

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

(An ethnographic study)

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Abstract: *Ethnography is a form of research focusing on the sociology of meaning through close fielded observation of socio-cultural phenomena. Typically, the ethnographer focuses on a community (not necessarily geographic, considering also work, leisure, and other communities), selecting informants who are known to have an overview of the community.*

On the whole, it is clear that low income consumers of Scheduled castes exhaust major portion of their income on essential commodities (that is for food, cloth and shelter), second to durable goods, third to recreation, and fourth to non-durable goods and so on. And it was found that the main factors which created relationship between market place and low-income consumers of scheduled castes are 'low price', 'credit facility', 'shop nearer to their residence', 'familiar shopkeeper', 'quantity', 'quality' and 'other benefits' like discounts, gifts, offers, prizes, etc.. Because of finding that scheduled castes' low-income people considering the factors like 'low price goods', 'credit facility', 'distance to shop', 'quantity', and other 'attracting benefits', it is suggested to the producers and marketers to produce and market the goods and services at an affordable prices. And also making the goods available in the shops nearer to their villages with a familiar shop keeper definitely ensure them to capture the new markets of low-income consumers

Key words: Ethnography, Marketing, Consumer behavior, Consumption behavior

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Introduction

It is a group which shares socio-cultural characteristics in the society. An ethnic group may be defined as a group of individuals “with a shared sense of people-hood” based on presumed socio-cultural experiences and/or similar physical characteristics. Such groups may be viewed by their members and/or outsiders as religious, racial, national, linguistic, and/or geographical. Thus, what ethnic group members have in common is their ethnicity or sense of people-hood, which represents a part of their collective experience.

Ethnography is a form of research focusing on the sociology of meaning through close fielded observation of socio-cultural phenomena. Typically, the ethnographer focuses on a community (not necessarily geographic, considering also work, leisure, and other communities), selecting informants who are known to have an overview of the activities of the community.

Definition of consumer behaviour

According to C.G. Walter and G.W. Paul, “consumer behaviour is the process here by individuals decide whether, what, when, where, how and from whom to purchase goods and services”.

According to Goethe, “the whole behaviour of a buyer while making purchases may be termed as consumer behaviour”.

Significance of the study

The ethnographic studies conducted, so far, were either related to Sociology or neither Anthropology nor consumer behaviour in relation to particular product or services. There were no research studies integrating these exclusive subjects. Hence, the present study has assumed greater importance in the present India.

Primarily, Indian population with various castes, races, religions and tribes who are oriented with different cultures do differ from one another in terms of shopping and consumer behaviour. Hence, it is a tough task to the producers and marketers to produce and sell goods and services in accordance with the requirements of consumers belonging to such diversified groups. Secondly, Indians are predominantly influenced by their own cultures and globalization process, and hence, competition has become too intensified to search for new

avenues and market segments to produce and sell such goods and services to meet the ever changing requirements of the people.

The competition among marketers has become cut-throat type leading to infighting for their existing market shares instead of their looking at new segments, like low income consumers from various sub-groups, rural markets etc. The present study certainly would help these marketers to achieve these objectives.

The present study can give better direction to the marketers and producers to understand the low income consumers from scheduled castes and to find new insights for the better supply of tailored goods and services in fulfilling their needs and wants to their satisfaction.

Objectives of the study

- To know the pattern of the consumption expenditure of the scheduled castes.
- To study the relationship between low-income people of scheduled castes and market place.

Research methodology

The following is the methodology followed in accomplishing the stipulated objectives of the study:

Research approach

The ethnographic method is applied to the present study of research in marketing. The research approach consists of the following steps to meet the objectives of the present study:

- ◆ Establishment of residents in the proposed study area for a period of approximately 9 to 12 Months.
- ◆ Selection of approximately 10 families of the resident population for closer observation and study.
- ◆ Development of social relationship and friendship with residents of the study area.
- ◆ Informal discussions on shopping and consumption behaviour of the residents.
- ◆ Investigation of the market place facilities in the study area.
- ◆ Interviewing owners, managers of local retail and service shops.
- ◆ Interviewing of elites, communities, organization workers, social workers and other community residents and officials in the study area.

- ◆ Accompanying local residents during shopping trips.
- ◆ Selection of the samples from the selected area.

Sample selection

Convenience sampling and multi-stage disproportionate stratified random sampling techniques were adopted in sample selection. Accordingly Kadapa district was selected as sample district, based on convenience sampling technique. The Kadapa district is one of the 4 districts in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh, other divisions being coastal Andhra and Telengana region with 9 and 10 districts respectively. The multi-stage stratified disproportionate sampling procedure comprised the selection of mandals at its first stage, selection of villages in the second stage, and finally the selection of families in the third stage. Accordingly 5 villages at random were selected from each mandal of 51 mandals in Kadapa district, and then 5 families from each village were selected to elicit responses to the questionnaire administered. Thus the total sample consists of 255 families. Besides this sample, 10 families from Putlam Palli panchayat in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh State as well was selected for the purpose of staying with them for 9-12 Months with a view to gain close observation and to attain the stipulated objectives of the present study.

Tools for data analysis

Both primary and secondary data were collected, classified, calculated, tabulated and analyzed systematically as per the required order by using percentage analysis, chi-square analysis.

Scope and limitations of the study

The study is limited to consumer behavior of scheduled castes in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh only. Hence, it may not be generalized for other castes existing in other areas of Andhra Pradesh and other states in India.

The study is limited to the sub-caste 'malas' only in scheduled castes category. Hence, the research findings may lose their validity in their application for other sub-castes of scheduled castes category in Andhra Pradesh.

The present study could cover only on ten families of Putlampalli Harijanawada of Kadapa district for staying with them for 9 to 12 months during 2008-2010 to observe closely their culture and consumer behaviour.

Empirical analysis of the study

As stated in the sample selection, after a careful observation of 51 mandals in Kadapa district, 10 different families were selected for persona observation and making relations with them with an objective of ethnographic study of those families. The information about these 10 families is provided in brief as follows:

Family-1

Total numbers of the family members is 4. They comprise father, mother and their son and daughter with the ages ranging between 11 and 5. Both father and mother are uneducated and agricultural laborers by profession. The two children are attending school. The family's total income is Rs. 42,000 (per annum), and have no other properties & assets.

Table 4.2: Social characteristics of the family1

Sl. No.	Status of the family members	Age	Education	Occupation	Earning/ Non-earning	Sources of income
1.	Head	37	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
2.	Wife	33	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
3.	Son	11	E	Going school	Non-earning	-
4.	Daughter	5	E	Going school	Non-earning	-

Assets/properties, if any : Nil

Total annual income : Rs. 42,000 (Forty two thousand only per annum)

Table 4.2.1: The expenditure pattern of family1

Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)	Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)
Food	30	Health	5
Clothes	7	Recreation	8
Rent	3	Durable goods	23
Education	2	Non-durable goods	9
Social ceremonies	10	Others, if any	3

- Source: Field data

It is clear from the table that they are spending major portion of their income on essential commodities, such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Family-2

It consists of 6 members. They include father, mother and their three sons and a daughter with ages of 26, 21, 13 and 17. Both father and mother and their two sons are agricultural laborers. Their main source of income is daily wage. The family2 has 1 acre land and its annual income is Rs.60000.

Table 4.3: Social characteristics of the family2

Sl. No.	Status of the family members	Age	Education	Occupation	Earning/ Non-earning	Sources of income
1.	Head	52	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
2.	Wife	46	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
3.	1 st Son	26	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
4.	2 nd Son	21	E.	Studying	Non-earning	-
5.	Daughter	17	E.	Studying	Non-earning	-
6.	Son	13	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage

Assets/properties, if any : 1 acre land

Total annual income : Rs. 60,000 (Sixty thousand only per annum)

Table 4.3.1: The consumption pattern of family2

Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)	Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)
Food	3	Health	7
Clothes	8	Recreation	9
Rent	3	Durable goods	13
Education	5	Non-durable goods	9
Social ceremonies	12	Others, if any	2

- Source: Field data

It is clear from the table that they are spending major portion of their income on essential commodities, such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Family-3

It comprises 3 members. They are father, mother and a son with the age 4. Father is a coolie and mother is a worker at lime stone furnace. Regarding their assets or properties, they have one cattle and their annual income is Rs.45000.

Table 4.4: Social characteristics of the family3

Sl. No.	Status of the family members	Age	Education	Occupation	Earning/ Non-earning	Sources of income
1.	Head	29	E.	Coolie	Earning	Daily wage
2.	Wife	25	U.E.	Coolie in lime stone	Earning	Daily wage
3.	Son	4	E	Studying	Non-earning	-

Assets/properties, if any : 1 cattle

Total annual income : Rs. 45,000 (Forty five thousand only per annum)

Table 4.4.1: The consumption pattern of family3

Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)	Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)
Food	31	Health	8
Clothes	9	Recreation	9
Rent	3	Durable goods	21
Education	1	Non-durable goods	7
Social ceremonies	10	Others if any	1

- Source: Field data

It is clear from the table that they are spending major portion of their income on essential commodities, such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Family-4

It has 10 members. They include father, mother, their first son, daughter in-law, first daughter, son in-law, second son, third son and a grand son and grand daughter with the ages of 8 and 3. Except second son and daughter, the remaining are illiterates and agricultural laborers. The third son is a private employee. Grand children are attending school. No assets or property is attached to them and their annual income is Rs. 98,000.

Table 4.5: Social characteristics of the family4

Sl. No.	Status of the family members	Age	Education	Occupation	Earning/ Non-earning	Sources of income
1.	Head	55	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
2.	Wife	50	U.E.	Agri. Labour	Earning	Daily wage
3.	1 st Son	35	U.E.	Coolie	Earning	Daily wage
4.	Daughter-in-law	30	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
5.	2 nd Daughter	25	E	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
6.	2 nd Son	20	E	Studying	Non-earning	-
7.	3 rd Son	18	U.E.	Pvt.employee	Earning	Monthly wage
8.	Son-in-law (nephew)	34	U.E.	Coolie	Earning	Daily wage
9.	Grand son	8	E	Studying	Non-earning	-
10.	Grand daughter	3	-	-	Non-earning	-

Assets/properties, if any : Nil

Total annual income : Rs. 98,000 (Ninety eighty thousand only per annum)

Table 4.5.1: The consumption pattern of family4

Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)	Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)
Food	30	Health	5
Clothes	9	Recreation	3
Rent	5	Durable goods	21
Education	3	Non-durable goods	12
Social ceremonies	11	Others, if any	2

- Source: Field data

It may be seen that they are spending major portion of their income on essential commodities, such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Family-5

It comprises 7 members. They include father, mother, 1st son, 1st daughter in-law, 2nd son, grand son and grand daughter. Majority of the members are literates. Father, mother, daughter in-law are agricultural labourers by profession. But 1st son is a vendor and 2nd son is a Pvt. employee by their profession. Both grand children are going to school. Family5 has 3 acres land and 10 goats. The total annual income is Rs. 1,00,000.

Table 4.6: Social characteristics of the family5

Sl. No.	Status of the family members	Age	Education	Occupation	Earning/ Non-earning	Sources of income
1.	Grand father	83	U.E.	-	Non-earning	-
2.	Grand mother	78	U.E.	-	Non-earning	-
3.	1 st Son	55	U.E.	Vendor	Earning	Forestry goods, Cattle
4.	1 st Daughter-in-law	42	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Agriculture
5.	2 nd Son	40	E	Employee	Earning	Govt. monthly sal.
6.	2 nd Daughter-in-law	35	E	Coolie	Earning	Agriculture,

						Limestone
7.	1 st Grand son-I	26	E	Studying	Non-earning	-
8.	1 st Grand daughter-I	20	U.E.	Coolie	Earning	Limestone
9.	1 st Grand son-II	8	E	Studying	Non-earning	-
10.	2 nd Grand daughter-II	11	E	Studying	Non-earning	-
11.	2 nd Grand daughter-II	8	E	Studying	Non-earning	-
12.	2 nd Grand son-II	4	U.E.	-	Non-earning	-

Assets/properties, if any : 3 acres of land (unfertile), 10 goats

Total annual income : Rs. 1, 00,000 (One lakh only per annum)

Table4.6.1: The consumption pattern of family 5

Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)	Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)
Food	30	Health	5
Clothes	9	Recreation	6.5
Rent	7	Durable goods	20
Education	5	Non-durable goods	7.5
Social ceremonies	10	Others, if any	nil

- Source: Field data

It is evident that they are spending major portion of their income on essential commodities, such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Family-6

It comprises 8 members. They are father, mother, 1st son, daughter in-law, 2nd son, daughter, 3rd son and a grand son with the ages of 40, 37,22,19,18,12,9 and 1. Except father, mother and 1st son all are literates. Father, mother, 1st son and daughter in-law are agricultural labourers but, 2nd son is a private employee.

Table 4.7: Social characteristics of the family6

Sl. No.	Status of the family members	Age	Education	Occupation	Earning/ Non-earning	Sources of income
1.	Grand father	70	U.E.	Agri. labour	-	Daily wage
2.	Grand mother	61	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
3.	1 st Son	36	U.E.	Agri labour/Vendor	Earning	Daily wage
4.	Daughter-in-law	27	E	Agri labour	Earning	Agri culture
5.	2 nd Son	29	E	Pvt. employee	Earning	Factory
6.	Daughter	20	E	Pvt. employee	Earning	factory
7.	3 rd Son	17	E	Studying	Non-earning	-
8.	Grand son	2	-	-	Non-earning	-

Assets/properties, if any : nil

Total annual income : Rs. 85,000 (Eighty five thousand only per annum)

Table 4.7.1: The consumption pattern of family6

Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)	Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)
Food	31	Health	4
Clothes	8	Recreation	22
Rent	5	Durable goods	22
Education	3	Non-durable goods	10
Social ceremonies	9	Others, if any	1

- Source: Field data

It is clear from the table 4.7.1 they are spending major portion of their income on essential commodities such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Family-7

It has 8 members. They include father, mother, 1st son, 1st daughter, 2nd daughter, 3rd daughter and 3rd son with the ages of 48,42,28,23,20,18,14 and 6. Except father and mother the remaining are educated in the family. Father, mother and 1st daughter are agricultural labourers but, 1st son is a Pvt. Employee. 2nd son, 2nd daughter, 3rd daughter and 3rd son are studying. The total annual income of the family is Rs.65000.

Table 4.8: Social characteristics of the family7

Sl. No.	Status of the family members	Age	Education	Occupation	Earning/ Non-earning	Sources of income
1.	Head	48	U.E.	Coolie	Earning	Daily wage
2.	Wife	45	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
3.	1 st Son	28	E	Employee in private ltd., co	Earning	Monthly wage
4.	1 st Daughter	23	E	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
5.	2 nd Son	20	E	Studying	Non-earning	-
6.	2 nd Daughter	18	E	Studying	Non-earning	-
7.	3 rd Daughter	14	E	Studying	Non-earning	-
8.	3 rd Son	6	-	-	-	-

Assets/properties, if any : Nil

Total annual income : Rs. 65,000 (Sixty five thousand only per annum)

Table 4.8.1: The consumption pattern of family7

Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)	Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)
Food	28	Health	3
Clothes	10	Recreation	5
Rent	4	Durable goods	23
Education	5	Non-durable goods	12
Social ceremonies	8	Others, if any	2

- Source: Field data

It is evident from the above that they are spending major portion of their income on essential commodities, such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Family-8

It has 3 members. They are father, mother and their child with the age of 8. Father and mother are agricultural laborers and the child is studying. The family has 1 acre land and its annual income is Rs 50000.

Table 4.9: Social characteristics of the family8

Sl. No.	Status of the family members	Age	Education	Occupation	Earning/ Non-earning	Sources of income
1.	Head	33	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
2.	Wife	28	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Agriculture
3.	Son	12	E	Studying	Non-earning	-

Assets/properties, if any : 1 acre (unfertile land)

Total annual income : Rs. 50,000 (Fifty thousand only per annum)

Table 4.9.1: The consumption pattern of family 8

Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)	Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)
Food	24	Health	6
Clothes	10	Recreation	5
Rent	6	Durable goods	23
Education	5	Non-durable goods	10
Social ceremonies	10	Others, if any	1

- Source: Field data

From the above table it is evident that they are spending major portion of their income on essential commodities such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Family-9

The family has five members. They include father, mother, daughter, son and daughter with ages of 43,40,20,16 and 12. Both father and mother are uneducated but their children are educated. cattle rearing is the profession of the father but the mother is an agricultural laborer. The family has 3 cattle and the annual income is Rs. 60000.

Table 4.10: Social characteristics of the family9

Sl. No.	Status of the family members	Age	Education	Occupation	Earning/ Non-earning	Sources of income
1.	Head	43	U.E.	Cow rearing	Earning	Cattle
2.	Wife	40	U.E.	Agri. labour	Earning	Agriculture
3.	Daughter	20	E	Studying	Non-earning	-

4.	Son	16	E	Studying	Non-earning	-
5.	Daughter	12	E	Studying	Non-earning	-

Assets/properties, if any : 3 cattle

Total annual income : Rs. 60,000 (Sixty thousand only per annum)

Table 4.10.1: The consumption pattern of family9

Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)	Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)
Food	22	Health	5
Clothes	10	Recreation	6
Rent	6	Durable goods	23
Education	7	Non-durable goods	9
Social ceremonies	11	Others, if any	1

- Source: Field data

The above data shows that they are spending major portion of their income on essential commodities such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Family-10

It has ten members. They include father, mother and their child with the age of 18. All are educated in the family. Father is an employee in a private company but the mother is an agricultural laborer and the child attending school. The family has 1 acre land and its annual income is Rs.40000.

Table 4.11: Social characteristics of the family10

Sl. No.	Status of the family members	Age	Education	Occupation	Earning/ Non-earning	Sources of income
1.	Head	34	E	Employee	Earning	Pvt. organization monthly salary
2.	Wife	30	E	Agri. labour	Earning	Daily wage
3.	Son	10	E	Studying	Non-earning	-

Assets/properties, if any : 1 acre of land (unfertile)

Total annual income : Rs. 40,000 (Forty thousand only per annum)

Table 4.11.1: The consumption pattern of family10

Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)	Item of expenditure	Exp. (in %)
Food	22	Health	5
Clothes	10	Recreation	6
Rent	6	Durable goods	23
Education	7	Non-durable goods	9
Social ceremonies	11	Others, if any	1

- Source: Field data

The data points out that they are spending major portion of their income on essential commodities such as food, clothes, and shelter.

Table 5.1 shows the summary of the divisions of the income of the family's expenditure in to various categories that was spending on. Most of the families would

like to exhaust 41.4% of their total income on 'essential commodities', 21.5% of their consumption expenditure was on 'durable goods', 10% on 'social ceremonies', 9.55% on 'non-durable' goods, 6.75% on 'recreation', 5.4% on 'health', 3.8% on 'education' and 1.55% on 'other things'.

On the whole, it is clear that first rank goes to essential commodities (that is for food, cloth and shelter), second to durable goods, third to recreation, and fourth to non-durable goods and so on.

Items	Families										Total	Rank
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Essential commodities	40	43	43	44	46	44	42	40	38	34	414 (41.4%)	I
Non-durable goods	9	9	7	12	7.5	10	12	10	9	10	95.5 (9.55)	IV
Durable goods	23	13	21	21	20	22	23	23	23	26	215 (21.5%)	II
Recreation	8	9	9	3	6.5	7	5	5	6	9	67.5 (6.75%)	V
Health	5	7	8	5	5	4	3	6	5	6	54 (5.4%)	VI
Education	2	5	1	2	5	3	5	5	7	3	38 (3.8%)	VII

Social ceremonies	10	12	10	11	10	9	8	10	11	10	101 (10.1%)	III
Others	3	2	1	2	-	1	2	1	-	2	15 (1.5%)	VIII
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100%	

Table 5.1: Consumption expenditure of 10 families on their necessities per year

- Source: Field data
- Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total.

It was found in the study that the low income consumers from scheduled castes (malas) prefer essential commodities, non-durable goods and durable goods in that order. It is shown in the following Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Impact of respondents' income on their priority for goods purchased

Sl. No.	Family annual income (Rs.)	No. of respondent families	Rank-wise priority of respondent's to			
			Essential goods	Non-durable goods	Durable goods	Others (Services)
1.	Rs.15000-30000	27	I	II	III	IV
2.	Rs.30000-45000	72	I	II	III	IV
3.	Rs.45000-60000	89	I	II	III	IV
4.	Rs.60000-75000	36	I	II	III	IV
5.	Rs.75000-90000	19	I	II	III	IV
6.	Rs.90000 - 1,20,000	12	I	II	III	IV
	Total	255	I	II	III	IV

- Source: Field data

Table 5.2 shows the distribution of respondents by their income level and their goods priority. In the Table, 255 respondents were classified into 6 income groups. Goods also were divided into 4 categories i.e., essential commodities, non-durable goods, durable goods and others (services). Of the respondents, 27 having Rs.15000-30000 income gave first preference to 'essential commodities', second priority to 'non-durable goods', third to 'durable goods' and, last to 'services'. Respondents having Rs.30000-45000 incomes were 72, and their order of preference was: first to 'essential goods', second to 'non-durable goods', third to 'durable goods' and lastly 'services'. Respondents having income of Rs.45000-60000 were 89. Their order of preference was: first 'essential commodities', second 'non durable goods', third 'durable goods' and lastly 'services'. Respondents having Rs.60000-75000 income gave their priority to 'essential commodities', 'non durable goods', 'durable goods' and lastly to 'services' consecutively. 19 respondents belonged to Rs.75000-90000 income group. Their order of preference was 'essential commodities', 'non durable goods', 'durable goods' and finally 'services' in that order. And lastly respondents having Rs.90000 and above incomes were 12. Their order of priority was: first 'essential commodities', followed by 'non durable goods', 'durable goods' and 'services'.

The data in the table makes it clear that all respondents of all income levels gave first preference to 'essential commodities', second to 'non durable goods', third to 'durable goods' and last preference to 'services'.

With regard to purchasing non-durable goods, their order of priority among the stipulated products is shown clearly in the Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Association between family's consumption expenditure and their priority in the purchase of non-durable goods

Sl. No.	Family consumption expenditure	No. of Respondents	No. of respondents chose non-durable goods				
			Toilet soap	Washing soap	Tooth-paste	Cosmetics	Decoration articles
1.	Below Rs.20000	15	6	4	1	3	1
2.	Rs.20000-30000	74	24	17	12	14	7
3.	Rs.30000-40000	72	23	18	14	11	6
4.	Rs.40000-50000	50	12	11	11	6	10
5.	Rs.50000-60000	26	5	4	6	6	5
6.	Rs.60000 and above	18	4	2	4	4	4
	Total	255 (100%)	74 (29.01%)	56 (21.96%)	48 (18.83%)	44 (17.25%)	33 (12.94%)

- Source: Field data ($\chi^2 = 13.918$ P = 0.604)
- Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total.

(There is no association between the scheduled castes' consumption expenditure and their priority in purchasing non-durable goods, and hence, the hypothesis 1 'there is no association between the family's consumption expenditure and in purchasing non-durable goods' is accepted)

Table 5.3 denotes the scheduled castes low income consumers' family consumption expenditure per year and their priorities in purchasing non-durable goods. Out of 255 respondents 15 were with less than Rs.20000 family consumption expenditure. 6 respondents' first priority was 'toilet soaps', 4 respondents gave priority to

‘washing soaps and powder’, 3 respondents chose ‘face powder and creams’, and only one respondent each preferred ‘tooth paste’ and ‘decoration articles’. Respondents having between Rs.20000-30000 consumption expenditure were 74. Here most of the respondents first preference was ‘toilet soaps’ and only a few respondents responded to ‘decoration articles’. Respondents having Rs.30000-40000 family consumption expenditure were 72 and their priorities were; ‘toilet soaps’, ‘washing soaps’ and ‘powders’, ‘toothpaste’, ‘cosmetics and decoration articles’ in that order. 50 respondents having consumption expenditure between Rs.40000-50000 gave first preference to ‘toilet soaps’ and least priority to ‘decorating things’. Respondents having Rs.50000-60000 family consumption expenditure were 26. Out of which 5 respondents gave priority to ‘toilet soaps’, 4 to ‘washing powder and soaps’, while 6 respondents each to ‘toothpaste’, ‘cosmetics’, and 5 respondents preferred ‘decoration articles’. Those are having families’ consumption expenditure of Rs.60000 and above accounts for 18. Out of these, 4 respondents gave priority to ‘toilet soaps’, 2 to ‘washing soaps and powder’, followed by 4 respondents each to ‘toothpaste’, ‘cosmetics and ‘decoration articles’.

The total number of respondents who responded to each of the products mentioned in the table under non-durable goods include: 74 in favor of ‘toilet soaps’, 56 respondents preferred ‘washing soaps and powder’, while 48 respondents were in favour of ‘toothpaste’, 44 respondents to ‘cosmetics’ and 33 respondents to ‘decoration things’.

Table 5.4: Association between family’s consumption expenditure and their priorities in the purchase of durable goods

Sl. No.	Level of family consumption expenditure (Rs.)	No. of respondents	No. of respondents chose durable goods			
			Entertainment goods	Kitchen ware	Home needs	Other electronic goods
1.	Below Rs.20000	15	5	4	3	3
2.	Rs.20000-30000	74	26	15	27	6

3.	Rs.30000-40000	72	25	18	24	5
4.	Rs.40000-50000	50	20	15	11	4
5.	Rs.50000-60000	26	8	5	7	6
6.	Rs.60000 and above	18	4	3	8	3
	Total	255 (100%)	88 (33.04)	60 (22.60)	80 (32.60)	27 (11.73)

- Source: Field data $(\chi^2 = 14.492 \quad P = 0.4885)$
- Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total.

(The hypothesis 2 ‘there is no association between the family’s consumption expenditure and their priority in purchasing durables’ is accepted, and it is found that there is no significant association between the two variables.)

Table 5.4 denotes the distribution of respondents according to their family consumption expenditure per annum on durable goods. As is shown in the table, durable goods are classified into 4 categories, namely the entertainment goods such as T.V., V.C.D., radio, tape recorder, home theatre, video games etc, second kitchenware like all steel ware, cooker, grinder, oven etc, third, home needs like air cooler, fan, bureau, cots, chairs etc., and lastly other electronic goods which include iron boxes, fridge, washing machines and others. Respondents having consumption expenditure below Rs.20000 were only 15. Out of them, 5 respondents gave priority to ‘entertainment goods’, 4 respondents to ‘kitchen ware’, while 3 respondents to ‘home needs’ and 3 respondents to ‘other electronic goods’. Respondents having Rs.20000-30000 of consumption expenditure were 74. Out of them, most of the respondents’ first priority was ‘home needs’ and the least priority was ‘other electronic goods’. 72 respondents were in the consumption expenditure group of Rs.30000-40000. Most of these respondents gave priority to ‘entertainment goods’ and least preference to ‘other electronic goods’. Respondents having Rs.40000-50000 of consumption expenditure were 50. At this level

too, most of the respondents' first priority was 'entertainment goods' and least preference to 'other electronic goods'. 26 respondents were placed in consumption expenditure of Rs.50000-60000. Most of the respondents gave priority to 'entertainment goods', and least preference to 'kitchenware'. Respondents having Rs.60000 and above as consumption expenditure were 18. Most (8) of which gave their priority to 'home needs', while 4 to 'entertainment goods', 3 to 'kitchenware', and 3 respondents to 'other electronic goods'.

The overall observation of the above table shows that out of 255 respondents most of the respondents gave first preference to 'entertainment goods', second to 'home needs', third to 'kitchenware' and last to 'other electronic goods'.

Table 5.5: Ranking of the respondents according to their income and preferred market places while purchasing goods and services

Sl. No.	Income	No. of Respondents	No. of respondents influenced by				
			Public distribution shops	Retail shops	Towns and district. head quarters	Vendors	Others
1.	Rs.15000-30000	27	I	II	III	IV	V
2.	Rs.30000-45000	89	I	II	III	IV	V
3.	Rs.45000-60000	72	I	II	III	IV	V
4.	Rs.60000-75000	36	I	II	III	IV	V
5.	Rs.75000-90000	19	I	II	III	IV	V
6.	Rs.90000-120000	12	I	II	III	IV	V
	Total	255	I	II	III	IV	V

- Source: Field data

Table 5.5 implies the rank wise distribution of respondent's ranks according to their income and preferred market places for purchasing goods and services. Five kinds of market places were frequently visited by the low-income consumers of scheduled castes. They were public distribution shops, retail shops, mandal or towns' shops, vendors (who visits low income people's villages for selling their goods and services) and others (fairs, exhibitions, show rooms, processions etc.). Irrespective of their income level, most of the respondents from scheduled castes preferred 'public distribution shops' for food provisions whatever was available there. Secondly, they preferred to visit 'retail shops', 'towns', and 'district head quarters' were cited as the third, 'vendors' as the fourth, and lastly 'other sources' as their preferred market places, from where they buy their products and services.

Table 5.6: Occupational distribution of respondents according to their motivating factors in visiting a public distribution shop

Sl. No	Occupation	No. of Respondents	No. of respondents influenced by						
			Low price	Quality	Quantity	Credit facility	Nearer to home	Familiarity with the shop keeper	Other benefits
1.	Govt. employees	12	07	02	02	-	01	-	-
2.	Pvt. employees	65	38	12	06	-	09	-	-
3.	Agri. labour	112	73	11	16	-	12	-	-
4.	Cultivators	16	04	03	03	-	06	-	-
5.	Business	20	08	03	06	-	03	-	-
6.	Others	30	16	03	04	-	07	-	-
	Total	255 (100%)	146 (57.25)	34 (13.33)	37 (14.50)	-	38 (14.90)	-	-

- Source: Field data $(\chi^2 = 21.790 \quad P = 0.113)$
- Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total.

(There is no association between occupation and their motivating factors in visiting public distribution shops, and hence, the hypothesis 38 ‘there is no association between the occupation and their motivating factors in visiting public distribution shops’ is accepted)

Table 5.6 denotes the occupational distribution of respondents by their influencing factors to visit a public distribution shop. Out of 12 government employees,

07 respondents indicated that they visited 'public distribution shops' due to 'low priced' goods available there. Followed by 02 respondents who cited the 'quality' of goods available there, 02 respondents 'quantity', and one respondent cited that it is 'near to their home'. Out of 65 private employees, chose 'low price', 'quality of the goods', 'nearer to home' and 'quantity' in the order were cited as the reasons to visit. Agricultural labourers also preferred 'low price', 'quantity', 'quality' and 'nearer to home', consecutively. Cultivators (16) gave priority to 'nearer to home', 'cheap price', 'quality' and 'quantity' in order. Of the 20 business respondents, 08 respondents chose 'low price' as their influencing factor, 06 people 'quantity', and 03 respondents each 'quantity', and 'nearer to home' as reasons to visit public distribution shops. Others were 30; their order of priority was 'low price', 'nearer to home', 'quantity', and 'quality'..

It is clear that most of the respondents chose 'low-price' (57.25%), followed by 'near to home' (14.90%), 'quantity' (14.50%), 'quality' (13.33%) consecutively.

Table 5.7: Distribution of respondents according to their level of consumption expenditure and key motivational factors for visiting a retail shop

Sl. No	Consumption expenditure (Rs)	No. of Respondents	No. of respondents influenced by						
			Low price	Quality	Quantity	Credit facility	Nearer to home	Familiarity with shop keeper	Others benefits
1.	Below Rs.20000	15	03	-	03	05	01	02	01
2.	Rs.20000-30000	74	13	04	05	27	16	06	03
3.	Rs.30000-40000	72	14	01	07	20	18	10	02
4.	Rs.40000-50000	50	06	05	05	13	10	08	03
5.	Rs.50000-60000	26	03	03	01	07	05	05	02
6.	Rs.60000 and above	18	02	02	01	06	03	02	02
	Total	255 (100%)	41 (16.07%)	15 (5.88)	22 (8.62)	78 (30.58)	53 (20.78)	33 (12.94)	13 (5.09)

- Source: Field data $(\chi^2 = 14.351 \quad P = 0.4990)$
- Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total.

(There is no association between family expenditure and their key motivational factors in visiting retail shops for purchasing goods and services, and hence, the hypothesis 39 ‘there is no association between the consumption expenditure and their motivational factor for visiting a retail shop’ is accepted)

Table 5.7 explains the distribution of respondents by their level of consumption expenditure and key influencing factors to visit a specific retail shop. Out of 45 respondents having below Rs.20000 as consumption expenditure, 05 families said that they visited ‘retail shops’, ‘credit facility’, provided by the retailers, 03 respondents each preferred ‘low price’ of goods and ‘quality’ of the goods, 02 respondents ‘familiar with shopkeeper’, and 01 respondent each ‘near to home’, and ‘others’. 74 respondents in the category of Rs.20000-30000 consumption expenditure gave their priority to ‘credit facility’, ‘nearer to their homes’, ‘low prices’, ‘familiar with shop keeper’, ‘quantity’, ‘quality’ and ‘other reasons’ in that order. Similar order of preference was stated by the respondents having Rs.30000-40000 consumption expenditure. 50 respondents relating to the consumption expenditure of Rs.40000-50000 gave their priority to ‘credit facility’, ‘nearer to home’, ‘familiarity with shop keeper’, ‘quality’ and ‘quantity’, and lastly ‘other reasons’ in that order. Out of 26 respondents having Rs.50000-60000 consumption expenditure, 07 respondents mentioned ‘credit facility’, 05 respondents each ‘nearness to home’ and ‘familiarity with shopkeeper’, 03 respondents each ‘low price’ and ‘quality’, 02 respondents ‘other reasons’ and only one respondent cited ‘quantity’. 18 respondents belonged to consumption expenditure of Rs.60000 and who gave their priority to ‘credit facility’, ‘nearness to home’, ‘familiarity with shop keeper’, ‘low price’, ‘quality’, ‘other reasons and ‘quantity’ consecutively as reasons to visit a retailer.

The above analysis shows that 78 respondents (covering 30.58%) chose ‘credit facility’ as their main influencing factor to visit retail shops, 53 respondents (covering 20.78%) preferred ‘nearness to home’, 41 respondents (covering 16.07%) ‘low price’, 33 respondents (12.94%) ‘familiarity with shopkeeper’, 22 respondents (8.62%) ‘quantity’, 15 respondents (5.88%) ‘quality’ and the rest of 13 respondents (5.00%) ‘other reasons’ as the reasons for their visit to retail shops.

Table 5.8: Distribution of respondents according to their education and key motivational factors for visiting towns and district headquarters for purchasing goods and services

Sl. No	Education level	No. of Respondents	No. of respondents influenced by						
			Low price	Quality	Quantity	Credit facility	Nearer to home	Familiarity with shop-keeper	Others benefits
1.	Illiterate	57	22	14	03	01	03	04	10
2.	Primary	74	18	20	05	02	06	07	16
3.	Secondary	67	13	27	05	03	04	08	07
4.	Graduation	13	02	05	-	01	01	01	03
5.	Post-graduation	06	01	03	-	-	-	-	02
6.	Technical and other qualification	38	08	12	03	01	02	01	11
	Total	255 (100%)	64 (25.99)	81 (31.76)	16 (6.27)	08 (3.13)	16 (6.27)	21 (8.23)	49 (19.21)

• Source: Field data $(\chi^2 = 19.968 \quad P = 0.6980)$

• Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total.

(Since the calculated value is greater than the table value it is found that there is no significant association between the two variables, and hence, the hypothesis 40 ‘there is

association between education level and their motivating factors in visiting shops in towns and district headquarters is accepted)

Table 5.8 shows the distribution of respondents by their education and key motivational factors in that prompted them in visiting the shops at mandal and district head quarters. Out of 57 respondents belonging to illiterates, 22 respondents told that they would go to towns with a view to get goods at 'low price', while 14 respondents 'quality', 10 respondents 'other reasons' (like discounts, offers, prizes and other promotional activities), 03 respondents each gave 'quantity' and 'nearness' to their village, and only one respondent cited 'credit facility'. 74 respondents having primary education gave priority to 'quality', 'low price', 'others', 'familiarity with shopkeeper', 'nearness to home', 'quantity' and 'credit facility' in that order. Out of 67 respondents having secondary education, 27 respondents chose 'quality', 13 respondents 'low price', 08 respondents 'familiarity shop keeper', 07 respondents 'others', 04 respondents 'nearness to home' and 03 respondents 'credit facility'. Out of 13 respondents having graduation, 05 respondents chose 'quality', 03 respondents 'others', 02 respondents 'low price' and finally 01 respondent each 'nearness to home', 'familiarity with shopkeeper' and 'credit facility' as their influencing factor for visiting town shops. 6 post-graduates indicated their priority to 'quality', 'other reasons' and 'low price' in that order. 38 respondents were belonging to 'technical and other qualification' category gave their order of preference to 'quality', 'others', 'low prices', 'quantity', 'nearness to home', 'familiarity with shopkeeper', and 'credit facility'.

It is clear that most of the respondents' main reason behind visiting towns for purchasing goods and services was to get 'quality goods' (31.76%), while 64 respondents (25.08%) mentioned 'low price', 49 respondents (19.21%) 'other reasons', 21 respondents (8.23%) 'familiarity with shopkeeper', 16 respondents (6.27%) each 'quantity' and 'nearness to home', and the remaining 08 respondents mentioned (3.13%) 'credit facility' as their motivators to go to towns and district headquarters to buy goods and services.

Findings and Suggestions

1. *Consumption expenditure per year of 10 families selected for personal observation.*

Finding

It was found that major portion of their expenditure was spent on essential commodities (41.4%), followed by on durables (21.5%) and non-durable goods (9.55%). (Table 5.1)

Reason

Being poor and low-income people they first preferred food and shelter, later for durable, non durable goods and other things in that order.

Suggestion

It is suggested to the producers and marketers, if they could produce and sell goods and services equal to their percentage levels of consumption expenditure on essential goods, durable and non-durable goods etc., there would be a good market for them.

2. *Distribution of respondents as per their income level and goods priority*

Finding

Irrespective of their income levels most of the respondents preferred 'essential commodities', 'non-durable goods', 'durable goods' and 'other things' in that order. (Table 5.2)

Reason

Because the people of scheduled castes are low-income consumers, they think about their minimum necessities irrespective of their income levels. Later they think about other needs.

Suggestion

Marketers have to concentrate on the goods that satisfy the basic needs of the low-income consumers of scheduled castes to capture new markets.

3. *Impact of respondents' income on their priority for goods*

Finding

Low-income people from scheduled castes gave first priority to 'toilet soaps' (39.01%), 'washing soaps' (21.96%), 'toothpaste' (18.84%), 'cosmetics'

(17.25%), and followed by 'decorative things' (12.94%) in that order while purchasing the non-durable goods. (Table 5.3)

Reason

They prefer these goods as these are the minimum requirements of low-income consumer's day-to-days life.

Suggestion

It is better for producers and marketers to focus on the non-durable goods like, 'toilet soaps', 'washing soaps and powders', 'toothpaste', 'cosmetics and 'decorative things' at an affordable price to capture the low-income consumer's markets of scheduled castes.

4. *Association between family's consumption expenditure and their priorities in the purchase of durable goods*

Finding

It is found that most of the low-income consumers from scheduled castes preferred 'entertainment goods' (33.04%), second, 'home needs' (32.60%), third, 'kitchenware' (22.60%), and last 'other electronic goods' (11.73%), while purchasing the durable goods. (Table 5.4)

Reason

With a view to lead some entertainment and luxury life, the low-income consumers of scheduled castes are purchasing durable goods in the order found in the Table 5.4.

Suggestion

It is suggested the producers and marketers consider the order of priority in the selection of durable goods of low-income consumers of scheduled castes during production and marketing of durable goods.

5. *Ranking of the respondents according to their income and preferred market places while purchasing goods and services*

Finding

It was found that low-income people from scheduled castes visited mainly 'public distribution shops' for their food and other available provisions, followed

by 'retail shops', 'towns and district head quarters', 'vendors' and 'others' for purchasing other goods and services in that order of ranking. (Table 5.5)

Reason

Because of availability of food provisions and other goods at cheaper prices in the 'public distribution shops', they preferred them as their frequently visited market places.

Suggestion

It is suggested to the producers and marketers to choose 'public distribution shops' as places for marketing goods and services at an affordable price to low-income people of scheduled castes.

6. *Occupational distribution of respondents according to their motivating factors in visiting a public distribution shop*

Finding

It is found that most of the scheduled caste people were visiting 'public distribution shops' due to 'low-price' (50.58%), 'nearer to their home' (14.50%), 'quantity' (14.11%), 'quality' (13.33%), 'credit facility' (3.53%), ' familiarity with shop keeper' (1.96%), and 'others' (1.96%) in that order. (Table 5.6)

Reason

By virtue of their low-income, scheduled caste people always preferred goods at low price with best quality that suited their purchasing capacity.

Suggestion

It is suggested the producers and marketers produce and market the goods and services at cheaper price, in order to capture the scheduled caste markets.

7. *Distribution of respondents by their level of consumption expenditure and key motivational factors for visiting a retail shop*

Finding

It is found that most of the scheduled caste people were visiting retail shops because of the availability of 'credit facility' (30.58%). Secondly, they considered the 'short distance' (20.78%) between market place and their residence, followed by 'low-price goods' (16.07%), 'familiar shop keeper' (12.94%), 'quantity' (8.62%), 'quality' (5.88%) and 'others' (5.09%). (Table 5.7)

Reason

As scheduled caste people are poor with low-income, they did not have sufficient money to accomplish all their necessities. Hence, they preferred to visit the market places where there was a 'credit facility' for them for purchasing the goods and services.

Suggestion

It is suggested to the producers and marketers to provide 'credit facility' to the people of scheduled castes while marketing goods and services. As well they should place the 'retail shop' nearer to their residences. 'Low price', 'familiar shopkeeper', 'quantity', 'quality' and 'other things' should also be considered consecutively by the producers and marketers while marketing the goods and services.

8. *Educational distribution of respondents by their key motivational factors in visiting towns and district headquarters for purchasing goods and services*

Finding

It was found that most of the scheduled caste people visited shops at 'towns' and 'district headquarters' with a view to get 'quality goods' (31.8%) 'low-prices of the products' (25.99%), 'other benefits' (19.21%), 'shop owners' (8.23%), 'quantity' (6.27%), 'distance' (6.27%), 'credit facility' (3.13%) consecutively. (Table 5.8)

Reason

Because of available various alternative products and types at shops in 'hometowns' or 'district headquarters' with bargaining prices of different companies, they preferred to visit these market places. Secondly for the goods that are not available at public distribution shops, they preferred to visit 'retail shop'. The main factors that made them to keep on visiting a particular 'retail shop' is the availability of 'credit facility' there. It is also created a kind of affection and respect among the low-income scheduled caste people towards the owners of those shops.

Suggestion

It is suggested to the producers and marketers to produce and market 'quality' goods and services with 'cheap price' and 'quantity' and making it available to the low-income people's nearer market places with some promotional activities to capture this markets and leverage it against the competition.

- ❖ On the overall observation, it was found that the main factors which created relationship between market place and low-income consumers of scheduled castes are 'low price', 'credit facility', 'shop nearer to their residence', 'familiar shopkeeper', 'quantity', 'quality' and 'other benefits' like discounts, gifts, offers, prizes, etc.,
- ❖ The main reason behind visiting 'public distribution shops' for purchasing their provisions is availability of their goods at 'cheap prices' and this is the another reason that made the low-income consumers of scheduled castes to stick to the 'public distribution shops'.
- ❖ Secondly, for the goods that are not available at 'public distribution shops, they preferred to visit 'retail shops'. The main factors that made them to keep on visiting a particular 'retail shop' is the availability of 'credit facility' there. It is also created a kind of affection and respect among the low-income scheduled caste people towards the owners of those shops.
- ❖ Another factor that created a relation between low-income consumers of scheduled castes and market place is 'short distance' to market place. It is usual that most of the low-income people visit the shops which are nearer to their homes, and it is the reason why low-income consumers are trying to purchase goods from street vendors. And it is found that the low-income consumers of scheduled castes are leisure in the evening time (between 6-10 p.m), it is the right time to the marketers to meet and sell their goods.
- ❖ The reason behind visiting 'towns and district headquarters' shops is availability of various alternative goods and bargaining facility along with gifts, offers, discounts, prizes etc., there. And it is found that on the festive and special occasions, the consumption level of the goods of these people is

doubled, and mostly on these occasions, they prefer to purchase durable goods.

- ❖ Because of finding that scheduled castes' low-income people considering the factors like 'low price goods', 'credit facility', 'distance to shop', 'quantity', and other 'attracting benefits', it is suggested to the producers and marketers to produce and market the goods and services at an affordable prices. And also making the goods available in the shops nearer to their villages with a familiar shop keeper definitely ensure them to capture the new markets of low-income consumers.

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