

“Passive Dictators” of the family and consumer behaviour: A case of malted food

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Keywords

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Abstract:

There are various roles played by the members in a family but research on family decision making has been largely confined to spouses, who have been considered as the relevant decision making unit in a family. However, the role of third party influences, such as children, on decision making strategies and negotiations is essential to taking a broader view of the relevant unit of analysis. Traditionally, women were seen to be the purchasing agents for the family. Now a days, In India increasing participation of women in the workforce has prompted a shift in this role as children are increasingly the "buyers" for the entire family. Even in families where women do not work, children are observed to share this role with their mothers. Children enjoy greater discretion not only in making routine consumption decisions for the family but also in pestering their parents to buy other products desired by them. It is also observed that children are socialized by their parents to act as rational consumers. After years of direct or indirect observation of parental behaviour in the marketplace, they gradually acquire relevant consumer skills from their parents.

The structure of Indian families has been previously characterized as joint families with traditional SRO (that is, the husband predominated in all family affairs). However, owing to influences from the West, the structure of Indian families has changed to nuclear or extended families (nuclear families plus grandparents). The Indian families have become more modern in SRO, such that the decision making has become more egalitarian (Chadha, 1995; Dhobal, 1999). Compared to this, the West is experiencing an increase in the number of single parent or female-headed households (Ahuja and Stinson, 1993; Mangleburg et al., 1999). Such a shift in family composition and structure has a bearing on the strength in the role that children are expected to play as buyers in the family.

Introduction

Individual members of families often serve different roles in decisions that ultimately draw on shared family resources. Some individuals are *information gatherers/holders*, who seek out information about products of relevance. These individuals often have a great deal of power because they may selectively pass on information that favors their chosen alternatives. *Influencers* do not ultimately have the power to decide between alternatives, but they may make their wishes known by asking for specific products or causing embarrassing situations if their demands are not met. The *decision maker(s)* have the power to determine issues such as, whether to buy, which product to buy, which brand to buy, where to buy it and when to buy.

Family decisions are often subject to a great deal of conflict. The reality is that few families are wealthy enough to avoid a strong tension between demands on the family's resources. Conflicting

pressures are especially likely in families with children and/or when only one spouse works outside the home. Note that many decisions inherently come down to values, and that there is frequently no "objective" way to arbitrate differences. One spouse may believe that it is important to save for the children's future; the other may value spending now to help prepare the children for the future. Some family members may resort to various strategies to get their way. One is *bargaining*—one member will give up something in return for someone else. Another strategy is *reasoning*—trying to get the other person(s) to accept one's view through logical argumentation. Note that even when this is done with a sincere intent, its potential is limited by legitimate differences in values. On one hand, *Authority* involves asserting one's "right" to make a decision but when it comes to products for consumption to children the choice of children does play a vital role.

Review of Literature

J. Miguel Villas-Boas,(1985)“Dynamic Competition with Experience Goods”, Journal of Consumer Affairs,Vol.19 (1)pp74This paper considers dynamic competition in the case in which Consumers are only able to learn about their preferences for a certain product after experiencing it. After trying a product a consumer has more information about that product than about untried products. When competing in such a market firms with more sales in the past have an informational advantage because more consumers know their products. If products provide a better-than-expected fit with greater likelihood, taking advantage of that informational advantage may lead to an informational disadvantage in the future. This paper considers this competition with an infinite horizon model in a duopoly market with overlapping generations of consumers. Two effects are identified: On one hand marginal forward-looking consumers realize that by purchasing a product in the current period will be charged a higher expected price in the future. This effect results in reduced price sensitivity and higher equilibrium prices. On the other hand, forward-looking firms realize that they gain in the future from having a greater market share in the current period and compete more aggressively in prices. For similar discount factors for consumers and firms, the former effect is more important, and prices are higher the greater the informational advantages. The paper also characterizes oscillating market share dynamics, and comparative statistics of the equilibrium with respect to consumer and firm patience, and the importance of the experience in the ex post valuation of the product.

Brenda J. Cude1,(1987)“Estimating the Returns to Informed Decision-Making” Journal of Consumer Affairs Vol-21(1),pp86 Data from 929 product tests in Consumer Reports between January 1975 and November 1984 were used to estimate the potential payoffs to consumer search. A "best choice" and a "worst choice" were identified in each product test using three different selection methods. In methods 1 and 2, the worst choice was qualitatively inferior to the best choice. However, the method 1 worst choice was the most expensive lower-quality option, while in method 2 it was the least expensive alternative. In method 3, both the best and worst choices were selected randomly without regard to quality rankings or price. When the worst choice in a product test was more costly than the corresponding best choice, the price difference (in percent) was computed to estimate the returns to search in 12 product classes. Implications for consumers and consumer educators are also identified.

Mary I. Carsky, Roger dickinson and Mary f. Smith,(1995)“Toward Consumer Efficiency:A Model for improved buymanship, Journal of Consumer Affairs”Vol 29(2) pp 442 This paper suggests that changes in the economic, marketing, and social environments call for alternative approaches to the traditional models of buymanship. The authors propose a shopping model that incorporates four main tenets: (1) search is conceived as a continuous process; (2) consumers take advantage of retail price competition at one point in time and over time; (3) an acceptable set of brands and stores is integral to purchase decisions; and (4) low price on an acceptable brand triggers purchase. Implications for consumer buying, research, and consumer education are identified.

Ruth Belk Smithi and George P. Moschisi, (2006) “A Socialization Perspective on Selected Consumer Characteristics of the Elderly” Journal of Economics & Management Strategy, Vol.15(4)pp 37 This study examines the effects of selected antecedent variables and communication processes on the consumer behavior of the elderly. The socialization perspective is suggested as a conceptual framework for the study of elderly consumer behavior, with specific theories used as bases for formulating hypotheses. The study results suggest that the mass media and the family may be instrumental in reinforcing or developing traditional sex-role stereotypes among the elderly, whereas consumer education may help them filter puffery in advertisements. Age, sex and health were also related to various aspects of consumer behavior.

Bahn, Kenneth D. (1986), “how and when do Brand perception and preference first form? A cognitive development investigation, Journal of consumer research, Vol. 13(2),pp 382-393This study examined children’s brand discrimination and preference for serials and behaviors, the study discovered several dimensions that underlie these two processes. Piaget’s cognitive developmental stage theory was used as then guiding framework. The result indicates that the numbers differ by both cognitive stage and by product category.

Glazer,Rashi, BarbaraE.Kahn,andWilliamL.Moore(1991),The Influence of External Constraints on Brand Choice: The Lone Alternative Effect, Vol.18 (2),pp 119-127
In this article, the objectives are (1) To provide an explanation for the deviations from accepted theoretical models (2) to suggest operational measures for the new construct identified by kahn, moore, and Glazer and (3) To propose a modification of hierarchical models that improves choice prediction by adjusting for bias against lone alternatives.

Heslop, Louise A. and Adrian B. Ryans (1980),A second look at Children and The Advertising of premiums,Vol 6(1), 414-420.The effects of advertising to children on the desire for a cereal product, product requests and product selection, while varying the levels of premium emphasis, are examined in an experimental setting involving children’s interaction with their mother’s. The results suggest that such advertising may have a marginal impact on preferences, but little effect on final choice.

Holbrook, Morris B. and Rajeev Batra (1987), Assessing the Role of Emotion as Mediators of Consumer Responses to Advertising,Vol.14(4),402-420.This paper pursues the emerging interest in emotional aspects of consumer behavior, advocates a broadened view of consumption related emotion and focuses on the role of emotions in mediating the effects of advertising. Specifically, it proposes an approach that examines the manner in which intervening emotional reactions mediate the relationship between advertising content and attitudes toward the ad of brand. An illustrative application of this approach demonstrates its usefulness in assessing the role of emotion as mediators of consumer responses to advertising.

Hoyer, Wayne D. and Steven P. Brown (1990), Effects of Brand Awareness on Choice for a Common, Repeat- Purchase Product,Vol-17 (3), 141-148.Results of a controlled experiment on the role of brand awareness in the consumer choice process showed that brand awareness was a dominant choice heuristic among awareness-group subjects. Subjects with no brand awareness tended to sample more brands and selected the high-quality brand on the final choice significantly more often than those with brand awareness. Thus when quality differences exist among competing brands, consumer may pay a price for employing simple choice heuristics such as brand awareness in the interest of economizing time and effort. However, building brand awareness is a viable strategy for advertising aimed at increasing brand choice probabilities.

Kirmani, Amna (1990), The Effect of Perceived advertising Cost on Brand Perception,Vol.17 (Sept) 160-171.How, why, and when consumers used there perceptions of advertising cost as cues of a new brands quality- related attributes is examined. It is proposed that consumers perceive advertising costs as deviations from expectation about typical costs in the product category. Perceived costs are hypothesized to affect brand perceptions in an inverted you

fashion with extremely high costs leading to negative perceptions. The level of involvement and informativeness of ad content moderates this relationship. An experiment in which subjects are exposed to ad for a new product provides evidence for the proposed model.

Liefeld, John and Louise A. Heslop (1985) Reference Prices and Deception in Newspaper Advertising, Vol.11 (March), 868-876. Consumers were exposed to newspaper advertisement for four products and one of five different price representations – regular price alone, sale price alone, regular price with manufacturers suggested list price (MSLP), sale price with regular price, or sale price with MSLP. Perceptions of the ordinary prices of the products were not effected by the presence of type of reference price, but the subjects did have lower estimates of ordinary prices in the sale context. The accuracy of consumer perceptions of ordinary prices was not related to the regency of subject shopping experience for the products as measured in the study.

Loken, Barbara and Ronald Hoverstad (1985), Relationship between information recall and Subsequent Attitude: Some Exploratory Findings, Vol.12 (Sept), 155-168.

Relationship between information recall and subsequent attitudes toward chosen rejected alternatives were explored under different experimental conditions. Memory for product information and effects of amount recalled on subsequently reported attitudes varied as a function of the processing objective and chosen or rejected alternatives. Results are discussed in terms of recent theoretical models describing effects of memory on judgments.

Mcgill, Annl. And Punan Anand (1989), The Effect of Vivid Attributes on the Evaluation of Alternatives : the Role of Differential Attention and Cognitive Elaboration,16(Sept),188-196. The differential attention model and the cognitive elaboration model suggest vivid information has certain properties that exert greater influence on attitudinal judgments than does non vivid information . To test these models, subjects evaluated alternatives described in terms of vivid and non vivid attribute and elaborated on the material in high and low elaboration conditions. The results demonstrate disproportionate influence for vivid versus non vivid attributes included in the same description only in the high elaboration condition to produced an effect for vividness on attitudes.

Meyers, Levy, Joan and Durairaj Maheswaran (1991) Exploring Differences in males and females Processing Strategies, Vol-18(June),63-70. Research suggests that, relative to males, females often are more concerned with the particulars of message claims when processing advertising message. This research examine how males processes messages, when gender differences in processing are likely to occur and whether variance in either information availability or information accessibility is likely to mediate such differences the findings suggest that whether gender differences in processing occur depends on the nature of the response task and the level of cue in congruity contained in the message differences in the accessibility of message cues and genders likelihood of using alternative processing strategies seem likely to account for these findings.

Raj S .P. (1982), The effect of advertising high and low loyalty consumer segments. Vol.9 (June), Paradigm, 77-89. Different advertising effects on purchase behavior of consumer of varying brand loyalty are investigated. In a frequently purchased product class, consumer of high loyalty increase brand and product purchase when advertising for that brand increases. Little switching occur from competitive brand into advertised brand at low loyalties there is a little impact effects of increased advertising carry over for a few month after advertising is lower back to lower level.

Adeline Broad bridge & Henry Morgan, “Consumer Buying behaviour of, and perceptions towards, retail brand baby products” Institute for Retail Studies. This research investigated consumer perceptions and buying behaviour of baby care products. The results of the primary research indicated that consumers need to feel confident with the product in terms of reliability and performance, and confirming research by Quelch and Harding (1996), brand names

provided this assurance of quality with baby products. In agreement with Morris (1979) and de Chernatony (1989), it appeared that the more distinctive a brand positioning is, the less likelihood that the consumer will accept a substitute or own brands. The current findings on retail label baby care products would support Burt's (1992) and Laaksonen's (1994) views that certain product categories carry a stronger preference for manufacturers brands and are prone to a higher risk than others. Products causing potential allergy to babies' skin (eg shampoo, lotion) were perceived as carrying greater risk than others (eg cotton wool). Parents were more concerned about the quality of products and the reduction of performance and physical risk than financial risk. Furthermore, the reinforcement of manufacturer brands by hospital professionals could significantly increase the perceived social risk associated with purchasing a retail brand. Upholding the work of Baltas (1999), the heavy advertising and image building of manufacturer brands may also be differentiating factors in consumers' choice for manufacturer over retail brand baby care product ranges, while product importance and experience level with retail brands (Livesey and Lennon, 1978) also could be plausible reasons for the choice of manufacturer over retail brand baby care products. Experience levels with retail brand baby care products varied according to product type, but were generally lower than other retail brand product categories, and demonstrated little repeat purchase activity. Various risk reduction strategies were adopted by respondents, including those found by Mitchell and Prince (1993) and Mitchell and McGoldrick (1996): pre-purchase product trial, the advice of family and friends, professional recommendation, store reputation, choosing amore expensive product and choosing a well-known manufacturer brand.

Betty Ruth Carruth, Jean D. Skinner (2001), "Consumer goals/skills that mothers want their children to learn" Journal of Consumer Studies and Home Economics Vol.25(4),290–298.The study purpose was to assess consumer practices and attitudes of mothers ($n= 117$), and consumer goals/skills that their children were to learn. Mothers with at least one child aged 5–9 years were recruited from an ongoing study and through posters, flyers and referrals. Mail-out surveys included a validated consumer questionnaire and requests for information related to socioeconomic status (SES), age, paid-employment and gender/age of children. Responses were analysed using SAS, Cronbach's alpha and qualitative analyses. Results indicated that mothers were of middle/upper SES and had 2.3 children/family, and 64% were in paid-employment. Mother–child co-shopping and mothers' role modelling were major means of teaching consumer goals/skills. Children were to learn about getting the best buy and quality for the money, cost/unit comparison, being knowledgeable about products and avoidance of impulse buying. Mothers were consciously consumer training their children.

Gupta, S. & Chundawat, D.S. (2002), Family and Social influences in Buying Decision Making- A Study of Television, Decision, Vol. 29 No 2, pp 45.A large number of purchase decisions are influenced by a person's interaction with his family, friends, relatives and acquaintances. There are distinct roles in the family decision process, which throw light on how family members interact in various consumption related roles. To effectively market the products, marketers must identify who makes and has input into the buying decision. This study is an attempt at understanding the roles played by family members and the social influences in purchase of television. Further it explores dealers' understanding of these influences and ascertains the extent to which it is congruent with the actual consumer behaviour. Findings of this study can be used by the intermediaries, to improve their understanding of consumer behaviour. This paper also reveals the promotion strategies adopted by the marketers of television and their consonance with the actual family and social influences. This will provide a framework to the marketers for designing marketing communications, which strike the right chord with the target audience.

Kumar A., Sinha, P. K. & Krishna, R. (2003)'Kids in a Kirana Store: Building a Case for Retail'. Journal of Brand Management, Vol-10(3)This paper looks at child-retail communication interaction at the 'Kirana' store, the Indian version of the US 'mom and pop' retail outlet, in the capital city of New Delhi. The methodologies for data collection were the non-

participatory unstructured observation and exit interview techniques. The results showed a high interaction between the child and retail communication. The findings also extracted some key factors that influence child behavior at the 'Kirana' store. These factors are- influence of advertisements on the child, predisposition of the accompanying person, child's prior interaction with the brand and age of the accompanying person. The model developed on the basis of the study emphasizes the importance of the role of the accompanying person in determining the efficacy of retail communication targeted to the children.

Sinha,P.K.& Uniyal, D.P.(2003)"Segmenting shoppers on behaviour",(10th International Conference on Recent Advances in Retailing and Consumer Services Science, Portland,Oregon,USA,Aug.7-10The present study uses observation of shopping behaviour as a method for developing shopper segments. Shoppers were observed at different stores and based on the behavioural cues; they were classified into six segments. The study generated some segments that were similar to earlier studies based on attitude or psychographics. It also identified new segments. More importantly, the study proposes an alternate basis and methodology of segmenting shoppers. The study also found that the segments were found to differentiate largely on bases of the type of products the stores dealt in and the format of the stores. The study suggests that in an evolving market situation where the manufacturer's brands constitute a major portion of the merchandise, a store could add value through good store format design to create differentiation in the market place and mould the behaviour of the shoppers to its benefit.

James A. Roberts, Chris Manolis, JohnF.(Jeff)Tanner,Jr.(2003)"Family Structure, Materialism, and Compulsive Buying: A Reinquiry and Extension"Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science,Vol. 31(3), 300-311 This study represents a re-inquiry and extension of Rindfleisch, Burroughs, and Denton's (1997) foundational study concerning the impact of family structure on materialism and compulsive buying in young adults. In addition to reexamining the relationships specified in the Rindfleisch et al. study, the authors of this study also examine additional and/or different relationships. The findings of their reinquiry include the following: (1) family structure is positively related to the happiness dimension of materialism; (2) the predicted direct effect of family structure on compulsive buying was not supported, suggesting that divorce may not affect compulsive buying until early adulthood; and (3) the mediating roles of family stressors and family resources, and the moderating role of socioeconomic status may require additional investigation.

Hamilton, Rebecca W,(2003) "Why Do People Suggest What They Do Not Want? Using Context Effects to Influence Others' Choices"Journal of Consumer Research. Vol-29(4),492-506 Previous research has demonstrated that people's preferences for an alternative can be reliably influenced by the other alternatives with which it is considered. This article examines the role of context effects in interactive decision making. Three studies examine people's intuitive abilities to influence others by leveraging context effects and their reactions when they believe others are manipulating the choice context to influence them. Experimental results show that people use context effects systematically when trying to influence others and, that under certain conditions, the perception of influence may enhance rather than decrease the effectiveness of this persuasion tactic.

Ratchford, Brian T, (2001) "The Economics of Consumer Knowledge," Journal of Consumer Research,Vol27(4)pp397-411 While approaches to measuring the state of a consumer's knowledge are well developed, much less is known about the relationship between knowledge and consumer choice and information search. The purpose of this article is to explore these relationships by treating consumer knowledge as human capital, which affects the full price of consumption and search activities. Using this framework, models are presented to explain life cycle consumption patterns, lifestyles, brand loyalty, choice of features, and search behavior. This economic perspective is compared and contrasted to other consumer research on these topics, including recent qualitative research that examines consumption behavior.

Campbell, Margaret C, Keller, Kevin Lane,(2003)“Brand Familiarity and Advertising Repetition Effects” Journal of Consumer Research.Vol-30(2) pp292-304

A crucial communication task for unknown brands is to build the knowledge in consumers' minds necessary to become established. However, communication effectiveness may depend on prior familiarity of the advertised brand. The findings of two experiments using television ads and computer Internet ads revealed that brand familiarity influenced repetition effectiveness. In particular, repetition of advertising attributed to an unfamiliar brand showed decreased effectiveness; when the same advertising was attributed to a known, familiar brand, repetition wear out was postponed. Negative thoughts about tactic inappropriateness were seen to arise with repetition, particularly for an ad for an unfamiliar brand, driving, in part, the decreases in repetition effectiveness.

Weiner, Bernard(2000)“Attributional thoughts about Consumer Behavior”, Journal of Consumer Research.Vol-27(3)pp382-387Two fundamental principles from attribution theory were examined for the role they might play in the psychology of the consumer. They are: (1) perceptions of causality along a stability dimension influence the anticipated likelihood of product satisfaction, and (2) perceptions of causality along a controllability dimension influence judgments of responsibility and retributive actions. Comments about the longevity of an attributional framework, methodological recommendations, and the heuristic value of the theory also are included.

Cooke, Alan D J, Meyvis, Tom, Schwartz, Alan, (2001) “Avoiding Future Regret in Purchase-Timing Decisions” Journal of Consumer Research, Vol-27(4)pp-447-459. This article examines how pre- and postpurchase comparisons affect regret and satisfaction, and whether consumers learn to avoid decisions that result in regret. In the first two experiments, we show that information learned after the purchase has a greater impact on satisfaction than information learned before the purchase. In addition, negative price comparisons have a greater impact on satisfaction than positive comparisons. These results imply that if consumers who receive postpurchase information wish to avoid future feelings of regret, they should defer their purchases longer.

Drolet, Aimee (2002) “Inherent Rule Variability in Consumer Choice: Changing Rules for Change's Sake”, Journal of Consumer Research, Vol29(3),Pg-293-305 The present research demonstrates that consumers tend to vary their use of decision rules independent of option and set characteristics. In five experiments, increased choice of a particular option (e.g., lower price, brand name, or compromise option) was associated with relatively decreased choice of that same (generic) option on occasions that followed. Results indicate that this inherent rule variability is not an effect of background contrast but instead relates to consumers' favorable valuation of decision change itself. This research implies that the idea of contingent decision making applies not only to decision outcomes but also to decision processes.

Keller, Kevin Lane,(2003)“Brand Synthesis :The Multidimensionality of Brand Knowledge”,JournalofConsumerResearch.Vol29(4),Pg-595-600The increased priority placed on branding by marketers in recent years offers an opportunity for consumer researchers to provide valuable insights and guidance. In particular, in highly competitive marketplaces, marketers often must link their brands to other entities, for example, people, places, things, or other brands, as a means to improve their brand equity. Understanding this leveraging process requires understanding consumer brand knowledge and how it changes from such associations.

Shiv, Baba, Huber, Joel, (2000) “The Impact of Anticipating Satisfaction on Consumer Choice” Journal.Vol-27(2),pp 202-216How do preferences change when consumers focus on the anticipated satisfaction with a purchase rather than choice? In a series of three studies, we show that preferences, both expressed and revealed, change depending on the degree to which anticipated satisfaction is evoked.These shifts in preferences arise because, compared to choice, anticipated satisfaction elicits a mental-imaging processing strategy that is both more effort intensive and

qualitatively different. By providing direct evidence from thought protocols and by presenting evidence suggesting that these shifts in preferences vanish when mental imagery is discouraged or made more difficult, we show that the effect arises out of a processing strategy that requires effortful mental imagery of one or more of the options in the decision-making task.

Marion M. Hetherington, Ali Bell, Barbara J. Rolls,(2000)Effects of repeat consumption on pleasantness, preference and intake, British Food Journal; 102(7) pp. 507-521 ,The pleasantness of a food declines with consumption and this phenomenon has been demonstrated reliably in the short-term. To investigate long-term effects of repeat consumption on pleasantness, preference and intake, 21 volunteers consumed either a salty snack (french fries) or sweet snack (chocolate) every day for 15 days. Four dependent variables were measured: pleasantness ratings, ranked preference, frequency of consumption and ad libitum intake. Daily pleasantness of taste ratings decreased across the exposure period only for chocolate. Ranked preference for chocolate declined during the sweet snack condition and increased during the salty snack condition. Preference for french fries remained the same during the salty snack condition and increased during the sweet snack condition. Frequency of consuming chocolate outside the laboratory decreased during the sweet snack exposure. No such pattern was found for french fries in either condition. Ad libitum intake in the laboratory remained the same over time for both foods. Short-term sensory-specific satiety within the eating episode was consistent over time. Therefore, long-term monotony effects were found only for pleasantness, preference and frequency of eating chocolate following repeated exposure, but these changes had no impact on ad libitum intake. Systematic, repeat exposure to a single food provides a useful paradigm for investigating the development of monotony.

Rosemary Duff (1999) "Children's drinks - what children really think,"Nutrition & Food Science;Vol 99(3); pp. 136-139This paper discusses the findings of a market research programme carried out by SMRC ChildWise on behalf of Tetra Pak UK Ltd, examining use of and attitudes to soft drinks among children and mothers. This is a product field of increasing interest to children as they grow, and their appreciation develops from being totally product-focused, to include packaging and then brand considerations. The research examined behaviour across the key drinking occasions that make up the child's day, looking in detail at drinks consumed at school. It is at school that a child's freedom of choice develops, and awareness of peer group influences becomes increasingly important. Children are highly receptive to new brands and flavours, but also demand professional packaging and promotional input for brands to be credible. Younger children appreciate having their own individual carton with a straw but, for older boys, a can is preferred, whilst girls like the practicalities of resealable bottles.

Van Osselaer, Stijn M J,Alba, Joseph W,(2000) Consumer Learning and Brand Equity, Journal of Consumer Research. Vol:27(1),pp 1-16 A series of experiments illustrates a learning process that enhances brand equity at the expense of quality-determining attributes. When the relationship between brand name and product quality is learned prior to the relationship between product attributes and quality, inhibition of the latter may occur. The phenomenon is shown to be robust, but its influence appears sensitive to contextual variations in the learning environment. Tests of process are inconsistent with attentional explanations and popular models of causal reasoning, but they are supportive of associative learning models that portray learners as inherently forward looking.

Inman, J Jeffrey,Zeelenberg, Marcel,(2002)Regret in Repeat Purchase versus Switching Decisions: The Attenuating Role of Decision, Journal of Consumer Research, Vol. -29(1)pp 116- It argued that there were situations in which repeat purchasing may cause as much or even more regret than switching. We contend that this effect depends on whether or not there is a justifiable basis for the decision. In a series of four studies, they show that if there is sufficient motivation to warrant a switch, consumers will feel less regret in the face of a subsequent negative outcome realized via a switch than in one realized via a repeat purchase. The results imply that feelings of

regret are mitigated when the consumer reflects and concludes that the decision was appropriate under the circumstances.

Suri, Rajneesh, Monroe, Kent B, (2003) “The Effects of Time Constraints on Consumers' Judgments of Prices and Products” Journal of Consumer Research, Vol 30(1)pp, 92-104, It examines how time constraints influence consumers' product evaluations over different levels of price information. To understand the effects of time constraints (time pressure), a conceptual framework incorporating both the motivational and the resource effects of time constraints on consumers' information processing is developed. Using price as the attribute information to be evaluated, specific hypotheses about the effects of time constraints on the relationship between price and consumers' perceptions of quality and monetary sacrifice are proposed. The results of a replicated experiment show that perceptions of quality and monetary sacrifice exhibit different response patterns depending on the time constraints, price levels, and subjects' motivations to process information. Additional analyses provide insights into how these two perceptions are integrated to form perceptions of value.

Objectives of the study:

- To study the general Media habits of the Consumers
- To study the consumer Response to advertisement
- To study about the factors of maximum impact on purchase decision
- To study the relationship between watching TV and likelihood of advertisement.
- To study the Brand awareness level in Females with respect to Malted Food.
- Study about the choice of product for children and their Price considerations

Research Methodology

Sample has been drawn from a metro city of U P that is Meerut .This city is ushering into one of the modern mega cities consisting of consumers with diverse habits. Being cosmopolitan cities it attract people from all over India. These are marked with great diversity in the region, language, literacy level, customs, life styles and economic trends. This heterogeneity holds many implications to the marketers especially to those who want to study the decision making aspect of Indian consumers. Therefore, the selection of this city will represent a true perspective for the proposed study. **Income Class:** Respondents from only middle class families were selected for proposed study as this class is now emerging as the major consumption community of India.

Age and Education level The sample selected comprised of different localities and colonies of Meerut and Ghaziabad city which represent the urban population. The sample consisted of men and women of more than 20 years age. The number of respondents constituting the sample was 125 coming from different occupations and education levels, income and age groups. The reason for selecting these variables was that they do play a vital role in decision making. As per education of the respondents it was categorized in five groups mainly matriculate (non-graduate), graduates, postgraduates, professional and other. Only consumer non-durables, non-perishables that are usually bought by the people of all income class were covered in this research. The products meeting these criteria that were selected were six non-durable products Toothpaste, hair oil, Tea, washing Soap, Bathing soap and malted food but the present paper study is limited to malted food only.

Sources of Data

The data sources are considered to be primary because it had been collected by administering questionnaire covering demographic, qualitative and quantitative aspects of human behavior. The questionnaire had been pre-tested before its administration. The methodology to be employed in the

proposed study was cross-sectional in nature. The analysis was be mainly carried out keeping in view about occupation, education, age supplemented with the income variable.

Survey results

Gender distribution.

On the basis of questionnaire administered the total number of male respondents were 68 (54.4%) and female respondents were 57 (45.6%) of total sample size of 125 in Meerut. It represents a balanced Gender distribution.

Age Distribution

The total number of respondents between age group 20-30 were 38 (30.4%), age group 30-40 were 44 (35.2%), age group 40-50 were 27 (21.6%) and age group of 50 & above were 16 (12.8%) of total sample size of 125 in Meerut.

Education

The level of education is high most of the respondents were Professional 37 (29.6) & Post-graduate 36 (28.8%), total number of respondents who are graduate 34 (27.2%), and non graduates are 9(7.2)and apart from these others are9(7.2%) of total sample size of 125 in Meerut.

Employment status

The no. of respondents in government service is 27 (21.6%), Business 26 (20.8%), Private service 31(24.8%) and apart from these that is other is 41(32.8%) of the total respondents.

Monthly income

The respondents having total monthly income less than Rs.6000 are 2 only(1.6%),Between Rs.6000-10,000,are 25(20.0%),between Rs.10,001-14000,are 54(43.2%)and above Rs.14000 constitutes 44(35.2%) of the total respondents.

Family size

The family size having 0-2 members are 12(9.6%), member having 2-4 (46.4%),family members having 4-6 30(24.0%) and family members above than 6 members are25(20.0%) of the total respondents.

General media habits

This is a prominent factor which affect their buying decision regarding the nondurable products. The respondents who spent more than three hours in watching T.V. are10(8%),2-3 hours,22(17.6%) and 1-2 hours 49(39.2%) and less than 1 hour 43(34.4%) .The respondents who never watch T.V. has also been included and one(.8%) respondent out of total never watch T.V.

The consumer response to advertisement

The results show that 42 (33.6%) respondents find TV. advertisements interesting whereas 26 (20.8%) find it boring and 57 (45.6%) say as O.K.This result shows that the media habits and the interest created through advertisement are one of the factors which affect the buying decision of consumers.

Media habit and consumer response to TV advertisement

H0: There is no significant relationship between watching TV and likelihood of advertisement.

HA: There is significant relationship between watching TV and likelihood of advertisement.

33.6% respondents find T.V advertisements Interesting, 20.8% of the respondents feel Boring whereas 45.6% respondents feels OK. The calculated value of **Pearson Chi-square is = 71.019** which is greater than **Critical value 15.5 at 5%** level of significance with **degree of freedom V=8**. This shows that the hypothesis between watching T.V and Liking of advertisement is rejected. It shows that there is significant relationship between watching T.V and liking of advertisement seen on the T.V.

Maximum impact on purchase decision pf non-durable products

The results show that maximum impact on consumers is the T.V. having 71(56.8%) and second major impact factor is the friends,neighbours and family members .The maximum impact of newspaper is on only 4(3.2%), magazines4(3.2%),dealers and retailers impact 6(4.8%), window display2(1.6%) and other sources areonly3(2.4%).

Product awarness

Ho-Brand awareness level is independent of gender with respect to Malted Food.

HA-Brand awareness level is dependent on gender with respect to Malted Food.

42.4% male respondents are less awaere,12.0% male respondents are aware, 0% respondents are moderately aware about the brands of the bathing soap but no male respondent was found highly aware about the brands at the same time 24.0% female respondents are less aware about the brands, 12.0% are aware, 8.0% are moderately aware and 1.6% respondents are found highly aware about the brands .The calculated value of **Pearson Chi-square is = 17.541** which is greater than critical value **7.81 at 5%** level of significance **with degree of freedom V=3** this shows that the hypothesis is rejected . This means that there is no significant relationship between brand awareness of the malted food and gender.

Brand Loyalty

The result shows that most of the consumers are brand loyal as 65(52.0%) consumers are using the brand for more than 5 years whereas 2-5 years using category is14(11.2%) and 6months to 2 years are31 (24.8%) and the consumers using the toothpaste for less than 6 months are 15(12.0%).

Purchasing specific brands and brand loyalty.

The insistence of their specific choice at every purchase gives an idea about their brand satisfaction leading to brand loyalty. According to the research results the consumers are brand loyal as 48(38.4%) who always insist for specific brand at every purchase whereas 71(56.8%) sometimes insist for specific brand of the product but only 6(4.8%) never brand specific while purchasing the product specially in non durable category.

Comparative analysis of decision factors with regard to selected products. Amongst the factors influencing decision making of the brand of malted food, the most prominent is the nutritional value of the malted food that is 88(70.4%).The price as influencing factor is found in 6 (4.8%),Flavour12 (9.6%%), taste factor10(8.0%),availability 9(7.2%), whereas pack advertisement ,size and celebrity as influencing factor are not found in the respondents. This shows that attributes of the product play prominent role in decision making by the consumers especially in malted food.

Gender, price and purchase of malted food

Ho: There is significant relationship between Price and the most influencing factor in purchase decisions.

HA: There is no significant relationship between Price and the most influencing factor in purchase decisions.

No male respondent is price sensitive, 31.2% respondents prefer the attribute of nutritive value of product Malted food for purchasing whereas, 7.2% male respondents prefer the flavor of the Malted food which may be the liking of children and 3.2% respondents are influenced by the pack size of the Malted food. No male respondent is motivated by the celebrity as well as advertisement for purchasing Malted food. Similarly the nutritive value of the product is the highest factor for preferring Malted food 31.2% in female whereas the price 4.8 % and in this case advertisement are not influencing factor for purchase of Malted food it's worth mentioning the; size and celebrity are not influencing factors for middle class females. The calculated value of **Pearson Chi-square is = 16.228** which is greater than **critical value 11.1 at 5%** level of significance **with degree of freedom V=5** this shows that the hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is no significant relationship between prices of the Malted food as influencing factor with respect to gender.

Price sensitivity in the purchase of non-durables.

On the basis of results regarding the role of price as most important factor in making purchase decision for these non-durables, it has been observed that 25.6% of the total respondents never consider Price as most important factor for buying these products but 24.8% always consider price as most prominent factor whereas 49.6% respondents sometime consider it as important during the purchase decision.

Perception of consumers regarding highly priced brand of a product and quality consideration compared to other brands

On the basis of results regarding the role of high price as mark of better quality as compared to other brands in making purchase decision for these non-durables, it has been observed that 7.2% of the total respondents never consider high Price as mark of quality product for buying these products but 44.0% always consider highly priced product as prominent in quality whereas 48.8% respondents sometimes consider it as mark of quality during the purchase decision.

Family roles in decision making

On the basis of results regarding role of family members in buying decision of malted food, it has been observed that 6.4% of the total respondents are husband and 34.4% wife while 22.4% respondents jointly make the decision regarding the brand of toothpaste. Where as 32.0% respondents are children and 4.8% role is played by other family members.

Influencing factor for the brands for children

It has been observed that while selecting the brand of the product for the children the most influencing factor considered by the respondents are the children choice where as the quality consideration is the second prominent factor in this regard. According to the results 44.8% respondents concluded their children choice as the most important factor influencing their decision. Quality has been preferred 43.2% respondent and price 7.2% has not been considered an important factor for the brand purchased for children only 1.6% respondents considered other members opinion and 3.2% respondents decision making was not in the context of children product since it was not applicable to them.

Price and specific brand for children

While selecting the brand of the product for the children, the 30.4% respondents always purchase specific brand for their children even if it is highly priced. These results show the significance of children role in brand preferences.59.2% respondents sometimes purchase the highly

priced brands, where as 7.2% respondents never go for specific brand if it is highly priced. 3.2% respondents are out of the context of this situation.

Retailers' role in purchasing

It has been observed that in most of the situation, 63.2% respondents sometimes purchase the brand suggested by the retailer this show the important role in purchase decision making for non durable goods. 32.8% respondents never purchase the brands suggested by the retailer where as 4.0% respondents always go for buying the brands suggested by the retailer.

Retailers role and age groups

Ho - The role of retailer is significant in high age group.

HA - The role of retailer is insignificant in high age group.

In the age group of 20-30, 4.0% respondents never purchase the brand suggested by the retailer, 26.4% respondents sometimes buy the brands, but no respondent in this age group always go for purchasing the brand suggested by the retailer. In the age group of 30-40, 12.8% respondents never buy the brands suggested by the retailer where as 22.4% respondents sometimes considered to buy the brand suggested by the retailer. In the age group of 40-50, 6.4% respondents do not considered the brand suggested by the retailer where as 11.2% sometimes, 4% respondents always considered to purchase the brand suggested by the retailer. In the age group of 50 above 9.6% respondents never consider and 3.2% always consider to purchase the brand suggested by the retailer. The calculated value of **Pearson Chi-square is = 39.165** which is greater than **critical value 12.6 at 5%** level of significance **with degree of freedom V=6** this shows that the hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is no significant relationship between the age group and the role of retailer in buying practices.

Relationship between purchasing specific brands for children and age

Ho-There is a significant relationship between purchasing specific brand for children and age.

HA-There is a no significant relationship between purchasing specific brand for children and age.

In the age group of 20-30, 5.6% respondents never purchase the brand if it is highly priced, 21.6% respondents sometimes buy, but 1.6% respondent in this age group always go for purchasing the brand even if it is highly priced. In the age group of 30-40, no respondents never, 19.2% always buy the brands for children even if it is highly priced 15.2% respondents sometimes considered to buy the brand. In the age group of 40-50, 1.6% respondents' consider to purchase the brand for children if it is highly priced where as 12.0% sometimes, 8.0% respondents always considered to purchase. In the age group of 50 above no respondents consider to purchase highly priced brand and 6.4% respondent sometime, 5.6% always consider the highly priced specific brand for the children.. The calculated value of **Pearson Chi-square is = 25.864** which is greater than **critical value 16.9 at 5%** level of significance **with degree of freedom V=9** this shows that the hypothesis is rejected. There is a no significant relationship between purchasing specific brand for children and age.

Brand and price relationship

3.2% of respondents never compare the prices with other brands whereas 52.8% respondents sometime and 44% respondents always compare the prices of other brands .

Brand promotion and gifts

With respect to the promotional factor offered by the companies which may be in the form of free gift or something extra with the actual product, it is observed that 12.8% respondents never,

68% sometimes whereas 19.2% respondents are always motivated to buy the products with promotion pack or free gift.

Brand Vs. total income

H₀-Selection of the brand is independent on total monthly income of the family.

H_A-Selection of the brand is dependent on total monthly income of the family.

The results show that respondents having income less than Rs.6000 which is 1.6% of total always compare the prices of other brands, respondents having income Rs.6000-Rs.10000, which is 20% of total in which 8% sometime, 12% always compare the prices of other brands in the same product category. Similarly the respondents having income Rs.10000-Rs.14000 which is 43.2% of total, out of this 20.8% sometime and 22.4% always compare the prices with other brands whereas in the income category of above Rs.14000, which constitutes 35.2% of total respondents, 3.2% never, 24.0% sometimes and 8.0% always compare the prices of other brands with the same product category. The calculated value of **Pearson Chi-square is = 19.550** which is greater than **critical value 12.6 at 5% level of significance with degree of freedom V=6** this shows that the hypothesis is rejected. There is significant relationship between purchasing specific brand and income of the consumers.

Choice of specific brands and age

H₀- The relationship between Choices of specific brand is independent of age.

H_A-The relationship between Choices of specific brand is dependent of age.

The results show that in the age group of 20-30, which is 30.4% of total, 4.8% respondents never purchase the specific brand at every purchase, 22.4% respondents sometimes insist to buy specific brand of the product, but only 3.2% respondents in this age group always go for purchasing the specific brand. In the age group of 30-40, which is 35.2% of total, 0.0% respondents never, 16.8% sometimes insist to buy the specific brand 18.4% respondents always insist to buy their specific brands. In the age group of 40-50, no respondents consider to purchase the specific brand whereas 14.4% sometimes, 7.2% respondents always insist to purchase their specific brand of the product. In the age group of 50 above 0.0% respondents never insist and 9.6% respondent always insist specific brands to purchase. The calculated value of **Pearson Chi-square is =35.249** which is greater than **critical value 12.6 at 5% level of significance with degree of freedom V=6** this shows that the hypothesis is rejected. There is a no significant relationship between purchasing specific brand and age.

Purchasing specific brands for children and price

H₀:- The choice of product bought for children is dependent of their Price.

H₁:- The choice of product bought for children is independent of their Price.

It is observed that the quality factor, which constitutes 43.2% of total, out of which 22.4% say sometime, 20.8% respondents always buy specific brands even if it is highly priced whereas only 7.2% respondents of total, out of which 4% respondents never and 3.2% sometimes buy specific brand for their children even if it is highly priced. Similarly children's choice counts 44.8% of total, out of which 1.6% say never, 33.6% say sometime and 9.6% respondents consider always buy the specific brand even if it is highly priced. Similarly other factors which influence the respondents for their children constitutes only 1.6% of total, 1.6% respondents never consider price as determining factor for buying. This consideration was not applicable on 1.6% respondents. The calculated value of Pearson Chi-square is =197.725 which is greater than critical value 21.0 at 5% level of

significance with degree of freedom $V=12$ this shows that the hypothesis is rejected It means that the choice of product bought for children is independent of their Price.

Findings

- **Relationship between watching TV and likelihood of advertisement-**
- This shows that the hypothesis between watching T.V and Liking of advertisement is rejected. It shows that there is significant relationship between watching T.V and liking of advertisement seen on the T.V.
- **Advertising Effect-**Research reveals that consumers' response to advertisements when Interesting and O.K. are put together, 78%(M) and 85%(G) shows that low involvement media are highly effective for non durable products ads because it does not offer much involvement due to Cognitive Economy of the consumers but the response about the child product has been asked from the other family members and it came out that even they are not the actual purchaser of their product even then their choice is of paramount concern for the parents and it can not be ignored in any case. They act as "passive dictators" of the choice in the purchase for malted food.
- **Consumers' media habits-** About 92% respondents agreed that they watch TV one to two hours everyday which shows the effectiveness of electronic media over other available mode of market communication. People not only watch TV at differing levels but they also have multiple motives for watching. Some of the consumers watch it as the programmes have become like friends (ritualized), many people view TV to elevate their moods or to escape from cares and worries and for some consumers it used to keep them up-to-date on current events and get "food for thought". Many consumers watch it because their family or friends are watching but after all they are either active or passive learner to those advertisements.
- **The choice of product bought for children is dependent of their Price.** The relationship between choice of the specific brand bought for children and price of the product has been observed. It is observed that the choice of product bought for children is independent of their price. The reasons are that the amount of influence exerted by children varies by product category and stage of the decision making process. For certain products they are instrumental in initiating a purchase, while for others, they make the final selections themselves. The purchasing act is governed by how they have been socialized to act as consumers. Family, peers and media are key socializing agents for children wherein family-specific characteristics such as parental style and patterns of communication play key roles.
- **Selection of the brand is dependent on the income of the family-**There is significant relationship between purchasing specific brand and income of the consumers. The study shows that awareness about the different brands available in the market is independent of age of the consumers. It also reveals that the attention about the various brands are not a matter of more interest because their choice are usually overridden by the children's choice of taste and purchase premiums offered by the companies through their advertisements.
- **Quality Considerations Vs. Price-**Perception of Consumer regarding highly priced brand of a product and quality consideration compared to other brands has been established. The consumers quality perception is directly linked with the price of the product.
- **Maximum Impact on Purchase decision-**The study reveals that TV advertising has maximum impact on their decision making. The more they are exposed to various advertisements the more passive effect of this media makes on their brand awareness as well as the level of learning about non durable products. Second most influencing factor on their purchase decision was the friends and neighbors. This proves the study done by H David Strutton and James R Lumpkin that early adopters are more dependent on mass media for information .Subsequently they show greater reliance on friends and family members to help them evaluate new products and word of mouth influence increases in importance as early

adopters progress from awareness to knowledge, evaluation, trial and adoption especially in the case of non durables.

Conclusion

Children constitute three different markets: the primary, the influencer, and the future market. Certain products are simply children's products for which they are the primary users/buyers. They sometimes either purchase a product themselves or select the product before it is purchased by the parents. For other products, such as ones which are used by the entire family unit, they may influence purchases made by the parents. There are some products where children wield direct influence or pester power by overtly specifying their preferences and voicing them aloud. For other products, parents' buying patterns are affected by prior knowledge of the tastes and preferences of their children. This 'passive dictation' of choice is prevalent for a wide variety of daily consumed product items like "malted food" as well as products for household consumption. Also, decision making in households is seen to change with the mere presence of children. The nature of joint decisions in couple decision making units and family decision making units is seen to be different

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