



## MARKEING IN TRIBAL AREAS IN COASTAL ANDHRA PRADESH

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### **Abstract**

*The tribal people are the oldest ethnological segment in the Indian population. As per 2011 census, they constitute 8.61 per cent of Indian total population. The tribal economy is completely primitive and is based on the concept of subsistence. The other characteristics of the tribal economy are collection of minor forest produce, absolute belief in superstitions, high incidence of poverty, high rate of illiteracy, podu type agriculture, frequent ill health due to malnutrition and very poor and transport and communication facilities. The technology used by them is primitive as well as simple and is often in consonance with their ecological surroundings. They cultivate their lands on primitive lines without any irrigation faculties or scientific cropping pattern resulting in very low yields.*

**Key Words: Market, Shandey, Buyers, Sellers.**

### **Introduction**

The traders, money lenders, contractors sordidly exploit them as they are innocent and illiterate. Their perpetual indebtedness and alienation of lands aggravated their misery and inflicted their peace and happiness. Tribal revolts in the pre and post independent India have their roots in the inhuman exploitation of tribals. The isolated location of the tribal population away from the rest of the mainstream of the society and lack of organized marketing and credit facilities have led to the entry of professional money lenders and the businessmen from the plains to exploit by buying minor forest produce from them at lower prices and in turn sell them their household requirements at prohibitive prices. Shandy is a market place where the buyers and sellers of the surrounding villages gather once in a week. These shandies offer a variety of goods at competitive rates by private and public agencies. Thus the present study of shandies in Srikakulam District has been chosen as they constitute the centre of business activity and are the pulse beet of the tribal economy.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- a. To study the exchange activities of marketing carried by the buyers and sellers in select shandies, and
- b. To suggest appropriate measures to be taken for strengthen the shandies so as to serve as an effective marketing organization.

### **Methodology**

The study is based on the primary as well as secondary data. The secondary data were collected from Books, Journals, periodicals, websites and bank manuals, files and records. The study depends mainly on the primary data collected through well-framed and pre-tested structured schedules to elicit the well-considered opinions of the respondents.

## **DISCUSSIONS: METHODS AND MATERIALS**

### **Assessment of Sales in Shandies**

The shandies in the tribal economy can be categorised as shandies of higher order and shandies of lower order. If the shandy is a high order one, more people tend to travel greater distances, even for



fulfilling their marginal requirements. The tribal shandies in Seethampeta and Kusumi are shandies belonging to the higher order which serve greater number of villages and also attract large number of sellers and buyers. The study revealed that 32.50 per cent of the sellers are attending two shandies per week while 15.50 per cent were attending three shandies per week. As many as 81.50 per cent of the respondents were visiting the shandies round the year, while only 16.50 per cent were visiting the shandies during seasons only.

Among the sellers at the shandies adopting various means of transport 48 per cent came by bus or van or auto followed by 28 per cent who carry their items of sale on headload and carrying pole. The tribal economy which was known for its barter transactions a few decades ago has undergone a complete change in the recent times. The people in the tribal economy dispensed with the barter transactions and got used to monetary economy.

### **Assessment of Purchases in Shandies**

Two types of people are found at shandies under study. The first and majority of the people were those who make the purchases for their household consumption. The second categories of the people were the petty traders who make the purchases at the shandy for resale at their native place.

The distance traveled by the buyers from their native village to the shandy forms an interesting aspect of the study. This focuses attention on whether the buyers in the tribal areas are satisfied with visiting the shandies that are closely located or whether they prefer to visit the shandies located at a distant place. A study about the travel pattern of the tribal buyers would help the policy makers to decide, whether to open more number of shandies, thus bringing down the distance to be traveled by the buyers to fulfill their basic needs.

It is evident from the study that a vast majority of 42.66 per cent of the buyers came to the shandy by walk. This was followed by around 35 per cent of the buyers coming by auto/van and a meagre percentage of 2.67 coming to the shandy by bicycle. There are however a little over 15 per cent of the buyers who are coming by RTC bus. The same phenomenon is evident between tribals and non-tribals. The percentage of tribals and non-tribals coming to the shandy by auto/van and bus is almost equal. Non-tribal buyers coming by motor bike and bullock cart are higher than their tribal counterparts. Interestingly, the percentage of buyers coming by walk or by auto/van is higher among tribals than non-tribals.

The variety in the mode of transport that was used by the buyers attending the shandies in the study area reflects the difficulties of transport facilities. The time taken by the buyers to reach the shandy depends on various factors. Some of those which influenced the time taken were, the distance travelled by the buyers from their native village to the shandy, the terrain on which they had to come, the quantity of produce they carried to the shandy and the mode of transport adopted for the purpose. Although the distance travelled by the buyers to attend the shandy was usually less, the terrain on which they had to come, mattered much for the time taken to reach the shandy.

The shandy in the tribal area apart from playing a marketing role, was also a centre of social activities. Shandies were places for the relations of close by villages to meet and 11 persons came to the shandy for that purpose. People also came to the shandies for the purpose of setting matrimonial alliances. During the study, three people responded saying that they visited the shandy for matrimonial alliances.



It was observed that 60 per cent of the buyers sold minor forest produce at the shandy. Sale of minor forest produce was considered to be a major source of income to the buyers. Agricultural produce was sold by around 26 per cent of buyers visiting the shandy. The buyers usually did not have sufficient agricultural produce to sustain their families throughout the year. Still they were compelled to sell a part of their agricultural produce, not because they possessed a surplus but due to unavoidable circumstances of pressing domestic requirements and in many cases harassment by traders who sold them products on credit or due to the pressure of the money-lenders. Tribal hamlets located in proximity to the towns had an advantage of cultivating and selling vegetables and fruits. Among the buyers visiting the shandies 10 per cent of them claimed to have sold vegetables. People including in the sale of cattle accounted for 3.75 per cent.

It was observed during the field study that 32.87 per cent of the buyers travelled to a maximum distance of five kilometers while visiting more than one shandy. This was closely followed by 33.57 per cent traveling 11 to 20 kilometers and 31.47 per cent of the buyers traveling between 11 to 20 kilometres and even above 20 kilometres were those who preferred to visit the higher order shandies.

The trader visiting the shandies were free to use different types of weights and measures and even approximation in the process of selling different items to the tribals. Lack of proper check on the weights and measures being used by the private merchants at the shandies gave them full scope to deceive the tribals. During the study, the buyers were questioned regarding their opinion about the proper weightment by the private merchants. About 72 per cent of the buyers said that proper weightment by the private merchants, whereas 28 per cent expressed their dissatisfaction on the issue. During the study, a peculiar practice that was adopted by some private merchants came to light. Some private merchants had two sets of weights, namely one for the purpose of buying the produce from the tribals and the other for selling the various items to them. The tribal buyers were kept busy in some petty talk about their welfare and in the process, some private merchants made use of these two sets of weights. Further, the tobacco is sold through approximation which has always profitable to the traders.

The items which were predominantly purchased by the females were edible oils, kirana, dry fish and pots. In some cases, both the tribal males and females were making the purchases. This was mostly in the case of purchase of textiles and high priced items like the aluminium utensils, etc. It was observed that there was lot of consultation between the male and female, while selecting the textiles and aluminum utensils because these involved a commitment of a significant amount of their resources.

### **Suggestions**

1. The Buyers would be spending more time at the shandy if they were assured of some transport facility to reach back home. Therefore it is recommended that the transport facilities may be provided to the shandy village in the tribal areas.
2. The G.C.C should open more no. of shandies in the interior tribal areas. This would minimize the need of the tribals to travel to long distance to fulfill there basic needs food and clothing and also animate congestion i.e., widely prevalent in many of the existing shandies.
3. It is suggested the Government may construct community shelters at the shandies so that the people coming to shandies could relax under the shelters and take food and also protect themselves in case of unfavourable weathers.



4. The facility of cold storage is available only at Seethampeta shandy. Similar cold storage facilities are absent in other shandy areas. Therefore suggested that Govt. take initiative to setup cold storage facilities in other shandy areas also.
5. A variety of weights and measures were observed to be in use at the shandies. These ranged from the modern weights and measures to the country once and also approximation. This blatantly brings out the fact and the extent to which the tribals were being cheated by the traders at the shandies. To prevent the usage of false weights and measures, shandy intelligence committee should prevail upon the traders at the shandies and strictly enforce the adoption of scientific weights and measurements.

### **Conclusion of the Study**

The sales volumes of products are very much directly influenced by the consumers' preference and recommendations. The finding confirms the traders' and consumers' preference. This is due to its good product appearance, normal maintenance cost, reasonable price, exchange mechanism and technically advanced features. It secures popular brand image in the market. The study also finds out that the advanced features, good appearance, less expensive maintenance, affordable price and high cost benefit attract the customers to prefer products.

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