CHAPTER III.

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS - A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.

(consumer values in product consumption patterns)

In the previous chapter, a brief survey of literature on 'values' and studies conducted to examine the influence of values on various aspects of behaviour across several disciplines and also the relationship between consumers' values and their consumption behaviour were made. Similarly, a brief survey of the studies conducted in India to understand the consumption patterns of Indian consumers especially with reference to their socio-economic aspects and an overview of Indian market environment were made.

This chapter deals with the conceptual analysis proposed for the study about how personal values of consumers influence their product consumption patterns and also about the relationship between personal values of consumers and their socio-economic status (income) with reference to their product consumption patterns. The methodology and approach adopted are also discussed.

The term 'value' is employed in different disciplines like sociology, psychology, anthropology, philosophy etc., The meaning is used according to the discipline in which it is applied.
For example, in anthropology, the term is used vaguely often as more or less synonymous with strongly held beliefs, moral code, culturally defined aspirations and even sanctions.¹

Sociologists are applying the term 'value' to understand the customs and ideologies and defined values 'as a concept that groups together some modes of behaviour within a society.'²

In psychology, values are applied equivalent to attitude, motivation and is defined as 'objective, social elements which impose themselves upon the individual as a given and provoke his reaction.'³

Values and related concepts.

Values can be distinguished from other concepts like attitudes, needs, social norms, interests, traits etc.,

(i) Values and attitudes:

Values can be distinguished from attitudes in several ways.

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While a value is a single belief, an attitude refers to an organisation of several beliefs that are all focussed on a given object or situation.

A value transcends objects and situations whereas an attitude is focussed upon some specified object or situation. A value, unlike attitude, is a standard that guides action. A person may have many attitudes whereas values will be fewer in number.

Values occupy a more central position than attitudes within one's personality make up and are therefore determinants of attitudes as well as behaviour.

(ii) Values and social norms.

Values differ from social norms in several ways:

A value may refer to a mode of behaviour or end states of existence, whereas a social norm refers only to a mode of behaviour.

A value transcends specific situations but in contrast, a social norm is a prescription or proscription to behave in a

specific way in a specific situation.

A value is more personal and internal, whereas a norm is consensual and external to the person.

(iii) Values and needs

Although needs and values have some elements in common, values differ from needs in some respects.

When a person wants to do something, he feels that he ought to do it, since a value is only a belief about what he ought to do but also a desire to do it. Values possess some attributes which needs do not have.

(iv) Values and traits.

Values can be distinguished from traits in several ways:

Traits, unlike a value is more highly fixed and not amenable to modification both by experimental and situational variations.

A major advantage gained from thinking a person as a system of values rather than a cluster of traits is that it becomes possible to conceive the undergoing changes as a result of changes in social conditions. In contrast, the trait has built into a characterological bias that forecloses such possibilities from changes in advance.

(v) Values and interest.

An interest is one of the many manifestations of a value
and therefore it has some of the attributes that a value possesses.

An interest may be cognitive representation of needs; it may guide evaluation of self and others and comparisons of self with others. It may serve adjutive, ego-defence, knowledge and self-actualisation functions. But interest is obviously a narrower concept than value. It cannot be classified as an idealised mode of behaviour or end states of existence. It would be difficult to argue that an interest is a standard or that it has an 'ought' character. It would, moreover, be difficult to defend the proposition that interests men have are relatively small in number. Interest seem to resemble attitude more than values, representing a favourable or unfavourable attitude towards certain objects or activities.

**Value orientation and classification.**

Value orientations can be referred to as dimensions and configurations taken by values of groups of individuals. Several methods have been adopted for classifying them.

(a) Values are classified according to their conduct as theoretical, social, economical, aesthetic, religious and political.

(b) According to operationality, they are classified as assertive and operative values.

(c) According to their generality, they are classified as
thematic and specific

(d) According to modality, they are classified as positive or negative.

(e) According to their intensity, they are classified as normative and preferential.

(f) According to dimensionality, they are classified as 'terminal' and 'instrumental'.

(g) According to content, they are classified as cognitive and normal.

(h) According to explicitness, they are classified as explicit and implicit.

Most of the insight into value research has been provided by Milton Rokeach. He had defined values as 'an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end states of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end states of existence.'

Values are taught and learned in isolation from other values in the sense that they are acquired or learned in isolation from other values and any conception of value will be fruitful, if it is able to account for the enduring character of values, as well as their changing character. Value is an abstract ideal, positive or negative, not tied to any situation or object but transcendentally guide action across specific situations beyond immediate
goals towards more ultimate end states.

Behaviours that do not implicate specific mode of behaviour or end states i.e. importance for a certain kind of food are not qualified to be labelled as a value. Value is a special kind of preference i.e. preference for specific mode of conduct over the opposite or preference for end state over the other.

Although a person may possess tens, hundreds or thousands of beliefs and thousands of attitudes, he may possess only a fewer values, thus making value concept more economical tool for explain-behaviour. Values are a result of all the cultural, institutional and personal forces that act upon a person throughout his lifetime.

Bulk of the marketing and consumer researches conducted to examine the relationship between values of consumers and their consumption behaviour have been influenced by the work of Milton Rokeach.

Values exist at two levels. At the higher level, they are more generalised, abstract, person centered representing preferred mode of conduct or preferred goals, enduring and widely held and


... "Beliefs, attitude and values" 1968 -

San Francisco, Jossey Bass.
relatively fewer in number based on which consumers can be group-
ed. For example, such values can be labelled as honesty, loving
status, prestige, cooperation etc., At the lower level, they are
found to exist in the form of concrete product attributes. For
example, such values can be labelled as durability, freshness,
sweetness etc.,

'CONSUMER VALUES' here refer to preferred modes of conduct
or preferred goals, person centered, more abstract in nature,
enduring and widely held and relatively fewer in number.

Based on the classification scheme of Milton Rokach, it had
also been subsequently postulated that terminal values are more
abstract and guide product class decisions, while instrumental
values guide choice of a particular brand within a given product
class and concrete attributes.5

Although in a study conducted among 120 women householders
who are considering the purchase of one or more of nine durables
to examine the relationship between personal values and their
product class and brand choice behaviour, it had been found that
terminal values guide product class decisions and instrumental
values guide brand choice behaviour in a product class.6

6. Alfred Boote A.S. "An exploratory investigation of the roles
of needs and personal values" in the 'Theory of buyer beha-
viour" Unpublished doctoral dissertation - Columbia University
It was subsequently found in another study that a strict relationship of personal values to class decisions and instrumental values to brand preference within a product class is not supported. 7

However, it had been observed that personal values of consumers are much more strongly related to their choice of product class/service decisions than their choice of a particular brand within a given product class. 8

Similarly it had also been pointed out that personal values affect consumer's choice of buying/using a product. 9


9. John Howard and Arch Woodside G (1984) "Personal values affecting consumer psychology" pages 3-11 in 'Personal values and
It had also been found that values are indicators of one's self image.10

It is therefore felt, that when consumer values are grouped based on their value orientations, the set of values held by these groups may also reflect their value images and consequently what products they are showing importance will stand for their images.

In recent years, there had been a growing interest among the market and consumer researchers to construct product inventories, which consist of wide range of products to examine the influence of personal values of consumers on the consumption behaviour on the premise that personal values are reflected in consumer's consumption patterns.11

It is also felt that identifying what products consumers

  Frank Killian Schulmann (1973) "Personal values and consumer behaviour" Unpublished dissertation-University of Illinois.
bought in the past and are currently using can serve as predictors for future buying decisions of consumers.

While examining the relationship between personal values of consumers and their behaviour, the influence of antecedent variable is also taken into account because they shape values to a certain extent.

Marketing and consumer researchers have also taken into consideration the influence of variables like age, sex, ethical background, geographical background etc., while examining the relationship between values of consumers and their behaviour. Empirical evidence in this aspect has been cited already in Chapter II (Pages 45-50).

A brief survey of some of the studies conducted to identify the product consumption patterns of Indian consumers reveal that income is a major determinant of consumption patterns and is the purchasing power of consumers, especially in a developing country like India.

A few studies conducted to examine the relationship between value orientations and income have found marked differences in the value orientations among respondents falling in diverse socio-economic levels.


13. Robert E.Pitts "Value group analysis of cultural values in heterogeneous population" Jl.of Social psychology 1981(115) Pp.104-12
However the influence of income has received little attention so far.

Since socio-economic status shapes values, which reflect in the purchase and usage of products, which consumers consider important, value orientations may also determine the way in which income is used by consumers who are falling in different income groups. It had also been noted that what products consumers bought and use will also reflect their usage of income.

The basic assumption leading to the study is that, being shaped by socio-economic status, value orientations are reflected in purchase/usage of products, which consumers consider important and which stand for their value images. Values may also determine the way in which income is used especially the discretionary income in the purchase/usage of products which are more than basic necessities of life. Values are also reflections of society and culture.

When conducting value surveys, the researchers usually construct value profile, which consist of series of statements reflecting the

Km. Shagufta Hafees and Km. Roshma Hafees "Socio-economic status as determinants of values" Indian Journal of Psychology 1982(5) Pages 185-188.


Abdul Kareem and V.S.R.Vijaykumar "Value orientation of college students in relation to socio-stratification" JI.of Psychological
values and the response patterns are elicited through 'agreed/dis-agreed' scale. They also construct value profile consisting of values in the form of concepts and the response pattern elicited through either rank ordered importance or respondents asked to rate each value in terms of importance attached to them.

This study has identified twenty-five values, scanned from previous literature relating to values and operationalised in the form of statements, as it is felt that statements may convey the meaning more clearly than concepts and it also makes the respondent's task much more easier to make response.

The twenty-five values identified and operationalised in the form of statements for the study are detailed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Adaptability</td>
<td>(I can feel at ease even with a stranger)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Appreciativesness</td>
<td>(I do not hesitate to admire notable deeds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Precaution.</td>
<td>(I usually think more than once before making a decision)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Cleanliness</td>
<td>(My personal cleanliness keeps me healthy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Comfort.</td>
<td>(My personal comforts cannot be sacrificed for the sake of others)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Competence.</td>
<td>(I have the skill and ability required for my job).</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Honesty.</td>
<td>(I want to be open and frank in my dealings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Individuality.</td>
<td>(I usually maintain my own opinion even though many others may have a different point of view. )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Harmony.</td>
<td>(I devote great deal of attention to solve conflicts confronted by me. )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Leisure.</td>
<td>(I enjoy rest and relaxation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Loving.</td>
<td>(There are very few people whom I don't like. )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Maturity</td>
<td>(I believe, personal experience is necessary for me for understanding this world. )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Methodical</td>
<td>(I want to be methodical in all my works)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Physical well being</td>
<td>(I am conscious of my physical well being and appearance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Planning</td>
<td>(I always plan my work well in time).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Practicality</td>
<td>(I care more for my work than anything else)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Prestige.</td>
<td>(I try to keep my personal prestige in all respects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Responsible</td>
<td>(I often realize that I have an obligation to help)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
24. Self development
(I am able to realize the potential for improving myself in whatever task I choose to do).

25. Status
(My actions always reflect my social standing).

In recent years, marketing and consumer researchers have begun to group consumer values and identify value segments by using set of values identified IN PRIORI as they can facilitate comparisons more easier. Further human beings can hold more than one value and these values carry different level of abstractions. From marketing perspective also, forming value segments in PRIORI will be helpful as they can be readily identified and interpreted meaningfully.

The study has identified five value orientations for grouping consumer values IN PRIORI as

(i) Functional value orientation
(ii) Social value orientation
(iii) Epistemic value orientation
(iv) Emotional value orientation
(v) Physical value orientation

The above classification scheme was based on the work of Jagdish Sheth N, Barbara Gross and Bruce Newman and has been adopted.

14. P. Novak and Bruce Hacevov "On comparing alternative segmentation schemes" The list of values and Values and life styles" Journal of Consumer Research - 1990
Pages 105-109.
for this study. It is felt that their classification scheme is more suitable for describing the behavioural characteristics of consumers as well.

However, the present study differs from their study, as this study focuses on values of consumers with reference to their behaviour characteristics based on their value orientations, which has received little attention so far. Their study is applicable only to choices that are made by individuals on a systematic basis. Their theoretical procedure is also not applicable to choices that are group or dyadic based (Page 13).

However this study has adopted 'physical orientation' instead of their 'conditional' value construct, as it is more apt for describing the statements relevant in the present study.

The five value orientations proposed for the study contain the following values in them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Functional orientation</td>
<td>1. Hardworking</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Honesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Planning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Practicality</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Self development</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Social orientation</td>
<td>1. Adaptability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Cooperation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Loving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Emotional orientation
1. Appreciativeness
2. Excitement
3. Hospitality
4. Individuality
5. Prestige.

4. Epistemic orientation
1. Prudence
2. Competence
3. Maturity
4. Forethought
5. Methodical.

5. Physical orientation
1. Cleanliness
2. Comfort
3. Harmony
4. Physical well being
5. Leisure.

Some academicians who are experienced in value research were consulted to ensure correctness of the classification of the groups and the statements contained in them, and necessary alterations were made on the suggestions. A brief description of the behavioural characteristics of the respondents in each value orientation is explained below:

1. Functional value orientation. These consumers are more concerned with their work, prefer to work tirelessly and utilise their full potential in whatever task they pursue. They also plan their work well in advance and want to be open and frank in their dealings. They are concerned more with their own work than anything else.
2. **Social value orientation.**

Social oriented consumers are freely interacting with others even with strangers and also adjustable to others. They are enjoying in participating group activities and ensuring that their actions are reflected in their social standing in the society. They often realise their responsibility and obligations to help others and maintain cordial relationship with almost everyone with whom they interact.

3. **Emotional value orientation.**

Emotional oriented consumers are adventurous and prefer to lead a life full of thrills and surprises. They are also having a sense of admiring notable deeds of others and also enjoy themselves by entertaining guests. They are having distinct outlook and opinion in all respects because of their sense of individuality and they also try to preserve their personal prestige in all respects.

4. **Epistemic value orientation.**

Epistemic oriented consumers are more knowledgeable having skills and ability in their field and are competent than others. They are meticulous in following the methods and think more than once before making decision, as they are precautious. They are having thorough knowledge of the implications of their decisions and believe that personal experience is necessary for them for understanding this world.

5. **Physical value orientation.**

Physical oriented consumers are likely to be more concerned
about their physical welfare as they are very conscious about their physical well being and appearance. They also believe that personal cleanliness makes their life healthier. They devote much of their time in solving conflicts and problems for leading a peaceful life. They do not forego their personal comforts under any circumstances for the sake of others. They prefer to have rest and relaxed way of life.

The study had also developed a product inventory to examine the product consumption patterns of consumers which consists of fiftyeight products mostly durable in nature and representing a wide assortment of product classes. These have been scanned from items in store catalogues, contact with businessmen and articles and advertisements in newspapers and magazines.

The respondents were asked to mark the products in the list, which they have actually purchased and are in their existing usage. This is to ensure that consumers mark only those products, which they have actually purchased and are in their usage to avoid mentioning those products which they keep in memory of some one else or might have obtained by tradition, as such products may or may not be used by them. They were also instructed not to mark the products received by them by way of gifts, as they have been presented to them by some others according to their wishes. Similarly consumers’ future level choices are not taken into consideration, although it is felt that future buying decisions can be predicted through knowledge of existing product usage.

The following products have been identified for the study
which are mostly durable in nature.

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Washing machine.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Grinder.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Gas stove.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Pressure cooker.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Ward robe (steel almirah)</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Calculator.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Wall clock.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Sewing machines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Water heater</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Typewriter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Boiler (to heat water)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Water heater (electric)</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Water filter.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Raincoat.</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Air cooler.</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Air conditioner.</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>Blankets (woollen)</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>Emergency lamp.</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>Flask</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>Suit case (Leather)</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>Moulded luggage.</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Torch light.</td>
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<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Television (colour)</td>
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<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Television (Black &amp; white)</td>
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<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Standby power Generator.</td>
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<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Audió cassette recorder</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(tape recorder)</td>
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<td>32.</td>
<td>Video cassette recorder</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(deck)</td>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>Camera.</td>
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<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Playing materials e.g. cartridge board</td>
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<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Novels (English)</td>
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<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Novels (Tamil)</td>
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<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Newspaper (English)</td>
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<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Newspaper (Tamil)</td>
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<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Magazines (English)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>Magazines (Tamil)</td>
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<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>Books (for self improvement)</td>
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<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>Library membership.</td>
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<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>Carpet.</td>
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<td>44.</td>
<td>Sofa bed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>Car.</td>
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<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>Dining table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>Bicycles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>Shoes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
49. Refrigerator
50. Personal computer (PC) (for personal use)
51. Art works (sculptures)
52. Paintings
53. Craft works (handicrafts)
54. Air freshner
55. Cooling eye glass
56. Musical instruments (for personal use)
57. Motor cycles/scooters
58. Koped.

As the study is focussed on the relationship between value orientations and consumers' socio economic status (income) with reference to their product consumption patterns, the income groups are classified as follows:

(i) Those whose monthly family income is Rs. 2000/- and below. Group I.

(ii) Those whose monthly family income is between Rs. 2001/- and Rs. 4000 Group II

(iii) Those whose monthly family income is between Rs. 4001/- and Rs. 6000/- Group III

(iv) Those whose monthly family income is above Rs. 6000/- Group IV.

In order to fulfil the statistical requirements and for having a meaningful analysis and interpretation of results, the income groups are reclassified as follows:

Respondents having monthly family income of Rs. 2000/- and below (Group I) are combined with the next higher income group (Group II) i.e., those having monthly family income between Rs. 2001/-
and Rs. 4000/- The resulting three groups are classified as follows:

(i) Those whose monthly family income
is Rs. 4000/- and below. Lower income.

(ii) Those whose monthly family income
is between Rs. 4001/- and Rs. 6000/- Middle income.

(iii) Those whose monthly family income
is above Rs. 6000/- Higher income.

It is also possible to categorise Indian consumers according to their socio-economic status as lower income, middle income and higher income groups.

The study has also identified and analysed the product consumption patterns of consumers separately according to their income and also according to their value orientations and identified the dominant product consumption patterns by using comparative classification method at both levels. The study had also identified the product consumption patterns of consumers among the three income groups (lower, middle and higher income groups) and how they are distributed across the five value groups emerged in the study to examine the association between value orientations and consumer's income usage and their product consumption patterns.

The association between value orientations and consumer's income usage has been examined through cross classification scheme and
their statistical significance tested through CHI square analysis in a productwise manner.

The predictive power of values on income has been tested through LAMBDA co-efficient method (Goodman and Kruskal 1954)16

The study has not adopted more sophisticated techniques as it is felt that psycho-sociological variables like values do not led themselves to precise measurement procedures.

Implications of the study.

From the academicians point of view, this type of study may help him to better understand the role of consumer values in product consumption patterns.

From marketer's point of view, understanding consumer values may contribute in several ways, as one of the basic objectives of marketing agencies is to segment market and formulate suitable marketing strategy, which enable them to derive competitive selling in the market place to optimise their performances.

Identifying value orientations by grouping consumer values and forming value segments will enable them not only to promote products that stand for consumers' value images but also help them to formulate appropriate advertising appeals that resemble consumers' value images

as it has been observed that communication of values is the heart of advertising.17

Similarly identifying value orientations at the socio-economic level may enlarge the scope of marketing opportunities, as it enables them to incorporate the values of these groups to make the marketing and advertising strategies more effective, interesting and meaningful.