

## **Short Research Article**

Challenges facing women vegetable vendors in Arusha, Tanzania. A case of Tengeru market.

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study aimed at assessing the challenges facing women vegetable vendors in Arusha, Tanzania, a case of Tengeru market. The study design used in this study was cross-sectional research design. Basically, a case study is of a particular situation rather than a sweeping statistical survey. It implies the process of gaining insight into the general picture of a situation, without utilizing the entire population.

Findings from this study revealed that most of the respondents were female due to the nature of the study, most of the respondents were aged between 21-25 years of age and most of the respondents in this study had attained only primary education levels. Results of the study revealed again that most of the respondents engaged in income generating activities and most of them were vending vegetable to community local markets.

Moreover, most of these people were engaging to vegetable vending activities as a result of the influence from the family, partners, local government officers, societal seminars as well as influence from the groups. Furthermore, it was observed that few reported that income generated from the activities performed is inadequate to cover for the needs of their households or other socioeconomic activities of a household.

The study found that, vegetable vendors were faced with different challenges including lack of support from the government, lack of support from their families, poor perception from the community members, lack of confidence, lack of skills and knowledge as well as gender based violence were faced them as well as affect their activities.

Generally, the study recommends that, government should provide loans to these women who perform vending activities, creation of awareness and supportive materials, empowerment as well as creation of bylaws and policies

*Keywords: Challenges, women, vegetable, vending, entrepreneurship*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Vegetables production constitutes a substantial part of the world economy. The statistics show that World's leading three producers of fresh vegetables are China, India and United State of America. China is the leading producer with annual production volume of nearly 554 million metric tons, followed by India with approximately 127 million metric tons of fresh vegetables. Cabbage, Chinese spinach, Chinese cabbage, bock Choy, cucumber, white radish and Chinese eggplant are main vegetables produced in China. India is the largest producer of vegetables such as ginger and okra and ranks second in production of onions, cauliflowers, Brinjal and cabbages (Shahbandeh, 2017).

Women's general disadvantaged employment positions have contributed to the debate that the labor market itself is "feminized" which suggests that the employment in which women engage in is associated with low pay, insecurity and precariousness (Heintz, 2006). Furthermore, the "feminization" of the global labor force is connected to urban growth and the expansion of informal employment (Tacoli, 2012). Sub-Saharan Africa is urbanizing at an average of almost 5 percent annually which is twice as high as in Asia and Latin America (UN-HABITAT, 2009). The economic liberalizations in East Asia that have been characterized by an increase in urban-based employment have generally not taken place in sub-Saharan Africa (Potts, 2009).

It has been stated that the African urbanization is not consistent with the assumptions of conventional economic theory since the link between industrialization and urbanization has not been witnessed in the region (Rakodi, 1997; World Bank, 2009). Instead, urbanization is occurring at lower rates of economic growth and is accompanied by a lack of employment generation as well as an increase in slum dwellers (UN-HABITAT, 2010). Moreover, the general lack of jobs in African cities becomes further challenging when the urbanization process has not been preceded by an overall structural transformation in the agricultural sector (Hillborn and Green, 2010)

Arusha City Council is a tourism city of Tanzania where there is flow of population from different regions to seek for formal and informal employment including vegetable selling business. In most cases vegetables are sold in both whole sale and retail at Kilombero market grounds, Tengeru market and other markets (Makwavila, 2017). Various studies have reported on women vegetable vending business (Chinomona and Maziriri, 2015; Daudi, 2015; Heilbrunn, 2014; Jagero and Kushoka, 2011; Domja'n and Fekete, 2011). However, there is little attention on women vegetable seller's challenges.

## **2. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The study was carried out in Arusha region at Arumeru district, Tanzania. The district is one among 6 districts of Arusha Region in the northern Tanzania. The economy of the district is entirely dependent on agriculture, consisting mainly of subsistence farming and livestock keeping. It lies between longitudes 36.50 to 37.50 East and latitudes 3.50 to 3.70 South of the Equator. The equatorial climate of the district is favorable for food and cash crops cultivation throughout the year. The cultivation ranges from grains, legumes, vegetables to fruits and it is predominantly characterized by small-scale farmers. The district is in a good location for export of agricultural produce because of its proximity to the commercial markets in major towns and cities in East Africa.

In fulfilling the purpose of the study, a cross-sectional approach was employed to collect data at once in a specified time [4]. The approach was chosen because it was satisfying the requirements of the objectives of the study. A sample of 150 respondents was drawn from the population of smallholder carrot farmers by using a multi-stage sampling procedure. At first stage, Arusha region was conveniently selected from a list of carrot producing regions in Tanzania. At second stage, Arumeru district was chosen randomly from a list of carrot producing districts while at the third stage, two wards Songoro and Akheri were purposively selected from a list of main carrot producing wards in the district. At the last stage, 150 carrot smallholder farmers were selected randomly from a list of smallholder carrot farmers.

The study employed both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data involved gender, marital status, level of education and household assets whereas quantitative data covered age, family size, input cost and output. The data was collected by using household questionnaires and key informant interview methods to farmers and district agricultural officer respectively. Specifically, the household questionnaire collected data on socio-economic characteristics, farm characteristics, input and output, and household livelihood assets. While the interview guide supported the collection of data regarding the main carrot producing wards within the district. The tools of data collection were relevantly applied because of the suitability and reliability of the methods designed for data collection in the study area.

## **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

The study involved respondents who were aged from 15-above 40 years. The findings shows that, most of the respondents were aged from 21-25 years and few respondents were

aged above 40 years. These findings shows that, other groups was 23.3% were aged from 15-20 years, 28.3% were aged from 26-30 years and 11.7% were aged from 36-40 years

Table 1 Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
15-20	14	23.3
21-25	20	33.3
26-30	17	28.3
36-40	7	11.7
Above 40 years	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey Data, 2022

### 3.2 Marital Status of Respondents

Marital status of the respondents is well presented to table 2. It shows that, 48.3% were married, 43.3% were single and 8.3% were divorced. The findings show that, most of the respondents were married. Even through normal observation from the study shows that, most of the respondents were married and they were conducting those activities for the wellbeing of their families.

Table 2: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Married	29	48.3
Single	26	43.3
Divorced	5	8.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Survey Data, 2022

### 3.3. Factors influencing women to join into vegetable vending activities

The findings shows that, 30% were faced with un employment hence they decided to become entrepreneurs in the portion of vegetable vending activities, 30% were faced with the poverty, 26.7% faced with the low income and 13.3% faced with the influence from the peer groups.

These findings shows that, most of the people to the community were engaging to these activities due to the fact that, they has-been affected with the un employment as well as

poverty which caused them to engage to these activities so as to get basic needs and improve their wellbeing as well as the wellbeing of their community.

The findings from this study were similar to the findings from the study conducted by The study conducted by Parker (2018) was assessing the factors which influenced the challenges facing fruits vendors in Bolivia. It found that, poverty, lack of formal employment and influence of the vitamins found in Carrots were the reasons influenced people of Bolkivia to engaged on vegetable vending activities to the study area.

This high altitude stretches from Northern Peru, through the Plurinational State of Bolivia into Northern Chile and Northeast Argentina. In line with altitude, and in the valley floors, subsistence-based production adds cereals to carrots and potatoes, the main staple of the country.

In Kenya, Carrots which is a source of the diets in Sub Saharan Africa – makes up for more than half of a smallholder household production. (Parker, 2018). Generally, there were many factors which were affected women and caused them to engage to income generating activities in order to improve their economic status.

#### **3.4. Challenges facing women in conducting vegetable vending in Arusha**

Based on the findings as they has been presented to table 1 shows that 23.3% were lack support from the government, 25% were lack support from their husbands, 16.7% were faced with the poor perception from the community members on the activities they conduct, 11.7% were affected with the lack of confidence, and other 11.7% were affected with the gender based violence which were also affected them in conducting their activities

The findings from respondents show that, most of them were affected with the lack of support from their husbands and support from their government. Basically, the findings show that, those challenges are affected women in conducting their entrepreneurship activities in their communities.

The study were similar from the study conducted by ECA, 2018, Which found that, Vegetable vending activities is very much the domain of women in many countries including Tanzania (ECA, 2018). There is generally a shift towards eating vegetables prepared outside (away) from home (WHO, 2006).

Millions of people use street food daily because they work far away from their homes and the vendors offers a wide variety of foods at a low cost and easily accessible. Street vegetable vending assures vegetable security for low income urban population and offers opportunity for developing small scale entrepreneurs (WHO, 1996).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The study found that, vegetable vending activities and entrepreneurship is of vital to women in the community since it helps to reduce poverty, unemployment, dependency rate, income generating as well as other impacts. Vegetable vending has become something very important to the community since people do not have formal employment hence they decide to become entrepreneurs in order to generate income for the wellbeing of their community as well as households.

The study explored that, poverty, influence from families, female headed households, lack of formal employment as well as dependency from men are some of the factors which influence women to become vegetable entrepreneurs in the community as they want to have self and dependency income generating activities.

The study found that, women are faced with different challenges in conducting vegetable vending activities in their community. They faced with the lack of fund, poverty, lack of knowledge and skills, lack of support from their families, lack of support from the husbands as well as other challenges are faced these people.

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