



## Rural Marketing - A study in Mangalore Taluk of Dakshina Kannada District

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**Abstract:** *Today, all marketing organizations are functioning in a highly dynamic environment and are finding it very difficult to stay in the face of the ever growing competition and shifting consumer preferences. The Three 'C's- Customer, Change and Competition are creating challenges and opportunities in the society. An era of new competition and new customers with different value systems is now a stark reality facing marketers. The business unit needs to have strategic orientation and engage themselves in planning and implementing marketing strategies. In the above context, the present study assesses the seller issues pertaining to SIRI products.*

### Introduction

The contemporary society is facing challenges ushered by the government policies of liberalization, privatization and globalization. This policy initiative has changed the very concepts of 3 C's. Now the customers have the option to buy multiple products flooded in the market. The intensity of the competition has increased due to the entry of new suppliers providing products at competitive prices. There are not only national suppliers but also international suppliers in the form of MNCs. Due to the change in the income levels, the consumer behavior and the purchase decision has also changed.

All these changes are not restricted to cities. It is now being percolated to rural areas also. Though there is a strong impact of change in urban centers, in rural areas also witnessing the impact of change. This change is a challenge and if managed properly is an opportunity to grow and excel the business.

The change in customer outlook and competition has to be addressed in production as well as in marketing. The marketing agencies has to redefine its operations and policies to accommodate the changes in the economy.

### SIRI PROFILE

Having an experience of 20 years in rural development activity SKDRDP nurtured many

groups producing commodities of various types. But on account of severe competition in the market, the pricing of commodities and quality maintenance have become challenging issue to SHGs. As a support system to SHGs, the SKDRDP established 'Shri Dharmasthala SIRI Gramodyoga Samsthe', under section 25 of the company's Act with share capital from SHGs, in order to provide forward and backward linkage to them for taking up income generating activities. The products of SIRI are sold under the brand name SIRI through various marketing networks. More than 5,000 women are engaged in production activities producing more than 75 items like chemical items, food products, readymade garments, pickles, areca leaf cups, fancy items, condiments, agarbathis, squashes, vermi compost, etc. Having its head office at Belthangady, SIRI provides the following services to rural women, SIRI is a unique rural agency promoted by Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala Rural Development Program (SKDRDP), an NGO in Belthangady taluk of Dakshina Kannada district in Karnataka State. As a umbrella brand SIRI agency promotes more than 60 products. The research study was mainly concentrated on seller perception of SIRI products.

### Objectives

1. To study the socio-economic background of respondents
2. To assess the respondents issues and their views on product supply

## Research Methodology

The researcher has followed the sample survey method for conducting the empirical enquiry. The mangalore taluk of Dakshina Kannada district is taken as sampling unit. Ten villages in the taluk were selected. A sample of 15 sellers of SIRI products from each village is identified and the 150 respondents are selected as sample size.

Table 1. Profile of respondents

1.Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Bellow 25	49	32.67
25-45	78	52
Above 45	23	15.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>2.Business Premises</b>		
Owned	62	41.33
Hired	88	58.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>3.Educational Qualification</b>		
Illiterate	8	5.33
Primary	48	32
Secondary	16	10.67
Inter-mediate	60	40
Gradation	13	8.67
Vocational/Technical	5	3.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>4.Mothly Turnover</b>		
Bellow 15000	69	46
15000-30000	34	22.67
Above 30000	47	31.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

Above table 1 depicts that, 52% of respondents belong to middle age i.e., 25-45. Table 1 exhibits that, out of 150 respondents, 41.33% are having their own premises and 58.67% are having hired premises. As per table 1, it is clear that 40% of respondents were educated up to intermediate level followed by 32% of respondents who were educated up to primary level. 46% of respondents is having turnover of bellow Rs 15000, 22.67% of seller falls under the turnover limit of Rs.15000-30000 and 31.33% of respondents are having turnover limit of Above Rs 30000.

Table 2. Respondents Issues on SIRI products

1.Media Awareness	No. of Respondents	Percentage
T.V/Newspaper/Radio	17	11.33
From another dealer	59	39.33
Through SIRI employee	74	49.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>2.Duration range of selling</b>		
Bellow 1 Year	25	16.67
1 -2	60	40
2-4	47	31.33
Above 4	18	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>3.Frequency of product supply</b>		
Daily	48	32
Weekly	82	54.67
Monthly	20	13.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>4.Parameters of product differentiation</b>		
Price	28	18.67
Quality	66	44
Availability	45	30
Commission	11	7.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 depicts that 49.34% of respondents are aware of SIRI products from SIRI employees. It was found that maximum percentages of sellers are selling the product for the last 2 years.

Table 2 indicates that 32% of sellers are obtaining the product on daily basis, 54.67% on weekly basis and 13.33% on monthly basis. It was found that 18.67% of respondents have differentiated the product in terms of price, 44% of the respondents preferred the quality, 30% availability and 7.33% stated the commission as parameters of product differentiation.

Thus on the basis of media awareness, frequency of product supply, product differentiation, promotional tools, it can be concluded that SIRI products have already created an impact in the market.

Based on the primary data and its analysis it reveals that, effectiveness of marketing strategy depends on variable like product awareness, product differentiation in terms of price, quality and availability. If there is a judicious blend of these variables, the revenue will increase for the manufactures and sellers.

### Conclusion

Consolidating the essence of secondary and primary data, it can be concluded that marketing strategies are essential for the survival and growth of enterprises. Rural micro enterprises have to compete with the urban and multinational companies in the open market. In this regard focusing their efforts on core competency area is essential. Supplying acceptable quality products with regularity and adopting motivational schemes for sellers, it is possible to build up brand image and satisfied loyal customers who are the real source of revenue to institution.

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