

## **FIVE CASE STUDIES**

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For the need of my dissertation work, I interviewed some of the female vegetable sellers. I often visited them therefore, I could understand their way of life, moments of happiness & Sorrow & various difficulties faced by them. I am trying to present a brief account of their true life stories.

1. There are very few people, who can face great obstacles in life & try to overcome them. Mrs. Rekha Vilas Kamble is one such woman who has determination & self respect. Rekha's Mother's place is in Sambhajnagar slum area. The family though independent, its size is large i.e. her mother, father, four brothers & four sisters. Her parents worked as labours to meet the daily needs. When she was young her father died & at the worst condition of a life her mother decided to work as a vegetable seller. As time passed children grew up & she arranged their marriage one by one to release her tension. As a lonely woman, all responsibilities of family were on her shoulder. She didn't have much energy & time to look for a suitable match for Rekha. At the last, Rekha married with Vilas Kamble who stayed in the same slum area.

Rekha's in law's native village was Awali (Tal. Radhanagari) :- however now the family is settled in Kolha-

pur for their livelihood.

Rakha's family life completes 15 years. Her father-in-law & mother-in-law are passed away. Her home is just a hut for which she pays rent Rs. 100.00 per month. In that hut there are five members. The facilities like water & sanitary are public facilities. Really the standard of living of that area is very low.

In the beginning Rakha's husband worked as a man-servant. But unfortunately, within of 4 or 5 years of their marriage life he started to drink liquor. Now he is heavy drinker & does not engage in any work for his family need. So all responsibilities of family are on Rakha. Their children go to school. Elder one is in 5th Std. & younger one is in 4th Std. The daughter is yet to go to school. As Rakha has right knowledge of vegetable selling since her childhood. She started the same business here also.

This occupation has turned her life as a very hard life. There is no one to look after her children, Therefore Rakha get up at 3.30 a.m. & performs all house works such as filling water, washing, cleaning & cooking. She goes to Shahu Market Yard at 4 a.m. with whatever eatables available to purchase vegetables. If she goes there within a reasonable time, it is possible for her to purchase vegetables with reasonable rates. Then with the vegetables, she goes to 'Kapilteerth Vegetable Market' & sells them till 8 p.m. at night. She come back to home at 11 p.m. which is almost

midnight time. Thus she works day & night for her home. She doesn't get free time to look after her kids. Even during the festival days she has to go to the market, as she cannot afford to spend Rs. 100.00 for the festival & bear the loss of days business. Generally she cooks some sweet dish on such days & goes to work as usual.

Vegetable selling demands continuous hard working from morning to late evening i.e. 8 p.m. She has to bring the vegetable from the Market. Additional expenses like transport charges for tempo as Rs. 2.00 for per vegetable sack, payment for the coolie, rent for space in the market & godown, rent for additional vegetable (unsold) are to be borne by her. This comes to about Rs. 50 to 60 per day.

On daily turnover Rs. 100 to 50 is the profit that remains with her out of this earning. She has to buy few other necessities for home. If expensive vegetables will remain, Rekha tries to keep them fresh for next day. She uses inexpensive & remaining vegetable for herself. That is the only way out for her.

It is difficult to get loan for her business so she has taken a loan of Rs. 2000/- with 10 % per month interest from rich person. The loan has to be returned in time, otherwise money lender will take extra amount (interest) Hence Rekha feels that Govt. Should make available loans with low interest rates repayable on the basis of monthly installments. She doesn't know any of the Govt. Schemes

being an illiterate and also due to her working hours she couldn't attain adult education programmes & avail of Govt. facilities.

Rakha wishes to educate her children inspite of all these difficulties. She feels that when they will grow up they would get good jobs & she will be able to take some rest. This ray of hope inspires her to struggle with hardships. She looks towards the future & continues her hard life pattern.

2. Suman Vilas Patil is a 35 years Old divorced woman, who stays in Ramanand Pawar Colony. Selling vegetables is the only sources of her livelihood. Due to this work she is independent & leads a self-made life.

Suman comes from Mangevadli, a small village in Dist. Radhanagari. Her family was comparatively small i.e. her Mother, two brothers & two sisters. Her father expired when she was very young. Her Mother was the only elder member of the family. Her mother washed utensils & looked after the children. Suman's brother is in 10th Std. & was sent to Kolhapur for School. Suman's mother came to Kolhapur when Suman was adolescent. Her mother purchased one room in Dhadgaon lane from her savings. Hence she thought of doing some work for her livelihood & family responsibility. The family had to suffer many hardship in the village hence they decided to settle in Kolhapur. Suman's mother with Suman's help started selling vegetables later on Suman got married.

Suman's husband Vilas Patil is from Panhala. His family has shifted to Kolhapur in search of work. Vikas is educated upto 7th Std. & worked with S.S. Miraje & Co. His two elder brother were staying independantly . Thus there were only three members in the family i.e. Vikas & his parents. When Suman was married to Vilas, the life was smooth few years passed happily, But later on Vikas started drinking liquer started bealing Suman everyday. Suman's brother in laws took responsibility of parents. Suman's life became more miserable due to Vikas behaviour. Still she continued to stay with him for 2 to 3 years & tried to sustain the beatings data on she came to her mother's house as there was no other way.

On staying for few months with her mother. Suman thought that she should live independatly & she should not be a burden to her mother. She knew the skills of vegetable selling. Hence she rented a room in Mangudevi Path & started selling vegetables. She has given birth to two sons & one daughter. As her husband drinks a lot & doesnto look after her. She is living as a divorce woman & leading a lonely life, with her children. Her elder son has completed education upto 10th Std. & second son & daughter are learning in 9th Std. Suman has managed to purchase her own room having 17 x 17 Sq.ft. size Electricity is available in the room. Other facilities are common. She has paid back Rs. 1500.00 to the house owner who has sold the room to her.

Thus she has a privilege & pride of staying in her own room.

During the early years. Suman worked very hard. Now the elder son helps her she feels that he should get more education but he doesn't want to learn. He has opted to continue with the business of vegetable selling Suman is worried about him as he is not very proficient in calculating the monetary aspect. Suman though an illiterate, is more expert in such things. The daughter helps in completing household work. Thus Suman can concentrate on her work.

Like other sellers, she has to go to the market yard for buying vegetables of approximately Rs. 500 to 100 per day, Expenses on the transport, labour charges, godown rent space rent costs about Rs. 60 to 70 She experiences different ways of behaviour, both good & bad, during the day. Kapilteerth Market is a large market but the whole area is not covered by roof. Hence she has to sit in the sun & heat to sell the vegetables. In rainy seasons the condition turns very bad. All buyers are not gentlemen few are notorious. But she has to neglect their behaviour, as she has to work in such a place everyday. Many of times there are occasions of quarrelling. The Union members solve such problems. The neighbouring vegetable sellers help each other. Sometimes if the whole lot is sold & still there is a rush of buyers, none gives vegetables for sale. Everybody thinks of her own profit.

It is not possible to take loan for this business as there is gain & loss as per the situation. The commodity is perishable hence there a risk of increased losses. The business can't be expanded due to lack of finance. Suman feels that Govt. Should give loans with less interest & should start more suitable schemes for such vegetable sellers. The benefit of Govt. schemes does not reach this class for people who need them most. Many times Govt. people visit, fill up various forms, later on no one turns up. In this way this work is neglected by the government.

She said that the business of selling vegetables can be developed with some help for storage. The Govt. should help such self amplified persons, especially women. In this way the women can live independently without her husband's support & income.

Suman feels that her children should find some service. They should be financially independent. She also says that they should be married off according to their choice. She doesn't approve of the dowry system. According to her the practice of giving gifts like utensils, clothing, gold etc. is getting popular due to rich people.

3. Mrs. Sunanda Dinkar Kadam is a woman with strong self respect, she supports her family with vegetable selling. She was born in Tambale in Dist. Bhudargad. Her parents were farmers. She had four brothers, three sisters which comprises a large family of 8 to 10 persons. The

financial condition of the family was below average so she could not get school education & she was married at the young age.

Sunanda was married in a relation i.e. to maternal Uncle's son, Dinkar Kadam. her maternal uncle comes from Radhanagar. Due to 'Radhanagari Dam', Few villages had to face, water flood. Hence Kadam family got shifted to Kolhapur. During the early days, they worked as labours & later on started business of vegetable selling. Dinkar Kadam's family is a joint family with three sisters, parents & an uncle. Sunanda has three sisters. It was very difficult for Sunanda's parents to look after four daughters. Hence they preferred to fix her marriage within relations. They didn't care to think about Sunanda's choice then.

Now there are father & mother in law three children in in-laws family. The elder son is in 9th Std. & second son is in 8th Std. & the daughter learns in 4th Std. Her husband doesn't have bad habits like drinking liquor etc. He works as vegetable seller. As the children have grown up. Sunanda opted to work along with her husband to support the family. her mother in law looks after the children hence they are not neglected. The family fulfills the necessities of life from earnings. They have started saving some money & from these savings a two room house was built in Santosh Colony at Sane Guruji Vasthat. A house with brick walls has the facility of electricity & water. Thus Sunanda has a

better standard of living. The main objective is to educate children so that they can be independent. The vegetable selling business means unpredicted profit & loss. Hence Sonanda feels that the children should get good service. If the children study well they will get good jobs. She feels that this will not create difficulties at the times of their marriage. She also expressed that the marriages should be arranged with children's choice, dowry, etc. in a better way.

Sonanda's husband also helps in selling vegetables. The husband goes to the Market Yard for purchases early in the morning. She performs all household work upto 10.30 a.m. with afternoon lunch box she goes for selling vegetables. Thus she does not face many difficulties of hard life. If she gets late due to work her elder children do proper help to her.

It is remarkable that Sonanda & her husband have not taken any loan for the business. There was loan for the house, which is returned. They feel that this selling business is not with steady income hence drawing loan is not affordable. The financial transactions of the family is well looked after by her husband who doesn't have bad habits. Their daily purchase of vegetables is approximately Rs. 1000/- with the other expenses of transport, labour rent etc. gives a net profit of Rs. 70 to 80. If the vegetables are fresh & if there is rush of buyers, the profit goes upto Rs. 100.00 also.

However, there are many problems for the vegetable sellers. The place of business isn't proper which can protect the seller from the sun & the rain. The market isn't closed & doesn't have proper sitting space with platforms etc. The godown facility is inadequate, hence there is a danger of rats for stored vegetables. If proper storage facility is available, it will be profitable for the next days business.

This business is much better especially for woman, if better facilities are made available. It doesn't have any other person's bossing or control. One can take rest on holiday if possible. Sunanda in this way leads a self sufficient life & supports her family in a better way.

4. Mrs. Nanda Shivaji Suryawanshi is basically from Kolhapur. The family resides in Vangi Lane with a joint family of two brothers, one sister, mother, two uncles & aunty. Her father died when she was a small child. Nanda's mother started working for vegetables selling so that the joint family can survive. She looked after all the member of the family. Now all children are grown up & help in the vegetable selling business as well as the household work. Nanda's brother works in the dairy. Her uncle also work in the dairy & another uncle is a labourer. They are staying in their own house with light, water, latrine facilities. They have also purchased a television Set, Nanda being youngest in the family could get education upto 10th

Std. She did not want to study later on. Her elder sister being physically handicapped, is still unmarried. Nanda's mother wanted Nanda to marry so that one person's responsibility is reduced. Thus Nanda was married six years ago.

Her in laws family stays near Rankala Tank. Her husband Shivji Suryawanshi who worked in a bakery was an acquaintance. Their family has parents, brother in law & sister in law. Overall the family was good hence Nanda got married. However after two, three years of normal married life, Nanda's husband started drinking liquor. Her father in law is a chronic patient, hence no one gives any importance to his opinions. Shivaji became an addict to liquor. The in laws also started giving her ill treatment. Hence Nanda started doing vegetable selling business. This increased more trouble for her. There was continuous quarrels & fights in the family. Hence Nanda's mother brought Nanda back in her house.

The mother's house has much better condition. However, Nanda does not like to depend upon her mother. She has given a birth to one son who is a three year old kid. hence, she preferred to work as a vegetable seller. Her child is looked after by her elder sister, sometimes she takes the child to the market along with her so far she has not taken legal divorce from her husband. Her husband is still addicted to liquor, hence he does not meet Nanda. Nanda is thinking of staying separately with her son instead of

staying permanently in her mother's house. She still hopes that her husband might leave the addiction. If this does not happen, she is working as a vegetable seller. She naturally feels that her only son should get proper education.

She does not know anything about Govt. Schemes. She does not know whom to approach, how to fill up forms etc. hence she cannot avail of the Govt. facilities. During the initial stage, she borrowed some money from her mother, & started selling vegetables. She did not take loan from any other sources. She knows many people in this business since the days of the mother working as a vegetable seller. Hence she does not face many difficulties. her mother with her son visit Market Yard for morning purchasing, hence Nanda comes to the vegetable market late in the morning, after completing house work & preparation of noon lunch box. She earns a profit of Rs. 50 to 60 after spending for necessary incidental expenses. She hands over this amount to her mother. This business has a continuous circle of profit & losses & There is not guarantee of continuous profits. Hence there is no fixed monthly income. Well there is no expenses for the vegetables as the remaining lot can be used at home.

Nanda now repents for not studying further. The business is very strenuous hence, she suffers from fatigue. There are no fixed earnings during hot & rain days, one has to go & sell the vegetables with some facilities. This work can be better. Govt. does not pay much attention to vegetar-

bles sellers, hence though it fulfills daily needs of the whole society, it does not give much profit to the seller.

5. Ina Mansur Hawaldar is a 28 year old Muslim unmarried woman. She comes from Kolhapur. She stays in a slum area near Timber Market. There are twelve members in the family. The family size is large though the family stays in their own house, the purchase documents are not completed. They pay the municipal taxes and use common water & latrine facilities of the area, the financial condition of the family is below average. The family comprises of Ina's parents, brother, sister, sister in law & their kids. The brother works in a private company. Ina works as vegetable seller with her mother which is their traditional occupation. The house work is done by the sister in law. Ina's father is bed ridden since last 5/6 years. The mother & brother take care of all the household. The brother has five children. The elder son is in 10th Std., two younger ones in 8th Std. and the girl is in 4th Standard. The whole family resides only in two rooms, hence lot of adjustment has to be done. However, as there is no other way, this is going on for years together.

According to Muslim religion, the girl is to be married with sufficient money. This is not affordable to the family. Therefore Ina is still unmarried. She has taken education up to 10th Std. This is quite insignificant in the service sector. Hence she has to depend upon vegetable

selling for her livelihood. Ina thinks that her husband should be well off as an educated, service man. She believes in the God. She feels that these days will change and better life would be possible due to God's grace. Muslims perform Namaz five times a day. Many a times she does not have that much time. She expressed that if she is doing sincere good work, she can get good rewards.

Like other vegetable sellers, she goes to the Market Yard to purchase vegetables early in the morning. Her mother, now an old lady, can not accompany her regularly. She knows many others being in the business for many years. Hence she does not have to face many difficulties. She brings vegetables through auto and tempo transport. Tempo is much better than auto due to sufficient space. The transport charges of tempo are also less than auto. Bringing the vegetables at the right time is very essential, otherwise it is perished so transport plays an important role in this business.

The Municipal Corporation takes daily Rs. 3 for space. There are other expenditures such as storage fee and Hamli etc. Hence Ina feels that storage should be given in the vegetable market, she knows that it will require a large amount of money. She complained about lack of shady space, and problems of heat and rain. There are no platforms for the sellers. This affects the business and life of vegetable sellers.

Vegetable is a daily necessity of whole society. Hence it should be available with proper cost and in better conditions. If the women seller has good facilities, she can do the the business well. The business conditions should be improved and can often work for the unemployed people. The poor class of the society can support their families through this occupation. Thus Ina thinks about the bright future eventhough she spends her life in the slum area.