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Buying Preference of Rural Consumers towards Fast Moving Consumer Goods

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Abstract: Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) constitute a large part of consumers' budget in all countries. India is no exception to this. In recent days consumer in India is at the point where there is a multiplicative effect of income growth, aspiration to consume and a changed consumption friendly ideology / social discourse across the income board, especially in rural India. Because of these factors, the FMCG market in India is expected to further expand to Rs 1,80,000 crore by 2015. Hence, the buying behaviour of rural consumers has become a hot topic for discussion, because rural India in recent days is enthusiastically consuming everything from shampoo to motor cycles and this is being considered as one of the significant topics of market analysis. This study highlights the factors which influenced the rural consumers to buy Fast Moving Consumer Goods.

Keywords: Buying Preference, Decisions, FMCG, Influencing Factors, Rural Consumers.

I. INTRODUCTION

The rural India offers a tremendous market potential. A mere one per cent increase in India's rural income translates to a mind-boggling Rs 10,000 crore of buying power. Nearly two-thirds of all middle-income households in the country are in rural India. And close to half of India's buying potential lies in its villages. Thus, for the country marketers, small and big, rural reach is on the rise and is fast becoming their most important route to growth. Realizing this, Corporate India is now investing a sizeable chunk of its marketing budget to target the rural consumers.

II. IMPORTANCE AND NEED OF THE STUDY

Customers decide to purchase products and services to satisfy their personal, social and environmental needs. The Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) sector is surging ahead in rural markets due to modern communication. It has attracted Indian villagers. When the urban demands for the goods are getting saturated, the manufacturing companies look at this development as an opportunity. Large FMCG companies including Multinational Companies (MNCs) have their own strategies to enter this large and developing rural market. Large companies in the FMCG sector in India have taken up a developmental approach to nourish this new market. For the last one decade, sales promotion activities for FMCGs in rural India are catching up. The pioneering efforts have been put by Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL), Godrej, Nirma and Colgate Palmolive. Now many more companies have joined the brand.

The changing market environment provides the impetus for a careful study of consumer buyer behaviour. The term 'model' generally refers to a general 'view' or perspective as to when and why individuals behave as they do. In buying and consuming a variety of goods and services, consumers are pursuing a set of motives. Thought need satisfaction is the underlying motive source of all consumption activity, an understanding of needs and processes that influence the formation and satisfaction

of such needs will help the marketer to devise suitable marketing programmes. A consumer purchase a particular product or service because of a strong inner feeling or force which instills in him a strong desire to have possession of the same. A buying motive can thus be said to be all the desires, considerations and impulses, which induces a buyer to purchase a given product. Marketers are interested in the understanding of buying motives because it would indicate about their attitudes and the 'why' of their purchase decisions.

III. PREVIOUS LITERATURE

Ramalingam, L.P. (2012) in a research investigation pointed out the attitude of rural consumers. In his investigation he found the level of attitude of rural consumers towards ISI Mark on white goods and also measured with the help of socio-economic variables. Samidha Sharma (2012) in a news reported that noodles, macaronis and soft-drinks made rapid in roads into rural markets, driven growth the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry – 10 per cent by volume and 12 per cent by value in the first ten months of 2011. Devadas, A. and H.L. Manohar (2011) in an article stated that the urban-rural inequality in market, as well as customer characteristics bring a major difference in shopping behavior and consumption pattern of the two communities. Chiang, D.A., Y.H. Wang, and S.P.Chen (2010) in their paper developed a methodology to detect the existence of repeat-buying behavior and discover the potential period of the repeat-buying behavior. Khan, F. and C. Prior (2010) in their paper critically explores consumer perceptions and trends regarding purchasing locally produced food. Until recently, much of the research in this area largely focused on regional consumers where rural consumers had reasonable access to locally produced food and were usually in close proximity to the producers within, or close to, their immediate community. Meyer-Waarden and C. Benavent (2009) in their article stated that in the retail sector, consumers typically patronize multiple outlets for a variety of products, which raises the important issue of how outlets can gain a greater share of consumer expenditures. One such way is to increase repeat purchases through loyalty programs. Lee, J.A. and J.J. Kacen (2008) in their study examines factors thought to influence consumers' planned and impulse purchase decisions including subjective culture (individualist or collectivist consumers) and the presence of another person at the time of purchase.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are – a) To assess the buying preference of rural consumers towards Fast Moving Consumer Goods; b) to analyze the factors which influenced the rural consumers to buy the Fast Moving Consumer Goods; and c) ranking of reasons for buying Fast Moving Consumer Goods.

V. METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both descriptive and analytical type. To achieve the said objectives, both primary and secondary data have been used. A comprehensive interview schedule, duly pre-tested, has been designed for collecting primary data. The non-probability method of convenience sampling was followed to choose the sample respondents.

The primary data have been collected from 300 sample respondents. These respondents were selected from two purely rural based taluks viz. Peraiyur and Vadipatti taluks falling under Madurai district of Tamil Nadu. Samples of 150 rural consumers have been selected from each taluk to ensure equal representation. Statistical tools such as mean score, preference score, Z-test, and Garrett's ranking technique have been applied for analyzing the primary data. Secondary data have been gathered by referring journals, magazines, newspapers, and web sites.

VI. BUYING PREFERENCE OF RURAL CONSUMERS

This section provides an assessment of buying preference of rural consumers towards Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG). For analyzing the preference of buying, an opinion survey has been conducted to identify the buyers who prefer to purchase the fast moving consumer goods in varying degrees, say always, frequently, sometimes, very rarely and never. This will

be helpful to the manufacturers of fast moving consumer goods to have an idea about the rural consumers who are buying always, buying frequently, sometimes buy, buy very rarely and never buy. Depending upon their frequency they keep stock in the stores.

The opinions of respondents were collected under each category and weights were assigned as 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. For each category of response, the number of respondents is multiplied with the respective weight and the sum total is obtained. It is known as 'obtained opinion score'. It is then compared with the 'maximum opinion score' (number of respondents multiplied by five) of 750 and multiplied by 100 for determining the percentage of preference of the respondents towards the fast moving consumer goods in Peraiyur and Vadipatti taluks. Thereafter ranking of consumer goods is made on the basis of such percentages. For getting the mean score, the opinion score is divided by the total number of respondents.

'Z' values have been computed for each product and compared with the table value ± 1.96 . When 'Z' values do not exceed the table value, it is concluded that the sample means are significant to grand mean. But when Z values exceed the table value they indicate that sample means are not significant to grand mean. Population mean is taken as grand mean and it is calculated as the mean of the sum of means of all products.

The details of preference in buying the fast moving consumer goods by the Peraiyur Taluk and Vadipatti taluk sample respondents are displayed in Table 1 and Table 2.

TABLE – 1
Preference in Buying Decisions by Peraiyur Taluk Consumers

Opinion	Number of Respondents			
	Personal Care	Home Care	Oral Care	Food and Beverages
Always	75	20	11	32
Frequently	10	36	32	39
Sometimes	16	26	30	26
Very Rarely	14	30	36	20
Never	35	38	41	33
Total	150	150	150	150
Opinion Score	526	420	386	467
Preference Score	70%	56%	51	62
Mean Score	3.51	2.80	2.57	3.11
Rank	I	III	IV	II
Z Value	0.00**	-6.23*	-8.94*	-3.37*

**Significant to Grand Mean; * Not Significant to Grand Mean

Table 1 shows the analysis of opinion score, mean score, Z value and rank in respect of Peraiyur Taluk sample respondents. It is clear that 'personal care' products occupy the first rank followed by food and beverages, home care and oral care products. Among the four selected categories, the 'personal care' product category is mostly preferred by the Peraiyur taluk respondents. It is obvious from Table 1 that the mean score is high in respect of personal care products (i.e. 3.51) than other products. The last rank is assigned to oral care products which indicate that the sample respondents do not prefer it. It is concluded that the FMCG companies may give more attention to sell the personal care products than the others in rural areas.

'Z' test results reveal that the sample mean is significant to grand mean in respect of opinions on preference in buying decision to personal care products. It shows that the opinions of sample respondents reflect the opinions of the population towards personal care products. But sample means are not significant to grand mean for other products, viz. home care, oral care, and food and beverages.

TABLE – 2
Preference in Buying Decisions by Vadipatti Taluk Consumers

Opinion	Number of Respondents			
	Personal Care	Home Care	Oral Care	Food and Beverages
Always	63	20	6	104
Frequently	39	47	15	22

Sometimes	21	29	20	11
Very Rarely	19	25	40	7
Never	8	29	69	6
Total	150	150	150	150
Opinion Score	580	454	299	661
Preference Score	77	61	40	88
Mean Score	3.87	3.03	1.99	4.41
Rank	II	III	IV	I
Z Value	9.51*	1.10**	-9.68*	17.14*

**Significant to Grand Mean; * Not Significant to Grand Mean

It can be seen from Table 2 that the 'food and beverages' products holds the first rank followed by personal care and home care by the Vadipatti taluk sample respondents. It is obvious from the analysis that 'food and beverages' products is mostly preferred by the Vadipatti taluk respondents as the mean score is more (i.e. 4.41) than other products. It further reveals that the least preference go to 'oral care' products in this taluk also. Hence, the researcher concludes that the consumer goods companies have failed in encouraging the rural consumers in making preference while buying fast moving consumer goods.

'Z' test analysis indicates that the sample mean is significant to grand mean towards 'home care' products. Hence it is concluded that the opinions of sample respondents towards home care products reflect the opinions of the population. But the sample means are not significant to grand mean for other products.

A. Analysis of Buying Preference Level of Peraiyur Taluk Consumers:

Buying preference level can be analyzed with the help of the preference score. To get the preference score, the obtained score of each category product is divided by the maximum score and multiplied by one hundred (in terms of percentage). A preference score of 'above 75' per cent is considered as 'high' level of preference, 50 to 75 per cent as 'moderate' level of preference and less than 50 per cent as 'low' level of preference while buying fast moving consumer goods. The Table 3 highlights the level of preference of Peraiyur Taluk respondents in buying the fast moving consumer goods.

TABLE – 3
Buying Preference Level – Peraiyur Taluk

Fast Moving Consumer Goods	Max. Score	Obtained Score	Preference Score (%)	Buying Preference Level
Personal Care	750	526	70	Moderate
Home Care	750	420	56	Moderate
Oral Care	750	386	51	Moderate
Food and Beverages	750	467	62	Moderate

It is inferred from Table 3 that the buying preference level of Peraiyur taluk respondents are moderate for all categories of fast moving consumer goods. In this taluk, the 'personal care' products obtained a highest score of 70 and 'oral care' products obtained the least score of 51. All the preference scores are in between 50 and 75. Hence, the sample respondents are having moderate buying preference level towards fast moving consumer goods in this area. There is no 'high' and 'low' buying preference level in this area. It is concluded that among the four categories of products, the rural consumers are driven by personal care products.

B. Analysis of Buying Preference Level of Vadipatti Taluk Consumers:

The researcher has calculated buying preference score for all the four categories of fast moving consumer goods and the buying preference into high, moderate and low levels. It is furnished in Table 4.

TABLE – 4
Buying Preference Level – Vadipatti Taluk

Fast Moving Consumer Goods	Max. Score	Obtained Score	Preference Score (%)	Buying Preference Level
Personal Care	750	580	77	High

Home Care	750	454	61	Moderate
Oral Care	750	299	40	Low
Food and Beverages	750	661	88	High

From Table 4 it is clear that the buying preference score for 'food and beverages' is more than that of other products, it is concluded that the food and beverages is the foremost product preferred by the Vadipatti taluk respondents. As the buying preference score is more than 75 per cent in the case of 'personal care' and 'food and beverages', it is concluded that they have 'high' level of preference. The 'home care' products obtained a preference score of 61 per cent. Hence, the buying preference level may be presumed as 'moderate' for this category of products.

As the preference score is less than 50 per cent for 'oral care' it is concluded that the Vadipatti respondents have the least preference in buying these products. This is an indication that the FMCG companies should concentrate more while manufacturing this product.

C. Comparative Analysis of Buying Preference Level:

Comparative results on buying preference level of both the taluks respondents are exhibited in Table 5.

TABLE – 5
Comparative Analysis of Buying Preference Level

Fast Moving Consumer Goods	Peraiyur Taluk		Vadipatti Taluk	
	Preference Score (%)	Preference Level	Preference Score (%)	Preference Level
Personal Care	70	Moderate	77	High
Home Care	56	Moderate	61	Moderate
Oral Care	51	Moderate	40	Low
Food and Beverages	62	Moderate	88	High

It is understood from Table 5 that the Vadipatti taluk respondents have varied nature of buying preferences i.e. high, moderate and low towards various categories of fast moving consumer goods whereas the buying preference is uniform i.e. 'moderate' in the case of Peraiyur taluk respondents for all categories of FMCG. It is also understood from the above table that the 'personal care' and 'food and beverages' are highly preferred by the Vadipatti taluk respondents.

The fast moving consumer goods are either highly or moderately preferred by the sample respondents of Peraiyur taluk and Vadipatti taluks but the 'oral care' products are preferred at a lower level in the Vadipatti taluk. Hence, the manufacturers of fast moving consumer goods may distribute lesser quantity of oral care products in Vadipatti taluk and increase the supply of other categories of fast moving consumer products in this taluk.

VII. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE BUYING DECISIONS

Buying decisions may depend upon certain important factors like utility, quality, cost, promotional and brand factors. The survey attempts to study the extent to which these five factors influence the buying decisions of respondents towards fast moving consumer goods.

For analyzing the factors influencing the buying decisions, fieldwork was conducted by interviewing a total of 300 rural respondents, each one of them representing a family. 150 respondents were interviewed from Peraiyur taluk and the remaining 150 from Vadipatti taluk of Madurai district, Tamil Nadu State. Respondents were interviewed to ascertain their opinions on the five important factors influencing the buying decisions towards fast moving consumer goods. They were asked to rank the five factors which influence their buying decisions.

The first, second, third, fourth and fifth ranks were assigned weights with 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. For each factor the number of respondents under each rank has been multiplied by the respective weight and the sum total is obtained. It is called 'obtained opinion score'. Thereafter, it is compared with the 'maximum opinion score' (number of beneficiaries multiplied by five) of 750 and multiplied by 100 to determine the percentage of influence of the individual factors towards fast moving

consumer goods. Based on this score, ranks are assigned. Z values have been calculated for all the influencing factors and then compared with table value (± 1.96) to conclude that the sample means are significant or not significant to grand mean.

A. Factors Influencing Peraiyur Taluk Consumers:

Table 6 portrays the influencing factors in respect of Peraiyur Taluk respondents for buying decisions towards fast moving consumer goods.

TABLE – 6
Influencing Factors of Peraiyur Taluk Consumers

Rank Assigned	Factor-wise Respondents				
	Utility	Quality	Cost	Promotional	Brand
First	110	10	11	5	14
Second	18	21	72	12	27
Third	11	64	41	28	6
Fourth	5	25	16	87	17
Fifth	6	30	10	18	86
Total Respondents	150	150	150	150	150
Opinion Score	671	406	508	349	316
Influence Score	89%	54%	68%	47%	42%
Mean Score	4.47	2.71	3.39	2.33	2.11
Rank	I	III	II	IV	V
Z Value	17.36*	-3.15*	4.76*	-9.09*	-7.43*

* Not Significant to Grand Mean

Table 6 shows that of the five influencing factors (i.e. utility, quality, cost, promotional and brand) identified by the researcher contributing towards buying decisions on fast moving consumer goods, the factor 'utility' occupies the first rank, followed by cost, quality, promotional and brand among the respondents of Peraiyur taluk. It is obvious from the analysis that 'utility' influences the rural consumers to buy the fast moving consumer goods as the mean score for utility (4.47) is more than that of the other factors.

The factor 'cost' has been considered as second while influencing the buying decisions. The influence score for this factor is 68 per cent. The study also reveals that the 'promotional factor' does not fully influence the respondents and it stands at fourth place by scoring 47 per cent. 'Brand' factor secures the fifth rank. The general observation is that the factor 'brand' fails to influence the respondents towards fast moving consumer goods. 'Z' test results reveal that the sample means are not significant to grand mean for all the five factors influencing buying decisions.

B. Factors Influencing Vadipatti Taluk Consumers:

The factors influencing the Vadipatti taluk respondents in decision making towards fast moving consumer goods has been illustrated in Table 7.

TABLE – 7
Influencing Factors of Vadipatti Taluk Consumers

Rank Assigned	Factor-wise Respondents				
	Utility	Quality	Cost	Promotional	Brand
First	119	8	10	9	4
Second	12	22	96	15	5
Third	8	25	13	87	17
Fourth	6	89	12	31	12
Fifth	5	6	19	8	112
Total Respondents	150	150	150	150	150
Opinion Score	684	387	516	436	227
Influence Score	91	52	69	58	30
Mean Score	4.56	2.58	3.44	2.91	1.51
Rank	I	IV	II	III	V
Z Value	19.16*	-5.32*	4.73*	1.27**	-18.28*

**Significant to Grand Mean; * Not Significant to Grand Mean

Table 7 shows the analysis of Vadipatti taluk respondents' opinion towards factors influencing for fast moving consumer goods. The analysis shows that among the five factors influencing, 'utility' secures the first rank followed by cost, promotional, quality and brand. It is interesting to note that in this taluk also 'utility' factor influences the sample respondents towards making buying decisions on fast moving consumer goods. The mean score account for this factor is 4.56 which is more than that of other factors. The survey also reveals that the respondents are not fully influenced by the 'brand' factor which stands in fifth rank. Therefore, it is concluded that it fails to influence the sample respondents in the study area.

'Z' test results reveal that the sample mean is significant to grand mean towards promotional factor. It shows that the opinions of sample respondents reflect the opinions of the population. But the sample means are not significant to grand mean for the remaining factors.

C. Analysis of Influence Level for Peraiyur Taluk Consumers:

The researcher has attempted to compute influence score of the individual factors. Obtained opinion score of each factor is divided by the maximum opinion score to compute 'influence score'. In order to get in percentage, it has been then multiplied into one hundred. When the influence score is more than 75 per cent, it is considered as 'high' level of influence, 50 to 75 per cent as 'moderate' level of influence and less than 50 per cent as 'low' level of influence. The level of influence of the individual factors towards decision making is given in Table 8.

TABLE – 8
Influencing Level Analysis – Peraiyur Taluk

Influencing Factors	Max. Score	Obtained Score	Influence Score (%)	Influencing Level
Utility Factor	750	671	89	High
Quality Factor	750	406	54	Moderate
Cost Factor	750	508	68	Moderate
Promotional Factor	750	349	47	Low
Brand Factor	750	316	42	Low

As the influence score for 'utility' is more than that of other factors, it is concluded that utility is an important factor influencing the Peraiyur taluk respondents towards fast moving consumer goods. Table 8 also reveals that the influence score is more than 75 per cent, it can be concluded that the respondents are highly influenced by the utility factor. 'Cost' and 'quality' factors get a score of between 50 and 75 per cent each indicating 'moderate' level of influence.

Since the influence scores for 'promotional' and 'brand' are less than 50 per cent, it is concluded that they lead to 'low level of influence' to the sample respondents towards making buying decisions on fast moving consumer goods. This requires attention of the manufacturers in usage of brands and expenditure on promotional activities.

D. Analysis of Influence Level for Vadipatti Taluk Consumers:

The influence level analysis for Vadipatti taluk respondents is presented in Table 9.

TABLE – 9
Influencing Level Analysis – Vadipatti Taluk

Influencing Factors	Max. Score	Obtained Score	Influence Score (%)	Influencing Level
Utility Factor	750	684	91	High
Quality Factor	750	387	52	Moderate
Cost Factor	750	516	69	Moderate
Promotional Factor	750	436	58	Moderate
Brand Factor	750	227	30	Low

It is evident from Table 9 that the influencing score for 'utility' factor is 91 per cent, which is more than that of the other factors. So, it may be concluded that the factor 'utility' is the predominant influencing factor towards buying decisions on fast moving consumer goods for the Vadipatti taluk respondents. As the influence score is above 75 per cent, it can be concluded

that the sample respondents are highly influenced by this factor. The influencing level 'moderate' goes to three factors namely cost, promotional and quality. These factors accounted for 69, 58 and 52 per cent respectively. In this taluk also the 'brand' factor obtained a low level of influence by scoring only 30 per cent. Moreover, this factor is the least influencing factor in the study area. From this it is clear that the rural consumers are not considering the brand factor while making buying decisions on fast moving consumer goods.

E. Comparative Analysis of Influencing Level:

A comparative study of the factors influencing buying decisions on fast moving consumer goods between the two rural taluks have also been attempted. The result is depicted in Table 10.

TABLE – 10
Comparative Analysis of Influencing Level

Influencing Factors	Peraiyur Taluk		Vadipatti Taluk	
	Influence Score (%)	Influence Level	Influence Score (%)	Influence Level
Utility Factor	89	High	91	High
Quality Factor	54	Moderate	52	Moderate
Cost Factor	68	Moderate	69	Moderate
Promotional Factor	47	Low	58	Moderate
Brand Factor	42	Low	30	Low

Table 10 portrays that the respondents in Peraiyur taluk as well as in Vadipatti taluk are consistent in their perceptions on four factors influencing the buying decisions, of which 'utility' is the predominant factor leading to 'high' influence towards buying decisions on fast moving consumer goods by both the taluk respondents.

'Quality' and 'cost' factors lead to 'moderate' level of influence by both these categories of respondents. The factor 'Promotional' leads to low influence on Peraiyur taluk respondents but it is moderately influenced the Vadipatti taluk respondents. As far as 'brand factor' is concerned, it has 'low' influence among both the taluk respondents.

VIII. REASONS FOR BUYING FAST MOVING CONSUMER GOODS

There are so many reasons to buy the fast moving consumer goods. The reason may vary from one consumer to another. Hence, the sample respondents are asked to rank the reasons. Taluk-wise analysis has been made. For analysis, the Garrett's ranking technique has been adopted. The ranks assigned were converted into per cent position using the formula:

$$\text{Per cent position} = \frac{100(R_{ij} - 0.5)}{N_j}$$

Where R_{ij} = Rank given by the j^{th} respondent for i^{th} problem and
 N_j = Number of problems ranked by the j^{th} respondent.

The per cent position of each rank thus obtained was converted into scores by referring the table given by Garrett. The scores of all the consumers for each reason was then added together and divided by the number of respondents who assigned ranks for that particular reason. Based on the mean score the ranks are allotted. The results are shown in Tables 11 and 12.

TABLE – 11
Reasons for Buying Fast Moving Consumer Goods – Garrett's Ranking Technique for Peraiyur Taluk

Reasons	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank	Number of Consumers Responded
Low Cost	8387	56.67	I	148 (98.7)
Necessity	7625	52.95	II	144 (96.0)
Easy Availability	7249	51.41	III	141 (94.0)
More Brands	7283	50.23	IV	145 (96.7)
Attractive Ingredients	6181	46.47	VI	133 (88.7)
Convenient Packs	7155	50.03	V	143 (95.3)
Other Reasons	5934	43.00	VII	138 (92.0)

(Figures in the parentheses are percentages to total sample consumers of 150)

It is obvious from the Table 11 that low cost, necessity and easy availability are the main reasons for buying fast moving consumer goods by the Peraiyur taluk respondents. These reasons scored a mean score of 56.67, 52.95 and 51.41 respectively. Hence, first, second and third ranks are assigned to these reasons. Following this, more brands, convenient packs, attractive ingredients and other reasons come in order.

TABLE – 12
Reasons for Buying Fast Moving Consumer Goods – Garrett’s Ranking Technique for Vadipatti Taluk

Reasons	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank	Number of Consumers Responded
Low Cost	7550	50.33	IV	150 (100.0)
Necessity	8177	54.51	I	150 (100.0)
Easy Availability	7280	48.53	V	150 (100.0)
More Brands	7042	47.58	VI	148 (98.7)
Attractive Ingredients	7474	51.90	III	144 (96.0)
Convenient Packs	7645	52.01	II	147 (98.0)
Other Reasons	6722	44.81	VII	150 (100.0)

(Figures in the parentheses are percentages to total sample consumers of 150)

It is inferred from the Table 12 that the reason ‘necessity’ scored the highest score (54.51) among seven reasons. Hence, first rank has been allotted to this reason. Next to this, ‘convenient packs’ obtained a mean score of 52.01 and placed in second position. Following this, ‘attractive ingredients’ come in third position by obtaining a mean score of 51.90. From this it is presumed that these three reasons are mostly influenced the Vadipatti taluk respondents to buy the fast moving consumer goods. The remaining reasons also influenced some extent. Hence, these reasons are placed in fourth to seventh rank.

IX. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that there is no difference in buying preference in respect of Peraiyur taluk and Vadipatti taluk consumers. Both taluk consumers prefer mostly ‘personal care’ and ‘food and beverages’ products. The level of preference is ‘moderate’ in Peraiyur taluk for all categories of FMCGs. But it is ‘high’ in respect of ‘personal care’ and ‘food and beverages’; ‘moderate’ in respect of ‘home care’; and ‘low’ in ‘oral care’ products by the Vadipatti taluk respondents. The factors ‘utility’ and ‘cost’ mostly influenced the rural consumers to buy the FMCGs. The level of influencing is at high level for ‘utility’ factor. The first and second main reasons for buying FMCGs by Peraiyur taluk respondents are – ‘low cost’ and ‘necessity’ whereas the Vadipatti taluk respondents reveal it as ‘necessity’ and ‘convenient packs’. Overall, the main reason for preferring the Fast Moving Consumer Goods is low cost and necessity.

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