

## A STUDY OF CONSUMERS' DECISIONS IN PURCHASING CHILDREN'S PHARMACEUTICAL SYRUP PRODUCTS: THE EXPERIENCE OF CADILA VIETNAM

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### ABSTRACT

*Pharmacies are trusted by the consumers for baby nutrition products due to safety concerns. They form the main children's beverage business due to strict regulations regarding the stocking and sale of medically approved products. Furthermore, the presence of pharmacists helps consumers seek advice, which is an added advantage. For example, according to India's 2024 E-pharmaceutical Market Opportunities Outlook, India currently has more than 850,000 independent retail pharmacies serving only 60% of the total domestic demand. The supply gap is expected to present a lucrative opportunity for more drug stores to support demand for various baby products. (Baby Drinks Market Size, 2020).*

The turnover of the market of products and services for children in Vietnam has been predicted to reach a scale of 7 billion USD, with a growth rate of 30-40%.

Besides, according to Nielsen, the sales of baby and child-specific products are still expected to rise by a healthy 7% in 2021 in 2020 constant value terms, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. The lasting impact of COVID-19 is expected to be linked to the economy, with the pandemic impacting macroeconomic stability and growth.

As the country with the highest proportion of young families in Southeast Asia with 12 percent of households having babies under one year of age, and over 30% of households having kids under two years old. With rising incomes and improved education, parents are becoming more willing to pay a premium for high-quality products that can serve their children well. Between 2018 and 2011, retail sales of baby and maternity products in Vietnam grew at an average annual rate of 15%.

The quality and origin of products are the two most important factors in the Vietnamese baby product market. Parents wanting high-quality products for their babies prefer international brands. Currently, these brands have the highest market share, while consumer trust in domestic products is not high. Vietnam is considered as a promising market for mother and baby care products and the booming market with opportunities for foreign brand. In order to write the article, consulting several sources such as books, newspapers, magazines, reports as well as other articles was necessary. Analysis, statistic, prediction, the application is the essential methods which were used to express the topic. The authors used the SWOT analysis method to evaluate the consumers' decisions in purchasing the children syrup products in Vietnam. Some recommendations for developing strategies of children syrup products have been proposed from the above analysis. The article consists of four main factors and they are: firstly, the Vietnamese social; secondly, the psychological of Vietnamese customers; thirdly, the customers' personal; and lastly is the Cadila Pharmaceuticals marketing actions. Relating to the consumers' decision in purchasing, the article will reflect the considerable factors of the Vietnamese customers or children syrup products market surveying during Vietnam in the period from 01st Feb 2021 to 02nd April 2021.

**Keywords---** Four main factors, Children's Pharmaceutical Syrup Products, consumers' decisions in purchasing.

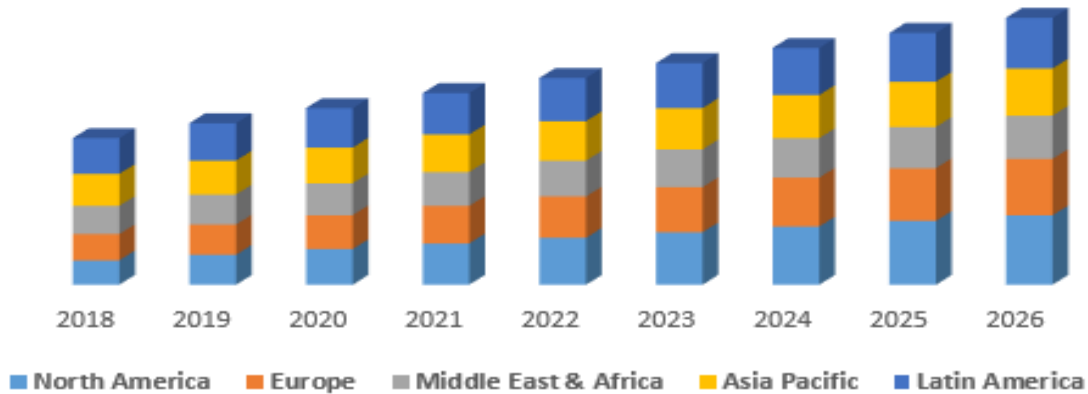
### I. INTRODUCTION

The global syrup market is expected to witness significant growth during the forecast period. The growing demand for syrups from the food and beverage industry and the pharmaceutical industry is a key factor driving the growth of this market. Also, the changing taste and taste preferences of consumers is expected to drive the market growth. (Anon., 2021).

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The analyzing the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on the revenue of market leaders, followers and disruptors. As lockdowns are implemented differently in different regions and countries, the impact of the same region and segment also varies. The report has addressed the current short-term and long-term impact on the market and will help decision-makers prepare to outline short- and long-term strategies for companies by region. The introduction of cough syrup is estimated to help the market market demand. Continuous product development to create better-tasting and healthier products is a key factor in sustaining the global syrup market.

### Syrup Market, BY GEOGRAPHY

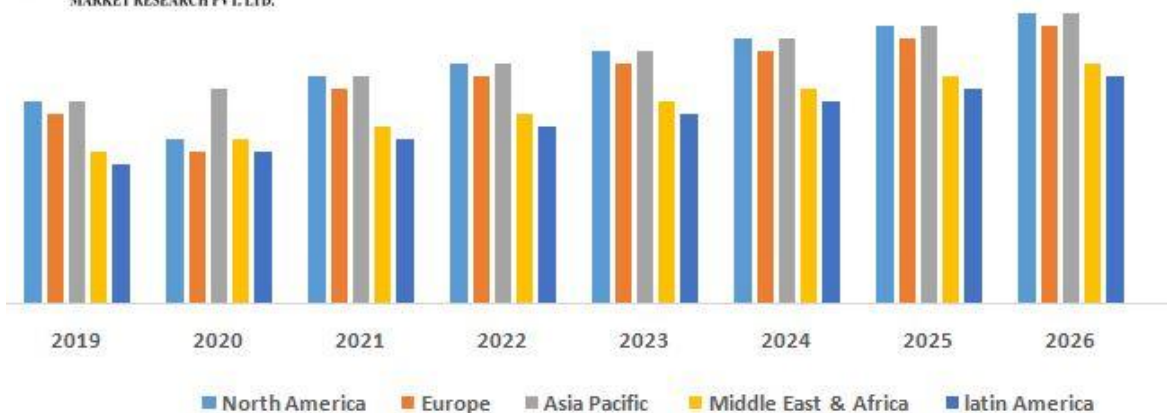


*Figure 0. Syrup Market by Geography, 2018-2026 (USD Billion)*

By geography, the syrup market is segmented into North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, Latin America, and MEA. North America is predicted to dominate the market due to the growing food and beverage consumption and the large expansion of the pharmaceutical and FMCG sectors in the United States and Canada. Europe is likely to show a significant increase due to the rapidly escalating number of supermarkets. Asia-Pacific is projected to grow the fastest during the forecast period. Growing demand for processed products, growing population base and high level of disposable income are estimated to drive the market growth. In addition, the growing retail industry in economic growth countries like Vietnam is contributing to the growth of the market. These developments are estimated to facilitate investment in the syrup market.



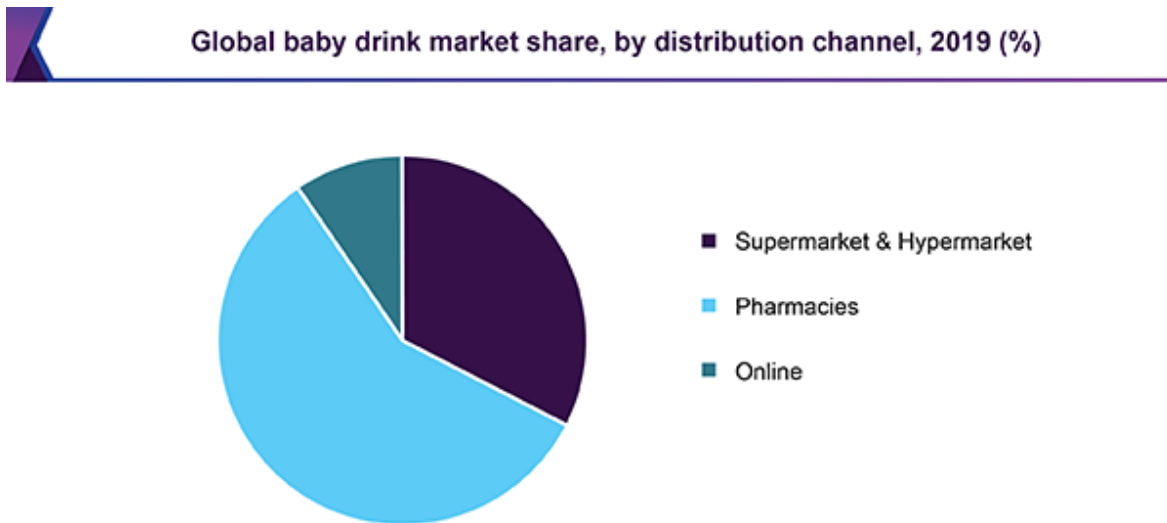
### Global Baby Care Products Market By Region: 2020-2027



*Figure 1. Global Baby Care Products Market by Region, 2020-2027 (USD Billion)*

An increase in the parental concerns about about children's immune system, rapid urbanization and changing lifestyles globally are expected to drive growth in the global baby care products market. bridge. In addition, the

growth in spending ability and the increase in the number of working parents, especially women are some of the prominent drivers for the global baby care products market. Increasing demand for safe and convenient products, containing cough syrup, in developed regions and strict child safety regulations are expected to drive growth in the market. global baby care products market. Baby food products account for the second largest segment of the global baby care products market.



Source: www.grandviewresearch.com

Figure 2. Global baby drink market, by distribution channel, 2019 (%)

Cadila Pharmaceuticals Ltd. is one of the largest privately held pharmaceutical companies in India. Over the past six decades, the company has been developing and manufacturing affordable medicines for patients around the world. Cadila Laboratories began the establish in 1952 and start manufacture a vitamin supplement in liquid form. End of year 2020, Cadila Pharmaceuticals launched its immunity booster syrup in an endeavor to promote “Cadimmune” which can further augment immunity and help in prevention of life-threatening complications in the case of viral infections.

To approach consumer easier, the brand name ‘Cadimmune’ in the mother country will be turn into the name “Bilacad” syrup in Vietnam market. This immunity booster syrup is introduced on the frontline against COVID-19. The more challenging and difficult it is for Cadila Pharmaceuticals in taking the trust and the customer's favor. For that reason, I choose the research on the assessment of “A study of consumers’ decisions in purchasing children’s Pharmaceutical syrup products” which is the topic for my EMBA dissertation to demonstrate key factors influenced on buying to suggest some idea for product/project managers.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Customer buying behavior

Consumer behavior studies individuals and groups as they choose, buy, use, and reject products, ideas, services, or experiences. This refers to the actions taken online and offline by consumers before buying a product or service. This process is valuable for company to understand the market demand and it helps the company better tailor their marketing initiatives to the marketing efforts that have successfully influenced consumers to buy in the past.

We have all experienced the moment when we walk into a store and see something that we just have to have. Retailers spend billions of dollars every year trying to generate that feeling in their customers. Web campaigns, video and print ads, social media campaigns, and branding seem to converge as the consumer finally feels a connection to a product and makes a purchase. So what drives that behavior? And how do you capture and then replicate that lightning-in-a-bottle moment when a potential customer turns into a buyer? What are the major factors that influence consumer buyer behavior? (Dikcius, 2019)

A variety of factors go into the consumer buyer behavior process, but here we offer just a few. Taken separately, they may not result in a purchase. When put together in any number of combinations, the likelihood increases that someone will connect with a brand and make a purchase. Four factors influencing consumer buying behavior are:

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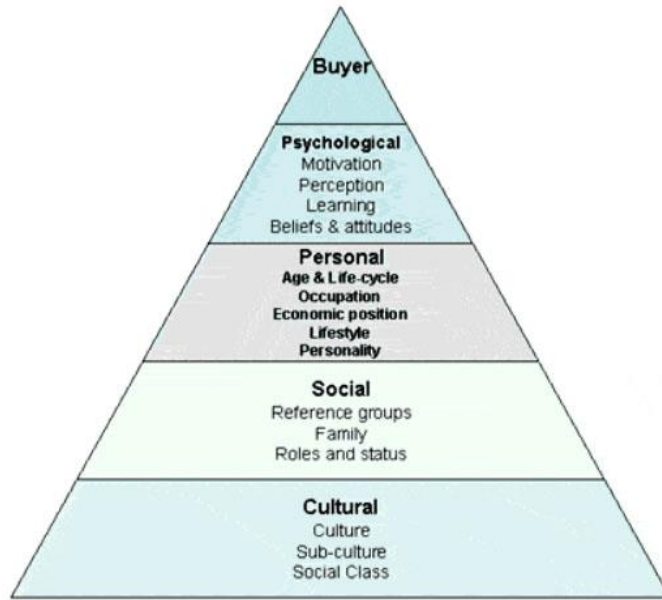


Figure 4. Four factors that affect customer behavior

**2.2. Model of consumer's behavior**

Consumers make many buying decisions every day. The consumer purchasing decision answers questions about what consumers buy, where they buy, how and how much they buy, when they buy, and why they buy (Armstrong & Kotler, 2003). Past decisions, time-related events, such as ageing, and external events, such as an illness of job change, lead to lifestyle changes that pose additional consumption problems and result in new purchases (Neal, Qvester, & Hawkins, 2002).

**A Model of Consumer Behavior**

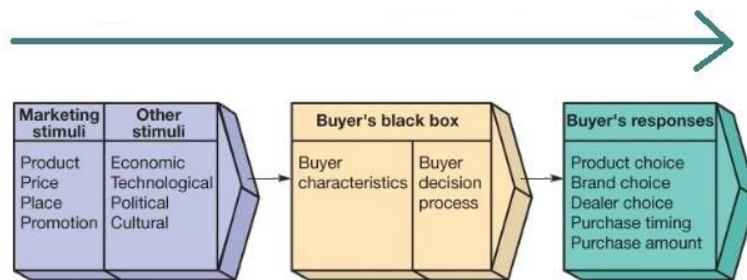


Figure 5. Model of consumer's behavior

Figure 5. presents that marketing and other stimuli enter the consumer's black box and produce certain responses. Marketing stimuli consists of the 4Ps: Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. These inputs enter the consumer's black box, where they are turned into a set of observable buyer responses: product choice, brand choice, dealer choice, purchasing timing, and purchasing amount. The market wants to understand how the stimuli are changed into responses inside the consumer's black box, which has two parts. First, the consumer's characteristics influence how they perceive and react to the stimuli. Second, the consumer's decision process itself affects the consumer's behavior (Armstrong & Kotler, 2003).

**2.3. Proposed research model**

Based on theory and model of Kotler (2012) about factors affecting the customers purchasing decision and the desiration of the author to find out the impact of marketing mix factors to purchasing decision, the author proposed the own model for this research is shown in figure 6.

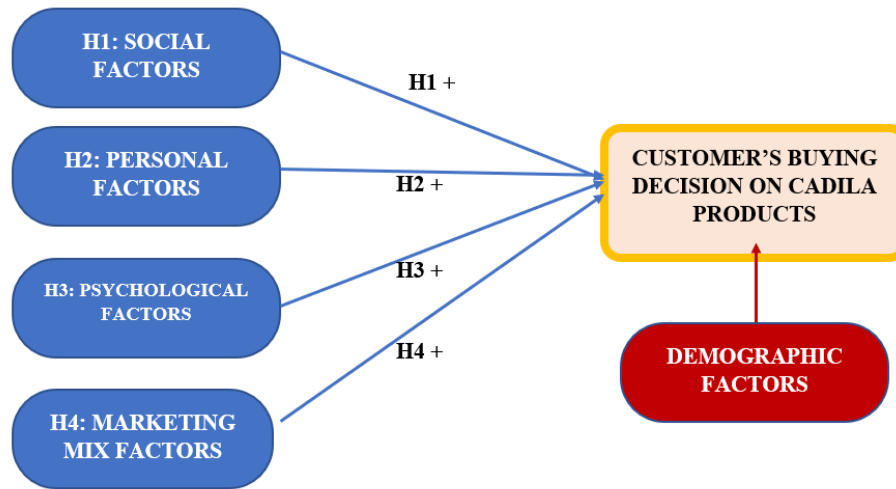


Figure 6. The proposed research model

#### 2.4. Research hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The more positive information from the social group and reference group, the more active purchasing decision of customers.

Hypothesis 2: The more positive acceptance from the personal insights and personal condition, the more active purchasing decision of customers.

Hypothesis 3: The more positive information from the social group and reference group, the more active purchasing decision of customers.

Hypothesis 4: The better marketing points from the brand delivered to the customers, the more impact on purchasing decision of customers.

### III. DATA COLLECTION

The author would like to rely on both primary data and secondary sources. In this research, the survey method will be chosen. The nature of the implementation of survey method in this survey is to ensure that the findings and results will be generalized. For as qualitative research, it is distributed to 10 distributors in the pharmaceutical industry: pharmacies, hospitals and retail stores. Furthermore, in this study, a quantitative approach was chosen, and primary data were collected from potential buyers and all those who used cough syrup for their children in Vietnam. The writer chose two kinds of question to create the questionnaire, including multiple-choice question and Likert scale question.

The first one is multiple choices. This type of question is used to ask customers about their demographic and other questions that relate to the history use of customers before.

Likert scale question is the second type. Likert scale survey question play a vital key in measuring an opinion of respondent or their attitude toward a given subject. It is designed to measure the attitudes that has multi-item. It has five level Likert scale to measure, include: 1: strongly disagree; 2: disagree; 3: neutral; 4: agree; 5: strongly agree (Kumar, 2011).

To sum up, within this study, the questionnaire in this study has two main parts.

To sum up, within this study, the questionnaire in this study has two main parts:

- ❖ Part I: it has 21 Likert scale questions stand for observable variables that relate to four independent factors and one dependent factor.
- ❖ Part II: it includes 8 questions to clarify the demographic and customer history use of cough syrup.

The SPSS 26 software will be chosen for this analysis. With the support of multiple regression analysis, the assumptions related to customer buying decisions on children cough syrup will be regressed to determine whether those factors influence buying decision of customers in Ho Chi Minh city as well as whether they affect decisions made by consumers.

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*Figure 7: The research process*

## IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT

After using Cronbach's alpha and EFA methods to evaluate the reliability scale of 21 observed variables, and 2 items were rejected. Therefore, the remaining 21 observed variables were analyzed EFA.

There are three key point from data analysis process. Firstly, Research model at first is the customer's buying decision on Cadila children syrup is impacted by personal factors, social factor, psychological factor, and marketing mix factor via each observable variable. Then thanks to EFA analysis, it supports the author to eliminated one weak item to enhance the psychological factor. After that all factors are kept as before which could use for this study.

**Table 1: EFA for buying decision factor**

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		<b>0.836</b>
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1725.126
	df	153
	Sig.	<b>0</b>

**Table 2: Summary results**

	<b>Factor</b>	<b>Number of items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha value</b>	<b>% of Variance</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
<b>Independent Factors</b>	Social	4	0,808	60.71%.	Qualified
	Personal	3	0,774		
	Psychological	5	0,826		
	Marketing mix	6	0,833		
<b>Dependent Factor</b>	Purchasing decision	3	0,759	67.875%	Qualified

Secondly, based on the analysis of ANOVA, it demonstrated the effect of demographic characteristics toward the customer's decision on buying the cough syrup for their children. To be clearer, it shows the differences in each characteristic that can affect the buying decision, including: gender, age, income, and occupation. In addition, thanks to t-test analysis, it presented that marital status did not impact to the buying decision of customers on cough syrup for their children.

**Table 3: Correlation analysis**

<b>Correlations Analysis</b>						
		<b>PD</b>	<b>PY</b>	<b>MF</b>	<b>SF</b>	<b>PF</b>
<b>PD</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	1	.237**	.640**	.602**	.566**
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>		0	0	0	0
	<b>N</b>	276	276	276	276	276
<b>PY</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	.237**	1	.174**	.133*	.124*

	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	0		0.004	0.027	0.04
	<b>N</b>	276	276	276	276	276
<b>MF</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	.640**	.174**	1	.314**	.373**
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	0	0.004		0	0
	<b>N</b>	276	276	276	276	276
<b>SF</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	.602**	.133*	.314**	1	.329**
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	0	0.027	0		0
	<b>N</b>	276	276	276	276	276
<b>PF</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	.566**	.124*	.373**	.329**	1
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	0	0.04	0	0	
	<b>N</b>	276	276	276	276	276

Lastly, thanks to the result of multiple regression analysis, it illustrated 4 independent factors, including: social, personal, psychological, and marketing mix influenced on dependent factor which is the buying decision of customers toward children’s cough syrup. To be more specific, standardized coefficient ( $\beta$ ) of these variables are positive and statistically significant (Sig. <0.05). T-test for each independent variable in linear regression model showed that all coefficients of independent variables are statistically significant at 95%. Then, based on the standardized coefficient, standardized coefficients which were estimated for social factor, personal factor, psychology factor and marketing factors are 0.371, 0.283, 0.082 and 0.404. Thus, an equation is formulated:

$$\text{Purchase decision PD} = 0.404 \times \text{Marketing mix factor MF} + 0.371 \times \text{Social factor SF} + 0.283 \times \text{Personal factor PF} + 0.082 \times \text{Psychology factor PY} + E$$

#### 4.1. Analyzing multiple linear regression results

The result of multiple linear regression demonstrates that the research model of the study has four independent factors, including: social factor, personal factor, psychological factor and marketing mix factor. These independent factors affect the dependent factor which is “Buying decision”. Then, the most influential factor in “Buying decisions” is “Marketing mix”. Next is “Personal factor”. The third and fourth are “Social factor” and “Psychological factor”, respectively.

Following to the linear regression equation, marketers can rely on the influence of each factor to be able to allocate appropriate resources in improving the factors. Then, according to the order of affecting factors, marketers can focus on investing in the strongest factors and then the next factor as order.

##### *Marketing mix factors*

According to the result, the “marketing mix” factor has the strongest affect “buying decision” factor. To be more specific, the beta value is 0.404 and the sig value is less than 0.05. Then, the beta value of marketing mix is positive, it means that the relationship between “marketing mix” and “buying decision” is positive. Therefore, the customers receive the “marketing mix” factor in a positive way, it will affect greatly their “buying decision”.

In pharmaceutical industry, prices affect customers slightly, but discounts are not always the best, sometimes unexpected low prices can create doubts and erode consumer confidence in the brands or products they have trusted. Hence, marketer should be wise in pricing strateging. Cadila has existed for a long time because of its reputation and quality, so it will not be simple for marketers to make discounts or decrease the price directly, which can lead to the comparison of Cadila products with similar products and customers may equate the quality of the product. There is a suggestion for marketers that instead of trying to reduce the price when you hear customers complain about the high price, create more value for the product or value added to the product. Always remind customers of the difference in the Cadila products that bring them as the origin, organic materials, standard production processes and even the follow-up and care of Cadila for each of their customers in post-marketing stage. That helps customers to see Cadila price is worthy.

##### *Personal factors*

The second most influential factor on “buying decision” is “personal factor”. The beta value is 0.283 and sig. value is 0.000, it means the relationship between the “buying decisions” and “personal factor” is positive.

As we already known that the deep instinct of parents that they always want the best for their children, including baby healthcare. Marketers can use this feature to create key messages, vision statements that evoke the desire to choose good products like Cadila for their babies, as well as create titles of conference or forum discussion based on parental instincts that will help attract attendees and influence the customer's decision to buy Cadila products.

##### *Social factors*

The result of social factors demonstrates that it has significantly affect “buying decision” factor with the beta is 0.371 and sig. value is less than 0.05. According to the results of the survey, social factors affect customers' purchasing decisions when choosing products for their children. To manipulate the impact of this factor on

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marketing activities, it is necessary to develop some programs to create cohesion between influence groups and target buyers. For each group of distinct influences, marketer can build different programs which suitable for each group.

## *Psychological factors*

According to the result, psychological factor has the lowest affect consumer's decision in cough syrup for children. Psychological factors often include the consumer's personal observations and preferences. Therefore, by making customers believe in the product as well as having preferential policies from the company, the buying decisions of customers will also be affected.

## **V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

### **5.1. Recommendations**

#### Marketing mix factors

Cadila needs to improve the distribution network and retail throughout the country. According to the survey results, it can be seen that the availability of goods and ease of shopping are the motivations for customer to buy goods. Cadila has developed a distributor system from large government and private hospital such as Bach Mai, Thong Nhat; private pharmacies or chains such as Pharmacy, Kudos, Long Chau, An Khang, and local agents as well as grocery stores all have Cadila products available. Moreover, online shopping channel is growing fast and Cadila products also registered to retail on sites such as Lazada, Shopee, Sendo, Tiki. The diversity in sales channels will help Cadila to get closer to the buyers thus enabling customers to select and buy Cadila products. One more recommendation for marketer that to expand the retail into the pharmacy store of Children hospital and inside of hospital. For example, a marketer might run a program that sponsors baby care, temperature checks, and wellness exams. In that opportunity, the doctor also advises parents on how to prevent colds and dry coughs for children as well as which cough syrup to use. Obviously that will increase the trust in Cadila's products for parents.

Finally, the factor makes the most motivative for customer to buy goods that is promotion. There are many ways to promote products. The author only gave a few suggestions to make the promotion more valuable. Marketers should apply promotions for products that are the direction of the current strategy. When running the promotion program, marketer should release information to customers at least 1 month in advance for customers to plan for receiving the promotion and choose to buy Cadila. In addition, another factor to increase the value for promotion of Cadila products is the promotion only for customers who have purchased and used Cadila products as a Cadila member. And in order to do this, a forum for Cadila product customers needs to be created and connected, which will be mentioned by the author below the social element. Or simply, if you want to make promotions only for customers who have purchased, the marketer can make a promotion program for customers to retain and exchange used Cadila bottles. This is one way to suggest implementation.

In conclusion, the marketing mix factor is the most affecting the customer buying process and there are many tactics to develop marketing strategy to convince customers to purchase Cadila products.

#### Social factors

Firstly, with a group of medical experts, they have the influence to give advice on reputable products, suitable for children who are sensitive to weather, or allergies. To take advantage of the influence of this group, some suggestions for marketers about programs for health professionals such as press conferences and seminars to introduce health care product lines during the pandemic. In addition, marketers should also rely on Covid-19 health protection guidelines from major associations around the world to integrate special features of children's cough syrup products. Moreover, consumers as well as health professionals are increasingly turning to natural organic products, so the introduction of the advantages of gentle new products from nature needs to perform more strongly. For groups of family and friends, the program needs to be built appropriately for this big group. One suggestion for this group, marketers can build a community on social networks including customers who have purchased and are using Cadila products. A forum was created for this group with sharing and updates from the company about products/promotions, along with the sharing and advice of medical experts to this group of customers as well as other customers. Forum members can share their experience with the product with others. The goal is to engage customers and promote sharing positivity. On the other hand, this will be the ideal channel to get customer opinions as well as prove the number of customers who have bought, used and trusted Cadila products through the number of members.

In conclusion, social factors in general or influential groups in particular affect the decision to buy Cadila's products. Although the end user is a child, the decision makers to buy and pay are the parents. Therefore, marketers when creating social interaction strategies or working with this group should identify specific factors. It is likely that buyers will be receptive to and rely on information obtained from influence groups to determine whether plans are appropriate and effective. For example, often buyers will record quality information from a group of health



professionals, information about convenience, ease of use, promotions from family or friends. With the basic results of this survey, marketers can conduct smaller branch surveys to detail the social factors influencing Cadila's purchasing decisions in Vietnam.

#### Personal factors

Personal factors covered in this survey include the client's economic condition, parenting instincts, and lifestyle.

Firstly, economic conditions will affect customers' decision to buy Cadila's products. This will govern new customers, first purchases, and subsequent purchases. On the other hand, it is possible to evaluate this economic condition as the relationship between income and purchase costs. Marketers will be able to change the relative "economic conditions" of customers with promotions, discounts, baby toy gifts, free product trials (applies only to new products). ). However, these practices will reduce purchasing costs, prompt buyers to re-evaluate a product's suitability to current economic conditions, and make purchasing decisions.

Second, the customer's lifestyle is more clearly explained through the family's lifestyle and activities in taking care of the baby's health. More specifically, parents will use the same products as adults for children or distinctively, do parents have any intentions about product selection or just any brand is fine, do they consult the surrounding ideas for their choice, etc. Marketers simply cannot influence the lifestyle of each customer. However, marketers can do community activities or do social media, but this is quite expensive as well as opening the market to other competitors.

#### Psychological factors

According to the results of this study, for the decision to buy Cadila products, the psychological factor has the least influence. This psychological factor is the shopper's favorite for the product. Because the buyer is not a user, this psychological factor has been influenced so it has little effect on the product selection results. But it can be seen that the psychology of customers who prefer products originating from abroad is still influential and the favorite brand still has a strong impact on the selection process of customers.

Hence, beside the main marketing activities, marketer should remember and utilize the Indian brand of Cadila as a plus point for product's message.

## 5.2. CONCLUSION

There is no published research on factors affecting customers' purchasing on a brand or product related to personal health care for baby, there are some private studies belong to the R&D of companies working on this field, the author makes a decision to study "factors affecting customers' purchasing decision on Cadila products" with the basic and initiatory factors, generally but not specifically.

The result shows that beside the basic marketing strategies on price, promotion, place or product, the recommendation of healthcare professional, family and friends are the most important factors that effect on decision making when selecting one Cadila product for their children. This gives an answer to research question that was set for this study. In addition, consumers can also base their selection on beliefs and attitudes of psychological factor. The research showed that even the psychological factor is the weakest affecting on decision-making of customer but the observable variable "reputation of company" in marketing mix factor still impacts strongly on buying intention of them. The results of the study give the general view that social, personal, and psychological factors have some effect, but statistical reliability is not stronger than the marketing mix factor.

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