PREFACE

Marketing is one of the basic factors determining the economy of the region. In Bastar district the rural economy percolates through the weekly markets. They are the integral part of the people's socio-economic activities.

Bastar, the biggest tribal district, is situated in the extreme south of Madhya Pradesh. There are 218 weekly markets in the district. In the weekly markets, rural and urban products are sold by the villagers and non-tribal traders. A villager is really a seller first and a buyer later in the market. He brings some quantity of farm or non-farm products to the market to meet the weekly needs from the amount realised on the sale. The villagers are not aware of the prevailing prices and modern weights and measures, so they face the chances of being cheated in both the transaction of selling and buying. The private traders and co-operative marketing societies conduct their business in the weekly markets.

The district possesses very feable infrastructure because of inadequate transportation and communication facilities. Each weekly market serves its nearby villages falling in the radius of 16 Kms. In the tribal areas the weekly market is the only economic institution based on the socio-cultural grounds.
The present study "An Economic Analysis of Weekly Markets of Bastar District of Madhya Pradesh" has been conducted to analyse the organisational pattern, market operations and the impact of the socio-cultural interaction on the rural economy, in the weekly markets. The suggestions have also been drawn to form an effective and efficient rural marketing net-work in the district. To conduct this study, 24 weekly markets have been selected, three from each tahsil, situated in the tribal-urban, tribal semi-urban and the tribal complex respectively. The data has been collected on the basis of a short and purposeful questionnaire from the sellers and buyers of different categories. The analysis of the weekly markets has touched every aspect of the market economy prevailing in Bastar district.

The present study has been divided into seven chapters. In the introductory chapter the objectives of the study, definition of the weekly markets, literature on the weekly markets, methodology and hypothesis are described. In the Chapter II, the historical view of Bastar district, situation, cropping pattern, transportation facilities, etc. have been explained. The Chapter III contains the hierarchy of the markets in the district and their inter-relationship. The Chapter IV analyses the working of the weekly markets in the district. It emphasises the commodities brought and sold in the
weekly markets, their trade-economy, etc. The movement of prices of different farm, non-farm and manufactured goods have been discussed in the Chapter V. The Chapter VI consists of the description about the trade-practice, prevailing among the different types of traders, in the weekly markets. The suggestions have been drawn in the Chapter VII to boost up the market economy of this tribal region.

All the possible efforts have been made to focus the characteristics of the tribal economy prevailing in the district, in this study. The new approaches have also been suggested to alleviate the exploitation of the tribals from the weekly markets.

I have opted to study the above problem which is vital for the economic development of this tribal region. Indeed, marketing and production are the two aspects necessary for the development of rural economy. I trust that the findings of this study would be useful and prove its worth to the planners and to others who are interested in the development of the tribal region.

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(RAJAGOPAL)