The most important prerequisite for any research work is clarity, so that the idea of the research could reach the ordinary layman just like a running stream. A lack of understanding of the research topic could mislead the researcher. The concepts like marketing research, branding, brand loyalty, brand switching, brand equity, brand positioning and its components of brand positioning need clear explanation and exposition. A sincere attempt has been made by the researcher to explain the concepts and reviews in the first part. Such an attempt could provide the necessary benchmark information for the study on brand positioning. In the second part of the discussion, concepts used in the analysis of the results and discussions have been explained.

When barter system was in vogue, professionals such as the blacksmith, the goldsmith, the mason, carpenter, saddle, hosier, tailor and so on had personal contact with their customers regularly. The design, the price, the size and the shape of their products and services were determined in direct personal contact with the consumers. This personal relationship which existed between the buyer and the seller changed after the advent of industrial revolution. Again the buyer started buying on a large scale for his customers, who were not known to him personally. This led to the emergence of many types of hindrances involving
people, place, time and knowledge. To remove all such hindrances, marketing research comes to one's rescue. Marketing research is concerned with all aspects of marketing like price, package, brand, sales, distribution, competition, market segments and buyer behaviour.

Definitions of marketing research:

The definitions of marketing research have been discussed under the following concepts:

a) Identifying and analysing a particular problem.

b) Scientific method for the solution of marketing problems by information collected through tools; such solutions are used for taking decisions.

A) Identifying and analysing a particular problem:

Marketing research may be defined as "the thorough objective gathering and analysis of data that pertain to a given problem in marketing" (Stanton and Futrell, 1987). According to American Marketing Association, 'marketing research dealt with many problems relating to the marketing of goods and services' (AMA Report, 1960). The British Institute of Management has adopted a slightly modified version of the original definition of the American Marketing Association, namely, "the objective of gathering, recording and analysing of all facts about
problems relating to the transfer and sale of goods and services from producer to consumer or user" (Baker, 1985). The above-mentioned definitions insist that marketing research is a systematic identification of marketing problems. For such an identification, data are gathered, recorded and analyzed. After the identification of a problem, the next step in marketing research is to analyze it. According to Green and Tull (1990), "marketing research is the objective research for an analysis of information relevant to the identification and solution of any problem in the field of marketing".

**B) Scientific method in the solution of marketing problems by information collected:**

Once the researcher collects information about the marketing problems, the next step is to find out solutions to the identified problems. The solutions are formulated scientifically. Luck *et.al* (1970), have defined marketing research as the application of the scientific method to the solution of marketing problems.

Phillips and Duncan (1956), explain marketing research as the employment of the scientific method in the solution of marketing problems. The problems faced by the marketer can be tackled easily in the scientific method. The Encyclopedia Britannica defines marketing research as, "the application of the scientific method to the solution of marketing problems. It studies people as buyers, sellers and consumers, examining their attitudes, preferences, habits and
purchasing power. It is also concerned with the channels of distribution with the promotion and pricing, and with the design of the products and services to be marketed. Although there is hardly a form of commercial activity that does not use marketing research with some frequency, it finds its widest application in manufacturing, probably because manufacturing is further removed from the ultimate consumer than are most service industries, public utilities and wholesale and retail enterprises.” (Patil et.al, 1981).

Information about the consumer’s attitudes, preferences, tastes, fashions, habits and purchasing power is useful to the marketer for taking decisions concerning product promotion. ‘marketing research involves the diagnosis of information needs and the selection of relevant interrelated variables about which valid and reliable information is gathered, recorded and analyzed’ (Zaltman and Burger, 1975).

The American Marketing Association defines marketing research as “the function which links the consumer and public to the marketer through information. This is used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems, generate, refine and evaluate marketing as a process” (Boyd et.al, 1986).

Thus marketing research helps the marketing manager identify the marketing problem through scientific solution and supplies him with up-to-date information which helps him take appropriate decisions. Such solutions are arrived at by using a set of techniques.
Collection of Facts:

Decisions are made on the basis of facts collected from the problem area in marketing so that both the marketer and the consumer reap the benefit out of them. According to Crisp (1957), ‘marketing research is a study of facts relevant to any problem in the field of marketing’. In the view of Nair (1987), marketing research is the study of facts relevant to any problem in the field of marketing. According to Enship and Boyle (1971), marketing research is the collection and interpretation of facts that help marketing management to get products more efficiently into the hands of the consumer.

Thus marketing research provides facts which are useful to the marketer and the consumer. Such type of research is capable of providing all facts to any marketing problem.

According to Debrukker and Scottward (1980), ‘marketing research is a family of techniques for collecting and analysing data’.

According to Stapleton (1980), ‘marketing research is quite simply a tool used to provide information which will help management to minimise the elements of risk involved in forming and making decisions concerning marketing policy’.
The Process of Decision-Making:

After identifying and analysing the problem, marketing research involves the finding of a solution to the problem. Once a solution is evolved, the next step is to apply the solution to the given problem. Before such an application, marketing research helps the marketer take decisions according to the situation. The purpose of marketing research is to provide valid and reliable information for making decisions by narrowing down the choices.

In Majumdar's (1996) view, “marketing research is the objective and formal process of systematically obtaining, analysing and interpreting data for actionable decision-making in marketing”.

Holmes finds that marketing research provides the management the factual information upon which to formulate executive decision and policies. (Patil, et.al. 1981). Cundiff et.al (1985) say, 'marketing research facilitates decision making. Kinnears and Taylor (1983), Tull and Hawkins (1984) and Litter (1985) have also expressed the same view in their discussion.

According to Patil et.al (1981), ‘marketing research is collection and interpretation of facts that help marketing management get products more efficiently into the hands of the customers. It encompasses all information pertinent to this task. It is a search for the facts relevant to any problem in the field of marketing. It embraces all research activities carried on in connection with the management of marketing work. It includes various subsidiary types of research
such as market analysis, the analysis of the sales records of a company, and consumer research chiefly, the discovery and analysis of consumer attitudes, reactions and preferences, and advertising, as an aid to the management of advertising work’.

In the words of Chisnall (1986), ‘marketing research is also concerned with the range of inquiries: it covers product development, identifying the market, and suitable methods of selling, distribution, promotion and after sales services.

Francis (1978) has also expressed his view of marketing research and its applications to marketing management decisions, based on facts. According to him, ‘marketing research is concerned with getting the best possible answers to certain major questions of business, namely, what to produce, when and how much to produce, where to place the product over the market, where to direct sales effort and what price to charge.’

From analysis of various definitions, it is evident that marketing research is concerned with various aspects of marketing problems. Marketing problems are related to pricing, packaging, sales, distribution, competition, market segmenting, and buyer behaviour. These problems are identified systematically. Relevant data are collected carefully and analyzed scientifically. Suggestions are given for taking decisions.

In India marketing research technique is applied widely in testing marketing, and selecting appropriate advertising media, in the awareness of its
products among prospective buyers and in identifying the segment or segments of
the market (Beri, 1993).

**Branding:**

**Evolution of Branding:**

Brand was originally a mark burned on animals to show their ownership. Branding became essential in the open range cattle days of the American West, but its use is old and widespread. A 2500 year old cattle brand has been found in Egypt. Spanish pioneers brought branding to America. In open range days, cattle were rounded up twice a year. In spring, rounded-up calves were branded while still with the mother cows. In fall, herds were separated by brands so that owners might assemble calves and yearlings for market (New Standard Encyclopedia).

According to the American Educator Encyclopedia (1967), branding and marking the hide, usually of cattle or other livestock, was done for permanent identification. In ancient Greece, slaves were branded so that they could not pass for freemen if they escaped. During some wars, prisoners were branded so that they could be identified easily.

The purpose of brand was the identification of ownership. During the year 1870, Averill Paint Company was granted the first U.S. trade mark. Borden’s Quaker frats, Vaseline, Pillsbury’s best and Ivory soap brands appeared in 1880s. The first step towards statutory regulation of Trade marks was taken in the year
1889, when the Indian Merchandise market was brought into force. The Industrial revolution encouraged large scale production and distribution of goods. That developed close substitutes in an unhealthy competitive market and the producers had to differentiate their products for the consumer's identification. Some marks, symbols or devices were used for such distinction. In the early 1900s dealer (retailer) brands began to emerge. During the year 1931, Proctor and Gamble introduced the product manager system. In India the trade mark act was enacted in the year 1940. Later it was amended as Trade and Merchandise Marks Act in 1958. In the mid 1970s Correfour (France) introduced Generic brands. During the year 1983, Johnson and Johnson revived Tylenol which was a major change in the history of branding. In 1985, Coca-Cola intensified its use of brand extension. Again Proctor and Gamble revamped its product management system. In the early 1900s privatization and globalisation of Indian Economy challenged the National and local brands. Today's brands are attracting more attention than ever before for their commercial value (Evans and Berman, 1990).

**Indian brand history**

India has gone through the same phases of marketing development as the more advanced countries like USA, UK and Germany. Tracing India's marketing history based upon all its functions would be a very lengthy process. It would suffice to examine it on the basis of today's most important parameter of marketing development and augmentation of brand hegemony. In the 1930s, the main motivation was the acquisition of a new product, with the emphasis on the
utilisation aspect. The decade of the 1940s was particularly noteworthy for the start-up of local manufacture of many brands, mainly in the non-durable consumer goods category. The market divided itself into three general groups. The first comprised imported brands purchased by the ruling British and the wealthy, urban Indian who was educated and who imitated the western lifestyles. The second represented locally manufactured brands mainly produced and distributed by foreign companies. These were designed in terms of quality and size to become affordable to the fairly large middle and lower middle class which existed in India even fifty years ago. The third group consisted of goods produced by small-scale manufacturers catering to the petty needs of the country’s very large population of the poor. The decade of the 1950s more or less followed the pattern of the 1940s and gave way to considerable dynamism in the next two decades. The weakening social conservatism in the 1950s, began to roll back rapidly in the face of new ideas, and changed the temper of society from meek acceptance of whatever was available to a penchant for change. By the mid-1960s, there were clear manifestations of change in several segments of the society. Table fans were replaced with ceiling fans, desert coolers with air-conditioners, bicycles with scooters, and bidis with cigarettes. This changing panorama inspired marketers to launch new brands to plug the new slots that had opened up. In fact, this marked the beginning of Indian Society changing to a high consuming system from one of abstinence. Several leading brands of today such as Liril, Thums Up, Bajaj, Nescafe and Postman were begotten in this era. The success graph of new entries in the 1960s and 1970s somehow petered out in the decade of the 1980s. Possibly, the commanding influence of market research in
1980s side-tracked the market place. A recent review of the status of new brands in the soap and cosmetics industry also lamented the absence of trend-setting bands and emphasised the need for the right mix of flavour, fragrance, colour and pack design to avoid mishaps. While the selection of the right mix is important, it falls short of getting the consumer's imagination often on account of the absence of the difficult total attribute of representational value. The concept of representational value is actually quite simple. It only needs the understanding of the moving socio-economic pattern to discern the emerging trend in any market segment and converting it into a symbolic form for building the brand. This process is particularly relevant during a period of high societal change, as the country is experiencing now. The society will offer many challenging opportunities to the marketing strategist, with an ear close to the ground, to cater to the brand-crazy consumerist. (The Economic Times, 1994).

**Definitions of Branding:**

Branding is defined in various ways. Branding helps the customer identify the product. The customer can quickly differentiate a particular brand / product from others and recognise it by its attributes which are unique to it.

According to Seibert (1973), brand name is a word, a letter or a group of words or letters that can be spoken. American marketing Association also expresses the same view. It defines a brand as that which consists of words, letters and / or numbers that can be vocalised and be associated with a specific product.
So a brand name is one which consists of a word, letter and number or any combination of all the three to identify a particular product. 'When a brand name or symbol is legally registered with the Government, it becomes a trade mark'.

Products are branded mainly due to the following reasons:

**Identification**

Pillai and Bagavathi (1992) have explained in their definition that the main aim and purpose of branding is identification. According to them 'branding is the process of finding and fixing the means of identification'. Thus branding is a management process by which a product is named, i.e. branded. Stanton and Futrell (1987), also accept that the sole purpose of branding. In their definition, they have expressed the view that brand is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or a group of sellers.

McCarthy (1982) also endorses the above view that the purpose of branding is to identify a product. He views that 'branding means the use of a name, term, symbol or design or a combination of these - to identify a product. It includes the use of brand names, trade marks, and practically all other means of product identification. Bushman (1993), observes that the familiarity and repetition of a brand name can become an incantation.
Differentiation and Recognition:

The following definitions highlight how branding helps differentiate a product from the other products of a particular firm and differentiate a firm’s products from those of the competitors’ (Rachman, 1985). Brooks (1960), acknowledges the same view for service industries. He says; ‘branding is intended to identify the goods or services of a seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of the competitors.

The main aim of branding is to make the customer recognise the brand at the point of purchase.

‘Recognising that homogeneity of product offering precluded identification of a given producer’s output at the point of sale, manufacturers ‘revived’ the practice of branding as a means of distinguishing their product from that of their competitors’ (Baker, 1985).

According to Littler (1985), brands are employed by manufacturers to distinguish their products from those of their rivals. Customers can build up strong associations with a brand that not only assist in repeat purchasing, but can also aid in the launching of new brands.

The distinctive name of a brand also helps the manufacturer in launching new products under the same brand. According to Cundiff et.al (1985), ‘brand can ensure the buyer of uniformity of quality or performance features of the product.’
Thus brand helps the manufacturers distinguish their brands from those of the competitors. Similarly, the wholesaler and the retailers also benefits by such distinction. Hisrich and Michael (1992), explain that the brand name develops a personality of its own that is interpreted by consumers and judged as to whether the image of the product will satisfy their needs.

Thus the various definitions mentioned above bring out clearly the purpose of the need for branding.

**Classification of Brand names:**

A brand name is a part of a brand which is verbally used. The brand names used in practice are the following:

1. Personal names, e.g., Bajaj and Dalmia
2. Company names, e.g., DCM, IBM, Britannia and Amul
3. Coined names, e.g., Parker and Vimal
4. Historical names, e.g., Tajmahal and Ganga
5. Geographical names, e.g., Mysore
6. Suggestive names, e.g., Kesavardhini
7. Descriptive names, e.g., Coco sweets
8. Dictionary words, e.g., True
9. Names of the founder or family, e.g., Tata, Godrej and Kirloskar
10. Letters abbreviating the company names, e.g., ITC, LOT, LMW, TVS TTC, BPL and VGP.
Similarly symbols or designs are also used with the brand names to make the products very familiar. The famous Indian brand symbols or designs include Air India’s Maharaja, LIC’s hands protecting the light, SBI’s blue circle with a central dot, Anacin’s four fingers and the palm, Incremin syrup’s giraffe, Murphy Radio’s Murphy baby, HMV’s dog in front of a gramophone and Onida’s Devil and his junior.

Apart from the names, symbols and designs, numbers are also used for branding. For example, computer manufacturers have used the company’s name and a model number to identify new computer systems. These numbers may be part of a series, such as the IBM series 360 or Honeywell 100. Electronic goods like Calculator, Video Cassette Recorder, Television, and View Compact Disk Player usually use numbers to identify their series. 501 detergent soap, 555 Monkey Brand broomstick and 77 Cola are some examples of consumer-non-durables. Thus in branding a name, symbol, design or number or a combination of all of them is used for identification and recognition. The brand’s personality helps in making distinctions.

**Types of Brands:**

Brands are of different types depending upon the type of product, producer and the clienteles.

**Individual Brands:**

‘A firm may decide upon a policy of adopting distinctive brands for each of its products’ (Pillai and Bagavathi, 1992). ‘Each product has a special and unique
brand name such as Surf, Ranipal' (Sherlakar, 1988). 'Individual branding is good for achieving greater market penetration than other similar products can do' (Arockiasamy). Schutte in 'the semantics of branding' classifies the brands into two broad categories: (1) Manufacturers brand and (2) Distributor’s brand.

**Manufacturer’s brands:**

'A brand which is owned by a manufacturer and / or registered as a trade mark under a distributor’s or a manufacturer’s name is referred to as a manufacturer’s brand' (Gandhi, 1995).

'Manufacturer’s brands may be (a) national brands (used at a national level) (b) regional brands (of a particular region), (c) advertising brands (stressing symbols), (d) blanket brands or single brands or family brands (the same name for all the products of a company), and (e) multiple brands or (f) individual brands (of each product). These manufacturer’s brands stress the identity of the manufacturer.

**Distributor’s Brands:**

These are classified into (a) Private brand (Middleman brand), (b) Store brand, (c) Dealer brand and (d) House brand. These brands lay emphasis on the identity of the distributors like retailers' (Arockiasamy).
**Umbrella Brand:**

All products such as soaps, chemicals, textiles and so on manufactured by the Tata concerns will have the “Tata’s” as one umbrella brand. According to Sethra, (1988) this device will help obtain low promotion cost and minimise marketing effort.

**Merits of Brands:**

The merits of branding from the point of view of the producer and the customer are mentioned below.

**Advantages to the producer:**

According to Pillai and Bagavathi (1992), brands enable a firm to build its reputation. Through branding, a good image and goodwill could be established. It also facilitates the introduction of new products in a simplified process. Brands are used to distinguish the products of one firm from those of the rival firms and to ensure constant returns. Sales promotion and the building up of demand also could be done through brands. Through demand creation, brands widen the markets, which may result in the reduction of advertising cost. Banerjee (1988), explains that the brands establish an image for the product and the company which widens the market and foster economies of scale. A well established brand could add a measure of prestige.

Schewe and Smith (1980), also note the above mentioned points. They also
examine the role of brand loyalty and its relative merits to the manufacturer. A brand helps its owner stimulate repeated sales. Brand loyalty results in a lower price competition, for a product than it is for another since the brand creates a difference between the two products.

Brands aid in building a company’s image and in reducing the price comparisons. According to Hisrich and Peters (1992), branding facilitates the expansion of product line because of the existing brand reputation.

Gandhi (1995) says that brand is a peripheral product attribute and it also has a significant communication value. It assists in advertising and sales promotion and in building up demand for a product. Brand reputation also ensures some kind of market control as it serves as an antidote to possible retailer hostility.

Among the above-mentioned merits, brand loyalty and its relative merits to the manufacturer attract the attention of the marketer. Brand loyalty improves the brand image (feeling about the product). Many marketers are interested in increasing the brand image of the product. The customers also in turn enjoy the merits of branding which are given below.

**Advantages to the consumer:**

Pillai and Bagavathi (1992) explain the relative merits of brands to the consumer and how their image creates brand loyalty. According to them brands distinguish and differentiate the products of different producers. A consumer
could make a distinction between the brands of different producers. Brands assure the quality and standard of the product and shopping becomes easy because of quick identification. Banerjee (1988) endorses the same view and adds that the benefits of large sales that result from branding might be shared by the manufacturer with the consumers. Hisrich and Peters (1992), remark that the brand name might provide protection to customers. They could compare the manufacturer of a product with the manufacturer of another of equal quality. Above all, status is associated with the brand name which builds an image. The marketer projects his brand through advertisement. Good quality and differentiation from other brands lead to brand loyalty.

**BRAND SURVEY**

Few publications have come out on branding and their role in the Indian market. In 1992, Advertising and Marketing and MODE research private limited jointly conducted a survey on India’s great brands. The study covered all four geographical zones, interviews were conducted in metropolitan cities, other urban areas and the rural hinterland. In all, 12 survey centres were covered. The interviewers consisted of house-wives, earning adult males, and going adults, taken from various income strata as appropriate for a class of town or a village. The sample size for the study was 1,378, of these 483 were housewives, 465 earning adult males and the balance 426, young adults of either sex. The process commenced with a check on consumer familiarity with a brand name. In the detergent market, Surf, a much cheaper washing powder ranked & seventh place in the all India level, scored 57 points. Nirma, the detergent powder that which
created almost a different product category, received strong recommendation from housewives and was ranked 18th place, scored 44 points in an all India level. (Advertising and Marketing, 1992).

The same type of Surveys were conducted in 1993, 1994, and 1995. The fifth annual survey of brand power in India was done by Advertising and Marketing jointly conducted by MARG and MODE, during 1996. The study were conducted in metropolitan cities, other urban areas and the rural hinterland. In all, 12 centres were covered. The interviewers consisted of house wives, earning adults males and young adults (15-25 years) from various income strata appropriate for a class of town or village. The three broad monthly household income strata in which the respondents were clubbed are one, income upto Rs.2,000/-; two between Rs.2,001 and Rs.4,000/-; and three Rs.4,000/- plus. The sample size for the survey was 1,442, of these, 492 were housewives, 491 earning adult males, and the balance 459, young adults of either sex. The sample was divided more or less equally between the four zones. The areas selected were: Delhi and Rohtakin in the North Calcutta and Medinipur in the east, Bombay and Pune in the West, and Madras and Madurai in the South plus form clusters of villages buying 10 km from the smaller towns. The washing products arena continues to be hot as the line - up, which was at variance from last year (1995) suggested. Rin had emerged as the new category leader as 1995s runner - up Nirma had been over taken by Procter & Gamble ‘s Ariel. Ariel had succeeded in nearly doing away with the gap that separated if from Nirma in the later’s strong - hold the lowest income group. This group seen an interesting triangular fight between Nirma, Ariel and Surf. Ariel and Nirma were almost neck to neck in the middle income segment. But in the Rs.4,000 plus group, Surf retains its lead over others while Nirma’s score drops, taking it way below Ariel towards tail- ender
Sunlight. Rin, detergent cake from Hindustan lever scored extraordinarily in the South, which had the Number 1 spot, had also enabled it to bag a seat among the National top 10 (Advertising and Marketing, 1996).

**Brand loyalty**

According to Arockiasamy ‘brand insistence emerges when customers insist on a particular brand, refusing to accept any other substitute; when customers prefer a particular brand to many other brands available, there will be a brand preference; brand recognition comes in when the customers buy any brand in the absence of the particular preferred brand. In the first two degrees of branding there is loyalty but not in the third.

**Brand loyalty is based on the following:**

1. Preference for a particular brand and
2. Time or period of repeat purchases.

Cunningham (1956), defines that all the manufacturers of branded goods want customer loyalty, i.e., the customer should insist on a particular brand and accept no substitute. Schoell (1985), also expresses the same idea. He says ‘when markets are built for identifiable brand name products, the eventual goal is a consumer loyalty such that the consumer will insist on purchasing a particular brand.
Kinnear and Taylor (1983) claim that the preferential attitudinal and behavioral response towards one or more brands in a product category is expressed over a period of time by a customer.

Hisrich and Peters also express the same view: 'The faithfulness displayed by a user toward a brand is measured by relative length of time or regularity of the item's use.'

Jacoby and Kyner (1973), also define brand loyalty as 'biased behavioral response expressed over time by some decision making a set of such brands and is a function of psychological processes. Thus the above mentioned definition explains brand loyalty as something expressed over time and connected with the functions of psychology. Reichheld (1993), defines the effects of brand loyalty from the marketer's point of view: 'Customer loyalty has three second order effects: (1) revenue grows as a result of repeat purchases and referrals, (2) costs decline as a result of lower acquisition expenses and from the efficiencies of serving experienced customers and (3) employee retention increases because job pride and satisfaction increase in turn, creating a loop that reinforces customer loyalty and further reducing costs as hiring and training costs shrink and productivity rises. Seibert (1973), correctly points out the goal of branding. He says, 'when markets are built for identifiable brand name products, the eventual goal is a consumer loyalty such that the consumer will insist on purchasing a particular brand.'
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>Bread, aspirin, milk</td>
<td>Relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>car appliances</td>
<td>More ex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>crossing sporting</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Durable goods brand</td>
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<td></td>
<td>differentiation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speciality</td>
<td>Fashion clothes, perfumes</td>
<td>Very ex</td>
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<td></td>
<td>substantial brand differentiation</td>
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Source: Edwards Fox, Edward W. Co., 1978, P. 177-178
The above mentioned classification of consumer goods and services is based on product services characteristics and on consumer behaviour. (Fox et.al, 1978).

Brand loyalty can be of different degrees (Strength) such as: a) undivided loyalty, b) divided loyalty, c) unstable loyalty and d) no loyalty.

a) Undivided loyalty:

The customer repeatedly buys a product as he or she is favourably disposed towards that product and its brand. This is called undivided loyalty, e.g., specialty goods.

b) Divided loyalty:

As in the case of family brand, the buyer may be loyal to one product of the brand family, but he buys another product of another brand; e.g., when both tooth brushes and tooth pastes of the same brand are available, the buyers may be loyal to one brand of brush and another brand of paste.

c) Unstable loyalty:

Some buyers are not just dependable. A small change in product design, price or better appeal of a competitor may induce them to change their brands. e.g., shopping goods.
d) No loyalty:

Some buyers have no loyalty whatsoever. They may experiment with a new brand every time they buy a product or go by objective standards. They will not stick on to a brand for a reasonable length of time e.g., convenience goods (Amarchand and Varadharajan, 1979).

Brand loyalty has many layers. The layers are customers who have divided loyalty, unstable loyalty and no loyalty. When there is little brand loyalty among the customers to a particular brand, they may switch over from that brand to another brand.

Brand switching:

Brand switching refers to a change in the preference of consumer brands. A study in brand switching provides some vital insight into the extent of brand switching by measuring consumers' actual brand purchases within a period over several time periods. Cravens et.al (1988) made a study on measuring the extent of consumer's brand switching. The consideration of consumers' actual brand purchases within a product category is spread over several time periods, so that the amount of brand switching can be analysed under this type of study. Marketing research is used to collect data on the brands purchased by consumers from period to period. The
most common technique used in such studies is asking a sample of consumers to keep a diary of the brands bought over a period of time. Brand switching has many names in literature such as, ‘Varied behaviour, variety-seeking behaviour and multibrand usage’.

A thorough review of the literature relating to brand switching was completed by McAlister and Pessemier (1982) and they worked out a useful framework for classifying the roots of varied buying behaviour.

This framework led to the emergence of two schools of thought in brand switching regarding ability to understand variations in consumer behaviour. The ‘Stochastic’ school regards most of the variation in consumer behaviors as inexplicable. Its focus is on predicting Consumers’ choices rather than explaining them. The ‘explanatory’ school argues that varied behaviour can be explained.

Jeuland (1978) has developed a model of the utility of variety which includes three important concepts. First, the utility of a given brand varies over time; secondly, utility is a function of the unique feature of the brand (such as price or any other attribute) and the amount of experience a consumer accumulates with that brand; thirdly, the consumer’s memory retention of the earlier brand fades over a course of time after switching on to a new brand. McAlister developed this model further and suggested that consumers build attribute inventories on products they consume - for example, various desserts, soft drinks, candies and so on. Inventories diminished over
time, and were replenished with further consumption. When used to measure varied purchase behaviour, both Jeuland's and Lister's MCA models required information on the specific array of brands a consumer had purchased over a period of time very close to the time of investigation.

Hagerty in 1980 raised a point that Jeuland's model did not address: how much did experience with one item carry over to another similar item? Intuitively and from the perspective of cumulative attribute levels, one could suggest that experience with the first should also lower the utility of the second.

Howard and Sheth (1969) examined two issues namely varied purchases as information seeking behaviour and the effect of consumer involvement with a brand on purchase behaviour. With regard to information seeking behaviour, they have showed that varied purchase behaviour might arise from confusion or ambiguity among brands. Jacoby and Robert (1978) have suggested that the more information a customer had about new items to purchase, the more he or she varies his or her purchases.

Studies on brand switching behaviour help the marketer understand the market for each product class, its quantum of brand switching over various times and the role of marketing mix variables included in the marketing strategies.
A study on brand switching of cool drinks was undertaken by Bass (1974) involving Coke, 7-Up, Tat, Like, Pepsi, Sprint, Diet Pepsi and Fresca brands.

Vilcassim and Jain (1991) have formulated a model of purchase timing and brand switching behaviour, incorporating explanatory variables and unobserved heterogeneity. The objective of their study was to build a single framework to analyze brand switching patterns and purchase timing decisions of households, while incorporating the effects of marketing mix variables, household specific characteristics and unobserved heterogeneity. Their results showed that the impact of marketing mix variables on the purchase timing and brand-switching decisions was significant in most cases. They found that price and special displays had a greater impact on the rate of brand switching than on the rate of repeat purchase. They also found that the rate of switching due to promotional activities was in reverse order to the share of purchase of the brands.

Hauser and Wisniewski (1982) refer in their paper, "dynamic analysis of consumer response to marketing strategies", to issues such as advertising, discount coupons, price-off promotion, product positioning and consumer characteristics. The switching among brands depends on marketing strategies also.

Handelsman (1987) tried to present and explain the specific measure of a consumer’s varied behaviour and by means of that measure, to explore some of the
motives behind that behaviour. The varied behaviour measure was found to be reliable and valid in the context of three frequently purchased non-durable goods (toothpaste, cake mix and liquid household cleaning) investigated. In the toothpaste category he found that the consumer made decisions carefully, prepared a shopping list, did not look for bargains and was willing to spend the time required to find his or her preferred brand. Thus the consumer’s behaviour was planned variety seeking. Better educated people selected the brand that matched their specific need (Bright teeth, anti-cavities, etc.,) and remained loyal to it. In the cake mix category, consumers were doubtful about the superiority of their current brand which was the main motive for brand-switching. In contrast to the liquid household cleaning variety, the seekers of the cake mix variety were conservative; the consumers’ uncertainty about the superiority of one brand over others in a product class was a major factor in brand loyalty.

Brand switching study helps the manufacturer and marketer to study the market for each product class. According to the situation, the marketers have to modify their marketing mix in order to avoid brand switching especially in non-durable goods. Price is also a motivating factor in such a brand switching followed by managerial controls. Each product category has two sets of consumers, namely: 1) variety seekers and 2) variety - avoiders. Normally customers who switch their brands are called as variety seekers and those who buy the same brand because of loyalty are called variety avoiders. Such variety avoiders are called laggards. Similarly the
variety-seekers' consist of group innovators, early adopters and late adopters. This classification has been made according to the response made by the group when a brand is introduced in the market.

**Brand Equity:**

According to Ogilvy (1992), 'a brand is the consumer's idea of the product. The consumer is an active participant in the creation of equity. One may even consider the consumer an equity partner in the brand'. The consumer creates the equity in his mind. 'Brand equity resides mainly in the consumer’s mind. So brand equity is created by the perceptions of the consumer. It is made in the consumer’s mind (Business World, 1993). The handbook of brand management by Arnold (1993), brought out by, The Economist, has expressed the same view: “Brand equity is the perception in the minds of brand valuation exercise while working out the merger proposal’.

Blackston (1992), has made an in depth study on brand equity. He says, ‘it is the incremental, added-value qualities that make brand equity. The term is often used synonymously with the total value of the brand’. The total equity-or value of a brand consists of two different sorts of 'equities', namely, fundamental equities and added values. Fundamental equities are concerned with the classical marketing variables of product, price and packaging together with distribution and measured brand image. Added value equities are usually much more elusive to define than fundamental equities because of their intangible nature.
Keller (1993) has defined brand equity in terms of the marketing effects uniquely attributable to the brand. There have been two general motivations for studying brand-equity. One is a financially based motivation to estimate the value of a brand very precisely for accounting purposes in terms of asset valuation for the balance sheet or for merger, acquisition or divestiture purposes. The other is a strategy-based motivation to improve marketing productivity.

Brand equity is the intrinsic value or worth of the brand, in terms of the kind of money a consumer is willing to pay for it in preference to its competitors. Brand values in the consumers’ mind are beneficial to the purchase of the brand and brand franchise which measures the ongoing relationship between the brand and its consumers in terms of actual purchase. (The Economic Times, 1994).

So in brand equity, fundamental equities can be measured even when added values cannot be measured. Consultants at Interbrand, an international brand consulting firm, have some strong ideas about how to assess a brand’s value. Interbrand claims to have isolated seven key areas which, when factored together, account for a brand’s overall worth. A perfect score in all seven areas equals 100. The seven following factors help the marketer value his brands.

**Leadership:**

The Leadership of a brand is measured by finding out the relative rank it holds among the competing brands (25 Points).
**Stability:**

The value of a brand’s ‘history and heritage’ is ascertained in this factor, according to Noel Penrose, Interbrand’s executive Vice-President. For example, a brand that has stood by its original product line would earn its points: a brand that has ‘meandered from covering shoe polish to cookies would not, Penrose explains’. This inconsistency has a destabilizing effect on the brand (15 points).

**Market:**

‘How receptive is the market place to the brand’s product category? For instance, the soft drink market has demonstrated strong, consistent demand for years, but the hat market rises and falls based on changing fashion (10 Points)

**Internationality:**

A globally known brand such as Kodak, is worth more than national or regional brands (25 points).

**Trend:**

This factor measures the overall long-term trend of the brand. For instance, ‘Coca-cola always has been the world leader among sodas’, explains Penrose. ‘We forecast that will continue’. A product that has moved up the ranks from number eight to number three in sales will also get high marks (10 Points).
Support:

Interbrand has examined as to how much time and money a company puts behind its brand. A company that consistently invests heavily in advertising and marketing will end up with brands that score well on that factor (10 points).

Protection:

The strength of the brand's trade mark gets the remaining five points. It protects the brand from the competitors. Interbrand has evaluated thousands of brands all over the world with that methodology (Brown, 1992).

Among the seven factors, leadership and internationality gain collectively 50 points. As market leaders and globally-known brands, ITC, Lever, Pepsi and Milkmaid could claim to be the leading consumer brands in the country. Their brand equity is very strong because of their leadership and internationality.

So much consumer loyalty and goodwill is surrounds a successful brand name (trend and protection) that it is seen as the direct source of much of the owner-company's profit.

A spokesman of the Philip Moris company which owns the Marlbaro brand was reported to have said that the company would sell the fixed assets at $30 million but it would not sell the Marlbaro name for $300 million. This proves that the brand
name has a direct financial worth, no less than the investment in fixed assets; this fact has given rise to the notion of brand equity: the brand name functions like an asset which has a direct impact on the bottom line. The clearest manifestation of this fact is the high value paid for brand names during buy-outs and mergers (Sengupta, 1990).

Brand name, its loyalty and variety-seeking behaviour are some of the attributes which help position a product or brand among the consumers.

**Brand positioning**

Brand positioning positively means perception; it creates value, belief, need, experience and environment about the brand. Reeves (1986) defines perception as the art of selecting out of a number of unique selling propositions.

Assessing consumers’ perceptions of competing products and brands is regarded as fundamental to marketing (Barwise and Ehrenberg, 1985). Perception refers to what the individual sees within a stimulus field and to the interpretation or meaning which is ascribed to the stimulus. Perception is affected first by the properties of the physical stimulus. (Britts and Guess, 1983).

Perception is based on (a) functional attributes like taste, aroma, roominess, width and spaciousness and (b) non-functional attributes or emotional associations
like advertising (e.g., reliability, smartness, modernity), making the message seen, heard and accepted by another human mind.

According to Schiffman and Kanuk (1996), perception is the process by which an individual selects, organises and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture.

A stimulus is any unit of input to any of the senses; examples of stimuli (i.e. sensory inputs) include products, packages, brand names, advertisements and commercials. Sensory receptors are the human organs (the eyes, ears, nose, mouth and skin) that receive sensory inputs. Their sensory functions are to see, hear, smell, taste and feel. Sensory organs use to identify the simple stimuli (an advertisement and brand name). These stimuli find a suitable place in the mind of the consumers and get engraved there.

A person’s memory consists of two locations, namely, semantic memory and episodic memory. Semantic memory is the place where knowledge, information and meaning are stored. Episodic memory, on the other hand, is the location where past events and happenings are stored. The Manufacturers’ and marketers’ repeated conventional advertising is aimed at the consumer’s semantic memory which gives him or her information about the unique selling proposition of a brand and tries to differentiate it from the remaining brands. Thus the consumer’s semantic memory is targeted for positioning a brand or product.
The term “position” refers to placing a brand in that part of the market where it will have a favourable reception compared to the products competing with it (Jain, 1981).

According to Lamp et.al (1994) the term position refers to developing a specific marketing mix to influence the potential customers’ overall perception of a brand. Positioning assumes that consumers view competing products along dimensions relevant to their purchase and consumption behaviour. Position refers to the place a product, or a group of products occupies in the consumers’ mind relative to competing offerings.

**Brand positioning definitions:**

Brand positioning can be defined in terms of the comparison between a brand and its competing brands on various dimensions considered important by consumers. Companies will periodically want to monitor how well their product is doing through the measurement of brand positioning. Two points are important about brand positioning analysis. First, the brand dimensions measured should be those which are important to consumers as far as they influence them to purchase the product. Secondly, brand positioning involves measurement of consumer attitudes, that is, the opinions of the consumers about the various brand dimensions. Although these attitudes frequently involve perceptions concerning physical aspects of brands - such as taste, durability and so on, brand positioning measurement is not directly concerned
with an assessment of the physical properties, but the attitudes of the consumers about them (Britt and Guess, 1983).

According to Wind and Oram (1982), 'the product (brand) positioning should be assessed, by measuring the consumer’s or organisational buyer’s perceptions and preferences for the product in relation to its competitors (both branded and generic) (Albert et.al 1969). Georges (1981), Hehman and Raymond (1984) also agree with the same definition.

According to Harrison,(1987), ‘the position a product or service is said to occupy is the extremely simplified persona that the product represents in the mind of a typical consumer. It is the sum of those attributes normally ascribed to it by consumers’. (Beckman et.al 1986). ‘Product positioning refers to the consumer’s perception of a product’s attributes, use, quality and advantages and disadvantages in relation to competing brands’. According to, Macmillan’s Dictionary of Marketing and Advertising, ‘product positioning consists of defining end consumer needs and then developing differentiated products and services which match precisely these pre-identified requirements so that the supplier is able to focus specifically upon selected market segments’.

According to Kotler,(1984), ‘Market positioning is arranging for a product to occupy a clear, distinctive and desirable place in the market and in the minds of target consumers’. Crowford (1987), expresses his view in the following words : ‘Once a
target market has been selected, the new product marketers must differentiate their item from products already offered to that target group. This differentiating is called positioning the product and is now in widespread use’.

Product position refers to a brand’s objective (functional) attributes in relation to other brands. It is a characteristic of the physical product and its functional features. Brand position, on the other hand, refers to a brand’s subjective (or perceived) attributes in relation to competing products. ‘This perceived image of the brand belongs not to the product but rather is the property of the consumer’s mental perceptions and in some instances, could differ widely from a brand’s true physical characteristics’.

Ayer’s(1976), dictionary of advertising terms explains positioning as ‘The art and science of fitting the product or service to one or more segments of the broad market in such a way as to set it, meaningfully apart from competition’. O’ Shaushnessy (1984), also accepts positioning as fitting the product to the segment where product performance and appeal most correspond’. Green and Tull (1986), express the importance of both position and segmentation in today’s marketing research.

After consumer’s perceptions and market segmentation, the next importance was given to unique selling propositions and product class, which are the components of brand positioning.
Ennis (1986), stresses the importance of ‘the identification of an exclusive niche in the market or the creation of a unique perception of the product that satisfies an unfulfilled consumer need and that serves to distinguish the product from competing alternatives’. Rothschild (1987), explains “product classes in brand positioning, in which he refers to the place a brand occupies in the mind in relation to a given product class. This place was originally a product - related concept ... concerning market structure... That concept now refers to the place that the brand holds in the consumer’s mind relative to perception and preferences’. Brand positioning has been defined thus and the following are the salient features of the various definitions in this regard:

a) Positioning is concerned with perceptions and preferences of the consumers.

b) Segmentation helps to fit the product, and

c) Unique selling propositions and product class are used for positioning a brand.

Mandell and Rosenberg (1983), define the term “market position” as that which ‘refers to both the rank of a given product in the market place relative to competing products, and the place it occupies with respect to consumer needs. In the first sense of the term, market position may be thought of as a ladder, on which some products and organisations climb higher than others with respect to market share, sales volume and other variables. In the second sense of the term, it may be thought of as a map on
which the competitor's offerings are related to consumer needs. In practice, the two meanings amplify one another. The aim of positioning strategy is to get the consumers to respond to a given product in the way that the organisation marketing it wants them to respond to and not in the way the competitor wants them to. This can be accomplished by either product positioning, promotional positioning, or a combination of both.

**A Strategy for positioning:**

The first step to be taken regarding positioning is to gather information on the product's current position and see how it compares to the positions of major competitors. A complete description of the market is also constructed. From this information, the current position is assessed on the basis of how it fits the target market - selected from the available segments. Given the target position and market, an appropriate marketing mix is designed to project that position and reach that market.

![Diagram of positioning strategy construction](image)

**Fig. No.2 Positioning strategy construction**

Positioning is achieved by using marketing mix variables, especially design and communication efforts. The desired position for a product may be determined by the use of the following procedure:

1. Analyze product attributes which are salient to consumers.
2. Examine the distribution of these attributes among different market segments.
3. Determine the optimal position for the product in regard to each attribute, taking into consideration the positions occupied by existing brands, and
4. Choose an overall position for the product (based on the overall match between product attributes and their distribution in the population and the positions of existing brands).

According to Jain (1981), there are two types of positioning strategy, namely, single brand strategy and multiple brand strategy.

**Positioning a single brand:**

To maximise its benefits with a single brand, a company must try to associate itself with a core segment in the market where it can play a dominant role. In addition, it may attract customers from other segments outside its core as a fringe benefit. An alternative single-brand strategy would be to consider the market as undifferentiated and cover it with a single brand.
Generally a single-brand strategy is a desirable choice in the short run, particularly where the task of managing multiple brands will be beyond the managerial and financial capacity of a company. This strategy is very conducive to achieving higher profitability since a single brand permits better control of operations than do multiple brands. There are two requisites to successfully managing a single brand in the market. The brand must be so positioned in the market that it can stand competition from the toughest rival and its unique position should be maintained by creating the aura of a different product.

**Positioning multiple brands:**

Primarily, two reasons lead companies to introduce multiple brands to the market: (1) to see growth by offering varied products in different segments of the market and (2) to avoid competitive threats to a single brand. Offering multiple brands oriented toward different segments of the same market is an accepted route to growth. To realise desired growth, multiple brands should be diligently positioned in the market so that they do not compete with each other and create cannibalism. Multiple brands can be positioned in the market either head-on with the leading brand or with an idea. The relative strengths of the newly-entered brand and the established brand will dictate which of the two positioning routes is more desirable. While head-on positioning usually appears risky, there are some companies which have successfully carried it out. IBM’s copier was positioned in head-on competition with Xerox.
Positioning with an idea, may prove to be a better alternative than positioning head-on with the leading brand, especially when the leading brand is well established.

**Product - repositioning strategy:**

Often a product may require repositioning. This can happen if (a) a newly-introduced brand has been positioned next to the brand with an adverse effect on its share of the market, (b) consumer preferences have undergone a change, (c) new customer-preference clusters have been discovered with promising opportunities or (d) a mistake has been made in the original positioning.

Jain (1981) also talks about the repositioning of a product, among the existing users, among the new users and for future users.

a) Repositioning among existing customers is sought by the promotion of more varied uses of the product.

b) Repositioning among new users requires that the product be presented with a new twist to the people who have not hitherto been favourably inclined toward it. In so doing, care must be taken to see that in the process of enticing new customers, the current customers of the product are not acerbated.

c) The repositioning for future users requires searching for latent uses of the product, if any. While all products may not have latent uses, there are products which may be used for purposes not originally intended.
After the detailed discussion of various types of positioning, it is apt to study the components of Brand-positioning.

Prof. Steffbe (1968), described a technique that could be used to measure consumers' perceptions of judged similarity between brands and products and thus give them a 'position' in a given market. Addressing a symposium on the application of the sciences to marketing in 1966, Steffbe explains that brands and products which were judged to be highly similar - that is, were close in perceptual space - also exhibited a high degree of competition and substitution. He pointed out how his technique could be used to prospect for 'holes' or 'blank spaces' for new products or brands in a product class. This could help a multi-product firm to develop new products that would position themselves in the market in a manner that makes them substitutable for and competitive with competitors' brands while not cannibalizing the firm's own related products.

Shortly afterwards, Barnett (1969), writing in the Harvard Business Review, talked of the need to go 'beyond market segmentation', that is, go beyond one's own understanding of homogenous consumer groupings and shift the focus to 'consumer's perception of products'.

Positioning of brands is possible by using consumers' judgements of similarity among brands to calculate how 'close' each brand is to every other brand. Thus brand positions constitute a framework or market structure...
According to Barnett, new product introduction would become the search for a position in the market structure for a product which is preferred over the products currently available.

Maggard (1976), recognised that positioning established practice of product differentiation. A number of marketing experts appear to agree that positioning provides a useful vehicle for the interpretation of various elements of marketing strategy. Internal positioning, external positioning, head-on positioning, positioning with an idea and positioning for social accountability are some different ideas of positioning.

Aaker and Shansby (1982), suggests a variety of positioning strategies to the advertiser. An object can be positioned:

a) by attributes, b) by price-quality, c) by competitor, d) by application,

 e) by product user, f) by product class.

**Components of brand positioning:**

The definitions discussed earlier have pointed out the four components of the positioning concept, they are :

1. Product class or the structure of the market in which one’s own brand will compete.

2. Consumer segmentation.
3. Consumer perception of one’s own brand in relation to that of the competitors, which leads to perceptual mapping.

4. The benefits offered by the brand. These benefits may also be expressed as attributes of dimensions along which brands are ‘fitted’ to represent consumer judgements. (Sengupta, 1990).

These four components of the positioning concept are so closely interwoven that they must be taken together while considering the positioning of a brand.

1) **Product Class**:

Product class can be defined as the set of products and brands which are perceived as substitutes which satisfy some specific consumer need. The term, ‘product category’, is also used interchangeably with product class and product market. It explains the structure of the market or set of substitutes amongst which the marketer’s brand is to be positioned.

Consumer judgements of similarity and substitution can form the basis for defining a product market or category and are likely to be more reliable than categories defined by industry classifications. In India, low-cost detergent powders would undoubtedly be grouped with higher priced powders in the category of ‘washing powders’. However, these low-cost powders such as Nirma, Wheel and Hippolin have also been positioned by consumers against the traditional (oil-based)
laundry soaps and bars and have been perceived by them as substitutes for such laundry soaps. Women are the principal shoppers in most households; they would presumably be more exposed to the dealing stimulus and thus have better recall of deal frequency and sale price than men. The more a household buys a product class, the more it will be exposed to deals as regards all brands within that product class. The frequency of exposure to sale price, and deal frequency for a specific brand would be influenced also by the household’s loyalty to the brand. (Krishna et al., 1991). Some specific consumer needs could be met by such factors of product class as time, income, price and gift. Young and Rubicam call this the choice of product class, which is the first ‘positioning’ decision of the advertising strategist. The marketer has to decide whether to compete broadly within the conventional product class, or to attract the user from some other product class. (Sengupta, 1990).

Academy for Management Excellence (ACME) and the university of Michigan’s William Davidson Institute jointly conducted a field research project in India and held a seminar on Global brands and marketing strategies in June 1994 in India. The survey covered 500 housewives in two metros on their perceptions, attitudes, experiences and intentions of buying 32 brands, in eight product categories. In every category, the brands were some obvious foreign ones like Ariel, Cake, Philips, Close-up and Citizen. Some were known existing ones but with multinational companies like Surf, Red Label, Brooke Bond, Colgate and many others were visibly Indian brands like Nirma, Taaza, Maharajah. The question was not to classify the brands, but interestingly the housewives did classify them by scoring
statements such as “This brand is sold only in India” and “This is an Indian brand”, (The Economic Times, 1994).

Lamp et.al (1994) have defined product class positioning as the base for focusing on a personality or a type of user. The objective here has been to position the product as being associated with a particular category of products, e.g., a margarine brand with respect to butter.

2) **Consumer segmentation**:

Consumer segmentation is necessary to get the answers to the following questions. What is the profile of the consumers? Whom will the brand serve and what are their needs to which the market is targeted. Target marketing is the directing of all marketing, promotional and media efforts for a brand to a chosen, sharply defined group of consumers. Positioning theory marks its departure from the old one by placing emphasis on the target consumer’s perceptions of a brand in relation to other brands. Its main focus, like all good marketing theory and practice, is on the target consumer’s characteristics, needs and expectations. The markets are inevitably faced with complex and heterogeneous groups. This means a multitude of consumer segments. Positioning is a theory that was born out of the intense competition let loose by a great proliferation of brands. This makes it necessary to understand who one’s closest competitors are and how one should seek to be unique among the similar. Each brand has to carve out a ‘niche’ to call its own. In such a competitive
product market, only that brand will survive which has been able to identify the segment that it will serve, which has particular benefits to attract that segment and which has engineered its position to match most closely with the needs and ‘dreams’ of that segment. Thus, the positioning of a brand and the target segment for which it is designed must be considered together as integral parts of one strategy. Integral, because just as a brand must be positioned to appeal to a target consumer segment, a consumer segment too would respond to a brand that occupies the position preferred by it. (Sengupta, 1990).

Cravens (1982), explains that target market and positioning strategies are like the two sides of a coin. They are inseparable, each depending upon the other.

Green (1986), says brand positioning and market segmentation appear to be the hallmarks of today’s marketing research. So the meaning and the methods of market segmentation are relevant for the discussion.

**Market segmentation:**

There have been several attempts to define market segmentation. McDaniel Jr. (1979), has given a simple definition. He says, ‘market segmentation is the process of identifying and evaluating various strata or layers of a market’. The same view is echoed by Schoell, (1985). He has identified the segments of people and organization that exist within a larger market. ‘The people in a given segment are supposed to be similar in terms of the criteria by which they are segmented. At the same time,
people in different segments are supposed to differ in terms of these criteria. The above mentioned definitions deal with the identification of segments which exist in a large market. The criteria and purpose of such identification have been explained by Heskett (1976), as the process by which groups of potential customers are identified by geographic area, buying behaviour patterns they hold in common, common perceptions they may hold for a product or service or common uses to which they might put a product or service for the purpose of

- a) designing more efficient marketing programs that can be directed primarily to one or more selected segments of
- b) positioning a product in relation to competition in a particular market segment”.

Thus market segmentation is used for identifying the small segments in the total market. This is done by grouping and dividing the entire market. ‘A market segment is a group that shares attributes such as age and income, or psychological traits, that make them the target of such marketing efforts (Nayar, 1987).

Marketing segmentation is the dividing of the entire mixed group of people who are members of a heterogeneous market into smaller, virtually similar subgroups that are like one another in some respect (Heldingsfield, 1974). Thus a heterogeneous market is grouped into the homogeneous needs of the consumer. For such homogeneous classification, attributes such as age, income and psychological traits
are used. That identification helps the marketer chalk out programmes for each subgroup in order to enhance consumer satisfaction and the profit position of business (Gandhi, 1995). Apart from the above mentioned methods of grouping the market segmentation, Hardin (1978), has suggested the following tools to sort out individuals into groups with homogeneous family needs regarding a product class or usage category. He says that 'market segmentation is the use of behavioural measurements and attitude scaling techniques, and / or socio-economic characteristics for such sort outs'.

Kotler (1985), has suggested that a few variables could be used to segment a market. He says, 'buyers are likely to differ in one or more aspects. They may differ in their desires, resources, geographical locations, buying attitudes, buying practices and so on'.

After identifying and / or grouping the market, the marketer has to prepare a strategy. Such a strategy will help him achieve his objective. Rachman (1985), has explained the aim of dividing the market. He says, 'split up the total market into smaller, more homogeneous groups and aim their production and selling strategies at these target markets. Smith (1956), has defined the market segmentation strategy as merchandising to a 'heterogeneous market by emphasizing the precision with which a firm's products can satisfy the requirements of one or more distinguishable market segments'.
Reynolds (1965), has also reflected the same view in his definition. He observes, 'the market segmentation strategy sees the market as composed of many different segments, each differing in its wants and needs, and urges marketers to design their products and aim their appeals for specific market segments'.

Buskirk (1970), also views 'market segmentation as a strategy of planning a marketing program that takes into account the wide variation in the demand factors existing in the various market segments that are potentially in the market for the product. In essence, a special program is custom-designed for maximum effectiveness in each market segment to be solicited.'

Buell (1984), also supports the above mentioned view regarding segmentation. He says, 'market segmentation is the division of market into those sub-groups which have special needs and preferences and which represent sufficient pockets of demand to justify separate marketing strategies.

Thus market segmentation reflects the needs of the population. Mandell and Roseberg (1983), have endorsed the same view. According to them, 'market segmentation is a natural reflection of the diverse and constantly shifting needs of the population. Stantan and Futrell (1987), say that 'management selects one or more of these market segments as the organisation's target market. Finally, a separate marketing mix is developed for each segment or group of segments in this target market'.

75
Segmentation involves identification of groups of buyers that differ in their requirements, in terms of satisfying their needs. The members of each of these groups, however, have similar requirements. Each segment is therefore homogeneous. There are several steps involved in this process. It is necessary to determine the dimensions along which the differences in requirements of customer groups are to be ascertained. These could be product characteristics, price or other factors. Next, customer requirements along these dimensions have to be ascertained and segments with homogeneous requirements identified. It is then necessary to estimate the potential size of each of these market segments and determine how well these segments are being served by other companies and products. Finally, these segments need to be described in terms of their geographic, demographic, social and psychographic characteristics, in order to determine how to reach them (Dholakia, et.al 1978).

The process of dividing a market into meaningful and relatively similar and identifiable segments or groups is called market segmentation (Lamb et.al 1994).

The process of dividing a potential market into distinct subjects of consumers with common needs or characteristics and selecting one or more segments to target with a distinct marketing mix is known as market segmentation (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1996).
**Methods of segmentation:**

There are several different methods of segmenting a market. Mandell and Rosenberg (1983), have suggested two general approaches to identify market segments. They are: to define segments by consumer characteristics or by consumer response. Marketers often combine these approaches to get as comprehensive a picture of the segment as possible. The seven major segment bases are connected in such a way that data gathered on one basis can overlap with data gathered on another. The following chart shows the major approaches to market segmentation.

![Segmentation Analysis Diagram](image)

**Fig. No.3** The major approaches to segmentation.
a) **Geographic characteristics:**

Grouping potential customers by geographic location is the oldest form of market segmentation. Often the reasons for segmenting on this basis are self-evident. When people move they often buy new household supplies and other goods and sometimes they switch to new brands and store them in the process. According to Gandhi (1995), 'Region and climate' are the two variables which are included in geographic segmentation. McDaniel (1979), makes urban and rural classification in geographic segmentation. Ramasamy and Namakumari (1983), have made a rural geographic segmentation and listed the following as variables:

(a) Climate, (b) level of irrigation, (c) Agricultural productivity and (d) nearness to feeder towns.

b) **Demographic characteristics:**

Demography is the study of human population in terms of its size, density and distribution. Demographic and socioeconomic statistics can be compiled on a range of factors, such as age, sex, family size, income and occupation, education, religion, ethnic status and social class. Ramasamy and Namakumari (1983), have identified rural demographic segmentation variables. They are (a) population spread, (b) agewise segmentation, (c) literacy, (d) income, (e) overall profile of the villages.
The method of dividing markets based on demographic variables such as age, gender, income, ethnic background and family life cycle is a series of stages determined by a combination of age, marital status, and the presence or absence of children. It is a valuable basis for segmenting the markets. (Lamp et al., 1994).

c) **Psychographic factors:**

Grouping consumers according to psychographic factors is one of the more recent trends of the consumer characteristics approach. Psychographic characteristics have been defined to include personality factors, lifestyles and attitudes. A word that describes people's activities, opinions and the sum total of their interests and values is an essential feature in the psychographic profile. McDaniel (1979) says that psychographic factors reveal the personality of the customers. Gandhi (1995), also views that the psychographic factors reveal the personality of the customers. Personality could be defined by the following terms:

- **Gregariousness** - Extrovert, Introvert
- **Autonomy** - Dependent, independent
- **Conservatism** - Liberal, Radical, Traditional and Modern
- **Authoritarianism** - Autocratic, Democratic.

Very few conceptual models are available to guide the selection of variables to be included in a psychographic segmentation study. One early model was provided
by Wind and Green (1974), wherein they identified five sets of variables that could be included to define a person’s lifestyle. These are a person’s (a) value system, (b) personality traits, (c) product and service consumption preferences, (d) activities, interests and opinions (AIO’s) and (e) attitudes towards product class or brands.

The Agarwal et. al (1990), model suggests that a person’s values and personality traits are primary, and that these are reflected in the person’s consumption behaviour, AIO’s and attitudes. Psychographic segmentation provide useful tools which can provide discrimination of consumption of both product class and brand.

Psychological factors such as needs, motivation, personality, perception, learning involvement and attitudes are used in psychological study. Similarly the same factors are studied in psychographic study. (Shiffman and Kanuk, 1996).

The consumer response approach differs from the consumer characteristics approach in that it analyzes why a consumer buys a product rather than who the consumer is. Marketers analyse consumer responses to their offerings by using four yardsticks namely, benefits, usage, loyalty and occasion.

**Benefits response:**

In this grouping, consumers are lumped together on the basis of what they are seeking in a given product: whether it is efficiency, prestige, durability, economy or
any other quality. Segmentation based on benefits response is usually the most practical approach from a marketing standpoint because of its connection to product planning and advertising.

**Usage Response**

It means the amount of usage that a particular product has among different consumer segments. Using this approach, marketers classify consumers as heavy, moderate, light users or nonusers of a product. Then, as with the benefits response, an attempt is made to relate these distinctions to demographic and psychographic factors. Marketers are usually the most interested in the heavy product users since they consume four to ten times as much as light users.

**Loyalty response:**

It is one of the most familiar segment bases. It is also a difficult one to pin down concretely. Every marketer has consumers who are extremely loyal, moderately loyal and fickle. Then too, the most loyal consumers may not be the heaviest users. Marketers are thus well advised to find out what their most loyal customers have in common so that more of them can be acquired. Brand loyalty is hard to measure because it may depend on the availability of competing products. Also, the reasons for faith in a product are often too personal to be of much help to marketers in performing market segmentation analysis.
Occasion Response:

The loyalty, benefits and usage responses vary according to the immediate situation. Marketers use the occasion response to determine which situations produce optimal consumption patterns for a given product. This ‘sense of occasion’ is extremely valuable when it comes to designing the marketing mix (Mandell et.al, 1983).

3) Perceptual mapping:

When marketers and advertising professionals begin to display their interest in the perceptions of target consumer segments, the next natural step is to measure these perceptions. This constitutes an open invitation to mathematical psychologists to move in. Today, a marketer cannot play the positioning game without ‘perceptual mapping’.

Perceptual mapping represents consumer perceptions usually in a two dimensional space so that the manager can readily see where his own brand is positioned in the mind of his consumer and in relation to other brands. Although the judgements of managers, sales staff or the trader may be used to plot brand positions in the consumer’s perceptual space, it is not advisable to substitute them for consumer judgements, which can only be obtained through field research. Consumers are asked
to rate a set of brands along the given attributes or benefits or they may be asked merely to judge, by pairs, how similar or dissimilar the brands are. (Sengupta, 1990).

According to Urban, et.al (1987), perceptual mapping techniques identify the underlying dimensions that differentiate consumers’ perceptions of products and the positions of existing products on the dimensions. Brand mapping or Perceptual mapping is a means of displaying or graphing in two or more dimensions, the location of products, brands, or group of products in the customer’s mind. (Lamp et.at. 1994).

Wilkes (1977), has demonstrated how multidimensional scaling and cluster analysis can be used to gauge consumer perceptions of competitive brands to determine if the desired positionings are being achieved.

Aaker and Day (1980), observe that multidimensional scaling addresses the general problem of positioning objectives in a perceptual space. Much of marketing management is concerned with such questions of positioning as “With whom do we compete?”, “How are we compared to our competitors?”, “On what dimensions?”, “What positioning strategy should be followed?”, and so on. The questions are addressed by multi-dimensional scaling techniques.

Green et.all (1994), have studied the two areas of application of multi-dimensional scaling techniques, namely. (i) market segmentation and, (ii) large-scale new product development models.
Market segmentation is studied by the relationship of perception and/or ideal point position to other characteristics of the buyer, such as the usual socioeconomic, personality, and demographic variables. Several researchers have proposed large-scale integrated procedures for new-product development and testing that are primarily based on multi-dimensional scaling.

Lautman *et al.* (1978), presents, a straight-forward multi-dimensional scaling method, which can be used to first select an advantageous advertising theme and then to test the persuasive effectiveness of its executions in terms of positioning or repositioning a brand or product in a desired direction.

Hooley (1980), expressed a representation of the relationship between objects (usually brands in the marketing context) and/or between variables (often product attributes), and/or between evaluators of the objects or variables (respondents). The relationships discovered are used to build a picture of brand images in the minds of the respondents and an indication of an individual respondent's product requirements.

Thus multidimensional scaling helps to segment the market, to know the perception of the consumers about the brand, the product and the marketer.

There are a number of computer programs available for conducting multidimensional scaling (MDS) analysis. The following are widely used for marketing applications.
(I) MDPREF

It is designed to do multidimensional scaling of preference or evaluation of data. It is a metric model based on principal components analysis. Input data are usually stimuli evaluation data, although paired comparisons can be used in older versions of the model.

MDSCAL 5M constructs a configuration of points in space from information about the distances between points. Input data are proximities (similarities) of stimuli-nonmetric and metric scaling can be performed, as nonmetric and metric unfolding.

INDSCAL performs a canonical decomposition of W-way tables and analysis of individual differences in multidimensional scaling. Proximity data are input and the program produces up to a 7-way solution for 10 dimensions.

PREFMSP produces preference mapping analysis based on a generalization of the combination enfolding model of preference. The program relates preference data to a multidimensional solution. Given a stimulus configuration and a set of preference scales, the procedure finds for each individual an ideal point in the given stimulus space.

PROFIT is a technique for filling outside property vectors into stimulus spaces. Input data are the coordinates of stimulus points in k-dimensional space derived from an MDS procedure and sets of independently determined physical measures.
KYST represents a blending of MDSCAL 5M and TORSC A9. It includes the initial configuration procedure from TORSCA and has the capability of rotating solutions to principal components. The program handles metric and non-metric scaling and unfolding and uses proximity input data. (Green et.al, 1994).

4) **Brand attributes and benefits:**

The physical existence of a brand is no assurance that it has a position in the target consumer's mind. To enter that covered territory - the consumer's perceptual space- and to secure a 'position' there, the brand must satisfy his question, 'What's there in it for me ?' It must offer a benefit which is of importance to the customer. These elementary brand attributes are the manufacturer's views of the brand. Brand attributes and benefits:- (Sengupta, 1990).

Most marketing managers have suggested the strategies for positioning their brand through brand attributes and their benefits. The brand attributes and benefits are measured by the unique selling propositions (USP) of the brands.

According to McGirr (1973), a variety of positioning strategies are available to the marketer for positioning the brands. The different strategies of brand positioning are used to find a strong position and then to maintain it comfortably. Positioning tells what the marketer stands for.
Reaves, (1961), chairman of the Ted Bates and Company claims that the theory of the USP enables the agency to increase turnover, while generating dramatic, and in some cases unexpected, sales for its clients. The USP has three major features: (a) Each advertisement must make a proposition to the consumer (b) The proposition must be one that the competition cannot, or does not, offer, and (c) The proposition must be so strong that it can move the masses, i.e., pull new customers to the product.

Eliseggev (1982), suggests that the primary role of advertising is to effect positioning. The objective of advertising is to serve as a vehicle for positioning, that is, to cause the target market to internalise that positioning.

Stewart & Koslow (1989), have found out that advertisement is quite consistent with the best creative wisdom, which has long advocated creating unique selling propositions, distinctive brand images, and making the product the “hero” of the commercial.

A study by Smith and Lush (1976), has revealed that product position can mean situational conditions in the industry. When product position is the competitive basis, unique selling proposition advertising is the typical form of promotion.

Jaffe et.al. (1992), conducted a study on the impact of comprehension, positioning and segmentation on advertising response. The objective was to show that the degree of comprehension of an advertisement’s positioning has a real and
measurable impact on advertising response. The degree of comprehension precisely influences one’s response to a communication. This communication persuades the target consumer. All the benefits of a brand can be easily reached by the consumers so that they have very good perceptions.

Pechmann and Ratneshwar (1991) have suggested that the direct comparative advertisements can enhance a consumer’s perceptions of the advertised brand by associating it with the comparison brand and by simultaneously differentiating the brand by lowering the consumer’s perceptions of the comparison brand on the featured attribute.

Stewart et al. (1989) have tried to describe the executional content of television commercials and to relate that content to measures of advertising effectiveness. Their study has produced a number of useful insights, including an empirical demonstration of the importance of brand differentiation.

Mittal (1994) has made a study on public assessment of television advertising. His study has confirmed that the only silver lining in the consumers’ perceptions of an advertisement is their acknowledgement of its informational value and the fact that it enables free television watching. Thus, advertisement in television passes information about the brand attributes and that information creates perception of the brand, which has informational value free of cost to the target consumers.
Aaker and Bruzz (1981), who analysed 524 prime-time television commercials have suggested that viewer reaction is generally positive and can in part be captured by entertaining, by personal relevance, by creating a sense of warmth and perhaps by focusing upon the family, kids or relationships among friends.

As television spread in India during the late-1970s, so too did Nirma’s popularity. The little girl on the pack became the symbol of a good-quality, low-priced detergent. A catchy jingle hammered home the message to millions of housewives—that they could wash their clothes at one third of the cost of detergent powders manufactured by the big houses. (Nadkarni, 1992).

**Packaging:**

“Packaging is the least expensive form of advertising”.

“Every package is a five second commercial”.

“The package is the product”

These statements bear eloquent testimony to the magnified role that packaging now plays in marketing products and services (Gershman, 1987).

The introduction of the new features in products and services is one of the most common methods of differentiating them and increasing sales, e.g., Minolta gained a significant competitive advantage when it was the first company to introduce cameras with automatic focus system (Nowlis and Simonson, 1996).
Concepts used in this study

On the basis of the review given above, the following concepts are defined for this study.

**Brand:** A brand is a particular product, or line of products, offered for sale by a single producer or manufacturer and made easily distinguishable from other similar products by a unique identifying name and/or symbol.

**Brand image:** Brand image means the perception of a product form in the mind of the consumer which is the result of the symbols and meanings associated with a particular brand. Advertising is often used to create a brand image.

**Brand recognition:** Brand recognition refers to a stage in brand acceptance in which consumers remember having heard about or seen a product, even if they have not yet tried it. Such recognition is a company’s first objective for a newly introduced product. The effectiveness of advertising and other publicity programs geared to familiarizing the consuming public with such a new product or brand may be tested by either a recognition survey or a recognition test.

A brand name is in stage two of brand recognition, when a person remembers having seen or heard of the brand. Most marketing managers are related if their brand
reaches this degree of brand preference in the market place. Consumption of the brand will naturally depend on the degree of brand availability and consumer needs.

**Brand Knowledge:** This is the initial stage in the consumer adoption process during which the buyer becomes aware of the product but has gathered little information about it.

**Perception:** It refers to what the individual sees within a stimulus field and the interpretation or meaning which is ascribed to the stimulus. Perception is affected first by the properties of the physical stimulus.

**Perceptual mapping:** Perceptual mapping is a marketing research tool in which a number of factors such as product attributes, customer preferences, and brand particularities are plotted on a chart on the basis of Computer Analysis.

**Product class:** It is a group or category where detergent cakes and powders compete. This category is made on the basis of the price charged by the retailers. This class consists of three groups or categories, namely, premium product class, semi-premium product class and discounted-price products.
**Premium Products/Brands**

Detergent cakes and powders which are highly priced are called premium brands.

**Semi-premium products/Brands**

Detergent cakes and powders which are charged medium (in between premium and discounted) prices are called semi-premium products/Brands.

**Discounted price products/Brands.**

Detergent cakes and powders which are priced very low are called discounted products/Brands.

**Demographic segmentation**

It is a method of market segmentation based on the place of abode of the respondents, the size of the household and the demographic profile of the respondents.

**Physical features:-**

They refer to a method of segmenting the market on the basis of physical attributes, for example, age.
Psychological factors

They refer to another method of segmenting the market. The respondent’s choice of the colour of washing products is the most important decision for a marketer. This factor is studied through the psychological attitudes of the customers.

Sociological factors

A marketer can also segment the market by sociological factors. In a society, people differ by caste, religion and their status in the family (e.g., being a housewife and being employed are the two status of a women).

Usage segmentation

The usage of brands among the various customers helps to segment the market. The expenditure pattern on cosmetics and detergents per month, the frequency with which new detergent brands are experimented on, the purchasing dates, the methods of washing the clothes, and the quantity used (light and heavy) are the factors which help to segment the detergent market on the basis of usage.

Habitualness segmentation

The habitualness of the customers in purchasing apparels and the frequency of purchasing clothes in a year is used to segment the market.
Loyalty segmentation

The loyalty of the customers is also used to segment the detergent market. When the preferred brand is not available at the point of purchase, the customers', chances of buying a new brand and brand preference of the customers are studied in loyalty segmentation.

Behavioural segmentation:

Behavioural segmentation is the process of grouping customers into market groups according to their demographic character, physical attributes, psychological factors and sociological factors.

Brand attributes

They mean brand characteristics.

Brand consciousness

The interest of the consumer in the brand is known as brand consciousness. The consumer is very specific and particular about the brand and its characteristics.

Product consciousness

The interest of the consumer about the products available in the market is known as product consciousness. Here, the consumer’s consciousness is general.
**Multi-national corporations**

Multi-national corporations are those firms which conduct a significant proportion of their business in two or more countries.

**Multi-national brands**

Detergent cakes and powders which are marketed by the above mentioned corporations are called Multi-national brands.

**Local brands**

Detergent cakes and powders which are marketed by local manufacturers are called local brands.

**Multi-dimensional scaling**

It is a marketing research technique in which the perceptions and attitudes of respondents are geometrically represented. The information presented through this technique is subsequently analysed in an effort to aid managers in solving marketing problems, e.g., determining how consumers perceive a brand.

**Point of purchase**

It is a place, (i.e. retail shop) where the customers, or the end users buy their goods for cash or credit.
Price quality

The consumers equate high prices with high quality goods and low prices with low quality goods.

Unique selling proposition (USP)

The unique selling proposition was the brain child of Rosser Reeves, co-founder of the Ted Bates advertising agency. He explained the concept in his book Reality in Advertising (1961). Reeves advocated using research to verify the truthfulness of advertising claims and then launching hard-hitting campaigns based on the unique properties of the product. The unique selling proposition is a promise made in a highly competitive and convincing manner which positions the product clearly in the minds of the consumer.

Umbrella brand

It is also known as a Family brand. It refers to a line of products offered for sale by a single producer all of which carry the company’s brand name, logo, or similar identifying design. It is also known as blanket brand.

Celebrity

It refers to a type of promotion in which popular personalities are used to praise or recommend a particular product, service, idea or brand.
Innovators

They are also known as Pioneers. Innovators or pioneers are those who adopt or buy a product or brand within the first two days of its launch in the market.

Early Adopters

Respondents who buy or adopt between the third and ninth day of the launch of a product or brand are known as early adopters.

Late adopters

Respondents who buy or adopt a product or brand between the tenth and sixteenth day of its launch are known as late adopters.

Laggards

Respondents who never adopt or buy the newly launched brand are called laggards or non-adopters.

Heavy users

A heavy user family is one in which the number of persons is more than six.

Light users

A light user family is one in which the number of persons is less than six.
The study of detergent cakes and powders was made viable by the companies which are in the Indian market. The company such as Procter and Gamble was earlier Procter and Gamble Godrej Limited, which is now Procter and Gamble India Ltd., the current corporates may differ from that of the past, as new companies are formed or they get amalgamated with existing companies or they are absorbed by a multinational giant. During the period of this study Tata Oil Mill Company was operating in the Indian market, but now absorbed by Hindustan Lever Limited. As such the names of the companies taken in this research may vary from the current day corporates.


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