

Tribal Weekly Markets: A Case Study of Adilabad District of Telangana



Commerce

KEYWORDS : Weekly markets, exploitation, tribals, shanthas, Girijan Cooperative Corporation

Ramavath Ravi

Assistant Professor of Commerce, Govt. Degree College Mahabubabad, Warangal district Telangana

ABSTRACT

Scheduled tribe communities lives around 18.08 percent of Adilabad district areas in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains to forest, hills and inaccessible areas. Out of many issues concerning tribals, one of the important issues i.e. marketing activities of tribals. The tribal, lives in subsistence economy, sells their marketable surplus in the weekly markets, locally known as 'Shanthas'. The present paper study the importance of weekly markets in tribal life and also study the buying and selling practices of tribals in weekly markets. It is concluded that the Adilabad district weekly markets are very big and large number of sellers and buyers will visit the Shanthas. Tribal people buy and sell their commodities in these markets. If Girijan Cooperative Corporation depots will available in weekly markets, they can also buy commodities from GCC depots. In weekly markets sellers are more commercialized it leads to the exploitation of the tribals. They are not only cheating on price, but also in the weights and measures used. In these markets sellers are offering urban made products which are low quality products. These markets are not regulated by government but it will be under control private traders.

Introduction:

Article 342, of the Indian constitution defines 'Tribal Folk' as "People living in a particular place, who enter into marriage relationship among themselves, who have no specific skills in any work, traditionally or ethnically ruled by adivasi leaders, who speak any special language, have own beliefs, customs and tradition". The criteria of geographical isolation, distinctive culture, primitive traits, shyness of contact with others and economic and social backwardness, are in general, considered relevant in the definition of tribes in India. Their poverty, social and economic backwardness are highly visible in the literature.

Concept of tribe, tribal society or tribal identity requires systematic investigation as they have implications both for theory and practice including the policy-related issues.1 Many assume that the tribal society is homogeneous or undifferentiated in terms of social and economic status.2 Tribal people of India are frequently referred to as vanajati, Vanavasi, pahari, Adimjati and Anusuchit Janjati. All these different names denote them as castes of forests, inhabitants of forests, hill dwellers. Original communities, first settlers, folk people, primitive people or schedule tribe respectively. Among all these terms, Adivasi is known most extensively and Anusuchit janjati or Scheduled tribe³ and the Constitutional Constituted as Scheduled Tribe.

The district derives its name from Adilabad, its headquarters town which was named after the ruler of Bijapur, Ali Adil Shah. The district was for long not a homogenous unit and its component parts were ruled at different periods by nasties namely, the Mauryas, Staavahanas, Vakatakas, Chaludyas of Badami, Rashtrakututs, Chalukyays of Kalyani, Mughals, Bhosle Rajes of Nagpur and Asaf Jahis, besides the Gond Rajas of Sirpur and Chanda. Originally this was not fully fledged district but a sub-district named Sirpur-Tandur which was created in A.D. 1872 with Edlabad (Adilabad), Rajura and Sirpur as its constituent's talukas. In 1905 the status of this sub-district was raised to that of an independent district with head quarters at Adilabad.

The district was situated between 77.46' and 80.01', of the eastern longitudes and 18.40' and 19.56', of northern latitudes. The district is situated on the northern boundary of Telangana, forming a border with the Yavatmal and Chandrapur districts of Maharashtra on the north, east and western borders and Nizamabad and Karimnagar districts of Telangana on the southern border. The District Compris-

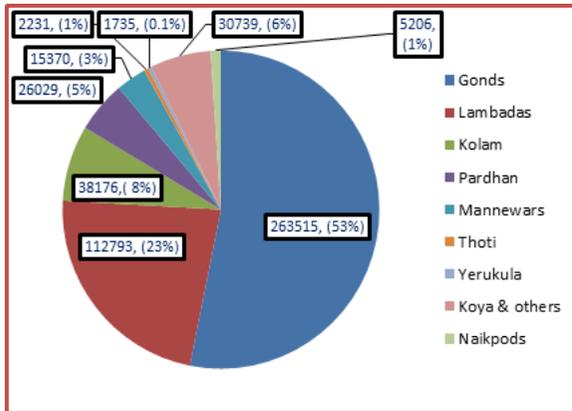
es of 52 Mandals and 1743 villages of which 1557 villages are inhabited and 186 villages are un-inhabited. There are 7 Municipalities in the District. The District is conveniently formed into 5 Revenue Divisions as follows: Adilabad, Nirmal, Uttoor, Asifabad and Mancherial.

According to 2011 Census, Adilabad had population of 2,741,239 of which male and female were 1,369,597 and 1,371,642 respectively. Out of the total population of the district, 4.89 lakhs persons are Scheduled Castes and 4.96 lakhs persons are Scheduled Tribes forming 17.82% and 18.08% of the total population district respectively. The district literacy rate is 61.01 percent. The literacy rate among the SCs and STs are 58.46 per cent and 51.49 per cent⁴. Some of the tribals groups like Gonds, Lambadas, Kolams, Mannewars, inhabit Adilabad. Hence it can be ascertained that Adilabad is essentially a rural district with vast forest cover and tribal populations. Majority of tribals depend on agriculture and forest resource for their livelihood. In this present study Adilabad district is selected, because of second highest tribal population district in Telangana State.

Tribals in Adilabad: The tribal area of the district is endowed with rich minerals, forest and water resources. Coal, Limestone, Iron and Clay are the important minerals found in the tribal areas of the district. The soils of the scheduled area are Clay loams and clay under black soils, Sandy loams, under red soils. The texture of the soil differs from mandal to mandal. The mineral resources of Adilabad are being exploited in commercial way.

The scheduled areas of the District are covered with rich forest, wealth on which the tribal depend for, fuel, house building materials, and agricultural implements etc. for their livelihood. During lean period, they depend on roots, tubers, bark, flowers, fruits and leaves etc., which are abundantly available in forests. Thus, the dietary items of tribal families mainly consist of leafy vegetables, fruits, etc. which are having high nutrition value. Minor forest produce is available throughout the scheduled area. Collection of minor forest produce is one of the secondary sources of livelihood to the tribals, the necessity of which includes addaleaf, tamarind, gum, mohwa flowers, soap nuts, cleaning nuts, hill brooms, etc. The major forest produce like teak, bamboo etc. are also available in the forest area of the scheduled area. The composition of the tribal of Adilabad district as estimated in the ITDA Report is as follows:

Figure 1.1
Composition of Tribals in Adilabad district of Telangana
(as per 2011 census)



Source: Integrated Tribal Development Agency Uttoor, Adilabad

Important tribes are Gonds, Kolams, Pardhans, Naikpods, Koyas, Mannewars, Andhs, Lambadas and Thoties. The Gonds and Lambadas are predominant among the tribes and constitute about 76% of the tribal population. The Kolams, Mannewars (Telugu speaking Kolams) and Thoties belongs to the Primitive Tribal Groups (PTG).

Weekly Markets/Haat Bazaar/Shanthas

Out of many issues concerning tribals, the present study was selected one of the important issues i.e. marketing activities of tribals. The tribal, living in subsistence economy, sells his marketable surplus in the weekly markets, locally known as ‘shanthas’. But unfortunately, the tribal were unaware of the marketing intelligence due to lack of adequate information and exposure, falls an easy prey to the powerful segment of non-tribal tradesmen in the ‘shanthas’. The traders are increasing commercialization, they feel, is leading to the exploitation of the tribal people. They are cheated not only on price, but also in the weights and measures used (traders still use the unreliable spring balance). Traders exploit their innocence and illiteracy. As a consequence they get a low return from their marketable surplus and fail to meet all his basic wants. While purchasing of goods of other traders, tribals are exploited in terms of absence of standard weight and measures or their improper use, and sale of low cost goods at higher prices etc.

The working of the marketing system in the tribal area, thus, appear to be unregulated which continues to be a dominating reason for keeping tribal economy depressed. Despite the volume of production has been increasing in some areas. But, mere increased production has no meaning unless the tribals get remunerative price for his produce in the market. Shanthas, the only marketing channel in the tribal area, do not promise such prices to tribals. They are also not equally assured of getting adequate return of their money from the purchases. Large scale presence of unscrupulous market operations in the ‘shanthas’ leaves the poor tribals fairly cheated.⁵

Weekly markets are the important assembling centers of agricultural produce and minor forest produce in rural areas and they are benefiting the farmer – sellers by way of reducing transport cost besides acting as purchasing center for seeds, food grains and household articles⁶ The weekly markets are the sole economic institutions in the rural area of the district on which tribal farmers depend for the ex-

change needs. The tribal economy of rural Adilabad is a subsistence economy, which does not support daily or permanent market place. The markets rather sit at regular intervals of seven days at particular places and for a specific period of time, which adequately meet the weekly requirements of the local people. The people usually suspend all their routine work on the ‘Weekly Markets’ days and attend the ‘markets’ many with their family member and friends. These ‘shanthas’ then became the central point for socio-cultural activities because human congregation is guaranteed at such centres. The peasant’s with for the market days when they are able to dispose of their marketable surplus and can buy what they need. They also exchange information about family functions like marriages festivals etc. with relatives and are able to enjoy the get-together. The customers their augment the utility of their time and money in market. The poor tribals are landless or the small farmers. They mostly earn their living on agricultural labour; their number is quite large in such weekly markets. They consider market visit essential to buy necessities at one place. They also frankly admit that the prices are lower in such markets than in the village shops.

Objectives of the study

To study the importance of the weekly markets in tribal life.

To identify the buying and selling practices of tribals at weekly markets in Adilabad district of Telangana state.

Selection of the Sample: - To study the Tribal of weekly Markets: A case study of Adilabad district of Telangana state a stratified random sampling technique is used to select the sample. In the present study major 4 weekly markets are to be selected under Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) and Girijan Cooperative Corporation Ltd activities covered areas of Adilabad district of Telangana. The present study 160 samples were selected from Adilabad district while giving equal importance to all the parameters. Out of 160 samples 120 are buyers’ respondents and 40 sellers’ respondents at the study area of weekly markets. The details of the sample selection as follows.

Table 1.1
Shandy wise section of respondents in field visit in Adilabad T.S.

SL. No	Name of the Shandy	Day of visit	Date of Visit	No of Sample collected		
				Buyer	Seller	Total
1	Utnoor	Sunday	20.12.2015	30	10	40
2	Indravali	Monday	21.12.2015	30	10	40
3	Shapoore	Tuesday	22.12.2015	30	10	40
4	Echoda	Monday	28.12.2015	30	10	40
Total no of respondents				120	40	160

Source: Field visit

Out of 120 buyer samples, 30 samples are selected from each weekly market. Similarly 40 sellers Samples 10 samples are drawn from each weekly market. In this present study Adilabad district is selected, because of second highest tribal population district in Telangana State.

Results and discussion

Socio-Economic characteristics of buyer

The socio-economic characteristics of the buyers of the sample shandies of Adilabad district have been discussed in the following paragraphs with a view to study their buying

habits. Generally tribals visit shanthas along with partner, because females have better ideas on domestic requirements and better bargainer's. Normally tribals buy and sell their produce at bargaining price.

Table 1.2

Table shows the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Tribal Buyers			
Socio-economic Activities	Performance	No of Respondent	Percent
Age group	Young age less than 40	42	35
	Matured age 40-60 year	50	41.7
	Old age above 60 year	28	23.3
Gender	Male	99	82.5
	Female	21	17.5
Marital Status	Married	107	89.17
	Unmarried	6	5
	Widower/widow	7	5.8
Number of children	One	22	18.3
	Two	49	40.8
	Three	28	23.3
	Four & above	21	17.5
Available Land	Yes	105	87.5
	No	15	12.5
Fuel using for cooking	Firewood	71	59.17
	Gas	21	17.5
	Gas & firewood	28	23.3
	Others	0	0
Main Occupation	Cultivation	101	84.17
	MFP collector	1	0.83
	Agriculture labour	6	5
	Employed Private/Govt.	6	5
	Others	6	5
Annual Income	Less than Rs.50000	0	0
	Rs.50001-100000	2	1.67
	Rs.100001-300000	36	30
	Above Rs 300000	82	68.3

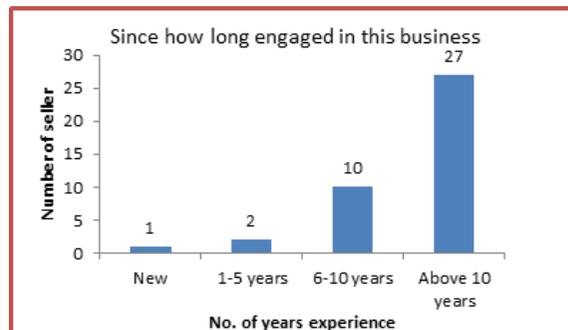
Source: Filed visit

The distribution of the respondents according to different age categories clearly indicates that the 41.67 percent are matured age i.e., (40 -60 years) belonged to an economically active age group. The 82 percent of buyers are male and 18 percent of female. The majority of tribals under study were married. The incidence of widowhood and divorce, though rare is not uncommon. Most of the tribal buyers have 2 to 3 children, and their children are going to School or College. It indicates that almost all the people are aware of the family planning and they came to know the importance of education. The 88 percent of tribals are landholders and 12 percent landless. The majority of the tribals are using firewood for cooking food and only 17 percent are using Gas. The majority of the tribals main occupation is cultivating agriculture and remaining are agriculture labourers, minor forest produce collector and few members are employees. The majority i.e., 68 percent of respondents annual income

is above Rs. 300,000/- and 30 percent of tribals under range between Rs. 100001-300000 category and only 2 percent of respondents are below Rs. 50,000/- of annual income.

Selling Practices of Seller: Sellers are the most important components forming the central level of the mechanism of weekly markets; in fact, they are the controllers of the periodic marketing system. The gathering of large number of individual sellers in a market always invites potential customers; the greater the gathering, the more people are interested to join it, if for no other reason than just to see for themselves what is going on to attract people in the first instance to gather together.

Figure 1.2



Source: Field visit

The figure 1.2 exhibits that the period of engagement of the business by the sellers attending shandies. It indicates that about 68 percent of sellers are engaging in business since 10 years. The sellers are engaged in business since 6-10 years are found to be 25 percent. It can be observed that 5 percent of the sellers are engaging in this business between 1-5 years of experience. It can observe that only 2 percent of sellers are entering in new business. It is concluded that the majority of the sellers are well experienced and it is primary income source to them. They are not interested to continue the business with their children in the future.

Table 1.3
Sellers Procure of stock

Procure the stock	Number of sellers	Percent
Marketable surplus of own production	7	17.5
Purchase from Producer/wholesaler of the same shandy/village	3	7.5
Purchase from Producer/wholesaler of other shandy/village	4	10
Urban Markets	26	65
Total	40	100

The selling traders get the supplies of their stock normally from four sources. Viz own production, same shandy at wholesale rate, other shandies or villages and urban wholesale market. The table 1.3 indicates that the largest number of selling traders i.e. 65 percent depend upon the urban wholesale markets for the supplies of their stock. Sellers who depend on their own production, which accounts to 17.5 per cent, follow it. About 7.5 per cent of sellers procure their stock from same shandy at wholesale price and 10 per cent of sellers receive their merchandise from other shandies or villages. Most of the traders buying from urban markets reported that the smaller and immediate supplier

is depended on nearby small towns like Utnoor, Adilabad, Mancheri and Nirmal etc.

In this present study (04) four major tribal shanthas are selected out of 23 shanthas, which are listed by Girijan Cooperative Corporation in Adilabad district of Telangana State. The brief review about the selected shanthas as follows.

Utnoor Weekly Market

About 90 percent of the population in Utnoor is identified as tribal people. The forest based economy is vibrant in and around Utnoor. Tribal groups include Gonds, Lambadas, Naikpod, Pardhan etc. The area has rich natural forest consisting of tamarind, jack custard, lemon cleaning nut, karaka Kanuga, gum and bamboo etc. Around 6000 to 8000 buyers and 300 to 400 sellers are visiting markets in each weekly market. In Utnoor weekly market start business at morning and it remain open till evening. The seller comes from various places of Adilabad, Maharashtra state and nearby villages. At morning hours sellers made temporary sheds or using umbrella and arrange their items properly to attractive manner. In this shandy different variety of items are offering to sells like vegetable, kirana stores, cosmetics, spices, bamboo products etc. Buyers will come after 10 AM onwards to till evening. After completion of their trading they return back to their respective villages. The peak hours of the shandy are 2-5 PM. The seller pay nominal fee to Local Gram Panchayat for using shandy place. In this shandy Girijan Cooperative Corporation (GCC) started super market. It is offering commodities similarity to private super markets at lesser price when compared to private shops. Some of the sellers came Maharashtra State; they sell specially bakery items, old dresses, onions, ginger and garlic etc

Indraveli Weekly Market

In Indraveli market located between Adilabad and Utnoor main road. It is a very big shandy as compared with Utnoor, Shapoor and Echoda markets in the Adilabad district. Around 8000 to 12000 buyers and 400 to 600 sellers are visiting markets in each weekly market. The business start at morning and it remains open till evening. The peak hour of business is between 2-5 PM. We observed that the most of the tribals of this area are hunting the forest animals and sell at shandy get money from hunting. In this shandy Telugu speaking people is very less number. They speak gonds, Marathi, Urdu etc. In this market a few of the respondents are cattle trading also available.

Echoda Weekly Market

The villages in Echoda mandal in Adilabad district of Telangana State. It is located 34 Kms towards south from district headquarter. Echoda consist of 72 villages and 19 Panchayat and Telugu is the local language and also speak Urdu. Echoda market is covering around 10-40 kms radius villages. Approximately 8000 buyers and 400 sellers are visiting this market. They buyers come by Bus, Auto Rickshaws and few of them by walk. In these market cattle markets are part of weekly market (i.e., buying and selling of cattle). An estimated 2000 to 5000 animals are traded for slaughter in the weekly market.

Shapoor shandy

Shapoor village is located in thick and remote forest area of Adilabad district, majority of population is tribals. The majority of the tribals are gonds. They will visit shandy from surrounding villages of shapoor. Around 1200 buyers and 80 sellers are visiting this shandy. This shandy starts at afternoon and it remains open till evening but peak hours of the business are 3-5 PM only. Most of the buyers come to shandy by walk only. Vendors will attend from different towns such Adilabad, Nirmal, Utnoor and nearby villages.

Local sellers are offering vegetable, bamboo products, and tamarind, etc.

Conclusion

Adilabad district is far away from the development and people are still using traditional methods for cultivation. Tribal population constitutes 18.08 percent of the total population of district. Tribals mainly depends on agriculture cultivation; under this cultivation, shifting cultivation is extensively practiced on hill and slope areas, and tribals also collects minor forest produce, rearing of animals, hunting, making bamboo products and labour works. The tribal women's lives' their life shoulders to shoulder on equal with the males sharing in all the work. Most of the tribal men drink country liquor (gudumba) and toddy, but rarely, they take bottled liquor. Most of the tribal males and females smoke and chew tobacco, gutkha, pan etc. They lives far away from the towns and also they don't have proper transportation & marketing facilities to their villages. So, they completely depend on weekly markets for selling and buying of commodities and also social interaction. Therefore, weekly markets are more essential to tribals' life for their selling and buying of products. The weekly markets have been developed for providing opportunities to the rural people to dispose their produce and to satisfy their limited demands.

In Adilabad district weekly markets are very big and large number of sellers and buyers will visit the shanthas. If GCC depots are available in weekly markets then they can also buy commodities from GCC depots. In weekly markets sellers are more commercialized it leads to the exploitation of the tribals. They are not only cheating on price, but also in the weights and measures used. In these markets sellers are offering urban made products which are low quality products. These markets are not regulated by government but it will be under control of the private traders. At the ending time of the market the sellers supposes to leave the shandy, he/she sells his product at lesser price as compared to earlier hour's sales price, because he/she doesn't want to carry the balance products without selling. Therefore, the buyers and sellers both will be benefited. This is win-win situation. It is concluded that the majority of the sellers are well experienced and it is primary income source to them. They are not interested to continue the business with their children in the future.

The Girijan Cooperative Corporation (GCC) Ltd was set up in 1979 in Adilabad district provided to the tribal people for marketing assistance at remunerative prices for their minor forest produce and agriculture produce in order to protect them from exploitative private traders and middlemen. But still the tribal people prefer the weekly markets.

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