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THE PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES IN RURAL MARKETING WITH REFERENCES TO TWO WHEELERS - A STUDY OF KARAD TALUKA OF SATARA DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

India's geo-demographic identity underscores as "India lives in her villages". Even the economy is progressing day by day very fast but the division between rural and urban has no signs of receding. As for the Indian context where more than three fourth of population lives in rural India & the national income generated in rural India is one third of its total. Now it becomes compulsory for researchers to study in-depth the needs and wants of rural population therefore most of the industries are investing their money for rural marketing. The researcher has taken two wheeler industries for studying the rural marketing. This research paper focuses the objectives, review of literature, scope, research methodology, hypothesis testing, and suggestions.

KEYWORDS

geo-demographic, identity, rural, urban, receding, rural marketing.

1. INTRODUCTION

Rural marketing have a broader sense it is not a compact form because when rural marketing comes to mind it attaches to only agricultural produce. From time immemorial there has been regular trade between urban & rural produce, as the lifestyle of rural people is changing with the change in disposable income to adopt consumables & durables & services. Now it is common to get well known brands by branded companies in rural areas. Rural marketing is a marketing process which encompasses inflow of different products in rural areas for different purpose and outflow of products for urban areas. The two-wheeler industry consists of three segments viz., scooters, motorcycles, and mopeds. The two wheelers in India began operations within the framework of the national industrial policy as espoused by the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956. Products in rural areas are for different purpose & outflow of products for urban areas. India is the second largest two wheelers market in the world in terms of sales volumes (after China), the two wheelers household penetration level in the country is much lower at around 36% than in some of the other emerging markets such as Brazil, Indonesia, Thailand and Taiwan.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- A) **Tej k. Bhatia and Mukesh Bhargava (Tej K Bhatia, 2008)** studied and concluded that due to globalization and the need to seek out new rural markets (sometimes labeled as business to 4-billion [B2-4B]), rural marketing is gaining new importance in India as well as across the globe. This article examines three facets: the marketing, linguistic and advertising of these markets.
- B) **Payal Arora (Arora, 2008)** in her article, story (re)productions by children in rural India are seen as a potential tool for addressing current 'participatory' issues facing development practitioners. A project was implemented to involve children from a rural village in South India in e-literary storybook productions.
- C) **Hajibah Osman (Osman, 2008)** studied and concluded that, in the end of the 1990s witnessed the corporatization of public universities in Malaysia resulting in the publication of corporate literature in these universities and the type of writing Fairclough (1993) refers to as the marketization of academic discourse.
- D) **Sujata Moorti (Moorti, 2007)** discussed in her article that, for an understanding of Indian television as a transnational mediated apparatus, rather than examining it as a national enterprise.
- E) **Jabir Ali (Ali, 2007)** has put forth that, Livestock is an important sub-sector of the Indian agricultural economy which plays a multi-faceted role in providing livelihood support and food security especially to the country's rural population.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research study is undertaken for the rural market of Karad Taluka aims at investing the market dynamics related to two wheeler marketing in Karad Taluka. Despite the improved socio-economic conditions of the rural people of this region the sales of two wheelers were not matching with improved conditions. Hence this research study titled "The prospects and challenges in rural marketing with references to two wheelers – A study of Karad Taluka Satara District" is undertaken.

4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is related to two wheelers rural market. It covers area of Karad Taluka in Satara district of Maharashtra state. The rural area market is having numerous products but this study is restricted to the two wheelers only. The research is carried out during year 2008 to 2011. The importance and significance of the rural market in India is taken into consideration for this study.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To study the consumer behavior towards two wheelers in Karad Taluka.
- 2) To study the problems and challenges faced by dealers in marketing of two wheelers in rural areas with reference to Karad Taluka.

6. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- A) Rural consumer perceives that two wheeler have impact on their development.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This research is both exploratory and descriptive in nature and has utilized both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools. The exploration of books, journals, and various newspapers reflecting their views on rural two wheeler market constitutes the exploratory research design in this research and the useful information extracted from these books, journals and newspaper is utilized.

7.2 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

An instrument in the form of Structured and closed ended questionnaire using multiple choice and dichotomous questions is constructed based on the data required for objectives and hypothesis for the research. (Kothari, 2009) This questionnaire is printed on the plain paper and carried in copies to the target area by researcher. The researcher assisted the respondents in responding to the questions in the questionnaire. The researcher had to translate some questions to Marathi for the convenience of the respondents.

7.3 SAMPLING METHOD

The researcher had to select from Probability and non probability sampling methods to avoid the problem of biased outcomes. (Kothari, 2009) The researcher has selected non probability Area sampling method as the scope of this study is limited to rural Karad Taluka in Satara district of Maharashtra state in India.

7.4 DATA COLLECTION

Data collection consists of surveys, showroom observations and interviews with consumers, as well as journal logs from scholars. Initially, a survey instrument to locate the consumer behavior regarding two wheelers is administered to a broad spectrum of participants (ideally, n=500). Subsequently, a purposeful sample is identified of 400 participants to use the data for analysis. A structured observation protocol is developed to aid in field note collection and an interview protocol rooted in the literature is developed to act as a guide for the interviews.

A qualitative evaluation is utilized for this research project leveraging subjective methods such as interviews and observations to collect substantive and relevant data. These interviews are conducted with respondents from the selected area. Upon collecting the qualitative data derived from said interviews, careful analysis is done both manually and utilizing SPSS software. Recent research on Indian two wheeler markets and instructional design is consulted to validate collected data. A bibliography containing such research sources has been created to give due credit to the contributors. The research from this effort shall hopefully become an asset to the academics and market on consumer behavior.

8. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

8.1 TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

H1: Rural consumer perceives that two wheeler have impact on their development [Alternative Hypothesis]

H0: Rural consumer perceives that two wheeler do not have impact on their development [Null Hypothesis]

To test the hypothesis

Step 1: The null hypothesis and alternate hypothesis are formulated as follows.

H0:- $\mu = 3$ (3 is the acceptance rating obtained for the statement "Do you think that the two wheeler you use has impact on your development?")

H1 = $\mu \neq 3$

Step 2: A significance level $\alpha = 0.01$ is selected

Step 3: Mean, Range and Standard Deviation is calculated

Descriptive Statistics	N	Mean	Std. Deviation (σ)	Std. error
Do you think that the two wheeler you use has impact on your development?	400	3.72	1.311	0.066

Step 4: Calculate Z statistics being large sample size of 400

$$Z = \frac{X - \mu_0}{\sigma / \sqrt{n}}$$

$$Z = \frac{3.72 - 3}{1.311 / \sqrt{400}}$$

$$Z = \frac{0.72}{0.655}$$

$$Z = 10.98$$

From the Z table the critical Z value for 99% confidence is 3.0 which is less than the calculated value of 10.98. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected i.e. Rural consumer perceives that two wheeler do not have impact on their development.

9. SUGGESTIONS

The researcher has furnished the suggestions and recommendation to the manufacturers and dealers as regards various aspects of marketing.

1. Since, the rural two-wheeler market is price-conscious and also looks for economy-in-use. It is suggested that, the marketers of two-wheelers should adopt price and economy-in-use as their Unique Selling Proposition (USP). Even if a particular brand does not have the price edge, it can still compete by educating the rural customer the 'value-for-money' (Price) through its marketing communication.
2. The study reveals "Durability" as an important factor in the buying decision. Therefore durability has to be enhanced in terms of number of years of service to the owner. In this connection it is also suggested that the dealer may consider offering exchange schemes periodically.
3. The rural customer prefers 'high speed', which is revealed by the study. This does not mean that speed thrills the rural two-wheeler user. However the rural customers prefer a two-wheeler, which will attain a speed of over 60 kmph with a payload of over 100 kgs. Therefore it is suggested that, the manufacturers may incorporate technical improvements so as to offer a sturdy two-wheeler with speed and payload carrying capacity.
4. The study would like to suggest that, trendy design should be incorporated in the overall looks and style of a two-wheeler. Since trendy design is slowly catching the eye of a rural two-wheeler customer.
5. It is suggested that, two-wheeler dealerships should arrange for a tie-up with banks or non-banking finance corporations for financing or hire purchase of two-wheeler to the rural customer.

10. REFERENCES

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