PREFACE

Consumer behaviour is a field of knowledge that explains and predicts how consumers buy. It has arisen largely in response to the needs of managers of profit and non profit organizations and of public policy makers considering the increasing potential of rural markets. The study of rural consumers assumes importance so as to frame effective rural marketing strategies, distinct from marketing strategies urban consumers. Hence the study titled “Dynamics of Rural Consumer behaviour in Kerala” has done with the broad objective to assess the pre-purchase, purchase and post purchase behaviour of rural consumers and to identify the factors influencing their purchase decisions.

In India there is no paucity of text books and studies that deal with the subject of consumer behaviour but the literature exclusively meant of rural consumer behaviour, especially in the context of Kerala economy is very limited. The study tries to fill this deficit to some extent. It studies the subject of rural consumer behaviour from the view point of rural consumers and lays stress on the pre purchase, purchase and post purchase behaviour of rural consumers.

With these objectives in view, this study is an all encompassing to cover the rural marketing in India and a special reference to Kerala, theoretical framework of consumer behaviour and the pre purchase, purchase and post purchase behaviour of rural consumers both for durables and non durables. This will in turn highlight certain policy implication to marketers or businessmen to frame effective rural marketing strategies to penetrate their products.
Organization of the study is confined in seven chapters. Chapter one covers brief introduction, problem with the methodological framework, scope and limitations. The second chapter highlights rural marketing scenario of India with special reference of Kerala. An overview of consumer behaviour and the theoretical framework are discussed in the third chapter.

The examination of pre-purchase, purchase and post purchase behaviour towards the selected products is made in the fourth and fifth chapters. Sixth chapter identifies factors influencing the consumer choice of both durables and non-durables. Summary findings and conclusions are given in the final chapter.

The findings of the study expose the dynamics of rural consumer behaviour pattern of Kerala. They are changing from the traditional way of thinking and attitudes the urban consumers are influencing then very much. Inter regional difference among the rural consumers are only marginal. Therefore the need for considering rural consumers as a single segment is very important. Moreover marketers have to frame appropriate strategies keeping the rural scenario and dynamics of rural consumer behaviour.

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