



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Marketing Management

CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE ON FAMILY PURCHASE DECISION: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN CAPITAL CITY OF ODISHA

KEY WORDS: Children's influence, family purchase decisions, consumer behaviour

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ABSTRACT

In the present scenario, children are the centre of attraction for marketers to market their products and services. From the marketing point of view, children are now the major target market segment. Children have better product information and market knowledge, than any of their previous generations. This might be the result of heavy consumerism, better education, and proliferation of electronic media including internet. And the ultimate impact can be seen on family purchase decisions, even parents are also accepting and approving the rising influence of children on purchase decisions. These changes motivate researchers to study the degree of influence of children on purchase decisions in the capital city of Bhubaneswar. Attempts have been made to explore, children's influence on different products and in different demographics variables.

Introduction

It is inevitable to overlook children's influence in family purchase decisions. Nowadays children are more active than ever in family purchases. They became buyers, information seeker, evaluator, influencers and even consumers. They are gradually getting most influential in the consumer market by influencing family purchases. It doesn't matter what is the purchase, it might their own or the household products. We are now experiencing the change especially in family purchase decisions. As per our tradition, children have very less say in the family purchases and the head of the family particularly father take most decisions. But gradually these are disappearing in our society. The family communication is more open and democratic, where children are getting power to influence purchase decision (Prakash and Yadav, 2014). Most of the earlier studies have conducted in developed nations, where more focus has been given to luxury goods and with husband and wife. Here we tried to capture the children's influence on product categories and find the level of influence in different demographic variables in a different socio-geographic setup.

Review of Literature

Webster (2000) observed in his study that Indian family structure is transforming from joint families to nuclear families, thus it is imperative to study the role and influence of children. Earlier in 1986 the research of Darley and Lim also emphasized that family type has its impact and effects over the children's influence on purchase decision.

Demographic variables like children's gender, age and parental profession have impact on children's influence on purchase decision (Ali et al. 2012). Moschis and Mitchell (1986) found in their studies that age of the children has its impact on children's influence. Likewise, Lee and Collins, (1999) stated that female children have stronger influence in family purchase decisions. Sundberg et al. (1969) reported that Indian girls perceived their families as significantly more cohesive than Indian boys. Ali and Batra (2011) concluded that income of the families has higher influence on purchase decision. Foxman et al. (1989), investigated that children are comparatively more influential in higher income families

Many researches are conducted on influence of children on the product category. Labrecque & Ricard (2001) and Flurry (2007) observed, children are moderately influential for the product like family vacations, restaurant outings, and family entertainment etc. According to the research of Halan (2002) children don't have direct influence on household categories. But, in 2014, the research of Ramchandani and Anchan expressed that the children are influential across the product categories. Jensen (1995) and Kaur and Singh (2006) proposed three different categories of

products based upon the influence of children. These are product primarily for children, for family usage, and primarily for parents Ali and Batra (2011) in Delhi explored that children are more influential in case of children specific products.

Research Methodology

Objective of Study:

1. To explore the level of children's influence on different products
2. To study the relationship between demographic variables and children's influence on purchase decision

Research Instrument:

Structured questionnaire was used

Sample Design:

Random sampling was conducted on 140 nos. of children in Bhubaneswar.

Data Analysis and Presentation

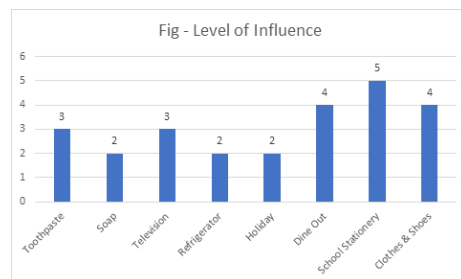
Demographic Analysis

Out of total 140 children surveyed, 45% are boys and 55% are girls. From the total 140 respondents 21.4% belong to the age group of 6-10 years, 30% to 10-12 years and 48.6% to 12-14 years old. It was also found that 66.4% are from nuclear family whereas only 33.6% are from joint families. While analysing income of the family, 11.4% are from less than 3 lakhs per annum, almost 70.7% belong to 3-6 lakh and 17.9% from income more than 6 lakhs per annum.

Level of Influence on different products

The respondents are asked to rate their level of influence on eight different products. For rating five-point Likert scale was used where 1 indicates for not at all influential and 5 indicates extremely influential.

Figure – 1: Level of Influence on different Products



Source: Analysis of Primary data

The above figure describes the children's level of influence on different product types. We can see that children are 'Extremely Influential' in case of school stationery and they are 'Very Influential' in the items like dine out and clothes & shoes. Children's influence is 'Slightly' in the items like soap, refrigerator and holiday. It indicates children are more influential where they are primary user of the products which justify previous researches.

Relationship Between Demographic Variables and Level of Influence

Table- 1: Cross Tabulation of Demographic Variables and Level of Influence

			LEVEL OF INFLUENCE				Total
			Not at All	Slightly	Moderately	Very	
Age	less than 10 years	Count	1	5	17	7	30
		% of Total	.7%	3.6%	12.1%	5.0%	21.4%
	10 to 12 years	Count	0	2	24	16	42
		% of Total	0.0%	1.4%	17.1%	11.4%	30.0%
	12 to 14 years	Count	1	3	32	32	68
		% of Total	.7%	2.1%	22.9%	22.9%	48.6%
Total		Count	2	10	73	55	140
		% of Total	1.4%	7.1%	52.1%	39.3%	100.0%
Gender	Boys	Count	1	4	35	23	63
		% of Total	.7%	2.9%	25.0%	16.4%	45.0%
	Girls	Count	1	6	38	32	77
		% of Total	.7%	4.3%	27.1%	22.9%	55.0%
Total		Count	2	10	73	55	140
		% of Total	1.4%	7.1%	52.1%	39.3%	100.0%
Family Structure	Nuclear	Count	1	4	48	40	93
		% of Total	.7%	2.9%	34.3%	28.6%	66.4%
	Joint	Count	1	6	25	15	47
		% of Total	.7%	4.3%	17.9%	10.7%	33.6%
Total		Count	2	10	73	55	140
		% of Total	1.4%	7.1%	52.1%	39.3%	100.0%
Family Income per annum	less than 3lakhs	Count	0	3	6	7	16
		% of Total	0.0%	2.1%	4.3%	5.0%	11.4%
	3 to 6 lakhs	Count	2	4	57	36	99
		% of Total	1.4%	2.9%	40.7%	25.7%	70.7%
	more than 6lakhs	Count	0	3	10	12	25
		% of Total	0.0%	2.1%	7.1%	8.6%	17.9%
Total		Count	2	10	73	55	140
		% of Total	1.4%	7.1%	52.1%	39.3%	100.0%

Source: Analysis of Primary Data

The above table reflects the cross tabulation between different demographic variables like age, gender, family structure and family income of the respondents. Out of 140 children surveyed, 22.9% are 'very influential' from the age group of 12-14 years which is the highest among all. This indicates older the age of the children higher is the influence on family purchase decision. Similarly, we found that girls have more influence on family purchase decision (22.9% of total respondents and 41% within girls), whereas 16.4% boys have 'very influential' out of total 140

respondents. It is also revealed that children from nuclear family have very influential (28.6%) as compared to their counterpart from joint family. It has been observed from the above analysis that, children from higher income families have greater influence. 48% of Children from more than 6lakhs annual income are 'very influential' on purchase decision.

Conclusions:

Finally, the purchase decisions are not confined to elders in the family, rather children in the family are getting more active and influential on family purchase decision. And this study observed that children's influence on family purchase decision is gradually increasing in the capital city of Bhubaneswar. To reach at the conclusion, analysis of the opinion and responses of the children respondents are conducted and the results are as follows.

1. Children are more influential in the products where they are the primary consumers and they have little influence on the household products.
2. Children's influence on the family purchase is higher when their age is higher.
3. Girl's have higher influence on purchase decisions as compared to boys
4. Children's from nuclear family have higher level of influence in purchase decisions
5. Children from higher family income have higher level of influence.

Limitation

Though the study has undertaken with utmost care, it is not free from limitation. First, with 140 nos. of sample size, it difficult to generalize the result. Lastly the understanding the questions by the lower age children is a concern.

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