CHAPTER - 1

SPOUSAL ROLES IN FAMILY PURCHASE DECISION MAKING PROCESS:

1. AN INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE PROBLEM

One of the major objectives of marketers is the identification of purchase decision makers – those crucial people who say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to marketers’ products or services. It is pertinent to know how the decision about purchase is formed and who exactly influence it, because this helps to deduce in chalking out their marketing and advertisement actions. But it is observed that a number of purchase related decisions are made by member of the family. It is an established fact that most of the research regarding bias behaviour is concerned on the individual as a unit of analysis.

The focus of this research is the role of spouses in decision making when purchase has to be made. Thus primary concerned is to check the say of a particular spouse in this regard. Earlier research has focused on family as a unit as for as decision making is concerned. Thus concentration of the research would be on the role of the husband and wife. Interestingly no endeavor has been made on the above said notion till present. This implies that this dissertation would explore the influence of spouse in family purchase decision making.
Traditional sex role orientations of families their structure and the pattern of family influences have all changed dramatically over the last few decades. Changes are occurring in the perception of the role of women in society. Due to the expansion of education women have started working outside the home, are solemnized at a late stage and a trend of single family have all resulted in breaking the earlier beliefs about the family structure. This has resulted a sea change in roles of spouse as far as buying is concerned.

The behaviour of spouse has multidimensional, because it highly depends upon the size of the family unit, age gap between them, social background of the spouse, working designation, the risk associated with the particular decision and above all the mindset of the family towards the traditional role of women. Thus decision making behaviour within a family becomes a complete task for analytical purpose.

Purchase is defined as the acquisition of an object or services. A mere emergence of this world brings an imaginary action of buying some goods or services from some body. To explain this we need to understand:

- The reason behind the purchase.
- The factors influencing the purchase.
- The dynamics of our society.

A procedure is obliged to research purchasing pattern among the buyers because of underlined reasons:
• The reaction of the purchasers to the marketing policies has a substantial influence whether the seller will succeed or not.

• There is a need to chalk that how, when, where and what a client chooses to buy since it helps a firm to create a marketing mix to optimize customer satisfaction.

• Marketers can form hypothesis on how a buyer will react to a particular marketing scheme.

In a particular situation, it is the degree of involvement, the depth of interest and the significant of interest in a particular object or services effect inclination of buying behaviour in a consumer. The state of involvement fixes the reasons behind enquiry about the particular product and why other products of the same utilities are ignored. There is a relative relation between risk and involvement. If the risk heads north so as the involvement and vice-versa. High involvement purchase--Honda Motorbike, high priced goods, products visible to others, and the higher the risk the higher the involvement. The four types of consumer buying behavior are:

• Routine Response/Programmed Behaviour: It is affected by the cost; if the cost is low the involvement is low. It needs a small amount of effort in search and decision making involuntary. Examples include soft drinks, snack foods, milk etc.

• Limited Decision Making: Random buying. It implies the quest for knowledge about an unknown brand in a known product category. It involves spending a little bit more time than usual for information gathering. Include Clothes--know product class but not the brand.
- Extensive Decision Making: subtle high involvement, unknown, costly and/or seldom bought products. Greater extent of monetary/working/mental risk. Examples include cars, homes, computers, education. Spend allot of time seeking information and deciding.

- Input derived out of the marketing mix, kith and kin, sales person etc. Sift all half a dozen purchasing modules process.

- Natural purchasing base on instinct, no intentional planning.

The buying behaviour for some product may vary according to the situation, trimming and the persons involved. For example: Going out for dinner for a person may be extensive decision making (for someone who does not go out often at all), but limited decision making for someone else. The reason for the dinner, whether it is an anniversary celebration, or a meal with a couple of friends will also determine the extent of the decision making.

The aim of the marketing is to meet and satisfy target customer’s needs and wants. The field of consumer behaviour studies how individuals, groups and organizations select, buy, use and dispose off goods, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy their needs and desires. The consumer behaviour is influenced by the social factors like reference groups, family, social role and status.

Marketers have to go beyond the various influences on buyers and develop an understanding of how consumers actually make their buying decisions. Specifically, marketers must identify, who makes the buying decisions, types of buying decisions,
and steps in the buying process. In general we can distinguish five roles people might play in a buying decision:

- Imitator
- Influencer
- Decider
- Buyer
- User

Before illustrating the above mentioned roles it’s very necessary to understand from where these roles originated. It is definitely the most powerful social group called family. The significance of the family in customer orientation springs out of two causes:

1. Numerous units are brought by it.
2. Personal buying judgments might be extensively affected by other members of the family.

A family is considered to be the basic decision making unit as regards purchases. The decision to purchase a commodity or service is generally combined but every family member is going to influence the decision most. It is established fact supported by marketers that purchasers behaviour pattern alters as the influence of family members among themselves increases. The key roles of purchase process are:

- Initiator
- Influencer
- Information gatherer
Since centuries the families are either ‘patriarchal’ in which husband plays a dominated role or ‘matriarchal’ in which wife/mother plays a dominant role or an ‘equalitarian’ in which both play equal role in family purchasing decisions. In the inference it is analysed that spouse could not have say in any decision, but it can be asserted that in ‘nuclear family’ both have equal power as far as decision making process is concerned. It means that individual arbitrary decisions in this type of democratic family structure are not possible. The media choice too gives a high weightage to the family oriented programming, avoiding overtly male or female-targeted slots.

Marketers can understand family and household decision better by examining the sociological dimensions of how families make purchase decisions. Three sociological variables that help to explain how families function includes:

- **Unity** binds every individual to each other in the household. It represents the intensity of intimacy among them.
- **Compliancy** gauges the potential of a family to tilt towards power formation duty and position, interpersonal settlements in acknowledgements to conditional and growth related anxiety.
Communication is the most substantial facto which affects the other two substantially. To ascertain whether members of the family are satisfied with whatever the purchase is made; communication among them plays the most critical role.

There are some products which might be obtained by an individual member but used by the whole unit. The uncertainty arises due to the factors like the sources of the product; and how to purchase? and by whom? All these answers are to be solved as it involves a number of persons from the family. The principle characteristics effecting relative influence of individual members of a family at each stage of the decision making process are social-economic class, culture, stage in family life cycle, sex-role orientation, product and situational characteristics.

The household, as a basic production and consumer specialization unit of society and economy, plays a very important role in the socio-economic life of a country. The theoretical and practical way of decision-making is very important, both for economic administration and household. That’s why the socio-economic situation, the internal consumption of households, their relation to the market, the way of thinking of those living there and their long–term relation to the market, the way of thinking of those living there and their long-term plans should be analysed.

Persons living in a common accommodation whatever they share blood relation or not directly come under the term household. This very definition distinguishes household and family, still they are used as each others substitutes. However for this particular purpose of research, it is necessary to differentiate both the terms family and
household since data related to them will have different inferences. The changing dynamics of social norms and commendable development in modern and single living families have turned marketers for a different kind of analysis under the nomenclature of household, because of its increasing popularity. Interestingly there are a lot of individuals who live alone and technically they are a family themselves. They include persons from migrant labour, deserted elderly people, students and professionals living far away from their homes.

A fourfold point of view is at stake for a conducive and reliable discussion on buyer’s mindset. These four points are monetary strength, compatibility among members and their sociability.

Monetary strength can be deciphered as an individual is economically strong enough to support their family members. It also includes that how the other members share their duties for this purpose. A noticeable change has occurred since 25 years, because with the emancipation of fair sex and awareness about their academic profile in society has balanced the role of male and female almost into equal. Now both the partners either earn or relatively share their responsibilities in economic terms.

The second basic point is emotional support; the closeness among members works as panacea for all increasing stress and problems arising out of changing contrary life styles.

Thirdly the compatibility among family members is very important as it helps to form a suitable life style for the family. Life style here may be inferred as spending time among family members since it has a great impact on buying patterns. Take an example
the growing number of married women who work outside has reduced the time they should otherwise spent for daily domestic work. Thus a new market trend has emerged for their convenience i.e. fast food industry. Another outcome of this social pattern is an enlarged emphasis on spending time together is based on quality instead of quantity. Market is cashing this phenomenon by providing tailor-made weekend packages for families.

Families work as a mentor for the spouses because the basic social values and social behaviour is taught as a collective measure by it. It includes general etiquettes orientation towards spiritual faith, setting standards of behaviour and most importantly how to project and carry themselves in society in both verbal and physical forms. Beside this a spouse counseled about academic and professional objectives to be achieved by the later life. The habit of gregarious is cultivated in a subject away by command and discipline; and periphrastically by study of the behaviour of guardians and fellow family members. Thus marketers generally aim at spouses who seek support in the task of socialization.

The statue of family member is quite decisive as it has great influence on what to buy and from where to buy. For example eatables and body care materials is bought by an individual but used by whole unit. On the other hand biological differences are taken into consideration while making purchase about cosmetics and other individual care products, such as their might be no say of female when a male buys an eraser or shaving foam and vice-versa in case of nail enamel and lipsticks. There are certain products where equal consideration is needed such as vehicles and houses by both the
partners with some exceptional interference of other members. The casual visits for
daily use objects are generally swayed by both the spouse; again with exceptional
interference of other family members it includes small recreational trips to newly
inducted mall culture in our society. The onus lies on the marketers to analyze utilizing
situation and family structure before earmarking any propagating methods to wow the
spouses for their products.

Noted sociologist Talcott Parsons asserts that spouses have a very strong and
explicit role to play while buying any utility. The first thing which must be indicated
here is the monetary robustness; an other roles enacted by the spouse. The counterparts
in this social unit record their presence explicitly by favouring other in their choices
which further caters the various longing of the family.

Family utilization choices can be divided into five definite roles which are taken
by spouses and other members. It is necessary for the policy makers to address different
levels of perception conceived by different members about the product and the situation
in which they are generally bought. Both partners can play the role of decision maker,
purchaser or influencer when a product or service is to be had.

The nature and use of the product is very determinant about whose involvement
would be more or less. Take an instance a home maker has a plenty of variables of one
product in front of her in the rack. Where she plays the role of decision maker
purchaser; but she may or may not be the manufacturer or lone utilizer. This example
best fits on eatables including snacks and soft drinks. On the other hand a utility like
home appliances related to recreation, modes of transportation related to daily activities,
interior accessories which are commonly used by other members likely to have a combined decision.

After examining the whole family structure and its divisional roles it is pertinent to understand the power equation and who plays the key role while making decision. Family is one of the most dominant reference groups. From the view of marketers this is the most important social combination of consumers. Marketers are interested in the distribution of roles in the family: “Who as a family member has a key power in the selection of goods and services. Many different researches on consumer behaviour were conducted recently. Some of the researches were focused on the family decision making processes and the role each family member plays in a particular stage in this process. Financial resources are a great check on what would be had and of what quality it should be. All members of the family are involved in the purchase decision making process directly or indirectly. It is very important to evaluate the role of each member of the family in making decision process so we could influence the family processes through implementation of appropriate positioning strategy and promotion of products and services. We can divide the family's household decision-making process into four different categories: a joint decision, husband's dominance, wife's dominance, autonomic dominance.

Many researchers separated the option of family’s decision to purchase various product categories which effects either the husband or wife, or the result of their joint decisions. There are three product categories being considered: goods of constant demand, durable goods (furniture, household appliances, etc.); economic decisions
related to family vacations, savings and budget related management, etc. The most common division of these categories is based on biological differences of “male" and "female" utilities. It was found that the dominance of husband is more common in the decision making process of purchasing luxury household items. While wife’s dominance in such kind of process usually relates to other types of products – home appliances, choice of food, gold etc. However, even such things as ties, underwear, socks for husbands, are often bought by their wives. At the same time, when it comes to purchase country house, furniture, family holidays, mortgages, insurance, banking services or rent, the process is being done mainly by joint decisions.

An alternative approach involves measurement of the influence in opinions of spouses, depending on the stage of making purchasing decisions. For example, Davis and Rigaux (1970, 1971) first analysed the influence of each spouse:

1. At different stages of decision-making process (identification of the need to purchase, collection of information, consideration of alternatives, final decision);

2. On components of the purchasing decisions, such as: where, when to buy, what model, what colour, style, etc.

These studies have shown that depending on the stage of the decision to buy the roles of both spouses can vary substantially.

In the study of family purchasing behaviour the theory of resources is being used, where the resource can be anything that one partner can give to another to meet the physical and psychological needs through social interaction.
There are six different types of social resources: money, information, products, services, status and love. During the process of family household decision-making presence or lack of resources explain the dominance of one of the spouses. To put in a different way who so ever generates more means and controls it donns more impact on the buying choices. It means either husband or wife absolutely control what is to be bought and not because one of them has the financial control.

It is essential for those who form marketing policies to understand the part tilt between spouses because they have to target particularly that partner. It implies that the financial management, choices about accommodation, education and occupation, guardian roles and even recreational activities are influenced by the earning partner. Most of the time the authority is divided among family members. It is possible for an individual to mold the situation their way. The role of researcher here is to ascertain who holds the necessary skills of convincing others according to their needs and in what types of utilities and services.

Ronald Cromwell and David Olson (1975) classified family power into three areas: Power bases, Power Processes, and Power outcomes.

J. R. P. French and Bertran Raven (1959) took a micro systemic view of family power, where they examined power strictly from inside the family and suggested that there are six bases of family power.

- **Legitimate power** is sanctioned by the belief system within the family, such as the belief that husband should be the head of the household, parents should have
control over raising children, or adolescents should have control over what they wear.

- **Information power** has its foundation in specific knowledge that is not available or is unknown to others in the family and one’s ability to verbally present the relevant information in an influential way. For example, if a man in the household is the only one who knows his income, or if he is viewed as knowledgeable about money; he is likely to make decisions about how much money should be spent in the family. Alternatively, if a wife can assemble relevant information about the benefits of purchasing a new car, she may be able to convince her reluctant husband.

- **Referential Power** is based on affection, mutual attraction, friendship, and likeability within the family. Positive feelings can be a powerful force in making alliances with others, if spouse want to make other one happy; they would care about happiness and, would not let them disappoint. For example a husband’s desire to please his wife.

- **Coercive power** involves the use of physical or psychological force in imposing one’s way on others in the family, assuming that others are resistant or opposed. Parental discipline threats, aggression, conflict and competition are inherent in the use of coercive power because getting one’s way is usually realized at the expenses of others getting theirs. For example, a wife wants to purchase a washing machine of a particular brand at a particular retail shop, but the husband does not the like the services of that particular retailer then; he tries to force his spouse to buy another brand from other retailer.
• **Expert power** is based on education, training and experience that is relevant to the issue at hand. For example, if a man of the household is a licensed real estate agent, he may have the most influence on where the family lives.

• **Reward power** is the ability to influence others by providing physical and psychological benefits to those who comply with one’s wishes. Spouses’ often strike bargains, exchange pleasing behaviours, and “sweet talk” with others to get their way.

Consequences between spouses about decision making works like a lubricant and helps to avoid unnecessary friction. So family decision making is as crucial as any other aspect discuss above.

It would appear that three distinct aspects have received considerable research attention; the first relates to the role structure in the decision making among the members of the family. The single most consistent finding is that the husband plays the instrumental (Ideal Man) role and the wife plays the expressive (emotional) role in the family decision-making (Blood and Wolfe 1960; Burchinal and Bander 1965; Ferreiva and winter 1965; Hill 1954).

Even though husbands tend to dominate decisions for certain product categories and wives for others, these roles may vary in the degree of dominance within each family. In some families, husband may be more dominant, regardless of the product being considered (patriarchal families); in others, wife may be more dominant (Matriarchal families).
Various studies shown that husband is generally more influential in the purchase decision than his wife where:

1. His level of education is higher.
2. His income and occupational status is higher.
3. His wife is not employed.
4. The couple is at the earliest stage in the family life cycle.
5. The couple has a greater than average number of children.

The opposite is true for a wife-dominant family; if the wife is employed has a higher level of education than the husband, and so forth. One study by Skinner and Dubinsky confirmed this profile. Wives who were more involved than husbands in forming insurance decisions tended to be employed and better educated than their husbands.(29)

The profile of the husbands-dominant family suggests a family with traditional values and attitudes towards martial roles. The husband’s higher income provides him with financial power within the family. A non working wife with a lower level of education usually means that more traditional values prevail.

Wives are classified as conservative, moderate or liberal with regard to feminine roles. Women who had liberal views of their role were much likely to make purchase decisions than conservative women. They were also more than twice as likely to make decisions about family savings, vacations plans and major appliances as compared to conservative women. Conversely, a study regarding husbands found that those with conservative perceptions of their martial role believed they influence more on decisions for vacations, insurance, and savings than husbands with more liberal views. Both
studies indicate that traditional (conservative) views of martial roles encourage greater male influence and contemporary (liberal) views encourage greater female influence.

The sum of consumption in a family based on the theory of family buying decisions can be classified as under:

- The individual members
- The family as a whole, and
- The household unit

For example, beer may be exclusively consumed by the father, hair spray by the mother, and cereals or baby food by the child. On the other hand, vegetables and cake mix may be consumed, after suitable transformation, by all the family members. Finally, there are several items such as paints, wall papers and lawn movers etc. which are consumed by the family indirectly in the process of consuming the household shelter unit. This classification of consumption behaviour has the advantage of pointing out whether the demand for goods and services is collective and indirect or otherwise.

The family consumption behaviour is considered largely to be the derivative of family buying decisions. Family buying decisions are considered to be of two types: autonomous by a single member and joint by both the spouses and all members of the family. It would appear that if the consumption of a particular product is made by a particular member, it would be their autonomous decision to choose a specific brand. However, this is not always true. There are quite number of products, particularly consumed by a spouse, for which buying decisions are strictly with their counterparts. In addition, lots of products are actually bought by the homemakers acting as a
purchasing agent for all the members including father in which consumer exerts his preferences but does not buy that himself.

On the other hand, buying decision may be completely autonomous with a member, although consumption is joint by whole family. It has been found that in grocery and personal care products where the brand is not visible at the time of consumption (spaghetti), and where the product is transformed considerably by the time it is consumed (cake mix), the housewife is an autonomous buyer for the joint consumption of the family. However, a large number of buying decisions are likely to be joint if their consumption is also joint.

Since there is one-to-one correspondence between type of consumption and type of family decision-making, it is critical to examine the determinants of joint vs. autonomous decision-making. The theory specifies that family’s social class, role orientation and life cycle as well as relative importance of purchase, perceived risk and time pressure imposing upon a buying decision will be joint or autonomous. The first three determinants are not product specific (although family specific) whereas the last three are product-specific.

If the decision is autonomous it is largely a function of the particular member’s predispositions towards a specific brand. These predispositions are based on one’s buying motives and evaluative beliefs about salient alternatives. All the three constructs – predispositions, buying motives and evaluative beliefs – are aggregately called one’s cognitive world relevant to the autonomous buying decisions, and it is based on three factors:
• First is the availability of information at the time of decision from a variety of sources including mass media and words –of –mouth and its processing by the individual member so as to make it congruent with his already stored knowledge.

• Second there is internal family influence from other members which attempts to revise his buying motives or evaluative beliefs about alternatives.

• Third, there is a set of antecedent factors, including personality, life style, social class, role orientation and reference groups that have exerted considerable influence in the past to mould his cognitive world in a certain biased way.

In the autonomous buying decision, a member is likely to take into consideration; specific requests and preferences of other members, especially when the latter likely to participate in the consumption of the products and services they decide on. Even in situations where one of them is the only consumer member, they may take into account preferences and biases of other member so that their choice and consumption is not consistent with general pattern of behaviour of the family.

Joint buying decisions, by definition are more complex, and perhaps they entail greater time interval between initiation and completion. Not only do they result in greater communication among family members, but also probably evoke inter-member conflict and its resolution. The theory states that both the necessary condition and sufficient conditions are likely to be present in joint decisions to entail some conflict.

Individual members of the family their predispositions, and the underlying cognitive world of buying motives and evaluative beliefs about product and brands.
Determinants of the cognitive world of individual members. There are both external and internal determinants. Determinants of autonomous vs. joint family decision-making. Process of joint decision-making with consequent inter-member conflict and its resolution.

The theory classifies family members as husband, wife and all other members. The latter largely consists of children but also includes either relative such as parents of the spouse. It assumes that a married couple has formed a family unit and if they live away from their parents they are not totally dependent upon someone else. Accordingly, it excludes a young married couple which lives with parents in the initial stages of forming a family unit. The parents would have a family unit in which the couple is a part of other members.

As a point in time, each member of the family has a set of predispositions, both positive and negative, toward products and specific brands involved in the buying decisions. These predispositions are presumed to be different in many instances because of difference(s) in motives and perceptions of individual members. For example, in buying of an automobile, the husband may prefer a medium priced full size sedan, the wife may prefer a low-priced full size station wagon, and the teenage children may prefer a high–priced small imported sports car. Within each of these types, the members may perceive the benefit of specific cars differently.

A member’s predisposition is a function of his buying motives and evaluative beliefs of specific brands in attaining or blocking his buying motives. Motives are the biogenic or psychogenic needs, wants or desires of person in purchasing and consuming
a product or service. Buying motives not only do impel or arouse behaviour but also
direct behaviour towards specific alternatives because most buying motives are learned
from past experiences and acculturation.

Another determinant of a family member’s predisposition is his evaluative
beliefs about specific brand alternatives as to whether they block or facilitate
achievement of buying motives. The evaluative beliefs are very small part of the total
cognitive awareness and knowledge about relevant products and brands. They solely
consist of the person’s evaluation of an alternative as a perceived instrument to satisfy a
set of motives. Thus evaluative beliefs of an alternative may vary from one member to
the other not only because their buying motives are different but also they perceive the
same alternative differently in its extent of being a perceived instrument to satisfy those
motives. Thus we can say that as compared to an individual’s buying decisions, family
buying decisions tend to be inherently more complex because of the variety of
predispositions and the underlying cognitive world of members of the family.

Social Class is an important concept although argument has been raised about its
validity and reliability to marketing. The opinion of different researchers seems to be
that it can offer insight into consumption patterns of the market place. This variable is
included in the analysis for two reasons. First, is that social class is an integral part of
every national culture, it seems probable that social class is culturally bound; therefore
it is likely that reported studies conducted in United States could be inappropriate to
India. Second, the relevant US studies are not recent and are by no means in agreement
with regard to the spousal influence patterns in India.
- Social class—a status hierarchy by which groups and individuals are classified on the basis of esteem and prestige.—American Marketing Association

- A social class is a group of people whom other members of the community see as equal to one another in social prestige and whom others believe to be superior or inferior in prestige to other groups that constitute the social classes below them or above them. (Warner).

Social class is defined by the ranking of the people in a society into hierarchy of upper, middle, and lower classes based on their power and prestige. Social class is based on demographic variables. Since the bases for defining power and prestige vary from one society to another, the composition of upper, middle, and lower class is likely to vary. Social class is dependent on the ideas and values of the society. Social class status does not imply face-to-face influence. This is reserved for peer groups and family who interact on a day-to-day basis. Social class status is likely to indicate common values and similar purchasing patterns. Previous studies have shown that individuals in the upper-middle class emphasize education, are fashioned-oriented, and are less likely to be brand-loyal than other groups. Such similarity in norms, values, and purchasing patterns means that social classes serve as a frame of reference for the purchasing behaviour of consumers in a particular social class.

Another indicator of social class is our possessions: the clothing we wear, the houses we live in, and the cars we drive. In other words homes, clothing, and other visible signs of wealth are signs of achievement or status symbols. Social class values can give direction to advertisers. Social class members must understand the language
and symbols used in advertising: otherwise. It will fail to communicate. Social class frequently differs in store patronage. Lower-class consumers are more likely to shop in discount stores and in neighborhood stores where they feel most comfortable and can rely on friendly salesperson for information. Upper –class consumers are more likely to shop in regular department stores for products they consider risky and in discount stores for products with little risk. Social classes may react differently to product characteristics and styles.

**Figure 1.1**

Educational status of each Spouse  
Occupation of each Spouse  
Living Standard  
Sources of income of each spouse  
Social Class  
Spousal Influence on Purchase Decision making

Variable Constituting Social Class of Spouse

Social class distinctions are common among all society. It is an established division comprising a set of people having common values, in traits and behaviour. A number of factors determine its shape for example the extent of disposable earnings through its length and breadth is established on the basis of earnings, academic qualifications, immovable and moveable property also play a considerable role. There is certain group of people who perform a permanent specified work and can not alter their social status. This kind of specifications is taken into careful consideration as such
groups have a common buying mind set since their inclination towards brands and products is exclusive to them only. It includes dress material, interior decoration for home, recreational activities and means of transportation.

The part which deals with economic psychology laid stress on the positive and negative tendencies of masses about money and how they like to dispose it.

Thus a customer sometimes is an important effect connected to their disposing tendencies. The level of employment, holistic shape of economy, the extent of flow of continuous earning, the quality of living standard and share market trends determine the way customer’s mindset would bent. These factors further divide society into various sub classes which may be minimum two in number or maximum ten. The most common change according to the circumstances influenced by above mentioned factors. So social status is a very substantial factor.

A number of studies have clearly indicated that there is a greater autonomy of buying decisions among all the members in both upper and lower social classes. This in turn, suggests that incidence of joint decision-making is likely to be more among middle–class families. Knowing well that middle class families have the least discretionary income and the highest perceived risk ,, it seems plausible that there will be greater planning , deliberation and participation by all members in decision-making.

### 1.1.1 Model of Household Decision Making

Households are likely to vary in the way they make their purchasing decisions depending on their stages in the life cycle. But there are certain common denominators in household decision making.
Model of Household Decision Making

This figure shows a model of household decision making. This model shows that household decision making is different from the individual decision making because of three factors:

1) The likelihood of joint decisions

2) Different role specifications for family members in the process of decision making.

3) The need to resolve conflicts among family members when making purchasing decisions.

As the figure 1.2 suggests that once the need for a joint decision has been established, decision roles will be specified for individuals in the household. Role specifications may be explicitly assigned to an individual, or it may be assumed that an individual in the household will perform the role. If an individual makes a decision, all
these roles would be fulfilled by one person. The various roles played by the household members are:

- The information gather or gatekeeper influences the family’s processing of information by controlling the level and type of stimuli the family is exposed to. The gatekeeper has the greatest expertise in acquiring and evaluating the information.

- The influencer establishes the decision criteria by which brands are compared and influences the other family members’ evaluation of alternative brands.

- The decision maker decides which brand to purchase, probably because he or she has budgetary power, and therefore final approval.

- The purchasing agent carries out the decision by purchasing the product for the family.

- The consumer uses the product and evaluates it, giving some feedback to other family members regarding satisfaction with the chosen brand and desirability of purchasing the same brand again.

The way in which roles in the decision making process are assumed by spouse is of importance to marketers. Knowing which spouse assumes each of these roles is a basic prerequisite for the establishment of sound marketing strategy. For sociologists, determining which spouse assumes the decision maker role is usually of prime importance since this is oftentimes equated with spouse having power, influence or authority (Blood and Wolfe 1960; King 1969; Bond and Peery 1971).
1.1.2 Joint Decision Making

Sheth in his study found that joint decision making is more likely in the following situations:

1. **The situation when the level of perceived risk in buying is high** because a wrong decision will affect the whole family, a joint decision is likely to occur to reduce risk and uncertainty. A decision regarding the purchase of a new home is invariably a joint decision because of the financial risks, the social risks involved in neighborhood interaction, and the psychological risks.

   Some evidence suggests that joint decision making may encourage the group to make riskier decisions because all members of the group can share the blame for a wrong decision. These so-called risky shift phenomena would mean that a decision the husband and wife make may result in the purchase of a more expensive house than if either spouse made a decision alone. Woodside studied whether a risky shift occurs in consumer decisions and found that wives were more willing to make riskier decisions for a variety of products after group discussion.

2. **The situation when the purchasing decision is important to the household**

   Importance is closely related to risk. However, in some cases, the decision may be important and the risk may be low. For example, deciding whether to return to the same vacation resorts the family has gone to for the past five years. Decisions to buy major appliances and automobiles are generally joint decisions because of their importance. Decisions for low-involvement products are more
likely to be made individually because it may not be worth the time and effort to engage in joint decisions for such products.

3. **The situation when there are few time pressures**: Time pressures will encourage one member of the family to make the purchase decision. The greater number of dual-earning households has created greater time pressures, a situation that encourages individual decision making for many products that ordinarily might be purchased on a joint basis.

4. **For certain demographic groups**: Several demographic factors are likely to encourage on a joint decision making:

   - Joint decision making is less risky among upper and lower socioeconomic groups. Lower –income households are more female –dominant’ higher-income households are more male –dominant. The middle –income groups are most likely to engage in joint decision making.

   - Young spouse show a higher frequency of joint decision making in one study it was found that the greatest amount of shared decisions in the first year of marriage. As the family gets older, joint decisions tend to decrease. Family members learn to make decisions that are acceptable to each other, and there is less need for shared decisions.

   - Joint decision making is more likely if there are no children in the family. As a family adds children, roles become more clearly defined and husband and wife are more willing to delegate authority to each other. Thus the need of joint decision making is reduced.
• Joint decision making is more likely if only one of the parents is working as time pressures are less.

1.1.3 Lifestyle and personality

Lifestyle and personality characteristics provide us with a richer understanding of consumer behaviour. Lifestyles and consumers’ modes of living is reflected in their attitudes, interests, and opinions. Lifestyle variables are defined by how people spend their activities, what they consider important in their environment, and what they think of themselves and the world around them. Lifestyle variables are also known as psychographic characteristics because activities, interests, and opinions are psychologically oriented variables that can be quantified. Lifestyle factors are relevant to marketers on two levels. First, broad lifestyle trends such as changing male/female purchasing roles have altered the habits, taste and purchasing behaviour. Second lifestyles can be applied on a product specific basis.

1.1.4 Changes in Purchase Behaviour of Male Spouse’s

The increase in the number of working women and single-parent households has meant a shift away from the traditional roles of a working male and stay-at-home female. The change in the male’s purchasing role is most apparent in increased responsibilities for shopping and child care and in more involvement with cooking and house cleaning – all traditional female roles. While they shopping they do not act differently from women. They tend to spend the same amount of time preplanning purchases, checking prices, and redeeming coupons.
The changing male’s role is not only a function of demographics. It is also a result of changes in male values. In a study, Campbell’s soup found that the men who are most likely to shop view themselves as liberated, considerate, achievement-oriented individuals; these are the types of males who do not feel the need to conform to a “macho” image. As a result, a second change has occurred in male purchasing roles. Males are beginning to buy products that at one time might have been dismissed as too feminine—Jewellery, skin care products, moisturizers, and cosmetics. The greater involvement of men in shopping and housekeeping activities and their willingness to shed a traditional male image has led to a merger of male and female purchasing roles.

1.1.5 Changes in Purchase Behaviour of Female Spouse’s

Working women’s greater affluence, independence, and self confidence have created a substantial change in women’s purchasing roles. As their purchasing power has increased, they have fixed more muscle in just about every product category, making almost no enclave a male preserve anymore. Women’s increasing independence suggests a desire for an identity beyond their traditional roles. In developing countries women play a vital role to the welfare of the family. They are basically viewed as the potential mothers and homemakers. Hence, decision-making power of the women within the family has been looked upon as one of the important factors which may affect on well-being of the family (Safilios, 1983) the importance of husband-wife decision making is well acknowledged by researchers (Davis and Rigaux 1974; Kassarjin 1982; Corfman 1991). It has been noted that women’s active participation at all levels of decision making is important in order to achieve equality and peace in
family as well as country (Mahmuda, 2008). According to UN (1995) “The empowerment and autonomy of women and improvement of their political, social, economic and health status is highly important end in itself. Improving the status of women also enhances their decision-making capacity at all levels in all spheres of life. The full participation and partnership of both women and men is required in productive and reproductive life, including shared responsibility for the care and nurturing of children and maintenance of the household”.

1.1.6 Product Based Buying Decisions

Traditionally, husbands have been regarded as the dominant decision makers for product such as automobiles, financial services, and liquor. Wives have been viewed as the prime decision makers for foods, toiletries and small appliances. Davis and Rigaux undertook one of the most detailed studies of husband-wife influences by product category.

1.1.7 The Nature of the Purchase Influence

The nature of the purchase influence may specify husband-wife roles. The most important classification by purchase influence defines instrumental versus expressive roles in family purchasing. Instrumental roles are related to performing tasks that help the group make the final purchasing decision. Decisions on budgets, timing, and product specifications are instrumental. Expressive roles facilitate expression of group norms and provide the group with social and emotional support. Decisions about colour, style, and design are expressive roles since they reflect group norms.
Historically, the husband has been associated with the instrumental roles and the wife with the expressive roles. However, we saw that as more wives enter the work force, husbands are more likely to assume household roles and wives budgetary and planning roles. As a result, instrumental and expressive roles are becoming more intermingled between husband and wife. Working wives are less likely to accept traditional homemaking tasks associated with expressive roles and are as likely to fulfill certain instrumental roles as the husband.

1.1.8 Changing Patterns of Husband-Wife Influence

Changes in martial roles have led to the husband’s greater influence in decisions the wife has traditionally assumed to be the home caretaker and husband the breadwinner of the family. The household life cycle operates in influencing the nature of decision making. Joint decision making is most likely to be early in the household’s life cycle. Then as husband and wife gain experience, they are willing to delegate responsibilities for decision to each other. If a family has children, joint decisions are even less likely as time becomes more constrained and husband and wife assume specific roles.

Regarding patterns of family influence, the husband tends to be more influential in the early stages of the life cycle. Over time, the wife becomes more assertive in decision making, particularly if she is employed and has some financial leverage over decisions. The arrival of children affects family influences for the simple reason that an additional person often must be considered in the decision process. Children not only act as
influencers over a wide range of decisions, but they also serve as occasional mediators in any disagreements between husband and wife.

1.1.9 Husband-Wife Influences

Implications for marketers from family decision center on the husband–wife relationship. The key question is who has the dominance influence. If the husband or wife is dominant in decision making, the marketer will direct the advertising message to the needs of the dominant party and select media to reach either the husband or the wife. A more difficult strategic issue arises when spouses make decision jointly or autonomously. If the decision is joint, should marketers direct separate message to husband and wife, or should they designed one campaign to appeal to both? In car advertising, some manufactures have used separate campaigns that husband and wife emphasized on different benefits. Chevorlet, for example began targeting 30 percent of its advertising budget to women, gearing its themes to fashion and style.

If the decision is autonomous- that is, the decisions made by husband or wife and either one is equally likely to make it- the marketer is faced with a difficult choice. Should the advertising budget be split equally between male and female oriented media or should the marketer appeal to one or the other? Men’s clothing is a good example. The marketer could advertise men’s clothing in women’s magazines, in men’s magazines or in both. If both are used, marketers need two separate campaigns. The danger of this approach is that the media budget may be spread into thin. A joint decision poses a different problem.
As patterns of husband-wife influence have changed, marketing strategies have adapted. For example, until recently, life insurance was designed primarily to the husband’s specifications, but companies now are developing policies geared specifically to the working wife. Similarly, marketers can no longer assume that the coupon redeemer is necessarily the wives. Husbands’ increasing involvement in food shopping means they are more likely to exchange coupon.

1.1.10 Spouse’s Buying Behaviour for a Specific Brand Choice.

As we know that much buying behaviour is more or less repetitive in nature. Every buyer establishes a purchase cycle for various products which determine how often he/she will buy the product or services. For durable products the purchase cycle is lengthy and infrequent, while on the other hand for the products like personal care items, food, entertainment, banking and insurance etc. the purchase life cycle is short and frequent. Each of the purchase cycle has confronted by repetitive brand-choice decisions. Spouse simplifies their task by storing relevant information and establishing a routine in their decision-making process. The main elements that affect the purchase decision-making process are

- A set of motives
- Several alternative course of actions
- Decision mediators by which the motives are matched with the alternatives

There are three important notions involved in the definition of alternatives as brands. First, the several brands which become alternatives to the buyer need not to
belong to the same product class as defined by the industry. For example a person may see Nescafe coffee, Sunrise and BRU.

Motives reflect the needs of the spouse and their product or service specifications. The alternatives are the various brands that have the potential of satisfying spouse’s needs. Motives are impetus to action. The spouse is motivated by expectation or anticipation, based on learning from the outcome of past purchase of a brand in his/her evoked set. Where evoked set is the number of known alternatives a spouse can know about his/her decision. Motives or goals may be of as constituting a means-end chain, and hence as being general or specific, depending upon their position in the chain.

Decision mediators are the set of rule that the spouse employs to match his motives and their means for satisfying those motives. They serve the function of ordering and structuring the buyer’s motives, and then ordering and structuring the various brands based on their potential to satisfy these ordered motives. Decision mediators develop by the buyer’s process of learning about the buying situation. They are therefore influenced by information from the buyer’s environment, and even more importantly by the actual experience of purchasing and consuming the brand.

Time pressure is an exogenous variable and therefore specific to a decision situation. When a spouse feels pressure for time, they must allocate their time among alternative uses. In this process a reallocation of unfavorably to purchasing activity can occur. It will also unfavorably affect he search for information.
Financial status refers to the constraint a spouse feels because he/she lacks financial resources. This can affect his/her purchase behaviour by creating a barrier to purchasing the most preferred brand.

Personality traits are such variables as self-confidence, self-esteem, authoritarianism, and anxiety, which have been researched to identify individual differences. These individual differences are “topic free” and therefore supposedly exert their affect across product classes.

1.1.11 Culture

There seems to be relatively few marketing oriented cross-cultural studies of family purchase behaviour reported in the literature. Most studies are North American based and seemed plagued by the same problem that mono-culture research is based on. In as much as social class, family structure, role models and other decision variables are clearly culturally dependent, a need exists to study effect of changes occurred in culture on spousal decision-making.

Culture is a set of socially acquired values that society accepts as a whole and transmits to its members through language and symbols. As a result, culture reflects a society’s shared meanings and traditions. A culture’s values are likely to influence its members’ purchase and consumption patterns. For example, one consumer may place a high value on achievement and demonstrate success with symbols of luxury and prestige. An other consumer may have a culturally derived desire to appear young and active, may buy cosmetics that advertise a “younger look”, and may enrol in an
exercise program. Culture not only influences consumer behaviour, it reflects it. Subculture can be defined by age, region, religious affiliation, or ethnic identity.

A number of researchers (Blood and Wolfe 1960; Bott 1955; Rainwater 1965) assert that influence in the decision-making power is affected by martial role attitudes which exist in the system’s subculture. Martial role attitudes can be traditional – where as in high degree of specialization between spouses exists with a few shared activities or decisions, with the dominance of the husband apparent across most family decisions – or companionship- where there is a low degree of specialization with most activities and decisions are shared with an equalitarian balance or power across most family decisions.

While marital role attitudes define conjugal role relationship, Turner(1970) and Blood and Wolfe(1960) feel that among the various determinants of influence, authority is the most basic, for it is authority which allows either spouse to perform or delegate the performance of tasks. Authority in the family is anchored outside of the individual family, in the system’s subculture, so that the course of interaction between husbands and wives in a particular subculture usually leads only to variations in the established authority pattern rather than complete transformations. Consequently, it is not surprising that traditional versus companionship martial role attitudes, and concomitant martial authority patterns, have been shown to be associated with certain social grouping such as ethnic groups (Rainater 1966A; Pettigrew 1964), social classes (Heer 1958; Komarovsky 1962) and religious denominations (Strodbeck 1951). These social
structure variables affect martial role attitudes and authority patterns which in turn are associated with task and decision behaviour.

### 1.1.12 Situational Characteristics

Situational characteristics and product characteristics are related. A product which is expensive usually involves high risk either financially or socially, thus typically leading to a joint family purchase decision. In a situation where a product is inexpensive or has no importance to the spouse, decisions are normally made by the spouse who is purchasing the product. Even if the purchase is an expensive one, a family purchase decision is less likely to be made jointly, when there is time pressure. Thus time pressure tends to cancel the effect of product categorisation. Indeed, it seems quite possible that product, situational and spousal characteristics may well be interrelated in quite complex manner, with certain product categories being more or less important in different situations for spouse exhibiting certain characteristics, Thus changing influence patterns. All these factors may be best dealt with through the involvement construct.

Involvement has been variously defined but is usually understood to mean perceived personal relevance. If a purchase is important more time will be spent searching for information and for the right selection. The inevitably means more spousal discussion.
Characteristics Impacting Spouse Involvement in Decision Making

Complex decision making is a characteristic of high involvement situations. This usually occurs when the purchase decision involves risk and sums of money. Three categories of factors have been identified as having influence on the level of involvement. They are:

1. **Personal**: inherent interest, values or needs that motivate a person towards a product.
2. **Physical**: characteristics of the product that causes differentiation and increase interest.
3. **Situational**: something that temporarily increases interest towards that product.

A research issue of interest here could be whether or not an individual’s involvement level has a direct bearing upon their influence in any given situation. The difficulty here is that involvement is multi-faceted; if the personal and physical aspects dominate overall involvement, marketers need only consider the involvement level of
individual spouse to determine the amount of influence they have in the purchase decision making.

Alternatively, if the situational aspect dominates, then the construct will be of little use to marketers because each situation will be different. It seems likely, in the latter case, that spousal involvement may better be captured as part of some other construct such as the decision strategy used. For instance, a female spouse who is deeply involved in the joint decision making may use persuasive tactics whereas if the decision was not important to her then a more logical, objective influence strategy might be used.

1.1.13 Qualls Theoretical Model of Household Decision Behaviour

The model postulates that the nature of a husband’s and wife’s influence is structurally determined by the sex role orientation of the household. Quall’s findings suggest the importance of studying family decision behaviour using a multivariate model which includes family sex role orientations.
Figure 1.4

Qualls Model of Household Decision Behaviour

His multivariate analysis was between sex role orientation and influence, preference agreement, conflict resolution and decision outcome. Empirical tests provided partial support for this model, a positive and significant relationship between SRO and household influence and conflict resolution was identified; but there was no significant relationship between SRO and preference agreement; and only a weak negative relationship between SRO and decision outcome. SRO plays a major part determining household decision responsibility and role structure, but apparently has little impact on the outcome of the decision process.

He suggested that the explanatory power of a theoretical model of family decision making process is improved when it is viewed as a network of household relationship. Therefore is the number of variables is increased to produce a large, more dynamic model, its explanatory and predictability power can be improved.

One limitation of this study is the exclusion of other household variables, for example, children, situational factors, life cycle, and social class which all could have
added to the explanatory power of the model. Also, this model cannot be generalized to other products or other household decisions as it was only tested on one decision situation – the purchase of a home.

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In marketing and consumer behaviour Husband and Wife are the decision makers in taking the buying decision. Although households are still treated as single entities in standard economic textbooks, day-to-day experience reveals that household decision-making among couples and families often involves conflict and certainly requires compromises in many cases. In this study, we argue that the role of gender in buying behaviour is largely due to the fact that many interesting propositions about individual decision in purchase remain outside the current perspective of the domain. We review the extent literature to demonstrate that much of the research so far has addressed only a small part of the extent domain, and that several important and interesting research questions remain unaddressed.

Research so far has focused mainly on decision outcomes (who makes the final decision) and to a much lesser degree on decision processes (how do they arrive at that). As the question of who makes the purchase decision has been explored extensively, findings became repetitive and interest in the role of gender in decision-making began to wane. At the same time, research that attempted to resist this wave of reductionism and grappled with family consumption in terms of all its interpersonal nuances has been hampered by a dearth of appropriate metaphors to talk about such behaviour; e.g. most theories of behaviour and personality in psychology are at the
individual level and, given that family is not a simple sum of two or more individuals, individual theories of behaviour and personality do not facilitate an explanation of behaviour observed in families.

Family decision-making is probably unique among research areas of social sciences that several discipline have contributed to its development including rural sociology, social anthropology, social psychology, clinical psychology, home economics, consumer psychology, marketing and economics. This interest of diverse disciplines in family decision-making is largely due to the fact that the whole social structure in the world rests on the consumption maintenance and survival of the family unit. Today, family decision-making enjoys a long tradition of research.

Most of the approaches to family decision making are the macro vs micro approach. In general economics, social anthropology and marketing have taken a macro approach in which households rather than members of the household have been the primary units of observation and investigation (Alxender 1947; Bell 1958; David 1962; Feber 1962; Zober 1964). On the other hand, rural sociology, consumer psychology have in general, adopted micro approach in which the major thrust has been observing and investigating the interaction processes among members of the family (Alderson 1957; Blood and Wolfe 1960; Bott 1957; Olsen 1956-57).

Most of the researchers in family decision-making process deals with the distinction between buying decisions and consumptions (Alderson 1957; Converse and Crawford 1950; Coulson 1966; Ferber 1954; Foote 1961, Nicosia 1966) pointed out that one member, particularly the homemaker, may be buyer, but products and services may
be consumed either by all the members. Specifically attention has been paid to role of the homemaker as a purchasing agent, and on some decisions which are truly joint among all the members of family.

Now in the 21st Century, it is difficult to determine that who is your customer man, woman and how? What are the changes in spousal roles in buying behavior process and what causes these changes? There is a thought that why gender is considered the unit for marketer and how promotion is the important component of the marketing wire. Women are dealing comfortably with the outside world. They seem to enjoy their work, and believe that the money is useful for their family. At the same time, as manufacturers come under increasing competitive pressure, both from rival brands and retailers, this consumer group offers the opportunity of developing fast growth brands that help to secure brand loyalty early on.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study entitled, “SPOUSAL ROLES IN FAMILY PURCHASE DECISION MAKING PROCESS” has been initiated with the objective to know the effect of gender role on buying behaviour and redefining the role of gender. The main objectives of the study are:

- To analyze the changing nature of spousal roles in family purchase decisions.
- To study the effect of spousal roles in the family purchase behaviour among husband and wife.
To study the socio-cultural shifts and their impact on family purchase decision process.

To analyze the change in the spousal roles family purchase decisions in case of dual income family groups.

To identify the shift in authoritative / hierarchical positions in the spousal roles with reference to purchase decision in the families.

1.4 DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The specific areas of spouse’s influence to be investigated in this thesis already been highlighted. Researchers have yet to resolve satisfactorily the problem of how to obtain accurate information about the relative influence of spouse’s in family purchase decision making process. A critical issue that which needs to be examined is that who should be interviewed? In fact, there is a series of questions that need to be addressed before serious research about spouse’s purchase decision making can be undertaken.

For instance, do the responses of one spouse member accurately reflect the influence behaviour of his or her counterpart? Indeed, the whole question of the validity and accuracy of the self-report scales or prevalent in the consumer behaviour family literature must be considered before the design of research can be attempted.

Much debate has occurred –presented below on how to obtain accurate information about the relative influence of spouses in family purchase decision making. A critical issue being that of who should be included in the survey. Specifically, can one
spouse accurately report the influence behaviour of other spouse, and should both be included in the survey.

Davis (1970) suggested that to rely only on wives’ responses would be both incomplete and possibly misleading. Hence, the similarity between husband’s and wife’s responses when viewed in aggregate terms is clearly not present on a within family comparison.

Self reports have also been criticized for yielding poor congruence. Spiro (1983) found only 6% of her respondents reported similar perceptions of influence strategies used. Burns (1976) found a general tendency for husbands to overestimate their influence, participations or authority and a tendency in other couples for wives to underestimate their roles. Thus is the objective is to find the relative influence of husbands and wives in purchase decisions making then for survey one spouse is probably not sufficient(Davis, Hoch & Regsdale(1986)). Thu sin my survey I included both the spouses to investigate the influence each have on the family purchase decision making process.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine spouse’s influence in family purchase decision making in India with regards to socialization of spouse’s as consumers, socializing agents(particularly, family, peers and media) and the role played by them, decision stages, demographic variables like age and sex and influence by product category. This research has considered various areas, where different conclusions have risen. Hence by going through various available literatures the objectives have been framed for this particular study.
Research may be defined as the application of the scientific method in the study of problems. Research requires expertise. We know what is already known about the problem and how others have investigated it. We searched the related literatures carefully. We thoroughly grounded in the terminology, the concepts, and the technical skill necessary to understand and analyze the data that has gathered.

1.4.1 Research Methodology

Research is common phraseology which refers to exploration of knowledge. One can also define research as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic. The Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English lays down the meaning of research as “a careful investigation or inquiry especially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge”. Some people consider research as a faction, a faction from the known to unknown. It is actually a journey of discovery. We all have the essential nature of questioning for, when the unknown confront us, we wonder and our questioning makes us probe and attain full and fuller understanding of the unknown. This questioning is the mother of all knowledge and the method, which we can use for obtaining the knowledge of whatever the unknown, can be termed as research.

Research comprises defining and redefining the problems, formulating hypotheses and suggested solutions, collecting, organizing, and evaluating data, making deductions and reaching conclusions. Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. Research methodology has many dimensions and research methods form a part of it. Every kind of research study initiates from defining the
research problem. The present study titled, “Spousal Roles in Family Purchase Decision Making Process” has been initiated with the basic objective of looking into the shift in the roles of the Spouse’s in the family purchasing decision making behavior

1.4.2 Research Design

Research design means the methods and procedures for conduction the particular study. It is a purposeful scheme of action proposed to be carried out in a sequence during the process of research focusing on the problem under consideration. Though collection and analysis of data make an important aspect of the research and hence the research design, there are many other aspects to be included in it. In words of Claire Selltiz, research design should be such that it lead into logical conclusions. On the basis of methodology, research design can be classified under three titles i.e.

(i) Experimental Research Design
(ii) Exploratory Research Design
(iii) Diagnostic or Descriptive Research Design

In this research exploratory research is employed as the problem not clearly defined. Exploratory research helps me to gather preliminary information that will help me to define my problem and suggest hypotheses. Exploratory personal investigations involving original field interviews with the household members have helped to have a greater insight into all possible practical aspects of the research problem. Pilot surveys of the initial ideas helped to refine the final statements of the scale. The survey of the concerning literature have been very helpful in formulation of the research problem. The changing role of the each spouse in the family purchase decision making process has given a new change in the marketplace. The adoption of the descriptive and
diagnostic research design has been very much effective in context to the present study in hand.

The objective to us descriptive research is to study the influence of spouses’ in family purchase decision making process.

Descriptive research is used because pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of phenomena is to be had. Descriptive research is the only means through which opinions, attitudes, suggestions and other data can be obtained. Descriptive research helps to explain the phenomena in terms of the conditions or relationship that exist and the level opinions that are held by spouses, and further the effects that are evident or trends that are developing. Because of the apparent ease and directness of this method, information has been gathered in terms of the individual’s opinion about some issue, by a simple questionnaire. The descriptive type of research is useful in the development of data gathering instruments like questionnaire.

1.4.3 Sampling Design

All items in any field of inquiry constitute a universe. A sample design is a definite plan for obtaining a representative proportion of the population. Sample design is determined before data is collected. Our universe approaches towards infinite, because of large and scattered respondents. The study specifically covers the nature of the family set-up and the effect on the marketing concept, which is going to give a new approach to the marketing field i.e. ‘Spousal Roles’. This study is confined to the areas
of Punjab, Haryana and U.T. of Chandigarh, comprising mainly of both spouses. The sample unit has been taken as both the spouses not an individual.

1.4.4 Size of the Sample

The Sample Size has been restricted to the 400 household couples (i.e each husband and wife i.e. 800 respondents), keeping in mind the research objectives and constraints. The distribution of sample units in the various specified areas will be proportionate according to the population.

1.4.5 Sampling Method/Technique

In the present study Simple Random Probabilistic (Convenience and Purposive Sampling) technique has been adopted. Random sampling formulas apply more or less accurately to purposive sampling (Garrett 1969). Guilford, J.P.(1984) writes a purposive sampling is one which is arbitrarily selected where there is a good evidence that it is very representative of the total population or it is known that it will produce well matched responses.

The non-probabilistic sampling is used because the selected sample are absolutely arbitrary and has no theoretical basis required for estimating population characteristic. The sample so selected is called a purposive sample. Such a sample is arbitrarily selected because there is good evidence that it is a representative of the total population.

Convenience sampling is used because it is useful in exploratory research which helps to collect an inexpensive approximation of the truth.
1.4.6 Instrument of Data Collection

Measurement is a process of mapping aspects of a domain onto other aspects of a range, according to some rule of correspondence. Scaling describes the procedure of assigning number to various degree of opinion, attitude and the other concepts. This can be done in two ways i.e.

(i) Making a judgment about some characteristics of some individual and then placing him directly on the scale.

(ii) Constructing questionnaire in such a way that the score of the individual responses assigns him a place on a scale.

Once the type and size of the sample has been determined, the next task is to select the various tools to be used to the collection of data from the identified universe. The tool, depending upon the various considerations such as objectives of the study, suitability of the test, competency of the researcher to control the administration and interpret the results is, ‘Spouse Behavioural Scale ‘ scale prepared by the researcher.

The response was measured on 5-point scale. The method is based on likert scaling technique: Rensis Likert who first developed this approach for attitudes surveys. Likert explained the benefits of his approach in his article, “A technique for the measurement of the attitudes”(1972). The prime objective of this technique was that it was too much quicker to develop and adopt as compared to any other technique. Further the likert scaling approach does not necessitate the use of negative items, a benefit that explains its widespread industrial applications.
The likert technique consists of a series of statements to which one responds using a scale of possible answers. Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Indifferent (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1), and the scores can be vice-versa also. This five point likert’s scale can be expanded to seven or more steps with a modification of the adverbs (Strongly, Moderately, Mildly). The five and seven points scale are the most common forms in use. In the present study, researcher used Summated Scale (Likert Five Point Scale). In the Likert’s Five Point Scale, the respondent is asked to respond to each of the statements given, in terms of five degrees of agreement or disagreement as below:

- Each point on the scale carries a score i.e. from least score to the highest score.

The most of the factors are psychology i.e. relating to the attitude, behavior, general family environment etc. cannot be measured quantitatively, so the need of Likert Scale has been tremendous.

**1.4.7 Item Generation**

At the very first stage it was very essential to identify the various factors that can effect the buying decision making process of the each constituent of the modern
family. For the same purpose the existing and related literature were explored to get help in the formation of the various relevant statements.

(a) The statements were made on the basis of the existing family structure and their buying decision making process.

(b) The study of literature on buying decision-making process and researches made on the related fields, internationals and prominent journals were also screened through available details for the formation of the relevant statements.

(c) Informal interviews with the number of marketing professionals and a reasonable number of families were also held.

The following are the various roles of the members identified in the families were:

- Initiator
- Influencer
- Decider
- Buyer
- User

1.4.8 The Statements Selection

The choice of the statement depends upon the opinion of the competent persons for its suitability towards the study and the tests. A set of statements has been developed and evaluated by the sample respondents on the Likert Scale. This also helped in determining the content validity. Approximately 100 selected statement items were
given to the panel of 25 judges, experts in the field of marketing. The purpose of this was:

- To struck off the redundant statements
- To delete the ambiguous items, words or statements.
- To suggest modification (if any) or addition of the new statements or items.

All the panel members were contacted personally and were given sufficient time to think before giving their judgments on each statements items. Research evidence is available leading to the conclusion that a relatively small number of judges can be entrusted to obtain reliable scale values for the statements Edward (1969). Rosander (1965) obtained independently from two groups of fifteen judges each a correlation as high as 0.99. Similarly Upbrock 1965 from the two groups of fifty judges each the correlation between two scales values were found of twenty judges is fully satisfied.

1.4.9 The Preparation of the Scale

In the preparation of the scale, Likert Summated rating technique was used. Shukla (1972) pointed out that likert method of summated rating has been perceived significantly and easiest to fill in. Therefore, in the present study, Likert’s Method of summated rating was employed. Against each statement five alternative responses, Strongly Agree, Agree, Indifferent, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. The scale thus prepared was administrated on 800 respondents i.e. 400 couples (each husband and Wife). The each respondent is asked to give their choice on likert scale of their own.

The data thus obtained were statistically treated giving a weightage of 5,4,3,2,1 for the positive items. The weightage were reversed for negative items i.e. 1,2,3,4,5.
Then the score of the each individual was summed up to calculate the response of the items.

1.4.10 Item Analysis

The various approaches are used for the item analysis to finally select the items. The first methods in which the individual statements are evaluated are known as the criterion method. In this method, twenty five percent of the subjects with the lowest total score are taken up. These constitute criterion groups in terms of which the statements are evaluated by finding out the t-value for each statement and ranking the statement in order of their t-values. In this way, the statement with higher t-values were retained and rejected to construct a scale (Garrett 1956).

The other method of the item analysis is the correlation method, which may be used in evaluating the individual statements. In this method the scores of each item are correlated with the total score by a statistical technique of point bi-serial correlation. In such case there are two category responses, hence it cannot be used here, as it is a five-point scale.

In this study, the determination of validity indices has been followed because it is much favored by test makers and it sets up extreme groups in computing the validity of an item. Garrett suggests that is the best among several methods. The number of items correctly selected to form the upper and lower sub-groups. Then the discriminating power of the items i.e. its consistency with the total score of the test is judged by bi-serial correlation of the items with the whole test. The bi-serial ‘r’ is read from the table.
The researcher in this study took up to form two groups, top 25 percent and bottom 25 percent. Each statement item of both the groups was corrected for chance success by the formulae:

$$Pc = \frac{(R-W)}{(K-1)}/(N-HR)$$

The difficulty index of each item was found by averages the percentages, correlated in the upper and lower groups. Next the discriminative power of the items, its consistency with the total score on the test is judged by the correlation of the items and the whole test. In this way the bi-serial ‘r’ has found. The validity index (Discriminating Power) was read out from the normalized bi-serial coefficient of correlation, (Garrett, 1973) as determined from proportions of correct responses in the upper and lower sub-groups.

The validity index (Discriminating Power) has been determined to the extent to which the given item discriminates among the respondents who differ sharply in the functions measured by the test as a whole. Bi-serial analysis has been usually regarded as the standard procedure in such type of item analysis, because it gives the correlation of an item with total scores in the test or with scores on some independent criterion. The corrected percentage of difficulty indices for chance success and item validity as determined by the method.

According to Garrett (1973), items with validity index of 0.20 or more regarded as satisfactory and the items with discriminatory power 0.50 or above has been retained. In this way only 44 statement items were retained.
‘Reliability and Validity’ of the measurement scale is generally the most important concept after preparing the scale. **Reliability** is concerned with the stability of test scores that it does not go beyond the test itself. **Validity**, on the other hand, implies evaluation in terms of outside and independent criteria.

A test is called reliable when we find the scores obtained are stable and trustworthy, which can be examined only through the measure that the scores are error free. As already discussed the items of the test were divided into two sub-groups i.e. 25 percent in the upper and the 25 percent in the lower group, which are further corrected to eliminate chance success. The discrimination power (Validity index) of each item is 0.50 and more.

There are four procedures in common use for computing the reliability coefficient (sometimes called the self-correlation) of a test. These are:

- Test-Retest (Repetition).
- Alternate or Parallel Forms.
- Split-Half Technique.
- Rational Equivalence.

In this study, the Split-Half method has been used which has some advantages over the other methods. One of its main advantages is that all data for computing reliability are obtained on one occasion and therefore variance is perfectly avoided. In the test-Retest method, there is a problem of interval between the two tests. The method of rational equivalence tends to underestimate some, but the reliability coefficient as found by the other methods. Moreover it is difficult to prepare the corresponding items
that are interchangeable. But Split Half Method found to be most commonly used. In this method, the test is divided in two halves on the basis of odd-even basis. From the reliability of the half test, the self-correlation of the whole test is estimated by the Spearman-Brown prophecy formulae. In this test, the reliability of the odd-even items has been found to be 0.76, and the self-correlation of the whole test has been estimated by the formulae has been found to be 0.86, which is highly correlated. The present test is highly reliable because its test reliability has been found more than 0.85 as suggested by Edwards (1969), if the test is reconstructed by the method of summated rating.

1.4.11 Validity

The validity of a test depends upon the fidelity with which it measures when it is supposed to measure. A test is said to be valid when the performances which it measures correspond to the same performance as otherwise independent measures are objectively defined.

In the development of Spousal Influence scale, in the first instance, efforts were made to improve and ensure the face validity of the scale by editing it again and again, and got read by several experts. A test is said to have face-validity when it appears to measure whatever the researcher had in mind. It also helps to decide whether the test items are relevant to the situation or to the persons whom this test is going to be given. In the second phase, content validity was determined on the basis of judgment of the marketing executives and experts in the field of marketing management and experts in test-construction. They numbered about twenty-five couples. Only those items were retained which represented their consensus. In this way, the content validity of the test
through competent judgment was ensured. Garret (1973) points out, “The validation of content through competent judgment is most satisfactory when the sampling of items is wide and judicious and when adequate standardization groups are utilized.”

The third type of validity is known as criterion validity. The criterion validity of the present scale was judged by using the forty items scale based on summated rating, prepared by the researcher for this Ph.D degree. This scale is not exactly similar to the present scale but it was considered to be a workable criterion. For this purpose, both the scales were administered to the same group of twenty-five couples. Co-efficient of correlation was found out of the scores obtained on the two scales, which came out to be which is considered to be highly satisfactory.

Construct validity was ensured by making correction for chance success of the top and bottom groups (25% in each case). The difficulty index was worked out by averaging the scores of the top and bottom groups of each item. Validity index of each item was read from a table of biserial correlation (normalized) as determined from proportions of correct responses of upper and lower groups. Only those terms were retained which had a validity index of .50 and above. In this way, the construct-validity was ensured and it is clear that the scale has very high construct validity.

1.4.12 Pilot Survey

After the selection of the data collection method, the particular methodology and scale to be used in the survey have been formulated. In the initial phase of the study several test/ experimental surveys have been carried out so as to list down the various significant factors playing central role in the study in hand. In these types of complex
studies, it is better to examine the various aspects with the help of pilot surveys. The initial scale includes the various statements recorded during the direct communications with the respondents, which later on helped to draft a final scale. It was decided to conduct a pilot survey for the following reasons:

(a) To finalize the method of measuring attitude (buying behaviour roles of the constituents of the new urban (upward mobile) families) which will be used in the main empirical research.
(b) To finalize the scale to be used in the research
(c) To gain familiarity with the fieldwork and the problems that can occur at different stages of the research.

**1.4.13 Collection of Data**

Primary Data and Secondary Data sources are used for data collection in this study, but the overall dominance remains with the primary data.

**(i) Collection of Primary Data**

In the case of descriptive research the primary data can be collected either through observations or through direct communications with the respondents in one form or the other. The data has been collected through the scale (prepared by the researcher), which has been filled by the direct communications with the respondents. In spite of a big Universe and a large sample size this tedious work of collection of data has been completed successfully.
As it is already discussed that the objective of the study is to analyze the shift in the buying behaviour of the new customers and redefining the role of each constituent of the new urban (upward mobile) family. There exists a radical shift in the structure of the family and their buying decision making process. The spouses play an important role in the buying behaviour of the parents. As per the requirement of the study data has been collected through the use of scale. The scale comprises a number of statements on the basis of five point Likert Scale. All type of primary information has been collected through this scale.

Data are collected from the respondents through personal interaction and the responses were recorded under almost similar conditions. The interactions with the respondents were held from April 2010 to July 2011. There was a minimum refusal on the part of the respondents.

(ii) Collection of Secondary Data

Though the real thrust in the study lies with the strength of immense amount of primary data has been collected with the help of the Likert’s Scale, yet the study is incomplete without the assistance of the secondary data. The secondary sources information has been gathered from various marketing journals, books, earlier related studies, reports and survey of government and non-government agencies in this regard press release, newspapers, periodicals and use of internet explore various useful sites in relation to study.

1.4.14 Processing and Analysis of Data
The data after collection are to be processed and analyzed with the requirement and purpose at the time of the development of the scale. It is essential for such a scientific study that only the relevant data should be used from the collection of such a voluminous data and processed through the proper statistical tools. Data were thoroughly evaluated before analysis. Data were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS package) and the MS – EXCEL tool.

All the sixty two items were divided into five factor – combinations according to the research objectives of the study so to apply statistical tool in order to prove the hypothesis. The items were constructed and divided keeping in mind various research objectives of the study in the mind. The items were given the name like Q1, Q2, Q3, ……………………Q62. The items were divided into the following five groups:

GROUP I : Q5, Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q20, Q24, Q26, Q29, Q32, Q40, Q41, Q43, Q49, Q50, Q52, Q56

GROUP II : Q1, Q2, Q3, Q16, Q34, Q36, Q61, Q62

GROUP III : Q6, Q18, Q22, Q25, Q28, Q33, Q37, Q42, Q43, Q55, Q57, Q58

GROUP IV : Q8, Q9, Q19, Q27, Q31, Q33, Q38, Q39, Q46, Q47, Q48, Q51, Q53, Q54, Q59, Q60

GROUP V : Q4, Q7, Q10, Q11, Q17, Q21, Q23, Q30, Q45

These groups are prepared in accordance to my research objectives of the present study. Question in Group – I relates to the first objective of the study, Group – II to the second objective and so on. After dividing the items into the five groups, data
analyzing has been done by applying various statistical and mathematic techniques.
Since the data related to behavioural characteristics, therefore, the following statistical
techniques as recommended by Garret(1956), Guilford(1985); Ferguson(1966) and
glass & Stanley(1978) were used for the purpose of analysis:

i. **Measures of Central Tendency**

   To judge the nature of the distribution measures of central tendency, namely, the arithmetic mean, median and mode were worked out.

ii. **Measures of Dispersion (Variability)**

   To observe the variability of the data around the central value different measures of variability, i.e. quartiles, standard deviations, variances and coefficient of variation were calculated. The coefficient of variation was calculated to see the variability in the scores of various items, areas under study and the variability between the genders of the same area as well as of the different areas.

iii. **Measures of Divergence**

   To analyze the divergence of the scores from the normal distribution Skewness and Kurtosis is calculated. Distributions are said to be skewed negatively or to left when scores are massed at the high end of the scale (the right end) and are spread more gradually towards the lower end. Skewness is said to be positive skewness when scores are massed at the low end of the scale (the left end). In fact, more the gap between mean and median, more is the skewness. A frequency distribution more peaked than the normal is said to be leptokurtic; one
flatter than the normal, platykurtic; and the normal distribution itself is known mesokurtic.

iv. **‘z’ - test**

A two-tailed test is a test with a rejection region consisting of the values in both tails of the sampling distribution of the test statistics. In a two-tailed test, the null hypothesis is stated in terms of an equality. The format is $H_0 : \mu = \mu_0$, where $\mu_0$ is some stated number. The alternative hypothesis includes all the possible values of the population parameter $\mu$.

v. **Comparison of Means**

To study the significant difference for further analysis, comparison of means is also applied. The levels of significance are either at 5% (95% confidence level) or at 1% (99% confidence level) respectively.

vi. **p – value**

$p$ – value is the smallest level of significance at which a null hypothesis may be rejected using the obtained value of the test statistics.

1.5 **LIMITATIONS**

The study has been conducted with immense responsibility while keeping in the mind that the success of first step is deemed necessary to have second one. Proper planning was done to analyze every aspects and related factors of the study. All precautions have been taken to evolve a systematic study to reduce the element of bias to its lowest extent. The data were collected through personal interaction and every
effort was made to observe consistency throughout. The statements of the scale were well explained and every response has been recorded properly (wherever necessary).

Although the efforts have been made to make this study ‘A comprehensive’ one but due to various reasons like time, money, small sample size there could be some limitations in the study. The main limitation can be the small sample size as compare to the universe, biasness or resistance in the respondent response due to some personal reasons, lack of published/unpublished direct literature on the study, time constraints, and frequent development/changes in the field.

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