The marketing business is undergoing reappraisal in the light of the vast global technological, economic and social challenges. The basic change, perhaps in marketing thinking is a shift from pursuing a sale to creating customer. Transaction oriented, largely, has been replaced with more relationship-oriented designing the best marketing-mix for winning as well as keeping customer. Marketing consultant S. Sumathi and Management consultant P. Saravanavel (2005) said that, Good customers are an asset to the company, which will turn a handsome income stream to it. The underlying thrust of marketing research is envisioning new products, services, lifestyles and ways to raise living standards. In business management one should pay attention of nine M’s namely money, materials, machines, men, methods, market, minute, matter and milieu. Among these the most important is market which is related to customers or consumer’s because when the products are produced by the manufacturer it is purchased or consumed by the consumer’s who are called as the end-user and post purchase satisfaction level of the customers is vital.

In this chapter, it is highlighted the reviews of earlier studies on consumer durable products and the factors influencing the purchase of durables, family decision making process, women’s role in family decision and post purchase satisfaction.

3.1 STUDIES ON CONSUMER DURABLE PRODUCTS

B S Hundal (2008) undertook a study entitled “Significant consideration in the purchase of consumer Durables (Refrigerator,
washing machine, TV and Air cooler) in Punjab” the objective of the study are to analyze the planning of brand choice, time of purchase, and choice of point of purchase and to ascertain intensity of brand loyalty and offer useful implications for marketers. The findings from the study are: A particular dealer showroom, shop or store is chosen because it is convenient to reach it and the consumer knows the dealer. Therefore durables are purchased based on the customers Convenient. The second is 47.27% of the customer says that the quality of service that a dealer provides after the sale and the variety of brands which are with the dealer are the important factor. The instalment facility is the added advantage and finally the brand loyalty covers 54.28% of the customers. Therefore the research concluded that the consumers have a preference /loyalty towards particular brand of consumer durables and are not ready to buy any other brand when it is most preferred.

Anand and BS Hundal (2008) undertook a study on “Perceptions of consumers towards Promotional schemes for durables” in Punjab. This study was conducted to gain insight into the perceptions of rural and urban consumers about various promotional measures adopted by durable goods manufacturing companies. Sample size 600. The major findings are though both the groups seem to have considered all the factors as important in sales promotion, a minute observation states that urban respondents have assigned high priority for these schemes: installment purchase (4.370), off-season discount (4.346) free gift (08). The suggestion is all the promotional measures has
to be enforced to capitalize the opportunities in this highly growing Indian market.

**CMIE (Centre for monitoring Indian Economy) (2005)** states that production index of consumer goods continued to display impressive year on year growth in April 2004. During the month, index was up by 17.7% compared with a negligible 0.4% growth in April 2003. This was also the eight consecutive month of double digit growth. This impressive growth in the production of consumer Durables in the past several months has been due to increased demand on account of higher growth in income.

**V.Shantha Meena and B.Nandhini (2007)** undertook the study entitled “Brand preference towards the computers”. The objectives of the study are: To study the source of information for brand awareness among the respondents, to identify the various factors influencing the brand preference and to study the level of satisfaction among the users. The sample size is 60. The respondents are computer users. The researcher concluded that the computer user prefers only the branded product rather than the assembled one. Most of the user preferred “Dell” Brand.

**Dr.G.Sudarasan Reddy and Ms. Rajarashmi. P.S (2004)** undertook a study entitled “Buyer Behaviour of Home Appliances with special reference to Microwave Products in Bangalore City” the objective of this study are to study the brand awareness of the buyers, to know the income level of microwave buyer, to extract the source of
information through which buyers came to know about microwave, to know buyers preference of branded product, to determine the decision maker, to identify the factors influencing the buyers while purchasing microwave product, to identify the most favourable choice of microwave, to provide suggestions to microwave companies. Based on the objectives the findings are: the income levels of the buyer are above 15,000. The print media is the important source of information for the purchaser. Almost all the respondent prefers the branded product. The study reveals that the wives are the decision maker’s followed by the husband and wife discussion. Factor influencing the purchase of microwave are Quality of the product rather than the any attribute followed by brand name, price, and features and after sales service. Among all other brands LG stands first. Thus the buyer behaves positively when Quality and branded product is purchased by them.

DS Chundawat and Seema Gupta (2003) undertook a study entitled “Family Roles and social influences in Buying Decision-making” The objectives of this study are: The roles performed by family members in buying decision making, variations in roles by product or service in the decision making, Impact of social factors in buying decision making, Dealers understanding of the role played by family members and social influences in purchase decision making. The finding indicates that there is no variation by product in the source of information considered reliable by consumers. The decision maker in the family is husband, followed by father and then wife does payment and it remains a male dominated activity. However, children greatly play a dominant role in purchase of television. 52%. 32% and 27%
consumers feel that children influenced the demand for purchase of television, refrigerator, and washing machine. Thus it is concluded that an understanding of who are the initiators, influencers, deciders, buyers and users for purchasing the various consumer durable products.

**Dr. D. Raghunatha Reddy and N. Sivakumar (2005)** Focused their research study on the title “Growth and Evaluation of Washing machine Industry.” As seen by the analysis of the washing machine industry, the industry shows high competition between the existing firms. Also the bargaining powers of the consumers and the distribution channel members are high. The new entrant will also face the threats in terms of cost disadvantages and the existing product differentiation in the market. Thus in order to get a hold of the market the new entrant must adopt strategies to overcome the existing brand localities and make the distribution channel members to adopt and promote its products. Chi-square test provides that the stock penetrates for different income groups and for different years is very much prevalent. ANOVA results prove that the purchase behaviour of different regions differs significantly but the purchases made in different years do not differ significantly.

**FICCI(2006) Survey Report** states “Cool Deals for Customers”- A recent survey conducted by FICCI on the growth of consumer durable goods market in the country, predicted that the segment is geared for a quantum leap due to technological improvements, falling prices due to competition, aggressive marketing and declining import tariffs. The survey reflected the changing
dynamics of consumer behaviour whereby luxury goods are being perceived as a necessity by the higher disposable income segment. There is a discernible shift in the consumers’ preference in favour of higher-end, technologically superior products, and the demand is being spurred by increasing consumer awareness and preference for new models. The FICCI survey also gives an insight into the dynamics of growth in a competitive market environment. Some of the salient features of the survey are as follows: a Quality product with superior technology and technology up gradation has helped the industry to achieve higher growth in terms of volume and also in higher realization in value terms. The frost-free refrigerators segment has shown an appreciable growth of 54 per cent, while the direct cool refrigerators have seen a negative growth of approximately 15 per cent. There has been qualitative change in consumer’s preference towards high end products. Rate of growth in production has been more in terms of quantity (or in volume) growth rather than the growth in value terms. This is on account of constant fall in prices over the years due to competition, aggressive marketing strategies and declining import tariffs. Growth highlights: The rising rate of growth of GDP, rising purchasing power of people with higher propensity to consume with preference for sophisticated brands would provide constant impetus to growth of air-conditioners and refrigerators segment.

Economic survey (2007) enlighten the survey report on the “Growth rate of consumer Durables increases to 17.5%” According to the Economic Survey Growth rate of consumer durables has sharply increased to 17.5 per cent in 2000-2001 (April to December) from 14
per cent during the corresponding period of last year. Growth rate of consumer goods (both durables and non-durables) accelerated during the current year; there was deceleration in the growth rate of basic, capital and intermediate goods. The high growth in the consumer goods sector is a latent asset and with some restructuring and favourable internal and external environment it has the potential of contributing to a higher growth momentum in all sectors of industry.

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (2005) reported on the title “Consumer durables market poised for high growth”. A survey by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has found that most of the consumer durables segments are set to see a double-digit growth in the current fiscal. The colour television segment is expected grow by 15-20 per cent, the projected growth for the VCD/MP3 player segment is 20 per cent, 25 per cent for DVDs, 5-10 per cent for refrigerators, 20-25 per cent for air-conditioners, 5-10 per cent for washing machines and 25 per cent for microwave ovens. The survey also highlights the shift towards the organized segment. The share of the unorganized segment has come down sharply to 8-10 per cent from 40-50 per cent, as the price differential between the two segments narrows down. The survey also says that rural India offers a huge growth opportunity for consumer durables manufacturers. While the urban consumer durables market is growing annually at 7-10 per cent, the rural market is zooming ahead with an annual growth of 25 per cent.
Vikalpa (2002) undertook a study entitled “Consumer Durables” - Deciding where to buy: Store choice Behaviour of Indian shoppers, Respondents interviewed at these chain stores agreed that their perceived risk associated with buying goods from the particular store was minimal. Also, the customer service provided by the store where durables were purchased was high. This is probably representative of the buying behaviour of the shoppers who would require a lot of pre-purchase information and rely partly on in-store service to acquire relevant information towards minimizing the risk from the purchase. The effort expended by shoppers is aimed at deriving maximum value for the money spent. This is very much in line with a major driver for store choice as discovered in the earlier analysis, personal referrals, which is intended to reduce the risk of wrong purchase. It is interesting to note that availability of large brand spread is not consistent observation with respondents visiting these stores, though merchandise is recorded as strong motivators for store choice, this could be attributed to commoditization of the category, where there are no distinct brand preferences and purchase happens only after enough information about all brands in the choice set has been compared. (Durable goods store-Brand spread p< 0.05 = -1.1443).

Consumer Markets (2007) Survey report is on “White goods and appliances” According to RNCOS, an India-based market research company, and the existing size of the consumer durable sector in India is an estimated US$ 4.5 billion. Leading consumer durables players and experts predict a 10-12 per cent growth for the sector in 2006.
Mathur (2007) focused their research study on the title “Consumer durables will now get their own star ratings” Consumer durable products will soon carry a star rating, highlighting the energy efficiency level which is emerging as the third most critical factor influencing purchase decisions after price and brand. Durable manufacturers like Samsung, LG, Whirlpool, Philips are implementing star rating on their refrigerators by ramping up R&D and manufacturing facilities. Korean major Samsung has introduced four-star labeling on its entire frost-free range.

S. Gayathry 1995 undertook a study entitled “A Study on consumer behaviour with special Reference to consumer Durables” The researcher of this study has emphasized the behaviour of consumer for four major consumer Durables. The sample size is 200. The products are TV, Refrigerator, Washing machine and VCR. The objectives of this study are: a) to analysis the behaviour of the consumer of these selected Durables. b) To study the factor influencing the consumer behaviour of consumer durables purchased by the middle class income group. c) To find out the attributes and attitudes of consumer durables purchaser and suggest the ways and means to satisfy the consumer. Based on this the findings and the suggestions are improving customer satisfaction is top priority (38%), improving customer satisfaction among the top three priority (79%), The important factor that influencing is price and the Brand.

Business & Economy (2005) has conducted a research entitled “Consumer Durables the season ahead”- the survey says that every year
there is a tremendous increase in the segment of consumer durable product particularly there is a high demand for the Refrigerator, washing machine and Microwave oven.

Table 3.1

Consumer Durables the season ahead

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Refrigerator</th>
<th>Washing machine</th>
<th>Microwave oven</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3,150</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Business & Economy 2005 Pg.no.75

Karan Bajaj (2002) has conducted a research entitled “Creating a successful Brand strategy for a global in the Indian context” Refrigerator and washing machine is considered for this study. The survey says that US appliance major whirlpool of India Ltd is leading with a market share of 26%. The company turned the corner during 1Q01to post a net profit of 25mn against a net loss of 138.6mn in the corresponding period last year. Refrigerators account for 71% of the company’s sales while the washing machine account for 25% of sales. The major players and their market shares are Videocon-25%, Whirlpool-17.5%, BPL-17%, LG-10%.
Mr. G. Rajat Goel (1996) surveyed under the title “Power and fuel consumption standards at Godrej” The objective of this study is to compare the last year’s power consumption with the standards established, and analyze the reasons for any deviations. The findings are the actual power consumption in plant 03 over the last year closely follows the standards established. Hence, depending on the Quantity of refrigerators it is possible to have standard for power consumption.

Arun Balachandran (1999) undertook a study entitled “Insights into the Refrigerator market in Chennai at Godrej –GE Appliances Ltd.,” The objectives of this study are: To determine whether customers who buy Godrej 200L refrigerators are upgrading from smaller sizes or downgrading their purchase decision from a possible purchase of larger refrigerators due to economy considerations. And to determine the criteria leading to the purchase decisions of frost-free-refrigerator buyers—both of Godrej’s products and of competitor’s products. The conclusions of the study are: All the 200L customers interviewed had upgraded from 165 liters and had no intentions of purchasing 300 litres or larger refrigerator. Brand switching is a real and present threat in the above customer segment if Godrej does not offer the 200L refrigerators in time. All the interviewed customers are satisfied by purchasing the product.

3.2 STUDIES ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR
Dr. D. Venkatrama Raju and S. Saravanan (2005) undertook the study titled “A study on Consumer Behaviour in the Marketing of a Household Appliance in Chennai city of Tamilnadu state”. An analysis of the consumer behaviour is the first and foremost requirement for the successful formulation and implementation of marketing strategies. This study of consumer behaviour involves the process of identifying,
a) When consumer purchase b) what they purchase c) where they purchase d) how much they purchase e) their buying habits and motives etc., the product undertaken for this study is Washing machine. The sample size is 200. Out of the sample surveyed it was found out that the majority of the respondents prefer twin tub automatic machine over single tub, semiautomatic or manually operated machines. Most of the respondents have preferred washing machine with 4 kg capacity closely followed by the machines with 3 kg capacity. This choice is dependent on the income and size of the family. Majority of the people prefer purchasing commodities on payment of cash rather than credit or instalment payment.

Dr. S.G. Losarwar (2002) undertook a study entitled “Consumer Behaviour towards Durable Products, A study with reference to Marathwada Region” the objectives of this study are: To study the socio-economic profile of the selected consumers, To investigate the role of family and friends in consumers buying behaviour, To study the lifestyle of selected sample consumers, To study the brand awareness of consumers, To identify the factors influencing the consumers in the selection and use of particular product, To examine consumers attitudes, behaviour and preferences and their effects on purchase
decision. The sample size is 200 and the products are TV, Washing machine, Refrigerator, mixer and fan. The study reveals 78% of the consumer respondents belong to open category and there is no significant difference between the social status of consumers in urban and rural area. Friends and relatives advice, retailers advice, joint family and credit facility is responsible for purchase of consumer durables. Behavioural patterns of consumers have a deep relevance with their life styles. Company’s advertisement, reputations, price are the factor influences the purchaser of Durable product. As far as Television is concerned Onida is popular, for washing machine Whirlpool is considered to be best, For Refrigerator Godrej is popular. This study depends upon a number of variables like income, price, Quality etc., which gives the clear idea about the consumer behaviour towards the Durable products.

Mr. Rajesh Shinde (2007) focused the attention in finding the “Recent facet of Consumer Behaviour: A case of Rural Market. As the competition increased in urban areas, and taking into account the increasing demand for FMCG’s in rural areas, the marketers expanded their business in rural areas. Perhaps it has become a policy of their survival. The objectives of the study are: To understand the buying decision process, to understand the factor influence purchase, to understand the place of purchase, to evaluate the source of information. The sample size is 50. It is found out that the TV plays a major role in informing the customer about particular product (33%). The shopkeeper also plays a major role in informing the customers about the product (25%). Regarding the purchase decision is that the youth and children of
the family are very aggressive in decision-making for FMCG at 56%. The survey concludes Rural India has more than 70% population is 6.27 lakh villages, which is huge market for FMCG product. All the income groups purchase the FMCG product but their brands differ from each other.

**K.Bhagavathi (1995)** the researcher of this study has attempted to analyze the consumer behaviour in relation to consumer goods with specific reference to two wheelers in a specific market in Chennai. The objectives of the study are: a) to study the source of information which influences purchase behaviour. b) To find out the factor that influences their buying decision other than price and income. c) To study the buyer decision making process. d) And To study the post purchase behaviour of the consumer with regard to two wheelers. From the research it was found that the other factor other than the price and income is the customer’s requirement and their perception about the product usage. 65% of the customer after the consultation with the family member they purchase this product and it was also found that 85.4% of the customers were highly satisfied with the product they have purchased.

**Dr. M. Abdul Haneef, Dr. M. Edwin Gnanadhas and Mr. B.A. Abdul Karim (2006)** has conducted a research entitled “Consumer Buyer Behaviour of two wheelers in Tirunelveli city” This research has the objective to determine the decision maker, to extract the source of information through which buyers came to know the various brands. The sample size is 1000 and the findings are: Family members, friends
and relatives are considered to an important source of information. Fuel economy, price & maintenance expenses are the main factors influencing the buying decision of a particular two wheeler. Most of the respondent prefers self decision in purchasing the two-wheeler.

**Nithila Vincent 2006** “A study on Brand consciousness among children and its effects on family Buying Behaviour in Bangalore city” The objectives of this study are: A) To study the level of brand consciousness among children. B) To examine whether unbranded products provides same satisfaction as branded products and customers preference for unbranded products. The sample size is 222. It is found out that there is no significant difference between the satisfaction levels of branded and unbranded products. Unbranded gives same satisfaction as branded product.

**3.3 STUDIES ON CUSTOMER EXPECTATION OR PREFERENCE**

**A.Selvaraj and Mahendran 2003** has conducted a research entitled “Brand Preference of washing machine: Role of factors and problems” The objectives of this study are: To examine the factors influencing the consumers’ choice of washing machine and to find out the problems faced by consumers of washing machine. The sample size is 100. His findings and conclusions are: It was found that the factors like Quality, price, advertisement, appearance, features, credit facility and service & guarantee are influencing factor. Further, it was found that all the sample respondents are facing the problems such as consumption
of more electricity, more water consumption, consumption of more detergent powder, lack of co-ordination of dealers, non-availability of spare parts, increase in repairing cost and lack of provisions. Thus it is concluded though it has certain problem but still it has its own platform which is boon to the consumers so; yesterday’s luxuries are today’s necessities. Hence in this digital world, washing machine is no longer a luxury item. A successful organization strives to meet customer expectations through continuous improvement of its processes, people and product focusing on customer satisfaction. For this, organization need to know explicitly and in depth exactly what each customer is buying and every customer is different and how it can continue to offer additional satisfaction that will differentiate its offering.

The Financial Express (2006) Report “Indian consumer ready to spend more on high-end products” indicates there are 1.6 million households in India earning around Rs 45 lakh (about $100,000) per year, who spend about Rs 4 lakh ($9,000) per year on “luxury/very premium” goods and services. While this number is likely to cross 3 million by 2010, the number of households is growing at 14% per year. According to the report, the immediate priorities for many consumers for luxury goods fall into the following categories—housing, travel, education, high-end automobile, entertainment electronics and home lifestyle improvement products.

3.4 STUDIES ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION & DISSATISFACTION
Ronald T. Rust, Tuck Siong Chung (2001) has conducted a research entitled on Marketing Models of service and Relationships. It explains the Models of service and relationships that help managers to manage service more efficiently, customize service more effectively, manage customer satisfaction and relationships, and model the financial impact of those customer relationships. Models for managing service have often emphasized analytical approaches to pricing, but future research in the area of service customization will likely place increased emphasis on e-service and truly personalized interactions. Relationship models will focus less on models of customer expectations and lengths of relationship and more on modeling the effects of dynamic marketing interventions with individual customers. The nature of service relations increasingly leads to financial impact being assessed within customer and across product, rather than the traditional reverse, suggesting the increasing importance of analyzing customer lifetime value (CLV) and managing the firm’s customer equity.

Johnson and fornell (1991) based on their research Customer Satisfaction is defined as a customer’s overall evaluation of the performance of an offering to date. This overall satisfaction has a strong positive effect on customer loyalty intentions across a wide range of product and service categories, including telecommunications services (Fornell 1992)As an overall evaluation that is built up over time, satisfaction typically mediates the effects of product quality, service quality, and price or payment equity on loyalty (Lemon 1999)30. It also contains a significant affective component, which is created through
repeated product or service usage (Oliver 1999) historically; satisfaction has been used to explain loyalty as behavioural intentions (e.g. the likelihood of repurchasing and recommending). However, Verhoe (2003) argues that longitudinal data that combine survey measures with subsequent behaviour should be used to establish a casual relationship between perceptions and behaviour. Bolton (1998) finds a positive effect of overall customer satisfaction on the duration of the relationship for cellular phone customers.

Shimu and Sharma 2008 pointed that, “the Success of an enterprise depends on its ability to create a community of satisfied customers”. Every organization tries to build up profits by creating a meaningful value satisfaction for the customers. Therefore, all business activities should be directed towards the satisfaction of the customer’s needs and wants. Customer needs and business plans have to be co-ordinated with the set of products and effective production programmes. Consumer satisfaction would determine product technology expectations and at the same time it would give a direction to the element of human interaction which is essential for any purposeful business. Thus, an insight into consumer satisfaction is therefore sine qua non for successful existence in the market. Management can adopt following three different orientations, a product orientation while developing different strategies to achieve the marketing task; a selling orientation and the consumer orientation to stay in the market for a long period of time. Though the company
follows different orientation the most important one is consumer orientation, which in turn achieves customer satisfaction.

Bruce Corner (1994) his research is on “what do you really know about …customer satisfaction” observation of customer satisfaction is rather surprising one. He presented a “pop Quiz” and answered it which shows diverse view compared to those in common. His first observation is customer satisfaction is not the key factor in business success today but only a minimum requirement. Perceived quality determines the strength of the company in attracting and keeping customers. His second observation is customer satisfaction does not mean doing whatever it takes to keep the customer happy. The most important factor is the perceived value of the offering. His third observation is that sales people do not know what customer expects and need. The sales people hear what they want to hear and not what they are told. Fourthly, Customer satisfaction is not just doing one or thinking correctly. Concentrating on the lowest customer satisfaction scores is not necessary, the reason being that all competitors may have low score in the same area or customers care little about such factors and therefore have a low score. The fifth observation is that quality improvement efforts need to focus on those areas that are most important to the customer because such areas are the minimum requirement to compete for the business. A surprising last observation is that complaint handling system do not provide for an adequate measure of customer satisfaction. As a new dimension, the author says, the number of complaints increases, at the same time a business also improves. To bring about improvement in an organization, data must be
collected and it should spur the development of a deployment plan. The success of an action plan may hinge on how well one department is meeting another department’s need. This shows that, first the employees should be satisfied, which will lead to customer satisfaction.

**Tracy Benson Kirker (1994)** has identified customer delight as the most powerful tool for achieving and sustaining competitive advantage. Robert Hunter, president of Delta Dental plan of Massachusetts, says that after the game of customer satisfaction the next logical step on the continuum is delight them. This can be achieved by offering an extraordinary guarantee. The extraordinary guarantee can help an organization to identify its customer’s current and future needs and provides managers a detailed road map to ensure that the company processes are designed to exceed these needs. It is not an easy task to identify what the customer wants. A credit organization, realized that the only way to build relationship with its customers was when the customer called with a question or a problem or when their representative called to collect on a delinquent account. In the case of the former, employees were trained sufficiently to deal with customer and in the latter case the mission of the delinquency department was transferred to helping customers work through their credit problems. Customers do not get carried by just strategies. The most important strategy to be followed is to provide good quality product and service. Customers do not make chemical or physical analyses of the goods they buy. They use a product and react to its ability to satisfy their wants.
Hence, quality is being one of the parts on its product or service that has an important role to play in satisfying a customer.

**Gregory Bressolles, Francois Durrieu, Magali Giraud (2007)** focused the attention in finding the impact of electronic service quality’s dimensions on customer satisfaction and buying impulse proposes a conceptual framework for measuring the effects of electronic service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction and buying impulse. The functional nature of customer buying impulsivity is introduced as a moderator. This variable measures both the general tendency of customers either to trust buying impulses and their level of satisfaction from impulsive purchases. The results highlight the principal dimensions of Website quality and their direct influence on customer satisfaction and impulse buying.

**Mrs. Babita Prem and Dr. K. Maran (2007)** in their study they observed that customer retention is a critical success factor in the highly competitive market. Historically, high customer retention rates consistently and positively correlate with high profits. From the study it is revealed that the newly accepted practice of replacing lost customer with new ones results in industries high customer acquisition costs and is a failure. The best and cheaper practice is to keep a customer than gain a new one.

**Nandini Vaish 2007** surveyed under the title “After Sales” As the durables companies attempt to drive volumes and penetrate deeper into the countryside and down the value chain, the lack of after-sales
infrastructure is a major stumbling block. In the rural and semi-urban markets in particular, non-availability of spares causes tremendous customer dissatisfaction because the product normally travels a fair distance from the villages to the dealership for repairs. So, while Samsung plans to expand its exclusive service outlet network from 279 to 500 by 2007, Electrolux has plans to increase manpower at its centre from 1,000 to 1,250 by next year. Videocon is also increasing its service network from 400 to 625 centers by 2007.

C. Madhavi and John William Felix 2002 undertook a study entitled “Consumers’ Level of perception and Experience of Product values with Reference to Refrigerators” The objectives of this study are: To identify the level of perception of different values. To measure the experience level of such values and How far the perceived values predict the experience level. The sample size is 150. The findings and the conclusions are: The value perceived were found to vary significantly, there was a significant level of association between the two sets of values, the shared variation between the linear composition of the experience level and the perception level was 79.6% but, 40.31% of the experience level of these values was perceived values. Some values are interrelated.

Srimathy Ramalingam (1997) has attempted to analyze the perceived product & service Quality and customer satisfaction in relation to selected durables in Chennai city. The objectives of the study are: To examine the quality of service rendered by manufacturers & dealers of selected durable products, To ascertain the manufacturers
perception of customer service expectations and to compare them with
the service expectations of consumers, To analyze the pre-purchase and
post-purchase service satisfaction among consumers, To find the
product quality ratings based on the perception of consumers and To
determine the level of overall customer satisfaction considering the
expectation and perception of consumers in the selected durable
products and the service offered with them. The Durable products that
are selected for the research are TV, washing machine, Refrigerator,
two wheeler, two-in-one. The sample size is 400. From the research it
was found that 30% of the customers were not satisfied with the service
provided by the company, 70% of the consumers were satisfied with the
quality of the product.

V. Thyagarajan (1997) focused the attention in finding the
consumer satisfaction & complaining behaviour in relation to Indian
auto industry with special reference to selected customer of 100 cc
Motorcycle. The objectives are To identify the customer preference for
specific attributes of the 100 cc motorcycles, To measure the degree of
achievement of the consumer derives with the purchase of the product
and its influence on satisfaction and dissatisfaction level, To analyze the
empirical relationship among the various variables affecting consumer
satisfaction or dissatisfaction, To assess the consumer complaining
behavior & to identify the effect of personal variables on the level of
satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The sample size is 420. From the research
it was found that 60% of the customers were satisfied with the service
provided by the company. 30% of the customer complains about the
delay in work when they leave the vehicle for service. 10% of the
customer’s complaints that they need to approach the dealers more than 2 times for booking the new vehicle.

**Sreelatha Paraman (2001):** focused the attention in finding the customer satisfaction on purchasing the consumer products. The objectives of the study are to find the relationship between the product quality & consumer satisfaction. The sample size is 210. From the research it was found that 75% of the consumers are highly satisfied by purchasing the quality goods. 20% of the customers are satisfied by purchasing the branded product. 5% of the customers are never bother about the price or quality of the product who falls under the low income group.

**Dilshath (1992)** The researcher on his study have covered many of the branches in Madras city with the view to identify the services that benefits the customers and also the problems faced by the customers. It is found out from the survey that 45% of the customers were not satisfied by the delay of service and 15% of the customers were satisfied by the discipline that is maintained and 40% of the customers were highly satisfied by the service that is offered to them.

**Shanthi (1993)** focused the attention in finding the issues of consumer grievance and the methods to overcome such grievance. From the research it was found out that among the 56 respondent 32 are having the grievances towards the service offered by the institution.

**Anjan Raichandhari (1994)** highlighted the fact that sale is not the end of the transaction. Customer satisfaction is of great use for
organizational improvement. The customer satisfaction programme essentially implies four steps (a) Identify attribute on the basis of which customer judges and differentiate product or service, (b) Rating the target company as well as major competitors according to such attributes (c) Providing overall customer index to the target company and its competitors (d) carrying out organizational improvement and measuring customer satisfaction index at regular intervals. For achieving customer satisfaction it is essential to differentiate factors which are marketing related, Production-related or finance –related and then Identify where improvement is needed in comparison with competitors. These can be termed as the hygiene factors like on time delivery and competitive price which have the potential of irritating customers by their absence. These are however, other factors which are called motivators, which can cause ‘unexpected happiness and delight to customer and bind them to a supplier. In a competitive market, long-term success assumes that hygiene factors must be present and competitive advantage hinges on the package of motivators that can offer.

**Eugene W. Anderson, Claes Fornell & Donald R. Lehmann (1994)** –Discuss how expectations, quality & price affect customer satisfaction and the profit. Hypotheses were tested using a national consumer satisfaction index and Traditional accounting, measure of economic returns, such as return on investment. The findings showed that economic returns from improving customer satisfaction are immediately realized. It also provides a preliminary indication of trade-offs between customer satisfaction & market share goals. Customer
satisfaction actually may fall as market share increases. When quality &
expectation increasing there is a positive effect on customer satisfaction
in the long run, but increasing expectation may have a negative impact
in the short run. The findings also indicate that, in the aggregate
customers have adaptive but largely rational expectations. Change in
the level of quality perceived by a firm enhances or erodes a firm’s
reputation of quality overtime. The implication for a firm trying to make
a quality turn around or come back is not to expect immediate returns
but co-ordinate product or service improvements with effects to
accelerate the diffusion of information regarding such improvement
through the market places.

Kevin (2007) indicates that consumer generally wishes to be
assured that they are getting inferior materials or shoddy workmanship.
They are not as gullible and manipulatable as they are apparently
believed to be by some critics of advertising. In developing product
quality programmes, companies often fail to take into account basic sets
of questions. First how do customers define quality and why they
suddenly demanding higher quality than in the past? Second how
important is higher quality in customer service, and how can it be
ensured after the sales? With these the customer’s satisfaction towards
the product quality can be assumed.

3.5 FAMILY IS A DECISION-MAKING UNIT FOR
PURCHASING DURABLES
Although a number of research studies have been done on the various factors influencing consumer purchase decision, the documentation of the significant role played by family and social influences in consumer buying decision making is sparse.

Brodowsky and Glen Howard (1997) studied the role of country of origin in consumer purchase decisions. The findings were that high and low ethnocentric consumers used the country information differently and hence the model could be useful for managers when choosing a location for manufacturing. Ariely Dan (1998) researched the role of interactivity in consumers’ decision-making and preferences. Wickliffe and Vanessa prier (1999) did a cross – cultural analysis of the relationship between decision-making styles, consumer demographics and product characteristics. Owens and Deborah Lynn (1997) studied the effects of integrating information from advertising and word-of-mouth on consumer processing and response to product information.

Talukdar and Deabrata (1996) did a theoretical and empirical investigation into consumers’ brand choice process under information uncertainty. Some researches done on some aspects of family decision-making, like effects of parents’ general socialization styles by Carlson, Les and Sanford Grossbart, (1991); adolescents in the context of family purchase decisions by Beatty and Talpade (1994), Foxman, Tansuhaj and Ekstrom (1989); adolescent-parent interaction in family decision-making by Palan and Wilkes (1997) and the

Eva MartõÂnez (1999) this study is on “Determining factors in family purchasing behaviour: an empirical investigation. Yavas et al. (1994) also considered a series of products that could be classified by sex (food products, women's clothing, furniture, electrical household appliances, the motor car, the television and the video).

Patricia L. Mokhtarian, Elizabeth A. Raney and Ilan Salomon (1996) empirically tested two hypotheses: (1) that responses to congestion are a function of previously adopted adjustments and (2) that the adoption of congestion-reduction policies is distributed differently across various socio-economic segments of the population. This paper presents the empirical evidence used to test these two hypotheses. The results indicate that there are significant differences in adoption of coping strategies – primarily by gender, and secondarily by family status, income, employment status, and household type.

Sheetal Kapoor (2003) in his study it is observed that a household is made up of persons who live and occupy a housing unit. A household is a basic consumption unit for most consumable goods. Major items such as housing, automobiles, washing machine, refrigerator, etc, are used more by the households than individuals. Family is a social group. It is also earning unit, consuming unit and
decision making unit. Family decision making is a complex process. Indian families exhibit certain different characteristics as compared to their counterparts in the western world. In India families bonds are very strong and since each purchase of a consumer durable product entails a substantial expense, many family members are inevitably involved in the decision-making.

**Family Types**

- **Nuclear family**: It consists of husband, wife and children
- **Joint family**: It includes a nuclear family and other relatives such as parents of husband or wife, aunts and grandparents also.

- One set of family characteristics that would impact the decision process includes *family Life cycle, socio economic status, and dual versus single career*. Consider FLC: Newly married have generally been found to use the joint process to a much greater extent than couples with aging marriage. Adolescent children begin to make more autonomous decisions for products like **DVD player** which they are the primary users. Socio economic status (SES) influences the extent of joint process and also how the conflicts may be resolved. Although there is no conclusive research evidence on this, for products meant exclusively for an individual member’s use, the decision is more likely to be an autonomous one for different reasons. For the upper class and lower class (compared to the middle class) households, but for reasons. For the upper classes, budgeting and spending are not
constrained, for the lower SES families; the head of the household would typically exercise autonomous decision regardless of who the intended user is.

- A second set of family characteristics is the gender-role orientations and role specialization. In families where gender roles are traditionally oriented, there will be many more autonomous decisions. In dual career families gender-role orientation is less both spouses are likely to participate in major family buying decisions process a joint one particularly for luxury products like Refrigerator, Micro wave oven etc.,

The last set of family characteristics comprises the communication and interaction patterns. The decisions would be much more joint in the latter than in the former type of households. The family members spend time together share their view and lifestyle, the more they are likely to engage in a joint decision process. Conflict would arise in joint decision processes when they do not agree on purchase goals and criteria or when they disagree on their perceptions-DPS Verma 2003.

Table 3.2

Three Customer Roles and Household Decision Making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of Household Decision-making</th>
<th>User</th>
<th>Payer</th>
<th>Buyer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

85
| **Family and non-family households** | *In non-family households user and payer roles reside more likely in the same individual.  
*User values normatively influenced by nonuser family members. | *In families where user and payer roles often separate, users need to persuade payers.  
Payer role most strained in full-nest families. | *In non-family households, members may alternate buyer role across situations, but users may not surrender their choice decision responsibility. |

| **Family life cycle** | *Members collaborate closely as each user also assumes the payer and buyer roles more in start-up families. |  | *Buyer role most separated in full-nest families. |

| **Family Decisions** | *Users initiate and gather information about desirable alternatives. | *Payers approve or disapprove category purchase. | *Buyers often influence brand choice. |

| **Children’s influence** | *Very young children as users depend on parents as payers and buyers.  
*Adolescent children influence user decisions on products for common use. | *Children on allowances look for price value.  
Payer role socialization is the hardest to achieve.  
Debt accumulation on credit card is a major concern of parents. | *Teenagers assume purchase task, including brand decisions, for routine shopping and seek convenience value the most. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer socialization children</th>
<th>*Observation of adults and mass media socialize children into becoming users.</th>
<th>*Financial resources enable payers to influence user choices across generations.</th>
<th>*Accompanying parents on shopping trips socialize children into buying roles.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intergenerational influence</td>
<td>*User values considerably influenced by and between the generations. Influence based on product expertise or taste.</td>
<td>*User-payer role separation principal source of conflict. *Often resolved by bargaining.</td>
<td>*Types of stores one shops or can be influenced by intergenerational influence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>*User-user conflict on items for common use. *Usually resolved by problem solving (e.g., finding an acceptable alternative)</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Buyers imposing their own user values can cause conflict.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Household consumer Decision making. The Dryden Press 1999 Pg.no. 600.

**K. Abirami Devi (2003)** in her research she concluded that Perceived risk an important factor associated with the purchase decision process which is the level of risk perceived by the buyer. This risk concerns the uncertainty of the proposed purchase and the outcomes that will result from a decision to purchase a product. Risk is perceived because the buyer has little or no experience of the performance of the product or the decision process associated with the purchase. Buyer may lack the ability to make what they see as the right decision and they may be forced to trade the decision to purchase on product in lieu of another because resources, such as time and money, are restricted.
Jagdish N. Sheth, Banwari Mittal, Bruce I. Newman (1999) discussed their study on the title “The Three Customer Roles and Household Decision Making”

Chrisfill (2000) on his study he confirms that the consumer’s decision produces an image of an individual carefully evaluating the attributes of a set of products, brands, or services and rationally selecting the one that solves a clearly recognized need for the least cost. It has a rational, functional connotation. Consumers do make many decisions in this manner; however, many other decisions involve little conscious effort. Further, many consumer decisions focus not on brand attributes but rather on the feelings or emotions associated with acquiring or using the brand or with the environment in which the product is purchased or used. The consumer’s decision making process is the procedure by which consumers collect and analyze information and make choices among alternative goods, services, organizations, people, places, and ideas. It is comprised of two parts: the process itself and factors influencing or affecting the process. There are a myriad of decision options possible for the consumer in today’s market economy. These options, however, may be distilled into five main types of decisions: What to buy? How much to buy? Where to buy? When to buy? and how to buy?

Joel R. Evans, Barry Berman (1999) have expressed their views that, each time a consumer buys a goods or service, contributes to a charity, and so on, he or she uses the decision process. Often, this is done subconsciously and the person is not aware of using it. Some
situations may allow a consumer to move through the process quickly and de-emphasize or skip certain steps; others may require the thorough use of each step in the process. A consumer may use extended, limited, or routine decision making. This depends on the degree of search, level of prior experience, frequency of purchase, amount of perceived risk, and time pressure.

**Extended consumer decision making** occurs when a person makes full use of the decision process. Considerable effort is spent on information search and evaluation of alternatives. Expensive, complex items with which a person has had little or no experience require this form of decision making. Purchases are made quite infrequently. All kinds of perceived risk are usually high, and the purchase is quite important. A person has no time available to make a choice. Delays in purchases often occur with extended decision making; and demographic, social, and psychological factor have their greatest impact. Extended decision making is usually needed when choosing a first car or a washing machine etc.

**Limited consumer decision making** takes place when a person uses every step in the purchase process but does not spend a great deal of time on any of them. The person has previously purchased the goods or service under consideration, but not regularly. Perceived risk is moderate, and a person is willing to spend some time in shopping. The process is used mostly on the amount of prior experience, the importance of the purchase, and the time pressure facing consumer. Emphasis is often on evaluating a list of known alternatives, although
information search is undertaken in some situations. Factors affecting the decision process have some impact on limited decision making.

**Routine consumer decision making** occurs when a person buys out of habit and skips steps in the process. The person seeks to spend as little time as possible in shopping and often repurchases the same brands. In this category are items with which a person has a lot of experience. These goods and services are bought regularly low in price. Once a person realizes a goods or service is depleted, a repurchase is made. The time pressure to buy is high. Information search, evaluation of alternatives, and post purchase behaviour are normally omitted, as long as a consumer is satisfied.

### 3.6 CUSTOMERS POST PURCHASE SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY

**Geoffrey (2000) Patti (2002)** in their research they concluded that almost all major purchases results in cognitive dissonance, or discomfort caused by post purchase conflict. After the purchase, consumers are satisfied with the benefits of the chosen brand and are glad to avoid the draw backs of the brands not bought. However, every purchase involves compromise. Consumers feel uneasy about acquiring the drawbacks of the chosen brand and about losing the benefits of the brands not purchased. Thus, consumers feel at least some Post purchase dissonance for every purchase.
S. Ramesh Kumar (2003) in his view the modern Doctrine of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty has a seductive logic i.e., simply satisfy your customers, and they will love you. The more you satisfy them, the more profit they will give you. The more they love you the better you must treat them. The Post- purchase phase of the decision- making process is essential to ensure whether the consumers are satisfied after the purchase. Another complex, but interesting, aspect of this phase is how consumers reconcile to (or are satisfied with) the brand they purchased when they are faced with similar or equally attractive propositions of competing brands. L.G refrigerator offers to preserve the nutrients of the foods stored in it. BPL converter offers to preserve the freezer into storage space in the refrigerator. Competing brands tend to impact consumer psyche a lot more in the post-purchase phase. After purchasing the product, the consumer will be either satisfied or dissatisfied and will engage in post purchase behaviour of interest to the marketer. What determines whether the buyer is satisfied or dissatisfied with a purchase? The answer lies in the relationship between the consumer’s expectations and the product’s perceived performance. If the product falls short of expectations, the consumer is disappointed; if it meets expectations, the consumer is satisfied: if it exceeds expectations, the consumer is delighted. The larger gap between expectation and performance, the greater the consumer’s dissatisfaction. This suggests that sellers should make product claims that faithfully represent the product’s performance so that buyers are satisfied. Some sellers might even understate performance level to boost consumer satisfaction with the product.
Table 3.3
Consumer Satisfaction Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Conceptual Definition</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oliver (1997)</td>
<td>The consumer's fulfilment response. It is a judgment that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provided (or is providing) a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfilment, including levels of under- or over fulfilment (p. 13)</td>
<td>Fulfilment response/judgment</td>
<td>Product or service</td>
<td>During consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halstead, Hartman, and Schmidt (1994)</td>
<td>A transaction-specific affective response resulting from the customer’s comparison of product performance to some pre purchase standard (e.g., Hunt 1977; Oliver 1989) (p. 122).</td>
<td>Affective response</td>
<td>Product performance compared to some pre purchase standard</td>
<td>During or after consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mano and Oliver (1993)</td>
<td>(Product satisfaction) is an attitude - like post consumption evaluative judgment (Hunt 1977) varying along the hedonic continuum (Oliver 1989; Westbrook and Oliver 1991) (p. 454).</td>
<td>Attitude evaluative judgment</td>
<td>Product</td>
<td>Post-consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Conceptual Definition</td>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fornell (1992)</strong></td>
<td>An overall post purchase evaluation (p.11).</td>
<td>Overall evaluation</td>
<td>Post-purchase perceived product performance compared with pre-purchase expectations</td>
<td><strong>Post-purchase</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oliver (1992)</strong></td>
<td>Examined whether satisfaction was an emotion. Concluded that satisfaction is a summary attribute phenomenon coexisting with other consumption emotions (p. 242).</td>
<td>Summary attribute phenomenon coexisting with other consumption emotions</td>
<td>Product attributes</td>
<td><strong>During consumption</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westbrook and Oliver (1991)</td>
<td>A post choice evaluative judgment concerning a specific purchase selection (Day 1984) (p. 84).</td>
<td>Evaluative judgment</td>
<td>Specific purchase selection</td>
<td><strong>Post-choice</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vikas Mittal (2001)** in his study he observed that it is very necessary to satisfy the customers because the companies’ sale is depended upon the satisfaction of the consumers. The term customer satisfaction was invented by Theodore C. Levitt in 1960 Harvard Business Review article entitled “Marketing Myopia” Later expanded into a book, The Marketing Imagination. The company sales come from two- basic groups – new customers and the retained customers. It usually costs more to attract new customers than to retain current ones.
And the best way to retain the current customer is to keep them satisfied.

Customer satisfaction is a key to building lasting relationships with consumers-to keeping and growing consumers and reaping their customer life time value. Satisfied customers buy a product again, talk favourably to others about the product, pay less attention to competing brands and advertising, and buy other products from the company. Many marketers go beyond merely meeting the expectations of customers - they aim to delight the customer. Dissatisfied consumer responds differently. Whereas on average, a satisfied customer tells 3 people about a good product experience, a dissatisfied customer gripes to 11 people. In fact, one study showed that 13 % of the people who had a problem with an organization complained about the company to more than 20 people.

3.7 **UTILITY AND SATISFACTION**

M.L. Seth (2003) expressed that the term ‘utility’ should be differentiated from ‘satisfaction’. Utility implies ‘expected satisfaction’ whereas satisfaction stands for ‘realized satisfaction’. A consumer thinks of ‘utility’ when he or she is contemplating the purchase of a commodity, but he or she secures the ‘satisfaction’ only after having consumed the commodity. Utility is not contingent upon actual consumption. A commodity may have utility for a consumer even without being consumed by them. But it cannot yield “satisfaction” to the consumer unless it is first consumed by them.
Further, there may sometimes be a glaring gap between ‘utility’ and ‘satisfaction’. For example, a consumer may expect a high degree of utility when he or she contemplates the purchase of a commodity, yet when he buys it actually consumes it, the ‘satisfaction’ secured may not come up to expectation. Lastly, utility can be measured, though indirectly, but ‘satisfaction’ is something which cannot be measured, directly or indirectly. There are, thus, obvious difference between utility and satisfaction. But the entire theory of consumer’s behaviour is based on the assumption that ‘utility’ and ‘satisfaction’ are synonymous, or that the ‘expected satisfaction’ from a commodity is equal to the realized satisfaction. This assumption has been made for the purpose of convenience, though it is not entirely unrealistic. For example, in the purchase of standardized goods, the ‘expected satisfaction’ of the consumer is often equal to their ‘realized satisfaction’.

3.8 DETERMINANTS OF SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION

S.M. Keaveney (1995) V. Mittal J. M. Kartrichis, and P. Kumar (2001) focused the attention in finding the performance expectations and actual performance are major factors in the evaluation process, the dimension of product and service performance. A major study on the reasons, customers switch service providers found competitor actions to be a relatively minor cause. Most customers do not switch from a satisfactory provider to a better provider. Instead, they switched because of perceived problems with their current service provider. The nature of these problems and the percentages listing each as a reason they
changed providers follow (the percentages sum to more than 100 because many customers listed several reasons that caused them to switch): -

- **Core service failure (44%)** - mistakes, billing errors, and service catastrophes that harm the customer.

- **Service encounters failures (34%)** – service employees were uncaring, impolite, unresponsive or unknowledgeable.

- **Pricing (30%)** - high prices, prices increases, unfair pricing practices and deceptive pricing.

- **Inconvenience (21%)** – inconvenient location, hours of operation, waiting time for service or appointments.

- **Responses to service failures (17%)** – reluctant responses, failure to respond and negative responses.

- **Attraction by competitors (10%)** - more personable, more reliable, higher quality and better value.

- **Ethical problems (7%)**- dishonest behaviour, intimidating behaviour, unsafe or unhealthy practices or conflicts of interest.

- **Involuntary switching (6%)**- service provider or customer moves or a third party payer such as an insurance company requires a change.

Other studies have found that waiting time has a major impact on evaluations of service. Consumers have particularly negative reactions to delays over which they believe the service provider has control and
during which they have little to occupy their time- Huli, Thankor, Gill 1998.

3.9 CONSUMER’S MAKE- “SATISFACTION AND DISSATISFACTION JUDGMENTS”-

Youja yi (1992) in his research he concluded that after consumers have made acquisition, consumption or disposition decisions, they can evaluate the outcomes of their decisions. If their evaluations are positive- if they believe their needs or goals have been met- they feel satisfaction. Thus someone could feel satisfied with the purchase of new DVD player. The consumer might also be pleased with a buying experience, a salesperson, or retail outlet. Satisfaction can be associated with feelings of acceptance, happiness, relief, excitement, and delight.

Richard L. Oliver (1989) in his research he concluded that when consumers have a negative evaluation of an outcome, they feel dissatisfaction. Dissatisfaction occurs if they did not enjoy the product they have purchased. Dissatisfaction can be related to feelings of tolerance, distress sadness, regret, agitation and outrage. Most of the research on satisfaction and dissatisfaction has focused on products and service for which the consumer can make an evaluation of both utilitarian dimensions, or how well the product or service functions (good or bad), and hedonic dimensions, or how it make someone feel (happy, excited, delighted or sad, regretful, angry). Consumers make a
conscious comparison between what they will happen and actual performance.

**Marsha L. Richins & Peter L. Bloch (1991)** in their research they concluded that Consumers’ evaluations and feelings are generally temporary and can change over time. The fact that they are satisfied now does not necessarily mean they will be satisfied the next time. Evaluations also tend to be tied to specific using it at the current time. In these ways, satisfaction differs from an attitude, which is relatively enduring and less dependent on the specific situation. A post–decision evaluation can differs from a pre-decision evaluation in that after using the product, a consumer may judge different attributes and cut off levels than before. Level of satisfaction varies with consumer’s involvement and overtime. Specifically, high-involvement consumers tend to express a higher level of satisfaction immediately after purchase, probably due to their more extensive evaluation. However, their satisfaction declines overtime. On the other hand, lower involvement consumers exhibit a lower level of satisfaction initially, but their level of satisfaction tends to increase with greater usage over time.

**Namikarten (2009)** expressed the view on the title “Managing customer’s expectation Panic to poise’ Customer expectations can pose a major challenge. That's because expectations are wondrous creatures: They grow, they shrink, they change shape, and they change direction. They shift constantly, and they shift easily. And how satisfied (or dissatisfied) customers are determined is by these expectations and
manufacturers performance in meeting them. If expressed as a calculation, customer satisfaction might look something like this:

\[
\text{Customer Satisfaction} = \frac{\text{manufacturers performance}}{\text{customer expectations}}
\]

Of course, customer satisfaction is influenced by a complex interplay of factors; it's hardly as simple as plugging numbers into a formula and calculating the result. Nevertheless, this calculation serves as a reminder that customers' level of satisfaction can be affected by changes in either their expectations or your performance. That means we have to pay attention to both.

3.10 EXPECTATION OF THE WOMEN CONSUMER IS POWERFUL

Molly McCracken (2001) undertook a study entitled “Women and the economy” One of the major contributions that we all make to the economy is through buying things. Women's role as care givers has meant that women play an especially prominent role in buying things that provide sustenance for home and family. Studies show that women are responsible for buying 80% of household goods. Although it is often played down, it is clear that women have a great deal of influence
in the economy as consumers, in other words, a lot of spending power. And so their expectation on each purchase is being high.

Nicole Crimaldi (2010) indicates that a woman expect more because they purchase more. Their buying capacity is supreme.

- 70% of new businesses are started by women
- 85% of all brand purchases are made by women
- 91% of new homes
- 80% of health care
- 93% food
- 65% new cars
- 93% over-the-counter meds

Yet 91% of women feel advertisers don’t understand them…Perhaps this is because only 3% of creative directors are women.

Christensen and Cheney, (2000) said that the marketplace has become “a battlefield of brand names, images and logos striving to be heard” where the women plays major role in selecting the best brand for their home. They tend to purchase the brand that gives them maximum satisfaction.

The study of Howard (1997) explains the trends in women’s labour force activity shows that, on the whole, women’s overall labour force, employment, and earnings experience are coming to resemble those of men. It also shows, however, that women are a very diverse group whose labour market activity varies considerably depending on
such factors as age, ethnicity, marital status, and motherhood. Even though surprise is known to be more likely to spur customer into more action than mild feelings of discontent, in many circumstances it is women customer’s expectations which have a more powerful effect on behaviour than their men past experiences. It is especially important to understand this when trying to influence future purchasing. Many managers assume that negative surprises cause brand switching and positive surprises cause repeat purchasing, but such generalizations are dangerous. Dissatisfaction is often not acted upon by consumers. Habits play an important part in behaviour, irrespective of thoughts and feelings, and many dissatisfied customers continue to purchase the same goods. Switching is often not the effect of dissatisfaction.

**Expectations Exist at Four Levels**

Suja (2004) confirms from the research study that though Customer’s expectations look realistic is very often build upon a very high platform. The quality of the product or service may not match the expectation which in turn again affects the consumer’s satisfaction level.

- **Expectation at the general level:** There is a general expectation (function like quality, durability, reliability, style etc) of the high level of quality of product or service along with some negative external effects. For instance one may expect high service levels but also some negative external effect like pollution.
• **Expectation at the category level:** The consumer expectation is associated or builds up from the particular product category or class. For instance, Blue Dart Express realized that key satisfier for its customers were on delivery of parcels to its customer’s desired destinations. This facility was expected from all courier companies.

• **Expectation at the Brand level:** The consumer’s expectation is build up based on his knowledge and information about the expertise and reputation of the organization. Names like BPL, Samsung etc., are actually brands which become identified with the product.

• **Expectations at the transaction level:** This refers to the expectations that build up at the time of a transaction between the customer and firm.

### 3.11 PURCHASE EVALUATION AND SATISFACTION / DISSATISFACTION

**Satish K Batra, SH H Kazmi, Anurag (2004)** in their study they expressed that Consumers’ post-purchase evaluation process is influenced by the purchase process itself, post purchase dissonance, product use and disposal of product/package. These are potential influencing factors and all purchases are not necessarily influenced by all these four factors. Consumers may evaluate each aspect of the purchase decision process right from the stage of information search to ultimately the product performance. Satisfaction with a purchase is
basically a function of the initial performance level expectations and perceived performance relative to those expectations.

**Relationship of Expectations, Performance and satisfaction**

**Table 3.4**

**Level of Expectation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived performance relative to expectation</th>
<th>Below minimum desired performance</th>
<th>Above minimum desired performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than expected</td>
<td>Satisfaction*</td>
<td>Satisfaction / commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same as expected</td>
<td>Non-satisfaction**</td>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worse than expected</td>
<td>Dissatisfaction</td>
<td>Dissatisfaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Consumer Behaviour Text and Cases- Satish K Batra, SH H Kazmi, Anurag Jain for Excel Books 2004 Pg.no. 456

* Assuming the perceived performance exceeds the minimum desired level.

** Consumer is neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and does not complain. One may expect, a positive post-purchase evaluation results in satisfaction and the negative evaluation causes dissatisfaction. The above figure shows that if the performance expectations with product, service or retail outlet were low and the actual product or outlet performance as perceived by the consumer matches up to that level, the consumer is neither
satisfied nor dissatisfied (non-satisfaction). Such a purchase occasion.

**J. Paul Peter, Jerry C. Olson (2003)** in his study they observed that **pre-purchase expectations** are the consumer’s beliefs about anticipated performance of the product and **post purchase perceptions** are the consumer’s thoughts about how well the product performed. **Disconfirmation** refers to the difference between the two. There are three types of Disconfirmation.

- First, there is positive disconfirmation, which occurs when product performance is better than expected. This situation is thought to lead to satisfaction or a pleasurable level of fulfilment.

- Second, there is negative disconfirmation which occurs when product performance is worse than expected. This situation is thought to lead to dissatisfaction.

Finally, there is neutral disconfirmation in which performance perception just meet expectations. Whether the consumer is satisfied or not in this case depends on other variables, such as the levels of expectation and performance.

**Arun (2004)** in his research he concluded that considering the large number of purchases that consumers make, most of them are generally satisfied with a majority of their purchases and dissatisfaction occurs only with some purchases. In case of dissatisfaction, first of all the Consumer decides whether to take action or not. If the decision is
not to initiate any action, then the consumer lives with dissatisfaction and develops negative or less favourable attitude towards the product or the retail outlet.

According to Jagdish N. Sheth, Banwari Mittal, Bruce I. Newman, (1999) the decision is not to initiate any action depends on the importance consumer assigns to a particular purchase, the ease with which the action can be initiated and the characteristics of the concerned consumer. One or more of the five alternative actions that consumers take in response to experiencing dissatisfaction are damaging to the company or the retail outlet due to loss of future sales and unfavorable consumer attitude.

S P Brown and R F Beltramini 2007 on their research on “Durable goods” they reported that 54% of dissatisfied consumers said that they would not purchase the brand again and 45% warned their friends about the product. Marketers should try their best to reduce dissatisfaction and effectively resolve customer complaints whenever they occur.

3.12 OTHER INFLUENCES ON SATISFACTION

Reddy G S (2004) in his research he concluded that that the simple fact that a product performs well will have a positive influence on satisfaction, independent of expectations. This particularly true in the case of consumer Durables, where risk and involvement are higher. Thus a consumer might not have any expectations about how a new computer may perform and be pleasantly surprised when she sees what
it can do it. Likewise, the poor performance of a product or service alone can lead to dissatisfaction. If the consumers buy a new *microwave oven* and if it doesn’t work well, the consumer gets dissatisfaction even without any prior expectations. Finally, research suggests that consumer satisfaction with products need not be transaction-specific and is subject to change. Satisfaction can also be affected by social influences such as family members and may be closely related to consumers’ satisfaction with their own lives.

### 3.13 SATISFACTION JUDGEMENT

*Frank R. Kardes (2002)* in his study he observed that satisfaction involves comparing a chosen product with a rejected product. The chosen product is the product the consumer actually purchased. The rejected product is a product that was considered for purchase but was not chosen. If the chosen product seems superior to the rejected product, the consumer will be satisfied. However, if the chosen product seems inferior to the rejected alternative, the consumer will experience dissatisfaction or regret. Satisfaction is important because it retain the consumer in the market for a long period of time.

### 3.14 SUMMARY

It is emphasized that many researchers have attempted the post purchase satisfaction on consumer durables. First, the Research evident suggests that there is a significant relationship between the consumers’ expectations and the product’s perceived performance. If the product falls short of expectations, the consumer is disappointed; if it meets
expectations, the consumer is satisfied: if it exceeds expectations, the consumer is delighted. The larger gap between expectation and performance, the greater the consumer’s dissatisfaction. This suggests that sellers should make product claims that faithfully represent the product’s performance so that buyers are satisfied. Sellers might even understate the performance level to boost consumer satisfaction with the product.

Secondly, the existing literature indicates a wide variance in the definitions of satisfaction. The lack of consensus definition limits the contribution of consumer satisfaction research. Without a uniform definition of satisfaction, researchers are unable to select an appropriate definition for a given context; develop valid measures of satisfaction; and or compare and interpret empirical results. Customer satisfaction researchers have contend that these problems are pervasive therefore, as the continuation of the early research, the researcher of this study have undertaken in depth study on customers’ post purchase level of satisfaction towards the consumer durables.