
The Role of Family Members on Decision Making Related to Fast Food

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Abstract

When it comes to consumer behavior, the impact that family members have on choices surrounding the consumption of fast food is a significant factor that plays a vital role. An investigation of the ways in which the dynamics of families influence preferences, choices, and consumption patterns within the fast-food sector is presented in this paper. The purpose of this study is to expose the complex web of decision-making processes that occur inside families by analyzing the roles and dynamics that exist within families, such as parental authority, sibling influence, and preferences that are passed down from generation to generation. In addition, it investigates the role that family norms, beliefs, and socio-economic backgrounds have on the decisions that people make about fast food, offering insight on the ways in which these elements jointly affect consumer behavior. For marketers and politicians who want to encourage healthy eating habits and address social problems connected to nutrition and health within family groups, it is essential to have a solid understanding of these interactions.

Keywords: Family Influence, Decision-Making, Fast Food Consumption, Consumer Behavior.

Introduction

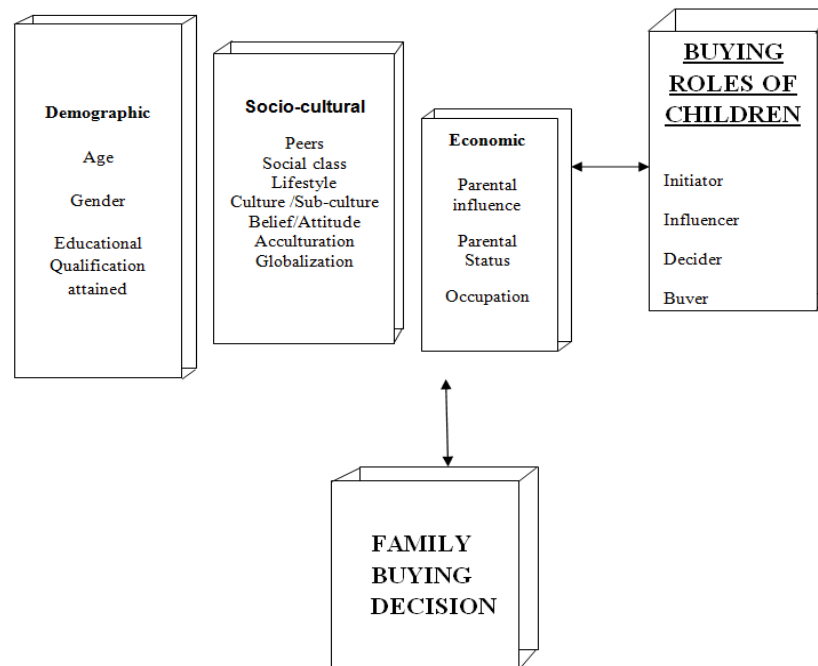
Fast food has become a popular option for many families in today's culture. This trend may be attributed to a number of causes, including the fact that it is convenient, inexpensive, and that it aligns with the fast-paced aspect of modern living. Family dynamics often play a role in the decision-making process that pertains to the consumption of fast food. This is because family dynamics include the intersection of individual preferences and collective decisions. There are a variety of responsibilities that family members play in the process of making these choices; nevertheless, parents are often the key decision-makers because of the power and duty they have in directing their children's eating habits. However, youngsters may advocate for their favored fast food selections or express wishes that are affected by peer trends. Siblings and even extended family members may also have a substantial effect on the choices that children make. This intricate interplay of influences is further amplified by cultural norms and socio-economic considerations,

which not only determine the kinds of fast food that are eaten but also the frequency with which such decisions are made. Furthermore, when families begin to negotiate the problems of combining health and convenience, the role of family members becomes increasingly important in the process of creating conversations about nutrition and the consequences of the food choices they make. It is crucial for marketers who want to engage with families and design tactics that resonate with their collective beliefs and preferences to have a solid understanding of these dynamics. In addition, public health programs may better address dietary problems and encourage healthy eating habits within family units if they acknowledge the influence that families have on choices about fast food. This, in turn, will eventually contribute to improved health outcomes throughout communities.

A growing number of people are becoming interested in the topic of the effect of family dynamics on food choices, especially with relation to fast food. This is because of the health consequences that are linked with dietary habits. A

considerable number of families have made the consumption of fast food a big part of their day-to-day lives. This trend is driven by a variety of reasons, including convenience, cost, and marketing methods. The decision-making process for fast food

is not just a reflection of individual tastes within the setting of the family; rather, it is a complicated interplay of many factors among the members of the family.



Family buying decision-making model (Source: Author's Own Model, 2014.)

Within the context of the decision-making process, members of the family, including parents, children, and extended family members, each participate in their own ways. The views that parents have regarding fast food have a considerable impact on the preferences and eating routines of their children, therefore parents often play a vital role in this regard. It has been shown via research that parents who consume fast food on a regular basis are more likely to establish similar eating behaviors in their children, which in turn shapes the overall nutritional choices that the family makes. Furthermore, the structure of family meals, whether they are home-cooked or comprise of takeaway, may have an effect on the probability that children will consume fast food. Children who have meals with their families on a regular basis have been shown to have better eating habits and decrease their use of fast food. Numerous factors, including financial position, cultural standards, and household routines, may have a significant impact on the dynamics that exist

inside a family unit. It is common for families with lower means to encounter obstacles when attempting to get access to nutritious food alternatives. As a result, these families tend to depend more on fast food as an alternative that is both quick and economical. Considering that particular populations may be more vulnerable to fast food advertising, which perpetuates bad eating behaviors, this link is further complicated by cultural factors and targeted marketing.

In addition, children are increasingly asserting their influence in the decisions that families make about food, negotiating their preferences, and pushing for options that are available at fast food restaurants. The interaction between parental authority and the wishes of children results in a complicated decision-making environment in which members of the family are required to negotiate trade-offs between convenience, flavor, nutrition, and health. For the purpose of establishing targeted interventions to encourage healthy eating habits and for the purpose

of understanding the larger consequences of family food choices on public health, it is essential to recognize these interactions. It is important to note that the involvement of family members in the decision-making process regarding the consumption of fast food is diverse and involves a variety of variables that impact behaviours linked to diet. Understanding these dynamics might help public health programs that seek to build better eating settings and promote more educated dietary decisions within families. These activities can be guided by the fact that families are navigating their food choices.

Family Dynamics and Food Choices

When it comes to the formation and reinforcement of eating habits, families are the key social units that perform this function. It is common for parents to play the role of gatekeepers when it comes to dietary choices, since they have a great amount of control over the meals that are made accessible to their children. Their perspectives on fast food may either stimulate the consumption of this kind of food or urge the adoption of healthier alternatives. It is possible, for instance, that families that place a high value on convenience owing to time limitations may find themselves leaning toward fast food alternatives. This may lead to a cycle of habitual eating that influences children's views of food and nutrition. Furthermore, as children develop, they become more vocal about their choices, often expressing their support for fast food, which makes the process of decision-making within the family more complicated.

Socioeconomic and Cultural Influences

There are a number of elements that contribute to the complexity of judgments about fast food, including not just the impact of parents but also cultural norms, economic position, and the structure of the family. There is a possibility that families that come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds have restricted access to fresh and healthful food alternatives, which allows fast food to become a more realistic alternative. In a similar vein, societal notions on food may play a role in determining dietary preferences. For instance, fast food may be seen as an appealing alternative for social gatherings

or celebrations. For the purpose of establishing successful measures to encourage healthy eating habits among families, it is vital to have a profound understanding of these dynamics.

Marketing Strategies and Family Consumption

Furthermore, the marketing methods that are used by fast food corporations are directed specifically toward families. These efforts appeal to the aspirations of children as well as the convenience of parents, which ultimately results in the incorporation of fast-food consumption into the routines of families. This phenomenon underscores the need for a full study of the role that family members play in the decision-making processes regarding fast food. This is because it has major consequences for public health campaigns that try to reduce bad eating patterns and promote healthful dietary practices.

Review of literature

(Parikh, 2020) studied "Social contextual influences on unhealthy food consumption: A psychological approach Despite the fact that the social, economic, and physical contexts have a significant impact on what individuals eat, the manner in which, the reason why, and the conditions under which these contextual variables drive individual food intake are largely understood. In this thesis, psychological explanations are sought for the ways in which the physical food environment and the socioeconomic setting may guide unhealthy food intake. The emphasis of the thesis is on psychological and interpretive processes and how they may impact eating behaviour. This is done in recognition of the need of having a better understanding of individual processes within these settings. This thesis presents fresh insights on social impacts buried within food environments as well as socioeconomic contextual factors that may lead to a different response to unhealthy food environments. These two types of influences are referred to together as food environments. The first part of this study examines the probable influence that people's perceptions of social norms have in the connection between the physical food environment and intake. In light of socioeconomic differences in diet, the second part of this article focuses on the experiences of scarcity and relative deprivation as potential explanations for

the influence of the socioeconomic context on consumption. These are presented as potential explanations for the influence of the socioeconomic context on consumption.

(Chen et al., 1996) studied capital structure decision making: a model for family business. The vast majority of theoretical and empirical studies of capital structure concentrate their attention on publicly traded companies. This deficiency is particularly obvious in investigations into the factors that influence the funding decisions of family business owners. Only a limited number of studies on capital structure have been conducted on small-to-medium size enterprises (SMEs), and this deficiency has only been addressed by a small number of researchers. According to theory, the choices that small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) owner-managers make about their companies' finances are impacted by a diverse set of elements. Recent research on family businesses reveals that these processes are driven by company owners' perceptions regarding the usefulness of debt as a method of finance, with these sentiments being regulated by the external environmental factors (e.g., financial and market considerations). A number of other factors, such as culture, entrepreneurial characteristics, prior experiences of entrepreneurs in capital structure, business goals, business life-cycle issues, preferred ownership structures, views regarding control, debt-equity ratios, and short- vs. long-term debt, age and size of the firm, sources of funding for growth, attitudes toward debt financing, issues relating to independence and control, and plethora of other factors have been shown to influence financing decisions.

(Kümpel NØrgaard et al., 2007) studied Children's influence on and participation in the family decision process during food buying. Children now make up a sizable portion of the consumer market and have a significant impact on the kinds of things their families buy across a variety of categories. In light of this recognition of children as a primary market, an influential market, and a future market, children of today are regarded as being distinct from children of previous generations. This is especially true of children aged 8 to 14 years old, who are referred to

as tweens because they are neither children nor teenagers but rather something in between. They have matured at a quicker rate, are better connected, communicate more directly, and are more informed. They have more personal authority than any previous generation that came before them, as well as more money, influence, and attention. The evolution of family structures has an effect on the way in which families make decisions". Furthermore, some authors contend that family communication has become more democratic and open as a result of these structural shifts. As a result, one consequence of these shifts is that modern parents pay more attention to the perspectives of their children.

(Goyal & Singh, 2007) studied Consumer perception about fast food in India: an exploratory study. The many various areas and states that make up India each have their own distinct cultures, and this variety extends to the country's cuisine as well. Indians have a long-standing preference for eating meals that they have prepared themselves at home, a practise that is encouraged both spiritually and culturally. In spite of this, there has been a modest change in the patterns of food intake among urban Indian households as a direct result of the growing knowledge of western culture and its effect. It began with dining in the open air and progressed to the acceptance of a broad array of foods from all over the globe. The liberalisation of the Indian economy in the early 1990s and the following entrance of new players laid the stage for a dramatic shift in the lives and culinary preferences of those living in India. Fast food is one that earned acceptability of the Indian taste when the international fast-food companies modified the fundamental Indian cuisine needs, such as vegetarian meals and chosen non-vegetarian alternatives, while completely omitting meat and pork from their menus.

Conclusion

The decision to eat fast food is not only a matter of personal desire; rather, it is the result of a complex interaction between the dynamics of the family, which includes the influence of the parents, the preferences of the children, the economic circumstances, and the cultural standards. As

families negotiate the process of making food choices, it is essential to acknowledge the multidimensional nature of these impacts in order to cultivate settings that are conducive to healthy eating and to encourage educated dietary decisions. We are able to obtain useful insights into the reasons that drive the consumption of fast food and eventually lead to better public health outcomes if we investigate the complex role that family members play in the decision-making process.

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