

CHILDREN INFLUENCE IN CASE OF CHILD-CENTRIC PRODUCTS: A COMPARISON AMONG VARIOUS PRODUCTS

MANJOT KAUR SHAH¹ AND DR. GARIMA MALIK²

¹Research Scholar, Amity University & Assistant Professor,
Mata Sundri College, University of Delhi

²Associate Professor, Amity Business School, Amity
University, Noida

Abstract—Children role in the purchase decision has gained importance over the period of time. Marketers are also targeting children for increasing their sales. Children contribute as direct purchaser for products they use and also as an influencer in the products used by their parents and other family members. The children these days have better access to the information and they are aware about the market and the products available. This paper attempts to analyse the role the children play in case of child-centric product. A total of 11 products were taken for the study. The study would focus on the role that the child play in each category of product and we would try to analyse in which category of child-centric product the child has more role to play and show much interest. We would also try to figure out that what source of information is used for various categories of child-centric product.
Keywords- Children, pester power, child-centric products

1. INTRODUCTION

India has a large population base and it is a great opportunity for marketers. India is expected to become the third largest consumer market by 2025. Children under the age of 14 years constitute about 29.5% of the Indian population and this shift the attention of marketers towards them. The children has direct influence in case of product they use and also indirect influence in case of products used by their family members. They are also the future consumers. Marketing to kids are passport to growth (Soni& Upadhyaya, 2007). They have more say in the family purchase decision than their parents had when they were kids. They have more control over what they watch, what they buy and even what the family buy.

Children have come to constitute a very important consumer group that influences family purchases of various products in many ways. Thus, recognizing children as a primary market, an influencing market, and a future market, children today are seen as different from past generations; especially the 8-14 year-old (called “tweens”, as they are neither children nor teens but something between). They’ve grown up faster, are more connected, more direct and more informed. They have

more personal power, more money, influence and attention than any other generation before them”.

There has been changes in family structure, the communication between families is more democratic. Parents these days pay more attention to their children and also take their opinions and advices into consideration for making decision. This lead to more active participation by children in family purchase decision.

Berey and Pollay (1968) were the first one to understand the role of children. He list down the following three reasons for which this segment should be paid attention. The reasons are as:

- (a) The size of the child market is growing rapidly
- (b) Children influence the family decision making
- (c) Adult consumer behaviour is the direct antecedent of the child consumer behaviour.

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.

There are five major role that one can play in purchase process- initiator, influencer, decider, buyer and user. Earlier the marketers focused on either husband or wife or joint decision that the family make. But the role that the child play has changed to a large extent over the passage of time. These days we need to focus on the child dominant purchase decision. Children role in the family purchase decision is something which the marketers can't ignore.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the popularity of various categories of products demanded by the children.

- To analyse the level of influence of children on various child-centric products.
- To analyse the source of information for children for various child-centric products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected from parents of children in age group of 6-12 years. The data was collected from Delhi/NCR region. The data was collected by using questionnaire method. The sample size for study was 120. The method used for the selection of sample was convenience sampling. The secondary data was collected from various journals, websites, books and articles etc.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The data was collected from 120 respondents. The respondents were parents of children in age group of 6-12 years. The respondents were either of the parent (mother or father). Out of 120 children 50% were girls and rest 50% were boys. The detailed description is shown in Table 1

		Gender of the Child		Total
		Girl	Boy	
Age of the Child	6 years	11	6	17
	7 years	6	13	19
	8 years	12	10	22
	9 years	9	10	19
	10 years	4	5	9
	11 years	10	6	16
	12 years	8	10	18
Total		60	60	120

RESULT OF THE STUDY

When asked about the product the child demand the most, toys was the most demanded product out of the list of 11 child-centric products followed by clothes, confectionery and beverages. Cosmetic was not selected by any of the respondent. The same has been shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: Product demanded the most

Product	Frequency	Percent
Toys/Games	26	21.7
Gift Items	2	1.7
Eating Out	7	5.8
Beverages	14	11.7
Games Parlour/Fun Zones	13	10.8
Clothes	20	16.7
Confectionery	18	15.0
Sports related items	12	10.0
Stationery	4	3.3
Accessories	4	3.3
Total	120	100.0

The product mostly demanded by boys and girls vary by the gender of the child. While boys demanded toys/games the most followed by sports related items. The girls demanded clothes and toys the most.

The table 4 shows the age wise distribution of the product most demanded by the child.

		Age of the Child						Total	
		6 years	7 years	8 years	9 years	10 years	11 years		12 years
Product Demanded Most	Toys/Games	9	5	5	4	1	0	2	26
	Gift Items	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
	Eating Out	0	0	1	2	0	4	0	7
	Beverages	0	2	3	5	2	0	2	14
	Games Parlour/Fun Zones	3	5	2	2	0	1	0	13
	Clothes	0	4	5	3	0	3	5	20
	Confectionery	5	3	4	0	2	3	1	18
	sports related items	0	0	0	2	2	3	5	12
	Stationery	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	4
	Accessories	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	4
Total		17	19	22	19	9	16	18	120

H1: There is significant difference between the gender of the child and product demanded

To test this hypothesis One way ANOVA was used. Since p-value is 0.032 (as shown in table 5) we reject the null hypotheses and accept H1. We conclude that there is significant difference between the gender of the child and the product demanded.

Table 5: ANOVA

		Gender of the Child			
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.465	9	.496	2.137	.032
Within Groups	25.535	110	.232		
Total	30.000	119			

Children Influence in purchase of various products

The children influence in case of various products was measured using 5-point Likert- Scale where 1 indicates extremely important and 5 indicates not important. The children influence is extremely important in purchase of beverages and toys. It is not important in case of purchase of gift items and cosmetic.

Child influence in purchase of toys/games	Total
Extremely Important	39
Very Important	40
Important	39
Less Important	2
Total	120

Child influence in purchase of Gift items	Total
Extremely Important	5
Very Important	16
Important	6
Less Important	24
Not Important	69
Total	120

Child influence in purchase of eating out	Total
Extremely Important	2
Very Important	28
Important	15
Less Important	43
Not Important	32
Total	120

Child influence in purchase of beverages	Total
Extremely Important	40
Very Important	45
Important	34
Less Important	1
Total	120

Child influence in purchase of games parlour	Total
Extremely Important	8
Very Important	26
Important	17
Less Important	42
Not Important	27
Total	120

Child influence in purchase of clothes	Total
Extremely Important	5
Very Important	49
Important	19
Less Important	34
Not Important	13
Total	120

Child influence in purchase of cosmetics	Total
Very Important	3
Important	3
Less Important	25
Not Important	89
Total	120

Child influence in purchase of confectionery	Total
Extremely Important	9
Very Important	38
Important	68
Less Important	5
Total	120

Child influence in purchase of sports items	Total
Extremely Important	7
Very Important	29
Important	16
Less Important	26
Not Important	42
Total	120

Child influence in purchase of stationery	Total
Extremely Important	18
Very Important	47
Important	41
Less Important	9
Not Important	5
Total	120

Child influence in purchase of Accessories	Total
Very Important	27
Important	26
Less Important	39
Not Important	28
Total	120

SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR CHILDREN

As far as source of information is considered visit to store is the most important source of information for the child in case of toys with 51.7 % of respondents agreeing to it. This was followed by friends with 48.3 % of respondents considering friends as source of information in case of toys. So visit to store and friends were the only source of information in case of toys.

In case of gift items visit to store was prominent source of information with 85 % agreeing to it. Internet was also considered as source of information in case of gift items.

Family is the most important source in case of eating out. Normally in case of choice of restaurant family play a very important role and acts as a major source of information in case of eating out or choice of restaurant. Internet was also another source used for getting information about the restaurant or eating joints.

In case of beverages family, friends and visit to store were the major sources of information for children.

Most of the information about games parlour comes from friends, family and television. In case of stationery school has very important role and children get most of the information about stationery from school. They often demand similar kind of stationery items that their friends bring to school.

In almost all the product categories visit to store, family and friends have major role to play as a source of information for child as compared to television. Internet is also used as a source of information and mostly used by children in age group of 11 and 12. Though even a child of 6 years of age has knowledge about the shopping apps where their parents can place order for them and fulfil their demands.

CONCLUSION

The children these days understand market and have their own demands that they fulfil either by themselves or use parental income to get their demand fulfilled. The children have a very important role in case of child-centric products. They are the major deciding factors in what to buy and what not to buy. They influence their parents in most of the products of their use though the influence is not seen much in case of gift items since gifts are normally bought for giving it to someone else. The major source of information for children are friends and family. Even internet is a source of information for children in age group of 6-12 years of age. Marketers need to focus more on the way the products are displayed in the store because for most of the products visit to store is very important source of information.

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