



A STUDY ON BRAND AWARENESS IN RURAL MARKETS IN INDIA: (A CONSUMER BRAND AWARENESS LEVEL STUDY) WITH RESPECT TO NAGARI REGION OF ANDHRA PRADESH

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Abstract

A rural consumer had to go to a nearby town or metropolis to purchase a branded product in the past since the branded corporations prioritised urban markets. However, with the increasing clout of rural consumers, large corporations are finally recognising the significance of rural markets. Due to the huge increase in purchasing power, rising brand awareness, effective media communication network, and changing customer demographics in rural areas, India's rural market is currently seeing tremendous growth. Numerous studies have shown that the rural middle class is not only wealthier but also expanding more quickly than the urban middle class. The infrastructure linking all four major urban areas via hundreds of towns is another factor hastening this occurrence. This aids businesses in distributing their goods to regional markets, achieving the widest possible distribution network, and combating the pervasive attitudes and customs of rural consumers. This essay makes an effort to determine the degree of brand awareness among rural residents in the Nagari Region.

Key words: Rural India, Growth, Household, Rural Market, Price-Sensitivity.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the bulk of the population (72%) According to Census 2011, there are 742,490,639 people living in rural areas and 286,119,689 people in urban areas. Their way of life has completely changed. We can now see that their spending patterns and level of living are gradually rising. The rural populace is switching from branded to unbranded goods. Indian farmers today wear designer jeans, use smartphones, drive cars, ride motorcycles, and carry LED and LCD TVs, music systems, and DVD players. All of this is a result of rural India's rapid emergence in all spheres of life. The availability of energy, living conditions, purchasing power, road connections to cities and roads, and modes of transit and communication have all changed significantly. Now, residents of rural areas don't need to travel to a nearby metropolis to get branded goods and services. A client in rural India has become relatively literate about the many products that are available in the market because of the widespread reach and telecast of regional programmes on television, as well as the accessibility of dish TV. And as a result of this altered situation, modern marketers are crying out for the rural markets in a big way and are doing all in their power to establish themselves there. Indian farmers are on the route to progress, which wouldn't be possible without taking into account the country's rural population.

CURRENT SCENARIO

The majorities of Indian corporate companies are already focusing heavily on the rural sector and are always coming up with fresh approaches to tap into it. With its successful rural marketing initiatives like “Project Shakti” and “Operation Bharat,” Hindustan UniLever Limited (HULL), for instance, has made significant progress in reaching rural India. Amul is another company that has been heavily involved in rural marketing for a while now, in addition to HLL. FMCG giants like Coca-Cola and PepsiCo are developing goods at low price points, especially in the Rs. 5 category, as part of their strategy to boost volumes with the goal of expanding their presence in rural markets. While multinational beverage company Coca-Cola recently launched a powder sachet called “Fanta Fun Taste” for Rs.5 to target the lower end of the market, PepsiCo recently released a 200 ml bottle of their well-known lemon-flavored drink called “Nimbooz” for Rs.5 as part of a promotional deal. By 2015, families earning close to Rs. 25000 per month would account for more than half of consumption spending in India, making the Coca-Cola market open for business. However, in order to keep up its market dominance, the world’s largest producer of biscuits, Britannia, has continually targeted the lower end of the market by releasing goods with modest price tags and small pack quantities. Analysts claim that the company’s focus on rural markets has allowed it to enjoy a market share of 34.9% while selling seven different biscuit brands, including “Tiger” and “50:50.” To raise awareness of its brand and services in rural areas, the business created a shared phone service called Public Call Officers. (PCOs). In rural India, Bharati Airtel has already set up more than 18,000 service centres that speak more than 400 different languages and regional dialects. Reliance and Vodafone are two additional competitors. Tata Indicom is also establishing itself in rural India. ITC hopes to give even the smallest individual farmer access to the power of specialist knowledge through its e-Choupal programme, thereby boosting his competitiveness in the global market.

For resource development activities, ITC e-Choupal is regarded as a trustworthy distribution method. With the assistance of a number of service providers, including non-governmental organisations, its potential is being tested through pilot projects in healthcare educational services, water management, and livestock health management. As of July 2010, over 4 million farmers in around 40,000 villages were served by 6500 Echoupal in 10 states. (www.echoupal.com). Colgate, Eveready Batteries, LG Electronics, Life Insurance Corporation, Cavin Kare, Britannia, and Hero Honda, TVS to name a few, are some of the other corporations that are gradually making progress in this field. Reasons that are sufficient for rural sales are to account for 40% of the company’s total yearly sales. TVS registered a total turnover (Net Sales & Other Operating income) of Rs. 3811.95 crores. The company’s turnover in the corresponding period last fiscal (July-September 20019-20) was Rs.4398.70 crores.

CHALLENGES IN THE RURAL MARKETING

One needs to comprehend the fundamental characteristics of the rural consumer, which differ greatly from those of his urban counterpart. A few barriers that prevent marketers from reaching the rural market are the development of the distribution network, inadequate telecommunications and transportation infrastructure, and lower levels of literacy. Most people in rural areas still don’t have bank accounts. Without a doubt, non-cash collection becomes pretty improbable. Contrarily, cash collections are chaotic and challenging to track, particularly as rural areas have not yet been accessible by cash cards or technology-enabled centralised POS. Since agriculture is the main source of income, the demand for commodities in rural marketplaces is influenced by the state of the agricultural industry. The demand or purchasing power is not viable or consistent because agriculture depends heavily on the monsoon. Additionally, each product category and each region where the campaign will be implemented require their own unique promotional programmes. Therefore, it is crucial to have a good understanding of the regional languages and dialects as well as common practises. The fact is that the rural consumer will always be motivated by his necessities first and will, therefore, be cost careful and thrifty in his spending habits, in contrast to the Indian urban population, which is evolving into a consumerism society. Thus to analyze the present situation about the ground reality a survey was conducted using schedule in few of the villages of Nagari region.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The study was conducted to find out the rural consumer awareness about the various products and services available in the rural market.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & DATA COLLECTION

A schedule was used to help with the research. The major information gathered from the survey has been methodically compiled and examined. 50 randomly chosen villagers from each community made up the sample size. Two representatives from each of the three villages-Nagari, Keelapattu, and Ekambara Kuppam-were chosen for this reason. Judgment and convenience were the sampling techniques utilised.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

- Data analysis reveals respondents' familiarity with various soap and washing powder brands.
- Data analysis reveals how much respondents know about different television, refrigerator, and washing machine brands.
- The analysis of the data gathered reveals how the villagers' environments are changing as well as the successful penetration of the mobile firms.
- Data analysis shows that respondents were aware of the various motorcycle and automobile brands.
- An analysis of the data gathered reveals the varied things that respondents in different villages possessed.

FINDINGS

- The Findings conclusions can be summed up as follows:
- The villagers are quite knowledgeable about the top brands in every market group, but those who live in the villages near highways have a higher level of awareness.
- The least necessary items for the villagers are refrigerators and washing machines.
- They take great delight in their mobile phones, motorcycles, and TVs.
- Even though they don't own them, Maruti automobiles are well-known to the peasants. But it's astonishing how much people know about brands like Honda City, Ford, Travera, Innova and others.
- Although not in extremely large numbers, residents of the communities along highways own vehicles and other electrical devices like Dish TV, cooking gas, mixis, etc.
- The community has stores for daily necessities, but for bicycles, mobile phones, and other electronic things, residents must travel to other cities. For the villages that were along the national highway, the situation is, however, quite the opposite.
- There are stores selling electronic goods, mobile devices, motorcycles, and used automobiles for sale, although they are limited in their selection and quantity of models.

SUGGESTIONS

- The examination of the data demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that although the corporations are making their presence felt in the villages located along National Highways, the opposite is true of the communities located off of them. This demonstrates unequivocally that the corporations' distribution networks are inefficient. As a result, businesses must build a strong distribution network to enable them to capture the entire rural market, not just a portion of it.
- Only a few local companies, such as No.1 Soap, Nirma Detergent Soap, and Star Biscuit, are able to reach remote areas, which is likely a result of their skill in comprehending local requirements and the efficient development of their distribution network.
- The older the respondents, such as Beltek, Uptron, etc., the more restructuring there was. This suggests that the villagers have some brand loyalty.
- Therefore, if businesses make an effort to communicate with the villagers better, they will undoubtedly be able to attract the brand-loyal consumers they lack in urban regions. In rural places, word-of-mouth is a significant messaging conduit. Advertising is crucial in boosting the mood of rural consumers. The emotional component is crucial. As brand ambassadors, movie actors' language and content (72%) and expression style (85%) play a significant effect.

CONCLUSION

We can confidently state that up until a few years ago, many businesses treated the rural market like a second-class citizen, and reaching rural consumers through advertising was frequently hit or miss. Usually, the goal is to bypass obstacles by simply transliterating the ad copy to reach rural audiences with metropolitan communication. Therefore, advertising that is based on urban sensibilities failed to resonate with rural consumers. Although there has been a change, it has been gradual. Finding the ideal combination, that will appeal to rural India as a whole continues to be the biggest difficulty for advertisers and marketers. Additionally, because rural India has so much untapped potential, businesses must fully

develop their distribution networks. Focus must be placed on all villages, not just those near highways but also those in the interior with a buying power. ITC and the local participants are the living evidence that creating such a network is not only feasible but also a reality, having built their enormous rural distribution network. The reality remains, however, that India's rural market has enormous potential that is simply waiting to be realised. The idea of rural markets in India is still taking shape, and the industry presents a number of difficulties, such as comprehending the characteristics of rural markets and developing supply and satisfaction strategies for rural consumers. Although some have made progress in this area, it appears that marketers still have a ways to go before they can fully benefit from their efforts. Additionally, rural India is not as impoverished as it was a few years ago.

REFERENCES

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