1.1 Introduction

Trade provides mankind's most significant meeting place i.e. the market. In primitive societies only religious events, cult rituals or rites of passage such as marriage bring people together in a comparable way. But a market is one place where interaction of people do take place in the due course while conducting trade.

Trade involves entrepreneurs and middlemen, people willing to accept delay and risk in the hope of a large profit. The archive found at Ebla gives a glimpse of an early trading city, from the middle of the third millennium BC. [Historyworld.net]

As quoted from the research article by Mark Casson and John S. Lee, The Origin and Development of Markets: A Business History Perspective, (Spring 2011), “the origins of the market are obscure, but substantial documentary evidence survives from the eleventh century onward, when chartered markets and new towns were established across Western Europe. The expansion of the market system is important for business history because it created new opportunities for business growth. It can be observed from the earlier history of developing markets, that successful markets were regulated often by civic authorities to maintain a reputation for reasonable prices and quality control. Markets were located at both transport hubs and centres’ of consumption, even when the latter were quite remote. However, as transport and communication costs declined, shakeouts occurred and only the larger markets survived.” [Cason & Lee].

According to Adam Smith, “The division of labour is limited by the extent of the market. The market is the key to specialization. Firms cannot specialize in particular product lines, or particular stages of production, if they cannot sell a sufficient quantity of their output. It is the growth of the market that facilitates both the emergence of new production methods and the growth of the firms and industries that exploit these methods. The market does not just allocate resources it stimulates innovation too. The market is an arena of competition. In a market where entry is easy, monopoly power is eroded by the entry of competitors. Even in innovative high-technology industries, firms circumvent each other’s patents,
and patents themselves expire. Eventually, the entry of followers may stabilize the market as an oligopoly, in which several firms share the market.” [Smith]

The growth of international commodity markets in the nineteenth century and the spread of global brands in the second half of the twentieth century, do argue, testify to the vitality and resilience of the market system. Conversely, the collapse of Soviet Communism and the liberalization of Chinese economic policy point to the demise of central planning as a viable alternative to the price system. Others have argued, however, that the market is merely a device by which powerful economic agents’ appropriate monopoly rents. These agents may be large corporations, such as the trusts created by the robber barons or businessman using unscrupulous means to earn gains of the Gilded Age, or powerful trade unions that bargain for a share of business profits for their members. [Cason & Lee]

In economics, the market is often described in abstract terms as an intersection of supply and demand. The play of competitive forces is assumed to generate an equilibrium market price. This raises the question of where the market is actually located and where the people who use the market actually reside. The answers to these questions lead to the concept of the market as a place, serving a particular area in which its participants reside. The participants meet at the market because it is an information hub. [Cason & Lee]

Historically, market behaviour has always been governed by rules, although they have been more intrusive for some commodities and in some localities than others. These rules relate to pricing, quality control, freedom of entry, and so on. They are enforced by law, by agreement, and by social convention. They provide reassurance to customers and help to maintain the reputation of the capitalist market system. Today, these rules are most apparent in the case of regulated natural monopolies, such as utilities, but in fact they apply to all markets. The field of competition may be local, regional, national, or global. Some commodities, such as grain, are easier to standardize, while others, such as high-value textiles, are easier to transport. Throughout recorded history, the costs of exchanging information and transporting goods have followed a downward trend, punctuated by periods of war, protectionism, and natural disaster. As the cost of
distance has fallen, so the field of competition has expanded, and goods that were once traded only locally become traded internationally instead. [Cason & Lee]

Long-distance trade stimulates the growth of hubs where routes converge, and where goods are transshipped from one mode of transport to another. Such hubs are natural market centres’, but they are also much more. By studying the variety of products available from distant sources, ideas for new products or new combinations, as Joseph Schumpeter called them are generated in the minds of traders and their customers. The market acts as a spur to innovation. The bigger the market, and the wider the area it serves, the more profound its innovations are likely to be. [Schumpeter]

Markets may be formal or informal. In a formal market, transactions are transparent and governed by regulations. Formal markets are open regularly at fixed hours for the exchange of a stipulated range of commodities at either the wholesale or retail level. Trust between trans-actors is based upon trust in the system, rather than (or as well as) personal knowledge. Large transactions may be witnessed, and, if credit is involved, then a record will almost certainly be kept. A formal market is therefore a specialized institution for the facilitation of transactions. It is normally associated with a concentration of transactions at a specific location, such as a marketplace, where infrastructure (e.g., a market hall and surrounding shops, inns, and taverns for refreshment) is provided. By contrast, an informal market can be based at any convenient place, such as the street corner or the doorstep. Informal transactions tend to be small, lightly regulated, dispersed over a range of locations, and dependent on personal trust, rather than on trust in the system. [Cason & Lee]

In a traditional market, agriculture produce would be brought and kept in the market and the potential buyers would come and see the quality of the produce and negotiate with the farmers directly for a price that they would be willing to pay and the quantity that they would like to buy. The deals were then struck once mutual agreement was reached on the price and the quantity to be bought / sold. Thus, a market does show its importance and its key character in purchasing and selling goods or commodities.
1.2 **Definition of Commodity:**

In classical political economy and especially Karl Marx’s critique of political economy states, “a Commodity” is any good or service produced by human labour and offered as a product for general sale on the market.

Generally speaking, any tangible good can be categorized as a Commodity. A Commodity is typically a bulk good or raw materials such as grains, metals, livestock, oil, cotton, coffee, sugar, and cocoa, which are used to produce consumer products and whose prices are driven by supply and demand.

In the world of business, a Commodity is regarded as “an undifferentiated product whose market value arises from the owner’s right to sell rather to use”. Different dictionaries has defined the word ‘Commodity’ as – “Any item that can be bought and sold, or Any item which affords convenience, advantage, or profit, and especially in commerce, which includes everything movable that is bought and sold”.

A Commodity in simple terms can also be described as a product having commercial value, which can be produced, bought, sold and consumed. In short Commodity includes all kinds of goods.

As quoted by Sunyani Pandit in her research paper Commodity Market published at managementadvise.com on January 30th 2007, defines Commodity as- “Commodities are basically the products of primary sector of an economy. Primary sector of an economy is that part of the economy, which is concerned with agriculture and extraction of raw material. In order to qualify as a commodity, an article or a product has to meet some basic characteristics. These are listed below: -

a) The product has not gone through any complicated manufacturing activity, though simple processing (like mining, cropping, etc.) is not ruled out. In other words, the product must be in a basic, raw, unprocessed state. There are of course some exceptions to this rule e.g. in case of metals and products like sugar.

b) Major consideration while buying a particular commodity is its price, since
there is hardly any difference in quality from seller to seller.

c). The product has to be fairly standardized in the sense that there cannot be such
differentiation in a product based on its quality.

d). Prices of the product are determined by market forces, demand and supply and
they undergo rapid changes or fluctuations.”

Another definition of the term Commodity forwarded by the Forward Contract
Regulation Act, 1952 as, “The term commodity includes all kinds of goods. It
defines 'goods' as every kind of movable property other than actionable claims,
money and securities.”

Another definition of commodity as suggested by investopedia.com is -
“Commodity can be termed as a basic good used in commerce that is
interchangeable with other commodities of the same type. Commodities are most
often used as inputs in the production of other goods or services. The quality of a
given commodity may differ slightly, but it is essentially uniform across
producers”.

Another definition of the term commodity as suggested by “The Statutes of
(California)” defining Commodity is- “Commodity is an article of trade or
commerce especially an agricultural or mining product that can be processed and
resold. It includes only tangible goods such as products or merchandise. It could
also mean an economic good like a raw material or an agricultural product.”

The USlegal.definitons.com has also given a simple definition of commodity as-
"Commodity means any horticultural, viticultural, or vegetable product of the soil,
aqua cultural, livestock and livestock products, and poultry and poultry products.
It does not, however, include milk or milk products.”

"Commodity means, except as otherwise specified by the commissioner by rule or
order, any agricultural, grain, or livestock product or byproduct, any metal or
mineral any gem or gemstone , any fuel (whether liquid, gaseous, or otherwise),
any foreign currency, and all other goods, articles, products, or items of any kind.”

In common parlance the word Commodity has its significance as it
encompasses a variety of goods which are traded in large quantities at markets
which are organized in nature. Commodities do have certain varieties and are typically of different nature. The inflow and outflow of commodities is the result of its demand and supply at a given place and some special significance has been attached to different markets for their transactions of commodities. The logistics support which is available to all the market contributes greatly to the development and to the growth of the markets. Existence of a vibrant, active and liquid commodity market is normally considered as a healthy sign of development of any economy.

1.3 Concept of Wholesale Market:

Commodities mainly primary or of raw nature do play a key role in the development of important wholesale markets at any place. Wholesale market does play an important role in developing the shape of any city into a central market and transforming it to a prime trading point. Wholesale markets improve efficiency in food distribution by encouraging competition through creating conditions for transparent price discovery at relatively low costs and by enhancing access to market information for various market participants. Wholesale markets therefore play a crucial role in the vertical coordination of food markets, equilibrating supply with demand and facilitating price formation.

The fundamental objective of wholesale markets is to improve efficiency in the food distribution pipeline. By centralizing transactions at a single location, reducing the period for transactions, and separating wholesale and retail functions in the distribution system, wholesale markets promote greater transparency and better price formation through a clearer interplay of supply and demand. Storage and handling conditions are also enhanced, leading to significant reductions in post-harvest losses especially in the case of perishable produce.

Few benefits which are derived from the physical functions of wholesale markets as outlined by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UNO viz.-

- produce protection: goods are protected from the elements (rain, wind and sun) and stored under more hygienic conditions, thus reducing spoilage;
• improved handling operations: the market considerably reduces loading and unloading times as well as repeated handling of goods between unloading and display; vehicles are also parked and unutilized for shorter periods; and
• easier introduction of innovation and new technology: the physical concentration of a large group of operators at the same place makes it easier to introduce innovation and to develop improved storage, handling and management technology and methods.

Wholesale markets also encourage:

• greater stability of supply and sale of produce: the existence of centralized physical locations, known and easily accessible to operators, reduces the number of intermediaries in the distribution pipeline and improves the flow of information between operators, both upstream (growers and collectors) and downstream (wholesalers and retailers), thus reducing uncertainty concerning supplies and completion of sales transactions;
• improved market information (especially on prices): the centralization of transactions that occur in modern wholesale markets enhances the collection, processing and wide dissemination of accurate market information, hence improving the quality of enterprise investment decisions as well as promoting efficient resource allocation in the economy in general and food production and distribution in particular;
• specialization of traders: the separation of wholesale and retail functions in FSDSs encourages specialization by traders leading to efficiency and lower distribution costs;
• enhanced competition leading to improved efficiency in the exchange process (efficiency in resource allocation and price) and facilitating price discovery;
• improved inspection, quality control, sorting and grading according to quality encourage the use of standard weights and measures and improved standards of hygiene in the sale of produce (especially of perishables); and
• increased volume of produce marketed and quality differentiation: the reduction in the number of intermediaries in the food marketing chain and consequent increase in the tonnage handled by individual traders or the scale of their operations tend to lower distribution costs (especially the cost of transporting produce) and also
encourage efficient sorting and grading which facilitates trade in produce of different quality.

According to The 1954 Census of Business (USA) which defines Wholesale Trade as “marketing or selling merchandise to retailers, to other wholesalers, or to industrial, commercial, professional or other institutional users in contrast to selling to household consumers; to individual for personal use or to farmers.”

1.4 Definition of wholesaler:

According to the United Nations Statistics Division, "wholesale" is the resale (sale without transformation) of new and used goods to retailers, to industrial, commercial, institutional or professional users, or to other wholesalers, or involves acting as an agent or broker in buying merchandise for, or selling merchandise to, such persons or companies. Wholesalers frequently physically assemble sort and grade goods in large lots, break bulk, repack and redistribute in smaller lots. While wholesalers of most products usually operate from independent premises, wholesale marketing for foodstuffs can take place at specific wholesale markets where all traders are congregated.

The sale and distribution of goods to users other than end consumers. Wholesaling involves selling merchandise to retailers, wholesalers and merchants, or to industrial, commercial and institutional users. A wholesaler can act as a middleman, brokering deals between these businesses. Wholesaling often occurs when large quantities of merchandise are reassembled, sorted, then repackage, and distribute in smaller lots.

In the word of Evelyn Thomas, “a true wholesaler is himself neither a manufacturer nor a retailer but acts as a link between the two.” 2012 [Jain & Jain]

As quoted from the website portal of Business Knowledge Resource Online created by the Government of India at business.gov.in. on 2013, a wholesaler may be defined as “the middlemen who operates between the producers (from whom they purchase goods) and the retailers (to whom they sell the goods). Wholesaler refers to any individual or business firm selling goods in relatively large quantities to buyers (retailers) other than the ultimate consumers.”

Thus, the manufacturers who sell their products directly to retailers may also be regarded as Wholesalers. The specialized knowledge and skills of the wholesaler
also increases the efficiency of the distribution network of any commodity. The wholesaler does provide important services and solve the problems of both the manufacturers and retailers.

On the basis of function of the wholesaler in the marketing of manufactured goods, a wholesale trader may be defined as a trader who purchases goods in large quantities from manufacturers and resells them to retailers in small quantities.

1.4. A. Characteristics of Wholesalers:

“The following are the main characteristics of the wholesalers-

1. Wholesalers occupy the first and important position in the channel of distribution.

2. Wholesalers generally purchase merchandise direct from the manufacturers in large quantities and sell them to the retailers in small quantities.

3. Generally, wholesalers are finally sound. They purchase goods in cash from the manufacturers and sell them to the retailers in credit.

4. Wholesaler’s profit margin is very small so that they can maximize their sales volume to earn maximum profit.

5. Wholesalers generally deal in limited product items or product lines.

6. Wholesalers provide ready delivery of products by having warehousing and transportation facilities.” [Jain & Jain]

In India the Koyambedu Wholesale Market Complex (KWMC) is one of Asia’s largest perishable goods market complex located at Koyambedu, Chennai. The market complex is spread over an area of 295 acres (1.19 km²). Inaugurated in 1996, the complex consists of more than 1,000 wholesale shops and 2,000 retail shops. In Phase I, a wholesale market for perishables was developed in an area of around 70 acres (280,000 m²) by constructing 3,194 shops. The market has two blocks for vegetable shops and one each for fruit and flower shops. In Phase II, a textile market and in Phase III, a food grain market have been planned to be developed in the complex.
The food grain market will be built on seven to eight acres of land belonging to the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority, adjacent to the Koyambedu fire service station and opposite the vegetable market, and will have about 500 shops.

Thus, a Wholesale market is considered a very important constituent of any market economy. In this market various commodities are traded at different trading points at bulk quantities and it is worth mentioning that rules governing this market for trading of commodities are not strictly followed or manipulation in trading results in a vast volume of transaction getting unaccounted. The task undertaken is invariably a challenging one owing to the fact, that primary investigation of a sincere research could be a more revealing assessment of the situation than any official document. The present study will basically analyse the flows of commodities at various trading points and also how these trading points have been developed into modern commercial markets.

1.5 History of Trade in India and Growth of Markets in Assam:-

Markets have been in existence for centuries all around the world and it usually represents a meeting point of sellers and buyers of varied commodities, goods and service. Traditionally, the farmers used to bring their produce to a central place (called Mandi\Bazar) in a town\village where grain merchants\traders would also come and buy the produce and transport, distribute it to other markets. The history of the growth of trade in India and especially that of the state Assam since the olden days are presented below.

“Right from ancient times till the establishment of the British Empire, India was famed for her fabulous wealth. Even during the medieval period, i.e. roughly from the 12\text{th} to the 16\text{th} centuries, the country was prosperous despite the frequent political upheavals. A notable feature of this period was the growth of towns in various parts of the country. This development was the result of the political and economic policies followed by the Muslim rulers. These towns grew into trade and industrial centres which in turn led to the general prosperity.

During the Sultanate period, which lasted from the early 13\text{th} to the early 16\text{th} centuries, the economy of the towns flourished. This was due to the
establishment of a sound currency system based on the silver tanka and the copper dirham. Ibn Batuta the 14th century Moorish traveller had visited India during the Sultanate period. He had described the teeming markets of the big cities in the Gangetic plains, Malwa, Gujarat and Southern India. The important centres of trade and industry were Delhi, Lahore, Bombay, Ahmedabad, Sonargaon and Jaunpur. Coastal towns also developed into booming industrial centres with large populations.

During the two hundred years of Mughal rule i.e. from the 16th to the 18th centuries the urbanisation of India received a further impetus. The Mughal era witnessed the establishment of a stable centre and a uniform provincial government. During this age of relative peace and security, trade and commerce flourished. The burgeoning foreign trade led to the development of market places not only in the towns but also in the villages. The production of handicrafts increased in order to keep up with the demand for them in foreign countries.

The prime urban centres during the Mughal era were Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Multan, Thatta and Srinagar in the north. The important cities in the west included Ahmedabad, Bombay (then known as Khambat), Surat, Ujjain and Patan (in Gujarat). The flourishing trade centres in the eastern part of the country were Dacca, Hoogli, Patna, Chitgaon and Murshidabad. Most of these cities boasted of sizeable populations.

Internal trade also flourished in the country due to the organised system set up by the government. The 14th century Sultan Alauddin Khilji for instance, used to strictly supervise the market places. Shopkeepers, who were caught violating the rules, were severely punished. According to Barbosa’s account, trade between Gujarat and Malwa was possible owing to the routes established in this area. The roads facilitated the exchange of goods between the different parts of the country. Limbodar in Gujarat and Dabhol in Maharashtra were major trade centres, which linked the northern and southern halves of the country. Accounts of foreign travellers give instances of the trade between Vijaynagar and Bhatkal in Goa with 5000-6000 bulls carrying goods between the two places. Vijaynagar traded in diamonds with other southern cities.
River routes also facilitated trade between different parts of the country. Boats carrying goods used to ply on the Indus and the Ganges. Some of the merchants had their own large boats.

Different communities dominated trade in various parts of the country. Multani and Punjabi merchants handled the business in the north, while in Gujarat and Rajasthan it was in the hands of the Bhats. Foreign traders from Central Asia, known as Khorasanis engaged in this profession all over India. Members of the nobility and the royalty took an interest in trading activities. They set up their own manufacturing centres wherein local artisans were employed.”[Padma]

Assam the state of India is located in the north-eastern part of the country and is bounded to the north by the kingdom of Bhutan and the state of Arunachal Pradesh to the east by the states of Nagaland and Manipur to the south by the states of Mizoram and Tripura and to the west by Bangladesh and the states of Meghalaya and West Bengal. The name Assam is derived from the word asama, meaning “peerless” in the now extinct Ahom language. [Britannica.com]

“In the earliest recorded times, Assam was part of Kamarupa, a state that had its capital at Praghyotishapura (now Guwahati). Ancient Kamarupa included roughly the Brahmaputra River valley, Bhutan, the Rangpur region (now in Bangladesh), and Koch Bihar, in West Bengal. King Narakasura and his son Bhagadatta were famous rulers of Kamarupa in the Mahabharata period.

But there is no doubt that throughout the ancient period, when the kingdom of Praghyotisha or Kamarupa included, besides the Brahmaputra Valley, part of East Bengal, its capital was situated at Praghyotishpur, which is known as Guwahati in the modern times, as there is no other place which all exactly fit with the description of the ancient inscriptions, where in the capital is stated to be “situated on the bank of Lauhitya” being surrounded by hills on all sides and crowded with dense forests.” [Britannica.com]

1.5.A. **Growth of Trade and Markets during the Ahom Period:**

History shows its evidence that export and import of commodities used to be practiced with other states of the country from the place then called Praghyotishpura since the time of Ahom Rule. Very few selected commodities
though used to be traded at that time as majority of the states were self sufficient within themselves, yet internal trade or movement of commodities used to take place since the early days from the State.

Since the early days it was an impression which has long sought, that the North-East is landlocked area and it is geographical location helps it to become as one of the major drawback for the under development of this region. It could also be learnt from history as narrated by the assamese historian Mr. S.K.Bhuyan and extracted from an unpublished seminar paper written by Mr. Udayon Misra and Jayanta Gogoi titled “India’s North-East: Exploring new possibilities of Trade and Communication with special reference to China” from the Chapter-3 titled- “The Ahom Period” (1328-1826), it is learnt that cotton was one of the product which used to be traded with the plains. Though, during the reign of the Ahom Rule, the Ahom Buranjis are full of account of retaliatory raids in to the Naga territory and the acceptance of Ahom suzerainty by the different Naga tribes bordering the Assam Plains. Thus, on the whole the Ahom Rulers followed a policy of accommodation with the Nagas and gave them revenue free lands and fishing rights in areas bordering the plains which were known as Naga-Khats and in return the Nagas paid tribute in the form of elephant tusks, spears, clothes and cotton to the Ahom Kingdoms. Due to this exchange a lively barter trade flourished between the Naga tribe and Assamese and flourished into Haats or village markets that were held in the Assam-Naga Hills border areas.

It was though with the Bhutanese that the Assamese had strong trade relations from the very early days. From the history it could be observed that the Bhutanese kept their trade relations open with the plains of Assam through the usual Duars or Gates. The duars through which the Bhutanese used to carry on trade with Assam were actually the strips of land given to the Rajah of Bhutan for facilitating trade. There were eleven such duars for facilitating trade and were located in Bengal and Assam. Apart from regular trade with Bhutan, there were also trade with Tibet through the Kariapar duar, and S.K. Bhuyan writes : “All Assam trade with Tibet were passed through the Kariapar Duar at a place called Chouna, two months journey from Lhasa; and in the first decade of the nineteenth it amounted to about two lakhs of rupees per year”. The merchants from Assam used to be stationed at Geegunsheer four miles from Chouna and the articles offered for sale by the
Lhasa merchants consisted of rock salt, woolen, gold dust, Chinese silk, etc., where as the Assam merchants carried the following goods for trade such as: Rice, Tussar cloth, iron and lac, buffalo horns, etc. It was here with the inception of trading between the two regions; the Kariapar Fair was started and held annually and was the principal channel for trade between Tibet, China, Bhutan and Assam.

Although as there is no such historical evidence of trade between Assam and China during the period of Ahom Rule, yet there was a time when the North-Eastern region occupied a central place in respect of trade and communication between the middle Gangetic valley and South China through Assam and North Myanmar. There was evidence of the fact historically about the existence of the Assam-Burma route, which is also known as Silk Route from the Seventeenth century onwards. However, the passes or the routes which were seemed to the way for entering the North-Eastern region through Burma seems to be fell into disguise, but the Burmese Army had used the Bhamo route to enter Assam. As there was no significant trade relation with the Southern China during the Ahom period, but the inflow of Chinese goods in the state can be presumed to be entering Assam through the intermediaries or middlemen viz. the Tibetans, Singhpho and the Bhutia traders. It was through the Bhutia traders who were acting as middlemen in the Assam-Tibet trade. There had been a regular traffic between the people of the hills and plains. Every winter through the duars the Bhutias and their neighbor would come down with mule loads of rock salt, gold dust, musk, woolen, yak-tails, Chinese silk, etc. and went back with different kinds of raw silk, clothes, rice and dried fish. (Misra 2000) Thus it can be said, that there had been a continuous traffic between the people of the hills and plains but with the invasion of the Burmese during the last few years of the Ahom Rule, the unfriendly atmosphere greatly reduced the volume of trade and interaction between the plains and the hills people.

During that period Assam’s relationship with neighbouring Bengal was not smooth upto the seventeenth century and was termed as a Close Door Approach. But despite the close door approach, there was a considerable amount of commercial transaction between the two states. Trade relations used to take place at a limited amount through the river routes to Bengal. The first overland routes laid from Bengal to Assam were through Murshidabad, Dinajpore, Rangpore,
Bagwa and Goalpara to the line till Calcutta Dak or Port. This close door approach of the Ahom rulers finally changed after the expulsion of Mughals in 1682, and resumed commercial ties with Bengal. (Bhuyan 1974) The setting up of the Hadira Chokey (a chokey or chowki, also spelt chowky is a trading Police post) during the temporary cessation of hostilities which turned into good trade ties between the two regions. Gradually trader from Bengal started settling in Goalpara with their merchandise while the Assamese traders stayed at Bangalghat. The key items of export from Assam were the cotton, mustard seeds, muga silk and ivory which accounted for around lacs of rupees and huge import of Salt the prime commodity which disrupted the balance of trade for Assam. Thus, it can be summed up from the above history that trade in Assam was stable and conducive towards making ties with the neighbouring regions during the Ahom rule.

1.5. B. Growth of Trade & Markets in Assam during Pre-Independence Period:

The advent of British brought few changes both in the economy as well as in the administration of Assam. With the extension of boundaries during the Ahom, Assam gradually increased to include most of the areas which include the North-East. The introduction of the tea discovery of the petroleum and coal were accompanied by the growth of railway network and development of new communication routes too. With the development of the tea, coal and petroleum industry in the Brahmaputra Valley, the British embarked on a forward policy at bringing all the neighbouring tribes under control. Instead of opening up trade with the Assam Plains, the British set up few regulations and acts which turned and pushed the Naga Hills into isolation. With the setting up of few acts and policies for controlling the region, the British has finally able to curb down the trading relations which were existed between Assam and its neighbouring states. Even the long trading relation with Bhutan seemed to be turning into a hostile one which finally broke all the trade relations with the state and finally the dispute with the British resulted in the Anglo Bhutan War in the year 1865. Finally, with the cancellation of the Treaty of Sinchula the trade relation which started during the Ahom period finally seen its end as it could not be restored under the British rule. (Barpujari, 1996).
As the British consolidated their hold over the market, trade through the frontier duars or doors gradually were taken off and the only major outlet remained was the Western Duar or the Hadira or the Khandahar Chowkey situated at the confluence of Manah and the Brahmaputra River. The abolition of the Hadira Chowkey resulted in a sharp rise in trade with Bengal which received an extra boost because of the induction of the regular river traffic on the river Brahmaputra, and eventually the first steam-boat service was started and put into service in 1847. The Assam-Bengal trade took a new turn with the growth of the tea industry in the region after the arrival of the British. Tea became gradually the most exportable commodities from Assam. The extension of the tea cultivation in the upper Assam and the operation of coal mines demanded an increase in the import of iron and steel needed for the laying of the railway lines. Thus, by the second half of the nineteenth century the entire pattern of the trade has changed with tea, mustard and jute replacing items like lac, cotton and ivory. By the year 1900, almost the entire trade was with Bengal, where as trading with the other regions other than Bengal accounted to less than one percent of the whole trading. (Barpujari, 1996)

Hence, with the introduction of the river and rail traffic along with the new commercial policies radically changed Assam’s trade relations with the bordering regions. With the introduction of the railways in the region the distance between Assam and Bengal have reduced dramatically and at the same time trading ties with the bordering regions were becoming very marginal. Gradually, it was observed and can be concluded by saying that the British rule in Assam was marked by a swift opening up towards the west and the gradual closure of the openings towards the east.

Thus, from the study of the above history a clear picture of the early trade in Assam can be seen and hence it can be said that prior independence until the advent of the British in the region, the trading of commodities to and from the region was at peak with its neighbouring and border regions but after the arrival of the British rulers this trading was curtailed and limited to only few regions. But, the arrival of the British do came with some advantages for the regions such as the introduction of the Railway network which was laid down by the British people
for trading specially with Bengal and even opening up the routes of the River ways for movement of goods and commodities both in and out of the region.

Though movement of goods and commodities or flow of commodities from Assam bears a long history and it’s not new for the region, yet after independence and after the partition of the India- Pakistan, there has been a shift of trade from the region which was considered bad for the region. Partition had a truly negative effect on the region’s border trade with the neighbouring countries and those who heavily depended on their trade with Eastern Bengal the most. With industrial development being slow and agriculture growth in minimum, Assam soon fell behind the other states of the Indian Union.

The history of trade in the state of Assam has been very rich yet it can be witnessed from long back history that Pragjyotishpur or Guwahati in modern times was one of the vital centres for the growth and development of market in the state. Yet, growth of market do depends on few essential points which includes the number of participants of both buyer and seller, the volume of trade, the number of population served, the number of commodities administered within the trading transaction, and lastly even the total turnover of the market. Hence, the Guwahati city does feature all the essential points to be developed as one of the vital centre for the market of various goods and commodities. Apart from the above mentioned elements to develop a market few other reasons which can be seen for the develop of market in the Guwahati city are basically-

a) the city is situated just beside the mighty river Brahmaputra and market do seem to grow near the riverside yet Guwahati do posses a healthy market for different commodity

b) The city is situated near the border areas and yet after division of the Union Territories in different states, the city is surrounded by different regions having their state boundaries near to the city which seems to be another reason for the growth of market in the Guwahati city.

c) Another reason for the growth of the market in this city are the community festival, religious festivals which do attract people from all around the country
temporarily for some time and thus plays an important role in the growth of market.

d) Lastly, with increase of population in the city and being developed as a one of the major cities in the entire North-Eastern region and even being considered as the Gateway to the North-Eastern Region, Guwahati has developed to be a prime centre for the growth of markets of different commodities scattering all around the city.

Assam being one of the prime important states in the North Eastern Region is predominantly rural and the economy is primarily agrarian in nature with almost 66% of the population directly dependent on agriculture as a source of income. If we look at the development of agriculture in Assam since independence, the scenario in terms of productivity and production has been mixed. The state has achieved self-sufficiency in rice, the staple crop, but still faces a shortfall in the overall requirement of oil-seed, pulses and wheat. Although the state has a surplus production of fruits and vegetables but almost 40% of the crop is lost because of poor harvest losses.

1.6 Guwahati - The city:

Being one of the major states of the North Eastern Region, Assam holds one of the key cities of the region viz. Guwahati, which is also known as the Gateway to the North East. Situated on the bank of the mighty river Brahmaputra, Guwahati is the legendary Pragjyotishpura or the City of the Eastern Light, the Gateway to the North Eastern India. Guwahati is a part of Kamrup District and is situated between 25.43 and 26.51 North Latitude and between 90.36 and 92.12 East Longitude. [Wikipedia.org] Guwahati, in Assam is a bustling city shaped by the temperamental Brahmaputra River. Being the nerve centre of the North Eastern states the city is well connected by air, road and rail. Guwahati also possess a thriving business class, comprising of people migrated from different states of India and settled here. The city has become the hub of industrial and commercial activities not only for Assam but also for the entire North Eastern part of India. It is also being contemplated to be the future gateway of India’s trade linkage with the South East Asia. As per the reports of Census India, the
population of Guwahati in 2011 is 957,352 of which male and female are 495,362 and 461,990 respectively. The sex ratio of female to male in the Guwahati city is 931 females against the national average of 926 females per 1000 males. The city with its population of nearly ten lakhs offers tremendous potentialities for growth of trade and commerce. In brief we can say Guwahati is the commercial nerve centre of the North East. Large quantities of primary goods, raw products, and finished goods are traded in the city with the help of existing and new trading centre in the city. The above study here has been undertaken to have a complete picture of the commodity flows and the growth of different key trading centers’ in the Guwahati city.

Guwahati being the flourishing city of Assam’s commercial capital has unique characteristics of fostering the growth of commodity markets. The inflows and outflows of commodities are indicative of its demand which is important from the view point of developing business activity for gainful employment and entrepreneurship development in the respective fields.

While the flow of commodity is accepted to be a demand adhered phenomenon, the growth of trading points is subjected to the rule of locational advantage, consistent with the nature of commodity, their transportation, acceptance of the public, convenience of buyer-seller congregation, etc.

1.7 Review of Literature:

Reviewing the literature has been an enormous task for the study as only a limited number of literature are available in the books, articles, papers, etc. Few authors have presented their views in relate to the wholesale markets and flows of commodity in India and some of which are outlined as follows-

**Da Silva Amandio F C and Parikh Nirali, (2008) from the book titled “Commodity Market: Emerging Paradigms” published by the ICFAI University Press**- attempts to highlights various methods of trading in derivatives and functioning of the various commodity exchanges across the world including India and has also tried to analyse commodity trading in India. Some quoted lines extracted from the book in relate to the topic- “Commodity markets are an important constituent of the financial markets of any country. The economic
The impact of the development of commodity markets cannot be undervalued. It is important to develop a vibrant and active commodity market to help investors hedge their commodity risk, take speculative positions and exploit arbitrage opportunities that they come across. With globalization and increasing world trade, commodities markets have emerged as a new opportunity area. The modern commodity markets have their roots in the ancient trade of agricultural and animal products and have now been extended to the trading of metals and energy commodities too. Commodity markets are not well developed in emerging markets like India, nor are there advanced controls and regulations, as is the case of financial markets.”


Few lines which are extracted in context of the commodity market are as such:

“The modern commodity market as we define it today has its origin in the western economies. Globally, this market has seen several cycles and the recent trend has seen an upswing in it. The robust growth of the emerging economies is shown as the primary reason for this. There are more than fifty major commodity exchanges in the world that trade in a variety of commodities. The commodities market in India has seen a gradual evolution over the years, picking up momentum only after economic liberalization, when the need for futures trading in goods was felt. Currently, India is one of the leading markets for commodity trading and is having a share of around 7% in exchange traded futures in the world.”

Alam. K, Das N.C., Borah A. K.,(ed) 2002 from the book titled “Guwahati- The Gateway to the North-East” published by the Concept Publisher, has served the study to have a broad view about the city, Guwahati.

Barua Nayan and Choudhury Monalisa, 2002, the topic titled ‘Guwahati- A Hub of Industrial and Commercial Buoyancy of the North-East India’ Chapter-15, from the book “Guwahati- The Gateway to the North- East”, Concept Publisher, has provided key literature source required for the study. Few important lines from the book quoted from chapter 15 are ‘Guwahati has become the hub of industrial and commercial activities not only for Assam but
also for the entire North Eastern part of India. It is also being contemplated to be the future gateway of India’s trade linkage with the South East Asia.”

Another research work similar to the study which was earlier conducted titled as- “Impact of Transport system on Commodity Movement – A Case study of Sonitpur District”, 2002 – By Suchitra Devi, Darrang College, Tezpur, under Dr. Devdas Bharali, [ Unpublished Thesis at K.K. Handique Library, Gauhati University]”

“The above study was conducted to highlight the movement of commodities and its relation with the prices of the commodities. The study was conducted at the Sonitpur district of Assam and key emphasis was given to highlight the importance of transport system in the movement of commodity. Movement of commodity is essential for the distribution of goods from the centre of production to the centre of consumption. Transport system is deeply concerned with the movement of commodities from place to place and it bridges the space and time gap separating the producer and consumer. The study was undertaken with the following objectives, few of which are mentioned below - a) to study the impact of transport system on the prices of commodities, b) to study the nature of commodity flows. It was found that 14 commodities were considered for the purpose of the study and it was later observed that among various commodities imported to the district, Tea is the only commodity which is exported from the district at large quantities. The study clearly comes with the findings that transport cost is included in the price of the commodity. The price of the commodity is generally determined from the transportation cost i.e. cost of carrying goods from the centre of production to the centre of consumption. Higher the distance higher is the price of the commodity. Thus, the study clearly shows the impact on commodities movement or flow without the appropriate support of all means of transport and suggestions were given to develop the infrastructure facilities for the betterment of commodity flow.”

A Research Paper titled- “Study On Marketing Infrastructure For Fruits and Vegetables in INDIA” by Dr. R.N. HEGDE Dr. N.V. MADHURI submitted to NIRD- NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India) on 2009-10
The above research paper here has attempted to study the requirement of infrastructure in marketing the fruits and vegetables in the market in the state of Karnataka and Maharashtra. This paper was submitted to the NIRD Hyderabad on 2009-10 & the study was conducted with important objectives. Few of those are as follows-

(i) To study the existing supply chain available for fruits and vegetables and to find the place of small and marginal farmers in the chain

(ii) To study the adequacy of market infrastructure

(iii) To study the personal profile of the consumers, their purchase behaviour, preferred purchase point and possible reasons for purchasing of fruits and vegetables.

(iv) Constraints faced by the farmers during the marketing of fruits/vegetables with reference to small and marginal farmers and to suggest solutions to overcome the constraints.

The study was conducted by using an ex-post facto research design and by adopting the purposively selected mango growers from Ratnagiri district (Maharashtra) and Ramanagara district (Karnataka) as well as tomato growers from Pune district (Maharashtra) and Kolar district (Karnataka) formed the universe for the study.

Few important lines extracted from the paper are-

“There has been concern in recent years regarding the efficiency of marketing of fruits and vegetables, leading to high and fluctuating consumer price and only a small share of consumer rupee reaching to the farmer. Marketing of fruits and vegetables is complex because of perishability, seasonality and bulkiness. Low efficiency in the marketing channels and inadequate marketing infrastructure are believed to be the cause for fluctuating prices. Indian farmers depend heavily on middlemen in fruits and vegetable marketing.

In the recent past, several private companies entered the business of marketing of fruits and vegetables. Therefore, an in-depth study of their operations vis-à-vis the existing public/people/member based organizations like Agriculture Produce and
Marketing Committee (APMC) and producer’s cooperatives would help in designing suitable strategies for improving the efficiency of marketing of fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetable crops assume a unique role in India’s economy by improving the income of the rural households. Cultivation of fruits and vegetable crops is labour intensive and hence, generate lot of employment opportunities for the rural population. Fruits and vegetables are rich source of vitamins, minerals, proteins, carbohydrates etc. and hence, referred as protective foods and contribute to the nutritional security of the people. Thus, cultivation of fruits and vegetables plays a vital role in the prosperity of a nation and is directly linked with the health and happiness of the people.

Fruits and vegetables are not only used for domestic consumption and processing into various products (pickles, preserves, sauces, jam, jelly, squashes, etc.) but also substantial quantities are exported in fresh and processed form, bringing much-needed foreign exchange for the country.

These crops also provide ample scope for achieving bio-diversity and diversification to maintain ecological balance and to create sustainable agriculture and can make significant impact on the national economy in the years to come.

The study here has concluded by stating that, the maximum share of consumer rupee is distributed among the wholesalers and the commission agents in both the commodities at the sampled markets.

Few suggestions to improve the marketing efficiency and to overcome the constraints in the marketing of fruits and vegetables have been forwarded from the researchers. Few of those are as follows:

* There is an urgent need to train the farmers on scientific post-harvest management techniques such as good cultural practices, harvesting at maturity, grading, pre-cooling, packaging and storage practices.

* Small and marginal fruit and vegetable growers need to form co-operative societies for their welfare to reap the remunerative prices in the market.
* Financial assistance for small / marginal farmers must be available from various private/public sector institutions without much delay and at nominal charges of interest.

* Community type pre-cooling and cold storage facilities need to be created at district and block level in the respective State.

* Set up processing units at rural areas to avoid post-harvest losses.

* Price forecasting information systems should be available at village levels so that farmers can directly contact the concerned in the market regarding the price.

* Local mandis or regulated markets should be updated and upgraded with modern information systems as well as residential facilities.

* Number of intermediaries and their commission should be reduced in the marketing channel.”


The above research paper here had been prepared by Vasant P. Gandhi and N.V. Namboodiri who are Professor and Research Associate, respectively, from the Indian Institute of Management. Few important quotes from the paper are as follows-

“There has been concern in recent years regarding the efficiency of marketing of fruits and vegetables, and that this is leading to high and fluctuating consumer prices and only a small share of the consumer rupee reaching the farmers. Marketing of horticultural crops is complex especially because of perishability, seasonality and bulkiness. The study seeks to examine different aspects of their marketing, focusing particularly, on the wholesale markets for fruits and vegetables which have been established to overcome deficiencies and improve the marketing efficiency. Results indicate that in Ahmedabad the direct contact between commission agents and farmers is very low. For vegetables this is 50 percent and for fruits only 31 percent. Further, in the system of transaction, secret bidding and simple transaction dominate and open auction is relatively rare. In
KFWVM, Chennai, the wholesalers act as commission agents and receive consignments directly from producing centers through agents or producers. By and large the system of transaction remains traditional and open auction is rarely seen. This is one major reason for poor efficiency. The share of farmers in the consumer rupee in Ahmedabad was 41.1 to 69.3 percent for vegetables and 25.5 to 53.2 percent for fruits. In Chennai KFWVM, the farmers' share was 40.4 to 61.4 percent for vegetables and, 40.7 to 67.6 percent for fruits. In the small AUS market in Chennai, where the farmers sell directly to the consumers, the share of farmers was as high as 85 to 95.4 percent for vegetables. This indicates that if there are few or no middlemen, the farmer s’ share could be much higher. In the Kolkata market the share of farmers ranged from 45.9 to 60.94 percent for vegetables and 55.8 to 82.3 percent for fruits. Thus, the shares are frequently very low, but somewhat better in Chennai, lower in Kolkata and even lower in Ahmedabad. The margin as a percentage of farmer-consumer price difference (an efficiency measure) shows that in Ahmedabad, the margins are very high and range from 69 to 94 percent. In Chennai they range from 15 to 69 percent, and in Kolkata they range from 46 to 73 percent. The high percentage of margin to farmer-consumer price difference is indicative of large inefficiencies and relatively poor marketing efficiency. There is great need to improve the marketing of fruits and vegetables. One important measure would be to bring more markets under regulation and supervision of a well-represented market committee. Another measure would be the promotion and perhaps enforcement of open auctions in the markets. Yet another measure could be efforts to bring more buyers and sellers into the markets, bringing them closer to perfect markets. The direct participation of farmers should be increased. Market infrastructure should be improved through storage (go-down) facilities, cold storages, loading and weighing facilities. Improvement in the road network, and cold-chain facilities are also of substantial importance.”

A Research Paper titled “Impact Of Emerging Marketing Channels in Agriculture- Benefits to Producer- Sellers and Marketing Costs and Margins of Orange and Potato in Assam” by Dr. Gautam Kakaty & Sri Debajit Borah submitted to the Agro-Economic Research Centre for North East India Assam, Agricultural University Jorhat-785013, Assam 2011
The present study on “Impact of Emerging Marketing Channels in Agriculture—Benefit to Producer-Sellers, Marketing Costs and Margins of Orange and Potato in Assam” was undertaken at the instance of Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India. Few important lines extracted from the above research article are as follows- “An efficient marketing system is indispensable for the success of any agricultural production programme. Marketing is an important link in the chain of production activities of agricultural sector. Organized marketing therefore, is a precondition to sustain production programme, more particularly, in respect of horticultural crops. Marketing of horticultural crops in Assam is largely unorganized and is in the hands of intermediaries such as pre harvest contractors, wholesalers, retail traders, etc.

Presently, the scenario of agricultural marketing in Assam is changing gradually because of the changes made in the Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC) Act through the amendments since 2006 and the emerging marketing concept like direct marketing, contract farming, corporate entry etc. have started to become popular among the farming communities. In the present study, an attempt has been made to estimate the costs and margins of producers and buyers and to study the degree of market efficiency, constraints faced by the farmers and other market functionaries in traditional marketing channels (TMC) and emerging marketing channels (EMC) of agriculture in Assam.

The study is based on a total sample of 200 households, 100 of which were under emerging marketing channel and rest belonged to traditional marketing channel.

In India, with growing distortions in the supply chain for agricultural commodities, there is need for greater efficiency in the supply chain. The emerging marketing channels are supposed to reduce the transaction costs and ensure that the high margins that certain intermediary agents get in the regular marketing channels is reduced. Some of the emerging channels include group-marketing, e-trading, direct marketing, contract farming, modern terminal markets, future trading, ITC Choupal, self help groups and NGOs in the marketing chain. Agricultural marketing functions are considered as the main planks of economic development in a state like Assam. An
efficient marketing system is indispensable for the success of the agricultural production programme, which is launched in recent years. Marketing is an important link in the chain of production activities of agriculture sector. Organised marketing therefore, is a precondition to sustain production programme, more particularly, in respect of horticultural production. Marketing of horticultural crops in Assam is largely unorganized and predominantly in the hands of intermediaries such as retail traders, wholesalers, the pre harvest contractors and others.

At present, the area under horticultural crops in Assam is 5.40 lakh hectares, which is 14 per cent of the net cropped area of the State. This sector annually produces 14.02 lakh MT of fruits, 39.16 lakh MT of vegetables, 2.18 lakh MT of spices besides nut crops, flowers and medicinal & aromatic plants (Economic Survey 2009-10. Govt. of Assam). The state is surplus as regards to fruits, vegetables and spices production. The important fruit crops grown include orange, pineapple, banana, lime lemon, jackfruits, guava, litchi, mango etc and more than 10 minor fruits. In case of vegetables, mention may be made of potato, various cole crops and brinjal. Major spices grown are chilly, coriander, black pepper, ginger and turmeric. In spite of all these potentialities, horticulture sector is still in an infant stage.”

**Research Paper titled “Fruit and Vegetable Marketing and its Efficiency in India: A Study of Wholesale Markets in the Ahmedabad Area” by Vasant P. Gandhi and N.V. Namboodiri, Submitted to the IIM Ahmedabad, June 2002.**

The above paper here has been prepared by Vasant P.Gandhi and N.V.Namboodri who are Professors and Research Associate respectively from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. A brief summary quoted from the paper is given below-

The paper examines regulated wholesale markets for fruits and vegetables in the Ahmedabad city area, a large city of 4.5 million in western India. Few quoted lines from the above research paper are as follows- “The markets were established to facilitate and improve the marketing efficiency. The paper studies their infrastructure, operation and status, and the value chain - from farmer to wholesaler to retailer to consumer. A variety of facilities and services are provided
at the three regulated wholesale markets studied. The ratings by farmers, commission agents and retailers indicates that location is the most important, followed by go-down facility, yard maintenance, weighing, price display, and banking facilities. Analysis of the data on the system of sale followed indicates that use of open auction as a system of market transaction is very limited and most of the exchanges take place through secret bidding or simple transactions. The study indicates that the regulated wholesale markets can help in improving the efficiency by measures such as increasing the direct contact with the farmers, increasing the number of buyers and sellers in the market, promoting the use of open auction at the market, and improving/ adding facilities and services such as go-down, cold storage, weighing, and transparency and access to internal and external market information.

The paper has examined the marketing of fruits and vegetables in the regulated wholesale markets of Ahmedabad, a large city of 4.5 million in western India, in light of widespread concerns about poor marketing efficiency and low share of farmers in the consumer rupee in India. The study finds that the Agricultural Produce Market Committee of Ahmedabad (APMC) has put up significant infrastructure including three regulated wholesale markets with many facilities and services. The objective of this is to improve the marketing and its efficiency for fruits and vegetables. The volume of business transacted through the markets has increased substantially to 700 thousand tons by 1998-99 and the financial viability of the APMC is very good.

Vegetables and fruits are known for their seasonality in sales and this is exhibited substantially by vegetables such as cauliflower and green peas, and fruits such as mango and apple. However, some such as potato, tomato and onion show less seasonality. The study finds that the extent of contact between farmers and commission agents is low and needs considerable improvement. It also shows that the adoption of open auctions in the markets is very low and so much potential for gain in market efficiency has not been realized.

The study finds that the share of the farmer in the consumer rupee works out to only 48 percent for vegetables and 37 percent for fruits. Further, the explicit marketing costs work out to only a very small percentage of the price difference
between the farmer and the consumer, and the profit margin works out frequently to 80 to 90 percent of the price difference. These figures are indicative of relatively poor efficiency of the marketing system despite the presence of the APMC and the regulated markets.”


The above research paper was presented at Rome in the year 2001 by Edward Seidler at the 22nd Congress of the World Union of Wholesale Markets Durban, South Africa organized by the FAO [Food and Agricultural Organization] of the United Nations. Few important lines extracted from the above research paper are here as follows-

“Wholesale markets are an essential component of any agricultural marketing system, especially for horticultural crops and FAO has been addressing wholesale market development issues in all continents for the past forty years. There currently is a debate as to whether wholesale markets are needed, in light of the rapid changes taking place within the food marketing chain. These changes include an expansion in direct marketing between large farmers, either in groups or as individuals, and the increasingly integrated food marketing chains, represented by hypermarkets, supermarkets and chain stores.

FAO has provided assistance to a large number of countries on issues relating to wholesale market development and improvement. In the 1960s, FAO actively assisted many Latin American countries (such as Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia and Mexico) in undertaking planning and feasibility studies for new wholesale markets. In the 70s, this support was also provided to countries in the Near East, Africa and Asia. Since then, when assessing marketing constraints for fresh produce, FAO teams have identified the poor state or the non existence of wholesale markets in some countries as key impediments and implemented projects to improve the management of existing wholesale markets or planned for new markets, such as in Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Swaziland, India, Indonesia, Egypt, Nepal and Thailand.
Significant development has taken place in wholesale markets in most Asian countries. In the 1970s, the Indian Government realised the importance of wholesale market development and introduced the concept of ‘markets of national importance’ in which it promoted the development of wholesale markets in each of the States and encouraged States to formulate Market Master Plans to promote the development of regulated wholesale and assembly markets. From the 286 regulated markets in 1950, India now has 7161 regulated markets (March 2001). The predominance of New Delhi as the main wholesale market of the country and its role both as a Terminal market and a Transit market is a matter of concern in India. It is estimated that over 30 per cent of the produce going through New Delhi’s Azadpur wholesale market is in fact produce originating from a different State and going to another by transiting through Delhi due to its transport links and the belief that Azadpur is the market that truly reflects market prices. One can imagine the savings that might accrue to farmers and consumers if produce was directly transported from the producing State's market to those in the consuming States.

Wholesale markets are dynamic entities within a rapidly changing operating environment. Most markets have problems and challenges that have been solved by markets elsewhere. There is a lot of scope for technical exchanges between existing wholesale markets in various areas of market planning, design, operation and management. This does not necessarily mean learning the “best” or adopting the most “modern” practices. One must guard against focusing on what is considered to be the most modern and copying what might be appropriate in one country but not in all.”


The above titled study had been conceived after initial discussions with Dr. R Srinivasan, Advisor (DP), Planning Commission, and Government of India on the request made by the Planning Commission to ASCI. A summary or brief review of the study which implement in the research work are laid down as below-
The economy of the northeastern region is predominantly agriculture comprising agriculture and horticultural crops. The rural marketing is largely unorganized in the region and dominated by the private traders. The northeastern states have observed high production of fruits, spices and cashew in the recent past but could not fetch market price to the farmers at par with the markets in the other states. The topography of the NE states is not favorable for the movement of the products. Besides, the infrastructure, procurement practices, marketing approaches and processing facilities are also observed as the major constraints in the rural marketing in the NE region.

Few objectives with which the above study was conducted are as follows-

1. To assess the existing infrastructure and policy support from the state and central government for post-harvest management and marketing of horticultural produce,

2. To study the existing practices for procurement, pricing and payments to the horticulture farmers on their produce and problems thereof.

3. To suggest policy measures to overcome the constraints in the present system and identify areas for more in-depth study in future.

Despite significant growth in agricultural production, income disparities between the developed and underdeveloped agricultural regions in the country have widened. Consequently, the Indian agriculture has been divided into two segments, firstly, dynamic or progressing and secondly, the backward and stagnating. It is in the latter segment, that little dent has been made into the basic problems of resource allocation, technology, marketing and media development. The Northeastern states of the country fall in the latter category where topographical heterogeneity and cultural factors act as constraints.

Assam is basically an agricultural state. The rural population is about 89 per cent living in 21,995 villages. Out of the total rural population about 80 per cent depend directly upon agriculture. The overall economy of the state depends upon the agricultural development and, hence, agricultural sector has been receiving considerable attention in the planning process. Assam grows a large number of
agricultural crops like paddy, pulses, oilseed, spices, fiber crop like jute, mesta and cotton and fruits and vegetables.

Under the existing system of agricultural marketing in Assam, farm produces change many hands before reaching the consumer. The middleman, in the process extracts a large share of consumer's rupee while the farmer gets only a small share. Taking advantage of the farmer's poor condition and weak bargaining power in the transaction, a set of middleman at different stages have emerged as a powerful channel for the procurement of food grains. They by and large, dictate the price. Thus, the farmer needs protection from such exploitation and also assistance in many respects, more so in a state like Assam where the agriculturists are subject to natural calamities and various other constraints.

According to a survey conducted by the marketing board the farmers are losing at least 10 per cent of the market price due to lack of proper sale arrangements in markets. In addition, farmers do not undertake proper cleaning and grading of the produce before sales, which is also, one of the reasons for low price. Regulated markets take up such quality improvement measures to increase the value of the produces in the market. Properly cleaned and graded produce normally fetches a minimum premium of 5 per cent in the price as estimated. Adoption of the measures as envisaged in the regulated market scheme is expected to benefit the producer-farmers by about 20 per cent of the total value of the produce according to a survey report of the Marketing Board.

The study also provides few important recommendations which would be helpful for the development of the rural market in the North East Region. The economy of the northeastern states is predominantly agriculture having 77 per cent of the working population engaged in cultivation and the role of agricultural marketing system has considerable importance in the overall economy of the region. It has been found that the in the selected states there are large number of unorganized rural markets and the private traders hold the core agribusiness activities in the region. The private traders, middleman, petty retailers and moneylenders locally known as Mahajans dominate these markets.

The bargaining power of the farmers is very weak and, therefore, the traders dictate the price. One of the main reasons for prominence of the traders in the
agricultural produce markets in villages is the heavy indebtedness of the farmers to the traders, commission agents and middleman. Besides the organizational and functional dimensions of the marketing system, the flow of commodities in the NE region is restricted and localized to certain specific areas due to geophysical conditions as well as lack of infrastructural facilities. Consequently, the factors of marketing such as pricing, backward and forward linkages, demand and supply of commodities are greatly affected to the disadvantage of both the producers and the consumers. The basic infrastructure facilities include storage and warehousing, road links, transportation and communication aids. Of these, storage and transportation network performs a significant role in stocking and mobilization of goods. The storage facilities in the region are located mainly at district headquarters and state capitals.”


The above study was undertaken by the researcher Dr. Purushottam Sharma, Assistant Director of the NIAM Jaipur, Rajasthan, and the study was conducted over the state of Orissa, to study the agricultural marketing system in the state. A brief summary of the study is quoted below-

“Agricultural marketing system in the State of Orissa is distinctly different from that of other states with fully functional regulated marketing system. It is observed that the ownership and functioning of the markets is not uniform with the physical markets being owned by different agencies such as RMCs, Municipalities, Panchayats and also purely private persons. Though the state has amended its Act, this is in form only, but not in substance, as the system is not fully under the control of the marketing setup of the state.

The present study was assigned to National Institute of Agricultural Marketing, Jaipur to study the agricultural marketing system in Odisha in the perspective of the implementation of market regulation so far. For fulfilling the objectives of the study, both primary and secondary information on various parameters were collected. The study uses primary information collected through discussion with different stakeholders like farmers, traders, traders
associations, village traders, RMC officials and different functionaries in markets under different modes of ownership and management.

A peculiar situation prevails in the state of Orissa in terms of ownership and management of markets. The markets are under different modes of ownership like RMCs, Local Bodies like Municipalities and NAC, Gram Panchayats, and private persons/associations. GP and Municipal markets managed either by Municipality itself or leased out to private persons. The lessees dominate the markets for providing space for farmers for selling their produce.

The prevailing marketing system is grossly inefficient one, where farmers do not have access to market for selling their produce and are constrained to sell their produce to local traders at abysmally low prices. This dampens their zeal to produce and Consumers also have to pay higher prices for the commodities they purchase.

The infrastructure available at the RMC market yards, sub-yards and other markets are not subject to regular use, as there is no enforcement for the buyers and sellers to assemble at the earmarked market yards. The infrastructure situation is worse in case of markets under Gram Panchayats, municipal and other local body markets, and private markets. Majority of the haats do not even possess basic infrastructure required for trading of agricultural commodities.

Few suggestions recommended by the researcher in the report are as follows-

1. it is given to understand that private wholesale markets are operating on daily basis without any infrastructure. Under such circumstances, there is a scope for RMCs to modernize the existing markets providing requisite infrastructure.

2. The present concentration of RMCs is mainly on check gates for market fee collection, and RMCs are paying limited attention for management of markets. The fee collection at check gates should be abolished. The arrangements can be made for collection of market fee and other charges at market yards rather than at the check gates as prevailing presently. At check points the function of market authorities has
to be limited only for ensuring fair trade practices in the market. This will induce the efficiency in the system and bring the marketing in order.

3. The markets under GP or other local bodies should be taken over by RMCs/ Directorate of Agricultural Marketing for operation and management on revenue share basis. This will induce effective regulation and proper management of the markets.

4. Providing electronic weighing scales at the entry gate of the market manned with trained staff, free weighing of produce brought by farmers, will give an edge over the value judgment of traders, and in turn farmers will tend to go for weighment their produce before selling their produce.”

Research Paper titled “Fish Consumers’ Behaviour at Selected Fish Markets of Tripura, India”, by Apu Das 1*, Nalini Ranjan Kumar 1, Biswajit Debnath 2, Debanu Barman 3 and Manik Datta 4, Society of Fisheries Technologies (India), 2013.


The authors of the above research paper hereby present the paper based on the study over the fish market in the State of Tripura, and a brief summary of the said paper is presented as follows.

“As fishery is considered to be an important economic activity for generating income and gainful employment and to ensure nutritional security of rural masses in Tripura. Knowledge on preference for fish is important for producers and traders at micro-economic level and also for policy makers and planners at macro-economic level. The above paper here had made an attempt to analyse the consumers’ preference for fish in Tripura.

The above study also came with some conclusion. The fish consumption is positively influenced by purchasing power of consumer. The low income group
consumers were very specific to species and their preference was to purchase whole fish or cut pieces depending on the species, whereas medium income group consumers preferred whole fish and consumers belonging to high income group preferred cut pieces. Family size had no effect on specificity. Fish consumers faced several problems during purchase of fish. Major constraints identified by consumers were fish price (level and fluctuation) followed by availability of fish, lack of fresh fish, non-availability of preferred species and lack of hygiene in market. As a result, consumption of fish was below the desired level.

Since there is a high demand for locally produced fish, there is a need to increase fish production in the state. For this purpose, Govt. of Tripura needs to take necessary steps to promote scientific aquaculture by imparting training to farmers in improved package of practices of fish culture. Boosting local fish production will reduce the price of fish. Fish marketing facilities in the state are very poor and premises are very unhygienic which are not only discouraging people from purchasing of fish but also may cause health hazards. There is a need to improve the infrastructural facilities in the market to make it more hygienic.”


A brief summary of the above research paper is discussed as follows.

“Agriculture is different from industry and plays a significant role in the economic development of a nation. India’s prosperity depends upon the agricultural prosperity. There are many kinds of agricultural products produced in India and the marketing of all these farm products generally tends to be a complex process. Agricultural marketing involves many operations and processes through which the food and raw materials move from the cultivated farm to the final consumers.

Agriculture provides goods for consumption and exports and manufacturing sectors. The suitable marketing system should be designed so as to give proper
reward or return to the efforts of the tiller of the soil. Market information is a means of increasing the efficiency of marketing system and promoting improved price formation. It is crucial to the farmers to make informed decisions about what to grow, when to harvest, to which market produce should be sent and whether or not to store it. Awareness of farmers on different components of market information and its utility was very poor (11 to 37%) as compared to that of traders (75%). Out of the expectations of farmers on grades, quality, prices in potential markets, price projections; only real time arrivals and prices were documented and disseminated with traditional approach. Hence there is a need to create awareness among the farmers through the agricultural extension agencies like the State Department of Agriculture, Krishi Vigyan Kendras so that the marketing information on agriculture commodities are incorporated in the extension services along with production aspects to the farmers.

The above researcher also highlighted few important problems of agriculture marketing in India which are highlighted in brief as follows.

**Problems of Agriculture Marketing in India**

There are several challenges involved in marketing of agricultural produce. There is limited access to the market information, literacy level among the farmers is low, multiple channels of distribution that eats away the pockets of both farmers and consumers. The government funding of farmers is still at nascent stage and most of the small farmers still depend on the local moneylenders who are leeches and charge high rate of interest. There are too many vultures that eat away the benefits that the farmers are supposed to get. Although we say that technology have improved but it has not gone to the rural levels as it is confined to urban areas alone. There are several loopholes in the present legislation and there is no organized and regulated marketing system for marketing the agricultural produce. The farmers have to face so many hardships and have to overcome several hurdles to get fair and just price for their sweat.

Few reforms in the field of agriculture which will help in curbing the problems of the agricultural marketing in India are highlighted by the researchers below.
AGRICULTURAL MARKET REFORMS

Below are the certain measures that can be affected to bring out the reforms in agricultural marketing so as to ensure just and fair price for the farming community.

a) Provide loans to the farmer at low rate of interest so that they will be freed from the clutches of local moneylenders who squeeze them.

b) It is essential to provide subsidized power supply and loans to the farmers as the expenses towards power consumption takes considerable amount of investments.

c) Generate a new distribution network that connects the farmers directly to the consumers to get maximum returns as the present channel of distribution involves multiple mediatory who take away the major portion of profits which otherwise the farmers is supposed to get.

d) Elimination of the existing loopholes in the present legislations is warranted.

e) There should be stringent action against black marketers and hoarders who buy the stocks from farmers at cheap prices and create artificial demand and then sell the stocks at higher prices.

1.8 Objectives of the Study: -

1. To identify the nature of commodities dealt as primary products in Assam in general and in the Guwahati city in particular.
2. To examine the inflow and outflow of commodities to and from the trading points of Guwahati city.
3. To examine the problems and prospects in the growth of trading centre’s in and around Guwahati since its early history of modern trade.
4. To analyse critically the growth of ancillary and collateral service industries associated with the commodities market under study.
5. To identify the regulatory provisions of these markets and their contribution to the State exchequer.
1.9 **Research Queries to be Investigated:**

The following are the research queries to be investigated under the study-

1. Whether the item of Primary products in the Commodity markets of Guwahati city are regularly traded and has an established market.
2. Whether the volume of trade taking place in each commodity market of Primary goods justify the demand for special status of such commodities.
3. Whether there is scope for development of other incidental services associated with the main trade.
4. Whether the commodity market of primary products bear significant contribution to the State exchequer
5. Whether there is future scope of these markets growing into a mega hub of trading activities.

1.10 **Methodology of the Study:**

1.10. A. **Coverage of the Study:**

   Guwahati, the premier city of Assam is increasingly getting the recognition of commercial and integral hub of the entire North-East India. As per the reports of Census of India, the population of Guwahati in 2011 is 957,352, of which 495,362 is male and 461,990 is female respectively. The sex ratio of female to male in the Guwahati city is 931 females against the national average of 926 females per 1000 males. For the purpose of the study the wholesalers of different commodity markets in existence at the Guwahati city dealing with different
commodities are considered as Population or Universe for the study. The term commodity includes a variety of agricultural as well as non-agricultural produce within the trading ring of any customary commodity market. The established definitions of commodities have been followed as an ideal concept in order to encompass the prominent commodities for the purpose of the study.

For convenience of the study, preference has been given to choose commodities on the basis of their cognizable nature of trade, their volume as a constituent of the total market share, the extent of exposure availed by the trading community, and the prevalent practices observed under the regulatory provisions of the government rules. In order to study the flow of commodities, both primary and secondary sources have been relied upon with the objective of recording commodity movement, its arrival and exit point and time periods.

1.10. B. Sample Selection: -

i) Universe & Sample Size of the Study:-

It is admittedly true that the term commodity has an extensive and all pervasive interpretation which perhaps cannot be precisely identified in terms of number and variety. The wholesale commodity markets of agricultural goods in the city of Guwahati comprises of markets where a single primary product is traded in huge volume. The items chosen under the study have got both economic and cultural significance since, from the olden times people of indigenous communities mostly participated in these trades. The markets have also seen shifted from its original location owing to several factors viz. growth in the volume of trade, government interventions, inadequacy for space or trading, parking and waste disposal.

At the present study the Population comprises in ten different markets in which seller participants in the wholesale markets are taken to be the sample units. Hence, the Universe comprises of Wholesale seller participants of all these specially selected commodities.

Therefore, in selecting a sample from the dealers of the above commodities which consist of the main population or universe of the study, a Convenient approach is opted to make the study feasible and realistic. Thus, it has been proposed to choose 10 commodities which have large scale operation at specific places where
both wholesale and retail sales are evident. The choice of the ten commodities is made on the basis of large operational volume in transaction, significant points of existence in market, easy accessibility to collect information, continuity of existence for a prolonged period and the specialty of these markets to attract buyers.

A pilot survey was conducted over the different commodity markets in the city and from where it was found that there is no uniformity in the number of participants trading at the different commodity markets and this was basically due to the different nature of varied commodities. For the study it has been proposed that 50% of market participants which constitutes the sample of each selected commodity will be adopted as sample for the study.

The study here will be conducted on the different commodity markets which exist in the city and for the purpose of the study the survey will be conducted over the different wholesale market of the respective commodities.

The sample units were selected in such a way so that both the wholesalers of the different commodities and retailers trading in special commodities could be focused upon. Accordingly, the following units had been selected and at the same time the break-up or the samples to be drawn from the sample units have been shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Units (Wholesale Markets)</th>
<th>No. of Places of Markets for Wholesaler cum Retailer</th>
<th>Location of the Markets</th>
<th>No. of Seller Participants</th>
<th>Percentage of Sample</th>
<th>Total No. of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Vegetable Market</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Gorchuk</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fruit Market</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Fancy Bajar</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Type</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Location Details</td>
<td>No. of Participants</td>
<td>Coverage (%)</td>
<td>No. of Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Fish market</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Paltan Bajar</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bamboo Market</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Bhunath (Near the bank of Brahmaputra river)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Livestock or Goat Market</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Santipur (Near the bank of Brahmaputra river)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sugarcane Market</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Fancy Bajar (Near the bank of Brahmaputra river)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Flower Market</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Panbajar</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Timber Outlet**</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Mostly located in Maligaon, Sarafbhati, Vetapara, Beltola, etc., all around the Guwahati city</td>
<td>150 (approx)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Coal Depot**</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Beltola</td>
<td>180 (approx)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Betel Leaf</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>Fancy Bajar, Adabari, Beltola, etc.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Respondents compiling of different markets for the study is .......................................................... 484**

**Wholesale cum Retail Participants**

**Source:** Collected from different Organised and Unorganised Trade Associations of markets

**1.10. C. Data Collection:**

The methodology adopted for the study is analytical in nature and is based on both primary and secondary data. For the purpose of primary data collection, the following course has been adopted-
Opinion survey based on structured questionnaire cum schedule.

Interview and personal observations

The secondary source of data will be chiefly based on published materials released by the Government, trade associations, market authorities and the local self authorities as the case may be. Data from the Assam Agricultural Marketing Board, Directorate of Fisheries, Assam Fishery Development Corporation, Kamrup Chambers of Commerce, Indian Chambers of Commerce, Commissioner of Taxes, etc. have been relied upon to serve the said purpose.

Information here also been collected from the literature on Guwahati city with an attempt to collect the growth history of markets during the British rule i.e. pre and post independence period. The study has also revealed the type of participants involved in a trading centre both with uniformity and variance of their interest involved in commodity market operations. The study assumes significance in view of the fact that the planners, policy makers and thinkers are agog with ideas to stimulate trade in the North East across Guwahati which is being projected as the Gateway city to South East Asia. The study will certainly help in identifying the causes of growth of trading centre’s, the reason of locational shift of trading points, entry and exit of new and old commodities, shift of location of markets, etc.

1.10. Period of the Study

Field survey for the purpose of ascertaining commodity flow have been conducted in different wholesale markets during the period from 2013-2015. The growths of trading points have been observed since the Post-Independent period.

1.11 Significance of the Study

Being one of the major states of the North Eastern Region, Assam holds one of the key cities of the region viz. Guwahati, which is also known as the Gateway to the North East. Situated on the bank of the mighty river Brahmaputra, Guwahati is the legendary Pragjyotishpura or the City of the Eastern Light, the Gateway to the North Eastern India. Being the nerve centre of the North Eastern
states the city is well connected by air, road and rail. Guwahati also possesses a thriving business class, comprising of people migrated from different states of India and settled here. The city has become the hub of industrial and commercial activities not only for Assam but also for the entire North Eastern part of India. It is also being contemplated to be the future gateway of India’s trade linkage with the South East Asia.

Large quantities of primary goods, raw products, and finished goods are traded in the city with the help of existing and new trading centres in the city. The study here will have a complete picture of commodity flows from and the growth of various trading centre’s in the Guwahati city and will also focus on the future prospect of growth of industrial units as well as its ancillaries in the city.

The specification of any commodity markets is virtually an impossible task owing to the fact that the market economy has produced myriad of products in all fields viz. agricultural, industrial in different forms like solid, liquid, gaseous etc. Also from another point of view goods can be classified as finished goods, processed goods, primary goods, packaged goods, metallic goods, etc.

The trading of agricultural goods has been an age old legacy in the growth of markets of any significant town, city or place. The society in general and the consumers in particular are intimately connected with the need for basic requirements of life which invariably constitutes a host of agro based products.

Another reason for choosing the markets of primary products is that they are not very scattered and also field investigation is relatively easier to access within the Guwahati city. Besides, the markets of primary products bear a significance of heritage because majority traders of these markets are continuing the family trade representing several generations.

In the present day at the different commodity markets, large quantities of agriculture produce, livestock, bamboo, coal, fish, sugarcane, fruits, flowers, timber, betel leaves are imported and exported to and from the city to various places of the district as well as the state and the country which results in huge inflow and outflow of commodities in the city. The present study here will have a detailed study of the history of various commodity markets existing in the city of
Guwahati and also how the different commodities covered in the study will act as an important constituent for the economic development of the state. The study will be conducted in the Guwahati city over different commodity markets and particularly of those commodities which are raw and primary in nature. Following are the commodities which are adopted for the purpose of the study viz. Agricultural products (vegetables), Fish, Coal, Livestock (Goat), Bamboo, Flowers, Sugarcane, Timber, Fruits and Betel Leaf.

As the purpose of the study is to provide information to the society at large hence the key benefit from the study could be enumerated as follows: -

1. The study is important because these flows of commodities constitute a major segment of our economy, which is closely connected with computation of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and consequently the determination of per capita income.

2. In case of correct identification of the flow of commodity the revenue earning of the Government will not suffer against manipulation, underweight and under invoicing by the respective traders.

3. This is also useful from the point of view of conservation of resources of the state for protection of environment because a wanton depredation of resources for commercial profit may endanger the eco balance and the state is likely to be a victim of profiteering motive of the traders.

4. It is also necessary to accord recognition to the market places where there is heavy concentration of saleable products and to bring regulations for registration of the dealers.

5. Trading points usually cause environmental degradation which is important for citizens’ and other living creatures’ health.

1.12 **Scope of the Future Study:**

The above study undertaken on the wholesale markets of the Guwahati city mainly covers commodities which are raw or primary in nature. The study attempts to highlight the growth and development of the selected wholesale markets all around the city since the early days of independence. But the study
failed to cover the rest of the wholesale markets dealing with variety of commodities comprised of mostly industrial goods, consumable goods, electrical goods, etc. and few other which have been operating at different trading centres within the city. The scope for the study on such fields trying to get an insight on the functioning and growth of these different markets will be a great contribution for the society at large and would prove to be a new area of research.

The study chiefly aims at observing the emergence of various markets in and around Guwahati city with the willful choice of ten different commodities of the primary product. In the study the growth of trading points and their subsequent location right from the formative stage to the developed stage have been discussed with problems and the method of transaction. However, a comparative study of growth of volume and the service area, profitability, etc. have not been covered owing to lack of correct data. Perhaps, these areas may need further research to identify the correct demand and supply position and facilitating support if any required from the Government can be established.

1.12 Limitation of the Study: -

The study is also faced with certain limitations which are enumerated as follows: -

1. A major limitation of the study is that the territorial boundary of the city of Guwahati has undergone expansion at various times owing to enlargement of greater Guwahati city model which has a distinct bearing with the current set of study. Markets originally not covered within municipal limit have now been incorporated as a part of it.

2. The location of wholesale markets specially of primary products are often shifted from one place to another owing to logistic problem, loading & unloading problems, etc. together with Court directives in this regard.

3. As the survey was conducted in the day time and during which the trading activity was at its peak, therefore the respondents naturally suffer from scarcity of time while providing information.
4. As the survey is conducted over different commodity market hence only 10 commodities have been selected for the study based on their cognizable nature of trade.

5. The study is confined with only wholesalers at different trading points and not the retailers of the different commodity markets.