

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

An attempt is made in this chapter to summarise the major findings of the study under four heads: Product Specification, Preference for Source of Buying, Influence of Advertisement and Sales Promotion, and Socio- Economic Factors of Buyers.

Product Specification

1. In the regional markets, the consumers had different perceptions about the influence of brand preference on the purchase of textiles.
2. It was found that the difference in the perceptions of the consumers was not significant in the regional markets.
3. The consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets had different perceptions about the influence of brand preference.
4. The difference in the perceptions of consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets was not found significant.
5. The sales forces had different opinions about the influence of brand preference of consumers on their purchase decision. However, the difference in their opinion was not found significant.
6. Quality was perceived as a factor having a very high degree of influence by the consumers in the regional markets.
7. Significant difference was noted in perception between consumers in

the Northern and Central, Southern and Central regions, but no significant difference was observed in the perceptions of consumers between the Southern and Northern regions.

8. Consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets perceived that quality exercised a very high degree of influence on their purchase of textiles.
9. It was found in the study that significant difference existed in perception between consumers in the urban and semi-urban, urban and rural markets .No significant difference was observed between consumers in the semi-urban and rural markets.
10. The sales forces had the opinion that quality exerted a very high degree of influence on the decision-making process of consumers.
11. Significant difference was noted between the opinions of the sales forces of large and small selling outlets, no significant difference was found in opinions between the sales forces of medium and small selling outlets.
12. In the regional markets, the consumers perceived that their colour preference exercised a very high degree of influence on their purchase of textiles.
13. It was observed that there was significant difference in perception between consumers in the Northern and Central, and Southern and Central regions, but no significant difference was noted between consumers in the Northern and Southern regions.

14. The urban, semi-urban and rural consumers perceived that colour preference had a very high degree of influence.
15. It was observed that there was significant difference in perception between consumers in the urban and semi-urban, urban and rural markets, and no significant difference was found between consumers in the semi-urban and rural markets.
16. The sales forces had the opinion that colour preference of consumers exercised a very high degree of influence on their purchase of textiles.
17. The study brought out that there was significant difference in opinions between sales forces of large and medium selling outlets, but no significant difference was noted between the sales forces of large and small, medium and small selling outlets.
18. The consumers in the regional markets perceived that the nature of fabric exercised a very high degree of influence on their purchase decisions.
19. Significant difference was noted in perceptions between consumers in the Northern and Central, Central and Southern and Southern regions, but no significant difference was found between consumers in the Northern and Southern regions.
20. In the urban, semi-urban and rural markets, consumers had the perception that nature of fabric exercised a very high degree of influence.

21. Significant difference was found in perception between consumers in the urban and semi-urban markets, but no significant difference was observed between consumers in the urban and rural, semi -urban and rural markets.
22. The sales forces had the opinions that consumers' preference for the nature of fabric had a very high degree of influence on their purchase decision.
23. It was observed significant difference in opinion between the sales forces of large and medium selling outlets. However, no significant difference was noted between the sales forces of large and medium, medium and small selling outlets.
24. In the regional markets, consumers perceived that fashion exercised a very high degree of influence on their purchase of textiles.
25. Significant difference in perception was found between consumers in the Northern and Central, Central and Southern regions, however, no significant difference was noted between consumers in the Northern and Southern regions.
26. The consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets had the view that fashion exercised a very high degree of influence.
27. However, it was found that there was significant difference in perceptions between consumers in the urban and semi-urban,

urban and rural markets. Yet no significant difference was observed between semi-urban and rural markets.

28. The sales forces had difference in their opinions about the influence of fashion on the purchase of textiles.
29. It was found that the difference in opinions between the sales forces of large and medium, large and small selling outlets was significant, and that between the sales forces of medium and small selling outlets was not significant.
30. The consumers in the regional markets had different perceptions about the influence of preference for readymade garments on their purchase of textiles.
31. It was observed that the difference in the perceptions between consumers in the Northern and Central, Central and Southern regions was significant, but no significant difference was noted between consumers in the Northern and Southern regions.
32. The urban, semi-urban and rural consumers perceived that preference for readymade garments exercised a very high degree of influence.
33. Significant difference was observed in perceptions between consumers in the urban and semi-urban, and urban and rural markets, but no significant difference was found between consumers in the semi-urban and rural markets.
34. The sales forces differ in their opinions about the influence of

consumers, preference for ready made garments on purchase of textiles.

35. The study revealed that the difference in opinions between the sales forces of large and medium, large and small selling outlets was significant, and that between medium and small selling outlets was not significant.
36. In the regional markets, the consumers perceived that preference for domestic textiles exerted a very high degree of influence on their purchase decision.
37. It was found that there was significant difference in perceptions between consumers in the Northern and Central, Central and Southern regions, but no significant difference was noted between consumers in the Northern and Southern regions.
38. The urban, semi-urban and rural consumers had the view that preference for domestic textiles had a very high degree of influence. However, it was observed that there was significant difference in perceptions between consumers in urban and semi-urban, rural markets, but no significant difference was noted between consumers in semi-urban and rural markets.
39. The sales forces had the opinions that consumers' preference for domestic textiles had very high degree of influence.
40. Significant difference was observed between the sales forces of large and medium, and large and small selling outlets, but no significant difference was found between the sales forces of medium and small

selling outlets.

41. The consumers in the regional markets had different perceptions about the influence of their preference for foreign textiles on their decision making process.
42. The difference in the perceptions of consumers was found significant in the regional markets.
43. In the urban, semi-urban and rural markets, the consumers had different perceptions about the influence of preference for foreign textiles.
44. It was noted that the difference in perceptions between consumers in the urban and semi-urban, semi-urban and rural markets was significant, whereas no significant difference was found between consumers in urban and rural markets.
45. The sales forces showed difference in opinions about the influence of consumers' preference for foreign textiles on their purchase of textiles.
46. The difference in opinion was found significant between the sales forces of large and medium, medium and small selling outlets, but no significant difference was observed between the sales forces of large and small selling outlets.
47. In the regional markets, the consumers had the opinion that the price of textiles exerted a very high degree of influence on purchase of textiles.
48. Significant difference was in the perceptions of consumers in the regional markets.

49. Consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets held the view that price had a very high degree of influence.
50. Significant difference was noted in perceptions of consumers between urban and rural, semi-urban and rural markets, whereas no significant difference was seen between consumers in semi-urban and rural markets.
51. The sales forces had the opinion that the influence of price on consumers was very high.
52. No significant difference was found in the opinions of the sales forces. The analysis reveals that in the textile market of Kerala, the consumers assigned different specifications for their target product.

The Hypothesis (H 1) “There are significant variations in the product specification among the consumers in Northern, Central and Southern parts of the state of Kerala” is accepted.

Preference for Source of Buying

1. The consumers in the regional markets perceived that attributes of textile shops exercised a very high degree of influence on their selection of shops. However, it was found that there was significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the regional markets. Consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets held the view that attributes of textile shops exerted a very high degree of influence on their choice of shops.

2. But it was observed that there was significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets.
3. The sales forces had the opinion that attributes of their shops exercised a very high degree of influence on consumers.
4. Significant difference was found in the opinions of the sales forces of large, medium and small selling outlets.
5. In the regional markets, consumers had different perceptions about the influence of the location of shops .
6. It was found that there existed significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the regional markets.
7. The urban, semi- urban and rural consumers had different perceptions about the influence of the location of shops.
8. The difference in the perceptions of consumers in the urban, semi - urban and rural markets was found significant.
9. The sales forces showed difference in opinion about the influence of the location of their shops on consumers
10. The difference in opinion of the sales forces between large and medium, between medium and small selling outlets was significant, while the difference between the sales forces of large and small selling outlets was not significant.
11. In all the regional markets, the consumers perceived that interaction with the sales personnel exercised a very high degree of influence on

their selection of textile shops.

12. It was found in the study that there existed significant difference in the perceptions of consumers the regional markets.
13. The urban, semi-urban and rural consumers had the view that interaction with the sales forces exerted a very high degree of influence.
14. Significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the urban, semi -urban and rural markets was found in the study.
15. Consumers in the regional markets perceived that provision for replacement had a very high degree of influence on their choice of textile shops.
16. As observed in the study that there was significant difference in the perceptions of consumers between the Northern and Central, between Southern and Central regions, but no significant difference was noted between the consumers in the Northern and Southern regions.
17. The consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets had the perception that provision for replacement exercised a very high degree of influence.
18. The study revealed significant difference in the perceptions of consumers among urban, semi -urban, and rural markets.
19. The sales forces in large, medium and small selling outlets had the

opinion that provision for replacement had a very high degree of influence.

20. The study brought out significant difference in the opinions of the sales forces.
21. In the regional markets, consumers had different perceptions about the influence of suggestions of family members on shop selection.
22. The difference in the perception of consumers among the regional markets was significant.
23. The consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets perceived that suggestions of family members had only a medium degree of influence. Yet it was found that there was significant difference in perception between consumers in urban and semi-urban, semi –urban and rural markets and no significant difference was seen between consumers in urban and rural markets.
24. The sales forces showed difference in opinion about the influence of suggestions of family members of consumers on selection of shop.
25. The difference in opinion of the sales forces between large and small, large and medium selling outlets was found significant, while such difference was not found between the sales forces of medium and small selling outlets.

The analysis suggested that consumers in different segments in the textile market had different perceptions about the source of buying.

The Hypothesis (H II): “The influence of the factors affecting preference for source of buying varies significantly among the consumers in the textile market of Kerala on the basis of place of residence” is accepted.

Influence of Advertisement and Sales Promotion

1. In the regional markets, television advertisement exercised a very high degree of influence on consumers.
2. Significant difference in the perceptions of consumers between the Northern and Central, Central and Southern regions was observed in the study. But no significant difference in perception between consumers in the Northern and Southern regions was found.
3. The urban, semi-urban and rural consumers believed that television advertisement exercised a very high degree of influence.
4. The study brought out significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the urban and semi-urban, semi-urban and rural markets. Yet no significant difference was observed between consumers in the urban and rural markets.
5. The sales forces had the opinion that television advertisement influenced consumers to a very high degree.
6. Significant difference was found in the opinions of the sales forces between large and medium, large and small selling outlets. However, the difference in the perceptions of the sales forces between medium and small selling outlets was not found significant.

7. The degree of influence of radio advertisement was perceived by the consumers in the regional markets as medium.
8. The study revealed significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the regional markets.
9. The perceptions of consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets indicated that radio advertisement had only a medium degree of influence. Yet significant difference was observed in perception between consumers in the urban and semi-urban, semi-urban and rural markets, but no significant difference was noted between consumers in the urban and rural markets.
10. The sales forces had the opinion that radio advertisement had only a medium degree of influence on consumers.
11. No significant difference in the opinions of the sales forces was observed in the study.
12. In the regional markets, consumers perceived that newspaper advertisement exerted a very high degree of influence.
13. It was observed in the study that there was significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the regional markets.
14. The urban, semi-urban and rural consumers held the view that newspaper advertisement had a very high degree of influence.
15. Significant difference in the perceptions of consumers between the urban and semi-urban, urban and rural markets was found in the

study while the difference between consumers in the semi –urban and rural markets was not found significant.

16. The opinions of the sales forces revealed that newspaper advertisement had a very high degree of influence on consumers.
17. The study brought out significant difference in opinion between the sales forces of large and medium, large and small selling outlets, while no significant difference was noted between the sales forces of medium and small selling outlets.
18. The consumers in the regional markets had different perceptions about the influence of magazine advertisement.
19. It was observed in the study that the difference in the perceptions of consumers in the regional markets was significant.
20. There was difference in the perceptions of consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets about the influence of magazine advertisement.
21. The difference in perceptions among the urban, semi-urban and rural consumers was found significant.
22. The sales forces had the opinion that magazine advertisement exercised a very high degree of influence on consumers.
23. No significant difference in the opinions of the sales forces was observed.
24. Consumers in the regional markets had different perceptions about the

influence of poster advertisement.

25. Significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the regional markets was found in the study.
26. The perceptions of urban, semi-urban and rural consumers about the influence of poster advertisement were different.
27. The difference in perceptions between consumers in the urban and semi-urban, urban and rural markets was found significant. However, that between consumers in the semi-urban and rural markets was not found significant.
28. The sales forces had the view that poster advertisement exercised a very high degree of influence.
29. Significant difference between the opinions of the sales forces of large and medium, large and small selling outlets was noted in the study. But no significant difference was found between the sales forces of medium and small selling outlets.
30. Consumers in the regional markets had different perceptions about the influence of billboard / banner advertisement.
31. It was found that the difference in the perceptions was significant.
32. In the urban, semi-urban and rural markets, consumers had different perceptions about the influence of billboard / banner advertisement.
33. The difference in perceptions between consumers in the urban and semi-urban, urban and rural markets was found significant, while

that between consumers in semi-urban and rural markets was not found significant.

34. The sales forces held the opinion that billboard/ banner advertisement had a very high degree of influence on consumers. No significant difference was found in their opinions.

The analysis made it vivid that television advertisement had a strong grip on the consumers in the textile market of Kerala.

The Hypothesis (H III): “Advertisement on television influences significantly on the buying decisions of the consumers in the textile market of Kerala” is accepted.

35. The perceptions of consumers in the regional markets revealed that discount had a high degree of influence on their purchase decision .
36. Significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the regional markets was noted in the study.
37. The urban, semi-urban and rural consumers perceived that discount exercised a high degree of influence on their purchase decisions.
38. It was observed that there was significant difference in perception between the consumers in the urban and semi-urban and urban and rural markets. But no significant difference was noted in perception between consumers in semi-urban and rural markets.
39. The sales forces had the opinion that discount exercised a high degree of influence on consumers. No significant difference was observed in

their opinions.

40. It was perceived by the consumers in the regional markets that gift schemes exert only a medium degree of influence.
41. The study revealed significant difference in the perceptions of consumers among the regional markets.
42. The consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets had the view that gift schemes had only a medium degree of influence.
43. It was observed in the study that there existed significant difference between the perceptions of consumers in urban and semi-urban, urban and rural markets. Yet no significant difference was found in perception between consumers in the semi-urban and rural markets.
44. The sales forces had the opinion that gift schemes had only a medium degree of influence on consumers.
45. Significant difference was noted between the opinions of the sales forces of large and medium, large and small selling outlets, but no significant difference was observed in the study between the opinions of sales forces of medium and small selling outlets.
46. The consumers in the regional markets perceived that packaging had only a low degree of influence.
47. Significant difference was noted between the perceptions of consumers in the Northern and Central, Central and Southern regions. However, no significant difference was observed between the Northern

and Southern regions.

48. The urban, semi-urban and rural consumers had different perceptions about the influence of packaging.
49. The difference in perceptions between consumers in the urban and rural markets was found significant and that between consumers in the semi-urban and rural markets was not found significant .
50. The sales forces had the opinion that packaging had a very low degree of influence on consumers.
51. It was observed in the study that there was significant difference between the opinions of the sales forces of large and medium, large and small selling outlets, but no significant difference was found between the sales forces of medium and small selling outlets.
52. In the regional markets, the consumers had different perceptions about the influence of incentives.
53. It was found in the study that the difference in their perceptions was significant.
54. In the urban, semi-urban and rural markets, the consumers had the view that incentives exerted a medium degree of influence. However, it was found that there was significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets.
55. The sales forces had the opinion that incentives had only a medium

degree of influence on consumers.

56. It was found in the study that there was significant difference in opinions between the sales forces of large and medium, and large and small selling outlets, but no significant difference was observed in the study between the sales forces of medium and small selling outlets.

The analysis made it explicit that the sales promotion devices had low potential to attract the consumers in the textile market.

The Hypothesis (H IV) : “The consumers in the textile market of Kerala are least attracted by the sales promotion measures of dealers” is accepted.

Socio - Economic Factors of Buyers

1. Consumers in all the regions perceived that their social status had a high degree of influence on their purchase of textiles.
2. Significant difference in the perceptions of consumers among the regional markets was noted in the study.
3. Consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets viewed that their social status exercised high degree of influence.
4. It was found that there was significant difference in the perception of consumers between urban and semi-urban, urban and rural markets, but no significant difference was noted between consumers in semi-urban and rural markets.
5. The sales forces had different opinions about the influence of consumers' social status on purchase of textiles.

6. The difference in the opinions was significant.
7. Consumers in the regional markets perceived that their economic status had a very high degree of influence on their purchase of textiles. However, it was found that there was significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the regional markets.
8. The urban, semi-urban and rural consumers had the opinion that their economic status exercised a very high degree of influence.
9. It was found in the study that there was significant difference between the perceptions of consumers in urban and semi-urban, urban and rural and semi-urban and rural markets.
10. The sales forces had the opinion that the economic status of consumers exercised a very high degree of influence on the purchase of textiles. No significant difference in their opinions was brought out by the study.
11. The consumers in the regional markets had different perceptions about the influence of their residential status on their purchase of textiles.
12. The difference in the perceptions was found significant.
13. The urban, semi urban and rural consumers had different perceptions about the influence of residential status.
14. The difference in perception between consumers in the urban and rural, semi-urban and rural markets was found significant. No significant difference was observed between the perception of consumers in the

semi-urban and rural markets.

15. The sales forces showed difference in opinion about the influence of residential status on the purchase decision of consumers.
16. There existed significant difference between the opinions of the sales forces of large and medium, large and small selling outlets. But the difference between the sales forces of medium and small selling outlets was not found significant.
17. In the regional markets, consumers perceived that their occupational status had a very high degree of influence on their purchase of textiles.
18. It was observed in the study that there was significant difference in perception of consumers between the Northern and Central, Central and Southern regions. However, no significant difference was found between consumers in the Southern and Northern regions.
19. In the urban, semi-urban and rural markets, consumers had the view that their occupational status had a very high degree of influence.
20. Significant difference was noted in the perceptions of consumers between the urban and rural, and urban and semi-urban markets. No significant difference was found between consumers in semi-urban and rural markets.
21. The sales forces had the opinion that the occupational status of consumers had a very high degree of influence on purchase of textiles.

22. Significant difference was observed in the opinions of the sales forces of large and small and large and medium selling outlets. Yet no significant difference was noted between the sales forces of medium and small selling outlets.
23. The consumers in the regional markets perceived their casual income exercised only a medium degree of influence on them while they purchase textiles.
24. It was found in the study that there was significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the regional markets.
25. The urban, semi-urban and rural consumers had the view that their casual income had only a medium degree of influence.
26. Significant difference in the perceptions of consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets was found in the study.
27. The sales forces had difference in opinion about the influence of the casual income of consumers on purchase decision.
28. The difference between their opinions was found significant.
29. Consumers in the regional markets had different perceptions about the influence of their foreign contact on decision – making regarding textile consumption.
30. Significant difference was found in their perceptions.
31. The consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets had different viewpoints about the influence of their foreign contact.

32. It was found that difference in the perceptions was significant.
33. The sales forces had different opinions regarding the influence of foreign contact of consumers on purchase decisions regarding textiles
34. It was found in the study that the difference in opinions of the sales forces between large and small, medium and small selling outlets was significant. But between the sales forces of large and medium selling outlets was not found significant.
35. The consumers in the regional markets perceived that the influence of Government Policy on the purchase of textiles was very low.
36. Significant difference was found in perceptions between consumers in the Southern and Central, Central and Northern regions. However, no significant difference was noted between consumers in the Northern and Southern regions.
37. The urban, semi-urban and rural consumers had the opinion that the Government Policy exercised only a very low degree of influence.
38. No significant difference was noted in the perceptions of consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets.
39. In the regional markets, consumers had different perceptions about the influence of their educational status on their purchase decision relating to textiles.
40. The difference in the perceptions was found significant.

41. There was difference in the perceptions of consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets about the influence of their educational status.
42. It was found in the study that the difference in the perceptions between consumers in urban and rural markets, semi-urban and rural markets was significant, but no significant difference was noted between consumers in urban and semi-urban markets.
43. The sales forces had the opinion that the educational status of consumers had a high degree of influence on purchase of textiles.
44. No significant difference was observed between the opinions of the sales forces of large, medium and small selling outlets.
45. Consumers in the regional markets have different perceptions about the influence of festivals on purchase of textiles.
46. The difference in the perceptions between consumers in the Central and Northern, Central and Southern is significant while it is not significant between consumers in Southern and Northern regions.
47. Consumers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets had different perceptions about the influence of festivals while purchasing textiles.
48. The difference in perceptions between consumers in the urban and semi-urban markets, semi-urban and rural markets is significant, but that between urban and rural markets is not significant.
49. The sales forces had different opinions about the influence of festivals

on textile consumption

- 50 The difference in the opinions between the sales forces of large and medium, large and small outlets is significant while that between medium and small selling outlets is not significant

The analysis of the socio-economic factors of buyers revealed that there was significant difference in the degree of influence of each factor.

The Hypothesis (H V): “There are significant variations in the influence of socio-economic status on the purchase decision of consumers in the textile market of Kerala” is accepted.

Recommendations and Suggestions

Market Monitoring Cell (MMC)

Since the dynamism of market is a challenge for the textile marketers, the market must be constantly reviewed. This embosses the need for setting up an agency like ‘Market Monitoring Cell’ (MMC). The prime objective of the proposed MMC is collection and dissemination of information about consumers. The MMC must be designed with a two- tier structure comprising of Executive body at the top level and Field Assistants at the bottom level. Executive body as the controlling authority of the MMC, can be constituted in collaboration with the Textile Dealers’ Association (TDA) of Kerala. Field Assistants are to be employed for undertaking surveys. The MMC can seek financial support from the TDA and managerial as well as technical assistance from the ‘Textile Committee, Kannur’ – which is a Government of India organization exclusively meant for uplifting the textile sector. The MMC has to initiate consumer survey

at least once in a year by giving emphasis on the changing needs of consumers and purchase pattern. The documentation of the information gathered must be done by designing an annual bulletin, which can be published under the label of the MMC/TDA. This ensures an uninterrupted flow of market information, which facilitates the marketers to launch customer -based strategies.

Revival of the Handloom Sector

In the textile market of Kerala, the consumers have a zeal for domestic products. Cotton handloom fabrics constitute the major share of the domestic textiles. This highlights the desirability of a multi-dimensional revival of the handloom sector so as to cater to the requirements of the modern market environment. Both the production and marketing operations have to be revived for achieving this goal. A Non Government Organization (NGO) is to be promoted for supervising and monitoring the revival programmes and the NGO must be linked with The Handloom Development Corporation / The Handloom Weavers' Co-operate Society/ Khadi and Village Industries. Development of new products, blending of modernity with the traditional designs, induction of new generation colours, training programmes to the weaving community, modernization of looms etc are some of the viable schemes for the revival and modernization of the production aspects of the handloom sector. A new horizon of marketing can be achieved by promoting the sale of handloom products in association with The Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) by carving out a new branch of tourism titled 'Handicraft Tourism'. The NGO which is focusing on the monitoring of the revival of production activities, can coordinate participation of other handicraft industries to promote the

handicraft tourism and thereby promoting the sale of handloom products. The effective implementation of the new schemes of production and marketing with the intervention of the NGO will be resulting in the overall development of the handloom sector to survive in the midst of competition during the post - MFA period.

Product Enrichment

The textile market of Kerala has already witnessed a drastic change in several aspects of consumer behaviour. Now-a-days, the consumers have a strong passion for quality, brand and madeups. In order to cope with the change in the attitude of consumers, the textile marketers have to go in for a comprehensive approach ensuring the potential for satisfying the consumers. This evinces need for 'product enrichment' characterized by quality and brand. Research and development for introducing new generation of textiles, induction of new fashion/ style, colour etc are some of the features, which enrich the quality of a product in the textile market. In the post- MFA period, the consumers will be exposed to numerous brands at affordable price and there will be a tendency to patronize such products. The upcoming trend of using ready-to-wear is also a notable deviation in the attitudinal path of the consumers in Kerala market. Perfectly made ready-to-wear from foreign countries are waiting at the doorstep of the Kerala market for the day on which the phasing out of MFA is going to be completed. The marketers have to give suggestions to the manufactures for launching products by giving emphasis on quality and brand. The readymade sector should also be strengthened enough to meet the challenges in the years yet to come. The proposed MMC can provide the relevant information so as to

avoid the threat of mismatching the demand and supply of textiles in the Kerala market.

Training Programmes for the Sales Forces.

The sales forces are the key factor of the successful functioning of textile retailing units. Since the activities of the sales forces have several dimensions, they have to be educated properly to carry out their operations effectively. This ventilates the need for organizing training programmes for the sales forces. The TDA can act as a facilitator to sponsor the training programmes. It can make use of technical assistance from academic institutions, organizations like Textile Committee, and Industries Department for designing the curriculum of the training programmes. Communication skill, customer attention, counter service, cordial interaction with consumers etc must be the thrust areas of the curriculum. A Quality Circle (QC)- consisting of experienced sales forces must be formed for giving exposure to the realistic situations in the selling outlets. In order to provide an opportunity for interaction between the sales forces and consumers, the TDA must organize periodical seminar /workshop on the topics related to practical aspects of 'instore sales'. This would equip the sales forces of the textile retailing outlets of Kerala to interact with their prospective consumers effectively - which is conducive to reinforcing customer loyalty.

Cost Competitiveness

Most of the large and medium selling outlets are being promoted through the television advertisement. However, the study reveals that the consumers have

positive perceptions about the influence of the press media. Since the television advertisement is contributory to escalating the cost, it is better to launch an 'economic package of advertising programme' by way of harmonious blending of both the electronic and press media. This is possible by limiting the television advertisement to a scale of 'information generation' and it must be supplemented by press advertisement; because press advertisement has the added advantage of reinforcing the message. Kerala, being a state of high literacy rate, the press advertisement has a strong potential to penetrate through the decision-making process of the masses. An approach of striking a balance between television and press advertisement, the marketers can significantly reduce cost of sales- which paves the way for achieving cost competitiveness. With the entry of foreign countries in the domestic market by virtue of ATC, cost competitiveness is the only means to meet the competition from countries like China, South Korea, Taiwan and Indonesia.

Redesigning of Packaging

At present, almost all the textile retailers resort to 'polythene covers' as packaging material. Owing to ecological and environmental problems, consumers are found to be reluctant toward accepting polythene covers. This calls for redesigning the packaging materials to cope with the attitude of consumers. An easy way out of this hurdle is to roll back to the age old concept of 'paper covers'. It is worth noting that the present day consumers are novelty seeking in character and they are longing for a harmless packaging other than the traditional one. Inducting packaging by using jute or coir products is a viable suggestion to cater to the requirements of the consumers. Retailers who maintain large selling outlets can adopt the new texture of packaging on an

customer retention.

Regional Marketing

The difference in the socio-economic environment of consumers in Kerala is explicit in their propensity to consume, attitude, information search and processing, interaction with the reference group, decision-making process etc. Such being the situation, the marketers have to launch a strategy, which is matching with the prevailing environment of every market segment. This spells out the need for a 'regional marketing' approach. Regional marketing denotes developing marketing mix applicable to the relevant segment. This can be manifested through specialties in product procurement, formulating appropriate pricing policy, organization of selling outlets, devising the most suitable tool of promotion etc. In order to launch the strategy of regional marketing effectively, the marketers are to be provided with the needful information regarding the changing dimensions of the behavioural aspects of consumers. The proposed MMC can act as a provider as well as facilitator of the infrastructure for designing regional marketing by collection and dissemination of the relevant information. This enables the marketers to translate the needs of their prospective consumers into products.

The textile market is going to be exposed to a strange environment by 2005. The phasing out of MFA will be completing and the country has to open the domestic market as per the provisions of the ATC. Several member countries of WTO have already attained competitiveness to launch their textile products at a lower price in the Indian market. Understanding the consumers very closely and identifying their needs very specifically seem to be the panacea for meeting

the fierce competition in the domestic market. The timely implementation of the above suggestions in the retailing scenario of textiles in Kerala is mediatory to making the textile industry of India as a “money spinning” industry.

Topics for Further Research

It is suggested that further researches in textile industry on the topics given below would be able to provide enlightenment to the varied categories of people and institutions associated with the industry.

- 1 **Impact of advertisement on the textile consumers in Kerala.**
- 2 **Human Resource Management in the large and medium textile shops in Kerala.**
- 3 **Brand preference among the textile consumers in Kerala..**