

Rural Infrastructure and Rural Agricultural Marketing: Challenges and Strategies

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to highlight both rural infrastructure and rural marketing. It examines the marketing aspects of Rural produce with special reference to agriculture market while on, the other hand Infrastructure. The concept of rural infrastructure and rural agricultural markets in India is still in evolving shape, and the sector poses a variety of challenges. The earlier practices of rural marketing as accompaniment of the urban market is not correct, the rural markets have their own independent existence, and if cultivated well could turn into a generator of profit for the sellers of farmers in rural area. This study focused on weakness, challenges and strategies and suggestion for promoting marketing and infrastructure within the rural areas.

1. Introduction

Rural Infrastructure assumes great importance in India because of the country's predominantly rural nature, the crucial linkages of infrastructure to economic growth poverty alleviation and human development. People need to have adequate access to water energy, Land, health Services, education, transport services and Markets. India's economic growth and development of its 700 million strong rural population. Infrastructure or its inadequacy is the single most important factor that distinguishes urban and rural markets. Promotion and physical distribution thus becomes very difficult in the rural terrain because of inadequate infrastructural facilities. Marketing is an essential component in income and employment generation in farm and non-farm sectors. The pattern of inclusive growth of the economy projected for the Eleventh plan, with GDP growth averaging 9 percent per year can be achieved only if this infrastructure deficit can be overcome and adequate investment take place to support higher growth and an improved quality of life for rural people. The Indian economy has grown at an average eight percent in the past three years-and a 10 percent annual GDP growth is difficult to achieve unless the country improves its rural infrastructure and rural marketing.

Broadly rural marketing incorporates the marketing of agricultural products, rural industries products and services of many kind. The trade channels for different types of commodities available in rural areas private, cooperatives, processors, regulated Markets and state agencies. India is a country of villages. Village is the unit of the rural Society. Approximately 10.5 % of the world lives in Indian Villages. The village is important in India as well as in the global scenario. The village economy as at whole can be developed without effective and efficient Infrastructure and rural marketing. Very little attention has been paid in the planning era towards the development of rural marketing. In fact marketing is a dynamic state of affairs and is part and parcel of the whole economy. Thus production and marketing are the two face of a coin.

Rural Marketing constitutes the nerve centre of rural development activities. Rural marketing is two way Marketing process. The content now encompasses not only marketing of products which flow to rural area, but also product, which flow to urban areas from rural areas. So a broad definition of rural marketing is concerned with the flow of goods is concerned with the flow of goods and services from urban to rural and vice-versa. In addition, it also include the marketing in the rural areas.

2. Rural infrastructure and rural markets

Rural Infrastructure development plays an important role in developing market access and supporting market expansion. Market access and strengthened market linkages enable the poor to participate fully in the opportunities unleashed by the growth process. Apart from addressing, income, poverty, Infrastructure development can also play a vital role in dealing with the non income aspects of poverty. Rural Infrastructure and support services play a key role in promoting rural development, in particular enhancing agricultural production. They influence the quality, quantity, diversity, affordability distribution and stability of the food supply from rural areas. Infrastructure affect the extent to which markets can function efficiently, thus influencing growth.

3. Marketing of rural produce to other areas

The rapid economic growth of any developing country is mainly governed by these factors; increasing food production and other Major inputs of industry; increasing the income levels of middle and lower strata of the population and most importantly provision of basic infrastructure and planning a national marketing system and thereby increasing the size of the national market is also essential to integrate the marketing systems with the needs and wants of the Consumer extent with available resources. This is the hall mark of economic development.

As India's major population lives in rural areas. It economic growth and development is predicated to a large extent upon

the development of its 700 million strong rural population. Majority of the population lives in about 6, 00,000 small villages and is engaged primarily in agriculture directly or indirectly. In most of the developing countries development strategies are mostly in and around urban areas while technical advancement and improvement in the agricultural sector is receiving less attention. In order to promote the marketing increase of the productivity of the farm is imperative. Apart from that, innovations in marketing of agricultural products is essential. On the other hand, promoting strategies for marketing of the Manu fractured goods in the rural areas requires equal attention. This paper mainly discusses these objectives.

3.1. Factors affecting agricultural productivity

Regarding the increase of agricultural productivity, farmers should have an easy access to production inputs, the financial system, the market and agricultural knowledge then only they can improve agricultural productivity most of the farmers suffer from loss due to inadequate marketing facilities like non-availability of the inputs lack of basic infrastructural facilities and price fluctuations etc., besides lacking in fundamental knowledge about advancement in the field of agriculture.

3.2. Disposal of surplus produce

The expansion of production should always be aided by efficient marketing and distribution of surplus to the final consumer. The co-ordination between productive and marketing systems is a pre condition for a stable progress. Farmers were stuck in disposing of the surplus due to inadequate transport and storage facilities. This explain that the emergence of large domestic production, if unattended by commensurate facilities in terms of credit, storage and transport facilities will increase the load of unsold price and depress to prices.

3.3. Need of other facilities

Besides, ensuring efficient co-ordination between production, transportation, communication and storage facilities, we have to realise the significance of credit financing and the value of market information for decision making.

4. Rural infrastructure- some issues

The rural infrastructure challenge for India is unique one in many respects. The technologies involved are hardly complex but users are dispersed, demand - supply gap substantial and there are several critical implementation issues. Creation of infrastructure must be backed by reliable systems of service provision and maintenance. While the need to 'create rural infrastructure is urgent and excites everyone, the normal bias of the technologically equipped elite is to design systems that all top driven. Top down strategies assume, sometimes with a touching naiveté, that scales of efficiency are achieved by mass production and therefore proceed with project mode (or 'mission mode' - a more fashionable term in government circles!) implementation. Concerns about local participation are brushed aside as being in convenient and irrelevant by mission mode Managers. Local leaders are ignored as being incorrupt and ignorant and irrelevant to the drive for achievement. Targets are achieved, the glossy presentations are made, awards are distributed and projects wound-up, in a blaze of

glory. Infrastructure creation imposed from above has not made much difference, particularly in certain sectors, is now staring the 'mission made' mentors in the face. The rural countryside is dotted with decaying bridges, potholed roads, crumbling buildings, electricity lines that carry no power, and dry Water supply schemes. Obviously, something has gone worry somewhere. Therefore, the issue of the sustainability of the infrastructure created is gaining visibility both in policy as well as Media Space.

5. Challenges in rural agricultural marketing

The agriculture sector needs well-functioning markets to drive growth, employment, and economic prosperity in rural areas. Currently agricultural markets are regulated under respective state agricultural produce marketing (Regulation) Act., Generally known as APMC Act. Besides, there are other regulations, viz, Essential commodities Act and various control orders issued there under. All these have created restrictive and monopolistic marketing structures, which have resulted in inefficient Operation and high degree of marketing costs. They have also had an adverse impact upon agricultural production and system, inefficient flow of commodities, and lack of competitiveness. The rural agricultural marketing has the following challenges.

All "Weather" roads all lacking to nearly 30% of the villages in the rainy season, it is not possible to reach many of them. The agricultural product cannot move.

Total markets and do not present any challenge to the private trade at in most places. The Gujarat Cotton Cooperative Marketing Societies set a good example of vertically integrated markets. The cooperative marketing institutions have to introduce scale economies in their marketing operation and provide efficient and comparable services to the customers in competition with the private trade. Cooperative institutions would do better if the state level marketing federations enter into multilevel activities to improve the turnover of their business. The non-governmental organizations can anchor a key role in conscientizing the rural people to form into cooperatives highlighting the possible benefits without being exploited.

5.1 Promotion strategies

Mass media is a powerful medium of communication. It could be television, cinema, print media, and radio and so on. The other means of mass media available are hoardings / wall paintings, shanties / hats / meals, non-price competition, special campaigns etc, Besides these, other mass media like hand bills and booklets, posters, strikers, banners of the schemes etc. For disseminating the information, related to agricultural and other rural industries products, the government should circulate pamphlets either to panchayat raj office or to schools where it can be documented for the reference. While making efforts to improve the marketing system within rural areas and the marketing of rural produce to other areas.

Agricultural produce Market committee (APMC) Act. The government of India has circulated model legislation titled. 'The State agricultural produce marketing act. 2003' to bring about

reforms in agricultural marketing contract farming, directing marketing and public - private partnership in management and development of agricultural markets all the major instruments of change among others. 25 States / UTs Have already amended their APMC acts made varying provisions for the purpose while other states or in the presses of amending their respective APMC acts. The Department of Agriculture and co-operation supports transfer of agriculture technologies and information to the farming community through several initiatives.

6. Suggestions for improving in the rural marketing sector.

- Government should assume a more dynamic role in the field of agricultural marketing that of a strong buffer between global forces and local needs.
- Emphasize value addition by giving a thrust to agro—processing industries at farm level so that the benefit of value addition is transferred to the producer.
- There is a need for professional zing agricultural marketing as a subject of great practical application.
- Creation of a effective market intelligence network, right from the importer in the global market to the producer in the remote corner of the rural India.
- Institutional linkages should be emphasized upon to integrate the markets, for easy movement of goods and also to facilitate the inter-state trade.
- Regular surveys and analytical studies on agricultural marketing should be conducted, so that appropriate police adjustments and refinements whenever necessary.
- Decentralization in the marketing system.

- To introduce social marketing for bringing about a change in the behaviour and attitude through social advertising and social communication. Some fertilizer companies and commercial banks are taking up Village Adoption Programme under the social marketing.
- A design frame work for information technology based Agricultural Marketing Network is essential. Computer installations at State as well as district marketing boards enhances the availability of trade information.
- Economic incentives should be offered to the farmers to encourage them during low economic conditions.

7. Conclusion

The vital role rural marketing have to play in the economic development of a developing country, to provision of the good quality infrastructure is a curtail prerequisite for market expansion and sustainable growth. It is particularly relevant for India which is predominantly rural infrastructure is a wattle ingredient in double digit growth to accomplish inclusive growth. Indian agricultural market system should be made much more competitive by infusing competition with in the country and preventing the external system equation from interfering with' the local markets in the larger interest of the Nation. Rural infrastructure is need for the increase of agricultural productivity and marketing. Infrastructure and marketing plays an important role in agricultural growth and rural development. Rural infrastructure and rural agricultural marketing gives shape to living environment of the villages. The planning of rural infrastructure and rural agriculture marketing should be comprehensive and co-coordinated.

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