



Perceived Reasons For Purchasing Vegetables And Fruits At Rythu Bazaars – An Analytical Study Of Consumers In Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

Rythu Bazaar is a type of market in Andhra Pradesh run by the State Governments for small-scale farmers with small landholdings. The motto of these markets is farmers can directly sell their agriculture produce to the consumers without the intervention of middleman. Thus this paper aimed to study the perceived reasons for purchasing vegetables and fruits at Rythu bazaars with reference to consumers. In this purpose 6 Rythu Bazaars in east Godavari district were selected and the 300 consumers randomly selected from these markets. The data was collected from the respondents with the help of self-designed questionnaire and process with the help of SPSS software. Thus, the key factors to purchase at Rythu Bazaars and the reasons to purchase at Rythu Bazaars are studied with the help of consumers' perceptions, who visit regularly to these markets. The key factors influencing the consumers in taking decision to purchase in Rythu Bazaars are lower prices compared to other markets, persuaded by location, trust on the farmers and freshness of produce influenced them to purchase in Rythu Bazaars. Whereas the reasons expressed by the consumers for purchasing fruits and vegetables at Rythu Bazaars revealed that as many as perceived location of Rythu Bazaars near to the residential areas, followed by scope to purchase directly from the farmers, price list of vegetables fixed by the government and prices are comparatively lesser than other markets. While only organic vegetables sell in Rythu Bazaar is the reason to purchase, suitable parking area available for vehicles and availability of diverse products are the other reasons. Moreover, there is less scope to bargain at Rythu bazaars, availability of fresh products and high quality products are the reasons for purchasing vegetable and fruits at Rythu Bazaars.

Keywords: Perceptions, consumers, vegetables and fruits, Rythu Bazaars.

Introduction

Fruits and vegetables typically constitute an essential part of the daily diet in India and they are in great demand round the year from most sections of the population. The commercial value of fruits and vegetables in terms of direct consumption, processing as well as trade has risen substantially in recent years. Their economic importance has also increased and high labour intensity in the production of most fruits and vegetables production also makes them important from the employment angle as well (Sharma, 1991). Increase in area allocation under horticultural crops has often been suggested as a measure for agricultural diversification, increased employment and income (Malik, 2012). Since, Indian farmers typically depend heavily on middlemen particularly in fruits and vegetable marketing, the producers and the consumers of these goods often get a poor deal and the middlemen control the market. To overcome the problems of farmers and consumers the Andhra Pradesh Government established the concept of Rythu Bazara in the year 1999 to create a platform where farmers could sell their produce directly to the consumers without the interference of middlemen or marketing intermediaries (Subhendu Dey, 2012).

Rythu Bazaar is an initiative to uplift small and marginal farmers by directly connecting them to the consumer through the setting up of Rythu Bazaars in residential areas with permanent complexes. Rythu Bazaars are a fundamental part of the urban–rural interface, they have continued to grow in popularity, mostly due to the growing consumer interest in obtaining fresh products, especially produce directly from the farm. Rythu Bazaars allow consumers to have access to locally grown, farm-fresh produce, enable farmers to develop personal relationships with their customers, and cultivate consumer loyalty with the farmers who grow the produce. Direct marketing of farm products through Rythu Bazaars continues to be a significant sales outlet for agricultural producers nationwide. In these Rythu Bazaars consumers can buy fresh vegetables, fruits, and many other agricultural products directly from farmers. Therefore, Rythu Bazaars not only help the farmers to fetch better prices for their produce but also consumers will inculcate the habit of getting fresh vegetables and agriculture products, which leads to clean eating with less to no wastage of food.

Literature review

Taj Mubeen, et.al, (2023) studied on consumer awareness on Rythu Bazars. This study analysis the consumer awareness and preferences of vegetable purchasing from farmers. The findings of this study shows consumers feel Rythu Bazar is the most affordable and accessible market where all the vegetables and grocery items are available in one place. Therefore, these markets are being run and organised by Government officials to eliminate the intermediaries and facilitate the consumers to purchase directly from the farmers. Thus, the study found that majority of the customers aware about Rythu Bazaars and the availability of variety products. Gangadhara Rao (2011) studied on Rythu Bazaars in Andhra Pradesh and the marketing practices of farmers and consumers. The study observed Rythu Bazaars eliminate the intermediaries and allow farmers to enjoy higher profit margins by selling their produce directly to the consumers. Therefore, Rythu Bazaars not only benefit to the farmers but also provided substantial advantages to the consumers. Saibaba and Vadde (2009) studied on consumer satisfaction and preferences with respect to Rythu Bazaars. Moreover, the consumers satisfied with the products available at Rythu Bazaars, a significant proportion of the expressed dissatisfaction about the unsuitable location of Rythu Bazaar.

Need and significance

Rythu Bazars were established for direct interface between the farmers and consumers by eliminating middlemen with a view to ensure remunerative prices and prompt realization of sale proceeds to farmers without any deductions, and to provide fresh vegetables to consumers at reasonable rates. Rythu Bazars were established in East Godavari district to facilitate direct interactions between farmers and consumers, eliminating intermediary agents. The primary objective was to ensure that farmers receive remunerative prices and timely proceeds from their sales, while also providing consumers with access to fresh vegetables at reasonable rates. In this district alone, a substantial effort has been made to set Up to date, Rythu Bazars

have been established. However, it's essential to mention that there may be unique challenges or developments specific to these districts, such as construction status, performance metrics, and any district-specific initiatives related to Rythu Bazars. Therefore, comprehensively evaluate the reasons to purchase vegetables and fruits in Rythu Bazaars, East Godavari districts, has been selected for data collection from the consumers, who regularly visit and purchase vegetables and fruits directly from the farmers. Hence, the following objectives are identified they the researcher to study during the investigation.

Objectives

1. To study the influenced factors to purchase in the Rythu Bazaars
2. To study the perceived reasons to purchasing fruits and vegetable in Rythu Bazaars

Hypothesis

H^0 : There is no significant difference among various demographic group consumers in their perceived reasons to purchase fruits and vegetables in Rythu bazaars

H^1 : There is significant difference among various demographic group consumers in their perceived reasons to purchase fruits and vegetables in Rythu bazaars

Methodology

The main aim of this paper is to study the perceived reasons of consumes to purchase vegetables and fruits in Rythu Bazaars For this purpose Andhra Pradesh state has chosen as study area and the Rythu Bazaars in East Godavari district are considered as study units. Thus, the data was collected from the consumers, who visit Rythu Bazaars regularly to purchase vegetables and fruits directly from the farmers. In the selected district, six Rythu Bazars have been chosen randomly, and from each one 50 consumers have be selected randomly. Thus all together 300 farmers were participated in this study to share their perceptions on the reasons to purchase fruits and vegetables in the Rythu Bazaars. For this purpose a questionnaire was designed, which contains two parts. The first part is socio-demographic variables of the respondents like age, gender, occupation, income, etc. and the second part of the questionnaire deals with the influenced factors and reasons to purchase in Rythu Bazaars.

Data Analysis

After data collection it was processed through SPSS and designed the output results in table format and analysed. Thus, the data was analysed by frequencies, percentages, mean and rank analysis by scores and ANOVA test to find out the influenced factors and reasons for purchasing vegetables and fruits in the Rythu Bazaars by the consumers.

Table-1: Socio-demographic characteristics of consumers purchasing at Rythu Bazaars

Socio-demographic variables	Groups	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Below 30 years	65	21.7
	30-50 years	145	48.3
	Above 50 years	90	30.0
Gender	Male	128	42.7
	Female	172	57.3
Occupation	Un employee	67	22.3
	Employee	51	17.0
	Self employee	83	27.7
	House wife	22	7.3
	Agriculture and allied activities	17	5.7
Income	Nil	35	11.7
	10,000	133	44.3
	10,000-20,000	104	34.7
	above 20,000	28	9.3

The Table-1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of consumers, who purchase fruits and vegetables at Rythu Bazaars. Out of total consumers 48.3 percent are in the age group of 30-50 years, followed by 30.0 percent are in the age group of above 50 years and the remaining 21.7 percent are in the age group of below 30 years. Whereas, the gender-wise distribution shows that majority group of 57.3 percent are females and the remaining 42.7 percent are males. According to the occupation of the respondents it is found that 27.7 percent are self employed, 22.3 percent are unemployed, 17.0 percent are employees, 7.3 percent are housewives and 5.7 percent are engaged in agriculture and allied activities. Thus, the income level distribution indicate 44.3 percent are earning 10 thousand rupees, 34.7 percent are earning between 10-20 thousand rupees, 9.3 percent are earning above 20 thousand rupees and the remaining 11.7 percent are non earners.

Influenced factors at Rythu Bazaars:

Table-2: Evaluation of consumers about cleanliness at the Rythu Bazaars

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	106	35.3
Reasonably good	114	38.0
Poor	47	15.7
Very poor	33	11.0
Total	300	100.0

The consumers' evaluation about cleanliness at the Rythu Bazaars reveals that a predominated group of 38.0 percent said reasonably the cleanliness is good followed very good (35.3 percent), and from the rest 15.7 percent said poor and the remaining 11.0 percent said very poor about the cleanliness at the Rythu Bazaars.

Table-3: Key factors influencing the consumers to purchase at Rythu Bazaars

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Freshness of produce	39	13.0
Lower prices compared to other markets	127	42.3
Trust in the source (direct from farmers)	55	18.3
Convenience of location	79	26.3
Total	300	100.0

The key factors influencing the consumers in taking decision to purchase in Rythu Bazaars infers that majority group of 42.3 percent said lower prices compared to other markets, and from the remaining 26.3 percent said persuaded by location, 18.3 percent said trust on the farmers and least group of 13.0 percent said freshness of produce influenced them to purchase in Rythu Bazaars.

Table-4: Assessment of the consumers about impact of Rythu Bazaars

Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Substantially beneficial for consumers	85	28.3
Marginally beneficial for consumers	145	48.3
No impact on consumer welfare	70	23.3
Total	300	100.0

The assessment of consumers about the impact of Rythu Bazaars shows that 48.3 percent felt they are marginally benefitted, 28.3 percent felt substantially benefitted and 23.3 percent opined Rythu Bazaars are for the welfare of consumers.

Table-5: The satisfaction levels of consumes with Rythu Bazaars

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Extremely satisfied	92	30.7
Reasonably satisfied	126	42.0
Indifferent	55	18.3
Dissatisfied	27	9.0
Total	300	100.0

The satisfaction levels of consumers towards the Rythu Bazaars it is observed that 42.0 percent reasonable satisfied, 30.7 percent extremely satisfied, 18.3 percent satisfied indifferently and 9.0 percent dissatisfied with the functioning of Rythu Bazaars.

Table-6: Willingness to recommend acquaintances to purchase at Rythu Bazaars

Willingness	Frequency	Percentage
Recommend purchase at the Rythu Bazaar	76	25.3
Recommend purchase of specific produce only	158	52.7
Not willing to commend purchase	66	22.0
Total	300	100.0

The willingness of the consumers to recommend acquaintances to purchase goods at the Rythu Bazaars the data revealed that while 25.3 percent recommended acquaintances to purchase at Rythu Bazaars, 52.7 percent recommended acquaintances to purchase specific products only, whereas 22.0 percent are not willing to commend acquaintances to purchase at Rythu Bazaars.

Reasons perceived by the consumers to purchase vegetables and fruits at Rythu Bazaars:

There are various reasons in purchasing of a product or products from a particular place or market. The reasons mostly depend on the availability of products, price, quality, accessibility of place, scope of purchase, availability of substitutes, etc. Therefore, the reasons perceived by the consumers to purchase vegetables and fruits at Rythu Bazaars are presented in the following table and analysed. Since, the study identified 10 major reasons for purchasing of vegetables and fruits in Rythu Bazaars the perceptions of the consumers about these reasons are presented in the table and discussed.

Table-7: Reasons perceived by the consumers to purchase vegetables and fruits at Rythu Bazaars

S. No	Statements	Strongly disagree	disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
1	High quality products available	24 (8.0)	29 (9.7)	34 (11.3)	71 (23.7)	142 (47.3)	300 (100.0)
2	Fresh products are available	22 (7.3)	25 (8.3)	30 (10.0)	61 (20.3)	162 (54.0)	300 (100.0)
3	Lesser price compare to other markets	9 (3.0)	15 (5.0)	20 (6.7)	38 (12.7)	218 (72.7)	300 (100.0)
4	Scope to purchase directly from the farmers	10 (3.3)	13 (4.3)	26 (8.7)	57 (19.0)	194 (64.7)	300 (100.0)
5	Only organic vegetables are sell in Rythu Bazaar	13 (4.3)	20 (6.7)	27 (9.0)	61 (20.3)	179 (59.7)	300 (100.0)
6	Price list of vegetables fixed by the government	8 (2.7)	18 (6.0)	26 (8.7)	67 (22.3)	181 (60.3)	300 (100.0)
7	Less scope to bargain	17 (5.7)	21 (7.0)	29 (9.7)	62 (20.7)	171 (57.0)	300 (100.0)
8	Location of Rythu Bazaars near to the residential areas	7 (2.3)	16 (5.3)	24 (8.0)	59 (19.7)	194 (64.7)	300 (100.0)
9	Suitable parking area available for vehicles	14 (4.7)	20 (6.7)	26 (8.7)	63 (21.0)	177 (59.0)	300 (100.0)
10	Available of diverse products	11 (3.7)	26 (8.7)	34 (11.3)	42 (14.0)	187 (62.3)	300 (100.0)

The reasons perceived by the consumers for purchasing vegetables and fruits at Rythu Bazaars, the data reveals that 47.3 percent strongly agreed and 23.7 percent agreed that high quality products available in Rythu Bazaars. Regarding availability of fresh products it is found that 54.0 percent strongly agreed and 20.3 percent agreed. With reference to low price at Rythu Bazaars compared to other markets data shows 72.7

percent strongly agreed and 12.7 percent agreed. It is observed 64.7 percent strongly agreed, 19.0 percent agreed that there is an opportunity to purchase directly from the farmers is the reason to purchase vegetables at Rythu Bazaars. It is noticed that 59.7 percent strongly agreed and 20.3 percent agreed that only organic products are available to purchase at Rythu Bazaars is the reason to purchase.

With reference to reasons to purchase vegetables and fruits at Rythu Bazaars the perceptions of the consumers revealed that data 60.3 percent strongly agreed and 22.3 percent agreed that vegetables price list set by the government, 57.0 percent strongly agreed and 20.7 percent agreed that less bargaining is the reason for buying at Rythu Bazaars, 64.7 percent strongly agreed and 19.7 percent agreed that location of Rythu Bazaars near to the residential areas, 59.0 percent strongly agreed and 21.0 percent agreed that adequate parking area available for vehicles at Rythu Bazaars, and finally 62.3 percent strongly agreed and 14.0 percent agreed that availability of diverse products at Rythu Bazaars is the reason for purchasing vegetables.

Table-8 Perceived score analysis of consumers about various reasons for purchasing vegetables and fruits at Rythu Bazaars

SL. No	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	
	Scale Value (SV)	1	2	3	4	5		
1	High quality products available	24	29	34	71	142	300	
	Frequency x Scale Value	24	58	102	284	710	1178-X	
2	Fresh products are available	22	25	30	61	162	300	
	Frequency x Scale Value	22	50	90	244	810	1216-IX	
3	Lesser price compare to other markets	9	15	20	38	218	300	
	Frequency x Scale Value	9	30	60	152	1090	1341-I	
4	Scope to purchase directly from the farmers	10	13	26	57	194	300	
	Frequency x Scale Value	10	26	78	228	970	1312-III	
5	Only organic vegetables are sell in Rythu Bazaar	13	20	27	61	179	300	
	Frequency x Scale Value	13	40	81	244	895	1273-V	
6	Price list of vegetables fixed by the government	8	18	26	67	181	300	
	Frequency x Scale Value	8	36	78	268	905	1295-IV	
7	Less scope to bargain	17	21	29	62	171	300	
	Frequency x Scale Value	17	42	87	248	855	1249-VIII	
8	Location of Rythu Bazaars near to the residential areas	7	16	24	59	194	300	
	Frequency x Scale Value	7	32	72	236	970	1317-II	
9	Suitable parking area available for vehicles	14	20	26	63	177	300	
	Frequency x Scale Value	14	40	78	252	885	1269-VI	
10	Available of diverse products	11	26	34	42	187	300	
	Frequency x Scale Value	11	52	102	168	935	1268-VII	
	Total Score						12718	
	Maximum Possible Score	5(Maximum score points) 300 (number of respondents) x 10 (number of statements)						15000
	Percentage of score	Total score of /Maximum possible score x 100						84.7
	Average	Total score / Number of statements						1271.8

Perceived scores of consumers about various reasons for purchase vegetables at Rythu Bazaars are consisted with 10 reasons and each one carrying its individual score on the basis of perceptions. Based on the scores the ranks have been given to each reason and analysis has been discussed. According to the scores the 1st rank is given to the reason lesser price compare to other markets influenced the consumers, and the 2nd rank has given to the reason location of Rythu Bazaars near to the residential areas. While the reason of scope to purchase directly from the farmers occupied 3rd rank, the reason of price list of vegetables fixed by the government has given 4th rank to purchase fruits and vegetables from the Rythu Bazaars. It is found from the data 5th rank is given to 'only organic vegetables are sell in Rythu Bazaar', 6th rank is given to 'suitable parking area available for vehicles'. While 7th rank is given to 'availability of diverse products, 8th rank is given to 'less scope to bargain at Rythu Bazaars'. Moreover, 9th rank is given to 'fresh products are available' and 10th rank is given to 'high quality products available at Rythu Bazaars. Hence, with reference to the scores of the 10 statements the total score was 12718 and the average score is 1271.8.

Table-9: Perceived score differences among various socio-demographic group consumers towards reasons to purchase vegetables and fruits at Rythu Bazaars

Particulars	Category	N	Mean	Std dev	Std Err	f- value	p-value
Age	Below 30 years	65	41.92	5.770	0.716	0.748	0.474
	30-50 years	145	42.28	5.480	0.455		
	Above 50 years	90	42.92	4.490	0.473		
Gender	Male	128	42.66	5.320	0.470	0.556	0.457
	Female	172	42.20	5.232	0.399		
Occupation	Un employee	67	41.28	5.537	0.676	1.412	0.220
	Employee	51	41.84	5.033	0.705		
	Self employee	83	43.33	5.149	0.565		
	Profession/ business	60	42.73	5.089	0.657		
	House wife	22	43.09	5.494	1.171		
Monthly income	Nil	35	41.54	5.669	0.958	0.812	0.488
	10,000	133	42.15	5.165	0.448		
	10,000-20,000	104	42.76	5.017	0.492		
	Above 20,000	28	43.25	6.138	1.160		
	Total	300	42.39	5.266	0.304		

The Table-9 represents the perceived score differences among various socio-demographic group consumers towards reasons for purchase vegetables and fruits at Rythu Bazaars. The data reveals that among various age group consumers the average perceived score of above 50 years (42.92) found highest and the lowest average score perceived by below 30 years (41.92), and the standard deviations are 4.490 and 5.770 respectively. With these mean and standard deviation differences among various age groups the calculated f-value 0.748 does not indicate any significance result because the p-value 0.474 found higher than 0.05. This infers that age is not a factor to determine the reasons to purchase vegetables at Rythu Bazaars. With reference to gender groups it is found that the average perceived score of male (42.66) is higher than their counterpart female (42.20), but the calculated f-value 0.556 does not indicate any significance result because the p-value 0.457. This indicates that gender does not influenced consumes to select for purchasing reasons at Rythu Bazaars. Regarding to the average perceptive scores of various occupation group consumers, it shows that self employee group (43.33) is found higher than other groups and unemployed group (41.28) found lowest, and their respective standard deviations are 5.149 and 5.537. But the calculated f-value 1.412 does not indicate any significance result because the p-value 0.220. This infers that occupation of the consumes does not determine the reasons for purchase vegetables and fruits at Rythu Bazaars. Whereas the average perceived scores of various monthly income level group consumers it shows that above Rs. 20,000 income group found maximum score (43.25) than other groups and none earning group consumers found minimum score (41.54), and the respective standard deviations of the groups are 6.138 and 5.669. In this regard the calculated f-value 0.812 indicate no significance result because the p-value 0.488. This shows that the income levels doe not determine

the consumers' reasons to purchase vegetables and fruits at Rythu Bazaars.

Conclusion

Rythu Bazaar is a type of market in Andhra Pradesh run by the State Governments for small-scale farmers with small landholdings. The motto of these markets is farmers can directly sell their agriculture produce to the consumers without the intervention of middleman. Thus this paper aimed to study the perceived reasons for purchasing vegetables and fruits at Rythu bazaars with reference to consumers. Thus, the key factors to purchase at Rythu Bazaars and the reasons to purchase at Rythu Bazaars are studied with the help of consumers who visit regularly to these markets. The key factors influencing the consumers in taking decision to purchase in Rythu Bazaars are lower prices compared to other markets, persuaded by location, trust on the farmers and freshness of produce influenced them to purchase in Rythu Bazaars. Whereas the reasons to purchase in Rythu Bazaars, the perceptions of the consumers revealed that as many as 92.4 percent perceived location of Rythu Bazaars near to the residential areas and scope to purchase directly from the farmers are the main reasons for purchasing at these markets. Whereas 91.3 percent opined price list of vegetables fixed by the government and 92.1 percent felt price at Rythu Bazaars comparatively lesser than other markets. Moreover, 89.0 percent felt only organic vegetables sell in Rythu Bazaar and 88.7 percent interested due to suitable parking area available for vehicles. While 87.6 percent interested to purchase at Rythu Bazaars because of availability of diverse products, 87.4 percent interested due to less scope to bargain. Since, 84.3 percent said the reason is availability of fresh products and 82.3 percent said availability of high quality products are the reasons for purchasing vegetable and fruits at Rythu Bazaars. Therefore, the government has to take more initiatives to encourage farmers to sell their produce and consumers to purchase at Rythu Bazaars.

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