

Tribal Shandies in The Indian Rural Market Scenario: A Descriptive Study on Tribal Shandies in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

Srikakulam District has been the starting district of A.P. on the East Coast with lot of tribal population and forest area. In the arena of Rural Markets the tribal shandies are an integral part. The word “Shandy” is applied to a place of human conglomerate both in rural as well as urban habitat. Shandy may also be called as “Tribal Bazaar” or “Hatt”. The tribal market is a highly imperfect one, as there exists no organized markets in tribal areas. The tribal people of these areas live in with abject poverty, low standard of living, and unhygienic conditions, unsecured from wild animals and anti-social elements etc., amidst rich natural and forest resources surrounding them. Their marketing habits and practices are so antiquated that they are unable to realize a fair value for their produce owing to exploitation of more enlightened trading community. The tribals mostly grow food crops and the produce is mainly used for domestic consumption. Besides this, they collect minor forest produce (M.F.P) like Tamarind, |Addaleaf, Soapnuts, Myrobalams, and Nuxvomica, which

have got a high commercial value. These products are also sold in tribal shandies, which are organized on a particular day of every week at respective locations nearer to the tribal habitats. The tribal shandies are held in the road side or open or under groves beside the road at various centrally located areas of the tribal villages. This study has been conducted with main objective of finding out the role of tribal shandies in tribal markets while exploring the present scenario of Indian Rural Market Panorama.

Key Words: *Srikakulam, Tribal Shandy, Human Conglomerate, M.F.P., G.C.C.*

I. Introduction:

Srikakulam District has been the starting district of A.P. on the East Coast with lot of tribal population and forest area. In the arena of Rural Markets the tribal shandies are an integral part. The word “Shandy” is applied to a place of human conglomerate both in rural as well as urban habitat. Shandy may also be called as “Tribal Bazaar” or

“Hatt”. The tribal market is a highly imperfect one, as there exists no organized markets in tribal areas. The tribal people of these areas live in with abject poverty, low standard of living, and unhygienic conditions, unsecured from wild animals and anti-social elements etc., amidst rich natural and forest resources surrounding them. Their marketing habits and practices are so antiquated that they are unable to realize a fair value for their produce owing to exploitation of more enlightened trading community. The tribals mostly grow food crops and the produce is mainly used for domestic consumption. Besides this, they collect minor forest produce (M.F.P) like Tamarind, |Addaleaf, Soapnuts, Myrobalams, and Nuxvomica, which have got a high commercial value. These products are also sold in tribal shandies, which are organized on a particular day of every week at respective locations nearer to the tribal habitats. The tribal shandies are held in the road side or open or under groves beside the road at various centrally located areas of the tribal villages. This study has been conducted with main objective of finding out the role of tribal shandies in tribal markets while exploring the present scenario of Indian Rural Market Panorama.

II. Need for the Study:

Marketing occurs only when people want to satisfy their needs and wants through the exchange process. The word “market” indicates a place or geographical area. Marketers should deliver

value for money in the process of carrying out their marketing function. According to Philip Kotler “Marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering and exchanging products of value with others.” Among the tribal forest regions, A.P. stands as a major state, and there is an immense need to study the shandy operations. For this purpose only, this study has been undertaken. Along with M.F.P., non-M.F.P., durable and non – durable consumer goods are also being traded in the tribal shandies. Due to this, variations in demand and supply for these products take place in the market. Both branded and un –branded goods are also traded here. A continuous change in the culture of society also influence the tribal habitats, which further made a shift in tribal culture, beliefs, attitudes and living situations.

“Shandy” a word of unknown origin, literally means beer mixed with lemonade or ginger beer. Because of the fact that a number of varieties of beers or their mixtures predominantly take part in the trade activities of the rural habitat, on specified week days, along with other forest .products, the word “Shandy” is applied to a place of human conglomerate both in rural as well as urban habitat. In other words, shandy may also be called as “Tribal Bazaar” or “Hatt”.

III. Objectives of the Study: The different objectives behind the study are:

1. To find out the nature of tribal markets;

2. To observe the scope of the tribal markets in the Indian Rural Market Scenario
3. To understand the culture of the tribal shandies under tribal markets;
4. To suggest the linkages to be established with the rural market environment in an effective manner.

IV. Methodology of the Study:

The study is purely descriptive and the data is both primary and secondary in nature. The primary data has been collected through the personal visits to the shandies and discussion with randomly selected people visiting the shandies. The secondary data has been obtained from books, journals and websites of different tribal marketing agencies.

V. Limitations of the Study:

1. This study has been configured to the extent of the tribal shandies of Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh only.
2. The study has been confined to the extent of personal observations and discussions with the visitors of the shandies.
3. The study is also limited to the extent of the availability of the time and infrastructural facilities at the tribal shandies.

VI. Data Analysis and Interpretation :

The shandy is not a mere place for trade, but also a spot for relationship building, carrying of information on marriage-talks. It has been observed that a gradual change in the civilization and culture

of the tribals, as compared to that of the past. They are using almost all the modern products like ready – made garments, shoes and chappals, cosmetic products, wrist watches or even cell phones etc. They speak a different language, which is very close to Oriya, along with local dialect i.e. Telugu. The total shandy time is based upon the entry and exit of the tribals to the shandy. It may last to a few hours and in general may extend up to three to four hours. While leaving the shandy, the tribals take away the necessary items for entire week. They purchase these goods with the money available to them, through the sale of their produce or as an exchange. Both the barter system and monetary system have been witnessed in the shandy. While returning to their houses they purchase finally tobacco, meat and fish and consume the abkari products.

Generally, the entire family visits the shandy. The buyers usually are tribals. They not only buy the necessary household goods, but also sell their local produce, which are brought to the shandy on head – loads. As per the information gathered through observations include Most of them are illiterates, They visit the shandy every week, They attend at least two shandies in a week, They visit the shandy with all the members of the family, with their produce on their heads, They are imperfect in speaking Telugu, Their travel time, to and from the shandy, is about five to eight hours from their respective tribal habitats, On an average, they earn about Rs. 400/- per week and they purchase goods

worth about Rs. 500/- to 800/-, which include the basic household necessities, They leave the shandy within two hours of their entrance to the shandy, so that they can reach their tribal habitat before sunset.

The tribals mostly grow food crops and the produce is mainly used for domestic consumption. Besides this, they collect minor forest produce (M.F.P) like tamarind, Addaleaf, Soapnuts, Myrobalams, and Nuxvomica, which have got a high commercial value. These products are also sold in tribal shandies, which are organized on a particular day of every week at respective locations nearer to the tribal habitats. The tribal shandies are held in the road side or open or under groves beside the road at various centrally located areas of the tribal villages. These shandies are a hub of business activity and are the pulse beat of the tribal economy. The importance of these market centers is such that no study of a tribal village or community could be completed without a visit to the shandy as it forms an integral part of their economic, social and cultural life. The Girijan Cooperative Corporation (G.C.C), many private traders and mediators participate in these shandies. They procure the agricultural and minor forest produce from tribals and sell the essential commodities, cosmetics, eatables etc., in turn. Almost the transactions at tribal marketing shandies form a major part of tribal marketing activity. The trading activity is continuously increasing at tribal shandies due to better transportation, communication and other facilities.

A major portion of tribal habitat consists of hilly and forest land. Tribal villages are generally found in areas away from the alluvial plains close to rivers or streams. Most villages are unequal in composition and smaller in size. Villages are often not planned at all. Considering the general features such as (1) eco-system, (2) traditional economy, (3) supernatural-beliefs and practices, the tribes can be classified into six types, such as: (1) Hunting type, (2) Collecting and gathering type, (3) Cattle – herder type, (4) Simple artisan type, (5) Hill and shifting cultivation type and (6) Industrial Urban worker type. Age-old traditional weekly markets, which have been in existence even in 21st Century, are the exchange centers of goods and services, which flow from rural to urban, urban to rural and within the rural areas. The network system of the market is very large and popular; the partners of this system are producers of agricultural products, traders of various manufacturers, artisans, and service providers, wholesale buyers facilitating agencies like transport organizations, catering agencies, monitoring and supervising organizations, local self government and other agencies. In Tribal Areas of Srikakulam, more than 80% of population is living in rural areas who sell their products in nearly weekly markets and therefore weekly market plays a major role in tribal Areas of Srikakulam.

Due to the structural reforms initiated during the last decade, the market environment has become very dynamic and there is a strong need to

analyze weekly market Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities at this crucial juncture. In India the participation of various sectors of the economy led to the gradual development of it. Particularly, the agriculture, Industrial and Service sectors are contributing heavily prior to globalization and in the Post –globalization period also. In developing economies like India, the economic growth is continuously increasing and business is ever expanding. The tribals consider shandies as their marketing centers for their purchases and sales. They not only sell their M.F.P. but also purchase so many products for their daily routine life. Hence lot of economic activity takes place through these shandies which have been contributing much to the economy.

Besides tribals, private merchants, middlemen, and agencies like Girijan Cooperative Corporation (G.C.C.) are also participating in the shandies. The M.F.P. includes natural forest products, herbal and other consumable products. The tribals daily procure these products and use some of them, and the remaining will be taken to the shandies. They sell them and purchase the needed non-M.F.P. and consumer products for their household purpose. Each tribal shandy is something different to that of the other. These shandies consists of trading in tamarind, hill – brooms, bananas etc. it has been noticed in the shandy that various products ranging from the urban markets to the minor forest produces are being traded. These products can be

categorized as Minor forest produces and Agro-Products, Livestock, Eatables, which are of instant in nature and packaged foods, Fruits and Vegetables, Decorating items and clothing , Cosmetics and toilet products, Hand – tools, ropes and wires etc, Various grocery items, Crockery and kitchenware, Fish, Meat and Abkari products, Electrical and Electronic items like cassettes bulbs, wires etc.

The merchants and mediators, who procure the items from the tribals take away the tribal produce for business purpose to their place of origin, dominate the selling operations. They sell not only semi-durable products but also items which are immediately consumable by the tribals. Besides grocery and vegetable shops, the services like tailoring, hair- cut, small hotels for refreshment, cattle sale, selling of livestock etc are also found in the shandy. The Girijan Co-operative Corporation (G.C.C.) has also set up its shandy procurement depot for procuring the tribal produce. It is also found that, the private merchants and mediators follow unscientific methods of weighing the produce in their trading. Recently some of the merchants and customers who have been participating in the shandies use the digital platform for payments, but it is very meager. This is because of the network issues, illiteracy both in general and digital nature, still having no access to the digital devices among the major tribal communities who arrive to the shandies from the remote hill areas etc. The duplication of brands still observed in the shandies

and the tribals are exploited by selling the fake and duplicate brands of products as if they are original brands.

VII. Suggestions : The following are the suggestions for more rural market connect with the Tribal Markets through the Tribal Shandies:

1. As regards the gender—wise increase of participation at shandies is concerned, male domination is clearly visible and there is an immense need to motivate and increase the female participation in both buying and selling operations in tribal shandies, which may increase the status of women in the tribal society and economy too.
2. The literacy standards are required to be increased among the tribals for making them more informative and wise, which enhances their ability to participate in the shandy operations with a rise in the personal and family income to elevate their own standard of living. In this context, the definition of Paul Mazur for marketing stands valid as marketing is the delivery of standard of living to the people.
3. The sources of income will determine the purchasing power and the economic status of the family. Here, the government and its agencies are to encourage the tribals not only to rely upon the collection of M.F.P. as a source of income but also to chose different other means available to them to generate income and employment. The agencies liken I.T.D.A. and

G.C.C. is to concentrate towards the improving the sources of income to the tribals by providing the necessary skill-set and training.

4. The infrastructural facilities available at the shandy spot are at the bare minimum level and far from satisfaction. Hence the trading authorities, who organize the shandy operations on the shandy day, are to provide the locational infrastructural support like erection of pucca-sheds, places for weightment and measurement, place of refreshment, and toilet, medical aid in the case of need and transportation facility etc.
5. As most of the commodities under M.F.P. are seasonal and the tribals do not have proper storage facilities should provide storage facilities out the shandies or never to the locations of the tribal habitats. The provision of storage facility enhances the quality of the product, stream-lines the supply and demand concern, and better price availability.
6. Finally, it may also be suggested that the procurement strategy of the G.C.C. is to be changed from time to time according to the necessity of the tribals for collecting the M.F.P. as most of the buyers who sold M.F.P. to the private merchants quoted the reason of lower price procurement by G.C.C. than the price paid by the private merchants. For this, the G.C.C. has to apply multiple strategies towards the tribals for procuring the M.F.P... Besides providing higher price to the produce sold by the tribals, the loan facility for performing

various tasks to reap-up, cultivate and collect the M.F.P., to be provided by the G.C.C. on a continuous basis. This facilitates the tribals to come out of the clutches of the private merchants and middle-men.

7. It can also be suggested that more and more opportunities are to be created to market the tribal produces across the world by protecting the M.F.P. procurers and sellers of tribal shandies through online and offline formats by the government departments and other business agencies.
8. Advertising to a major extent is to be done by specific local branding to upgrade the rural marketing scenario. The allocation of brand ambassadors' concept to the M.F.P. should also be considered such that the exposure to the outer world is increased drastically.
9. The e-commerce companies should also be involved for procurement and marketing the M.F.P. whose exposure is to the extent of global level. This scenario is to be conducted at a maximum extent such that the gross root level beneficiaries i.e. Tribals are really benefitted with maximum income realization on their produces.

Conclusion:

It can be concluded that the role of Tribal Shandies in the Indian Rural Market Scenario is significant and there is a need of more exposure on

the Tribal Shandies for better inclusion in to the Rural Market Panorama. There is a lot of scope for tapping in the rural markets in general and the tribal markets in particular, hence it needs an urgent attention by all the concerned .

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