

IDENTIFICATION OF PRESENT STATUS AND CONSTRAINTS OF THE FLOWER VENDORS IN TWO SELECTED RELIGIOUS AREAS

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By
NAULLAGE UMESHA MADUMALI PERERA

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Uva Wellassa University of Sri Lanka**

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ABSTRACT

Cultivation and use of flowers for religious and cultural festivals is popular in Sri Lanka. Small-scale flower vendors can be seen near temples selling fresh flowers. These huge demanded niche markets were hidden and less studied. Therefore, this study was conducted to review present status, major constraints face by the vendors and potentials for younger generations' involvement related to the flower-vending sector attached to "Kiri-vehera temple in Katharagama" and "Maha Saman Dewalaya in Ratnapura" in 2015. The population was both registered and non-registered vendors and sample consists 30 respondents from Kiri-vehera temple in Katharagama and 28 respondents were from Maha Saman Dewalaya in Ratnapura. Data were collected using structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and multiple linear regression using SPSS 16 and Minitab 17 statistical packages. The relationship between socio-economic factors and constrains in sector was analyzed.

Study reveals that majority of the vendors are females (84.5%) with average monthly income level of Rs. 24966. Most of the respondents (87.9%) are satisfied as a flower vendor as well as moderate level of younger generations' involvement in the sector (46.3%). The level of constraints faced by vendors is considerably high in both places. However, vendors attached to Maha Saman Dewalaya have faced relatively high level of constraints. Lack of market demand & its' fluctuation, non-availability of proper selling location/area, multiple responsibilities, lack of support from government & other related authorities, laws and regulations, policies were identified as most affecting constraints for the vendors in both areas. Higher competition, less social acceptance and less recognition of venture, lack of ability in obtaining financial and banking resources/ capital, non-availability of proper selling location/ area, laws, regulations and policies and lack of support by government & other related authorities were identified as most affecting barriers for potential involvement of younger generations in the venture.

The results of the regression analysis revealed that level of constraints was significantly affected by the socio-economic factors such as household size, gender of the respondent, working hours per day, stall availability, availability of other income source and vending area but not significantly affected by the socio-economic factors such as age of the respondent, marital status, educational level, age of the business/ experience in industry and distance from residence to working place.

Keywords: Flower Vendors, Religious Areas, Present Status, Constraints, Younger Generations' Involvement

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