

Empowering Young Consumers who Experience Vulnerability

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Children are An Attractive Market

1/5 of all household purchase decisions are influenced by children (Page et al. 2018)

17% of grocery store shoppers are accompanied by children (Page et al. 2018)

95% of early childhood videos contain advertising with 1/3 videos containing three or more ads. (Mostafavi 2020)

Concerns about Vulnerability and Advertising



Obesity Issue



Parent-Child Conflict



Materialism

but do we really know the vulnerability factors?

My research aspiration is to empower young consumers. However, we can only empower them when we understand their experience of vulnerability.

Based on a deep understanding of persuasion knowledge and the endowment effect, my research program scaffolds children against vulnerability in several areas. The aim is to test and provide ways to empower children for each identified vulnerability factor.



I know their intentions

*I know it is an advertisement
and who made it*

*I do not want to
spend the money I
earned on the
advertised toy...*

*"I like it does not
mean I want it" –
[5-year-old]*

The findings of multiple studies

Vulnerability Factors	Empowerment via Wang studies	Research Agenda
Developmental factors (e.g., age and cognitive ability)	In a conceptual book chapter, Mizerski, Wang, Lee and Lambert (2017) discuss ways to empower children with targeted strategies for different age groups.	Technology and digital vulnerability
Low knowledge about persuasive advertising	Wang and Mizerski (2019), an experiment-based study, suggest empowering very young children (<8yrs) by increasing their persuasion knowledge and scepticism toward advertising.	Online trolling/abuse
Recognition of brands placed in advertising	Wang and Japutra (2021), an experiment-based study, suggests a learning approach rather than an over-protective approach to empower children's voice in advertising. Wang and Mortimer (2021), a Conversation article, echos this approach.	Gamification in marketing communication
Low/no behavioural control	Wang and Mizerski (2018), an experiment-based study, suggest empowering children by endowing them with crucial consumer skills – earning and buying.	Kidfluencer marketing



The impact of my research

The profile of the empowered child

Disciplinary Impact

- Scaffold children's vulnerability and provides a theoretical ground for future researchers.
- Develop the first persuasion knowledge measurement for very young children (<8yrs).
- Lead a shift of research paradigm from over-protecting children to empowering children.

Real-world Impact

- Show social impact via more than 7000 reads of my Conversation article, which also attracted more media engagement from ABC, WSJ, and BSB.
- Potential impact on assisting parents and educators in training children as rational consumers.
- Potential policy impact on reducing a strict and over-protective legislation environment which has many negative consequences.

University community Impact

- Add to the QUT research strength in the area of enabling children (an important part of our society) as consumers.
- Improve children's technology readiness from a marketing and behavioural economics perspective.
- Reduce children's digital vulnerability and enable them with appropriate technology.