CHAPTER V
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the study were accomplished in three stages. In the first stage, rural consumers’ pre purchase behaviour was analyzed and it covers need recognition, information search and evaluation of alternatives of pre purchase behaviour of rural consumers. The second stage covers the purchase behaviour of the rural consumers and the last stage covers the analysis about the post purchase behaviour of the rural consumers. The result of the analysis has been presented and discussed in previous chapters. In this chapter key findings and conclusion of this research are explored. Based on these findings, suggestions have been proposed to improve the strategies of the marketers in rural areas.

Democratic background of rural consumers makes marketers to concentrate on rural marketing in India. Since globalization, the rural marketing and its structure have been changing continuously because of the huge development in the communication system. It is highly essential to frame a suitable marketing strategy to meet the needs of emerging rural consumer. Various studies on rural consumer behaviour have been conducted by researches. Most of the earlier studies had focused attention on preference, brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty related to durable goods. This study is focused on the consumer behaviour in the purchase of above said three stages of durable goods. The concepts and methodology were formulated according to the objectives of the study with the help of an ample review of earlier studies. The study is completely based on primary data. For the primary data, 675 respondents were selected from 45 villages in Kanyakumari District.
5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

5.2.1 Personal profile of the respondents

- Most of the respondents (42.52%) fall in the age group of less than 30 years and youth population have an influence on consumer behavior.
- Most of the respondents (51.56%) are females and the sample is equally distributed gender wise.
- Nearly two fifth of the respondents (41.93%) are possessing school level education.
- Most of the respondents (20.74%) are students and more equally the sample constitutes the farmers (20.30%).
- Majority of the respondents (58.07%) were married.
- Most of the respondents (35.85%) are earning between Rs.75,000 – 1,25 lakhs as their annual income.
- Almost more than half of the respondents (59.41%) are living in nuclear families.
- Most of the respondents nearly more than half (56.59%) are having 3 and 4 members in their family.

5.2.2 Durable products information

- Most of the rural consumers (75.9%) of Kanyakumari District are having awareness about the durable products.
- Samsung and LG are the top brands used by the respondents and Videocon occupies the third Place in Television brands used by the respondents in rural areas of Kanyakumari.
- Respondents preferred Samsung and Godrej followed by Whirlpool refrigerators.
- More than half of the respondents considered the three brands LG, Samsung and Whirlpool in Washing machine.
• Butterfly is the top brand of Pressure cooker that is preferred by the respondents in rural areas of Kanyakumari District followed by Premier and Prestige brands.

• Maharaja Mixie is considered by more than one fifth of the rural consumers followed by the brands Butterfly and Prestige dominates the Mixie market in Kanyakumari District.

• Sowbagya grinders dominate the rural market and the rural consumers preferred Butterfly and Ultra grinders in the second and third place.

• Majority of the rural consumer (41.92%) prefer to buy the durable goods from the outlets in nearby towns of Kanyakumari District.

• Majority of respondents are using the Durable products of particular brand for less than six years in Kanyakumari District.

• Most of the rural consumers (34.67%) in Kanyakumari District agreed that they have purchased durable goods in discount sales.

• Majority of the rural consumers (40.44%) of Kanyakumari District prefer fair quality of durable goods.

• Majority of the rural consumers (34.66%) of Kanyakumari District feel that the price of durable products is high.

• Consumers of rural areas in Kanyakumari District are well aware of brand, quality, price, durability, warranty, comfort and behaviour of retailers of Television and they agreed that technology, sales promotion and after sales service are the attributes of selecting brand/model of Television.

• Consumers of rural areas in Kanyakumari District are well aware of brand, quality, price, durability, warrant, comfort, design and sales promotion and they agreed that technology, behaviour of retailers and after sales service are the attributes of selecting brand/model of Refrigerator.

• Consumers of rural areas in Kanyakumari District are well aware of warranty and they also agreed that brand, quality, price, durability, comfort, technology, design, behaviour of retailers, sales promotion and after sales service are the attributes of selecting brand/model of Washing Machine.
• Consumers of rural areas in Kanyakumari District are well aware of brand, quality, price, durability, warranty, sales promotion and after sales service and they agreed that technology, comfort, design and behaviour of retailers are the attributes of selecting brand/model of Pressure cooker.

• Consumers of rural areas in Kanyakumari District are well aware of quality and durability and they agreed that brand, price, technology, comfort, design, sales promotion, warranty, after sales service and behaviour of retailers are the attributes of selecting brand/model of Mixie.

• Consumers of rural areas in Kanyakumari District are well aware of brand, quality, price, durability, design, sales promotion and warranty and they agreed that technology, comfort, after sales service and behaviour of retailers are the attributes of selecting brand/model of Grinder.

5.2.3 Consumers’ pre-purchase behaviour

• Factors of Need recognition is identified as Consumer Awareness, Consumer Assessment and Utility and Affordability. Knowledge about durable goods, Spending money for comfort and buying household products for utility are considered as the important reasons for the need of purchasing the durable goods in the rural areas of Kanyakumari District. Durable goods makes life comfort, impressed through advertisement and Reliability of the product are also considered as some of the reasons for purchasing durable goods by rural consumers.

• Rural consumers are classified as Energetic consumers, Unfussy consumers and Conservative consumers based on the factors of Need recognition.

• Significant association between age and classification of consumers based on Need recognition is observed. Most of the rural consumers (15.26%) with age below 30 years are energetic consumers. Rural consumers of all the age groups are able to identify the factors that influence the purchase of durable goods in Kanyakumari District.
• Significant association between gender and classification of consumers based on Need recognition is not observed. This shows that men and women are not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Need recognition.

• Significant association between education and classification of consumers based on Need recognition is observed. Most of the rural consumers (18.96%) possessing educational qualification of School level are energetic consumers. Rural consumers of all the educational groups are able to identify the factors that influence the purchase of durable goods in Kanyakumari District.

• Significant association between occupation and classification of consumers based on Need recognition is observed. Most of the rural consumers (9.48%) doing agriculture are energetic consumers. Rural consumers of all the occupation groups are able to identify the factors that influence the purchase of durable goods in Kanyakumari District.

• Significant association between marital status and classification of consumers based on Need recognition is observed. Most of the rural consumers (31.55%) who were married are energetic consumers. Rural consumers of both the marital status groups are able to identify the factors that influence the purchase of durable goods in Kanyakumari District.

• Significant association between family annual income and classification of consumers based on Need recognition is observed. Most of the rural consumers (13.93%) with family annual income of below Rs.75,000 are energetic consumers. Rural consumers of all the income groups are able to identify the factors that influence the purchase of durable goods in Kanyakumari District.

• Significant association between family type and classification of consumers based on Need recognition is not observed. This shows that family type is not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Need recognition.

• Significant association between family size and classification of consumers based on Need recognition is observed. Most of the rural consumers (27.85%) with family size of 3 and 4 members are energetic consumers. Rural consumers of all the family size groups are able to identify the factors that influence the purchase of durable goods in Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Consumer Awareness is observed. Consumers with age between 31-40 years are able to recognize the need and they are good in awareness towards durable goods. Consumers with age below 30 years are lacking in awareness towards durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Consumer Assessment is observed. Consumers with age between 31-40 years are able to recognize the need and they are good in assessing the need and importance of durable goods. Consumers with age below 30 years are lacking in assessment towards durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Utility and affordability is observed. Consumers with age between 41-50 years are able to recognize the need and they are having good knowledge about Utility and affordability of durable goods. Consumers with age below 30 years are lacking in knowledge about Utility and affordability of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s gender on Consumer Awareness is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s gender on Consumer Assessment is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s gender on Utility and affordability is observed. Men are able to recognize the need and they have good knowledge about Utility and affordability of durable goods than the women in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s education on Consumer Awareness is observed. Graduate/Diploma holders are able to recognize the need and they are good in awareness towards durable goods. Consumers possessing upto school level education are lacking in awareness towards durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s education on Consumer Assessment is observed. Consumers possessing education qualification of Graduate/Diploma
are able to recognize the need and they are good in awareness towards durable goods. Consumers possessing up to school level education are lacking in awareness towards durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

- Significant influence of rural consumer’s education on Utility and affordability is not observed.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s occupation on Consumer Awareness is not observed.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s occupation on Consumer Assessment is observed. Government employees are able to recognize the need well and they are good in assessing the need and importance of durable goods. The students are lacking in assessment of need and importance of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s occupation on Utility and affordability is observed. Government employees are able to recognize the need and they are having good knowledge about utility and affordability of durable goods. Students are having less knowledge about utility and affordability of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s marital status on Consumer Awareness is observed. Married consumers are able to recognize the need and they are good in awareness towards durable goods than the consumers living as single in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s marital status on Consumer Assessment is observed. Married consumers are able to recognize the need and they are good in assessing the need and importance of durable goods than the consumers living as single in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s marital status on Utility and affordability is observed. Married consumers are able to recognize the need and they are good in knowledge about utility and affordability of durable goods than the consumers living as single in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s family annual income on Consumer Awareness is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family annual income on Consumer Assessment is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family annual income on Utility and affordability is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family type on Consumer Awareness is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family type on Consumer Assessment is observed. Consumers living in joint family are able to recognize the need and they are good in assessing the need and importance of durable goods. The consumers living in nuclear family are lacking in assessment of need and importance about durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family type on Utility and affordability is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family size on Consumer Awareness is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family size on Consumer Assessment is observed. Consumers with family size of five and above are able to recognize the need and they have good knowledge in assessing the needs and importance of durable goods. Consumers living with the family of size up to two members are lacking in knowledge in assessing the needs and importance of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family size on Utility and affordability is not observed.
• Majority of rural consumers (41.5%) of Kanyakumari District use to get as much information as possible about the durable products.
• Mothers in most of the families (34.5%) have provided the information about the Durable product before purchasing in Kanyakumari District.
• Majority of rural consumers (66.67%) visited many shops to collect the information about Durable goods in Kanyakumari District.
• Family members and Friends are considered as most important Personal sources for making decision about durable goods for rural consumers in Kanyakumari District.

• Television and News papers are considered as most important Public sources for making decision about durable goods for rural consumers in Kanyakumari District.

• Sales representatives are considered as most important Commercial source for making decision about durable goods for rural consumers in Kanyakumari District.

• Factors of Evaluation of alternatives are identified as Purchase decision and Merchandise properties. Quality and comfort in handling the products plays the major role in making purchase decision. Price and compatibility of the durable products are also playing hand in deciding the purchase of durable goods among rural consumers in Kanyakumari.

• Rural consumers are classified as knowledgeable consumers and Requirement based consumers based on the factors of Evaluation of alternatives.

• Significant association between age and classification of consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives is not observed. Rural consumers of all the age groups are not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives.

• Significant association between gender and classification of consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives is not observed. This shows that men and women are not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives.

• Significant association between education and classification of consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives is not observed. This shows that educational groups are not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives.

• Significant association between occupation and classification of consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives is not observed. This shows that occupations are not
able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives.

- Significant association between marital status and classification of consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives is not observed. This shows that marital status is not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives.

- Significant association between family annual income and classification of consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives is not observed. This shows that income groups are not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives.

- Significant association between family type and classification of consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives is not observed. This shows that family types are not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives.

- Significant association between family size and classification of consumers based on Evaluation of alternatives is observed. Most of the rural consumers (38.96%) with family size of 3 and 4 members are knowledgeable consumers. Rural consumers of all the family sizes are able to identify the factors that influence the purchase of durable goods in Kanyakumari District.

- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Purchase Decision is not observed.

- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Merchandise properties is observed. Consumers with age between 41-50 years are good in awareness about the Merchandise properties of durable goods and the consumers with age below 30 years are lacking in awareness about Merchandise properties of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

- Significant influence of rural consumer’s gender on Purchase Decision is not observed.

- Significant influence of rural consumer’s gender on Merchandise properties is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s education on Purchase Decision is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s education on Merchandise properties is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s occupation on Purchase Decision is observed. Government employees are good in making Purchase decision about durable goods and the students are lacking in making the Purchase decision of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s occupation on Merchandise properties is observed. Consumers running business are well aware about the Merchandise properties of durable goods and the consumers who are self employed are lacking in awareness about the Merchandise properties of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s marital status on Purchase Decision is observed. Married consumers are good in making Purchase decision towards durable goods than the consumers living as single in making in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s marital status on Merchandise properties is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s annual income on Purchase Decision is observed. Consumers belonging to the family with annual income less than Rs.75,000 are good in making Purchase decision about durable goods and the consumers belonging to the family earning annual income of Rs.1.75-2.25 lakhs are lacking in making Purchase decision about durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s annual income on Merchandise properties is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family type on Purchase Decision is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family type on Merchandise properties is not observed.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s family size on Purchase Decision is not observed.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s family size on Merchandise properties is not observed.
- Consumers in rural areas of Kanyakumari District have strongly agreed with the variables the brand stays fixed in mind and good exposure to the brand for remembrance. Rural consumers agreed towards the Brand awareness variables brand recognition due to performance, distinguish brands by performance, discriminated brands due to prior knowledge and awareness of the other brands. This shows that the rural consumers are aware of various brands of durable goods in Kanyakumari District.
- Consumers in rural areas of Kanyakumari District have strongly agreed with the variables sure decision about the brand before buying, stimulates the use of the same brand and helps to recall the attributes of the product. The consumers agreement towards the variables enables to understand the image of the brand, brand knowledge helps to identify the Ingredients of the product and able to distinguish between original brand and spurious brand are above three reflects that the rural consumers in Kanyakumari District have good Brand knowledge about durable goods.
- Relationship between Brand awareness and Brand knowledge is positive and significant ($r = 0.672$). Brand awareness leads to Brand knowledge by 67.2%, which shows that the relationship between Brand awareness and Brand knowledge is good among the rural consumers of Kanyakumari District towards durable goods.

5.2.4 Consumers’ behaviour at the time of purchase
- Majority of respondents (26.96%) agreed that Fathers are responsible persons for purchasing the Durable products in Kanyakumari District.
- Majority of respondents (29.48%) agreed that their Husbands make final decision about the purchase of durable products in Kanyakumari District.
• Most of the respondents (82.07%) agreed that they use to decide the brand before purchasing the durable product in Kanyakumari District.
• Most of the rural consumers (33.48%) of Kanyakumari District prefer to buy Durable products of National brands.
• Nearly more than half of the respondents (56.59%) agreed that they always look for preferences in varieties of durable products.
• Most of the rural consumers (55.40%) of Kanyakumari District agreed that the sellers offer adequate varieties of brands of Durable products to choose from them.
• Most of respondents (69.18%) agreed that they always examine the durable products before purchase.
• “Good quality” and “Standard price” and “Better service” are the main factors among the rural consumers regarding the importance given to the outlets and the interior atmosphere of outlets while purchasing. Consumers give less importance to “Sufficient stock”, “Courteous treatment” and “Value for money” in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

5.2.5 Consumers’ Post purchase behaviour
• Factors of Post purchase behavior is identified as Consumer grievance handling, Brand Image, Advertisement and Promotion, Brand Equity and Brand Loyalty. Sincere efforts taken by the retailers/manufactures in handling the rural consumers’ complaints in Kanyakumari District has brought satisfaction in this regard. Rural consumers in Kanyakumari District give good opinion if the product/brand fulfills their expectations and they will recommend to their friends and relatives to popularize the brand. If the product of the used brand satisfies more, the rural consumers of Kanyakumari are intending to make repeated purchase.
• Rural consumers are classified as Trust worthy consumers, Obliged consumers and Eager consumers based on the Post purchase behaviour.
- Significant association between age and classification of consumers based on Post purchase behaviour is observed. Most of the rural consumers (18.37%) with age below 30 years are Obliged consumers. Rural consumers of all the age groups are able to identify the factors that influence the purchase of durable goods in Kanyakumari District.
- Significant association between gender and classification of consumers based on Post purchase behaviour is not observed. This shows that gender is not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Post purchase behaviour.
- Significant association between education and classification of consumers based on Post purchase behaviour is not observed. This shows that education groups are not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Post purchase behaviour.
- Significant association between occupation and classification of consumers based on Post purchase behaviour is not observed. This shows that occupations are not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Post purchase behaviour.
- Significant association between marital status and classification of consumers based on Post purchase behaviour is not observed. This shows that marital status is not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Post purchase behaviour.
- Significant association between family annual income and classification of consumers based on Post Purchase Behaviour is observed. Most of the rural consumers (16.74%) having family annual income of Below Rs.75,000 are Obliged consumers. Rural consumers of all the income groups are able to identify the factors that influence the purchase of durable goods in Kanyakumari District.
- Significant association between family type and classification of consumers based on Post purchase behaviour is not observed. This shows that family types are not able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Post purchase behaviour.
- Significant association between family size and classification of consumers based on Post purchase behaviour is not observed. This shows that family sizes are not
able to recognize the classification of rural consumers based on Post purchase behaviour.

- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Consumer grievance handling is not observed.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Brand Image is observed. Consumers with age below 30 years are more concentrating on Brand Image of durable goods and the consumers with age between 41-50 years are less concentrating on Brand Image of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Advertisement and Promotion is observed. Consumers with age 31-40 years are more concentrating on Advertisement and Promotion of durable goods and the consumers with age above 50 years are less concentrating on Advertisement and Promotion of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Brand Equity is observed. Consumers with age 31-40 years are giving more importance to Brand Equity of durable goods and the consumers with age above 50 years are giving less importance to Brand Equity of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Brand Loyalty is observed. Consumers with age 41-50 years are more loyal to the brands/products they purchased and the consumers with age above 50 years are less loyal to the brands/products in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Consumer grievance handling is not observed.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Brand Image is not observed.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Advertisement and Promotion is not observed.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Brand Equity is not observed.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s age on Brand Loyalty is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s education on Consumer grievance handling is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s education on Brand Image is observed. Professionals are more concentrating on Brand Image of durable goods and the consumers with up to school education are less concentrating on Brand Image of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s education on Advertisement and Promotion is observed. Consumers with school level education are more concentrating on Advertisement and Promotion of durable goods and the Post graduates are less concentrating on Advertisement and Promotion of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s education on Brand Equity is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s education on Brand Loyalty is observed. Consumers possessing Graduation/Diploma are more loyal towards the brands/durable products and the Post graduates are less loyal to the brands/durable products in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s occupation on Consumer grievance handling is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s occupation on Brand Image is observed. Government employees are more concentrating on Brand Image of durable goods and the Self employed consumers are less concentrating on Brand Image of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s occupation on Advertisement and Promotion is not observed. Consumers employed in Private organisations are more concentrating on Advertisement and Promotion of durable goods and the House wives are less concentrating on Advertisement and Promotion of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s occupation on Brand Equity is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s occupation on Brand Loyalty is observed. House wives are more loyal to the brands/durable products and the Government employees are less loyal to the brands/durable products in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s marital status on Consumer grievance handling is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s marital status on Brand Image is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s marital status on Advertisement and Promotion is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s marital status on Brand Equity is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s annual income on Consumer grievance handling is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s annual income on Brand Image is observed. Consumers belonging to the family with annual income above Rs.2.25 lakhs are more concentrating on Brand Image of durable goods and the consumers belonging to the family with annual income below Rs.75,000 are less concentrating on Brand Image of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s annual income on Advertisement and Promotion is observed. Consumers belonging to the family with annual income of Rs.1.25 – 1.75 lakhs are more concentrating on Advertisement and Promotion of durable goods and the consumers belonging to the family with annual income of above Rs.2.25 lakhs are less concentrating on Advertisement and Promotion of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s annual income on Brand Equity is not observed.
• Significant influence of rural consumer’s annual income on Brand Loyalty is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family type on Consumer grievance handling is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family type on Brand Image is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family type on Advertisement and Promotion is observed. Consumers living in nuclear family are more concentrating on Advertisement and Promotion of durable goods and the consumers living in joint family are less concentrating on Advertisement and Promotion of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family type on Brand Equity is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family type on Brand Loyalty is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family size on Consumer grievance handling is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family size on Brand Image is observed. Consumers belonging to the family with size of upto two members are more concentrating on Brand Image of durable goods and the consumers belonging to the family with size of three and four members are less concentrating on Brand Image of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family size on Advertisement and Promotion is not observed.

• Significant influence of rural consumer’s family size on Brand Equity is observed. Consumers belonging to the family with size of upto two members are more concentrating on Brand Equity of durable goods and the consumers belonging to the family with size of three and four members are less concentrating on Brand Equity of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.
- Significant influence of rural consumer’s family size on Brand Loyalty is observed. Consumers belonging to the family with size of upto two members are more concentrating on Brand Loyalty of durable goods and the consumers with family size of three and four members are less concentrating on Brand Loyalty of durable goods in rural areas of Kanyakumari District.

- Consumers in rural areas of Kanyakumari District have strongly agreed with the variables brand chosen has a good reputation, stick to the same brand and brand marketed is very impressive. The rural consumers have agreed for the variables adjust with the shortcomings of the brand, do not tolerate the non-availability of the brand, enjoy using the brand, appreciate those use the same brand and share views about the brand with others shows that the rural consumers of Kanyakumari District are sticking with the same brand and having good Brand loyalty towards the brand of durable goods they are consuming.

- Brand awareness, Brand Knowledge, Consumer grievance handling, Brand Image, and Advertisement and Promotion serves as significant predictors of Brand loyalty among consumers towards durable goods in Kanyakumari District. Consumer grievance handling serves as important predictor for Brand Loyalty followed by Brand Image and Brand Awareness.

- A model is fit to ensure the model for Brand Loyalty among rural consumers towards durable goods in Kanyakumari District. The model fit Chi-square $\chi^2 = 3.025$ and the model’s $p$-value is 0.112 which is insignificant at 5% level. The goodness of fit index (GFI) is 0.922, which is within the acceptable range indicating a better model fit.

- Rural consumers agreed that they have experienced unfair trade practices through defectiveness in product, selling spurious brands, violation in warranty, damage in packaging, missing of specification and misuse of brand.

- Only less than one fifth (18.67%) of the rural consumers have changed their brands of durable products recently, which shows the brand loyalty is good among the rural consumers of Kanyakumari District.
• Most of the rural consumers (30.95%) in Kanyakumari District accepted that they have changed the brand of durable goods recently for better quality.

5.3 SUGGESTIONS

• Since product attribute, brand awareness and brand knowledge plays important role in assessing the behavior of rural consumers, it is suggested that the manufacturing company may advertise the Durable products by giving more thrust to the product attributes, characteristics and utility of product.

• Advertising the products involving Celebrities can also be given to reach the rural consumer to induce the brand knowledge.

• It is revealed from the present study that advertisement plays a major role in educating rural consumers. Among the media of advertisements, television advertisements take the leading role in informing the rural consumers. The merit goes to the sudden surge of satellite television networks. Radio, newspaper and magazines also aid information campaign made by leading brands of consumer durables. Raising literacy levels, increase in purchasing power, spread of cable television, exposure of media, desire to urbanize, changing norms and value systems, improvement in transport and infrastructure have compounded and aided the growth of brand awareness among rural consumers. The above reasons had decreased the market share of local brands considerably in the recent past and therefore the local brands should explore new strategies to influence the rural consumers and try to retain their market share for survival.

• It is understood from the study that rural consumers consult product users and sales representatives if there is any clarification or doubts regarding usage of durable goods. They obtain information from advertisement, friends, relatives and neighbors. It is also interesting to note that rural consumers give the least agreement to suggestion of brands by friends and relatives. The above position reveals one important fact, that they prefer to take individual decisions, in selecting the brand based on their usage, comfort, utility, satisfaction level, price, quality etc. therefore, sales representatives/owners of the retail outlets play an
important role as consultants for all the brands keeping this fact in view, all the manufacturers or producers should educate and involve the owners of the retail outlets in all promotional activities. Sales representatives should be given enough training about the product information. This will be more effective because the sales representative/owner is the only intermediary, who is interacting with the consumers from manufacturing to consumption.

- The study revealed that a person who makes the purchase is the decision maker. This brand usage might be consulted with husband or wife according to the need. Elder members of the family can also take part in certain purchase decision. Rural consumers also give importance for purchasing a particular brand of durable products. Because there will always be a standard practice of purchase which also coincides with the attitude of not changing the brands easily. The above behaviour makes decision making processes easier for rural consumers.

- The studies revealed that majority of the consumers are using branded products. Consumers are associating superior quality, reasonable price and social status to branded products. It is also observed that even users of unbranded products are slowly shifting to branded products in the recent years. Thus branding is gaining importance in rural markets in the recent days. Rising literacy level, product awareness, media of communication, growing income levels etc., are aiding the growth of purchase of branded durable products, should try to establish their brands and capture their market share to be successful in the rural market in the years to come, through innovative marketing strategies.

- It is observed from the present study that majority of the consumers purchase durable products from retail outlets located in towns. While visiting the outlets they are expecting various choices in the brand as well as in products, in viewing the about aspect the retail outlets should give ample choices for the rural consumers by equipping themselves by multiple brands and products to cover/retain the rural consumers and improve their business.

- Discount sales, festival offers, free gifts and improved quality in purchase had been considered effective in rural markets. Though there is no predominant influence of these offers, these attempts will help rural consumer to move on to an
expected level in purchase of selected products. Hence, the manufacturer of products shall pay attention on these aspects and possibility try to win the rural market through these promotional offers.

5.4 CONCLUSION

On assessing various aspects of rural consumer behaviour, the research concludes that there is no big difference between the perception levels of rural consumers as compared to urban consumers. Rural consumers are able to realise the need of the product, good awareness about the product and getting information from various sources about the products. They are particular about purchasing from retail outlets where they can purchase durable products. Through experience they study various characteristics of the product and judge the quality of product. They are able to collect more information about the durable products through Television advertisements and Newspapers. The rural consumer behaviour prefers the product making decision about purchasing and expressing their level of satisfaction. The rural consumers can refer the brand and stick on to the same brand if they are satisfied or they may shift their brands if they are dissatisfied with the utility and comfort of the product as well as availability of the product in the rural market. Brand Image and quality plays vital role in the post purchase satisfaction among rural consumers and this leads to Brand loyalty. Rural consumers play a crucial role in determining the behavioural aspects of brand and royalty of brand. In coming years the rural consumers in the market cannot be ignored and the marketers need to give more importance to them to survive in the market and run the business in most successful way.

5.5 SCOPE FOR THE FURTHER RESEARCH

After completion of every study there is always scope for further research. The following areas are displayed for further research that may be conducted in future by researchers.

- A study on rural consumers’ behavior on non-durable goods may be undertaken.
- A study on rural consumers’ behavior on other durable goods can be conducted.
- Comparative study on rural and urban consumers’ behavior on durable goods.