The chapter will provide the details of the research design and methodology used for the study. The statement of the problem will be provided that will be the basis of the research work. Thereafter, the rationale, scope and the objectives of the study will be highlighted along with the hypotheses considered for the study. The research design would cover aspects showing the secondary and primary data collection plans, the manner in which the variables have been operationalized for the study, the sampling process and the proposed data analysis to be undertaken.

3.1 Statement of the problem:
The study intends to find out the demographic profile of the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years, residing in Bengaluru, along with their product and psychological antecedents that are likely to influence conspicuous consumption for status indication. The study will determine the perception that the youth members have towards different aspects of lifestyle products and services like the status indicative potential of the item(s), the extent of past purchases made from the categories, the likelihood of participating in decision making for the purchase of the item(s) in the future, the importance of brand names of the lifestyle item(s), the extent of importance given to price considerations and the importance of situational factors of use of the items. The outcome of the study is expected to contribute to the consumer behaviour domain, provide managerial insights for marketing lifestyle products & services and finally to provide information about the urban Indian youth that may help in the formulation of youth centric policies for social welfare and benefit.

The conceptual framework that forms the basis of the research work is given in Figure 3.1. The internal factors that are likely to influence the urban Indian youth to participate in conspicuous consumption for status indication purpose is given on the left side of the diagram. The right side of the Figure 3.1 shows the external factors which are the different aspects of the lifestyle products and services considered for the study. Thus the product and psychological antecedents are the main aspects that will be investigated to understand the perceptions and aspirations among the urban Indian youth (aged 18-25 years and residing in Bengaluru) that are likely to influence their conspicuous consumption. The study considers different types of questions to find out the internal and external factors of the proposed research model as shown in Figure 3.1.
The internal factors of the research model are assumed to be composed of both the perceptual and attitudinal elements of the urban Indian youth. The perception of the urban Indian youth regarding their status orientation, materialistic tendencies and interest towards status consumption are the three psychological aspects that are the focus of the study. The attitude of the youth towards lifestyle products and services form the product related antecedents of the study. The demographic variables are also an important aspect of the study. The external factors of the study aims to understand the perception that the urban Indian youth have towards different categories of lifestyle items present in the market. Some of the aspects being considered for the study are, the status indicative potential of the item(s), the extent of purchases made from the categories by their households, the likelihood of their influence in decision making for the purchase of the item(s) in the next 1-5 years, the importance they gave to the brand names, importance of price considerations and their perceived importance for the situational factors of use. There are ten product categories chosen for the study that included mobile phones, clothing,
watches, cosmetics, television, motorbikes, air conditioners, branded laptops/tablets, personal computers and cars. Six categories from the services sector were chosen for the study that included foreign travel, educational qualifications attained, retail stores, eating out at restaurants considered expensive, club memberships and vacations taken on weekends. The lifestyle items considered for the study were finalized after detailed group discussions with around thirty youth members across the city who were from the same age group as the target segment of the study.

3.2 The Rationale for the study:
Consumer behaviour is generally considered to be based on a generalized stimulus response model where several intervening variables interact between stimulus and response. Three major kinds of variables affect consumer behaviour, namely the stimulus, the intervening variables and the response variables. Stimulus variables like human needs, marketers’ offers and various marketing communication mix elements influence individuals both internally and externally respectively. Intervening variables like attitudes, knowledge, mood, values etc. affect the interplay of stimulus and response variables. Response variables result in the mental and physical reactions of individuals who are influenced by the stimulus variables. In many cases when it becomes a challenge to determine and observe the factors and variables that are likely to affect consumer behaviour based on the nature of variables involved e.g. knowledge, motives, learning and perceptions which may be difficult to observe and interpret. Thus there is always the scope to undertake different research studies that could determine the extent of influence that different variables may have in influencing consumer behaviour in different contexts and time frames (Kumar 2009).

The antecedent factors chosen for the study are important from the marketing management point of view as the youth chosen for this study who are in the age group of 18-25 years are expected to become financially independent in the next three to five years when they are likely to enter the workforce with either jobs or starting their own entrepreneurial ventures. The urban Indian youth of the 18-25 years thus will become active consumers who are expected to participate more actively in the purchase and consumption of a variety of products and services throughout their different life stages.
An important aspect of consumer behaviour that has been considered to extend the economic function of consumption is the motivation to use the symbolic value of products for signaling wealth & social status (Veblen 1899; Levy 1959; Mason 1982; Chaudhuri & Majumdar 2006; Bijapurkar 2013). In the Indian context, consumption for signaling social mobility and success has been found to be prevalent among the immigrant population moving across states in the lower socio economic segments (Bijapurkar 2013). Bijapurkar illustrates how possessions and items of consumption of the immigrants are likely to be used to indicate his success and movement up in the social rank. This behaviour was similar to what was seen among the earlier generations of Indian immigrants in the United Kingdom (U.K) where the consumption of items indicated the standard of living. Thus consumption of goods and services are likely to be considered for signaling success and social mobility. According to Bijapurkar, an average IIM graduate also uses consumption to signal success, though not social mobility. The consumption agenda of the upper-middle-class Indians, according to Bijapurkar, is also about ‘signaling success’. The signals are also supposed to be varying depending ‘on what the peer group is doing’, such that consumption could mean ‘second homes’, ‘trips to Disney land with the kids’, buying home theatres, purchasing cars, going to spas and taking exotic holidays etc. that are likely to indicate ‘I am doing better than you’, to their reference groups (Bijapurkar 2013, p.157).

Consumption of products and services for showcasing status and prestige has been an important aspect of consumer decision making across generational cohorts (Eastman & Liu 2012). It is in this perspective that there is a curiosity to find the relevant antecedents and consequences of status and conspicuous consumption among the urban Indian youth for lifestyle products and services. It also becomes important to understand the factors that can be used to describe and predict the likelihood of conspicuous consumption among the urban Indian youth in the future. Thus the research focuses on finding the factors affecting conspicuous consumption of lifestyle products and services among the urban Indian youth in Bengaluru.

3.3 Scope of the research:

The consumption behaviour among the Indian youth has been found to differ across linguistic and sub cultural contexts (Byoungho & Junghwa 2013, IBEF). The youth living across the
country are expected to be influenced by their traditional values, exposure to the effects of globalization and their economic background. Thus the plurality of Indian consumers pose a challenge to marketers who wish to gain sustainable competitive advantage for their offers in the market. In the journey to gain an understanding of the Indian youth consumers, the present research focuses on deriving insights about the psychological and product antecedents that are likely to affect conspicuous consumption of lifestyle items among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age category of 18-25 years, residing in Bengaluru.

3.4 The objectives of the study:
The research objectives of the study will focus on finding out the demographics, attitudinal and behavioural pattern that affect the conspicuous consumption of the urban Indian youth with respect to lifestyle products and services. The broad objectives of the study may be stated as follows:

i. To demonstrate the perceptions of the urban Indian youth regarding lifestyle items and to find out the significant demographic variables that are significantly associated with the responses.

ii. To find out the levels of status orientation, materialism and status consumption among the urban Indian youth and identify the significant demographic variables that affect the responses.

iii. To illustrate the lifestyle orientations of the urban Indian youth clusters.

iv. To determine the variables that are likely to influence conspicuous consumption among the urban Indian youth.

v. To provide suggestions and recommendations based on the theoretical insights drawn from the outcome of the research study.

The above five objectives are expected to provide unique insights about the perceptions and attitudes of the urban Indian youth regarding conspicuous consumption for status indication purposes. The study will provide contributions for the consumer behaviour domain, the
marketing management of lifestyle offers and providing a basis for formulating policy initiatives for youth welfare and benefits.

3.5 Research Questions & Hypotheses:

The objectives of the study are the basis upon which the research hypotheses of the study are formulated. Review of literature on conspicuous consumption and status consumption illustrate the importance of various attitudinal variables like traditional status orientation, modern status orientation, materialism etc. that affect conspicuous consumption for status. Based on the objectives of the study the following research hypotheses have been formulated for the study.

The following sections highlight the objectives of the study and the corresponding hypotheses that have been proposed for the work.

3.5.1 Objective No.1: To demonstrate the perception of the urban Indian youth regarding lifestyle items and to find out the demographic variables that are significantly associated with the responses.

Research outcomes have revealed that it is important to determine the products that are perceived to be status indicators (Mason 1992). Each society and culture is likely to illustrate different patterns of product preference patterns regarding products that can be used to display and indicate status. The six research questions that have been framed are given hereafter:

a. RQ1 regarding the status indicative potential of the lifestyle items:

For the purpose of the present study the following categories of sixteen lifestyle items have been considered for the study as is shown in the questionnaire in the annexure. Lifestyle products and services are considered to be the collection of items that consumers purchase and use as part of leading their lives. Conspicuous consumption of lifestyle products and services has the potential of being used to show status to others. The items chosen for the study include sixteen categories of products and services. The research question that is relevant on this perspective is to enquire as to which of the lifestyle products and services are indicative of status. All the ten categories of the lifestyle products listed for the study are conspicuous and tangible and have the potential to be used to signal status. Six of the lifestyle products like mobile phones, clothes, watches,
motorbikes, branded laptops/tablets and cars can be used conspicuously in the public domain. Hence it will be interesting to understand the perception that the youth have towards them regarding their status indicative aspect. The intangible nature of services makes them less helpful for indicating status as compared to products. However, six categories of services have been considered for the study that may have the potential to indicate status of those using or patronizing them. In this context it would be interesting to find out the perception of the Indian youth as to which of the services categories are indicative of status. The research question (RQ) that is relevant for this investigation may be stated as:

The research hypotheses that become important for understanding the status indicative potential for the listed lifestyle products and services can be stated as follows:

- **RQ1: Which lifestyle items are considered to be status indicators?**

  The hypothesis proposed for RQ1 may be stated as:

  ➢ **H1:** Most of the lifestyle items will be perceived to be indicative of status.

- **Using Chi Square goodness of fit test: To find the demographic variables that are significantly associated with the status indicative response.**

**Hypothesis testing:**

The information will be found with the help of Chi square goodness of fit test. For each of the lifestyle item considered for the study, chi square test will be done with the following assumption of null and alternate hypothesis:

  ➢ **H0:** There is no significant association between the demographic variable and the response regarding the status indicative potential of the lifestyle item.

  The alternate hypothesis will be:

  ➢ **H1:** There is a significant association between the demographic variable and the response regarding the status indicative potential of the lifestyle item.
The outcome of the chi square test will reveal the lifestyle items for which there are significant associations between the youth clusters and their response regarding the status indicative potential of the lifestyle item(s).

As the study primarily aims to understand the conspicuous consumption of lifestyle items among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru, hence chi square tests will be done to determine which of the demographic variables, besides gender, have a statistically significant association with the status indicative response towards the listed lifestyle items mentioned in the study. For each demographic variable and a lifestyle item the null hypothesis for the chi square test will be assumed to be that:

- H0: There is no significant association between the demographic variable and the response regarding the status indicative potential of the lifestyle item.

The alternate hypothesis will be:

- H1: There is a significant association between the demographic variable and the response regarding the status indicative potential of the lifestyle item.

b. RQ2: Purchase of Lifestyle products and services in the last one year:

The purchase behaviour of consumers is an indication of the choice and preference made by the consumer for a product or service category. Consumer behaviour of individuals has been considered to be an aspect of study that considers both the cognitive and the physical processes that individuals engage in when trying to acquire, evaluate, use and dispose goods and services (Della Bitta 2002). Thus the study of conspicuous consumption will be incomplete if the list of those lifestyle products and services are not ascertained which have actually been purchased in the households of the respondents. The second research question deals with finding out the lifestyle item(s) that have been purchased by the households of the urban Indian youth. The research question may be stated as:

- RQ2: Which lifestyle item has been purchased by the urban Indian youth in their household in the past one year?

The research hypothesis for RQ2 may be stated as:
H2: Most of the lifestyle products and services would have been purchased by the urban Indian youth across clusters.

b. Using Chi square test to find out if gender is significantly associated with the response regarding past purchase.

Chi square test will be done with the following assumption of null and alternate hypothesis:

H0: There is no significant association between the gender of the urban Indian youth and their response regarding past purchase.

The alternate hypothesis will be:

H1: There is a significant association between the gender of the urban Indian youth and their response regarding past purchase.

The outcome of the chi square tests would be able to reveal the lifestyle items for which there are significant associations between the youth clusters and their response regarding the future likelihood of participating in decision making for purchase of the lifestyle item.

c. RQ3: Likelihood of participating in decision making for the purchase of lifestyle products and services in the next 1-5 years:

Purchase intention of lifestyle products and services will be able to indicate the demand from the urban Indian youth. Effective marketing strategies can be formulated to attract the consumer segment with relevant and appropriate brand communications. The research question may be stated as:

RQ3: For which of the lifestyle items are the urban Indian youth likely to participate in decision making for purchase in the next 1-5 years?

The research hypothesis for RQ3 may be stated as:

H3: Most of the Indian youth is expected to participate in decision making to purchase lifestyle products and services in the next 1-5 years.
d. Using Chi square test to find if gender is significantly associated with the likelihood of decision making for purchase of the lifestyle item(s) in the next 1-5 years.

Chi square test will be used. For each of the lifestyle item considered for the study, chi square test will be done with the following assumption of null and alternate hypothesis:

- \( H_0 \): There is no significant association between the gender of the urban Indian youth and their response towards the future likelihood of participating in decision making for purchase of the lifestyle item.

The alternate hypothesis will be:

- \( H_1 \): There is a significant association between the gender of the urban Indian youth and their response towards the future likelihood of participating in decision making for purchase of the lifestyle item.

The outcome of the chi square tests would be able to reveal the lifestyle items for which there are significant associations between the youth clusters and their response regarding the future likelihood of participating in decision making for purchase of the lifestyle item.

e. RQ 4: Importance of brand name.

It has been identified in a lot of seminal works that culture is one of the major factors affecting consumer behaviour (Duesenberry 1949). It was also deciphered that products and services are consumed within a culturally defined needs and wants structure and also in a culturally compatible manner. Providing abstract dimensions to a brand to increase its evaluation of intrinsic attributes to enhance the probability of consumer choice and preference has been considered to be an important aspect of adding value to a product (Levy 1959; Zeithaml 1988, O’Cass 2002). Brand names are important for status seeking consumer behaviour (Mason 1992). Research work has highlighted how products are purchased both for their personal and social meanings besides their functional benefits (Loudon & Della Bitta 2002). Consumer perception of brands across the emotional, social, quality/performance and price/value for money has been considered important in evaluating brands for purchase (Sweeney & Soutar 2001). Brand symbolism has been considered to be an important influence affecting youth consumer behavior.
Brand status imagery has been found to be an important consideration factor amongst youth for selecting brands for status and conspicuous consumption (O’Cass 2002). In the questionnaire respondents were asked if they felt branding was important for the chosen lifestyle products & services. Responses were collected on nominal scale. With the rise of post-modernism the neo-classical mindset of rationality dominating purchase considerations underwent a change in favor of symbolism and image dimensions being important considerations in the consumption of products with self and social identity dimensions (Chaudhuri 2006). The self concept of consumers is dynamically affected by the consumption choices in the postmodern consumer culture (Elliot 2010). Thus brand symbolism attained importance and was considered to be an important aspect of branding a product (Levy 1959). Marketers in India can greatly benefit from the insights of young consumers regarding how they perceive branding so that effective brand concepts can be generated for optimized and effective brand equity. The brand is important for a consumer as the brand name is likely to reduce the risk perception from a product and provide a scope for making a safe choice. Conspicuous consumption has been to be affected by status considerations which are determined by product and brand choices and are important considerations for positioning aspects of products (Chaudhuri 2010). The conspicuity and the inconspicuous aspects of consumption are relevant in the contemporary business and social context. It has been found that besides socio-psychological factors, brand antecedents significantly influences status and conspicuous consumption ((Levy 1959; O’Cass 2002; Kumar 2009; Shukla 2008, 2010, Narang 2011). The research question may thus be stated as:

RQ4: For which lifestyle item(s) is brand name an important aspect of purchase consideration among the urban Indian youth?

For the research question, RQ4 it is hypothesized that:

H4: Brand names are likely to be considered important for purchase consideration of lifestyle products and services among the urban Indian youth.

f. Using Chi square test to find if gender is significantly associated with the response regarding the importance of brand name.
It will be relevant to find if the gender of the urban Indian youth is significantly associated with their response regarding the importance of brand name as an important purchase consideration for lifestyle products and services.

Chi square test will be conducted and tested at 95% confidence level. For each of the lifestyle item considered for the study, chi square test will be done with the following assumption of null and alternate hypothesis:

- **H0:** There is no significant association between the gender of the urban Indian youth and their response regarding the importance of brand name being an important consideration for the purchase of lifestyle products and services.

- **H1:** There is a significant association between the gender of the urban Indian youth and their response regarding the importance of brand name being an important consideration for the purchase of lifestyle products and services.

The alternate hypothesis will be:

- **H1:** There is a significant association between the gender of the urban Indian youth and their response regarding the importance of brand name being an important consideration for the purchase of lifestyle products and services.

### g. RQ5: Importance of price.

Economic capital was one of the resources considered to be important for conspicuous consumption, besides social and cultural factors. It was also found that cultural capital with appropriate taste and preferences need not always necessitate expensive prices to be factors that affected a product choice in communicating conspicuous consumption. This is in contrast to the seminal writings of Veblen in the subject of conspicuous consumption where he reiterated the aspect of conspicuous consumption having the potential to indicate pecuniary strength basis affordability of relatively expensive products that could indicate status and prestige of the consumer in their social context. Price is an important aspect of status consumption. Conspicuous consumption is based on the display of goods that are costly and hence have ‘display value’ (Veblen 1899; Mason 1992). Research has also highlighted how pricing can be one of the factors that endow brands with potential for status and conspicuous consumption (O’Cass 2002). Premium pricing has been seen as one of the factors endowing products with capacity for status and conspicuous consumption. Status
signaling, brand prominence and pricing studies have revealed that there could be a set of consumers who aspire for conspicuous consumption but may not have the necessary economic capacity to afford the premium prices of status products. Indian culture has been considered to be responsible to influence frugal behaviour (Maxwell 2001). Consumers exhibit price sensitivity for various product categories (Maxwell 2001, Bharadwaj et al. 2005, Ramachandran 2000). Counterfeit products get a chance to be marketed by opportunistic marketers because of the prevalence and inherent tendency of consumers to conspicuously consume expensive products that are popularly thought to signal higher status. Indian youth have been found to be affected by interpersonal influence that also makes them sensitive to price (Gupta 2011). Branding has been considered to be important, so as to be able to charge premium prices for status brands consumed conspicuously by consumers (Veblen 1899; Mason 1984, 1992; Loudon & Bitta 2002; Assael 2005; Bijapurkar 2004; Shukla 2010; Fitchett 2012). The research question that may be framed for the enquiry for the importance of price for purchase of lifestyle products and services may be stated as:

➢ **RQ5: For which lifestyle item(s) is price an important aspect of purchase consideration among the urban Indian youth?**

The hypothesis for RQ5 may be stated as given below:

➢ **H5: Price will be an important aspect of purchase consideration for most of the lifestyle products and services.**

The final aspect regarding the importance of situational factors of use of lifestyle products and services are discussed next.

> **h. Using Chi square test to find if gender is significantly associated with the response regarding importance of price:**

The study aims to finding if the gender of the youth is significantly associated with the response of considering price as an important aspect of purchase consideration for lifestyle
products and services. Chi square test will be done for each of the lifestyle item considered for the study and tested at 95% confidence level. The null hypothesis will be stated as:

- \( H_0: \) There is no significant association between the gender of the urban Indian youth and their response regarding the importance of price being an important consideration for the purchase of lifestyle products and services.

The alternate hypothesis will be:

- \( H_1: \) There is a significant association between the gender of the urban Indian youth and their response regarding the importance of price being an important consideration for the purchase of lifestyle products and services.

i. **RQ6: Importance of situational factors of use.**

Ritualized activities that are expressive and symbolic, occurring in a fixed episodic sequence and repeatable over time are some of the important cultural manifestations determining consumer behaviour (Rook 1985). Ritual behaviour significantly affects consumer behaviour of acquiring, evaluating, using and disposing of goods and services like media, household products and services, grooming services, religious activities, gifting, business dealings, eating etc. (Wright & Snow 1980). Material aspects of culture pertains to different types of products and services like automobiles, tools, roads and tools etc., while the non material aspects of culture pertain to how consumers shop, use and consume products within their culture having different beliefs, ideas and customs etc. Cultural values interact with emotional needs to influence consumer behaviour (Gershmann 1988). Some of the cultural values that have been found to influence consumer behaviour arise from the conceptual influence of the idea of ‘community’, ‘traditions’ and ‘responsibility’ that consumers infer from their cultural context. Some of the manifestations of culture are to be found in the accepted norms of ‘national character’ and the silent language of gesture, posture, food and drink references etc. Some of the important situational factors that have been found important for consumer behaviour are, the time available for shopping and the store knowledge that consumer have which are likely to affect the purchases of grocery products (Park et al. 1989; Anic & Radas 2006). Situational factors of purchase, shopping and consumption are considered important for consumer decision making (Assael 2005) In the recent
times with the rise of online shopping some of the situational factors that have influenced consumers to do online shopping are the life stage of having a baby or having health problems. Retail store format choice has also been found to be influenced by the physical surroundings, task definition, perceived risk, temporal aspects, social interactions and experiences of the consumer (Jayasankaraprasad 2010). Contextual and situational factors have been found to affect the tendency of consumers in purchasing products and services (Sankaran & Demangeot 2011; Anic & Radas 2006). Thus it has been established from the literature review from the time of Veblen that situational antecedents influence conspicuous consumption of goods to signal status and wealth among and across social classes (Veblen 1899; Assael 2005; Bijapurkar 2004; Shukla 2008, 2010). The research question that may be framed for finding out the perception of the urban Indian youth regarding the situational factors of use of the lifestyle item(s) for purchases consideration are:

- **RQ6:** For which lifestyle item(s) is the situational factor of use an important aspect of purchase consideration among the urban Indian youth?

Thus it is hypothesized that:

- **H6:** Situational factors of use is likely to be an important aspect of purchase consideration for most of the lifestyle products and services.

**j. Using Chi square test to find if gender is significantly associated with the response regarding the importance of situational factors of use.**

It will also be imperative to find if the gender of the urban Indian youth is significantly associated with their response regarding the importance of situational factors of use of lifestyle products and services being an important aspect of purchase consideration. Chi square test will be conducted and tested at 95% confidence level. The null hypothesis will be assumed to be:

- **H0:** There is no significant association between the gender of the urban Indian youth and their response regarding the importance of situational factors being an important consideration for the purchase of lifestyle products and services.

The alternate hypothesis will be:
H1: There is a significant association between the gender of the urban Indian youth and their response regarding the importance of situational factors being an important consideration for the purchase of lifestyle products and services.

3.5.2 Objective No.2: To find out the levels of status orientation, materialism and status consumption among the urban Indian youth and identify the significant demographic variables that affect their responses.

The levels of the lifestyle orientations of the urban Indian youth will be measured using the scales derived from the review of literature. Review of literature revealed research facts that highlighted that conspicuous consumption for status signaling is likely to be affected by status orientation (O’Cass 2002; Mai & Tambyah 2011), materialism (Richins & Dawson 1996; Mai & Tambyah 2011) and status consumption (Eastman *et al.* 1997; Mai & Tambyah 2011). The three scales of status orientation, materialism and status consumption have been used for the study and formed the second part of the questionnaire (please refer the questionnaire enclosed in the annexure).

- **Status Orientation:**

Status orientation is considered to be an important factor for conspicuous consumption for status (Tambyah *et al.* 2009, Mai & Tambyah 2011). For the purpose of the present study it was important to find the status orientation of the Indian youth in Bangalore for conspicuously consuming lifestyle products and services for status. Since status orientation construct has been considered with two sub-components i.e. the traditional status orientation (TSO) that emphasizes traditional status symbols before economic transition, and the modern status orientation (MSO) that gives importance to modern status symbols in the present times, post the economic transition. Thus modern status orientation is expected to positively influence conspicuous consumption for reflecting status (Mai & Tambyah 2011, O’Cass 2002).

Status orientation of the youth respondents chosen for the study was researched on the aspects pertaining to the traditional status orientation and modern status orientation of the respondents using Likert scaled questionnaire with responses in the range from ‘Strongly Disagree’,
‘Disagree’, ‘Neither Agree nor Disagree’, ‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly Agree’ (Mai & Tambyah 2011). The urban Indian youth in Bengaluru is expected to have low level of traditional status orientation as the city has developed immensely with people migrating to the city from various parts of India to pursue educational, professional and entrepreneurial opportunities. Bengaluru is also known as the Silicon Valley of the country and thus the urban Indian youth of 18-25 years are thus expected to be exposed to lots of marketing communication, brand names and products that indicate status and prestige of the possessors. Hence the urban Indian youth is expected to be status oriented. The research question for the study of the status orientation pattern of the urban Indian youth will be studied on the following two aspects:

- Traditional status orientation and
- Modern status orientation

**Finding the level of Traditional Status Orientation:**

The hypotheses for finding out the level of traditional status orientation may be stated as:

- *RQ7a: What is the level of traditional status orientation among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years, residing in Bengaluru?*

The hypothesis for RQ7a may be stated as:

- *H7a: The urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru will have low levels of traditional status orientation.*

**To find out if gender differences affect the mean TSO ratings:**

To determine if the differences in the mean ratings of traditional status orientation (TSO) are significantly different across young men & women, the following hypothesis was proposed:

- *RQ7b: Is there a significant difference in the mean ratings of traditional status orientation levels among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years, based on their gender?*
The hypothesis would be tested with the independent sample t-test where the null hypothesis would be:

- \( H_0: \text{There will be no difference in the mean ratings of traditional status orientation among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru based on their gender.} \)

The alternate hypothesis that will be accepted on the rejection of the null hypothesis would be:

- \( H_1: \text{There will be significant differences in the mean ratings of traditional status orientation among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru based on their gender.} \)

**Finding the level of Modern Status Orientation:**

The research question for determining the level of modern status orientation (MSO) among the urban Indian youth may be stated as:

- \( \text{RQ7c: What is the level of modern status orientation among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 year, residing in Bengaluru?} \)

The hypothesis for RQ7c may be stated as:

- \( H_{7c}: \text{The urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru will have high levels of modern status orientation.} \)

**To find out if gender differences affect the differences in the mean MSO ratings:**

To find out if the differences in the mean ratings of modern status orientation are significantly different among the urban Indian men & women, the following hypothesis was proposed:

- \( \text{RQ7d: Is there a significant difference in the mean ratings of modern status orientation among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years, based on their gender?} \)
The hypothesis for answering RQ7d would be tested using the independent sample t-test where the null hypothesis would be:

- \( H_0: \) There will be no difference in the mean ratings of modern status orientation among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru based on their gender.

The alternate hypothesis that will be accepted on the rejection of the null hypothesis would be:

- \( H_1: \) There will be significant difference in the mean ratings of modern status orientation among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru based on their gender.

- **Materialism:**

  The use of self-report measures was found to be useful for studying materialism and have been used for quantitative consumer research studies (Richins & Dawson 1992; Richins 2004; Mai & Tambyah 2011). Materialism has been considered to be a personality trait with three subcomponents of success, centrality and happiness factors. The Materialism scale (Richins & Dawson 1992; Richins 2004; Mai & Tambyah 2011, Kasser et al. 2013) measures materialistic tendencies leading to conspicuous consumption for status. The subcomponent of success has been considered to be an important consideration for consumers who consider success in life to be important and for whom material objects are potential indicators of success and achievement in life. The subcomponent of centrality indicates the extent to which one places acquisition of possessions at the center of one’s life. The third and last subcomponent of materialism, happiness indicates the belief that possessions are essential to satisfaction and well being in life.

  It was therefore interesting to find have the following research question to understand the extent of the influence of materialism that the urban Indian youth in Bengaluru had towards conspicuous consumption of lifestyle items for indicating status. Consumer preference and choice of brands have been evaluated not only from the economic and functional aspect but also for the psychological benefits (Zeithaml 1988). Marketing firms have focused on delivering
quality in their market offerings through the brands that are marketed. Consumers evaluate different brands on different aspects of consumer value ranging from emotional, social, quality/performance and price/value for money (Sweeney & Soutar 2001). Materialism has been found to influence choice of products and is a personality trait that comprises an important aspect of psychographic determinant for status and conspicuous consumption of brands to signal status and wealth (O’Cass 2002; Shukla 2010; Narang 2011, Mai & Tambyah 2011). Materialism as a construct was measured on centrality, success and happiness sub constructs using questions where responses were captured on a five point Likert scale measuring responses across the spectrum ranging from ‘Strongly Disagree’, ‘Disagree’, ‘Neither Agree nor Disagree’, ‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly Agree’. Materialism has been found to be linked for achieving social status by acquiring goods among US college students (Eastman et al. 1999, Watson, 2003, Kasser et al. 2013). Materialism has been considered as a personality characteristic and value guiding focus on making money, having possessions and considering things as a means to achieve status and happiness in life (Goldsmith 2012). The research question for this aspect of enquiry in the study has been structured as:

- RQ8a: What is the level of materialism among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru?

To answer the above research question the hypotheses for RQ8 may be stated as:

- H8a: Urban Indian youth in the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru will show high levels of materialism.

It was intended to determine if the levels of materialism varied across the gender categories of the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru. The research question that will be used for the study will be:

- RQ8b: Is there a significant difference in the mean ratings of materialism among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years, based on their gender?
The hypothesis will be tested using the independent sample t-test where the null hypothesis may be considered as:

- **H0**: There will be no difference in the mean ratings of materialism among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru based on their gender.

The alternate hypothesis that will be accepted on the rejection of the null hypothesis is:

- **H1**: There will be significant difference in the mean ratings of materialism among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru based on their gender.

---

**Status consumption tendencies:**

Lifestyle products and services are used as part of daily lives for both hedonic and utilitarian values. The capability of lifestyle products and services to indicate status will motivate consumers who would like to purchase products and services that can reflect their status. Questions were also asked to understand respondents’ predisposition for conspicuously consuming for reflecting status.

Status consumption was measured on a five point Likert scale questions with responses in the range from ‘Strongly Disagree’, ‘Disagree’, ‘Neither Agree nor Disagree’, ‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly Agree’ was also used to capture the status consumption predisposition of the urban Indian youth in Bengaluru for the chosen lifestyle products & services with 5 item questions as used in the research context of a transitional economy (Eastman *et al.* 1999 and Mai & Tambyah 2011). The research question for the study of status consumption pattern of the urban Indian youth in Bengaluru has been framed as:

- **RQ9a**: What is the level of status consumption among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru?

To answer the above research question the hypothesis for RQ9a may be stated as:

- **H9a**: Urban Indian youth in the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru will show high levels of status consumption levels.
To find if gender differences affect the mean status consumption ratings.

It was intended to determine if the levels of status consumption varied across the gender categories of the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru. The research question that will be used for the study will be:

\[ \text{RQ9b: Is there a significant difference in the mean ratings of status consumption levels among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years, based on their gender?} \]

The hypothesis would be tested using the independent sample t-test where the null hypothesis would be:

\[ \text{H0: There will be no difference in the mean ratings of status consumption among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru based on their gender.} \]

The alternate hypothesis that will be accepted on the rejection of the null hypothesis would be:

\[ \text{H1: There will be significant difference in the mean ratings of status consumption among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru based on their gender.} \]

\[ \text{One-way ANOVA of Demographic variables & Mean Ratings of Status Consumption.} \]

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) will be conducted to find out which demographic variable(s) are significantly associated with the differences in the mean ratings of the status orientation, materialism and status consumption scale. The research question for the enquiry may be stated as:

\[ \text{RQ10: Which are the significant demographic variables, (except gender) that influence the differences in the mean ratings of status consumption among the urban Indian youth in the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru.} \]

One-way ANOVA will be conducted to get the answer to RQ10. Each of the demographic variables (except gender) will be considered to be a factor for the analysis. For each demographic variable being considered for ANOVA, the null hypothesis will be assumed to be:
- **H0**: The mean ratings of status consumption are the same for all the categories of the demographic variable.

The alternate hypothesis would be:

- **H1**: The mean ratings are different across the demographic variable categories.

### 3.5.3 Objective No.3: To illustrate the lifestyle orientations of the urban Indian youth clusters.

The variables used for identifying customer segmentation studies are the geographic, demographic, psychographic and behavioural aspects. The demographic segmentation of customer markets remain the fundamental and one of the most important aspect of consumer and market study among consumer behaviour researchers, marketing practitioners and policy makers of the government. The demographic variables are an important and basis aspect of customer segmentation. Some of the demographic variables that are commonly used to profile consumer segments are age, gender, income, occupation, nationality, religion, race, family size, family life cycle and education level (Kotler 2013). Demographic and psychographic variables can together form a comprehensive profile of customer segments rather than using only the geographic or demographic variables of segmentation. As Indian is expected to reap benefits from its ‘demographic dividend’, so the demographic profiling of the urban Indian youth becomes an important aspect of consumer study that will contribute to the knowledge of consumer behaviour in this part of the emerging market, help marketing professionals and provide inputs to policy makers focusing on the youth population. The following research question will help in proceeding to identify the different youth segments in the market.

The research question relevant for the pursuit of understanding the characteristics of the youth clusters may be stated as:

- **RQ1**: Are there distinctive clusters of youth segments to be found among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru?

The hypothesis that will proposed for RQ1 may be stated as:
There will be distinct clusters of urban youth segments that may be identified among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru.

The results of the demographic characteristics of the urban Indian youth respondents surveyed for the study will be shown in the fourth chapter.

Marketing management is about addressing the needs and wants of customers. Segmentation, targeting and positioning (STP) has been considered the cornerstone of strategic marketing that underlies every marketing effort (Levitt 1975; Aaker 1991, 1996; Yankelovich & Meer 2006; Bijapurkar 2012; Kotler 2013). Segmentation attains importance as without understanding the nature of heterogeneity in the market place, it would be a naïve endeavour to attempt attracting customers assuming that there is homogeneity in consumer perception, attitudes and aspirations. Global operations of marketers have often forced them to find the local relevance of their products and services in order to appropriately establish a connection with the local customer groups in order to fulfill their needs and wants. Globalization has ushered in connectivity, convergence, and deregulation and enhancing competitive intensity (Dobbs et al. 2012; Bijapurkar 2012; Kotler 2013). The market forces of competition are making it imperative for marketers to be able to comprehend their target market who are made up of customers characterized by a variety of demographic and psychographic characteristics that that affect consumer preference and choice behaviours. Identifying the psychographic profiles of customer segments are important as the perceptions, attitudes and aspirations of the members of the segment determine how they are psychologically oriented in their life and what is likely to motivate them. Thus the psychographic profiling of customers is likely to provide a comparatively more detailed and comprehensive understanding of customer segments than only a demographic profiling. The research question pertaining to seek the information relevant for fulfilling the second objective of the study may be stated as:

Cluster analysis will be done to identify distinct groups of youth segments. The scales of materialism, status orientation and status consumption that have been identified from the review of literature will be subject to factor analysis. The outcome of factor analysis will reveal distinct factors containing variables. The variables of the factors will then be used for cluster analysis.
Firstly hierarchical clustering method will be conducted. Thereafter K-Means clustering technique will be used to derive the final cluster centers that will provide the basis of understanding the characteristics of the youth segments identified.

### 3.5.4 Objective No.4: To determine the variables that are likely to influence conspicuous consumption among the urban Indian youth.

Discriminant analysis, correlation analysis, simple regression, multiple regression and logistic regression will be used to formulate the research models to identify the variables that are likely to affect conspicuous consumption among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru.

- **RQ12**: What variables are likely to influence conspicuous consumption among the urban Indian youth in Bengaluru.

The hypothesis for RQ12 may be stated as:

- **H12**: Various attitudinal & demographic variables will affect the conspicuous consumption motivation among the urban Indian youth in Bengaluru.

### 3.5.5 Objective No.5: Providing suggestions and recommendations based on the theoretical insights drawn from the outcome of the research study:

The answer to the fifth objective will be drawn by comprehensively organizing the results obtained from the first four objectives of the study. The reliability and validity measures of the scales used in the study will be highlighted to indicate the robustness of the results or the lack thereof. The suggestions and recommendations will provide an idea of the contributions of the study that may be considered for the academic domain, for marketing practitioners and for policy makers.
3.6 The Research Design:

The methodology of the study is explained. The research design used for the study is given and the methods of data collection explained. Questionnaire design and the manner in which the questions were structured and the scales used are highlighted thereafter. The sampling plan used and the proposed data analysis is finally outlined.

- Descriptive research design:

Descriptive research design has been used for the present study. The purpose of descriptive research is to describe some market characteristic that is of importance and relevance to the researcher. The purpose of the present study is to understand the conspicuous consumption of lifestyle products and services among the urban Indian youth residing in Bengaluru. The objective of the study deals with finding out the perception of the urban Indian youth towards a set of lifestyle items considered for the study and finding their lifestyle orientation. It is also relevant to find out if there are different consumer segments that are identifiable based on their attitude towards status consumption, materialism and status orientation. There is also a need to understand the demographic characteristics of the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in Bengaluru. Hence descriptive research design was chosen for conducting the study. The plan for the study was based on examining the earlier research work in the field of consumer behaviour. The review of academic literature was done with the objective of obtaining objective evidence pertaining to prior research work done in the area of conspicuous consumption for status, materialism, status orientation, branding and lifestyle products. Post literature review the gap prevailing in the body of knowledge for conspicuous consumption for status indication purpose and the marketing implication for lifestyle products and services were identified. Thus the foundation for the present study was based on extensive secondary research. The review of literature also provided an idea of the comprehensive set of scales used in similar studies of consumer behaviour. To determine the information required for addressing the requirements of the present study was done by framing appropriate research questions and formulating the relevant hypotheses. Thus the use of descriptive research design for the study entailed prior planning for the research work that was to be undertaken to meet the objectives of the study.
Single cross-sectional research design was specifically utilized, which implied that responses from the target group of respondents were collected once from all the respondents within the city of Bengaluru, during the specific time frame meant for data collection (in this case data was collected from January 2014 and June 2014). Since the respondents for the study were selected from across the four zones of Bengaluru, so the study may be considered to be have used the multiple cross sectional research design. The survey method for data collection was implemented using a structured questionnaire that was finalized especially for the purpose of the present study after suitable pretesting. The responses were collected on the questionnaire by interviewing respondents from within the city of Bengaluru. The data that was collected through the questionnaires constituted the primary data for the study. The respondents were chosen from among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing within Bengaluru city. The responses were collected from across the northern, southern, eastern and western parts of the city. The potential sources of error that could have arisen from the non-sampling part of the study has been used by conducting robust review of literature that provided the relevant constructs based on which the questionnaire was made. Pilot studies were conducted prior to making the final questionnaire using appropriate scales. Thus measurement error was reduced substantially as the relevant data required for meeting the objectives of the study was obtained. Sampling frame error was reduced by specifically defining the age group under consideration for the study to be urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years residing in the city of Bengaluru.

- **Data Collection:**

The study used both secondary and primary sources of data. Secondary sources of data collection involved searching for data available both in the print and electronic media accessible through college and university libraries highlighted across the first and second chapters of the report. Primary data collection was done through the cross-sectional research design using a structured questionnaire specially created for the study purpose.

- **Primary Data:**

The research uses descriptive research design. Survey method of data collection has been used using structured questionnaire (please refer Annexure 1 for the sample questionnaire). The
questionnaire had three parts, using a combination of questions that measured the responses of the respondents on nominal and interval scales. Pilot studies were conducted with the draft questionnaires. The final questionnaire containing the various types of questions was made after protocol analysis and suitably pre-testing it among about thirty respondents who were similar to the target segment of the study. The final questionnaire was also pre-coded prior to administering them to the respondents. The list of questions was kept concise, without compromising the quality of content required, so that respondents can provide their response. Simplicity of language on the dimensions being researched ensured that respondents did not have any problem comprehending the meanings. The questionnaire was pretested among a sample of post graduate students chosen by convenience sampling. The questionnaire was pretested for comprehension and ease of answering (Malhotra 2008). The questions and scales that were used in the questionnaire were checked for content and construct validity for the present study through extensive literature review. After conducting the review of literature, gaps were identified whereby the scope of the present research was conceptualized.

- **Primary Data collection technique:**

The present research is a descriptive study that has been conducted using cross-sectional research design. The study illustrates various aspects of the conspicuous consumption pattern among the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years, residing in Bengaluru, for lifestyle products and services. The primary data for the study was collected by using a structured questionnaire. A market survey was conducted using the structured questionnaire prepared for the purpose that contained a mix of both nominal and interval scaled questions.

- **Interview Method**

The interview method of collecting data was used using the structured questionnaire. This involved the use of a set of predetermined questions as laid out in the questionnaire. The respondents were contacted across the four zones of urban Bengaluru who belonged to the age group of 18-25 years, residing within the city and were Indian citizens. Cross-sectional research design was used for the study, by which respondents were contacted across the city of Bengaluru for their responses to the questions prepared in the questionnaire. Research volunteers were
selected and trained for the purpose of data collection. The data was collected by the team of research volunteers, besides the researcher by contacting respondents belonging to the age group of 18-25 years, as was deemed to be the target sample unit of the study. Respondents were located at various places within the city through a variety of means like mall, market and college intercepts. The responses were collected on both online hard copy versions of the questionnaire. For sustainability issues, online version of filling up the questionnaire was encouraged. Also since the age group of the sample under consideration for the study was found to be more familiar in using the digital medium, so the online questionnaire found more popularity. The online version of the questionnaire was uploaded on the Survey Monkey portal, that enabled the research volunteers to access the questionnaire and collect the responses from the respondents through tablets and smart phones. The collection of responses was done primarily by contacting the respondents on the field and filling up the questionnaire online. Online collection of responses enabled the research to become ecologically positive as the amount of paper copies of questionnaire was substantially reduced. The other advantage accruing out of using the electronic form of the questionnaire was that the chances of data entry error was substantially reduced as the data that was captured as response from the respondents were automatically fed into an excel file. All the data from the questionnaires were thus readily available in an excel file. A special paid subscription at the SurveyMonkey portal was availed by the researcher. Using SurveyMonkey ensured that the excel file data dump of the responses was available for data analysis. The site also provided some preliminary data analysis like the count of the responses for each question, number of male and women responses zone wise. During the period of the data collection (January 2014 - June 2014), periodic data analysis was conducted to ensure that the responses being received were in line with the sampling plan made for the study.

After the information required from the study was determined, suitable scales were used that were found during the review of literature that involved examining research studies conducted in the area of consumer behaviour, materialism, status orientation and status consumption. Research volunteers who were used for the study to collect responses from the respondents were trained by the researcher on the manner of selecting respondents of the targeted age group of the study for the survey, the manner of administering the structured questionnaire for collecting the responses and the way in which doubts raised by the respondents could be clarified. Thus interviewer errors
arising out of respondent selection error, questioning error and recording errors were substantially reduced for the study. The structured questionnaire that was used went through several drafting stages that involved pretesting using protocol analysis and debriefing of respondents selected from within the age group meant for the study. Closed ended questions used in the questionnaire ensured that the respondents would not be unable understand the questions for which answers were sought. The questionnaire was pretested on a sample of 30 urban Indian youth belonging to the targeted age group of the study. The draft questionnaire was also given to experienced faculty members and experts for their opinion on content and structure of questions. Protocol analysis and debriefing was done when pre testing the questionnaire. The questionnaire was also translated into the local language, Kannada, to ensure that language did not become a barrier for answering the questions and to reduce non response. The Kannada translation was done by giving the English questionnaire to an academician who knew both English and Kannada fluently. The English questionnaire was translated into Kannada. The Kannada version of the questionnaire was then given to another expert who was fluent in both the languages who then translated the questionnaire back into English. Thus the two versions of the questionnaire were checked and compared after which the Kannada copy of the questionnaire was used wherever required. The coding for all the questions remained the same as was for the English version. The questionnaire was also made available online through the Survey Monkey website link. The responses were collected by interviewers using tablets having internet access to the online questionnaire. The respondents were handed the tablets to see the questions on the screen and tick the responses. Finally, to address any potential unwillingness that might occur within the selected respondents to answer the survey questions, full confidentiality was assured to the respondents that their responses would be used for only the academic research purpose and would not be transferred for any commercial purpose. The respondents also had the option to not disclose their contact details while filling the questionnaire. Thus the respondent errors that could occur from the inability and unwillingness of the respondents of the study were also substantially reduced.

The online questionnaire was also filled by respondents who were provided the link to the questionnaire. Thus the data that was collected got directly transcribed into excel file which was then used in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for detailed analysis. The study
thus made all efforts to reduce paper prints of questionnaire as it was possible to access the targeted respondent group of urban Indian youth in the age group of 18-25 years who were mostly familiar in accessing emails and internet through computers, laptops, tablets and smart phones.

- **Questionnaire Design:**

A structured questionnaire using closed ended questions was used for the purpose of taking responses of the urban Indian youth in the age group of 18-25 years in Bengaluru for understanding the conspicuous consumption pattern for selected lifestyle products and services. The questionnaire was made into three parts. The first part contained the list of lifestyle products and services. The second part had the Likert-scaled statements measuring the status orientation, materialism and status consumption aspects of the respondents. The final part of the questionnaire contained questions that collected the demographic information of the respondents.

- **Questionnaire – First Part:**

The first part of the questionnaire that contained the list of lifestyle products and services chosen for the study was finalized after consulting various articles in the field of lifestyle research and after consultation with several groups of interaction sessions held with young people in the age group of 18-25 years that was the target segment of the study.

The list of ‘status product ownership’ scale of items was adopted and thus modified from status consumption studies (Mai and Tambyah 2011; Ghoshal & Mathews 2012). The products and services were chosen after discussing the relevance and access of the items with around thirty urban Indian youth in Bengaluru belonged to the age group that was being considered for study.

The items under each of the categories are illustrated in Table 3.1. The list of lifestyle products and services that was finalized for the study contained sixteen items. There were three categories of products and three categories of services used for the study for which the perception of the respondents were sought during the survey.

- The three product categories were, ‘personal durables’ (PD), ‘household durables’ (HHD) and ‘personal accessories’ (PA).
The three services categories chosen for the study were, ‘travel services’ (TS), ‘retail services’ (RS) and ‘personal services’ (PS). The items under the six categories are given below:

Table 3.1: Lifestyle Products and Services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Durables (PD)</th>
<th>Household durables (HHD)</th>
<th>Personal Accessories (PA)</th>
<th>Travel Services (TS)</th>
<th>Retail Services (RS)</th>
<th>Personal Services (PS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Phone</td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>Clothes</td>
<td>Travel Abroad</td>
<td>Retail stores</td>
<td>Educational qualifications attained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branded laptops / Tablets</td>
<td>Airconditioners</td>
<td>Watches</td>
<td>Weekend travel</td>
<td>Eating out at expensive restaurants</td>
<td>Club Membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cars</td>
<td>Personal Computers</td>
<td>Cosmetics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorbikes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ninety-six variables arose out of the questions measured on nominal scale with options of either a ‘Yes’ or a ‘No’ for questions on the listing of the sixteen lifestyle products and services chosen for this study.

- The first question was asked as to whether the respondent thought the listed items were capable to indicate status.
- The second question was about whether the respondent had bought the listed items in the last one year.
- The third question was about whether the respondent is likely to participate in the decision-making process of the listed items in the next 1-5 years.
- The fourth question was about whether the respondent thought branding was important for the listed items.
- The fifth question asked whether the respondent thought pricing is important for the listed items.
Lastly the sixth question asked if the respondent thought situational factors like the purpose of use was important for the listed items.

The sixteen categories of lifestyle items was listed in the questionnaire and presented to the respondents for their views on the various dimensions as indicated earlier.

- **Questionnaire – Second Part:**
  
The second part of the questionnaire consisted of thirty three interval scaled questions. The thirty three statements measured the levels of status orientation, status consumption and materialism using the five point Likert scale.

The response options of the statements ranged from ‘Strongly Disagree’, ‘Disagree’, ‘Neither Agree nor Disagree’, ‘Agree’ to ‘Strongly Agree’. The scales for status orientation, status consumption and materialism were chosen after conducting the review of literature pertaining to conspicuous consumption. The use of self-report measures was found to be useful for studying materialism and was used for quantitative research (Richins 2004; Kasser et al. 2013). The Likert scales used have been earlier used for consumer research in other emerging markets (Mai T.T. N & Tambyah 2011).

- **Status Orientation scale:**
  
Status orientation of the youth respondents chosen for the study was researched on the aspects pertaining to their levels of traditional status orientation and modern status orientation using the Likert scaled statements with responses ranging from ‘Strongly Disagree’, ‘Disagree’, ‘Neither Agree nor Disagree’, ‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly Agree’ (Mai & Tambyah 2011).

The status orientation scale (Mai & Tambyah 2011) that has been considered for the contains ten statements and is illustrated in Table 3.2. The first five are considered to be the statements for the traditional status orientation (TSO) sub scale, while the last five items of the scale are the modern status orientation (MSO) sub scale items.
Table 3.2: The Status Orientation Scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status Orientation Scale Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I respect people who devote their lives to the benefit of the country and the people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I respect people who always give the first priority to social benefit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I would try to lead a simple life without any material objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In order to get the respect of others, a person should lead a clean life regardless of fame and wealth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I respect people who care for others more than for themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Striving to become a rich person would be one of the important goals in life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I admire people who have abilities to earn high incomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I admire people who have a wide relationship network, especially with important people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I would make a considerable effort to obtain luxury products and services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I would try to learn things that will help me earn a higher income.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Mai & Tambyah 2011.

- **Status Consumption scale:**

The status consumption scale used for the study consisted of five statements (Eastman et al. 1999) using the five point Likert scale with responses ranging from ‘Strongly Disagree’, ‘Disagree’, ‘Neither Agree nor Disagree’, ‘Agree’ to ‘Strongly Agree’. The scale was meant to understand the predisposition of the urban Indian youth towards status consumption. The statements used in the status consumption scale are shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: The Status Consumption Scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status Consumption Scale Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I would buy a product just because it has status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I am interested in new products with status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I would pay more for a product if it had status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The status of a product is not important to me(r).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. A product is more valuable to me if it has some prestige appeal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Eastman et al. 1999.
Materialism scale: The materialism scale used for the study (Richins & Dawson 1992) is shown in Table 3.4. The statements of the materialism scale use the five point Likert scale wherein the response options range from ‘Strongly Disagree’, ‘Disagree’, ‘Neither Agree nor Disagree’, ‘Agree’ to ‘Strongly Agree’.

Table 3.4: The Materialism Scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materialism Scale Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Success (6 items):</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I admire people who own expensive homes, cars &amp; clothes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I don’t place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success. (r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The things I own, say a lot about how well I’m doing in life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I like to own things that impress people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I don’t pay much attention to the material objects other people own. (r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Centrality (7 items):</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I usually buy only the things that I need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned. (r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The things that I own aren’t all that important for me. (r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I enjoy spending money on things that aren’t practical.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I like a lot of luxury in my life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know. (r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Happiness (5 items):</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I have all the things I really need to enjoy life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. My life would be better if I owned certain things I don’t have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I would not be any happier if I owned nicer things. (r)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I would be happier if I could afford to buy more things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The materialism scale contains statements measuring three sub constructs i.e. *success*, *centrality* and *happiness*. Materialism has been considered as a personality characteristic and value guiding focus on making money, having possessions and considering things as a means to achieve status and happiness in life (Goldsmith 2012). There were thus thirty three questions in the questionnaire that were used to measure status orientation, status consumption and materialism.

- **Questionnaire – Third Part:**
The third part of the questionnaire collected the demographic information of the respondents. The demographic variables used are explained below:

  - **Demographic Variables:**
    Questions were asked pertaining to capturing the demographic information of the respondents like the age, gender, monthly household income, occupation, amount of pocket money received, the number of siblings and the parent(s) present working status.

- **Operationalization of the variables.**
The research investigates the conspicuous consumption potential of lifestyle products and services to reflect status among the urban Indian youth, within the age groups of 18-25 years, in Bengaluru. The study intends to understand what lifestyle products and services are likely to be bought and consumed for conspicuously showing status among the Indian youth in urban Bengaluru. The research focuses on the 18-25 year old urban Indian youth residing in Bengaluru. The study thus aims to find out how urban Indian youth in Bengaluru perceive the different lifestyle products and services chosen for this research for reflecting status. Lifestyle products and services are an important aspect of young consumers. The implication of consumption of products and services for showcasing status and prestige also becomes important when youth consumers are considered. Thus the antecedents and consequences of status and conspicuous consumption among the Indian youth for lifestyle products and services becomes an interesting area for research. The study therefore focuses on understanding the factors influencing conspicuous consumption of lifestyle products and services among the urban Indian youth in Bengaluru.
There are three sets of variables that are of importance for the study that can be categorized as follows:

i. The demographic profile of the respondents,

ii. The attitudinal variables measuring materialism, status consumption and status orientation of the respondents, and

iii. The perceptions of the urban Indian youth towards lifestyle products and services regarding.

The data for the above three sets of variables have been collected by using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire used for the study had three parts:

i) The first part of the questionnaire had dichotomous questions capturing responses on six dimensions for sixteen categories of lifestyle products and services.

ii) The second part of the questionnaire contained thirty three Likert scaled items measuring status orientation, status consumption and materialistic tendencies of consumers.

iii) The third part of the questionnaire contained questions measuring the demographic aspects of consumers like age, gender, MHI, educational levels, marital status, occupation, source of pocket money, amount of pocket money, number of siblings, which of the parents are working etc.

The variables of the research work after the intensive literature review as discussed in Chapter 2 has considered demographic variables of gender, age, MHI, educational level, occupational categories, source of pocket money, amount of pocket money, number of siblings and working status of parents. Status orientation and materialistic tendencies of the urban Indian youth are also of interest to determine the characteristic of the urban Indian youth consumer. The variables are further described in detail as follows:

- **Independent Variables:**

All the demographic variables included in the study are the independent variables of the study. The demographic variables of the study have been collected using closed ended questions with nominal scaled variables. The demographic variables considered for the study were age, gender, MHI, educational levels, marital status, occupation, source of pocket money, amount of pocket money, number of siblings and identifying which of the parent(s) were working etc.
Dependent Variables:
The first set of dependent variables is made up of the Likert scaled statements of the Status Orientation scale. The Status Orientation scale contains a total of ten variables (Tambyah et al. 2009; Mai & Tambyah 2011). The first five statements of the Status Orientation scale measure the importance that respondents give to traditional symbols of status, and have thus been aptly termed as Traditional Status Orientation (TSO) scale. The responses are collected on the Likert scale with choice of the replies ranging from 1: ‘Strongly Disagree’, 2:‘Disagree’, 3:‘Neither Agree nor Disagree’, 4:‘Agree’ and 5:‘Strongly Agree’ (Tambyah et al. 2009; Mai & Tambyah 2011). The last five items of the Status Orientation scale contain variables that measure the importance that respondents are likely to give towards modern status symbols and are termed as the Modern Status Orientation (MSO). Thus the variables of the TSO and the MSO scales that cumulatively make up the Status Orientation scale are considered as independent variables for the purpose of this study.

The second set of dependent variables for the study includes the Likert scaled statements of the materialism scale (Richins & Dawson 1992; Mai & Tambyah 2011). The Materialism scale contains 18-items containing three components of success, centrality and happiness (Richins & Dawson 1992; Mai & Tambyah 2011) measuring responses on the Likert scale with choice of the replies ranging from 1: ‘Strongly Disagree’, 2:‘Disagree’, 3:‘Neither Agree nor Disagree’, 4:‘Agree’ and 5:‘Strongly Agree’. The first six items of the Materialism scale measured the Success subcomponent of the Materialism. The second seven items of the Materialism scale measured the Centrality subcomponent of Materialism. The last five items of the Materialism scale measured the Happiness subcomponent of Materialism.

The third set of dependent variables are the Likert scaled statements of the Status Consumption scale (Eastman et al. 1999; Mai & Tambyah 2011). The scale uses five items, the responses to which were captured on the Likert scale with choice of the replies ranging from 1: ‘Strongly Disagree’, 2:‘Disagree’, 3:‘Neither Agree nor Disagree’, 4:‘Agree’ and 5:‘Strongly Agree’.

The other set of dependent variables for the study include the metrics that are used to measure different aspects of the sixteen lifestyle product & service items considered for the study. The list
Nominal scaled questions were framed to find out the perception of the youth towards six dimensions of each of the sixteen categories of the lifestyle items selected for the study. Closed-ended dichotomous questions were framed for all the six dimensions using nominal scale. The answer options given to the respondents for each of the dimensions were either to either indicate their positive perception with a ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. The respondents were offered the options to either tick ‘√’ indicating ‘yes’ or make a ‘×’ marking in the cells of the grid indicating ‘no’ for each of the relevant items. The nominal scaled questions measuring the demographic variables of the respondents will be converted into dummy variables for enabling them to be used in simple regression, multiple regression and logistic regression for deriving information for the fourth objective of the study.

The questionnaire was prepared whereby the list of sixteen categories of the lifestyle item was listed on the left hand side of the page while the six perception related questions (on status indicative potential, past purchase data, future participation in decision making, importance of the brand name, price and situational factors of use of the lifestyle categories) regarding the lifestyle items was listed in six different columns on the right side of the listed lifestyle items. A 16x6 matrix thus resulted whereby respondents could indicate their positive or negative perceptions in the cells of the grid. Thus, ninety-six variables arose out of this part of the study.
on the sixteen categories of lifestyle items. For the purpose of building the final research model of the study the dependent variables will be the two Likert scaled statements that are part of the ‘Status Consumption’ scale. The statements whose ratings will be considered as the dependent variable(s) for the study will be:

- I am interested in new products with status and
- I would pay more for a product if it had status.

The independent variables that would be considered would be the demographic variables and the ratings received from all the balance thirty one Likert scaled statements (of the status orientation scale, materialism status consumption scales). The association between the independent variables and the dependent variables in the research model will be illustrated in the fifth chapter of the study.

- **Secondary Data:**

Various secondary data sources have been used. The details of the secondary data obtained for the research has been suitably incorporated in the first and second chapters of the report with appropriate referencing provided at the end of the respective chapters. The first chapter highlighted the broad macro environmental context of the study. Marketing information collected from various books, magazines, news portals are suitably incorporated. The details of the academic research in the area of consumer behaviour especially in the areas of conspicuous consumption, materialism, status orientation, youth studies, branding and pricing are highlighted in the second chapter of the study, titled ‘Review of Literature’.

The secondary data for the research has been obtained by referencing academic text books in management, management books, management journals and visiting libraries across management institutions like Jain University, IIM, PES, etc. Academic journals from Emerald, Elsevier, Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Marketing, Journal of emerging markets etc. have also been referenced to obtain the seminal, theoretical and conceptual domain knowledge in the areas of conspicuous consumption, status consumption, materialism, status orientation, branding, pricing etc. Past research articles and Ph.D reports, Fellowship dissertations were also
accessed from different libraries. Management magazines, marketing books and consumer behaviour publications including government and management consulting white papers have been referenced to elicit data and trends pertaining to Indian economic statistics and outlook of eminent experts in the field of marketing and consumer behaviour. The interest that the country has generated from across the globe as evidenced by national and international studies provided the background and rational for conducting the study within the Indian market context. The scope of the present research was also framed in view of the theoretical developments in the field of consumer behaviour and marketing with special reference to conspicuous consumption that became evident from secondary research. The potential contributions of the research was also derived from the gaps that were evident from the present body of knowledge became after the extensive literature review that was conducted as part of the secondary research. The social relevance of the outcome of the research was also an important aspect that motivated the investigation into the topic of the research. Secondary data for the review of literature for the study has been done by consulting different academic peer refereed journals in the field of consumer research, youth studies and marketing management. The review of literature covered the seminal work of Veblen (1899) and other conceptual and empirical works in the field of conspicuous/status consumption. A total of more than one hundred and seventy two research articles were consulted. Business journals, magazines and various books in the field of marketing and consumer behaviour have proved invaluable to provide the theoretical and practical underpinnings of the domain being studied. Secondary research provided valuable inputs regarding the construct of the concept of conspicuous consumption. After conducting a comprehensive review of literature, potential areas of consumer research were identified as gaps that were prevailing but which had not been addressed in the research studies that were reviewed. The gaps that were identified after the review of literature provided the basis upon which the scope of the present research work was outlined. The review of the past research studies also provided insights regarding the manner in which the operationalization of the variables required for the study could be done. Detailed analysis of the different measurement scales used by past marketing researchers were studies and their reliability and validity of the different scales used for research works in the area of conspicuous/status consumption, materialism and status orientation were examined for their relevance to the present study.

- **Sampling procedure:**
The study uses quota sampling for the purpose of selecting respondents for the study. The study focused on a mix of both local youth population as well as migrant youth who reside in Bengaluru pursuing either higher education or occupational pursuits or even both. Descriptive research was conducted using single cross-sectional research design within the city of Bengaluru. Survey method of data collection was done. A sample of six hundred urban youth respondents in the age group of 18-25 years were surveyed using a structured questionnaire containing structured questions on understanding the antecedent factors that were likely to influence conspicuous consumption of lifestyle products and services. The population of the study was the urban Indian youth within the city of Bengaluru. Youth respondents within the age groups of 18-25 years were sampled for the survey. Pretesting of the initial draft questionnaire was conducted from the urban Indian youth age group of 18-25 years during June 2013-Sep 2013. Post the results of the pretesting final inputs were incorporated in the final questionnaire and final survey was conducted across Bengaluru in four zones covering six hundred youth respondents who were in the age group of 18-25 years. The final survey was conducted between the months of January 2014 and June 2014. The areas covered in the southern zone were Koramangala, Madivala, BTM Layout, JP Nagar, Marenahalli, Chamrajpet, Adugodi, Basavannagudi, Katriguppe and Hosakerehalli. Some of the areas that were considered in the northern zone were, HBR Layout, Kuvempu Nagar, Vidyaranyapura, Jakkuru and Thanisandra. In the eastern zone the areas like Domlur, Shivaji Nagar, Jayamahal, C.V Raman Nagar, Hoysala Nagar, Muneshwara Nagar, Sarvagna Nagar, Kushal Nagar, Banasvadi and Jeevanbhima Nagar were covered. The areas covered in the western zone were Vijayanagar, Cottonpet, Chickpet, Rajaji Nagar, Gandhinagar, Malleswaram, Nandini Layout, Vasanth Nagar, Mattikere and Hebbala. Pre-coding of the final questionnaire was done to ensure efficient and effective data entry and analysis.

- **Population:**

The population of the study is made up of the urban Indian youth belonging to the age group of 18-25 years who reside within the city of Bengaluru across the northern, southern, eastern and western parts. The youth population of Karnataka is estimated to be around 1.9 crore.

- **Sampling Frame:**
The sampling frame comprised of urban Indian youth residing within the city of Bengaluru who belong to the age group of 18-25 years. The youth population was stratified gender wise and equal number of responses from both the young men and women were collected for the survey.

- **Sampling Element & Unit:**

  The sample unit for the study is the urban Indian youth who resides in the city of Bengaluru and whose age is between 18-25 years. The sample element and unit is the same for the study as the individual is the respondent for the study. The study seeks to find the opinions, perceptions and attitudes that the youth have towards various psychological orientations and lifestyle products and services considered for the study. Six hundred respondents were contacted across the four zones of the city spanning the eastern, western, northern and southern parts. As the youth population was stratified gender wise for sampling purpose, so fifty per cent of the sample units were drawn from among the young women while the balance fifty percent of the sample were collected from young men. The responses of the respondents on demographic, psychological aspects and regarding lifestyle items were collected on the structured questionnaire containing closed ended questions specially created for the purpose of the study. The questionnaire that was utilized is illustrated in the annexure section of the report.

- **Sample Size:**

  A total of six hundred respondents were contacted during the survey and their responses were recorded for the study using the structured questionnaire. Fifty percent of the sample size were made up of women while the balance half of the respondents were men. Equal number of responses was collected from across the four zones of the city. Hence one hundred and fifty responses were collected from each of the north, south, east and western parts of the city. While collecting the responses, care was taken to ensure that equal number of responses was collected from both men and women. Thus seventy five responses from young women and young men were respectively collected from each zone thus making up the total of one hundred and fifty responses gathered from each zone.

- **Sampling Technique:**
The city of Bengaluru was divided into four clusters. The north, south, east and western parts of the city made up the four clusters of the city from which the six hundred responses were to be collected. The urban Indian youth population who belonged to the age group of 18-25 years was stratified into women and men. Gender wise stratification was done and responses were collected in equal numbers from both the young men and women from across the four clusters of the city. Considering the fact that it was not possible to get a list of the urban Indian youth population members, the responses from the survey had to be collected from all the four clusters identified for the study in a non probabilistic manner. Random mall, shop, market and college intercepts of youth members were conducted by the researcher and teams of specially trained research volunteers across the four clusters identified within the city. The research volunteers were trained by the researcher regarding the manner of contacting the respondents, asking permission for administering the questionnaire, the method of screening respondents who could be given the questionnaire, the manner in which doubts were to be clarified in case they were raised by the potential respondents. Responses were collected for the study through the survey method keeping in view the quota of respondents planned to be collected from each cluster while simultaneously ensuring that the number of responses collected from each cluster also contained an equal representation from both women and men belonging to the age group of 18-25 years.

- **Plan of Data Analysis:**

Data analysis error was reduced by determining the information data required to meet the objectives of the study. Accuracy of transcribing data as well as reducing carbon footprints was made possible by using relevant technology in this study. The respondents were asked questions on the lifestyle product and service categories chosen for the study. Univariate, bivariate and multivariate data analysis was done to derive insights from the data collected. Statistical analysis was done with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Univariate data analysis will be done on both the nominally scaled variables and the interval scaled variables. Frequency counts and percentage will be used to analyze the nominally scaled variable responses. For the interval scaled variables the mean, median and mode would be derived. Bivariate analysis using cross tabulations will be conducted wherever deemed appropriate. The *Chi-square goodness-of-fit* tests would be done to check if there are significant associations between the gender of the respondents and their perceptions regarding various
aspects of the lifestyle items under consideration in the study. One-way ANOVA will be done with the gender of the respondents as the independent variable and each of the thirty three Likert-scaled items treated as a dependent variable to see if the ratings on the scaled item(s) vary with the gender of the respondents. The status consumption scale (Eastman et al. 1999) had five questions, while the status orientation scale (Mai & Tambyah 2011) had ten items. The Status orientation scale was measured on interval scaled Likert scale measuring traditional status orientation (TSO) and modern status orientation (MSO) of the respondents using scales developed by Mai & Tambyah (2011). The materialism scale (Richins & Dawson 1992) used for the study had eighteen items. The Materialism scale had items on centrality, success and happiness sub scales. Materialism is considered to affect the well-being of individuals (Kasser et al. 2013) and hence the study aimed to use the materialism scale with all the three components of success, centrality and happiness, to gauge the extent of the materialistic trait with its three subcomponents among the urban Indian youth of Bengaluru. Thus there were thirty three interval scaled variables that are used in the study.

- **Investigation of the data for reliability and validity:**

The data collected for the research topic will be analyzed both for reliability and validity. Reliability is achieved when consistent results are likely to be achieved when the measurement of the parameters being considered are done on similar population to reproduce similar results. Consistency of form and manner of asking questions are considered to be generally useful in generating reliability (Nargundkar 2010). Relevant training to interviewers ensures that variation in manner of asking questions and recording answers to achieve reliability. Structured questionnaire with structured answers ensure reliability. Validity of a result refers to the generalizability and the robustness of the result (Nargundkar 2010). To obtain validity of results it becomes important to understand all the likely variables that could influence the dependent variable being studied. Validity would be achieved if the questions being asked actually measure the construct that is under study.

- **Reliability:**

The research focuses on investigating the conspicuous consumption of lifestyle products and services among the urban Indian youth in the age group of 18-25 years in Bengaluru using a structured questionnaire containing closed ended structured answers that are either dichotomous
or having multiple choice answer options. Using such a survey questionnaire containing structured questions having structured answers that were available in both English and Kannada enabled reliability in getting correct answers overcoming inability and unwillingness of respondents wherever possible. Pretesting with protocol analysis and debriefing enabled making a questionnaire that was reliable. The researcher personally trained interviewers who were used to conduct the survey to ensure reduction in the variability of the manner in which respondents would be approached for data collection. Cronbach’s alpha will be used to determine the reliability of the scales used in the study. Generally when the values of the Cronbach’s alpha is higher than 0.60 then the scales are considered to be reliable (Malhotra 2008; Nargundkar 2010).

○ **Validity:**

The construct of the present research was to investigate the antecedents of conspicuous consumption of lifestyle items to indicate status of the possessor. The construct of conspicuous consumption for status contained the dimensions of status orientation, materialism, status products list, importance of branding, importance of pricing, importance of situational factors, data of purchase of status products in last one year and the likelihood of deciding for purchase of the status items in next 1-5 years as the variables that could be used to understand the conspicuous consumption pattern among the urban Indian youth in Bengaluru. Factor analysis will be used to check the content validity of the construct of antecedents of status consumption. To achieve *construct validity*, the scales used to measure the status consumption, status orientation and materialism among the urban Indian youth have been included after conducting a detailed search of the constructs and the scales used in conspicuous consumption research works by past researchers in the field globally. Convergent validity would be determined by checking the correlations and conducting factor analysis. Convergent validity will be achieved if the measurement of different items measuring same type of construct exhibit consistent result pattern. Discriminant validity will be achieved in seeing that the scales which are reversed for two different constructs reveal results in opposite pattern. The regression equation will illustrate the variable(s) that would have significant linkages with the dependent variable and thus prove the validity of the study. The positive or negative value of the coefficient(s) of the independent variable(s) that would be available from the regression equation will highlight whether the independent variables are positively or negatively linked to the dependent variable(s) of the research model.
• **Factor analysis for deriving factors:**

Multivariate analysis will be done using factor analysis, cluster analysis, discriminant analysis, logistic regression and using correlation and regression. Factor analysis will be used to derive the factors which will have Eigen value(s) of greater than one. Hence factor analysis will be used to reduce the thirty three statements of the combined scales of status orientation, materialism and status consumption into fewer relevant factors that are likely to be used for understanding the conspicuous consumption of lifestyle products and services. The factors derived from factor analysis will be analyzed to reveal the dominant values using inverse of coefficient (Kumar 2009). Cluster analysis will be used for segmentation and highlight the different youth segments with their characteristics. Discriminant analysis will be used to create a discriminant equation for checking if the gender of respondents has an impact on the response regarding their life orientations. Cluster analysis will be used to derive the characteristics of the distinct youth segments in the market. Correlation and regression will be used to derive the final research model estimates of the linkages of the independent variables to the dependent variables. Thus regression will be used to determine the causal model that could be formulated for predicting conspicuous consumption for signaling wealth and status. The demographic data of the respondents will be processed and highlighted in Chapter 4 of the report. Univariate analysis of the demographic data will be conducted to reveal the characteristics of the sampled respondents. Thereafter cross tabulation will be done with the gender of the respondents and some of the select demographic data to view response patterns and trends. The data collected on the scaled items will be analyzed to reveal the mean, standard deviation and inverse of coefficient of variation of the scale items. The fifth chapter will provide the detailed analysis and interpretation of the primary data collected. The chapter would provide the details of the appropriate and relevant statistical tool(s) used and the outcomes. Some of the analytical techniques proposed to be used will be:

• **Cluster analysis for identifying customer segments:**

Cluster analysis will be conducted to identify the different Indian youth segments and profile them for understanding their orientations, interests and goals.

• **Chi square tests:**
Chi square tests will be used to find out the demographic variables that are significantly associated with the lifestyle products and services dimensions.

- **ANOVA:**
  One-way ANOVA will be used to find out if the different levels of the demographic variables affect the mean ratings of the scale items making up the factors derived from factor analysis. CC trends will be outlined basis the One-way ANOVA tests.

- **Discriminant Analysis & Logistic Regression:**
  Discriminant analysis and logistic regression will be used to derive the variables that are important for classifying and predicting the lifestyle items that are likely to be chosen for status indication.

- **Correlation & regression for estimating the final research model.**
  Correlation and regression will be used to estimate and develop the forecasting models for identifying variables affecting CC of lifestyle products and services. Single and multiple regressions will be conducted to estimate the variables and their respective values for the final research model for the study.

The outcomes of the data analysis will thus be suitably illustrated in the fifth chapter meant for showing the data analysis of the study and providing the inferences from the results. The sixth chapter of the report would discuss the findings of the study in order to provide suggestions and recommendations. The study as a whole will thus provide comprehensive insights and recommendations based on the outcome of the above mentioned hypotheses and different multivariate analyses.

### 3.7 The limitations of the research:

The present research focused on studying the conspicuous consumption of lifestyle products and services among the urban Indian youth, in the age group of 18-25 years, in Bengaluru. Further studies may be done on the same aspects including larger sample sizes and including both urban and rural Indian respondents. Future research may also be done across other age groups of youth, example among young people below 18 years of age and across those who are above 25 years. Demographic studies based on age segments could include young adults younger than 18 years, those aged between 26-35 years, older adults in the age group of 36-55 years and even older
adults above 55 years. Another perspective of expanding the scope of the present research work could be on in understand the conspicuous consumption patterns of the urban Indian youth for other lifestyle product and service categories, besides those categories chosen for the present research work.

3.8 Potential Contributions:
The study is expected to contribute to the academic, industry and policy domains in the following manner:

○ Academic contributions:

The academic contributions expected from the study would be about adding to the body of knowledge for consumer behaviour of lifestyle items based on conspicuous consumption for status indication. The study aims to enhance the domain of consumer behavior by understanding the factors that are likely to influence conspicuous consumption of lifestyle items in an emerging market context. The research work is also expected to provide reliable and valid scales that can be used to study CC for status in other emerging market environments. The research identifies the issues that emerge after the literature review regarding areas that can be investigated to extend the theoretical body of knowledge in the field of marketing and consumer behaviour. The study also provides insights and inputs that are valuable for management practitioners for developing effective brand management and promotional strategies. Thus the study is expected to contribute to the existing theoretical body of knowledge in the consumer behaviour domain as well as provide insights for management practice that can help marketers design effective marketing strategies based on the outcome of the study. The Indian youth make up a majority of the Indian population and are considered to be the potential torch bearers of the future social and economic growth of the nation, hence they are a generational cohort about whom both global and local marketers are trying their best to comprehend. The marketers of products and services for the youth thus have enormous scope to develop youth brands that appeal to the young and not just the ‘youthful’ population.

This research work will thus focus on understanding the conspicuous consumption pattern for status reflection among the urban Indian youth consumer and their psychological antecedents
that may affect consumer choice for lifestyle products & services. There is an estimate of a ripple effect that can arise out of understanding the determinants of conspicuous consumption among the Indian youth in Bengaluru in terms of being able to connect with them meaningfully not only for marketing products and services, but also to engage them for nation building across their lifecycle. Thus the research work will explore both the determinants and effects of conspicuous consumption of youth consumers who form a very important consumer group in the country. Thus the outcome of the research work will contribute to the academic domain of marketing and consumer behavior.

- **Contributions for marketing practitioners:**

The study is expected to provide the demographic characteristics of the youth segments and identify the product and psychological factors that affect the purchases of lifestyle items among the urban Indian youth residing in Bengaluru. The study will also identify significant demographic variables that may influence product and attitudinal variables affecting CC of lifestyle items for status. The research work will contribute to strategic marketing, by providing variables that may be used to identify youth segments basis demographic aspects like pocket money and amount of pocket money of the youth. The demographic consumer segmentation variables will thus be expanded using pocket money source and amount as an additional metric variable to the monthly household income (MHI) variable in order to be able to develop better segmentation profiles for youth for developing hybrid segmentation profiles. The use of the variable like ‘the number of siblings’ of the youth will also highlight the family size and the number of young people more or less in the respondent’s age group. Thus the study provides the potential use of three extra demographic variables for consumer segmentation studies. The pattern of status orientation, status consumption and materialism found among the urban Indian youth surveyed will provide the better psychographic profiling urban Indian youth. Consumer segments will also be identified basis their conspicuous consumption potential. The segments identified through cluster analysis will help marketers. The study will provide theoretical insights of which of the psychological antecedent states impact conspicuous consumption of lifestyle products among the urban Indian youth. The research will also reveal potential linkage of brand names and price sensitivity in conspicuous consumption. The potential linkage of status consumption with specific product categories will also be established. Among the product
categories laden with potential to reflect status, the importance of brand names and pricing will be derived. The products for which the youth are likely to participate in decision making for purchase of lifestyle items will be identified that may help marketers forecast future consumer sales and choice. Important scale items for status orientation, status consumption and materialism will be identified that may be used in marketing research studies. Hence the research outcomes will have inputs for the marketers of products and services targeting the youth consumer segment. The research work will provide insights for understanding the consumer behaviour of the Indian youth with special reference to lifestyle product & service.

- Contributions for Youth Policy:

The output of the study can be used for understanding the significant variables that affect purchase of lifestyle items among the urban Indian youth. Identify the level of status orientation, materialism and status consumption tendencies of the contemporary youth generations and devise policies that can ensure sustainable and responsible consumption. The social outcome of the study provides insights to enable communication, dialogue and interaction with the Indian youth about critical factors that they should bear in mind about their consumption journey so that they are capable to make responsible consumption choices and preferences.

The outcome of the study thus is expected to be of practical utility to the academic domain of consumer behaviour, provide insights for marketers and provide inputs for formulating policy initiatives that take into account the perceptions and aspirations of the Indian youth.

3.9 Chapter scheme and report format:

The following will be the chapter scheme of the report that will be made for this study:

- Chapter 1 Introduction
- Chapter 2 Review of Literature
- Chapter 3 Research Design & Methodology
- Chapter 4 Profile of respondents
- Chapter 5 Data analysis & interpretation
- Chapter 6 Summary of Findings, Suggestions and Conclusions.

The fourth chapter will highlight the profile of the respondents on various demographic aspects.
References

Books


Journals


