Summary

&

Conclusion
Chapter 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The present study was designed to find out decision making determinants/factors associated with purchase of clothing of middle age consumers. An attempt was made to analyze clothing purchase behavior of adults aged 40-60 years. Decision making determinants are fundamental to marketing because they determine consumer behavior and they are relatively stable over time, hence relevant for market segmentation (Tai, 2005).

In order to achieve the result data was collected from 600 respondents of 40-60 years-300 from Gorakhpur and 300 from New Delhi. Non-probability sampling technique was used to select 150 male and 150 female adults from each locale. Independent variables of the study were- sex, age, locale and socioeconomic status. Dependent variables were decision making factors, clothing buying factors.

Two questionnaires were used to collect the data. One questionnaire was used to study middle age consumers’ decision making characteristics. It was based on Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) developed by Sproles and Kendall (1986) to examine and describe decision making of consumers. Another questionnaire was developed to study existing clothing buying practices of middle age consumers. Socio-economic Status Scale developed by Dr. Kuppuswami and updated by Kumar, Gupta and Kishore in 2012, was used to measure socioeconomic status of the respondents. Data was personally collected by the investigator by interview method.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to analyze data. Method of factor analysis was used to confirm the middle age respondents’ decision making factors/determinants related to clothing. Chi square test was used to study the association between selected variables of the study. Significance of the difference between means of the two groups of given variables was assessed with the help of the z-test while ANOVA was used to measure significance of difference between means of the more than two groups. Regression analysis was conducted to test possible interaction between decision making factors and demographic variables.
CONCLUSION

Decision Making Factors

Factor analysis revealed that five reliable factors or determinants affect decision making related to clothing of middle age respondents. These were in the following order - brand consciousness, fashion consciousness, planned purchasing, price consciousness and store/brand loyalty.

Impact of demographic variables on decision making factors

- The influence of gender on decision making factors was most significant. Brand consciousness, price consciousness, fashion consciousness, store/brand loyalty and planned purchase habit of male and female middle age respondents differ. Gender has been identified as a significant factor in understanding consumer behavior in most of the studies. It is used as a fundamental marketing segment index by firms to meet their customers’ needs and wants. Mean values indicate that female are more brand conscious and more loyal to store/brand than male. On the other hand, male are more fashion conscious than female, price conscious. Moreover, male plan their clothing purchase more carefully. In comparison to female, they mostly compare price, try to buy quality clothes.

- Age group of the middle age respondents i.e. lower or upper age group does not affect decision making of clothing. The reason is that their decision making mode has become set over the years. Both the groups follow same process of decision making for buying clothes.

- Impact of locale is found on brand consciousness, fashion consciousness and planned purchase of middle age respondents. It is interesting to note that brand consciousness, fashion consciousness and planned purchasing habit of Gorakhpur respondents are higher than those of Delhi. Every group or society has a culture and its influence on buying behavior varies from place to place. Socio-cultural characteristics affect purchase behavior. Shift in socio-cultural values might have impacted decision making related to purchase of clothes. Moreover, the present era is of increasing globalization and technological
advancement. Access to internet and exposure to mass media has led to convergence of traditional and modern values. It has made them aware of fashion and brand. As mentioned earlier, Gorakhpur is developing city. Branded garments are available in Gorakhpur with the opening of specialty shops, department store, malls etc. Lifestyle of people has changed which has resulted in change in consumer behavior.

- Socioeconomic status affects brand consciousness, price consciousness, fashion consciousness, store/brand loyalty and planned purchase habit. Brand consciousness and store/brand loyalty of lower middle group is highest. Clothes are very important for lower middle group. They use clothes to show high status to climb up on social ladder. Upper middle group is more price conscious. They compare price of clothes and try to buy quality clothes at low price. Fashion consciousness of upper group is highest.

- Further in-depth analysis of respondents on the basis of gender revealed that Gorakhpur male are more fashion conscious and planned purchaser than Delhi male. Fashion consciousness and planned purchase of male respondents of different socioeconomic group differs significantly. Brand consciousness and fashion consciousness of Gorakhpur females is higher than that of Delhi females. Female of upper middle group are more fashion conscious, price conscious and loyal to store/brand while females of lower middle group are more brand aware. Females of upper group plan purchase carefully.

- Locale wise analysis of respondents showed that in case of Gorakhpur locale, respondents of younger age group are more fashion conscious while respondents of older age group are more price conscious. Gorakhpur male are more brand conscious and planned purchaser whereas female of Gorakhpur are more fashion conscious. Brand consciousness, fashion consciousness, price consciousness and store loyalty of respondents of Gorakhpur belonging to different SES group is significantly different. So far as respondents of Delhi are concerned, respondents of upper age group are more brand conscious than lower age group. Female of Delhi are more fashion conscious and price conscious than male. There is significant difference in decision making
determinants except brand consciousness of Delhi respondents belonging to upper, upper middle and lower middle socioeconomic groups.

- Comparative analysis of respondents of 40-50 years indicated that male of 40-50 years are more fashion consciousness, price consciousness and planned purchaser than female of 40-50 years. Gorakhpur respondents of 40-50 years are more fashion conscious and planned purchaser than Delhi respondents. All the decision making determinants except price consciousness of respondents of lower age group (40-50 years) belonging to upper, upper middle and lower middle SES groups is different.

- Male of 50-60 years are more fashion conscious whereas female are more loyal to store and brand. In the upper age group (50-60 years), Residents of Gorakhpur are more brand conscious, fashion conscious and planned purchaser than those of Delhi. Residents of Delhi are more price conscious. Three decision making factors viz. fashion consciousness, store loyalty and planned purchase of upper age group respondents belonging to different socio economic groups are significantly different.

- Regression analysis also revealed relative importance of each regressor in the analysis. The standardized coefficients showed that out of four variables, locale and sex are main predictors of brand consciousness. This indicates that locale has biggest impact on brand consciousness of middle age respondents followed by sex of the respondents.

Locale and socio economic status are predictors of fashion consciousness. This establishes that fashion consciousness is affected by locale and socioeconomic status of the respondents.

Locale and sex are predictors of planned purchaser. Socioeconomic status while not a significant predictor also approaches significance. Locale has main impact followed by sex and socioeconomic status.

Sex is found to be significant predictor of price consciousness.
Socioeconomic status is predictor of store and brand loyalty. It can be deduced that store and brand loyalty depends mainly up on socioeconomic status of middle age respondents.

It is also observed that age is not predictor of any decision making factor.

It is noted that interactions are not significant as all the $r^2$ are very less. It can be inferred that decision making factors and demographic variables do not interact to predict decision making.

**Clothing buying practices**

- When queried about the frequency of purchasing apparel, a majority of the subjects have stated that they buy apparel five to ten times each year, some buy less than five times per year. Few purchase apparel products more than ten times each year.

- Regarding motivations for clothing purchases, the utilitarian need for apparel appears to be most important to the middle aged consumers, with regards to clothing purchases. Discount sale on the other hand, is not perceived to be as great an influence as other reasons for middle aged.

- About fifty percent of middle aged people prefer to go for shopping of clothes with family members. Some of them go with their spouse. Almost equal number goes with friends or does shopping alone.

- Availability of quality clothes is most important criteria for selection of particular shop followed by good service and availability of branded clothes respectively. Fourth is availability of clothes in reasonable price.

- Traditional retail shop is most preferred for purchase of clothes followed by branded shops and shopping malls respectively.

- Percentage of middle aged who spend Rs. 5000-10,000 on clothes is highest followed by those who spend above Rs. 10,000. Number of people who spend less than Rs. 5000 is low.
Main source of clothing information is T.V. Newspaper/magazine, shopkeeper and friends/colleagues are other important sources of information followed by window shopping for middle aged respondents. Internet is least used by them to acquire product information.

Majority of them buy clothes when it is in fashion. Some buy at the end of season whereas very few buy before everyone else.

Cotton is the most preferred fabric for garment for summer while wool is preferred for winter. Sari is the most preferred apparel item for party/festivals of middle age women irrespective of locale, age or socio economic status group. Next preferred item is salwar suit. Pant shirt is the most preferred item for party and office wear for middle age male. At home they prefer to wear T shirt pant followed by T shirt short. This trend is same for male respondents belonging to different locale, age group and Socio economic status.

Implication of the study

The findings of the study will be useful to manufacturers and marketers of middle age clothing. It provides useful information about the decision making determinants of Indian consumers.

Consumer decision making determinants refers to mental orientation or approach a consumer has towards making choices and it represents a relatively consistent pattern of cognitive and affective responses. The firms whose target market is middle age consumers should take into consideration the decision making style of consumers of middle age.

In this study five determinants were identified which will help the firms in developing insights about their target market and in planning future strategies.

Brand is important for middle age consumers. Result has shown that they are habitual and high brand loyal toward their favorite brand of clothing. To promote brand, manufacturers and retailers should highlight unique characteristics, such as fabric, detailing, construction etc. retailers should include branded products in their product mix.
Along with that other factor like fashion should also be focused by marketers as they have motivation to keep up-to-date with styles and fashion trends. As middle age male are also fashion conscious, designers and manufacturers should try to bring more variety in male garments and, make their garments more trendy and fashionable. Marketers can attract fashion conscious consumers’ attention by placing more advertisement in television and newspaper/magazine. Marketers can attract fashion conscious consumers’ attention by placing more advertisement in television and newspaper/magazine.

Middle age consumers’ decision on buying clothes is also governed by the price sensitivity to a large extent. This is especially true when consumers realize that the gap between different brands of apparel gets smaller with respect to quality and perceived benefits.

Limitations of the Study

Present study is limited by the fact that sample of this study was composed of respondents living in limited geographical areas viz. Gorakhpur and Delhi, the result should be approached with caution. Further research can be extended to more diverse geographic population. Quantitative data which is collected orally suffers from a degree of inaccuracy due to misreporting (both under and over reporting).