



MSC in Marketing

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Factors influencing purchasing decisions of baby care products in the
Icelandic market

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Declaration of Research Work Integrity

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature of any degree. This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

By signing the present document, I confirm and agree that I have read RU's ethics code of conduct and fully understand the consequences of violating these rules in regards of my thesis.

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Signature



Recoverable Signature

X A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alexandra Frank', written over a horizontal line.

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Signed by: f0cd99ae-6405-49fb-a896-7dcb813fe710

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Abstract

In regard to babies, manufacturers are continuously researching ways to develop the most state-of-the-art baby care products. Parents and other baby product consumers are concerned with purchasing the best products in the marketplace and doing everything they can to ensure the health and safety of the baby. But how do baby product consumers determine which products are the best and which ones are not going to deliver the value in which they are seeking? Do they merely guess or are they looking carefully, researching the attributes and factors that go in to finding the optimal product for the child they are purchasing for?

The aim of this article is to discover what consumer's priorities are in the Icelandic market when choosing to purchase baby care products and the most influential factors in that decision. The fundamental purpose of this it is to discover how such factors are behind the success of the purchase decision making process. Understanding the consumers' perceptions, behavior and priorities concerning baby care products is an important topic. There is a lack of information about the consumers' perceptions and what factors determining their buying behavior about baby care products in Iceland.

This study uses the mixed method exploratory approach, a strategic combination of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The targeted sample is parents and other baby product consumers who have the experience of buying baby care products in Iceland. The size of the sample is 305 participants, including fathers, mothers, family, and friends of babies of primarily 0-4 years in age. The participants included are of random selection to collect the most diverse and non-biased data. This includes participants who are both Icelandic and international permanent residents of Iceland. The research is designed as a questionnaire collected in Google Forms, as well as five one-on-one interviews.

The results indicated that ingredients of products, environmental concern, price, natural and organic properties of products were significantly important factors influencing their purchasing decision. Products attributes showed a significantly higher influence than brand influence on the purchasing decisions. Moreover, respondents claimed that they were satisfied overall with the quality of products in Iceland. However, high prices, and low selection was a primary concern.

Keywords--- Baby Care Products, Purchasing Factors, Consumer Behavior, Quality Perception, Customer Satisfaction.

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Chapter 1

1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Baby care products refers to the products which are necessary for taking personal care of a baby. Baby care products mostly include baby skin care, baby hair care products, bathing products, baby toiletries and baby food and beverages (MarketWatch, n.d.). This study is used to understand and examine the current behavior and factors towards purchasing baby care products. Understanding how the current baby care product consumer makes their purchasing decisions is essential knowledge to the baby product industry. A fundamental reason why the baby care product industry was chosen in this study was because of the author's own experience of purchasing baby care products as a parent in Iceland and listening to other parents in Iceland regarding their preferences and priorities when decided on purchasing a product. In order to create a successful strategy for each product, baby care products companies need to understand what type of information a consumer needs to make their buying decisions (Subrahmanyam & Gomez-Arias, 2008). Discovering how consumers behave when they are purchasing items and what priorities they have are of extremely high value to marketers, manufacturers, stores and to the customer themselves, in order to maximize the efficiency of conveying the value of the products to the customers.

1.2 Problem Statement

This study analyses the factors that are behind the success of the purchase decision making process by gathering concrete data from real customers in order to better understand their priorities, needs and preferences in the baby care product marketing in Iceland. There is very little research done in Iceland regarding what factors influence purchase decisions in the baby product market. As of today, no concrete research has been conducted identifying these important primary factors which influence the customer's final decision to buy or rebuy the product. A lack of this knowledge keeps manufacturers, shop owners, and product developers in question of what the baby care product customer prioritizes when choosing a product. The idea of this study was sparked from the author's own experience as a new parent in Iceland and inspired from the experiences of other parents in the Icelandic community.

Understanding customer needs plays a central role in the process of creating an innovation (Kozludzhova, 2018). Without any current information on this topic, manufacturers, stores, and marketers may find it difficult to accurately convey the value of each product to the consumer in Iceland.

1.3 Aims and purpose of the Study

This study aims to discover and give a comprehensive understanding of which factors influence purchase decisions of baby care products in the Icelandic market to store managers, business leaders, manufacturers, marketers, and the like. It will aid in identifying gaps in the market, products that are needed, products that are obsolete, and also how to deliver the value of those products better to the consumers in order to meet their needs. The baby products included in this study will cover products intended to be used on infants and children ages 0-4 years old. The product types are baby food/snacks/formula, diapers, wipes, oral hygiene, bath shampoo, body wash, lotions, and creams.

By identifying and understanding the factors that influence their customers, brands have the opportunity to develop a strategy, a marketing message (Unique Value Proposition) and advertising campaigns more efficient and more in line with the needs and ways of thinking of their target consumers, a real asset to better meet the needs of its customers and increase sales (Ramya & Ali, 2016). In order to follow through in the purchase decision, the product must fulfill the basic needs of the consumer. Moreover, the product must solve problems and/or provide benefits that are better than its competitors (Bhakat, & Muruganatham, 2013). According to the study by Ramya & Ali, there are seven questions that support any understanding of consumer behavior.

- 1) Who is the market and what is the extent of their power with regard to the organization?
- 2) What do they buy?
- 3) Why do they buy?
- 4) Who is involved in the buying?
- 5) How do they buy?
- 6) When do they buy?
- 7) Where do they buy?

The answers to these questions will provide the understanding of how and why buyers are most likely to respond to marketing stimuli.

1.4 Perspective Statement

The problem of this thesis is studied from a consumer perspective. The targeted consumer of this study are consumers who have the experience of buying baby care products in Iceland. Primarily parents, family and friends of children residing in Iceland.

1.5 Research Objectives

The following objectives are the subject of this thesis:

- *To identifying the role of critical factors such as brand trust, price influence, safety and quality, and environmental concerns, that may influence customers to buy baby care products.*
- *To explore and analyze any other sub-factors that might emerge from the research which may influence parent's purchase decision of baby care products.*
- *To explore the factors of satisfaction of the selection of baby products in Iceland.*

The reason for the first objective of the research is chosen is because by understanding what consumers prioritize and behave and how they perceive products in the baby care industry is essential to understanding how to convey the message of the value of the product to that consumer, mainly in the categories of brand trust, price influence, safety and quality, and environmental concerns. The reason for the second objective is to discover any other significant patterns of factors that appear not in the first objective category. The reason for the third objective is to understand the factors of the satisfaction of the selection of baby products in Iceland in order to find how the market needs to improve and which factors that consumers care about regarding product satisfaction.

1.6 Benefits of this research study

Because there is little research that has been performed in Iceland on what factors influence purchase decisions in the baby product market, this research will act as a foundation to further research on this subject.

It will study the role of critical influential factors such as brand trust, & environmental concerns, pricing, level of satisfaction, and product quality factors, which may influence

customers to buy certain baby care products and not others. Knowledge of these factors could be utilized by branded manufacturers and retailers towards designing their product and marketing strategies for baby care products in Icelandic consumer market. This research will also increase the useful information to the existing literature, which could be used by researchers to investigate further in this topic category. As stated previously, the lack of any current information on this topic makes it difficult for manufacturers, stores, and marketers to accurately convey the value of each product to the consumer in Iceland if they don't know their perceptions, purchase intentions and factors that influence their purchase.

1.7 Thesis Structure

The thesis consists of eight chapters. The introduction provides a brief introduction and overview of the factors that influence purchasing decisions of baby care products in the Icelandic market and the importance of the study for both academics and professionals alike. It also examines the limitations of previous relevant studies as well as the aim and the objective of the study. In the following chapter consisting of the literature review, the concept of factors influencing purchasing decisions of baby care products will be discussed.

The chapter will describe the theoretical frameworks that have been used in relevant and recent studies. Following that, a short description of relevant terminology will be discussed. The fourth chapter provides a detailed description of the methodology used in the study, explaining the research approach, data collection, survey formation and design. In the fifth chapter, findings of the first-hand research are discussed. The fifth chapter focuses on the results of the study and the sixth chapter holds a discussion about the study. The seventh chapter includes conclusion, limitations, and recommendations for further research.

The consumer may ponder such issues as, "Do I really need the product?" Exist any substitutes for this? Is the original item really so poor? Typically, a customer will use the cut-off approach or select one key factor as the basis for their final decision (e.g., price, quality, brand, etc.). Moments that count in this context could be emotional connections to or experiences with items, or giving in to marketing or advertising campaigns. For marketers, it is crucial that a customer understands their brand during the evaluation process and, ideally, is aware of the attribute on the basis of which the customer makes a purchasing decision. The consumer's process at this step is unique to his or her search for the greatest offer. The best bargain is defined in terms of factors that are more important to each

consumer; these factors may include price, quality, brand, product positioning, a store's location, the effects of utilizing the goods, etc.

Chapter 2

2 Theoretical Framework

Regarding the literature search strategy, it has been decided where to search, then written, then refined, and finally citations and references were added. This literature search strategy uses a six-step model to find the relevant materials needed in the literature review. The first step was selecting the necessary and relevant keywords to the research question and objectives. The keywords utilized which delve into the relevant literature are consumers' purchasing behavior from a safety and quality of use standpoint, consumers' purchasing behavior from a product environmental sustainability standpoint, consumers' affordable price concern, research done on brand preference, and how the consumer perceives their level of satisfaction of the product. These concepts were chosen as they were most relevant to the thesis topic. The third step was searching for relevant literature of these stated topics. After finding relevant and up-to-date literature, it was surveyed, and an argument was developed. The fifth and sixth steps included reviewing it and writing the literature review. The main source of finding the literature was Google Scholar as well as several reputable business journal. Peer reviewed papers, books and articles have been mainly used in the research, which makes ensure the most credible and trustworthy sources. This study is looked through both the qualitative and quantitative lenses, in a mixed method approach. In other words, both the social and data aspects are collected and then compared to form a well-rounded and non-biased result on which factors influence the purchase decision of baby care products in the Icelandic market.

2.1 Research gap

The baby market is ever evolving with new technology, online purchase options, environmental sustainability concerns growing, health and safety revelations changing products and consumer preferences evolving. With these new changes, come different opinions and preferences of the consumer. There is very little research done in Iceland regarding what factors influence purchase decisions in the baby product market. Moreover,

there also shows to be a lack of information regarding the consumers' perceptions of baby care products in Iceland. As of today, no concrete research has been conducted identifying these important primary factors which influence the customer's final decision to buy or rebuy the product. A lack of this knowledge keeps manufacturers, shop owners, and product develops in question of what the baby care product customer prioritizes when choosing a product. The idea of this study was sparked from the author's own experience as a new parent in Iceland and inspired from the experiences of other parents in the Icelandic community.

Chapter 3

3 Literature review

This chapter provides a theoretical background of existing literature to outline this research and sets the basis for the following chapters. It will discuss the baby care product factors such as follows: Chapter 3.1 presents consumers purchasing behavior from a safety and quality of use standpoint. Chapter 3.2 elaborates on the consumers purchasing behavior from a product environmental sustainability standpoint. Chapter 3.3 aims to explain consumers affordable price concern. Chapter 3.4 elaborates on research done on brand preference. Lastly, Chapter 3.5 delves into how the consumer perceives their level of satisfaction of the product.

3.1 Safety and quality influence on consumers purchasing behavior

According to a study on a study on women's perception towards baby care products in Kumbakonam, 36 percent of the participants purchased baby care product based on better quality products for quality concern India (Durgamani & Ganesan, 2018). This was the biggest factor influencing the purchase decision. Following this was reasonable price, 17.3 percent purchased based on the goodwill of the product, and more than 7 percent purchased based on health concern. This study recommended that manufacturers of the baby care products focus on the aspects of quality, safety and health of the baby.

Another study on A Study on Consumer Behavior towards Johnson Baby Product in New Panvel found that the sales of Johnson and Johnson are affected due to the toxic substance contain in it (Mathew, 2019). This is because people are becoming more aware of harmful

chemical, and base are large factor of their purchasing decision on that. This is elaborated in the study by (Hartmann & Klaschka, 2017), which found that while a significant number of consumers were aware of chemical in daily products, consumer awareness should be stipulated by an improved information strategy about chemical risks in consumer products with an extensive participation of the target groups and by more efforts by authorities and manufactures to build trust and to provide easily understandable information. Moreover, nearly two-thirds (63%) of adults say the ingredients in a food or beverage have at least a moderate influence on what they buy (ltd, M. D. F., n.d.). Furthermore, it is shown that consumers prefer to buy products from a baby care department in a supermarket because “they are more likely to be a part of a knowledgeable range of products, as opposed to self-service departments with fewer products and less awareness of products. They prefer to buy the cleaning product from a dedicated shelf in a department store, because the store often has a large display, unlike self-service stores, which focus on a short list of products” (Daniels, 2009).

Richardson (1996) defined perceived quality as how consumers assess intrinsic characteristics (taste, ingredients, nutrition value, and overall quality). Consumers assess quality in conjunction with external and inner cues. Extrinsic cues are characteristics that do not directly relate to the product (packaging, price, advertising, peer pressure), whereas intrinsic cues are the sense of quality based on the physical characteristics of the product (color, size, flavor, or scent). Customers are better able to evaluate products based on extrinsic cues since they are more familiar with them. Consumer propensity to purchase a brand is determined by perception of quality. However, consumers rather than businesses analyze product quality comparisons. Consumers occasionally place a larger value on less important traits (Richardson, Jain, et al., 1996). Additionally, as more information becomes available, consumers' perceptions of quality alter over time. Because of this, marketers need to monitor perception via product alignment and promotion techniques (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 18).

Price, quality, and value are all favorably correlated with consumer impression, however perceived risk is adversely correlated. A higher price is a sign of higher quality and lesser risk, according to price perception. While a larger perceived risk is indicated by a lower perception of price and quality. On the other hand, a positive effect on the product's perceived value results from greater perceptions of value and price. Customers will

recognize a higher value in a product if they believe the price is high and the product is superior, and vice versa (Ha, Nguyen, & Gizaw, 2014).

3.2 Environmental sustainability influence on consumers purchasing behavior

Within the last few years, a drastic change in consumer lifestyles and their preferences have changed which can be evidently seen around the world. Market researchers have discovered that customers' preferences for organic foods are primarily driven by their own well-being rather than social or environmental concerns, and they are prepared to pay a higher price for these goods (Bruschi et al., 2015). In most countries, consumers are becoming more active and enthusiastic to act on environmental concerns (Lewandowska, et al., 2017). According to (Orzan, Cruceru, Bălăceanu, et al., 2018), in their study, “Consumers’ Behavior Concerning Sustainable Packaging: An Exploratory Study on Romanian Consumers”, “Research results have shown there are two motivational factors—saving by recycling and protecting the environment—which can influence the decision to buy ecological packaging. However, the high costs of eco-packaging and lack of information on the benefits of their use is considered as reasons for not purchasing them.”

A study on sustainability in packaging found that forty-three percent of surveyed US consumers cited environmental impact as extremely or very important for packaging, compared with 77 percent for hygiene and food safety, 67 percent for shelf life, and 61 percent for ease of use (McKinsey, n.d.). According to a study on consumer buying behavior of baby care products in Sweden, most of the respondents said that eco-friendly materials of the products affect them very positively because more than one-fourth of the customers said that eco-friendly materials influence very highly buying of baby care products (Jarajreh, 2022).

According to a study on the “Effect of Environment-Friendly Attitude on Consumer Perception of Usability of Product Packaging”, the findings demonstrate that consumer environmental consciousness has a favorable and significant influence on this sensitivity to product packaging recycling. The findings of this study demonstrated that consumers' perceptions of the reusability of product packaging are significantly and favorably impacted by the harmonization of packaging (Esmaeilpour & Rajabi, 2016). The results also show that customer sensitivity has a favorable and significant impact on how consumers view the potential of product packaging to be reused. Finally, the findings demonstrate that

consumers' perceptions of the reusability of product packaging are positively and significantly impacted by the package's proportionality in terms of form, color, and material (Esmaeilpour & Rajabi, 2016).

Packaging serves a variety of purposes. It is a tool for engaging with customers and preserving product quality in addition to providing information about goods and companies. The functions of product packaging are numerous. It gives information about the firm and the product, establishes contact with clients, and guarantees the quality of the goods (Rambabu, Lavuri et al., 2020). It is crucial to keep in mind that packaging has a big impact on clients and their buying choices. Quality, color, and content elicit favorable reactions from consumers. Similar to this, if a product's label has correct information about it, it will be worth more. Customers react to the precise name, components, and packaging of a product. Concerns about how a product is marketed and designed are common among consumers. Although a product's quality can vary, packaging has a significant impact on customers' purchasing decisions. Eco-friendly packaging is necessary right now. Advertisers should therefore emphasize this element and use best practices, such as eco-friendly recyclable packaging, to the fullest extent possible (Zhao, Yao, et al., 2021).

Lastly, according to an Icelandic study, found that even after controlling for environmental values, the results of the present study supported the hypotheses that materialistic values are a detriment to pro-environmental behavior and that environmental values are a positive predictor of pro-environmental behavior. This suggests that materialistic values contribute to our understanding of pro-environmental behavior (Felixdóttir, 2017).

3.3 Pricing influence on consumers purchasing behavior

One of the most important and crucial factors that might affect consumer purchasing behavior or the decision-making process of buyers is pricing. Price is a major factor that may both logical and emotional aspects to it (Daniels, 2009). Price and quality are two components of functional value. Price is the fair price buyers pay for products or services, and quality is the usefulness of the product's perceived quality and performance. A study on Analysis of customer attitude factors towards online purchase intentions of baby products in Chennai, reveals that that quality of product was identified as very important factor in

overall customer satisfaction and followed by timely delivery, payment comfort and price preference (Pradeep, Shenbagaraman & Saravanan 2018).

Furthermore, a study on the Impact of Pricing and Product Information on Consumer Buying Behavior with Customer Satisfaction in a Mediating Role, found that if managers “want to connect with their target customers more efficiently and effectively, they should focus on both product pricing and packaging options. However, if they can afford only one option from the product’s operational cost perspective, they must focus on product pricing strategies”, (Zhao, Yao, et al., 2021). When studying the combined impact of product pricing and relationships with packaging on consumer purchase behavior, pricing alone plays a more significant role than packaging, which only partially influences buying behavior (Jabarzare and Rasti-Barzoki, 2020). Consumers frequently base their purchasing decisions on routine or habitual decision-making processes. The decision-making process for many inexpensive, regularly bought products is essentially limited to recognizing the issue, conducting a brief internal search, and making the purchase. When conducting external research or alternative evaluation, the consumer invests little to no effort (Belch, 2009). Price and customer satisfaction are positively and significantly correlated. They also said that customer happiness and fair pricing were key factors in the sector's success. This phenomenon has also been examined in relation to other geographical regions in earlier studies. Product packaging has less bearing on consumer purchasing decisions than does price. Product packaging has less of an impact on purchasers' decisions than product pricing (Jabarzare and Rasti-Barzoki, 2020).

3.4 Brand influence on consumers purchasing behavior

The subjective, internal responses (sensations, thoughts, and cognitions) and behavioral responses brought on by brand-related stimuli that are a part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and locations are referred to as brand experiences (Oriol & Singh, et al., 2011). Loyalty can be cultivated just by having an experience with a brand. More thorough information processing and inference-making that is inspired by an event may also result in a brand-related relationship. These connections then affect commitment (Oriol & Singh, et al., 2011).

A study on “Factors influencing parent’s purchase decision in Ireland while purchasing private label's baby care items”, found that “despite the risk perception associated with

consumable private label baby products, organic option if present in baby food category may help in alleviating parent's risk perceptions and uncertainties associated with consumable baby food item. Also, risk is not only associated with private label baby products but with all baby food products including the branded ones. Further research is highly recommended in the area finding "till what extent does the organic option alleviates the risk associated with private label baby food products'", (Tyagi, 2018). Moreover, it has been identified that brand image is playing an important part in the consumer's behavior. It is an important aspect of the organization's image and its reputation.

In another report, it has been found that to make customers satisfied, the organization need to improve its brand image (Ahmed, 2021). Furthermore, it has been found that current purchases are affected by brand image mostly directly and by brand awareness mostly indirectly. In contrast to this, "future purchases are not affected by either dimension of brand knowledge directly; rather, brand knowledge affects future purchases via a brand relationship path that includes brand satisfaction, brand trust, and attachment to the brand. Thus, brand knowledge alone is not sufficient for building strong brands in the long term; brand relationship factors must be considered as well" (Esch, & Langner, et al., 2006).

A previous study found that there is a positive association between product brand loyalty, product perceived quality, price, and purchase decision. It is now more understood that consumers have become more rational and knowledgeable in their buying decisions. (Lee-Angela, Sternthal & Keller, 2010). The consumer buys a product and if they like it, it gets higher level of satisfaction. Then positive word of mouth will be spread about that product. To sum up, a strong brand name with high level of satisfaction would be possible if a budget of the company's revenue would be spent on branding and rebranding strategies that further includes positioning and repositioning of their brands in the minds of their customers (Naeem & Sami, 2020).

Research has shown that company brands can influence consumer behavior. (Aydin et al., 2014), suggest that brand awareness is a powerful tool people use when trying to increase their visibility. Consumers seem to prefer brands with a high degree of awareness, even if they cost more or perform less well in other categories. Lastly, people may have a predisposition to believe the brands they see used and purchased the most frequently (Aydin et al., 2014).

3.5 Customer perception of satisfaction of product

According to an article by (Consumer Decision Process, 2019). There are five Stages of the consumer decision process (buyer decision process) are Problem Recognition or Need Recognition, Information Search, Evaluation of Alternatives, Purchase Decision, and Post-Purchase Evaluation. “Post-purchase behavior is the result of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that the consumption provides. The answer lies in the relationship between the consumer’s expectations and the product’s perceived performance”. If the product falls short of expectations, the consumer is disappointed; if it meets expectations, the consumer is satisfied; if it exceeds expectations, the consumer is delighted (Consumer Decision Process, 2019).

Assessing the level of satisfaction about the health care products is to improve quality products. Variables include easy availability, packaging, product quality, price, quantity, using method. Baby products should satisfy the fast-moving people in the world without compromising quality and standard, according to a study of mothers’ satisfaction in baby care products - Nagapattinam District (Palanisamy, 2020). A higher customer value can be achieved through greater product quality through product conformity and competitive pricing through cheap price. By taking into account the product's functional value, one can boost customer happiness and encourage repeat business by ensuring the preservation of healthy teeth and mouth freshness. The key finding from this study is that while toothpaste products still have some functional value, it is still insufficient to be a proper primary factor in satisfying customers. However, the product's quality must match a standardization for toothpaste in order to generate satisfaction (Razak, 2016).

Zeithaml (1988) came to the conclusion that, from the perspective of consumer psychology as revealed by numerous empirical studies, the greater the benefits consumers perceive about products or services, the higher their perceived value, which in turn increases their willingness to buy goods or services, during the shopping process. Customers also have certain preferences during the purchasing process, including emotional considerations. In other words, consumers select their preferred goods or services under the same circumstances. Value, a crucial aspect in shaping customer purchase behavior, drives the majority of consumer actions. Monroe (2012) asserted that consumers' inclinations to buy

products are influenced by their cognitive worth. During the buying process, customers will weigh the actual cost of goods or services against their own quality in order to decide whether or not to make a purchase. In conclusion, consumers' perceptions of value are influenced by online retailers' reputations, which in turn influence their desire to make purchases.

3.6 Consumer' decision making process

Before understanding the factors that influence consumer buying behavior, it is important to understand the consumers' decision-making process. Consumers' purchase decision process is a rational decision-making process that incorporates personal beliefs and preferences. It is the process by which consumers make the best choices for themselves among the many alternatives available. Understanding how consumers make decisions can help businesses, manufacturers and marketers to increase their impact. This is done by offering more options for future interactions, understanding the customer journey, and making the consumer's decision-making process easier to maximize the value to businesses and the consumer.

A traditional model of decision-making is the 5-step model of the consumer purchasing process. It involves a need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and lastly, post-purchase behavior (Stankevich, 2017). This is shown below in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Consumer decision-making, the 5-step model (Stankevich, 2017).

There is a distinction between high and low involvement in purchasing, where high involvement means that the actual buying process reflects the five steps model, while low involvement means that the buying process is less detailed or reflects only a few steps. The degree of buyer involvement is also an important part of the buyer's experience. For example, when you first buy a product, you typically have to spend more time involved in its use than if you have bought it repeatedly (Stankevich, 2017). The majority of respondents, according to the survey, said they think personally before making purchases.

These factors include knowing the utility value and the perceived quality of the high or low participation product. Nearly all the survey's participants were not very interested in reflecting social standing. This has an explanation by the average age of the study's respondents.

Consumer purchasing patterns are linked to the perceived worth and interaction quality at the interface level. The research revealed that the majority of shoppers take their time to examine how important the products are. prior to their acquisition (Agosi, & Pakdeejirakul, 2013). To satisfy a customer, many things must be done. Customer satisfaction is connected with each of these variables. There is no assurance that the consumer would purchase the product even if they are satisfied with all of these. As a result, consumer pleasure also affects their purchasing decisions (Zhao, Yao, et al., 2021).

Chapter 4

4 Methodology

This chapter gives an overview of the methodology used in this research study.

It explains the research participants, research design, sampling, data collection, and data analysis method. After extensive research in the fields of product quality (natural/organic materials) and safety, environmental sustainability, affordable price, brand preference and to identify the level of satisfaction of the product through research of peer-reviewed articles, and books, the research methodology was established. The research participants are described in section 4.1, the research design is explained in section 4.2, the sampling is discussed in section 4.3, the data collection is explained in section 4.4 and lastly, the data analysis method is described in section 4.5.

4.1 Participants

Two methods were used to gather information from participants. The first method was by conducting one-on-one interviews with parents in Iceland. The second method was by gathering information via a questionnaire. In order to gather the information of the aforementioned objectives of the questionnaire, a random population sample was used. Random sampling is a probability sampling type where everyone in the entire target population has an equal chance of being selected. Random samples are a great way of

selecting the sample from the target population. The primary advantages of random sampling are that the sample should represent the target population and eliminate sampling bias. However, the disadvantage is that it is very difficult to achieve as it can be time consuming, effort-full and cost money (McLeod, 2019). In order to overcome these disadvantages, it was decided to take two routes in gain this random sampling information. The first route was to collaborate with a local Icelandic children's store "Barnaloppan". Triangle desk stands with scannable QR codes were set up on the purchasing desk of the store. The QR code stands read "Take this survey to enter to win a 5000 kr Barnaloppan gift card". The strategy behind this approach was a filtered strategy in that the store was only for children, and it was located in near an Icelandic residential area. Thus, the target research groups would be filtered down to consumers who only buy children's products in Iceland. The incentive of the 5000-kr. gift card was given in order to expedite the number of responses of participants.

The second approach was utilizing social media. Local Icelandic Facebook groups, mainly "Living Away from Home in Iceland", "International Parents in Iceland", "Mæðra tips!", "Americans (U.S citizens) living in Iceland" and "Aprílbumbur 2020" were used to post an incentivized post asking participants to take a questionnaire for a chance to win a Barnaloppan gift card. This strategy was also deeply calculated, as it gave the opportunity of random sampling as well as filtered to the target groups. For example, random sampling was attained because it reached over 35 thousand people in total; not related to the author. Moreover, this approached was filtered because only parents, friends of family members who purchased baby care products in Iceland would even want to participate in the survey because of the group type and the incentive given.

The Facebook groups were about children in Iceland and the incentive was the Barnaloppan gift card. This gift card was to a local Icelandic store and could only be used in Iceland to purchase products for children. Thus, the primary target of participants was reached because of these strategies. In order to participate in the survey, they needed to give their email addresses. This ensured that it was detected in case the same person wanted to take the survey twice, which would negatively alter the data. Thus, the obligatory email entering strategy, prevented the misuse of the questionnaire, in order to derive the most accurate information from the participants.

In order to gather the information of the aforementioned objectives of the one-on-one interviews, a post on an Icelandic Facebook group was posted. The post asked if anyone would be interested in participating in a one-on-one video chat interview on Google Meet to participate in the study. From this outreach, five participants reached out and fulfilled the interview via online video chat. The video chats audio was then written down and copywritten into the respective categories of questions asked.

4.2 Research Design

In this study, primary data is used. Primary data is collected from the consumers of baby care products who live in Iceland. A Mixed method approach was determined to be the most appropriate design for this research. Sequential exploratory mixed method design in particular was used. This means that the qualitative research was done first, giving insight and guidance into the next step, which is the quantitative research. Finally, the linking or integration of data from the two separate strands of data collected is done. Because of the little data available on baby care product consumers in Iceland, this method was deemed best; not only to allow a more in-depth understanding of the topic of study than a quantitative or qualitative approach used alone, but also to ensure comprehensive and transparent data integration in this study to be used as a guideline or template for future studies.

Quantitative research is the process of collecting numerical data and information to create meaningful information about the baby care product industry in Iceland. Qualitative research involves any research that uses data that do not indicate ordinal values. Essentially, qualitative research involves collecting and/or working with text, images, or sounds (Sutton & Austin 2015). It involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data that are not easily reduced to numbers. These data relate to the social world and the concepts and behaviors of people within it.” (Anderson, 2010). Mixed methodology (combining quantitative and qualitative approaches) has become an increasingly popular way of both researching and teaching methodology across the social sciences (Teddlie, & Tashakkori, 2009). The mixed method approach has been chosen because it brings a better understanding to the research problem and objectives than by one or the other approach.

The qualitative phase consisted of one-on-one interviews in which five people participated. The results of the interviews helped give insight to and shape the next part of

the research, the quantitative phase. This phase consisted of an online 19-question questionnaire, in which 300 participants completed. Random population sampling was used to ensure that each member carried an equal opportunity of being chosen as a part of the sampling process and to ensure that an unbiased representation of the total population was administered.

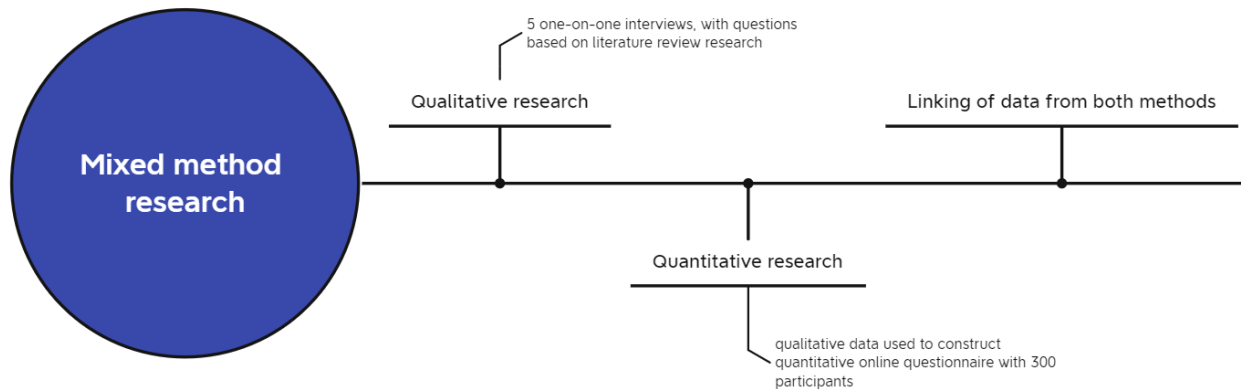


Figure 2. Research design

4.3 Sampling

The sample size of this questionnaire is 300. Secondly, it is designed as a one-on-one interview. The sample size of this questionnaire is 5. In total there are 305 participants in the research conducted.

4.4 Data Collection Process

In the literature review, secondary data from peer-reviewed sources have been utilized. These studies consisted of up-to-date sources credible sources. This secondary data was sourced from academic research papers, and credible website sources.

Regarding the study itself, only primary data was used. Two forms of qualitative data collection were used in this study. Firstly, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants. Secondly, a detailed structured questionnaire was conducted to gain the perspective of a wider range of the population sampling. The participants included random individuals from two primary sources. Firstly, from a questionnaire available in Icelandic Parenting Facebook groups, which had an incentive to participate. The incentive was a chance at winning a 5000 kr. Gift card to the children's store Barnaloppin.

The reasoning behind this was to make sure that the correct demographic was being targeted. The store demographics is mostly Icelandic and International parents living in Iceland. Moreover, the incentive only interests people who want to buy children's products which fits with the target participants.

Secondly, a collaboration was done with a local second-hand children's clothing/toy store to reach targeted participants. The store named Barnaloppan in Skeifan, Reykjavik agreed to place four triangle desk-stands with scannable QR codes to the questionnaire. These codes directed participants to the direct link of the questionnaire. Written on these stands was an incentive to win a 5000 kr. Barnaloppan gift card in exchange for participating in the questionnaire. A copy of the scannable triangle stand display is shown below in Appendix C.

4.5 Data Analysis Method

The qualitative data analysis method that was used was thematic inductive coding. This type of coding is a process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a preexisting coding frame or the researcher's analytic preconceptions that may cause bias in the data analysis process. In this sense, this form of thematic analysis is data-driven (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process used Microsoft Excel to find theme in the data from scratch. Then color-codes were created to represent each theme on the qualitative data itself. All codes arose directly from the interview responses. The following steps were taken in the inductive coding process:

1. Qualitative dataset (interview transcripts) was broken down into smaller samples.
2. Data was read.
3. Codes were created based on themes in each data section.
4. Data sections were re-read, and color codes were applied.
5. The next section of data was read, and the codes were applied it.
6. Additional codes arose and were applied based on new themes appearing in the data.
7. Reviewing and recoding all responses again – ensuring accurate coding.
8. Codes were calculated using Microsoft Excel to find most prominently appearing themes.
9. Data visualization charts were created to help convey the results of the themes.

The quantitative data analysis method used was descriptive statistics. This method focused on describing the sample of data. This study used Microsoft Excel functions and statistics tools to draw the descriptive statistics results. Descriptive statistics tables show the minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation and other important information such as percentages, that help convey a deeper understanding of the data itself. Chart, graphs, and tables were also constructed using Microsoft Excel to help visualize the data.

4.6 Definitions

The following points explain the specific definitions and important terminology regarding key recurring topics in the research paper.

4.6.1 Baby care products

In this study, baby care products can be defined as products that are used for the care of babies under the age of four years old, specially designed for infants due to their sensitive and delicate form. Categories of baby products used in this study are mainly, but not limited to baby skincare, haircare, bath products, oral hygiene, toiletries (including diapers and wipes), food and beverages (including formula, snacks and squeeze packs) (Market Data Forecast, 2022).

4.6.2 Factors influencing the purchase behavior

The six stages of the consumer buying behavior process are problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, purchase, post-purchase evaluation (Kumar, 2016). Customer buying behavior can be understood as a process by which the consumers identify their needs, collect product information, evaluate product alternatives, and finally, make their purchase decision.

Chapter 5

5.1 Results

This chapter illustrates the analysis of the primary data, collected by the author from in depth semi-structured open-ended questionnaires and focus groups. The results will be discussed in three parts. Firstly, the One-on-one interview. Secondly, the questionnaire.

Thirdly, the analysis and discussion of both the one-on-one interview and the questionnaire. As part of the qualitative analysis, collected audio data of the focus groups was transcribed into word files, consisting of exact user responses and questions. Transcripts were read and converted into condensed responses before categorizing the data in tables for data analysis.

5.2 One-on-one interview - Qualitative Part

This chapter dives deep into inductive coding to illustrate the analysis of the primary data collected from in depth structured interviews. As part of the qualitative analysis, collected audio data was transcribed into Microsoft Word files, consisting of interview questions and user responses. Transcripts were read and converted into condensed responses and then categorized in the data in tables for the purpose of data analysis. Table 1 shown below, consists of respondent names, interview dates and respondent Ids. Throughout data analysis chapter, respondents will be identified with these respondent Ids.

| Respondent ID # | Respondent Name | Interview Date (dd/mm/yyyy) |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Respondent 1 | 01/05/2022 |
| 2 | Respondent 2 | 03/05/2022 |
| 3 | Respondent 3 | 03/05/2022 |
| 4 | Respondent 4 | 05/05/2022 |
| 5 | Respondent 5 | 06/05/2022 |

Table 1: Respondent Key

Table 2 shown below, defines the color coding for different research themes or category. The color coding is used to aid in drawing connections between the otherwise disconnected data. Deductive thematic color coding was used to analyze the one-on-one interviews.

| Category/Theme | Code |
|---|------|
| *Coding in white indicates the answer does not fall into a particular theme or is part of a descriptive answer* | |
| Purchase decision is driven by emotions towards a brand. | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Organic/clean options in baby care products plays an important role in purchasing and towards alleviating uncertainties related to high inherent risk baby care products. | |
| Ingredients of product is an important factor in deciding to buy a product. | |
| Consider minimal packaging as sign of good quality. This also negatively affects the purchase decision of baby products which have excessive packaging. | |
| Research on the product is a prerequisite to purchasing | |
| Friends and family advice, and product reviews is a main factor which influences the purchase decision of baby products. | |
| Peer-reviewed research and doctor's/medical advice is an important prerequisite in which the purchase decision is made. | |
| Trends influence purchase of product | |
| Tends do not influence purchase of product | |
| Avoid buying baby care products online due to too much hassle and expensive. | |
| Quality is perceived to be more important than price. | |
| Perceives larger brands to be more trustworthy | |
| Affordable price is a critical factor in the purchasing decision | |
| Perceives brand labels alike and are willing to switch retailers frequently if needed | |
| Perceives selection of baby care products to be lacking in the Icelandic market | |
| Brand trust is associated with quality of product | |
| Past experience of brand does not influence next purchase | |
| Past experience of brand does influence next purchase | |
| Perceives selection of baby care products to be sufficient in the Icelandic market | |
| Environmental attitude plays a role in the purchasing decision | |
| Lack of time to research product | |

| | |
|---|--|
| Product satisfaction is more important than brand loyalty | |
| Products that are consumed or applied to baby are considered more important to be clean or organic than non-consumable products | |

Table 2: Color coding of themes/Categories

Table 3 consists of categorized condensed responses with color coded themes for Respondent -1.

ID#: Respondent Id

Question#: Question number

Response: Participant's response in condensed form

Code: Color code defined in Table 2

| ID# | Question# | Response | Code |
|-----|-----------|--|------|
| 1 | 1 | Wipes and diapers | |
| 1 | 2 | Baby food because we feed our baby whatever we are eating. We've gotten most toys secondhand from friends and most clothes as gifts, so we haven't purchased those either. | |
| 1 | 3 | I do typically trust larger brands more because I perceive them to be more closely monitored for safety. | |
| 1 | 4 | Moderately | |
| 1 | 5 | It is fine | |
| 1 | 6 | 16 months old | |
| 1 | 7 | Parent to my child | |
| 1 | 8 | I try to buy plastic free wipes. | |
| 1 | 9 | No | |
| 1 | 10 | I do tend to trust Costco more than other private label brands or other retailers. I have | |

| | | | |
|---|----|--|--|
| | | a lot of confidence in them due to the way they treat their workers in the us (well) | |
| 1 | 11 | Not influenced | |
| 1 | 12 | - | |
| 1 | 13 | Friends and family and the internet. | |
| 1 | 14 | I'm not sure | |
| 1 | 15 | I'm not really sure | |
| 1 | 16 | Lack of time and energy to do the research | |
| 1 | 17 | No. Ordering from abroad is never worth the hassle/price. | |
| 1 | 18 | Diapers changes about 3 times per day. | |
| 1 | 19 | The most important would be skincare and the least important would be toys. | |
| 1 | 20 | Low sugar for food and being fragrance free for lotions and soap. | |

Table 3. Respondent #1 Answers

Table 4 consists of categorized condensed responses with color coded themes for Respondent-2.

| ID# | Question# | Response | Code |
|-----|-----------|--|------|
| 2 | 1 | Diapers, clothing, toys, and pacifiers. | |
| 2 | 2 | Toys that are too stimulating — because they are too stimulating | |
| 2 | 3 | Quality always decides | |
| 2 | 4 | It depends on the product, but BPA free always | |
| 2 | 5 | It's ok, but hard to compare from each shop | |
| 2 | 6 | 2.5 years old | |
| 2 | 7 | Parent to my child | |
| 2 | 8 | Avoiding toxins is a large thought in my process | |
| 2 | 9 | Yes, if it disappoints, then never again. | |

| | | | |
|---|----|---|--|
| 2 | 10 | If they prove to be toxin free and eco-friendly, then yes | |
| 2 | 11 | I don't think Montessori is trending. It's been around for a very long time. I am open to suggestion but will not buy merchandise from a franchise. | |
| 2 | 12 | Money is no issue. I will always buy the better quality. | |
| 2 | 13 | Amazon reviews and the ingredient list | |
| 2 | 14 | Ingredient list and looking up recalls and comparison blogs | |
| 2 | 15 | Accessible information detailed and listed in an easy well-designed manner | |
| 2 | 16 | Not enough information / pictures | |
| 2 | 17 | I always order books online. There are no English books here | |
| 2 | 18 | Every day | |
| 2 | 19 | I won't use anything that is not clean | |
| 2 | 20 | No Sulfates | |

Table 4. Respondent #2 Answers

Table 5 consists of categorized condensed responses with color coded themes for Respondent-3

| ID# | Question# | Response | Code |
|-----|-----------|---|------|
| 3 | 1 | Baby diapers and formula Hipp organic for my child. | |
| 3 | 2 | Baby powder because it can be dangerous for babies to inhale it, pureed food because I prefer to make him more chunkier food at home. | |
| 3 | 3 | Regarding some products, I find largely known brands more trustworthy, for example we use | |

| | | | |
|---|----|--|--|
| | | Pampers as I have tried Grøn from Kronan and the whole batch of diapers was compromised, this never happened with Pampers | |
| 3 | 4 | I tend to buy things that claim are organic. | |
| 3 | 5 | I am rather satisfied with the selection and availability of products here; it suffices our daily needs | |
| 3 | 6 | 8 months old | |
| 3 | 7 | Mother | |
| 3 | 8 | I see the necessity during daily interaction with my baby, if needed, I research a bit about the product and I proceed to buy it. | |
| 3 | 9 | No. | |
| 3 | 10 | I tend to be loyal to the brands I know work best. | |
| 3 | 11 | Unless it is a necessity, I will not buy a product for the sake of trends | |
| 3 | 12 | If the product I desire is not available, I will settle for the second-best choice, given that it is not clean label or the preferred brand. | |
| 3 | 13 | My mother. | |
| 3 | 14 | The internet as there are so many more experienced moms out there that have already tested the products and can give an objective review | |
| 3 | 15 | A combination of price and characteristics | |
| 3 | 16 | Too many products of the same type to choose from | |
| 3 | 17 | Baby swings, jumping swings are rather rare here, but it would not be worth the wait and | |

| | | | |
|---|----|--|--|
| | | shipping fees to order it, I would rather construct one myself | |
| 3 | 18 | On a daily basis | |
| 3 | 19 | Baby formula milk is most important to be organic, all other products can be of other types like toiletries. | |
| 3 | 20 | As healthy and organic as possible and price accessible. | |

Table 5. Respondent #3 Answers

Table 6 consists of categorized condensed responses with color coded themes for Respondent-4.

| ID# | Question# | Response | Code |
|-----|-----------|---|------|
| 4 | 1 | I mostly buy diapers, clothes, and toys, sometimes food bags. | |
| 4 | 2 | Soaps and lotions, I just don't think they are necessary. I also haven't really bought any dishes etc. that are specifically for babies. I find them really expensive, and my baby doesn't throw his stuff to the floor that much (at least not yet...) so he has been eating from same bowls and plates that we use. | |
| 4 | 3 | View them the same way usually. Sometimes it is easy to go well-known brands because then you know what you are getting, it is a safe option. Local or smaller brands then again often feel more quality and that there is more thought and time behind the product which makes it feel better. | |
| 4 | 4 | Definitely buy rather something that is clean and organically packed. Unless it is A LOT | |

| | | | |
|---|----|---|--|
| | | more expensive, like double the price in comparison. | |
| 4 | 5 | Well, it is definitely not as good as it is in Finland but I can work with this. I often buy things like outdoor clothing and shoes from Finland because the selection is better, and prices are cheaper. | |
| 4 | 6 | 11 months | |
| 4 | 7 | Parent | |
| 4 | 8 | Of course, this depends on a product. But often I think the following: Is it something I can buy second hand? Is it easy or possible to buy it abroad? Is it organic? What is it made of? Where can I buy this? How much does it cost? How long can my baby use this? | |
| 4 | 9 | If I am happy with some brand, then I often like to continue with it. For example, I have been happy with Britax products (stroller and baby car seat) so I recently bought new car seat from Britax also. | |
| 4 | 10 | If the price-quality ratio is better, I am more than happy to change brands or retailers. | |
| 4 | 11 | I would like to say I am not but clearly; I am because I find myself googling and looking Montessori toys from flea markets quite often. | |
| 4 | 12 | Hmm.. This really depends on the product and the situation. If the product is something that stays with us after the situation I would at least try paying more attention to what I am buying. | |

| | | | |
|---|----|--|--|
| 4 | 13 | Facebook groups, friends with babies, family members. | |
| 4 | 14 | I often look for other people's opinions but this doesn't always work though because everyone thinks that the best thing is the one they own. I noticed this when I was researching my options for the next car seat. :D I look also for more general reviews when it comes to safety. I read carefully the package labels too and they often give a lot info too. | |
| 4 | 15 | Packaging, no nonsense, price | |
| 4 | 16 | Can't always trust if the info I find is an advertisement or someone's honest opinion. Also, more expensive the product is the more people love their own choices so can't really trust that. | |
| 4 | 17 | I am about to order this Pikler triangle toy that with everything included is cheaper than the ones here. I saw one in Barnaloppan that was used and still more than ordering online. | |
| 4 | 18 | I try to only get products that I use often and if I don't, I give, borrow or sell them forward. | |
| 4 | 19 | This varies. I often try to buy organic foods. | |
| 4 | 20 | Less is more. Longer the INCI or the ingredients list, less likely I will buy it. | |

Table 6. Respondent #4 Answers

Table 7 consists of categorized condensed responses with color coded themes for Respondent-5.

| ID# | Question# | Response | Code |
|-----|-----------|--|------|
| 5 | 1 | Body wash, nappy cream, oil, shampoo, conditioner, toothbrushes, and Toothpaste. General hygiene | |
| 5 | 2 | Bubble bath. Cannot find one safe for toddlers. Fragrance, paraben free etc. | |
| 5 | 3 | I generally avoid large scale commercial brands due to the ingredients. I find smaller, niche brands often cater to what I'm looking for. Which is minimal ingredients that are safe and don't mess with the natural skin microbes and ph. | |
| 5 | 4 | Largely. The toiletry products I buy are plastic free packaging that is 100% compost able, except for the Toothpaste tube and Toothbrush bristles. | |
| 5 | 5 | Not great but improving. I've recently seen there are now multiple options for 'beauty bars' or plastic free beauty products such as those listed above. | |
| 5 | 6 | 2 and a half years old | |
| 5 | 7 | Parent | |
| 5 | 8 | Primarily the ingredients, also the packaging and production of the items. More broadly - can I find my desired products here and if not, who is visiting next or when am I abroad next. | |
| 5 | 9 | I don't think so. | |
| 5 | 10 | If I know a brand to be cruelty free, Palm oil free, sustainably produced and the like I'm | |

| | | | |
|---|----|---|--|
| | | certainly more likely to trust it. I do still check the label on specific items I haven't bought even if it's the same brand, though. | |
| 5 | 11 | Not very. Only because I'm more likely to wait till I travel abroad to buy it cheaper and by then I've probably had more time to think about it. | |
| 5 | 12 | I would not buy brands I know to have harmful chemicals. E.g., If I needed wet wipes and only pampers were absolutely, I would use a cloth and water instead. If they didn't have a safe brand of soap/conditioner I would likely go without. | |
| 5 | 13 | Doctors. | |
| 5 | 14 | Evidence based information or any peer reviewed science. That's for ingredients or types of products. | |
| 5 | 15 | Ingredients. | |
| 5 | 16 | Different names used for the same ingredient. | |
| 5 | 17 | There were (plastic free packaging) but I would only buy when I was abroad. I don't find customs and delivery to be worth it for most things. | |
| 5 | 18 | To wash. Daily. Moisturize as needed. Nappy cream as needed. | |
| 5 | 19 | I am not swayed by organic due to the excessive resources usually needed to qualify as organic. | |
| 5 | 20 | Primarily the ingredients, also the packaging and production of the items. | |

Table 7. Respondent #5 Answers

Most commonly occurring themes among all respondents:

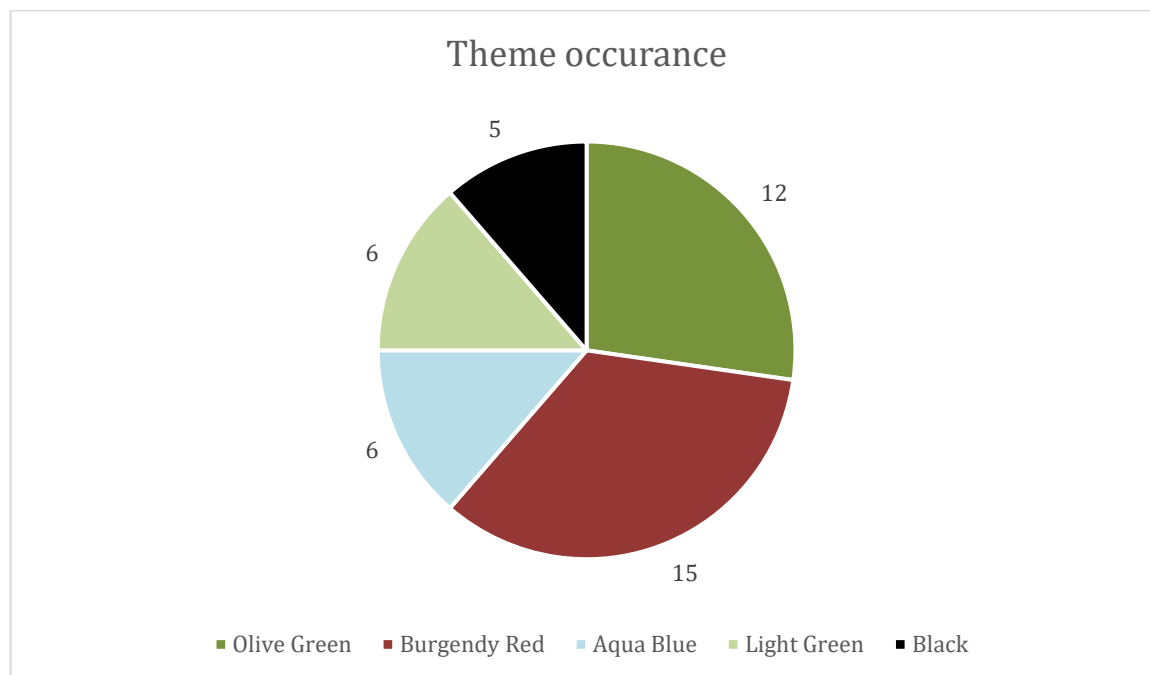


Figure 3. Five most commonly occurring themes among respondents

| Category/Theme | Code |
|---|------|
| Organic/clean options in baby care products plays an important role in purchasing and towards alleviating uncertainties related to high inherent risk baby care products. | |
| Ingredients of product is an important factor in deciding to buy a product. | |
| Affordable price is a critical factor in the purchasing decision. | |
| Perceives selection of baby care products to be sufficient in the Icelandic market. | |
| Friends and family advice, and product reviews is a main factor which influences the purchase decision of baby products. | |

Table 8: Color codes corresponding to the Figure 3., shown above.

Findings: Addressing aim and objectives of the research

This subchapter will use the above data analysis and insights to address research objectives defined in the introduction chapter. Restatement of research question: Which Factors influencing purchasing decisions of baby care products in the Icelandic market? As defined in Introduction chapter, below are the objectives of this research:

Research Objective 1:

To identifying the role of critical factors such as brand trust, price influence, safety and quality, and environmental concerns, that may influence customers to buy baby care products.

The primary data collected in the one-on-one interviews showed that the safety and quality category was the most influential. The color code burgundy red was among the top 15 theme occurrences. This code falls into the category of “safety and quality” that influence the purchasing decision. This code represents the consumer perception that considers organic and/or clean options in baby care products plays an important role in purchasing and towards alleviating uncertainties related to high inherent risk baby care products. However, 1 out of the 5 respondents (respondent #5) expressed that they were “not swayed by organic due to the excessive resources usually needed to qualify as organic.” The frequency of occurrences of the burgundy red theme was the highest of all themes identified. Thus, indicating that organic and/or clean options play a main factor in the purchasing decision of baby care products.

Regarding brand trust, 3 occurrences indicated that the respondents perceive larger brands to be more trustworthy. This was indicated by color code light pink. Respondents #3 and #4 conveyed that they tend to stay loyal to brands they have tried in the past. However, respondents #2 and #5 perceive clean ingredients and chemical-free products to be a more important factor than brand loyalty and are willing to switch brands if the product ingredients do not fit with their needs. “Past experience of brand does not influence next purchase” is indicated by the color code tan. Three occurrences indicated that past experience does in fact influence the respondents next purchase of that brand- whether negatively or positively. “Past experience of brand does influence next purchase” is indicated by color code yellow/orange. Three occurrences arose with the respondent perception that

their past experience with a particular brand does influence their next purchasing decision of that brand.

Price influence showed to be a significant factor. The color code “light green” occurred 6 times. This code suggested that affordable price is a critical factor in the purchasing decision of baby care products. The majority of participants responded that a combination of price and characteristics of the product is a major determining factor if they will purchase the product or not. Moreover, “If the price-quality ratio is better, I am more than happy to change brands or retailers”, answered respondent #4. This suggests that for this particular respondent, brand loyalty or reputation does not at all surpass the importance of affordable pricing or product quality.

The environmental concerns category was referenced several times throughout the interview process. Both respondents #1 and #5 tend to want to purchase products with plastic-free packaging. The color code “dark green”, which occurred twice, indicates that participants consider minimal packaging as sign of good quality. This also negatively affects the purchase decision of baby products which have excessive packaging. Moreover, the color code light yellow, suggests that an environmental attitude plays a role in the purchasing decision. This code occurred 4 times throughout the interviews. Respondents suggested that re-usable, recyclable, plastic-free and minimal packaging influenced their purchasing decision.

Research Objective 2:

To explore and analyze any other sub-factors that might emerge from the research which may influence parent's purchase decision of baby care products.

Several sub-factors arose that indicated to be significant factors for respondents before purchasing a baby care product. One such sub-factor was that friends and family advice, and product reviews was a main factor which influences the purchase decision of baby products. This theme was indicated by the color code “black” and occurred 5 times in the interview process. Moreover, the color code “bright pink” indicated that peer-reviewed research and doctor's/medical advice was an important prerequisite in which the purchase decision was made. This code appeared once. Thus, the majority of respondents trusted family, friends' advice as well as product reviews as a primary source of product research before purchasing that particular product.

Another sub-factor that appeared was indicated by color code “grey”. This code suggested that products that are consumed or applied to baby are considered more important to be clean or organic than non-consumable products. This theme occurred 3 times. Respondent #1 replied that “The most important would be skincare and the least important would be toys”, when asked what product is most important to them regarding being organic or clean. Other respondents mentioned formula and food and lotions (consumables) to be most importantly organic out of all the product categories.

A third sub-factor which submerged from the interviews was the influence on product trends. The color code “dark tan” was used to indicate that trends influence purchase of product. Only one respondent replied that they were influenced by trends, particularly the Montessori trending products. The color code “red” indicates that trends do not influence purchase of product. Four out of five respondents suggested that they are not influenced by trends.

Research Objective 3:

To explore the factors of satisfaction of the selection of baby products in Iceland.

The color code “Aqua” indicates that respondents perceive the selection of baby care products to be sufficient in the Icelandic market. This theme occurred 6 times throughout the interview analysis. The color code “turquoise” suggests that respondents perceive the selection of baby care products to be lacking in the Icelandic market. This color code appeared once. While the majority of respondents suggested that they were satisfied with the selection of baby care products in Iceland, they also mentioned some products which show to be lacking. These products include books for children written in the English language, baby swings, baby clothes, and Pickler triangles.

The color code “dark blue” indicates that respondents avoid buying baby care products online due to too much hassle and expensive. The majority of respondents indicated that purchasing online was not worth the hassle, custom fee price, or delivery fee of wait time. However, one respondent replied that they often purchase products online due to their preferred item not being available in Iceland.

5.3 Questionnaire results – Quantitative Part

A total of 300 people participated in the online questionnaire. This questionnaire has examined the consumers' views, opinions, and perceptions regarding purchasing baby care products in Iceland. The fundamental intentions are to understand the consumer purchasing decision factors of baby care products. Results of the questionnaire are discussed in categorical form. For instance, first descriptive questions are discussed, then brand trust, price influence, safety and quality, environmental concerns, additional factors and finally, satisfaction of product selection in Iceland.

| Descriptive questions | Brand trust | Price influence | Safety and quality | Environmental concerns | Sub-factors | Satisfaction of products selection in Iceland |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| How old is your child/children you are buying for? | Is your trust for baby care products driven by product features, quality, attributes etc. or it is driven by emotional connect with the retailer brand? | What is your perception of price-quality relationship, do you perceive a higher price to be of a certain quality or vice versa? | Before purchasing a baby care product, how important are the following attributes of the product? | How much does a product with minimal packaging influence your purchase decision? | Are there any baby products that you do not buy? If so, what are the reasons? | How often do you buy baby care products online or out of the country, and what is the main reason you do so? |
| How are you connected with the child - e.g., Mother, Father, family member, friend, etc. | What are the reasons which you find one brand more trusted than other brands? | When comparing similar alternative products, what things determine the final choice for you? | Of the following, how important is it that the product is natural/organic? | How often do you purchase a product with recycled qualities due to environmental concerns? | What or whom would you consider is good source of info when choosing a product and why? | What is your perception of baby care products in terms of quality of the products in Iceland? |
| What baby care items do you frequently purchase? | How much does a previous experience with a brand affect your future choices with that brand? | | How often do you check the ingredients label on the back of new products before purchase? | | | Are there any baby products that are lacking in Iceland in your opinion? Please specify in the "other" box below. |
| Which stores do you usually purchase baby care products from? | | | | | | |

Table 9. Questionnaire Question Categories

5.3.1 Descriptive questions

Important note: Respondents who participated in the online questionnaire were residents and/or baby care product customers in the Icelandic market. This was ensured by distributing the questionnaire via private parenting and childcare Facebook groups in which the criteria for being a member is living in Iceland. Moreover, the incentives given to the respondents to take the questionnaire (two, 5,000 ISK Barnaloppa gift cards) were only relevant and useful in the Icelandic market; an otherwise worthless incentive for anyone other than the target respondent group. These methods ensured the most accurate engagement of relevant participants in this questionnaire.

Question: How are you connected with the child?

Respondent relation to child

| Respondent's relation to child | Respondents | Percentage total |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Mother | 277 | 92.3% |
| Father | 15 | 5% |
| Friend | 1 | 0.3% |
| Family member | 7 | 2.3% |
| Other | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Table 10. Respondent relation to child

Among the 300 respondents, 92.3% consisted of mothers of the child being purchased for, 5% consisted of the father of the child, 0.3% consisted of the friend of the child, and 2.3% consisted of family members of the child. Thus, the majority of the respondents were mothers of the child who purchased baby care products for their child. The relation to the child is an important factor to understand, as it may have an effect on the intentions of the purchase.

Question: How old is your child/children you are buying for?

| <i>How old is your child/children you are buying for?</i> | |
|---|--------|
| Mean | 22.21 |
| Standard Error | 1.00 |
| Median | 22.00 |
| Mode | 24.00 |
| Standard Deviation | 17.39 |
| Sample Variance | 302.54 |
| Kurtosis | 3.94 |
| Skewness | 1.55 |
| Range | 108.00 |
| Minimum | 0.00 |
| Maximum | 108.00 |
| Count | 300.00 |
| Largest (1) | 108.00 |

Smallest (1) 0.00

*Result units are in months of age.

Table 11. Age of child/children

Among the 300 respondents, the ages of the child/children the respondents were buying for were from newborn to 108 months (9 years old). The mean age of the child being purchased for was 22.21 months old.

Question: What baby care items do you frequently purchase?

| Baby care item | Number of respondents purchasing item | Percentage total of respondents purchasing item |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Baby food/ snacks | 202 | 67.3% |
| Formula | 73 | 24.3% |
| Diapers | 223 | 74.3% |
| Cloth diapers | 29 | 9.6% |
| Wipes | 209 | 69.6% |
| Oral hygiene products | 191 | 63.6% |
| Bath shampoo, body wash | 106 | 35.3% |
| Toys | 198 | 66% |
| Pacifiers | 107 | 35.6% |

Table 12. Baby care items frequently purchased by respondents

The top three most frequently purchased baby care products among the participants were diapers at 74.3%, baby food/snacks at 67.3% and wipes at 69.6%.

Question: Which stores do you usually purchase baby care products from?

| Store | Respondents who shop at particular store | Percentage of respondents |
|-------|--|---------------------------|
|-------|--|---------------------------|

| | | |
|-------------|----|-------|
| Krónan | 68 | 22.6% |
| Bónus | 85 | 28.3% |
| Pharmacy | 45 | 15% |
| Barnaloppán | 67 | 22.3% |
| Hagkaup | 15 | 5% |
| Nettó | 12 | 4% |
| Costco | 12 | 4% |
| Other | 7 | 2.3% |

Table 13. Stores respondents usually shop at

The stores in which the respondents usually shop for baby care products are Bónus at 28.3%, Krónan at 22.6% and Barnaloppán at 22.3%.

5.3.2 Brand trust

Question: Is your trust for baby care products driven by product features, quality, attributes etc. or it is driven by an emotional connection with a particular brand?



Figure 4. Origin of trust for baby care products

It is observed in figure 4, that 75% of respondents mentioned that their your trust for baby care products driven by both product attributes such as quality and also emotional connection to the particular brand. For instance, one respondent said that “when my daughter was first born, I trusted products I had grown up around and tended to buy products from my home country”. Another respondent said that they trust based on “quality and product features only. I can easily change brands if I find one better than the other. For me it’s about the quality rather than the name.” Moreover, a third respondent claimed that they are influenced by “Both. I’m used to major brand name products from my home country which influence what I’d like to buy.” It can be seen that emotional factors alone are not a major influence on trust of a product. However, the majority of respondents appear to be influenced by a mixture of both quality of the product attributes and a previous emotional connection to the brand.

Question: What are the reasons which you find one brand more trusted than other brands?

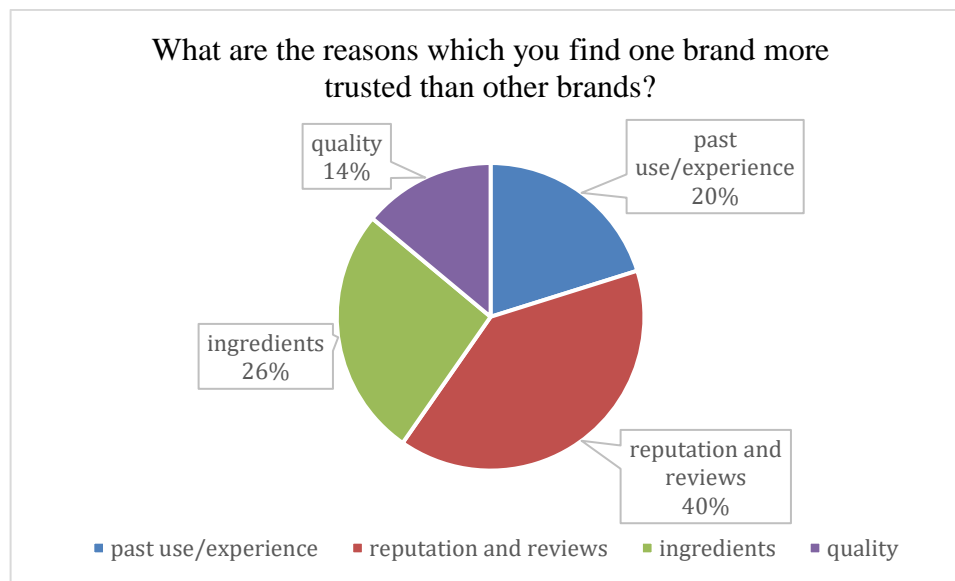


Figure 5. Reasons one brand is trusted more than another

It is found that 40% of respondents perceived that reputation and reviews of the brand is a primary factor in determining whether one brand is trusted more than another brand. “ingredients” was also a primary factor at 26%, followed by “past use/experience” and finally “quality” at 14%. Respondents were also given the option of explaining why they

felt that way. One answer was that “I choose the products following the quality plus the price, I am not interested in the brand!”. Another replied “Usually if it is recommended by doctors or/and the ingredients list is un-fragranced and without toxins. Having some labels helps, like vegan, green, without parabens and so on”. Another responded that they trust products that “other parents have tried and liked, products last well or even for multiple children”.

Question: How much does a previous experience with a brand affect your future choices with that brand?

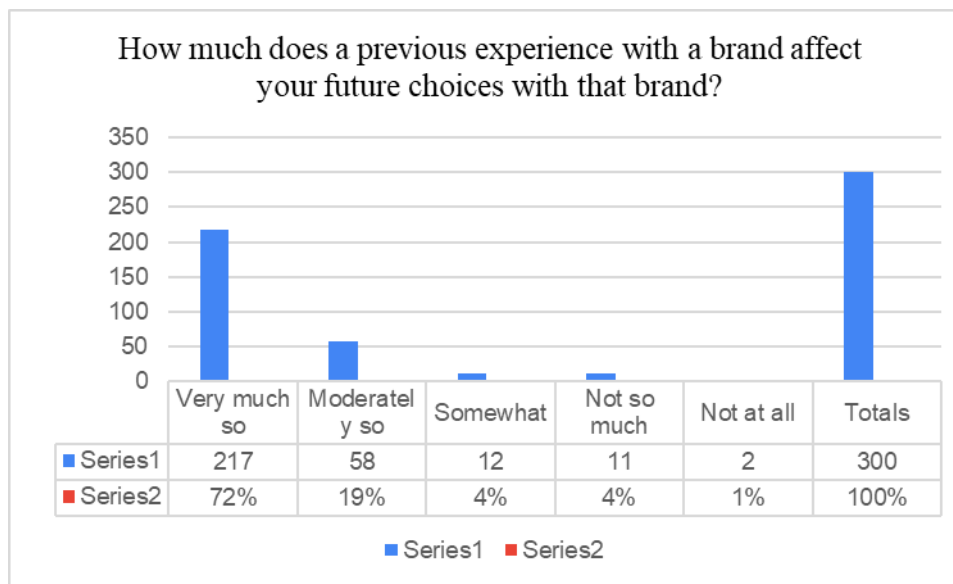


Figure 6. Previous brand experience effect

When asked “how much does a previous experience with a brand affect your future choices with that product”, 72% of respondents answered, “very much so”, 19% answered “moderately so”, 4% answered “somewhat”, 4% answered “not so much” and 1% answered “not at all”. This shows that previous experience with a particular brand does indeed significantly affect future purchases with that brand.

5.3.3 Price influence and Safety & Quality

Question: What is your perception of price-quality relationship, do you perceive a higher price to be of a certain quality or vice versa? Please explain.

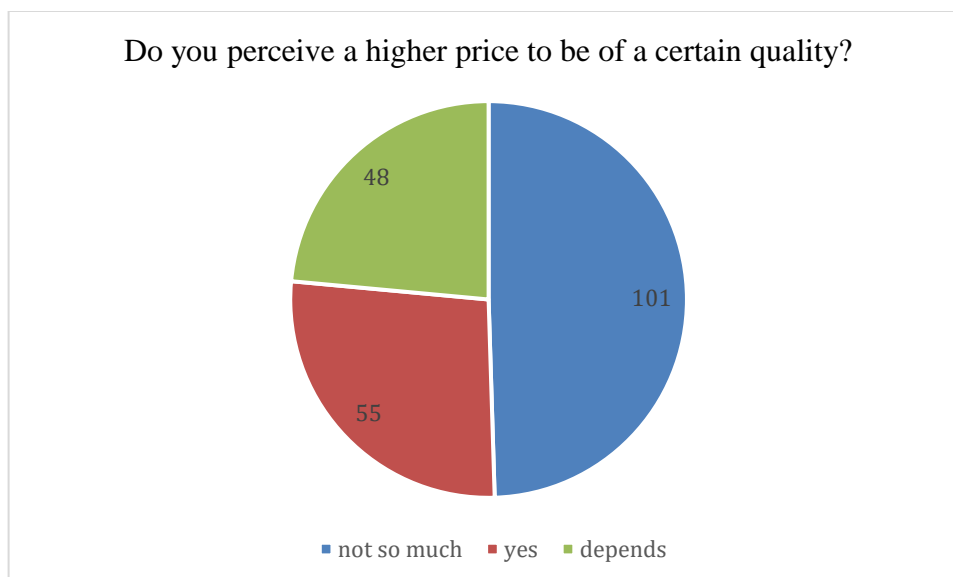


Figure 7. Perception of quality-price relationship

There were 204 responses which were viable for analysis under the categories “not so much”, “yes” and “depends”. Most respondents conveyed that they do not think that they perceive a higher price to be of a certain quality. 55 respondents did indeed think that there was higher price should be of a certain quality. Lastly, 48 respondents said, “it depends”. Of the respondents who said “depends”, “I don’t believe price always means quality, it depends on what the product is made with so that is always what I would look at first”. Another replied that “I will buy something that is a little more expensive if the quality is better but of course it depends on what kind of product it is and if the better quality is really worth the extra price”. Another said that “It depends on the product, example: I buy a stroller because of the quality and clothing of the price”. A fourth respondent conveyed that “No, it depends less on the price more on other factors”.

Question: Before purchasing a baby care product, how important are the following attributes of the product?

| [Origin of product] | | [Price] | | [Ingredients] | | [Packaging] | | [Brand Name] | |
|---------------------|----------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| Mean | ↓ 3.06 | Mean | ↑ 3.83 | Mean | ↑ 4.45 | Mean | ↓ 2.67 | Mean | ↓ 2.57 |
| Standard Error | 0.06 | Standard Error | 0.05 | Standard Error | 0.04 | Standard Error | 0.06 | Standard Error | 0.07 |
| Median | 3.00 | Median | 4.00 | Median | 5.00 | Median | 3.00 | Median | 3.00 |
| Mode | 3.00 | Mode | 4.00 | Mode | 5.00 | Mode | 3.00 | Mode | 3.00 |
| Standard Deviation | ↑ 1.05 | Standard Deviation | ↓ 0.84 | Standard Deviation | ↓ 0.74 | Standard Deviation | ↑ 1.04 | Standard Deviation | ↑ 1.10 |
| Sample Variance | 1.09 | Sample Variance | 0.71 | Sample Variance | 0.54 | Sample Variance | 1.09 | Sample Variance | 1.22 |
| Kurtosis | -0.47 | Kurtosis | 0.77 | Kurtosis | 1.51 | Kurtosis | -0.61 | Kurtosis | -0.99 |
| Skewness | -0.10 | Skewness | -0.65 | Skewness | -1.27 | Skewness | 0.02 | Skewness | 0.05 |
| Range | 4.00 | Range | 4.00 | Range | 4.00 | Range | 4.00 | Range | 4.00 |
| Minimum | 1.00 | Minimum | 1.00 | Minimum | 1.00 | Minimum | 1.00 | Minimum | 1.00 |
| Maximum | 5.00 | Maximum | 5.00 | Maximum | 5.00 | Maximum | 5.00 | Maximum | 5.00 |
| Sum | ↓ 835.00 | Sum | ↑ 1046.00 | Sum | ↑ 1215.00 | Sum | ↓ 730.00 | Sum | ↓ 702.00 |
| Largest(1) | 5.00 | Largest(1) | 5.00 | Largest(1) | 5.00 | Largest(1) | 5.00 | Largest(1) | 5.00 |
| Smallest(1) | 1.00 | Smallest(1) | 1.00 | Smallest(1) | 1.00 | Smallest(1) | 1.00 | Smallest(1) | 1.00 |

Table 14. Attribute importance

Before purchasing a baby care product, how important are the following attributes of the product?

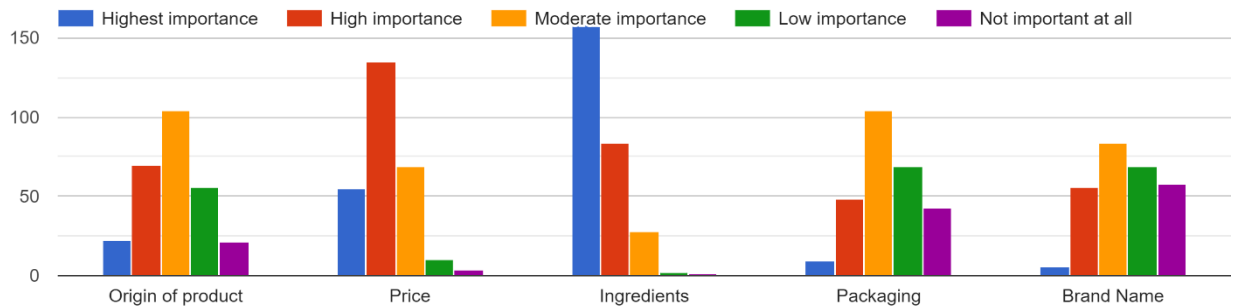


Figure 8. Attribute importance chart

Respondents were asked to answer this question in 5 series Likert scale, which ranged from “not important at all” to “highest importance”. 1= “Not important at all”, 2= “Low importance”, 3= “Moderately important”, 4= “High importance” and 5= “Highest importance”. From the results of the descriptive statistics in the graph above, it can be seen that the “ingredients” attribute was shown to be the most important attribute of the

product according to the respondents, based on the mean being 4.45, the standard deviation being 0.74, and the sum being 1215. The second most important attribute shown is price. This attribute showed a mean of 3.83, a standard deviation of 0.84, and a sum of 1046. Here it can also be seen that “origin of product” is more important than “packaging” of the product or “brand name” of the product. In fact, the brand name of the product shows to be the least important attribute of the product before the consumer decides to purchase it.

Question: Of the following, how important is it that the product is natural/organic?

Of the following, how important is it that the product is natural/organic?

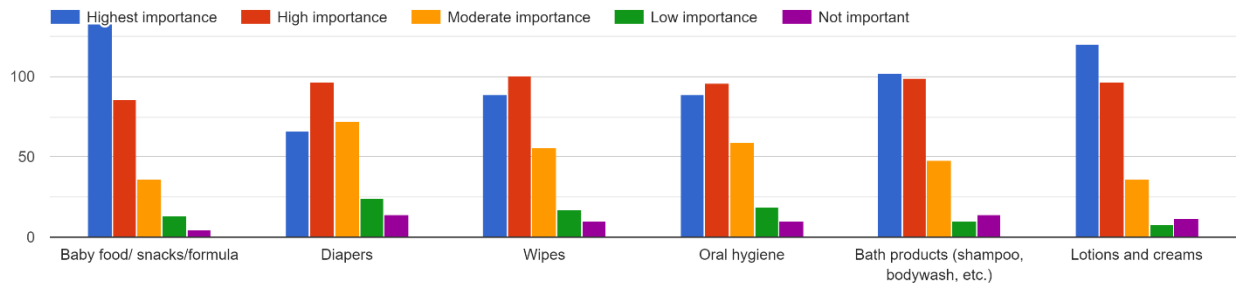


Figure 9. Importance of natural/organic properties of product

| [Baby food/ snacks/formula] | | [Diapers] | | [Wipes] | | [Oral hygiene] | | [Bath products (shampoo, bodywash, etc.)] | | [Lotions and creams] | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|---|-----------|----------------------|-----------|
| Mean | ↑ 4.21 | Mean | ↓ 3.65 | Mean | → 3.89 | Mean | → 3.86 | Mean | → 3.97 | Mean | ↑ 4.12 |
| Standard Error | 0.06 | Standard Error | 0.07 | Standard Error | 0.06 | Standard Error | 0.06 | Standard Error | 0.07 | Standard Error | 0.06 |
| Median | 4.00 | Median | 4.00 | Median | 4.00 | Median | 4.00 | Median | 4.00 | Median | 4.00 |
| Mode | 5.00 | Mode | 4.00 | Mode | 4.00 | Mode | 4.00 | Mode | 5.00 | Mode | 5.00 |
| Standard Deviation | ↓ 0.97 | Standard Deviation | ↑ 1.10 | Standard Deviation | → 1.05 | Standard Deviation | ↑ 1.07 | Standard Deviation | ↑ 1.08 | Standard Deviation | → 1.04 |
| Sample Variance | 0.94 | Sample Variance | 1.20 | Sample Variance | 1.10 | Sample Variance | 1.13 | Sample Variance | 1.16 | Sample Variance | 1.07 |
| Kurtosis | 1.11 | Kurtosis | -0.16 | Kurtosis | 0.32 | Kurtosis | 0.12 | Kurtosis | 0.87 | Kurtosis | 1.60 |
| Skewness | -1.23 | Skewness | -0.62 | Skewness | -0.87 | Skewness | -0.80 | Skewness | -1.11 | Skewness | -1.35 |
| Range | 4.00 | Range | 4.00 | Range | 4.00 | Range | 4.00 | Range | 4.00 | Range | 4.00 |
| Minimum | 1.00 | Minimum | 1.00 | Minimum | 1.00 | Minimum | 1.00 | Minimum | 1.00 | Minimum | 1.00 |
| Maximum | 5.00 | Maximum | 5.00 | Maximum | 5.00 | Maximum | 5.00 | Maximum | 5.00 | Maximum | 5.00 |
| Sum | ↑ 1148.00 | Sum | ↓ 996.00 | Sum | → 1061.00 | Sum | → 1054.00 | Sum | → 1084.00 | Sum | ↑ 1124.00 |
| Largest(1) | 5.00 | Largest(1) | 5.00 | Largest(1) | 5.00 | Largest(1) | 5.00 | Largest(1) | 5.00 | Largest(1) | 5.00 |
| Smallest(1) | 1.00 | Smallest(1) | 1.00 | Smallest(1) | 1.00 | Smallest(1) | 1.00 | Smallest(1) | 1.00 | Smallest(1) | 1.00 |

Table 15. Importance of natural/organic properties of product

Respondents were asked to answer this question in 5 series Likert scale, which ranged from “not important at all” to “highest importance”. 1= “Not important at all”, 2= “Low importance”, 3= “Moderately important”, 4= “High importance” and 5= “Highest

importance”. According to the results, respondents conveyed that of the displayed product categories, the most important to be natural/organic was “baby food/snacks/formula”. This had a mean of 4.21, a standard deviation of 0.97, and a sum of 1148. The second most important product category to be natural/organic was “lotions and creams”. This had a mean of 4.12, a standard deviation of 1.04 and a sum of 1124. The other categories had very similar importance at “bath products” with a mean of 3.97, “wipes” at a mean of 3.89, “oral hygiene” at a mean of 3.86, and lastly, “diapers” at a mean of 3.65.

Question” How often do you check the ingredients label on the back of new products before purchase?



Figure 10. Frequency of checking product labels

When asked how often the respondents check the ingredients label on the back of new products before purchase, the majority responded that they either always for often times check the label.

5.3.4 Environmental concerns

Question: How much does a product with minimal packaging influence your purchase decision?

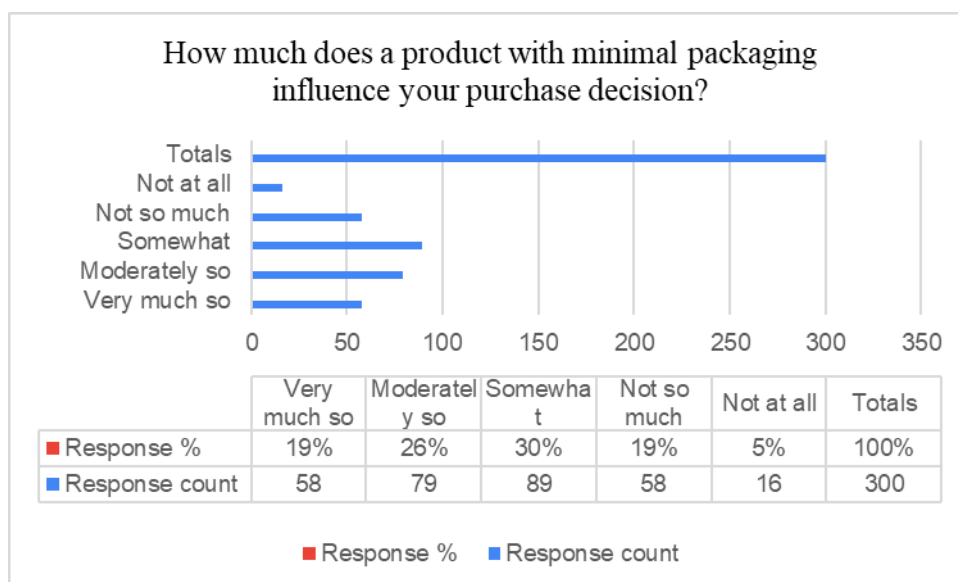


Figure 11. Influence of minimal product packaging

It is found that 19% of respondents said that a product with minimal packaging influences their purchasing decision “very much so”. Moreover, 26% responded that it affects it “moderately so”, and 30% respondent that it affects them “somewhat”. This indicates that a product with minimal packaging does indeed affect the majority of consumers.

Question: How often do you purchase a product with recycled qualities due to environmental concerns?

| | |
|--------------------|--------|
| Mean | 3.26 |
| Standard Error | 0.08 |
| Median | 3.00 |
| Mode | 5.00 |
| Standard Deviation | 1.44 |
| Sample Variance | 2.08 |
| Kurtosis | -1.34 |
| Skewness | -0.21 |
| Range | 4.00 |
| Minimum | 1.00 |
| Maximum | 5.00 |
| Sum | 976.00 |
| Largest(1) | 5.00 |
| Smallest(1) | 1.00 |

Table 16. Product purchase frequency due to environmental concerns

| Row Labels | Count of Respondents |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 5 | 84 |
| 4 | 62 |
| 3 | 48 |
| 2 | 60 |
| 1 | 46 |
| Grand Total | 300 |

Table 17. Product purchase frequency due to environmental concerns- respondent count & distribution

Respondents were asked to answer this question in 5 series Likert scale, which ranged from “Never” to “Always”, with 1= “Never”, 2= “Not often”, 3= “Sometimes”, 4= “Often” and 5= “Always”. The response rate has a mean of 3.26, and a high standard deviation of 1.44 indicating a large range of opinions on this topic. In the graph above, it can be seen that the count of respondents weighs considerably along the ranges, further indicating the respondents’ contrasting views on the topic. However, the slight majority indicated that they do indeed often purchase a product with recycled qualities due to environmental concerns.

5.3.5 Sub-factors

Question: Are there any baby products that you do not buy? If so, what are the reasons?

| Product themes not purchased | # of responses |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| soaps and bath products | 40 |
| formula milk | 34 |
| disposable diapers | 27 |
| wipes | 18 |
| cloth diapers | 16 |
| plastic or cheap toys | 16 |
| pacifier | 15 |
| baby food | 12 |
| baby powder | 7 |
| clothes | 6 |
| Total theme responses | 191 |

Table 18. Products not purchased

Of the 300 respondents, 191 of the answers included themes of products which they do not purchase. The most commonly unpurchased products were “soaps and bath products”,

“formula milk”, “disposable diapers”, and “wipes”. One reason for not buying soaps and bath products from a respondent was: “I don’t buy baby powder because of the toxins, any scented wipes, or colored lotion/soap”. Another respondent mentioned that they didn’t buy “Baby cosmetics - I only use water. I stopped buying wipes when the kid was about 10 months and just cleaned him with water or water and soap as well. Wasn't buying formula or bottles as I was exclusively breastfeeding.” Another replied that they do not purchase "Shampoo and other soaps since kids don't need them. Wipes, I always use reusable ones. Plastic toothbrushes and cheap plastic toys"

Question: What or whom would you consider is good source of info when choosing a product and why?

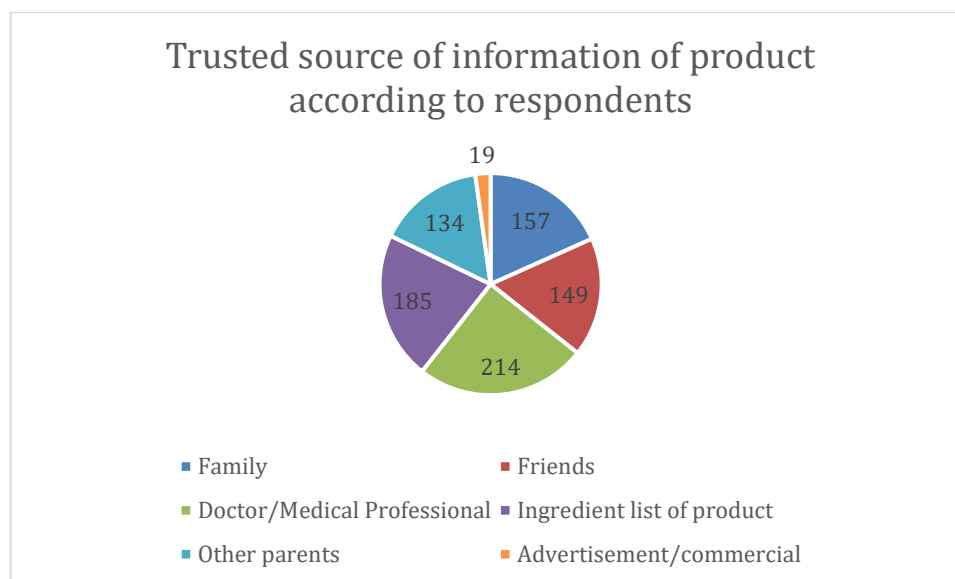


Figure 12. Trusted information source of products

Respondents were given the choice to “check off” any or none of the options which they considered to be a good source of information when choosing a product. They were also given the option to give their open opinion via a comment section below the question. The comment section included theme such as referring to online reviews, internet research, and reputation of product. From the graph above, the respondents conveyed that the most highly trusted source of information of product is via “doctor/medical professional” at 214 responses, “ingredient list of products” at 185 responses, “family” at

157 responses, “friends” at 149 responses”, and “other parents” at 134 responses. The last category which did not receive as much trust was that of “advertisements/commercials”.

Question: When comparing similar alternative products what is the most determining factor in the final choice for you for the product types shown below?

When comparing similar alternative products what is the most determining factor in the final choice for you for the product types shown below?

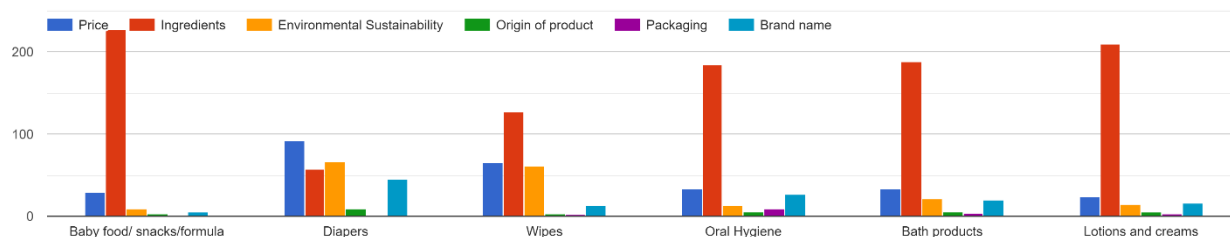


Figure 13. Determining factors of final choice among product alternatives

Ingredients were the most determining factor of 4 out of the 5 categories. The only exception to this was diapers, in which 32% of respondents claimed that price was the most important determining factor in the final choice when comparing alternative products. The baby food/snack/formula category had a staggering 83% choice towards ingredients and only 11% was affected by price. The wipes category was influenced 47% by ingredients, 24% by price and 23% by environmental sustainability. Oral hygiene was mainly influence by ingredients at 67%. Bath products and lotions and creams were also significantly affected by price at 69% and 77%, respectively.

5.3.6 Satisfaction of product selection in Iceland

Question: What is your perception of baby care products in terms of quality of the products in Iceland?

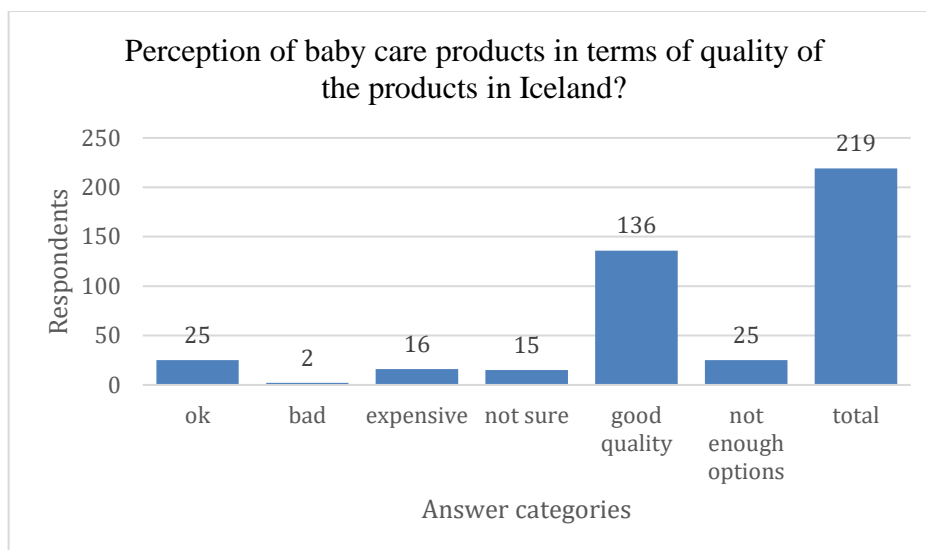


Figure 14. Quality perception of products in Iceland

There was a total 219 out of 300 respondents answered this question in open and written form with their answers being further categorized in the above themes of “ok”, “good quality”, “bad”, “expensive”, “not sure”, and “not enough options”. The most commonly occurring themes were “good quality” at 136 respondents, “ok” at 25 respondents, “not enough options” at 25 respondents and “expensive” at 16 respondents.

Question: How often do you buy baby care products online or out of the country, and what is the main reason you do so?

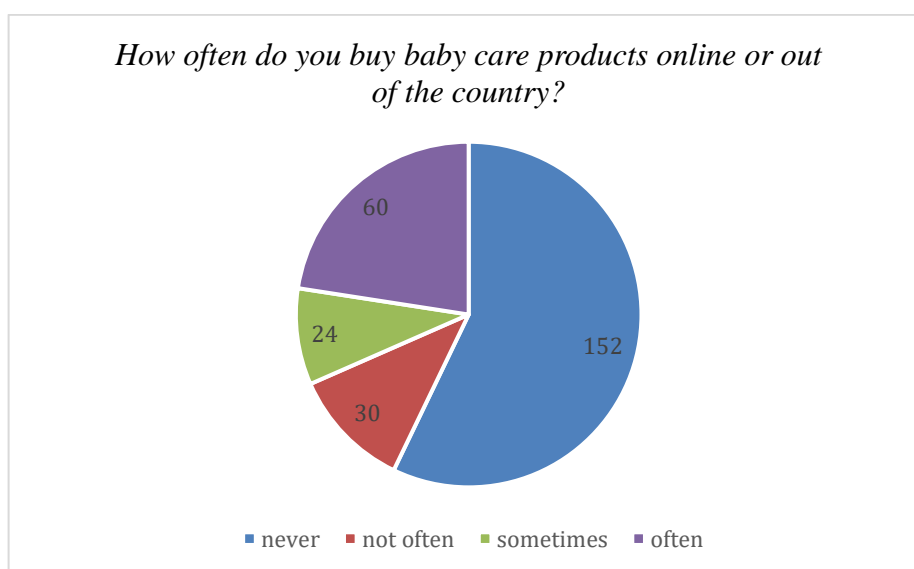


Figure 15. Frequency of online product purchases

There were 266 out of 300 respondents who answered this question. Respondents were asked to answer this question in 4 series Likert scale, which ranged from “Never” to “often”, with 1= “Never”, 2= “Not often”, 3= “Sometimes”, 4= “Often”. The respondents were given the option of writing their explanation of why they do or do not purchase baby care products online or out of country. 152 respondents said that they “never” purchase products online. 60 people said that they did purchase online and often. And the rest (54 respondents) replied that they either purchased “not often” or “sometimes”. One reply said that “Every time we go abroad, we purchase food, clothes, toys etc. Online is an option if the company is based in Iceland due previously established trust with the brand and high import taxes”. Another person replied that “I often purchase online local products because I trust that the ingredients are well suited for the environment in which it exists. Shipping taxes are also ridiculous if ordering from abroad, so I rarely do that.” A third respondent said that “I buy it many times online because it is cheaper and sometimes, I buy out of the country because Iceland doesn’t sell it”.

Question: Are there any baby products that are lacking in Iceland in your opinion?

Please specify in the "other" box below.

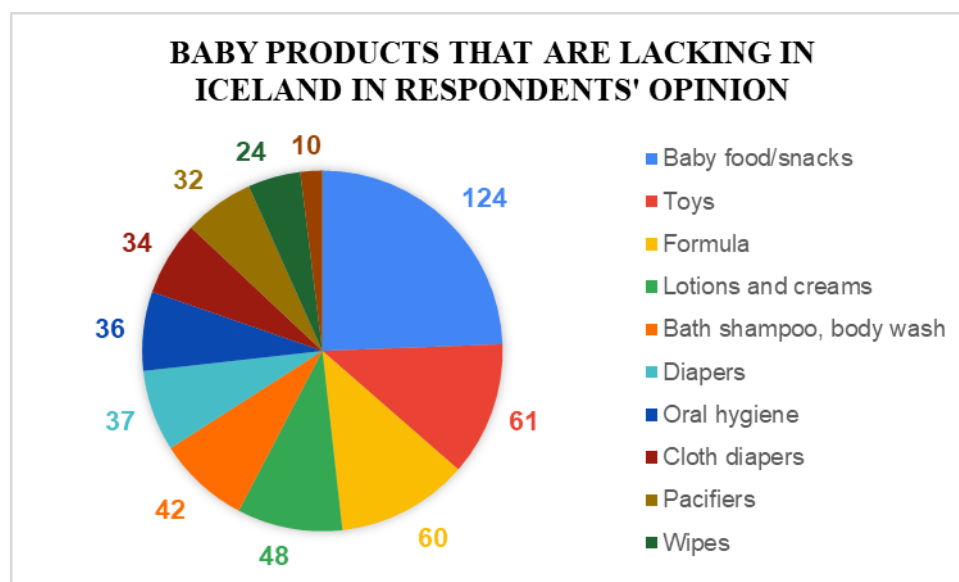


Figure 16. Lacking baby products in Iceland

It is asked whether there any baby products that are lacking in Iceland. It is observed in figure 16 that 124 respondents said that “baby food/snacks” are lacking. The second most predominant category theme is “toys” at 61 respondents, and thirdly “formula” at 60 respondents. Other significant categories that respondents conveyed to be lacking in Iceland are “lotions and creams, “bath shampoo, body wash” and “diapers” and “oral hygiene” products.

Chapter 6

Analysis & Discussion

This chapter presents the analysis and findings in the data analysis section in regard to the research question and objectives. This chapter will also discuss the implications of the findings of this research in relation to the relevant literature in the literature review chapter. The restatement of the research question is as follows: Which factors influence purchasing decisions of baby care products in the Icelandic market? The objectives will be restated in chapters 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3.

6.1 Factors that influence consumers’ purchasing decision of baby care products in Iceland including brand trust, price influence, safety and quality, and environmental concerns.

From the results of the qualitative research part, most consumers purchase baby care products such as diapers, and general hygiene products. Moreover, respondents from the quantitative questionnaire responded that they mostly purchase are formula, diapers, wipes, and bath products. Regarding the relation of the respondent to the child being purchased for, in both in the interviews and the questionnaire, the majority consisted of over 90% mothers. Fathers consisted of the second majority at 5% of the total respondents. It is further observed that the age of the child/children the respondents are buying for ranged from newborn to 9 years of age, with a mean age of 22.2 months old. The usual stores that respondents primarily purchase their baby care products from are Bónus at 28.3%, Krónan at 22.6% and Barnaloppan at 22.3%.

Regarding brand trust, the study shows that 75% of respondents trust for baby care products is driven by the quality of the product. 20% of their trust is driven by both a quality and product features perceptive as well as an emotional connection to a particular brand. Lastly, 5% of participants are driven primarily from an emotional connection to a brand.

A major reason why respondents found one brand more trusted than another was by the reputation and reviews of the product, which consisted of 40% of the respondents' answers. The second most important reason was ingredients at 26%. When asked how much a previous experience with a particular brand affects future choices with that brand, 72% of consumers reported that it does very much so. This is consistent with previous literature saying that "future purchases are not affected by either dimension of brand knowledge directly; rather, brand knowledge affects future purchases via a brand relationship path that includes brand satisfaction, brand trust, and attachment to the brand. Therefore, brand knowledge alone is insufficient for long-term brand creation; brand connection aspects must also be taken into account (Esch, & Langner, et al., 2006).

On the topic of price influence, most respondents conveyed that they do not think that they perceive a higher price to be of a certain quality. The majority of respondents conveyed that they do not think that they perceive a higher price to be of a certain quality. 26% of respondents did indeed think that there was higher price should to be of a certain quality. From a previous brand trust study, it is found that "more expensive products might be perceived as more attractive -- which could increase demand -- but they are also more expensive, which our study showed decreased demand" (Lowery, 2009).

Regarding most importantly perceived attributes of a product before purchase, it was found that the attribute "ingredients" was shown to be the most important according to the respondents. This is also confirmed from the qualitative results of the interviews, as it was found that the second most common theme category within the interviews was that ingredients of product is an important factor in deciding to buy a product. The second most important attribute shown is price. It can also be seen that "origin of product" is more important than "packaging" of the product or "brand name" of the product. In fact, a very interesting find in this study is that the brand name of the product shows to be the least important attribute of the product before the consumer decides to purchase it.

When it comes to the importance of natural/organic, respondents conveyed that of the displayed product categories, the most important to be natural/organic was "baby

food/snacks/formula”. The second most important product category to be natural/organic was “lotions and creams”. This shows that consumers are understanding that products that are consumable by baby or are absorbable into their system are considered of the utmost important to be natural/organic to the purchaser. Results show that 79% of respondents either always or often times check the label of a new product before purchasing it. This is consistent with a previous study that found that over 7 in 10 consumers say it’s at least moderately important that brands offer “clean” products (Haller, Lee, et al., 2020).

Environmental concerns showed to have a large impact as a factor of purchasing baby products. 19% of respondents claimed that a product with minimal packaging influences their purchasing decision “very much so”. This is followed by the sentiment that 26% are affected “moderately so” and that 30% of respondents are affected “somewhat”.

According to a previous study, two main motivational factors are conveyed by the consumer—saving by recycling and protecting the environment—which can influence the decision to buy ecological packaging (Orzan, Cruceru, Bălăceanu, et al., 2018). Moreover, when asked how often do you purchase a product with recycled qualities due to environmental concerns, the results were dividing. A significant number of participants did not take into account this as a purchase factor, however, the slight majority of participants indicated that they do indeed often purchase a product with recycled qualities due to environmental concerns. This is consistent with the results from (Esmaeilpour & Rajabi, 2016) which showed that the harmonization of packaging has a considerable and positive impact on consumers' perceptions of the reusability of product packaging.

6.2 Sub-factors influencing purchase decisions of baby care products.

In Iceland, most consumers get information to purchase their baby care products from health care personnel, family or friends, or on the internet. The respondents replied that the most highly trusted source of information of product is from “doctor/medical professional” at 214 responses, “ingredient list of products” at 185 responses, “family” at 157 responses, “friends” at 149 responses”, and “other parents” at 134 responses. The “advertisements/commercials” category was the least significant category as a trusted information source for baby care products. The most common product categories which they do not purchase are “soaps and bath products”, “formula milk”, “disposable diapers”, and “wipes”. Reasons for not purchasing these items included avoiding

unnecessary chemical and toxins in products such as lotions and bath products, etc., formula because the baby breastfed/is breastfeeding or had grown out of needing milk; disposable diapers because they use cloth diapers instead or the child/children has no need for diapers anymore; wipes because they contain unnecessary chemicals, and soaps and bath products to avoid toxins and chemicals.

Respondents were asked what is the most determining factor in the final purchase choice for the following product types: baby food/snacks, diapers, wipes, oral hygiene, bath products, and lotions and creams. Out of these categories, ingredients were the most determining factor of 4 out of the 5 categories. The only exception to this was diapers, in which 32% of respondents claimed that price was the most important determining factor in the final choice when comparing alternative products. The baby food/snack/formula category had a staggering 83% choice towards ingredients and only 11% was affected by price. The wipes category was influenced 47% by ingredients, 24% by price and 23% by environmental sustainability. Oral hygiene was mainly influence by ingredients at 67%. Bath products and lotions and creams were also significantly affected by price at 69% and 77%, respectively. This data is backed up by some of the latest consumer statistics indicating that 63% of adults say the ingredients in a food or beverage have at least a moderate influence on what they buy (ltd, M. D. F., n.d.).

6.3 Factors of satisfaction of the selection of baby products in Iceland.

Respondents were asked how they perceived the quality of products in the Icelandic market. The most commonly occurring themes were “good quality” at 136 respondents, “ok” quality at 25 respondents. However, respondents also replied that there are “not enough options” at 25 respondents and that the options are too “expensive” at 16 respondents. When asked whether there any baby products that are lacking in Iceland the majority of respondents (124 respondents) said that “baby food/snacks” are lacking. The second most predominant category theme is “toys” at 61 respondents, and thirdly “formula” at 60 respondents.

Purchasing products online has been a growing trend in the last few years. As internet access and adoption are rapidly increasing worldwide, the number of digital consumers grows every year. Over two billion people in the year 2020 purchased goods online, and e-retail sales surpassed 4.2 trillion U.S. dollars worldwide (Statista, 2022). However, it

appears that in Iceland it is not quite the same case. 152 respondents said that they “never” purchase products online. 60 people said that they did purchase online and often. And the rest (54 respondents) replied that they either purchased “not often” or “sometimes”. Some common reasons and responses for the large majority not purchasing baby care products online was that they tend to go abroad to do their shopping because it is cheaper, because of high customs fees and hassle of ordering online in Iceland, and because of not wanting to wait so long to get the product.

Conclusion 7

7.1 Contribution to Theory and Practice

The aim of this research is to discover and give a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing purchase decisions of baby care products in the Icelandic market to store managers, business leaders, manufacturers, marketers, and the like. It will aid in identifying gaps in the market, products that are needed, products that are obsolete, and how to help deliver and convey the value of those products better to the consumers in order to meet their needs.

A mixed-method exploratory research approach was used in the thesis. The initial qualitative part consisted of semi-structured interview questions based on previous peer-reviewed literature. The results from the interviews were then used to construct the questions for the quantitative part, the online questionnaire. The questions covered relevant topics with regard to previous literature and the results from the interviews.

The results from this study provide important insights into consumers’ buying behavior, priorities and identifies the important factors that influence the purchase decision of baby care products in the Icelandic market. It is found that most of the consumers in Iceland purchase baby care products regularly at the stores Krónan, Bónus and Barnaloppán. For the respondents, getting information from medical professionals, family and friends and product reviews is important before making a purchase decisions of baby care products. The most regularly purchased items include diapers, baby food/snacks, and wipes. Respondents claimed that their trust for baby care products driven by primarily product attributes such as quality but also an emotional connection to the particular brand. It is found that 40% of respondents perceived that reputation and reviews of the brand is a primary factor in

determining whether one brand is trusted more than another brand. Regarding how much a previous experience with a brand affects consumers' future choices with that product, the majority replied that previous experience with a particular brand does indeed significantly affect future purchases. Price and quality of products are two significant factors that significantly influence consumers' toward purchasing baby care products. Respondents conveyed that they do not think that they perceive a higher price to be of a certain quality and instead focus on product attributes.

Another useful insight that is gained through this research is in area of how important certain attributes are of a product before the purchase decision is made. From the results, the "ingredients" attribute was shown to be the most important attribute of the product according to the respondents, based on the mean being 4.45 out of a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important. The second most important attribute shown is price. This attribute showed a mean of 3.83, It was also found that "origin of product" is more important than "packaging" of the product or "brand name" of the product. When respondents compared these attributes, it was found that brand name of the product was the least important attribute of the product compared to the others.

Consumers were asked how important the following products were to be natural/organic. The majority replied that the most important to be natural/organic was "baby food/snacks/formula". This had a mean of 4.21 out of a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important. The second most important product category to be natural/organic was "lotions and creams". This had a mean of 4.12. The other categories had very similar importance at "bath products" with a mean of 3.97, "wipes" at a mean of 3.89, "oral hygiene" at a mean of 3.86, and lastly, "diapers" at a mean of 3.65.

The majority of consumers responded that they either always for often times check the label before purchasing a new baby care product. Moreover, a product with minimal packaging significantly influences their purchasing decision. Regarding purchasing a product with recycled qualities due to environmental concerns, sentiments were varied, with a significant portion of respondents saying they don't or never take that into consideration. However, the slight majority indicated that they do indeed often purchase products with recyclable properties and that it factors into why they purchase the product. The most commonly unpurchased products were "soaps and bath products", "formula milk", "disposable diapers", and "wipes". When respondents were comparing between

similar products, the ingredients were the most determining factor of 4 out of the 5 categories of products. The price of diapers was the only outlier. The overall perception of baby care product quality in Iceland was good. However, a significant portion of respondents claimed that there were not enough options and products may be too expensive. It was found that baby food and snack options are lacking in Iceland, as well as toys at 61 respondents, and formula. Despite this lack of options and expensive price range, most of the respondents stray away from ordering baby care product online because of the hassle, time wait, and high custom and shipping fee rates.

This study will be helpful to understand consumers' buying behavior of baby care products in the Icelandic market better. This study can help baby care product manufacturers, stores, and marketers in making appropriate business decisions. It can also help with the inventions or creation of new baby products based on the feedback of the respondents and results of this research. This study can also help to understand the factors that influence consumers choice of products baby and the ever-changing consumer goods market in Iceland. The results can pave the way for better understanding of the priorities, needs and factors that influence baby care product consumers in Iceland.

7.2 Limitations and Further Research

Some limitations of the current paper and opportunities for future research are worth mentioning. Firstly, the scope of this research is focused on consumer preferences, perception and factors influencing the purchasing decision of baby care products. This research is limited to the Icelandic market. It is also restricted to random sampling of the population but does not attempt to reach the full population due to resource and time constraints.

The topic of this study is both interesting and important, however, due to the limited sample size and specific geographical location, the research findings may not be useful in a global perspective. Future researchers may use greater geographical areas which may be applicable for global policy purposes. It is recommended that future studies should use a larger sample size to examine consumers' buying behavior, preferences and identify the more intrinsic factors that influence the purchasing decision of baby care products. Future researchers can utilize current and updated research methods and analysis to make the results most effectively accurate and globally accepted.

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Appendix A

Interview

1. Type of product - diapers, baby food, pacifiers, baby shampoo, baby lotions,

- What baby care items do you frequently purchase?
- Are there any baby products that you do not buy, if so, why?
- Do you differentiate between largely-known commercial brands and private/local label brands or view them in the same way? If you differentiate between them, what are the factors on which you find one retailer more trusted than other retailers and manufacturer brands?
- In what way and degree does "clean" or organic packaging and promises on label affect your buying decision.
- What do you think about the availability of versions of product types in Iceland?

2. Purchase motivation (price, quality, sustainability, urgency, eco, etc.)

- How old is your child/children or child with who you are buying for?
- How are you connected with the child- e.g. Parent, family member, friend, etc.
- When determining to purchase a baby care item, what thought process do you have?
- Does your purchase decision for baby care items get influenced by your past experiences
with products in other categories? Can you share an example?
- How is your purchase of baby care products influenced by the trust towards private label brands in general or loyalty towards a particular-retailer?
- How influenced are you to purchase an item that is trending? (For example, Montessori items, Pop-it toys, etc.)
- What items would you purchase if you are in a time-urgent situation? How would brand or "clean-label" matter to you if the item was more convenient and cheaper to buy?
- Would you buy online or out of the country because of lack of options, high price, and effectiveness of products? If so, how often?

3. How we get to know info about the products? word of mouth, ads, shop positioning, etc.

- Whom did you take advice from when deciding on a baby care product to purchase in the past?

- Who or what is good source of info and why?
- Whose recommendation of a baby care product would influence you the most?
- What would be a critical determining factor in decide to buy a product if you've never bought it before?
- What kind of problems do you face when deciding on collecting info on a product?
- Are there any products that are not available in Iceland that you would have to order online? If so, would it be worth it? (price, time wait, customs fee).

4. Usage- how is it being used?

- How do you use the products and how frequently?
- Which products are you more likely to use if they are "organic/clean" and which products don't matter to you if they are or are not "organic/clean".
- What criteria is important to you when choosing consumable baby products like foods, formulas, lotions, baby wash.

Appendix B

Open-ended Questionnaire

1. Basic info.

- What baby care items do you frequently purchase?
- Are there any baby products that you do not buy? If so, why?
- How old is your child/children you are buying for?
- How are you connected with the child - e.g., Mother, Father, family member, friend, etc.

3. Product quality (natural/organic materials) and safety.

- Which products are you more likely to use if they are "organic/clean" and which products don't matter to you if they are or are not "organic/clean"?
- To what degree does organic or natural ingredients affect your purchase decision? Please explain.
- When determining to purchase a baby care item, what priorities do you have from most to least important?
- When comparing similar alternative products, what things determine the final choice for you?
- How often do you check the ingredients label on the back of products before purchase?

4. Environmental sustainability.

- How much does a product with recycled and minimal packaging influence your purchase decision?
- Do you avoid buying over packaged products due to environmental concerns?

5. Brand preference.

- Which one would you prefer between a branded product and premium category private label product, and why?

- What would be a critical determining factor in deciding to buy a product if you've never bought it before?
- What would you consider is good source of info when choosing a product and why?
- Whom did you take advice from when deciding on a baby care product to purchase in the past?
- Which stores do you usually purchase baby products from?
- How much does a previous experience with a brand affect your future choices with that brand? Please explain.

6. Affordable price.

- How much would you say price affects your purchase decision?
- Are there certain products that seem too expensive for their use here in Iceland? If so, what are they?

7. satisfaction of the product.

- Would you buy online or out of the country because of lack of options, high price, and effectiveness of products? If so, how often?
- What determines if you are satisfied with the baby product or not?
- Is there any baby product that is lacking in Iceland in your opinion?

Appendix C

