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Article

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A bibliometric investigation into the intellectual milieu of research on consumer socialization of children

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ABSTRACT

Studies on consumer socialization delve into how customers acquire an interest in a product or service. These studies attempt to comprehend customer attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors towards a product or service as a result of diverse social interactions. Children are a vital part of this process. Family members, classmates and friends, the media, school, other institutions, and cultures all impact children's socialization process, resulting in consumption decisions. A glance at the literature on consumer socialization of children throughout the last five decades shows how related literature has evolved over a period of time. Consumer socialization is vital in the market and consumer research. However, there is a need to offer a more comprehensive picture of the work that scholars worldwide have done in this sector. Bibliometric analysis is a common tool for tracing the evolution of literature over the previous decades. The researchers in this study employed bibliometric analysis to assess a study done in consumer socialization. The current study used bibliometric analysis to discover the most frequently cited papers, journals, nations, organizations, and authors in the ethics and higher education literature. In addition, the study seeks to comprehend new research areas in consumer socialization.

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Children and Youth

1. Introduction

The famous Greek philosopher Aristotle once said,

Man is by nature a social animal; an individual who is unsocial naturally and not accidentally is either beneath our notice or more than human. Society is something that precedes the individual.

Human beings are social beings and therefore the process of socialization plays a vital role in all aspects of their life. Socialization can be defined as the progression of acquiring knowledge, understanding norms, and developing ideologies that inculcate skills required to sustain in society (Aleti et al., 2023). Consumer socialization - a field of research that dwells on how children develop an interest in a product or service has been highlighted as an important topic for consumer researchers (John, 1999). It tries to also understand consumer attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors towards a product or service that develops due to various social interactions.

Consumer socialization as a field of study has grabbed the attention of policy-makers, consumer researchers, psychologists, and marketers (Kerrane et al., 2015). An exciting area of research for marketers is how children get socialized into the role of consumers (Tang, 2019). This socialization could be primary or secondary. Primary socialization takes place during early childhood days. At the same time, secondary socialization takes place after childhood days. Children interact with various socialization agents and grow into 'consumers of the future'. These 'consumers of the future' shape the forthcoming marketplaces. Extant literature has designated consumer socialization among children as a 'complex, multifaceted

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process that involves four main components, influenced by the surrounding social structures, which include parents as primary agents' (Hota & Bartsch, 2019). The four component includes communicating about consumption, acquiring autonomy in consumption, involvement in purchase decisions, and restraint of consumption or exposure to media (Hota & Bartsch, 2019; Rose, 1999). Children are also vital influencers in a family's decision-making process. A study by Carlson et al. (2001), showed that parenting styles and communication patterns adopted by parents are crucial in children's exposure, which impacts their involvement in the socialization process. Also, culture and developmental timetable (expectation of parents about what is 'typical' or 'normal' for a child at a specific age) impact the socialization process of children (Rose, 1999). Findings of a study by Hota and Bartsch (2019) in an Indian context reveal that consumer socialization processes differ with the 'children's age (early childhood versus adolescence) and family structures (nuclear vs. stem vs. extended)'.

1.1. Research gap and research questions

Consumer socialization is an interesting area to explore and has an impressive body of research to its credit. Past studies have explored varied facets of consumer socialization research and have also reflected on children's growing importance and role as consumers. An in-depth insight into the literature on the consumer socialization of children shows that a substantial number of studies have focused on family communication, parental style, sibling relation, media, peers, social aspects, and motives of consumption and materialism. John (1999) merged and presented the finding of 25 years (from 1974 to 1998) of research on consumer socialization of children. Interestingly, there has been a considerable amount of research contribution in this domain post-2008 which makes it an essential and interesting area to explore for researchers as well as marketers. There is a strong need to conduct a study that provides a comprehensive view of the nature of work done in consumer socialization. Also, there is a need to understand how literature has developed over a period of years. This would help in understanding the extant state of research work in this area and present an insight into the emerging areas of interest. The present study is an attempt to address this research gap using bibliometric analysis. Bibliometric analysis is an effective method with a well-defined structure for analyzing a particular research domain. It is helpful in providing insights into the nature of work published, key contributors, and key focal points of research. Another exciting feature of the bibliometric analysis is the insights it provides that help researchers understand the network of co-citation that helps identify emerging research areas. The researchers have followed bibliometric analysis to address the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the current publishing trends in consumer socialization of children in terms of journals, fields, authors, countries, time, and institutions?

RQ2: What are the most influential papers and research themes in this field?

RQ3: What is the intellectual framework of research on the consumer socialization of children? What are the emerging research trends in this field?

To find the answers to these three research questions, the researchers have studied articles published in the area of consumer socialization and children from the Scopus database for the last five decades, i.e., from 1971 to May 2023. The findings have been showcased systematically in this paper. The introduction section of the paper gives an overview of the consumer socialization process. The next section discusses the study's theoretical background, followed by the data collection process and research methodology. The paper concludes with the findings and discussions.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Consumer socialization

Consumer socialization is an important research area in underlying consumer buying behavior (Ekström, 2006). Research done by Ward (1974) forms the basis for studies in consumer socialization. According to

Ward (1974), consumer socialization is 'the process by which young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace.' Consumer researchers have referred to this seminal work to study the influence of family dynamics on the spending patterns of children. In consumer socialization studies, the prime focus is on the consumption environment and actors that get influenced by the consumption environment. The theory of consumer socialization studies how each actor influences the other. This influence could be reciprocated equally or unequally (Aleti et al., 2015). The actors who take on the responsibility of influencing are called socialization agents. It is crucial to understand these agents' role and their impact on the final purchase decision. It is, therefore, important for researchers to identify who the socialization agents are and the impact that they would have on the consumer socialization process of children (Sookdew, 2020). This knowledge is beneficial to marketers in developing marketing strategies that would positively influence the agents. This would enable marketers to understand opportunities to stimulate consumer knowledge about a product or service that would result in purchase decisions.

2.2. Consumer socialization and children

A critical study that laid the foundation for consumer socialization of children is the seminal work done by John (1999). The study focused on five aspects of children's consumer socialization. This included children's knowledge due to advertisements, transaction knowledge that focused primarily on sales, decision-making ability and skills of the children, purchase influence, and consumption motive. The study highlighted how these five focal points were essential in understanding the socialization process of children at different levels. As the study of children's consumer socialization evolved, family communication styles, parenting styles, and family consumer socialization became focal areas of research. A critical development in this area was the study of children as influencers for purchase decisions in the family. Parents nowadays acquire new information from their children; children have become integral to the decision-making process. Studies on the re-socialization of parents focus on how parents acquire information from children, especially in specific segments that involve technology. Children's consumer socialization relies heavily on communication (Aggarwal & Anon, 2019). The communication gap between children and media has nearly vanished with the development of internet platforms (Morris, 2019). Children have access to information through various direct and indirect sources. Mothers play a crucial part in the consumer socialization of children (Watkins et al., 2021), and the mother's parenting style is vital in the child's exposure to media and the development of his/her consuming behavior (Wisnblit et al., 2013).

Research by Watne et al. (2011), highlighted the importance of product category as one of the aspects that influence children's involvement in influencing their parent's purchase decisions. Parents quite often rely on their children for technology-driven purchases (Gangwar & Dewani, 2022). Children today are born in the era of technology. They can pick up and adapt to technology at a fast pace as compared to their parents. Hence, parents value their input in purchase decisions, especially in this segment (Kharuhayothin, 2018). Research in consumer socialization has focused on various dimensions such as parenting style, communication pattern, societal influence, product category for influence, stages of child development and its impact on influence, sibling influence, etc.

3. Research methodology

Bibliometric analysis helps quantify the existing literature in a particular field of study. The method adopts a set of tools that helps researchers analyze data, identify patterns and networks in research. The insights drawn from bibliometric analysis help the researcher better understand the research topic of study as it provides crucial information on the leading articles, authors, countries, and institutions that have contributed the most and impacted the research area. The bibliometric process outlines a structured set of steps to follow. The critical steps in bibliometric analysis include data sourcing, screening, and analysis.

3.1. Data sourcing

The preliminary and most crucial part of the bibliometric analysis is data sourcing. It is the process of identifying the most suited database for the analysis, identifying suitable keywords, and then running a search command. The researchers have referred to the Scopus database to study published research articles that discuss consumer socialization. Scopus is a renowned and respected database provided by Elsevier Co. Compared to other databases, Scopus covers a wide range of journals as it is internationally oriented. Scopus provides access to the references in a paper that helps a researcher to go both forward and backward in time to identify other literature in the field of research (Falagas et al., 2008). Other key features of the Scopus database that make it more comprehensive and user-friendly include an index that helps researchers identify open-access titles and checks the user's entitlement before delivering a full-text image which helps the researcher identify if the article is accessible in case an entire article is not available in Scopus it provides a link to the publisher's website so that researchers can check the availability of the research article on the publisher's website (Burnham, 2006).

Another critical aspect of data sourcing is keyword identification for sourcing. To ensure accuracy, the researchers first conducted a thorough literature review on consumer socialization of children to understand the repetitive keywords and synonyms. They were used by other researchers that discussed consumer socialization. The researchers brainstormed together after the initial literature review to finalize the words. The use of appropriate BOOLEANs was considered before finalizing the keywords. As shown in Figure 1, the initial search words were 'sociali*ation', 'child*', and 'consumer*' searched in the title abstract and keyword in the Scopus Database. The search was performed on 11th May 2023. This initial search helped to yield 393 results. The researchers then applied two levels of filters.

In the first filter, the search was limited to articles over book chapters, conference papers, reviews, books, editorials, short surveys, notes, conference reviews, and letters. Before being published, articles indexed in Scopus go through a rigorous peer review procedure that is frequently double-blind. Before an article is published, the reviewers offer an objective assessment and comments that are considered. In order to ensure high standards of study, the researchers decided to use publications exclusively. The second level of filtering, as seen in Figure 1, restricted the search to English-language journal articles that had already been published.

The search helped to yield 293 results over a period of five decades from 1971 to May 2023. The downloaded format was then screened for missing values, and repeated data. Data screening is crucial to ensure that all the assumptions, outliers, and error concerns have been managed.

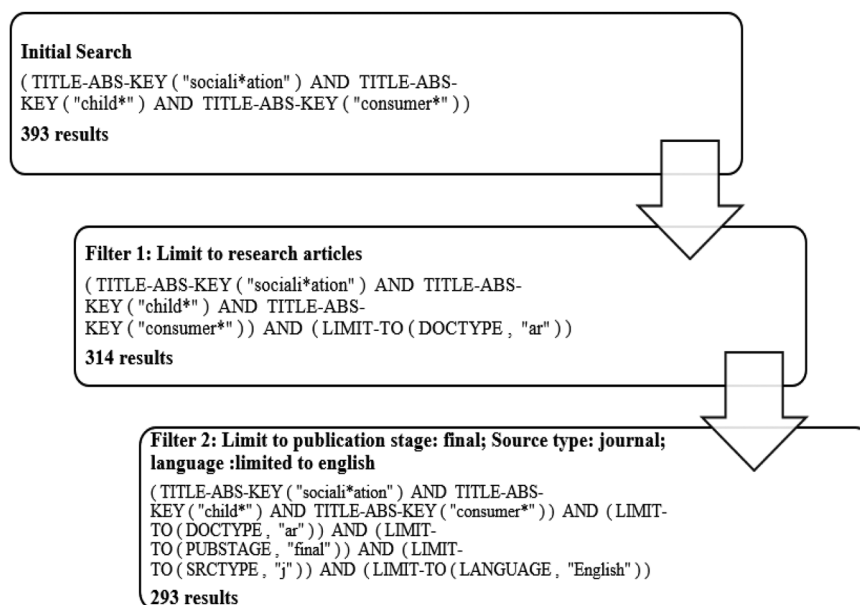


Figure 1. Data sourcing based on scopus database.

3.2. Data analysis

Citation analysis and co-citation analysis are two essential components of bibliometric analysis. Citation analysis is based on the importance that academics accord a work when they cite it as a source. Citation analysis employs descriptors like language, authors, institutions, nations, etc., to assist researchers in finding significant contributors to the field of research. The publishing frequency broken down by year makes comprehending how much research is needed in a particular field easier. According to McCain (1983), co-citation analysis examines the publications that cite a particular pair of references by gathering information from databases and utilizing analytical and graphic presentation approaches. According to Ramos-Rodríguez and Ruíz-Navarro (2004), co-citation may indicate content similarities and assist in identifying groupings of themes and researchers and how they may be connected.

4. Results

Getting in-depth insights into the research articles on consumer socialization from 1971 to 2023 was an essential objective of our study. In the Scopus database, work on consumer socialization first surfaced in 1981. In the current study, the researchers divided the research approach into three essential phases. Data was gathered from the Scopus database in the initial phase. The preceding section has covered this in great detail. The second step in the research approach was studying the search results to provide the findings of citation analysis. In the third stage, co-citation analysis was carried out using VOS Viewer and Biblioshiny by R Studio. The co-citation analysis assisted in identifying new clusters that offer a foundation for more study in consumer socialization.

4.1. Overview of research

Table 1 provides an interesting overview of the search results. 293 research articles were used for bibliometric analysis through citation and co-citation analysis. The table shows that 160 institutions have made vital contributions to this field of research through 147 different journals. Another fascinating insight is that researchers from 48 countries have participated in research on consumer socialization.

4.2. Citation analysis

4.2.1. Publication trend

293 papers on consumer socialization of children have been published between 1971 to 11th May 2023. The number of papers published in a year till 2007 was a single digit. As shown in Table 2 and Figure 2, from 2008 onwards, consumer socialization gained more interest. This period they marked the beginning of social media's influence on consumers. This generation was also well adapted to the internet and technology.

4.2.2. Country wise publication trend

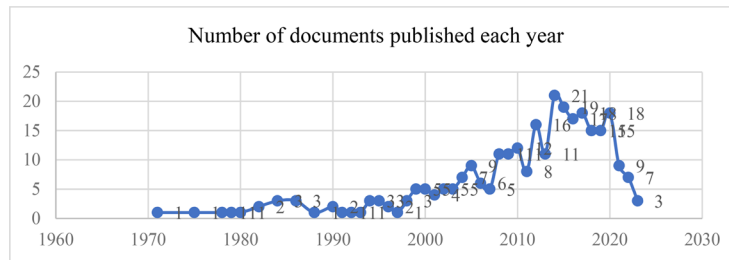
As shown in Table 3 and Figures 3 and 4, 48 countries have contributed to the research on consumer socialization. The United States has the maximum number of research articles at 117. The United Kingdom, Australia, and India followed this. The difference between the articles in the United States and the United Kingdom is relatively high. This shows that a blend of developed and developing countries contributes to this research area. This indicates that consumer socialization is essential in developing and developed countries.

Table 1. Overview of research articles published in the scopus database on consumer socialisation.

Total documents	293
Total number of Institutes/ Universities/ organizations	160
Total number of Journals	147
Total number of countries	48

Table 2. Year wise number of papers published.

Year	Number of papers published
2023	3
2022	7
2021	9
2020	18
2019	15
2018	15
2017	18
2016	17
2015	19
2014	21
2013	11
2012	16
2011	8
2010	12
2009	11
2008	11

**Figure 2.** Year wise number of papers published.**Table 3.** Country wise number of papers published.

Country	Number of articles published
United States	117
United Kingdom	34
Australia	24
India	19
Canada	13
Hong Kong	13
France	12
New Zealand	12
China	10
Denmark	8
Malaysia	7
Ireland	6
Pakistan	6
Germany	4
Israel	4
Netherlands	4
Turkey	4

4.2.3. Most influential journal by number of articles

The 293 articles are from 147 different journals. Table 4 and Figure 5 represent the most prominent journals that publish consumer socialization articles. The top three journals to publish research related to consumer socialization of children were Young Consumers, the International Journal of Consumer Studies, and the Journal of Consumer Marketing. Most of these journals belong to the Q1 quartile of the Scopus database. A Scopus quartile is a category of scientific publications that demonstrates its trustworthiness. The quartile shows the scientific community's demand for Journal. Each journal subject group is broken into four quartiles: Q1, Q2, Q3, and Q4. Q1 comprises the best 25% of the list's journals. This shows that the articles on consumer socialization have been majorly published in the best journals and have demand among researchers. Many of these journals have an Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) ranking of A and a high h index. A look at the local citations, as shown in Figure 6, shows that Journalrnl of consumer research has the maximum number of citations at 1027 citations, followed by Advances in consumer research with 344

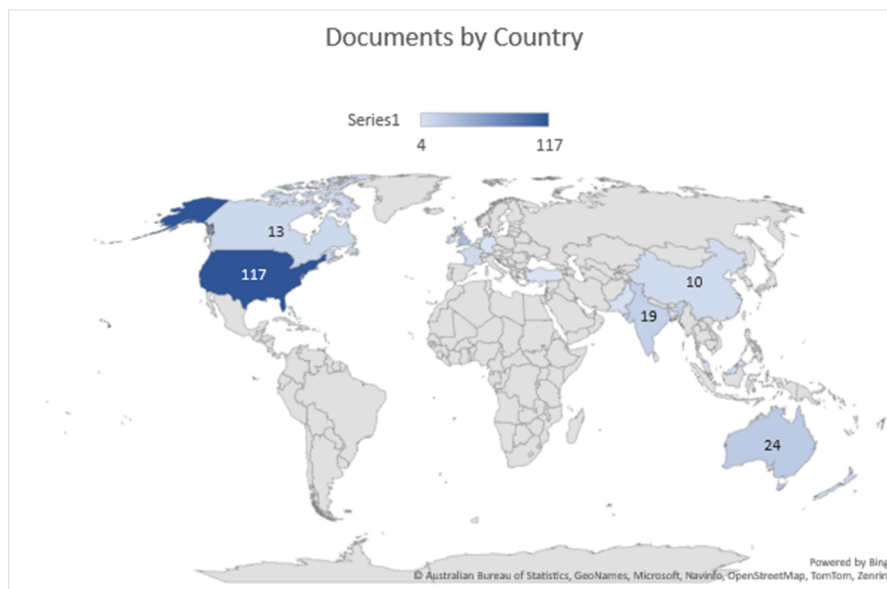


Figure 3. Country wise number of papers published.

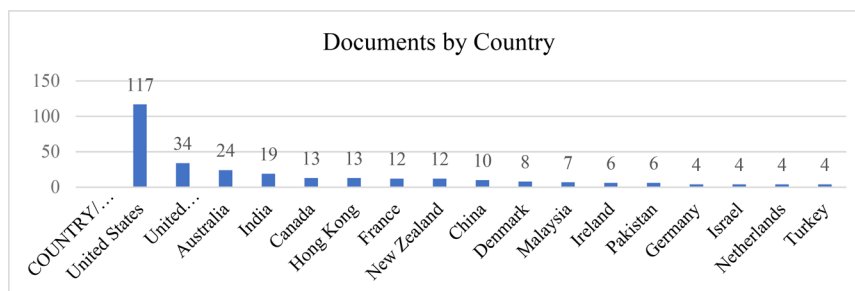


Figure 4. Graphical representation of country wise number of papers published.

citations and Journal of consumer marketing with 205 local citations. The journals with the most citations focus on consumer-based research as their core research area.

4.2.4. Most influential institutes/university/organizations

The 293 articles were affiliated with 160 Institutes/Universities/Organizations to which the Journals were affiliated. As shown in Table 5 and Figure 7, the top institutes were Hong Kong Baptist University and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, with 9 papers published on consumer socialization. Iowa State University closely followed this with 8 papers. The University of Arizona had a total of 7 papers published in the area of consumer socialization.

4.2.5. Most influential research article

The Most Influential Research article was 'Consumer Socialization of Children: A retrospective look at twenty-five years of Research' written in 1999 by D. R. John. It had 1272 citations. This was followed by 'Treating Children With Early-Onset Conduct Problems: Intervention Outcomes for Parent, Child, and Teacher Training', written in 2004 with 604 citations. This is represented in Table 6 and Figure 8.

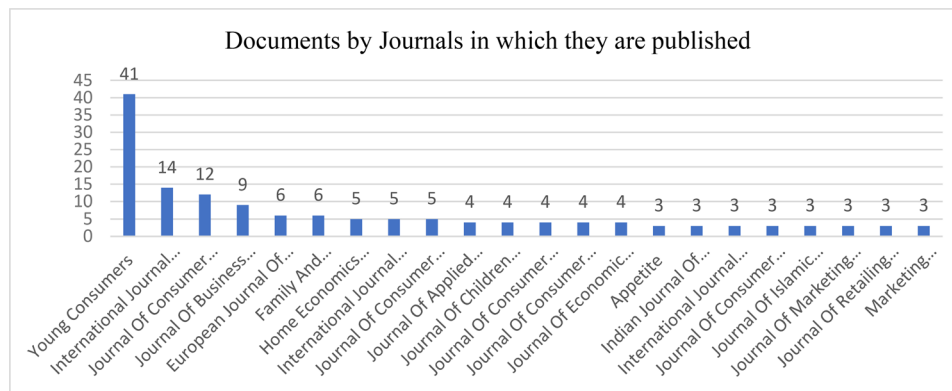
4.2.6. Three-field plot

As shown in Figure 9, the three-field plot gives the relation between three key areas, i.e., Authors, Keywords, and Journal of Publication. This is done by using Sankey Plots. The ten items showed

Table 4. Most influential journal by number of articles.

Journal Name	ABDC 2022 Rating	H Index	Publisher	Quartile	Local Citations	Total Papers
Young Consumers	B	32	Emerald Group Publishing Ltd.	Q1	155	41
International Journal of Consumer Studies	A	88	Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd	Q1	122	14
Journal of Consumer Marketing	A	113	Emerald Group Publishing Ltd.	Q1	205	12
Journal of Business Research	A	236	Elsevier Inc.	Q1	195	9
European Journal of Marketing	A*	146	Emerald Group Publishing Ltd.	Q1	78	6
Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal	NR	35	Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd	Q1	19	6
International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management	NR	94	Emerald Group Publishing Ltd.	Q1	6	5
Journal of Consumer Behaviour	A	53	Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Ltd	Q1	104	5
Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology	NR	99	Elsevier BV	Q1	56	4
Journal of Children and Media	NR	26	Routledge	Q1	25	4
Journal of Consumer Affairs	A	70	Wiley-Blackwell Publishing	Q1	80	4
Journal of Consumer Research	A*	210	Oxford University Press	Q1	1027	4
Journal of Economic Psychology	A	112	Elsevier	Q1	54	4
Appetite	A	168	Elsevier	Q1	122	3
Indian Journal of Marketing	C	12	Associated Management Consultants Private Limited	Q3	10	3
International Journal of Business Innovation And Research	NR	24	Inderscience Enterprises Ltd.	Q2	12	3
Journal of Consumer Psychology	A*	130	Wiley-Blackwell Publishing	Q1	77	3
Journal of Islamic Marketing	B	49	Emerald Group Publishing Limited	Q2	8	3
Journal of Marketing Management	A	82	Taylor & Francis Online	Q1	76	3
Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services	A	120	Elsevier Ltd.	Q1	23	3
Marketing Intelligence and Planning	NR	80	Emerald Group Publishing Limited	Q2	8	3

ABDC: ABDC is ranking of journal quality (provided by Australian Business Deans Council); A*: highest quality showing top 5%–7% journals in the field; A: second highest quality showing the next 15%–25% journals in the field; B: third highest quality showing the next 35%–40% journals in the field; C: fourth highest quality showing the rest of the journals in the field; NR: Not ranked/rated C.

**Figure 5.** Most influential journal by number of articles.

prominent keywords such as consumer socialization, children, socialization, consumer behavior, children, advertising, parents, family, and consumption, along with the source journals and contributing authors. The ten most influential journals shown in the figure revolved around research in consumer consumption patterns.

4.2.7. Trend topics

Figure 10 represents the trends in consumer socialization that has evolved over the years. To derive the same, the Author had a minimum frequency of occurrence as 5 were considered and the period 2005–2009 had generic studies that saw the emergence of the concept of children as influencers in consumer

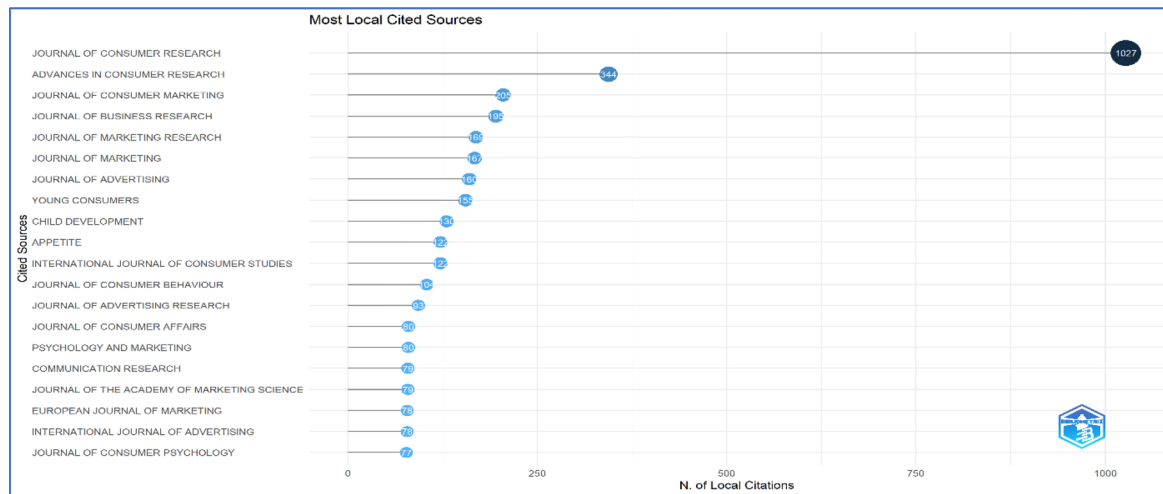


Figure 6. Graphical representation of Local citations of journals.

Table 5. Most influential Institutes/University/Organizations.

Affiliation	Total Papers (TP)
Hong Kong Baptist University	9
University of Nebraska–Lincoln	9
Iowa State University	8
The University of Arizona	7
RMIT University	6
University of Otago	6
Western Michigan University	5
University of Mississippi	5
University of Wisconsin–Madison	5
Jaypee Institute of Information Technology	5
NEOMA Business School	5
University of Haifa	4
Colorado State University	4
Georgia State University	4
University of Toronto	4
Universiti Putra Malaysia	4
Alliance Manchester Business School	4
University of Minnesota Twin Cities	4
Aarhus Universitet	4
International Management Institute, New Delhi	4

social-ization. Hence the keywords included children, adolescents, and consumer behavior. This marked the shift in researchers' focus toward children as influencers in the consumption pattern of families. 2009 to 2015, the main keywords were influence, obesity, consumption, financial socialization, advertising, and children, which showed research in areas where children have a crucial impact on consumption. The recent studies from 2015 onwards have focused on parenting style, a family that influences socializing children for consumption decisions, and marketing strategies adopted by marketers. Hence, keywords such as parenting, family, parents, and marketing occur.

4.3. Thematic evolution

Thematic evolution investigates the overall picture of field evolution across time by splitting the entire time frame into multiple time slices. It directs the evolution of the study topic based on the importance and density of keyword components and domains (Chen et al., 2019). To arrive at the thematic evolution shown in Figure 11, the word count was kept at 200 with a minimum cluster frequency of 5, the label size was 0.3, and the number of labels for each cluster was 3. To get a better understanding of the

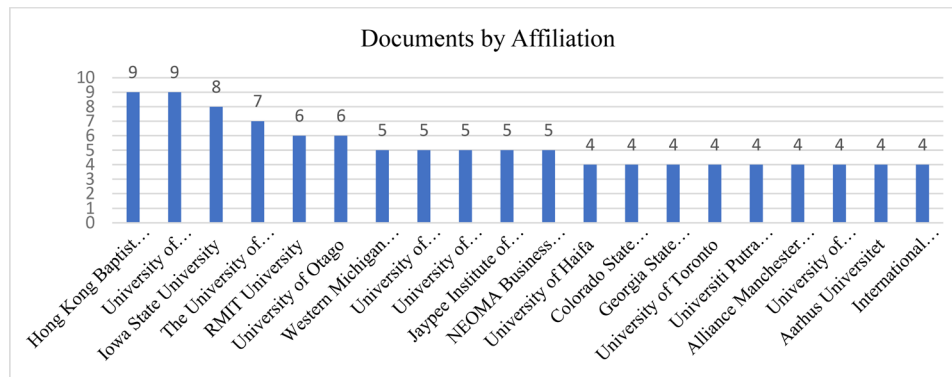


Figure 7. Most influential Institutes/University/Organizations.

Table 6. Most influential research article.

Publication Year	Document Title	Total Citations
1999	Consumer socialization of children: A retrospective look at twenty-five years of research	1272
2004	Treating Children With Early-Onset Conduct Problems: Intervention Outcomes for Parent, Child, and Teacher Training	604
2010	Financial Socialization of First-year College Students: The Roles of Parents, Work, and Education	351
2008	Family identity: A framework of identity interplay in consumption practices	288
1995	Psychological factors in consumer debt: Money management, economic socialization, and credit use	235
2009	Like father, like son? Intergenerational transmission of values, attitudes, and behaviours in the environmental domain	202
2001	The development of a child into a consumer	201
2012	Action speaks louder than words: The effect of personal attitudes and family norms on adolescents' pro-environmental behaviour	157
2005	Major influence factors in children's consumer socialization	136
2003	Children's perception of their influence over purchases: The role of parental communication patterns	126
2000	On the Origin and Distinctness of Scepticism toward Advertising	123
2015	Foundations of financial well-being: Insights into the role of executive function, financial socialization, and experience-based learning in childhood and youth	115
1999	An integrated model of consumer materialism: Can economic socialization and maternal values predict materialistic attitudes in adolescents?	87
1999	Consumer socialization, parental style, and developmental timetables in the United States and Japan	86
1998	The Influence of Family Communication Patterns on Parental Reactions toward Advertising: A Cross-National Examination	86
2009	Parents' experiences of home-based applied behavior analysis programs for young children with autism	82
1990	Mothers' communication orientation and consumer 'socialization tendencies	80
2002	Higher education and civic engagement	78
2000	Young peoples' perceptions of housing tenure: A case study in the socialization of tenure prejudice	72
2011	Pester power - a battle of wills between children and their parents	71
2015	The role of appeals to tradition in origin food marketing. A survey among Polish consumers	68
2017	All in the family? Parental roles in the epidemic of childhood obesity	66
2009	Predicted and observed outcomes in preschool children following speech and language treatment: Parent and clinician perspectives	65
1991	Consumer socialization and frequency of shopping with children	65
2002	Family communication and children's purchasing influence: A cross-national examination	62
1992	The Role of Parental Socialization Types on Differential Family Communication Patterns Regarding Consumption	61

evolution of themes over the years, the number of cutting points was 2, the first cutting year was placed in 2009, and the second was in 2016. [Figure 11](#) shows that during the initial period from 1999 to 2009, consumer socialization was still emerging. The research was primarily in the area of socialization, children, and consumption. We do not see too much of the occurrence of consumer socialization. The period 2010–2016 saw a significant amount of contribution in the area of consumer socialization; the power of children to influence purchase decisions was recognized. The era marked studies that started differentiating between children and adolescents, and studies revolved around the influencing power of both. Another exciting area of emergence was financial socialization. This is also when brands started recognizing children as an integral part of the consumption process. In recent studies from 2017 to 2023, children's role in consumer socialization is a well-accepted phenomenon. Efforts have been on how to use this for the benefit of marketers. The studies show concentrated media effort in influencing children

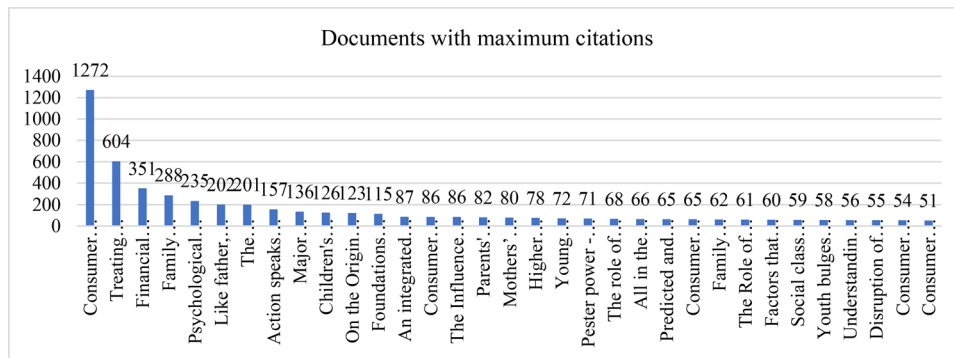


Figure 8. Most influential research article.

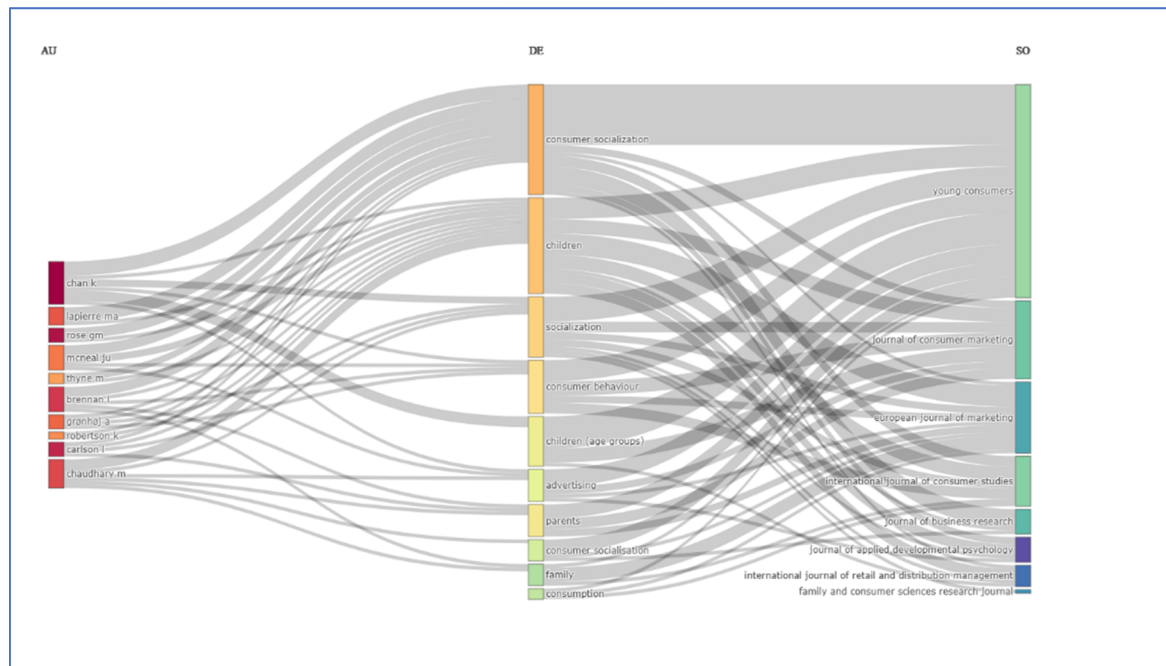


Figure 9. Three field plot-Authors, Keywords and Journals (Generated using Biblioshiny R Studio).

and how marketers have started focusing on initiatives for the development of children consumers (Figures 12–15).

4.4. Co-citation analysis

Understanding the web or network of publications is aided by co-citation analysis. many types of co-citation analysis, such as co-occurrence of author keywords, co-authorship analysis by country, and co-cited authors, aid in understanding the many clusters that have evolved as a result of the work of various academics throughout the world (Su & Lee, 2010).

4.4.1. Co-occurrence of author keywords

Co-occurrence is a network that helps to analyze potential relationships between different entities. Keywords are an essential part of any research document. Authors give the author keywords and define the key focus of the research area. The co-occurrence of author keywords helps identify the most popular topics covered in the defined area of research. They also help in identifying the emerging trends of research. The authors used VoS viewer software to construct this map. The nodes represent the

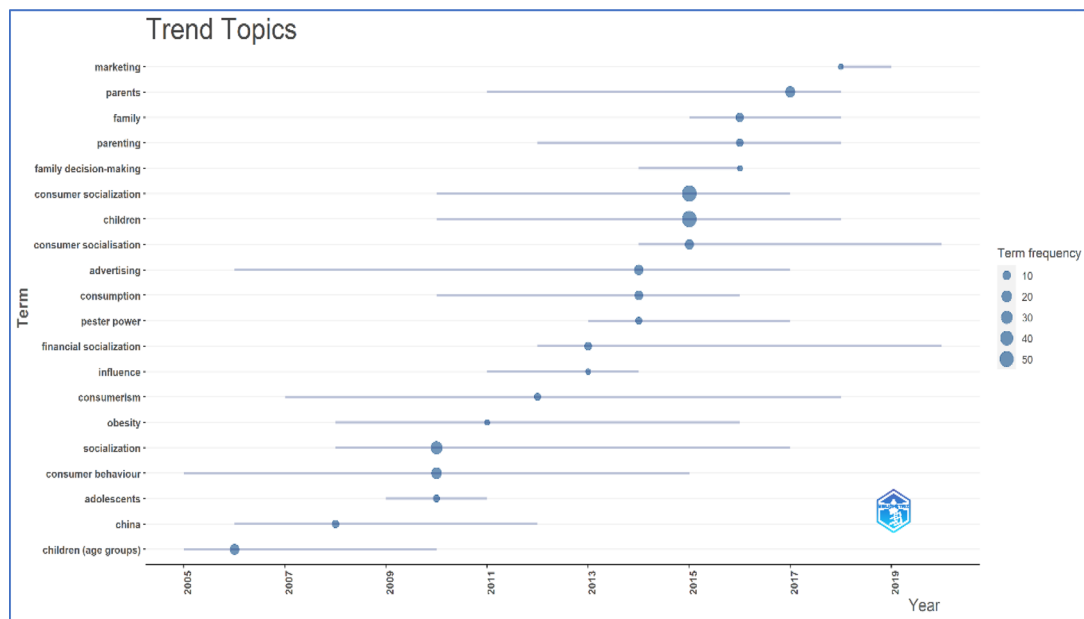


Figure 10. Trend topics in consumer socialisation (Generated using Biblioshiny R Studio).

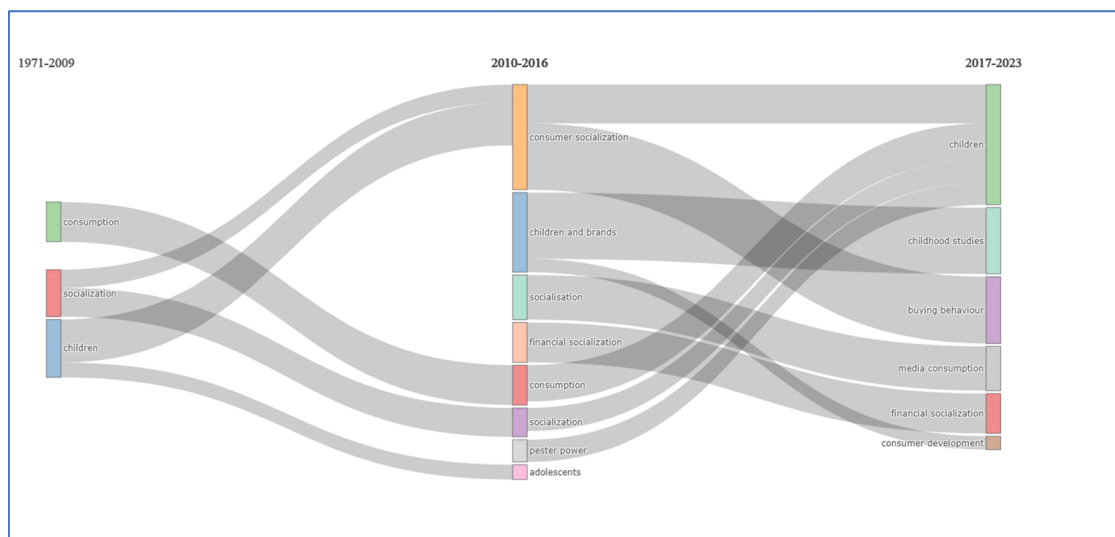


Figure 11. Thematic evolution.

keywords, and their size is related to the number of times they appear in the documents. The links indicate the relationships between a pair of nodes, and the strength of this relationship is observed in the width of the link. Thus, the larger the node's size, the more times the keyword has appeared. The network thus constructed is a representation of the cumulative knowledge of a domain (Table 7).

Further, for analysis, we clubbed the exact sounding and exact meaning words together and set the minimum occurrence of keywords to 5. Out of 696 keywords, 21 keywords met this threshold value. Overall, we had 21 keywords divided into 6 clusters with 21 items, 89 links, and 266 link strengths. The top keywords as per the links, link strength, and occurrences were:

Cluster 1 had five nodes and had advertising, children, China, Consumerism and Socialization as author keywords. Cluster 2 showed a close relationship between adolescents, Buying behavior, Financial Socialization, India and influence. The author key words of Cluster 3 were Consumption, family, marketing and parenting. Cluster 4 focused on the relationship between Consumer Socialization, Family decision making, Obesity and Qualitative methods.

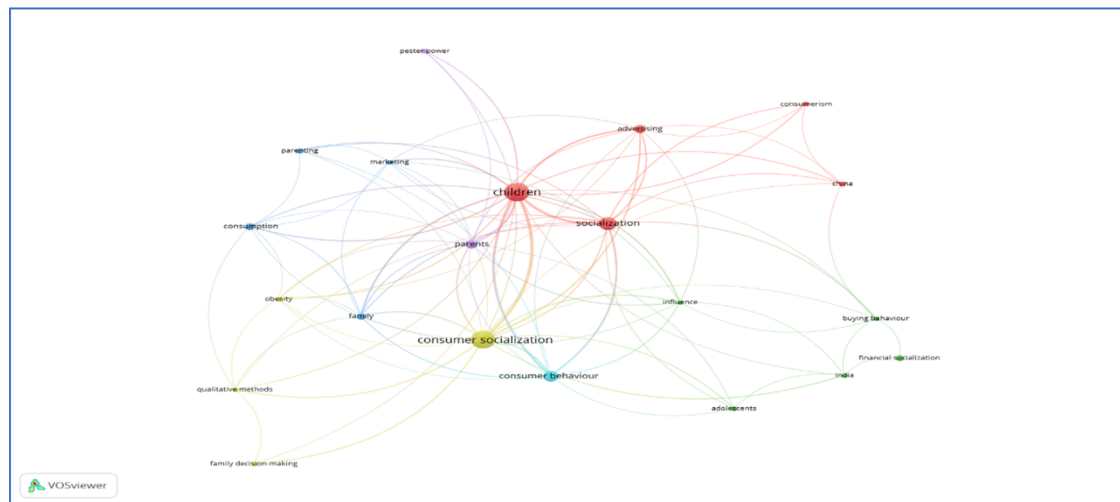


Figure 12. Co-occurrence of author keywords.

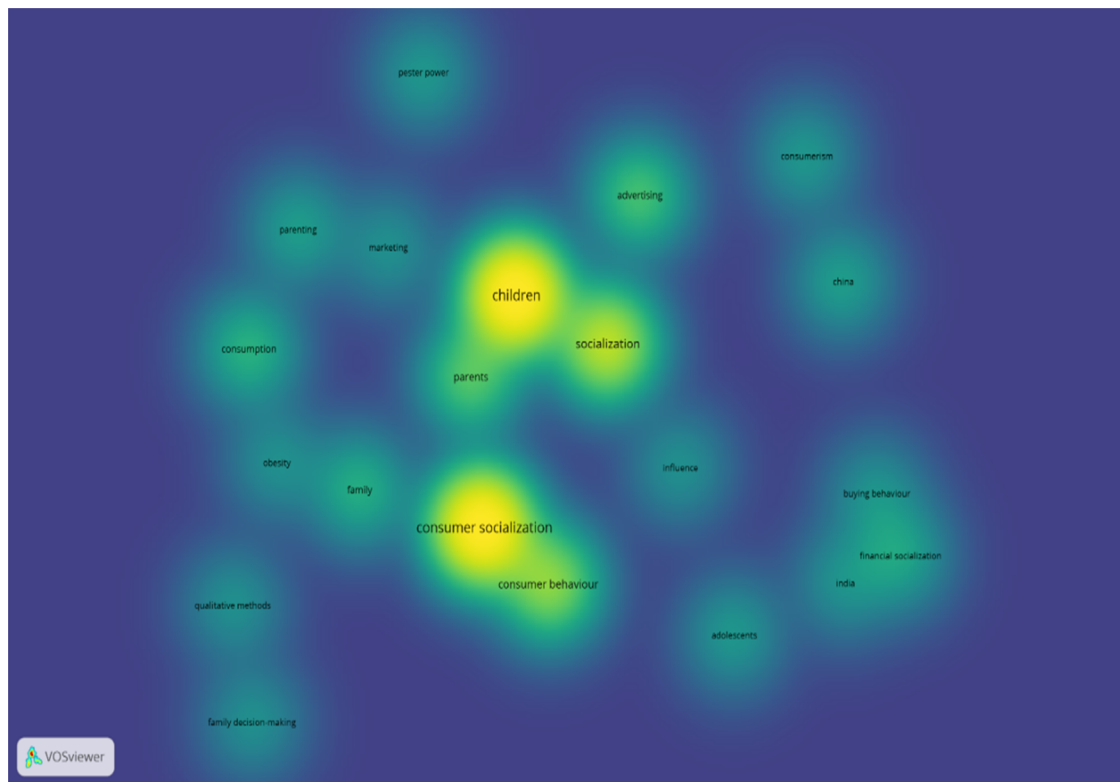


Figure 13. Density visualization Co-occurrence of author keywords.

4.4.2. Content analysis: Emerging trends in consumer socialisation

Drawing on the results of cluster analysis, the keywords help in defining four broad research themes.

The four broad research themes are:

Cluster 1: Changing role of media and parents as agents of Consumer socialization of children

Cluster 2: Socialization of children and re-socialization of parents

Cluster 3: Consumption behaviour of children

Cluster 4: Family communication and consumer socialization of children

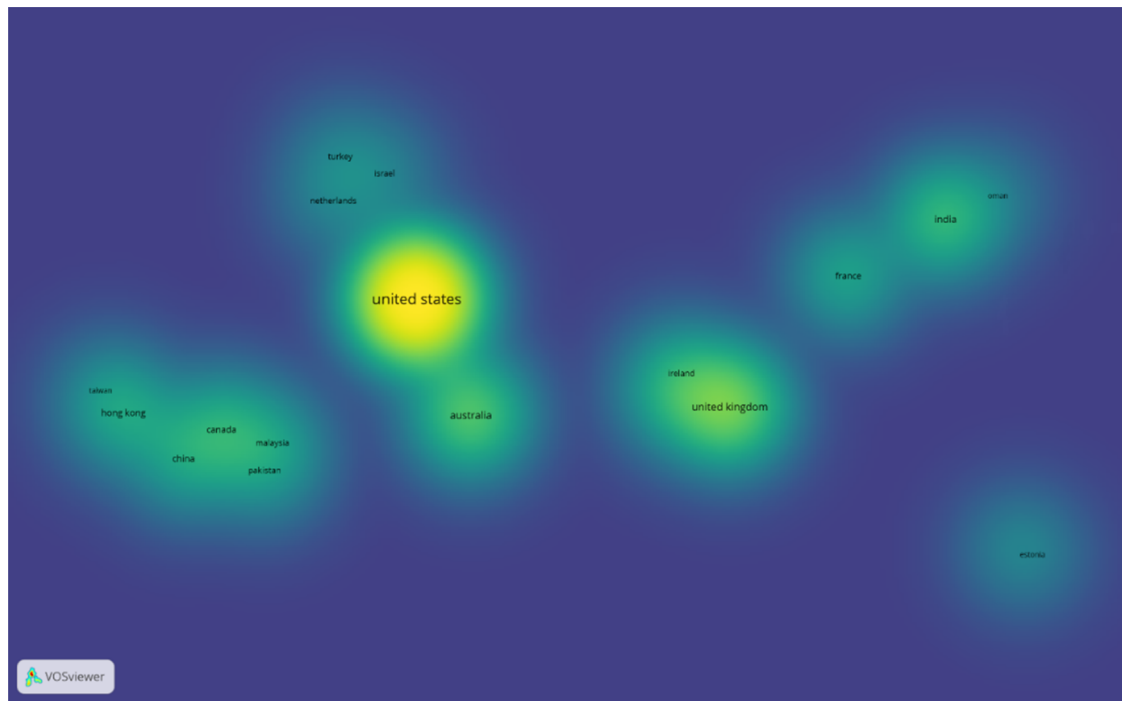


Figure 14. Density visualization of Country wise co-authorship network.

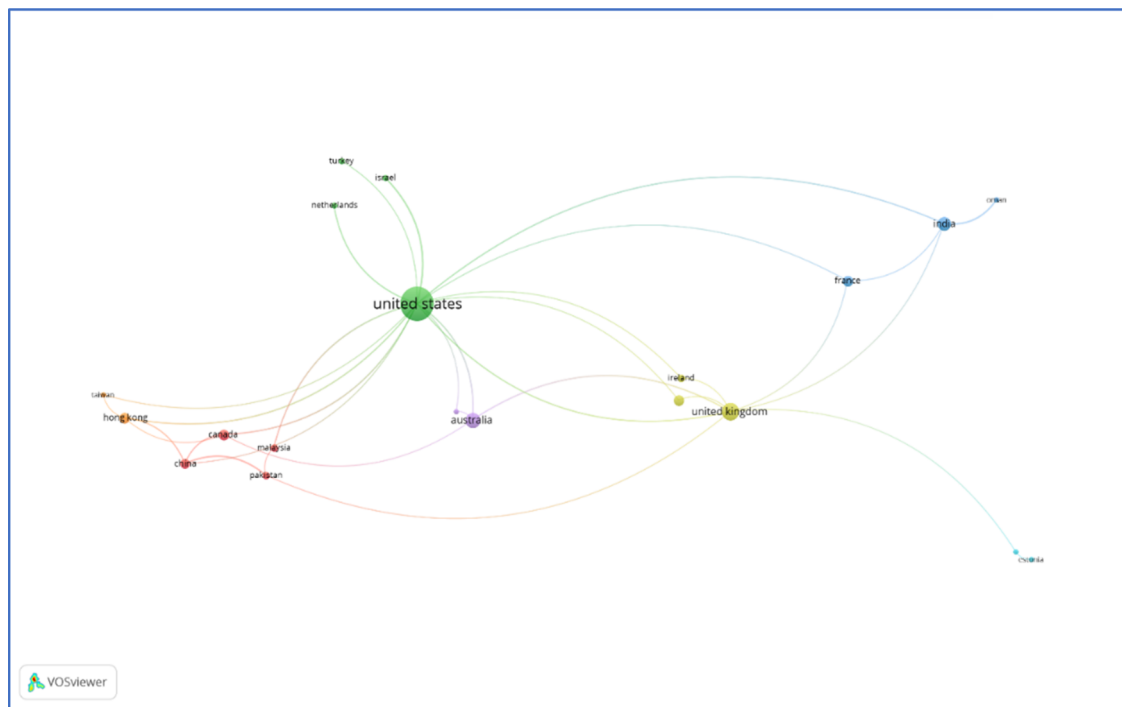


Figure 15. Country wise co-authorship network.

Cluster 1: changing role of media and parents as agents of consumer socialization of children.

Communication plays a significant role in the consumer socialization of children. With the advent of online platforms, the communication gap between the child and media has almost disappeared. Cluster 1 is dominated by research highlighting the advantages and challenges of consumer socialization of children by media. The cluster also brings into focus the role of parents as socialization agents. Parents who perceive their children to possess higher levels of media skills believe that advertisements will

Table 7. Co-occurrence of author keywords.

Author keyword	Links	Link strength	Occurrences
Children	18	128	73
Socialization	15	58	36
Consumer Socialization	18	77	71
Consumer Behavior	10	43	26
Parents	12	37	17
Advertising	10	28	15
Family	10	28	10
Influence	9	17	5
Consumption	9	16	11

have less negative influence on the child. This positive perception of the media skills of their children decreases their parental concerns and responsibility, while a negative perception makes them more concerned. Parents' knowledge and their co-playing with their children mitigated the harmful effect of violent video games. Though children regard television advertisements as an important source of communication for new products, they rely on their parents more for authentic information (Fan & Li, 2010; Holvoet et al., 2021; Walker et al., 2018). Online media was also found to play a major role in the political socialization of children. However, peer pressure also emerged as an essential element of online communication on different social media sites (Bauer et al., 2011; Thaichon & Quach, 2016). Consumer socialization of children has increased their influence in buying products, especially when the product is food or beverage. Children do not feel the need to discuss buying food/beverages with their parents and make the decision themselves. On the other hand, parents still believe that they have power in children's decision-making regarding food and beverage (Chaudhary et al., 2018; Page et al., 2018). The different styles of communication of parents also help in predicting a child's consumer behavior. More television exposure and less parental control had a direct relation to child's preference for branded products (Aitken & Watkins, 2017; Krcmar & Lapierre, 2018). Gender is also one of the most influences on children's social development. A child's cultural environment plays a role in defining the gender stereotype. Children with same-gender siblings or girls who spent more time in playschool had more gender-typed toys. The cultural environment affects the child's consumer development, and thus, differences are observed in their consumer socialization (Lapierre & Rozendaal, 2018; MacPhee & Prendergast, 2019).

Cluster 2: socialization of children and re-socialization of parents. The research papers in this Cluster are centered around the consumer socialization of children in general, with a particular focus on children's financial socialization. Cluster two papers also direct the research in the re-socialization of parents by children. The central theme of this Cluster is the influence of different socialization agents on children and the influence of children on parents/family. Television, the internet, and parents emerged as major predictors of children's role as co-decision makers (Chaudhary & Gupta, 2014). Peer's influence was more significant than siblings' influence to develop healthy eating habits (Ragelienė & Grønhoj, 2021). It was empirically proven that adolescents do socialize with their mothers, and hence children are important re-socialization agents for parents. Children's influence was especially more in areas of computer-related and small high-tech products (Ahmad et al., 2011; Essiz & Mandrik, 2021; Watne et al., 2011). Pester power was portrayed positively as a good-natured game between parents and children towards consumer socialization of children (Lawlor & Prothero, 2011).

The intergenerational influence was crucial for brand transfer and sustainable consumer attitudes. Strong communication between Parent and child helped in greater intergenerational similarity, while a strong peer influence harmed intergenerational similarity (Essiz & Mandrik, 2021; Kharuhothoin & Kerrane, 2018; Sotelo-Duarte & González-Cavazos, 2023). Parents play a major role in children's key financial attitudes and behavior. Financial well-being was found to have a positive relationship with financial knowledge, and children's financial knowledge was influenced by childhood experiences related to financial matters. Attitude toward money also strongly predicted financial well-being (McNeill & Turner, 2013; Pandey et al., 2020; Sabri et al., 2012). Parents' influence on children's financial socialization was more than financial education at education Institutes (Shim et al., 2010). Cluster 2 highlights the critical role of parents as a socialization agent for many parameters, including financial socialization. Cluster 2 also highlights intergenerational influence and re-socialization of parents by children.

Cluster 3: the consumption behaviour of children. Cluster 3 provides a look at how children's consumption behavior/pattern is affected by various factors. The close relationship between parent and child was a significant influencer in determining the different consumption patterns of children. Thus, the green consumption value of youth was directly impacted by the green consumption values of parents/family (Gong et al., 2022). Even the stories/narratives told in childhood impacted consumption behavior (Kennedy et al., 2022). The cultural practices and local media influenced parents' behavior which in turn influenced the socialization of the children (Kordrostami et al., 2018). Child obesity, a primary global concern, was also found to depend on the consumption habits of families. Thus, besides biological makeup, family food preferences and parents' beliefs about weight were instrumental in developing children's attitudes toward child obesity (Jayanthi & Reddy, 2017; Moore et al., 2016). Children who visited stores with their parents for shopping had different consumption behavior than those children who did not accompany their parents (Krcmar et al., 2017). Even children's gambling attitudes and consumption patterns depended on parents' importance of events by culture and media. Parents' cultural capital (socially rare and distinctive tastes of parents) significantly predicts children developing those distinctive tastes and values (Pitt et al., 2017; Wei et al., 2019). Intergenerational influence plays a vital role in adults' consumption patterns of technology. Reliance on children to help them learn new technology determines the consumption process (Perez et al., 2019). The role of family/parents supported by culture and media provides insight into how children develop consumption patterns.

Cluster 4: family communication and consumer Socialization of children. Cluster 4 has many studies which have brought into focus the role of family communication in consumer socialization of children and family decision-making. The cluster also has studies that have used qualitative methods to understand consumer socialization and decision-making in more detail (Cody, 2015; Harrison et al., 2021). The qualitative design method was used to understand the role of youth as assistive technology device consumers (Ryan et al., 2013). The influence of children as young as 2–7 years in shopping excursions was found through in-depth interviews (Gaumer et al., 2013). The snacking behavior of children and their perception of healthy and unhealthy food was also explored through qualitative methods (Chan et al., 2016). Children are exposed to video games from a very young age. Video games were found to mediate children's personal and family relationships in both positive and negative ways (Bassiouni & Hackley, 2016). Mothers play a significant role in children's consumer socialization, and the mother's parental style is instrumental in a child's exposure to media and the development of his/her consumption behavior (Wisnblit et al., 2013). An open communication pattern between parents and children impacts children's consumer socialization and helps in the re-socialization of parents, especially related to sustainable products. Different patterns of family communication have been discussed and debated, but there is a convergence that family communication plays a vital role in defining the consumer behavior of children (Aleti et al., 2015; Bakir et al., 2006; Sharma & Sonwaney, 2015; Watne & Brennan, 2011).

The Clusters give an overview of the Emerging trends in consumer socialization of children. The Clusters help us understand that while parents are an essential socialization agent for children, children help re-socialize parents after certain years. The joint defining agent in all clusters is the parent's role in developing children's Consumption Behavior. Parents' communication patterns, the relationship between parents and children, and parents' perception of different products all play an essential role in developing a child's consumption behavior. Parents must be aware and informed about their crucial role in educating children about consumerism. Parents and media are essential socializing agents for children. However, fast-tracked changes in media, including its easy accessibility to children from a very young age, have brought into focus the need to debate and discuss its increasing role in children's consumerism. This also highlights the need for redefining parents' role in providing accessibility and knowledge to children regarding media. Currently, different media platforms are readily available to children of all age groups. Children can be an easy target for marketers. Policymakers need different policies to protect children from the harmful effects of media.

4.4.3. Country wise co-authorship network

Collaborations among authors brings a diversity of ideas to research. When the authors are from different countries it makes the area of research richer with different perspectives. VoS viewer was used to analyse the network of co-authorship country wise. The minimum number of documents from a country was kept at a threshold value of 3. 24 countries met the criteria. However, Denmark, Germany, Italy and

Table 8. Country wise link strength.

Country	Total link strength
USA	24
UK	10
China	8
India	7
Australia	6
Canada	6
Hong Kong	6

South Africa had no links with other country authors. Hence the network analysis had 20 items divided into 7 clusters with 33 links and 49 link strength. The same has been demonstrated in [Figures 10 and 11](#).

Cluster 1 showed co-authorship links between Canada, China, Malaysia and Pakistan. Cluster 2 showed a closed working relationship between Israel, Netherlands, Turkey and USA. India, France and Oman were the three countries/items of Cluster 3. Cluster 4 highlighted the close working relationship between Ireland, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

As shown in [Table 8](#), the USA had the highest number of links followed by the United Kingdom, China and India

5. Conclusion and implications of the study

The process of how the socialization of children takes place to take up the role of consumers and insights into how children make consumption decisions are important research areas for marketers (Ekström, 2006). Various agents influence the socialization of children. These include family members, peers and friends, media, school, and other institutions and cultures (Mandrik et al., 2005). Parental communication and style are important factors shaping how children impact consumption decisions. In this research, the researchers have used bibliometric analysis to analyze the study on consumer socialization.

The citation analysis results draw interesting inferences; it shows that the most cited article was 'Consumer Socialization of Children: A retrospective look at Twenty-five Years of Research' by John, D. R. published in 1992. It had 1272 citations. This paper was closely followed by 'Treating Children with Early-Onset Conduct Problems: Intervention Outcomes for Parent, Child, and Teacher Training,' written in 2004 with 604 citations. The top three journals to publish research related to consumer socialization of children were *Young Consumers*, the *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, and the *Journal of Consumer Marketing*. Most of these journals belong to the Q1 quartile of the Scopus database. At the same time, the most influential institutions were the Hong Kong Baptist University and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, with 9 papers each published on consumer socialization. A look at the country-wise contributions shows that the United States of America dominates the list, followed by the United Kingdom. It was also interesting to note that both developed and developing countries have contributed to this research area.

The results of the co-citation analysis for country-wise co-authorship showed the USA had the highest number of links, followed by the United Kingdom, China, and India. Seven clusters were identified that showcased the collaboration between researchers from different countries. Drawing on the results of cluster analysis, the keywords help in defining four broad research themes. Cluster 1: The changing role of media and parents as agents of Consumer socialization of children; Cluster 2: Socialization of children and re-socialization of parents; Cluster 3: Consumption behavior of children; Cluster 4: Family Communication and Consumer Socialization of Children.

Understanding consumer socialization is important for several reasons. The key implications are discussed as follows:

5.1. Theoretical implications

From the theoretical perspective the understanding of consumer socialization helps in a better understanding of the consumer learning process as well as its outcome which is a vital element of consumer behavior study. It is also important to note that the scope of consumer socialization is very broad and can 'encompass life-long consumer socialization, different life events and spheres of consumption,

dialogs, negotiations, and translations, as well as the socio-cultural context in which socialization occurs' (Ekström, 2006). All these areas provide interesting research avenues worth exploring.

5.2. Managerial implications

From the managerial implication perspective, consumer socialization provides an inimitable insight into the behavior of an important market segment i.e. children that impact up to 80 percent of all everyday purchases (Goodwin, 2013). According to Goodwin (2013), 'Children's spending had roughly doubled every ten years for over three decades and had tripled in the 1990's. Kids 4-12 spent \$2.2 billion in 1968, and \$4.2 billion in 1984. But by 1994 the figure climbed to \$17.1 billion, and by 2002 their spending exceeded \$40 billion. These figures are direct spending by kids. Taking into account spending influence results in staggering numbers. For example, in 2012, kids buying power and influence had reached \$1.2 trillion'. These figures clearly state that children constitute a market segment that is impossible to ignore. Marketers should design strategies keeping in mind the role of children in influencing the purchase. For a few product categories, children can be targeted directly by developing child-oriented messages, images, characters, themes, logos, etc. However, in other cases, an attempt can be made by marketers to bridge the 'gap between children and parents, such as creating products, programming and activities that involve both children and adults' (Dotson & Hyatt, 2005).

5.3. Societal/public policy implication

From the societal and public policy perspective the study of consumer socialization provides a deep understanding of the factors affecting the consumption behavior of children of various categories of products and services. This also includes products that fall under the category of 'Compulsive Consumption' i.e. consumption that falls under the addiction category and may have damaging consequences to the users as well as those around them (for example- alcohol, tobacco, illegal substances, social media addiction, etc.). This calls for the development of various effective and efficient policies, guidelines, and laws from the government and consumer groups to promote positive consumer behavior. Also, interventions should be evidence and context-based.

6. Limitations of the research

The present study is one of the very rare attempts to provide a comprehensive understanding of the literature on children's consumer socialization. The researchers have conducted the study rigorously and meticulously. However, there exist a few limitations that need to be acknowledged. The researchers used research publications published in the Scopus database only. Although Scopus is a well-known and reputable database, it may exclude some significant publications indexed in other databases such as the Web of Science. This study might be expanded by doing a bibliometric analysis based on the search results of Web of Science-indexed journals. It would also be interesting to compare the bibliometric results of Scopus and Web of Science databases. The use of a single database is the key limitation of the study. Also, the study uses author keywords in order to conduct a co-occurrence analysis. The selection of keywords is subjective and depends on the researcher/author of the study. This means selecting author keywords as a means to conduct co-occurrence analysis is somewhat subjective also which can act as another limitation of the study. The use of bibliometric analysis provides the number of paper and their citation. The number of papers indicates quantity but, the number of citations does not always signify quality. In other words, the citation analysis is based on quantity and does not emphasize quality thus acting as a limitation.

7. Future research avenues

The current study opens up a few promising avenues for future research. Firstly, the study predominantly uses bibliometric analysis. Bibliometric analysis can be carried out using different techniques and

therefore future studies can adopt other techniques to gain more insights into this area of study. Secondly, this area is gaining the attention of marketers and researchers and may receive a substantial number of promising research papers in the coming future. Thus, bibliometric analysis can be done at interval of seven to ten years to understand advancement in this area. Thirdly, in order to understand emerging trends in consumer socialization the researchers have segregated the research into their self-generated clusters. The usage of different databases, tools, techniques, and keywords may yield different clusters and different research streams which can be an interesting avenue to explore. Additionally, children are essential influencers in consumption, and their influence cannot be ignored. The analysis depicted the routes via the four selected clusters that represent how future research in consumer socialization is shaping up. This is critical for future researchers to participate and contribute rich literature to develop this area of research further.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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