CHAPTER I

Introduction and Design of the Study

1.1. Introduction

Man is an unclothed creature. It is not known when the dress sense began. It is usually said that primitive people wore clothes for warmth and protection. The feeling of shame arose only after they got used to clothes. After the World War II, many readymade garment units were started in India. The industry comprises children’s wear, women’s wear, and men’s wear.
The textile and apparel industries have been the driving force for all developed countries. Today, countries such as China, Korea, Vietnam, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Poland, Turkey, Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Africa have targeted the apparel industry as a means to provide jobs, raise their standard of living and create economic wealth. Each is at a different stage of development but all view the industry as a critical part of their social and economic health.

Traditionally, Indians preferred dresses stitched by local tailors. The growing awareness of brands since 1980 and the convenience offered by ready-to-wear garments were largely responsible for the development of the branded apparel industry in India.\(^1\) Other factors affecting its growth are as better purchasing power, access to fashion trends outside the country, and the superior quality of fabrics available in the fashion market. 1990s witnessed a drastic change in the overall economic environment of the country characterised by described liberal trade and new investment policies. After liberalization of Indian economy, there emerged more than 100 leading brands that swept off their feet the potential consumers.

In the perspective of clothing, people express themselves through consumption in innumerable ways. Similarly, executives determine the consumers’ perception regarding a particular product and brand due to the skill

\(^1\) Indian Retail Report 2010.
of communication with customers differently. In gender perspective, for building individuality, a reasonableness of attainment and recognition for fashion conscious people, brands are perceived essentially in separate outlook the information for which can be made available through market segmentation in which analysis can be done in a profound way to find out differences in shopping behaviour.

Market segmentation is defined as the process of dividing a market into distinct subsets of the consumers with common needs or characteristics and the selecting one or more segments to target with a distinct marketing mix. Segmentation studies are designed to discover the needs and wants of the specific groups of the consumers so that the specialized goods and services can be developed to meet the need of each group. In this competitive era, the marketer must be fully aware of about the customer needs distinctly and separately as two groups, males and females as regards what are they expecting from a brand, how they differ in their buying behaviours, factors which provide the incentive for the purchase of a particular brand. This vital information can help the companies to formulate the strategies as per the customer needs and deliver them the products which consumers want from the company. The brands magnetic hold on the customer work to the immense advantage of the company.
The consumer is the king in the modern marketing world. Consumer behaviour and attitude helps to determine effective technique and strategies by the marketeers for attaining great competitive advantage in the market.

To understand the buying behaviour of consumers the following factors which influence their buying behaviour. The factors include (i) influence of culture (ii) geographic locations (iii) exposure to urban lifestyles (iv) the way the consumer uses the products (v) places of purchases (vi) involvement of others in the purchase. These factors influence the buying behaviour of consumer and hence their responses to the marketing mix variables towards purchase decisions.

Readymade garments are used because these are fashionable, suitable for a particular occasion or event, season or climate and more specifically, they are economically suitable for all sorts of people. Various types of readymade garment are used by diverse sections of people and hence these are available in a wide variety too.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The consumers in general prefer to buy readymade garments because of certain reasons such as reasonable price, proximity, large variety, different qualities, durability of the cloth, time saving, availability and so on. Many leading textile manufacturers have established their readymade garments units to fulfil the consumer’s expectations in a modern way. Due to large scale
operation, the prices of readymade garments are reasonable. It has been realized by the foot-wear manufacturers like Bata, Liberty, Reebok and they have also started their business in the field of readymade garments in the line of sportswear to cater to the needs of the sports persons.

Readymade garments occupy an important place in the family budget of common people in not only in the urban but even in the rural areas. In India, readymade garment units function in the large, organized and unorganized small scale forms. Due to the advent of new inventions in the field of garments in the form of machinery and designs, the manufacturers of readymade garments attract a lot of customers who feel happy and excited.

In this context, the research inquisitive to know how far the consumers of Madurai City took to readymade garments. Hence, subject matters such as consumer behaviour towards readymade garments constitute the crux of the problem.

1.3. **Review of Literature**

The review of previous studies related to consumer behaviour and consumer behaviour towards readymade garments is presented as under:
D.L. Louden and A.J. Delta Bitta (1979)\(^2\) in their book titled “Consumer Behaviour Concept and Application” viewed that the study of consumers buying behaviour normally should include less observable decision processes that accompany consumption, including where, how often and under what conditions consumers make their purchases of desired goods and services. Most of the marketeers have accepted the fact that the understanding of consumer buying behaviour is essential to their long-run success. Therefore, their major activities and strategies such as market opportunity analysis, target market selection and marketing mix decision are consumer oriented.

J.D. Singh and Raghbir Singh (1981)\(^3\) in their article titled “A Study of Brand Loyalty in India” found that consumers had single or multi-brand loyalty based on the nature of the product, like necessities or luxuries. Brand choice and store loyalty were found to affect the brand loyalty of the consumer. The factors that influence and strengthen loyalty to the brand where quality of product, habit of use and ready and regular availability.

A.K. Aggarwal (1983)\(^4\) in his article titled “Brand Loyalty in Blade” identified that the Indian consumers have become more and more brand loyal. Depending upon the nature of the product, namely, basic necessities or


luxuries, they have single or multibrand loyalty. This brand loyalty on their part has been found to be affected both by their brand choice as well as by their store loyal behaviour. The retailer continues to have an influence over the brand choice and the loyalty behaviour of the consumers as store loyalty has contributed in a big way to brand loyalty in the case of a large majority of the consumer surveyed.

G. Zoltman and M. Wallandorf (1983)⁵ in their book titled “Consumer Behaviour” found that human behaviour in the consumption process involves planning to make purchases, making purchases and using their purchase. In all these activities, consumer (a human being involved in consumption is termed consumer in marketing lexicon) is the target of marketing attempts to influence by major entities such as businesses, government agencies, advocate groups and by social groups such as family, friends and peers.

N. K. Malhotra and Newman (1983)⁶ in their article “An Individual Differences in Search Behaviour for a Non-Durable” stated that consumer search behaviour is an important factor in the field of decision-making. They have further pointed out that for marketing managers, understanding search behaviour is crucial for designing effective marketing communication campaigns.


K. Rajendran (1989)\textsuperscript{7} in his study titled, “A Psychological Study of Consumer Behaviour Towards Super Markets” attempted to understand the consumers and their behaviour towards the super markets through their attitude, personality factors and socio-economic background. He found that female consumers were more favourable to most of the aspects of the super markets than male consumers. Members of the super markets were not more favourable to the super market than they were expected to be consumers who were in the range of 41 to 50 years of age were more favourable to super market. He further found that the Muslim consumers showed a most favourable attitude to the super market and the Christian consumers were the least favourable. The consumers who were in the high socio-economic strata showed more interest to the super market. The large families with five or six members showed the most favourable attitude to the super market.

L. Krishnamurthy and S.P. Raj (1991)\textsuperscript{8} in their article titled “An Empirical Analysis of the Relationship between Brand Loyalty and Consumer Price Elasticity” identified that the loyal customers are to be less price sensitive and the presence of a loyal customer base provides the firm with valuable time to respond to competitive actions because a large number of loyal customers were considered as a competitive strength for a brand that has been identified as a major determinant of its equity. They viewed that brand loyalty


refers to a biased behavioural response expressed over time by some decision making unit with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands.

S. Shanmugasundari (1993) in her study “Consumer Preference in Readymade Garments in Madurai City” expressed the view that the preference of the customers of readymade garments was based on the specific aspects like comfortable, easy to wear, varieties, assortment of designs, price, models, trial room, size, different colours, updated fashion and technology, elegant looking and brand image. The young and middle age respondents prefer readymade garments based on the media, especially, television advertising and others.

Kent et al. (1994) in their article titled “Competitive Interference Effects in Consumer Memory for Advertising: The Role of Brand Familiarity” stated that the brand familiarity captures brand knowledge of the consumers. Although many advertised products are familiar to consumers, some others are unfamiliar either because of the reason that they are new to the market place or they have not yet been exposed to the brand. Consumers may have tried or may have used a familiar brand or they may have family or friends who have used the brand and told them something about it.

Frederick Reichheld (1994)\textsuperscript{11} pointed out in his book titled “The Loyalty Effect” that ‘customers’ equity effectively explains success and failure in businesses. The companies with the highest retention rates also earn the profits. Relative retention, explains profits better than market share, scale, cost position or any other variable associated with competitive advantage.

W. Scoulten John and H. James Mc Alexander (1995)\textsuperscript{12} in their article titled “Subcultures of Consumption: An Ethnography of the New Bikers” experienced the multiple dimensions of brand knowledge. The reality that emerges from the varied activity in branding through the years is that all different kinds of information may become linked to a brand covering awareness, attitudes, benefits, images, thoughts, feelings, attitudes and experiences.

Evans \textit{et al.}, (1996)\textsuperscript{13} in their book titled “Applied Consumer Behaviour” stated that promotion is a one of the marketing mix component which is a kind of communication with consumers. The promotion includes the use of advertising, sales promotion, personal selling and publicity. Advertising is a non-personal presentation of information in mass media about a product, brand, company or store. It greatly affects consumers’ images, beliefs and attitudes towards products and brands, and in turn, influences their purchase

\textsuperscript{11} Frederick Reichheld., 1994, The Loyalty Effect. www.fusionbrand.blogs.com


behaviours. This shows that promotion, especially, through advertising, can help establish ideas or perceptions in the consumers’ minds as well as help differentiate products against other brands.

Simintiras (1997)\textsuperscript{14} in his article titled “Prepurchase Satisfaction and First Time Buying Behaviour” attempted to distinguish evaluation outcomes of the likely future satisfaction from feelings or emotions prior to the act of purchase, and assesses the impact of prepurchase satisfaction on the purchase behaviour of first time buyers. After conceptualizing prepurchase satisfaction as the emotional outcome of anticipated satisfaction, it was hypothesized that; prepurchase satisfaction and anticipated satisfaction are related but distinct constructs; And prepurchase satisfaction levels are higher for potential first time buyers who buy than those who do not buy. The results provided support for both propositions, and suggest that anticipated satisfaction and prepurchase satisfaction are distinguishable constructs, and prepurchase satisfaction is a predictor of the purchase behaviour of first time buyers.

Linda M. Cushman and Carl L. Dyer (1997)\textsuperscript{15} in their article titled “Post-Acquisition Performance of Apparel Retailers: is bigger necessarily better?” mentioned that the apparel retailers overall appear to have

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experienced neither significant gains nor losses, indicating that they may actually fare somewhere better than acquiring firms in other countries.

Frank (1997)\textsuperscript{16} in his article titled, “Correlates of Buying Behaviour” found that there is no significant association between the socio-economic variables, namely, social class, sex, intelligence, marital status, family size and education of the buyers and their brand loyalty.

S.V. Nathan, (1997)\textsuperscript{17} in his article titled “Dimensions of Marital Roles in Consumer Decision Making” found that the product category is an important factor in the decision making process. Role specialisation of the wife is observed to be high for purchase of groceries, furniture and clothing, while that of the husband is significant for the purchase of automobiles and life insurance. Vacations and housing decisions are seen to fall under the savings, investments and household appliances come under the autonomic category.

Nancy \textit{et al.}, (1997)\textsuperscript{18} in their article titled “Consumers Definitions of Apparel Value: An Investigation of Department Store Shoppers” indicated the combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies using components of the EBM model to obtain a comprehensive consumer definition of value. The definition of value for the two product categories of women’s Jacket and

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men’s (dress) shirt was different. The known brand value consumer places sole importance of brand as a value indicator. The low price value consumer places importance first on price, followed by quality and brand value remains an important criterion in apparel product selection.

Bonnie D. Belleau et al., (1997)\textsuperscript{19} in their article titled “A comparison of older and younger women's attitudes towards apparel and media”, found that younger and older women have similar attitudes towards apparel. The media still target younger women more than older women for apparel promotion. It is observed that older women recognized the penetration and the magnitude of the media more than younger women. Older women aware of message from apparel promotion while younger women felt that there were no messages being conveyed. Older women make up a huge market segment with a large discretionary income. They are willing to spend a handsome amount on apparel that fits appropriately and appeals to them.

Kohli and Thakor (1997),\textsuperscript{20} in their article titled “Branding Consumer Goods: Insights from Theory and Practice” stated that the brand name is the creation of an image or the development of a brand identity and is an expensive and time consuming process. The development of a brand name is an essential part of the process since the name is the basis of a brand’s image. The brand name is important for the firm to attract customers to purchase the product and


influence repeat purchasing behaviour. Consumers tend to perceive the products from an overall perspective, associating with the brand name all the attributes and satisfaction experienced in the purchase and use of the product.

Mary A. Littrell et al., (1997)\textsuperscript{21} in their article titled “Marketing Ethnic Apparel: Single or Multiple Consumer Segments?” highlighted that wearing ethnic apparel holds different meaning for different consumers. Yet, across both clusters, consumers exhibited a number of characteristics common in the emerging population group of ‘cultural creative’. The female ethnic apparel consumers in this study were well educated and travelled internationally. Commonality is characteristic among the ethnic apparel consumers in this research and the emerging population group of cultural creative suggests a large potential market towards which ethnic apparel holds potential for successful marketing.

S.B. Biplab (1998)\textsuperscript{22} in his book entitled “Hand Book of Marketing Management” stated that the Indian customers have become more sensitive to quality, customer service and status. He is ready to pay, sometimes, astronomical sums, provided their needs are satisfied. They are basically looking for an experience which is more about cognitive than physical in nature.

\textsuperscript{21} Mary A. Littrell, Jennifer L. Paff Ogle and Soyoung Kinn, “Marketing Ethnic Apparel: Single or Multiple Consumer Segments?” Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management, 3(1), 1999, pp.31-43.

Rowley (1998) in his article titled “Promotion and Marketing Communication in the Information Marketplace” stated that the promotion is an important element of a firm’s marketing strategy. Promotion is used to communicate with customers with respect to product offerings, and it is also a way to encourage the purchase or sales of a product or service. Sales promotion tools are used by most organisations in support of advertising and public relations activities, and they are targeted toward consumers as final users. She further stated that promotion has a key role in determining profitability and market success and is one of the key elements of the marketing mix which includes advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, public relations and publicity, personal selling and sponsorship.

Amine (1998) in her article titled “Consumers’ True Brand Loyalty: The Central Role of Commitment” distinguishes two main approaches to define the loyalty construct: the behavioural one suggests that the repeat purchase of a brand over time by a consumer expresses their loyalty, and the attitudinal perspective which assumes that consistent buying of a brand is a necessary but not sufficient condition of ‘true’ brand loyalty and it must be complemented with a positive attitude towards this brand to ensure that this behaviour will be pursued further.

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Thus, brand loyalty is a function of both behaviour and attitudes. It is the preference of consumers to buy a particular brand in a product category. It occurs because consumers perceive that the brand offers the right product features, image, or level of quality at the right price. This perception becomes the foundation for new buying habits. Consumers will initially make a trial product of the brand and, when satisfied with the purchase, tend to form habits and continue to purchase the same brand because the product is safe and familiar.

Y. Jayashree (1998) in her article titled “Consumer Behaviour and Fashion Textile Trends” explained that the consumer taste is a controlling factor in determining the character of goods that appear on the market. A rational approach to clothing needs and expenditures makes the consumer to participate effectively in the entire market economy. It is concluded that changes in consumer values, tastes and living habits force a continual adjustment in the clothing industry.

Ruthor, Julie and Suraj Commuri (1998) in their article titled “Shifting Roles in Family Decision Making” exposed that the major economic decisions had become more shared and less controlled by just one family member. Most decisions involved collaboration of partners instead of being a solo-decision.

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Vidyadhar Reddy Aileni, (1998)\textsuperscript{27} in his article titled “Effectiveness of Print Advertisements – A Study of Indian Service Organisation” found that the awareness advertisement given by service organization is very high. The major sources of media are newspaper, magazines and journals, television and billboards. There is a significant difference among the ranking given by males and females regarding the message with respect to the study advertisement. Similarly, there is a significant difference between male and female.

R.E. Bucklin \textit{et al.}, (1998)\textsuperscript{28} in their article titled “Determining Segmentation in Sales Response across Consumer Purchase Behaviours” stated that the price significantly influences consumer choice and incidence of purchase. He emphasized that discount pricing makes households switch brands and buy products earlier than needed. Price is described as the quantity of payment or compensation for something. It indicates price as an exchange ratio between goods that pay for each other. Price also communicates with the market the company’s intended value positioning of its product or brand.

Leon G. Schiffman (1998)\textsuperscript{29} in his article stated that consumers seek information about the product and product class through word of mouth communication (from friend and family and from other people whose opinions


\textsuperscript{29} Leon G. Schiffman (1998), Journal of Marketing, 63, pp.33-44.
They spend more time thinking about their choice and search for more information about the product alternatives when they associate in a high degree of risk with the purchase. This strategy is straightforward and logical because the more information the consumer has about the product and the product category, the most probable consequence and thus the lower the perceived risk.

Jaishri and Jethwaney (1999)\(^{30}\) in their book titled “Advertising” the research type was exploratory as it was conducted to develop a concept about the purchasing behaviour of buyers of branded men’s garments and the impact of advertising on their purchase decision. This study concluded that most of the time, buyers visit the showrooms of branded garments with the purpose of shopping.

Suyan Shin and Kitty Dickerson (1999)\(^{31}\) in their article titled “Personal and Non-Personal References Used by South Korean Men in Apparel Purchase Decision” found that Korean men indicated that they preferred to consult non-personal preferences than to consult personal references when making apparel buying decisions. The most efficient method for reaching the male clothing consumer is by marketing products through advertisements in non-personal references. The three media references influence the Korean men are store displays, window displays and billboards. The highly educated and affluent


\(^{31}\) Suyan Shin and Kitty Dickerson (1999) “Personal and Non – Personal References Used by South Korean Men in Apparel Purchase Decision”.

men are more likely to use position media. The youngest consumers were least likely to use of position media references. Teenage Korean males appear to be influenced more by television advertising.

K.M. Anitha Goyal (1999)\textsuperscript{32} in her study titled “The Influence of Supplementary Services on the Consumer’s Evaluation of the Credit Card System with Special Reference to Delhi” found that a significance number of respondents had taken into consideration the supplementary services prior to purchase for making a credit card purchase decision. She further found that the respondents who were in the age group of 24 to 35 years carried a preference for supplementary services compared to other age groups. She concluded that both males and females had evaluated the supplementary services in a more or less similar framework.

N.R. Padmanaban and K. Sankaranarayanan (1999)\textsuperscript{33} in their study titled “Business Experience, Product Lines of Dealers and Farmer's Loyalty to the Dealer for Pesticides in Southern Tamil Nadu” highlighted that the price of the preferred brand, efficiency of the preferred brand and influence of advertisement, significantly influenced the brand loyalty. Only when the price of a particular brand was comparatively low, the farmers would naturally prefer


the low priced brand. Otherwise, the farmers would naturally continue to purchase the same brand.

A research conducted by Duff (1999)\textsuperscript{34} titled “Niche Marketing in Fashion in Women’s Sportswear” investigated the niche market in women’s sportswear, and the results showed that sportswear shoppers were becoming more fashion conscious and were demanding products with more style. Furthermore, consumers have a tendency to wear different attires for different occasions.

Omar (1999)\textsuperscript{35} in his book entitled “Retail Marketing” emphasised that the store environment was the single most important factor in retail marketing success and store longevity. Positive attributes of the store, which include store location, store layout, and in-store stimuli, affect brand loyalty to some extent. Store location and number of outlets are crucial in altering consumer shopping and purchasing patterns.

Kumud Diwan (2000)\textsuperscript{36} in her study titled “A Study of Consumer Behaviour and Managing Customer Value in the Post-Liberalization Indian Marketplace-with Special Reference to Delhi” stated that the multinational corporations entered India by targeting a 250 million middle class and a


10 million super rich class of consumers. These multinationals tried to entice the urban Indian consumers with their choicest offerings. She mentioned that the Indian consumer, however, was a very different phenomenon from the pre-conceived notions these multinationals had. He was a value maximiser, extremely well informed and choose carefully and most of all, a swadeshi conscience that did not accept premium value behind them. She further found that social factors like family played a crucial role in influencing the purchase decision.

Low and Lamb (2000)\(^{37}\) in their article titled “The Measurement and Dimensionality of the Brand Associations” came out with an interesting conclusion that well-known brands tend to exhibit multi-dimensional brand associations, consistent with the idea that consumers have more developed memory structures for more familiar brands. Consumers might be willing to expend more energy in processing information regarding familiar brands compared to unfamiliar brands.

Deeter-Schmelz et al., (2000)\(^{38}\) in their article titled “Prestige Clothing Shopping by Consumers: a Confirmatory Assessment and Refinement of the Precon Scale with Managerial Implications” examined the background on the symbolic aspects of consumption; prestige shopping behaviour; reassessment


and refinement of the PRECON scale and impact of income and age on prestige shopping. The paper concluded with managerial implications for the United States apparel retailers dealing in prestige clothing.

Cadogan and Foster (2000)\textsuperscript{39} in their article titled “Relationship Selling and Customer Loyalty: An Empirical Investigation” stated that the price is probably the most important consideration for the average consumer. Consumers with high brand loyalty are willing to pay a premium price for their favoured brand, hence, their purchase intention is not easily affected by price.

Kincade et al., (2002)\textsuperscript{40} in their article titled “Buyer–Seller Relationships for Promotional Support in the Apparel Sector” stated that the purpose of the study was to define promotional support categories offered to apparel retailers by manufacturers, to identify the perceptions of retailers of the offering frequency and importance of the promotional support, and to investigate the relationship between offering frequency and perceptions of importance. Results indicated that monetary support was regarded as the most important promotional support.

S. Abbas (2002)\textsuperscript{41} in his study titled “A Study on Consumer Brand Preference towards Readymade Shirt in the Madurai City” viewed that the


importance of branding, brand preference, measuring of brand, brand loyalty and purchasing power on the basis of income level of the respondent. He also found that the brand “S Kumar” is preferred by most of the respondents in the study.

Marnik G. Dekimpe et al., (2003)\textsuperscript{42} in their article “Erosion and Variability in Brand Loyalty” stated that a firm’s ability to retain customer and foster brand loyalty is crucial for its success. Loyal customers are typically less price sensitive than others, and a loyal customer base provides firms with a usable time to respond to competitive conditions. Indeed, a cost of attracting a new customer has been found to be costlier by six times higher than the cost of retaining a current customer.

Francis Sekar (2003)\textsuperscript{43} in his article titled “Culture – A Factor that Influences Buyer Behaviour in Canada and India” stated that the consumers compare and evaluate their attitudes towards brand and purchasing behaviour in the context of the reference groups to which they belong to. Reference group is of a relative, friend, neighbour, family member and celebrities like cini actor, cini actress, player, leader and so on. Culture, religion, race, occupation, income and communication, education and reference group types are the factors which influence a buyer behaviour in Canada and India.

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\textsuperscript{43} Francis Sekar, “Culture – A Factor that Influences Buyer Behaviour in Canada and India”, Indian Economic Panorama, 13(3), October 2003, pp.42-49.
Verma and Surender Munjal (2003) in their article titled “Brand Loyalty Correlates: Study of FMCGS” identified the major factors in making a brand choice decision namely quality, price, availability, packaging and advertising. The brand loyalty is a function of behavioural and cognitive pattern of the customer. The age and demographic variable affect significantly the behaviour and cognitive pattern of the consumers. Demographic characteristics such a gender and marital status are not significantly associated with these behavioural and cognitive patterns of the consumers.

Lin and Chang (2003) in his journal titled “Determinant of Habitual Behavior for National and Leading Brand in China” showed that the channel convenience of the brands had significant influence on buying behaviour. This means that the accessibility to this product/brand in the store is important when purchasing low involvement products. Consumers will not go to another store just to find the brand. Instead, they will stay put and choose another brand.

C. Rajendra Kumar (2003) in his article titled “Ten Commandments of Branding Strategies” stated that the brand image forms a specific figure in the consumer's mind at the very first time. Sometimes brand extension may result in failure. For example, in the mid 80’s, Ponds launched toothpaste with a
strong brand image in talcum powder, but it was a total failure because, the consumer was obsessed with talcum powder. Building and properly managing brand equity and become a priority for companies of all sizes, in all types of market from strong brand equity flows customer’s loyalty and profit. Brand constitutes a large of the intangible assets the company own. Today, companies are beginning to recognize the balance sheet value of their brands.

Bhattacharya, C.B. and Sen, S. (2003)\textsuperscript{47} in their article titled “Consumer-company identification: a framework for understanding consumers’ relationships with companies” stated that behaviour refers to the mental and emotional process and the observable behaviour of consumers during searching, purchasing and post consumption of a product or service. Consumer behaviour involves a study of how people buy, what they buy, when they buy and why they buy. It blends the elements from psychology, sociology, socio-psychology, anthropology and economics.

V. Mitchell and G. Walsh (2004)\textsuperscript{48} in their article entitled “Gender Differences in German Consumer Decision-Making Styles” stated that gender has been identified in much literature on consumer shopping behaviour as a significant factor in understanding consumer behaviour and as a fundamental market segmentation index for companies to meet the needs and


wants of the customers. Marketeers should strive to understand the gender differences in decision-making styles. Research addressing the issue of gender differences in decision-making styles could help marketeers to find better ways of communicating with both sexes and to guide marketing mix decisions.

Ravichandran, K. and Nagarajan, S. (2004)⁴⁹ in their article titled “Factors Determining the Brand Preference of TV” understood that the brand preference of consumer durables is largely influenced by a number of factors such as advertisements, price, quantity, performance, after sale service and the like. These factors play a vital role in the decision making process and in the brand preference.

They also found that Advertisement plays a vital role in influencing the purchase decision of a particular brand of TV. Socio-economic factors such as sex, age, education, occupation and income influence the brand preference and motivate the buyers to choose the buyer's market, style and features of the product also act as a determinant of buying decision.

Sangitha Joshi (2004)⁵⁰ in her article titled, “How does a Marketeer Approach a Large Market Divided by Culture and Geography?” quoted the words of kotler that the success of a marketing strategy for promoting a product was based on variation, not offering the same product everywhere and thus

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⁵⁰ How does a Marketer Approach a Large Market Divided by Culture and Geography?” The Hindu Business line, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, April 15, 2004.
products themselves could be different for different regions, based on the respective consumers’ preferences, purchasing habits and their culture. She also mentioned that for pizza, the Americans preferred pepperoni, the Japanese preferred popular topping, the English preferred tuna and corn, the Guatemalians preferred black bean and sauce, the Chileans preferred mussels and clams, the Bahamas preferred barbered chicken and Indians preferred thandoori chicken. She concluded that while manufacturing a product the needs, preferences and the cultural influences of the consumers are to be taken into account.

K. Chidambaram and S. Ganesan (2004)\textsuperscript{51} in their article, “Brand Preference of Talcum Powder” highlighted that talcum powder is one of the popular cosmetics used by both men and women. It has been traditionally used for its fragrance and feeling freshness. There are numerous companies marketing their talcum powder under different brand names. The major ingredients are more or less same.

However, the brand name of a product plays an important role in determining the product success or failure. Freshness beautification measures followed by fragrance are the reasons for using the talcum powder by consumers. Brand preference is an important aspect of the purchase decision. Generally brand selection is based on certain choice criteria, namely quality, price, model and the like.

B. Nagaraja (2004)\textsuperscript{52} in his article titled “Consumer behaviour in rural areas: A micro level study of consumer behaviour in Kavi Mandal” stated that the buying behaviour is very much influenced by the experience of their own and of neighbour consumers and his own family. The involvements of his own family members were exerting maximum influence on his purchases. Above all, the quality of the product and its easy availability were the primary and the vital determinants of his buying behaviour. Consumers were influenced by touch and feel aspect of any promotional activity.

Nick Wreden (2004)\textsuperscript{53} in his book entitled “Fusion is Branding: How to Forge Your Brand or the Future”, showed that branding has a little secret; it doesn’t know how to count. However, the author mentioned the measure of brand is a pseudo-measurement, i.e., brand equity. It can be used to overcome the inability of traditional accounting to measure intangible strategic assets, like perceived quality, brand and channel resources, to rise to power point fame in marketing for several reasons. It appeared to quantify intuitive recognition about the value of the brands. It incorporated two brand strengths - its standing with purchases and the perception among prospects and customers. Brand strength provides a means to rank winners and losers in branding wars.


Huddleston et al., (2004)\textsuperscript{54} in their article titled “Food Store Loyalty: Application of a Consumer Loyalty Framework” felt that customer loyalty could yield a favourable operating cost advantage for retailers. Furthermore, they stressed that obtaining new customers cost five to six times as much as retaining existing customers. Loyal customers can increase their purchase spending. The cost of retaining them is low compared to obtaining new customers.

R. Renganathan (2005)\textsuperscript{55} in his article titled, “Consumer Markets and Buyer Behaviour of Cars” stated that the brand name and features, mileage, price, maintenance, style, engine power, after sales service are the key factors considered in purchasing any automobile. Type of buyer behaviour involved in car purchase is complex buying behaviour. Many people feel that car is a necessity for commuting convenience with more comfort. A car now a day is not a symbol of status, but essential for a family.

K. Ramasamy et al., (2005)\textsuperscript{56} in their article titled “Consumer Behaviour Towards Instant Food Products” indicated that the buying behaviour is vastly influenced by awareness and attitude towards the product. Commercial advertisements over television where looked upon as the most important source


of information, followed by displays in retail outlets. Consumers do build opinion about a brand on the basis of which various product features play an important role in the decision making process. A large number of respondents laid emphasis on quality and felt that price is an important factor while the others attached importance to image of a manufacturer.

Frings (2005)\textsuperscript{57} in his book titled “Fashion: From Concept to Consumer” stated that the components of product, quality of fashion merchandise include size measurement, cutting or fitting, material, colour, function and the performance of the merchandise. He expressed that fitting is a crucial aspect in garment selection because some fitted garments such as swimsuits and aerobic wear can ideally enhance the consumers’ general appearance.

The material is important in product quality because it affects the hand feel, texture and other performance aspects of the product. Further, consumers relate personally to colour, and could select or reject a fashion because of the colour. If the colour does not appeal to them, they will reject the fashion.

Ritu Narang (2006)\textsuperscript{58} in his article “A Study on Branded Men’s Wear” gives a brief account of readymade garment industry which is one of India’s largest foreign exchange earners. Garment manufacturing is one of the most fragmented sectors of the Indian textile industry. The garment industry


comprises manufacturers of readymade garment for either the domestic or export markets or in certain cases, both. The constituents of this segment are very diverse in terms of their size, production facility, the type of apparel manufactured, the quality of output, fabric requirement and price sensitivity. This is an industry with no visibility of data in an organized sense. Hence, the figures quoted are more about industry estimates rather than of any organized research.

N. Vincent (2006)\textsuperscript{59} in his article titled “A Study on Brand Consciousness among Children and its Effect on Family Buying Behaviour in Bangalore city” elicited that the quality is an important factor that draws consumers towards branded products. Branded products are accepted as good quality products. People do not mind paying extra for branded products, as they get value for money. Media is a key constituent in promoting and influencing brand. A child’s insistence affects family’s buying behaviour. Children are highly aware and conscious of branded items. Although, the unbranded products sometimes give the same satisfaction as branded products, customers would still prefer to purchase a branded product.

Russell and Taylor (2006)\textsuperscript{60} in their book titled “Operation Management: Quality and Competitiveness in a Global Environment” stated that the product quality encompasses the features and characteristics of a


product or service that bears on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. In other words, product quality is defined as “fitness for use” or ‘conformance to requirement”.

Preeta H. Vyas (2007)\textsuperscript{61} in her working paper titled “Sales Promotion in Apparel Retail Sector and Challenges Ahead” found that all the stores used in mass media for promotion. However, the use of mass media and electronic media varied across the sample under study. Use of only in store media would restrict the announcement to those who walk into the store. It can be assumed that only the loyal/frequent visitor would know about the offers. Whereas, the variety of media used would enhance footfalls to the store and trigger word of mouth.

Syed Mahmood Mohideen Razwi (2007)\textsuperscript{62} in his study titled “A Study of Consumer Behaviour Towards Readymade Garment in Chennai city” spoke of the influence of the consumers purchase of readymade garment based on the availability of brands, location of showroom, presentation of garments, quality, price, design and fashion.

Market research report (2008)\textsuperscript{63} titled “Women Wear Forecast to 2010” provides extensive research and rational analysis on the women apparel market


in India. It underlined the various factors responsible for the growth of women apparel market in India and helps to explore the opportunities associated with it. This study gives an insight into the changing market dynamics and identifies the potential segments in the overall women apparel market.

Wong Foong Yee and Yahyiah Sidek (2008) in their article titled “Influence of Brand Loyalty on Consumer Sportswear” concluded that the brand loyalty is important for an organisation to ensure that its product is kept in the minds of consumers and prevent them from switching to other brands. They also concluded in their research that it was not easy to obtain and maintain consumer loyalty for a company’s product because there were many forces drawing consumers away such as competition, consumers’ thirst for variety, and so on. From the analysis it was highlighted that there are six factors of brand loyalty in the Malaysian environment. They are, the brand name, product quality, price, promotion, service quality and store environment.

Lalitha et al., (2008) made a study entitled "Brand Preference of Men’s Wear" stated that the scope of the study focuses on the brand preference regarding shirts and pants of select consumers living in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. It is confined to the customers visiting the select showrooms in Hyderabad and Secunderabad.

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The objectives of this study were to know the reason why customers prefer branded shirts and pants to unbranded ones; to find out the influence of advertisement for branded clothing for the purchase behaviour of the respondent; and to know the factors influencing customers while choosing branded shirts or pants. It concluded that educational qualifications, employment status, age group, convenience of shops, and advertisement are the influencing factors for purchasing the branded shirts and pants by the respondents.

Ninety four per cent of the respondents are highly educated and purchased branded ready wears. The age group of 20-50 years is income earning people willing to spend on the branded wears. The study exhibited that the advertisements play a limited role for the selection of the brand among readymade dresses available in the market. Fifty four per cent of the customers are buying branded ready wear because of quality and status symbol.

Jana, Prabir (2011) in his article titled “Assembling Technologies for Functional Garments – An Overview” highlighted the higher functional properties and lesser aesthetic properties. They are work wear, active sportswear, medical wear, personal protective wears and smart wears.

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1.4. Research Gap

There have been numerous studies on readymade garments namely, consumer decision process, brand loyalty, brand preference, brand familiarity, marketing opportunities analysis, marketing mix decisions, consumption process, awareness, attitudes, consumer taste, family decision making, segmentation, targeting, positioning and mode of payment and so on. However, study on consumer behaviour towards readymade garments have not been studied that too in Madurai city. For the purpose of filling the research gap, the researcher has attempted to study the consumer behaviour covering VALS lifestyle, decision style, internal influences, external influences, buying process, psychological factors, psychographic factors, use related factors and online buying behaviour.

1.5. Scope of the Study

This study covers readymade garments of both men and women and it is confined to dress materials. Common readymade items such as inner garments, shawls, scarves, mufflers, mantillas, veils, handkerchiefs, gloves, mittens and mitts, and so on are excluded.

1.6. Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of this study:

1. To trace the origin, growth, modernization, and development of readymade garments industry.
2. To study the concept and model of consumer behaviour.

3. To analyse the attitude of the individual consumers towards readymade garments in Madurai city.

4. To analyse the attitude of the institutional consumers towards readymade garments in Madurai city.

5. To summarise the findings, offer suggestions to improve the consumer satisfaction in readymade garment industry and conclusion of the study.

1.7. Research Proposition for Individual Consumers

1. The various roles played by the respondents do not vary with the demographic characteristics of the respondents at 5 per cent.

2. The decision styles adopted by the respondents do not vary with the demographic characteristics of the respondents at 5 per cent.

3. The reasons for switching over to other brand do vary due to the demographic characteristics of the respondents at 5 per cent.

4. The reasons for recommending the present brand do vary due to the demographic characteristics of the respondents at 5 per cent.

1.8. Research Proposition for Institutional Consumers

1. The various criterions considered for selecting readymade by the respondents do not vary with the types of uniform worn at 5 per cent.
2. The various criterions considered for selecting readymade by the respondents do not vary with the contribution towards cost of uniform at 5 per cent.

1.9. Period of the Study

The relevant secondary data were collected for a period 14 years from 2000 to 2013. The necessary primary data were collected through well-structured interview schedule for a period of six months from August 2012 to January 2013.

1.10. Methodology

This is an empirical study based on a survey. To learn the features and functioning of the readymade garment industry, the manufacturers, dealers and other agencies were approached. The consumers of readymade garments were interacted for obtaining their opinion on the nature and features of readymade garments. Appropriate sampling size, frame and procedures were adopted.

1.10.1. Data Collection

The essential secondary data related to the production, marketing strategies adopted and so on were collected from the pamphlets, annual reports, records and bulletins from the readymade garment companies. The consumers’ opinion on the features of the product and services were obtained through a well-structured Interview schedule. The researcher discussed and interacted with the experts in the field of readymade garments for strengthening the
interview schedule. Arrangements were made to pre-test the interview schedule before it was administered to respondents.

1.10.2. Sampling Procedure

As a list of consumers of readymade garments is not known, the researcher adopted purposive sampling method for choosing the respondents for this study. However, the researcher collected primary information from a large sample of 500 respondents to represent the population. There are 504 retail outlets in Madurai city. The researcher has chosen 10 per cent of this total outlets randomly, 10 consumers of each outlets have been chosen. These 10 consumers were selected in a particular retail outlet by choosing every 10\textsuperscript{th} consumers. The researcher contacted the selected consumers after remitting the bills for their readymade garment purchases. Thus, the sample consist of 500 consumers, 10 each from 50 selected readymade garments retail outlets in Madurai city.

The primary data were also collected from the institutional consumers in Madurai city. Though there were 10200 institutions covering educational, hospital, corporate, departmental store, private store, private business centre, showroom, manufacturing and service, and other(s) only 512 institutions are purchasing more than 100 sets each every year from the selected readymade garment retail outlets in Madurai city. Hence, the primary data were collected from 51 institution consumers which is 10 per cent of 512 institutions by using simple random sampling method.
1.10.3. Tools for Analysis

The statistical tools used were Percentile analysis, Descriptive statistics, Linear multiple regression, One way ANOVA, and Factor analysis. The relevant tools were also applied for analysing the primary data especially for the purpose of knowing the attitude of individual and institutional consumers towards readymade garments in Madurai city.

1.11. Operational Definition of Concepts

1.11.1. Readymade Garment Industry (RMGI):

Those establishments which cut and stitch, makeup garments out of woven or knitted fabrics without being involved in the manufacture of fabrics (International Standard Classifications, United Nations). They manufacture garments to domestic and international markets either to the store in India or outside India.

1.11.2. Apparel:

An inclusive term for clothing or garments which includes all categories of clothing from intimate apparel to outer wear for men, women and children.

1.11.3. Readymade Garments:

Readymade garment are ready to use dresses.
1.11.4. Brand:

Brand is a name, term, symbol or design, or a combination of them which is intended to identify the goods or sources of one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.\(^\text{67}\)

1.11.5. Manufacturer – Exporter:

A person who manufactures goods in his own manufacturing facility and exports or intends to export such goods. The manufacturer, exporter have to meet certain conditions laid down by the government about the number of machines and workers. They are defined as exporters with own manufacturing facility, although all their exports may not be necessarily produced in own factories.

1.11.6. Merchant–Exporter:

A person engaged in trading activity overseas markets and exporting or intending to export goods. They are the firms with export business, but no manufacturing setup.

1.11.7. Woven Fabrics:

Fabrics used to make woven garments. Woven fabric is made from two yarns, namely, warp yarn, interlaced perpendicularly to each other.

1.11.8. Hosiery:

This term includes all types of knitted underwear, outerwear, head wearer and footwear.

1.12. Area of the Study

Madurai city is world renowned for its grand temples and impressive town planning. It is situated in the middle of the Tamil Nadu State in India. There is historical evidence to show that the temple formed the nucleus and was surrounded by forest during the rule of Kulasekara Pandian. It was built around the temple with a big tank inside. Later it was improved several times by succeeding rulers. It remained as the capital of the Pandyas from historic times.

Madurai is a suitable place for conducting the study for the certain special reason that (i) the general public in Madurai City comprises upper, middle, lower middle and lower economic strata (ii) the usage of readymade garments in Madurai City is on a large scale.

1.13. Limitations of the Study

The study covers only men and women wear only. Children wear and other readymade garment item such as, inner garments, shawls, scarves, mufflers, mantillas, veils, handkerchiefs, gloves, mittens and mitts, have been excluded from this study.