

# **CHAPTER - 1**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

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### INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Importance of vegetable.
- 1.2 Place of vegetable sellers in the Society.
- 1.3 Statement of problem.
- 1.4 Objectives of the study
- 1.5 Methodology of the study
- 1.6 Limitations of the study



1.1 IMPORTANCE OF VEGETABLE

The importance of vegetables in human life is increasingly recognised in recent years. As part of human diet, vegetables have sufficient amount of nutritinal value. Therefore, for the healthy growth of human body the consumption of vegetable is very essential. The production and distribution of vegetables can also be considered as an important economic activity. The selling of vegetables provide employment opportunities both in farm and non-farm sectors. The cultivation and production of vegetables is also desirable from environment point of view. Many kinds of pollution can be controlled by growing vegetables. The waste material and water can be turned into natural fertilizers on which the vegetables grow. By and large, the importance of vegetables can be understood, by considering the following aspects.

1. Vegetable as a source to provide nutritious food for people.
2. The production and marketing of vegetables as a rewarding economic activity.
3. The production of vegetables results in development of green fields having valuable construction towards pollution control.

It will not be out of place to consider each of the above

aspects in detail. This would enable us to understand the real importance of the vegetables as an item of human diet on one hand, and as an activity of which leads to generation of income and employment for the people. In short, the importance of vegetables from the consumers point of view and the importance of vegetables from producer's and distributor's point of view, can be understood.

### 1. NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF VEGETABLES

The vegetables are rich sources of vitamins and other elements. Vegetables have very important place in human diet. The vegetables provide all the necessary nutrients in a balance way for human health. Vegetables supply carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals etc. Although vitamins are present in small quantities in vegetable, they produce profound physiological effects. If properly and regularly used, vegetables show many positive results on human health, e.g. clear and soft skin, bright eye-sight, growth of bones and soft tissues etc. The various nutrients which are available in the vegetables, and the positive contribution of such nutrients on human health, can be briefly explained as follows :-

#### A. MINERALS :

At least 10 minerals needed for the proper growth and development of human body. Out of these calcium, iron and phosphorus are required in large quantities. These are present in sufficient amount in vegetables. Iodine and sodium are also available in the vegetables.

1. CALCIUM

Calcium is needed for growth of bones and for development of resistance power. Calcium acts as the coordinator among the various nutrients. It helps to keep desirable proportion of all the nutrients. The calcium is supplied mainly by beans, cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, onions, peas, tomatoes and the green vegetables supply good amount of calcium.

2. IRON

The vegetables are richer in iron than fruits. Iron is essential part of red blood corpuscles & is the best known oxygen carrier in the body. It can be obtained from the vegetables like spinach, cabbage, beans and tomatoes.

3. PHOSPHORUS

This is essential for all active tissues of the body. Phosphorus is required for cell multiplication of both bones and soft tissues. It plays an important role in the oxidation of carbohydrates which liberate energy. It can be obtained from potatoes, carrot, tomatoes, cauliflower etc.

B 4. VITAMINS

Besides the above three nutrients several vitamins are also provided by the vegetables. These vitamins can be briefly explained as follows :-

## 1. VITAMIN - A

4

It is fat soluble and essential for growth and reproduction. Proper availability of vitamin A in the body keeps eyes bright, growth normal, intestinal tracts and respiratory organs in a good condition. It is supplied by carrot, peas, beet, tomatoes and green vegetables.

## 2. VITAMIN - B

It is also known as thiamin which is essential for growth and reproduction. The vegetables like cabbage, green pepper, carrot, onion, contain vitamin B. The deficiency of it causes Beri Beri, loss of appetite, loss of weight fall in body temperature.

## 3. VITAMIN - C

It is essential for good health. The green vegetables like methi, palak, cabbage, green pepper and other green vegetables contain appreciable quantity of vitamin C. Potatoes and sweet potatoes supply about 16 % of ascorbic acid (vitamin C.)

## 4. VITAMIN - D

A good supply of vitamin D is essential for proper bone formation and healthy teeth. It helps in the calcification of bones by proper utilization of calcium and phosphorus salts. Green vegetables are rich in this vitamin.

#### 5. VITAMIN = E

It is a fat soluble substance and is essential for reproduction and antisterility vitamin. It is found in leafy vegetables like cabbage.

#### 6. VITAMIN = B

This is a growth promoting water soluble vitamin. It is essential for growth and healthy skin. It is formed during the growth of the green plants and green leaves which are good source of this vitamin.

#### C. AMINO ACIDS

These are fatty acids in which the amino -group takes the place of hydrogen atom of the hydrocarbon radical. They are very necessary for the growth and development of human beings.

#### D. SUPPLY OF CARBOHYDRATES

Vegetables such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, peas and dried seeds of beans are significant energy foods or source of calories. The use of vegetables should be greatly increased in quantity when a person is on a reducing diet.

#### E. VEGETABLES AS SOURCE OF ROUGHAGE.

Roughage aids in digestion and prevents constipation. Most vegetables particularly the leafy ones as spinach, cabbage and most of the root vegetables are eaten they improve the tone

of the muscles.

6

#### F. VEGETABLES TO OFFSET PROTEIN.

Human body tissues are alkaline. And it is essential that for good health proper alkaline reserve is maintained in the body. The green vegetables counteract the harmful action of protinacious food, e.g. meat, eggs etc. Which disturb the alkaline reserve of the body.

#### G. VEGETABLE REQUIREMENT FOR A FAMILY

On an average 250 gms of vegetables are required per capita per day. For the family of 5 adults the average consumption of vegetables comes to 1.25 kg per day. Which again will work out as 4.6 quintals per year.

### II THE CULTIVATION, PRODUCTION OF VEGETABLES AS A REWARDING ECONOMIC ACTIVITY.

The per acre yield of vegetables is very high. In a year vegetable production can be taken for 3 to 4 times. The vegetables production is therefore, a rewarding economic activity particularly for the farmers. The production per acre of vegetable is higher than production of cereals. Vegetables are also important source of income. Generally vegetables are sold in market at higher prices. The vegetable production, particularly in the near by villages of the city proved quite profitable, of



course, the prices of vegetables widely fluctuate. During the peak season the prices come down, while in the summer season the prices go up. The vegetables being perishable in nature are required to be sold out within limited period of time. Along with the production the arrangement of transport, storage are required to be made. On the whole from income as well as employment point of view, vegetable production and selling can be made profitable business activity. In our country, particularly in state like Maharashtra, where irrigation facilities are available, this economic activity can be expected to contribute substantially towards the economic development of the state. The new approach of 'Agro-business' will have to be adopted for production and marketing of vegetables.

### III AESTHETIC VALUE OF VEGETABLES

Besides the nutritional and economic value of vegetables, the aesthetic value of vegetables can be taken as an additional point that conveys the larger significance of vegetables. Those who grow vegetables can very well tell the joy of it, from the stage of sowing to the stage of harvesting. The vegetables provide green-scenes on the farm of the vegetables. There is minimum pollution of air. The environment remains very friendly, and favourable for the health of human beings. As already mentioned, the human and material wastages can be turned in to valuable organic fertilizers. These fertilizers are used to grow vegetables. Even the polluted water can be used. The production of vegetables helps to complete the process of, "Turning waste into

Wealth". The overall importance of vegetables can thus, be perceived as an item of human diet, as an economic activity and also as a factor helping to maintain the atmosphere and environment clean and healthy.

## 1.2 PLACE OF FEMALE VEGETABLES SELLERS IN THE SOCIETY :

A. The development of the society depends upon the development of all the individuals in that society. Any society consists of the people of various age-groups e.g. children, adults and the old people. The people in the society include males and females. All the people in the society are not actively engaged in economic activities. For example children and old persons. The young and the adults members of the society are generally engaged in the economic activities. The place of any person or group of persons in the society is determined by various factors, e.g. education, income, occupation etc. Among the various factors the economic position is the most important factor. The self-dependent persons have their own social and economic status in the society. Although, both females and males are expected to have equal status in the society. But the religious and the social tradition in our country, does not permit women to enjoy equal status, in the society. The economic dependence is also a major cause of having secondary place for the women in our society. The things are changing gradually. More and more females are entering in to labour force, in both organized and unorganized sectors of our economy.

It is now well known that women in India are backward in

terms of economic, social and educational development. Among the female labour-force majority are employed in agriculture and in un-organized and non-agricultural activities. Very few females are engaged in organized sectors. The female vegetable sellers are the women following in unorganised sector. All these females are economically, socially and educationally backward. They go out of their houses for their business because it is very much necessary for them, to work hard and earn money to support their families. The day to day life of these women is very hard. They are required to work the whole day, right from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. There are no fix working hours in their business, neither there is any provision of rest time, for lunch etc. Somehow they get few hours of leave period particularly in the afternoon hours, during which they are expected to finish their lunch, and rest for some time. The place of their business is also not conducive for the health. They occupy some space in the market amidst the dirt and dust around. They work not less than 8 to 10 hours. Most of the vegetable sellers are educated. The people look at them with not very respectable way of their outlook. The overall rating of vegetable sellers in the eyes of people is quite low. They are put to harassment by the porters, agents, and the transporters. The vegetable sellers try their level best to earn. But the income earned is not sufficient so they remain poor, hardworking throughout their lives. Many a times because of less education and illiteracy, the vegetable sellers develop among them some bad habits, which adversely affect their health. Culturally also they are backward. Their children remain deprived of proper education, scientific nourishment also. And by

the time the children become 10 to 12 years of their age, they sit along with their mother and do some of work in the same manner, as their mothers have been doing for years together. The same socio-economic status continues for one generation to another generation.

B. The female vegetable sellers are economically and socially backward. Their standard of living is low and they have to work very hard in their business. Still the income level of the vegetable sellers is quite low. The present study attempts to suggest the ways and means to change the present socio-economic status of female vegetable sellers. This is a kind of transformation which is required to be brought in the life of female vegetable sellers. The present study specifically attempts to consider the following aspects.

1. Vegetable selling should be carried on scientific lines. The traditional way of selling has to be changed, so as to reduce the risk of the business. Vegetable is a perishable commodity. It is required to be transported, stored very carefully. The loss by way of delay in transport, unscientific storage can be reduced by adopting scientific techniques of storage and transportation.

2. The standard of living of vegetable sellers is very low. Attempts are to be made to increase their level of income by providing credit and other facilities. The social backwardness has to be reduced, by way of providing education. The programmes

like adult education would provide the opportunity of the female vegetable sellers to get themselves educated.

3. At the level of families various social developments are necessary. The income and expenditure of the family, hygiene and health, the nourishment and education of children are some of the very important issues. The socio-economic development of the families of the vegetable sellers will again require us to make them aware of these issues and the problems.

There are many such facts, for the socio-economic development of the vegetable sellers. As a matter of fact, the real significance of this study lies with the fact that, it deals with the problems of the most valunorable and hard working female workers. The study attempts throw light on day-to-day lives of female vegetable sellers. The socio-economic backwardness of the vegetable sellers is an important obstacle in the way of development of the society as a whole. It is needless to say that conscious efforts are required to be made, to bring about improvements both at the level of the lives of the vegetable sellers and also at the level of their bussiness activities.

### 1.3 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM:

The title of the present study is, "Female vegetable sellers in Bolhapur mandis A critical study of social-economic plight" The study is directed towards, the investigation of the existing social and economic conditions of the female vegetable, sellers. After understanding the existing state of affairs, the study also attempts to make suitable suggestions to improve the social and

economic conditions of the sellers. The existing conditions of vegetable marketing and the improvement in it are also examined. The improvement in the social and economic conditions of the female vegetable sellers depends upon the improvement in their business activities.

#### 1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present study is directed towards the critical investigation, of the social and economic conditions of vegetable sellers in Lothapur mandales. The broad objectives can be stated as follows.

1. To understand the personal profile of vegetable sellers by considering their age group, religion, caste, marital status, education etc.
2. To understand the family conditions of the vegetable sellers by considering the size of the family, the type of the family and the occupational activities of the family.
3. To study the social conditions of vegetable sellers.
4. To study a economic conditions of vegetable sellers.
5. To understand the social and economic problems faced by the vegetable sellers.
6. To examine infrastructure facilities available for vegetable marketing and to identify the deficiencies there in.
7. To suggest remedies/solutions of the socio-economic problems of vegetable sellers.
8. To make suggestions for the improvement of vegetable marketing in the area of study.

### 1.5 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

The present study is basically an intensive investigation of the social and economic conditions of the female vegetable sellers. The area for the purpose of investigation is confined to mandales (the market place) in Kolhapur city. The work of the present study is completed by adopting proper and systematic procedure of investigation. Following are the important steps of methodology adopted for the study.

#### 1. A REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

As a matter of fact, the very nature of the present problem of the study is quite practical one. The base of the theoretical literature is not that very extensive. Nevertheless an attempt is made to review critically the existing literature of the subject. The production and selling of the vegetable is the subject, which has been discussed in the books of agriculture rural economics, and such other allied academic disciplines. The references are taken from the various books, periodicals and other publications in these areas. The critical review of existing literature has enabled the researcher to understand the basic concepts and the terms which are frequently used in vegetable marketing. The second aspect of the study of existing literature relates to the study of social and economic condition and the dynamics of this process. This has also help the researcher to understand the factors which govern the process of social and economic development. Women vegetable sellers are also studied

as to their own typical problem by some of the earlier scholars. The researcher has taken into consideration all such empirical studies while formulating the proposal of the present study.

## 2. COLLECTION OF THE DATA

The data base of the present study has called upon the researcher to use both primary and secondary data. For the collection of primary data well designed questionnaire is administered personally by the researcher to the respondents in the sample. The researcher also has observed carefully the way of doing the business by female vegetable sellers. The important events have been carefully noted. In addition to the formal administration of the questionnaire interview were taken, so as to solicit detailed information from the selected respondents.

The secondary data for the study is collected from the various sources. Kolhapur Municipal Corporation has market Inspectors, as a competent authority to control and regulate vegetable marketing in Kolhapur mandales. Some important data are made available for the study from his office. Agriculture department of Kolhapur Zilla Parishad, District statistical office, Agriculture produce market committee and The union of vegetable, traders are the other agencies from where the secondary data are collected from the purpose of the present study.

## 3. SAMPLE DESIGN

There are about 9 to 10 mandales in the area of Kolhâ-



pur Municipal Corporation. The size of all the mandales are unequal in terms of number of sellers, turnover etc. Proper sampling is undertaken in order to collect the primary data. A simple quota sampling is considered suitable. Ten percent of total of female vegetable sellers in each of the mandales are included in the sample. Due care is taken to include various type of female vegetable sellers such as big and small, old and new, regular and seasonal, producer sellers and traditional traders etc.

#### 4. PROCESSING OF DATA

After collecting the primary and secondary data the processing is undertaken. Suitable techniques like tabulation, statistical averages, graphs and diagrams are used to analyse and interpretate the data. With the help of analysis the researcher has attempted to draw the conclusions. Further based on the conclusions, attempts are also made to make appropriate suggestions to improve the socio-economic conditions of female vegetable sellers.

#### 1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The present study covers the mandales in the municipal corporation area of Kolhapur city. There are many suburban areas around Kolhapur city. The mandales in such suburban area not covered. Even in the municipal area, the mandales which are small and of seasonal existence are not covered under the study. Of course, the mandales covered account for the major share of the

vegetable selling in the area.

2. The study covers only the individual retail sellers. The institutional sellers which are mainly in engaged wholesale distribution of vegetables are not included. This is mainly to make the study reasonably intensive rather than unduly extensive in its coverage.

3. Among the individual sellers there are male as well as female vegetable sellers. The study confines its investigation only to female vegetable sellers. Female vegetable sellers account for nearly 50 % of the total vegetable sellers. It is decided to study female vegetable sellers because these vegetable sellers are the most the unorganised class. The female vegetable sellers are the most neglected but hardworking class and deserves separate research study. The present study is an attempt in this direction.

4. The researcher has encountered many difficulties in collection of data. Most of the female vegetable sellers covered under study are either illiterate or less educated. These vegetable sellers are found to be not keeping any record of their business. The researcher has approached the respondents in person and tried to get the first hand information from them. As regards secondary data, the researcher could hardly get adequate information from any source. Some scanty information and figures are collected from the various sources mentioned elsewhere. The

base of secondary data for such type of research study, is not available in adequate terms.

5. The female vegetable sellers being the most neglected class of the society has not been studied by the research scholars earlier. The present researcher therefore, could not get much scope to review the earlier research work. The present research therefore has its unique nature providing a way to further research in this area.

6. The present study broadly covers the period of last 3 years. That is from 1993 to 1995. The researcher tried to collect the data from earlier year even. But the data was not available adequately. Also the time available for the research is limited. The study therefore confines its investigation for the last 3 years only.