# Rural Marketing





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# Rural Marketing

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#### **PREFACE**

Economic reforms in India have brought about major changes in the whole market environment, specially rural market. Rural marketing has become an important concern to marketers. Successful rural marketing call for review of rural marketing environment, proper understanding of the nature and profile of the rural consumers, designing the right products to appeal to them, and suitable media for communication and distribution.

The Indian markers need to change their traditional view about the rural India's rural consumer that settles for less. The consumer markets can be rejuvenated taking into account the Indian rural markets with their full potential. The environment of rural markets in our country is fascinating and challenging. They offer large scope on a account of their big size and demand base. But, in spite of these, the rural markets pose several complex problems like poor communication and distribution facilities, low literacy level, thinly populated and scattered markets, poor standard of living and socio-economic and cultural backwardness.

Rural Market in India started showing their potential since 1960 and this coincided with the green revolution. But may manufacturers were hesitant to enter into rural market for a long time as they believed that rural folks can not be conceived of used and hence a need for manufactured product can not be created in village. Besides, difficulties in having a free accessibility to those distant markets, forced the producers to think that these markets can not be served economically and profitably.

Prosperity in rural areas is very much reflected in the buying and consumption habits of rural folk. Their indignation to spend on the modern gadgets has increased as a result of their increasing purchasing power. This necessitates an appraisal of the rural marketing environment, which is, no doubt, an outgrowth of various socio-economic and cultural activities.

The 'Psyche' of rural consumers in rural India is a true reflection of the 'Psyche' of village in relation to consumer behaviour. So it is essential for the market to understand the rural consumer and size and composition of rural demand and marketing plans should be in tune with these qualitative aspects. The change in the rural market may be due to change in attitude and way of life of rural consumers. So the composition of the demand has been changing significantly. More and more new products have entered the consumption basket of the rural consumers. The relative share of different categories of products in the consumption basket has also been recording welcome change knowing the exact size and composition of rural markets for consumables and durables will keep the marketers to start the next course of action.

Agricultural marketing scenario in the country has undergone a sea change over the last four decades especially after the on set of technological revolution in the country. The Indian rural market, with vast size and demand base, offers growing opportunities for marketing products. About three-fourth of the population live in rural areas and one-half of national income is generated there. In our country, a silent revolution has been taking place throughout rural areas. Infect, the rural market forms an integral part of marketing in India.

Agricultural marketing is characterised by the involvement of a large number of functionaries and duplication of functions in the process of distribution of product from the producers to the consumers. There is need to undertake adaptive research which will aim at vertical and horizontal integration of marketing functions and functionaries so as to reduce the cost of marketing and ensure a fair price to the growers and consumers a like.

Government is promoting organised marketing of agricultural commodities in the country through a network of regulated markets, which have helped in mitigating the market handicaps of producers sellers at the wholesale assembling level.

Co-operative marketing was developed in India with an aim to deal with the multi-faced problems of agricultural marketing as well as to stream line direct marketing of farm products. Co-operatives play a significant role in alleviating poverty in rural areas. The following are objectives of co-operative marketing.

- To make arrangement for the sale of member's produce to their possible advantage by eliminating speculative practices.
- To provide facilities and guidance to producers for improving the quality of their produce.
- To stabilize prices.
- To provide financial assistance to member producers.
- To act as the government agent for procurement of food grains.
- To facilitate the transport of produce.
- To act as the government agent for implementation of price support policy.

Preface

• To assure a regular trade outlet to the member producers.

Social marketing is the social dimension of marketing that touches upon the social aspects. The concept is not new. Apparently, the idea has been around for over a quarter century. As the concept filters down to any community- based organisation, people are becoming aware of the term. But, like most buzzwords, the term often is misused, ordinarily, social marketing is the use of commercial marketing techniques to promote the adoption of a behaviour that will improve the well being of the target audience or of society as a whole. The very characteristic the distinguishes has social marketing from commercial marketing is its purpose, that is, the benefits accrue to the individual or society, rather than the marketer's organisation or the organisation that is pushing the information.

Social marketing helps the firm in bridging the gap between consumers wants, consumer interest and social welfare. It is adopted by the government and voluntary organisations for promoting social ideas and causes like pollution control, health care, energy conservation literacy, movement and safety measures. It is two dimensions-

- It is related to social responsibility of marketers in a way to respond to the consumer advocacy movements and the pressure of government regulations. Eventually, this results in the economic benefits to the business policies and social benefits to the society that emerge from socially responsible business firms.
- The adoption of marketing approach to the introduction and dissemination of social ideas.

Rural micro-enterprises sub-sector has grown in importance during the last two decades. Policy-makers and development administrators can not ignore its capacity to provide viable and sustainable avenues of selfemployment to the members of self-Helf-Groups (SHGs). Two market strategies viz. market penetration and market creation could be followed for identifying the self employment potential.

The Editor cum Anthologist Dr. S.B. Verma is thankful to `Yojana'; `Kurukshetra'; Employment News and so on for giving their permission to reprint the articles published by them.

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