

The Impact of Children on Family Purchase Decision: A Case Study

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Abstract. To highlight the effect of kids on purchasing decisions, this research was conducted to investigate whether there is a kids' impact on the purchase decision of Syrian families or not. The research was based on deductive methodology, which guided us to collect the primary data through a questionnaire based on Likert five scale as well as the sample that was set from an infinite population. To analyze data, we used correlation measurements in addition to two types of regression analysis (simple linear regression plus Stepwise regression). The researcher tested the power of the relationship between children's impact (independent variable) and purchase decision (dependent variable) by applying the demographic variables - gender and age of children, the revenue of family, plus mother's employment status as moderator variables. The results reported here mainly support the findings of the previous studies with some exceptions, where the gender of the child has no significant impact on purchase decision; on the contrary, the child's age significantly impacts purchase decision. On the same side, the mother-employment status has no impact on the purchase decision of the Syrian family, while the family's income affects the purchase decision..

Keywords: Children, family, family purchase decision, children's influence, children's age and gender, mother employment status, income.

1. Introduction

Children's impact on family purchase decisions is extremely increased due to their wider knowledge based on the variation of communication channels such as mobile phones, TV, and social media, which is the most effective. This exposure to various communication means allows children to follow up with the latest product in the market. In addition to the ease of gathering information and searching for every new product in the market in a way that satisfies their curiosity and desire to acquire new and innovative products, which made them influential even in high-risk family purchasing decisions such as homes and cars. However, probably, children are often exposed to risky purchasing decisions due to vast information about several products they cannot analyze. On the other side, the high level of mothers working percentage on the parallel children's long periods at home alone allowed them to have extensive exposure to social media and TV advertisements. For example, kids in the USA stay beyond three hours daily watching TV, which means watching more than 300,000 advertisements annually (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2007). The parent's work and long absence from home reinforced their feelings of guilt toward their children in a way that made each parent or both respond positively to their children purchasing desires (Nicholls & Lee, 2006). Further, some studies showed that the amount of children's influence depends on certain demographic characteristics of a child, a mother, and a family.

Shedding light on the Syrian family where the purchase decision is also affected by the children's influence, and like other families around the world, the Syrian families' purchase decisions' includes the possibility of some contradictions between parents and children. Hence, this study attempts to examine the impact of children on the purchasing decisions of the Syrian family. Based on that, this study will allow us to know the role of children on purchase decisions and the factors that affect their influence by answering the main question, "Is there any impact of children on the purchase decision of Syrian families?" The previous question emanates the following sub-questions (1) Does the family income modify the impact of children on the purchase decision? (2) Does the mother's work modify the impact of children on a purchase decision? (3) Does the gender of children modify the family purchase decision? (4) Does the age of children modify the family purchase decision?

2. Literature Review

According to the study by Sharma and Sonwaney (2003), several studies related to the kids' effect on family purchase decision-making. In addition, a study by Nickelodeon (2015) showed the power of children's impact on purchasing decisions had maximized remarkably during the last ten years, and the family decision-making process has become collective. Furthermore, the research stated that the influence of children is affected by the goods' type, child's year, and family's transmission norms.

In addition to the previous article, this study in the Czech Republic by Balcarova

et al. (2014) aims to assess the impact of kids' overall purchase process, starting from generating the purchase motive and ending with the purchase decision. Results revealed a strong dependence on pester power's techniques, accommodating their requests besides transacting the purchasing.

Thirdly, Kumar's (2013) study of kids' effect on family purchase decisions comes. This research considered children's age as a moderator variable. He chose children between 8-12 years old in India. However, the children's influence depends on several factors such as; the educational level of each parent, their occupations, whether they work or not, the family type, and types of products, among others. As a result, the research found that kids' impact is at the highest level towards goods such as bikes, ice-creams/chocolates/ drinks, and computer entertainment equipment'.

As well as Ramzy et al. (2012) study was made to explore parents' perceptions of kids' effect on purchasing decisions formed on chosen demographic variables among the United States and Egyptian samples. This study considered gender and age of children as moderate variables. In addition, they studied durable and non-durable products. The study concentrates on fathers' and mothers' insights into kids' effect (year 4-18) on purchasing decisions. Kid's impact on fifteen commodities in three commodities was examined; findings referred to many variations based on commodity group, age, and parents' transmission type. Focusing on sex, there were variations among females. In contrast, no variations emerged among American and Egyptian males during the kids' impact studied as well, as the results state that the size of a commodity's influence varies in one country.

Bahar Isin & Alkibay's (2011) study in Ankara, Turkey, discussed essential issues in their research; first, they studied kids' impact on family purchase decisions and then mentioned several factors that affect this impact the mother's employment status, children's number, and gender. The higher level of working moms has dramatically affected the kids' personality and the mothers' behavior toward kids. Nowadays, kids motivate their moms to occupy in terms of income and classy social status. Working mothers feel guilty toward their children because they believe they are not caring and giving them enough time; because of guilty emotions, moms move to accept their kids' misbehavior. They also spend more money on their children and get them what they want.

G. Ulger & B. Ulger (2011) studied kids' impact on family purchasing decisions. Generally, it examined if demographic differences like age and family structure significantly impact mother behavior toward the purchase decision when children are included. Hence, results suggest that the different families' compositions, in addition to moms' and kids' age differences, are not considered during recognizing the factors that modify kids' variables influences in Turkey.

Based on G.V Prasad & G.V Prasad's (2007) study, the impact of each person in the family on purchasing decisions is noticed in many product categories. However, influence varies from product to product, but their influence is seen in the purchase

decision, especially the children. Thus, children became powerful, strong influencers as consumers among family members.

Moreover, the structure of families has changed over the years—especially the traditional American family structure, which widely changed. New trends have appeared, such as elderly dads and moms delaying childbearing. This is what Flurry (2007) discussed in her research. These social changes have modified children's lives and caused to vary the kid's impact type in the purchase decision process. The findings of this research recommended that following up and caring about children must take prior interest in changing the family composition and the class of commodity during recognizing features, which modify kids' impact.

Thomson, Laing, and McKee (2007) looked at the children's influence and discussed it from another point of view. As children play an important role in family purchase decisions whether they directly or indirectly influence it; so, the research emerged from a phase that includes enhancing knowledge surrounding the importance of kids' character in purchasing decisions containing subjects like immediate respondents. The approach adopted had individual interviews with mothers, fathers, and kids, and family interviews constructed the decision-mapping tool. As a result, children in all respondents were found to have a direct influence over the purchase discussed.

In conclusion, the authors' Maggie Geuens and others (2002) discussed the effect of family structures on the kids' impact on the process of making a family purchasing decision. Results showed that the family composition has a limit influence on the impact of kids in different decision-making processes, unless in certain situations of commodities like CD's, dessert, appetizers, and children's clothes. The following Table 1 illustrates the previous literature reviews.

Table 1: Literature reviews summary (created by the author)

Year	Researcher	Variables	Results
2015	Nickelodeon	Power of kid influence	Positive impact
2014	Balcarova et al.	Children influence on the food purchase	Positive impact
2013	Kumar	Children's influence considering the age	Positive impact
2012	Ramzy et al.	Parents perception of Kids' impact	Positive impact
2011	Bahar Isin & Al Kibay	Mother employment status, children's number, and gender	Positive impact
2011	G. Ulger & B. Ulger	Age and family compositions	No impact
2007	G.V Prasad	Influence of family members	Positive impact
2007	Flurry	Social changes	Positive impact

2007	Thomson, Laing, McKee	Children's role	Positive impact
2002	Maggie Geuens	Family structure	Minor impact

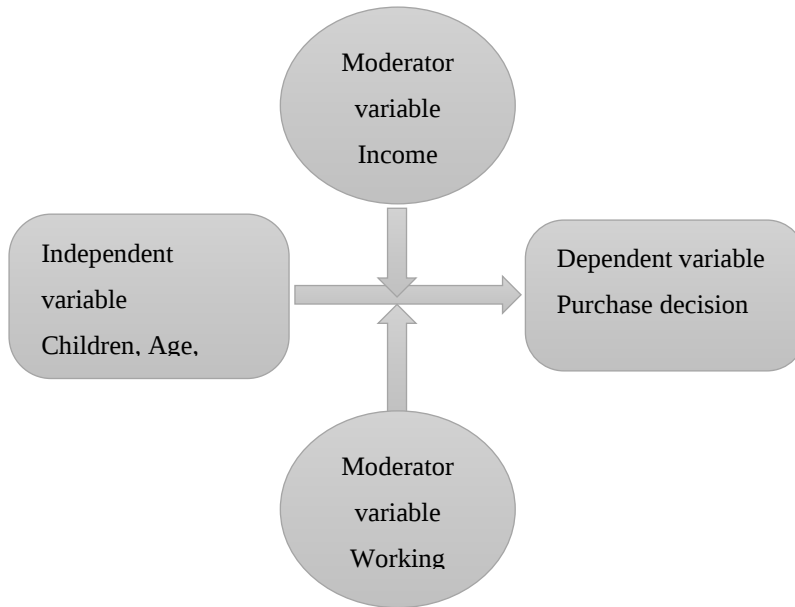


Fig. 1: The model of the study (created by the author)

The following hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is a significant impact of children on purchasing decisions:

H1-1: The child's gender is not an essential variable on the family purchase behavior.

H1-2: The child's age is a critical variable on purchasing decision-making.

H2: Children of working moms have more effect on the family purchase decision than those of moms not working.

H3: There is a significant impact of families' income on enhancing the relationship between children and purchasing decisions.

3. Empirical Study

To test the internal consistency, it was run Cronbach's alpha test was run using the reliability command in the SPSS version (26), which was measured for a pilot sample sized 23% of the whole sample, which was (58) respondents. Tables 2 and 3 below show the results for each part of the questionnaire, divided into three main parts. The first part was for demographic variables, and the second consisted of questions related to children from the gender and age side. The third part consists of questions related

to purchasing decisions. The first variable (the independent): children: The following statements construct the first variable: Q1, Q2, and Q3.

Table 2: Reliability statistics for children

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.671	.666	3

The second variable (the dependent) was purchase decision: to calculate the Cronbach's Alpha. We compute new variables for Q4 and Q5 where the questions have been stated in negative form, so in SPSS, we need to reverse the data. The second variable is Q4 (the New_Q5) plus Q6.

Table 3: Reliability Statistics for a purchase decision

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.728	.728	3

Table 4: The Cronbach's Alpha for the entire questionnaires, Reliability statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.621	.627	12

From the previous tables, Cronbach's Alpha was above 60%, and we apply the rule of George and Mallery (2003) to read the results. Therefore, it was concluded that Cronbach's alpha coefficient was between Questionable and Acceptable. The following tables illustrate the descriptive analysis of the different demographic variables: gender variable.

Table 5: Child gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	boy	124	48.6	48.6	48.6
Valid	girl	131	51.4	51.4	100.0
	Total	255	100.0	100.0	

The following chart explains the distribution of the sample respondents according to gender variables.

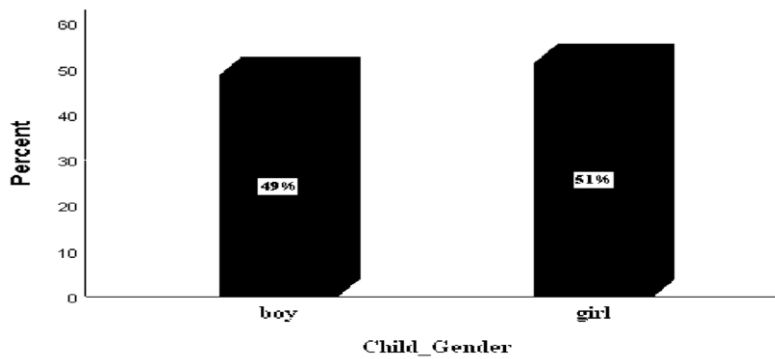


Fig. 2. Child's gender

The collected data shows the almost equal distribution between a girl child and a boy child, where a girl child scored about 51% compared to a boy child who scored about 49%.

Table 6: Mother's employment status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Employee	85	33.3	33.3	33.3
Valid	no-employee	170	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	255	100.0	100.0	

The following chart explains the distribution of the sample respondents according to their mother-employment status. A closer view of the previous diagram showed that the percentage of working moms recorded about 33%, while non-working moms recorded 67%. As a result, it was concluded that most respondents were from the house-mom type.

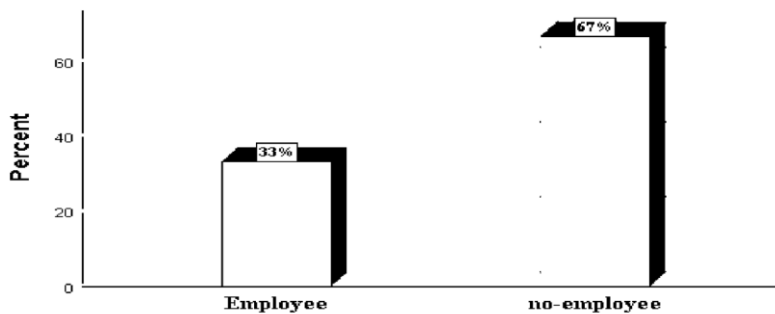


Fig. 3: Mother employment status

Table 7: Family income (the levels in the family income based on the observation of the researchers for the variation of income between Syrian different business sectors)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Below 200,000	20	7.8	7.8	7.8
200,000-799,000	93	36.5	36.5	44.3
800,000-1500,000	80	31.4	31.4	75.7
Above 1,500,000	62	24.3	24.3	100.0
Total	255	100.0	100.0	

The following Fig. 4 explains the distribution of the sample respondents according to their mother's employment status.

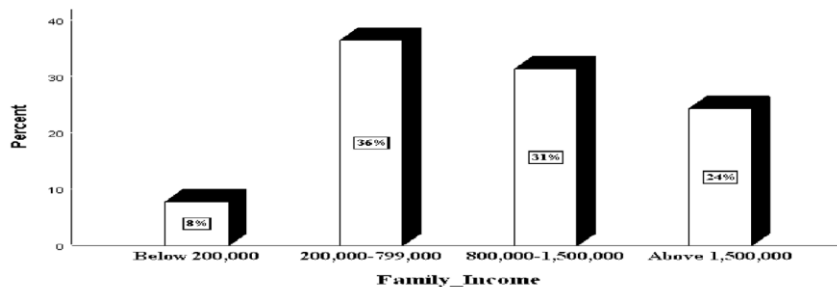


Fig. 4. Family income

The frequencies test for family income showed that the Syrian family who obtained the lowest level of income ranked the lowest percentage, about 8%. In comparison, families earned between (200, 000-799, 000) record about 36%, then the income between (800, 000-1, 500, 000) rated about 31%, and families with income above 1,500,000 rated 24%.

Table 8: Number-of-children

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	44	17.3	17.3	17.3
	2	94	36.9	36.9	54.1
	3	72	28.2	28.2	82.4
	4 and more	45	17.6	17.6	100.0
	Total	255	100.0	100.0	

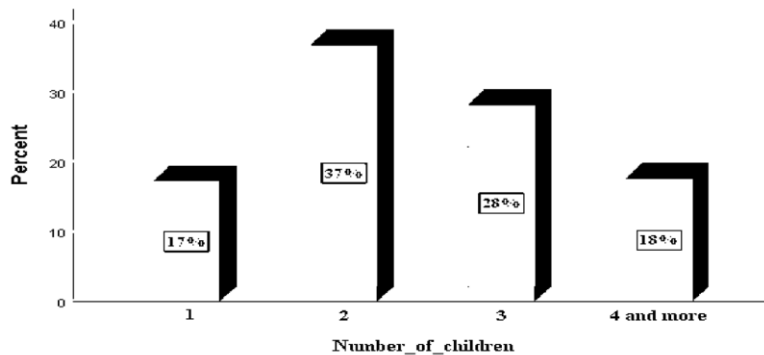


Fig. 5. Number of children

Fig. 5 presents the distribution of the sample respondents according to the number of children. The highest number of children was recorded for two children with 37%, next to the families with three children rated about 28%. 4 and more place was about 18%, and one child recorded the lowest rate with 17%.

Testing the Hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant impact of children on purchasing decision

The first hypothesis is split into two sub-hypothesis:

H1-1: The child's gender is not an essential variable in the family purchase behavior.

To test this hypothesis, it was applied different statistical measures. First, the Correlation coefficient between the two main variables of the study -child's gender and purchasing decision- was examined to measure how strong a relationship is between them (Table 9).

Table 9: Correlations

		Purchase-decision variable	Child-gender variable
Purchase-	Pearson Correlation	1	.174**
decision-	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005
variable	N	255	255
Child-gendervariable	Pearson Correlation	.174**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	
	N	255	255

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 9 demonstrates the Correlation measure registered about 17%, indicating a weak positive relationship; the Sig. was 0.005. The result: there is a weak positive linear significant relationship between child gender and purchase decision, and it's possible to apply the Linear Regression, which is the second phase after correlation.

The linear regression applied while predicting the amount of a one-variable depends on the amount of another variable. The following table points out the results of the regression analysis.

Table 10: Variables, Entered/Removed^a

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Child Gender-variable ^b		.Enter

Dependent Variable: purchase-decision-variable

All requested variables were entered. Table 10 shows that there are no excluded variables from the regression model.

Table 11: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.174 ^a	.030	.026	.77721

a. Predictors: (Constant), Child-gender-variable

The value of R-square was 0.030, so the child-Gender explains about (3%) of the changes in the family purchase decisions, which is a feeble influence of gender on the purchase decision (Table 11).

Table 12: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.658	.203		13.072	.000
	Child-gender-variable	.179	.064	.174	2.812	.005

a. Dependent Variable: purchase-decision-variable

Table 12 illustrates that there is a significant positive impact for the Child-Gender on Purchase-Decision and the following equation explains this impact:

$$\text{purchase decision} = 2.658 + 0.179 \text{ child gender}$$

Therefore, for one change in child gender, the purchase-decision changes by 0.179. For the Constant number, there are many other factors affecting purchase decisions in addition to child gender, and those factors are not the concern of this study. The result: the first null sub-hypothesis accepted that the child's gender is not an essential variable in the family purchase behavior.

Second sub-hypothesis H1-2: The child's age is a critical variable in purchasing decision-making.

It followed the same previous steps to test this hypothesis, and the results are shown in the following tables.

Table 13: Correlations

		Purchase-decision	Child-age-variable
Purchase-decision	Pearson Correlation	1	.194**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	255	255
Child-age-variable	Pearson Correlation	.194**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	255	255

**_. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 13 demonstrates the Correlation measure registered about 19%, which indicates that; there is a weak positive relationship; the Sig. was 0.002. The result: there is a weak positive linear significant relationship between Child Age and purchase decision, and we can apply the Linear Regression, which is the next step after correlation. It is used to predict a variable's value based on another variable's value.

Table 14: Variables Entered/Removed^a

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Child Age-variable ^b		.Enter

The dependent variable was purchase decision. All requested variables were entered. Table 14 shows that there are no excluded variables from the regression model.

Table 15: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.194 ^a	.078	.064	.77422

a. Predictors: (Constant), child-age-variable

From Table 15, the value of R-square was 0.078, so the child-Age explains about (8%) of the changes in the family purchase decisions, which is a very weak influence of age on the purchase decision.

Table 16: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.394	.265		9.049	.000
	Child-Age-variable	.255	.081	.194	3.150	.002

a. *Dependent Variable: purchase-decision*

Table 16 illustrates the significant positive impact of the child's age on purchase decisions, and the following equation explains this impact:

$$\text{purchase decision} = 2.394 + 0.255 \text{ child Age}$$

Therefore, for one change in child age, the purchase-decision changes by 0.255, and for the constant number, there are many other factors affecting purchase decision in addition to child age, which is not the concern of this study. As a result, the second sub-hypothesis was accepted, which refers to the child's age as a critical factor in purchasing decision-making.

The second hypothesis H2: Children of working moms have more effect on the family purchase decision than those of moms not working. The previous hypothesis presents the moderation hypothesis; for testing it, a was computed new variable: children-mother work moderator. Then moderation analysis was applied, where the demographic variable mother-employment-status turned out to be the second independent variable and the primary independent variable - children; the following model explains the moderation analysis.

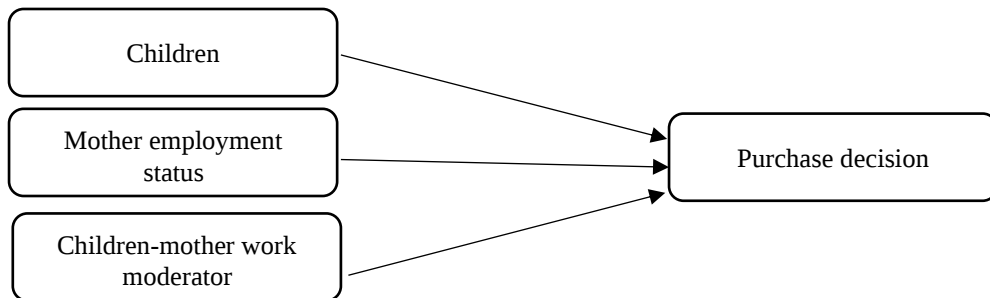


Fig. 6. Children-mother work moderator variable

The following Table 17 shows the result of Stepwise Regression, which involves adding or removing potential explanatory variables (independent) in succession and testing for statistical significance after each iteration.

Table 17: Variables Entered/Removed^a

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Child		Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter<=.050, Probability-of-F-to-remove>=.100)

Independent variable: purchase-decision

Table 18: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.361 ^a	.130	.127	.59445

Predictors: (Constant), children

Table 19: Excluded Variables^a

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics
						Tolerance
1	Mother-employment	-.083 ^b	-1.407-	.161	-.088-	.995
	Children-Working Mom-Moderator	-.132 ^b	-1.652-	.100	-.103-	.538

Dependent variable: purchase-decision

Predictors in the Model: (Constant), children

Table 19 illustrates the chosen and excluded variables, and the Stepwise regression removed the mother-employment-status variable from the model where they did not have any significant impact on the relation between children and Purchase Decision. The researchers explain this result where the percentage of working-Mom recorded at 33% compared with the non-working-mom, plus the different environment between the Bahar Isin Turkish study and the Syrian environment, where the previous study took place in Turkey. The working hours and job conditions are significantly different than in Syria; on the other side, the psychological structure of Syrian moms is highly varied from Turkish moms.

Table 20: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.985	.156		12.762	.000
	children	.300	.049	.361	6.150	.000

a. Dependent Variable: purchase-decision

There is a significant positive impact for the child on purchase-decision, and the following equation explains this impact (Table 20):

$$purchase_decision = 1.985 + 0.3 \ child$$

The result shows that the second hypothesis was rejected, which refers to children of working moms having more effect on the family purchase decision than those of moms not working.

The third hypothesis, H3: A significant impact of families' income on enhancing the relationship is between children and purchasing decisions. The previous hypothesis presents the moderation hypothesis; for testing it, a new variable was computed - children's families' income moderator. Then moderation analysis was applied, where the demographic variable families' income turned to be the second independent variable plus the primary independent variable, Children.

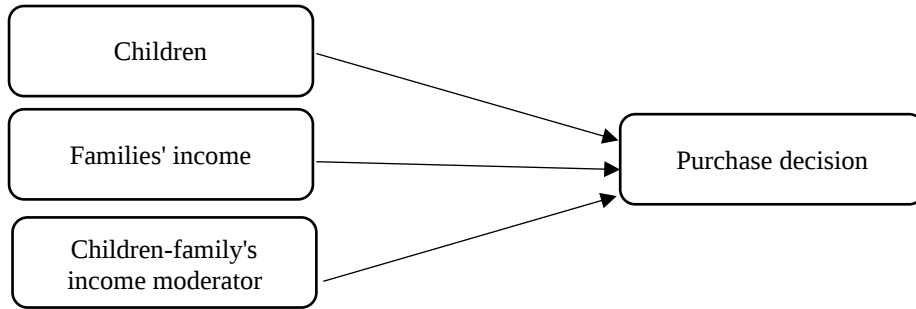


Fig. 7: Children-Families' income moderate

The following table (21) shows the result of Stepwise Regression, which involves adding or removing potential explanatory variables (independent) in succession and testing for statistical significance after each iteration.

Table 21: Variables Entered/Removed^a

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	children	.	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove >= .100).
2	Children-Income Moderator	.	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove >= .100).

a. Dependent Variable: purchase-decision

Table 22: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.361 ^a	.130	.127	.59445
2	.380 ^b	.156	.147	.59082

Predictors: (Constant), children

Predictors: (Constant), children, children-income-moderator

The previous table elaborates the value of R Square between the two models. The first model investigates the influence of children on purchasing decisions, while in the second model, we added the moderator variable families' income. The difference between both results is straightforward, wherein the second the value of R Square increased supported by families' income, where it recorded nearly 16%.

Table 22: Excluded variables^a

Model	Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics
					Tolerance
2 Family-Income	-.015 ^{-b}	-.062-	.951	-.004-	.057

Dependent variable: purchase-decision

Predictors in the Model: (Constant), children, Children-Income-Moderator

Table 22 illustrates the chosen variables and the excluded variables. The Stepwise regression removed the Family Income variable from the model where it did not significantly impact the relationship between children and purchase decisions. That makes sense; hence, we do not study the direct relation of the families' income to purchase decisions, meaning the families' income did not play a primary independent role.

Table 23: Coefficients^a

Unstandardized Coefficients				Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model	B	Std. Error		Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.985	.156		12.762	.000
	children	.300	.049	.361	6.150	.000
2	(Constant)	2.021	.156		12.987	.000
	children	.218	.063	.262	3.452	.001
	Children-Income Moderator	.026	.013	.154	2.029	.043

a. Dependent Variable: purchase-decision

The second model was selected, and the following equation explains the influence of children on purchasing decisions in the presence of families' income (Table 23).

$$\text{purchase decision} = 2.021 + 0.218 \text{ child} + 0.26\text{children} - \text{income moderator}$$

As a result, the third hypothesis was accepted, which refers to a significant impact of families' income on enhancing the relationship between children and purchasing decisions.

4. Conclusions

The study showed that there is an influence of children on purchase decision and this influence differs between the sub-variables we examined for children. The first aspect is gender, which doesn't play any critical role on family purchase decisions. In contrast, the child's age plays a weak positive significant impact on purchase decisions which is reported at 8%, which makes sense in Syria. Those results are similar to Kumar's (2013) study and Ramzy et al. (2012) study. In Syria, there is no influence of a mother's employment status on the relationship between child and purchase decision, supporting the study of Bahar Isin & Al Kibay (2011). The results make sense in Syria due to the psychological difference between the Turkish moms and Syrian moms' and the economic crises we are experiencing in Syria. In addition, the Syrian working mother truly knows the value of money and will not make the spending decision without having a rational decision before an emotional one. Third, the family income plays a critical role in enhancing the

impact of children on purchase decisions, which recorded 3%, making confess about the influence of income on modifying the relation between children and purchasing decisions. Finally, this study has two limitations: the theoretical, where studies in Syria that focus on the impact of children on purchasing decisions are limited, in addition to limitations related to variables where the variety of variables the previous researchers took represent challenge to pick the appropriate ones based on the Syrian environment.

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Appendix

Questionnaire:

Demographic Variables	
Gender of the child	Boy
	Girl
Mother employment status	Yes
	No
Monthly income salary	Below 200,000
	200,000-799,000
	800,000-1,500,000
	Above 1,500,00
Number of children	1
	2
	3
	4 or more

Statements:	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
1. I always take my children shopping.					
2. My children help me in purchase decision-making.					
3. I feel comfortable taking my children shopping.					
4. I cannot make a purchase decision without involving my children.					
5. Children's influence on the purchase decision is not good.					
6. My boy child has more influence on purchasing decisions than the girl.					
7. I buy products that my children request.					
8. I listen to my younger child in purchasing decisions.					
9. My older child is a more conscious consumer than the younger ones.					
10. Working mothers tend to fulfill their children's purchasing needs more than non-working moms'.					
11. The family's income determines the amount of purchase.					
12. I stop responding to my children's buying decisions in spite of the family's income.					