REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rural marketing is an unexplored area compared to urban markets. The reason is obvious. Marketing theories were originally developed in the urban context focusing on urban consumers and urban products. However a review of available literature is quite essential in order to finalise the focus of any research study.

Below an attempt is made to review the available literature on consumer behavior classifying those under four heads-

- Consumption pattern
- Factors influencing Consumer choice
- Consumer decision making
- Post purchase behavior

CONSUMPTION PATTERN

Philip Kotler (1965) opine that all the models so far developed by various scientist should be used in an integrated manner in order to understand the consumer in general. In his opinion, buying patterns are being influenced by price, quality, availability, service, style, option and image.

Depending on the product involved, different variables and behavioral mechanisms assume different degrees of importance in influencing the purchase decision process.

Kaul (1977) in their study conducted in Punjab, analyzing the rural and urban food consumption pattern found that consumption of relatively superior food is positively correlated with the income level of the individuals. The study also found that the usage of millets and to some extent cereals is higher in rural areas.

Rodge (2001) finds that rural consumers give more importance to the advertisements as compared to urban consumers. Both rural and urban groups found that all the advertisement media are equally important and effective.
Vijay kumar (2005) found out that age group of people is an important criterion to determine the consumption pattern of carbonated soft drinks. It is also pointed out that age, marital status, occupation and family income were significantly related to the monthly spending on soft drinks.

FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMER CHOICE

Subbalekshmi (1999) observed that rural consumers in general were influenced by the packing of the products whereas urban consumers by the promotion and product features like taste of the product.

Rodge (2001) finds that the rural consumers attach more importance to the advertisement and its impact as compared to urban consumers. He also points out that rural consumers are more influenced by electronic media than print media.

Kumar (2003) revealed that the majority of consumers are highly enlightened and are concerned of quality of the products. He also revealed that the consumers uniformly, both in urban and rural areas, desire to have quality of the products at reasonable price and trust more on the advice of the retailers.

CONSUMER DECISION MAKING

Yadav (1998) opined that the decision for buying vegetables for family consumption is dominated by wife, influenced by the likes and dislikes of the family members and by the influence of electronic media on the children.

Venkateshwaralu & Rao (2000) in their study opined that the role of women in decision making for consumer non-durables is high and in the case durables both wife and husband decide together.

Verma & Israney (2000) conducted a survey to find out the consumer attitude towards the advertisement messages revealed that the general attitude of the majority of consumers is favorable towards advertisement messages. They also pointed out that it is not easy for advertisers to persuade adult consumers to shift their brand preferences based on product advertisement alone.
Gaur & Vaheed (2002) observed that consumers buying behavior normally should include the less observable decision process that accompany consumption including where, how often and under what conditions consumers make their purchase of desired goods and services.

POST PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR / BRAND LOYALTY

Jagdish (1991) who studied customer satisfaction on Alwyn trendy watches identifies certain unique features which influence the consumers especially the youngsters such as light weight, water proof, wide choice of designs and colors, accurate indication of time and flexibility to change cases and straps.

Broudbridge & Morgan (2001) in their study on consumer buying behavior and perception towards retails brands baby products found that consumers need to feel confident with the product in terms of reliability and performance and brand names provided this assurance of quality with baby products. Further it appeared that the more distinctive a brand positioning is the less likelihood that the consumers will accept a substitute or own brands.