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The economic impact of the weekly market in Ashta City on traders and consumers

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Abstract
The present research investigates the economic impact of the weekly market in the city of Ashta on both traders and customers. Ashta is an economically and educationally developed city in Western Maharashtra, where a large-scale weekly market is held every Monday and Friday. Farmers, traders, and customers from approximately 25 surrounding villages participate extensively in this market. Consequently, it is evident that the weekly market exerts a significant influence on local economic transactions, employment generation, trade growth, and consumer purchasing patterns.
Primary data was utilized for this research, and a sample of 50 traders and 50 customers was selected using a sampling method. The data required for the study was collected through questionnaires, interviews, and direct observation. The collected data was classified and subsequently analyzed with the aid of tables, percentages, and statistical analysis.
The study revealed that the weekly market contributes to an increase in traders' income and stimulates local employment generation. It was observed that customers show a strong preference for the weekly market, as it provides them with fresh goods at lower prices. Furthermore, an increasing trend in the use of digital payment methods by both traders and customers was noted. However, the study also highlighted that traders face various challenges, such as a shortage of space, transportation issues, and intensifying competition.
Overall, this research concludes that the weekly market in Ashta serves as a vital economic catalyst—boosting the local economy, benefiting both traders and customers, and bridging the gap between rural and urban economic transactions.

Keywords: Weekly market, traders, customers, digital payment, Ashta city

Introduction

Ashta is a significant commercial and social hub in Western Maharashtra, situated in the Walwa Taluka of Sangli district. The city holds special significance from historical, social, and economic perspectives. Ashta is home to a Municipal Council, which is regarded as one of the oldest municipal bodies in Maharashtra. Established in 1853, the Ashta Municipal Council is an institution that preserves a rich historical legacy within the realm of local self-governance. According to the 2011 census, the population of Ashta city was approximately 37,000, while by 2026, the estimated population has reached up to 53,000. The city comprises a total of 21 wards and is witnessing continuous development across the commercial, educational, agricultural, and service sectors. In this city—which is closely linked to surrounding rural and semi-urban areas—the traditional weekly market holds distinct economic and social importance.

A large-scale weekly market is held in Ashta city every Monday and Friday. Farmers, traders, and consumers from nearly 25 neighboring villages participate in this market. Many farmers from rural areas bring their vegetables, grains, fruits, dairy products, and other agricultural produce to this market for sale. Consequently, the weekly market in Ashta serves as a vital economic link connecting the rural and urban sectors. This market not only boosts local trade but also provides farmers with the opportunity to reach consumers directly.

The weekly market is considered a crucial traditional institution within the rural and semi-urban economy. Through this market, direct economic transactions take place among farmers, small traders, hawkers, retailers, and consumers. The weekly market plays a pivotal role in facilitating the sale of local produce, the exchange of goods, employment generation, and the fulfillment of consumer needs.

The weekly market in Ashta city functions as a central hub for economic activity for local traders, farmers, and consumers alike. This market stimulates local trade, generates employment opportunities, and makes a diverse range of goods available to consumers at affordable prices. Conversely, the advent of digital payments, modern retail outlets, and evolving consumer habits has led to observable changes in the nature of traditional weekly markets.

This research endeavors to examine the economic impact of the weekly market in the city of Ashta on both traders and consumers. Primary data will be utilized for this study, with information collected directly from traders and consumers through questionnaires and interviews. Through this research, an analysis will be conducted regarding the weekly market's contribution to the local economy, traders' income, consumers' purchasing patterns, and the economic shifts associated with the market.

Statement of the problem

Ashta is a significant commercial hub in the Sangli district, where a large-scale weekly market is held every Monday and Friday. Farmers, traders, and consumers from approximately 25 surrounding villages participate in this market. Farmers from rural areas bring their vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy products, and other agricultural produce to this market for sale. Consequently, the weekly market in Ashta serves as a vital link connecting the rural and semi-urban economies. The weekly market creates business

opportunities for local traders while enabling consumers to access a wide variety of goods at relatively lower prices. Furthermore, it is observed that this market fosters local employment generation, boosts cash transactions, and facilitates economic exchange within the rural sector. On the other hand, the advent of modern retail outlets, supermarkets, digital payment methods, and evolving consumer habits is bringing about changes in the operational dynamics of traditional weekly markets.

In the current context, there is a pressing need for an in-depth study to determine the precise impact of the weekly market on the economic status of traders and consumers—specifically, the extent to which traders' incomes increase, the economic benefits accrued by consumers, and the overall contribution of this market to the local economy. Regarding the weekly market in Ashta, there appears to be a dearth of specific studies analyzing its economic impact on traders and consumers based on primary data. Therefore, the present research endeavors to examine the economic impact of the weekly market by collecting direct data from both traders and consumers.

Against this backdrop, the topic selected for the present research study is: "The Economic Impact of the Weekly Market in Ashta City on Traders and Consumers."

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the impact of the weekly market in the city of Ashta on the economic transactions of traders and consumers.
2. To analyze the changes brought about by the weekly market in the income of traders and the purchasing patterns of consumers.
3. To examine measures aimed at making the weekly market in Ashta more effective and economically viable.

Research Methodology

For the purpose of the present research, the city of Ashta located in the Walwa Taluka of Sangli District has been selected. Ashta is a significant commercial hub in Western Maharashtra and is home to a functioning Municipal Council established in 1853. According to the 2011 Census, the city's population stood at approximately 37,000, while the estimated population for 2026 is 53,000. The city comprises 21 wards, and a large-scale weekly market is held every Monday and Friday. Farmers, traders, and consumers from approximately 25 surrounding villages participate in this market. The nature of the present research is descriptive and analytical; primary and secondary data will be utilized to study the topic: "The Economic Impact of the Weekly Market in Ashta City on Traders and Consumers." Primary data will be collected from traders and consumers through structured questionnaires and direct interviews, whereas secondary data will be sourced from Municipal Council reports, Census reports, books, research articles, periodicals, and internet resources. For this research, a convenience sampling method will be employed, involving the selection of a total of 100 respondents—comprising 50 traders and 50 consumers from the weekly market. The collected data will be analyzed using percentage methods, tables, and graphs. This research is limited to the city of Ashta, and its findings will be contingent upon the accuracy of the information provided by the respondents.

Review of Literature

Kumar, A., & Pathak, H. (2025) [1], Studied 'Consumer buying behavior in the weekly markets of Kondagaon District, Chhattisgarh'. In this paper, the author primarily investigates the purchasing behavior of consumers at weekly markets in tribal regions, while also examining the pivotal role these markets play within the local economy and social fabric. To this end, the research is based on primary data collected from 180 respondents. According to the 'Regression Analysis' (statistical analysis) presented in the research paper, 'Price' and 'Quality' emerged as the most significant factors influencing purchasing decisions, followed by 'Product Availability' and 'Convenience.' Conversely, cultural, seasonal, and social factors were found to exert a statistically negligible influence on purchasing decisions. Consumer expenditure is predominantly moderate in nature; more than one-third of the consumers (33.88%) spend between Rs.501 and Rs.1,000 per month. While cash remains the primary medium of payment (71.11%), the continued prevalence of the barter system (12.22%) signifies the persistence of traditional practices; alongside this, the adoption of digital payment methods (10.55%) has also begun to show a gradual upward trend—a conclusion drawn by the author. The author further elucidates that these weekly markets serve as vital, multi-purpose hubs for tribal communities. Consumer purchasing behavior is primarily driven by economic and pragmatic considerations; these markets emerge as significant spaces where livelihood necessities, cultural traditions, and the gradual influence of modernity converge. As noted earlier, cultural, seasonal, and social factors were found to be statistically insignificant. The research findings indicate that consumer spending is predominantly moderate, with over one-third (33.88%) of consumers spending between Rs.501 and Rs.1, 000 per month. While cash remains the primary medium of payment (71.11%), the continued use of the barter system (12.22%) serves as an indicator of the persistence of traditional practices; alongside this, it has been observed that the adoption of digital payments is just beginning (10.55%).

Anand U. (2017) [2], Studied 'Role of Weekly Market in Indian Economy'. In their research paper, they assert that weekly markets constitute the most ancient medium of marketing in India. Markets continue to play a pivotal role in the Indian economy even today; they provide opportunities not only for people to purchase goods but also for vendors to sell them. These markets are variously known as 'Haat', 'Bazaar', or 'Periodic Markets'. Weekly markets represent an informal form of market organization, characterized by a certain degree of inherent uncertainty. It is their contention that weekly markets are integral to the entire process encompassing the development of specific products, their pricing, promotion, and distribution. Furthermore, in this research paper, they conclude that beyond merely providing opportunities to traders, these 'Haat' markets gradually foster the integration of rural settlements and play a crucial role in facilitating the transformation of villages into small towns.

Behra H.C. (2024) [3], Studied 'Weekly Market in Tribal Areas and the New Economic Frontier'. In this research paper, the authors posit that weekly markets constitute a traditional economic institution and serve as an integral part of the rural economy. They specifically argue that these markets represent a critically important socio-economic institution for communities residing in forested hills and

highland regions. Guided by these considerations, they have structured their research paper around a case study of two such weekly markets—one each located in the states of Jharkhand and Odisha. This paper focuses on three key dimensions pertinent to the study of weekly markets: economy, culture, and environment. Furthermore, the authors discuss the nature of the weekly market's existence within the context of the modern economic landscape—specifically, how it interacts with and adapts to new technologies and electronic devices, such as smartphones.

Chakreshwari A.B. (2019) [4], Studied 'Analysis of Rural Weekly Market: A Case Study Of Madhugiri Taluk, Tumakuru District Of Karnataka State'. In this research paper, the authors primarily articulate that customers in the local market experience a profound sense of closeness and belongingness with the weekly market. They further posit that these customers eagerly await the specific day of the week to purchase the various commodities they require. Since these markets offer them the opportunity to meet friends and relatives, the authors conclude that weekly markets play a pivotal role in accelerating rural development and enhancing the socio-economic lives of the local populace. Furthermore, this research paper endeavors to examine the nature and structure of the weekly markets situated in the Madhugiri Taluka.

Dagade M.V., Patil R.P. (2021) [5], Studied 'Study of Weekly Market in Khanadala Taluka of Maharashtra'. In this research paper, the authors define a weekly market as a market that convenes every week on a specific day and at a specific location. They posit that, despite the advent of the "Mall Era," weekly markets have successfully retained their relevance and existence in rural areas. They view the weekly market—which is held in every village—as a vital public space for the exchange of goods, particularly vegetables, livestock, and various non-agricultural commodities. They further argue that these weekly markets serve as platforms where farmers and traders bring their agricultural produce and other available goods for sale and exchange, thereby fostering sustainable development. In this research paper, the authors have analyzed the operational mechanisms and performance of weekly markets within the Khandala Taluka. Such market systems continue to exist in India—particularly in rural regions—and are even found in many cities, where they are held at designated locations. The village weekly market constitutes an extremely critical component of the local economy. It is imperative for the administrative authorities to safeguard farmers in rural areas and protect them from potential exploitation by traders. The authors conclude in this research paper that, while it is essential to enact appropriate rules and laws across the board, it is equally crucial to ensure their strict adherence and effective implementation through diligent oversight.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Weekly markets important role play in rural areas providing employment and income generation. (Patel A.K.,Singh V.p.4)

1. Age-wise Classification of Traders

The Gender and age group is vital role to know about the relationship of customer. (Kumaresan.K., Manivannan B.,p. 6194.). In the present study, the selected traders have been classified according to their age groups. This data has been collected to understand the participation of traders across various age groups. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 1.

Table 1: Classification of Weekly Market Traders by Age Group

Sr.No.	Age Group	Number of Traders	Percentage
1	20-30	10	20
2	31-40	18	36
3	41-50	14	28
4	51 and Above	8	16
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 1 presents the classification of traders in the weekly market of Ashta city, categorized according to their age groups. Out of a total of 50 traders, 10 traders—constituting 20 percent—fall within the 20 to 30 age group. The number of traders in the 31 to 40 age group is 18, accounting for 36 percent. There are 14 traders in the 41 to 50 age group, representing 28 percent, while the number of traders aged 51 years and above is 8, making up 16 percent.

This table reveals that the proportion of traders belonging to the middle-age groups is higher in the weekly market of Ashta city. In particular, the participation of traders in the 31 to 40 age group is observed to be the highest. This clearly demonstrates that the weekly market serves as a significant source of income for an economically active and productive demographic. Furthermore, the increasing participation of traders from the young and middle-age groups can be regarded as a positive indicator for the development of local trade.

2. Educational Qualification-wise Classification of Traders

In the present study, the selected traders have been classified according to their educational qualifications. This data was collected to ascertain the educational levels of the traders. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 2.

Table 2: Classification of Traders Based on Educational Qualification

Sr.No.	Educational Qualification	Number of Traders	Percentage
1	Primary	8	16
2	Secondary	15	30
3	Higher Secondary	17	34
4	Degree and Above	10	20
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 2 presents the classification of traders operating in the weekly market of Ashta city, categorized according to their educational qualifications. Out of a total of 50 traders, 8 have completed primary education, constituting 16 percent of the total. The number of traders who have completed secondary education is 15, accounting for 30 percent. There are 17 traders with higher secondary education, representing 34 percent, while 10 traders hold a graduate degree or higher qualifications, making up 20 percent of the total.

This table clearly indicates that, within the weekly market of Ashta city, the proportion of traders with higher secondary and secondary education is predominant. Furthermore, the proportion of graduate traders is also observed to be significant. Since Ashta is an educationally developed city, the overall level of education among the traders is found to be relatively high. It is evident that this educational background contributes to enhanced business acumen,

improved communication skills with customers, and an increased adoption of modern transaction methods, such as digital payments, among the traders.

3. Classification of Traders According to Type of Business:

Weekly markets play a crucial role in the socio economic development of rural people in India as they are the centers of compilation and distribution of rural produces in the villages. (Sunildro L.S.,p.567) In the present study, the selected traders have been classified according to their type of business. This data has been collected to gain insights into the traders engaged in various types of businesses within the weekly market. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 3.

Table 3: Classification of Traders Based on the Type of Business

Sr.No.	Business Type	Number of Traders	Percentage
1	Vegetables	14	28
2	Fruit Vendors	8	16
3	Clothing	9	18
4	Groceries & Household Goods	11	22
5	Agricultural Produce	8	16
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 3 presents the classification of traders operating in the weekly market of Ashta city, categorized according to their type of business. Out of a total of 50 traders, 14 constituting 28 percent—are engaged in the business of selling vegetables. The number of fruit vendors stands at 8, accounting for 16 percent of the total. The number of traders selling clothing is 9, representing 18 percent. There are 11 traders selling groceries and household items, making up 22 percent, while 8 traders—or 16 percent—are involved in the sale of agricultural produce.

This table reveals that vegetable vendors constitute the largest proportion of traders within the weekly market of Ashta city. This clearly demonstrates that the weekly market serves as a vital hub, primarily dedicated to the buying and selling of goods required for daily necessities. Furthermore, the presence of vendors selling groceries and household items is also significant. Since farmers and traders from the surrounding rural areas utilize this market to sell their produce, the sale of agricultural goods and vegetables appears to hold particular importance within this setting. Consequently, it becomes evident that the weekly market in Ashta acts as a crucial catalyst, providing impetus to both local trade and the rural economy.

4. Monthly Income-wise Classification of Traders:

In the present study, the selected traders have been classified based on their monthly income. This data has been collected to ascertain the financial status of the traders. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 4.

Table 4 presents the classification of the monthly income of traders operating in the weekly market of Ashta city. Out of a total of 50 traders, 6 traders have a monthly income of up to Rs.10,000, constituting 12 percent of the total. The income group ranging from Rs.10,001 to Rs.20,000 comprises 15 traders, accounting for 30 percent. There are 18 traders with an income between Rs.20,001 and Rs.30,000, representing 36 percent, while 11 traders have a monthly income exceeding Rs.30,000, making up 22 percent of the total.

This table clearly indicates that the majority of traders in the weekly market of Ashta city fall within the monthly income bracket of Rs.20,001 to Rs.30,000. Furthermore, the proportion of traders earning more than Rs.30,000 is also significant. This suggests that the weekly market in Ashta city serves as a vital source of income for its traders. It is observed that the traders' income is on the rise, driven by the city's economic prosperity, the purchasing power of consumers, and the participation of customers from the surrounding rural areas. Consequently, it becomes evident that the weekly market exerts a positive influence on the economic status of the local traders.

Table 4: Classification of Traders' Monthly Income

Sr.No.	Monthly Income	Number of Traders	Percentage
1	Up to 10,000	6	12
2	10,001 to 20,000	15	30
3	20,001 to 30,000	18	36
4	Over 30,000	11	22
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

5. Classification of Payment Methods Used by Traders

In the present study, the payment methods utilized by the selected merchants have been classified. This data has been collected to gain an understanding of the merchants' transaction practices. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 5.

Table 5: Payment methods used by Traders

Sr.No.	Payment Methods	Number of Traders	Percentage
1	Cash Only	18	36
2	Cash & UPI	24	48
3	UPI / QR Code	8	16
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 5 presents a classification of the payment methods utilized by traders at the weekly market in the city of Ashta. Out of a total of 50 traders, 18—constituting 36 percent rely exclusively on cash transactions. The number of traders utilizing both cash and UPI payment methods stands at 24, accounting for 48 percent of the total. Furthermore, 8 traders—representing 16 percent—conduct transactions solely through UPI or QR Codes.

This table clearly indicates that, alongside traditional cash transactions, the usage of digital payment methods is on the rise within the weekly market of Ashta. Notably, the proportion of traders utilizing a combination of both cash and UPI methods appears to be the highest. This observation underscores the fact that traders are embracing evolving technology. Given that Ashta is an educationally and economically developed city, there is a discernible increase in awareness regarding digital transactions among the trading community. Moreover, it is evident that traders are adopting modern payment methods—such as UPI and QR Codes—to enhance customer convenience. Consequently, the data demonstrates a growing influence of the digital economy within the weekly market.

6. Classification of Change in Income of Traders Due to Weekly Market:

In the present study, changes in traders' income resulting from weekly markets have been categorized. This data has been collected to understand the impact of the market on

traders' income. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 6.

Table 6: The change in traders' income resulting from Weekly Markets

Sr.No.	Change in Income	Number of Traders	Percentage
1	Significant Increase	16	32
2	Moderate Increase	22	44
3	Slight Increase	8	16
4	No Change	4	8
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 6 presents a classification of the changes observed in the income of traders in the city of Ashta, attributed to the weekly market. Out of a total of 50 traders, 16—constituting 32 percent—reported a significant increase in their income. 22 traders—or 44 percent—stated that they experienced a moderate increase in income. 8 traders—representing 16 percent—noted a marginal increase, while 4 traders—or 8 percent—reported that there was no change whatsoever in their income.

It is evident from this table that the weekly market in Ashta has led to a positive increase in the income of the majority of traders. Notably, the proportion of traders reporting moderate to significant increases in income appears to be substantial. This clearly demonstrates that the weekly market serves as a vital economic platform for the traders. It is observed that the participation of customers from surrounding rural areas, the large-scale buying and selling of goods, and the regularity of the market contribute to the growth in the traders' financial earnings. Consequently, it can be concluded that the weekly market exerts a positive influence on the economic status of local traders.

7. Age-wise Classification of Customers:

In the present study, the selected customers have been classified according to their age groups. This data has been collected to understand the participation of customers from various age groups. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 7.

Table 7: Classification of Customers by Age Group

Sr.No.	Age Group	Number of Customers	Percentage
1	20-30	12	24
2	31-40	16	32
3	41-50	13	26
4	51 and Above	9	18
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 7 presents the classification, based on age groups, of customers visiting the weekly market in the city of Ashta for shopping. Out of a total of 50 customers, 12 belong to the 20–30 age group, constituting 24 percent of the total. The number of customers in the 31–40 age group is 16, accounting for 32 percent. There are 13 customers in the 41–50 age groups, representing 26 percent, while the number of customers aged 51 years and above is 9, making up 18 percent.

This table reveals that the proportion of customers in the 31–40 age group is the highest among those visiting the weekly market in Ashta. Furthermore, the participation of customers in the 41–50 age groups is also observed to be significant. This clearly indicates that customers in the middle-age groups constitute the majority of visitors to the weekly market. It appears that customers are drawn to the weekly market due to factors such as the opportunity to purchase daily necessities, the availability of goods at lower prices, and the facility to procure fresh produce. Consequently, it can be concluded that the weekly market in Ashta plays a pivotal role in the daily shopping activities of local customers.

8. Occupation-wise Classification of Customers:

In the present study, the selected customers have been classified according to their occupation. This data was collected to ascertain information regarding the customers' occupations. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 8.

Table 8: Classification of Customers by Business Type

Sr.No.	Occupation	Number of Customers	Percentage
1	Agriculture	14	28
2	Service	16	32
3	Business	11	22
4	Housewife	9	18
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 8 presents the classification, based on occupation, of customers visiting the weekly market in the city of Ashta for shopping. Out of a total of 50 customers, 14—constituting 28 percent—are associated with the agricultural sector. The number of employed customers stands at 16, accounting for 32 percent of the total. Customers engaged in business number 11 (22 percent), while the number of homemakers is 9 (18 percent).

This table clearly indicates that employed individuals constitute the largest segment of customers visiting the weekly market in Ashta. Furthermore, a significant presence of customers associated with agriculture is also observed. This underscores the fact that the weekly market in Ashta serves as a vital shopping hub for both rural and urban clientele. Factors such as the city's economic prosperity, its growing population, and the participation of customers from surrounding rural areas contribute to a large influx of shoppers from diverse occupational backgrounds to the weekly market. Consequently, it is evident that the weekly market plays a pivotal role in the daily economic transactions of the local populace.

9. Classification of Major Reasons for Customers Visiting Weekly Market:

In the present study, the primary reasons for customers visiting weekly markets have been categorized. This information has been collected to gain insights into the purchasing preferences of the customers. The details regarding this are presented in the following Table 9.

Table 9: Key Reasons Why Customers Visit Weekly Markets for Shopping

Sr.No.	Reason	Number of Customers	Percentage
1	Low Price	18	36
2	Fresh Products	14	28
3	Variety	10	20
4	Nearby Place	8	16
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 9 illustrates the primary reasons why customers visit the weekly market in the city of Ashta for shopping. Out of a total of 50 customers, 18—constituting 36 percent—visit the weekly market to shop because goods are available at lower prices. 14 customers—or 28 percent—come to the market because fresh produce is available. 10 customers—20 percent—prioritize the market due to the availability of a wide variety of goods, while 8 customers—16 percent—visit the weekly market for shopping because it is a nearby and convenient location.

It is evident from this table that the availability of goods at lower prices is the primary reason driving customers to the weekly market. Furthermore, the availability of fresh produce and a diverse range of goods are also significant factors that attract customers. This indicates that the weekly market in Ashta serves as a vital shopping hub that fulfills the daily needs of customers at a lower cost. Since farmers from the surrounding rural areas engage in direct selling, customers are able to access fresh produce and goods at relatively lower prices. Consequently, it is established that the weekly market has a positive economic impact on the purchasing activities of customers.

10. Monthly Expenditure-wise Classification of Customers:

In the present study, the monthly expenditure of the selected customers has been classified. This data was collected to gain insights into the spending patterns of the customers. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 10.

Table 10: Classification of Customers' Monthly Purchase Expenditure

Sr.No.	Monthly Expenditure	Number of Customers	Percentage
1	Up to 2,000	7	14
2	2,001 to 5,000	19	38
3	5,001 to 8,000	15	30
4	More than 8,000	9	18
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 10 presents the classification of the monthly purchasing expenditure of customers shopping at the weekly market in the city of Ashta. Out of a total of 50 customers, 7 customers—constituting 14 percent—have a monthly purchasing expenditure of up to Rs.2,000. The number of customers spending between Rs.2,001 and Rs.5,000 is 19, accounting for 38 percent. There are 15 customers spending between Rs.5,001 and Rs.8,000, representing 30 percent, while 9 customers spend more than Rs.8,000, accounting for 18 percent.

It is evident from this table that the majority of customers fall within the monthly purchasing expenditure bracket of Rs.2,001 to Rs.5,000. Furthermore, the proportion of customers spending between Rs.5,001 and Rs.8,000 is also significant. This clearly indicates that the weekly market in Ashta serves as a vital hub for the regular purchasing activities of customers. It is observed that customers shop at the weekly market in large numbers due to the availability of a variety of goods at lower prices, the supply of fresh produce, and the general convenience offered by the local market. Consequently, it can be concluded that the weekly market exerts a positive influence on the economic transactions of local customers.

11. Classification of Payment Methods Used by Customers:

In the present study, the payment methods utilized by the selected customers have been classified. The emergence and spread of digital payment methods (UPI, mobile wallets, PoS, QR payments) have transformed how transactions are conducted, changed pricing approaches, and influenced interactions between buyers and sellers. (Jawale A.S., s573) This data was collected to gain insights into the customers' transaction patterns. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 11.

Table 11: Payment methods used by customers

Sr.No.	Payment Methods	Number of Traders	Percentage
1	Cash	20	40
2	UPI	17	34
3	Cash and UPI	13	26
4	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 11 presents a classification of the payment methods utilized by customers at the weekly market in the city of Ashta. Out of a total of 50 customers, 20 constituting 40 percent—conduct their transactions using cash. The number of customers transacting via UPI stands at 17, representing 34 percent of the total. Furthermore, 13 customers—accounting for 26 percent utilize a combination of both cash and UPI methods.

This table clearly indicates that while cash transactions remain predominant in the weekly market of Ashta, the usage of digital payment methods is also on the rise. In particular, the proportion of customers conducting transactions via UPI appears to be significant. Given that Ashta is an educationally and economically developed city, there is a discernible increase in customer awareness regarding digital transactions. Moreover, the fact that merchants have made QR Code and UPI facilities available suggests that customers are increasingly prioritizing digital modes of payment. Consequently, the findings demonstrate that the influence of the modern digital economy is steadily growing within the traditional weekly market setting.

12. Classification of Satisfaction Level of Customers

In the present study, the satisfaction levels of the selected customers have been categorized. This data has been collected to understand the customers' responses regarding the weekly market. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 12.

Table 12: Classification of Customer Satisfaction Levels

Sr.No.	Satisfaction Level	Number of Customers	Percentage
1	Highly Satisfied	17	34
2	Satisfied	22	44
3	Moderately Satisfied	8	16
4	Dissatisfied	3	6
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 12 presents the classification of customer satisfaction levels regarding the weekly market in the city of Ashta. Out of a total of 50 customers, it was observed that 17 customers—constituting 34 percent—were 'highly satisfied.' It appears those 22 customers—or 44 percent—was 'satisfied.' Furthermore, 8 customers—representing 16 percent—expressed a 'moderate' level of satisfaction, while 3 customers—amounting to 6 percent—were found to be 'dissatisfied.'

This table clearly indicates that the majority of customers are satisfied with the weekly market in Ashta. In particular, the high proportion of 'highly satisfied' and 'satisfied'

customers suggests that customers hold positive sentiments regarding the quality, affordability, and freshness of the goods available in the market, as well as the wide variety of products offered. Conversely, only a very small fraction of customers were found to be dissatisfied. Consequently, it can be concluded that the weekly market in Ashta serves as a significant local shopping hub that effectively fulfills the needs of its customers.

13. Opinion of Traders Regarding Employment Generation through Weekly Market:

In the present study, the opinions of traders regarding the generation of employment through weekly markets have been categorized. This data was collected to ascertain the market's contribution to employment generation. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 13.

Table 13: Opinion of Traders Regarding Employment Generation through Weekly Market

Sr.No.	Opinion	Number of Traders	Percentage
1	Yes	39	78
2	No	11	22
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 13 presents the opinions of traders in the city of Ashta regarding the extent to which the weekly market contributes to local employment generation. Out of a total of 50 traders, 39—constituting 78 percent—expressed the view that the weekly market facilitates local employment generation; conversely, 11 traders—or 22 percent—opined that the market has no significant impact on employment generation. It is evident from this table that, in the opinion of the majority of traders, the weekly market in Ashta serves as a significant medium for generating local employment. It appears that the market provides employment opportunities to hawkers, individuals involved in the transport sector, laborers engaged in loading and unloading goods, as well as small-scale traders. Furthermore, it is observed that economic activity witnesses an upsurge, as the market offers farmers and traders from the surrounding rural areas a platform to sell their produce. Consequently, it can be concluded that the weekly market exerts a positive influence on both the local economy and employment generation.

14. Classification of Types of Goods Purchased by Customers

Fresh vegetables, fruits, clothes, utensils, grains, bakery items and other items useful in daily life are sold in this weekly market. (Chavan Y.B.,p.h215) In the present study, the types of goods purchased by consumers have been classified. This data has been collected to gain insights into consumers' purchasing patterns. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 14.

Table 14: Types of goods purchased by customers

Sr.No.	Item Category	Number of Customers	Percentage
1	Vegetables	18	36
2	Fruits	9	18
3	Clothing	8	16
4	Groceries	10	20
5	Other	5	10
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 14 presents a classification of the types of goods purchased by customers at the weekly market in the city of Ashta. Out of a total of 50 customers, 18—constituting 36 percent—purchase vegetables. The number of customers purchasing fruits is 9, representing 18 percent. The number of customers purchasing clothing is 8, accounting for 16 percent. There are 10 customers purchasing grocery items (provisions), making up 20 percent, while 5 customers purchase 'other' items, representing 10 percent.

This table clearly indicates that vegetables are the most frequently purchased items at the weekly market in Ashta. Furthermore, the volume of purchases for groceries and fruits is also significant. This demonstrates that the weekly market serves as a vital hub for customers to procure goods required for their daily needs. Since farmers from the surrounding rural areas bring fresh vegetables and other agricultural produce directly to the market for sale, customers have access to fresh goods at affordable prices. Consequently, it is evident that the weekly market exerts a positive economic impact on the purchasing activities of the customers.

15. Classification of Major Problems Faced by Traders

Generally, weekly market vendors face mass competition from local shops, supermarket like big bazars, Dmart, within the vendors and markets. (Prasad., Begari., p.50**)** In the present study, the major difficulties encountered by traders have been classified. This information has been collected with the objective of understanding the professional challenges faced by the traders. The details thereof are presented in the following Table 15.

Table 15: Major Challenges Faced by Traders

Sr.No.	Challenges	Number of Traders	Percentage
1	Shortage of space	15	30
2	Transport Issues	10	20
3	Competition	14	28
4	Customer Irregularity	11	22
	Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, April 2026.

Table 15 presents a classification of the major difficulties faced by traders in the weekly market of Ashta city. Out of a total of 50 traders, 15—constituting 30 percent—expressed the problem of a shortage of space. Ten traders (20 percent) cited transportation issues. Fourteen traders (28 percent) identified competition as a major difficulty, while 11 traders (22 percent) reported the problem of customer irregularity.

It is evident from this table that a shortage of space and increasing competition are the primary challenges confronting traders in the weekly market of Ashta city. Given the large-scale participation of traders in the market, there is a felt need for proper space planning. Furthermore, it appears that traditional traders are facing difficulties due to the emergence of modern shops and intensifying commercial competition. It is also observed that transportation issues and customer irregularity are adversely impacting the traders' businesses. Consequently, the findings indicate a need for necessary facilities and planning to enhance the effectiveness of the weekly market's management.

Findings

1. Out of a total of 50 traders, it was observed that 36 percent belonged to the 31 to 40 age group. This clearly

indicates a higher level of participation among traders in the middle-age category.
2. It was found that 34 percent of the traders had completed their higher secondary education, while 20 percent were graduates. This suggests that the level of education among the traders is satisfactory.
3. It was observed that 28 percent of the traders were engaged in the vegetable vending business, while 22 percent were involved in the grocery business.
4. It was evident that, among the total traders surveyed, 36 percent had a monthly income falling within the range of Rs.20,001 to Rs.30,000.
5. It was noted that 48 percent of the traders utilized both cash and UPI payment methods. This clearly indicates a growing acceptance of digital transactions.
6. 44 percent of the traders reported a moderate increase in their income due to the weekly market, while 32 percent stated that they experienced a significant increase.
7. Among the customers, it was found that 32 percent belonged to the 31 to 40 age group. This clearly indicates a higher level of participation among customers in the middle-age category.
8. It was observed that 32 percent of the customers were salaried employees, while 28 percent were engaged in agricultural activities.
9. It became evident that 36 percent of the customers visited the weekly market for shopping primarily because goods were available at lower prices.
10. It was found that the monthly shopping expenditure of 38 percent of the customers fell within the range of Rs.2, 001 to Rs.5, 000.
11. It was observed that 40 percent of the customers conducted transactions using cash, while 34 percent utilized UPI for their transactions.
12. It was evident that 44 percent of the customers were satisfied with the market, while 34 percent expressed that they were highly satisfied. 13.78 percent of traders expressed the opinion that weekly markets contribute to the generation of local employment.
13. It was observed that 36 percent of customers purchase vegetables, while 20 percent purchase grocery items.
14. Among the traders, 30 percent cited a shortage of space as a problem, while 28 percent identified increasing competition as a major difficulty.

Suggestions

1. It is essential to provide adequate and well-planned space for traders within the weekly market in Ashta city, thereby minimizing the difficulties they face while conducting business.
2. There is a need to improve traffic and parking arrangements within the market premises to make commuting to and from the market more convenient for both customers and traders.
3. It is necessary to provide traders with greater training and encouragement regarding digital payment systems, which will reduce their reliance on cash transactions and promote the adoption of modern transaction methods.
4. Local self-government bodies must prioritize the provision of sanitation, drinking water, and other basic amenities within the market premises.
5. There is a need to implement special schemes within the weekly market to encourage and support farmers and small-scale traders from rural areas.
6. Market management needs to be made more effective to ensure that customers have access to high-quality goods at affordable prices.
7. In light of the increasing competition within the market, it is essential to provide financial and technical assistance to small-scale traders.
8. Since weekly markets stimulate local employment generation, it is necessary to provide greater encouragement and support to such traditional market systems at both the government and municipal levels.
9. Emphasis must be placed on enhancing safety and amenities within the market premises for the benefit of both traders and customers.
10. Effective planning and management of the weekly market can provide a significant boost to the local economy of Ashta city.

Conclusion

The present research examines the economic impact of the weekly market in the city of Ashta on both traders and consumers. For the purpose of this study, primary data was collected from traders and consumers through the use of questionnaires. This data was subsequently classified and analyzed with the aid of tables and percentages.

The study clearly demonstrates that the weekly market in Ashta constitutes a vital component of the local economy. The market contributes to an increase in traders' incomes and simultaneously stimulates local employment generation. In particular, it was observed that the trade of vegetables, groceries, and daily necessities is conducted on a large scale. Furthermore, it became evident that consumers show a strong preference for the weekly market, primarily because it offers fresh goods at affordable prices.

The study also revealed a growing adoption of digital payment methods among both traders and consumers. This indicates an increasing acceptance of modern transaction methods within the traditional weekly market setting. It was found that the vast majority of consumers are satisfied with the quality, pricing, and availability of goods within the market.

However, the study also highlighted that traders face various challenges, such as a shortage of space, intensifying competition, and transportation-related issues. Consequently, it is imperative to implement necessary improvements in the management of the market.

Overall, this research concludes that the weekly market in Ashta serves as a significant economic hub for traders, consumers, and the local economy alike, acting as an effective catalyst for boosting both rural and urban economic activities.

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