



Chapter 5
Conclusion

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CONCLUSION

In chapter 4, the analysis of data and findings of the study on effect of culture on consumer behaviour as a comparison between North and South India has been presented. This chapter deals with interpretations of the outcomes of the study. The chapter further deals with conclusions drawn, limitations of the study and makes suggestions for potential future investigators, practitioners, government agency and regulatory bodies.

5.1 INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS PART I: CULTURAL DIMENSION

This section is related to the interpretation of the findings of the study regarding difference in cultural dimensions between North and South India. The interpretations have been done taking into consideration the major findings about the seven hundred and nine consumers selected from different parts of India as discussed in chapter 3.

- For Power Distance Dimension it was found that North Indian respondents scored more than South Indian respondents regarding the statements “Important task/decision making should be done by the head of the family and not by other family members”, “Parents should teach obedience to their children”, “Instructions should be given by the head of the family for the work/task” and “Parents should not treat their children as equals”. North Indians believed in the supremacy of the head of the family clearly indicating that the Power Distance orientation is more in North as compared to South India. This supports the findings of Kumar, Ravichandran & Nath (2013).
- It was statistically established that there is a significant difference in Power Distance orientation across various age groups of North India. Respondents of young age showed lower Power Distance orientation as compared to respondents of the “Above 50” age group. This supports the finding of Hofstede (2001) who reported that in high Power Distance countries, old leaders are less prepared to give away their powers. On the contrary, in South

India, significant difference in Power Distance orientation across various age groups was not visible.

- The study further revealed that different occupation groups had different Power Distance orientation in North as well as in South India. Occupation group “Retired” scored more for Power Distance orientation than other occupations groups. “Students” scored the least for Power Distance orientation. Contradictory to these findings, Hofstede (2001) reported that correlation between education and Power Distance is strongly negative.
- It was statistically proved that the interaction of age and occupation is significant in North India, whereas, the interaction of age and occupation is not significant in South India.
- It was found that North Indians scored more than South Indians regarding the statements “In a family, the role of each member should be well defined so that person knows what she/he is expected to do”, “The importance of rules/regulations is that they provide guidelines and set the limits”, “Standardized work procedure should be followed as they make the outcome more predictable” , “Parents should behave emotionally with their children” and “Children should follow the rule and should be punished if they do not follow”. This clearly indicates that North Indians tend to avoid uncertainty more than South Indians. This supports the findings by Kumar, Ravichandran & Nath (2013).
- It was statistically established that there is no significant difference between the various age groups of North India regarding Uncertainty Avoidance, whereas, South Indian data showed that there significant difference exists between various age groups of South India in this regard. Respondents of “less than 20” and “20-30” age groups scored less on Uncertainty Avoidance and respondents of “40-50” and “above 50” age groups scored more for Uncertainty Avoidance. This supports the findings of Hofstede (2001).
- It was statistically found that there is no significant difference between various occupation groups regarding Uncertainty Avoidance in North India. The above findings support Hofstede (2001). However, South Indian respondents showed

significant difference for the various occupation groups regarding Uncertainty Avoidance.

- It was found that the interaction of age and occupation regarding Uncertainty Avoidance does not have any significant difference both in North and South India.
- For Masculinity vs Femininity dimension, North Indians again scored more regarding the statements “Professional career is more important for men than for women”, “Men are usually practical while solving the problem but women use their intuition for problem solving”, and “Solving troublesome issues requires aggressive approach which is typical of men.” This clearly indicated that North India is a male dominated society. This supports findings of Kakkar & Kakkar (2007) who had suggested that role of females remain traditional regardless of the income and status in North India. Further, these results were supported by Vorting (2008) who had concluded that traditional roles of females are more prevalent in North India. One of the reasons for this can be attributed to the fact that literacy level of females is less in North India than in South India (Vorting, 2008).
- Significant difference was not observed in the opinion of respondents with different age groups for Masculinity vs Femininity orientation for North and South India. On the contrary, the findings of Hofstede (2001) reported that as the age increases, masculinity decreases.
- It was statistically proved that significant difference exists in the opinion of respondents with different occupation groups regarding Masculinity vs Femininity orientation in North and South India. Occupation groups “Service Class” and “Business Class” scored more on masculinity than other occupation groups. This supports the finding of Hofstede (2001) who had concluded that highly educated and upper middle class scored more on masculinity.
- It was statistically proved that the interaction of age and occupation on Masculinity vs Femininity is significant in North India, whereas, the interaction of age and occupation on Masculinity vs Femininity is not significant in South India.

- On Individuality vs Collectivism, North Indians scored more regarding the statement, “One should sacrifice self-interest whenever there is a clash of personal and family interest”, “In difficult times, an individual should stick with family”, “Aged relatives should be taken care of”, “People should not hide any matter in the family” and “Parents should take care of their children throughout their life”. This clearly indicates that North Indian society is Collectivist in Nature and South Indians are Individualist in nature. These findings were supported by Kumar, Ravichandran, & Nath (2013). These findings were also supported by Vorting (2008) who concluded that North Indian families are more traditional where opinions of family members are considered while the case is different in the nuclear family pattern which is common in South India.
- It was statistically established that significant difference in the opinion of the respondents with different age groups exists regarding Individuality vs Collectivism orientation in North India. However, South Indian respondents did not show any significant difference in the opinion of the respondents with different age groups for Individuality vs Collectivism orientation.
- It was statistically established that no significant difference in the opinion of the respondents with different occupation groups exists regarding Individuality vs Collectivism orientation in North India. However, South Indian respondents showed significant difference in the opinion of the respondents with different occupation groups for Individuality vs Collectivism orientation.
- It was found that the interaction of age and occupation for Individualism vs Collectivism does not have any significant difference both for North and South India.

5.2 INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS PART-II: APPAREL PURCHASE

This section deals with the interpretation of the findings of the study related to the apparel wear in North and South India.

- As India is a multi-cultural nation, it is perceived that people from different regions will prefer different apparels but the findings of the research are quite contradictory to the perceived notion i.e. people from North and South India have similar kind of apparel preferences. This supports the findings of Vorting (2008) that difference in clothing is mainly visible in the rural areas as the urban middle class has adopted western clothes and hence, more homogenous dressing style is visible.
- When it comes to female traditional attire, overall Indian response was in favour of *sari*. However, there was a considerable difference in the pattern of female traditional apparel wear. North Indian females preferred *salwaar kameez*, while *sari* dominated in South India. It is believed that *salwaar kameez* originated from the Turkic-Iranian horse riding steppe people of Central Asia. A number of this type of native tribes got converted to Islam. From 12th century onwards, there were a number of raids and invasions which led to the establishment of Islamic Turkic-Iranian rule, the Delhi Sultanate and subsequently the Moghul Empire, over northern and North-Western part of the country, a part of which is Pakistan now exactly what is now northern India and Pakistan. Thereafter, *salwar suit* become popular throughout the area. This is one reason why *salwaar kameez* is preferred in North India. However, it is fast catching up in South India also because of the convenience.
- For formal female clothing, *salwaar suit* was the most preferred attire followed closely by *sari*. *Business Suits* and *Trouser-Shirts* were least preferred in both the regions- North and South India. The possible reason for these phenomena can be that it is still considered in India that females are supposed to look after household work only. However, the percentage of South Indian females who preferred *Business Suits* and *Trouser-Shirts* was more than that of North India. The reason can be that role of females are more traditional in North India than South India and hence, number of working women are less in North India.
- When it comes to casual female apparel, there is no difference between the two regions. *Jeans-T-shirt* is the most preferred casual attire in North as well as in South India.

- The overall trend for traditional male apparel in India was for *kurta pyjama*. However, significant difference was visible between North and South India. South Indians preferred *lungi* over kurta pyjama compared with the North Indians. One of the reasons why lungi is preferred in South India is that the region is surrounded by sea from three sides and heat and humidity in these regions create unpleasant climate for trousers.
- It was found that regarding formal male apparels, there is hardly any difference in the two regions. North Indians' as well as South Indians' most preferred formal apparel is Trouser -Shirt. As formals are worn mainly by working class and majority of the working class is found in urban areas only, where the approach is more towards wearing formal attire (Euromonitor, 2006).
- It was also revealed in the study that there is not much difference in the pattern of casual wearing of the males in the two regions. Both the regions preferred Jeans – T-Shirts to any other casual wear.

5.3 INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS PART-III: CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

- Regarding Pre-Purchase behaviour, North Indians scored more for the statement, “I will try to search information from every possible source before making any decision regarding purchase”. This clearly indicates that North Indians rely on information before making purchase decision. These results validate previous findings in this study that North Indians score more on Uncertainty Avoidance than South Indians. This finding was also supported by Kau & Jung (2004) who said that a person, who has less tolerance for ambiguity and less tendency for risk taking, will always engage in a thorough information search before purchasing any new item. This also applies for any product which might cause unpleasant consequences, if a wrong buying decision is made. Further, Hirschman (1983) found that there are significant dissimilarities between cultures in information exchange and this can be associated with the degree of Uncertainty Avoidance in each culture.

- It was statistically established that significant difference exists between North and South India regarding the statement, “If I have a prior knowledge about the product/brand, I feel less uncertain” with North Indians scoring high for the above mentioned statement indicating that North Indians love to buy known brands to reduce the ambiguity. This supports the findings of Hoover & Saegert (1978) who reported that different consumer groups related brand loyalty with risk and this relation is positive. In other terms, whenever consumers believe that the risk connected with a specific service or product category is high, they will have a tendency to stay faithful to a single brand so as to reduce the uncertainty.
- It was statistically established that there is no significant difference in Pre-Purchase behaviour across various age groups in North as well as South India.
- It was found in the study that significant difference in Pre-Purchase behaviour across various occupation groups exist in North India, whereas, in South India, no such significant difference was found across various occupation groups.
- In North India, there was significant difference regarding Pre-Purchase behaviour across the interaction of age and occupation. However, no such significant difference was visible in South India.
- Regarding Purchase behaviour, North Indians score more than South Indians on the statement, “I purchase branded products as I am able to identify with my personality”. Buying branded apparel is related to Individualistic culture indicating that North Indians are more individualistic. This means that North Indians are more individualistic than the South Indians on this particular aspect while the South Indians are otherwise an individualistic society. According to Manrai, Lascu, Manrai & Babb (2001), brands are symbols which communicate meanings to consumers as well as fashion consciousness for individuals from an individualistic society and predisposition to purchase new and different products and brands are characterized by a high individualistic orientation (Hofstede G. , 2001; Leng & Botelho, 2009).
- Regarding Purchase behaviour, North Indians score more than South Indians also on the statement, “I seek variety and novelty in my purchase”. Seeking

variety and novelty in purchase is related to individualistic culture indicating that North Indians are more individualistic in this aspect also than the South Indians who are otherwise a more individualistic society than the North Indians.

- According to Hofstede (2001), the inclination to buy unique and various different products and brands is classified by a high individualistic orientation. Consumers from individualistic cultures have greater tendency to take risk and innovativeness than those from collectivistic cultures. Collectivist cultures are conformance oriented and demonstrate a greater degree of group conduct and concern, while members of individualistic societies are emotionally more unattached from in-groups (other than immediate family) and place their individual objectives, motives and needs ahead of those of the in-group . Members of individualistic cultures concentrate on higher public self-consciousness, variety-seeking and less conformity behavior (Hofstede G. , 2001).
- It was found in the study that no significant difference exists regarding purchase behaviour across various age groups in North and South India.
- It was statistically established that significant difference exists regarding Purchase behaviour across various occupation groups in North as well as South India.
- It was found in the study that no significant difference exists regarding purchase behaviour interaction of age and occupation groups between North and South India.
- The study revealed that there is no difference regarding Post Purchase behavior between North and South India. Post purchase behaviour is either related to consumer satisfaction or complaints from consumers. Researchers have been successfully able to relate Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance and Collectivism vs Individuality with the complaint behaviour. According to Ngai E. W., Heung, Wong & Chan (2007), people in high Power Distance do not complain as they are afraid of losing face as compared to people in lower Power Distance. In collectivist culture, consumers do not prefer raising

complaints, but are likely to complain it to their family members (Huang, Huang, & Wu, 1996; Liu & McClure, 2001). Consumers from collectivist culture do not make complaints because they are afraid of losing face and prefer not to complain it to third party (Liu & McClure, 2001). Whereas, consumers from individualist culture make it a point to complain to third party (Huang, Huang, & Wu, 1996). Ngai E. W., Heung, Wong, & Chan (2007) concluded that consumers high on Uncertainty Avoidance tend not to make complaints because of fear of loss of face as compared to consumers low on Uncertainty Avoidance who tends to make complaints. North Indians were found to be higher in Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance and Collectivism than South Indians, hence, it can be concluded that North Indians make less complaints as compared to South Indians because of the fear of loss of face.

- It was established statistically that significant difference exists regarding Post Purchase behaviour across various age groups in North India. People in the “above 50” age group tend to engage in complaint behaviour. This finding coincided with Han, Keng, & Richmond (1995) who concluded that complainants tend to be older than those who do not complain. However, no such difference was visible for South Indians respondents across various age groups.
- It was statistically established that significant difference exists regarding Post Purchase behaviour across various occupation groups in North India. However, no such difference was visible for South Indian respondents across various occupation groups.
- The study revealed that significant difference exists regarding Post Purchase behaviour for the interaction of age and occupation groups in North India. However, no such difference was visible for South Indian respondents regarding the interaction of age and occupation.

5.4 INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS PART-IV: ACCULTRATION

- It was statistically established that significant difference exists between North and South India on the statement, “ Most of the book I read are in my native

language” with South Indian scoring high for the above mentioned statement indicating that South Indians prefer their native language to other languages.

- Study revealed that significant difference exists between North and South India regarding the statement, “ I prefer to go out during vacation near my home town” with South India scoring high for the above mentioned statement indicating that South Indians like to vacation near their home.
- Further study revealed that significant difference exists between North and South Indians on the statement “Visiting different parts of the country is my favourite hobby” with North Indians scoring high indicating North Indians do not confine themselves to North India and prefer to vacation throughout the country.
- It was statistically established that significant difference exists between North and South on the statement, “I am able to adapt to people from other culture” with North Indians scoring high indicating that they mix up with everybody as compared to South Indians.
- It was statistically established that significant difference exists for acculturation pattern across various age groups in North India as well as South India.
- The study revealed that significant difference does not exist for acculturation pattern across various occupation groups in North India as well as South India.
- It was found in the study that significant difference does not exist for acculturation pattern for the interaction of age and occupation in North India as well as South India.

5.5 INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS PART-V: FACTORS AFFECTING APPAREL PURCHASE

- Using factor analysis, following 8 factors were identified for North Indians which affect apparel purchase: “Care and Service Quality”, “Acculturation”, “Brand Conscious”, “Information Seeking”, “Uncertainty Avoidance”, “Family Values”, “Careful and Certain” and “Collectivism and Quality Conscious” , whereas for South India, 12 factors were identified using factor analysis. The

factors for South India are: “Power Distance”, “Collectivism and Masculinity”, “Brand Conscious, Materialistic and Self Centered”, “Acculturation”, “Uncertainty Avoidance”, “Quality Conscious”, “Masculinity and Adaptability”, “Respectful”, “Independence with Certainty”, “Native”, “Trying New Things” and “Individuality and Certainty”.

- In the backdrop of above findings, factors were regressed using forward regression and factors were identified which have major influence on apparel purchase for North and South India. For North India, following factors were found to have major influence on apparel purchase - “Brand Conscious”, “Information seeking” and “Care and Service Quality”. For South India, following factors were found to have major influence on apparel purchase - “Power Distance”, “Quality Conscious” and “Brand Conscious, Materialistic and Self Centered”.
- Clearly there are some similarities and some dissimilarities.
- According to North Indians, culture becomes more homogenizing over time because of the technological changes. Over the years, technology has made interaction between the people easier. This has been going in for a long. Steam ships did this over a hundred years ago, and the internet does it now. Indian government is also aware that it is not easy to connect entire India through roads because of the very reason that the terrain of India is not so easy to cover by roads. Even if the government goes for connecting roads, it will take decades and huge amount of money will be invested. Considering the above mentioned points, Indian government emphasized more on the development of telecommunication network and internet to reduce the gap. When people interact more, their culture become more homogeneous as they borrow from one another. Today, the world is shrinking into a multinational web, where the products and services of one country are hospitably received with great excitement by another country. However, the people of South India had a contrary view. According to them, culture is homogenized if those who were previously unexposed to it assimilate it after they are exposed to it. The use of technology will expose people to other cultures, but they do not necessarily

acquire the characteristic of a culture due to exposure. Culture becomes more fragmented because after being exposed to a different culture, one might choose or pick up certain elements of it, but not entirely. India is a country of diverse culture and nationalities and underneath this diverse culture lays another phenomenon called subculture which cannot be diluted easily.

- Both North and South Indians agreed that travel is a form of learning. When one travels to another place, he is exposed to the different living styles, wearing and food habits, languages, traditions and culture. One not only learns all these things but also adopts some of these things either in total or in parts. By travelling to historical places, one learns not only about the history but also about the art, architecture and other traditions of that period. Realization of this concept is the beginning towards a globalized world. Notwithstanding, traveling also gives an opportunity to realize the similarities among different cultures. North Indians believe that in spite of the diversity of languages and cultures, and the difference of politics and governments, people are essentially the same. There is a general agreement that traveling is, indeed, a learning opportunity. While travelling in other countries, one meets different people, sees different sights and does different things. Nevertheless, the most valuable learning that comes from travel is not that we are different from others, but that we share so many common needs and feelings. For centuries, travelling in India was about pilgrimage. Holy trips were, and still are, given great importance in an individual's life. All these destinations of pilgrimage were also linked for the purpose of nationwide integration. When people travelled to another parts of the country, they would also carry along trade, language, dances and art along, leading to an exchange of culture, ideas, technology and economy.

5.6 CONCLUSIONS

- North India emerged as a high Power Distance oriented society. It means that power is unequally distributed and the tendency to accept and expect unequal distribution of power is more in North India as compared to South India.

- Different age groups showed different orientation for Power Distance in North India. Age group of “41-50 and “above 50” showed inclination towards high Power Distance orientation, whereas, “less than 20” , “20-30” and “31-40” age groups showed low Power Distance orientation.
- Different occupation groups have different orientation for Power Distance in North India. Occupation group “retired” showed high Power Distance orientation, whereas, occupation group “student”, “service class” and “business class” and “housewife” showed lower Power Distance.
- Power Distance orientation is same across all age groups in South India.
- Different occupation groups have different orientation for Power Distance in South India. Occupation groups “retired”, “service class” and “business class” showed high Power Distance orientation , whereas, occupation groups “student”, “business class”, and “housewife” showed lower Power Distance .
- North India also emerged as a society high on Uncertainty Avoidance .It means that North Indians try to reduce the occurrence of uncertain and unusual events.
- Uncertainty Avoidance is same across various age groups of North India.
- Uncertainty Avoidance is same across various occupation groups of North India.
- Uncertainty Avoidance is same across various age groups of South India.
- Different occupation groups have different orientation for Uncertainty Avoidance in South India. Occupation group “retired” showed high Uncertainty Avoidance orientation, whereas, occupation groups “student”, “service class” and “business class” and “housewife” showed lower Uncertainty Avoidance orientation.
- South Indian culture emerged as more Individualistic culture. It means that South Indians are concerned more towards their immediate family members and friends.
- Different age groups have different orientation for Individualism vs Collectivism in North India. Age groups “41-50 and “above 50” showed

inclination towards high collectivist orientation, whereas, “less than 20” , “20-30” and “31-40” age groups showed high Individualist orientation.

- Individualism vs Collectivism is same across different occupation groups in North India.
- Individualism vs collectivism is same across different age groups in South India.
- Different occupation groups have different orientation for Individualism vs collectivism in South India. Occupation groups “retired” and “housewife” showed high collectivism orientation, whereas, occupation groups “student”, “Service” and “Business” and showed lower individualistic orientation.
- South India also emerged more femininity oriented culture as the females play active role in decision making and they have shed the traditional roles.
- Masculinity vs Femininity is same across different age groups in North India.
- Different occupation groups have different orientation for Masculinity vs Femininity in North India. Occupation groups “service”, “business” and “retired”, showed high Masculinity orientation , whereas, occupation groups “ student”, and “housewife” showed higher Femininity orientation.
- Masculinity vs Femininity is same across different age groups in South India.
- Different occupation groups have different orientation for Masculinity vs Femininity in South India. Occupation group “retired” showed high Masculinity orientation , whereas, occupation groups “service”, “business” ,“ student” and “housewife” showed higher Femininity orientation.
- There is not a huge difference between the North and the South for apparel wear/purchase as both the cultures have adopted western wears as their preferred clothing.
- *Sari* which is used for traditional as well as formal wear, is more preferred in South India as compared to North Indian where *kurta* and *churidaar pyjama* are preferred.

- *Sari* is the most preferred as formal female apparel wear. Preference for business suits and trouser shirt is still very low because of the reason that number of working females is still quite less.
- The most preferred female casual apparel throughout India is Jeans-T-shirt.
- The most preferred traditional male apparel is *kurta pyjama* in North India, whereas, in South India, *lungi* is most preferred.
- There is no difference between the North and the South India regarding formal male apparel wear.
- There is no difference between the North and the South India for casual male apparel wear.
- North Indians try to search information from every possible source and feel more certain if they have some prior knowledge about the product/brand signifying that consumers of North India plan their purchases in advance.
- Different age groups have no significant difference for Pre-Purchase Behaviour in North as well as South India.
- Different occupation groups have significant difference for Pre-Purchase behaviour in North India. Occupation groups “service”, “business” and “retired”, tried to reduce their uncertainty by seeking more information about the products/brands and buying brands/products with some prior knowledge, whereas, occupation groups, “student”, and “housewife” do not follow this pattern. However, no such difference in Pre-Purchase behaviour was visible across various occupation groups in South India.
- North Indians purchase branded products which they are able to identify with their personality and they seek variety and novelty in their purchases. Above findings indicate that North Indians, although high on Collectivism, but when it comes to purchase behaviour, they love to buy branded products to express their personality and they seek novelty in their purchase which is typical of individualistic trait.
- Different age groups did not show any difference in purchase behaviour in North and South India.

- Different occupation groups show difference in the purchase behaviour for North India. Occupation groups “service”, “business”, “housewife” and “retired” do not buy new products until these are recommended, buy branded and quality products to reduce uncertainty, purchase materialistic products, seeks novelty in their purchases, whereas, occupation group, “student” do not follow this pattern.
- Different occupation groups show difference in their purchase behaviour for South India. Occupation groups “service”, and “retired” do not buy new products until they are recommended, buy branded and quality products to reduce uncertainty, purchase materialistic products, seek novelty in their purchases, whereas, occupation groups , “student”, “business”, “housewife” do not follow this pattern.
- There is no difference in the Post-Purchase behaviour of North and South Indians.
- Different age groups have different Post –Purchase Behavior in North India. Age groups “31-40”, “41-50”and above 50” do not go for repeat purchase if the quality of the product is not up to the mark and do not recommend it to reference group, do not complain about the product in case the product is faulty, whereas, age group “less than 20” do not follow same pattern. However, no difference was visible for different age groups in South India.
- Different occupation groups have different Post –Purchase Behavior in North India. Occupation groups “service”, “business”, “retired” and “housewife” do not go for repeat purchase, if the quality of the product is not up to the mark and do not recommend to reference group, do not complain about the product in case the product is faulty, whereas, occupation group – “student” do not follow same pattern. However, no difference was visible for different occupation groups in South India.
- North Indians like to try different cuisines other than their culture, they love to visit different parts of the country, they also try to mix with the people of other cultures, whereas, South Indians love to read the books in their native languages and prefer vacationing near their home town. It clearly shows that

North Indians are able to adapt to different culture easily and South Indians are more closed in nature.

- Different age groups showed different Acculturation Pattern in North India. Age groups “ less than 20”, “21-30”, “31-40”, were open to new cultures, whereas, age groups “41-50” and “above 50” were closed to new culture.
- Different age groups showed different Acculturation Pattern in South India. Age groups of “less than 20” and “21-30” were open to new cultures, whereas, age groups “31-40”, “41-50” and “above 50” were closed to new cultures.
- Different occupation groups didn’t show any difference for Acculturation Pattern in North as well as South India.
- Different factors were identified using Factor Analysis for North and South India respectively. Following eight factor were identified for North India - “Care and Service Quality”, “Acculturation”, “Brand Conscious”, “Information Seeking” , “Uncertainty Avoidance”, “Family Values”, “Careful and Certain’, “Collectivism and Quality Conscious”. Following twelve factors were identified for South India - “Power Distance” , “Collectivism and Masculinity”, “Brand Conscious, Materialistic and Self Centered”, “Acculturation”, “Uncertainty Avoidance”, “Quality Conscious”, “Masculinity and Adaptability”, “Respectful”, “Independence with Certainty”, “Native”, “Trying New Things” and “Individuality and Certainty”.
- Using Multiple Regression, major factors influencing the apparel purchase were identified. Factors which influence apparel purchase in North India are “Brand Conscious”, “Information seeking” and “Care and Service quality”.
- Factors which influence apparel purchase in South India are “Power Distance” and “Quality Conscious” “Brand Conscious, Materialistic and Self Centered”.

5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It will certainly be plausible to note the circumstances which limit the extent of this study and are given below:

- Although the whole country has been divided into two parts i.e. North and South for the purpose of the study. However, seeing the vastness of the country, people generally tend to divide India into 5 parts i.e. North India, West India, South India, East India and Central India.
- The study compares the culture in terms of apparel purchase only. There are many other things which can be compared between North India and South India.
- Despite its detailed coverage, the current research might be criticized simply because it overlooks a comprehensive analysis of the type which the psychologists and anthropologists have generally performed. The study has not been put to any psychometric test or econometric test and does not emphasize understanding culture from anthropologist's point of view.
- Culture has been described as being dynamic in nature. As it is not always possible to get definitive answers to the questions of cultural impact, it is best to view a cultural study as a small step on a learning curve. This study too, is a small step in this direction and should be taken as a humble contribution to the academic world.
- The national-level measures of Hofstede's (2001) four significant cultural dimensions might be challenged, because these were initially evolved based on data of a survey accumulated more than three decades ago. Although Hofstede's analyses were cautious only to retain dimensions which could be replicated, yet the age of these measures a source of concern, as the culture is dynamic in nature.

5.8 SUGGESTIONS

Based on the basis of these findings, following suggestions are made to the retailers and researchers, having interest in this area.

5.8.1 Retailers and Marketers

- Marketers should offer new and innovative apparels in North India. Although North Indians score high on Power Distance but they are ready to try new

things, whereas, South Indians are low on Power Distance but they still prefer product of their region.

- Consumers of “40-50” and “above 50” age groups showed higher Power Distance , so marketers, if targeting these groups, should not experiment with them and should offer them tried and tested products in North India. However, in South India, as Power Distance is less than North India, marketers can experiment with all age groups.
- Marketers have to offer different products to consumers of different occupation groups. As Power Distance is high in North India, people involved in occupations which require them to be in formal attire will not experiment much but consumers who wear casuals for work will be ready to experiment in North as well as in South India.
- The biggest challenge in front of marketers in North India is that people tend to avoid uncertainty. A new firm setting business in North India will find it hard to make their products acceptable to consumers. Marketers must take the help of well-known celebrities to penetrate into new markets. However, South Indians are the people who are less uncertain and can easily be targeted for new and innovative products.
- Marketers should not consider age when targeting products based on Uncertainty Avoidance as there is no difference in the different age groups in North as well as in South India.
- Marketers should plan according to occupation groups when targeting in South India. However, no such targeting is required in North India as different occupation groups of North India did not show significant difference when targeting products based on Uncertainty Avoidance.
- Marketers should target North Indians based on the family needs rather on individualistic needs as North Indians are more family oriented and place their product preference according to family choices rather than personal choices. Moreover, they will be involved on information sharing and feedback from family members before making purchase. On the other hand, South Indians should be targeted based on the individual needs rather than family needs.

- Marketers should target different age groups differently as different age groups showed difference for Collectivism vs Individualism. However, there is no need to target consumers of different age groups differently in South India as people of different age group are similar and individualistic in nature.
- Marketers should target different occupation groups differently as different age groups showed difference for Collectivism vs Individualism in South India, whereas, there is no need to target consumers of different occupation groups differently in North India as people of different age group are similar and individualistic in nature.
- While targeting North Indians, marketers should target the male member of the family as North India is male dominated society and decision making power still lies with the male member of the family, whereas, the role of female has evolved more in South India and marketers need not target only the male members of the family but also female members.
- Marketers need not target masculinity vs Femininity on the basis of age group for North and South India as age has no impact on masculinity vs Femininity .
- Marketers need to target consumers based on their occupation in North as well as South India as some occupations are highly masculine and some are considered feminine.
- Marketers need to target *sari* as female apparel and *lungi* as male apparel in South India, whereas, they need to target *salwaar-suit* for females and *kurta pyjama* for males in North India as these are the major difference in the apparel wear between the two regions.
- As North India is high on Uncertainty Avoidance, marketers need to reduce their uncertainty by providing more information/detail about the product and by providing well known products.
- Marketers need to target different age group differently as they show different pre-purchase behaviour both in North and South India.

- Marketers need to target different occupation groups differently in North India. However, marketers need not target consumers based on different occupation groups in South India.
- Marketers can also target North Indians for branded products and for new variety of products.
- Marketers need not target consumers for purchase behaviour based on different age groups in North as well as South India.
- Marketers need to target consumers of different occupation groups differently for purchase behaviour both in North and in South India.
- Marketers need to address the complaints of consumers effectively both in North and South India.
- Marketers need to target different age groups for post purchase behaviour differently in North India. However, in South India, marketers need not target based on age group segmentation.
- Marketers need to target different occupation groups differently for post purchase behaviour in North India. However, in South India, marketers need not target based on occupation group segmentation.
- Marketers need to provide innovative and new products to North Indians as they love to experiment new things from different cultures. However, they should not offer products/items from other cultures than their native culture to South Indians.
- Marketers need to focus on some key factors while targeting North Indians for apparel purchase and these are as following: “Brand Conscious”, “Information seeking” and “Care and Service quality”. For South Indians, the key factors to be considered by marketers are: “Power Distance”, “Quality Conscious” “Brand Conscious” and “Materialistic and Self Centered”.

5.8.2 Researchers

In the present Study, the researcher has studied only four dimensions of Hofstede. The fifth dimension which was added later on was left to limit the study. Future researcher can include the fifth dimension also for their research.

Apart from North and South India, there are other subcultures which exist in India i.e. East India, West India and Central India. Future researchers can also consider the above mentioned cultures.

Apart from North, West, South, East and Central India, every state has its their unique culture. Future researchers can compare different states based on their cultures.

The present Study has considered apparel purchase as the point of difference between North and South India. However, there are many differences between North and South India. Future researchers should identify the differences and conduct study on those items also.

The researcher can also undertake a study and come up with the model through structure equation modeling.

5.9 DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As discussed in the above section, this research has its own limitations which provide opportunities for future work.

Consumer behaviour is a complicated process and can be studied from different perspectives. Further investigation is required for providing results according to the multi-layer onion diagram suggested by Hofstede for studying culture. As per the triangulation approach, combination of methods should be used to give more holistic and contextual results to the study. A qualitative methodology such as in-depth interviews could compliment results of the survey and bring out clarity on some of the puzzling findings. Different aspects of consumer behaviour could be discovered by developing culture specific scales. Rich possibility also lies for collaboration across various disciplines which may provide a holistic view of such a complex and multifaceted area of enquiry.