JCRT.ORG

ISSN: 2320-2882



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE **RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)**

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

NTFP MARKETING AND CHALLENGES IN WAYANAD THROUGH SCHEDULED TRIBES **CO-OPERATIVES**

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Abstract: As there is a need to increase employment, revenue, and forest utilization, marketing forest products is crucial. The tribes exhibit remarkable diversity across the nation regarding economic, social, political, educational, and health issues. In certain cases, they are also granted preferential treatment because of their socioeconomic status, and as a result, the Indian constitution assigns the state governments the duty of fostering their development. The federal and state governments are paying extra attention to them by holding awareness campaigns, seminars, and other events for their welfare to bring them up to speed with everyone else. This study, which is limited to the Muthanga tribal territory in the Wayanad district, focuses on the different marketing issues that members of the Sulthan Bathery Scheduled Tribes Service Co-operative Society confront and offers suggestions for how to improve the marketing situation for their products. It is determined through statistical research that the tribal people of Muthanga are not well-informed about marketing. Since the government does not take any action to promote their products or offer them any bonuses or subsidies, they are not happy with the help the government provides for marketing. The indigenous people lack adequate awareness of a number of projects, schemes, and other forms of assistance. They are compelled to provide the local traders a reduced price for their goods. In comparison to other items, they offer pure and high-quality goods, but their products do not have more demand or a fair price, and they encounter numerous marketing challenges.

Index Terms - Scheduled Tribes Co-operatives, Marketing Problems, Muthanga, Tribal Development, Tribal Village, Tribal Products.

I. INTRODUCTION

A group of individuals that reside in a forest are known as tribes. In certain parts of the world, they are also referred to as "Clans." According to Sunil (2021) a tribe is a social division in a traditional society made up of families connected by social, economic, religious, or blood ties. Tribes have a standard culture and dialect and share certain traits and attributes that distinguish them as a unique political, social, and cultural entity. The term "Adivasi" is another term for the major Indian tribes. (Ghadei, 2021). Tribals are recognised as the native inhabitants of the land; the Dictionary of Anthropology defines a tribe as a collection of people who are typically from a specific region, speak a common language, have a similar culture, and form a cohesive social structure. (Ghadei, 2021) Tribal's are often mentioned 'adivasi', 'vanvasi', 'pahari', 'adimjati', 'anusuchit janjati', etc. India has the second largest tribal population within the world, after Africa and tribal Communities is an integral segment of Indian society. (Samarath, 2019) India's diverse tribal population is distributed over its length and width, presenting a sophisticated cultural mosaic due to the country's diverse ecosystems. The tribal economy is heavily reliant on the agricultural land and forests, as well as, to a lesser degree, on the artisans' abilities to create handicrafts and indigenous knowledge. Depending on the possibilities accessible in terms of assets like land, machinery, animals, forest and agricultural resources, capabilities, etc., a family will determine how to generate different livelihood strategies while attempting to make the most use of the resources at hand. Tribal problems are thought to originate from the very fact that their traditional way of life has been materially disrupted by more developed populations who have invaded their habitations, taken over large tracts of farmland, and occasionally reduced the tribal owners to the status of landless labourers. This suggests that tribal problems are not caused by development within tribal societies. The tribe's way of life was made more difficult by unfavorable weather patterns, a lack of land ownership rights, illiteracy and ignorance, ongoing debt, and the malicious practices of moneylenders. The issue of keeping tribal households at the subsistence level escalated due to insufficient agricultural productivity from tribal territory. As a result, the tribe's primary source of income is now the collection and sale of small-scale forest products. Certain indigenous communities still subsist solely on consumables such as fruits and roots that they harvest from forests during hard times and droughts.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since forests are the natural habitat and ecosystem of the tribal people of India, many of these communities have relied solely on the forest for their survival, means of subsistence, and employment. They made the best use of the forest's resources to create a fruitful, well-balanced ecosystem. Up until the Middle Ages, every Indian tribal community relied entirely on the forest for their subsistence. However, some of the tribal people living in the valley accepted the superior agricultural cultivation, tool use, and notion of an agricultural season that the present castes brought with them when they migrated into tribal regions. This led to the emergence of peasant tribal people in India during the 17th and 18th centuries. Since the process of pesantization of the tribal groupings has persisted. Currently, a sizable portion of India's tribes are considered peasants, engaging in a diverse array of activities. However, many indigenous people, especially those who live in forests, still rely on the forest for their survival even after being exposed to more developed agricultural communities. Others support themselves by gathering various small-scale forest products.

(Sati, 2014) They create their dwellings out of bamboo and wood, practise crafts with raw materials, employ herbs and medicinal plants to treat their ailments, and even centre their religion and folklore around the spirits of the forest. They also live off of edible leaves and roots, honey, wild game, and fish. Numerous tribal communities are known to rely on farming. However, we are unaware of the total number of labourers employed in agriculture and in cultivation. It is possible that low production levels in agriculture are keeping some workers from finding other employment, or it could be the case that the local economy is unable to support a significant portion of the labour force, forcing them to temporarily relocate from their communities. An area's ability to develop economically depends heavily on its marketing efforts. It plays a significant role in the production of income and jobs in both the farm and non-farm sectors. In India, agriculture marketing is a frequent term for tribal marketing. Nonetheless, economic ventures that boost the flow of goods from the tribal sector to the nation's agricultural areas are included in the category of tribal marketing. In addition to agriculture and the forest, raising livestock is crucial to the tribal economy. Cattle and goats are domesticated for a variety of purposes, including milk production, meat sacrifice for their deity, and weekly market sales. Studying how raising livestock might increase their income becomes vital as a result. Due to a number of issues and concerns, including low prices, limited capital, small land holdings, high unemployment, and illiteracy, the tribal people are currently having difficulty marketing their goods. Aside from this, tribal people in the categories of farm and non-farm products are having severe issues with technical and marketing skills. They also do not understand contemporary marketing concepts like after-sales care, quality delivery schedules, and service, among others. (Dave, 2010) Because pricing strategies are not in line with what customers want and items are manufactured without conducting a thorough market analysis or determining in advance whether a given product is in demand, tribal products are unable to compete fiercely with their urban counterparts. The current study is limited to Muthanga, a tribal region in Kerala's Wayanad district.

III. OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study the various marketing practices adopted by tribals.
- 2) To identify the various challenges and problems faced by the tribals in marketing their product.
- 3) To examine the opportunities available for marketing their product.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The research on the marketing issues surrounding tribal items is both analytical and descriptive in character, with a focus on the Muthanga tribal hamlet. Primary data serve as its foundation. Interview schedules were used to gather primary data. Books, journals, magazines, and different online downloads have all provided other details. In this investigation, the random sampling method is employed. In the study only 50 tribal members are considered as the sample.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section aims to present the conclusions and insights from previous research investigations carried out by diverse research experts, together with their perspectives and ideas regarding distinct subject areas. This would make it easier for the current research project to employ relevant data and submit it to strong interpretation and logical thinking. Kankate, J.R & et.al. (2020) in the study, Marketing Systems of Minor Forest Products and Identification of Constraints faced by Tribals for Marketing of Minor Forest Product was done with the intention of examining the different MFP marketing channels and examining the challenges that the tribal farmers had when selling MFP.

The lack of transit infrastructure found in the research location was the main barrier to MFP marketing. Shukla et al. (2018) anticipated that there would be a correlation between socioeconomic indicators and the indigenous people' reliance on non-timber forest products (NTFPs) in Jaldapara National Park. The study recorded the discrepancy in NTFP item pricing between local marketplaces and household levels. Multiple-step sampling techniques were utilised. The communities do depend on NTFPs to meet their daily, financial, and sociocultural needs as well as to provide a safety net in times of scarcity.

Sarker & Das (2007) found that the vast majority of households below the poverty line primarily derive their income from non-timber forest products. The collectors are required to sell their products at the LAMPS-selected centre rather than local markets, and at a price set by the organisation without engaging in any form of negotiation. The agents of the Large-sized Adivasi Multipurpose Cooperative Credit Society (LAMPS) offered the highest appropriate price per unit of products made from sal seeds and kendu leaves.

Chaudhari et al. (2021), the forest yields both non-timber forest products and timber. These forest products are crucial for the government's financial stability, the creation of jobs, and the income and means of subsistence for indigenous people. The current study was conducted to examine the growth and variability in the production of forest products in the Gujarat state, taking into account the significance of these products for the socioeconomic development of the state. Secondary data on the production of wood and non-timber forest products (NTFPs) were gathered for this study in order to examine decadal increase over three distinct time periods.

Sankar, S., et al. (2014) investigated the selling of minor forest products in Andhra Pradesh's tribal and high-altitude regions. The Government of Andhra Pradesh established Girijan Cooperative Corporation (GCC) to handle the marketing prospects of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) in the tribal areas in order to ensure livelihood security and sustainability prospective on the part of tribal farmers in collecting and transacting minor forest produce. This was done after realizing the significance and contributing share of MFP transactions in the total income of tribal farmers.

Negi and Bhalla (2002) studied the marketing and collection of significant aromatic and medicinal plants in Himachal Pradesh's tribal areas: a case study of significant aromatic and medicinal plants. Himachal Pradesh, a hilly state in northwest India, is home to a vast array of aromatic and medicinal plants. In order to better understand the system of their collection and marketing, a research was carried out in the districts of Kullu, Lahaul, and Spiti in the state, taking into account the significance of the commodity taken from this area.

Gupta, A.K. et al. (2015), who studied the challenges tribes in Chhattisgarh, India experience in gathering and selling non-timber forest products (NTFPS), the tribal community primarily resides in and near the forests. They primarily rely on agriculture and labour earning for a sustainable living. However, because rainfed and monocropping agriculture predominate, the revenue from agriculture is insufficient to support their sustainable way of life. As a result, the tribal community depends on non-agricultural activities, forest products (particularly NTFPs), and animal husbandry as alternate sources of income.

Alibaba and Rao (2005) investigated the Adilabad District of Andhra Pradesh's minor forest produce sale patterns. According to their report, there are two channels for the marketing of minor forest produce. The first

channel involves tribal sellers, village traders, wholesalers, retailers, and consumers, while the second channel involves tribal sellers, Girijan Co-operative Corporation, and consumers. Only honey and tamarind pass through this channel.

In the book, Marketing of Tribal Products, Misra & Panda (2004) discuss a number of topics related to product marketing in the tribal sector and what needs to be done to assist the tribal people in raising their standard of life in light of India's subsequent rural development. The non-tribals took advantage of the tribals. to give unusually low rates to local dealers for agricultural and forest products. To save the tribals and weaker sections of the society from the exploitation of the private traders, moneylenders and others agency marketing cooperative society was established in 1947. This society had several procurement centers were the tribals sell their products at reasonable prices.

Shukla et al. (2018), there was a significant difference in the price that the community received from the sale of NTFPs and the price that was obtained from those that were sold at neighbourhood markets. Institutional intervention was required in order to increase community empowerment and process or add value and market knowledge.

Sarker and Das's (2007) research, village wholesalers are sample collectors' primary marketing representatives and provide them the highest prices across all markets. When it comes to the marketing costs of non-timber forest products, manpower is the most significant expense component, followed by packaging and transportation costs.

Chaudhari et al. (2021) revealed significant volatility in the production of fuel wood, timber, and non-timber forest products throughout Gujarat state and all of its circles. During the study period, there was a great degree of heterogeneity in the increasing tendency of gum, flower, fruit, and honey production.

Sankar, S. & et al. (2014), there are two marketing channels in the Visakhapatnam district's tribal areas for trading selected MFP. They are selling the produce to the GCC in addition to village or travelling merchants by packing it in shandies. However, due to a lack of funds and the limited amount collected, many tribe members are selling their food in shandies to the village merchants shortly after it is harvested. The Government of the United Arab Emirates (GCC) has made attempts to promote effective marketing of MFP; however, due to insufficient organisational, functional, and structural resources, the product still faces difficulties. An integrated strategy is required for MFP marketing planning.

Negi & Bhalla (2002). Noted the practise of taking this forest's resources without doing scientific research needs to be stopped. Simplifying M&AP marketing and encouraging coordinated efforts are necessary to ensure that collectors receive fair prices. This will assist in giving collectors of various M&APs from the State, who are each merely small-lot sellers, a voice in the market.

Gupta, A.K. et al (2015), stated NTFPs are crucial to the tribes' ability to maintain a sustainable way of life on the edges of forests. They are a vital source of food, nourishment, healthcare, money, and jobs. However, because of a number of ongoing issues, including low and unstable market prices, a lack of a developed market, the occurrence of inclement weather, which significantly disrupts the collection and marketing of NTFPs, and inadequate market infrastructure and unstable market prices, the tribes were not receiving fair compensation for their NTFPs. As a result, they made less money from selling NTFPs. They believed that to solve these current issues, the government must take the appropriate steps.

Alibaba and Rao (2005) discovered that tribal people were taken advantage of when they sold to village traders at a cheap price. As a result, loans should be given by the GCC to small-scale forest produce collections in order to stop distressed sales to village traders.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Demographic Profile

Table 4.1: Classification based on demographic variables

), C				
No. of Respondents	Percentage	Mean	SD	
	Age			
2	4			
13	26	10.7	10.55	
30	60	12.5	12.55	
5	10			
	Gender		1	
16	32	2.5	12.72	
34	68	25	12.72	
	Occupation	Ores.	1	
5	10	No.		
32	64	10.5	13.77	
12	24	12.5		
1	2		A 1	
	Monthly Income		7.7	
32	64			
17	34	12.5	15 15	
1	2	12.3	15.15	
0	0	1		
es com	Product procured			
26	52	2.77	(\$0°s)-	
20	32			
14	28	12.5	10.24	
8	16			
2	4			
S	Source of Finance		1	
13	26			
2	4	12.5	12.55	
30	60	12.3	12.33	
5	10			
	2 13 30 5 16 34 5 32 12 1 1 1 0 1 26 14 8 2 13 2 30	Respondents Age	Percentage Mean	

From Table 4.1 it can be seen that, only 4 per cent of the respondents are from the age group of 0 to 25, 26 per cent of them are from 25 to 50 age and 50 per cent belong to the age group of 50 to 75. 10 per cent of them are coming under the age group of above 75. So it can be concluded that majority of the respondents are coming under 50 to 75 year age group. 32 per cent respondents were male and 68 per cent were female. 10 per cent were unemployed people, the percentage of agriculture or self-employed people are 24 per cent another 24 per cent respondents were government or semi government employees and 2 per cent respondents engaged in private employment. It was found that most of the respondent engaged in agriculture or selfemployment. In the category of income of 5000, there are 64 per cent and 34 per cent of them have an income between 5000 and 10,000.

There is no respondent whose income is above 20,000. So it was found from the table above that majority of respondent are in the category of below 5000. 52 per cent of respondents produced agricultural products, 28 per cent of respondents produced medicinal products.16 per cent of respondents produced cane and bamboo products and 2 per cent of the respondents were engaged in other works. 26 per cent of respondents obtained finance by bank, 4 per cent of respondents obtained finance by middleman, 60 per cent of respondents obtained finance by owned savings and 10 per cent of respondents are obtain finance to government.

4.2 Other Parameters

Table 4.2: Other Parameters

Variable	Response	No of Respondents	Percentage	
Agency for raw	Yes	6	12	
materials	No	44	88	
7	Co-operative society	44	88	
Storage	Rented building	6	12	
	Warehouses	0	0	
	Poor	7	14	
Market condition	Good	37	74	
Warket condition	Very Good	6	12	
	Excellent	0	0	
100	Direct	10	20	
Method of sales	Traders	33	66	
Without of sales	Agents	5	10	
	Wholesalers	3	6	
	Walking	6	12	
Transportation	Animals	0	0	
facilities	Public transport	38	76	
	Own vehicle	6	12	
	Local market	47	94	
Place for selling	Through government	3	6	
r face for setting	National market	0	0	
	International market	0	0	
Govt sunnart	Poor	32	64	
Govt support	Average	12	24	

Total		50	100
	Excellent	2	4
	Good	4	8

Source: Primary Data

From Table 4.2, it is concluded that 12 per cent of the respondents have opined that there is a special agency for getting the raw materials. 88 per cent of respondents stored their products in own building and 12 per cent of respondents in rented building. Among 50 respondents 14 per cent of respondents rated that present market condition is poor, 12 per cent responded opinion present market condition is very good, another 74 per cent of respondents rated that present market condition is good. That means most of them agreed that present market condition is good. 20 per cent of respondents used direct sale method for the sale of product, 10 per cent of respondents used sale through agent, 66 per cent respondents used village traders for the sale of product and 4 per cent of respondents are used wholesale cum retailer for the sale of product. Most of the respondent depend village traders. It was found that most of the tribal are using bus or public transportation. 94 per cent of respondents are selling their product in local market, only 6 per cent of respondents are selling their product throughout the state. That means majority people are selling their product in local market and no one sell their product nationally and internationally. Among 50 respondents, only 2 per cent of tribal rated that the support of government for the product promotion is excellent. Majority of tribals opinion government support for product promotion is poor (32 per cent).

4.3 Rank Correlation of Promotion Mix

Table 4.3: Correlation of Promotion Mix

Promotion Mix	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Correlation	Rank
Advertisement	0	0	0	50	20	4
Public Relation	27	15	8	0	8.1	1
Direct	22	13	15	0	9.3	2
Marketing						
Low Cost	1	22	27	0	12.6	3

Figure.4.1: Marketing Practices and Promotion Mix



From Fig. 4.1 out of 50 respondents, 27 people responded that public relation and publicity has been adopted for the promotion mix. After using rank correlation method, public relation and publicity got the first rank. From the table second rank goes to direct marketing third rank goes to low price and finally last rank goes to advertisement.

4.4 Marketing Challenges

The challenges and problems of marketing of tribal products are related to transportation facilities, procurement of raw materials, availability of raw materials, quality and price.

Table 4.4: Marketing Challenges

Transportation Issues	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	38	76
No	12	24
	Other Problems	
Unavailability of raw material	34	68
Unreliable supply	1	2
Poor quality	13	26
High Price	2	4
Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 4.4 shows the various challenges faced by the tribals. 76 per cent of the respondents have opined that their village is connected to road and remaining 24 per cent of respondent's village are not connected to road. 68 per cent of respondents face unavailability in procurement of raw material, 2 per cent of respondents face unreliable supply in procuring raw material. Another 26 per cent of respondents are facing quality in procuring material. Remaining 4per cent are facing high price in procuring material. It was found that majority of the tribals face the problem of unavailability of raw material.

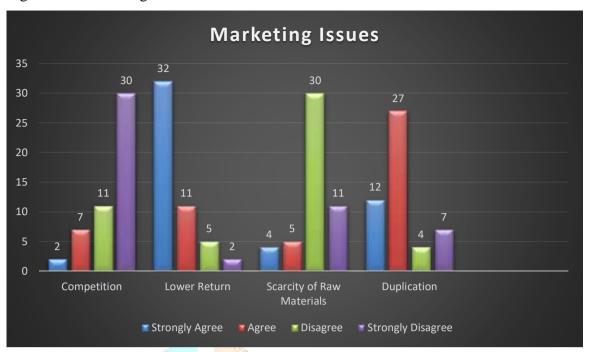
4.5. Marketing Issues

The difficulties faced at the time of marketing the products were found to be growing competition, continuous law return, scarcity of raw material, competition from machine made products

Table 4.5: Marketing Issues

Parameter	SA	A	D	SD	Correlation	Rank
Competition	2	7	11	30	16.9	4
Lower return	32	11	5	2	7.7	1
Scarcity of raw material	4	5	30	11	14.8	3
Duplication	12	27	4	7	10.6	2

Figure.4.2: Marketing Issues



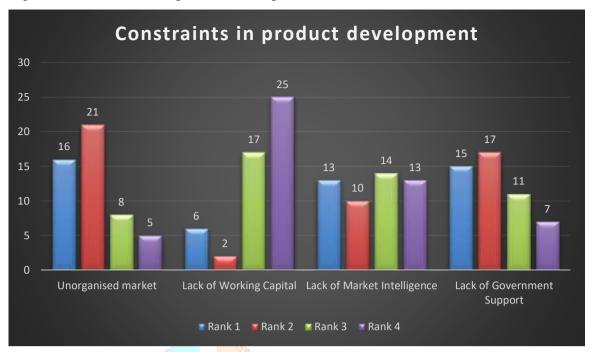
From the above table out of 50 respondents 32 people says that continuous law return is the main problem facing at the time of marketing. After using rank correlation method, continuous law return got the first rank and 30 people says that growing competition is the least problem facing while marketing of products. From the table second rank goes to competition from machine made product third rank goes to scarcity of raw material and finally last rank goes to growing competition.

4.5. Constraints in product development

Table 4.6: Constraints in product development

Constraints	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Correlation	Rank
Unorganised market	16	21	8	5	10.2	n Th
Lack of Working Capital	6	2	17	25	16.1	4
Lack of Market Intelligence	13	10	14	13	12.7	3
Lack of Government Support	15	17	11	7	11	2

Figure.4.3: Constraints in product development



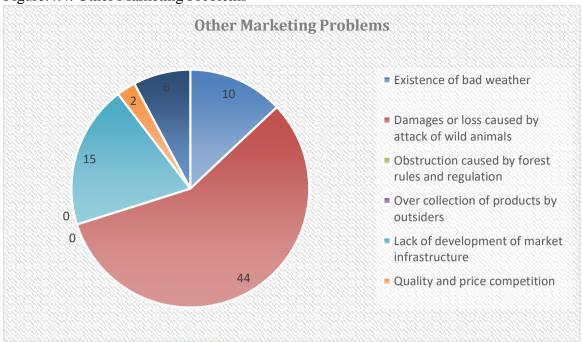
The above figure shows that the constraints and bottleneck in development of product. From the figure we can found that unorganized market is the main problem faced by development of product. After using rank correlation unorganized market got first rank and lack of working capital got last rank.

4.6. Other Marketing Problems

Table 4.7: Other Marketing Problems

Parameter	N	Percentage	Mean	SD	Chi-Square
		madi Stan			(P-value)
Existence of bad weather	5	10			
Damages or loss caused by attack of wild animals	22	44			
Obstruction caused by forest rules and regulation	0	0	7.14	8.3	1.8
Over collection of products by outsiders	0	0	7.14	3	1.0
Lack of development of market infrastructure	15	30	79	3-	
Quality and price competition	2	4	Barrie	500 -	
Lack of proper sale organisation and planning	6	12			je-
Total	50	100	Section 1		

Figure.4.4: Other Marketing Problems



Out of 50 respondents, 10 per cent of the respondents are facing existence of bad weather as marketing problem, 44 per cent of the respondents are facing damages or loss caused by attack of wild animals, 30 per cent face lack of development of market infrastructure as a marketing problem, 4 per cent of the respondent face quality and price competition as a marketing problem, 12 per cent of them have opined lack of proper sale organisation and planning as another marketing problem. It means that most of the tribals face the problem of damages or loss caused by attack of wild animals. A p-value of >0.05 shows that the marketing problems faced by the tribal's are very much significant.

4.7. Opportunities available for marketing

Table 4.8: Opportunities available for marketing

Parameters	No of Respondents	Percentage
	Knowledge about TRIFED	
Yes	1 3	2
No	49	98
	Training for marketing	
Yes	3	6
No	47	94
Be	onus or Subsidy for the prod	uct
Yes	11	22
No	39	78
	Government support	
Fully Satisfied	2	4
Satisfied	8	16
Partially Satisfied	6	12
Dissatisfied	34	68
Total	50	100

V. SUGGESTIONS

The government can appoint special agencies for providing raw material and develop the infrastructure facilities. Provide government ware housing facilities. Promote their product in global level. To give facilities for provide timely information of product to the customers. Provide maximum government support. Provide adequate knowledge about TRIFED and encourage them to involve TRIFED. To take necessary arrangement for providing training to tribals. To provide maximum bonus and subsidy. To adopt more production facilities for producing diversified product. To adopt more marketing facilities for enlarging the marketing of product. Tribal products need advertisements. To develop a marketing facility in their own village. Provide maximum financial support.

VI. **CONCLUSION**

The government can appoint special agencies for providing raw material and develop the infrastructure facilities. Provide government ware housing facilities. Promote their product in global level. To give facilities for provide timely information of product to the customers. Provide maximum government support. Provide adequate knowledge about TRIFED and encourage them to involve TRIFED. To take necessary arrangement for providing training to tribals. To provide maximum bonus and subsidy. To adopt more production facilities for producing diversified product. To adopt more marketing facilities for enlarging the marketing of product. Tribal products need advertisements. To develop a marketing facilities in their own village. Provide maximum financial support.

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