CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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Janaki, P and Shanthi, P (2013) in their study entitled, “Marketing Stimuli in Purchase of Home Appliances From Customer Perspectives”, explains that marketing strategy is the game plan which the firms must adhere to, in order to outdo the competitor or the plans to achieve the desired objective. The people consume things of daily use, and buy these products according to their needs, preferences and buying power. The objectives of the study are to study the purchase decision behaviour relating to home appliances and to analyze customer response to the marketing stimuli of home appliances. The study was carried out with the sample size of 200 respondents selected based on proportionate random sampling within Coimbatore city. The data were collected with interview schedule and were analyzed using percentage weighted average score analysis of variances. The findings of the study included that education and income of the respondents are the two socio-economic variables which have significant association in all the stages which the buyers undergo while purchasing home appliances.

Shahram Jenabi, Seyed Yahya Seyed Danesh and Minoo Yousefi (2013) made a study titled, “Examining the effect of Brand dimension (trademark) on home appliances consumers’ behavior Case study: LG brand in Rasht city”, tells that one of the most important and valuable assets of a company is its trademark. The more valuable is a trademark for consumers more profit the company achieves. The present

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paper aims to identify the effect of brand dimension on home appliances consumers’ behavior. To achieve this goal the relationship between reputation, identity, image, meaning, age and brand advertisement with consumer behavior was tested based on the conceptual research model. Required data were collected using questionnaire, randomly, from the population of LG brand consumers from agents of this company in Rasht city. Since the population is wide and infinite, simple random sampling and sample size formula were used to estimate the sample size (it was calculated to be 202 individuals). Pearson correlation test, using SPSS software, and multiple regression analysis were used to analyze collected data. Results showed that aspects of brand’s dimensions have a positive effect on consumers’ behavior and there is significant relationship between these two components. Thus, it is suggested to LG brand to use its competitive advantage, particularly its reputation, identity and brand management, and other aspects of brand (mentioned in this research) to lead its consumers’ behavior to a positive direction.

Senthil Kumar, M.J and Sadeesh Kumar, K and Nagarajan, N.R\(^4\) (2013) in their study entitled, “A Study on Consumer’s Attitudes towards Washing Machine”, which explains that in the modern technological world many innovations and new apparatus are invented by the man for reducing the work burden of the layman. Especially a lot of home appliances are introduced to save the valuable time of the working women. Because in the hurry bury world both husband and wife are working. So the modern women are not having sufficient time to do domestic work like washing their dresses. In this situation washing machine becomes an integral part of their home. The washing machine is not only to reduce their physical work but also it gives quality washing. In a competitive world many well reputed companies

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manufacture various brands of washing machine with varying features to cater to the diverse needs of consumer. The consumers are not in a position to identify the good brand of a washing machine because of its technical features. Consumer’s opinion about the washing machine is paramount importance, so a study of this kind helps the customer to know the features available with the various brands.

Rajarajan, M and Priyanga, T (2013) have written a paper on, “Consumer Behaviour Towards Selected Household Appliances in Ramanathapuram District”, the study revealed that lifestyle characteristics have a great impact on the purchase behavior of the clusters. In a consumption environment, a person chooses a product or a brand, which seems to possess a maximum possibility of the definition or elaboration of his life style identity. Alternatively, a person makes a choice in a consumption environment in order to define or actualize his life style, identify it through the products or brands chosen. This paper highlights that, life style determinants of consumer purchase behaviour towards durable products in Ramanathapuram district. This study concluded that, the consumer behavior have a great impact on the household appliances of the clusters. In a consumption environment, a person chooses a product or a brand, which seems to possess a maximum possibility of the definition or elaboration of his life style identity. Alternatively, a person makes a choice in a consumption environment in order to define or actualize his life style, identify it through the products or brands chosen. It can be assumed that the individual’s consumption behavior can be predicted from an understanding of how he represents his world to himself, if the details of his life style system are known. The household appliances like Electrical cooker, Electrical

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induction stove, Micro oven, Multipurpose mixer, Refrigerator, Wet grinder were once considered as life purchase but now people become more open to the idea of exchanging their old appliances for new ones. The relationship between consumer behavior and household appliances can thus be seen as an individual’s purchases and use of products and services where these choices constitute part of his life style expression and its reflection.

Vijayalakshmi, S and Mahalakshmi, V⁶ (2013) have made an attempt on, “An impact of consumer buying behavior in decision making process in purchase of electronic home appliances in Chennai (India): an empirical study”, which presents consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, and dispose products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society. It blends elements from psychology, sociology, social anthropology and economics. It attempts to understand the decision-making process of buyers, both individually and in groups. It studies characteristics of individual consumers such as demographics and behavioral variables in an attempt to understand people’s wants. It also tries to assess influences on the consumer from groups such as family, friends, reference groups, and society in general. This empirical study contributes to a vital comprehension of the impact of dissimilar factors on consumer buying behaviors. The numerous independent variables in electronic home appliances market in India are deeply analyzed. The factors that are affecting the consumer behavior in electronic home appliances markets in India have been taken as the empirical study of this research. The key findings of this study designates that, overall, the set of self determining variables are weakly associated with the self determining variable. The

profound analysis institutes those social and physical factors along with marketing mix elements are sturdily associated with consumer buying behavior. The consumer decision making rules discovery is made possible through these analyses. The results shall support the manufacturers and electronic home appliances retailers in comprehending consumer behavior and enhancing the satisfaction of the consumers.

**Srinivasa Rao Kasisomayajula**\(^7\) (2013) have written an article entitled, “A Study on Customer Preference of LG Lap-Top”, explains that the consumers’ tastes change rapidly. They want new models with the latest features. It is a very hard fight. The competition is on features differentiation, time to market and promotion, basically on every front. The dealer-push and brand pull, both plays a very crucial role. Hence the company concentrate on both fronts equally will have an upper hand over the others. Companies like *hp, Compaq, Lenovo, Sony* and *LG* have practiced this very well and leading on the sales front. The dealers have to observe that the consumers add a lot of value for after sales and service provided by the company while making a purchase decision. Today Management of Customers’ relationship is assuming more and more importance and company cannot afford to ignore this. Based on the above response, *hp* and *Compaq*, provide better customer service as compared to others.

**Kalaiselvi, K.T and Muruganandam, D**\(^8\) (2013) made a study on, “Consumer Attitude towards Promotional Schemes and Influence of Brand On Purchasing Home Appliances”, points out that understanding the consumer attitude is an important part of the marketing process to realize the challenges faced by

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marketers in comprehending the consumers’ mind. The marketers have to know why a buyer makes a purchase and the processes in the mind of the buyer which influence him or her in buying different products or services. Sales promotions are designed to have an immediate impact on sales. The main objective of this study is to find the impact of promotional schemes on consumer attitude and to find out the brand loyal consumers and also brand switchers of consumer home appliances only because of promotional offers. The methodology adopted for the study was descriptive research design. Sample size was 200. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, chi-square, ANOVA and Garrett’s Ranking were used for analysis. The results indicate that whatever attractive promotional schemes may be, “BRAND NAME” plays a dominant role in purchasing the home appliances. Maximum of the respondents have interest in some of the promotional schemes such as price discount, exchange scheme, warranty, etc. It is concluded that whatever attractive promotional schemes may be, “BRAND NAME” plays a dominant role in purchasing the home appliances. Maximum of the respondents have interest in some of the promotional schemes such as price discount, exchange scheme, warranty, etc. and also consumers prefer price discount as first, when compared to non-price schemes. Most of the consumers in Erode city, Tamilnadu, India have replaced their home appliances at Exchange offer period and also they are satisfied with the home appliances, purchased at the time of offer period.

Qianyu Dong and Tohru Futawatari\(^9\) (2013) made a study entitled, “The Study of Low-Carbon Policy Influence on Consumers’ Energy Efficiency Household Appliance Purchase Behavior”, explains that sequences of low carbon policies are aimed at reducing greenhouse gases and increasing energy efficiency also in the

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household sector in China. However, not all the policies are useful to guide consumers’ purchase behavior. Consumer’s environmental friendly purchase behavior is affected not only by personal influence but also by external environmental forces. While information provision policies may be effective in encouraging certain consumers to understand the energy efficiency household appliance, but not promote purchases; fiscal incentive may be more attractive during pre-purchase period (information collection); regulation instrument regards as the most effectively instrument to influence consumers’ energy efficiency household appliance purchase behavior, but useless to advance citizen’s environmental awareness. Analysis of a survey dataset of Chinese households observes considerable heterogeneity in terms of influence of three policy instruments, in line with our conjectures.

Paramanand Dasar, Hundekar, S.G. and Mallikarjun Maradi10 (2013) made a study entitled, “Consumer Behaviour on Consumer Durables With Reference To Bijapur District”, which explains that consumer is the nerve centre of the modern marketing, understanding his behaviour is quite essential for efficient and effective marketing management. Customers may state their needs and wants, but act otherwise. They may not be in touch with their deeper motivations. Indian consumer market is riding the crest of the country’s economic boom. Driven by a young population with access to disposable incomes and easy finance options, the consumer market has been throwing up staggering figures. Marketing problem enhanced from the consumers’ behaviour has a greater degree of similarity in behavioural problems relating to the consumer durables. Hence, the present study has been chosen to identify and ascertain the impact of consumer behaviour problems on the marketing of consumer durables in the fast growing Bijapur District (Karnataka State). The

consumer behaviour in relating to consumer durables is strongly affected by some economical, social, cultural and psychological factors; the research had been selected for an intensive empirical survey of the various factors influencing the buyer’s behaviour on consumer durables in Bijapur District (Karnataka State).

**Selvakumar, M and Jegatheesan, K**\(^{11}\) (2012) have written a paper on, “Brand Preference: A Study With Reference To Washing Machines”, explains that washing machine is one of the widely used home equipment which used to wash the cloths. India is one of the fast developing countries in the world. At present it is needed for both in the family to work. Therefore to simplify the washing work, the people need machine for washing. In washing machines number of varieties are there. Today, Indian consumers not only have a wide variety of brands to choose from, but also the option to buy a machine that is just right for them from amongst the several models available. Apart from these factors that they should consider the various wash programs, the wash mechanism and some convenience features that their machine should have in order to provide the maximum level of comfort. With this backdrop, this article makes an attempt to analyse the brand preference of washing machines.

**Azamat Maksudunov**\(^{12}\) (2012) made a study entitled, “Family Influence on Consumer Home Appliances Purchasing Behavior: An Empirical Study In Kyrgyzstan”, which explains that the economic, social and political changes in Kyrgyzstan, after independence in 1991, have created new business opportunities and forces not only for local entrepreneurs, but also for international marketers of goods and services. Economical, political and social changes influenced the values and life

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styles of consumers in the Kyrgyz Republic. Rising competition, consumer’s purchasing power, and new technological opportunities make enterprises become more market and consumer oriented in Kyrgyzstan. In this context the main purpose of the study is to investigate the family influence on consumer home appliances purchasing behavior in the Kyrgyz society. It is of importance for both local and foreign marketers to understand the family purchasing behavior in the Kyrgyz society after the social and economical transformation from 1991 onwards. The study consists of two parts. The first part includes general information of Kyrgyzstan, consumer purchasing process and the main factors effecting consumer home appliances purchasing behavior. The second part of the study represents an empirical study. A structured survey was carried out in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. The sample size was determined after classification according to age and gender. Participants were interviewed to identify the influence of family members on their purchasing decisions and behaviors. It was recognized that the results of this research will be useful not only for national firms but also for international companies.

Lhotakova, M and Olsanova, K\(^{13}\) (2012) in their study entitled, “The Role of Positioning in Strategic Brand Management – Case of Home Appliance Market”, explained that with growing competitiveness in the national as well as international markets, brands have increased importance in consumer decision making process. Brands help consumers to choose products that satisfy their needs, suit their emotions and help them demonstrate their place in the society. Current financial crises proved that strong brands can do well even in bad times. Global brands, which are ranked at the top as the world’s most valued brands, put a lot of efforts into positioning development, keeping it up-to-date and consistent across all brand’s activities.

Positioning is a broadly used tool of brand development but deep analyses and real cases of positioning development are rare. The objective of this paper is to analyse the existing theoretical fundamentals of positioning as well as day-to-day business practices and following that to formulate a positioning development model, a tool that will help marketers in brand management to create proper brand positioning and develop intended consumer brand perception.

Ratika Rastogia and Sonia Chaudhary\textsuperscript{14} (2012) made their study entitled, “Psychology and Buying Behaviour of Rural Consumers with Special Reference to Television, Washing Machine and Refrigerator in the Rural Areas of Meerut Region”, In this era of competition, understanding the consumer is a necessity for producers. The consumer behavior suggest how individual, groups and organization select, buy, use and dispose of goods, services, ideas or experience to satisfy their needs and wants. Consumer needs and preferences are continuously changing, attributing the changes to factors like demographics and lifestyles. Rural areas are scattered and it is next to impossible to ensure the availability of a brand all over the country. It is true that Consumer India is flourishing, but at the same time Indian Consumer has his roots deep into his traditions. This is what is called ‘The Indian Way’. This study was an attempt to examine the purchase motivators (viz.: Item of necessity, symbol of social status, marketing influence, brand reputation) for television, washing machine and refrigerator in the rural areas of Meerut region. This study has been helpful to the manufactures to identity the consumer perception, beliefs, and behaviors to introduce new strategies and increase the sales. This paper discussed about how to find the modern way for marketing implementation and value addition.

Fatimah Furaiji, Małgorzata Latuszynska, Agata Wawrzyniak\textsuperscript{15} (2012) have written a paper on, “An Empirical Study of the Factors influencing Consumer Behaviour in the Electric Appliances Market”, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the impact of different factors on consumer buying behaviour. It analyses the relationship between several independent variables, such as cultural, social, personal, psychological and marketing mix factors, and consumer behaviour (as the dependent variable) in the electric appliances market. The purpose of this study was to determine the factors affecting consumer preferences and behaviour in the electric appliances market in Iraq. The data employed to analyse the factors influencing consumers’ purchase decision-making processes were obtained through a questionnaire in December 2011 in Basra, a city in southern Iraq. The major findings of the study indicated that, overall, the set of independent variables are weakly associated with the dependent variable. However, the in-depth analysis found that social factors, physical factors, and marketing mix elements are strongly associated with consumer buying behaviour. These analysis made it possible to discover consumer decision-making rules. The results helped producers and retailers in understanding consumer behaviour and improving consumer satisfaction.

Arash Shahin, Ali Kazemi and Hamzeh Kazemi Mahyari\textsuperscript{16} (2012) in their study titled, “How Consumer’s Perception of Country of Origin Affects Brand Equity: A Case Study in Iran”, the main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of country of origin on brand equity, based on Aaker’s well-known conceptual framework in the household audio visual appliances from the viewpoint of


Masjedsoleyman city’s buyers, Khuzestan, Iran. For this purpose, a conceptual framework has been designed and relationships among its constructs (brand country of origin, brand equity dimensions) have been hypothesized. Data had been collected from a sample of 351 buyers and all hypotheses had been tested using structural equation modeling (SEM) and AMOS software. Results indicate that brand country of origin has a direct and significant effect on perceived quality, brand loyalty, brand association and brand awareness. It was suggested that marketers and producers should carefully consider the brand country of origin effects on brand equity dimensions when designing their branding strategies.

Padmaja K. Manoharan and R. Vijayalakshmi (2012) made a study entitled, “Role of Family Members in the Purchase of Television”, which concludes that, only by gaining a deep and comprehensive understanding of buyer behaviour, the marketing goals can be realized. Studies on family influence have revealed that a number of family members may be involved in a decision to purchase durable products. Family should be considered as a decision making unit and a buying center for recognizing product needs, obtaining information, evaluating product features and finally deciding on product selection. There are five distinct roles in a family buying decision process. They are - Initiator, Influencer, Decider, Buyer and User. Individual members of families often serve different roles in decisions that ultimately draw on shared family resources. The amount of influence exerted by the husband, wife and children will vary, depending on the stage of the decision process. This study was to determine the dynamics of family decision making, in which family members are involved, the roles they play and the member who has the major influence in the purchase of the selected product under study namely, Television. The primary

objective of this study was to explore the roles performed by the family members in the decision making process and to ascertain the transmission of authority, if any, in the family decision making while buying a television. Data had been collected from 200 respondents using a pre-structured questionnaire. Percentage analysis and Chi-square test had been applied to analyse the information gathered. The result depicted more of joint decision making during the various stages of buying a television.

Seyed Fathollah Amiri Aghdaie\textsuperscript{18} (2012) has written a paper on, “An Analysis of Impact of Brand Credibility and Perceived Quality on Consumers’ Evaluations of Brand Alliance”, the purpose of this study was to analyse the effects of brand credibility and perceived quality on consumers’ evaluation of brand alliance. This goal had been followed by examining the impact of constituent brands credibility on co-brand overall credibility, effect of perceived quality of the constituent brands on co-branded product perceived quality and constituent brands credibility and perceived quality on perceived price and purchase intention of co-branded product as the hypotheses of the study. This study could be considered as an applied research from purpose perspective and descriptive-survey with regards to the nature and method (type of correlation). Respondents to the questionnaire were randomly selected shoppers at one of the branches of Refah chain stores in Isfahan city. The study identified that credibility of constituent brands (i.e., brand $A$ and brand $B$ the allied brands) positively affect co-brand credibility, co-branded product perceived price and purchase intention. Results also show that perceived quality of constituent brands affect co-branded product perceived quality and perceived price. Furthermore, only perceived quality of one of constituent brands (brand $B$) has positive influence on

cobranded product purchase intention whereas the perceived quality of the other brand (brand B) has no effect.

Rajendraprasad, K. Hanagandi, Filipe Roduguese Melo and Shrinivas Patil\(^\text{19}\) (2012) in their study on, “A Relative Analysis on Customers’ Satisfaction of Microwave Oven: Study on Selected Companies”, explain that customer satisfaction is the key for company’s boom and sustainability of today’s competitive marketing world. A company ought to know their customers’ sense towards products and services. The study enables firms to scrutinize the changes in customer satisfaction, so that company can act swiftly to satisfy them. Appraisal of customer satisfaction for unrelenting perfection is a prerequisite for any company. Customer retention is also money-spinning; companies will amplify profits by having better customer loyalty and satisfaction. Customers who are discontented tell twice as many people about it as compared to contented ones. The Indian microwave oven manufacturing companies like Videocon, Onida are having convincingly good products and also they are priced comparatively less with foreign players. The market statistics in India indicate that foreign companies LG, Samsung, IFB have achieved greater heights. The Indian key players Onida and Videocon are not able to get a bigger pie. The study aimed to analyze the satisfaction level of customers towards microwave oven products of LG, Onida & Videocon. The sample size of 300 respondents was taken from three major cities like Hubli, Dharwad and Belgaum of North Karnataka. Thus it was analyzed with statistical tools like standard deviation, arithmetic mean and testing hypothesis with chi-square test.

Mohammad Hussein Askariazad and Maria Yousefian (2012) made a study on, “A Comparative Study of Consumer Attitudes in Iran and Dubai towards Marketing Mix Elements for Small Home Appliances”, this study examined the attitude of consumers of small home appliance products in Iran and Dubai towards four elements of the marketing mix, Product, Price, Place and Promotion. Empirical data were gathered from 393 respondents in Iran and Dubai. Statistical analysis conducted using SPSS 18 software to test the research hypotheses about the similarity of each element’s importance in the two studied countries. The findings revealed great insights about customers’ preferences in each country. This novel study was of particular interest for the academic researches and marketing practitioners seeking firsthand information about customer attitudes both in Iranian and Dubai markets.

Janaki, P and Premila, S (2012) in their study entitled, “A Study on Customer Involvement in Purchase of Home Appliance”, explains that consumer behavior is a complex, dynamic, multidimensional process, and all marketing decisions are based on assumptions about consumer behavior. The people consume things of daily use, and buy these products according to their needs, preferences and buying power. These can be consumable goods, durable goods, specialty goods or, industrial goods. Involvement can be viewed as the motivation to process information. To the degree that there is a perceived linkage between a consumers needs, goals, or values, and product knowledge, the consumer will be motivated to pay attention to product information. For this study four objectives were framed. The study was carried out with the sample size of 200 respondents’ selected based on proportionate random sampling with in Coimbatore city. The data were collected with interview

schedule analyzed and were using percentage weighted average score analysis of variances and factor analysis. Thus the study on consumer behavior with respect to involvement helps marketers to understand consumers’ needs so as to recognize the potential for development of change in consumer requirements. The study concluded by stating that customer involvement ultimately leads to attitude, attitude guides in achieving desired benefits and that in turn enhances the brand loyalty.

Matthew Leach, Michael Peters and Shane Fudge (2012) in their study entitled, “Efficient Household Appliances: A field study of the contribution of appliance replacement and consumer behaviour to reducing energy use - Research Study Report”, involved a four-month study of five households in the Borough of Woking in order to ascertain the role and interrelationship between technology and education in driving energy efficient consumer use of modern domestic electrical appliances. Energy consumption and user behaviour were monitored and a selection of the appliances replaced with newer models that were rated to have lower energy usage. The research had three complementary objectives: (1) Assessing the inherent energy efficiency of the appliances; (2) Exploring opportunities to use energy-saving features; and (3) Investigating opportunities and challenges to changing habits and practices around particular appliances. In all instances of appliance replacement, savings in energy use were achieved: fridge-freezer (combined fridge plus freezer) replacement yielded savings between 39% and 66%; for dishwashers and washing machines the savings were between 8% and 21%; and 39% was saved for a tumble-dryer. The study identified some disconnects between largely pro-environmental attitudes, and both stated behaviours and appliance usage - some of which are not currently maximising efficiency. This was qualified, in part, by a range of practical

issues (effectively ‘barriers’) that in the consideration of some participants, limits their ability to use certain appliances in more energy efficient ways, e.g. disability, old age, young children etc. In the ‘test week’ participants carried out a range of previously untested energy-efficient appliance practices. It became apparent that some of those barriers could in fact be quite easily overcome, with results that exceeded the expectations of some participants. For example, changing to a lower temperature wash, with an appropriate detergent, yielded reductions in energy use for washing machines of between 35% and 59% and for dishwashing of 19% to 34%. It should be noted that the cleaning results for one of the dishwashers were unsatisfactory; however this appliance was 8 years old. Overall, replacement of an existing appliance with a new energy-efficient model in all cases yielded improvement in terms of energy consumption. Changed practices in most cases also enabled reduced energy consumption with both existing and newer appliances. It was postulated that even greater savings are possible by combining some behavioural change with the purchase and use of new energy-efficient appliances: a case measured in this study, for example, showed combined savings of 48% when a 14+ year-old washing machine was replaced, and a low temperature wash and premium brand detergent were used. A larger study would be required to explore this area further, allowing incorporation of control groups and segmentation of the trial.

According to Mokhlis and Yaakoop\(^23\) (2012) there are countless factors that influence the way a consumer perceives a particular brand and prefers it over the others.

According to Sardar’s\(^24\) (2012) research study, Indian people give much higher value to brands. In India, a brand is due to quality because the unbranded

products have huge varying quality. Consumer surveys often show that quality is one of the most important decision factor for the consumers, if not the most important. He also explored that the aesthetic appeal of a product, which also symbolizes packaging and the product quality, is the main differentiating feature of the successful brands.

The mobile phone features are basically the set of competencies, services and applications that are offered to the users. These can be Bluetooth, camera, dual SIM, video-recorder, MP3 player, memory card reader, WiFi connectivity and so on and they vary from brand to brand.

Abdul Brosekhan, A. and Muthu Velayutham, C. (2011) in their study entitled, “An Empirical Study on Consumers Buying Behaviour towards Selected Home Appliance Products in Ramanathapuram”, which explains that management is the youngest of sciences and oldest of arts, and consumer behaviour in management is a very young discipline. Various scholars and academicians concentrated on it at a much later stage. It was during the 1950s, that marketing concept developed, and thus the need to study the behaviour of consumers was recognized. Marketing starts with the needs of the customer and ends with his satisfaction. When everything revolves round the customer, then the study of consumer behaviour becomes a necessity. It starts with the buying of goods. Goods can be bought individually, or in groups. Goods can be bought under stress (to satisfy an immediate need), for comfort and luxury in small quantities or in bulk. For all this, exchange is required. This exchange is usually between the seller and the buyer. It can also be between consumers.

Consumer behaviour can be defined as the decision-making process and physical activity involved in acquiring, evaluating, using and disposing of goods and services. This definition clearly brings out that it is not just the buying of goods/services that receives attention in consumer behaviour but, the process starts much before the goods have been acquired or bought. A process of buying starts in the minds of the consumer, which leads to the finding of alternatives between products that can be acquired with their relative advantages and disadvantages. This leads to internal and external research. Customer behavior study is based on consumer buying behavior, with the customer playing the three distinct roles of user, payer and buyer. Consumer buying behaviour has become an integral part of strategic market planning. We consume things of daily use, we also consume and buy these products according to our needs, preferences and buying power. These can be consumable goods, durable goods, specialty goods or, industrial goods. What we buy, how we buy, where and when we buy, how much we buy, all depends on our perception, self concept, social and cultural background and our age and family cycle, our attitudes, beliefs values, motivation, personality, social class and many other factors that are both internal and external to us. To understand the likes and dislikes of the consumer, extensive consumer research studies are being conducted. The study revealed that lifestyle characteristics have a great impact on the consumer buying behavior of the clusters. In a consumption environment, a person chooses a product or a brand, which seems to possess a maximum possibility of the definition or elaboration of his life style identity. Alternatively, a person makes a choice in a consumption environment in order to define or actualize his life style, identify it through the products or brands chosen. This paper highlights the life style determinants of consumer buying behaviour towards home appliance products in Ramanathapuram.
Jagwinder Singh (2011) in his study on, “A Comparison of Rural and Urban Buying of Consumer Durables”, explains that India is one of the fastest growing markets of the world. The potential not only lies in the urban India but in the rural India also. The study has been carried out to differentiate the buying behaviour of rural homes from that of urban homes. Three durable goods from three different product categories; Television (entertainment product), Refrigerator (home appliance), and an Automobile (two wheeler, motorcycle and car/jeep) have been selected for the study. A sample of 411 (204 from urban and 207 from rural areas) homes across the Punjab State (India) have been selected on the basis of non probability convenience sampling. Overall no significant differences could be observed between rural and urban consumers in terms of their; timing of purchase, buying the same brand of other durable, number of items, and duration of planning before buying. Habitat (rural or urban) has a relation with income for the timing of buying a television, refrigerator, and automobile except in case of buying of an automobile on festive/special occasions, where the income had no relation with habitat. There is a relation between habitat and income in terms of duration of planning for different time periods before the buying of a television and refrigerator. The habitat also reveals association with income in terms of planning for months before buying an automobile. No association has been observed between habitat and income in case of planning for a few days, a few weeks and years before buying an automobile.

Konstadinos Abeliotis, Niki Nikolaou and Eleni Sardianou (2011) have written a paper on, “Attitudes of Cypriot consumers on the ownership of household appliances: the case of the city of Limassol” the aim of this paper is to analyse the factors affecting consumers’ preferences towards the ownership of household appliances. The study is based on 186 survey responses from Cypriot households, and they are analysed econometrically using regression techniques. The analysis is based on a theoretical framework, which takes into account both demographic and economic factors behind households’ preference to energy-efficient appliances. The results show that consumers that buy energy-efficient appliances are highly educated and women. Household income is not a statistically significant variable of the probability to choose an appliance based on its energy efficiency characteristics. On the contrary, income and number of persons per household affect the number of appliances that consumers own.

Sarika And Lohana (2011) in their study entitled, “A Study of the Consumer Behaviour for Household Appliances with Special Reference to Nanded City”, aims to analyze the users want in a smart kitchen, so that intend centered on the Smart Kitchen can be realized in a quality smart living space. This enables designers to address the characteristics and requirements of clients and design adequate user interface and functionality, and let the users get closer to have better and more convenient products. The study adopted focus group interview to collect the main users’ expectation about the Home appliances to help the designer to deeply understand their needs. Secondly, purposive sampling to conduct the research; the

sample primarily came from the Nanded city of Maharashtra. The selected samples were the main users of home kitchen and their houses had to be equipped. The research was to analyze the users’ behavioral approach, the Smart Kitchen’s importance and degree of demands. The study utilized importance-and-degree of demands analysis, to evaluate the demands of the Smart Kitchen’s equipments to be the priority for the designer to design the Modern Household appliances. The results from focus group interview indicate that the difference of kitchen usage between housewives and career women could be the reference of market segmentation and the base of making marketing strategy. Under the lifestyle of modern business society, people are always busy, family members need time and space to interact, and kitchen is therefore the place for dining and parent-kid’s interaction and communication. The results from questionnaire survey indicated that the importance and extent of demand on functions and equipments of the Smart Kitchen is positively pair wised correlated. The main user stated functions could be reference for the designer’s when designing the system.

Kedarshukla and Amol Rault\textsuperscript{29} (2011) conducted a study on “Emerging Trends and Challenges in Air-conditioning Industry in India”. The objective of the study was to know the marketing position of the Air conditioning Company in India and to analyses the factors influencing the purchase of Air conditioners in India. The data were collected from various Air conditioning companies in India. The SWOT analysis was used for statistical analysis. It was concluded that Air conditioning industry has a huge growth potential taking cognizance of higher push on infrastructure development in India. There are many players in the market to fulfill the demand but the required techno-managerial talent pool has become a scare

commodity. Also, the research focus of this industry is lesser as compared to other industry.

Amutha, G. Sulthana, M. and Nasrin (2011) in their study entitled, “A Study on Replacement Attitude of Consumers Towards Home Appliances”, explains that attitudes and preferences of the consumers are changing vastly in almost all the sectors and it has become the challenge to the manufactures to cope up with the change. Home appliances are facing tough times because of heavy competition and changing tastes and preferences of the end users. This research examines consumer replacement attitude towards home appliances and the ambivalence that may accompany such decisions. The home appliances chosen for the study were Television, Washing Machine and Refrigerator. Data’s were collected through questionnaire method and the number of respondents was 140 of which most of them were women. This study was an attempt to examine the reasons for replacing the home appliances, to view the sales promotional strategy and after sales service. The study is based on the convenient sampling method. The analysis made were Paired test, ANOVA and Correlation. The study concludes that people in Chennai city are highly aware about different brands of home appliances and their attitude changes due to various reasons such as updated technology, improve status, influence by family and friends. The study is most suitable for the present environment as the world is moving to an advancement change in almost all the sectors.


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questionnaire survey of residents in Chongqing, China”, Promoting the use of energy efficient household appliances is one of the important approaches in building an energy saving society. Government policies play important role in this process. The research findings reveal that Chinese consumers have relative high awareness of energy challenges and of Chinese government incentive polices in a general level, and a high rate of agreeing that people should change their behaviors. However, the respondents lack clear information and knowledge of these challenges, of government policies, and of the roles they can play for energy saving. Sacrificing comfort levels in order to achieve energy savings is not likely a choice, especially for younger people. The policy implications of these findings are discussed.

Lilly J\textsuperscript{32} (2010) in her study entitled, “Customer Perception and Preference towards Branded Products with special references to Television Sets”, with the objectives of evaluating the customers perception of the promotional factor of purchase towards branded products and also to know whether the demographic variables of the respondent have influence on brand preference of television sets. The primary data has been collected through questionnaire with sample size of 200 respondents. The statistical tools namely two way analysis, ‘t’ test and chi-square analysis were used to test hypothesis. The study found that the demographic variables such as age, gender, educational qualification, occupational status and monthly income had impact on the customer’s perception towards branded products. In case of customer’s preference towards television brand, all the demographic variables except nature of family have significant relationship in brand preference of television set. In a family, the role of the spouse was considered to be the most important in seeking information about television brands and while selecting branded television set.

Technical features, investment, awareness about brands in the television set were considered. Sustaining preference is an important step of the brand loyalty.

Saravanam.S (2010) conducted “A Study on Consumer Behavior of Women with Special Reference to Durable Goods in Coimbatore City”. The study has been conducted with the objective of analyzing the factors influencing women’s purchase behavior. The primary data were collected from customers through questionnaire with the sample size of 250 respondents. The descriptive statistics, weighted scaling technique and ranking technique were used and hypotheses were tested. The study concluded that the modern market is highly competitive and transitional. The prominence gained by an individual consumer in marketing decision making compels the marketers to look at the components of the marketing mix through the customers eyes.

Wong Foong Yee and Tan Hwee Xian (2010) have written a paper on “Price Sensitivity-Consumer Satisfaction Relationship towards Electrical Appliances”, which explains that consumer satisfaction has been long recognized in marketing thought and practice as a central concept as well as important goal of all business activities. While price sensitivity, has been observed as an important element affecting diffusion of products and services which irrefutable, proved to correlate in consumer satisfaction with other efficiency dimensions. By incorporating price information into the consumer satisfaction framework, this study was aimed to identify the relationship that is germane between the variables, and to investigate the influence of demographical characteristics, effect of ads, consumer loyal and disloyal behaviours towards price sensitivity, by adopting electrical appliances as the medium

of this study. Itemized rating scales and multiple choices instrument were used in the questionnaire survey, by gathered opinions and preferences of a total of 201 respondents in Klang Valley, Selangor, Malaysia, through a quota sampling technique. The variables were tested via Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and the results indicated that price sensitivity-consumer satisfaction relationship is significant in a positive way on electrical appliances purchasing. Meanwhile, effect of ad, consumer loyal and disloyal behaviours also proved to correlate with price sensitivity. Nevertheless, a hypothesis test on these variables via multiple regression analysis is only partially accepted, as the relative importance of affect of ads is below the significant level. As for demographic factors, age is proved to have a negative relationship with price sensitivity and consumer satisfaction whereas other demographic factors indicate differences and indifferences with price sensitivity and consumer satisfaction. In sum, consumer satisfaction depends on value to some extend, which in turn depends on price. The descriptive and inferential analysis of this study provides discernible trends on consumer purchasing behaviours in electrical appliances and a lucid explanation between variables proposed in the study. It also presents a concise and simple measure of price sensitivity that may open the door for more careful and empirical study of other aspects of price sensitivity. At the same time, this study provides a simple idea to marketers, researchers, advertisers and other parties who may interest to know more about the price sensitivity-consumer satisfaction relationship studies.

Hitesh D. Vyas\(^35\) (2010) in his study on “Consumer Purchase of Consumer Durables: A Factorial Study”, explains that many things that were considered as luxuries till about ten years ago have become necessities for most people today. And

in case of home goods consumption it has happened also, as scooter were luxury at once becomes necessity now. The present study is focused on a study of important factors and sources of information in purchase of consumer durables. This is an exploratory study using primary data collected through purposive sampling method with an adequate sample size of 100 home respondents of Bhavnagar city. It reveals that Company or Brand Name, guarantee / warrantee, Price, and After Sales Service are the important factors in purchase of durables. While, sources of important information, authorized dealers’ shop, technical expert advice, role of TV as media and influence of friends, relatives and neighbors were also important in purchase of durables by respondents.

The results of the study of Mack and Sharples\(^\text{36}\) (2009) also pointed out the significance of features in predicting mobile phone choice. Their experimentation indicated that usability is an important element in choice of a mobile phone but not as much as the users believed it would be. In reality, other such attributes especially features, visuality and cost might be of top priority when making a product choice.

Siew-Yong Lam and Chee-Keong Choong\(^\text{37}\) (2007) in their study entitled, “A Study on Malaysian Consumers Perception Towards Quality of Chinese Electrical Home Appliances”, which explains that although there are many Chinese electrical home appliances in the Malaysian market, the perception towards Chinese products is always very negative. The study, therefore, aims to examine the perceptions of the Malaysian consumers towards Chinese electrical home appliances. The research findings suggest that the country-of-origin and product durability are important


evaluation criteria for the Malaysian consumers. The country-of-origin effect
influences the country image to a great extent. The Chinese products have a negative
image. So, Chinese firms should raise the quality of the products in order to set a
higher price in the Malaysian market. Moreover, it is suggested that China’s electrical
home appliance producers need to be more concerned about the quality issues in order
to satisfy the Malaysian consumers’ need and gain a positive image among the
Malaysian consumers. Besides, local producers also are advised to ensure and
enhance their product quality since the quality of the product is a critical component
of long-term success. First Western companies entered China as early as 1979 when
Deng Xiaoping announced the famous ‘Open Door’ policy, and these brave pioneers
were followed by successive waves of optimistic investors. As the Chinese market
opened, many investors from various countries actively entered into the Chinese
market. During the 1990s, China attracted around US$ 350 bn of FDI with joint
ventures being the preferred mode of entry. Millions of cheap workers and tens of
thousands of new engineers pouring out of Chinese universities and rapid economic
growth attracted foreign investors to expand their business as well as shift their
productions to China. According to the research done by Guntalee and Savika (2003),
the average annual growth rate of GNP was about 9.4% from 1979 to 2003, which
made China the fastest growing economy in the world. China contributed 27.7% to
world economic growth in 2003, exceeding that of the United States, whose
contribution in the same year was 16.3%. Surprisingly, China’s import and export in
2003 reached a record high since 1995, surging 39.9% and 34.6% respectively, and
the country has become the world’s third largest importer and the fourth largest
exporter (Guntalee and Savika, 2003). The Chinese exports to other Asian nations
increased as companies from around the region moved their lower-end manufacturing
processes to China. For instance, China’s two-way trade with Malaysia jumped more than 50% in 2002, propelled by a 54% rise in People’s Republic of China (PRC) exports.

**Isiklar and Buyukozkan** (2007) carried out a study on users’ preferences by evaluating the mobile phone options. Different mobile features namely physical features, functionality, technical characteristics, brand choice and ‘customer excitement’, were compared as a multi-criteria approach for decision making. The results showed that functionality was the most dominant factor among all three phones under consideration while the ‘customer excitement’ and the basic requirements were found to be least influencing factors.

**Newman, Joseph, W and Werbel, Richard, A** (2005) in their study on, “Multivariate Analysis of Brand Loyalty for Major Household Appliances”, present two different measures of brand loyalty through an analysis of survey data by MCA in which six hypotheses are tested. A measure based on brand deliberation as well as brand repurchase appeared.

**Karjaluoto et al.** (2005) investigated the consumer choice in the context of the mobile phone industry in Finland using a sample of 196 respondents. Twenty-four questions were used to assess consumer motivations in mobile phone choice. Seven estimated factors influencing mobile phone choice were: innovative services, multimedia, design, brand and basic properties, outside influence, price, and reliability. He explains that these accounted for about 70% of the total variance.

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Wee\textsuperscript{41} (2003) conducted a study to identify the factors affecting adoption of new product innovations in the consumer electronic industry of Singapore using qualitative (focus group discussions) and quantitative research techniques (survey with 151 respondents in the 16 - 35 year age group). The researcher considered two brands, the Mini Disc and the MP3 Portable player. Using factor analysis, seven factors were identified as critical in effecting adoption of a player: relative advantage, perceived risk, complexity, compatibility, observability, image and trialability. Of these factors, relative advantage conferred by the player was the most important factor that consumers valued in their adoption decisions.

Kotler\textsuperscript{42} (2003) Consumer surveys often reveal that quality is one of the most important decision factors for consumers, if not the most important. Product quality stands for the ability of a product to perform its functions. Given that literature on brand choice in the dairy products is relatively sparse, the relevant research hypotheses were guided by the above studies. It has been hypothesized that choice or preference of a dairy brand is influenced by:

1. Price of brand
2. Product quality
3. Brand design (packaging)

Yun et al.\textsuperscript{43} (2003) by means of “look-and feel” consumer survey explored 50 distinct mobile phones. All the 78 participants assessed the mobile phones design based on a scale of perceived image/impression attributes including attractiveness,
texture, luxuriousness, colorfulness, rigidity, simplicity, harmoniousness, delicacy, salience and overall satisfaction. The image/impression qualities of the products were found to be closely related to human-product interface measurements along with overall product shape. Post-purchase services, also known as after-sale services, mean any assistance which the seller provides to a buyer after a particular product is sold. It is a viable and important means of building brand loyalty through customer satisfaction and generating repeated customer purchase behavior. It basically involves the warranty or guarantee package offered to the customers based on the periodic or required maintenance or repair of the equipment (product) by its manufacturer during the time period of warranty.

Keller\textsuperscript{44} (2002) in his study said that the brand is the sum total of all elements of the marketing mix. Brands can also be explained based on their elements “those trademark-able devices that serve to identify and differentiate the brand (e.g.; brand names, logos, symbols, characters, slogans, jingles and packages)”.

Doyle\textsuperscript{45} (2002) Some of the important product decisions in any marketing context are product, variety, product performance, product features, product design, product presentation, sizes etc.

Hundal\textsuperscript{46} (2001) in his study titled, “Consumer Behavior in Rural Market: A Study of Durables”, investigated the role of family members in purchase decisions of durables such as fridge, TV, air-coolers and washing machines. His findings projected that product selecting decisions in rural families were mostly made by spouses together but they were highly influenced by children.

**Dorsch** et al.\(^{47}\) (2000) The relative importance of each factor depends on the nature of industry under consideration, location and social characteristics of the consumers of the different brands. Consumer choice behaviour has also been studied using the five-step process step (need–information search–evaluation of alternatives–purchase–post-purchase evaluation) problem solving paradigm or through the progression of consumer choice from a product class to brand choice.

**Li and Houston**\(^{48}\) (1999) employed a sample of 1200 consumers in Taiwan to determine factors underlying choice of market innovations. Price level, product variety and marketing communications factors were identified as promoters of choice. The promotional (marketing communications) mix has various elements advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, exhibitions sponsorship, personal selling, word of mouth, merchandising, public relations, relationship marketing, corporate image and reputation etc.

According to **Wilson** et al.\(^{49}\) (1999) after-sale services may include six activities namely: routine maintenance, installation, parts supply, training, emergency repair and software services.

According to **Jordan**\(^{50}\) (1998) usability appears as the influential factor regarding whether people build a negative or positive belief about a product. The eye catching display of stylish and uniquely designed mobile phones has a great appeal to young consumers. Having stylish mobile phones has become a fashion statement and status symbol for youths and teenagers. The decision making of youths regarding the

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brand choice of mobile phones can also be seen to be largely influenced by the stylish outlook mobiles.

**Malathi**\(^51\) (1998) in her study entitled, “Consumer’s Brand Choice Behaviour for Television in Salem District”, emphasized the major findings that Consumer awareness about the brand is created through advertisement and dealer’s contact. Further her study focused that durability, brand image price after sales service are the main reasons for preferring particular brand.

**De Chernatony and MacDonald**\(^52\) (1998) in an attempt to emphasize the increased value that accrues to the consumer by buying the established brand rather than a generic or commodity product, offer the following definition of a brand: “A successful brand is an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant, unique added values which match their needs most closely. Furthermore its success results from being able to sustain those added values in the face of competition”.

**Nilson**\(^53\) (1998) in his study titled, “Competitive Branding-Winning the Marketplace with Value Added Brands”, tells that the price has a vital role in consumer’s purchase decision or in other words, we can say that most of consumer buying behavior and choices are determined by price. It can act as a dominant and, in fact, the most important factor affecting the decision making and purchase process. For youths, price can be a key factor of attraction. When selecting out of varying mobile phone models, consumers usually prefer such brands with which they have familiarity. Price of the mobile phone has been identified as a key factor in the choice

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of mobile phones, especially among the young consumers. The product’s price may vary based on economic conditions and perceptions of the consumers. It may affect the brands’ perceived value. Price is used by many of the consumers as an indication of the brands’ quality which is a vital factor in the purchase decision.

Venkteshwar and Rao\textsuperscript{54} (1997) made a study entitled, “Marketing of TV. sets – A study of external and internal influence on consumer behavior”, focused on tracing and identifying the elements in consumer decision-making; the research has studied 200 urban workingwomen belonging to different occupation, educational and income groups. This study observed television as a major source of information, for 65.5% consumers. While group forces affects 50% respondents. Surprisingly 45%-employed women still feel radio as a source of information. In purchase of consumer durables, 53% would decide for brand. Price is relatively more important factor and husband and wife take decision jointly.

Park et al.,\textsuperscript{55} (1996) in their article stated that, brand is symbolic and functional attributes that the market place associates with the brand. Symbolic attributes are those that satisfy internally generated needs for self-enhancement, role position, group membership or ego identification, whereas, functional brand attributes solve an externally generated consumption related problem.

Ambler and Styles\textsuperscript{56} (1996) describe two different views of defining a brand. The first is the product plus view, when the brand is seen as an addition to the product, and in this view a brand is also called an identifier. The second is the holistic view that communicates the focus on the brand itself that is considered to be much more important than the product.

more than just the product. The brand is said to be the sum total of all elements of the marketing mix.

Rogers\(^57\) (1995) in his study observed that various factors influence the consumers when they are making a choice among alternate brands. These factors consist of price, perceiver risk, compatibility, triablity, relative advantage, complexity, image and observability. In this research article, the influence of following factors on brand choice has been measured: price, quality, features, family and friends’ recommendations, brand image, innovative features, promotion effectiveness, celebrity endorsement, user friendliness, stylish appearance, post-purchase services.

Cooper\(^58\) (1993) noted that most new innovations come with high risks as most of them failed in the marketplace creating the need for marketers to have a clear understanding of success factors in brand adoption.

Mujahid-Mukhtar, E and Mukhtar, H\(^59\) (1991) in their study entitled, “Female Participation in Home Decision-Making: An Analysis of Consumer Durables’ Acquisition in Pakistan”, has studied the role of decision making for home durables: good measure of women’s power within a home in Pakistan. It is their influence in the purchase of new home improvement technology goods. The study identified various cultural and economic factors that affect women’s decision making power: urban women, women in nuclear families, educated women, and working women generally have more decision making power than rural women, women in extended families, illiterate women, and unemployed women.


Phillips\footnote{Phillips (1988), "Buying a brand: what you can't see can hurt you". Design Management Journal, winter, pp. 43-46.} (1988) in his study has described that a brand can be described as a "trademark that communicates a promise".


Levitt\footnote{Levitt, T. (1983), “After the Sale is Over”, Harvard Business Review, Vol. 61, No. 5, pp. 87-93} (1983) Marketers have found that after-sale services are one of the way through which they can enhance the customer perception about product quality.

Zajonc and Markus\footnote{Zajonc, Robert B., & Markus, Hazel. (1982). Affective and cognitive factors in preferences, Journal of Consumer Research, 9, 123.} (1982) in their study titled, “Affective and cognitive factors in preferences”, explains that the notion of preference has been considered in different disciplines such as economists, psychologists, sociology. However there is no commonly agreed definition of preference among these disciplines. For example, economists believe that preferences are exogenous, stable, and known with adequate precision and are revealed through choice behaviour. The economic view of preference had been criticised for assuming that preferences are stable and endogenous. An individual’s preferences are not stable and can be endogenous or exogenous. In marketing literature, the word preference means the desirability or choice of an alternative. Preferences are above all behavioural tendencies.