

A STUDY ON MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR RURAL AREAS AND BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF RURAL CONSUMERS IN VIRUDHUNAGAR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT:

Rural markets in India are very large and scattered and providing enormous opportunities for marketing of variety of products in all ranges. Companies are adopting a variety of strategies and programme in order to market their products among consumers in rural areas. The results reveal that rural consumers are agreed with advertisement, small packs, low price, discount, availability of products, word of mouth, recommendation from peers and attractive packaging as marketing strategies for rural areas. There exists significant difference amid marketing strategies for rural areas and features of rural consumers. Marketing strategies for rural areas has a positive, moderate and significant relation with buying behaviour of rural consumers. Thus, in order to improve buying behaviour of consumers, companies should provide quality of products at low price to rural consumers and shops must display all type of products with features to attract rural consumers to enhance their buying behaviour.

Keywords: Buying Behaviour, Marketing Strategies, Rural Consumers

1. INTRODUCTION:

Indian rural markets is remarkably contributing to improvement of standard of living of rural population and development of economy and they are providing huge number of employment opportunities and improving buying and consumption of variety of products among rural population (Kaleeswari, 2017). Rural markets in India are very large and scattered and providing enormous opportunities for marketing of variety of products in all ranges (Vasavada, 2014). Rural marketing in India is the most potential area for expansion of marketing activities of various products (Kumar, 2016) and it is continuously growing due to increase in income of rural consumers and knowledge on quality consumption and transformation in their life styles (Rithvikaa and Ramachander, 2017).

Indian rural markets are having many challenges namely poor literacy, huge potential, distances, poor communication, inadequate infrastructure facilities, and unequal distribution of products, varying behavior of consumers and different social and cultural norms and traditions (Chhabra and Farooqu, 2018). Thus, companies are adopting a variety of strategies and programme in order to market their products among consumers in rural areas (Bose et al 2020) and those marketing strategies are different and exclusive for different rural market segments (Raj, 2020) and those are influencing buying behavior of rural consumers. Therefore, it is important to study marketing strategies for rural areas and buying behavior of rural consumers.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Pedhiwal et al (2011) found that advertisements, posters, free, extra quantity, low price, attractive packaging and personal sales were marketing strategies for rural consumers.

Ayyub and Laddha (2012) concluded that low price, attractive promotion, availability of products, high quality, affordability, discounts and attractive packaging were strategies adopted for rural consumers.

Patel (2013) revealed that advertisements, personal sales, promotions, discounts, different size of packets, free coupons and easy availability of products were marketing strategies for rural areas.

Patel (2014) indicated that small size products, low price, strong products, reusable package, attractive discount, annual melas, painting, festive offer and celebrity advertisements were marketing strategies for rural areas.

Ramesh and Kalaivani (2015) found that advertisements, hoardings, discounts, small size products, colourful packaging, low prices and availability of products were marketing strategies followed by companies in rural areas.

Tegwal and Tegwal (2016) concluded that product, pricing, packaging, place and promotion strategies were important marketing strategies for consumers in rural regions.

Chaturvedi (2017) revealed that low price, small size packets, attractive packaging, advertisements, boards, paintings, melas and discounts and offers were major strategies adopted for rural consumers.

Jayadatta and Abhinaya (2018) indicated that promotion, communication, price, store operations, quality of products and attractive packaging and offers and discounts were strategies for rural marketing.

Yadav and Raju (2019) found that small size products, low prices, packed products, advertisements, promotion, discounts, offers and free gifts were marketing strategies for fast moving consumer goods in rural areas.

Mande (2020) concluded that small sized and packed products, low price, advertisements, discounts, offers and availability of products were marketing strategies for rural consumers.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- i) To study opinion of rural consumers about marketing strategies for rural areas.
- ii) To find difference amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and features of rural consumers.
- iii) To examine relation amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and buying behaviour of rural consumers.

4. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:

- i) There is no significant difference amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and features of rural consumers.
- ii) There is no significant relation amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and buying behaviour of rural consumers.

5. METHODOLOGY:

The current study is carried out in Virudhunagar district. Rural consumers are selected by using convenience sampling method. Data are collected from 250 rural consumers by means of questionnaire. Percentages are used to understand features of rural consumers. Mean and standard

deviation are worked out to study opinion of rural consumers about marketing strategies for rural areas, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test are employed to find difference amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and features of rural consumers. Simple correlation analysis is applied to examine relation amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and buying behaviour of rural consumers.

6. RESULTS:

6.1. Features Of Rural Consumers:

The features of rural consumers are given in Table-1. Higher than half of them are males (53.20 per cent) and larger than one third of them are falling in age of group of 26 – 35 years (35.60 per cent). Near to two fifth of them are holding secondary education (38.00 per cent) and near to two fifth of them are coming under monthly income group of Rs.15,001 – Rs.20,000 (37.20 per cent) and greater than four fifth of them are married (81.60 per cent).

Table-1. Features of Rural Consumers

Features	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	133	53.20
Female	117	46.80
Age		
Below 25 Years	29	11.60
26 – 35 Years	89	35.60
36 – 45 Years	72	28.80
Above 45 Years	60	24.00
Education		
Informal	43	17.20
Secondary	95	38.00
Higher Secondary	79	31.60
Under Graduation	33	13.20
Monthly Income		
Less than Rs.15,000	55	22.00
Rs.15,001 – Rs.20,000	93	37.20
Rs.20,001 – Rs.25,000	63	25.20
More than Rs.25,000	39	15.60
Marital Status		
Married	204	81.60
Unmarried	46	18.40

6.2. Marketing Strategies For Rural Areas:

The opinion of rural consumers about marketing strategies for rural areas is given in Table-2.

Table-2. Marketing Strategies for Rural Areas

Marketing Strategies for Rural Areas	Mean	Standard Deviation
Advertisement	3.96	0.82
Small packs	3.92	0.85
Low price	3.86	0.92
Discount	3.82	0.95
Quality	3.24	1.13

Availability of products	3.80	0.98
Word of mouth	3.76	1.01
Recommendation from peers	3.73	1.04
Attractive packaging	3.70	1.07
Shop display	3.32	1.10

The rural consumers are agreed with advertisement, small packs, low price, discount, availability of products, word of mouth, recommendation from peers and attractive packaging, while, they are neutral with quality and shop display as marketing strategies for rural areas.

6.3. Marketing Strategies For Rural Areas And Features Of Rural Consumers:

The linkage amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and features of rural consumers is given as below

6.3.1. Marketing Strategies For Rural Areas And Gender:

The linkage amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and gender of rural consumers is given in Table-3.

Table-3. Marketing Strategies for Rural Areas and Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-Value	Significance
Male	133	36.72	4.22	4.302**	.000
Female	117	39.48	3.15		

** Significant in 1% level

Mean value of marketing strategies for rural areas for male and female categories of rural consumers are 36.72 and 39.48 sequentially. This indicates that marketing strategies for rural areas for female category of rural consumers is better as compared to male category.

The t-value of 4.302 is showing that there exists significant difference amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and gender of rural consumers.

6.3.2. Marketing Strategies For Rural Areas And Age:

The linkage amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and age of rural consumers is given in Table-4.

Table-4. Marketing Strategies for Rural Areas and Age

Age	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F-Value	Significance
Below 25 Years	29	38.31	3.71	4.529**	.000
26 – 35 Years	89	39.19	3.14		
36 – 45 Years	72	36.04	3.74		
Above 45 Years	60	37.72	4.01		

** Significant in 1% level

Mean value of marketing strategies for rural areas for rural consumers falling in to age group of below 25 years, 26 – 35 years, 36 – 45 years and above 45 years are 38.31, 39.19, 36.04 and 37.72 sequentially. This indicates that marketing strategies for rural areas for rural consumers falling in to age group of 26 – 35 years is better as compared to others.

The F-value of 4.529 is showing that there exists significant difference amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and age of rural consumers.

6.3.3. Marketing Strategies For Rural Areas And Education:

The linkage amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and education of rural consumers is given in Table-5.

Table-5. Marketing Strategies for Rural Areas and Education

Education	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F-Value	Significance
Informal	43	36.28	4.58	5.186**	.000
Secondary	95	37.18	4.22		
Higher Secondary	79	37.29	4.14		
Under Graduation	33	39.64	3.48		

** Significant in 1% level

Mean value of marketing strategies for rural areas for rural consumers holding education of informal, secondary, higher secondary and under graduation are 36.28, 37.18, 37.29 and 39.64 sequentially. This indicates that marketing strategies for rural areas for rural consumers holding education of under graduation is better as compared to others.

The F-value of 5.186 is showing that there exists significant difference amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and education of rural consumers.

6.3.4. Marketing Strategies For Rural Areas And Monthly Income

The linkage amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and monthly income of rural consumers is given in Table-6.

Table-6. Marketing Strategies for Rural Areas and Monthly Income

Monthly Income	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F-Value	Significance
Less than Rs.15,000	55	39.89	2.95	5.053**	.000
Rs.15,001 – Rs.20,000	93	37.62	3.86		
Rs.20,001 – Rs.25,000	63	36.73	4.59		
More than Rs.25,000	39	36.41	4.62		

** Significant in 1% level

Mean value of marketing strategies for rural areas for rural consumers coming under monthly income of less than Rs.15,000, Rs.15,001 – Rs.20,000, Rs.20,001 – Rs.25,000 and more than Rs.25,000 are 39.89, 37.62, 36.73 and 36.41 sequentially. This indicates that marketing strategies for rural areas for rural consumers coming under monthly income of less than Rs.15,000 is better as compared to others.

The F-value of 5.053 is showing that there exists significant difference amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and monthly income of rural consumers.

6.3.5. Marketing Strategies For Rural Areas And Marital Status:

The linkage amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and marital status of rural consumers is given in Table-7.

Table-7. Marketing Strategies for Rural Areas and Marital Status

Marital Status	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-Value	Significance
Married	204	36.22	3.65	4.707**	.000

Unmarried	46	39.54	3.19		
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** Significant in 1% level

Mean value of marketing strategies for rural areas for rural consumers belonging to married and unmarried status are 36.22 and 39.54 sequentially. This indicates that marketing strategies for rural areas for rural consumers belonging to unmarried is better as compared to married status.

The t-value of 4.707 is showing that there exists significant difference amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and marital status of rural consumers.

6.4. Relation Amidst Marketing Strategies For Rural Areas And Buying Behaviour Of Rural Consumers:

The correlation analysis is carried out to examine relation amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and buying behaviour of rural consumers and the result is given in Table-8.

Table-8. Relation amidst Marketing Strategies for Rural Areas and Buying Behaviour of Rural Consumers

Particulars	Correlation Coefficient
Relation amidst Marketing Strategies for Rural Areas and Buying Behaviour of Rural Consumers	0.54**

** Significant at 1% level

The correlation coefficient relation amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and buying behaviour of rural consumers is 0.54; thus, they are moderately and positively related among them.

7. CONCLUSION:

The results of this study are explicating that rural consumers are agreed with advertisement, small packs, low price, discount, availability of products, word of mouth, recommendation from peers and attractive packaging as marketing strategies for rural areas. There exists significant difference amidst marketing strategies for rural areas and features of rural consumers. Marketing strategies for rural areas has a positive, moderate and significant relation with buying behaviour of rural consumers. Thus, in order to improve buying behaviour of consumers, companies should provide quality of products at low price to rural consumers and shops must display all type of products with features to attract rural consumers to enhance their buying behaviour.

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