

International Conference on Business Research
University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka
December 3, 2021, 310-318



BUSINESS RESEARCH UNIT
FACULTY OF BUSINESS
UNIVERSITY OF MORATUWA

EFFECTS OF CHILD'S PESTER POWER IN THE PARENT'S PURCHASE DECISIONS IN RELATION TO FAST MOVING CONSUMER GOODS MARKET IN SRI LANKA.

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ABSTRACT

For decades, the Pester Power of a Young Consumer has piqued interest, providing new areas of research for interested parties. The goal of this research is to look into the involvement of the kid in the decision-making process of parents in Sri Lanka's fast-paced consumer goods market. The study is based on a thorough review of the literature in the topic of interest, which included evaluating publications to find elements that contributed to the emergence of pester power. The exploratory discovery shows a concept indicator model that reveals three distinct factors: demographic, socio-psychographic, and informative. Due to the scarcity of factors being examined in the Asian region, notably in Sri Lanka, there is an empirical gap. More study is needed to validate the indicator model and learn more about the phenomenon's impact on parent purchasing behaviour. This is the first time a study like this has been carried out in the Sri Lankan market. Despite the fact that Sri Lanka has a very traditional culture that places a high value on group norms and social acceptance, confirming a collectivistic culture in which children are expected to be subservient, there is a new wave of incredibly energetic, more informed young children who make their own consumer decisions. The majority of empirical research focuses on children's increased participation in family purchases and their conversion into active consumers in a rapidly developing market in Southeast Asian countries.

Key Words: Pester power, Business, advertising & promotion, Marketing, Working with Children, Young People & Families.

1. Introduction

Contemporary families' prominence in enacting, planning, and socializing consumption practices is affecting marketing methods. Marketers have long identified the family as the fundamental unit responsible for decision-making and consumption. According to Dens et al., (2007) the modern FMCG sector has significantly improved the shopping experience, enabling young customers to convince their parents to purchase excessive products on the grounds that they are an integral part of the family unit and modern society. There is a considerable body of knowledge regarding the nature of a child's contact with their parents, and it is based on the worry that advertising may activate the so-called "pester power" phenomenon, resulting in persuasive behavior that alludes to a child's adversely exerting behavior. Moreover, as per to the findings by implying that a child uses a variety of persuasive tactics to purchase a variety of market goods to varied degrees. On the other hand, the rise of the singularity in the twentieth century's westernized countries sparked the curiosity of marketers and advertising seeking expansion in the FMCG industry. Additionally, because there are few studies from the world's south-east Asian region, particularly Sri Lanka, and because numerous studies have interpreted the global singularity differently, the purpose of this study is to fill in the gaps, both practical and conceptual, by assisting stakeholders in the FMCG industry in emerging in their growth, as it was clear that this phenomenon aided marketers in the said industry in growing in other developing countries (Abbasi et al., 2020). Additionally, through an extensive literature review, the study will develop a concept indicator model, which will include a consistent set of factors that may influence the pestering behavior of young consumers, as numerous studies have interpreted the global singularity differently, and by providing sufficient literature on this behavior in the Sri Lankan context.

2. Methodology

According to Snyder, (2019) Within the field of business research, knowledge generation is expanding at a breakneck pace while staying fragmented and transdisciplinary. This makes it difficult to stay current on the state of the art and to be at the cutting edge of research, as well as to appraise the collective evidence in a particular field of business research. This is why, more than ever, the literature review as a research method is critical. Following that the authors used a comprehensive literature survey strategy and exhibited the process in the, a semi systematic review is conducted so that mapping similar to Tranfield et al., (2003) findings, this includes both theoretical approaches or topics and identifying knowledge gaps within the literature. To conduct an examination of the validity or accuracy of a particular theory or set of competing hypotheses. The systematic review, semi-systematic review, and integrative review are the three broad categories that will be presented and addressed. Under the correct circumstances, any of these review procedures can be extremely beneficial in assisting with the resolution of a specific research question. However, it is worth noting that there are numerous other types of literature reviews and that parts from other methodologies are frequently blended. Due to the breadth of these methodologies, it should be emphasized that they may require additional adaption for a particular study endeavor (Snyder, 2019). Hence, this study follows a semi-systematic review with the purpose of overviewing a research area over a period of time with broad questions and objectives. Research articles will be

searched, and the data will be analyzed following a qualitative or quantitative approach to provide a theoretical model through the findings and contribution.

3. Analysis & results

3.1. Pestering Behavior of a Child in the parent's buying decisions.

When it comes to marketing, pester power, sometimes known as the "nag factor," is a new phenomenon that has sparked debate in both academic circles and the marketing industry. Researchers have previously investigated a variety of factors that may influence a child's pestering behavior, but they have not done so consistently, and this phenomenon has also been understudied in the Sri Lankan context, despite the fact that numerous studies have been conducted in Westernized countries and some South Asian countries. According to the author Abbasi et al., (2020), given the recent trend of increase among nuclear families, parents are seeking to make their children happy by purchasing and encouraging them to do so without considering whether or not they genuinely require it. As a result, children have gotten more spoiled, which has led to their becoming more passionate about their product selections. Marketers have long debated the effectiveness of persuasion, using a range of research to investigate the impact of influence on different stages of the purchasing cycle, and this debate continues to this day. Children's voices nowadays are more assertive than ever before, whether it is in the context of making purchases or refraining from making purchases, among other things.

3.2. Demographic factors influencing pestering behavior of a young consumer.

According to Phongsvarintr & Prasongsukarn, (2018) and Ward, (1974) in order to be successful, young people must learn the skills, information, and attitudes that will allow them to act as customers. According to the findings, when youngsters get information from various agents in society such as peers, coworkers, friends, and family, they exhibit a certain level of pestering behavior with the information received. Families' shopping patterns are changing as a result of children's influence and participation, who are progressively becoming one of the most important influences and factors in influencing family members' routines. Conferring to Wood et al., (1967), as cited by Chaudhary et al., (2019), children use a range of motivating tactics that can be divided into five categories: Positive sanctions include invoking norms (such as the rule of law, fair play, and justification), constructive sanctions include gifts and favors, negotiation, and civility, while negative sanctions include physical aggression, nagging, pleading, and weeping. In order to attain their goals, numerous studies have used a number of strategies. Requesting, demanding, and bargaining; negotiating; politeness; positive influence; coercion; displaying sadness; sobbing and pouting. Aside from that, according to Ward & Wackman, (1972), one of the numerous emotional strategies that a child demonstrates is the deliberate manipulation of sentiments to persuade parents to obtain what they wish. Several strategies, including weeping, pouting, retreating, or giving the silent treatment, as well as outrage, sweet talk, and making a positive impact on the issue, have been found to be effective in this situation. When compared to older age groups of customers, the authors of Ramya, (2016) suggest that children think and behave differently than adults. This is because, when compared to adults, children are natural observers with high levels of creativity and impulsivity, but adults do not. The fact that children begin to emerge as consumers at a very young age has a significant impact on their development and

behavioral patterns. Furthermore, prior research by Nicholls & Cullen, (2004) found that products that appeal to younger children differ from those that appeal to older children. Younger children who want more clothing, toys, and food than they already have exhibit a certain level of nagging behavior. However, when children grow older, the products that appeal to them alter, such as electrical equipment. Begging and pressure tactics are among the strategies used by younger children to persuade their parents to make a purchase, but older children's efforts are more sensible. Sri Lankan children act in ways that are similar to youngsters in Westernized nations. According to the findings of a study conducted by Elliott, (2009), there are differences in product selection based on gender when it comes to purchase decisions made by children, which is consistent with earlier studies. Females, according to the study's findings, are more likely to choose products based on emotional features, such as those that trigger a sentimental sensation or a connection to a certain experience, when it comes to purchasing things. This phenomena demonstrates that girls are emotionally invested in their favorite products when it comes to consuming those products. It is similar to what Ramya, (2016) and Chaudhary, (2018) revealed in their research study that family money has aided young customers in engaging in bothersome behaviors. The amount to which this has occurred is determined by the family's financial situation. The level of pestering behavior rises in direct proportion to the amount of money available. According to Evans & Chandler, (2006), purchasing decisions made by purchasers' family members may have a considerable impact on the decision to acquire. A family's purchasing habits reflect their preferences, likes, and dislikes, as well as their overall way of life. Because of the rising range and complexity of family commitments, the consumption process is projected to undergo significant modifications. Respondents from Westernized countries are also more attached and closer to their siblings and family members, which is consistent with empirical data. Characteristics of Sri Lankan households are comparable. According to Moschis & Moore, (1979), four communication patterns were used to analyze distinct family types in the context of consumer socialization. Several communication patterns, including pluralistic (decentralized), protective (centralized), laissez-faire, and consensual communication patterns, were identified and categorized.

3.3. Socio-psychographic factors influencing pestering behavior of a young consumer.

Materialism, according to Goldberg et al., (2003), is an emergent, self-centered belief system that incorporates obsessive buying behavior, which has resulted in materialistic beliefs among young consumers. It is made up of the want to acquire and possess things, as well as the satisfaction obtained from these possessions, as well as the need for money to make these acquisitions feasible, and the desire for employment to generate the necessary cash. Furthermore, today's kids are the most brand-focused, consumer-focused, and materialistic generation in history, with materialism at an all-time high. A similar result was reached when it was observed that when youngsters have a desire to "look good" among their friends or colleagues who are wearing trendy brands, they become more materialistic and begin to nag or pester their parents to get such trendy things. Furthermore, earlier research, such as Dávila et al., (2017), claimed that celebrity endorsement has a positive effect on children's materialism. According to the study participants' comments, children favor things consumed or used by celebrities, which is consistent with the findings. Furthermore, according to Richins & Chaplin, (2015),

materialistic behavior is demonstrated with the use of peer influence. Peers are generally viewed as having a greater influence than parents on the acceptance of materialistic attitudes. Many experts were surprised to discover that there is no empirical evidence that the level of materialism among one's classmates has any effect on teenage materialism. Children between the ages of 8 and 14 are susceptible to a large amount of peer pressure, according to Khandai & Agrawal, (2012). When children see advertisements, they participate in peer-to-peer conversation. This discussion leads to the purchasing of products linked with their respective brands. Children are more receptive to peer pressure and are more inclined to purchase products recommended by their peers.

3.4. Informative factors influencing pestering behavior of a young consumer.

Persuasion power resulted in an increase in consumerism among children, as defined by Lee et al., (2007), manifested by the bombardment of child-centric commercials. Furthermore, it has been suggested that advertising is primarily targeted towards children because they are seen as the key impacts on family purchasing decisions. According to the findings, as a result of new children's television programming, advertising to boost the pester power of young customers has become a popular trend, resulting in a child's ability to exercise influence over their parents by repeatedly nagging them to purchase marketed items. Furthermore, the survey revealed that children learn about new products and brands mostly from television commercials, which account for 80% of all primary sources of knowledge. Fast food restaurants, clothes, chocolates, chips, and toy products are among the top five items for which children have pestered their parents due to ads, according to Ambler, (2007). Bamfo et al., (2019) discovered that television advertising had a significant impact on children's happiness, brand choice, and purchase behavior, among other things. As a result of marketing activities, customers' loyalty and brand preference are developed, and consumer purchasing behavior is impacted. Prible, (2017) discovered that packaging can play a crucial role in attracting the attention of young consumers and creating an incentive for them to nag their parents and other family members. According to the study's findings, visual components are vital in bringing enjoyment and stimulation to preschoolers. They are drawn to the brilliant colors found in nature. Children encourage their parents to buy items in bright pastel hues such as dazzling blue, red, and purple that are made up of numerous odd forms and come in a variety of sizes, similar to the discovery. When these components are combined with kid-friendly packaging, marketers can greatly boost their target demographic's pestering behavior (Turner et al., 2006). For product preservation, branding, positioning, and communication, packaging is essential (Roberts, 2005). Children's packaging is frequently used by marketers to appeal to children's feelings of imagination and pleasure, prompting them to become stimulated and hounding their parents to buy a product. The primary means of bringing delight and entertainment to young consumers is through perception-evoking packaging.

4. Conclusions & implications

The purpose of this study was to develop a concept indicator model (see Figure 1) that could be used to characterize the most likely paths via which elements impacting pester power evolve. Examining these factors is the first step in developing a model. The nave idea was considered in the context of consumer socialization theory, which contends that a child's pester power can affect parents' buying decisions, as well as the influence of other influential actors on a child's activities. After that, the study undertakes a thorough evaluation of the literature on this social event. Following the advent of the social phenomenon, pester power, in westernized countries around the turn of the twentieth century, previous investigations have been conducted with a lack of consistency.

The components that contribute to the creation of pester power were defined as demographic, socio-psychographic, and informative characteristics after a thorough examination. To begin, demographic data such as age, gender, household income, and family structure were discussed. Second, materialism and peer pressure were evaluated as socio-psychographic sub variables. Finally, advertising and packaging were included in the informative element. According to the model, all three of the aforementioned factors influence the emergence of a young consumer's pester power, which in turn influences the parent's purchasing decision in relation to Sri Lankan fast moving consumer goods. It is recommended that more research be done to determine the veracity of the described associations in terms of pester power. The conduct of this study will contribute to recognizing the phenomena in the aforementioned industry, with the literature evaluation emphasizing the lack of accessible research in the Asian region. While previous literature identified a large number of factors influencing the pester power of young consumers, an even greater number of factors influencing the pester power of Sri Lankan young consumers have been identified, adding to the academic literature in Sri Lanka in the years since the phenomenon's emergence. These variables could be utilized to direct marketing efforts and enjoy the rewards. When selling their products and services, Sri Lankan marketers and advertisers, like their counterparts in industrialized countries, try to stay current with marketing trends. FMCG marketers will use appealing marketing and packaging in both traditional and digital media to create income for their firms in order to leverage on youthful consumers' pester power. Considering this study further research could be conducted testing these factors or identifying new factors that could influence the pestering behavior of a young Sri Lankan Consumer.

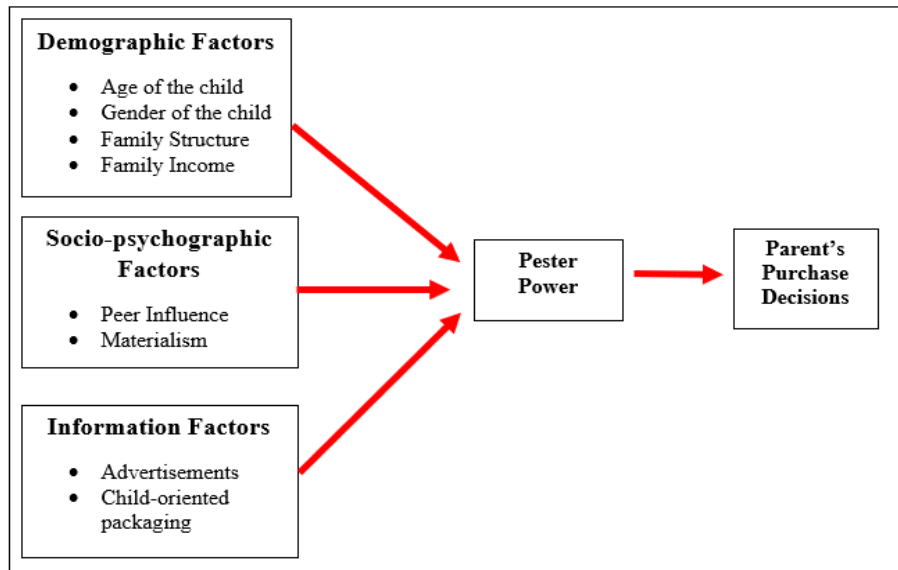


Figure 1. Concept Indicator Model

Source: Authors Creation

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