Discussions on Literature Review
CHAPTER – 3

DISCUSSIONS ON REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Knowledge on consumer behaviour is very essential for the people in the field of marketing to make crucial decisions during various stages of product’s life cycle. Even a minor aspect cannot be ignored as it may cause very serious repercussions.

On the one hand, the purchase decision taken by the consumer is purely psychological. Owing to this feature, one cannot see what is going in the minds of the consumer. On the other hand, it is very vital for the marketers to know what is flickering in the “black box”.

Since a long period, research studies have been conducted to find out the affairs happening in the minds of the consumer through forming logics for the behaviour they are exhibiting at various points.

Consumer research is the methodology used to study consumer behaviour. As in any science, consumer behaviour theories must be generalized as principles applicable to marketing practice. Some consumer behaviour researches are conducted based on observations of actual behaviour in the market place; other research is conducted under controlled conditions in the laboratory; still other research is based on the manipulation of marketing variables within a stimulated marketing context. Only through constant testing, evaluation, rejection and support of related hypotheses, behavioural principles can be developed to provide marketers with meaningful insights into psychological and environmental factors that influence consumer decision making. Consumer behaviour research also enables marketers to carve out new market segments based on variables
that emerge as important discriminators among consumers for a specific product or product category.

Consumer behaviour research is conducted for every phase of the consumption process: i.e. from before the purchase takes place (when the consumer becomes aware of a need) to the search and evaluation of product alternatives (ranging from simple to extensive information search) to the actual purchase decision (including such factors as product and brand choice and method of payment) to after the purchase takes place (through any period of uncertainty, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, repurchase or further search in the market place).

Studies relating to the subject matter of the study are searched and reviewed briefly in terms of the inferences and results and the same are mentioned below:

Mr. G. Sitamber (1979) in his research study titled "Consumer's shopping Behaviour" (A study in a semi–urban area) has revealed that the consumer has little choice in choosing a particular item. The wholesaler & the retailer extend marketing even to the doorstep of the consumer with their wide net work of operations and supply what the consumer requires to meet his day-to-day needs.

Mr. Shugan (1983) in his study on "Price and quality relationship" has exposed that price is an indicator of the quality. Manufacturers are encouraged to raise the quality of their product. He believes that delivering good quality of goods is the right image to be developed among the users of the product.
Mr. Dhunna (1984) in his study has focused on the consumer behaviour of soft drinks among 100 respondents representing fairly the various categories of people. He has studied the brand with high awareness and preference value and the consumption pattern of soft drinks. Taste is found to be an important feature in preferring a particular brand of soft drink. Brand switching has occurred because of non-availability of preferred brand. Most of the respondents have showed interest in soft drink advertisement more specifically those who are in their teenage group.

Mr. Namasivayam (1988) in his study on "Impact of advertisement and consumer preference of toilet soap" has focused that audio-visual medium of advertisement is the catching point to inspire the potential customers in selecting their brand of toilet soap. This study is conducted based on the socio-economic and psychological factors.

Mr. N. Ravisankar, Dr. A.S. Rajarao & Dr. B.P. Raju, (1995) in their article "Rural Markets – features and marketing strategies" deals that competition in urban markets is hotting up; marketers are turning to rural markets to exploit the untapped potential. A deep analysis of the consumer goods indicates that the contribution of rural markets is more significant than urban markets for many durable as well as non-durable products and the share of rural markets is increasing over time. Due to peculiar features of the rural markets, the product and the marketing strategies designed for urban markets are not suitable for successful penetration into rural markets. It is necessary for marketers to adopt rural
oriented product, promotion and distribution strategies and focus on long term gains.

Dr. P. Indrasena Reddy (1996) in his study on “Rural Marketing in India—Problems and Prospects” has remarked that product planning is very important to the marketers to enter into rural market. Therefore, the product design, colour, size and quality have to be planned as per the needs and tastes of rural consumers. As far as possible, the product should be low priced because of low purchasing power of rural consumers and the packaging should be strong enough to withstand rough handling. The size of the pack should be relatively small as compared to urban retail unit packs. Brand names must be simple and easily pronounceable.

He further says that adequate rural infrastructure is necessary for the development of rural marketing. Therefore, Government should give priority for the development of adequate rural roads, storage and communication facilities. It should expand further the banking and credit facilities in rural areas. Further, transport subsidy and tax concessions must be offered by the Government to business concerns selling products in rural areas.

For effective distribution of goods to reach remote villages, traditional channel of distribution, viz., wholesalers and retailers should be followed. For proper management of sales force, rural salesmen must be given adequate orientation and training with regard to rural market environment, rural consumer’s attitude and behaviour and selling techniques to tap rural market potential. Besides, sales force must be encouraged to work in rural areas by offering monetary benefits. In some
cases, it is worthwhile to select local people as salesmen since they are well versed with the local language.

Dr.D.Raji Reddy (1996-2001) in the research study titled “Rural consumer Behaviour for seed - a case study” has analyzed that the certified seeds are not available in adequate quantity at the time of sowing season. Therefore, rigorous efforts should be initiated to multiply the production of certified seeds. It is necessary to encourage small seed growers for seed production by providing financial assistance to them. This is possible only through the government. Particular care should be taken for ensuring quality production through control measures.

Dr.W.K.Sarwade (2000) in his study on “Retail Trade Structure in Rural Area” has found that rural retail traders are the major communication link for rural consumers. But, in many cases, it is complained that they do not get reliable information. In fact, most of the rural traders are not well informed by dealers or company sales personnel. He has also suggested that the companies/dealers must ensure that adequate information about the products is made available to retail traders in villages. Display of products at shop level should be improved. Adequate support should be provided to rural traders in this regard.

Retail traders who are operating in rural market generally follow the methods of credit sale because the demand characteristics for a product is closely related with agricultural income and so it has been observed that the total volume of sale generated in retail market in rural area by merely credit sale to the perspective, price is the main sales appeal in rural area.
In brief, as regards the size of retail stores in terms of size of employment, generally the stores are very small. On an average, the retail stores in villages have employed only one or rarely two employees in one or two retail stores. In terms of reach, there are 1.24 to 2.76 retail stores or shops for every 100 households in rural area.

Mr. L.B. Hugar, Mr. Balappa Shivaraya and Mr. J. Yerriswamy (2000) in their study on “Dynamics of consumer behaviour in vegetable marketing” has found that educational level as well as nature of income (Stable Vs Varying) has significant influence on purchase pattern of vegetables related to the quality. There is a positive relationship between educational level of consumer and the extent of quantity and number of times of vegetables purchased in a week. The female consumers have better purchase behaviour compared to male consumers. The purchase of vegetables in the evening times are mostly preferred by the majority of consumers particularly highly educated consumers. The dynamics of consumer behaviour has indicated that the extent of vegetables purchased changes with the changes in the prevailing market price, more so, in low-income group of consumers. It is found that the producer-sellers are generally preferred and the choice of the shop is based on the price, quality and weightment of the produce.

Dr. (Mrs.) D. Kamlaveni (2001) in her research study titled “Consumer Behaviour in Infant Food Products” has discussed that there is a complete agreement between ranking given by the homemakers and working women regarding the reasons prompting them to buy IFPs. Education, family size and annual income are the decision points for
purchase. Habit of buying newly launched products and the ability to recall advertisement on IFP's do not influence the precipitate expenditure on IFP's.

Mr. Roy F. Baumeister (2002) in his study on “Yielding to Temptation: Self-control failure, Impulsive Purchasing and Consumer Behaviour” has revealed that the ability to alter one's own responses is one of the most important features of the human psyche and is substantially responsible for the immense range and diversity of human behaviour as well as for the adaptive success of our species.

For consumer behaviour, self-control represents the capacity to resist temptations, especially those relevant to impulsive purchases and other expenditures that are likely to be regretted later on. The effectiveness of self-control depends on multiple factors including chronic traits and weaknesses, clarity of goals, careful monitoring of one's behaviour and depletion of self-regulatory strength caused by prior execution or decision making. In the long run, such purchases may lead to higher profits for manufacturers and retailers but more unsatisfied and unhappy consumers.

Dr. Sunjaya A. Gaur (2002) in the thesis “Study of Buying Behaviour on Branded Fine Rice” has revealed that there is an increasing demand for premium quality usually highly priced, packaged and branded products. In recent times, almost every commodity like wheat, wheat flour, sooji, rice, rice flour, cooking oil, ghee, chilly, turmeric powder, sugar etc., have been branded and marketed in urban areas. There is also a rise in the voluntary
Agmark grading for the produce to convince consumers about the quality of the produce.

Dr. W.K. Sarwade (2002) in his study on “Emerging dimensions of buying behaviour in rural area” has discussed in brief about the recent dimensions of buying behaviour. It is observed from the study that the role of husband in family purchasing decisions for various items is comparatively less than that of homemaker. The study reveals that the family purchases for convenience goods in rural market is mostly once in a week and it is daily for daily consumption goods such as edible oil, sugar, tea, etc. With the increase in real income of rural people, a shift has been found to take place in the items consumed by the rural consumers. It is found in the study that most of the consumers from rural area developed brand familiarity with brand names such as Lipton, International lux, Keo karpin, Brahmi amla, Panteen that are normally widely known in urban areas.

Marketing and trading of luxurious durable products such as washing machines, water heaters, bathroom fittings and fixtures, air conditioners, sofa sets, chairs, cameras and other products have not yet strategically established in the rural markets. The buying behaviour in general and buying decision in particular in rural area is influenced by the factors like price and availability of products. Another finding is that overall consumption pattern of the rural consumers has changed; consumption expenditure for non-durable items has increased considerably during the study period.
Rajasekar (2002) conducted a study to find the levels of awareness and the brand preferences for fairness creams. He has revealed that the purchase decisions are highly influenced by the quality of fairness cream and the price.

Dr. Rajmani Singh and Mr. A.S. Yarso (2002) in the study titled "Consumer behaviour and consumption pattern of toilet soap in Imphal, Manipur – A micro level study" has remarked that toilet soap produced in India does not give full satisfaction to all sections of the consumer particularly in Imphal, Manipur. They, in one or other way, are not satisfied with the price, quality, colour, smell and size of the product available in the market.

On the other hand, the entry of foreign brands in Imphal through Myanmar is significant that it is slowly capturing the imphal soap. The companies especially MNCs are coming out with various strategies to lure the consumers which ultimately affect their buying behaviour. The buying behaviour of consumers could be better understood not only from the exogenous and endogenous variables of consumers but also from strategies adopted by the companies to wean them away from their competitors.

Dr. Deepak Raj Gupta and Prof. Keshav Sharma (2002) in their study on "Knowing the Rural customers" show that rural consumer in the urban analogous villages wants to acquire the urban life style. But when it comes to buying decision making, it is entirely different from its urban counterpart. Culture has a great influence on their buying decisions. The finding is: Equal status of female in buying decision-making.
The rural customer upholds his traditions and customs in high esteem. They hate the way their culture is being diluted through advertisements. Only a very small proportion of the younger segment is willing to change and keep only the good that their culture wants. Rural customer is simple and virgin. Upholding the dictum that customer is the king, if marketers try to approach him through his culture, he will feel respected and honoured and will be with marketers for ever.

Mr. C.S. Adhikari (2002) in his “Marketing of Rural Industry products through Rural Haats: A District level study” has revealed that the structure of rural haats has undergone significant changes in terms of composition of goods, sellers and distributors. Rural industry products except handicrafts and aesthetic items are giving way to urban-based substitutes. Utility items such as pottery, textiles, fibres, bamboo, leather, etc. though continue to account for significant sale through rural haats, need to be upgraded and diversified. Besides, since the 90’s, corporates have started focusing on rural haats for promoting and penetrating their products in rural areas. State governments, local-self bodies, development agencies such as NABARD and corporates can join hands in terms of creating some minimum infrastructure and utilities such as drinking water, public toilets, stalls/shades, approach roads, etc., on a pilot basis at least with well known rural haats to start with and covering all the major haats in future.

Dr. M.A. Kohok (2002) in his study on “Indian rural Market” has observed that marketing is a multistage process. For the improvement and development of marketing structure, a holistic approach aiming at removing all weak links of the marketing chain is essential. Marketing research
programmes should be oriented to develop an orderly and efficient market system. This is a crucial time in the development of agriculture marketing when the country is poised to enter an era of production surpluses. A placement approach at this stage can be disastrous and can nullify the advantages gained by the farmers on the production front. The analysis of the sample market is signaling that unless changes are done to the present system, the future of the Jangoan market is bleak and traders and commission agents will directly purchase produce from the farmers in the villages. Everything that the regulated agricultural market provides should be reflected on high quality, competence, taste and an obvious commitment to service. The officials of the market could keep this in mind.

Dr.SC.Varshney and Kuldeep singh (2003) in their study titled “Consumer Behaviour and Marketing Trends of toilet soaps in Ghaziabad District rural areas – A Survey” has observed that shrinking market share and sales of companies does not mean consumers have actually been cutting back on their use of toilet soaps. The fact is, in volume terms, the market for toilet soaps has continued to grow at 5-6 percent p.a. It is actually price competition and promotional war between companies which reduces per unit realization and profit margin for companies. The lower rank brands i.e. economy segment or better known as discount segment has highest growth which has resulted into fall in net realization because of volume consumption remaining same or increased value consumption has declined which has caused downfall in company sales and share in turn.

Another cause for downfall in sales is due to provision of better quality soaps to consumers at lower price in the form of increased Total
Fatty Matter (TFM). HUL and GCPL can neither compromise on quality nor afford heavy promotional budget in long term. The revival in rural economy is the only hope alive which is expected to serve two purposes. Firstly, vegetable oil price will come down if there is good monsoon in the country. Being the main raw material, it influences price of toilet soaps heavily. Secondly, increase in disposable income of rural consumers will certainly boost the sales of popular brands of toilet soaps as it is not lack of awareness but lack of affordability which restricts consumers from buying.

Dr. R. Nandagopal and P. Chinnaiyan (2003) in their study on “Brand Preference of Soft Drinks in Rural Tamil Nadu” has mentioned that the level of awareness among the rural consumers about the brand of soft drinks is high which was indicated by the mode of purchase of the soft drinks by “Brand Name”. Major source of brand awareness is the Word of Mouth followed by advertisement. The family members, relatives and friends form a major influence in purchase of specific brand of soft drinks in the rural area. Most of the sample respondents prefer 300 ml quantum whenever the respondents consume individually. An important factor that influences the purchase of a brand of soft drinks is product quality i.e. quality perception in the mind of the consumer.

Dr. V. S. Ganesamurthy & Dr. M. K. Radhakrishnan, (2003) in their study “Survey of Selected Consumer goods in rural marketing areas” have discussed that products are flowing from rural to urban areas and urban to rural areas. Thanks to improvement in media and transportation, etc. The rural market is however not restricted to mass communication products. Even premium brands are gaining wide acceptance in the rural areas.
Increasing awareness has lead to significant changes in buying behaviour and consumption habits. The urban market is getting increasingly competitive and saturated. There is less scope for growth in the urban markets especially for the already established categories. Today, the rural market is blooming with increase in the disposable incomes of the households.

It has been noted that “income” is the variable that determines the purchasing pattern. Most of the consumers from higher income group generally purchase the products that are highly popular in urban area.

According to Schiffman and Kanuk (2003) in the study on “The Process of consumer decision-making” has mentioned that consumer decision-making can be viewed as three distinct but interlocking stages: the input stage, the process stage, and the output stage”.

The input stage influences the consumer’s recognition of a product need and consists of two major sources of information. They are the firm’s marketing efforts and the extreme sociological influences on the consumer (family, friends and neighbours). The cumulative impact of each firm’s marketing efforts, influences of the family, friends, neighbors and society existing codes of behaviour are all inputs that are likely to affect what consumers purchase and how they use what they buy.

The process stage of the model focuses on how consumers make decisions. The psychological factors inherent in each individual affect how the external inputs from the input stage influences the consumer’s recognition of a need, pre purchase search for information and evaluation of alternatives.
The output stage of the model consists of two closely related post-decision activities i.e. purchase and evaluation.

Dr. Amrikh Singh Sudan and Rohini Gupta Suri (2003) in their study titled "Rural Marketing – Some Issues" have observed that few marketers are taking their strategies for rural markets very seriously. Since the rural view of conventional is actually non-traditional, there's huge spending on van operations, village haats, wall paintings that are slicker, stenciled renditions now and so on. Today, MNCs are directly signing contract with villages for want of wall space.

If rural promises moolah for marketers, it's because overall category numbers here are substantial. The creative ethos of marketers is also in flux. Many rural setups have creative teams hailing from smaller towns, which think in the idiom and understand the psyche of the region.

Ruchi Trehan and Harmandeep Singh (2003) in the study "A Comparative Study on Urban and Rural Consumer behaviour" has observed that urban and rural markets significantly differ from one another in considering general and product specific factors while making their purchase decisions for durables. Urban and rural consumer is significantly different in considering brand image, guarantee, warranty, credit availability, foreign collaboration, latest technology and after sales service and there is no significant difference between the two populations in considering durability and price while making purchase decision for colour television.

There is a significant difference between the urban and rural people regarding time of their purchase in rural areas. 51% people purchase as
and when needed and 12% after harvest whereas in urban areas, 68% purchase as and when needed and none after harvest as there is no agriculturist out there.

Dr. V. S. Ganesamurthy, Dr. M. Radhakrishnan and S. Bhuvaneshwari (2003) in their study titled “A Survey of Selected Consumer Products in Rural Marketing Areas” have revealed that nowadays products are flowing from rural to urban areas and urban to rural areas. Thanks to improvement in media and transportation, etc. However, the rural market is not restricted to mass communication products only. Even premium brands are gaining wide acceptance in the rural bastions. Increasing awareness has led to significant changes in buying behaviour and consumption habits.

The Urban market is getting increasingly competitive and saturated. There is less scope for growth in the urban markets especially for the already established categories. Today, the rural market is blooming with increase in the disposable incomes of the households.

Dr. M. A. Lokhande (2004) in his study on “Rural Marketing – A study of Consumer behaviour” has dealt with electronic media and efficient transportation system. Increasing income levels and strategic marketing policies are the major contributing factors to enhance the scope of rural marketing. Rural consumers who are changing their consumption habits to suit themselves to changing environment are aware of the producers of the product.

The buying behaviour in general and buying decision in particular in rural area is influenced by the factors like price and availability of products. An interesting finding of the study is that overall consumption pattern of the
rural consumers has changed and consumption expenditure for non-durable items has increased considerably during the study period.

Mr. M.K. Gandhi (2004) in his study "Rural Marketing – Prospects" has found that Indian rural market is a huge market with lot of potential in it. The rural market is growing at least 5 times the rate of the urban market. Both rural and urban markets differ significantly. Similarly, urban and rural consumer behaviour is significantly different with regard to price, guarantee, durability, brand image, credit availability, after sale service, etc.

First three factors are the factors that influence rural marketing namely price, credit availability and durability whereas in the urban market the related factors are price, latest technology and durability. Therefore, importance is given to rural markets in the modern marketing seen due to saturation level attained in the urban market. Thus, it is often said that "markets are made, not found". This is especially true in the rural market. It is a market meant for the truly creative marketer.

Dr. K. Mallikarjuna Reddy (2004) in the study on "Marketing strategy-Linkages with Consumer Behaviour" has revealed that the consumer market consists of all the individuals and households that buy or acquire goods and services for personal consumption. In old times, marketers could understand consumers through the daily experience of selling to them. But the growth in the size of firms and markets has removed many marketing decision-makers from direct contact with customers. So, the firms are dependent on consumer research to understand their needs and aspirations.
The factors which influence consumer behaviour are cultural, social, personal and psychological. The need for modern marketing has to be consumer-oriented and to be concerned with the needs and wishes of the consumer. It is concluded that business firms are not the centre of the economic universe but they revolve around the consumer.

Dr.B.Nagaraja (2004) in his study titled "Consumer Behaviour in Rural Areas: A microlevel study on Buying Behaviour of Rural Consumers in Kavali Mandal" has concluded that rural consumer is totally a different consumer in the rural market scenario being influenced by rationality, personal experience and the level of utility that is derived from the consumption being influenced by the changing tastes and preferences of the younger generation. The clever and gimmicky advertisements do not work out with rural consumers. Their buying behaviour is very much influenced by 'experience' of their own and of neighbour-consumers and his own family members are exerting maximum influence on his purchases.

Above all, quality of the product and its easy availability are the primary and vital determinants of his buying behaviour. The technique of bombarding with messages has a limited influence. He is very much attached to and influenced by "touch and feel" aspect of any promotional activity. It is imperative that the marketing experts should understand the mindset of rural consumers for every product in a particular region. Hence, it is necessary that more rural research studies of quality should be undertaken to understand rural consumers better and generate more reliable data with particular attention to product-specific, region-specific, group-specific and occasion-specific studies.
It is also very important that language and regional behavioural variations should be given due attention while developing the rural communication strategy. Feel the local touch and sell the goods much should be the aim of producers and marketing agencies. If the increased participation of rural consumers and purchase is the objective of the rural marketing, emergence of a radical shift is the need of the hour in management thinking. Then only, the producers are able to taste the success and rural distribution of the products and their sales would not be considered as a nightmare which automatically paves the way for the next big market revolution in rural areas.

Dr. Shivkumar J. Giram (2004) in his study on “Buying Behaviour of Consumers Towards the products produced by SSI Units” has remarked that buying behavior of the consumers is influenced by family members’ recommendation. Moreover, it is also influenced by the quality aspect also. Hence, maximum efforts should be taken by the entrepreneurs of SSI units in order to confer product standard to win the confidence of buyer and accept it. Similarly, efforts should be taken to inculcate the attraction for their products in the mind of general people. The prices of the goods should be moderately changed. Dealer plays an important role in pursuing the sale of the products produced by SSI units by their guidance to the customers.

Hence, dealer should be inspired to keep such products in their shop and sale. Maximum consumers prefer to purchase the product having standardization certification marks. Hence, producers should try to maintain quality of the product and acquire standardization certification.
Moreover, they should develop product-testing laboratory in their units to confer the standard of the product. It is essential for SSI units to use attractive and proper advertisement media to attract consumers towards their products.

Dr. V. Krishna Mohan Naidu (2004) in his study on “An Evaluation of Consumer Awareness in Rural markets” has found that awareness of the rural consumers about the consumers movements are qualitative in character and cannot be measured directly in quantitative terms. There is no fixed value or scale which will help to measure the awareness. But, the awareness has been studied with the help of their responses to various questionnaires. Little wonder then that success has eluded most corporate in rural markets but with urban markets getting saturated and fiercely competitive. They willy-nilly have to look at rural markets due to the emerging potentiality in these and the facts presented here would enable the giants to take a plunge into the rural hinterland to hawk their wares. Brand marketers across industries from FMCG’s to durables, pharmaceuticals and automobiles should discuss the strategies positively to solve the rural conundrum.

Mr. McGrath and Mr. Mahood (2004) in their study on “Impact of advertisement among consumers” have observed that products with high level of involvement score high on various measures (brand recall, brand attitude, attitude towards advertising and purchase intention) of effectiveness of the advertisement. The findings of the study suggest that advertisements shown immediately after a high involvement program receive higher scores on attitude towards the advertisement as compared
to commercials shown after a delay. It is also observed that advertisement recall is weaker for those placed immediately following the arousing program stimulus than for advertisements placed after a delay. The study further suggests that if advertiser wants to maintain a high level of advertisement, likeability and brand recall level, then, he must embed his advertisements with the slots that have a high arousal level.

Nilofer (2004) conducted a study on “The effects of the influences of personality on advertisement preference and consumer behaviour on working and non-working women”. It is concluded that personality dimension affects the advertisement preference and consumer behaviour of women of different age groups.

Dubey and Patel (2004) have attempted to study and draw conclusions on certain aspects of advertising effectiveness related to identifying the key ingredients of advertisements that make them liked or disliked by youth. The study has revealed that college going girls are more responsive to advertising messages than their male counterparts. The use of celebrities, emotional elements and jingles make advertisements attractive to girls.

Mr. Satish Chandra R. (2004) in the study titled “Opening the rural Eye” has indicated that the rural urban divide is very much there and it will take some time before it zoom and zaps in the rural folk to catch-up with the urban counterpart in relation to the comprehension of TV commercials. Though it is generally believed that the top of the rural hierarchy consists of opinion leaders and educated village youth have some understanding
levels as the urban audience, their number is small. A large majority of the rural folk has a mindset that is different from the urban viewers and hence there is a need to tackle them differently.

Marketers aiming to target their brand commercials to both urban and rural audience will do well to pre-test the spots and that the spots communicate what is intended for the targeted viewers. The companies should explore the key opportunities and challenges of advertising rural India. To be successful, these companies need to be innovative, dogged and culturally sensitive in developing advertising message strategies.

Mr. Sivam Varadarajan (2004) in the study titled “Marketing Agenda for the Rural Poor” has revealed that the new strategy for targeted rural marketing would take marketers to the basics of Distribution economics necessitating detailed selection and routing of rural markets. It is desirable to design and deliver a value effective package of benefits, product, packaging, delivery system and cost that ensure sustained value for both consumers and the company.

Experience with the cooperatives and regulated markets points out those basic requirements for an efficient and growth supporting market system. They are: linking input, supply especially credit to farmers with marketing of farm products; aimed at consumer satisfaction per se and largely private sector operated; the role of the government being promotional to strengthen competition with necessary infrastructure, market information and policies for stabilization, quality control and foreign trade.

For effective tapping of rural markets, it will be necessary to segment them because inequality in purchasing power is large but media
exposure raises aspirations overcoming cultural barriers. Currently mass media (Satellite, TV, Radio and print) have changed buyer preferences to boost branding.

Ms. Sukhjinder Baring and Mr. Sandhir Sharma (2004) in the study of “Challenges and Opportunities for Rural Markets” has concluded that over the years, the attitude and lifestyle of rural folk has changed due to exposures through TV and awareness through an increase in literacy level. Though change is common, some changes seem peculiar and paradoxical. Today, we witness in the Indian economy such a bifaceted change—a change from national to global on one side and urban to rural on the other. Though the change is revolutionary and characteristic of a developing nation with huge population and vast resources, one requires a visionary entrepreneurship to respond productively to it. For a product to reach six lakh villages, one needs to know that 700 million villages are spread over 3.2 million sq. metre of area and for this, the appropriate planning for rural India in terms of trade for Channel infrastructure, technology and behavioral dimensions needs greater emphasis for achieving better economic efficiency.

Hence to be successful, multinational consumer goods companies need to be innovative, dogged and culturally sensitive in developing rural marketing strategies. A direct transportation of traditional marketing strategies that have worked in core “first world” markets will likely need to be localized to cater to the substantially lower per capita incomes, a lack of formal retail and distribution networks and the relatively low cost of labor. It is a testament to both multinational and local consumer goods companies
that they have been able to innovate and address the challenges offered by India's rural market to bring goods to improve the lives of so many people.

Mr. R.K. Singh, Mr. Om Prakash, Mr. Ashutosh Kumar Singh and Mr. Pramod Kumar Singh (2004) in their study titled “Designing rural market: The Indian perspectives” have remarked that the articulation for designing of rural market refers process of getting tradeoff between supply and demand driver efforts in the country. This will be possible - by reducing the cost of bringing produce from the producer to the consumer. Efficient, effective and lowcost rural markets must be developed in order to bring these costs down. The reduction in the costs call for investment in developing and maintaining infrastructure; policies and institutions that favour large scale capital intensive markets’ agents over rural small scale institutions.

Dr. Awadhesh Kr. Singh (2004) in his study on “Dynamics of Rural Marketing: A Suggestive Approach for Rural Retailing” has concluded that immense potential of retail business has emerged in rural India. However, it possesses challenges in terms of transportation, logistics, warehousing, re-distribution of goods and products etc. With the change in Information and Communication Technologies, the role of web and internet related communication and business has shown immense potential that may be taking effectively through evolving out suitable strategies for marketing and particularly re-distribution.

On the one hand, there has been low expected growth rate of retail business in urban Indian while on the other hand, there is a high expected growth rate in rural areas that may be effectively exploited by promoting
and strengthening the vast network of retail outlets including village shops, Self-Help-Groups, NGOs, Mobile Traders, haats and fairs and other community-based organizations. Overall, Indian rural retailers need to be empowered regarding Information Technology Enabled Services (ITES) and for having in-depth understanding of dynamics of rural marketing and particularly understanding the psyche of consumers in the changing context of business environment and improving living standards of rural consumers.

He has further recommended that corporate sector should come forward to exploit the emerging potential of newly emerged markets. The retailers especially Mobile Traders, village shops and large retailers of semi urban areas or small towns may be supported with high profit margins for establishing stalls at traditional fairs, periodical haats and exhibitions. They may also be given goods and products on credit basis.

Proper system of re-distribution of goods and products to the retailers may be ensured through promoting customer relationship, management of Internet services and also providing incentives to large retailers or wholesalers of towns and cities for redistribution of goods and products to small retailers in rural areas. Corporate sector should come forward to sponsor the social events such as haats, fairs, exhibitions, etc. for the promotion of existing brands of products and services and also to gain customer loyalty.

Corporate sector should identify established NGO’s, voluntary organizations, youth clubs, SHG’s Panchayats etc. to engage them in direct marketing of products and services. The corporate sector should organize
orientation, training and skill upgradation programmes for them to make
them well acquainted with the dynamics of rural marketing and consumer
behaviour. Even the NGO's engaged in implementation of development
programmes in rural areas may be provided some incentives for organizing
special sessions on rural marketing while imparting training to the target
groups. These sessions may be enriched by the marketing professionals of
the corporate sector. The established mobile traders be trained, motivated
and oriented towards marketing of branded products in rural areas. Even
they can be provided incentives for marketing of goods and products in
rural areas. They should be issued identity cards and may be provided
products on credit basis. The large retailers and wholesalers should chalk
out their marketing programmes according to seasonal calendars of haats,
fairs, exhibition to be held in the area.

Mrs. Rosanna Sounder and Mr. B. Karthikeyan (2004) in their study
on “Dynamics of rural markets- potentials, challenges and opportunities”
have concluded that rural marketing is a double-edged sword. However,
remember the value of the sword lies in the hand of the user. Adopt a
strategy that appeals individually to the rural audience and formulate
separate annual plans and sales targets for the rural segment. Common
aspects like advertising through traditional media forms like folk dances,
puppet shows, etc with which the rural consumers are familiar and
comfortable should not be overlooked. Many independent retailers have to
be covered as the retailers influence purchase decisions in these areas.
New price points have to be created in order to reach out to rural
consumers. Availability, affordability, acceptability and awareness of the
product or service will definitely bring profits. A robust route should be
taken to rule the entire rural market.

Prof. Sudhindra Bhatt (2004) in his study on “Marketing strategies for
Rural Indian Markets” has revealed that in spite of the increasing rate of
growth in urban population through migration and other channels and the
consequent increase in their purchasing power, the rural market still offers
opportunities, which are vast and yet relatively untapped. It has been noted
that the rural consumer is discerning and the rural market is vibrant. At the
current rate of growth it will soon outstrip urban market. Surveys and audits
for a number of consumer products and services have, over the years,
clearly highlighted the emerging importance of this sector. In short, the
sheer size of the rural population will serve as a large potential demand
base for a variety of products. The new agricultural strategy of applying
science and technology to farming will increasingly trigger off a chain
reaction of increased generation of wealth, productivity, income and
consumption that would provide the key for the emerging rural demand.

The marketing boom in the rural areas is caused by factors like
increased discretionary income, marketable surplus of products like
vegetables and eggs, rural development schemes, improved infrastructure,
increased retailing and retailers, increased awareness with information
explosion, expanding TV networks, liberalized Government policies for rural
development, emphasis on rural markets by companies, new cadre of
entrepreneurship, competitive and creative sales promotion, packaging
revolution and changing life styles in the rural areas.
The traditional marketing activities undertaken so far like promotion, distribution, sales and servicing in the urban and semi-urban contexts are to be extended to cover a much wider area in a rural environment by introducing appropriate innovation, selection and adoption. There are about 5,76,000 villages in India of which 79 percent of them with a population of less than 1,000 each. The major hurdles in tapping the rural markets can be summarized as:

1. High distribution costs
2. High initial market development expenditure
3. Inability of the small retailer to carry stock without adequate credit facility
4. Generating effective demand for manufactured goods
5. Wholesale and dealer network problems
6. Mass communication and promotion problems
7. Banking and credit problems
8. Management and sales managing problems
9. Market research problems
10. Inadequate infrastructure facilities (lack of physical distribution, roads, warehouses and media availability)
11. Highly dispersed and thinly populated markets
12. Low per capita and poor standards of living; social, economic and cultural backwardness of the rural masses.
13. Low level of exposure to different product categories and product brands.
14. Cultural gap between urban-based marketers and rural consumers.
The development of the rural market will involve additional cost both in terms of promotion and distribution. In rural marketing, often it is not the promotion of a brand that is crucial but creating an awareness concerning a particular product, for instance, fertilizers and pesticides. Urban and semi-urban based salesmen are not able to tap the full potential in the villages.

Hence, it may be suggested that the marketers may select and employ the educated unemployed from villages. The rural markets can be exploited by ruralising them rather than treating them as convenient extensions of the urban market. The focus should be on injecting marketing culture into the villages. The educated unemployed youth in the villages could be trained to carry out this mission.

1. Decentralizing rural markets by detaching them from the urban bases.

2. A give-and-take two-way approach should replace the present one-way exploitation

3. The salesman in rural markets should be selected from the educated unemployed villagers. They should be trained well and appointed as salesmen. The town-to-villages shuttling salesmen are to be replaced by stationary salesmen in villages. Companies should also adequately concentrate on educating the villagers to save them from spurious goods and services.

4. Rural markets are laggards in picking up new products. This will help the companies to phase their marketing efforts. This will also help to sell inventories of products outdated in urban markets.
Hansa Iyengar (2004) in the study titled "Indian Rural markets – A Snapshot" has remarked that despite the inherent challenges, more and more companies are turning towards the rural marketplace to drive volume growth. Following the footsteps of HLL, many more FMCG companies are coming up with convenient packages and affordably priced products for the countryside and a similar trend is being observed in the consumer durable market also. The days when a rural consumer had to travel to the nearest city for his purchases is over; the rural markets arriving in a big way is proved by the fact that of the 2 million mobile connections given by BSNL in 2002, nearly 50% have been given to rural areas only. LIC of India has sold more than 55% of its insurance policies in rural India and of the 20 million signups on the Rediffmail website, 6% are from the Indian countryside. Commenting on the booming rural markets Adi Godrej, Managing Director of Godrej Soaps said, "The rural market is not sleeping any longer, we are." The 800 million strong rural markets is an untapped goldmine and those who take the initiative to penetrate it first are bound to reap rich rewards.

Mr. Tarang Vaish and Mr. A. Chandrakanth (2004) in their study titled "Changing Face of Rural Markets in India" have found that many new products have entered the consumption basket of the rural consumer and the relative shares of the different categories of products in the consumption basket have also recorded a welcome change. Rural India now accounts for a sizeable share of the total consumption for a variety of consumer goods such as packaged tea, washing products including detergents, toiletries, bath soaps, tooth pastes, tooth powder, safety razor
blades, talcum powder, hair oil and OTC products. Surprisingly, in many products, rural consumption now accounts for a larger share than urban. For washing soaps (cakes/bars), the rural share is over 60%. In the popular bath soaps, it is more than 50% and in batteries it is more than 50%. They also say that advertising media is changing from TV shows to video on wheels with projector.

The following can be the future approaches: The packing size, colour and the language will differ from one region to another as also the product in rural market. More importance will be given to the features and the usage of the products during promotion than the brand values (initially while entering to rural markets). The competition will get tougher with more companies/industries eyeing rural markets. Buying and selling process will happen directly between farmers and manufacturers.

Ruchira Misra (2004) in the research summary of “Opportunities, Challenges and Innovations in Marketing Consumer Goods to Rural India: Observations of a First-time visitor” has mentioned that to be successful in the Indian market, multinational companies need to be innovative and culturally sensitive while developing rural marketing strategies. Traditional marketing strategies which have worked well in the core markets need to be localized as per the demands of the rural market. To be profitable in rural India, one should focus on large volumes over fat margins. A cost-efficient way of reaching the large number of potential consumers in rural India is through mass marketing.

Rolisehgal (2004) in the article titled “Branding in rural India” has revealed that rural lifestyle is changing. Almost every household has at
least one member living and working in a city. The road leading to village markets may be difficult to travel on, but it does promise a lot of potential. When the city markets are getting cluttered with multiple goods and unlimited communication, the village markets could provide a fresh user base. Some of the reasons that attract companies to rural markets are rising purchasing power, increase in awareness, improvement in transport and infrastructure and changing lifestyles.

Opinion leaders have significant role in motivating village buyers. They break their inhibitions in trying new products and concepts. Low prices work well. Smaller packs encourage experimentation and, thus, generate awareness and interest. They come with low entry price and are convenient in smaller village homes. The communication has to be in the form of a narrative and have a high component of dramatization. Television and radio are effective. Companies should use captive audience points like melas, haats and fairs. A good amount of consumer research is required to understand the latent needs and provide suitable products. Distribution of free samples to be done to generate trials. Though the marketing strategies may differ, what remains unchanged is that, a happy customer would mean a strong brand.

Raju M Rathod (2004) in his article titled “Word of Mouth-centric communication for Effective Rural marketing” has mentioned that effective marketing communication is one of the biggest challenges of rural marketing because of poor media penetration in rural markets. As a solution to this problem, his paper attempted to highlight the possibility of the most traditional mode of communication i.e., word of mouth.
communication for effective rural marketing. Effective communication is the key to reach rural consumer. It has been observed that rural consumers are generally more brand loyal than urban consumer and they are influenced by symbols. A marketer has to develop different brands to fulfill the requirement of different rural areas. They need to change product content as also packaging, communication or any association with the brand.

The right marketing communication strategy for rural market is word of mouth communication. Rural consumers are highly fragmented. So, advertisements suitable for urban market cannot work for rural market that demands some exclusive strategy to woo the rural customer. Spoken words always hold highest importance as far as marketing communication is concerned especially in rural market.

Thus, in order to communicate effectively with a view to penetrate the rural market, the aim of rural marketing communication should be word of mouth oriented communications. Whether it is advertising, demonstration, events, consumer promotion or whatever the tools of communication, the ultimate goal should be word of mouth.

Jayatri Das gupta (2004) in the case study on "Innovations in Rural India" has revealed that rural India has great potential for development as it is the source of livelihood for more than two-third of the country’s population. In spite of the wide scope that agriculture and non-farming rural activities offered, the rural economy stagnated and suffered due to the exploitative nature of the unorganized sector and the absence of structured value chain management. Large-scale exploitation by private traders and
middlemen and the farmers' lack of information on issues pertaining to their livelihood are serious obstacles on the path of rural development. New innovations in agribusiness are looking to close the gap between primary producers and their market for greater supply chain efficiency. One of the earliest moves is the setting up of producers' cooperatives; one of the most successful of those is the dairy cooperative AMUL. More recently, agri portals have been set up to open up information channels, distribution and procurement networks and also financing and banking facilities so that primary producers in agriculture could break the shackles of the middleman and become self-dependent and strong.

Ms. D. Seetha Naik (2004) in her study on "Rural consumer Acceptance, Behaviour and Communication strategies" has found that the rural market differs by geography, occupation and socio-cultural factors. This term influences product design, promotion, pricing and use of channels. There is a need to develop positioning and product variants according to the geography and social grouping. The product offering in rural markets needs to reflect the product – use situation. Understanding and monitoring use behaviour of consumers helps to discover new uses for products. This is useful for market development. Rural consumers prefer to buy different products from different locations. Consumers seek variety of products and therefore the marketer will find it effective to deliver the products to the haats. A market has to identify region specific media and develop regional messages. This is to be implemented by developing region and area-wise budget for promotion. A marketer also needs to research the audience state of readiness and information search behaviour
for their products for effective promotion. Demonstration and sampling for a new brand helps to create brand awareness and pushes the product through the channel. The marketer needs to use multiple media to communicate the rural consumers as they are geographically spread out.

Marketer can efficiently reach rural consumers through popular television programmes. Marketer can use the radio as an effective medium a time during the day but not late at night. The awareness, knowledge and attitude are also achieved through audio-visual vans and a network of fixed audio-visual sites.

Mr. H.N Ramesh (2004) in his study on "Indian rural Market – Challenges and Opportunities" has observed that successful marketing in rural areas depend on understanding of the rural mindset, social norms, culture specifications, etc. Therefore, marketing is a multi-stage process. It requires sound knowledge of the entire key parties involved in successful marketing. The objectives of the marketer should be to improve the quality of life in rural India. That is how, HUL Shakthi, PepsiCo’s contract farming, ITC’s e-choupal and Mahindra’s Shubhalabh strategies paid them a remarkable success in rural markets. Marketer’s success in rural market requires the wholehearted support from the top management. The rural market should be treated as a separate area for work. More rural research studies should be undertaken and improvement in rural marketing communication strategies is also equally important.

Mr. Bhanu Pratap Hegde (2004) in the study on "Evolving Marketing strategies for Indian rural markets" has concluded that today's non-consumers comprising the rural poor will enter the market as first-time
buyers in large numbers. To get a large share of the growing rural pie, it will call for a radical shift in management thinking from gross margins to high profits; from high-value unit sales to a game of high volumes and capacity efficiency. Companies will need to take the following specific initiatives if they have to succeed in the dynamic rural market.

Top management support is absolutely essential. The CEO must articulate a strong commitment to rural marketing. Then only, the marketing team will give focused attention and sustained support to this growing market segment. Further, rural marketing should be treated as a separate area of work like the way export market is treated.

More rural research studies should be undertaken to understand rural consumers better and generate more reliable data on the rural sector. Language and regional behaviour variations should be considered while developing rural communication strategy. Advertising agencies should entrust the development of rural communication packages to professionals hailing from small towns as they would understand rural mindsets better.

The type of competitive situation and the challenge presented by the rural market influence the implications for a marketer. The key to developing a strategy is an understanding of the competitive situation by the marketer. The marketer who introduces a new brand has to invest in promoting the brand position and support it with distribution efforts. It is critical to get the brand to the shelf of the village shop. The marketer who is not having the strength in distribution will find it useful to enter into an alliance for access. Marketers of durables can explore a tie-up with small
manufacturers or those in the unorganized sector for taking up dealership. This is important for durables that require frequent servicing.

The rural marketer frequently has to compete with substitutes irrespective of the nature of products. In competing with substitutes, the marketer can increase consumer acceptance by: Education using demonstration and designing a product with relative superiority can be easily perceived by the rural consumer.

Implementations of distribution and promotion decisions are a critical challenge for the marketer. In rural markets, therefore, there is a need to reach the markets through multiple channels; retail, haats and melas. The positioning efforts in the rural markets including the haats and melas need to use methods that compel the attention of the audience like games and demonstration. In addition to the above, the efficient use of resources to launch campaigns suggests a focus on select villages, haats and melas. The distribution and promotion should be targeted to reach villages with a 2000 plus population, haats held in these villages and 500 of the commercial melas which are of long duration. This approach will effectively and efficiently reach a large percentage of the rural population.

Mr. S.J. Manjunath (2004) in the study on “Strategies for Rural Market through Recreating Strategy” has remarked that the key to developing a strategy is an understanding of the competitor’s strategy by the rural marketer. Retention of share with the entry of new brands is a growing challenge even in rural markets. The problem of retention is acute when faced with competition from the unorganized sector.
The introduction of lower priced brands, small package size and demonstration of quality compared to the competitor makes use of the value for money proposition. Hence, there is a need to reach the rural markets through multiple channels.

One of the best practices of Philips Mahasangram which involves a lot of creativity and innovative thinking of using a lever in place of batteries for a free power radio is appreciable. This type of substitutes should be created and marketed in rural India for many of the products in future. Recreating strategy gives a framework as to how anyone could be different and think beyond the traditional frameworks. It looks into the formation of strategy based on organizational ethos, creativity and innovation to realize the dream of the rural marketer to increase the market share which is unexplored to a certain extent.

Dr. K. E. Srirammappa and Mr. Huchhe Gowda (2004) in the study on "Rural Marketing – Opportunities and Challenges in India" have concluded that the rural market in India is fascinating and challenging at the same time. If offers large scope on account of its sheer size. And, it is growing steadily. Even a modest growth pushes up the sales of a product substantially in view of the huge base. It is attractive from yet another angle. The urban market is highly competitive whereas the rural market is relatively quiet. In fact, for certain products, it is totally a virgin market. The market pioneers can certainly reap rich rewards from the market. Simultaneously, the market also poses several problems and hurdles. The firms have to encounter them squarely and put in a great deal of effort if they have to get a sizeable share to the market. It is often said that markets
are made, not found. This is especially true of the rural market of India. It is a market for the truly creative marketer.

Dr. Kameshwar Mishra (2004) in his study titled "Accessing the Rural Markets" has observed that rural income generating pattern is not uniform like salary earners or industrial producers, Agriculture in this country has not developed to a stage where some or other products are always produced, processed and sold. It is very much seasonal and there is sudden burst of income at harvesting time when most farmers have some cash income to buy non-food goods. The rural selling strategy calls for ensuring supplies of goods at this time of the year. Harvesting season and festival season being the marketing seasons, they are the months when sales can shoot up. The marketers should so arrange their distribution network that adequate supply of their goods be available to consumers without much inconvenience.

Timing has much importance so long the main source of rural income is crop based. But, with diversification of rural occupation to dairying, poultry, piggery, fishery, rural industries and non-agricultural employments, income is accruing to rural people round the year and steps have to be initiated when most of the goods are available round the year.

There are numerous factors that influence a consumer to buy a product namely price, design, colour, package/size and portability. A product that may be selling well in urban areas may not be sold well in rural areas. There are many products that have become household need in urban markets but they may still be considered as luxury in rural areas. Design development is necessary for making a dent in rural markets.
Appropriate design can be developed only when manufacturers/sellers have correct understanding of rural people's psyche, their likes and dislikes. The real thrust will happen only when it is backed by proper market research. Hence, it would be essential here to assess the Rural Market in terms of their attributes and other factors influencing the environment, the lifestyle of rural consumers and the extent of their acceptability first; then only efforts should be taken to design the 4Ps to access the rural markets. This has been successfully examined in case of Amul. Amul has been marketing successfully its products in metros and other urban areas. But it has experienced a miracle in case of Amul Taaza – a "ready to take" milk, which has got its highest sale in Jhanjharpur – a local headquarter (absolutely rural market) of several villages in North Bihar. Similarly, "Nirma" - one of the top sellers during 80's could achieve its target from rural market. Manufacturers of GUTKHAS (Paan Masala) are enjoying the specific characteristics of Rural Markets.

Rincy V. Mathew (2005) in the research study titled "Customer Satisfaction in relation to the products and services of Nagarjuna herbal concentrates Ltd. (NHCL)" has analyzed the present marketing strategy followed by NHCL. The present marketing strategy is found successful largely in satisfying the customers of different categories. The study also revealed that more attention should be paid in popularizing NHCL through mass media advertisements.

Mr. A.V. Ramana and Mr. P. Viswanath (2005) in their study titled "Consumer Behaviour and Awareness with special reference to Edible Oil Users-A Study" have found that price, quality and taste are the most
influencing factors among all the categories of consumers than smell, colour, company package and brand. On the whole, about 62.50 per cent of the respondents do not have the habit of testing the quality of oil purchased by them. However, 48.21 per cent of businesspersons and 41.07 per cent of employers and only one fifth of the labourers are on and often testing the oil purchased by them. It is also noticed that whether increased or decreased price of a particular brand of oil being used, there is no change in buying quantity among the selected consumers. This speaks out that change of price and quantity of buying has not influenced the buying behaviour of the consumers. However, non-availability of a particular product forced some of the buyers to buy other brands.

Dr.V.Kubendran and Dr.T.Vanniarajan (2005) in their study on "Comparative analysis of rural and urban consumers on milk consumption" have found that per capita milk consumption of consumers in rural areas fall behind the consumers in urban areas. The consumption pattern of milk is different from urban to rural due to the changes in food habits of the consumers in the environment. Per capita milk consumption significantly increases if the income and urbanization increases among the consumers but the increase in family size significantly decreases the per capita milk consumption. The urban consumers mostly prefer the branded milk especially Aavin Milk, Arokia Milk, etc. whereas the rural consumers prefer mostly unbranded milk. The most significant factor influencing the selection of source of milk purchase is the physical factor namely accessibility, quality, regular supply, door delivery, timely delivery and mode of payment.
It is further observed that the consumption pattern of milk is completely different in rural and urban areas. The growth of urbanization may change the consumption pattern of milk even among the rural consumers. The milk producers have to accept the changing scenario and formulate their marketing strategy to sell their products. The marketing strategy may be focused on two aspects namely physical and promotional aspects. The importance of the two aspects is completely different in the rural and urban market. So, it is the right time to discriminate the marketing strategies to position the product appropriately in two different markets.

Dr. A. Raghurama (2005) in his study on “Agricultural marketing in Rural Areas of Dakshina Kannada District – problems and policy measures” says that the rural areas are devoid of basic infrastructural facilities that are needed for development. Due to the lack of these basic inputs, the rural areas of Dakshina Kannada are kept aloof from the process of development. Thus, organized marketing institutions may be set up in the rural areas to provide better price, higher income, higher standard of living to the farmers to remove exploitation of the farmers by the middlemen and moneylenders.

Marketing is the beginning and end of all economic activities. Globalization and opening of the economy is not the immediate answer to the marketing problems of rural farmers to ensure organized marketing system and better prices to the rural farmers. The establishment of organized marketing institutions will not only ensure higher income to the farmers but also prosperous rural Dakshina Kannada. It is possible only by
from markets/wholesalers of nearest towns or cities for bulk purchases. 52% of consumers say that they purchase from nearest baniya shop, 30% of consumers say that they make goods available from nearest town and cities (20% and 10% respectively). Only 20% say that they purchase from weekly hat around their villages. 65% of the respondents say that they purchase goods from nearby shops because of credit facility being offered by local shops. 30% purchase because it is convenient to buy from nearby place. 5% give reason of personal relationship. The awareness regarding new modes of credit availability is found to be low. The survey has also revealed that a high percentage of products sold in rural markets are cheap imitation of branded products. Customers are not found to be very happy with the product quality and variety offered by various companies in the rural markets.

One startling fact was that most of promotional offers by companies never reach rural consumers. The retailers sell most of the promotional items separately. Government’s efforts to ensure easy availability of credit at affordable rates to villagers through kissan credit cards and initiatives by companies like Mahindra Finance to offer credit in rural areas making it easy for these companies to experiment with unconventional channels of distribution and new retailing formats. As per NCAER survey, growth in financed purchase of white goods has been more in rural market (39.6%) as compared to urban market (17.4%) during the period 1998-1999 to 1999-2000. As per the positive response shown by the consumers and the inherent problems of distribution and retailing through conventional modes
for companies, it is advisable for these companies to try such innovative methods.

Jha and Vohra (2005) have studied “Role portrayal in Indian television advertising”. They have observed that women are found primarily at home or in domestic settings. Women are underrepresented in working situations and are given a narrow range of occupations. A large majority of advertisements have showed woman as preoccupied with physical attractiveness and sex objects. Women are seen associated with purchase of low valued products such as food products and cosmetics. Role portrayals in advertising reflect indigenous aspects of a country’s culture implying that marketers need to be sensitive to cultural variations while developing content.

Dr.C.Madhavi and Mr.S.Arul kumar (2006) in their study titled “Rural Marketing for – FMCG” have remarked that most of the consumers are influenced by quality of the product. So, the FMCG companies should strictly adhere to the quality standards. If price is the second factor that influences the purchase of the product in most of the cases, then, the product should be reasonably priced. Rural people expect quality oriented functional based product with reasonable price.

In the toilet soap, Hamam is the leading brand of which most of the consumers are satisfied. Here also, the other brands of toilet soap are not having excellent place in the minds of rural consumers. The toilet soap companies should create good brand image and awareness with the help of mass advertising and through the shop keepers. So, FMCG companies
should create awareness about the usage of toothpaste and shampoo, educate the product values and increase their market share. They have further added that rural marketing is not fully encashed by marketers. FMCG products could significantly increase their market share by extending attention to rural areas. More generic products with different advertisement camping surely attract non users. This untapped source could be easily reached by FMCG manufacturing.

Ms. Banumathi and Ms. Kalaivani (2006) in their study on "Customer satisfaction – An important parameter" have found that marketing is an art of attracting and retaining new and current customers respectively. This is possible only when the producers and sellers are able to fully satisfy the customers continuously. The consumers are said to be satisfied when the actual results exceed their expectations; otherwise they are said to be dissatisfied. Therefore, "satisfaction is the feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance in relation to his/her expectation".

Anil Chandhok (2006) in his article titled "Rural Marketing in India – Prospects for Growth" has indicated that the rural market in India is quite fascinating and challenging. It has a large scope for the marketers. Even though these markets have weaknesses, they also have tremendous opportunities that should be availed by the marketers as markets are created and not born. The market so created should be tapped effectively and not squeezed. The marketers, therefore, have to come up with innovative proposals through which the villages are involved in getting business from their respective villages.
Tarang Vaish (2006) in the article “Promotion and Communication strategies for Rural Markets in India” has revealed that it is more effective to use simple language and touch emotions of rural folks through the communication - something that they can empathize with. Commercials that use gimmicks, high-tech story and are fast-paced will not work in rural India. Message should be utilitarian and narrative. Rural dwellers relate more with colors, symbols, logos, etc. We have to use local icons and idols.

Rural communication has become such an important part of marketing portfolio that now every advertising agency has a separate division that deals with the rural marketing solutions. Behind every communication, there is a purpose and that purpose needs to be communicated to the right people (target segmentation). An effective communication is one that leads to purchase decision, brand registration in consumer’s mind, brand recall and right brand associations. The communication for rural markets needs to be different from that of urban markets. Interpersonal communication accounts for about 80% of the rural communication process.

The communication package should generate a lot of “word-of-mouth” publicity so that the brand acquires “top-of-the-mind” recall value. Advertisements couched in entertainment work well. But they should suit the language, habits and customs of the rural consumer so that he can easily accept the new product. Marketer can use a judicious mix of conventional and unconventional media. Further, every marketing communication has to be backed by distribution in rural areas.
marketers who understand rural consumers and fine-tune their strategies accordingly are the ones who will succeed in future. The communication should be such so as to make the product category relevant to the rural folk.

Ms. Gayatri Nagarajan (2006) in the case study on "Unilever in India – Rural Marketing Initiatives" has revealed that seventy percent of the Indian population lives in rural areas. This segment, commonly referred to as the "bottom of the pyramid", presents a huge opportunity for companies. Hindustan Uni Lever Ltd. (HUL), considered as one of the best-managed companies in India, has understood the importance of rural marketing. The trigger point came when a local firm Nirma, through its new product formulation, pricing and distribution challenged HUL's detergent business. Nirma's attack from below made HUL to realize its vulnerability as well as to identify a new opportunity. Since then, HUL has launched various initiatives to reach out to the rural consumer. It has changed its product formulations and deliveries. It has begun a number of initiatives in terms of widening distribution reach through traditional as well as unconventional channels. HUL has also empowered rural women by assisting them in obtaining financial assistance through its project Shakti.

India's rural population comprising 12% of the world's population presents a huge, untapped market. HUL has signaled its commitment to the rural market in various ways. Management trainees have to begin their career with the company by spending a month or two in a rural village. Senior managers have continued to emphasize the importance of rural markets. Various innovations in the marketing mix have been introduced,
with the requirements of the rural markets in mind. But the company has realized that much more needs to be done.

In 2003, to consolidate its rural marketing efforts, HUL felt that it was not sufficient for individual divisions to push their own strategies. The entire company had to act in unison to achieve a balanced and sustained growth. HUL planned to reach 2,35,000 villages up from the 85,000, 75% of the rural population up from 43% and message reach of 65% up from the television reach of 33% by 2006. HUL's rural Self-Help Group initiative “Project Shakti” had contributed 10 to 15% of HUL's rural sales. HUL also had plans to take “Project Shakti” to 400 districts across the country by 2006.

In his work on “Marketing to Women”, Mr. GVS Sreedhar (2006) has expressed that as women's financial independence grows, marketers modify their approach. In the case of personal care and beauty products, they have begun to communicate the ways through which the use of their product would help women appear confident and poised. The author further says that if marketers recognize the growing importance of women consumers and cater to their likes and dislikes, it will result in a win-win situation for both.

Kumar sanjeev and Bishnoi V.K. (2006) in their study on “Influence of Marketers' Efforts on Rural Consumers and Their Mindset: A Study in Haryana” have revealed that the impact of marketing goes beyond mere selling the products to intended consumers. We see a huge thrust by marketers into rural markets triggered by saturating urban markets and huge rural potential very much reflected in growing demand. This upsurge
in rural demand has its genesis in people's recognition of their otherwise latent needs brought to their consciousness largely by the marketers' efforts and their own increased interaction riding on the growing reach of media of course apart from increased purchasing power.

Marketers are seeking fresh challenges and coming in a big way to attract this large and relatively untapped market. Newer variety of products specially designed for these markets, price cuts, lucrative schemes, appealing advertisements and logistical support by way of e-choupals and rural malls have affected rural consumers in ways difficult to measure. The present study aims at finding how marketers' efforts have influenced the rural mindset regarding the products, their own self and society. Influenced by Sir Theodore Levitt's dictum that marketing is a 'creation and delivery of standard of living'.

No student of marketing would feel satisfied unless and until she/he gets a feel whether the efforts of marketers in terms of products they manufacture are having a positive impact on society in general and consumer in particular. With this in mind, the researchers have tried to gauge the social impact of marketing with the objectives of studying the perception of rural consumers regarding the impact of consumer durable on their life, impact of the advertisements on consumers' attitude and brand choice, impact of marketers' efforts in building aspirations regarding future products and brands and rural consumers' perception regarding the impact of marketing on society.

Susan Chirayath (2007) in her article "Customer Attitude and Market Potential" says that a firm needs to study the consumer buying behaviour
because the buyer's reaction to a firm's marketing strategy has a great impact on the firm's successes. The marketing concepts emphasize on the need of the firm to create a Marketing Mix (MM) that satisfies (give utility) the customers.

A. S Shiralashetti and S. S Hugar (2007) in their study on “Consumer Satisfaction with Special Reference to Milk Consumers in Gadag” have discussed that the people of India are traditionally milk conscious and they use milk to prepare a wide variety of dairy delicacies. The milk serves the purpose of consumers in satisfying daily food requirements like tea, Coffee, buttermilk, butter, curds, ghee and milk. Further, it also satisfies the requirements of business consumers in preparing sweets like peda, burfi, kunda, gulabjamun, sreekhand, etc. Therefore, one can easily say that milk is a multiuse product for direct consumers and a multiuse input for industrial users in preparation of food and sweet items. Because of its multiple uses, it fetches much export earning to India.

Moreover, the milk industry provides an opportunity for direct and indirect income to the Indian farmers and an employment opportunity to many unemployed youth. Though India is the largest producer milk in the world, the per capita availability (gm/day) is much lower than that of many developed countries like Switzerland, France, Germany, USA and UK. It is due to low productivity of animals and large populations with high growth rates. Again, the per capita availability of milk in Karnataka is below the average per capita availability in India and is much lower than that of other states of India.
Mr. G. Senthilkumar, Assistant Professor, Mr. K.N. Selvakumar, Professor and Head, Mr. M. Prabu, Assistant Professor, N. Mega Nathan, Associate Professor, Department of Animal Husbandry Economic, Madras Veterinary College, Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Chennai, India (2007) in their study on “Factors Influencing Expenditure on Consumption of Milk and Milk Products in and around Chennai” have discussed that the upsurge in milk production has thrown up unprecedented challenges in the milk and milk products marketing. In India, milk is consumed in the fluid form and in the form of traditional milk products such as ghee, curd and butter and Western products like table butter, ice cream, milk powder and cheese.

The study conducted to analyze the factors influencing the expenditure on milk and milk products has revealed that out of the total monthly expenditure per consumption unit, the percentage expenditure on food items decreased with increase in the average monthly income per consumption unit. Out of the total expenditure on milk and milk products, the expenditure on fluid milk has formed a greater proportion. Factors such as family size, educational level of the head of the household, food habit and monthly expenditure on non-food items have a significant influence on the expenditure on milk and milk products. However, detailed studies on the consumption and expenditure pattern of milk and milk products should be undertaken temporally and spatially in order to improve the consumptions of nutritive milk and milk products and to assess the future demand and supply.
Mr. Atish Chattopadhyay (2007) in his study on "Perception of Mall Shoppers in Kolkata" said that consumers have more choices today in the competitive business scenario. Consumers today have a growing choice of shopping destinations which include freestanding stores, retail parks, malls, festival centers and ancillary retailing as well as an increasing variety of home shopping through mail, computer, television and telephone. Shopping centers can no longer rely on a captive market and there is an increasing need for centers to compete and to market themselves effectively.

**Discussions on Literature Review:**

From the above studies, it is observed that the consumer behaviour in rural markets is studied with regard to several Fast Moving Consumer Goods with various factors like brand preference, price, consumption pattern, etc.

In one of the studies, in some selected villages, HUL has dominated the sales as far as the toilet soaps are concerned. It is observed from one of the studies that "income" is the variable that determines the purchasing pattern. It has also revealed that most of the rural consumers are not aware of the producer of the product. The buying behaviour in general and buying behaviour in particular in rural area is influenced by the factors like price and availability of products. One more interesting finding is that, overall consumption pattern of the rural consumers has changed. In one of the studies, it is found that rural consumers are keen on receiving the product in small containers or sachets.
The previous studies are limited to only certain features of the product. Nobody has made an attempt so far to study the consumer behaviour in rural markets with regard to toilet soaps of various manufacturers. The idea for this study has been conceived and given a shape to explore the untapped market potential available in the rural sector yet to be concentrated. In addition to that, the various factors like product features, promotional features of the products, brand preference of the rural people, quality awareness and consciousness of the rural mass that influence the purchase of the product are also the key result areas that have been aimed by the study. There is an enormous amount of scope in this project to know the behaviour of consumers and this study is aimed to suggest innovative and creative strategies to manufacturers of toilet soaps to attract the potential customers.

The proposed study on consumer behaviour in rural market with reference to toilet soap is significantly different from earlier studies on the ground that this study aims at studying the factors that influence the buyers’ preference of brand and the spending pattern towards toilet soaps purchase. The influence of product features and promotional features on consumer attitude in rural market is also explored. Identifying the non users of toilet soap in rural market and framing a strategy to make them purchase toilet soaps is also one of the aims of the study.