

A Study on Problem and Prospects of Women Street Vendor with Special Reference to Tirunelveli City

S. Sri Atchaya¹ and Dr. P. Ponmalar²

III B.Com (CS)¹

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce (Corporate Secretaryship)²

Sri Sarada College for Women (Autonomous), Tirunelveli Tamil Nadu, India

(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India)

Abstract: *Street vending plays a vital role in providing livelihoods for many women in Tirunelveli city. It enables them to earn income, support their families, and gain a measure of financial independence. Despite their contribution to the local economy, women street vendors face several challenges that affect their work and overall well-being. This study was undertaken to understand the major problems, prospects, and day-to-day struggles experienced by women street vendors in Tirunelveli, as well as to suggest practical measures for their improvement. The study is based on responses from 102 women vendors, using percentage analysis and simple ranking techniques to interpret the data. The findings reveal that most respondents are between 40 and 60 years of age, married, and living in urban areas with nuclear families. A large proportion of them are illiterate and earn below Rs. 20,000 per month. Many have been vending for more than six years, primarily selling fruits and vegetables along roadside pavements. The study also found that a majority of women use Self Help Group (SHG) accounts for savings but lack awareness of government welfare schemes. Common problems include lack of space, absence of permanent vending spots, limited government support, and frequent health issues such as body pain due to long working hours. Based on these findings, the study suggests creating designated vending zones, providing access to microcredit, ensuring better sanitation and storage facilities, and organizing health camps. Awareness programs on hygiene, financial literacy, and business skills are also recommended. By offering structured support and recognizing their role in the informal sector, women street vendors can achieve greater economic security and social dignity.*

Keywords: Women street vendors, government support, empowerment, microcredit, social security.

I. INTRODUCTION

Street vending is an important source of income for many women in Tirunelveli city. It provides them with opportunities to earn a living, support their families, and gain some degree of economic independence. Women street vendors sell a wide variety of products, including fruits, vegetables, snacks, clothes, and household items, catering to the everyday needs of local residents. Despite their significant role in the informal economy, these women often face a range of challenges that affect both their business and personal lives. Many women street vendors work under difficult conditions, with limited access to basic facilities such as clean water, sanitation, and shelter. They frequently encounter harassment from authorities, social discrimination, and competition from larger businesses. Additionally, lack of proper legal recognition and access to financial resources restricts their ability to grow their enterprises.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

KARTHICK S AND Dr.M.D. CHINNU (2025) analysed a research on the topic, "CHALLENGES FACED BY STREET VENDORS IN TAMILNADU", focusing on regulatory hurdles, financial difficulties, and poor infrastructure. The study surveyed 180 street vendors, including 45 women primarily involved in food vending, to capture diverse



perspectives. The findings reveal frequent harassment by authorities and lack of legal protection as major problems. Many vendors suffer from unstable incomes and limited access to formal credit. Competition from organized retail further threatens their livelihood. The research points to inadequate public spaces and vending zones, increasing their vulnerability. The authors suggest enhancing policy frameworks, improving infrastructure, and strengthening vendor associations to safeguard rights. This study highlights the urgent need for targeted interventions to support street vendors in South India.

ANIKET S.KHANDAAGALE AND MAHAVIR M.SHETIYA (2024) analysed a research on the topic, “A STUDY ON ONLINE BANKING & FINANCIAL INCLUSION OF WOMEN STREET VENDOR IN PUNE” explores how online banking can empower women vendors through digital inclusion. Conducted in Pune, the study surveyed women street vendors to understand their use of digital financial services. The objective was to assess the role of online banking in improving financial stability and self-reliance. Findings revealed low adoption due to lack of awareness, despite the clear benefits. The authors suggest promoting digital literacy, simplifying mobile banking, and implementing focused outreach programs. The study concludes that while online banking has transformative potential, it requires targeted efforts to bridge the access gap.

FATHIMA BEE M H (2024) conducted a research on the topic, “PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF DIFFERENTLY-ABLED WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KRISHNAGIRI DISTRICT”. This study explores the challenges faced by differently-abled women entrepreneurs in Krishnagiri district, Tamil Nadu. It aims to understand issues related to education, employment, family and societal support, and access to training and resources. A sample of 500 respondents was used, making the study both descriptive and empirical. The research also looks into motivational factors that drive these women to start businesses and their success rates. Differently-abled women face unique barriers but also show strong resilience and determination. The study highlights the need for inclusive support systems and better awareness of existing schemes. It ultimately seeks to promote independence and equal opportunity within the entrepreneurial space.

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the main problems faced by women street vendors in Tirunelveli city.
- To explore the opportunities and prospects available for these women in their work.
- To look into the everyday challenges experienced by women street vendors in Tirunelveli, both at work and in their personal lives.
- To study the impact of street vending on their household responsibilities, social standing, and overall quality of life.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In semi-urban cities such as Tirunelveli, street vending has become a vital source of livelihood, particularly for women who rely on it to support their families and secure a degree of financial independence. Yet, the conditions under which they operate remain uncertain and vulnerable. Women vendors frequently encounter difficulties such as the absence of designated vending zones, lack of credit facilities, poor infrastructure, and occasional harassment from local authorities. Their challenges are compounded by the burden of household responsibilities, social restrictions, and limited access to institutional support.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The selected area of this study is Tirunelveli city. Questionnaires were prepared for collecting data. Most of the questions are based on five-point Likert scale technique depending on the level of satisfaction. The sample size for the study constituted 102 respondents in Tirunelveli city. The data were collected from respondents to fill forms. Both primary and secondary data were collected.



IV. ANALYSIS

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS: AGE WISE CLASSIFICATION

S.no	Age	No.of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Below 20 years	10	5
2.	20 years - 40 years	25	25
3.	40 years - 60 years	45	44
4.	Above 60	27	26
	Total	102	100

Source: Primary data

From the above Table, it is observed that out of 102 women street vendors surveyed, 5 Percentage are below the age of 20 years, 25 Percentage fall in the age group of 20 to 40 years, 44 Percentage are in the age group of 40 to 60 years, and the remaining 26 Percentage are above 60 years of age. It is evident that a majority of the respondents, 44 Percentage, belong to the age group of 40 to 60 years.

STREET VENDING YEARS WISE CLASSIFICATION

S.no	Years	No.of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Less than 2 year	12	12
2.	2 – 4 years	22	22
3.	4 – 6 years	24	24
4.	More than 6 years	44	42
	Total	102	100

Source: Primary data

From the above Table, it is observed that out of 102 respondents, 12 Percentage have been engaged in street vending for less than 2 years, 22 Percentage for 2 to 4 years, 24 Percentage for 4 to 6 years, and 42 Percentage have been vending for more than 6 years.. Hence, it is concluded that the majority of the respondents have been involved in street vending for over 6 years.

SIMPLE RANKING TECHNIQUES ISSUE OPINION WISE CLASSIFICATION

S.No	Statements	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Harassment from authorities	46 (230)	34 (136)	12 (36)	6 (12)	4 (4)	4.09	II
2.	Lack of space	50 (250)	30 (120)	10 (30)	8 (16)	4 (4)	4.12	I
3.	Health issues	40 (200)	32 (128)	15 (45)	10 (20)	5 (5)	3.90	V
4.	Competition	38 (190)	28 (112)	20 (60)	10 (20)	6 (6)	3.80	VI
5.	Weather problems	44 (220)	30 (120)	16 (48)	8 (16)	4 (4)	4	III
6.	Lack of toilet facilities	42 (210)	31 (124)	15 (45)	9 (18)	5 (5)	3.94	IV

Source: Computed data



From the above Table, it is evident that out of the 102 respondents, the issue of lack of space ranked first with the highest mean score of 4.12. The second-ranked problem is harassment from authorities, with a mean score of 4.09. Weather problems came in third place with a mean score of 4, showing that unfavorable weather conditions significantly affect the vendors' daily activities. Lack of toilet facilities placed in the fourth rank, with mean scores of 3.94 and the fifth rank is placed for health issues with mean score of 3.90 respectively. Finally, competition among vendors ranked sixth with a mean score of 3.80. Overall, the classification reveals that spatial constraints and harassment from authorities are the most pressing problems faced by women street vendors in Tirunelveli city, followed by environmental and health-related challenges.

FINDINGS

According to age wise classification, majority of the respondents are belonging to the age group of 40 - 60 years.

According to street vending years wise classification, majority of the respondents are belonging to the year of more than 6 years.

According to opinion for having some issues, most of the women vendor are facing lack of space in the spot.

SUGGESTIONS

Local authorities should provide designated vending zones to ensure women vendors can work without fear of eviction.

Women street vendors should be given easy access to microcredit and small loans to expand their businesses.

Awareness programs on hygiene, food safety, and financial literacy should be conducted regularly for women vendors.

V. CONCLUSION

The study shows that women street vendors in Tirunelveli are an essential part of the city's informal economy, working hard each day to support their families and earn a living. Yet, they continue to struggle with issues such as limited space, harassment from officials, poor facilities, and lack of financial support. Many of them have spent years in this occupation, which reflects both their determination and the challenges they face. To improve their livelihoods, there is a need for better vending zones, access to small loans, and basic amenities like toilets and shelter. Awareness programs on hygiene and financial management can also make a real difference, helping these women gain greater independence and stability in their lives.

REFERENCES

- [1]. KARTHICK S AND Dr.M.D. CHINNU (2025), "Challenges faced by street vendors in Tamilnadu" International Journal for Scientific and Advanced Research in Technology, Volume 11, Issue 4, 2025, pp. 103–106.
- [2]. ANIKET S.KHANDAAGALE AND MAHAVIR M.SHETIYA (2024), "A study on online banking & financial inclusion of women street vendor in pune" *Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*, Volume 5, Issue 1, pages 2131–2134, in January 2024. It carries the ISSN number 2582-7472 and can be accessed through the DOI: 10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.4941.
- [3]. FATHIMA BEE M H (2024), "Problems and prospects of differently-abled women entrepreneurs a study with special reference to Krishnagiri district". Thesis submitted to Periyar University, Salem in partial fulfillment of the requirements For the award of degree of Doctor of philosophy in commerce 2024.

