



## Factors Impacting Purchase Behaviour in Respect of Kitchenware Durables: A Study of Three Towns in Andhra Pradesh

\*Varam Krishnaveni \*\* Dr. M. Venkaterswarlu

\*Lecturer in Commerce, Department of Commerce, B.T. Degree College, Madanapalle-517 325, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh

\*\* Professor, Department of Commerce, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh

### ABSTRACT

*A number of consumer items, which were earlier considered as luxuries for many families with limited income, are today being considered as almost indispensable. These basically serve two purposes. One, these add to the comfort and convenience levels of families. Two, ownership of these can enhance the social standing of the particular family. Even otherwise, with the increasing trend towards living in multi-storeyed houses, the traditional means like firewood for cooking or grinding stones for preparing condiments or the dough for snacks like idli, wada and dosa are losing their appeal. Their place is being taken by alternatives like gas stoves and mixer-grinders. Almost similar is the increasing importance being given to rice cookers and refrigerators. All the four items are relatively high priced. Therefore, some thought process is invariably involved in the actual purchase action. Some of the issues to be taken into consideration are: availability of funds, specific needs of the family, features offered by the particular brand, the competing brands available in the family. This paper will present a detailed analysis of how selected respondents in Chittoor, Madanapalle and Tirupati towns of Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh tackled the various involved issues before finally purchasing the four kitchenware items – gas stoves, rice cookers, mixer-grinders and refrigerators.*

**Keywords :** Consumer behaviour, need recognition, brand preference, mass media and decision-making

### Introduction

A purchase decision, today, involves a series of actions before reaching its finality. Marketers can no longer afford to take the consumer for granted, smug in the belief that whatever is on offer will certainly be bought. Of special importance to the present day marketers is 'Consumer behaviour', which can be defined as something that the consumer exhibits in searching for, purchasing, using, and evaluating products, services and ideas, which they expect would satisfy their needs.

Marketing is seen as the whole business from the point of view of its final result, that is, from the customer's point of view (Peter Drucker, 1986). The consumer is king in the age of consumerism (McGuire, 2000). The term consumer behaviour defines as "the behaviour of consumers in deciding to buy or use or not to buy or use or dispose or not to dispose of the products which satisfy their needs" (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1995, Chunawalla, 2000, Solomon, et al, 2001). The common thread in all these definitions is the pivotal role that the consumer has come to occupy since he is the ultimate authority in the purchase process.

### Objectives of the study

The study has been undertaken with the following objectives in mind:

- To ascertain the factors which the buyers take into consideration before zeroing onto a particular brand of the item to be purchased,
- To understand the various determinants that condition the purchase action,
- To examine the impact of various media on the purchase decision,
- To ascertain the usual time gap between triggering of the felt need and the actual purchase, and
- To explore whether any uniformity exists in the purchase

behaviour of the respondents in the three towns under study.

### Need for the study

It is today accepted that there can be no uniform formula for marketing of products. A strategy that is successful in one area may not be so in a different one. This is because of cultural and socio-economic factors which vary from place to place. Marketers, therefore, need to adapt and adjust their strategies accordingly. The instant study will endeavour to impart a sense of direction for sellers of goods or services in towns which have an almost socio-cultural profile.

### Sample Population for the study

An equal number of respondents (158 each) were selected from the three towns— Chittoor, Madanapalle and Tirupati. Care was taken to choose respondents from various occupation categories, educational backgrounds, family income brackets, and annual savings ranges. It was also ensured to select respondents who were already using the four appliances – gas stoves, rice cookers, mixer grinders and refrigerators. In this way, it was possible to elicit meaningful responses on issues like factors that influenced the purchase decision and level of satisfaction with the particular brand(s).

### Demographic profile of the respondents

In all the three towns, the majority of the respondents (more than 69 percent) were females. In all the three towns, the largest number of respondents belong to the age bracket 30 to 39 years. It is also seen that in all the three towns, and overall, the highest number of respondents belong to the Service (Govt or private) category and the least to the agriculture one. The occupation, 'Business' occupies the second position in all the towns and overall. This is followed by 'Others'. Not surprisingly, the least number of respondents belong to the Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Castes, since generally, the

awareness level and financial status of many STs and SCs may not be comparable to that of persons belonging to the other castes. It can be seen that in both Chittoor and Tirupati, the largest number of respondents belong to the Backward Castes. It is only in Madanapalle that the majority 54 percent hail from 'Other Castes' category.

In all the three towns, and overall, respondents with educational level up to Intermediate, are relatively fewer in number as compared to those belonging to the other two categories. Contrary to the earlier trends, here it is Chittoor and Madanapalle which exhibit a similar tendency – the maximum percentage of respondents are Post Graduates. In Tirupati, the largest number of respondents are graduates. Not surprisingly, since Hindus constitute the majority of our country's population, here too the maximum number of respondents in all the three towns and overall, were found to be Hindus. Muslims and Christians followed in that order. It can be seen from the above figures that in all the three towns overall, the largest number of respondents have a family size between 1 to 5. Next, is the family size 5 to 10. The size 10 to 15 has a negligible presence in all the three towns. It can be seen that the figures for Chittoor and Tirupati are almost similar for all the family size brackets. On the other hand, in Madanapalle, 22 percent of the respondents are staying in families with 5 to 10 members. It can be seen from the figures above that in all the three towns and overall, majority of the respondents belong to nuclear families. Significantly, Madanapalle town has a noticeable percentage (17 percent) of respondents staying in joint families. An encouraging feature noticed in all the

three towns and overall is that very few respondents reported having an annual income below Rs 50,000. The largest numbers can be found in the annual income range of Rs 1,00,000 to 2,00,000 in Madanapalle and Tirupati. This is followed by the range Rs 2,00,000 to 5,00,000 in these two towns (in the case of Chittoor, the income range Rs. 2,00,000 to 5,00,000 predominates). It also emerges that the income range Rs 5,00,000 and above does have some presence – 13 percent in Chittoor, 8 percent in Madanapalle and 8 percent in Tirupati. A very encouraging fact that emerges from the figures above is that a noticeable number of respondents – 9 percent in Chittoor and 6 percent in Madanapalle - reported having annual savings in excess of Rs. 1,50,000. The general trend in all the three towns, and overall, was either for Rs 50,000 to 1,00,000 or Rs 1,00,000 to Ra. 1.50,000 brackets.

With the above-mentioned socio-economic profile, it would be logical to examine how the various determinants, including the role of the media, have influenced the purchase behaviour regarding the various appliances. Individual appliances are discussed below.

**Brand Purchased: Gas Stoves**

With so many brands of gas stoves available in the market, customer even in smaller towns have become quite brand-conscious and are taking marketing decisions with due care. The publicity campaigns on the media and mouth of word endorsements by existing users are going a long way in influencing marketing decisions.

**Table 1**  
**Brand purchased by consumers - gas stoves**  
(Percentages in parentheses)

S. No	Town	Laxmi	Butterfly	Pigeon	Padmasree	Superflame	LPG	Panasonic	Prestige	Akai	Ganga	Sunlight	Kanchan	Videocon	Surya	Kenstar	Total
1	Chittoor	55 (35)	40 (25)	24 (15)	5 (3)	6 (4)	3 (2)	2 (1)	4 (3)	2 (1)	6 (4)	0 (0)	3 (2)	3 (2)	2 (1)	3 (2)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	55 (35)	35 (22)	9 (6)	9 (6)	27 (9)	2 (1)	3 (2)	6 (4)	4 (3)	2 (1)	2 (1)	0 (0)	2 (1)	2 (1)	0 (0)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	34 (22)	38 (24)	12 (8)	6 (4)	15 (9)	1 (1)	11 (7)	6 (4)	9 (6)	13 (8)	11 (7)	1 (1)	1 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	158 (100)
	Total	144 (30)	113 (24)	45 (9)	20 (4)	48 (10)	6 (1)	16 (3)	16 (3)	15 (3)	21 (4)	13 (3)	4 (1)	6 (1)	4 (1)	3 (1)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

It emerges from the above figures that 'Lakshmi' is the most popular brand in Chittoor and Madanapalle. 'Butterfly', the most preferred brand in Tirupati and the second choice in the other two towns. Other noticeable brands are 'Pigeon' in Chittoor and 'Superflame' in the other two towns. Other brands only appear to be fringe players in all the three towns.

**Rice Cookers.** Since rice is the staple diet in most parts of the state, there is a vast market for rice cookers here. The market is already flooded with a number of brands, which given the buyers several options. What are the chosen brands in this regard?

**Table 2**  
**Brand of purchased by consumers - rice cookers**  
(Percentages in parentheses)

S.No	Town	Panasonic	Preethi	Pigeon	Prestige	Ganga	Sumith	Butterfly	Bajaj	Maharaja	Total
1	Chittoor	80 (51)	4 (3)	9 (6)	32 (20)	20 (13)	2 (1)	8 (5)	2 (1)	1 (1)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	66 (42)	23 (15)	17 (11)	45 (28)	3 (2)	2 (1)	2 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	74 (47)	4 (3)	17 (11)	32 (20)	24 (15)	1 (1)	5 (3)	1 (1)	0 (1)	158 (100)
	Total	220 (46)	31 (7)	43 (9)	109 (23)	47 (10)	5 (1)	15 (3)	3 (1)	1 (1)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

It can be seen that Panasonic is the most preferred brand in all the three towns. Pigeon is the second choice in Chittoor and Madanapalle and Prestige in Tirupati.

**Mixer Grinders.** As already mentioned, the mixer grinder is a

multi-use appliance for many south Indian households. Keeping the potential market in mind, manufacturers have flooded the market with their brands, leaving a wide range of options before the buyers. The responses regarding this appliance are presented below.

**Table 3**  
**Brand purchased by consumers - mixer grinders**  
**(Percentages in parentheses)**

S. No.	Town	Ganga	Panasonic	Butterfly	Kanchan	Videocon	Preethi	Sumith	Prestige	Bajaj	Pigeon	Usha	Kenstar	Total
1	Chittoor	20 (13)	7 (4)	39 (25)	13 (8)	3 (2)	41 (26)	20 (13)	7 (4)	2 (1)	4 (3)	0 (0)	2 (1)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	26 (16)	8 (5)	54 (34)	12 (8)	6 (4)	20 (13)	10 (6)	12 (8)	3 (2)	2 (1)	5 (3)	0 (0)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	27 (17)	18 (11)	30 (19)	13 (8)	6 (4)	23 (15)	16 (10)	11 (7)	5 (3)	1 (1)	7 (4)	1 (1)	158 (100)
<b>Total</b>		73 (15)	33 (7)	123 (26)	38 (8)	15 (3)	84 (18)	46 (10)	30 (6)	10 (2)	7 (1)	12 (3)	3 (1)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

No uniform trends can be discerned for all the three towns. 'Butterfly' is most popular in Madanapalle and Tirupati and the second choice in Chittoor. Preethi is the most popular brand in Chittoor. Of the others, Ganga has a noticeable presence in all the three towns

**Refrigerators.** In the case of this appliance too, a number of brands are competing to grab the 'eye balls' of the buyers. What are the brand preferences of buyers in this regard?

**Table 4 Brand purchased by consumers -refrigerators (Percentage in parenthesis)**

S. No	Town	Samsung	LG	Whirlpool	Godrej	Kelvinator	Videocon	Panasonic	VolvoPlus	Total
1	Chittoor	39 (25)	57 (36)	36 (23)	14 (9)	4 (3)	7 (4)	0 (0)	1 (1)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	64 (41)	42 (27)	8 (5)	33 (21)	6 (4)	4 (3)	1 (1)	0 (0)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	43 (27)	49 (31)	23 (15)	12 (8)	20 (13)	7 (4)	4 (3)	0 (0)	158 (100)
<b>Total</b>		146 (31)	148 (31)	67 (14)	59 (12)	30 (6)	18 (4)	5 (1)	1 (0)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

No uniform trend can be discerned regarding brand preferences in the three towns. LG is most preferred in Chittoor and Tirupati and Samsung in Madanapalle. Whirlpool has a noticeable presence in Chittoor and Tirupati, In Madanapalle, Godrej is reasonably popular.

**Time Gap between need recognition and the actual purchase.** Most purchase decisions – especially regarding costlier items have to pass through two major stages: (i) strong felt need for that, and (ii) the actual purchase action. At times, there may be some time gap between the two stages due to considerations like arrangement of finance for that, selection from among the competing brands and (perhaps) a rethink whether the item is indeed required.

**Table 5**  
**Time gap between the need recognition and the actual purchase - Gas Stoves**  
**(Percentages in parentheses)**

S. No	Town	Less than a week	Within a fortnight	Within a month	1 year	Total
		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	
1	Chittoor	79 (50)	4 (3)	71 (45)	4 (3)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	86 (54)	17 (11)	49 (31)	6 (4)	158 (100)

3	Tirupati	101 (64)	2 (1)	51 (32)	4 (3)	158 (100)
<b>Total</b>		266 (56)	23 (5)	171 (36)	14 (3)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Gas Stoves.** This item is perhaps considered the most essential (and the most affordable) among the four durable under study. No wonder, the largest number of respondents in all the three towns took less a week to make the actual purchase once a strong need for the same was felt. The second highest number of respondents said that they purchased the item within a month. Maybe this class of respondents needed that much time to prioritise their expenditure and maybe even arrange the needed funds. As already mentioned, since this is a relatively low cost item, most of the respondents did not need a time gap of one year. The time gap of a fortnight was found to be noticeable only in Madanapalle (for 11% of the respondents there).

**Table 6**  
**Time gap between the need recognition and the actual purchase - Rice Cookers**  
**Percentages in parentheses**

S. No	Town	Less than a week	Within a fortnight	Within a month	1 year	Total
		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	
1	Chittoor	59 (37)	22 (14)	73 (46)	4 (3)	158 (100)

2	Madanapalle	53 (34)	30 (19)	69 (44)	6 (4)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	81 (51)	22 (14)	51 (32)	4 (3)	158 (100)
Total		193 (41)	74 (16)	193 (41)	14 (3)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Rice Cookers.** While responses (a) and (c) continued to dominate as in the case of gas stoves, their relative positions were found to be reversed in the case of Chittoor and Madanapalle. Another fact that emerged is that a noticeable number of respondents in all the three towns bought the item within a fortnight.

**Table 7**  
Time gap between the recognition and actual purchase of the product- Mixer Grinders  
Percentages in parentheses

S. No	Town	Less than a week	Within a fortnight	Within a month	1 year	Total
		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	
1	Chittoor	56 (35)	15 (9)	83 (53)	4 (3)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	50 (32)	14 (9)	86 (54)	8 (5)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	75 (47)	8 (5)	67 (42)	8 (5)	158 (100)
Total		181 (38)	37 (8)	236 (50)	20 (4)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Mixer Grinders.** As in the earlier cases, the responses (d) were given by the least number of respondents in the three towns. The largest number of respondents (53% in Chittoor and 54% in Madanapalle) said that they bought this item within a month. In Tirupati, however, majority of the respondents (47%) said that they purchased this item within a week. In Chittoor and Madanapalle, a noticeable number of respondents took a fortnight's time to make the actual purchase.

**Table 8**  
Time gap between the recognition and the actual purchase of the product - Refrigerators  
Percentages in parentheses

S. No	Town	Less than a week	Within fortnight	Within a month	1 year	Total
		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	
1	Chittoor	52 (33)	12 (8)	76 (48)	18 (11)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	45 (28)	18 (11)	60 (38)	35 (22)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	75 (47)	8 (5)	61 (39)	14 (9)	158 (100)
Total		172 (36)	38 (8)	197 (42)	67 (14)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Refrigerators.** A very significant fact that could be noticed in all the three towns is that the number of respondents 11% in Chittoor, 22% in Madanapalle and 9% in Tirupati) who took a year to make the actual purchase is very noticeable. This can be attributed to the relatively high cost of refrigerators due to which financial and other considerations can come into play. Chittoor and Madanapalle exhibited a degree of uniformity in that the largest number of respondents (48% and 38% respectively) needed a time gap of about a month for making the purchase. On the other hand, in Tirupati, the largest number (47%) were able to take the action within a week.

**Media Influence on Purchase Decisions.** Much has been spoken and written about the power and influence of the media. The media is, today, acknowledged for its role in providing infotainment – information and entertainment. Let us see the extent to which advertisements in the media have influ-

enced purchase decisions regarding the four appliances of the respondents in the three towns.

**Table 9**  
Media influence on the purchase of gas stoves  
(Percentages in parentheses)

S. No	Town	News-papers	Show-room	Televi-sion	Comput-ers/Internet	Total
1	Chittoor	40 (25)	11 (7)	103 (65)	4 (3)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	44 (28)	10 (6)	102 (65)	2 (1)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	29 (18)	13 (8)	107 (68)	9 (6)	158 (100)
Total		113 (23)	34 (7)	312 (66)	15 (3)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Gas Stoves.** Not surprisingly, TV has been the biggest influence in spreading awareness about the respective brands in all the three towns. Since it is a dynamic medium, TV can present 'live' images of the brands/products being advertised and easily catch the eyeballs of the viewers. Newspapers are a distant second influence, while 'Showroom Displays' are even more remotely placed. The significantly much lesser influence of 'Computers/Internet' can be attributed to the lesser spread/usage of these devices in the three towns when compared to the metropolitan towns.

**Table 10**  
Media influence on the purchase of rice cookers  
(Percentages in parentheses)

S. No.	Town	Newspapers	Magazines	Pamphlets	Showroom	Television	Computers/Internet	Exhibitions	Total
1	Chittoor	43 (27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	9 (6)	102 (65)	4 (3)	0 (0)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	44 (28)	3 (2)	3 (2)	10 (6)	96 (61)	2 (1)	0 (0)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	29 (18)	4 (30)	0 (0)	10 (6)	103 (65)	9 (6)	3 (2)	158 (100)
Total		116 (24)	7 (1)	3 (1)	29 (6)	301 (64)	15 (3)	3 (10)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Rice Cookers.** As in the case of gas stoves, 'TV', followed by 'Newspapers' and 'Showroom Displays', in that order, have been found to be the most important influencing media for purchase decisions. In this instance too, Computers/Internet have not found to be major players in this area. Other media like 'Magazines', Pamphlets' and 'Exhibitions' have been found to be almost insignificant motivators.

**Table 11**  
Media influence on the purchase of mixer grinders  
(Percentages in parentheses)

S. No.	Town	Newspapers	Magazines	Pamphlets	Wall posters	Showroom	Television	Computers/Internet	Exhibitions	Total
1	Chittoor	43 (27)	0 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	9 (6)	102 (65)	4 (3)	0 (0)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	44 (28)	2 (1)	4 (3)	0 (0)	10 (6)	96 (61)	2 (1)	0 (0)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	28 (18)	0 (1)	1 (1)	2 (1)	10 (6)	105 (66)	9 (6)	3 (2)	158 (100)
Total		115 (24)	2 (0)	5 (1)	2 (1)	29 (6)	303 (64)	15 (3)	3 (1)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Mixer Grinders.** In the case of these appliances too, the earlier trends have been noticed. The glamour attached to TV and probably the urge to use the same brand as endorsed by the celebrities seems to be the main factor for TV to be the most popular medium to 'sell one's goods'.

**Table 12**  
**Media influence on the purchase of Refrigerators**  
**(Percentages in parentheses)**

S. No.	Town	Newspapers	Magazines	Pamphlets	Showroom	Television	Computers/Internet	Exhibitions	Total
1	Chittoor	43 (27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	9 (6)	102 (65)	4 (3)	0 (0)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	44 (28)	3 (2)	3 (2)	10 (6)	94 (59)	2 (1)	2 (1)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	29 (18)	1 (1)	2 (1)	1 (7)	104 (66)	9 (6)	2 (1)	158 (100)
Total		116 (24)	4 (1)	5 (1)	30 (6)	300 (63)	15 (3)	4 (1)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Refrigerators.** Not surprisingly, the trend regarding the other three kitchen appliances can be seen in the case of refrigerators also. The message that emerges is that those handling the 'less influential media' need to make their messages more alluring and attractive, since many of them may not be able to afford the cost of advertising on TV and newspapers. It may be mentioned here that while the electronic media – TV and print – are 'impersonal', in media like 'Showroom Displays' and 'Exhibitions', there is always the scope for personally interacting with the potential buyers and addressing issues of concern to them on the spot.

**Buying Decision**

Most Influential Players in the Decisions Regarding Purchase of Kitchen Durables. Since the items discussed in the study are relatively costly, the decisions regarding these cannot be impulsive ones. Also, since these are meant for the entire family, the opinion of the spouse – the husband (since he normally provides the finance) and the wife (who is the main user) – should logically carry a lot of weight. Let us see the responses on this issue.

**Table 13**  
**Decision of individual (s) in the purchase of gas stoves**  
**(Percentages in parentheses)**

S. No	Town	Respondent himself/herself	Spouse (Wife/Husband)	Children	Friends/Colleagues	Parents	Total
1	Chittoor	46 (29)	105 (66)	3 (2)	2 (1)	2 (1)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	62 (39)	86 (54)	1 (1)	0 (0)	9 (6)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	74 (47)	76 (48)	0 (0)	0 (0)	8 (5)	158 (100)
Total		182 (38)	267 (56)	4 (1)	2 (0)	19 (4)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Gas Stoves.** Not surprisingly, the overwhelming number of respondents named the spouse at the most influential decision maker in this regard. The next preferred option was Respondent' himself or herself. Parents were found to have a noticeable presence in Madanapalle and Tirupati. The opinions of 'Sons' and 'Friends/Colleagues' did not figure noticeably in any of the three towns.

**Table 14**  
**Decision of individual (s) in the purchase of rice cookers**  
**(Percentages in parentheses)**

S. No	Town	Respondent himself/herself	Spouse (Wife/Husband)	Children	Friends/Colleagues	Parents	Total
1	Chittoor	59 (37)	88 (56)	8 (5)	0 (0)	3 (2)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	52 (33)	93 (59)	3 (2)	1 (1)	9 (6)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	58 (37)	88 (56)	2 (1)	2 (1)	8 (5)	158 (100)
Total		169 (36)	269 (57)	13 (2)	3 (1)	20 (4)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Rice Cookers.** In this case also, the spouse has been listed as the one having the major say by majority of the respondents in all the three towns. The Respondent, himself or herself, has been mentioned as the next most influential player in this process. Interestingly, sons seem to be having a greater say than daughters in the purchase decisions. The influence of parents is noticeable in Madanapalle and Tirupati.

**Table 15**  
**Decision of individual(s) in the purchase of mixer grinders**  
**(Percentages in parentheses)**

S. No.	Town	Respondent himself/herself	Spouse (Wife/Husband)	Children	Friends/Colleagues	Parents	Total
1	Chittoor	55 (35)	92 (58)	8 (5)	0 (0)	3 (2)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	45 (28)	94 (59)	1 (1)	8 (5)	10 (6)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	56 (35)	88 (56)	6 (1)	0 (0)	8 (5)	158 (100)
Total		156 (33)	274 (58)	15 (3)	8 (2)	21 (4)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Mixer Grinders.** In this instance too, the spouse has been mentioned at the most influential player in the decision regarding this appliance. The second position has continued to be occupied by the Respondent. The role of parents is found to be noticeable in Madanapalle and Tirupati. In this case also, the opinion of sons seems to take greater priority over that of daughters.

**Table 16**  
**Decision of individual (s) in the purchase of refrigerators**  
**(Percentages in parentheses)**

S. No	Town	Respondent himself/herself	Spouse (Wife/Husband)	Children	Friends/Colleagues	Parents	Total
1	Chittoor	49 (31)	96 (61)	10 (6)	0 (0)	3 (2)	158 (100)
2	Madanapalle	52 (33)	77 (49)	12 (8)	2 (1)	15 (9)	158 (100)
3	Tirupati	56 (35)	80 (51)	14 (9)	2 (1)	6 (4)	158 (100)
Total		157 (33)	253 (53)	36 (8)	4 (1)	24 (5)	474 (100)

Source: Primary Data

**Refrigerators.** A trend similar to the earlier ones is visible here. Friends/Colleagues are the least cited option. The role of spouse, followed by that of the respondent, figure among the most preferred responses. Here too, sons score over daughters in the decision process. Parents have a noticeable presence in Madanapalle and Tirupati.

### Conclusions

**The major facts that emerged can be summarized as under:**

- (a) **Brand Preferred.** It was found that respondents in the three towns did not necessarily choose one particular brand of an item. It was also seen that a brand highly popular in one town was not necessarily so in another town.
- (b) **Time Gap between crystallizing of a felt need and the actual purchase.** The most numerous options in the three towns for all the four items were: less than a week and within a month. In the case of gas stoves, a period less than was sufficient. However, in respect of the

other three gadgets, the period 'Within a Month' gained in importance. In the case of refrigerators, the number of respondents who need a year's time was found to be noticeable. This is understandable in view of the relatively higher cost of refrigerators vis-à-vis the other gadgets.

- (c) **The Most Effective Media for Influencing Purchase Decisions.** The pride of place was taken by Television and Newspapers, in that order. The comparatively low penetration of IT devices in these towns could perhaps explain the almost insignificant influence of internet and computers on the purchase decisions.
- (d) **Influential Players in the Purchase Decisions.** True to expectations, the respondent/his or her spouse appeared to be the most influential players in this process. This is understandable since they are either the actual users or the providers of funds for purchasing these. The others seem to be fringe players only.

### REFERENCES

Chunawalla, S. A. Commentary on Consumer Behaviour (M/e). New Delhi: Himalaya Publishing House, 2000, 1&6. | Drucker, Peter in Moven, John C. and Minor, Michael. Consumer Behaviour (5/e). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998, 7. | McGuire, William J. Standing on the shoulders of ancients: Consumer research, persuasion, and figurative language. Journal of Consumer Research, 2000, Vol. 27, 34-47 | Schiffman, Leon G. and Kanuk, Leslie L. Consumer Behaviour (6/e). New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India, 1995, 7. | Solomon, Michael R., Judith L. Zaichkowsky, Rosemary Polegato. Consumer Behaviour (Canadian Edition). Online study guide for Consumer Behaviour.