

INTRODUCTION

Today there is no country in the world which does not have a co-operative movement of its own in one or the other form. The Co-operative movement has come to stay as an important sector of the national economy all over the world; irrespective of form of Government, Political ideology, level of economic development and the social background.

The Co-operative movement exists in the developed as well as under developed countries. In India's democratic, socialist economic planning the Co-operative movement has been assigned the key role. The Co-operative principles like universality, democratic control and liberty have make this movement a unique form of business organisation. In India the co-operative movement came into vogue to satisfy the credit needs of Indian farmers. However/ today this movement had spread in all important sectors of Indian economy. One such important sector is Consumers' Co-operatives. It is assumed that Consumers' Co-operatives have capacity to protect the consumers as well as they are able to hold the price line by working as an agency in the public distribution system of essential goods. Naturally the actual functioning of Consumers' Co-operatives working at various levels has become of prime importance. Because ultimately it is their day-to-day working which generates their over all impact on consumers' life. Keeping in view the importance of their

working the present study tries to evaluate the overall performance of 'The Kolhapur Janata Central Co-operative Consumers' Stores Limited, Kolhapur' with special emphasis on Janata bazars.

FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY:

I) NATURE OF THE STUDY:

The title of the study is "Consumers' Co-operative Movement : A study of the Co-operative Janata Bazars in Kolhapur City". Let us make it clear that 'The Kolhapur Janata Central Co-operative Consumers' Stores Limited, Kolhapur' is popularly known as "JANATA BAZAR" in Kolhapur city. Therefore the study begins with an attempt to analyse the various aspects of working of 'The Kolhapur Janata Central Co-operative Consumers' Stores Limited, Kolhapur'. Afterwards, a separate study of department stores (branches of 'The Kolhapur Janata Central Co-operative Consumers' Stores Limited, Kolhapur') has been undertaken. Also an attempt has been made to major the impact of departmental stores in over all working of 'The Kolhapur Janata Central Co-operative Consumers' Stores Limited, Kolhapur'.

II) SELECTION OF THE PROBLEM:

For the present study Co-operative Janata Bazars; working in Kolhapur city is selected. The researcher selected the problem mainly on following grounds.

It was felt that the district of Kolhapur was the most

suitable area for the micro-level study of consumers' co-operatives. Because the district is well known for the spread of co-operative movement in the State of Maharashtra.

In India, in post-independence period, a co-operative movement had attracted many research students as a subject of study. However in these studies consumers' co-operative movement remained some what neglected. It was also the reason to select this problem for the present study.

III) OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The main objective of the study is to analyse the working of 'The Kolhapur Janata Central Co-operative Consumers Stores Limited, Kolhapur' and its departmental stores. The specific objectives of the study are summarised below:

- i) To point out the principles and objectives of Co-operative movement;
- ii) To review the growth of consumers' Co-operative movement in India;
- iii) To study the development of 'The Kolhapur Janata Central Co-operative Consumers' Stores Limited, Kolhapur;
- iv) To study and analyse the policy matters of the store;
- v) To study and analyse the performance of departmental stores.

IV) METHODOLOGY:

A study is mainly based upon secondary data published by 'The Kolhapur Janata Central Co-operative Consumers' Stores Limited, Kolhapur'. In addition un-published secondary data has also been obtained from the official records. The secondary data available have been tabulated according to time series (periodwise and yearwise) method. The analysis of the study is made on the basis of the above tables. Additional information regarding the working of the stores was collected through personal discussions with the officials and managerial staff of the store and private traders.

V) CHAPTER SCHEME OF THE PRESENT WORK:

The scheme of the present study includes five chapters as given below:-

The first chapter deals with the various aspects of consumers' co-operative i.e. origin, meaning, principles, objectives of consumers' co-operative. The chapter also takes brief review of consumers' co-operative movement in India.

The second chapter deals with Economic profile of Kolhapur District and Development of Consumers' Co-operative movement in the district.

The third chapter is divided in two sections. The first section includes the necessary information regarding establishment, objectives, area of operation and financial provision of 'The Kolhapur Janata Central Co-operative Consumers' Stores Limited, Kolhapur'. The second section deals with the various aspects of

development of the store.

The Fourth chapter is divided in to two sections. The first section deals with the policy matters of the stores and the second section includes the functioning of Departmental Stores.

The Fifth chapter deals with the final observations and conclusions from the study made by the researcher.

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