CHAPTER-7

PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

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Conclusions

Apart from primary data collected from field, there were several encounters and discussion with these rural craftsmen, artisans and producers. During different meeting with them researchers found following major issues and problems which are really burgeoning with time and changing market place. Following are the major problems:

- Large manufactures have ample budgets for customer need identification, market research, product development and advertising. Thus they can develop and create demand of their products.
- Quality is inconsistent because of the very nature of handmade crafts.
- Access to low cost finance, cost of credit, and availability of raw material are some major issues for small rural producers.
- Administrative complexity, multiplicity of required formalities while dealing with different agencies.
- Lack of assistance in value addition which can dramatically improve marketability of the product. Assistance can be given in the areas of skill up gradation training, design input and technical up gradation.
• They are unaware about potential new markets in India and abroad. Their means of access to these markets is severely limited.

• Crafts persons suffer greatly from lack of accessible credit and loan facilities. This might be due to lack of information on facilities and credit procedures, lack of properties to serve as collateral, necessity of having a “contact man” in the bank etc.

• Civic infrastructure is another hurdle, poor condition of roads, irregular electricity, lack of transportation facilities are major issues. Professional infrastructure like work sheds, storage, shipping and packing facilities and social service infrastructure like insurance, medical care etc are addition to these problems.

• The Language and content must be according to the suitability of rural environment.

• Admissibility of brand ambassadors plays an important role in this regard.

• Special promotion measures are the strong applicable factors in this regard.

Researchers could collect opinions from few representatives of facilitating agencies i.e. banks, government agencies and important NGOs working in the area undertaken. Based on these interactions and input from rural
producers following strategic framework is designed to upgrade the status of these producers and increase their prospects in long run.

**Suggestions**

Following suggestions are proposed based on opinions of different stakeholders and researchers to improve the present condition of rural producers.

- The important interventions of government agencies like RUDA (Rural Non-farm Development Agency) in organizing and capacity building, technology dissemination, product and design development, credit and market facilitation had been of great value to the rural artisan families. Such Agencies should be equipped with more resources and should be given autonomy to work in more coordinated way.

- Promotion of SHGs of Udaipur (meenakari, leather, stone, and bamboo), SHGs of Dungarpur (durry, archery, bamboo) and half the region of Rajsamand Similarly, activities related to bamboo, archery, terracotta, durry and leather in Banswara district. These SHGs should be given more assistance and support to sustain and develop.

- Present system of selling the products and to receive orders is facilitated mainly through the exhibitions and local haat, Collective
Marketing is need of the hour not only in the local market but also in the outside market.

- Study of Market Trend, Product Trend, Price Fluctuation, Trade Meets, Retail & Wholesale Events, and Fairs & Exhibitions, preparation of Product Information Brochures, CD Catalogues, Price Lists, and efforts for Brandings are some important areas where rural producers and facilitating agencies should pay attention.

- The skill training can lead to the improvement in the quality and the design of the products prepared by the Artisans, which can result in better off to take of their products in local market, in nearby towns as well as in various fairs and exhibitions.

- Technological upgrading and process changes are desired to compete on price with other similar products available in the market, for example the price of Meenakari products are high (1.5 times) in comparison to the similar products made in Surat (Gujarat). Similarly the cost of Durry (Carpet) and bamboo products are high (1.5 to 2 times) in comparison to the cost of similar products from West Bengal and Assam respectively (artisans under this project mainly depend upon the manual work in all stages of production while at other places machine are used, RUDA Evaluation report, 2009)
• Market facilitation through exhibitions/Melas, exposure visits and customer interaction can help in capacity building and regaining the lost confidence in the craftsmanship.

• Guidance and help should be solicited to rural producers in suitable packaging as per the requirement of the product, client and distance, etc.

• Apart from this, Enterprise Management trainings to build up their entrepreneurial abilities by providing basic set of skills of enterprises management, credit mobilization through various schemes as well as existing infrastructure of Banks like NABARD, SIDBI, Local Banks, providing platform of interaction and information dissemination, helping in appropriate networking are some steps which can lead to better tomorrow for these rural producers.

• Rural consumer environment must be understood before the creation of ad.

• Rural mindset accepts the brands easily, which are close to their culture. This point must be reflected in ad for rural markets.

• Sponsorships to the Melas and Hats must be considered in a significant manner.

Selection of brand ambassadors, lyrics must not be ignored in this regard.
Proposed suggestive framework.

- Indepth Research and Strong Government Commitment for connecting culture and rural development
- Leveraging International interventions like UNESCO, UNDP, UNIDO with the help of efficient NGOs of repute.
- Promotion of NGOs and private participation in rural development
- Promotion of government agencies
- Technological Upgradation (Product and process change)
- Skill Upgradation
- Market Facilitation
- Credit Facilitation
- Facilitating bank services for rural producers
- Special schemes and dedicated desk in branches operating in such locations
Concluding Remarks

It is clear from the foregoing discussion, that rural marketing is an essential ingredient for the overall rural development. The study describes the importance of flow of goods and services from rural areas both rural as well as urban areas for sustainable rural growth. The above study also elaborates problems and prospects of marketing of rural products with specific reference to tribal region of south Rajasthan, India. Suggestive framework for improving the present marketing scenario of these rural products is the highlight of the study. They have a special liking for folk culture so this can be taken in an effective utilization of brand promotions.