Chapter 6

Summary, Conclusions & Recommendations
This chapter presents summary, draws conclusions and makes recommendations for packaged food Industry & General Public and presents the directions for further research. It is divided into three sections, section one draws conclusions based on the analysis of Chapter 3, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. Section two presents recommendations for the Packaged Food Companies and for General Public, while section three provides directions for the further research.

6.1. Conclusions

Food is not just eaten for its nutrient value; for many people it is a source of pleasure, an enjoyable experience and even a comforting activity. The properties of individual foodstuffs, such as taste, texture, quality, smell and appearance, play an important role in whether a person will choose to consume an item.

A number of studies have found sensory factors to be among the most influential in determining eating behaviour. In a pan-European survey, looking at consumer attitudes to food, nutrition and health, when consumers were asked about their influences on food choice behaviour, ‘quality’ was the most mentioned influence and ‘taste’ was within the first three mentioned.

a. Rural Consumers’ Attitude towards Branded Packaged Food

Rural consumers may expect more Sensory Appeal of a Branded Packaged Food. They have a strong opinion that Branded Packaged Food Products generally looks nice, smells nice and tastes good. So, they may find a Branded Packaged Food with the best package only. In present days, rural households are so particular about lunch box of their school going children. They may expect fresh and nutrition food
for their children. The assumptions of rural households are like the branded products are nutritious. This may necessitate them to tune towards Branded Packaged Food Products in more usage. It shows that the respondents are more positive towards the factor of Sensory Appeal of Branded Packaged Food Products and Married consumers are little more mindful to eat Branded Packaged Food.

All kinds of rural consumers irrespective of their demographic profiles, they generally felt that the Branded Packaged Food Products will help consumers to be relaxed, cheer consumers up and make consumers feel good. Several food varieties, convenience in food preparation, availability and accessibility for these products in rural market are a positive turn to food manufacturing corporations.

Rural consumers who seek for a Branded packaged Food Products are mostly Small & Medium Family households and Employees & Landlords. That means monthly income holders and people with good income may have an intention towards Branded Products. Usually in rural area, households who are not engaged in other works (agricultural work, etc.) may spend time in watching Television, engage with school going children. The effective advertisement will grab the attention of viewers. It involves his or her interest into the product. The high involvement of a customer will take him or her to get an experience of that product. At the time of purchase of food item, most of the customers will listen to their conscious mind (i.e. high involvement of him or her into a product). Apart from this, the urbanized culture of these groups of customers (i.e. timely lunch, tea / coffee, snacks, which is not at all rural culture) will lead to seek for branded packaged food at rural shop.

Grabbing the attention of rural consumers is one thing, but to truly create consumer-brand image, packaging must appeal to a consumer's wants, needs and lifestyle.

Packaging makes products and brands tangible to consumers. Shoppers can actually pick a product from the shelf, hold it, read the front or back panel, shake it, sniff it and make a purchase decision. Since packaging is the ultimate touch point after the product itself. For example; Most of the children in rural area adopted for
Kurkure, Lays, etc. Parents may purchase them without hesitation and much recognition of these products. Most of the rural customers are becoming as customers or consumers for such a food item without much awareness being it is liked by their children.

Illiterates / less literacy holders are felt much more comfort in Branded Packaged Food Products comparatively with literates / high education holders. Post Graduates & high educated people have their knowledge towards pros and cons of packaged food. And they may also read several research reports trough dailies/ journals/ periodicals/ etc, that the packaged food contains chemicals which may harm human health.

Awareness towards Branded Packaged Food in rural consumers’ is increasing. To expand their brand awareness in rural consumers companies shall concentrate on Illiterate and low income grade people in rural market. The urbanized culture in rural consumers is a turning point to the corporations to spread their product development speedily towards target consumer in rural India. However, most of the time, consumers merely prefer traditional food which will prepare at home or manufacture at local shop. For example; people prefer a bread item manufactured at local shop instead of Britannia Bread which will be available at medical stores and big Provisional stores. People purchase junk food at sweet stall instead of purchasing Haldiram’s packaged food.

Rural consumers have a general opinion towards factor Health of Branded Packaged Food Products that these products won’t harm human health. It reveals that the positive thinking of rural consumers towards Branded Packaged Food.

The product knowledge of rural consumers may be very limit in the rural market. It is also known from Table 3.14 that the rural consumers may blindly accept Branded Packaged Food Products in the rural market. Though the acceptance level of Agricultural Labourer is 76 percent, comparatively which is lower to the other groups of consumers in the rural market. Agricultural Labourer are the prominent consumers for such products like sachets @ Rs. 1/-, sambar powder,
rasam powder, etc, @ Rs. 2/- and snacks like kurkure, Lays, etc, @Rs. 5/-, households of these segments are purchasing products for their children, just based on their awareness of the product instead of product knowledge.

Low income grade people accept that the ingredients in Branded Packaged Food Products are natural and do not have any artificial ingredients in them. Likewise middle age group households, landlords and employees are okay for these Branded Packaged Food Products. But only this may not good enough, to make consumers to consume branded food.

People may accept Branded Packaged Food Products to economize time while preparing food. The urgency in their daily works and not much importance for food preparation also may cause to this acceptance levels for Branded Packaged Food Products. When such a natural food is available and promised for customers’ good health, these acceptance levels of rural consumers for Branded Packaged Food Products may immediately turn towards the New Natural Products.

Rural consumers who are single, middle aged, well educated and high income grade group concentrate more on the factor of Weight Control of Branded Packaged Food Product. Unmarried girls / women usually will have an idea not to consume such products which consumption may cause to / lead to obesity. Women who are well educated will naturally concentrate more on such products before going to purchase. Most of them intentionally avoid packaged food with a phobia of obesity. For example; Cream Products, Ghee Products, Much Oil Products, etc.

But there are no alternatives instead of using Rasam Powder, Sambar Powder, Pulihogare Rice Mixtures, Instant Noodles, etc. People are forced to consume it because of its flavor, taste, colour, etc. Small and medium (Nuclear) families will mostly depend on such products due to no awareness of food preparation or it is easy preparing method. And most of them used to say that packaged food may not cause obesity.

Rural consumers are moderately tuning towards Packaged Food Culture.
There are several reasons, accountably 'not interested in stored and packed food', 'phobia in obesity', 'no trust on ingredients of packed food', 'a strong belief that packaged food is caused to ill health', 'insistence to kitchen made products by elders of the house', etc. But most of the times rural consumers are purchasing these goods Cognitionally due to 'convenience' in food preparation, tastes good, smells nice, colour, food varieties, instant mixtures, rice recipes, etc. For example; Rasam Powder, Sambar Powder, Rice Mixture Pulhogare, etc

b. Distinguish Attitudinal Behaviour of Rural Consumers’ Attitude towards Branded Packaged Food

Most researchers agree that an attitude has three components: affect, behavior and cognition. ‘Affect’ refers to emotional aspect. Consumers enjoy the process of consumption. People show special preference to branded packaged food, because they gain happiness form it. ‘Behavior’ highlight the outcome of consumption, it is conditioning. Some people choose branded packaged food, maybe because it is the only food available at nearby shop of consumer. ‘Cognition’ relates to rational choice. Customers know much about one product and their own need, because they know that it is with a good taste and promotes health. These three elements of attitude can be regarded as the ABC model.

Rural consumers both men & women are getting excitement towards Sensory Appeal (it looks good, smells nice, good taste). It is a common psychology of human being is to taste or test the food items at least once which are available in very nearer to them. Rural consumers are no exception. They will try such products at least once and get an idea about that product. Being a food item, no many experiences are required. If any dissatisfaction occurred to consumers, their purchasing behavior will change immediately.

Behaviourally, they are getting back to their decision while purchasing Branded Packaged Food Products. Women respondents are looking into the price of Branded Packaged Food. Comparatively, local manufactured products are less in price and more in quantity. Though the rural women are more familiar about Branded Packaged Food Products than rural men, they are having a less acceptance
level to pay premium price for Branded Packaged Food Products. We also can see rural consumers' willingness to pay for Branded Packaged Food Products in the next chapter. This can be understood that the rural consumer is more concerned about price & quantity rather than brand.

Though the rural men & women consumers have more acceptance levels towards factor *Health*, they have very less acceptance levels towards *Natural Content, Weight Control, Culture and Safety* of Branded Packaged Food Products. Irrespective of *Gender* both men & women opined similar towards Branded Packaged Food Products.

There is not only less acceptance but also accountable ignorance towards *Natural Content, Weight Control, Culture and Safety* of Branded Packaged Food Products. Depending on the situation, rural consumers will take a decision to purchase them. Some time, rural consumers purchase Branded Packaged Food Products without hesitation and much knowledge about them. They may not be in a position to explain why they have purchased them, but consume them.

This can be understood that the urbanized culture is making rural consumers to turn up towards Branded Packaged Food Products. It also can be understood that the attitudinal behaviour of rural consumers towards ‘Affect (Sensory Appeal, Mood & Brand Image)’ is high in acceptance level. There is no much variations in either *Married* or *Single* attitudinal behavior of rural consumers towards ‘Affect’ of food choice behaviours.

It also can be concluded that the attitudinal behavior of rural consumers towards ‘Behaviour (Convenience, Price & Familiarity)’ is at moderate acceptance level. There are distinct behaviors of rural consumers between what they feel (Affect) and what they do (Behaviour). The response of rural consumers towards *Price* of Branded Packaged Food Products is almost moderate. *Married* respondents felt more positive than *Single* respondents towards *Price*. 

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Married housewives usually have a common responsibility to take care of monthly budget of their home. They will plan for food items; compare costs between homemade food and available packaged food at nearby shop. Some will give high priority for convenience. And there is another drawback for Packaged Food Companies that the Married households have less Familiarity when compared with Single respondents for Branded Packaged Food Products.

Though the packaged food companies are spending a lot of money on Brand Promotion like sponsoring Television Mega Serials, Special Programmes, etc, reaching rural consumer is still under covering. It is also observed that the consumers have a high positive thinking towards Health in Branded Packaged Food Products, they do not think in the same line about Natural Content, Weight Control Mechanism in them. And towards Culture and Safety, consumers are thinking in moderate around 70 percent.

Usually in rural area, old and middle age people will have full freedom to spent money on food items. Younger people have less scope to spend. They usually depend on parents or elders in the family. Sometime, even the interest of this group will be led by elders in the family. It can be concluded through the figure 3.3 that the less than 25 years respondents are less in their opinion in all factors except at ‘Familiarity’ of Branded Packaged Food Products to the middle age group 25 – 35 years.

Though they are very familiar about Branded Packaged Food Products through Television, Print ads, Friends, Sales Promotions, Shopkeepers, the decision making will be the elders in the family. This group will act as an information source. Since they are not the decision maker to purchase items, they usually have less concentration, except what they can spend like snack items, Lays, Kurkure, Moongdal, etc. In another aspect of this age group, they are not the responsible for food in the family. 25 – 35 years age consumers are more positive in all factors to the other groups except convenience and familiarity. 35 years & above respondents felt Branded Packaged Food Products are more convenient for food preparation, Product availability. When compared with one another 25-35 years age people are
having much more responsibility for food preparation at home and they are the decision makers what to purchase and what to prepare.

It can be concluded from figure 3.4 that education plays a major role in consumers’ decisions to purchase Branded Packaged Food. Irrespective of education, the consumers felt more about Sensory Appeal of Branded Packaged Food Product. And through education, consumers are getting more clarity about the ingredients in a packaged food, duration (lifetime of the product - the period between manufacturing and expiry dates) of the product, product usage, process of food preparation, etc. Educated customers are seeing the product package and coming to an opinion. In this process, consumers are having product knowledge. They are comparing similar type of products of different companies or local manufactured products or home made products and coming to one idea to purchase or not to purchase of Branded Packaged Food.

While purchasing products who studied College (Intermediate / Degree) Education and PG Education have above kind of attitude more when compared with other consumers in rural area. Comparatively, Degree and PG education holders may have certain product knowledge towards Branded Packaged Food Products. They are aware of pros and cons of these products through the News Papers and Television Channels, etc.

It is common thing in the rural area that the consumers will enquire about newly introduced products into the market. For enquiry, they may depend on educated children. Educated children may influence the households’ decision to purchase Branded Packaged Food Products in the rural market.

It can be concluded from Figure 3.5 that the Agricultural Labourers have a high positive thinking towards Sensory Appeal; it is above to other occupational consumers. They also have high acceptance levels towards Health of Branded Packaged Food Products. The financial capacity of this particular segment of people may not be enough or propose to purchase Branded Packaged Food. This particular segment of people may not have awareness even to express their opinion towards
Natural Content, Weight Control and Safety. They have moderate acceptance level towards culture of Branded Packaged Food Product. It may be occasional. Financial capacity of them may not support them to be continued for these products.

Landlords who have more acceptance levels towards ‘Affect, Behaviour & Cognition’ of food choice factors would like to try everything which is allowed by their financial capacity. Something like discount or advertisements of new products of dishes absorb consumers to ask Branded Packaged Food Products. their mood, the sensory appeal of food or some specific imagine referring to food will be highlighted to make them repeat consumption behaviour. So, hedonic consumers cannot explain the exact reasons of their consumption behaviour.

Employees have high acceptance level towards ‘Affect’, moderate to ‘Behaviour’ and ‘Cognition’. Employees in rural market are more brand concerned, it may be the reason that they are well educated, adapt urbanised culture and have monthly income. They come close to urban schools for their children education. Follow urbanised culture in rural area. Self Business people in rural area are similar like agricultural labourer or landlords. Their income may not suggest them to go for Branded Packaged Food in all purchases. They felt the price of Branded Packaged Food Products are very high comparatively than all other occupational consumers. they have a moderate opinion like other consumers towards ‘Behaviour & Cognition’ for Branded Packaged Food Products.

It can conclude that the consumers have a high positive thinking towards Branded Packaged Food Products. ‘AFFECT’ (what the consumers feel) food choice behavior of rural consumer is turning towards high positive due to the Sensory Appeal (looks good, smells nice and good taste) of Branded Packaged Food. The Brand Image of Packaged Food in rural consumers is moderate. It may take time to enrich brand knowledge in rural consumer for all kinds of products. In present days, very few products and brands are well familiar in rural markets. For example: Lays, kurkure, Tiger Biscuits, Horlicks, Aachi, BSF, Chik shampoo, Clinic Plus, Rexona soaps, Santoor soaps, etc, less or moderate price goods. Some special customers are
there in rural are for premium brands, shopkeepers treat them as special consumers and sell the products separately.

Most of the times, these particular consumers may not depend on rural shopkeepers for their products. Average income people will purchase this premium Branded Packaged Food Products occasionally, like at discount price, available as additional products, on special occasions, etc.

Factor of Convenience (takes no time to preparation of food, available in nearby shops) in Branded Packaged Food Products is accepted by all kinds of consumers. Irrespective of income, all kinds of consumers accepted it. Manufacturing companies push their products into the rural markets being it is high potential market for their products. Companies are increasing their sales promotions to attract these untapped potential customers in rural market. Almost all packaged food companies are turned into small packets (Sachets) as less priced products to attract rural consumers and to get accessibility of them.

Still, either income group of consumers is not convinced by food manufacturing and/or marketing companies that these Branded Packaged Food Products are cheap, value for their money. Rural consumers may both quality and quantity conscious. They may find each price to spend, must be in value return of that product. They may not mind about that the additional cost happen for availability of such products in rural markets. This may be another drawback of Branded Packaged Food Products. Shopkeepers charge extra price on listed price of such premium products in rural markets. For example: list price of a cool drink is Rs. 10, but rural shopkeepers charge minimum of Rs.12. They may feel, it is high cost to them. Very few consumers will purchase such premium products based on the occasion or on special interest.

It can be observed that the consumers have a high positive thinking towards Health in Branded Packaged Food Products, they do not think in the same line about Natural Content, Weight Control Mechanism in Branded Packaged Food Products. And towards Culture and Safety consumers think in moderate around 72 percent.
Rural consumers know about the Branded Packaged Food Products, getting excitement towards Package / Sensory Appeal / Convenience in food preparation / but behaviourally having Limitations / Phobias. Finally the hedonic consumption is happening by consumers in rural consumers.

- All consumers appreciate Sensory Appeal to have good taste and relish of food. Irrespective of categories including age groups can prefer this method of usage of food quickly in short time.
- Married women taking with food mind for taste and patability. Others are not caring much of Mood for Branded Packaged Food Products.
- Attractive feeling (Brand Image) encourages them to prepare in short time to save time, expenditure and labour while food preparation.
- All groups (mostly 85 percent) will appreciate the convenience of Branded Packaged Food Products and consumer items which are available very near to eyesight.
- Low income grade people mostly prefer low rates to the moderate of their living standards. Since Branded Packaged Food Products are costly, most of the times rural consumers prefer local manufactured products.
- Women are not much familiar about different kinds of similar goods and they will purchase after visiting one or two shops.
- Rural consumers with an anxiety and save much time purchase commodities in hasty.
- Senior women usually verify the capacity of food grains for usage and to use them more.
- Quality of materials is much more important as they have to be saved for longer time for further use in houses rather than for short time of wastage. Thereby women would have awareness of purchasing food and as well as domestic materials.
- Culture imposes brightness on domestic administration wherein ladies are prominent decision makers.
- Women prefer quality products as the products are to be in shorter harvest and think for mortal usage. Rising prices in shops are not much manageable.
by lower income groups and in the marginal level benefits to be provided to the lower income groups.

c. Rural Consumers' Attitude towards Willingness to pay for Branded Packaged Food

It can be concluding through the table 4.1 that irrespective of Gender, rural consumers' Willingness to Pay for Branded Packaged Food Products is 69 percent. It may be the reason that the Branded Packaged Food Products are available in small packets for lower prices in rural market. And through sales promotions companies are reaching the rural consumers in a passionate manner to the rural consumers. When the Branded Packaged Food Product is available at local manufacturing cost and quantity, there is no reason to hesitate these products to the rural consumers. Particularly, women consumers are more concerned about such benefits in markets being it is more benefit in their budget.

Rural consumers who are 35 years & above are more positive around 74 percent towards Willingness to Pay for Branded Packaged Food Products than the consumers less than 25 years and 25-35 years whose Willingness to Pay is around 65 percent and 71 percent respectively. This may be the reason that the financial freedom or capacity of this group and freedom in decision making will have a high positiveness towards Branded packaged Food Products.

Though the other age group of consumers is more interested in packaged food, have an acceptance from elders is common in rural area. Now and then, younger’s decision may be accepted by the elders but not all times. Particularly in food preparation, family conditions may give first priority to the elders in rural area.

There are no countable variations in Willingness to Pay for Branded Packaged Food Products, among different literacy holders like primary, high school, intermediate & degree, post graduates towards Willingness to Pay for Branded Packaged Food Products.
Irrespective of education all kinds of consumers (around 70 percent) have shown their willingness to pay for Branded Packaged Food Products. And there is no significant relationship between education level of rural consumers and their willingness to pay for Branded Packaged Food Products.

However, the rural consumers are willing to pay for premium branded packaged food products. Due to their special appearance, varieties in food, good taste, available in nearby shops, at small packets with feasible price, etc, are tempting the rural consumer to experience packaged food products. Particularly, high income people (Landlords) are more interested on such packaged food items.

In current days, the financial strength or capacity may not suggest less income group (i.e. Rs. 5,000 and 10,000 per month) to go for Premium Products. Being companies already followed a penetration strategy that introducing a well branded product for a small price (in a less quantity) is attracted or tempted the potential rural consumer. And the promotional strategies of these big companies are more attractive and informative.

We can conclude that there is no significant relationship between marital status and willingness to pay for Branded Packaged Food Products. And there are no much differences of opinions between single and married respondents towards willingness to pay for Branded Packaged Food Products.

In present days, nuclear families percentage is increased even in rural area. People prefer individual houses and individual lives after marriage. Even parents / elders, they are accepting this concept with an intention that there shall be no splits among people in the same family.

Almost 70 percent of the rural people depend on agriculture. Their income may not suggest them to go for premium products (Branded Products), since Branded Packaged Food Products are premium products. Though Sachets (less price and small quantity) are available in rural market, the quantity may not be enough for
big families. So, these people usually go for homemade preparation or they approach local made products.

Logically, small towns / big villages will have good infrastructure facilities. In current days, it became very easy to connect with nearby towns / cities. Especially, Chittoor District is connected with five plus national high ways and two other states’ boarders. A small village connected with any national high way is running at least one Dhaba / Snack & Beverages Shops, small hotels, etc. Likewise, many villages in Chittoor District is in and around of one big pilgrim center. And population size of the village is playing its importance to establish such stores at their village. Particularly, some companies are promoting their shops & goods also in such villages.

The availability of Branded Packaged Food Products in such a village is also quite common due to well established shops in customers’ accessibility and affordability.

Married women have to carry much responsibility in house management which includes purchasing of food products and of their best benefits.

Good food materials are much preferable by women rather than bazaar’s hold products. Branded foods are set to be using efficiency after long time and products which are to be tasty and live efficiently in shorter period are to be preferred mostly, which save money and time.

*It can conclude that there is less regression between Demographic variables and Willingness to Pay for Branded Packaged Food Products.*

d. Following Promotional Activities and Consumption of Rural Consumers

Married women have to carry much responsibility in house management which includes purchasing of food products and of their best benefits. Good food materials are much preferable by women rather than bazaar’s hold products. Branded foods are set to be using efficiency after long time and products which are
to be tasty and live efficiently in shorter period are to be preferred mostly, which save money and time.

Women consumers are more positive towards Branded Packaged Food Products. They will Follow the Promotional activities and improve the Consumption pattern of Branded Packaged Food Products.

The educated rural women are trying or testing the products available in rural market. Whenever they watch an advertisement of food item on TV, they think, whether the product is worthy/ useful and tests it once or twice. They also enquire and share the same with neighbours. When they feel it convenient, tasty & value return, they may repurchase that product.

Agricultural Labourers' and Daily Wagers' income may not support them to have many facilities and spent time on some relished food items. Apart from this segment everybody is in touch with Branded Packaged Food Products. And people in rural area are Following Promotional Activities of Branded Packaged Food Products and consuming them.

Income may not be important in consumption of the Branded Packaged Food Product. The awareness may be low when the facilities are less at home. The frequency of consumption may be less due to low income. Apart from electronic devices there are so many things are which can create awareness of food items.

However, there is a significant relationship that people will get aware of food products through marketing communications of food companies through different media. Income and occupation may not be a constraint to taste of the food products. And awareness of these products may not be only through electronic media, it may be on word of mouth, from shopkeepers, in neighbours discussions, etc.

And in general, for food products there is no hesitation from either group of people (income/ occupation/ caste/ education/ family size/ etc.). It's a common
psyche of rural or urban consumers to taste it once as a trail. It's nothing to worry for one time consumption.

Shop keepers should enlighten the richness of food items to the customer, especially women. So that they can concentrate on purchasing the same items further which helps them to save much time.

6.2. Recommendations

a. Contribution for Packaged Food Industry

The recommendations made here are based on the conclusions of this study. This may help the food manufacturing companies that the ways to enter into rural market, understand rural consumers, and promote & sell their products.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)

The scheme guarantees 100 days of employment (in a financial year) to every household those volunteers to participate. It has resulted in a rise in minimum wages in many states, with the average wage rise being around 32%. The purchasing power is increased in rural India.

i. Follow 4 A's approach for Rural Marketing

It is essential to all marketers / manufacturers that to find and satisfy consumers in rural market requires some strategic approaches. These are

1. Availability: The first challenge is to ensure availability of products. Reaching rural villages which spread over 3.2 million sq. km, with 700 million rural Indians may require different channel distribution marketing strategies.

2. Affordability: The second challenge is to ensure affordability of the products. With low disposable income, rural consumers may not afford premium products. So products must be affordable to the rural consumers. Some companies consider it by introducing small unit packs,
e.g. Lays @ Rs.5/-, Bombino Sambar Powder @ Rs. 2/-, MTR Pulihogare @ Rs. 6/-.

3. **Acceptability:** The third challenge is to gain acceptability for the products. Therefore, there is a need to offer products that suit the rural consumer needs and customs. E.g. Priya Pickles @ Rs. 10/- in place of homemade ‘PACCHADI’, 90 percent of the common man’s common soup.

4. **Awareness:** Events like festivals, haats etc., are to be used for brand communication. Ideas like putting sticker on the hand pumps, walls of the wells, tin palates on trees surrounding the ponds etc. are some of the innovative media used by soap companies like Lux, Lifeboy, Rin and Wheel. The idea is to advertise at the time of consumption.

**ii. Planning for Marketing Campaign**

Under project “Bharat” HUL vans visited villages and sold small packs of low unit price. It includes detergent powder, toothpaste, face cream and talcum powder for Rs. 15. During the sales, the company representatives also demonstrate the usage of the products with the help of a video show. This creates awareness about HUL product categories and availability of affordable packs.

- Packaged food companies can follow marketing campaigns, can recruit sales representative to reach rural consumers directly, establish dealer distributions may give increasing sales.

**iii. Finding Rural Potential Consumer**

- **Affluent Group:** This group is very small. This group can afford luxury products.

- **Middle Class:** This class is about 300 million in size and continues goes on expanding. It forms the base for demand of manufactured goods in the
country.

- **Poor:** This class is about 250 million in size. Their purchasing power is very low.

**iv. Rural Potential Market**

- **Wide Scope to Variety of Products:** After 2000, food manufacturing companies found the potential market in rural India. Still, many of the companies are not taken rural India as their potential market.

- **Rural Consumerism:** Rural consumers are more concerned with the utility of the product and its appearance. Rural consumers will seek for free products / as additional products under sales promotions. There may be wide scope that the rural consumers’ product satisfaction will repurchase that product.

- **Low Brand Awareness:** It badly requires improving product knowledge among rural consumers. Resolving rural consumers’ package phobia is the major duty of packaged food companies.

**v. Marketing Mix Strategies for Rural India**

- **Product Design:** Packaged Food Companies shall concentrate on rural culture. There may be wide scope which the package appearance will stripe consumers’ involvement.

- **Application of Value Engineering:** The aim of value engineering is to reduce the value of the product so that a larger segment of population can afford it to buy. Example: Soya protein can be used instead of milk protein, nutrition content of both is same but the soya protein is cheaper than milk protein.

- **Brand Name / Product name:** The brand name should instantly be understood by the rural consumers. Rural consumers are unfamiliar with
English and absurd names. More preferably rural brand is a symbol, logo or color. (For example; Priya, Ruchi, MTR, etc.)

- **Low Cost Products:** Rural customer is price conscious because of low income. The price can be kept low, by low unit packaging. This is a common strategy adopted by many companies marketing in rural areas. Example – *same as of small unit packs*.

- **Refill / Reusable Packaging:** Refill packs benefits the rural consumers in terms of price and also the packaging material should be reusable in rural areas.

- **Less Convenient Buying, Less Retail Outlets:** Distribution channels are very less towards Branded Packaged Food Products in rural India. It is still at beginning stage. Massive distribution of beverages companies made rural India changing culture from buttermilk to cool drinks. Likewise a massive distribution is required for packaged food companies improving product knowledge and brand awareness. Good appearance of a product in a shop will create an intention in rural consumers’ mind. They may recall an advertisement what they have seen in Television. Even a small percentage of sales increasing in rural India will lead to a big sales volume of a company.

- **Stockist’s Van / Company Owned Vehicles:** In this system, a salesman loads the van with stocks and from the company stock point and distribute in the surrounding market. Then he moves the next stock point and covers all surrounding markets. In this way, he moves from one stock point to another and returns to company’s stock point. It is the best but an expensive method.

- **Hired Vehicles:** In this system, the salesmen hire a public carrier like a taxi or a truck. The disadvantage of this system is that the salesman has to spend lot of time in organizing transport.
• **Working by Independent Stockist**: In this system, in spite of having salesman, company gives this job to the stockist. Each stockist is asked to cover his surrounding market. It is useful only to companies with high volume turnover.

• **Selling Through Bullock Cart/Camel**: This is used to market in remote villages with no motorable roads. In this system the number of outlets covered is limited because of slow transportation.

• **Appointment of Primary Dealers**: Here a big retailer in a village is appointed as a primary dealer and is asked to purchase the goods from nearby stockist with a special discount.

• **Using Urban Wholesalers**: Company can ask the urban wholesaler to recommend and sell its products through their rural retailers. In return, company shall provide incentives on actual sales made.

• **Point Of Purchase**: Point of purchase or point of sale is popular promotional tool used in rural market. POPs should be especially designed to suit rural requirements. POPs. Colours, symbols and pictures should be used more than the written words.

• **Outdoors**: Outdoors such as hoardings, wall paintings, illuminations and other displays are also now being used for rural communication.

• Shop keepers should enlighten the richness of food articles to the purchase, especially women. So that they can concentrate purchasing the same items in further times which helps them to save much time.
vi. Duplicate and Counterfeit Products in Rural Market

Spurious products are the copy of established brand name at a cost of few thousand rupees and sold it in the rural market. This duplication takes place in all sectors and especially in FMCG, food items and medicines.

Counterfeiting is a kind of duplication where the fake products bear the identical name of the original product, its packaging, graphics, color pattern, design and even same name and address as the genuine manufacturer. A pass-off product is one that comes with a few minor changes from the original product. The slight changes are made to avoid legal problems.

Example:
- Head and Shower – Head and Shoulder
- Pantane – Pantene
- Sunmilk – Sunsilk
- Lifebuoy – Loveboy
- Climik Plus – Clinic Plus
- Parla G – Parle G
- Vikas – Vicks

vii. Recruitment of regional Sales Representatives

- A sales representative and a rural dealer may avoid this duplication as maximum as possible.

viii. Limited number of Children Brand Names

- The researcher strongly believed that in today's rapidly changing product markets, a firm needs to focus on a limited number of strategic brands in emerging markets in order to consolidate and strengthen its position and enhance brand power, targeting in suburban and rural markets with convenience packaging, pricing and psychodynamics. (Example Ashheervad- Atta, Chilli powder, Rasam powder, Sambar powder etc)
Firms looking towards managing brands in Bottom of the Pyramid (BoP) market segments need to reduce brand costs by increasing the volume of sales and augmenting consumer value. Brands of BoP market segments are socially and culturally embedded. They are co-created by consumers and firms, and positioned with the influence of brand equity of the premium market. Unlike traditional brands, BoP brands may be sufficiently malleable to support brand interpretations in the rural and suburban consumer segments.

The distribution of products and services to rural market involves high cost and effort. The marketers of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) use fixed retail shop to reach the rural consumer. The high costs for marketers in servicing the rural retail shops and the non-availability of fixed location retail shops have necessitated many marketing organizations to explore alternative channels to reach rural consumers.

The alternative channels that marketers use include the haats (periodic markets), Self-help groups (SHGs), mobile traders, network marketing/agents etc. The SHGs are of recent origin. Mobile traders have been in existence for long but conscious effort at using them is of recent origin. Some marketers have used the haat for promotion and sale of products but not as an important channel. The advantage in using the haats for reaching the products to the consumers is the cost advantage and also ability to reach the rural consumers of small and remote villages. There are a large number of small villages that do not have fixed location retail shops. A quarter of the less than 500 population villages do not have fixed location retail shop. Haats on an average caters to 25 to 50 villages and therefore haats is an option to reach consumers in the remote and small villages economically.

ix. Establishments of Regional Supermarkets (RURAL BAZARS)

The purchasing power in rural India is on steady rise and it has resulted in the growth of the rural market. The market has been growing at 3-4% per annum adding more than one million new consumers every year and now accounts for close to 50% of volume consumption of FMCG. The growth rates of lot of FMCG are higher in rural markets than urban markets. In product categories like toilet soaps,
talcum powder, cooking oil, vanaspati, ghee, tea, cigarettes and hair oil, the share of rural market is more than 50%. The estimated annual business from rural markets was Rs 1,23,000 crore, comprising Rs 65,000 crore of FMCG, Rs 5,000 crore of durables, Rs 45,000 crore of agricultural inputs including tractors and Rs 8,000 crore of two-wheelers and fourwheelers. Twenty nine per cent of the rural people own cars, 27 per cent own colour televisions, 24 per cent own refrigerators and 10 per cent own washing machines, which points to the untapped potential in the rural areas.

The Company's 'e-Choupal' initiative is enabling Indian agriculture significantly enhance its competitiveness by empowering Indian farmers through the power of the Internet. This transformational strategy, which has already become the subject matter of a case study at Harvard Business School, is expected to progressively create for ITC a huge rural distribution infrastructure, significantly enhancing the Company's marketing reach. Realising the importance of reaching the consumer, more and more companies are experimenting with alternative channels like direct marketing, rural haats, etc. Mr Press says Godrej generally keeps experimenting with alternate channels to pump up volumes. ITC is experimenting with its e-Choupal as a procurement and marketing channel to expand its presence in rural India, while HUL has a similar initiative in Project Shakti.

- There is wide scope to the marketers that there may be a phenomenal growth for rural bazaar (similar to Big Bazaar in Urban Market) where all sort of goods are available in small quantity with less price at a place which is a hub of several villages of population below 2000. Not with stand of sophistication it must be in a wide area and with similar and small haats with company representatives.

Corporate shall take an initiation to look into deep of rural culture and their consumption pattern while establishing RURAL BAZAARS in rural areas.

IIM-Raipur has made a rural stint mandatory for its students. Students of the Postgraduate Programme, the flagship course at Indian Institutes of Management,
will have to spend one week in rural India 'to understand the spirit of true India'.

According to B S Sahay, "Rural marketing is the buzzword. Many marketing managers are disconnected from the real world. When they plan to enter the rural market, they devise strategies sitting in corporate offices for a market they have seen only in 'Swades',".

Pholbasan Yadav, Padma Shri awardee, who has been working with over 10,000 women on self-help groups to set up a marketing organization in Chhattisgarh.

It is great step ahead not in order to learn marketing in rural areas but to know the needs of rural people. If at least one out of 100 can help the rural people improve their living conditions.

*Rural retail has been a tough ride for companies. Most have faced problems due to infrastructure, distribution and fluctuating rural incomes, along with competition from local kirana stores, which operate at much lower costs. In early 2010, Triveni Engineering shut its rural retail arm, Khushali Bazaar, after incurring a loss of Rs 19 crore in five years. ITC has not expanded its Choupal Sagaar business for the past few years. Godrej sold its Aadhaar rural retail business to the Future Group and the latter revamped it into a wholesale format. Hariyali Kisan Bazaar had to shut at least 70 outlets over the past couple of years.*

b. Contribution for General Public

During the course of research, it was observed that the packaged foods contain lot of synthetic chemicals that can trigger unwanted reactions in the body and may also lead to ill health.
The policy makers may throw light on educating the general public / making relevant laws to avoid the following kinds of foods, as they are literally loaded with sodium and other chemicals;

- Packaged high-calorie snack foods, like chips and cheese snacks
- Sugary breakfast cereals
- Canned foods with lots of sodium
- Frozen fish sticks and frozen dinners
- Pastas and white bread that are made with refined white flour
- Packaged cakes and cookies
- High-fat foods, like cans of ravioli
- Boxed meal mixes, loaded with sodium and fat

The general public is also advised to exercise restraint while consuming processed foods, as they are high in calories, sugar, Transfat and saturated fats. They also have a high salt content as salt is added to these foodstuffs in order to prevent the foodstuffs from spoiling by draining out the moisture and increasing the shelf life.

Given below are some ways that can be implemented by general public if they want to avoid these foods in your diet;

- Get rid of all the cans of processed foods in the cabinet and refrigerator.

- Select fresh fruits like fresh whole fruits and vegetables to replace the canned fruits and vegetables. As the fresh fruits and vegetables do not have a longer shelf life, it would motivate you to finish them off before they go bad and get a fresh stock.

- Eat meals at home and get your lunch packed from home. In this way you can eat fresh and healthy food and can also save money which you spend on fast food.

- Buy fresh meat instead of getting processed meat like bacon, hotdogs, red
eat and bacon as they are chemically treated in order to make a longer shelf life.

- Use homemade versions or substitutions of the store bought sauces. You can also make your favorite condiments and sauces with fresh ingredients or you can also try new recipes by getting a replacement for these condiments.

6.3. Directions for Further Research

The research has gone through with some specific objectives to study 'Impact of Branded Packaged Food Products on rural consumers in Chittoor District'. Specific objectives are to know the attitudinal behavior of rural consumers and distinguishing the behavior of rural consumer towards Branded Packaged Food Products, to know the rural consumers' willingness to pay for Branded Packaged Food Products and to study the role of promotion mix on rural consumers. The research is designed with certain limitations and confined to Chittoor District.

In further study, the researcher may concentrate to consider the geographical variations or behavioural variations among the rural consumers in one particular territory / zone which may show their influence on consumers’ behavior. It may also concentrate to study the awareness versus consumption levels of rural consumers

If the research was concentrated in all segments of population (users/ nonusers of Branded Packaged Food Products) the present findings would be assorted. There is a scope to know the brand knowledge among all segments of population, to find why consumers like the Branded Packaged Food Products, if not branded items what will be the other alternatives for food selection, what's the score for a brand given by a rural consumer. Altogether it will be the task to study the brand awareness and brand recall / recognition. Culture impact on brand vs. brand impact on culture will definitely provide a certain benefits for the corporate companies.