

CHILDREN BUYING BEHAVIOUR AND PARENTAL INFLUENCE (A STUDY OF CHILDREN BUYING HABITS RELATED TO TOILETRIES)

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Abstract— Consumer behaviour study has become more significant for marketers for their sustainability, growth and development. Understanding the changing needs, preferences, lifestyle, and demographic factors of consumers is more challenging. No longer are the children at backstage. The buying process in a family by large involves a concurrent decision taken by all. Today the parents buying decision is mostly influenced by their children. Marketers have to understand this dynamics of family buying decisions process and the power of children influence the same.

ses on the children influence in parents buying decision in case of toiletries. 185 children were taken as sample and the questionnaire were administered to capture the data. The study reveals that the children get money on different occasions for their personal use and additionally they mostly influenced their parents while buying many products which are used by them. The degree of children influence may vary for various products as prioritized by them. This highlights on findings suggestions and conclusion for them.

Purpose

Reports an empirical study on children's buying behaviour in Faridabad with a special focus on their information sources.

Design /Methodology

The key literature on consumer socialisation of children is reviewed. Primary data was collected from a sample of 195 children aged 8 to 12 using questionnaire survey. Various statistical methods such as Pearson correlation and tests were employed to analyse the data.

Findings

Children regard TV commercials as an important information source for new product. However, they place greater level of trust in interpersonal information sources, especially in their parents who are perceived as the most credible information source with respect to their learning about new food products.

Originality /Value

The study has made a contribution to the extant literature on children as consumer. The findings would be valuable in assisting companies, especially those in the toiletries industry, to have a better understanding of children's buying behaviour.

Keywords— Children buying behaviour, consumer socialisation, socialisation agents, information source, TV commercials.

I. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society. It blends elements from psychology, sociology, social anthropology and economics. It attempts to understand the decision-making processes of buyers, both individually and in groups. It studies characteristics of individual consumers such as demographics and behavioural variables in an attempt to understand people's wants. It also tries to assess influences on the consumer from groups such as family, friends, reference groups, and society in general. Customer behaviour study is based on consumer buying behaviour, with the customer playing the three distinct roles of user, payer and buyer.

Consumer behaviour is influenced by many things, including environmental and marketing factors, the situation, personal and psychological factors, family, and culture. The emergence of increasing competition and changing socio economic environment has made

the marketers to be more customers oriented. Buying behaviour of customers plays a significant role in the strategic management planning. The recent awareness of consumer behaviour has introduced many new dimensions in the marketing and philosophy and practices. It is both, relevant and important for every business enterprise to know its customers and understand its buying behaviour.

Customer preferences are changing rapidly with each passing day. Various internal and external factors are influencing the customers to be more aware and choosy. According to Schiff man and Kaunk (2000), "Consumer behaviour is the behaviour that consumers display in searching, purchasing, using and evaluating products, services and ideas which they expect will satisfy their need." American Marketing Association defines "Consumer behaviour as, "the dynamic interaction of affect and cognition, behaviour and the environment by which Human beings conduct the exchange aspects of their lives." Behaviour is therefore determined by the individual psychological make-up and the influence of others. Today's consumer behaviour is resulting in unstable and unpredictable environment with the plenty of surprise ahead. Consumer behaviour is the complex

phenomena where there is an interaction of various social, economic and psychological factors.

In the study of consumer buying behaviour the family is considered a crucial decision making unit as the interaction and influence between family members are likely to be greater and more significant than those within the other smaller groups, such as friends or colleagues. According to Cart Wright, "Influence has been defined as something that is inferred when one person acts in such a way as to change the behaviour of another in some intended manner". Thus influence involves actions by family members that make a difference during the decision making process.

Consumer Behaviour is defined as activities people undertake when obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and services. Simply stated, consumer behaviour has traditionally been thought of as the study of "why people buy" with the premise that it becomes easier to develop strategies to influence consumers once a marketer knows the reason people buy specific products and brands.

A family member has the authority to make decisions or to be the most powerful one in the family when cultural or social norms designate him/her as the rightful person. For example in some culture it is the husband or the wife invested with his power, in others it might be the mother-in-law's. Jets Sprey(1972) notes that the person who has the authority to make decision does not generally need to exert influence upon the other family members unless they seriously challenge his/her power rights on the on-going social cultural changes weaken or undermine his/her authority position.

Jain and Bhatt (2004) have tried to explain in it as human beings are usually quite rational and make systematic use of information available to them. People consider the implications of their actions before they decide to engage or not to engage in given behavior. Indian societies to a great extent differs from west in terms of family, composition and structure, norms and values, behaviour hence it become important to understand children influence in family purchase decision making in Indian context. They not only influence markets with regard to parental decision making on purchasing products, but they also act as future consumers.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Belch Et Al (1985) investigate family members' influence as a function of product category and stages of the decision-making process by questioning husbands, wives, and children. The products selected for the study are car, television, household appliances, furniture, family vacation, and breakfast cereal. The influence of the child varies by product class and decision stage. The child shows the greatest influence for decisions regarding cereal and less for other products. The child has greatest influence in the

initial stage and less on the final stage of decision making. The child's influence also increases for the color style and brand of products, and the child has the least influence on how much money to spend.

Study by Beatty and Talpade (SEP. 1994) used an integrative model of teenager influence and a new scale of the perceived relative influence of younger children when the purchases made are not for self-use. It further examined the effect of the parental employment status on teen influence as well as gender based differences in perception. The teenager influence as a function of the characteristics being studied can be depicted as:

Teenager influence = F {Teenager characteristics (Ability, Motivation) + Parental / Household Characteristics + Decision Characteristics}

In this study, the financial resources and product knowledge of the teens serve as the sources of their ability, while the perceived importance and usage of the product motivate them to influence the purchase decision. The household characteristic examined is whether the family is a dual or single income one and the decision characteristics examined include the consumption situation, the product type and decision stage.

According to Noergaard et al. (2007) discussed the studies on family decision making during food buying. Family food decision making is often a joint activity and children's active participation among other things determines the influence they wield. Parents and children do not always agree on how much influence children have in the various stages of the process, indicating the importance of listening to both parties for an understanding of the family dynamics and processes involved in everyday food buying. The study emphasized the importance of looking at food decision making as a joint activity where children participate actively and wield influence.

According to Kaur, P and Singh, R (2006), urban Indian adolescents have a significant influence on the family decision making. In the 11 sub decisions (six for high technology product and five for vacations) examined in their study, teenage children's role in decision making was found to be more than mid-value in all cases except in financial decisions – how much to spend. According to the authors, early consumer's socialization, time poor indulgence parents, rising media interface, susceptibility to peer influence all boost newer aspirations that dictate consumption.

The study from Mikkelsen (2006) presented the preeminent applicable method for the study of children in Jakarta. In his study, Mikkelsen applied the quantitative as well as qualitative method, using the ethnographic study from 20 families. The difference from his study is that the ethnographic study was carried out first before the survey was conducted. The study of children's influence in Jakarta conducts the survey first and then applies the

ethnographic study from 17 families. The influence score from Mikkelsen study is used as the guidelines for the study of children in Jakarta because it gives a suitable measurement and brings a clear result afterwards concerning the degree of children's influence. The results from study are also applied as a comparison with the study of children influence in Jakarta. Since the norms, traditions, and culture from Denmark are different from Indonesia, especially with regard to buying and consumption factors, it will be interesting to compare the results later on.

Mikkelsen (2006) and Norgaard (2007) analysed children age 10 to 13 years old; they found that the family food decision is a joint activity; children's participation determines the influence that they gain. Children participate and gain influence on several decision stages and area on family food decisions. Martensen (2008) stated that children exercise quite an influence on the family decision making processes, particularly on the products that are mostly related to them, such as juice and cereals.

Datta (2008) explained that in the few decades ago Indian parents use to control their children with a stick and expect obedience and discipline was a common household word. Now in changing time family spend "Quality time" in shopping malls or in exhibition, or watching the latest movie together. Irrespective of the Income group, parents are breaking the limits to meet the demand of their children. Most of the parents want their children to get whatever parents had not got when they were kids. As the survey conducted by CN (cartoon Network) in the year 2006 – 2007 among 9000 plus respondents, the demand of children is simply strong that they want more and more. Around 70% pester their parents, 84% influence family buying decisions, 40% have electronic goods (mobile phone and computers) in their home. In the current changing time children are taking centre space in the family and it is difficult to set limitations on them.

Study by Bulent Ozacmact and Nurettin Panlti 2009 aims to explore the influence of children in family decision making process. To bring out a complete picture regarding the role of children, the effect of family type and composition sex role orientation, parental style, patterns of consumption must be taken in consideration. This research also attempts to analyse the amount of influence exerted by children based on the product category and stage of the decision making process.

III. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

For the current study the researcher has undertaken the children influence on parents purchase decision. The purchase decision greatly varies on the number of people in family. Each member in the family will have varying degree of influence in buying toiletries. The researcher has made an effort to understand the degree of influence exercised by the children in

purchase decision. Hence the statement of the problem is to study the degree of influence on parents purchase decision.

3.1 Scope of the study

The study is carried out in Faridabad, India. The marketers will get the insight on the children influence on parents purchase decision on various parameters – family structure, profession, number of children in family, type of school, income group. It will help them to design a strategy to market their goods and services to tap the market more efficiently.

3.2 Objectives of the study

- To analyse the relative influence of children on parents purchase decision with respect to family structure.
- To examine the degree of children influence on purchase decision of working parents (single or both parents working)
- To know the children level of influence on parents during the purchase of various product categories.
- To study the methods adopted by children in order to influence the parents purchase decision making.

3.3 Statement of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: The decision making of children for purchase of various products is same across working of parents.

Hypothesis 2: The decision making of children for purchase is same across different structure of family.

3.4 Design of the Study

The present study employed the descriptive research design. This design is for summarizing the set of factors and variables. The survey method is followed in this study and a set of questionnaire was used for collecting the primary data. Measures adopted are "Foxman Scale" and "Laura and Alvin scale".

3.5 Data collection

Primary Data: Primary research consists of a collection of original primary data. It is often undertaken after the researcher has gained some insight into the issue by reviewing secondary research or by analysing previously collected primary data. It can be accomplished through various methods, including questionnaires and telephone interviews in market research, or experiments and direct observations in the physical sciences, amongst others. The data was collected by administering the questionnaire to children. The purpose of the desired collection and questionnaire was explained to them. The questions were read by the children and they got time to response back.

Table 1 The Reliability test of sample data.

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's alpha	No of items
.110	10

The reliability test of the sample data is shown in table 1 above with Cronbach's alpha .710 for 17 products. Secondary data was collected from selected sources like journals, websites, textbooks, magazines and newspapers.

3.6 Sampling technique

The study was restricted to Faridabad city only. Children between the age group of 8 to 12 years were taken along with one of their parent. In the study convenience sampling technique was use.

3.7 Sample size

For the study 200 samples were chosen from the population in Faridabad city. The questionnaire was administered to 200 samples and response rate was 195.

3.8 Statistical tool and technique

Considering the amount and the nature of data for this research it is necessary to use statistical tools. Following descriptive and inferential statistical methods were employed in the present investigation. The statistical techniques which are used in the study are given below in brief:

- Descriptive statistics – used to summarize variables in the terms of central tendency and measure of dispersion.
- Frequencies and percentages
- Reliability tests – used to check the measurement error and ensure the goodness of data.
- Pearson' product movement correlation is employed to know the relationship between the variables.
- One Way ANOVA – is used to find the gaps on various factors based on independent variables.
- Two Way ANOVA – is used to find the gaps on various factors based on two independent variables at a time.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analysis on the basis of demographic variables like gender, age, money from parents, and amount of money children from parents are analysed on the base of age and various product categories.

Table 4.2 Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage %
Boys	143	73.33%
Girls	54	26.67%
Total	195	100.00%

Out of 195 respondents surveyed, 143 were boys and 54 were girls. Hence percentages of boy respondents were more than girls.

Table 4.3 Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage %
8years	18	9.23%
9 years	36	18.46%
10 years	64	32.82%
11 years	14	7.18%
12 years	63	32.31%
Total	195	100.00%

More number of respondents were from the age group of 13 and 15 years respectively.

Table 4.4 Frequency of children getting money

Period	Frequency	Percentage %
Never	29	14.87%
Each week	26	13.33%
Each Month	39	20.00%
During holidays	45	23.08%
During Birthdays	50	25.64%
For Good Behavior	6	3.08%
Total	195	100.00%

Majority of children answer for the frequency of getting money from parents during birthdays, holidays and monthly.

Table 4.5 Amount children getting from parents

	Mean	Std deviation
The amount you get from parents for spending	482.93	53.24

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 stood Never and 5 stood for Always, the overall mean for decision made by children on various commodities was 3.59 in specific commodities on which surveyed children spend money was highest on

Table 4.6 Children influence on buying products in toilet category

	Children	
	Mean	Std. Deviation
Soap	2.71	0.52
Powder	1.72	0.63
Toothpaste	2.10	0.99
Shampoo	2.93	0.55
Hair oil	2.36	0.93
Face wash	2.75	0.81
Deodorant	2.48	0.94
Moisture	3.13	0.81
Cream	2.17	0.99
Tooth brush	2.49	0.95
Hand wash	2.20	0.93
Body Wash	3.12	1.02

The influence was found maximum in case of buying moisture (with a mean Score of 3.13) and this was followed by body wash (with a mean score Of 3.12) respectively.

Table 4.7 Methods adopted by children

Methods adopted by children	Mean	Std Deviation
	Children asks nicely	3.88
Children slam the door / hit something	1.44	0.69
Children say that they will help in Household activities (washing, purchasing form near market etc.)	2.32	1.19
Children say that you are the best dad / mom in world	3.61	1.15
Children asks over and over again	2.89	1.23
Children say his/her friend also has this so he/she wants	2.89	1.22
Children say they need it for school when they really don't.	1.40	0.80

As per the perception of children the top two methods adopted by them to purchase is they ask nicely with a mean score of 3.88 and followed by saying that you are the best mom and dad in the world with a mean score of 3.61.

V. HYPOTHESIS – 1 Using ANOVA

Null hypothesis – the decision making of the children for purchase of various products is same across working level of parents.

Table 5.1 Working parents

PRODUCTS	Both Parents are working			Only one is working		
	Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank
Soap	1.95	1.01	5	2.00	.974	4
Powder	2.66	1.10	1	2.67	1.15	1
Toothpaste	1.79	.924	8	1.85	.980	8
Shampoo	2.00	1.09	3	2.10	1.18	3
Hair oil	1.90	.925	6	1.95	1.01	5
Face wash	1.97	.793	4	1.92	.841	6
Deodorant	.841	.596	10	.967	.596	10
Moisture	2.52	1.06	2	2.59	1.25	2
Cream	1.82	.945	7	1.89	.969	7
Tooth brush	1.35	.530	9	1.30	.566	9

The analysis of the variance in the above table reveals that a significance in the last product category soap, powder, hair oil, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorants, face wash, moisturizer, cream, except in deodorant. The mean difference existing between different working levels of respondents is not statistically significant at 5% level. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted for all products except for deodorants. For the product toothbrush, the analysis of variance in the above table reveals a significance level in the last

column .841 which is very less. Since the mean difference existing between working level of respondents is statistically significant, thus the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate is accepted.

HYPOTHESIS – 2 Using ANOVA

Null hypothesis – the decision making of the children for purchase of various products is same across structure of family

Table 5.2 Type of Family

FACTORS	NUCLEAR			JOINT FAMILY			SINGLE PARENT FAMILY		
	Mean	SD	Rank	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank	Mean	SD	Rank
Soap	2.05	.908	3	1.93	1.02	6	2.01	.992	4
Powder	2.74	1.12	1	2.58	1.12	1	2.79	1.11	1
Toothpaste	1.87	.945	7	1.78	.921	7	1.87	1.00	8
Shampoo	1.96	1.11	5	1.96	1.09	4	2.23	1.19	3
Hair oil	1.69	.835	8	1.97	1.00	3	1.96	.924	5
Face wash	2.00	.758	4	1.96	.813	5	1.90	.803	7
Deodorant	.822	.612	10	.900	.603	10	.910	.585	10
Moisturizer	2.48	1.20	2	2.54	1.08	2	2.59	1.20	2
Cream	1.95	.969	6	1.77	.966	8	1.93	.916	6
Tooth brush	1.36	.579	9	1.34	.541	9	1.30	.534	9

- The analysis of variance in the above table reveals a significance level in the last column is more than 0.05 for products soap, powder, hair oil, toothpaste, deodorants, face wash, shampoo, moisturizer, cream and tooth brush.
- The mean difference exist between the type of family of respondents is not statistically significant at 5% level. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted.
- The analysis of the variance in the above table reveals a significance level in the last column is less then 0.05% for products like shampoo and face wash.
- The mean difference existing between the type of family is statistically significant at 5% level. Thus null hypothesis is accepted.

Findings

- It is found that the children get more money on their birthdays and during holidays from their parents with 25.64% and 23.08% respectively (table 4.4)
- It is found that the average amount of money children get from their parents is Rs. 482.93 (table 4.5)
- Children spend more money on buying moisturizer 3.13 and then closely followed by body Wash 3.12.
- The influence was found maximum in case of purchase of moisturizer with a mean score of 3.13 and followed by body wash and face wash with a mean score of 3.12 and 2.98 respectively.
- The top two methods adopted by children to purchase products they ask nicely with a mean score of 3.88 followed by saying that you are the best mom and dad in the world with a mean score of 3.61 (table 4.7)
- The degree of children influence in buying majority of items like soap, shampoo, hair oil, body wash, tooth paste, deodorant, face wash, tooth brush, is more when both the parents are working then only single parent working.
- The degree of children influence is found more in nuclear family then in joint or single – parent family due to completion of demands.

Suggestions

This study has different implications on marketers, parents, and children. For all three of them there is a clear indication that children influence exists, although it depends on various other factors. Based on the findings the suggestions are as follows:

- The buying of moisturizer is mostly influenced by children irrespective of the family type, or employment status or family income.
- Marketers should have the data base of their which help them to design customised strategy

for each segment based on family structure, income, working parents and so on.

- The high value products like body wash are also getting children attention and influence of different families irrespective of income and number of working members. Marketers should create an atmosphere where children are engaged in the process.
- Right entertainment quotient included in getting information about the product being available in the market to do more business.
- Attaching more importance to children by taking proper care during the process will help the marketers positively.
- Specific offers and promotional offers targeting children for the above product category.

Limitations

- The study was conducted only with 10 products in the toilet category.
- The study was confined to the age group of 8 – 12 years
- The study was limited to Faridabad city only.

CONCLUSION

The children influence is analysed by various aspects. The products directly used by children as well as family are considered for the study. For the products directly used by children, it is mostly decide by children themselves. The descending order of influence for product used by children is face wash, soap, deodorants, tooth paste, tooth brush respectively.

Depending on the family structure and working status the definition of need and luxury differs and same is reflected in the survey analysis. The children are the centre of attraction in any family irrespective of country and culture. They have been voicing their opinion for purchase of products. There are few family products where children influence is observed higher. The children used the persuasive strategy mostly. When their more income in the family then it directly impact the children influence. The children influence slightly more in nuclear family as compared to other family structures.

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