

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF FAMILY'S THEATRICAL ROLE IN INFLUENCING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Surinder Kumar,

Research Scholar,
Department of Management,
Singhania University, Pacheri Bari,
Jhunjhunu (Rajasthan), India.

Dr. Vipul Jain,

Professor,
Department of Management,
Roorkee Engineering and Management
Technology Institute, Shamli, India.

ABSTRACT

A family is an important stratum for any purchasing by the consumers within the society. It constitutes an important economic and social unit that affects consumption decisions of individual family members. The aim of the present study is to analytically discuss about the family's theatrical role in influencing consumer behaviour. This paper is an attempt to enquire the influenced role of family members in buying process and consumer behaviour related to Fast Moving Consumer Goods and Durables too. The research is exploratory and descriptive in nature. The research is conducted in Ambala and Yamuna Nagar, the two important districts of the State of Haryana. Based on the evidences it was concluded that in the purchasing of FMCG, men spouse and elders play an important role while women spouse a minor role though in the purchase of durable items men spouse role is vital and major but elders, women spouse and kids are influencers. Children's have also a role of initiator as well.

Keywords: Family Theatrical Role, Influence, Buying Process, Consumer Behaviour.

INTRODUCTION:

Consumer behaviour can be defined as the decision making process and physical activity involved acquiring, evaluating, using and disposing of goods and services. Consumer behavior refers to the behaviour that consumer display in searching purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services that they expect to satisfy the needs.

So far as family theatrical role in influencing consumer behaviour is concerned; Family is an important consumption and spending unit. It is crucial for marketers to understand families since they frequently seek to influence the purchase decisions made by them. This involves a study of the nature of decision-making process, that is, an investigation of role structure in decision-making among the members of a family and the family specific characteristics. Role-structure in decision-making describes the manner in which influence, across elements of the decision process, is distributed among members of a decision-making unit (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993). According to Pavleen (2006), family role structure is defined as the way in which members of the unit taking decision influence the process of making decisions. The nature of influence of family members is also seen to vary by product category. While for some product purchases, husband may be most influential, for others, wife or other family members may decide about all or most dimensions of the purchase. The possibilities of dominance between spouses may take any of the following forms:

- Autonomic decisions: Where decisions are made unilaterally by the spouse.
- Husband-dominated decisions: Where husband has the most significant influence in purchase outcome.
- Wife-dominated decisions: Where wife has the most significant influence in purchase out-come.
- Syncretic decisions: Where the spouses jointly decide about the purchase.

Role-specialization of wives is observed to be high for purchase of groceries, furniture, and clothing, while that of husbands is significant for the purchase of automobiles and life insurance policies. Vacations and housing decisions are seen to fall under the joint-consensus category and those of savings, investments and household appliances under the autonomic category.

Families are more complex to understand as compared to individual consumers for specific roles played by family members undergo dynamic and continuous changes because of psychographic and attitudinal metamorphosis. Some families remain essentially traditional in their life styles following the traditional role patterns and relationships, while others adopt more materialistic orientations; wherein the individual family member becomes of prime importance because of his individuality. In such families, the choice of each individual needs to be considered independently and every individual priority owes due consideration before the final decision outcome. Still, some other families are left in between-trying to adopt the modern life style and at the same time confining to the traditional norms and values. The roles and relationships in such families follow an entirely different pattern. These shifts are also being increasingly caused by participation of women in the labor force. The dual-career families, within a social stratum, have relatively greater discretionary income to buy products that are otherwise sometimes out of reach, for single-earner families. Not only are the buying structures different, but also the persons involved in the purchase and use of these products differ due to various factors playing in the family, one of which is the time pressure experienced by women in such families. Children also display varying levels of involvement not only across product categories but also across family types.

Influence is assumed when due to the act of a person in a particular way; another person's behaviour is affected or influenced. For an analyst on consumer behavior in a family, it is essential to know who is important for what aspects of decision making. In a family, different individuals play different roles and sometimes, play multiple roles. Often, it is noticed that the person who undertakes purchase transactions on behalf of a family may not always be the decision maker in the family. Decisions for buying a particular product or service are an outcome of a complex set of interactive processes among the various members of a family. In some situations, the husband plays a dominating role, in some situations, it is the wife; further, in some situations, it is the Elders; moreover, in some situations, it is the children, and lastly, in some situations, it is a composite decision by all the members of the family. Normally, it is seen that there exist six roles in a family. They are initiator, influencer, decider, financer, purchaser, and user. A family has a huge impact on the personality of an individual. As a primary unit, the family invariably provides the base for the ultimate face to face interactions. From the individual consumer's point of view, family differs from larger reference groups; in that, family members need to take joint decisions for joint consumption needs from a relatively fixed amount of financial resources. In such a situation, the family influences individual personality, attitudes, and values as well as the decision making processes that take place in the purchase of goods and services.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

In management literature, there are a number of studies on consumer purchasing behaviour, family members influence on consumer purchasing decision. A few studies related to family theatrical role in influencing consumer behaviour have been reviewed are outlined below:

In a study (Grey, Peter, Davis, & Rigau, 2016) on the role of husband and wife in family decision making, found that the husband's influence 'was considerably higher than that of the wife. In case of purchase of consumer durables, the husband and wife jointly took decisions. The study also found the existence of a significant role played by children in the decision making process, especially in the matter of brand selection process.

(Lantos, 2015) found that the husbands played - ideally - an instrumental role and the wives played an emotionally expressive role in decision making process in a family. The study also found that husbands' influence was significantly greater than that of wives in decision making related to purchases.

(Singh & Nayak, 2014) tried to examine the impact of teenager - peer interaction in the family purchase decision. It proposed that the nature of teenager's interaction with peers has an impact on the family decision-making process. The study found that the more the teenagers interact with peers, the more they contribute in the initiation stage of the family decision-making process.

(Sharma, Sonwaney, & Vandana, 2013) examined the role of children in family purchase decisions, and found that influence exerted by children varied by product category and stage of the decision making process. For some products, they are active initiators, information seekers, and buyers; whereas, for other product categories, they influence purchases made by the parents. The purchasing act is governed by how they have been socialized to act as consumers; wherein, characteristics such as parental style, family's sex - role orientation (SRO), and patterns of communication play key roles.

(Wut & Chou, 2013) tried to examine the impact of perceived buying preferences of individual family members on perceived family buying preferences. The study found that there is a synergy effect in a family decision-making process. The synergy effect is expressed as positive correlations between individual family members' buying preferences.

(Rani, Mailka 2012) in her study, tried to analyze the role of women in buying behaviour for durables. The findings of the study revealed that at the final purchase decision stage for cars, only 10% women dominated the decision-making process. As washing machines are mainly used by women, for washing machines, 44% of the women dominated the decision making process.

(Gupta, Sachin, & Mittal, 2010) conducted a study on the degree of influence exerted by the different members of the family. The study found that the family head exerted the highest level of influence in the purchase of a product followed by retailers, other members of the family, and relatives.

(Juyal & Singh, 2009) tried to ascertain the effects of female role orientation in family purchase decisions. It was found that there is a difference in female role orientation vis-a-vis their family type (joint or nuclear), age, education, and income levels. Women are found to play more positive role in the purchase of durables they personally use than the durables for the family usage.

The study has confirmed the traditional dominant role of men in taking the family purchase decisions, as revealed in the reviewed literature. Secondly, it also confirms the increasing role of women and children. However, majority of the studies reviewed have concentrated on the role played by husband and wife. The roles of the Elders were not considered. In a few studies, the role played by women and children in taking the family purchase decisions were considered, but as a separate study. Keeping in mind the above facts, following objectives have been set for the study, which are given below.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To study how different members of a family influence the family theatrical role as initiator, influencer, decider, financier, buyer, and user with respect to FMCGs and durables.
2. To rank the priority elements under study i.e. husband, wife, Elders, and children, based upon individual influences in the family theatrical role, and construct a customized model for each district under each product category.

METHODOLOGY:

For the purpose of study, both primary and secondary data has been taken in to account. Primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire, comprised of six questions to analyze the buying behaviour of the rural consumers with respect to FMCGs and durables. The questionnaire tried to elicit responses regarding the

various roles i.e. initiator, influencer, decider, buyer, and user, played by various persons in a family-like husband, wife, Elders, and children. For data analysis, simple counts and percentage have been used. Statistical tools used to derive the observations are simple counts and percentages.

NATURE OF THE RESEARCH:

The present research is a combination of exploratory as well as descriptive in nature.

AREA AND TENURE OF RESEARCH:

Ambala and Yamuna Nagar Districts of the State of Haryana were selected for the study. These two districts have been selected based upon the assumption that they are the most ideal districts (economy wise) for the study (and neither takes any extreme positions). The study was conducted from February 2016 to January 2017.

Sampling Technique:

The method of multi-staged sampling has been used for collection of primary data. The sampling units comprise of the consumers of the rural areas in the identified districts i.e. Ambala and Yamuna Nagar (Haryana).

Sample Size:

A sample size of 200 respondents participated in the study from each district (total 400 respondents) as this is common for behavioural studies. The sample size was determined both by qualitative approach and quantitative approach.

Analysis and Findings for Fast Moving Consumers’ Goods (FMCGs)

The analysis throws up interesting results. The details of the analysis and major findings are given below district wise with the description of the major role players in purchase decisions and the consequent implications for the managers.

(1) For Ambala District: The significant findings of Ambala District are shown in the Table No. 1, as given below:

Table No. 1: Family Theatrical Role of Ambala District for FMCGs

No. of times as	Initiator	Rank	Influencer	Rank	Decider	Rank	Financer	Rank	Purchaser	Rank
Husband (in %)	48 24%	3	79 39.5%	2	66 33%	1	101 50.5%	1	93 46.5%	1
Wife (in %)	34 17%	4	16 8%	3	34 17%	4	7 3.5%	4	8 4%	4
Elders (in %)	64 23%	1	91 45.5%	1	54 27%	2	78 39%	2	84 42%	2
Children (in %)	54 27%	2	14 7%	4	46 23%	3	14 7%	3	15 7.5%	3
Sample	200		200		200		200		200	

Husband: It is observed that husbands played a major role by acting 50.5% of the time as the financer followed by 46.5% of the time as the purchaser. Furthermore, husbands acted as the influencer 39.5% of the time, and acted as the decider 33% of the time.

Wife: It is observed that the wives acted as the initiator and decider 17% of the time, respectively. Furthermore, the wives acted as the influencer 8% of the time.

Elders: The role of Elders is also quite important. They acted as the financer 39% of the time, followed by acting as influencers 45.5% of the time. Elders acted as purchasers 42% of the time.

Children: Children’s role in FMCG purchases is the least, with children acting as initiator 27% of the time, which is followed by 23% of the time as the decider.

As **Users** of the purchased FMCGs, all the members of the family (comprising of husband, wife, Elders, and children) together were found to be the major users (77% of the time) of the items purchased. They are followed by children who turned out to be the second major users (16% of the time) of the purchased FMCGs. Lastly, the adult members of the family (comprising of husband, wife, and the Elders), who were individually found to be using the FMCG products in varying percentage [were together using 7% of the time (out of which husband used 1% of the time, wife used 5% of the time, and Elders used 1% of the time), turned out to be the third major users of the items purchased.

Based upon the percentage of occurrence, husband, wife, Elders, and children played different family roles (as depicted in the Table 1) for FMCGs in Ambala District. Different ranks have been assigned, where Rank 1 stands for exerting the highest degree of influence and Rank 4 stands for exerting the lowest degree of influence in their respective roles.

(2) Analysis for Yamuna Nagar District: The significant findings of Yamuna Nagar District are shown in the Table 2.

Table No. 2: Family Theatrical Role of Yamuna Nagar District for FMCGs

No. of times as	Initiator	Rank	Influencer	Rank	Decider	Rank	Financer	Rank	Purchaser	Rank
Husband (in %)	54	2	52	2	68	1	93	1	91	1
	27%		27%		34%		46.5%		45.5%	
Wife (in %)	38	3	47	3	50	3	14	3	10	4
	19%		23.5%		25%		7%		5%	
Elders (in %)	82	1	81	1	62	2	81	2	84	2
	41%		40.5%		31%		40.5%		42%	
Children (in %)	26	4	20	4	20	4	12	4	15	3
	13%		10%		10%		6%		7.5%	
Sample	200		200		200		200		200	

Husband: It has been found that husbands played the most important role - acting as the initiator 27% of the time and 46.5% of the time as the financer. Furthermore, husbands were found to act as the purchaser 45.5% of the time.

Wife: It has been found that wife acted as the influencer 23.5% of the time, 25% of the time as the decider, and 19% of the time, she acted as the initiator.

Elders: It has been found that Elders’ role was significant, as they acted 41% of the time as the initiator, 40.5% of the time as the financer, and 40.5% of the time as the influencer.

Children: Children’s role in FMCG purchases is the least - with them acting as the initiator 13% of the time, and acting as the influencer 10% of the time.

As **Users** of the purchased FMCGs, all the members of the family (comprising of husband, wife, Elders, and children) together were found to be the major users (85% of the time) of the items purchased. They are followed by children who turned out to be the second major users (9% of the time) of the purchased FMCGs. Lastly, the adult members of the family (comprising of husband, wife, and the Elders) who were individually found to be using the items in varying percentages [were together found to be using the items 6% of the time (out of which husband used 1% of the time, wife used 4.5% of the time, and Elders used the items 0.5% of the time) turned out to be the third major users of the items purchased.

Based upon the percentage of occurrence, husband, wife, Elders, and children played different family roles, which are depicted in the Table 2 for FMCGs in Yamuna Nagar District. Different ranks have been assigned, where Rank 1 stands for exerting the highest degree of influence and Rank 4 stands for exerting the lowest degree of influence in their respective roles.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS FOR CONSUMER DURABLES:

(1) Analysis for Ambala District: The significant findings of Ambala District are shown in the Table 3.

Table No. 3: Family Theatrical Role of Ambala District for Consumer Durables

No. of times as	Initiator	Rank	Influencer	Rank	Decider	Rank	Financer	Rank	Purchaser	Rank
Husband (in %)	32	3	26	4	138	1	149	1	108	1
	16%		13%		69%		74.5%		54%	
Wife (in %)	77	2	68	1	46	2	8	3	47	2
	38.5%		34%		23%		4%		23.5%	
Elders (in %)	13	4	39	3	13	3	36	2	3	4
	6.5%		19.5%		6.5%		18%		1.5%	
Children (in %)	78	1	67	2	3	4	7	4	42	3
	39%		33.5%		1.5%		3.5%		21%	
Sample	200		200		200		200		200	

Husband: It has been found that husbands played a very major role as financier and decider, acting as financier 74.5% of the time, and acting as the decider 69% of the time. The husbands were also found to act as the purchaser 54% of the time.

Wife: It has been found that the wife plays a major role as initiator and influencer acting as initiator 38.5% of the time and acting as the influencer 34% of the time. Furthermore, it has been found that 23% of the time, she acted as the decider, and acted as the purchaser 23.5% of the time.

Elders: It has been found that Elders played a minor role - acting as influencer 19.5% of the time, acting as the financier 18% of the time, and acting as decider 6.5% of the time.

Children: Children played a major role as the initiator and influencer. They acted as the initiator 39% of the time and acted as the influencer 33.5% of the time. Furthermore, children acted as the purchaser 21% of the time.

As **Users** of the purchased products, all the members of the family (comprising of husband, wife, Elders, and children) together were found to be the major users (67% of the time) of the purchased durables. They are followed by wives, who were exclusively found to be the second major users (22% of the time) of the purchased durables. Lastly, children were found to exclusively use the purchased durables 11% of the time.

Based upon the percentage of occurrence; husband, wife, Elders, and children played different family roles (as depicted in the Table 3) for durables in Ambala District. Different ranks have been assigned, where Rank 1 stands for exerting the highest degree of influence, and Rank 4 stands for exerting the lowest degree of influence in their respective roles.

(2) Analysis for Yamuna Nagar District: The significant findings of Yamuna Nagar District are shown in the Table 4.

Table No. 4: Family Theatrical Role of Yamuna Nagar District for Consumer Durables

No. of times as	Initiator	Rank	Influencer	Rank	Decider	Rank	Financier	Rank	Purchaser	Rank
Husband (in %)	21 10.5%	3	33 16.5%	4	141 70.5%	1	163 81.5%	1	138 69%	1
Wife (in %)	78 39%	2	68 34%	1	32 16%	2	8 4%	3	47 23.50%	2
Elders (in %)	13 6.5%	4	34 17%	3	22 11%	3	23 11.5%	2	5 2.5%	4
Children (in %)	88 44%	1	65 32.5%	2	5 2.5%	4	6 3%	4	10 5%	3
Sample	200		200		200		200		200	

Husband: It has been found that husbands played a very major role as financier, decider, and purchaser. They acted as the financier 81.5% of the time, acted as the decider 70.5% of the time, and acted as the purchaser 69% of the time.

Wife: Wives played a major role as initiator and influencer. They acted as the initiator 39% of the time and acted as the influencer 34% of the time. Furthermore, the wives acted as the decider and purchaser 23.5% of the time, respectively.

Elders: It has been found that the Elders played a minor role. They acted as the influencer 17% of the time, acted as the fmncer 11.5% of the time, and acted as the decider 11% of the time.

Children: The children played a major role - they contributed as the initiator 44% of the time and acted as the influencer 32.5% of the time.

As **Users** of the purchased products, all the members of the family (comprising of husband, wife, Elders, and children) together were found to be the major users (made purchases 66% of the time) of the purchased durables. They are followed by wives who were exclusively found to be the second major users (24% of the time) of the purchased durables. Lastly, children are found to exclusively use the purchased durables 10% of the time,

Based upon the percentage of occurrence ; husband, wife, Elders, and children played different family roles are depicted in the Table 4 for durables in Yamuna Nagar District. Different ranks have been assigned, where Rank 1 stands for exerting the highest degree of influence, and Rank 4 stands for exerting the lowest degree of influence in their respective roles.

In the district of Yamuna Nagar, husbands basically played the overall dominating role as financier, decider, and purchaser, and to some extent, as an influencer. Wives played the role of an initiator, influencer, and to some

extent, as a purchaser. Elders played the role of an influencer, and to some extent, as a financier and decider. Children played the role as an initiator and influencer only.

CONCLUSION :

In the FMCG sector, in rural Ambala, it is observed that a significant role was played by husbands and Elders in the various family role decisions. Wives basically played the role of homemaker and had a minor role as influencer. Majority of the goods purchased were for the family's consumption. In rural Yamuna Nagar, Elders and husbands also played significant roles in all aspects of family decisions. Husbands played a major role as financier, decider, and purchaser. Therefore, marketers can target husbands and Elders in product promotions and advertisements. Moreover, the advertisements can highlight the benefits that can be derived by the usage of the products by the consumers.

In the consumer durables sector, it is seen that among the majority of the respondents, the financier is the decider who happens to be the husband in both the districts. The husbands were also involved in making the purchases of the durables. This is in stark contrast to the FMCG sector, where other members of the family are also seen to be involved in purchase transactions. Wives, on the other hand, played the role of an initiator, influencer, decider, and purchaser in a major way. The Elders basically played the role of an influencer. Lastly, children played a big role as an initiator, and to some extent, as an influencer and purchaser. Therefore, marketers can go for persuasive advertisements to target the husbands. Since the husbands are the financiers and deciders, the durable companies can go for sales promotion, especially with the finance companies where husbands can be the targeted. Moreover, informative advertisements can be targeted to the wives and children.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The study has been confined to two districts of Haryana. However, the two districts may not be a representation of the entire population of rural Haryana. At the same time, the research is based mainly on the information supplied by the consumers of rural Haryana only. Due to low levels of literacy and conservative nature of rural folks, the eagerness of the respondents to respond was low. The women were not very forthcoming with the responses.

REFERENCES:

- Anderson, E. W., & Sullivan, M. W. (1993). The Antecedents and Consequences of Customer Satisfaction for Firms. *Marketing Science*, 12(2), 125-143.
- Grey, Peter, Davis, H. L., & Rigau, B. P. (2016). Jointly Household purchasing by Husband and Wives'. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour Research*, 12(6), 44-62.
- Gupta, Sachin, & Mittal, R. K. (2010). Impact of Family Roles on Purchase Decision Process - An Empirical Study. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 1(1), 38-50.
- Juyal, A. S., & Singh, M. (2009). Role of Females in Family Buying Decision-Making - A Study among Females in Uttrakhand. *Vision – The Journal of Business Perspective*, 13(4), 15-23.
- Lantos, P. G. (2015). Family Members' Perception in Buying Process. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 8(8), 12-32.
- Sharma, A., Sonwaney, & Vandana. (2013). Influence of Children on Family Purchase Decisions in Urban India: An Exploratory Study. *International Journal of Marketing & Business Communication*, 2(2), 32-43.
- Singh, R., & Nayak, K. (2014). Peer Interaction and Its Influence on Family Purchase Decision: A Study among Indian Teenagers. *Vision – The Journal of Business Perspective*, 18(2), 81-90.
- Wut, R., & Chou, W. (2013). Family Roles Dimensions in Buying Preferences. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 11(2), 41-58.
