

Pester Power Consumer Behaviour among Kids and its Impact on Family Buying A study with Reference to Packaged Convenience Food in Kerala

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

In today's environment many nuclear families have emerged and the role of elders have been limited in these places with the kids starting to gain dominance in decision making especially in the area of purchases. Today, children have become powerful influencers in their role as consumers on various product categories even on those products which they don't use directly.

Commercial pressures on children and teenage youth may encourage continual consumption and acquisition at the expense of informed consumer decision making and environmental sensitivity.

The purchase decision making by the consumers in today's world is largely different from that of the past. Though the degree of influence of purchase decision and tastes vary from person to person, the kids of today have become powerful as influencers. It is under such a context that this research is being made. The theme was selected as "Study on Pester power consumer behavior among kids and its impact on family buying with reference to packaged convenience food in Kerala"

During the course of searching for any secondary data, it was also identified there were just a few minor research works that were carried out on kids influence in Kerala. There were no works related to the influence of kids in the purchase of packaged convenience foods behind which most of the kids are running helter skelter.

An extensive review of literature was undertaken to ascertain research gap and to identify the relevant issues for the study.

It is believed by the researcher that this comprehensive study will benefit a large spectrum of consumers, retailers, children's and others general in understanding the purchase behaviour of kids towards convenience food items.

The major objectives framed by the researcher are:

- To identify the linkage between Pester Power and Purchase Intention.
- To study the level of awareness about convenient food items among the kids and their parents

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- To study the kids decision making abilities and purchase behavior towards convenience food items
- To examine purchase behavior of parents towards the convenience food items
- To measure the level of satisfaction derived by the parents towards the factors that had influenced the kid buying behaviour.

This study has been carried out with an objective of understanding children's influence on purchase decisions with reference to Kerala. The survey was carried out in the Gods own country of Kerala. Three major districts namely, Thiruvananthapuram, the capital city of Kerala, Ernakulam (Kochi), the industrial city and Kozhikode (Calicut), the Northern part and the city with a large NRI population were selected for the study.

Further it was decided to conduct the survey among the parents and students studying in unaided private schools which had been in the field of education for a period of minimum 10 years. As per the details of the State Government Education department Census report of 2009 conducted under the aegis of educationist, Prof. B. Hridayakumari, it has been pointed out that many of the parents belonging to upper and middle income groups as well as those belonging to Double Income groups (both parents employed) preferred to send their kids to unaided private schools in the city limits rather than to Government or Government aided schools or to unaided private schools at remote areas to avoid being affected by strikes, logistics problems and also in view of providing a good curriculum support, the researcher preferred to chose the schools in the city limits only in these three districts.

As per the State Governments Education department data available (2009 June), there were as many as 52 unaided private schools in Thiruvananthapuram district, 58 in Kochi and 41 in Kozhikode which had put in a service of minimum 10 years. As many as 10 schools each belonging to Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode were randomly chosen for the study and parents of students studying in these schools were also contacted.

The respondents were parents having children in the age group of 4 – 15 years and they were selected through Stratified random sampling method. The questionnaire was administered to them to extract the views from them. The study has been carried out on the lines of the aspects mentioned in the diagram given below.

The Sampling methodology adopted in the current study is Stratified Random Sampling. In this type of sampling method, the population is divided into certain strata and further Simple Random sample is used within each stratum of the population.

The data sources for the study were acquired from both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data were collected directly from the sample population during the field survey. The secondary data were sourced from journals as well as other reports and magazines.

From the analysis it was found that Parents do make their choices while purchasing convenience food items for children. It was also identified that the parents provide tips for their children during purchases. The purchase decision when the kids accompany their parents is not dependent on the family status. There is significant difference in the level of influence induced through different promotional factors such as – TV Commercials, References made by friends, Print Ads/ hoardings/ Knowledge through Internet.

Similarly, there is difference between the perception of factors inducing pester power in children as perceived by parents and the e monthly amount that the parents are ready to spend on their kids' pocket money is not dependent of the family style. Likewise, there is difference between the frequencies of purchase of the different food items: Milk products and nutrition, beverages, health drinks, ready to use food items, ready to eat food items, chocolates, biscuits and ice creams.

It was also found that there is significant difference between the perceptions of importance of the different factors considered while taking purchase decisions and there is significant difference between the perceptions towards ethical marketing practices.

The study also identified that there is significant difference between the levels of perception towards unethical marketing practices and there was influence of the reasons stated for focus on children in the international level of marketing on purchase behaviour.