ABSTRACT

Rural Marketing is a factor which is gaining importance in the recent days as the urban market is almost saturated. Rural reach is on the rise and it is fast becoming the most important route to growth. New approaches, new strategic alternatives and new operational techniques are being evolved to gain competitive advantage.

In recent years, rural markets have acquired more importance in India, as the overall growth of the economy has resulted into substantial increase in the purchasing power of the rural communities. In India, the rural areas are consuming a large quantity of industrial and urban manufactured products. In this context, a special marketing strategy, namely, rural marketing has taken shape.

There is a huge market potential available in rural market for fast moving consumer goods. In this category, toilet soap is one of the important consumer goods on a day to day basis on the consumption part of an individual in rural segment. As the toilet soap is very much relevant to the hygiene aspects of the rural people, the researcher has selected the title of “Consumer Behavior of Toilet soaps”. This study would recommend suitable promotion strategies for the organizations to influence the consumer behavior and to tap the untapped potential available in the rural market.
Many of the researchers in yester years had done lot of work in consumer behaviour in urban and rural markets. But, no significant research has been attempted to explore the market potential for toilet soap in rural areas. Having analysed the various facts and figures pertaining to consumer behaviour on Fast Moving Consumer Goods, the researcher has felt the need of doing the research on consumer behaviour of toilet soaps in rural markets.

The objectives of the study are:

1. To analyze the demographical status of the consumers in the study area.
2. To study the toilet soaps used by the respondents.
3. To analyze the consumer attitude towards purchase of toilet soaps.
4. To find out the factors influencing the purchase of toilet soaps.
5. To test the influence of income, product features and promotional aspects of toilet soaps on consumer purchase.
6. To recommend strategies to tap the untapped market available in rural areas.

Some of the limitations of this study may be summarized as follows:

1) The Study is conducted for respondents in and around Trichy. Only five villages are chosen for this study because of large population size.

2) The results of this study will be based on the responses of the respondents. Sample Size is Limited
The proposed study is categorized under exploratory research. The main purpose of exploratory research study is that of formulating a problem for more precise investigation. The major emphasis in such studies is on the discovery of ideas and insights.

Area sampling method is used for this study. This sampling technique is more practical and economical. The area to be covered is divided into a number of smaller sub-areas (villages).

The data collected are tabulated. Factor wise, table is created and analysis is done using statistical tools for testing the hypothesis using techniques like Anova, ChiSquare, etc. Cross tabulation analysis is also done to have better interpretations on various factors taken into study. Interpretations and conclusions are drawn from the analysis.