

PESTER POWER EFFECT ON THE SPENDING PATTERN OF KIDS WEAR MARKET

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INTRODUCTION

What do you call a consumer who wants to buy everything you have, doesn't care what it cost, and is less than five feet tall? A marketer's? Nope. You call them kids.

-Ad Relevance intelligent Report, 2000

These days kids are well aware what is happening in the market place, as they are exposed to a lot of advertising both on television and outdoors. So be it television sets, cellphones or the new video game in town, children are well educated about the brands available and the prices. Here the question arises that how far the child's word go in the buying decision. After all it is the parent who spends the money and actually buys the products. Hence it is very important for a marketer to understand the buying or spending pattern before deciding the marketing strategy. Nowadays, kids are influencing the buying decisions taken in their family especially when it comes to their clothes, toys they exert lots of pressure. This paper attempts to study the pester power effect on the spending pattern of kids wear market.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- 1) To study the pester power of the kids for the age group 9 years to 12 years.
- 2) To analyze whether pester power among the kids has changed the purchasing pattern for the kids wear from parents to kids themselves.
- 3) To study whether the pester power been the reason for the increase amount of spending on kids wear.
- 4) To analyze the reasons of why the parents agree to kids demand.
- 5) To study whether increase in the sales occurred because of the pester power. (From retailer's point of view)

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. RESEARCH DESIGN:

Descriptive and Exploratory Research Designs has been used. Descriptive research is employed for the kids and Exploratory Research is used for the parents.

Descriptive because the study attempts to finds out 6 important questions i.e. 6 *W's*: *what, why, who, where, when, how*. **What:** What is pester power. **Why:** Why has the purchasing pattern changed? **Who:** Parents having children of the age 9 years to 12 years. **Where:** People living in NCR Region **When:** research to be carried out during daytime and evening. **How:** Through medium of questionnaires, interviews.

Exploratory because the study wants to establish /clarify/explain /gather more knowledge about the concept/happening/phenomenon.

2. DATA COLLECTION METHOD:

PRIMARY SOURCE:

Primary data was collected through the survey method (**questionnaire observation and interview**) from the kids, parents and retailers. Observations regarding the pester power of the kids was done by visiting the stores that keep stuffs meant for kids. The questionnaire aimed at studying the change in buying pattern in the kids wear because of the pester power. Unstructured interview was conducted for the retailers wherein questions on consumer behavior such as who makes the purchasing decision, kids exerting pester power, were asked. Also questions to know about the increase in sales of the store were asked by them.

SECONDARY DATA: Internet, Magazines and Journal on the related topic.

3. SAMPLE DESIGN:

Sample size: For the research the sample size of

- 100 respondents were taken for the parents.
- 100 respondents were taken for children.
- 20 respondents form marketers / retailers.

Sample unit: This consists of

- Parents of the kids from the age of 9 years to 12 years,
- Kids of age 9 years to 12 years
- Retailers who sell kids wear garments.

Sampling technique: Convenient sampling technique is used.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The top ten children's wear markets are growing at around 6-7% each year - and are expected to generate retail sales of US\$131.5bn by 2013 according to new research from just-style. And in what will be good news for retailers and suppliers, opportunities still exist in several areas including designer wear, discount channels, licensed products and boy's wear.

In emerging countries, not only do parents have more money to spend, but they also inherently want to spend money on their children. This gives retailers at all levels, from discount to luxury, the opportunity to expand into new geographical regions

Children's apparel is a market that is growing rapidly today. Trends in the market are fast changing. This article aims to analyze the market for kids' apparel in detail and explaining the shift in focus that is taking place.

Children's apparel includes clothing for kids between 1 and 14 years of age. The market for kids' apparel in India exceeds Rs. 13000 crore, of which around Rs. 3000 crore is constituted by branded kids' wear. The kids' wear market is growing at the rate of 10% per annum, which makes it one of the fastest growing markets.

Some major changes in trends are taking place in the market for kids' apparel. One of the important changes is the increasing preference for branded apparel. This shift is taking place on account of changes such as a rise in the disposable income of the people and the increasing influence of foreign culture. The other important change that is taking place in this area is the emergence of kids as an independent buyer group. Influenced by mass media and peer pressure, today's kids are more informed and self-conscious.

Armed with this knowledge, popular apparel brands are coming up with new collections that will appeal to kids. Gini and Jony have come up with a collection of brightly colored apparel. Their collection includes clothes in hues such as lilac, pink, plum, orange and citrus green.

Certain brands like Weekender have made an agreement with Walt Disney and Warner Bros., whereby they can make use of some of their famous cartoon characters in their apparel. The brand is planning to make use of characters like Mickey and Minnie Mouse as well as Tom and Jerry in the new line of children's clothing that they are planning to launch. This collection is to be named 'Toon World'.

Pantaloon and Gini and Jony have entered into a joint venture to set up a chain of retail stores for children's apparel. Raymond has launched its first store for kids' apparel 'Zapp!'. DS Corporation, which owns the Ruff Kids brand of kids' garments, is planning to expand.

Generally in India, the trend was that most of the people prefer buying functional kids' apparel rather than branded ones. Children's garments were usually purchased from small stores and from street shops, while branded garments were only bought by the very high status families. This trend is gradually changing and the market for branded kids' clothing is growing.

Dungarees, shorts and shirts are the evergreen fashions in kids' apparel. Short skirts, tops with puffed volume, halter tops, lace trims and cropped trousers are the in things in the world of children's apparel in today's times. In terms of prints, butterflies, flowers, polka dots, skulls and pirates and stripes are popular in kids' apparel.

There are two important factors to be considered for making a kids' apparel brand a success - variety and price. A children's apparel collection should have variety that will appeal to kids. Moreover, kids outgrow their clothes very rapidly. Hence it is necessary that a kids' apparel range be reasonably priced.

Children's apparel is a growing market in India that has huge untapped potential.

Kid-fluence, the 'Nag' Factor and 'Pester Power' The power children have, by repeated nagging, of influencing their parents to buy advertised or fashionable items. (*"Pester power"*)

"Mom I want this. Dad I want this" are the demands, fuelled by marketing tactics that erode the adult wallets. The bug is none other than Pester Power. The power children have, by repeated nagging, of influencing their parents to buy advertised or fashionable items is called as Pester power. The marketers are relying on the kids to pester the mom to buy the product, rather than going straight to the mom- Barbara A Martino (Advertising executive).

Frontline, the PBS documentary series, notes that Millennial Teens influence more than \$50 billion adult spending every year and pester an adult 25 times on an average before the desired product or experience is finally bequeathed. Over 95% of kids have pestered their parents for a product promoted on TV, according to a new survey by www.raisingkids.co.uk. (*Ibid*)

Children have long been able to influence what their parents bought on their behalf, by making it easier for the parents to give in than to endure relentless badgering. The fact that this wasn't a significant enough phenomenon to be given a name until the late 20th century is indicative of the

changing nature of child/parent relationships in western societies. Parents are now more likely to take a child's demands seriously, whereas in earlier times they were expected to be content with whatever they were given. Also, the increased pressure on parents to work longer hours has led to a society that is increasingly cash rich and time poor, which makes it a more attractive option to buy their way out of the time-consuming task of fending off demands.

Kids don't think like adults and they do buy like adults. They certainly have the pull. Children can dominate family life. They can influence - even veto - their parents' purchases of everything from cars to toys to groceries as well as determine their apparels and entertainment choices. Children's impact on familial spending adds up many lakhs every year. (*"How Marketers Target Kids"*)

Kids represent an important demographic to marketers because they have their own purchasing power, they influence their parents' buying decisions and they're the adult consumers of the future. (*Ibid*)

Today's kids have more autonomy and power in decision-making within the family and are vocal about what they want their parents to buy. "Pester power" refers to children's ability to nag their parents into purchasing items they may not otherwise buy. (*Prof. Soni Swati*)

Each time a child's face lights up, a brand strikes gold. Those innocent sniffles and smiles actually dictate business. A survey conducted by Ingenuity Research shows that 43 per cent of urban Indian kids convince their parents into buying the products of their choice. What's more, this figure is next only to the US and Japan. (*Sawhney Anubha, 2 Dec 2003,*)

A recent study by AC Nielsen reveals that children do have the ability to influence their parents's decisions. The pester power is best displayed when it comes to toys and games, where in a market of Rs 362 crore (Rs 3.62 billion) , 41 per cent of the purchases are influenced by kids -- i.e. Rs 148 crore (Rs 1.48 billion) worth of business. This may not be such a surprise -- after all, who else would decide between Barbie and GI Joe? (*Prof. Soni Swati*)

Kids have a firmer grip over the society than what their parents ever had. Not only are they consumers in their own right, they also have a major influence over the family's purchasing power. "Kidfluence" is the direct or indirect influence kids have over family household purchases. Indirect influence means that the kids' preferences are given consideration when parents make a purchase decision. The major driving force behind this sweeping change is the Advertising. Advertising has changed the way kids learn, react and behave to a large extent. On

the television, too, only 18 percent of the total viewing is of the kids' channels, while 80 percent still continues to be general viewing.

THE PESTOR POWER IN INDIA

The arrival of niche channels like the Cartoon Network, Hungama and Toonami has given a big push to the kid power in India. According to some estimates, in 2005, there were more than 120 million tween (children between 5-12 years of age). Among them around 45 million live in urban areas who have the power of determining or influencing the whopping Rs. 20,000 crore worth purchasing decisions on food, mobile phones, apparel, cars and FMCGs.” (Prof. Soni Swati)

What and How Much Indian Tweens spent on (Rs. in crores)

Apparel	7,000
Gizmos	4,650
Food and Eating out	2,500
FMCG	950
Games	150
Entertainment	150
Books	80
CDs/DVDs	60

CHANGING LIFESTYLES OF INDIAN CONSUMERS

Rapid transformation in the lifestyle of Indians, particularly those living in urban India, has resulted in dramatic increase in the demand for apparels.

The attitude of the customer has changed. They are now willing to spend more on the apparels and others FMGC products.

With the change in the Indian retail sector, the Indian customer has also changed, so has changed its lifestyle, its way of living. Indian customers are spending more and are literally living by the dictum of shop until you drop. (*“Change in Lifestyle Leads to the Growth in Indian Food Industry”*)

With the growth of the organized retailing there is increase in the acceptance of the manufactured goods, increase in the brand consciousness and increase in the comfort and quality parameters. This change in the lifestyle has changed the overall marketing structure.

CHANGING SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

With the changing socio-economic structure of a typical urban family, marketers are shifting their marketing strategies and focus on the kids.

The major changes in a family's structure and environment in which kids are brought up these days are:

- More women working
- More single parent households
- More dual-income families
- More divorces and remarriages
- Grand parents raising children
- Postponing children until later in life (more disposable income)
- Kids more exposed to information through technology and mass media. (*Dudani Chinar, 2004*)

Consequently, parents today are willing to buy more for their kids because they have

- a) More disposable income
- b) Lesser time with family
- c) More stress in life
- d) More guilt for not spending enough time with the kids.

DRIVERS OF PESTER POWER

The reason for the pester can be many, a few of them are mentioned here below:

- More **working women** and consequently more dual income families.

Both men and women are the earning member of the home. With greater proportion of working women in the family the monthly disposable of the family has increased. And hence this gives the parents a greater ability to spend.

- **Rise in the number of single parent households**

A Research supports that children in single parent households make their first purchases almost a year earlier than their two-parent household counterparts.

- **Delayed parenthood**

This result in parents with more disposable incomes at the time their children are born. A 2000 study of 50 older couples by SNTD University showed that most of them had kids after they turned 35. "The average age of career women starting a family may well have touched the mid-30s," says gynecologist Dr Duru Shah.

• Greater exposure to kids

There is an ever-increasing exposure to kids both in terms of technology and mass media. The guilt of **not being able to spend much quality time with children** is compensated by smothering them with material goods.

The kids are now more exposed to mass media such as television, advertising, radios, Internet and magazines. .

• Hurried Child Syndrome and Hyper parenting

Parents today overscheduled their children's' life with a heavy dose of academics and extracurricular activities, forcing the little adults to excel both at school and extra academics.

Now this again has led to parents agreeing to their kid's demands.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Age Group that exerts maximum Pester power

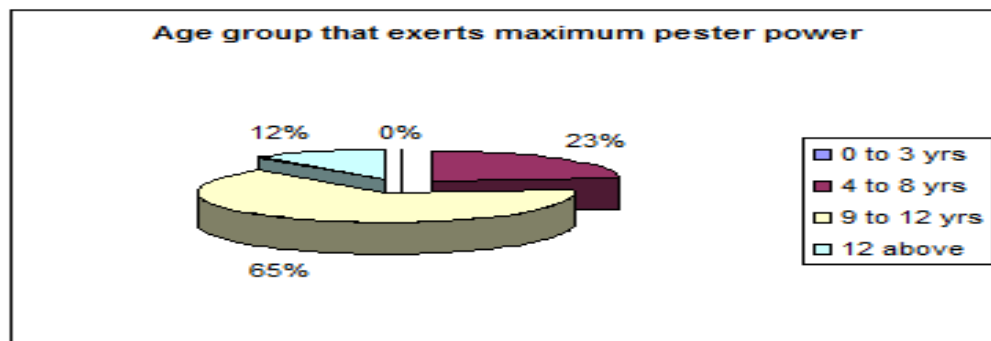


Figure 1

The above figure (Figure 1) clearly shows that 9 years to 12 years of the age group exerts maximum pester power. Out of the total, 65% of the respondents feel that this age group, which is 9 years to 12 years exerts maximum power to influence their parents to buy their most preferred product / stuff. Another 23% feel that 4 years to 8 years kids exert pester power. 12% of the respondents say that pester power is exerted by 12 years and above age group. This age group exerts most pester power because at this age the kids are more knowledgeable, there is peer pressure, more of exposure to media such as advertisements on television and access to internet.

Figure 2

According to Figure 2. 58% of the respondents say that pester power is exerted very often by the kids as against 27% of the respondents, who say that pester power is exerted sometimes. Yet another 15% say that kids always exert pester power to get the stuffs they want.

Pester power among kids has changed the purchasing pattern for the kids wear from parents to kids themselves.

Figure 3

Figure 3. Clearly shows that 80% of the respondents say yes their purchasing / buying pattern has been changed. They used to decide earlier what needs to be purchased for their kids, but now with kids gaining more knowledge and exposed to media, they now themselves decide what they need to purchase.

Brand conscious among kids

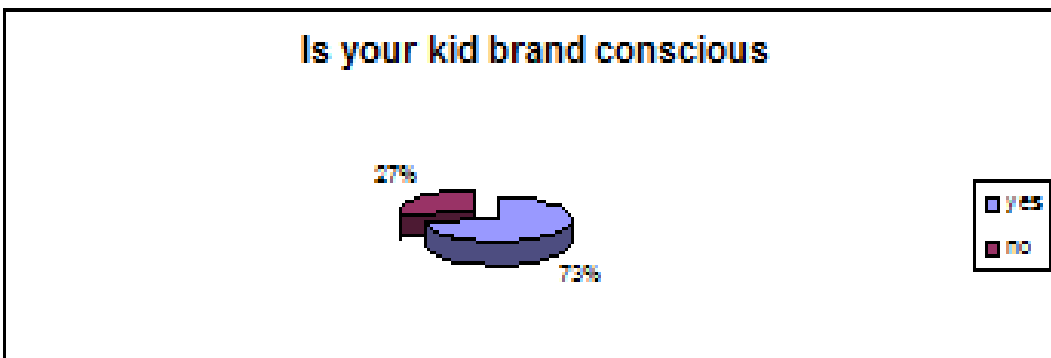


Figure 4

According to Figure 4, 73% of the parents agree that their kids are brand conscious, the kids demand particular brand. Remaining 27% of the respondents say that their kids are not brand conscious. This means that due to more exposure of the media and education plus awareness has led kids to be more brand conscious.

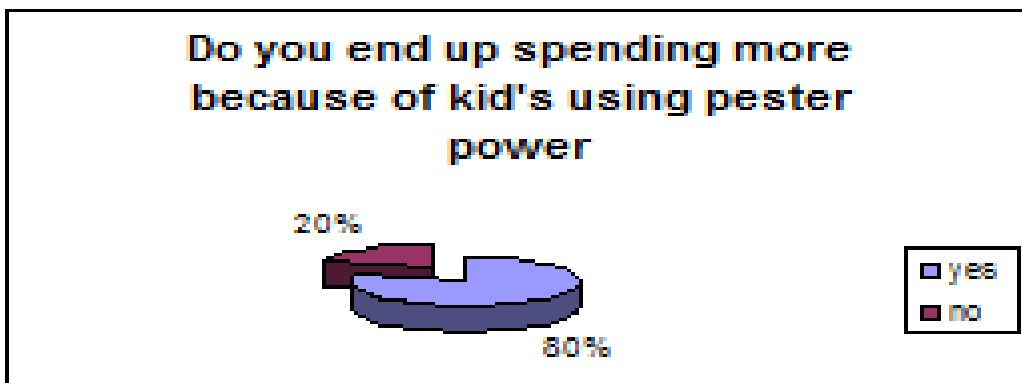


Figure 5

According to Figure 5, 80% of the parent respondents say that yes pester power has led to their increase spending on the kids wear. Which means clearly that parents today are spending more

because of the kids exerting pester power. Remaining 20% of the parents' respondents have not noticed increase in the spending on kids wear.

Thus a higher percentage of the respondents feel that pester power used by kids has led to increase in the spending on the kids wear.

Reason to agree at kids demand

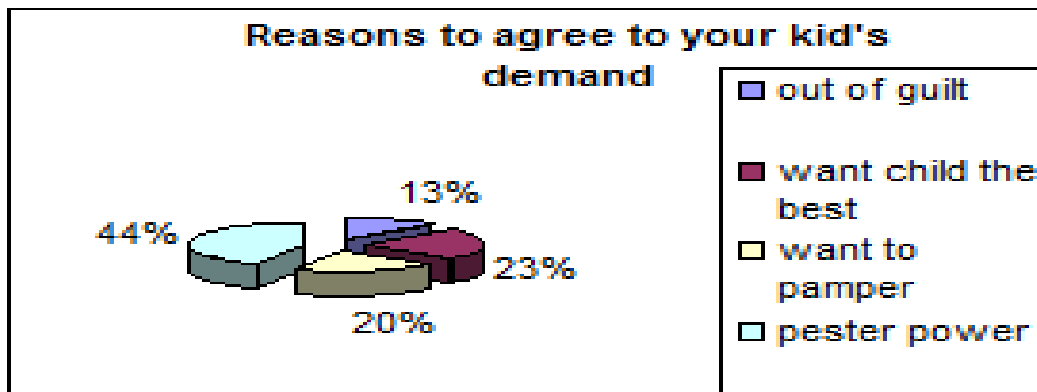


Figure 6

The above Figure 6. states that pester power is the most highlighted reason for parents to agree to their kids demands. Thus kids nag power or the power to ask for their stuffs again and again is the most said factor, as it is said by the 44% of the parent respondents.

Parents' wants to give their kids the best is the second most important reason for them to agree to their demands as it is said by 23% of the parents' respondents. 20% of the respondents want to pamper their kids and remaining 13% agree to their kids demand out of the guilt factor. They feel that they spend less time with their kids so they want to agree to their demands.

increase in the sales because of the pester power. (From retailer's point of view)

Figure 7

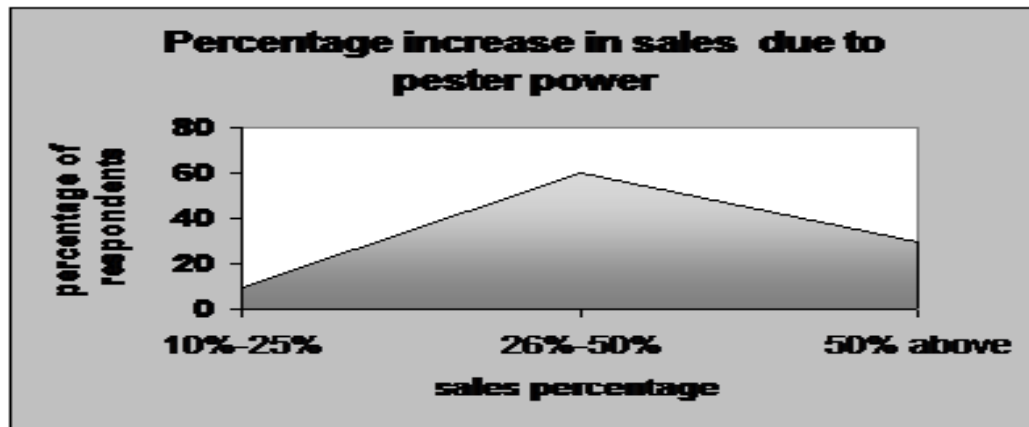


Figure 8

The two graphs, that is, Figure 7 and 8 clearly state that 100% of the retailer respondents noticed increased in the sales of the store for kids wear section. This means that kids using pester power has led to great business for the retailers of the kids wear. Also according the second graph 60% of the retailer respondents say that 26% to 50 % of their sales increase is because of kids using pester power. Whereas 30% of the retailer respondents say that 50% and above increase in the sales is because of the pester power. Thus one can clearly say that a significant portion of the sales increase is attributed towards the pester power of the kids.

Findings

- Majority of respondents feel that the age group, which is 9 years to 12 years is exerts maximum power to influence their parents to buy their most preferred product / stuff. This age group exerts most pester power because at this age the kids are more knowledgeable, there is peer pressure, more of exposure to media such as advertisements on television and access to internet. .
- According to study, 58% of the respondents say that pester power is exerted very often by the kids
- Almost 80% of the respondents agree that yes their purchasing / buying pattern has been changed. They used to decide earlier what needs to be purchased for their kids, but now with kids gaining more knowledge and exposed to media, they now themselves decide what they need to purchase. 60% of the parents' respondents say that they very often end up buying of their kids' choice, which means that kids now have decision making power. They (kids) now decide their purchases.
- 70% of the kids' ask/ discuss and take opinion from their parents before buying the actual

stuff. This means that although the kids decide themselves that they need to have that product, they still take opinion from their parents before actually buying that stuff.

- 63% of the total respondents say that both the parents of the kids are working. This means that there are dual income earners of the family. With more working women the disposable income of the families has risen. This has further led to increase in the standards of living of the families. Again this has risen the spending of the families.
- Majority of the parents agree that their kids are brand conscious, the kids demand particular brand. Higher exposure to media and more awareness has led to kids being more conscious for the brand they want to have.
- Higher percentage of the respondents feel that pester power used by kids has led to increase in the spending on the kids wear. Kids nag power or power to influence the parents actually increased their spending on kids' wear.
- 60% of the parents respondents say that they agree too their kid's demands very often. 33% of the parents respondents say that they agree to their kid's demands sometimes and 7% of the parents' respondents always agree to their kids demand. Kids demands are never agreed is not said by any of the parent respondents. Thus it can be clearly said that kids demands are agreed upon.
- Pester power is the most highlighted reason for parents to agree to their kids demands. Thus kids nag power or the power to ask for their stuffs again and again is the most said factor, as it is said by the 44% of the parent respondents. Parents' wants to give their kids the best is the second most important reason for them to agree to their demands as it is said by 23% of the parents' respondents.
- Retailer respondents have also noticed increased in the sales of the store for kids wear section due to increase pester power by kids. This means that kids using pester power has led to great business for the retailers of the kids wear. Thus one can clearly say that a significant portion of the sales increase is attributed towards the pester power of the kids.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

With the change in the socio economic structure of the Indian society, there are visible changes such as more working women, dual income families, nuclear families and also kids being more exposed to the media and because of peer group pressure, the scenario of pester power is gaining

pace.

It is clear from the research study that there exist pester power amongst the kids of the age 9 years to 12 years, reasons of which are many. Also parents do agree to their kids demand in getting them the stuffs that they want.

Thus, in a market where kids exert pressure on their parents to get their stuff and parents agreeing to what their kids want, retailers or the marketers need to strategize themselves in such a way that further leads to increase in their sales.

Thus following recommendations are suggested for the retailers:

- Kids give importance to the ambience of the store when they make purchasing decision. Thus retailers of the store are suggested to make appropriate ambience of the store that attracts the kids. This means that there should be the proper environment for kids to shop. A little paying area can help gaining kids attention. Best selling celebrity poster can be another tool.
- Window display also plays an important role for the kids to enter the store. Window display should be attractive enough so that the kids enter the store the moment they see the store's window display. Theme window displays attracts kids, so this can be used as a powerful tool to capture kids mind
- The display of the merchandise mix also plays an important role in kids deciding what they need to purchase. The display racks should be on appropriate level or height so that the kids can easily see the merchandise mix.
- Offers such as buy 2 get 2 free or giving 3 different kids of T – shirts in an pouch, or cricketers bat on purchase of certain limit influences kids decision to buy stuffs. Retailers should introduce such offers and should being them in notice of the kids; this will further enhance their sales.
- According to the research kids give more importance to celebrity appearance on the merchandise followed by the latest trends. Thus the retailers should see top it that they carry merchandise with them that has some remark of the hot celebrity.
- Also, accessories such as belts, hair bands, and celebrity mark clips, caps, bracelets and others are in growing demand amongst kids along with the garments. Retailers should thus take care that along with garments they should keep such stuffs in the stores.

CONCLUSION

Kids are emerging as a homogenous consumer cluster of their own with peer group factor and mass media having an overwhelming impact on their brand choice, consumption behavior and consumption patterns.

Kids are keen observers, ever experimenting, do not take anything for granted and want to learn while having fun.

With growing nuclear families, dual incomes, working women and mass exposure to media and Internet; kids today are buying like adults. They are making their own decisions of what they want to purchase and wear.

They want to buy what they want. They pressurize their parents and influence the decision in the end.

Thus with the kids making their own decisions of what needs to be shopped for them the buying patterns have shifted from the parents buying for their kids initially to the kids buying for themselves nowadays. Also this has risen the spending of the parents, as the kids today have become more brand conscious.

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