CHAPTER - VII

FINDINGS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Consumerism is as old as man, who did not know then how to produce, but what was endowed with plenty by Mother Nature, to discover, use, and consume. But today, man has evolved into a seasoned producer and consumer of a large number of goods and services. In a vastly populated country like India the strength of consumers can change their position from receiver of goods and services to one of choosers of these goods and services. Consumers in India are very heterogeneous in composition, and evince different patterns of consumption.

Much of the research into consumer behaviour has revealed that there are a number of types of behaviour that can be used to explain the process of buying goods and services. People often consume products in a variety of different situations. In making consumption decisions in these different situations, consumers first recall from memory a set of products that could fulfil their needs and then make their final choice from this set. Endorsers’ or spokespersons’ expertise and trustworthiness have been used as credible sources to influence consumers’ attitudes and purchase intentions.

Past research has shown that when consumers need to provide reasons, they select salient, verbalizable, compelling principles, and these reasons sometimes lead to choices that are inferior. Many of the rules and principles relevant to decisions that an individual possesses are derived from proverbs and other cultural knowledge. In general three factors are stated to influence the dynamic choice behaviour of consumers: habit persistence, state dependence, and unobserved heterogeneity.

With urban markets reaching saturation levels and facing excessive competition, consumer durables manufacturers are trying their luck with rural markets for growth. Rural purchasing power has steadily expanded over the past decade with the help of hefty increases in rural plan outlays and higher support
prices for farm produce. The proliferation of television has changed rural lifestyles and spending habits.

A rational concept of equivalence for comparing standards of living in two regions may not be difficult when a single consumption basket is equally representative of the goods and services purchased by households in the two regions, which are to be compared. Definition of equivalence becomes more difficult, however, when the goods and services available and the household consumption patterns are quite different in the two regions. Determination of comparable groups, through an analysis of consumption at different income levels has been attempted before.

With this background an attempt is made by the researcher to know the ownership pattern of consumer durables, factors influencing demand for consumer durables, benefits sought by consumers, important buying criteria, and the sources of information for the consumer. The present study examined consumption pattern among different economic classes with special reference to consumer durables in rural and urban economy of Nagappatinam (Nagai) District in Tamil Nadu. The main findings of the study are inferred and presented as below:

7.1 A brief Socio-economic Profile of Respondents:

The sexual vs. regional distribution of the respondents reveals that 66.30% were males and 33.70% were females. Even though the urban and rural respondents constituted in equal proportion of the total respondents (92 each), the share of male respondents is higher (86.96%) in the rural areas when compared with the female respondents (54.35%) from urban areas and vice versa.

The economic status vs. regional distribution of the respondents reveals that 38.59% belong to high-income group, 37.50% belongs to middle income group and 23.91% were low-income people. Even though the urban and rural respondents constituted in equal proportion of the total respondents (92 each), the share of low income respondents is higher (33.69%) in the rural areas when
compared with the middle income (39.13%) and high income respondents (46.74%) from urban areas and vice versa.

The marital status vs. regional distribution of the respondents shows that 91.85% were married, 4.35% were unmarried, 2.17% respondents were bachelors, 1.09% was widowers, and 0.54% was spinster. It shows that the share of married respondents was higher (91.30% and 92.39%) in both the rural and urban areas when compared with the other categories of marital status of the respondents. It is noted that the percentage of widower in the respondents is the same for both the areas of the study.

The sex wise classification of the rural-urban distribution of the respondents in the present study shows that the share of male respondents in the rural area is higher (80) than the urban area (42). Likewise, the share of female respondents in the urban area is higher (50) than the rural area (12). In total, the male respondents in both the areas were higher (122) than the female respondents (62).

The present study reveals that 64.13% respondents were living in pucca type of house, and 3.26% were living in serviceable kutcha type of house. The study also shows that the percentage of respondents having their housing stock as semi-pucca is 32.61%. It is found that none of them are living in non-serviceable kutcha type of housing.

The occupational status vs. region-wise distribution of the urban and rural respondents shows that both constituted 92(50%) each of the total respondents. Out of 184 respondents, 2(01.09%) were unemployed, 27(14.67%) were government servants, 22(11.96%) were employed in quasi-government bodies, 24(13.04%) were working in private organisations, 8(04.35%) were professional peoples, 41(22.28%) were businessmen, 28(15.22%) were housewives, 11 (05.98%) were labourers, and the remaining 21(11.41%) were involved in other forms of work.
The respondents' working in government, quasi-government departments, and private organisations were higher in urban areas than the rural area respondents. Likewise, the respondents working as professionals, businessmen, labourers, and in other forms of occupation were higher in rural areas than the respondents in urban areas. Twenty-five respondents (27.17%) in urban area were housewives.

The present study reveals that all the respondents have earned Rs. 140341.46 as their average income from their main source of occupation. But only 57 respondents have earned Rs. 33772.92 as their average income from their supplementary (secondary) source of occupation.

7.2 Ownership Pattern of Durables

The present study reveals that, 67.56% of the value of assets of durable goods owned by the respondents were vehicles and machines types, 27.82% were household articles, and 4.62% were kitchen durable goods.

7.3 Effects of Socio-economic status of Consumers on the selection of Consumer Durables

χ² analysis is used to evaluate the effects of sex, region, educational status, family size, spouse status, marital status and economic status of the respondents on the selection of brand of consumer durables (household articles, kitchen durables, and vehicles and machines). It is found that, possession of durable goods like Television, Tape recorder, Refrigerator, Still Camera, Quartz Watch, Mixer-Grinder and Motorcycle are influenced by economic status of the respondents.

Some important characteristics of consumption pattern with reference to durables are revealed by the present research as a whole. Consumer psychology holds the key in explaining the non-economic factors governing consumption pattern. Durable goods are very often differentiated, at least psychologically, through branding, packaging and advertising. Very often, a consumer purchases a
higher priced brand just because the price is higher. The higher price increases the snob appeal of the goods; the higher price creates confidence in the consumer that he is getting good quality as revealed by research works. With an improvement in incomes, the average consumer becomes quality-conscious. Consumers may also be persuaded to pay more for heavily advertised goods.

By taking account of underlying attributes rather than basing simply on the quantities of the commodities the analysis of consumer demand improved. It is conceptually possible to estimate the marginal utility consumers derive on average from the underlying attributes of the goods they consume. Many qualities of life other than size of income can guide a consumer's choices. Lancasterian demand theory disaggregates individual commodities into separate characteristics. Consumer choice can be examined in terms of the characteristics of commodities.

7.4 Influence of brand on the consumer investment on Household Articles

In order to understand the influence of brand of the articles on consumer buying decisions, the relationship between the consumer investment (total values of articles in possession) and brand of household articles consumer investments (value of assets) on imported and Indian brands of household articles (in total) and a few representative household articles are analysed.

It seems from the analysis that the consumers prefer investing on imported varieties for Household Articles. So, the consumer is attaching the quality of the product with the brand. Their perception seem to be that imported varieties have inherent advantages / favourable qualities such as beauty, durability, efficiency, etc.

It is inferred from the box plots (fig 5.16) that mean money spent on imported items is higher than that of Indian manufactured items of all the household articles except vacuum cleaner. Among these items consumers spent remarkably higher amount of money on the imported items for Tape recorder, Video Cassette Recorder, Still camera, and Refrigerator.
7.5 Influence of brand on the consumer investment on Kitchen Durables

In order to understand the influence of brand of the durables on consumer buying decisions, the relationship between the consumer investment (total values of durables in possession) and brand of kitchen durables consumer investments (value of assets) on imported and Indian brands of kitchen durables (in total) and a few representative kitchen durables are analysed.

It seems from the analysis that the consumers prefer investing on imported varieties of Kitchen Durables. It is inferred that the consumer is associating the quality of the product with the brand. Their perception seem to be that imported varieties have inherent advantages with specific characteristics such as capacity, durability, attractiveness, efficiency, etc.

It is inferred from the box plots (fig 5.17) that the amount of mean money spent on kitchen durables did not vary much between Indian and Imported items.

7.6 Influence of brand on the consumer investment on Vehicles and Machines

In order to understand the influence of brand of the vehicles and machines on consumer buying decisions, the relationship between the consumer investment (total values of vehicles and machines in possession) and brand of vehicles and machines consumer investments (value of assets) on imported and Indian brands of vehicles and machines (in total) and a few representative vehicles and machines are analysed.

It seems from the analysis that the consumers prefer investing on imported varieties for Vehicles and Machines. So, the consumer is attaching the quality of the product with the brand. Their perception seem to be that imported varieties have inherent advantages / favourable qualities such as beauty, durability, energy efficiency, etc.
It is inferred from the box plots (fig 5.18) that the amount of mean money spent on vehicles and machines showed variation between imported and Indian items. The average money spent on two-wheelers of the imported items is higher than that of Indian items, whereas the reverse was observed for motorcycles.

7.7 Effects of Socio-economic status of Consumers on the selection of Consumer Durables - Overall observations from Gini analysis – Policy Implications:

1. The purchase of consumer durables increase with increase in the annual income of the consumer; but middle income and higher income classes have a tendency to buy more relative to their income.
2. The distribution of assets (consumer durables) is disproportionate; about 50% of the assets are with 25% of the consumers, i.e., the higher income group.
3. Middle class women have a tendency to acquire more assets disproportionate to their income; significantly ‘very low’ and ‘very high’ income group women buy rationally; i.e., relative to their income.
4. Upper class or higher income group males purchase more assets i.e., their buying is proportionate to their income (but even then they buy more relative to their income).
5. Urban poor buy rationally i.e., relative to their income. Urban middle class and upper class buy irrationally i.e., buy more relative to their income.
6. The all classes of respondents (rural poor, middle & upper classes) buy disproportionate to their income; but rural poor seemed to be a little bit less ambitious.
7. Non-graduates of lower class & middle class show irrational buying i.e., they buy more relative to their income; Non-graduates of high income group are highly rational.
8. Graduates of all classes' poor, middle, rich are highly irrational; but graduates of low income are little bit rational.
9. Married peoples of all categories of income classes spend rationally on durables purchase.
10. Unmarried middle and higher income groups are highly irrational in buying; lower income group of unmarried are highly rational in buying durables.
11. Persons with non-earning spouse and with low and middle-income group buy irrationally i.e., disproportionate to their income. Higher income groups with non-earning spouse are highly rational in buying durable goods.

12. Persons with earning spouse are highly irrational; spend more disproportionate to their income.

13. Respondents with medium & large sized families behave irrationally i.e., they tend to buy more (acquire assets) irrespective of their income.

14. Respondents with small families possessing lower income behave irrationally; small families with higher income behave rationally in buying durables.

15. People of higher and lower income groups but with lower ranges of income behave rationally; others behave irrationally in buying durables.

16. Middle-income groups of respondents in all income ranges behave irrationally in buying durable goods.

Through the application of Gini-graphical analysis, it is found that, -

- About 25% of the high-income groups possess about 50% of the assets in the form of durables. So they have a high consumption standard.

- Upper class or higher income group males possess more assets.

- Higher income groups of both rural and urban have a tendency to buy more assets of durables disproportionate to their income.

The 'gini' graphs (figures 5.20 to 5.35) show similarity in the behaviour of both the urban and rural middle class people. The 'gini' graphs showed similar buying patterns or asset accumulations in response to the income for both rural and urban consumers, i.e., there is no rural-urban difference with regard to asset accumulation of all the income classes.

7.8 Evaluation of the Rationale of Buying Motives

The extent of importance given to buying motives, and about their nature by the respondents while buying durable products was analysed. The following observations were made with regard to the nature and extent of importance given to buying motives in purchasing the durable products.
a. Need

As per the study, out of 181 respondents, 104 (57.46%) respondents reveal that the extent of importance regarding 'need' as 'very high' and only 2 (0.10%) as 'low' importance. Only three respondents do not express their opinion on this buying motive.

b. Desire

Out of 154 respondents, Twenty one (13.64%) respondents reveal that the extent of importance regarding 'desire' as very 'high' and 11 (07.14%) as 'very low' importance. Further it is noted that thirty respondents do not express their opinion about this buying motive.

c. Brand

Out of 158 respondents, Sixty seven (42.41%) respondents reveal that the extent of importance regarding 'brand' as 'very high' and only 3 (01.90%) as 'very low' importance. Also it is noted that twenty-six respondents do not express their opinion about this buying motive.

d. Price

Out of 157 respondents, Thirty four (21.66%) respondents reveal that the extent of importance regarding 'price' as 'very high' and only 5 (03.18%) as 'very low' importance. Further it is noted that twenty-seven respondents do not express their opinion about this buying motive.

e. Quality

Out of 170 respondents, Ninety six (56.47%) respondents reveal that the extent of importance regarding 'quality' as 'very high' and only 1 (00.59%) as 'very low' importance. It is also noted that fourteen respondents do not express their opinion about this buying motive.
f. **Reliability of the Seller**

Out of 128 respondents, Twenty four (18.75%) respondents reveal that the extent of importance regarding 'reliability of the seller' as 'very high' and only 7(00.59%) as 'very low' importance. Further it is noted that fifty-six respondents do not express their opinion about this buying motive.

g. **Durability**

Out of 145 respondents, Sixty nine (47.59%) respondents reveal that the extent of importance regarding 'durability' as 'very high' and only 1(00.69%) as 'very low' importance. Also it is noted that thirty-nine respondents do not express their opinion about this buying motive.

h. **After-Sale Service**

Out of 129 respondents, Thirty one (24.03%) respondents reveal that the extent of importance regarding 'after-sale service' as 'very high' and only 10(07.75%) as 'very low' importance. Further it is noted, that fifty-five respondents do not express their opinion about this buying motive.

i. **Mode of Payment**

Out of 131 respondents, Thirty nine (29.77%) respondents reveal that the extent of importance regarding 'mode of payment-cash' as 'very high' and only 5(03.81%) as 'very low' importance. It is also noted that fifty-three respondents do not express their opinion about this buying motive.

Out of 110 respondents, Twelve (10.91%) respondents reveal that the extent of importance regarding 'mode of payment-credit' as 'very high' and 29(26.36%) as 'very low' importance. It is also noted that seventy four respondents do not express their opinion about this buying motive.
Score Value Analysis for importance attached to buying motives in purchasing durables shows that the buyers even though attach highest priority to need while buying; they are also greatly weighing the factors such as quality, brand name, durability and price.

Principal Component Analysis revealed how the contention of rational (quality/importance given for the brand/price of the durables)/ irrational (pompiness/showiness) behaviour influence the importance attached to buying motives by the selected respondents in the study area. When the mean component scores derived for various factors viz., sex, region, marital status, family size, educational background, spouse status, income status, for the two components were plotted, it was found that the male respondents from urban areas who are married, possessing medium and large family sizes, having their educational background as graduation or above and having earned spouses, belonging to high income group are behaving rationally in choosing the durable products based either on brands/quality or price, compared to rural respondents.

7.9 Emotional buying factors involved while buying durable products by the respondents

The emotional buying factors, viz., Security, Curiosity, Ego, Comfort, Recreation, Status, Psychological buying factor, Pressure from Middlemen, Spouse, Children, Family Members, Middlemen, Friends and Relatives, Neighbours and the like, involved while buying durable products by the sample respondents with their nature and extent have been analysed. The following findings were drawn from the present study:

a. Security

Out of the 151 respondents, 57(37.75%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to ‘security’ as ‘very high’ and 7(04.64%) as ‘very low’ involvement. Further it is noted that thirty-three respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.
b. Curiosity

Out of the 138 respondents, 17(12.32%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to ‘curiosity’ as ‘very high’ and 26(18.84%) as ‘very low’ involvement. It is also noted that forty-six respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.

c. Ego

Out of the 126 respondents, only 4(03.17%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to ‘ego’ as ‘very high’ and 71(56.35%) as ‘very low’ involvement. It is also noted that fifty-eight respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.

d. Comfort

Out of the 151 respondents, 54(35.76%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to ‘comport’ as ‘very high’ and 15(09.93%) as ‘very low’ involvement. It is also noted that thirty-three respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.

e. Recreation

Out of the 141 respondents, 15(10.64%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to ‘recreation’ as ‘very high’ and 34(24.11%) as ‘very low’ involvement. It is also noted that forty-three respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.

f. Status

Out of the 142 respondents, 21(14.79%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to ‘status’ as ‘very high’ and 52(36.62%) as ‘very low’ involvement. It is also noted that forty-two respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.
g. Psychological Buying Factor

Out of the 148 respondents, 35 (23.65%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to ‘psychological buying factor’ as ‘very high’ and 11 (07.43%) as ‘very low’ involvement. It is also noted that thirty-six respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.

h. Middlemen Pressure

Out of the 114 respondents, only 1 (00.88%) respondent reveals that the extent of emotional involvement given to ‘middlemen pressure’ as ‘very high’ and 59 (51.75%) as ‘very low’ involvement. It is also noted that seventy respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.

i. Pressure from Spouse

Out of the 117 respondents, 10 (08.55%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to ‘pressure from spouse’ as ‘very high’ and 34 (29.06%) as ‘very low’ involvement. It is also noted that sixty-seven respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.

j. Pressure from Children

Out of the 131 respondents, 17 (12.98%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to ‘pressure from children’ as very high’ and 41 (31.29%) as ‘very low’ involvement. It is also noted that fifty-three respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.

k. Pressure from Family Members

Out of the 148 respondents, 18 (12.16%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to ‘pressure from family members’ as ‘very high’ and 46 (31.08%) as ‘very low’ involvement. It is also noted that thirty-six respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.
I. Pressure from Relatives

Out of the 129 respondents, 10 (07.75%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to 'pressure from relatives' as 'very high' and 70 (54.26%) as 'very low' involvement. Further it is also noted that fifty-five respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.

m. Pressure from Friends

Out of the 124 respondents, 10 (08.06%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to 'pressure from friends' as 'very high' and 64 (51.61%) as 'very low' involvement. Further it is also noted that sixty respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.

n. Pressure from Neighbours

Out of the 115 respondents, 5 (04.35%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to 'pressure from neighbours' as 'very high' and 70 (60.87%) as 'very low' involvement. Further it is also noted that sixty-nine respondents do not express their opinion about this buying factor.

o. All above factors

Out of the 20 respondents, 6 (30.00%) respondents reveal that the extent of emotional involvement given to 'all the above mentioned factors' (factors including a to m) as 'moderate' and 12 (60.00%) as 'very low' involvement. It is also noted that one hundred and sixty-four respondents do not express their opinion about this buying motive.

Score Value Analysis for emotional buying factors involved in purchasing durables shows that the buyers even though gives highest involvement for security, while buying, they also greatly involving the factors such as comfort, psychological satisfaction, curiosity, pressure from family members.

Principal Component Analysis revealed the interdependence postulate of spending patterns (the societal influence -status, curiosity, and pressure from
neighbours and middlemen and pressure from spouse / family members of the respondents) among the selected respondents in the study area. When the mean component scores derived for various factors viz., sex, region, marital status, family size, educational background, spouse status, income status, for the two components were plotted, it was found that the male respondents from rural areas who are unmarried, possessing small and large family sizes, having their educational background up to higher secondary level, and having earned spouses, belonging to low and medium income groups are yielding to pressure from their spouses or family members while choosing the durable products, compared to urban respondents.

7.10 Evaluation of the Influence of Emotional Aspects to New Brand Advertisement

When a potential consumer of durables is exposed to a new rival brand advertisement what would be his/her reaction is the main criteria followed in interpreting this aspect. With regard to the nature and extent of influence of the emotional aspects to new rival brand advertisement in purchasing the durable products by the respondents, the following findings were made from the present study:

(a) Tendency to skip over the advertisement

Out of the 163 respondents, 37(22.70%) 'always skip' the extent of influence of emotional aspect 'tendency to skip over the advertisement to new rival brand advertisement' and 25(15.34%) 'skip it hardly'. Further it is noted that twenty-one respondents do not express their opinion about this nature of influencing emotional aspect.

(b) Reading advertisement in order to evaluate Customers Brand against the rival brand

Out of the 136 respondents, 23(16.91) 'always read' the extent of influence of emotional aspect 'read it in order to evaluate customers brand
against the rival brand' and 27(19.85%) 'read it hardly.' Further it is noted that forty-eight respondents do not express their opinion about this nature of influencing emotional aspect.

(c) Compulsion to buy the new brand

Out of the 147 respondents, 19(12.93%) 'always felt' the extent of influence of emotional aspect 'feel compelled to buy the new brand', and 36(24.49%) 'felt it hardly.' Further it is noted that thirty-seven respondents do not express their opinion about this nature of influencing emotional aspect.

(d) Feeling as compelled to Recommend the product to others

Out of the 130 respondents, 7(05.38%) 'always felt' the extent of influence of emotional aspect 'feel compelled to recommend it to others', and 52(40.00%) 'felt it hardly.' Further it is noted that fifty-four respondents do not express their opinion about this nature of influencing emotional aspect.

(e) Feeling like buying the product if it promises to be some thing more than the Present brand

Out of the 130 respondents, 17(13.08%) 'always felt' the extent of influence of emotional aspect 'feel like buying it if it promises to be something more than the present buyer's brand' and 38(29.23%) 'felt it hardly.' Further it is noted that fifty-four respondents do not express their opinion about this nature of influencing emotional aspect.

(f) Thinking about giving the product a Trial

Out of the 131 respondents, 3(02.29%) 'always thought' the extent of influence of emotional aspect 'think about giving it a trial' and 49(37.40%) 'thought it hardly'. Further it is noted that fifty-three respondents do not express their opinion about this nature of influencing emotional aspect.
Score Value Analysis for influence of emotional aspects to rival brand advertisement shows that the buyers even though influenced by tendency to skip over the new rival brand advertisement to higher extent, while buying, they are also greatly influenced by the aspects such as read it in order to evaluate customers brand against the Rival brand, Feel compelled to buy the new brand.

Principal Component Analysis revealed the phenomenon of asymmetric behaviour of consumers, viewed as a psychological lock - in effect, influences the emotional aspects to new rival brand advertisement, is considered by the respondents. When the mean component scores derived for various factors viz., sex, region, marital status, family size, educational background, spouse status, income status, for the two components were plotted, it was found that the male respondents from rural areas who are unmarried, having their educational background up to higher secondary level, possessing small and large family sizes, unearned spouses, belonging to low and middle income groups are flexible in seeing the new rival brand advertisement as the influencing emotional aspect while choosing the durable brands, compared to respondents from urban areas.

7.11 Factors influencing while purchasing the durables

The role of various influencing factors in purchasing durables by the respondents was analysed and it was found that, the ISI mark/quality/guarantee influenced 19.97% of respondents in household articles; similarly influenced 20.50 % in kitchen durables, and 18.90% in vehicles and machines.

7.12 Problems faced by the respondents while buying durables

The nature of problems faced by the respondents at the time of buying the durable products was analysed and it was found that 34.78 % of respondents do not face problems of different kinds of nature as revealed by the other people while buying the durable products.
7.13 Buyer’s perception about durables

The buying perception of the buyer’s viz., entertainment / recreation, knowledge acquiring tool, time-killing device, good companion, powerful media of communication, reducing physical strain, able to concentrate other works, time saving, convenience, fuel economy and others, its type and extent involved in buying durables by the sample respondents have been analysed. The following were the observations made:

(a) Entertainment/Recreation

As per the study, out of 167 respondents, 47 (28.14%) perceive the durables to ‘very little extent’ as ‘entertainment/recreation’ and 58(34.73%) perceive to ‘greater extent’. Further it is noted that 17 respondents do not express their view for this type of buyer’s perception about durables.

(b) Knowledge acquiring tool

Out of 146 respondents, 35(23.97%) perceive the durables to ‘very little extent’ as ‘knowledge acquiring tool’ and 44(30.14%) perceive to ‘greater extent.’ Further it is noted that 38 respondents do not express their view for this type of perception about durables.

(c) Time-killing device

Out of the 115 respondents, 74(64.35%) perceive the durables to ‘very little extent’ as ‘time-killing device’ and 11(09.57%) perceive to ‘greater extent.’ Further it is noted that 69 respondents do not express their view for this type of perception about durables.

(d) Good companion

Out of the 117 respondents, 11(09.40%) perceive the durables to ‘very little extent’ as ‘good companion’ and 54(46.15%) perceive to ‘greater extent.’ Further it is noted that 67 respondents do not express their view for this type of perception about durables.
(e) Powerful media of communication

Out of the 144 respondents, 33 (22.92%) perceive the durables to ‘very little extent’ as ‘powerful media of communication’ and 43 (29.86%) perceive to ‘greater extent.’ Further it is noted that 40 respondents do not express their view for this type of perception about durables.

(f) Reducing Physical Strain

Out of the 147 respondents, 16 (10.88%) perceive the durables to ‘very little extent’ as ‘reducing physical strain’ and 85 (57.82%) perceive to ‘greater extent.’ Further it is noted that 37 respondents do not express their view for this type of perception about durables.

(g) Able to concentrate other works

Out of the 123 respondents, 22 (17.89%) perceive the durables to ‘very little extent’ as ‘able to concentrate other works’ and 35 (28.46%) perceive to ‘greater extent.’ Further it is noted that 61 respondents do not express their view for this type of perception about durables.

(h) Time Saving

Out of the 137 respondents, 27 (19.71%) perceive the durables to ‘very little extent’ as ‘time saving’ and 73 (53.28%) perceive to ‘greater extent.’ Further it is noted that 47 respondents do not express their view for this type of perception about durables.

(i) Convenience

Out of the 134 respondents, 16 (11.94%) perceive the durables to ‘very little extent’ as ‘convenience’ and 74 (55.22%) perceive to ‘greater extent.’ Further it is noted that 50 respondents do not express their view for this type of perception about durables.
(j) **Fuel Economy**

Out of the 137 respondents, 24 (17.52%) perceive the durables to ‘very little extent’ as ‘fuel economy’ and 67 (48.90%) perceive to ‘greater extent.’ Further it is noted that 47 respondents do not express their view for this type of perception about durables.

(k) **Others**

Out of the 5 respondents, 4 (80.00%) perceive the durables to ‘very little extent’ as ‘other perceptions’ and only one respondent (20.00%) to ‘some extent.’ It is found that none of the respondents perceive them to greater extent. Further it is noted that a majority of 179 respondents do not express their view for this type of perception about durables.

**Score Value Analysis** for buyer’s perception about durables shows that the buyers even though gives higher perception to reducing physical strain, while buying, they are also greatly weighing the perceptions such as entertainment / recreation, convenience, knowledge acquiring tool and fuel economy.

**Principal Component Analysis revealed** the respondents’ perception about durables while involved in buying them. When the mean component scores derived for various factors viz., sex, region, marital status, family size, educational background, spouse status, income status, for the two components were plotted, it was found that the male respondents from rural areas who are unmarried, possessing medium and large family sizes, having their educational background up to higher secondary level, having unearned spouses, belonging to middle and high income groups are having the perception about the durables while involved in buying is that it is a device for relaxation / entertainment, compared to urban respondents.
7.14 Need Identification

Consumer behaviour begins with the triggering of need identification. A Consumer identifies the need to fill up the intolerable gap perceived. A modest attempt has been made to study its various aspects with regard to their level and type involved by the sample respondents in buying the selected durable products. The findings have inferred as under:

(a) After Observing Neighbours

Out of 141 respondents, 16(11.35%) identified the need ‘after observing neighbours,’ to ‘very high level’ and 38(26.95%) to ‘very low level. Further it is noted that 43 respondents did not express their view for this type of buyer’s need identification about durables.

(b) Entertainment at home

Out of 153 respondents, 35(22.88%) identified the need ‘entertainment at home,’ to ‘very high’ level’ and 18(11.76%) to ‘very low’ level’. Further it is noted that 31 respondents did not express their view for this type of buyer’s need identification about durables.

(c) To avoid time-wasting

Out of 142 respondents, 37(26.06%) identified the need ‘avoid time-wasting,’ to ‘very high level’ and 22(15.49%) to ‘very low level.’ Further it is noted that 52 respondents did not express their view for this type of buyer’s need identification about durables.

(d) Pressure from family members

Out of 143 respondents, 17(11.89%) identified the need ‘pressure from family members,’ to ‘very high level’ and 38(26.57%) to ‘very low level’. Further it is noted that 41 respondents did not express their view for this type of buyer’s need identification about durables.
(e) Substitute

Out of 111 respondents, 7(06.31%) identified the need 'substitute,' to 'very high level' and 43(38.74%) to 'very low level'. Further it is noted that 73 respondents did not express their view for this type of buyer's need identification about durables.

(f) Reduction in Outside Entertainment Expenditure

Out of 126 respondents, 13(10.32%) identified the need 'reduction in outside entertainment expenditure,' to 'very high level' and 21(16.67%) to 'very low level.' Further it is noted that 58 respondents did not express their view for this type of buyer's need identification about durables.

(g) After Seeing TV. Advertisements

Out of 137 respondents, 19(13.87%) identified the need 'after seeing TV advertisements,' to 'very high level' and 48(35.03%) to 'very low level.' Further it is noted that 47 respondents did not express their view for this type of buyer's need identification about durables.

Score Value Analysis for buyers' need identification shows that the buyers even though attach highest importance to entertainment at home, while buying, they are also greatly weighing the factors such as, to avoid time-wasting, pressure from family members and after observing neighbours.

Principal Component Analysis revealed the respondents need identification in buying durable products. When the mean component scores derived for various factors viz., sex, region, marital status, family size, educational background, spouse status, income status, for the two components were plotted, it was found that the male respondents from rural areas who are unmarried, possessing small and large family sizes, having their educational background up to higher secondary level, having unearned spouses, belonging to
middle income group are yielding to pressure from their family members while identifying the need for the durable products, compared to urban respondents.

### 7.15 Sources of Information

Consumer -- information processing is initiated by the incoming stimuli. The marketer in the form of advertisements, displays, and sales pictures can either initiate the stimuli and direct information sources like friends/relatives family members, neighbours, dealers, and manufacturers, exposure to industrial exhibitions and existing users.

Gathering of information from different sources is of great importance since it is only through these sources the buyers make decisions. The types of information sources used to identify the need of the durables which attached to buying decisions by the consumers have considered through such parameters, as: Media, Family Members, Friends / Relatives, Neighbours, Dealers, Manufacturers, Industrial Exhibition, Existing Users, Shop keepers, Own Experience, and None. A moderate attempt has been given to analyse the sources of information available to the buyer’s and its extent of viewing by them while involved in buying the durable products and the findings have inferred as under:

(a) **Sources of Information available to the Buyer’s – Family Members**

Out of the 153 respondents, 34(22.22%) of them viewed ‘sources of information available to the buyer’s from family members,’ as ‘very high’ and 8(05.23%) as ‘very low’. Further, it is found that 31 respondents did not view their idea about this source of information available to them.

(b) **Friends / Relatives**

Out of the 138 respondents, 23(16.67%) of them viewed ‘sources of information available to the buyer’s from friends / relatives,’ as ‘very high’ and
29(21.01%) as 'very low'. Further, it is found that 46 respondents did not view their idea about this source of information available to them.

(c) Neighbours

Out of the 120 respondents, 14(11.67%) of them viewed 'sources of information available to the buyer's from neighbours,' as 'very high', and 45(37.50%) as 'very low'. Further, it is found that 64 respondents did not view their idea about this source of information available to them.

(d) Dealers

Out of the 126 respondents, 9(07.14%) of them viewed 'sources of information available to the buyer's from dealers,' as 'very high', and 39(30.95%) as 'very low'. Further, it is found that 58 respondents did not view their idea about this source of information available to them.

(e) Manufacturers

Out of the 101 respondents, 4(03.96%) of them viewed 'sources of information available to the buyer's from manufacturers,' as 'very high', and 53(52.48%) as 'very low'. Further, it is found that 83 respondents did not view their idea about this source of information available to them.

(f) Industrial Exhibition

Out of the 107 respondents, 9(08.41%) of them viewed 'sources of information available to the buyer's from industrial exhibition,' as 'very high', and 56(52.33%) as 'very low'. Further, it is found that 77 respondents did not view their idea about this source of information available to them.

(g) Existing Users

Out of the 124 respondents, 11(08.87%) of them viewed 'sources of information available to the buyer's from existing users,' as 'very high', and
31(25.00%) as 'very low'. Further, it is found that 60 respondents did not view their idea about this source of information available to them.

(h) Own Experience

Out of the 124 respondents, 28(22.58%) of them viewed 'sources of information available to the buyer's from their own experience,' as 'very high' and 11(08.87%) as 'very low'. Further, it is found that 60 respondents did not view their idea about this source of information available to them.

(i) Media

Out of the 157 respondents, 79(50.32%) of them viewed 'advertisement as a source of information available to the buyer’s from media,' as 'very high', and 5(03.18%) as 'very low'. Further, it is found that 27 respondents did not view their idea about this source of information available to them.

(j) None

When the sources of information 'none' is considered, only 4 respondents are viewed the extent of information sources. Out of 4, 1(25.00%) is viewed it as 'moderate' and the remaining three (75.00%) viewed it as 'very low.'

Score Value Analysis for sources of information shows that the buyers even though attach highest priority to gather information from media, while buying, they are also greatly weighing the factors such as information from family members, own experience, from friends and relatives and from the existing users of the durable products.

Principal Component Analysis revealed the significance of different sources of information available to the respondents in buying durable products. When the mean component scores derived for various factors viz., sex, region, marital status, family size, educational background, spouse status, income status, for the two components were plotted, it was found that the male respondents from rural areas who are unmarried, possessing small and large family sizes, having
their educational background up to higher secondary level, having unearned spouses, belonging to middle income group are obtaining information either from their relatives or friends only while identifying the availability of the different varieties of durable products, compared to urban respondents.

7.16 Source of Finance – Thought After Need Identification

Thinking about mobilising required finance from different sources by the consumers arises after identifying the need for buying the durable products is of great importance since through these sources they make decisions. The sources of finance thought used to purchase the durables which attached to buying decisions by the consumers have considered through some parameters, like: ploughing back of finance from past savings made by the consumer, availing loan from others, and enjoying the instalment scheme offered by the business people.

The extent and sources of finance–thought arises soon after the buyers identified the need for the durables. The sources of finance thought are ‘ploughing back of finance,’ ‘availing loan from others,’ and ‘using instalment scheme,’ have considered for analysis. The following findings were drawn from the analysis:

(a) Ploughing back of Finance

Out of the 150 respondents, 97(64.67%) of them considered ‘ploughing back of finance’ to ‘large extent’ and 53(35.33%) to ‘some extent.’ Further, it is found that 34 respondents do not express their idea about this source of finance thought.

(b) Availing Loan from others

Out of 108 respondents, 25(23.15%) of them considered ‘availing loan from others,’ to ‘large extent’ and 83(76.85%) to ‘some extent.’ Further, it is noted that 76 respondents do not express their idea about this source of finance thought.
(c) Using Instalment Scheme

Out of 121 respondents, 47 (38.84%) of them considered ‘using instalment scheme,’ to ‘large extent’ and 74 (61.16%) to ‘some extent.’ Further, it is noted that 63 respondents do not express their idea about this source of finance thought.

Score Value Analysis for source of finance – thought after need identification shows that the buyers even though attach highest priority to ploughing back of finance while buying; they are also greatly weighing the factors such as availing the instalment scheme and loan from others.

7.17 Exact Time Involved in Need Identification and Actual Buying of Durables

It was felt to study the time gap between need identification and actual buying of durables. The findings drawn from the study have inferred as under:

The exact time involved in need identification and actual buying of durable products by the respondents shows that, out of the 184 respondents, 19 (10.33%) were taken above six months period as time taken for need identification and actual buying, followed by 13 (07.06%) six months, 36 (19.56%) three months, 59 (32.07%) one month, 23 (12.50%) a fortnight and 22 (11.96%) one week as time involvement in need identification of the durables. Only 12 (06.52%) did not involve in this type of time involvement in need identification.

7.18 Reasons for Delaying the Purchase of Durables

After identified the need for buying the durable products, the time taken for purchasing them by the consumers is of importance since the delay in purchase make decisions invalid. The extent and the reasons for delaying the purchase of durables attached to buying decisions by the consumers have considered and analysed through some parameters, like: gathering information about various brands, non-availability of required brand, anticipated change in
price (price reduction), for finalising the brand and the shortage of required finance. The following were the findings drawn from the study:

(a) Gathering information about various brands

As per the study, out of the 157 respondents, 66 (42.04%) opined this reason to 'greater extent' and 25 (15.92%) as 'very little extent.' Further, it is observed that 27 respondents do not express their view about this reason.

(b) Non-availability of required brand

Out of 126 respondents, 20 (15.87%) opined 'non-availability of required brand,' to 'greater extent' and 51 (40.48%) as 'very little extent'. Further, it is observed that 58 respondents do not express their view about this reason.

(c) Price reduction

Out of 146 respondents, 43 (29.45%) opined 'price reduction,' to 'greater extent' and 27 (18.49%) as 'very little extent'. Further, it is observed that 38 respondents do not express their view about this reason.

(d) Time taking for finalisation of the brand

Out of 119 respondents, 18 (15.13%) opined 'time taking for finalisation of the brand,' to 'greater extent' and 34 (28.57%) as 'very little extent.' Further, it is observed that 65 respondents do not express their view about this reason.

(e) Financial constraints

Out of 147 respondents, 68 (46.26%) opined 'financial constraints,' to 'greater extent' and 29 (19.73%) as 'very little extent.' Further, it is observed that 37 respondents do not express their view about this reason.
Score Value Analysis for Reasons for Delaying the Purchase of Durables

The reasons for delaying the purchase of durables attached to buying decisions by the consumers have been considered through some parameters. For knowing the reasons for the delayed purchasing of durables by the buyers, Scoring Technique is adopted. It is found that even though greater extent of delay is involved in purchasing the durable products by the consumers, due the gathering of information, they are also evolving the other reasons like financial constraints.

7.19 Media, where consumers have seen advertisements as a source of information

After identified the need for buying the durable products, the consumers have to search and rely upon different sources of information. Advertisements seen in media by them could be as sources of information do the purchase of durables. The important sources of information from advertisements appeared in media attached to buying decisions by the consumers have considered through some parameters, like: - News Paper, Magazines, Pamphlets Brochures / Leaflets in Print Media; Television, Radio, Films, Slides in Broadcast/Telecast Media; Bill Boards, Sign Boards, Posters, Hoardings and Direct Mail in Out Door Media. A moderate attempt has been made to analyse the selected parameters by considering their extent and type (print/broadcast/telecast/outdoor/direct mail) of advertisements as the source of information from where consumers have seen advertisement and the findings drawn were presented as below:

(a) Print Media- Newspaper

As per the study, out of 174 respondents, 143(82.18%) of them viewed 'advertisements seen as a source of information through newspaper,' to 'large extent' and 31(17.82%) viewed it to 'some extent'. Further, it is noted that 10 respondents did not view their idea about this type of print media.
(b) Magazines

Out of 120 respondents, 45(37.50%) of them viewed ‘advertisements seen as a source of information through magazines,’ to ‘large extent’ and 75(62.50%) viewed it to ‘some extent’. Further, it is noted that 64 respondents did not view their idea about this type of print media.

(c) Pamphlets

Out of 76 respondents, 11(14.47%) of them viewed ‘advertisements seen as a source of information through pamphlets,’ to ‘large extent’ and 65(85.53%) viewed it to ‘some extent’. Further, it is noted that 108 respondents did not view their idea about this type of print media.

(d) Brochures / Leaflets

Out of 70 respondents, 11(15.71%) of them viewed ‘advertisements seen as a source of information through brochures/leaflets,’ to ‘large extent’ and 59(84.29%) viewed it to ‘some extent’. Further, it is noted that 114 respondents did not view their idea about this type of print media.

(e) Broadcast Media – Radio

Out of 117 respondents, 56(47.86%) of them viewed ‘advertisements seen as a source of information through radio,’ to ‘large extent’ and 61(52.14%) viewed it to ‘some extent’. Further, it is noted that 67 respondents did not view their idea about this type of broadcast media.

(f) Telecast Media – Television

Out of 180 respondents, 162(90.00%) of them viewed ‘advertisements seen as a source of information through television,’ to ‘large extent’ and 18(10.00%) viewed it to ‘some extent’. Further, it is noted that only 4 respondents did not view their idea about this type of telecast media.
(g) Films

Out of 95 respondents, 30 (31.58%) of them viewed ‘advertisements seen as a source of information through films,’ to ‘large extent’ and 65 (68.42%) viewed it to ‘some extent’. Further, it is noted that 89 respondents did not view their idea about this type of telecast media.

(h) Slides

Out of 72 respondents, 10 (13.89%) of them viewed ‘advertisements seen as a source of information through slides,’ to ‘large extent’ and 62 (86.11%) viewed it to ‘some extent’. Further, it is noted that 112 respondents did not view their idea about this type of telecast media.

(i) Out Door Media – Bill Boards

Out of 61 respondents, 29 (47.54%) of them viewed ‘advertisements seen as a source of information through billboards,’ to ‘large extent’ and 32 (52.46%) respondents have viewed it to ‘some extent’. Further, it is noted that 123 respondents did not view their idea about this type of out door media.

(j) Sign Boards

Out of 63 respondents, 28 (44.44%) of them viewed ‘advertisements seen as a source of information through sign boards,’ to ‘large extent’ and 35 (55.56%) viewed it to ‘some extent’. Further, it is noted that 121 respondents did not view their idea about this type of out door media.

(k) Posters

Out of 101 respondents, 46 (45.54%) of them viewed ‘advertisements seen as a source of information through posters,’ to ‘large extent’ and 55 (54.46%) viewed it to ‘some extent’. Further, it is noted that 83 respondents did not view their idea about this type of out door media.
(l) **Hoardings**

Out of 57 respondents, 17(29.82%) of them viewed 'advertisements seen as a source of information through hoardings,' to 'large extent' and 40(70.18%) viewed it to 'some extent'. Further, it is noted that 127 respondents did not view their idea about this type of out door media.

(m) **Direct Mail**

Out of 95 respondents, 31(32.63%) of them viewed 'advertisements seen as a source of information through direct mail,' to 'large extent' and 64(67.37%) viewed it to 'some extent'. Further, it is noted that 89 respondents did not view their idea about direct mail.

**Score value Analysis** for media, where consumers have seen advertisements as a source of information shows that that the buyers even though gives more priority to advertisements appeared in telecast media (Television), while buying, they are also greatly weighing the factors such as advertisements appeared in print media (Newspaper) and in broadcast media (Radio).

**Principal Component Analysis** revealed the role of media, where consumers have seen advertisements as a source of information while involved in buying durables. When the mean component scores derived for various factors viz., sex, region, marital status, family size, educational background, spouse status, income status, for the two components were plotted, it was found that the male respondents from rural areas who are unmarried, possessing medium and large family sizes, having their educational background up to higher secondary level, having unearned spouses, belonging to low income group are seeing advertisements as a source of information from electric and electronic media while involved in buying durables, compared to urban respondents.
Score value Analysis for persons involved in the process of buying durables shows that higher extent of involvement was seen from the role of head of the family in the process of buying i.e., need identification (table-6.57), rather than the other variables followed by the role of the head of the family and spouse, the role of head of the family, spouse and children, and the like, as the process while purchasing the selected durable products for this study.

Also higher extent of involvement was seen from the role of the head of the family in the process of buying, i.e., deciding the budget (table-6.58), rather than the other variables followed by the role of the head of the family and spouse, from the head of the family, spouse and children, and the like, as the process while purchasing the selected durable products for this study.

Further it was found that higher extent of involvement was seen from the role of head of the family, spouse, and children in the process of buying i.e., information search (table-6.59), rather than the other variables followed by the role of the head of the family, role of the head of the family and, spouse, and the like, as the process while purchasing the selected durable products for this study.

Finally it was found that higher extent of involvement was seen from the role of head of the family and spouse, in the process of actual buying (table-6.60), rather than the other variables followed by the role of the head of the family, the role of head of the family, spouse, and children, and the like, as the process while purchasing the selected durable products for this study.

The comparative position of different persons involved in the process of buying durables vs. different stages in the process of buying (table-6.61) shows that larger extent of involvement is higher in the role of head of the family in need identification and deciding the budget, the role of the head of the family, head, spouse and children in information search and head of the family and spouse in actual buying as the stages in the process of purchasing the durable products.
It is further observed that some extent of involvement is higher in the role of head of the family in need identification, head of the family and spouse in deciding the budget, the role of the head of the family and spouse, head, spouse and children in information search and head of the family and head and spouse in actual buying as the stages in the process of purchasing the durable products.

7.20 Consumer awareness

Awareness of the legislations concerned with consumers’ rights has been considered here as a proxy variable to measure overall awareness of the consumers. The consumers were asked to what extent they were aware of the laws that sought to protect their interest. The respondents level of awareness about membership of consumer forum, representing general characteristics, their awareness level regarding different consumer legislations about durable products were analysed and the findings drawn were presented as follows:

7.21 Consumers’ Awareness Level of Different Government Legislations about Durables

With regard to the ‘Indian Standards Institute Certification Marks Act,’ 1952, out of 184 respondents, 76(41.30 %) respondents were ‘fully aware’ of it, 73(39.67 %) respondents were aware it to ‘some extent’ 23(12.50 %) respondents was ‘not aware’ of it. It is noted that 12 (06.52 %) respondents were not responded to this question.

In the case of The Standard Weights and Measurements Act, 1956, out of 184 respondents, 36(19.57 %) respondents were ‘fully aware’ of it, 53(28.80%) respondents were aware it to ‘some extent’ 68(36.96%) respondents were ‘not aware’ of it. It is noted that 27 (14.67 %) respondents were not responded to this question.

As per the study, 28(15.22 %) respondents ‘fully aware’ of the Packaged Commodities (Regulations) Order, 1975, out of 184 respondents, 40(21.74%)
respondents were aware it to 'some extent' 83(45.11%) respondents was 'not aware' of it. It is noted that 33(17.93 per cent) respondents were not responded to this question.

Regarding the Display of Prices Order, 1963, 31(16.85 %) respondents were 'fully aware' of it, 45(24.45%) respondents were aware it to 'some extent' 71(38.59 %) respondents was 'not aware' of it. It is noted that 37(20.11%) respondents were not responded to this question.

In the case of The Consumer Protection Act, 1986, 32(17.40 %) respondents were 'fully aware' of this act, whereas 53(28.80 %) respondents were aware it to 'some extent' followed by 64(34.78 %) respondents were 'not aware' of it. It is noted that 35(19.02 %) respondents were not responded to this question.

7.22 Awareness of Consumer Rights

The distribution of the respondents according to the extent of awareness of the consumer rights was analysed. The findings show that out of 184 respondents, 60 (32.61%) respondents were fully aware of the consumer rights, 104(56.52%) respondents were aware it to some extent, and 20 (10.87%) respondents were 'not aware' of the existing consumer rights.

7.23 Membership in the Consumer Protection Councils (CPCs)

The distribution of respondents according to their membership position in the consumer forum (CPC) was analysed and it is found that out of 184 respondents, 14 (07.61 %) were members of the Consumer Protection Councils (Consumer Forum). It is seen that 170 (92.39 %) respondents were not the members of the forum.
7.24 Lodging of Complaints by sample consumers to the Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum (CDRF)

The distribution of respondents according to their making of complaints to the Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum (CDRF) was analysed and found that out of 184 respondents, only (19.02 %) respondents were making complaints to the Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum (CDRF). It is seen that a greater majority of 80.98 % respondents are not making complaints to the Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum.

7.25 Behaviour of Consumers Regarding the demand for Cash bills for purchases

The distribution of respondents according to their behaviour of demanding cash bills while buying the durable products was analysed and it was found that out of 184 respondents, 139 (75.54 %) respondents were demanding cash bills for their purchase, and 45(24.46 %) were not demanding the cash bills while purchasing the durable products.

7.26 Habit of checking the quality of the products

The distribution of respondents according to their habit of checking the quality while buying the durable products was analysed. It is found that out of 184 respondents, 179 (97.28 %) respondents were having the habit of checking the quality of the durable products while involved in their purchase, and 5(02.72%) respondents were not having the habit of checking the quality.

7.27 Suggestions to strengthen the consumer movement

The respondents were given the option to express their view with regard to strengthen the consumer movement based upon their experiences in the purchase of consumer durables.

The following were the suggestions offered by them.
As per the study, out of 184 respondents, 32.13% of respondents were suggesting the introduction of “consumerism” as a subject of study in the curriculum at schools / colleges / universities may strengthen the consumer movement.

36.07% of respondents were suggesting for creating awareness through mass media (new papers & electronic media) as the way.

9.84% of respondents viewed forming Voluntary Consumer Clubs in Schools / Colleges / Universities as the via media.

8.52% of respondents were suggesting the arrangement of public speeches, holding demonstrations and conducting competition for students on ‘Consumer Day’, every year.

11.80% of respondents were favouring, the involvement of Municipal Corporations, Social Welfare Institutions and Service Organizations like Lions Club, Rotary Club, etc, in promoting consumer education, and only 1.64% of them mentioning the other possibilities.

7.28 Determinants of Consumer Buying Decisions

Based on the Principal Component Analysis five consumer behaviour variables were found to be the most important variables that influence consumer-buying decisions. These variables were subjected to the Binary Logistic Regression Analysis to predict the effect of sex, marital status, family size, spouse status and area of the consumer belongs to and the results are presented as follows:

a. The effect of sex on consumer buying decisions was best predicted by simultaneous operations and influence of friends and relatives \( (G = 13.254, \text{ DF} = 2, P - \text{Value} = 0.001) \). Female respondents were more influenced by these factors to the tune of 1.04 times higher than the males with regard to simultaneous operations and 1.08 times with regard to the influence of friends and relatives. Analysis of basic data also indicated
that female consumers are more likely to be influenced by simultaneous operations (41.3% as against 20.8% of male consumers) and friends and relatives (46.0% as against 20.5% of male consumers) than male consumers.

b. The effect of marital status on consumer buying was best predicted by the influence of provision of brochures & leaflets \((G = 7.304, \text{ DF} = 1, \text{ P Value} = 0.008)\) with the married persons influenced more by this consumer behavioural variable. Analysis of basic data also indicated that married consumers are more likely (18.2%) to be influenced by the provision of brochures and leaflets than unmarried consumers (15.3%).

c. Influence of knowledgeable middlemen, provision of gifts with durables, and provision of durables in instalments / credit best predicted the effect of family size on the consumer buying decision and the prediction was highly significant \((G = 16.606, \text{ DF} = 3, \text{ P Value} = 0.001)\). The odds ratio indicated that a respondent of the small family is 1.43 times less likely to be influenced by the middlemen. Provision of gifts was a highly influencing factor for a respondent belonging to small family size. The odds of succumbing to the lure of instalments / credits was less for a respondent of small family. Analyses of basic data also indicates that

1. Consumers of small family are less likely to be influenced (71.1%) by knowledgeable middlemen than consumers of medium and large sized family (76.7%).
2. Consumers of small family are more likely to be influenced (56.25%) by provision of gifts than consumers of medium and large family (25.30%), and
3. Consumers of small family are less likely (61.7%) influenced by provision of instalments and gifts than consumers of large family (66.7%).
The effect of spouse status on consumer buying decision was best predicted by the influence of information from friends and relatives \((G=6.974, \text{ DF} = 1, \text{ P - Value} = 0.008)\) with a respondent having an earning spouse is influenced by 1.26 times than a respondent having a unearned spouse. Analysis of basic data also indicated that consumers having earning spouse are more likely to be influenced by information from friends and relatives (46.6%) than consumers without earning spouse (30.1%).

e. Information from and relatives, information from Television and the emotional aspect - feel like buying the product if the product is promised to be more than the present brand possessed by the buyer are the best predictors for the effect of areas on consumer buying decisions \((G = 23.346, \text{ DF} = 3, \text{ P - Value} = 0.001)\). The urban respondents are more influenced from friends and relatives (odds ratio 1.32) and the emotional aspect - feel like buying the product if the product is promised to be more than the present brand possessed by the buyer (odds ratio 1.31) while the rural respondents are more influenced by information from television.

**Analysis of basic data also indicated that**

1. Urban consumers are more likely to be influenced by information from friends and relatives (68.9%) than rural consumers (23.9%).
2. Urban consumers are less likely to be influenced by information from television (87.5%) than rural consumers (92.2%) and
3. Urban consumers are more likely to be influenced by the emotional aspect - feel like buying the product if the product is promised to be more than the present brand possessed by the buyer (38.8%) than the rural consumers (15.9%).

**7.29 Testing of Hypotheses:**

The present study was directed towards testing the following hypotheses by the appropriate statistical tools:
Hypothesis-1

Possession of consumer durables depends on the economic status of the family. Individual's quality of life is related to his or her material possessions and to his or her buying motives.

Result

The association between the brands of the consumer durables owned with the economic status of the Households were considered through the $\chi^2$ analyses and tabulated. It was found that possession of durable goods like Television, Tape recorder, Refrigerator, Still Camera, Quartz Watch, Mixer-Grinder and Motorcycle were significantly ($p<0.05$) influenced by economic status of the respondents.

The Principal Component Analyses (PCAs) showed that high-income consumers were highly rational as their major buying motive was quality, highly responsive to social factors while purchasing durables, highly tenacious or rigid as they do not switch over to rival brands quickly, take decisions independently as they do not prefer to take associates while buying, highly dependent on own source/savings to acquire durables, mostly influenced by neighbours while identifying the need to buy, mostly rely on outreach from manufacturers as the primary source of information, highly perceive the consumer durables as a device for relaxation and entertainment, less influenced by electric and electronic media as a source of information, gave high preference to quality of the products while buying a particular type of durable, and select, buy and patronize a particular brand by societal influence.

Through the application of Gini-graphical analysis, it was found that,

a. Among the consumers, the high-income groups of about 25% possess about 50% of the assets (total value of durables) in the selected population of
consumers. Hence, it was inferred that they have a high consumption standard
b. Upper class or higher income group males tend to possess more assets.
c. Higher income groups of both rural and urban have a tendency to buy more assets (of durables) disproportionate to their income.

Therefore, by the Chi-square analysis, PCAs, and also through Gini-graphical presentation, all the points in the first hypothesis were validated.

Hypothesis-2

Grey market flourishes in rural Nagappattinam District in meeting the demand for consumer durables.

Result

Through the application of Binary Logistic Regression Equation this hypothesis had been tested. The result showed that the rural consumers compared to the urban consumers were more influenced by information from Television, less influenced by friends and relatives, less succumbed to the emotional aspect of the new rival brand advertisement, such as ‘feel like buying the durable product’. Therefore, there is no evidence for this hypothesis and hence it is invalidated. The rural respondents seemed to be highly knowledgeable. The policy implication of the study is that the Multi National Companies (MNCs) can target the rural consumers through Television - Network.

Hypothesis-3

Customer service receives thrust in urban areas due to globalisation.
Result

Principal Component Analysis indicated that the urban consumers have chosen durables based on brands, quality and price. Hence, this hypothesis was validated. However, as inferred from the hypothesis 2, it could be expanded to rural areas as well, if the globalisation process extends its tentacles perhaps by providing more information through electronic media, to the rural consumers.

Hypothesis-4

Aggressive advertising promotes over-consumption and sustained advertising promotes unsustainable consumption.

Result

Other than the statement ‘sustained advertising promotes unsustainable consumption’, all the other points in this hypothesis were found to be valid through the Index derived on the determinants of consumer spending on durables.

Index of Determinants of Consumption Spending on Durable Goods, as inferred from the present study were:

(i) Economic Factors
   - (Objective/Ability Variables)
     1. Income
     2. Asset
     3. Credit Availability

(ii) Non-Economic Factors
   - (Subjective/Willingness Variables)
     1. Attitudes, sentiments
     2. Advertisements and Market informations
     3. Provision of gifts

All the above determinants of consumer spending on durables in the above index validated the fourth hypothesis of this study.

Hypothesis-5

Lower levels of income did not automatically mean lack of buying power for various products in rural Tamil Nadu.
Result

There was no evidence for this hypothesis based on the ‘Gini’ graphical analysis. Further, an explanatory note in the same hypothesis, viz., “the middle class in the same levels of income denotes very different levels of purchasing power in rural and urban areas” was also not supported by data as the ‘Gini’ graphs showed similarity in the behaviour of both the urban and rural middle class people. Therefore, the hypothesis was invalidated.

Hypothesis-6

The analysis of durability (possession of durables) is extended to several directions.

Result

The statement under this hypothesis viz., “Brand name and price are the prime considerations in buying decisions of higher income consumers,” was validated through the Principal Component Analysis.

Another statement of explanation of this hypothesis viz., “Rural consumers seemed to consider brand name, perceived quality and price as important elements in buying durables,” was also supported by the PCA. The analysis of demographic factors determining the consumption pattern was also supported by the PCA. Further, medium sized families’ buying decisions were found to be influenced by society, ability/ quality of the associates, savings, neighbours, outreach from manufacturers, influence of electronic media, and quality of the product. Hence, they constituted the most vulnerable section of the society. The second statement was also validated.

A third statement of this hypothesis was, “rural-urban differentials in Tamil Nadu are reflected in the ownership pattern of consumer goods.” The ‘Gini’ graphs showed similar buying patterns or asset accumulations in response
to the income for both rural and urban consumers, i.e., there was no rural-urban difference with regard to asset (durable) accumulation of all the income classes. Hence, there was no evidence for this statement.

Hypothesis-7

Female participation in household decision-making in acquisition of consumer durables is substantial.

Result

Female participation in household decision-making in acquisition of consumer durables was tested through Binary Logistic Regression Equation, which showed that females have more roles in decision-making power in the acquisition of consumer durables. Hence, the hypothesis was validated. Female participation seemed to be vital in household decision-making.

7.30 Scope for Future Research:

The study of consumer behaviour has revealed many important facts about human nature and psychology and has, therefore, been of significant importance to both individuals and policy-makers. The consumer study is useful to householders to guide in spending their incomes in a prudent manner with the objective of getting maximum satisfaction. Consumer studies are useful to policymakers. They help to estimate the standard of living of any class of people. The standards of living are estimated for a particular group based on a study of a few representative families. Consumer study may be used to judge the taxable capacity of the people since the study assigns a proper weightage of important goods purchased by people.

The scope for future research in the present context of globalisation is wide. Consumer studies are important for the formulation of proper tax policies. For example, if tax falls more heavily on the higher income groups, it is easier for
them to pay taxes, since a large percentage of their spending goes for luxuries and savings. Thus, consumer studies are useful to policy makers and social reformers.

The consumer study as a whole is of first-rate importance in an economy to assess the progressing nature of the economy and the methods to be adopted to accelerate the consumption standards.