
UNIT 10 FAMILY BUYING INFLUENCES, FAMILY LIFE CYCLE AND BUYING ROLES

Objectives

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Explain the nature of the family influences that operate on the purchase behaviour
- Describe how family decision-making is influenced by the role specialisations of the members involved in the purchase decisions
- Evaluate the impact of the family life cycle stages on consumption behaviour
- Explain the implications of family decision-making for marketing strategy.

Structure

- 10.1 Introduction: The Family as a Consuming Unit
- 10.2 Family Buying Influences: Nature and Types of Influences
- 10.3 Consumer Socialisation
- 10.4 Intergenerational Influences
- 10.5 Family Decision-Making
- 10.6 Family Role Structure and Buying Behaviour
- 10.7 The Dynamics of Family Decision-Making: Purchase Influences and Role specialization
- 10.8 The Influence of Children
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10.1 INTRODUCTION: THE FAMILY AS A CONSUMING UNIT

Consumer behaviour is influenced not only by consumer personalities and motivations, as you learnt in the previous unit, but also by the relationships within families. You will find this illustrated in Figure 1. The family is such a familiar social unit that, it is difficult to discuss it without appearing to discuss the obvious. Nevertheless, in this unit we will look at the interaction of the individual within the family and examine those features that are of importance to marketing. A knowledge of family structure and its consumption characteristics is, in fact, a necessary precondition for successful marketing.

From the marketing point of view, the family differs from larger reference groups in that the members must satisfy their individual and shared needs by drawing on a common and shared, relatively fixed supply of sources. And for the individual, the family is the strongest, most immediate, and most pervasive influence on decision-making.

Family Types

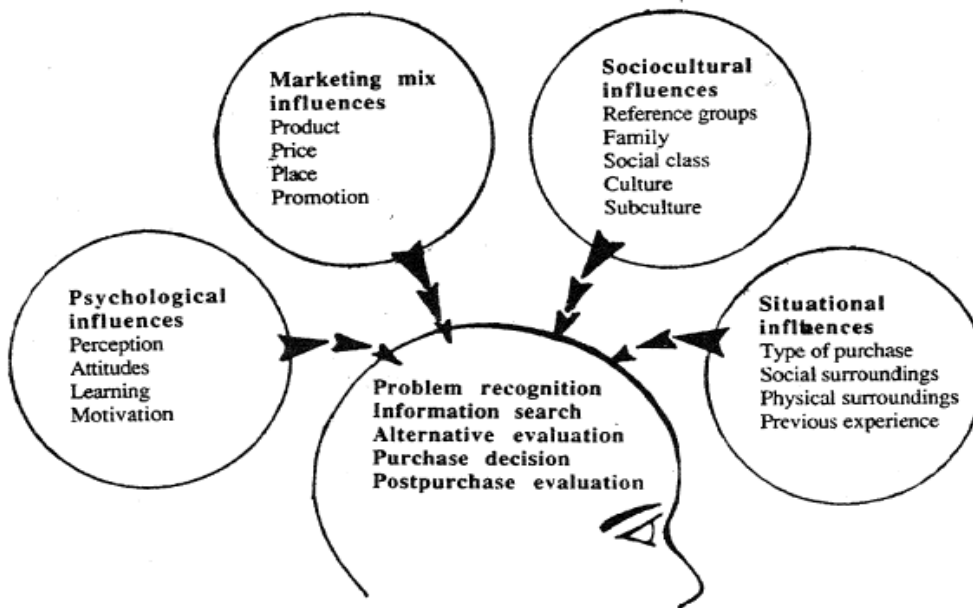
As a consuming unit to consider, the marketer is interested in the variety of living arrangements that exist in the population. There are several types of families and their buying requirements would differ subject to their structural variations.

There is the **nuclear family**, which is termed as consisting of the husband, wife and their offspring.



Figure 1

Factors Influencing the Consumer Decision-Making Process



There is the **extended family** in which the family structure extends beyond the nuclear family and includes other relatives such as the parents of the husband or wife, aunts, uncles, grandparents and in-laws. The traditional household set-up in India consisting of a joint family is an example of an extended family.

The term family is actually a subset of the more general classification of household, where the household comprises all those persons who occupy and share a housing unit. The household thus covers a variety of living arrangements such as roommates living in an apartment, single parent families, and joint family households, all of which are of value to the marketer as consumption units.

10.2 FAMILY BUYING INFLUENCES: NATURE AND TYPES OF INFLUENCES

The Reciprocal Nature of Family Influence

The family is not just a social group. It is also an earning, consuming, decision-making unit, and it is of importance to marketers because of the influence that family members have on purchase and consumption decision. In this section we will consider the various family related factors that have an impact on consumer decision-making.

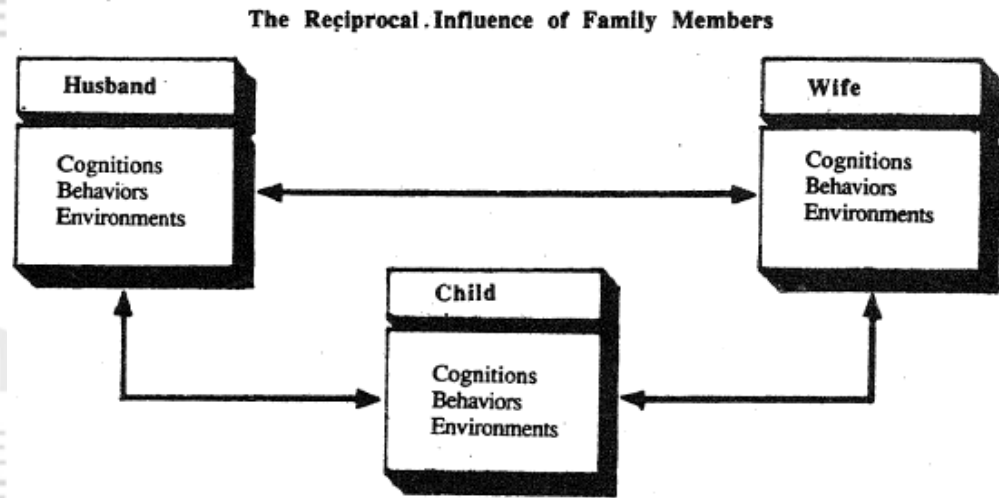
The family's influence comes from the fact that the bonds within the family are likely to be much more powerful and intimate than those in other small groups. Because of these bonds, the family has profound social, cultural, psychological and economic influence on consumers. Within the family, operating as the unit of analysis, a **reciprocal influence** operates on all decisions. There are three main sources of influence in the family decision process. These are the father, the mother and other family members.

Since a particular family may have several persons in the 'other family members' category, the decision process for a given family can be complex. Every family member brings his or her own motives, evaluations, beliefs and predispositions to the decision process. Every family member becomes part of the environment for the other family members and, influences, and is influenced by them. And the cognitions, behaviour and environments of the several persons become an important consideration for the marketer, as do the interactions of the members among themselves. Not only do we need to analyse the cognitions of these individuals, as you see in Figure 2, but also the possible interaction patterns between each of the family members. For the marketer, it is therefore necessary to sort out the extent of influence exerted by the various family members.



In the next section you will read about the two main buying influences that operate on the individual within the family, namely consumer socialisation and the intergenerational influences.

Figure 2



10.3 CONSUMER SOCIALISATION

Consumer socialisation is the process by which young people acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers. Through the variety of family interactions, the consumer learns to develop tastes, preferences, and shopping styles, how to budget money, what types of clothes to wear for what occasions, and also what stores to patronise.

Factors Influencing Consumer Socialisation

There are several distinct factors that influence the consumer socialising process, as you see in Figure 3. These are:

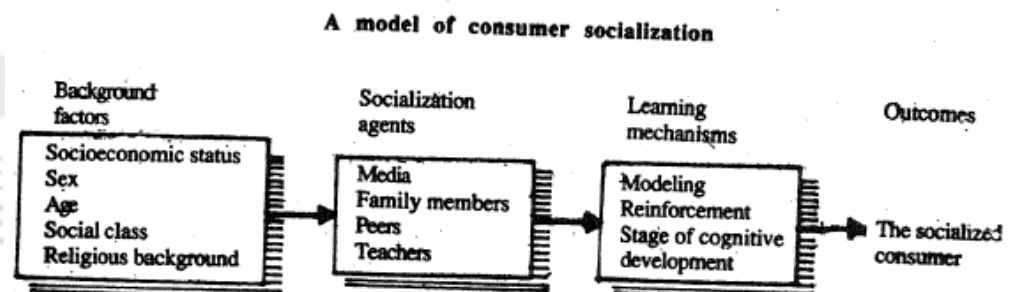
1) The Background/Environmental Factors

These include the environmental factors such as social and economic status, social class, age, sex, and religious affiliation of the consumer.

2) The Socialising Agents

These include individuals who have direct influence on the consumer such as parents, sisters, brothers, peers, teachers and the media. The family is found to be important in teaching the rational aspects of consumption while TV viewing encourages consumption for emotional reasons.

Figure 3



Consumer socialisation occurs through two types of **learning**. One is the **imitation of others** by observing the actions of others in the family. What is learnt early in life has a lasting effect on most people. Brand loyalty is thus transmitted from parents to children and, favoured brands may persist for periods of anywhere up to twelve years or longer. The second type of learning is operant conditioning. This means that consumption behaviour that receives praise and is complimented likely to be repeated by a child while actions, that are ridiculed or, are less likely to have a negative outcome be repeated.



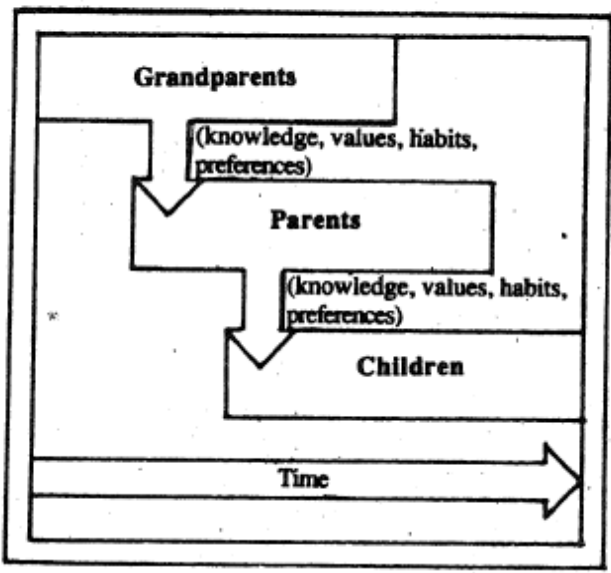
Consumer socialisation occurs in subtle ways that are not always obvious. There are four primary ways in which family influences can be transmitted to the individual within the family:

- 1) **The parents act as models** for the child on numerous consumption occasions. The child learns through observation without the parents' conscious awareness or intention to teach.
- 2) **Parent-child discussions** about particular products or brands, why they are good for you, and why they are not.
- 3) **Child-child interactions.** These become an important socialising influence when more than one child is present.
- 4) **The child begins to handle** money as he or she becomes older. Thus, through gifts and allowances, the family provides opportunities for a child to become more experienced as a consumer.

10.4 INTERGENERATIONAL INFLUENCES

The intergenerational consumer influences refer to what is passed along from grandparents to parents, from the parents to their children, and from the children to their children. Many forms of influence are passed on. These include religious and cultural values, general lifestyles, attitudes toward education, sports, leisure and social life. Such intergenerational influences play an important role in forming product and brand differences. In fact, many consumers have, perhaps, never considered purchasing brands other than those their parents purchased for them as children. For example, consider your own experiences regarding your choice of toothpaste, ketchup, bath soap, laundry detergent, and many other such products. Thus, you may find that you prefer a brand because it was what your mother, used or, because your father believed in the manufacturer. Such items are often purchased throughout an individual's adult life without serious consideration of other brands. And this is the marketer's dream-to' get consumers who are highly brand loyal for many decades. Figure 4 illustrates for you, the concept of **intergenerational carryover** that you have been reading about.

Figure 4
The Concept of Intergenerational Carryover



10.5 FAMILY DECISION-MAKING

The decisions made by families involve large amounts of money and, it is necessary to understand as much as possible about this consumption unit. In this section we will examine how families make their purchase decision. How many members are involved in each decision? How are they involved? How does this influence work on the outcome? What is the best way to reach them?

As in other small groups, there is a well defined role structure in families as well, as you would find if you apply this concept to your own family. Thus, there is the **Instrumental**



role, usually taken by the head of the family for the achievement of specific goals. In addition, there is the **expressive role** undertaken by the wife and other family members to provide emotional support to the functioning of the family group. In addition to this goal-oriented behaviour there is also a set of purchase roles undertaken by family members.

10.6 FAMILY ROLE STRUCTURE AND BUYING BEHAVIOUR

In order to function as a cohesive unit, purchase roles or tasks are assigned and carried out by one or more family members. When trying to reach families, therefore, marketers need to realise that a set of purchase roles exist and come into play within the family. These roles can be identified and they determine how families make decisions.

The important buying roles include:

- 1) **The Instigator (Initiator):** This is the person who first suggests the idea of a product or service and initiates the purchase process, to begin with. The Initiator can even be a stranger. For example, you may see someone walking down the street, wearing a new style of sweater or shirt, and decide that you would like a similar one. Or, you may go over to a friend's house and notice a new stereo. Your friend (the instigator), turns it on to demonstrate the sound quality. The matter is then discussed at home with your family members (co-decision makers) and you decide whether the brand suits your requirements.
- 2) **The Influencer:** This is someone whose opinion is valued in the decision-making process. An influencer may be a friend, brother, sister, spouse, doctor or other influential person. All these persons have a direct or indirect influence on the final purchase decision.
- 3) **The Decider:** This is the person who makes the final decision on what brand or make to buy, after all aspects such as price, quality, servicing, have been thought over.
- 4) **The Purchaser (Buyer):** This is the individual who actually purchases the product, pays for it, takes it home or arranges for delivery. Very often, the purchaser and the decider are the same person, particularly for big value items.
- 5) **The Consumer:** He is the user of the goods or service.

Although these five buying roles are performed whenever a purchase is made, the individual performing each role may vary from purchase to purchase, and from family to family. The number and identity of the family members who fill these roles thus varies. In any given situation, the same member may take on several or all roles. Thus, in some cases, a single family member may independently assume a number of roles, in which case, it is really an individual decision within a family context. In other cases, a single role will be performed jointly by two or more family members. Multiple roles, too, may be performed by one of the family members.

For example, in the purchase of household cleaning products, a single person may perform all buying roles. In contrast, in purchasing cornflakes, the mother may act as the decider and buyer, her children as influencers and users and her husband as the evaluator. Thus, different persons may perform different tasks in the purchase process. In all cases, family roles are usually appointed in a way that ensures that they will be handled efficiently. Again, for example, the person who purchases a loaf of bread may not be the same one who prepares the toast or eats it. In fact, the purchaser may have been quite indifferent to the various brands or makes and purchased it only because one or more family members expressed preference.

Family Decision Stages

Just as there are different purchase roles, there are also a number of different steps in the decision to buy a product or service. And the amount of influence exerted by the husband, wife and children will vary, depending on the stage of the decision process. If you refer back to Figure 1 for what goes on inside the consumer's mind, you will find that the simplest of these is the five-stage decision-making model which includes:

- 1) Problem recognition
- 2) Search for information



- 3) Evaluation of alternatives
- 4) Final decision
- 5) Purchase

The role of husband, wife and children will differ across the stages. There can thus be shifts in the husband-wife decision-making from stage one of problem recognition, to stage two of search for information and finally, to the decision. Marketers should therefore examine husband-wife decision-making in terms of specific purchase factors.

Activity 1

Recall the purchase of a recent consumer durable product by your family and try to identify the role(s) played by respective members of your family.

Family Member	Role(s) played
1)
2)
3)
4)
5)

10.7 THE DYNAMICS OF FAMILY 'DECISION-MAKING: PURCHASE INFLUENCES AND ROLE SPECIALISATION

The assignment of roles to specific members of the family, that you saw in the previous section, has an impact on the overall buying behaviour. There is a sensitive interplay of roles and the different roles are reflected in the relative influence of husband and wife.

The extend and nature of husband-wife influence is an interesting factor to consider in family decisions, because it is likely to shift, depending on the specific stage of the decision-making process and the specific product features under consideration.

When a single person decides to eat out, the decision is based on only his or her own needs. But when that person gets married, the situation changes. A household forms and its members are confronted with various decisions that reflect the needs of the family unit. Who will pay the bills? Who will do the grocery shopping: Who will wash the clothes? Who will cook the dinner?

It has consistently been found that, most husband-wife influence studies classify consumer decisions as husband-dominated, wife-dominated, joint or syncratic and, autonomic or unilateral. This gives us four main decision type categories, namely:

Wife-dominant decisions: Wives have been found to dominate decisions on food purchase, groceries, household furniture and appliances.

Husband-dominant decisions: Husbands have been found to dominate the decisions on purchases such as automobiles and life insurance.

Syncratic decisions (Joint decisions): These are decisions in which husbands and wives share influence. Vacations, choice of schools for children, for example, are jointly decided.

Autonomic decisions (Unilateral decisions): Decisions of lesser importance that either the husband or wife make independently.

In a joint decision, several persons will be involved in performing a particular role in deciding what to buy (or not buy). Shared consumption and joint decision-making are characteristic of family living. As children grow older, their opinions about products also become important.

An interesting aspect of the role specialisation in the purchase decision process is that, in several families, particularly in traditional households, the husband takes on the roles that are external to the home such as arranging finances, buying the product and so on. The wife performs tasks internal to the home, as in grocery shopping, decorating and cleaning.



However, as women become more active, these distinctions decrease, even though they continue to hold for the majority of the Indian households.

Different family members assume the leadership role under different situations. Particularly for low cost items, decisions tend to be autonomic and each partner tends to take responsibility for particular types of purchases. More expensive items involve more joint decision-making. And compromises often have to be made on how a family's limited resources will be spent, since family members value different items differently.

All families face the problem of determining who gets what he or she wants, even when resisted by others. They get involved in power relationships and in dealing with the resolution of conflicts. When family members disagree about the goals, then decisions become more difficult to make. Decisions may thus be either **consensual** or **accommodative**. In the case of **consensual decisions**, everyone in the family may agree with the desired outcome. However, **accommodative decisions** become necessary in other cases, and conflict resolution may then need to be accomplished.

There are two ways that families generally use to resolve conflict. One is persuasion, where a family member is persuaded to make a decision. When persuasion is not used then bargaining is often resorted to. Bargaining involves creating conditions of give and take in which a family member is induced to make a decision that is favourable to other family members.

The element of power within the family is obtained from a variety of sources such as the following:

- 1) **Economic resources:** Here, the person making the greater economic contribution tends to have the most power.
- 2) **Cultural norms:** The prevailing culture may decide which partner has the most power. In many cultures the male is the dominant partner and decisions for several product purchases may be husband-dominant.
- 3) **Expert power:** One partner has more knowledge and more detailed information concerning the products purchase under consideration.
- 4) **Legitimate power:** This is the influence that results naturally from role expectations in the family.
- 5) **Bargaining power:** This involves inducing one member to make a decision favourable to another on the basis of give and take.
- 6) **Reward/referent power:** One spouse may reward the other by doing something the other will like.
- 7) **Emotional power:** The direction of the purchase decision maybe influenced by one partner by making use of non-verbal emotional pressure on the other.

Activity 2

Prepare a list of about 2 to 3 durable products and 7 to 8 non-durable products (at different levels of price) consumed by your family. In case of each product try to identify the type of decision that led to the choice.

List of Products	Type of decisions
1) Groceries	Wife-dominated
2) Newspaper	Husband-dominated
3)
4)
5)
6)
7)
8)
9)
10)



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10.8 THE INFLUENCE OF CHILDREN

Another influence operating on family purchase behaviour is the influence of children on the budget allocation and purchases and consumption. The birth of a child creates a demand for a wide variety of products a couple never needed or considered purchasing previously. In addition, children influence the purchase of many products both directly and indirectly. Thus in a child-centred culture such as exists in Indian society, children tend to dramatically affect family expenditures. When children are part of a family, their influence may or may not be felt. However, it is found that the child centredness of mothers may increase their receptivity to the child.

As soon as children develop the basic skills to communicate they start attempting to influence the family decisions. Older children participate more directly in the decision processes. While children generally have no say in how much to spend (which essentially remains a parental prerogative) they influence virtually all major dimensions of the decision-making exercise. They may take up buying roles of initiators and influencers in case of products the use of which they share with others in the family. Examples could be the choice of breakfast cereal, brand of toothpaste and other toiletries. As they grow older, they may take a far greater degree of leadership for particular purchases, for example choice of amusement, and restaurants, and sometimes even vacations. In products which are for their exclusive use, the influence is obviously much greater. The role of children, however, varies across product categories and even across family environments. As families differ in their internal culture, the discretion that is allowed to children may differ across families and would affect the degree of influence children can exert on purchase decision. In addition, children are also influenced by their families through the socialisation process. In the context of consumer behaviour the parent-child relationship can be seen as an influence versus yield situation. Children, acting as initiators or influencers seek to influence parents make a particular product/brand decision (to yield). The response of the parent may be modified by enabling condition, or a differing order of expenditure priorities. It has been found that attempts on the part of children to influence purchase decisions of parents tend to decline as they grow up.

10.9 THE FAMILY LIFE CYCLE CONCEPT

Just as individuals and product types go through a life cycle, families also have life cycles. Most people go through several phases in their lives. The term family life cycle refers to the series of life stages through which individuals proceed over time. It describes, in other words, the process of family formation and dissolution. Thus, a family may begin as a married couple and move through a series of stages in which young children are born, grow older and move out and, finally, the couple grows old. Each life cycle stage differs from the previous stages in terms of family structure, financial position, consumption patterns, and product needs and preferences.

The family Life Cycle Stages

The life cycle of families has been conceptualised as a progression involving several stages:

1) The Bachelor Stage (Young and single)

In the bachelor stage of the life cycle, income is low relative to future earnings, since most bachelors are just beginning their careers. However, there are few financial burdens. They therefore have relatively high discretionary incomes. They tend to spend substantial amounts on personal consumption items, food, clothing, transportation, certain luxury goods entertainment, vacations, and possibly even a car. A few basic furniture items may be acquired, as well as some kitchen equipment. However these purchases tend to be on a non-systematic basis and also minimal, because possessions restrict their freedom of movement.

This market segment also offers marketers opportunities in terms of single serving packaging for a wide variety of foods. Overall, there is more individuality in purchasing at this stage.

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1. Bachelor stage: young single people



2. Young married couples with no children



3. Full nest 1: Young married couples with children



4. Full nest 2: Old married couples with dependent children



5. Empty nest: Older married couples with no children living with them



6. Older single people still working or retired

2) **The Newly Married Couples (Young, no children)**

With marriage, the requirements and resources change. Household requirements increase. In addition, in some cases, both partners may be working. This stage therefore represents a high expenditure period. Purchases include durable goods such as refrigerators and other appliances, inexpensive durable furniture, home entertainment items such as TV sets. These items often take priority over other purchases.

3) **Full Nest 1 (Young, married, with child)**

The arrival of a child creates major changes. Some wives may stop working and they suffer a reduction in income. The financial resources thus change significantly. Child rearing and educational responsibilities increase. Money is now directed to baby furniture, toys, chest rubs, vitamins, baby foods and baby medicines. While more shopping is done, the family also faces more medical bills. This is also the period that they become dissatisfied with their income and with their inability to accumulate earnings.

4) **Full Nest 2 (Older, married, with children)**

The family's financial position starts to improve because of career progress and also because many wives return to work. They present an active market for a wide variety of food products, bicycles, music lessons, magazines and also educational services as children are growing up.

5) **Full Nest 3 (Older, married, with dependent children)**

Income is high for the family at this stage. However, they now represent experienced buyers and tend to be less interested in new product purchases. Expenditures continue to be high due to replacement buying in the later phases of the stage.

6) **Empty Nest (Older, married, with no children living with them)**

With no children living at home, the financial position stabilises. Savings accumulate. There may be a resurgence in self-education. Hobbies also become an important source of satisfaction. More is spent on luxury appliances, magazines, and health products. Major expenditures are on home ownership, home improvements and also on medical care.



7) Solitary Survivor (Older, single, retired people)

Simple, often more economical lifestyle. A lower income due to retirement may be a restrictive factor. Health care and other services become important.

The stages at which families find themselves thus affect the nature of the goods and services required, their wants and consumption patterns, as well as the volume of consumption on specific products. At each stage there are unique needs, different patterns of object accumulation, and different demands that are placed on the family.

It would seem, therefore, that the family life cycle is a better predictor of consumption patterns than age. For example, it is well known that major furniture items are bought at or shortly after marriage, regardless of age. Conversely, furniture purchases tend to be put off in favour of baby furniture and medical expenses at the time and stage required.

The family life cycle stages are therefore used along with age in analysing and segmenting markets. Since it combines incomes, marital status, social perceptions, and family needs into one measure, richer picture of family is obtained than is possible on any single variable. Family life cycle analysis thus permits marketers to segment families into subgroups that are relatively homogeneous in terms of age, interests, needs and disposable income. Segmentation by stage in the family life cycle also permits marketers to develop products and services to meet the specific needs of families at each stage, and to design promotional strategies for their specific target audiences.

You will find in Table 1 the differences in the consumption patterns and characteristics of families in the various family life cycle stages. As you can see, the presence or absence of children to a large extent dictates the families activities and much of a family's disposable income gets spent in fulfilling children's needs.

The traditional view of the family life cycle has, however, been criticised for failing to recognise that a single family unit may not exist throughout the life of an individual. Families may be created by second marriages, and these families may involve children from prior marriages. Also, the traditional model ignores the existence of single parent households. The modern family life cycle, which takes into accounts, the existence of working women, is a more complex and more useful model than the traditional model.

The modern family life cycle accounts for women in the work force and dual income families. The pace of life is faster and there is less time for children and for one another. As a result the two income households is more likely to spend more on time saving and

Table 1
Consumption Patterns of Families in Life Cycle Stages

Stage	Consumption Patterns
1) Young single	Outdoor sporting goods, sports, cars fashion clothing, entertainment and recreation services
2) Young married with no children	Recreation and relaxation, insurance, home furnishings, travel, home appliances, high purchase rate of durables
3) Young married with children	Baby food, clothing, and furniture: starter housing, insurance, washers-dryers, medical services/supplies for children, toys for children
4) Middle-aged with children at home	Children's lessons (piano, dance, etc.) large food purchases (respond to bulk buying deals), dental care, higher-priced furniture, autos, and housing, fast-food restaurants
5) With no children at home	Luxury products, travel, restaurants, condominiums; recreation, make gifts and contribution, high discretionary incomes, solid financial position.



6)	Older (married or single)	Health care, home security, specialized housing, specialized food products, recreation geared to the retired, generally cash poor.
7)	Divorced	Money-saving products, frozen foods, rental housing, child care, time-saving appliances and foods, cash poor.

convenience goods. Women also appear to retain the primary responsibility for housekeeping though husbands appear to help more than in the past. Convenience products ranging from paper plates automatic appliances and other convenience foods appeal to the working women segment. There is also more sharing of responsibilities than in single income households.

In conclusion, while the family life cycle concept segments families on the basis of demographic variables, it still has the disadvantage that it ignores the psychological variables. It is therefore used to supplement the concept of lifestyle which emphasises behavioural dispositions and attitudes. It is a good idea to remember, moreover, that while the family life cycle is an important factor in controlling consumption patterns, there are other variables such as available income, education, occupation, whose effects govern spending on such items as food, clothing, housing and even cars, and which control how consumers spend their money. Family life cycle is also related to the use of leisure time, family expenditure patterns for services and other consumer activities.

Activity 3

Select at least 10 known families in your social world and identify the stage at which they are in the family life cycle description. Also list some of the products (a) they have stopped buying (b) they are going to buy for the first time.

Family Code	Stage of F.L.C.	Products stopped buying	New products going to buy
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10.10 IMPLICATIONS OF FAMILY DECISION-MAKING FOR MARKETING STRATEGY

Once it is recognised that the same individual may not perform all the purchase consumption tasks, it becomes clear that the development of a successful marketing mix depends on answers to questions such as:

- 1) Is the product likely to be purchased for joint or family use?
- 2) Is the product likely to be purchased with individual or family funds?
- 3) Is the product so expensive that the purchase involves a trade-off in purchasing other products for the family?
- 4) Are family members likely to disagree about the product?



- 5) Is the product likely to be used by more than one family member? If so, are product modifications necessary to accommodate different persons?
- 6) Which family members will influence the purchase and what media and messages should be used to appeal to each?
- 7) Are particular stores preferred by various family members or families in the target market?

Forward-thinking companies can anticipate and take advantages of trends that are likely in the future.

10.11 SUMMARY

The family has an institutionalised position in the larger society and provides the primary setting for consumer socialisation, whereby children learn consumer tastes, preferences and shopping styles. When trying to reach families marketers should therefore realise that, family influence is an important factor in developing marketing strategy.

Parents play an important role in consumer socialisation, especially in providing information on the rational aspects of consumption. Their impact varies across types of product and across the stage of the decision process.

A set of buying roles also exist within the family. Different roles can be identified such as initiators, influencers, gatekeepers, deciders, buyers and users. The role of the member is shaped partially by cultural and social determinants, including the mass culture, subcultural influences, social class and reference groups.

The relative importance of members may vary according to the kind of product and service under consideration, its cost and other variables. Decisions within the family can thus be classified into four categories namely, wife-dominant, husband-dominant, syncratic and autonomic. These categories refer to the extent to which the husband and wife act independently versus together in making purchases. And for certain type of products or services the presence of children as well as their request can influence the purchase decisions.

The family also has a life cycle that determines its needs and expenditure patterns at different points in its development. The family life cycle includes nine stages which describe changes in the family's buying and behaviour patterns across time. This has implications for segmenting families into various markets.

10.12 KEYWORDS

Household: A group of people living under one roof.

Nuclear Family: Consists of husband, wife and offspring.

Extended Family: Consists of the nuclear family plus the husband and/or wife's mother, father and/or other relative.

Family Life Cycle: The idea that families move through a series of stages in a developmental fashion.

Instrumental Role: Within a group, the instrumental role is taken by the person who deals with the problem of getting the group to achieve certain goals and complete certain tasks.

Expressive Role: A role found in many groups that involves a person helping to maintain and provide emotional support for its members.

Purchase Roles: include the various roles in the buying and using of products by family members or industrial 'buying groups.

Syncratic decision: Important decisions in which husband and wife participate jointly.

Autonomic decisions: Decisions of lesser importance that either the husband or wife may make independently. How do consumption patterns change as people move through the stages of the family life cycle? Now apply this to yourself.



Family Decision Stages: The steps in the decision process used by a family to purchase products or services.

Power Sources: Factors that can increase the personal power of a person in a relationship such as economic resources, cultural and subcultural values and the degree of dependence in a relationship.

Consumer Socialisation: Processes by which young people acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the market place.

Socialising Agents: Individuals directly involved with a consumer, who have influence because of their frequency of contact with the consumer, importance to the consumer or control over rewards and punishments given to the consumer.

10.13 SELF-ASSESSMENT TEST

- 1) Differentiate between the terms household and family.
- 2) Illustrate how the process of a complex buying decision might operate for (a) a college student who wants to buy a home computer (b) for you.
- 3) What purchase decision process would occur for a family in the purchase of furniture? Think of your own family. Which individuals in your family have the roles of gatekeeper, influencer, decider, buyer, and user? To what extent do these roles change across different product categories?

10.14 FURTHER READINGS

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