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BLOOMING AGAINST ODDS: A SURVEY OF UNTOLD STORIES OF WOMEN FLOWER SELLERS OF JAMMU

Dr. Shalini Rana¹, Dr. Nirja Sharma², Ranjeet Singh³, and Dr Santosh Kumar Yadav⁴

- 1) HOD, Department of English, Government College of Education, Jammu
- 2) Department of English, Kumaon University, Nainital
- 3) Research Scholar, School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Jammu
- 4) Research & Development Cell, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara Punjab

Abstract: *The study provides a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analysis of women flower sellers in the Jammu region. The survey includes data of approximately 30 women who sell flowers outside temples. The research explores the socio-economic dimensions of their livelihood. It includes their earnings, working conditions and the challenges they face in the informal unorganized sector. The data was collected through structured interviews and surveys conducted with these flower sellers during field visit across Jammu region particularly in urban and semi-urban areas. The study offers insights into their income patterns, demographic characteristics and the socio-cultural factors that impact their trade. Statistical methods were employed to analyze the data, revealing significant findings about the economic contributions of these women and their dependency on this trade. The initial stages of survey findings highlight several key challenges like- fluctuating income due to seasonal demand, the precarious nature of their informal employment, lack of access to formal credit systems and the physical toll of long working hours in harsh weather conditions. These women also encounter social challenges, such as limited support from family and societal expectations that restrict their mobility and decision-making power. In Jammu, majority of uneducated women are working in this unorganized sector. They face additional challenges like they are unable to perform household duties, difficulty in commuting in odd hours, management of income, looking after alcoholic and abusive husband, raising children etc. Due to lack of education and ignorance majority of the women labours for lower wages. But still they expressed their satisfaction that this sector is providing a source of income to them and as compared to any other menial job this work helps them in working with dignity. The women interviewed showed the intent to work so that they can remain financially independent but their only demand was good working condition like creation of small kiosks, support from the temple authorities and security for their earned money. The findings draw attention to the need for targeted policy interventions from the government to improve the working conditions and livelihood security of these women. This research not only contributes to the limited literature on women in the informal economy in Jammu but also provides a foundation for future studies and policymaking in similar contexts.*

Keywords: *Flower vendors, unorganized sector, socio-economic dimensions.*

INTRODUCTION

Floriculture, the cultivation and sale of flowers is known to offer “immense potential for generating remunerative self-employment among small and marginal farmers” (Raina et al., 2017). In regions like Jammu, favourable climate and a rich tradition of flower use make

flower vending a natural occupation. In Hindu culture, for example, flowers are integral to religious rituals; all the basic rituals like birth, marriage or sacred festivals are considered incomplete without the use of flowers. “Flowers symbolize the bridge between earthly and divine realms, representing the universe's grandeur. Their blooming reflects a soul's journey toward enlightenment, facing challenges just as flowers do” (Thursd., 2024). Marigold, Lotus and Rose offerings in temples are very common across Indian states. Every temple priest garlands the statue of gods and goddess with beautifully woven garlands. Flowers are also known for their therapeutic properties and through aromatherapy they are gaining popularity among the masses.

Despite this cultural demand, flower-vending by women in Jammu remains a low-income, informal livelihood with scant support or recognition. Street vendors also contribute in the urban economy. According to WEIGO (2025), “Street vendors sell goods and offer services in broadly defined public spaces, such as streets, parks and open spaces near transport hubs and construction sites. Market traders sell goods and provide services in stalls or built markets on publicly or privately owned land.” Parimala and Sneka (2025) highlight that flower vendors, as part of the unorganized labour sector, play a significant role in the socio-cultural landscape. Women flower sellers are common in India. It is considered as a safe work for women. Flower selling outside temple is even safer than any other place as the men visiting temples come with a pious mind. Due to devotion in particular deities when people come for prayers they do not look with lusty eyes towards women. In fact, while buying flowers they speak in a polite manner and their focus is more towards devotion and piety to their respective gods. All women interviewed during the study confessed that they were never sexually harassed or looked with lusty eyes by the temple visitors besides most of the famous temples are usually located in busy markets, thronged by tourists. Flower Street vendors are an integral part of informal economy of India. Flower vending business at small scale has its own challenges like unstable income and fluctuation in demand.

Street vending is not a new profession; it had been there since rise of civilizations. In our country also it is an age old profession but due to lack of proper planning this has remained an unorganized sector. Street vendors especially in Jammu have vulnerable status. Flower street vending is still an informal, unregulated and unorganized sector. Despite all odds, it offers at least some means of sustenance to people with no skills or means of earning. It is a form of self-employment. Since it doesn't require to any formal training hence people enter into street vending to support themselves.

This study focuses on women selling flowers outside temples in Jammu city, a niche yet important segment of the informal economy and examines their socio-economic conditions, motivations and challenges. In Jammu's temple precincts, women flower vendors perform essential, albeit marginalized, roles. Their day usually begins before dawn and ends after sunset, yet their earnings are meagre. Recognizing this, the study investigates the demographics, income patterns and work conditions of these vendors, situating their experiences within the larger context of India's informal economy and gendered labour dynamics. The aim is to highlight an overlooked group of urban poor and to inform policy by understanding their untold stories.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research on urban informal workers and street vendors provides important context. Jan Breman's work on Indian labour highlights how rural workers are often shunted into low-paid, insecure jobs (Breman, 1985). In particular, studies of street vendors underscore severe hardships. Ayikai's (2013) study of women vendors in Accra, Ghana found high rates of health problems (musculoskeletal pain, respiratory illness, etc.) due to long hours in harsh condition. Similarly, Bhowmik's (2001) surveys of Indian hawkers emphasize that unregulated street

vending is common, and vendors often face harassment and lack legal protections. Bromley's (2000) global review argues that without proper policy, street vending remains an informal safety net but also a site of exploitation. According to Mahima (2025), street vendors are "economic citizens," and their recognition is essential under Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution of India. Yet, she argues that "the complete invisibility of this sector means that the street vendors are denied the right to exist." Dr. Sukhwinder Singh has conducted research on women working in the unorganized sector in Patiala, Punjab. According to his findings, "women working especially in the unorganized sector have a poor level of job satisfaction when it comes to the current status of their income. The workers are mostly dissatisfied with their earnings and concerned about their future needs" (Singh, 2021). To a great extent the outcome of the current research shows the same results. Women flower vendors also seemed to be less satisfied about the wages that they earned after the days long back breaking labor. Besides observing the dissatisfaction pattern Dr. Singh also found that the women labourers belong to marginalized classes. However as noted by Monisha and Rani (2016) such considerations are much less prevalent in urban areas yet they cannot be completely eliminated as the majority of unorganized workers in urban areas are migrant workers from rural areas.

Vanitha and Rajasekaran (2022) observed that the floral industry has high growth potential. Their study focused on Coimbatore and Madurai in India. They found that the main challenges faced by flower business owners include transportation costs, changing consumer behavior, and inconsistency in flower production. The sale of flowers also depends on factors such as the season, festivals, wedding dates based on Hindu astrology, and the local culture. If flower traders are able to accurately anticipate demand and supply, it can lead to reduced wastage of this natural resource.

Rajbir Saha has conducted research on flower sellers in Assam. Through his survey, he observed that "the flower market is distributed and scattered to some specific areas, dominated by Hindu shrines. Such a cause of localized distributions of the market is because of the demand in terms of devotees' offerings" (Saha, 2022). Assam is particularly known for the Kamakhya Temple, which attracts millions of tourists every year. Flowers are primarily procured from the Nilachal Hills, and flower selling has become a family business for many, passed down through generations due to the temple's presence. However, in recent times, traditional sellers are facing growing competition from professional companies offering cut flowers arranged in attractive designs. Saha's study focuses on the contrast between traditional flower-selling practices and the emergence of large companies entering the market with designer cut flowers.

Gender-focused research indicates that women in informal jobs endure added discrimination. Dave (2012) reports that women labourers in India's unorganized sector work long hours for lower pay than men, with minimal job security. A study on construction workers notes that women comprise a large share of unskilled workers and face wage and job discrimination (Devi & Kiran, 2013). Kumar (2013) similarly mentions that women perform two-thirds of all labour but receive only about one-third of the income and own under one-tenth of the resources, highlighting a systemic gender wage gap. Tooba Arif (2023) highlights that "the street vending sector is a significant component of informal economies worldwide. However, street vendors often encounter numerous challenges that hinder the smooth operation of their businesses." These challenges include poor infrastructure and harassment by municipal officials. It is therefore essential to recognize the need to create a supportive environment for individuals who choose self-reliant forms of employment over government or private sector jobs. More broadly, Barati et al. (2015) find that Indian working women face persistent barriers (bias, harassment, lack of advancement) even in formal jobs, implying similar or worse challenges in informal trades.

To summarize, the available literature shows that informal street vending is a crucial livelihood for the urban poor, yet women vendors specifically suffer from health risks, low earnings and lack of legal or social support. However, almost all studies focus on general markets or male vendors; very few have examined female flower sellers selling flowers outside temples in particular. This gap motivates the present study that is why the study is focussing on this neglected sector.

RESEARCH GAP

While numerous studies have described street vendors in India and their struggles, none to the researchers' knowledge concentrate on women selling flowers outside temples in Jammu. Existing Kashmir-focused work discusses women in markets or roadside vending broadly (Din et al., 2023), but not this subset. Temple flower sellers face unique circumstances: they engage with religious customers, endure daily rituals of supply (often transporting fresh produce early in the morning) and work in sacred public spaces. This focused attention is absent in prior literature. The present study fills this gap by providing detailed empirical data and analysis specifically on female flower vendors in Jammu's temple areas, thus addressing an overlooked aspect of the urban informal economy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on this gap and the study's objectives, the following research questions are framed:

1. **What are the demographic and socio-economic profiles of women who sell flowers outside temples in Jammu?** (e.g., age, caste, education, marital status)
2. **What are their income levels and work patterns?** (e.g., daily earnings, peak selling seasons, hours worked)
3. **What factors motivate these women to engage in flower vending?** (e.g., choice vs. compulsion, family circumstances)
4. **What challenges do they face in their livelihood?** (e.g., weather, market fluctuations, harassment)
5. **How do their experiences reflect broader issues of gender, caste and informality described in the literature?**

These questions guided the mixed-method research design and analysis.

METHODOLOGY

This exploratory study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining structured interviews, surveys and qualitative narratives. The researchers used **snowball sampling** to reach 30 women selling flowers outside various temples in Jammu. The research started with a few known vendors. Later on referrals led to others in this dispersed network. A brief questionnaire was administered in person to collect demographic and income data. The survey included closed-ended questions on education, caste, religion, family and earnings, as well as Likert-scale ratings of challenges. It also covered open-ended questions about personal history and motivations.

Interviews were semi-structured, recorded in Hindi and local language Dogri and lasted 20–30 minutes each. Questions probed entry into the business, daily routines, family support and perceptions of risk or discrimination. Interviews were later translated and coded thematically. We used descriptive statistics (means, medians, frequencies) to analyse the quantitative data. In line with Creswell and Clark's (2006) framework for mixed methods research, we triangulated statistical findings with qualitative stories to ensure a holistic understanding. For instance, survey results on earnings and challenges were explained through direct quotes.

Given the sensitive and informal nature of this population, ethical considerations included informed consent and ensuring of anonymity. The small sample size and non-random

sampling limit generalizability of this qualitative–quantitative combination yields rich, grounded insights into an otherwise invisible group.

DATA ANALYSIS

Demographics- The 30 respondents were predominantly middle-aged, with an average age of about 51 years (not tabulated due to privacy). Educational attainment was very low: half (15 of 30) had no formal schooling at all, while only one had reached 12th grade. The table below summarizes education levels:

Education Level	Frequency
No formal education	15
Up to 3rd grade	1
Up to 5th grade	7
Up to 8th grade	4
10th grade	2
12th grade	1

This indicates that 80% (24 of 30) had at best primary-level schooling. Low literacy suggests limited alternative job options.

Most women were from marginalized castes: 15 identified as Scheduled Caste, 9 as Salaray, and the rest from small artisan or lower castes. All respondents were Hindu except one, reflecting the temple context. Two-thirds (60%) were married and 37% widowed; only one was divorced. These women often headed families alone, especially the widows.

The vast majority (80%) operated in urban temple sites, with 20% in semi-urban outskirts. The locations included Old Jammu City and Janipur markets, Roopnagar area in Jammu which are busy temple-adjacent areas.

Income and Work- Daily earnings from flower sales were very low. The distribution of earnings (in Indian rupees) per day was as follows:

Daily Earnings (INR)	Number of Women
100–200	8
200–300	11
300–400	5
400–500	3
500–600	3

The **median** range was Rs. 200–300, and the **mode** fell in that same bracket. The **mean** daily earning was only about Rs. 273 (~USD 3.5), reinforcing that flower-selling yields only subsistence income. Anecdotally, women reported net daily profits of a few hundred rupees at most. Most sold loose flowers or small bouquets at temple gates or on pavements, with only a small cellophane cover on their heads as shelter. Out of mutual consent they sat at their designated places outside popular temples.

On being asked about whether they have taken any loan from the government or any financial support by any agency, 90% of the women said that they have not taken any loan for running this small business of flower selling. While 10% said that they had taken loan initially to start the business from their acquaintances. Majority of them were unaware about government schemes meant for the poor and marginalized women while a small minority said that their family members know about the schemes but there are so any formalities associated in preparing documents and it is highly time consuming process hence they availing any benefit of any such schemes.

As far as personal accommodation is concerned, 28 out of 30 respondents had permanent houses although comprising only one or two rooms while two respondents were living on rent. The houses either belonged to their in-laws or were in the name of their husbands. So they had no property or piece of land registered in their own name. It was heartening to note that at least all these women had a bank account in their name. The women also revealed that they have made no investment anywhere while a minority of the women had saved money in the form of committee which is a local system of money management in which around ten or twelve women of the same colony save money and circulate among themselves turn wise. For example twelve women decide to invest Rs 2000 per month so each woman will get Rs 24000 turn wise. In order to decide the turn, people either use chit system or mutually decide month wise distribution). This is a very common practice among women in Jammu Kashmir, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. It can be called as micro-management of saving money. The benefit of this system is it is tax free. It is a popular means of savings among Indian middle class women and lower income group women. They often fulfil their needs like purchasing clothes, gold jewellery and other important household items like sofa set, furniture, and refrigerator with the help of these savings.

On being asked whether they managed their finances independently 90% of them answered in affirmative. So, it was satisfying to see that at least they were owner of their own earnings. As far as their family details were concerned majority of them had two or three children while one woman reported to have six children and two women had no children. It was disheartening to know that they were not conscious about growth in their own business. They were not very much concerned about expanding or diversifying their business. Like other than flower selling outside temple they could start making bouquets for official functions or flower decoration for wedding ceremonies as these businesses are picking up pace in Jammu and Kashmir. Only 3% women vendors had received request for garlands (*jaimala*) for wedding purpose other than offering flowers to deities by the customers. 100% response was in disfavour of expansion or diversification of this business. On being scrutinized further they showed their apprehension that perhaps it will require heavy investment, it may be risky or perhaps this will be like treading an unknown path. Overall they were not comfortable with this idea. Sangeetha Priya and Kamble (2025) have also suggested alternative use of flowers by women flower sellers keeping in view of the rising demand. According to them, "Fresh flowers, dry flowers and even the floral waste can be utilized for value addition in an enterprise level. Nowadays, there is an increasing demand of floral arrangements in hotels, restaurants, IT companies and multi-national companies to increase employees work efficiency by improving the working environment."

The women interviewed were not very much satisfied with the outcome of this small business. The only satisfaction that they had was at least they had some work to do. But they didn't want to give advice to other women to enter this small earning business. 100% of them said that they wouldn't like other women to enter this business as this is not very profitable. They stated in Dogri language that, "*madamji massanguzarahai*" in English it means, "We are only able to make both ends meet."

On the one hand, many writers have reported success stories of flower entrepreneurs. For instance, Raajwrita Dutta (2025) documented the achievements of individuals such as Lohith Reddy, Parvathy Mohanan, Abhinav Singh, and others. However, flower vending is different from flower entrepreneurship.

In terms of work patterns, these women typically worked 6–8 hours on a selling day (often skipping midday as they closed their paraphernalia in extreme heat). Peak business came during festivals (Diwali, Shivaratri, Navratri, Shrawan month of Shiva) when demand surged. However, they earned very little outside festive days. Six in ten respondents relied on flower

vending as their only source of income; the rest occasionally did light labour in others home or involved themselves in sales of small goods during lukewarm season.

As far as their expectations from the government were concerned they had only basic demands: *“Asainkuchhna hinchaida bus ik shed howaytakigarmisardichbachav howay, taypension, pinsionbudapay da saharhondi ae”* (in Dogri language)

Translation, “We don’t expect much, our only demand is just make one small shed for us so that we are saved from extreme summers and winters and pension so that we can have some financial security in our old age.” Thus these women were neither very ambitious nor greedy all they wanted was some sense of security and working conditions with dignity. Out of 30 respondents, majority of them wanted shed (20%) and pension and Shed (86.6%) and about 7% respondents wanted financial support to their children and family members.

Dr. Uttam Mandal advocates for the empowerment of women flower vendors through his research on the socio-economic status of women flower vendors in Purba Medinipur, West Bengal (India). He states, “Empowering women flower vendors can have a ripple effect, contributing to community development, social change, and economic growth. Flower vendors are an integral part of many cultures, bringing beauty, tradition, and economic value.” His study also reveals that “as their family is small in size of four members, the income they earn out of this informal activity is sufficient to meet only food expenditure” (Mandal, 2025). Dr. Mandal further observes that despite having worked in this unorganized sector for two to three decades, these women are only able to meet basic expenses such as food, with insufficient savings to improve their living conditions. A decent living with basic amenities is still a far-fetched reality. So is the case of Jammu women flower vendors they just earn to survive but they are not able to thrive.

Motivation- Almost all (90%) said they entered flower selling by compulsion rather than by choice; only 7% said it was voluntary. Widowed or otherwise women abandoned by husbands, these women cited poverty and family responsibility as the driving force for them into vending. (For example, one widow explained that after her husband’s death she *“had no option but to earn some income for my daughters”*.) Only a single respondent mentioned a husband’s illness forcing her out to work.

Flower vending business can be a profitable business if these women are given proper support and guidance also for diversification. They need to be well oriented through various workshops by Floriculture department. Nasima & Kumari (2024) have suggested through their study that the value addition of flowers presents a significant business opportunity for women entrepreneurs, as it allows them to leverage their creativity, build sustainable practices, and take advantage of online platforms and niche markets to establish successful ventures that generate income and promote economic empowerment. In the present-day world, the global demand for flowers is rising. Besides the elite class is now inclined to eco-friendly, organic and natural products so with the right education and skills women flower sellers can improve their livelihood.

Challenges- The women faced multiple hardships in running their business. According to the current survey, the top challenges were:

- **Harsh weather conditions:** Cited by 50% of women. Vendors work exposed to cold winters, scorching summer sun and heavy rains without shelter.
- **Fluctuating flower prices:** 40% noted that flower wholesale rates varied dramatically, cutting into their already thin profit margins. The rich wholesale vendors priced the flowers according to their whims and fancies during festive season and there was no check on them by the government. They in fact demanded that the rich wholesale

vendors should be taken to task for raising the price unnecessarily because it is the street vendors who face the public wrath during peak seasons.

- **Limited space:** 17% struggled with cramped selling spots at temple entrances, often having to compete with other vendors or be moved by authorities. Some sold flowers at the mercy of temple owners. Kumari (2024) also points out in her research on street vendors in the unorganized informal sector that in modern urban planning and governance, connecting roads get priority, ignoring the chaotic social spaces like streets. According to her, street vendors are often considered a threat to peace, stability, and security, compelling them to shift away from the natural markets. As human beings, women have the right to work with dignity. Productive individuals in society should be given space, time, and opportunities by both the community and the responsible government.
- **Health issues:** 17% mentioned aches and fatigue from long hours sitting/squatting and carrying heavy loads of flowers.
- **High input costs:** 10% mentioned that wholesale flower prices and transport expenses (e.g. to Indira Chowk market in Delhi for supplies) were prohibitive.
- **Harassment:** A few (about 7%) reported trouble from police or local officials, who sometimes made them pay fines or move their goods.

These findings are summarized below:

Main Challenge	% of Respondents
Harsh weather	50%
Price fluctuations	40%
Limited space to vend	16.7%
Health-related fatigue	16.7%
High wholesale costs	10%
Police/official harassment	6.7%

(Percentages sum to more than 100% because respondents could name multiple issues.)

When the women were asked whether they get any support from the temple priests or temple management, 20% women said that they do get support like during rainy days they are allowed to sit inside the temple premises and carry on their business while 76.67% said that they never got any support. 3.33% women said that to some extent sometimes they were given support or help. Many a time's devotees offer community food (*Bhandara* in Hindi) which is offering sumptuous food as charity in order to express thanksgiving during auspicious occasions, during such occasion the women vendors are given free food by the priests. “*kadaykaday jay chezanjayda hoi jaan, jiyaruti, kapday, phal, taanasainsaddiyecheezandaiodday,*”

Translation: If there is an overflow of charitable items like food, clothes, fruits etc then sometimes we are called and we are also offered some share by the priests.

DISCUSSION

The data paints a stark picture of struggle and marginalization among Jammu's temple women flower vendors. Surprisingly male flower sellers were almost negligible during the survey. In some cases the sons and husbands of these women sellers was to provide supply of certain amount of flowers during the early hours from the main supplier. Their demographic profiles and challenges closely mirror findings from studies of informal women workers elsewhere. For instance, the predominance of Scheduled Caste women in our sample aligns with scholarship noting that, “Going against the generally accepted view, the individuals and groups involved in street vending are also internally differentiated based on factors such as caste, age and gender, among others. It is crucial to highlight in this context that female and lower-caste street

vendors experience heightened marginalization, facing the harshest repercussions in this scenario” (Kumari, 2024) The fact that all respondents were Hindu reflects the temple context and traditional roles in worship, but also points to a common cultural thread: across India, lower-caste women fill these informal niches.

The very low education levels (50% with no schooling) and low incomes echo Vandana Dave’s conclusion that women in India’s unorganized sector are frequently illiterate and “*exploited to a greater degree... paid less compared to men*” (Dave, 2012) In line with Kumar (2013), who observed that women perform two-thirds of the work but earn only a third of the income, our flower sellers bear a heavy workload (long hours, daily setup and takedown of goods) for only a few dollars’ equivalent per day. One vendor’s lament “*Even after waking before dawn to bring flowers, I barely make Rs.200 per day to feed my family*” exemplifies this disparity. Such anecdotes reflect Kumar’s broader finding that gender and poverty entwine to keep women workers in subsistence.

Health and safety concerns also resonate with prior research. All respondents reported some bodily pain or fatigue from their work, which matches Ayikai’s (2013) Ghana study finding that street vendors frequently suffer musculoskeletal ailments and exhaustion. Unlike Ayikai’s South African sample, however, our women did not report high rates of overt harassment or violence – likely because temple crowds are more family-oriented – but they did face threats of informal eviction or police fines, consistent with general street vendor pressures noted by Bhowmik (2001) and Bromley (2000).

Social support was minimal. Most women entered vending alone, without organizational backing. This lack of collective bargaining power aligns with the literature: Mohapatra(2012) emphasize that informal women workers often lack protection and voice, making them vulnerable to market forces. None of our respondents belonged to any vendor association.

In sum, the data reveal a classic case of an informal, feminized and marginalized livelihood. The women’s experiences support the literature’s portrayal of street vending as an informal safety net “*subsisting on the margins*” rather than a path to empowerment. Yet the cultural importance of flowers suggests policy potential: if harnessed, temple flower-selling could be made safer and more remunerative.

CONCLUSION

This study documents how a small group of women flower vendors in Jammu eke out a living under adverse conditions. They are overwhelmingly from low-caste, low-income backgrounds and have minimal education. Most sell flowers not by choice but from economic necessity, often due to widowhood or destitution. Their daily earnings (around Rs. 250–300 on average) confirm that this trade yields only subsistence-level income. Key challenges include weather exposure, unpredictable prices, and health strains. These findings reaffirm broader patterns: female informal workers in India shoulder a disproportionate workload for meagre pay and face systemic neglect.

The research highlights the critical importance of these vendors’ contributions (supplying temples and households with flowers) despite their economic precarity. By giving a voice to these “*untold stories*”, the study emphasizes the need to integrate such workers into social and economic planning. The persistence of gender and caste disparities, even in this microcosm, underscores the urgency of targeted support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The close scrutiny of all the responses helps in drawing on the following findings and best practices that can be offered for several policy and community recommendations:

- **Legal Recognition:** The results of the study strongly advocate inclusion of temple flower women vendors under the *Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and*

Regulation) Act, 2014. Municipal authorities should formally register them and allocate safe vending zones near temples. Their legal status would reduce harassment by police and provide a sense of protection.

- **Dedicated Facilities:** The local municipality officials should establish covered kiosks or stalls at temple sites specifically for women flower sellers. This could mitigate weather risks and reduce police eviction. Local temple trusts and city planners should collaborate on setting up such infrastructure which is otherwise also not very expensive.
- **Financial Support:** Social welfare departments of the government should provide microcredit and subsidized loans to purchase flowers or equipments related to this business. Government rural development schemes and NGOs could extend targeted credit to these women thus reducing their dependence and exploitation by middlemen who sell flowers at whopping prices during festivals.
- **Social Security:** It is high time that these helpless women vendors are enrolled in health insurance and pension schemes for unorganized workers. For example, linking them to schemes like Ayushman Bharat or construction worker welfare boards (which could be extended to flower sellers) would alleviate health and old-age vulnerabilities.
- **Training and Cooperatives:** Self help groups can be formed as well as cooperatives among flower vendors to enhance collective earning and saving. Institutes like Agriculture departments and Agriculture Universities can offer training in floriculture (helping them grow their own small flower plots) and basic accounting that would improve productivity and profits. Organizations like WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing & Organizing) and SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) have models for vendor organizing that could be adapted.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** The temple authorities and the public can be educated about the problems faced by these women. NSS volunteers of colleges can spread awareness about them. Temple management could allow one vendor per temple to earn a token salary or provide free child care on site, acknowledging their service. Public awareness (e.g., through media or temple announcements) can encourage patrons to treat vendors fairly.

Implementing these measures would help “bloom” this enterprise beyond mere survival. Empowering female flower sellers aligns with broader goals of urban inclusivity and gender equity. Their work is small in scale but deeply connected to Jammu’s economy and culture; it merits formal attention rather than neglect.

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