India is one of the world's largest consumer markets and is an emerging world economic champion too. This market presents a potentially vast untapped source for research and business. Marketers have acknowledged the role of family in general and involvement of husband-wife dyad in the purchase decision-making process in particular.

Studies have found that the roles of husband, wife and children are fluid and continuously change with time. They are likely to shift, depending on the specific product or service, the family role structure orientation, and the specific stage in the decision-making process. These factors also are mediated by changing lifestyles, particularly the changes in family lifestyle options associated with women working outside of the home. With these changes there is also a continuous change of their involvement in purchasing decisions. So the behaviour of husband, wife and children as consumers has to be studied regularly to find out the main decision makers within the family.

The extant research in the context of family decision-making and that too which is US centric, has been mainly oriented towards studying the purchase involvement of husband-wife dyads. Other members of the family — particularly children have largely been neglected. Though, husband and wife may play a dominant role in the decision-making process vis-à-vis products and services, yet the kidfluence aspect has recently gained importance because of gradual metamorphosis of their role in the family. Therefore, to have a meaningful understanding of the family decision-making pattern in the purchase of different products, the children's role needs to be taken into consideration. Present study is an effort in this direction. It is hoped that the
findings will provide a realistic insight into the dynamics at play in the family decision-making process in the Indian context.

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 tries to identify the dominant players in the family purchase decision process in the light of extant literature.

Chapter 2 is an attempt in the direction of highlighting the problems encountered and issues related with family decision research.

Chapter 3 deals with the methodology and related sub-headings pertaining to the hypothesis, research design and instrument administered, the profile of the respondents, limitations, and the method of analysis adopted for the presented study.

Chapter 4 deals with analysis and interpretation of data. It is an attempt in the direction of unravelling the involvement of various family members and the family dynamics at work in the purchase of products under study.

Chapter 5 presents a summary of results and discussion. The findings are presented in the form of sections dealing with stages of decision-making process and the sub-decisions relating to the products under study.

Chapter 6 proposes steps that may prove to be of help to the marketing practitioners in developing promotion campaigns, selecting markets, market segmentation and product design and development. It also contains a section suggesting future research directions.

At the end, Bibliography and Appendices I & II are given. The bibliography is provided for ready reference and it is also hoped that it may be a potential source for future researchers in this area. Appendix I is the English version of the research instrument while Appendix II is the Hindi version of the same.

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