suffer from some kind of health problems. 40 women say that they endure nerve related problems because of

vending. Since they leave their homes in the early hours of the morning, many did not have the chance to eat proper food, 13 respondents bear stomach ulcer. Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) is another health problem suffered by the women vegetable vendors, 10 out of the total respondents suffer from this. One can conclude that the sanitary conditions in the market place are good and that the most common health problem faced by the women vegetable vendors is nerve related problem.

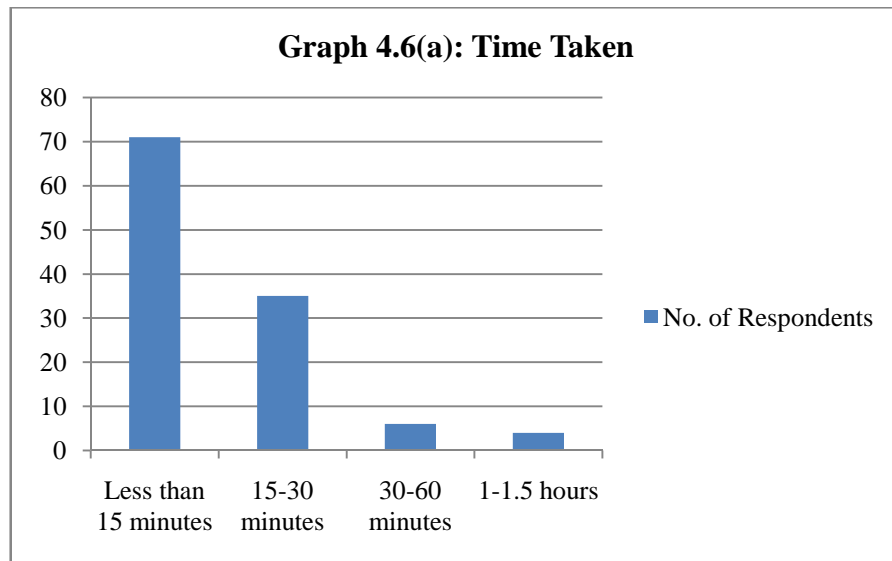
#### **4.6: TRANSPORTATION OF THE VENDORS**

Another point to take into account while analyzing the conditions of women vegetable vendors is the transportation costs. The ideal condition is when they live near their market place. That way they will not only save money but also time for vending. If they used too much time and money to reach their market place, it sure will have a negative impact in their business. The following tables represent the time taken; the mode of transportation and the amount spend by the women vegetable vendors.

**Table 4.6 (a): Time Taken**

<b>Time Taken</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>
Less than 15 minutes	71
15-30 minutes	35
30-60 minutes	6
1-1.5 hours	4

*Source: Field Survey 2016*



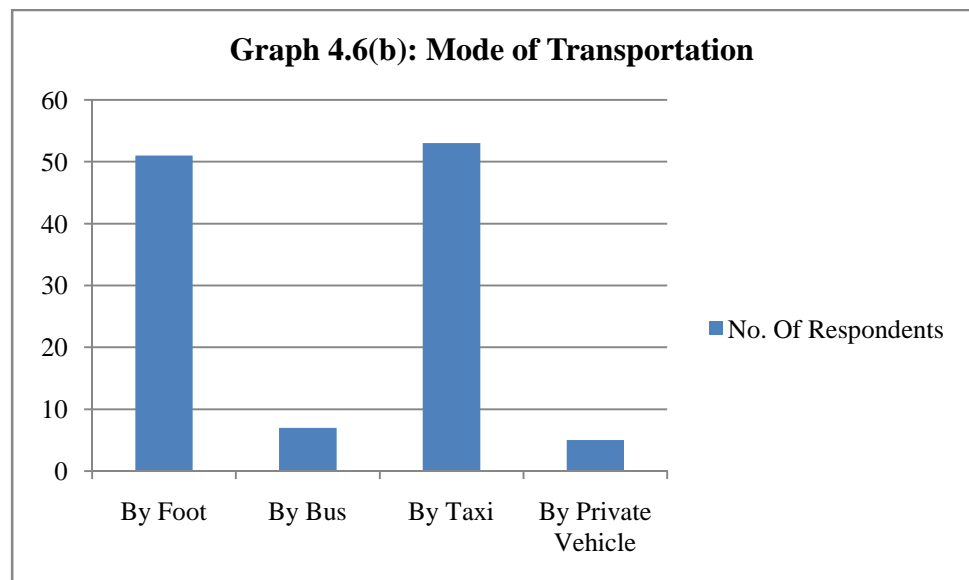
71 respondents used less than 15 minutes to reach the market place. 35 of them used 15 – 30 minutes and 6 of them used 30 – 60 minutes to reach the market place. The other 4 respondents took 1 – 1.5 hours to reach the market place. Therefore, it can be said that most of the women vendors live nearby to their workplace.



**Table 4.6 (b): Mode of Transportation**

<b>Mode of Transportation</b>	<b>No. Of Respondents</b>
By Foot	51
By Bus	7
By Taxi	53
By Private Vehicle	5

*Source: Field Survey 2016*



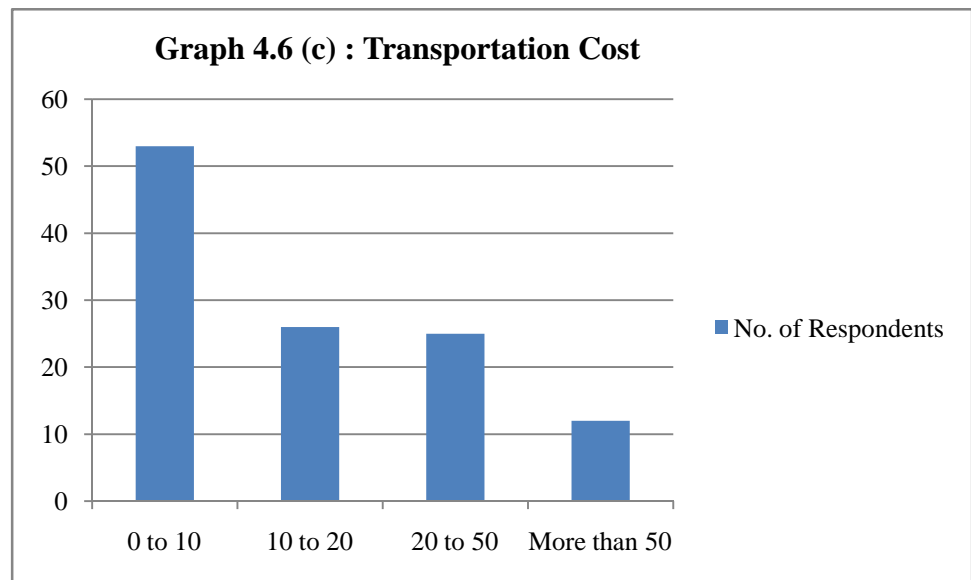
Under the mode of transportation, 5 out of the total respondents used their own private vehicle (i.e. motor-cycle). The women vegetable vendors who came by taxi are 53 in numbers. It is to note that these women usually came in taxis on a contribution basis. 7 of them came by bus and the rest 51 of them came by foot.

Therefore, it can be concluded here that most of the women vendors in Aizawl city used taxis by sharing the fares to go to their workplace.

**Table 4.6 (c): Transportation Cost**

Amount Spent (in ₹)	No. of Respondents
0 to 10	53
10 to 20	26
20 to 50	25
More than 50	12

*Source: Field Survey 2016*



12 of the respondents used more than ₹ 50 and 25 of them used ₹ 20-50 to reach the market place. 26 of them used ₹ 10-20 for

transportation cost and the rest 53 of them used less than ₹ 10 for transportation cost. Since there are 53 respondents who came by taxix one can conclude that majority of the women vegetable vendors spent less than ₹ 10 to go to their vending palaces.

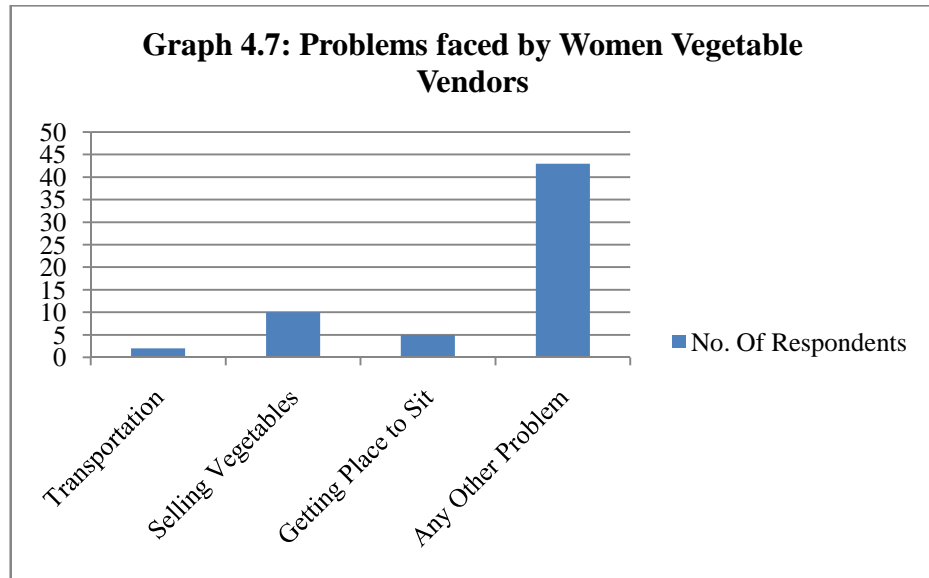
#### **4.7: OTHER PROBLEMS OF VENDING**

There used to be some kind of problems faced by the different workers of any profession. The women vegetable vendors are no exception. The following table and graph shows the main problems faced by the women vegetable vendors in Aizawl City.

**Table 4.7: Main Problems Faced**

<b>Problems Faced</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>
Transportation	2
Selling Vegetables	10
Getting Place to Sit	5
Any Other Problem	43

*Source: Field Survey 2016*



As mentioned in the previous paragraph, women vegetable vendors also faced many problems. But surprisingly, 56 respondents stated that they did not face any kind of problem in their profession. 2 respondents faced transportation problem and 10 women vegetable vendors faced the problem of selling vegetables. 5 respondents faced the problem of getting place to sit in the market place. The rest 43 respondents faced some other kind of problem. Some of the respondents are also getting vegetables from outside Mizoram in which they faced problems in measuring the quantity of the vegetables. It often happen that one box of vegetable which is supposed to be 50 kgs as written on the box itself happens to be 35 kgs only when the vendors measure it again. This clearly suggested

that there is lack of proper weight and measure controls in the vegetable market in Aizawl City. The vegetable vendors have submitted their grievances to the concerned authority but continuous inspection of this matter is not being monitored properly.

Also, those vendors who are getting products from Vegetable Commissioners are facing competition from those producers who directly sold their products in the market - a market is said to be efficient, when the producer earns maximum profit, at the same time, we should take into account the profits of these vendors. This shows that there is fluctuation of vegetable prices in Aizawl City. Based on this empirical evidence, it is suggested that there should be a uniformity of price.

## FINDINGS

- The women vegetable vendors in Aizawl earned ₹ 5000.00 – ₹ 10000.00 per month, this amount is quite low to sustain their families taking into account the cost of living in Aizawl City. Though their income is low, they contributed to their family and 55 of the respondents are the sole earners of their family. (Objective No.1)
- Average sale per day is more than ₹ 2000.00 which is used again to commissioned the vegetables and for family consumption. It is also noteworthy that their family members helped whenever necessary and support them in their business. (Objective No. 1)
- The women vendors not only contribute in their monthly income, but maximum of them are the sole earners. This let them participate in the decision makings at home on different issues relating to their children education, purchase of household items, daily consumption etc. This suggests that vendoring is a contributing factor in empowering women. (Objective No.2)
- 99 percent of the women vegetable vendors are members in the women vendors' organization of their market place, which

helps them in building confidence among them. (Objective No.2)

- The most common health problem faced by the women vegetable vendors is nerve related problem, which may be caused by long hours of sitting at their respective seats. Stomach ulcer is another problem for the vendors which may be caused by the irregularity of their food consumptions. (Objective No.3)

- The sanitary conditions in the market place are satisfactory and toilets are available in all the five markets surveyed. (Objective No.3)

- Some of the respondents are also getting vegetables from outside Mizoram in which they faced problems in measuring the quantity of the vegetables. It often happen that one box of vegetable which is supposed to be 50 kgs as written on the box itself happens to be 35 kgs only when the vendors measure it again. (Objective No.4). This clearly suggested that there is lack of proper weight and measure controls in the vegetable market in Aizawl City. The vegetable vendors have submitted their grievances to the concerned authority but continuous inspection of this matter is not being monitored properly. *This finding placated our first Research Question*

*that whether there are any proper weights and measure controls of vegetables in Aizawl City.*

- None of the vendors avail financial support from banks. When their own funds from their daily turnover is less than their requirement, maximum of these women vendors borrowed from their relatives and friends. This finding shows that there is no bank – vendors’ linkages. *This finding satisfied our second Research Question whether banks play a role as a source of finance for women vegetable vendors.*
- Those vendors who are getting products from Vegetable Commissioners are facing competition from those producers who directly sold their products in the market - a market is said to be efficient, when the producer earns maximum profit, at the same time, we should take into account the profits of those vendors. This shows that there is fluctuation of vegetable prices in Aizawl City.
- The ages of the women vegetable vendors vary. Out of the total respondents, 43 of them are in the age group 50 years and above. Only 3 of them are below 30 years. This shows that the older women, who have less knowledge of the modern world technology, used vending as the main source of earning.



- 39 respondents studied up to high school level, 36 of them till middle school, 37 of them till primary school and the rest 4 of them studied till higher secondary level. From the empirical analysis it can be seen that most of the women vegetable vendors are literate.
- Their sitting place of their activity is officially recognized by the State Government. They paid a rent of ₹ 10 per day for their vending seat.
- The respondents are charged 10% out of the total amount of vegetables taken by them from the commission agents.
- Majority of the women vegetable vendors avail the laborers to carry their vegetables by paying ₹ 20.00 on a daily average. At the same time, there are those vendors who paid more than ₹ 20.00 daily for transportation charges.
- These women, though not content with their job continue to vend because of the requirement of less capital and as there is no bar for educational qualification.

## **EMPIRICAL BASED SUGGESTIONS**

- Most of the vendors in the markets have permanent seats where some are much better as compared to other seats due to its easy access. Therefore, the authority should revise the seating arrangement of the vegetable vendors frequently so that every vendor has an equal chance to be seated in those seats which are in better site.
- These women vendors, especially for Saturday market sat in their seats from dawn. Supply of electricity is required for these vendors to help them in selling their vegetables in the morning and late evening especially during monsoon period.
- From our analysis it was seen that there is price fluctuation in different markets within Aizawl City. Therefore, it is suggested that the concerned authority should monitor and check prices to maintain uniformity.
- As highlighted in the findings, there is no proper and regular inspection of the weight of imported vegetables. In order to control this, the concerned authority should inspect the vegetable markets regularly.
- Since vegetables are perishable commodities, the vendors often faced problems of storage facilities. In this regard, the State government should setup terminal markets which will

provide infrastructure facilities for storage, cold – chain, etc. which should be conveniently located for the women vegetable vendors and to prevent distress sale of produce.

- In today's world, financial inclusion is one of the components of development in which even the weaker section of the society should be included. But as seen from the finding, there is no bank – vendors' linkages and it is suggested that banks should act as a source of finance for the women vendors and also a credit – linked investment subsidy to be provided on the capital cost of general or commodity – specific marketing infrastructure for agricultural commodities.
- Vegetable markets should be clean as they are the place where eatables are sold. Most of the vegetable markets are not clean enough. Both the vendors and the customers have an important role to maintain cleanliness in the market. Trash – bins provided in the market place should be used properly.
- There is lack of customer care in all the vegetable markets. The vendor themselves must improve in caring for the customers to increase the sales of their vegetables.
- The vegetable markets in Aizawl City should have better infrastructure facilities for the safety as well as convenient of

the vendors. There should be safe drinking water facilities not only for the vendors but also for the customers.

- Apart from the permanent seaters there are those vendors who sells their vegetables on the road – side and foot path; it suggested here that the authority should provide a mini market to sell their vegetables.

### **GENERAL SUGGESTIONS**

- Women must be educated and trained constantly to acquire the skills and knowledge in all the functional areas of business management.
- The women vendors have little access to funds, due to the fact that they are concentrated in poor communities with few opportunities to borrow capital. They suffer from inadequate financial resources and working capital. They lack access to external funds due to their inability to provide tangible security. Hence, it is suggested that these women vendors must be given relaxation to borrow from any financial institution.
- Active member based organizations must adopt a social security scheme that gives multiple benefits to the members those who are unionized.

- To acquire practical knowledge vocational training should be provided to Aizawl's women vegetable vendors.
- Non – governmental organizations and vendors should start regular consultations to coordinate advocacy programmes with a view to recognition and formalization of vegetable vending.
- Women vegetable vendors needs to be imparted with certain property rights : to utilize the public space; to access the institutional credit; and to participate actively in union activities, all of which would help them achieve decent work and enjoy an adequate means of livelihood.
- Garbage collection and solid waste disposal, public toilets and sanitation for vendors – for this purpose, monthly fee can be levied on vendors for the use of infrastructure services.
- Photo identity card can be issued to all women vegetable vendors where their activity type, location of vending space besides bio – data are mentioned. For this purpose, a nominal fee can be collected by ward vending committee, from all registered women vegetable vendors. This will increase cooperation among them and other important aspects of the business.

- The government and NGOs should intervene and help women vegetable vendors with credit for capital, funds and provide business skills.
- Access to market information should be improved. This will alleviate the problem of high and fluctuating supplier prices so that hawkers will know the prices and gains before getting involved in the business of vegetable vending.
- Government actions are required to certify and scrutinize competing vegetable product traders to ensure achievement of minimum standard weighing units and quality standards in order to facilitate vegetable production and marketing process.
- Vegetable production should be intensified and diversified to satisfy wider market demand and to gain normal profit for all women vegetable vendors.
- Voluntary organizations can work towards making improvement in the health status, educational attainment and general welfare of the women vegetable vendors. The following areas particularly can be intervened by these groups: to organize awareness programs regarding their legal rights, health, nutrition and sanitation; to make arrangement

for doctors to organize health camps or free medical check – ups; to make provision for adult education.

- Experienced social organizers should come forward to organize / unionize the women vegetable vendors to enable them to raise voice collectively.
- The government should evolve a mechanism to listen to the grievances of the women vegetable vendors periodically.
- Any policy intervention should take into account the ways in which the women vegetable vending sector is segmented between more and less vulnerable vendors, and the ways in which the voices of women vegetable vendors and their organizations can be heard in policy process.

## **CONCLUSION**

A broad and holistic approach is needed to improve the conditions of women vegetable vendors in Aizawl city. While formulating the urban plans it is necessary to take into account the rights of the vendors to public space. We should keep in mind that a large number of people are dependent on street vending for their livelihood and the common urban dwellers benefits from their services; they exist because the consumers want them to exist.

Vendoring is a fundamental right provided it does not infringe on the right of others. Therefore, the findings and suggestions is hoped to have some policy implications for the policy makers for improving the conditions of women vegetables in Aizawl city.



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