

Prospect of flower vendors: A Case study at Bhubaneswar

■ PARITOSH MISHRA AND SABITA MISHRA

Received: 07.05.2013; Accepted: 01.11.2013

See end of the paper for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to :

SABITAMISHRA

Directorate of Research on Women in Agriculture, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, BHUBANESWAR (ODISHA) INDIA

■ **ABSTRACT** : This study was designed under the ex-post-facto research approach to analyze the life style of flower vendors at Bhubaneswar. For the purpose, 50 flower vendors were randomly selected having two years of experience in this particular business. The major problem in this business in initial stage was lack of adequate capital to start the business, majority of them had started the business with working capital of Rs.1001 to Rs.2000. In case of unsold flowers, 60 per cent of vendors kept flowers for next day selling followed by 40 per cent sold these at any cost by reducing their margin of profit. The vendors maintained good dealings, reduced cost, maintained quality of product and followed other promotion strategies as keeping fresh flowers, varieties of raw materials, good customer relation and affordable price, providing home delivery service and credit sale. They felt much competition in the business. Although 84 per cent responded positively that vending zone had helped them still the major problems they faced were to handle the customers, parking, capital inadequacy, raw materials, water and toilet. The vendors suggested solutions with supply of water and electricity, credit facility for capital investment, toilet facility and prohibition of parking in front of vending zone. About 72 per cent were ambitious to expand their business and 93 per cent wanted to stay at Bhubaneswar to continue their business. Therefore, flower vendors should be provided need based inputs to expand their business as there is a great demand for it.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Vendors, Costumers, Vending business

■ **HOW TO CITE THIS PAPER** : Mishra, Paritosh and Mishra, Sabita (2013). Prospect of flower vendors: A Case study at Bhubaneswar. *Asian J. Home Sci.*, 8 (2): 780-784.

Floriculture offers a great opportunity in providing employment opportunities and entrepreneurship in both urban and rural areas. According to one study (Anonymous,1999) Mumbai has the largest number of street vendors numbering around 250, 000, while Delhi has around 200,000. Calcutta has more than 150,000 street vendors and Ahmadabad has around100, 000. Some major issues in this connection are: (i) most cities consider hawking as an illegal activity, the laws impose restrictions on the trade and while urban plans allot space for markets, parks, etc. for public use never consider for street vending. Therefore, this study is a challenge for the academicians and also for the civil society to draw some recommendations to address these problems. It was studied in Bhubaneswar, the state capital of Odisha with the objective of (i) identifying the life style of the street vendors, (ii) creating a data base on personal information of vendors, (iii) problems faced by the street

vendors, and (iv) the suggestions for better vending business.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

The present study was designed under the ex-post facto research approach. A total number of 50 male flower vendors having two years of experiences in such business and possessing license were selected as respondents from selected units of Bhubaneswar. A structured interview schedule was developed comprising of three parts namely, personal information of vendors, business operation and problems in the business and suggestions for improvement in vending system. The schedule was pre-tested, modified and final draft was developed. The investigator collected data with the help of interview schedule at the vending zone of the respondents. Then, statistical methods were used for analysis of primary data collected from respondents.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the present study as well as relevant discussions have been presented under following sub heads:

Personal profiles:

Out of the total samples, a majority (42%) were within the age group of 21-30 years, qualification up to High School group (40%), unmarried (56%), having medium sized family (58%), staying in rented houses (70%) with rent of Rs. 2001 to 3000 per month (45.72%), providing full financial support to meet their house hold requirements (60%) and it was recorded that 66.00 per cent of vendors had not tried any business before this flower vending business. The family size of respondents was grouped into three categories on the basis of the number of members living together in their family. Here, the procedure adopted by Kenchangoudra (2007) was used to measure the family of the respondents.

Table 1 depicts that 86 per cent of flower vending business were self owned which require skill to operate. It also needs small investment but more risk which leads to infer that they have the risk taking capacity of the business. On the other hand, 14 per cent of the vendors managed it with partnership mode.

Business management	Frequency	Percentage
Self-managed	43	86.00
Managed with partnership	7	14.00
Total	50	100.00

Table 2 indicates that 48 per cent of the vendors have less than 5 years of experience followed by 32 per cent with 6-10 years, 18 per cent with 11-20 years. Only 2 per cent of them were with more than 21 years of experience. It depicts that all have experiences in the same business which expect that they will be able to operate the business as per the market response.

Year of experience	Frequency	Percentage
0-5	24	48.00
6-10	16	32.00
11-15	7	14.00
16-20	2	4.00
21 and more	1	2.00
Total	50	100.00

It is clear from Table 3, 60 per cent of respondents felt this business is at risk in Bhubaneswar market, where as 16 per cent considered quite good followed by difficult to compete (10%), may not continue longer (6%) and four per cent for short term arrangement and having no feeling only 4 per cent.

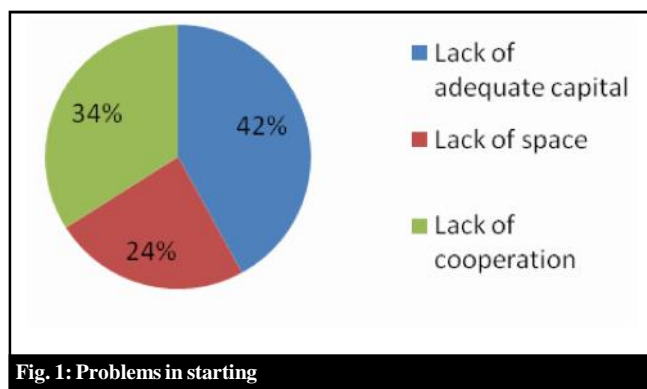
Initial feelings	Frequency	Percentage
Full of risk	30	60.00
Difficult to compete	5	10.00
May not continue longer	3	6.00
Only short term arrangement	2	4.00
Good	8	16.00
No feeling	2	4.00
Total	50	100.00

Table 4 reveals that 62 per cent of the respondents have taken their own decision to start the business. However, unemployment is another critical factor which was recorded by 22 per cent followed by 2 per cent of the respondents who have their parental business, 8 per cent accounted for low investment, 4 per cent for persuasion by friends and relatives although there were 2 per cent who recorded under other reasons.

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Own decision	31	62.00
Low investment	4	8.00
Persuasion by friends	2	4.00
Parental business	1	2.00
Unemployment	11	22.00
Other reasons	1	2.00
Total	50	100.00

Problem faced while starting the business:

With reference of data, it is quite obvious that there were number of problems in the business. The major problem in this business was lack of adequate capital to start the business (42%) followed by lack of space (24%), denounced by friends and lack of cooperation from others, 34 per cent were recorded under green zone in commence of business (Fig. 1).



Exact role in business:

All the vendors were engaged in selling (100%), followed by 86 per cent in account keeping, 50 per cent in arranging raw materials, 32 per cent in processing of flowers. So, it leads to infer that selling is the major task of the flower vendors (Fig. 2).

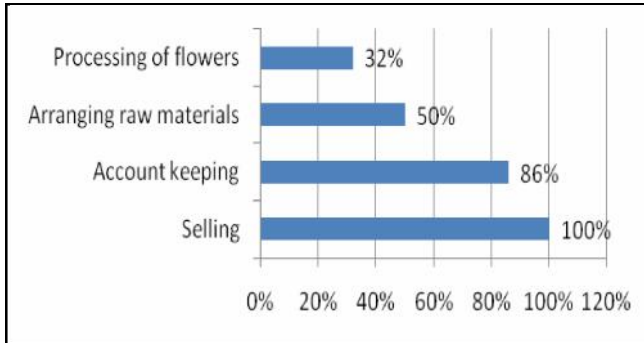


Fig. 2: Exact role in business

Daily transactions:

During survey, data were collected on daily transactions. It was found that the proportionate of business is directly co-related with daily transaction working capital requirement. Majority (50%) of the vendor’s working capital was Rs. 1001 to Rs. 2000, whereas 40 per cent with less than Rs. 1000 and only 10 per cent more than Rs. 2001 per day.

As stated in Table 5, 66 per cent vendors started the business with their own saving followed by loan from friends and relatives (24%), from bank loan (8%) and only 2 per cent from other sources.

Table 5: Source of initial investment (n=50)		
Source of capital	Frequency	Percentage
Own saving	33	66.00
Bank loan	4	8.00
Loan from friends and relatives	12	24.00
Any other means	1	2.00
Total	50	100.00

Strategy for unsold product:

As flowers are perishable items, it is very crucial to take effective strategies for unsold products. A quick glance at the mentioned figure revealed that 60 per cent of vendors kept flowers for next day selling followed by 40 per cent sale these at any cost which may reduce their margin of profit in the business (Fig. 3).

Data of Table 6 infer that the vendors adopted the strategies like good dealings (70%), reduce cost (30%), maintained quality of product (24%) and 16 per cent followed other strategies. It is interesting that good dealings and cost are the major factors in flower business at Bhubaneswar.

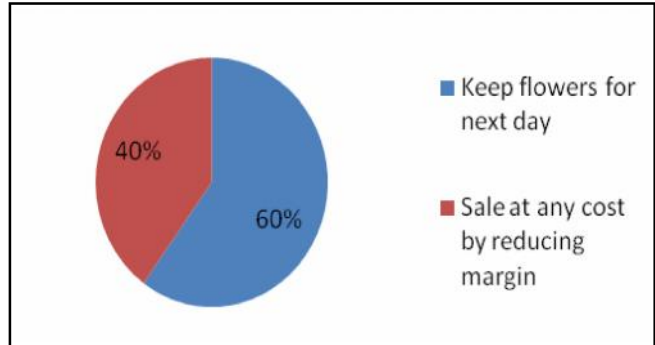


Fig. 3 : Strategy for unsold product

Table 6 : Adoption of customer oriented strategy (n=50)

Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Improve quality	12	24.00
Decrease cost	15	30.00
Make very good dealing	35	70.00
Any other	8	16.00

Sales promoting strategies:

Sale promoting has a very important role in business promotion and business growth. Vendors used different sale promotion strategies as keep fresh flowers, varieties of raw materials, good customer relation and affordable price, provide home delivery service and credit sale.

Saving:

Saving in business is one of the major indicators for economical viability. In Bhubaneswar market, 46 per cent of the vendors were able to save Rs. 2001 to Rs. 3000 per month whereas 22 per cent between Rs. 1001 to Rs. 2000, 8 per cent between Rs. 3001 to Rs. 4000 and 24 per cent less than Rs. 1000 per month.

Out of total respondents, only 44 per cent were giving credit. Among them 68.19 per cent were able to recollect the money fully against 9.09 per cent who were not able to recovery whereas 22.72 per cent recovered partially (Table 7). From the findings we can conclude that credit was at risk. It is recommended that vendors should give credit to only

Table 7: Credit given by the vendors (n=50)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Vendors give credit	22	44.00
Vendors give no credit	28	56.00
Total	50	100.00
Rate of recovery		
Full	15	68.19
Partial	5	22.72
Sometime nil	2	9.09
Total	22	100.00

those who are reliable in financial behaviour since last times.

From Table 8, it is clear that there was much competition in the business as 80 per cent responded against much and too much competition and were ranked I and II. On the other hand, 20 per cent of the respondents were in view of little completion with rank III (Table 8).

Level of competition	Percentage	Rank
Too much	32.00	II
Much	48.00	I
Little	20.00	III

The result was very significant as 84 per cent responded positively that vending zone has helped them (Table 9). About 64 per cent of respondents were helped being saved from natural disaster like extreme sun and rain, 58 per cent respondents were of opinion that it has provided necessary permanent shed followed by reducing transportation cost, good customer relation and availability of fixed customers which accounted for 36 per cent, 30 per cent and 24 per cent, respectively. So space for business is most important for future.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Good consumer relation	15	30.00
Reducing transport cost	18	36.00
Fixed customers	12	24.00
Permanent shed	29	58.00
Save from rain and sun	32	64.00
Any other	1	2.00

Problems and solutions:

Table 10 reveals that the vendors were facing the major problems to handle the customers, parking, capital inadequacy, raw materials, water and toilet which they have ranked as I, II, III, IV, V and VI, respectively. The areas of

Problem variables	Score	Rank
Parking space	2.24	II
Lack of maintenance	1.80	VII
Taxation	1.50	VIII
Iron structure	1.40	IX
Water	1.86	V
Electricity	1.24	X
Toilet	1.84	VI
Customers	2.40	I
Capital	2.20	III
Raw material	1.88	IV

least important problems were electricity, iron structure, taxation and lack of maintenance in order, ranks.

Suggestions for solution of problems:

The suggestions were collected from vendors for possible solutions of identified problems as supply of water and electricity, credit facility for capital investment, toilet facility and prohibition of parking in front of vending zone.

Future aspiration of the business:

Whatever may be the business and its investment, it is worthless if the business does not have any future prospect. Keeping this in view, an attempt was made to study the future aspiration of the vendors.

Recorded data in Fig. 4 show that 72 per cent have decided to expand their business followed by 28 per cent who have not decided what direction they will give to their business. It was noted that 7 per cent have decided to return to their native place and 93 per cent desired to will stay at Bhubaneswar either to continue their business or search alternative employment opportunities.

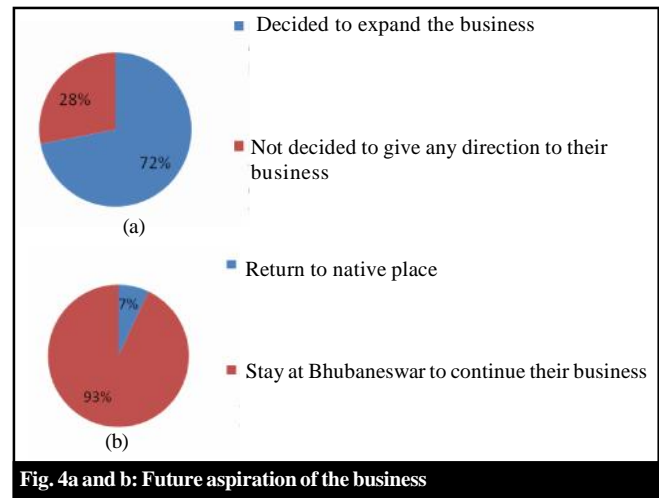


Fig. 4a and b: Future aspiration of the business

The flower vendors should be provided need based inputs to expand their business as India's share in international market of flowers is negligible and there is a great demand for it. But, according to National Horticulture Board (2007-08), the total area under flower crops was estimated around 160.7 thousand hectares while production of flowers was estimated to be 870.4MT of loose flowers and 43417.5 million (numbers).

Conclusion:

The flower vending has a great scope to strengthen local economy particularly the vulnerable section. Therefore, the vending zone should be taken care with changing time and requirements of the vendors mostly in populated cities like Bhubaneswar.

Recommendation:

- In view public interest, vending zones should be set up
- Provision of water, electricity, toilet facility, etc. should be made
- For working capital, credit should be provided to the vendors
- Before issuing license, proper assessment on socio-economic back ground of people should be made.

Authors' affiliations:

PARITOSH MISHRA, Department of Agri-Business, Utkal University, BHUBANESWAR (ODISHA) INDIA

■ **REFERENCES**

Anonymous (1999). Indian Alliance on Street Vendors, Mumbai.

Kenchangoudra, S.M. (2007). An analytical study on SGRY in Gadag districts of Karnataka state, M.Sc. (Ag.) Thesis, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, KARNATAKA (INDIA) .

National Horticulture Board, 2007-08.

■ **WEBLIOGRAPHY**

www.outsource2india.com

www.bmc.orissa.in

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ of Excellence ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
8th Year