

Relative Influence of Couples in Household Purchase Decision in Selected Households in Anambra State Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyze which spouse has the greatest influence on household purchases, as well as to observe, whenever purchase conflicts arise, the influence tactics employed and whether these tactics have a relationship with socio-demographic characteristics. Information was obtained through the use of questionnaires applied to co-habiting couples. A convenience sampling (“snowball” method) was carried. Factor Analysis of Principal Components (FAPC), t-test for independent samples and variance analysis were employed. Results show an unmistakable tendency towards joint decisions in the couple, with women playing the specialized role of grocery buyer. Gender differences are also confirmed in the use of influence tactics. These results may be of interest to both firms and public institutions. To this effect, organizations decision makers should consider women in policy making as pertinent decision makers

KEYWORDS: Evaluates Brands, Influencer, Socio-Demographic Characteristics, Information Search, Household Decisions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Family purchase decision has attracted remarkable research interest. The focus of attention has been on the role of the husband and wife in the purchase decision-making process of the family. This is a remarkable shift of interest in consumer behaviour research – a shift from the individual consumer to the family as a key purchase decision and consumption unit. The family is rightly viewed as a far larger and more attractive segment with higher sales potential for marketers’ products compared to the single individual consumer. Hence, information about this area of interest will help in understanding behaviour of the family with regard to choice and purchase of its products and services.

Many studies have been done, from the distant past to the present time, on the influence or role of husband and wife in the purchase decision of many household products and services (Davis and

Rigaux 1974; Bonfield, 1978; Ekasasi, 2005; Barles-Arizon, Fraj-Andres & Martinez-Salinas, 2013; Opara & Uboegbulam, 2015). The decisions to purchase certain major household products/services are typically made in the context of the family. The decision appears to be vested more on spouses such that they bring their respective influence to bear on the purchase decision situations.

The influence or dominance of the spouses in the purchase decision is felt whenever any of the two is involved in the purchasing decision-making roles/stages as the initiator, information-gatherer, influencer, and/or decider in a given purchase situation. This influence is more obvious, not in the purchase of daily or routine low-unit-low-cost household product needs of the family, but in the purchase of major household products and services classified under extended and limited problem-solving situations. In which case, the consumer is faced with a costly product, unfamiliar product brand, needs to collect fresh information, evaluates brands, and is not yet decided on the evaluative criteria to be used to take the decision. Davis & Rigaux (1974) study however, reduced the stages to only problem recognition (initiator), information search (information-gatherer) and final decision (decider).

Objectives of the Study

1. Determine the relative influence of the husbands and wives in identifying need for a product for the family.
2. Determine the relative influence of each spouse in the search for information for the purchase of identified household products.

Scope of the Study

The products/services to be considered in this study are such products/services that belong to extended problem-solving situation. Products and services in this category are costly product and unfamiliar product brand on which the consumer needs to collect fresh information, evaluate brands. Six of such products/services that are considered relevant to the Igbo environment namely family car, sitting room sofa, television, refrigerator, children schooling and land property are investigated in this study. The socio-demographic variables (or antecedents) that impact on the influence of the spouses that are examined in this study are the age, education level, occupation, personal income, and tradition.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Resource, according to Mordi (2012), is anything including money, information, product, services, status and love that either of the spouse can give to the other to satisfy their material and psychological or emotional needs.

In the process of making household decisions in the family, the presence or lack of resources account for the dominance of either of the spouses. The lack of resources, not only could it constrain or create barrier to purchase of preferred needs, but also will more likely diminish the zeal and extent of involvement in decision-making. The resources theory proposed that the husband or wife that brings more resources, e.g. income, occupational prestige, educational attainment into the household should be more dominant or powerful than the other during decision-making process. This is on the assumption that household decision-making is a win-or-lose co-operative game between the husband and the wife; there is a common pool; the common pool is largely controlled by either the husband or the wife depending on the amount of contribution by him/her and; the husband or wife gains the control lost by the other member.

Blood and Wolfe (1960) argued that allocation of tasks and apportionment of power between the spouses is completely determined within the family based on the relative resource that each contributes to the household. Relative contribution theory therefore, tries to establish that the influence of each spouse in purchase decision is directly dependent on the spouse's contribution. Thus, under this situation and given this scenario, the theory is suggesting that husband who earns more than the wife and takes on the role of the family head by virtue of resources he brings in is more likely to exert greater influence and, thus controls the household decisions. His perceived influence within the family cannot be because he is a man by nature or being the husband by right, but because of his more and easier access to resources (e.g., education, occupation and financial income) in the society.

It follows that the wife who works outside the home and earns her own income will gain power, obtain control in the family and so, have more say too in the household purchase decision. Angel-Urdinola and Wodon (2010) findings in a study conducted in Nigeria showed that women gain substantial power in decision-making when they are the main contributor of family income. Further corroborating this position is Lakshmi and Murugan (2008) who asserted that increase in education and income earning status of wives in the modern times has brought about changes in purchase decision pattern of the household that wives are now more involved than ever before.

Uzulens (2012), however, has argued in the contrary about woman's increased influence relative to her higher income contribution. He asserted that superior contribution by the wife to family income does not ensure her dominance but rather could engender a more equalitarian relationship and joint decision-making between her and the husband. This is supported by findings of the study by Tichenor (1999, cited in Hsiao-Li, 2010) that showed no evidence suggesting that wife's attainment of higher education and higher occupational status and income give her higher influence in family purchase decision making than the husband.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research approaches adopted for this study were both qualitative and quantitative techniques. To cover the study area effectively, The research design used in this study is the descriptive survey conducted with structured questionnaires for the major study population and anchored with semi-structured interviews for the secondary population and other relevant secondary data. The research design used in this study is the descriptive survey. The study covered all the Igbo households of married couples in Anambra-South Senatorial Zone of Anambra State of Nigeria.

The sample size of 400 participants from 200 households, 8 participants (that is 4 households - four husbands, four wives) was excluded because their questionnaires were not properly completed. Thus, responses from 392 participants comprising 196 households were used for the study. The survey had 98% response rate. Independent samples t-test statistic research tool was used for the study.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section deals with the analysis of questionnaires collected and presented in the following:

The results presented in this chapter include the descriptive statistics of the respondents, spousal influence on need recognition, spousal influence on information search, spousal influence on final purchase decision and, impact of socio-demographic variables on spousal influence on purchase decision. Out of the 400 participants from 200 households, 8 participants (that is 4 households - four husbands, four wives) were excluded because their questionnaires were not properly completed. Thus, responses from 392 participants comprising 196 households were used for the study. The survey had 98% response rate.

Table 1: Result of t-test for Equality of Means for test of hypothesis one

Products	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Children Schooling	.403	383.987	.687	Not Significant
Sitting room sofa	8.804	381.694	.000	Significant
Television	7.569	377.756	.000	Significant
Refrigerator	-6.534	380.255	.000	Significant
Family car/motorcycle	13.142	343.562	.000	Significant
Land property	15.572	315.093	.000	Significant

T-test hypothesis testing at 5% level of significance showed that the p.value is less than 0.05 for sitting room sofa, television, refrigerator, family car/motorcycle and land property but greater than 0.05 for children schooling. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis for sitting room sofa, television, refrigerator, family car/motorcycle and land property but, do not reject the null hypothesis for children schooling in the identifying need stage. Decision: Overall, we accept the alternate hypothesis: There is significant difference between the influence of husband and wife in identifying need for a product for the family.

Table 20: Result of t-test for Equality of Means for test of hypothesis two

Product	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Children Schooling	2.440	383.053	.015	Significant
Sitting room sofa	7.550	373.215	.000	Significant
Television	12.904	367.103	.000	Significant
Refrigerator	1.505	373.588	.133	Not Significant
Family car/motorcycle	14.777	358.389	.000	Significant
Land property	16.688	329.790	.000	Significant

T-test hypothesis testing at 5% level of significance showed that the p.value is less than 0.05 for children schooling, sitting room sofa, television, family car/motorcycle and land property, but greater than 0.05 for refrigerator. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis for children schooling, sitting room sofa, television, family car/motorcycle and land property but, do not reject the null hypothesis for refrigerator in the search for information stage. Decision: Overall, we accept the alternate hypothesis: There is significant difference between the involvements of each of the spouses in the search for information on the product to purchase for household.

5. Summary of Findings, Implication and Conclusion

The result showed that at need identification stage of household purchase decision, sitting room sofa, television, family car/motorcycle and land property are significantly husband dominant while refrigerator is significantly wife dominant, whereas spouses have high influence joint decision that is not statistically significant on children schooling. The result also showed that at information search stage, spouses have significant low influence joint decision on children schooling and sitting room sofa, while television, family car/motorcycle and land property are significantly husband dominant. However, refrigerator is low influence joint decision but not significant. The implication is that husband dominant society, while occupation, personal income and age of the spouses are the major influencer of their involvement in the family purchase decision-making

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