

Children's Influence in
Family Consumer Decision Making: A Study of
Chinese Families in Hong Kong

By

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A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Business Administration (DBA)

Faculty of Business and Law
University of Newcastle, Australia

August 2014

Declaration

I hereby certify that the work embodied in the Dissertation Project is the result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other University or Institution.

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Acknowledgments

First and foremost I would like to express deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Stacey Baxter, for her invaluable advice and guidance throughout my doctoral journey.

I would also like to sincerely thank school principals Ho Po Ling, Choy Sai Hung, Lai Ping Wah Johnathan, Ng Yau Keung Benjamin, Chung Kwok Keung, and Yiu Wai Chung for their outstanding cooperation, and all the schools and families who participated in the study for their selfless contribution. Without the support of all the aforementioned, the successful completion of this research would not have been possible.

Finally and most importantly, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my family for their ceaseless encouragement and enduring love.

Table of Contents

Declaration	i
Acknowledgments	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures.....	ix
Abstract	x
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.1.1 Family Consumer Decision Making.....	1
1.1.2 Consumer Socialization and Reverse Socialization	2
1.1.3 Hong Kong	3
1.1.4 Culture and Socialization	4
1.2 Justification for Research	6
1.2.1 Importance of Children as a Market Segment.....	6
1.2.2 Internet Generation	8
1.3 Research Methodology	9
1.4 Outline of Thesis.....	10
Chapter 2 Literature Review and Hypotheses	11
2.1 Introduction.....	11
2.2 Consumer Socialization	11

2.2.1 Consumer Behavior	12
2.2.2 Theoretical Foundations of Consumer Socialization	13
2.2.3 Consumer Socialization Agents	16
2.2.4 Cognitive Development Theory	19
2.2.5 Consumer Socialization Stages	20
2.3 Reverse Socialization.....	22
2.3.1 Social Learning Theory	23
2.3.2 Theoretical Foundations of Reverse Socialization	24
2.4 Children's Influence in Family Consumer Decision Making.....	25
2.4.1 Children's Influence	25
2.4.2 Factors affecting Children's Influence	26
2.5 Hong Kong Consumer Context	28
2.6 Research Questions and Hypotheses	31
2.6.1 Question 1	31
2.6.2 Question 2.....	35
2.6.3 Question 3	37
Chapter 3 Research Design.....	40
3.1 Introduction.....	40
3.2 Research Methodologies.....	40
3.3 Research Design	43
3.3.1 Types of Research Design	43
3.3.2 Research Methods	44
3.3.3 Survey Research	46

3.3.4 Sampling.....	47
3.3.5 Questionnaires	49
3.3.6 Product Categories.....	50
3.3.7 Research Framework	52
3.4 Data Collection	54
3.4.1 Pilot Test.....	54
3.4.2 Process Planning with Schools.....	54
3.4.3 Bulk Survey Logistics	56
3.5 Measures	57
3.6 Method of Analysis.....	58
3.6.1 Parametric and Non-Parametric Test.....	58
3.6.2 Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test.....	59
3.6.3 Spearman's Correlation Test	60
3.7 Validity	61
3.8 Ethical Considerations	62
3.9 Limitations of Research Design.....	63
4.0 Conclusion	64
Chapter 4 Data Analysis	65
4.1 Introduction.....	65
4.2 Descriptive Statistics	65
4.2.1 Valid Response Rate.....	65
4.2.2 Respondent Profiles.....	66
4.3 Assumption Checking.....	67

4.3.1 Types of Data	68
4.3.2 Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test	69
4.4 Hypotheses Testing	70
4.4.1 Hypothesis 1	71
4.4.2 Hypothesis 2	73
4.4.3 Hypothesis 3	74
4.4.4 Hypothesis 4	76
4.4.5 Hypothesis 5	78
4.4.6 Hypothesis 6	80
4.5 Summary of the Hypotheses Results	82
Chapter 5 Conclusions and Implications	84
5.1 Introduction.....	84
5.2 Findings	84
5.2.1 Decision Stages	85
5.2.2 Product Relevancy	87
5.2.3 Age	88
5.2.4 Gender	90
5.2.5 Household Income	92
5.2.6 Parental Education Level.....	94
5.2.7 Summary of Findings	96
5.3 Implications and Recommendations.....	97
5.3.1 Internet Mavens	97
5.3.2 Cultural Changes and Marketing Ethics	99

5.3.3 Product Relevancy and Involvement	101
5.3.4 Insights from Socio-demographic Status	101
5.3.5 Insights from Socio-economic Status	103
5.4 Limitations and Directions for Future Research	104
5.4.1 Parent-child Communication Structure	104
5.4.2 Reciprocal view from Child	105
5.4.3 Generalization Problem	105
5.4.4 Family Structure	106
5.4.5 Brand Loyalty and Relationship Marketing	106
5.5 Summary and Conclusion	107
References	110
Appendices	133
Appendix A Information Sheet for Principals	133
Appendix B Information Sheet for Respondents	136
Appendix C Questionnaire	141
Appendix D Hong Kong Fact Sheet	157
Appendix E Descriptive Statistics Summary	159
Appendix F Respondent Profiles	161
Appendix G Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test	164
Appendix H Overall Ranking	166

List of Tables

Table 2-1	Theoretical Approaches to Consumer Socialization	14
Table 2-2	Consumer Socialization Stages	21
Table 3-1	Overview of the Six Selected Schools	48
Table 3-2	Product Categories from the Study by Aslan and Karalar (2009)	50
Table 3-3	Products Categories from the Study by Shoham and Salakas (2005).....	51
Table 3-4	Products Selected for Questionnaire	51
Table 4-1	Hypothesis 1 Test Results	72
Table 4-2	Hypothesis 2 Test Results	74
Table 4-3	Hypothesis 3 Test Results	75
Table 4-4	Hypothesis 4 Test Results	77
Table 4-5	Hypothesis 5 Test Results	79
Table 4-6	Hypothesis 6 Test Results	81
Table 4-7	Summary of Hypotheses Results	83

List of Figures

Figure 2-1	A Conceptual Model of Consumer Socialization	15
Figure 2-2	Social Learning Model	23
Figure 3-1	Buyer Decision Process	52
Figure 3-2	Research Framework	53

Abstract

This study analyzed how Hong Kong children from Chinese families of different socio-economic and socio-demographic backgrounds influence family consumer decision making. Product relevancy and influence at different buying decision stages were also examined in the same context. The aim of the study was to discover if children's influence is dominant in Hong Kong and to offer marketers insight from different perspectives to help them develop the right marketing strategies for increasing their market share.

The quantitative research design was based on collecting and analyzing the experiences of parents. With the support from six principals of three primary schools and three secondary schools, 1800 questionnaires were distributed and 1294 completed questionnaires were returned. Parents of children aged 7-16 years were invited to participate in the survey by answering the questionnaires based on the purchases that they had made in the past six months.

Findings from the study suggest that product relevancy is important to children's influence in family consumer decision making in Hong Kong, as children show high involvement and participation when the products are for their own use. However, children's influence in the buying decision process is still unclear because of inconsistent and contrasting results for different products and service. The hypothesis that older children are more influential in family consumer decision making in Hong Kong is supported. However, the gender of the children does not play a dominant role in determining children's influence, as both male and female children were found to be equally influential in family consumer decision

making for most product categories. The research results also found that there is no significant correlation between children's influence in family consumer decision making and household income and parental education.

It would seem that scholars have at long last acknowledged the important role that children play in the family consumer decision-making process, and that their power has been enhanced in recent years by the acquisition of Internet-enabled knowledge. It is suggested that future research should cover the children's perspective, family communication style, family structure, and family size.