7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Knowledge is a process of piling up facts; wisdom lies in their simplification.

Alexander Graham Bell

7.1 Introduction
The managerial implications, conclusion of the study and directions of the future research are presented in this chapter. In following section, the discussions on results and findings is illustrated. Managerial implications of the study are elaborated in the subsequent section followed by concluding remarks.

7.2 Discussions

7.2.1 Shopper’s Buying Behaviour
From the study conducted and factor analysis performed for shopper’s buying behaviour construct, four buying patterns are deduced. These behavioural patterns illustrated below are tendencies that describe the shoppers’ psyche and reasons as why they behave in a particular way. They includes...

1. Active Buying Behaviour,
2. Planned Buying Behaviour,
3. Seeking Buying Behaviour, and

Active buying behaviour of the shopper reflects his or her impulse to purchase variety at various stores and replace the old wear to lead active lifestyle and be reference to others.

Planned buying behaviour of the shopper is reflected in their preferences for shopping that is planned well in advance. They plan their wardrobe in keeping up with their personality and keen to dress better than others.

Seeking buying behaviour is reflected in shopper’s keenness to visit stores to seek ideas, and find apparels and accessories that reflects their selves. They are more willing to buy private labels and seek pleasure in the purchases they commit.

Controlled buying behaviour of shopper is reflected in their fear of excessive spending. They so as to search for better alternates to shop are more than willing to go visit new places.
Gender and Shoppers’ Buying Behaviour
Males somewhat display higher levels of active buying behaviour than females. Employability, income and social factors may predominantly see a greater active buying among males. Since males enjoy higher level of employability and income levels and have more active social life their purchases tend to be more impulse with faster replenishment of present set of wear and sense of being reference to others. However, the differences in active buying behaviour of males and females is only indicative leading to the fact that females too are catching on the line and are becoming more conscious and active in their buying preferences. The ample job opportunities and employability with better finances that females enjoy today has seen an emergence of active buying behaviour and lifestyle among them.

There is not much difference among males and females and the degree of planned buying behaviour they display, though males are a bit more planned in their buying behaviour than females.

Males demonstrate behaviour that seeks to identify new dressing ideas, buy apparels and accessories that reflect themselves and are willing to buy private labels that superimpose their identity. Females too demonstrate the same but lack the intensity that males demonstrate. The differences in the mean score of the two are quite near to acceptable significance.

Female shoppers demonstrate more controlled buying behaviour than their male counterparts. Though the differences in their mean scores between males and females is not significant, it indicates females fear of excessive spending and their look and visit for new alternates for cheaper shopping.

Age and Shoppers’ Buying Behaviour
Shoppers in the age of 45-54 years are much more planned in their purchases than shoppers in other age groups. Planned buying behaviour is reflected more among shoppers in 45-54 year age group of their sense to dress better and possess a wardrobe that matches their personality. For this they plan their shopping trips well in advance and take pleasure in shopping.

Age reflects the seeking buying tendencies of the shoppers to a considerable extent.
Shoppers in young age groups of 18-24 years and 25-34 years seem less seeking to visit stores to acquaint themselves with new ideas and display inhibitions in purchasing private labels. Shoppers in the age group of 45-54 years and 35-44 years display significantly higher seeking buying behaviour and are apparently more open to seek ideas, wear private labels and take pleasure in shopping trips.

Age of shopper has a significant influence on his or her buying behaviour. As age increases so does shopper’s impulsive buying, tendency to visit more varied stores and lead an active lifestyle and also be reference to others. Shoppers in the age group of 45-54 years are found to be more active buyers than shoppers in age groups of 35-44 years, 25-34 years and are least for shoppers in the age group of 18-24 years. Employability, income levels and social engagement that enhances with maturing age for the shopper is supposedly the major reason for cultivation of active buying behaviour among shoppers.

Controlled buying behaviour is significantly different across the various age groupings. Shoppers in the age group of 25-34 years are found to exhibit lowest controlled buying behaviour. They are apparently relaxed and shop at particular stores with less fear of excessive spending. Shoppers in the age group of 35-45 years are more controlled in their buying behaviour. Most probably with household responsibilities and children in the family they exhibit more control in their buying conduct.

*Education and Shoppers’ Buying Behaviour*

Professionally qualified shoppers are potentially more active buyers than graduate and post graduate shoppers. Senior school shoppers are least active among all education groups. Active buying is propelled to a greater degree among professionally qualified shoppers for they enjoy better employability and incomes. Also, professionally qualified shoppers lead more active lifestyle and consider themselves as reference to others.

Professionally qualified shoppers are not only active buyer, they are planned buyers too. Planned buying among shoppers is reflected in their making concentrated efforts to plan their wardrobe in keeping up with their persona and committing well planned shopping trips which they actually enjoy. Professionals more for the occupational requirements need to dress better. They also need to shop at variety of stores to meet their need for complete range of apparels and accessories.

Seeking buying behaviour is observed to a greater degree among professionally qualified...
shoppers and one with senior school education. Professionals may visit stores to seek ideas and buy wears that resemble their persona. Likewise senior school educated shoppers may prefer to seek new ideas, including private label so as to match their requirements and purchase parity.

Graduate shoppers are more controlled in their buying behaviour than other categories. Senior school shoppers too are more controlled in their buying. Fear of excessive spending and likelihood of visiting stores to see what is new and affordable in offering rationalizes their concern in committing purchases to match their income levels.

*Occupation and Shoppers’ Buying Behaviour*

Occupation of shoppers suggests sales/skilled and self-employed as more active buyers than other occupation categories. Housewives are least active among all shopper categories. Sales/skilled shoppers enjoy higher earnings, lead more active lifestyle and more prone to impulse tendencies all contributing to higher active buying behaviour.

Planned buying behaviour is seen more prominently among sales/skilled shoppers. Self employed and shoppers with white collar job also display higher planned buying behaviour. Housewives are not much planned in their buying behaviour. Sales/skilled shoppers link their dressing with their professional requirements commit planned trips at variety of stores so as to maintain a wardrobe in keeping up their persona.

Shoppers in sales/skilled profession supposedly have highest seeking nature in their buying behaviour. Self employed shoppers too have higher seeking nature. Sales/skilled and self employed shoppers are more than willing to visit new stores and buy apparels that resemble their personalities. They are willing to buy private labels too. Housewives have lowest seeking tendency and are unlikely to see new ideas or feel good when buying.

Housewives are more controlled in their buying behaviour than other occupation categories. Housewives with responsibility of managing family expenses are more controlled and are likely to visit stores to see what is new and affordable in offering.

*Income and Shoppers’ Buying Behaviour*

High family income levels, may lead to higher consumption levels, which would imply larger aggregate shopping. Previous research (Prais and Houthakker 1971; Houthakker and Taylor 1970) supports the view that a household’s income has a major effect on its
consumption. In addition the higher income will result in a shopping basket comprising of goods of better quality (Bawa and Ghosh, 1999) and is also expected to have a wider variety of assortment in the consumption. Thus the aggregate shopping is expected to grow with the income levels and also diversify in terms of the objects of consumption. With a higher income level, the impulse shopping will be less drain on the resources and is also expected to increase. In the study conducted we conclude that:

Shopper’s earnings have a significant influence in his or her active buying behaviour. Shopper with higher earnings displays greater active buying tendencies. Higher earnings lead shopper towards more active lifestyle, giving them ample leverage to shop at varied stores and free hand to commit impulse purchases.

Shoppers in income category of Rs. 6, 00,001 to Rs 10, 00,000 and Rs. 3, 00,001 to Rs. 6, 00,000 are more planned buyers. Shoppers in the income category of Rs. 10, 00,001 and above are least likely to display planned buying behaviour. Income levels determine the spending limits of shoppers and hence the concern for planned buying is seen more desperately among shoppers in mid income groups. But the difference in planned buying behaviour of shoppers with respect to their income levels is not significantly different.

Shoppers in the income category of Rs. 10, 00,001 and above and Rs. 6, 00,001 to Rs. 10, 00,000 display seeking buying behaviour to a greater extent than other income categories. Higher income group shoppers are more likely to visit stores to seek ideas, buy private labels, see buying as a means to reflect one and take pleasure in shopping. Income levels of shoppers determine their spending levels and their likelihood to seek new trends and labels. Shoppers’ in the income category of Rs. 3, 00,001 to Rs. 6, 00,000 and Rs. 3, 00,000 or less display lower level of seeking buying behaviour.

Shoppers in the income category of Rs. 6, 000,001 to Rs. 10, 00,000 are more controlled in their buying preferences than other income categories. Shoppers in the income levels of Rs. 3, 00,001 to Rs. 6, 00,000 display lower control buying behaviour. Fear of excessive spending may impose shoppers to visit stores to see what is new and affordable on offer.

*Store Location and Shoppers’ Buying Behaviour*

Shoppers at Delhi are apparently more active buyers than their counterparts at other locations. Shoppers at Ghaziabad and Gurgaon, in that order, also display higher active buying behaviour, whereas shoppers at Noida are less likely to be active shoppers.
Shoppers at Faridabad and Ghaziabad are evidently more planned than shoppers at other locations. Shoppers at Noida demo lower level of planned buying behaviour.

Seeking pattern of buying behaviour is more prevalent among buyers at Delhi, Ghaziabad and Gurgaon in that order and least among buyers at Noida.

Controlled buying behaviour is depicted more among shoppers at Ebony and Shopper’s Stop. Controlled buying behaviour is exhibited to a higher degree by Shoppers at Delhi, Ghaziabad and Faridabad and lowest by shoppers at Noida.

*Store Brand and Shoppers’ Buying Behaviour*
Active buying behaviour is depicted more among shoppers at Ebony and Shopper’s Stop. It is lower for shoppers at Globus. However the differences in rating are not significant.

Planned buying behaviour is relatively higher among shoppers at Ebony and Lifestyle. And it is lowest for shoppers at Shopper’s Stop.

Seeking buying behaviour is depicted more among shoppers at Ebony and Shoppers Stop. It is lower for shoppers at Globus. However, no significant differences in seeking nature of shopper and their buying behaviour and store brands they associate themselves with are established.

Controlled buying behaviour is depicted more among shoppers at Ebony and Shoppers Stop. It is lower for shoppers at Pantaloons. However mean differences are significantly low to decipher impact of store brand on controlled buying behaviour.

*Store Format and Shoppers’ Buying Behaviour*
For Ebony Shoppers buying behaviour at stand alone stores is quite evident than at stores in malls. This is specifically true for active, seeking and controlled buying behaviour. The same is true for Lifestyle and Shoppers Stop stores. At Lifestyle stand alone store shoppers display much fairer degree of buying behaviour than shoppers at malls, particularly for seeking and controlled buying behaviours. At Shoppers Stop, the buying behaviour is more profound at stand alone stores, principally in case of planned buying behaviour.

Among shoppers at Globus and Pantaloons, buying behaviour for stores located in malls explain higher levels of shoppers’ buying behaviours than stand alone stores. It is
predominantly high for planned buying behaviour and indicatively higher for active buying behaviour at Globus. At Pantaloons shoppers at stores located in malls display considerably higher buying behaviour than shoppers at stand alone stores for all buying behaviours viz. active, planned, seeking and controlled.

However, shoppers at Delhi and Satellite Towns display considerably greater degree of buying behaviour at stores located in malls than at stand alone stores. For Delhi shoppers, it is predominantly higher for active, planned and seeking buying behaviours. Among shoppers at Satellite Towns it is primarily higher for active, seeking and controlled buying behaviours.

Overall shoppers buying behaviour is reflected to a greater degree at stores located in a mall than at stand alone stores.

*Store Factors and Shoppers’ Buying Behaviour*
Active buying behaviour of shoppers is reflected significantly for the department stores product quality, promotion and store facilities and indicatively for store branding.

Planned buying behaviour of shoppers is reflected significantly for the department stores product quality, price, promotion, location and store facilities and indicatively for store branding.

Seeking buying behaviour of shoppers is reflected significantly for the department stores price, promotion and store facilities and indicatively for store branding.

Controlled buying behaviour of shoppers is reflected significantly for the department stores store facilities and personnel service and indicatively for range of assortment available at the store.

7.2.2 Store Image
From the study conducted and factor analysis performed for store factor construct, six store image variables are deduced. They include…

1. Store Quality
2. Shopping Ease
3. Store Shopper Connect
4. Other Store Relativity
5. Customer Relationship, and

**Store quality** of the store is explained by the quality of assortment the store provides, the latest fashions and style statements that the store bring forth to its customer; informative advertisement about latest arrivals, stocks and promotional campaigns. The well assorted rest areas, informed and understanding staff, fair exchange and return policy and the high class image the store bestows also shapes its store image.

**Demographics and Store Quality**
Store Quality is perceived to be equally important by both males and females. Though males have some higher rating for store quality, the difference is not significant. All store quality parameters of quality assortment, availability of latest trends and fashions, informative ads, relaxed store atmosphere with well assorted rest areas, informed and considerate staff, fair exchange and returns of purchases and an enhanced store image are well validated and are of prominent importance to one and all.

Store quality ratings are significantly dependent on shoppers’ age levels. Shoppers with mature age are found to perceive and rate store quality to a higher level than shoppers who are young. Shoppers in the study with age levels of 45-54 years and 35-44 years are found to have higher ratings for store quality than shoppers in age group of 25-34 years and 18-24 years. Store quality perception is higher among shoppers with matured age as they are far more rational in their evaluation of store quality and stores’ efforts to provide for better.

Store quality ratings are fairly the same for shoppers’ vis-à-vis their education levels. However, professionals have higher ratings for the store they regularly visit on store quality parameter.

Sales/ skilled and self-employed shoppers are more likely to give higher rating to store’s assortment as quality offering and being fashionable and stylish, store ads being informative about new arrivals and promotional offers, well assorted rest areas at store, informed staff and the high class image of store. They appear to enjoy shopping and expect store to provide them quality in all expects of store’s offerings and service.

Shopper’s income level has a direct bearing on their rating of store quality. Shoppers with
annual income of Rs.10, 00,001 and above have highest rating for store quality whereas shoppers with Rs. 3, 00,001 to Rs. 6, 00,000 have lowest rating for store quality. Store quality supposedly is rated higher by shoppers with higher income groups for they are qualitatively able to experience and evaluate the store’s assortment as quality offering, it’s fashionable and stylish range of assortments, informative ads, well assorted rest areas at store, informed staff. They are more frequent to visit and commit more visits and see store to offer high class image.

*Store Location and Store Quality*

Shoppers at Delhi rate quality of the store considerably higher than shoppers at other locations. Shoppers’ at Gurgaon and Faridabad too have higher rating for store quality. Store quality rating is comparatively lower at Ghaziabad.

*Store Brand and Store Quality*

Shoppers perceive store quality to be significantly higher at Shopper’s Stop and Ebony and lowest at Globus.

*Shopping ease* reflects the shoppers concern for luxurious store environment, the ease in billing and courteous sales staff.

*Demographics and Shopping Ease*

Females are somewhat less convinced about the ease in shopping that a store offers than their male counterparts. Males apparently are more relaxed to rate store’s luxurious environment, the ease in billing provided for by the store and the courteous staff fairly higher than females.

Shoppers in higher age groups consider store to provide greater shopping ease than the shoppers in lower age groups. This confirms that age has ample effect on shopper’s evaluation of store environment, its billing procedure and how sales staffs behave. Elderly shoppers are more considerate about these facts than younger ones.

Education level of shoppers influences their rating for shopping ease a department store offers. Professionals and graduates give higher ratings for store ease. This is significantly higher than shoppers in other education categories. Professionals see the store they patronize offering a luxurious environment, simple billing processes and courteous and polite sales staff.
Sales/skilled and self-employed shoppers having higher rating for shopping ease. Luxurious store environment, ease in billing and courteous sales staff enhance sales/skilled and self-employed shopper’s perceived store image to a greater degree than shoppers belonging to other occupation categories. Housewives give lowest rating for the shopping ease the store they patronize offers.

Shoppers with annual income of Rs. 10,00,001 and more are most overwhelmed by the shopping ease a department store provides. They give higher rating for store they patronize offering luxurious environment being, the ease in billing and the courtesy and humbleness with which the staff of the store interacts. Shoppers in the income level of Rs. 6,00,000 to Rs. 10,00,000 supposedly are least convinced by the shopping ease the store they patronize provides.

Store Location and Shopping Ease
Shopping ease is relatively perceived to be higher by shoppers at Delhi, Faridabad and Gurgoan, in that order. It is lowest for shoppers at Ghaziabad.

Store Brand and Shopping Ease
A significant relationship is established among store brands and the ease of shopping it offers. The ease of shopping is more comforting at Shoppers Stop and Ebony and less comforting at Globus.

Store-shopper connect for the shopper is defined by the price quality equilibrium, frequency of sales promotions and discounts offered by the store, and information about the new arrivals at the store.

Demographics and Store Shopper Connect
Males to a fair extent see that the store they usually visit offers quality assortments at right price, more frequent sales offers and discounts, and store being informative about fresh arrivals. Females are somewhat less convinced than males about these above mentioned store-shopper connect factors.

An age level of shopper establishes a significant relationship with their perceived rating of store-shopper connects. Shoppers in higher age groups are more convinced about the price-quality equilibrium of the store they patronize offers. The frequency of sales offers
and discounts that the store offers is more enticing to them and they appear more satisfied with store information about fresh and new arrivals.

Education level of shoppers presumably has no significant influence on their perception about store-shopper connect. Professionals presuppose store shopper connect to be of higher degree than other education groups. And it is lowest for shoppers with senior school qualifications. Professionals see the store they patronize offers better price quality equilibrium, greater frequency of sales promotions and is more informative about the new arrivals at the store.

No major differences appear in the mean rating of shopper with respect to their occupation categories with their perceived store-shopper connect, though self employed and sales/skilled shoppers having higher rating and housewives the lower rating among all.

Higher the income level of shopper, higher is his or her perceived levels of store-shopper connect. Though of only indicative significance it is highest for shopper in the income group of Rs. 10, 00,001 and above and lowest for shopper with income level of Rs. 3, 00,000 or less.

Store Location and Store Shopper Connect
Store-shopper connect is found to be higher among shoppers at Noida, followed by shoppers at Delhi, Gurgaon and Faridabad. And it is lowest for shoppers at Ghaziabad.

Store Brand and Store Shopper Connect
Shoppers Shoppers Stop and Ebony perceive greater affinity with the store than shoppers at other stores particularly Globus where shoppers have lowest rating on this parameter.

Other store relativity lends shopper to compare the store with other stores in terms of reasonable pricing and excellent services offered. The shopper is also keen to have apparels and accessories in various designs, colours and shades to meet his or her all varied requirements.

Demographics and Other Store Relativity
Male shoppers see the store they patronize to offer comparatively better pricing and services than other stores that what female shoppers presuppose. Though of an indicative significance, male shoppers also rate the store’s offering to be better in terms of design
and colour ranges than competing stores. Females are somewhat less likely to consider the same.

Age tends to determine shoppers’ rating of the store they patronize vis-à-vis other stores. Higher the age of the shopper, greater is the probability of their rating the store relatively better than competing ones. Elder shoppers are more convinced about the store they patronize to offer relatively better pricing and service, offer apparels in far larger shades, colours and designs than competing ones.

Shoppers rating of the store they patronize vis-à-vis other stores is shaped by their education level. Professionals give highest rating for the store they patronize, followed by graduates. Senior school level shoppers have lowest rating for the store they usually visit amongst all education categories. Professionals see store they patronize to offer relatively better pricing and services, and are pleased to find variety of colour ranges and designs.

Self employed and sales/skilled shoppers are more pleased with the store they patronize. They consider their store to offer better price deals and service quality, and assortments in varied colour and design range.

Income level category of shopper fails to establish any relationship with shoppers’ perception towards other stores. But, shopper in the income category of Rs. 6, 00,001 to Rs. 10, 00,000 perceive their store to be relatively better in comparison to other stores than any other income levels. And this is least for shoppers in the income level of Rs. 3, 00,000 and less.

**Store Location and Other Store Relativity**
Relative worth of the store vis-à-vis other stores, the shopper usually patronizes is found to considerably higher among shoppers at Faridabad, Noida and Delhi. Shoppers at Gurgaon consider other stores besides the store they patronize to be relatively comparable than other locations.

**Store Brand and Other Store Relativity**
Relative rating of store the shopper patronizes with other stores is highest for Ebony and lowest for Globus.

**Customer relationship** is seen in perspective of store inviting shoppers for events and
special occasions being celebrated by the store or wishing the shoppers on their anniversaries. The wide array of assortment that the store offers too is an important aspect leading to shoppers finding store relevant and related to meet all their requirements.

**Demographics and Customer Relationship**

Females have less faith on customer relationship efforts of the stores. Males on the other hand perceive store they patronize to offering regular invitations to any events or special occasions being organized by the store and receipt of greetings on anniversary, etc.

The value shoppers give to the customer relationship efforts of the store apparently is determined by his or her age level. As the age of shopper increases so does his faith in customer relationship practices of the store and the difference in mean scores of shoppers is highly significant to establish the same. It is highest for shopper in the age group of 45-54 years and least for shopper in the age group of 18-24 years.

Shoppers with professional qualification perceive store’s customer relationship efforts to be far better than other educational groups. Shoppers with senior secondary qualifications are least happy about the same.

Occupation category of shopper shapes their perception about the customer relationship practices undertaken by the store. Self employed and shoppers in sales/skilled jobs have more faith in customer relationship practices of the store. They see the store they patronize offering invitations to any events or special occasions being organized by the store and receiving greetings on anniversary from the store. Housewives do not confer any higher ratings for stores customer relationship efforts.

Incomes levels validate that income levels of shoppers has direct bearing of how they feel about customer relationship practices of the store Shopper in the income bracket of Rs. 10, 00,001 and above have highest rating for customer relationship practices of the store, followed by shoppers in the income bracket of Rs. 6, 00,001 to Rs. 10, 00,000. And it is least for shoppers in the income bracket of Rs. 3, 00,000 to Rs. 6, 00,000.

**Store Location and Customer Relationship**

Shoppers at Gurgoan and Delhi rate customer relationships to be higher than shoppers at other locations. Shoppers at Noida rate customer relationships lower than other location shoppers.
Store Brand and Customer Relationship
Customer relationship efforts are rated considerably higher by shoppers for Shoppers Stop and Ebony. It is lowest for Globus.

Shoppers’ comfort with the store lies in its offering assortments that are relatively better than one offered in other stores leading to his or her assurance and being at comfort with their purchases. The cheaper private labels that the store offers also comforts the shopper about relatively better quality to the price being charged. And the physical comforts that the shopper draws with stores open lounges and shopping area that lend him or her free movements and relaxed shopping environment.

Demographics and Shoppers’ comfort
Shopper’s comfort level evidently disapproves any major differences among males and females.

Shoppers in age group of 45-54 years are more convinced with the level of comfort offered by stores while shopping than any other age group, while shoppers in age group of 18-24 years are least convinced. Shoppers with higher age groups are more convinced about the store offering assortments including private labels at competitive prices, and the physical comforts that the shopper draws with stores open lounges and shopping area.

Shoppers with professional qualifications have significantly higher rating for the comfort they derive shopping at store, whereas senior school level educated shoppers have lowest rating. Shoppers with professional qualifications are more convinced about the store offering assortments including private labels at competitive prices, and the physical comforts that the shopper draws with stores open lounges and shopping area.

Occupation has some influence on shoppers rating of comfort they derive from the store. It is highest for sales/skilled and lowest for housewives. Sales/skilled shoppers are more convinced about the store offering assortments including private labels at competitive prices, and the physical comforts that the shopper draws with stores open lounges and shopping area.

Annual income has a significant role in determining the perceived level of comfort a shopper drives from the store. It is considerably higher for shoppers in the income bracket
of Rs. 6, 00,001 to Rs. 10, 00,000 and Rs. 10, 00,001 and above. Shoppers in the income bracket of Rs. 3, 00,001 to Rs. 6, 00,000 have lowest rating for shopper’s comfort taken care by store.

*Store Location and Shoppers’ comfort*

Shoppers at Noida rate comfort level relatively higher than shoppers at other locations. It is higher for shoppers at Delhi and Ghaziabad and is lowest among shoppers at Faridabad.

*Store Brand and Shoppers’ comfort*

Comfort level are perceived to be similar by shoppers from all stores, though higher rating is for Shoppers Stop and Ebony and lowest for Lifestyle.

*Store Format and Store Image*

Among shoppers at Ebony, store image variables are predominantly high for shoppers who shop at stand alone stores, than those who prefer shopping at malls. This is significantly high for store quality, customer relationship and shopper's comfort. An indicative significance is revealed for store-shopper connect.

Among shoppers at Globus, store image variables viz. store quality, other store relativity, customer relationship and shopper’s comfort variables are predominantly high for shoppers who shop at stores in malls than at stand alone stores. Shopping ease and store shopper connected are higher for shoppers who shop at stand alone stores, than those who prefer shopping at malls.

Among shoppers at Lifestyle, store image variables are predominantly high for shoppers who shop at stand alone stores than those who shop at stores in malls. It is significantly high for store quality and store-shopper connect and indicative for shopping ease.

Shoppers shopping at Pantaloons stores in a mall rate store quality, other store relativity and customer relationship variables better to shoppers who shop at stand alone stores. Stand alone store shoppers rate shopping ease, store-shopper connect and shopper’s comfort higher than shoppers visiting Pantaloons stores in a mall.

At Shoppers Stop shoppers at stand alone stores rate store image variables to be higher than shoppers at malls, except for store shopper connect where shoppers at malls give higher rating than shoppers at stand alone stores. This is significantly true for store quality,
shopping ease and other store relativity.

Shoppers at Delhi, visiting stand alone stores often rate store image variables to be higher than shoppers who visit stores in malls, except for customer relationship which is rated higher by shoppers shopping in malls.

Shoppers at Satellite Towns rate store image variables to be higher than shoppers who visit stores in malls, except for other store relativity and customer relationship that are rated higher by shoppers shopping in malls. This is significantly true for store-shopper connect and has an indicative bearing for shopping ease and shopper’s comfort.

Shoppers invariably of store brands and store locations, at stand alone stores rate stores image variables to be predominantly higher than shoppers shopping in stores at malls. This is significantly true for store quality, shopping ease, and store-shopper connect and of indicative significance for shopper’s comfort.

7.2.3 Satisfaction Construct
Demographics and Satisfaction
Satisfaction level of shoppers has no significant differences among males and females, except for ‘add on services provided’ by the store and ‘sales person servicing’. But males derive higher level of satisfaction from the store, than their female counterparts in all parameters of satisfaction. Males to some extent seem to be less compulsive buyers than females and hence are more convinced about the quality and delivery of offerings and services offered by the store.

Age plays a major role in shaping shopper’s derived satisfaction level from the store he or she patronizes. Pricing seems to be more satisfactory to shoppers with higher age groups. Earnings determine the spending levels and shoppers’ in higher ages with higher level of earnings are able to better rationalize the pricing the store offers to their spending levels. Convenience of approach of store is rated as most satisfactory by shoppers in the age category of 25-34 years, seconded by shoppers in the age group of 18-24 years. Shoppers in the age group of 35-44 years have lowest satisfaction score for convenience of approach their store offers. The differences in ratings are however not significant. Shoppers’ in the age group of 18-34 have less commitments and family compulsions and have higher levels of mobility and freedom. Shoppers in age group of 35-44 years have family and kids ensuring more family compulsions and less mobility. Range of goods
available to shoppers in high age groups is more satisfying than ones in younger age groups. The difference in scores has indicative significance. Shoppers in young age group have varied needs and requirements. They are likely to buy more range, design, shade and colour of apparels and accessories than elder age groups who seem to have specific requirement. Service quality at stores is rated to be significantly higher by shoppers in higher age groups than younger shoppers. Age and rational expectation seem to let higher age group shoppers be fairer and concerned about their evaluation of store quality. Add on services provided by the stores is not rated to be significantly different by shoppers of various age groups. It is rated to be most satisfactory by shoppers in the age group of 45-54 years, followed by shoppers in age group of 25-34 years. The shoppers in the age group of 35-44 years are least convinced about the level of add on services their store provides. Age is an indomitable factor that shapes shopper’s faith in the billing system. Shoppers in the age group of 18-24 years have lowest satisfaction rating for the transparency in billing. Other age group shoppers are much more confident and satisfied with the billing system. Sales person services offered by the store are rated more satisfactory by respondents in higher age groups than by shoppers in the lower age groups. Although no significant differences appear, it leads one to believe that elder aged shoppers are more generous and supportive of the services offered by sales staff. Shoppers in the age group of 25-34 years are more happy and content with promotional offers and discount offered by the store, seconded by shoppers in the age group of 45-54 years. Shoppers in the age group of 18-24 years are least content with the promotional offers and discounts their store offers. Store ambience and layout is perceived to be more satisfactory and appealing by shoppers in age group of 25-34 years, 34-44 years and 44-45 years in that order. And it is lowest for shopper in the age group of 18-24 years. But the difference in rating is of no significance. Overall satisfaction level of shoppers is reflected by the age group they belong to. It is highest for shoppers in the age bracket of 25-34 years, seconded by shoppers in the age bracket of 35-44 years. The shoppers in the age bracket of 18-24 years have lowest rating for overall satisfaction they derive from the store. But the difference in rating is of indicative significance only.

Education level of shopper has some influence on the level of satisfaction they derive from the store. No significant difference occur for satisfaction level the shopper derives from the store and their educational background for price of goods, convenience of approach to the store, availability of goods, service quality, and sales person servicing. Add on services
provided by the store is rated considerably high by shoppers with post graduation education and professional qualification. The ratings are lowest for shoppers with senior school education. Though of indicative significance this approves the fact that shoppers with post graduate or professional qualifications are more induced to add on services than shoppers with senior school certificates. Transparency in billing is evidently more satisfying to shoppers with graduation and post graduation qualifications. Senior school pass outs are least satisfied with transparency in billing. Educational background of shopper thus emerges as an important parameter in developing the faith the shopper has in the billing system. Professionals, graduates and post graduates shoppers are more satisfied with promotional offers and discounts the store offers. Shoppers with senior school level education are least satisfied with the promotional offers. This statistical significance too, leading to the conclusion that senior school shoppers expect much more from store’s promotional offers and discounts than what the store at present offers. Store layout and ambience is considered to be more satisfying by shoppers with graduation degree, followed by post graduates and professionals. Senior school pass outs gives fairly less rating to stores on this parameter. An indicative significance confirms the role education plays in shaping the shoppers perception towards their derived satisfaction from store’s ambience and layout. An indicative significance exists for shoppers rating on overall satisfaction derived from store vis-à-vis their educational background. Shoppers with post graduate, graduate and professional backgrounds have higher satisfaction from the store they patronize, than shoppers with school level education.

Occupation category of shopper fails to establish any significant impact on shopper’s derived satisfaction from the store. Shoppers from working class are more satisfied with convenience of approach the store offers than any other occupational group. But, they do not appear to be too pleased with price range the store offers, assortment range available at the store as shoppers from other occupational group are. Self employed shoppers’ rate pricing structure, service quality, adds on services provided, transparency in billing, sales person services higher than any other occupational group. Moreover, the overall satisfaction derived by self-employed shoppers is higher to other occupation categories. Shoppers with sales/ skilled job profiles apparently are satisfied with the store, they usually buy from and give high ratings to pricing of assortments, convenience of approach, availability of goods, promotional offers and discounts and store layout and ambience. Housewives appear to be least satisfied with store they usually visit. Though the ratings
given by housewives are high, it falls short of the rating given by other categories. Particularly for convenience of approach, availability of goods, service quality, transparency in billing and promotional offers and discounts housewives feel less satisfied than any other occupational group. Overall satisfaction rating of housewives is lowest.

Income levels of shopper have some impact on level of satisfaction they derive from the store. However, no significant differences are seen for convenience of approach, availability of goods, transparency in billing, sales person services and store layout and ambience provided by the store. Price of goods is rated to be most satisfactory by shoppers in the income group of Rs. 10, 00,001 and above, seconded by shoppers in the income group of Rs. 3, 00,001 to Rs. 6, 00,000. Shoppers in the income group of Rs. 3, 00,000 or less are least satisfied by the pricing range the store they patronize offers. This is of considerable significance to presume that higher the income level of shopper greater is their probability of being satisfied with store pricing. Shoppers in the income range of Rs. 10, 00,001 or above give higher rating for store’s service quality, add on service provided and promotional offers and discounts offered by the store. The same are rated lowest by shoppers in the income range of Rs. 3, 00,000 or less. Though difference in scores for both parameters is of indicative significance only, it exemplifies the role income plays in shopper’s perception towards store’s service quality and add on services provided. Overall satisfaction derived by the shopper is rated highest by shoppers in the income level of Rs. 10, 00,001 and above followed by shoppers in the income level of Rs. 3, 00,001 to Rs. 6, 00,000. Shoppers with income level of Rs. 3, 00,000 or less gives lowest satisfactory rating for overall satisfaction with the store. The mean ratings are significantly different leading to conclusion that higher income level of shopper has considerate and positive effect on his or her satisfaction level.

**Store Location and Satisfaction**

Store location with respect to city/town the store is located at reflects the satisfaction level of shoppers, primarily for price they pay for procuring the assortments they purchase at their patronized store, promotional offers and discounts the store provides for, store layout and ambience and overall satisfaction with the store.

Satisfaction for pricing of assortment for store patronized by shopper is noticeably higher at Noida and Faridabad. Shoppers at Gurgaon apparently are less satisfied with the price the store they patronize charges. Shoppers at Ghaziabad and Faridabad evidently are far
more satisfied on convenience of approach their store offers than shoppers at other location where satisfaction level is somewhat lower leading to indicative significance to the fact that store location defines shoppers’ satisfaction for the convenience of approach it offers. Shoppers at Noida and Faridabad are more fascinated by promotional offers the store frequently offers. The shoppers at Delhi seem not to be much convinced with discounts and offers and give lowest rating among shoppers from all locations. Store layout and ambience is considered to be more gratifying for shoppers at Faridabad, for they give far greater rating on this parameter than shopper from any other location. Shoppers at Delhi seem not to be much convinced about the store layout and ambience about the store they usually visit. Overall satisfaction derived by shopper for all location is considerably high. But shoppers at Faridabad and Noida evidently are much more satisfied than shoppers from other store locations. The shoppers at Delhi are least appreciable of the overall satisfaction they derive from the store they usually visit.

*Store Brand and Satisfaction*

No significant differences appear among shoppers with respect to the store brand they usually visit and their satisfaction rating on various parameters except for the convenience of approach their store offers. Convenience of approach is rated highest for Globus and Ebony and lowest for Lifestyle. The mean ratings are significantly different to conclude the influence of store brand on perceived satisfaction with convenience of approach the store offers.

*Store Format and Satisfaction*

Shoppers at store located in malls are more satisfied than stand alone stores for all department stores except Pantaloons. The satisfaction levels vis-à-vis store format is not significantly different except for Globus where an indicative significance is revealed. Overall, satisfaction level is also high for shoppers at malls than stand alone stores, but lacks statistical significance.

*Store Factors and Satisfaction*

Satisfaction level of shoppers is reflected significantly for the department stores promotion, credit service and store atmosphere. Price stipulates an indicative significance for the level of satisfaction the shoppers derive.
7.2.4 Loyalty Construct

Demographics and Loyalty

The impact of gender on buying behaviour has attracted some research interest. In relation to gender differences in purchasing behaviour several issues have been examined, including the link between gender and time spent on shopping (McDonald, 1994; Arndt and Gronmo, 1977), and gender’s role in unplanned purchases (Granbois 1968; Kollat and Willett, 1967). Gender is widely acknowledged as a moderator variable in marketing, and has recently been investigated as a moderator between satisfaction and loyalty by Evanschitzky and Wunderlich (2006). As compared to male respondents, females are more likely to be more emotionally involved in shopping, evaluate information received more in detail and to limit information search to lesser extent. As such, female’s reaction to satisfaction is different from men's attitudes. They tend to be significantly more loyal than male counterpart when the bank institution is deemed very trustworthy (Ndubisi, 2006). In the present study Male shoppers give higher rating on all parameters of loyalty construct. Though of limited significance males confer more pride than females in being associated with the store they patronize. Males consider store’s customer feedback system to be far more credible than what females perceive. But males and females have similar probability of recommending the store they patronize to their colleagues, friends and neighbours. However, males are more likely to continue patronizing the store and won’t move out even if better alternates occur. The same can’t be predicted about females with same intensity. Similarly, males are more than willing to recommend prompt action in case of any lapse or inefficiency to the concerned authority in the store.

Shopper at higher age levels are seemingly more proud of their association with the store they patronize and are much more convinced about keenness the store exhibits in acquiring customer feedback. Likewise shoppers in age group of 25-34 years are somewhat more likely to recommend the store they patronize to other. Continued patronage for the store is much more likely among shoppers with higher age groups despite the fact that other better alternates are available. Also, higher age group shippers are more likely to recommend an appropriate action in case of any fault or lapse to concerned authority in the store.

Senior school pass outs have lowest scores on all loyalty parameters, whereas postgraduates and professionals score high on loyalty parameters. However no significant
differences appear among shoppers with respect to their education level and all loyalty parameters to deduce any formidable conclusion.

Self employed shoppers feel somewhat more proud than any other education group to be associated with the department store they patronize. Sales/skilled shoppers assume customer feedback practices of the store much more promising than other occupation groups. The probability of recommending the store the shopper patronizes is highest among self employed and lowest among sales/skilled. Sales/skilled shoppers are somewhat more likely to continue patronizing their store even if better options appear. Self employed and sales/skilled shoppers are more likely to recommend an action for any lapse or fault by the store employees.

Income is a demographic variable that has an important effect on consumption and the volume of retail sales. If people have more income, they tend to spend more. This leads to higher sales and more profits for retailer (Hasty and Reardon, 1997). Several studies suggest that there is a link between income and loyalty (Homburg and Giering, 2001; Tate, 1961), although some studies did not find any associations between these two variables (East, Harris, Wilson and Lomax, 1995). Tate (1961) suggests that one-store shopper were low-income families, while the very disloyal households had a strong tendency to be middle-income or upper income families. This can be partly explained by the fact that the income of a person has a strong impact on choice decisions (Zeithaml, 1985). In a general sense, it is assumed that people with higher income have achieved a higher level of education (Farley, 1964). Thus, they usually engage more in information gathering and processing prior to the decision process (Schaninger and Sciglimpaglia, 1981), and use more information prior to decision making, while less educated people rely more on fewer information cues (Capon and Burke, 1980; Claxton et al., 1974). Since better educated people feel more comfortable when dealing with and relying on new information (Homburg and Giering, 2001), they are more likely to base their choice on the evaluation of the information given to them. Higher level of information processing capabilities has an impact on satisfaction, generating lower emotional attachment to a store. In the present study shoppers with higher income levels are somewhat more proud to be associated with the store they patronize. Also, shoppers with higher income level give higher rating to store’s customer feedback practices. Recommendation probability too is somewhat higher at higher income groups. In case of any lapse or mistake committed by store shoppers at higher income groups are much more likely to recommend an appropriate action.
Store Location and Loyalty

Store location is a decisive factor in shaping shoppers loyalty. Rating of shoppers is noticeably high on being proud to be associated with the store they patronize. It is considerably high for Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Noida in that order. Shoppers at Delhi have lowest on being proud to be associated with the store brand they patronize. Shoppers’ perception about the keenness the store has for customer feedback is not given high rating by shoppers. However the mean ratings between store locations and keenness the store has on customer feedback is significant and it is highest for Gurgoan and Noida and lowest for Ghaziabad. Shoppers at Noida and Faridabad are much more likely to recommend the store they patronize than shoppers at other store locations. It is lowest for shoppers at Ghaziabad. Probability to recommend an action to mitigate any lapse or fault has a significant bearing on store location of the shopper. It is highest among shoppers at Faridabad, Noida and Gurgoan and lowest for shoppers at Ghaziabad.

Store Brand and Loyalty

Store brand does not offer any significant differences in mean ratings of shoppers on loyalty parameters except the association feeling shoppers have and the probability of recommending an action for any fault or lapse by store. Association feeling is considerably high among all shoppers; however it is highest for shoppers at Globus and Ebony. Also the differences in mean ratings are high to confer the influence of store brand in shaping shoppers feeling of being proud to be associated with the store brand they patronize. Probability of recommending store brand is highest among shoppers at Lifestyle and Ebony and lowest among shoppers at Pantaloons and Shoppers Stop. The differences in mean ratings of shoppers offer an indicative significance to the premise that store brand plays a role in shaping shoppers recommendation. Shoppers at Ebony, Lifestyle and Globus have higher probability to recommend an appropriate action for any fault and lapse by the store. It is lower for shoppers at Pantaloons and Shoppers Stop. The mean ratings are quite varied to signify the role of store brand on shopper’s recommending an action for inefficiency or conduct by store.

Store Format and Loyalty

Shoppers at stand alone stores are more satisfied than store located in malls at all stores except Pantaloons. The satisfaction levels vis-à-vis store format is not significantly different except for Globus where an indicative significance is revealed. Overall, satisfaction level is
also high for shoppers at malls than stand alone stores, but lacks statistical significance.

**Store Factors and Loyalty**

Loyalty ratings of shoppers are reflected significantly for the department stores price, assortment, credit service and store atmosphere. Promotion stipulates an indicative significance on loyalty levels of shoppers.

### 7.2.5 Shoppers spending with respect to frequency of visit and location of store

**Ebony**

Shoppers at Faridabad commit higher expenses on shopping at Ebony than their counterparts in Delhi. Also frequently of visit has direct bearing on the spending of the shopper. An interaction effect between Store Location and Average spend at Ebony is also revealed. If there were no interaction, one would expect the difference between store locations to remain constant with frequency of visit of shoppers.

**Globus**

Shoppers at Delhi commit higher expenses on shopping at Globus than their counterparts at Ghaziabad. However, it is just reverse for shoppers who frequent Globus thrice a month. Also frequently of visit has direct bearing on the spending of the shopper. An interaction effect between Store Location and Average spend at Globus is also reflected. If there were no interaction, one would expect the difference between store locations to remain constant with frequency of visit of shoppers.

**Lifestyle**

Shoppers visiting either once or thrice spend more at Delhi and Delhi and Noida respectively, than shoppers at Gurgaon. Gurgaon shoppers who visit twice a month at Lifestyle commit higher spending than shoppers at Lifestyle stores in Delhi and Noida. This suggests an interaction effect between Store Location and Average spend at Lifestyle. If there were no interaction, one would expect the difference between store locations to remain constant with frequency of visit of shoppers.

**Pantaloons**

Shoppers at Delhi make higher spending at Pantaloons stores than their counterparts at Noida and Ghaziabad. Among shoppers who visit Pantaloons only once in a month, Noida shoppers have highest average spending followed by Ghaziabad. But among shoppers
who visit Pantaloon store twice or more Delhi shoppers have highest spending. An interaction effect between Store Location and Average spend at Pantaloons is also suggested. If there were no interaction, one would expect the difference between store locations to remain constant with frequency of visit of shoppers.

**Shoppers Stop**
Shoppers at Delhi make higher spending at Shoppers Stop stores than their counterparts at Gurgoan. This is true for shoppers who are more regular and visit Shoppers Stop store thrice or more. But among shoppers who visit Shoppers Stop store twice the one in Gurgoan commit higher spending than Delhizens. An interaction effect between Store Location and Average spend at Stoppers Stop is also revealed. If there were no interaction, one would expect the difference between store locations to remain constant with frequency of visit of shoppers.

**7.2.6 Relationship of Store factors with Store Brand & Store Location**

**Product Quality**
Quality of stores is perceived to be higher among shoppers at Delhi than among shoppers located in other townships of NCR. Gurgoan shoppers are quite low on quality rating of department store they patronize.

Among store brands shoppers rate Ebony high on quality parameter than other stores. It is fairly high for Pantaloons and Shoppers Stop but exceedingly low for Globus and Lifestyle.

**Price**
Delhi shoppers give higher rating for the price factor associated with the department store they usually buy from, than shoppers from other towns of NCR. Price as the store factor is rater higher by shoppers at Noida and Ghaziabad too. However, it is lowest among all towns for Gurgoan. Shoppers who patronize Ebony and Pantaloons have noticeably higher rating on pricing factor, than shoppers at Globus and Lifestyle who gives the lowest rating on pricing factor.

**Assortment**
Delhi and Gurgoan shoppers apparently are more pleased with the assortment availability and range at stores. Shoppers at Noida appear less pleased with the availability and range of assortments.
Among store brands shoppers at Ebony and Shoppers Stop confine higher ratings on assortment availability and range. Apparently shoppers at Globus appear least pleased with the availability and range of assortments it offers.

**Promotion**  
Gurgoan and Delhi shoppers evidently are more contented with the promotional offers and discount offerings by the department store they usually buy from. Faridabad shoppers are least content with the promotional offers their patronized store offers. Shoppers at Ebony, Pantaloons and Shoppers Stop are quite content with the promotional offers. Shoppers at Globus are least content with the promotional offers the store provides.

**Convenience of Shopping**  
Gurgoan shoppers confirm the convenience of shopping to a greater degree than shoppers at other locations. Shoppers at Noida on the other hand give lowest rating to convenience of the department stores offer. Ebony and Lifestyle stores offer greater convenience of shopping to shoppers than other stores. Globus has the least rating on convenience of shopping it offers to shoppers.

**Convenience of Location**  
Convenience of location is rated highest by shoppers at Delhi and Gurgoan. It seemingly is quite lower for shoppers at Ghaziabad and Faridabad. Shoppers Stop offers reasonably higher convenience of location to shoppers than any other department store. Globus evidently has lowest rating on convenience of location it offers to shoppers.

**Store Facilities**  
Store facilities apparently are rated higher by shoppers at Delhi. Shoppers at Noida have considerably lower rating for store facilities. Store facilities at Shoppers Stop and Ebony are giver higher rating by shoppers. Evidently it is lowest for Globus.

**Personnel Services**  
Personnel services are rated to be considerably higher by shoppers at Delhi than shoppers from other towns. Apparently the shoppers at Noida and Ghaziabad are not much pleased by personnel staff services.
Sales and service staff at Shoppers Stop and Ebony is rated to be better than other stores. Lifestyle shoppers apparently are not much pleased by services rendered by the sales and service staff.

**Credit Services**

Shoppers at Delhi and Faridabad rate credit services offered by store to be more promising than shoppers at other locations. Shoppers at Ghaziabad have lowest rating for the credit services offered by the stores.
Shoppers rate credit services offered by Ebony and Shoppers Stop to be better than at other stores.

**Store Atmosphere**

Evidently store atmosphere is perceived to be more gratifying to shoppers at Noida and Faridabad. It is seemingly less pleasing to shoppers at Gurgaon and Ghaziabad.
Pantaloons and Shoppers Stop offer more pleasing store atmosphere than other stores.
Globus is supposedly low on store atmosphere it offers.

**Store Branding**

For Gurgaon and Delhi shoppers the store they patronize beams high class image and enjoys high brand image. This seemingly is lower at other locations and least for shoppers at Noida.
Shoppers Stop and Pantaloons enjoy higher brand image among shoppers than other department stores. It is seemingly lowest for Globus.

**7.2.7 Satisfaction and Loyalty Relationship**

Satisfaction involves consumers’ emotions, i.e. personal feelings of pleasure or disappointment with shopping experience. It creates an individual’s attachment to a product or store, a feeling that is likely to lead to consumer purchase intentions or loyalty.
Loyalty can be defined as the consumer’s readiness to recommend a store to a friend (positive word-of-mouth statement) and consumer intention to repurchase in this store again. If positive, purchase intentions should trigger consumer response behaviour on a fairly habitual basis (action loyalty). Action loyalty might be expressed in terms of frequency of store visit, amount of money spent or the percentage of the customer’s purchases made from this store and retailer (share of wallet).
Past research suggests that customer satisfaction has a positive impact on post purchase attitudes and purchase intentions (Huddleston, Whipple and VanAuken 2004; Sivadas and Baker-Previtt, 2000; Hallowell, 1996), although some studies did not find a significant relationship between satisfaction and re-patronage intention in a mall setting (Stoel, Wickliffe and Lee, 2004; Dawson and Ridgway, 1990). Customer satisfaction is an outcome of purchase experience, i.e. a post consumption evaluation of the degree to which a store or product meets or exceeds customer expectations in terms of rewards and costs. Positive customer perceptions of store attributes result in enhanced customer satisfaction. Satisfaction elicits emotions, which in turn leads to positive loyalty intentions. Satisfied customers are likely to become retained customers, while dissatisfied customers are sooner or later likely to switch to competitors. In the long run, retained customers produce a higher annual revenue and margin per customer than do lost or new customers (Best, 2004). As suggested by Sivadas and Baker-Previtt (2000) there is a positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. If satisfied with purchases at one particular store, consumers are likely to have positive attitudes toward that store. This leads to consumers' commitments to recommend a store to friends and to return to the store for either similar or other purchase tasks.

The present study confirms that store satisfaction has positive and significant effect on shopper’s loyalty. Among all department stores the relationship among shoppers’ satisfaction and store loyalty is highly significant. Store satisfaction has positive and significant effect on shopper’s loyalty for shoppers at Delhi and satellite towns and for shoppers shopping at stand alone stores or stores located in malls.

7.3 Managerial Implications
The shoppers’ buying behaviour has a decisive bearing on store purchases. The shoppers’ buying behaviour is majorly influenced by their demographic profiles. Gender, age, education, occupation, and income of shoppers’ have a wider influence on their buying behaviour. Moreover, buying behaviour of shoppers in this study has been categorized as Active, Planned, Seeking and Controlled.

Shoppers’ perceived image about the store is reflected by their rating of store quality, ease of shopping, store-shopper connect, other store relativity, customer relationship, and shoppers comfort.
It thus becomes imperative for marketers to understand the behavioural patterns of shoppers and how they relate to their demographics. Besides store image plays an influential role in harboring satisfaction and loyalty among shoppers.

1. Males apparently are more active, planned and seeking. Females are more controlled in their purchases. Marketers can look at this gap to plan and prioritize to female shoppers to elicit a more active and seeking buying behaviour from them.

Males apparently are more convinced about store image. The females seem not so appreciable about store image particularly for customer relationship and to some extent shopping ease. It therefore becomes essential for store managers to engage female shoppers in stores functional events and relationship building so as to harbour an interactive and incessant relationship.

Females seem to be quite less content and satisfied. Females are more difficult customers to manage. They ask more questions, desire more varied ranges and style and quite less impulsive in their purchases. Moreover the level of involvement of females is higher. It thus becomes pertinent for store managers to possibly create an environment where females feel more convinced, confident and satisfied.

Females are less likely to display higher loyalty levels as their male counterparts do. Females are less convinced about customer feedback procedures, less likely to continue if competitive offerings sound better, and will ignore any lapse on the part of the store to give constructive ideas. This speaks critically about female shoppers who seem to feel less satisfied and related to the store. As stated above creating an environment that is more convincing, confiding only can help enhance females’ confidence and trust for the store.

Other major group that seems to be less satisfied with store facilities is housewives. They too give lower rating than any other educational group. Housewives with their chores and family priorities seem not to enjoy shopping. This group cannot be ignored. For they buy for the whole family, and carry much deeper word of mouth. Again it becomes imperative for store managers to include assortment that caters to their specific needs and create a more conducive environment for their purchases, with special shopping hours (may be school and office hours i.e. late morning to early
afternoon).

2. Again shoppers at department stores in young age group of 18-34 years display lesser agility in their buying behaviour than shoppers in the age group of 35-54 years. Income levels and career positions of young shoppers may be limiting factors. But these shoppers are cached prizes for they have many more years of shopping. Loyalty and inclusive programs can be generalized to garner faith and bring momentum in their purchases with the store.

Age levels of the shopper exercise an indomitable influence in their perceived rating for store image. It is invariably higher for higher age groups. Young shoppers particularly in the age group of 18-34 years have less appreciation for store quality, ease of shopping, store-shopper connect, other store relativity, customer relationship, and shoppers comfort. This certainly suggests that youth fails to relate to department stores the same way as mid and elder age groups do. Youth form the larger market and cannot be ignored. Store managers need to look at their concern and be more related to youth.

Young shoppers seem not to be too convinced with store prices but arguably rate discounts and offers par higher than others. This necessitates store managers to include product range and offers to match their pockets and style.

3. Income level of shoppers considerably influences their store image rating. Store image is perceived to be significantly greater by shoppers in higher income groups. Department stores hence need to appraise the forces limiting the perceived store image perception level of shoppers in lower and mid income groups. Store offerings, atmosphere, service, and environment may not evolve same image in minds of shoppers in low and mid income groups as it does for higher income groups. Essentially for store managers it is important to vitalize the shopper in lower and mid income group by creating more conducive and involving store atmosphere.

Shoppers in mid and lower income group are less satisfied by store offerings, facilities and services. Price is a dominating factor, except shoppers in higher income category other are not much convinced about store prices. Store range and offers therefore can be worked out to add meaning and relevance for these shoppers.
4. Store quality a decisive factor in shaping shoppers’ store image is not rated highly by shoppers at Ghaziabad. Managers of department stores at Ghaziabad need to find the reasons limiting shoppers perception about store quality so as to improvise and gain shoppers confidence about store quality.

The perceived relative worth of department stores the shoppers patronize is considerably low among shoppers at Gurgaon. This fact suggests that department stores in Gurgaon are unable to establish a distinct image and differentiation with other stores. Image enhancement and store differentiation hence emerge as priority areas which store managers at Gurgaon need to focus at.

5. Store pricing is not rated very satisfactory by shoppers at Gurgaon. They apparently fail to relate assortment with price being charged. This gap persecutes the fact more meaningful and rationalized approach is required to hive of this gap.

Shoppers at Delhi fail to view the promotional offers and discounts with same retrospect as shoppers at other locations do. The store managers therefore need to critically look at the promotional offers they frequently provide. Promotional offers are not to subject just a matter of stock clearances to pave way for new collections, but a dedicated effort to create sales and sense of relatedness with the store.

Store ambience and layout is another factor that is not much satisfying to Delhi shoppers. Delhi being the epicenter of business and shopping activities instills more demanding and categorically more critically evaluative shoppers. Being innovative in store design, layout and ambience is approach store managers at Delhi should be more concerned about.

Delhi shoppers are less satisfied. As mentioned above they are more demanding and have considerably higher expectations than shoppers at other locations. Expectations are result of once experiences and exposures. Delhi shoppers are exposed to competitively better shopping environs and experience relatively better offerings and services than shoppers at other locations. This transforms into greater expectations from shoppers. Marketers therefore need to strive harder to instill the same level of satisfaction for Delhi shoppers as for shoppers from other locations.

6. Appreciation and being proud to patronize a particular department store is
significantly lower among shoppers at Delhi. As noted above satisfaction from store is not so convincing to Delhi shoppers. Store managers need to focus on creating a sense of belongingness and association among shoppers at Delhi. Relating to shoppers need with distinct and unique offerings culminating to meet shoppers’ expectations can surge a sense association feeling among shoppers.

Shoppers at Ghaziabad are less appreciative of stores’ customer feedback systems and are more prone to switch of competitive stores. Their apprehensions regarding stores’ customer feedback procedures need to found out and store managers must elicit shoppers confidence in the feedback procedures they undertake to help understand the shoppers rating and likelihood of continuing with the store.

7. Store image is convincingly lower at Globus stores. Globus stores are rated abysmally low on store quality, shopping ease, store-shopper connect, other store relativity and customer relations. Store managers at Globus need to find issues and reasons that hamper store image and dilute shoppers’ confidence on store.

8. All stores perform reasonably well on all parameters of satisfaction. However Shoppers Stop has correspondingly lower rating for pricing of assortment, service quality, transparency in billing, sales person services, and overall satisfaction. It therefore becomes imperative for Shoppers Stop managers to seek reasons and remedy for lower rating on satisfaction parameters.

9. Stand alone and a store in malls for all department stores is a matter of strategic fit and availability of retail space. However, shoppers perceive the two formats differently and rate either of the two better depending on store brand or location. With pros and cons for each of the two retail formats, the store managers should focus on creating congruity for better perceived store brand image and perception.

Except for Pantaloons, shoppers at stores in malls are more satisfied and display higher loyalty levels than shoppers in stand alone stores. For Pantaloons it becomes imperative to create better and consistent retail environment at stand alone stores to match up the shoppers’ perception for stores located in malls. For other stores where stand alone store confide higher satisfaction and loyalty among shoppers, enhancement of assortments, services and image building for stores located in malls
is necessitated.

10. Buying behaviour of shopper is confined to how they related to various store factors. Product quality, price, promotion, store facilities, personnel service are major store factors shaping buying behaviour of shoppers. Store branding and range of assortments also contribute in shaping shoppers’ buying behaviour. Store factors leading to a significant contribution in satisfying a shopper include promotion, credit service, store atmosphere and price. Similarly loyalty of shopper has a decisive influence from store price, assortment, credit service, store atmosphere and promotion.

Store managers therefore need to work out on these factors to enhance shoppers’ buying, satisfaction and store loyalty.

7.4 Limitations of the Study
The nature of current study presented certain unavoidable limitations that impacted on the interpretation of the results. A particular concern in the current study was the halo effect could impact the measurement of buying behaviour, store factors, satisfaction and loyalty constructs. The presence of the halo effect, together with the response biases and the principles of Gestalt theory, could have contributed to habitual, positive (or negative) evaluations by the consumers, as well as the inability to differentiate between the dimensions and attributes when evaluating a construct that is usually experienced holistically by the shoppers.

Other possible shortcomings include the following:

- The study concentrated on current consumers of well established department stores. Shoppers who had defected, shoppers that do not purchase at this store, as well as other target shoppers were excluded.

- The specific stores selected for the study could have effected the generalization of result.

- The selection of the geographical area was based on practical and resource considerations, thus the study was not entirely representative of all. This could limit the generalization of results.
• For few of the respondents English was the second language. Though utmost care was taken to communicate and elaborate the questionnaire to such respondents, limited impact of language barrier cannot be ignored.

7.5 Directions of Future Research

Based on the result of the current study, the following can be recommended for the future research:

• A qualitative research approach (focus group) may provide further in-depth guidelines for customer’s preferred attributes consisting of various dimensions.

• Monitoring of changes in shoppers buying behaviours, perception towards various store factors and satisfaction criteria for shoppers could be introduced via longitudinal research.

• The valence value of the various dimensions of store factors, satisfaction and loyalty constructs could be investigated by determining how the dimensions contribute overall in building shopper’s perception towards the store leading to his or her satisfaction and thereby building loyalty. A small change in the dimension with a high valency could have a significant impact to dimensions of store factors, satisfaction and loyalty. The interaction of the various dimension would provide rich opportunities for the future research.

• Valuable information could be gained from the repletion of the current study with other competing department stores. This would allow an opportunity to obtain more exhaustive insight on shoppers buying patterns and store factors shaping their satisfaction and loyalty with a given store. In addition such a study could provide insight into different target market, and thereby provide ideas on shopper’s buying behaviour, or how to adjust store factors to enhance shopper’s satisfaction and thus their loyalty for the store.

• Future study may expand the scope of current study to include a national sample and other store retail formats.
7.6 Conclusion
The purpose of this study was to understand the shoppers’ buying behaviour, perceived store image and their influence on his or her store satisfaction and loyalty in the Indian department store setting. Specifically, it examined the impact of satisfaction and store loyalty with shoppers’ buying behaviour, store image and demographic factors and the association between satisfaction and loyalty.

In general the results of our study support the proposed hypothesis and relationship of store image on satisfaction and loyalty of shoppers. Research findings indicate demographic factors contributing to a larger extent in shaping shoppers’ buying behaviour (H1). Shoppers’ active buying behaviour is significantly influenced by their age, education, occupation and incomes. Gender imparts an indicative influence on shoppers’ active buying behaviour. Planned buying behaviour of shopper is shaped to a significant level of their age levels, education and occupation groups. Age, education, occupation and income level of shoppers has a significant influence in shaping their seeking buying behaviour. Controlled buying behaviour of shopper is significantly dependent on their age levels, education and occupation groupings.

Shoppers’ demographic factors contribute extensively in shaping their perceived store image (H2). Gender of shopper has a significant influence on perceived customer relationship efforts of the store. An indicative significance is reflected for shopping ease and its perceived rating differences among males and females. Age of shopper has significant influence on all store image variables. Education level of shopper has considerable influence in shaping shoppers perception towards shopping ease, other store relativity, customer relationship efforts by the store and shopping comfort that a store offers. Occupation of shopper has a greater influence in shaping his or her perception towards store quality and other store relativity. Occupations of shoppers also demo an indicative influence in shaping shoppers perception towards stores efforts towards customer relationships and the shopping comfort they offer. Income level of shoppers has a major role in shaping shoppers store image and it is profound for store quality, shopping ease, customer relationship, and shopping comfort and indicative for store-shopper connect.

Demographic profile of shoppers has some influence on their satisfaction level (H3).
major differences satisfaction rating of males and females is established except for add on services provided by the store and sales person servicing. Age has significant influence on shoppers rating for their satisfaction with pricing at store, service quality, transparency in billing, promotion and overall satisfaction derived from the store. An indicative significance of age on satisfaction with availability of goods is also revealed. Education level of shoppers has a significant influence on shaping their satisfaction with transparency in billing, promotion and overall satisfaction derived. An indicative significance of education level of shoppers on satisfaction with confidence of approach and add on service provided by the store. Occupation category of shopper fails to establish any significant impact on shopper’s derived satisfaction from the store. Income level of shopper has significant influence on satisfaction derived from pricing of goods at store and overall satisfaction. An indicative significance of income level of shoppers is reflected for service quality and add on services provided by the store.

Demographic profile of shopper has some bearing on store loyalty (H₄). Gender to a greater extend has a meaningful influence in loyalty behaviour of shopper. Males are more convinced by the feedback procedures at the stores, are more likely to continue shopping and would not hesitate to recommend in case of lapses or failure at stores. Males thus apparently demonstrate higher loyalty. Shoppers exhibit substantial difference in their loyalty behaviour vis-à-vis their age levels. Shopper at higher age levels are seemingly more proud of their association with the store they patronize and are more convinced about keenness the store exhibits in acquiring customer feedback. Shoppers in mid and higher are more likely to continue shopping at the store they patronize even if other stores offer better options. No significant differences appear among shoppers with respect to their education level on any of the loyalty parameters to deduce any formidable conclusion. Occupation category of shopper has limited influence in shaping their store loyalty. Sales/skilled shoppers assume customer feedback practices of the store more promising than other occupation groups. Apparently income of shopper plays an important role in shaping his or her store loyalty. Income level of shoppers has a significant influence on how they rate customer feedback practices of the store they patronize. Probability of shopper recommending an appropriate action is higher among shoppers with higher income levels.

Store location vividly establishes the differences in shopping buying behaviour (H₅). Shoppers at Delhi are apparently more active buyers than their counterparts at other
locations. Shoppers at Faridabad and Ghaziabad are evidently more planned than shoppers at other locations. Seeking pattern of buying behaviour is more prevalent among buyers at Delhi, Ghaziabad and Gurgaon. Controlled buying behaviour is exhibited to a higher degree by Shoppers at Delhi, Ghaziabad and Faridabad.

Store location to some extent establishes the differences in shoppers perceived store image ($H_6$). Shoppers at Delhi rate quality of the store considerably higher than shoppers at other locations. Relative worth of the store vis-à-vis other stores, the shopper usually patronizes is found to considerably higher among shoppers at Faridabad, Noida and Delhi.

Store location has limited influence on shopper’s derived satisfaction ($H_7$). Satisfaction for pricing of assortment for store patronized by shopper is noticeably higher at Noida and Faridabad. Shoppers at Noida and Faridabad are more fascinated by promotional offers the store frequently offers. Store layout and ambience is considered to be more gratifying for shoppers at Faridabad. Overall satisfaction derived by shopper for all location is considerably high. But shoppers at Faridabad and Noida evidently are much more satisfied than shoppers at other store locations.

Store location apparently is decisive factor in shaping shoppers loyalty ($H_8$). Shoppers are proud to be associated with the store they patronize and it is considerably high for Faridabad and Ghaziabad. Shoppers at Gurgaon and Noida are more convinced about the feedback procedures of the stores. Shoppers at Noida and Faridabad are more likely to recommend the store they patronize. Probability to recommend an action to mitigate any lapse or fault has a significant bearing on store location of the shopper.

Store brand apparently signifies no differences in shoppers buying behaviour and the store brand they patronize ($H_9$), except for planned buying behaviour. Store brand apparently has major influence on shaping shopper’s perception towards store image ($H_{10}$). Shoppers perceive store quality to be higher at Shopper’s Stop and Ebony and lowest at Globus. The ease of shopping is more comforting at Shoppers Stop and Ebony and less comforting at Globus. Shoppers at Shoppers Stop and Ebony perceive greater affinity with the store they patronize. Relative rating of store the shopper patronizes with other stores is highest for Ebony and lowest for Globus. Customer relationship efforts are rated considerably higher by shoppers for Shopper’s Stop and Ebony. No significant differences appear among
shoppers with respect to the store brand they usually visit and their satisfaction rating on various parameters ($H_{11}$), except for the convenience of approach their store offers. Store brand does not offer any significant differences in mean ratings of shoppers on loyalty parameters ($H_{12}$), except the association feeling shoppers have and the probability of recommending an action for any fault or lapse by store.

Shoppers buying behaviour is defined by store format they visit ($H_{13}$). For shoppers at Ebony, Lifestyle and Shoppers Stop buying behaviour is reflected to a greater degree at stand alone stores than at stores located in a mall. For shoppers at Globus and Pantaloons buying behaviour is reflected to a greater degree at stores located in a mall than at stand alone stores. Store format has a greater bearing on shoppers’ perceived store image ($H_{14}$). At Ebony, Lifestyle and Shoppers Stop perceived store image is higher among shoppers who shop at stand alone stores than at stores in malls. Store format has no significant impact on shopper satisfaction and store loyalty ($H_{15}$ & $H_{16}$). Store location and frequency of visit the shopper commits has an impact on shoppers’ amount spend at store ($H_{17}$). This is true for all store brands.

Shoppers’ perception towards various store factors is influenced by the store brand and the location of the store ($H_{18}$). Store factors have greater influence on shoppers’ buying behaviour ($H_{19}$). This is particularly true for store facilities, promotion, product quality and price. Promotion, credit service and store atmosphere are the major store factors that determine shopper satisfaction ($H_{20}$). Price, assortment, credit service and store atmosphere are decisive store factors shaping shoppers’ store loyalty ($H_{21}$). Satisfaction has positive effect on store loyalty ($H_{22}$). Shoppers’ satisfaction has a positive and significant bearing on their store loyalty.
References


