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### Consumer buying behaviour in the weekly markets of Kondagaon District, Chhattisgarh

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#### Abstract

The buying behaviour of consumers in the weekly markets of a tribal area, highlighting their central role in the local economy and social life. The research, based on primary data from 180 respondents, reveals that the typical consumer is a middle-aged (31-50 years), female cultivator with primary-level education, reflecting the significant involvement of women in market activities and a livelihood dependent on land and forest resources. The majority (67.78%) visiting weekly to purchase essential goods. The most frequently purchased items are agricultural produce (65.55%) and groceries & spices (53.33%), underscoring the markets' role in fulfilling basic needs. Regression analysis identifies price and quality as the most significant factors influencing purchasing decisions, followed by product availability and convenience. In contrast, cultural, seasonal, and social factors were found to be statistically insignificant. Consumer spending is predominantly moderate, with over a third (33.88%) spending between ₹501-₹1000 monthly. While cash remains the dominant payment mode (71.11%), the persistence of barter (12.22%) signifies enduring traditional practices, alongside a nascent adoption of digital payments (10.55%). Weekly markets are vital, multi-utility hubs for tribal communities. Consumer behaviour is primarily driven by economic and functional factors, with these markets serving as crucial spaces where livelihood needs, cultural traditions, and gradual modern influences intersect.

**Keywords:** Weekly markets, tribal consumers, buying behaviour, socio-demographic, payment modes, regression analysis, rural economy

#### Introduction

Weekly markets, commonly known as haat bazaars, have long been central to the socio-economic fabric of rural and tribal regions in India. These traditional markets serve as vital platforms for the exchange of goods, social interaction, and livelihood generation. Beyond their economic importance, they embody the cultural identity and collective life of tribal communities. In regions such as the Keshkal Block of Kondagaon District, Chhattisgarh, weekly markets are not only centres of trade but also hubs of social cohesion, sustaining the local economy and promoting entrepreneurship among small and marginal farmers. Similar to findings from studies conducted in Nepal's Rupandehi District (Nepal, 2023) [8], haat bazaars play a pivotal role in ensuring food security, supporting self-employment, and fostering rural development through direct producer-to-consumer linkages. At the same time, understanding consumer buying behaviour within these markets has become increasingly important. As shown in rural consumer studies (Chiru, 2017 and Verma *et al.*, 2023) [3, 1], consumer behaviour encompasses the decision-making processes individuals undergo when selecting, purchasing, using, and evaluating products and services. It is influenced by a variety of psychological, social, cultural, and economic

factors. In rural settings, these factors include price sensitivity, product quality, availability, convenience, cultural relevance, seller behaviour, and trust, all of which determine how consumers interact with market systems. Research on consumer decision-making rules and buying preferences helps to identify the determinants that influence purchasing patterns in weekly markets. Regression analysis and other statistical tools allow researchers to examine the relative importance of each factor, thereby guiding policymakers and market planners in improving market infrastructure and consumer welfare. This study is to buying behaviour of the consumers in the weekly markets.

#### Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Keshkal Block, Kondagaon District (Chhattisgarh) a tribal-dominated region with hilly terrain and forest-based livelihoods. Weekly markets (haats) serve as key centres for economic and social exchange. Research Design and Sampling - A descriptive and exploratory research design was adopted. Six major weekly markets Arandi, Bahigaon, Bedma, Dhanora, Kanagaon, and Keshkal were purposively selected. A total of 180 respondents (buyers) were surveyed to understand consumer behaviour.

**Data Collection** Primary data were gathered through structured questionnaires, personal interviews, and field observations, while secondary data came from government records and published literature. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics (percentages, means, frequencies) and regression analysis to identify factors influencing consumer buying behaviour.

## Results and Discussion

### Socio Demographic Characteristics of Tribal Consumers

**Table 1:** The Socio Demographic Characteristics

Factor /Activates	Performance	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Age group	17 - 30	48	26.66%
	31 - 50	97	53.85%
	50 +	35	19.49%
Gender	Male	77	42.78%
	Female	103	57.23%
Main Occupation	Cultivator	82	45.55%
	MEP collector	38	21.11%
	Agriculture labourers	31	17.22%
	Govt. employed	15	8.33%
	Others	14	7.77%
Education Level	Illiterate	41	22.77%
	Primary	74	41.11%
	Secondary	45	25.00%
	Higher	20	11.11%
Language	Hindi	31	17.22%
	Chhattisgarhi	82	45.55%
	Gondi	45	25.00%
	Halbi	22	12.00%

**Source:** Primary data

The table 1. shows the data shows that the majority of consumers in weekly markets belong to the 31-50 age group (53.85%), indicating that middle-aged individuals are the most active participants. In terms of gender, females (57.23%) are more involved in market activities than males, suggesting a significant role of women in local trade and consumption. Regarding occupation, cultivators (45.55%) form the largest group, followed by MEP (Minor Forest Produce) collectors (21.11%) and agricultural labourers (17.22%), highlighting the dependence on land and forest-based livelihoods.

In education, the highest percentage of respondents have primary education (41.11%), while 22.77% are illiterate, reflecting moderate literacy levels in the area. Language data shows that Chhattisgarhi (45.55%) is the most spoken language, followed by Gondi (25%), pointing to the cultural-linguistic identity of the tribal population.

### Frequency of Weekly Market Visits

According to the study, the table no. 2 and fig.1 reveals that frequency with which consumers visit the weekly market. a significant majority of respondents 67.78%, referred that they visit the market every week, indicating a strong dependence on weekly markets for purchasing daily necessities such as Food, Groceries, Forest produce and household items. Around 20% of the respondents visit the market once in 15 days, reflecting a moderately regular buying pattern, possible due to availability of goods at home, distance, or limited cash flow. Meanwhile 12.22%

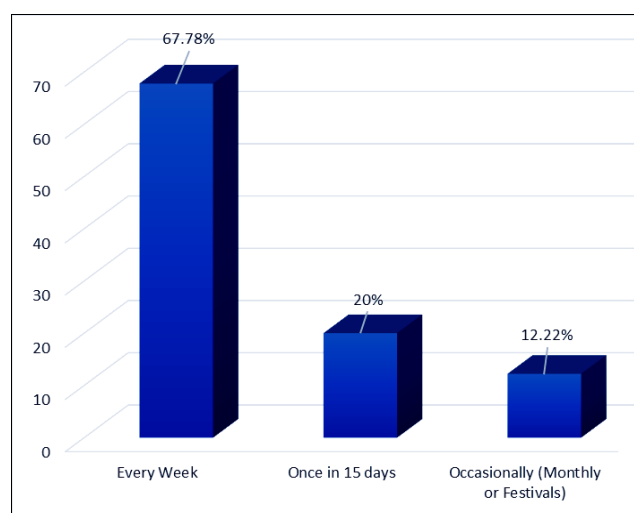
visit the market occasionally, such as during Festival of Special events showing a more selective of behaviour.

The results clearly demonstrate that weekly markets are integral to the economic and social life of tribal households, with weekly visits being the dominant trend. The dependence on these markets also underscores their importance as a sustainable local distribution system in rural and tribal regions, where access to modern retail or permanent shops is limited.

**Table 2:** Frequency of Market Visits

Frequency of Visit	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
Every Week	122	67.78
Once in 15 days	36	20.00
Occasionally	22	12.22
Total	180	100

**Source:** Primary data



**Fig 1:** Frequency percentage in weekly market visit

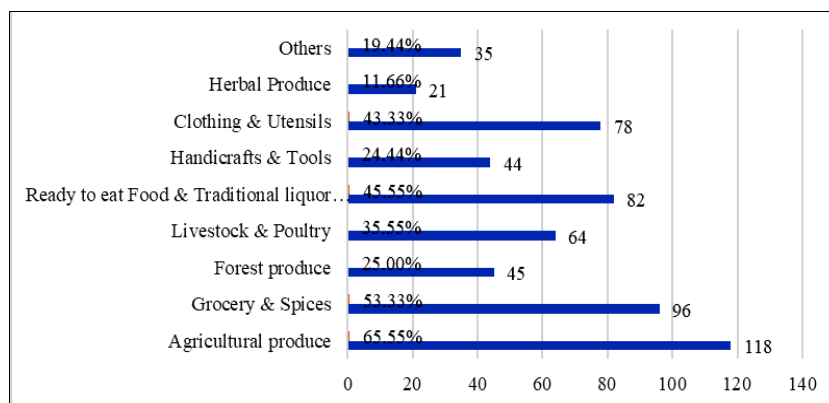
### Type of Goods purchased by Respondents

According to the study, the table no. 3 and fig. 2 reveals that the most purchased items by consumers in the weekly markets are agricultural produce 65.5% followed by grocery and spices 53.3 which indicates that basic food and kitchen needs are the top priorities for rural tribal consumers. a significant portion also buys ready-to-eat food and traditional liquor 45.5% reflecting the cultural and social role of weekly markets as not just economic but also communal gathering spaces. Clothing and utensils 43.3% and livestock poultry 35.5% also form important purchases showing that weekly markets are multi-utility spaces catering to both household needs and livelihood investments. other product categories such as forest produce 25% handicrafts tools 24.4% and herbal produce 11.6% indicate selective but culturally relevant consumption patterns the others category 19.4% may include mobile accessories or miscellaneous goods showing a small but growing modern demand. the Findings demonstrate that weekly market in study areas serve as multi-dimensional economic hubs, catering simultaneously to basic survival needs, cultural practices and evolving modern demands. this under sources there continued importance in rural tribal life as space of livelihood, Culture, and gradual social economy transformation.

**Table 3:** Type of Goods purchased by Respondents (n=180)

Type of product	No. of respondents	Percentage%
Agricultural produce	118	65.55%
Grocery & Spices	96	53.33%
Forest produce	45	25.00%
Livestock & Poultry	64	35.55%
Ready to eat Food & Traditional liquor (Mahua, Rice beer)	82	45.55%
Handicrafts & Tools	44	24.44%
Clothing & Utensils	78	43.33%
Herbal Produce	21	11.66%
Others	35	19.44%

Source: Primary data

**Fig 2:** Type of Goods Purchased by Respondents

### Factors Influencing Buying Behaviour in Weekly Markets

The buying behaviour of tribal consumers is essential to assess how weekly markets function as a core economic institution. Various personal, social, cultural, and economic

factors influence consumer decisions in rural weekly markets. This finds and explains the major factors that influence consumer buying behaviour based on primary data collected from weekly markets.

**Table 4:** Factors influencing buying behaviour Regression Results

Factor	$\beta$ (Coefficient)	t-value	p-value	Result
Price	0.42	5.25	0	Strongest influence
Quality	0.35	3.88	0	Highly significant
Availability	0.28	2.8	0.006	Significant
Seller Behaviour	0.21	1.91	0.058	Marginal
Cultural Relevancy	0.18	1.5	0.136	Not significant
Convenience & Access	0.22	2.2	0.029	Significant
Seasonal Influence	0.12	1.1	0.273	Not significant
Recommendations	0.15	1.15	0.254	Not significant
Gender Preferences	0.08	0.67	0.505	Not significant

$R^2 = 0.68 \rightarrow$  Model 68% variation explain

The regression analysis was conducted to identify the major factors influencing consumer buying behaviour ( $N = 180$ ). The model yielded an  $R^2$  value of 0.68, which means that 68% of the variation in buying behaviour is explained by the independent factors considered in the study. Price ( $\beta = 0.42$ ,  $t = 5.25$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) emerged as the strongest and most significant factor influencing buying behaviour. Quality ( $\beta = 0.35$ ,  $t = 3.88$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) also showed a highly significant effect, confirming that consumers value product quality in their purchase decisions. Availability ( $\beta = 0.28$ ,  $t = 2.80$ ,  $p = 0.006$ ) and Convenience & Accessibility ( $\beta = 0.22$ ,  $t = 2.20$ ,  $p = 0.029$ ) were found to be statistically significant, suggesting that ease of access and timely availability are key contributors to consumer choices. Seller Behaviour ( $\beta = 0.21$ ,  $t = 1.91$ ,  $p = 0.058$ ) showed a marginal effect,

indicating that seller's attitude may influence buying decisions but not at a statistically strong level. On the other hand, Cultural Relevancy, Seasonal Influence, Recommendations & Trust, and Gender Preferences were not statistically significant ( $p > 0.05$ ), meaning that they do not have a considerable impact on consumer buying behaviour in this context. The findings highlight that economic and functional factors (Price, Quality, Availability, and Convenience) dominate consumer buying behaviour, while social and cultural factors play a limited role in this study area. Price and Quality: Consumers in rural and tribal markets are highly sensitive to price and product quality. This aligns with previous studies that suggest affordability and durability are crucial in low- to middle-income consumer groups. Availability and Convenience:

The significance of these factors suggests that accessibility of products at the right time and place is essential. This may be due to limited infrastructure and fewer shopping alternatives in rural areas. Seller Behaviour: Although seller interaction is important, the marginal significance indicates that it is secondary compared to core product-related attributes. Cultural and Seasonal Factors: This may be because modern consumer choices are becoming more rational and less dependent on traditions or seasonal cycles. Trust and Gender Preferences: These factors did not emerge as influential, which could be due to increasing exposure to diverse markets and reduced gender bias in purchase decisions.

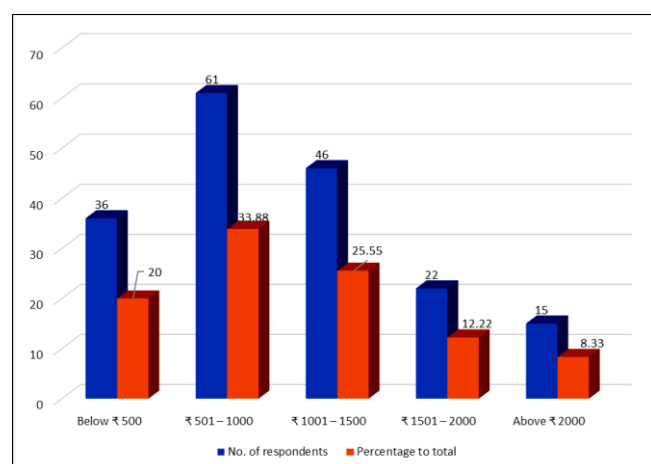
### Average Spending in Weekly Markets

According to the study, the table no. 5 and fig. 3 data reveals that the majority of consumers (33.8%) spend between ₹501 and ₹1000 weekly in weekly markets, indicating moderate but consistent expenditure on essential items. weekly Markets. About 25.5% of respondents spend ₹1001-₹1500, suggesting that a quarter of households have slightly higher purchasing power. A notable 20% spend less than ₹500, reflecting limited income and basic consumption. only 12.2% spend between ₹1501-₹2000 and 8.3% spend above ₹2000, likely due to better economic status or larger family needs. This distribution shows that weekly markets are central to household consumption, catering mostly to low and middle-income groups in tribal areas. The results highlight that weekly markets serve as a primary consumption platform for low and middle-income groups in tribal areas. Most consumers spend less than ₹1500 per month, which reflects both limited purchasing capacity and the fact that households often supplement their needs through subsistence farming, livestock, and forest produce collection.

**Table 5: Average Spending in Weekly Markets**

Weekly spending (in ₹)	No. of respondents	Percentage to total
Below ₹ 500	36	20.00
₹ 501 - 1000	61	33.88
₹ 1001 - 1500	46	25.55
₹ 1501 - 2000	22	12.22
Above ₹ 2000	15	8.33
Total	180	100

Source: Primary data



**Fig 3: Weekly Spending in Weekly Markets No. of respondents**

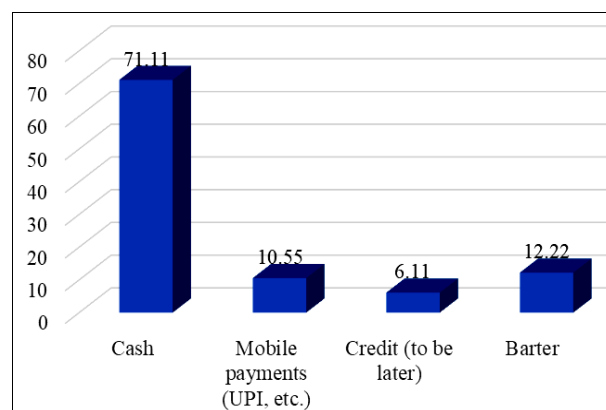
### Payment's modes in weekly markets

According to table no. 6 and fig. 4 The data shows that cash is the most commonly used payment mode, with 71.11% respondents using it to buy goods in weekly markets. This is because most tribal people still prefer physical money for ease and habit. Mobile payments like UPI are used 10.55%, mainly younger buyers or shopkeepers with smartphones. About 6.11% purchase goods on credit, where they pay later, based on mutual trust between seller and buyer. Interestingly, 12.22% still use the barter system, exchanging goods like forest products, or grains instead of money. This shows that traditional practices are still alive in some tribal areas. Overall, the results show cash remains the main mode of payment, but a dual trend is visible digital methods like UPI are emerging, while traditional systems such as barter and credit still survive. This reflects the transition phase where economic modernization coexists with cultural traditions. the persistence barter highlights the social cultural role of market, and the gradual adoption of UPI signals potential for future financial inclusion with better infrastructure and awareness.

**Table 6: Types of payment modes**

Payment mode	No. of Respondents	Percentage to total
Cash	128	71.11
Mobile payments (UPI, etc.)	19	10.55
Credit (to be later)	11	6.11
Barter	22	12.22
Total	180	100

Source: Primary data



**Fig 4: Types of Payment Modes**

### Conclusion

Weekly markets in the tribal areas of Keshkal Block, Kondagaon District play a vital role in sustaining local livelihoods and ensuring access to essential goods. Based on responses from 180 consumers, the findings highlight that the typical buyer is a middle-aged (31-50 years) female cultivator with primary-level education, indicating women's active participation in market activities. The majority (67.78%) of consumers visit weekly to purchase basic items such as agricultural produce (65.55%) and groceries & spices (53.33%), confirming that haat bazaars meet the daily needs of rural households. Regression analysis shows that Price ( $\beta=0.42$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and Quality ( $\beta=0.35$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) are the most influential factors shaping buying behaviour, followed by Availability ( $\beta=0.28$ ) and Convenience &

Access ( $\beta=0.22$ ). The model explains 68% of variation ( $R^2=0.68$ ) in consumer behaviour, emphasizing that purchasing decisions are mainly driven by economic and functional considerations rather than cultural or seasonal ones. In terms of expenditure, 33.88% of respondents spend ₹501-₹1000 weekly, reflecting moderate purchasing power, while 71.11% still rely on cash payments, and 12.22% continue using the barter system, showing a coexistence of traditional and modern practices.

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