

A Study on Marketing of NTFPs in Bastar Region of Chhattisgarh state with special reference to Fermented Traditional Drinks

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ABSTRACT

Chhattisgarh, state of east-central India having 41.21 percent of its total geographical area under forest cover. It is the third largest state of India in terms of forest cover famous for its richness in biodiversity, its tribes and culture. The tribal people of the state mainly depend on forest produce for their livelihood. The present paper focuses on Marketing of NTFPs with special reference to fermented traditional drinks i.e., Mahua (*Madhuca longifolia* var. *latifolia* (Roxb.) A.Chev.), Chhind (*Phoenix sylvestris* (L.) Roxb.) and Salphi (*Caryota urens* L.). The study has been conducted in selected rural markets in four sampled districts of Bastar region i.e., Bastar, Dantewada, Kanker and Kondagaon in the month of November and December, 2022. The paper is purely based on the data obtained from the markets and respondents there which shows that its market price varies according to its availability.

KEYWORDS: Forest Produce, NTFPs, Marketing Price, Mahua, Salphi, Chhind

INTRODUCTION

Chhattisgarh state was carved out of Madhya Pradesh as the 26th state of India on November 1st, 2000. The state is significantly rich in biodiversity due to its favorable agro-climatic conditions. The state's recorded forest area (RFA) is 55,717 km², which is 41.21% of its total geographical area (ISFR 2021). The inhabitants of Chhattisgarh are mainly tribal whose livelihood depends on the forest produce.

Timber, Non-Timber (also known as Minor Forest Produce), and Minor Minerals are the three categories into which Forest Produce can be divided. Minor Forest Produce (MFP) encompasses all non-timber forest products of plant origin which comes in the forms of fruits, seeds, leaves, roots, barks, flowers, grasses, and more. It also includes the entire plant of therapeutic herbs and shrubs.

These NTFPs are advantageous to those who reside close to or in the forest. Their livelihood is largely dependent on this insignificant forest produce because it is their main source of revenue. In addition, they obtain a variety of items from forests to meet their daily needs. It is well known that not all NTFPs that are harvested from forests get sold in marketplaces; just a select few do. Tribal peoples get their fermented drinks from the entire plant or plant parts, through distillation after that fermentation.

Traditional and heritage-fermented drinks like mahua, salfi and chhind are major source of livelihood for tribal people. Which is also included in their indigenous culture. Tribals of Chhattisgarh state are authorized to sell the fermented drinks in local or tribal market. It contributes to a major share in revenue as well as in rural economy developments. Below are the details of NTFPs selected for the study:

Mahua (*Madhuca longifolia* var. *latifolia* (Roxb.) A.Chev.): Mahua, a member of the Sapotaceae family, is primarily found in the forests of the north and central India, namely in the states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Gujarat, and Orissa. It is naturally found in the forest of the Bastar plateau in Chhattisgarh. It is a rapidly expanding, multi-use tree with evergreen characteristics that is grown for its flowers, seeds, and wood in warm, humid climates also. Mahua season lasts for two to three months. It blooms between March and April.

Mahua provides several health advantages and disease-preventive qualities. Mahua flowers, which have strong cultural significance to the tribal people, are distilled and fermented to create "mahua daaru," an alcoholic beverage with a 20–40% alcohol content. Mahua drink is offered to deities by Bastar tribal groups because they view it as a part of their cultural heritage. Mahua is always present throughout their all-cultural ceremonies.

Chhind Ras (*Phoenix sylvestris* (L.) Roxb.): The Khajur palm, often referred to as Indian Date or Wild Date Palm, is a member of the Areaceae family and is well-known for its nutritional value as well as a variety of medicinal and non-medicinal characteristics. Alcohol and sugar are prepared using the *Chhind ras*. In rural regions, Chhind juice is often used to make jaggery. According to tribal legend, a tree produces juice 200–250 liters throughout the season. Prior to the trees producing juice, the tribals sell them for the season. In this method, there is a good amount of fruit and liquid.

Salphi (*Caryota urens* L.): Salphi, a member of the Areaceae family, is a local drink made from the sap of the tree, which is known to be intoxicating on its own. It is commonly referred to as "*Bastar Beer*" in this region. The drink is smooth and mild in flavor. Salphi, which is white in color, resembles coconut water but is less sweet; in fact, it has a slightly bitter taste. In order to collect it, men climb the tree with an earthen pot and make a cut with Haasiya, allowing the sap to flow into the pot. When the sap begins to drip from a cut the flowering branch, yeast in the air begins to ferment it. Salphi does not have the longest shelf life, so it must be consumed fresh, that is, within an hour of being collected from the branch, otherwise excessive fermentation will cause stomach upset. The tree represents prosperity and is very important to the rural region of Bastar. The drink is used by the tribes for a variety of occasions and celebrations.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To have a general idea about the heritage liquors of Chhattisgarh (Mahua, Salfi and Chind Ras).
- To assess the marketing value of these fermented drinks in different markets of Bastar Region.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Selection of study area

The study has been conducted in sampled four districts of the Bastar region i.e, Bastar, Dantewada, Kondagaon and Kanker. The rural market was selected randomly from each district as presented in Table 1.



Fig 1 : Map showing Chhattisgarh in India

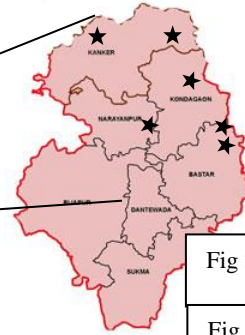


Fig 2: Map showing Bastar region in Chhattisgarh

Fig 3: Map showing study area in Bastar region

Table 1: Sampled districts, and rural markets for study

DISTRICTS	RURAL MARKET
Bastar	Dimrapal
	Kamanar
Dantewada	Geedam
Kondagaon	Pharasgaon
Kanker	Sarona
	Amaguda

Method of Enquiry and Data Collection

Primary Data has been collected from the respondents of selected rural markets by personal interview method. The data were collected in the month of November and December 2022.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On the basis of the survey conducted in the Rural markets of Selected four districts under Bastar region by asking frequent questions to the sellers there, the below is the findings of the study:

➤ **Marketing Price of Mahua (*Madhuca longifolia* var. *latifolia* (Roxb.) A.Chev.)**

Districts	Rural Markets	Marketing Price (Per litre)
Bastar	Dimrapal	Rs.70-80/L
	Kamanar	Rs.70-80/L
Dantewada	Geedam	Rs.60/L
Kondagaon	Pharasgaon	Rs.60-70/L
Kanker	Sarona	Rs.80/L
	Amaguda	Rs.70-80/L

It can be seen from the above table that the selling price of Mahua in Sarona market is highest i.e, Rs. 80/L while Geedam market of Dantewada district offers the lowest price of Rs.60/L.

➤ **Marketing Price of Chhind Ras (*Phoenix sylvestris* (L.) Roxb.)**

Districts	Rural Markets	Marketing Price (Per litre)
Bastar	Dimrapal	Rs.50/L
	Kamanar	Rs.60/L
Dantewada	Geedam	Rs.60/L
Kondagaon	Pharasgaon	Rs.60/L
Kanker	Sarona	Rs.60/L
	Amaguda	Rs.50/L

It is depicted from the table that Dimrapal ana Amaguda market of Bastar and Kanker district sells it in the lowest price of Rs. 50/L while in other markets the selling price is Rs.60/L.

➤ **Marketing Price of Salphi (*Caryota urens* L.)**

Districts	Rural Markets	Marketing Price (Per litre)
Bastar	Dimrapal	Rs.40/L
	Kamanar	Rs.30/L
Dantewada	Geedam	Rs.40/L
Kondagaon	Pharasgaon	Rs.50/L
Kanker	Sarona	Rs.60/L
	Amaguda	Rs.50/L

Likewise if we see the above table it is depicted that Sarona Market of Kanker district offers the highest price of Rs.60/L while it's the lowest in Kmanar market of Bastar District(Rs.30/L.)

CONCLUSION

Non-timber forest produce (NTFPs) are crucial for the tribes residing inside of forests to maintain a sustainable way of life. NTFPs are a significant source of employment, money, food, nutrition, and healthcare. However, current issues including average market prices, a lack of a developed market, and the presence of adverse weather significantly impede the gathering and marketing of NTFPs. The respondents were earning fair but unstable rates for their traditional beverages as a result of the market's unstable price and weak infrastructure. Therefore, it is necessary to take the appropriate work plan in order to resolve the issues that the respondent in the study region is currently experiencing.

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