Chapter Two

Conceptualizing the Actual Practices of Consumption

"It has become quite usual for sociologists to suggest that when individuals in contemporary society engage with consumer goods, they are principally employing them as 'signs' rather than as 'things', actively manipulating them in such a way as to communicate information about themselves to others" (Campbell 1987:340).

There is a relationship between objects and its use as merely rational individual are not driven by external forces alone. Their choice of objects is based on objective qualities and taste and preferences are assumed given. This also acts as an adage which does not change by fleeting persuasion of mass media as well. Such developments may at first seem surprising given the representations of consumers and consumption in modern discourse. A closer look into these representations will however, indicate that the developments are not surprising at all, that, in effect, they are natural consequences of modern ideologies and discourses. The findings of the study reveal that consumer handles consumption in a self-conscious way. Simultaneously carefully building his own 'me'. Real average household income has roughly doubled. The combination of ever rising incomes and robustly growing population will lead to a striking increase in overall consumer spending (Mckinsey 2007). Thus, the research aims to empirical study consumption practices vis-à-vis its ideology.

Consumption has taken center stage as far as human lives are concerned. Mass media has increasingly become the sole locus of power in the determination of consumer trends. The market is described as an arena bringing together actors wanting to purchase goods and services, and those wishing to sell them. Rising incomes, multiple income households, exposure to international lifestyles and media, easier financial credit and an upbeat economy
has enhanced aspiration of the consumer. The crux of this study is to discuss the meanings of consumption in modern culture at length. We are all aware of the way, that, consumption has been represented in modern discourse as an antithesis of production and underprivileged in its negative images. Even, Marxist faced problems delineating production-which they deemed the paramount determinant of human success-from consumption-which came largely to be considered a necessary evil (Mill 1929; Say 1964). But to their dismay, after all, that there was no production without something being consumed, and vice versa and at any cost both can never be separated. Besides, everything that is produced cannot rest merely on use-value, rather something beyond as well. Thus, a prominent correlation has to be analysed through a rigorous investigation of the commodities to be utilised as well as the preference of the markets by the modern consumers. The meanings attached to consumption control the systems which are easily observable by the use of products that permeate our lives today. Take television, for example. Largely shunned by intellectuals and controlled by commercial interests, television has become the most powerful communication medium since the Second World War. It is now seen basically as a form of entertainment process, to relax and pass time for recreational purposes. People use this to escape from daily chores and take them from reality-although often reality replicates it (Firat & Dholakia 1998:283-376). Since, it has been represented as a "consumption tool" its viewers expect programming that fulfills such a purpose.

This has resulted in growing interest among academicians and social scientist as to analyse its meanings held for consumers. Which market is preferred the most and why? Consumption patterns in metros have undergone metamorphic changes in the last decade from education, health, and basic essentials to entertainment, fitness center, eating out and personal care etc. The forecast reveals that the Indian market will undergo a major transformation, and India will climb from its position as the 12th largest consumer market today to become the worlds fifth-largest consumer market by 2025 (Mckinsey 2007). There are multiple reasons for rising consumption in India are such as:

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1 Today, it ranks among the top five economies of the world in terms of purchasing power parity. Since the early nineties, government of India emphasis on economic reforms has created a healthy environment for foreign investment and ensured a steady growth of the GDP beyond the benchmark of 8 percent.

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The incomes have risen rapidly as a result of overall economic growth from rise in GDP. Consumption is at 62 percent of GDP, closer proportionally to developing countries. India’s real aggregate disposable income has increased from 7,527 billion Indian rupees ($165 billion) in 1985 to 13,164 in 1995 to 17,657 in 2000 to 23,526 Indian rupees ($515 billion) in 2005—a compound annual growth rate of 5.9 percent. Rising income as distributed widely lead to the creation of widespread consumers. Thus, rise in income has encouraged the rising expenditure.

- Consumers have also started using credit than their savings at a accelerated rate. There has been four fold increase in penetration of credit-cards in India from 2.5 percent in 2001 to 8.1 percent in 2005.

- The overall savings of Indian households is 32.4 percent as gross national saving rate. This has also outgrown as compared to the high saving countries (32.8 percent of S. Korea & 26.4 percent of Japan).

- Finally, the overall attitude and behaviour of people has also changed in the modern capital world. Especially, the influence of advertising more visible communication, radio and television also stimulated consumption (Mckinsey 2007).

Therefore, an appropriate methodology is to stand amidst the consumption activities and analyse the consumer attitudes. On a similar note, construction of consumption, heterogeneous markets certainly accelerated demand and mass consumption via exhibitions, displays and special weeks in malls, markets and local 'bazaars'-as the locus of this study. The focus of this research is to survey the ‘markets’ to analyse the consumption preferences consumer’s shopping basket consist of. What instigates the Indian consumer to buy--is it advertisement or the market hyperspace (Jameson 1991)? Or better quality? How is she/he paying for her or his purchases? How much is she/he is willing to travel to shop for the

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commodity? Is she/he discount driven enough to wait for promotions or markdowns? Also what markets they prefer for their day to day consumption? How do consumers relate themselves with their consumption preferences and commodities? Most importantly, does consumer overspend under the influence of the advertising?

The pertinent question, evolves is the preference of consumption vis-à-vis the consumerist attitude of Indian society. The integral subject is to deal with historical and conjectural analysis in which emphasis is paid on the changing conditions. Nonetheless, the study truly reflects the purpose of consumption is to enable the human being a better life which, in modern capitalist folklore, is largely defined as an ability to equip oneself with ideal lifestyle. Surprisingly enough, not to forget that the purpose of consumerism is to improve the standards of living as well. This chapter will provide the details of the widespread commodification of life in the metropolitan areas in Delhi and Gurgaon of India. Furthermore, it talks in detail regarding the spread of consumption activities all pervasive irrespective of their economic positions in the society. This is invariably in tune with the role of advertisement and the markets as a flourishing site of consumerism observed in the form of consumption activities. In this modern capitalist system anything that can have value can do so as part of everyday living: admired as objects of gaze; detached, distanced entities to be observed and ultimately assessed as objects of desire by being imported into the realm of production (Firat and Dholakia 1998).

2.1. Review of Literature:

Another validation is that the global balance is shifting to Asia with everything from cars to software likely to be developed and marketed in this part of the world. With consumers for luxury goods more in numbers than adult population of several countries, the Indian luxury retail market is estimated to leap-frog from around US$ 3.5 billion to US$ 30 billion by 2015. India's luxury market estimated to be the 12th largest in the world has been growing at the rate of 25 per cent per annum. The Indian retail market, which is the fifth largest retail destination globally, according to industry estimates is estimated to grow from the US$ 330 billion in 2007 to US$ 427 billion by 2010 and $637 billion by 2015. Simultaneously,
modern retail which presently accounts for 4 per cent of the total market is likely to increase its share to 22 per cent by 2010\(^3\). Driven by changing lifestyle Indian retail is expanding at a rapid pace. Consequently, a number of foreign brands including *French Connection, Sanrio of Hello Kitty fame, Jimmy Choo, La Pearla and Calvin Klein* among others have already lined up for permission to infuse Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) through the single-brand retail window. The influence of multiple commodities tends to confuse an individual and their classification. Consequently, the classification mentioned below are relevant in accordance with this study i.e. four distinct psychographic profiles identified at an all India levels projected in graph (2.1) (Consumer Outlook Survey of 2005);

- The comfortably affluent
- The first adopters
- The social emulators
- The indifferent skeptical

Graph 2.1  Consumer Outlook Survey 2005\(^4\) (KSA-Technopak)

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\(^3\) AT Kearney's annual Global Retail Development Index (2006 Indian Retail: on fast tract bridging the capability gaps.) GRDI www.atkearney.com

For instance, those living in northern India particularly Delhi and Ludhiyana are predominantly driven by heard mentality and as social emulators are constantly trying to keep up with Joneses. They are more conformist than trend setters. In contrast, Southern India has the highest number of first adopters and the credit owes to the three metros Bangalore, Chennai, and Hyderabad located there. Acceptance of new technology and gadgets, high fashion wear, lifestyle and entertainment products is the highest in the South as compared to the rest of the country. Eastern India is dominated by the indifferent skeptics who are slowest at adopting the latest in fashion and technology. They are least influenced by peer pressure, advertisement or celebrity persuasion as they remain socially more inward in their attitude and consumption. Finally, there are the comfortably affluent who are evenly distributed across the country-the most prominent being in the West and South. Thus, these heard mentalities are well elaborated in this research as the chosen field area is National Capital Region (NCR). Youngsters who are working in MNC, Banks, IT & BPO, and Hospitality Industry earn Rs 6-8 lakh per annum. With double income deepening their pockets, these young consumers can afford to do impulsive shopping, eat out frequently and take dream vacations, fitness centre, eating & moving out, branded clothes etc.

Multi-National Company consultancy firm Knight Frank sees the future of malls in India as bright because of the fast growth of the brand-conscious urban population, which has grown 3.22 per cent a year over the past decade against the overall population growth of 2.13 per cent a year.

Besides, consumers’ expendable income has grown by an average of 11.5 per cent over the past decade. This notion strengthened my belief to cover the heterogeneous market place for the sake of accuracy in results especially in India. Inevitably modernisation of the Indian consumer sector is reflected in rapid growth of sales of supermarkets, department stores and hypermarkets discussed in the last chapter. This is, because of the growing preference of the affluent and upper middle class for shopping at these types of retail stores given the conveniences they offer, such as shopping ambience, variety and a single-point source for purchases. India’s retail industry accounts for 10 per cent of its GDP and 8 percent

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of the employment to reach $17 billion by 2010. A shopping revolution is ushering in India where, a large population between 20-34 age groups in the urban regions is boosting demand by 11.1 percent in 2004-05 to an Rs 23,308 purchasing power. This has resulted in huge international retail investment and a more liberal FDI. There are about 300 new malls, 1,500 supermarkets and 325 departmental stores in the cities.

Graph 2.2

(Figures in billions, $2000)-MGI India consumer demand Model.

Above (Graph 2.2) clearly presents the bright future of consumer market in India. The notion of production is synonym to expansion. Mckinsey Global Institute expects that, India to emerge as the fifth largest consumer market in the world by 2025 at $1,521 billion-up from $746 billion in 2015 and $370 billion in 2005. According to this year’s Global Retail Development Index, India is positioned as the leading destination for retail investment. This followed from the saturation in western retail markets and we find big western retailers like Wal-mart and Tesco entering into Indian market. Organised sector retailing is growing fast, at 8.5 per cent a year. Last fiscal, it was worth Rs 19,500 crore. Yet, it consists of only 2 per cent of the country’s total retail volume. A report by Fitch Ratings put the total private consumption expenditure of India at Rs 1,500,000 crore in 2001-02. Of this, 65 per cent is spent on goods and services bought off the shelf. DLF selected the brands to feature in the mall after visiting shops in Karol Bagh, Lajpat Nagar, Caunaught Place and South

Extension: “She says, a proper combination of Western and Indian shops, catering to women and children, is a must. A chhole-bhature shop is highly appreciable, along with a modern pizzeria, to attract all kinds of shoppers. Thus, this will place the nation ahead of Germany in the global consumer market sweepstakes. Hence, consumption is proportionate to rising income and economic development of the nation.

2.2 Reasons to Choose Delhi and Gurgaon for the Fieldwork:

Gurgaon contributes over 50 per cent of Haryana’s income tax revenues along with Faridabad. Most of them are white coloured and spend an average 11 and a half hours in office, four hours higher than the national average. Both the couple’s works in these markets, hence the culture in Gurgaon is quite different from other parts of India. Most people go to shopping malls everyday and watch a movie every two weeks. Average eating out also stands at 3.7 times a week higher than the national average of 1.89. The crème of Delhi move to Gurgaon causing a very high standard of life being formed in Gurgaon (Wikipedia).

Gurgaon saw a massive increase in its population and economy after real estate major DLF group bought farms owned by local people and started developing housing societies for upper-middle class residents of Delhi. A study of the occupational consumption pattern of households reveals that 48 per cent of Delhi’s population are self-employed, 62 per cent salaried, and 22 per cent engaged in other vocations. The average monthly consumer expenditure per family in Delhi is 1,250 rupees.

On the other side, Delhi, a modern cosmopolitan city is the best example of a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society with an ever-expanding economy. Delhi is ranked as the second largest market in the country in terms of size and socio-economic profile. Often consumption is considered as one of the key indicators of the economic growth of the region, state or country. This research also identified the consumers willing to explore the necessity of buying. Broadly, this follows the good old Marxist principle that the affluent should subsidise the poor. The Indian capital, however, is second in terms of fast moving consumer goods. Delhi is the largest market for high-end consumer durables and cars in India, despite Greater Mumbai having the highest prosperity among all markets. The survey says Greater Mumbai, followed by Delhi, Calcutta and Chennai are the most economically prosperous.

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8 Times Of India, 21 Sep 2003, 2300 hrs IST, Prabhakar Sinha, TNN Are one-stop malls here to stay?
cities in India. Again, it lagged behind Delhi in terms of purchasing ability for high-end consumer durables like colour televisions, scooters, refrigerators and mopeds and other durables costing over Rs.6,000. Delhi is also the country's largest market for cars, followed by Greater Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai, respectively. Being the capital city, it has an affluent population comprising a cosmopolitan mix from across the country. It is important for analysis as they represent frequent travelers and is considered to be the leading edge of consumption trends.

2.3. Aims and Objectives:

Objectives of this research is to understand how fundamental forces of advertising, fashion, income, urbanisation and rising awareness levels do affect the consumer preference levels at the market place. The overall aim of this research is to investigate how 'consumerism' is interpreted after using certain brands and their impacts. These results might become obsolete over time as markets mature, consumption patterns change etc. The importance of its categories as apparels, accessories, electronics, automobiles, fmcg's, increases nonetheless. All these factors contribute to the enhanced awareness and their influencing parameter vis-à-vis consumption. Empirically, the authenticity of research resides in the fact that consumption has not been studied from a socio-cultural perspective in markets as a social structure, so far. Therefore, this study can provide useful insights regarding the strategic significance of consumption in consumerism. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate 'consumerism' and consumption patterns vis-à-vis to the differential category of income groups.

2. The influence of the lifestyles subject to consumption styles (brands, designer labels and FMCG, consumer durables and white goods) in an urban space (market) affects the attitude of prospective consumers.

3. To what extent the use and effectiveness of the advertising information helps the consumer in the interpretation of 'consumerism'.

2.4. Methodology:

This section is an overview of methods used throughout the thesis in order to analyse issues revolving around “consumerism”. The exploratory nature of this research meant that the usual and derived methods of analysis were not appropriate. The aim of this research was to gain an indication as to whether consumers were willing to buy and use a wider spread of information in the purchase of their products or they merely fancy the idea to buy and actually buy for sheer fancy? Besides, do they really visit the market place having a set paradigm of their budget and are usually under control of their credits or merely to gain the spectacle and the information for future shopping they stumble? Further, to establish to identify the consumers opinions and to what extent they hold it against market forces. The research is conducted in the markets and data (interviews and questionnaires) were collected from the active consumers. In an attempt for an unbiased research only one set of questionnaire was used. Initially, the questionnaire was not designed separately for the different classes of consumer as it was a deliberate move to study consumption on the basis of the consumer preference vis-à-vis their income group in the market place. This helped to strengthen the hypotheses of research i.e. consumption as all pervasive irrespective of the income group vis-à-vis the consumers. Hence, asserting the spread of consumerism in all the sections of the society.

The structure of research is the plan or the blueprint to be used for relative objectives and answering questions. It is a structure or a framework within which a specific problem is solved (Cooper & Schindler 1998:72). To choose the appropriate methodology was the most difficult step in conceiving this research. The research designs namely exploratory and descriptive designs were both vital for this research. Exploratory research design incorporated the fewest characteristics from secondary and primary data using an unstructured pattern of survey methods. Though not intended to provide conclusive results but helped in framing the structure. Amongst which focus group interviews and pilot studies
proved to be an integral guide for this research. *Descriptive research design was kept in mind seeking the dynamics of the subject to be chosen between varieties of methods. Especially, the literature review of the subject examining the significant research studies and reports acted as a basis for the proposed study (ibid:82). Besides which, the secondary resources from the overview of previous research in written form via computers and electronic access is also made available in this research. Statistics, reports and other existing information are also discussed in this chapter. The research method utilised for collecting data have been generally classified into broad categories namely qualitative and quantitative. This necessitated a discussion on research design especially when fieldwork is conducted. The main concern was to gather primary data as part of the original research conducted on a specific topic (ibid: 135). The structure or the framework of the research detailing each step which has been used are both open ended questions for the analysis in the advertisement section and close ended questions for the other sections of questionnaire. The initial part of the field work was to carry a focus group discussion to bring clarity as the research area is quite vast as part of consumption study of markets. This really helped in targeting the focus areas of the research into integral sections to be surveyed. Hence, the questionnaire was designed in a way to cater the needs of the research as well as its objectives.

2.5. Sampling:

Initially, as was predicted, it was very difficult to frame a questionnaire, for which a FGD was conducted. A focus group discussion is held to invite respondents in the self-administered questionnaires with face-to-face delivery in order to achieve a focused view on a vast subject. This avoids the disadvantage of misinterpretation or non-comprehension. Focus group discussion is a research technique used to collect data through a group interaction on "why", "how", "what"-to bring clarity in the research process. The study is based on data gathered through an extensive quantitative research. The next step is followed by a questionnaire and interview schedules to be carried in the chosen market areas. A further advantage of self administered questionnaires is the standardised nature of their delivery and thus, the reduction in interviewer bias intruding in the research which would have otherwise
threaten the reliability of the research. Interviews were conducted which were proportionate to the population in order to provide adequate representation of consumers present in the market. This allowed freedom to explore additional information and helped to change the direction of questionnaire at the level of conception. It was helpful to be focused on what I was asking and also what I wanted to ask. Along with it the survey also included both the qualitative as well as quantitative research covered in the questionnaire.

Consequently, the loosely structured discussion (FGD), facilitated the respondents' views by creating high level of understanding of the research at the market place. The research field is conducted in the market place of two zones - New Delhi and Gurgaon. This field work attracted over hundreds of people and was held at intervals of the festival season, discount as well as normal seasons which covered almost a year. Though it was a difficult task, I was on a visiting sprawl to markets all over Delhi and Gurgaon. Due to its vast nature the study was restricted to certain consumer durables. The study relied heavily upon markets of South Delhi and the one's predominant in the DLF region in Gurgaon zone, which is integral site for shopping flanerie (Jameson 1991) for NCR population. There were in total 150 samples chosen both from Delhi and Gurgaon zones covering 50 each from three categories of markets. Around 15-20 malls were initially visited to finally discover the functional field area for the research. There have been household surveys covering income, expenditure and consumption patterns but the nature of this study was unique precisely because never before an academic study is conducted in the market space.

The research aimed at studying consumers' preference and its recurrent change in consumption patterns subject to advertisement which could be studied through; and so was most likely to occur in the market place. Especially when consumption activities dictates the modern economy in contemporary times. To avail greater accessibility to the market area as well as the consumers’ perception the research is conducted in urban area. India’s two largest cities Delhi and Mumbai will continue to be biggest markets (Mckinsey 2007).
2.6. Categorization of the Markets:

The most important task is to choose markets as a true representative of the sample size. Further, markets were identified and randomly chosen from varied sources and data from the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO); National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER); Institute of Economic Growth (IEG); and data results from Consultancy Handbooks and Delhi Statistical Handbook 2006. Although, the term "Indian consumer market" is a misnomer: it would be more accurate to describe it as a collection of different consumer markets (NCAER)\(^\text{10}\). When we talk of markets, the first question that comes to our mind what kind of markets? The above statement is a valid reason to choose these heterogeneous markets as the field area for this study. Thus, for the purpose of covering all kinds of markets, it has been categorically placed into three types as mentioned below. This was also required to represent the mix of class, caste, creed, income and spending power of the people.

- Malls.
- City Markets, and
- Local markets.

As there are several markets in Delhi and Gurgaon, seeking their location, accessibility and the inflow of the crowd became the major factors for their selection into the study. Being physically present at the market place (postmodern space) distinguished consumers from those in their households. Though this was more time consuming, and complex yet much needed for the research. Consumption in the National Capital Region (NCR) is primarily being planned in the new malls. To assert the above, approximately 100 malls are to be erected in NCR alone. The most appropriate field area to be selected for this research was certainly NCR-Delhi and Gurgaon due to the consumption boom in India. This can be further witnessed in the last chapter on markets.

2.6.1. Reasons to Choose Markets as Field Area:

i. The difference in the parity of consumption preference vis-à-vis what they buy exists in the market place.

ii. Markets as social units are socio-culturally linked with the informal relationship of socialisation and other activities.

iii. The spectacle of the market plays a role and acts as an incentive for the people to earn and possess what they visualise at the market place.

iv. Markets also act as a liaison between the different dimensions of the socio-economic activities being carried in the Indian society.

2.6.2. Markets in Delhi and Gurgaon:

In 2001, top eight cities contribution alone to 40% of its developed income (Mckinsey 2006). With the Indian as well as International corporate entering into the Indian retail scenario the market exists in the form of small kirana stores (traditional markets), Next door markets (Unorganised sector); and in the form of department stores, Malls and hypermarkets (Organised sector) discussed in detail in the last chapter. The Indian consumption scenario is presently facing similar situations where the kirana stores (mom and pop stores) are at stake due to the emergence big box retailers. From 1992 to 2004 investment spending grew from 2.6 trillion Indian rupees ($ 56 billion) to 7.1 trillion Indian rupees ($ 156 billion). As a result India progressed from being 16th largest economy in 1990 to 13th largest in 2005. On a consumption level India is still very much a developing country with consumption of $334 per person lagging behind countries such as Indonesia ($ 557 per person & china $542 per person) (Mckinsey 2006). There are various issues that need to be addressed as to how does socio-cultural scenario affects the patterns of consumption and which market type would cater to needs of the consumers?
For the zone of Delhi, the categories for central market is *South Extension*, Local markets is *Munirka* and *Vasant Kunj* and for Malls it is *Ansals* and *Select City Walk* as shown in the above illustration. Whereas, *Gurgaon* was little restricted due to its location- *Sadar Bazaar* in the category of Central Market, *Sector market* for the Local Market and *MGF Metropolitan* in the category of Malls was chosen randomly. Following markets were randomly selected on the basis of accessibility, location, convenience and substance as mentioned above. The methods used to select respondents in the markets ensured that the sample was representative of those present in *Delhi and Gurgaon* market places. The table 2.3 depicted below simplifies the picture of the markets divided above:

### Table 2.3 Market Category and the No. of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Delhi</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Gurgaon</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Select City Walk-Saket</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>MGF Metropolitan mall</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Extension I &amp; II</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Sadar bazaar</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munirka</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Sector market 4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>75</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>75</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Survey 2007-2008*
➢ Sector Markets and Munirka (Next Door Traditional Market): Both are urban middle-class residential colony of Gurgaon and Delhi. Sector market is just any other market near your residential area. Munirka is located directly across Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. While the front is a bustling market, the serpentine streets inside are home to a vibrant multi-cultural cosmos people from all over India. Basically these markets are typically open air and like a small world on its own. They are strengthened on the basis of more personalised relationships encouraging credit facility and drop facility to homes. They are the ideal type of traditional markets in India.

➢ South Extension and Sadar Bazaar (City Market): These are the central markets of Delhi and Gurgaon. Shoppers can purchase anything from gadgets to apparel to home appliances. They cater to the specialised stores of the cities as well. There are also availability of food and other entertaining resources available from fairs to ice creams parlours to parks. They are also the old face of the present malls storing everything a consumer might need and hold their special significance in terms of actual shopping.

➢ Select City Walk & Metropolitan (Malls): They are the contemporary forms of shopping places. Such spaces are said to be constructed in ways that enclosed and separate activities from wider social spheres to the extent that they represent a complete kind of a miniature city (Jameson 1991:40). They are the ideal location as they constitute clearly bounded spaces organised around consumption activities. Much have been discussed in the entire research regarding their spectacle as they are preferential to go for leisure activities. Though catering almost all the exclusive and specialised stores, actual shopping is minimal in these areas. The image is presented in illustration 2.3 and 2.4 respectively.

2.6.3. Limitations Faced During the Field Work:

The precaution was to derive sense from truly reflected feelings of the respondents rather than the socially desirable answers written in the questionnaires. These weaknesses exacerbate when hypothetical questions or intentions to do something occurs. Thus, as far as
possible, questions were concentrated on actual topic to limit the potential for invalid answers. This was the result of the focus group techniques. Hence, the entire discussions were designed and free floating to elicit clarity in the questionnaire. Also the number of people interviewed was small because of the time and costs involved. After improvisation in the questionnaire, 150 rear samples were taken as respondents and were randomly picked 50 from each market category i.e. Malls, Central Markets and ‘Next Door Markets’. To provide specific facts and accurate predictions statistical data analysis was used. It was numerical and coded to simplify any complexity occurring in tabulating datas for precision. To this end, frequencies were produced using the statistical package. Despite limitations, correlations suited the research requirements because of its simplicity and flexibility. It also ensured that calculations remained close to the original data rather than the derived hypothesis. The test enabled the statistical assessment for the cross tabulations in the relationships between variables. Nevertheless, to obtain responses from the consumers in the market place was still exhausting as could be because of several reasons such as:

- Consumers don’t want to waste their time in the market place.
- They are least interested in some academic study regarding shopping in a place like market.
- Their orientation is more towards shopping and gathering information about its socio-cultural connotations.
- They were too busy in visualizing and acquiring information’s of their preferences and identifying future consumer trends.
- They don’t accept easily that they have come either to shop or for a window shopping.
- In general, they were apprehensive to open up and were mostly pretentious in nature.

2.6.4. Non Response Rate of the Respondents:

Consumers of the markets in both New Delhi and Gurgaon were included to participate in discussion as well as to fill the questionnaire. All respondents were required to be 18 years or above. Random sampling was done on the spot after a brief focus group discussion in several rounds to fix on the set of questions and interview schedules as
discussed in detail above. One hundred and fifty respondents (75 from Gurgaon and 75 from New Delhi) completed the survey giving a response rate of 97 per cent. In addition, a further 3 per cent of the sample population was accounted for as follows: (1 per cent) respondents completed surveys with inappropriate answers; one (1 per cent) respondents were screened from the survey because they were under 18 years, (1 percent) respondents did not complete the survey. The absolute details are properly mentioned in the statistical package of the respective survey report.

2.7. Conceptual Framework of the Research:

Keeping in mind, the extensive nature of the study, the subject was simplified in broad categories. The research is structured in a way to provide a broad understanding of the consumption preference and its ideological attitude of the people. Most of the questions in the questionnaire are closed ended. Since one method of putting forth the questions did not solve the purpose of the research, questions with multiple responses, dichotomous response and discrete response were also used. The questionnaire was first tested within the academic group of fellow researchers and supervisor for errors and only after their valuable suggestions the questionnaire was modified. The modified questionnaire was tested through a focus group discussion survey involving respondents in the above proposed sampling frame. This exercise was conducted to test the degree of understanding conveyed properly to the respondents. After the Focus group discussion the questionnaire was further modified and divided into sections. The final questionnaire is attached at the end of the thesis (annexure). The following sections were finally included as relevant for the research. The focus areas of the entire research are as follows:

- Background information of occupation, Income, age, gender
- Preference of the Markets (Mall, Bazaars, Local Market)
- Role of Advertisement.
- Consumer Non durables (Apparel, Footwear, Personnel Products).
- FMCG’s (Shampoo, Soap, Hair Oil, Cream, etc).
- White Goods (Electronic goods).
Behavioral Pattern of Eating out.

2.8. Background Information of the Study:

India is a fast developing nation thus, inherits the charm of traditional as well as contemporary markets that mark its integral modes of economy. Market spaces are ideal to define the consumption activities, lifestyle and economy of postmodernity. NCR being a strong political and economic capital corresponds to the archetype of modern urban form. This is important in meeting the requirement of the research objectives. Markets were divided in three categories to suit the needs of the research. The Saket Mall bears resemblance of its architecture to that of hotel complex (Baudrillard 1988:59); whereas Metropolitan Mall is more like a typical postmodern space encouraging a particular type of crowd-flânerie (Shields 1989). The central bazaars were essential for its traditional shopping practices so far before the advent of these malls and next door markets always existed parallel for they meet the daily requirement of the nearby population. All were broadly similar in terms of resources, location, and structure of the heterogeneous nature in Delhi and Gurgaon of Indian markets. Though they differed in the degree to which they exhibited spatiality and location, they still manage to represent the research location adequately.

One hundred and fifty respondents were surveyed over consecutive days in Delhi and Gurgaon, 50 of whom were questioned in the local markets adjacent to the university area i.e. Munirka as well as the sector markets of Gurgaon, 50 others were interviewed in South Extension-1 and Sadar Bazaar area and 50 others were conducted in the malls of Gurgaon and Delhi i.e. Select city walk & Ansal and Sahara & Metropolitan Malls of Gurgaon. Every fifth respondent from the right side was approached for the interview, and when that respondent refused to participate then the very next person was approached. This process of attrition continued until a person agreed to the interview request. The discussion was held at the weekend before the ‘Sunday’ or the very next working day as people during these days were seen in ample in the market place. The study, then, moves to next level, to look into its contours of the market types for the purchase of the chosen commodities. The study represents the respondents preference over markets for particular products such as:
2.8.1. Age and Gender:

An observation was made for the four consecutive weekends and the majority was the regular attendees coming over the weekend. The relaxed environment of the mall convinced the people to willing participate in the survey. Thus, the refusal rate was very low (less than 10 per cent) and not a cause for concern in introducing bias into the survey. However, the results are quite from the other side of the gender i.e. the females. This also happened because most of the times being a young researcher, women in particular were not ready to allow their respective men to interact for the sake of the interview. Otherwise as well, very few men were sensible to understand the importance of this study and came forward, although some wasted time as well. In this way, the study is not unbiased and fair from the gender perspective.

Graph No: 2.4. Representation of Gender in the Study

Source: Field Survey 2007-08
The above graph 2.4 and table 2.5; vividly represents the age-group and number of respondents of the sample population. There were 68 respondents in the age group of 18-34; 55 in 35-45 and the least 27 in the age group of 45-70 amongst the total surveyed population of 150 respondents. The sample contained 62 per cent females (93) and 38 per cent (57) males. This difference is exaggerated by the propensity of females to take charge of completing the questionnaire. The sample reported a high level of educational achievement amongst respondents and thus demonstrates the non-representative nature of this sample (and
therefore population) when compared against the general public. However, this finding will also be reflective of the greater number of younger people represented at the market area than in the public as a whole. Responses for the question of occupation again show the group to be slightly contrary to the national norm. Being present at a market place the respondents have expressed their interest in brands to seek information regarding shopping. Overall, the group can be seen to reflect 'individual mass tourist' (Cohen 1972) who travels with greater flexibility than the organised mass tourist but perhaps leans towards the 'explorer' who travels more independently and is more prepared to make his or her own travel plans.

2.8.2. Income Group of the Respondents:
Consumption often, means buying and to buy, one needs money. Thus, there is an integral role of economy underlying the consumption patterns of individuals. Though the sample size is small and is subject to fluctuation. Consumer status is a complex phenomenon influenced by various factors such as income, occupation, education, lifestyle, inheritance, location etc. The sample was non-probabilistic respect to geographic and economic factors of the respondents. A stratification of the sample was done on the basis of the family income categorized into five strata defined as (1) Less than Rs. 35,000 (2) Rs. 35,000-70,000 and (3) Rs. 70,000-105,000 (4) Rs. 105,000-140,000 (5) above Rs. 140,000 per annum (NCAER.1998).

Table 2.6: Basis of Consumer Class as well as Income Class (NCAER)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer Class</th>
<th>Annual Income (Rs.) At 1998-99 prices</th>
<th>Income class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destitutes</td>
<td>&gt;=35,000</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspirants</td>
<td>35,000-70,000</td>
<td>Low middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climbers</td>
<td>70,000-105,000</td>
<td>Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consuming Class</td>
<td>105,000-140,000</td>
<td>Upper Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Rich</td>
<td>&gt;140,000</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2008-09
The overall category has been borrowed from the NCAER-MISH survey 1998-99 and NCAER Report 1996. The basis of consumer class as well as income classes is as elaborated above in table 2.6. This is best suited for research purpose as it truly represents consumer class vis-à-vis their income group. (NCAER-1996 & 1998). The above table was a representation of the respondents interviewed on the basis of their income. This was the only means to distinguish between consumers purchasing potential and their actual consumption practices. In the survey the income is invariably correlated with all the units of consumption taken in this research for investigation hence a remarkable conceptual difference was also observed over the time. The most important finding of the research is the graphical representation of the income group in which- among 150 respondents, 25 per cent very rich were high income group, 14 per cent consuming class were upper middle, 22 per cent climbers as middle, 32 per cent aspirants as low middle and 12 per cent were destitute in the category of Low income group. Hence, the highest numbers of respondents were the middle class and lowest were the low income group of consumers present in the market place during the survey. The graph 2.7 is depicted below as:

**Graph 2.7.**

*(%wise) Respondents as per their Consumer-Classes*

![Graph 2.7](image)

*Source: Field Survey 2007-08*
The above graphical representation is appropriate in knowing the expenditure levels of these respondents subject to their consumer class. The results showed exceptional difference in the respondent’s expenditure exceeding his/her income as a rear sample of this research. This was the base of my survey as unless their economic capacities are recognized, their power to make purchase decisions cannot be judged. In extreme conditions artificial needs often result in overspending and over consumption, which cannot be taken as yardstick of the study. For this purpose, it can be cautiously assumed that purchasing power is proportional to income despite variables such as location, taste etc.

2.9. Shopping as a Medium to Assert Consumerism in the Study:

This becomes essentially the study of urban areas as the National Capital Region is my field area. The reasons to choose Delhi and Gurgaon as one unit was for the authenticity of urban city in this study. Consumerism has been around even before the advent of the malls. Monthly per capita expenditure (Rs.) was highest in Delhi both in rural and urban among states/UTs. Average monthly per capita expenditure of Delhi worked out to Rs.1511.16. During the survey period January-June 2004, the monthly per capita expenditure (MPCE) was Rs.1013.10 for rural and Rs. 1606.36 for urban Delhi (NSSO)\textsuperscript{11}. This is most visual consumption act (Warde 1994), and also an important aspect of leisure activity. The study aims to identify the patterns, practices as well as ‘how’ this acts as an integral aspect of modern life. Shopping has become the new hobby with new labels and luxury brands entering the market. Stores furnish the designers to open boutiques to cater to the young rich Indian. Beige walls, designer display ambience, classy interiors sets the mood to push to the limits of purchasing and ‘shop till you drop’ attitude through the air-conditioned halls. They are pulling out all limits to ensure their clientele is well and truly hooked to spending moolahs (money). Thus, in no time shopping will be included as a cultural practice. Today’s generation has access to money. They spend freely on fashion, communication, technology, eating out and travel thereby contributing to creating a $300 billion\textsuperscript{12} consumer market. Therefore, the consumer is seen as carefully shaping his fleeting identity, constantly

\textsuperscript{11} Household Consumer Expenditure In Delhi 2004., Based on N.S.S. 60th Round (State Sample) www.des.delhigovt.nic.in
\textsuperscript{12} Mckinsey Report 2007The Golden Bird.
subjecting to the passing glimpse of goods and durables in the market. Reason enough for the upscale brands and availability of big labels. During the field survey there were innumerable brands in India that can be covered as part of the study. They are projected below in table no.2.9:

Table 2.8

Available Luxury Brands in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UCB</th>
<th>Brioni</th>
<th>Louis Vuitton</th>
<th>Adidas</th>
<th>Arrow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fcuk</td>
<td>Mango</td>
<td>Miss Sixty</td>
<td>Nike</td>
<td>Pierre Cardin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guess</td>
<td>Promod</td>
<td>Calvin Klien</td>
<td>Reebok</td>
<td>Daks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Espirit</td>
<td>Guess</td>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Lacoste</td>
<td>Cartier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ucb</td>
<td>Just Cavalli</td>
<td>Juicy Couture</td>
<td></td>
<td>Giordano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tommy Hilfiger</td>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>Jimmy Choo</td>
<td>Mothercare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marc cain</td>
<td>Esprit</td>
<td>Diesel</td>
<td>La Perla</td>
<td>Etro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentino</td>
<td>Dolce &amp; Gabbana</td>
<td>Gucci</td>
<td>Burberry</td>
<td>Chanel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Dior</td>
<td>Moschino</td>
<td>Ralph Lauren</td>
<td>Aigner</td>
<td>Armani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloé</td>
<td>Fendi</td>
<td>Missioni</td>
<td>Puma</td>
<td>Pucci</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marks &amp; Spencer</td>
<td>Roberto Cavalli</td>
<td>Juicy Couture</td>
<td>Charles &amp; Keith</td>
<td>La Senza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAS</td>
<td>Canali</td>
<td>Bottega Veneta</td>
<td>Gant</td>
<td>Salvatore Ferragamo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bossini</td>
<td>Victoria’s Secret</td>
<td>Morgan De Toi</td>
<td>Xess</td>
<td>La Vie En Rose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine West</td>
<td>Lee Cooper</td>
<td>Nautica</td>
<td>Bvlgari</td>
<td>Woodland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Versace</td>
<td>Levis</td>
<td>Wrangler</td>
<td>Pepe</td>
<td>Replay</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2007-08
Thus, almost all the brands have been mentioned above as to present a macro view of the brands available in India. We attained the brand specialization while extracting the information of the available brands in Indian market. As the field area was Delhi and Gurgaon—which availed all possibility to explore the urban metropolitan set up of India. Among those most important was the Select city walk mall in Saket, (super Luxury mall) where brands appear even before one thinks. Sale and discount also acts as a triggers. There were people who would buy anything during sales though only slightly cheaper than the regular prices. It may even not be something they cannot live without. We came across as many statements as was meant to be recorded to provide the sociological analyses to the question:

Q)Shopping is better because?

“It makes me feel better.”

“Its like a stimulator”

“I prefer to shop and check out on new things to keep myself updated”. 

“Rather to go to a restaurant and gain weight”.

“Helps me to get into a good mood-stress buster”.

“Discounts are not be missed as it suits our pocket”.

As 2006 Mckinsey report suggests that, the country’s consumer market could reach $400 billion by 2010, making it one of the largest markets in the world after United states, Japan, China and Germany. Many responses came across which considered shopping goods as a fundamental right. Probably with incomes on rise and lifestyles changing rather dramatically, they no longer considered sinful to spend. Fashion is also the reason why the stores are always packed. Men and Women today want to be regarded as well dressed and updated in their lifestyles. They are the bunch of shopholics who knows what’s happening around the world. There is also the rise in per capita income as well as the majority of young purchasers as discussed further. Further taking the research to another level, the study deals with the distribution of focus areas into seven sections of the questionnaire in sync with the interview schedules in analysing consumption patterns. The Sections are as follows:

50
2.10. Findings of Research (Questionnaire and Interview Schedule)

2.10.1. Markets a Preference Site of Consumption:

Markets are socio-economic loci involving both ideational and material elements where commodities are traded. Because, market exchange is fundamentally a social exchange (Migone 2007:117-200). Mediated through the relative abundance of need for these commodities, a price is fixed and an exchange takes place. Consumption is buying and using goods and services by people to improve the standard of living. Today, however there is an increasing realisation that the key domain is neither production nor distribution but consumption, also because that is the arena where most of us still feel we have power to become what we want to. In order to understand we need to understand the process which is carried by a consumer. Most of our choices about what to consume are made by purchasing the goods as nowadays not much is grown or produced at home. There are people who spend significant amount of their spare time browsing through the shops. Society, culture and consumption are interlinked. Market in its principle is entertainment and socialising center. At the same time the needed goods can be bought which make consumption as an event (Miller 1987:35). The pleasure to go to shopping is not to merely get goods but to meet people, have a chat, be seen and be recognised. People like to consume, create expectation, and work towards achieving the goal of consuming everything possible under the sun. They expressed multiple reasons and the responses were in the form of expressions such as:

“Life comes only once”;
“Live today as if there is no tomorrow-who knows what happens tomorrow-I should have no regret”;
“Money is sand it comes and it goes”;
“Take Easy man”; “what if I earn less money, once in while I can splurge on my priority”.

It's easy to achieve something from life through the way one consumes--is the fundamental of coming generations. Irrespective of their position in the society vis-à-vis their
income potential the preferences are more or less the same. Though, their actual purchase may vary from their preferences. Consumers or purchasers can be characterised by different socio-demographical parameters as age, income, occupation, gender, and so on, but I would like to look only at the core issues for the purpose of my thesis. Further major discrepancy between the choice of market area and the actual shopping area that provided satisfaction to the consumers was observed. The following questions reflect the experience discussed above:

Q.) What kind of Market do you prefer to visit?
Q.) What is your preference for markets between Mall, Central Market or a Local market?
Q.) Which market do you prefer to shop?
Q.) In which market do you derived maximum satisfaction?

Graph 2.9: Different Attitude in Preference and Reality

The above depiction of the differential attitude between boasting of a market and preferring to buy, presents the theory of 'looking glass self' (Cooley 1902). When respondents were asked to fill the entry in the questionnaire regarding their preference scales for malls, 'Bazaars', and local market their descending levels were from 67 preferred for
malls as compared to 55 for bazaars and 28 for their respective next door market category. On the contrary, out of 150 respondents, the results were different when replied discreetly during interviews, as it was 35, 60 and 55 in the same order. This clearly manifest the satisfaction levels or the level of actual buying is quite less in malls as compared to the central markets' bazaars'. The results are specified below in the table no.2.10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market Types</th>
<th>Prefer to Buy</th>
<th>Actual Place to Buy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malls</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Markets</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Door Markets</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Survey 2008-09*

Thus, it is very difficult to understand the psyche of the consumer in the capitalist mode of production. They often want to get associated with the product they use. As an outcome of the society they imitate each other yet are different in their own subjective ways. Similarly, the above diagram shows that though they prefer strolling around the mall and gaze but wants to prefer to shop from central markets. As out of 150 respondents, 67 of the respondents wants to go to the mall but when it comes to virtual shopping 55 prefers to shop from a next door market (Native)\(^{13}\). Out of this only 55 prefer and 60 of the respondents (of all the age, income groups) actually go to a central market as of priority. And 35 satisfied in

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\(^{13}\) Native and next Door Market or Local market are used interexchangeably for the same type of market in the field study as per the usage.
the malls as compared to that of the 28 per cent in the local market. Therefore, essentially, modern consumers are wise but pretends to be otherwise to gain advantage. The diagram above represents the figures quite very well.

Q) When asked the **about the purpose of their visit**?

Most of them were quite unsure and couple of them replied with an answer-for window shopping. However, it was evident, for the brands otherwise only few had the need to go to the mall for a specific thing. Especially in urban cities, malls are otherwise used for other purposes as well other than shopping or consumer related things. The shopping mall provides a walking area as well as cinema complexes and eateries, which becomes quite popular to mix food with leisure. The other things didn’t mattered as long as they are free such as :

Q) When asked how much significance they give to the **duration of the stay as well as the vicinity of the market**?

- Most of them had a carefree attitude and some of them also passed a staring glance towards me. Practically, it was a mixed response from all of them as they were themselves not so quite sure of the duration. For which, the answer lied in multiple responses as provided in the in-depth interview as follows:

  A Company Manager: "**Howsoever busy I am it doesn’t matter to travel for a better deal, good schemes and quality-as we earn day and night for an improved lifestyle hence I don’t mind taking a bit of pain.**"

The study is based on the above premises and analysing consumption in a new perspective. Although, my focus and approach is the importance of consumption in modern living. Consumers or purchasers can be characterised by different socio-demographical parameters as age, income, occupation, gender, geography and so on and so forth.
2.10.2. Consumer Non Durables Goods:

All possessions and activities can be signs of merit, but clothes are considered as the most significant. They are treated as the most apparent disinclination of one’s personality and are taken as parameters to know about someone’s social standing. Also, wardrobe engineering, clothing is one of the most important technologies of ‘self’. Although, Consumer non durable goods consists of various items yet for the convenience of the research I have taken apparel and shoes, common to all. These goods are consumed almost by all the income groups and are treated as one unit in my research. They also form the most common denominator to analyse the degree of consumerist attitude present uniformly in almost all of them. The myth reveals that malls are the perfect space to provoke you to buy something impulsively by merely looking at it. This is a flawed assumption of group of people as is proved in the above sections. It might be the forte of the most who are the ‘consuming class’ wanting to climb the ladder to reach the ‘super rich’ category of consumer class. The good things for them are that they have not to travel extensively but the international labels are available right there in their backyard. Clothes besides shoes remain a significant factor to determine, distinguish and socially define ‘self’ vis-à-vis groups. Being different from others or becoming distinctive amongst a larger group often results from signals conveyed by material objects that consumers chose to display (Bourdieu 1986).

The phrase can be typically used here of (Kotlowitz 2000) “dress to impress”. Today, it is a common feature that people have multiple identities. The traditional divisions of caste, class, sex and religion are less present than they used to be, however their influence has not disappeared. The boundaries of social groups to which one belongs have loosened though not all social groups. In this state of mobility, the products symbolic value is of prime importance (McKrahen 1988). Most important are reference groups, who imposes norms as has been depicted above in the illustration of the youth. There are some of the premium brands under the section of non durable goods as mentioned below in the table 2.11:
Table 2.11 Consumer Non Durables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apparel Clothing</td>
<td>VF Corp, Ralph Lauren Polo, Activewear, Liz Calibre, Benetton Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel Footwear and Accessories</td>
<td>Nike Inc, Coach, Crocs, Wolverine, Timberland, Deckers Outdoor, Iconix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Products</td>
<td>P&amp;G, Colgate Palmolive, Kimberly Clarke, Avon Products, Estee Lauder, Playtex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual wear</td>
<td>Fcuk, Guess, UCB, Espirit, Tommy Hilfiger and Marc Caine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Industry Snapshot - Top six companies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressy outfits/Semi formals</td>
<td>Mango, Promod, Guess, Just Cavalli, Morgan and Espirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best jeans</td>
<td>Levis, Lee, Diesel, Calvin Klein, Miss Sixty, Seven and Juicy Couture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sportswear</td>
<td>Nike, Adidas, Puma, Lacoste, Lingerie: La Senza, La Perla, Vanity Fair, Marks &amp; Spencer, Victoria Secret, and Xess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Occasions</td>
<td>Dolce and Gabbana, Moschino, Christian Dior, Pucci, Versace and Valentino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories</td>
<td>Salvatore Ferragamo, Louis Vuitton, Fendi and Jimmy Choo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2008-09

These are few of the items which provide instant gratification to the young generation and communicates of the individual status in the society. In fact, this apparel plays quite an active role in younger generation to judge others. There have been instances where people associate ‘generalized others’ by the brand they are wearing for e.g., “here comes Jus Cavalli”; “Hi A &F, whats happening”; so on and so forth. This implies the transformation of a new identity liberating individual from their previous one’s and at the same times an easy norm to get accepted to the group. The above is also dangerous for the one who cannot buy

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this stuff to assimilate in their peer group thus instilling a sense of loneliness. There were several questions asked in this regard such as

Q.1. What is your preference if you intend to buy apparel?

**Graph 2.12: Preference of Clothes**

![Graph showing preference for clothes](image)

*Source: Field Survey 2007-08*

Above graph 2.12 clearly denotes the preference of 150 consumers leaning more towards the brands to be included in the wardrobe. Though it involves all the income groups yet to be precise besides the super rich the preference of the middle class was also close to the choice of those of the rich and super rich. In order to be more clear, we have divided the consumer non durables as 1) designer label, 2) as affordable premium labels, 3) as brands and 4) as the most wanted affordable brand. Also the below is the table 2.13 presents the clear picture of rating as coded in the SPSS package as per their preference scales.
In the following three categories of Shoes, Jeans and Apparel-68 per cent tilted towards number 3 and 20 per cent were for the designer brands along with 12 per cent got stuck with 2 and 4. There was an evidence through this research that the middle class surely has a upper hand in dictating the consumption patterns and the ideology of consumerism. Although the popular brands are more in demand amongst all the consumer classes yet the desire to own a premium brand is no less.

Table 2.13: Classification of Consumer Choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Jeans</th>
<th>Shoes</th>
<th>Apparel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>D &amp; G, Versace, CK, Armani</td>
<td>Armani, Valentino, Geox</td>
<td>CK, CD, D&amp;G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Energy, Diesal, Rock &amp; Republic</td>
<td>Rockport, Cat</td>
<td>Banana Republic, A&amp;F,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Levis, Lee, Wrangler</td>
<td>Reebok, Adidas, Nike</td>
<td>Benetton, Lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Numero Uno, Provogue, Koutons</td>
<td>Leecooper, Woodland, Bata</td>
<td>Provogue, van Huesan etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2007-08

Codes of SPSS and the Categories

Therefore there was lot of discrepancy between the choices filled in the questionnaire and the responses to what they were really wearing. For example, a couple was wearing a Levis jeans with a wrangler top (popular brands), but when asked filled the super premium brand as their preference for apparel. Similarly, a BPO working girl wearing a premium brand in spite of belonging to the income group in less than Rs.20,000. In relation to the above analysis there was an interesting respondent when asked his preference replied:

Response-Even if I go bankrupt then also I will try and make it to the brands due to the association and loyalties involved. As once if I've started wearing a sports brand then I would not like to be those stupid feminine kinds by not using it. The brands have also provided me a niche in my office and other places. They recognise me by my brand
association. People very well know that I don’t compromise and my assets should be apart from the crowd. As I am a modern girl and an equal.

It was an amazing experience as after interviewing and achieving 150 questionnaires I came across strange stories of why they don’t want to part from their expensive brands. How these labels, endow them with a unique sense of identity in their ‘habitus’ (Bourdieu 1977). To assert this, one can trace it to the roots of capital logic of Bourdieu and structures of meanings in Baudrillard, which rationalises the commodity logic manifest in the sphere of consumption. The values and belief systems filter through the everyday life of culture. Industry dominates the logic of production of consumption. Traditional forms of enjoyment and leisure transforms its meaning into a new form of ‘wanting and recurrently wanting’ needs created by commodities15. To get more close to our observation we then asked them to put their priority as per the scale of likeness. The results can be studied through the following graphical representation in 2.14.

Graph 2.14: Preference Scale of the Consumers:

![Graph showing preference scale of the consumers](image)

Source: Field Survey 2007-08

15 Content analysis of the popular culture whereby the culture shrinks to the propagated commercials inspired by their very own traditional needs and wants. They are best described as the reflections of the society in a stipulated time slot in between the programmes.
The bars clearly depicts strong likeness towards the brands Levis, Lee, Diesel, Energy, Benetton etc, which is almost sky touching. Whereas only availability guarantees the imitation stuff, i.e. the best bargain if available will let them choose the export stuff along with the imitation. But certainly if choice given they fix their priority strongly to brands and designer tags and compromise only when highly unavoidable due to pocket and availability. Hence only 10-35 per cent of the responses were for the neutral availability of the brands whereas the persistence of imitation and export stuff was more prevalent in case of availability and 'doesn't matter' attitude. With international brands like Tommy Hilfiger, Esprit and Puma (that have entered the country) growing well over 100 per cent, many others are also planning to foray into the Indian retail market. India's vast middle class with its expanding purchasing power and its almost untapped retail industry are key attractions for global retail giants wanting to enter for the apparent reasons.

- The world's largest retailer Wal-Mart, has tied-up (Sunil Mittal's Bharti enterprise).
- Microsoft's first shop-in-shop pilot has been launched with the Tata Group subsidiary Infiniti Retail's multi-brand consumer durables retail format, Croma.
- The Walt Disney Company, consumer product retailing arm of global animation giant, will soon add 135 new stores to its existing 15 stores.
- World's leading coffee chain, Starbucks' enters India through a tie-up with the country's leading multiplex operator PVR Limited.
- Apple Inc has entered into an exclusive marketing and distribution deal with Reliance Retail through "iStore by Reliance Digital".
- The UK-based international coffee chain, Costa Coffee, plans to double the number of retail outlets by the end of 2008.  

The above facts clearly shows the demand for the increasing consumer markets coupled with heavy investments in India. Thus, the spread of consumerism is quite apparent in the form of consumption prevalent in India. Now, I move on to my next section which is the Fast Moving Consumer Goods category to analyse the consumerist taste and preferences.

2.10.3. Fast Moving Consumer Goods:

A consumer good is fast moving when it is purchased frequently with little planning or shopping effort. FMCG are low priced and widely distributed. Toiletries, detergents and beverages are examples for FMCG. These are the basic goods and affordable by all sections of the society. In India the traditional stores like the local bazaars, cater the needs of the FMCG goods. They are sold on the basis of the personalised relationships of the store keepers with that of the consumer. Often these petty mom and pop outlets provide the suggestion needed for the confused consumer in Indian society. Here, along with overspending an individual is usually wise to make his/her purchase decision. Indian FMCG sector is the fourth largest sector in the economy with a total market size of more than US$ 13.1 billion in 2006. As per a CII-AT Kearney report, the FMCG sector is expected to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 9 per cent by 2010. The sector is also expected to grow to US$33.4 billion in 2015. The Indian FMCG industry grew by 22 per cent in 200617.

FMCGs purchasing is based on a habitual behavior, and the consumer routinely purchase a particular commodity. Some convenience goods may be bought impulsively, involving no habit, planning or search efforts, these are the products which one can find close to the cashiers (Fine and Leopold 1993:87). Over the past 10 years or so supermarkets have spent millions of dollars building the kind of consumer relationships that traditional stores enjoy. As a result, consumers now buy as long as it is on a shelf in a major supermarket chain, for its easy availability and better quality. This is bad news for branded products, and FMCGs know it. More advertising won’t help get back their consumers or increased purchasing power of the consumers. They are an ideal target for consumption and identity building through these commodities. Fast moving consumer goods are the day to day products individuals use for their daily chores. In order to take a macro view of the FMCG sector in the country, consumption patterns relating to a basket of products is necessary. There were many FMCG products whose sales increase significantly after a celebrity endorsing it or a flamboyant ad covers it or even if billboards exhibit extensively. There were

few of these commodities studied in detail in the advertising chapter of this thesis. There were significant increase in the purchase of the FMCG commodities over the years as can be observed below in graph 2.15 & 2.16.

Graph 2.15   Distribution of FMCG in Urban Area

Source: Field Survey 2008-09

Graph 2.16   Distribution of FCG in Rural Areas

Distribution of FMCG Market1998-99$^{18}$.

$^{18}$ NCAER 1998 Market Demography Report. p-50
The above pie diagram 2.15 & 2.16, talks about the spatial distribution of the FMCG market which has remained more or less stationery since 1995-1996. Though the rural market with households spending is less than half as compared to their urban counterparts, accounted little over half (52.8 per cent) of total consumption in the country during 1998-99. It is observed that high-income households were spending on an average 4.6 times that the low-income households did at an all-India level. Also the spending pattern of low income and high income households was more or less uniform in each zone. The urban market grew at a higher rate as compared to the rural market during both the periods. It grew at the rate of 8.27 per cent per annum between 1995-96 and 1998-99, while the rural market grew at 3.2 per cent during the same period. Thus, this is the time to keep consumers keep them informed, and make them feel part of the big picture. Campaigns that treat them as valued customers in their own right and not as a minor link in a huge chain from manufacturer to consumer.\(^\text{19}\) The limitation of choosing only few of the products from the FMCG range confused me in the beginning. It was difficult so I picked up randomly eight products from the FMCG market. These eight products such as Hair Oil, Cream, Toothpaste, Washing Powder, Soap, Shampoo, Washing Soap. To gauge the fact that advertising and marketing influence the sales significantly. There were many anxieties while collecting data for this section as this was one action where all the income groups are active consumers. The data are obtained from in-depth interview as well as the questionnaire as follows:

Q) Which mode of advertising influences you the most while buying FMCG?
Q) Does your purchase gets affected by advertisement or otherwise also you use popular brands in FMCG?

\(^{19}\) www.graingerandassoicates.co.nz, April 15, 2004 14:49 IST Tim Grainger is a director of direct marketing, advertising and sales promotion company Grainger & Associates and a director of gourmet dog food marketer Doggy Deli Direct.
The above graphical representation in 2.17 proves the reflection of the strategies influencing the purchasing decision of the consumer the most. The percentage of FMCG used on the basis of advertisement is 62 per cent, from word of mouth and availability of schemes is 20 per cent each and simply purchase on the basis of optimum usage is 8 per cent each. Therefore, the strategic influence effecting the sales was advertisement but a substantial role from word of mouth as well. This highlights the fact, that though, respondents write about advertisement and it dominant role mapping their brains, we would discuss in next section how ads remain restricted to their fantasy levels and only few of them increase the sales in reality.

Thus, this forms the background for our finding stating the apparent yet subtle role of mass media in our daily lives. The survey showed the results that the most influential strategy to accelerate the demand for FMCG was advertising and the most preferred market type to buy was the local market (traditional stores). Howsoever, respondents boast of their literate consumer understanding following the trends, their choices are in control of themselves so far. Furthermore, the discussion of the above made choices as written in the questionnaire and as revealed during the interview sessions shows remarkable difference. This was also subject to respondent’s accessibility, parking facility, saving time and energy and need and
functionality of the product. In this respect, there was also a difference of opinion amongst the consumer categories as well. Interestingly, the ‘Super Rich’ bought the best brands available without thinking of any of the above strategies, thus, the survey on FMCG for them was almost futile. On the contrary, the ‘Consuming Class and the Rich class’, are more thrilled and aware of the best schemes. Though ‘Aspirants classes, is interested to know more and depends on word of mouth as well as advertisement. The ‘Deprived class’ is not ignorant, yet had little knowledge and follows the advertisement blindly. Surprisingly one of our respondent also revealed a statement as:-

"Small shop owners know better than the big shop owners and are updated on the latest brands as well as the discounts and schemes. Hence, we, are more profitable for our budget and also provides a second opinion of test and trial methodology on themselves".

Although buying the monthly supplies for their homes they prefer going to retail departmental stores for better schemes and massive variety. In Indian society they hardly bought FMCGs products from a mall or a distant locality. Though they are willing to go to malls for the wholesale supplies irrespective of the congestion they faced on their way. Thus, they approach the big giant retailers after getting convinced by schemes advertised in national dailies as well as the information reaching them through T.V. and Fm radio stations as well. Few of the respondents belonging to the super Rich, Rich and Consuming Class also revealed that:-

"Big Bazaar and Sahara is a better place for the heavy purchases and at the same time you never know what more is waiting for you right there-I might get something good for my personnel use as well.”

The above statement clearly manifests their consumerist intention to buy wisely and not impulsively even if they had not planned it or something fantasizing to keep their passion alive to go shopping and get fresh by the mere idea of buying. There were in total eight products which were picked randomly on which qualitative survey was conducted. During our focus group discussion I emphasized more on their favorite advertisement as most of
them were keen observers. These advertisements are discussed in detail in chapter IV, of this thesis. The table below 2.18, will show their influence percentages of the eight products and the advertisement influence on their purchase decisions of these products. Altogether, this is an exercise to study the products separately and the role of advertisements affecting their sales individually.

Graph 2.18: Influence of Advertisement on Purchase of FMCG

Source: Field Survey 2007-08

As a result of the quantitative study of structured interviews the above responses are a result of the finding of the 150 respondents, as filled in the questionnaire. This reflects the influence of advertisement to be maximum on the face creams and lowest in experimenting new shaving creams. However, this can be said that the results for this are shaded as most of my respondents were females. In addition, advertisement that most of them recalled were of
celebrity endorsement of FMCGs during the in-depth interview schedules. This was also one of the reasons that advertisements are more admired than the products as analyzed after an informal discussion with the respondents. Not to forget the Lux Soap, the Nescafe coffee, Tata Tea and various others discussed at length in the advertisement chapter.

In relation to the above, NCAER had conducted the market growth of 22 FMCG products. The table below is also presented in accordance with the research gauging the market growth scenario to compare changes over periods. The table has been selected for only six FMCGS products used in this research for the purpose of convenience over the period of 1992-93 to 1995-96 and 1995-96 to 1998-99. The market for shampoo have grown tremendously at the rate of 40 per cent, the reason is the low penetration of these products. However, in the damp market, products such as tooth paste, toilet soap, face cream, talcum powder have maintained a steady growth ranging between 13.7 per cent to 19.3 per cent.

Table 2.19  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shampoo</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>+17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilet Soap</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tooth paste</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>+6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face Cream</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>-2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talcum Powder</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>+3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair Oil</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing Powder</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>-4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing Cake</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>+1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NCAER

Toilet soaps growth has been the least during the period. For example, initially the growth of washing powder was expanding three times but in the later phases, the markets for

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20 MISH Survey Report NCAER, pp.53-54
both the products have risen at almost equal rates. This proves the rise might be temporary or the consumers have moved back to washing cake or using both. The information is consolidated on the basis of data collected through recent surveys and studies conducted by renowned names like Business Today, IDC Data Quest, Hewitt Association, NASSCOM and our own study of the organization. The results of the ranking are consolidated in 2006, is significant in relation to the study of FMCG sales and influence of advertisements on its sales. The table 2.20 represents below the above guidelines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Ranks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindustan Unilever Ltd</td>
<td>138.6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITC Limited</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britannia Industries</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nestle India</td>
<td>132.6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dabur India Ltd</td>
<td>131.1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parle</td>
<td>129.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadbury India Ltd</td>
<td>128.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PepsiCo</td>
<td>126.2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;G</td>
<td>124.6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marico Industries</td>
<td>121.2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Above table 2.20 presents a clear picture of the leading FMCG company in India. FMCG major Hindustan Unilever has reported a 3.8 per cent rise in net profit in 2007, at Rs.1,925 crore as compared to Rs.1,855 crore in the previous year. The industry is seeing a resurgence in growth as demand picks up. There can be multiple factors for this change in growth or demand of FMCGs in the market such as income, expenditure, saving, gift, bonus, schemes, discounts so on and so forth. The change in the demand is primarily influenced by

21 2006 survey reports conducted by marker research companies.
http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/News/News_By_Company/Hindustan_Unilevers_2007_net_up_38_at_Rs_1925_cr/rssarticleshow/2875111.cms
April 15, 2004 14:49 IST
the income patterns of the population, family type (nuclear or joint) and the optimum usage of the products as well. Similarly, the income and the consumption patterns have a proportionate relationship as a shift in income levels show rise in consumption as well. Currently, FMCG products rural market size is estimated at 52% which is projected to reach at 57% and grow by 10% in next 3 years as against 6 per cent growth of semi-urban FMCG demand which might touch 21 per cent level from present level of 19 per cent. However, in Urban India, in which FMCG market size is currently estimated at 29 per cent level is likely to come down to 22 per cent, registering a fall of 25 per cent. “The per capita consumption is currently low in these categories and is poised to grow with increasing income levels and awareness in personal hygiene and grooming.”

The next section comprised of that of the electronic goods as a consumer category of the research.

2.10.4. Consumer White Goods (Electronic Goods):

All manufactured consumer durables products that are relatively high priced are treated as white goods for the present exercise. This include-motorized two wheelers, colour television sets, refrigerators, washing machines, music system, video cassette recorders and VCD’s/DVD’s. Thus, in this analysis of automobiles and its imagery stresses the ways in which the consumption of automobiles, particularly in terms of their visual appearance and capacity as signs, is intrinsically wedded to the process of consumerism. Indeed, for consumers as well as producers cars have been taken as veritable emblems of the techno-economic transformation which made them powerful. These white goods are the basis of this research besides consumer non durables. All products have an inherent communicative status and they are consumed as signs. This symbolic is of prime importance as their primary value has taken a backstage. In a consumer society, the meanings, consumers create and find in consumer gods are on the front stage (Belk 1995).

As the very thought of the round steel rim of Mercedes gives jitters to every individual. During the interview schedule many were asked about the reason of their likeness for this particular car. Most of them didn’t have clear idea except for the fact that they want


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it. This reminded me of, Ludhiyana as a live example of hosting the maximum number of sales of Mercedes cars in India—probably functions on the principle of competition of conspicuous consumption (Veblen, 1899.). The natural link between products and their use became a cultural link (Firat and Venkatesh 1993). Similar is the case with Rolex Watches—as the most likeable brand amongst watches. Consumers are least bothered of the price as they are deconstructed to the ‘other self’, directed by the laws of the consumer society. In accordance, later we can see the saving rate declining and expenditure is on a rise. Nevertheless, these premium brands be it Rolex or Benz, both excel in class, innovation and technology. There have been multiple reasons discussed later in this thesis to choose white goods representing the attitude of consumerism. The electronic goods to be precise is a strong tool to decide the attitude of a consumer as accessing the degree of desire to want a product through cash or finance. The background information such as income, expenditure, saving etc acts as a parameter to evaluate the frequency of the consumption pattern. Below is the table depicted and segregating the white goods in the category of consumer electronics and small appliances for better understanding of the goods.

Table 2.21: **List of White Goods**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer Electronics : White goods</th>
<th>Small Appliances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Colour Television sets</td>
<td>1 Refrigerators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 CD/VCD/DVD-based music players/systems</td>
<td>2 Washing machines/sewing machines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 VCD/DVD players</td>
<td>3 Room air-conditioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Video cameras/ Camcorders (Households segment)</td>
<td>4 Microwave ovens/music system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Digital still cameras</td>
<td>5 Car/Jeep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Computers</td>
<td>6 Scooter/motorcycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Mobiles</td>
<td>7 Water purifiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Gas stoves/Hobs/Cooking Range</td>
<td>8 Vacuum Cleaners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Field Survey 2007-08*
This was an integral source of information to understand the utility as well the desire of the product. During the field work, there was a couple who was admiring the yellow Lamborghini-displayed at the City walk mall, Saket, New Delhi.

Q.) When I asked them what is their preferable car?

They instantly showed their consumerist loyalty and answered unilaterally- LAMBO! (Lamborgini). Though obviously they belonged to the high income group yet were enjoining the gaze of the car.

Q) When asked the next question of which car they target to buy now?

They named Mercedes E-class.

The ‘new’ status does not lie in the fact that the past consumption was never used as sign value, but in the fact that consumption is more open in contemporary society than it was ever before. Thus, the reason they gave was definitely not logical however, subjective connotation of a new environment of consumption is being had constructed (Bourdieu 1970). Hence, to get assimilated in their colony which has maximum number of Mercedes than any other luxury car was an eligibility factor to defend their logic. Similar to that of Bourdieu distinction (1977) and the round steel rim on the bonnet of Mercedes similar to that of Baudrillard’s sign (1970) to communicate their status in the society.

Goods are neutral, their uses are social; they can be used as fences or bridges. [...] Goods are used for marking in the sense of classifying categories. [...] Consumption habits, deemed natural as skin, are criteria for membership and become weapons of exclusion’’ (Douglas and Isherwood 1980:12, 74, 85).

In contemporary society, value of products has stepped forward and has pushed the exchange value into the background. This sign values are in continuous state of change as meanings do nor stay same as forever (Baudrillard 1970). Though, the aspiration of the classy cars were more on the list of super rich consumers yet the preference was more or less same of all the income groups which was surprising enough. As discrepancy was observed between the choice of preference and their purchase a correlation was made as part of the study. The table
2.22 presents the clear picture of the differentiation between their desire and their capacities to achieve their desire.

Table 2.22

(% wise) Differential Levels of Preference and Possession

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Group</th>
<th>Preference</th>
<th>Possession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Middle</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper middle</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Super Rich</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph No.2.23: Different between Preference and Possession Levels of Cars

The Difference between Preference and Possession of Cars

Source: Field Work 2007-08
In this study the most amazing fact was that 85 per cent to 75 per cent of low income group along with that of the super rich have shown an equitable interest in their preference of cars. The determination to want or to possess it varies from almost 75 per cent, which is very large in itself. Whereas, the upper middle class and the rich class is more or less on the edge of having a just affair by wishing what they could really afford to buy. The middle and low middle class are quite skeptical and conscious of what they will purchase as the difference is of 10 per cent almost half in general. Whereas, the highly unpredictable source of income i.e. low income group definitely without taking care of the budget prefers a classy car but then again will go for an affordable car. Similarly there was also varying difference between the electronic goods mentioned above which they purchased and the electronic goods they preferred. Thus, the entire exercise was deliberately implemented to articulate their consumerist attitude as an ideal type of their consumer preference.

The survey shows, while the growth for the next six months for hardware has been pegged at 20-30 per cent that of personal computers has been estimated at 20-25 per cent\textsuperscript{24}. It said the high-end products like LCD TVs, MP3s, DVDs, split air conditioners, washing machines, micro wave ovens being manufactured during the recent years also do not find place in the list of items covered by the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) for calculating official data though have excellent growth rates. Already to some extent, finance and credit facility has become another convenient strategy to convince the poor and not so rich consumers to identify themselves via these products. In the increasing consumption trends, income plays a major role in possessing what one desires. Though there were major discrepancies noticed during the data collection from the respondents. In this questionnaire maximum number of respondents prefers to buy white goods from the central markets and not from the malls. Few of the white goods items which were included in the questionnaire to know the frequency of purchase were mobiles, cars and home appliances. Mobiles are an impressive category which is a wonderful case study of becoming a luxury from necessity in recent years. Also it has the most attracted feature of being included in the commonest of denominator in the entire income group. Cars, though still is an exclusive category till the time \textit{Tata-Nano} congests the Indian roads. Home appliances is as always a much in demand

category included Irons, refrigerators, washing machines, mixer grinders mentioned in the list below in general. The subjective questions are further covered in the next chapter for a demand of a particular commodity. But the most basic questions asked were as follows;

Q) What is the frequency to change cars, mobiles and home appliances?

Graph 2.24: Frequency of Changing White Goods

![Graph 2.24: Frequency of Changing White Goods](image)

Source: Field Survey 2007-08

The above Graph 2.24 is a manifestation of the respondents reply to the change of white goods. The thing to notice here is again mobiles are leading on the scale of yearly basis-as most are in demand. Whereas home appliances as and when need arises hence, is unconditional to the time slot. The most important thing to notice here in the era of consumerism is that change is must and consumers are more than willing to change frequently than never. Likewise, the frequency to change white goods also denotes and judges their impulsive nature or wisdom to handling the budget carefully. Especially, in a metro like Delhi- the frequency to change cars and mobiles is high as compared to other cities. The mobile is the most apparent commodity to be flaunted- i.e. the conspicuous
consumption of the consumers. It is almost prevalent in all the income groups as per their capacities. The mobiles are one such example of its metamorphosis into a complete need than a luxury as compared to its other consumer siblings.

Indian customers increasingly are being attracted to technology such as frost-free refrigerators, fully-automatic washing machines, split air conditioners, and flat TVs, thereby fuelling growth in era of consumerism. Automobile sales are rising steadily every year. In two-wheeler sales, India ranks second in the world, while car sales are over a million per annum and growing at a blistering rate of 25 per cent. India is the sixth largest market for mobile handsets (16 million units per annum) and is growing at 50 per cent per annum. With nearly 200 television channels and 48 million cables homes, India is the third largest cable economy in the world after U.S. and China. The country is the fifth largest market for colour television sets and is growing at a consistent 25 per cent per annum25. The shift in the overall trend is remarkably represents by NCAER for the year 1998-09 to 2006-07. It is shown in the table below 2.25.

Table 2.25 (1)

Rural and Urban White Goods Consumption Trends
(1998-99 to 2006-07)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>(000*)</th>
<th>1998-99</th>
<th>2006-07</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>All India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVs (colour)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerators</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing machines</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing machines</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NCAER, * households

Table 2.25 (2) Rural and Urban White Goods Consumption Trends (in Millions)
(1998-99 to 2006-07)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1998-99</th>
<th>2006-07</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TVs (colour)</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerators</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing machines</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing machines</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NCAER, * Millions

As per NCAER (one of the premier economic research agencies in India), the penetration of TVs is expected to increase almost three times by (Five Year Plans) FY07 as compared to the FY99 level. Growth is even higher for other durable items like refrigerators and washing machines. The expectations are also on the premise that the consuming class, as a percentage of total households, is expected to grow at a faster rate. This would benefit the consumer durable manufactures. In TV segment, the 14, 20 and 21 inches segments are expected to be the key contributors to the overall industry growth. In the air conditioner segment, room air conditioner market is growing at the rate of 18 per cent per annum. Demand for (Air Conditioner's) ACs in the long run will be robust due to rising income levels and also due to higher computerization. Besides, air conditioners are no longer perceived as luxury needs.²⁶

²⁶ http://www.equitymaster.com/research-it/sector-info/consdur/#pr_18_Nov_2008_1200.30hrs
“The non-IT consumer durable goods market estimated at Rs 35,000 crore in 2006-07 with 11.5 per cent growth is expected to achieve about 12 per cent overall growth in 2007-08”\textsuperscript{27}. Another trend in the industry is the shifting focus of consumer durable companies toward rural marketing. Companies such as Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd. and LG Electronics are reviewing their activities and strategies in the rural market.

2.11. Consumer preference for Eating Out

Spending habits are different for people belonging to different income classes of society. For instance, people belonging to the middle class consider basic necessities and education and spending toward the future of their children as their top priorities, followed by lifestyle goods. The rich class spends more on luxury goods and international brands. The super rich class spends on ultra luxury goods. It is observed that as disposable income increases, people prefer more of branded goods, shift to processed foods, and the expenditure on food, beverages, tobacco, and transport and communication also increases. A comparison of consumer spending habits amongst all the income groups revealed that expenditure on food has remained more or less constant, but expenditure on entertainment increased manifold. As during the interview session as well the results of the filled up questionnaire the results were subject to the metropolitan culture of Delhi and Gurgaon. There were some interesting incidents such as:

An executive of BPO said, “I eat out three to four days in a week and watch minimum four to five movies a month. I easily end up spending Rs 10,000 a month on all this. I only go in for branded stuff. Every time I shop, I spend upwards of Rs 200-5000 on my clothes only.”

\textsuperscript{27} Pranav Kudesia is an iSuppli associate analyst and is a co-author of iSuppli Corp’s upcoming report, Consumer Electronics In India: Expanding Middle Class Drives Rapid Growth. This report, from supply’s India service, will provide a comprehensive analysis of the fast-growing consumer electronics industry in India, available at http://thehindubusinessline.com 14 Dec 2008 1200hrs
A student of a university replied, "Though there are times when I don't have a single penny in my pocket yet to eat outside is must with friends as my market credibility is sufficient for them to provide me with some credit atleast for food"

Similarly a newly wed couple in the income group of Rs.70,000-140,000 confessed that "my wife doesn't feel like cooking at home so it becomes essential to eat outside as it is necessary to socialize and spend some time when we are not troubled for food-what if it empties my pocket a little."

Subsequently, it was discovered that income does matter to these aspiring consumers along with that of the affluent consumers, as the finding of the study. They had different preferences for different places as the middle class goes to an elite restaurant once in a while whereas the super rich have five star hotels as their second home. The couple of questions that are framed in the questionnaire are a follows:

Q). Do you prefer to go out and eat occasionally or frequently?
Q). What exactly is the frequency of eating out?

Graph 2.26: Preference of Eating Out

Source: Field survey 2007-08
The percentage of people preferring to go out and eat amongst the 150 respondents were 60 per cent than those 40 per cent who preferred to go out as per the exigency of family occasion, festival, birthday parties. Quite a few were least interested and seemed concerned regarding their pocket and budget. Similarly the reason for 61 per cent of the respondents was for lifestyle parameters which they followed in their respective workplace, peer pressure, status symbol etc. There were only couple of people who were concerned with the food quality and the enthusiasm of the new place. Time along with money played a substantial role when it comes to planning for a long holiday. They try to squeeze out for a short break each year. Growing disposable income is also propelling demand for consumer durables and eating in restaurants among Indians. Age is also a major factor that affects the spending decisions of an individual. For instance, people in 20-24 years age group spend more on electronic or home appliances and movies, while people in the 45-48 years age group spend more on vacations. The pattern of spending categories for the average Indian has increased from 1991 to 2007. In 1991, the average Indian spent on 8 product categories, where as in 2008 the number of categories increased to 17, and included mobile handsets, gifts, and durables, among others. Nearly 75 per cent couple falling in DINK (double income no kids) category with about Rs.6 lakh-8lakh of per annum, roughly spend Rs15,000-20,000 in entertainment, shopping, fitness centers, eating out and branded wear articles in almost every month. The ASSOCHAM finding stated that all the working couples with no kids appear to have one expense in common i.e. eating out. The reason behind were the tough schedules and late work-hours that their jobs demand especially those are into MNC’s, Computer professionals, Sales & Marketing etc. In addition they strongly feel that it is practical to eat out rather than return home and cook.

28 A Survey Report by the Associated Chamber of Commerce & Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) on Changing Consumption Pattern of city like Delhi as a result of rising income levels http://www.indiainfoline.com/macro/innernews.asp?storyId=62993&lmn=6&cat12 Jan 2008 12OOhrs
Summing up:

This research aimed to establish whether consumers within the surveyed population are only using an expanded range of commodities for the sake of consumerism. Thus, it was an effort to investigate the evidence to support the above research objectives. This survey has identified the rationale for the logic of consumerism. This rationale is that consumers will increasingly want, and desire goods for innumerable reasons as a means to identify and satisfy themselves. The central tenet was the selfish altruism that consumers uphold— with their cause and effect of the purchase that benefits the consumer rather than just the wider world which is tested and evaluated. While this phenomenon can be expected across all products, as a service industry, randomly picked commodities enjoy simultaneous production and consumption, both in time and space. Thus, a consumer is more readily faced with the consequences of his or her consumption decisions. While the purchase is made in order to secure a desired product, to get what one wished. This ‘inseparability’ of consumerism and consumption in the market place offers consumerism the potential to promote more desires. As a corollary, there can be a cautious acceptance of the research thesis that consumerism has the potential to promote motivation and an inherited loyalties towards that particular brand or label helpful in sustaining one’s identity. Yet, in contrast, if the consumer becomes less interested in the brand and draws away from its impacts, then so will the advertising and their likelihood of taking action will be commensurately less. This research found evidence to believe that people are becoming more concerned and are willing to take risks now. However, reinforcing the warning about the non-representative nature of the surveyed population, it is apparent from the behaviour of the main respondents that concern shown in this survey is not widespread amongst the wider population and so a douse of sobering water needs to be poured over any rising spirits created by this survey.

In order to place the views of those surveyed, it is helpful to view consumer aspiration as a ladder to spread consumerism. Those consumers interviewed at the rising incomes placed on a heightened rung as a result of their willingness to seek out and spend only on expensive and global brands. For this group, consumerism is all about sophistication and luxuriating; the rise of the all-inclusive resort in which the consumer is king. The second
group, rest on the same rung of the ladder but see their budget or rather plan it accordingly. The third groups buy as per their income levels and have responsibilities at home, stepping down a rung temporarily. The third group are on a rung below and show little awareness or action to promote more consumerism either in their home society or in the society of their market.

Understanding that there are consumers with different levels of consciousness is an important research finding and could give rise to the same information being presented differently according to the income group. Yet, the information cannot be tailored to suit the budding interest of the consumer as it also showed lot of paradoxes as was assumed and does represent an excellent way to prove our generalizations. Arguably, the role of advertisement speeds this process, enabling both the producer to reach the consumer faster but also for the consumer to reach product information more readily. Yet, as Baudrillard avers, the art of the advertiser is precisely to deal in the vague and non-verifiable, this is what makes them so successful. However, such an obviously sensible view ignores the short-term profit to be made from gilding the lily.