Reimagining our Rural Villages

Value Chain project supported by Suzuki Innovation Centre

KID: 20230107

The gap between rural and urban has been ever-decreasing in this digital world. In an attempt to understand rural India better, the IITH Department of Design and Suzuki Innovation Centre partnered to understand rural needs want, and aspirations deeply. Our team started off with a vision to empower rural India by focusing on the end-to-end supply value chain. Equipped with a research plan, thorough on-ground research, namely Focus group discussions, in-person interviews and surveys, were conducted in two remote villages of Telangana, namely Antharam and Salabatpur. A simultaneous secondary literature review suggests that the likes of rural people are trending towards that of the urban population. But it is not clear as to whether the same marketing and supply chain strategies which are deployed in the urban scenario will work in the rural areas. Also, how to modulate the strategies based on the geographic areas. This research attempted to address these gaps and try to identify specific guidelines to strategize and plan intervention in rural consumer ecosystem.

Phase 1 Research:

117 survey respondents and 2 focus group discussions later, the insights from the field visits made us understand that the villages were struggling to procure city-grade products. Insights led through primary and secondary research helped us understand the needs and desires of the people of Antharam. Survey results showed us that the villagers travel a lot, almost 20 km to sometimes even as far as 70 km, to get daily products like medicines, groceries, and household items. Only some people have their own vehicle for shopping in the city. There exists a willingness in the people to pay if the products are somehow available to them in their village only. They would prefer not to travel to the city if the availability of products is closer to home.

Phase 2 research:

Research was expanded to more villages, namely Mamidipally, Kandi Mandal Gollagudem Thanda, Kandi Mandal, Bujirampet, Kawdipally mandal Mohammed Nagar, Kowdipally Mandal. Byathol and Sangareddy Mandal to gather richer data. We surveyed by directly interacting with the household members and shopkeepers in the village. We wanted to grab the data of the top 10 products and services that villagers are availing within the distance of 1-5 km, 5-10 km and above 10 km. The whole research helped us to brainstorm on design directions and solutions which would be feasible as well as usable for the villagers and would help in ease of living. Our team decided to go ahead with forming a system design intervention where the top most needed products would be available via a vending machine installed in the village premises. The research and its impact are in the assessment stage, wherein the response from the villagers will be recorded and analyzed. This project helped to deeply understand ways to improve the ease of living of rural inhabitants and implement those on the ground through action-oriented research. The project's present status is that customers are enthusiastic about the machine, and we feel that this intervention will lead to greater ease of living.


Focus group discussions and field visit interviews by our team in Antharam Telangana

The gestures were incorporated into the game using Unity™3D Game engine software. The game, after the first stage of development, was deployed at the Zilla Parishad High School in Mamidipally village of Kandi Mandal, Sangareddy district, for heuristic evaluation, and insights from the deployment would be used to modify/add features to the game and the story.

The development of TeeHee is an example of how the culmination of technology and animation can be used to improve public health in rural India. By using games, we can make health education more accessible, especially in areas where healthcare awareness is limited.
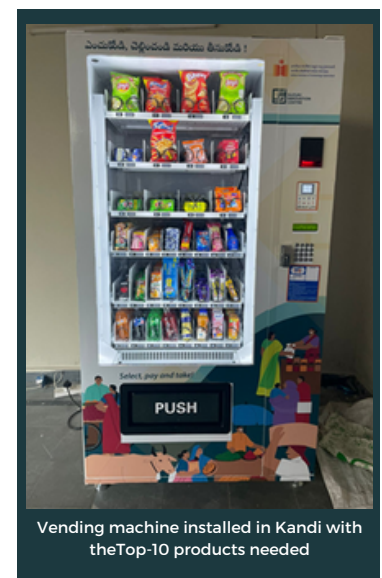
Vending machine installed in Kandi with theTop-10 products needed

[1] Dr Prasad Onkar
Associate Professor and
Head - Department of Design

[2] Mr Naresh Rathod
MA. Dev Studies,
Project Associate, SIC

[3] Ms Ananya Shah
MDes 2Yr
Department of Design