

## PREFACE

The cooperative movement in India with above three lakh cooperative societies of all types and at all levels and with a membership of 145 million is perhaps the largest in the world. The movement, since its inception in 1904, has spread its tentacles to almost all spheres of socio-economic activity and has tremendously expanded and diversified its operations.

The consumer cooperatives can play a vital role in procurement and distribution of essential commodities. The consumer cooperatives can provide the necessary protection against the exploitation of the trading community and ensure regular supply of goods and also promote the collective well being of the members. Hence, cooperatives are non-exploitative, self-help and mutual help organisations meant for realizing social interest rather than narrow self-interest. The urban consumer in Indian context is always confronted with regular shortages of goods and services, business malpractices, inadequate and irregular supply. The consumer cooperatives functioning in urban India have not been able to even meet 2 percent of the total requirement of the people. Therefore, the consumer cooperative movement in urban India is underdeveloped and it is under-performing in relation to the actual requirements and expectations of urban people. In the wake of rising urbanization and industrialization in

the country, the consumer cooperatives are expected to play greater role in ameliorating the problems of urban consumers. In this context, the present study aims at examining the working of Shree Bhagwant Sahakari Puravatha Mandali Ltd., Barsi, a leading consumer society in Barsi town.

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