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Title

**MARKETING OF DW CRA PRODUCTS A NEW
PARDIGM FOR COMBATING RURAL POVERTY-
A CASE STUDY OF ANDHRA PRADESH**

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Introduction:

Development is a continual process where there is always scope for improvement. Though many governmental agencies are working, and various schemes for improvement of living conditions of the rural and urban poor have been initiated, the rapid increase in population becomes a challenge in providing the basic amenities to the poor and marginalized. The diversified income drainage in the form of usurious interest to money lenders charging exorbitant interest rates, extravagant expenditure on festivals and functions, alcoholism, dowry, and other social problems coupled with very low socio economic status of women, both in the family as well as in the society developing countries. Inspirit of the many programmes undertaken for the betterment of women's position, it is only the DWCRA that has mobilized the women's involvement both in rural and urban areas

- DWCRA programme has particularly given psychological confidence in tackling issues by women groups.
- DWCRA has trained the women's groups for better involvement in all aspects of the community development and prepared them to shoulder higher responsibility and share in the work of the community.
- DWCRA has particularly made the women group realize their potential in various activities by pooling together their small resources.

Findings of the study:

Ignorance of Members/Participants

Even though the authorities take measures for creating awareness among the group members about the schemes beneficial to them, still majority of the group are unaware of the schemes of assistance offered to them. Now the Government of A.P. offers subsidies and other schemes of assistance up to a maximum of Rs. 5 Lakhs. However, many are ignorant.

□ *Inadequate Training Facilities*

The training facilities given to the members of DW CRA groups in the specific areas of product selection, quality of products, production techniques, managerial ability, packing, other technical knowledge etc. are not adequate to compete with that of strong units.

Problems Related with Raw Materials

Normally each DW CRA groups procures raw materials individually from the suppliers. They purchase raw materials in smaller quantities and hence they may not be able to enjoy the benefits of large scale purchase like discount, credit facilities etc. Moreover there is no systematic arrangement to collect raw materials in bulk quantities and preserve them properly. There is no linkage with major suppliers of raw materials Most of the DW CRA groups are ignorant about the major raw material suppliers and their terms and conditions, all these causes high cost of raw materials.

Problems of Marketing:

Marketing is an important area of functioning of the DW CRA. However, they face different problems in the marketing of products produced by them. Following are the major problems reported by the DW CRA groups.

- Lack of sufficient orders
- Lack of linkage with the marketing Agencies
- Lack of adequate sale promotion measures.
- Lack of Permanent market for the products of DW CRA groups
- Absence of proper brand name.
- Poor/unattractive packing system.
- Poor quality of products due to the application of traditional technology, resulting in poor market.
- Stiff competition from other major suppliers.
- Lack of a well defined and well knit channel of distribution for marketing.

□ *Inadequate Financial Assistance*

It is also found that in most of the DWCRA groups, the financial assistance provided to them by the agencies concerned is not adequate to meet their actual requirements. The financial authorities are not giving adequate subsidy to meet even the labor cost requirements.

□ *Inadequate and Ill trained Staff to Meet the Challenges*

The attitude of the staff of the rural development department is not encouraging. They are not well trained to accept the challenges and equip the DWCRA groups self reliant..

□ *Inadequate Support from Line Departments*

For obtaining assistance and support the group members have to approach the line officers. However, the line officers are not co-operative with the DWCRA groups. This will hamper the very objective of the schemes.

SUGGESTIONS:

1. In A.P., there are plenty of locally available resources. Information about locally available materials and their varied uses should be disseminated to DWCRA groups. Proper encouragement and training should be given to them to make innovative products by using these materials. In order to have a knowledge base about the availability of materials, in Panchayat levels, surveys can be conducted under the auspices of local authorities.
2. In order to solve the various problems relating to marketing of DWCRA products, the state level organization “APRAMS” (Andhra Pradesh Rural Development and Marketing Society) should extend the activities throughout the state instead of limiting its operations in a particular area.
3. Various DWCRA groups functioning in a particular Panchayat area can form a co-operative Society. This society may be entrusted with the task marketing the products of different DWCRA groups under a common brand name.

Further, the society can undertake sales promotion activities and procure rare raw materials for the benefit of member DW CRA group.

4. Non Governmental Agencies (NGOs) can play a significant role in empowering women entrepreneurs by providing basic education, motivation training, and financial help and so on.
5. All the members in the DW CRA groups may not have the same caliber and expertise. NGOs can identify the inefficient members of the group and can impart proper training to them in order to make them competent. For this purpose short term training programmes can be arranged at the panchayat level.
6. Frequent awareness camps can be organized by the Rural Frequent awareness camps can be organized by the Rural Department authorities to create awareness about the different schemes of assistance available to the participants in the DW CRA groups.

Conclusion:

Women empowerment is the need of the day for the fast economic development of the country. Having identified the need for empower women, the governments at the central and State levels have been preparing and implementing many schemes exclusively for empowering women in India, and also spending cores of rupees under the sachems. At this stage what is important is the implementation of these schemes by removing the inherent and operational defects of these schemes.

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