This chapter seeks to present a conceptual framework and literature review of various studies undertaken in the past. The necessary theoretical backdrop is provided by briefly introducing the various concepts used in the study. More specifically, an attempt has been made to provide an overview of various studies undertaken in respect of consumer attitudes towards marketing including the marketing mix elements in various countries, consumerism, government regulations, consumers own responsibilities, consumer well being and life satisfaction.

2.1 Consumer Attitudes towards Marketing
Booming marketing activities and escalating consumerism drew the implausible interest among the researchers for consumer perceptions towards marketing. ‘Index of Consumer Sentiment’, ‘Consumer Confidence Index’, ‘Consumer Buying Confidence’ and ‘Household
Money Supply’ were the scales developed by researchers over a period of time to measure consumer perceptions of marketing. But the main flaw of these instruments was that they were not exactly related to marketing (Jain and Goel, 2011).

The very first measure, related to the following seven areas of marketing: philosophy of business, product quality, advertising, price and price control, government regulations, consumer responsibilities and consumerism, was developed by Barksdale and Darden (1972). Barksdale, Darden, and Perreault (1976) and Barksdale and Perreault (1980) replicated the original study at two year intervals during the period 1971-1979 by modifying the same scale formed by Barksdale and Darden (1972).

Over a period of time, a number of cross-national studies have been undertaken by various researchers using a modified version of the same scale. Arndt et al. (1980) examined consumer perceptions towards marketing and its related issues in the United States, Venezuela and Norway. French et al. (1982) also conducted a study in Britain to analyze consumers’ perceptions. Barksdale et al. (1982) studied consumers concerns of marketing in six countries, viz., Israel, United States, Canada, England, Australia and Norway. Barker (1987) carried out a comparative study of New Zealand consumers with those of consumers in Australia, Canada, Britain and United States regarding attitudes and perceptions towards consumerism and other marketing related issues.
Vardarajan and Thirunarayana (1990) compared Indian consumers’ attitudes with those of consumers from six other industrialized countries which were documented in Barksdale et al. (1982) study by using a modified version of the original scale. In a study of attitudes toward consumerism in four developing countries (viz., Singapore, India, Nigeria and Kenya), Darley and Johnson (1993) studied and compared consumer responses.

Turkish consumers’ (i.e., undergraduate business students) attitudes toward marketing practices and consumerism were examined by Uray and Menguc (1996). Bhuiian et al. (2001) performed a study in Saudi Arabia to analyze similarities and differences in the attitudes of business majors and non-business majors toward business, consumerism and government regulations. Lyonski and Durvasula (2003) had also investigated consumers’ views during the period 1986 to 2001 on variety of issues dealing with marketing and consumerism.

Despite its use by various researchers, the scale developed by Barksdale and Darden (1972) has been found to be deficient in its reliability and validity (Chan, Yau and Chan, 1990). The scale’s suitability to measure consumer attitudes was not supported by the close scrutiny of scale’s psychometric properties (i.e., dimensionality and reliability) (Uray and Menguc, 1996). Also the scale failed to reveal the factor structure in conformity with the seven dimensions suggested by Barksdale and Darden (1972) in a study conducted by
Lyonski and Durvasula (2003). For these reasons, objection has been raised for the computation of a composite score for each of the seven dimensions.

Other scales have also been suggested and employed to measure consumer sentiments towards marketing. Hustad and Pessemier (1973), Lundstrom and Lamont (1976), Allison (1977) and Klein (1982) were amongst the researchers who had attempted to develop substitute scales to measure consumer attitudes. However, these scales could not gain much recognition due to being too lengthy for the respondents to handle.

In the mid-eighties, a scale was developed by Gaski and Etzel (1986) to measure consumer sentiment towards marketing. The scale is comprised of 28 statements relating to four elements of marketing: product, price, advertising and retailing/selling. This scale has been tested and found to be highly reliable and valid. To measure consumer sentiments toward marketing and its various practices in the United States, this scale has been administered annually by Market Facts Inc. (now Synovate) since 1984 to a mail consumer panel (Gaski and Etzel, 2005). Because of its simplicity, this scale is widely accepted by the researchers of other countries as well. Wee and Chan (1989) have used this scale to determine Hong Kong consumers’ sentiment towards marketing. Chan, Yau and Chan (1990) in their study have used the scale developed by Gaski and Etzel (1986) to compare Hong Kong consumers’ attitudes towards
marketing across various demographic variables with those of Australian’s consumers. In a similar vein, Chan and Cui (2004) have employed this scale to measure consumer attitudes in four cities in mainland China and compared the findings with those of previous studies of other economies, viz., USA, Hong Kong and Australia. Peterson and Ekici (2007) and Ferdous and Toufique (2008) have also used the same scale to measure attitudes towards marketing of Turkish and Bangladeshi consumers respectively. Recently, Jain (2011) has employed the same scale to ascertain Indian consumers’ attitudes towards marketing across various demographic variables.

2.2 Findings of Past Studies on Consumer Attitudes and Related Issues

Using the scales referred to in the preceding section, various studies have been conducted in the past for assessing consumer sentiments towards marketing and related issues such as government regulations, consumerism and consumers own responsibilities. A review of the major findings of these studies is provided in the following paragraphs.

2.2.1 Consumers Overall Attitude towards Marketing and Operating Philosophy of Business Firms

Numerous studies have been conducted in the United States and other countries to determine consumer attitudes towards marketing, consumerism and government regulations using the scales referred
to in the preceding section. Most of the studies indicate consumers having negative opinions towards marketing. There are only a few studies those report slightly favorable sentiments towards marketing (Jain and Goel, 2011). A review of the past studies assessing consumers’ overall attitudes towards marketing and business operations is as follows.

To ascertain consumers overall attitudes towards marketing, studies in the United States were conducted by Barksdale and Darden (1972), Barksdale, Darden, and Perreault (1976) and Barksdale and Perreault (1980) by making use of a national mail sample survey and a five-item Likert scale instrument. Later, Barksdale et al., (1982) performed another study comparing consumers’ attitudes across six countries (viz., Israel, United States, Canada, England, Australia and Norway). A comparative study of consumer attitudes in the United States and Britain was undertaken by French et al., (1982). In all these studies, consumers reported negative attitudes toward marketing practices.

Klein (1982) carried out a study and found that US consumers were more dissatisfied with the marketing practices than Swedish consumers. Gaski and Etzel (1986) documented in their study that US consumers had negative attitude towards marketing despite a positive enhancement in attitudes reported by consumers over time. Consumers of New Zealand, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom and
the United States too reported inability of the firms to fulfill their expectations in a study conducted by Barker (1987).

By making use of Gaski and Etzel instrument, Wee and Chan (1989) ascertained the consumer sentiment in Hong Kong and compared the results with Gaski and Etzel’s study. They established that consumers in Hong Kong were having more favorable attitudes towards marketing than consumers in the United States. Employing the same scale, Chan, Yau and Chan (1990) compared attitudes of Australian consumers with those of Hong Kong consumers and found Australian consumers to be having a negative attitude towards marketing.

Suspicion regarding the operating philosophy of business and dissatisfaction with marketing practices was reported by consumers in India and six other countries, viz., Israel, United States, Canada, England, Australia and Norway in a study conducted by Vardarajan and Thirunarayana (1990). Barksdale and Darden (1972), Hustad and Pessiemier (1973), Greyser and Diamond (1974), Jones and Gardner (1976), Andreasen and Best (1977), Barker (1987), Vardarajan and Thirunarayana (1990) and Uray and Menguc (1996) documented in their studies marketers’ inability to solve consumers’ problems have led to consumer disgruntlement.

Though in some studies consumers have indicated that business appears to be honest in their endeavors to resolve problems, there is too much formalities involved in getting the problems settled.
(Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale et al., 1982; French et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Darley and Johnson, 1993; Uray and Menguc, 1996). In several national and cross-national studies, respondents reported that manufacturers have not extensively acknowledged marketing concept in their operations (Barksdale and Perreault, 1980; French et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Uray and Menguc, 1996).

Darley and Johnson (1993) in a cross-national study in Singapore, India Nigeria and Kenya and Uray and Menguc (1996) in their study of Turkish consumers found that consumers were doubtful of business and its various practices. Consumers articulated concerns about honesty of games and contests sponsored by manufactures (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale and Perreault, 1980; Barksdale et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990). French et al. (1982) and Lyonski and Durvasula (2003) reported in their studies that sponsored games and contest are aimed to increase the product purchase only.

Consumers felt that it is the competition because of which prices are fair, and they appeared doubtful about the purpose of business. They reported that business do not bother about the consumers welfare (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; French et al., 1982; Barksdale et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Uray and Menguc, 1996; Lyonski and Durvasula, 2003).
Lysonski and Durvasula (2003) reported in their study that consumers in New Zealand had more favorable attitudes towards consumerism and marketing issues that they had before fifteen years. Chinese consumers are also having more favorable attitudes towards marketing than US and Australian consumers as reported by Chan and Cui (2004). In a study, Gaski and Etzel (2005) found that US consumers’ attitudes have also improved over the years in respect of marketing practices.

Peterson and Ekici (2007) documented in their study that Turkish consumers have an overall lower score for consumer sentiment towards marketing than US consumers. Ferdous and Towfique (2008) found that the overall consumer sentiment towards marketing in Bangladesh is negative. While comparing the attitudes of Bangladesh with countries belonging to transitional economies (China and Hong Kong), it was found that consumers in Bangladesh held more negative views but at the same time they have also displayed more positive attitudes than consumers of developed countries (USA and Australia).

Jain (2011) reported that Indian consumers have more favorable opinions about marketing than consumers in Hong Kong, Australia, United States, China and Bangladesh.

While examining the relationship between consumers’ attitudes towards marketing institution as a whole at the macro level and economic development, it has been found that consumers’ attitudes
towards marketing are more negative in more advanced nations as aspirations of people in these countries are higher with increased levels of income so they are more dissatisfied with marketing system. However, this proposition needs further exploration (Kayank and Wilkstrom, 1985; Thorelli, 1990).

### 2.2.2 Consumers Attitudes towards Marketing Mix

Consumers’ attitudes towards marketing apparently relate to elements of the marketing mix. Therefore, an attempt has been made in the following sub-sections to provide an overview of the studies undertaken in the past to measure consumer attitudes towards four elements of marketing, i.e., product, price, distribution and advertisement.

- **Consumers Attitudes towards Product**

For long, consumerists are arguing that excessive marketing is creating discontent among consumers because of illusory product differentiation and unreasonable market segmentation. It has been argued that product differentiation based on minor differences is created for more segmentation of the market. Prices of differentiated products are fixed in such a way that they represents more variations in products quality than what exists in reality so as to induce
consumers to perceive differences to be existing in quality (Straver, 1977).

Barksdale and Darden (1972), French et al. (1982) and Barker (1987) found consumers to be having problems with product element of marketing mix because of deliberate obsolescence, product proliferation, safety, worth of the product to consumers and labeling. Product proliferation has been interpreted as a trading up of the product line, offering marginally different products at substantially higher prices.

Although most consumers felt that manufacturers attempt to make products as per the needs of the consumers, but at the same time they have also voiced high level of discontent with product quality issues such as no improvement in product quality to have been made over a period of time, products wear out quickly and product improvements are intentionally held back by manufacturers (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale et al., 1982; French et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Uray and Menguc, 1996; Lyonski and Durvasula, 2003).

Barksdale and Perreault (1980) also reported that consumers are distrustful about the product quality. In a similar vein, Chan, Yau and Chan (1990) and Chan and Cui (2004) in their studies reported consumers having negative attitude about product.

While evaluating consumer sentiments in New Zealand, England, USA and Greece Lyonski and Zotos (1989) reported that
respondents in the above stated four countries are not critical about product quality. Because of wide variety available in the market and high quality, consumers of Hong Kong are holding highly positive attitude towards product (Wee and Chan, 1989). Bhuian et al., (2001) reported that consumers (business majors as well as non business majors) have positive attitudes about product quality. In a study, Gaski and Etzel (2005) reported positive attitude of US consumers in respect of product. In a similar vein, Peterson and Ekici (2007), Ferdous and Towfique (2008) and Jain (2011) found that consumers in Turkey, Bangladesh and India respectively have positive sentiment towards product. Orel and Zeren (2011) reported in their study that respondents felt quality of most products has improved over time and as per the customer needs manufacturers are making the products. Consumers also felt that manufacturers provide guarantees in respect of products prepared by them (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Uray and Menguc, 1996; Lyonski and Durvasula, 2003). Thus, overall consumers had positive attitudes toward the product quality offered by manufacturers.

- **Consumers Attitudes towards Price**

During periods of rising inflation and financial crisis, pricing policies had been blamed by consumers as reported by Barksdale et al. (1982), Barker (1987), Wee and Chan (1989) and Chan, Yau and
Chan (1990) in their studies. Most of the consumers held middlemen like wholesalers and retailers responsible for the key problem of high prices (French et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Lyonski and Durvasula, 2003). Chan, Yau and Chan (1990), Chan and Cui (2004), Gaski and Etzel (2005), Peterson and Ekici (2007) reported in their studies that consumers seemed to be despondent with the prices of products.

Ferdous and Towfique (2008), Jain (2011) and Orel and Zeren (2011) found that consumers in Bangladesh, India, Poland and Turkey respectively had negative sentiment towards price. Ferdous and Towfique (2008) and Jain (2011) argued that prices of consumer goods in Bangladesh and India are high compared to the wage rates and income levels prevailing in these countries. Lyonski and Durvasula (2003) suggested that to control prices, competition should be encouraged. Thus, irrespective of their nationality, all consumers have shown their concern about high prices of products.

- **Consumers Attitudes towards Distribution**

Consumers have been reported in the past studies to be having favorable opinions about the ease and convenience in availability of products (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale et al., 1982; French et al., 1982; Barker, 1987 and Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990). Similarly, consumers’ attitudes towards
retailing were found to be positive as reported by Chan, Yau and Chan (1990), Chan and Cui (2004), Gaski and Etzel (2005), Ferdous and Towfiq (2008) and Jain (2011) in their studies. Thus, consumers in different countries appear quite satisfied with the distribution system.

- **Consumers Attitudes towards Advertisement**

Because of the psychological positioning used for differentiating products, puffery, deception, emphasis on acquisitiveness to attain the high quality life and lack of information to assess price/quality associations among akin brands; advertising had been criticized in studies by Barksdale and Perreault (1980), French et al. (1982), Wee and Chan (1989), Chan, Yau and Chan (1990), Vardarajan and Thirunarayana (1990) and Uray and Menguc (1996). Barksdale and Darden (1972), Barksdale et al. (1982), French et al. (1982), Barker (1987), Lysonski and Zotos (1989), Vardarajan and Thirunarayana (1990), Uray and Menguc (1996) and Lysonski and Durvasula (2003) found that consumers were critical with respect to advertising as ads were considered as undependable sources of information, providing colossal and not genuine or phony pictures of products. Across demographic and socioeconomic strata, Barker (1987) also recognized concern about misleading advertising.

Though most of the consumers doubt about the trustworthiness of advertised products in comparison to unadvertised ones (Barksdale
et al., 1982; French et al., 1982; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Uray and Menguc, 1996 and Lyonski and Durvasula, 2003), a few respondents were found having more faith in the advertised products in a study undertaken by Barksdale and Darden (1972). In a similar vein, Jain (2011) reported in a cross-sectional study that Indian consumers have positive views about this element of marketing mix. While comparing attitudes of consumers of Poland and Turkey towards advertisement, Orel and Zeren (2011) documented that Polish respondents are more doubtful than Turkish respondents regarding the fidelity of advertised products in comparison to unadvertised ones.


Thus, negative views about advertising appear to be a common trend among these studies regardless of differences in the degree of advertising and deviations in the coverage of government regulations of advertising in various countries.

2.2.3 Role of Demographic Variables in Influencing Consumer Attitudes towards Marketing

A thrust area of investigation among the researchers across the countries and regions of the world has been identification of factors
responsible for the consumer attitudes towards marketing. Researchers have tried to recognize the impact of demographic factors on consumer attitudes towards marketing as discussed below:

- **Consumers Attitudes across Gender**

In their findings, Wee and Chan (1989), Chan, Yau and Chan (1990) and Jain (2011) have that women held more antagonistic attitudes towards marketing than men. However, Gaski and Etzel (1986) and Chan and Cui (2004) found that the reverse is true. Men are more unreceptive to marketing than female (Gaski and Etzel, 1986; Chan and Cui, 2004) and one of the possible reasons suggested by them is comparatively more participation of males in purchase of high priced goods (Davis, 1970; Davis and Rigdux, 1974) and post-purchase dissonance is more likely to be experienced for costly purchases suggested by Festinger (1957) and Robertson, Zielinski and Ward (1984).

Barker (1987) also reported that men had vehement feelings that manufacturers' evade their responsibility than females. Ferdous and Towfiq (2008) in their study reported that women were more negative towards marketing practices in comparison to men. They had also noticed some significant gender differences in terms of advertising and retailing, i.e., the sentiments of female respondents were more unfavorable towards advertising and retailing in comparison to their male counterparts.
• **Consumers Attitudes across Age**

In their findings, French et al. (1982), Barker (1987), Wee and Chan (1989), Chan, Yau and Chan (1990) and Roberts and Manolis (2000) found that the older consumers had more favorable attitudes towards product, price and advertising. Also, older respondents have articulated more confidence in the competitive system and more trust regarding the advantages of advertising, while younger respondents questioned about the reliability of advertised products and that advertisements present accurate picture of the products (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale et al., 1982; French et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990).

Majority of the young respondents are not satisfied with the measures to manage consumer complaints (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Chan and Cui, 2004). Thus, younger respondents have more unfavorable attitudes toward marketing and its various elements. However, the results of Ferdous and Towfique (2008) study indicated no significant differences among the age groups for the overall sentiment towards marketing and specific attitudes for different elements of marketing.

• **Consumers Attitudes across Education**

In their studies Barker (1987), Wee and Chan (1989), Chan, Yau and Chan (1990), Bhuian et al. (2001), Chan and Cui (2004) and Jain (2011) found that the level of educational attainment was positively
related to respondents’ attitudes towards marketing. That is, higher the level of educational attainment, the more positive was their attitude towards marketing. However, Ferdous and Towfique (2008) found no significant differences between different levels of educational attainment and marketing sentiments.

- **Consumers Attitudes across Occupation**

In their studies French et al. (1982), Wee and Chan (1989) and Chan, Yau and Chan (1990) found that the occupation and attitudes towards marketing were positively related. In a similar vein, Jain (2011) also found that professionals had more favorable opinion about marketing practices in India. That is, consumers in more prestigious occupations have more affirmative attitude towards marketing.

Chan and Cui (2004) reported that even though blue collar workers were more positive about retailing, but they were less satisfied with advertising than white collar workers, students and others. Ferdous and Towfique (2008) study results indicated significant difference between the different occupational categories and overall attitude towards marketing.

- **Consumers Attitudes across Income**

In their studies Barker (1987), Wee and Chan (1989) and Chan, Yau
and Chan (1990) found that there is positive relationship between personal income and consumer attitudes towards marketing. Consumers in higher income groups tended to hold more favorable attitudes against the lower income groups who had more unfavorable opinions about marketing.

- **Consumers Attitudes across Marital Status**

Wee and Chan (1989) have found in their study that married people held more favorable attitude towards marketing than unmarried people.

- **Consumers Attitudes across Residential Districts**

Consumers who are residing in areas which have availability of various products and are offering rich shopping experiences have more favorable attitude towards marketing (Wee and Chan, 1989).

The following hypotheses have been proposed for empirical testing:

A₁: There are no significant differences in consumer attitudes towards marketing across gender.

A₂: There are no significant differences in consumer attitudes towards marketing across different age groups.
A3: Consumer attitudes towards marketing do not differ significantly across various educational groups.

A4: There are no significant differences in consumer attitudes towards marketing across different occupations.

A5: Consumer attitudes towards marketing do not differ across various income groups.

A6: There are no significant differences in consumer attitudes towards marketing across marital groups.

A7: Attitudes towards marketing do not differ between urban and rural consumers.

Similarly, consumer attitudes towards various elements of marketing and operating philosophy of business firms can be ascertained across demographic variables viz., gender, age, educational qualifications, occupations, family income, marital status and residential area.

### 2.2.4 Consumers Attitudes towards Consumerism

According to Mayens (1989), consumerism represents the voice of consumer disgruntlement and consequent remedial measures. Respondents in the past studies have indicated that affirmative change in the business performance is because of consumer movement (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Uray and Menguc, 1996). But studies by French et al.,
(1982) and Vardarajan and Thirunarayana (1990) report that respondents do not think that firms dealings have been affected by organized consumer movements.

Consumers’ problems are less serious now is disagreed by most of the consumers (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale et al., 1982; French et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Lysonski and Durvasula, 2003). Bhuian et al. (2001), however, in their study found that consumers felt that their problems are less serious now. One of the possible reasons for this provided by them was that standard of living of people in Saudi Arabia has improved.

Varadarajan et al. (1990) documented that consumer movement is yet to materialize as a key force in India though in many developed countries it is a well recognized phenomenon.

Jain (2011) found that consumers felt that abuse of consumers by the business firms is an issue of concern and more attention should be paid to this. Furthermore, consumer protection in India is expected to get more attention in future. In a similar vein, Orel and Zeren (2011) reported respondents’ positive attitudes towards consumerism.

Not much work has been done in the past to examine the influence of demographic variables on consumer attitudes toward consumerism. In the absence of any conclusive empirical or theoretical support, the
following exploratory hypotheses with respect to consumerism have been proposed for empirical testing:

\( C_1 \): Consumer attitudes towards consumerism do not differ significantly across gender.

\( C_2 \): Consumer attitudes towards consumerism do not differ significantly across various age groups.

\( C_3 \): Consumer attitudes towards consumerism do not differ significantly across various educational groups.

\( C_4 \): Consumer attitudes towards consumerism do not differ significantly across various occupation groups.

\( C_5 \): Consumer attitudes towards consumerism do not differ significantly across family income.

\( C_6 \): Consumer attitudes towards consumerism do not differ significantly across marital status.

\( C_7 \): Consumer attitudes towards consumerism do not differ significantly across residential area.

2.2.5 Consumers Attitudes towards Government Regulations

government in their study for the increase in consumer dissatisfaction. Since law is made on the principle of caveat emptor i.e., *Let the buyer beware*, therefore, government has been reported to have failed to protect the consumers. Andreasen and Best (1977) held that government is not protecting consumers interest and is responsible for the rise of consumer disgruntlement.

Barksdale et al. (1982) in their study reported that consumers felt that it is the duty of government to protect their rights. Barker (1987) also reported that businesses have to face additional government regulations; unless and until they improve their marketing practices and give attention to consumerism issues. Most of the consumers prefer self-regulation by business, but they are demanding government regulations because firms fail to exercise self-regulation (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale et al., 1982; French et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Uray and Menguc, 1996; Bhuian et al., 2001; Lysonski and Durvasula 2003).

Barksdale and Darden (1972), Barksdale et al. (1982), French et al. (1982), Barker (1987), Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, (1990), Darley and Johnson (1993), Uray and Menguc (1996), Lysonski and Durvasula (2003) and Orel and Zeren (2011) documented in their studies that government should stipulate minimum standards for quality, carry out sovereign tests of rival brands, publicize the results, control the advertising, sales and marketing actions of manufacturers and there is also need of a central governmental department for consumer protection.
Lyonski and Durvasula (2003) reported in their study that government has introduced laws and regulations regarding consumer protection resulting in improved consumers’ attitude towards marketing and consumerism over a period of 15 years.

Bhuian et al. (2001) reported in their study that young adults have positive attitudes towards government regulations and price controls despite difference in educational backgrounds. Jain (2011) documented that Indian consumers robustly believe that government control is crucial for the safeguard of consumer interests.

It has been found by Kayank (1985) and Varadarajan et al. (1990) that consumers in developed countries do not want further government regulations and satisfied with the existing conditions, whereas in developing countries the scenario is opposite.

However, it was found that respondents in all countries want government regulations to protect consumers’ rights irrespective of their nationality and advancement in consumerism issues (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale et al., 1982; French et al., 1982; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Uray and Menguc, 1996; Bhuian et al., 2001; Lyonski and Durvasula 2003; Orel and Zeren, 2011 and Jain, 2011).

The influence of demographic variables on consumer attitudes toward government regulations has not been analyzed in the past studies. In view of the lack of any empirical or theoretical support, the following
exploratory hypotheses with respect to government regulations have been proposed:

G₁: Consumer attitudes towards government regulations do not differ significantly across gender.

G₂: Consumer attitudes towards government regulations do not differ significantly across various age groups.

G₃: Consumer attitudes towards government regulations do not differ significantly across various educational groups.

G₄: Consumer attitudes towards government regulations do not differ significantly across various occupation groups.

G₅: Consumer attitudes towards government regulations do not differ significantly across family income.

G₆: Consumer attitudes towards government regulations do not differ significantly across marital status.

G₇: Consumer attitudes towards government regulations do not differ significantly across residential area.

2.2.6 Consumers Attitudes towards Consumer Responsibilities

Barksdale and Darden (1972), Vardarajan and Thirunarayana (1990) and Lyonski and Durvasula (2003) found in their studies that
consumers are anxious about the environment and are prepared to pay more prices for the environmental friendly products. However, Barksdale et al. (1982), French et al. (1982), Barker (1987) and Orel and Zeren (2011) found that consumers are not prepared to pay more prices for the environmental friendly products although they do care about the environment. Also, Orel and Zeren (2011) reported in a comparative study of Poland and Turkey that Polish respondents product selection is not so much affected by environmental issues than it is for Turkish respondents.

Most of the respondents blamed themselves for their carelessness, incompetence, indifference or lack of knowledge while buying (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale and Perreault, 1980; Barksdale et al., 1982; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Lysonski and Durvasula, 2003) while Barker (1987) found that New Zealanders’ disagreed to believe that they are behaving irresponsibly while making a choice.

Most of the consumers denied that they are getting unjustified benefits from manufacturers and dealers (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale et al., 1982; French et al., 1982) while the respondents in Lysonski and Durvasula (2003) study admitted that they do formulate unfair claims.

In general, consumers did understand their responsibilities towards environment and they admitted the wrong doing on their part by making unwarranted claims on the manufacturers and dealers.
Not much work has been done in the past to examine the influence of demographic variables on consumer attitudes toward their own responsibilities. The following exploratory hypotheses with respect to influence of demographic variables on consumer own responsibilities, therefore, have been proposed in the absence of any empirical or theoretical support:

CR₁: Consumer attitudes towards their own responsibilities do not differ significantly across gender.

CR₂: Consumer attitudes towards their own responsibilities do not differ significantly across various age groups.

CR₃: Consumer attitudes towards their own responsibilities do not differ significantly across various educational qualification groups.

CR₄: Consumer attitudes towards their own responsibilities do not differ significantly across various occupation groups.

CR₅: Consumer attitudes towards their own responsibilities do not differ significantly across family income.

CR₆: Consumer attitudes towards their own responsibilities do not differ significantly across marital status.

CR₇: Consumer attitudes towards their own responsibilities do not differ significantly across residential area.

In all these studies regardless of nationality, respondents had negative views about prices and advertising practices adopted by
firms. In a similar vein, respondents view business with great skepticism (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale and Perreault, 1980; Barksdale et al., 1982; French et al., 1982; Gaski and Etzel, 1986; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Darley and Johnson, 1993; Uray and Menguc, 1996; Lysonski and Zotos, 1989; Wee and Chan, 1989; Chan, Yau and Chan, 1990; Lysonski and Durvasula, 2003; Chan and Cui, 2004). However, consumers have been found to be recognizing their obligations towards environment and even ready to pay extra prices for environmentally friendly products (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Lysonski and Durvasula, 2003) and had favorable attitudes towards government regulations framed to protect them (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Barksdale and Perreault, 1980; Barksdale et al., 1982; French et al., 1982; Gaski and Etzel, 1986; Barker, 1987; Vardarajan and Thirunarayana, 1990; Darley and Johnson, 1993; Uray and Menguc, 1996; Lysonski and Zotos, 1989; Lysonski and Durvasula, 2003; Jain, 2011; Orel and Zeren, 2011).

2.3 Consumer Well Being

Consumers’ attitude towards marketing is concerned with attitudes towards four elements of marketing, while consumer well being measures consumer satisfaction with the performance of marketing activities in the consumption process (Gaski and Etzel, 1986; Lee et al., 2002).
Researchers (Day, 1978, 1987; Lee and Sirgy, 1995; Leelakulthanit, Day and Walters, 1991; Meadow, 1983; Lee et al., 2002; Sirgy et al., 2008) defined consumer well-being as “consumer satisfaction within the various consumer life sub domains” i.e., satisfaction or dissatisfaction of consumers requirements throughout the various stages of the consumer life cycle. In other words, consumption process impacts consumer well being. Therefore, to comprehend consumer well-being, one needs to ascertain the sub domains or stages of consumer life cycle (Lee et al., 2002).

However, over a period of time no unanimity has developed among the researchers regarding what the sub spheres of consumer life are (Meadow, 1983; Hawes and Lumpkin, 1984; Day, 1987; Sirgy, Meadow and Samli, 1987; Leelakulthanit, Day and Walters, 1991; Lee and Sirgy, 1995; Sirgy, 2001; Lee et al., 2002; Sirgy et al., 2008).

Meadow (1983) and Nakano, MacDonald and Douthitt (1995) conceptualized consumer well-being through single dimension. Meadow (1983) proposed that consumer well being could be established via satisfaction with acquisition (shopping) of consumer goods and services. While Nakano, MacDonald and Douthitt (1995) argued that it is the satisfaction with possession (ownership) of consumer goods which measures consumer well being.

On the other hand, Day (1978, 1987) and Leelakulthanit, Day and Walters (1991) elucidated consumer well being as having two dimensions – acquisition and possession. Thus, they defined
consumer well being as satisfaction with acquisition along with possession of goods.

It has been argued by the researchers that behavior of consumers’ for consumption process ranges across an array of dimensions from acquisition through consumption to disposal (Wilkie and Moore, 1999; Arnould, Price and Zinkhan, 2002; Solomon, 2002; Lee et al., 2002). For that reason, Sirgy et al. (2008) proposed that consumer well being scale should embody all the six types of stages, i.e., acquisition/shopping, preparation/assembly, possession/ownership, consumption/ use, maintenance/ repair and disposal stages of consumption process. Thus, consumer well being is composed of satisfaction of consumers with respect to acquisition, preparation, possession, consumption, maintenance, and disposal of goods and services.

The scale of consumer well being should takes into consideration experiences of consumers in exhaustive manner across various dimensions of consumer life cycle. The various dimensions of consumer life cycle conceptualized in terms of six types of consumer experiences: acquisition, preparation, possession, consumption, maintenance, and disposal are explained below:

- **Acquisition (Shopping) Dimension**
  
  Satisfaction related to the buying of consumer goods and services and other allied aspects such as variety, quality and
prices of goods in local stores, operating hours, appeal or environment of establishments, refund strategies of stores and assistance of staff etc. are measured through acquisition dimension (Day, 1987; Hawes and Lumpkin, 1984; Lee and Sirgy, 1995; Leelakulthanit, Day and Walters, 1991; Meadow, 1983; Lee et al., 2002; Sirgy et al., 2008).

- **Possession (Ownership) Dimension**
  Consumer well being can also be delivered by the ownership of goods (Belk, 1985; Dawson and Bamossy, 1991; Douglas and Isherwood, 1979; Day, 1987; Lee and Sirgy, 1995; Leelakulthanit, Day and Walters, 1991; Sirgy, Lee, Larsen and Wright, 1998; Lee et al., 2002; Sirgy et al., 2008). Therefore, in a measure of consumer well being possession should also be incorporated. Satisfaction ensuing from the ownership of goods is ascertained by possession dimension. It is possible to differentiate between satisfaction from consuming a product and satisfaction from possessing a product because at times people use products which they do not own and vice versa (Lee et al., 2002; Sirgy et al., 2008).

- **Consumption (Use) Dimension**
  Fulfillment of individual needs through consuming goods and services is captured by consumption dimension (Baudrillard, 1998). Though it resembles possession satisfaction, on close
scrutiny it can be easily figured out that possession satisfaction results from the possession or ownership of the product while consumption satisfaction results from the real utilization of the goods and services (Sirgy et al., 2008). Also, possession satisfaction is irrelevant for services because services cannot be possessed or stored (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry, 1988) while consumption satisfaction takes into contemplation both goods as well as services (Lee et al., 2002; Sirgy et al., 2008).

- **Maintenance (Repair) Dimension**
  Satisfaction which the consumers derived from the servicing and repairing of their products is measured through maintenance dimension of consumer well being (Sirgy et al., 2008). Lee, Sirgy, Larsen and Wright (2002) posited that repair and maintenance services provided by the service dealers (i.e., repair services) and availability of facilities to repair and maintain the products by the owners themselves (i.e., do-it-yourself support services) are the two sub dimensions of maintenance. They have used quality, availability, skills, honesty, speed or promptness of service providers and price of maintenance or repair services, etc. to assess repair services aspect while quality, price and availability of necessary spare parts and components, quality of guidance or help provided by dealers and the extensiveness of the handbook and information
are used to evaluate do-it-yourself repairs (Lee et al., 2002; Sirgy et al., 2008).

- **Disposition Satisfaction**
  Satisfaction with the disposition dimension refers to the amount of satisfaction which the consumers identified during the course of discarding their products, such as simplicity, comfort and the environmental friendliness of the product at the time of dumping (Lee et al., 2002; Sirgy et al., 2008).

- **Preparation (Assembly) Dimension**
  Preparation dimension is concerned with the making or changing the products so as to make it fit for use after purchasing them to fulfill the particular needs of the customers (customizing a readymade suit as per the customer size) (Sirgy et al., 2008).

It has been argued by Sirgy et al. (2008) that greater consumer well being is reported by those consumers who are satisfied with all the six stages in comparison to those who are satisfied with one or two stages only. Thus, consumer well being is a status of satisfaction with all the six stages of the consumer life cycle. Right from purchasing a product till the product is discarded consumer life cycle takes into consideration satisfaction or dissatisfaction of consumers for all the six stages i.e., acquisition (purchase), preparation.
(assembly), consumption (use), possession (ownership), maintenance (repair) and disposal (Lee and Sirgy, 1995; Wilkie and Moore, 1999; Sirgy et al., 2008).

Demographic variables are expected to exert influence over consumer well being. But in the absence of previous empirical work, the following exploratory hypotheses with respect to consumer well being across various factors has been proposed:

CWB₁: There is no significant difference between men and women regarding consumer well being.

CWB₂: Consumer well being do not differ significantly across various age groups.

CWB₃: Consumer well being do not differ significantly across educational groups.

CWB₄: There are no significant differences in consumer well being across different occupations.

CWB₅: Consumer well being do not differ significantly across different family income groups.

CWB₆: There is no significant difference between well being of unmarried and married consumers.

CWB₇: There is no significant difference between well being of urban and rural consumers.
Consumers’ interactions with marketers in the marketplace not only affect the consumer well being, but also consumer satisfaction with life by providing satisfaction of needs in other domains of life (e.g., family life, work life, spiritual life and love life), implying that consumption and other marketplace activities through their influence on other domains of life affects overall life satisfaction also (Lee et al., 2002). Thus, an equally important and emerging concept within the realms of marketing is satisfaction with life discussed in the next section.

### 2.4 Life Satisfaction

Satisfaction is a Latin word the dictionary meaning of which is “The fulfillment or gratification of a desire, need, or appetite”. Satisfaction with life connotes accommodating with the state of affairs or accomplishment of wants and needs for the whole life (Sousa and Lyubomirsky, 2001). Shin and Johnson (1978) have defined life satisfaction as a “global assessment of a person’s quality of life according to his/her chosen criteria”. Determination of life satisfaction involves comparing one’s actual circumstances of life with the desired standard which a person establishes for her or himself. The peculiar feature of life satisfaction is that it is not based upon those standards which are considered significant by the research scholar i.e., standards are not outwardly forced by
researchers rather it is based on person’s own judgment (Diener, 1984).

Researchers identified the need to make a distinction between global life satisfaction (or life as a whole) from life domain satisfaction. A life domain satisfaction is the satisfaction which an individual derives from a particular sphere of his life. For example, individual life domain satisfaction may vary for various spheres of life such as work, marriage, and income etc. (Sousa and Lyubomirsky, 2001), while life satisfaction is the satisfaction from the life taken as a whole (Tatarkiewicz, 1976), implying thereby that overall satisfaction of life is a much broader term and involves an all-inclusive judgment of an individual’s life. It may be possible that different individuals may assign different weights to the same sphere of life. So it is better to solicit the information regarding the overall assessment of their lives rather than summing their satisfaction with different spheres of life to find the overall life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1985).

An important aspect which has gained the attention of researchers is the measurement of life satisfaction. Over a period of time researchers posited that self reporting of life satisfaction is the most authentic and unambiguous approach to gauge judgment of life satisfaction. The degree to which an individual is satisfied is expressed by respondents through choosing a value or pictogram on a rating scale which best describes their satisfaction with lives (Sousa and Lyubomirsky, 2001).
2.4.1 Single-Item vs. Multi-Item Measures of Life Satisfaction

Over a period of time, various scales of general life satisfaction have been developed and proposed by researchers like Cantril’s (1965) self anchoring scale, Campbell, Converse and Rodger’s (1976) semantic differential like scale, Andrews and Withey’s (1976) delighted-terrible scale and Fordyce’s (1978) single item measure of happiness etc. But these scales were criticized because many of these scales were not exclusively tapping the life satisfaction and were single item scales. There are many problems associated with single item scales like with them internal consistency cannot be evaluated, errors concerning phrasing cannot be easily detected and chances of social desirability biases (changing ratings to fulfill social approval need) are greater for single item scales (Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1985; Sousa and Lyubomirsky, 2001).

Therefore, a multi item scale i.e., Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), was developed to find out the overall judgment of the respondents in respect of their satisfaction with life and it is aimed specifically to ascertain life satisfaction. Moreover, multi item scale captures variety of information extensively and more precisely, therefore, chances of social desirability biases are also reduced. This multi-item scale to measure life satisfaction as a cognitive judgmental process inquires from the respondents their agreement or disagreement level with respect to some predetermined assertions (Diener et al., 1985).
In their study conducted by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985), favorable psychometric properties, i.e., high internal consistency, good reliability and validity have been demonstrated by Satisfaction with Life Scale. The scale has been extensively used in various psychological researches (Burroughs and Rindfleisch, 2002). Thus, overall researchers agree that multi-item scale of life satisfaction developed by Diener et al. (1985) is preferable to single-item scales.

2.4.2 Past Studies on Life Satisfaction

A few attempts to measure life satisfaction were made in USA in the 1960’s as reported by Gurin et al. (1960) and Bradburn (1969) in their books. Noteworthy work had also been performed by Campbell et al. (1976) and Andrews and Withey (1976) in their books in 1970’s. Outside USA also researchers like Allardt (1975), Glatzer and Zapf (1984) and Heady and Wearing (1992) in Nordic countries, Germany and Australia respectively conducted the studies on life satisfaction. Over a period of time, researchers have also tried to determine the influence of various factors like employment status and educational attainment on life satisfaction (Decker and Schulz, 1985; Mehnert, Krauss, Nadler and Boyd, 1990; Krause and Dawis, 1992; Diener and Diener, 1995; Boschen, 1996; Keith, Heal and Schalock, 1996; Oishi, Diener, Suh and Lucas, 1999).
 Positive relationship has been determined by researchers in their studies conducted in U.S. for life satisfaction and employment, education and social support (Decker and Schulz, 1985; Mehnert, Krauss, Nadler and Boyd, 1990; Krause and Dawis, 1992; Boschen, 1996).

While comparing life satisfaction across gender, it has been found by Gurin, Veroff and Feld (1960) and Campbell (1981) that American women were less satisfied than men while Hampton and Marshall (2000) reported the reverse results in respect of Chinese respondents. However, men and women had similar views in respect of life satisfaction in a study conducted by Diener, Suh, Lucas and Smith (1999).

Decker and Schulz (1985), Krause and Dawis (1992), Boschen (1996), Mehnert, Krauss, Nadler and Boyd (1990) and Hampton and Marshall (2000) reported in their studies that employed respondents were more satisfied with their lives than unemployed respondents.

Evans and Kelly (2004) reported that married people are more satisfied with their lives and within that those having life-long marriages reported more satisfaction.

Since the studies examining the influence of demographic variables are limited in number, the following hypotheses are proposed for empirical testing:
LS1: There is no significant difference between life satisfaction of men and women.

LS2: There are no significant differences in life satisfaction across different age groups.

LS3: There are no significant differences in satisfaction with life across various educational groups.

LS4: Life satisfaction does not differ across various occupational groups.

LS5: There are no significant differences in satisfaction with life across various family income groups.

LS6: There is no significant difference between life satisfaction of unmarried and married consumers.

LS7: There is no significant difference between life satisfaction of urban and rural consumers.

2.5 Relationship of Consumer Attitudes towards Marketing, Consumer Well Being and Life Satisfaction

It has been found by researchers that overall life satisfaction and satisfaction with specific domains of life are related. For instance, satisfaction with respect to health, job, family, friends, neighbors, community, cultural life, spiritual life and finance etc. influences life
satisfaction (Aiello, Czepiel, and Rosenberg, 1977; Diener, 1984; Leelakulthanit, Day, and Walters, 1991; Sirgy, 2002). It has been concluded by Lee et al. (2002) that satisfaction with life increases with the rise in the satisfaction with the consumer life domain comprising six stages of consumption process. In a similar vein, Leelakulthanit, Day and Walters (1991) conducted a study on the respondents of Thailand and reported that satisfaction with life is significantly related with possession and acquisition satisfaction of the respondents. Sirgy et al. (2008) concluded in their study that consumer well-being influences life satisfaction.

Peterson and Ekici (2007) studied the relationship of consumer attitudes towards marketing with life satisfaction by using data of Turkish consumers and found positive relationship between consumer attitudes towards marketing and life satisfaction. Also, most of the items to examine consumer attitudes towards marketing are related to acquisition dimension of consumption process as suggested by Peterson and Ekici (2007). But no major attempt has been made to relate consumer attitudes towards marketing with consumer well being and life satisfaction in Indian context.

Hence, the present study aims at ascertaining the relationship among the three constructs i.e., consumer attitudes towards marketing, consumer well being and life satisfaction through the following research hypotheses:
R₁: There is no correlation between consumer attitudes towards marketing and consumer well being.

R₂: There is no correlation between consumer attitudes towards marketing and life satisfaction.

R₃: Consumer well being and life satisfaction are not related.