

Comparative study of the buying habits of rural and urban women consumers of Meghalaya

M. BARUAH AND S. BORAH

Accepted : February, 2009

See end of the article for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to:

M. BARUAH

Department of Family Resource Management, College of Home Science, Central Agricultural University, TURU (MEGHALAYA) INDIA

ABSTRACT

The involvement and influence of the women in the family purchase is not only important for the welfare of the family, it has far reaching impact on life style and standard of living of the country. The present paper is an attempt to study the buying habits of both rural and urban women consumers of Meghalaya. It was found that among the rural women consumers 46% had a good habit while purchasing packaged food items, 43% had a poor habit while purchasing clothes, almost equal distribution *i.e.* 36% had a good and poor habits while buying cosmetics, 44% had an average habit while buying consumer durables. Among urban consumers 55% had a good habit while buying packaged food item, 45% had a good habit while buying clothes, 53% had good habit while buying cosmetics, 54% had a good habit while buying Consumer durables and 49% had average habit while buying general items.

Key words : Consumers, Consumer behaviour, Buying habits, Consumer durables

Buyer consumers behaviour is a comparatively recent area of study. It tries to understand and predict human action in consumers role as a buyer. It is the study of individuals, groups or organizations and process they use to select, secure, use and dispose of products, services, experiences or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and the society. In simple words it can be stated as the behaviour exhibited by people in planning, purchasing and using economic goods and services.

The study of consumers helps firms and organizations improve their marketing strategy by understanding issues such as, the psychology of how consumers think, feel, and select between different alternatives. The psychology of how the consumers are influenced by his or her environment, the behaviour of consumers while shopping or making other marketing decisions.

Limitations in consumer knowledge or information processing abilities influence decisions and marketing outcome. How consumer motivation and decision strategy differ between products that differ in their level of importance on interest that they entail for the consumer and how marketers can adopt and improve their marketing campaigns and marketing strategies to move effectively to reach the consumers. The current investigation has been undertaken with a view to ascertain the buying habits of the rural and urban women consumers of Meghalaya.

METHODOLOGY

A two stage stratified random sampling method was adopted in order to select representative samples for the purpose of the study. Out of the seven districts of

Meghalaya two districts were purposively selected for the study *i.e.* the districts of West Garo Hills and East Khasi Hills. The total sample size of the study was 200 of which 100 from urban households and another, 100 from rural households selected randomly for the study, Interview method was considered as an appropriate tool for the study so as to get complete and reliable information. The data were analyzed in percentage, buying habits were analyzed by calculating mean and standard deviation. It was measured on the basis of always: 3, sometimes: 2, Never: 1. On the basis of scores received, the buying habits were analyzed. Mean $\pm 1.96 \times S.E$ were computed and categorized into three groups good habit, average habit and poor habit.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Buying habits of some consumers were discussed in terms of buying habits of food items, non food items like clothing, cosmetics and consumer durables.

Food items:

From Table 1 it was found that in rural areas of Meghalaya only 20% had a habit of preparing a shopping list always otherwise it was disappointing to note that about 39% sometimes prepared a shopping list and 41 % never prepared a shopping list. About 64% of the respondents reported that it was only sometimes they went to a particular shop and only 17% always bought from Cooperative Govt. Sales Centres and about 7% always bought from the wholesalers. The buying habits of urban consumers were quite different from their rural counterparts. It was seen that 59% of the urban