CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Since the present study is related to family purchase decisions of durable goods, literature survey has been done regarding the theory and concepts of spousal purchase decision, process of family decision making and durable goods. During literature survey it is found that varieties of research problems have been explored in the concept and theory of spousal decision making in western countries rather than in India.

2.2 Review of Literature

The findings of a few such research works have been presented below in chronological order.

Davis (1970)\(^1\) has selected automobile and furniture to study the dimensions of husband and wife roles in consumer purchase decision and to analyse the extent of husband’s and wife’s agreements in their perception of roles. The relative influence of six automobile purchase decisions is positively
associated and high. Data from husbands yield gammas and the degree of association reported by wives is even stronger. The same pattern characterizes the association between relative influence in furniture purchase decisions. In contract to the association among decision roles within each of the two product categories, there is little relationship across product categories. There is an inverse relationship between influence in automobile purchase decision and influence in the purchase of furniture.

Fry and Siller (1970)\textsuperscript{2} have designed a study to compare elements of the purchase decision processes of working and middleclass housewives, under the relatively controlled condition of a simulated shopping behaviour. Comparison of search, brand preference and deal sensitivity measures for the two social classes reveal a fairly high degree of similarity in observed behaviour during the shopping simulation. However differences found between the class groups in the sign and/or magnitude of variables relate to observed behaviour variation by social class in the nature of decision making process which have been summarised in terms of subjective vs. objective relation sets.

Courtney and Lockeretz (1971)\textsuperscript{3} has surveyed different magazines to study the role of women in magazine advertisement and it was found that the print advertisements rarely showed women in working roles. The distribution of occupational and non-working roles in the advertisements reinforces the feminists impression that women are rarely shown engaged in important activities outside the home and women are limited even in household decision making. They
appear independently only for inexpensive purchases and for expensive purchases men are brought into the advertisements.

Davis (1971) has proposed a multitrait-multi method approach for determining convergent and discriminant validity for the measurement of purchase influence. The four traits used in this study to measure purchase influence are global measure of influence, Blood and Wolfe index, seven role of purchase decisions for automobile and furniture. The findings show relatively high correlations between the Blood and Wolfe index and the seven automobile decisions for both husbands and wives.

Jeffrey (1971) in his studies says that one of the key variables in studying the role of risk handling in the consumer decision process is self confidence. When making problem solving purchase choice decisions, low self confidence consumers would be defensive or indecisive and would tend to reject persuasive inputs.

Ward and Wackman (1972) have examined the influence of demographics, parent-child interaction and mother's mass communication behaviour on children's purchase influence attempts and parental yielding. Analysis of marginal data indicate that children frequently attempt to influence purchases for food products but these attempts decrease with age. Durables which the children use directly are the second most requested product. Mothers of younger children (5-7 years old) indicate frequent influence attempts for game
and toy purchases. While mothers of older children indicate frequent purchase influence attempts for clothing and record albums.

Another result of continuing study of consumer decision making directed by Newman and Staelin (1972) has been made with an objective that knowledge of information seeking is fundamental to understand buyer behaviour and planning marketing communication and retail distribution. It is found that the amount of information seeking is positively related to decision time. The data also shows that experienced buyers are able to collect a lot amount of information in a short time. Young, unmarried persons have the highest information seeking scores as they have less experience. The study suggests that the purchase decision process for durables frequently begins with anticipation of product breakdown.

A study of activity in the purchase decision process and analysis of brand loyalty has been made by Newman and Werbel (1973) by selecting six major appliances like refrigerator, washing machine, range, T.V. and air conditioner. To measure brand loyalty a scoring scheme has been adopted and it is found that 26.5 percent of the households are brand loyal.

Davis and Rigauz (1974) have examined the influence exerted by husbands and wives at different stages in the decision process for 25 economic decision in a convenience sample of Belgian households in which both spouses are questioned. The analysis considers changes in marital rates throughout decision making and extent of role consensus within families by dividing the
relative influence into four decision areas as ‘husband dominant’, ‘wife
dominant’ or as a ‘syncratic’ or “autonomic” pattern.

Hempel (1974)\textsuperscript{10} has measured the husband and wife interaction in family decision at different stages in the house buying decisions. Two areas are selected for the study in different periods namely Connecticut in 1968 and North West England in 1971. Role performance in the purchase decisions appeals to depend upon the type and nature of decisions – husbands are more involved in decisions concerning mortgage, price and when to buy while wives are more involved in decisions regarding neighbourhood and house style.

A study concerned with changes that have occurred over the past eighteen years in the roles of husband and wives in family purchase decision making has been made by Cunningham and Green (1974).\textsuperscript{11} The study made by Shart and Mott in 1955 and the study made by Robert in 1973 are compared. In the case of grocery, in 1955 the decision on how much to spend on groceries was dominated by wife and in 1973 the study found that this area was even more wife dominated. The comparative findings with respect to the decision of life insurance show that in 1955, 43 percent of the decision was made by the husband and in 1973 it was 66 percent. The automobile decision findings suggest a different tendency. The 1973 result shows more joint decision making than was in the case in 1955 study.

A study made by Hansen et al., (1975)\textsuperscript{12} is concerned with the roles of husbands and wives in the decision to purchase a home. Husbands and wives
tend to agree that the husband is dominant in the decision to rent or buy and in the price decision of home while the wife is dominant in the floor plan, style and size of home decisions.

Cox (1975) uses two alternative operational definitions to indicate the degree of adjustment between a husband and a wife. Results show that relationship between marriage and the RCP definition is found to be significant at .001 level for all five orders. The hypothesized relationship between stage in the family life cycle and the RCP definition is also examined by means of both Kruskal-Wallis test and Anova and the relationship is found to be significant.

Green and Cunningham (1975), on the basis of inventory scores, divide the respondents into conservatives, moderates and liberals. Ten products are selected for the study. On five of the products and services, the purchase decision patterns of husbands and wives are same for the three subject groups. Decisions relating to groceries are wife dominated in the three groups while life insurance decisions are husband dominated in the three groups. Furniture, housing and family savings tend to be jointly made in all three groups.

Shuptrine and Samuelson (1976) have made a study which is a partial replication of the study made by Davis (1970). The results indicate that the role response of a partner in major purchase decisions is product specific. The findings also indicate that the partner who is dominant for most prepurchase decision components also tends to make the real decision to purchase.
Davis (1976)\textsuperscript{16} attempts to review and evaluate the area of decision making within the households. His article includes the involvement of family members in economic decisions, the process by which family decisions are made and the consequences of different family structures and decision making styles.

Burns and Granbois (1977)\textsuperscript{17} are of the view that measures of involvement, empathy and recognised authority are taken for each sub decision to investigate the possible role in moderating the need for resolving discrepant preferences. The average husband is more highly involved than the average wife with respect to automobile size, automobile make, body, style, price range, type of transmission, type of radio, method of financing, type of brakes and place of purchase. Only exterior colour and seat upholstery have lowest husband involvement.

Scanzoni (1977)\textsuperscript{18} suggests two important dimensions in the change of sex roles. First dimension is that younger women are coming toward to take up jobs in the same way as members of the dominant group (men) have always done. A second and concomitant dimension of sex role changes pertains to women’s relationships with their husbands. Consequently decisions have to be made and issues have to be dealt with that are rarely grappled with earlier.

A research has been made by Westbrook et al., (1978)\textsuperscript{19} to find out how satisfied or dissatisfied consumers are with their experience in arriving at purchase decisions of major household durables. Data are collected from recent buyers and prospective buyers. Over all, this study suggests that consumers find
enjoyment and satisfaction in their buying experiences for durables considerably more often than they find difficulty and discontent.

Atkin (1978)\textsuperscript{20} has observed patterns of interactions between parents and children in supermarket to determine the processes and effects of decision making in the selection of breakfast cereals. Observers have viewed the behaviour of parents and children at the cereal shelves and recorded the sequence of action along with the characteristics of the participants. The findings show that 46 percent of the children pose a cereal ‘demand’ and an additional 20 percent offer a cereal ‘request’. The rate of positive versus negative parental response is slightly higher in the demand than in the request situation. Most of the parent initiated sequences involve an invitation for the child to select a cereal. In majority of these cases, the child chooses a brand and the parent agrees to the selection.

Curry and Menasco (1979)\textsuperscript{21} report some theoretical results based on one possible orientation for studying the husband-wife decision process. This orientation builds on research using the Weighted Linear Multiattribute (WLM) model of preference. The result demonstrates that marketing communication can often be effective without having to promote strong changes in weights. In the context of a joint decision, a message that attempts to increase each individual’s weight for a particular attribute will not only improve the brand’s utility but also increase agreement about this utility.

Filiatrault and Ritchie (1980)\textsuperscript{22} have made a study concerning a
series of 17 sub-decisions related to vocation travel and choice of accommodation during travel by comparing influence structure of two types of household DMU (family verses couple). The result shows that husbands tend to dominate decision making more in family DMU than in those where no children are present and joint decision making is more prevalent in couple DMU’s. Within family DMUs children have exerted little influence on the overall decision process.

Schaninger and Allen (1981)\(^2\) have classified wife’s occupational status as non working wife (NWW), low-occupational status working wife (LSW) and high occupational status working wife (HSW) in order to present empirical support for a trichotomous family classification scheme of consumer behaviour. The results show that LSW wives purchased more number of dresses than NWW wives. Regarding ownership of T.V, LSW families tended to own more televisions especially, colour televisions more than HSW or NWW families. For the ownership of major and minor appliances such as microwaves, dishwashers, cloth washers, refrigerators, etc., both LSW and HSW families tend to own multi feature washers and dryers compared to NWW families. Higher mean feature counts for refrigerators and ranges are found for HSW families.

A study has been made by Reilly (1982)\(^2\) to examine the use of convenience foods and the ownership of time saving durables for working wife and non-working wife families. It is found that it is negatively related to working and convenience food consumption. The model proposed by the author concludes that there is relationship between the wife’s work status and the
family's consumption behaviour. But there is lack of relationship among the 
wife's education, the family status and the wives work involvement.

Park (1982) has examined the joint decision making process using a method called the "decision plan net" in the context of a husband and wife's joint decision in home purchasing. Theoretical characterizations of joint decision making as a muddling-through process are discussed and a decision plan net is introduced for future decision situations. This study has conceptualized joint decision as a muddling-through process characterized by limited knowledge and awareness of each spouse's decision strategies.

Spiro (1983) has examined the strategies used by individual spouses in making accommodative joint decisions for major durable purchases. People who are more traditional in their life styles and attitudes are more likely to use persuasive influence. This study identifies two major dimensions that affect influence choice. Several demographic and attitude variables such as traditional family ideology, avoidance of conflict, income, gender, age, age of youngest child, education, wife's employment and income of wife are the important discriminators among the influence strategies.

Krishnamurthi (1983) is of the opinion that the use of key informants and assessment of relative influence may represent progress in understanding decision making. The findings indicate that the views of others must be salient to the key informant and that a key informant must be
knowledgeable of other’s preferences if she/he is to represent the group’s preferences accurately.

A study has been made by Weinberg and Winer (1983)\(^{28}\) which is a duplicate of the study made by Strober and Weinberg in 1977 in which they have hypothesised that expenditure on durable goods is a function of total family income (Y), life cycle stage of family (Young), the family moving into a new home (MOVHSREC) and working women. The results show that wife’s employment is not significantly related to the purchase of five time-saving durables such as dishwashers, dryers, refrigerators, stoves and washers.

A research study made by Slama and Armin (1985)\(^{29}\) has developed a Likert-type scale to measure final consumer’s involvement with the purchasing activity. By using ANOVA, it is found that members of the family life cycle with children have higher purchasing involvement than those without children at home. The ANOVA results also show a positive and direct relationship between education and purchasing involvement. Women have higher level of purchasing involvement but working wives’ involvement in purchasing shows insignificant difference with traditional housewives.

Lehmann and Corfman (1987)\(^{30}\) have developed a conceptual framework for conflict resolution and relative influence in cooperative groups and performed an exploratory test of these models on family making realistic consumption decisions as an initial indication of the framework’s ability to represent group decisions. From the results of estimating these models it is
concluded that relative preference intensity and decision history dominate the conflict resolution process.

Qualls (1987)'s study examines household decision behaviour and provides the theoretical justification for selecting the household dimensions that are then investigated in a sex role-oriented theoretical model of household decision behaviour. The results show that Sex Role Orientation (SRO) is positively and significantly related to family member influence and mode of conflict resolution.

Ramu (1988)'s study in Bangalore city among 245 single-earner and double-earner couples, he used the decision-making power of women as an indicator of her status in the family. The findings suggest that decision-making power and economic resources are positively related. Thus, wife's economic status enhances her importance in the domestic decision-making.

Bryant's (1988)' study on durables and wife's employment shows that wife's time and durables are complementary rather than substitutes and the effect of wife's employment on durable purchases is negative. As the wife's involvement in employment grows larger, the demand for durables falls. Durables are not substituted for the time wives spend on household activities as wives become more involved in the labour market.

Foxman et al.'s (1989)' study investigated the reports of the relationship among different members of the family regarding the adolescents' relative decision influence for specific products and of their general influence in
family decision processes. Children tend to rate themselves as having more influence than their parents in purchasing toothpaste for themselves. Regarding clothes for the child, the respondents have indicated that children have a greater say in purchasing their own clothes. Higher the adolescents grades the less disagreement there is among family members regarding adolescent influence in family decision processes.

An article written by Menasco and Curry (1989) has presented results from an experiment that addresses certain hypothesis about husband-wife choice behaviour in the context of the maximization of dyadic utility. Results suggest that dyads tend to compromise, seeking balance and equity in outcomes. The forces that prompt equitable choices are grounded in principle, conflict avoidance and empathy.

A segmentation model in which demographic information is used to identify durable replaces segment is proposed in the study made by Bayus and Mehta (1995). Data concerning the ownership of several home appliances including colour T.V., refrigerators, clothes washers, vacuum cleaners and coffee makers are collected. For colour T.V., more established households tend to be average replacers. Households with more adults tend to be early coffee maker replacers and average refrigerator replacers. Households with a high income tend to be early colour T.V. replacers and average coffee maker replacers. For vacuum cleaners households with children older than 6 years of age tend to be early replacers. Households with strong homemaking interests tend to be early
replacers of refrigerators and none of the available household characteristics are statistically significant for cloth washers.

Kim and Lee (1997) using reports from father, mother and child has developed family level measures of children's relative influence in family purchase decisions involving four categories of products that exhibit convergent and discriminant validity.

Palan and Robert (1997) have explored the strategies used by adolescents to influence decision outcomes, the responses by parents to these influence attempts and the perceived effectiveness of these influence attempts. Bargaining, persuasion, emotional, legitimate and directive strategies are used by adolescents to influence parent decisions. Regarding the responses by parents, can't afford tactic, making delay, suggestion of alternative purchase choices on shopping location, reasoning and money deals are used to influence their attempts.

Arora and Allenby (1999) have developed, tested and validated a statistical model that provides an outcome based or inferred measure of influence on family decision making involving a husband and a wife. They also have made an empirical analysis involving two family decision making tasks (micro oven and lawn mower) in which husbands and wives are expected to differ. The results show that for micro oven on an average wives have a higher influence with regard to the burning power, cleaning pattern and price. For lawn mower on an average husbands have a substantially higher influence on all attributes.
Allen et al., (2001)\(^4^0\) have compared individuals who are remarried with those in their first marriages investigating their standards for how marriages should be in the domains of autonomy and decision making power and their reported communication patterns. It is found that marital communication is a major way in which spouses may change from a first marriage to a remarriage. Self reports in a remarriage indicate that they avoid discussing difficult issues and remarried spouses endorse standards for shared decision making power and more autonomy.

Jejeebhoy and Sathar (2001)\(^4^1\) has compared the autonomy of women in three settings – Punjab in Pakistan and Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu in India. The findings show that when women from all three sites are considered, Tamil Muslims exhibit far greater level of autonomy than either Hindu or Muslim respondents from Uttar Pradesh and respondents from Punjab and concludes that in comparison, the influence of religion and nationality are less consistent and powerful.

Aribara et al., (2002)\(^4^2\) have developed a hierarchical Bayes Model of group decision-making that incorporates preference revision and concession at the attribute level during the decision process. They find preference revision and concession to be strongly associated with sex, age and education. They have also found that converging preferences because of revision affect a member’s concession which in turn affects post decision satisfaction.

Jejeebhoy (2002)\(^4^3\) explores similarities and differences in the
perceptions of rural Indian women and their husbands with regard to women’s autonomy in terms of decision making, physical mobility and access to resources in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The results show that women from Tamil Nadu, regardless of religion, have significantly more decision making authority and mobility than women in Uttar Pradesh and have considerably greater access to economic resources.

Nash’ bargaining approach to household behaviour has been tested by Lakshmanasamy (2002-03) who studied the effect of pooled non labour income vs. independent labour incomes of both the husband and wife on five household decisions viz., male and female labour supply, household expenditure on food, education and health. The empirical testing of unitary vs. collective models of this study shows that, in the Indian household context, female independent non-labour income is insignificant and it may not have any significant influence on female’s bargaining strength and her control over household resource allocation decisions. Hence the collective models to household behaviour have limited scope in the context of the Indian household behaviour.

Shivakumar and Ravindran (2003) in their study on “The Role of Husband and Wife in Purchase Decisions” in Pondicherry region have found out that it is the wife who takes the decision regarding the purchase of agarbattis, cooking oil, grocery, milk and salt. The husband is the decision maker for fruits and magazines. Mosquito mats/ coils are bought on the basis of joint decisions.
It is found that there is significant difference in the decision regarding the purchase of convenience goods due to changes in the personal characteristics of husband.

Su Chenting et al., (2003)\textsuperscript{46} are of the opinion that spousal decision behaviour is key to understanding how families reach purchase decisions. Spousal decision behaviour is affected by prior decision experiences and this forms the basis of future interactions. The results indicate that (i) both husband and wife tend not to reciprocate coercion in a discrete purchase decision, (ii) both husband and wife tend not to use strong means of influence across decisions consistently, and (iii) both husband and wife’s post decision evaluations tend to affect subsequent decision behaviour.

Grewal et al., (2004)\textsuperscript{47} in their study "The Timing of Repeat Purchases of Consumer Durable Goods" show that actual purchase decisions and hazard models that incorporate individual heterogeneity, support the suggested role of attitude functions in explaining and predicting interpurchase intervals and suggest means by which managers can position their products to shorten interpurchase intervals. Communication and positioning strategies that help consumers achieve social goals and fit into desired social settings would help firms increase the rate of repurchase of consumer durables.

Ragbir Singh and Pavleen Kaur (2004)\textsuperscript{48} in their study on role structure for product purchase decision across urban and rural families brings forth that husbands in urban families wield maximum influence for purchase of
two-wheeler whereas wives have greater influence in the purchase of a refrigerator. Both spouses together have the strongest influence on all durables. Children exercise little influence over durable purchase while all the members together use the greatest power for purchase of television and two-wheeler. In the rural, more control is wielded by both husband and wife for the purchase of all durables except that of car, which is influenced by all the members of the family. For automobile husbands alone or jointly they decide about the time of purchase. Store selection decision is dominated by husband. Regarding budget decision role in the urban, husbands demonstrate considerable power.

Viswanathan (2005)\textsuperscript{49} and others have made a study of how functionally illiterate consumers behave and make decisions while shopping. It reveals cognitive predilections, trade offs and coping behaviours that distinguish functionally illiterate consumers from literate consumers. The authors find that functionally illiterate consumers display distinct cognitive predilections such as concrete reasoning and pictographic thinking when making sense of elements of the marketing mix such as packaging, in-store displays and price promotions.

A study on brand consciousness among children and its effect on family buying behaviour has been made by Nithila (2006)\textsuperscript{50} in Bangalore city. Data is collected both from children and parents through two set of questionnaire. Regarding brand awareness among children there is a very high degree of brand awareness among children. But the children declare that they do not enjoy independence in decision making for the items listed. According to parents view
for items such as chocolates, chips and soft drinks the children are allowed to
decide independently and not for the durable goods like watches, clothes, bags as
they are relatively more expensive.

Mohanram and Mahavi (2007) attempt to evaluate the factors
influencing teenagers in forming purchase decision for two-wheelers in Chennai
(TN, India). Teenagers are influenced by updated information of the product like
price, technology and peer compulsion and sales talk of the dealers. They
employ two types of strategies to convince their parents – emotional and logical.
They give top priority to quality, durability, utility and long term benefits. They
also look at colour, popularity, physical appearance and brand value. However
for promotional mix, they are driven by dealers’ sales initiative, cultural
environment stimuli, sales promotion and advertisement. The emotional
teenagers give least importance to sales promotion like offers and schemes
whereas teenagers who approach logically consider offer and schemes as
important.

2.3 Conclusion

The study on family decision making has attracted many
researchers throughout the world and recently it has got some attraction in India.
It is evident from the review presented that attempts are being made to study the
process of family decision making. However, reviews reveal that not much effort
has been made in India to analyse the ‘women’ factor in family purchase decision
of durable goods. The present study is therefore, focused to fill the gap with this
regard.
ENDNOTES


Comparison of Influence Structure in Family and Couple Decision Making
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