PREFACE

I joined teaching profession in July 1999 with an objective to 'create and disseminate knowledge through the divine experience of continuous two-way learning, research and consultancy'. The first part of the statement is much broader and forays its presence throughout life. Notwithstanding the holistic aspect, I have been experiencing it right from the day one of my teaching career. I fully know that it is passion and not compulsion that gives the holy experience of two-way learning. In order to fulfill the second, one of the most important aspects of the statement i.e. research, I decided to join Ph. D in September 1999 and did so too at Bhavnagar University, Bhavnagar; of course, on the advise of few well wishers. However, constraints, developed mainly on account of certain unforeseen and uncontrollable circumstances, did not allow me to complete the embarked task in time. Nevertheless, my aspiration for the highest academic qualification did not end there. It took me some time to deregister from the esteemed university. My firm belief in the almighty God and constant persuasion paid off in October 2006 when I got myself registered at Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar in the topic of "Consumer Buying Behaviour: A Study of Selected Categories of White Goods in the State of Gujarat" under the guidance of Prof. H. J. Jani.

It's not been easy to earn, make others learn and learn for Ph. D, as the present academic scenario is extremely competitive and demanding. Against all man-made and unforeseen situations, I managed to work out things in extremely systematic manner and my Ph. D Progress Reports during the last three years stands as testimony to it. As required by my institute, I set my priorities, followed all my service obligations and never allowed the research work take a front seat. The minimal sanctioned vacation holidays (includes both Diwali and Summer vacations) were utilized to further the Ph. D work. I convey my sincere gratitude to the Secretary, Kelavani Mandal, Principal, Indukaka Ipcowala Institute of Management (I²IM), all board members & executives and other staff members for the same.

I²IM was set up in the year 2006 with the vision of emerging as a significant management institute meeting the needs of society through creation and
dissemination of world-class cutting-edge knowledge. It adopted as its mission the development of managers of excellence with entrepreneurial and leadership qualities. The Institute has been striving to achieve its mission and realize its vision through the MBA programme then affiliated to Gujarat University, Ahmedabad and presently as constituent of Charotar University of Science and Technology (CHARUSAT), Changa.

As a pioneering and contributive member of the Institute and its vision respectively, I have always been conscious of my contribution with regards to research. Degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Sardar Patel University, Vallabhbh Vidyanagar was my ultimate choice in this regard as it is one of the premier universities of the country and recognized across national and international frontiers in the world of education, training, and consulting, etc. The present Ph. D research work has been undertaken with a view to contribute to the institute’s vision, mission and achieve my personal objective (as stated earlier) and work towards the development of the society as a whole. I consider myself extremely fortunate and blessed as to belong to this elite class of few.

One of the objectives of Ph. D is to facilitate the research scholar’s teaching and research capabilities as well as improving substantive knowledge on specific areas of management. The present research work (based on primary and secondary data) has definitely enhanced my research skills as it provided hands-on experience to research and use of statistical techniques that were learned through application of relevant software.

The present thesis is based on extensive literature review carried out from variety of sources namely books, journals, magazines, newspapers, internet (web sites) and collection of e-resources generated during my participation in 30th Faculty Development Programme in Management (FDPM) organized by Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIMA). I have taken utmost care to quote the original source / author either as endnote, footnote or in the bibliography or at all the places. I express my sincere thanks to all the original contributors for providing me with a direction to work on. However, if
inadvertently, I have forgotten to mention some sources, I express my apology to the original contributors of these sources.

It is said that "Small things make perfection, but perfection is no small thing". Man's endurance for perfection never ends and indeed it is the essence of innovation. I have tried for perfection and have left no stone unturned to prepare this thesis. I hope that the work presented here will be helpful to the scholars, researchers, organizational managers', and other interested persons for their future work / decisions in the area of consumer buying behaviour in general or white goods industry in particular.

I also sincerely hope that my present research experience paves way for achieving the third part of my objective namely to undertake consultancy.

Govind B Dave