



The Study of Millennial Parents' Perspectives and Knowledge on the Importance of Child Car Seats and Purchasing Decisions

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Abstract:

This qualitative study examined the perspectives of millennial parents in Thailand on the importance of child car seats and their impact on child safety and injury prevention. The research addressed a gap in the existing literature by exploring the factors influencing these parents' decision-making processes when purchasing child car seats. Utilizing the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) model, the Marketing Mix (7Ps), and the Consumer Decision-making Process frameworks, the study provides a comprehensive analysis of parental behaviors and attitudes toward car seat usage.

18 millennial parents, aged 28 to 43, each with at least one child under 6 years old, were interviewed in-depth. The findings revealed that these parents had moderate knowledge and strong positive attitudes toward the necessity of child car seats, especially for newborns. However, practical challenges such as children's resistance and the perceived convenience of short trips often lead to inconsistent adherence to safety protocols. Among the brands, Chicco emerged as the most preferred.

The study also highlighted distinct purchasing behaviors among millennial parents. Safety and quality are prioritized, with significant investments typically made in the first car seat, while subsequent purchases were approached with greater budget-consciousness. Mothers were particularly influenced by promotional offers like discounts and free gifts, whereas fathers focused on product features and functionality, relying heavily on prior knowledge and research. This indicated a collaborative yet distinct approach in the decision-making process, where both parents played crucial roles.

Keywords : Millennial Parents, Child Car Seats, Children's Safety, Injury Prevention, Purchasing Decisions

Introduction

In 2018 (B.E. 2561), the World Health Organization ranked Thailand as No. 9 globally due to its high road accident rates, with approximately 20,000 or more road accident deaths annually. In response, various institutions have implemented strategies to reduce accidents, aiming for significant reductions by 2027 (Thailand Development Research Institute, 2023; World Health Organization, 2023). Focusing on car accidents involving children, a report from the Thai Senate Newsletter (2022) indicated that from 2017 to 2021, a total of 1,155 children aged newborn to 6 years lost their lives due to road accidents. Among these, approximately 221 deaths occurred in car accidents. The report also highlighted that between 2019 and 2021, only 3.46% of children in this age group were seated in appropriate child car seats while traveling. Currently in 2024, within the first five months from January to May, there were 227 child fatalities due to car accidents. This figure represents nearly half of the total deaths over the past two years: 586 in 2023 and 554 in 2022 (Thai Road Safety Center, 2024). This lack of improvement raises questions about the factors or obstacles that hinder efforts to reduce car accidents involving children.

One crucial factor contributing to child safety in vehicles is the proper use of appropriate seating equipment. Failing to use a child car seat or misusing adult seat belts poses serious risks, as standard seat belts are only safe for children over 10 or those meeting specific size requirements. Thus, choosing “Child Car Seats” is essential, as they are designed to reduce the risk of death by up to 60%, compared to the 120 annual deaths attributed to improper use (Thai PBS, 2017).

In Thailand, the Land Traffic Act B.E. 2565 (2022) mandates that children under 6 years old or shorter than 135 centimeters must be secured in a “Child Safety Car Seat” while traveling in vehicles. While enforcement was set to begin on September 5, 2022, consumer opinions on this law vary (The Thai Senate Newsletter, 2022; The Standard, 2022; ThaiPBS, 2023). Concerns have been raised about additional costs, pricing, and quality control (Thai Consumer Council, 2022). Eventually, the Royal Thai Police later announced that enforcement of the law would begin on August 17, 2023, with a fine of 2,000 baht for non-compliance, though taxis and public transport are exempt (Thai PBS, 2023).

This fine prompts questions about how much parents are willing to invest in their children's safety. Car seats vary significantly in price, ranging from under 2,000 baht to over 40,000 baht, and differ in materials, quality, and safety standards. Each brand offers options that meet various safety regulations, such as FMVSS 213 (U.S.), ECE R44/04 (EU), and ECE R129 (i-Size, EU). This variety underscores the importance of selecting the right car seat for optimal safety. Generally, there are four types of car seats based on age: (1) Rear-Facing Seats, (2) Forward-Facing Seats, (3) Combination Seats, and (4) High-Backed or Belt-Positioning Booster Seats (Thai Senate Newsletter, 2022; Thai Consumer Council, 2022).

In 2024, children aged newborn to 12 years likely have parents aged 28 to 43, born between 1981 and 1996, categorizing them as millennials (Pew Research Center, 2019). Studies indicate that millennial parents exhibit significant differences from previous generations in child-rearing practices and information-seeking behaviors related to purchasing children's items. In many Southeast Asian households, including Thailand, millennial mothers often act as 'Chief Household Officers,' making key purchasing decisions for the family (The Asian Parent, 2020). They are more comfortable with online shopping, often reading reviews and comparing prices across platforms while combining online and offline channels (The Asian Parent, 2022).

Surveys reveal that mothers typically select brands for purchases, while high-involvement categories like health, insurance, and education often require joint decision-making from both parents. Notably, child car seat brands such as APRICA, FIGO, and CAMERA are well recognized among brands targeting fathers (The Asian Parent, 2021). Previous studies on child car seats have included data collection from fathers, recognizing their role as co-decision makers (Atayoglu and Atayoglu, 2023; AlSallum et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2014; Liu et al., 2016; Cai et al., 2021).

In Southeast Asia, a study by Tan et al. (2020) found that while parents acknowledge the importance of legally mandated child car seats, barriers to their use include limited awareness, challenging child behavior, and cultural perceptions. In Thailand, Termworasin et al. (2020) noted that although parents were aware of car seats, only 21.5% consistently used them, primarily due to children's refusal. Atinwong (2022) applied the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice (KAP) Model to find positive correlations among parents' perspectives on car seat usage, highlighting challenges with bulky equipment and child behavior. Champahom et al. (2023) reported that while both users and non-users prioritize child health, non-users encounter greater barriers related to installation and price.

Despite existing studies on millennial parents' knowledge and attitudes toward child car seats, there is limited research on their purchasing decisions, especially through qualitative methods. This study aims to explore how millennial parents in Thailand perceive the importance of child car seats in light of recent legal mandates and to identify the factors influencing their purchasing decisions. The research will utilize the KAP Model, the 7Ps of the Marketing Mix, and the Consumer Decision-Making Process. The findings will provide valuable insights for the child car seat industry, helping brands effectively target millennial parents with relevant messaging and strategies to promote child seat safety.

Research Objectives

1. To examine millennial parents' perspectives regarding their knowledge and attitudes of child car seats' importance and impact on children's safety for injury prevention.
2. To investigate the factors influencing millennial parents' decision-making processes when purchasing car seats for their children.

Literature Reviews

1.The Importance of Child Car Seat, its Impact and The Government Policy

A child car seat is vital for child safety in car accidents, as a parent's embrace and safety belt are insufficient, increasing the risk of injury. Infants up to 2 years old should use rear-facing seats, while children aged 2-6 need forward-facing seats with harnesses. Booster seats are recommended for children aged 4-11 until they can use the vehicle's seat belt, typically around age 9, following international safety standards (PPTV, 2022; Royal College of Pediatricians of Thailand, 2023). In Thailand, car seats are classified as controlled products, ensuring certified safety (ThanSettakij, 2023).

The World Health Organization reports car seats can reduce child fatalities by up to 70%. As of now, 96 countries mandate car seat use for children under 135 cm or 10-12 years old, including the U.S., France, Portugal, and Thailand. Thailand's Land Traffic Act B.E. 2565 (2022) requires children under 6 to use a car seat, effective from September 5, 2022 (Thai Senate Newsletter, 2022).

2.Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of Child Car Seat Usages among Millennial Parents

Liu et al. (2016) found that factors like knowledge, car ownership, occupation, and income influenced parental decision-making in China regarding child car seats. Many parents had misconceptions, such as believing holding a child on the lap was safer than using a car seat, and lacked knowledge about selecting, installing, and pricing child seats. Chen et al. (2014) reported that only 22 out of 3,333 children were properly secured in vehicles, with over half of infants or toddlers riding on adults' laps. Cai et al. (2021) highlighted the relationship between CRS use and trip frequency but noted low CRS usage despite reasonable knowledge.

AlSallum et al. (2019) found most parents complied with seatbelt laws, some for safety and others to avoid penalties. In Malaysia, Ang et al. (2020) found half of the parents had CRS for their newborns, despite general awareness. In Thailand, Termworasin et al. (2020) and Atinwong (2022) found positive correlations between knowledge, attitudes, and car seat use but identified obstacles like children's refusal and difficulties with installation.

The K-A-P model, used in several studies, explores knowledge, attitudes, and practices. According to Rogers (1971), communication influences these three factors, but gaps may arise between attitudes and behaviors. Addressing this gap requires education, expert advice, or strategies like influencer marketing (Kertsombat, 2008). Attitudes can also shift based on family, peers, and experiences (Assael, 1998).

3.Targeting Millennial Parents in Child Car Seat Marketing

Millennial parents differ from earlier generations in child-rearing practices, information-seeking, and purchasing behavior, drawing attention from marketers and researchers. The marketing mix has evolved from the original 4Ps (product, price, place, promotion) to 7Ps, adding people, process, and physical evidence, as noted by Išoraite (2021) and Thienthaworn (2024). These components shape consumer decisions today.

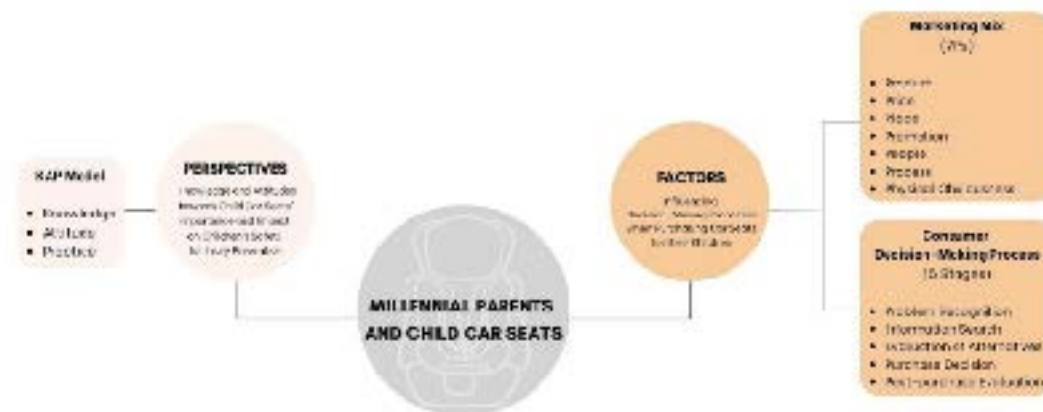
Thienthaworn (2024) found that consumers favored quality, reasonably priced products, preferred online shopping with discounts, fast delivery, and well-designed stores. Millennial mothers, according to Richards et al. (2020), rely on online sources and value feedback. Studies also show parents prioritize product quality and durability (Chuathue, 2017; Tu et al., 2021). Regarding child car seats, Anitsal et al. (2009) identified price as a barrier, with parents perceiving the cost as outweighing the benefits due to children's rapid growth.

4. Millennial Parents' Decision-Making Process in Child Car Seat Purchase

The consumer decision-making process includes five stages: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation (Solomon, 2011). Studies like Ayuningtyas et al. (2018) show millennial parents prioritize online research, quality, and price comparison, particularly for low-involvement products like children's apparel. However, for high-involvement items like strollers and car seats, parents conduct extensive information searches (Asavachongruk, 2019). Atinwong (2022) noted most parents don't receive hospital recommendations on car seats, suggesting businesses should offer various price options and ensure safety.

Millennial parents often share responsibilities, with high-involvement decisions like car seats being collaborative. There is limited research on their car seat purchasing patterns, so this study aims to fill that gap using the consumer decision-making process, the 7Ps framework, and the K-A-P model to examine knowledge and attitudes toward child car seat safety.

Conceptual Framework



Research Methodology

Population and Sampling Group:

The study employed purposive and snowball sampling to recruit 18 Thai millennial parents aged 28 to 43, each with at least one child aged newborn to 6 years. This recruitment complied with the Land Traffic Act B.E. 2565 No. 13 (2022), which requires children under 6 years old to use a child car seat while traveling in vehicles, and also follows the suggestion of types of car seats and boosters appropriate for children.

Data Collection Procedure:

Each session typically lasted between 45 to 60 minutes, and the in-depth interviews were conducted via Zoom, an online meeting platform, and recorded for electronic transcription.

Research Instrument:

The one-on-one in-depth interview questionnaire comprised semi-structured and open-ended questions, which integrated relevant concepts from the literature such as the KAP model, the Marketing Mix (7Ps), and the Consumer Decision-making Process.

Validity of Instrument:

The questionnaires were reviewed by scholars who, as millennial parents, had firsthand experience with child car seats and were familiar with the law enforcing their use. Their review confirmed that the questions were clear and suitable for the study.

Data Analysis:

The author utilized coding techniques to analyze the responses, which were then synthesized into relevant and meaningful points, as depicted in the research findings section.

Research Findings**Part 1: Demographics**

The study includes 18 families, consisting of nine millennial mothers and nine fathers aged 30 to 40. Among these parents, five have one child each, while the remaining four have two children, resulting in an equal distribution of one-child and two-child families. Participants have educational backgrounds ranging from bachelor's degrees to doctorates and work in diverse fields, including freelancing, public and private sectors, business ownership, teaching, healthcare, and homemaking, with monthly incomes between 80,000 and 100,000 baht.

The children, both male and female, are aged from 2 months to 8 years, with the youngest in the 0-6 age range, necessitating compliance with the Land Traffic Act regarding child car seats. All children follow WHO guidelines for car seat usage, with heights of ≤ 135 centimeters. Parents typically own one to five vehicles, tailored to their family size and needs. Some households include extended family members, while others prefer independent living arrangements. Vehicle types vary from sedans to family-oriented models. Notably, four families reported non-serious child road traffic accidents, with only one child not properly secured in a car seat, fortunately escaping serious injury.

Child car seat ownership varies from one to five per family, with some families having multiple seats for different vehicles. Chicco is the most preferred brand among parents (12 mentions), followed by AILEBEBE (7 mentions) and Daiichi (6 mentions). Other brands mentioned include Joei, Combi, Graco, Recaro, and Gloway, though some parents could not identify all their car seat brands.

Part 2: Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (K-A-P) of millennial parents concerning child car seats' importance and impact on children's safety for injury prevention.

Knowledge: Millennial parents generally have a moderate understanding of child car seat regulations under the Land Traffic Act B.E. 2565 No. 13. Mothers often show lower levels of knowledge, with many uncertain about the WHO's recommended ages and heights for using car seats. However, most correctly identify the proper installation position and acknowledge the need for seats on both sides when transporting two children. Notably, many parents are familiar with the two installation systems, with ISOFIX being the most recognized.

Attitudes: All millennial parents agree on the importance of placing a newborn in a child car seat immediately after hospital discharge, although four families did not follow this practice. They strongly believe that using a child car seat is the safest option and stress the importance of properly securing children for both short and long journeys.

Practices: Millennial parents, especially mothers, occasionally make exceptions for short trips in low-traffic areas or when a child is crying. To address a child's refusal to stay in the seat, they use strategies like explaining, negotiating, storytelling, offering snacks, or showing videos. If these fail, parents may remove the child from the seat, even when the car is moving, with some grandparents also doing so to alleviate the child's distress. Most parents purchased their first child car seat, while some received second-hand seats from friends or relatives.

Part 3: Factors influencing millennial parents' purchasing decisions for child car seats

Marketing Mix

Product: All parents prioritized child car seats that meet safety and quality standards, considering functionality, features, brand reputation, and materials. Some fathers also assessed installation compatibility with their vehicles. They typically invested more in the initial purchase and reduced costs for subsequent purchases while maintaining a focus on safety.

Price: Parents viewed child car seats as essential safety investments. Initial purchases ranged from 10,000 to 80,000 baht, while subsequent purchases usually cost several thousand to ten thousand baht.

Place: Most preferred in-store purchases for their first car seat, often buying at events like 'Baby Best Buy' or department stores where free installation services were offered. For later purchases, many brought their children to test the product in-store for comfort and fit, although some opted for online shopping when preferred models were out of stock or during special promotions.

Promotion: Eight out of nine mothers stated that promotions influenced their decisions, while nearly all fathers focused on product features and functionality. Mothers particularly favored discounts of 30-50%.

People: Seven mothers emphasized the importance of salesperson advice, compared to four fathers who acknowledged its influence. Some fathers felt well-informed and sometimes knew more than the sales staff. Salesperson guidance was mainly valued for the first purchase, with free installation being a plus for families with one child.

Process: The ordering and delivery processes had little impact on purchasing decisions, as parents prioritized the outcome over the process due to the high cost of child car seats.

Physical Obviousness: Most parents noted that product displays, point-of-purchase setups, and store decorations were crucial in attracting their interest. They preferred stores that highlighted top products and provided clear information and pricing. Only three fathers felt these factors were unimportant, as they preferred online shopping and had specific products in mind.

Consumer Decision-Making Process

Stage 1: Problem Recognition: Most parents, except those who received second-hand car seats, purchased their first seat when expecting a baby. Initially, they acquired one car seat, with additional seats purchased when their child began kindergarten for school transportation. Parents with multiple children bought a second seat when expecting a new baby, upgrading the older child's seat and passing the original to the younger one. As children grew, parents upgraded to larger seats or boosters for continued comfort and safety.

Stage 2: Information Search: Millennial parents primarily used the internet and social media to gather information, focusing on consumer and peer reviews. Both parents were actively involved, with fathers researching functionality, safety, and installation compatibility. While they shared information and selected the best options together, most fathers tended to follow the mothers' preferences. Fathers also accompanied mothers to stores to help finalize decisions.

Stage 3: Evaluation of Alternatives: Millennial parents evaluated brand reputation, safety, and quality standards, as well as product features and materials. Fathers typically focused on safety and installation systems, while mothers with two children were more price-sensitive.

Stage 4: Purchase Decision: Parents identified several key factors influencing their decisions: safety standards, comfort, reasonable pricing relative to functionality, and age suitability for their child. Mothers with two children prioritized promotions and discounts, while fathers emphasized the need for proper fitting and installation in vehicles with multiple car seats.

Stage 5: Post-purchase Evaluation: All millennial parents expressed satisfaction with their child car seats, whether purchased or received as gifts from reputable brands. Some recommended car seats to friends and family in person or via social media, while others seldom did so, either because they used second-hand products or because no one asked for recommendations.

Conclusion and Discussion

Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (K-A-P Model):

"MILLENNIAL PARENTS SHOW MODERATE CAR SEAT KNOWLEDGE AND STRONG ATTITUDES TOWARDS CAR SEAT NECESSITY; SUPPORT SAFETY PROTOCOLS ESPECIALLY FOR NEWBORN BUT EXHIBIT FLEXIBILITY IN PRACTICE DUE TO CHILDREN'S RESISTANCE AND SHORT TRIPS; PREFER NEW SEATS AND BOOSTERS IN CASE OF DISCOMFORT; INVEST HEAVILY IN THE FIRST SEAT, BUDGET-CONSCIOUS FOR SUBSEQUENT PURCHASES."

The results both reaffirmed and contradicted previous studies. Millennial parents in Thailand exhibited moderate knowledge about child car seats, being familiar with correct installation positions and the two main systems but uncertain about specific regulations, including those under the Land Traffic Act and WHO's recommended ages and heights. Despite this uncertainty, they intended to use child car seats primarily for safety reasons, aligning with Champahom et al. (2023), which emphasized parents' concerns for their children's safety. However, this contrasts with Tan et al. (2020) in Singapore, where strict legal mandates motivated parents, and AlSallum et al. (2019) in Unaizah City, KSA, where most parents used car seats to avoid punishments rather than for safety.

This suggests that in countries with stricter regulations, people tend to understand and follow the rules more diligently due to severe penalties. In Thailand, the relatively low fine of 2,000 THB may not effectively promote compliance. Key informants in this study, millennial parents with moderate to high incomes, prioritize their children's safety over concerns about fines, as the cost of a child car seat often exceeds the penalty. If they can afford the fine, they can also afford a standard car seat. Similarly, lower-income parents may be less influenced by the fine, as the higher cost of a car seat may not significantly impact their purchasing decisions. Consequently, this could explain why millennial parents in Thailand possess only moderate knowledge about child car seats; they understand installation but are less aware of the regulations, which aligns with Liu et al. (2016), highlighting how knowledge and income influence decision-making.

In terms of attitudes, the study found that millennial parents strongly agreed on the importance of using child car seats from the first day after hospital discharge, believing that sitting a child on a parent's lap with a seatbelt was less safe than using a dedicated car seat. This perspective is likely shaped by information received prior to the child's birth from family, cousins, and peers, aligning with Termworasin et al. (2020), which highlighted that parent mainly learned about car seats through the internet and relatives. This supports Assael's (1998) view that attitudes are influenced by family, peers, and acquired knowledge. However, it contrasts with studies in China by Liu et al. (2016) and Chen et al. (2014), which revealed misconceptions, including the belief that holding a child on the lap was safer than using a car seat.

Despite this strong agreement on necessity, practical implementation showed inconsistencies. While millennial parents in Thailand demonstrated moderate knowledge and expressed commitment to using car seats, actual practices varied due to factors such as the baby's size not fitting the car seat, insufficient recommendations from healthcare professionals, the belief that car seats were unnecessary for short trips, and challenges in managing a crying baby, especially when grandparents were involved.

These findings align with previous research from both domestic and international scholars. For example, studies by Termworasin et al. (2020) and Atinwong (2022) in Thailand found that while most parents were aware of child car seats, major obstacles included children's refusal to use them and difficulties with installation. Similarly, Tan et al. (2020) in Singapore identified challenges such as limited awareness and challenging child behavior, while Ang et al. (2020) in Malaysia noted that although most parents supported legislation for car seats, only half had them for their newborns and sought assistance with usage challenges. Additionally, the perception among millennial parents that car seats are unnecessary for short trips aligns with findings by Cai et al. (2021), who showed significant associations between car seat use and trip frequency and distance traveled.

A crucial factor affecting the inconsistency among knowledge, attitudes, and practices is the K-A-P gap, which suggests that while information shapes knowledge and attitudes, actions may not align with them (Assael, 1998; Kertsombat, 2008). This discrepancy likely explains why millennial parents, despite having moderate knowledge and positive attitudes towards child car seats, do not consistently adhere to their intended use. Challenges such as managing a crying child, especially with grandparents involved, and the belief that car seats are unnecessary for short trips contribute to this issue. Interestingly, parents who experienced minor accidents with their child in the car became more committed to using car seats, highlighting that attitudes can evolve through personal experiences.

In addition to these obstacles, the cost of purchasing new car seats significantly affects usage frequency. Parents often continue using a car seat until it is uncomfortable and may delay buying a new one until necessary. If their children reach the size stipulated by the law, they might refrain from purchasing additional car seats. Thus, price plays a crucial role in decision-making, as Anitsal et al. (2009) found that perceived expenses are a major barrier to regular booster seat usage, with parents often viewing the costs as outweighing the benefits due to children's rapid growth.

Marketing Mix:

"MILLENNIAL PARENTS PRIORITIZE SAFETY AND QUALITY IN CHILD CAR SEATS; VIEW CAR SEATS AS ESSENTIAL SAFETY INVESTMENT; PREFER IN-STORE PURCHASES FOR INITIAL CAR SEATS TO INSPECT PRODUCTS AND ACCESS FREE INSTALLATION; SUBSEQUENT PURCHASES OFTEN INCLUDE IN-STORE TESTING OR ONLINE OPTIONS FOR DEALS"

Millennial parents prioritize safety and quality standards for children's products, including toys and food, due to their children's weaker immune systems and overall fragility, as noted in previous studies (Thienthaworn, 2024; Chuathue, 2017). Similarly, this study finds that parents view child car seats, despite their high cost, as essential investments in safety. As a result, they focus on safety and quality, dedicating significant time to researching and comparing options before making informed purchasing decisions. Many parents prefer to visit stores for their first car seat purchase to experience the product firsthand and benefit from free installation services. This aligns with Asavachongruk (2019), who noted that millennial parents extensively seek information to ensure well-informed purchases at reasonable prices. Ayuningtyas et al. (2018) also highlighted their focus on quality and price comparison across stores, while Thienthaworn (2024) and Richards et al. (2020) confirmed that convenience, such as free installation services, is particularly valued by millennial parents, especially mothers.

"MILLENNIAL MOTHERS ARE MORE INFLUENCED BY PROMOTIONS THAN MILLENNIAL FATHERS; MOTHERS FAVOR DISCOUNTS AND FREE GIFTS, WHILE FATHERS PRIORITIZE PRODUCT FEATURES, FUNCTIONALITY AND RELY ON PRIOR KNOWLEDGE; ATTRACTIVE STORE DISPLAYS IMPORTANT; RECOMMEND HIGHLIGHTING TOP SERIES AND CLEAR PRICING."

As mothers often serve as ‘Chief Household Officers,’ they make decisions about various household items, including those for children (The Asian Parent, 2020). Their management of family finances makes them more price-sensitive, leading them to compare prices across different platforms (The Asian Parent, 2022). Consequently, a ‘child car seat,’ being a high-cost item, receives significant attention from mothers who seek promotions like discounts or free gifts to manage expenses. This aligns with Anitsal, Anitsal, and Liska (2009), who identified ‘price’ as a key factor in purchasing decisions for child car seats. In contrast, fathers typically focus on product features and functionality, relying on their own research, particularly for decisions related to children’s health and insurance. Such high-involvement decisions are often made collaboratively by both parents (The Asian Parent, 2021). Additionally, store displays can influence parents to explore product details and alternatives, as documented in the prior study on eco-friendly toys (Thienthaworn, 2024).

Consumer Decision-Making Process:

“MOST MILLENNIAL PARENTS PURCHASE FIRST CAR SEAT BEFORE BABY’S ARRIVAL; ACQUIRE ADDITIONAL SEATS FOR SCHOOL TRANSPORT OR NEW SIBLINGS, OFTEN AT LOWER COST; PREFERENCE FOR TESTING IN-STORE OR ORDERING ONLINE, UPGRADE SEATS AS CHILDREN GROW.”

This behavior suggests that millennial parents leverage their initial car seat purchase experience to find a balance between cost and appropriate features. Their past experiences shape their decisions, leading them to select car seats that offer reasonable pricing and suitable features aligned with their needs and purposes. This aligns with Assael’s (1998) assertion that acquired knowledge and experiences are crucial factors influencing consumer behavior, including purchasing decisions. Additionally, the findings support the study by Anitsal, Anitsal, and Liska (2009), which examined factors influencing parents’ consistent use of booster seats. One significant barrier was the perceived expense, with parents viewing the cost of booster seats as outweighing their benefits due to children’s rapid growth. This underscores the importance of price in purchasing decisions for child car seats, explaining why millennial parents may lower their budget for subsequent purchases and seek good deals, whether in-store or online.

“MILLENNIAL PARENTS RESEARCH CAR SEATS ONLINE, PRIORITIZE BRAND REPUTATION, SAFETY AND COMFORT; PREFER CONSUMER REVIEWS OVER ADVERTISING; MOTHERS WITH TWO CHILDREN ARE PRICE-SENSITIVE, FATHERS FOCUS ON INSTALLATION; BOTH ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN FINAL DECISION, FATHERS OFTEN SUPPORT IN-STORE VISITS AND DEFER TO MOTHERS’ PREFERENCES; GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH THEIR PURCHASE, SOME HESITANT TO RECOMMEND SECOND-HAND OPTIONS; LIKELY TO PURCHASE THE SAME BRAND FOR FUTURE CHILDREN OR BOOSTER SEATS.”

The findings align with the Asian Parent Survey (2020 and 2022), which revealed that millennial parents, shaped by the digital era, differ from previous generations in their child-rearing and information-seeking behaviors. They primarily rely on the internet for information about children’s products, valuing reviews from other buyers, including child car seats, due to convenience. While they prioritize feedback from fellow millennial parents, brand reputation is

also crucial for ensuring product safety and quality, allowing them to make informed purchases at competitive prices (Asavachongruk, 2019). Price sensitivity is evident, especially among mothers of two children facing significant family expenses for items and school tuition.

Additionally, millennial fathers are active co-decision makers in purchasing child car seats, often leading the research on high-involvement items like health and education (Atayoglu & Atayoglu, 2023). They support mothers, typically the 'Chief Household Officers' (The Asian Parent, 2020), during in-store visits and ensure proper installation and vehicle compatibility, given the high cost of car seats.

Most millennial parents prefer reputable brands, whether purchased or received from peers, as they invest significant time to ensure the seats meet their children's needs. This trust in established brands emphasizes the importance of branding, as those with second-hand seats from lesser-known brands are less likely to recommend them. Child car seats have a limited lifespan and must be replaced as children grow, necessitating different types for various ages (Thai Senate Newsletter, 2022; The Asian Parent, 2024). Lastly, parents often stick to the same brand for future car seats if their children experience discomfort, reflecting how past experiences influence future choices (Solomon, 2011). Millennial parents also frequently review their purchases through social media and face-to-face recommendations, consistent with findings by Ayuningtyas et al. (2018).

Recommendation for Policy Governors, Brand Strategists and Marketers

1. Educational Campaigns on Safety: Develop comprehensive educational materials, including online videos and in-store demonstrations, to educate millennial parents on the proper use and safety benefits of consistent car seat use, especially for short trips. **2. Enhanced In-Store and Online Integration:** Improve the in-store experience with expert consultations and clear product information, while integrating with online platforms for virtual consultations and special deals, catering to parents who prefer testing products before purchasing. **3. Targeted Promotions and Incentives:** Design targeted promotions such as product bundles, discounts, and loyalty programs to attract price-sensitive millennial parents, emphasizing safety features, brand reputation, and positive consumer reviews in marketing strategies.

Limitation and Suggestion for Further Research Study

1. Future research could explore additional concepts, principles, and theories, emphasizing demographics as a critical factor influencing the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of millennial parents in Thailand regarding child car seats and their importance for child safety. The study notably finds that, unlike in countries such as Singapore, millennial parents in Thailand use child car seats primarily for security reasons, rather than due to legal mandates. Further investigation could assess the impact of enforcing the Land Traffic Act on these behaviors.

2. This study uses qualitative research to gain in-depth insights into the behaviors of millennial parents in Thailand, providing a detailed understanding of consumer behavior dimensions. For broader and more representative results, future research could employ quantitative methods to collect data that reflects the population at large. Alternatively, an experimental study using a 2x2 factorial design could be conducted. This could involve creating different campaign messages (rational and emotional) promoting child car seat usage and communicating them through different spokespersons (influencers and medical professionals) to examine the main and interaction effects of these variables.

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