

“A Buying Behaviour of Rural Weekly Haat Customers: An Empirical Study”

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Abstract

Weekly markets are the only source of livelihood for many villages that don't have access to the normal markets. Around 43,000 haats are held in India, sales almost all kinds of products that needed for a rural lifestyle, from agricultural products to cosmetics and provide the platform to gather market information. Haats provide a touch and feel the experience of the product, satisfy the physical verification requirement and allow for live demonstrations all important considerations for a villager to buy any product. The fast-changing economic situation, both in India and world markets, has to lead to new perspectives in both the theory and practice of rural consumers. Rural FMCG market will grow 100 billion US\$ by 2025. Companies participate in haats for creating awareness and promoting brands in the rural market. The current empirical study educates about the primary indicator of the sustainable purchasing behavior of rural haat shoppers. In order to ascertain the stated objectives, a structured questionnaire in regional language has been prepared and administrated on the 200 respondents. Analysis reveals the convenience-oriented behavior of the customer, source of information and significant correlation of income with spending. The findings can be utilized by strategy makers, government agencies in targeting rural market and developments of rural haats.

Keywords: - Buying behavior, FMCG, Rural lifestyle, rural consumer, Weekly haat.

(I) INTRODUCTION

1.1 Indian Rural Market

(IBEF 2019)_[1] A World Bank study has revealed that nearly two-thirds of India's 120 crore population still live in rural areas. About one-third of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and consumer durables are sold in rural markets, according to a Tata Strategic Management Group report. (NCAER ,2015)_[2] The pace shift in workers engaged in agricultural and allied sectors to other sectors of the economy such as industry and services is more in the recent period as compared to the early '90s. This will lead to economic reforms in rural areas. Agriculture including livestock continues to account for a major share of the total GDP. (McKinsey Global Institute, 2007)_[3] The Indian consumer income segment and their spending power it analyzes the difference between the urban and rural consumers. The report reveals that annual real rural income growth per household has accelerated over the past two decades. The income level will be raised to almost triple which drives the increasing consumption, it creates 583 million strong middle class and become the world's fifth-largest consumer market by 2025. (BCG, 2016)_[4] stated that the number of connected rural consumers to increase from about 120 million in 2015 to almost 315 million in 2020, more than half of all new internet users will come from rural communities and rural user will constitute about half of all Indian internet users in 2020.

1.2 Indian Rural Weekly Haat

(Census 2011)_[5] Weekly Haat: These are those clusters of shops with or without fixed premises which are open once a week. (Agriculture marketing and the role of weekly Gramin haats, 2019)_[6] Rural Haats, known by varied names like Rural Periodical Markets, haats, shandies, painths, and fairs, etc., are estimated to be numbering more than 22,000 in the country. These are located in rural and interior areas and serve as focal points to a majority of the farmers – mostly small and marginal ones, contributing more than 86 % of the total landholdings with their 41% contribution in total marketable surpluses. Weekly markets are the only source of livelihood for many villages that don't have access to the normal markets. Haats can provide farmers direct access to consumers, require less transportation cost, and thus, may emerge as a viable alternative for agriculture marketing. (AIF, 2018)_[7] HAATs play a pivotal role as a scene to gather news and information, to exchange views and knowledge, to engage in various social, cultural, religious, and even political activities. They are venues for both commerce as well as festivity and exude a feeling of unity and strength. These occasional gatherings lead to traffic in social, cultural, and economic exchanges. (Financial Express,

2011)^[8]Haats sell almost all kinds of products that are needed for a rural lifestyle, from agricultural products to hairpins. Though agricultural products (53%) still have a major share, manufactured goods (19%) and processed foods (6%) have gradually found entry. On any haat day, an average buyer spends around Rs 40 on FMCG products. The spending amount varies from state to state. (AMIF, 2019)^[9] Government announcement in the Union Budget 2018-2019 to develop and upgrade existing 22,000 rural Haats into Gramin Agricultural Markets (GrMs). In these rural haat physical infrastructure is to be strengthened by MGNREGS and other Government schemes. Haat markets provide a benefit to customers because they provide lower rates for products. It also provides access to fruits, vegetables, clothing, and other products that may not be regularly available at the permanent markets in the region they live in. (W.K &Chetan, 2017)^[10]The weekly market has four distinct groups of functionaries including producer, sellers, traders and consumer buyers and commercial buyers. Most of the markets are located on a rail, bus head or at place connected with pucca roads or near kuccha road. The profit is the motive of both traders and consumers, therefore, there is much hanging in prices and one can see too many variations of the prices. The whole marketing system is still traditional and in the absence of Government Supervision, the weights and measures used are not a standard one. (Dey, Pathak, &Baghmar, 2017)^[11] study spatial patterns of weekly markets and investigate the concentration of rural markets. Periodicity of the market meetings indicated that the Thursday has the highest market meetings followed by Monday, GIS helps to find out the served and un-served area in the study region for further planning and development purpose. (Akoijam, S. L. 2018)^[12]Identified issues related to weekly market faced by sellers and buyers and facilities available in the rural weekly market. . It was observed from the survey that there is a lack of infrastructure facilities to run the market. A weekly market is a major source of goods supply in many villages it becomes necessary to arrange basic amenities. (Singh D. 2018)^[13] examine the issue of efficient reach of the rural market and highlight the role of Haat and melas in rural people's life. Haat provides opportunities for sales promotion and creates awareness. Haats can be used for sampling of new products or increased penetration of existing products.

(II) REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Broadbridge, A., & Calderwood, E.,2002)^[14]The factors and attitudes that influence customers' store choice decisions and their attitudes towards their local shops compared with demographic characteristics of respondents according to their main shopping activity and it revealed that although respondents held a positive overall view of their local shops, less than one-third purchased a high proportion of their food shopping in local shop.(Sun, T., & Wu, G., 2004)^[15]the impacts of economic

development on consumer lifestyles. Chinese rural and urban consumers were found to be statistically different in terms of their attitudes toward the whole marketing mix. It revealed that the rural consumers were less product-innovative, more price-conscious and suspicious of mass media advertising as compared to the urban consumer. (Sarangapani, A., & Mamatha, T. 2008)^[16] analysed the consumption pattern and post-purchase behavior for selected FMCG. Quality, size, fragrance, quality, price, foaming, performance, durability, packing and scientific features selected for measuring product attributes with rural respondents belonging to all three income groups. With increased purchasing power consumers were able to enjoy a wide variety of products and were satisfied with the product attributes on a moderate scale. (Dhumal, M. N., Tayade A, 2008)^[17] for making a decision about purchasing an FMCG product rural consumer consider Convenience of a retail store as most important, price and popularity of Brand, credit facility by shopkeepers, the popularity of brands and quality also significant factors. (Amanor-Boadu, V. 2009)^[18] stated that consumers select shopping locations on their shopping value, determined by its attractiveness and accessibility. (Subramanian, R., & Gupta, P. 2011)^[19] identified factors related to awareness such as education level Female in Household, access to TV with Cable and radio. (Ullah, G. M., & Prince, P. R., 2012)^[20] there are eight factors that influence the buying behavior of consumers for FMCG including sales promotion, unavailability of the brand, time constraint, in-store TVC, variety-seeking behavior, product features, end of aisle display and product convenience. (Singh, V., & Bajaj, A., 2012)^[21] and the impact of haat on rural market development. Haat, help to create awareness among the villagers. These markets provide hands-on experience of the products. (Ravikanthi, S. K. 2012)^[22] The comparative behavior of rural and urban consumers towards a place of purchase reveals that consumer focus on convenience, to purchase with minimum efforts. (Velayudhan.S, 2014)^[23] The study examines the performance of periodic markets. Results support growth in periodic markets and rural retail stores negatively correlated. Rural retail stores grow over time because of the population but the periodic markets may not grow as much or not at all. Rural consumer outshopping possibly related to the perceived value offered and convenience is an important determinant by these locations than just population or mass. (Sathyanarayana, S., & Suresh, B. H., 2017)^[24] studied rural consumer with respect to buying habits at haat & intension of visiting rural haat and revealed average spending pattern of the rural customer in weekly haats motive and for shopping weekly, haat is reasonable price and wide variety, majority of rural consumer buy vegetable and groceries from haat, and they notice advertisement. With low and seasonal income rural consumers need products under their affordability.

- **Objectives of the study**

This paper is intended to achieve the following objectives:

1. To study the demographic profile of weekly haat customers.
2. To identify the buying pattern of weekly haat customers.
3. To measure the factor which influence buying at a weekly haat.

- **Hypothesis development**

(Broadbridge, A. & Calderwood, E. 2002)_[14]uncover the factors and attitudes that influence customers' store choice decisions and their attitudes towards their local shops. Demographic features such as gender, education, occupation, and income of respondents according to their main shopping activity. (Amanor-Boadu, V. 2009)_[18]consumers select shopping locations on its shopping value, determined by its attractiveness and accessibility.(Kim, J., &Stoel, L., 2010)_[25]shopping behavior of rural consumers residing in a rural area who were geographically able to shop in nearby metro centers is affected by perceptions of local retailer's social norm-based activities and task-oriented actions and social capital within the community. Based on these studies, it was concluded that consumer buying location choice depends on demographic variables. This lead to the development of the following hypothesis :

H01 – There is no significant association between occupation and weekly haat visits.

H02- There is no significant association between a distance of weekly haat and the number of visitors.

(Misra, S., Chadah, M. S., Singh, 2009)_[26] stated that major dependency upon the local haat or weekly market for purchasing goods, enquiry into various aspects before the purchase was directly connected to the level of education. The four factors which influenced demand in rural market were identified as- access, attitude, awareness and affluence. (Kumar, S., & Singh, M. 2008)_[27]focuses on brand possessions of consumer durables by rural consumers and the impact of the demographic variable on brand choice. (NasrudeenM. L.P. Ramalingam 2013)_[28]concluded that there is an important role played by the rural consumers in their family in decision making towards buying FMCG. This means there is a necessity for further investigation. Based on this following hypothesis proposed:

H03- – There is no significant association between education and source of information.

H04 - – There is no significant association between family type and decision-maker in the family.

(MitraR & Pingah V 2000)_[26] Consumer aspirations in buying behavior were studied separately for the male and female decision-makers. Differences across gender and class show up in differences in consumption preferences and the degree to which these distinct subgroups within a village choose their market integration levels. (Sathyanarayana, S., & Suresh, B. H. 2017)_[24] study to understand the rural consumer with respect to buying habits at haat & intension of visiting rural haat. Study revealed that, with low and seasonal income rural consumers need products under their affordability. Based on these studies concluded that gender may be an important factor for understanding their buying preference. This lead to the development of the following hypothesis:

H05- There is no significant association between gender and reason for buying from a weekly haat.

(Singh, J. 2011)_[29] Studied about the rural and urban habitants for their timing of the purchase, buying the same brand of other durable, number of items and duration of planning before buying and analyzed an association between habitat and income as well as habitat-family size. (patel, s. K., & patel, z. M. 2013)_[30] literacy levels, family structure, occupational patterns, social customs, and norms have a greater influence on consumer behavior in rural areas. All these may be taken as evidence of the fact that the income of consumers may have shown a significant difference in buying behavior. Therefore, the following hypothesis is postulated:

H06- There is no statistical relationship between monthly household income and one-time weekly haat spending

(III) METHODOLOGY

In order to investigate the research objectives, study utilizes an exploratory cum descriptive type of research design has been employed for gaining basic information. The sample for this research consists of individuals from two weekly haat of block faridpur district Bareilly, UP which is held on Thursday and Sunday. A sample of 200 was targeted and 100 responses were collected by a personal in-depth interview from each weekly haat. The data collected with the help of a structured schedule and interview method. The schedule was divided into two parts defining demographic profile and buying behavior of weekly haat customers. In order to understand weekly haat shopper behavior, respondents were asked to buying preference in regard to the weekly market. Collected data used to test the hypothesis.

• **PROFILE OF VILLAGE**

Table 1.0, Source: Census 2011

District Name	Bareilly
Sub District Name	Faridpur
No. of Village	382
No of Inhabited Village	329
No. of Un-Inhabited Village	53
Total Household of Village	65400
Total Population of Village	384637
Total Male Population of Village	206808
Total Female Population of Village	177829
Weekly haat	58

The total population of Faridpur is 384637 under which 54% are male population and 46 % is the female population. out of 329 villages, only seven villages having the population more than 5000 these including StiswaUmedpurBhuta, MehtarpurTej Singh, Bilpur, DhakniRajpuri, Pachauni, FaizNagaar. The total number of rural weekly haat available only in 58 villages.

(IV) DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Sample Description of Respondents (N=100)

Table 1.1, Source: field survey

Demographic characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	MALE	145	72.5
	FEMALE	55	27.5
Age	Upto 20	18	9.0
	21-25	46	23.0
	26- 30	50	25.0
	35- 40	54	27.0
	above 40	32	16.0
Marital status	Married	119	59.5
	Unmarried	69	34.5
	Widow	12	6.0
Education level	Illiterate	26	13.0
	school level	92	46.0
	Graduation	82	41.0
Occupation	Business	18	9.0
	Student	19	9.5
	Pvt. Job	47	23.5
	Gov. job	26	13.0
	Farmer	57	28.5
	Labour	15	7.5

	Housewife	18	9.0
Type of family	Nuclear family	94	47.0
	Joint Family	106	53.0
Number of family members	1 to 2	3	1.5
	3 to 4	68	34.0
	5 to 6	82	41.0
	more than 6	47	23.5
Number Of Earning Family Member	Only 1	98	49.0
	2 to 3	95	47.5
	more than 3	7	3.5
Monthly family income	Less than 10000	110	55.0
	10001 - 15000	37	18.5
	15001– 20000	14	7.0
	20001– 25000	9	4.5
	More than 25000	30	15.0

The total sample size was 200 and the collected demographic data includes gender, age, marital status, education, family income, family size, occupation, number of earning members of family. These variables were framed on appropriate category scales. The demographic factors explain the profile of rural weekly haat customers.

- **Shopping behavior of Respondent in weekly Haat**

In order to identify customer's purpose of visit, question was asked to the respondents regarding motive behind their visit to weekly haat, 32% of respondents were coming to weekly haat because of its nearby location and 27% of respondent had given reason of availability of every product at rural weekly haat. It concludes the convenience behavior of rural weekly haat customers, where they have given preference to convenience over price and quality of a product. To buy products from a weekly market for 48% and 35% of the family's male members and children play a significant role. As weekly haat held on different days of the week like Thursday and Sunday, 60% respondent visit weekly haat whenever they realize the requirement to buy the products and 33% of the customer of weekly haat have their residential area under 1 to 2 km whereas 29% customer come from less than 1 km area. To reach weekly haat, mainly two-wheeler and walk-in mode is used by customers. To take the decision for buying products from weekly haat, 49% of families follow joint consultation including 28% males and 23% of females of the family who are decision-maker The amount of spending at weekly haat is very low 48% of respondents spend less than Rs. 500 and 27% customer spend

between Rs. 501 to 1000. The source of information of products for rural weekly haat consumers is friends & relatives (57%) which signify word-of-mouth promotion importance in the rural market.

- **Hypothesis Testing**

Table 1.2

Hypothesis	Variable	Pearson Chi-Square Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
H01	Occupation & frequency of visit weekly haat	53.651 ^a	18	0.000
H02	Distance of weekly haat & frequency of visit	82.874 ^a	9	0.000
H03	Education & source of information	30.117 ^a	12	0.003
H04	Family type & decision maker in family.	15.878 ^a	2	0.000
H05	Gender & reason for buying from weekly haat.	14.455 ^a	3	0.002

A chi-square test was used for measuring the statistical significance of the hypothesis(Kothari, C.R.(2004)_[31] at 95% level of significance. There is very strong evidence of a relationship between occupation and frequency of visit to weekly haat. Chi-square = 53.651, df = 18, $p > .05$. We fail to reject the null hypothesis that there is a significant association between occupation and frequency of visit weekly haat. In the case of distance covered to reach weekly haat where mostly customers reached under 1 to 2 km, it is analyzed that distance is statistically associated with frequency of visit weekly haat. (Chi-square = 82.874, df = 9, $p > .05$) we, therefore, concluded that there is strong evidence to suggesting the association between a distance of weekly haat and frequency of visit. Since the P-value (0.003) is less than the significance level (0.05), for a level of education association test with a source of information such as TV& radio, past experience, friend & relative, newspaper & magazine, shopkeeper and shop display statistically associate, therefore cannot accept the null hypothesis. In regards to decision-makers in the family for buying products from weekly haat, family joint consultation and male dominance is significantly associated (Chi-square = 15.878, df = 2, $p > .05$) with both nuclear and joint families. Analysis reveals that the main reason for buying from a weekly haat is near the location and availability of every product, whereas reasonable price and quality of product evenly consider, these reasonsfor buying from weekly haat found significantly associated with the gender of weekly haat customers.

H06- There is no statistical relationship between monthly household income and one-time weekly haat spending.

Table 1.3

Correlations			
		Monthly Income	One time spending in the weekly market.
Monthly Income	Pearson Correlation	1	.317**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
One time spending in the weekly market.	Pearson Correlation	.317**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To measure the effect of two variables that are linked, i.e, monthly income and amount spend in weekly haat, the correlation coefficient has been calculated. As mention in table 1.3 Pearson's bivariate correction coefficient shows a low positive linear relationship between monthly family income and spending at weekly haat. ($r=.317$) that is significantly different from zero ($p < 0.001$). If household income increase than the amount of spend at weekly haat is also increased.

Correlations Of Product Categories With Buying Influencing Factors

Table 1.4

Correlations							
		Product category 1 (Fruits & vegetable)	Product category 2 (Wheat, pulses, spices, etc)	Product category 3 (Toothpaste, soap, cream, etc.)	Product category 4 (Outfit, shoes, etc.)	Product category 5 (Household care products, utensils, bucket, etc.)	
Advertisement	Pearson Correlation	.178*	.106	.151*	-.157*	-.063	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.012	.134	.032	.026	.376	
Packaging of the product	Pearson Correlation	.069	.086	.026	.052	.177*	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.329	.228	.715	.467	.012	
Name of the company	Pearson Correlation	-.067	-.060	.183**	.099	-.057	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.345	.398	.010	.164	.423	
Price	Pearson Correlation	.082	-.205**	-.048	.108	-.043	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.249	.004	.496	.129	.546	
Quality of the Goods	Pearson Correlation	.205**	.124	.044	-.107	-.027	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.080	.537	.132	.705	

	Discount & offers	Pearson Correlation	-.265**	-.123	-.099	.136	.238**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.083	.164	.055	.001
	Durability	Pearson Correlation	-.021	.181*	.030	-.083	.267**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.769	.010	.677	.245	.000
	Size/fragrance of product	Pearson Correlation	-.174*	-.121	-.063	.170*	.157*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.014	.089	.376	.016	.026
	Warranty of the product	Pearson Correlation	.061	-.063	.003	-.120	-.216**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.388	.376	.966	.091	.002
	Family members	Pearson Correlation	.126	-.140*	-.172*	-.205**	-.110
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.076	.047	.015	.004	.122
	Past Experiences	Pearson Correlation	.143*	-.120	-.141*	.054	.102
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.043	.092	.047	.445	.150
	Advice from shopkeeper	Pearson Correlation	.031	-.276**	-.189**	.146*	.285**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.659	.000	.007	.039	.000
	Shops Decoration	Pearson Correlation	-.143*	-.207**	.009	.003	.007
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.044	.003	.894	.961	.918
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).							

Table 1.4 shows the correlation (Malhotra, N 2006)_[32] between the five product categories (1. Fruits & vegetables, 2. Wheat, pulses, spices, etc., 3. Toothpaste, soap, cream etc., 4. Outfit, shoes etc., 5. Household care products, utensils, bucket etc.) available to sale in weekly haat with the five factors comprising 13 consumer buying influencing variables. To measure the buying preference for different categories of product scale based responses (Never, very less, less, average, high very high) recorded and for measure the level of influence of different variables upon consumer buying, Likert 5 point scale used. In the above table, it's observed that there is significant correlation between product category 1 and 3 with advertisement by marketer, but in case of product category 4 advertisement correlation is negatively correlated it means rural customer is not influenced by advertisement while buying outfits, shoes etc.. Product category 5 is positively correlated with the packaging of the product, it signifies that rural customer influence by packaging of the household care products. When it comes to brand name analysis, it shows positive significance with product category 2, rural weekly haat customers influenced by the brand name of the product while select the personal care products such as toothpaste, cream etc. As rural consumer is price sensitive (Kashyap, P. and Raut, S, 2007)_[33] but analysis shows that the negative correlation with wheat, pulses, spices etc in weekly market, because it was observed in field survey that rural customers positively accepted the pricing of product at weekly haat and they perceived that the price of wheat, pulses, spices etc. are reasonable because

they are directly sold by farmers Product category 1 shows a positive correlation with quality and negative correlation with discounts and offers, whereas customers looking for discounts & offer on Household care products, utensils, bucket etc. (Nargundkar, R. 2003)_[34] ($p = .238^{**}$). The durability aspect significantly positive correlated with product category two and five. When it comes to size/fragrance/variety analysis showed significant correlation with product category 4 (Outfit, shoes etc.) and product category 5 (Household care products, utensils, bucket etc.). weekly haat customers not concern about the warranty of product category 5. ($p = -.216^{**}$). The effect of a family member on buying negatively correlated with product categories 2, 3 and 4. Rural customer past experience play a significant role in their buying decisions for category 1 products, but not for product category 3. In rural market retail shopkeeper advice play a significant role in buying decision for product category 4 (Outfit, shoes etc.) and product category 5 (Household care products, utensils, bucket etc.) but in case of buying wheat, pulses, spices etc., and Toothpaste, soap, cream etc. customer avoid to take suggestions to form shopkeeper. In respect of shop appearance/decoration analysis shows the negative correlation with product categories 1 and 2. That means rural customers at the weekly.

(V) DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Weekly haat is one of the most prominent sources of supplying every kind of products in rural areas. This study investigates the buying behavior of customers of rural weekly haat. Demographics, buying patterns, preferences, and sources of information and buying influential factors of weekly haat customers was studied. The finding concede that the rural weekly market customers are coming from the near the residential area and used two-wheeler vehicle to reach haat. Studies support the (Ravikanthi, 2012)_[22] comparative behavior of rural and urban consumers towards a place of purchase and also reveals their focus on convenience, with which they want to purchase things with minimum efforts. As weekly haat provide the facility of availability of every kind of product under one roof, rural customer like to visit haat for their convenience of nearby market and fulfillment of household needs when they required more than one category of products. Mostly male members visit the weekly market and the family jointly takes a buying decision. Weekly haat customers get information from their friends and relatives. Weekly haat customer spends very less amount on buying a product at weekly haat but (Sarangapani, TMamatha, 2008)_[16] with increasing purchasing power consumer is able to enjoy a wide variety of products and spend more amount at weekly haat. Rural customer is influenced by advertising, quality, past experience while buying fruits and vegetables and negative effects of discount, variety and shop decoration on their buying. They believe that the price of wheat,

pulses is reasonable at the weekly market and they focus on the durability aspect. Whereas family & shopkeeper's advice and shop decoration is not important for buying wheat, pulse, spices etc. Shopping of personal care products is persuaded by advertisement and brand name, but family influence; past experience and shopkeeper advice does not influence their choice. Outfit, shoes etc. buying is positively affected by the variety available at weekly haat and advice of shopkeeper. Advertisement of outfits and customer's past experience does not significantly influence the buying. Household care product packaging, durability, variety, advice of shopkeeper and discount at weekly haat influence rural customer choice, but they donot expect warranty for household care products at weekly haat.

(VI) LIMITATIONS & MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Though this study has been theoretically insightful, it has some limitations too. The study utilizes the data for two weekly haat only; which makes it difficult to generalize the results on the bigger level. Although the respondents in the study represented relatively diverse demographic characteristics, rural customer hesitate to respond, and sometimes they are not clear about their decisions. The rural market is becoming a potential market for marketers but it's still difficult to target rural consumers because of their distinctive characteristics. This study will help the marketer to develop a strategy for rural markets. Rural weekly haat may become one place for companies' different categories of products. A marketer can promote and demonstrate their products and services in weekly haat. Companies should focus on better service as rural consumers are more convenience-oriented. It is a good opportunity for the organization to connect with rural consumers as they spend enough time at a weekly haat.

(VII) SCOPE OF FUTURE RESEARCH

The finding of the study is a start to an understanding of the dynamics of the weekly haat customers for every category of product available at a weekly haat. But further research is required to understand the buying behavior for different categories of products. A physiological study can be conducted to understand the perceptual thinking of rural consumers towards weekly haat. Further the study may be conduct to measure the satisfaction level of rural customers towards weekly haat which will help authorities in development of markets.

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