

The Effect of Reverse Intergenerational Influence on purchase and brand equity of durable goods

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Abstract- *The Intergenerational Influence (IGI) is the transmission of beliefs, perceptions, cognition, attitudes and behaviors from one generation to another. It is a fundamental mechanism by which culture is sustained over time. Its key elements are embedded within socialization theory. Reverse IGI indicates the transmission of beliefs and perception from child to parent. In this study the influences of children on their parent's decision making for buying durable goods such as cars, mobile phones, laptops, air conditioners, and televisions have been studied. Parents are of age group between 45 and above. The questionnaire was designed and given to 50 respondents for the pilot study. Based upon the findings of the pilot study, the questionnaire was finalized and has been distributed to respondents in Mumbai area. In Preliminary results of a pilot study, respondents were asked to report on a variety of product category of durable goods and their brands. To test for (reverse) IGI, it is investigated if one party's brand image perceptions, brand consideration, brand preference and loyalty (behavioral and attitudinal) have a significant influence on the other party's brand awareness, image, consideration, preference and loyalty. In addition to these main effects, gender (of the child) and family communication patterns are expected to influence (reverse) IGI.*

Key words- *Intergenerational Influence; socialization theory; Reverse Intergenerational Influence; brand equity; durable goods*

1. INTRODUCTION

Intergenerational influence (IGI) is the transmission of cognitions, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes and behaviors from one generation to another. IGI can be defined as the influence of one generation on another in terms of the transfer of skills, attitudes, preferences, values, and behaviors. The IGI in *consumer behavior* can be defined as the influence of one family generation on another in terms of acquiring skills, attitudes, preferences, values, and behaviors related to the *marketplace* (Heckler et. al 1989; Childers and Rao 1992). Given this, IGI can involve the within-family intergenerational transfer of knowledge with regard to a range of consumer behaviors such as information search, brand, product and store selection, use of evaluative criteria, and receptivity to marketing mix variables. Examples of IGI can include parents influencing their adult children in their life insurance choices, and adult children influencing their parents' choice in music. IGI, which involves intra family interaction and communication, is likely to influence a host of decisions including product class preference, brand loyalty, and deal proneness. While IGI can span multiple generations and can involve numerous members of a family. Research is concerned only with IGI, or the influence between two members of a given family. Specifying the particular unit of analysis under consideration improves the validity of our contracts. Although differences between different types of dyads (e.g., mother-daughter; father-son, etc.) may result in some variability regarding the strength of

proposed relationships, Research also acknowledges that in addition to these structural differences, varying individual differences, such as gender, age, education and income, can have a differential impact on IGI. Reverse IGI can include adult children influencing their parent's decision making for certain range of products as well as brands.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Most researchers have assumed that intergenerational Influences flow from parent to child. However, some evidence exists that this assumption cannot be made in every situation; in some situations the child acts as the influencer, while the parent is the influenced (Polachek and Polachek, 1989; Foxman et al, 1989, Ekstrom, Tansuhaj and Foxman, 1987). Swinyard and Sim (1987) found that the influence of a child varies across product types, stages in the decision and age of the child. Children's influence on their parents can occur in several ways. The thesis written by Karlijn van Oorschot in 2008 says, when reciprocal socialization occurs, it means that parents actually learn and internalize new values, skills and roles, taught by their children (Ekstrom et al., 1987). Parents can be considered to be one of the influences within the socialization process. When interpreting reverse IGI as a form of reciprocal socialization, it is meant that parents internalize new values, skills, preferences and roles as taught by their children. Another form of a child's

influence on parents is 'yielding'. 'Yielding' means that a parent simply complies with a child's wishes or requests, without internalization of values, skills or preferences (Ekstrom et al, 1987). Berey and Pollay(1968)expected a child's assertiveness to lead to more yielding by the mother. Furthermore, it was expected that more child-centered the mother was, the more likely it was for yielding to occur. As cited by Moore-Shay and Lutz, 1977, three general processes by which parents influence the development of their children's brand preferences, decision strategies and marketplace beliefs. There are four general learning mechanisms as discussed by Sheth and Mittal (2004). The first learning mechanism discussed is cognitive learning. In case of Cognitive learning is used in the reverse IGI context, children directly communicate to their parents. Especially in the context of technological complex and innovative products. Children influence their parents by directly communicating to them, while informing, advising or persuading them. Another learning mechanism by which parents might learn from their children is by means of experiential learning or conditioning mechanism. Sheth and Mittal (2004) distinguish between classical conditioning and instrumental conditioning. If classical conditioning would occur in the context of Reverse IGI, it would mean that a parent learns an association between two stimuli because they constantly appear as pair. This would mean that, when a mother always sees her daughter smiling and singing when she uses a specific product/service, with positive feelings of happiness. This form of conditioning might very well be applicable to reverse IGI. Instrumental conditioning in the context of reverse IGI would mean that a mother learns to respond in a certain way because it is rewarding or avoids punishment. It is expected that it is more applicable to the context of parental influence on offspring than in context of reverse IGI, as it is more common for parents to use rewards/punishments for their children than the other way round. However, instrumental conditioning could occur when parents see that their children are rewarded by specific behaviors. However, it is questionable how often this is really seen by parents. Again, an open family structure is very important then. The fourth learning mechanism presented by Sheth and Mittal(2004) is modeling, where people learn from observing others. The authors cite a study by Miller and Dollard in which four classes of people are identified who are likely to be imitated by others. These four groups of people are persons superior 1) in age-grade 2) in social status 3) in intelligent ranking 4) technicians in any field. The first two criteria are not applicable to the context of reverse IGI. : Children are not older or have a higher social status. The third and fourth groups might apply to children, when children have obtained higher or more specialized education than parents. In these cases, when children are superior in intelligence ranking and/or superior technicians in any field, parents might learn from their children by

observing them and even imitating them (Sheth and Mittal, 2004).

2.1 Factors influencing reverse IGI

Reversed Inter generational Influences vary across parent-child dyads, depending on several factors. These factors are as follows:

2.1.1 Family communication Patterns

A first factor influencing the existence and strength of reverse IGI Family Communication Patterns. These communication patterns are found to be based on two uncorrelated dimensions, being socio-orientation and concept-orientation (Moschis, 1985; Carlson, Grossbart and Walsch, 1990; Ekstrom et al., 1987). Moschis (1985) describes socio-orientation as the degree to which communication is designed to produce deference towards parents and to foster harmony at home. Carlson et al. (1990) extend this description to include the degree to which parents monitor and control their children. A socio-oriented family, thus, is a family in which children are monitored and controlled by parents and where harmony should be kept rather than discussions should take place. Concept orientation reflects the degree to which parents 'encourage children to develop their own skills and competence as consumers' (Carlson et al, 1990, p. 28). Concept-oriented families encourage children to develop their own competencies, preferences and opinions. Based on these two dimensions, four family-communication patterns exist (Moschis, 1985; Carlson et al., 1990, Ekstrom et al., 1987). Carlson et al. (1990) find that a child's influence on the purchase decision and a child's participation in the decision making process is higher in concept-oriented families than in socio-oriented families. A reason for this can be that children in a socio-oriented communication environment are less likely to express their own ideas and discuss these with their parents than children in a concept-oriented environment (who are encouraged to develop their own opinion and ideas).

2.1.2 Family Structure

Family structure can be described in two different ways. First of all, a distinction can be made between single and two-parent families. Ekstrom et al. (1987) expect that a child in a single-parent family has more influence on purchase decisions than a child in a two-parent family. This difference can be explained in several ways. The parent in a single parent family might suffer from task overload. The child might make up for the lack of decision input of a second parent in the family (Glasser and Navarre, 1965; as cited by Ekstrom et al, 1987). Another reason might be that decisions tasks are reallocated in families which have only one parent as a decision maker (Ekstrom et al, 1987) Second, a sex-role egalitarian and a traditional family can be distinguished. Sex-role egalitarian families are families in which tasks are divided among family members, while tasks are likely to be delegated in traditional families (Heffring, 1980, as cited by Ekstrom et

al., 1987). Ekstrom et al. (1987) expect that decision influence on purchase decisions is stronger for children in sex-role egalitarian families than for children in a traditional family. In *Intergenerational Product Transfer, The Advertising Factor* by *Barbara Olsen*, over the course of the last 60 to 100 years, certain product categories and brands have become firmly woven into our family histories and the tapestry of everyday life. In this paper, Olsen brings abroad perspective to the investigation of intergenerational transfer of favored brands through the inclusion of grandparent, as well as parent and child generations.

2.1.3 Child's individual characteristics

Foxman et al. (1989) investigated the role of adolescents in family purchasing. They investigated if adolescents' personal resources play a role in determining reverse IGI. Based on resource theory, it was expected that a child's relative influence in family purchasing would increase as the child's personal resources are greater. Personal resources can include income contribution, employment status, grades and only-child status. This expectation was generally met. Ekstrom et al. (1987) propose the same relationship, being that a child's relative influence in family decision making is positively related to the child's personal resources.

2.1.4 Socio-economic characteristics

In research paper written by Ms. Elizabeth Moore, *Intergenerational research on political and social behavior* shows that many forms of influence are transmitted from parents to their children, including political affiliation, religious values, achievement orientation, and gender and racial attitudes. This determinant of reverse IGI is very much related to the factor just discussed. Socio-economic characteristics are for example income, social class and education. Moschis and Moore (1979; as cited by Ekstrom et al.) found that children with a higher economic status have more opportunities for economic consumption. Having more opportunities for economic consumption also means that there are more opportunities for children to influence family consumption (Ekstrom et al., 1987). Therefore, it is expected that children in families with high socio-economic status exert more influence on family consumption than children with low socio-economic status. (Ekstrom et al., 1987).

2.1.5 Product knowledge and importance

Research paper on *Brands as Resources in Intergenerational Cultural Transfer* by Sandy Bulmer, Massey University, New Zealand, Margo Buchanan-Oliver, University of Auckland, New Zealand talks about socialization during infancy and childhood is understood to be the most intense period of cultural learning (Giddens 2001) when families teach their children the information, codes, skills, attitudes, conceptions, beliefs, systems and values that constitute cultural knowledge. In *Intergenerational Product Transfer, The Advertising Factor* by *Barbara Olsen*, over the course of the last 60 to 100

years, certain product categories and brands have become firmly woven into our family histories and the tapestry of everyday life. According to Bourdieu's (1986) concept of cultural capital, a process of domestic education is responsible for the level of cultural knowledge acquired by children, although Bourdieu "does not report how exactly cultural knowledge is transmitted within the families" (Becker 2010, p.19). Some parental activities that impact on children's cultural knowledge have been identified by education researchers, such as telling stories and reading books to children, playing cards and board games with them, doing jigsaw puzzles, visiting zoos, libraries and museums (Becker 2010). Children's influence on parents and family consumption is expected to vary across products. Foxman et al. (1989) and Ekstrom et al. (1987) expected children's influence in family decision making to be strongest for products the child considered important and knew a lot about. The results with respect to this expectation were mixed. The results with respect to product importance were significant, but in the opposed direction as expected. It was found that children have significantly less influence on product purchase decisions for products they considered important rather than unimportant (Foxman et al., 1989). A possible explanation can be found in the research method. Children indicated to have a similar influence for both products which they considered to be important/ unimportant. However, parents indicated a greater influence for those products, which their children had indicated to find unimportant. The results with respect to product knowledge were in the expected direction. When children have more expertise, experience and knowledge of the product, they are likely to become more involved and influential in the decision process. Children indicated to exert more influence for purchases of products they knew a lot about. However, the results were not statistically significant (Foxman et al., 1989; Ekstrom et al 1987). Literature and research results about which exact product categories are susceptible to reverse IGI are lacking. Most researchers investigate reverse IGI in general, e.g. whether adolescents made purchase or store suggestions in general rather than for one product category. Expectations are communicated by for example Moore et al. (2002) that reverse IGI is especially pronounced for innovative or technologically new products. However evidence for this is lacking. Swinyard and Sim (1987) found that the reverse intergenerational influences are strongest for products in which the child has apparent self-interest

2.2 Overview of past research on manifestations of (reverse) IGI

Past research has shown that similarities exist between parents and offspring which are greater than when parents and adolescents would have been randomly paired. Past research has found different areas in which these similarities exist. First of all, an IG effect has been found

to be at work for brand preferences. Mandrik et al (2005) hypothesized that intergenerational similarity because of an IG effect (rather than chance) occurred for (amongst others) brand preferences. This specific construct was chosen because of its importance to the consumer experience. The results indicate that an IG effect is indeed at work for this construct. Rao, Childers and Dutta (1991; as cited by Childers and Rao, 1992), Moore et al. (2002) and Moore-Shay and Lutz (1988) also found an IG effect for brand preferences. Price/ value consciousness and price sensitivity are two other constructs which have been indicated to be a possible manifestation of intergenerational influences, by Rao, Childers and Dutta (1991; as cited by Childers and Rao, 1992) and Childers and Rao (1992). Mandrik et al. (2005) provide additional support for an IG effect with respect to price/ value consciousness. Third, an IG effect is at work for price-quality schema and brand-name-quality, as indicated by the results of Mandrik et al (2005). For example, if parents associate a high price or specific brand name with high quality, the child might adopt a similar belief/ schema. Rao, Childers and Dutta (1991; as cited by Childers and Rao, 1992) also indicated price-quality schema as a possible manifestation of IGI. Moore-Shay and Lutz (1988) found that mothers and daughters showed less agreement on market place beliefs than on choice rules and shopping strategies. A significant intergenerational agreement was found for the belief that a positive price-quality 22 relationship exists, the usefulness of market conveyed information and the perceived value obtained with private label and sale merchandise. Mothers and Daughters have shown more agreement on choice rules and shopping strategies than on marketplace beliefs (Moore-Shay and Lutz, 1988). Thus, a fourth manifestation of IGI is the adoption of choice rules. It was found that mothers and daughters showed the same propensity to purchase items on sale, similar levels and patterns of brand loyalty and lack of reliance on the advice of others. This brings forward another subject of (reverse) IGI, i.e. loyalty. Childers and Rao (1992) indicated that IGI can be manifested in both store and brand loyalty. The authors themselves measure the IG transfer from parents to off spring of brand loyalties. They find that offspring from an extended family is more likely to purchase the same brand as their parents for privately consumed products than offspring in a nuclear family. Rao, Childers and Dutta (1991; as cited by Childers and Rao, 1992) also found an IG effect for brand loyalty. Moore et al. (2002) investigate intergenerational influences as a source of brand equity. First, IGI effects on product non-use are examined followed by IG impacts on brand awareness, consideration/choice sets and brand preferences. Overall, it was found that IG influences indeed have an influence on the (non-)usage, awareness, choice set and preferences of some, but not all, products. Two additional types of adolescent influence on parents which are found to be

significant are product choice and general influence in the family decision making process (Foxman et al., 1989). This general influence was measured using communication and socialization oriented items. Adolescents were found to influence both factors significantly. Ekstrom et al. (1987) also propose child's influence in the overall family decisions process. Furthermore, it is proposed that children act as real socialization agents for their parents, by teaching them consumer skills and knowledge. As can be seen from the discussion above, (reverse) IG effects can be manifested in many different ways. However, most research has tested for IG effects on product/ 23 brand preference, product/ brand choice or loyalty (e.g. Feltham, 1998; Heckler et al., 1989; Mandrik et al. 2005; Childers and Rao, 1992; Rao et al, 1991). These concepts are all very much related to one general construct: brand equity. This construct is discussed in more detail in the following section.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To study impact of reverse IGI in various products of durable goods

Hypothesis:

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying durable goods.

H1: The adult child influences their parents in buying durable goods.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The objective of the paper is to study the Effect of Reverse Intergenerational Influence on purchase and brand equity of durable goods. For this study secondary research has been done such as reviewing available literature and also qualitative approach has been used by informal talks with adult children. Primary data has been collected by interviewing parents of adult children in Mumbai and also asked to them to fill questionnaires.

4.1 Tools of Data Collection

4.1.1 Secondary Data: Various Marketing Journals, Research Journals and Research websites, E-Journals were used to gather Secondary data on research topic.

4.1.2 Primary Data: Questionnaire was designed to understand buying pattern and Influence of adult children on Decision Making process of parents in buying durable goods.

4.1.3 Sample Size: In total 130 respondents are taken and all of them are students of PGDM and MMS of SIES College of Management Studies. A pilot study was conducted and factor analysis was done to reduce the statements. Final data collection was done using convenience sampling and analysis was done using SPSS.

4.1.4 Analysis of Data: Basic statically tests applied on SPSS.

5. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

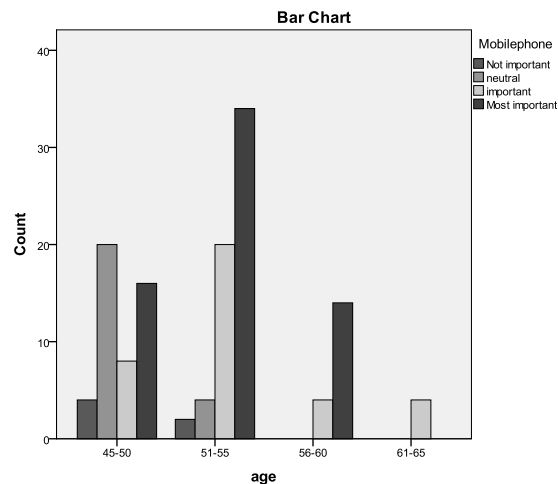
H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying mobile phones.
H1: The adult child influences their parents in buying mobile phones.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mobilephone	130	2.00	5.00	4.2154	.90635
Valid N (listwise)	130				

Mobilephone * age Crosstabulation

		age				Total
		45-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	
Mobilephone	Not important	4	2	0	0	6
	neutral	20	4	0	0	24
	important	8	20	4	4	36
	Most important	16	34	14	0	64
Total		48	60	18	4	130

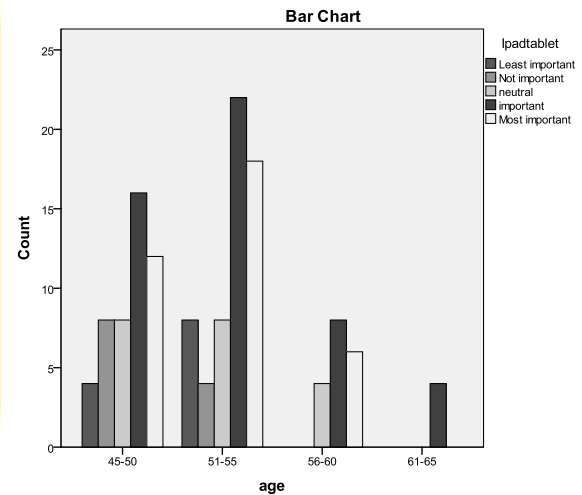


Null hypothesis is rejected. From observations, it has been that parents are highly influenced by their adult children while purchasing a mobile phone.

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying ipads/tablets
H2: The adult child influences their parents in buying ipads/tablets.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ipadtablet	130	1.00	5.00	3.6615	1.23611
Valid N (listwise)	130				



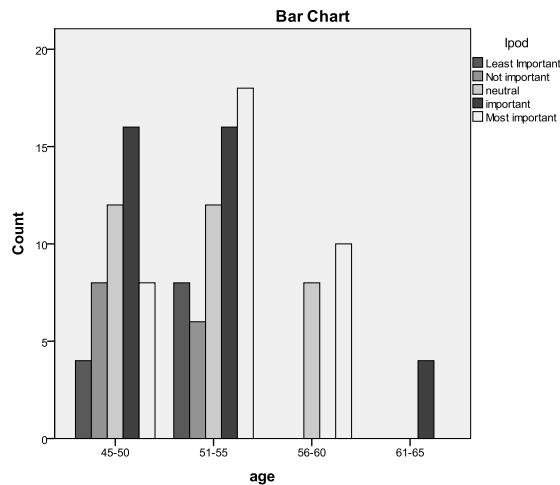
Null Hypothesis is rejected. From observations, it is noted that parents are influenced while buying ipad or tablets.

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying ipods/music players
H3: The adult child influences their parents in buying ipods/music players

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Ipod	130	1.00	5.00	3.5385	1.25848
Valid N (listwise)	130				

Null Hypothesis is rejected. From observations, it is noted that parents are influenced while buying ipod or music players.

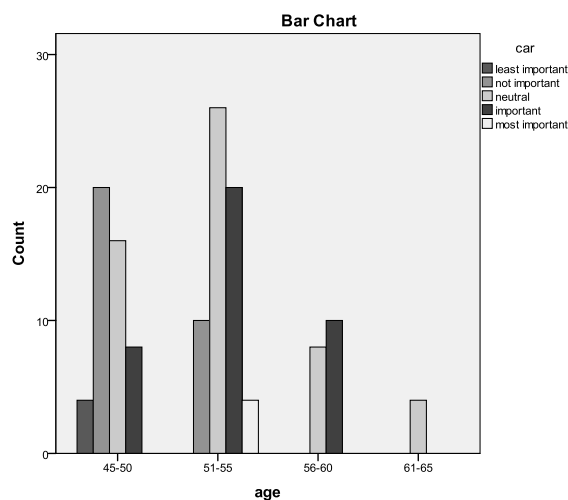


H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying car

H4: The adult child influences their parents in buying car

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
car	130	1.00	5.00	3.0615	.87828
Valid N (listwise)	130				



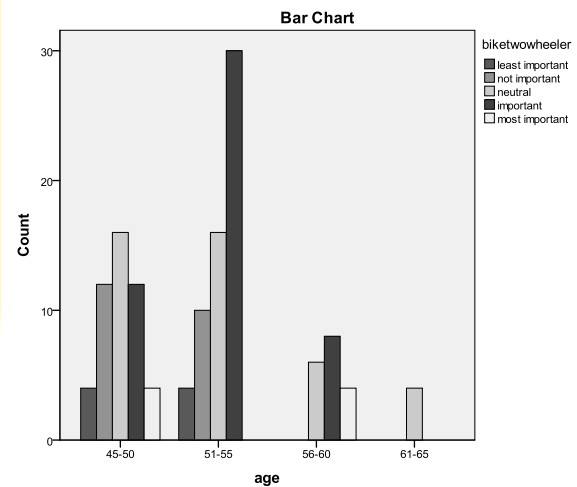
Null Hypothesis is rejected. From observations, it is noted that parents gives priority for their adult child's opinion while buying a car.

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying bike or two wheeler

H5: The adult child influences their parents in buying bike or two wheeler.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
biketwo Wheeler	130	1.00	5.00	3.2154	1.00375
Valid N (listwise)	130				



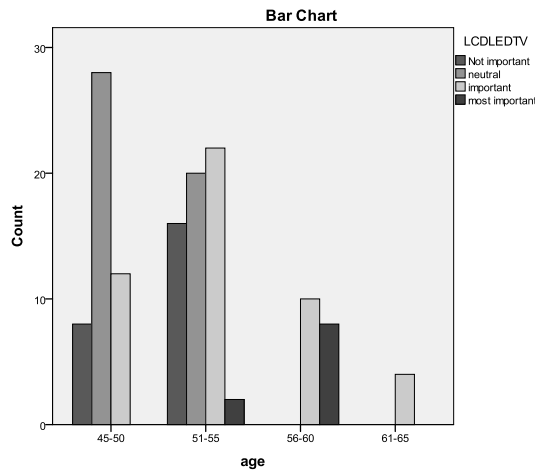
Null Hypothesis is rejected. From observations, parents feel important of their adult child's opinion while purchasing a bike or two wheeler.

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying LCD or LED TV.

H6: The adult child influences their parents in buying LCD or LED TV.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
LCDLEDTV	130	2.00	5.00	3.3385	.86762
Valid N (listwise)	130				



Null Hypothesis is accepted. From observations, parents do not feel important to take their adult child's opinion about LCD or LED TV.

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying DVD player.

H7: The adult child influences their parents in buying DVD player.

Descriptive Statistics

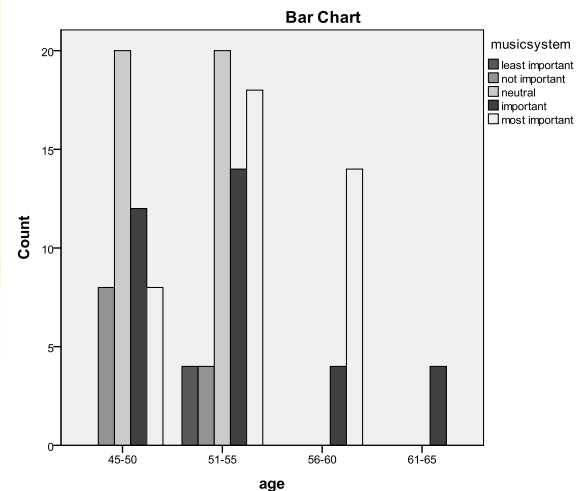
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Music system Valid N (listwise)	130	1.00	5.00	3.7231	1.09272

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying.

H8: The adult child influences their parents in buying.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
DVD player Valid N (listwise)	130	1.00	5.00	3.2462	1.11412



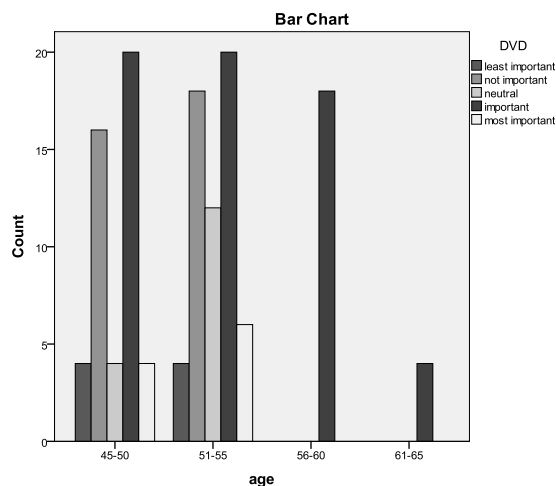
Null Hypothesis is accepted. From observations, parents do not feel important to take their adult child's opinion about music system.

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying refrigerator.

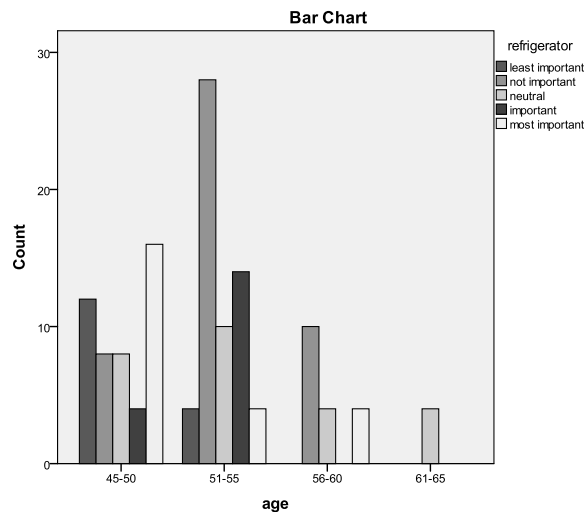
H9: The adult child influences their parents in buying refrigerator.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
refrigerator Valid N (listwise)	130	1.00	5.00	2.9077	1.31448



Null Hypothesis is rejected. From observations, parents feels the importance of their children's opinion while buying a DVD player.



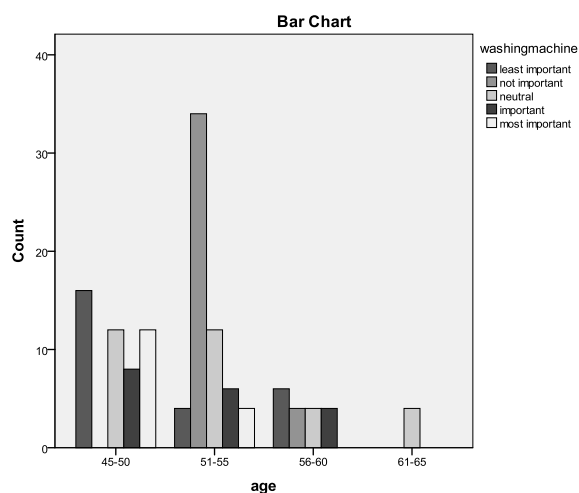
Null Hypothesis is accepted. From observations, parents do not feel important to take their adult child's opinion while buying refrigerator.

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying washing machine.

H10: The adult child influences their parents in buying washing machine.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
washingmachine	130	1.00	5.00	2.6923	1.28103
Valid N (listwise)	130				



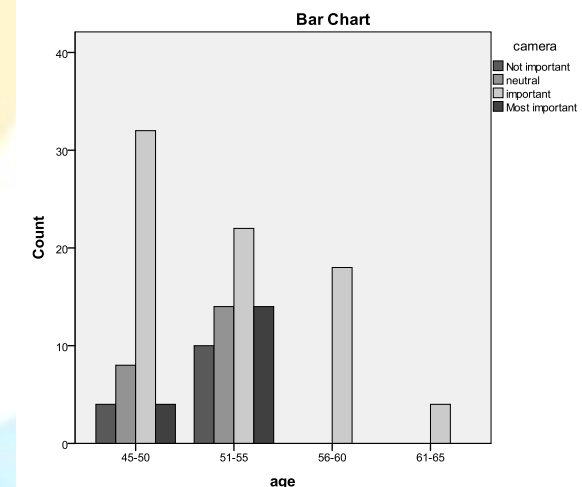
Null Hypothesis is accepted. From observations, children's opinion is not very important for parents while purchasing a washing machine.

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying camera.

H11: The adult child influences their parents in buying camera.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
camera	130	2.00	5.00	3.7538	.82651
Valid N (listwise)	130				



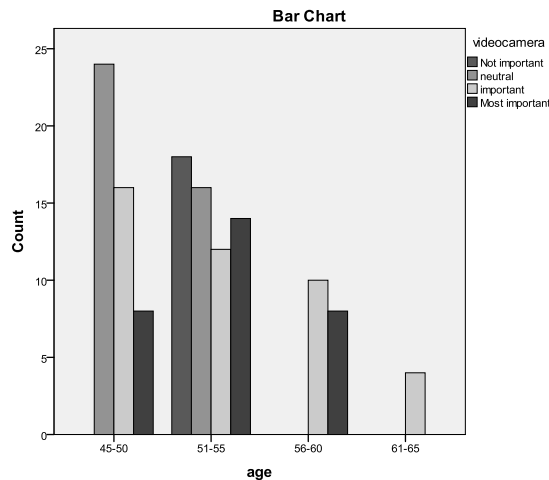
Null Hypothesis is rejected. From observations, parents feel importance of taking their adult child's opinion while buying camera.

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying video camera.

H12: The adult child influences their parents in buying video camera.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
videocamera	130	2.00	5.00	3.6462	.98722
Valid N (listwise)	130				



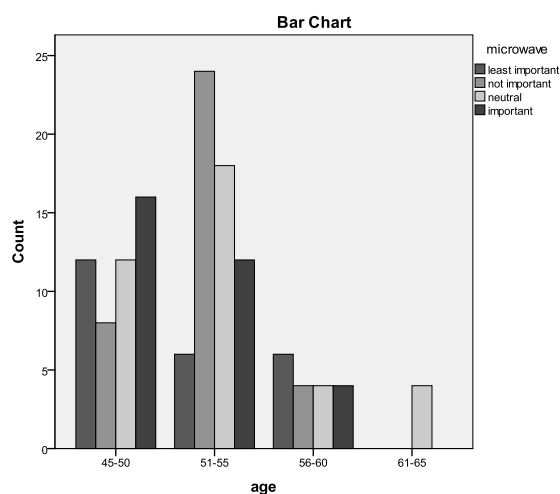
Null Hypothesis is rejected. From observations, children's opinion influences parent's buying decision of a video camera.

H0: The adult children do not influence their parents while buying microwave.

H13: The adult child influences their parents in buying microwave.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
microwave	130	1.00	4.00	2.6000	1.05360
Valid N (listwise)	130				



Null Hypothesis is accepted. From observations, parents do not feel important to take their adult child's opinion while buying microwave.

6. FINDINGS

As per analysis of data, the influence of adult child's opinion on buying decision of parents for durable goods varies. 45.2% parents feel their adult children's opinion is most important while buying a mobile phone. While buying ipad, 35.5% considers their opinion important, for buying a car 38% people do not need their children's opinion. Buying camera and DVD, again 58% people take their children's opinion.

7. CONCLUSION:

After doing the analysis of the data, it is observed that there is adult children influences parents' decision while buying particular products in durable range. While in few particular product range of durable goods, adult children do not really influence parent's decision.

7.1 Scope: The scope of the study is limited to Mumbai area.

7.2 Limitation: The study has been done only for the area of Mumbai. Further it can be done for more metro cities. Also, in this study researcher could compare between the influence of adult children in buying durable goods and consumer goods.

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