



## Family Shopping- How are Choices Impacted by the Decision Making Processes of Young Shoppers?

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Now a days shopping is just not shopping buy an experience or family entertainment. Due to huge range of products and plenty of malls around us customer has to choose a bit. Especially family with children and young shoppers has to ask them about their decision regarding some of the products, which influence the young shoppers in the family. The choice of young shoppers in the family shopping is one of the most important matters now days.

From an earlier authoritative upbringing in the Western world, upbringing has become more liberal from a focus on obedience to a focus on independence and autonomy and families have become negotiation families (Gram, M. (2007). This plays a role for family decision making where children are listened to a greater extent and encouraged to voice their point of view. Young shoppers have many reasons to raise their voice. One of the reasons is information technology, due tremendous use of internet now days especially among young people. Parent also gives lot of independence to their children to make decision in family shopping.

Children have come to constitute a very important consumer group (McNeal, 1992) that influences family purchases of various products in many ways ( Belch , 1985; Foxman , 1989; Caruana and Vassallo, 2003). Young shopper's influences family shopping in many ways like what to buy, when to buy, what size, shape and color to choose from etc. Even Marketers focuses on young customer as they have quit strong buying power in their home. Parents generally prefer decision of children before buying a product especially when product is being used by the children themselves.

Family structures have changed, which influences family decision-making (Belch and Willis, 2001), and, as some authors argue, family communication has become more open and democratic, one consequence being that today parents pay more attention to their children and their opinions. Generally yes family structure has changed a lot from olden days. Earlier there was tradition to live in joint family with grandparents who majorly influence the household decision, but gradually power is becoming more decentralized. One big family is divided into several small families. That means more decision makers or says more people to influence the buying decision.

Small family entitles parents to have clear communication with their children and take their children opinion in various buying decision. Children also enjoy taking part in household buying decision. Talking more about family structure and changes in it I have example from India, India is a huge country with lots of cities and many villages, very highly populated. In rural India still there are large numbers of joint families living together, where majority of the shopping decision is taken by elders of the family. Children were given very less or no opportunity in shopping. But on the contrary urban India has more of nuclear families that means less family member per family and more opportunity is given to young people while shopping.

There are lot of people of group of people who generally influence the decision of the person who is shopping, these includes family members, friends, co-workers, relatives. Especially when a family is shopping their shopping decision mainly focus around young shopper that is children in the family. Young shopper has substantial power to convince their parents regarding what they like and what they want to buy.

Family decision-making is a type of consumer decision-making that involves several persons as potential decision makers and influencers (Sheth 1974) has developed a general theoretical model outlining family decision-making and related explanatory factors. According to this there are many members in the family who actually influence the decision while shopping. So let's say a family goes for shopping to buy a LCD with 5 family members including 2 children, everyone's decision may be different as per which brand, or size or some might even don't want to buy LCD they may look for LED instead of LCD.

Five family members give at least five decision-makers in family shopping. But who will win and whose decision will be preferred is again a big question. Who has a strong impact on family decision making? Don't forget the two children, they are young they are knowledgeable and the next generation. They are the most influencer among the five family members.



Studies have also measured children's influence distributed on more specific decision areas such as product type, color, brand, price and shop. These studies found that children's influence varied across decision areas in the decision process. Children have most influence as regards product type, color and brand (Belch, 1985; Foxman, 1989; Jenkins, 1979; Lee and Beatty, 2002). At almost every part of decision making process young customer plays very important role. The decision process is quit long and goes through various processes, young adults influence the decision process and they have a great impact on the decision of the family shopping too.

Decision areas where young people influence are generally product type, color, brand, price and the shop from where to buy. If we go in detail about the product type with the previous example of LCD young shopper may be able to change the product from LCD to LED which is new technology than LCD. Here product type is used in example to show the influence of young shopper. The other major factor which influences the family shopping decision is color.

Young shopper has some choice of special colors. Colors are attached to the person's attitude and personality. Young shopper are generally brand conscious, they prefer to purchase the branded stuff rather than going for unbranded one. It's the matter of show-off some time.

Young shopper creates the huge impact when the role of brand comes into the picture while shopping. Price knowledge is also a major factor that creates the impact on purchase decision by young shopper. Due to various sources of price comparison available to young shopper, they are not going to buy the things costly which are available at some low price at some other place. They are alert customers when price comes into the picture.

The place from where to buy is really a big question. Nowadays internet shopping is also one of the medium of shopping, just go online and you can shop whatever you want to shop. Family shopping not ends by just going to the mall or some shopping complex, young shopper can create a great impact on decision process just by shopping online.

## II. YOUNG SHOPPER DECISION AREAS



Sometimes size of the product is also area where young shopper creates the impact on decision making process. So there are several areas where young shopper has a dominant influence on decision making processes.

Family shopping is influence by many people but there is special role of young adults in the family on the decision making while shopping. Due to more social networking these days' young adults have immense knowledge about the products and

brands, which gave them more reason to influence the purchase decision while their family is shopping. The impact of young adults during family shopping is quite visible these days due to their knowledge about the products available in the market.

### III. INFLUENCE OF OTHER PEOPLE ON FAMILY SHOPPING

The following figure shows the influence of other people on family shopping.



Young people are involved in social network via internet or clubs .A socialization agent may refer to a person or organization in the life of every person there are a number of people and institutions (e.g., family members, school) directly involved in socialization that have great influence because of their frequency of contact, primacy, and control over rewards and punishments given to the individual. (Moschis and Roy 1979).

Socialization makes young people more aware about the products available in the market, the brands which are popular among youngster etc. These interactions in socialization help them to choose or make influence when they go for shopping with their families, and there is great impact on family decision making.

Children also have been taught about what is rational and what is not from their family members. General things like price-quality decision and how to compare the prices of various products using common sense are being taught by the parents to their children, since their childhood. Young people learn basic "rational" aspects of consumption from their parents (Riesman and Roseborough 1955; Parsons, Bales, and Shils 1953).These results that Young people learn rational shopping behavior from their parents and they have a great impact on shopping decision. Moore and Stephens (1975) show that overall parent-adolescent communication about consumption predicts fairly well a child's knowledge of prices of selected products.

These findings suggest that parents may encourage their youngsters to use price as a criterion in evaluating products. Parents help their children to judge the products and its appropriate price since childhood and make them strong enough to choose the rational product price combination. This knowledge is used by the children during family shopping encounters and they have a great impact on family shopping decision.



Young people interacts with his/her peers about consumption matters, s/he is likely to learn about their product preferences and may take them into account in evaluating products (Moschis and Roy 1979). Young people follow their peers regarding shopping patterns and thus while shopping with family peer influence is a lot in the mind of young adults, which creates the impact on family shopping decision making.

Many marketers' makes advertisements to influence the young people just because they know young shopper choice create impact on family decision making. There are number of examples where young shoppers are centre of attraction in an advertisement. This kind of advertisement also encourage young shopper to influence their decision while their family is shopping.

(Sheth and Mittal 2004) suggests that cognitive resources are a basis for a reversal of influence in family. The shift occurs when a child grows up and is exposed to new knowledge. He or she begins to depend less on the parental role model. Thus, when children's preferences differ from those of their parents, they are able to exercise their influence. There are two reasons for reverse influence. First, children may have greater knowledge and expertise than their parents in specific purchasing areas such as new media products. Second, there is a family norm, known as democratic justice in which each family member is given a voice. Many parents may consider giving their children the opportunity to influence their preferences in family decisions. This demonstrates that sons and daughters are citizens of the family and have their own rights.

Children greater knowledge about the product and new upcoming products give them chance to take part in family decision making and their choice is being considered an important decision. Young people acquires knowledge from various media and specially internet gives them extensive data about the products available in the market or which are going to be launch soon. Parents also give opportunity to their children to participate in family shopping and thus have impact on the decision of family shopping.

I want to give an example where parent motivates their children to give order at one of the McDonald's restaurant. First children will order want they want to eat and parents will give them money in advance so they can directly give to the person who is taking the order. This gives more freedom to children in decision making and it impact in the family decision making.

The child may use affective tactics to increase his or her influence on family decisions. (Wimalasiri (2004) gives a detailed classification of influence tactics used by children to elicit the desired parental purchasing behavior: pressure tactics, upward appeal, exchange tactics, coalition tactics, ingratiating tactics, rational persuasion, inspirational appeals and consultation tactics. Generally young shopper uses their emotion to influence their shopping decision. Children creates an affection mode towards their parents, which helps them to obtain what they want from their parents during family shopping, thus there is impact of young shopper in family decision making.

The child is seen as progressing from a state of vulnerability to sophistication, from an earlier lack of skills to a later possession of abilities (Young 1990).

This common Western way of perceiving children naturally implies consequences for perceptions of how children, seen as vulnerable and innocent, passive and dependent, should be treated and socialized, and this obviously plays a role when adults consider whether or not children should be allowed to participate in decision making. As child grows up and turns towards young human there is more influence in family decision making process by them as compare when they were kids.

Children influence indirectly and in a passive way by indicating what they like and what they do not like (Roedder John, 1999) and young children might use very direct approaches to influence (Rust, 1993). "Pestering" means that the child insists on getting his or her will, particularly used to describe what might go on in a supermarket near the shelves with toys or candy. This strategy "pestering" involves repeated requests and exchanges not always in argumentative form. "Pestering", however, is only one strategy among many and children use more advanced techniques in taking part in family decision making and in influencing family purchases.

Many children just directs what they want to buy and what they do not like , so this gives direct indication to their parents what to buy and what not to buy for them. In this kind of process there is a passive influence of children on the family decision making process. But still children can create an impact on family decision making process directly or indirectly.

Children might initiate the purchase, collect information about alternatives, suggest retail outlets, and have a say in the final decision (Roedder John, 1999). As children grow older, strategies such as bargaining, compromising and persuasion are employed, and asking for products with no argumentation turns into discussions and compromises between parents and children (Rust, 1993).

Sometimes children may initiates the buying process, they collect the relevant information about the product, there alternatives, where it is available, where is the specials attached to it, and similar kind of stuff. These skills of the child help them



when they grew older to take active part in family decision making process. Parents also enjoy this activity and feel proud about their children.

(Lindstrom (2003) maintains that children's indirect influence is very important as well. The influence of children is not just a one-way unsophisticated process with a screaming child in a supermarket, as the process is thought of stereotypically, but a two-way communicative and multifaceted process between the child and an adult often encouraging the child's participation.

Children role in the family decision is very important, as it fulfills the communication process and fills the gap what child wants. Children participation is encouraged by the parents especially in the starting of buying process by the family. Children usually don't participate in monetary part involved in buying process.

Parents' decision usually prevails in the final decision stage in family decision-making. This may be due to economic realities, where parents contribute and hold family financial resources. Children have influence in the stage of making choice regarding the product and brand.

It's clear that in family buying process choice of young adults influence the decision making process. The decision making process has various steps.

(Kotier (1996) cited that buyer decision process passing through five stages that is:

- Need recognition,
- Information search,
- Evaluation of alternatives,
- Purchase decision and
- Post purchase behavior.

This process starts with the buyer recognizing a need which can be inspired by internal or external stimuli. The first three stages can be initiated by the young adults as a shopper but the fourth step i.e. purchase decision is usually dominant by the parents due to various factors like family economic condition, future product requirement or not etc.

A review of some of empirical literature indicates that children are most likely to have influence when they are the primary user of a product or in the initial buying stages and when they are involved in sub-decisions such as make, color and brand choices (Belch, 1985; Swinyard and Sim, 1987). Children don't take part in complex buying situation or where their interest is not attached to the family shopping. Therefore children do influence family shopping decision but not at all the stages but only when they feel to involve and when they like.

Young adults influence the family decision during shopping, but majorly during the initial stages of buying process. There are different factors which create impact on decision making by the young adults during shopping, these are color, brand, from where to buy and some other similar factors.

Product categories, age and gender of child are potential candidates affecting family decision making. Age of the child may differ the influence of the decision making during family shopping. Small children influence the family decision making during the initial stages only, but young adults may influence the family decision making during middle stage of buying process. Young people influence the family decision making but the impact differs as per age. The other factor which varies the influence is the gender of young people. Boy and girls influence the family decision in different manner too.

There are many ways by which young people influence the family decision making, and parents also like to appreciate their involvement in decision making process. Due to increased knowledge of the young people parents also give opportunity to them to take part in the decision process.

It has been known for marketers to target both children and parents in family consumption products advertising, with increasing children's influences in family decisions (Kaur and Singh, 2006). Thus parents and their children usually work together in family decision making. It is clear that the marketer must address the needs of both parties and work to help to resolve any conflict that may arise. Marketers should focus on both parents and young people outlook before deciding any marketing activities.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

It was quite clear from the literature studied that young people influence the decision while family is going shopping. Young people influence the buying decision of family across various stages of buying process. Importance of their decision may differ through various processes. Due to tremendous knowledge of young people these days give them more chance to participate in family decision making processes. Parents also encourage their children to participate in family buying decision.



Young people influence the family decision in many ways like product selection, color of the product, from where to buy, which brand to buy. Young consumer can greatly influence the family decision due these factors. There are also other groups of people who influence the family decision buying process like colleagues, relatives, friends but the most affluent among these are the children in the family.

Marketers need to understand the power of young consumer to attract them more. Marketing strategies should be designed in accordance to attract young consumer. Young consumer generally influences in the initial process of family shopping decision but they are quit important to generate sales volume.

At the end I would like to conclude that young consumer can greatly influence the family buying decision while family goes for shopping. The degree of impact may differ according to various factors which were mentioned in the paper. Marketer should focus on behavior of young consumer in their marketing plans so that they can increase sales volume and enjoys more revenue.

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