CHAPTER II

Review of literature
2.1 Psychographics and Life Style

The terms 'Psychographic' and 'Life style' have been used by many authors and researchers with different meanings. It is therefore necessary first to clarify the meaning of these terms. Although the concepts of life style and Psychographics are often used interchangeably, they are not equivalent but are complementary.

Despite extensive use of the psychographic/life style approach in the research on consumer behaviour in the past, no common definition of psychographics or life style has been approved by researchers. Psychographic research, life style research and even attitude research often meant the same thing. As Wells (1975) explains.

Although the need for a common definition of psychographics is obvious, no single definition has met with general approval. Twenty four articles on psychographic life styles contain no less than 32 definitions, all somewhat different.

Williams (1973) and Reynolds and Darden (1974) have also pointed out the confusion over the definition as a serious problem in psychographic /
life style studies. Life style, according to wells (1974) refers to the disparate modes of living in a whole society or any of its segments, while psychographics embrace a wide range of content, including activity, interest, opinions, needs, values, attitudes and personality traits. Wells (1975) claimed that psychographic life style research can be defined as qualitative research intended to place consumers on psychological as distinguished from demographic dimensions. It is implied, that the psychographics combine a variety of psychological information about people, where as demographic information does not.

The definition of Reynolds and Darden (1972) is identical to that of wells: "We can view psychographics as the systematic operationalization of life style i.e., life style in an empirical context." In relation with the AIO measures, Reynolds and Darden stated that psychographics is a systematic use of relevant activity, interest, and opinion constructs to quantitatively explore and explain the communicating, purchasing and consuming behaviours of persons for brands, products, and cluster of products. With regard to psychographics Anderson and Golden (1984) further explained that, "It is mental ("Psycho") profiles ("graphics"), or the profiling of psychological processes or properties of consumer". Thus
it pertains to the consumers cognitive style.\(^4\) Psychographics is the technique that classifies consumer life-styles by investigating how people live, what interests them and what they like.\(^5\)

Thus, psychographics may be viewed as the method of defining life style in terms of psychological characteristics. A clear distinction between psychographics and life style emerges from the above arguments.

### 2.2 Life Style – Meaning

The term 'Life Style' has come to mean many things to many people. The concept of life style patterns and its relationship to marketing was introduced in 1963 by William Lazer. He defined life style pattern as "a systems concept". It refers to a distinctive mode of living in its aggregate and broadest sense... It embodies the patterns that develop and emerge from the dynamics of living in a society. It is concerned with those unique ingredients or qualities which describe the style of life, some culture or group and distinguish it from others."\(^6\)
Lazer's (1963) model, shown in Fig 2.1, shows the linkage of life style patterns and values to purchase decisions.

**Figure 2.1**

**LAZER'S LIFE STYLE HIERARCHY MODEL**

- Culture & Society
- Group and Individual
- Expectations and Value
- Life Style Pattern and Values
- Purchase Decisions
- Market Reaction of Consumers

Mitchell (1969) defined it as a macro social phenomenon or a distinct trait of a society as a whole in a particular period of time. Using Maslow's hierarchy of human motivation, Mitchell identified the developmental process of society's life style and defined it "Life way". For Veblen, life style was essentially what social class is all about.
Veblen's notion of life style is no longer acceptable; many researchers argued that there are diverse types of living even within one social class. Other scholars still emphasize the sociological aspect of a life style construct. Havigurts (1957) defined life style as a pattern of social role performance. He identified eight social roles: (1) Parent (2) Spouse (3) Home Maker (4) Worker (5) Citizen (6) Friend (7) club or association member and (8) User of leisure time. Life style difference exists among people according to the significance to the individual of his major social role.

Feldman and Thielbar (1972) developed a life style definition on the basis of group Phenomenon. They pointed out four distinctive characteristics of life style.

1. Life style is a group phenomenon. A person's life style is not a unique or individual pattern of behaviour. It is influenced by his participation in various social groups and by his relationship with significant others.

2. Life style pervades many aspects of life. Knowing how an individual behaves in one area of his life may allow us to predict how he will act in other areas.
3. Life style implies a central life interest. A distinct life style is evident when a single activity or interest pervades a person's other interests and unrelated activities.

4. Life style differs according to sociologically relevant variables.

Feldman and Thielbar's definition of life style emphasizes a sociological aspect and interpersonal nature of life style construct.

Alfred Adler conceived of life style as a much more individual concept than it was to Veblen or to Feldman and Thielbar. It meant something like "core personality", a way of responding to the world that the person develops early in life, and that remains more or less unchanged over long periods of time.⁹

Reynolds and Darden (1972) definition of life style is similar to Alder's definition. They related the life style construct to the personal construct theory of George Kelly. Reynolds and Darden defined life style as a personal construct system, which is the way each individual organizes and structures his world in order to anticipate the events happening there. Both definitions are similar in that each emphasizes a personality aspect of life style construct.¹⁰ A personal construct notion of
life style is, however, different from Adler’s definition because it assumes changes over time and among situations. A personal construct of life style is less stable than Adler’s life-style, but it is still an individual’s psychological trait.

Plummer (1974) defined life style by emphasizing its behavioural aspect. He compared the life style construct with demographic, social class and psychological variables.

"The new construct, life style patterns, combines the virtues of demographics with the richness and dimensionality of psychological characteristics and depth research. Life style deals with everyday, behaviourly-oriented facets of people as well as their feelings, attitudes and opinions".11

This looks easy to understand. It represents a typical understanding of the life style construct among a majority of the life style researchers. It emphasizes particularly an expressive behavioural aspect of life style. However it lacks a psychological understanding of the life style construct.
A review of past life style definitions suggest some important issues for this study. First, from an individualistic psychological point of view, life style is not simply the expressive behaviour of an individual, but his ways of responding to the world, or the ways in which he organizes and structures his world. Wind and Green (1974) defined life style as made up by values and personality reflected in activity, interest and attitude towards many facets of the environment of the individuals. Mitchell (1973) also emphasized the individual’s value system as a core concept of life style. Feldman and Thielbar stressed that life style is central to the individual’s psychological field, although their definition emphasizes a group nature of life style. It means that life style is unique to a society, group or even to an individual. It is distinguishable from others. Since life style is based on the value system of the individual and on his unique ways of responding to the world, it is assumed that each individual may possess his own style of life which may be relatively similar or different from those of others.

Second, Lazer (1983) conceived life style explicitly as a system. It means that life style is neither a mere aggregate of any aspects of life environment nor a single facet of human life. It is a totality of human life, which is composed of many parts. Life style therefore embodies a pattern
as the result of the dynamics of living in society. Lazer's definition of life style essentially suggest that life style forms a systematic pattern, resulting from the dynamic relationship between man and his environment.

The definition of life style by Feldman and Thielbar also emphasizes a system "notion of life style." It emphasizes a centrality of the life style and the interrelationships between many facets of life environment. In addition, life style not only embraces a portion of life environment but it includes an entire facet of a person's life environment. A systems notion of a life style construct is also clear in the definition of Reynolds and Darden. They defined life style as a personal construction system, in which all elements of the system are inter-related.

Systems notion of the life style construct implies two important characteristics of life style: That is, life style constitutes a pattern, and life style includes an entire facet of life environment. Life style, therefore, becomes a psychological construct rather than a mere aggregate of many dimensions and embraces a systematic pattern regarding the relationship between man and his entire environment.
The present study postulates the definition of the life style construct as having the following two characteristics:

1. Life style is the individual’s psychological pattern that results from his relationship with his entire environment, rather than a bundle of individual dimensions.

2. It embodies a systematic pattern, in which all elements of the system are interrelated.

2.3 Life Style Construct And Consumer Behaviour

Form the discussion in the previous section, it emerges that a life style construct is an individual’s psychological and relatively enduring trait, a multidimensional whole embodying a systematic pattern. Further, it is also concerned with entire facets of human life environment. Now the question that arises is how an individual’s life style is related to the specific consumer behaviour.

Wind and Green (1974) developed a conceptual framework of life style in relation with consumer behaviour. They considered life style as:” .... made up of values and personality as reflected in activities, interests and attitudes towards leisure time, work and consumption of person alone
and person with others.\textsuperscript{15} One important point in this framework is that consumption environment is treated as only one part of a person's total environment, and his representative mode of consumption environment is one dimension of his life style.

Reynolds and Darden (1974) agreed with this point when they attempted to reconcile life style construct with psychographics by applying the theory of personal construct. Reynolds and Darden divided a person's multitude of personal constructs into non-consumer and consumer constructs. Consumer construct deal with the communicating, purchasing and consuming. Consuming facets of consumers.\textsuperscript{16} But because it is almost impossible to cover all possible relevant ranges of personal constructs construed by a person, they proposed, for convenience to limit the range of life style within a consumer construct domain. Non-consumer constructs are treated simply as irrelevant ranges of consumer life style.

Alderson (1965) made suggestive comment on the relationship between life style construct and consumer behaviour. Alderson, without directly referring to life-style construct stated “people enter the market to replenish or to extend the assortment of goods needed to support
expected patterns of future behaviour”. Alderson implies that people purchase or use products and services in order to express or support their way of life. It seems that Alderson strongly suggests a causality of life style pattern with respect to the individual’s consumption behaviour. Similarly, Lazer (1963) stated “From one perspective, the aggregate of consumer purchases and the manner in which they are consumed, reflect a society’s life style”\(^{17}\). Both Lazer and Alderson seem to express the notion that life style is reflected in a person’s consumption behaviour.

In a consumption environment, a person chooses a product or brand which seems to possess a maximum possibility for the definition or elaboration of his life style identity. Alternatively, a person makes a choice in a consumption environment in order to define or actualize his life style, identify it through the products or brands chosen. In can be assumed that the individual’s consumption behaviour can be predicted from an understanding of how he represents his world to himself, if the details of his life style system are known.

The relationship between life style construct and consumer behaviour can thus be seen as an individual’s purchase and use of products and services where these choices constitute part of his life style
expression and the reflection of his life style. Products and services are selected, purchased and consumed by the individuals, in order for them to define, actualize or extend their life style identity. Consequently, this notion supports the proposition that there is a causal effect of the individual's life style on his consumption behaviour.

2.4 Life Style Research Studies

In the early 60's, although demographic segmentation had consistently provided actionable consumer insights, market researchers felt that the utilisation of demographic variables had reached point where it was time to explore variables that provided information about a different facet of consumer behaviour. In particular, there was general agreement that attention should be given to understanding the life styles and attitudes of consumers.

The first studies in the psychographic area were published by Pessemier and Tigert (1966) and by Widson (1966). Pessemier and Tigert found that psychographic measures were superior to both standard personality measures and to demographic measures in predictive power.
In addition, both studies found that psychographic measures tended to be independent of demographic measures. These studies thus provided the initial justification for the use of psychographic measures. Further, as Wells (1971) states "... it seems obvious that this level of descriptive detail is a significant improvement over the rather sparse and sterile demographic profiles that have been traditional in marketing research".

There is also the fact that while many studies look at attitudes, they treat each attitude as a separate or isolated statistic and do little or nothing to combine them into some meaningful pattern for a group of consumers. A study by Pernica (1974) showed the effectiveness of combining psychographics, personality attributes and demographics while a study by Tigert, Lathrope and Bleeg (1971) combined demographics, products usage factors and psychographics. Further, Wells (1971) suggests that psychographics can be used in conjunction with demographic to "...give additional meaning to the standard demographic classification by showing how the executive's wife differs from the homemaker in a blue collar household". Therefore, psychographics provide a means for segmenting the market along dimensions variously labeled as life style attitude, psychological, socio-cultural etc., which may have much more significance than demographic variations.
Two studies of Mathews and Slocum (1969, 1970) found a number of interesting and useful relationships between social class and the usage of bank cards. For instance, they found that "members of the lower social classes tend to use their cards for instalment purposes; upper classes for convenience". Further, their results indicated that all users had a favourable general attitude towards credit; however, instalment users tended to use their cards more frequently. Their study also indicated "the upper classes are generally favourable towards using credit to purchase 'luxury goods' and the lower class users tended to use their cards for 'durables' and necessity goods". To explain these relationships, Mathews and Slocum invoked many of the life style differences and value orientations between social classes that have been found in sociological research. For example, the finding that instalment users place a low emphasis on saving and do not defer gratification was drawn from sociological studies. These concepts were used to explain the differences found between the lower class tendency toward instalment purchases and the upper class tendency toward convenience use.

Additional insights about the bank credit card users were given by a study conducted by Plummer (1971). He found out the differences
existing between users and non-users of commercial bank charge cards along 'life style' dimension. However, the evidence in this study is derived from direct study of the life style of users and non-users, rather than from inferences drawn from measurements of social class and income segments. In particular, it notes credit card user's life styles, their contemporary thinking, risk -orientation and service organization affiliations. The life style portrait of the user indicates an active, upper socioeconomic, urban -suburban life style with many interests outside the home. The conceptualization of the previous studies (Mathews and Slocum, 1969,1970) upper-middle and upper classes are 'achievement-oriented' and are 'decision makers' appears to be supported and made more explicit in the present study of users life styles. The study indicated that users of commercial bank charges cards in contrast to non-users, exhibit a "contemporary state of mind" and a rejection of conservative, rational concepts.\textsuperscript{20}

Mehrota and Wells (1977) introduced general life style pattern in the marketing research and formally incorporated this concept into the theory of life style analysis. They reported ten different life style types by using general life style characteristic. The five female segments are labeled as (1)the old fashioned traditionalist (2)the militants mother (3)
the chic subordinate (4) the contented housewife and (5) the elegant socialite. The five male segments are (1) the retiring home body (2) the successful professional (3) the frustrated factory worker (4) the devoted family man and (5) self-made business man. They reported that within the groups have similar life style and each group represents a different pattern of needs for and consumption of products and services. 21

Crask and Reynolds (1980), using life style analysis, examined the differences between segments of people classified in terms of their print and TV media – exposure patterns. They reported four media – exposure classes in terms of their life – style differences. They are;

1. The HITV life style (High Television and Low Print Exposure)
2. The HIPRNT life style (Low Television and High Print Exposure)
3. The HIBOTH life style (Scoring above median both Television and Magazine – Readership)
4. The LOBOTH life style (Print and Television scores are both below median).
They concluded that “the four media exposure classes appear to have distinctive life-style profiles”. In brief, HIPRNT members are self-confident, involved, change-oriented moderns; HITV persons are uninvolved, change-resistant traditionalist.

Although numerous academic and commercial market segmentation studies have been conducted, very few generalization can be drawn from them which might contribute to the advancement of market segmentation theory. However, from both an academic and a corporate standpoint, the question of generalizability of psychographic segments is important. Corporate strategists, if psychographic segments are similar across markets, might consider developing programmed, carefully targeted marketing strategies that appeal to “basic” consumer segments which exist in every market.

Life style analysis, since its inception, explored many un-answered questions in the marketing field. It is also used in other spectrums. Lastovicka and others (1987) attempted to study the drinking-driving behaviours of young males. They developed a life-style based typology and then ties this typology to drinking-driving behaviours. Four different segments namely the good timers, the well-adjusted, the nerds and
problem kids were found among the young males (18 to 24 years old). According to National Highway Traffic safety Administration (1984) "Studies of personality ....... variables that may be related to drinking – driving have not been conclusive.......". In contrast, the study shows that the life style traits are related to drinking –driving behaviour.

2.5 Indian Studies

In India, very few attempts were made to segment the consumers on life style basis. Vinoo Mathew (1990) attempted to examine the stereotypes among the urban Indian men. He followed the method used by Troiano (1983) on female stereotypes in Brazil. He conducted 25 in-depth interviews in the four cities of Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras. Respondents consisted of men from four income (lower, middle, upper, upper-upper) and three age (18-25,26-35,36-45) groups. Each interview consisted two stages, viz.,

1. A broad -ranging discussion about the respondent-his aspirations, like / dislikes, his background and past, current activities, hobbies, interests, his relationship with his job, family friends etc.

2. An exercise where respondents sorted print ads into three categories: those that in some way represented themselves, those
that presented something they aspired to and those that were neither of these. Respondents were then encouraged to explain why they had put certain ads into the first two categories; after which they were asked to further sub-divide the third category into different ‘types’ of other men.

The study found three stereo types among Indian urban consumers namely.

1. the career driven
2. the self-seeker and
3. the home-lover

It also found that there are differences within a stereo type that arise due to age, background and present circumstances. The study had not tried to correlate the life style and consumption behaviour, but made an attempt to segment on general life style basis.

Agarwal, Muthukumarn and Sharma (1990) made an exploratory study of the Indian urban youth market (people in 15 to 19 years age group, living in towns and cities). The study used the model provided by
wind and Green (1974), where they identified five sets of variables that could be included to define a person’s life style. These are person’s:

a. Value system
b. Personality traits
c. Product and service consumption
d. Activities, interest and opinions (AIO’s) and
e. Attitude towards product class or brands.

Based on the mode, information was collected on personality attitudes, opinions, activities and on a subset of product consumption. 12 focus groups were contacted in different locations in India to understand the attitudes, opinions and life styles of the youth. The final survey included 60 personality statements, 46 activity statements and 28 psychographic statements. The psychographic statements covered aspects such as the respondent’s opinion and attitudes towards shopping, sex role, future orientation, family, region and so on. The personality statements were rated on a three point (yes, no, some times) scale, the activity statements on a nine-point frequency-of-activity scale. And the psychographic statements on a five point scale. Agree-disagree scale.
other demographic, purchasing, consumption, media habits and expenditure pattern information was also collected.

Quota sampling was used to ensure adequate representation with respect to sex, income groups, regions and town classes. 7,791 complete responses were obtained. Convergent cluster analysis (Sawtook, software, 1988) was used for clustering.

The study found five clusters among males as well as females. They are

a. Traditional
b. Transitional
c. Drifter
d. Rebel
e. Liberal

The study found that psychographic statements have helped in obtaining a clear and meaningful, segmentation of the urban India youth market. Personality, activity and consumption variables have helped in highlighting inter-segment differences and in better understanding of segment character. Further analysis revealed that psychographic
segmentation will provide a useful tool to marketers in India, a tool that can provide information on both consumption of product class and brand. 24

To conclude, this chapter examined the approaches to life style segmentation, dimensions of the life style and the interrelationship between life style and other buyer behaviour variables. The review of literature revealed that life style segmentation is a useful technique and among the approaches, the generalized life style approach is preferable for segmentation because of its added advantages. The clustering technique has yielded better results. Studies have also found that life style variables is a significant factor that explains buying behaviour clearly. Therefore, the present study is designed on the basis of the foundations laid by some of the previous studies.