Impact Of Television Advertisement On Children’s Pester Power In Family Purchase Decision Making

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Abstract:

The kid market is the Escalating market worldwide. India has over 390 million children under the age of 13 - one of the most appealing target segments for marketers today. Having realized the sheer size of this market, the marketers have devised their marketing mix strategies specifically aimed at this target audience. Marketers use various communication tools to reach this audience. The media tool which the children are more conversant with is Television media. Since TV has omnipresence in homes around the world, advertisers have long tried to exploit the TV medium to target Children as the potential market segment. This study is aimed at measuring the impact of television advertisement on children’s pester power in family purchase decision making. It also aims at exploring the relationship of child demographics, parent’s demographics and situational variables on pester power of children.

Keywords: pester power, Advertisement, purchase decision, children

Introduction

Children nowadays are tyrants. They contradict their parents, gobble their food, and tyrannize their teachers. (Socrates, 425 BC)

According to Economist Milton Friedman, “The main purpose of any business is to maximise profit.” Marketers do anything and everything to achieve this purpose. To achieve this the main tool marketers use is Media. The Indian media and entertainment industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the country. As per FICCI –KPMG report 2015, India’s media and entertainment industry reaches 161 million TV households, 94,067 newspapers and 214 million internet users. The success of any marketing strategy depends on the extent it reaches the customer. Television (TV) is considered as one of the most powerful medium of advertisement as it has the capability to penetrate the mass-market and influence the attitude of people. children are the lifeblood of a family. Commercialization through TV advertisements is expected to enhance the demand among young consumers. Children are no longer considered as the passive spectators but are being targeted as the active participants in making important buying decisions in the family. Kids were the active knowledge partner in the family due to their exposure to media, irrespective of country and culture. They have been involved in all activities of the family. Most of the purchase decisions of the products used by them are chosen by them. Several studies pinpoints that the influence that the kids have on the purchase decisions in a household is increasing day by day. However, it is interesting to find that the nagging effect of children has also increased manifold in the recent decades.

Review Of Literature

Attitude of Children towards Advertisements-

Chan and McNeal (2004) examined Chinese children’s perceived truthfulness of and liking for television advertising in three Chinese cities with different developmental levels of advertising. An in-person survey of 1758 children (ages 6 to 14) was conducted between December 2001 and March 2002 using a structured questionnaire. Results indicate that a majority of children perceive half of the
television commercials to be true, although this varies by grade and geography. Hasmini (2004) conducted a study to examine Malaysian children’s attitudes towards television advertising. 252 Malaysian primary school children aged 10-12 years were selected with the help of random sample method. Petrovici and Marinov (2005) in their paper explored the relationships between determinants and primary antecedents of advertising and attitudes to advertising in the context of European Union accession countries. Data was collected from major urban areas of Bulgaria and Romania. The study conceptualises an extended version of Pollay and Mittal’s model of beliefs and attitudes towards advertising. Findings confirm that consumers in the two countries are more positive about advertising as an institution that the instruments used to promote advertising.

Pester Power of Children

The notion...of pester power is often thought to be highly influential in the marketing process of selling products to children’ Proctor and Richards, (2002). This influence is achieved through the enhancement of products, usually through advertising, to children resulting in improved sales, by increasing awareness levels (Proctor and Richards, 2002). Despite an abundance of research, along with evidence accounting for the growth in spending on child-targeted advertising, research concerning an understanding of pester power and the subsequent nature of the parent-child purchase relationship remains inconsistent and inconclusive.

The Effects/Consequences of Pester Power

Pester power reportedly results in a number of negative effects on parents and While they may be unintended by industry practitioners, they are considered an everyday reality for many consumers. Isler, L, Popper, E.T. and Ward, S. (1987) They include:

1. Unsought products and increasing materialism;
2. Parent-child conflict;
3. Disappointed children;
4. Exasperated parents.

Studies on the Impact of TV Advertisements on Children – Indian Context

Panwar and Agnihotri (2006) made a study titled —Advertising message processing amongst urban children. Data were collected from 250 children aged between 7 and 12 years, drawn from five major towns of western state of Gujarat (India) by using the cluster sampling approach. The result showed that children understand that basic objective of advertisement, which is to inform about the products and also to persuade them to buy these products and also know that medial vehicles carrying advertisements gain financially from the advertisements.

Priya et al. (2010) carried out a study among children studying in English medium schools in the Indian capital city Delhi, to analyze the impact of children’s attitudes towards TV ads and on their resultant buying behaviour. This study suggested that more focused approach is required by advertisers while planning their ad campaign for different age groups of children, rather than considering them as one homogenous group. Characters from folklores can be depicted for creating aspiration.

Singh and Soni (2012) studied the mediation strategies of Indian mothers regarding TV advertising. It was observed that mothers of Indian children resorted to mediation of advertisements in general and food advertisements in particular. Their mediation level was dependent on the age of the children as mothers of older children primarily focused on the active advertising mediation as compared to the mothers of the younger children who preferred using restrictive mediation strategies.

Conceptual Model Depicting The Relationship Of Different Variables

Based on the literature review, an attempt has been made to develop a model on Impact of Advertisement on children’s pester power in family purchase decision making is made. Previous research reports on this topic indicates that the Effect of advertisement on pester power is the result of
amalgamation of various factors such as child demographics, parent demographics and the time the child spent in front of television. These are the factors that determines the degree of influence the child uses to pester their parents. so the model was developed based on the model developed by Vashima veerkumar & Dr.Nerrja jaiswal (2015)

**Independent variables** - An independent variable is defines as the variable that is changed or controlled in a scientific experiment. It represents the cause or reason for an outcome. Here in our study the variable that controls or changes the pester power of children are

1. Child variables (child demographics) such as
   - Age of the child
   - Gender of the child
   - Education of the child
   - Board of study

2. Family variables of the respondents (parent Demographics) such as
   - Size of the family
   - Type of family
   - Structure of the family
   - Family income in rupees
   - Qualification of the parents
   - Occupation of the parents

3. Situational variables of the respondents
   - Hours of exposure of the children toward media in general and Television advertisements in particular.

**Mediating variable**

Those variables which cannot be controlled or measured directly is called as mediating variable. These variable have significant effect on the outcome variable. Often, a mediating variable is used to explain the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable. In the present study, Impact of television advertisements was used as the mediating variable.

**Dependent Variable**

Dependent variables or outcome variable are those variables which depend upon on one or more other variables. In the present study, the dependent variable was purchase intention.

**CONSTRUCTS-**

Child variables-

Past researches have proved that child variables play a important role in their influence on family buying decision. Child variables like age, gender, birth order of the child, education level of the children play a vital role in their pester power over family purchase decision.
Age-

Children of different ages use different influence strategies to convince their parents. Shoham and Dalakas (2003) stated that children of the ages of 3 to 11 make their parents to buy the products of their choice by using nagging strategy. children ages 12 and up uses bargaining, emotional strategies to convince their parents.

Selman (1980), John (1999) Hansen et. Al (2002) are the people who studied the influence of children in family decision making. In their study they concluded that child’s age is the most impacted factor and they concluded that the older children have significantly more influence than younger ones. Adya Sharma (2013) framed the proposition that as the age increases their preference in product categories also varies. Older children were found to be more involved in the purchase of furniture, automobiles and electronic gadgets.

Gender-

Children’s influence over parents varies with their gender. Compared to male children female children have more influence in family buying decision as they are accompanying their parents in most of the purchase. Flurry (2007) states that boys exert more influence than girls on toy purchases .on the other hand Haynes et all (1993) quoted that girls exert more influence than boys on purchase of apparels. But in recent study, Adya Sharma and Vandana Sonwaney (2013) concluded in their study that in urban India , as Girls and boys being treated equal , the influence of children would not be effected by gender. It might only affect the areas of influence.

Family variables-

Type of family-

Many researchers have highlighted the family variables as a most important determinant of pester power.in their study states pestering in children varies under the influence of different family structures . Moore and Moschis (1978, cited in Moschis 1985) has classified the family structures into four types namely the laissez–faire family, the protective family, the pluralistic family, and the consensual family. The laissez–faire family have a low social interaction and less communication between parent and child. In the protective family parents have more power over children. The pluralistic family encourages the child to develop new ideas. The consensual family is characterised by letting the child develop his own set of views with social harmony and the family cohesiveness. The different types of family have different purchase pattern.

Occupation –

Children of dual income families have more influence on family purchase decision than the family with single income .In dual income families parents spent more time away from children due to this guiltiness they allowed their children to dominate them in materialistic issues. Veloso et al,2008 as cited by sunita kumar(2013) studied the children in low-income families. It was observed that these families are more price conscious so they are not allowing their children to persuade them. Akhter Ali and D.k.Batra (2012) in their studies identified that more the professional involvement of parent, less time they spent for family purchase so children have more independence in purchase decision. Family income has a direct influence on the role of children in the family buying process. In higher income families, children influences more in family buying decision making process (Ali, Ravichandran and Batra, 2013)

Size of family-

The family which has few children spend more money for each child, compared to family with more children, and the influence of children in family buying decision is more in nuclear families (Neetu jain, 2015) but the views of Dunne and Mahrotra differs in this regard, they in their research found that the influence of children in buying decision of food items increases when there is more number of children in the family. Maggie Geuens, Gitte mask and Patrick(2002) in their study
found that most probably children of smaller family chooses their snacks by themselves compared to larger family where parent’s choose children’s food.

**TV viewing Hours by children**-

Evidence shows that Impact of Television advertisement directly related to time the children spent in watching Television. The Children who watch more Television are exposed to more Advertisement which results in purchase of more advertised goods. *Vareecken C.A & Maes.I. (2006)*

**Conclusion**

The proposed study tries to explore the relationship between demographic variables and pester power and impact of advertisement on pester power and its resulted purchase. The paper enables the fact that any study relating to pester power cannot be complete without considering the impact of advertisement and the degree of pester power varies with the difference in demographic features. It is interesting to find that majority of the seminal work has been reported from the western countries. Contrarily, very few studies have been conducted in India in this context. Similarly, the published literature on the impact of television advertisements on the pestering power of children was minimal and very few studies have been reported in India. The concept of pester power of present generation is of booming topic to the marketers nowadays all over the world. Children are centre of attraction for every family irrespective of country and race. The paper will contribute to the body of knowledge on pester power and its impact on family purchase decision making especially in a country like India where parents have greater responsibility over the behaviour of their children.

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