CHAPTER-I
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We are living now in the era of consumerism. In comparison to previous years, in the last few decades, marketers have made all efforts to designate the consumer starting from the king to queen and are trying to owe them in large number for their survival and growth in the competition. Every individual, irrespective of his/her position and status is essentially a consumer. In order to have the major share of the cake in the market, every sensitive marketer is making all possible efforts to know why, how, when, from whom and where a consumer buys his/her goods and services to satisfy the needs and wants. As a discipline of study, it has borrowed heavily from concepts developed in other scientific discipline such as psychology, sociology, social psychology, anthropology and economics. The interest and current thrust in consumer behaviour research is due to the concern of the marketers to predict about how people receive, store and use consumption related decisions, so that they could design marketing strategies to influence consumption decisions.

The emotional and cognitive processes going on inside a consumer’s head lead to particular kind of behavior. Behavioral segmentation encompasses the methods used to segment the audience based a behavior. A common method of behavioral segmentation is product-use segmentation. In this case, customers are grouped by the way they use the product and by the quantities they buy them. A common strategy adopted by the marketers is to split the market into light and heavy users. Many marketers rely on the “80/20” rule meaning that 80% of sales come from 20% of the market which comprises of the heaviest users. Identifying who these people are can help a marketer to define a valuable segment of the consumer universe.

1.1. CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Consumer behavior as a discipline of study has been treated as a part of human behavior or division of human behavior. It is a specific type of human action, which has direct bearing on purchase of goods and services from the marketing organization. Consumer behavior is the process whereby the individual decides whether to buy or not, what to buy, from whom to buy, how to buy the goods and services for satisfaction of his desire. The key to consumer behavior lies with the individual. The decision to buy or not to buy is an indi-
individual decision. The decision of a consumer to buy or not to buy is influenced by several determinants or factors.

Consumer behaviour is an exciting and dynamic field of study. A wonderful aspect of taking a course in consumer behaviour is that examples are everywhere. Because all of us are consumers, we can draw on our everyday experiences in the marketplace to understand consumer behaviour concepts and theories. Consumer behaviour is the study of decision-making units and processes involved in acquiring, consuming, and disposing of goods, services, experiences, and ideas. First, the definition uses the term "decision-making units" rather than "consumer", since decisions may be made either by individuals or groups. In the introductory vignette, several indicators of group decision making are found.

The definition of consumer behaviour also recognizes the consumption is a process. A series of steps are involved beginning with the acquisition phase, moving to consumption, and ending with the disposition of the product or service. When investigating the acquisition phase, researchers analyze the factors that influence the product and service choices of consumers. The term consumer behaviour refers to the behaviour that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs. The study of consumer behaviour is the study of how individuals make decision to spend their available resources (time, money, effort) on consumption related items. It includes the study of what they buy, why they buy it, when they buy.

Possessing an understanding of consumers and the consumption process provides a number of benefits. These benefits include assisting managers in their decision making, providing marketing researchers with a theoretical base from which to analyze consumers, helping legislators and regulators to create laws and regulations, and assisting the average consumer in making better purchase decisions. In addition, the study of consumers can help us to understand more about the psychological, sociological, and economic factors that influence human behaviour. Consumer behaviour also provides three types of information: (1) an orientation, (2) facts, and (3) theories. The study of the consumer helps to orient managers and public policy makers so that they consider the impact of their actions on consumers. The field also provides facts, such as the size of various demographic groups. In addition, the study of con-
sumer behaviour provides theories. The term ‘theory’ tends to be ridiculed with statements such as: “that’s only theory; it has nothing to do with what really happens.” In fact, nothing is more practical than theory.

In fact, consumer behaviour is a specific type of human action, which has direct bearing on purchase of goods and services from the marketing organization. The term consumer behaviour refers to the behaviour that consumer displays in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs. The study of consumer behaviour is the study of how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money efforts) on consumption related items. According to Schiffman and Kanuk (1996), consumer behaviour is the study of what they buy, why they buy it, when they buy it, where they buy it, how often they buy it, and how often they use it.

Consumer behaviour is the study of the decision-making units and the process involved in acquiring, consuming, and disposing of goods, services, experiences, and ideas. Within this simple definition a number of important concept are introduced. First, the definition uses the term “decision-making units” rather than “consumers”, since decisions may be made either by individuals or groups. In the introductory vignette, several indicators of group decision making are found. The definition of consumer behaviour also recognizes that consumption is a process. A series of steps are involved beginning with the acquisition phase, moving to consumption, and ending with the disposition of the product or service. When investigating the acquisition phase, researchers have analyze the factors that influence the product and service choices of consumers.

1.2 Necessity to Study Consumer Behaviour

As stated by Theodore Levitt, the marketing concept embodies “the view that an industry is a consumer satisfying process, not a good-producing processing ....An industry begin with the consumer and his needs, not with a patent, a raw material, or a selling skill.” The general acceptance by academicians and practitioners that business functions to fulfill consumer needs and wants made the study of the consumer essential. Detectives develop theories for why a crime was committed. Medical doctors develop theories for why a person gets sick, and managers develop theories why a product fails to sell.
There are number of reasons why the study of consumer behaviour developed as a separate marketing discipline. Marketers had long noted that consumers did not always act or react as marketing theory would suggest. The size of the consumer market in this country was vast and constantly expanding. The field of consumer behaviour is rooted in the marketing concept, a marketing strategy that evolved in the late 1950s. When World War II ended, marketers found they could sell almost any goods they could produce to consumers who had done without while the nation’s manufacturing facilities were dedicated to the production of war materiel. Consumer research has played a significant role in the study of consumer behaviour. Consumer research is the methodology used to study consumer behavior. Given that fact that there are two major theoretical perspectives concerning the study of consumer behavior, it is not surprising to find that there is divergence in theoretical assumption and, to some extent, in research methodology between the positivist approach and the interpretative approach. Broadly speaking, positivists tend to be objective and empirical, to seek causes for behaviour, and to conduct research studies which can be generalized to larger population. The early consumer researchers, with their strategic management perspective, were largely positivist in their approach.

There are a large number of factor which necessitate to study consumer behaviour. Following are the some of the important factors for which it is essential for the marketers to understand and study consumer behaviour:

- With the fast innovation of new products and services the consumer is overloaded with variety of products and services to choose and use for his day to day use. Therefore, it is essential for the marketer to understand what happens to a consumer when he is exposed to this type of information and his changing preferences can be understood in order to design better products and services to compete in the competition.

- There is massive explosion in the information technology. The marketers are using many a time more than one technology in order to provide more and more exact and accurate information to their consumers. Similarly, the consumers are themselves aware of new innovations and development in products and service any where in the world because of the development in the technology. Therefore, it is high time for the marketers to understand how the information revolution has impact upon the buying behaviour of the consumers.
and accordingly evolve appropriate mechanism to do better than their competitors.

- Now customer is the king. A marketer needs to understand not only what their needs are and desire but have evolve mechanism to provide them satisfaction and delight them so that they will not only buy the product for themselves but can recommend others to use the products and services.

- With the global competition and fast innovation of new products and services, the life cycle of the products and services are becoming shorter day by day. As a result, it is becoming essential to understand the needs and desires of the consumers in advance, so that before a product goes to the declining stage the marketer is getting optimum out of it for the organization.

- Growing consumerism is also another important factor which necessitates the marketers to understand the consumer behaviour. It was the year 1962 when President John Kennedy who declared the consumer has the rights to safety, to be informed, and to be heard. This Consumer Bill of Rights which set the stage for consumer movement that started around 1964. The movement tried to correct the imbalances that have developed between the buyers and sellers.

- Consumer mind is a mystery, He is neither Rational nor irrational, is A rational {knows what he does, but behaviour compulsive (I had money, so buy) others cannot know it}. The field of consumer research developed as an extension of the field of marketing research, focusing almost exclusively on consumer behaviour rather than on other aspects of the marketing process. Just as findings of marketing research were used to improve managerial decision making, so too were the findings of consumer research.

- The initial reason for studying consumer behaviour was to enable marketers to predict how consumers would react to promotional messages, and to understand why they made the purchase decisions they did. Marketers assumed that if they knew everything there was to know about the consumer decision-making process, they could design marketing strategies and promotional messages which would influence the consumer in the desired way (i.e., to purchase the marketer's product or service). In the belief that marketing was simply applied economics, the economic man
theory prevailed - which assumes that consumers are rational decision makers who objectively evaluate the goods and services available to them and select only those that give them the highest utility.

1.3 Determinants of Consumer Behaviour

There are a large number of factors which influence the consumer behaviour. These factors can be divided into two categories. They are:

I. Internal Factors, and
II. External Factors

Internal or personal factors are also called basic determinants and external factors which are also called environmental factors. Therefore, consumer behaviour = \( f(P \& E) \)

1.3. I. Internal Determinants Determine Consumer Behaviour

The internal variables are important in the individual's decision-making process. So these are called basic determinants. These includes - Needs, Motivation, Perception, Attitude and Personality.

1.3. I.i. Consumer Needs and Motives

Diversity in consumer behaviour - different ways of spending money - does not surprise us. We have been brought up to believe that the differences among people are what make life truly interesting. Psychologists and consumer behaviourists agree that most people tend to experience the same kind of needs and motives; they simply express these motives in different ways. Human needs - consumer needs - are the basis of all modern marketing. Needs are the essence of the marketing concept.

The key to company's survival, profitability, and growth in a highly competitive marketing environment is its ability to identify and satisfy unfulfilled consumer needs better and sooner than the competition. Marketers do not create needs, though in some instances they may make consumers keenly aware of unfelt needs. Successful marketers define their markets in terms of the needs they presume to satisfy, rather than in terms of the products they sell. This is market oriented, rather than a production oriented, approach to marketing. A marketing orientation focuses on the needs of the buyer; a production orientation focuses on the needs of the seller. The marketing concept implies that the manufacturer will make only what it knows people will buy; a production orientation implies that the manufacturer will try to sell what it decides to
make. Marketers who base their offerings on a recognition of consumer needs find a ready market for their product.

It may be noted that needs and goals of consumers are dynamic and ever changing and one goal may substitute other or new needs may emerge even before satisfying the others because there is multiplicity of needs. However, goals and needs often vary and needs are created by advertisement, knowledge, contract, rise in level of income; children and wife can also stimulate needs.

Marketers want to know what motivates the consumers. Basically, this is needed so that they can shape and influence human behaviour. It is important for marketers to realize that motivation is only one of the essential elements that contribute to buying behaviour. Motivation can also be described as driving force within individuals that impels them to action. Marketers want to know what motivates the consumers in order to develop their for particular product and can be influenced suitably. The motivation studies why a consumer buys a particular product and/or service and from where i.e. what is consumer buying behaviour which is dependent upon ability to buy and opportunity which motivates the consumer to buy. The motivation process according to various studies is that first there should be unfulfilled need which creates tension and drive and there is desire to fulfill the need.

1.3. I.ii. Consumer Perception

Individuals act and react on the basis of their perceptions, not on the basis of objective reality (i.e. reality as recorded by camera). Thus to the marketer, consumers' perceptions are much more important than their knowledge of objective reality. For example, if one thinks about it, it's not what actually so is, but what consumers think is so, that affects their actions, their buying habits, their leisure habits, and so forth. And because individuals make decisions and take actions based on what they perceive to be reality, it is important that marketers understand the whole notion of perception and its related concepts so they can more rapidly determine what factors influence consumers to buy.

Perception is "how consumers see the world around them". It is the process by which an individual selects, organizes and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent manner. But different people view same event differently. It depends upon sensitivity of different sense organs (nose, ears, tongue, eyes and skin). The marketers try to change sensitivity of different organs to their
advantage by influencing it through conditioner and other psychological methods is called adoption.

Just as individuals have a perceived self image as a certain kind of person, so, too, do products and brands have images for the consumers. The perceived image of a product or service is probably more important to its ultimate success than are its actual physical characteristics. Products and services that are perceived favourably have a much better chance of being purchased than products or services with unfavourable or neutral images.

Compared with manufacturing firms, service markets face several unique problems in positioning and promoting their offerings, including service environment, service characteristics (e.g. intangibility, variability, perishability, simultaneous production and consumption). Regardless of how well positioned a product or service appears to be, the marketer may be forced to reposition it in response to market events, such as new competitive strategies or changing consumer preferences. Therefore, it is essential for marketers to be aware of consumer perception which plays a significant role in the purchase and consumption related decisions.

1.3. I.iii. Consumer Learning

Consumer learning is response to change of a consumer arising from experience i.e. response is dynamic. Different psychologists have defined it differently but all agree that it results in change of response based on environmental condition. There are two basic theories of learning First Classical theory which believes that by repetitive conditioning one becomes accustomed to it. The Second and modern theory is called Congenial orientation which believes that consumer uses his rational and process the information and then arrives at a decision. It has following features: i. the consumer learning is a process; ii. through the process consumers acquire knowledge and experience; ii. the knowledge and experience acquired is basis of future behaviour.

In fact, there are two basic learning theories. They are:

1. Behavioural Learning Theories, and
2. Cognitive Learning Theories

There are also Involvement Theory and Social Judgement Theory of Learning. However, the marketing strategies require proper study and use of consumer perception and learning for segmentation, sales promotion, advertising and influencing consumers. Consumer learning is the process by which
individuals acquire the purchase and consumption knowledge and experience they apply to future related behaviour. While some learning is intentional, much learning is incidental. Basic elements that contribute to an understanding of learning are motivation, cues, response, and reinforcement. There are two schools of thought as to how individuals learn: behavioural theories and cognitive theories. Both contribute and understanding of consumer behaviour. Behavioural theorists view learning as observable responses to stimuli, while cognitive theorists believe that learning is a function of mental processes. Two types of behavioral learning theories are classical conditioning and instrumental conditioning. New interpretations view traditional classical conditioning as associative learning rather than as reflexive action. Three principles of classical conditioning provide the theoretical underpinnings for many marketing applications: repetition, stimulus generalization, and stimulus discrimination.

A basic issue among researchers is whether to define brand loyalty in terms of consumers’ behaviour or consumers’ attitude towards the brand. Brand equity refers to the inherent value a brand name has in the marketplace. Marketers are consolidating their brands to enhance brand equity and to encourage brand loyalty in the face of a proliferation of private brands. For marketers, the purpose of understanding how consumers learn is to teach them that their brand is best, and to develop brand loyalty.

1.3. Liv. Consumer Attitude

As consumer, each of us has a vast number of attitudes towards products, towards services, towards advertisements, towards retailers. Whenever we are asked whether we like or dislike a product/service (e.g. vehicle insurance), a particular retailer (e.g. vishal mart, shopping plaza), a specific direct marketer (e.g. Sky shop) or an advertising theme (e.g. “Crest, helping to ensure a lifetime of health teeth”), we are being asked to express our attitude. Within the context of consumer behaviour, attitude research has been used to stay a wide range of strategic marketing questions. The goal of this attitude research is to increase sales by better satisfying customer needs. Awareness of consumer attitudes is such a central concern of both product and service marketers that it is difficult to imagine any consumer research project that does not include the measurement of some aspect of consumer attitude. An outgrowth of this widespread interest in consumer attitudes is increased
reporting of attitude research in the consumer behaviour literature.

How consumer attitudes are formed and how they are changed are two closely related issue of considerable concern to marketing practitioners. When it comes to attitude formation, it is useful to remember that attitudes are learned, and that different learning theories provide unique insights as to how attitudes initially may be formed. Attitude formation is facilitated by direct personal experience, and influenced by the ideas and experiences of friends and family members, and exposure to mass media. In addition, it is likely that an individual’s personality plays a major role in attitude formation.

1.3. I.v.Consumer Personality

Marketers have long been intrigued by the possibility of appealing to consumers in terms of personality traits. They have felt that what consumers purchase, and when and how they consume, are likely to be influenced by personality factors. For this reason, advertising and marketing people have frequently depicted (or targeted) specific consumer personalities in their advertising messages. Theorists in a variety of ways have approached the study of personality. Some have emphasized the dual influence of heredity and early childhood experiences on personality development; others have stressed broader social and environmental influences and the fact that personalities develop continuously over time. Some theorists prefer to view personality as a unified whole; others focus on specific traits. The wide variation in viewpoints makes it difficult to arrive at a single definition. However, personality is defined as those inner psychological characteristics that both determine and reflect how a person responds to his or her environment.

Personality can be described as the psychological characteristics that both determine and reflect how a person responds to his or her environment. Although personality tends to be consistent and enduring, it may change abruptly in response to major life events, as well as gradually overtime. Each individual has a perceived self-image (or multiple self-images) as a certain kind of person with certain traits, habits, possessions, relationships, and ways of behaving. Consumers frequently attempt to preserve, enhance, alter or extend their self-images by purchasing products or services and shopping at stores believed to be consistent with the relevant self-image, and by avoiding products and stores that are not. Consumer researchers are interested in four pairs of personality types: sensing-intuiting, thinking-feeling, extroversion-
introversion, and judging-perceiving. Each of these four pairs of dimensions reflects two distinctly different personality characteristics that influence consumer responses to the world around them.

1.3. II. External Determinants Determine Consumer Behaviour

Consumer also does not operate in a vacuumed. The individual is also influenced by his environment. There are five broad environmental determinants, which influence purchase strategy. They include: i. Social class influence; ii. Cultural influence; iii. Reference Group influence; iv. Economic influence; v. Business influence and vi. Family Influence.

1.3. II.i. Social Class

Social class is a relatively permanent and homogeneous group or strata in society which differ from one another in their status, wealth, education, possessions, values, beliefs, and attitudes, etc. Some form of class structure of social stratification has existed in all societies throughout the history of human existence. While social class can be thought of as a continuum—a range of social positions—on which each member of society can be placed, researchers have preferred to divide the continuum into a small number of specific social classes, or strata. Researchers often measure social class in terms of social status; that is, they define each social class by the status the members of that class have in comparison with members of other social classes.

People's buying behaviour is strongly influenced by social class to which they belong, or aspire to belong, rather than by income alone. Besides, it has also been observed that people from same social classes are living in common geographical clusters. Social class differences are distinctly symbolized by consumption differences. In fact societies with materialistic clusters, acquisition of wealth and other possessions itself symbolizes an individual's growth. Membership of a particular class, as said earlier, normatively dictates the kind of food, recreation, vacations, education, and other purchases.

Thus upper- upper class has access to prosperity, prestige, and power. With an appropriately large slice of income this class offers attractive opportunities to the marketers of designer clothing, local and foreign vacations, leisure related items, etc. The aim of the lower upper class on the other hand is to intimate the sophisticated living style of the upper class. Hence, it consumes luxury goods for conspicuous consumption purposes.

Since the upper class acts as a reference group for social class below it,
members of upper class are sometimes used in advertising to create inspirational value in the other social classes. The upper class symbols are used for products aimed at middle class. The upper middle class is moderately successful. They acquire success through pursuing income yielding (as against wealth creating) careers. They constantly aspire to move up to upper class and hence choose products accordingly. The members of lower middle class wish to gain acceptability and respectability in the society. Hence, they adopt a consumption pattern accordingly.

The upper lower class on the other hand, lives for the present. It looks horizontally within its own class for its value orientation instead of looking upward to the next social class. The basic hypothesis behind attempting to link each social class with distinctive consumption pattern seems to be that the needs and wants of members of a particular class are product of social class conditioning by the environment.

In recent years some marketers have turned to geo-demographic clustering is a technique that combines geographic and socioeconomic factors to locate concentrations of consumers with particular characteristics. Particular attention currently is being directed to affluent consumers, who represent the fastest growing segment in our population. Research has revealed social-class differences in clothing habits, home decoration, leisure activities, and saving, spending, and credit habits. Thus, astute marketers tailor specific product and promotional strategies for each social-class target segment. Consumer socialization is an important component of the socialization process of children. It is the vehicle through which the family imparts consumer-relevant knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Children are not only influenced by their families; they also influence their family consumption decisions.

1.3. II.ii. Cultural Factors

"Culture is the distinct way of life of a age group of people and their complete design for living."

Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs and any other habits acquired by humans as members of society. Culture influences the pattern of living, of consumption, of decision-making by individuals. It has certain characteristics and is transmitted from one generation to another.

Culture keeps on changing slowly over time; and is not static. Changes
takes place due to rapid technologies. In case of emergency, war, or natural calamities, marketers and managers must understand the existing culture as well as the changing culture and culture of the country where goods are to be marketed. Major companies have adapted themselves to international culture and are accepted globally.

Coca Cola is sold all over the world. Procter Gamble and other companies give cross-cultural training to their employees. By making cross-culture mistakes, many companies have difficulty in pushing their products for example, (i) Coca Cola had to withdraw its 2 liter bottle from Spain, because it did not fit the local refrigerator; (ii) Many countries are very traditional and do not like women displayed on the products. This acts as a detriment to business in those countries.

The consumer behaviour is being studied for half a century to take advantage in marketing of products and services, which are largely to earn profits, but there are few areas discussed latter which are providing social services. The consumer behaviour is basically studied to optimize profits by taking full advantage of market situation after studying consumer behaviour and this is the main purpose of the study. The segmentation of market, advertisement strategy, sales promotion schemes, introduction of new products, variation of existing ones, producing different products for different regions, classes, price variation, quality variation all are done based on study of consumer behaviour. Whenever any new product or variation of existing one is introduced through innovation, research is conducted to find out consumer response to a new product. All the elements in marketing mix serve to communicate symbolically with the audience. Products project images of their own; so does promotion. Price and retail outlets symbolically convey images concerning the quality of the product.

The socio-cultural environment also put a major pressure on consumer. The socio cultural inputs consist of wide range of non commercial influence. For example, comments of friends, news in the news paper, and suggestion of the family members are direct and non commercial source of information. The influence of social class, culture and subculture though less tangible, are important factors that are internalized and affects how consumers evaluate and ultimately accept or rejects a product.

More over unwritten codes of conduct communicated by culture subtly indicate which consumption behaviour should be considered right or wrong at
a particular point in time. Further, unlike farms marketing efforts, socio-cultural input do not necessarily support the purchase or consumption of a specific product but any influence a consumer to avoid a product. Thus, cumulative impact of each firm’s marketing efforts, the influence of family, friends, and neighbour, and society’s existing code of behaviour are all inputs that are likely to affect what consumers purchase, and how they use and what they buy. Thus the culture plays a vital role on consumer buying behaviour and it is essential for marketer to evolve appropriate marketing strategy to attract and influence consumers, keeping in mind their socio-cultural importance.

1.3. II.iii. Reference Groups

A group may be defined as two or more people who interact to accomplish either individual or mutual goals. The broad scope of this definition includes an intimate “group” of two next-door neighbours who do their supermarket shopping together and a larger, more formal group, such as a neighbour homeowners’ association, whose members are mutually concerned with the schools, roads, taxes, and types of business in their neighborhood.

Almost all individuals regularly interact with other people who directly or indirectly influence their purchase decisions. Thus, the study of groups and their impact on the individual is of great importance to marketers concerned with influencing consumer behaviour. Groups may be classified according to regularity of contract (primary or secondary groups), by structure and hierarchy (large or small groups), and by membership or aspiration (membership or symbolic groups).

The four types of reference groups most commonly used in marketing are celebrities, experts, the common man, and the executive spokesperson. Celebrities are used to give testimonials or endorsements, as actors, or as company spokespersons. Experts may be recognized experts in the product category or actors playing the part of expert (e.g. an automobile mechanic). The common man approach is designed to show that individuals “just like” the prospect are satisfied with the advertised product. Increasingly, firms are using their top executives as spokesperson because their appearance in company advertisements seems to imply that someone at the top is watching over the consumer’s interest.

Reference group appeals are effective promotional strategies because
they increase brand awareness and reduce perceived risk among prospective consumers. Reference groups affect consumption through a variety of means: through norms, information providing, and through influencing the value of expressive needs of consumers. They influence consumption by bringing about change in attitude through encouraging expression of certain attitudes and values by the group. More strongly an individual feels a sense of identification with a group, greater will be the psychological or material benefit from being associated with the group. Reference groups have varying degree of influence on the usage of the product category, type of product used, and/or brand used.

Generally, consumers accept group influence because of the perceived benefits in doing so. The nature and degree of social interactions between individual’s perception of the profitability of the interaction. Interaction may result in rewards in the form of friendship, information, satisfaction, etc. but it will also exact cost like time lost, money spent, alternative people and activities being sacrificed. An individual will attempt to maximize difference between these rewards and costs. Thus, he will choose his groups and interact with the members based upon his perception of the net reward out of his exchange.

1.3. II.iv. Family Defined

Family is defined as two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption who reside together. In a more dynamic sense, the individuals who constitute a family might be described as members of the most basic social group who interact to satisfy their personal and mutual needs. Though families sometimes are referred to as households, not all households are families. For example, a household might include individuals who are not related by blood, marriage, or adoption, such as unmarried couples, family friends, roommates, or boarders. However, within the context of consumer behavior, households and families usually treated as synonymous.

Family is perhaps the first social group from which a child learns about tastes, preference, shopping styles, and etc. Family influence leads to consumer socialization. Parents for example provide information on rationality of consumption. Hence the child while deciding about feels their impact, albeit to varying extent consumption of various products. Moreover, an individual member of the family performs different roles in deciding what the family will buy. Such roles are shaped by many factors like cultural and social determinants,
sub cultural influences, social class, and reference group. The family also has
a life cycle that determines its needs and expenditure patterns at different points
in this life cycle. This has implications for segmenting the market.

In fact family is a very basic concept but it is difficult to define. It diffi-
cult because the structure and the role of family vary from place to place and
society to society. Though a wide variety of family types exist in contemporary
society, but according to Schieffman and Kanuk (1996), family is defined as
two or more persons related by blood, marriage or adoption who reside to-
gether. In fact individual who constitute family is the members of the most
basic social group who live together and interact to satisfy their personal and
mutual needs. Like other modern societies, in India too after industrailisation
and urbanization, when joint family system is fast breaking and more and
more people are self conscious to control the population growth in the country,
therefore largely three types families are also found in our country.

As a social group, family is the most important consumer buying orga-
nization in society. A family is a group of two or more persons related by
blood, marriage or adoption who reside together. Family can be classified as
nuclear family, extended family, family of orientation, family of procreation.
The nuclear family is the immediate group of father, mother and children
living together. The extended family is the nuclear family, plus other rela-
tives, such as grandparents, uncle and aunts, cousins and parents-in-law. The
family in which one is born is called the family of orientation, whereas the
one established by marriage is the family of procreation.

The importance of the family in consumer behaviour arises for two
reasons- (1) many products are purchased by a family unit, (2) individuals
buying decisions may be heavily influenced by other family members. Family
members occupy various roles, which include initiator (gatekeeper), influencer,
decider, buyer and user. The influence of spouses, children or other family
members varies depending on the resources of family members, the type of
product, the stage in the family life cycle and the stage in the buying decision.
These variables are more important in understanding family decisions than
traditional roles ascribed to one gender or the other.

An individual family often is in the best position to influence his or her
consumption decision. The family’s importance in this regard is based on the
frequency of contact that the individual has with other family members and the
extent of influence that the family has on establishing a wide range of values, attitude and behaviour. How families are households make purchase decisions depends on the roles of the various family members in the purchase, consumption and influence of products. Household products like food and shampoo may be purchased by one person but consumed by many, whereas personal care items, such as cosmetics or shaving cream, might be purchased by an individual family member for his or her own consumption. Homes and cars, on the other hand, are often purchased by both spouses, perhaps with involvement from children or other members of the extended family. The members of a family assume specific roles in their everyday functioning; such roles or tasks extended to the realm of consumer purchase decisions. The majority of consumer studies classify family consumption decision as husband-dominated, wife-dominated, joint or automatic decisions. The extent and nature of husband-wife influence in family decisions depend, in part, on the specific product or service and selected cultural influences.

The development and formation of an individual's attitude and behaviour towards preferences of food items, beliefs about the style of dressing, eating food, attitude towards class, culture etc. are acquired and influenced by the immediate family. The first and strongest influence on a child is that of his family. He imbibes many behavioural patterns from other family members subconsciously and these tend to stay with him even after attaining adulthood. If the family has teenaged children, they have their own set of taste and preferences especially related to clothing, cosmetics, film and magazines. These teenagers get easily motivated by novelties, have a variety of interests, are quick at adopting fashions and give a lot of value to possessing material comfort and physical wellbeing. However this category of customers has also limited choice, within the family and their consumption pattern of behaviour is limited to choosing products related to clothing, cosmetics and personal care. In the nuclear family set up, the urban house-wife is an active partner in the family decisions. She is the live manager of her household. She is no longer confined within the four walls of her house. Woman take the role of cook, house-keeper and decision maker of the purchase of household items like cooking gas, electric stove, grinders, mixers, refrigerators etc. By virtue of her education, increasing awareness of her environment and at times employment, she has acquired a status in the society. She is very often known as the family decision maker and purchasing agent.
They are married couple, the nuclear family and the extended family. While in married couple, there is only a wife and a husband, a husband, wife and one or more children constitute a nuclear family. The nuclear family with at least one grand parent living within the household is called extended family. Though in a individualistic country like USA, nuclear family is common; but despite of all modernization in our society and county of soneka chidia where our relationship is important and always matters a lot. Thus, family vary from country to country and culture to culture.

Out of varied external determinants, family is the most influential determinant in consumer behavior. If we think about our family purchase decision: husband asks wife about the color of his shirt, color of the scooter, color of the car, size of toothpaste, the brand to be purchased. Like wise sister influences to brother to purchase a particular dress. Child has the most significant influence among the family members for certain products. So it is necessary to understand the significance of family in the purchase decision on the part of the marketer. The main thrust of the marketer is to understand how family influences an individual's attitude, motives and personality characteristics.

Family can be divided into two types:i. Nuclear family (father, mother, children);and2. Extended family (father, mother, grand parents, uncle, aunt, cousin.)

1.3. II.v. Unique Aspects of the family
Face-to-face interaction, co-operation, and association characterise it. Family is earning & consuming unit. So consumption need of each member will be satisfied from a common pool of income. Functions of the Family: The family performs certain very basic functions for the members. These functions include:
1. Providing income security
2. Providing emotional support in the form of love, affection, and intimacy to its members.
3. Establishment of a suitable lifestyle to the family.
4. Socialization pf family members.
In turn these functions have important bearing on consumption pattern.

Though families sometimes are referred to as households, not all households are families. For example, a household might include individuals who
are not related by blood, or adoption, such as unmarried couples, family friends, roommates, or boarders. However, within the context of consumer behavior, households and families usually are treated as synonymous, and will continue this convention.

In the United States, as in most western societies, three types of families dominate: the married couple, the nuclear family, and the extended family. The simplest type of family, in number, is the married couple— a husband and a wife. As a household unit, the married couple generally is representative of new married who have not yet started a family, and older couples who have already raised their children. A husband and wife and one or more children constitute a nuclear family. This type of family is still the cornerstone of family life. The nuclear family, together with at least one grandparent living within the household, is called an extended family. This three generation family, which at one time was most representative of the American family, has been declining because of a variety of family lifestyles. In particular, the incidence of extended family has suffered because of the geographic mobility that was commonplace among the young people during 1970s and 1980s. In contrast, because of divorce, separation, and out-of-wedlock births, there has been a rapid increase in the number of single-parent family households— consisting of one parent and at least one child.

Not surprisingly, which type of family is most “typical” can vary considerably from culture to culture. For instance, in an individualistic society such as the United States, the nuclear family is the most common. In a kinship culture (with extended family) such as Thailand, a family would commonly include a head-of-household, married adult children, and grandchildren.

1.3. II.vi. Role of Family

In order to understand the behaviour of consumers, it is essential to have enough knowledge on the role provided by the family. These roles are:

- Emotional support
- Socialization of family members
- Suitable family lifestyles
- Economic well-being

(1) Emotional Support: The family provides that much needed emotional support in the form of love, affection, and intimacy to its members. The family provides support and encouragement and assists its members in coping with decision making and personal or social problems. This type of bonding
has been capitalized upon, say, by the greeting card companies who not only make cards for all occasions, but also to express different emotions.

(2) Socialization of family members: The socialization of family members, ranging from young children to adults, is a primary family function. In the case of young children, this basically includes process of imparting to them the basic values and modes of behaviour consistent with the family culture. These generally include grooming style, and the selection of educational and career goals. Today, parents are increasingly conscious of the fact that their children should be computer savvy and take extra efforts to ensure that they learn these skills as early as possible.

Socialization skills, which include manners, goals, values and other skills are imparted to a child directly through the behaviour of parents and elders in the family.

(3) Suitable Family Lifestyles: Another important family function in terms of consumer behaviour is the establishment of suitable lifestyle in the family. Upbringing, experience and the values of parents determine the importance placed on education or career, on reading, on television viewing, on the learning of computer skills and other behavioural aspects. Earlier, a family did things together, but today, the scenario has undergone a dramatic change. All the members of a family are busy doing their own thing. Hence, family lifestyles commitments, including the allocation of time is greatly influencing consumption pattern. The market for convenience goods has increased primarily because of the increase in the number of women who have taken up a job outside their homes and consequently have less to do their household chores. Besides, today there is an increased emphasis on "quality time" rather than "quantity time" spent with the one’s spouse or children.

(4) Economic well-being: Family is the basis for providing economic security. Traditional, it was the husband who was the economic provider and the wife was the homemaker and child rearer. But today, there has been considerable change. It is fairly common today for married women with children to be employed outside their homes and contribute to the economic functioning of the household. Thus role of women in consumer related decision making is growing.

Consumer behaviour is an exciting and dynamic field of study. A wonderful aspect of taking a course in consumer behaviour is that examples are everywhere. Because all of us are consumers, we can draw on our experience in the market place to understand consumer behaviour concepts and theories.
1.4. Stages of Family Life Cycle

Most families necessarily pass through the traditional family life cycle which comprises of predictable stages. Consumer researchers have always been attracted to the concept of family life cycle (FLC) to understand the behavior of consumers at various stages of lives so as to effectively design the right marketing strategy. The FLC is a composite variable created by systematically combining such commonly used demographic variables as marital status, size of family, age of family members, and employment status. The traditional FLC is a progression of stages through which many family members pass starting from childhood, moving on to marriage to family growth, to family contraction and ending with dissolution of the basic unit.

Classification of families by stages in the family life cycle (FLC) provides valuable insights into family consumption related behaviour. The traditional FLC begins with bachelorhood, moves on to marriage, then to an expanding family, to a contracting family and to an end with the death of a spouse. Dynamic socio-demographic changes in society have resulted in many non-traditional stages that a family or non-family household might pass through (such as childless couples, couples marrying later in life, single parents, unmarried couples or single person household). These nontraditional stages are becoming increasingly important to marketer in terms of specific market niches. Marketers are interested in knowing which member normally has the greater influence on the purchase of a particular product or service, so as to develop a suitable communication programme accordingly.

Family cycle segmentation is based on the basic premise that most families pass through similar phases in their formation, growth and final dissolution. At each stage the requirements of the family vary. The requirement of a young couple with a single child would be for different products than a person who is single. The former category would have requirements of baby food, toys, and investments for future, etc. the latter category would buy clothing, personal care items, spend more on entertainment, liquor etc. family life cycle is based on marital and family status. It also include age, income, and employment status but at an implicit level. Each of the stages in the traditional life cycle represents an important target segment to a variety of consumers.

Sociologists and consumer behavior researchers have long been attached to the concept of the family life cycle (FLC) as a way to classify family units into significant groupings. FLC analysis a strategic tool for marketers that
enables them to segment families in terms of a series of stages spanning the life course of a family unit. The FLC is a composite variable created by systematically combining such commonly used demographic variables as marital status, size of family, age of family members (focusing on the age of the oldest or the youngest child), and employment status of the head of the household. The age of parents and the relative amount of disposable income usually are inferred from the stage in the family life cycle.

The family-life-cycle concept can be broadly divided into two parts. The first section considers the traditional family-life-cycle schema. This depiction has dominated most of the thinking about family life cycle. It is increasingly being challenged because it fails to account for various important family living arrangements. The second section focuses on alternative family-life-cycle stages, including increasingly important, nontraditional family structures.

Different authors have tried to study family life cycle in different ways and accordingly have categorized it into different stages. For example, Murphy and Staples (1979) categorized it into five stages such as: I. Young single, II. Young married without children, III. Other young (married with children, divorced with kids, divorced with no kids), IV. Middle aged (35-65) with children, no dependant children, and no children, divorced-no kids, divorced with kids, and V. Older (65+) married spouse present.

The five basic stages may be summarised as follows:

I. Young Single (Bachelorhood): The young single has left high school and is either in college or beginning to work has relatively high discretionary incomes and tend to spend substantial amounts on personal care items, transportation and certain luxurious goods, fashion clothes, entertainment and recreation services.

II. Young Married without Children (Honeymooners): This group is in a life phase that some call the honeymooner or establishment period. The phase starts immediately after the marriage and continues until the first child is born. Honeymooners have considerable startup expenses when establishing a new home. They found to be buying home, and traveling prior to the arrival of the children.

III. Other Young (Parenthood): They are the adults under 35 years of age. This group is composed of the couple with children. The major demands for this group include baby food, clothing, and toys for the children.
1.4. I. Traditional Family Life Cycle

The traditional family life cycle is a progress of stages through which many families pass, starting with bachelorhood, moving on to marriage (and the creation of the basic family unit), then to family growth (with the birth of children), to family contraction (as grown children leave the household), and ending with the dissolution of the basic unit (due to the death of one spouse). Although different researchers have expressed various preferences in terms of the number of FLC models proposed over the years can be synthesized into just five basic stages, as follows:

- **Stage I: Bachelorhood** - young single adult living apart from parents
- **Stage II: Honeymooners** - young married couple
- **Stage III: Parenthood** - married couple with at least one child living at home
- **Stage IV: Postparenthood** - an older married couple with no children living at home
- **Stage V: Dissolution** - one surviving spouse

**Stage I: Bachelorhood** The first FLC stage consists of young single men and women who have established households apart from their parents. Although most members of this FLC stage are fully employed, many are college students who have left their parents' homes. Young single adults are apt to spend their incomes on rent, basic home furnishing, the purchase and maintenance of automobiles, travel and entertainment, and clothing and accessories. Members of the bachelorhood stage frequently have sufficiently disposable income to indulge themselves. Marketers target singles for a wide variety of products and services. In most large cities, there are travel agents, housing developments, health clubs, and other service and product markets that find FLC stage a lucrative target niche. Meeting, dating, and mating are prominent concepts of many young adults who typically are beginning their working lives after recently completing college or some other form of career or job training. It is relatively easy to reach this segment, because many special interest publications target singles. For example, GQ and Playboy are directed to a young, sophisticated, single male audience, while Cosmopolitan and Glamour are directed to young single females, whereas married makes the transition from the bachelorhood stage to the honeymooner stage. Engaged and soon-to-be-married couples are the target for many products and services.

**Stage II: Honeymooners** The honeymooner stage starts immediately after the marriage vows are taken and generally continues until the arrival of the
couple's first child. This FLC stage serves as a period of adjustment to married life. Because many young husbands and wives both work, these couples have available a combined income that often permits a pleasure-seeking lifestyle. Honeymooners have considerable start-up expenses when establishing a new home (major and minor appliances, bedroom and living room furniture, carpeting, drapes, dishes, and a host of utensils and accessory items). During this stage, the advice and experience of other married couples are likely to be important to newly wed.

**Stage III: Parenthood** When a couple has its first child, the honeymoon is considered over. The parenthood stage (sometimes called the full-nest stage) usually extends over more than a 20 years period. Because of its long duration, this stage can be divided into shorter phases: the pre school phase, the elementary school phase, the high school phase, and the college phase. Through these parenthood phases, the interrelationships of family members and the structure of the family gradually change. Furthermore, the financial resources of the family change significantly, as one (both) parents progress in career, and as child-rearing and educational responsibilities gradually increase and finally decrease as children become self-supporting.

An increase in the number of births among baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) has resulted in a “baby boom let”. These new parents are older (30 to almost 50), better educated, more affluent, and more socially aware. Their children often become the focus of their lives, and they spend money accordingly. “Boomer” parents have become an important target for companies that serve the baby market. They also are an important market for many investment and insurance services.

In the opinion of some other experts, these stages of family life cycle can be further subdivided into three stages:

1. **Full Nest I**: This is immediately after the first child is born. Many wives stop working and there is a reduction in the family income. This stage is characterized by new purchases in the areas of baby clothes, furniture, food, and health care products. Lifestyles are also greatly altered. At this stage, choice of vacations, restaurants, and automobiles are made to accommodate young child. Discretionary funds are also reduced by the need to spend child-related accessories.

2. **Full Nest II**: In this stage the financial position of the family with the career advancement of the husband with the possible return of the wife to work. Families in this stage are fairly new-product oriented, but tend to be less influenced
by advertisement than the earlier stages as now they have more buying experiences.

3. Full Nest III: During this stage, the family’s income continues to grow. The wives return to work and now even the children are employed. Susceptibility to advertisement is almost negligible at this stage. This stage is marked by high average expenditure for durable goods, primarily because of the need to replace older items. They purchase new, more tasteful furniture, luxury appliances, and cars. Vacations also comprise a major component of expenditure.

Stage IV: Post parenthood: Because parenthood extends over many years, it is only natural to find that post parenthood—when all the children have left home—is traumatic for some parents and liberating for others. This so-called empty-nest stage signifies for many parents almost a “rebirth”—a time for doing all the things they could not do while the children were at home and they had to worry about soaring educational expenses. For the mother, it is a time to further her education, to enter or reenter the job market, to seek new interests. For the father, it is a time to indulge in new hobbies. For both, it is the time to travel, to entertain, perhaps to refurbish their home or to sell it in favor of a luxury home or condominium.

It is during this stage that married couples tend to be comfortable financially. Today’s empty nesters have more leisure time. They travel more frequently, take extended vacations, and are likely to purchase a second home. They have higher disposable incomes because of savings and investments, and fewer expenses (no mortgage or tuition bills). For this reason families in the post parenthood stage are an important market for luxury goods, new automobiles, expensive furniture, and vacations to faraway places.

In recessionary times, some empty nesters find a surprise waiting for them at their front doors—the return of the adult child. For almost a decade, there has been a trend towards young adults between 18 to 24 years of age returning home. There are numerous motivations driving the return to the “nest”: completion of college, unemployment, underemployment, more disposable income, more comfortable lifestyle, separation or divorce are just a few examples. In many cases, the parents (especially mothers) welcome home the returning offspring.

1. Empty Nest I: This stage is characterized by satisfactory financial position for the family. The spending pattern emphasizes gifts, vacations, and luxuries.
2. **Empty Nest II:** During this stage, the couple’s income is drastically cut. They stay at home more and spend more on medical care, and products that aid their health, sleep, and digestion.

**Stage V: Dissolution:** This is also known as the solitary survivors stage. Dissolution of the basic family unit occurs with the death of one spouse. When the surviving spouse is in good health, is working or has adequate savings, and has a supportive family or friends, the adjustment is easier. Hereafter, the lifestyle of the surviving spouse tends to follow a very simple pattern and is very economical.

**1.5. Family Purchasing Decision**

While many marketers recognize the family as the basic decision-making unit, they most frequently examine the attitudes and behavior of the one family member whom they believe to be the major decision maker. In some cases, they also examine the attitudes and behavior of the person most likely to be the primary user of the product or service. For instance, in the case of men’s underwear, which is frequently purchased by women for their husbands and unmarried sons, it is commonplace to seek the views of both the men who wear the underwear and the women who buy it. By considering both the likely user and the likely purchaser, the marketer obtains a richer picture of the consumption process.

Decision-making by a group such as a family differs in many ways from decisions made by an individual. Consider the purchase of a health food (which is added to milk) the children, and maybe adults consume. How is the brand selected? Does everyone consider the same attributes? Typically, the parents make the actual purchase, but they do not necessarily make the choice! If it primarily consumed by children, it will be they who make the final choice or at least influence the choice considerably.

The family decision-making process often varies across market segments such as stages in the family life cycle or the social class to which the family belongs. It therefore becomes imperative to analyze family decision making within each defined target market. Within each market, it is important to determine which family members are involved at each stage of the decision process and what their motivations and interests are. Once it is determined who is involved at each stage and the nature of their motivation, a marketing programme may be put together which may meet the needs of all the participants.
1.6. Household Decision-making in the Family

Decision making by a group such as household differs in many ways from decisions made by an individual. Consider the purchase of a health food (which is added to milk) the children, and may be, adults consume. How is the brand selected? Does everyone consider the same attributes? Typically, the parents make the actual purchase, but they do not necessarily make the choice. If the children primarily consume it, it will be they who make the final choice or at least influence the choice considerably.

There are five roles that frequently occur in household decision-making. Individuals play various roles for different decisions:

- Information gatherer: The individual who has expertise and interest in particular purchase. Different individuals may seek different information at different times or on different aspects of purchase. For instance, in the example of health food, it is the mother who plays the role of information gatherer. She gathers information on various brands available in the market and the ones, which are good from the nutrition point of view.

- Influencer: The person who influences the alternatives evaluated, the criteria considered and final choice. In the example of health food, it is the child who is the primary consumer, who plays the role of major influencer.

- Gatekeepers: Family member(s) who control the flow of information about a product or service into the family.

- Decision maker: The individual who makes the final decision. Joint decisions are also likely to occur more often than not. It is the mother who makes the final decision regarding purchase of health drink, but perhaps after taking into account the child’s preference.

- Purchaser: The household member who actually purchases the product. It may be any member of the family who is visiting the market, or it may even be the servant who runs all the household errands.

1.6.1. Involvement with Purchase

Actually the scope for the marketer to effectively influence the customers' decision making process depends on two major considerations, the kind of decision making involved on the one hand, and the level of involvement of the customer with purchase on the other. The involvement of consumers can be
broadly divided into two categories: i. low involvement; and ii. high involvement

**Low Involvement**

The concept of involvement focused on the issue of whether or not a customer cares much about brand choice decision while buying a product. Low involvement is a situation where a consumer needs to buy a product (say bread, tea packet, tooth paste, ata etc.) but does not need to patronize a particular brand which is of shorter life, relatively less amount is invested. Such will be the case while selecting a bathing soap, biscuits etc. usually such products are low priced, frequently purchased convenience goods. The available choices are seen to be not much different from each other, and the cost of a poor decision is rather low. In case of any mistake occurs in the purchase of these products a consumer does not regret too much, only thing he or she does is avoid repletion of the purchase or the consumption those products.

**High Involvement**

On the other hand, a highly involved customer carefully selects a brand due to significant price, style, attractiveness, quality or other difference among various brands that are available. This purchaser has to have a definite positive attitude towards the selected brands prior to the purchase. Product like consumer durables, high priced items, goods that are unfamiliar or infrequently purchased, or products where offering are dissimilar fall in this category. So in such cases of a wrong decision is perceived to be high. That is why there is greater involvement with purchase.

While a highly involved purchaser is termed as an active consumer, a passive consumer treats a purchase as low involvement. A marketer has many lessons to learn from this kind of distinction since it provides him valuable insights into the consumer decision making process. For example in case of low involvement category a tentatively held attitude (i.e. an attitude that is not so strongly held that it cannot be changed) will be sufficient enough to motivate a person to give in for trial purchase. This is not the case for the high involvement category. For a highly involved purchase, the favourable attitude must be held fairly strongly. Thus, in case of high involvement category the marketer will have to choose a source of information that carries a lot of credibility in the eyes of the consumer. Nobody settles for a computer system merely by looking at its advertisement. So the marketer may use advertising only to create awareness, interest and knowledge about the advertised brand but not
conviction. Such advertisement in turn prepares a prospect for seeking information from more credible sources like sales force, product demonstrations, reduced risk trails etc.

Types of Household

There are a variety of households. The Census Bureau defines a household as all the people who occupy a housing unit (a house, apartment, group of rooms, or single room designed to be occupied as a separate living quarters). It defines a family as a group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together. A family household is defined as a household consisting of a family and any unrelated people residing in the same housing unit. A non-family household is a household living alone or exclusively with others to whom he or she is not related.

The definitions are important because the Census Bureau, which provides most of the available data on household, uses them. Unfortunately, these terms do not cover the richness of the American family structure. The term traditional family refers to a married couple and their own or adopted children living at home much publicity has been given to its demise and this type of family has clearly declined over time. This is particularly true if one were to consider a traditional family to be one headed by a never-divorced couple.

However, most households (53%) are headed by married couples (this has declined from 71% in 1970) and more than 70% of households with children are headed by a married couple. The decline in traditional families is due in part to an increase in single parent household as a result of divorce. A large cause is a significant increase in single individuals. This increase has been largely a result of the overall delay in the median age of marriages – from 23.2 and 20.8 years for males and females in 1970 to 26.8 and 25.1 in 2000 – and by an increase in sole survivors as the percent of the population over 65 has grown significant.

Other common household structures are also not adequately captured by Census reports or other major data sources such as Madiamark, simmons, or Nielsen. Unmarried couples, both sex and opposite sex, have consumption patterns similar to married couples but are not counted as family by Census. Kraft recognizes the diversity and importance of families in its campaign featuring brief, unscripted videos of actual families interacting around food. One spot features an apparently single mother shopping with her teenage sons, another
features a traditional family of seven, while a third portrays an extended family get-together. At the end of the family get-together commercial, the grandmother says: "Everyone needs to connect as a family. Just a simple thing such as making dinner. Everybody gets a little bit of attention which I don’t mind going. I like that."

Marketers must determine who in the family plays which role before they can affect the family decision process. After thorough study, Crayola shifted its advertising budget from children’s television to women’s magazines. Its research revealed that mothers rather than children were more likely to recognize the problem, evaluate alternatives, and make the purchase.

1.7. Role of Children in Family Decision Making

The studies just mentioned tended to ignore the role of children as influencers, decision makers, and users of the products and services. Clearly, though the children do make a difference in family decision such areas as the types of foods to buy, vacations and eating out. One study investigated the vacation decision process for the couples and families. The results revealed that the families with children tended to have less consensus on where to vacation and to have more husband-dominated decisions than did couples. Although children did not dominate the decision process, they had the potential to produce a "majority" decision.

The influence of children on the purchase of breakfast cereals has been extensively investigated. Researchers have found that children make requests for breakfast cereals more frequently than for other product categories. Other researchers have found that almost one half of mothers interviewed at grocery check-out counters mentioned that their child had asked for breakfast cereal. A relation between Saturday morning television viewing and cereal requests has been found such that the greater the amount of television viewing the greater the tendency to make request for specific cereals. In other research it was found that mothers exert little influence over cereal brand preferences among children less than ten years of age. As the researcher noted, "Children appear to develop their own criteria for preferring brands of cereals and beverages that do not correspond with their mother’s criteria."

The results of a large-scale study in twenty supermarkets on the flow of parent-child interaction in breakfast cereal selection shows quite interesting and surprising results. For example parents tended to yield more often when the child demanded a cereal than when the child merely requested a particular
cereal. However, when the parent invited a cereal selection, he or she tended to agree with the child's selection much more frequently (about 90% of the time as compared to 71% when the child demanded cereal.

The age of the child was found to influence the yielding of mothers to request for cereals. The results of the supermarket study also shows that the parent tended to initiate the choice of cereals more often for older children. Furthermore, the percentage of occasions when conflict occurs tended to maximum when the children were between the age of six and eight. Data were also analyzed to determine the sex of the child or the social class of the parent affected the trends. The results showed that sex of the child had little effect. However, the social class of the family was related to the occasions of child unhappiness. Working-class families tended to have more frequent occasions when child unhappiness occurred.

The influence of children on household decisions increases as they grow older. One study of 161 adolescents and their parents found that as the adolescent's age increased, his or her influence on the various decision stages also increased. Another major findings was that peer communication was related to mentioning and discussing purchases with parents. These results demonstrate the large impact that peer group have on adolescents' product preferences. The study also found that with increasing money earned outside of the home, adolescents had more input into purchase decisions. These results are consistent with the concept that financial resources are related to power and influence within the family.

In other research adolescents' and mothers' perceptions of their influence or family purchase decisions were compared. As one would accept, the adolescents believed their influence was greater than their mothers rated it. Similarly the mothers rated their own influence greater than the adolescents believed. The study did show that adolescents are active participants in family purchase decisions, even for products not for their own use.

1.8. Marketing Applications- Family Buying

Understanding family buying process helps the marketers: i. Understand the differences in consumption pattern of different families; ii. Develop product and promotional strategies with recognition of the changing gender roles and responsibilities within the family; iii. Use the concept of the family life cycle as a basis for segmenting the market; iv. Target product and services properly for the family roles in decision-making. All these basic determinants
have significant impact on purchasing strategy and consumer decision-making.

1.9. Important Roles In Family In Decision Making Process

There are five roles that frequently occur in family decision-making. Individuals play various roles for different decisions:

- **Information gatherer**: The individual who has expertise and interest in a particular purchase. Different individuals may seek information at different times or on different aspects of the purchase. For instance, in the example of health food, it is the mother who plays the role of information gatherer. She gathers information on various brands available in the market and the ones, which are good from the nutrition point of view.

- **Influencer**: The person who influences the alternatives evaluated, the criteria considered and the final choice. In the example of health food, it is the child who is the primary consumer, who plays the role of a major influencer.

- **Gatekeeper**: Family members who control the flow of information about a product or service into the family.

- **Decision maker**: The individual who makes the final decision. Joint decisions are also likely to occur more often than not. It is the mother who makes the final decision regarding purchase of health food, but perhaps after taking into account the child's preference.

- **Purchaser**: The family member who actually purchases the product. It may be any member of the family who is visiting the market, or it may even be the servant who runs all the household errands.

- **Users**: The user of the product. For many products there are multiple users

- **Maintainers**: The individual who services or repairs the product such as it continues to provide satisfaction.

- **Disposers**: The family member who initiates or carries out the disposal or discontinuation of the particular product.

How family members interact in a purchase decision is largely dependent on the role specialization of different household members and the degree of involvement each has in the product area of concern. Household purchasing decisions can be examined from four perspectives: (i) role structure, (ii) power structure, (iii) stage in the decision making process, and (iv) family specific characteristics. It is important for the marketer to understand who influences whom, and how, in the family buying process, so that the proper marketing strategy may be developed.