



## A Study on the Traditional Assamese snacks items and its market value in Guwahati city

Jupitara Goswami, 2 Dr. Nayanjyoti Goswami

Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Gauhati Commerce College  
Assistant Professor, Assam down town University

**Abstract:** Assam is the place of different ethnic food with medicinal value. Traditional food items have a special place in the heart of Assamese people. The traditional food items has been a high regards specially during the festival time. The *pithas* which were made mostly from rice, coconut and jiggery were prepared using different techniques. No doubt the impact of fast food is growing very fast and its domination in the market is very high but still traditional snacks of Assam have high place in the hearts of the people of Assam. The demands of traditional food items especially *pithas* usually raises during Bihu festivals and its market value usually raises during the festive occasion.

**Keywords :** traditional snacks, Assamese, *pithas*, market

**Introduction:** Assam the land of diversified cultural tradition has rich traditional food diversity. The process of preparation of these food items follows elaborate and scientific ways. The ingredients were collected from nature through natural process. The purpose of preparing the traditional food items are both for personal and commercial purposes. Market or marketing system existed in Assam since ages, where variety of material was also marketed along with varied food stuff. And these marketing at now have developed and take the shape of full phased market (Sarmah P, Saikia S & Saikia A 2019:1) The impact of Globalization has made the world a small village. Everything is within reach of people. The unity and diversity concept of India makes India a land of uniqueness. Each region of India has rich cultural diversity with different cuisine. During religious and social gathering some dishes were prepared which are unique in their own taste.

### Objectives of the study:

- 1 To know about the importance of traditional food items for the people of Assam.
- 2 To know about the market value of traditional food items.
- 3 To know how far the Assamese traditional snacks items have remain a tough competitor to western snack items.

**Study area** The study was conducted in the *Ulubari* and *Paltanbazar* area of Guwahati city and a sample of 100 individual were randomly selected. For this particular study the investigator

collected specific necessary information about the market value of Assamese traditional snacks from the shop owners to make the study more authentic.

**Methodology:** For the collection of primary data interview of shop owners and vendors were collected randomly. Survey schedules were prepared from scientific point of view for collection of primary data. Few case studies were also incorporated to make the study more authentic. Data were also from secondary sources such as book journals articles newspapers adds, poster and banners

Traditional Snacks have a special place in Assam. It was prospered in a traditional way. The Assamese snack were the regular food in earlier days as during that time there is less availability of western food. During that time period it was compulsory for every household to prepare the traditional snacks that to by themselves and people mostly prefer to prepare in home. But slowly as time changes and under the impact of modernization and westernization traditional snacks goes to market as people gave up the habit of preparing regularly instead on special occasion such as Bihu, marriage, and other religious occasion it was prepared. People specially the city dwellers mostly prefer to buy the traditional snacks from the shops rather than preparing by themselves. At the same time traditional snacks food items have a tough completion with western food items. Western food items such as pizza, burger, and many others have taken place in every kitchen and have become favorite for everyone. People specially youth and children mostly prefer for western food. There are a few who would apt for traditional snacks rather than western snacks.

*Jolpan* which is called as snacks in Assamese society are usually served with yogurt, sugar, jiggery and cream. Bihu festival is generally associated with preparation of rice cakes with different ingredients. Cakes which is termed as *pithas* were prepared from rice husk or rice flour. To make *Jolpan* the Assamese people generally use the rice of *Joha*, *Bora* etc *Chira* (Flattened rice), *muri*(glutinous), *aakhoi*(puffed rice etc are also made from these rice also (Das, Monika 2021:591) *Pithas* of different varieties such as *Tilpitha*, *Ghila pith*, *Telpitha*, *Khutuli pitha*, *Tupula pitha*, *Japori pithas*, *kol pitha*, *Luthuri pitha*, *kol pitha*, *Bhapotdiya pitha* and *larus* such as *narikol laru*, *tilor laru*, *chira laru*, *akhoi laru* were prepared in every special occasion

The market vendor of the study area gives a clear picture of the market value of the traditional snacks. Anil Deka Case 1, a vendor of Ulubari area says that the sale of Assamese snacks were very limited on regular basis. Mr. Deka a grocery shopkeeper said that people used to demand the traditional snacks only during festival such as Bihu and any special occasion. While he said that people mostly buys western snacks such as *chowmine*, *Maggie*, etc. He said that when he kept the traditional snacks for sell during odd season of the year he was in loss. So he kept the traditional items only during the festive season. *Ranju Devi* case 2 a house wife said that she prepared the traditional snacks during her daughter marriage and for that she gave order to a lady who used to sell the products. *Ranju Devi* said that she had to pay high price for it as it was not

the season of Bihu. But as traditional snacks were part and parcel of Assamese wedding so *Ranju Devi* has to get it in any cost.

**Table1 Preference for snack**

Types of snacks	Preference			
	Male	percentage	Female	percentage
Traditional Assamese snacks	20	35.08%	18	41.86%
Western snacks	37	64.91	25	58.13%
Total	57	100%	43	100%

The above table reveals about the preference for snacks which shows that out of 57 male 20 male prefers for traditional Assamese snacks while 37% prefers for western snacks .While on the other hand 18 female prefers for traditional snacks while 25 female prefers for western snacks. This shows that the maximum number of individuals prefers for western snacks

**Table 2: Level of selling of Traditional Assamese snacks during off season**

Level of selling	Response from the vendors
High selling	10%
Average selling	40%
Low rate of selling	50%
total	100%

The above table reveals the level of selling of traditional snacks by vendors during off season. The table reveals the response from the vendors which reveals that 10% is for high selling while 40% is for average selling while 50% is for low rate of selling during off season

**Table 3: Level of selling of Traditional Assamese snacks during festive season**

Level of selling	Response from the vendors
High selling	60%
Average selling	30%
Low rate of selling	10%
total	100%

The above table reveals the level of selling of traditional snacks by vendors during festive season. The table reveals the response from the vendors which reveals that 60% is for high selling while 30% is for average selling while 10% is for low rate of selling during off season

**Table 4: No. of shops selling Traditional Assamese snacks and western snacks**

Area	No of shops selling Traditional Assamese snacks	No of Shops selling Western snacks
<i>Ulubari</i>	5	15
<i>Paltanbazar</i>	6	18

The above table shows a comparative scenario of shops selling traditional Assamese shops and western snacks items in *Ulubari* and *Paltanbazar*. The table shows that only 5 shops/tea stalls selling traditional Assamese snacks while the number is 15 in regard to shops selling western snacks. While in Panbazar area also the numbers of shops /tea stalls selling traditional Assamese snacks is less in comparison to western snacks sellers

Traditional snacks of Assam have a tough competition with western snacks items. With the passage of time the taste of the people have also changed. Assamese snacks which were once a part and parcel for every Assamese household were affected by western food. Traditional snacks were not only good for health but also easily storable but the western snacks though easily available are not good for health. In regard of availability also we found that traditional snacks are not found within easy reach as compared to western snacks. The huge number of small stalls with fulls of western snacks items show the true picture. Further the cost of making and getting less in return also demotivated some shopkeepers from selling traditional Assamese snacks.

Positive steps in regard to commercialization of traditional Assamese snacks have been taken by small group of youth in cottage industry scale and many youth have started individually. Many self help group have come forward for this purpose and have try to commercialized traditional snacks to global market. Proper training should be given to the youth for setting up an industry for traditional Assamese snacks, preservation of snacks for longer duration and how to make it more globalized and earn more profit from it. Online shopping is now-a –days a greatest trend and social media platform should be used as an effective platform for online marketing of the traditional Assamese snacks

**Conclusion:** Assamese traditional snacks have its tradition of its own. The traditional snack shows the identity of Assam and its people. Besides it has lots of medicinal value and at the same time good for health with less oil and less species is truly a blessing for Assam. But it is sad to say that under the influence of westernization or we can say urbanization the demand of traditional Assamese snacks is decreasing day by day. Western snacks have take the place of Assamese snacks in many cases but when it comes to celebrating any festival or events people always prefers to offers their guest first with *Assamese jolpan* because it is a matter of pride and respect to offer *jolpan* specially in Assamese bell metal utensil. We cannot imagine Assamese culture without Assamese traditional snacks because its shows our true identity.

**Reference:**

Chetia, U. 2008 *Axomor Lokosanskritir Ruprekha* (1st ed) Dhemaji: Kiron Prakashan

Das M., 2021 Food stock in Assamese Culture, *International Journal of Advanced Research in Science, Communication and Technology*, Vol4, Issue 2

Das N., 2017 *Asamar Janajatiya Lakakhadya: Ek Bislesanatmak Adhyayan* PhD. Thesis, Gauhati University, Assam

Gogoi, L. 2003 *Axomia Sanskriti* (4<sup>th</sup> ed) Dibrugarh: Bonalata

Gogoi MP., 2013 *Pan-Bhoojan*, Students Stores, Guwahati, Assam

Gogoi L., 2013 *Asomar Loka Sanskriti* (Vol-II), Krantikaal Prakashan Guwahati.

Sarmah, P, Saikia S., Saikia A 2019, Traditional Food of Assam and its Commercialization, *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering*, ISSN2277-3878 Vol 8 Issue 2S11

Sharma, N.C 2003 *Axomia Lokosanskritir Aabhakh* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed) Guwahati: Bani Prakash

---