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Management

THE PROMOTION OF SWADESHI THROUGH ONLINE MARKETING IN THE REVIVAL OF THE RURAL ECONOMY IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

70% of the total population of India are scattered in the diverse demographic structure of rural India. Thus, it results in a dichotomous market structure – Urban and Rural. Rural India has a lack of basic market structure as compared to Urban. The concept of SWADESHI has been developed to uplift and provide strength to the Villagers. SWADESHI stands for the indigenous socio-economic system which is based on Indian value. The Swadeshi directs for the selfless aim of business rather than want of incentives. The development structure of Swadeshi is to guarantee production structure and generate employment through localization. In this paper, the study reveals the descriptive approach in analyzing major issues and challenges being faced in developing rural economy, how the villagers will get benefit from SWADESHI and their future. Online Marketing has emerged as a solution for ensuring the availability of different brands of products at a single platform, promotions and advertisements, payments via cash on delivery or online transactions and online handling the queries of the customer and offering suggestions to them. SWADESHI aims to emerge as a cluster of communities for socio-economic and infrastructural development and provide a bright scope for the online business to mitigate their needs.

INTRODUCTION

The word 'Swadeshi' has several interpretations of its meaning and a wide scope of its implications. The Swadeshi was identified by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Dada Bhai Nauroji, and Sri Aurobindo. After the entry of Mahatma Gandhi in the Indian freedom struggle, the ideology of Swadeshi was carried ahead in its new form. Swadeshi is a strategic term described for achieving Swaraj. However, the term 'SWADESHI' became a fundamental aspect of Gandhi's Philosophy. The concept developed by Gandhi was an initiative to coordinate the different aspects of life like cultural, economic, religious, social, and political; but the concept of Swadeshi was not an exception. The Swadeshi was declared as a universal concept by the Mahatma Gandhi and coined it as an instrument for the freedom struggle of the Nation. Swaraj through Swadeshi was the principle applied by the people in the freedom struggle. Under British rule, the textile industry was the major material of import from England, and to capture the market of indigenous items. With the call of Swadeshi by the freedom fighters, many people have given up the import of mill yarn from England and they started to use hand-woven yarn in Indian mills. The traditional work of the country was agriculture, hand spinning, and hand weaving, handlooms, cottage industries, animal husbandry, and handicrafts. These major rural industries boosted the growth and development of villages in the country. Though, the generic concept of Swadeshi involves several aspects of human life, thoughts, methodology, programs, and processes. Since the economic activities of the country have been halted, the workers are migrating to their native places by hook and crook. Some workers walked thousands of kilometers on foot to reach their homes. In this paper, the economic perspectives of Swadeshi have been considered for the study in the present scenario of Corona.

Online Marketing

The term 'Online Marketing' in general stands for doing business through electronic means. When there is internet connectivity, online portals can be accessed from everywhere. It is often that there is an easy reach of new technologies like the Internet in Urban while rural are unaware of how to access the internet. The village can only grow when there is developmental work at the grassroots level. Every village should be self-sufficient and a bundle of services can be delivered efficiently to its residents. The vision of empowered villages has led to the concept of online marketing to strengthen the rural economy. Rural development is a community-based initiative to achieve sustainable development enabling proper nutrition and

sanitation, clean drinking water, education, enhanced security, healthcare, infrastructure, and digitalization. Irrespective of infrastructural development and lack of proper market, digitalization can play a vital role in connecting them with the mainstream of the urban. Around 250,000 Gram Panchayats covering over 6,600 Blocks and 641 Districts would be connected by high-speed internet connectivity through the 'Digital India' program. This initiative aims to transform villages into a digitally empowered society.

Literature Review

Though covering more than 600,000 villages in India, market size is very vast but it is fragmented in nature. It is very hard for last-mile reach. The IT revolution is triggering the transformation of society by improving ICT infrastructure and penetration of the internet through broadband on a large scale. It has led to unprecedented growth in online marketing. There is a tremendous increase in internet users across the country. The growth in inclination towards online purchases is increasing day by day and is driven by the rising disposable income of people. Online marketing has a strong potential to add higher values to business in developing countries (Nir Kshetri, 2001) where ICT has emerged as a tool for doing business (Siriginidi, 2004). According to the Global Information Technology Report 2015 published by the World Economic Forum, India stands the first position in the affordability pillar for ICT. The revolution brought by e-Commerce is breaking the barrier; even it is also changing the lifestyle of the people in rural areas. The future of e-Commerce depends upon the accessibility of the internet in rural areas (Saroj, 2016). It is expected to have an annual growth rate of (CAGR 2017-21) of 22.6% which will result in a market volume of US\$45,172m in 2021. As per the report of Dataquest, the day has come when online marketers will be completely focused on rural e-Commerce. The major giants like Amazon, Snap deal, eBay, and Flipkart have moved one step ahead towards connecting villages through Online Marketing. Thus, there is a boom in the coming days in rural marketing. According to Brandequity, the campaign 'Be Indian Buy Indian' can help in strengthening the Swadeshi market. The crafts industry provides a lot of employment but the maker of the craft has neither insurance policy nor pension (Bali E., 2020 Apr 28). After the festive season of Holi, the Indian govt. had declared countrywide lockdown. During this lockdown period in March – April- May, all the economic activities shut down for a while. The rural economy is unstructured and unorganized, the govt. schemes are very little utilized by rural people. MSME companies should be

encouraged to sell their products online. The research gap identified is to promote these swadeshi goods through online marketing. One way for reviving the economy is to build online infrastructure and carry the unstructured organized into an organized sector. The lockdown and pandemic crisis can be converted into opportunities for establishing a new kind of business.

Drivers of Growth for Online Marketing in Rural India

- **'Digital India'** initiative envisages that almost 250,000 villages will be connected through high-speed internet connectivity. The better online infrastructure will help to develop the online business successfully in villages. Thus, Village would be the major focussed region for e-learning and accessing the online portal.
- **Building Trust** The online business units have to develop trust among customers that the products purchased online should resemble the same as it was published on their website. It is often that products mentioned during purchase and the items delivered are entirely different.
- **Services in Local Languages** The online marketer should translate their websites in local languages for positioning of e-Commerce among rural consumers. They can easily access the portal in their languages like Bhojpuri, Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, Punjabi, Assamese, etc.
- **Issues related to Security** People have a fear of sharing bank accounts details during online purchasing. A lot of fraud is common in practice. Villagers are generally not aware of the processing of online transactions. Therefore, Security and privacy of information should be kept on a priority basis.
- **Rural Kiosks** Rural Kiosks is an authorized community center of an online marketer where people can place an order and receive the products from the kiosks. Kiosks act as a mediator for placing an order online on e-Commerce websites. It helps in building loyalty with the customer and reflects as a traditional way of marketing.
- **Digital Wallets** Digital Wallets is a system that can store payment information and passwords of the users. It helps in the quick process during filling of the details online. It can be used to store information on their debit and credit cards and digital coupons. People can be safe in entering details when they are not using their personal computers or mobile phones.

The revival of Rural Economy after lockdown

The Govt. of India has announced a stimulus relief package of Rs 20 lakh crores on 12 May 2020 to boost the economy of the nation. It has focused on tax breaks for small businesses, and domestic manufacturing could get incentives. It also comprises distributing free food grains to poor cash transfer through DBT mode to women. Overall, the govt. has targeted to make the nation 'Self Reliant'. The relief package has covered several sectors like MSMEs, Workers, Middle People, and Industries. The self-reliant economy can stand on five pillars i.e. economy, infrastructure, technology, demography, and demand. Self-reliant India can only be achieved through the rural economy and the promotion of our Swadeshi Products. Some daily needs products are as follows.

Grocery	Edible Oil	Ghee	Maida	Bajra
	Pulses	Mustard Oil	Besan	Bread
	Flour	Rice	Sattu	Chikki
	Spices	Salt	Jeera	Poha
Packed Food	Confectionery	Snacks	Sauce	Biscuit
	Bakery	Pickle	Soan Papdi	Honey
	Candies	Papad	Sweets	Noodles
Household Items	Cleaning	Washing	Toiletries	Bucket

Healthcare	Energy Drinks	Chawanprash	Baby Foods	Antiseptic liquid
Personal Care	Face Care	Body Care	Shaving Kits	Cosmetics
Beverages	Cold Drinks	Fruit Juice	Sharbat	Liquor

When these locally made products are sold through online marketing, it will strengthen the rural economy and can generate big employment. Through a report in economic times on 16 Oct. 2019, 50% of the consumers prefer local brands. The low price would attract more consumers through online marketing. The commercialization of indigenous technology, improvement in the Public distribution system, transforming rural healthcare infrastructure can help in reviving the rural economy.

CONCLUSION

Online marketing is an advanced technology concerning the traditional way of marketing i.e. visiting stores, picking the items, and paying the sum to the vendor. But, online marketing provides home-based marketing through the internet. It will help the villagers in purchasing varieties of products sitting at their homes; there is no need to worry about the availability of products of their interest in such remote locations. The Villages have better internet connectivity, they can also place the order in their user-friendly languages through Kiosks and then pick the items and move to their home happily. There is no need to fear about fraud in online transactions. Therefore, Online marketing is playing a vital role in the development of the rural economy by selling Swadeshi goods.

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