CHAPTER VI
DISCUSSION

Rising Indian middle class and cultural branding:

To support the rising needs of the consumers, marketing and advertising needs also arises (Parameswaran, 2001). In India a quarter of the population lives in the below poverty line in urban and rural areas. The population in India is more than one billion, and out of this the middle class is half a billion, after combining rural and urban areas (NCEAR, 2005). The Indian middle class has gained upward mobility by attaining good disposable income and education, and it is reflected in their personal life. After 1991, India turned fast into consumer society (Bijapurkar, 2014). To tap consumers in competitive era, companies focus on those aspects which are locally and culturally accepted.

Venkatesh (1995) describes the ethno-consumerist approach through the relationship of Nano brand with Indian value system. He determines Nano as a people’s car and links its design with Indian culture. In his paper the data were collected from field and text view. For text information, professional knowledge was considered, like, Tata earned their name in automobile industry by collaborating with Mercedes, and developed reputation and trusted brand in Indian market. Tatas advertise Nano with cultural branding and represent Nano as an emotional and rational product. The emotional aspects are described as people’s car, and rational aspects were highlighted through “affordable passenger car”. Similarly, the Indian retailers relate modern retail image with Indian culture and transform the traditional store image into modern brand store image, by changing the store wooden door with glass door, products hanging are changed with mannequin, and transform the traditional store looks into modern store looks through lighting, ceiling, etc., which motivate consumers to shift from rational aspects of store selection to cultural or emotional aspects.
Types of Ethnicity

Hirschman (1981) described that ethnicity is based on individual subjectivity, and defined it as self-perception, and its usage is good for cross-cultural behavioural research, and it is considered as a best label for measuring ethnicity, because it helps to represent individual internal beliefs and ethnic affiliation (Cohen, 1978). Hirschman (1981) calculated ethnicity through ethnic group information and religious information. In the past 20 years ethnicity is considered in four major approaches, which include “(1) ethnicity conceived as a primordial phenomenon, (2) ethnicity conceived as an epiphenomenon, (3) ethnicity conceived as a situational phenomenon, (4) ethnicity as a purely subjective phenomenon” (Isajiw, 1992). In the present study, the focus is on subjective phenomenon. The primordial approach is the oldest one which described that ethnicity is assigned to an individual during birth (Geertz, 1963; Isaacs, 1975). The second epiphenomenon approach was described by Hector (1978) which determined that society consists of two sectors, center and periphery. It stated that immigrants at periphery are concerned to maintain their culture, and offer little to centre. The third situational approach is based on rational choice theory, which stated that individuals change their ethnicity as per the advantage they get from it (Royce, 1982). The fourth approach is subjective ethnicity which considered ethnicity as a social and psychological phenomenon that develop a perception of ‘us and them’ among individuals. The ethnicity is a fuzzy term, some researchers conceptualize ethnicity as objective variables in which socio-demographic variables are considered or some considered it as a subjective variable. Some researchers consider ethnicity as a multi-dimensional concept (Sekhon and Szmigin, 2005). Other researchers differentiate ethnicity on the basis of formative and reflexive indicators. In one study, the author determined two components of ethnicity named as common origin (permanent trait) and shared cultural trait (flexible and influence on consumption), and consider media usage as formative indicator and ethnic origin as reflexive, because of its flexibility, and consider consumption as a formative indicator of ethnicity (Hui, Laroche and Kim, 1998).
Subjective ethnicity and store choice.

Subjective ethnicity has positively strong relation with store choice (H1). The subjective ethnicity talks about subjectivity of individuals which in turn influence store selection criteria programmed by consumers. Consumer analyzed many socio and psychological parameters in monitory and non-monitory terms before the final selection of the store and subjectivity plays an important role in the parameters prioritized by consumers. The subjectivity in store selection act as a perception which influences store choice parameters (the subjective beliefs are influenced by their ancestral norms, customs etc. (Weber, 1968), and subjective meanings are also derived from symbolic meanings (Lee and Um, 1992)), the more is the exposure of the parameters the more stronger is the perception in selecting a particular store. Like the concept of Moschis (1987), who talk about exposure in dyadic relations and of Styven (2010) who talks about role of subjective knowledge in enhancing experiences toward product consumption. The subjectivity describes consumers feelings and emotions towards store choice parameters which describes the objectivity, on which subjectivity is based. Same notion is try to explained by Jamal and Goods (2001). So, it is emphasized on the basis of hypothesis that subjective ethnicity marks a significant effect on the store selection criteria prioritized by consumers.

Subjective ethnicity and Shopping Behaviour.

Subjective ethnicity has positively strong relationship with shopping behaviour (H2). Subjective ethnicity influences shopping behaviour which describes that subjective parameters related to ethnicity effect in a combined fashion and it depends on the way the consumers shop (ethnicity act as a social process which builds cultural differences (Mehta and Belk, 1991) and influences consumption decisions (Costa and Bamossy, 1995)). Different individuals have different socio-psychological indicators which make individuals to behave differently in different situations and also affects on their shopping behaviour. Different individuals have different mindset, different cognitive memories which remain stored in their sub-conscious mind. These cognitive memories have different patterns in individual mind related to various things. The cognitive memories are formed and built in individual mind because of various individual backgrounds like
the education, gender, age, income, caste, class, and exposure to the outer world. The cognitive memories related to various things or issues work simultaneously in individual mind which affect on their shopping behaviour.

**Shopping behaviour and store choice**

Shopping behaviour has positively strong relationship with store choice (H3). Shopping behaviour influences store choice, because there is always a difference in individual preference for store choice. Social affiliations impact shopping attitudes through the medium of self-actualization (Shim and Eastlick, 1998). The stronger the obligation towards symbolic artifacts, the stronger is the preference for a particular store (Carlson, 1991). Different individuals have different criteria of shopping and have different parameters in mind before selecting a store. In a collective society like India, social class plays an important role in selecting a store. The middle class consumers like to shop at weekends or at evening hours after their job finishes, but this happens especially for necessary products, during that time they prefer to visit at pretested stores for which they have well past experiences to shop in a limited time period. Otherwise, during normal shopping, middle class consumers prefer to visit those stores which are of their standard, especially those stores which suit their social class. They don’t prefer to shop at low standard stores (in terms of product quality, ambiance, price, and store location), because they feel that at those shops only low class consumers shop, and by shopping at those stores, their social prestige might get affected.

**Determinants of Subjective Ethnicity**

**Cultural Intelligence:**

Culture intelligence positively influences subjective ethnicity (H4). The author discussed the experiences of consumers in cross-cultural environment (Davies et al., 2004). When consumers travel in different cultural environments they experience different consumer lifestyles and symbolic systems. It includes their habits, dress codes, languages and social expectations (Joy and Wallendorf, 1996). Along with that consumers also experience their value systems, but response to new cultural values are context and socially bound (Sparrow, 2000). The culture and intelligence works as per
individual sociocultural context (Sternberg, 1999). The level of intellectual skills in a particular culture describes its intelligence in solving a particular problem (Sternberg et al., 2000). Every culture has its own level of intelligence in doing arithmetic operations (Murtaugh, 1985).

Culture intelligence influences individual socio-psychology. It describes individual cultural awareness during cross-cultural interaction, and describes the strategies designed by individuals to adapt them in social environment. It also describes individual knowledge of norms and practices acquired while interacting with people from different cultures and getting adapt in his social interactions. The cultural norms and values shown by an individual depends on his relation with other person (may be from in-group and out-group). It also highlights individual mental make to learn and function according to culturally diverse situations, and the mental motivational capabilities of individual influence his social interactions. It also exhibits individual capability to use verbal and non-verbal actions while interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds and the usage of verbal and non-verbal actions influence his social interactions.

**Emotional intelligence:**

Emotional intelligence positively influences subjective ethnicity (H5). Ego focused emotions influence cultures in individualistics and in collective societies (Ekman and Friessen, 1971) which indirectly influence subjective ethnicity. Self confidence has been hypothesized as an antecedent to subjective product knowledge (Park, Mothersbaugh, Feick 1994), and it is a determinant of product-specific self-confidence (Locander and Hermann 1979) and works, as a distinguishing characteristic of market-segment profiles (Darden and Ashton 1974). Consumer self-confidence reflects subjective evaluation of one’s ability to generate positive experiences as a consumer in the market place (Adelman, 1987). Goparaj and Sharma (2009) described the usage of EQ competences in social service organizations. Indian society is characterized by traditional values like humility, affinity, respect for wisdom and age, spiritual harmony with nature or cosmos, cooperation, generosity and cultural pluralism (cited by Sharma,
In Indian Vedas, Indian philosophical thoughts have been transferred from generations as early as 3000 BC.

The spiritual laws and principles related to this issue inscribed and listed in Indian scripts are the laws of karma which express that individual thoughts and actions are developed by individual himself and its usage depends on individual ability, which is considered as motivational achievement in the West. The law of Yagna motivates to give up something for someone for mutual gain or create win-win situation for both parties. The law of Yoga indicates association with self or supreme (Goparaj and Sharma, 2009). Indians consider intelligence as “buddhi” and further divide it into positive “buddhi” which talks about prosperity and negative “buddhi” talks about misery (Srivastava and Misra, 2000). In Indian context emotional intelligence goes beyond the rational and logical concepts and enlightens one-self towards realizing its responsibilities towards self and others (Baral and Das, 2004). Relationships are considered as an important element in Indian traditions. Mothers in India do sacrifices for their children which constitute emotional devotion toward their kids (Kakkar, 1978). A person who has the knowledge of the self has been considered as “yogi” in Indian ancient literature. The person who has attained that level is emotionally stable and gives equal importance to interpersonal and intrapersonal relations.

The emotional intelligence focuses on individual talent, and helps to understand the complexity of an individual capability. It describes the personality of the society and then links it to individual performance. It defines the self confidence of an individual while interacting with others. The representation of individual in the society is described through his law of karma, the way an individual thinks about himself and about others, and turns every interaction into a beneficial transaction, builds good relation with others and the outcome in individual personality bears influence on his social interaction with others.

Practical intelligence:

Practical intelligence positively influences subjective ethnicity (H6). People do negotiation in every culture and in every phase of life and in every sphere (Shell, 1999) and the intensity of negotiation varies from cultures and define the magnitude of
subjective attached to it. Negotiation is considered as a process where an individual tries to solve the conflicting goal (Carnevale and Pruitt, 1992). Brett (2000) considered negotiation as a cultural process, and has different negotiation patterns in different cultures, and also described the values/beliefs which are intrinsic to that culture. Kopelman and Olekalns (1999) described that various researchers worked on identifying the effect of culture on negotiation process and its outcome. In an interdependent world it is important for managers to have good managerial skills (Redding, 1993). In cross cultures cognitive processes are similar, but their demonstration varies (Nisbett et al., 2001). Indians are considered as collective in nature, but behave as individualistic when they interact with out-group members (Sinha, 2000), and the boundary of their in-groups is limited to extended family and the caste community, but sometimes it is difficult to get cooperation from the extended family (Roland, 1990). Rubin et al., (1994) considered negotiation in four terms (1) one part wins the negotiation terms (2) a mutual agreement happen (3) no agreement (4) benefit for both parties. The outcome of any negotiation depends on rigidness, softness, motivational achievement level, and psychological biasness of parties (Brett et al., 1999). The ambitious level of the negotiator defines the level of success or failure of negotiation. The psychological bias during the negotiation evoke the negative emotions in the mind of negotiator and have effect on the success of the negotiation, and the motivational level of Indians for negotiation is very high, which sometimes proves good or sometimes bad for negotiation among Indians. High motivational level protects the negotiator from guilty of negotiation (Filley, 1975), and the negative side of high motivation is that it increases the time period of negotiation (Bezerman, et. al., 1985). Knee (1998) noted that Indian managers are considered very clever by foreign managers, and they can easily take more advantages from them than any other managers from other south Asian countries with whom they trade (Knee, 1998). It also seems that Indian negotiator do not try to re-adjust their expected negotiation level, but try to mould the other member in negotiation toward the end (Brett, et. al., 1999). So it might happen that Indian managers get better deals and in the other way it may happen that the process of deal gets extended. In the negotiation process, over expectation sometimes creates psychological trouble for the negotiator, because he cannot access the right way to negotiate with other member in the negotiation
(Vertzberger, 1984). So, with high expectation and high rigidity in expectation during negotiation, it might lead the negotiation toward high emotional state, and this may lead to blockage in the goal attainment (Johnson-Laird, et. al., 1996). Sometimes, it seems that failure lead to Indian negotiator towards dejection related emotions, in which an individual try harder to get the deals (Kumar, 1997). In negotiations it is important that the other member in the negotiation is from out-group or in-group. Members of the same caste (in-group) get more favour, both he and negotiator try to maintain good relations and show care for each other (Sinha and Kanungo, 1997).

Negotiation is a process which helps conflicting parties to solve their problems (Carnevale and Pruitt, 1992). In Indian interdependent culture, it is very important for people to have negotiation skills. In a negotiation process, best negotiation proves as beneficial and, whereas, its prevention leads to minimizing the profitable transaction. The negotiation happens in many phases like negotiation between individuals, negotiation between groups, or negotiation within a group. The negotiation process may also get affected by contextual variables like “(a) the nature of the organization (like, in India most of the business organization are family owned and the business decisions are centralized); (b) nature of the opponent (i.e. a member of the in-group (same caste) or the out-group (other caste) play an important role to each other (Sinha and Kanungo, 1997). Indians give importance to members of out-group in negotiation process); (c) task complexity (describes that (i) a priori integrative potential inherent in the negotiation situation; (ii) that nature of the negotiation (transactional vs. dispute settlement negotiations); and (iii) accountability pressures confronting negotiators); the lower the potential of integrative priori, the lower is positive outcome, and transactional negotiations includes new negotiation between parties, in contrast, dispute resolution resolve pre-existing conflicts (Brett, 2000), and are difficult to handle due to the presence of emotions and (d) individual difference variables (relation of individuals with members of the out-group have difference in opinions)” (Kumar, 2004).

The practical intelligence describes the problem solving capability of an individual in conflicting social interactions. In collective culture, individuals have collective self when they interact with members of in-group and have individual self
when interacting with members of out-group. When an individual deals with in-group members, his focus is to get at least mutual benefits. But, when an individual deals with members of out-groups the focus is to get major portion of benefit from others. The ratio of benefit or gain by an individual depends on his problem understanding and solving capability at a higher cognitive level than others in social interaction.

**Culture-self:**

Culture self positively influences subjective ethnicity (H7). In cross-cultures independent/interdependent depends on social connections (Kastanakis and Balabanis, 2012) which are influenced by social values (Yamaguchi, 1994), and people actions are influenced by in-group or out-group well being (Yang, 1981). The intensity towards holistic approach (Nisbett and Masuda, 2003) or heterogenous approach (personal, relational or communal) depends on individual identity (Hall, 1990). The intensity toward above two approach defines its relation with subjectivity. The collective society the people approach toward in-group and out-group members varies (Vries, 2003), and these variations also influences the magnitude of subjectivity attached to it. An individual identity has multi facets as he has to maintain social (what other person’s think about them) and personal identity (what an individual think about him). Before taking the decision for making a purchase, people consider the past experience and modify their future actions, if something has happened wrong with their past decision. They carry on with the past experiences if something happened right in the past. The consumption, being a social activity, is usually done to satisfy human needs for social interactions. Our consumption lifestyle also helps us to build our social status and group membership (Ransome, 2005). The decision of a person depends on his individual opinion (Self identity) and others opinion (social identity) (Baker, 2000). Paterson (2006) considered lifestyle of a person as a major factor which decides the social group of an individual, and the individual behaves differently with other social groups to maintain synchronism with their group.

The cultural formation happen in three stages: (a) own community representation starts from single community which takes care of own cultural identity, practices, rituals and belief systems; (b) the intercommunity cultural transaction and interaction happens
which creates composite culture; and at third level (c) the state administration comes into picture to maintain the whole system in a favourable way. The public appearance of this composite culture is easily experienced during Hindu and Muslim festivals, ritual gatherings and during occupational activities and sometimes during state sponsored social gathering (drama, dance performance and cultural meetings) where people from different religions and castes like Muslim, Rajput, Brahmins and Kayasthas come and enjoy together and represent their identity as a part of composite culture. Besides, the communal harmony is largely maintained by Sufis and Saints, as the people exercise faith in their teachings and preaching even in the modern society and their thoughts are strongly followed by people from all religions and ethnic groups, by paying their homage and obeisance at their places like temples and tombs. The multi-communitarianism and inter-communitarianism in India come from the composite legacy which India inherited for centuries of interaction, exchange and communication between Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities. Despite of various turmoils undergone by various communities, they still live in an inseparable way in millions in India and share their specific social and cultural spaces (Singh, 1994).

In India if a person behaves like context free in one situation, he might behave like context-sensitive in other situation, because of changing aesthetics, life stages, semantics and religion. In India it is considered that “karma, artha and dharma are all relational in their values, tied to place, time, personal character and social role” (Marriott, 1990).

Chandra (2007) determined that communal harmony was disturbed after 1947 and become entirely different, as it was before 1857. Muslims in India have a tendency that when they are in majority they have an approach of secession and when they are in minority they choose separate identity and avoid connecting with the mainstream. Parekh (2007) indicated that multicultural societies move to composite culture. In multi-cultural society people live with their individual and collective lives, and with a sense of plurality of culture. It signifies a meaning of self, relation with others, moral values, intellectual analysis to navigate the direction of life. In multicultural society culture is embedded in communities, but it might be possible that there is diversity among individuals in
understanding and organizing their lives. In multicultural society every group has its own principles, beliefs and practices which vary among other group, because of difference in their ancestral memories and the way of practicing their culture. This might be possible that the members of the groups do not follow properly the principles of the group, but they know their boundaries and their change in action is limited to these boundaries. So, India is a contemporary multicultural society. The democracy has built the moral and political norms of tolerance, and disrupted suppression of weaker communities as it was observed in Indian histories. It motivates different communities to practice their own principles and get their self-respect and dignity in society, while resisting their dominant culture. No diverse communities can stay together, if they do not take care of collective and shared responsibilities. Different communities have to come forward for mutual trust, concern and belonging and it helps to build harmony in the society. In multicultural society the nation and state focus on collective capital.

Indians have multiple mindsets which depend on the situation. Sometimes they reflect collectivism and high power distance, and in the secondary mode they show individualism and pragmatism. The context is conceptualized in the form of “place (desh), time (kal) and person (patra)”. Roland (1988) described Indian self as familial, individual and spiritual self. The familial self focus on interdependence between individuals; the individual self highlights that each and every one is unique and autonomous form each other; the spiritual self highlights one’s attempt at discovering the deeper reality. Roland (1988) described that Indian self is a combination of familial and spiritual self. Indians have collective approach when they interact with family members, but at the same time have individual identity when they interact with outsiders (members of out-group). Even in in-group (family and caste) it is difficult for Indians to form cooperation (Roland, 1990). But sometimes, it is seen that in-groups do not have the spirit of teamwork and cooperative behavior (Gupta, 2002).

Collective identity is derived in the social context, in which individuals are concerned with welfare and connections to others, and embed in the group values (Brewer, 2003). It is also considered as ‘we’ (Onorato and Turner, 2001). In collective self people consider social relationship as obligations, and give value to interpersonal
connections, community responsibility, respect for elders, collective welfare. Respect is
granted to those individuals who care about the needs of others, and use their abilities to
defend others, which in turn helps them to get individual achievement, and sometimes
‘we’ in collective cultures depicts self-concept as ‘me’ (Whitesell et. al., 2006). In self-
concept trajectories males have higher self-esteem than females (Crocker, Luhtanen,
Cooper and Bouvrette, 2003). Perdue, Dovidio, Gurtman, and Tyler (1990) described that
the concept of ‘We’ and ‘Us’ symbolically represent idea of social life of an individual.
In both the concepts the individual has emotional attachment with interpersonal self and
collective self.

Ethnic Identity:

Ethnic identity positively influences subjective ethnicity (H8). Ethnic identity
describes feelings (Oyserman, 2009), beliefs, attitudes and behaviours (Gardiner and
Kosmitzki, 2008) whose intensity defines through subjectivity. The magnitude of
objectivity involve in ethnic identity is explained through subjectivity (Kihlstrom, 1992).
The Identity salience (Wheeler, DeMarree and Petty, 2007), Idenitty association (Pelham,
Carvallo and Jones, 2005), Indentity relevance (Belk, Mayer and Bahn, 1982), Identity
verification (Heggins, 1986) and Identity conflict (Arnold and Thompson, 2005) has
subjective importance. Ting Toomey (1985) also describes the relation with ethnic
identity and subjective ethnicity. Cultural identity is a social construction (Fong, 2003)
which defines subjective ethnicity. Isajiw (1992) described ethnic identity at individual
level as a socio-psychological process which develops a sense of belonging and identity.
The external aspects of ethnic identity are “(a) speaking an ethnic language, practicing in
ethnic traditions, (b) participation in ethnic personal networks, such as family and
friendships, (c) participation in ethnic voluntary associations, such as clubs, societies,
youth organizations and (d) participation in functions sponsored by ethnic organization
such as picnics, concerts, public lectures, rallies, and dances”. The internal aspects of
ethnic identity are “images, ideas, attitudes, feelings” which are linked with external
boundaries. The internal aspects of identity can be further segmented as cognitive, in
which individual consider first his self-image and his group. Second, is moral identity
which talks about group obligatory feeling among individuals. Third, is affective identity which talks about individual attachment with the group (Isajiw, 1992).

In multiethnic society people have multiple ethnic identities, like parents belonging to different ethnic groups, and single identity happens only when parents are from single ethnic group. In the changing times, it is seen that objective and subjective ethnicity are interrelated. The objective aspects help the subjective aspects to make visible, and sometimes subjective aspects are explained through objective aspects. The construction and deconstruction of objective and subjective patterns is a continuous process, in some cases new patterns evolve with the dilution of old patterns, and sometimes old patterns remain intact within objective and subjective approaches. Deshpande et al., (1986) determined that the combination of subjectivity and objectivity is incomplete until, without measuring individual’s degree of ethnic attachment with ethnic groups, and also considered ethnic identification of Hispanic group for measuring subjective ethnicity. Donthu and Cherian (1994) considered ethnic identity as a strong factor in identifying consumer purchase decisions. The ethnic identification of individual depicts his desire to maintain relationship with members of the group (in-group).

By linking subjective ethnicity to postmodernist movement, it gets influenced (Smith, 1984), and it can also be related to habitus and practices which shape social phenomenon (Bourdieu, 1977). The basic understanding of ethnicity is that it is negotiated, constructed in daily lives, continues to unfold, and linked with everyday survival. It is related to various processes like clothing, feeding, conversing, and others. Ethnicity is a combination of individual (ethnic identity) and collective (ethnic groups) phenomenon. There are several dimensions which come under ethnicity at individual or collective level. In order to measure ethnicity from all aspects, researchers have to understand ethnicity from both individual and collective dimensions. Therefore, ethnicity includes both subjective and objective dimensions. The difference in two dimensions comes under “direct” and “in-direct” observation. The objective dimensions can be considered in terms of institutions, kinship, descent, and in unconcealed behaviour of individuals. In contrast, the subjective dimensions are focused on attitudes, values, preconceptions and ethnic boundaries. These boundaries are based on socio-
psychological perceptions and also include the concept of group-inclusion and exclusion. The ethnic boundaries exist within the group and external to the group. The concept of interethnic relations depends on both internal and external ethnic boundaries. The internal boundaries describe the level, at which individual maintains his self-identity and relation with internal group members, and show his loyalty and commitment towards it. The external boundaries are mostly seen in multiethnic society, where multiple ethnic groups interact with each other. In multiethnic society external boundaries are produced with the existence of internal boundaries. The individual identification is based on its membership in ethnic groups. So, ethnicity develops dual boundaries, one boundary explains that one has to maintain self-identity within the group, and other boundary develops through intergroup relations. Isajiw (1992) described that difference lies in external boundaries, which in the study conducted by him, is between American ethnic groups and Canadian ethnic groups. Sometimes external boundaries enforce internal boundaries. External boundaries can also become the source of pan-ethnicity. Culture is considered under ethnicity only to understand traditional anthropological sense through historical group experiences, everyday customs, and symbolic patterns. The behavioural differences between groups are because of difference in group’s historical experiences.

From the results it is analyzed that all the five determinants (culture intelligence, emotional intelligence, practical intelligence, culture self, ethnic identity) of subjective ethnicity influence it. Most of the previous studies like Hirschman (1981) and Deshpande et al., (1986) limited its focus on single subjective dimension of ethnicity. But, the results help researcher to analyze that subjective ethnicity is a multi dimensional construct.

**Determinants of Store Choice**

**Perceived self-congruity:**

Perceived self-congruity positively influences store choice (H10). From the results it is analyzed that perceived self congruity influences store choice. The results depict that people like to shop at those stores where they have good relation with the storekeeper, where they have trust or confidence on storekeeper, and where they get importance and preferences from the storekeeper. The symbolic signs helps to develop
store patronage among consumers. The stronger the relationship between store image and consumer self concept, the greater is the tendency that consumers have positive image toward the store (Sirgy et al., 2000). Some times environmental cues (Turley and Milliman, 2000) like salesperson behaviour (Reynolds and Arnold, 2000) also influence consumer preference toward the store.

In the present study the perceived self congruity effect on store choice is better understood through the example of Williams (2005). He described the example of toy warehouse to explain the store choice scenario of middle class consumers. On week days children come with their mothers and during weekend, the children come with their fathers. Every store in the competitive arena tries not only to sell the goods but also tries to build the mood and family oriented environment for their customers. The job of salesmen is to represent themselves with a lot of enthusiasm. The dress of the salesperson is considered an important aspect in the store. Along with that the time period to respond to the customer should be less than thirty seconds. To get customer satisfied in such a lesser time, is to provide customer some time to spend with the product, and allow him to discuss what he wants to share about the product of his interest. The five steps included in customer service are “initiate, inquire, inform, include, and to register”. The shop represents an image to its customers that it is a right place for fun and entertainment. The attendant at door greets customers with full enthusiasm. The store has good display and music systems which attract customers’ attention towards it. Most of the customers know what they want but they require little support from salesperson in selecting things, and customers do not like waiting. So, it is mandatory for every salesperson to take care of every customer personally. In the Toy warehouse the money is spent by mothers on their children, for buying toys of their choice. To maintain relation with customers, store offers very beneficial schemes for the children who purchase their products. The shoppers of the store come from different racial/ ethnic groups, and from different social classes. All the ethnic group customers are treated well, but white women get better service than African and Asian customers. Customers appreciate cheerful expressions by salesperson, because it helps them to justify their purchase decisions. The customers behave in the same manner as the salesperson does. The facial experiences play an important role in handling operations and interactions. The atmosphere of the store
represents both physical and symbolic meanings. The male shopper wants that store is more convenient and organized. In contrast, female shoppers give more importance to relations and how gently their requests are handled. The masculine shoppers are in hurry to finish their shopping and always in demand for respect in the way they want. Otherwise, they create trouble in the store. By understanding consumer attitudes and values, the retailers develop store environment in such a way that attracts customers. The personal values help to build base for making behavioural decisions (Williams, 1979). Consumers, who consider social affiliation as a strong element in shopping, consider store environment as an ideal place for socialization (Shim and Eastlick, 1998). The U.S. market has a variety of ethnic consumers, like African American (Milton, 2005), Jews (Bravin, 2001), and Hispanics (Tharp, 2001). So ethnicity represents as consumers consumption driver, like Jewish consumers prefer more nightclubs and ballets culture than Catholic consumers (Hirschman, 1983). Hispanic consumers prefer retailers who give preference to Hispanic community and have advertising in Spanish language (O’Guinn, et al., 1985). African American consumers like stores which provide social culture, like, interaction with other consumers of their community (Wright, 1998).

**Pragmatic legitimacy:**

Pragmatic legitimacy positively influences store choice (H11). From the results it is predicted that pragmatic legitimacy influences store choice. This could happen when consumers have rational or utilitarian mind set while selecting the store. The middle class consumers prefer to shop at those stores where they have benefit in terms of price, quality and services provided by the store. The experience shopper are always in search of new information, because new information satisfies the utilitarian factors of the consumer (Brucks, 1985). Chinese consumer are pragmatic shoppers are conscious about price and service instead of any other thing (Handelman and Arnold, 1999).

**Perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture:**

Perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture positively influences store choice (H12). In the results of the study it is depicted that perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture influences store choice. The middle class consumers are conscious about their class, because they have achieved that class. They do not want to lose their respect in public. They select
those stores to shop where consumers of the same class come. When they notice that
storekeeper or salesperson do not treat well other consumers in the store, they feel little
uncomfortable, and think that storekeeper or salesperson might show the same behaviour
(i.e. rude behaviour) to them, and they avoid to shop at these stores. Store legitimacy in
the present context determines the compatible perception with social actors whose
cognitive legitimacy is based on norms, beliefs and values (Suchman, 1995).

From the results it is analyzed that store choice is not a single dimensional
construct. It is composed of three sub-dimensions (perceived self congruity, pragmatic
legitimacy, perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture). The interesting feature of store choice
is that various researchers have determined various parameters of store choice, but very
few of them have analyzed the store choice on the analogy of the above mentioned
parameters. In selecting a store consumers not only consider rational and attractive
features of the store, but also give importance to social features of the store.

**Gender Moderation**

We have derived the fact after hypothesis of the data that the relation of subjective
ethnicity and store choice is moderated by gender (H1a). The results depict that females
are more conscious about prioritizing criteria in selecting a store than males. Because for
many years in collective societies it is a taboo that females take care of family and males
take care of fulfilling basic necessities of the families (the same remarks are given by
Marku and Oyserman (1989)). Due to the prevalence of this taboo, females from their
very childhood develop themselves in such a way so that they can adjust their cognitive
structure in a manner that is suitable and acceptable in the society. When the girls are in
their childhood, they learn the characteristics and ways of living as a female in the society
from their mothers, and the learning is carried forward from one generation to another.
So, in the society a myth develops that females are caring and consider every relation and
argument very carefully than males. But, there is no difference seen in females from
different ethnic groups in collective society, which means that it does not matter to which
ethnic group females or males belong, because in collective society their learning process
is inspired by each other, whether it is from members of in-group or out-group, because
of their daily interaction with members of in-group and out-group.
Torsheim et al., (2006) believes that there is difference in male and female opinion and Freese (2008) believes that it is because of biological or genetic factors.

Mead (1935) determined the differentiation in male and female temperament while comparing three Guinea groups. Gender is genetically defined as reproductive anatomy which is fixed during birth and categorizes gender as male and female. It also determines its meaning with symbols, behaviours, roles, and status linked with male and female, which has been learned through their culture. Women usually perform subordinated role in domestic sphere and bear and rear children. Whereas, men show their presence in public sphere and perform important affairs (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974; Reiter, 1975). Otner’s (1974) described Levi-Strauussian structuralism: which links women with nature based features within their bodies and related functions (menstruation, pregnancy, and lactation), social roles, and their psyche. Herritier (1996) considered gender as main social factor where levi-Strauss put exchange. It is easy to make space by embedding gender asymmetries so deeply in the cognitive system. Sacks (1979) described the notion of gender inequality which is raised by many scholars of that period. Rosaldo (1974) described gender behaviour in private and public sphere. Later researchers emphasized gender dualism and linked it with culture-bounding (Du, 2003). Rubins (1975) described model of sex/gender which transform social structure through their actions related to products and the differentiation is generally set by society (Levi’s-Strauss’s theory). Ortner (1996) described two kinds of gender system in stratified societies: Patrilineal systems which emphasize women as wives; bilateral systems which emphasize women as kin and sisters, where women attain greater status. In broader perspective gender learning requires understanding of personal and social values. Abu-Lughod (1986) described that in Egyptian Bedouins, male honour is complementary to women honour. Butler (1990, 1993) led researchers to rethink the relationship among gender, sex and subjectivity across many disciplines and also considered gender as a product of discourse and sex as the product of gender rather than its antecedents. Bourdieu (1977, 2004) considered that “body hexis” (moments, expressions, decorations) as a prime vehicle of social and cultural capital. Individuals generally live through the body and constantly act in their worlds by using their body as mnemonic device that reminds them how structure is organized. Foucault (1997) theorized bodies as
“technologies of the self”, through which bodies represent themselves as thin, healthy, and moral in personal sphere. Bodies usually come from humanistic approaches, with broader concern on their culture, and later anthropologist conduct their research through ethnographic study. Gender is also considered as a generative and reflective of social and cultural processes (Brownell and Besnier, 2013).

The relation of subjective ethnicity to shopping behaviour is moderated by gender (H2a). Females are more active than males in the way they shop, and have a significant difference between each other. For females shopping is like fun (same is the opinion of Dholakia, 1999) and excitement and during shopping they still take care of other people’s opinion on shopping, maintain their emotions in social environment, talk to others on shopping by analyzing their view points from all angles (either positive or negative), are highly expressive and their expressions either are emotionally based on verbal or non-verbal cues, their thorough calculation of others is linked to their emotions. Females also choose their companion very selectively, and like to take only those companions whose company they like or whose shopping style they like most. In constrast, males do shopping in less time in comparison to females (Bakewell and Mitchell, 2004, 2006).

Male and females are distinguished from each other through physiological and anatomical differences. Both members of the family have different status and roles like wife, husband, father and mother. For the fulfillmen of these role males are socialized as masculine and the females are as feminine.

Enculturation affect male and female behaviour differently. The values and beliefs systems act differently for male and females. Anthropologists observe that boy and girls play different games which are again the part of enculturation. Boys are encouraged being aggressive and girls are restricted from participating in such activities (Stone, 2010).

The relation of shopping behaviour and store choice is moderated by gender (H3a). The gender differences can be easily observed through biological sexes (Palan, 2001). The males and females differ in their judgement and in processing ideas (Dube and Morgan, 1996), and also differs in manner of doing shopping in a store (Bakewell
and Mitchell, 2004, 2006). Males ($\beta=0.6932$) are more conscious about the relationship between shopping behaviour and store choice than females ($\beta=0.6922$). The difference is clearly seen between males and females, but males are more concerned about the selection of the store. Males prefer to shop at those stores where they have confidence of getting things, have feeling of shopping from a standard store of their economic level (status) and have trust on the storekeeper and salesperson. Males also show less variation in their store selection. They prefer to visit those stores first where they have confidence of getting the right product which is based on their past experiences, if their pre-planned expectation fails then only they try to approach other store based on their past experiences or whatever store comes in the way during shopping. In contrast, females try to visit as many stores as possible and are very choosy in store selection, and try to compare product by roaming one store after another, and do not do shopping in hurry. Females are very rational in their store selection and select stores after careful evaluation of shopping criteria. The importance of criteria depends on the value of shopping.

Gender moderates the relationship between subjective ethnicity and (a) Cultural intelligence, (b) emotional intelligence, (c) practical intelligence, (d) culture self and (e) ethnic identity (H9). All the proposed determinants of subjective ethnicity significantly influence it. Gender plays a crucial role in determining cultural intelligence and emotional intelligence. Males are more concerned about cultural intelligence and females are more concerned about emotional intelligence. Males interact more with outer world and its artifacts in comparison to females, as females remain busy in handling household work, and their interaction is not much with opposite sex in comparison to males. Other researchers also believe that if females are good in one thing it might be possible that they are not good in doing other thing (Sternberg and Grigorenko, 1999). Males are more aware of other ethnic groups ‘males and females’ symbols and preferences towards choices and perceptions, because of their wide exposure to outer world. In contrast, emotional intelligence is quite high in females as they are very particular in perceiving emotions of others during interaction, because of their social and emotional behaviour. The researchers believe that females are high in emotional intelligence than males (Alonso et al., 2004). But for other determinants of subjective ethnicity like culture self, practical intelligence and ethnic identity, there is no difference in the perception of male
and females, which means that both sexes equally prioritize these factors. But, previous researchers, believe that there is difference in males and females behaviour on practical intelligence (Rubin and Brown, 1975), culture self (Eagly, 1987), and ethnic identity (Duveen and Lloyd, 1986). But, none of the researchers study is related to store choice, which is hard to say that whether the difference in males and females are equally treated for store choice also. The results give indication that both males and females are rational in their behaviour. Both sexes give importance to people during interaction no matter in which self (individual self, social self or collective self) they are placed during interaction. Along with that both sexes care about their ethnic symbols and artifacts.

Gender moderates the relationship between store choice and (a) pragmatic legitimacy, (b) perceived self congruity, and (c) perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture (H13). All the proposed determinants of store choice influence it. The moderation effect of gender seems relevant for perceived self congruity and perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture, but seems irrelevant for pragmatic legitimacy. Females are more concerned for perceived self congruity (the results matches with previous studies, where the researchers described that females are influenced more on the relation between self-congruity and store loyalty than males (Das 2014; Mazodier and Merunka, 2014)) and perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture than males (previous studies also matches with the results, where the researchers believe that females have stronger sense toward perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture than males (Kenneby and Laura, 2012; Beutel and Marini, 1995)). In the store, when the salespersons do not behave properly with customers belonging to in-group or out-group in front of females, these female consumers consider this issue very seriously. If the behaviour of the salesperson is very good with others or with them, then females prefer to come to the shop again, but if the behaviour of the salesperson is not good with others or with them, then females do not prefer to visit that store. But males visit the un-preferable stores, unless the product is not available among the list of prioritized stores. When, the salesperson or storekeeper shows his delightedness to females and offer snacks, tea or cold-drinks, then females feel delighted, but having an illusion that whether storekeeper really welcomes them or not, deviate their mind from rational behaviour and shift their purchasing decisions toward recreational purchase process. When females observe that the store keeper is not good with females of
other ethnic groups, then they believe that it might be possible that one day the
storekeeper may not behave well with them also. So, those stores where storekeepers do
not have good behavior with people from other ethnic groups are prioritized at lower
ranking by female consumers. Both males and females have similar attitude towards
pragmatic legitimacy, which means that both male and female feel delighted with
attractive store features and environment, and both sexes prioritized to shop at those
stores which have attractive features (either in monetary or non-monetary terms).
Females prefer to shop at those stores which are clean, safe and provide a sense of special
customer care in the store.

Spelman (1988) determined that gender identity is different from identities like
race, ethnicity and social class. Both males and females have different psychological
that men and boys feel more comfortable in separation from connection than women and
girls. Girls have strong sense of empathy than boys, and have strong sense of others’
needs and feelings than boys (Chodorow, 1978).

Sociological accounts of gender identity initially focused on how gender is
socially acquired, especially through socialization, or the process of learning to be a
socially acceptable human being. However, considerable early attention to gender
identities appeared within symbolic interactions (Plummer, 1991). Women learn feminine
characteristics from their mothers and therefore, learn that being feminine means
mothering, due to which girls have less sense of separation and focus on relations to
others. The above reasoning fits well with the results of perceived sensitivity to ethnic
culture and perceived self congruity. In contrast, the males learn the art of detachment
from their mothers so that they can build relations with other women and prove their
masculinity (Chodorow, 1978). Social institutions, such as family, school and workplace
have different expectation from girls and boys. The most crucial gender socialization
takes place within the family, especially the mother (Oakley, 1972). Goffman (1972)
described that gender is culturally established and personality display of male and female
acts as a cue which helps in defining their differentiation. Collins (2009) described the
relationship among diverse groups of women and the formation of particular identities
and knowledge and also described that in non-western nations gender identities relate to ethnic identity.

Reflexivity has been a way to understand the diminished impact of structure in organizing people’s lives and the increased importance of institutions (Beck and Gernsheim, 2002). Habitus provides some counterpoint by examining how reflexivity is still a product of relations. Habitus ingrained collective practices in individuals as they operate in particular field but the process is not happening in their conscious mind it is in unconscious mind and the activities are taken for granted (Adkins, 2002).

Bem (1974) and Gilligan (1982) described masculine characteristics as independence, strength, and decisiveness, and feminine characteristics as dependence, weakness, and irrationality. The male and female differences are defined by society and culture rather than biologically. Home is considered as centre of control for a female, and her main job is to do caretaking, provide support to others, empathy and handle relations. But, studying gender without understanding race and ethnicity is not a better idea to understand society. One can easily differentiate ethnic groups on the basis of skin color, hair texture, and eye shape (Tobin and Dusheck, 1998). In collective cultures men and women have indirect way of communication, and people focus on group’s needs rather than individual needs (Gao and TingToomey, 1998). The feminine communication styles are polite and they have positive feeling towards other people’s needs and show respect to other’s self image (Mills, 2003).

Gender moderates the relationship between shopping behaviour and (a) status consciousness, (b) need for touch, and (c) companion opinion (H14). Shopping behaviour is influenced by its determinants. Males are more concerned about status (in previous studies researchers also found that males are more conscious about their social status in the society (Aries, 1976; Holmes, 1998)) and females are more concerned about companion opinion and need for touch (researchers also believe that females are more conscious about touching the product before purchasing them (Major and Williams, 1981; Vanketesh and Morris, 2000) and also rely more on companion opinion in making decisions (Underhill, 1999; Sondhi and Singvi, 2006). Before selecting or entering store males consider whether the store suits well to their status in the society, or they are shopping from lower standard store. The lower standards are in terms of quality, price,
environment and artifacts of the store. But, females prefer to visit multiple store and compare the variety and price at various stores. Females take very carefully others opinion on shopping, which might be her husband, mother, children or friends. Whenever, females select anything, they first confirm about their decision from companion than from salesperson or storekeeper. In contrast, males are more flexible in shopping, if they don’t know about the product they simply ask the salesperson or storekeeper to show something which suits them or fit them well. But females prefer to select the product on their own, and also try to first touch the product before purchasing it. In contrast, sometimes males rely on the opinion of the salesperson which suits them well and sometimes purchase the product without touching it or purchase the product without any consultation i.e. purchase the product by using their own senses.

**Gender Role in Consumption**

After 1947 citizens got constitutional guarantees, particularly women with a view to enhance their educational level, and involvement in civil jobs. This scenario improved the condition of women in urban areas, but not in rural areas. The changes in women psychology cannot be considered as generalized, because 70% of the people in India live in rural areas. In urban areas, the changes have been observed in upper caste which includes both women and men, and the upper caste enjoys economic and educational opportunities. In the time period of 1970s and 1980s, a modernized view of feminist approach has been seen in the Indian society. In traditional India, particularly in Hindu system, the role of women is limited to household and kinship relationships. The woman from birth till marriage, depends on her father, after marriage (initial years) depends on her husband and in later life depends on her son. This dependence makes impossible for a woman to make space for her. The woman in her unmarried life prepares herself for after marriage life, and cannot be as free and social as men are in their early lives. The woman spends her entire life in a space created by others. The gender differences are written up without any confusion. In India, people worship both male gods and female goddesses, and sometimes female deities are given more importance than male counterparts. Indian society is a hierarchical in nature (Dumont, 1980), and weight-age is given to position acquired by individual. Indians resist in giving higher position to women and people from lower caste, but once the position is attained, the discrimination or restriction melts away.
In urban areas, gender is gaining social status without considering their caste hierarchy. In urban areas joint family structure gets diluted, and transformed into nuclear family. In nuclear families both men and women are concerned about their careers, women are independent in earning money and can more easily take household decisions. Indian women depict themselves as modern, but in reality they are strongly attached with their traditions. The notion of losing unique identity is very common in Indian middle class women. The store selection for gender has a symbolic meaning.

Females are more concerned about subjective ethnicity in relation to store choice and shopping behaviour than males. The results predict that females are conscious about others in relation whether from in-group and out-group, easily capture emotions of others in conversation, deal with storekeeper with great bargaining power, are social in nature and have strong attachment with their ethnic group, which affects their store selection and shopping behaviour. In contrast, males are more concerned about shopping behaviour in relation to store choice. The results depict that males are choosy in their store selection, and they select store after careful calculation in terms of hedonic and rational means before selecting a store. Males are more concerned about culture intelligence and females are more concerned about emotional intelligence, and both sexes have similar response for ethnic identity, culture self, and practical intelligence. The results depict that males have more knowledge about outer world and worldly affairs in social and political issues and females are more concerned about emotions of others and judge how someone takes care of their emotions. For store choice females are more concerned about perceived self congruity and perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture than males. The results demonstrate that females like to shop at store where storekeeper gives preference to relation maintenance, and prioritizes customers from different ethnic groups equally. In case of shopping behaviour, males are more concerned about status of the store than females. In contrast, females are more concerned about need for touch and companion opinion. The results show that males are conscious about status of the store and like to shop from stores with whom they have good relations. Whereas, the females like companion opinion and salesperson opinion in the store, and also like to touch the product before purchase to check its rational benefits.
Ethnic Group Moderators

The relation of subjective ethnicity and store choice is moderated by ethnic groups (H1b). In a composite society, it is hard to find difference in the behaviour of ethnic groups, because in composite collective society everyone tries to please one another no matter if the other individual is member of in-group or out-group. Whereas, in western societies, difference exists in the preference of ethnic groups in selecting a store (Schmitt et al., 1997; Bristow and Asquith, 1999), but in Indian society it is hard to find any difference for grocery, apparel and electronics store selection. But, we can say that subjective ethnicity influences ethnic groups (as was determined in Jamal and Chapman (2000) and Dibb and Simkin (1996) study). In collective society it is believed that any member whether belonging to in-group or out-group can be used for help, so, people try to see everyone as friend or keep members of other groups as backup if members of his group do not come forward for help. So, to please others (in-group or out-group) in the society, each member of the ethnic group behaves in a similar fashion and prioritizes the shopping symbols in a similar way.

Lenoir, et al., (2013) used the study of Forehand and Deshpande (2001) which focus on identity salience and Deshpande and Satyam (1994) described the effect of spokesperson of same ethnic group as of target consumer, to study multicultural consumers. He also described that spokespeople with ancestral background have strong effect on first generation than second generation. In multicultural societies, the second generation ethnic consumers live bicultural life (Giguere, et. al., 2010), having attachment with both ancestral culture and mainstream culture (Arends-Toth and van de Vijver, 2004). In the present study, the respondents selected belong to third generation or later, settled in Jammu after independence and they follow bicultural life. So, ethnic groups work as moderators and differ in the strength of consumer ethnic identity.

The relation of subjective ethnicity and shopping behaviour is moderated by ethnic groups (H2b). Ethnicity influences consumption behaviour of ethnic groups (Jamal and Chapman, 2000; Mokhlis, 2009), and ethnic group membership influences consumer shopping behaviour (Ghert and Shim, 1996). But, no differences is found in the behaviour of selected ethnic groups in comparison to the study of Menendez (1989). Lim et al.,
(1997) also found homogeneity among in-group ethnic group behaviour. But it is found that in collective society, there is homogeneity in between-group behaviour.

Penaloza (1989) described that the shopping behaviour of Latino and Asian consumers has integration and differentiation, because of their psychological clashes between country of origin, culture and host culture (U.S. culture). Other researchers also described that ethnic identification helps to identify shopping behavior of individuals. Donthu and Cherian (1994) described that ethnic identification helps to identify differences in ethnic groups toward ethnic vendor patronage, family and friends guidance for product choice. Webster (1991) studied consumers with high attachment towards ethnic culture, and those who are less attached towards their ethnic culture, and described that acculturated consumers are more attracted toward host culture (American culture and behave like Caucasian consumers), and socioeconomic factors have a little effect on Latino consumer attitudes and values (Webster, 1991; Kara and Kara, 1992). In the present study, ethnic groups show no difference in the relation between subjective ethnicity and shopping behaviour, which describes that in collective society all ethnic groups behave in a similar manner.

Herche, et. al., (1994) described shopping orientation of six ethnic groups like Black, Hispanic, Chinese, Japanese, Italian, and Korean. In heterogeneous culture ethnocentrism influence shopping behaviour and promotes same ethnic group store selection in comparison to other stores, i.e. Black consumers prefer to shop from Black store owners. Ethnicity is also based on “product lines, store ambiance aspects, such as, ethnically appropriate background music and décor and compatible ethnicity of sales personnel are likely to impact Black consumers”.

Ghert, et. al., (1996) studied on shopping orientation and socialization process on three ethnic groups which includes “Native American, Hispanic, and white adolescents”. Adolescent consumers usually go for comparison shopping, negotiation and planned shopping (Teenage, 1993).

In the present study it is observed that in traditional and modern retail business, majority of the retail store owners are Hindus and consumers from all ethnic groups
prefer to shop at their stores. Such a tradition of shopping is continuing for a long time and consumers from all ethnic groups are used to it. The difference between ethnic group preference might have been observed in other studies where consumers have to purchase specific ethnic products, which include religion based products and eateries, particularly meat.

The relation of shopping behaviour and store choice is moderated by ethnic groups (H3b). The difference in preferences is not seen in the relationship between shopping behaviour and store choice for ethnic groups. It is observed that due to cross ethnic interaction, all the ethnic groups develop a common schema which develops through common learning practices. In other markets, like western markets, there is difference in the shopping behaviour of Hispanics (Seock, 2009), Native Americans and Whites (Shim and Gehrt, 1996). The same pattern is seen among Indians, Chinese and Malays (Mokhlis et al., 2009). It happens because of less longitudinal interaction among ethnic groups like it in India.

Ethnic group moderates the relationship between subjective ethnicity and (a) Cultural intelligence, (b) emotional intelligence, (c) practical intelligence, (d) culture self and (e) ethnic identity (H9a). From the results it is observed that there is no difference in ethnic groups for the relation between subjective ethnicity and its determinants. But from the previous research it is found that there is difference in ethnic group for all five determinants of subjective ethnicity (culture intelligence (Livermore, 2015; Raven, 1989), emotional intelligence (Emmerling et al., 2008; Case, 2008), practical intelligence (Goldsten and Hersen, 2000; Lave et al., 1984), culture self (Uba, 1994; Yeh, 2000), ethnic identity (Deshpande et al., 1986; Lind et al., 1996)). It might possible because all the studies are not conducted in a particular regard as is done in the present study.

Ethnic groups moderate the relation between shopping behaviour and (a) status consciousness, (b) need for touch, and (c) companion opinion (H15). The hypothesis predicts that there is no difference of opinion in ethnic groups for the relation between status consciousness, need for touch, companion opinion and shopping behaviour (H15). The previous researches results are slightly different from the present study (like ethnic groups differ in opinion toward status conscious (Kasinitz et al., 2008; Watanabe, 1977);
companion opinion (Kellert, 1996; Brown, 2002) and need for touch (Manzano et al., 2013; Haque et al., 2006)). But the path coefficients show that Rajputs are more concerned about their status during shopping. They select shops which suits their status, which means they prefer to shop at stores which is of their level in recreational and utilitarian terms. But, it does not mean that other ethnic groups are not concerned about their status during shopping. They are equally treated for their concern on status consciousness, because there does not exist any significant difference between ethnic groups. The path coefficients also predict that Muslims are more concerned about the need for touch and companion opinion. The Muslims live in ghettos, and they have habit of sharing, and greeting everyone by touching. So, they rely more on need for touch during shopping. The Muslim women prefer to take someone on shopping, there might be any reason for it. Like, Muslim women do not shop alone during evening times, they always have a subconscious sense of protection from unwanted happenings, or they like the company of someone to enjoy shopping for fulfilling the task with recreational needs, and consider shopping as a relaxing trip, which gives a feeling of freedom from day to day responsibilities. But, it does not mean that other ethnic groups do not do shopping with their companions or do not touch the product during shopping. They equally hold strong relevance for need for touch and companion opinion, as there is no significant difference between ethnic groups.

Ethnic groups moderate the relation between store choice and (a) pragmatic legitimacy, (b) perceived self congruity, and (c) perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture (H16). We hypothesized that ethnic groups moderate the relation between pragmatic legitimacy, perceived self congruity, perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture and store choice (H16). The previous researches results are slightly different from the present study (like ethnic groups differ in opinion towards pragmatic legitimacy (Hiu et al., 2001; Cai and Shannon, 2010); perceived self congruity (Berger, 1969; Griswold, 2008) and perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture (Adamson, 2000; Harris, 2003)). But the results predict that there is no significant difference (P >0.05) between ethnic groups for the relationship between store choice and its determinants. From the path coefficients it is observed that, Muslims prefer relationship and preference provided by the storekeeper or salesperson. Muslims live in ghettos, and they prefer to maintain close relationship with
neighbours, friends and relatives (in-groups) who care for them and take care of what they like or demand. That is, Muslims moderate more on the relationship between perceived self congruity and store choice. But, it does not mean that ethnic groups do not influence on the relation between perceived self congruity and store choice, they all are equally contributed to this relationship. From the results it is predicted that Mahajans are more concerned about pragmatic legitimacy, which is because of their trading habitus, that is transferred from generation to generation, and their store preference highly depends on the rational factor. Because of non-significant difference between ethnic groups, it is predicted that all ethnic groups participate equally well on the relation between pragmatic legitimacy and store choice. From the results it is predicted that Rajputs are more concerned about perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture. If one looks at their ancestral habitus one can understand that they belong to a warrior community, their duty is to protect other ethnic groups from violence, harassment, or discrimination, and they always fight for justice. So, their characteristics support the results that they take storekeeper or salesperson’s behaviour very seriously, and they also observe keenly that, whether the storekeeper or salesperson deals politely with customers from other ethnic groups or not, because they presume that it might happen someday that storekeeper or salesperson might show the same rude behaviour to them at any point of time. So, they take such behaviour seriously before starting store selection process in their mind. But the results also predict that there is no significant difference between ethnic groups for the relation between perceived sensitivity to ethnic culture and store choice. So, all ethnic groups are considered equally relevant for this relationship.

**Ethnic group Outlook**

Social stratification works well in developing countries which relates consumption with socioeconomic status (Corrales, Barberena and Schmeichel, 2006), and it is better if one tries to understand the society in terms of classes like, upper class, upper middle class, middle class, working and lower class (Thompson and Hickey, 2005). In the present study, the prevalent classes are framed as upper middle class, middle class, and lower middle class as per the tax slab system in India for the year 2013-2014. In developing economies, there is hierarchy in the society and socioeconomic status is good
to understand market segmentation (Burgess and Steenkamp, 2006). In the recent years there has been a huge growth in the middle class which makes social class an important element in understanding consumer market segmentation (ABEP, 2011).

In the middle class, the caste is of less significance. In other spheres like socio-cultural and religious events caste plays major role but in shopping activities caste plays less significant role. It has been projected that by the year 2027 India will become the largest middle class group in the world. The economic growth and education will overcome social barriers. The caste division is expected to become insignificant in coming years in the minds of middle class. When a retailer opens shop and a customer enters for shopping neither the retailer nor the customer ask for the caste from each other (Limaye, 2013).

Different countries adopt different practices to segmentise social strata, but in the present study the social stratification has been done on the basis of income and ethnic group belongings. Researchers also emphasized that in social stratification gender also plays an important role (Williams, 2002). In the present research it is analyzed that gender plays an important role in social stratification. With the rise of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) nations, socio economic status has been used to determine the consumption patterns, and between 2010 and 2050 the combined GDP of BRICS nations is expected to be around US$9 trillion (O’Neill, et. al., 2005). The rise of middle class has increased the desire for good life style and high social status, which indirectly hike the need of socioeconomic cohort among people (Cui and Song, 2009).

In the present study there is no differentiation between ethnic groups, because the sample selected is middle class, their identity is based on their position in the society. Once they achieve some position in society, their psychological behaviour is more influenced by social norms and social acceptance. I have used here the principles of threshold theory to define this phenomenon, which indicates that once an individual overcomes the restrictions imposed by the society, he gets free from the social bindings, especially of in-group members, and his attitude is more influenced towards gaining social recognition and acceptance in the society, which includes both in-group and out-
group members. In urban upper caste areas, the caste based hierarchy is transformed into class based hierarchy, but it does not mean that caste based hierarchy is disappearing.

People from different cultures share the need for social recognition and sense of belonging (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). During the adolescent period the adolescents separate themselves from their parents and focus their selves in the search of social identities which they achieve through peer-group associations (Sternberg and Morris, 2001), and use products to improve their social belonging (Haytko and Baker, 2004). Peer groups also provide emotional support which improves one’s self worth (Youniss and Smollar, 1985) and behaviour (Yang and Laroche, 2011). Individuals have a need to affiliate with others (Brewer, 1991). The group oriented behaviour in society promotes social belonging (Piacentini, 2010). Social motivation in consumption also supports those needs.

Solomon (2006) described that markets become homogenous, so companies have to focus on standardization. This approach helps companies to get benefit from economies of scale (Solomon, 2009). In today’s culture the shopping behaviour of cultures cannot be viewed in isolation, the focus should be on individual cultural norms, traits and value systems (Carvlaho, et. al., 2008).

Many authors believe that out-groups are more homogeneous than in-groups (Park and Rothbart, 1992; Mullen and Hu, 1989). The out-group homogeneity might be because of level of information people have related to in-groups and out-groups, and are based on different levels of cognition. On the other hand, out-group homogeneity is possible because people gather information more frequently about their group members than out-groups (Linville, et. al., 1989). Simon (1992) perceived that out-group homogeneity exists if one has examined the context to understand “(1) the numerical relation between in-group and out-group; (2) the relevance of the dimensions or attributes in question for in-group definition of social identity; (3) the socially prevailing group stereotypes”. The more the people perceived similarity in attribute, the more should be the out-group homogeneity. In contrast, stereotyping is a social process which is based on the shared thinking by majority of people in social context (Tajfel, 1981).
The industrial revolution brought changes in the socio-economic conditions in India. The British employment system and growth of industries destroyed old crafts and household industries, and also caused movement of people from one place to another which shattered the norms of caste system. Overloaded trains and buses take millions of people of all castes from one place to the other and leave small space for ceremonial purity. The taboos in people about accepting things from people of other castes also weaken, along with that the endogamous nature of marriage system which includes practices, rules and beliefs also weaken. Now the people accept marriages of inter-caste nature. The occupations are not anymore based on caste system or hereditary occupation and the jobs in all fields are open for people belonging to all castes. The educated people no more believe in the caste system. No doubt every caste tries to save its self interest and builds organized model of labour like unions. Various elements which brought a change in the caste system in India included: uniform legal system, modern education, industrialization, urbanization, westernization and rise of non-Brahmin movement in India (the moment was initiated to impart self-respect in lower castes and develop backward class commissions at central and state level) (Rao, 2012).

The existence of ethnic culture had been because of institutionalization of multiculturalism and diversity. Both firms and organizations promote multiculturalism to control normative and economic benefits and allow people from one culture to interact with the people from other culture to reduce disparity in cultures. Schools are the best place where dissemination of ethnic culture can be rooted in the early stages of childhood, to make one’s mind adaptable to local and global democratic systems (Frank and Gabler, 2006). School and colleges cannot be considered as the only place for such activities, but it caters to sufficient amount of citizens (Fisher and Hout, 2006). Ethnicity is not a private business which can be done behind closed doors. People from different cultures come together to celebrate their festivals, religious function and also take part in street affairs. These events allow different cultures to come to a single place and learn their uniqueness and share their knowledge and thought with each other and build relations with others by knowing others.

The interethnic group marriages diffuse some of the ethnic origins and couple exchanges some degree of ethnic traditions between one another, but the ethnic cultural
traditions of one partner dominate that of the other and this process plays a crucial role in the family ethnicity (Jiménez, 2004). The other partner learns the cultural traditions of dominant partner, and applies it into familial and extra-familial life to match it with ethnic identity with which it affiliates (Waters, 1990). The regular contact with people from other groups make changes in affiliative ethnic psychology and it may increase the rate of acceptance of other ethnic groups, while maintaining one’s own affiliative ethnic identity. Sartwell (2005) conducted ethnic group interview to know the preference of Whites for Blacks. “I like listening black music and sometimes talk in black slang and enjoy my whiteness with blackness. I enjoy black music and have learned to play harmonica”.

The different racial groups come closer because of mutual attraction to each other’s group and form endogamous conjugal groups. The interaction in social intercourses allows friendly and economic relationships between different ethnic groups based on mutual trust and respect. To understand such broader social circles one has to understand different customs followed by groups and it cannot alone be understood with the help of subjective meaning unless one understands the historical culture of the groups. By understanding the relationship between groups in diversity one can understand the relationship ranging from households, neighbours to political and religious communities. Despite of group differences in the style of beard, clothes, food and eating habits, there is still a belief of affinity or dis-affinity between the groups. This artificial origin of belief in common ethnicity follows the patterns of rational association turning into personal relationships. This belief builds a sense of brotherhood which leads to common ethnicity. The belief in common ethnicity raises the notion of ethnic honour which is closely related to status honour. Despite of feeling of group affinity by individuals, and doing the same task in a different way cannot exclude the sentiments of common ethnicity.

Cherrier (2005) determined that in modern social daily lives individuals have to self monitor their actions by creating self awareness of their identities in diversifying lifestyle choices, so it must come under the umbrella of their customs and traditions, while taking care of flexibility in reflexive self-identity.
In the present study the individuals from six ethnic groups have collective behaviour. Collective behaviour revolves around a phenomenon which is normally temporary and unplanned in nature. The collective behaviour is not controlled by any set of rules and regulations, and is also not defined by any norms. Like, if an accident occurs at the street, people gather over there to see what has happened, but no one tells them what to do when you see such incidents, the answer to these questions is hidden in non-verbal collective cues. This kind of collective behaviour is aroused because of beliefs, hopes, fears and enmity. Muslims show collective behaviour on religious issues, and Hindus show collective behaviour on caste matters. The collective behaviour is categorized as mass and crowd behaviour. “A crowd is a set of people who are physically close together and share a common concern. Whereas, mass behaviour involves action by people with common concerns who may or may not have met each other” (Rao, 2012).

In a country like India pluralism officially safeguards minorities and all of them enjoy equality in the institutions of the larger society (Rao, 2012) Hindus and Muslims favour environmental concerns (Lal, 1995), and because of secular ideology give importance to quality of life and maintenance of environment (Inglehart, 1990).

Identity can be considered either as objective or as constructionist. The constructionist view considers identity as fluid, and explains that people come out of their group membership; based on the cause they support (Griswold, 2008). Melucci (1989) described that collective identity is not fixed objective fact, but a process. Melucci (1989) cited in Griswold (2008) described it as “Collective identity is an interactive and shared definition produced by several interacting individuals who are concerned with the orientations of their action, as well as, the field of opportunities and constraints in which their action takes place… Collective identity formation is a delicate process and requires continual investments. As it comes to resemble more institutionalized form of social action, collective identity may crystallize into organizational forms… In less institutionalized forms of action its character more closely resembles a process which must be continually activated in order for action to be possible”. In order to understand collective identity as constructionist, it is recommended to consider race and ethnicity.
Modern sociologists also suggest that in modern times, the race and ethnicity are eroded, like ethnic and race differences have been eroded in homogenized American identity.

The cultural phenomena in India originates with a combination of institutional, cultural and social-structural elements and the civilized society of India has overseen dynamic historical interaction with thousands of communities and castes over the landmass of India. These communities grow in a friendly environment where they enjoy their religious identities and freely follow their cultural attributes, customs and life styles and the process has been strengthened by numerous saints, sufis and religious reformers. In a civilized Indian society culture is the central theme with which communities are bound from within and with other groups (Cohn, 2000). Culture is not simply a normative structure of scripts and combination of values, beliefs and aesthetic standards but grounded in the existential, ecological, social and political settings of the society. The combined effect of these forces reforms the norms of the culture over a period of time.

The Indian contemporary society has been build on the concept of ‘culture complex’ and ‘cultural order’. Culture complex comprises of social, economic, political and religious aspects which are mixed with cultural symbolism, beliefs and practices represented by communities. So, culture cannot be explain by any one of the social dimension, and it might happen that subculture has its own norms and belief systems which are derived from the composite culture (Singh, 2007), and sometimes it may also happen that cultures overlap. Vidyarthi (1961) emphasized that sites which are strong in representation of different religious scared sculptures, with socio and economic relevance (like Gaya), their culture shows its core attachment to its own ethnic group patterns, assimilations and adoptions. With passage of time Indian culture has seen many cultural leaders who made the system more complex and stronger the urge of inclusion and exclusion of several practices among common people, which boost the preference of self identity among masses and develop cultural stratification (or cultural order) to maintain power and authority.

The research on Latino and Asian consumers described that people of these two communities find themselves in between the host culture and the culture of country of origin (Kara and Kara, 1992). Dillard et al., (2002) described that it is difficult to
determine the role of ethnicity on segmenting consumer strategies on the basis of their ethnic groups, because of hybridization of cultural factors due to constant interaction of intercultural processes. Dillard studied on Latino and Asian consumers dwelling in U.S. and experienced similarity in dynamic host culture and difference on the basis of their original culture. The variables used to study both the ethnic groups are brand/quality conscious, fashion conscious, price/assessment conscious and impulsive/over-choice. Both the ethnic groups (Latino and Asian) show similarities for good quality, low price and brands. But differ in preference for store formats which is based on ethnic differences. Demographic variable also plays an important role in categorizing differences in ethnic groups. In the present study, all the ethnic groups follow the host culture for store choice.

Ethnicity is a “process of construction and invention which incorporates, adapts, and amplifies pre-existing communal solidarities, cultural attributes and historical memories” (Conzen, et. al., 1992 cited in Dillard, et. al., 2002). The socialization process of all the ethnic groups have been affected by Hindu culture. In that sense, ethnicity in itself is not a strong indicator for segmenting consumers whose ethnicity is in transition. The intercultural accommodation is an ongoing process and a process of continuous mixing of different cultural values, norms and behaviours, but the influence of different ethnic groups cannot be completely ignored for setting consumer preferences for selecting products and stores. In short, intercultural influences may be directed towards mixed market behaviours. Therefore, the decision of standardization and customization depends on inter-ethnic communalities and differences in ethnic groups. The extent to which ethnic differences and similarities work, depends on consumer’s goals and motivation (Ratneshwar, et. al., 2000), market conditions (Roth, 1995) and practices of consumption (Stayman and Deshpande, 1989).

Various previous international researchers described that culture of various ethnic groups defines their socialization and consumption patterns (Aaker and Mahaswaran, 1997; Eastlik and Shim, 1995). Ethnic identification determines consumer shopping orientation, and product/store choice behavior. Dillard (2002) found the influence of
demographic variables on store choice, and also described the importance of ethnicity on consumption choice on the basis of variables like age, income, and education.

In the present study, there is no difference observed in ethnic groups as the subjects are youth and they have quite enough exposure of different groups in their professional and personal spheres of life, than their ancestors and they are open to other ethnic groups, and due to collective society, they adopt trends commonly, and the trend adoption is common and equal in all ethnic groups. The trend adoption is seen as same in case of males, but in case of females it is a slow process, because they are the one who maintain the traditions in the family, and carry forward and imbibe them in children, and also carry forward from one generation to other, and males maintain the same traditional psychology at external level (outside home or in society, and work as a keeper of the society). But, it doesn’t mean that difference doesn’t occur among ethnic groups, and around different ages and gender; differences might happen in other spheres of lives (Isajiw, 1992).

6.1 Theoretical Contribution

Consumer subculture theory

Differences in consumer emotional and imaginable response to products appear closely tied to variety of sub-cultural differences. Ethnic groups, whether defined along racial, religious or nationality dimensions represent complex systems of socialization there by educating their members into a certain worldview and enforcing adherence to a set of customs (Hirschman, 1981). Hence, an individual tends to treat a product or store according to the perspective learned from his/her ethnic group. Similarly, the values shared by members of a given social class or gender affect desires for and responses to products or stores.

Subculture varies in the style of fantasy and emotionality encouragement among its members (Hirschman, 1982, Singer, 1966). Differences of this type can greatly influence the potential exhibition of hedonic response by consumers. For instance, Jews and Italian Catholics are generally permitted by their ethnic norms to be emotionally expressive, whereas such displays of expressions are discouraged among Protestants.
It has also been found that fantasizing and complexity of imagery are distributed in similar fashion across Jews and Italian Catholic religious groups (Singer, 1966). Jews and Catholic Italians not only report more and richer fantasies than the Protestants but also report significantly more erotic and sensual content in their fantasies (Singer, 1966).

Subculture groups vary in their perception of what products are appropriate for hedonic consumption. For example, consumers of many hedonically experienced products are characterized by very distinctive social class profiles (Lapso, 1981). Opera goers are typically older, wealthier and higher in social status than theater goers. Similarly, large socioeconomic difference exists between those who patronize basketball games and those attending museum exhibits (though cost differentials between these two products are minimal or even countervailing). These differences suggest that social class acts as a sub-cultural socialization agent and channeling consumers into these hedonic activities should be appropriate to their social positions. Marketers should attempt to broaden the scope of their performance by including vast majority of middle class to avoid any confrontation. In case the marketers begin attending middle-class consumers in large numbers then the upper-class patrons may leave in favour of something more exclusive. Notions of social appropriateness appear to extend to gender and ethnic group influences on hedonic consumption. Ethnic groups share norms that encourage and discourage certain kinds of hedonic consumption. For example, recent research on weekend evening entertainment choices by Catholics, Jews and Protestants shows several significant differences (Hirschman, 1982). There are also various social norms concerning masculine entertainment forms (e.g., sporting events) and feminine entertainment forms (e.g., shopping).

Culture provides a sociological approach (which depicts the individuals socially acquired behavioural pattern which suits to in-group members) to understand consumer behaviour (Zaltman and Wallendorf, 1977). All societies have their own language, shared meanings, customs and traditions. Every culture has its own shared values and beliefs. Culture is adaptive and constant in nature. People adapt culture and do collective adjustments according to material possessions in life. The changes happen in the
surroundings of individual and life gets imbibed in the individual culture that becomes its cultural style which expresses its content of culture and subjective values attached to it, helping in depicting individual choice. The cultural styles can be easily judged in cross-cultural comparisons. So, before understanding consumer subcultures, it is important to understand how and why culture affects consumption. Various researchers studied the cultural differences of ethnic groups, and also illustrated the consumption practices of different ethnic groups (in the present study the concern of consumption relates with store choice) (Wallendorf and Reilly, 1983), Deshpande, et al., (1986) also focused on consumption practices of Hispanic consumers, Omar, et al., (2004) demonstrated the brand preference of different ethnic groups and non-ethnic groups, and Hamlett, et al., (2008) studied shopping pattern of Asian (Muslim) ethnic group for meat, and discovered Muslim consumers’ real life stories of meat buying from English shop, and other items from other ethnic groups shops, based on their taste and product preferences, but very little research has been done on store choice behaviour of different ethnic groups. In the present study, consumer subculture theory is used to understand the advancement in concept and influences on consumer subculture theory in the sphere of store choice made by different ethnic groups in pluralistic culture. One reason for very little research in this area might be because of less exposure in western societies towards multi-ethnic groups residing at the same place for a long time.

The common platform which is used by ethnic groups defines their subculture. Subculture is basically a segment of the society which exchanges common cultural traits. In contrast, ethnicity focuses on sociological and psychological traits. Barth (1969) described that ethnicity can also be judged through one’s commitment toward his group, or in other sense we can say that, ethnicity not only describes one’s values and cultural traits, but also his attachment toward his group, and overall the ethnic groups should be considered as social organizations which reside in society with their cultural barriers. Other researches try to incorporate more parameters in studying the combination of subjective and objective measures. The subjective measures are self-identification, religious beliefs, social interactions, upbringing/background, spouse’s ethnic identity, and the language used. Six indicators combine into two factors, like, first factor includes language use, social interactions and ethnic identity, and the second factor includes self-
identification, upbringing and religion. The objective measures are socio economic status, income, education and occupation (Laroche, et al., 1997).

Deshpande, et al., (1986) worked on consumer subculture theory, which the researchers developed based on Hispanic and Anglo Americans by comparing them on advertisement, brand loyalty, attitude towards government, brand prestige, and ethnic pride, and talked about group differences on these dimensions, and used ethnic identification as a measure of ethnicity. The researchers work on weak Hispanics, Anglos and strong Hispanic identity, and found difference among three groups related to attitude toward institution, Spanish media usage, attitude toward advertising, brand loyalty, ethnic advertised products, and prestige product purchase. The researchers measured ethnicity in terms of two questions (which Hirschman (1981) was asked in his study). First, is to define ‘your ethnic group’, and second is to ‘identify your attachment with your ethnic group’.

Little work exits on consumer subculture theory, in which ethnicity of consumer groups is examined (Wallendorf and Reilly, 1983). Previous researchers worked on Jewish ethnicity and their research is descriptive, and their focus mainly on Blacks, Hispanics and Jews, and understand consumer as per the convenience of researchers rather than as per the perception of members of different ethnic groups. But researchers have focused a little on measuring subjective ethnicity through more than one dimension. The previous researches used one of the determinants of subjective ethnicity in understanding ethnic groups (Deshpande, et al., 1986). In the present study ethnicity is judged through both subjective and objective approaches. The subjective ethnicity is measured through five dimensions (culture intelligence, practical intelligence, emotional intelligence, culture self and ethnic identity) and objective ethnicity is measured through six ethnic group differences. All the ethnic groups selected in the present study are residing together for a long time.

In the present study, sub-culture theory is understood through combination of subjective and objective ethnicity by applying it on six ethnic groups (Mahajans, Rajputs, Brahmans, Muslims, Sikhs, and Kashmiri Pandits). The present study understood consumer’s subculture through their (consumer’s) perspective and not according to
researcher’s convenience. The results demonstrate that all six ethnic groups have influence on all the dimensions of subjective ethnicity and there is no difference in six ethnic groups in relation to subjective ethnicity, which means that all ethnic groups influence equally on subjective ethnicity and have no difference in store choice behaviour. This advancement in understanding dimensions of subjective ethnicity enriches sub-culture theory, and the dimensions can be used as generalization for other subculture ethnic group studies across India and abroad.

**Shared culture theory:**

The shared sense of culture helps individual to understand himself and the world around him. Culture also helps individual to organize himself and others around him. Culture also provides meaning of human activities, intellectual and moral values to individual to navigate his self throughout his life. The shared culture in a society requires common sense of belonging among his members, to avoid conflicts in a situation of crises. So, a society needs a common culture to stand together. The shared culture need not be “unified and homogeneous, it could be composite, internally diversified and multi-culturally constituted” (Parekh, 2007). It originates out of interaction between different communities in the society. Every society has dominant culture, and other communities, either migrated or in minority try to accommodate themselves into the dominant culture, by their own will. The shared culture provides a means of communication to Indians. All the communities living in composite culture share a collective creation. The composite culture gathers its strength from the conceptualization that it has no single source. The concept of shared culture was spread by Emperor Akbar through the concept of *sulh-i-kul*, which emphasized on equal treatment or justice for all religions. To support this concept Akbar got strong association and support from Rajput ruling class. Akbar also employed a large number of Hindus for his administrative work at middle class level (Chandra, 2007).

Shared culture theory works well in multicultural societies and it has seen success in most of such societies (Macmillan, 2006). The members of multicultural society come in contact with other diverse groups by compulsion and have formal and informal relations in the daily course of life which generates their curiosity to know each other in a
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to make interaction and understanding of views of each other in an easier and
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concepts develop a conflict in individual minds that either their own culture is good or
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other local languages or slangs. Sometimes, it may happen that Muslims don’t like some
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can be considered as a contemporary plural multicultural society (Parekh, 2007). So, it is
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very difficult to see differences among different ethnic groups in social arena for social
activities, like, store choice, shopping behaviour and subjective ethnicity.
In the present study, there is no difference in ethnic groups for store choice, shopping behaviour and subjective ethnicity, which depicts that, all ethnic groups follow same norms and rituals for these three constructs. All ethnic groups use non-verbal set of norms and rules while shopping, in socio and psychological phenomenon (subjective ethnicity) and during store selection.

6.2 Recommendations

Retailers have to understand the importance of ethnic groups and gender differences in marketing their products in multicultural pluralistic culture in India. In store choice behaviour there is no difference in ethnic groups, because it is seen that traditional stores are mostly run by Mahajan community, and they are neutral to all ethnic groups and welcome all ethnic groups to their stores. The Mahajan community is considered as Vaishyas whose ancestral tradition is to indulge in trade of selling goods and the same notion is carried forward by generations. Even in modern times the store owners or franchise owners are mostly Mahajans, and they train their salesperson in a way, which is open to all ethnic groups. So, salespersons consider all members of the society alike, apart from their affiliation to any ethnic group, and focus only on selling goods and services to customers. But, it doesn’t mean that belongingness of customers to ethnic groups is not important to be taken care of in smooth handling of customers. In traditional retail for “Sikh” male and female customers the salespersons use gestures term like “satsriakal” or “Sahab” for male customers, for “Muslim” male and female customers the gesture term is “adabarz” or “Janab” for males, for “Hindu” male and female customers the gesture term is “Namaste”, for Kashmiri pundits male and female customers, the gesture term is “Jee” or “Namashkar”. Other terms used for female customers for all ethnic groups are “Didi” for young females and “Bahanji” and “Madamji” for adult females. These gestures reduce the psychological difference of in-group and out-group from the mind of customers, and they feel that they are in safe hand, who can understand their problem in a way they like. In contrast, in modern retail the salespersons are males and females in their youth, and they don’t know such term, so they call everyone with gesture term like “sir” or “madam”, which sometimes give pride to customer or sometimes do not connect to emotions of customers, and the brand name
help is required to connect to customers and motivate them to come to the store again. So, the customers visit the store for the sake of brand and not because of the relation and a trust is developed with the store or storekeeper. The modern gesture codes work in those situations where customer is youth and have less experience of purchasing from traditional retails, and feel delighted by hearing “sir”, which they commonly use for greeting others in their professional lives. But, this effect cannot last long because when they come under the influence of their traditional family environment and achieve a position in their lives, whether or not they are greeted by others in their professional and personal lives, in that situation the gestures used in personal lives are marked as important, for building fast relations with others rather than the professional gestures.

In a country like India where caste plays an important role, using local codes in selling plays an important role. Like, when lower caste customers or “Shudras” are called by gesture terms like “Sahab” or any other local gesture term, they feel more delighted or consider themselves referred to with dignity, and when the same term is used for upper caste customers they feel delighted, relaxed and proud for being conferred the status which they have in society. So, such local gesture terms work well for all strata of different ethnic groups, because in all ethnic groups caste plays same havoc. In a country like India, there is inequality in masses because of their caste, and such gesture terms diminish inequality notion for a period of time and gives a feeling of delightfulfulness to the customer. So, in modern retails the importance of retailer’s orthodox gesture techniques get diminished, and the relation limits with brands only. Those retailers, who have shifted from traditional retail to modern retail, like purchasing the franchise, forgot their family selling name which they earned by spending years in business and start over again, or depend on the popularity or demand of the brand name. But, if they carry on with same salespersons who have working experience in traditional retail selling, get more sales by using traditional retail practices, even if the brand name is not popular in the masses, in comparison to those stores which have higher number of salespersons who have no working experience in traditional retail. So, those customers who shop in both traditional and modern retail try to visit both these retail stores, the traditional retail and modern retail. In some cases, it might be possible that quality and price of the product is good in modern retail, but because of good selling experience traditional retail salesperson
achieve higher sales which the modern retail salesperson cannot. In traditional retails the salesperson uses traditional gesture codes to get attention of customer at first, and then try to understand the requirement of the customer. But, in modern retail everything is displayed in open and it is up to the customer to solve the problem of search on his own or ask for help from the salesperson to suggest the best product or service for him. But the salespersons those who get phone numbers of the customers and call them when the required product is available in the store, build relations with the customers easily and achieve higher sales. Now-a-days few modern retail stores have developed commissions based system on items sold by salesperson, but to achieve sales the salesperson has first to learn traditional gesture to get attention of the customer, and then has to learn the problem solving techniques for different ethnic groups, and ways of expressing solutions to different ethnic groups. In today’s competitive era mannequin display, brand name and store atmosphere seem almost similar to the customer, and most of the stores use the same technology to display the items in a modern retail.

So, to achieve good sales, prompt and efficient service to the customer is the only option for retailers to boost their profits. For that matter every modern retailer has to understand, how with little resources and low quality and low price products a traditional retailer can earn profits in the same area in which the modern retail with competitive prices is selling its products? The solution lies in the selling skills, the brand name to attract customers up to a certain limit or attract the customer to the store, but after the customer enters the store, it is the job of salesperson to get attention of the customer and indulge customer into conversation, and try to get the best deal with rational and emotional attachment with the product, which can only happen by understanding the historical background of that ethnic group. The Mahajan community retailers are dealing with customers from different ethnic groups for many years, and they know how to deal with customers of different ethnic groups. The tactic is to use gesture codes, then try to develop relation by indulging customer into conversation, and then remove hesitation and matter of doubt from customer’s mind, whether he is purchasing the right product or not, by verbally assuring the quality and reasonable price of the product, and then turn the rational purchasing behaviour of consumer to hedonic purchasing behaviour, when
consumer turns in to hedonic purchasing behaviour, the chances of spending more money gets higher and develops trust and goodwill, positive word of mouth towards the retailer.

Those retailers who slightly change the ambience of the store from traditional retail to modern looking retail store in outlooks, demand higher price of the same product which is available at cheaper rates at traditional store. Such retail stores are not able to generate trust in consumers for meeting their demands, because for consumers these stores are simply fancy stores which have lost their identity. These stores neither fall in the category of traditional stores nor get the respect of modern store, which they want from the consumers by doing small changes in display, and rather get in to troubles because of identity crises.

So, if the retailer is opening a modern retail store, by purchasing franchise of international or national brand, or opens a traditional store or makes a shift from traditional to modern store outlook, one has to understand the local codes of selling goods and services, by understanding the local gesture codes used by ethnic groups, and ways of expression, thoughts and developing relations with customers. If a retailer uses these tactics in selling products, even with brand name one can easily sell products and earn a reputed name in the market in a country like India.

Culture and religion affect on cognitive self of an individual’s ethnicity (Sklare and Greenblum, 1967). In multi-cultural ethnic group parents teach values to their children, which develop psychological norms of identification between in-group members and out group members, differentiation between two and protection from others (in-group or out-group members) (Root,1994). Culture in one society might be smarter than other society, every culture has its own ability to grasp and solve problems. The cultural knowledge makes persons aware of their self and behavioural actions (Costa and McCrae, 1992). Some people have great knowledge about their cultural assumptions, which help individual in social interactions. Every individual has its own level of cultural assumptions. Culture helps individuals to focus on their cognitive behaviour during cultural interactions. The retailers have to understand the cultural influence on store choice behaviour of consumers, as consumers from different ethnic groups prefer to shop from those stores, which provide equal treat to people from all cultures, and avoid
visiting those stores which give preference to people from a particular ethnic group. “Multi-cultural” (acceptance of consumers from all ethnic groups in a store) behaviour is accepted by consumers from all ethnic groups in their store choice preference, which seems from results that for this behaviour there is no difference in all selected ethnic groups. But there is difference in preference among male and female. From the results it is clear that females care about “Multi-culture” more than their counterpart. So, a retailer selling female items has to take care of “Multi-culture” more than a retailer selling male items. But, those retailers who are selling items for both males and females, or those stores who have to entertain females as male companion have to make themselves open for all cultures.

The emotional status of individuals also impact on their decisions (Moon, 2008). The consumer’s decision is influenced by his mood and ability to motivate oneself. The latent efficacy influenced individual’s skills and abilities (Goleman, 1995). The emotions build a link between consumers brain functioning and behaviour. Some consumers are confused about their emotional self states, but some are very peculiar about it. The self confidence in consumers helps them to make decisions. The confidence in consumers enhance as they acquire more information from external or internal environment and feed it to their conscious or sub-conscious mind (subjective mind). The interest of collecting information gets generated among consumers while interacting with salesperson, by seeing retail environment, at point of purchase, and by looking at advertisement (Gardner, 1985). There are various dimensions which consumers consider before and after purchase. From the results it is perceived that females are conscious about product and store dimensions like offers, past experiences, special attention, variety, exchange offer, warranty, and fashion products. So, retailers selling female products have to take care of consumers mood during shopping in stores, because consumer select and enter the store with a predefined expectation which is subjective (either confused or set expectations), and if the expectations are negative toward the store consumers do not prefer to enter and recommend the store to anyone. The retailers selling male items have to care about product and store dimensions, but its implementation with less intensity also work for them. But, if there is female companion with male consumer,
then the intensity of implementation of product and store dimensions should equal in comparison to female retail shops.

During interaction with salesperson and retailers (traditional retail) consumers use strong positive cognitive thoughts and cause to affect on their mind (Green and Brock, 2000). Consumer uses past knowledge to get rid of persuasion tactics used by salesperson (in modern retail) and from retailers or salespersons in traditional retail. The consumers develop own concepts to interpret the persuasion motives and tactics used by agents (Wright, 1986). Some persuasion tactics are smiling and listening carefully (Brown, 1990). When salespersons openly disclose the reasons behind the tactics, consumers feel confident (Decarlo, 2005). This helps people to handle anxiety, anger and emotional impulsivity (Davidson et al., 2000). When consumers feel that retailers understand their intentions and feelings, and acting in appropriate way which is desired by consumers. Consumers develop a sense of trust with retailer. Then emotional waves comprises of non-verbal sings exchange between consumer and retailers through eye contact or facial expressions. It is believed that when an individual has information regarding the power of other person, then he uses tactics knowledge to deal with the powerful person in interaction, and tries to get concessions and offers from them. In the present study all ethnic group use persuasion knowledge, do negotiation when trust build between them and retailers. But, from the results it seems that females are more involved in the above discussed process than males. So, retailers seeling items to females consumers have to understand, they are more involved in negotiation, use more persuasion tactics to reduce the prices, and only shop from the retailers when a strong trust build between them and retailers. But, males, even purchase from those retailers with them have little trust. Males do not care much about negotiation and do not care about the persuasion tactics used by retailers or salespersons.

Retailers who have good relation with customers develop dyadic binds and attachment (Hawkley, et al., 2005). It is a symbolic interaction which is based on beliefs in the course of social interaction. The relational self is a give and take relation (Baldwin, 1911). An individual develops relations at multiple levels which are linked with specific significant others. These relationships may involve either single, normatively defined
relationship domain or idiosyncratic grouping of relationship (Tapis et al., 2006). In the present study, it is perceived that females develop strong relations with retailers in comparison to males, and prefer to visit the regular retailer for every new shopping trip. If a product is not available to women after lot of information search, they go to their regular retailer to get some information about the availability of the product, or sometimes ask the retailers to arrange the product from other known retailer, and if necessary, are ready to pay the money in advance to their regular retailer, even if the retailer is not directly dealing with the required product. Female develop blind faith on retailers, if they are trustworthy. But, males do not have blind faith on retailers, they always judge the benefits earned before developing blind relation with retailers. So, retailers have to understand this phenomenon and build relations accordingly with males and females.

Modern day shopping is a complex phenomenon where consumers have to roam around crowd from different cultures and ethnic groups and responding to a wide range of stimuli. During shopping consumers have to solve problems (minor to major) related to product choice and take habitual decisions.

Shopping is a social experience. Some shoppers like to go alone or with a companion on shopping. Shoppers use companion experiences for decision making. Companions provide psychological support to shoppers. The companion advice provides emotional support to shoppers, which makes them fearless in making decisions (Matzler et al., 2005). People in different cultures rely on different companion. Some like celebrity endorsements as companion, and some like friends or parents as companion. During shopping young female consumers like to take opinion of their friends or someone they like most. Young male consumers like to take opinion of others (friends, salesperson, or parents) but its impact on decision making process is less in comparison to female counterparts. So, retailers have not only to understand the shoppers, but also the companion, because is the one who builds motivational emotional support amongs, and continuously stimulate shoppers mind with positive or negative signals, which ultimately work as a base for decision making process, which seems extreme in case of females.
Consumers like to touch the products during shopping. The perception of touch is even stronger than vision (Siegel, 1970). The interpersonal touch affects both attitudes and behaviour (Hornik, 1992). Consumers use hand sensory perception before going for purchase decision. The sense of touch develops choice preference among consumers and builds brand, product and store loyalty. The sense of touch helps consumers to judge the quality of the products and builds trust with the brand. The pleasing sensory feedback builds confidence in consumers and leads them to purchase the product. Young female consumers give more preference to touching or rubbing the product before purchasing them, to get little demonstration of product beneficial features and delightful futuristic experiences in comparison to male counterparts. So, retailers have to display more female product to give a chance of touch to female consumers in comparison to male counterparts.

Young consumers are status conscious. They like to enjoy uniqueness and differentiation of their purchased brands from other group members. The sense of status gives consumers feeling of stronger relationship with class and quality (Shermach, 1997). Young consumers like to influence societal groups with their branded products, family status and parent’s dignity. They like to visit those stores who give importance to their status. Males have higher sensitivity of status while selecting a brand in comparison to female counterparts. So, retailers entertaining male consumers have to design their stores with elegance and maturity, and to carry status sensitive brands along with normal brands, such efforts resembles with the psychological status mind set of male consumers.

At last, it is suggested to retailers that they should adopt standardization strategy instead of customization as per ethnic groups. In the present study the selected age group is young and from middle class. Young middle class consumers like to shop with companions and it might be possible that the companion is from the same ethnic group or different ethnic group. Young middle class Indians like to show their products and also like to talk about the retailer from where they buy the product to others, and others might be from the same ethnic groups or different ethnic groups. If retailers adopt customization strategy, then males and females from other ethnic groups do not prefer to visit the retailer who gives preference to particular ethnic groups. Under the pressure of social
acceptance, males and females from same ethnic group (resembles with retailer ethnic
groups) even do not prefer to visit to that retailers (customized as per ethnic group)
because they tell in public from where they have purchased the product. In composite
society, person has relation with person of different ethnic group and to please them,
people like to do such activities which resembles with others ethnic group activities, but
without hampering the psychological notion (rules and regulations) of ours religion and
other religion.

6.3 Limitations of the study:

The study investigates the role of ethnicity on store choice. In the present study,
the ethnicity is considered as subjective ethnicity and shopping behaviour is used as
mediator in the relationship between subjective ethnicity and store choice. In some sense
this dissertation could be considered as an initial step towards the relation between
subjective ethnicity and store choice. While the utmost care has been taken in conducting
the study, there are certain limitations to its methodology and results. The findings of this
study should be viewed with these limitations in mind. First, only six ethnic groups living
in Jammu region were studied. Thus, findings cannot be generalized to other individuals
from same ethnic groups, living in other parts of India. Second, the study has been
conducted on small number of ethnic groups, so there is a need to apply subjective
ethnicity scale on more ethnic groups to make it generalized. The sample size chosen for
the study is limited, because of the need of the time. Fourth, limitation pertains to the
cross-sectional research design. Subjective ethnicity, store choice and shopping
behaviour may develop over time, so a study that is not longitudinal may not capture the
full range of these three above stated variables and the results indicate only a snapshot in
time. A longitudinal design has the ability to capture personality and management
variables over an extended period instead of a one shot scenario. Despite this limitation,
the cross-sectional design used in the present study facilitates the investigation of these
three variables for six ethnic groups. Therefore, it is believed that greater variability with
these three variables is achieved and the external validity of the findings has been
enhanced. Future research should look into a longitudinal study to fully capture these
three variables over time and understand the impact of time factor on the relationship between subjective ethnicity and store choice.

Last, limitation of this study is related to the use of a convenience sample. A convenience sample can compromise some generalizability of research findings and their consequent interpretations. Although probabilistic sampling is one of the most important conditions for external generalizability, this criteria has not been met in most of the social science research. Schwab recognizes this limitation when he states that “almost all of the empirical studies published in our journals ... use convenience samples ... thus if one took generalization to a population using statistical inference seriously, one would recommend rejecting nearly all manuscripts submitted” (Schwab, 1985). When researchers use a non-probabilistic sample the stress is on “transferability” rather than “generalizability” (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). In this study, there are no reasons to infer that the opinion of consumers from six ethnic groups who participated in this study is different from generic consumers in Jammu. Thus, the use of a convenience sample does not limit us by stating the possibility of generalizing the expected results to a larger population of generic consumers.

6.4 Future research

In this research the researcher predicts five determinants of subjective ethnicity. The study has been conducted in multicultural pluralistic environment, but these determinants are tested on limited ethnic groups. One can expand the study and incorporate more ethnic groups and increase the sample size. One can also find more determinants of subjective ethnicity. There are chances that more determinants may emerge from cross national research or cross cultural research in a nation having homogenous ethnic groups and more determinants can also be found by comparing the reaction of interaction between host culture and immigrants in Europe, USA and in Asia. One can also find more determinants for shopping behaviour and store choice and support the present model with more insights. One can also compare the reaction of female on online shopping and brick shopping and determine that need for touch varies in both shopping channels.
From the present research, question arises whether the marketers go for standardization or customization of store for different ethnic groups by considering ethnicity as a base? How ethnicity can be used for developing consumer store choice behaviour? The customization approach is useful if consumer from different ethnic groups show different store choice behaviour. Other researchers also consider this perspective in the same way for international marketing (Buzell, 1968; Jain, 1989). If consumers from different ethnic groups show no difference in store choice then it is better to opt for standardization and economies of scale, in the same way it is used for international marketing (Porter, 2000).

The extent to which phenomena of composite culture penetrate in modernized society has to be empirically investigated, through ethnographic study at various levels in Indian culture (Singh, 2007). The culture gets so complex that the people follow their religious and ethnic traditions, and simultaneously maintains their relations with other ethnic groups through inter-communitarian formal and informal compulsions. There is a need to work on subjective ethnicity by applying it to more ethnic groups in India and abroad, with different age groups. In the present study, the influence of subjective ethnicity is seen on store choice for youth, in future research the researchers can also do comparison of youth and adult consumers and compare their preference for store choice.

In the present research there is no difference seen in ethnic groups. It might happen because of selection of young consumers as they do not much take care of ethnicity as an elder person does. So, researcher can use the same model on baby boomers and late boomers.