



MARKETING OF PRODUCTS OF TRIBAL SECTOR

The present study is to analyse the various marketing strategies adopted by Kudumbashree Mission on products produced by tribal sector and to derive better positioning of these products in the market



Submitted by:
Priya Paul
State Mission Manager (NULM)
Kudumbashree

INTRODUCTION

The tribal people of India are called "Scheduled Tribes" in the Indian Constitution. They have their own unique dialects, culture, tradition & religion which they maintained from generations. The modern day lifestyles and socio – economic scenario doesn't have much impact on them. The government has put great effort to preserve their rights and has developed various schemes supporting them especially specific component in plan. i.e. Tribal Sub Plan (TSP). The expenditure on the component is analysed and is ensured that a percent of Govt. schemes is benefited by them.

The tribals in Kerala too has their own peculiarities and has maintained their originality. They are in almost all districts of Kerala. The Scheduled Tribes Development Department, Government of Kerala has categorized the tribal into three sub-sets (Particularly Vulnerable, Marginalized and Minorities) and Kerala Public Service Commission, Government of Kerala, lists thirty-six of Scheduled Tribes in Kerala. (The list is attached in text box). According to the 2011 [Census of India](#), the Scheduled Tribe population in [Kerala](#) is 4,84,839 in 119,788 family units constitutes 1.5 % of the total population. Out of which 51747 families are residing in urban areas. Wayanad and the Attappady region of Palakkad are the most populated tribal districts in Kerala. Wayanad has the highest concentration of tribal population (31.2%), followed by Idukki (11.5%) and Palakkad (10 %).

Kerala's tribal population dwell mostly in the dense forests of the Western Ghats and are thereby cut off from mainstream society. The tribes show a very low literacy rate (75.81%) compared to the general population in Kerala. With respect to employment, only 10 per cent of the total tribal population living in Kerala cultivate their own land, whereas 40 per cent are agricultural wage labourers¹.

¹ [Scheduled Tribes Development Department STDD, 2013](#)

INTERVENTION OF KUDUMBASHREE IN TRIBAL SECTOR

Kudumbashree, being the Poverty Eradication Mission of the state is putting much effort to provide livelihood to the poor focusing on economic stability of the families. The Mission started focusing on tribal sector from the year 2007 with the communities in the districts of Idukki, Palakkad, Wyanad & Kaseragode. In the initial stage the Mission targeted 10 panchayats each in these districts and the funding for the same was from the Scheduled Tribes Development Department (STDD).

The project got continued with the support of STDD and in the year 2009-10 the Mission extended its intervention in 9 districts covering 10 panchayats each in the districts, alongside covering all panchayats in the initial 4 districts. By 2011-12 all the districts having tribal communities got covered except Alappuzha, where the tribal population is scattered (not an 'ooru' concept). The Mission integrated the project under DAY NRLM from 2011-12 once it became the nodal agency for the implementation of the same. The Mission analyzed the tribes residing in Alappuzha district and started supporting them from 2018-19. Today the Mission covers all the tribal hamlets across the state covering 13 districts.

As stated before the intervention of the Mission in the tribal sector was in phases and the support provided to them is in livelihood, NHG formation, health & education. But these are solely based on analyzing the specific nature of the tribes taking into account of their culture and life style. A common intervention lacks as it differs widely on different communities, though education, health and livelihood were given preference.

The tribes being a specific community who dislikes external intrusion relies much on their hamlets and their said rules. Therefore the Mission availed the support of 'oorumooppans' and ST promoters of the STDD. The Mission developed a training team with the support of these people and through them formation of

NHGs, special ADSs (where ever required), livelihood initiatives (agriculture, animal husbandry and general micro enterprises), balasabha and other primary activities were taken care of. Later the Mission developed Tribal Animators as part of NRLM and with the support of these people are implementing the project now. The tribal animators are selected from the community and therefore the support of the community is thereby ensured.

INITIATIVES IN TRIBAL SECTOR

Instead of developing a common package for all the communities, the requirements should be analyzed for fruitful results. The Mission therefore trained the community leaders and has conducted micro plan development in the year 2017-18 in all tribal hamlets. The micro plan developed by them showcased their requirements in various sectors & helped in the identification of most vulnerable category. The peculiarity of the micro level plan was its participatory nature, the participatory planning. The Mission later takes this into account for developing and designing various programmes for the tribal population and it is unique for different hamlets.

Major interventions in different areas

Organisation	Micro Finance	Social Development	Livelihood
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tribal NHGs formation - Capacity building training to NHGs leaders - Regular Community RPs(Animators) support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corpus fund of Rs. 10000/- to NHGs - Revolving Fund Rs. 15000/-to NHGs selected for Self reliant - Special attention for NHGs grading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special tribal Ashraya formation - Food support programme- Paniya and community kitchen - Literacy programme interventions 	<p>Agriculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JLGs formation • Training to JLG members • Corpus fund of Rs 4000/- to JLGs • Marketing support of JLG

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NHGs gathering/get together - Special reservation of CDS Chairpersons in tribal panchayath - Awareness classes on social evils - Tribal training groups formed - Special focus on balasabha and adolescents - Capacity building of Promoters and Oorumoopans - Hamlet development plan preparation (like VPRP) 	<p style="text-align: center;">and Matching grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Banking literacy programme for NHGs - Various funds to NHGs from NRLM (VRF, CIF, Start up fund(special ADS) - Book keeping training /Free registers to NHGs - Book keepers support for remote area - Grading and linkage campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ooru adalath/Ooril orudivasam - Support for getting basic entitlements - Holistic health programme - Medical camps/speciality medical camps - Bridge Course/ Bridge School/ Online Class support - Competitive exam preparation support 	<p style="text-align: right;">products of tribes</p> <p>Micro Enterprises Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special GOT/EDP/Skill training • Stipend for the participants • Project preparation support and handholding support • NTFP products collection <p>Skill and Placement sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training support through DDU GKY scheme • Stipend for the participants Special interventions on drop outs
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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The tribes have their own traditional products and livelihood interests, and the Mission provides support to them analyzing this interests. Agriculture, animal husbandry and collection of non-timber forest produce are the most encouraged ones. Alongside, enterprises in general sectors are promoted among the new generation like apparel parks, bag making, coir products etc. For the youth the Mission focusses on wage employment programmes through skilling.

The objective of the study is to analyze the marketing support provided to tribes as part of enterprise promotion and traditional products.

1. To analyze the various marketing support provided by the Mission
2. To analyze the support extended by departments and agencies
3. To understand how the external support services are being explored by the Mission for the tribal products
4. To analyze the different methods that can be adopted to market the products and to position them better in the market

METHODOLOGY

The information is collected from primary and secondary sources like review of literature, various schemes for Mission and discussion with State Tribal team. Also the programme developed as part of Responsible Tourism initiative in Idukki.

MARKETING OF TRIBAL PRODUCE

The tribal hamlets are engaged in different livelihood activities out of which the interested and preferred ones are agriculture, animal husbandry, bamboo products, coir products, collection of forest produce etc. In addition now a days the Mission also promotes other activities among women like garment making (apparel parks), craft items, bag making, umbrella making etc. Also machine tools rent outs and other new initiatives too are promoted.

The Mission has developed different marketing strategies from 2006 onwards. Monthly markets, weekly markets, community marketing network, nano markets, finding shelf space in different shops and super markets, tie up with supply co are worth to mention. In addition the Mission also developed an online platform kudumbashreebazar.com and even made tie-ups with the famous online platforms like Amazon and Flipkart. The Mission is also in the process of developing its own bazars and shoppee that markets Kudumbashree products as a special brand. Saras fairs and supply co outlets are other marketing platforms.

The products of tribal sectors are attached to these different platforms. The first attempt to brand tribal products was made in Attappadi under the name 'Hill view'. The forest produce and agricultural products are marketed under the brand and is also attached to Kudumbashree online platform.



In the case of Mannan tribes of Idukki they have their own marketing federation through which their traditional products are marketed. Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) an initiative of Govt of India is another platform where handicrafts items are marketed.

The agricultural and animal husbandry products are marketed locally without any external intervention. These products have good acceptance at the local level.

CHALLENGES

The challenges faced is the products produced by the tribal hamlets are less in volume. High end marketing is not possible. The forest produce collected and

agricultural produce are less in volume and can be integrated with the existing systems only.

The Mission should special effort to increase the production without disturbing the unique nature of it like organic farm products, traditional crafts and real forest products etc.

The promotion of enterprises without analyzing the cost of production and the scope of its marketing in the tribal localities is one of the biggest challenges. For eg, the items that require transportation from the city that requires huge cost and thereby increase in production cost will affect the price and thereby marketing.

SUGGESTIONS

As the products has unique value, the Mission may focus on branding the products. Better positioning of these products should be taken care of by targeting it to affordable customers. Different customer segments may be targeted depending on the type of products.

The agriculture products may be marketed under the organic farm products (if we can guarantee the norms). Similarly, the farm products and traditional craft items may be integrated under a common brand and different platforms may be explored that targets the premium customers like Fab India. A shelf space in existing government shops like Forest department, Agro bazar and similar ones may be explored highlighting the significance of the product by pricing it a premium rate. This will help to get a higher price for the producers.

The products that has daily requirements especially in earlier times at households like broom, kutta, vatti and other kitchen items can be marketed locally through the nano market concept of Kudumbashree. Online marketing of these products too has much significance as the 'Keralites' in general has a nostalgic

feeling towards some traditional items (the demand can easily fetched in the IITF fairs at Delhi).

Marketing of tribal products itself requires a specific research to analyze the demand among different category of customers so that branding, positioning and pricing can be done accordingly. The support of external professionals in the field may be availed for marketing study.

