



Received: 29-12-2022
Accepted: 09-02-2023

International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

A Study on Consumers Awareness in Rythu Bazars with Reference to Andhra Pradesh

¹Mubeen Taj, ²Dr. Isac Gunday, ³MK Navya, ⁴Mahabub Basha

¹ Assistant Professor, Department of Management, HKBK Degree College, Bangalore, India

² Assistant Professor, Mohan Babu University, Andhra Pradesh, India

³ MBA, Koshys Institute of Management Studies, Bangalore, India

⁴ Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, IIBS, Bangalore, India

Corresponding Author: **Mahabub Basha**

Abstract

During the last more than a decade, Rythu Bazaars have gained prominence and both farmers and consumers have shown interest in selling and purchasing vegetables at these market yards. This paper analysis the consumer awareness and preferences of the vegetable buyers and make them available to farmers so that they can take appropriate decisions regarding the marketing strategies to be implemented in Rythu Bazars in Andhra Pradesh. Consumers feel that Rythu Bazar is the most affordable and

accessible market where all the vegetables and grocery items are available in one place. These markets are being run and organised by Government officials to eliminate the intermediaries and facilitate the farmers with marketing information to sell their produce directly to consumers. Study found that majority of the customers aware about supporting the cause of local farmers and variety of products.

Keywords: Rythu Bazars, Grocery Items, Consumer Awareness and Markets

1. Introduction

It is common knowledge that inefficiencies in the wholesale markets result in a long chain of intermediaries, multiple handling, loss of quality, which increase the gap between the price at which the consumer purchases his vegetables and the price that the grower gets. Large number of small retailers, each handling small quantities, create high overheads leading to high price. The state government of Andhra Pradesh, therefore decided on working towards the creation of a market where both growers and consumers get benefitted. Thus, Rythu Bazaars were established.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh started Rythu Bazaar in 1999 with the principal objective of helping farmers bring and sell their produce without the involvement of any middleman or marketing intermediary. Both farmers and consumers get benefitted with direct marketing as it helps ensure higher remuneration for the farmers and provides fresh vegetables at cheaper rates to the consumers. The usefulness of direct marketing at Rythu Bazaars is increased by the Andhra Pradesh Agricultural Marketing Department providing facilities like weighing scales for proper weighing, transportation, stalls for the farmers operating from these market yards. These market yards operate outside the purview of the Agriculture Market Committees and are managed by Estate Officers (administrative in charge of Rythu Bazaars) under the control of Revenue Department of the Andhra Pradesh State Government.

Rythu Bazaars are located in government plots convenient to farmers as well as consumers. Built on a minimum one-acre vacant land, the infrastructure provided by the government included sheds, arrangements for supply of drinking water, toilets with sanitation facility, parking for vehicles, arrangements for removal of garbage and cleaning of market by local body, facility for storage of unsold produce, provisions of weighing scales for all farmers, telephone, fax etc.

The state government of Andhra Pradesh meets all the capital expenditure which varies according to the land prices prevailing in an area. At present, market yards are mostly set up by the State Governments. For setting up of agricultural markets, funds are sourced from NABARD. Apart from developing the market yards, free supply of weighing machines and free transport of vegetables to the farmers' market in selected Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation run buses is also provided to the farmers. Horticultural services and seed supply at subsidized rates also benefit the farmers. Every Rythu Bazaar has an Estate Officer, Assistant Estate Officers, supervisors, night watchman, office boys, and sweepers. When the farmers enter into a Rythu Bazaar, the vegetables brought by them are weighed correctly and then the quantity is entered in a register which is

later put up on the Rythu Bazaar website. The farmers' therefore do not lose on account of faulty weighing practices. For the consumers also, vegetables are weighed accurately and they receive the vegetables at a price which is about 15% lower than the supermarkets.

2. Review of Literature

Wolf (1997) in a case study examined responses of consumers to compare the profile of farmers' market shoppers to those who do not shop at farmers' markets. Examination of the demographic profile of consumers of farmers' market indicates that they are more likely to be female, married, and have completed post-graduate work. There was no difference observed concerning age, income levels, and employment status between farmers' market shoppers and farmers' market non shoppers.

J Italia *et al* (1998) looked at the resurgence of farmers' markets in New Jersey which allowed farmers to capture a more significant share of the consumers' food expenditure thus increasing their profitability, while the consumers' need for fresh, high-quality commodities as well as for farm-based recreational experiences are met.

Trobe (2001) studied the potential benefits of marketing food directly from producers to consumers, and hence circumventing the 'middlemen' in the food supply chain. This qualitative study concluded that both farmers and consumers had accrued profits. Consumers get locally grown, fresh, healthy, and, in many cases, organic food at affordable prices, while producers get more value of their produce.

Daniel (2005) undertook a study to assess the market participation and the impact it had on the economic front. The method adopted was based on the survey of a large number of consumers (4500) and vendors (780). The findings regarding consumer and vendor characteristics reveal opportunities for increased marketing toward certain

participants. Evidence from the study suggested that targeting of urban consumers and participants approaching retirement age as well the development of new strategies to attract younger consumers. The study also indicated that these markets were an important place for rural producers and urban consumers to come together to exchange goods and information.

Santhisree (2022) Rythu bazaars undoubtedly serve lakhs of farmers and consumers with its excellent organisation by government officials. However, there are some complaints in these markets regarding the sellers' violation of the prices fixed on the board, unhygienic conditions, and insufficient parking facilities. These issues are to be appropriately and timely and should be attended to by the officials and strengthen the online facility of price display and control the prices.

2.1 Objectives

- The main objective of the research is to analyze the consumer awareness in Rythubazars in Andhra Pradesh.

3. Research Methodology

This study is based on survey method. Data has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. For collecting primary data, a sample of 107 regular purchasers of vegetables at Rythu bazaars from all over Andhra Pradesh, was selected through convenience sampling method. A structured questionnaire was prepared and administered among the consumers to collect the primary data. The data has been collected by interviewing the selected consumers with the help of questionnaires at Rythu Bazaars. Secondary data is collected from Newspapers, Journals, and Magazines and through informal discussion with officials of the department concerned.

3.1 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Data Analysis and Interpretation

Variable	Measure	Frequency	%	Variable	Measure	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	76	71	Age in years	Below 30	18	16.8
	Female	31	29		30-40	57	53.3
Education qualification	Graduate	79	73.8		40-50	24	22.4
	Non graduate	10	9.3		Above 50	8	7.5
	Post graduate	18	16.8	Occupation	Student	18	16.8
Marital status	Single	26	24.3		Employed	29	27.1
	Married	81	75.7		Others	60	56.1
Total				Annual income (Rs. In Lakhs)	Below 2	18	16.8
					2-5	29	27.1
					5-10	34	31.7
					Not applicable	26	4.2
					Total	107	100

Source: Computed own

From the above table 1, it is found that 71% are male and 29% of female consumers. It is also observed that 79% are having post graduate as their education qualification. Then, it is found that 57% of rythu bazars consumers fall in the

age group below 30 to 40 years. Annual income of 5 to 10 lakhs falls into 31.7% and followed by 27.1% in 2 to 5 lakhs.

3.2 Reliability Test

Table 2: Reliability Test

Variables	No. of Statement	Alpha
Quality of the products at rythu bazaars	4	0.882
Friendly atmosphere	4	0.856
Price at rythu bazaars	5	0.904
Variety of vegetables	4	0.819
Consistence of availability	4	0.921
Convince purchase	4	0.788
Parking facility	5	0.819
Accessibility of rythubazaars	5	0.887

In table 2 the Cronbach's alpha reliability test was used to assess the questionnaire's internal consistency, which measures how closely the questions and variables are related to one another. The results show that the study's measurement is reliable because the alpha values are equal to or greater than 0.70, so it is accepted (Goodboy *et al.*, 2020).

3.3 Consumers Awareness on Rythu Bazaar

Table 3: Consumers Awareness on Rythu Bazaar on various Aspects

Consumers Awareness	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Total
Quality of the vegetables	72.5	20	7.5	7	107
Friendly atmosphere	37.5	42.5	27	0	107
Availability of Variety	27.5	35	42	2.5	107
Supporting the cause of local farmers	12	22.5	72.5	0	107
Convince purchase	22	60	17.5	7.5	107

The table shows that a maximum of the respondents (72.5%) opined that the Consumers Awareness on the Quality of the vegetables of the rythubazaar is just satisfactory. The Consumers Awareness on the Friendly atmosphere by the rythubazaar is good (42.5%) and satisfactory (37.5%). The Consumers Awareness on Availability of Variety is high at good (35%) and very good (35%). The Consumers Awareness for the variety of products is excellent (72.5%), and the Consumers Awareness for supporting the cause of local farmers at good (60%). The Consumers Awareness lies between satisfactory and very good

4. Conclusion

It is this "Value addition to the Agricultural products" that will build every firm rural base for a stable growth in the economy by exploring the local market itself. The government should take adequate measures to educate both farmers and consumers about farmers' markets and explain them the benefits of participating in the mutual exchange process. Local administration should also enlighten the farmers to acquaint themselves with the latest marketing strategies and help them become efficient and self-sufficient farmers. The infrastructure of the rythu bazaars must be accessible to the customers groups, setting the rythu bazaars at convince place, especially in the centre of public dwellings. Makes it cost advantage on the overall purchase and transportation cost. It is highly difficult to inculcate attitude among the sellers at rythu bazaars. However, sellers start realizing serving customers will lead to repeated purchase, the attitude can be built up over a period of time.

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