

The Influence of Family and Peer Group on Children Consumer Socialization

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, the consumer in India is more modern and urban, with greater buying capacities. This is mainly because of their rise in disposable income and changing family profile. The Indian consumer has grown to be entirely different in the past two decades. Children are the decision makers for three target markets: the current market for the existing needs, the future market and the influential market, where they help their parents make various market choices. Thereby, children are prime purchase decision makers, as more than 30% of the population in India is below the age of 15 years. This paper discusses about the influence of family and peer group on children consumer socialisation.

KEYWORDS: Influence, Family, Peer group, Socialisation

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INTRODUCTION

Consumer Socialisation is the process by which young people acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in market place. There are many forces which influence on the purchasing pattern of the children or consumers. The major aids that influence the customer to purchase would be family group, the peer group, and also media which plays an important role in the purchasing pattern of any consumer. The family background or the decision making of family members would influence the buying behaviour of an individual. The peer group referred as friends or the same age group of individuals. And the most effective influence among all these is media which promotes the product through the advertisements and make an impact on the consumers in buying pattern.

Objectives:

- To analyse the influence of Family and peer group in shopping behaviour of children concerning the consumer socialisation.
- To identify the influence of family and peer group on sample children consumer socialization.

Research Methodology:

This article explains the perspective of many individuals relevant to this research article and data is obtained as per their research. The information regarding this research is

made available through secondary sources on which entire research is based.

Literature Review:

➤ **Hawkins Del I, Best Roger J, Coney Kenneth A, Mookerjee Amit (2000):**

In this study the author illustrates' the six roles that frequently occur in family decision-making. All the family members play an important part and important roles at different stages of decision-making. Nowadays children are fast swapping the roles with either the father or the mother or both at different stages and it is interesting to note the changes. No matter who are the end users of a product, children initiate the buying of a product and keenly start gathering information about the same through the media, internet or peers.

➤ **Ward and Wackman (1974):**

They have defined consumer socialization as "the process by which young people acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the market place".

➤ **Brim (1966):**

This article described Socialization as, "the process by which individuals learn social rules and behaviours needed to participate effectively in society. The term socialization is

considered to be the process through which individuals learn to participate effectively in their social environment.

➤ **Adya Sharma:**

This paper analyses the family time and again has been identified as an important socialization agent. Family's communications style with children in terms of socio oriented/ concept oriented has been used in various studies to highlight the difference in consumer socialization of children. Among various family members role of mother in consumer socialization of children has been found to be more important

➤ **Dr. Sunayna Khurana, Kanupriya Dang (2017):**

The findings of this study portray the importance of family, especially the mother, peer group, media and culture that help to develop the knowledge, skills and attitude required to function in the market place. Throughout their childhood, the children develop the skills and values that help them in making and influencing purchases in the present and in the future.

Findings and Analysis:

1. Impact of Family on Shopping behaviour of Children:

The family decision making is one of the force that plays an important role in influencing the shopping behaviour of children. The family decisions may depend on the family situations, family financial status and many other. The below explained are some of the family variables that influence on children buying pattern.

➤ **The influence of a mother in consumer socialisation of children:**

Mother has been identified as the most significant influential factor of socialisation of children. Mothers are of different parental style the parents who are more emotionally involved want to avoid conflict or want to limit their child's autonomy knowingly indulge in their children's wishes. Different family structures lead to different consumer socialization of children. Children develop various norms relating to consumer socialization by observing the behaviour of their parents and receiving positive as well as negative reinforcement.

➤ **Influence of Social Status of the family:**

The social status of the family is also one of the influence that would drive children to become socialised. The education qualification of the parents and their thinking will also influence on the shopping decision of the child which will in turn impact on the purchasing decision making of the child.

➤ **The Financial Status of the Family:**

The economic and financial status of the family and their members also a factor which can influence child in buying behaviour. The family financial position would be poor and cannot afford the high priced product and the same way the income of the family would be high and they can afford the luxury purchases.

2. Influence of Peer Group on Shopping Behaviour:

A peer group is a social group whose members have interests, social positions, and age in common. It is a group of people of approximately the same age, status, and interests. This is where children can escape supervision and learn to form relationships on their own. A peer group consists of friends and associates who are about the same age and social status.

Peer groups play an important role in socialization, especially in childhood and adolescence. It means a group in which the members share some common characteristics such as age or sex etc. Peer groups are the only form of socialization that is not under the control of adults. It is made up of the contemporaries of the child, his associates in school, in a playground and in street. It provides children with the opportunity to be a part of relationships that are productive and beneficial for all parties involved. The growing child learns some very important lessons from his peer group. Since members of the peer group are at the same stage of socialization, they freely and spontaneously interact with each other. They also allow children to create relationships with one another without being under adult control. The influence of the peer group typically peaks during adolescence, however, peer groups generally only affect short-term interests, unlike the family which has a long-term influence.

Conclusion:

Family influences the child's marketing choices both directly and indirectly. They are exposed to consumer socialization from early childhood. Parents are the main socializing agent until the child reaches adolescence. Single parents have greater influence, as their children are more prone to go to shopping with his/her parent. It is found that peers appeared to be the most important agents of consumer socialization and contributed to decision making styles of adolescents. Printed media and television commercials were also found to be significant sources of the acquisition of both desirable and undesirable decision-making styles. Throughout their childhood, the children develop the skills and values that help them in making and influencing purchases in the present and in the future. In the present days children not only act as consumers but also act as influencers in the family decision making. The increase in nuclear families and double earning couple and also adopting different parental style has led the children to play a vital role in shopping behaviour/buying decision making.

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