

## Factors Influencing Parents Fast-Food Purchasing Intention and the Children's Intention to Consume; a study on Sri Lankan Fast Food Chains

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose** - Grounded in Social Learning Theory and Consumer Socialization Theory, this study investigates the factors influencing parents' fast-food purchasing intention and the subsequent impact on children's consumption intention in the Sri Lankan fast-food context. Specifically, the study examines the roles of brand loyalty, lifestyle, technological factors, and family setting in shaping parental purchasing decisions and explores the mediating role of parents' purchasing intention on children's fast-food consumption intention.

**Design/methodology/approach** - A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was employed, and primary data were collected from 200 parents in Colombo using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and mediation analysis via SPSS.

**Findings** - The results reveal that brand loyalty, lifestyle, technological factors, and family setting are all positively and significantly associated with parents' fast-food purchasing intention. Furthermore, parents' purchasing intention shows a strong positive relationship with children's consumption intention and significantly mediates the relationships between the examined antecedent factors and children's consumption intention.

**Originality** - This study extends the application of Social Learning Theory and Consumer Socialization Theory to the fast-food consumption context in a developing country, specifically Sri Lanka. It contributes to the consumer behaviour literature by highlighting the influence of parental decision-making on children's consumption intentions within family settings.

**Implications** - These findings highlight the pivotal role of parents as primary socialization agents in shaping children's fast-food consumption behavior. The study contributes to the consumer behavior literature by extending socialization-based explanations to a developing country context and offers practical implications for policymakers and marketers aiming to promote healthier food choices among families.

### Keywords:

Brand Loyalty, Family Setting, Lifestyle, Parents' Purchasing Intention and the Children's Intention to Consume, Technological Advancement

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## Introduction

In the last few years, the consumption of fast food and its underlying factors has drawn considerable attention and is the subject of deep investigation (Askari Majabadi et al., 2016). This is, perhaps, part of the shift towards recognizing the complexity of individual food choices and the surroundings, especially at the household level (Pretorius et al., 2021). It is, in fact, the household environment which is now seen as the most important setting for food choices in regard to its possible consequences for obesity (Ayala et al., 2008). Obesity is now seen as a multilevel problem. The household is now viewed as the basic unit of consumption in which the relationships between members of the household determine the quantity and quality of the food purchased and consumed (Pechey & Monsivais, 2016). The work of Boutelle et al. (2007) sheds some light on this interplay as it deals with the issues of fast-food consumption and acquisition in families and the body mass indexes of the parents and their children. The findings of the study suggest a story with complex relationships where the quantities of fast food bought as family meals is related to dense home availability of non-nutritive food (Boutelle et al., 2007). As the study mentions, family dynamics reflect more than the mere fast-food consumption, offering a different angle which is inclusion of the deficits of the family meal system as the family meal system is the focal point. The data shows strong correlations between family meals for which fast food is purchased and the home availability of non-nutritive food. As an example, the availability of soda pop at home was markedly lower for parents claiming fewer purchases of fast food, while the chances of serving vegetable products for dinner were greatly diminished in such families. Moreover, the consequences of adult relatives on the fast-food intake of children have received special attention (Lee & Lien, 2015). This study explores the challenges parents face in managing their children's fast-food intake. Despite the convenience or difficulty of saying no to their children, many parents struggle to exert control over fast-food consumption, particularly when enticed by child-friendly packaging, complimentary toys, and adjacent playgrounds (Bautista et al., 2023). The research emphasizes that children are a preferred target for fast-food businesses, leveraging their susceptibility and early-formed preferences to promote consumption.

The pervasiveness of fast-food advertising, recognized as a potent force drawing individuals into fast-food consumption (Kim & Lee, 1997). It highlights the detrimental impact of unauthorized access to profit by fast-food marketers at the expense of children's health. Beyond the persuasive power of advertisements, the geographical concentration of fast-food outlets is explored in studies such as Local Concentrations of Fast-Food Outlets is associated with poor nutrition and obesity (Kruger et al., 2014). The research reveals a correlation between proximity to fast-food restaurants and compromised nutritional choices, as individuals residing near such establishments demonstrated lower consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Building upon these seminal studies, this research aims to explore into the complex dynamics between family influences, individual fast-food consumption, and the broader environment within the Sri Lankan context. By synthesizing and extending the findings of

existing research, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how familial and environmental factors intertwine to shape dietary preferences and impact public health. The investigation will not only contribute to academic discourse but also offer practical insights for policymakers, health professionals, and the fast-food industry in Sri Lanka, fostering informed strategies to address the intricate challenges associated with fast-food consumption.

Although prior research has extensively examined fast-food consumption from nutritional, psychological, and marketing perspectives, much of the existing literature remains fragmented and predominantly focused on Western and high-income country contexts. Studies consistently demonstrate that family dynamics, parental modeling, and brand-related cues influence children's fast-food consumption; however, these factors are often examined in isolation, with limited integration of family structure, lifestyle, technological influences, and brand loyalty within a single explanatory framework. Moreover, while Social Learning Theory and Consumer Socialization Theory emphasize the role of parents as primary agents shaping children's consumption behavior, empirical studies rarely test parents' purchasing intention as a mediating mechanism linking these determinants to children's consumption outcomes.

The Sri Lankan context provides a particularly relevant setting to extend these theories, as rapid urbanization, increased female labor force participation, and the expansion of global fast-food chains have reshaped family decision-making processes and food consumption patterns (Bandara et al., 2021). Unlike Western contexts where individual choice dominates, Sri Lankan households are characterized by collectivist decision-making and strong parental authority, potentially altering the pathways through which socialization and consumption intentions are formed (Chapin, 2014). By empirically examining these dynamics within Sri Lanka, this study advances existing theory by demonstrating how socialization-based models operate in an emerging market context, thereby offering both contextual and theoretical novelty.

### ***Problem Statement***

The expansion of international fast-food franchises has significantly reshaped the Sri Lankan food market, particularly in urban areas, where brands such as KFC and Pizza Hut have become increasingly attractive to children (Nirmanani et al., 2017). Prior studies consistently show that children are drawn to fast food due to taste preferences, brand familiarity, and experiential marketing strategies such as free toys and play areas (Longacre et al., 2016). While children's attraction to fast food is well documented, empirical evidence regarding the consequences of frequent consumption remains inconclusive, particularly within developing country contexts (Poti et al., 2014). Much of the existing literature emphasizes the adverse health outcomes associated with fast-food consumption among children; however, an emerging stream of research suggests that fast-food offerings can potentially be modified to include healthier options, such as the incorporation of vegetables and nutrient-enhanced ingredients (Poti et al., 2014). This perspective highlights the pivotal role of parents in mediating children's fast-food

consumption by guiding food choices and encouraging healthier alternatives (Bautista et al., 2023). Nevertheless, despite acknowledging parental influence, existing research provides limited empirical insight into why parents continue to patronize fast-food outlets and how these purchasing decisions shape children's dietary behaviors, particularly within the Sri Lankan context.

### ***Research Gap***

Scholarly discussion suggests that the parents have primary oversight responsibility for their children's initiation into the fast-food culture, a tendency that is more often than not, carried forward to the next generation (Lakra & Singh, 2024). Yet, the gap in the literature as well as the absence of any form of primary data, particularly in the case of studies contextualized to Sri Lanka, makes it difficult to appreciate the reasons for the sustenance of such a fast-food culture across the generations being studied here. Although the literature suggests such studies, it is, to a large extent, unaddressed the question of the various specific underlying reasons for children's fast-food culture to be carried forward for further generations. This gap is important in Sri Lanka to understand so that the much-needed culturally appropriate education and public health policies and programs can be devised them. There is, thus, an urgent need to comprehensively understand this issue in its full complexity and derive recommendations for public policies and practice for the fast-food sector as well as health services, grounded in the realities of the context.

### ***Research Objectives***

This study explores factors shaping parental fast-food choices in Sri Lanka, impacting children's consumption, providing nuanced insights for practical applications. Below are my research objectives.

01. To evaluate the level of brand loyalty among parents patronizing Sri Lankan fast food chains.
02. To assess the impact of brand loyalty on parents' purchasing intention of fast food.
03. Examine the various lifestyle factors influencing parents' decisions to purchase fast food from Sri Lankan chains.
04. To investigate the role of Technological Advancement in shaping parents' purchasing intention of fast food.
05. To explore how family setting contributes to parents' decisions regarding fast food purchases.
06. To investigate the mediating role of parents' purchasing intention in the relationships between brand loyalty, lifestyle, Technological Advancement, family setting, and children's consumption intention.
07. To examine the relationship between parents' purchasing intention and the consumption intention of their children regarding fast food from Sri Lankan chains.

## **Significance of the study**

Theoretically this study contributes to the existing theoretical framework by advancing our understanding of the intricate dynamics governing parents' fast-food purchasing decisions by examining the roles of key determinants such as brand loyalty, lifestyle, technological influences, and family settings, the research enhances theoretical foundations in consumer behavior and family studies.

In terms of Practical Significance this study has implications from practice perspective for the fast-food sector in Sri Lanka by identifying factors that motivate parents to buy can help local fast-food outlets devise better marketing and product strategies.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Theoretical framework***

Different views on human behavior have adopted Bandura's Social Learning Theory as a base. Out of the many, the most significant is that which describes human behavior as being "repertoire-less" except for the most rudimentary reflexes. There is, therefore, a strong necessity for being educated either through exposure to and/or participation in an event (Bandura, 1977). The process of learning stems from an individual being exposed to a form of stimulus and the subsequent action that is the outcome of that stimulus. Outcomes are either rewarding or punishing. Rewarding results, in this case, are referred to as behavior that is productive and 'successful', while the punishing stimulus is defined in this context as 'non-productive' or 'non-effective' actions.

Reinforcement, encompassing positive or negative social impacts, plays a pivotal role in guiding individuals towards adopting successful behaviors and relinquishing ineffective ones. This process involves the reception of information, encouragement, and the reinforcement of instinctive reactions (Bandura, 1977). The theory posits that learning extends beyond personal experiences to include the observation of others, a form of modeling where individuals form an idea of new behaviors through observation, subsequently guiding their actions (Bandura, 1977).

Furthermore, the Social Learning Theory acknowledges the significance of the social environment in facilitating learning, emphasizing that interactions with others are essential for experiential understanding (Howorth, Smith, & Parkinson, 2012). This perspective aligns with the concept of consumer socialization theory (Moschis & Churchill, Consumer Socialization: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, 1978), which posits that socialization outcomes are influenced by environmental factors.

While much of the research on Consumer Socialization Theory (CST) has traditionally focused on young children and adolescents, recent studies have recognized that the process extends into young adulthood (Bush, Smith, & Martin, 1999). Young adults are notably engaged in social activities, actively socializing with family and peers, and increasingly using mass media (Gregorio & Sung, 2010). Adapting CST for contemporary

contexts, this study incorporates social media and internet searches as additional socialization agents. Social networking sites (SNS), defined as websites with interactive communication features, have become crucial in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors. With 60% of internet users obtaining product information through SNS, the study recognizes the significance of this additional socializing agent in the current landscape. Beyond SNS and internet searches, peer and family influences continue to be influential socialization agents, as indicated by prior research ( (Bush, Smith, & Martin, 1999; Gregorio & Sung, 2010). The inclusion of various forms of mass media in the model provides a nuanced understanding of the complex web of potential outcomes (Gregorio & Sung, 2010; Bush, Smith, & Martin, 1999; Lachance, Beaudoin, & Robitaille, 2003). This comprehensive approach allows for a detailed examination of the interplay between socialization agents and their impact on consumer behavior in the contemporary social and digital landscape.

### ***Purchasing Behavior***

Most adults' purchasing behavior is shaped early in life (Olshavsky & Granbois, 1979). Children are exposed to their caregivers from an early age, and according to conventional socialization theory, intergenerational research underscores the significance of childhood learning in influencing thinking and behavior patterns later in life (Wilkie & Moore-Shay, 1997). Notably, previous research has focused on the connection between mothers and daughters, revealing that shopping experiences with mothers continue to influence values, indicating the transmission of values across generations (Minahan & Huddleston, 2013).

The impact of mothers on the purchasing activities of their daughters is evident throughout their lives, emphasizing the enduring importance of mother-daughter relationships in the realm of consumer behavior (Minahan & Huddleston, 2013). In contrast, the role of fathers in relation to their sons is less concentrated on market activities, with family influence being equally significant for both parents and sons. Men express gratitude for their fathers' involvement in activities such as sports, camping, storytelling, or working on engines, highlighting the importance of family interactions in shaping consumer behavior (Long, Fish, Scheffler, & Hanert, 2014).

Examining the nature of children's connections with their parents, it is widely acknowledged that young people represent a critical period for consumer learning within the socialization process (Moschis, Prahato, & Mitchell, Family Communication Influences on the Development of Consumer Behavior: Some Additional Findings, 1986). The core elements of consumption socialization encompass knowledge, attitudes, and value development in consumer protection (Haq & Rahman, 2008). The family is identified as the primary setting for children's socialization regarding consumer conduct (Carruth & Skinner, 2001).

Consumer behavior patterns among family members may appear coincidental, yet the parties involved naturally and often socialize without much effort. Similarities in

consumption behavior across generations may persist, even if parents may not actively influence their children. The concept of consumer influence, rooted in individual differences, incorporates both social psychological and personality psychological traditions (Schroeder, 1996).

In contemporary society, Millennials play a significant role as the largest demographic group, surpassing the Baby Boomer generation. Given their substantial influence on the economy, understanding the buying choices of Millennials is crucial. This study, focusing on Millennial consumer behavior, involves conventional university students as participants, acknowledging the need to explore the distinct characteristics of this generation (Knobler, 2015).

Research on consumer behavior often employs university students as participants (Park & Lessig, 1977), and in this study, conventional university students and their parents/guardians are examined to understand the effects of parent-child relationships on age-related consumer behavior. Sociologists distinguish between normative and informational effects in vulnerability to interpersonal influence, with parents utilizing both these social factors to socialize their children (Higby & Mascarenhas, 1993).

Information influence involves the perception that others are more informed, leading to internalization of influence. Normative influence, on the other hand, results from conformity due to perceived individual expectations, driven by the desire for consent or fear of disagreement, compensation, or punishment (Burnkrant & Cousineau, 1975). Parental involvement in private and necessary purchases may be influenced by motives such as genuine family connection or adolescent identification with parents (Goodrich & Mangleburg, 2010).

Social Learning Theory provides a foundational explanation for how children develop consumption-related attitudes and behaviors through observation, imitation, and reinforcement within the family environment (Bandura, 1977). In the context of fast-food consumption, parents function as primary role models whose purchasing behaviors signal acceptable consumption patterns to children. Accordingly, parents' fast-food purchasing intention serves as a critical behavioral cue through which children learn preferences and normalize consumption behaviors. Consumer Socialization Theory further explains how this learning process is shaped by multiple socialization agents, including family interactions, lifestyle practices, brand exposure, and technology-mediated communication (Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Within this framework, brand loyalty reflects repeated exposure and reinforcement of brand-related attitudes, lifestyle factors capture time constraints and consumption routines that normalize fast-food usage, technological influences represent modern socialization agents facilitating information access and online engagement, and family setting embodies the normative and relational context through which consumption decisions are negotiated. Together, these theories suggest that the effects of these determinants on children's consumption intention are not direct but are transmitted through parents' purchasing intention, positioning it as a theoretically grounded mediating mechanism. By empirically testing

these relationships, the present study advances a theory-driven explanation of intergenerational fast-food consumption behavior.

### ***Factors contributing to a normative purchase behavior in Children***

#### ***Brand loyalty***

An unexpected phenomenon in contemporary consumer culture is the increasing tendency of even younger children to assert specific brand preferences for the products they use. Research indicates that a significant proportion of toddlers actively influence their parents' purchasing decisions based on brand preferences. For instance, a study revealed that 52% of 3-year-olds and 73% of 4-year-olds typically urge their parents to buy specific brands (Greninger, 2017). Such experiences are commonly witnessed, where children express strong preferences, leading to scenarios such as a young child displaying dissatisfaction in a grocery store because their preferred cereal brand was not chosen. Observations further reveal that some parents tend to capitulate to such demands, while others resist.

Researchers notes that child expenditure has witnessed significant growth, almost quadrupling every decade for more than three decades, with a tripling observed in the 1990s (Goodwin, 2016). For instance, the expenditure by children aged 4 to 12 years increased from \$2.2 billion in 1968 to \$40 billion in 2002, demonstrating a substantial rise in purchasing power. Notably, these figures only account for direct expenditures by children, excluding the considerable influence they exert on their parents' choices.

In 2012, the purchasing power of children and their impact on parental decision-making reached an astonishing \$1.2 trillion, underscoring the magnitude of their influence (Goodwin, 2016). This trend is further evidenced by parental behavior, with reports indicating that a significant majority of parents, 71 percent, seek their children's input on purchasing decisions (White, 2013). Nearly all parents allow their children to express opinions on items like toys, clothing, and food purchases, and approximately two-thirds of parents take into consideration the preferences of their children in family choices.

#### ***Life Styles***

The shift in children's purchasing power is attributed by Forbes to the parenting style of millennials, who are actively reshaping the decision-making process to incorporate their children. A significant 76% of millennial parents identify with the "Family Meeting" decision-making style, emphasizing the inclusion of the entire family in decisions, both small and large (Fromm, 2015). This approach implies that even minor purchases are deliberated with input from both parents and children. Additionally, societal changes, such as increased maternal employment and the rise in single-parent families, have bestowed children with greater responsibilities and direct purchasing power (Greninger, 2017).

Mothers, particularly those working full-time jobs, harbor a sense of guilt for their inability to spend more time with their children. In an attempt to compensate for this, they confer more decision-making power upon their children (Rindfleisch, Burroughs, & Denton, 1997). Notably, children in single-parent families wield more influence over family consumption choices, often assuming the responsibility of shopping for the entire family (ibid). White (2013) argues that the phenomenon of children influencing family purchasing decisions is not exclusive to the United States; it is a global trend evident in countries such as Israel, India, China, Fiji, and the Philippines. This observation holds implications for both parents and marketers.

Parents play a pivotal role in either restricting or facilitating the purchasing behavior of their children, depending on what is deemed best for the specific family. For marketers, the heightened influence of children on family purchasing decisions underscores the importance of considering children as a distinct market segment. It is crucial for marketers to recognize that today's children are the consumers of tomorrow and may develop into lifelong customers if engaged at an early age (Medialit, 1987; White, 2013).

While various studies have explored the extent of children's influence at different stages of the family buying decision process, this paper focuses specifically on how children, employing different tactics, influence their parents' purchasing behavior and how lifestyle factors impact this influence. There is a consensus among researchers that children exert a considerable influence on their parents' buying decisions, though debates persist regarding the specific stage at which this influence is most pronounced (Shergill, Sekhon, & Zhao, 2013). Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom (1989) contend that family members often do not agree on the extent of children's influence over family purchases, with parents being more aligned in their perception of this influence than children. This study aims to contribute to the understanding of how children influence their parents' buying decisions by examining the tactics employed and the impact of lifestyle factors (Foxman, Tansuhaj, & Ekstrom, 1989).

### ***Technological Advancements***

The process of developing consumer skills is a lifelong endeavor that begins early in life. While individuals may be considered fully functional consumers by the age of 13, the acquisition of consumer skills remains an ongoing process influenced significantly by parental guidance and modeling (Ahmad, Sidin, & Omar, 2011). Family factors, particularly parental communication and behavior regarding consumption, play a crucial role in shaping children's attitudes and skills as consumers (Kim & Lee, 1997).

Parents are identified as key socialization agents, instrumental in educating their children about rational consumption aspects and the socialization process involves various communication processes, including open interaction, cognitive reinforcement, and providing opportunities for children to observe parental consumer behavior (Moschis & Churchill, Consumer Socialization: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, 1978). Families, as a whole, serve as more than just a single socialization agent, with family members

indirectly influencing a child's relationship with other socializing agents (Moschis, Prahato, & Mitchell, Family Communication Influences on the Development of Consumer Behavior: Some Additional Findings, 1986).

The influence of parents extends to online consumer abilities, as evidenced by the correlation between parents' regular Internet usage and their children's socialization as consumers (Ahmad, Sidin, & Omar, 2011). Parental involvement in online activities, coupled with concerns about Internet hazards, shapes the learning environment for their children regarding online behavior (Sasson & Mesch, 2014). The significance of the Internet in consumer socialization spans across the entire life cycle, making parents a consistent socialization agent for individuals of all ages (Ahmad, Sidin, & Omar, 2011).

Parental communication and involvement in Internet activities also impact the quality of relationships between parents and teenagers. Positive communication reduces verbal aggressiveness among teenagers, fostering a healthier parent-child relationship (Appel, Stiglbauer, Batinic, & Holtz, 2014). Parental influence extends to family decision-making, where children actively participating in the process tend to embrace choices more and gain valuable experiences (Kim & Lee, 1997).

### ***Family setting***

Parents emerge as significant agents of economic socialization for children, playing a crucial role in introducing them to the fundamentals of the consumer world. Families serve as primary educators, imparting knowledge about money, its uses, and the principles of spending. Children learn the value of money and encounter the challenges of reconciling desires with financial constraints, fostering an early understanding of economic realities. For instance, a 5-year-old child's statement about buying ice cream even in winter reflects this early exposure and understanding.

In some families, parents encourage older children to engage in domestic work to earn income, offering practical lessons in financial responsibility. Older children, particularly in the preoperative period, exhibit more engagement with the commercial world, often influenced by video games, tablets, and content from popular vloggers.

Researchers have proposed different models for the decision-making process, with Davis and Rigaux (1974) advocating a three-phase model: problem recognition, internal and external search, and final decision. Shergill et al. (2013) explore variations in children's influence across decision stages, noting that literature generally suggests higher influence in early stages like problem recognition and information search, decreasing towards the final decision. However, conflicting views exist, with Holders and Antonides arguing for greater influence in later stages (Shergill, Sekhon, & Zhao, 2013). Szybillo and Sosanie assert a high degree of interaction between children and parents throughout the decision-making process (Swinyard & Sim, 1987).

### ***Purchase Intention***

Purchase intention is a concept rooted in behavioral science, encompassing the subjective probability that an individual will undertake a specific action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977). It represents a plan to instruct a person to behave in a certain way, reflecting motivations such as "I should do," "I am going to do," and "I will do" (Triandis, 1990). In the realm of consumer behavior, purchase intention is a vital element revealing how individuals plan to acquire a specific brand (Huang & Su, 2011). It serves as a predictive tool for future consumer choices, indicating the likelihood of actual purchases, particularly among consumers loyal to specific products and brands (Backhaus, Hillig, & Wilken, 2007).

Despite purchase intention signaling a person's immediate behavioral orientation (Hagger, Chatzisarantis, & Biddle, 2002), it does not guarantee an actual purchasing decision. Various factors, including price, quality perception, and value perception, can influence purchase intention (Dehghani & Tumer, 2015). This variable depends on several external and internal factors, as emphasized by them.

Different scholars offer diverse perspectives on purchase intention. Axelrod (1968) integrates purchase intention into other attitude measures for predicting actual purchase behavior. Jamieson and Bass (1989), Schiffman and Kanuk (2009) emphasize the impact of product values and recommendations derived from advertising or other users. Mirabi et al. (2015) view purchase intention as a complex process linked to the behavior, perceptions, and attitudes of consumers, serving as a predictive tool for the buying process. Armstrong and Kotler (2011) argue that buying intention forms before the final purchase decision.

Lee (2005) delves into the five stages of the consumer decision-making process in the context of China, particularly focusing on demographic effects such as gender, education, income, and marital status in the purchase of imported health food products. The study highlights the significant impact of family members on the consumer decision-making process, attributed to Chinese traditions emphasizing care for both young and old family members. The Five Stages Model of consumer decision-making, as proposed by Blackwell et al. (2006), includes problem/need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation.

Each stage, according to various researchers, involves need recognition, internal and external information search, analysis of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation. While Bruner (1993) and Neal and Questel (2006) emphasize need recognition, Kotler and Keller (2005) stress the importance of analyzing alternatives. Purchasing decisions, discussed by Kacen (2002), may be planned, partially, or impulse-driven. Post-purchase decisions, often overlooked, are considered crucial as they directly impact consumers' future purchases from the same supplier (Neal, Quester, & Pettigrew, 2006).

### ***Brand Loyalty and Parents' Purchasing Intention of Fast Food***

The literature converges on the substantial impact of brand loyalty on consumer behavior (Rose & Samouel, 2009). Keller's (2003) insights on brand awareness underscore the cognitive advantages it brings. This contends that children's influence on parents' purchasing, exemplified by the substantial buying power of children in 2012 (Goodwin, 2013), is intricately tied to brand loyalty. A loyal consumer, as suggested by Habib and Aslam (2014), tends to advocate for and recommend favored brands.

### ***Lifestyle and Parents' Purchasing Intention of Fast Food***

The evolving trend of even younger children expressing brand preferences (Greninger, 2017) underscores the need to explore the impact of lifestyle on purchasing intentions. Lifestyle segmentation, as advocated by Zhu et al. (2009), becomes pivotal in predicting consumer behavior. Kamakura and Wedel (1995) emphasize that lifestyle serves as a pattern to evaluate consumer behavior, providing a nuanced understanding of their choices.

### ***Technological Advancement and Parents' Purchasing Intention of Fast Food***

The changing dynamics of parental guilt and compensatory behavior Rindfleisch et al. (1997) due to Technological Advancements form the backdrop of this hypothesis. Law and Cheung (2006) talk about how technology has changed consumer decision processes in detail. While balancing work and family, technology tends to shape a parent's purchase behavior.

### ***Family Setting and Parents' Purchasing Intention of Fast Food***

Rindfleisch et al. (1997) explained of how mothers in a family setting behave compensatively. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) suggests that subjective norms of family impact positively on purchase intention. Ishaque and Tufail (2014) as well as Shergill, Sekhon, and Zhao (2013) highlighted the extended family system as a dominant system.

### ***Parents' Purchasing Intention and Consumption Intention of Children***

Beyond the direct associations, these hypotheses also examine the potential moderating impact of parents' purchasing intentions on children's consumption intentions. Children have also been noted to acquire learning behaviors through the parental consumption that Tharmi and Senthilnathan (2011) have highlighted. Parents are also very much considered the principal socialization agents of children (Ahmad et al., 2011) which attest to that part also. These parents' purchase intentions, as corroborated through researched literature, provide the basis. The recommendations of Vranesevic and Stancec (2003) on brand perception, brand loyalty, and brand advocacy further attest to this remark.

## ***Purchasing Intention of Parents and Consumption Intention of Children***

This shift focuses toward the evidence-based analysis of the role of the parents in the consumption behavior of children as presented in Šrédľ and Soukup (2011). Nayyar and Gupta (2011) analyzed the demographic variables of gender, age and income and its impact on consumer behavior. The socio-demographic segmentation as labeled by marketers is in sync with the concept that demography creates wants and needs. Hence, much is said about the correlation between parents' purchasing intentions and their children's consumption intentions.

### ***Hypothesis Development***

#### ***H1-H4: Determinants of Parents' Purchasing Intention***

##### **Brand Loyalty and Parents' Purchasing Intention**

Consumer Socialization Theory suggests that repeated exposure to brands within the family environment reinforces favorable attitudes and habitual purchasing behavior (Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Brand loyalty reflects accumulated learning, trust, and positive reinforcement, which reduce perceived risk and simplify decision-making. In the fast-food context, loyal parents are more likely to repeatedly patronize familiar brands and normalize these choices within the household. Social Learning Theory further posits that such repeated parental behaviors are observable and influential within family settings (Bandura, 1977). Accordingly, higher levels of brand loyalty are expected to increase parents' intention to purchase fast food.

H1: There is a significant relationship between brand loyalty and parents' fast-food purchasing intention.

##### ***Lifestyle and Parents' Purchasing Intention***

Lifestyle factors, such as time scarcity, work demands, and family routines, shape everyday consumption decisions. From a Consumer Socialization perspective, lifestyle reflects the structural context within which consumption practices are learned and repeated (Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Parents experiencing time pressure may rely more heavily on fast food as a convenient solution, reinforcing habitual purchasing intentions. Social Learning Theory suggests that these routine behaviors become normalized through repetition and reinforcement (Bandura, 1977). Therefore, lifestyle characteristics are expected to significantly influence parents' intention to purchase fast food.

H2: There is a significant relationship between lifestyle and parents' fast-food purchasing intention.

##### ***Technological Factors and Parents' Purchasing Intention***

Technological Advancements have expanded the role of digital platforms as socialization agents, influencing information search, brand exposure, and purchasing convenience.

Consumer Socialization Theory recognizes mass media and digital technologies as influential sources shaping consumer attitudes and behaviors (Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Online ordering platforms, mobile applications, and social media promotions can reduce effort and increase purchase frequency. From a Social Learning perspective, technology-mediated consumption behaviors are reinforced through ease, rewards, and repeated use (Bandura, 1977). Thus, technological factors are expected to positively influence parents' fast-food purchasing intention.

H3: There is a significant relationship between technological factors and parents' fast-food purchasing intention.

### ***Family Setting and Parents' Purchasing Intention***

Family setting encompasses household structure, interaction patterns, and normative expectations that guide decision-making. Social Learning Theory emphasizes that behaviors are shaped within social environments through observation and reinforcement (Bandura, 1977). In family-oriented cultures such as Sri Lanka, consumption decisions are often negotiated collectively, with parental roles strongly influencing outcomes. Consumer Socialization Theory further highlights the family as the primary context in which consumption norms are transmitted across generations (Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Accordingly, family setting is expected to significantly influence parents' intention to purchase fast food.

H4: There is a significant relationship between family setting and parents' fast-food purchasing intention.

H5–H8: Mediation by Parents' Purchasing Intention

### ***Mediating Role of Parents' Purchasing Intention***

Both Social Learning Theory and Consumer Socialization Theory emphasize that children's consumption behaviors are shaped indirectly through parental actions rather than direct exposure alone (Bandura, 1977; Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Parents act as gatekeepers who translate contextual influences—such as brand loyalty, lifestyle constraints, technological exposure, and family norms—into actual purchasing decisions. These purchasing intentions, once enacted, become observable behaviors that children internalize through imitation and reinforcement. Consequently, parents' purchasing intention is expected to function as a mediating mechanism through which these antecedent factors influence children's fast-food consumption intention.

H5: Parents' purchasing intention mediates the relationship between brand loyalty and children's consumption intention.

H6: Parents' purchasing intention mediates the relationship between lifestyle and children's consumption intention.

H7: Parents' purchasing intention mediates the relationship between technological factors and children's consumption intention.

H8: Parents' purchasing intention mediates the relationship between family setting and children's consumption intention.

H9: Parents' Purchasing Intention → Children's Consumption Intention

### ***Parents' Purchasing Intention and Children's Consumption Intention***

Social Learning Theory posits that children learn behaviors by observing significant others, particularly parents, whose actions are perceived as normative and acceptable (Bandura, 1977). When parents repeatedly demonstrate an intention to purchase fast food, children are likely to internalize these preferences and develop corresponding consumption intentions. Consumer Socialization Theory further explains that parental purchasing behavior serves as a primary instructional mechanism through which children acquire consumption-related attitudes (Moschis & Churchill, 1978). Therefore, parents' purchasing intention is expected to have a direct and positive effect on children's fast-food consumption intention.

H9: There is a significant relationship between parents' purchasing intention and children's consumption intention.

### **Methodology**

The research paradigm underlying this study rests on a positivist view. It focuses on quantitative methods to investigate factors affecting parents' intention to purchase fast food and their subsequent influence on children's consumption intention. The reasoning utilized in the study is deductive, whereby the author's predefined hypotheses set out in the literature and relevant theories are tested in a systematic manner.

The research logic and approach for this study are designed to methodically test the relationships proposed in the hypotheses. Based in a quantitative approach, the research utilizes a survey and employs various statistical techniques to analyze the data.

In the context of the reasoning strategy, the research begins with general theories and hypotheses, then shifts to testing and observing specific elements. The predefined hypotheses H1 to H9 facilitate the inquiry and focus the research onto the systematic intersection of brand loyalty, lifestyle, technology, family dynamics, parents' purchasing intentions, and children's consumption intents.

### ***Study context***

The fast-food restaurant industry in the city of Colombo, Sri Lanka, is, as in many other cities in the world, one of the key elements of the culinary habitat, and the research attempts to analyze the phenomena and the complex relations.

**Population and Sampling**

The focus population is parents buying fast food for children along with children consuming fast food fillers in the city of Colombo. After considering the necessary statistical considerations, a sample of 200 respondents was found to be appropriate for the study as it sufficiently represents the population.

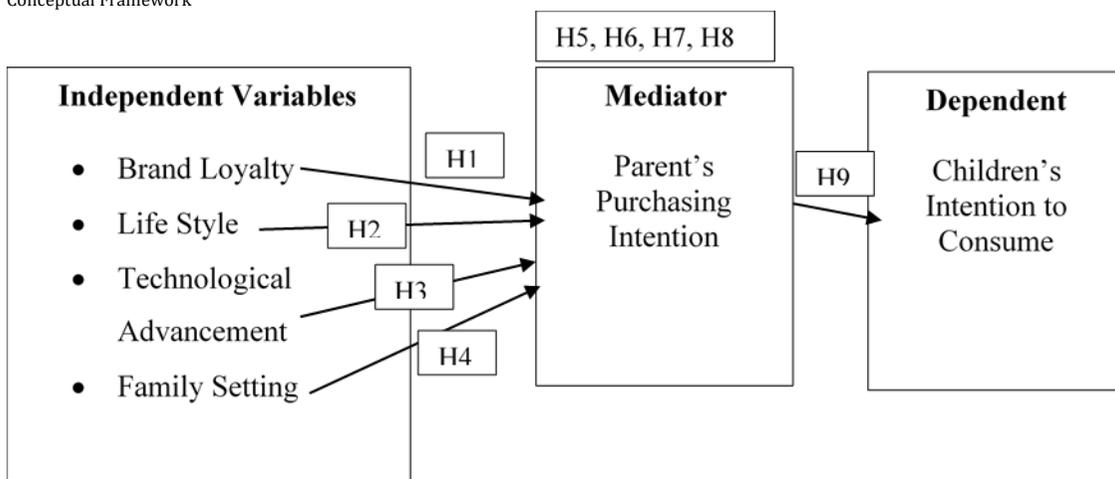
**Data Analysis**

The data that has been formulated passes extreme scrutiny. The data is then described using statistical approaches and structural organization. Dependent and independent structure features will be further assessed using correlational and regression approaches for population sampling formulation.

For the analyses of the data collected, the SPSS software has been used. The study follows ethical norms stipulated in the Helsinki Declaration, concerning privacy and the welfare of study subjects and steps are taken to improve the validity and reliability of the study.

**Conceptual Framework**

Figure 1  
Conceptual Framework



**Measurement and Instrumentation**

Data for this study were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire developed based on established scales from prior empirical studies. All constructs were measured using multi-item scales to enhance measurement accuracy. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

Brand Loyalty was measured using two items adapted from prior branding and consumer behavior research (Keller, 2003; Rose & Samouel, 2009). Lifestyle was measured using

four items, capturing time pressure, work–life balance, and consumption routines, adapted from lifestyle segmentation studies (Kamakura & Wedel, 1995; Zhu et al., 2009). Technological Factors were measured using five items reflecting online information search, digital ordering, and technology-enabled convenience, adapted from studies on technology and consumer behavior (Law & Cheung, 2006; Ahmad et al., 2011). Family Setting was measured using five items adapted from family decision-making and consumer socialization literature (Moschis & Churchill, 1978; Shergill et al., 2013).

Parents' Purchasing Intention was measured using three items adapted from purchase intention literature (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1977; Mirabi et al., 2015), while Children's Consumption Intention was measured using four items reflecting intended frequency and preference for fast-food consumption, adapted from prior studies on food consumption behavior (Huang & Su, 2011; Nayyar & Gupta, 2011).

Reliability of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with values ranging from 0.696 to 0.918, indicating acceptable to excellent internal consistency. Content validity was ensured by adapting measurement items from well-established prior studies and reviewing them for contextual relevance to Sri Lanka. Construct validity was assessed through Principal Component Analysis (PCA), supported by an acceptable Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) value (0.690) and a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ( $p < 0.05$ ), confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis.

## Data Analysis

Following an initial screening, the dataset was further scrutinized to validate against missing cases, revealing no instances of such discrepancies. Consequently, with an absence of identifiable errors in the acquired dataset, all 200 cases were deemed suitable for subsequent analyses.

Table 1  
Summary of the descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Brand Loyalty	200	1.00	5.00	3.7579	.69324
Lifestyle	200	2.69	5.23	3.7588	.43039
Technological Advancement	200	2.34	4.74	3.7539	.55307
Family Setting	200	2.34	5.30	3.8854	.60448
Parents_Purchasing _Intention	200	2.34	5.30	3.8228	.60882
Children_Consumpt ion_Intention	200	3.00	5.00	4.2900	.66943
Valid N (listwise)	200				

This table 2, provides an overview of the central tendencies and variations across various dimensions, including Brand Loyalty, Lifestyle, Technological Advancement, Family Setting, Parents' Purchasing Intention, and Children's Consumption Intention. The mean values for all dimensions exceed the midpoint of the Likert scale, indicating generally positive perceptions among respondents. The standard deviations reflect the degree of variability in responses, with Brand Loyalty showing the highest variability. This comprehensive analysis sets the stage for a detailed examination of each dimension's impact on respondents' attitudes and behaviors.

Figure 2:  
Normality Test

**Tests of Normality**

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Life_Style	.061	200	.000	.973	200	.001
Technical_Knowledge	.105	200	.000	.972	200	.000
Family_Setting	.064	200	.048	.990	200	.000
Parents_Purchasing_Intention	.064	200	.043	.982	200	.010
Children_Consumption_Intention	.266	200	.000	.777	200	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The normality tests provide insights into the distributional characteristics of the variables within sample. In this case, the sample size is 200, which is relatively large. It's important to note that with larger sample sizes, statistical tests for normality may be more sensitive and might detect deviations from normality that are not practically significant.

Refers to the figure 2 all variables have small p-values in both tests suggest that the variables don't follow a normal distribution. However, with a sample size of 200, the results might be influenced by the large sample.

**Reliability**

Reliability analysis assesses the consistency of multiple measurements of variables, ensuring that responses to measures remain relatively stable across different time periods. To gauge the reliability of the measurement scale employed in this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was utilized. With a lower limit typically set at 0.7, this widely accepted tool for reliability analysis helps verify the stability and consistency of measurements, aligning with established standards in the field (Hair, Black, Babin, & Ander, 2009).

Table 3:  
Reliability Test

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
<b>Life Style</b>	0.736	4
<b>Technological Advancement</b>	0.764	5
<b>Family Setting</b>	0.794	5
<b>Parents Purchase Intention</b>	0.918	3
<b>Children's consumption Intention</b>	0.696	4
<b>Customer purchasing decision</b>	0.712	4
<b>Brand Loyalty</b>	0.743	2

Considering above table 2, all items in the reliability assessment, the alpha coefficient indicates the variables within the all variable domain are moderately consistent in internal structure.

### **Validity**

The study's validity assessment encompassed three key dimensions: content validity, criterion validity, and construct validity. Convergent validity and discriminant validity were subsequently scrutinized, utilizing the aforementioned statistical analyses, to fortify the construct validity of the study.

Content validity pertains to the degree to which the measurements in a study effectively capture a specific construct or concept under consideration, thereby delineating the representational fidelity of the study's purpose (Roger, 2001). To ensure the relevance of the study's findings, the selected measures were drawn from the same content domain as previous studies.

Figure 4:  
Principal Component Analysis

<b>Total Variance Explained</b>						
Component	Total	Initial Eigenvalues		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
		% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1.258	31.456	31.456	1.258	31.456	31.456
2	1.045	26.134	57.590	1.045	26.134	57.590
3	.953	23.837	81.426			
4	.743	18.574	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The Total Variance Explained table presents the results of Principal Component Analysis (PCA), indicating the proportion of variance accounted for by each component. In this analysis, two components were extracted. The initial eigenvalues demonstrate the variance associated with each component before extraction, and the Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings represent the variance retained after extraction (Figure 3).

The first component explains 31.456% of the total variance, while the second component contributes an additional 26.134%. Together, these two components cumulatively explain 57.590% of the total variance. This implies that the selected variables, particularly those related to Brand Loyalty, exhibit a substantial degree of variability that is captured by the extracted components.

The Component Matrix provides the factor loadings for each variable on the extracted components. The values in the matrix indicate the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables and the components. For example, Brand\_Loyalty\_Question01 and Brand\_Loyalty\_Question03 have high loadings on Component 1, while Brand\_Loyalty\_Question02 and Brand\_Loyalty\_Question04 have higher loadings on Component 2.

These findings suggest that the variables related to brand loyalty contribute meaningfully to the identified components, supporting the validity of the dataset. The extraction method used in PCA aids in revealing underlying patterns and relationships in the data, confirming the construct validity of the measured variables.

Figure 5:  
KMO Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.690
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	13.920
	df	6
	Sig.	.031

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy for the data is 0.690, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded an approximate chi-square value of 13.920 with 6 degrees of freedom, resulting in a significance level of 0.031 (Figure 4). The KMO measure assesses the suitability of data for conducting factor analysis, with values closer to 1 indicating better suitability. The obtained KMO value of 0.690 suggests a moderate level of sampling adequacy, implying that the data may be suitable for factor analysis. Additionally, the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity being statistically significant ( $p = 0.031$ ) indicates that correlations between variables are sufficiently different from zero, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix. Researcher can cautiously proceed with factor analysis based on these results.

### ***Regression Assumption Testing***

Prior to conducting regression analyses, key statistical assumptions were examined to ensure the strength of the results. Linearity was assessed through visual inspection of scatterplots between independent variables and dependent variables, which indicated approximately linear relationships suitable for regression analysis. Multicollinearity was

evaluated using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values. All VIF values were below the commonly accepted threshold of 5, and tolerance values exceeded 0.20, indicating that multicollinearity was not a concern among the predictor variables.

In addition, normality of residuals was assessed using histogram and normal probability (P-P) plots of standardized residuals, which showed acceptable approximation to normality. Homoscedasticity was examined through residual scatterplots, revealing no severe patterns of heteroscedasticity. Given the sample size (N = 200), minor deviations from normality were not considered problematic, as regression analysis is robust under large-sample conditions. Overall, the diagnostic tests confirmed that the data met the key assumptions required for regression analysis, supporting the validity of the hypothesis testing results.

**Demographic information**

**Parents Age**

As presented in figure 5, illustrates the distribution of responses from parents categorized by age. The data reveals that 36.5% of the respondents fall within the age range of 21-30 years, while a slightly higher percentage, 38.5%, belong to the 31-40 years category. Furthermore, the analysis includes respondents aged 41-50 years, constituting 25.0% of the total.

Figure 6:  
Parents Age

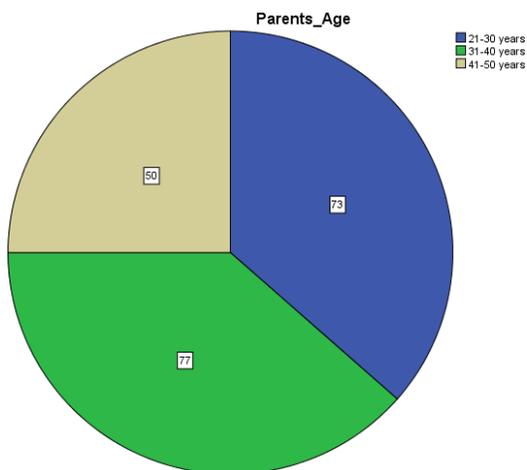


Figure 7:  
Gender of Respondents

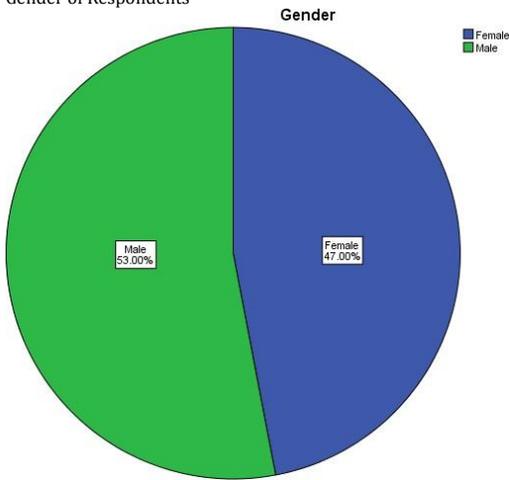
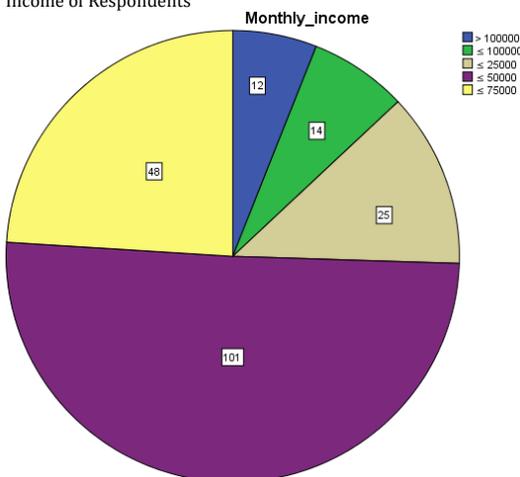


Figure 6 an insightful analysis of the distribution of responses based on gender. The data reveals that 47% of the respondents identified as female, whereas 53% identified as male.

**Monthly Income of Parents**

It is evident that the majority of participants fall within the lower income brackets, with 50.5% having a monthly income of less than or equal to Rs. 50,000. Additionally, 24% of respondents reported an income between Rs. 50,000 and Rs. 75,000. In contrast, smaller proportions of participants were distributed across higher income categories, with 12.5% earning less than or equal to Rs. 25,000, 7% falling within the Rs. 75,000 to Rs. 100,000 range, and 6% reporting an income exceeding Rs. 100,000. This distribution suggests that a significant portion of respondents has a monthly income below Rs. 50,000, highlighting the economic diversity among the survey participants.

Figure 8:  
Income of Respondents



## ***Eating Habits***

Upon investigating the eating habits of parents, the analysis reveals that the majority of respondents, constituting 78.5% of the sample size, identify as non-vegetarian. In contrast, 21.5% of participants follow a vegetarian diet. This distribution, illustrated in Figure 8, underscores the prevalence of non-vegetarian preferences among the surveyed parents.

## ***Hypothesis Testing***

According to the above Table 10 correlation study, Brand Loyalty, Life Style, Technological Advancement and Family Setting all exhibits a sizable positive connection with Parents purchasing Intention. And Parents purchasing Intention exhibits a sizable positive connection with Children consumption intention.

### ***H1: There is a significant relationship between Brand loyalty and Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food.***

According to the above table, Brand loyalty has a coefficient of 0.651 and a p- value of 0.000, indicating the significant and strong relationship with the Purchasing Intention of Parents on fast food. Therefore, H1 can be accepted

Figure 9:  
Eating Habits

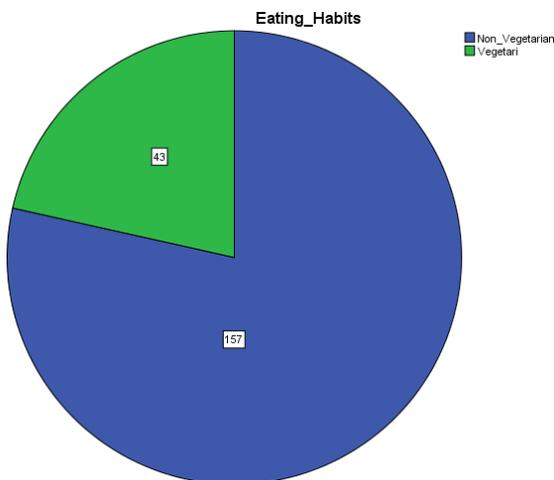


Table 3  
Correlations

		Brand Loyalty	Lifestyle	Technological Advancement	Family Setting	Parents Purchasing Intention	Children Consumption Intention
	Pearson Correlation	1	.511**	.215**	.315**	.651**	.547**
<b>Brand Loyalty</b>	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.002	.000	.000	.000
	Pearson Correlation	.511**	1	.308**	.222**	.847**	.767**
<b>Lifestyle</b>	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.002	.000	.000
	Pearson Correlation	.215**	.308**	1	.028	.419**	.355**
<b>Technological Advancement</b>	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000		.696	.000	.000
	Pearson Correlation	.315**	.222**	.028	1	.275**	.223**
<b>Family Setting</b>	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.002	.696		.000	.001
	Pearson Correlation	.651**	.847**	.419**	.275**	1	.897**
<b>Parents Purchasing intention</b>	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	Pearson Correlation	.547**	.767**	.355**	.223**	.897**	1
<b>Children Consumption Intention</b>	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	

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

***H2: There is a significant relationship between Life Style and Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food.***

According to the above table, Life Style has a Correlation coefficients of 0.847 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating the significant and strong relationship with the Purchasing Intention of Parents on fast food. Therefore, H2 can be accepted

***H3: There is a significant relationship between Technological Advancement and Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food.***

According to the above table, Technological Advancement has a Correlation coefficients of 0.419 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating the significant and strong relationship with the Purchasing Intention of Parents on fast food. Therefore, H3 can be accepted

***H4: There is a significant relationship between Family setting and Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food.***

According to the above table, Family setting has a Correlation coefficients of 0.275 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating the significant and strong relationship with the Purchasing Intention of Parents on fast food. Therefore, H4 can be accepted

**H5: Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food is mediating the relationship between Brand loyalty and consumptions Intention of Children.**

Table 4:  
Mediating the relationship between Brand loyalty and consumptions Intention of Children

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.675	.181		9.250	.000
Brand_Loyalty	.572	.047	.651	12.064	.000

**a. Dependent Variable: Parents\_Purchasing\_Intention**

Table 5:  
Mediating the relationship between Brand loyalty and consumptions Intention of Children

Coefficientsa					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.577	.138		4.170	.000
Brand_Loyalty	-.061	.040	-.063	-1.537	.126
Parents_Purchasing_Intention	1.032	.045	.938	22.732	.000

**a. Dependent Variable: Children\_Consumption\_Intention**

Figure 10: Eating Habits

Input:	Test statistic:	Std. Error:	p-value:
a <input type="text" value=".380"/>	Sobel test: <input type="text" value="6.25496791"/>	<input type="text" value="0.06056946"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
b <input type="text" value=".997"/>	Aroian test: <input type="text" value="6.25068723"/>	<input type="text" value="0.06061094"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
s <sub>a</sub> <input type="text" value=".059"/>	Goodman test: <input type="text" value="6.2592574"/>	<input type="text" value="0.06052795"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
s <sub>b</sub> <input type="text" value=".038"/>	<input type="button" value="Reset all"/>	<input type="button" value="Calculate"/>	

According to the above table, the most important parameter here is the p-value which in this case is less than 0.05 therefore we can conclude that Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food has the significant and strong mediating relationship between Brand loyalty and consumptions Intention of Children. Therefore, H5 can be accepted (p-value ≤ 0.05). The results indicate that brand loyalty significantly predicts parents' purchasing intention, and parents' purchasing intention, in turn, significantly predicts children's consumption intention. When parents' purchasing intention is included in the model, the direct effect of the independent variable on children's consumption intention is reduced and becomes statistically non-significant, indicating the presence of an indirect effect. These findings provide evidence of full mediation, suggesting that parents' purchasing intention serves as the primary mechanism through which the independent variable influences children's consumption intention.

**H6: Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food is mediating the relationship between Life Style and consumptions Intention of Children.**

Table 6:  
Mediating the relationship between Life Style and consumptions Intention of Children.

<b>Coefficientsa</b>					
<b>Model</b>	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
<b>1</b> (Constant)	-.682	.202		-3.373	.001
Life_Style	1.198	.053	.847	22.435	.000

**a. Dependent Variable: Parents\_Purchasing\_Intention**

Table 7:  
Mediating the relationship between Brand loyalty and consumptions Intention of Children

<b>Coefficientsa</b>					
<b>Model</b>	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
<b>1</b> (Constant)	.460	.191		2.412	.017
Life_Style	.041	.092	.026	.447	.656
Parents_Purchasing_Intention	.961	.065	.874	14.749	.000

**a. Dependent Variable: Children\_Consumption\_Intention**

Figure 11:  
Eating Habits

Input:		Test statistic:	Std. Error:	p-value:
a	1.198	Sobel test: 12.37296367	0.09304788	0
b	.961	Aroian test: 12.36449212	0.09311163	0
s <sub>a</sub>	.053	Goodman test: 12.38145266	0.09298408	0
s <sub>b</sub>	.065	Reset all	Calculate	

According to the above table, the most important parameter here is the p-value which in this case is less than 0.05 therefore we can conclude that Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food has the significant and strong mediating relationship between Life Style and consumptions Intention of Children. Therefore, H6 can be accepted (p-value ≤ 0.05).

The results indicate that the Life Style significantly predicts parents' purchasing intention, and parents' purchasing intention, in turn, significantly predicts children's consumption intention. When parents' purchasing intention is included in the model, the direct effect of the independent variable on children's consumption intention is reduced and becomes statistically non-significant, indicating the presence of an indirect effect. These findings provide evidence of full mediation, suggesting that parents' purchasing intention serves as the primary mechanism through which the independent variable influences children's consumption intention.

**H7: Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food is mediating the relationship between Technological Advancement and consumptions Intention of Children.**

Table 8  
Mediating the relationship between Technological Advancement and consumptions Intention of Children

Coefficientsa					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.300	.227		10.135	.000
Parents_Purchasing_Intention	.380	.059	.419	6.486	.000

Coefficientsa					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.588	.165		3.564	.000
Parents_Purchasing_Intention	.997	.038	.907	26.170	.000
Technical_Knowledge	-.030	.042	-.024	-7.07	.481

**a. Dependent Variable: Children\_Consumption\_Intention**

Figure 12:  
Eating Habits

Input:	Test statistic:	Std. Error:	p-value:
a .380	Sobel test: 6.25496791	0.06056946	0
b .997	Aroian test: 6.25068723	0.06061094	0
s <sub>a</sub> .059	Goodman test: 6.2592574	0.06052795	0
s <sub>b</sub> .038	Reset all	Calculate	

According to the above table, It The most important parameter here is the p-value which in this case is less than 0.05 therefore we can conclude that Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food has the significant and strong mediating relationship between Technological Advancements and consumptions Intention of Children. Therefore, H7 can be accepted (p-value ≤ 0.05).

The results indicate that the Technological Advancement significantly predicts parents' purchasing intention, and parents' purchasing intention, in turn, significantly predicts children's consumption intention. When parents' purchasing intention is included in the model, the direct effect of the independent variable on children's consumption intention is reduced and becomes statistically non-significant, indicating the presence of an indirect effect. These findings provide evidence of full mediation, suggesting that parents' purchasing intention serves as the primary mechanism through which the independent variable influences children's consumption intention.

**H8: Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food is mediating the relationship between Family setting and consumptions Intention of Children.**

<b>Coefficientsa</b>					
<b>Model</b>	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
	<b>1</b> (Constant)	.600	.169		
Parents_Purchasing_Intention	.994	.036	.904	27.613	.000
Family_Setting	-.028	.036	-.025	-.770	.442

**a. Dependent Variable: Children\_Consumption\_Intention**

According to the above table, the most important parameter here is the p-value which in this case is less than 0.05 therefore we can conclude that Parents' Purchasing Intention of fast food has the significant and strong mediating relationship between family setting and consumptions Intention of Children. Therefore, H8 can be accepted (p-value ≤ 0.05).

Table 9  
Mediating the relationship between Family setting and consumptions Intention of Children.

<b>Coefficientsa</b>					
<b>Model</b>	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
	<b>1</b> (Constant)	2.842	.263		
Parents_Purchasing_Intention	.273	.068	.275	4.022	.000

Table 10:  
Mediating the relationship between Technological Advancement and consumptions Intention of Children

Input:		Test statistic:	Std. Error:	p-value:
a	.273	Sobel test: 3.97292833	0.06830277	0.00007099
b	.994	Aroian test: 3.9703791	0.06834662	0.00007176
s <sub>a</sub>	.068	Goodman test: 3.97548248	0.06825888	0.00007024
s <sub>b</sub>	.036	Reset all	Calculate	

The results indicate that the Family Setting significantly predicts parents' purchasing intention, and parents' purchasing intention, in turn, significantly predicts children's consumption intention. When parents' purchasing intention is included in the model, the direct effect of the independent variable on children's consumption intention is reduced and becomes statistically non-significant, indicating the presence of an indirect effect. These findings provide evidence of full mediation, suggesting that parents' purchasing

intention serves as the primary mechanism through which the independent variable influences children’s consumption intention.

***H9: There is a significant relationship between Purchasing Intention of Parents and consumptions Intention of Children***

According to the above table, Purchasing Intention of Parents has a coefficient regression of 0.897 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating the significant and strong relationship with the consumptions Intention of Children on fast food. Therefore, H9 can be accepted.

***Mediation Analysis Procedure***

To strictly test the proposed mediation hypotheses, the study followed a regression-based mediation approach grounded in the logic proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986), supplemented by significance testing of indirect paths. Mediation was examined by estimating a series of regression models to assess: (1) the effect of each independent variable (brand loyalty, lifestyle, technological factors, and family setting) on the mediator (parents’ purchasing intention); (2) the effect of the mediator on the dependent variable (children’s consumption intention); and (3) the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable both in the presence and absence of the mediator. Mediation was inferred when the independent variable significantly predicted the mediator, the mediator significantly predicted the dependent variable, and the direct effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable was reduced or became non-significant after inclusion of the mediator. This approach is consistent with established mediation testing practices in behavioural and consumer research and allows for examination of indirect effects through parents’ purchasing intention.

Table 8  
Summary of the Hypothesis Testing

	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
H <sub>1</sub>	Brand Loyalty has a significant and strong relationship with Parents' Purchasing Intention (coefficient = 0.651, p-value = 0.000).	H <sub>1</sub> is accepted.
H <sub>2</sub>	Lifestyle has a significant and strong relationship with Parents' Purchasing Intention (coefficient = 0.847, p-value = 0.000).	H <sub>2</sub> is accepted.
H <sub>3</sub>	Technological Advancement has a significant and strong relationship with Parents' Purchasing Intention (coefficient = 0.419, p-value = 0.000).	H <sub>3</sub> is accepted.
H <sub>4</sub>	Family setting has a significant and strong relationship with Parents' Purchasing Intention (coefficient = 0.275, p-value = 0.000).	H <sub>4</sub> is accepted.
H <sub>5</sub>	Mediation analysis indicates a significant and strong mediating relationship (p-value ≤ 0.05).	H <sub>5</sub> is accepted.

H <sub>6</sub>	Mediation analysis indicates a significant and strong mediating relationship (p-value ≤ 0.05).	H <sub>6</sub> is accepted.
H <sub>7</sub>	Mediation analysis indicates a significant and strong mediating relationship (p-value ≤ 0.05).	H <sub>7</sub> is accepted.
H <sub>8</sub>	Mediation analysis indicates a significant and strong mediating relationship (p-value ≤ 0.05).	H <sub>8</sub> is accepted.
H <sub>9</sub>	Purchasing Intention of Parents has a significant and strong relationship with Consumption Intention of Children (coefficient = 0.897, p-value = 0.000).	H <sub>9</sub> is accepted.

While the regression-based mediation analysis provides meaningful insights into the indirect relationships among the study variables, future research could further enhance methodological consistency by employing bootstrapping techniques or structural equation modelling to estimate indirect effects and confidence intervals. Nevertheless, the current analytical approach aligns with widely accepted mediation testing practices in social science research and offers a theoretically grounded examination of the proposed relationships.

The relationships identified in this study are based on correlational and regression analyses and should therefore be interpreted as associational rather than causal. While the proposed conceptual model is theoretically grounded in Social Learning Theory and Consumer Socialization Theory, the cross-sectional nature of the data limits the ability to draw definitive causal conclusions. Furthermore, the mediation analysis was conducted using a regression-based approach to examine indirect relationships through parents' purchasing intention; however, indirect effect sizes and bootstrapped confidence intervals were not estimated. As such, the mediation findings should be interpreted as theoretically consistent and indicative of indirect pathways, rather than as conclusive evidence of causal mediation. Future studies employing longitudinal designs, bootstrapping techniques, or structural equation modelling would provide stronger inferential support for causal and mediation claims.

## **Summary and Conclusion**

### ***Results and Conclusion***

The study's findings are aligned with the existing literature, which emphasizes the significant influence of family dynamics, socialization agents, and various factors on consumer behaviour. The results support the notion that children play a relevant role in family purchasing decisions, and family structure significantly impacts the level of influence that children have over their family. The document also acknowledges the limitations of the study, such as the small sample size and the constraints imposed by

travel restrictions and social distancing, which affected direct interviews and observations. The researcher recommends conducting extensive research in a non-academic context to address these limitations.

The correlation analysis aimed to explore relationships between key factors, including brand loyalty, lifestyle, Technological Advancement, family setting, parents' purchasing intention, and children's consumption intention. The findings revealed significant positive correlations between brand loyalty, lifestyle, Technological Advancement, and family setting with parents' purchasing intention. Notably, the strongest correlation was observed between parents' purchasing intention and children's consumption intention ( $r = 0.897$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), underscoring the critical role of parental decisions in shaping their children's eating habits.

The results of this study are consistent with the literature concerning the impact of multifarious factors on consumer habits, particularly the consumption of fast food. There is evidence of considerable brand loyalty as well as lifestyle factors impacting purchase decisions in the food market (Bailey, Charles, & Jasmine, 1999; Kacen & Lee, 2002). Parents' purchase intention and children's consumption intention demonstrate the interrelatedness of family influence on food choice.

The constructs in this study's hypotheses were aimed at brand loyalty, lifestyle, technical competence, family environment, and parents' purchase intention. There was evidence to support all hypotheses, showing strong and positive relationships. Parents' purchase intention was influenced positively and significantly by brand loyalty, lifestyle, technical competence, and family environment. Such results are in tandem with the current literature which argues that these elements are crucial to consumer behaviour in the fast-food industry (Blackwell, Miniard, & Engel, 2006; Kim & Lee, 1997).

The goal of mediation analysis was to determine whether the intention to purchase parents served as a mediator between several factors and the intention of children to consume certain items. The outcomes of this analysis were supportive of the mediation hypotheses and showed that the intention to purchase parents had a mediation effect on the brand loyalty, lifestyle, Technological Advancement, and family setting children consumption intention. This means that parents are mediators with respect to some factors and the food choices made by children.

These mediation findings are in line with other studies that have highlighted the significance of parental influence on children's actions, especially on the food that they eat (Mirabi, Akbariyeh, & Tahmasebifard, 2015; Long, Fish, Scheffler, & Hanert, 2014). The findings of this study emphasized the need for parental-focused strategies and campaigns to influence children's eating behaviours.

The identified positive associations of brand loyalty, lifestyle and Technological Advancement, and family setting with parents' intention to purchase provide clear

guidance for marketers. Fostering brand loyalty, creating favourable lifestyle choices, using appropriate technology, and family-oriented settings will enhance fast-food purchase intentions among parents.

The mediation analysis highlights the importance of parents in determining children's intention to purchase. Since parents' purchasing intentions mediate the influence of certain criteria on a child's decision, any action or campaign should address family decision-making as an interconnected unit. Attempts to change parents' purchase intentions may change the preference of their children in certain dietary practices.

While the findings from this research are useful, some shortcomings deserve to be pointed out. The way this research is designed limits the possibility of making causal claims. Future research should incorporate longitudinal methods to improve the understanding of how these factors interact over time. In addition, the findings of this research were place specific, in this case Colombo, thus may not be generalizable. More research on different cultures as well as demographic factors will allow these findings to be more widely applicable.

### ***Conclusion***

In the rapidly evolving landscape of the fast-food industry, understanding the intricacies of consumer behaviour has become paramount for stakeholders, particularly advertisers and food delivery services. The surge in fast-food consumption, as reported by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) (2006), has intensified the focus on consumers' expectations, making it imperative to scrutinize the factors propelling this market expansion. This study delves into the influential variables of brand loyalty, lifestyles, Technological Advancements, and family setting, seeking to unravel their impact on parents' purchasing intentions and, consequently, children's consumption of fast food in Colombo.

Examining the nexus between these variables, the study identified several noteworthy trends. Brand loyalty emerged as a significant factor influencing both parents' purchasing intentions and children's consumption of fast food. This aligns with existing research, such as Greninger's (2017) study, which highlighted children's persuasive role in influencing specific brand choices. The study underscores the evolving dynamics in decision-making processes within families, attributing the shift to millennial parenting styles that emphasize family-centric decision-making.

In Colombo, parent buying intentions and child consumption behaviour are profoundly influenced by personal lifestyle choices. This parallels the trend showing that parents, especially those in the millennial cohort, seem to practice the collaborative decision-making style described as the Family Meeting style (Fromm, 2015). This calls for modifying advertising strategies to consider the 'lifestyle variety' within the target population.

Also, the internet as a technological factor was shown to influence parent buying intentions and child consumption of fast food. This develops the understanding of the internet's impact on family behaviour as the socialization of consumption practices performed by both parents and children (Ahmad, Sidin, & Omar, 2011). As family behaviour continues to be influenced by newer technologies, advertisers are advised to apply the same technological strategies to communicate with the market.

Family environment, which focuses on the configuration, interaction, and relationships of the family members, was also noted as an important factor. The research established that family environment affects and controls the intention of the parents to buy and also controls the children's patterns of consumption. This is also supported by the research of Ishaque and Tufail (2014), which shows the influence of family structure on the degree of influence children exercise within the family circle. Marketers must understand the different types of family arrangements and ensure that their communication addresses these different configurations (Šrédl & Soukup, 2011).

### ***Recommendation***

The results from the study show that it is crucial to market healthy food products to the parents who recognize the advantages of such food choices for their children. As food marketers aim to meet the health-driven needs of parents, there are several strategies that should be considered in order to increase the impact on buyers' intentions to purchase and improve population health.

**The Promotion of Healthy Products:** Marketers need to recognize the perception parents have of healthy food products. Advertising strategies should show the constructive steps that are possible for young consumers to achieve their health objectives.

**Assessment of Additional Determinants:** While the study concentrates on crucial aspects, such as brand loyalty, lifestyle, and technological and family structures, future studies should uncover more possible determinants of consumer purchasing intentions.

**Partnership with Educational Programs:** Bundling marketing and promotion partnerships with educational programs is a strategy worth pursuing. Implementation of these programs as part of a school curriculum and educational extracurricular activities would improve children's knowledge on the importance of eating healthy.

**Price Reduction Strategies:** Price is still a major consideration when making a purchase. Marketers can devise strategies aimed at lowering pricing levels of healthy food products to widen the target market.

**Restriction on the marketing of fast foods.** Considering the adverse consequences of fast foods on the health condition of children, it is vital to implement more restriction on the advertisement of these foods within mass media.

Nutritional Content Disclosure. Bringing laws into effect which require the disclosure of nutritional information on food packaging is the second most important step. Nutrition facts are one of the bases on which many buying decisions are made.

Government Interventions - The government must take the initiative to alleviate the burden of the price of basic food items so that healthy food is affordable to the majority of the population.

Integration into Educational Curriculum - The inclusion of chapters on food and nutrition in school textbooks is a positive step.

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