

**Effects of Parental Style and Power on  
Adolescent's Influence in Family Consumption Decisions**

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(ABSTRACT)

This dissertation developed a comprehensive model conceptualizing the factors affecting children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions. In particular, the model asserted that antecedent variables (i.e., family variables, individual characteristics of children, individual characteristics of parents, and parent-child interdependence) affect both directly and indirectly children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. Process variables (i.e., family socialization and power structure) mediate the effects of the antecedent variables. In addition, effects of family socialization and power structure on children's choice of influence strategy and subsequent relative influence vary with the product type, decision stage, and subdecision. Finally, children's relative influence is also dependent on their choice of influence strategy.

An empirical study was advanced to partially test the model. Specifically, relationships among family socialization, power structure, children's choice of influence strategy, and their relative influence were empirically examined. A field experimental interaction procedure was designed for data collection from parent/child dyads. Multiple regressions were conducted to analyze the data. Results showed moderate support to the hypothesized relationships. However, most links in the testing model presented significant results. It appears that the integration of consumer socialization theory and power relational theory provides better explanation to children's influence behavior than either theory does individually.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since entering the doctoral program, I have read a large number of dissertations. Almost all authors say that the dissertation is never one individual's endeavor. Now reflecting on my own process of completing the dissertation, I fully realize the great meaning behind this seemingly simple statement and agree to it with both hands up. Without the guidance on almost a dozen of previous versions from my advisor, Dr. Edward Fern, this dissertation would have remained a scratchy drawing. His thoughtfulness ranges from as macro as the conceptual development to as micro as the punctuation. His help has been important not only to my completion of the degree but also to my development as a mature scholar. I have and will always feel deeply indebted for his mentorship.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### **Problem Statement**

Historically, both marketers and consumer researchers have ignored children as a consumer segment because of their little disposable income (Ward 1974). Since the 1980s, interest has been growing in children's consumption behavior, especially their influence in family consumption decisions. Contrary to the traditional assumption that parents dominate in family decisions, abundant research has found that children have substantial relative influence (i.e., influence relative to their parents) in family consumption decisions. Such academic findings actually parallel the reality in the marketplace. McNeal (1998) reported that children aged 4 to 12 roughly doubled their direct purchase during each decade of the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, and tripled it during the 1990s, reaching about \$24 billion in 1997. In addition, children's indirect purchase through influencing parents' decisions soared from \$5 billion in the 1960s to about \$188 billion in 1997. Thus, children's influence in family consumption decisions is a topic worthy of research attention both theoretically and managerially. From the theoretical perspective, including children as a decision role will help researchers fully understand family consumer behavior. Past research has opened an avenue, but more effort is needed to further the stream. From the managerial perspective, provided children's growing consumption power (McNeal 1998), understanding children's influence would help practitioners better serve the child consumer segment.

Two theoretical approaches have played leading roles in studying children's influence in family consumption decisions. They are consumer socialization theory and power relational theory. The former theory views children as a socializee and parents as a major socialization agent (among others such as schools, peers, and mass media). Children's relative influence is an outcome of consumer socialization that happens in certain social settings. Under this theory, children are essentially passive learners and the socialization takes place one sided from parents to children (Peterson and Rollins 1987). Guided by the consumer socialization theory, researchers have found that children's influence is affected by a variety of factors, including family variables (e.g., social class, family size, and family structure), children's characteristics

(e.g., gender, birth order, and age), parents' characteristics (e.g., education, occupation, and consumption experiences), parental style, and family communication environment.

Alternatively, the power relational theory regards parents and children as partners in an interdependent relationship. Children possess a certain degree of power, although relatively little, over parents. They apply different strategies to gain influence. Children's choice of influence strategy and the subsequent relative influence are the exhibition of their strategic use and the result of power in family consumption decisions. Under this theory, children are active participators in family consumption decisions and influence is reciprocal between parents and children. Based on the power relational theory, researchers have found that both children and parents perceive the other as having power over themselves (McDonald 1982; Peterson 1986). Such power includes outcome-control power, referent power, legitimate power, and expert power.

Guided by the power relational theory, researchers have found that children, especially adolescents, apply a variety of influence strategies to approach their parents such as asking, begging and pleading, telling or asserting, reasoning, bargaining, and using an advocate, to name but a few. Such influence strategies could be further categorized along different dimensions such as Directness, Bilaterality, and Strength (Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984). Directness indicates the extent the influence behavior is indirect (e.g., evasion, use of an advocate) or more overt and direct (e.g., asking, demanding). Bilaterality refers to the degree that the strategy involves dual interaction (e.g., bargaining) or only one person's independent action (e.g., stating importance). Strength is related to the compliance the strategy user anticipates from the other side. If he/she anticipates high compliance by using a strategy, then it is a strong strategy (e.g., demanding). In reverse, if he/she anticipates low compliance, then it is a weak strategy (e.g., begging).

Besides these findings, past research has found that children's relative influence varies with product type, decision stages, and product subdecisions (e.g., Ahuja 1993; Belch, Belch, and Ceresino 1985; Darley and Lim 1986; Foxman and Tansuhaj 1988). Overall, children appear to have significant influence in product decisions for which they are the primary consumer. This is particularly true when the product involves low financial costs. Their influence is greatest in the problem recognition stage and declines significantly by the decision stage. This is especially true for major products related to children (Beatty and Talpade 1994).

Finally, children's relative influence is lowest in the subdecisions such as how much money to spend, where to buy, and gathering information. As a contrast, children appear to involve more in subdecisions regarding color, make, model, and brand choices.

Obviously, past research has contributed greatly to our knowledge about children's influence in family consumption decisions. However, much remains to be explored. First, while guided by the consumer socialization theory and the power relational theory, researchers have identified many factors that would affect children's influence, no research has ever tried to integrate these two theories in investigations. We are still unclear what (if any) factors have been ignored which have impact on children's influence in family consumption decisions. A model including important factors based on the two theories will be valuable in guiding researchers to systematically examine and fully understand children's influence.

Second, although consumer socialization theory recognizes that parental style plays an important role in family socialization of children, the effect of parental style on children's relative influence is still indecisive. Specifically, Carlson and Grossbart (1988) as well as Mangleburg (1992) investigated but failed to find any difference in children's influence among parents with different parental styles. Rose (1999) found that parents with certain style (e.g., Permissive) allow children more influence than do parents with other style (e.g., Authoritarian). But not all of his research hypotheses were supported regarding the effect of parental style on children's influence. Evidently, more research is necessary in this area.

Third, recognizing the importance of influence strategy in children's gaining influence, researchers have spent sufficient effort in identifying the various strategies children (especially adolescents) employ to sway parents. However, it remains undetermined what factors would and how they impact children's choice of different influence strategies. Only a very few studies have been conducted in this regard, indicating that children's age and gender and the power structure between parents and children affect children's choice of influence strategy (Cowan and Avants 1988; Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984; Manchanda and Moore-Shay 1996). According to the consumer socialization theory, children's use of influence strategy could be considered as one of the consumer socialization outcomes, similar to children's relative influence. Thus, it would be plausible to propose that those factors affecting children's relative influence might also act on children's choice of influence strategy. No research has been directed in this way. Apparently, future effort is greatly needed to explore this topic.

Last but not least, according to power relational theory, children's choice of influence strategy would affect their relative influence. However, empirical evidence is very scarce, leaving this relationship unproven. Only one study has been conducted so far. Kim, Lee, and Hall (1991) explored adolescents' power, influence strategy, and influence in family purchase decisions. Results showed that in purchasing goods for family use, teenagers who rely more on the "persuasion" and "playing on emotion" strategies and less on stubborn acts in their influence attempts perceive themselves as having greater influence. However, they also found in purchasing goods for their own use, teenagers who more often employ the "stop eating" and the "approach the other parent" strategy perceive themselves as having greater influence. One may speculate that those children who often rely on strategies based on reasoning and logical appeals may be perceived by parents as mature and competent. Thus, these children might have greater relative influence in family decision making than those who rely on emotion-based strategies. Kim, Lee, and Hall's first finding is partially consistent with but the second finding is exactly opposite to this reasoning. These mixed results are hard to interpret. One possibility is that the authors measured teenagers' influence in different purchase decisions but choice of influence strategies across all purchase decisions. This mismatch between purchase situations might have led to the dubious results. Clearly more research is needed to inspect how children's choice of influence strategy affects their relative influence in family consumption decisions.

In a summary, previous research has recognized that children have substantial influence in family consumption decisions. A great number of factors have been found to affect this influence. In addition, researchers have realized that children (especially adolescents) gain influence through applying different influence strategies toward parents. A variety of children's influence strategies have been identified. However, a model incorporating important factors that affect children's influence is still lacking. Such a model would be of great value in guiding researchers to systematically examine and fully understand children's influence. Further, despite some empirical work, it is still unclear how parental style affects children's relative influence, what factors affect children's choice of influence strategy, and how children's choice of different influence strategies impacts their relative influence in family consumption decisions.

### **Research Questions**

Given the above limitations in the literature regarding children's influence in family consumption decisions, a dissertation was proposed to pursue the following questions, aiming to

fill some of the research gaps. While literally children of any age might have influence in family consumption decisions, adolescents possess more influence and greater variety of strategies in attempting to influence parents than younger children (Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom 1989a; Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991). Thus, from now on, when talking about children, this dissertation refers to adolescents rather than younger children (i.e., 3 - 11 years old) unless otherwise indicated.

1. What factors will affect children's relative influence in family consumption decisions? For example, does parental style and power structure influence children's relative influence? If so, how?
2. What factors will affect children's choice of influence strategy? For example, does parental style and power structure influence children's choice of influence strategy? If so, how?
3. How does children's choice of influence strategy impact their relative influence? For example, do children choosing Bilateral strategies differ from those choosing Unilateral strategies in relative influence? If so, how?

Children's influence, as a research topic, has attracted plenty of attention since the 1980's. A great number of factors have already been identified as affecting children's influence in family consumption decisions. It is not the intention of this dissertation to empirically replicate the effects of all these factors. However, as aforementioned, despite the abundance of existing studies, we lack a framework to direct future research in a systematic manner. Thus, in order to answer the above research questions, this dissertation first proposes a comprehensive conceptual model delineating the process of children's influence in family consumption decisions. Based on a review of the past literature and the guidance of both the consumer socialization theory and the power relational theory, the model denotes important factors and processes that might modify children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence.

In specifics, the model proposes that family variables, children's characteristics, parents' characteristics, and parent-child interdependence affect children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence both directly and indirectly. Family socialization is proposed to mediate the effects of family variables, children's characteristics, and parents' characteristics on children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. Power structure is proposed to mediate the effects of children's characteristics, parents' characteristics, and parent-child interdependence on

children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. Product type, decision stage, and subdecision are proposed to moderate the effects of socialization process and power structure on children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. In addition, children's choice of influence strategy is expected to affect their relative influence.

Some relationships in the model have already been empirically verified by past research, some only partially supported, and others never explored yet. Thus, the dissertation further answers the research questions by empirically testing several important relationships that are not fully inquired or understood by previous studies. Specifically, pertaining to the first research question, the current study empirically examined the impact of parental style and power on children's relative influence. It was tested whether children under parents with a certain parental style (e.g., Indulgent) possess higher relative influence than those under parents with an alternative parental style (e.g., Authoritative). Also, the research tested whether children who perceive parents to have high power possess less influence than those who perceive parents to have low power.

Concerning the second research question, the present study empirically inspected the effects of parental style and power on children's choice of influence strategy. The specific question was whether children under a certain parental style (e.g., Authoritarian) are more inclined to apply Bilateral strategy than those under another parental style (e.g., Neglecting). Another questions was whether children who perceive parents to have high power are more inclined to use Bilateral strategy than those who perceive parents to have low power.

Relating to the third research question, this dissertation looked into the impact of children's choice of influence strategy on their relative influence. Especially, it was examined whether children applying Bilateral strategies possess higher relative influence than those applying Unilateral strategies in family consumption decisions.

Finally, not directly but still pertinent to the topic of children's influence, the effect of parental style on children's perceived parental power was also investigated. Particularly, it was inspected whether children under a certain parental style (e.g., Authoritarian) perceive their parents to have higher power than those under another parental style (e.g., Indulgent) along various power bases (e.g., outcome control power, legitimate power, etc.).

To realize the above empirical tests, a field experimental interaction procedure was designed to explore the process children influence their parents. One hundred and thirty nine

parent/adolescent dyads were recruited. Subjects were invited to make two product decisions. The first involves selecting a major product from four alternatives (i.e., CD player, Electronic Game Platform, Elegant Family Dinner, and Family Music Event). The second involves selecting a minor product from four alternatives (i.e., Music Record, Movie Coupons, Coupon for Home Depot, and Coupon for Sears). Adolescents and parents were instructed to reach unanimous product choices through discussion in each decision. After the decision making, information regarding parental style, parental power, children's choice of influence strategy, and children's relative influence were obtained from both adolescents and mothers. Then, multiple regressions were applied to statistically examine the research hypotheses.

### **Importance and Contribution of the Dissertation**

The dissertation makes important theoretical contributions to the family decision making research. First, in the literature, consumer socialization studies often treat children as the socializee and emphasize children's learning of consumption related knowledge and skills, while the power relational studies often treat children as mature men and emphasize their being active partners in using different influence strategies. This dissertation integrates these two theoretical perspectives. It recognizes children's being young and in the process of growing and learning, but it also acknowledges that children are active human beings in the sense that they use what they have learned to solve conflicts. Guided by this integrative view, the dissertation proposed a conceptual model exploring factors and processes that affect children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions. This model embraces relationships already tested in the literature as well as those never explored before. As such, it serves as a framework to the future research in the area of children's influence. It would help researchers develop a systematic program to scrutinize factors affecting children's power strategy behavior and their relative influence in family consumption decisions.

Second, although a few studies have already investigated the effect of parental style on children's relative influence, results are not consistent. This dissertation revisited the relationship by overcoming some deficiencies in previous studies (e.g., measurement problems). This will shed more light on this indecisive issue. Further, although it seems intuitive that children's perceived parental power should affect their relative influence, no previous research has tested it. This dissertation not only tested it, but also inquired whether the relationship holds across different product categories (i.e., major product decision and minor product decision).

Third, children's choice of influence strategy is a new area in the literature and research on it is sparse. This dissertation empirically tested the impact of parental style and power on children's choice of influence strategy. It also tested the effect of children's choice of influence strategy on their relative influence. This not only extends the existing research, but also provides guidance to future research in testing and improving the proposed conceptual model.

Fourth, this dissertation employed a new methodology to study children's influence in family consumption decisions. Almost all studies in the literature have used survey as a research tool to examine children's influence. A few have employed field observation. The survey approach has been criticized as being subject to recall problem or report bias (Corfman 1991; Olson 1969), and the field observation is unable to track causality and is very costly to conduct. This dissertation employed a field experimental interaction procedure to explore the issue. This new method combines the advantages of the survey approach and field observation yet overcomes most of their drawbacks. This will certainly provide new insight into the research in this area.

This dissertation also enlightens managerial practices. It relates parental style and power to children's influence in family consumption decisions. Children under certain parental style (e.g., Neglecting style) possess greater influence than those under other parental style (e.g., Authoritarian style). Children who perceive parents to possess high power tend to have greater relative influence than do those who perceive parents to have low power. This indicates that parents with certain parental style are actually more receptive to children's influence than those with other parental style. This is also the case for parents with low power compared to those with high power. Thus, parental style as well as parental power actually provides marketers a new segmentation variable. Marketers could sell children related products more efficiently through targeting at parents with a certain parental style or a certain level of parental power.

Further, this study examined the role of parental style and perceived parental power in children's choice of influence strategy. Such information is valuable to those engaged in advertising (Szybillo, Sosanie, and Tenenbein 1977). Copywriters might apply this information in delineating that children under parents with different parental style and power approach their parents in dissimilar ways. Account executives might use this information to judge whether portrayals of family consumption decisions involving children and parents are realistic and

effective. Commercials with the appropriate parent-child interaction information should appear more persuasive to consumers than those with wrong information.

In general, this dissertation contributes to both the consumer research and managerial practices. It should play an important role in the family decision making literature.

### **Structure of the Dissertation**

The study is organized as follows. This introduction chapter is followed by a review of the existing literature on children's influence in family consumption decisions. The review is divided into three parts. Part one reviews two theories (i.e., consumer socialization theory and power relational theory) guiding research on children's influence in family consumption decisions. It provides the theoretical base for this dissertation. Part two focuses on reviewing the different decisions in which children have substantial influence. Part three is devoted to reviewing the different influence strategies developed by previous research in consumer socialization and developmental psychology. Based on this literature review, a conceptual model is developed in Chapter 3. The model investigates those important variables that affect children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions. It proposes conceptual resolutions to the research questions. Research hypotheses are then developed to empirically explore the research questions and to test part of the conceptual model. Chapter 4 discusses the research methodology applied in the empirical test, including research design, sampling procedure, operationalization constructs, and the appropriate statistical procedure for testing the hypotheses. Data analysis and results are presented in Chapter 5, in which each research hypothesis is scrutinized. In Chapter 6, findings are discussed and research implications as well as future research avenues are offered.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, existing literature on children's relative influence in family consumption decisions is reviewed. The review is divided into three parts, beginning with examining two important theories in studying children's influence, consumer socialization theory and power relational theory. Then previous empirical work is reviewed on children's extent of influence in family consumption decisions. Various decisions are identified in which children exhibit significant influence. The third part reviews the different influence strategies developed by previous researchers in consumer socialization areas and developmental psychology areas. As it goes, the review surrenders direction to develop a conceptual model fully investigating factors motivating children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family decisions.

#### **THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO STUDYING CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE**

Research on children's influence used to be criticized as a-theoretical and descriptive (Mangleburg 1990; 1992). Recent effort has been drawn to exploring children's influence in family consumption decisions in a systematic and theoretical way. Two approaches have shown leading positions in such effort. They are consumer socialization theory and power relational theory.

##### **Consumer Socialization Theory**

Consumer socialization theory stemmed originally from the broader research in socialization that is referred as the process by which individuals develop, through transaction with other people, their specific patterns of socially relevant behaviors and experience (Zigler and Child 1969). Adapting the concept to marketing context, Ward (1974, p.2) defined the consumer socialization as "the process by which young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace." Based on Ward's work, Moschis and associates further investigated the antecedents, process, and outcomes of consumer socialization in a series of studies (Moschis and Churchill 1978; Moschis and Moore 1979; Moschis 1985, 1987). As a result, consumer socialization theory gains wide application in studying children's development as a consumer.

Consumer socialization theory asserts that children gain consumption-related skills, knowledge, and attitudes through the interaction with socialization agents in various social settings. Such socialization agents include parents, peers, schools, and mass media and children's learning might involve three processes: modeling, reinforcement, and social interaction (McLeod and Chaffee 1972; McNeal 1987; Moschis and Churchill 1978; Moschis and Moore 1979).

Modeling involves children's observation and imitation of the agent's behavior. Through observing others' behavior, children could acquire novel behaviors, become aware of the consequences of different behaviors, and discover new ways to combine various elements in their existing repertoires of behaviors (Maccoby and Martin 1983). Children may see the socialization agents get rewards for performing a certain behavior, and by performing similar behaviors, children themselves may get rewards in the future (Bandura 1977). Consequently, children gain some of agents' behaviors through this imitation process. It explains, at least partially, the findings that children possess similar favorite store types and brand choice to their parents (Arndt 1971; Childers and Rao 1992; Heckler, Childers, and Arunachalam 1989).

Children's modeling of agent's behavior is selective. The simple parrot-like imitation of what other people do or say might happen during the first 2 years, but when children grow older, this becomes very rare (Piaget 1962). Children are most likely to model after socialization agents who are powerful or prestigious, nurturant, and possessing greater knowledge and skill than themselves (Yando, Seitz, and Zigler 1978). From infancy on, parents are highly available; they provide children's basic physical and mental needs, thus appear very powerful; they are nurturant and provide emotional support; and they are also knowledgeable and skillful in performing various tasks about which children need to learn. Thus naturally parents become one of the most important socialization agents.

Children's modeling is more likely to happen either in situations in which they are instructed to imitate, or in situations in which the model's actions inform them how to utilize novel material or behave in novel situations (Maccoby and Martin 1983). Given parents is one important socialization agent who gives instructions regarding the various aspects of children's life, children's modeling should differ if different parents give different instructions. Research has found parents with alternative parental styles (e.g., Authoritarian parents vs. Neglecting parents) differ in guiding consumption behaviors, restricting media exposure, and explaining

advertising programs (Carlson and Grossbart 1988). Consequently, children's modeling after parents is likely to vary under different parental styles. It is probably stronger with parents who give more instruction and reasoning in practice (e.g., Authoritative parents).

Reinforcement. The second learning process, reinforcement, involves either reward (i.e., positive reinforcement of desired skills, knowledge and attitudes) or punishment (i.e., negative reinforcement of undesired skills, knowledge and attitudes) mechanisms used by the socialization agents (Moschis and Churchill 1978). When children are rewarded for performing a certain behavior, they might retain the behavior to expect further reward. When children are punished for performing a certain behavior, they might stop the behavior to avoid future punishment. This process is important for children to develop their innovative behavior and attitude (Mischel and Mischel 1976). In regard to children's choice of influence strategy in family consumption decisions, if certain influence strategy proves effective in persuading parents to buy the goods they want, children might keep this strategy as their repertoire. In reverse, if certain influence strategy proves ineffective, children might refrain from using it.

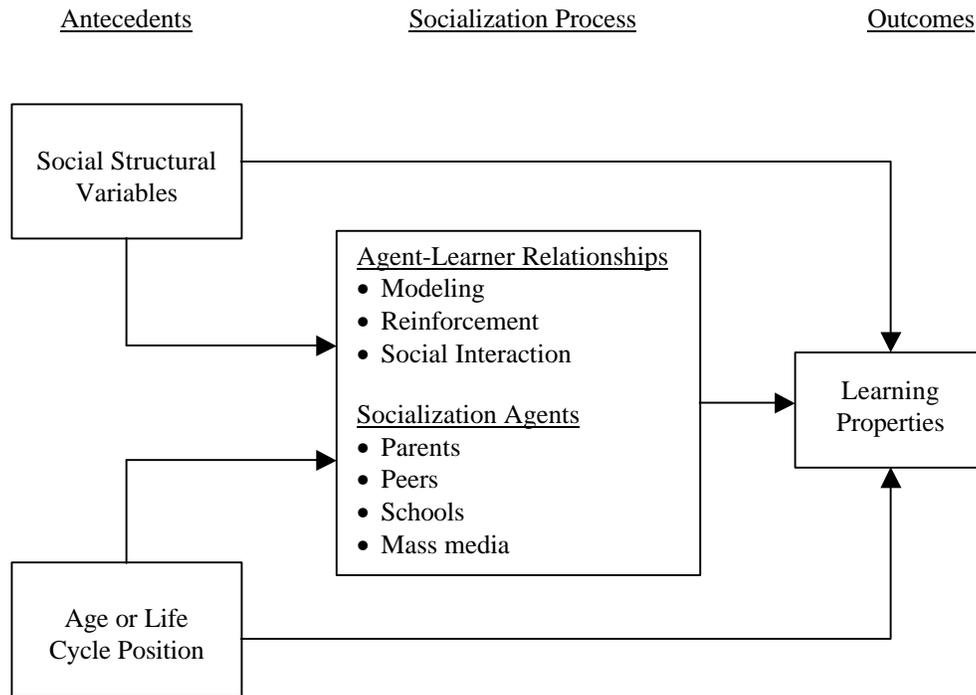
Socialization agents such as parents may use (either intentionally or unintentionally) both reward and punishment to rear children along their socialization goals. Parents with different parental styles (e.g., Authoritative parents vs. Indulgent parents) have been found to exhibit differing expectations about children's development of consumption-related skills, knowledge, and values (Rose 1999). As a result, children's same behavior may be rewarded or punished by different parents, depending on the parental style. For example, Authoritarian parents usually expect children to be submissive and are easy to use punishment if children attempt to influence parents in family consumption decisions. Thus, children may hesitate to influence Authoritarian parents. On the contrary, Indulgent parents are normally permissive toward children's influence attempts and inclined to satisfy children's request. Children might consider such permission as reward and thus request more from parents. As a result, children with Indulgent parents are likely to have greater extent of influence in family consumption decisions than are those with Authoritarian parents. So it is likely that children under different parental styles possess different level of consumption knowledge and skills, and further different extent of influence in family consumption decisions (Rose 1999).

Social Interaction. Both modeling and reinforcement processes emphasize how socialization agents such as parents modify children's development via their own behavior as

agenda setters, reinforcers, and models. However, children are not just passive recipient of socialization, they are actually active participants in the socialization process. They might influence socialization agents at the same time as they are influenced by the socialization agents (Maccoby and Martin 1983). Such mutual influence between agents and socializees is the focus of the third learning process, social interaction. During social interaction, children do not merely act in a social relationship, they react. For example, when parents restrict children on TV viewing, children may abide by (i.e., act). They may not abide by and tell parents that the TV program is interesting and they like it (i.e., react). Under the latter situation, sometimes parents may simply force children to abide by the restriction with punishment. Sometime parents may explain why children should not watch too much TV and children accept the explanation. Through this interaction, children learn the concerns of too much TV viewing. Parents may also listen to children, evaluate their reasoning and amend the restriction. Such amendment reflects the influence of children on parents through the interaction. Social interaction may include a combination of modeling and reinforcement (Moschis and Churchill 1978). It might be stimulated by children's earlier actions and the repercussions of parents' behaviors the actions produce (Cairns 1979). Such action and reaction between children and socialization agents (especially parents) continuously modify children's personality and self-concept development.

In social interaction, the reciprocal feedback process motivates mutual reinforcement and punishment (Raush 1965). Thus the amount and quality of communication between children and the social agents have great impact on children's development as well as parents' adjustment toward children. For example, research suggests that frequent parent-child communication increases parents' influence on children's consumption behaviors (Heckler, Childers, and Arunchalam 1989; Moschis 1985). In an observation of parent-child interaction in supermarket decision-making, Atkin (1978) found that when children request their parents to buy a certain cereal, parents yield to three-fifths of these requests. But when children use a more strident approach by demanding a cereal, parents yield to two-thirds of these demands. Parents' yielding is strikingly affected by the way children communicate their needs. Social interaction happens in a reciprocal relationship. The actions and reactions are meaningful only to the extent that they are understood by persons in the relationship (Youniss 1980). Thus, in the social interaction process, the relationship is more important than the characteristics of the individual actors.

A classic consumer socialization framework was proposed by Moschis and Churchill (1978) to conceptually organize studies of consumer socialization (see Figure 1). This framework has been widely used in marketing research since its proposal. The main elements included in the model are antecedents, socialization processes, and outcomes.



**FIGURE 1**  
 A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF CONSUMER SOCIALIZATION  
 (Moschis and Churchill 1978, p. 600)

Antecedents consist of social structural variables and age or life cycle position. Social structural variables include factors such as social class, family size, and family structure (Moschis and Churchill 1978). They provide the social setting within which learning takes place, thus affect learning both directly and indirectly through their impact on the socialization process (Moore and Stephens 1975; Ward 1974). Age or life cycle position actually reflects children’s lifetime span during which learning occurs. Similar to social structural variables, they might influence children’s acquisition of consumer learning properties in a direct or indirect manner.

In most studies, antecedent variables are treated as incidental factors that affect socialization outcomes but are beyond the primary research interest (Mangleburg 1992). As

such, researchers often treat them as covariates in analyses (e.g. Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Carlson, Grossbart, and Walsh 1990; Moschis and Churchill 1978). However, some studies explicitly inspected the effect of antecedent variables on consumer socialization. Moschis and Mitchell (1986) found that children's influence in family consumption decisions (i.e., mentioning the need for products, discussing purchase, making purchasing decision, and actually buying products) is affected by children's age, money earned outside the home, gender, and socioeconomic status. Both Brown and Mann (1990) and Ahuja (1993) found that family structure has direct impact on children's influence in family decision making, with adolescents in one-parent families participate in more family decisions than those in dual-parent families.

Burns and Gillett (1987) investigated both the direct effect of antecedent variables (i.e., child's age, sex, weekly allowance, and number of siblings) on children's participation in family purchases and the indirect effect of these antecedent variables on children's purchase participation through their impact on socialization processes (i.e., family communication environment). For the indirect effect, they only found a significant impact from number of siblings, with less siblings resulting in a more concept oriented family communication environment. Further effort is needed to fully investigate the issue of how antecedent variables affect outcomes indirectly through socialization processes.

Socialization Processes are the social courses through which children acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes (Ward 1974). They incorporate both the socialization agents and the learning mechanisms actually operating (Moschis and Churchill 1978). Socialization agents are sources of influence that transmit norms, attitudes, motivations, and behaviors to the learner. They could be any person or organization directly involved in socialization because of contact with the learner, primacy over the individual, and control of rewards and punishments toward the subject (Brim 1966). Four commonly studied consumer socialization agents are parents, mass media, school, and peers. Among the four agents, parents are the most available from infancy through adolescence, supporting children's physical and psychological development. In addition, more than often, the knowledge children acquire from parents affects things they learn from other agents. Because of such special role of parents in children's development, this dissertation focuses on the socialization between parents and children (i.e., family socialization), leaving those occurring between other agents and children to future research.

Children's learning from socialization agents may involve the processes of modeling, reinforcement, and social interaction. However, these three types of learning often happen covertly and unconsciously. They may happen independently and interchangeably in different events, or they could happen simultaneously in one single event. As such, it is very hard (if not impossible) to discern and track the specific learning process taking place between children and agents. Thus, research on socialization process always involves the frequency, content, and structure of agent-learner interaction rather than the specific type of learning (Moschis 1985; Moschis and Churchill 1978; Moschis and Moore 1979; Moschis, Moore, and Smith 1983; Moschis, Prahasto, and Mitchell 1986). Specific to the family socialization, research often centers on the quantity and quality of interaction between parents and children rather than tracing the specific type of learning. Two family socialization processes that have been investigated in relation to children's influence and related learning properties are the family communication environment and parental style.

The family communication environment pertains to both the extent of agent-learner interaction (e.g., frequency of parent-child communication, amount of TV reviewing, etc.) and the pattern or quality of agent-learner interaction (e.g., socio-orientation vs. concept-orientation). Parental style, although not specifically related to Moschis and Churchill's (1978) framework, has received increasing attention in consumer socialization research, mostly because of its close relation to the learning process (Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991; Manchanda and Moore-Shay 1996; Mangleburg 1992; Rose 1999). As will be described below, different parents vary in children rearing styles along two dimensions of demandingness and responsiveness, which are evinced in the interaction between parents and children (Mangleburg 1992).

**Family Communication Environment** sets the context for parent-child communication about consumption and consumer learning (Moschis 1985). It is composed of two uncorrelated dimensions of communication structure (McLeod and Chaffee 1972). The first one, socio-orientation, refers to the type of communication that produces social deference and fosters harmonious and pleasant social relationship at home. The second one, concept-orientation, reflects the type of communication that encourages children to develop their own views about events and issues in the world.

Together, the two dimensions of communication structure further yield four patterns of family communication environment: laissez-faire, protective, pluralistic, and consensual (see Figure 2). Laissez-faire families are low on both socio-oriented and concept-oriented communications. In these families, there is little communication between parents and children. Protective families are high on socio-oriented but low on concept-oriented communication. These families stress obedience and social harmony, and are not concerned with conceptual matters. Pluralistic families are low on socio-oriented but high on concept-oriented communication. In these families, emphasis is placed on mutuality of respect and interest. Children are encouraged to explore new ideas and to express them openly without fear of reprisal. Finally, consensual families are high on both socio-oriented and concept-oriented communications. Children in consensual families are encouraged to explore the world about them yet should not disrupt the family's established internal social harmony (Moschis, Prahasto, and Mitchell 1986).

	Low Socio-Orientation	High Socio-Orientation
Low Concept-Orientation	Laissez Faire	Protective
High Concept-Orientation	Pluralistic	Consensual

**FIGURE 2**  
 FAMILY COMMUNICATION PATTERN  
 (Adapted from McLeod and Chaffee 1972, p. 85)

Family Communication Environment and Consumer Socialization. Using the two dimensions developed by McLeod and Chaffee (1972), researchers in consumer socialization found that socio-oriented communication environment limit children's influence in family consumption decisions, because such families emphasize harmony and children in these families are expected to go along with parent's decisions. Conversely, concept-oriented communication environment enhances children's influence, because parents in these families encourage children

to develop concept-related thoughts and children are granted more decision independence (Burns and Gillett 1987; Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom 1989b).

Two studies further applied the four communication patterns to examine the effect of family communication on children's development of consumer behavior (Carlson, Grossbart, and Walsh 1990; Moschis, Prahasto, and Mitchell 1986). Since parents in different communication environment deviate from each other in socio-oriented and/or concept-oriented communications, they are expected to vary in socializing their children as a consumer. As a result, children under different communication environments would exhibit dissimilar consumption-related behaviors. This contention is generally supported by empirical results. Carlson, Grossbart, and Walsh (1990) showed that mothers in pluralistic and consensual families would (1) grant children more consumption independence, (2) yield more to children's consumption requests, and (3) consider more of children's views than mothers in laissez-faire and protective families. Moschis, Prahasto, and Mitchell (1986) showed that adolescents in pluralistic families develop (1) more negative attitudes toward the marketplace, (2) more brand preferences, (3) greater shopping independence, (4) higher degree of egalitarian sex-role perception, and (5) higher degree of syncratic family-role structure than their counterparts in other families.

These studies implied that in different family communication environments, children form dissimilar consumption knowledge and concepts because of parents' variant communication orientation. Children's consumption requests are either encouraged or discouraged. As a result, children in different family communication environments exhibit varying extent of involvement and influence in family consumption decisions. It appears family communication environment, as a family socialization process, provides some valid explanation of children's influence in family consumption decisions.

**Parental Style** is the other socialization process that has received growing research attention. It is a "constellation of attitudes toward the child that are communicated to the child and that, taken together, create an emotional climate in which the parent's behaviors are expressed" (Darling and Steinberg 1993, p. 488). As such, parental style provides a family socialization context in which parents direct parenting practices to children and gradually reach their parental goals and values. In the process of socializing children, parents with different parental styles contrast in a number of respects, including how they attempt to control children's

behavior and elicit children's compliance, and how warm and responsive they are toward children.

Parental style affecting child development has prevailed as an important research theme in psychology and sociology for the past three decades. In general, certain type of parental style has been found to be more effective in promoting children's social and instrumental competencies than are other types of parental style (Baumrind 1971, 1978; Becker 1964; Biggam and Power 1998; Clausen 1996; Hart, Ladd, and Burleson 1990; Hauser et al. 1991; Maccoby and Martin 1983; McFarlane, Bellissimo, and Norman 1995; Pawlak and Klein 1997; Peterson and Leigh 1990; Yee and Flanagan 1985). In this research, researchers have generally applied two approaches to study the role of parental style in family socialization – the dimensional approach and the typological approach. Recently, a framework integrating the two approaches has also been developed.

Dimensional Approach. Under this tradition, parental style is assumed to consist of different dimensions that are orthogonal to each other. Although labels vary, dimensions found are similar across studies. They include acceptance/rejection and dominance/submission (Symonds 1939); emotional warmth/hostility and detachment/involvement (Baldwin 1955); love/hostility and autonomy/control (Schaefer 1959); warmth and permissiveness/strictness (Sears, Maccoby and Levin 1957); and acceptance/rejection, psychological autonomy/psychological control, and firm/lax control (Schaefer 1965).

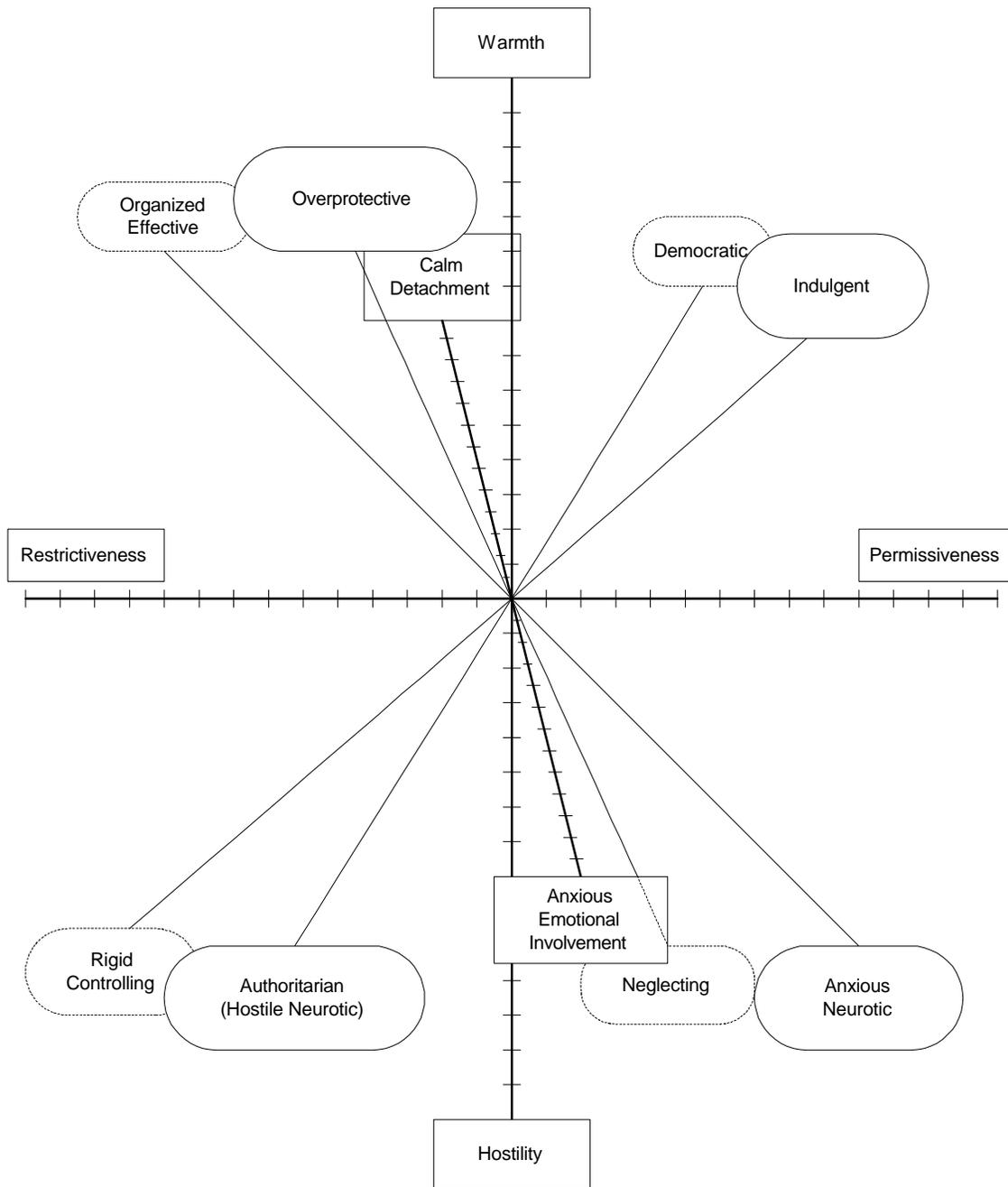
Based on prior parenting behavior research, Becker (1964) conceptualized a three-dimensional model that has been regarded as the representative of this approach. He suggested that parental discipline behavior could be reflected by three general dimensions, including warmth vs. hostility, restrictiveness vs. permissiveness, and calm detachment vs. anxious emotional involvement. The warmth vs. hostility dimension reflects the degree of parental accepting, affection, child centeredness, and use of explanation, reasoning, praise, or reliance on physical punishment in discipline. The restrictiveness vs. permissiveness dimension denotes the extent of parental use of restrictions and strict enforcement of demands regarding manners, neatness, care of family items, obedience, and attitude toward peers, siblings, and parents. And the calm detachment vs. emotional involvement defines parent's emotionality in relation to child, babying, protectiveness, and solicitousness for the child's welfare.

Based on the performance on these three dimensions, parents are divided into eight types, including Rigid Controlling, Authoritarian, Organized Effective, Overprotective, Democratic, Indulgent, Anxious Neurotic, and Neglecting (see Figure 3). Thus, both Democratic parents and Indulgent parents are warm and permissive, but Indulgent parents tend to be emotionally involved while Democratic parents are more calmly detached in relation to children. Both Overprotective parents and Organized Effective parents are high on warmth and restrictiveness, but Overprotective parents are similar to Indulgent parents, showing high anxious emotional involvement, while Organized Effective parents tend to be calm detached. Further inspection of the model shows that both Authoritarian parents and Rigid Controlling parents are hostile and restrictive, but Authoritarian parents are also high on anxious emotional involvement while Rigid Controlling parents are more calm detached. Neglecting parents and Anxious Neurotic parents are both hostile but permissive toward their children, however, the former are calm detached and the latter are more emotionally involved in child rearing.

In this approach, parental style is typically treated as continuous along different dimensions, and researchers try to assess the quantitative relationship between different aspects of the parental style and children's adjustment. For example, Eastburg and Johnson (1990) showed that college women's shyness correlated negatively with perceived maternal acceptance, and positively with perceived maternal psychological control. Paulson (1994) showed that adolescent's reports of parental style predict their school achievement outcome. Bernardino (1996) found adult codependency is significantly correlated with parental style. In contrast with dimensional approach's regarding parental style as a linear combination of different dimensions, typological approach (as will be described below) defines parental style as parents' characteristic that provides a context for the overall parenting behavior (Darling and Steinberg 1993).

Typological Approach was set forth by Baumrind (1971) whose theoretical framework about parental style has been widely accepted and had considerable impact on the parent socialization research in the past three decades. Baumrind's parental style typology is composed of three distinctive types of parental control: Authoritarian, Authoritative, and Permissive.

Authoritarian parents maintain high level of control over their children and limit children's autonomy. They value respect for authority, respect for work, and respect for tradition. These parents judge and evaluate children's conduct by a set of standards endorsed by



**FIGURE 3**  
 BECKER'S (1964) THREE-DIMENSION MODEL OF PARENTAL STYLE

higher authority figures. They strictly enforce rules, favor children's unquestionable obedience, and punish willful behavior (Baumrind 1968; Carlson and Grossbart 1988).

Authoritative parents recognize their own rights as adults, but also acknowledge children's individual interests. They view rights and responsibilities of adults and children as complementary, thus try to balance between parents' right and children's development. These parents value children's autonomy but also expect disciplined conformity. They encourage self-expression as well as give instrumental attribution. Similar to authoritarian parents, they also set standards for children's conduct. However, they explain rules, and use reasoning as well as power to direct children's activity. They are warm and supportive, but also expect children's responsive behavior (Baumrind 1971).

Permissive parents view children as having adult rights but few responsibilities (Baumrind 1978). They present themselves to children as resources to use, but not as agent to actively direct their development. They rarely enforce externally defined standards, instead they consult with children about policy decisions and give explanation for family rules. These parents allow children to regulate their own activities and avoid the exercise of control. They obtain children's compliance by reasoning rather than by applying power (Baumrind 1971; Carlson and Grossbart 1988).

The primary interest of this typological approach is the general pattern, organization, or climate of parenting (Steinberg et al. 1994). Subjects are often categorized into groups with alternative parental style (e.g., Authoritative, Authoritarian, or Permissive), and then children's developmental outcome is compared among these groups. For instance, Baumrind (1971) compared the social and emotional behavior of preschool children from families with the three parental styles. Further in 1978, Baumrind theoretically explained how parents with different parental styles facilitate the development of social competence in children and adolescents.

Integrative Approach. Both Becker's (1964) and Baumrind's (1971) model of parental style represent ideal family socialization types (Carlson, Grossbart, and Stuenkel 1992). Becker's model was conceptualized from prior parenting behavior research, and Baumrind's classification was derived empirically by grouping parents with similar parenting orientations and behaviors. Although determined from different methods, the two approaches are actually similar and converge to some extent (Table 1 exhibits a comparison of the two approaches). For example, Baumrind's authoritarian parental style corresponds to Becker's Authoritarian and

Rigid Controlling styles, and Baumrind’s Authoritative style in most part overlaps Becker’s Overprotective and Organized Effective styles.

**TABLE 1**  
COMPARISONS OF PARENTAL STYLE CLASSIFICATIONS

Baumrind (1971)	Becker (1964)	Parental Style Descriptions
Authoritarian	Authoritarian and Rigid Controlling	Have strict standards of conduct; Value obedience; Do not encourage verbal exchange; Favor physical punishment of willful behavior
Authoritative	Organized Effective and Overprotective	Have clear standards of conduct; Value autonomous but responsive activity; Encourage verbal communication; Use reasoning to reach goals
Permissive	Indulgent and Democratic	Do not enforce standards of conduct; Expect children to regulate their own activities; Be warm and acceptant; Use explanations to gain compliance
	Anxious Neurotic and Neglecting	Do not have clear standards of conduct; Give children high behavioral freedom; Be rejecting; Discourage children’s emotional dependency

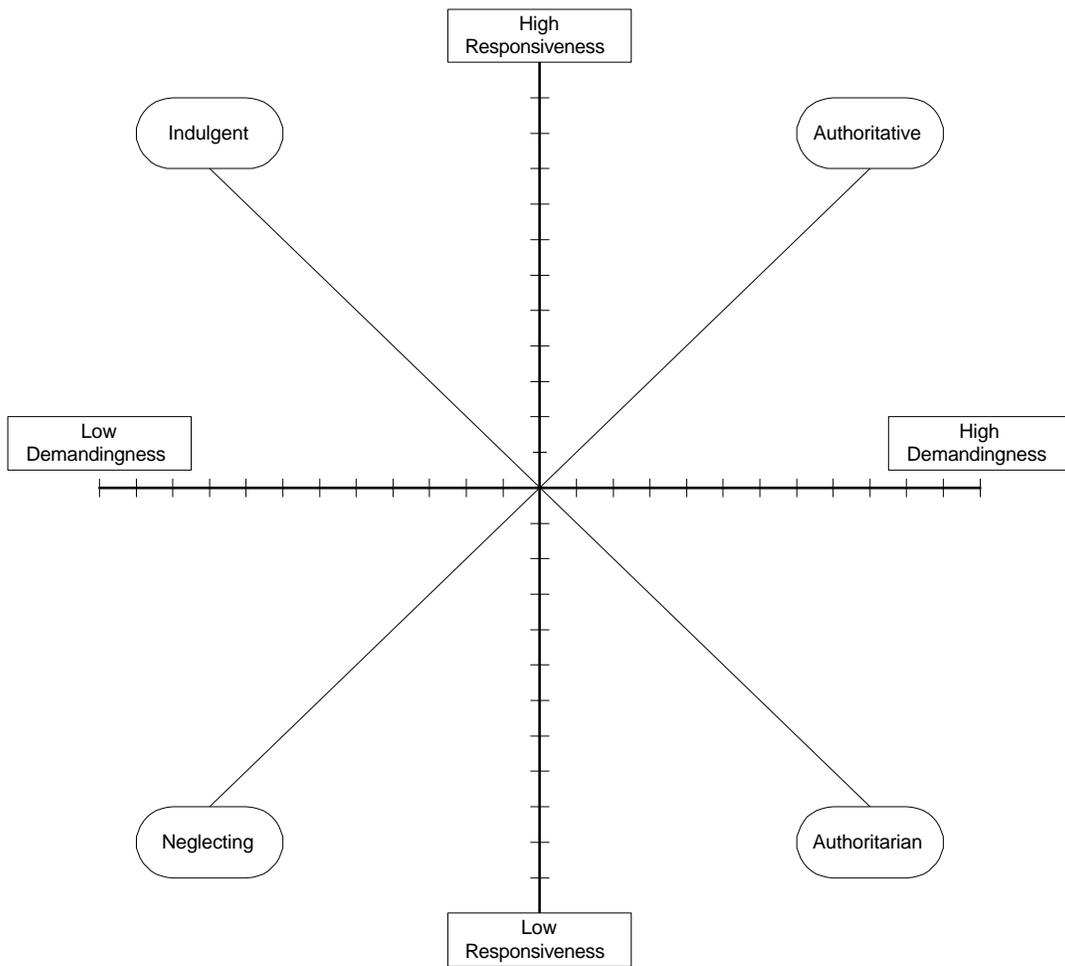
However, comparing Baumrind’s approach and Becker’s approach, there also appears to be one striking difference. In Baumrind’s approach, parental style classifications appear to fit two dimensions, warmth and restrictiveness. Yet, her three primary parenting styles seem to only cover three areas, including high restrictiveness and low warmth (Authoritarian), high restrictiveness and high warmth (Authoritative), and high warmth and low restrictiveness (Permissive). Although she actually mentioned the fourth area of low warmth and low restrictiveness as Rejecting-Neglecting (1971, p. 24), she does not draw much attention to this parental style in her research (e.g., Baumrind 1967, 1978; 1980), probably because in her early research, the focus was on families where parents were relatively active in child rearing (Baumrind 1971). In regular family samples, the Neglecting parental style often emerges (e.g., Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Steinberg et al. 1994).

In reverse, Becker actually subdivided the restrictiveness dimension into restrictiveness vs. permissiveness and calm detachment vs. anxious emotional involvement dimensions (Becker 1964). The reason for adding the third dimension is probably that the most of the literature Becker reviewed was primarily dealing with subjects from clinical settings and concerned with examining children’s problematic behavior such as aggression, hostility, socially withdrawn, and

“neurotic” problems. These types of children behavior relate more with parents’ restrictiveness due to extreme anxious emotional concern about children’s well-being than with restrictiveness due to disciplinary values (Mangleburg 1992). Consequently, not all of Becker’s refined parental styles (especially Anxious Neurotics) could be found in nonclinical settings (Carlson, Grossbart, and Stuenkel 1992).

In order to integrate the similarity of the dimensional approach and typological approach as well as overcome their respective disadvantages, researchers have attempted to merge these two approaches so that the parenting classification could be generalized to regular family settings. Maccoby and Martin (1983) are among the first advocates. Baumrind also developed similar approach in her recent works (1991a, 1991b). They defined parental style as a function of two dimensions, i.e., responsiveness and demandingness. The responsiveness dimension, similar to (although not exactly) the warmth vs. hostility dimension, refers to the extent that parents engage in activities that encourage children’s individuality and autonomous by staying attuned, supportive and acquiescent to the children’s needs and demands. The demandingness dimension, relating to the restrictiveness vs. permissiveness dimension, reflects the extent that parents direct children’s development by maturity demands, close supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys (Baumrind 1991a). Accordingly, parental style with high responsiveness and high demandingness corresponds to Authoritative styles; parental style with low responsiveness but high demandingness corresponds to Authoritarian style. Further, Indulgent parents are those with high responsiveness but low demandingness, and Neglecting parents are those with low responsiveness and low demandingness. An exhibition of the four parental styles is presented in Figure 4.

The integrative approach incorporates the advantages of both the dimensional approach and the typological approach. It could not only examine whether responsiveness and demandingness are equally relevant to children’s choice of influence strategy, but also explore whether and how children under different parental styles diverge from each other in choice of influence strategy. Thus, the integrative approach is applied in this dissertation to investigate the effect of parental style on consumer socialization.



**FIGURE 4**  
AN INTEGRATIVE MODEL OF PARENTAL STYLE  
(Adapted from Maccoby and Martin 1983)

Parental Style and Consumer Socialization. The role of parental style in family socialization, especially child development, has remained a research theme in psychology and sociology for almost three decades. But in marketing, it is not until recently that researchers start to employ the parental style as a socialization process to examine children's consumer socialization. Carlson and Grossbart (1988), Mangleburg (1992), Manchanda and Moore-Shay (1996), and Rose (1999) are among the lead.

Carlson and Grossbart (1988) examined the relationship between mothers' parental style and their consumer socialization of children. They applied the typological approach but with Becker's (1964) three dimensions (i.e., warmth, restrictiveness, and anxious emotional involvement). Mothers were empirically clustered into five groups with distinctive parental styles (i.e., Authoritarian, Permissive, Rigid Controlling, Authoritative, and Neglecting). Mother's consumer socialization tendencies were then compared across these groups. Specifically the authors examined children's consumption autonomy (measured by mother's yielding to children's requests, allowing purchase if children pay all or part of the cost or do chores, and permitting independence in product selection), parent-child communication about consumption (measured by coshopping, concept-orientation in family communication, child's influence, and extent of family communication), and restriction and monitoring of consumption and media exposure (measured by socio-orientation in family communications, refusing children's requests, refusing with explanation, control of TV viewing, amount of child's TV viewing, discussions about advertising, and covieing). Since parents with different parental style diverge in directing parenting practices toward children, it is expected that they will also show difference in the socialization of children as consumers.

Results were mixed in terms of supporting their research hypotheses. As proposed, Carlson and Grossbart found that Authoritative and Permissive mothers communicate more with their children about consumption than do Authoritarian and Neglecting mothers. Authoritative mothers have more restriction of consumption than do Permissive mothers and Authoritarian mothers are more restrictive about consumption than are Rigid Controlling and Permissive mothers. Authoritative mothers do more to mediate media exposure than Permissive, Neglecting, and Authoritarian mothers. Rigid Controlling mothers engage in more media mediation than Neglecting mothers. Authoritative mothers possessed more concern regarding

children's ads and less positive attitudes toward ads in general than Authoritarian and Neglecting mothers do. They are also more concerned about children's ads than are Permissive mothers.

Contrary to hypotheses, however, they found no difference in children's consumption autonomy among mothers with different parental styles. This finding is striking. Given that Authoritarians are the most and Permissives are the least restrictive among all parents, one would expect that at least there should be difference between these two types of parents in granting children consumption autonomy. One possible reason pertains to the measurement they employed. Mothers of children in kindergarten through sixth grades were respondents in the study. In constructing their dependent variables, Carlson and Grossbart took 15 of the dependent variables examined in prior studies of consumer socialization and submitted these 15 variables to a factor analysis. They extracted six factors that accounted for only 63 percent of the variance in response and each single factor only accounted for less than 19 percent of the variance. This is rather small provided their large sample size ( $n = 451$ ) and the large number of variables. Specifically, the factor of child's consumption autonomy was measured by three variables, mother's yielding to children's requests, allowing purchase if children pay all or part of the cost or do chores (labeled as child payment in the study), and permitting independence in product selection (labeled as consumption independence in the study). These three variables are not conceptually complementing, as parental yielding relates more to restriction of consumption behavior than to the consumption autonomy. Further, although loading on the same factor, factor loadings were not high (.78, .65, and .52 for the three variables, respectively) and child's payment also cross loaded on the factor of parent-child communication about consumption (factor loading is .36) while consumption independence cross loaded on the factor of medication of the media (factor loading is -.40). Thus, the consumption autonomy factor may not be uni-dimensional, which attenuated the divergence among parents with different parental styles. Carlson and Grossbart's aggregated data report prohibits such unpacking analysis. Future research should look into this issue.

Mangleburg (1992) investigated the effect of family type, family hierarchy, and parental style on children's influence in family consumption decisions. She proposed a mediational model for the effect of family type on children's influence. Specifically, family type (single parent vs. reconstituted vs. intact families) was proposed to directly affect five socialization factors, including peerness between parents and children, children's household responsibility,

parental coalition formation, parental restrictiveness, and parental nurturance. Further, each socialization factor would directly affect children's extent of influence in family consumption decisions.

Regarding parental style, she applied dimensional approach and developed the parental style along two dimensions (i.e., nurturance and restrictiveness). It was proposed that parental restrictiveness would negatively affect children's influence in family consumption decisions while parental nurturance would positively affect children's influence. This makes sense given that restrictive parents tend to limit and control children's attempts to influence, while nurturant parents are more likely to listen to children and be open to children's opinions. However, Mangleburg's empirical results showed no support to these hypotheses.

One potential reason for Mangleburg's failure to find significant relationship between parental style and children's influence is that the author applied a very broad measure to elicit perception of children's aggregate influence. Specifically, subjects were asked to rate their perception of children's influence in purchasing family- and teen- related products on a seven-point Likert scale, anchoring from "parent(s) made decision alone" to "teen made decision alone," with the midpoint as "parent(s) and teen participated equally in decision." Such broad measures have been proved as hampering inferential ability, increasing perceptual bias, and weakening reporting accuracy in people's perception of relative influence (Corfman 1991; Kim and Lee 1997). Future research should employ more specific measures regarding children's relative influence in family decisions (e.g., to measure children's separate influence in various decision stages and subdecisions rather than the aggregate influence across the decision making process).

Manchanda and Moore-Shay (1996) examined the effects of parental style, gender and materialism on children's choice of influence strategy. They applied the dimensional approach and treated the parental style as continuous along three dimensions (i.e., permissiveness, authoritarianism, and authoritativeness). Considering that authoritarian parents are more restrictive and controlling than both permissive and authoritative parents, they proposed that (1) authoritarianism would positively relate to children's use of low power strategies, (2) authoritativeness would positively relate to children's use of high power strategies, and (3) permissiveness positively relates to children's use of high power strategies. Parental style was

elicited from only parents' response and children's use of influence strategy was measured by both parents' and children's perceptions.

Empirical data only minimally supported their propositions, however. First, using parents' perceptions, none of the relationships was significant between parental style and children's influence strategy. Then using children's perception of their own influence strategy, the relationship between authoritarianism and children's use of low power strategy was significant. But neither of the other two propositions was significant. Their failure to find sufficient support for the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy might stem from their measurement of parental style. Although using the same label, they actually measured parental style along three different dimensions, authoritarianism, authoritativeness, and permissiveness. Their purpose was to use these three dimensions to measure Baumrind's (1971) Authoritarian, Authoritative, and Permissive styles of parenting. But the faulty is Baumrind's three styles of parenting are three groups of parents who differ from each other in some orthogonal dimensions (e.g., demandingness, responsiveness, etc.). The three parental styles (i.e., Authoritarian, Authoritative, and Permissive) themselves are usually not treated as dimensions because they are not orthogonal to each other. Thus, measuring parental style along such three nonorthogonal dimensions brings questionable validity about their study. Future research should use more valid measurement and reassess the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy.

A very recent study (Rose 1999) investigated the relations among consumer socialization, parental style, and parental age expectations in the United States and Japan. The author applied the typological approach but with Becker's (1964) three dimensions (i.e., restrictiveness, anxious emotional involvement, and warmth) to analyze parental style. For the US sample, he found very consistent parental style types with Baumrind's results, 37.3% of mothers appearing to be authoritative, 23.7% to be authoritarian, and 22.1% to be permissive. The other three parental styles, Detached (characterized as nonrestrictive, not anxiously emotionally involved and low warm), Indulgent amae (characterized as nonrestrictive, anxiously emotionally involved, and low warm), and Strict amae (characterized as restrictive, anxiously emotionally involved, and warm) are more suitable with Japanese subjects. The study showed mixed support to the hypothesized relationships between parental style and consumer socialization regarding expectations for consumer-related skills and understanding advertising practices, communications about

consumption, children's influence and participation in family purchases, children's consumption autonomy, and parental restriction of consumption and media exposure. Rose's work involves cross-cultural comparisons. It appears the relationships between parental style and consumer socialization is much more complicated cross-culturally, because of the different social norms, values, and goals adopted in different cultures. Given this complexity, Rose's mixed results are rather not surprising. Provided the early stage of research about consumer socialization, it might be plausible for researchers to further look into the effect of parental style on children's development as consumers in one single cultural context before advancing to cross-cultural contexts.

Summary of Parental Style. Parental style provides a family socialization context in which parents reach their parental goals and transfer values to their children through parenting practices. In the process of socializing children, parents with alternative style of parenting differ in controlling children's behavior and responding to children's inquiry. In regard to children's development as consumers, parents with different parental styles vary in age expectations, granting consumption autonomy, communicating about consumption, restricting consumption, yielding to children's requests, allowing children's influence in family decisions, and mediating media exposure. Compared to family communication environment, parental style as a socialization process seems to offer richer explanation in studying children's influence in family consumption decisions. As showed by Carlson, Grossbart, and Stuenkel (1992), parental style even provides a theoretical basis for explaining differences among parents regarding how they communicate consumer skills and knowledge to their children. However, parental style as a consumer socialization process affecting children's development as consumers is a new topic in marketing literature. Our understanding of the role of parental style in consumer socialization is still in early stage, as evidenced in the limited number of related studies as well as the mixed results supporting the research hypotheses in each of those studies (Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Manchanda and Moore-Shay 1996; Mangleburg 1992; Rose 1999). Thus, effort is needed to further explore the effect of parental style as a socialization process on consumer socialization of children.

Outcomes are the last element in Moschis and Churchill's (1978) consumer socialization framework. They refer to the learning properties (both cognitions and behaviors) consumers develop through socialization, including a wide variety of consumer skills, knowledge, and

attitudes. Outcomes could be direct effects of antecedents or socialization process, indirect effects of antecedents through socialization processes, and the blend of both. Specifically, consumer researchers have looked into such socialization outcomes as consumer affair knowledge, consumer activism and ability to manage consumer finance, attitude toward prices, materialism, consumption motivation, brand evaluations, exposure to media and advertising information processing, participation in family purchasing process, children's relative influence in family consumption decisions, and children's choice of influence strategy (Burns and Gillett 1987; Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Darley and Lim 1986; Grossbart and Crosby 1984; Manchanda and Moore-Shay 1996; Mandrik, Fern and Bao 2000; Mehrotra and Torges 1977; Moore and Moschis 1981; Moschis 1984, 1985; Moschis and Churchill 1978; Moschis and Mitchell 1986; Moschis and Moore 1979; Moschis, Prahasto, and Mitchell 1986; Roberts, Wortzel, and Berkeley 1981).

Summary of Consumer Socialization Theory. Consumer socialization theory has been reviewed by discussing the three mechanisms (i.e., modeling, reinforcement, and social interaction) underlying children's learning process and an important framework guiding research in consumer socialization. This theory appears to present high explanatory power in studying the phenomena of children's development as consumers. Germane to the focus of this dissertation, both children's choice of influence strategy and their extent of influence in family consumption decisions could be tracked through effects from socialization antecedents and socialization processes. However, consumer socialization theory is not without limitations. It has been criticized for viewing the socialization process as essentially static and one-sided from agents to socializees (e.g., from parents to children) (Gecas 1981; Peterson and Rollins 1987). Critics charge that consumer socialization theory view children as "blank slates" upon which values of different agents are imprinted. In the three learning mechanism, although social interaction involves the reciprocal change between agents and socializees, it still emphasizes more on socializees' learning from this reciprocity. As such, consumer socialization theory overlooks socializees' initiative in the socialization process (Demo, Dmall, and Savin-Williams 1987). For an instance, children learn consumption related skills and knowledge from parents. However, they could also be socialization agents for parents in the sense that they could be motivated to participate in purchase decisions and try to impact the decisions toward their own end by using different influence strategies. Thus, consumer socialization could actually be a dynamic and bi-

directional process. This alternative view of socialization is captured by power relational theory, which views the agent-child as a dynamic system and treats children as actors rather than receivers in the system (Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984; Falbo and Peplau 1980; Howard, Blumstein, and Schwartz 1986; Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson 1980; Wolfe 1959). The following section reviews the power relational theory.

### **Power Relational Theory**

Power relational theory deals with conflict resolution in interdependent relationships. It dominates research of dyadic conflict management in social psychology, family sociology, and organization behavior. Recently, some consumer behavior researchers have successfully applied it in studying the interaction and dynamic of spousal conflict management in family consumption decisions (e.g., Corfman 1991; Spiro 1983; Su 1999). Its application in studying children's influence in family consumption decisions is only in emergence but appears very promising. This section will review the basic components of power relational theory by drawing mostly upon the literature from other disciplines. Since the main purpose of this dissertation is to study children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions, this section will also address how power relational theory would relate to the parent-child interaction.

Power relational theory asserts that in an interdependent relationship, when there is conflict, the actor's power determines his/her choice of influence strategy in the conflict management and further the extent of relative influence he/she exhibits in the decision outcome (Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984; Falbo and Peplau 1980; French and Raven 1959; Howard, Blumstein, and Schwartz 1986; Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson 1980). Thus, the theory embraces three important elements, power, relative influence, and influence strategy.

Power. According to power relational theory, in interdependent relationships, partners do not always perfectly correspond to each other's desire and there often exist conflicts regarding actions or goals between partners (Howard, Blumstein, and Schwartz 1986; Perreault and Miles 1978). The actor might use different influence strategies to impact the target toward his/her own favor. In such a relationship, power refers to the actor's ability to influence the target person to do or to believe something he or she would not have necessarily done or believed spontaneously (Blood and Wolfe 1960). As such, power is a relational property (Emerson 1962; Yukl 1981). It exists in an interdependent relationship and the actor is powerful over the target if and only if the

actor holds some resources that the target person potentially desires and might not get otherwise (Emerson 1962; French and Raven 1959; Smith 1970). Such resources could be economic resources (e.g., income, Blood and Wolfe 1960), normative resources (e.g., culturally defined authority, Rodman 1972), affective resources (e.g., emotional involvement, Emerson 1962), personal resources (e.g., personality, physical appearance, McDonald 1977), and cognitive resources (e.g., power perception, Bacharach and Lawler 1976). Therefore, people's resources are often embedded in their personal factors. In a social relationship, the resource structure partners possess influence the power structure between the partners (McDonald 1980a).

French and Raven (1959) identified power as consisting of five bases in social relationships, including (1) coercive power – one's potential to administer punishment to the person influenced; (2) reward power – one's potential to provide reward for the person influenced; (3) expert power – one's potential to supply superior knowledge and skill to the person influenced; (4) legitimate power – one's perceived right to control the influenced person's opinion or behavior; and (5) referent power – one's potential to function as an identification object for the person influenced. This power identification is applied with modification by family sociologists to the parent-child relationship in probing parental and children's power.

**Parental Power.** Consumer socialization theory views parent and child as a socializer vs. socializee relationship (Moschis and Churchill 1978; Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Ward 1974). Different from this view, power relational theory regards parent and child as two partners in a social relationship in which each partner provides some unique resources to satisfy the other's needs and desires (Smith 1970; McDonald 1977, 1980b, 1982). Thus, parents and children may hold power over each other, although in most cases, the power structure is unbalanced with parents having much greater power than children (Hoffman 1960). Smith (1970) recognized that in the parent-child relationship, "the same conditions which would give a parent reward power would also give him coercive power" (p. 862). Thus he consolidated reward power and coercive power into a single power type – outcome-control power. Further, McDonald (1977, 1979) indicated that the direct application of French and Raven's referent power as parental referent power closely resembles parental identification, a concept relating to parental power yet not considered a component of power. In order to distinguish the parental referent power from parental identification, he reconceptualized the parental referent power as parents' potential to be a comparative referent, functioning for the adolescent as a comparison

for self-appraisal, rather than as parents' potential to be a normative referent, functioning as a source for the internalization of norms, attitudes and values, and the resultant feeling of oneness with the referent.

According to this research, parental power is thus conceptualized as consisting of four major dimensions: outcome-control power, referent power, legitimate power, and expert power. In specifics, outcome-control power refers to parents' potential to influence or control children's positive and negative reinforcement, including the parental control of economic resources, perception of decision-making in the parental unit, and the perceived strength of parental rewards and punishments. Referent power indicates parents' potential to be a comparative referent, providing the child with guidance and advice. Legitimate power reflects parents' perceived right or authority by the child to control his/her behavior or opinions. Finally, expert power means parents' potential to supply superior knowledge and skill to the children.

Research in developmental psychology and family sociology has identified that parent's characteristics, child's characteristics, and parent-child interdependence as factors determining parental power perceived by children (Cook, 1993; McDonald 1979; Tashakkori, Thompson, and Simonian 1989).

Parent's Characteristics and Parental Power. Parents' characteristics such as education, occupation, personality, and experiences are parent's personal resources that contribute to children's development both economically and emotionally. In a social relationship, the person who could contribute resources valuable to others has the power over others (Blood and Wolfe 1960; Wolfe 1959). Applying this to the parent-child relationship, the more resources a parent could contribute to children's development, the more parental power she/he would have over children (McDonald 1979; Tashakkori, Thompson, and Simonian 1989).

Child's Characteristics and Parental Power. As indicated previously, power is a relational property. In a social relationship, person A has power over person B only when B is interested in the resources A could provide (Emerson 1962; Lewin 1951). This interest could vary with person B's characteristics (Dowd 1975; Emerson 1962; Waller and Hill 1951). Thus, in the parent-child relationship, the child's characteristics (e.g., age, gender, birth order, income, and knowledge, etc.) would influence his/her dependency on parent's resources and thus his/her perception of the parental power (McDonald 1979, 1982; Tashakkori, Thompson, and Yousefi 1990).

Parent-Child Interdependence and Parental Power. Power is a phenomenon in social relationships (French and Raven 1959; Olson and Cromwell 1975) and one's power to control or influence the other resides implicitly in the other's dependency (Emerson 1962). Thus, the relationship or the degree of dependency between the partners affects one partner's ability to influence the other. Consequently, in the parent-child relationship, the interdependency between parents and children would influence children's perception of parental power (Cook 1993).

**Children's Power.** In social relationships, the interdependency between partners makes it possible that both partners possess power over the other (Emerson 1962; Cromwell and Olson 1975). It could be that one partner maintains absolute rule in one behavioral realm while the other partner does the same in quite a different area. It could also be that partners share power in a single realm. This might also be the case in the parent-child relationship. However, for long time researchers have concentrated on parents' power over children and ignored children's potential power over parents (McDonald 1977, 1979, 1980; Peterson, Rollins, & Thomas 1985; Rollins and Thosmas 1975; Smith 1970, 1983, 1986). The reason might be that "probably in no other relationship does a person in our society have such complete power over another as do parents over young children" (Hoffman 1960, p. 130).

Actually, children do have certain degree of power over parents. This was first empirically demonstrated by Peterson (1986) who showed that teenagers are perceived by both fathers and mothers to have "power" or the potential to exercise influence within the parent-child relationship. Specifically, parents viewed their children as having reward power (the potential to provide gratification), coercive power (bring about adverse consequences), legitimate power (legitimize their "right" to exercise influence), expert power (provide useful information), and referent power (function as significant others). Kim, Lee, and Hall (1991) further asked adolescents' self-perception of their power over parents, finding that teenagers attribute to themselves relatively high levels of reward power, legitimate power, and referent power, a somewhat low level of expert power, and a still lower level of coercive power. Given the findings in consumer socialization literature that children have certain extent of influence in family consumption decisions (e.g., Beatty and Talpade 1994; Belch, Belch, and Ceresino 1985; Darley and Lim 1986; Foxman and Tansuhaj 1988; Kim and Lee 1997; Mehrotra and Torges 1977), these two studies' results make good sense in that children are perceived to have some

degree of power by parents thus are able to acquire certain extent of influence in family consumption decisions.

As indicated previously, in the parent-child relationship, parental power is determined by parent's characteristics, child's characteristics, and parent-child interdependence (Cook 1993; McDonald 1979; Tashakkori, Thompson, and Simonian 1989). Parent-child influence is a reciprocal process (Peterson 1986; Smith 1983), thus it is likely that by factors such as parent's characteristics, child's characteristics, and parent-child interdependence would also affect children's power in the parent-child relationship. Research efforts do not exist and future research is needed on this matter.

Relative Influence is the degree to which an individual has engaged in activities that contribute to the decision making process relative to the contributions of the others in group decisions (Beatty and Talpade 1994; Corfman and Lehmann 1987). It has been a heavily studied topic in family decision literature. According to power relational theory, in interdependent relationships, power is the actor's ability to influence the target person in a manner desirable to the actor (Blood and Wolfe 1960). As such, other things being equal, when the actor attempts to influence the target, the greater his/her power, the more likely that the target person will be affected toward the actor's favor, leading to the actor's greater relative influence in the decision outcome (French and Raven 1959; Rollins and Thomas 1975). Since access to power resources used to be described as a necessary condition for power (e.g., French and Raven 1959; Lasswell and Kaplan 1950), many studies have been conducted to verify this inference by testing the effect of resources on decision outcomes (Blood and Wolfe 1960; Fox 1973; Rodman 1967; 1972). However, empirical results are inconsistent, especially in cross-national contexts (Webster 1997). One important reason is that this view only considers the bivariate relationship between the power bases and the consequences of power but fails to consider how power is used to achieve the decision outcome (Sprey 1975; Szinovacz 1987; Su 1999). Power is a necessary but not a sufficient cause of relative influence, and the way power is used (i.e., influence strategy) mediates the effect of power on the actor's relative influence (Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991; Su 1999). Thus, the following reviews the role of influence strategy in conflict management. Pertaining to this dissertation, focus is on children's influence strategy use in family consumption decisions.

Influence Strategy is the strategic use of power in an attempt to get one's way in a conflicting context (Ohbuchi and Yamamoto 1990; Su 1999; Tedeschi, Schlenker, and Bonoma 1973). This definition carries two connotations: (1) influence is intentional--partners may choose to use power or not use power, or use different types of power; (2) influence is reciprocal--a partner's use of power might affect the other partner's power behavior in a dyadic relationship (Su 1999; Szinovacz 1987). For example, in joint family consumption decision making when conflict exists, children may use unilateral strategies such as begging and pleading, or bilateral strategies such as bargaining and reasoning. Also, children's power behavior may be contingent on parent's use of power. Children as a less powerful partner in the parent-child relationship might become more influential in a certain decision because parents' not using power.

Power relational theory conceptualizes power as the ability to influence. Because of the power advantage, the more powerful partner may act opportunistically to take advantage of the other partner in order to gain a disproportional share of interests from his/her exchange (Bannister 1969). Thus, power is an important factor in determining partners' choice of influence strategy in a social relationship (Molm 1997; Roering 1977; Rubin and Brown 1975; Su 1999). Besides power, the actor's as well as the other partner's characteristics affect the actor's self-efficacy (i.e., one's belief about one's ability to perform a behavior required to produce a desired outcome, Bandura 1977) in power behavior. Thus, both the actor's and the other partner's characteristics would impact people's choice of influence strategy (Kipnis 1984; Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson 1980). Finally, the interdependency between partners affects the actor's concern about the other partner's feeling in the decision making process, thus will modify the actor's choice of influence strategy (Boyle et al. 1992; Frazier and Rody 1991; Frazier and Summer 1986). Adaptation of the power relational theory to investigating children's influence strategy choice behavior in the parent-child relationship is limited. Some sparse research has been conducted to investigate the role of power, children's characteristics, and parents' characteristics in children's choice of influence strategy.

Power and Children's Choice of Influence Strategy. According to power relational theory, during the parent-children interaction in family consumption decisions, children's perception that they have potential to influence their parents will likely lead them to exerting power in various strategic forms. Kim, Lee, and Hall (1991) found a negative relationship

between female teenagers' legitimate power and their playing on emotion as an influence strategy. However, they did not find significant relationship between teenagers' other types of power and choice of influence strategies. Given this is the only study in its regard, clearly more research is needed.

Children's Characteristics and Choice of Influence Strategy. In the parent-child relationship, children's age and gender are found to affect their choice of influence strategy (Cowan and Avants 1988; Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984; Manchanda and Moore-Shay 1996). Older children develop greater cognitive ability (John 1999) thus might anticipate more cooperation with others. In accord with this, old children may use more bilateral influence strategies such as bargaining and persuasion than young children do (Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984). Gender has been found to relate to children's choice of influence strategy, with girls using low power or weak strategies more frequently than boys do toward their parents (Manchanda and Moore-Shay 1996; Cowan and Avants 1988). This may be due to the power structure of the relationship. Girls might perceive parents as having more power than boys do and thus use low power strategies toward powerful target (Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984).

Parents' Characteristics and Children's Choice of Influence Strategy. Almost none research exists investigating the impact of parents' characteristics on children's choice of influence strategy in family consumption decisions. Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin (1984) investigated the effects of target, age, and gender on children's choice of power strategies. Pertaining to the topic here, they found that children used less direct and bilateral strategies toward fathers than toward mothers. The authors stated that this is because children perceive fathers to have more power than mothers and use less direct and bilateral strategies toward powerful targets. However, contradictory to this statement, they also found children used less "negative affect" (which is an indirect and unilateral strategy such as crying and anger) toward fathers than toward mothers. The authors conjectured that this is due to mothers' being more tolerant of negative behavior and thus being subject to more negative affect from children. It appears that parents' characteristics (e.g., tolerance of negative behavior in this case) might affect children's choice of influence strategy. Obviously, more research effort is needed to explore this topic.

Parent-Child Interdependency and Children's Choice of Influence Strategy. The nature of relationship (e.g., the interdependence) in a dyad is often shown to have important impact on strategies the actor chooses to influence the partner (e.g., Boyle et al. 1992; Bugental 1993; Farmer et al. 1997; Pratt, Jones-Aust, and Pennington 1993). Thus, it is reasonable to suspect that the interdependence between parents and children may also affect children's choice of influence strategy in family consumption decisions. Such interdependence could be reflected by the attachment between parents and children, identified as an emotional tie that develops between parents and children (Campbell and Taylor 1980). Low attachment typically involves low interaction and low dependency between parents and children, and may lead children to employing more unilateral rather than bilateral influence strategies. While high attachment often develops through frequent interaction and warm relationship between parents and children, thus may entice children to apply more bilateral strategies. To date, no research attention has been cast upon this issue.

Choice of Influence Strategy and Relative Influence. Researchers have found that certain type of influence strategy is more effective in swaying the target person's behavior or attitude in a dyadic relationship (Bhatnager 1993; Su 1999; Yukl and Falbe 1991; Yukl and Tracey 1992). For example, in a husband-wife relationship, the cost of exiting the relationship is high and retaliation of coercion may only lead damage to the marriage. Therefore, when one spouse uses coercive strategy (e.g., threats and punishments), the other spouse usually chooses to tolerate the coercion rather than retaliate or exit (Heirschman 1970). As a result, the spouse who uses coercive strategy is more likely to get his/her way and exhibits a greater relative influence in family decisions (Su 1999). Research is scarce regarding the effect of children's choice of influence strategy on their relative influence in family decisions. Only one study was conducted so far (Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991).

In the parent-child relationship, children probably seldom choose coercive strategies to influence their parents due to the extreme power imbalance. However, one may speculate that those children who more often rely on strategies based on reasoning and logical appeal may be perceived by parents as more mature and competent. Thus, these children might have greater relative influence in family decision making than those who rely on emotion-based strategies. Kim, Lee and Hall's (1991) results showed that in purchasing goods for family use, teenagers who rely more on the "persuasion" and "playing on emotion" strategies and less on stubborn acts

in their influence attempts perceive themselves as having greater influence. This finding is basically congruent with the above reasoning. However, they also found in purchasing goods for their own use, teenagers who more often employ the "stop eating" and the "approach the other parent" strategy perceived themselves as having greater influence. This second finding is exactly opposite to the above reasoning. These mixed results are hard to interpret. One possible reason is that the authors measured teenagers' influence in different purchase decisions but choice of influence strategies across all purchase decisions. This mismatch between purchase situations might have led to the dubious results.

Summary of Power Relational Theory. Power relational theory is widely used to explore the dyadic conflict management phenomena in social psychology, family sociology, and organization behavior. Applied to the parent-child relationship, this theory considers parents and children as partners in an interdependent relationship with differing degree of power. When there is a conflict between children's and parents' view regarding a consumption decision (e.g., whether to buy a product, which brand to buy, when to buy, etc.), children might strategically use their power to persuade parents, thus gain influence in the decision making process (Cowan and Avants 1988; Cowan, Drinkard, MacGavin 1984; Kim, Hall, and Lee 1991). However, such application to studying children's influence in family consumption decisions is only in emergence. Results regarding relationships between children's power, children's choice of influence strategy, and children's relative influence are barely understood. This is partly because of the specialty of the relationship between parents and children in which they are not only partners but also socializers and socializees most of the time (Moschis and Churchill 1978). Nevertheless, the power relational theory, as an alternative explanation, has provided very encouraging avenue to explore children's influence in family consumption decisions.

### **Summary of Theoretical Review**

This section reviews two leading theories in studying children's influence in family consumption decisions, consumer socialization theory and power relational theory. The former theory views children as a socializee and parents as a major socialization agent. Children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence are outcomes of consumer socialization that happens in certain social settings. Under this theory, children are essentially passive learner and the socialization takes place one sided from parents to children (Peterson and Rollins 1987). Alternatively, the power relational theory regards parents and children as two partners in an

interdependent relationship. Children possess certain degree of power, although relatively little, over their parents. Children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence are the exhibition of their strategic use and the result of power in family consumption decisions. Under this theory, children are essentially active participator in family consumption decisions and influence is reciprocal between parents and children.

Although never done in the literature, the consumer socialization theory and power relational theory could be integrated to study children's influence in family consumption decisions because of the specialty of the parent-child relationship. On the one hand, it is well known that parents play a distinctive role in children's development. Specifically, in children's development as a consumer, parents not only transfer their consumption knowledge and skill to children, but also mediate children's acquisition of consumption knowledge and skill from other agents such as mass media, school, and peers (Moschis 1985; Moschis and Churchill 1978). This legitimates the application of consumer socialization theory to studying children's influence in family consumption decisions. On the other hand, from a systematic point of view, family is a system consisting of various dyadic, triadic, and larger subunits (Olson, Cromwell, and Klein 1975). Thus, parents and children could be studied as a special dyadic relationship, as compared to other frequently studied relationships such as husband vs. wife and superior vs. subordinate. Consequently, power relational theory would be applicable in explaining children's, as a partner, relative influence in this relationship. In the sense that motivated by their personal consumption needs, children could actively use the consumption knowledge and skill learned from parents to solve conflicts within as well as outside the family context, these two theories are actually complementary to each other. The consumer socialization theory emphasizes children's learning of consumption knowledge and skill, while the power relational theory focuses on children's use of such knowledge and skill. Thus, integration of these two theories should provide greater explanatory power to children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions than either one of them. This theoretical integration will be the guiding approach in this dissertation.

## **EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE**

The previous section reviewed two theories applied in studying children's influence in family consumption decisions. This section shifts to an examination of the earlier empirical

research regarding children's influence. The attention is focused on two issues: 1) to reveal the various types of consumption decisions in which children have influence; and 2) to discern the influence strategies children use to gain influence in these decisions. These two issues are important in that they contribute to the conceptual development (as will be presented in the next chapter). To avoid redundancy, theoretically based results for the two theories discussed above will not be repeated unless they are related to these two issue.

### **Type of Consumption Decisions Children Involved**

A review of the existing empirical research (see Table 2) indicates that children are more likely to be involved in those decisions 1) in which they are the primary consumer of the focal product, 2) which are in the problem recognition stage, and 3) which belong to subdecisions regarding color, make/model, and brand choices.

Product Type and Children's Influence. In reviewing past research on children's relative influence in family consumption decisions, the literature shows that children's relative influence varies with product type. Overall, children appear to have significant influence in product decisions for which they are the primary consumer. This is particularly true when the product involves low financial costs. Specifically, children have been found to have substantial impact in decisions for breakfast cereal, snack foods, toys and games, children's clothing, records or tapes, school supplies, and children's stereo (Ahuja 1993; Atkin 1978; Beatty and Talpade 1994; Belch, Belch, and Ceresino 1985; Burns and Gillet 1987; Foxman and Tansuhaj 1988; Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom 1989a; Isler, Popper and Ward 1987; Mangleburg 1992; Swinyard and Sim 1987; Ward and Wackman 1972).

On the contrary, children are found to have little influence in product decisions for which their parents are the primary consumer or the entire family share the usage. This is particularly true when the family products involve substantial financial costs. Specifically, research found that children have little impact in decisions for coffee, parents' clothing, alcoholic beverages, magazine subscription for parents, laundry soap, household cleaning products, automobile, major appliance, life insurance, and household furniture (Ahuja 1993; Beatty and Talpade 1994; Belch, Belch, and Ceresino 1985; Foxman and Tansuhaj 1988; Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom 1989a; Jenkins 1979; Mangleburg 1992; Swinyard and Sim 1987; Ward and Wackman 1972).

Two sources, children's product involvement and the product's financial risk, possibly contribute to the above findings. From the children's standpoint, when the product is for their

**TABLE 2**  
**STUDIES ON CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE IN FAMILY CONSUMPTION DECISIONS**

Source	Products	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Results
Berey and Pollay (1968)	Cereal	Mother's brand recall Mother's purchase of the child's favorite brand	Children's assertiveness Mother's child centeredness	The more child-centered the mother, the less likely she is to buy child's favorite brand. The higher mother's brand recall, the more likely she is to buy child's favorite brand.
Ward and Wackman (1972)	22 products including relevant foods, less relevant foods, durables (for child's use), notions and toiletries, and other products (e.g., auto, gasoline)	Children's attempts to influence purchases Parental yielding	Demographics (age, number of children, and social class) Interpersonal variables (parent-child conflict, restrictions on TV viewing) Communication variables (mother's time spent with television, recall of commercials, and attitude toward advertising)	Parents yield more to older children but less when they place more restriction on TV viewing. Parental yielding increases when parents have more positive attitude toward advertising and as they spend more time watching TV. Children's influence attempts increase when parents spend more time watching TV and as their recall of commercials increases. More influence attempts from children lead to more parent-child conflict. Children's influence is greatest for relevant foods and durables for child's use.
Szybillo, Sosanie, and Tenenbein (1977)	Fast-food Restaurant and Conventional Restaurant	Family member involvement	Decision stages Subdecisions Restaurant type	Children have more influence in early decision stages. They have least influence in the subdecision about how much to spend.
Moschis, Moore, and Stephens (1977)	Three categories including convenience goods, shopping goods, and specialty goods	Purchasing role structure	Product type Social class Sex Age	Adolescents' shopping goods (clothing) tend to be purchased jointly by the adolescent and family members, whereas adolescent specialty goods tend to be purchased without family members. Adolescents in lower social class families tend to have more purchasing independence. Females have greater family independence than males in purchasing health-care items and clothing items, but less in purchasing sports equipment.
Szybillo and Sosanie (1977)	Fast food restaurant eat out and a one day family trip	Family member decision involvement	Product type Decision stages Subdecisions	Children have more influence in early decision stages. They have least influence in the subdecision about how much to spend.
Mehrotra and Torges (1977)	Group 1 (Cold cereal, fast food restaurant) Group 2 (children's clothes and shoes) Group 3 (potato chips and soft drinks)	Children's influence on mothers' buying behavior	Demographic variables (age, education, family size, income, degree of urbanization, and working status) AIO variables (attitude, interest, and opinion) Media Variables	Children's influence relates to mother's activities/interests/opinions.
Atkin (1978)	Cereal	Parent-child interaction and consequences	Child's age Child's sex Family social class	Parent-child interaction increases with children's age. Parents refuse younger children's requests more than older children's requests.

Source	Products	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Results
Nelson (1979)	Family eat out decision	Family member involvement in the decision	Decision stage Child age Respondent socioeconomic characteristics (age of youngest child, family size, occupation, education, and income)	Children's involvement is greater in earlier decision stages. Older children have greater decision involvement than younger children. Older children have less involvement than parent's only for choice and how much to spend. Children's involvement in providing information, selecting particular type and brand increases with family size.
Jenkins (1979)	Furniture, automobiles, groceries, life insurance, savings, general family decisions, and vacation decisions.	Parent's perceived influence of children in a given vacation subdecisions	Various demographic, socio-economic, personality, and attitudinal variables (totally 20 variables)	Children have little influence for all products except vacations. Children's influence is lowest for how much, where to stay and transportation mode.
Brody et al. (1981)		Children's purchase influence attempts Mother's teaching children about nutrition information	TV programs with/without commercials Child viewing TV with/without mother	Children exposed to ads make more influence attempts toward their mothers than those not exposed to ads. Children request more advertised products under coviewing condition than those under viewing alone or no ad conditions.
Roberts, Wortzel, and Berkeley (1981)	Child/pet foods, gum, clothing/cereal/cookies, sweets and snacks. In total 37 products.	Mother's perception of the amount of influence their children have on their brand choice in selected product categories. The amount of family consumption in the particular product category.	Mother's attitude toward a variety of family-related and social issues	Children have less influence on mother's brand choice when mothers are more concerned about nutrition and family financial matters, and when mothers are more traditional and conservative. The more influence children have, the more the family consumes in that particular product category.
Belch, Belch, and Ceresino (1985)	Automobile, television, household appliances, household furniture, family vacation, and breakfast cereal.	Family member's influence	Product category Stage of the decision making process Subdecision areas for each product category	Children's influence is greatest for cereal and vocation. Children's influence is lowest in product choice stage. Children's influence varies along subdecisions, being lowest for how much & where for car and how much for vacations. Children disagree with husbands on how much children's influence is. Children believe they have more influence than their fathers think they do. Children think fathers have more influence than fathers think they themselves have.
Moschis and Mitchell (1986)	Soft drinks, child's clothing, shampoo, school supplies, auto repairs, kitchen appliances, records for the child, and grooming products for child	Child's role as purchase initiator Child's role as influencer Child's role as decider Child's role as purchaser	Youth's television advertising viewing Family communication structure Youth's frequency of communication with peers about consumption Child's age Child's amount of money earned outside the home Child's gender Child's socioeconomic status	The more socio-oriented the family communication, the less is children's influence in the stage of alternative evaluation and choice. The more frequently children communicate with peers about consumption, the more they participate in family decisions. Older children participate more in family decisions. The more money children earned outside home, the more children's participation in family decisions. The higher the SES, the greater children's influence in problem recognition.

Source	Products	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Results
Darley and Lim (1986)	Three leisure time activities: movie attendance, family outing, and participant sports	Parents' perception of children's influence for seven subdecisions/areas	Parent's locus of control Parent type Child's age	<p>In participant sports, external locus of control parents perceive their children to have more influence for what type and where to go subdecisions than do internal locus of control parents. Single parents perceive their children to have more influence for how much to spend and where to go subdecisions than do dual parents. Older children are perceived to have more influence for when, how much, what type, information, and initiation subdecisions.</p> <p>In movie attendance, external locus of control parents perceive their children to have more overall influence than do internal locus of control parents. Older children are perceived to have more influence in specific information and when subdecisions. Single parents perceive their children to have more influence for when subdecision than do dual parents.</p> <p>In family outing, single parents perceive their children to have more overall influence than do dual parents. Older children are perceived to have more influence for how much to spend subdecision than are younger children.</p>
Burns and Gillett (1987)	Toys and games	Cognitive adjustment outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertising recall</li> <li>• Recall of store of last purchase</li> <li>• Awareness set of stores</li> <li>• Evoked set of stores</li> </ul>	Family communication environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socio-orientation</li> <li>• Concept-orientation</li> </ul> Purchase process participation Child' age Child's gender Number of children Child's allowance	Socio-oriented family communication negatively affects children's participation in purchase process. Concept-oriented family communication positively affects children's participation in purchase process.
Swinyard and Sim (1987)	25 products, including children's products, children's education, family activities, durable products, and nondurable products	Child's participation in purchase decisions	Product type Decision stages Child's age	Children are most influential in decisions regarding children-centered products, and least in decisions regarding adult-centered products. Children are most influential in problem recognition stage. Older children have more influence than younger children in all decision stages for durables, nondurables, and outside entertainment.

Source	Products	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Results
Isler, Popper, and Ward (1987)	Multiple products requested by children (e.g., candy, toys, clothing, etc.)	Child-Parent Interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's request type</li> <li>• Mother's response</li> <li>• Children's response</li> <li>• Mother's subsequent response</li> </ul>	Television viewing Product type Age Location	Younger children make more purchase requests than older children. Children request most for snack foods and candy, and least for fruit and vegetables, medicine, and toothpaste. Younger make more requests for candy and toys than older children do. Older children make more requests for snack food and clothes than for other products. Children tend to make requests in home and at store. Older children make more requests in home and less at store than young children. Children make most requests by just asking without nagging. Mothers yield to children's requests for cereal, candy, clothes, snacks, other food, and miscellaneous products more than for toys and sports equipment. When parents refuse, they tend to "say no and explain why" or "say maybe sometime but not now." Younger children tend to accept mother's refusal more easily than older children.
Carlson and Grossbart (1988)		Children's consumption autonomy granted by mothers Parent-child communication about consumption Restriction and monitoring of consumption and media exposure	Parental style	Mothers with different parental styles do not differ in granting children consumption autonomy. Authoritative and permissive mothers have more communication about consumption with children than do authoritarian and neglecting mothers. Authoritative mothers have more restriction of consumption than permissive mothers. Authoritarian mothers are more restrictive than rigid controlling and permissive mothers. Authoritative mothers engage in more media mediation than do permissive, neglecting, and authoritarian mothers. Authoritative mothers have more concern about children's ads and less positive attitudes toward ads in general than authoritarian and neglecting mothers do.
Foxman and Tansuhaj (1988)	14 products: six for family use, six for adolescent's use, and two for parent use.	Perceived relative influence	Respondent Primary user of products Perceived product importance	Children have more influence for child relevant than for family relevant products. Children perceive themselves to have greater relative influence than mothers do to them. The more important mothers perceive the toothpaste to children, the less is their perception of children's relative influence. The more important respondents consider cable TV subscriptions, the more likely they are to rate adolescents as influencing their purchase. Mothers and children disagree over children's influence for child's records, clothes, magazines, and bike, furniture, groceries and family toothpaste.

Source	Products	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Results
Hansen and Bokemeier (1988)	5 family decisions including TV watching, whether child takes job, children's after-school activities, vacation, church going	Children's influence in family decisions	Parents' marital equality Children's task involvement Children's employment Life course stage Number of children Dual-worker parents Family type (farm vs. rural) Family Income Mother's education	Mothers and fathers share similar perceptions of children's influence in decision-making. The more children participate in family tasks, the greater is their influence in family decisions. Older children have more influence than younger children do. The higher mother's education is, the less is children's influence. Children from higher income families have more influence than are those from lower income families. Parents who are more likely to share marital decision-making equally are more likely to report that their children are involved in family decision-making. Farm families do not significantly differ from other rural families in children's influence in decision-making.
Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom (1989a)	12 products in a broad price range: six for family use and six for the adolescent's use	Adolescent's influence in family decision making Adolescent's general influence in family decision processes Divergence in family members' influence perceptions	Product type Respondents Decision type	Children have influence in suggesting products, paying attention to new products and learning best buy, but not in suggesting price range. Children perceive themselves as having more influence than do parents. The older the father and the more concept-oriented family communication environment, the less divergence in respondents' influence perceptions. The larger the family is and the more the mother works, the greater is the perceptual divergence.
Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom (1989b)	14 products: six for family use, six for the adolescent's use, and two for parent's use	Child's product-choice influence Children's general influence in family decision making	Family communication environment Personal Resources Product-related factors (importance and knowledge)	Children's influence increases as they possess more income and better grade. For general influence, children who possess better grades and in whom parents have greater confidence have more influence than do those with lower grade and low confidence from parents.
Carlson, Grossbart, and Walsh (1990)	Automobiles, furniture, groceries, life insurance, major appliance, vacations, and general purchases	Number of consumer goals Control and Mediation of Media Exposure Parent-child interaction Responses to requests	Parents' communication orientation	Mothers with pluralistic and consensual communication report more children's influence, parental yielding, and child's consumption independence than do mothers with laissez-faire and protective mothers.
Brown and Mann (1990)	No specific product involved.	Adolescent's decision making competence (participation in family decisions, and vigilance as a decision maker)	Family's socio-economic status Type of family Family Size Family cohesion Family adaptability Parent-adolescent communication Parental conflict resolution strategies	Age is neither related to adolescent participation in family decisions nor to decision vigilance. Female adolescents involve in more family decisions than male adolescents, yet male adolescents report more decision vigilance than female adolescents. Adolescents in one-parent families participate in more family decision than those in two parent families do. Adolescents from professional families have higher decision vigilance than adolescents from other families.

Source	Products	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Results
Grossbart, Carlson, and Walsh (1991)	No product involved.	Perceived importance of co-shopping Number of consumer goals Concept orientation Child's sex Child's influence Economic motivation for consumption Social motivation for consumption Materialism Discussions about advertising Refusing with explanation TV Co-viewing Social desirability	Co-shopping frequency	Heavier shopper mothers score highest and lighter co-shopper mothers score lowest on perceived importance of co-shopping, concept-orientation and child's influence. Heavier shopper mothers have the highest economic motivation for consumption and lowest materialism scores of the three groups and less social motivation for consumption than moderate shopper mothers. TV co-viewing is highest for heavier co-shopper mothers and lowest for lighter co-shopper mothers. Heavier co-shoppers refuse with explanation more than moderate or lighter groups and lighter co-shoppers have least discussion about advertising with children.
Kim, Lee, and Hall (1991)	20 products (major purchase items for family, minor purchase items for family, minor purchase items for child, major purchase items for child)	Adolescent's influence on various family purchase decisions Influence strategy	Adolescent's power (coercive, reward, expertise, legitimate, and referent power) Income Sex Age	Teenagers' perceived influence is highest in purchase decisions involving minor items for themselves, followed by major items for themselves, major items for their family, and minor items for their family. Female teenagers who perceive themselves as having less legitimate power rely more on playing on emotion as an influence strategy. Teenagers who rely on more on the "persuasion" and "playing on emotion" strategies and less on stubborn acts in their influence attempts perceive themselves as having greater influence in purchase situations involving both major and minor items for family use. Teenagers who more often employ the "stop eating" and the "approach the other parent" strategy perceive themselves as having greater influence in those situations involving purchase of major and minor items for their own use or minor items for family use, but having less influence in situations involving the purchase of major items for family use. Adolescents' perception of power does not have a direct relationship with their perceived influence on any of the family purchase decisions.
Ahuja (1993)	11 products, including cereal, snack foods, candy, soft drinks, hot dogs, luncheon meats, cheese, soups, laundry detergent, housecleaning products, and personal grooming aids.	Mothers' perception of children's (as a whole group) influence in family decisions	Family structure	In the initiation stage, children with single parent are perceived to have greater influence for all 11 products but cheese and soups. In the search for information stage, children with single parent are perceived to have greater influence for soft drinks, hot dogs, luncheon meats, laundry detergent, house cleaning products, and personal aids. In the evaluation of alternative stage, children with single parent are perceived to have greater influence for all 11 products but snack foods, candy, and soups. In the final decision stage, children with single parent are perceived to have greater influence for all 11 products but luncheon meats, cheese, and soups. In the purchase stage, children with single parent are perceived to have greater influence for snack foods, soft drinks, hot dogs, laundry detergent, and house cleaning products.

Source	Products	Dependent Variables	Independent Variables	Results
Beatty and Talpade (1994)	Television, video cassette recorders, stereo systems/components, telephones, answering machines, and furniture	Teen's relative influence	Teenage financial resources Product knowledge Product importance Product use Parental employment status Product type Decision stage	Teen's perceived financial resources affect their perceived participation in a family stereo purchase. Knowledge affects teen's perceived influence in initiating but not in searching and deciding stages. Product importance is positively associated with teenager influence at both decision stages. Teenager usage is positively associated with influence perceptions for family purchases. Teens in dual-income families have more influence in initiating and searching/deciding stage than do teens from single-income families. Teenager influence at initiation is higher than at the search/decision stage for both family purchases and teenager purchases. Teenagers attribute stronger influence to themselves than their mothers do at both stages for family purchases.
Kim and Lee (1997)	Minor products for the child, minor products for the family, major products for the child, and major products for the family	Children's relative influence in family decisions	Product type Respondents	A triadic measurement of children's relative influence performs better than the single respondent measure. For children's minor products, older children have greater influence than are younger children. For family's minor products, children's income and father's age are positively related to children's influence. Mother's age is negatively related to children's influence. For children's major products, father's age is negatively related to children's influence. For family's major products, father's age is positively and mother's age is negatively related to children's influence.

primary use, their involvement with the product is high. They might be motivated to spend more efforts in requesting and persuading, thus leading to greater relative influence in purchasing this product. Otherwise, if the product is irrelevant, children's motivation to influence would be low, resulting in little or no influence in the purchasing decisions. There is no research examining the effect of product involvement on children's extent of influencing effort. However, Beatty and Talpade (1994) found that the more teenagers use durable family products, the greater is their relative influence. Also, the more important teens deem products (both for family use and for their own use) to be, the greater is their relative influence. Since product usage and product importance are important components of product involvement (Laurent and Kapferer 1987), Beatty and Talpade's results support that children's product involvement affects their relative influence in family consumption decisions for that product.

From the parents' standpoint, if the product is relatively low expense or buying it does not affect much of the family's financial situation, then they are likely to yield to children's requests. Otherwise, even when the product is for children's primary use, if it initiates relatively high financial cost, parents would not let children have much influence in the purchase decisions (e.g., home computers for child, Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom 1989a). This reasoning seems to be partially reflected in Roberts, Wortzel, and Berkeley's (1981) study. They investigated relationships between mother's attitudes and perceptions of children's influence in four product categories (i.e., children's/pet foods, gum, clothing/cereal/cookies, and sweets and snacks). Results showed that "mothers' high concern over family financial matters predicted low levels of child influence for all product categories except gum, yet price consciousness predicted low influence levels only for children's/pet foods (p.733)". The authors only measured mother's general financial concern, and also their products are all in low price categories, their findings might not be conclusive. Future research should measure the financial risk associated with each specific product and use a wider price range of products to investigate the effect of product financial risk on children's relative influence.

Based on the above reasoning, it seems likely that children's relative influence for any product will depend on the interaction between the child's product involvement and the financial risk associated with that product (cf. Mangleburg 1992). Kim and associates (1991, 1997) developed a product typology that captures this relationship. They classified products along two dimensions, major-minor (reflecting large and small expenditures, respectively) and family-child

(indicating the primary user), resulting in a four-fold product categorization. Major products for family included car, house, and TV. Minor products for family consisted of toothpaste, shampoo, and ketchup. Major products for children contained walkman and bicycle. Finally, minor products for children involved clothes, records, and shoes.

In the 1997 study, Kim and Lee showed that using this four-fold product categorization to measure children's influence provides high reliability and validity. However, they did not compare children's relative influence in each product category. In the 1991 study, they found that children's perceived influence was highest for child-minor products, followed by child-major, major-family, and minor-family products. They concluded that children have greater extent of influence for products for their own use than for family use "however, no such generalization can be made between those decisions involving major and minor items (Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991, p. 40)." The authors did not report statistics regarding whether the differences were significant, rather they only presented the rank orderings. Nevertheless, Kim and associates' typology is more systematic than prior examinations of product-type effects. Future research should apply this typology and explicitly test the relationship between product-type and children's relative influence.

Decision Stage and Children's Influence. Past research has also showed that the children's relative influence in family consumption decisions varies along the stage of decision process. The majority of studies investigating children's influence across decision stages have used a three-stage model of the decision process. The three stages include problem initiation, information search, and final choice (Belch, Belch, and Ceresino 1985; Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom 1989a; Nelson 1979; Szybillo and Sosanie 1977; Szybillo, Sosanie, and Tenenbein 1977). Two studies reduced the process to include two stages, product initiation and search/decision (Beatty and Talpade 1994; Darley and Lim 1986). Two other studies enfolded four decision stages, problem recognition, information search, final decision, and actual purchase (Moschis and Mitchell 1986; Swinyard and Sim (1987). One study even elaborated the decision process as including five stages, initiation, information search, alternative evaluation, final decision, and purchase (Ahuja 1993). Regardless of the model used, results found across the different studies are similar. In general, children's influence is greatest in the problem recognition stage and declines significantly by the decision stage. This is especially true for major products related to children (e.g., stereo, phone, Beatty and Talpade 1994).

This trend might also be explained by causes from both children and parent. From children's standpoint, they may spend much effort in presenting to their parents the necessity to buy a product. Once they succeed in persuasion, they may not feel motivated in the later stages as highly as earlier to influence their parents. This is because first, in essence buying a product or not (the problem recognition stage) is more critical than what, when or where to buy (the later decision stages) in the sense that the former is the precedent to the latter. Second, children might have used a lot of power in the early decision stages. There is usually cost associated with power use (Corfman and Lehmann 1987), so children may need time to recover from the cost. This might attenuate their influencing effort in the later decision stages. From the parents' perspective, first, initiation of a purchase idea does not really lay much impact on the family's financial situation. Children may propose as many purchase as they could, but parents may simply deny most of them. However, for those decisions that are "approved", children's influence will be felt because it is the children that recognize the problem. Second, in the later decision stages, the closer to the final stage, the more imminent that the decision will impact the family's financial situation (this is more true for high expense products), and parents will become more involved in decisions to make sure it is a good decision. This might be partially reflected in the fact children normally have little say in the subdecision of how much money to spend (see discussion below).

Subdecision and Children's Influence. Besides product type and decision stage, product subdecision has also been found to affect children's influence in family consumption decisions. The subdecisions examined are adaptations of Davis' (1970, 1971) specific, as opposed to global, index of purchase decisions. For different product categories, subdecisions are usually at variance. For example, in eat out decisions, they could be what type of restaurant, which restaurant, when to go, and money to spend (Nelson 1979; Szybillo, Sosanie, and Tenebein 1977). While in family car decisions, subdecisions are composed of make, model, color, when to purchase, where to purchase, and how much to spend (Belch, Belch, and Ceresino 1985; Jenkins 1979). The pattern emerging from the past studies is that children's relative influence is lowest in the subdecisions such as how much money to spend, where to buy, and gathering information. As a contrast, children appear to involve more in subdecisions regarding color, make, model, and brand choices (Belch, Belch, and Ceresino 1985; Darley and Lim 1986; Jenkins 1979; Nelson 1979; Szybillo, Sosanie, and Tenebein 1977).

The fact that children possess lowest influence in the subdecision of how much money to spend seems to again reflect parents' financial concern in purchase decisions. It is also possible that parents perceive children as lacking experience necessary to make informed decisions for instrumental activities (e.g., allocation and scheduling), thus restrict children's influence in these areas and permit greater children's influence in the more expressive subdecisions (e.g., color and model decisions) (Mangleburg 1990).

Summary. The above review indicates that children have substantial influence in family consumption decisions. It appears that children are most likely to be involved in decisions 1) for child related (minor or major) products, 2) in the early stages of the process, and 3) relating to expressive subdecisions. For example, it is fairly safe to state that children will have significant influence in initiating the need to buy a toy/game and suggesting the type for the toy/game.

### **Children's Choice of Influence Strategy**

It is clear now that children are likely to have significant influence in consumption decisions involving child-related products, being in early stages, and associating with expressive subdecisions. However, the above review does not tell how children achieve this influence. Consumer socialization theory treats this influence as an outcome of parents' socialization of children, but does not provide the process through which children gain this influence (Moschis and Churchill 1978). Alternatively, power relational theory denotes that children achieve such influence through using various influence strategies toward parents (Cowan and Avants 1988; Cowan, Drinkard, MacGavin 1984; Kim, Hall, and Lee 1991). So the following examines children's choice of influence strategy in family consumption decisions.

Children's Influence Strategy. Compared to the vast literature on adult power and influence strategy, research on children's power and influence strategy in family decision making is very limited. Two of the existing five studies examined children's influence strategy use in intimate relationships such as with parents and with best friends (Cowan and Avants 1988; Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984). In the 1984 study, children were asked to write an essay about "how I get my way with my mother... father... best friends." The authors identified 15 influence strategies. Further they applied three dimensions (i.e., Directness, Bilaterality, and Strength) to categorize these strategies. Directness indicates the extent the influence behavior is indirect (e.g., evasion, use of an advocate) or more overt and direct (e.g., asking, demanding). Bilaterality refers to the degree that the strategy involves dual interaction (e.g., bargaining) or

only one person's independent action (e.g., stating importance). Strength is related to the compliance the strategy user anticipates from the other side. If he/she anticipates high compliance by using a strategy, then it is a strong strategy (e.g., demanding). In reverse, if he/she anticipates low compliance, then it is a weak strategy (e.g., begging).

Based on the 1984 study, Cowan and Avants (1988) picked 10 from the 15 influencing strategies, and added another two (cry and get angry) to form a 12 influencing strategy set. Children were asked to assess the frequency and effectiveness of using these 12 strategies toward their mothers. Factor analysis identified three general categories as Anticipating noncompliance, Egalitarian, and Autonomous strategies. Anticipating noncompliance strategies comprise those that imply high resistance on the part of parents (e.g., beg and plead, cry). Egalitarian strategies include those that suggest a give and take between children and parents (e.g., bargain, reason). Finally, autonomous strategies contain those that anticipate low resistance from parents (e.g., tell, laissez-faire).

The other three studies specifically inspected the strategies children use to influence their parents in family consumption decisions. Kim, Lee, and Hall (1991) formed 19 strategy items through personal interviews with teenage children and the modification of husband-wife conflict resolution strategies. Then adolescent subjects indicated how often they acted in the manner described when they wanted to purchase something but their parents did not allow. Five categories of influence strategies were determined through factor analysis, including Persuasion, Stop eating, Act stubbornly, Approach the other parent, and Playing on emotion. Machanda and Moore-Shay (1996) used Cowan and Avants' (1988) typology and conducted interviews with children, then picked 7 influence strategies that were most frequently used by the children. In addition, a new strategy item, postponement, was induced from the interview and included in the study. The eight influence strategies were conceptually classified into three types of strategy as High, Low, and Moderate Power strategies. This classification along power dimension is similar to Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin (1984) classification along the strength dimension. Specifically, high power strategy reflects a more equitable interchange between parents and children. Low power strategy implies that parental resistance is anticipated. And moderate power strategy indicates that children are "willing to delay action until a more opportune time, perhaps in the service of minimizing confrontation" (Machanda and Moore-Shay, p. 84).

A very recent study developed a comprehensive set of both children's influence strategies and parental response strategies in family consumption decisions (Palan and Wilkes 1997). The authors in-depth interviewed adolescents, mothers, and fathers in 100 families. Four categories of strategies often used by children were identified, including Bargaining, Persuasion, Emotional, and Request. In Bargaining strategies, children intent to create agreement with parents based on mutual gain and mutually satisfactory outcomes such as money deals and negotiations. In persuasion strategies, children try to convince the parent(s) to resolve decision conflict in their favor, probably via certain manipulation or maneuvering. Persuasion strategies differ from bargaining strategies in that the former focus on unilateral gain for the children while the latter emphasize mutual gain for both parents and children. Emotional strategies reflect children's "intentional use of emotion, either directly or indirectly" (p. 164), when trying to influence parents in the consumption decision making process, such as anger and sweet talk. In request strategies, children ask parents to purchase a particular item through a direct request, without stating any reason.

Summary. The above review of children's influence strategy indicates that in order to get their way in family decisions, children do use different influence strategies. This well supports power relational theory's assumption that children, as a partner in a social relationship (e.g., parent-child relationship), actively use power to influence the other partner (e.g., parents) when there is conflict (Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984; Falbo and Peplau 1980; French and Raven 1959; Howard, Blumtein, and Schwartz 1986; Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson 1980). The influence strategies often used by children in family consumption decisions include reasoning/negotiating (e.g., money deals, other deals, reasoning), persuading (e.g., forming coalition, pleading, nagging), playing on emotion (e.g., pouting, stop eating, anger) and direct requesting (e.g., directly express need, demand).

Each of the previous empirical studies found some unique as well as some similar influence strategies children use to influence their parents, however, it seems possible to categorize the influence strategies along some dimensions (e.g., directness, bilaterality) that could be generalized across different studies. This is important to make different studies comparable and to synergies research effort. Cowan, Drinkard, and Macgavin (1984) categorized children's influence strategies along three dimensions (i.e., directness, bilaterality, and strength). They found significant age effect only on the dimension of bilaterality. Both 9<sup>th</sup>

and 12<sup>th</sup> graders use more bilateral strategies than 6<sup>th</sup> graders. This might “reflect greater anticipation of cooperation with age or the greater cognitive abilities of the formal operational period” (p. 1397). Based on their effort, this dissertation further explores whether consumer socialization and power structure between parents and children also contribute to children's tendency to apply bilateral strategies.

### **SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW**

Children's influence in family consumption decisions is attracting growing research attention. Two theories, consumer socialization theory and power relational theory, have been reviewed as they play important roles in studying children's influence. The former views children as a socializee and parents as a major socialization agent. Thus, children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence are outcomes of consumer socialization process that happens in certain social settings. The latter theory regards parents and children as two partners in an interdependent relationship. Thus, children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence are the exhibition of their strategic use and the result of power in family consumption decisions. Since children are likely to use the consumption knowledge and skill learned from parents to solve the conflicts within as well as outside the family context, these two theories complement each other and could be integrated to study children's influence in family consumption decisions. This theoretical integration will be applied in the dissertation.

A review of the past empirical work indicates that children are most likely to have influence in decisions 1) in which they are the primary consumer of the focal product; 2) which are in the problem recognition stage; and 3) which pertain to subdecisions regarding color, make/model, and brand choices. The literature also shows that in order to get their way in family decisions, children use different influence strategies toward their parents. Influence strategies often used by children in family consumption decisions include reasoning/negotiating (e.g., money deals, other deals, reasoning), persuading (e.g., forming coalition, pleading, nagging), playing on emotion (e.g., pouting, stop eating, anger) and direct requesting (direct express need, demand). Consistent with Cowan and associate (1984), in this dissertation children's influence strategies are categorized into bilateral strategies and unilateral strategies.

The literature review so far has disclosed 1) the types of family consumption decisions in which children have influence; and 2) the influence strategies children use to gain influence in

these decisions. However, we are still not clear what factors will affect children's choice of influence strategy, and how choices of different influence strategies affect children's relative influence in family consumption decisions. Based on the consumer socialization theory and power relational theory, a conceptual model will be developed in the next chapter to answer these questions.

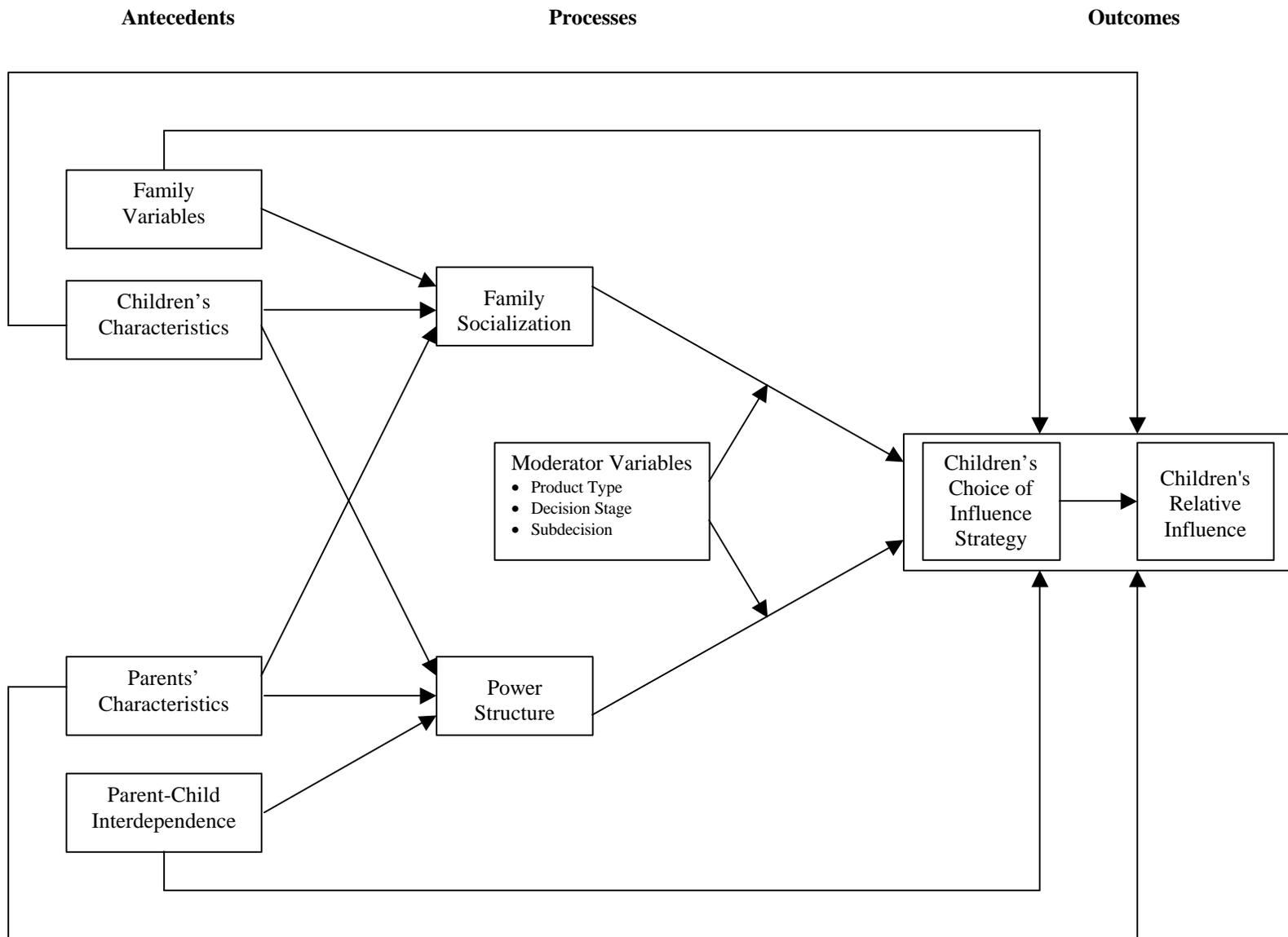
## **CHAPTER 3**

### **CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT**

The literature review in the previous chapter reveals that children's influence strategy is an important part in studying children's influence in family consumption decisions. With the guidance of consumer socialization theory and power relational theory, this chapter first develops a conceptual model to explore factors affecting children's choice of influence strategy, and the impact of influence strategies on children's relative influence in family consumption decisions. Then an empirical study is set forth to partially test the model. Research hypotheses are advanced regarding the relationships between parental style, parental power, children's choice of influence strategy, and children's relative influence.

#### **AN INTEGRATIVE MODEL OF CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE**

According to consumer socialization theory, children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence are outcomes of consumer socialization, thus are affected by family socialization process and antecedent variables (Moschis and Churchill 1978; Moschis and Moore 1979; Ward 1974). According to power relational theory, children's choice of influence strategy reflects children's strategic use of power in the parent-child relationship, and is affected by the power structure, children's characteristics, parents' characteristics, and the parent-child interdependence (Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984; Falbo and Peplau 1980; French and Raven 1959; Howard, Blumtein, and Schwartz 1986; Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson 1980). Children's relative influence would be a natural result of their choice of influence strategy. Based on these two theories (i.e., consumer socialization and power relational theory), a conceptual model is developed to explore children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions. Adapting Moschis and Churchill's (1978) terminology, the model could be roughly divided into three parts: antecedents, processes, and outcomes (see Figure 5). Antecedents include family variables, children's characteristics, parents' characteristics, and parent-child interdependence. Processes comprise family socialization, power structure, and moderator variables. Outcomes contain children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. The constructs and relationships in the model are discussed as follows.



**FIGURE 5**  
CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE IN FAMILY CONSUMPTION DECISIONS

## **Family Variables**

Family variables such as social class, family size, and family structure provide the social setting within which the family consumer socialization takes place (Moschis and Churchill 1978; Moschis and Moore 1979). Thus, family variables are likely to have a direct impact on family socialization. According to consumer socialization theory, social setting variables could modify the socialization outcomes both directly and indirectly through the socialization process. Thus, it is expected that family variables will influence children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence directly as well as indirectly through family socialization.

## **Children's Characteristics**

Children's characteristics include demographic variables (e.g., socioeconomic status, gender, birth order, age) and resource variables (e.g., job status, product knowledge). Consumer socialization theory holds that variables such as socioeconomic status, gender, and birth order help locate the learner within his/her social environment where the learning takes place. While variables such as age, job status, and product knowledge reflects children's cognitive development or life cycle stages during which learning occurs (Moschis and Moore 1979). These variables (both demographic and resource variables) may affect children's acquisition of consumer learning properties such as influence strategy and relative influence both directly and indirectly through their impact on the family socialization process (Moschis and Churchill 1978).

Children's characteristics may also affect their influence strategy choice and relative influence through impact on the power structure in the parent-child relationship. As power relation theory indicates that in a social relationship, person A has power over person B only when B is interested in the resources A could provide (Emerson 1962; Lewin 1951). In the parent-child relationship, children's characteristics (e.g., age, gender, birth order, job status and product knowledge, etc.) might affect their dependency on parents' resources, thus affect the power structure (McDonald 1979, 1982; Tashakkori, Thompson, and Yousefi 1990).

## **Parents' Characteristics**

From the consumer socialization perspective, parent's characteristic factors such as education, occupation, personality, and experiences may influence parents' pattern of socializing their children, and further affect children's learning property (Beatty and Talpade 1994). From the power relational perspective, parents' characteristic factors reflect parent's personal resources that contribute to children's development both economically and emotionally. Everything else

being the same, the more resources a parent could contribute to children's development, the more parental power she/he would have over children (McDonald 1979; Tashakkori, Thompson, and Simonian 1989). Consequently, parents' characteristics should affect the power structure in the parent-child relationship.

Parents' characteristics might directly affect children's choice of influence strategy. According to power relational theory, in a social relationship, both partners' characteristic factors could affect the focal person's self-efficacy in power behavior, and thus influence his/her choice of influence strategy (Kipnis 1984; Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson 1980). In a similar manner, parents' characteristics may influence children's confidence in using their limited power to acquiring parents' agreement, and consequently leads children to choosing different influence strategies. All these contentions combined, it is likely that parents' characteristics affect children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence directly as well as indirectly through impact on family socialization and power structure.

### **Parent-Child Interdependence**

In the parent-child relationship, the degree of dependency between parents and children might affect children's need for resources from parents. For example, in a high dependence parent-child relationship, children usually feel secure, warm, and supportive. Should they come across any difficulty (economical or emotional), they would like to share with parents because they know that parents are ready to provide support and guidance. On the contrary, in a low dependence (e.g., indifferent or cold) parent-child relationship, children might feel reluctant to approach the parents because they know that parents will not provide help or may even reprimand them for disturbance. Rather they may turn to friends or grandparents for help. The power relational theory states that in a social relationship, person A has power over person B only when B is interested in the resources A could provide (Emerson 1962; Lewin 1951). Thus in a low dependence relationship, even though parents may possess abundant resources (e.g., experience, wealth), they may not have power over children because children do not ask for such resources from them (Cook 1993). So parent-child interdependence would affect the power structure between parents and children.

Power relational theory asserts that the interdependency between partners affects one's concern about the other partner's feeling in the decision making process, thus will affect the his/her choice of influence strategy (Boyle et al. 1992; Frazier and Rody 1991; Frazier and

Summer 1986). Specifically, in solving conflicts regarding family consumption, an unsatisfactory solution may bring about unhappiness, posing damage on the relationship. Certain influence strategies (e.g., coercive strategies) are easier to raise dissatisfaction and thus more destructive than other influence strategies (Su 1999). Thus, for those who value harmony in a relationship, they tend to avoid using such destructive strategies (Corfman and Lehmann 1987). Parent-child relationship is likely to last over the lifetime, maintaining a cohesive and close relationship is important to both parents and children. It is likely that children in a high dependence family would value a harmonious relationship more than those in a low dependence family. As a result, the former would probably apply different influence strategies from the latter in family consumption decisions.

In a similar manner, refusing a children's consumption request could lead to conflict or unhappiness on the part of the child (Atkin 1978). Such conflict or unhappiness may impose destruction on the parent-child relationship. Parents in cohesive and close parent-child relationships are likely to value a harmonious relationship more than those in indifferent and distant parent-child relationships. Thus, to avoid destruction of the relationship, the former parents may yield to children's consumption request more than the latter parents do. Consequently, it is likely that the interdependence between parents and children modifies children's relative influence in family consumption decisions.

All the above contention integrated, it is plausible to expect that parent-child interdependence directly impact the power structure between parents and children, children's choice of influence strategy and their relative influence in family consumption decisions.

### **Family Socialization**

Family socialization belongs to one of the socialization processes in children's consumer socialization. It emphasizes the influence of parents, as an important socialization agent, on children's development as a consumer. As indicated before, there are four common socialization agents (parents, mass media, school, and peers), and children could gain consumption knowledge and skills from the socialization with each of them. Because of parents' special role in children's development, this dissertation concentrates on the socialization between parents and children (i.e., family socialization), leaving those between other agents and children to the future research.

In the family socialization process, children could learn from parents through modeling, reinforcement, and social interaction (Moschis and Churchill 1978). Since it is through the

family socialization process that children acquire consumption knowledge, values, and skills from parents, variations in family socialization would have great impact on children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence (Burns and Gillett 1987; Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom 1989b; Manchanda and Moore-Shay 1996; Mangleburg 1992, Rose 1999).

### **Power Structure**

Power structure refers to the power distribution between parents and children. Power is a relational concept and is meaningful only in interdependent relationships (Emerson 1962). In the parent-child relationship, although normally parents possess absolute power over children, children (especially adolescents) are still perceived to have some power over their parents (Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991; Peterson 1986). According to power relational theory, children's potential power over parents will motivate them to apply strategies to influence their parents, and the amount of power will contribute to their choice of different influence strategies (Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984; Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991).

In an interdependent relationship, higher power means greater ability to influence others, which is likely to result in greater relative influence in the group decisions (Corfman and Lehmann 1987; Davis 1976). While Kim, Lee, and Hall (1991) failed to confirm such effect of power on relative influence in the parent-child relationship, given it is the only study in this regard, such effect is still expected to hold in the parent-child relationship.

### **Moderator Variables**

The previous review of the empirical research shows that children's relative influence varies with product type, decision stage, and subdecision. Although not having been studied by any research before, it is likely that children's choices of influence strategy also change with these factors because children's anticipated noncompliance from parents as well as motivation to influence parents may vary with these factors (Cowan and Avants 1988). These factors change neither the family socialization process nor the power structure between parents and children, but they might interact with family socialization and power structure to affect children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. For example, certain types of parents may be more open to children's influence for child products than for family products (e.g., Authoritatives), whereas other types of parents may yield to children's influence for both family and child products (e.g., Indulgents). Therefore, it is expected that these factors moderate the relationship

between family socialization and power structure and children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence.

### **Children's Choice of Influence Strategy and Relative Influence**

Children's relative influence indicates the consequence of children's influence effort in the family consumption decisions and their choice of influence strategy emphasizes the means or the process through which children gain their influence. According to power relational theory, influence strategy has significant impact on partners' relative influence in a social relationship (e.g., Izraeli 1987; Su 1999). Specifically, in family consumption decisions, children who often apply Bilateral influence strategies such as bargaining and reasoning maybe perceived by their parents as more mature and competent (Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991). Thus, parents are willing to consider their suggestions in family decisions. As a contrast, children who often rely on Unilateral influence strategies such as nagging and showing temper maybe perceived by their parents as immature and irritating. Thus, their consumption requests and suggestions are more likely to be disregarded by parents. Thus, children's choice of influence strategy (Bilateral vs. Unilateral) is expected to affect their relative influence in family consumption decisions.

### **Summary**

Based on the integration of consumer socialization theory and power relational theory, the above model proposes that family variables, children's characteristics, parents' characteristics, and parent-child interdependence affect children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence both directly and indirectly. Family socialization is proposed to mediate the effects of family variables, children's characteristics, and parents' characteristics on children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. Power structure is proposed to mediate the effects of children's characteristics, parents' characteristics, and parent-child interdependence on children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. Product type, decision stage, and subdecision are proposed to moderate the effect of family socialization and power structure on children's choice of influence and relative influence. In addition, children's choice of influence strategy is expected to affect their relative influence. Conceptually, this model denotes important factors that are likely to affect children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions. Theoretically, it provides directions to all the research questions.

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Now that a comprehensive conceptual model has been proposed to explore children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions. However, it would be almost impossible to conduct a single study to empirically test all the links in the model. Consequently, this dissertation will empirically test part of the model. As revealed by the literature review, past research has cast most attention on relationships between antecedent variables (e.g., family variables, children's characteristics) and consumer socialization outcomes (e.g., children's relative influence) and paid limited attention on relationships between process variables (e.g., family socialization, power structure) and consumer socialization outcomes. However, the latter relationships are more important than the former in explaining "why" variations occur in the outcomes (Mangleburg 1990). Thus, this dissertation focuses on testing effects of family socialization and power structure on children's choice of influence strategy and children's relative influence in family consumption decisions. The moderator variables (i.e., product type, decision stage, and subdecision) will be controlled in the experimental design.

Past research has used either parental style or family communication environment to investigate the family socialization in relation to children's learning properties. Parental style seems more powerful in explaining the family socialization than family communication environment, because the former could actually provide a theoretical basis for explaining differences in the latter (Carlson, Grossbart, and Stuenkel 1992). Thus, in this dissertation, parental style is used to examine the impact of family socialization on children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. Such a decision is actually congruent with the theoretical interests in that parental style has received increasing attention in consumer socialization research (Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991; Manchanda and Moore-Shay 1996; Mangleburg 1992, Rose 1999). As discussed in the literature review, parental style could be divided along two dimensions, demandingness and responsiveness, into four types, Authoritative, Authoritarian, Indulgent, and Neglecting style.

Power structure is the power distribution between parents and children. Since power is a relational property, it is meaningless to study absolute power. One's perception of his/her partner's power is sufficient and necessary to affect his/her power behavior (Emerson 1962; Lewin 1951). Thus, it is sensible to use either the child's perceived parental power or the parent's perceived children's power to reflect the power structure in the parent-child relationship. Since

normally parents possess much greater power over children, the child's perceived parental power is used to reflect the power structure in the parent-child relationship. As indicated in the literature review, parental power includes four power bases: outcome-control power, referent power, legitimate power, and expert power. McDonald (1977, 1980b) demonstrated that these four power bases intercorrelate with each other. Further, Smith (1970) found that each of these four power bases, independent of the others, correlate positively with parental influence upon adolescents. Thus, it is sensible and parsimonious to investigate the role of perceived parental power in an additive rather than separate manner (Rollins and Thomas 1975). That is, operationally, parental power is the summation of the magnitude of each of the power bases the parent as perceived by the child (French and Raven 1959).

Although not proposed in the integrative model of children's influence, parental style might influence parental power. Rollins and Thomas (1975) suggested that a parent's nurturance toward a child would affect his/her power over the child. As discussed before, parents with alternative parental styles differ in their nurturance toward their children, thus it is plausible to expect parents with different parental styles would have dissimilar parental power over children. Thus, the relationship between parental style and perceived parental power is also pursued in this dissertation.

As shown in the literature review, children apply various influence strategies in family decisions, and these strategies could be categorized into Bilateral and Unilateral strategies along the bilaterality dimension (Cowan, Drinkard, and Macgavin 1984). Bilateral influence strategies involve dual interactions between children and parents such as bargaining and reasoning. Unilateral influence strategies involve only the child's independent actions toward the parent such as begging and pleading. In reality, it is rare that a child uses only one type of influence strategy (Bilateral or Unilateral). Most likely is that the child uses both Bilateral and Unilateral influence strategies, but applies one more frequently than the other. Thus, operationally, it makes more sense to inquire children's tendency to use rather than whether they use Bilateral influence strategies vs. Unilateral influence strategies.

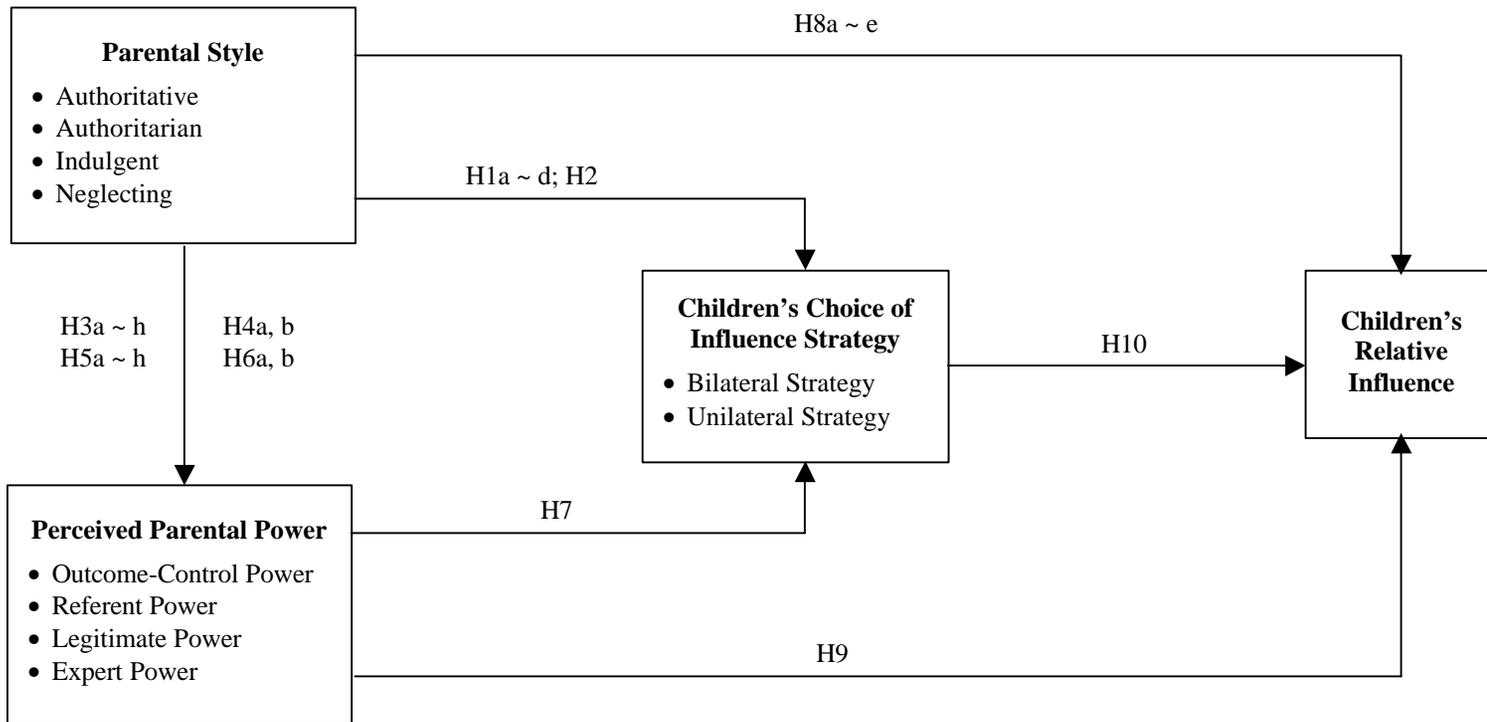
In short, this dissertation will empirically test the relationships between parental style (Authoritarian, Authoritative, Indulgent, and Neglecting), perceived parental power (outcome-control power, referent power, legitimate power, and expert power), children's choice of influence strategy (Bilateral vs. Unilateral), and children's relative influence in family

consumption decisions. The links between different constructs are exhibited in Figure 6. The following section specifies research hypotheses regarding these links.

### **Effect of Parental Style on Children's Choice of Influence Strategy**

Different parents vary along demandingness (i.e., parental control of children's behavior) in rearing children. Authoritative and Authoritarian parents are high in demandingness while Indulgent and Neglecting parents are low in demandingness (Maccoby and Martin 1983). Parents with high demandingness usually set and enforce clear behavioral standards, actively monitor and supervise children's conduct, and try to foster mature behavior in children (Baumrind 1989; Maccoby and Martin 1983). Under high demandingness parents, children's rational and mature behaviors are praised and irrational and emotional behaviors are controlled. Unilateral strategies such as begging and pleading, negative affect and Laissez-faire are probably not favored by these parents because such behaviors are often irrational and emotional. Bilateral strategies such as bargaining and reasoning appear more rational thus are more welcomed. Consequently, these parents may yield more to children's consumption requests when children use Bilateral strategies than when they use Unilateral strategies. From children's standpoint, Bilateral strategies appear more effective than Unilateral strategies. Through reinforcement, these children would be more likely to apply Bilateral strategies more than Unilateral strategies in attempt to influence parents.

On the contrary, parents with low demandingness either do not have specific behavioral rules for children (e.g., Neglecting parents) or they do not enforce these rules (e.g., Indulgent parents). These parents are easy to satisfy children's requests either because they do not want to disappoint children (e.g., Indulgent parents) or they simply want to avoid children's disturbance (e.g., Neglecting parents). Should their requests not be met, children are likely to get approval from these parents if they use some strategy, be it unilateral or bilateral. Such approval actually reinforces children that they could easily influence their parents with either unilateral or bilateral strategies. Thus, these children's tendency to use Bilateral influence strategies should not be as strong as those with parents high on demandingness. Based on these reasoning, it is expected that children with Authoritative or Authoritarian parents (high on demandingness) are more likely to use Bilateral strategies than those with Indulgent and Neglecting parents (low on demandingness).



**FIGURE 6**  
EFFECTS OF PARENTAL STYLE AND POWER ON CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE

**H1a:** Children with Authoritative parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Indulgent parents.

**H1b:** Children with Authoritative parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Neglecting parents.

**H1c:** Children with Authoritarian parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Indulgent parents.

**H1d:** Children with Authoritarian parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Neglecting parents.

Both Authoritative and Authoritarian parents are high in control of children's behavior, but Authoritative parents are more involved in attending to children's emotional and developmental needs (i.e., responsiveness, Maccoby and Martin 1983). Authoritarian parents set standards for children's conduct. They strictly enforce rules, favor children's unquestionable obedience, and punish willful behavior (Baumrind 1968; Carlson and Grossbart 1988). Authoritative parents, while also setting up standards regarding children's conduct, value children's autonomy as well as expect disciplined conformity. They foster reciprocal communication between children and themselves (Baumrind 1971). As consumer socialization theory asserts, children might learn through modeling parents' behavior. Children with Authoritative parents may model parents' bilaterality in communication, and use bilateral influence strategies in the family context because their parents encourage so. Children with Authoritarian parents may model parents' unilateral assertiveness in communication. For example, Hart, Ladd, and Burleson (1990) found children of mothers who are more power assertive in disciplinary styles (e.g., Authoritarian) tend to favor using unfriendly-assertive strategies in resolving peer conflicts. However, in the family context, these children's unilaterality and assertiveness in influence strategy may be suppressed by Authoritarian parents' strictness. In summary, children with both Authoritative and Authoritarian parents might use bilateral influence strategies in family consumption decisions. However, the former are encouraged thus actively choose such strategies while the latter are forced thus passively choose such strategies. The latter may not use such strategies when circumstances permit. Therefore, it is proposed that:

**H2:** Children with Authoritative parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Authoritarian parents.

## **Effects of Parental Style on Perceived Parental Power**

Parents with alternative parental styles differ in their attitude and behavior toward children. Both Authoritative and Authoritarian parents are high in demandingness (i.e., parental control of children's behavior), while both Indulgent and Neglecting parents are low in demandingness. Parents with high demandingness have clear conduct rules and will punish children for self-will behavior. Through family socialization, children would feel these behavioral boundaries and attribute the controlling power to the rule enforcer. On the reverse, although Indulgent parents also tell children good and bad behavior, they are reluctant to discipline children when they act willfully. Neglecting parents care little about children's conduct and let children develop as they are. Thus, literally children with parents who are low in demandingness feel little pressure from their parents about their conduct. Consequently, children with parents low in demandingness should perceive their parents to possess less potential to reward and/or punish (i.e., outcome-control power) than those with parents high in demandingness. Further, since Indulgent and Neglecting parents either hesitate or do not want to bother to discipline children, their children might perceive their right to control children's behavior and opinions as low (i.e., legitimate power). Therefore,

**H3a:** Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Indulgent parents.

**H3b:** Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Neglecting parents.

**H3c:** Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Indulgent parents.

**H3d:** Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Neglecting parents.

**H3e:** Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Indulgent parents.

**H3f:** Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Neglecting parents.

**H3g:** Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Indulgent parents.

**H3h:** Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Neglecting parents.

Both Authoritarian and Authoritative parents are high in demandingness, but they differ in enforcing the conduct rules. Authoritarian parents enforce rules in a strict manner, favor children's unquestionable obedience, and often physically punish willful behavior. Their pressure on children's compliance with conduct rules is salient and psychologically unambiguous, and is often over-sufficient for children to adjust behavior. Alternatively, Authoritative parents explain rules, and use reasoning as well as power to direct children's activity. Their pressure on children's compliance with conduct rules is psychologically acceptable, and is sufficient to gain compliance yet not over-sufficient (Baumrind 1968, 1971). According to attribution theory (Lepper 1983), Authoritarian parents apply over-sufficient pressure, thus their children comply only to avoid temporary punishment and will break rules in the future when parents are not present. Authoritative parents apply mild and only sufficient pressure, thus their children internalize parents' value and will sustain future abidance even when parents are not present. In the sense that Authoritative parents' influence is more acceptable to children and lasts longer in children than that of Authoritarian parents, the former should be perceived as more powerful than the latter.

**H4a:** Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Authoritarian parents.

**H4b:** Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Authoritarian parents.

Besides outcome-control and legitimate power, research also indicated that parents have referent and expert power over children (McDonald 1977, 1979; Smith 1970). Referent power refers to parents' potential to be a comparative referent, providing guidance and advice. Expert power refers to parents' potential to supply knowledge and skill to children (McDonald 1979). Children are able to gain more knowledge and guidance from parents through frequent interaction as opposed to little interaction (e.g., communication) with parents (Heckler, Childers and Arunachalam 1989; Moschis 1985). Thus, Children are likely to perceive parents who interact and communicate frequently with them to have more referent and expert power than those who interact and communicate little with them.

Authoritative and Indulgent parents are both high in responsiveness. They are very supportive to children's development. They respect give and take between them and children, value children's individuality, and encourage children's autonomy. On the contrary, Authoritarian or Neglecting parents are low in responsiveness. They often distance children, do not encourage or care little about children's own opinion, and seldom engage in children's activities. So parent-child interaction would be more frequent between Authoritative and Indulgent parents and their children than that between Authoritarian and Neglecting parents and their children. Because of the frequent interaction, the knowledge and skill of Authoritative and Indulgent parents are more likely to be noticed and learned by their children than those of Authoritarian and Neglecting parents. Thus, other thing being equal, Authoritative and Indulgent parents should be perceived by their children to have higher expert power than Authoritarian and Neglecting parents.

Further, Authoritative and Indulgent parents are more responsive and supportive than Authoritarian and Neglecting parents toward children. Thus, children should be more inclined to turn to the former for guidance and advice than to the latter. That is, the former should be perceived to possess higher referent power than the latter. All the above contention combined, it is therefore expected that Authoritative and Indulgent parents are perceived to have greater referent and expert power than are Authoritarian and Neglecting parents.

**H5a:** Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Authoritarian parents.

**H5b:** Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Neglecting parents.

**H5c:** Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Authoritarian parents.

**H5d:** Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Neglecting parents.

**H5e:** Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater expert power than Authoritarian parents.

**H5f:** Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater expert power than Neglecting parents.

**H5g:** Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater expert power than Authoritarian parents.

**H5h:** Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater expert power than Neglecting parents.

While both Authoritative parents and Indulgent parents have frequent interactions with their children, the former are also mildly power assertive in directing children's activity while the later allow children to self-regulate and avoid exercising control (Baumrind 1971; Carlson and Grossbart 1988). According to attribution theory, the little pressure by Indulgent parents is less likely to result in children's internalization of parents' value than the mild power assertion by Authoritative parents (Lepper 1983). Consequently, children with Authoritative parents might accept parent's knowledge and guidance more than children with Indulgent parents. In this sense, children might perceive Authoritative parents to possess greater referent and expert power than Indulgent parents.

**H6a:** Authoritative parents are perceived to have greater referent power than Indulgent parents.

**H6b:** Authoritative parents are perceived to have greater expert power than Indulgent parents.

### **Effect of Perceived Parental Power on Children's Choice of Influence Strategy**

Past research has recognized that in a social relationship, ones' power would influence his/her choice of influence strategy (Falbo and Peplau 1980; Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson 1980; Offerman and Schrier 1985; Sagrestano 1992). However, empirical results are not consistent about how one's power affects his/her choice of influence strategy. For example, in organization settings, it is found that supervisors use less negotiation and more Unilateral strategies than employees do (Offerman and Schrier 1985). However, in intimate relationship context, Falbo and Peplau (1980) found that individuals having greater power than their partner are more likely to use Bilateral influence strategies.

Such a dissonance might reflect the difference in the nature of the relationship such as competitive vs. cooperative relationships. In competitive relationships (e.g., Offerman and Schrier's supervisor-employee relationship), partners' goal is to gain the desired outcome. Those having more power might feel less dependent on the partner, thus feel less compelled to negotiate or even yield to the partner. So they may feel freer to take Unilateral actions and apply

less Bilateral strategies (Offerman and Schrier 1985). In cooperative relationships (e.g., Falbo and Peplau's intimate relationship), partners also pursue desired goals through trying to influence others, but they might also try to avoid hot disputes or even serious negative behavior in order to maintain the good relationship. Thus, in cooperative relationships, even the people with high power may use more Bilateral influence strategies. Partially supporting this, Tjosvold, Johnson, and Johnson (1984) showed that in unequal power relationships, the high-power person apply more negotiation and less coercion toward the low-power person when the relationship is cooperative than when the relationship is competitive.

The nature of relationship seems to help explain the high-power partner's choice of influence strategy, but it does not help much in predicting the low-power partner's behavior. In either competitive relationship or cooperative relationships, being in the low-power position, the partner is more dependent on the high-power partner. Under such situations, the low-power partner may have little choice but anticipate the cooperation and responsiveness of the high-power person. Bilateral strategies would help exhibit this attitude thus should be applied more than Unilateral strategies. Corroborating this, Tjosvold, Johnson, and Johnson (1984) showed that no matter the relationship is cooperative or competitive, the low-power person always employs more negotiation than coercion toward the high-power person.

In the parent-child relationship, children are normally in the low-power position. So it is likely that Bilateral strategy would be children's first choice in influencing parents. But for those children who perceive parents to have relatively low power, they may increase the use of Unilateral power. For example, Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin (1984) found that children tend to use negative affect (one form of Unilateral strategy) more toward mothers than toward fathers. Therefore, it is proposed that:

**H7:** Children who perceive high parental power tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those who perceive low parental power.

### **Effect of Parental Style on Children's Relative Influence**

Parents with alternative parental style differ in their attitude toward children. Authoritative and Indulgent parents are more responding to children's inquiries and requests than Authoritarian and Neglecting parents (Maccoby and Martin 1983). Thus, when children express their needs or wants for products and services, Authoritative and Indulgent parents are more likely to listen to and consider children's opinion than Authoritarian and Neglecting parents. As

a result, children with Authoritative and Indulgent parents may possess greater influence than those under Authoritarian and Neglecting parents.

Authoritative parents are more demanding and set more standards for children's conduct than Indulgent parents (Baumrind 1971). Authoritative parents explain rules, and use reasoning as well as firm discipline to direct children's activity. Thus, when children request for products, Authoritative parents may refuse children's unreasonable wants with explanation, while Indulgent parents are more inclined to satisfy children's requests. Consequently, it is likely that in family consumption decisions, Indulgent parents permit children's influence more than Authoritative parents.

**H8a:** Children with Authoritative parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Authoritarian parents in family consumption decisions.

**H8b:** Children with Authoritative parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Neglecting parents in family consumption decisions.

**H8c:** Children with Indulgent parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Authoritarian parents in family consumption decisions.

**H8d:** Children with Indulgent parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Neglecting parents in family consumption decisions.

**H8e:** Children with Indulgent parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Authoritative parents in family consumption decisions.

### **Effect of Parental Power on Children's Relative Influence**

Power is the ability to influence others to do things they would not have done spontaneously (Blood and Wolfe 1960). In the parent-child relationship, when children and parents hold different views in consumption decisions, parents with greater power means they possess higher ability to influence children. These parents are more likely to change their children's views, thus possess higher degree of influence in the decision process. This is tantamount to say that when perceived parental power is high (or the other side is that when children's power is low), children's relative influence will be low. However, Kim, Lee, and Hall (1991) did not find empirical support for this reasoning. Specifically, the authors asked adolescents to self-report their coercive power, reward power, expert power, legitimate power, and referent power over their parents. Adolescents' relative influence was measured by asking them to indicate how seriously their parents would consider their opinion in four different family

consumption decisions. Results showed no direct relationship between adolescents' power perception and their relative influence in any of the decisions. Given this is the sole existing empirical study in this regard, the result may not be conclusive. As the authors themselves stated that "due to the prior knowledge, the investigation should best be regarded as exploratory (p. 38)."

Smith (1970) investigated the impact of adolescents' perceived parental power on parental influence in the educational and heterosexual areas of life. He found that each of the four parental power bases (i.e., outcome-control, referent, legitimate, and expert), independent of the others, correlated positively with the parental influence. Although the focal issue of this study is not related to family consumption decisions, the results at least render some confidence in speculating that the perceived parental power might negatively relate to children's relative influence in family consumption decisions. All the above contention considered, it is thus proposed that:

**H9:** Children who perceive higher parental power have lower relative influence in family consumption decisions.

### **Effect of Influence Strategy on Children's Relative Influence**

In family consumption decisions, children would find some strategies might work and some might not in influencing their parents. When they learn certain strategies work for them, they are likely to feel empowered in that process (Palan and Wilkes 1997). In other words, certain strategies might enhance children's relative influence (either perceived by their parents or by themselves) in family decisions. Kim, Lee, and Hall (1991) found that teenagers who apply frequently "persuasion" and "playing on emotions" strategies and rarely stubborn acts in their influence attempts reported themselves as having greater influence in purchasing situations involving items for family use.

In a relational situation, Bilateral strategies (e.g., bargaining, reasoning) require the target person's cooperation and responsiveness, while Unilateral strategies (e.g., evasion, begging and pleading) do not (Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984). When using Bilateral strategies, the interaction between the child and parent might develop the parent's perception of equality, thus enhance his/her perception of the child's influence in the decision process. Therefore, children using Bilateral strategies might be perceived to possess more relative influence in family consumption decisions than those using Unilateral strategies.

In addition, as Kim, Lee, and Hall (1991) contended, children who often apply Bilateral influence strategies such as bargaining and reasoning maybe perceived by their parents as more mature and competent. Thus, parents are willing to consider their suggestions in family decisions. As a contrast, children who often rely on Unilateral influence strategies such as nagging and showing temper maybe perceived by their parents as immature and irritating. As a result, these children's consumption requests and suggestions are likely to be disregarded by parents. Therefore, it is proposed that:

**H10:** Children who apply Bilateral strategies possess higher relative influence than those who apply Unilateral strategies in family consumption decisions.

## SUMMARY

In summary, this chapter develops a conceptual model, exploring factors affecting children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions. Consumer socialization theory and power relational theory are integrated to guide the model development. Past research has focused only on either consumer socialization theory or power relational theory, but not both. The integral of both theories, hopefully, will provide richer theoretical guidance to future research.

A smaller model is further derived to partially test the conceptual model. Research hypotheses are developed (see Figure 6 for corresponding links). This model proposes that both parental style and perceived parental power directly affect children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions. Parental style also affects children's choice of strategy and relative influence indirectly through perceived parental power. Further, children's influence strategy is proposed to affect children's relative influence.

Looking back into the literature, the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy (H1a~d, H2) has been explored by only one study with inconclusive findings (Manchanda and Moore-Shay 1996). The effect of children's choice of influence strategy (H10) on their relative influence has been explored by another single study with indecisive results (Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991). While the impact of parental style on children's relative influence (H8a~e) has been examined by several studies, again the results are inconsistent (e.g., Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Mangleburg 1992; Rose 1999). The rest of the relationships (H3~H7, and

H9) are proposed for the first time. Thus, it is expected that this dissertation will make important contributions to the literature regarding children's influence in family consumption decisions. The next chapter discusses the methodology applied to test these research hypotheses.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **METHODOLOGY**

In the preceding chapter, a conceptual model is proposed and research hypotheses are advanced regarding the effects of parental style and power on children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions. This chapter is devoted to the methodology applied to test these research hypotheses. Specifically, it discusses the research design, sampling procedure, operationalization of constructs, and the data analysis plan for the empirical study.

#### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

##### **Choice of Data Collection Method**

Several methods of data collection could be applied to the research of children's influence, including field observation, personal interview, survey approach, and field experimental interaction procedure. Field observation involves recording the parent-child interaction in natural settings such as the supermarket and the home (Atkin 1978; Isler, Topper, and Ward 1987). Personal interview uncovers children's influence in family consumption decisions through one-on-one depth interviews with respondents (e.g., Palan and Wilkes 1997). Survey research obtains information about children's influence through asking subjects (i.e., parents, children or both) a variety of structured questions (e.g., Beatty and Talpade 1994; Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991). Finally, a field experimental interaction procedure induces family members into interaction about a hypothetical yet relevant consumption decision. Then subjects self-report their influence behavior (e.g., influence strategies, relative influence) in the decision making process. Comparisons of these different methods of data collection in terms of research concern and practical concern are summarized in Table 3.

This dissertation aims to investigate the effects of parental style and power on children's choice of influence strategy and the subsequent relative influence in family consumption decisions. As such, reliability and validity of the information about children's influence strategy and relative influence are very important. Among the different methods of data collection, the field experimental interaction procedure appears more capable of uncovering people's influence behavior in a decision-making process. Although it still has drawbacks, such as the hypothetical

**TABLE 3**  
COMPARISONS OF DATA COLLECTION METHODS

		Field Observation	Personal Interview	Survey Approach	Field experimental interaction Procedure
Research Concern	Unobtrusiveness of research	++	--	o	-
	Representativeness of sample	-	o	+	o
	Control of extraneous variables	--	-	o	++
	Causality	--	--	-	+
	Understanding phenomena	--	++	o	+
	International Validity	--	o	+	++
	External Validity	++	--	o	-
Practical Concern	Response Rate	--	--	-	-
	Time	--	--	+	o
	Cost	-	-	+	-
Summary of property	Provides a more accurate assessment of the varying modes of interaction between parents and children. However, it also leads to serious problems. First, researchers have low controllability over extraneous factors, thus are unable to track the causality of events. Second, parent-child, especially parent-adolescent interaction often entails sensitive topics and most subjects will have concern about exposing their privacy. It will be tremendously difficult to get permission to investigate related topics through field observation.	Very useful in gaining depth insights into a phenomenon. However, it is also very obtrusive. Its results are susceptible to the interviewer's influence. Further, it is time consuming and financially costly, leaving it restrained to small sample size. Consequently, it is often employed in exploratory research rather than quantitative analysis.	It is the most widely used method in the literature of children's influence. It is easy to administer and can reach a large sample. However, problems such as memory error, report bias, distortion of subject's estimation, and word-action discrepancy often confront serious challenge to the validity of this method of data collection (Atkin 1978; Corfman 1991; Su 1999).	This method gives people more control over the extraneous factors, thus makes it possible to track causality of the phenomena. It also greatly attenuates the memory error problem, the estimation distortion, and word-action discrepancy problem as in the survey approach. However, this method might still suffer from problems such as hypothetical decision and report bias.	

Note: "+ +" - very good  
 " + " - good  
 " o " - neutral  
 " - " - bad  
 "- -" - very bad

consumption decisions and the potential self-report bias, these problems could be attenuated by making the decision more relevant to participants (e.g., they may get the focal product through a lottery, Su 1999) and by monitoring participants' social desirability (e.g., Rossiter and Robertson 1975; Carlson and Grossbart 1988). Thus, the field experimental interaction procedure was adopted in this dissertation. A field experiment was designed in which children try to influence their parents to buy certain products over a set of different alternatives.

### **Field Experiment**

To apply the field experimental interaction procedure, a conjoint design was used to capture children's choices of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions. Specifically, a set of hypothetical decision scenarios was developed. In each scenario, several alternatives with similar attractiveness and retail value were provided. Subjects (i.e., children and parents) first independently indicated their likelihood to choose each alternative, and then got together to jointly rate the same set of alternatives and decide on an optimal choice.

The procedure and order follow those applied in the literature of family decision-making (e.g., Corfman and Lehmann 1987; Olson and Ryder 1970; Su 1999). During the experiment, children and parents first disclosed their ratings of the alternatives to each other. In most of the cases, they may have dissimilar ratings for each alternative based on their diversified consumption preferences and knowledge. Otherwise, the decision was considered consensual and would be dropped from analysis. Provided the revealed differences in choice, children and parents were then supposed to interact and reach a joint decision regarding which alternative to choose. With both products favored by parents and products favored by children included in the choice set, such a process was expected to motivate children as well as parents to apply different strategies to influence the other toward their preferred alternatives. Since joint preferences are a result of interaction between children and parents, the closer the joint preferences are to children's preferences, the more relative influence children have in the decision (Corfman and Lehmann 1987).

After the subjects completed the decisions following the above procedures, they were asked to indicate on a separate questionnaire "how children get their way" in the decisions they just made. An inductive influence strategy scale was provided. Subjects were asked to indicate their agreement with statements that the child had used each of the strategies in the joint

decisions. Several other scales were included in the questionnaire to measure other dependent and independent variables, such as children's relative influence, parental style, and perceived parental power, as will be discussed in the following sections.

Because of its interactiveness and timeliness, such an experimental interaction procedure could capture children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence more accurately than the often-applied survey method in the literature. However, as indicated before, this procedure still contains certain validity concerns and selecting appropriate products and monitoring subjects' social desirability are important to improve the validity of the study. These two issues are discussed below.

### **Product Selection**

Past research has indicated that children's influence in family consumption decisions varies with product type (see literature review). Applying Kim and Lee's (1997) typology, it appears that children gain highest influence for child-minor products, followed by child-major, family-major, and family-minor products. In addition, as discussed before, the experimental interaction procedure calls for using products highly related to participants. Consequently, both child-related and parents-related products were included in this dissertation.

In the literature, child-major products often include computer, bicycle, stereo system, CD player, clothing, and electronic game, while child-minor products often consist of records, movies, magazines, school supplies, deodorant, and shoes (Foxman, Tansuhaj, Ekstrom 1989a, b; Kim and Lee 1997; Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991; Mangleburg 1992). Products related to parents are either their personal items such as clothing and magazine or family items such as groceries and family dinner (Beatty and Talpade 1994; Kim and Lee 1997). Based on the literature, interviews with some adolescent children and parents, and a pretest (described later), four items were determined as minor products, including record, coupon for movie tickets, coupon for Sears, and coupon for Home Depot. Another four items were determined as major products, including CD player, Electronic game play station, Elegant family dinner, and Family music event.

Half of the selected products are popular among adolescent children and the others are favored by parents. It was expected that parents and their children would hold different degree of preference toward products in the study. Since children and parents have to agree on one item

that will be awarded if they win the lottery, it was expected that both parties would be motivated to influence each other.

### **Social Desirability**

Social desirability refers to the degree to which people describe themselves in socially acceptable terms to gain the approval of others (Crowne and Marlowe 1964). Researchers have already cautioned about parents' attempts to respond in a socially desirable manner in socialization research (Robertson 1979; Rossiter and Robertson 1975; Carlson and Grossbart 1988). Some other researchers even call for attention to the social desirability bias in general marketing research (King and Bruner 2000). Concern about subjects' social desirability is greater in research designs that incorporate self-report measures such as surveys (Zerbe and Paulhus 1987). In this dissertation, the field experimental interaction procedure rather than the survey approach was applied. In the experiment, subjects were asked to interact over product choice decisions and then to report their influence strategies and relative influence in the decisions. Since decisions happen minutes ago, subjects' self-report might be more objective compared to if they are asked to estimate their daily experience as in surveys. In this sense, the field experimental interaction procedure may attenuate the impact of social desirability. However, in this study, subjects (i.e., both parents and children) still needed to self-report their interaction process and results. Especially, subjects were asked to answer questions about parental style and parental power that may foster social desirability bias. Thus, it was deemed necessary to monitor subjects' tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner.

## **SAMPLING PROCEDURE**

### **Subjects**

Although children of all ages have certain influence in family consumption decisions, such influence deviates across age groups. First, older children (e.g., 12 years and above) are found to have greater influence on parents than younger children (e.g., 3~11 years) do (Atkin 1978; Darley and Lim 1986; Moschis and Mitchell 1986; Nelson 1979). This has been the case in all decision stages for durables, nondurables, and outside entertainments (Swinyard and Sim 1987). Second, older children involve more interaction with parents in attempting to influence parents. Younger children tend to simply ask for products, while older children are more likely

to use a wider variety of influence strategies (Isler, Popper, and Ward 1987; Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991; Palan and Wilkes 1997).

The difference between younger and older children's influence behavior reflects their difference in cognitive and social development. Compared to younger children, older children are more cognitively mature, more proficient in acquiring, encoding, organizing, and retrieving information, and more able to understand the social aspects of products and consumption. Based on cognitive and social development, John (1999) divided children's consumer socialization into three stages, perceptual stage (3~7 years), analytical stage (7~11 years), and reflective stage (11~16 years). Only children in the reflective stage possess a full repertoire of influence strategies and apply them in a flexible manner to suit the situation or answer the objection of a parent. Based on this research, it is clear that older children (e.g., reflective stage) rather than younger children would be appropriate subjects for this dissertation, given that the focus of this dissertation was to investigate children's use of different influence strategy and relative influence. Further, borderline age children (e.g., 11 and 16 years) may share the dispositions of other adjacent age groups, and were dropped in order to decrease confounding impact. Consequently, children between 12 and 15 years old were included as part of the subjects in this dissertation.

Previous research has already shown that children tend to overestimate their relative influence while parents tend to underestimate it (Belch, Belch, and Ceresino 1985; Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom 1989a; Kim and Lee 1997). Kim and Lee (1997) suggested that multi-respondent and multi-item measures be used to improve the reliability and validity of children's influence. Thus, this dissertation also inquired parents' opinion regarding children's influence. Although it will be ideal to include both parents in the study, only one parent was selected because of the practical difficulty in recruiting parents to participate in the research.

### **Sample Size**

To determine the sample size for the study, past research was examined. Several studies have been conducted to investigate the effect of parental style or children's choice of influence strategy on children's relative influence (Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991; Manchanda and Moore-Shay 1996; Mangleburg 1992; Rose 1999). In most of the studies, the effect size of the intended impact could not be derived because of either insignificant effect or insufficient information. Only Rose (1999) provides enough information to calculate the effect

size regarding the impact of parental style on children's influence and children's consumption autonomy. In Rose's study, the children's influence scale indicated the degree to which children's opinion is taken in family purchase decisions, the perceived importance and frequency of parent-child shopping, and children's consumption dependence. The scale of children's consumption autonomy denoted children's payment pattern, parents' yielding to children, and parents' refusing with an explanation. Rose found significant effect of parental style on both children's influence and children's consumption autonomy. Since both variables are very related to children's influence strategy and their relative influence in family consumption decisions as in the current study, the effect size for both variables was examined.

Based on Fern and Monroe (1996), the effect size  $\eta^2$  for the impact of parental style on children's influence in Rose (1999) is .036. And the effect size  $\eta^2$  for the impact of parental style on children's consumption autonomy is .083. These two effect sizes were averaged (the average  $\eta^2$  is .060) because conceptually the two variables are closely related. In the current study, there would be four groups of subjects with alternative parental styles (i.e., Authoritarian, Authoritative, Indulgent, and Neglecting). Employing the formula  $F(df_B, df_W) = \eta^2 * (df_W) / [(1 - \eta^2) (df_B)]$  (Fern and Monroe 1996, p. 92), in order to detect the effect of parental style on children's relative influence in the current study, the sample size is 130.

Manchanda and Moore-Shay examined the effects of parental style, gender, and materialism on children's choice of influence strategy. Relating to the current study, they found a significant effect of parent's Authoritarianism on children's use of low power strategy. The effect size is .110. If approximating it as the effect size of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy, then the minimum sample size for the current study is 35. Apparently, it is easier to detect the impact of parental style on children's influence strategy than to detect the impact of parental style on children's relative influence.

This dissertation aimed to investigate effects of parental style on both children's choice of influence strategy and their relative influence in family consumption decisions. Thus, the sample size (i.e.,  $N = 130$ ) determined based on Rose (1999) was preferred. However, this sample size is probably overstated considering the difference between Rose's (1999) study and the present study. In Rose's (1999), the subjects were mothers of children between the ages of three and eight years. In the present study, subjects were parents and adolescent children. Since adolescent children tend to have greater involvement in family consumption decisions than

younger children do (e.g., Darley and Lim 1986; Moschis and Mitchell 1986), the variation of children's influence should be larger among adolescents than among younger children. That is to say, the effect of parental style on children's influence is more manifest among adolescents. Consequently, the effect size regarding the parental style on children's influence is likely to be greater in the present study than that in Rose (1999). Thus, a sample size around 100 was felt to be sufficient. Nevertheless, to ensure testing power, a sample size of 140 was set as the recruiting goal for this dissertation.

### **Questionnaire**

Two parallel questionnaires with slight differences (e.g., different wording, alternative demographic information) were developed for the parent-child dyad. For each subject, there were three parts in the questionnaire, Part A, Group Choice, and Part B. In part A, subjects were asked to provide independently their ratings and choices for two decision scenarios. After part A, parents and children were asked to jointly finish the group choice. Then in part B, subjects again independently self-reported on items regarding their relative influence, choice of influence strategy, realism check, parental style, perceived parental power, and demographic information (see Appendix A for details).

Two forms of the questionnaire with the decision scenarios alternated were developed to reduce the potential carry-over effect and order bias. Specifically, in form A the major product decision was presented before the minor product decision, while the reverse was in form B. In addition, since half of the subjects were adolescent children, special care (e.g., graphics, easy wording, clear anchors) was taken to make sure that they clearly understand the questions and instructions.

After permission was received from potential subjects, a package including questionnaires, consent forms, and a pre-stamped envelope was sent out. Subjects were asked to finish the study (it takes about 40 minutes to finish the study) in home based on the detailed instructions and then mail back the completed questionnaires and consent forms. In this way, it was hoped that subjects would feel less outside influence (e.g., monitoring from experimenters) and behave as they usually do in family decisions, thus improving the study's external validity.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

As indicated above, adolescent children and their parents were subjects in this study. To encourage participation, each parent/child group was compensated \$10 for participation. To

further motivate participation in the study, two lotteries were designed based on interviews with experienced researchers and my financial capability. For the major products, two prizes were awarded, each of \$200 retail value. For the minor products, four prizes were awarded, each of \$30 retail value. In addition, these two lotteries were inclusive. That is, winning the major products does not exclude subjects' chance to win the minor products. Thus, each parent/child dyad had six chances to win a product. Based on a sample size of 140, the winning chance was approximately 4%. The products subjects receive should they win the lottery are the ones they jointly decide in the study. This was expected to further increase the relevancy of decisions to subjects, and thus elevate the study's external validity.

Electronic mail was used to recruit subjects from university faculty and staff members, given the fact that their email addresses are available on the Internet. In total, 10,200 faculty and staff members at four universities (Virginia Tech, Radford University, James Madison University, and Old Dominion University) were contacted with a standard message (see Appendix B). One hundred and ninety two replied with agreement to participate. A package including questionnaires, consent forms, and a pre-stamped envelope was sent to each of them. Two weeks later, a reminder message was sent to those who had not returned the questionnaires. Upon the time of data analysis, 139 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a response rate of 72.4%. It was expected that some more would arrive in the following days. Of all the questionnaires received, none of them exhibited consensual product ratings by the parent and child, thus all were included in data analysis.

## **OPERATIONALIZATION OF CONSTRUCTS**

Children's relative influence is the dependent variable and parental style is the independent variable in this study. Perceived parental power and children's choice of influence strategy are process variables, because they are both dependent and independent variables. This section describes the operationalization of these variables.

### **Children's Relative Influence**

Children's relative influence refers to the degree to which children have engaged in activities that contribute to the decision making process relative to the contributions of parents in family consumption decisions (Beatty and Talpade 1994). It has been measured almost exclusively in a self-report manner in previous studies. Extending this convention, this

dissertation measured children's relative influence using both the self-report method and outcome method. The self-report method asked both the parent and child to state the child's influence in each decision scenario as opposed to the parent's influence (e.g., Kim and Lee 1997).

Specifically, subjects were asked to indicate the child's influence for each decision on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = parent entirely, 7 = child entirely). The outcome measure of children's relative influence was obtained by creating an index, which is a division of the difference between children's original likelihood and the group's joint likelihood to choose each item and the difference between children's likelihood and parents' likelihood (Corfman and Lehmann 1987). Then this index over the four items was summed to indicate children's relative influence in each product decision.

### **Parental Style**

Parental style refers to the "constellation of attitudes toward the child that are communicated to the child, and that, taken together, create an emotional climate in which the parent's behaviors are expressed " (Darling and Steinberg 1993, p. 488). As suggested by Maccoby and Martin (1993) and Baumrind (1991a, 1991b), the parental style is investigated along two dimensions, responsiveness and demandingness. Responsiveness is the extent that parents engage in activities that encourage children's individuality and autonomous behavior by staying attuned, supportive and acquiescent to the children's needs and demands. Demandingness reflects the extent that parents direct children's development by maturity demands, close supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys (Baumrind 1991a).

Based on previous studies, Steinberg and associates (1989, 1991, and 1994) developed an instrument to measure the above two dimensions. The original scales were developed to measure father's and mother's parental style as a whole, but are also valid to measure individual parent's style (Steinberg, Elmen and Mounts 1989). The scales yield fairly high internal consistency (Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients were .72 and .76 for parent's responsiveness and demandingness toward their children, respectively, Steinberg et al. 1994). Discriminate validity is good in the sense that the two dimensions are only moderately intercorrelated ( $r = .34$ ,  $p < .001$ , Lamborn et al. 1991). Thus, this instrument was adapted to measure the parental style in the current study. The wording of scales was changed to accommodate either parents or children so that both subjects would report their perception of the parental style.

When categorizing parents, Steinberg and associates (1989, 1991, and 1994) trichotomized their sample and used the upper and lower tertiles on each dimension to determine their groups. This was feasible because of their very large sample size ( $n = 1,320$ ). However, they also reported that the results did not change substantively when median split analyses were applied to define groups (Lamborn et al. 1991). Such median split procedure is especially beneficial for studies with relatively small sample size (McIntyre and Dusek 1995). Thus, in the present study, parents were divided into high and low groups on the basis of the median score for each dimension.

### **Perceived Parental Power**

Parental power is a special case of social power. It reflects the ability of one or both parents to influence or control children's behaviors and/or opinions (McDonald 1979). As revealed in the literature, parental power consists of four bases, outcome-control power, referent power, legitimate power, and expert power.

McDonald (1977, 1979, 1980, and 1982) developed a measurement instrument to tap the different parental power bases. Four items were used to measure the parental outcome-control power and the parental referent power, respectively. The areas of perceived legitimate and expert power are very broad. Two domains (heterosexual relationship and education) were selected for inspection because "these two areas are of particular relevance to adolescents and thus provide strong indicators of perceived parental legitimate and expert power" (McDonald 1982, p. 13). Each of the bases was measured with four items. In order to make the values of parental legitimate power and parental expert power congruent with the other power variable measures, the eight items for each of these two power bases were summed and that total value divided by two. This instrument was adapted in the current study. Further, following Rollins and Thomas' (1975) suggestion of the additive nature of power bases, values of the four power bases were summed to indicate the general parental power (McDonald 1982).

### **Children's Influence Strategy**

Children's influence strategy refers to children's strategic use of power to influence decision outcomes in family consumption decisions. As noted in the literature review, a few researchers have developed complete sets of children's influence strategies in family consumption decisions using personal interview and/or essay analysis (Cowan and Avants 1988; Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984; Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991; Manchanda and Moore-Shay

1996; Palan and Wilkes 1997). Based on these studies, an instrument including 18 items was advanced to measure children's choice of influence strategies in the designated decisions. Specifically, 11 items were used to tap children's Unilateral influence strategy and 7 items tap children's Bilateral influence strategy. Although beyond the current study's focus, 11 items were used to indicate parent's influence strategy. This information might be of interest for future research. Table 4 lists the scales for both children's influence strategies and parents' response strategies.

After the experimental interaction procedure, both subjects were inquired about the child's as well as the parent's choice of influence strategy in each decision scenario. Subjects were asked to indicate their agreement with the strategy statements on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The difference between children's mean Bilateral score and their mean Unilateral score was operationalized as children's tendency to use Bilateral influence strategy. As indicated by Su (1999), such a difference score measurement enhances reliability and validity of the construct.

### **Other Variables**

As indicated before, subjects' attempts to respond in a socially desirable manner should be monitored so as to increase validity of the study. The social desirability scale developed originally by Crowne and Marlowe (1964) consists of 33 true-false items. It has been criticized as too long and comprising some inappropriate or even offensive items (Fisher 2000). Thus, a new but shorter scale containing 10 items was derived by dropping inappropriate items from the original scale. Values of these 10 items were added up with high score indicating greater tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner. This variable was included in the data analysis to check the impact of social desirability on dependent variables.

In order to assess the validity of the research design, two additional scales were included in the questionnaire for realism check (Corfman and Lehmann 1987; Olson and Ryder 1970; Su 1999). The first scale examined whether subjects behaved in the study as they usually do. Both parents and children were asked to indicate their agreement with two statements: "These decisions are practical despite hypothetical, I behaved as I usually do in real family consumption decisions." "These decisions are practical despite hypothetical, my parent (child) behaved as she/he usually does in real family consumption decisions." (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree). The second scale was composed of a single item providing manipulation check

**TABLE 4**  
**CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE STRATEGIES AND PARENTS' RESPONSE STRATEGIES**  
(Adapted from Cowan and Avants 1988; Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984; Palan and Wilkes 1997)

**Children's Influence Strategies**

1. I simply asked my mom to agree with me.
2. I told her that I'd do some special things if she agrees with me. (\*)
3. I made jokes trying to get my way.
4. I pleaded or begged her to agree with me.
5. I indicated to my mom the fact that my other friends have "it".
6. I reasoned with my mom, trying to argue my request logically. (\*)
7. I told my mom what I wanted. I just stated my needs.
8. I became especially affectionate to my mom in hopes to get my way. (\*)
9. I nagged until she got irritated.
10. I made my mom feel guilty in hopes to have her agree with me.
11. I tried to negotiate something agreeable to both of us. (\*)
12. I repeatedly reminded her of what I wanted. (\*)
13. I explained the reasons for my choice. (\*)
14. I asked repetitively for the product yet trying not to irritate her. (\*)
15. I withdrew affection, acted cold, became silent, or ignored her. (x)
16. I behaved angrily trying to get her agreement. (x)
17. I appealed to her love and affection for me.
18. I asked for the product in a way that sounded reasonable to my mom.

Note: - statements with "\*" are Bilateral strategies and those without are Unilateral strategies.  
- statements with "x" are dropped in the final study.

**Parents' Response Strategies**

1. She discussed each product with me.
2. My mom tried to negotiate something agreeable to both of us.
3. She simply gave in to me.
4. My mom promised to reward me if I agree with her.
5. She shamed on me about my choice. (x)
6. She just ignored my choice. (x)
7. My mom expressed her opinion toward each product.
8. My mom taught me how to select the best alternative.
9. She indicated her choices without giving reasons.
10. She reasoned with me, trying to argue her choice logically.
11. My mom asked my opinion toward each product.

Note: - statements with "x" are dropped in the final study.

on earlier instructions that ask the subjects not to discuss the alternative ratings before the group choice questionnaire is provided (Corfman and Lehmann 1987; Su 1999). Subjects were asked to indicate their agreement with the statement that "When I filled out the Part A of this questionnaire, I did not discuss it with my father/mother (child) and formed ideas by my own" (1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree).

Finally, demographic information such as age, gender, whether the child has part-time job, amount of spending money from parents, number of siblings, family income, and parent's occupation and education were also included in the questionnaire. These factors were used as covariates for further investigation (Robertson 1979; Rossiter and Robertson 1975).

### **DATA ANALYSIS PLAN**

The unit of analysis for this study is the parent-child dyad. Since two product categories were involved, the model was tested in product decisions for both categories. As aforementioned, categorizing parents along the two parental style dimensions (i.e., demandingness and responsiveness) might lead to unequal sample size across parental groups. In order to mitigate the potential impact of unequal cell size, planned comparisons with orthogonal designs (i.e., multiple comparisons among means via multiple regressions) rather than MONOVA/ANOVA were applied to test the effect of parental style on perceived parental power (Cohen and Cohen 1983; Pedhazur 1982; Pedhazur and Schmelkin 1991). Multiple regressions were also conducted to test the effects of parental style and perceived prenatal power on children's choice of influence strategy and their relative influence.

### **PILOT TEST**

Using the field experimental interaction procedure to study children's influence in family consumption decisions is novel in the literature. To assure its validity, a pilot test was conducted. The purpose of the pilot study was threefold. First, it was expected to help define the appropriate products. As described above, two product categories with four items in each were derived based on the past research and personal interviews. It was necessary to confirm that they were attractive to the potential subjects. Second, the pilot study would help confine the proper influence strategies applied by the adolescent children as well as their parents. A set of influence strategies could be found in the past research. However, not all of them may be

relevant to the field experimental interaction procedure. It was important to delete those inappropriate strategies so as to reduce questionnaire length and subject fatigue. Finally, except for Manchanda and Moore-Shay (1996) (a discussion of concerns of their study could be found in the literature review), no other research has investigated the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy. It would be very helpful to pilot test this effect. Such information was also instrumental in determining the sample size for the final study.

### **Questionnaire**

Only parents of adolescent children were included in the pilot study for simplicity as well as the fact that most parents know their children well. Two decision scenarios were provided and parents were asked to indicate the products that their children are most likely to buy if they were given \$100 and \$15 respectively. Then they were asked to indicate the likelihood that their children will choose each of the exhibited products. Further, they were asked about the frequency that their children use different influence strategies when the children want them to buy something. Parents were also asked about how they usually respond to their children. Finally, information regarding parental style, social desirability, and brief demographics are inquired (see Appendix C for the detailed questionnaire).

### **Sampling of Pilot Study**

A convenient sample of parents who attended a local children soccer game participated in the pilot study. In total 36 parents participated in the study. Results of this pilot study are presented in the next Chapter.

## **SUMMARY**

This chapter describes the methodology applied to test the research hypotheses. Based on comparisons of three data collection methods, the experimental interaction procedure was considered as best for the current study. Two product categories, major product and minor product, were incorporated in the research design. Both parents and adolescent children were included as subjects in order to improve response reliability and validity. Parallel questionnaires were developed for the parent-child dyads and sample size was determined based on the effect size obtained from previous research. A pilot study was conducted in order to obtain useful information for the final study.

In the study, children's relative influence was dependent variable and parental style was independent variable. Perceived parental power and children's choice of influence strategy were mediating variables. To test the proposed mediation relationships, comprehensive models employing multiple regressions were designed. A summary of the methodology is presented in Table 5.

**TABLE 5**  
SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>I.V.</b>	<b>D.V.</b>	<b>Predictions</b>	<b>Statistical Tests</b>
H1a	Parental style	Children's Choice of Influence strategy	Children with Authoritative parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Indulgent parents.	Planned comparisons through multiple regression with categorical variables
H1b			Children with Authoritative parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Neglecting parents.	
H1c			Children with Authoritarian parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Indulgent parents.	
H1d			Children with Authoritarian parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Neglecting parents.	
H2			Children with Authoritative parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Authoritarian parents.	
H3a	Parental style	Perceived Parental Outcome-control power	Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Indulgent parents.	Planned comparisons through multiple regressions with categorical variables
H3b			Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Neglecting parents.	
H3c			Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Indulgent parents.	
H3d			Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Neglecting parents.	
H4a			Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Authoritarian parents.	
H3e	Parental Style	Perceived Parental Legitimate Power	Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Indulgent parents.	Planned comparisons through multiple regressions with categorical variables
H3f			Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Neglecting parents.	
H3g			Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Indulgent parents.	
H3h			Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Neglecting parents.	
H4b			Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Authoritarian parents.	

Hypotheses	I.V.	D.V.	Predictions	Statistical Tests
H5a	Parental style	Perceived Parental referent power	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Authoritarian parents.	Planned comparisons through multiple regressions with categorical variables
H5b			Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Neglecting parents.	
H5c			Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Authoritarian parents.	
H5d			Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Neglecting parents.	
H6a			Authoritative parents are perceived to have greater referent power than Indulgent parents.	
H5e			Parental style	
H5f	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater expert power than Neglecting parents.			
H5g	Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater expert power than Authoritarian parents.			
H5h	Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater expert power than Neglecting parents.			
H6b	Authoritative parents are perceived to have greater expert power than Indulgent parents.			
H7	Parental power	Influence strategy		Children who perceive high parental power tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those who perceive low parental power.
H8a	Parental style	Relative influence	Children with Authoritative parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Authoritarian parents in family consumption decisions.	Multiple regression with effect coding to test direct effect and Planned comparisons to test group difference
H8b			Children with Authoritative parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Neglecting parents in family consumption decisions.	
H8c			Children with Indulgent parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Authoritarian parents in family consumption decisions.	
H8d			Children with Indulgent parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Neglecting parents in family consumption decisions.	
H8e			Children with Indulgent parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Authoritative parents in family consumption decisions.	
H9	Parental power	Relative influence	Children who perceive higher parental power have lower relative influence in family consumption decisions.	Multiple regression
H10	Influence strategy	Relative influence	Children who apply Bilateral strategies possess higher relative influence than those who apply Unilateral strategies in family consumption decisions.	Multiple regression

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

The preceding chapter delineates the methodology applied to testing the model. This chapter presents the results of data analysis and research hypotheses testing. It begins with an examination of the pilot test.

#### **RESULTS OF PILOT TEST**

As aforementioned, a convenient sample of 36 parents participated in the pilot test. Much useful information was obtained from the pilot test toward the final study.

##### **Sample Profile of Pilot Test**

Of the 36 participants, two questionnaires were dropped because the children are out of the selected age range (7 and 17, respectively). Of the remaining 34 subjects, about half were mothers and half were fathers, all from different families. All of their children were between 11 and 16 years old with the mode as 13. More than half of the children (61.8 percent) were male. All parents were aged between 35 and 59 and 97.1 percent of them have some college or above education. Apparently, in terms of education level, this sample reflects the characteristics of the population in the local area, but is skewed upward compared to the overall population in the United States. Thus, care must be taken in interpreting the pilot test results.

##### **Findings of Pilot Test**

Product Selection. Eight products were included in the pilot study, with four in the major product category (CD player, N64 play station, Mountain bike, and Tennis racquet) and four in the minor product category (CD, Scientific calculator, Movie coupons, and Magazine subscription). Parents were asked to indicate on a 7-point scale (1 = Very unlikely and 7 = Very likely) the likelihood their children to choose each product when given the opportunity. For the major product category, the mean likelihood score was 5.03 for the CD player, 4.71 for the N64 play station, 4.32 for the mountain bike and 3.41 for the tennis racquet. It seems among the four products, tennis racquet and mountain bike were not as popular as the other two products. Consequently, it was decided that in the final study, these two items be replaced with products related to parents/family.

For the minor product category, the mean likelihood score is 4.68 for the CD, 3.26 for the scientific calculator, 5.35 for the movie coupons, and 3.35 for the magazine subscription. Obviously, CD and movie coupons were more welcome among the local teenagers than scientific calculator and magazines. Consequently, the latter two items were replaced with two parents/family related products in the final study.

Children's Influence Strategy. Eighteen children's influence strategies were derived from the literature. Parents were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale (1 = Never and 5 = All the time) the frequency that their children use each strategy when they ask parents to buy things. All strategies but two had mean score above 2.00. The two exceptions were "My child withdraws affection, acts cold, becomes silent, or ignores me" and "My child behaves angrily trying to have me buy the product for him/her." Both are emotionally negative strategies. It seems these teenagers were fairly mature and respected their parents. This is also congruent with Palan and Wilkes (1997) who found that adolescents rarely use emotional strategies. Consequently, these two items were dropped in the final study.

Of the remaining 16 influence strategies, nine are Unilateral strategies and seven are Bilateral strategies. The Cronbach reliability coefficient was .85 for the Unilateral influence strategies and .73 for the Bilateral influence strategies. Given the small sample size of the pilot study, these reliabilities were satisfactory.

Parent's Responding Strategy reflects the ways parents respond to their children's strategic use of power in family consumption decisions. This was not a focal variable in the current study and was included solely for future research interest. Out of the 14 strategies phrased from the literature, three seemed to be not very often applied by parents. They were "I shame him/her about his/her request", "I just ignore his/her request", and "I give yes/no answer to his/her request without giving reasons" (mean scores were 1.35, 1.97, and 1.94 respectively). The results for the first two items are very consistent with Palan and Wilkes (1997) who found that almost no parents (only one out 100) ignore or shame their children's purchase request. Thus, these two items were dropped in the final study. Palan and Wilkes found that a fairly higher percentage of parents (35%) respond to children's purchase request with the simple yes/no answer without giving reasons. The low mean score in the current pilot test seemed to be in accord with their relative higher education background. Given the fact that in the final study, wider range of subjects would be recruited than those in the pilot test, this third item was kept for

the final study. Furthermore, of the 14 parent's responding influence strategies, the last three did not match the proposed context of field experimental interaction procedure, thus were also dropped in the final study.

Parental Style. A scale including 19 items was adapted from Lamborn et al. (1991) to measure parental style. Since the scales are not of equal length (e.g., some are 3-point scale while others are 7-point scale), scores on the scale were standardized before being combined. The Cronbach reliability coefficients were .51 and .86 for the responsiveness and the demandingness dimension, respectively. Although the reliability for the responsiveness dimension was low, it was believed that with a larger sample size in the final study, reliability for the scale would not be an issue. For the responsiveness dimension, mean = 0, SD = 4.32, median = .89, mode = 3.67, and range = -12.14 to 4.97. For the demandingness dimension, mean = 0, SD = 5.76, median = .92, mode = 1.28 and 2.82, and range = -25.44 to 4.99. Both dimensions appeared to be highly upward skewed. Clearly, parents in the pilot study were relatively homogeneous in parental style (appears to be Authoritative style). This means that in the final study, a wider range of population should be sampled.

Given the small sample size of the pilot study, parents were not categorized into different groups. Instead, correlations were computed between the two parental style dimensions and children's choice of influence strategy. Person correlations ranged from -.06 to .14 and none was significant. Thus, one thing was certain that if there exists a relationship between parental style and children's choice of influence strategy, much larger sample is needed to detect the relationship.

Social Desirability. The shortened 10-item social desirability scale reached a relatively low reliability (Alpha = .54), but sufficient for a pilot study (Nunnally 1978). Bivariate correlations were computed to detect potential impact of social desirability on parent's response (i.e., report of children's choice of influence strategy and their parental style). Pearson product coefficients were between -.08 and .15, none of them being significant. This suggested that social desirability was not a concern, thus was dropped in analysis for the final study.

### **Summary of Pilot Study**

Although a simple study, the pilot test has provided very useful information toward the final study. First, two product items in each category were replaced with parents/family related products in the final study. Second, measurements of children's influence strategy as well as

parents' responding strategy were determined based on the pilot test. Third, a more diverse and larger sample was decided to be necessary to detect the impact of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy. Finally, results of the pilot test indicated that social desirability was not a concern and could be ignored in the final study.

## **RESULTS OF FINAL STUDY**

As briefed previously, subjects were recruited through electronic mails from faculty and staff members at four universities in the state of Virginia. One hundred and thirty nine parent/child dyads participated in the study and returned useable questionnaires. Data from these questionnaires were used to test research hypotheses.

### **Sample Profile**

Among the 139 parent subjects, the majority (79.9%) are mothers. More than half (74.8%) are 40 years old or above. All of them are at least high school graduates, with the majority (85.6%) have received some college or more education. Most of them are working full time (79.1%) and have less than three children (90.6%). More than half (72.3%) report a family income of \$40,000 or above.

Of the 139 child subjects, all are between 11 and 16 years old, with the vast majority (92.1%) between 12 and 15. Since those who are 11 or 16 years are reported by their parents as either close to 12 or barely over 15, and are few in number (four of them are 11 years and seven are 16 years old), it is deemed appropriate to include them in data analysis. Close to half of the children (41.0%) are male and only a very few them (11.7%) work on a part-time job. Most of them (87.8%) get less than \$20 as spending money from parents each week. A small number of them (12.4%) are the sole child in family. Less than half are the oldest (40.1%) or the second oldest (37.2%) in family. A slight more than half of them (68.6%) live with intact parents, a few (13.1%) with stepparents, and 12.4% with single parents. From the sample profile, it appears that subjects in this study presented good diversity, albeit the fact that almost all of them were associated with universities.

### **Measurements**

Children's relative influence is the dependent variable and parental style is the independent variable in this study. Perceived parental power and children's choice of influence strategy are process variables, because they are both dependent and independent variables.

Children's Relative Influence was measured by both the self-report method and the outcome method. As shown in Table 6, parents' estimation of children's relative influence was correlated with children's own estimation in both product decisions. In addition, there was no difference between parents and children's estimation in either product decision (see Table 7). Consequently, the mean of parents and children's estimation was used to indicate children's relative influence measured by the self-report method.

As described previously, the outcome measure of children's relative influence was obtained by creating an index, which is a division of the difference between children's original likelihood with the group's joint likelihood to choose each item and the difference between children's likelihood and parents' likelihood (Corfman and Lehmann 1987). Then this index over the four items was summed to indicate children's relative influence in each product decision. After reverse coding, this summed index should range between 0 and 4, with the higher score meaning greater influence. The self-report measure was positively correlated with the outcome measure of children's relative influence in the minor product decision ( $r = .19, p < .05$ ), although this relationship does not exist in the major product decision (see Table 6). Research in group decision making has reported no relationship between self-report and outcome measures of members' relative influence (e.g., Olson 1969; Olson and Rabunsky 1972; Turk and Bell 1972). Thus, this result seems to attest to a certain degree of internal validity of the current study.

Parental Style was measured along two dimensions, responsiveness and demandingness. As shown in Table 8, parents' report of parental style presented very poor reliability while children's responses exhibited satisfactory reliabilities (above .70, Nunnally 1978) which are also very comparable to that in the Steinberg et al. (1994) study. Consequently, only children's report of parental style was retained for further analysis.

The median split categorization along the two dimensions resulted in 41 Neglecting, 25 Indulgent, 25 Authoritarian and 41 Authoritative parents. Two points need to be noted. First, parental styles from such categorization possess relative meaning. For example, 41 parents were Neglecting only relative to the other parents in this study. They might be considered Authoritarian compared to some parents who did not participate in this study. Second, the unequal size of each parental group was the result of intercorrelation (Pearson  $r = .41, p < .01$ ) of the two parental dimensions, which was also the case in the Lamborn et al. (1991) study (where  $r = .34, p < .001$ ). Since the two dimensions were only moderately correlated, the median split

**TABLE 6**  
PEARSON CORRELATIONS OF CHILDREN'S RELATIVE INFLUENCE

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Children's estimation in the major decision.	1.00	.50**	.26**	.15	.88**	.26**	.12	.10
2. Parents' estimation in the major decision.		1.00	-.08	.17	.85**	.04	.11	-.03
3. Children's estimation in the minor decision.			1.00	.29**	.11	.82**	-.08	.08
4. Parents' estimation in the minor decision.				1.00	.18*	.78**	.08	.23**
5. Mean estimation in the major decision.					1.00	.18*	.13	.04
6. Mean estimation in the minor decision.						1.00	-.00	.19*
7. Outcome measure in the major decision.							1.00	.05
8. Outcome measure in the minor decision.								1.00

Note: \* - Significant at the .05 level.

\*\* - Significant at the .01 level.

**TABLE 7**  
CHILDREN'S RELATIVE INFLUENCE

	Major Product Decision				Minor Product Decision			
	Mean	S.D.	Mean Comparison		Mean	S.D.	Mean Comparison	
			<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value			<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Parents' Estimation	4.08	1.04			3.96	.96		
Children's Estimation	4.12	1.17	.46	.64	4.02	1.06	.63	.53
Mean of Parents and Children's Estimations	4.10	.96			3.99	.82	1.13	.26
Measured by Decision Outcomes	1.43	.74			1.49	.89	-.61	.54

**TABLE 8**  
MEASUREMENT RELIABILITY OF INFLUENCE STRATEGY AND PARENTAL STYLE

		Children's Influence Strategy				Parental Style	
		Major Product Decision		Minor Product Decision		Responsiveness	Demandingness
		Bilateral	Unilateral	Bilateral	Unilateral		
Parents' Responses	Reliability	.57	.71	.66	.71	.45	.53
	Mean	22.59	23.04	21.99	22.51	.03	-.06
	S.D.	6.29	7.13	6.65	7.10	4.11	3.87
Children's Responses	Reliability	.74	.76	.72	.78	.73	.76
	Mean	23.52	22.63	23.47	22.04	.15	-.07
	S.D.	8.22	8.91	7.84	8.87	5.33	4.91
Mean Comparison	<i>t</i> -value		1.54		2.68	-	-
	<i>p</i> -value		.13		.01	-	-

Note: Means of parental style should be zero because of standardization. The real value in the table does not equal to zero because of rounding error.

categorization was valid. In order to reduce the impact of unequal sample size, multiple regressions rather than ANOVA/MANOVA were used to analyze data. This issue are further discussed in the data analysis section.

Perceived Parental Power has four power bases, outcome-control power, referent power, legitimate power, and expert power. And the general parental power is the summation of the four bases. After reverse coding, each power base should range between 0 and 28, and the general power range from 0 to 112, with the higher score referring to greater perceived parental power.

Table 9 lists correlations among the various power bases and reliabilities of their measurements. Cronbach Alphas were high for all but one power base (i.e., outcome-control power). It appears that measurement for the outcome-control power is not very reliable ( $\alpha = .55$ ). Given that this variable was proposed in the research hypotheses (H3a ~ d, and H4a) and that if a hypothesis is supported by constructs with low measurement reliability, it is very likely to be supported by constructs with high measurement reliability (Nunnally 1978), the outcome-control power was retained in further data analysis albeit its relatively low reliability. The correlations among the various power bases were all significant but those between the outcome-control power and referent power and between outcome-control power and expert power. These results show similarity to findings by McDonald (1977).

Children's Influence Strategy was obtained from both parents' and children's responses. As exhibited in Table 8, the measurement reliability for parents' report of children's influence strategy was vastly inferior to that of children's report in both the major and the minor product decision. Especially, the Cronbach Alphas for parents' report of children's Bilateral strategy were too poor to accept. As a contrast, the Cronbach Alphas for children's report were all above .70, the benchmark reliability value recommended for basic research by Nunnally (1978). Thus, only children's responses regarding their choice of influence strategy were used for further analysis.

The difference between the score of children's Bilateral strategy and that of their Unilateral strategy was operationalized as children's tendency to use Bilateral influence strategy. The greater the difference score, the more likely children were to use Bilateral strategy than Unilateral strategy in family decisions.

**TABLE 9**  
CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION OF PARENTAL POWER

	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	S.D.	Reliability
1. Outcome-Control Power	1.00	.12	.29**	.17	.51**	22.60	3.61	.55
2. Referent Power		1.00	.47**	.54**	.78**	20.00	4.73	.72
3. Legitimate Power			1.00	.54**	.78**	17.98	3.71	.72
4. Expert Power				1.00	.79**	20.48	3.66	.73
5. General Parental Power					1.00	80.80	11.22	.84

Note: \*\* - Significant at the .01 level.

## Manipulation Check

Realism Check. Two scales were included in the questionnaire for realism check. The first scale examined whether subjects behaved in the study as they usually do. The second scale was composed of a single item providing manipulation check on earlier instructions that ask the subjects not to discuss the alternative ratings before the group choice questionnaire is provided. Subjects' responses are presented in Table 10. It appears that subjects followed the instructions and behaved in a similar way as they usually do in daily life despite that the product decisions were hypothetical, reflecting good validity of the research design. It is interesting that parents seemed to agree with the statement more than children do, especially regarding parents' behavior and their following of instructions where differences were significant. Maybe parents were showing sympathy to the researcher and trying to give more supportive responses.

**TABLE 10**  
REALISM CHECK

	Parents' Response	Children's Response	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Parents' Behavior	5.99 <sup>a</sup> (.81) <sup>b</sup>	5.74 (1.04)	2.13	.035
Children's Behavior	5.83 (1.00)	5.72 (1.09)	1.25	.214
Following of Instructions	6.59 (1.11)	6.05 (1.57)	3.25	.001

Note: a - Response was measured on 7-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree.  
b - Numbers in the parentheses are standard deviation.

Order Effect Check. In an effort to diminish potential carry-over effect of product decisions on subjects' responses, questionnaires were sent out in two forms with the two product decisions alternated. Tests were conducted to inspect whether such manipulation produced any order effect on subjects' responses. As presented in Tables 11, out of nineteen focal variables in the study, one variable (children's tendency to use Bilateral influence strategies in the major product decision) appears to be contaminated by the order manipulation ( $F = 6.28$ ,  $p = .01$ ). Since this order effect was rather incidental (with a probability of 5.26%), the cause was more likely to be chance rather than anything meaningful. Thus, in further analysis the order effect was not deemed as an issue.

**TABLE 11**  
IMPACT OF QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS

Variables	Descriptions	F-value	P-value
ZCPRESP	Children's report of parental responsiveness	.00	.99
ZCPDEMN	Children's report of parental demandingness	.35	.56
CPOUTPW	Children's perception of parental outcome-control power	.02	.89
CPREFPW	Children's perception of parental referent power	1.18	.28
CPLEGPW	Children's perception of parental legitimate power	.01	.92
CPEXPPW	Children's perception of parental expert power	1.83	.18
CPPOWER	Children's perception of the general parental power	1.68	.20
CCDIFSGJ	Children's tendency to use Bilateral influence strategies in the major product decision	6.28	.01
CCDIFSGN	Children's tendency to use Bilateral influence strategies in the minor product decision	.08	.78
SRCINFJP	Children's relative influence by self-report measures in the major product decision	.08	.78
SRCINFNP	Children's relative influence by self-report measures in the minor product decision	.66	.42
CIMAJOR	Children's relative influence by outcome measures in the major product decision	2.01	.16
CIMINOR	Children's relative influence by outcome measures in the minor product decision	3.72	.06
PPBHV	Parent's self-report behavior during the study	.11	.74
PCBHV	Parent's report of children's behavior during the study	.08	.78
PPARTA	Parents' self-report behavior during part A of the study	1.06	.31
CCBHV	Children's self-report behavior during the study	.00	.99
CPBHV	Children's report of parents' behavior during the study	.98	.33
CPARTA	Children's self-report behavior during part A of the study	.98	.33

Note: Only the focal variables that will be used to test the research hypotheses are included in the table. Other variables such as demographic variables are not listed because they are not directly related to the research hypotheses.

## **Hypothesis Testing**

Method of Analysis. The unit of analysis for this study was the parent-child dyad. As described above, parents and children's response were combined to form children's relative influence by both the self-report and outcome measures. Since two product categories were involved, the model was tested in product decisions for both categories. As aforementioned, categorizing parents along the two parental style dimensions (i.e., demandingness and responsiveness) has resulted in unequal sample size across parental groups. In order to mitigate the potential impact of unequal cell size, planned comparisons with orthogonal designs (i.e., multiple comparisons among means via multiple regressions) rather than MONOVA/ANOVA were applied to test the effect of parental style on perceived parental power (Cohen and Cohen 1983; Pedhazur 1982; Pedhazur and Schmelkin 1991). Table 12 exhibits the orthogonal coding for the planned comparisons.

Multiple regressions were also conducted to test the effects of parental style and perceived parental power on children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. Specifically, perceived parental power was proposed to incompletely mediate the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy. To test this incomplete mediation relationship, the effect of parental style on parental power should be supported first. Then the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy should be supported. Finally, when they are simultaneously entered to the regression, if the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy is reduced but still significant, then parental power incompletely mediates the relationship between parental style and children's choice of influence strategy. Otherwise, if the effect of parental style reduces to nonsignificance, then the mediation is complete (Baron and Kenny 1986). Since two types of product decisions were included in the study, this mediation was tested using children's choice of strategy in both decisions. In addition, the average of children's choice of influence strategy across two decisions was computed to indicate their general tendency of strategy choice that was also used to test the mediation.

Children's choice of influence strategy was proposed to mediate the effects of parental style and power on children's relative influence. To test this mediation relationship, a three-stage multiple regression model was conducted. First, children's choice of influence strategy was regressed onto parental style and perceived parental power. Second, children's relative influence

**TABLE 12**  
**ORTHOGONAL CODING FOR THE PLANNED COMPARISONS**

Hypotheses		Authoritarian	Authoritative	Neglecting	Indulgent	
		(25)	(41)	(41)	(25)	
Children's Choice of Influence Strategy	H1a	0	25	0	-41	+
	H1b	0	1	-1	0	++
	H1c	1	0	0	-1	++
	H1d	41	0	-25	0	+
	H2	-41	25	0	0	
Outcome Power	H3a	1	0	0	-1	+
	H3b	41	0	-25	0	++
	H3c	0	25	0	-41	++
	H3d	0	1	-1	0	+
	H4a	-41	25	0	0	
Legitimate Power	H3e	1	0	0	-1	+
	H3f	41	0	-25	0	++
	H3g	0	25	0	-41	++
	H3h	0	1	-1	0	+
	H4b	-41	25	0	0	
Referent Power	H5a	-41	25	0	0	+
	H5b	0	1	-1	0	++
	H5c	-1	0	0	1	++
	H5d	0	0	-25	41	+
	H6a	0	25	0	-41	
Expert Power	H5e	-41	25	0	0	+
	H5f	0	1	-1	0	++
	H5g	-1	0	0	1	++
	H5h	0	0	-25	41	+
	H6b	0	25	0	-41	
Children's Relative Influence	H8a	-41	25	0	0	+
	H8b	0	1	-1	0	++
	H8c	-1	0	0	1	++
	H8d	0	0	-25	41	+
	H8e	0	-25	0	41	

Note: 1- Numbers in the parentheses are sample size for each parental group.

2 - Within each category, comparisons with the same sign "+" or "++" are orthogonal.

was regressed onto parental style and perceived parental power. Finally, children's relative influence was regressed onto parental style, perceived parental power, and children's choice of influence strategy. The mediation relationship is supported if the intended relationships are significant in all the three rather than only in any individual regressions. Since children's relative influence was measured by both self-report and outcome variables and in two types of product decisions. Thus, the model was tested in each of the situations. Furthermore, the mean of children's influence across product decisions was computed to indicate children's general relative influence which was also used to test the model.

In testing the above two mediating effects, since parental style is a categorical variable, effect coding (i.e., testing the null hypothesis whether the categorical means are equal to each other) was applied to examine its direct effect on children's choice of influence strategy and children's relative influence (see Table 13), and planned comparisons with orthogonal coding (i.e., multiple comparisons between specific category means) was conducted to inspect the difference between parental groups (see Table 12).

**TABLE 13**  
EFFECT CODING OF PARENTAL STYLE

Variables	Authoritarian	Authoritative	Neglecting	Indulgent
E1	1	0	0	-1
E2	0	1	0	-1
E3	0	0	1	-1

Note: Three vectors (E1, E2, E3) are necessary and sufficient to represent parental style because it has four parental groups.

Effect of Parental Style on Children's Choice of Influence Strategy. Hypotheses 1a ~ 1d and hypothesis 2 predict that children with different types of parents have dissimilar tendency to use Bilateral influence strategies in family consumption decisions. Planned comparisons were conducted to test these hypotheses. Since H1a vs. H1d and H1b vs. H1c are orthogonal, thus three multiple regressions were run for the planned comparisons. Results are presented in Table 14. It appears that in the major product decision, the regression coefficients for H1b and H1d were significant ( $p = .049$  and  $.027$ ). In the minor product decision, coefficients for H1b and H1d were only marginally significant ( $p = .092$  and  $.057$ ). When using the mean of children's choice of influence strategies in both product decisions, coefficients for H1b and H1d were again

significant ( $p = .040$  and  $.027$ ). None of the other regression coefficients was significant. Thus, hypothesis 1b and 1d are supported.

**TABLE 14**  
PLANNED COMPARISON RESULTS OF H1 AND H2

Dependent Variable	Comparison	Unstandardized B	S. E.	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	
Children's Choice of Influence Strategy in the Major Product Decision	(Constant)	.785	.544			
	H1a	.005	.024	.196	.845	
	H1d	.054	.024	2.231	.027	
	(Constant)	.769	.545			
	H1b	1.366	.687	1.989	.049	
	H1c	.542	.897	.604	.547	
	(Constant)	.773	.552			
	H2	-.011	.025	-.466	.642	
	Children's Choice of Influence Strategy in the Minor Product Decision	(Constant)	1.473	.531		
		H1a	-.001	.024	-.051	.960
H1d		.045	.023	1.920	.057	
(Constant)		1.488	.533			
H1b		1.150	.677	1.699	.092	
H1c		.317	.864	.366	.715	
(Constant)		1.469	.537			
H2		-.011	.024	-.455	.650	
Children's General Choice of Influence Strategy in Family Consumption Decisions		(Constant)	1.137	.494		
		H1a	.003	.022	.114	.909
	H1d	.049	.022	2.238	.027	
	(Constant)	1.141	.495			
	H1b	1.297	.626	2.073	.040	
	H1c	.396	.808	.490	.625	
	(Constant)	1.120	.501			
	H2	-.010	.022	-.428	.670	

Note: In planned comparisons, it is the regression coefficient rather than variance explained that is of importance. Thus, the overall *F*-ratio and  $R^2$  are not listed.

Effect of Parental Style on Perceived Parental Power. Hypothesis 3 through 6 state that children with different types of parents perceived dissimilar degree of parental power. Again planned comparisons through multiple regressions were conducted to test these hypotheses. Results are exhibited in Table 15. For the perceived parental outcome-control power, none of the comparisons was significant. For the perceived parental legitimate power, two of the five comparisons (H3h and H3g) were significant ( $p = .000$  and  $.036$ ). For the perceived parental referent power, three comparisons (H5a, H5d, and h5b) were significant ( $p = .001$ ,  $.001$ , and

.000). The coefficient for H6a was marginally significant ( $p = .085$ ). For the perceived parental expert power, three comparisons (H5e, H5h, and H5f) were significant ( $p = .008, .001, \text{ and } .000$ ). Therefore, the data support hypotheses H3g, H3h, H5a, H5b, H5d, H5e, H5f, and H5h.

**TABLE 15**  
PLANNED COMPARISON RESULTS FOR H3 ~ H6

Dependent Variable	Comparison	Unstandardized B	S. E.	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	
Perceived Parental Outcome-Control Power	(Constant)	22.736	.311			
	H3a	.699	.507	1.379	.170	
	H3d	.608	.394	1.542	.126	
	(Constant)	22.736	.312			
	H3b	.018	.014	1.306	.194	
	H3c	.022	.014	1.574	.118	
	(Constant)	22.746	.315			
	H4a	.000	.014	.033	.974	
	Perceived Parental Legitimate Power	(Constant)	18.060	.315		
		H3e	.260	.504	.517	.606
H3h		1.449	.403	3.591	.000	
(Constant)		18.044	.323			
H3f		.021	.014	1.456	.148	
H3g		.030	.014	2.116	.036	
(Constant)		18.039	.327			
H4b	.022	.014	1.525	.130		
Perceived Parental Referent Power	(Constant)	19.914	.386			
	H5a	.061	.017	3.559	.001	
	H5d	.060	.017	3.546	.001	
	(Constant)	19.939	.360			
	H5b	3.100	.458	6.771	.000	
	H5c	.920	.581	1.582	.116	
	(Constant)	19.934	.417			
H6a	.032	.018	1.736	.085		
Perceived Parental Expert Power	(Constant)	20.457	.311			
	H5e	.037	.014	2.692	.008	
	H5h	.046	.014	3.391	.001	
	(Constant)	20.490	.293			
	H5f	2.233	.377	5.931	.000	
	H5g	.580	.467	1.242	.217	
	(Constant)	20.452	.330			
H6b	.019	.015	1.284	.202		

Note: In planned comparisons, it is the regression coefficient rather than variance explained that is of importance. Thus, the overall *F*-ratio and *R*<sup>2</sup> are not listed.

### Effect of Parental Power on Children's Choice Influence Strategy. Hypothesis 7

examines the impact of children's perceived parental power on their choice of influence strategy. Given the relationship between parental style and children's choice of influence strategy and that between parental style and parental power (see above hypotheses), hypothesis 7 actually poses a mediation effect of perceived parental power between parental style and children's choice of influence strategy. The three-step multiple regression method suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) was conducted to test this mediation effect. In step one, perceived parental power was regressed on parental style. In step two, children's choice of influence strategy was regressed on parental style. Then in step three, children's choice of influence strategy was regressed on both parental style and perceived parental power. Dissimilar to the previous tests, effect coding rather than orthogonal coding was applied to parental style and the general parental power rather than various power bases was used in regressions. Since in effect coding, parental style was represented by three variables, thus hierarchical multiple regression tests (Pedhazur and Schmelkin 1991, p.432) were conducted to examine the significance of parental style in step three. Table 16 presents the results.

Regression results showed that the impact of parental style on children's perceived parental power was significant ( $F = 13.449, p = .000$ ). However, the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy was only marginally significant in major product decisions ( $F = 2.144, p = .098$ ) and general product decisions ( $F = 2.260, p = .085$ ), and was not significant in minor product decisions ( $F = .038, p = .182$ ). The hierarchical tests showed that when entered together with parental power into the regression, the impact of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy was significant in none of the product decision contexts ( $F(3,112) = .980, p > .250$  in major product decisions;  $F(3, 111) = 1.092, p > .25$  in minor product decisions; and  $F(3, 110) = 1.143, p > .250$  in general product decisions). The impact of parental power on children's influence strategy was significant in all the three decision contexts ( $t = 2.115, p = .037$ ;  $t = 2.198, p = .030$ ;  $t = 2.374, p = .019$ ; respectively). If the marginal significance of step 2 in major product decisions and in general product decisions are counted, then perceived parental power seems to completely mediate the impact of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy. Accordingly, H7 is fully supported but the mediation relationship is only marginally supported, because the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy was marginal.

**TABLE 16**  
MEDIATION EFFECT OF PERCEIVED PARENTAL POWER

Decision Context	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables				Model $R^2$	F-value	p-value for F	
		B	S.E	t-value	p-value for t				
Major Product Decisions	Step 1		Perceived Parental Power				.258	13.449	.000
		(Constant)	81.069	.930					
		E1	-1.352	1.735	-.779	.438			
		E2	7.725	1.522	5.077	.000			
	Step 2		Children's Influence Strategy				.049	2.144	.098
		(Constant)	.981	.563					
		E1	1.352	1.056	1.280	.203			
		E2	.555	.885	.627	.532			
	Step 3		Children' Influence Strategy				.086	2.656	.037
		(Constant)	-9.107	4.768					
		E1	1.674	1.112	1.505	.135			
		E2	-.278	1.061	-.262	.794			
		E3	-1.304	1.004	-1.299	.197			
		Parental Power	.124	.058	2.115	.037			
		(Constant)	-10.603	4.058					
Parental Power	.140	.050	2.805	.006					
Minor Product Decisions	Step 1		Perceived Parental Power				.258	13.449	.000
		(Constant)	81.069	.930					
		E1	-1.352	1.735	-.779	.438			
		E2	7.725	1.522	5.077	.000			
	Step 2		Children's Influence Strategy				.038	1.647	.182
		(Constant)	1.669	.547					
		E1	1.051	1.013	1.037	.302			
		E2	.382	.875	.437	.663			
		E3	-1.889	.862	-2.192	.030			

**TABLE 16 (cont.)**

Decision Context	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables				Model $R^2$	F-value	p-value for F	
		B	S.E	t-value	p-value for t				
General Product Decisions	Step 3					.085	2.612	.039	
		(Constant)	-8.583	4.678					
		E1	1.531	1.053	1.454	.149			
		E2	-.756	1.051	-.719	.474			
		E3	-1.128	.975	-1.157	.250			
		Parental Power	.126	.057	2.198	.030			
							.058	7.325	.008
		(Constant)	-9.673	4.063					
		Parental Power	.135	.050	2.706	.008			
		Step 1					.258	13.449	.000
		(Constant)	81.069	.930					
		E1	-1.352	1.735	-.779	.438			
		E2	7.725	1.522	5.077	.000			
		E3	-6.992	1.459	-4.791	.000			
	Step 2					.052	2.260	.085	
		(Constant)	1.330	.508					
		E1	1.150	.951	1.209	.229			
		E2	.529	.810	.654	.515			
		E3	-2.037	.798	-2.553	.012			
	Step 3					.102	3.167	.017	
		(Constant)	-8.963	4.343					
		E1	1.583	.993	1.594	.114			
		E2	-.500	.978	-.511	.610			
		E3	-1.209	.903	-1.339	.183			
		Parental Power	.126	.053	2.374	.019			
						.074	9.362	.003	
		(Constant)	-10.261	3.697					
		Parental Power	.139	.045	3.060	.003			

Note: - E1, E2, and E3 are effect-coding vectors that represent parental style.

### Parental Style, Parental Power, Influence Strategy and Children's Relative Influence.

Hypotheses 8a ~ 8e predict that children with different types of parents possess varying extents of relative influence in family consumption decisions. Hypothesis 9 states that children who perceive higher parental power possess lower relative influence. Hypothesis 10 proposes that children who apply Bilateral strategies possess higher relative influence than those who apply unilateral strategies. These hypotheses in the model posit a mediation of children's influence strategy between the two precedent variables (i.e., parental style and parental power) and children's relative influence. Therefore, a three-step multiple regression model was conducted. First, children's choice of influence strategy was regressed onto parental style and perceived parental power. Second, children's relative influence was regressed onto parental style and perceived parental power. Finally, children's relative influence was regressed onto parental style, perceived parental power, and children's choice of influence strategy. Again, effect coding for parental style and general parental power were applied to these regressions. In addition, children's relative influence was measured by both self-report measures and outcome measures. Both types of measures were employed in these regressions. Results are exhibited in Table 17.

An examination of step 2 in Table 17 indicates that the combined direct effects of parental style and parental power on children's relative influence were significant in both the minor product decision and the general product decisions when outcome measures were used ( $F = 2.617, p = .039$ ; and  $F = 3.618, p = .008$ ; respectively). Hence, H8a ~ 8e and H9 were further examined in these two decision contexts. Results of planned comparisons to test H8a ~ 8e are presented in Table 18. It turns out the planned comparison for H8b was significant in both the minor product decision ( $t = -3.134, p = .002$ ) and the general decision ( $t = -3.345, p = .001$ ) but in the opposite direction ( $b = -.299$  and  $b = -.214$ , respectively). The planned comparison for H8d was marginally significant in both decision contexts ( $p = .071$  and  $p = .079$ ). However, again the direction was opposite to hypothesis. None of the other comparisons was significant. Therefore, none of the hypotheses 8a ~ 8e was supported.

Further regressions of children's relative influence with perceived parental power (see Table 17) show that when children's relative influence was measured by decision outcomes, the impact of parental power was significant in both the minor and general product decisions ( $t = -2.805, p = .006$ ;  $t = -3.346, p = .001$ ; respectively). And in major product decisions the effect of parental power was marginally significant ( $t = -1.846, p = .067$ ). Hence, H9 is supported in

**TABLE 17-A**  
**MEDIATION EFFECT OF CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE STRATEGY IN MAJOR PRODUCT DECISIONS**

	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables				Model $R^2$	F-value	Sig. for F
		B	S.E	t-value	Sig. for t			
Step 1		Children' Influence Strategy				.086	2.656	.037
	(Constant)	-9.107	4.768					
	E1	1.674	1.112	1.505	.135			
	E2	-.278	1.061	-.262	.794			
	E3	-1.304	1.004	-1.299	.197			
	Parental Power	.124	.058	2.115	.037			
Step 2		Children's Self-Report Relative Influence				.038	1.115	.353
	(Constant)	4.575	.752					
	E1	.204	.172	1.182	.240			
	E2	-.213	.168	-1.265	.209			
	E3	.077	.159	.486	.628			
	Parental Power	-.006	.009	-.647	.519			
Step 3		Children's Self-Report Relative Influence				.035	.808	.546
	(Constant)	4.645	.772					
	E1	.160	.179	.896	.372			
	E2	-.190	.170	-1.116	.267			
	E3	.082	.162	.505	.614			
	Parental Power	-.007	.009	-.735	.464			
	Influence Strategy	-.001	.015	-.069	.945			
Step 2		Children's Outcome Measured Relative Influence				.037	1.114	.353
	(Constant)	2.287	.567					
	E1	-.124	.130	-.950	.344			
	E2	.027	.126	.213	.832			
	E3	.076	.119	.639	.524			
	Parental Power	-.010	.007	-1.500	.136			
Step 3		Children's Outcome Measured Relative Influence				.036	.827	.533
	(Constant)	2.313	.571					
	E1	-.114	.132	-.862	.391			
	E2	-.002	.125	-.013	.990			
	E3	.057	.119	.476	.635			
	Parental Power	-.010	.007	-1.488	.139			
	Influence Strategy	.003	.011	.302	.763			
		Children's Outcome Measured Relative Influence				.027	3.409	.067
	(Constant)	2.354	.486					
	Parental Power	-.011	.006	-1.846	.067			

Note: 1 - E1, E2, and E3 are effect-coding vectors that represent parental style.

2 - Step 1 is the same regardless which measure (self-report or outcome) of children's relative influence is used.

**TABLE 17-B**  
**MEDIATION EFFECT OF CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE STRATEGY IN MINOR PRODUCT DECISIONS**

	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables				Model $R^2$	$F$ -value	Sig. for $F$
		B	S.E	$t$ -value	Sig. for $t$			
Step 1		Children' Influence Strategy				.085	2.612	.039
	(Constant)	-8.583	4.678					
	E1	1.531	1.053	1.454	.149			
	E2	-.756	1.051	-.719	.474			
	E3	-1.128	.975	-1.157	.250			
	Parental Power	.126	.057	2.198	.030			
Step 2		Children's Self-Report Relative Influence				.038	1.136	.343
	(Constant)	5.089	.617					
	E1	.119	.141	.844	.400			
	E2	-.006	.137	-.044	.965			
	E3	-.087	.130	-.673	.503			
	Parental Power	-.014	.008	-1.792	.076			
Step 3		Children's Self-Report Relative Influence				.037	.861	.510
	(Constant)	5.003	.650					
	E1	.129	.146	.886	.378			
	E2	-.035	.144	-.243	.808			
	E3	-.075	.134	-.556	.580			
	Parental Power	-.013	.008	-1.569	.120			
	Influence Strategy	-.001	.013	-.056	.955			
Step 2		Children's Outcome Measured Relative Influence				.083	2.617	.039
	(Constant)	2.645	.668					
	E1	-.158	.153	-1.031	.305			
	E2	-.066	.148	-.446	.656			
	E3	.232	.141	1.647	.102			
	Parental Power	-.014	.008	-1.742	.084			
Step 3		Children's Outcome Measured Relative Influence				.086	2.087	.072
	(Constant)	2.544	.694					
	E1	-.164	.155	-1.054	.294			
	E2	-.083	.154	-.541	.589			
	E3	.266	.143	1.858	.066			
	Parental Power	-.013	.009	-1.558	.122			
	Influence Strategy	.011	.014	.762	.448			
		Children's Outcome Measured Relative Influence				.061	7.868	.006
	(Constant)	3.113	.575					
	Parental Power	-.020	.007	-2.805	.006			

Note: 1 - E1, E2, and E3 are effect-coding vectors that represent parental style.

2 - Step 1 is the same regardless which measure (self-report or outcome) of children's relative influence is used.

**TABLE 17-C**  
**MEDIATION EFFECT OF CHILDREN'S INFLUENCE STRATEGY IN GENERAL PRODUCT DECISIONS**

Independent Variables		Dependent Variables				Model $R^2$	F-value	Sig. for F
		B	S.E	t-value	Sig. for t			
Step 1		Children' Influence Strategy				.102	3.167	.017
	(Constant)	-8.963	4.343					
	E1	1.583	.993	1.594	.114			
	E2	-.500	.978	-.511	.610			
	E3	-1.209	.903	-1.339	.183			
	Parental Power	.126	.053	2.374	.019			
Step 2		Children's Self-Report Relative Influence				.059	1.772	.139
	(Constant)	4.847	.516					
	E1	.160	.118	1.351	.179			
	E2	-.111	.115	-.960	.339			
	E3	-.000	.109	-.001	.999			
	Parental Power	-.010	.006	-1.570	.119			
Step 3		Children's Self-Report Relative Influence				.067	1.549	.181
	(Constant)	4.785	.548					
	E1	.157	.124	.262	.210			
	E2	-.110	.122	-.904	.368			
	E3	-.009	.113	-.083	.934			
	Parental Power	-.009	.007	-1.348	.180			
	Influence Strategy	-.011	.012	-.932	.353			
Step 2		Children's Outcome Measured Relative Influence				.112	3.618	.008
	(Constant)	2.466	.437					
	E1	-.141	.100	-1.405	.163			
	E2	-.020	.097	-.203	.840			
	E3	.154	.092	1.673	.097			
	Parental Power	-.012	.005	-2.306	.023			
Step 3		Children's Outcome Measured Relative Influence				.109	2.693	.025
	(Constant)	2.396	.451					
	E1	-.137	.102	-1.335	.185			
	E2	-.048	.100	-.482	.631			
	E3	.166	.093	1.795	.075			
	Parental Power	-.011	.006	-2.065	.041			
	Influence Strategy	.001	.010	.877	.382			
		Children's Outcome Measured Relative Influence				.084	11.194	.001
	(Constant)	2.734	.375					
	Parental Power	-.015	.005	-3.346	.001			

Note: 1 - E1, E2, and E3 are effect-coding vectors that represent parental style.

2 - Step 1 is the same regardless which measure (self-report or outcome) of children's relative influence is used.

**TABLE 18**  
 PLANNED COMPARISON RESULTS OF H8a ~ 8e

Dependent Variable	Comparison	Unstandardized B	S. E.	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Children's Outcome Measured Relative Influence in Minor Product Decisions	(Constant)	1.492	.077		
	H8a	-.001	.003	-.330	.742
	H8d	-.006	.003	-1.822	.071
	(Constant)	1.492	.075		
	H8b	-.299	.095	-3.134	.002
	H8c	.057	.122	.469	.640
	(Constant)	1.492	.078		
	H8e	.003	.003	.834	.406
	(Constant)	1.455	.052		
	Children's Outcome Measured Relative Influence in General Product Decisions	H8a	-.000	.002	-.168
H8d	-.004	.002	-1.769	.079	
(Constant)	1.455	.051			
H8b	-.214	.064	-3.345	.001	
H8c	.067	.082	.818	.415	
(Constant)	1.455	.052			
H8e	.002	.002	1.047	.297	

Note: In planned comparisons, it is the regression coefficient rather than variance explained that is of importance. Thus, the overall *F*-ratio and *R*<sup>2</sup> are not listed.

minor and general product decisions. Regression results in Table 17 (step 3) indicates that the effect of children's choice of influence strategy on their relative influence was significant in none of the product decisions, regardless of the way children's influence is measured. Accordingly, H10 is not supported.

Covariance Analysis. The previous analysis was conducted without taking account of the potential impact of covariates on hypotheses. In order to eliminate such impact, a set of MANCOVA (Multivariate Analysis of Covariance) was conducted. Eleven covariates were identified, including parent's gender, parent's work status, parent's age, parent's education, child's gender, child's work status, child's birth order, child's spending money from parents, family income, family type, and number of children in the family. MANCOVA was conducted with perceived parental power, children's choice influence strategy, and children' relative influence as dependent variables. Results are exhibited in Table 19. Wilks' Lambda shows that only parent's education had significant effect. Further tests of between-subjects effects (see Table 20) indicate that children's perception of parental expert power varied with parent's education. Since one of the domains measuring parental expert power was education (e.g., education goals, career opportunities), it seems reasonable that parents who possess higher education background may obtain more knowledge in this domain, thus were perceived by children to have greater expertise in this area.

**TABLE 19**  
MULTIVARIATE TESTS

Covariates	Value	F	Wilks' Lambda Hypothesis df	Error df	p-value
Parent's Gender	.901	.919	10.000	84.000	.520
Parent's Work Status	.623	1.442	30.000	247.233	.071
Parent's Age	.970	.257	10.000	84.000	.988
Parent's Education	.780	2.363	10.000	84.000	.016
Child's Gender	.841	1.585	10.000	84.000	.125
Child's Work Status	.881	1.139	10.000	84.000	.344
Child's Birth Order	.641	.998	40.000	320.374	.479
Child's Spending Money	.919	.740	10.000	84.000	.685
Family Type	.582	1.228	40.000	320.374	.172
Family Income	.871	1.243	10.000	84.000	.276
Number of Children in Family	.875	1.203	10.000	84.000	.301

**TABLE 20**  
TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECT OF PARENT'S EDUCATION

D.V.	Meaning	Mean Square	MS df	Error	Error df	F-value	p-value
CPOUTPW	Perceived parental outcome-control power	.831	1	14.213	93	.058	.809
CPREFPW	Perceived parental referent power	1.245	1	21.964	93	.057	.812
CPLEGPW	Perceived parental legitimate power	12.383	1	13.775	93	.899	.346
CPEXPPW	Perceived parental expert power	99.079	1	12.991	93	7.626	.007
CCDIFSGJ	Children's choice of influence strategy in major product decisions	.605	1	39.858	93	.015	.902
CCDIFSGN	Children's choice of influence strategy in minor product decisions	75.551	1	41.789	93	1.808	.182
MNDIFSG	Children's choice of influence strategy in general product decisions	22.418	1	34.309	93	.653	.421
SRCINFJP	Children's self-report measured influence in major product decisions	.971	1	.855	93	1.135	.289
SRCINFNP	Children's self-report measured influence in minor product decisions	.468	1	.704	93	.665	.417
MNSRCINF	Children's self-report measured influence in general product decisions	.697	1	.456	93	1.527	.220
CIMAJOR	Children's outcome measured influence in major product decisions	.229	1	.574	93	.399	.529
CIMINOR	Children's outcome measured influence in minor product decisions	.736	1	.786	93	.936	.336
MNCI	Children's outcome measured influence in general product decisions	.446	1	.338	93	1.321	.253

Since parent's education had significant impact on their perceived expertise power, thus Hypotheses 5e ~ 5h and 6b were tested again with parents' education as covariate. Table 21 lists the results of planned comparisons. Results indicate that even with the effect of parent's education controlled, Hypotheses 5e, 5h, and 5f were still significant, the same as previous tests. It appears that most covariates did not have direct effects on the focal dependent variables and the only one that did impact did not change the pattern of proposed relationships. Thus, it was concluded that covariates did not play important roles in the current study.

**TABLE 21**  
PLANNED COMPARISON RESULTS WITH PARENT'S EDUCATION AS COVARIATE

Dependent Variable	Comparison	Unstandardized B	S. E.	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Perceived Parental Expert Power	(Constant)	16.857	1.642		
	PEDU	.611	.274	2.232	.027
	H5e	.032	.014	2.373	.019
	H5h	.041	.013	3.054	.003
	(Constant)	17.166	1.551		
	PEDU	.564	.258	2.182	.031
	H5f	2.097	.376	5.573	.000
	H5g	.433	.465	.932	.353
	(Constant)	15.513	1.677		
	PEDU	.839	.280	2.999	.003
	H6b	.019	.014	1.369	.173

Note: In planned comparisons, it is the regression coefficient rather than variance explained that is of importance. Thus, the overall *F*-ratio and *R*<sup>2</sup> are not listed.

### SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESES TESTS

The purpose of the empirical study is to test the effects of parental style and perceived parental power on children's influence in family consumption decisions. Specifically, among the five hypotheses regarding the impact of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy (H1a ~1d and H2), two (H1b and H1d) were supported by the data. However, this relationship was completely mediated by the perceived parental power, since first, parental style showed great impact on perceived parental power (out of twenty hypothesized comparisons, eight were supported); and second, after entering both parental style and perceived parental power into the regression with children's choice of influence strategy, the effect of parental style was reduced to non-significance. Regression results further supported the proposed effect of perceived parental power on children's choice of influence strategy (H7). This relationship held in all the three different decision contexts. Data showed that the impact of parental style on children's relative

influence was significant, however, the effect was opposite to the research hypothesis (H8b). The impact of perceived parental power on children's relative influence (H9) was supported in the general decision context when the influence was measured by the decision outcomes. And this relationship was not mediated by children's choice of influence strategy, because the impact of children's influence strategy on children's relative influence (H10) was not supported. Results of the hypotheses tests were summarized in Table 22. Overall, research hypotheses were moderately supported by the empirical data.

**TABLE 22**  
RESULTS OF HYPOTHESES TESTS

<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Predictions</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>Conditions if Supported</b>
H1a	Children with Authoritative parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Indulgent parents.		
H1b	Children with Authoritative parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Neglecting parents.	Yes	Significant in major and general decisions; Marginally significant in minor decisions.
H1c	Children with Authoritarian parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Indulgent parents.		
H1d	Children with Authoritarian parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Neglecting parents.	Yes	Significant in major and general decisions; Marginally significant in minor decisions.
H2	Children with Authoritative parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Authoritarian parents.		
H3a	Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Indulgent parents.		
H3b	Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Neglecting parents.		
H3c	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Indulgent parents.		
H3d	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Neglecting parents.		
H3e	Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Indulgent parents.		
H3f	Authoritarian parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Neglecting parents.		
H3g	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Indulgent parents.	Yes	N/A
H3h	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Neglecting parents.	Yes	N/A
H4a	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater outcome-control power than Authoritarian parents.		
H4b	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater legitimate power than Authoritarian parents.		
H5a	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Authoritarian parents.	Yes	N/A
H5b	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Neglecting parents.	Yes	N/A

TABLE 22 (cont.)

Hypotheses	Predictions	Support	Conditions if Supported
H5c	Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Authoritarian parents.		
H5d	Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater referent power than Neglecting parents.	Yes	N/A
H5e	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater expert power than Authoritarian parents.	Yes	N/A
H5f	Authoritative parents are perceived by their children to have greater expert power than Neglecting parents.	Yes	N/A
H5g	Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater expert power than Authoritarian parents.		
H5h	Indulgent parents are perceived by their children to have greater expert power than Neglecting parents.	Yes	N/A
H6a	Authoritative parents are perceived to have greater referent power than Indulgent parents.	Marginally	N/A
H6b	Authoritative parents are perceived to have greater expert power than Indulgent parents.		
H7	Children who perceive high parental power tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those who perceive low parental power.	Yes	Significant in all three decisions.
H8a	Children with Authoritative parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Authoritarian parents.		
H8b	Children with Authoritative parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Neglecting parents.		Significant but opposite direction in minor and general decisions when outcome measures are used for influence.
H8c	Children with Indulgent parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Authoritarian parents.		
H8d	Children with Indulgent parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Neglecting parents.		Marginally significant but opposite direction in minor and general decisions when outcome measures are used for influence.
H8e	Children with Indulgent parents are likely to possess higher relative influence than those with Authoritative parents.		
H9	Children who perceive higher parental power have lower relative influence in family consumption decisions.	Yes	Significant in minor and general decisions and marginally significant in major decisions when outcome measures are used for influence.
H10	Children who apply Bilateral strategies possess higher relative influence than those who apply Unilateral strategies.		

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

In this chapter, findings of the empirical study are first discussed. Especially, current findings are compared to previous studies, trying to evaluate the efficacy of consumer socialization theory and power relational theory in explaining the phenomenon of children's influence in family consumption decisions. Post analyses are conducted to explore potential reasons that some research hypotheses were not supported. Then, research implications as well as future research avenues are offered.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Children's Relative Influence**

Previous research has reported that children have substantial influence in family consumption decisions (e.g., Foxman and Tansuhaj 1988; Foxman, Tansuhj, and Ekstrom 1989a). This is also the case in the current study. As shown in Table 7, both parents and children themselves reported that children's influence is greater than parents in both product decisions (approximately 4.00 on a seven-point scale). On the one hand, this may be due to the fact money involved in the two decisions come from outside sources (i.e., lotteries in the study), thus parents may not concern as much as when the money is from their own. So they yield more to their children in the product decisions. On the other hand, it truly reflects the phenomenon that children do have substantial influence in family decisions.

Former studies have indicated that children's relative influence tends to possess greater influence in product decisions involving low financial costs. This is not the case in the present study. Between the major and minor product decisions, no significant difference was observed in terms of children's influence, no matter whether such influence was measured by self-report response or decision outcomes (see Table 7). This might be because in the present study, both products of interest to children and those of interest to parents were included in decisions. It has been found that children have high influence in product decisions for which they are the primary consumers and have little influence in those decisions for which their parents or the whole family are the primary consumers (e.g., Kim, Lee, and Hall 1991). Thus, when both children related

and parents/family related products are included in the decision scenarios, children's influence might have been diluted by the mixture.

### **Children's Choice of Influence Strategy**

As discussed before, parents' responses regarding children's choice of influence strategy resulted in unacceptable reliability while children's do. Consequently, only children's responses were used in analyzing their choice of influence strategy. Data show that children in this study appeared to choose Bilateral strategies as much as Unilateral strategies in the major product decision ( $t = 1.54, p = .13$ ) and more than Unilateral strategies in the minor product decision ( $t = 2.68, p = .01$ ). Given that children subjects in this study were between 11 and 16 years old, this result seems to collaborate Palan and Wilkes' (1997) finding that among all the influence strategies, adolescents use Bargaining and Persuasion (two main Bilateral strategies) most. This may be attributed to the greater anticipation of cooperation with age and/or the greater cognitive abilities adolescent children possess than younger children (Cowan, Drinkard, and MacGavin 1984).

Although not formally hypothesized, one may suspect that children's choice of influence strategy might vary with product decisions. However, this is not the case in the present study. Children's tendency to choose Bilateral influence strategies did not differ between the major product decision and the minor product decision ( $t = -1.10, p = .275$ ). This might be because in the study, children-related products and parents-related products are mixed in product decisions and thus have blurred the potential difference.

### **Field Experimental Interaction Procedure**

A new method, the field experimental interaction procedure was employed to collect data from parent/child dyads in this study. Combining the advantages of survey approach and field observation, this method seems to generate data of better quality than before. First, previous research has indicated that in estimating children's relative influence, children tend to overestimate while parents tend to underestimate children's relative influence (e.g., Foxman, Tansuhaj, and Ekstrom 1989a; Kim and Lee 1997). As a contrast, in the current study, parents and children's estimation exhibited good consensus in that the two estimations were positively correlated. What's more, there was no difference between parents and children's estimation. Second, both self-report and outcome measures were included in the study to measure children's relative influence. Former research in group decision making has reported no relationship

between self-report and outcome measures (e.g., Olson 1969; Turk and Bell 1972). However, in this study, the self-report measure was positively correlated with the outcome measure in one of the product decisions. Given these evidences, it is believed this new methodology is worth adopting by future research.

### **Parental Style and Perceived Parental Power**

Research hypotheses regarding the impact of parental style on perceived parental power received fairly good empirical support. Authoritative parents seem to be attributed more power by their children than any other types of parents. Of the eight planned comparisons supported by data, six were involved in comparing Authoritative parents to other parents. Specifically, Authoritative parents were perceived to possess more legitimate power than both Indulgent and Neglecting parents (H3g and H3h). They were also perceived to have greater referent power than both Authoritarian and Neglecting parents (H5a and H5b). Further, they were attributed greater expert power than Authoritarian and Neglecting parents (H5e and H5f). It appears children respected (e.g., attribute high legitimate power to them) as well as looked up to (e.g., attribute high referent power to them) Authoritative parents. These results seem to be in tune with findings in parental style research that Authoritative parents are often the most successful parents who demand mature behavior as well as provide parental affection, thus lead to satisfactory behavior in children such as self-reliance, high self-esteem, and prosocial behavior (Maccoby and Martin 1983).

Results also indicate that Indulgent parents were perceived by their children to have greater referent power as well as greater expert power than Neglecting parents (H5d and H5h). It seems that although Neglecting parents are low demanding, children still do not want to associate with them (e.g., perceive them to have low referent power) because children get little affection from them. And because of the little interaction between Neglecting parents and their children, their expertise is seldom known to children or is not admired even if it is known to children, as attested by the fact that their children perceive them to have low expert power.

Among the five research hypotheses regarding perceived parental outcome control power none was supported. This might have been the result from the low measurement reliability associated with the construct ( $\alpha = .55$ ). Clearly, a better measurement needs to be developed for this construct.

### **Perceive Parental Power and Children's Choice of Influence Strategy**

Based on power relational theory, it is hypothesized that children who perceived high parental power tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those who perceive low parental power (H7). This was supported by data in all the three decision contexts. This is contrast to Falbo and Peplau's (1980) finding that in intimate relationships, individuals having greater power (thus perceive the other to have less power) than their partner are more likely to use Bilateral influence strategies. But it is in accord with Tjosvold, Johnson, and Johnson (1984) who suggested that low-power person always employs more negotiation than coercion toward high-power person. It seems in intimate relationships, the high-power person and the low power person may choose similar influence strategies but for different reasons. The former may choose Bilateral influence strategies because they want to show concerns about their partners and do not want hurt the relationship. The latter choose Bilateral influence strategies because they have to, given their inferior power position. In families, parents normally hold much more power than children. Thus, it will be interesting to test this conjecture in the future by examining both parents and children's choice of influence strategy in family consumption decisions.

### **Perceived Parental Power and Children's Relative Influence**

The research hypothesis that children who perceive higher parental power would have lower relative influence (H9) was supported in the minor and general product decisions when the influence was measured by decision outcomes. This relationship was marginally significant in major product decisions. Kim, Lee and Hall (1991) investigated the impact of adolescents' self-report power on their relative influence but did not detect significance. Compared to the result in this study and theirs, a possibility for their failure to find the relationship is that they measured children's influence in a self-report manner. In the current study, children's influence was measured in both the self-report manner and by the decision outcomes. However, when using the self-report influence measures, the effect of children's power perception on their relative influence is not significant, either. Given the warning by researchers that self-report measures are subject to perceptual bias and decision outcomes are more accurate in measuring relative influence (Corfman 1991), it seems likely that the bias in self-report measures of children's relative influence may have caused the nonsignificant result in Kim, Lee and Hall's study as well.

### **Parental Style and Children's Choice of Influence Strategy**

Empirical results supported the hypotheses that children with Authoritative and Authoritarian parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Neglecting

parents (H1b and H1d). However, no difference was found among children with Authoritarian, Authoritative, and Indulgent parents. It seems parents might foster Bilateral behavior through discipline, interaction, or both. Through discipline, a child may be enforced to apply more Bilateral influence strategies than Unilateral strategies. While through interaction, children might model their parents so that more Bilateral strategy are employed. The least desired parental behavior appears to be Neglecting where children employed more Unilateral influence strategy, probably because they know through experience that their parents will either accept or refuse their purchase request, and no extra word is necessary.

### **Parental Style and Children's Relative Influence**

Propositions regarding effects of parental style on children's relative influence did not get any support by the empirical results. As a matter of fact, data showed some opposite patterns to what were hypothesized. Specifically, children with Neglecting parents turned out to have greater relative influence than those with Authoritative parents and even Indulgent parents. This finding is a bit surprising. Three potential causes might have contributed to the result. First, compared to other parents, Neglecting parents tend to be more indifferent to children's development. Maybe during the study, they just wanted to finish the task as quickly as possible thus accepted their children's requests without much interference. While other parents, especially Authoritative and Indulgent parents, spent some time discussing with their children about each item, hence attenuated their children's influence.

Second, in this study the money in product decisions came from outside source. Past research has showed that people might spend money differently when it comes from outside source compared to when it is out of their own pocket (Henderson and Peterson 1992). Therefore, it is possible that parents and children did not really behave in the products decisions as they usually do in daily life, although they claimed so. Children may not have tried as hard as usual to persuade their parents, and vice versa. Thus, the relationship between parental style and children's relative influence was not able to show up.

Third, considering that in the past, researchers either failed to find the effect of parental style on children's relative influence (e.g., Carlson and Grossbart 1988; Mangleburg 1992) or found rather "messy" results (e.g., Rose 1999), it is also possible that conceptually there is only indirect but no direct effect of parental style on children's relative influence. Some factors might be missing between parental style and children's relative influence. For example, results showed

that perceived parental power is one of such factors. Further, the dynamic interaction between parents and children might be another factor. Future research might be more fruitful if focusing on finding these potential factors rather than on pursuing the direct impact of parental style on children's relative influence.

### **Children's Choice of Influence Strategy and Their Relative Influence**

While Kim, Lee and Hall (1991) found significant, despite contradictory, effect of children's choice of influence strategy on their relative influence in family consumption decisions, the current study did not find this effect in any of the three decision contexts, no matter how children's influence was measured. Given that the influence process often involves more than children themselves, including parents and examining the give-and-takes between children and parents might be able to shed more light on the relationship between children's choice of influence strategy and their relative influence.

### **Mediating Role of Perceived Parental Power**

As previously discussed, when individually tested, the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy was significant, although not all of the hypothesized comparisons were supported. However, hierarchical tests showed that such effect was reduced to non-significance when parental style and perceived parental power were simultaneously entered the regression with children's choice of influence strategy. In other words, perceived parental power completely mediates the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy.

Since none of the hypothesized comparisons regarding the effect of parental style on children's relative influence was supported, the potential mediating role of perceived parental power in this relationship was not tested. Given the result that parental style did have impact on children's relative influence although the direction was opposite to hypothesized (see Table 18), hierarchical regression tests were run to explore whether this effect was mediated by perceived parental power. Results show that when simultaneously entered into regressions, the effect of parental style on children's relative influence was reduced to nonsignificance ( $F(3,114) = .912, p > .25$  for increment of  $R^2$  in minor product decisions and  $F(3,114) = 1.198, p > .25$  in general product decisions). Thus, again perceived parental power plays a mediating role.

### **Summary**

In general, although not all hypothesized comparisons were supported, data do support the propositions that parental style affects children's choice of influence strategy and their relative influence. Relatively, research hypotheses developed on the base of power relational theory were better supported than those developed from consumer socialization theory. What's more, parental style was found to completely mediate the impact of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy and that on children's relative influence. It appears that family socialization have affected children's power use behavior through influencing their power perception between themselves and their parents. In this sense, consumer socialization theory and power relational theory are literally complimentary to each other in explaining children's influence in family consumption decisions.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

### **Overview of the Dissertation**

The dissertation reviewed two leading theories in researching children's influence in family consumption decisions, consumer socialization theory and power relational theory. The former focuses on children's learning processes and treats children's influence behavior as properties learned through consumer socialization. The theory appears to present high explanatory power in studying children's development as consumers. However, it also has theoretical flaws. The theory has been criticized for viewing the socialization process as essentially static and one-sided from agents to socializees (Peterson and Rollins 1987). And when applied to family socialization, it overlooks children's initiative in the socialization process.

The other approach, power relational theory, focuses on people's conflict management behavior in interdependent relationships. When applied to the parent-child relationship, this theory considers parents and children as partners with differing degree of power. In family consumption decisions, children might strategically use their power to sway parents, thus gain influence in the decision making process. This theory seems to fill the flaw in the consumer socialization theory. But it ignores the specialty of the parent-child relationship where parents and children are not only partners but also socializer and socializee most of the time (Moschis and Churchill 1978).

The theoretical overview provided a premise to integrate consumer socialization theory and power relational theory in studying children's influence in family consumption decisions. Based on the two theories, a conceptual model was developed to explore children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence in family consumption decisions. It was proposed that family variables, children's characteristics, parents' characteristics, and parent-child interdependence affect children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence both directly and indirectly. Family socialization was proposed to mediate the effect of family variables, children's characteristics, and parents' characteristics on children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. Power structure was proposed to mediate the effects of children's characteristics, parents' characteristics, and parent-child interdependence on children's choice of influence strategy and relative influence. Product type, decision stage, and subdecision were proposed to moderate the effects of family socialization and power structure on children's choice of influence and relative influence. In addition, children's choice of influence strategy was expected to affect their relative influence.

An empirical study was then developed to partially test the model. Specifically, effects of family socialization and power structure on children's choice of influence strategy and their relative influence in family consumption decisions were empirically tested. In accord with past research, parental style was used to reflect family socialization and perceived parental power was used to indicate power structure in the parent-child relationship. In addition, the impact of parental style on perceived parental power was also tested.

A field experimental interaction procedure was designed for data collection and 139 parent/child dyads participated in the study. Multiple regressions involving both categorical variables and continuous variables were run to analyze the data. Although results only showed moderate support to research hypotheses, five of the six proposed links in the testing model exhibited significant results. In addition, perceived parental power appeared to completely mediate the effect of parental style on children's choice of influence strategy and their relative influence. Thus, it seems consumer socialization theory and power relational theory truly go together in explaining children's influence behavior in family consumption decisions.

### **Contributions of the Dissertation**

This dissertation makes important theoretical contributions to the family decision making research. First, it integrated consumer socialization theory and power relational theory and put

forward a conceptual model to studying children's influence in family consumption decisions. The model embraces relationships already tested by previous research as well as those never explored before. As such, it serves as a framework to the future research in the area of children's influence. It would help researchers develop a systematic program to scrutinize factors affecting children's power strategy behavior and their relative influence in family consumption decisions.

Second, an empirical study was conducted to partially test the conceptual model. The previously inconsistent findings regarding the impact of parental style on children's relative influence were revisited. New hypotheses regarding the effect of perceived parental power on children's relative influence were tested. In addition, the impact of parental style and perceived parental power on children's choice of influence strategy was advanced. Although not all research hypotheses were supported by empirical data, most of the links in the testing model did show significant results. In this sense, the empirical study has not only extended the existing research, but also provided guidance to future research in testing and improving the proposed conceptual model.

Methodologically, this dissertation employed a new method to study children's influence in family consumption decisions. Almost all studies in the literature used survey as the data collection method to examine children's influence. A few employed field observation. The survey approach is subject to recall problem or report bias (Corfman 1991; Olson 1969), and the field observation is unable to track causality and is very costly to conduct. This dissertation developed a field experimental interaction procedure to explore children's influence. This new method combines advantages of survey approach and field observation yet overcomes most of their drawbacks. As expected, data in this study showed better validity than previous studies, thus providing a good example to the future research in this area.

The dissertation also enlightens managerial practices. It related parental power to children's relative influence. Results showed that children who perceive their parents to have low power tend to possess greater influence than those who perceive parents to have high power. Thus, marketers could use parental power as a segmentation variable. For families that are in the high parental power segment, children tend to have low influence in family decisions. Thus, it might be more effective to promote children related products to parents than to children themselves. On the contrary, for families that are in the low parental power segment, children

tend to have high influence in family decisions. Consequently, it might be more effective to promote children related products to children than to parents.

Further, results showed that children with Authoritative and Authoritarian parents tend to use more Bilateral influence strategies than those with Neglecting parents. Also, children who perceive high parental power tend to apply more Bilateral influence strategies than those who perceive low parental power. Such information is important in design marketing communication programs, especially creating advertising messages, since children as well as parents are more likely to identify with messages that are consistent with reality. For example, children and parents might identify better with an advertising message which describes children applying more Bilateral influence strategies in talking to Authoritative parents than with a message which describes children applying more Unilateral influence strategies in talking to Authoritative parents. Consequently, findings of this dissertation would be of help to advertising copywriters in delineating parent-child interaction scenarios. They might also be helpful to account executives in judging whether portrayals of family consumption decisions involving children and parents are realistic and effective.

Overall, this dissertation contributes to both the consumer research and managerial practices. Hopefully, it will play an important role in the family decision making literature.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

As with most research studies, this dissertation contains limitations that actually indicate avenues for future research. Conceptually, the model only examined the static relationships between children's choice influence strategy and their relative influence in the decision outcomes. It did not go further to explore the more dynamic parent-child interactions (i.e., the give-and-takes between parents and children) during decision-making process. Future research should try to explore this interaction process which might help solve the inconsistent relationship between children's choice of influence strategy and their relative influence.

When recruiting subjects, this study used a convenient rather than a random sample. Although convenience sampling is acceptable for theory development, random sampling is necessary to improve the theory's applicability and predictability to the whole population. Thus, future research should seek random samples to test the proposed model. Second, this study focused on adolescents' influence behavior. Future research could certainly examine the influence behavior of children in other age groups (e.g., younger children).

Although a new method was applied to collect data, only one parent and one child were involved in this study for cost and response rate concerns. Future research should try to include both parents as well as siblings in the study, if condition allows. Kim and Lee (1997) showed that a composite measurement developed from multiple respondents exhibits desirable levels of convergent and discriminant validity thus would shed more insight on children's relative influence in family consumption decisions. In the current study subjects completed questionnaires in home and then returned them through the mail. This certainly reduced the impact of experimenter on respondents. However, the real interaction between parents and children was not recorded. Future studies, if circumstance allows, might use video equipment to record this interaction process during the experiment or even children's daily involvement in family decisions. Such information will be of great importance to deepen our understanding of children's influence behavior in family decisions.

Finally, but not least, cross-cultural/national studies could be conducted to explore whether and how cultural factors affect children's influence behavior in family consumption decisions. Research topics could include but not limited to parenting behavior in different cultures, consumer socialization patterns across nations, power structure between children and parents in various cultures, and children's influence behavior comparisons in different countries. Rose (1999) has made a good lead in this direction. However, the limited support for his research hypotheses surely indicates the necessity for more effort in this area.

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## **Appendix A**

### Questionnaire for the Final Study

## **Survey for Father/Mother: Part A**

Welcome to the study!

The purpose of this study is to understand how families reach decisions. Your participation will contribute to this important research in family decision-making.

This study consists of three surveys: one for you, one for your child, and one for you and your child together (namely, the **Group Choice Survey**). In your survey, you will be first asked to answer questions regarding **two product decisions**:

- (1) selecting a minor product, and
- (2) selecting a major product.

In each decision, there are **four possible choices**. Please rate your likelihood of choosing each alternative if you are given the chance based on your own preferences, expertise, and experiences. **Please do not discuss the choices with your child or family members.** Your child will do the separate ratings on his/her survey in the mean time.

After both you and your child complete rating the alternatives for each of the two decisions in **Part A**, please **get together** to discuss the alternatives for each decision, using the **Group Choice Survey**. Then, based on the discussion, please **jointly** select the **best alternative** for each decision and record the selected alternative on the **Group Choice Survey**.

After the **Group Choice Survey**, please continue on **Part B** of your questionnaire and we will ask you questions regarding the decision processes. We will then ask you for information about your daily experience. Detailed instructions will be provided before each section of the questionnaire.

**We guarantee that the information you provide will be kept strictly confidential.** In an effort to appreciate you and your child's time and effort, you and your child, as a group, will be compensated \$10 for participation. Further, you will be entered in a lottery for both the minor product and major product. If you win the lottery or lotteries, you will receive the gift or gifts you chose in the group survey. There will be two drawings for major products and four drawings for minor products. We expect no more than **140** mother-child groups to participate in the study, so your chances of winning are pretty good.

Your frank and honest answers to all the questions will be highly appreciated! But you are free not to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable about.

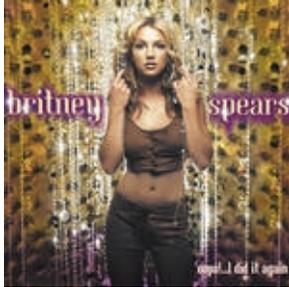
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**Section I**

In this section, you are presented with **two decision scenarios**. For each scenario, we present descriptions of **four product alternatives**. Suppose you win the lottery, please indicate your likelihood of choosing each alternative on the scale of 1 to 7 based on your preference, expertise and experiences, **without consulting your child or other people**.

**Scenario One: Selecting a Minor Product (\$30 retail value)**

**Alternative 1: Music Record (CD)**

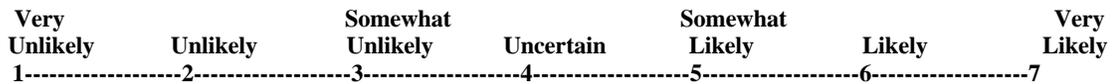


**Popular Music Record**

Have you got the recent CD by Britney Spears, Backstreet Boys, or other big stars yet?

*Here you get the chance!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.



**Alternative 2: Coupon for Sears**

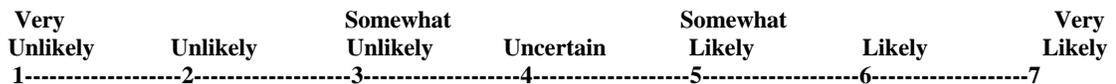


**Coupon for Sears**

The good life at a great price!

*Go to Sears!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.



⇒ over

**Alternative 3: Coupons for Movie Tickets**



**Coupons for Local Cinemas**

What are you doing this weekend?

*Why not invite your friends to the movies!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Uncertain	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Very Likely
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7

**Alternative 4: Coupon for Home Depot**



**Coupon for Home Depot**

Your hard work deserves a better life.  
Home depot has got everything for your  
home improvement needs.

*Your home, your home depot!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Uncertain	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Very Likely
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7

Now, among the four alternatives, **which one do you prefer if you win the lottery?** Please circle only one of the alternatives below.

Music Record (CD)

Coupon for Sears

Movie Coupons

Coupon for home depot

⇒ over

**Scenario Two: Selecting a Major Product**

Suppose you also win the lottery for a major product (**\$200** retail value) and you need to choose what item to have. The following are four product alternatives. Please indicate your likelihood of choosing each alternative on the scale of 1 to 7 based on your preferences, expertise and experiences, **without consulting your child or other people.**

**Alternative 1: Sony CD player.**

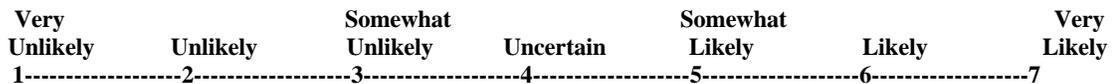


**Sony Discman**

SteadySound™ Electronic Shock Protection  
 Digital MEGA BASS Sound System  
 Long Battery Life with 2 AA Batteries  
 High Image design with Heat resistant lid

*Your world ... Your Sony!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.



**Alternative 2: Nintendo Play Station**



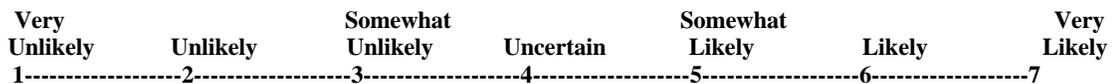
**N64 Funtastic System**

Experience unsurpassed 64-bit graphics and CD quality sound at an awesome 94 MHZ.

Reach new levels of accuracy with the N64 controller featuring 14-buttons and analog control stick.

*Enjoy your favorite N64 games!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.



⇒ over

**Alternative 3: Elegant Family Dinner**



**Elegant Family Dinner**

Perfectly cooked lobster tails  
 Carefully selected and grilled steaks  
 Fresh seafood and delightful pastas

*Treat your family to something really delicious!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Uncertain      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

**Alternative 4: Family Music Event**



**Family Music Event**

The whole family together  
 Flowing melodies  
 Touching songs  
 Another treasurable night

*Enjoy the sweet moment!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Uncertain      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

Now, among the four alternatives, **which one do you prefer if you win the lottery?** Please circle only one of the alternatives below.

- CD Player                      Video Game Play Station                      Family Dinner                      Family Music Event

**Attention:** after you finish rating the alternatives for each of the **two** product decisions, please pause on this survey. Then, please go to the enclosed **Group Choice Survey** (the cherry one) which you are now supposed to complete **together with** your child. After finishing the group choice survey, you will be asked to *continue on* **Part B** (the next page) of this survey and complete the rest of it. Thank you!

**(Go to the Group Choice Survey)**

**Survey for Father/Mother: Part B**

Please continue on this survey.

**Section II**

In this section, please recall how your child has influenced you toward his/her preferred alternative and how you responded to him/her in each of the two product decisions. There are 16 different strategies your child might have used and 9 strategies you might have used in the product decision processes. On a scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree, please circle the number indicating how strongly you agree/disagree with each statement. The more strongly you agree with the statement, the higher number you should circle:

<b>Strongly</b>		<b>Somewhat</b>		<b>Somewhat</b>		<b>Strongly</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Uncertain</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

**Scenario One: Selecting a Minor Product**

Please indicate how strongly you agree/disagree with your child having used each of the following strategies in getting his/her way during the discussion with you about which minor product to choose (i.e., Music Record, Coupon for Sears, Movie Coupons, and Coupon for Home Depot).

	<b>Strongly</b>					<b>Strongly</b>
	<b>Disagree</b>	-----	-----	-----	-----	<b>Agree</b>
	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
1. My child simply asked me to agree with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
2. My child told me that he/she'd do some special things if I agree with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
3. My child made jokes trying to get his/her way.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
4. My child pleaded or begged me to agree with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
5. My child indicated to me the fact that his/her other friends have "it".	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
6. My child reasoned with me, trying to argue his/her request logically.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
7. My child told me what he/she wanted. He/she just stated his/her needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
8. My child became especially affectionate to me in hopes to get his/her way.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
9. My child nagged until I got irritated.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
10. My child made me feel guilty in hopes to have me agree with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
11. My child tried to negotiate something agreeable to both of us.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
12. My child repeatedly reminded me of what he/she wanted.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
13. My child explained the reasons for his/her choice.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
14. My child asked repetitively for the product yet trying not to irritate me.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
15. My child appealed to my love and affection for him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
16. My child asked for the product in a way that sounded reasonable to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6 7
		-----	-----	-----	-----	
	<b>Strongly</b>					<b>Strongly</b>
	<b>Disagree</b>					<b>Agree</b>

⇒ over

Please indicate your agreement with how you responded to your child during the discussion about which minor product to choose (i.e., Music Record, Coupon for Sears, Movie Coupons, and Coupon for Home Depot).

	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
	----- ----- ----- ----- -----						
1. I discussed each product with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I tried to negotiate something agreeable to both of us.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I simply gave in to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I promised to reward him/her if he/she agrees with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I expressed my opinion toward each product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I taught my child how to select the best alternative.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I indicated my choices without giving reasons.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I reasoned with my child, trying to argue my choice logically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I asked my child's opinion toward each product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	----- ----- ----- ----- -----						
	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

**Scenario Two: Selecting a Major Product**

Please indicate how strongly you agree/disagree with your child having used each of the following strategies in getting his/her way during the discussion with you about which major product to choose (i.e., CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Elegant Family Dinner, and Family Music Event).

	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
	----- ----- ----- ----- -----						
1. My child simply asked me to agree with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. My child told me that he/she'd do some special things if I agree with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. My child made jokes trying to get his/her way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. My child pleaded or begged me to agree with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. My child indicated to me the fact that his/her other friends have "it".	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. My child reasoned with me, trying to argue his/her request logically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. My child told me what he/she wanted. He/she just stated his/her needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. My child became especially affectionate to me in hopes to get his/her way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. My child nagged until I got irritated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. My child made me feel guilty in hopes to have me agree with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. My child tried to negotiate something agreeable to both of us.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. My child repeatedly reminded me of what he/she wanted.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. My child explained the reasons for his/her choice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. My child asked repetitively for the product yet trying not to irritate me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

⇒ over

15. My child appealed to my love and affection for him/her. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. My child asked for the product in a way that sounded reasonable to me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- |-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
- Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Please indicate your agreement with **how you responded to your child** during the discussion about which **major product** to choose (i.e., **CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Elegant Family Dinner, and Family Music Event**).

- Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree
- |-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
1. I discussed each product with him/her. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. I tried to negotiate something agreeable to both of us. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. I simply gave in to him/her. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. I promised to reward him/her if he/she agrees with me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I expressed my opinion toward each product. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I taught my child how to select the best alternative. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. I indicated my choices without giving reasons. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I reasoned with my child, trying to argue my choice logically. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. I asked my child's opinion toward each product. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- |-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
- Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

### Section III

Recall the joint discussions you just finished. On a scale ranging from 1 = my child entirely to 7 = myself entirely, please indicate between you and your child, who decided what product to choose in each of the decision scenarios. For example, if you think you had more say in a certain decision than your child, then you should circle a higher number (e.g., 6 or 7). Also, please indicate how satisfied you are with each of the two discussions with your child and the ultimate product choices on a scale of 1 to 7.

#### Scenario One: Selecting a Minor Product (i.e., Music Record, Coupon for Sears, Movie Coupons, and Coupon for Home Depot)

1. Between you and your child, who decided what product to choose in this minor decision scenario?

My child Entirely	My child More than me	My child slightly More than me	My child & I Jointly	I slightly more Than my child	I more than My child	Myself Entirely
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

2. How **satisfied** are you toward the **ultimate product choice** (i.e., Music Record, Coupon for Sears, Movie Coupons, and Coupon for Home Depot)?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

3. How **satisfied** are you toward the **discussion with your child** in selecting the minor product (i.e., Music Record, Coupon for Sears, Movie Coupons, and Coupon for Home Depot)?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

⇒ over

**Scenario Two: Selecting a Major Product (i.e., CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Elegant Family Dinner, and Family Music Event)**

1. Between you and your child, who decided what product to choose in this major decision scenario?

<b>My child Entirely</b>	<b>My child More than me</b>	<b>My child slightly More than me</b>	<b>My child &amp; I Jointly</b>	<b>I slightly more Than my child</b>	<b>I more than My child</b>	<b>Myself Entirely</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

2. How **satisfied** are you toward the **ultimate product choice** (i.e., CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Elegant Family Dinner, and Family Music Event)?

<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat Satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

3. How **satisfied** are you toward the **discussion with your child** in selecting the major product (i.e., CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Elegant Family Dinner, and Family Music Event)?

<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat Satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

**Section IV**

In this section, we would like to know some information about your daily experience. There is no right or wrong answer. Please read the instruction and answer each question honestly. Thank you!

**What do you think is usually true or usually false about you and your child? Please circle the number that most represents your experience.**

1. My child can count on me to help him/her out, if he/she has some kind of problem.

<b>Usually True</b>	<b>Sometimes True</b>	<b>Usually False</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

2. I keep pushing my child to do his/her best in whatever he/she does.

<b>Usually True</b>	<b>Sometimes True</b>	<b>Usually False</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

3. I keep pushing my child to think independently.

<b>Usually True</b>	<b>Sometimes True</b>	<b>Usually False</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

4. I help my child with his/her school work if there is something he/she doesn't understand.

<b>Usually True</b>	<b>Sometimes True</b>	<b>Usually False</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

5. When I want my child to do something, I explain why.

<b>Usually True</b>	<b>Sometimes True</b>	<b>Usually False</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

6. When your child gets a poor grade in school, how often do you encourage him/her to try harder?

<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Usually</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

7. When your child gets a good grade in school, how often do you praise him/her?

<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Usually</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

⇒ over

8. How much do you know who your child's friends are?

**Don't know much**                      **Know a little**                      **Know a lot**  
 1-----2-----3

**The following questions relate to your child's daily life. Please circle the number that most represents your experience.**

1. In a typical week, what is the latest your child can stay out on SCHOOL NIGHTS (Monday-Thursday)?

**Not allowed out**    **Before 8:00**    **8:00 ~ 8:59**    **9:00 ~ 9:59**    **10:00 ~ 10:59**    **11:00 or later**    **As late as he/she wants**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

2. In a typical week, what is the latest your child can stay out on FRIDAY or SATURDAY NIGHT?

**Not Allowed out**    **Before 9:00**    **9:00 ~ 9:59**    **10:00 ~ 10:59**    **11:00 ~ 11:59**    **12:00 ~ 12:59**    **1:00 ~ 1:59**    **2:00**    **After he/she wants**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

3. Do you know where your child is most afternoons after school?

1 = Yes                      2 = Sometimes                      3 = No

4. Do you know where your child goes at night?

1 = Yes                      2 = Sometimes                      3 = No

5. Do you know what your child does with his/her free time?

1 = Yes                      2 = Sometimes                      3 = No

**How often do the following things happen in your family? Please circle the number that most represents your experience.**

1. You spend time just talking with your child.

**Almost every day**                      **A few times a week**                      **A few times a month**                      **Almost never**  
 1-----2-----3-----4

2. Your family does something fun together.

**Almost every day**                      **A few times a week**                      **A few times a month**                      **Almost never**  
 1-----2-----3-----4

3. I try hard to know where my child goes at night.

**Strongly Disagree**    **Disagree**    **Somewhat Disagree**    **Uncertain**    **Somewhat Agree**    **Agree**    **Strongly Agree**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

4. I try hard to know what my child does with his/her free time.

**Strongly Disagree**    **Disagree**    **Somewhat Disagree**    **Uncertain**    **Somewhat Agree**    **Agree**    **Strongly Agree**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

5. I try hard to know where my child is most afternoons after school.

**Strongly Disagree**    **Disagree**    **Somewhat Disagree**    **Uncertain**    **Somewhat Agree**    **Agree**    **Strongly Agree**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

⇒ over

**Section V**

This section asks you some general information about your family. There is no right or wrong answer. On a scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree, please circle the number indicating how strongly you agree/disagree with each statement. The more strongly you agree with the statement, the higher number you should circle:

**Strongly Disagree**      **Disagree**      **Somewhat Disagree**      **Uncertain**      **Somewhat Agree**      **Agree**      **Strongly Agree**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

- |   | <b>Strongly Disagree</b> |   |   |   |   |   | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |
|---|--------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-----------------------|
|   | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 1. My child is the kind of person who could make me feel bad when we have a hard time talking about important family matters. | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 2. My child is the kind of person who could make me worry by choosing the wrong kind of friends..                             | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 3. My child is the kind of person who could make me worry by choosing the wrong kind of educational goals.                    | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 4. My child is the kind of person who could make me worry by choosing the wrong kind of occupational goals.                   | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 5. My child is the kind of person who could make me worry by choosing the wrong kind of dating partners.                      | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 6. My child is the kind of person who could make me worry by not doing what I tell him/her to do.                             | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 7. I feel good that my child has chosen the right kind of friends.  | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
|   | <b>Strongly Disagree</b> |   |   |   |   |   | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |
| 8. I feel good that my child will choose the right kind of educational goals.   | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 9. I believe that my child will choose the right kind of occupational goals.  | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 10. I feel good that my child will choose the right kind of dating partners.  | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 11. My child knows a great deal about future career opportunities.  | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 12. My child knows a great deal about how to get a good education.  | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 13. My child knows a great deal about how to choose the right kind of dating partners.  | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |
| 14. My child knows a great deal about how to choose the right kind of friends.  | 1                        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7                     |

⇒ over

	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
	----- ----- ----- ----- -----						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. My child has a right to choose his/her own occupational goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. My child has a right to choose his/her own educational goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. My child has a right to choose his/her own dating partners.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. My child has a right to choose his/her own friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. My child's wishes should be given a great deal of importance when it comes to making decisions about his/her relationships with members of the opposite sex.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. My child's opinions should be given much weight when it comes to making decisions about his/her education.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. My child's opinions should be given a great deal of importance when it comes to choosing his/her occupational goals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	----- ----- ----- ----- -----						
	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

## Section VI

This section inquires your and your child's participation in making the previous **product decisions** (i.e., CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Music Record, Movie Coupons, etc.). Each question is rated on a 7-point scale (**1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree**). The **more strongly** you agree with the situation, the **higher** number you should circle.

1. These decisions are practical despite hypothetical, and I behaved as I usually do in real family decision making.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Uncertain	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

2. These decisions are practical despite hypothetical, and my child behaved as he/she usually does in real family decision making.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Uncertain	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

3. When I filled out the **Part A** of this questionnaire, I did not discuss with my child and formed ideas by my own.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Uncertain	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

## Section VII

Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Read each item and indicate whether the statement is **True** or **False** as it pertains to you personally.

- |   |        |         |
|---|--------|---------|
| 1. I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble. | 1=True | 2=False |
| 2. At times I have really insisted on having things my own way.     | 1=True | 2=False |

⇒ over

- |  |        |         |
|--|--------|---------|
| 3. My table manners at home are as good as when I eat out in a restaurant.                         | 1=True | 2=False |
| 4. I have never intensely disliked anyone.   | 1=True | 2=False |
| 5. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability. | 1=True | 2=False |
| 6. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.   | 1=True | 2=False |
| 7. When I don't know something I don't at all mind admitting it.                                   | 1=True | 2=False |
| 8. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.                                       | 1=True | 2=False |
| 9. I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoings.                     | 1=True | 2=False |
| 10. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.                                    | 1=True | 2=False |

Finally, this section asks information regarding your demographics for classification purpose. Please circle the appropriate answer.

1. What is your age?

Less than 30 years    30-34 years    35-39 years    40-44 years    45-49 years    50-54 years    55-59 years    >= 60 years  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8

2. What is your gender?    1 = Male    2 = Female

3. How far did you go to school?

Grade School	Some High school	High school Graduate	Trade school After high school	Some College	College Graduate	Graduate School
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

4. What is your working status (outside of home)?

Full-time	Part-time	Not working outside the home	Others
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----

5. How many children do you have?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8 or more

6. What is your total family income before taxes (including child support, alimony and all other income)?

< \$10,000	\$10,000-19,999	\$20,000-29,999	\$30,000-39,999	\$40,000-49,999	\$50,000-74,999	\$75,000-99,999	> \$100,000
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----	8-----

**Thank you very much for your cooperation! Please mail back the signed informed consent forms and all the three completed questionnaires (i.e., your survey, your child's survey, and the group choice survey), using the enclosed pre-stamped envelope. The lotteries will be drawn shortly and you will be notified the result through the mail.**

## **Survey for Son/Daughter: Part A**

Welcome to the study!

The purpose of this study is to understand how families reach decisions. Your participation will contribute to this important research in family decision-making.

This study consists of three surveys: one for you, one for your father/mother, and one for you and your father/mother together (namely, the **Group Choice Survey**). In your survey, you will be first asked to answer questions regarding **two product decisions**:

- (1) selecting a minor product, and
- (2) selecting a major product.

In each decision, there are **four possible choices**. Please rate your likelihood of choosing each alternative if you are given the chance based on your own preferences, expertise, and experiences. **Please do not discuss the choices with your father/mother or family members.** Your father/mother will do the separate ratings on his/her survey in the mean time.

After both you and your father/mother complete rating the alternatives for each of the two decisions in **Part A**, please **get together** to discuss the alternatives for each decision, using the **Group Choice Survey**. Then, based on the discussion, please **jointly** select the **best alternative** for each decision and record the selected alternative on the **Group Choice Survey**.

After the **Group Choice Survey**, please continue on **Part B** of your questionnaire and we will ask you questions regarding the decision processes. We will then ask you for information about your daily experience. Detailed instructions will be provided before each section of the questionnaire.

**We guarantee that the information you provide will be kept strictly confidential.** In an effort to appreciate you and your father/mother's time and effort, you and your father/mother, as a group, will be compensated \$10 for participation. Further, you will be entered in a lottery for both the major product and minor product. If you win the lottery or lotteries, you will receive the gift or gifts you chose in the group survey. There will be two drawings for major products and four drawings for minor products. We expect no more than **140** parent-child groups to participate in the study, so your chances of winning are pretty good.

Your frank and honest answers to all the questions will be highly appreciated! But you are free not to answer any questions that you feel uncomfortable about.

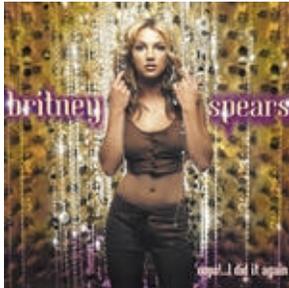
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**Section I**

In this section, you are presented with **two decision scenarios**. For each scenario, we present descriptions of **four product alternatives**. Suppose you win the lottery, please indicate your likelihood of choosing each alternative on the scale of 1 to 7 based on your preference, expertise and experiences, **without consulting your father/mother or other people.**

**Scenario One: Selecting a Minor Product (\$30 retail value)**

**Alternative 1: Music Record (CD)**



**Popular Music Record**

Have you got the recent CD by Britney Spears, Backstreet Boys, or other big stars yet?

*Here you get the chance!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Uncertain      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

**Alternative 2: Coupon for Sears**



**Coupon for Sears**

The good life at a great price!

*Go to Sears!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Uncertain      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

⇒ over

**Alternative 3: Coupons for Movie Tickets**

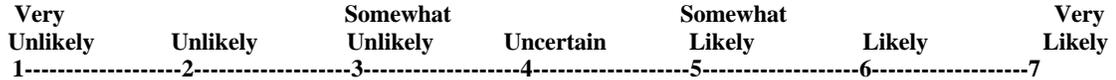


**Coupons for Local Cinemas**

What are you doing this weekend?

*Why not invite your friends to the movies!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.



**Alternative 4: Coupon for Home Depot**

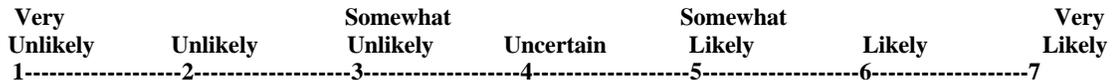


**Coupon for Home Depot**

Your hard work deserves a better life.  
Home depot has got everything for your  
home improvement needs.

*Your home, your home depot!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.



Now, among the four alternatives, **which one do you prefer if you win the lottery?** Please circle only one of the alternatives below.

Music Record (CD)

Coupon for Sears

Movie Coupons

Coupon for home depot

⇒ over

**Scenario Two: Selecting a Major Product**

Suppose you also win the lottery for a major product (**\$200** retail value) and you need to choose what item to have. The following are four product alternatives. Please indicate your likelihood of choosing each alternative on the scale of 1 to 7 based on your preferences, expertise and experiences, **without consulting your father/mother or other people.**

**Alternative 1: Sony CD player.**

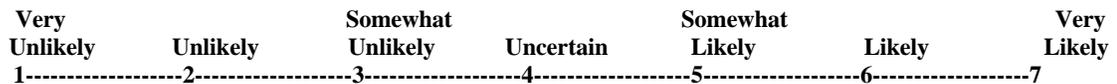


**Sony Discman**

SteadySound™ Electronic Shock Protection  
 Digital MEGA BASS Sound System  
 Long Battery Life with 2 AA Batteries  
 High Image design with Heat resistant lid

*Your world ... Your Sony!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.



**Alternative 2: Nintendo Play Station**



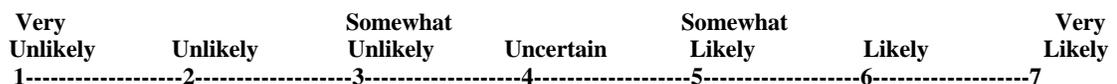
**N64 Funtastic System**

Experience unsurpassed 64-bit graphics and CD quality sound at an awesome 94 MHZ.

Reach new levels of accuracy with the N64 controller featuring 14-buttons and analog control stick.

*Enjoy your favorite N64 games!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.



⇒ over

**Alternative 3: Elegant Family Dinner**



**Elegant Family Dinner**

Perfectly cooked lobster tails  
 Carefully selected and grilled steaks  
 Fresh seafood and delightful pastas

*Treat your family to something really delicious!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Uncertain      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

**Alternative 4: Family Music Event**



**Family Music Event**

The whole family together  
 Flowing melodies  
 Touching songs  
 Another treasurable night

*Enjoy the sweet moment!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Uncertain      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

Now, among the four alternatives, **which one do you prefer if you win the lottery?** Please circle only one of the alternatives below.

CD Player

Video Game Play Station

Family Dinner

Family Music Event

**Attention:** after you finish rating the alternatives for each of the **two** product decisions, please pause on this survey. Then, please go to the enclosed **Group Choice Survey** (the cherry one) which you are now supposed to complete **together with** your father/mother. After finishing the group choice survey, you will be asked to *continue on Part B* (the next page) of this survey and complete the rest of it. Thank you!

**(Go to the Group Choice Survey)**

**Survey for Son/Daughter: Part B**

Please continue on this survey.

**Section II**

In this section, please recall how you have influenced your father/mother toward your preferred alternative and how your father/mother responded to you in each of the two product decisions. There are 16 different strategies you might have used and 9 strategies your father/mother might have used in the product decision processes. On the scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree, please circle the number indicating how strongly you agree/disagree with each statement. The more strongly you agree with the statement, the higher number you should circle:

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Uncertain</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

**Scenario One: Selecting a Minor Product**

Please indicate how strongly you agree/disagree with having used each of the following strategies in getting your way during the discussion with your father/mother about which minor product to choose (i.e., Music Record, Coupon for Sears, Movie Coupons, and Coupon for Home Depot).

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>						<b>Strongly Agree</b>
	-----						-----
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. I simply asked my father/mother to agree with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I told him/her that I'd do some special things if he/she agrees with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I made jokes trying to get my way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I pleaded or begged him/her to agree with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I indicated to my father/mother the fact that my other friends have "it".	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I reasoned with my father/mother, trying to argue my request logically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I told my father/mother what I wanted. I just stated my needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I became especially affectionate to him/her in hopes to get my way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I nagged until he/she got irritated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I made him/her feel guilty in hopes to have him/her agree with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I tried to negotiate something agreeable to both of us.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I repeatedly reminded him/her of what I wanted.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I explained the reasons for my choice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I asked repetitively for the product yet trying not to irritate him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I appealed to his/her love and affection for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I asked for the product in a way that sounded reasonable to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	-----						-----
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>						<b>Strongly Agree</b>

⇒ over

Please indicate your agreement with how your father/mother responded to you during the discussion about which minor product to choose (i.e., Music Record, Coupon for Sears, Movie Coupons, and Coupon for Home Depot).

	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
	----- ----- ----- ----- -----						
1. He/she discussed each product with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. My father/mother tried to negotiate something agreeable to both of us.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. He/she simply gave in to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. My father/mother promised to reward me if I agree with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. My father/mother expressed his/her opinion toward each product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. He/she taught me how to select the best alternative.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. He/she indicated his/her choices without giving reasons.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. He/she reasoned with me, trying to argue his/her choice logically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. My father/mother asked my opinion toward each product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	----- ----- ----- ----- -----						
	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

**Scenario Two: Selecting a Major Product**

Please indicate how strongly you agree/disagree with having used each of the following strategies in getting your way during the discussion with your father/mother about which major product to choose (i.e., CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Elegant Family Dinner, and Family Music Event).

	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
	----- ----- ----- ----- -----						
1. I simply asked my father/mother to agree with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I told him/her that I'd do some special things if he/she agrees with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I made jokes trying to get my way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I pleaded or begged him/her to agree with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I indicated to him/her the fact that my other friends have "it".	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I reasoned with my father/mother, trying to argue my request logically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I told him/her what I wanted. I just stated my needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I became especially affectionate to him/her in hopes to get my way.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I nagged until he/she got irritated.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I made him/her feel guilty in hopes to have him/her agree with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I tried to negotiate something agreeable to both of us.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I repeatedly reminded him/her of what I wanted.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I explained the reasons for my choice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I asked repetitively for the product yet trying not to irritate him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I appealed to his/her love and affection for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. I asked for the product in a way that sounded reasonable to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	----- ----- ----- ----- -----						
	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

Please indicate your agreement with how your father/mother responded to you during the discussion about which major product to choose (i.e., CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Elegant Family Dinner, and Family Music Event).

		Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree
		----- ----- ----- ----- -----					
1. He/she discussed each product with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. My father/mother tried to negotiate something agreeable to both of us.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. He/she simply gave in to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. My father/mother promised to reward me if I agree with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. He/she expressed his/her opinion toward each product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. He/she taught me how to select the best alternative.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. He/she indicated his/her choices without giving reasons.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. He/she reasoned with me, trying to argue his/her choice logically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. My father/mother asked my opinion toward each product.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		----- ----- ----- ----- -----					
		Strongly Disagree					Strongly Agree

### Section III

Recall the joint discussions you just finished. On a scale ranging from 1 = my parent entirely to 7 = myself entirely, please indicate between you and your father/mother, who decided what product to choose in each of the decision scenarios. For example, if you think you had more say in a certain decision than your father/mother, then you should circle a higher number (e.g., 6 or 7). Also, please indicate how satisfied you are with each of the two discussions with your father/mother and the ultimate product choices on a scale of 1 to 7.

#### Scenario One: Selecting a Minor Product (i.e., Music Record, Coupon for Sears, Movie Coupons, and Coupon for Home Depot)

1. Between you and your father/mother, who decided what product to choose in this minor product decision?

My parent Entirely	My parent More than me	My parent slightly More than me	My parent & I Jointly	I slightly more Than my parent	I more than My parent	Myself Entirely
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

2. How **satisfied** are you toward the **ultimate product choice** (i.e., Music Record, Coupon for Sears, Movie Coupons, and Coupon for Home Depot)?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

3. How **satisfied** are you toward the **discussion with your father/mother** in selecting the minor product (i.e., Music Record, Coupon for Sears, Movie Coupons, and Coupon for Home Depot)?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

⇒ over

**Scenario Two: Selecting a Major Product (i.e., CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Elegant Family Dinner, and Family Music Event)**

1. Between you and your father/mother, who decided what product to choose in this major product decision?

<b>My parent Entirely</b>	<b>My parent More than me</b>	<b>My parent slightly More than me</b>	<b>My parent &amp; I Jointly</b>	<b>I slightly more Than my parent</b>	<b>I more than My parent</b>	<b>Myself Entirely</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

2. How **satisfied** are you toward the **ultimate product choice** (i.e., CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Elegant Family Dinner, and Family Music Event)?

<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat Satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

3. How **satisfied** are you toward the **discussion with your father/mother** in selecting the major product (i.e., CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Elegant Family Dinner, and Family Music Event)?

<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Somewhat Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat Satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Very Satisfied</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

**Section IV**

In this section, we would like to know some information about your daily experience. There is no right or wrong answer. Please read the instruction and answer each question honestly. Thank you!

**What do you think is usually true or usually false about your father/mother? Please circle the number that most represents your experience.**

1. I can count on him/her to help me out, if I have some kind of problem.

<b>Usually True</b>	<b>Sometimes True</b>	<b>Usually False</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

2. He/she keeps pushing me to do my best in whatever I do.

<b>Usually True</b>	<b>Sometimes True</b>	<b>Usually False</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

3. He/she keeps pushing me to think independently.

<b>Usually True</b>	<b>Sometimes True</b>	<b>Usually False</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

4. He/she helps me with my school work if there is something I don't understand.

<b>Usually True</b>	<b>Sometimes True</b>	<b>Usually False</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

5. When he/she wants me to do something, he/she explains why.

<b>Usually True</b>	<b>Sometimes True</b>	<b>Usually False</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

6. When you get a poor grade in school, how often do your parents encourage you to try harder?

<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Usually</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

7. When you get a good grade in school, how often do your parents praise you?

<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Usually</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----

8. How much do your parents know who your friends are?

**Don't know much**                      **Know a little**                      **Know a lot**  
 1-----2-----3

**The following questions relate to your daily life. Please circle the number that most represents your experience.**

1. In a typical week, what is the latest you can stay out on SCHOOL NIGHTS (Monday-Thursday)?

**Not allowed out**    **Before 8:00**    **8:00 ~ 8:59**    **9:00 ~ 9:59**    **10:00 ~ 10:59**    **11:00 or later**    **As late as I want**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

2. In a typical week, what is the latest you can stay out on FRIDAY or SATURDAY NIGHT?

**Not Allowed out**    **Before 9:00**    **9:00 ~ 9:59**    **10:00 ~ 10:59**    **11:00 ~ 11:59**    **12:00 ~ 12:59**    **1:00 ~ 1:59**    **After 2:00**    **As late as I want**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8-----9

3. Do your parents know where you are most afternoons after school?

1 = Yes                      2 = Sometimes                      3 = No

4. Do your parents know where you go at night?

1 = Yes                      2 = Sometimes                      3 = No

5. Do your parents know what you do with your free time?

1 = Yes                      2 = Sometimes                      3 = No

**How often do the following things happen in your family? Please circle the number that most represents your experience.**

1. My parents spend time just talking with me.

**Almost every day**                      **A few times a week**                      **A few times a month**                      **Almost never**  
 1-----2-----3-----4

2. My family does something fun together.

**Almost every day**                      **A few times a week**                      **A few times a month**                      **Almost never**  
 1-----2-----3-----4

3. My parents try hard to know where I go at night.

**Strongly Disagree**                      **Disagree**                      **Somewhat Disagree**                      **Uncertain**                      **Somewhat Agree**                      **Agree**                      **Strongly Agree**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

4. My parents try hard to know what I do with my free time.

**Strongly Disagree**                      **Disagree**                      **Somewhat Disagree**                      **Uncertain**                      **Somewhat Agree**                      **Agree**                      **Strongly Agree**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

5. My parents try hard to know where I am most afternoons after school.

**Strongly Disagree**                      **Disagree**                      **Somewhat Disagree**                      **Uncertain**                      **Somewhat Agree**                      **Agree**                      **Strongly Agree**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

⇒ over

**Section V**

This section asks you some general information about your family. There is no right or wrong answer. On a scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree, please circle the number indicating how strongly you agree/disagree with each statement. The more strongly you agree with the statement, the higher number you should circle:

**Strongly Disagree**      **Disagree**      **Somewhat Disagree**      **Uncertain**      **Somewhat Agree**      **Agree**      **Strongly Agree**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

- |  | <b>Strongly Disagree</b> |   | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 1. Including food, housing, and all other expenses, my living expenses are paid entirely by my parents.  | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2. When it comes to deciding when and how things are done in my family's home, my father/mother has the largest amount of influence.   | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3. In making decisions about how much money I get from my parents, my father/mother has the largest amount of influence.   | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4. My father/mother is able to make you feel very good or make you feel bad, when he/she wants to, by the things he/she says and does.   | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5. When I have to make a decision, I sometimes consider what my father/mother would want me to do.   | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6. When I have a decision to make the ideas of my father/mother are worthy of careful consideration.   | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7. My father/mother's opinion of my behavior would not mean so much to me as the opinions of my best friend.   | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8. If I were undecided about whether some particular behavior would be all right, I would make up my mind <u>without</u> considering what my father/mother might think.  | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 9. The wishes of my father/mother should be given as much weight as those of anyone except myself, when it comes to making decisions about my relationship with members of the opposite sex.   | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10. My father/mother has a right to give me advice about my relationships with members of the opposite sex.  | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11. Since my relationships with members of the opposite sex will influence the remainder of my life through affecting what people think about me and who I marry, my own opinion is more important than my father/mother's in this area. | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 12. My father/mother is the authority in decisions about my relationships with members of the opposite sex.  | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 13. My father/mother has a right to give me advice about my education.   | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 14. The wishes of my father/mother should be given as much as those of anyone except myself when it comes to making decisions about education.   | 1                        | 2 | 3                     | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

⇒ over

- |  |                                     |                             |                                       |                     |                         |                        |                           |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | <b>Strongly<br/>Disagree</b>        |                             |                                       |                     |                         |                        | <b>Strongly<br/>Agree</b> |
|  | ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- |                             |                                       |                     |                         |                        |                           |
| 15. Since my education will influence the remainder of my life, my own opinion is more important than my father/mother's in this area.                             | 1                                   | 2                           | 3                                     | 4                   | 5                       | 6                      | 7                         |
| 16. My father/mother is the authority in decisions about my education.   | 1                                   | 2                           | 3                                     | 4                   | 5                       | 6                      | 7                         |
| 17. My father/mother is able to give me useful advice about relationships with the opposite sex.   | 1                                   | 2                           | 3                                     | 4                   | 5                       | 6                      | 7                         |
| 18. For an older person, my father/mother knows a great deal about the dating activities of young people.  | 1                                   | 2                           | 3                                     | 4                   | 5                       | 6                      | 7                         |
| 19. My father/mother's ideas about dating and relationships between the sexes are entirely out of date.  | 1                                   | 2                           | 3                                     | 4                   | 5                       | 6                      | 7                         |
| 20. My father/mother's ideas would <u>not</u> be very helpful to me in deciding what kind of person of the opposite sex I should and should not get involved with. | 1                                   | 2                           | 3                                     | 4                   | 5                       | 6                      | 7                         |
| 21. My father/mother knows little or nothing about the names and activities of various academic fields and college departments.                                    | 1                                   | 2                           | 3                                     | 4                   | 5                       | 6                      | 7                         |
| 22. My father/mother knows a great deal about the strong and weak points of various college and universities.  | 1                                   | 2                           | 3                                     | 4                   | 5                       | 6                      | 7                         |
| 23. My father/mother is <u>not</u> able to tell me how to study effectively.   | 1                                   | 2                           | 3                                     | 4                   | 5                       | 6                      | 7                         |
|  | ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- |                             |                                       |                     |                         |                        |                           |
|  | <b>Strongly<br/>Disagree</b>        |                             |                                       |                     |                         |                        | <b>Strongly<br/>Agree</b> |
| 24. How far did your father/mother (this parent) go to school?   |                                     |                             |                                       |                     |                         |                        |                           |
| <b>Grade School</b>  | <b>Some High school</b>             | <b>High school Graduate</b> | <b>Trade school After high school</b> | <b>Some College</b> | <b>College Graduate</b> | <b>Graduate School</b> |                           |
| 1-----   | 2-----                              | 3-----                      | 4-----                                | 5-----              | 6-----                  | 7-----                 |                           |

## Section VI

This section inquires you and your father/mother's participation in making the previous **product decisions** (i.e., CD Player, Video Game Play Station, Music Record, Movie Coupons, etc.). Each question is rated on a 7-point scale (**1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree**). The **more strongly** you agree with the situation, the **higher** number you should circle.

- |   |                                     |   |                              |   |                  |   |                           |  |              |  |                           |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|---|------------------|---|---------------------------|--|--------------|--|---------------------------|
|   | <b>Strongly<br/>Disagree</b>        |   | <b>Somewhat<br/>Disagree</b> |   | <b>Uncertain</b> |   | <b>Somewhat<br/>Agree</b> |  | <b>Agree</b> |  | <b>Strongly<br/>Agree</b> |
|   | ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- ----- |   |                              |   |                  |   |                           |  |              |  |                           |
| 1. These decisions are practical despite hypothetical, and I behaved as I usually do in real family decision making.                    | 1                                   | 2 | 3                            | 4 | 5                | 6 | 7                         |  |              |  |                           |
| 2. These decisions are practical despite hypothetical, and my father/mother behaved as she usually does in real family decision making. | 1                                   | 2 | 3                            | 4 | 5                | 6 | 7                         |  |              |  |                           |

⇒ over

3. When I filled out the **Part A** of this questionnaire, I did not discuss with my father/mother and formed ideas by my own.

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Uncertain</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

**Section VII**

Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Read each item and indicate whether the statement is **True** or **False** as it pertains to you personally.

- |  |        |         |
|--|--------|---------|
| 1. I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble.                                | 1=True | 2=False |
| 2. At times I have really insisted on having things my own way.                                    | 1=True | 2=False |
| 3. My table manners at home are as good as when I eat out in a restaurant.                         | 1=True | 2=False |
| 4. I have never intensely disliked anyone.   | 1=True | 2=False |
| 5. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability. | 1=True | 2=False |
| 6. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.   | 1=True | 2=False |
| 7. When I don't know something I don't at all mind admitting it.                                   | 1=True | 2=False |
| 8. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.                                       | 1=True | 2=False |
| 9. I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoings.                     | 1=True | 2=False |
| 10. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.                                    | 1=True | 2=False |

Finally, we would like to know some information regarding your demographics for classification purpose. Please circle or check the appropriate answer.

1. What is your age?      10 years      11 years      12 years      13 years      14 years      15 years      16 years

2. What is your gender?      1 = Male      2 = Female

3. How much spending money do you get from your parents each week?

<b>&lt; \$10</b>	<b>\$10~19</b>	<b>\$20~29</b>	<b>\$30~39</b>	<b>\$40~49</b>	<b>\$50~59</b>	<b>&gt; \$60</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

4. How would you describe your relationship with your parents?

<b>Extremely close-knit</b>	<b>Very close-knit</b>	<b>Somewhat close-knit</b>	<b>Not very close-knit</b>	<b>Not at all close-knit</b>
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----

⇒ over

5. Are you working on a part-time job?                    1 = Yes                    2 = No
6. How many brothers/sisters do you have?            None    1            2            3            4            5 or more
7. If you have brothers/sisters, what is your order among them?
- Don't have any            Oldest            2nd oldest            3rd oldest            4th oldest            5th oldest or others
8. With which parent(s) do you currently live? (Please check only one response)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mother and father
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mother and stepfather
- \_\_\_\_\_ Father and stepmother
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mother only
- \_\_\_\_\_ Father only
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify \_\_\_\_\_)

**Thank you very much for your cooperation! Please mail back the signed informed consent forms and all the three completed questionnaires (i.e., your survey, your father/mother's survey, and the group choice survey), using the enclosed pre-stamped envelope. The lotteries will be drawn shortly and you will be notified the result through the mail.**

## Group Choice Survey

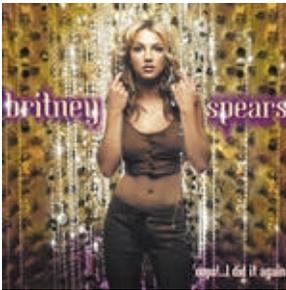
### Part I

Suppose that your family wins the lottery for the minor product. Which of the minor products will you choose? **Please review the alternative products again** and make a **joint decision** about which item to choose. Remember, this is the product you will receive if you win the lottery. **Please discuss and agree on a rating for each of the four alternatives.** After both of you agree on the ratings, please record them in the space provided below.

#### Scenario One: Selecting a Minor Product

Please **jointly** rate the following four minor product alternatives and decide on the one you will choose if you win the lottery.

##### Alternative 1: Music Record (CD)



##### Popular Music Record

Have you got the recent CD by Britney Spears or Backstreet Boys, or other big stars yet?

*Here you get the chance!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Uncertain      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

##### Alternative 2: Coupon for Sears



##### Coupon for Sears

The good life at a great price!

*Go to Sears!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Uncertain      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

⇒ over

**Alternative 3: Coupons for Movie Tickets**



**Coupons for Local Cinemas**

What are you doing this weekend?

*Why not invite your friends to the movies!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Uncertain      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

**Alternative 4: Coupon for Home Depot**



**Coupon for Home Depot**

Your hard work deserves a better life.  
 Home depot has got everything for your home improvement needs.

*Your home, your home depot!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Uncertain      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

**Now, please circle the product you both agree on. This is the one you will receive if you win the minor product lottery.**

Music Record (CD)

Coupon for Sears

Movie Coupons

Coupon for home depot

⇒ over

**Part II**

Suppose that your family also wins the lottery for the major product. Which of the major products will you choose? **Please review the alternative products again** and make a **joint decision** about which item to choose. Remember, this is the product you will receive if you win the lottery. **Please discuss and agree on a rating for each of the four alternatives.** After both of you agree on the ratings, please record them in the space provided below.

**Scenario Two: Selecting a Major Product**

Please **jointly** rate the following four major product alternatives and decide on the one you will choose if you win the lottery.

**Alternative 1: Sony CD player.**

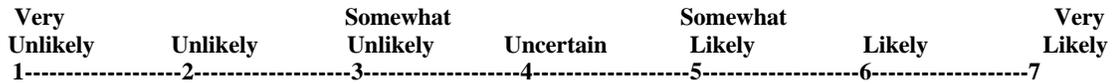


**Sony D-E200 Discman**

SteadySound™ Electronic Shock Protection  
 Digital MEGA BASS Sound System  
 Long Battery Life with 2 AA Batteries  
 High Image design with Heat resistant lid

*Your world ... Your Sony!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.



**Alternative 2: Nintendo Play Station**



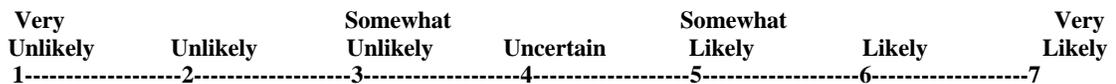
**N64 Funtastic System**

Experience unsurpassed 64-bit graphics and CD quality sound at an awesome 94 MHZ.

Reach new levels of accuracy with the N64 controller featuring 14-buttons and analog control stick.

*Enjoy your favorite N64 games!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.



⇒ over

**Alternative 3: Elegant Family Dinner**



**Elegant Family Dinner**

Perfectly cooked lobster tails  
 Carefully selected and grilled steaks  
 Fresh seafood and delightful pastas

*Treat your family to something really delicious!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Uncertain	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Very Likely
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

**Alternative 4: Family Music Event**



**Family Music Event**

The whole family together  
 Flowing melodies  
 Touching songs  
 Another treasurable night

*Enjoy the sweet moment!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your likelihood of choosing this alternative.

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Uncertain	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Very Likely
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

Now, please circle the product you both agree on. This is the one you will receive if you win the major product lottery.

CD Player

Video Game Play Station

Family Dinner

Family Music Event

Please Go Back to **Part B** of Your Previous Survey. Thank You!

## Appendix B

### Electronic Message to University Faculty and Staff Members

Title: Help on research/Receive gift

Dear faculty and staff members:

#### **I need a favor!**

I am a doctoral candidate in marketing at Virginia Tech. For my dissertation, I have proposed a study to examine the roles family members play in family purchase decisions. I need one teenage child, 12 to 15 years old, and one of their parents/stepparents to participate in the study.

If you participate, you and your child will complete three simple surveys at home (the study does not require traveling). This will take about 40 minutes. To show my appreciation for your effort and time, I will send you \$10 for participation. In addition, a lottery will be run in which you and your child will have a chance of approximately 1 in 25 to win one of two gifts (either \$200 or \$30 retail value). All responses will remain anonymous and confidential. Your responses will be combined with those from other parents and children so that individuals cannot be identified.

**To participate, please reply to this message and indicate your mailing address. A package including the surveys and instructions will be snail-mailed to you shortly.**

I look forward to your participation in the study. If you have any question about this research, please do not hesitate to contact me at (540) 231-9618 (email: yeqing\_bao@yahoo.com). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Yeqing Bao  
Doctoral Candidate  
Dept. of Marketing  
Virginia Tech  
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Ps:

1. This study has been approved by the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB).
2. Please forgive if you happened to have come across this message before due to cross post.
3. This message was sent to you as an individual, not as a member of any email list. Please ignore if you are not interested.

## **Appendix C**

### Questionnaire for the Pilot Study

## Children's Participation in Family Consumer Decision Makings

### Section I

Suppose your teenager child (12~15 years) wins a monetary award of **\$100** through participating a consumer behavior study. But he/she could only get the award by purchasing one major product of equal or less value (i.e., **\$100 retail value**). What product do you think your child would most want to purchase? Please write it in the space below.

---

### Scenario One: Selecting a Major Product

Now suppose your teenager child wins an award because of his/her outstanding performance in school. He/she is asked to pick up one major product as the award. The following are four product alternatives. **How likely do you think your child will choose each alternative?** Please circle the appropriate number on a scale of 1 to 7.

#### Alternative 1: Sony CD player.



#### Sony D-E200 Discman

SteadySound™ Electronic Shock Protection  
 Digital MEGA BASS Sound System  
 Long Battery Life with 2 AA Batteries  
 High Image design with Heat resistant lid

*Your world ... Your Sony!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your child's likelihood to choose this alternative.

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Maybe or Maybe not	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Very Likely
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

#### Alternative 2: Nintendo 64 Funtastic Play Station



#### N64 Funtastic System

Experience unsurpassed 64-bit graphics and CD quality sound at an awesome 94 MHZ.

Reach new levels of accuracy with the N64 controller featuring 14-buttons and analog control stick.

*Enjoy your favorite N64 games!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your child's likelihood to choose this alternative.

Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Maybe or Maybe not	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Very Likely
1-----	2-----	3-----	4-----	5-----	6-----	7-----

⇒ next page

**Alternative 3: Roadmaster Mountain Bike**



**Roadmaster™ Mountain Sport Bike**

Specifically designed for younger generations  
 18-speed twist torque drive shifting  
 Front and rear caliper brakes  
 Bottom bracket-mounted kickstand and water bottle

*Experience the excitement of off-road riding!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your child's likelihood to choose this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Maybe or Maybe not      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

**Alternative 4: Wilson Titanium Tennis Racquet**



**Wilson Pro Staff Titanium Racquet**

Preferred by some of the best tennis players everywhere, the Wilson titanium racquet is designed with a long loopy stroke and a fast swing speed. It puts the sweet spot lower on the face of the frame where more professionals like for absolute control.

*Go for the Championship!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your child's likelihood to choose this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Maybe or Maybe not      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

Now, among the four alternatives, **which one do you think your child is most likely to choose if he/she wins the award?**  
 Please circle only one at the below.

CD Player

N64 system

Mountain Bike

Tennis Racquet

⇒ next page

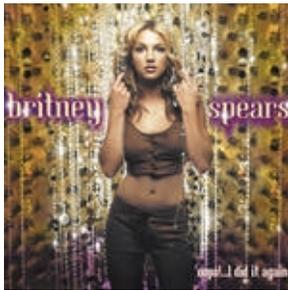
Now suppose your teenager child wins another monetary award of **\$15** through helping others. Again he/she could only get the award by purchasing one product of equal or less value (i.e., **\$15 retail value**). What product do you think your child would most want to purchase? Please write it in the space below.

---

**Scenario Two: Selecting a Minor Product**

Now suppose your teenager child wins an award because of his/her excellence in a public speech competition. He/she is asked to pick up one product as the award. The following are four product alternatives. **How likely do you think your child will choose each alternative?** Please circle the appropriate number on a scale of 1 to 7.

**Alternative 1: Music Record**



**Popular Music Record**

Have you got the recent album by Britney Spears or Backstreet Boys yet?

*Here you get the chance!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your child's likelihood to choose this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Maybe or Maybe not      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

**Alternative 2: Scientific Calculator**



**TI-30X IIS Scientific Calculator**

Do you feel headache at math, algebra, or trigonometry?

*This product may help you!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your child's likelihood to choose this alternative.

Very Unlikely      Unlikely      Somewhat Unlikely      Maybe or Maybe not      Somewhat Likely      Likely      Very Likely  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

⇒ next page

**Alternative 3: Coupons for Movie Tickets**



**Coupons for Local Cinemas**

What are you doing this weekend?

*Why not go to the movies with your friends!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your child's likelihood to choose this alternative.

Very Unlikely 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7  
 Unlikely Somewhat Unlikely Maybe or Somewhat Very  
 Unlikely Unlikely Unlikely Maybe not Likely Likely Likely

**Alternative 4: Subscription to a Magazine**



**Subscription to a Popular Magazine**

Are you keeping up with what is happening to other teens?

*Read the Seventeen!*

On the following scale of 1 to 7, please circle the number that represents your child's likelihood to choose this alternative.

Very Unlikely 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7  
 Unlikely Somewhat Unlikely Maybe or Somewhat Very  
 Unlikely Unlikely Unlikely Maybe not Likely Likely Likely

Now, among the four alternatives, **which one do you think your child is most likely to choose if he/she wins the award?** Please circle only one at the below.

Record                  Calculator                  Movie Coupons                  Magazine Subscription

⇒ next page

## Section II

In this section, please recall in daily life, how does your teenage child try to influence you when he/she wants you to buy something (e.g., CD player, Tennis Racquet)? How do you usually respond to him/her? There are 18 different influence strategies your child might have used and 14 strategies you might have used in responding to him/her. On a scale ranging from 1 = never to 5 = all the time, please circle the number representing the frequency each statement occurs to your child or you. The more frequently a stated behavior occurs, the higher number you should circle:

Never                      Only                      Now and                      Often                      All the time  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5

	Never				All the time
	----- ----- ----- -----				
1. My child simply asks me to buy the product for him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My child tells me that he/she'd do some special things if I buy the product for him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My child makes jokes trying to get his/her way.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My child pleads or begs me.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My child indicates to me the fact that his/her other friends have "it".	1	2	3	4	5
6. My child reasons with me, trying to argue his/her request logically.	1	2	3	4	5
7. My child tells me what he/she wants. He/she just states his/her needs.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My child becomes especially affectionate to me in hopes to get his/her way.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My child usually nags until I get irritated.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My child makes me feel guilty in hopes to have me buy the product.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My child tries to negotiate something agreeable to both of us.	1	2	3	4	5
12. My child repeatedly reminds me of what he/she wants.	1	2	3	4	5
13. My child explains the reasons for his/her requests.	1	2	3	4	5
14. My child asks repetitively for the product yet trying not to irritate me.	1	2	3	4	5
15. My child withdraws affection, acts cold, becomes silent, or ignores me.	1	2	3	4	5
16. My child behaves angrily trying to have me buy the product for him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
17. My child appeals to my love and affection.	1	2	3	4	5
18. My child asks for the product in a way that sounds reasonable to me.	1	2	3	4	5
	----- ----- ----- -----				
	Never				All the time

⇒ next page

Please indicate how you usually respond to your child when he/she requests you to buy something (e.g., CD player, Tennis racquet).

	Never					All the time				
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
1. I discuss the purchase with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5					
2. I try to negotiate something agreeable to both of us.	1	2	3	4	5					
3. I simply give in to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5					
4. I often make purchase to reward his/her good behavior.	1	2	3	4	5					
5. I shame on him/her about his/her request.	1	2	3	4	5					
6. I just ignore his/her request.	1	2	3	4	5					
7. I express my opinion toward his/her request.	1	2	3	4	5					
8. I teach my child how to select the best alternative.	1	2	3	4	5					
9. I give yes/no answer to his/her request without giving reasons.	1	2	3	4	5					
10. I reason with my child, trying to argue logically.	1	2	3	4	5					
11. I ask my child's opinion toward different alternatives.	1	2	3	4	5					
12. I suggest other product choices or shopping locations.	1	2	3	4	5					
13. I postpone purchase decision for some period of time.	1	2	3	4	5					
14. I offer purchase in return for certain behaviors.	1	2	3	4	5					
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----					
	Never									All the time

### Section III

In this section, we would like to know some information about your daily experience. There is no right or wrong answer. Please read the instruction and answer each question honestly. Thank you!

**What do you think is usually true or usually false about you and your child? Please circle the number that most represents your experience.**

9. My child can count on me to help him/her out, if he/she has some kind of problem.

Usually True                      Sometimes True                      Usually False  
 1-----2-----3

10. I keep pushing my child to do his/her best in whatever he/she does.

Usually True                      Sometimes True                      Usually False  
 1-----2-----3

11. I keep pushing my child to think independently.

Usually True                      Sometimes True                      Usually False  
 1-----2-----3

12. I help my child with his/her school work if there is something he/she doesn't understand.

Usually True                      Sometimes True                      Usually False  
 1-----2-----3

13. When I want my child to do something, I explain why.

Usually True                      Sometimes True                      Usually False  
 1-----2-----3

⇒ next page



8. How much do you REALLY know what your child does with his/her free time?

*Don't know*                      *Know a little*                      *Know a lot*  
 1-----2-----3

9. How much do you REALLY know where your child is most afternoons after school?

*Don't know*                      *Know a little*                      *Know a lot*  
 1-----2-----3

**Section IV**

Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Read each item and indicate whether the statement is **True** or **False** as it pertains to you personally.

- |  |               |                |
|--|---------------|----------------|
| 1. I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble.                                | <b>1=True</b> | <b>2=False</b> |
| 2. At times I have really insisted on having things my own way.                                    | <b>1=True</b> | <b>2=False</b> |
| 3. My table manners at home are as good as when I eat out in a restaurant.                         | <b>1=True</b> | <b>2=False</b> |
| 4. I have never intensely disliked anyone.   | <b>1=True</b> | <b>2=False</b> |
| 5. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability. | <b>1=True</b> | <b>2=False</b> |
| 6. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.   | <b>1=True</b> | <b>2=False</b> |
| 7. When I don't know something I don't at all mind admitting it.                                   | <b>1=True</b> | <b>2=False</b> |
| 8. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.                                       | <b>1=True</b> | <b>2=False</b> |
| 9. I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoings.                     | <b>1=True</b> | <b>2=False</b> |
| 10. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.                                    | <b>1=True</b> | <b>2=False</b> |

Finally, this section asks some demographic information for classification purpose. Please circle the appropriate answer.

1. What is your age?

**<=29 years**    **30-34 years**    **35-39 years**    **40-44 years**    **45-49 years**    **50-54 years**    **55-59 years**    **>= 60 years**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8

2. What is your working status (outside of home)?

**Full-time**                      **Part-time**                      **Not working outside the home**                      **Others**  
 1-----2-----3-----4

3. How far did you go to school?

**Grade School**                      **Some High school**                      **High school Graduate**                      **Trade school After high school**                      **Some College**                      **College Graduate**                      **Graduate School**  
 1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7

4. How many children do you have?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----8 or more

5. How old is your child of concern in this study? \_\_\_\_\_ years

6. What is the gender of your child of concern in this study?      **1 = male**                      **2 = female**

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP!**

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**EDUCATION**

- Ph.D. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, April 2001  
*Major Area: Marketing*  
*Minor Area: International Business*
- M.S. Program Tsinghua University, P.R.China, September 1994-June 1996  
Major: International Finance and Trade  
Thesis: Shanghai's Moderate Amount of Foreign Debt and Developing Strategy  
(Entered doctoral program at Virginia Tech rather than stay and complete MS program)
- B.E. Tsinghua University, P.R.China, July 1994  
*Major Area: Mechanical Engineering*  
*Minor Area: Enterprises Management*

**DISSERTATION**

*Effects of Parental Style and Power on Children's Influence in Family Consumption Decisions* (Copyright 2001)

**Dissertation Committee:**

*Chair:* Edward Fern

*Members:* Noreen Klein, James Littlefield, Joseph Sirgy, and Keying Ye (Statistics)

**TEACHING**

**Courses Taught**

Marketing Research, Advertising, International Marketing, Relationship Marketing, Marketing Communications, Consumer Behavior

**RESEARCH**

**Research Interests**

*Family Decision-Making:* Consumer socialization between parents and children

*Internet Marketing:* Impact of Internet use on service quality evaluation; Internet advertising

*International Marketing:* Country of origin effect in international advertising; Cross cultural consumer behavior

**Journal Publications**

Littlefield, James E., Yeqing Bao, and Don L. Cook (2000), "Internet Real Estate Information: Are Home Purchasers Paying Attention to It?" Journal of Consumer Marketing, 17 (7), 575-590.

Su, Chenting and Yeqing Bao, "Student Complaint Behavior Based on Power Perception: A Taxonomy," forthcoming, Services Marketing Quarterly (formerly the *Journal of Professional Services Marketing*).

### **Conference Publications**

Bao, Yeqing and Zheng Zhou (1999), "Effect of Involvement on Consumer's Country of Origin Information Processing," in Joyce A. Young, Robert D. Green, and Faye W. Gilbert (eds.), Advances in Marketing: Theory, Practice, and Education, Atlanta, GA: Society for Marketing Advances, 107-110.

Ming, Tianran and Yeqing Bao (2001), " Evaluation of Problems on Solid Waste Management in Developing Countries: A Model For Decision-Making," accepted by the World Planning Schools Congress in Shanghai, China.

Shao, Alan T. and Yeqing Bao (2001), "Unique Positioning to an Elusive Market: Targeting Teenagers," accepted by the 2001 Academy of Marketing Science Annual Conference in San Diego.

Yang, Xin and Yeqing Bao (1997), "Developing Countries' Need for Foreign Investment: Modeling from a Consumer Behavior Perspective," in Scott M. Smith (ed.), Sixth Symposium on Cross-Cultural Consumer and Business Studies, Honolulu, HI: 25-29.

Zhou, Zheng, Liang Li, and Yeqing Bao (1999), "Demographic Profiles of China Internet Users: Implication for International Marketing in China," in Ruby R. Dholakia and Solveig Wikstrom (eds.), Electronic Commerce: Behaviors of Suppliers, Producers, Intermediaries & Consumers, Vol. 3, Kingston, RI: RITIM, University of Rhode Island.

### **Papers Under Review**

Zhou, Zheng and Yeqing Bao, "User's Attitude toward Web Advertising: Effects of Internet Motivation and Internet Ability," Manuscript submitted to the 2001 Association for Consumer Research conference.

### **Research in Progress**

Bao, Yeqing, Carter A. Mandrik, and Edward F. Fern, "A Cross-Cultural Study of Intergenerational Transfer of Brand Preference." (Manuscript in progress)

Bao, Yeqing, James E. Littlefield, and Don L. Cook, "Consumer Use of Internet Information in Home Purchase: Does It Affect Evaluation of Service Quality?" (Manuscript in progress)

Bao, Yeqing and Zheng Zhou, "Influence of Culture on Decision-Making Styles: An Expanded Consumer Socialization Perspective." (Manuscript being revised for resubmission)

Mandrik, Carter A., Edward F. Fern, and Yeqing Bao, "Intergenerational Influence in Mother/Daughter Dyads." (Manuscript being revised for submission)

Mandrik, Carter A. and Yeqing Bao, "To BIRG or Not to BIRG? Team Loyalty is the Question!" (Manuscript being revised for submission)

Shao, Alan T. and Yeqing Bao, "Unique Selling Proposition Through Non-Conformity Advertising Toward Teens: A Field Study." (Manuscript being revised for resubmission)

Zhou, Zheng, Chenting Su, and Yeqing Bao, "Is Price-Quality Schema Robust Across Markets? A Cross-National Perspective." (Manuscript in progress)

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

American Marketing Association  
Association for Consumer Research  
Society for Marketing Advances

## **SERVICE**

Virginia Tech Cranwell International Center Advisory Committee, 1999-present.  
Virginia Tech International Student Orientation Leader, 1999.  
Public relation president of the Virginia Tech Association of Chinese Students and Scholars, 1998.  
Departmental representative to the Virginia Tech Graduate Student Assembly, 1997-1998.

## **AWARDS**

Fellow, Society for Marketing Advances (SMA) Doctoral Consortium, 2000.  
Honored Graduates, Tsinghua University, 1994.

## **REFERENCES**

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