Preface

"Attitudes are always seen as Precursors of behaviour, as determinants of how a person will actually behave in his daily affairs".

- Arthur R. Cohen

Marketing, in the broadest sense, encompasses the entire system for bringing goods and services to actual and potential users. It includes understanding customer desires and designing, distributing, and informing potential customers of the means to satisfy these desires. Today, what marketers and advertisers are worried about is how to develop a scalable model of influencing the consumers' mind over a period of time and keep it going. Established marketers and advertising agencies can make a difference and develop a scalable channel or communication model to understand consumer.

The present research in marketing examines how a market operates from its influences of socio-economic factors and it may study how consumers respond to the marketing activities of suppliers. This, in turn, leads to better understanding of how to manage these activities to serve suppliers or the community as a whole.

Life-style, as used in life-style segmentation-research, measures people's activities in terms of their interest. These are: 1) How they spend their time engaging in activities. What interests them most and its relation to their immediate surroundings? 2) Their opinions and views about themselves and the world around them (What a person thinks of his self and the world). 3) Some basic characteristics such as their age, income, education, stage in life cycle and where they live. Together, these three areas are generally referred to as activities, interests and opinions or simply AIOs.

Being true believers in the marketing concept, the researcher has tried his best to meet the needs of marketers to understand the product perceptions, which are portrayed through the lifestyle segments, can be useful inputs to the marketers who target to reach the potential consumers. Through perfect prediction is not possible, yet a reliable and in-depth understanding of current AIO's can provide some important insights to predict better their behaviour. This study would definitely meet the needs of consumers,
students, marketing practitioners and teachers of marketing by providing useful information that is highly reliable, readable and explains the relevant concepts upon which the discipline of consumer behaviour is based.

This study is presented in six chapters:

First chapter is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the introduction on the conceptual overview of consumer lifestyle, Psychographics, VALS and their significance in the marketing strategies. Second part of this chapter is sample profile of the respondents. Second and third chapters deal with consumer perceptions for Personal-care and Household products, an attempt is made to trace the dominant factors bearing a significant influence on their purchase decision making. Aspects such as brand usage, major influencers, generic buying motives, rating of the brand and their propensity for brand changes are analyzed. Fourth Chapter presents an analysis of the consumer purchase behaviour for personal care and household products. It examines to identify the major choice determinants in the purchase process in order to outline their behaviour. Their behaviour is studied in terms of store preference, price perceptions, search effort, advertisement, media and shopping companions. Fifth chapter attempts to analyze the consumer lifestyle and develop psychographic profiles using the AIO inventory across a wide variety of perceptions. Subsequently, attempts are also made to correlate the identified lifestyle variables and product variables to reflect the lifestyle influences on consumer choice. A complete and meaningful consumer profile is traced out compiling on the demographic, lifestyle and product variables emerged form the analysis. Sixth Chapter is the last and concluding chapter consists of summary and conclusions. Besides, some useful suggestions have also been made in order to fulfill the objectives.

(K. VENKAIAH BABU)