

MARKETING MIX ADAPTABILITY IN RURAL MARKETS

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INTRODUCTION

Marketing is a societal process through which people get what they need and want through a process of exchange which satisfy both individual and organization goal.

According to AMA - "Marketing Management is a process of planning and executing the conception, pricing, promotion and distribution of ideas, goods and services to create exchanges that satisfies both individual and organizational objectives". According to diversified profiles of consumer which includes different educational background, level of affluence, life style and different patterns of consumption due to difference in customs, traditions, practices etc. marketing is basically divided into two parts -i) RuralMarketing ; and ii) Urban Marketing.

Rural Marketing can be defined as "a marketing activity which is targeted to rural population in the rural areas which have some difference in their needs, wants, desire, buying behaviour, consumer behaviour etc. as they are raised in different customs, tradition and culture and have different economic, social and political background".

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the characteristics of Rural Population.
2. To find out how rural markets can be catered and their untapped potential can be tapped.
3. How 4 P's of marketing can be adopted effectively and efficiently in rural markets.
4. To study the different tools suited to the rural markets.
5. To study the role and means of advertising in rural markets.

HYPOTHESIS

The buying behaviour of rural population is different from urban population and therefore a different set of marketing mix and strategies are required for marketing the products in rural markets.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research work is based on convenient random sampling in which 100 villagers from village "Betma", had been chosen and the method of collection of data was based on questionnaire and thus the nature of data is primary.

The study reveals following characteristics of rural population –

- 1) Study of patterns of earning - The research revealed that there are three major sources of earning rural population.

- a) Agricultural activities - It constitutes a major portion and plays vital role in providing livelihood torural population and is directly related with their life style and need.
- b) Small unprofessionally managed business - Due to lack of educational qualification and professional degrees most of the rural population is engaged in doing small sort of family business, so have mediumlevel of earning which leads to somewhat middle status in the society.
- c) Daily wages - The persons belonging below poverty line or lower level of the rural class are engaged in daily wage earnings.

Source of Earning - Rural Population

1 Earning from Agriculture	56
2 Small Unprofessionally Managed Business	12
3 Daily Wages	32

2) Lack of technical knowledge - As we know that rural population has low level of literacy rate and characterized by lack of technical and professional knowledge so the marketer faces lots of problem in several areas like development of less complex products and creation of advertisement because they face the problem of convincing and face high resistance from rural population.

Technical Knowledge - Rural Population

1 Technical Knowledge	28
2 Not having Technical Knowledge	72

3) Rigidity in behaviour - It was found that it is difficult to convince the rural population about the products and services due to their rigidity in the behaviour. In order to counter attack the rigidity several behaviour moulding techniques can be used and in order to sell the product and services their advantages are required to be described.

4) Lack of Infrastructure - There is a lack of infrastructure in rural area like improper transport facility, lack of adequate power supply, problem of water for irrigation and lack of educational and other infrastructure.

5) Cost Conscious - The people living in village are more prices sensitive and the reason beingthe low level of earnings and the rigid behaviour.

Cost Conscious - Rural Population

1 Cost Conscious	76
2 Quality Conscious	24

6) Joint families - The study also reveal that in contrast to the urban areas where nuclear family culture is more persistent and growing in nature, in rural areas still joint family culture is more valuable and the head of the family plays an important role in purchase decision.

Education - Rural Population

S. No.	Sex	Educated	Non-Educated
1	Male	39	61
2	Female	31	69

7) Rural population is more socially and religiously connected with each other. So it is directly related with occasional marketing. They meet at the time of different festivals. This characteristic of rural population provides them a platform through which valuable information from one to another is passed which can be seen as an important source of advertising, publicity and propaganda for a product or service.

Marketing Mix adaptability for rural population:

1) **PRODUCT**- Study of rural population preference reveals that rural population doesn't seek much variety so the marketer doesn't need to produce a wide variety range, as far as quality is concerned rural population is not very much quality conscious and simply focus on performance, output and utility of the product. Their main focus is on deriving the benefits. They do not evaluate product on technology basis. They are not much feature seeking in nature and branding doesn't matter for them. They prefer local or unbranded product. Even they also like duplicate products. They are rough user of product and they prefer dark and exogenous coloured products. To overcome this marketer should provide a product with limited variety and colour edition, low cost product and should focus on working quality of the product. The product / service must satisfy the core need and product reliability should be increased so that the rural population become first user and approach should be totally based on reducing barriers.

2) **PRICE** - Installment and credit facility are also required to be provided and because rural population is very much price sensitive so penetration pricing strategy should be used. It should also be supported by competitive pricing strategy. Also seasonal pricing strategy can be used depending upon variation in demand and the aim should be on building more brand preference and brand loyalty.

3) **PLACE** - Rural population uses traditional and trustworthy channels as distribution usually small unprofessionally managed Business Houses are important sources for their purchases. Exclusive patterns of distribution are not preferred usually all competitive lines are carried by businessman and small retail business is more preferred over super stores and mega stores. Shopping mall culture has not yet knocked the village doors.

4) **PROMOTION** - Looking at the low level of literacy ratio, lack of technical and professional knowledge and rigidity in behaviour a lot of difficulties are encountered in promotion in rural area, so different popular and accepted simple means of communication like puppet show, skit, role plays, nukkud natak, audio video vans, outdoor advertisement suitable to local custom, tradition, culture and language should be used to get appropriate results.

RESULTS

1) It was found that rural society can be divided into three classes depending upon their income. From this we can draw a conclusion that in Rural Marketing first there should be the study of rural social class and from this need determination should be done. The strategy can be Buying formula or Solution strategy.

2) As they are having lack of technical knowledge to convince them * Demonstration * Instruction/ Manual in local language and Communication which suit to their culture, custom and tradition should be used.

3) As they are rigid in nature Educative Marketing Strategy will provide the results.

4) As the infrastructure in rural areas is very poor, so in order to counter this Development Marketing Strategy can be used.

5) As they are cost conscious, Penetration Strategy work a lot in effective way which should also be backed by promotional scheme on product & services.

The various promotional tools used are -

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|--------------------|------------------------|
| a) Free sampler | d) Coupons |
| b) Buy back offers | e) One plus one offers |
| c) Gifts | f) Contest etc. |

6) As they are living in the joint families so the Targeting Strategy aimed at head of the families and their Opinion Leadership should be used.

CONCLUSION

The rural markets have very good potential which is still untapped and by using the different marketing strategy and tools of promotion this untapped potential can be catered.

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