

THE IMPACT OF VARIOUS INFORMATION SOURCES ON MOTHERS OF GENERATIONS X AND Y WHEN PURCHASING TOYS

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MIROSLAV MANDIĆ

PhD, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND
BUSINESS, ZAGREB
mmandic@efzg.hr

DUBRAVKA PULJAK

MA
dubravka.puljak@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper looks at how belonging to different generations, namely the X and Y generations, is related to preferences regarding the various sources of information when purchasing toys. The base of the research were the psychological characteristics of both generations in general. Furthermore, the collected facts were used to confirm negative results. The sources of information were divided into the marketing dominant sources, such as advertising, sales promotion and the Internet, while the consumer dominant sources included children, family and friends. The paper uses exclusively the qualitative research method, with the in-depth interview as the chosen technique. The sample consists of twenty mothers in an equal ratio; ten mothers who are the members of the Generation X, and ten mothers from the Generation Y. All the mothers in the research have children younger than seven years of age, because of their relevant but not excessive impact on the mothers and their ability to make decisions when buying toys. The purpose of this method is to get into the core of the issue, and come to comprehensive answers that could be elaborated in more detail. Also, although the interview reminder exists, and it is listed at the very end of this paper, the interviews were conducted through engaging in casual conversation. The goal was to make the mothers more open and objective. The reminder was, therefore, used in cases when there was no specific subject was discussed. The survey obtained results showing a clear distinction between the members of these two generations, proving that it is important to know the mothers' age group to be able to use a quality approach. The X Generation mothers get the information they need via television, catalogs and by visiting the stores of their choice. We can say that they are the traditional group. However, the Y Generation mothers clearly prefer the Internet and their circle of friends as the source of information. The common variable for both generations are their children as the consumer dominant source of information.

KEY WORDS: The Generation X and Y, mothers as buyers, marketing directed to mothers, purchasing decisions, toys.

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, when there are so many different sources of information, it is important for every company to find out which source favours its customers, concerning their offered product. At this point, the children's toy market is worth more than \$84 billion (Statista, 2012), which is just another proof that there is a need for discovering the roots of this market's success. The following paper focused strictly on mothers, as the biggest and most important toys customer segment (Field Agent Toy Study, 2016) and explored how different sources of information affect Generation X and Y mothers. The aim of the presented paper was to prove, or to deny, the gap between these two generations when collecting information necessary for decision-making on buying toys.

Since several global researches are exploring similar topics, the aim is to carry out a research on the territory of the Republic of Croatia, based on the following combination of professional (Zeldis Reseach Associates, 2010, Goldman Sachs, 2015) and scientific papers (Andez G., 2013, Talafuse A., Brizek MG, 2012, Lupton D., 2016). Professional papers are devoted to mothers, their personal methods of gathering information, and preferences of different information sources concerning the types. Moreover, they explain some of the reasons why mothers, of both generations, use certain sources of information, and how they use them considering different generational affiliation. These papers provide a comparative image of mothers as customers who differ regarding their age.

Unlike professional papers, scientific papers do not data about mothers regarding generations, but study the process of making a decision when buying toys, and which sources of information they use during the decision-making process. Furthermore, these papers provide an overview of general sources of information for everyday situations in the mothers' lives. By combining the results of the observed researches, it comes to mind that mothers are the main customers of toys for children, as there is a difference between the mothers of generations X and Y as buyers, which points to the difference between the used sources of information about the products, used by both generations simultaneously.

Ultimately, this research is being carried out as previous researches, it was conducted on the territory of Republic of Croatia and it did not deal with the influence of the sources of information on Generation X and Y mothers when purchasing toys.

2. METHODOLOGY

For this paper's purpose, the market research was conducted on the territory of the City of Zagreb in the Republic of Croatia. In-depth interview was used as a part of the investigative research, and it was made on the sample of 20 mothers, through two phases. The first round of interviews took place in the month before Christmas, in order to find out which sources of information mothers used when thinking about toys and choosing them, and how clear the difference between the two generations of mothers really is. The second round of interviews was conducted a few days after Christmas, and here, the purpose was to know what changed with respect to the first interview, and which sources of information really had the dominant influence on the mothers of one and the other generation when buying toys. The interphase, between the first interview and Christmas, implied the monitoring of marketing activities of the leading toys makers on the market of the Republic of Croatia. The Christmas season was chosen as an occasion to conduct research, since it was the most appropriate time for buying toys (Christmas Retail Research, GfK, 2013). As a research instrument, a pre-developed interview guide was used.

In the previous years, a large number of researches were conducted on the theme of generation Y mothers and their comparison with generation X (Sachi & Sachi, 2015, The Goldman Sachs Group Inc., 2015). The Internet, as the dominant cause of the emergence of new generations, and its impact on young mothers, was the main cause these researches were conducted in the first place. Also, one more trend is emphasized, and that is the trend of the expanded use of social networks and blogs as a source of information where mothers often seek answers to their questions (BabyCenter 21st Century Mom 2015). This can be compared with the generation X mothers who are still more inclined to traditional sources of information, such as television and magazines.

The dominant method used in the aforementioned researches was mainly a survey, while on the contrary, this paper uses in-depth based interviews through two stages, where it is important to follow the sequence and links between the first and second phase of interviews. Also, the interviews were conducted on the same sample, making the use of any other research method limited.

To undertake an in-depth interview, a total of 20 mothers residing in the city of Zagreb were chosen, so it is a deliberate, appropriate customer sample. However, when selecting mothers, it was important to choose a relevant ratio of mothers according to their income, and most importantly, their age. Out of a total of 20 respondents, 10 are generation X members, where the youngest of them is 37, and the oldest is 45. The average age of the respondents of the generation X is 41 years. The Y generation respondents are on average 30 years old with the youngest being 24 and the oldest 34. The average monthly income of the mothers' households was considered as well, with the aim to notice a consistency or a gap between the income and the average monthly amount which the mothers are willing to spend on their children's toys. The respondents' income ranged between 1,000 and 2,500 euros per household, with 5 out of 20 respondents refusing to comment on the average monthly household income.

Another important variable when selecting the mothers was the number and age of the children, in order to show the relationship between the mothers concerning their age and their age-related children. The purpose was to find out how both groups of mothers are searching for information and from which sources, given the age of their children as influencers when choosing toys. Moreover, as children are one of the important sources of information, it is necessary to review their age as the influence on their mothers' changes as they are getting older. A total of 14 out of 20 mothers have two children, and the remaining six have one child. The youngest child is 5 months old and it is the child of a generation Y mother. The oldest child is 7 years old and it is the child of a generation X mother. The average duration of the interview was 45 minutes.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE MARKETING SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR THE GENERATION X AND Y MOTHERS

The sources of information are just one of the chain loops in decision-making. This complex process is explained through the five stages which a consumer goes through when making a purchase decision. They are the following: recognition of needs and wants, information search, evaluation of information, purchasing process and post-purchase evaluation (Kesić, 2003). This work will essentially be devoted to the second phase of the model: seeking information, where different types of information sources will be analyzed, as well as their influence on a consumer's purchasing decision. In this case, this

specifically means that sources of information, at the stage when mothers are looking for information, directly influence their decision whether to buy toys for children or not. Considering the above stated, it is necessary to define the concept of seeking information, which can be clarified as a psychological or physical search for information in the decision-making process, with a desire to reach the set goal (Kesić, 2006). According to the Howard-Sheth model, the inputs involved in purchasing decision-making are the sources of information coming from the external environment, physical stimulus such as product quality, cost or product performance, then symbolic influencing factors through which visual and verbal information on a product is transmitted, whereas the last inputs are the social ones, such as families, reference groups, and friends who influence the decision-making process (Howard, Sheth, 1969).

Also, it is important to note how information seeking can take place pre-emptively and continuously, observed from the "connection with the purchase" point of view. Also, it can act both internally and externally, from the "source of information" point of view (Kesić, 2006). This paper focuses on the pre-purchase information search, after the consumer has already discovered the problem (Kesić, 2003). The source of information to be observed in this paper is exclusively external and includes ads, friends, family, exhibitions, journals (Kesić, 2003). They are defined in degrees of attention, perception and effort directed toward obtaining environmental data or information related to the specific purchase under consideration (Beatty, Smith, 1987).

Which sources of information will be most noticed by individual groups of consumers depends on several factors. There are three main theoretical consumers' frames concerning product information search (Srinivasan, 1990):

1. Psychological approach based on motivation,
2. An economic approach that explains the cost-benefit strategy,
3. Access to value-based information, focused on memory and human limitations and its cognitive information processing.

It has also been proven how searching and acceptance of different sources of information depends on personal skills and motivation, which are the two elements needed for a consumer to understand the information, and apply it to the purchasing decision (Brucks 1985). An extended version of determinants that influence the acceptance of various sources of information by the consumers includes knowledge, involvement, beliefs and attitudes, as well as demographic characteristics (Kesić, 2006).

Consumer knowledge refers to objective knowledge that implies what the consumer already knows about the product, and subjective knowledge as a perception of the volume of product knowledge (Brucks, 1985). Their

correlation has a stimulating, but also restrictive effect on the search for information. Namely, when a customer perceives the volume of information as sufficient, he will not allow new sources of information to influence his decisions. However, if he knows that he does not have enough information to make a purchase decision, he turns to new sources (Schmidt, Spreng, 1996).

Involvement, as an influencing element on sources of information, explains how consumers are involved in seeking information when having a greater interest in the product, and vice versa (Engel, 1993). They also spend more time looking for information as their involvement and interest increase (Celsi, Olson, 1988).

Beliefs and attitudes are the third determinant affecting the search for information, explaining that individuals, who enjoy the buying process, are more motivated to seek information and are inclined to accept more sources of information at once. On the contrary, those who have a negative attitude towards buying, discard certain sources, and focus on a small number of them (Schmidt, Spreng, 1996). In addition to that, the beliefs that consumers have towards a particular product category, the manufacturer or the brand, affects the scope of their search. This is explained by the fact that consumers are investing more energy in seeking information if the perceived benefit of having this product is high. (Kesić, 2006).

Demographic characteristics are the ultimate variable influencing the consumers when evaluating different sources of information. Research has shown that specific demographic characteristics are associated with the scope of search. It is stated that older consumers have more experience, so their need for a countless number of sources of information is lower than that of younger consumers (Kesić, 2006).

The importance of discovering sources of information lies in the fact that the right source reduces the risk (Bennett, Harrell, 1975). In a situation where a consumer has enough information and has gathered them from a trustful source, then his reliability in buying a particular product increases. That is why, in the future, consumers always pay close attention to the credible sources (Schmidt, Spreng, 1996). Also, the perceived risk will increase the need for information seeking and even from multiple sources, until the risk is completely eliminated. There are four types of risks which concern customers; the perceived risk of whether the product will work the way it was promised, the social risk of the product being liked by people around them, the risk of uncertainty that perceives the danger of constant technological progress and the rapid outdated nature of the existing product, as well as the psychological risk of consumer safety when using the product (Beatty, Smith, 1987). The risk addressed in this paper is the psychological risk. In this case, mothers in the role of customers, pay most attention to the safety of toys. Although they are not the users of the product, the consumers are their children, they still carry a psychological risk. Thus, it was found that more than 41% of the parents were most concerned about toy safety during the purchasing process (fieldagent.com).

Now, when the theoretical framework of information search has been established, it is necessary to focus on the types of sources of information that will be dealt with in this paper. The consumer gets information from three main sources: marketing as the dominant source, consumers as the dominant source, and some neutral sources. Only the first two types will be discussed in this paper, since the third has no particular impact on the work and its research.

Marketing-dominant sources include sellers, packaging, advertising, sales promotion, and other sources under the control of a marketing specialist. They are most effective in the first phases of creating familiarity and interest in a product or brand (Kesić, 2003). This can be explained by the fact that marketing-dominant sources provide clear information about the product and its performance, and therefore serve as a good source of information for making a purchase decision (Vlašić, Janković, Kramo-Čaluk, 2011). As noted, they imply different types of sources of information and the theoretical framework will be given only for three types, due to their use in the research work. These three types are advertising, sales promotion aimed at consumers, and the Internet and catalogues as forms of direct marketing communication. Table 1 summarizes the sources of information that are relevant to this work and the ways in which they have the biggest impact on consumers.

Table 1. The ways in which different marketing-dominant sources influence a purchase decision

SOURCES	TV	Sales promotion	Internet/ Social networks	Internet/ Web sites
Building product awareness	***	**	***	**
Transfer of important information	*	*	**	***
Building brand personality	***	**	***	**
Building loyalty	*	*	***	*
Excitement/emotions	***	**	***	**
Consumers' inspiration	*	***	*	**
Invoking Loyalty	**	*	**	**
Connecting people	*	*	***	***

Source: Batra R., Keller K. L., Integrating Marketing Communications: New findings, new lessons and new ideas, 2016., Journal of Marketing, Vol. 80, p122-145.

Table 1 clarifies the main advertising types, television, sales promotion, and the Internet, through social networks and websites, and the impact they have on consumers when it comes to product information. The aforementioned will be used in the research part of this paper, where it will be attempted to prove, or refute this in the case of generations X and Y mothers, when purchasing toys.

Advertising is paid, impersonal communication from a certain organization, identified in the message through various media, with the aim of informing and persuading members of the public (Bovee, Thill, Dovel, Burk Wood, 1995). It is a marketing-dominant source of information since it is a paid form designed to present the product to a broader audience with the aim of achieving communication, economic or both effects (Kesić, 2003). There are two basic advertising functions: communication and sales. Informing, as a part of the communication advertising function, is the most important issue in this paper. It is about informing the consumer of the product, its features, the selling point and the price. Also, it provides information for the consumer concerning the benefits that one can expect from the product.

In order for advertising to be sent by an advertiser (sender) to a consumer (in the research the recipients are mothers), different communication channels need to be studied.

Table 2 shows the comparison between the generations X and Y according to their most important characteristics and personalities, which represents an important starting point for the research part of this paper.

Table 2. Generation X and Y mothers according to characteristics and their comparison

GENERATION	X	Y
Year of birth	1960-1980	1981-2000
World population	1.44 billion	1.72 billion
Characteristics	Pragmatic Thinking globally Technologically educated Informed Trusting themselves Independent Work to live	Serve to community Technologically educated Technology-minded Tolerant Reliable Optimistic Socially conscious
Consumption style	Cautious	Compulsory
Communication style	Email, SMS	Social networks
The most used technological device	Laptop/computer	Mobile phone
Decision making	Team work (with kids)	Individual
Values	Family	Accomplishment
Critical point	Educating children in the right way	Being concerned how other people see them as mothers

Sources: Zemke, Raines i Filipczak, 2000. Generations at work: Managing the clash of veterans, boomers, Xers and non-Xers in your market place, Mobile Consumer Culture: Analysis of the US Smartphone Consumer Market, <http://www.data-charts.com/mobile-consumer-culture-analysis-of-the-us-smartphone-consumer-market/> (access 20.11.2016.), <http://re-generations.org/generation-connections/> (access 20.11.2016.), <http://www.mothermag.com/millennial-parents/> (access 20.11.2016.).

The characteristic of the generation X mothers and the sources of information they use can be shown in the way they communicate. It is straightforward, open and uses clear, current facts. They often communicate informally and share information quickly and consecutively with other mothers. E-mail is the preferable communication medium when it comes to selecting technological innovations (wmfc.org). They are also more involved in activities that imply a particular task, such as online shopping, product survey and review, and photo organization (parentingmagazine.com).

Generation X mothers use a combination of different sources, including traditional print media, but also electronic media, the Internet and social networks. However, friends and family have a strong role to play in influencing the decision-making made by the mothers of that generation (Miller, 2013). Research in the US from 2015, has shown that television, as a source of information, remains on top, followed by the Internet, print media and radio (statista.com).

Generation Y differs from generation X, both regarding personal characteristics and sources of information. Speaking of marketing-dominant sources, digital media is the number one source when it comes to product information search. Also, generation Y mothers have a great influence on each other. More than any other generational group, they are willing to share information found with other mothers, and declare themselves a good product advisor (KRC Research for Webershandwick.com).

The Generation Y are urban, young mothers who look on social networks as personal advisers, and channels for sharing information with others. For example, 46% of them uploaded the image of their newborn child to one of the social networks (as opposed to just 10% of the mother of the X generation). It is proof that this generation of mothers sees the Internet as a "saviour", and they look for all answers in virtual reality, which they experience as a place to connect with other people, but also to express their feelings and attitudes (mothermag.com).

The research carried out by American agencies AOL and OMD Worldwide, in 2013, claims that mothers of this generation spend up to eight hours using marketing-dominant sources, including 2.6 hours on the Internet, 2.1 hours on television, 1.2 hours on radio, and about 30 minutes for newspapers and magazines. Also, seeking information that will help them in parenting is the most common purpose of spending time using these media. 79% of them opted to practice online shopping, 71% ask for product or service information, and 52% seek for discounts and coupons. Moreover, 83% of this generation's mothers said they shared the experience of a particular store or product on social networks. 75% stated that they would rather buy a product for which they have a coupon or discount (Yasav, 2014).

Blogs are, as a source of information for young mothers, extremely important, and their influence and perception is rising. This can be witnessed by the fact that young mothers can identify themselves with other mothers, whether anonymous or celebrity mothers. Blogging is based on the

principle where a company makes a contract with a blogger mom, and she writes product reviews, publishes videos about using that product, or simply invites her public to try the product (The Goldman Sachs Group, 2015).

When it comes to consumer-dominant sources of information, 82% of generation Y mothers acknowledge they will talk to their mothers or friends about a particular issue. This fact suggests how young mothers, who do not yet have enough experience, trust their close friends and family when making a purchase decision. Web pages affect purchase decision for 73% of them, and 69% said how advertising in print and digital format have the biggest impact (Yasav, 2014).

Briefly, when seeking information about good parenting, buying children's food, cosmetics, and toys, generation Y mothers believe in advice and recommendations from their own mothers (40%), their own intuition (15%), parenting portals blogs (13%), friends (8%), other social networks (5%) (Schawartz, Gaffney, 2015).

Table 3. Mothers as a source of information for other mothers, reporting how they found the product they like

SOURCES	Mothers X	Mothers Y
I call a friend/Wait to meet a friend	78%	69%
I send an e-mail to my friend(s)	49%	37%
I publish a post on a social network	15%	28%
I write a review on the store's website	23%	26%
I publish and discuss this in a forum	6%	10%
I do not tell anyone about it	10%	9%

Source: Radar Research by Sugar Inc. „Why Y Women“, available on <http://media.onsugar.com/static/imgs/WhyYWomen.pdf>

It is important to notice what mothers do when they come across a product that they consider good, whether for themselves or their child. They can serve, as a source of information, to others in helping them make a purchasing decision, or just to confirm their opinion. Mothers of both generations prefer to communicate with their friends directly, but, as expected, Y mothers share their opinions on social networks much more than X mothers (28% versus 15%). This only strengthens the fact that generation Y mothers are the mothers of the digital age.

However, when comparing the producer as a marketing-dominant source, and friends as a source which is not controlled by the company, it is apparent that younger mothers are more attached to both sources than generation X mothers. The explanation lies in the fact that young mothers socialise more and have a larger number of friends they trust. Meanwhile, older mothers spend more time at home.

Table 4. Mothers as a source of information for other mothers, reporting how they found the product they like

SOURCES	Mothers X	Mothers Y
Family and friends	61%	77%
Visiting stores	53%	62%
Browsing web pages of stores and manufacturers	40%	42%
Reading reviews of other product users	39%	44%
Store's catalogues	31%	18%
Emails received by sellers	26%	25%

Source: Punchtab, 2014., Holiday Shopping Whitepaper, <http://www.adweek.com/socialtimes/survey-reveals-social-shopping-habits-spanning-generations/206940>

In a situation where mothers seek information that will help them make a decision about buying gifts, toys in the research, they mostly trust their families and friends. They see them as a confidential source with a certain experience. Generation X mothers are at the forefront of browsing stores' catalogues (31%), compared to younger mothers (18%). They prefer the Internet sources, such as reviews written by other users (44%) and blogs (26%).

Comparing the sources of information used by the mothers of the two generations, it can be said that in general, mothers of the X generation still prefer traditional sources, such as television and magazines, but are getting closer to mothers Y when it comes to digital sources. By contrast, generation Y mothers mostly rely on the Internet sources of information, such as social networks, blogs, and forums. This can be explained with the Y generation's characteristics, as they were born and raised in the digital age, and who have no fear and prejudice regarding the latest forms of communication. Both generations consider their family and friends to be extremely important sources, especially when buying a product with a higher safety risk. However, regarding this, generation Y is a bit ahead of generation X. They seek their mothers' advice somewhat more often than the generation X mothers, which is logical since they are younger and more inexperienced than the older generation mothers.

4. RESEARCHING THE IMPACT OF DIFFERENT SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON MOTHERS OF GENERATION X AND Y WHEN PURCHASING TOYS

Since the research was conducted in two phases, where the first phase refers to the pre-Christmas period, and the second phase to the post-Christmas period, their results will be presented separately. It should be noted that the first stage of this research presents a base, and it can be applied to all parts of the year, regardless of being carried out during the pre-Christmas period. After that, the second

phase will be briefly described regarding the specificity of the situation to which it relates, namely buying toys on special occasions, more specifically for Christmas. In the end, a cross-section of both phases will be drawn, and a conclusion will be made.

The first phase, the interviews, took place in the period between 28 November 2016 and 13 December 2016 in Zagreb. The stage is referred to as the "pre-Christmas phase" for easier identification of the interview period. However, only the last set of questions referred to the influence of various sources of information on mothers when buying toys for Christmas, while the majority of questions concerned the impact of information sources when buying toys in every day life.

Generation X mothers are more sensitive to television as a source of information, watch various TV programs more, and spend more time watching TV in general. In most cases, they will pay attention to ads, especially when they are in the information search phase. On the other hand, the generation Y mothers declare to be rare television watchers, generally due to lack of time, and search for information only in children's content ads. What is common with these two generations is television as a source of information which impacts their children, and then indirectly them too. This fact is confirmed by the number of toys the children of the respondents have, which exhibit the characteristics of the cartoon/series they watch.

Neither newspapers nor magazines, as forms of print media, represent an important role for mothers when purchasing toys. Both generations claim they do not have a habit of using them, and they find digital editions much more practical. Also, none of the mothers, who read newspapers, bought a toy, or any other product, after being stimulated by the information from newspapers or magazines in the print edition. No mother, from both generations, has talked about any form of printed media as an important source of information, nor even mentioned it during an entire conversation, until the author proposed it as an option. It can be concluded that newspapers and magazines are not important here, however, the size of the sample should be taken into consideration, indicating the possibility of different results in a larger sample.

The catalogues are for both generations an extremely important source of information when it comes to buying toys. They are almost always the initial source of ideas about the toys, after which the generation X mothers switch to other sources, such as television, or the Internet for Y generation mothers. Ease of the displayed content, delivery to home address, and reading in leisure time, are the most common reasons why mothers advocate this type of source. Bubamara, Muller and Konzum are the stores from whose catalogues mothers of both generations often draw ideas and information. The only larger gap lies in the fact that children affect mothers of the generation X through those catalogues, while no such response was noted with the generation Y mothers.

In the X generation, mothers who do not accentuate Internet as the primary source of information are dominant, while stating they spend, on average, one hour a day on the Internet. Respondents of the Y generation are a lot different in that case. They emphasize the Internet as the most important source of information in everyday life, as well as when buying toys. They are great advocates of social networks, blogs and forums and will easily find themselves in the examples of celebrity mothers, while with generation X that is not the case. They primarily use the Internet as their source for price comparison and visiting web shops, and are not affected by social networks and celebrity mothers. The interviews revealed a gap between the two generations when it comes to the Internet as a source of information in general, but also when purchasing toys, which coincides with the previous research.

Coupons are still a source of information of great importance, and the root of ideas for mothers of both generations. They are more commonly used in everyday shopping, but when purchasing toys, they will serve as a motivator for buying a specific toy. Therefore, their role as a source of information when purchasing toys, for both generations, is negligible. They both use them when there is a price difference, while for Generation Y there is frequent use of coupons when purchasing toys for children who are not theirs. Generally speaking, the interviews found that coupons serve as one of a few sources of information, but never as the most important source and never exclusively. They will always be combined with some other sources, such as children or the Internet.

Although web shops are increasingly attracting mothers' attention, going to a physical store is still a preferable way for many mothers when searching for information. Thus, generation X mothers tend not only to get ideas in store, but they also purchase impulsively without getting more information, while the Y generation mothers are still more careful about it. They will use additional sources to be sure about their idea which they purchased instore. Also, the reason for going to a physical store is different between the two generations, so generation X is more prone to price detection and toys comparison, while the reason for generation Y is the ability to observe the quality of the toy. In general, both generations' mothers do not hesitate to pay attention to toys at the store even when they do not need them.

It can be said that there are some neutral sources of information are from TV when talking about generation X mothers, and from the Internet for generation Y mothers. At the same time, sharing information with their family is more preferable for X mothers, and with friends with Y mothers. This can be explained with the fact that generation X, by definition, is more family-oriented. Generation Y is characterized as more self-reliant, while considering their friends family. Speaking about the last neutral source, the children, they bring the mothers of both generations together. Children are the crucial source of information when buying toys, and their impact will

be considered if the toy is what they really need, and the price is acceptable to mothers.

The last set of questions in the first interview referred to Christmas toys shopping, in order to find out if the mothers of both generations use other sources of information when buying Christmas gifts. This is of great importance considering that this event is to mothers the most special, including their children's birthday. During the first phase of the interview, eight out of ten respondents of the generation X stated that they were already thinking about buying Christmas gifts, and that it would be a toy. Getting the idea for buying it came primarily from their children, said six out of eight respondents. Five of them spoke about their children writing letters to Santa Clause. This was a way of getting an idea for buying a Christmas gift. The remaining three respondents did not say the same, which was expected due to the age of their children. Since they are too young for what, mothers are those who get the idea from the marketing-dominant sources. After getting ideas from their children, five respondents said they will devote more time looking for information about the price, stores, brand comparison, and the quality of similar toys.

Seven out of ten respondents argued that they would, or already did, start paying more attention to television content, including advertisements for toys. The mothers agree that such ads are frequently broadcast in the pre-Christmas period, but that does not bother them as they get useful information. They also point out how their children got ideas thanks to some television programs, which enables them to buy exactly what their children want. Speaking of catalogues, there will be no change, mothers will not use them more or less than usual. Only two respondents said that they would start searching more self-initially and look at catalogues to get additional information. Print media will not experience more popularity either, since mothers do not consider it a useful source for this situation. Regarding the coupons, mothers stated that their children would get what they want for Christmas, so the use of coupons only applies to the situation where the coupon coincides with the toy that the child wants.

All six respondents claim that their children are old enough to express their desire for a toy, so a coupon will not change their mind. For the remaining four respondents, coupons might change their mind, as they are the ones deciding which toy to buy. Only four mothers will use the Internet, two of them immediately at the beginning of the information search, and two after using some other sources. Mothers point out that stores' Web sites will be most used, when talking about their Internet activities. Regarding the neutral sources neutral sources, as has been said above, children and their wishes are the most important, where all respondents agree that children will get the toy they want. However, they note that this is not an everyday occasion. Since most of them, more specific six, have already formed their opinion on what to buy, they say nothing would change their mind; neither coupons, discounts, or any other distraction in the physical store

or the reviews of other mothers, especially not celebrity mothers. They agree that these factors would have an impact on regular shopping for toys, but for special occasions they do not play an important role. The last aspect of the interview explains a perfect situation where respondents get all the information they need as they wish. The most striking source is a coupon with the exact same toy which their child wished for, giving information about the price, the place of purchase and the purpose. Similar situation is with catalogues. Mothers would like to receive them in their post box, providing all the information they need, without needing to involve other information sources. The mothers emphasized that the ideal source would be one which saves them the search time and gives them all the information they need in the same place. Finally, mothers talked about specific toys they intend to buy for Christmas, and this information is important due to the comparison with the second stage of the interview. The listed toys are: Ironman; idea derived from the child and the information found on the Bubamara website, a fire truck seen in the Muller catalogue, the Lego cube seen by the child in the Muller catalogue, Frozen nail set seen on television, Monster puppet seen in the Muller catalogue, a Lego air plane seen in the Muller catalogue, Violetta earbuds, a child's idea.

The Situation with generation Y mothers is similar when talking about the beginning of planning to buy a toy for Christmas. Seven mothers already began to think about buying presents, while three of them said they were not thinking about it yet. Of all the mothers, only three said they would pay more attention and invest more time in gathering information on the Internet, and in conversation with friends. This generation, as well as the previous one, state children are the main source in case of buying toys for Christmas. Thus, children of six mothers wrote letters to Santa Claus, from which the mothers then drew ideas. After that, they sought further information on the Internet, such as where to buy and what the price is. Five mothers said they would share the gathered information with their friends, and they would probably get the desired feedback from them. Television and print media would not be dominant when searching for Christmas toys, said all the mothers, nor will it play a more important role than usual.

In this case, the children will get the toys they want, said six of the mothers, while the children of the other four will get the toys the mothers considered good for their development. A child's wishes would not be considered here due to the premature age, mothers say. Also, the respondents point out that coupons can change their mind as they do not have a fixed idea of what to buy. They also say that in this case less attention will be paid to mum reviews on parenting sites, or to recommendations of celebrity mums, purely because of their children's wishes. The ideal situation for generation Y respondents, when obtaining information, implies a catalogue received personally via e-mail, with toys intended solely for their children's age. Also, the catalogue would not be just from one store, but would summarize the same toys and give a price comparison from different retailers. Furthermore,

the catalogue would describe the toys and their purpose, and would also offer the option of online shopping and home delivery. It is obvious that generation Y mothers want the sellers to recognize their individual needs, and provide them with information which they can use immediately and easily.

The toys the mothers mentioned, and which are intended for Christmas, are a pair of gloves by Frozen, a child's idea (daughter), a remote-sighted car from Muller and a car ride as a child's idea, Violetta puzzles, a microphone and a Barbie doll as a child's idea, a board game seen on the store's website. Other examinees do not have a specific toy in mind yet.

The second phase of the in-depth interview, called the "post-Christmas phase", took place in the post-Christmas period, more precisely, from January 2 2017 until January 10 2017, when the respondents already bought and given the toys. The second phase of the interview was followed by the first one, so the dominant sources of information did not change regarding everyday life and Christmas time for both generations of mothers. Children, as a neutral source, dominated with all the respondents, especially in the generation X. Given the fact that their children are older and more able to collect information and pass them on to their mothers by their age, this was expected. After getting the idea from the child, the generation X mothers were searching for further information mostly on TV and in catalogues. The aim of the search was to find out where to buy the toy. On the contrary, generation Y mothers used the Internet as a source, through which they got the information about what to buy for a certain age o, where to buy it and at what price. The toys presented on television were the ones bought by the generation X respondents. These toys are: Lego's cages, Frozen dolls and Violetta sets. The generation Y mothers' purchase of toys was driven by online sources.

5. LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

The primary limitation of the carried out research was the size of the sample. The sample included twenty respondents, mothers, who participated in-depth interview. All the respondents were from city of Zagreb, therefore, the results cannot be applied to the entire territory of the Republic of Croatia.

Furthermore, since the subject of the paper is related to the children of the respondents, and the act of buying toys for children, it is normal to assume that the mothers were subjective in terms of their responses, not intentionally wanting to present themselves in the best possible way.

6. CONCLUSION

Given the fact that the digitalized world has become more advanced, and the Internet is used more frequently, in all its forms, especially as a source of information, it is

no wonder that number of its users increased as well. Generation Y mothers grew up in that world, so they are attached to this kind of information search every day, while the generation X mothers are close followers, using the Internet more and more.

Previous research, as well as this one, has shown that there is a difference between X and Y generations in using different sources of information. The obtained results could be useful to the toy store managers in looking at the difference between the generations and creating two different approaches for each group of the mothers. Generation X have developed their own way of decision making and firmly believe in themselves due to the experience they have. They focus on the family and quality of life, they take into consideration their children's opinions more, trying to provide them with everything they want, and they themselves did not have. They prefer traditional media and sources just because they are not used to and they still do not trust the new sources. This fact has been proven by the presented research where it has been shown that television and catalogues are their most reliable sources of information and that they are highly under their children's influence. Although they subconsciously know that they should not always give in, generation X mothers provide their children with what they want. Considering the above said managers should focus their attention on children and provide them with information through the channels they prefer. This particularly applies to television, at a time when the content that children love it displayed.

For the mothers of this generation stronger advertising is advised at later times when mothers watch more TV, and they pay attention to the TV content. Also, personalized catalogues are precisely what these mothers need in order to buy exactly what is offered. These mothers like to skim through catalogues, and they often buy what they see inside. It is the same with their children, since they even mark the wanted items. The recommendation is to sum all the information needed in one place so that the source is enough for these mothers, but also to include the toys solely for the age of their children. Regarding the existing database, the store or manufacturer has information about the mother and the age of her children, and can adjust the contents of the catalogue, offering only toys which are suitable for the age of the children. In this way, it is possible to expand the choice of toys that would be interesting to this specific group of mothers and their child. This leaves more room for information about the content of toys, their composition, price, and country of origin.

A personalized approach will reduce this generation's innate scepticism and suspicion, and will contribute to easier decision making when purchasing a toy. Direct email can help here, as an Internet source which the generation X mothers know about and trust. The last recommendation is related to coupons, which did not have a special significance in this research because with them they never find what they need, said the X mothers. In accordance with their statements, that they would use

coupons only if they really needed an item marked on the coupon, it is recommended to incorporate toys which are required by the mothers at that time, given the age of their children.

A theoretical approach mentions generation Y respondents as mothers who grew up online, with a broadly developed network of friends, and reluctantly self-reliant. These mothers should be accessed through online sources, and specifically in the early stages of pregnancy. During that time, they are looking for more information and have more free time for discovering options. If they already become attached to a particular manufacturer and toy at that stage, it is likely that this adherence will be prolonged to a longer period of time. They pay special attention to the mental development of the child (in comparison to X generation mothers who pay attention to social development), so they need more information about how a particular toy serves this purpose. Using YouTube channels for this is also recommended as these mums are extremely visual types, and have very little experience and knowledge. So, toy manufacturers can make their own YouTube channel where the main characters will be exactly the toys in their assortment. This is also recommended because the children of Y generation mothers are increasingly watching cartoons on YouTube channels, rather than on TV.

Also, these videos can show the purpose of the toys, and provide detailed information for mothers. Furthermore, due to the increased exposure to ads for this generation's mothers, a recommended approach is to make attractive ads which will draw their attention. Thus, good humour or inclusion in socially responsible actions are considered as positive ways of attracting their attention. They are somewhat distrustful to themselves and have developed a wide circle of friends. This has been proven by this research where all the mothers of this generation said they exchange information with friends when making a purchase decision. In this way, word of mouth plays a major role, and information providers are affected the same way as recipients, taking into account their generational affiliation. By "following" celebrity mums on social networks, reading and believing what they say, it is advisable to give them toys to try and write about them on social networks. In that way, generation Y mothers will get information through a confidential source. No additional investment is recommended in print media sources, coupons, or television because of the drastically low popularity for these mothers. It is more logical to focus on sources which generation Y mothers perceive as credible and desirable.

There is a clear difference between these two generations when it comes to the preferred sources, so it is necessary to know, and in the right time who is the customer and what age group they belong to. In this way, any party who is interested in offering a product to a mother can focus on the individual needs of each of them, and create and distribute information at preferred time and through the sources the mothers prefer the most.

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ONLINE SOURCES

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2. <http://www.mothersmag.com/millennial-parents/>