

Examining Children's Perceptions Of Parent-Adolescent Communication Quality, Consumption Interaction, And Shopping Enjoyment

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study is to examine the influence of family communication patterns on parent-adolescent consumption interaction and adolescent shopping enjoyment. The present study utilizes survey responses from 263 high school students and 338 junior high school students. Results from each sample indicate that communication quality between parents and their adolescent children impacts the consumption interaction taking place between the parents and their children. Additionally, results indicate that mothers are more likely to positively influence adolescent shopping enjoyment as compared to fathers.

Keywords: Adolescent; Communication Quality; Consumption Interaction; Shopping Enjoyment

INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive review of research focusing on the consumer socialization of children indicates that a wide variety of topics have been examined. Included among this research are studies that examine marketing and purchase related knowledge of children, specific consumption related attitude perceptions of children, a child's decision-making strategy in terms of consumption, and the influence that parents and children exert on each other in the consumption process (John 1999). A significant focus within the consumer socialization literature has been placed on the involvement of adolescents in family decision-making and the communication between adolescents and their parents. Although the importance of an adolescent's peers and friends in the socialization process has been empirically documented, past examinations have shown that strong communication between parents and adolescents remains necessary in an adolescent's development of capable consumption skills and abilities (Mandrik et al. 2005). Research has even suggested that, contrary to public belief, parents have as much or more influence on an adolescent's lifestyle and consumption decisions as mass media or advertising (Martin and Bush 2000).

However, the influence of differing types of family communication on adolescent consumption characteristics has not been fully explored. Initially, gender differences are often overlooked in the consumer socialization literature. John (1999) reports that scant research attention has been focused on understanding gender differences in consumer socialization, especially in the areas of persuasion knowledge and consumption expectations. Palan (1998, p. 338) agrees, stating that, "no marketing studies have directly examined the effect of gender differences in family communication on consumer socialization".

In addition to the lack of research centered on gender differences in family communication, most previous research in the area of family communication has concentrated on consumption-oriented communication (Palan 1998). Consumption-based analyses are legitimate contributions to this area of study as consumers increasingly live a world that revolves around consumption (Strasser 2003). Consumption-oriented communication has been shown to be a critical influence variable in the consumer socialization process (Moore and Moschis 1981). However, the influence and importance of overall communication quality between parents and adolescents has been ignored by

most researchers in this area. This lack of attention has occurred despite the call for greater attention on overall communication quality in consumer socialization research (Moore and Moschis 1981).

Finally, John (1999) has proposed that a wealth of opportunities remain unexamined in terms of the outcomes associated with the socialization process. Among these unexplored areas is the question of whether adolescents make purchase and consumption-related decisions using motivation or goal-oriented behaviors similar to those utilized by adults. John (1999, p. 205) suggests that, "research has proceeded as if children shared the same decision-making goals as adults, such as buying the best product or making a good decision with the least cognitive effort". However, adolescents might have different consumption or shopping goals in mind, such as having fun or enjoying their shopping experience. All told, adolescent consumption goals might focus more on social or recreational characteristics of the consumption experience, and less on product-related or cognitive characteristics of the consumption experience.

Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to examine the influence of family communication patterns on important adolescent consumer socialization outcome variables, such as consumption interaction and the potential enjoyment these consumers receive from shopping.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Family Communication

A variety of approaches have been utilized to examine family communication patterns, including frequency, content, and family member structure (for a complete review, see Bakir et al. 2005). Although the vast majority of family communication studies in consumer socialization revolve around the frequency of the communication (Moschis 1985), the content of the family communication has been shown to be more important in determining the quality of the communication within a family (McLeod and Chaffee 1972). A typology of family communication patterns has been developed and utilized in developing knowledge of communication patterns between parents and their children (Ritchie 1991). The FCP (Family Communication Patterns) typology was developed around the two communication dimensions of socio-orientation and concept orientation (McLeod and Chaffee 1972). Socio-orientation was based on the foundations of harmonious interpersonal relationships and agreement aspirations between parent and child. Conversely, concept orientation suggested that children should develop their own ideas, considering all alternatives before making a choice (Moschis 1985). Combining high and low levels of both concept and socio-orientations together, the FCP typology provides researchers with four separate communication patterns that can be utilized to examine consumer socialization. These four categories included laissez-faire communication, protective communication, pluralistic communication, and consensual communication.

Although the FCP typology has provided significant research opportunities for understanding family communication patterns, it has been questioned both methodologically and conceptually (Palan 1998). Multiple measures have been utilized in examining the FCP typology, causing results from a variety of studies to lose their comparative abilities. Additionally, Ritchie (1991) found that parents and children actually have contradicting associations for concept and socio-orientations as compared to their original conceptualizations in the literature. A more appropriate conceptualization of family communication patterns has recently been proposed that circumvents the aforementioned methodological and conceptual problems. Based on the early work of Barnes and Olsen (1982), this approach focuses on the openness, or positive, aspects of family communication, and the problem, or negative, aspects of family communication. Combined together, the quality of the communication between parents and children can be assessed on a continuum, alleviating the methodological overlaps of the FCP scale, and providing consumer socialization researchers with an opportunity to evaluate the importance of family communication content and quality (Palan 1998). Consequently, understanding the impact of the quality of family communication becomes an important, yet under-represented component of consumer socialization research.

Consumption Interaction

Previous empirical investigations have shown that parents vary in terms of their purposeful attempts to educate their children on consumption-related issues. Activities included in these overt education attempts are

discussions about specific purchases, prevention of certain consumption behaviors, and lectures covering consumer activities. Ward and Wackman (1971) found that greater consumption interaction between parents and children was positively related to the adolescent's attitudes toward television advertising, and the effects of television advertising on buying specific products. Additionally, Moschis (1985) found that consumption interaction between parents and children was positively associated with both adolescent consumer role perceptions and the consumer activity of adolescents.

HYPOTHESES

The quality of communication between an adolescent and his or her parents has long been accepted as an important factor in the consumer socialization of the adolescent. Peterson and Rollins (1987) established early in this research stream that communication in a family context has a stronger influence on an adolescent's development as a consumer than does mass media advertising. Additionally, research has shown that communication between adolescents and their parents, examined as role models, significantly influences adolescents' purchase intentions and behaviors (Martin and Bush 2000). Palan (1998) showed that family communication quality and consumption interaction were positively related. Recently, research has shown that differing types of family communication have a significant impact on a variety of consumer behaviors of children, such as consumption deception, television viewing, and susceptibility to peer influence (Bristol and Mangleburg 2005). Rose et al. (2002) examined the consumer socialization of children ranging from three to eight years of age. Their results indicate that a child's purchase independence or dependence is significantly impacted by the type of communication (socio- or concept-oriented) in their households. Using the FCP typology, Clarke (2008) found support for family communication positively influencing children's Christmas requests, encouraging a temporary environment around this holiday season of open consumption communication. Finally, examining family communication through the theory of social power, Goodrich and Mangleburg (2010) found that teens' power perceptions were influenced by the predominant communication environments in their life. These power perceptions were shown to differ depending on the product being purchased.

However, the goal of the present study is to extend that established positive relationship by showing that the quality of communication between each parent and his or her child positively influences the consumption interaction between each parent and his or her child. Therefore, it is expected that the quality of communication between both sets of parents and their children will positively impact the consumption interaction between both sets of parents and their children.

H1: The greater the quality of communication between a mother and her adolescent child, the greater the consumption interaction between a mother and her adolescent child.

H2: The greater the quality of communication between a father and his adolescent child, the greater the consumption interaction between a father and his adolescent child.

A multitude of research analyses have investigated the relationship between consumption interaction and other consumer variables. Early research indicated that consumption interaction and an adolescent's ability to use price in product evaluations were positively related (Moore and Stephens 1975). Additionally, Moschis and Churchill (1978) utilized a summed measure of participation in consumer activities and found that consumption interaction was positively related to this variable as well.

However, the impact of consumption interaction with individual family members on other consumer variables has received limited research attention. Previous research has shown that one important consumer activity for younger consumers is the enjoyment or hedonic pleasure they receive as consumers. Taylor and Cosenza (2002) found that teenage females often undertake the consumption process more for the experience of shopping than for the actual purchases or need for products. While parents are often focused on objective consumption variables such as price and quality, their children are often more concerned about the social environment surrounding them during consumption (Darian 1998).

An important distinction new to the consumer socialization literature is the potentially differing impact that fathers and mothers might have in the consumption experience. Previous research studies indicate that children in their teenage years communicate differently with their fathers than they do with their mothers (Palan 1998). Mothers have been shown to have both higher communication quality and more frequent communication with their adolescent children than fathers (Barnes and Olson 1982). Additionally, research indicates that mothers are often seen as the leader in terms of initiating and encouraging the consumer socialization of children (Grossbart and Crosby 1984). In the marketing literature, mothers have often been identified as more important in the consumer socialization of children than fathers (Grossbart et al. 1991). Research also indicates that mothers are often seen as having greater positive communication or interaction with their children than are fathers (Noller and Bagi 1985). Rose (1999) found that mothers in the United States, acting as socialization agents, expect children to develop into independent consumers earlier than their counterparts in Japan. In a study of parental communication style in Israel, Bakir et al. (2006) discovered that mothers are more likely to be consensual communicators, encouraging children to be involved in family consumption decisions. Alternatively, fathers are more protective communicators, strictly monitoring a child's consumption activities. Finally, the most recent research has shown that mother-child communication, not father-child communication, exhibits a significant impact on adolescent decision-making and family consumption influence (Kim et al. 2009). Therefore, it is expected that the consumption interaction between adolescents and their mothers differs in terms of its impact on consumer socialization outcomes, specifically shopping enjoyment, as compared to the consumption interaction between adolescents and their fathers.

H3: The greater the consumption interaction between a mother and her child, the greater the perceived shopping enjoyment of the child.

H4: The greater the consumption interaction between a father and his child, the less the perceived shopping enjoyment of the child.

METHODOLOGY

Measures

Communication quality was assessed using the 20-item Parental-Adolescent Communication Scale (PACS) developed by Barnes and Olson (1982). Adolescents were asked to respond to ten items measuring the openness of their communication with their parents, and ten items measuring the problems in their communications with their parents. After the ten problem-based items were reversed coded, all items were summed, with a higher score indicating a higher communication quality. Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Respondents completed the communication quality scale twice, once each for their mother and their father. Reliability analyses on these scale items exhibited acceptable Cronbach's alpha scores (*Mothers*: 0.85 junior high student sample, 0.90 for high school student sample; *Fathers*: 0.88 for junior high student sample, 0.87 for high school student sample) (Cronbach 1951).

Consumption interaction was assessed via a six-item scale developed by Moore and Stephens (1975), and later refined by Moschis (1978). Responses for this scale were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (very often). All of the items from the consumption interaction scale were summed, with a higher score indicating a higher level of consumption interaction. Respondents completed the consumption interaction scale twice, once each for their mother and their father. Reliability analyses on these scale items exhibited acceptable Cronbach's alpha scores (*Mothers*: 0.80 for junior high student sample, 0.83 for high school student sample; *Fathers*: 0.80 for junior high student sample, 0.82 for high school student sample) (Cronbach 1951).

Finally, shopping enjoyment was assessed using a scale developed by Dawson et al. (1990). This scale contains 5 items, and responses were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). After reverse coding the one negative item in the scale, all of the items from the shopping enjoyment scale were summed, with a higher score indicating a greater enjoyment of shopping. Reliability analyses on these scale items exhibited acceptable Cronbach's alpha scores (0.81 for junior high student sample, 0.81 for high school student sample) (Cronbach 1951).

Sample and Data Collection

Two distinct samples of adolescents were utilized for the present study. Adolescents have long been a focus of consumer socialization research, yet this particular age group has often been overlooked for examination. This age also represents the first actual competition for parents in terms of their socialization influence on children. Although children of elementary school age are often primarily socialized by their parents (Carlson et al. 1992), children entering their teenage years encounter strong socialization influences from peers and friends. Previous research also indicates that adolescence is the period where children begin to form differing communication patterns with their mothers and fathers, with mothers serving as the more positive influence in consumption related discussions (Palan 1998). Each sample is detailed below.

Sample 1

Three separate Junior High Schools agreed to participate in the research project. Each Junior High School had students at the seventh and eighth grade levels. Prior to survey distribution, parents for all students were asked to sign a permission slip granting their approval. The principals at each Junior High School approved the survey instrument and asked that teachers allow the surveys to be distributed to students in specific classes. Each student in each Junior High School was given the opportunity to participate. Questionnaires were administered to 353 junior high school students. Valid responses were received from 338, a 95.8% response rate. Students were asked to respond to the questions from the aforementioned scales, and to provide basic demographic information such as their age, gender, race, and grade in school.

Sample 2

Sample 2 was comprised of adolescent consumers enrolled in high schools between the ages of 14 and 18. A convenience sampling technique utilized teen buddy pairs to collect data. Teen buddy pairs are frequently used by advertising agencies when data is collected from teens. Buddy pair interviews include two friends, one friend interviewing another friend. Zollo (1995) found that teens were much more comfortable during an interview process when they had a friend with them, which often led to greater depth in a teen's responses to specific interview questions. For the present study, interviewers were recruited from senior level marketing classes to participate in the buddy pair interviews. The students were told to recruit a friend or acquaintance between the ages of 14 and 18 to participate in the study. Student interviewers were trained on how to approach respondents, describe the study and ensure that respondents fully completed questionnaires. Questionnaires were administered to 298 high school students. Valid responses were received from 263, an 88.3% response rate. Students were asked to respond to the questions from the aforementioned scales, and to provide basic demographic information such as their age, gender, race, and grade in school. Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for both samples.

Table 1 Respondent Characteristics

Sample 1 – Junior High School Students				Sample 2 – High School Students			
Gender	n	Grade	n	Gender	n	Grade	n
Females	188	7 th	168	Females	141	9 th	60
Males	140	8 th	158	Males	122	10 th	63
Missing	10	Missing	12			11 th	63
						12 th	77
Race	n	Age	n	Race	n	Age	n
Af-Am	51	11	4	Af-Am	44	14	14
Asian	7	12	84	Asian	4	15	46
Cauc.	238	13	178	Cauc.	195	16	64
Hisp.	11	14	54	Hisp.	12	17	76
Bi-rac.	6	15	8	Bi-rac.	3	18	63
Other	10	Missing	10	Other	5		
Missing	15						

RESULTS

To assess the overall relationships between the variables, path model analysis using Amos 17 was performed (Arbuckle, 2008). Initially, separate path models were estimated for each sample. Figure 1 contains the paths that were examined for each sample. Results from these initial analyses are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Junior High School Student Sample

Using the maximum likelihood method of estimation, the overall fit indices for the model appear satisfactory, indicating an acceptable fit of the model to the data. [$\chi^2 (5) = 17.615, p = 0.003, NFI = 0.94, RFI = 0.90, IFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.96, CFI = 0.95$].

As shown in Table 2, all four hypothesized relationships are supported in the junior high school student sample, three at the $p = 0.00$ significance level, the remaining relationship at the $p = 0.01$ level. Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 are all significant (0.00). Both a mother’s communication quality with her child (H1) and a father’s communication quality with his child (H2) were shown to be positive influences of each parent’s consumption interaction with a child. Additionally, a mother’s consumption interaction with her child positively impacted that child’s shopping enjoyment (H3). Hypothesis 4 was also supported ($p = 0.01$), indicating that a father’s consumption interaction with his child negatively impacted that child’s shopping enjoyment.

High School Student Sample

Using the maximum likelihood method of estimation, the overall fit indices for the model appear satisfactory, indicating an acceptable fit of the model to the data. [$\chi^2 (5) = 15.526, p = 0.008, NFI = 0.95, RFI = 0.89, IFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.95, CFI = 0.96$]

As shown in Table 3, all four hypothesized relationships are supported in the high school student sample at the $p = 0.00$ significance level. Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4 are all significant (0.00). Both a mother’s communication quality with her child (H1) and a father’s communication quality with his child (H2) were shown to be positive influences of each parent’s consumption interaction with a child. Additionally, a mother’s consumption interaction with her child positively impacted that child’s shopping enjoyment (H3). Conversely, a father’s consumption interaction with his child was shown to be a significant negative influence on that child’s shopping enjoyment (H4).

**Table 2 Parameter Estimates for Prediction Paths
Sample #1 – Junior High School Students**

Hypothesis	Prediction Paths ↔		Standardized Regression Weights	p
H1	Mother-Child Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Mother-Child	0.405	0.00
H2	Father- Child Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Father-Child	0.534	0.00
H3	Consumption Interaction Mother-Child	Shopping Enjoyment	0.335	0.00
H4	Consumption Interaction Father-Child	Shopping Enjoyment	-0.132	0.01
Variance explained: Mother’s Cons. Inter. = .164; Father’s Cons. Inter. = .285; Shop. Enjoy. = .123				

**Table 3 Parameter Estimates for Prediction Paths
Sample #2 –High School Students**

Hypothesis	Prediction Paths (←→)		Standardized Regression Weights	p
H1	Mother-Child Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Mother-Child	0.472	0.00
H2	Father- Child Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Father-Child	0.520	0.00
H3	Consumption Interaction Mother-Child	Shopping Enjoyment	0.398	0.00
H4	Consumption Interaction Father-Child	Shopping Enjoyment	-0.262	0.00
Variance explained: Mother’s Cons. Inter. = .222; Father’s Cons. Inter. = .271; Shop. Enjoy. = .206				

Gender Specific Analysis

Although all four hypotheses are supported for both the junior high student sample and the high school student sample, further analysis was conducted to probe for and assess potential gender implications in the study. As shown by Wilska (2003), adolescent males and females exhibit significant differences in consumption habits and perceptions. Therefore, each of the samples in the present study was divided into males and females, and the same path analysis models were run to examine the hypothesized relations for each gender in the sample. This resulted in four additional path analyses (Junior High Males, Junior High Females, High School Males, and High School Females). The results for each of these analyses are seen in Tables 4 through 7.

As seen in Tables 4 and 6, the results for both sets of male respondents mirror the results of the overall samples. When split based on gender, the male junior high student sample and the male high school student sample show similar results as the overall junior and high school student samples. All four hypotheses are supported, and in the hypothesized direction, for both male samples.

However, the female samples show one noticeable difference from the overall samples. As seen in Tables 5 and 7, the negative hypothesized relationship (hypothesis 4) between father-child consumption interaction and shopping enjoyment is not statistically significant. Although the negative relationships are still seen in both female samples, the relationship is weak, indicating that the consumption interaction between fathers and daughters is not seen as a significantly negative influence on the daughter’s shopping enjoyment.

**Table 4 Parameter Estimates for Prediction Paths
Sample #1 – MALE Junior High School Students**

Hypothesis	Prediction Paths (←→)		Standardized Regression Weights	p
H1	Mother-Son Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Mother-Son	0.369	0.00
H2	Father-Son Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Father-Son	0.490	0.00
H3	Consumption Interaction Mother-Son	Shopping Enjoyment	0.180	0.03
H4	Consumption Interaction Father-Son	Shopping Enjoyment	-0.240	0.00
Variance explained: Mother’s Cons. Inter. = .136; Father’s Cons. Inter. = .240; Shop. Enjoy. = .046				

**Table 5 Parameter Estimates for Prediction Paths
Sample #1 – FEMALE Junior High School Students**

Hypothesis	Prediction Paths (\longleftrightarrow)		Standardized Regression Weights	p
H1	Mother-Daughter Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Mother-Daughter	0.395	0.00
H2	Father-Daughter Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Father-Daughter	0.569	0.00
H3	Consumption Interaction Mother-Daughter	Shopping Enjoyment	0.338	0.00
H4	<i>Consumption Interaction Father-Daughter</i>	<i>Shopping Enjoyment</i>	<i>-0.043</i>	<i>0.53</i>
Variance explained: Mother's Cons. Inter. = .156; Father's Cons. Inter. = .324; Shop. Enjoy. = .113				

**Table 6 Parameter Estimates for Prediction Paths
Sample #2 – MALE High School Students**

Hypothesis	Prediction Paths (\longleftrightarrow)		Standardized Regression Weights	p
H1	Mother-Son Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Mother-Son	0.523	0.00
H2	Father-Son Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Father-Son	0.572	0.00
H3	Consumption Interaction Mother-Son	Shopping Enjoyment	0.247	0.00
H4	Consumption Inter. Father-Son	Shopping Enjoyment	-0.286	0.00
Variance explained: Mother's Cons. Inter. = .274; Father's Cons. Inter. = .327; Shop. Enjoy. = .120				

**Table 7 Parameter Estimates for Prediction Paths
Sample #2 – FEMALE High School Students**

Hypothesis	Prediction Paths (\longleftrightarrow)		Standardized Regression Weights	p
H1	Mother-Daughter Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Mother-Daughter	0.423	0.00
H2	Father-Daughter Communication Quality	Consumption Interaction Father-Daughter	0.508	0.00
H3	Consumption Interaction Mother-Daughter	Shopping Enjoyment	0.330	0.00
H4	<i>Consumption Interaction Father-Daughter</i>	<i>Shopping Enjoyment</i>	<i>-0.096</i>	<i>0.23</i>
Variance explained: Mother's Cons. Inter. = .179; Father's Cons. Inter. = .258; Shop. Enjoy. = .113				

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Three noteworthy implications can be drawn from the results of the present study. Initially, the results indicate that the communication quality between adolescent consumers and both their mothers and fathers has a critical influence on the perceived consumption interaction between the adolescents and each parent. The critical implication from these results is that as socialization agents, each parent can exhibit a significant influence on the consumption perceptions of children.

The key ingredient, however, is communication quality. The present results suggest that mothers and fathers must be willing to put forth the effort to discuss important events in the lives of their children in order to be able to have a significant influence in the area of consumption-related perceptions. As suggested by the items utilized to assess communication quality, open communication is often critical in establishing communication quality between a parent and a child. Adolescent children that sense a level of communication comfort with parents are more likely to discuss consumer-related purchases with their parents. Overall, this suggests that parents must be cognizant of their global communication with their children, and the quality of this communication, if they wish to increase their ability to interact with their children about consumption issues.

A second implication from the results of the overall sample analyses indicates that consumption interaction with mothers significantly and positively influences an adolescent's shopping enjoyment. The same relationship does not hold true for fathers and their children. The important implication from this result is that mothers and fathers might be interacting with their children much differently when consumption-related issues are being discussed. Although the present study does not determine specifically what issues are being discussed or the tone of the conversation taking place, each of these issues could significantly influence the positive or negative impact that consumption interaction has on an adolescent's shopping enjoyment. For instance, if mothers focus their consumption interaction with adolescents on positive issues such as buying products for fun, or socializing during shopping excursions, the obvious implication is that the consumption interaction discussions focus more on positive aspects of shopping. However, if fathers are more focused on price issues and saving money in their consumption interaction with adolescent consumers, the adolescent children might perceive these interactions as more negative or condescending in nature, leading to a decrease in shopping enjoyment.

The differences between the potential impact of mothers and fathers on shopping enjoyment are further magnified by the results of the gender specific analyses. Those results indicate that the shopping enjoyment of males is likely to be negatively influenced by the consumption interaction between a father and son. The same consumption interaction between a father and a *daughter* does not have a significant impact on her shopping enjoyment. The potential explanations are potentially noteworthy. First, it is possible that the consumption interaction that takes place between a father and son occurs in a different tone than the consumption interaction taking place between a father and daughter. Many fathers would readily admit taking different approaches when conversing with children of different genders. The consumption-related topics being discussed could be identical between fathers and their sons, and fathers and their daughters. However, *how* those discussions take place could be significantly different. It is possible that fathers are more stern in their consumption conversations with their sons, emphasizing conservative approaches to purchasing in all consumption endeavors. These same consumption-based conversations between fathers and daughters might emphasize conservative shopping habits, but not at the level fathers would use with their sons. It seems that daughters still perceive that their consumption discussions with their fathers make shopping a little less enjoyable, but that they possibly dismiss this impact, or do not assign it a high level of importance. However, it appears that consumption conversations between fathers and sons truly result in a negative impact on the sons' shopping enjoyment.

A separate explanation for the differences seen between the father-child consumption interaction influences on sons and daughters might simply result from *where* these conversations are taking place. Most fathers are more likely to actually participate in shopping excursions with their sons as compared to shopping excursions with their daughters. This indicates that the consumption interaction between a father and son is more likely to occur during a shopping trip, meaning that the consumption messages being delivered by fathers might be seen as significantly negative because it is occurring *during* a shopping excursion. Conversely, step into most malls around the world and you would be less likely to find fathers and teenage daughters shopping together. Therefore, while the consumption interaction between a father and son is possibly taking place simultaneously with the actual shopping trip, the consumption interaction between a father and daughter is likely to take place somewhere other than the shopping trip. The possibility exists that daughters, and their shopping enjoyment, are less likely to be negatively influenced by consumption interaction with their fathers because that interaction is taking place at some point *outside* of the shopping experience. In summary, the specific consumption interaction between fathers and daughters is not as relevant for daughters because the interaction is removed from the shopping experience.

The final implication taken from the results of the present study comes from the differing impacts of consumption interaction on shopping enjoyment based on whether the interaction is with mothers or fathers. Accepting that these relationships hold true, organizations seeking to promote products to adolescents might need to tailor their messages depending on the expected motivation used to purchase the product. Specifically, it appears that mothers are more likely to have discussions with their children that encourage an enjoyable shopping experience. As such, organizations that seek to capitalize on enjoyable shopping experiences should focus on establishing a positive image in the minds of both the adolescent shopper, and the adolescent shopper's mother. Organizations that predominantly utilize shopping malls as their primary distribution outlets should encourage greater consumption-based communication between mothers and their children. As many adult shoppers utilize online shopping options, retailers could encourage initial mother-child consumption communication by suggesting

that mothers speak with adolescent children about the positives and negatives of online shopping. Overall, as shopping malls often attempt to combine the consumption experience with an enjoyable atmosphere, it seems likely that mothers could have a significant impact on the shopping attitudes and purchase-related decisions of their adolescent children, especially in a shopping mall environment.

FUTURE RESEARCH AND CONCLUSION

The results provide a promising foundation for further research in this area. Future research should focus on intervening variables that might factor into the relationship between consumption interaction and shopping enjoyment. Past research studies have examined the motivations of consumers and their primary and secondary reasons for undertaking shopping experiences. Included among these studies is the identification of shopping for pleasure (hedonic shopping) or shopping for purpose (utilitarian shopping) (Babin et al. 1994). Understanding adolescent consumer shopping motives, such as hedonic versus utilitarian shopping, would allow researchers to better explain the impact of parental consumption interaction on adolescent consumer shopping habits and behaviors. This greater understanding, in turn, would allow marketing managers and owners to better serve the large group of adolescent consumers who spend millions of dollars every year in the marketplace.

Additionally, research focus must be placed on understanding the online shopping behaviors of adolescents. As shopping is often a socially-driven exercise for this age group, the impact of online purchase options might not be as tempting for this age group as it is for older consumers. A critical component of shopping for adolescent consumers is the enjoyment they receive from the experience. Determining the potential positive or negative impacts that online shopping might bring to this experience will be important for retailers.

AUTHOR INFORMATION

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