

## **Usage and recall of FMCG brands by rural consumers and relevant facts**

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### **Abstract**

India is a country of villages. It has mammoth rural population of 833 million spread over 640,867 villages. Rural markets are small in size, distantly scattered and heterogeneous. They provide awesome opportunities for fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies. Rural consumers aspire to use brands rather than just commodities. At this juncture, understand rural consumer usage of FMCG brands and awareness is perceived appropriate. The objective of this research paper is to study the usage and recall of FMCG brands by rural consumers in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh in India. Thus, a modest attempt is made in this paper to divulge relevant facts of the topic with empirical data. This article is quite useful to the stakeholders of rural marketing.

**Keywords:** brand recall, FMCG brands, rural consumer, rural marketing, usage

### **Introduction**

In the 1960s HLL (Hindustan Lever Limited now call it as Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL)) saw rural markets as an

opportunity and entered with Lifebuoy soap. Today, HUL dominates rural markets and has a presence in more than half of the Indian villages. FMCG majors like Colgate-Palmolive, Proctor & Gamble, Dabur India, Nirma Limited, Godrej Consumer Products Limited, CavinKare Private Limited, Jyothi Laboratories etc. followed the suit and gung-ho about rural marketing. Rural consumers now aspire to use brands rather than just commodities. For any branded product there are a multitude of local variants, which are cheaper and therefore more desirable for villagers. For instance, CavinKare launched Chik and Meera shampoo brands with low unit price for the first time in rural markets of south and succeeded. Rural consumers are used to charcoal, neem sticks, salt and other traditional means of oral hygiene. But Colgate used Operation Jagruti to successfully persuade people to convert to oral hygiene products, to the extent that toothpaste has become generic with the brand among rural consumers. HUL launched Operation Bharat in the year 1997 to create brand awareness for its rural brands and successfully addressed issues of awareness, attitudes and habits. For example, Anchor White toothpaste positioned itself as India's first 100 percent vegetarian toothpaste and effectively priced it much lower than the leading brand Colgate. Hopefully, the consumers in rural areas get exposed to such value-added, value-for-money alternatives and continue to use different categories of products (Ramkishan, 2005). Factors such as increase in literacy levels, considerable media reach, growing purchasing power, high penetration of rural brands, development in transportation and distribution have brought changes in rural consumer behavior.

### **Literature Review**

Rural markets can be segmented by price, region and season. Mass media is not as effective in rural areas as consumers are heterogeneous and scattered across India. The message for the rural consumer also must be simple about relevance and benefits of product, that too in local language with high visual content to get better attention. In fact, rural markets are a more price sensitive version of urban markets is half wrong, as prices are important, but value is even more so (Halan, 2003). The rural brand loyal consumers are found to be more price conscious for detergent powder and toilet soaps. Toothpaste is the only product for which rural market shows greater brand loyalty (Vasudeva, 1999).

The success of a brand in the Indian rural market is as unpredictable as rain. It is always difficult to gauge the rural market. Many brands, which should have been successful, have failed miserably in rural markets (Pirakatheeswari, 2010). The regional brands of FMCGs are making their aggressive presence in smaller towns and villages by participation in *melas* and exhibitions. Easily available technology, strong local area knowledge, a short supply chain and quality raw material are factors which regional players are giving big brands a run for their money. They provide better margins to distributors and retailers in rural areas (Oza, 2004). Pond's is the most favored brand followed by regional brand Gokul Sandal in rural areas of Madurai district. Most of the respondents have not changed their brand of talcum powder, suggesting existence of good degree of brand loyalty for this product category (Chidambaram and Ganeshan, 2004). HUL's Clinic Plus is the market leader in shampoo market on an all India basis. CavinKare's Chik is market leader in the rural areas where Clinic Plus is only distant second. Regional brands and niche players, with better understanding for rural market and rural specific business models and strategies, are emerging clear leaders in the rural market (Shukla, 2004).

Local players are defeating the big giants of FMCG market. Local players in particular category like in detergent cake, Kudrat, Atul, and Bartan have defeated Nirma and Wheel in achieving market share. In bathing soap category, Lux and Lifebuoy got strong competition from Vatan and Navrang. Main reasons found for the popularity of local brands have been the push strategy of retailers because of high margin profitability and also due to the familiarity with the local names. The prices of local brands are affordable for rural consumers. Chik shampoo is very much preferable because it is cheaper. Marketers should realize that as rural users are unfamiliar with English and absurd branding names, they tend to hesitate trying out such brands. This is one of the major threats still for big players in FMCG category (Naresh and Prasad, 2005).

Brand awareness of the rural consumer is qualitative in character and cannot be measured directly in quantitative terms. There is no fixed value or scale which will help to measure the brand awareness. But the awareness can be studied with the help of consumer responses to various questions (Naidu, 2004). For example, the level of awareness among the rural consumers about the brand of soft drinks is high which is indicated by the mode of purchase of the soft drinks by Brand Name.

Major source of brand awareness is the word of mouth followed by advertisement. Another factor that influences the purchase of a brand of soft drinks is product quality (Nandagopal and Chinnaiyan, 2003). Increasing awareness led to significant changes in buying behavior and consumption habits of rural consumer. Even premium brands are gaining wide acceptance in the rural bastions (Ganesamurthy, 2003).

The future is very promising for those who can understand the dynamics of rural markets and exploit them to their best advantage.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To study the FMCG brand usage of the rural consumers;
2. To examine the FMCG brand recall and awareness of the rural consumers;
3. To measure the relationship between variables.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses have been developed to test statistically:

- H1: There is no relationship between toothpaste brand recall and education level of the rural consumer.
- H2: There is no significance between shampoo brand recall and education of the rural consumer.
- H3: There is no association between the toilet soap brand recall and the level of education of the rural consumer.
- H4: There is no relationship between detergent cake brand recall and education of rural consumer.
- H5: There is no association between the detergent powder brand recall and education of rural consumer.

### **Methodology**

The study covers only five select FMCG products viz., toothpaste, shampoo, toilet soap, detergent cake and detergent powder. The survey is conducted in 40 select villages out of 1093 in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh. Multistage random sampling method is used for the study. In the first stage, 40 mandals out of 56 are randomly selected. One village having more than 1000 population from each mandal is randomly selected in the second stage. Six respondents from each village are randomly selected in the third stage. The total sample size is 240. A pre-structured schedule is used as the research instrument

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for gathering responses. Responses are collected by personal interview method. The research work is done between 2012 and 2014. The statistical technique of Chi-square test is used to test the hypotheses.

**Results and Discussion**

***Usage and recall of toothpaste brands by rural consumers and relevant facts***

When rural respondents are asked about the brand of toothpaste they are using at present in rural areas, the outcome is quite impressive. Rural consumers are loyal to one brand of toothpaste and hardly shifting to other brands. Those who are exposed to TV ads believe that FMCG companies are simply promoting old brands and need to launch new brands in this category. Advertisements such as Babool toothpaste showcase the natural neem herbs influence the rural buyer behavior. The users of Colgate brand are happy with the offers given by the company and the users of other brands are eagerly seeking offers from companies for their brands.

**Table no. 1.** Brand Usage of Toothpaste

Brand Name	Used by no. of Respondents	Percentage
Anchor	5	2.08
Babool	3	1.25
Close-up	58	24.17
Colgate	117	48.75
Dabur	29	12.08
Himalaya	4	1.67
Meswak	2	0.83
Nutrogel	2	0.83
Pepsodent	16	6.67
Senquel	1	0.42
Sensodine	3	1.25
Total	240	100.00

**Table no. 2.** Brand Recall of Toothpaste

No. of Brands Recalled	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	11	4.58
2	22	9.17
3	80	33.33
4	84	35.00
5	28	11.67
6	15	6.25
Total	240	100.00

Table no.1 reveals that Colgate is the leading brand of toothpaste used by rural consumers in Prakasam district as it renders 48.75% usage followed by Close-up (24.17%), Dabur (12.08%) and Pepsodent (6.67%). Apart from these brands, other brands such as Anchor (2.08%), Himalaya (1.67%), Bobool and Sensodine (1.25% each) as well as Meswak and Nutrogel (0.83% each) also used by a significant number of rural respondents. Senquel is used by an insignificant number of respondents (0.42%). As far as toothpaste brand recall and awareness of the rural consumer is concerned, table no. 2 shows that 35% of the respondents are able to recall four brands followed by 33.33% respondent's three brands, 11.67% respondent's five brands, 9.17% respondent's two brands, 6.25% respondent's six brands and 4.58% respondent's recall one brand impulsively. In the process of recalling toothpaste brands most of the respondents are begin with their present use of brand and then recalling other brands which are positioned in their minds.

In order to test statistically whether there is relationship between toothpaste brand recall and education level of the rural consumer, the following hypotheses are developed.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no relationship between toothpaste brand recall and education level of the rural consumer.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is relationship between toothpaste brand recall and education level of the rural consumer.

The primary data is put to hypothesis testing by applying chi-square test.

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The observed values

Education	No. of Toothpaste brands recalled						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Up to School	4	13	35	28	7	4	91
Graduation	1	2	23	29	12	3	70
Post-Graduation	1	2	17	26	7	7	60
Others	5	5	5	1	2	1	19
Total	11	22	80	84	28	15	240

The expected values

Education	No. of Toothpaste brands recalled						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Up to School	4.171	8.342	30.333	31.850	10.617	5.688	91
Graduation	3.208	6.417	23.333	24.500	8.167	4.375	70
Post-Graduation	2.750	5.500	20.000	21.000	7.000	3.750	60
Others	0.871	1.742	6.650	6.650	2.217	1.188	19
Total	11.000	22.000	80.000	84.000	28.000	15.000	240

Results

Chi-square calculated value	51.7519
Degrees of freedom	15
Level of significance	5%
Chi-square tabulated value	24.996
The p value	0.000006

Since the calculated value of chi-square is greater than the tabulated chi-square value, the null hypothesis  $H_0$  is rejected and alternate hypothesis  $H_1$  is accepted.

Thus, it can be statistically concluded that there is relationship between the toothpaste brand recall and the level of education of the rural consumer.

***Usage and recall of shampoo brands by rural consumers and relevant facts***

Most of the rural consumers are using low unit sachets in shampoo category. Barring the rural youth using multiple brands of shampoo in one family, a significant portion of rural orthodox accustomed to use soapnuts (*sapindus marginatus*) for their head bath

rather than shampoo. Rural educated those who have technical exposure are closely observing ingredients such as low sodium hydroxide content while choosing the shampoo brand.

**Table no. 3. Brand Usage of Shampoo**

Brand Name	Used by no. of Respondents	Percentage
Chik	15	6.25
Clinic All Clear	8	3.33
Clinic Plus	40	16.67
Dove	31	12.92
Head & Shoulders	36	15.00
Karthika	9	3.75
L'Oreal	2	0.83
Meera	58	24.17
Neutrogena	1	0.42
Nyle	2	0.83
Pantene	18	7.50
Shikakai	3	1.25
Sunsilk	8	3.33
Vatika	5	2.08
Vivel	4	1.67
Total	240	100.00

**Table no. 4. Brand Recall of Shampoo**

No. of Brands Recalled	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	11	4.58
2	19	7.92
3	48	20.00
4	66	27.50
5	64	26.67
6	32	13.33
Total	240	100.00

Table no. 3 portrays that Meera is leading brand of shampoo with 24.17% of respondents' usage followed by Clinic Plus (16.67%), Head & Shoulders (15%), Dove (12.92%), Pantene (7.5%) and Chik

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(6.25%) brands. Besides, a significant percentage of respondents also using brands such as Karthika (3.75%), Clinic All Clear and Sunsilk (3.33% each), Vatika (2.08%), Vivel (1.67%), Shikakai (1.25%), L’Oreal and Nyle (0.83% each) and Neutrogena (0.42%) in rural Prakasam. Meera got wider acceptance in rural areas because of an impression among the rural folk that it is made up of soapnuts. Karthika, a Tamil Nadu based regional brand claims significant usage in rural areas because of its low unit price. Rural respondents have sound awareness about shampoo brands. As per table no. 4, 27.50% of the respondents are able to recall four brands of shampoo and closely followed by 26.67% respondents recall five brands. 20% of the respondents are able to recall three brands, 13.33% respondents six brands, 7.92% respondents two brands and 4.58% of the respondents recall only one brand what they are using at present.

So as to test the significance of shampoo brand recall and level of education of the rural consumer, the following hypotheses are developed.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significance between shampoo brand recall and education of the rural consumer.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significance between shampoo brand recall and education of the rural consumer.

The primary data is put to hypothesis testing by applying chi-square test.

The observed values

Education	No. of Shampoo brands recalled						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Up to School	3	8	22	24	25	9	91
Graduation	2	4	8	21	19	16	70
Post-Graduation	1	2	14	19	19	5	60
Others	5	5	4	2	1	2	19
Total	11	19	48	66	64	32	240

The expected values

Education	No. of Shampoo brands recalled						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Up to School	4.171	7.204	18.200	25.025	24.267	12.133	91
Graduation	3.208	5.542	14.000	19.250	18.667	9.333	70
Post-Graduation	2.750	4.750	12.000	16.500	16.000	8.000	60
Others	0.871	1.504	3.800	5.225	5.067	2.533	19
Total	11.000	19.000	48.000	66.000	64.000	32.000	240

Results

Chi-square calculated value	48.6520
Degrees of freedom	15
Level of significance	5%
Chi-square table value	24.996
The p value	0.00002

The calculated value of chi-square is greater than the tabulated chi-square value. Therefore,  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted.

Thus, it is stated that there is significance between the shampoo brand recall and the level of education of the rural consumer.

***Usage and recall of toilet soap brands by rural consumers and relevant facts***

Rural consumers are diligently observing the price changes of toilet soaps. Due to large variation in soap prices between the village and the town, the rural folk who are carrying their primary produce to nearby town is used to buy soaps in town. Though they are loyal to one brand of toilet soap, now and then they shift to other brands because of non-availability in village shops. Rural consumer is carefully watching the offers and others sales promotional schemes available to toilet soaps.

**Table no. 5.** Brand Usage of Toilet Soap

Brand Name	Used by No. of Respondents	Percentage
Cinthol	27	11.25
Dove	9	3.75
Hamam	1	0.42

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Lifebuoy	4	1.66
Liril	3	1.25
Lux	17	7.08
Medimix	3	1.25
Mysore Sandal	15	6.25
No.1	12	5.00
Pears	7	2.92
Rexona	7	2.92
Santoor	134	55.83
Wild Stone	1	0.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Table no. 6.** Brand Recall of Toilet Soap

No. of Brands Recalled	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	6	2.50
2	10	4.17
3	40	16.66
4	71	29.58
5	61	25.42
6	22	9.17
7	19	7.92
8	11	4.58
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100.00</b>

As per the data in table no. 5, Santoor is the leading brand of toilet soap in rural areas as if it claims 55.83% of usage. Barring little dissatisfaction over its fragrance, Santoor is highly positioned in rural respondents because of attractive advertisement and affordable price. Next to Santoor are Cinthol (11.25%), Lux (7.08%), Mysore Sandal (6.25%), No.1 (5%), Dove (3.75%), Pears and Rexona (2.92% each), Lifebuoy (1.66%), Liril and Medimix (1.25% each), Hamam and Wild Stone (0.42% each) brands which are used by rural respondents. As far as toilet soap brand recall and awareness of the rural consumer is concerned, the responses are quite optimistic. Table no. 6 illustrates that 29.58% of the respondents are able to recall four brands, followed by 25.42% respondents five brands, 16.66% respondents three brands, 9.17% respondents six brands, 7.92% respondents seven brands, 4.58% respondents eight brands 4.17% respondents two brands and 2.5% of the respondents recall only one brand what they are using at present.

To test whether there is association between toilet soap brand recall and level of education of the rural consumer, the following hypotheses are developed.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no association between the toilet soap brand recall and the level of education of the rural consumer.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is association between the toilet soap brand recall and the level of education of the rural consumer.

The primary data is put to hypothesis testing by applying chi-square test.

The observed values

Education	No. of Toilet soap brands recalled								Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Up to School	2	4	19	23	20	10	7	6	91
Graduation	2	3	6	25	17	6	9	2	70
Post-Graduation	1	1	13	17	20	4	2	2	60
Others	1	3	2	6	4	1	1	1	19
Total	6	11	40	71	61	21	19	11	240

The expected values

Education	No. of Toilet soap brands recalled								Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Up to School	2.275	4.171	15.167	26.921	23.129	7.962	7.204	4.171	91
Graduation	1.750	3.208	11.667	20.708	17.792	6.125	5.542	3.208	70
Post-Graduation	1.500	2.750	10.000	17.750	15.250	5.250	4.750	2.750	60
Others	0.475	0.871	3.167	5.621	4.829	1.662	1.504	0.871	19
Total	6.000	11.000	40.000	71.000	61.000	21.000	19.000	11.000	240

Results

Chi-square calculated value	22.2967
Degrees of freedom	21
Level of significance	5%
Chi-square tabulated value	32.671
The p value	0.3826

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Since the calculated value of chi-square is less than the tabulated chi-square value,  $H_0$  is accepted and  $H_1$  is rejected.

Hence, there is no association between the toilet soap brand recall and the level of education of the rural consumer. High penetration of more number of brands and high level of media communication are the factors led to enhance the brand awareness among the rural consumers irrespective of their education level in toilet soap category.

### *Usage and recall of detergent cake brands by rural consumers and relevant facts*

The prices of detergent cake brands are perceived as high by rural consumers but compromise due to high quality instinct. Rin is the leading brand in this category. Oorvasi, a regional brand got due attention of the rural consumers on account of low price and large quantity.

**Table no. 7.** Brand Usage of Detergent Cake

Brand Name	Used by no. of Respondents	Percentage
Henko	7	2.92
Nirma	1	0.42
Oorvasi	16	6.66
Rin	104	43.33
Surf Excel	55	22.92
Tide	33	13.75
Xtra	7	2.92
XXX	17	7.08
Total	240	100.00

**Table no. 8.** Brand Recall of Detergent Cake

No. of Brands Recalled	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	15	6.25
2	48	20.00
3	98	40.83
4	44	18.33
5	29	12.08
6	6	2.50
Total	240	100.00

Table no. 7 depicts that Rin is the leading brand in detergent cake category as if it claims 43.33% usage followed by Surf Excel (22.92%), Tide (13.75%), XXX (7.08%), Oorvasi (6.66%), Henko (2.92%), Xtra (2.92%), and Nirma (0.42%) brands in rural areas. As far as detergent cake brand recall and awareness is concerned, table no. 8 shows that 40.83% of the respondents are able to recall three brands, 20% respondent's two brands, 18.33% respondents four brands, 12.08% respondents five brands, 6.25% respondents one brand and 2.5% respondents recall six brands at the moment.

In order to test statistically whether there is relationship between detergent cake brand recall and level of education of the rural consumer, the following hypotheses are developed.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no relationship between detergent cake brand recall and education of rural consumer.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is relationship between detergent cake brand recall and education of rural consumer.

The primary data is put to hypothesis testing by applying chi-square test.

The observed values

Education	No. of Detergent Cake brands recalled						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Up to School	7	24	31	12	16	1	91
Graduation	1	9	35	17	7	1	70
Post-Graduation	3	10	27	13	4	3	60
Others	4	5	5	2	2	1	19
Total	15	48	98	44	29	6	240

The expected values

Education	No. of Detergent Cake brands recalled						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Up to School	5.688	18.200	37.158	16.683	10.996	2.275	91
Graduation	4.375	14.000	28.583	12.833	8.458	1.750	70
Post-Graduation	3.750	12.000	24.500	11.000	7.250	1.500	60
Others	1.188	3.800	7.758	3.483	2.296	0.475	19
Total	15.000	48.000	98.000	44.000	29.000	6.000	240

Results

Chi-square calculated value	28.5638
Degrees of freedom	15
Level of significance	5%
Chi-square tabulated value	24.996
The p value	0.0183

Since the calculated value of chi-square is greater than the tabulated chi-square value,  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted.

Therefore, there is relationship between the detergent cake brand recall and the level of education of the rural consumer.

***Usage and recall of detergent powder brands by rural consumers and relevant facts***

Detergent powder is an unavoidable product besides detergent cake in rural areas. Soaking clothes with detergent powder before washing is a common practice even in rural areas. Despite higher prices rural consumers use premium brands such as Surf Excel and Rin. However, Oorvasi, a Tamil Nadu based brand is in progressive track on competition with renowned multinational brands.

**Table no. 9.** Brand Usage of Detergent Powder

Brand Name	Used by no. of Respondents	Percentage
Ariel	20	8.33
Nirma	6	2.50
Oorvasi	21	8.75
Rin	57	23.75
Surf Excel	73	30.42
Tide	44	18.34
Wheel	8	3.33
XXX	11	4.58
Total	240	100.00

**Table no. 10.** Brand Recall of Detergent Powder

No. of Brands Recalled	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	16	6.67
2	38	15.83

3	69	28.75
4	55	22.92
5	38	15.83
6	24	10.00
Total	240	100.00

Table no. 9 divulges that Surf Excel is leading brand of detergent powder in rural areas as it claims 30.42% of the respondents' usage. The other brands in line are Rin (23.75%), Tide (18.34%), Oorvasi (8.75%), Ariel (8.33%), XXX (4.58%), Wheel (3.33%) and Nirma (2.5%) respectively. As far as brand recall and awareness is concerned, table no. 10 shows that 28.75% of the respondents are able to recall three brands, 22.92% respondents four brands, 15.83% respondents two brands and five brands each, 10% respondents six brands and 6.67% of the respondents recall only one brand.

In order to test statistically whether there is association between detergent powder brand recall and level of education of the rural consumer, the following hypotheses are developed.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no association between the detergent powder brand recall and education of rural consumer.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is association between the detergent powder brand recall and education of rural consumer.

The primary data is put to hypothesis testing by applying chi-square test.

The observed values

Education	No. of Detergent Powder brands recalled						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Up to School	6	14	28	18	15	10	91
Graduation	1	9	26	12	15	7	70
Post-Graduation	4	12	13	20	7	4	60
Others	5	3	2	5	1	3	19
Total	16	38	69	55	38	24	240

The expected values

Education	No. of Detergent Powder brands recalled						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Up to School	6.067	14.408	26.162	20.854	14.408	9.100	91

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Graduation	4.667	11.083	20.125	16.042	11.083	7.000	70
Post-Graduation	4.000	9.500	17.250	13.750	9.500	6.000	60
Others	1.267	3.008	5.462	4.354	3.008	1.900	19
Total	16.000	38.000	69.000	55.000	38.000	24.000	240

Results

Chi-square calculated value	29.1774
Degrees of freedom	15
Level of significance	5%
Chi-square tabulated value	24.996
The p value	0.0153

Since the calculated value of chi-square is greater than the tabulated chi-square value,  $H_0$  is rejected and  $H_1$  is accepted.

Hence, there is association between the detergent powder brand recall and the level of education of the rural consumer.

**Conclusions**

Brand awareness of FMCG products such as toothpaste, shampoo, toilet soap, detergent cake and detergent powder categories has been enhanced in rural consumers. Factors such as increasing levels in education, income, communication, transportation and other infrastructure facilities led development in rural consumer awareness and brand usage pattern of FMCGs. Rural consumers are loyal to one brand of toothpaste and hardly shifting to other brands. They use brands which resembles their lifestyles. For example, the natural neem herbs feel of Babool toothpaste and soapnut liquid feel of Meera shampoo attract rural consumers. Rural consumers are diligently observing the price changes of FMCGs. Due to large price variation between village shop and town shop, the rural folk who are carrying their primary produce to nearby town is used to buy FMCGs in town shops. They compromise with price hikes because of quality instinct. Despite higher prices rural consumers use premium brands such as Surf Excel and Rin in detergent category. However, Oorvasi, a Tamil Nadu based regional brand is in progressive track on competition with renowned multinational brands due to low price and large quantity. High rural penetration of FMCG brands and communication media reach are some of the factors responsible for increased brand awareness of the rural consumers irrespective of their education level. There is a wide scope

for further research in this area as the study confined only to Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh and covered only five select FMCG products.

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