

Rural marketing: challenges and prospects

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Abstract

Indian economy is the rural economy. More than half of the Indian population is lives in rural areas. Current population of India is 134 crores and out of which 66.86% lives in rural areas. Because of much population base in rural area, scope of rural marketing is increasing in today's era. Marketing is one of the common factors for the development of economy, but now we can see that most of the market players are keen to invest in the rural sectors. Though there are huge potential and growth opportunities in the rural sector but there are various challenges for rural marketers too. Through our present study we will show these challenges and present scenario of rural marketing. This study is a step forward in exploring several new technology based strategies to be adopted by the rural marketers.

Key words

Rural marketing, technology, internet, schemes, RRB, 4As

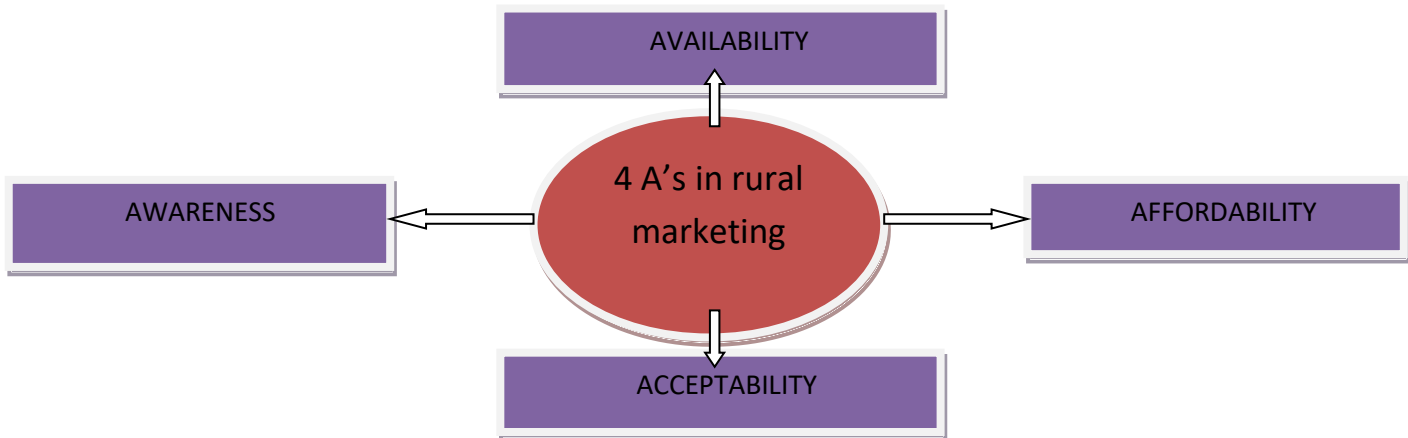
Introduction

The word rural means 'the geographic area or countryside which is outside the urban or city area. the word marketing is derived from word 'marcatus' means that place where buying and selling is takes place. marketing in todays world is based on customer as the customer is considered is the king of every market . So in rural marketing there is need to understand the needs, desires, wants, tastes, expectations of the rural customers and also to increase their knowledge base . All these comes under the important activities of rural marketer.

production is not only the important for the marketer but to marketized it also the main factor. economy has two sectors one is rural sector and the other is urban sector. Rural sector is divided into two main activities one is agriculture based and second is non agricultural based. Mostly rural people earn their livelihood by agriculturelike farming, animal husbandry, fisheries, poultry, dairying etc and non agricultural activities based on industry, business and services such as khadi, handloom, handicraft, transport, banking etc.

According to T.P. Gopaldaswamy, "Rural marketing is a two way process which encompasses the discharge of business activities that direct the flow of goods from urban to rural areas (manufactured goods) and rural to urban (agriculture products) as also within the rural areas.

In the place of 4Ps some marketer adopt 4As in rural marketing. The diagram given below is about the four A's of rural marketing that are very essential for successful implications of rural marketing mix.



Objectives

- 1) To understand the concept of rural marketing.
- 2) To know about the challenges faced by marketer in rural areas.
- 3) To highlight the role of internet in marketing of goods in rural areas.
- 4) To study the schemes and apps launched by government for rural sector.
- 5) To show the effectiveness of media for promoting rural marketing.
- 6) To give some suggestions for the effective implications of rural marketing for the upliftment of rural sector by raising their standard of living and the growth of economy.

Research Methodology

This study is based on secondary data collected from various books, magazines, journals, government reports and analysis, publications by relevant websites which focuses on various aspects of rural marketing and research based on different marketing schemes, five year plans regarding rural marketing, expert's opinions, and use of internet for information search.

Challenges

Rural marketing term is an emerging concept in the modern era but we face various challenges when we do marketing in rural areas like in rural areas

- 1) Communication : communication is the main problem because people in rural areas are introvert and shy nature.
- 2) Lack of participation : they don't disclosed their problems and also not participating in various programmes implemented by the government from time to time.
- 3) Lack of knowledge : they don't use the new technology like mobile, internet, online banking and digital mode of transactions.
- 4) Transportation : Transportation is also a main challenge because people are scattered in rural areas. they are not connected with each other by proper roads.
- 5) Hesitation in using new products : they hesitate in using new products and mainly large sizes, costly products because they prefer small size and low price product weather it is not a qualitative product.
- 6) Convincing : rural people are not get easily convincing by proper advertisement, different media, new sample products they are less convincing in nature.
- 7) Traditional belief and outlook : rural people are stick to their traditions, customs, beliefs they don't want to change their attitude towards new products.

- 8) Lack of availability of technology : even we are living in the 21st century but then too there is lack of availability of recent modes of technology.

Role of internet in rural marketing

Now, internet become a basic need in rural areas to marketized the product. internet connects the scattered areas in various villages where transportation has never reached yet. Marketers are looking to extend their product categories in rural areas. This also help poor people attain some wealth to spend on their product categories. Hindustan uniliver limited company start initiatives to explore their product in these areas. One of such project is project Shakti which is not only helping their company to attain some revenue but also helping the poor women of the village to attain some money which is surely going to increase their purchasing power. Similarly we can take ITC E – CHOUPAL which is helping the poor farmers in getting all the information regarding weather as well as market price of the food grains they are producing.

Schemes and applications launched by government for rural people and farmers

Now rural sector is also a growing part of our indian economy. As taste, income, habits of rural consumer also effect our national income. Therefore our government launched various programmes and applications for the growth of this economy.

Various schemes and applications are discussed below:

- 1) Integrated wasteland development project scheme : the objective of this scheme is taking up integrated wastelands development based on village watershed plans and helps in generation of employment in rural areas enhancing rural people participation in this.
- 2) Antyodaya yojna : main objective is to transforming 5000 rural clusters and 50000 gram panchayats through cluster specific sustainable livelihood development. linking micro enterprises to large market scale.
- 3) National rural livelihood mission (aajevika) : it enables poor people in rural areas to increase their household income through sustainable livelihood enhancements and improved access to financial services.
- 4) Swarnajayanti gram swarajyoyjna : this scheme is starting for those people who are below poverty line in rural sectors to create employment opportunity for self.
- 5) Pradhan mantra gram in digital shaksharta abhiyan : it is for educating rural household digitally literate.
- 6) Bhavantar bharpayee yojna : it is to assure farmers of fair prices for their production and emphasizing in diversification of crops.
- 7) 24*7 power supply : it is started to provide free electricity to farmers for their production so that they continue their production with power supply machines.
- 8) Kisan suvidha app : started in 2016 by our prime minister narendra modi to strengthen the farmers and development of villages. It provides information on current weather and also forecast for next 5 days of weather, market prices of crops in the nearest town, knowledge of fertilizers , seeds, machinery etc.

Effectiveness of media for promoting rural marketing

Media plays a very prominent role in promoting rural marketing. As we know that reach of people living in rural area is less to new technological instruments. but now a days there is great increment in technology base products used by rural people especially by youth such as mobile phones with smart and android features, personal computer ,net cafe's etc. which increases the use of modern available instruments that are very much helpful in providing new and updated information about products, services and schemes available for rural areas. Besides that the earlier means like newspapers, televisions etc. can also be used for promotion of various types of products and services available for rural area.

Without proper media any section of society can't get the adequate information whether it is in rural or in urban sector. It shows how important and useful media is for promoting the rural marketing. as above we have already told about various schemes specially launched by government for rural areas .these can be fully availed by people with the help of media as through fast and effective media tools all incentives and schemes can be fully utilized.

Suggestions for effective implications of rural marketing

- To bring fast information system so that all available product and services can be known to rural people.
- Various schemes are there but these are not sufficient as the need and demand in rural area is changing day by day, so further new schemes and incentives are required for rural areas.
- Markets have to come up with new ideas and innovations which will suit to the changing scenario of rural people as there consumption pattern is changing considerably which has the influence of urban consuming patterns.
- Proper application and implementation of government schemes is necessary so that their benefit can be properly reached to rural sector.
- Availability of technology and digitization effect should also be considered for rural marketer and people living in rural areas.so technology use should be increased in these areas to increase the awareness in people of various programs and schemes.
- More and more campaigns and advertisements should be introduced which is based on rural people needs so, that they people also realized their important role in the society.

Conclusion

Upliftment of rural sector and raising the standard of living of rural community is vital for the development of indian economy. rural marketing can play a very prominent role in these areas . By providing innovative products and services with various choices and in different price range that will be according to the demand pattern of rural sector is the responsibility of rural marketer. Technology, media and various government schemes are also supportive in raising the rural marketing.

Rural people attracted towards the various incentives and benefits immediately, discount, free samples about product. Their reaction are mostly positive regarding discountable goods. They always ask to the retailer for their opinion about the product before they purchase any product. But still awareness level of this sector regarding various promotional schemes is very less.

In today's era differences between urban and rural marketing is reducing but still there is a gap between both. Development aspect and social and economic welfare of indian economy all can be achieved when there is the growth of rural areas and rural marketing is a necessary tool for it.

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