

Influence of Family members and their interaction in the purchase decision of Durable goods

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Abstract

This paper presents the analysis of the personal and product related details of the sample respondents. An analysis relating to personal details such as age, educational status, occupational status, income level, family details and product related details like product ownership, order of purchase, brand selection, mode of purchase, shopping behavior and the related details are discussed with the help of the primary data collected.

Keywords: *Product, Respondents, Occupational status, Income, Shopping Behaviour.*

Introduction

Purchase decision process which is characterized as more complex in its nature, has been subject to research more often, only recently. This study in an attempt to explore the purchase decision process within a family with special reference to husband and wife interaction and their inter-relationship. 'Family' influences in the purchase decision process is to be considered more seriously than the influence of any other factor, for the simple and the most important reason that, it is the family that decides the consumption pattern, choice of products, brands, stores and other product related aspects.

With the family, the role of husband and wife need specific attention in view of their role as the core unit of the family which decide, manage, implement and control the entire affairs of the family, in the way they perceive. Obviously, this implies that, among other things, it is the interaction between the husband and wife that enables need identification which leads to decision and implementation of the decision concerning any purchase activity.

II Age-wise classification of respondents

Age plays a key role in determining the needs of the individuals, need identification, need fulfillment and the process of need fulfillment are to a greater extent related to the age of the person concerned. Hence knowledge about age is essential to arrive at meaningful conclusion, in these type of studies. An attempt is made to classify the sample respondents on the basis of age group and the same is summarized in table 3.1.

Table – 1
Age of the Sample Respondents

Age	Husband		Wife		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
21 – 30	14	14	20	20	34	17
31 – 40	32	32	42	42	74	37
41 – 50	41	41	29	29	70	35
50 & above	13	13	9	9	22	11
Total	100	100	100	100	200	100

The above table clearly indicates that, in the sample selected, 14% of husbands come under the age group of 21 – 30 and 20% of wives also come under the same age group. Secondly 32% of husbands and 42% of wives belong to 31 – 40 age group. 41% of husbands and 29% of wives belong to the age group of 41 – 50. Lastly 13% of husbands and 9% of wives come under the age group of 51 and above.

From this it is obvious that majority of the respondents centered around the age group of 31 – 40 in the selected sample. This is the age wherein people are generally settled in their life and many of their needs would have been fulfilled and this being a dominant group, in the present study, makes the study more meaningful.

2. Education level of the respondents

Education plays a vital role in uplifting and maintaining the standard living of human being. It is the level of education that imparts knowledge to the prospective buyer that enables him to make a wise purchase decision. As the level of education has linkage to a rational decision maker, the researcher made an attempt to classify the respondents on the basis of level of education and is presented in table 2.

Table 2
Education of Husband and Wife

	Husband		Wife		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No. formal education	6	6	8	8	14	7
School level	24	24	37	37	61	30.5
College level	45	45	45	45	90	45.0
Professional	25	25	10	10	35	17.5
Total	100	100	100	100	200	100

From the above discussion it is clear that the percentage of educated husbands and wives are more as compared to that of husbands and wives who have no formal education. As far as education in college level is concerned the percentage of education is equal to 45% in case of both husbands and wives. This

reveals that both husbands and wives are equally educated in the college level classification. 37% of wives and 24% of husbands have completed only their school education, whereas, the category 'Professional' denotes Engineering. Medicine and College level teaching, which constitutes 25% of husbands and 10% of wives in the selected sample.

This study brings to light that women samples assume equal higher educational status in comparison with the men samples.

3. Occupational Status

Occupational status generate and multiplies human needs. At times, it is the occupational status that compels product possession. The changing role of women as working women enables supportive role in the need identification and need fulfillment process. The sample respondents are grouped on the basis of occupational status and the results are summarized in table 3.

Table 3
Occupation of Husband and wife

	Husband		Wife		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Self-employed	27	27	-	-	27	13.5
Employed as clerks	23	23	30	30	53	26.5
Employed as officers	23	23	5	5	28	14.0
Professional practice	27	27	35	35	62	31.0
House wife	-	-	30	30	30	15.0
Total	100	100	100	100	200	100

The above table pinpoints that in the sample selected 27% of husbands were self employed, engaging in trade and business, 23% of husbands and 30% of wives were employed as clerks, 23% as officers and 27% as professionals and out of the female respondents 70% are career women and the 30% were house wives.

4. Income – Wise Classification

The ultimate factor that leads to the ownership or otherwise of a product is the discretionary income of an individual. Normal people falling within the higher discretionary income strata, can very easily satisfy their needs provided, they have less commitments, compared with that of the lower discretionary income group. As such, the significance of income can never be under estimated on any account in the matter of purchase decisions.

Table 4
Monthly Family Income

S. No.	Income Level (Per month) (in Rs)	% to total
1.	Below 10000	20
2.	10000 – 20000	37
3.	Above 250000	43
	Total	100

In the above table 4 income-wise classification of the respondents are presented. The table depicts that majority of the respondents come under the income group of above Rs. 25000 which constitutes 43% and 37% of the respondents come under the income group of Rs. 10000 – 20000 and only 20% of the respondents come under the income group of below Rs. 10000.

5. Family size

Family size play a dominant role in deciding various aspects of goods, quantity of goods etc. 'Family' for the purpose of the study refers to husband, wife, chil/children and other dependant members. Family size of the respondents is studied and the result is summarized in table 5.

Table 5
Size of the Family

S. No.	Size of the Family	No. of respondents
1.	2 Members	6
2.	3 Members	18
3.	4 Members	36
4.	5 Members	30
5.	More than 5	10
	Total	100

The above table reveals that in the sample selected majority of respondents do have only 4 members, i.e. Husband, wife and two children. 36% of respondents family comprises of 4 members and 30% of respondents family comprises of 5 members, 9% of respondents have more than 5 members in their family and only 6% have 2 members i.e. newly married couples with no children.

6. Type of family

In Indian context there are two types of families namely joint and Nuclear. A joint family is a family system where in those who are related by blood or by marriage or by adoption are living together. As against this a nuclear family is concerned with a system wherein husbands and wives live with their unmarried children. The type of family has some influence in the purchase pattern, quantity of

goods purchased etc. Hence an attempt has been made to classify the respondents on the basis of the type of family and the classification is presented in the table 6.

Table 6
Type of Family

S. No.	Type of Family	No. of respondents
1.	Joint	29
2.	Nuclear	71
	Total	100

The above table represents the fact that majority of respondents come under the group of nuclear family which constitutes 71% and the remaining 29% of respondents come under the group of joint family.

Findings

An attempt has been made, in the present study to focus the role played by husband-wife, in the process of need identification and fulfillment with respect to the purchase of consumer durables. The summary of the findings are listed below.

The respondents chosen for the study were in the age group of 21 to 51 years and above. Their family income ranges from 2000 to 7000 and above. They belong to either joint or nuclear family type. Majority of the female respondents are also employed and on analysis of the level of education, it is found that, they have attained higher educational status compared to the men (husbands) sample. The number of members in the family ranges from 2 to 5. Few of the selected samples were newly married couples, and on the other extreme, some are on the verge of retirement.

The study also elucidates the fact that, there is significant relationship between family size, income, education and frequency of shopping on the one hand, while there is no relationship between age and frequency of shopping on the other. The distinctive feature of the higher income group respondents is that, they shop as and when they like. Similarly, the house-wives shop almost daily but the career going women do shop, only when need arises, education also plays a key role in shopping behavior, in the sense that, compared to respondents with no formal education, respondents having a good educational background shop more often.

The post purchase behavior of the sample respondents reveal the fact that, the decision process is never a satisfactory affair. The pressure of negative attitudes mounts up in certain families and is overcome by convincing, compromising, augmenting or by being totally indifferent to the dissatisfaction expressed by the spouse. To overcome such an attitude, either they get convinced or as observed in the study, the way for getting rid of the product is a better option.

The level of agreeability varies from individual to individual, inspite of the fact that, they belong to the same family. Such a level when put to test, on the selected sample, revealed interesting findings, when the views of the husbands on wives and vice versa. The opinion statements were grouped into three categories namely, supportive, involvement and indifference and compared with each other's personal factors. It appears from the study, that the husbands have opined that, they ever seek the support of their wives, and would like to involve themselves even if it is a purchase, exclusively meant for the use of his wife. At the same time, a few women samples, contradict the views of their husbands by saying that, the husbands do not willingly participate in the decision making process. But a

majority of them wants to say that they are 'one' with them, as far as support is concerned and would equally involve themselves.

Right from the process of decision making until ultimate purchase of the durable. At the same time the 'indifference' factor cannot be ruled out completely. There are a few respondents (both husbands and wives) have expressed such an indifferent attitude of their spouses too.

Conclusion

An attempt has also been made to check the personality characteristics of both husbands and wives, from the point of view of each other. The samples have agreed equivocally on the positive characteristics such as convincing the knowledge possessed, suggestive etc. This itself clearly indicates that in family purchase decisions, inspite of an individual's age, income, level of education status, family size etc, the interaction they have with each other leads the way for 'best buy', ultimately greater the interaction, better the involvement, and may be a satisfactory purchase.

To conclude, in order to bring about lasting happiness in 'one time purchase', decision should be 'joint decision'. Any purchase decision, must first be negotiated, then persuaded to arrive at a compromise on the basis of collective interest of the family members, instead of knocking out individual roles.

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