

Influence of Family Communication Patterns in Family Purchase Decision Making

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Abstract

The purpose of the paper was to find out the influence of Indian children in family purchase decisions across product categories as per parental perception with special consideration to family communication patterns. The research was conducted on 320 parents of Delhi - NCR. Various statistical tools such as exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, MANOVA, multiple linear regression, and independent sample *t* - test were used to conduct the research. The findings concluded that Protective and Laissez - Faire type of parents had no significant influence on the purchase of product categories. The results also reported the influence of concept orientation type of communication on children's influence in family purchase decisions across product categories, especially on child - related products and services.

Keywords : Consumer behaviour, family purchase decision making, parental styles, family communication patterns

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The rapidly growing Indian market has a tremendous potential as it comprises of consumers of all age groups ranging from young consumers to the old consumers. With the changes in lifestyle and emergence of nuclear families, young consumers are gaining more interest of researchers. Children constitute a large consumer market in the global arena (Cook, 2009 ; Ironico, 2012). They, as consumers nowadays, participate in the purchase of both family related as well as child related goods and services. The family plays an important role in socializing children as consumers (Flurry, 2007).

Consumer socialization is the process by which young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to the functioning in the market place (Ward, 1980). The concept of consumer socialization states that children undergo various types of changes from birth to adolescence. Different types of abilities and skills are learned by children from their surroundings, which vary from abstract thinking skills to information - processing skills to interpersonal skills (Ville & Tartas, 2010).

Children's influence in family purchase decisions has increased due to changes in family communication patterns (Tripathi & Sengupta, 2011). Family communication patterns are the means to measure the interaction levels between parents and children and their consumption patterns. It consists of two types of orientation : socio-oriented and concept oriented (McLeod & Chaffee, 1972). Socio - orientation is based on obedience to authority, respect for elders, love for younger ones, and to make pleasant shared relationships. On the other hand, concept orientation promotes development and expression of ideas and participation in the decision-making process of the family.

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The purpose of the study is to find out how Indian children communicate about consumption with their parents. The influence of culture on family communication patterns has also been studied with the help of Hofstede index. The research paper also focuses on the effect of demographic variables of both parents and children on family communication patterns.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Consumer socialization is a process of incorporating consumer - related properties with the help of agent and learning processes. It comprises of two types of learning processes : Social and cognitive learning about the marketplace. With an increase in age, cognitive development and social learning help children to develop consumption related skills and abilities along with decision making skills (John, 1999). Parents interact and discuss with their children about purchase related activities, which lead to the development of consumption - related skills and abilities in them (Hayta, 2008). Parents educate their children about utilization of money, buying of good - quality products, and relationship between price and quality, which have an impact on children's brand choice. They also tell their children about adverse effects of junk food consumption, which leads to various serious health issues in children (Jayanthi & Reddy, 2017).

(1) Family Communication : Communication is essential so that family members respect each other's needs and wants. Family communication about consumption is defined as an overt interaction between parents and adolescents concerning goods and services (Ward & Wackman, 1972).

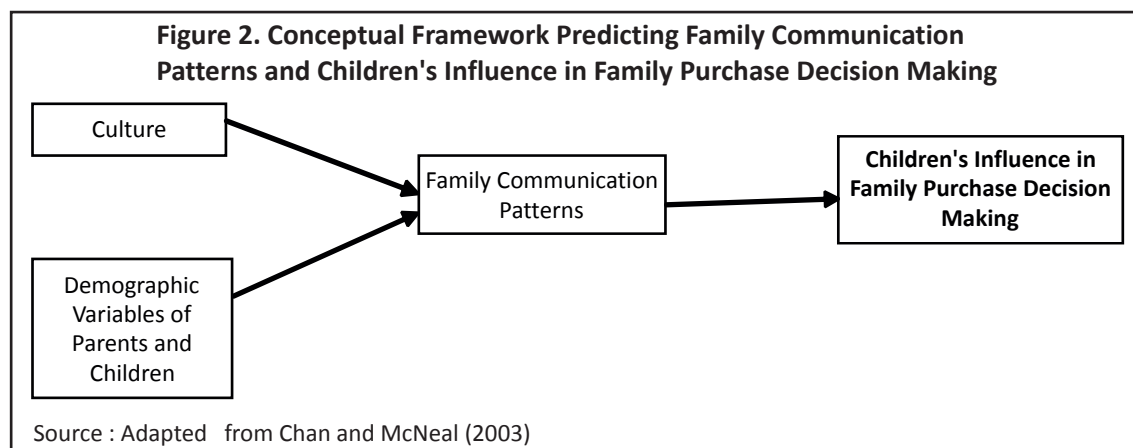
Family communication patterns are the means to measure the interaction levels between parents and children and their consumption patterns. These patterns consist of two types of orientation : Socio-oriented and concept oriented (McLeod & Chaffee, 1972). Family communication was then further segregated into a four - fold typology : Laissez - Faire, protective, pluralistic, and consensual (Moschis, 2005) as shown in the Figure 1.

Figure 1. Fourfold Typology of Family Communication Patterns		
Concept Orientation	Socio-Orientation	
	Low	High
	Laissez - Faire Little communication with children Little parental impact on consumption	Protective Stress vertical relationships Obedience and social harmony Children's exposure to outside environment is limited
	Pluralistic Stress horizontal relationships Issue oriented communication Children are encouraged to explore ideas and express opinions	Consensual Maintain control over children's behaviour Stress both issue oriented communication and the consideration of others
Source : Adapted from Chan and McNeal (2003)		

Laissez - faire parents are neither concept oriented nor socio - oriented. They believe in little communication with their children, and therefore, children have no influence on their purchase decision making. Protective parents have high socio - orientation and low concept orientation. These types of parents restrict their children to take any decision and maintain control over them. These parents expect respect, obedience, social harmony, etc. from their children. Pluralistic parents are those having low socio - orientation and high concept orientation. They allow their children the full expression of their ideas and views openly to the world (Sener, 2011; Shim, Serido, & Barber, 2011). In the last, consensual parents have both high levels of socio - orientation and concept orientation. It is a blend of giving the freedom of expression to the children along with maintaining a control on them. Kerrane and Hogg (2013) studied the consumer microenvironments prevailing within the family that also have an influence in family purchase decisions.

(2) Family Communication Patterns are Cultural Specific : Family communication is the process of cognitive communication and interaction between parents and the child (Flurry, 2007 ; Koerner & Schrodtt, 2014). Wut and Chou (2009) concluded that more parental indulgence leads to more influence of children in the purchase decisions. Indian children were found to be more influential than American children as parental indulgence is more in India than in America. Ramzy, Ogden, Ogden, and Zakaria (2012) examined U.S. and Egyptian families and explored the perceptions of parents towards children's influence on durable and child related products on purchase decisions (Aggarwal & Khurana, 2016). Children's influence was found to be higher in the case of non - durable goods followed by durable and child related goods and services. Various cross-cultural studies related to family communication and parent - child interactions in family purchase decisions were conducted by different authors (Aggarwal & Khurana, 2016 ; Chaudhary, 2016 ; Kim, Yang, & Lee, 2009 ; Kim, Lee, & Han, 2018 ; Opara & Uboegbulam, 2015).

Therefore, after indepth literature review, the conceptual framework of family communication patterns and children's influence in family purchase decisions is developed as shown in the Figure 2.



(3) Effect of Culture on Family Communication Patterns : Individualism refers to the degree to which nations are interdependent on each other. Power distance refers to the extent to which less powerful members of the institutions and organizations within the country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede, 2011). Uncertainty avoidance culture is in which people in culture avoid risk taking/uncertain situations. While masculinity stands for stress assertiveness, competition, and material success ; femininity refers to the quality of life, interpersonal relationships, and concern for the weak (Hofstede, 2011 ; Hofstede Insights, 2018 ; Mooij & Hofstede, 2010).

India scored 77 on the power distance scale of Hofstede, which was higher than the world average of 56.5. It is clear from the score that India is a high-power distant country where power is in the hands of wealthy and high status people. The caste system in India has created a hierarchy between the members of the society such as priests, merchants, warriors, and workers (LeFebvre, 2011). Similarly, in the family system, children are dependent on their parents for purchase of goods and services. Children are expected to show obedience to their elders and are not allowed to question their authority. They have less purchasing power than low power distant countries (Sharma, 2016). Similarly, in socio - oriented communication, parents have full autonomy of decision making and along with it, they expect obedience and respect from their children. Therefore, we hypothesize :

☞ **H1** : Indian parents engage in high level of socio - oriented communication.

The research is done in a single country, that is, India, and hence, there is no comparison with other foreign nations. Therefore, we presume the average point on a 5 - point scale to be the mean value of null hypothesis, that is, more than 3.

(4) Individualism/Collectivism : Individualism is the degree to which people of a nation are interdependent upon each other. It also refers to the involvement and interdependence of family members in the decision - making process (Hofstede, 2011). In individualistic nations, the concept of family communication patterns is different from collectivistic nations. In individualistic nations, parents encourage their children to give their opinions and participate in the purchase decision - making process of the family ; whereas, collectivistic nations' culture largely depends on group and social harmony (Chan & McNeal, 2003 ; Roland, 1991). In this type of culture, group family interest or group interest comes first than child or individual interest. The Indian culture scored 48 on Hofstede's individualism collectivism index (Chaudhary, 2015 ; Hofstede Insights, 2018 ; Shefali & Aggarwal, 2018). Indian people lie in the middle of the scale and are blessed with both types of traits. As the scores indicate, they are little more individualistic than collectivistic. This ranking has several implications. The Indian society is collectivistic in nature because of the traditional form of family system (Roland, 1991).

With the socioeconomic changes, disintegration of joint families etc., nuclear families are emerging and with the rise in nuclear families, India is moving towards individualism (D'Silva, Futrell, & Reyes, 2007 ; Sinha, 2014 ; Shefali & Aggarwal, 2018). The implication of this is that parents treat their children as individuals and involve them in family purchase decision making, which is a major feature of concept orientation. As Indians put more emphasis on collectivistic values also (Migliore, 2011), therefore, by taking into account Hofstede's score of collectivism and changing family dynamics, we hypothesize :

☞ **H2** : Indian parents will engage in a low level of concept orientation.

The combination of high level of socio - orientation and low level of concept orientation of Indian parents results into the following hypothesis :

☞ **H3** : Indian parents are likely to be classified as protective parents.

(5) Effect of Demographic Variables on Family Purchase Decision Making : This change in consumption behaviour in the behaviour of children depends on their child related demographics such as age, gender, etc. A study on gender reported that girls are more inclined towards choice of products than males (Samsinar, Rahman, Rashid, Othman, & Bakar, 2008). Martensen and Grønholdt (2008) showed contradictory results and concluded that gender does not affect children's influence in family decision making, and further, this influence varied with sub - decision stages. Older children have more influence than younger ones. Dotson and Hyatt (2010)

concluded that the child related factors such as age, gender, number of children in family, type of product, and mother's employment status had a considerable effect on family decision making. Aleti, Lobo, and Brennan (2011) depicted that in case of high technology and computer related products, consumer socialization of parents by children depends upon the gender of the parent as well as of the child. Beneke, Silverstone, Woods, and Schneider (2011) concluded that girls are more socialized about purchase - related decisions than boys and hence are more influential. Older children have a greater significant influence in family purchase decisions (Ramzy et al., 2012). Ali, Mustafa, Batra, Ravichandran, and Rehman (2012) concluded that age and gender of child played an important role in family purchase decision process. Boys had more influence than girls in the family purchase decisions. According to Tiago and Tiago (2013), teenagers of highly educated parents had a low significant influence on purchase decisions than the teenagers of parents with lower educational levels. Chaudhary (2015) ; Chaudhary (2016) ; Thorson and Horstman (2017) ; and Chaudhary, Ghouse, and Durrah (2018) concluded the significant influence of demographic variables of parents and children in family purchase decision making. Therefore, we hypothesize :

☞ **H4** : There is a significant influence of demographics of parents such as gender, age, and educational qualifications on family communication patterns in family purchase decision making.

☞ **H5** : There is a significant influence of the demographics of the child such as gender of child as well as age of child on family communication patterns in family purchase decision making.

(6) Children's Influence in Family Purchase Decision Making : When one person acts in such a way as to change the behaviour of another person in some intended manner, influence has occurred (Cartwright, 1959). This definition is applicable when the children affect the purchase decisions of their family that is also referred to as an influence. Kaur and Singh (2006) compared Indians with the Western society to reach at the result that sometimes, a child acts as an initiator and at other times, as an influencer. Nørgaard, Bruns, Christensen, and Mikkelsen (2007) found that children exerted more influence on all stages of decision making, especially on initiation and choice for easy prepared meals as well as unhealthy foods (sweets) than healthy foods (fruits & vegetables). The results revealed that the child related products exerted more influence than non durables and durables. Non - durables came at second and durables at the last (Ramzy et al., 2012). Sharma and Sonwaney (2015) found the moderating effect of type of product and stage of purchase decision making in family decision making. Children also exerted influence in family decision making about holidays (Watne, Brennan, & Winchester, 2014). Sharma and Sonwaney (2015) explored the influence of family communication patterns on children's influence in family purchase decisions. Therefore, we hypothesize that :

☞ **H6** : There is a significant influence of family communication patterns on children's influence in family purchase decision making across product categories.

Research Method

An extensive literature review has been done on family communication patterns, Hofstede cultural dimensions, buying process of families, and involvement of children across buying stages and sub - decisions. Further identification of variables was done from the literature review which affected the children in the family purchase decision making process. Different scales such as Moschis, (1985), Carlson and Grossbart (1988), etc. were referred to design a questionnaire and a 5 - point scale was used to measure these dimensions. Inter item reliability was checked, and it came out to be reliable. Impact of family communication patterns on children's influence in

family purchase decision making was measured by using three point scales on the basis of three buying stages (initiation, search, and final) across different product categories. The final questionnaire was distributed to the parents of 6 - 12 year old children living in Delhi - NCR. Purposive sampling was done to collect the data as it contains a specific set of respondents. A total of 320 questionnaires were collected from the parents of Indian children aged 6 - 12 years in Delhi - NCR. The study was conducted during March - June 2018. Statistical tools such as exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, MANOVA, multiple linear regression, and independent sample *t* - test were used to conduct the research.

Analysis and Results

Indian parents' family communication patterns show a high level of socio - oriented communication with a mean of 3.179, which is significantly higher than the hypothesized mean of 3.0. Therefore, H1 is supported. The items with higher means are, "I decide what things I should buy or not buy for the family," "I don't allow my child to buy certain things," "I tell my child that you will know better when you grow up." These items imply the controlled and dominant behaviour of parents towards their children and restricted parental style of the parents towards their children regarding the purchase of goods and services. Parents think that children are not capable to participate in family purchase decision making. Besides this, the statement, "I allow my child to learn from his/her own experiences" (with highest mean of 3.89) concludes that parents wanted their children to become independent by facing purchase related situations and learn from their experiences. Parents also told their children to consider advantages and disadvantages of products and brands prior to purchase so as to be careful to avoid any uncertainty. They wanted that every member of the family including children should participate in the purchase related decisions of the family. Along with this, the level of concept orientation in Indian parents is less than the hypothesized mean of 3. The mean value for concept orientation is 2.910. It means H2 is supported that Indian parents engage in low level of concept orientation. Our results indicate that besides low level of concept orientation, Indian parents report higher means of 3.89, 3.33, and 3.55, which indicates the level of concept orientation in them. Indian parents asked for the preferences of their children when they bought something for them. They actively engaged their children in buying related situations and also told them how to spend money carefully.

Family communication patterns are classified into four parental types by applying exploratory factor analysis on 27 statements taken from different scales of Moschis (1985) and Carlson and Grossbart (1988) on 139 respondents. The KMO came out to be 0.910 (Table 1), which means the sample was adequate and Bartlett's test of sphericity is also significant. Inter item reliability has been checked and items are reliable with Cronbach's alpha of 0.640. The factor analysis results into four factors (Table 2).

Factor 1 shows high concept orientation and high socio - orientation and we name it as Consensual as evident from previous studies of Carlson and Grossbart (1988) and Chan and McNeal (2003). Factor 2 has high socio - orientation and low concept orientation and we name it as Protective. The Factor 3 has low socio - orientation and high concept orientation and is termed as Pluralistic. Factor 4 has both low socio - orientation and concept orientation and we name it as Laissez - Faire. Our hypotheses H1 and H2 conclude that Indian parents have high level of socio - orientation and low level of concept orientation. Therefore, H3 is accepted that Indian parents are protective in nature with both high socio - orientation and low level of concept orientation.

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to refine the scale (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). It was applied on the remaining 15 items using maximum likelihood extraction method with oblimin rotation to confirm the dimensions of the derived scale. The recursive model was used in CFA. The assumptions of CFA were met before moving further. Various indices such as overall chi-square, *F*- value, absolute fit measure, GFI, RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation), SRMR (standardized root mean residual), and CFI (comparative factor indices) were

Table 1. Convergent Validity and Average Variance Extracted Values

Family Communication Patterns	Convergent Validity	AVE
Protective	0.839	0.635
Consensual	0.882	0.565
Laissez - Faire	0.777	0.541
Pluralistic	0.788	0.556

Table 2. Discriminant Validity

Family Communication Patterns	Protective	Consensual	Laissez - Faire	Pluralistic
Protective	0.079			
Consensual	0.106	0.751		
Laissez - Faire	0.297	0.002	0.735	
Pluralistic	0.371	0.0092	0.267	0.746

Note. Discriminant Validity as represented by the square root of AVE values.

calculated to find the validity of the measurement model. It shows good fit of data with GFI = 0.901, RMSEA = 0.069, NFI = 0.914, and AGFI = 0.847. The four factors which were extracted from exploratory factor analysis are confirmed and named as Consensual, Protective, Pluralistic, and Laissez - Faire. Split half reliability is used to check whether data are reliable or not. Data are found to be reliable and closer when split into two different data of responses. Content validity, composite reliability, and discriminant validity are measured and the results are shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics

	Qualification	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Protective	Higher Secondary	3.65	.735	37
	Graduation	3.160	.687	61
	Post Graduation	2.850	.563	40
	PhD	3.40	.	1
	Total	3.20	.726	139
Laissez - Faire	Higher Secondary	2.58	.459	37
	Graduation	2.92	.455	61
	Post Graduation	3.030	.563	40
	PhD	2.70	.	1
	Total	2.86	.515	139
Pluralistic	Higher Secondary	3.02	.775	37
	Graduation	3.08	.827	61
	Post Graduation	3.14	.802	40
	PhD	3.33	.	1
	Total	3.08	.799	139
Consensual	Higher Secondary	3.55	.474	37
	Graduation	3.65	.454	61
	Post Graduation	3.68	.486	40
	PhD	3.16	.	1
	Total	3.63	.468	139

Multivariate analysis of variance is used to test the significant influence of parents' and children's demographics on family communication patterns. MANOVA is used here because the dependent variables are correlated as per Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2016), and its use is discouraged when dependent variables are not correlated or are highly positively correlated. Demographic variables of parents such as age of parent, gender of parent, qualification of parent, etc. are taken as independent variables ; whereas, four types of family communication patterns, that is, Pluralistic, Protective, Consensual, and Laissez - Faire are considered as dependent variables. Box test of equality of variance is done and reports the p - value to be greater than 0.005, which concludes that there is no difference in their covariance matrices, that is, equality of covariance matrices satisfies the homogeneity of variance assumption of MANOVA. Similar results are seen in Levene's test and reported homogeneity of variances. Prior to the application of the test, all the assumptions are satisfied. Influence of age of parent on family communication patterns is also tested by MANOVA. Box test of equality of variances value comes out to be 0.006, which is more than 0.005, which satisfies the homogeneity of variance assumption. The Table 4 of multivariate tests shows the significance value of Wilks' lambda = 0.022, which is less than 0.05 and it can be concluded there is a significant influence of age of the parent on family communication patterns.

Separate ANOVA tests are applied on Consensual, Pluralistic, Laissez - Faire, and Protective types of patterns. For Consensual and Pluralistic type of family communication patterns, the significant value is less than .05, but if we consider the value to be 0.025, Consensual pattern's value is 0.10 and Pluralistic pattern's value is 0.030, which is acceptable. It implies the significant influence of age of parents on family communication patterns, especially on Consensual and Pluralistic but not on Protective and Laissez - Faire. The results depicted in Table 5 reveal that parents in the age group of 50+ years were very less protective in nature ; whereas, parents in the age group of 30 - 39 years were more protective ; Laissez - Faire parents did not vary with the age group. Pluralistic parents were mostly in the age group of 30 - 39 years ; whereas, parents in the 20 - 29 years age group were more Consensual than any other communication pattern.

Table 4. Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Age of Parent	Pillai's Trace	.168	1.992	12.000	402.000	.024
	Wilks' Lambda	.838	2.012	12.000	349.531	.022
	Hotelling's Trace	.186	2.023	12.000	392.000	.021
	Roy's Largest Root	.129	4.329	4.000	134.000	.003
Qualification of Parent	Pillai's Trace	.330	4.137	12.000	402.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.675	4.671	12.000	349.531	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	.476	5.179	12.000	392.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	.462	15.462	4.000	134.000	.000

Table 5. Tests of Between - Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age of Parent	Consensual	2.449	3	.816	3.953	.010
	Pluralistic	5.619	3	1.873	3.064	.030
	Laissez - Faire	1.601	3	.534	2.054	.109
	Protective	1.216	3	.405	.763	.517
Qualification of Parent	Protective	12.660	3	4.220	9.454	.000
	Laissez - Faire	4.240	3	1.413	5.883	.001
	Pluralistic	.313	3	.104	.160	.923
	Consensual	.601	3	.200	.910	.438

Table 6. Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t - test for Equality of Means						
		<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i> (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
Laissez - Faire	Equal variances assumed	1.563	.213	.812	137	.418	.0723149	.0890102	-.1036966	.2483264
	Equal variances not assumed			.838	132.028	.403	.0723149	.0862821	-.0983593	.2429892
Pluralistic	Equal variances assumed	.224	.637	.012	137	.990	.0017116	.1383118	-.2717905	.2752137
	Equal variances not assumed			.013	125.147	.990	.0017116	.1367900	-.2690096	.2724328
Protective	Equal variances assumed	.147	.702	-1.856	137	.066	-2.3059478E-1	1.2425884E-1	-.4763081	1.5118531E-2
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.876	125.065	.063	-2.3059478E-1	1.2291741E-1	-.4738624	1.2672795E-2
Consensual	Equal variances assumed	.832	.363	-1.146	137	.254	-9.2497504E-2	8.0745908E-2	-.2521670	6.7171975E-2
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.118	109.895	.266	-9.2497504E-2	8.2720106E-2	-.2564311	7.1436065E-2

Table 8. Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Age of Child	Pillai's Trace	.103	1.811	8.000	268.000	.075
	Wilks' Lambda	.899	1.810	8.000	266.000	.075
	Hotelling's Trace	.110	1.808	8.000	264.000	.076
	Roy's Largest Root	.082	2.754	4.000	134.000	.031

Table 9. Tests of Between - Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age of Child	Laissez - Faire	.127	2	.064	.237	.789
	Protective	4.838	2	2.419	4.832	.009
	Pluralistic	1.044	2	.522	.815	.445
	Consensual	.846	2	.423	1.951	.146

Consensual type of parents have higher means for education followed by Protective parents to Pluralistic and at the last are Laissez - Faire parents as shown in the Table 3. It implies Consensual parents were highly educated. Box test of equality of variances value comes out to be 0.455, which is more than 0.005, which satisfies the homogeneity of variance assumption. Wilks' lambda is 0.000, which is less than the p - value of .05, which reports

Table 10. Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t - test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
Laissez -Faire	Equal variances assumed	.909	.342	-1.083	137	.281	-.0950919	.0877806	-.2686720	.0784882	
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.066	121.751	.288	-.0950919	.0891806	-.2716374	.0814536	
Pluralistic	Equal variances assumed	3.458	.065	-.087	137	.931	-.0119048	.1366516	-.2821239	.2583144	
	Equal variances not assumed			-.086	120.117	.932	-.0119048	.1391168	-.2873437	.2635342	
Protective	Equal variances assumed	.001	.979	-1.634	137	.105	-.2011278	.1231107	-.4445708	.0423152	
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.631	131.231	.105	-.2011278	.1233489	-.4451374	.0428818	
Consensual	Equal variances assumed	.259	.612	-1.078	137	.283	-.0860485	.0798222	-.2438914	.0717945	
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.093	136.786	.276	-.0860485	.0787147	-.2417036	.0696067	

the significant influence of qualification on family communication patterns especially on Protective and Laissez - Faire patterns as shown in Table 4 and Table 5.

Independent sample *t* - test is applied, which reveals no significant influence of gender of parent on the family communication patterns when considered jointly on the variables of family communication patterns as shown in the Table 6. There is no significant influence of gender of parent on any of the family communication patterns. Therefore, H4 is partially accepted for age and not for gender of parent (Martensen & Grønholdt, 2008).

The results of MANOVA are reported in the Table 7, Table 8, Table 9, and Table 10 to check the influence of children's demographics on family communication patterns. Post - hoc tests are also applied to check the significant influence of children's demographics on family communication patterns. Independent sample *t* - test is applied for examining the effect of gender of children on family communication patterns, and no significant influence is reported for gender of children on family communication patterns. In case of age of children's influence on family communication patterns, the influence of children of 6 - 8 years and children of 10 - 12 years differs in case of Protective type of communication with significant value of 0.002 in LSD test (post - hoc). Therefore, H5 is partially supported.

Multiple linear regression is used to test the influence of four types of family communication patterns on children's influence in family purchase decision making. Children's influence in family purchase decision making is measured by checking the influence of children on buying of 25 products as per parental perception. Median split is used to categorize these 25 products which resulted into three types of medians : 0, 1, and 2. The products which come under 0 value are removed such as washing machine, house, refrigerator, furniture, etc. These products show no or very less influence of children in family purchase decisions. The products having Median 1 are named as family - related goods and services and products with Median 2 are named as child - related products and services as shown in the Table 11. Family - related goods and services include cereals, easy to prepare meals, shampoo, toothpaste, laptops, cars, movie out, family entertainment, and education. Child - related goods and services include soft drinks, snack foods, candies and sweets, fast food, bicycles, mobile phones, clothing, vacations, and dining out.

Multiple linear regression is applied to test the influence of family communication patterns such as Laissez - Faire, Consensual, Pluralistic, and Protective on children's influence on both family - related goods and services and child - related goods and services, which measure the children's influence in family purchase decision making.

Table 11. Median Values of Three Different Product Categories

Median 2 (Child - Related Goods and Services)	Median 1 (Family - Related Goods and Services)	Median 0
Soft drinks	Cereals	TV
Snack foods	Easy to prepare meals	Furniture
Candies & sweets	Shampoo	House
Fast food	Toothpaste	Washing machine
Mobile phones	Laptops	Refrigerator
Clothing	Cars	
Vacation	Movie out	
Dining out	Family entertainment	
Books	Education	
Play stations		
Bicycles		

Table 12. Correlation Coefficients

Model (Child - Related Goods & Services)	Beta	T	Sig
(Constant)		1.237	.218
Pluralistic	-.189	-2.077	.040
Consensual	.251	2.723	.007
Protective	.112	1.317	.190
Laissez - Faire	.004	.045	.964
Model (Family - Related Goods & Services)	Beta	T	Sig
(Constant)		.361	.718
Pluralistic	-.118	-1.278	.204
Consensual	.056	.599	.550
Protective	.121	1.409	.161
Laissez - Faire	.147	1.689	.094

Table 13. ANOVA Table

Model	F(Family - Related Goods)	Sig	F(Child - Related Goods)	Sig.
1 Regression	1.623	.172^a	2.436	.050

a. Predictors : (Constant), lf, pr, pl, cn

The assumptions of multiple regression are checked before proceeding to the test. Multicollinearity is tested by using the Durbin - Watson method with value of 1.828 and 1.529 for child - related goods and services and family - related goods and services, respectively. The maximum value of Mahalanobis distance is less than the chi-square value and Cook's distance value (0.64), which is less than 1, clearly indicates the absence of outliers. Normal PP plots are drawn to check the assumption of normality and the data comes out to be normal. The correlation table shows a positive correlation of the variables with each other except the Pluralistic type of pattern, which shows a negative correlation with child - related goods and services. The Table 12 shows a negative relationship between Protective and Consensual types of communication patterns. Adjusted R^2 indicates 40% of the variance explained by the independent variables on the dependent variable, that is, child - related goods and services.

Hence, there is a significant influence of four types of family communication patterns on children's influence on child - related goods and services with $F = 2.436$, beta coefficient = 0.251, which is the highest for Consensual type of parents with child - related goods and services. Pluralistic type of pattern has a significant value of 0.040, which is less than the p - value, which indicates a significant influence of Pluralistic parents on child - related goods and services as shown in the Table 12. Consensual parents also have a significant influence on children's influence on purchase of child - related goods and services. Protective and Laissez - Faire type of parents have a significant value of more than 0.05 and reported no significant influence on child - related goods and services. The same type of test is applied on family related goods and services.

The correlation of child - related goods and services and family - related goods and services is shown in the Table 12 because the independent variables are the same for both of them. Adjusted R^2 shows 18% of the total variability. The Table 13 (ANOVA) clearly shows no significant influence of family communication patterns on family - related goods and services. Hence, H6 is partially accepted as influence is only on child - related goods and services.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings show a significant influence of age of parents on family communication patterns, especially on Consensual and Pluralistic parents. Parents in the age group of 20 - 29 years and 30 - 39 years were more Consensual in nature, which clearly explains the youthful, open, and independent behaviour of parents towards their children. Young parents are more open with their children on technology - related products than older parents. They talk more openly about the risks involved in technology and how to deal with the risks. Parents in the age of 50+ years showed more of Laissez - Faire type of communication because they were not much tech savvy than their counterparts and faced many health issues ; hence, it was very challenging for these parents to educate their technology - savvy children and to monitor their activities. Gender of the parents has no significant influence on family communication patterns. These results are in line with the results of some previous studies (Biblarz & Stacey, 2010 ; North, Birkenbach, & Slimmon, 2007) but contrary to some studies (Yang, Kim, Laroche, & Lee, 2014) because of cultural differences. Highly educated parents followed Consensual type of communication followed by Protective parents because they were very much aware and informed about the products and services which are beneficial for their children such as healthy and organic food than less - educated parents. They can easily monitor the activities of their children and inform them to stay away from misleading advertisements done by marketers nowadays to sell their product and services.

Protective type of parents had different type of family communication patterns for children in the age groups of 6 - 8 years and 10 - 12 years. This type of parents believe that children are too young to understand the rules and regulations and, therefore, they engage in more parental concern and proper normative behaviour towards their children (Rose, Bush, & Kahle, 2013). They don't permit their children to participate in family purchase decisions at this young age because they found it risky and taught their children to be sensitive towards the views of others and not to discuss their view points on any activities, especially on purchase - related activities (North et al., 2007).

Gender of child showed no significant influence on family communication patterns. No differential treatment of sons and daughters was generally seen, especially in purchase related matters but this differs in other family matters (Caruana & Vasallo, 2003). The results report the influence of concept orientation type of communication on children's influence in family purchase decisions across product categories, especially on child - related products and services. No influence is reported for family - related goods and services because this category has products important for the family and not exclusive for children such as cereals, easy to prepare meals, shampoo, toothpaste, etc. Children were found to have a very low interest in purchasing these products, therefore, they did not show their involvement in purchase decisions of family - related goods and services. However, the products under the category of child - related goods and services were highly influenced by children of Pluralistic and Consensual type of parents. Pluralistic type of parents encouraged their children to actively participate in family purchase decision making (as per our research), especially in child - related goods and services such as soft drinks, snacks, candies and sweets, etc. They allowed their children to purchase child - related goods and services, which help in developing child consumption skills and competencies.

Protective and Laissez - Faire types of communication have no significant influence on purchase of product categories because these kinds of parents think that their children are not mature enough to take the right decisions, and parents and children both disagree with each other's decisions as parents want children to follow them without any questions and arguments. Laissez - Faire parents have no or very less influence on family purchase related decisions as these parents are very less socially competent and not open towards any type of discussion (Yang et al., 2014).

Managerial Implications, Limitations of the Study, and Scope for Further Research

Marketers can frame the strategies to attract and persuade children as per the family communication pattern followed in the family. The type of communication pattern followed in the family also helps in drawing conclusions regarding the marketing communication to be followed by marketers towards parents and children. Different types of national cultures have different impact on family communication patterns. Therefore, marketers should consider all these factors before designing any marketing strategy towards children and their parents, especially for Indian culture (Barthwal & Gupta, 2011). The products influenced by children also have an added advantage for the marketers so that they would not waste their money on the products and services which are not really relevant to the children. Marketers are now able to understand how children interpret, evaluate, and influence the parents' purchase decisions. It helps them to recognize the needs and distinct characteristics of a young Indian consumer.

The research was done only on Indian children in the age group of 6 - 12 years and was limited to Delhi - NCR. The sample size and sampling area were quite limited. The perception of children was not taken into consideration while conducting the study. Multi member and multistage studies can be conducted to arrive at better results. Different national cultures and cross cultural comparisons should be considered to fully explore the influence of children on family purchase decisions and family communication patterns. The online behavioural patterns of children regarding purchase, especially in family communication perspectives needs to be explored.

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