



**STUDY OF MARKET OPPORTUNITY FOR
GENDER-NEUTRAL DESIGN PARENTING PRODUCTS
IN THAILAND**

BY

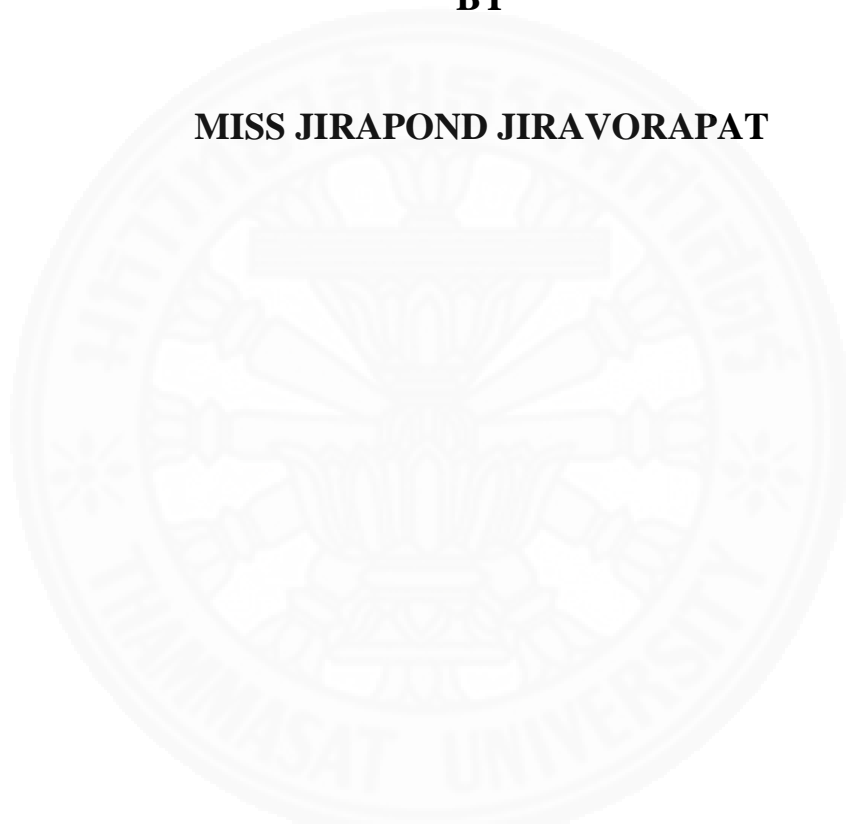
MISS JIRAPOND JIRAVORAPAT

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM IN MARKETING
(INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM)
FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND ACCOUNTANCY
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2016
COPYRIGHT OF THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY**

**STUDY OF MARKET OPPORTUNITY FOR
GENDER-NEUTRAL DESIGN PARENTING PRODUCTS
IN THAILAND**

BY

MISS JIRAPOND JIRAVORAPAT



**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM IN MARKETING
(INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM)
FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND ACCOUNTANCY
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2016
COPYRIGHT OF THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY**

THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND ACCOUNTANCY

INDEPENDENT STUDY

BY

MISS JIRAPOND JIRAVORAPAT

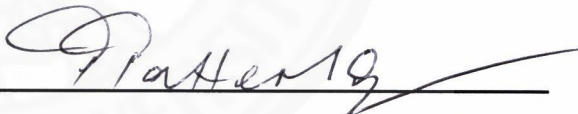
ENTITLED

STUDY OF MARKET OPPORTUNITY FOR GENDER-NEUTRAL DESIGN
PARENTING PRODUCTS IN THAILAND

was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Science Program in Marketing (International Program)


on..... 8 MAY 2017

Chairman

× 


(Professor Paul G. Patterson, Ph.D.)

Member and Advisor



(Professor K. Douglas Hoffman, Ph.D.)

Dean



(Associate Professor Pipop Udorn, Ph.D.)

Independent Study Title	STUDY OF MARKET OPPORTUNITY FOR GENDER-NEUTRAL DESIGN PARENTING PRODUCTS IN THAILAND
Author	Ms. Jirapond Jiravorapat
Degree	Master of Science Program in Marketing (International Program)
Major Field/Faculty/University	Faculty of Commerce and Accountancy Thammasat University
Independent Study Advisor	Professor K. Douglas Hoffman, Ph.D.
Academic Year	2016

ABSTRACT

The study of “market opportunity for gender-neutral design parenting products in Thailand” has been chosen as an independent study topic that focuses on a societal issue, about the changing role of parents in Thailand and how that might affect the parenting products business in Thailand. This study is a contemporary topic in applied marketing and the objectives are to identify profile of the potential customers for gender-neutral design parenting products and to identify average spending on parenting products.

Secondary research was gathered through various published sources such as websites, online journals, e-news and etc. Furthermore, qualitative analysis was attained by conducting in-depth interviews with twenty parents, to discover their perspectives towards manly, girly and gender-neutral design parenting products. Quantitative analysis was accomplished by surveying 200 respondents through online questionnaires. Finally, statistical procedures were carried out using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) and other statistical methods such as frequency, mean, ANOVA, etc., and summarize the outcomes from quantitative survey.

This research aims to bring to attention the impacts of changing role of parents in Thailand. Key findings from this study would be beneficial to companies within the parenting products industry as it provides insights into the market trend, customer

profile and product design trend. This research also aims to highlight the opportunity for gender-neutral design parenting products, thereby allowing marketers and companies in the parenting product industry to develop appropriate marketing strategies as well as introduce the right products to the market, in order to maximize future revenue and profits.

Keywords: gender-neutral, parenting, product, Thailand



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This independent study could not be completed successfully without the support from many people. First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor, Prof. Dr. K. Douglas Hoffman, for his invaluable time, kind support, thoughtful comments via emails and face-to-face discussions and guidance during the entire independent study project. Additionally, I would like to thank my family, friends and colleagues for their support.

Furthermore, I would like to express my appreciation to all the respondents from the in-depth interviews and the respondents who spent their time to finish the questionnaire.

Finally, I would like to thank the MIM faculty, professors, directors, officers, alumnis, MIMers and MIM29 for letting me be a part of the MIM family and for the most invaluable moments in my life.

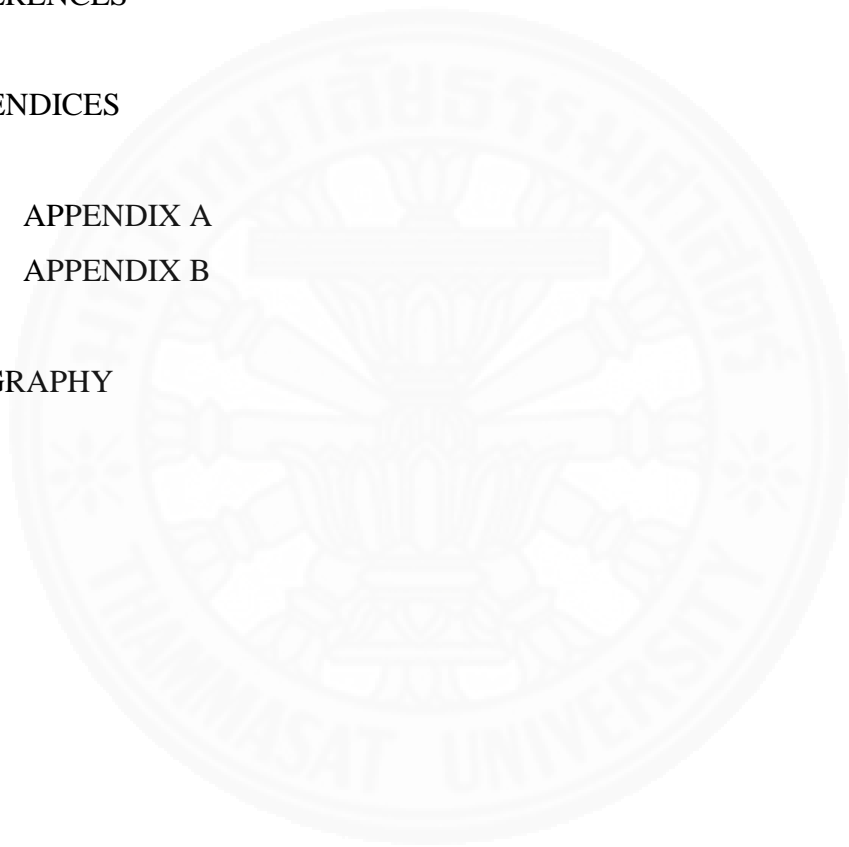
Miss Jirapond Jiravorapat

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	(1)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	(3)
LIST OF TABLES	(7)
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Research overview	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	2
1.3 Objective of the study	2
1.4 Glossary	3
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	4
2.1 Review of the industry	4
2.2 Review of literature	4
2.2.1 The changing roles of father	4
2.2.2 Increasing number of stay-at-home fathers	4
2.2.3 Trend of stay-at-home fathers in Japan	4
2.2.4 Increasing number of stay-at-home fathers in Taiwan	5
2.2.5 Men’s attitudes towards parent’s role in childcare in Thailand	5
2.2.6 Thai government supports men to have more role in childcare	5
2.2.7 Statistical record of the number of births and income per household in Thailand	6
2.2.8 Market value of parenting products in Thailand	6
2.2.9 Manly design products encourage men to do housework and childcare	6

	(5)
2.2.10 Baby trends in 2016	6
2.2.11 Lego launched a Stay-At-Home-Dad figure	7
2.2.12 Summary of literature review	7
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	8
3.1 Exploratory research	8
3.1.1 Secondary research	8
3.1.2 In-depth interviews	8
3.2 Descriptive research	8
3.2.1 Quantitative research	9
3.3 Identification of research variables	9
3.3.1 Dependent variables	9
3.3.2 Independent variable	9
3.4 Data collection plan	9
3.4.1 In-depth interview plan	9
3.4.2 Questionnaire recruitment plan	10
3.4.3 Research sample	10
3.5 Data analysis plan	10
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	11
4.1 Key findings from secondary research	11
4.2 Key findings from in-depth interview	11
4.3 Key findings from qualitative analysis	12
4.3.1 Demographic	13
4.3.2 Lifestyle	18
4.3.3 Purchasing behavior	20
4.3.4 Childcare behavior	23
4.3.5 Spending amount	25

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	26
5.1 Summary and conclusion	26
5.1.1 Study of the research objective 1	26
5.1.2 Study of the research objective 1	27
5.2 Significance of study	27
REFERENCES	29
APPENDICES	31
APPENDIX A	32
APPENDIX B	35
BIOGRAPHY	45



LIST OF TABLES

Tables	Page
1. Research respondents	10
2. Frequency counts of total respondents from questionnaire survey	13
3. Gender -vs- Preferable style	13
4. Age range -vs- Preferable style	14
5. Education level -vs- Preferable style	15
6. Living area -vs- Preferable style	15
7. Monthly income -vs- Preferable style	16
8. Gender of children -vs- Preferable style	17
9. Lifestyle -vs- Preferable style	18
10. Purchasing behavior -vs- Preferable style	21
11. Childcare behavior -vs- Preferable style	23
12. Spending amount on each product category	24
13. Top 10 countries for exported value of baby's cloth of Thailand	32
14. Top 10 countries for exported value of baby's toys of Thailand	33

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research overview

In the past, women were more likely to stay at home to do housework and care for the children, while men were more likely to be breadwinners and work for the family's financial status. People's way of living has gradually changed throughout the years, due to the changing attitudes towards gender equality. Nowadays, more women enjoy working outside the home, while more men are taking on more domestic and childcare responsibilities.

Due to the change in people's attitudes toward gender roles, many men no longer think that raising a child is a responsibility of only mothers. An increasing number of men also think it is nice for them to help take care of the children and help with domestic tasks. Additionally, more evidence shows that fathers have an important role on the overall physical and mental development of their children. A research center in the United States of America found that the number of fathers who stay at home to raise children has doubled since 1989. This trend has also been seen in recent years in many countries in Asia, i.e. Japan, Taiwan and Thailand.

The government in some countries has noticed this change and taken actions to fully support men in their parenting roles.

In Japan, one governor took a paternity leave, which deviated from the cultural norm that men should work and women should only stay at home to raise children and do domestic tasks.

In Taiwan, the government supports male employees to register for paternity leave. Under the regulations, a paternity leave can be taken for up to 2 years and pays up to 60% of the employee's current wage for a maximum of 6 months.

In Thailand, the government also supports men to have an active role in parenting, by allowing male employees to take up to 15 days of paternity leave within 30 days of the child's birth, in order to take care the wife and the newborn.

Some companies in the private sector have also noticed this change. A leading toys company, Lego, has elected to follow this trend by launching a new toy collection that features stay-at-home dads, so that children can better understand their parents' responsibilities. Lego wants to promote the gender acceptance and illustrate that not only mothers can be the caregivers, but fathers too.

A home-appliances company, Dyson, noticed that men are increasingly involved in domestic tasks and childcare. Therefore, Dyson designed and launched products for both male and female, called "transparent design", for women who are the buyers and for men who are the users. This "transparent design" makes women feel happy because it encourages men to do the housework.

This study is related to a societal issue about the changing role of parents in Thailand that could affect the parenting product business. This study is important to Thai companies in the parenting product industry, as it encourages these companies to consider more about gender-neutral design parenting products for both fathers and mothers, and could provide an opportunity for product penetration.

1.2 Statement of the problem

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. Who are the potential customers for gender-neutral design parenting products?
2. What is the amount of money that is spent on parenting products?

1.3 Objective of the study

This study focuses on Thai people who are potential customers of gender-neutral design parenting products. The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify the profile of the potential customers for gender-neutral design parenting products.
2. To identify the average spending amount on parenting products.

1.4 Glossary

- Parenting products: For the purpose of this study, parenting products refer to nursery products that support parents for childcare. They will be categorized into 3 categories, which are:
 1. Baby carriers i.e. strollers, baby wrap carriers, baby car seats and etc.
 2. Diaper changing supplies i.e. diaper bags, baby changing pads and etc.
 3. Other childcare equipment i.e. baby nail & hair clippers, baby ears & nose cleaners and etc.
- Design: The physical appearance of a product i.e. color, pattern of the fabric and etc.
- Gender-neutral design: The design that is not specifically targeted to either male or female. Both genders will feel comfortable using it.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Review of the industry

Parenting products business in Thailand is a very interesting market. Its value has been increasing annually and was valued at 1,000 million US dollars in 2016. Additionally, Thailand's parenting products are exported to many countries around the world. In 2015, Thailand's total export value of baby clothes increased to 170 million US dollars and the total export value of toys also increased to 210 million US dollars.

2.2 Review of literature

2.2.1 The changing roles of father

The U.S. Census calculated that as many as 20 percent of children under the age of 5 are primarily cared for by their fathers. When both parents need to work, both the mother and the father have to balance their responsibilities in whichever way they can to support the children's needs and to promote the children's overall development (Wood, 2012).

2.2.2 Increasing number of stay-at-home fathers

Based on the research conducted by Pew Research Center in the United States, the number of fathers who stay at home and take care of the kids has doubled in the two decades since 1989 (Livingston, 2014).

2.2.3 Trend of stay-at-home fathers in Japan

Mr. Hidehiko Yuzaki, the governor of Hiroshima Prefecture, decided to take paternity leave to look after his third child and help his wife with the housework. His decision deviates from the traditional culture and attitudes of Japanese that women should stay at home to raise children and perform

domestic tasks because they are not supported for top ranking positions in their careers. In the present time, more women are being supported for top ranking roles in many companies in Japan and more women are enjoying working outside the home. Mr. Sakie Fukushima, a former chairman and representative director of Korn Ferry in Japan, believes that younger generations would follow this changing culture and more companies in Japan would allow their male employees to take paternity leave (KOH, 2010).

2.2.4 Increasing number of stay-at-home fathers in Taiwan

In Taiwan, there is a statistical record that the number of stay-at-home fathers have doubled in 2015, compared to 2010. The reason for this is because The Ministry of Labor in Taiwan has been supporting male employees to register for paternity leave. Under the regulations, a paternity leave can be taken for up to 2 years and pays up to 60% of the employee's current wage for a maximum of 6 months (“Radio Taiwan international | news | กระแสผู้ชายเลี้ยงลูก ผู้หญิงทำงานนอกบ้านในไต้หวันกำลังฮิต,” 2016).

2.2.5 Men's attitudes towards parent's role in childcare in Thailand

In 2010, the Friends of Women Foundation in Thailand and Thai Health Promotion Foundation organized a gender equality campaign. In order to gain a better understanding of men's attitudes, a survey was conducted on 1,139 men. It was found that 89.40 percent of those surveyed either agree or strongly agree that men should be more involved in raising the children and not leave this role to only women (Mootie, 2010).

2.2.6 Thai government supports men to have more role in childcare

The Thai government has taken actions to support fathers to have an active role in parenting. The Thai government announced a policy allowing male employees to take up to 15 days of paternity within 30 days of the child's birth, in order to take care of the wife and the newborn (msna-admin, 2012).

2.2.7 Statistical record of the number of births and income per household in Thailand

Based on the statistical record of the quality of life in childcare, the birthrate in Thailand has been decreasing since 2012 (NSO, 2016), while the average income per household has more than doubled since 2000 (NSO, 2016). Therefore, it can be assumed that a family's quality of life, including the quality of childcare would be higher because the increased level of income per household.

2.2.8 Market value of parenting products in Thailand

The value of parenting product market is increasing every year. The market grew to around 1,000 million US dollars in 2016 (b-search-admin, 2016).

2.2.9 Manly design products encourage men to do housework and childcare

A home-appliances company, Dyson, noticed the changing gender roles in families. Therefore, Dyson designed and launched products under the theme of “transparent design” for both sexes. According to Kennedy, parenting products can make fathers feel less “manly” because some, such as diaper bags, were designed for mothers. However, some parenting product companies have noticed this issue and came up “gender-neutral” products for fathers, so that they feel more comfortable in using these products and performing their parental duties (Kennedy, 2016).

2.2.10 Baby trends in 2016

2015 was a big year for gender neutrality in baby's fashion and the trend of “Gender-Neutral Designs” continued into 2016. The design of baby and nursery products was not specific to only colors pink and blue; black and white are becoming popular under this trend (Della Bitta, 2016).

2.2.11 Lego launched a Stay-At-Home-Dad figure

Due to the increasing number of fathers that are taking on the domestic role, the leading toys company, Lego, has recently launched a new toy collection that features stay-at-home dads, so that children can understand their parent's responsibilities. Lego wants to promote the gender acceptance and illustrates that not only mothers can be the caregiver, but fathers too (Romain, 2016).

2.2.12 Summary of literature review

Following are the summary of the literature review (1) there is a changing gender role of parenthood, specifically the increasingly active role of fathers in raising children in countries around the world, including Thailand. (2) Many companies that are in the business related to household or parenting products have noticed this change and have taken this into consideration when designing and launching new products (3) As of date, no research or articles have been published on gender-neutral design parenting products in Thailand. The proposed study aims to provide contribution to parenting product companies, by encouraging them to consider whether these changing gender roles in Thailand would have an impact on customers' purchasing decisions for parenting products and whether there is a market opportunity for gender-neutral design parenting products in Thailand.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted using exploratory research and descriptive research. The exploratory research was conducted by employing secondary research, followed by secondary research and in-depth interviews. The data from the qualitative research were then collected and used to design and conduct quantitative research to gather further information.

3.1 Exploratory research

This study employed two qualitative research methods including secondary research and in-depth interviews. Information obtained was then used as a guideline for the descriptive research.

3.1.1 Secondary research

The data on the changing roles of parenthood, importance of father's role in childcare and popular parenting products was obtained from the Internet, through websites and online articles.

3.1.2 In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted in order to explore consumer's perception towards gender-neutral design, compared to gender-specific designs (i.e., manly and girly designs). This data was then used as a guideline to draft and design the questionnaire.

3.2 Descriptive research

Descriptive research was conducted to gain profile of the customers and the amount of money they spent on different parenting products. The questionnaire survey will be used to obtain this information.

3.2.1 Quantitative research

Questionnaire surveys were distributed online to 200 respondents, both male and female who have children aged below 3 years old. There are some screening questions that were placed at the beginning of the questionnaire, in order to make sure that only target respondents are included.

3.3 Identification of research variables

3.3.1 Dependent variables

Dependent variables in this study are i) the amount of money spent on parenting products and ii) purchasing intention towards gender-neutral design parenting products.

3.3.2 Independent variables

Independent variables in this study are i) the respondent's gender, age, educational background, living area, monthly income, number of children, gender of children and etc.

3.4 Data collection plan

3.4.1 In-depth interview plan

In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 fathers and 10 mothers who live in Bangkok and suburban area and have children aged below 3 years old. The respondents consisted of people aged 28 – 38 years old. These respondents have different occupations and different lifestyles. The objective of in-depth interviews was to explore consumer's perception towards gender-neutral design, compared to gender-specific designs (i.e., manly and girly designs). The findings from the in-depth interviews will be used as a guideline to design the questionnaire.

3.4.2 Questionnaire recruitment plan

Questionnaires were distributed through online channels (i.e., via social media and webpages) to a total of 200 respondents.

3.4.3 Research sample

The sample was selected using convenience sampling method (non-probability sampling). The target respondents of the surveys can be characterized as follow:

- Male or Female
- Have children aged below 3 years old
- Residents of Thailand

Table 1: Research respondents

Type of research	Methodology	Pre-test	Sample size
Qualitative	In-depth interview	5 people	20 people
Quantitative	Questionnaire survey	30 people	200 people

3.5 Data analysis plan

Quantitative information obtained from the questionnaire surveys was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) and other statistical methods, such as frequency, mean, ANOVA and etc.

CHAPTER 4

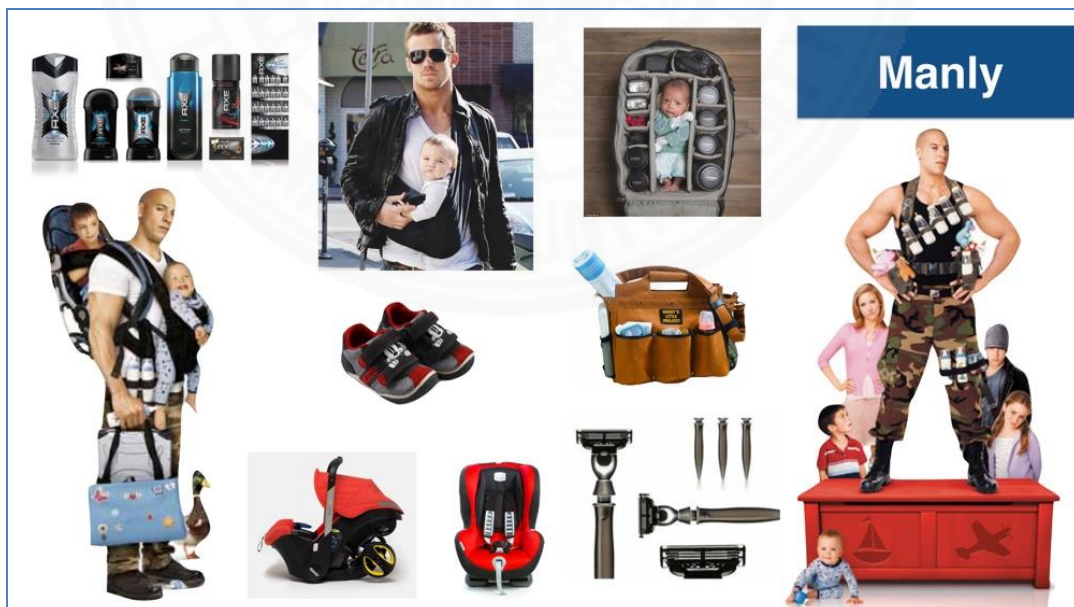
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

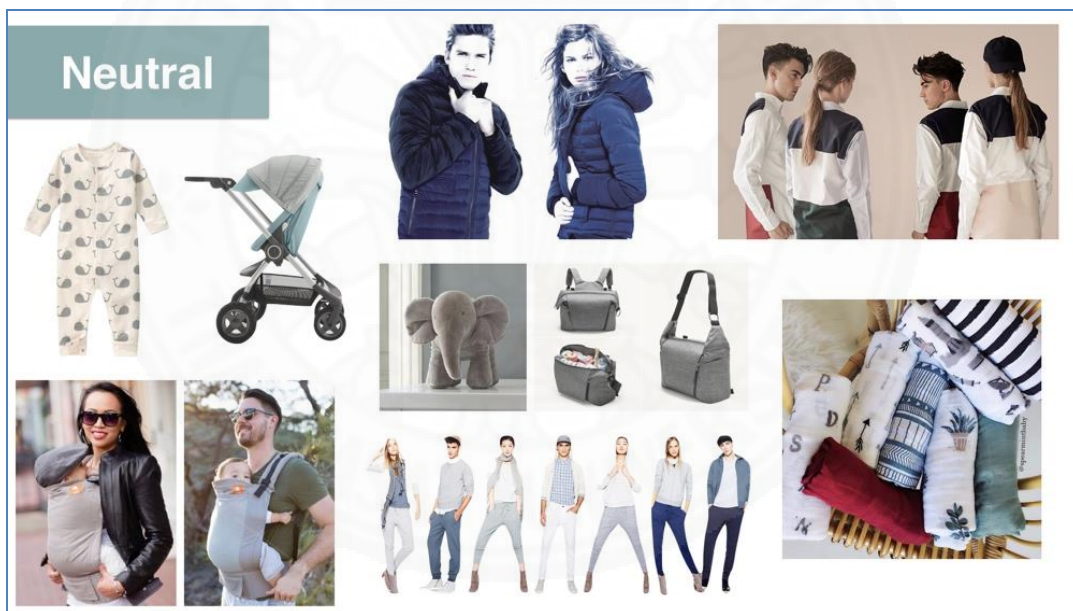
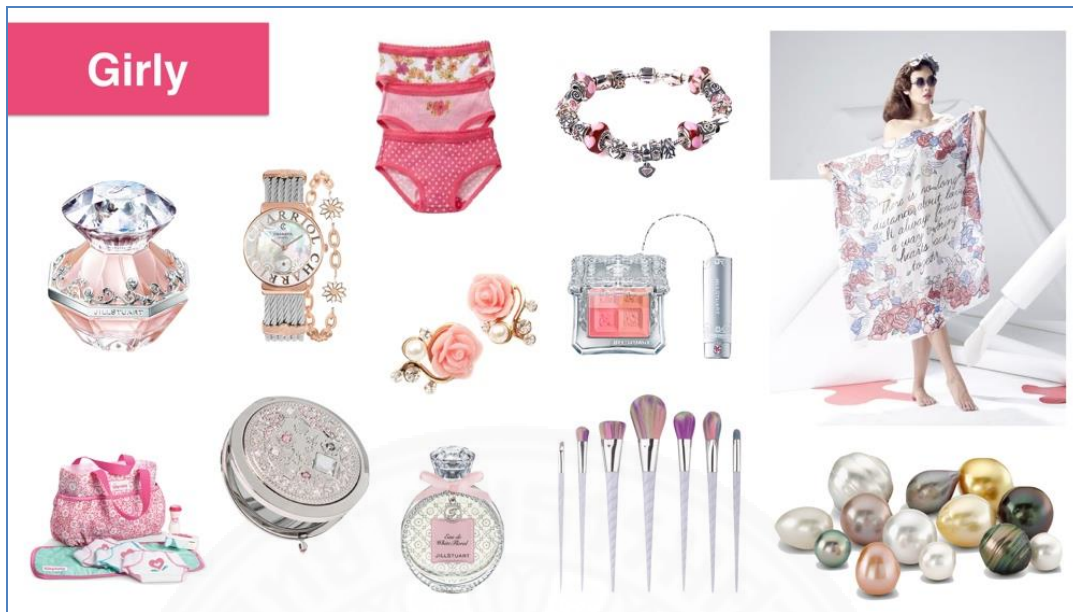
4.1 Key findings from secondary research

The findings from the secondary research indicate that there is a changing role of parents in many countries around the world, including Thailand. Both the public and private sectors have noticed this change. Government agencies have introduced policies to support men to have an active role in parenting, while the stakeholders in the private sector are changing their product designs so that they are suitable to men

4.2 Key findings from in-depth interview

In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the perspective of parents on manly designs, girly designs and gender-neutral designs. The resulting mood boards are depicted below:





4.3 Key findings from quantitative analysis

The sample size for the questionnaire is 200 respondents. This research focuses only on parents who have children aged below 3 years old. The findings were generated and presented by applying custom table analysis. The testing standard was set at 95% confidence level. The key findings are summarized below:

4.3.1 Demographic

The following information was gathered from the respondent information section of the questionnaire. This information was used to identify the background and profile of the potential customers for gender-neutral design products.

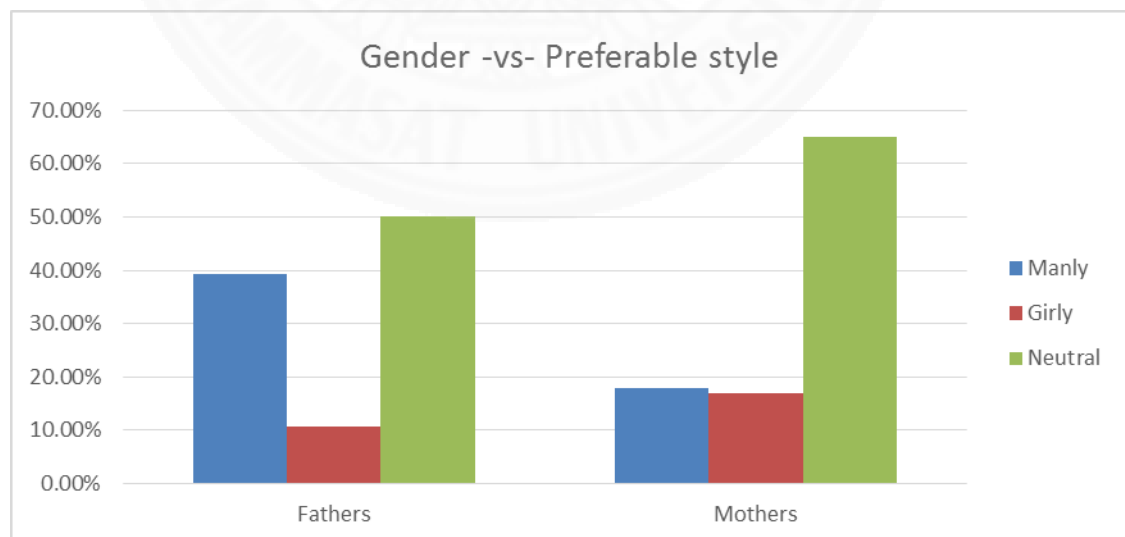
Table 2: Frequency counts of total respondents from questionnaire survey

Gender	Count	Percentage
Fathers	28	14%
Mothers	172	86%
Total	200	100%

From a total of 200 respondents, 28 are fathers and 172 are mothers, accounting for 14% and 86% of all respondents, respectively.

Table 3: Gender -vs- Preferable style

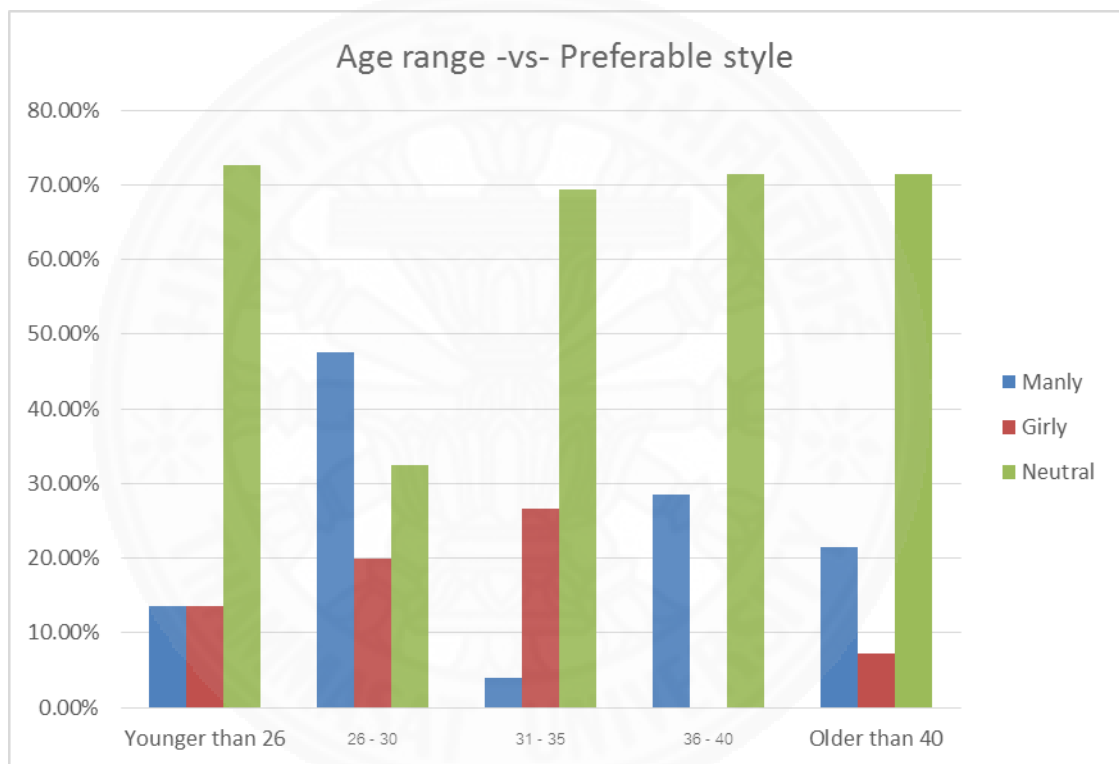
Gender	Manly	Girly	Neutral	Total
Fathers	39.29%	10.71%	50.00%	100%
Mothers	18.02%	16.86%	65.12%	100%



It was found that both fathers and mothers prefer products with gender-neutral designs rather than manly and girly designs.

Table 4: Age range -vs- Preferable style

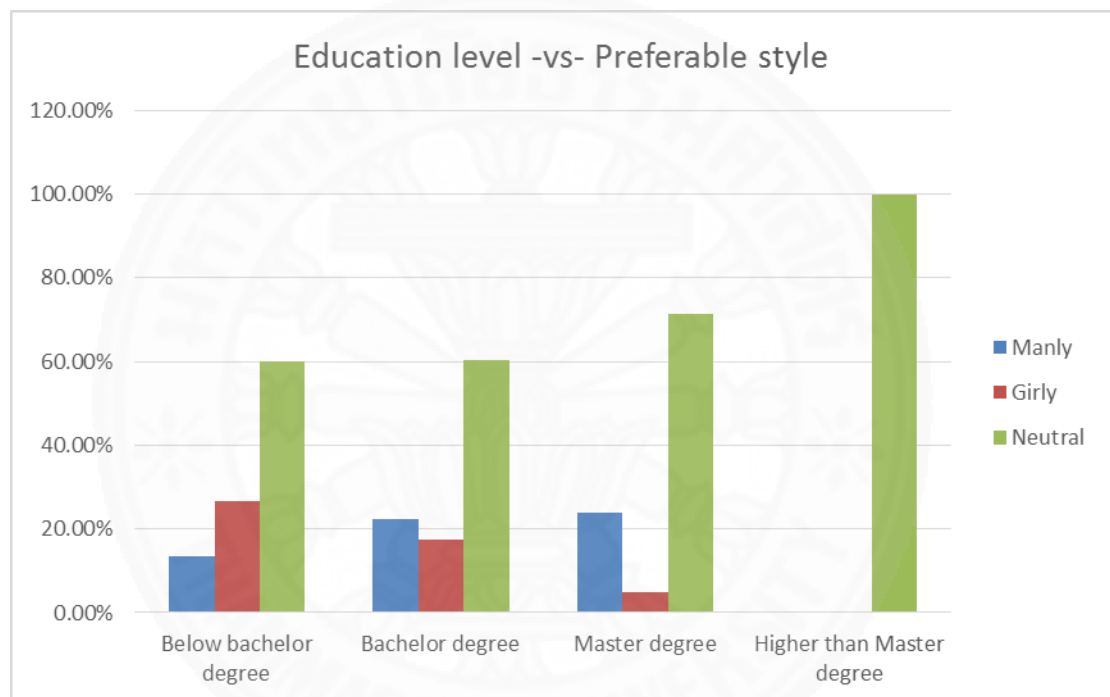
Age range	Manly	Girly	Neutral	Total
Younger than 26	13.64%	13.64%	72.73%	100%
26 – 30	47.50%	20.00%	32.50%	100%
31 – 35	4.00%	26.67%	69.33%	100%
36 – 40	28.57%	0.00%	71.43%	100%
Older than 40	21.43%	7.14%	71.43%	100%



It was found that apart from the 26 – 30 age group that prefers manly designs to girly and gender-neutral designs, all other age groups exceedingly prefer products with gender-neutral designs.

Table 5: Education level -vs- Preferable style

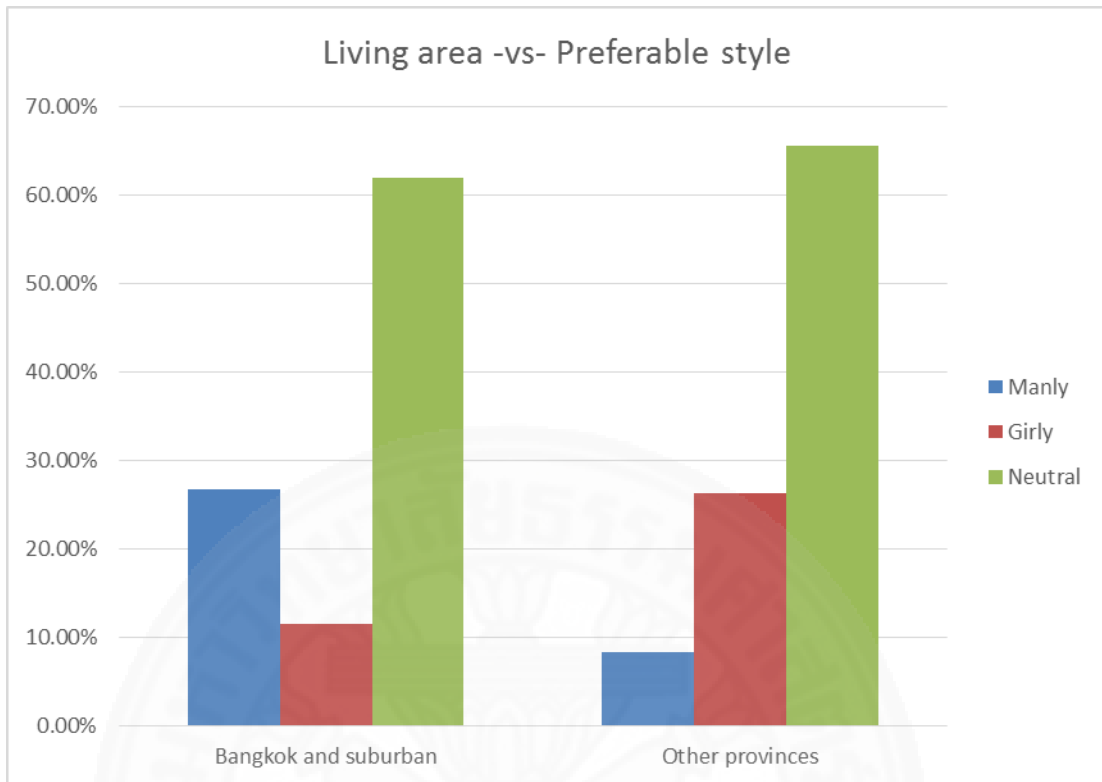
Educational level	Manly	Girly	Neutral	Total
Below bachelor degree	13.33%	26.67%	60.00%	100%
Bachelor degree	22.44%	17.31%	60.26%	100%
Master degree	23.81%	4.76%	71.43%	100%
Higher than Master degree	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	100%



Regardless of their level of education, it was found that respondents prefer products with gender-neutral designs to manly and girly designs. Additionally, the higher education, the higher preference in gender-neutral designs.

Table 6: Living area -vs- Preferable style

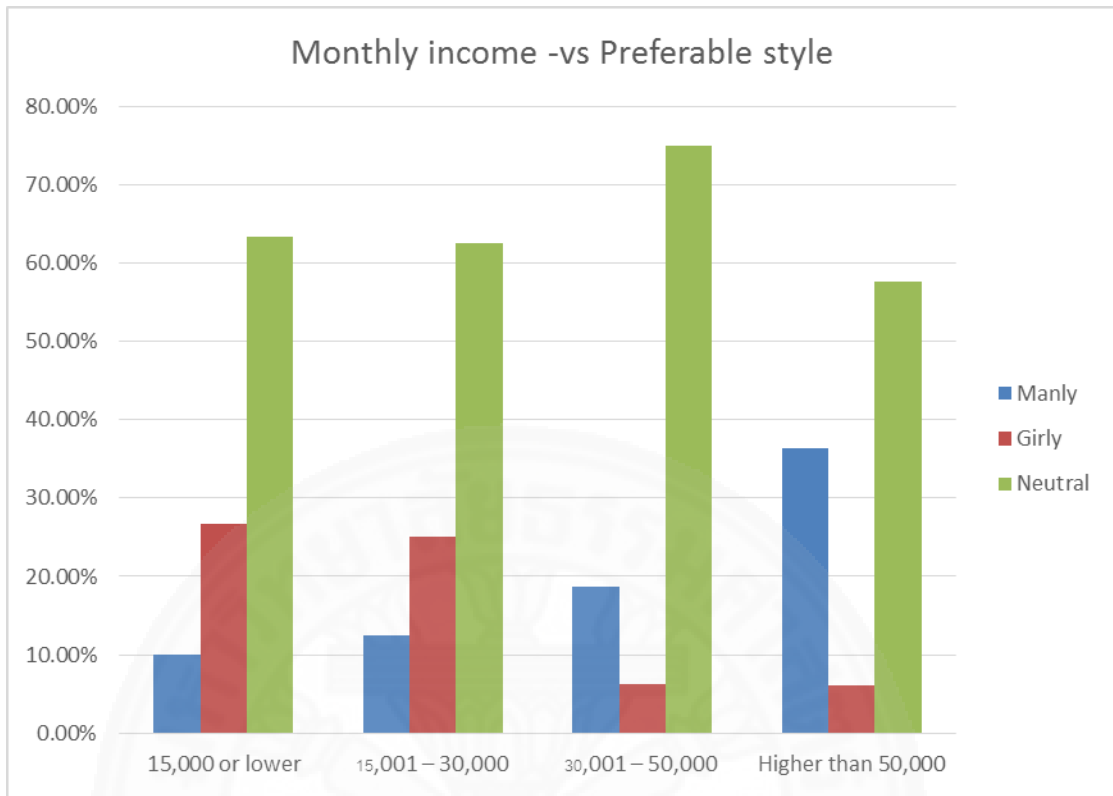
Living area	Manly	Girly	Neutral	Total
Bangkok and suburban	26.62%	11.51%	61.87%	100%
Other provinces	8.20%	26.23%	65.57%	100%



The preference on product designs differs between those who live in the Bangkok and suburban area versus those who live in other provinces. It was found that those who live in Bangkok and suburban area prefer products with manly designs to girly designs, while those who live in other provinces prefer products with girly designs to manly designs. Nevertheless, products with gender-neutral designs are the most preferred, regardless of where the respondents live.

Table 7: Monthly income -vs- Preferable style

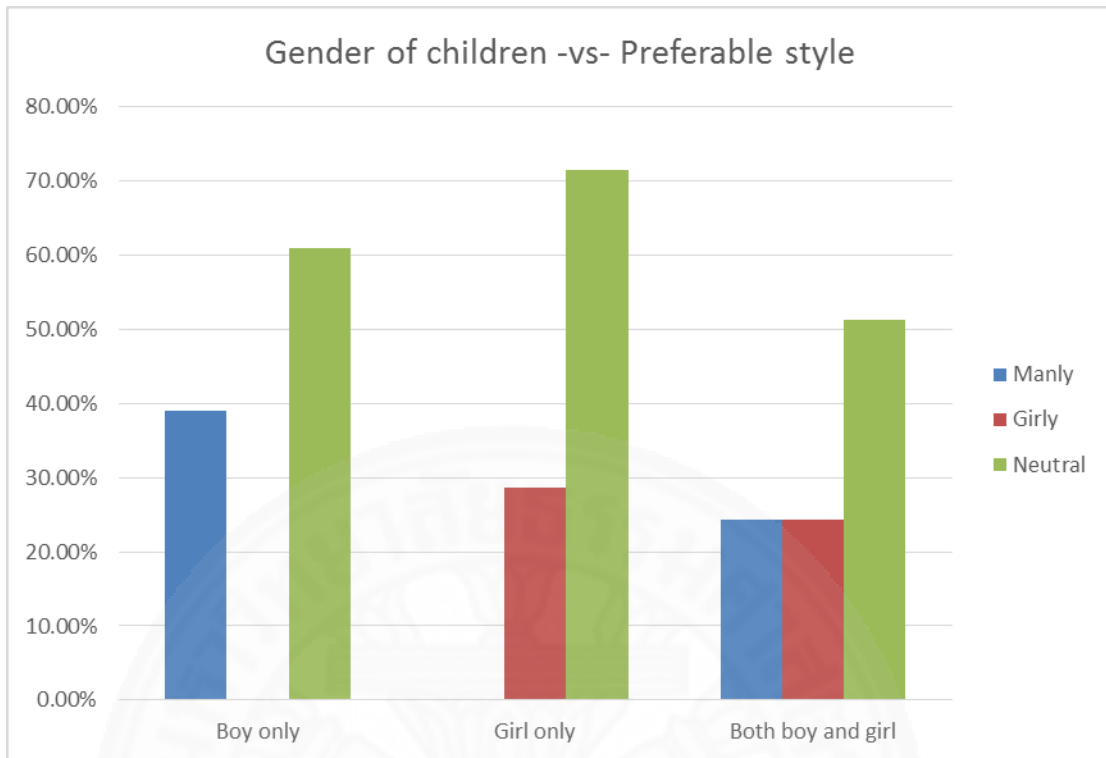
Monthly income	Manly	Girly	Neutral	Total
15,000 THB or lower	10.00%	26.67%	63.33%	100%
15,001 THB – 30,000 THB	12.50%	25.00%	62.50%	100%
30,001 THB – 50,000 THB	18.75%	6.25%	75.00%	100%
Higher than 50,000 THB	36.36%	6.06%	57.58%	100%



It was found that for those with a monthly income of less than 30,001 THB, products with girly designs are more preferable. However, for those with a monthly income of more than 30,000 THB, manly designs are more preferable. Nevertheless, products with gender-neutral designs are the most preferred, regardless of the monthly income of the respondents.

Table 8: Gender of children -vs- Preferable style

Gender of children	Manly	Girly	Neutral	Total
Boy only	39.02%	0.00%	60.98%	100%
Girl only	0.00%	28.57%	71.43%	100%
Both boy and girl	24.39%	24.39%	51.22%	100%



Respondents with only son(s) would clearly prefer products with manly designs to products with girly designs, while respondents with only daughter(s) would clearly prefer products with girly designs to products with manly designs. Nevertheless, products with gender-neutral designs are the most preferred, regardless of whether the respondents have only son(s), only daughter(s) or both son(s) and daughter(s).

4.3.2 Lifestyle

The following information was gathered from responses under the Lifestyle section of questionnaire. The respondents were asked to provide responses to the following 16 statements about their lifestyles, using the Likert Scale.

Table 9: Lifestyle -vs- Preferable style

Statements	Mean			F Statistic	P- Value
	Manly	Girly	Neutral		
You travel many times a year.	4.6	3.87	3.77	13.059	0.000
An interesting book or video game is often better than a social event.	3.57	3.69	3.37	1.476	0.231

Table 9: Lifestyle -vs- Preferable style (continue)

Statements	Mean			F Statistic	P- Value
	Manly	Girly	Neutral		
You prefer to eat at home, rather than eating out at a restaurant.	3.81	3.37	3.37	3.850	0.023
You always plan ahead on what to wear before a date or an event.	3.19	3.75	3.81	9.338	0.000
You prefer to have a to-do-list, rather than keeping the plan flexible.	3.81	3.81	3.79	0.012	0.988
You are not easily convinced.	3.79	3.5	3.41	3.093	0.048
You are a relatively reserved and quiet person.	3.1	3.41	2.94	2.885	0.058
Keeping your options open is more important than having a to-do list.	4	4.38	3.77	9.797	0.000
You enjoy a specific theme-party.	3.52	3.09	3.6	3.066	0.049
You do not wear the same clothes in one week.	2.6	3.28	3.17	4.184	0.017
You have different shoes for different occasions.	3.24	2.94	3.34	2.313	0.102
You like to be the center of attention.	2.64	3.09	2.92	2.042	0.133
You like many cartoon characters.	3.93	3.66	3.66	1.548	0.215
You prefer black and white products, rather than colorful products.	3.81	2.97	3.04	12.166	0.000
You do not like complicated patterns of fabric.	3.81	3.78	3.56	1.507	0.224
Your mood can change very quickly.	3.12	3.84	3.29	5.121	0.007

Referring to Table 9, when comparing those who prefer products with manly designs, girly designs and gender-neutral designs, the findings are as follows:

- Those who prefer manly designs travel the most, while those who prefer gender-neutral designs travel the least.

- Those who prefer manly designs prefer to eat at home, rather than eating out at restaurants.
- Those who prefer gender-neutral designs plan ahead on what to wear before an event, while those who prefer manly designs are more flexible.
- Those who prefer manly designs are independent and confident, while those who prefer girly and gender-neutral designs are more easily convinced.
- Those who prefer manly designs are more flexible than those who prefer girly and gender-neutral designs.
- Those who prefer girly designs enjoy a theme-party more than those who prefer manly and gender-neutral designs.
- Those who prefer girly and gender-neutral designs are more careful not to wear the same clothes in one week, while those who prefer manly designs are less concerned on whether they wear the same clothes repeatedly in a given week.
- Those who prefer manly designs prefer products with black and white colors, while those who prefer girly and gender-neutral designs prefer products with colors other than only black and white.
- Those who prefer girly designs are more emotional than those who prefer manly and gender-neutral designs.

4.3.3 Purchasing behavior

The following information was gathered from the responses under the Purchasing behavior section of the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to provide responses to the following 16 statements about their purchasing behavior, using the Likert Scale.

Table 10: Purchasing behavior -vs- Preferable style

Statements	Mean			F Statistic	P- Value
	Manly	Girly	Neutral		
You prefer to buy products through online channels i.e. Facebook, Instagram or websites.	4.17	4.13	4.02	0.742	0.478
You prefer a product that serves a variety of purposes.	4.6	4.62	4.37	4.342	0.014
You always consider the design of the product before purchasing.	4.12	4.44	4.12	3.653	0.028
You always spend time considering the design of the product, rather than its functionality before purchasing.	3.79	3.5	3.38	2.097	0.126
When purchasing a product, you often check the price before asking for the product details.	4	4.34	4	2.421	0.091
You prefer to shop at a physical store or a department store, rather than a virtual store (i.e., online-shopping).	3.64	3.78	3.17	8.535	0.000
You are price sensitive.	3.71	4.19	4.13	5.285	0.006
You are willing to pay more for a limited edition of a product.	3.98	2.87	3.21	11.077	0.000
You mostly choose a product that is versatile (i.e., its design and colors are suitable for many occasions).	4.36	4.41	4.25	1.104	0.333
You shop every week.	3.24	3.91	3.21	6.316	0.002
You spend more than 1,000 THB on each transaction.	3.45	3.63	3.1	4.275	0.015
Seeing a physical product before purchasing is important to you.	3.88	4	3.74	1.433	0.241

Table 10: Purchasing behavior -vs- Preferable style (continue)

Statements	Mean			F Statistic	P- Value
	Manly	Girly	Neutral		
You will purchase product with gender-neutral designs (i.e., both the father and the mother would feel comfortable using it).	3.9	3.87	3.9	0.019	0.981
You will purchase products that match your style.	3.81	3.94	4.07	1.723	0.181
The father is a partial decision maker when purchasing parenting products.	2.83	3.72	3.7	12.059	0.000
The mother is the main decision maker when purchasing parenting products.	4.21	4.38	4.08	1.863	0.158

Referring to Table 10, when comparing those who prefer products with manly designs, girly designs and gender-neutral designs, the findings are as follows:

- Those who prefer manly and girly designs are more likely to prefer a product that serves a variety of purposes, compared to those who prefer gender-neutral designs.
- Those who prefer girly designs are most likely to consider the design of the product before purchasing.
- Those who prefer gender-neutral designs prefer online shopping, while those who prefer manly and girly designs prefer to shop at a physical store.
- Those who prefer manly designs are the least price-sensitive.
- Those who prefer manly designs are most willing to pay a higher price for a limited edition of a product, while those who prefer gender-neutral designs are least willing to pay a higher price for a limited edition of a product.
- Those who prefer girly designs shop the most often.

- Those who prefer girly designs are most likely to spend more than 1,000 THB per transaction.
- Those who prefer girly and gender-neutral designs let fathers become a co-decision maker when purchasing parenting products.

4.3.4 Childcare behavior

The following information was gathered from the responses under the Childcare behavior section of the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to provide responses to the following 8 statements about childcare, using the Likert Scale.

Table 11: Childcare behavior -vs- Preferable style

Statements	Mean			F Statistic	P- Value
	Manly	Girly	Neutral		
Parents should look after their children by themselves.	4.57	4.87	4.48	6.141	0.003
Others (i.e., other members of the family or a babysitter) can help to raise your children.	4.17	3.91	4.24	3.097	0.047
You prefer to bring your children outside.	4.33	4.25	4.24	0.303	0.739
You pick out your children's clothes based on your preference.	4.33	4.41	4.3	0.319	0.728
You prefer your children to be the center of attention.	2.76	4	3.31	15.897	0.000
You buy parenting product that matches your children's gender (i.e., pink for girl, blue for boy).	4.24	4.62	3.34	29.17	0.000
When the family goes out, the father will be the one carrying the children's belongings.	4.38	3.84	3.33	16.067	0.000

Table 11: Childcare behavior -vs- Preferable style (continue)

Statements	Mean			F Statistic	P- Value
	Manly	Girly	Neutral		
If you have both son(s) and daughter(s), you will purchase products with gender-neutral designs so that both your son(s) and daughter(s) can use them.	4.4	3.69	4.13	4.891	0.008

Referring to Table 11, when comparing those who prefer manly, girly and gender-neutral design, the findings are as follows:

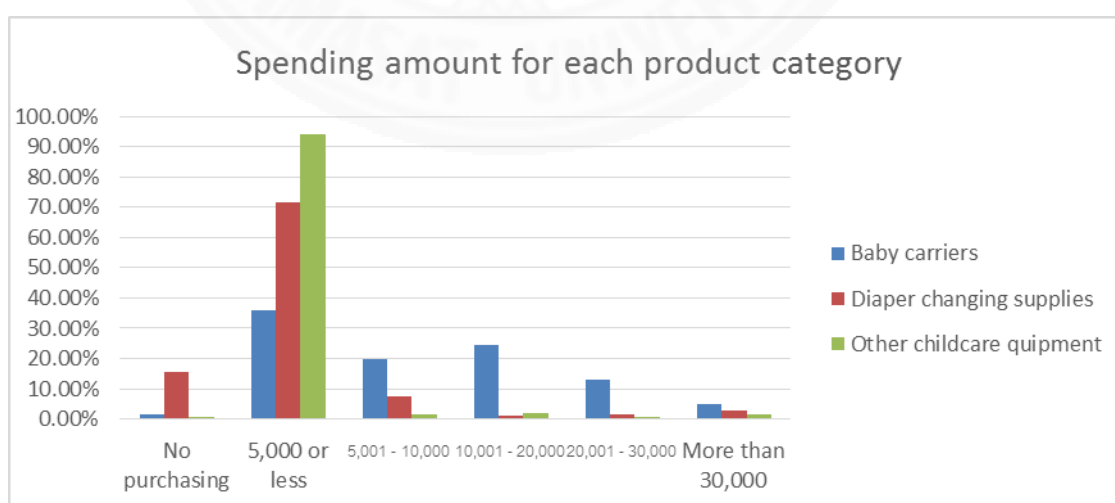
- Those who prefer girly designs are mostly likely to agree that parents should raise their children by themselves.
- Those who prefer girly designs are least likely to agree that other members of the family or a babysitter should help to raise the children.
- Those who prefer girly designs are most likely to prefer their children to be the center of attention, while those who prefer gender-neutral designs are least likely to prefer their children to be the center of attention.
- Those who prefer girly and manly designs are more likely to buy parenting products that match their children's gender, while those who prefer gender-neutral designs are less likely to buy parenting products that match their children's gender.
- Those who prefer manly designs mostly agree that fathers are the one who carry the children's belongings when the family goes out, while those who prefer gender-neutral designs mostly disagree.
- Those who prefer manly and gender-neutral designs are more likely to buy a product that both the son(s) and daughter(s) can use together.

4.3.5 Spending amount

The following information was gathered from the responses under the Spending Amount section of the questionnaire, in order to identify the average spending on each category of parenting products.

Table 12: Spending amount on each product category

Spending level (THB)	Baby carriers		Diaper changing supplies		Others childcare equipment	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
No purchasing	3	1.5%	31	15.5%	1	0.5%
5,000 or less	72	36.0%	143	71.5%	188	94.0%
5,001 – 10,000	40	20.0%	15	7.5%	3	1.5%
10,001 – 20,000	49	24.5%	2	1.0%	4	2.0%
20,001 – 30,000	26	13.0%	3	1.5%	1	0.5%
More than 30,000	10	5.0%	6	3.0%	3	1.5%
Total	200	100%	200	100%	200	100%



From the above table and chart, respondents spend around 5,000 THB or less on all product categories.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary and conclusion

Many organizations, both in the public and private sectors, have noticed about the changing role of parents. Public organizations have introduced policies to provide paternity leave to male employees so that they have an active role in parenting and can take care of their family and the newborn. In the private sector, many companies have changed their product designs so that they are more gender-neutral and are suitable to men, thereby encouraging men to help with domestic tasks. The baby and parenting product industry is directly affected by this change.

Parenting products business in Thailand is a very interesting market. Its value has been increasing annually and was valued at 1,000 million US dollars in 2016. Therefore, it is important that companies are aware of the market opportunity for gender-neutral design parenting product in Thailand.

The research focuses only on Thai parents who have children aged below 3 years old. The findings are summarized below for each of the research objectives:

5.1.1 Study of the research objective 1: To identify the profile of the potential customers for gender-neutral design parenting products.

Gender-neutral design products are preferred by both fathers and mothers, who are younger than 26 years old and older than 30 years old, regardless of their education level, where they live and the amount of their monthly income. Furthermore, the gender of their children does not affect their preference because gender-neutral design products are preferred, regardless of whether the respondents have only son(s), only daughter(s) or both son(s) and daughter(s).

In terms of lifestyle, those who prefer gender-neutral design products prefer to eat at home to eating out at restaurants and are more likely to plan ahead on what to wear before an event. Also, they are independent and strictly follow their plans in everyday life. They are not emotional and prefer colorful products.

In terms of purchasing behavior, those who prefer gender-neutral design products are less concerned with the design of the products and whether a product serves a variety of purposes. They can also shop at a physical store, department store or online. They are quite price-sensitive and are not willing to pay a higher price for a limited edition of a product. . They do not go shopping every week and do not normally spend more than 1,000 THB per transaction. Also, they allow fathers become a co-decision maker when purchasing parenting products.

In terms of childcare behavior, those who prefer gender-neutral design products view that it is fine for other family members or a babysitter to help them to raise the children. They are also fine with their children being the center of attention. In addition, they are less likely to buy parenting products that match their children's gender and are more likely to choose gender-neutral design products for their children to use together, especially if they have both son(s) and daughter(s). Lastly, those who prefer gender-neutral design products responded that when the family goes out, fathers are not always the ones who carry the children's belongings. Therefore, they are potential customers for gender-neutral design parenting products.

5.1.2 Study of the research objective 2: To identify the average spending amount on parenting products.

For the purpose of this study, parenting products are categorized in 3 categories, including 1) baby carriers i.e. strollers, baby wrap carriers, baby car seats and etc. 2) diaper changing supplies i.e. diaper bags, baby changing pads and etc. 3) other childcare equipment i.e. baby nail & hair clippers, baby ears & nose cleaners and etc. Based on the study, it was found that respondents spend around 5,000 THB or less on all product categories.

5.2 Significance of study

The study was conducted to help marketers and companies in the parenting product industry in Thailand to be aware of any market opportunity for gender-neutral design parenting products and to better understand the profile of the potential

customer who are looking for gender-neutral design parenting products. Additionally, the research also identifies the average spending amount on different parenting product categories. This would help marketers and companies in the parenting product industry to develop appropriate marketing strategies as well as introduce the right products to the market, in order to maximize future revenue and profits.



REFERENCES

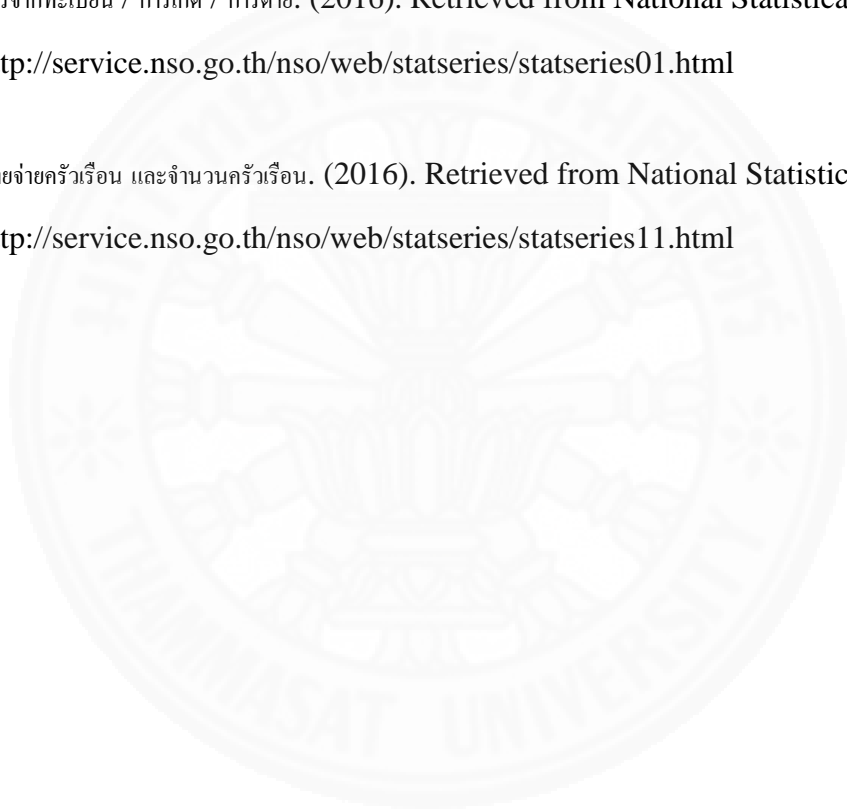
- Kennedy, B. (2016). How to design “manly” household products for the involved dad « femme den. Retrieved from <http://www.femmeden.com/article-how-to-design-manly-household-products-for-the-involved-dad/>
- Koh, Y. (2010, October 19). Japan’s Next Big Thing: Stay-at-Home Dads? Retrieved from <http://blogs.wsj.com/japanrealtime/2010/10/19/japan%E2%80%99s-next-big-thing-stay-at-home-dads/>
- Livingston, G. (2014, June 5). Growing number of Dads home with the kids. Retrieved from Pew Research Center, <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2014/06/05/growing-number-of-dads-home-with-the-kids/>
- mootie. (2010, November 10). เมื่อสังคมมนุษย์เปลี่ยนโฉมหน้า. Retrieved from Thai Health Promotion Foundation, <http://www.thaihealth.or.th/Content/22680-เมื่อสังคมมนุษย์เปลี่ยนโฉมหน้า%20.html>
- msna-admin. (2012, March 29). Paternity leave in Thailand. Retrieved from MSNA GROUP, <http://msnagroup.com/paternity-leave-in-thailand/>
- Radio Taiwan international | news | กระแสผู้ชายเลี้ยงลูก ผู้หญิงทำงานนอกบ้านในได้วันกำลังฮิต. (2016, October 10). Retrieved from Radio Taiwan International, <http://thai.rti.org.tw/news/?recordId=55810>
- Romain, A. (2016, February 24). Lego has released A stay-at-home-dad figure, & it’s A huge step forward. Retrieved from Romper, <https://www.romper.com/p/lego-has-released-a-stay-at-home-dad-figure-its-a-huge-step-forward-6126>

Wood, D. (2012, June). The Changing Roles of Fathers. Retrieved from Washington Parent, <https://www.washingtonparent.com/articles/1206/the-changing-roles-of-fathers.php>

25 สิงหาคม 2559 งานช้อปเพื่อลูก By Baby Best Buy 2016 ศูนย์การประชุมแห่งชาติสิริกิติ์. (2016, August 25). Retrieved from B-Search, <http://th.bsearch.in.th/news/25-สิงหาคม-2559-งานช้อปเพื่อลู/>

ประชากรจากทะเบียน / การเกิด / การตาย. (2016). Retrieved from National Statistical Office, <http://service.nso.go.th/nso/web/statseries/statseries01.html>

รายได้รายจ่ายครัวเรือน และจำนวนครัวเรือน. (2016). Retrieved from National Statistical Office, <http://service.nso.go.th/nso/web/statseries/statseries11.html>





APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

EXPORTED VALUE

Table 13: Top 10 countries for exported value of baby's cloth of Thailand

ตลาดส่งออกเสื้อผ้าเด็กอ่อน 10 อันดับแรกของไทย
มกราคม-พฤศจิกายน 2558

ที่	ประเทศ	มูลค่า(ล้านบาท)	อัตราการขยายตัว(%)	สัดส่วน(%)
1	สหรัฐอเมริกา	2,720.61	-1.75	46.08
2	สหรัฐอาหรับเอมิเรตส์	534.18	24.21	9.05
3	เนปาล	254.93	90.95	4.32
4	เม็กซิโก	238.35	-4.32	4.04
5	ฮ่องกง	224.87	-5.48	3.81
6	ซาอุดีอาระเบีย	219.33	14.50	3.71
7	สหราชอาณาจักร	206.15	43.25	3.49
8	อินเดีย	139.15	23.50	2.36
9	สเปน	124.07	-3.98	2.10
10	ฝรั่งเศส	102.09	-24.41	1.73
19	จีน	39.17	-56.58	0.66
รวมทุกประเทศ		5,903.97	0.68	100.00

ที่มา : ศูนย์เทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศและการสื่อสาร สำนักงานปลัดกระทรวงพาณิชย์

No.	Country	Value (MB)	Growth rate (%)	Proportion (%)
1	United States of America	2,720.61	-1.75	46.08
2	United Arab Emirates	534.18	24.21	9.05
3	Nepal	254.93	90.95	4.32
4	Mexico	238.35	-4.32	4.04
5	Hong Kong	224.87	-5.48	3.81

6	Saudi Arabia	219.33	14.50	3.71
7	United Kingdom	206.15	43.25	3.49
8	India	139.15	23.50	2.36
9	Spain	124.07	-3.98	2.10
10	France	102.09	-24.41	1.73
19	China	39.17	-56.58	0.66
All countries		5,903.97	0.68	100.00

Source: Information and Communication Technology Center of the
Permanent Secretary Ministry of Commerce

Table 14: Top 10 countries for exported value of baby's toys of Thailand

ตลาดส่งออกของเล่น 10 อันดับแรกของไทย
มกราคม-พฤศจิกายน 2558

ที่	ประเทศ	มูลค่า(ล้านบาท)	อัตรายายตัว(%)	สัดส่วน(%)
1	สหรัฐอเมริกา	2,038.27	5.01	27.79
2	ญี่ปุ่น	1,165.81	1.09	15.89
3	ฮ่องกง	580.26	-5.36	7.91
4	สหราชอาณาจักร	386.56	-5.44	5.27
5	เกาหลีใต้	364.21	7.28	4.97
6	เยอรมนี	357.00	12.68	4.87
7	ออสเตรเลีย	242.18	20.84	3.30
8	เม็กซิโก	239.58	37.86	3.27
9	ฝรั่งเศส	232.42	6.46	3.17
10	สาธารณรัฐเช็ก	206.67	36.33	2.82
11	จีน	192.93	185.87	2.63
รวมทุกประเทศ		7,334.92	5.45	100.00

ที่มา : ศูนย์เทคโนโลยีสารสนเทศและการสื่อสาร สำนักงานปลัดกระทรวงพาณิชย์

No.	Country	Value (MB)	Growth rate (%)	Proportion (%)
1	United States of America	2,038.27	5.01	27.79
2	Japan	1,165.81	1.09	15.89
3	Hong Kong	580.26	-5.36	5.27
4	United Kingdom	386.56	-5.44	5.27
5	South Korea	364.21	7.28	4.97
6	Germany	357.00	12.68	4.87
7	Australia	242.18	20.84	3.30
8	Mexico	239.58	37.86	3.27
9	France	232.42	6.46	3.17
10	Czech Republic	206.67	36.33	2.82
19	China	192.93	185.87	2.63
All countries		7,334.92	5.45	100

Source: Information and Communication Technology Center of the
Permanent Secretary Ministry of Commerce

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

This study is conducted as part of a class at Thammasat University. The study will gather data only from Thai people who have children aged below 3 years old. All responses to this questionnaire will be kept confidential. If you have any questions about this questionnaire, please call Bo 098-435-6889.

This questionnaire asks Thai parents about their purchasing behavior and purchasing intention towards gender-neutral design parenting products. Gender-neutral design parenting products are alternative design of the products for parents to be considered for purchasing.

Screening question

Do you have children aged below 3 years old?

- Yes
- No

1. Have you purchased any product as the following categories? (can choose more than 1 answer)

- Baby carriers i.e. stroller, baby wrap carrier, baby car seat etc.
- Diaper changing supplies i.e. diaper bag, baby changing pad and etc.
- Other childcare equipment i.e. baby nail & hair clipper, baby ear & nose cleaner etc.

2. Comparing the above categories of the product, what is the proportion of your spending? (out of 100%)

- a) Baby carriers i.e. stroller, baby wrap carrier, baby car seat etc.
 - No purchase this product category
 - 10%
 - 20%
 - 30%

- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- 100%

b) Diaper changing supplies i.e. diaper bag, baby changing pad and etc.

- No purchase this product category
- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- 100%

c) Other childcare equipment i.e. baby nail & hair clipper, baby ear & nose cleaner etc.

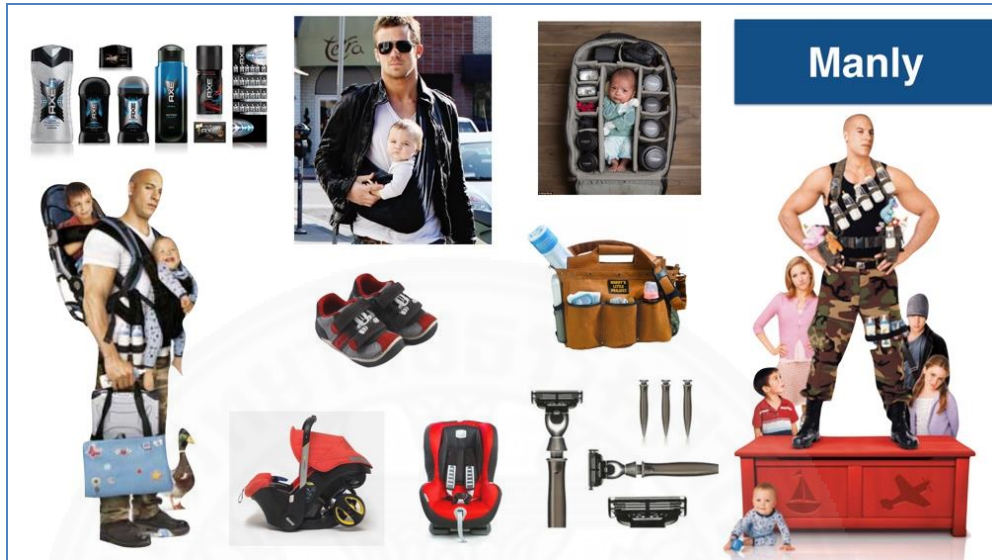
- No purchase this product category
- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- 100%

3. How much would you spend for each categories of the product?

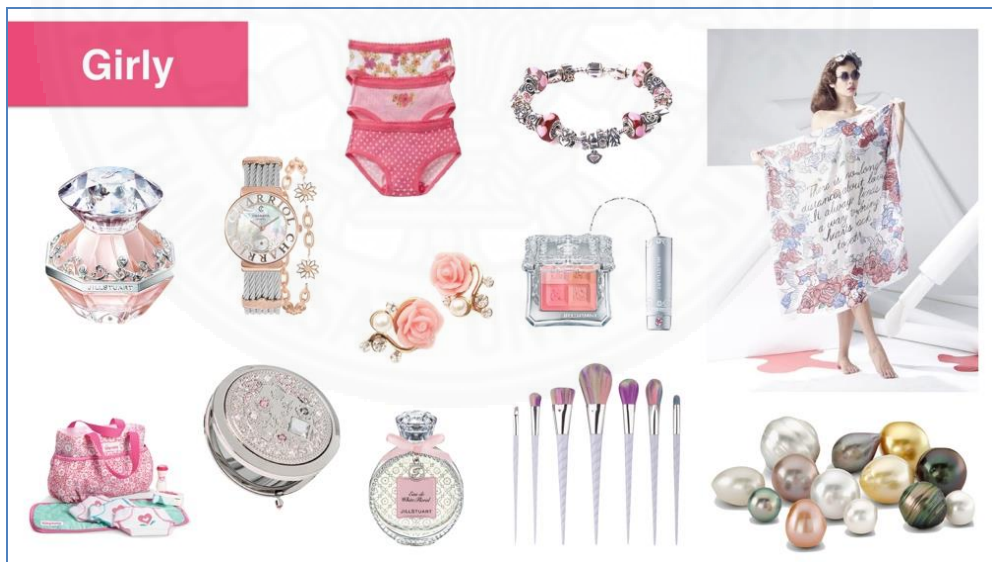
- a) Baby carriers i.e. stroller, baby wrap carrier, baby car seat etc.
- No purchase this product category
 - 5,000 THB or less
 - 5,001 THB – 10,000 THB
 - 10,001 THB – 20,000 THB
 - 20,001 THB – 30,000 THB
 - More than 30,000 THB
- b) Diaper changing supplies i.e. diaper bag, baby changing pad and etc.
- No purchase this product category
 - 5,000 THB or less
 - 5,001 THB – 10,000 THB
 - 10,001 THB – 20,000 THB
 - 20,001 THB – 30,000 THB
 - More than 30,000 THB
- c) Other childcare equipment i.e. baby nail & hair clipper, baby ear & nose cleaner etc.
- No purchase this product category
 - 5,000 THB or less
 - 5,001 THB – 10,000 THB
 - 10,001 THB – 20,000 THB
 - 20,001 THB – 30,000 THB
 - More than 30,000 THB

4. As the following mood-boards, which one is your preferable mood for parenting products?

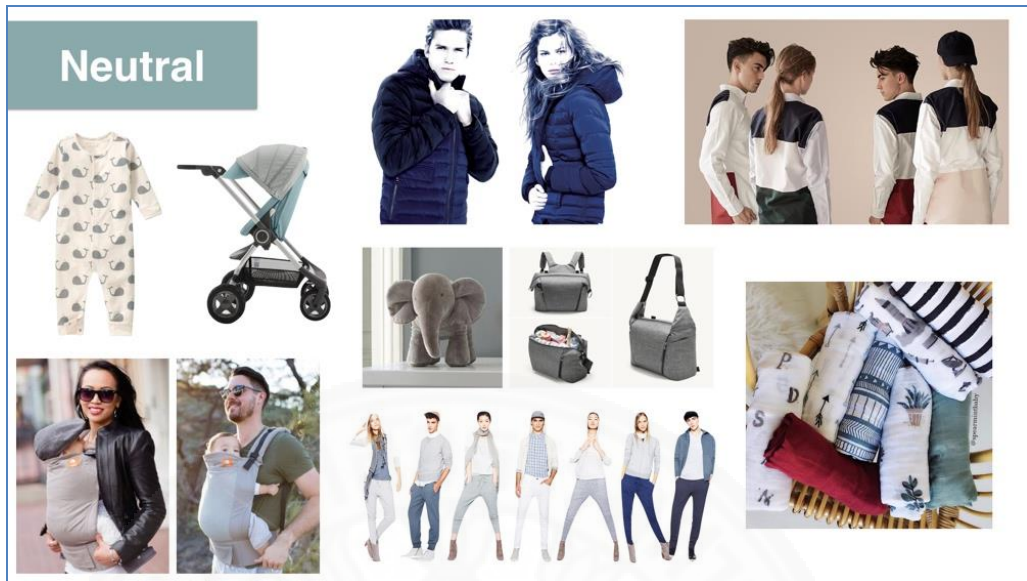
a. Manly style



b. Girly



c. Neutral



5. As the following statements, please rate your answer.

Questions for Lifestyle

No.	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	You travel many times a year.					
2	An interesting book or video game is often better than a social event.					
3	You prefer to eat at home, rather than eating out at a restaurant.					
4	You always plan ahead on what to wear before a date or an event.					
5	You prefer to have a to-do-list, rather than keeping the plan flexible.					
6	You are not easily convinced.					

7	You are a relatively reserved and quiet person.					
8	Keeping your options open is more important than having a to-do list.					
9	You enjoy a specific theme-party.					
10	You do not wear the same dress in a week.					
11	You have different shoes for different occasions.					
12	You like to be the center of attention.					
13	You like many cartoon characters.					
14	You prefer black and white products, rather than colorful products.					
15	You do not like complicated patterns of fabric.					
16	Your mood can change very quickly.					

Questions for Purchasing behavior

No.	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	You prefer to buy products through online channels i.e. Facebook, Instagram or websites.					
2	You prefer a product that serves a variety of purposes.					

3	You always consider the design of the products before purchasing.					
4	You always spend time considering the design of the products, rather than its functionality before purchasing.					
5	When purchasing a product, you often check the price before asking for the product details.					
6	You prefer to shop at a physical store or a department store, rather than a virtual store (i.e., online-shopping).					
7	You are price sensitive.					
8	You are willing to pay more for a limited edition of a product.					
9	You mostly choose a product that is versatile (i.e., its design and colors are suitable for many occasions).					
10	You shop every week.					
11	You spend more than 1,000 THB on each transaction.					
12	Seeing a physical product before purchasing is important to you.					
13	You will purchase product with gender-neutral designs (i.e., both the father and the mother would feel comfortable using it).					

14	You will purchase products that match your style.					
15	The father is a partial decision maker when purchasing parenting products.					
16	The mother is the main decision maker when purchasing parenting products.					

Questions for Childcare behavior

No.	Statements	tronly Agree	gree	eutral	isagree	tronly Disagree
1	Parents should look after their children by themselves.					
2	Others (i.e., other members of the family or a babysitter) can help to raise your children.					
3	You prefer to bring your children outside.					
4	You pick out your children's clothes based on your preference.					
5	You prefer your children to be the center of attention.					
6	You buy parenting product that matches your children's gender (i.e., pink for girl, blue for boy).					
7	When the family goes out, the father will be the one carrying the children's belongings.					

8	If you have both son(s) and daughter(s), you will purchase products with gender-neutral designs so that both your son(s) and daughter(s) can use them.					
---	--	--	--	--	--	--

6. Respondent's information

1. You are... Father Mother
2. What is your age?
 - a. Younger than 26
 - b. 26 – 30
 - c. 31 – 35
 - d. 36 – 40
 - e. Older than 40
3. What is your educational background?
 - a. Below bachelor degree
 - b. Bachelor degree
 - c. Master degree
 - d. Higher than Master degree
4. Where is you current living area?
 - a. Bangkok and suburban
 - b. Other provinces
5. How much is your monthly income?
 - a. 15,000 THB or lower
 - b. 15,001 THB – 30,000 THB
 - c. 30,001 THB – 50,000 THB
 - d. Higher than 50,000 THB
6. How many children do you have?
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. More than 3

7. What is your children's gender?
- a. All boy
 - b. All girl
 - c. Both boy and girl



BIOGRAPHY

Name	Ms. Jirapond Jiravorapat
Date of Birth	August 18, 1987
Educational Attainment	2010: Bachelor of Arts Business Chinese, Assumption University
Work Position	Executive Secretary of Hospital Director Bangkok Dusit Medical Services PCL.

