

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**The effect of family communication structure on children's influence strategies and
parental responses in a purchasing context**

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DECLARATION

I, Revasha Sookdew declare that;

- (i) The research reported in this dissertation/thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
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- (iii) This dissertation/thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
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11 January 2021

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ABSTRACT

Children are seen to have increasing power over family decision making and are regarded as being major participants in the consumer market and are an important target market. Not only do children have more power over their own spending, but they also have a greater influence over their parents' spending. At the same time, family structures have changed, and parents have become more lenient with their children. Anitha and Mohan (2016) propose a conceptual model in which family communication structures affect the influence strategies used by children, which in turn affect parents' responses.

This research aimed not only to determine the relationship between family communication structures, children's pestering, and parents' responses, but also to test the model. A positivist paradigm and quantitative research design was used. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire. Using exponential snowball sampling, the sample consisted of 165 parents who completed the child portion of the questionnaire separately for each child thus giving a total of 300 child questionnaires. Non-parametric testing was then used to analyze the data showing the impact the various factors have on the final purchasing decision within a family household. Results were presented in the form of graphs and tables for ease of understanding.

It was found that children exhibit low levels of both persuasive and emotional pestering, proving the relationship that family communication structure affects the kinds of influence strategies that children are likely to use. These family communication styles are associated with low levels of both persuasive and emotional pestering. In this sample, a consensual family communication style was most common, revealing that children belonging to consensual families use influencing strategies to get what they want and parents belonging to this family style are more open to accepting the views of their children.

It was found that most of the participants agree to their children's requests. Parents tend to agree more to food and snacks, clothes and shoes and grocery requests. As the most common pestering form was persuasive and the common parental response to this influencing strategy was to accept children's requests, marketers should target both children and their parents in their communication strategies. Encouraging and endorsing a consensual family communication style would also make good business sense as children's roles in family decision making are likely to be more accepted in families with this family communication style.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

It appears that parents today are now involving their children in purchasing decisions compared to parents of previous generations (Ali & Kerpcarova 2019, p.5). Children are seen to be active influencers of their parents' consumption (Chaudhary, 2018, p.2524). Chaudhary (2018, p.2524) further states that children influence 43 % of the total family buying. In the past, consumer behaviour research focused mainly on individuals as the key decision-makers in the market, and studies focused mainly on trying to determine the behaviour of these individuals. However, the focus has since shifted to viewing the "family as an important decision-making unit" (Ndubisi & Koo, 2006, p.53). Researchers have begun to realize the importance of each member of the family in purchase decisions (Ishaque & Tufail, 2006, p.162). Although several factors influence family decision making, the role of family communication is seen to be an important factor (Ishaque & Tufail, 2006, p.168). Families are making children the center of their focus due to changing demographic factors (Ishaque & Tufail, 2006, p.162). Parents are seen to be giving children increased power to influence family decision making (Suwandinata, 2012, p.13).

Not only are children a priority in the family, but they also play an important role in the purchasing decision-making process. Children are considered as being "consumer-buyers" (Akter, 2017, p.25), where children purchase the product (buyer of the product) and also consume the product (consumer). Coupled with the advancements of modern technology, children are seen to be more sophisticated and have a wider product knowledge than their parents (Akter, 2017, p.25). Chaudhary (2018, p.2525) concurs that the development in modern technology, particularly that of the internet has added to the learning culture of children, thus allowing children to learn more about the products being offered in the market and using their gained knowledge to share and discuss their opinions with their parents.

At the same time, family structure and functioning have also changed whereby some parents are listening to and accepting the information given to them by their children about products and what to purchase (Suwandinata, 2012, p.13). These authors add that children now have the freedom to share their observations about certain products and persuade their parents into buying the products of their (the child's) choice. It is possible that family communication structures influence the kinds of behaviours of children as well as how parents respond. Anitha and Mohan's (2016, p.269).

conceptual model proposes that family communication structures affect the influence strategies used by children, which in turn affect parent's responses. Marketers need to understand consumer behaviour and family co-member behaviour because of the nature of the family unit. Therefore, it is necessary to understand whether family communication styles influence how children behave, as well as how parents respond.

Children are seen to represent three markets: the primary market, where children spend their own money which they saved. The secondary market, where children act as the influencers on parental spending and the third market being the future market of adult consumers (Ali & Kerpcarova 2019, p.7). This dissertation will therefore focus on the secondary market where children are the influencers within the family. This research paper will assist in understanding the role of family communication structure and whether it has an effect on the influence strategies that children use as well as examine how parents respond to children's requests.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AND BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

1.2.1 Power of children in the marketplace

Over the years, there has been a growing interest in child consumers. Children are viewed as being major participants in the consumer market today and are considered an important target market which continues to gain the interest and attention of marketers (Challa, Singh, Fosad, Harjani & Hota, 2016, p.2). Therefore, today, marketers invest large amounts in advertising directed at children, but 40 to 50 years ago, this was not always true. Previously, children were not seen as being 'real consumers' although there were many products available for children; marketers did not focus their attention on gaining child consumers as they viewed them as being insignificant with limited amounts of money to spend (Puiu, 2008, p.2034).

In recent years, it is believed that children hold a significant amount of buying power and by investing in attracting young consumers, this can possibly lead to a lifetime of brand loyalty (Lapierre, Flemming, Rozendaal & Castonguay, 2017, p.152). Over the past two decades advertising to children has grown significantly because marketers do not only want to maintain their current customer base and consumption levels but also want to increase their future consumption levels (Calvert, 2008, p.205).

Marketers view children as being an important target market to consider because not only do they hold the largest growth potential in the market, but children have their own purchasing power, they have an influence over their parents buying decisions, as well as children are regarded as being the future adult consumers (Ali & Kerpcarova 2019, p.5). Children are growing up faster and have more money to spend on themselves (Calvert, 2008, p.205), have more personal power and have a greater influence compared to past generations (Jain & Dave, 2015, p.43).

1.2.2 The role that children play within family decision making and the impact they have on family decision making.

Children are seen to play a vital role within a family and in influencing the buying decision process (Akter, 2017, p.25). Thus, children can be seen to be the direct influencers of household consumer spending by pressurizing their parents into buying products (Jain & Dave, 2015, p.43). Children are also seen to be more knowledgeable than their parents since children are exposed to and have the availability of modern information technology and communication systems in present times (Akter, 2017, p.25). Therefore, parents are more willing to take information from their children (Akter, 2017, p.25).

Over the years, the traditional family structure, whereby only the parents make decisions, has begun to evaporate. Parents are becoming more open-minded, lenient and democratic with their children (Suwandinata, 2012, p.13). This change is seen to bring about the impact that children have over their families and decision making within the household (Ali & Kerpcarova 2019, p.6). Children are given the freedom to choose what they want and are encouraged to provide their input and opinions about what to eat, wear and buy, decisions which were previously made by parents (Ali & Kerpcarova 2019, p.6).

A study was done by Chaudhary (2015, p.312) on family decision making in emerging economies found that children have a greater influence on family decisions. A child's influence in family decision making can vary based on many different factors such as product categories, family characteristics, socioeconomics and the resources that children have. Chaudhary believes that children have a greater influence over high involvement products and are most likely to influence purchases when they are the primary users of the product; therefore children are most likely to influence decisions about family vacations, travel and where to eat out (Chaudhary, 2019, p.2525).

1.2.3 Influence strategies used by children

The ability of children to nag or hassle their parents into buying them a specific item has been defined as pester power (Abbasi, Amran, Riaz, Sahar & Ahmed, 2020, p.115). Pester power refers to the influential power that children exercise over the purchases that their parents make, particularly over items advertised through media (Abbasi, *et al.*, 2020, p.115). Children affect the purchasing power of their parents either directly, referring to children's ability to pester or demand a particular product (Tilley, 2000, p.89), or indirectly which refers to when parents are already aware of what their children prefer or like when it comes to products or brands, and therefore parents will purchase these products for their children without having to ask them what they want (Mboweni-De Klerk, 2008, p.40).

Due to the rise in advertising to children, pester power is thought to be a valuable and useful influence technique that marketers can use to sell their products and increase sales, by targeting and captivating the attention of children, knowing the powerful influence that children have over their parents (Abbasi, *et al.*, 2020, p.116).

The rise in children's power to influence their parents' purchasing has also been found to be due to the increase in interactive technologies which has opened a wide media platform which advertisers or marketers use to advertise to their child consumers (Abbasi, *et al.*, 2020, p.116). Children are exposed to new and changing technologies which aid them in increasing their knowledge about different products (Abbasi, *et al.*, 2020, p.116).

Another reason for the increased influence of children over household purchasing decisions stems from parents having fewer children than before (Suwandinata, 2012, p.35). This leads to parents being more lenient towards their children, spoiling them and giving them more autonomy or allowance to purchase things that they want (Suwandinata, 2012, p.35). Also, there is a growing number of one-parent households, where children play a greater role or a joint role in decision making, as the parent has no spouse to share experiences with (Chaudhary & Hyman, 2019, p.4). There is also an increasing number of parents who are deciding to have children at a much later stage in life when their careers are much more stable (Sharma & Sonwaney, 2014, p.41). Also, the absence of mother's in the household due to them working full time has led to an increase in household decisions being made by children (Sharma & Sonwaney, 2014, p.41).

1.2.4 The family communications model

Numerous reasons have been proposed for the change in household decision making but according to Anitha and Mohan (2016) this change is due to the changes to family structure. Anitha and Mohan (2016) deem that these family communication structures affect the type of influence strategy that children use to influence the final purchase outcomes. Anitha and Mohan (2016, p.270) further propose that the strong influence that children have over their families today is due to the way life has changed and how family structures and communications have changed which has aided children with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to assist them in being consumers, “opinion givers and co-deciders” (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.270). These authors also believe that children use different emotional and persuasive strategies to get what they want. They often negotiate, bargain and manipulate their parents into buying certain products (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.270). However, the model proposes that it is the type of family structure that children grow up in that ultimately shapes how the child behaves and communicates with their parents in purchase situations (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.271). These authors proposed a model illustrating the influence of family structure on pestering and family purchase outcomes.

According to Anitha and Mohan (2016, p.270), family communication comprises of four different family structures: Laissez-Faire family, Protective family, Pluralistic Family and Consensual Family. According to the model, family communication structure influences the kinds of influence strategies that children use. Anitha and Mohan (2016, p.270) examine persuasive pestering strategies and emotional pestering strategies and propose that these influence strategies in turn influence how parents respond, i.e. the purchase outcomes which are assent, dissent, negotiate and procrastinate.

The model described how different family structures influence the pester power strategies used by children which in turn affects the final purchase outcome (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272). Anitha and Mohan’s (2016, p.270) model provided the theoretical framework for the current study but was also tested in the study. Although Anitha and Mohan’s (2016, p.270) planned to test the model, no studies testing the model could be found.

Previous studies on family structure included Ndagurwa’s (2013) study on the impact of family communication structure on schooling outcomes for children in South Africa, Quarmby’s (2011) study on the influence of family structure in shaping young people’s engagement in physical

activity, Family buying behaviour: Parent's perspective of children's influence on their buying behaviour (Ali & Kerpcarova 2019, p.6) and Family communication for the modern era: a typology (Aleti, Brennan & Parker, 2015, p.13). Therefore, although some research on family communication structure has been done in the past, more emphasis was placed on the social factors that influenced purchasing behaviour rather than on the family communication structure with the family (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272). From the model, the researcher deduced that the dependent variable was parental responses and the independent variable family communication structures, however, it was not clear from the literature, if children's influences were a mediating factor or an independent factor.

Testing the relationships of the model within the South African context provided greater knowledge on the topic of pester power, as well as indicated whether a relationship exists between pester power and the family communication structure thus broadening the knowledge on the role and impact of family communication structures in a purchasing context. In addition to testing the model, the researcher investigated whether age of the children and parents affected their responses.

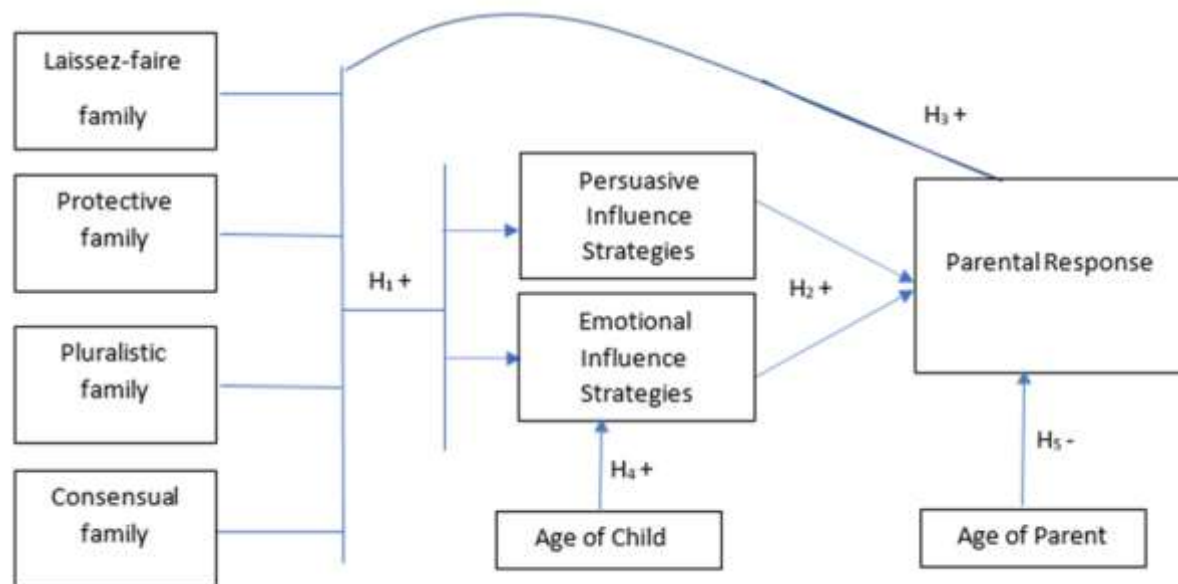


Figure 1-1: A model of family communication structure on children's influence strategies and parental responses

The basic model by Anitha & Mohan (2016, p.270) did not cover all the possible relationships between family communication structure and parental responses, therefore the researcher developed a model (figure 1-1) that included other possible relationships.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The research problem which needs solving is to test the family communication model within a South African context, and specifically a Pietermaritzburg sample, to determine whether the family communication structure affects the strategies children use to influence their parent's responses. Marketers need to understand families as a consumption unit because of the interaction that occurs between children and parents in terms of what purchases are made. Family communication structure has been found to influence other behaviours within the family (Sundar & Mathew, 2016, p.49). Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the role that this plays in terms of influencing both children's attempts to influence their parents, as well as parent's responses.

1.4 RESEARCH PURPOSE

Although various studies have been done by Ishaque & Tufail (2006, p.1), Kaur & Singh (2006, p.1), and Sundar & Mathew (2014, p.1), on children in family decision making, none of these have examined whether the model holds true that the type of family communication structure affects the type of influence strategy used by children thus impacting the outcome of the parent's response in terms of final purchase outcome.

The studies done on children in family decision making mentioned above were conducted in Eastern countries (India and Pakistan) and although certain aspects may be generalized, it may not all be applicable to families in South Africa where culture, norms and characteristics of families are different.

The model of family communication structure and its impact was developed by Anitha and Mohun (2016) in India; therefore the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships predicted in this model in the South African context and to test the relationships between the family communication structure, the type of influence strategy that children use, the effect thereof in terms of parental responses as well as the role of age of both parents and children.

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study of family communication patterns and their impact on children's influence strategies and parental responses was based on a survey of parents within the Pietermaritzburg area so that the objectives conform with the SMART Principal - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (Bradley, 2013, p.38).

The research objectives were:

1. To determine parent's perceptions of the role played by children in family decision-making.
2. To determine the effect of family communication structure on the type of influence strategy used by children.
3. To understand the relationship between the influence strategy used by children and the response of parents.
4. To determine if there is a direct effect of family communication structure on parental behaviour when it comes to responses of parents to children's influence.
5. To examine the influence of age on children's influence strategies and parental responses.

1.6 HYPOTHESES

In order to accomplish the previously stated research objectives, the following hypotheses were tested:

H₁: the type of family communication structure affects the influence strategy used by children

H₂: a relationship exists between the influence strategy used by children and the response of parents

H₃: the type of family communication structure affects parent's responses to children's influence strategies.

H₄: there is a relationship between age of child and influence strategy

H₅: there is a relationship between age of parent and parental response

If hypotheses H₁ and H₂ are found not to be false, then support is provided for the Anitha and Mohan (2016) model.

1.7 OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY

A positivist paradigm was used in this study. The positivist paradigm usually uses quantitative data, explains the cause and effect relationships between variables, and allows for the testing of hypotheses (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.29). A descriptive research design was used for this study. Descriptive research aims to provide insight into the who, what, when and where questions of a topic and looks at the relationship between two variables (Cant, Strydom & Jooste, 2007, p.163). This type of research design aided the researcher to gain insight into the role of children and the influence they have over family purchasing decisions, considering the family communication structure. For this study, a quantitative research approach was used. This approach helped to test the hypotheses and to gain a better understanding and attain more accurate results by examining the relationships between the variables in the research model. Therefore, the use of quantitative research assisted in determining the role of children in the family decision-making process and whether family communication structure influences the influence strategies that children use which in turn can affect parental responses in terms of the purchase of goods within the household.

A structured questionnaire was used and deemed most suitable for this study. A standardized questionnaire with closed-ended questions was used to obtain information from respondents. The questionnaire provided information that could be used to categorize each family into one of the four types of families in terms of communication style. The questionnaire also helped determine the type of pestering behaviours that children in the family use to persuade their families to purchase their choice of product. As this study tested Anitha and Mohan's (2016) model, the questionnaire focused on measuring the emotional and persuasive tactics that children use, as well as measuring the final purchase outcome by parents.

A sample of 165 parents from the Pietermaritzburg area who had children 18 years old and younger participated in this study. The type of sampling that was used was exponential snowball sampling. Snowball sampling, also known as chain referrals, is a method of sampling in which one or a few individuals are initially selected to participate in the study, and those individuals recruit new respondents from their acquaintances (Ochoa, 2017, p.1). Exponential sampling refers to where each participant recruits two or more individuals so that the more people participate in the study the faster the sample will grow (Ochoa, 2017, p.1). This type of sampling was used so that

the desired number of respondents needed for the study was reached at a faster rate. Parents with multiple children completed the child portion of the questionnaire separately for each child. Thus while the parent information and family communication questions pertained to the parents the multiple children had separate sections related to the influence strategies and parental response to those different strategies and thus the total sample of 300 child questionnaires were collected from 165 parents. Once all the questionnaires had been completed and collected, the data was captured and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS. Analyzed data were presented in the form of a written report as well as graphs and tables to allow for easy understanding. The study used construct validity to certify that the data collected was valid and internal consistency reliability was used to determine how all items on the test relate to their respective variables.

1.8 CONTRIBUTION

The research benefits academics and marketers. Marketers can benefit from this study as it assists them in identifying the important role that children play within family purchase decision making by understanding how communication structures of family influence the pestering behaviour of children. It also aids marketers to formulate appropriate communication strategies focused more on children to encourage a more desirable behaviour which can possibly lead to them influencing their parents purchasing decision, and lead to an effective purchase outcome decision being made.

For academics, the study adds to existing knowledge on children and family decision making. This study helps future researchers in identifying which strategy children use more depending on the family communication structure they belong to and which parental response it will most likely lead to.

1.9 STRUCTURE OF DISSERTATION

The following chapter consists of a discussion of the existing literature on the role of children in family decision making. The literature review includes the power of children in the marketplace as well as the role and impact that children play within family decision making. The second chapter also discusses the different influence strategies that children use and what factors influence children to use these strategies to influence their parent's buying decisions. Parental responses to children's pestering are also covered, as well as the factors that influence parents' responses.

The third chapter goes on to explain the types of family structure and their influences on family

behaviours and elaborates on the types of family communication structures that exist. The chapter discusses the different types of communication styles that are present within family structures. The Anitha and Mohan (2016) family communication model tested in this research, as well as factors that influence the communication structure and the known impacts of family communication structure, are discussed. The change in family communication in South Africa is also explained.

The fourth chapter is the methodology chapter which elaborates on the research paradigm, the data collection methods and sampling, as well as explains the data analysis procedure.

The fifth chapter presents the findings of the study. The final chapter discusses the findings in relation to the previous knowledge for each objective and draws conclusions to the study. This chapter provides recommendations based on the findings of the study. Limitations are acknowledged and recommendations for future research provided. A final conclusion is then provided.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced the family communications model which underpinned the research. It briefly described the growth of children as consumers, the influence that children have on family decision making, the strategies they use and parental responses of parents. The chapter also outlined the research problem, objectives and hypotheses of the study. The next chapter focuses on the role that children play in family decision making and elaborates on the influence strategies that children use and as well as parental responses to those.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW: THE ROLE OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY DECISION MAKING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Over the years, there has been a tremendous interest in child consumers. Children are regarded as being major participants in the consumer market today and are considered an important target market which continues to gain the interest and attention of marketers (Challa, *et al.* 2016, p.2). These days, children are “customers, buyers, spenders, shoppers, and consumers” (Challa, *et al.* 2016, p.2) which is why more and more marketers aim their well-established strategies towards them (Calvert, 2008, p.205). This chapter outlines the power of children in the marketplace as well as the role that children play in the family decision making process and the enabling factors. This chapter also identifies the types of influence strategies that children use and the factors that affect children’s influence strategies. In addition, this chapter outlines how parents respond to the influence strategies used by children and looks at family communication structure as a factor that affects children’s influence

2.2 THE POWER OF CHILDREN IN THE MARKETPLACE

Marketers previously viewed marketing to children as a scowled upon practice (Lapierre, *et al.*, 2017, p.152). Marketers rarely focused their attention on gaining child consumers even though there were many products available for them (Puiu, 2008, p.2034).

In recent years marketing to children has become an important part of many companies’ marketing strategy, as companies have realised the profitable rewards from marketing to children (Lapierre, *et al.*, 2017, p.152). Haryanto (2020, p. 200) concurs that children represent a large market which holds good potential. Haryanto (2020, p. 200) proceeds to support his statement by revealing that in 2019 the total market for children researched \$80 billion and the children’s clothing market being one of the greatest.

According to Gupta (2011, p.2) children are seen to represent three different markets

1. **The Influence Market** – Children influence household purchasing decisions by forcing or persuading their parents into purchasing products that they want (Gupta, 2011, p.2). The increased ability that children have to influence their parents’ purchase decisions is supported by a study done by Samova (2014, p.1) which states that children have become

an attractive target market for marketers due to their power of persuasion.

2. **The Current Market** – Children as a consumer segment were viewed as being one of insignificance and not possessing the money power needed to spend in the marketplace (Puiu, 2008, p.2034). Most children today receive pocket money from their parent's, therefore they have their own capital to spend on desirable items. This allows children to purchase independently without the assistance of their parents, turning them into consumers from a younger age (Gupta, 2011, p.2). Today it is believed that children hold a significant amount of buying power (Lapierre, et al. 2017, p.152). Therefore, children are now viewed as being vulnerable and easily manipulated, making them the favoured target of marketers throughout the world (Puiu, 2008, p.2034).
3. **The Future Market** -Advertising to children, has grown significantly because marketers do not only want to maintain their current customer base and consumption levels but also want to increase their future consumption levels (Calvert, 2008, p.205). Children are very much impacted by media, and with the advancements of technology, marketers can reach children throughout the day and not only when they are watching television. The increase in television channels leads to a smaller viewing audience for each channel, thus creating space for just children and children's products (Gupta, 2011, p.1). Samova (2014, p.1) supports this by expressing that children are surrounded by media, namely: television and the internet. Most children have their own or have access to a smartphone or some electronic device that connects to the internet; hence children are exposed to advertising that is designed to make them future consumers (Gupta, 2011, p.3). Ahmed, Ameen, Shaikh and Memon (2015, p.12) further state that due to parents and children having smartphones and being exposed to the media, parents and children are most likely to connect with each other and also share purchase consumption related information through social media for example Facebook. Therefore, marketers aim to change knowledge, attitudes and behaviours towards products through advertising mediums that children are exposed to (Samova, 2014, p.1). It is believed that by investing in attracting young consumers, this can possibly lead to a lifetime of brand loyalty (Lapierre, et al. 2017, p.152).

To summarise, marketers view children as being an important target market to consider because not only do they hold the largest growth potential in the market but children have their own

purchasing power as well as they have an influence over their parents buying decisions (Bhattacharyya & Kohli, 2007, p.70). Today, children are seen to play a vital role within a family and in influencing the buying decision process (Akter, 2017, p.25).

2.3 THE CHANGING ROLE OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY DECISION MAKING AND ENABLING FACTORS

Over the years, the traditional family structure whereby the parents make decisions has begun to evaporate (Suwandinata, 2012, p.13). Norms and rules that fit a traditional family structure are changing, and parents are becoming more open-minded, lenient and democratic with their children (Suwandinata, 2012, p.13). Therefore, this change is seen to bring about the greater influence that children have over their families and decision making within the household (Suwandinata, 2012, p.13). Children are now given the freedom to choose what they want and are encouraged to give their input and opinions about what to eat, wear and buy, decisions which were previously made by parents (Suwandinata, 2012, p.13).

Children are also seen to have more autonomy when it comes to purchasing as they are maturing faster and have more money to spend on themselves, more personal power and have a greater influence compared to past generations (Jain & Dave, 2015, p.43; Calvert, 2008, p.205). Gupta (2011, p.2) states that due to the change in family dynamics and the environment in which the child is raised, this greatly attributes to the influence that children have in family decision making. Children also have a significant influence on their parents' spending and not only possess power over their own spending (Calvert, 2008, p.205). Thus, children can be seen to be the direct influencers of household consumer spending by pressurizing their parents into buying products (Jain & Dave, 2015, p.43). The importance of children sharing in the family decision making can be attributed to several reasons.

2.3.1 Pester Power

The ability of children to nag or hassle their parents into buying them a specific item has been defined as pester power (Nash & Basini, 2012, p.268). Pester power refers to the influential power that children exercise over the purchases that their parents make, particularly over items advertised through media (Nash & Basini, 2012, p.268). Due to the rise in advertising to children, pester power is thought to be a valuable and useful influence technique that marketers can use to sell their products and increase sales, by targeting and captivating the attention of children, knowing the

powerful influence that children have over their parents (Nash & Basini, 2012, p.268).

Pester power has been associated with negativity, thus being termed the ‘nag factor’ (Nash & Basini, 2012, p.268). However, in recent years there has been a progression from pester power being viewed as negative into something that is now seen to be positive (Yock, 2019, p.1). Children are now pestering their parents to make socially impactful purchases that are more environmentally friendly (Yock, 2019, p.1).

Pester power is seen to be increasing because children are spending less time with their parents (Ishaque and Tufail, 2014, p.164). Gupta (2011, p.2) states that children have a greater say in purchase decisions because parents are giving in more to their children’s requests. This is due to the increase in the number of both working parents (Ishaque and Tufail, 2014, p.164). This leads to parents having more disposal incomes compared to before, but also both parent’s work; therefore, there is less family time. Dual income increases and aids purchasing power (Jain and Dave, 2015, p.44). Thus, parents are seen to make up for the less time spent with their children by giving them material items which their children want (Gupta, 2011, p.2).

2.3.2 Parents having fewer children

Swandinata (2012, p.35) states that another reason for the increased influence of children over household purchasing decisions stems from parents having fewer children than before. An increasing number of parents are deciding to have children at a much later stage in life when their careers are much more stable (Sharma & Shonwaney, 2014, p.41). The increase in both parents working and the delay in having children has had an impact on the role that these children play within the family. Parents tend to feel guilty that they don’t spend enough time with their children and leads to parents being more lenient towards their children, spoiling them and giving them more autonomy or allowance to purchase things that they want (Suwandinata, 2012, p.35).

Today, women are striving to build rewarding careers, and this means that mothers have a good source of income too and this provides the household with greater financial assistance with the maintenance of the household (Jain and Dave, 2015, p.44). Women plan their career path and to be settled in a stable career before starting families of their own (Jain and Dave, 2015, p.44). The stability of finances and having children at a later stage is seen to make parents more emotional towards their children; thus parents give in to the requests of their children and don’t hold back when spending money on their children (Jain and Dave, 2015, p.44). Similarly, the absence of

mother's in the household due to them working full time has led to an increase in household decisions being made by children (Sharma & Shonwaney, 2014, p.41).

There is a growing number of one-parent households, where children play a greater role or a joint role in decision making, as the parent has no spouse to share experiences with (Sharma & Shonwaney, 2014, p.40). Jain and Dave (2015, p.46) propose that adolescents in single-parent families have a greater influence than those children in other family types, i.e. nuclear and stepfamilies. This can be attributed to the difference in socialisation in relation to family authority (Jain & Dave, 2015, p.46). Parents have a vital impact on a child's socialisation process and their purchasing behaviour (Khurram and Hameed, 2018, p.131). Sharma and Shonwaney (2013, p.39) agree that family type is a significant "socialisation agent" for children (Sharma & Shonwaney, 2013, p.39). Parents educate and explain adverts to their children to help them make controlled and sound purchasing decisions (Jain & Dave, 2015, p.46). Children who spend time shopping with their parents and watch television adverts with their parents learn more about making sound purchasing decisions compared to those children who spend less time with their parents (Jain & Dave, 2015, p.46).

2.3.3 Children's knowledge and the role of technology

Children are also seen to be more knowledgeable than their parents as they are exposed to and have the availability of modern information technology and communication systems (Akter, 2017, p.25). Hence, children are more educated on being socially and environmentally friendly and are seen urging their parents (positive pestering) to make the change as well, for example buying recycled items or becoming vegetarian because it is more sustainable (Yock, 2019, p.1). Parents are also aware that their children are well informed and are more willing to take information from their children (Akter, 2017, p.25). Thus, the role of children in the family buying decision-making process is not insignificant as they have a fundamental influence on their parents buying behaviour (Akter, 2017, p.25).

The rise in children's power to influence their parent's purchasing has also been found to be due to the increase in interactive technologies which has opened a wide media platform which advertisers or marketers use to advertise to their child consumers (Calvert, 2008, p.205). Children are exposed to new and changing technologies which aid them in increasing their knowledge about different products (Mboweni-De Klerk, 2008, p.33). As children grow, they gain a better understanding of the media that they are exposed to. It is believed that whatever is expressed through the media will stick in the minds of those who are exposed to it and in turn this will affect consumer behaviour and ultimately affect purchasing (Oyewole, Peng & Choudhary, 2010, p.9). This is an important point to consider because children are exposed to an increased amount of media which can have an impact on the development of their consumer attitudes and behaviours (Oyewole, *et al.*, 2010, p.9).

Television is viewed as the most popular form of media among children between the ages of 6-17 and is the favourite after-school pass-time of children (Oyewole, *et al.*, 2010, p.8). Therefore, the power that children have over their parents purchasing decisions may be attributed to what they absorb from the media that they are exposed to. If a child sees something on TV or on the internet, they will relay their desire for the product to their parents in the form of requesting for their parents to purchase the product they saw, thus influencing their parents purchasing decisions (Oyewole, *et al.*, 2010, p.9).

A child's influence in family decision making can vary based on many different factors such as product categories, family characteristics, socioeconomics, and the resources that children have (Akter, 2017, p.25).

2.3.4 Product categories that children exert influence on

Children are one of the most significant influencers in family buying behavior (Ali & Kerpcarova, 2019, p.2). Children tend to control family buying decision and can influence their parents in many product categories such as from buying a car to regular grocery shopping (Ali & Kerpcarova, 2019, p.2).

Children's tendency to influence family purchase decisions is based on products which they consume directly, their knowledge of the product and the product characteristics (Ishaque & Tufail, 2014, p.162). Children usually influence those products that provide them with the greatest benefits (Ishaque & Tufail, 2014, p.164). Ali & Kerpcarova, (2019, p.2) state that almost all parents allow

their children to voice their opinion about things they want, such as: toys, clothes and food which are categories that are bought for them. Ali & Kerpcarova, (2019, p.2) further explain that around two-thirds of parents take into consideration what their children want when making family decisions.

Chaudhary (2015, p.312) believes that children have a greater influence over high involvement products and are most likely to influence purchases when they are the primary users of the product. Products are categorized as high-involvement or low-involvement reliant on factors such as price, importance, the level of risk involved in a product's purchase, frequency of purchase and durability (Ahmed, Ahmad, Umar, Bukhari and Ijaz, 2009, p. 1). High involvement products are those which reflect one's personality and lifestyle and low involvement products reflect routine purchases (Ahmed, *et al.*, 2009, p.1). Some examples of high-involvement products are cars, furniture, home renovations, new, vacations and fashion clothing (Ahmed, *et al.*, 2009, p.2). Low-involvement products are referred to as products such as sweets, biscuits, coffee, ice cream, etc. (Ahmed, *et al.*, 2009, p.2). Therefore, Chaudhary (2015, p.312) states that children are most likely to influence decisions about family vacations, travel and where to eat out concurring to that of high involvement. According to the National Retail Federation, 90% of parents said that their children influenced their purchasing decision (v12Data, 2020, p.1). Categories of products which children influenced were: toys and games (92%), toys and shoes (91%), food and drink (88%) and dining out (87%) (v12Data, 2020, p.1).

2.4 TYPES OF INFLUENCE STRATEGIES USED BY CHILDREN

A study conducted by Mboweni-De Klerk (2008, p.34) verified that children affect the purchasing power of their parents in two ways; directly and indirectly:

- Directly- refers to when the child 'pesters', demands, hints or requests for a product or brand or when a child is a part of the actual decision-making process of purchasing a product (Tilley, 2000, p.89).
- Indirectly: refers to when parents are already aware of what their children prefer or like when it comes to products or brands, and therefore parents will purchase these products for their children without having to ask them what they want. This is known as passive influence (Mboweni-De Klerk, 2008, p.40).

According to Akter (2017, p. 103), children utilize various techniques to impact their parents

purchasing decisions. The strategy that children use to influence their parents will depend on the type of family structure, the size of the family and the family's disposable income (Akter, 2017, p.103).

Children try to influence their parent's purchasing decisions by influencing the way their parent's think, feel and behave towards purchases. According to Akter (2017, p.103), she identifies four strategies that children use to influence their parents:

- Rational Approach-where children bargain and negotiate with their parents
- Persuasion Strategy- where children voice their opinions, beg and whine.
- Emotional Strategies-where children use tactics such as pouting, sweet talk or anger to influence their parents.
- Simple Requests-where children voice what they need or want and ask their parents directly (Akter, 2017, p.104)

The study was done by Chaudhary, Medury & Gupta (2012, p.1) on the use of pester power in India identifies six influence strategies that children use:

- Bargaining Strategy – where the child will offer to strike a deal with their parent to get the product they want (Chaudhary, *et al.*, 2012, p.5).
- Persuasion Strategy – where the child will use begging tactics and express their opinion about the product that they want (Chaudhary, *et al.*, 2012, p.5).
- Competitive strategy – where the child will suggest a competition to win a game and therefore win the right to ask for the product of their choice (Chaudhary, *et al.*, 2012, p.5).
- Emotional strategy – where the child will nag, whine or throw a tantrum to get the product of their choice (Chaudhary, *et al.*, 2012, p.5).
- Aggressive strategy – where the child will refuse to eat or the child acts stubborn so that the parent gives in to the child's request (Chaudhary, *et al.*, 2012, p.5).
- Playing a trick – where the child may hide the product that they want in the shopping cart while shopping with their parents (Chaudhary, *et al.*, 2012, p.5).

According to Anitha & Mohan (2016, p.271), the most common pestering strategies are persuasive and emotional pestering (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.271) and thus these are the ones included in

the conceptual model which underlies the current study, and which is discussed in more detail.

Persuasion strategies refer to when children try to convince their parents to buy certain products by using terms such as “my friends have it” or “I’ve seen this on TV” or even by expressing their own opinions about the brands they want (Chaudhary, et al., 2012, p.3). According to Anitha and Mohan (2016, p.271), persuasive pestering is the most common form of pestering. Children persistently request, beg or express their opinion about products that directly or indirectly relate to them (Anitha and Mohan (2016, p.271)

Akter (2017, p.104) states that children use various persuasion techniques. Some children argue with their parents to get products of their choice while some children voice their opinions by providing information to their parents about the products they want (Akter, 2017, p.104). Akter (2017, p.104) believes that children have complete knowledge about products they want which they acquire from different sources and in turn express this information to their parents with the aim of persuading their purchase decision (Akter, 2017, p.104). Due to the persistent requests, some parents avoid shopping with their children (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.271).

Persuasion strategies are important to understand because as children grow, they learn from previously rejected purchase requests and therefore use this information to their advantage for future requests by transforming new persuasive strategies (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.271).

Emotional strategies are where the child whines and nags the parent to purchase the item or brand of their choice (Chaudhary, et al., 2012, p.3).

Emotional pestering includes expressing anger, sweet talk, being nice and loving (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.271). Children use their emotions to influence their parents buying decisions by either expressing anger in the form of yelling or refusing to cooperate with their parents during the buying process, also children can create embarrassing situations by laying on the floor, kicking and crying or simply refusing to talk to their parents during the buying process (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.271). Alternatively, children can also be extremely nice and loving with their parents during the buying process, as well as sweet-talking their parents into buying items of their choice (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.271). Emotional pestering is found in children from a youthful age (Anitha & Mohan, 201, p.271). Emotional pestering is often used by younger children because less knowledge about a product is required for children to deploy their emotional tactics in a buying decision (Anitha & Mohan, 201, p.271).

2.5 FACTORS AFFECTING CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE

Age is a factor that affects the type of influence strategy that children use to influence purchase decisions (Baldassare, 2015, p.5). According to Ishaque and Tufail (2014, p.165), pre-teens have a substantial impact in family decision making. These authors believe that children get more influential the closer they get to their teen years (Ishaque and Tufail, 2014, p.165). Similarly, Sharma and Shonwaney (2014, p.42) believe that older children tend to exert more influence in family decision making.

Another study by Ali and Kerpcarova (2019, p.21) agree that the age of a child is an important factor to be considered and further state that children between the ages of five and ten years old take part in family decision making on a high level, however children aged 10 to 14 years old are more involved in family decision making and children aged 13 to 17 years old have the ability to make decisions like an adult consumer would and are most involved in family decision making . Ali and Kerpcarova (2019, p.21) agree that the older children are, the more influence the child has in family decision making.

Sharma and Shonwaney (2014, p.42) found that older children have a better ability to analyze and think compared to younger children. Martensen and Gronholdt (2008, p. 14) agreed that older children have a better cognitive ability in comparison to younger children. Martensen and Gronholdt (2008, p. 14) believe that younger children merely ask their parents for requests which affect their parent's decision making whereas, older children tend to persuade and negotiate their requests with their parents. This is due to older children having the ability to understand and perceive situations better which puts them in a position that allows them to handle their argumentative skills better. Older children have greater product knowledge and are able to processes information better coupled with them being most likely to mimic the consumer behaviour of their parents, thus making older children employ more advanced strategies when requesting for something in comparison to younger children who simply ask (Martensen and Gronholdt, 2008, p. 14).

Therefore older children tend to influence their parent's decision making about furniture and cars and are more brand and price-conscious as compared to younger children who request more food products and for specific brands (Sharma and Shonwaney, 2014, p.42). In addition, girls are also seen to use less aggressive strategies compared to boys and mothers are more susceptible to

agreeing to the purchase requests of their sons rather than their daughters (Ishaque and Tufail, 2014, p.164).

Research has shown a correlation between a family's socioeconomic status and the influence of children on family decision making (Sharma & Shonwaney, 2013, p.41). Previous research states that children from higher-income families have a more prominent impact over what their families buy (Jain & Dave, 2015, p.45). Children who belong to wealthier families are seen to socialise faster than those children from lower socio-economic families; hence children from high income families have a greater knowledge of the purchase market (Sharma & Shonwaney, 2013, p.41).

In addition, research also shows that children tend to have more influence in the purchase decision of family if the income level of the family is high and amongst the upper socio-economic class (Ahmed, *et al.*, 2015, p.12). This is due to the risk experienced by the upper class which tends to be lower in comparison to the lower class. Thus, parents belonging to a higher income class group will be more willing to involve their children in the decision-making process compared to lower income class parents (Ahmed, *et al.*, 2015, p.12).

Another influencing factor is the intensity of desire for the product. The greater the desire for the product, the greater the influence of the child and vice versa (Ishaque and Tufail, 2014, p.164). Martensen and Gronholdt (2008, p. 14) agree that the degree of influence employed by children depends on how attracted or interested children are to the product. Products that pertaining to children's own use are expected to be recognized as the most relevant. Therefore, children are expected to have the strongest influence on decisions for products which they are directly involved in consuming. Ahmed, Ameen, Shaikh and Memon (2015, p.9) further state that that children place greater influence on products which catch their interest levels and that children will have more influence on products that are related to their interest like eatables, gadgets and toys relative to products that used in family consumption and related to household goods.

Several factors are seen to have add to the influence that children have on their family's decision making across different product categories (Ahmed, *et al.*, 2015, p.12). Children are seen to have lesser influence on product categories that a higher in value such as cars, insurance, housing, etc (Ahmed, *et al.*, 2015, p.12). Martensen and Gronholdt (2008, p. 15) also stated that children's influence is anticipated to be lower for family products that are costly such as TVs and cars. Due to the financial risk associated with these products, parents will most likely opt to make these

decisions without asking the child for their opinion or taking the child's opinion into consideration. Hence Children are seen to have the least influence on durable and expensive products Martensen and Gronholdt (2008, p. 15). Whilst children influence product categories such as toys, cereals, children's clothing and snacks, with cereal being the most influenced product category (Ahmed, *et al.*, 2015, p.12).

2.6 PARENTAL RESPONSES TO INFLUENCE STRATEGIES

Some parents try to adopt an authoritative role over their children when it comes to purchasing, however, some parents may struggle to resist pester power and the urge to give in to their children's requests (Kumar, 2012, p.7). Most parents feel that in order to maintain control over their children and not appear weak, they need to overlook the demands of their children (Kumar, 2012, p.7).

A study on pester power found that 63% of the parents studied gave in to the desires of their children once every 2-3 times, while 21% gave in to the desires of their children every single time (Kumar, 2012, p.7). Kumar states that the success rate of children influencing their parents purchasing decisions is relatively high (Kumar, 2012, p.4). Prible (2017, p.28) supports this statement and states that almost half of the time parent's surrender to the requests of their children because parents cannot handle the pestering behaviour of their children (Prible, 2017, p. 28).

Another study on pester power done by Shah and Malik (2017, p.532) found that 22.9% of the parents surveyed do not show any reaction to their child's request, whilst 14.87% of parents agreed to their child's request. The study further revealed that 10.37% of parents ask their child to buy a substitute product and 7.41% of parent's negotiate with their child and ask them to do something in return in order to get their request.

Four forms of parental responses to their children's requests have been identified; assent, procrastinate, negotiate and dissent (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p272; Marshal, 2014, pg.5):

- Assent – when parents agree to purchase the requested product (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272). Parents may hold the marketers responsible for their children's pestering but make the purchase anyway (Prible, 2017, p.29).
- Dissent – when parents refuse or disagree to purchase the requested product (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p272; Marshal, 2014, pg.5). The parent will ignore the request completely and decline to purchase the product (Prible, 2017, p.29).

- Procrastinate – when parents keep the requested product in mind (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272). Parents delay the purchase and not give in to requests immediately (Prible, 2017, p. 28). Procrastination reinforces the proof that parents do give in or agree to their children's demands most of the time rather than every single time (Prible, 2017, p.28). The parent will delay or postpone the request (Prible, 2017, p.29).
- Negotiate- when parents and children come to a mutual agreement (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272) or children, in exchange for the desired product agree to perform a certain task i.e. a chore (Prible, 2017, p. 28). Children try negotiating with their parents by trying to offer and alternative or substitute because the item being requested is too expensive and the parent wants to avoid a clash with their child (Prible, 2017, p.29).

2.7 FAMILY COMMUNICATION STRUCTURE AS A FACTOR AFFECTING CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE

A child's consumer behaviour is developed through observing their parents shopping behaviour; therefore the type of family in which a child grows up is also a significant factor in the role and impact that children have in family decision making (Ishaque & Tufail, 2014, p.164). Jain and Dave (2015, p.46) suggest that some families treat children more as equals whilst other families view their children as subordinates to their (the parent's) authority. The extent or degree of family authority depends on the type of family a child is raised in (Jain & Dave, 2015, p.46).

Family communication patterns can be seen as an influencing factor to the responses of parents (Sharma and Shonwaney, 2014, p.42). The communication pattern between parents and children is an important factor to consider because some families encourage their children to give their opinion and to fully express themselves without fear, while some families do not. If children aren't free to express their requests, then they cannot influence purchase decisions (Sharma and Shonwaney, 2014, p.42).

Anitha and Mohan (2016) believe that family communication structures affect the type of influence strategy that children use to influence the final purchase outcomes. Anitha and Mohan (2016, p.270) propose that the strong influence that children have over their families today is due to the way life has changed, how family structures and communications have changed which has aided children with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to assist them in being consumers, "opinion givers and co-deciders" (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.270). Anitha and Mohan (2016,

p.270) also believe that children use different emotional and persuasive strategies to get what they want. They often negotiate, bargain and manipulate their parents into buying certain products (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.270). However, it is the type of family structure that children grow up in that ultimately shapes how the child behaves and communicates with their parents in purchase situations (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.271).

2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter drew on the point that children's influence is to ultimately change the final purchasing decision. The chapter also outlined the influence that children exert on their families is molded by the different factors to which they are exposed as well as the increase of available information to children through new technologies and advertising which have all added to the roles that children now play within family decision making. Anitha and Mohan's (2016) model of family communication structures as an influencing factor on children's influence strategies and the responses of parents, is discussed in more detail in the next chapter as this forms the focus of this study.

CHAPTER 3- THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: FAMILY COMMUNICATION STRUCTURES AND THEIR IMPACT ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Family communication is focused on communication behaviour between the parent and child (Clark, 2015, p.19). Individuals communicate differently with all sorts of people that they meet throughout life. People communicate differently with friends compared to how they would with their families or with other unfamiliar persons, but of all communications, family communication is seen to be the most important as it's seen as the "building blocks of all social relationships" (Muscato, 2018, p.1). This chapter outlines the types of family communication structure and the types of family communication styles, as well as the impact of family communication structure. It also gives insight into family communication in South Africa and outlines the family communication model being tested.

3.2 Dimensions of Family Communication Patterns

3.2.1 The Origins of the Family Communication Dimensions

Family communication is a major factor to consider in family decision making. Children feel more comfortable to communicate their requests when their parents are more open and communicate with them (Ishaque & Tufail, 2014, p.168). Sharma & Shonwaney (2013, p.42) agree that family communication is important and plays a vital role in the socialization of children.

In order to measure family communication, a family communication pattern measurement was first developed in 1972 by McLeod, Chaffee and Wackman (1972). The two dimensions of family communication pattern or structures were concept orientation and social orientation (Nash, 2009, p.61). The social orientation dimension refers to those families who control and monitor the behaviour of their children. These parents strive to raise obedient children whereby doing so creates a pleasant, homely environment (Nash, 2009, p.61). Children that belong to families with a social orientation are encouraged to make purchasing decisions that will please others and suppress their own feelings and opinions so as not to offend others (Nash, 2009, p.61). Hu and Bai (2006, p.115) agree that children belonging to families with the socio-orientation tend to be more submissive and will refrain from voicing their opinions so as not to offend anyone.

The concept orientation, however, encourages children to express their own opinions and feelings (Nash, 2009, p.61). The concept orientation refers to parents who have open discussions with their children. Parents with this orientation are seen to encourage their children to talk about their own views and to weigh up alternatives before deciding (Nash, 2009, p.61). Hu & Bai (2006, p.115) propose that children belonging to families with the concept orientation will have a greater influence on family decision making as they are encouraged to participate and voice their opinions.

3.2.2 The Revised Family Communications Pattern Dimensions

The two dimensions (social orientation and concept orientation) were later replaced by Fitzpatrick and Ritchie, who revised the initial family communications pattern measurement (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994, p.277). They renamed the measurement instrument to the Revised Family Communication Pattern measurement (RFCP) and replaced social orientation with conversation orientation and concept orientation with conformity orientation (Baker & Afthanorhan, 2016, p.34).

Conversation orientation refers to how freely family members communicate with one another (Rudi, Walkner & Dworkin, 2014, p.3). The RFCP indicates that when families communicate openly or when families have a conversation orientation, parents and children are able to talk more about any topic (Rudi, *et al.*, 2014, p.3). Families that have a high conversation orientation feel comfortable with discussing many different topics and have an emotionally stimulating conversation (Keating, Russell & Ross, 2013, p.4). Conversation orientation refers to families that spend time together, talk about their emotions, feelings and thoughts (Rudi, *et al.*, 2014, p.3). These families usually consult each other before making decisions and plan family events together (Rudi, *et al.*, 2014, p.3). These families believe that having frequent, open conversations assists in the educating, socializing and overall development of children (Rudi, *et al.*, 2014, p.3).

Conformity orientation refers to families who strive in creating an environment where there is harmony and members of the family are homogenous in their attitudes, beliefs and values (Rudi, *et al.* 2014, p.3). Families who adopt this orientation stress that their children need to be obedient and follow their parents' decisions (Rudi, *et al.* 2014, p.3). Parents in this orientation place greater emphasis on their authoritative role, usually giving advice and monitoring the behaviour of their children through rules and norms rather than allowing their children to express themselves and interpret from their children's perspective (Rudi, *et al.* 2014, p.3).

Families that high conformity orientation find it harder to openly discuss a wide array of topics because parents want to avoid conflict and therefore rather have their children follow their decision making or their way of thinking, rather than giving their children the freedom to express their opinions and risk having a disagreement (Keating, *et al.*, 2013, p.5). Parents who display high conformity orientation expect their children to follow in their footsteps and adopt their beliefs (Keating, *et al.*, 2013, p.5).

Parenting behaviour is seen to influence family communication (Clark, 2015, p.19). How mothers and fathers behave towards their children can influence their children differently (Clark, 2015, p.19). The way in which parents interact with their children can either lead to a positive or negative communication outcome for children (Clark, 2015, p.19). Nash (2009, p.61) believes that family communications have an important impact on family decision making, whereby children who are more open and vocal with their parents tend to have a greater influence in family decision making than those children who come from families where they are stifled (Nash, 2009, p.61). Family communication is important in the way children behave as present and future consumers (Nash, 2009, p.61).

The two dimensions mentioned are not seen to be mutually exclusive, meaning that some families may have both communication orientations present whilst some families might have a lack of both communication orientations altogether (Ali & Kerpcarova, 2019, p.12). That is, families can be both encouraging and controlling, either encouraging or controlling or neither (Ali & Kerpcarova, 2019, p.12). Therefore, the two forms of communication orientation can be portrayed as a matrix of communication styles, with a set of prospects for each ranking from low to high (Ali & Kerpcarova, 2019, p.12).

3.3 TYPES OF FAMILY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

According to the revised family communication pattern (RFCP) measurement a family can be classified into four categories depending on how high or low in conformity and conversation orientation they score on the relevant measures for these dimensions (Osredkar, 2012, p.4). As a result of the family scores on the two communication dimensions (conformity orientation and conversation orientation) a family can be placed on a matrix (as seen in Figure 3.1 below) depicting the four family communication styles: Pluralistic, Consensual, Laissez-faire and Protective styles (Aleti, *et al.*, 2015, p.13).

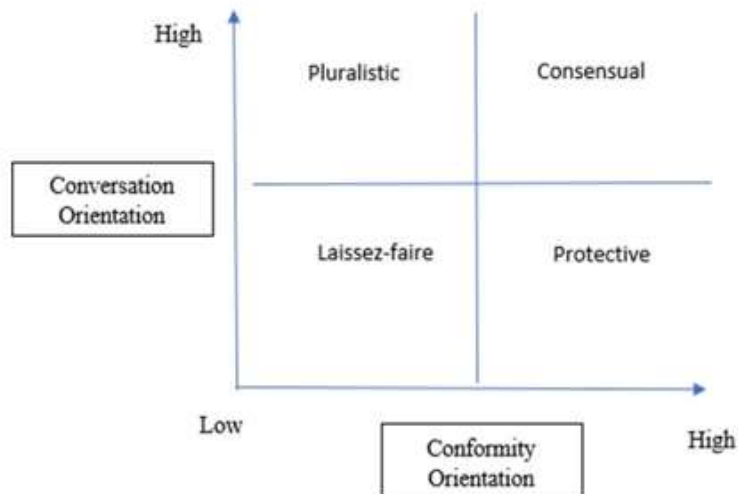


Figure 3- 1: Typology of family communication styles

The four types of communication patterns or styles are:

- Consensual – this family scores high on conversation orientation and high on conformity orientation (i.e. both scores are above the scale mid-point)
- Pluralistic – this family scores high on conversation orientation (above the scale midpoint) but low on conformity orientation (below the scale mid-point)
- Protective – this family scores low on the conversation orientation and high on the conformity orientation
- Laissez-Faire – this family has low conversation and low conformity orientation scores (Osredkar,2012, p.4).

Thus, some families may have both dimensions present whilst some families may lack in one dimension (Aleti, Brennan & Parker, 2015, p.13). In other words, with regards to children's requests families can be both encouraging and controlling, either or neither. The four family communication styles or patterns are described below.

The consensual family-style describes harmony and togetherness within the family (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.271). This family strives to be open and honest with each other and parents permit their children to express their own views and develop their own set of views (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.271). However, families in this category also expect their children to follow family beliefs

and norms and parental authority is imposed with the hopes of children learning from their parents and adopting similar values (Keating, *et al.*, 2013, p.5). Various topics are discussed freely within this family-style where children are encouraged to express their thoughts, however, some topics may prove more difficult to discuss than others, such as those topics that encourage children to be more independent which may go against the family's interdependent values which the parents are trying to instil (Keating, *et al.*, 2013, p.5).

The pluralistic family displays high conversation orientation and low conformity orientation; therefore in this type of family, parents encourage their children to openly communicate and express their thoughts and opinions even if it does not adhere to the family belief or value system (Osredkar, 2012, p.5). Topics that may seem difficult to discuss by other families are relatively simple to discuss by a pluralistic family due to parents being open to accepting their children's opinion and their decision making (Keating, *et al.* 2013, p.5). Children are greatly opinionated in this type of family and lack obedience (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.273).

Protective families are depicted by high conformity and low conversation orientation. A protective family reinforces obedience, parents play an authoritative role, and there isn't much communication between parents and children (Osredkar, 2012, p.5). However, there is social harmony in this family (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272). Due to less communication in these families and children not being able to openly express their belief, children belonging to protective families tend to be easily persuaded when faced with deciding (Osredkar, 2012, p.5).

The laissez-faire family displays low conformity and low conversation orientation (Osredkar, 2012, p.5). The author states further that members of this type of family have very little interaction and children are easily influenced by their peers or anyone outside the family (Osredkar, 2012, p.5). There is very little communication between parents and children and parents don't show interest in decisions made by their children (Cuncic, 2018, p.4). Each member is free to do as they please. Therefore, there is no conflict in this type of family (Cuncic, 2018, p.4).

Sharma and Shonwaney (2013, p.42) feel that family communication conditions the influence of children. Osredkar (2012, p.5) supports this and elaborates that children belonging to families that display high levels of conversation-orientation are most likely to develop better interpersonal communication skills than children belonging to low conversation families.

It has been found that family communication strategies that encouraged supportiveness and

openness have been linked to children having greater self-esteem, whereas children who belong to families where parents instill obedience and authority are seen to have higher stress levels when dealing with family conflicts and overall a lower self-esteem (Clark, 2015, p.20).

3.4 IMPACT OF FAMILY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS

Family communication is an important factor and is crucial to the development of children's consumer behaviour (Hu & Bai, 2006, p.115). These authors state that consumer socialization has stirred interest amongst researchers as it is seen as a significant factor of children's influence in family decision making. They defined consumer socialization as "as the process by which young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace" (Hu & Bai, 2006, p.115). Hu and Bai (2006, p.115) propose that the influence that a child exerts on family decision making largely depends on the family communication in which the child was raised. They explain that parental influence is an important factor in socialization and that children learn and adopt the purchasing and consumption habits of their parents (Hu & Bai, 2006, p.115).

Nash (2009, p.60) agrees that family communication is considered to be a fundamental component in the consumer socialization of children (Nash, 2009, p.60). The style of communication that parents adopt affects the purchase influence of children; this happens when both parents and children communicate about purchases and consumption. Parents who gratify the requests of their children encourage them to be more observant of advertising, thus making children ask or request for products regularly, whereas parents who take the time to discuss the requests of their children with them, in turn, teach their children to develop skills in selection and interpretation of product information (Nash, 2009, p.60). Family communication plays an influential role in the amount of influence that children exert when it comes to family decision making (Nash, 2009, p.61).

3.5 FAMILY COMMUNICATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

There has not been much focus on family communication, parenting style and parental behaviours and their effects on children in the context of South Africa. However, a study by Roman, Makwakwa & Lacante (2016, p.5) found that in South Africa parents across all ethnic groups displayed signs of an authoritative parenting style.

Tustin (2009, p.165) states that there are changing family structures in South Africa due to more women working, higher divorce rates and people deciding to have fewer children; thus children have become more active decision-makers in the family. The study investigated the influence of family communication on durable and non-durable children's products and found that, from a parent's perspective, children belonging to pluralistic families portrayed a higher influence on purchasing of durable products compared to children belonging to protective and laissez-faire families. Children from pluralistic and consensual families were found to exert a higher influence on non-durable products compared to protective parents (Tustin, 2009, p.166).

Hence it appears children belonging to pluralistic and consensual families are more likely to influence their parent's decision making, which is likely to impact the final purchase decision. Therefore, in the current study, the researcher seeks to investigate the role that family communication structure plays in terms of influencing both children's attempts to influence their parents, as well as parent's responses.

Leonardi (2018, p.2) found that children from poorer communities are tasked with the responsibility to make purchasing decisions for their family. This is due to these children having absent fathers, mothers who work, living with grandparents who, due to old age, are unable to go out and shop or children who are orphans and have to take care of themselves.

Culture is an influencing factor in family communication. Different cultures have different beliefs about how families ought to communicate (Muscato, 2018, p.3). If children are expected to follow and embrace family traditions, customs and behaviours, and their communication style will mirror this (Muscato, 2018, p.3). In some cultures, families have parents who make most of the decisions and children are expected to obey their parents, however in other cultures families have diversified beliefs and encourage individuality and growth (Muscato, 2018, p.3).

3.6 THE FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS MODEL BEING TESTED IN THIS RESEARCH

Anitha and Mohan (2016, p.270) propose that the strong influence that children have over their families today is due to the way life has changed and how family structures and communications have changed, which in turn has aided children with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to assist them in being consumers, "opinion givers and co-deciders" (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.270). Anitha and Mohan (2016, p.270) also propose that children use different emotional and

persuasive strategies to get what they want. They often negotiate, bargain and manipulate their parents into buying certain products (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.270). However, it's the type of family structure (family communication pattern) that children grow up in that ultimately shapes how the child behaves and communicates with their parents in purchase situations (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.271).

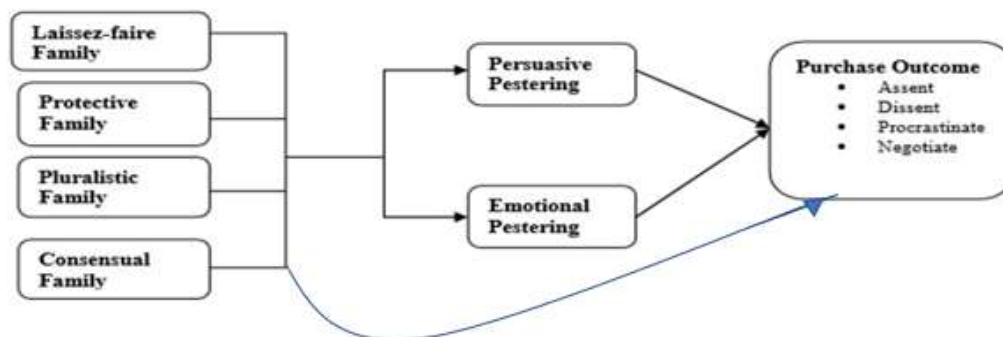


Figure 3- 2: The original model which shows the influence of family structure on pestering and purchase outcomes (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272).

The above model portrays the influence of family structure on pestering and the final purchase outcome. This original model aimed to describe how unique family communications structures impact the pestering strategies used by children which affect the final purchase outcome or parental response (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272).

Anitha and Mohan (2016, p.272) hypothesize that children from protective families exercise less influence on family purchase decisions and are happy to go along with their parents' choices without trying to influence their decision. However, children belonging to the laissez-faire families usually have no choice but to accept their parent's decision due to a lack of communication within this family (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272). These authors propose that children from pluralistic families seldom take 'no' for an answer and will use emotional and persuasive strategies to sway their parents' decisions in their favour, whereas children of consensual families will use persuasive pestering rather than emotional pestering towards parents. Parents belonging to consensual families are more open to accepting the views of their children and most likely will assent to their children's request (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.273).

The model proposes that family communication structure influences parental responses but only through the influence strategies used by children and by the combination of the different types of

pestering and the family communication styles (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272).

3.7 LITERATURE SUPPORT FOR ELEMENTS OF THE MODEL

Whilst no evidence could be found of a full model testing, there is empirical support for elements of the model. For example, family structure and the communication styles within these structures, have been found to have a major influence on the way children behave as consumers (Sundar & Mathew, 2016, p.49). While some family structures promote freedom of choice and expression, other family structures do not. Therefore, it can be said that pester power too is dependent on family structure.

The category of family communication style has an effect on the type of pester power used by children (Sundar & Mathew, 2016, p.49). Children can use emotional or persuasive strategies in purchase situations. It is proposed that the more freedom parents give to their children to express their opinions, the more active and persuasive children will become in the purchasing process (Sundar & Mathew, 2016, p.49). However, if there is hardly any communication between parents and children and parents are more restrictive, children will be less informed about the purchasing process and will lean towards emotional strategies (Sundar & Mathew, 2016, p.49). These strategies then lead to one of the parental purchase outcomes being achieved (Sundar & Mathew, 2016, p.49).

3.8 ADAPTED CONCEPTUAL MODEL FOR THE STUDY

In view the current research study and the researcher amended the original model and proposed the below model below which includes all the possible relationships between family communication structure and parental responses, and the impacts of the child's age on the influence strategy and the parent's age on the parental response.

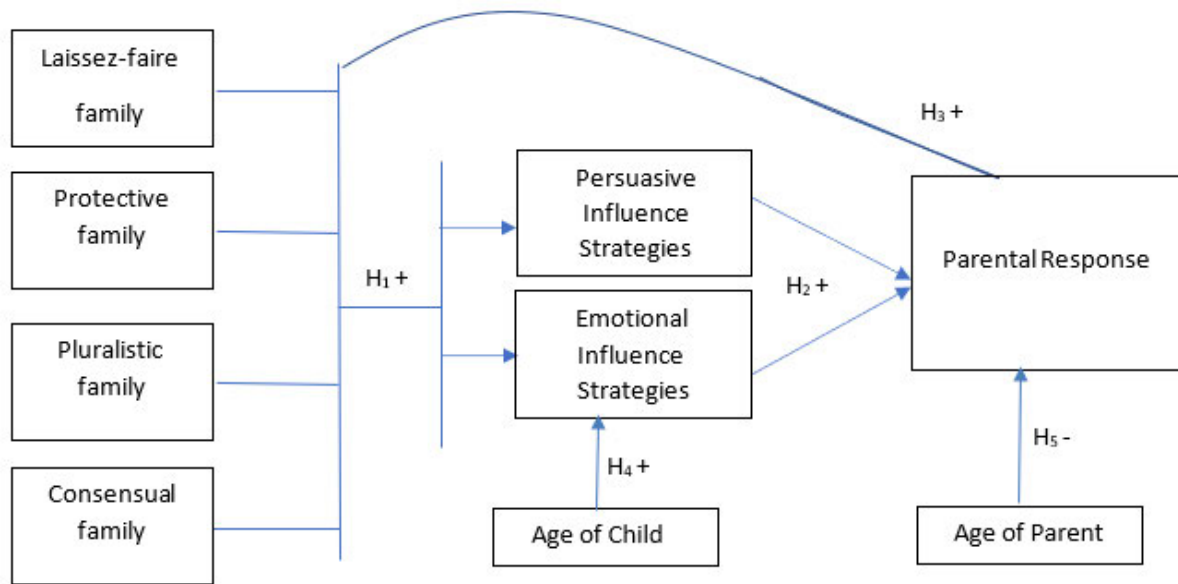


Figure 3- 3:The conceptual model for the study

3.9 Conclusion

From this chapter, it can be deduced that family communication is important and that communication orientations reflect the communication habits of family members. Based on the two communications orientations (conversation and conformity), four family communications patterns can be identified: Laissez-faire, protective, pluralistic and consensual. This research tested an adapted model developed by Anitha & Mohan (2016) which proposed that family communication structure affects children's influence strategies which in turn affect parental responses to those influence strategies. While the study sought to test the model it also slightly adapted the model to determine if there was a direct link between family communication structure and parental responses to children's influence strategies and to determine if the age of children affects the influence strategies used and whether the age of parents affects their responses to the influence strategies. Thus, the chapter ends with the presentation of the adapted conceptual model for the study. The following chapter discusses the research methodology used for the study.

CHAPTER 4 – METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Research methodology describes the research process (Babin & Zikmund, 2016, p.449). Research methodology refers to a systematic way to solve a problem. It includes the type of method used to obtain the best results in the collection and analysis of data (Mboweni-De Klerk, 2008, p.48). The research methodology is seen as an overall approach to the research process, as it aims to provide a work plan for research (Mboweni-De Klerk, 2008, p.48).

Research methodology should include four points;

- Research design
- Sample design
- Data collection and fieldwork
- Analysis

(Babin & Zikmund, 2016, p.449).

Thus, this section entails the research problem and the objectives of the research. It identifies and explains the research philosophy that was chosen as well as the research design and method that was used to collect data for the research. This chapter explains how the researcher analyzed the data and states the ethical considerations.

4.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The research problem was to test the family communication model to determine whether the family communication structure affects the strategies that children use to influence their parent's responses. This study sought to investigate the role that family communication structure has in terms of influencing both children's attempts to influence their parents, as well as parent's responses.

4.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives of the study were:

1. To determine parent's perceptions of the role played by children in family decision-making.
2. To determine the effect of family communication structure on the type of influence strategy used by children.
3. To understand the relationship between the influence strategy used by children and the response of parents.
4. To determine if there is a direct effect of family communication structure on parental behaviour when it comes to responses of parents to children's influence.
5. To examine the influence of age on children's influence strategies and parental responses

4.4 HYPOTHESES

In order to accomplish some of the previously stated research objectives, the following hypotheses were tested:

H₁: the type of family communication structure affects the influence strategy used by children

H₂: a relationship exists between the influence strategy used by children and the response of parents

H₃: the type of family communication structure affects parent's responses to children's influence strategies.

H₄: there is a relationship between age of child and influence strategy

H₅: there is a relationship between age of parent and parental response

If the above hypotheses are found not to be false, then support is provided for the Anitha and Mohan (2016) model.

4.5 RESEARCH PARADIGM AND DESIGN

4.5.1 Research Paradigm

A positivist paradigm was applied to this study. By using a positivist paradigm, it is thought that information can be obtained through observation and experiment (Rahi, 2017, p.1). Positivists select scientific methods to produce information or knowledge (Rahi, 2017, p.1), thus positivism is referred to a scientific approach to research to obtain the truth (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.29). The positivist paradigm usually uses quantitative data, explains the cause and effect relationships between variables, and allows for the testing of hypotheses (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.29). The benefits of using this paradigm are that it is economical for a large amount of data, it provides ease when comparing data and there is a good opportunity for the researcher to gain control of the research process (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.29). However, the disadvantage of using this paradigm is that data collection can be time-consuming and data difficult to analyze (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.29). The positivist paradigm was beneficial to the study as it allowed for the determination of the influence of the family communication structure on children's influence strategies and ultimate influence over family decision making.

4.5.2 Research Approach

For this study, a quantitative research approach was used. Quantitative research involves using numbers to make claims, provide evidence, describes an occurrence and determine relationships or causation (Thomas, 2003, p.2). A quantitative approach is a scientific method and is acknowledged in a positivist paradigm (Rahi, 2017, p.2). Therefore, using a quantitative approach was best suited for the selected positivist paradigm. This research method concentrated on primary data collected from a large population and included the analysis of the data (Rahi, 2017, p.2). The quantitative approach used was helpful in testing the hypotheses and helped to gain a better understanding and attain more accurate results by examining the relationships between the variables in the research model. Therefore, the use of quantitative research assisted the researcher in determining the role of children in the family decision-making process and whether family communication structure has an influence on the pestering strategies that children use which in turn may affect the purchase of goods within the household.

4.5.3 Research Design

A descriptive research design was used for this study. Descriptive research aims to provide insight into who, what, when and where questions of a topic and looks at the relationship between two variables (Cant, Strydom & Jooste, 2007, p.163). A descriptive research design aims to describe specific behaviours as they occur through observational, case study and survey method (Cant, *et al.*, 2007, p.163). This type of research design was, therefore, appropriate to help the researcher to gain insight into the role of children and the influence they have over family purchasing decisions, taking into account the family communication structure.

4.5.4 Survey Method

The survey method can be defined as the collection of information about a large group of people by interviewing or asking questions from a few of them (Ponto, 2015, p.168). Data collection methods include interviews, questionnaires, observations etc. (Ponto, 2015, p.168). Surveys are used in descriptive research, with questionnaire techniques being the most suitable form of collecting information from a larger sample (Ponto, 2015, p.168).

4.6 THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT & CONSTRUCT MEASURES

A structured questionnaire was the most suitable for this study as it is most economical for collecting large amounts of data (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.147). Questionnaires are usually used as a survey instrument for descriptive research designs as it is seen to be an effective way of collecting specific data (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.147). Questionnaires are also seen to be a low-cost method of collecting data from a relatively large sample which can, if they want, remain anonymous (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.147). For this study, a standardized questionnaire with closed-ended questions was used to obtain information from respondents.

Section A and Section B of the questionnaire obtained information about the type of family communication structure that best represented the respondent's family. The questionnaire provided the researcher with information that could be used to categorize each family into one of the four types of family in terms of communication style.

Section C collected information on the parent demographics and Section D on the first child demographics, such as age of parent and children, gender, race and religion the next part of the questionnaire comprised of questions about the influence strategies the child used. Section E measured persuasion strategies and emotional strategies. These questions assisted the researcher in identifying which influence strategy is most commonly used by children to influence parent's decisions.

The Parental Response, section F of the questionnaire attempted to gain insight into the response strategy used by the parents. The questions asked the respondent how often they give in to the requests of the child and how they respond to influence strategies across different product categories.

Sections D to F of the questionnaire were repeated so that parents with more than one child could complete the child demographics, influence and response sections for each child.

4.6.1 Family Communication Pattern

In order to distinguish the family communication structure applicable to respondents, the **Revised Family Communication Pattern** instrument was used. The Family Communication Pattern instrument was first developed in 1972 by McLeod & Chaffee to show how parents communicate with their children (Huang, 2010, p.12). Two dimensions of the Family Communication Pattern (FCP) were developed: social orientation & concept orientation. Social orientation referred to families who are more controlling and commanding, whereas the concept orientation referred to families who are more open and encouraging to their children expressing their ideas and feelings (Huang, 2010, p.12). The first FCP instrument consisted of a set of 10 questions to measure the family communication pattern. It included five questions which measured social orientation and five questions to measure concept orientation (Huang, 2010, p.12). By using these two dimensions (social orientation and concept orientation), McLeod and Chaffee (1972) were able to categorize families into four different types: Protective, Pluralistic, Consensual and Laissez-Flare, thus creating a model for the family communication pattern (Huang, 2010, p.12).

In 1990, the original FCP model was revised and modified by Ritchie and Fitzpatrick (Huang, 2010, p.13). The FCP dimensions were replaced by two new dimensions, the conformity orientation concept and the conversational concept. The conformity orientation concept replaced

the social orientation and the conversational concept replaced the concept orientation (Huang, 2010, p.13).

In addition, Ritchie and Fitzpatrick developed a Revised Family Communication Pattern instrument to measure the two dimensions (Huang, 2010, p.14). A set of 26 questions were developed: 11 questions to measure conformity orientation and 15 questions to measure conversational orientation. From this, families can then be categorized into one of the four types of families (Huang, 2010, p.14). (See Data analysis section below).

Composite scores for each dimension is calculated and if the score is above the scale midpoint of three then respondents were considered high on the dimension and the score was below the midpoint of three, then respondents were considered low (Huang, 2010, p.14). Hence, respondents were then classified into one of the four types of families

The four types of communication patterns or styles are:

- Consensual – this family scores high on conversation orientation and high on conformity orientation (i.e. both scores are above the scale mid-point)
- Pluralistic – this family scores high on conversation orientation (above the scale midpoint) but low on conformity orientation (below the scale mid-point)
- Protective – this family scores low on the conversation orientation and high on the conformity orientation
- Laissez-Faire – this family has low conversation and low conformity orientation scores (Osredkar,2012, p.4).

The Revised Communication Pattern instrument was used by Huang (2010) in a study done on family communication patterns, communication apprehension and socio-communicative orientation amongst Chinese students. The study found the FCP instrument to be reliable, with Cronbach alphas of 0.75 for the 15-question measurement of the conversational orientation and 0.87 for the 11-question measurement of conformity orientation (Huang, 2010, p.19).

4.6.2 Children's Influence Strategies

The questionnaire also determined the type of pestering behaviour that children use to persuade their families to purchase their choice of product (Section E) To determine whether children use

persuasive or emotional tactics to persuade their parents, the researcher adapted a scale from a study on children's use of pester power in India by Chaudhary, *et al.*, (2012, p.3). The study investigated different strategies that are used by children today to influence their parents. However, as this study tested Anitha and Mohan's (2016) model, the questionnaire focused on measuring only the emotional and persuasive tactics that children use as per the model. Therefore, only questions relevant to these tactics were included:

- **Persuasion Strategy** – This is where children attempt to convince their parents to buy certain products by using terms such as “my friends have it” or “I’ve seen this on TV” or even by expressing their own opinions about the brands they want (Chaudhary, *et al.*, 2012, p.3).
- **Emotional Strategies** - This is where the child whines and nags the parent to purchase the item or brand of their choice (Chaudhary, *et al.*, 2012, p.3).

The first seven questions in the questionnaire (Section E questions 1-7) pertained to persuasion strategies and the remaining four questions (Section E Questions 8 – 11) pertained to emotional strategies that children use (Chaudhary, *et al.*, 2012, p.5). A pilot study conducted by Chaudhary (2012) which ensured that the questionnaire could be trusted as problems were identified and revised to ensure that respondents clearly understood the questions. The questionnaire was also found to be reliable, having a Cronbach alpha of 0.7 (Chaudhary, *et al.*, 2012, p. 4). The study used a five-point Likert scale to measure the influence strategies used by children to coax their parents into buying certain products, with 1- being never and 5- being every time (Chaudhary, *et al.*, 2012, p. 4).

4.6.3 Parent's Responses

In order to measure the final purchase outcome by parents, the researcher adapted questions from a questionnaire used by Akter (2017, p.161) on children's roles in the family buying processes comparing British Bangladeshi and Bangladeshi families.

For this study, the researcher aimed to measure the extent to which parents give in to children's pestering and this was the measure used for parental response for the hypothesis testing. Akter (2017, p.196) conducted a pilot survey to ensure that the sample audience understood the questionnaire and also tested the validity and reliability of the structured survey. The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale, with 1- being never and 5- being always. It also had a Cronbach alpha of 0.656, which showed

that the questionnaire is acceptable to use (Akter, 2017, p.196).

In order to address objective one to understand parent's perception of the influence children have on purchases Section F, question two determined parent responses to different product category requests and thus determined what purchase outcome is most likely to arise from parents being influenced by their children across different product categories. There were four possible parental response options:

- **Assent** – when parents agree to purchase the requested product (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272).
- **Dissent** – when parents refuse or disagree to purchase the requested product (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272)
- **Procrastinate** – when parents keep the requested product in mind (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272). Parents delay the purchase and do not give in to requests immediately (Prible, 2017, p. 28).
- **Negotiate**- when parents and children come to a mutual agreement (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272) or children, in exchange for the desired product agree to perform a certain task e.g. a chore (Prible, 2017, p. 28).

The table above illustrates a summary of the objectives and the questions from the questionnaire.

Table 4- 1: Summary of the research objectives and relevant sections and questions from the questionnaire

Objective 1: To determine parent's perceptions of the role played by children in family decision- making.	Section F: Parental Response, questions 1-3
Objective 2: To determine the effect of family communication structure on the type of influence strategy used by children.	Section A: Conformity orientation, questions 1-11 Section B: Conversation orientation, questions 1-15. Composite scores for conformity orientation and conservation orientation were combined to determine the FCP for the respondent Section E: Types of influence behavior used by children, questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuasive Strategy questions 1-6 • Emotional strategy questions 7-10
Objective 3: To understand the relationship between the influence strategy used by children and the response of parents	Section F: Parental Responses, question 1 Section E: Types of influence behavior used by children, questions 1-10
Objective 5: To examine the influence of age on children's influence strategies and parental responses	Section D: Child's demographics, question 1 and Section E: Types of influence behavior used by children, questions 1-10 Section C: Parents demographics, question 2 and Section F: Parental Responses, question 1

4.7 SAMPLE DESIGN

The sampling design process comprised of five parts; identifying the population, recognizing the sample frame and determining the sampling design. Thereafter, a sample size was determined and the method used for executing the sampling process (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.244).

4.7.1 Defining the population

The sample refers to a subset of the population that will be selected for the study (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.241). This study focused on the influence of family communication on influence strategies used by children and the final purchase outcome; therefore the target population was parents (both dual and single) who have children who live at home with them, up until the age of 18 years old. The sample population, therefore comprised of parents who have children 18 years old or younger who reside in the family home. The reason for including all ages of children was to determine whether the age of children affects influence strategies used by children and in turn their parent's purchase response.

4.7.2 Determining sampling design

Probability sampling refers to a technique whereby the elements within the population have a known, non-zero chance of being selected to participate in the study (Babin and Zikmund, 2016, p.348), whereas, non-probability sampling refers to a technique whereby all members of the population have an unknown chance of being chosen to participate in the study and are selected based on convenience or personal judgment (Babin and Zikmund, 2016, p.348).

Due to the fact that this study focused on the influence of family communication structure on pester power and the final purchase outcome, the sample population was centered around parents who have children 18 years old or younger. Locating a list of these population elements, i.e. a sampling frame necessary for probability sampling (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.247) was not possible, therefore non-probability sampling needed to be used.

Snowball sampling is the type of non-probability sampling that was used. Snowball sampling, also known as chain referrals, is a method of sampling in which one or a few individuals are initially selected to participate in the study and those individuals recruit new respondents from their acquaintances (Ochoa, 2017, p.1). Snowball sampling allows the sample size to grow as the initial individuals selected recruit respondents they know to join in the study (Ochoa, 2017, p.1). The

sample starts off small but ‘snowballs’ into a greater sample during the course of the research (Crossman, 2018, p.1). Snowball sampling is seen as a popular sampling technique among researchers whose population is difficult to locate (Crossman, 2018, p.1). This method of sampling proves to be more effective when studying a sample with similar characteristics, as people are most likely to get in touch with others that are in the same or similar situations (Ochoa, 2017, p.1). Thus, it is appropriate for a sample of parents with children.

There are two basic types of snowball sampling:

- **Linear Sampling-** where each participant selects only one other participant so that the sample grows at a linear pace (Ochoa, 2017, p.1).
- **Exponential Sampling-** where each participant recruits two or more individuals so that more people participate in the study and the faster the sample will grow (Ochoa, 2017, p.1).

For this study, the researcher used exponential snowball sampling so that the desired number of respondents needed for the study was reached at a faster rate.

4.7.3 Determining the sample size

There are no statistics of the number of parents or families that reside in Pietermaritzburg; therefore, the total population of Pietermaritzburg was used to work out the sample size for this study.

Pietermaritzburg, according to the World Population Review (2018, p.1), has an estimated population of 750 845. There are two factors that need to be considered when calculating the sample size; the confidence interval, also known as the margin of error and the confidence level (Qualtrics, 2010, p1). The confidence interval or margin of error is usually 5% or lower and means that should one ask a question of the sample using a confidence interval of 4%, and 47% of your sample choose a certain answer, you can be sure that between 43% (47-4) and 51% (47+4) of the population would have chosen the same answer, should one have asked the entire population (Siegle, no date, p.1). The confidence level refers to how sure one can be that the probability of their estimators is correct. The confidence level is usually 95% and means that you can be 95% certain that your findings are correct (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p.21).

Using the approximate population of 750845, the sample for this study should be 384 respondents,

according to a sample size calculator, with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level (Qualtrics, 2010, p1). The study is using a non-probability sampling technique which looking at the sample sizes from previous studies done on family communication and children's influences on purchase decisions, the sample size chosen for this study was guided by the sample sizes observed from previous, similar studies. The researcher examined the sample sizes from four other studies. The studies on family communication done by Akter (2017), Aggarwal and Dwarka (2019) and Savita and Geetika (2019) and the study of children's influences done by Suwindinata (2012) had sample sizes of 200, 300, 320 and 300 respectively.

Therefore, the researcher combined the sample sizes of the four studies, which gives a total of 1120 which will make up the approximate population. Using a sample size calculator with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level, the sample size for this study should be 287 respondents (Qualtrics, 2010, p1). Therefore, the researcher rounded off the desired sample to 300 to account for possible incomplete or unusable responses.

4.7.4 Executing the sampling process

For this study's snowball sampling, the researcher selected 24 initial respondents who have children 18 years or younger who reside in the family home. The initial 24 respondents were found through the researcher's acquaintances. South Africa is a rainbow nation; therefore, it was important to determine whether families of different races respond differently to the pestering or requests of their children and purchase decision making compared to other races. Therefore, the researcher divided the initial 24 parents equally among the main race groups, namely; White, Indian, Black and Coloured so that each race is equally represented. The researcher also divided each race group into groups of parents who have children in the following age groups: under 6, tweens (7-12) and teenagers (13-18). Therefore, the researcher recruited two parents per age group across the different race groups in order to make up the initial 24 respondents. Thereafter, the researcher asked each parent, from the initial 24 chosen, to nominate or recruit six other parents who have children who live at home and are 18 years old or younger. Then those respondents were asked to nominate a further three respondents who gave the researcher a large enough sample (taking into consideration that not everyone would agree to participate in the study). Parents who have children in more than one age category were counted as two respondents. The initial participant either forwarded the questionnaire to those that they had selected or gave the researcher an email address so that the researcher was able to forward the questionnaire to them. The questionnaire (Appendix

C) was emailed or a hard copy was given to the respondents to complete. The researcher allocated ten days in which the questionnaire was completed and returned, either emailed back or the researcher collected the completed questionnaires from the respondents. The snowball sample continued until a total of 300 completed questionnaires were obtained.

4.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Once all the questionnaires were completed and collected, the data was captured and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS was used because it is a “windows-based program that can be used to perform data entry and analysis and to create tables and graphs” (UVM, no date). SPSS is also proficient with computing large amounts of data (UVM, no date). Analyzed data was presented in the form of a written report as well as in bar graphs and tables to allow for easy understanding. Descriptive statistical testing was done to look for frequencies and patterns in the data.

Descriptive statistics refer to the use of numbers and graphs in order to sort data in an understandable way for interpretation. Descriptive statistics assist in summarizing large amounts of data in a clear and precise way to understand the data collected more easily (Jaggi, 2003, p.1). There are two methods in which descriptive statistics can be portrayed:

- Through a numerical approach
- Through a graphical approach

The numerical approach is more precise and gave the researcher information about the average, using statistical mean and standard deviation, whereas a graphical approach is used to identify patterns in the data. The numerical and graphical approach complement each other, and therefore researchers tend to use both approaches (Jaggi, 2003, p.1).

One characteristic of a single variable is central tendency. Central tendency is referred to as the estimated center of distribution of data values. There are 3 types of central tendency

- Mean- - a most common method of central tendency and shows the average. The mean is calculated by adding up all the values and dividing by the number of values.
- Median – the median shows the exact center or middle of a set of values in numerical order and finding the center of the sample.
- Mode – the mode refers to the most frequently occurring value in the set of values.

(Jaggi, 2003, p.1).

For this study, the researcher used non-parametric testing to assist in testing the hypotheses of the study. To measure family communication, the FCP instrument was used. Frequency tables were used to analyse the two dimensions of FCP which are conformity orientation and conversation orientation. The researcher used the Kruskal Wallis test to test FCP and influence strategies and parental responses. Also, the Spearman Rank order correlation test was used to further analyse the effects of age on influence strategies and parental responses

4.9 DATA QUALITY CONTROL

Validity refers to the extent to which a measurement instrument measures the variables that it was intended to measure (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p. 225).

Construct Validity will be used to ensure that data collected is valid. Construct validity determines how well a test or study measures up to its claims (Churchill, Brown & Suter 2010, p. 260). It measures the relationship among the variables (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p. 227).

Construct Validity can be divided into 2 segments;

1. Convergent Validity – where scores from two different measurements that measure the same concept are highly correlated (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p. 227).
2. Discriminant Validity – When two variables are seen to be uncorrelated based on theory and the scores from measuring them show that they are uncorrelated (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p. 227).

To measure convergent and discriminant validity, correlation analysis is generally used (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p. 227). Correlation analysis measures to what degree any two measures relate to each other (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p. 227).

For convergent validity the researcher showed that the measures that should be related are in fact related; the measures should be highly correlated and for discriminant validity, the researcher showed that the measures that are not intended to be related are in fact not related, the measures should hold a low correlation (Trochim, 2006, p.1).

A confirmatory factor analysis was done which showed the unidimensionality of the scales used in the study. Prior to performing the confirmatory factor analysis, the suitability of the data for the factor analysis was assessed using the The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity which support testing factorability (Pallent, 2010, p.165). These results provided support for convergent and discriminant validity of these constructs which are discussed in the next chapter.

For this study, the FCP instrument was used to measure the family communication pattern. This measured pester power used by children to influence their parents purchase decision and the purchase outcomes, questionnaires from two independent studies were adapted to suit the current study. The questions from the studies done by Huang (2010), Akter (2017) and Chaudhary, et al. (2012) were pre-tested in the pilot stage to determine their validity. A pre-test is done on a small sample of respondents before the main study and helps in identifying any problem such as ambiguous wording in a questionnaire (Insightsassociation, 2018, p.1). Pre-testing helps to identify possible flaws in the study and helps the researcher avoid wasting time, money and energy (Calitz, 2009, p.258).

All three independent measures from the studies done by Huang (2010), Akter (2017) and Chaudhary, *et al.* (2012) were found to have favourable Cronbach alpha's in the respective studies, which shows reliability. Reliability refers to the degree to which data is free from random error, thereby providing consistent data (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p. 228). There are four general estimators that are used to ensure data is reliable (Trochim, 2006, p.1):

1. **Inter-Rater/Observer Reliability:** The degree to which different raters/observers give consistent answers or estimates.
2. **Test-Retest Reliability:** Tests the consistency of a measure assessed over time.
3. **Parallel-Forms Reliability:** Tests reliability of two tests which are created the same way, from the same content.
4. **Internal Consistency Reliability:** Tests the consistency of results across items, often measured with Cronbach's Alpha.

Internal Consistency Reliability was used to determine how all items on the test relate to their respective variables. Reliability of the measures is presented in the next chapter.

4.10 ETHICAL CLEARANCE

The sample comprised of parents who have children 18 years old or younger in the Pietermaritzburg area, therefore the ethical codes were adhered to in order to conduct the research. Ethical clearance was applied for by the researcher and upon ethical clearance, the researcher obtained the permission letter from the Research Office (in the Appendix A). An informed consent form was attached to each questionnaire (See Appendix B), for the parents to complete to participate in the study. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the research and the fact that

the research was voluntary, they could withdraw at any time, and that individual confidentiality was applied.

4.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined that a quantitative, descriptive research was used. Data which was collected for the study by means of a structured questionnaire which comprised of close ended questions and was distributed to parents who have children 18 years old and younger in the Pietermaritzburg area. The primary data collected was captured into SPSS where the researcher used non-parametric testing to analyze the collected data. The next chapter focuses on the research findings and will be discussed using tables and graphs to illustrate the data collected.

CHAPTER 5 - FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the findings which the researcher gathered during the data collection process with the use of a structured questionnaire which was distributed to parents who have children 18 years old and younger in the Pietermaritzburg area. This study sought to investigate the role that family communication structure plays in terms of influencing both children's attempts to influence their parents, as well as parent's responses. In this chapter frequencies of the demographic profile of parents and children were analyzed. Validity and reliability measures were analyzed, as well. The researcher conducted a series of non-parametric tests such as the Kruskal Wallis and the Spearman Rank order test which assisted in testing the hypotheses and objectives of the study.

5.2 SAMPLE PROFILE

The researcher surveyed parents who have children 18years old and younger who reside in the family home. In total 165 parents were sampled who had between one to four children and this made up the total sample of 300 children.

Table 5- 1: Summary of Demographics Profile of parents						
Demographics	Frequency (Percentage)					Missing
Gender	Male	Female				
	76(46.1)	89(53.9)				0
Race	African	White	Indian	Coloured		
	100(60.6)	14(8.5)	30(18.2)	21(12.7)		0
Age	18-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	50 &above	
	0 (0)	24(14.4)	56(33.8)	79(47.8)	6(3.6)	0
Marital Status	Divorced	Married	Single			
	19(11.5)	133(80.6)	13(7.9)			0
Religion	Christian	Hindu	Islam	Shembe	Xhosa	
	122(73.9)	12(7.3)	3(1.8)	12(7.3)	16(9.7)	0

The table is an illustration of the demographic profile of parents used in the study.

The total number of parents surveyed was 165 (n=165), of which the majority of the sample was represented by females (53.9%). In terms of race, 60.6% of the sample was African which made up the majority. Parents who participated in this study were between the ages of 21-30 (14.4%), 31-40 (33.8%), 41-50 (47.8%) and only 3.6% of parents surveyed were 50 years old and above. A great majority of the parents surveyed were married (80.6%) and were of Christian faith (73.9%).

Table 5- 2: Summary of Demographics Profile of Children				
Demographics	Frequency			Missing
	(Percentage)			
Gender	Male	Female		
	146(48.7)	154(51.3)		0
Age	6 & under	7-12	13-18	
	48 (15.9)	97 (32.4)	155 (51.8)	0

The total number of children survey was 300 (n=300). From the table above, it can be seen that the majority of the children reported on by the parents were girls (51.3%) and a large portion of the children were in the age group 13-18 (51.8%)

5.3 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

5.3.1 Validity testing

Construct Validity was used to ensure that the data collected is valid. It measured the relationship among the variables (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013, p. 227). A confirmatory factor analysis was done which showed the unidimensionality of the scales used in the study. Due to cross loadings, five items from the conformity scale and three items from the persuasive influence scale were removed.

Prior to performing the confirmatory factor analysis, the suitability of the data for the factor analysis was assessed. The Kaiser-Meyer-Okin value as presented in Table 5-3 below was 0.595 when rounded off is in line with the recommended value of 6 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity proved statistically significant (0.00) thus supporting the factorability (Pallent, 2010, p.165).

Table 5- 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.595
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	7515.729
	df	378
	Sig.	0.000

Table 5- 4: Confirmatory Factor Analysis for validity				
	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Conversation_11	.834			
Conversation_10	.809			
Conversation_9	.788			
Conversation_8	.778			
Conversation_15	.770			
Conversation_2	.759			
Conversation_14	.755			
Conversation_5	.749			
Conversation_3	.672			
Conversation_6	.661			
Conversation_7	.646			
Conversation_12	.640			
Conversation_4	.599			
Conversation_13	.572			
Conversation_1	.570			
Conformity_6		.879		
Conformity_8		.811		
Conformity_3		.731		
Conformity_1		.726		
Conformity_11		.666		
Conformity_7		.592		
Influence_Behaviour_8			.867	
Influence_Behaviour_7			.840	
Influence_Behaviour_10			.723	
Influence_Behaviour_9			.659	
Influence_Behaviour_5				.890
Influence_Behaviour_4				.888
Influence_Behaviour_1				.716

The results of the confirmatory factor analysis presented in Table 5-4 show that the items for family communication structure (conversation orientation and conformity orientation) and children's influence strategies (persuasive and emotional pestering) scored on Likert-type scales load separately and distinctively onto the four factors that correspond to the constructs in the study. These results provide support for convergent and discriminant validity of these constructs.

5.3.2 Reliability testing

To test reliability, the researcher used internal consistency and measured the Cronbach Alphas of the family communication orientation and children's influence strategy measures.

The results below show that all measures have strong Cronbach alphas which is good as it shows that the scales are highly reliable.

Table 5- 5: Reliability of Items			
Reliability	Cronbach Alpha	Alpha based on standardized items	No. of items
Reliability of Family Communication Structure			
Reliability of Conformity orientation	0.847	0.851	6
Reliability of Conversation orientation	0.925	0.932	15
Reliability of Influence strategies			
Reliability of Emotional strategies	0.853	0.832	4
Reliability of Persuasion strategies	0.856	0.855	3

Therefore, the results above are supportive of validity as well as shows that the scales used in the questionnaire are reliable.

5.4 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE VARIABLES IN THE CONCEPTUAL/ THEORETICAL MODEL

To measure family communication, the researcher used the FCP instrument. The instrument which is comprised of two dimensions: the conformity orientation concept and the conversational concept helped the researcher in categorizing families into the four different types of families. The

analyses presented below are that of frequencies for conformity and conversation orientation as well as a typology of family communication structure.

5.4.1 Conformity - Orientation

To measure conformity orientation respondents indicated their level of agreement with statements on a scale from 1 =strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. According to our respondents, the majority of the answers shown by the frequency table below indicate that parents have a moderately high level of conformity. There were 11 conformity questions asked, and from the data, the researcher understands that the parents in the sample displayed moderately high levels of conformity.

This is indicated by question 1 which has a mean score of 3.99 and a standard deviation 1.17, this shows that the majority of parents strongly agree to tell their children that they will understand a situation once they have grown up and become adults. Also, question 3, which has a mean score of 4.17 and a standard deviation of 0.90, indicates that most of the respondents strongly agree that their children should not backchat with adults. In addition, the respondents also agree that their children should obey the rules set out by their parents and this is indicative from question 11, having a mean score of 4.29 and a standard deviation of 0.90.

Table 5- 6: Summary of frequencies of conformity orientation

FCP	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5	Mean	Std. Dev	Missing
Conformity Orientation								
1. I often tell my children "you'll know when you grow up"	12 (4%)	43 (14.3%)	6 (2%)	115 (38.3%)	124 (41.3%)	3.99	1.17	0
2. I often tell my children that my ideas are right and they should not question them	15 (5%)	126 (42%)	63 (21%)	65 (21.7%)	25 (8.3%)	2.86	1.09	6 (2%)
3. I tell my children that they should not argue with adults	0 (0%)	24 (8%)	27 (9%)	118 (39.3%)	26 (42%)	4.17	0.90	5 (1.7%)
4. I tell my children that there are some things that just should not be talked about	52 (17.3%)	90 (30%)	49 (16.3%)	68 (22.7%)	41 (13.7%)	2.86	1.32	0
5. I tell my children that they should give in on arguments rather than risk making people mad	45 (15%)	98 (32.7%)	55 (18.3%)	51 (17%)	51 (17%)	2.88	1.33	0
6. I expect my children to obey me without question when anything important is involved	33 (11%)	39 (13%)	26 (8.7%)	99 (33%)	103 (34.3%)	3.67	1.35	0
7. I as the parent usually have the last word	22 (7.3%)	107 (35.7%)	13 (4.3%)	92 (30.7%)	66 (22%)	3.24	1.34	0
8. I, as the parent, feel it's important to be the boss of the home	62 (20.7%)	54 (18.0%)	5 (1.7%)	133 (44.3%)	46 (15.3%)	3.16	1.43	0
9. I sometimes become irritated with my children's views if they are different from mine	92 (30.7%)	108 (36%)	59 (19.7%)	31 (10.3%)	10 (3.3%)	2.20	1.09	0
10. If I am not going to approve of my children's idea/suggestion, I don't want to know more about it	115 (38.3%)	129 (43%)	30 (10%)	21 (7%)	5 (1.7%)	1.91	0.95	0
11. At home, I expect my children to obey my rules	15 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	154 (51.3%)	131 (43.7%)	4.29	0.90	0

5.4.2 Conversation – Orientation

Conversation orientation was also measured using a 5-point likert scale, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Respondents were asked a series of 15 questions.

From the data, the researcher can infer that most of the parents from the sample portrayed relatively high levels of open communication between them and their children. This is indicated by questions 2,14 and 15 which have means of 4.26, 4.05 and 4.53 and standard deviations of 0.88, 1.14 and 0.77 respectfully. As well as most of the sample agreed to urge their children to express their own feelings without fear and to communicate their own opinions openly, as indicated by questions 3,11 and 12 each with respective means of 4.20, 4.32 and 4.44 and standard deviations of 0.75, 1.07 and 0.70.

Table 5- 7:Summary of frequencies of conversation orientation								
FCP	Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5	Mean	Std. Dev	Missing
Conversation Orientation								
1. In my family we often talk about topics like politics or religion, where some persons disagree with others	33 (11%)	36 (12%)	16 (5.3%)	129 (43%)	86 (28.7%)	3.66	1.30	0
2. I feel that every member of the family should have some say in family decision making	0 (0%)	27 (9%)	6 (2%)	130 (43.3%)	137 (45.7%)	4.26	0.88	0
3. I often ask for my children's opinion when the family is talking about something	0 (0%)	5 (1.7%)	46 (15.3%)	135 (45%)	114 (38%)	4.20	0.75	0
4. I often ask for my children to challenge my ideas and beliefs	30 (10%)	90 (30%)	64 (21.3%)	75 (25%)	41 (13.7%)	3.02	1.23	0
5. I always say that "you should look at both sides of an issue"	0 (0%)	29 (9.7%)	0 (0%)	140 (46.7%)	126 (42%)	4.23	0.88	5 (1.7%)
6. My children usually tell me what they are thinking about	0 (0%)	24 (8%)	35 (11.7%)	173 (57.7%)	68 (22.7%)	3.95	0.81	0
7. My children can talk to me about almost anything	0 (0%)	21 (7%)	77 (25.7%)	101 (33.7%)	96 (32%)	3.92	0.93	5 (1.7%)
8. In our family we often talk about feelings and emotions	5 (1.7%)	25 (8.3%)	34 (11.3%)	146 (48.7%)	85 (28.3%)	3.95	0.95	5 (1.7%)
9. I often have long, relaxed conversations with my children about nothing in particular	0 (0%)	45 (15%)	43 (14.3%)	116 (38.7%)	96 (32%)	3.88	1.03	0
10. My children enjoy talking to me even if we disagree	0 (0%)	35 (11.7%)	29 (9.7%)	162 (54%)	74 (24.7%)	3.92	0.90	0
11. I like to hear the opinions of my children even if I don't agree with them	20 (6.7%)	5 (1.7%)	3 (1%)	102 (34%)	170 (56.7%)	4.32	1.07	0
12. I encourage my children to express their feeling	0 (0%)	5 (1.7%)	21 (7%)	107 (35.7%)	162 (54%)	4.44	0.70	5 (1.7%)
13. I tend to be very open about my emotions	25 (8.3%)	41 (13.7%)	53 (17.7%)	50 (16.7%)	131 (43.7%)	3.74	1.36	0
14. We often talk as a family about things we have done during the day	0 (0%)	63 (21%)	0 (0%)	97 (32.3%)	140 (46.7%)	4.05	1.14	0
15. In our family we often talk about plans and hope for the future	0 (0%)	15 (5%)	6 (2%)	83 (27.7%)	196 (65.3%)	4.53	0.77	0

Upon analysis, we can conclude that from the analysis of different frequencies of conformity orientation and conversation orientation, which are the two dimensions of the family communication patterns instrument (FCP) used to categorize families into the four types of families, it was found that parents in the sample for this study portray high levels of conformity and high levels of conversation orientation. Thus, categorizing the majority of our sample into the consensual family category.

Due to some cross loadings found during validity testing, certain items were excluded from the composite measures for conformity. Therefore, when conducting the hypothesis testing, the researcher used the items that made up the valid measure, six conformity items were included (conformity questions 1, 3, 6, 7, 8 and 11).

The confirmatory factor analysis showed the unidimensionality of the scale, therefore the values of the six items were summed and averaged to create the conformity orientation dimension. The composite mean for the six items are 3.75 and the standard deviation is 0.90.

No cross loadings were found for conversation orientation therefore, all 15 values were summed and averaged to create the conversation orientation dimension. The composite mean for the 15 conversation items are 4.00 with a standard deviation of 0.68.

5.4.3 Typology of family communication styles

As stated previously, families can be classified into four categories (consensual, pluralistic, protective and laissez-faire) depending on how high or low in conformity and conversation orientation they score (Osredkar, 2012, p.4).

The two dimensions (conformity orientation and conversation orientation) which were explained in the literature section stated that some families may have both dimensions present whilst some families may lack in one or both dimensions (Aleti, *et al.*, 2015, p.13). In other words, with regards to children's requests families can be both encouraging and controlling, either or neither. As a result, the two communication dimensions (conformity orientation and conversation orientation) can be combined to place families in a matrix of communication styles (Pluralistic, Consensual, Laissez-faire and Protective) (Aleti, *et al.*, 2015, p.13).

According to the data gathered, the research classified the respondents from the sample into the category of communication style they fall into base on their conversation and conformity scores. The family communication pattern was calculated for each child in the sample based on their parent's responses to the valid questions in the conversation and conformity scales, thus the sample comprised of 300 respondents. The scale midpoint of 3 was used to split respondents into the high or low category on each dimension (Aleti, *et al.*, 2015, p.13). The matrix below displays the four family communication styles present in the sample.

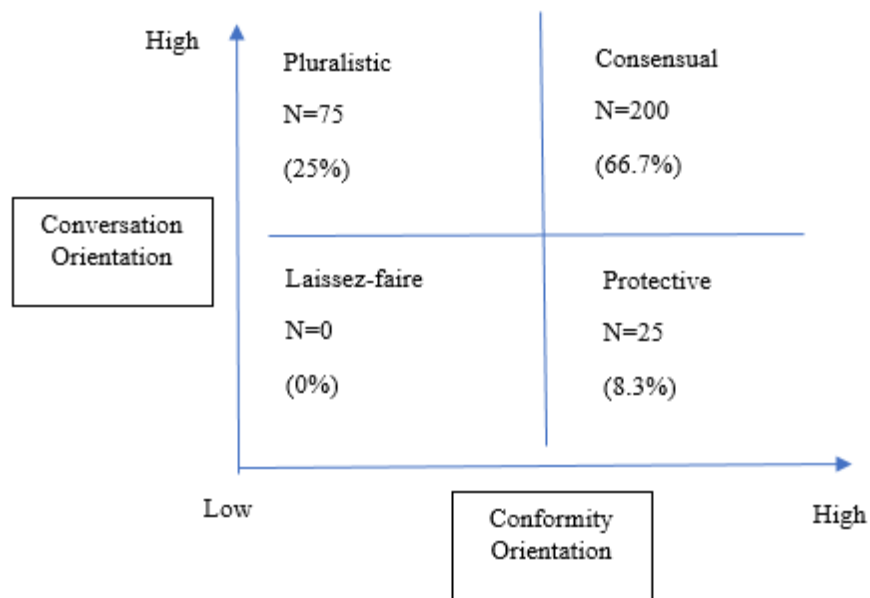


Figure5- 1: Typology of family communication styles

From the matrix, the majority of the sample falls within the consensual family category (66.7%) followed by pluralistic (25%) and protective (8.3%). There were no respondents from the sample who were classified as laissez-faire. Therefore, it is understood that the majority of the sample are consensual families who score high in conversation orientation and high in conformity orientation indicating that these families encourage their children to express their views and opinions freely but at the same time hope that their children learn from them as the parents and adopt similar views which the parents are trying to instill.

5.5 TYPES OF INFLUENCE BEHAVIOUR USED BY CHILDREN

This part of the questionnaire provided the researcher with information on how parents believe children behave when it comes to purchasing decisions and voicing their opinions. This section aimed to identify if children use persuasive or emotional techniques when wanting something.

There were ten questions under this section of the study, the first six questions pertained to persuasive strategies that children use, and the last four questions pertained to emotional techniques that children use. Respondents were asked to rate their children's use of influencing tactics on a scale from 1=Never and 5=Always.

Table 5- 8: Summary of Frequencies of persuasive strategies used by children								
Influence behaviour used by children	Never 1	Rarely 2	Occasionally 3	Most of the time 4	Always 5	Mean	Std. Dev	Missing
Persuasive Strategies								
1. My child expresses their opinion on a product	14 (4.7%)	10 (3.3%)	46 (15.3%)	95 (31.7%)	135 (45%)	4.09	1.07	0
2. My child insists that he/she wants the product	36 (12%)	57 (19%)	71 (23.7%)	67 (22.3%)	69 (23%)	3.23	1.32	0
3. My child pleads and begs for the product	73 (24.3%)	54 (18%)	54 (18%)	49 (46.3%)	65 (21.7%)	2.93	1.49	5 (1.7%)
4. My child tells me about the tv advert that he/she saw about the product	28 (9.3%)	27 (9%)	74 (24.7%)	85 (28.3%)	86 (28.7%)	3.60	1.25	0
5. My child tells me that the product brand is famous or popular	23 (7.7%)	20 (6.7%)	63 (21%)	107 (35.7%)	87 (29%)	3.72	1.18	0
6. My child expresses an external reason for wanting the product (e.g. Need chocolate to regain strength)	74 (24.7%)	48 (16%)	78 (26%)	35 (11.7%)	65 (21.7%)	2.99	1.46	0

Table 5- 9:Summary of Frequencies of emotional strategies used by children

Influence behaviour used by children	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Most of the time	Always	Mean	Std. Dev	Missing
	1	2	3	4	5			
Emotional Strategies								
7. My child nags and whines for the product	120 (40%)	53 (17.7%)	35 (11.7%)	40 (13.3%)	52 (17.3%)	2.50	1.54	0
8. My child expresses anger	142 (47.3%)	41 (13.7%)	44 (14.7%)	24 (8%)	49 (16.3%)	2.32	1.52	0
9. My child becomes unnaturally nice towards me	117 (39%)	44 (14.7%)	67 (22.3%)	51 (17%)	21 (7%)	2.38	1.34	0
10. My child pretends and fakes illness	193 (64.3%)	43 (14.3%)	40 (13.3%)	6 (2%)	18 (6%)	1.71	1.15	0

From the data above, the researcher understands that under persuasive strategies, the majority of the parents in the sample feel that their children always express their opinion on a product. This is evident from question 1, with a mean of 4.09 and a standard deviation of 1.07. In addition, under emotional strategies that children use, the majority of parents found that their children nag and whine for products that they want, evident from question 7 with a mean of 2.50 and a standard deviation of 1.54.

Thus, according to the respondents and the data collect, the majority shown by the frequencies above infer that children use more persuasive techniques to get what they want rather than emotion techniques, this is evident by persuasive strategies having higher means and standard deviations as compared to emotional strategies.

Again, due to cross loadings found during validity testing, certain items were excluded from the composite measures for persuasion influence strategies. Therefore, when conducting the hypothesis testing, the researcher used the items that made up the valid measure, three persuasion items were included (persuasion questions 1, 4 and 5).

The confirmatory factor analysis showed the unidimensionality of the scale, therefore the values of the three items were summed and averaged to create the persuasion influence strategy construct.

The composite mean for the three items are 3.79 and the standard deviation is 1.02.

No cross loadings were found for emotional strategies therefore, all four values were summed and averaged to create the emotional influence strategy construct. The composite mean for the 15 conversation items are 2.23 with a standard deviation of 1.16.

5.6 PARENTAL POSITIVE RESPONSE

This question assisted the researcher in determining how often parents give in to their children's requests. The frequency graph below depicts that parents give in at least occasionally 82% of the time, with 51% giving in most of the time or always.

Table 5- 10: Frequency of parental responses

Parental_Response_Frequency					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	10	3.3	3.3	3.3
	Rarely	44	14.7	14.7	18.0
	Occasionally	93	31.0	31.0	49.0
	Most of the time	108	36.0	36.0	85.0
	Always	45	15.0	15.0	100.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0	

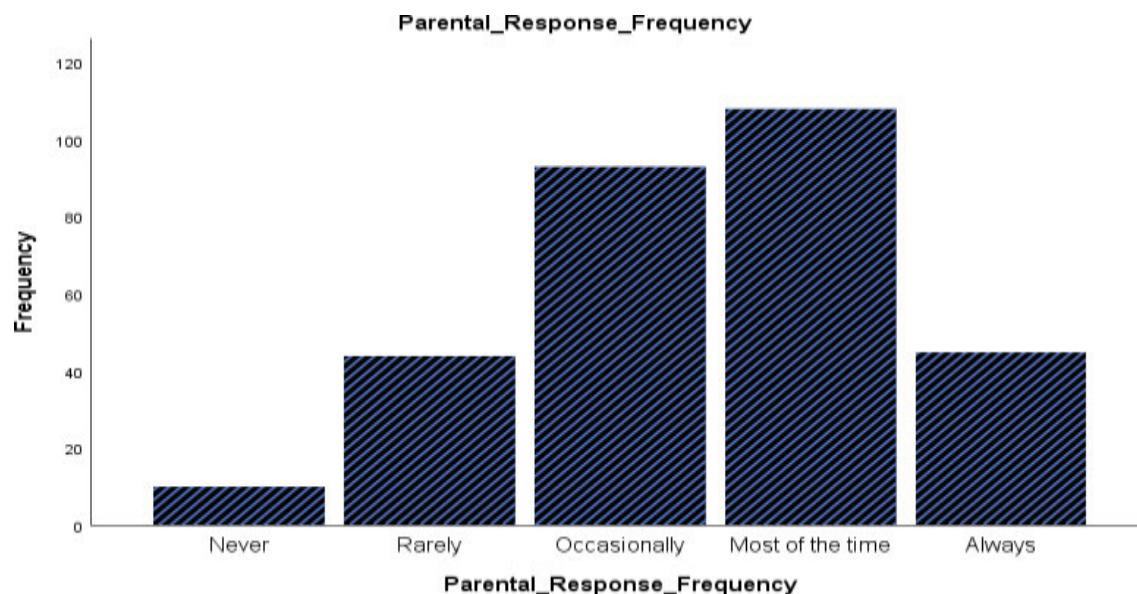


Figure5- 2: Bar graph of parental response frequency

5.7 PURCHASE RESPONSES TO PRODUCT CATEGORIES

Different product categories were tested to see how parents responded to requests of their children based on what they asked for. The frequencies found are as follows:

Table 5- 11: Frequencies of purchase responses to product categories						
	Assent	Dissent	Negotiate	Procrastinate	Mode	Missing
Purchase responses to product categories	1	2	3	4		
Product Categories						
1. Food and Snacks	277 (92.3%)	0	23 (7.7%)	0	1	0
2. Clothes and Shoes	178 (59.3%)	3 (1%)	93 (31%)	26 (8.7%)	1	0
3. Groceries	250 (83.3%)	0	19 (6.3%)	31 (10.3%)	1	0
4. Vacations	96 (32%)	81 (27%)	69 (23%)	54 (18%)	1	0
5. Dining Out	120 (40%)	61 (20.3%)	69 (23%)	50 (16.7%)	1	0
6. Toys	90 (30%)	71 (23.7%)	81 (27%)	58 (19.3%)	1	0

It was found that the sample of parents tend to agree to their children's requests, with the majority of parents agreeing to their children's requests for food and snacks (92.3%) clothes and shoes (59.3%) and groceries (83.3%).

5.8 Hypothesis testing

5.8.1 Hypothesis 1: The type of family communication structure affects influence strategies used by children

To test the first hypothesis, the researcher conducted the Kruskal Wallis test which is a non-parametric test and an alternative to the Anova test, which is used when the assumptions of the Anova test are not met as in the case of this research (Pallant, 2010, 263)

To test this hypothesis, the Kruskal Wallis test was used to test whether the influence strategies used by children vary by family communication type. A test was conducted for each composite influence strategy measure.

5.8.1.1 FCP across Emotional influence strategies

Table 5- 12:Kruskal Wallis Test of FCP across emotional strategies	
	Emotional Strategies
N	300
Median	2.0000
Chi-Square	22.398
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	0.000
Median of Consensual Families (1)	2.00
Median of Pluralistic Families (2)	2.25
Median of Protective Families (3)	1.25

To evaluate whether family communication structure affects emotional influence strategies used by children the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used. The test revealed a significant difference (Asymp. Sig. = 0.000) in family communication affecting the emotional influence strategies used by children. The Kruskal-Wallis Test revealed significantly different median scores for the use of emotional strategies ($\chi^2(2, n=300)=22.398$, $p=0.000$). Although children in all family types exhibited low levels of emotional pestering, emotional pestering was significantly lower (Median= 1.25) in protective families than in either Consensual (Median= 2.00) or Pluralistic families (Median= 2.25).

Table 5- 13: : Post Hoc Mann Whitney U Test (FCP and emotional strategies)

	p-value	z-statistic	Mann-Whitney Test
Consensual Families (1) compared to Pluralistic Families (2)	0.155	-1.423	6671.5
Consensual Families (1) compared to Protective Families (3)	0.00	-3.548	1425.00
Pluralistic Families (2) compared to Protective Families (3)	0.00	-4.636	362.5

A Post Hoc Mann Whitney Test was done to determine where the significant difference lies between the family types and emotional strategies. The test revealed no significant difference between consensual families and pluralistic families ($U = 6671.5$, $z = -1.423$, $p = 0.155$). The test however did reveal that there is a significant difference between consensual families and protective families ($U = 1425.00$, $z = -3.548$, $p = 0.00$) and between pluralistic families and protective families ($U = 362.5$, $z = -4.636$, $p = 0.00$). This indicates that children in protective families display emotional strategies less than those in consensual and pluralistic families.

5.8.1.2 Family communication across Persuasive strategies

Table 5- 14: Kruskal Wallis Test of FCP across persuasive strategies	
	Emotional Strategies
N	300
Median	4.0000
Chi-Square	26.192
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	0.000
Median of Consensual Families (1)	4.33
Median of Pluralistic Families (2)	3.67
Median of Protective Families (3)	3.00

The Kruskal-Wallis Test was used to reveal a significant difference (Asymp. Sig. = 0.000) in family communication affecting the persuasive influence strategies used by children. The Kruskal-Wallis Test revealed significantly different median scores for the use of persuasive strategies ($\chi^2(2, n=300) = 26.192$, $p = 0.000$). Children in all family types displayed moderate levels of

persuasive pestering, persuasive pestering was significantly lower (Median= 3.00) in protective families. Children belonging to pluralistic families also displayed relatively moderate persuasive pestering techniques (Median=3.67), whilst children in Consensual (Median= 4.33) use more persuasive influencing techniques.

Table 5- 15: Post Hoc Mann Whitney U Test (FCP and persuasive strategies)			
	p-value	z-statistic	Mann-Whitney Test
Consensual Families (1) compared to Pluralistic Families (2)	0.86	-1.715	6505.00
Consensual Families (1) compared to Protective Families (3)	0.00	-6.529	520.00
Pluralistic Families (2) compared to Protective Families (3)	0.00	-4.856	335.00

A Post Hoc Mann Whitney Test revealed no significant difference between consensual families and pluralistic families ($U = 6505.00$, $z = -1.715$, $p = 0.86$). The test however did reveal that there is a significant difference between consensual families and protective families ($U = 520.00$, $z = -6.529$, $p = 0.00$) and between pluralistic families and protective families ($U = 335.00$, $z = -4.856$, $p = 0.00$). This indicates that it is indeed true that children in protective families display persuasive strategies less than those in consensual and pluralistic families.

5.8.2. Hypothesis 2: A relationship does exist between the influence strategy used by children and the response of parents

Due to the violation of the assumptions for the correlations and regression analysis, the Spearman's Rank order correlation test was conducted.

Table 5- 16: Spearman Rank Order Correlation for influence strategy and parental responses

			Parental_Response_Frequency	Mean_Emotional	ValidMeanPers
Spearman's rho	Parental_Response_Frequency	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.056	.333**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.334	.000
		N	300	300	300
	Mean_Emotional	Correlation Coefficient	.056	1.000	.268**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.334	.	.000
		N	300	300	300
	ValidMeanPers	Correlation Coefficient	.333**	.268**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	300	300	300

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A Spearman's rank order correlation was run to determine the relationship between parent's responses and children's influence strategies. The analyzed data shows that there is a significant strong positive correlation between persuasive influence strategy used by children and parental responses, ($r_s(298)=0.333$, $p=0.00$). Hence, these results indicate that there is a relationship between the use of persuasion strategies that children use to get what they want and their parents responding to their requests. This indicates that the more children use persuasive pestering tactics, the more often parents give in to these requests. Thus, persuasive pestering increases parents' acquiescence.

The data above further reveals that there is no significant relationship between emotional influence strategies used by children and parental responses, ($r_s(298)=0.56$, $p=0.334$). This indicates that the use of emotional strategies used by children have no effect of parent's responses.

5.8.3 Hypothesis 3: The type of family communication structure affects parent's response to children's influence strategies

The data was not suitable for the researcher to conduct the Anova Test due to the violations of level of measurement and non-random sampling.

Table 5- 17: Kruskal Wallis Test of FCP across parental responses	
	Emotional Strategies
N	300
Median	4.0000
Chi-Square	11.320
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	0.003
Median of Consensual Families (1)	4.00
Median of Pluralistic Families (2)	4.00
Median of Protective Families (3)	3.00

To assess whether family communication structure affects parent's responses to children's influence strategies the Kruskal-Wallis Test was used. The test revealed a significant difference (Asymp. Sig. = 0.000) in family communication affecting parental responses. The Kruskal-Wallis Test further revealed significantly different median scores for parental responses ($\chi^2(2, n=300)=11.320, p=0.003$). Protective families are seen to give into their children's request significantly less frequently (Median=3.00) as opposed to parents from Consensual (Median=4.00) and Pluralistic families (Median=4.00).

Table 5- 18: Post Hoc Mann Whitney U Test (FCP and parental responses)			
	p-value	z-statistic	Mann-Whitney Test
Consensual Families (1) compared to Pluralistic Families (2)	0.52	-0.643	7140.00
Consensual Families (1) compared to Protective Families (3)	0.00	-5.187	985.00
Pluralistic Families (2) compared to Protective Families (3)	0.00	-4.471	395.00

The Post Hoc Mann Whitney Test revealed no significant difference between consensual families and pluralistic families ($U= 7140.00, z= -0.643, p= 0.52$). The test however did reveal that there is a significant difference between consensual families and protective families ($U= 985.00, z= -5.187, p= 0.00$) and between pluralistic families and protective families ($U= 395.00, z= -4.471, p= 0.00$). This indicates that parents belonging to consensual and pluralistic families tend to give in more to

the requests of their children compared to parents belonging to protective families.

5.8.4 Hypothesis 4: There is a relationship between age of child and influence strategies

The Spearman's Rank order correlation test was used to evaluate whether a relationship does exist between age of child and influence strategies.

Table 5- 19: Spearman Rank Order Correlation for age of child and influence strategies

			Child_Age	Mean_Emotional	ValidMeanPers
Spearman's rank order correlation	Child_Age	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.435**	.032
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.580
		N	300	300	300
	Mean_Emotional	Correlation Coefficient	-.435**	1.000	.268**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	300	300	300
	ValidMeanPers	Correlation Coefficient	.032	.268**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.580	.000	.
		N	300	300	300

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The analysis revealed that there is no relationship between age of child and persuasive influencing strategy use, ($r_s(298)=0.32$, $p=0.580$), thus explaining that children of all ages use persuasive strategies. The analysis further revealed that there is a significant negative correlation between age of child and emotional pestering, ($r_s(298)= -0.435$, $p=0.00$), thereby proving that older children are less likely to use emotional influencing strategies.

5.8.5 Hypothesis 5: There is a relationship between age of parent and parental response

The researcher pursued the Spearman Rank order correlation test to analyze whether there a relationship exists between age of parent and parental responses.

Table 5- 20: Spearman Rank Order Correlation for age of parent and influence strategies				
			Parental_Response_Frequency	Parent_Age
Spearman's rank order correlation	Parental_Response_Frequency	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.084
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.147
		N	300	300
	Parent_Age	Correlation Coefficient	.084	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.147	.
		N	300	300

The analysed data above indicates that there is no correlation between age of parent and parental response ($r_s(298) = 0.084$, $p = 0.147$). Therefore, it can be said that no matter how old a parent's is, their age will not affect their response to their child's requests.

5.9 SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESES AND THEIR OUTCOMES

Table 5- 21: Summary of hypotheses and their outcomes	
Hypotheses	Outcome Accepted / Not accepted
H₁ : The type of family communication structure affects influence strategy used by children	Accepted
H₂ : a relationship does exist between the influence strategy used by children and the response of parents	Accepted
H₃ : They type of family communication structure affects parent's responses to children's influence strategies	Accepted
H₄ : there is a relationship between age of child and influence strategy	Accepted
H₅ : there is a relationship between age of parents and parental response	Not Accepted

5.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter comprised of a comprehensive discussion of the findings from the research. The findings were analyzed using non-parametric testing through SPSS and results were illustrated using tables and graphs for ease of understanding and interpreting. Each table and graph aimed to breakdown and analyze the research objectives and hypotheses. The following chapter rounds up the overall research study and comprises of a discussion and conclusion.

CHAPTER 6 – DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the research findings in relation to extant literature and provides conclusions to the research as well as recommendations to marketing managers so that they understand child consumers more and are able to design marketing campaigns to target child consumers. This chapter also outlines the limitations that the researcher faced whilst conducting the study, as well as a conclusion to the study.

The aim of this research was to test the family communication model and to determine whether family communication structure affects the influence strategies that children use to influence their parents and parent's responses to these.

6.2 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF OBJECTIVES

To test whether the family communications structure affects the influence strategies that children use and their parent's responses, the following was found based on the objectives and relevant hypotheses:

6.2.1 Objective 1: To determine parent's perceptions of the role played by children in family decision-making.

The first objective was to determine parent's perceptions of the role played by children in family decision-making. The first objective sought to understand how parents felt their children played a role in family decision making. Overall, it was found that many (36%) of the respondents in the sample gave into their children's request most of the time with 31% occasionally giving into the requests of their children, and 15% always giving in. Thus overall, it can be concluded that 82% of these South African parents at least sometimes gave in to their children's pestering and thus allowed the children to influence the family decision making. This sample of South African parents appear to be more lenient than the Indian parents reported in Kumar's (2012, p.7) study which found that the majority of the sample (63%) only occasionally gave in to the requests of their children followed by only (21%) parents giving in to their children's requests every single time.

Looking at the different parental responses to different product categories reveals how children affect specific product purchases within the family. It was found that respondents agreed more than they refused, negotiated or procrastinated in response to their children's requests for food and snacks, clothes and shoes, vacations, groceries, dining out and toy requests. This is supported by evidence from Jain & Dave (2015, p.43) who state that children are direct influencers of household purchasing. Chaudhary (2015, p.312) suggests that children tend to influence purchases where they are the primary users of the product, such as dining out and choosing where to go on holiday. Similarly, Ishaque & Tufail (2014, p.164) suggest that children are part of the decision-making process of purchases which add to their benefit. The current findings support this as all the categories of product investigated do benefit the children, and the parents were found to assent more than any other response to all the product categories.

However, the purchase requests that the majority of parents in the sample agreed to give in to their children's requests for food and snacks (92.3%), groceries (83.3%) and clothes and shoes (59.3%). This finding supports Suwandinata (2012, p.1) who states that parents do give their children a certain degree of freedom to make a choice about what they want and parents encourage their children's suggestions and opinions about what to eat and wear. Negotiation, although found less often than assent, was more likely to occur as a parental response with products like toys (27%), dining out and vacations (both 23%). As these are likely to be more expensive family purchases, this is perhaps expected. Dissent was also more common amongst these categories, although also still less common than assent. Thus, it can be concluded that the South African parents in this study do give in to the purchase requests of their children and allow them to play a role in family decision making particularly when it comes to food, grocery and clothing and shoe purchases.

6.2.2 Objective 2: To determine the effect of family communication structure on the type of influence strategy used by children.

The second objective was to determine the effect of family communication structure on the type of influence strategy used by children. It was found that most parents in the sample for this study portray high levels of conformity and high levels of conversation orientation (66.7%), thus, categorizing the majority of the sample into the consensual family category. Almost one in five families were categorized as pluralistic and only 8.3% protective. There were no families classified as laissez-faire in this sample. This is supported by the findings of another South African study which states that South African parents of all ethnic groups display an authoritative parenting style

(Roman et al., 2016, p.5), this is associated to that of a family displaying high conformity orientation.

It was also found that family communication has a significant effect on both persuasive and emotional influence strategies. From the sample it was found that persuasive strategies was higher than emotional strategies or all family types, with the means ranging from the midpoint 3 for protective families to 4.33 for consensual families. Emotional strategies were relative to persuasive strategies less common amongst all family styles with the means all below the midpoint. This correlates to that of a consensual family communication style which the study displays and is supported by Anitha & Mohan (2016, p.273) who propose that children belonging to consensual families will demonstrate more persuasive pestering rather than emotional pestering as parents belonging to consensual families are more open to accepting the views of their children and most likely will agree to their children's request.

For persuasive strategies the results show consensual families exhibiting higher levels of persuasive strategies than either pluralistic or protective families. Upon further analysis it was found that children use persuasive strategies significantly more in consensual and pluralistic families in comparison to protective families.

The prevalence of emotional strategies was particularly low amongst protective families and slightly higher amongst consensual and highest amongst pluralistic families. It was found that children use emotional strategies significantly more in consensual and pluralistic families relative to those children belonging to protective families.

This is supported by Anitha & Mohan (2016, p.272) who stated that children from protective families, which are represented by high conformity orientation and low conversation orientation, exert less influence on family purchase decisions and will not try and influence their parent's purchasing decision. Due to the characteristics of a protective family in which parents are more authoritative, and there is less communication between parents and children, children aren't able to openly express themselves due to parent's emphasizing obedience (Osredkar, 2012, p.5).

In conclusion, the first hypothesis of the study was accepted, and family communication structure affects the kinds of influence strategies children are likely to use. This is further supported by Sundar & Mathew, (2016, p.49) who state that family structure and the communication styles have

been found to play a part in the way children behave as consumers and that children will use emotional or persuasive strategies in certain purchase situations.

6.2.3 Objective 3: To understand the relationship between the influence strategy used by children and the response of parents

The third objective was to understand the relationship between the influence strategy used by children and the response of parents. This was determined by investigating the Spearman Rank order correlations between the two types of influence behaviour used by children and the parental responses, which measured how frequently parents give in to their children's requests.

Sundar & Mathew (2016, p.49) proposed that emotional and persuasive strategies lead to one of the parental purchase outcomes being achieved and upon further analysis of this study, it was found that parents will give in to the requests of their children when their children use persuasive techniques to get what they want which is supportive of Sundar and Mathew's statement (2016, p.49).

The correlation between the persuasion strategy and parental assent was moderate and positive, thus indicating that parents are more likely to give in to their children when they use persuasive strategies because children are also seen to be more well-informed than their parents as they are exposed to and have the availability of modern information technology and communication systems and parents are aware of this and therefore trust their children's opinions (Akter, 2017, p.25). However, the study found that there is no correlation between emotional strategies and parental responses. This means that children's use of emotional strategies has no effect of parent's responses.

To conclude, the second hypothesis of the study sought to determine if there is a relationship between influence strategy used by children and the response of parents, the researcher has determined that the null hypothesis can be rejected, concluding that there is a relationship between influence strategies and parental responses.

6.2.4 Objective 4: To determine if there is a direct effect of family communication structure on parental behaviour when it comes to responses of parents to children's influence.

The fourth objective is to determine if there is a direct effect of family communication structure on parental behaviour when it comes to responses of parents to children's influence. It was found that there is in fact a significant relationship between the family communication structure that children belong to and the response of parents. It was found that Protective families are seen to give into their children's request significantly less frequently as opposed to parents from Consensual and Pluralistic families. The conceptual model by Anitha & Mohan (2016, p.273) supports this by proposing that family communication structure influences parental response through the children's influence strategy. This occurs because parents cannot handle the pestering behaviour of their children, thus giving in to their children's requests (Prible, 2017, p.28).

Therefore, in conclusion, the third hypothesis which sought to determine if there is direct influence between family communication and parental responses was found to be true, there is a direct relationship between the two variables thus the researcher can accept this hypothesis.

6.2.5 Objective 5: To examine the influence of age on children's influence strategies and parental responses

The fifth and final objective of the study was to examine the influence of age on children's influence strategies and parental responses to these strategies.

Anitha and Mohan (2016, 271) believe that emotional pestering is found to occur amongst younger children. This is supported by the study and it was found that there is a negative but significant relationship between age of child and emotional pestering meaning that older children are less likely to use emotional influencing strategies. The study found no relationship between age of child and persuasive strategies, meaning that children of all ages use persuasive strategies. Anitha and Mohan (2016, 271) found that as children get older, they are less likely to use influence strategies, both persuasive and emotional, to get what they want. This finding contradicts what Sharma and Shonwaney (2014, p.42) believe, and they found that older children tend to exert more influence in family decision making. This is further supported by Ishaque and Tufail (2014, p.165) who believe that children get more influential the closer they get to their teen years.

It was found that the age of parent does not affect the parental response of parents. In South Africa,

families have parents who make most of the decisions and children are expected to obey their parents (Muscato, 2018, p.3), indicating higher conformity orientation conducive to the study in which the majority of the sample (74%) belongs to the consensual family-style.

In conclusion, the fourth hypothesis which sought to determine the relationship between age of child and influence strategy was found to be true, there is a negative relationship between age of child and emotion strategies, thus the researcher can accept this hypothesis and the fifth hypothesis proved true to be false, there is no relationship between age of parent and parental response.

To sum up, it was found that relationships do exist between family communication, children's influence strategies and parental responses. The most common family communication style from the sample set was consensual families and children of all ages are more likely to use persuasive influence strategies to get what they want and younger children tend to use more emotional strategies to get what they want.

6.3 CONCLUDING ON THE MODEL TEST

The conceptual model portrays the influence of family structure on pestering and the final purchase outcome. The model describes how different family structures influence the pestering strategies used by children which affect the final purchase outcome or parental response (Anitha & Mohan, 2016, p.272).

Based on the findings it was found that the researcher will accept the hypotheses H1, H2 and H3 i.e. a positive relationship was found.

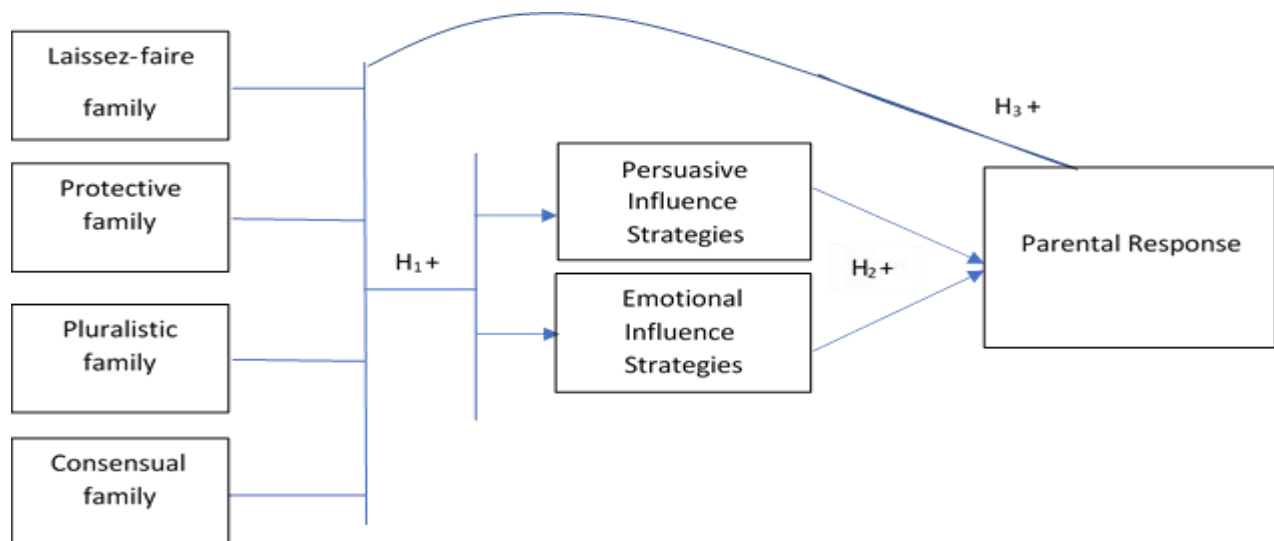


Figure 6- 1: A model of family communications on children's influence strategies and parental response.

It was also found that the researcher will accept H4; there is a positive relationship between the age of child and influence strategies. However, the researcher will reject the hypothesis for H5 and accept the null. There is no relationship between age of parent and parental response.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.4.1 *Recommendations to marketers*

By knowing which type of family communication structure children belong to, marketers can predict the type of influence strategies used by children that will lead to parent's assent to their request. From the research conducted it shows that parents respond positively to both emotional and persuasive strategies but more towards persuasive strategies that children use. Marketers can assist children' by becoming more persuasive by using a popular cartoon character to attract children to the product (Katke, 2017, p.37). Children are also drawn to bold and bright colours which marketers can use in their advertising, as well as music to heighten children's brand recall (Katke, 2017, p.37). Marketers can also overstate product benefits to attract young consumers, also by offering a free item with the purchase of the product (Katke, 2017, p.37).

These strategies will attract young consumers and will entice them to influence their parents to buy the product. Although these recommendations may sound unethical, pestering is not always negative because children are exposed to multiple media which they have easy access to as well as have the ability to handle technology well. Parents are aware that their children are more knowledgeable and look to their children for advice so marketers can use positive pestering techniques such as on how to be more socially and environmentally friendly to educate children so that they can easily persuade their parents (Yock, 2019, p.1).

Children have learnt the art to ask for what they want, and due to families having more open communication, children feel comfortable to ask for what they want, and parents are most likely to give in to their requests. (Suwandinata, 2012, p.13), therefore, marketers must ensure that they are targeting both the child consumer and the parent when advertising to ensure that their product appeals to both consumers, young and old.

6.4.2 Recommendations to academics

Testing of the family communications model by Anitha and Mohan (2016, p.273) was found to be sound. Further research can be done amongst other samples, taking into consideration family income and size of family, parents' occupation and also other strategies that children use to influence their parents. By testing these variables, it will assist in understanding children's influence strategies more and parental responses.

6.5 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

6.5.1 Limitations

The limitation that the researcher faced conducting this study related to the non-probability sampling which was required because of the lack of a sampling frame necessitated by the lack of a sampling frame (Showkat and Parveen, 2017, p.15). Another limitation encountered was the use of snowball sampling, which proved difficult to ensure equal numbers of parents from different demographics due to the seed respondents chosen.

The researcher had no respondents from the Laissez-faire family communication type, thereby limiting the researcher's study to see if this family communication type leads to a particular influence strategy.

Also, the possibility of socially desirability bias amongst that parents, i.e. they may have indicated a higher level of assent, so they did not come across as being horrible.

Similarly, the results of the study are limited to the sample and cannot be generalized beyond it

6.5.2 Additional recommendations for future research

- Focus groups can be used to gather more in-depth knowledge about attitudes of parents and children with regards to purchasing experiences and with regards to the reasons why children display pestering behaviour, for example, to meet social expectations. This will add value to understanding the relationship between influence strategies and parents' response.

- The use of a demographically stratified sample can be used to look specifically, for example, at whether the age of children makes a difference or racial group of the family affects the family communication structure.
- Prescreening of respondents on the two-family orientations (conformity and conversation) can be done to try and get equal portions of all the family communication types/styles.
- For future research, the relationship between household income can be an added variable to determine whether this has an influence on parental responses and family communication. This will be useful to understand if parents belonging to certain income groups have different purchase responses.
- In addition, cultural impacts on family communication and children's influence strategies can be analyzed as well in order to understand if this plays a role in race groups displaying different parental responses and in family communication structure.
- The researcher can also consider family size and deduce whether sibling influence has an effect on the strategy's children use to influence purchasing decisions.

6.6 FINAL CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research study was effective in terms of the collection of information and data in order to achieve the research objectives. The literature gathered provided the researcher with a clearer understanding of how the role of children in family purchasing decisions have evolved over the years and how the strategies children use to get what they want have progressed. The literature also gave insight to the different communication structures that exist and how parents respond to their children's requests. As well as provided an understanding of the conceptual model and the relationships between variables.

The data was gathered using a structured questionnaire which was distributed to parents who have children 18 years old or younger who reside in the family home. The questionnaire comprised of demographic questions and questions pertaining to family communication, children's influence strategies and parental responses. Data collected was analyzed, interpreted and represented using graphs and tables.

The purpose of this study was to test the family communication model to determine whether the

family communication structure affects the strategies children use to influence their parent's responses and based on the objectives and hypotheses it was found that children do play a significant role in family decision making especially in relation to products such as food and snacks, groceries and clothes and shoes which children directly consume, but were also found to influence at least in some families, the decision making process about dining out, toys and vacations which are also for their benefit.

The Consensual family type was the most common type of family structure found in the study. It was found that younger children use emotional strategies to get what they want. The research also proved that no matter how young or old parents are, it will not affect their response to their children's request. Whereas, with children, as they get older the less likely they are to use influence strategies to get what they want. In addition, it was found that the conceptual model shows there is a direct relationship between family communication and parental responses as well as a relationship between influence strategies and parental responses. This tells the researcher that it is likely that parents will agree to their children's purchase requests should their child use either emotional or persuasive strategies.

Therefore, this study makes two key contributions: Firstly, the research is of benefit to marketers as it assists them in understanding how the communication structures of the family influence the pestering behaviours of children, and in turn the responses of parents in terms of product purchasing. Secondly, to academics, the study adds to the existing body knowledge on children and family decision making. This study has tested and provides support for Anitha and Mohan (2016) model but also extends the model by indicating there is a direct link between the family communications model and the parental responses. This provides a new model which can be tested amongst other cultures and communities.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



20 December 2019

Miss Revasha Sookdew (210504325)
School of Management, IT & Governance
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Miss Sookdew,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00000929/2019

Project title: The Effect of Family Communication Structure on Children's Influence Strategies and Parental Responses

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 14 December 2019 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. **PLEASE NOTE:** Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid for one year until 20 December 2020.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Urmilla Bob
University Dean of Research

/ms

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Rosemary Sibanda (Chair)
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

30 November 2020

Miss Revasha Sookdew (210504325)
School Of Man Info Tech & Gov
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Miss Sookdew,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00000929/2019

Project title: The Effect of Family Communication Structure on Children's influence Strategies and Parental Responses

Amended title: The effect of family communication structure on children's influence strategies and parental responses in a purchasing context

Approval Notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application and request for an amendment received on 10 November 2020 has now been approved as follows:

- Change in title

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form; Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully



.....
Professor Dipane Hialele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
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Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
(HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL For research with human participants

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date:

Greetings,

My name is Revasha Sookdew and I am a student at UKZN PMB (210504325@stu.ukzn.ac.za).

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that investigates the effects of family communication structure on children's influence strategies and parental responses. The study is expected to include 300 respondents from Pietermaritzburg who comprise of parents who have children 18 years old and younger who reside in the family home. It will involve completing a questionnaire. The duration of your participation if you choose to participate and remain in the study is expected to be 5 about minutes. The study does not pose any risk and will not cause any discomfort. This study is for research purposes only and will not directly benefit the participants.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number_____).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher at 210504325@stu.ukzn.ac.za or my supervisor, Prof Ellis (vigard@ukzn.ac.za) or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION Research Office, Westville Campus Govan Mbeki Building Private Bag X 54001 Durban 4000 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609 Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Your participation in the study is voluntary and by participating, you are granting the researcher permission to use your responses. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequences. Your anonymity will be maintained by the researcher and the School of Management, I.T. & Governance and your responses will not be used for any purposes outside of this study.

All data, both electronic and hard copy, will be securely stored during the study and archived for 5 years. After this time, all data will be destroyed.

If you have any questions or concerns about participating in the study, please contact me or my research supervisor at the numbers listed above.

Sincerely Revasha Sookdew

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

I (Name)_____ have been informed about the study entitled
'The effect of family Communication structure on Children's influence Strategies and Parental
Responses' by Revasha Sookdew.

I understand the purpose of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study and have had answers to my
satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any
time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may
contact the researcher at 210504325@stu.ukzn.ac.za.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned
about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact: HUMANITIES & SOCIAL
SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building Private Bag X 54001 Durban 4000 KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609 Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Signature of Participant

Date

APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire

Family communication style

<u>Section A: Conformity Orientation</u>					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I often tell my children “you’ll know when you grow up”					
2. I often tell my children that my ideas are right and they should not question them					
3. I tell my children that they should not argue with adults					
4. I tell my children that there are some things that just should not be talked about					
5. I tell my children that they should give in on arguments rather than risk making people mad					
6. I expect my children to obey me without question when anything important is involved					
7. I as the parent usually have the last word					
8. I, as the parent, feel it’s important to be the boss of the home					
9. I sometimes become irritated with my children’s views if they are different from mine					
10. If I am not going to approve of my children’s idea/suggestion, I don’t want to know more about it					
11. At home, I expect my children to obey my rules					

Section B: Conversation Orientation

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
1. In my family we often talk about topics like politics or religion, where some persons disagree with others					
2. I feel that every member of the family should have some say in family decision making					
3. I often ask for my children's opinion when the family is talking about something					
4. I often ask for my children to challenge my ideas and beliefs					
5. I always say that "you should look at both sides of an issue"					
6. My children usually tell me what they are thinking about					
7. My children can talk to me about almost anything					
8. In our family we often talk about feelings and emotions					
9. I often have long, relaxed conversations with my children about nothing in particular					
10. My children enjoy talking to me even if we disagree					
11. I like to hear the opinions of my children even if I don't agree with them					
12. I encourage my children to express their feeling					
13. I tend to be very open about my emotions					
14. We often talk as a family about things we have done during the day					
15. In our family we often talk about plans and hope for the future					

Section C: Parents Demographics

4. Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

5. Age of Parent: _____

6. Race

Indian ☐

White ☐

Coloured ☐

African ☐

Other ☐

7. Marital Status

Married ☐

Divorced ☐

Single ☐

8. Religion: _____

Please complete the following sections, 1 per child still living at home.

Section D: Child's Demographics

1. Age of Child: _____

2. Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

Section E: Types of influence behaviour used by children

Please indicate how often your child performs the following activities

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Most of the time	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
1. My child expresses their opinion on a product					
2. My child insists that he/she wants the product					
3. My child pleads and begs for the product					
4. My child tells me about the tv advert that he/she saw about the product					
5. My child tells me that the product brand is famous or popular					
6. My child expresses an external reason for wanting the product (e.g. Need chocolate to regain strength)					
7. My child nags and whines for the product					
8. My child expresses anger					
9. My child becomes unnaturally nice towards me					
10. My child pretends and fakes illness					

Section F: Parental responses

1. How often do you give into your child's request?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

2. Please indicate your purchase response to your child's purchase request for the following products:

Assent – Approval or Agreement

Procrastinate – Delay or postpone action

Negotiate – Try to reach an agreement or compromise by discussion.

Dissent - Refusal to accept

Product Category	Assent	Procrastinate	Negotiate	Dissent
Food and Snacks				
Clothes and Shoes				
Groceries e.g. Cereal				
Vacation/ Family Holidays				
Dining out				
Toys				

3. Are there any conditions or factors that might change how you respond to your child's requests?

Section G: Child's demographics for 2nd Child

1. Age of Child: _____

2. Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

Section H: Types of influence behaviour used by children

Please indicate how often your child performs the following activities

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Most of the time	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
1. My child expresses their opinion on a product					
2. My child insists that he/she wants the product					
3. My child pleads and begs for the product					
4. My child tells me about the tv advert that he/she saw about the product					
5. My child tells me that the product brand is famous or popular					
6. My child expresses an external reason for wanting the product (e.g. Need chocolate to regain strength)					
7. My child nags and whines for the product					
8. My child expresses anger					
9. My child becomes unnaturally nice towards me					
10. My child pretends and fakes illness					

Section I: Parental responses

1. How often do you give into your child's request?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

2. Please indicate your purchase response to your child's purchase request for the following products:

Assent – Approval or Agreement

Procrastinate – Delay or postpone action

Negotiate – Try to reach an agreement or compromise by discussion.

Dissent - Refusal to accept

Product Category	Assent	Procrastinate	Negotiate	Dissent
Food and Snacks				
Clothes and Shoes				
Groceries e.g. Cereal				
Vacation/ Family Holidays				
Dining out				
Toys				

3. Are there any conditions or factors that might change how you respond to your child's requests?

Section J: Child's demographics for 3rd Child

1. Age of Child: _____

2. Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

Section K: Types of influence behaviour used by children

Please indicate how often your child performs the following activities

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Most of the time	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
1. My child expresses their opinion on a product					
2. My child insists that he/she wants the product					
3. My child pleads and begs for the product					
4. My child tells me about the tv advert that he/she saw about the product					
5. My child tells me that the product brand is famous or popular					
6. My child expresses an external reason for wanting the product (e.g. Need chocolate to regain strength)					
7. My child nags and whines for the product					
8. My child expresses anger					
9. My child becomes unnaturally nice towards me					
10. My child pretends and fakes illness					

Section L: Parental responses

1. How often do you give into your child's request?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

2. Please indicate your purchase response to your child's purchase request for the following products:

Assent – Approval or Agreement

Procrastinate – Delay or postpone action

Negotiate – Try to reach an agreement or compromise by discussion.

Dissent - Refusal to accept

Product Category	Assent	Procrastinate	Negotiate	Dissent
Food and Snacks				
Clothes and Shoes				
Groceries e.g. Cereal				
Vacation/ Family Holidays				
Dining out				
Toys				

3. Are there any conditions or factors that might change how you respond to your child's requests?

Section M: Child's demographic for 4th Child

1. Age of Child: _____

2. Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

Section N: Types of influence behaviour used by children

Please indicate how often your child performs the following activities

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Most of the time	Always
	1	2	3	4	5
1. My child expresses their opinion on a product					
2. My child insists that he/she wants the product					
3. My child pleads and begs for the product					
4. My child tells me about the tv advert that he/she saw about the product					
5. My child tells me that the product brand is famous or popular					
6. My child expresses an external reason for wanting the product (e.g. Need chocolate to regain strength)					
7. My child nags and whines for the product					
8. My child expresses anger					
9. My child becomes unnaturally nice towards me					
10. My child pretends and fakes illness					

Section O: Parental responses

1. How often do you give into your child's request?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

2. Please indicate your purchase response to your child's purchase request for the following products:

Assent – Approval or Agreement

Procrastinate – Delay or postpone action

Negotiate – Try to reach an agreement or compromise by discussion.

Dissent - Refusal to accept

Product Category	Assent	Procrastinate	Negotiate	Dissent
Food and Snacks				
Clothes and Shoes				
Groceries e.g. Cereal				
Vacation/ Family Holidays				
Dining out				
Toys				

3. Are there any conditions or factors that might change how you respond to your child's requests?

Thank You