Independent “family” variables that affect the influence of adolescents in the family decision making process.

Tim Veenstra
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Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction ............................................................................................................. 3
  1.1 introduction ...................................................................................................................... 3
  1.2 Managerial relevance ..................................................................................................... 3
  1.3 Academic relevance ...................................................................................................... 4
  1.4 Problem statement: ....................................................................................................... 4
  1.5 Research Questions: ..................................................................................................... 4
  1.6 Structure of the thesis .................................................................................................. 4

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework ......................................................................................... 5
  2.1 Influence of Adolescents on the Family Decision Making process (FDM):.................. 5
    2.1.1 Influence: ............................................................................................................... 6
    2.1.2 Adolescents: ....................................................................................................... 6
    2.1.3. Family decision-making: .................................................................................. 6
  2.2 Family structure: ......................................................................................................... 7
  2.3 Gender Role Orientation .............................................................................................. 8
  2.4 Parental Communication Patterns .............................................................................. 8
    Concept-orientation: ...................................................................................................... 8
    Socio-orientation: ....................................................................................................... 9
  2.5 Mother’s Occupational status .................................................................................... 10

Chapter 3: The family structure’s affect on the influence of adolescents on the family decision-making process. ........................................................................................................... 12
  3.1 Introduction: ............................................................................................................... 12
  3.2 Consistent literature ................................................................................................... 12
  3.3 Inconsistent literature ............................................................................................... 14
  3.4 conclusion .................................................................................................................. 14

Chapter 4: The affect of Gender Role Orientation on the influence of adolescents on the family decision-making process, partially mediated by the mother’s occupational status. ......................................................................................................................... 15
4.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 15

4.2 Literature review for the direct effect of GRO on the influence of adolescents on the FDM process .................................................................................................................................................. 15

4.3 Introduction of the mediating variable .................................................................................................. 16

4.4 linking mother’s occupational status to GRO ......................................................................................... 17

4.5 The literature about GRO mediated by mother’s occupational status on the influence of adolescents in the FDM process ........................................................................................................................................... 17

4.6 conclusions .............................................................................................................................................. 18

Chapter 5: The parental communication patterns’ (PCP) effect on the influence of adolescents in the family decision-making process. ........................................................................................................... 20

5.1 Introduction .............................................................................................................................................. 20

   5.1.1 Concept-orientation: ......................................................................................................................... 20

   5.1.2 Socio-orientation: ............................................................................................................................ 21

   5.1.3 Laissez faire: .................................................................................................................................... 21

   5.1.4 Protective: ....................................................................................................................................... 21

   5.1.5 Pluralistic: ....................................................................................................................................... 21

   5.1.6 Consensual: .................................................................................................................................... 21

5.2 The literature on the role of PCP on the influence of adolescents on the FDM process. ........................................................................................................................................................................... 22

5.3 conclusion .............................................................................................................................................. 22

Chapter 6: General Discussion ..................................................................................................................... 24

6.1 Conclusion .............................................................................................................................................. 24

6.2 limitations and suggestions for further research .................................................................................... 25

6.3 Managerial Implications ......................................................................................................................... 26

Reference list: ........................................................................................................................................... 27
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In this thesis, focus is on the family decision-making process, particularly on the children’s role in this process. Since “all children” as a dependent variable would be too broad, it has been decided to narrow it to adolescents only. This category of children is the most interesting for the purpose of this paper, mainly because adolescents can indeed exert the most influence on the family since they are the oldest children, i.e. they have the most “tools” of influence. (e.g. Kim, Lee, and Hall, 1991; Palan and Wilkes, 1997) Furthermore, there has been much research on the family decision-making process as a whole and adolescents’ role in this process, in particular. (e.g. Nørgaard, Bruns, Christensen and Mikkelsen, 2007) What was missing, however, was an overview of the family variables that give an adolescent the opportunity to exert influence on the family decision-making progress. Of course not all variables that play a role in the “family make-up” can be put in the theoretical framework. For this literature review four of them (family structure, Gender Role Orientation, Mother’s occupational status and Family communication pattern) were chosen. The goal of this thesis is to give an overview of the family variables that have an effect on the influence that adolescents are able to exert in the family decision-making process.

1.2 Managerial relevance

From a manager’s point of view this thesis will be of interest because it combines different aspects of a family that play a role in the influence an adolescent can exert in the family decision-making process. It will also be of interest for marketers, because they can target families as a whole, and adolescents in different kinds of families in particular. More precisely, because marketers know the role of the adolescents in the family decision making process (relative to other families), they can target specific families through the adolescents of these families. Take for instance a marketer who has to sell a family vacation. It is highly beneficial for him/her to know in what kind of family an adolescent has a lot of influence. This way he/she knows whether to target the adolescent more profoundly or pay less attention to the adolescent.

This thesis aims to give an overview of a number of variables that can be used to draw some conclusions about a family. Furthermore, this thesis gives an indication about how a manager can/should react to families with different specifics.
1.3 Academic relevance
Although there have been articles (e.g. Roedder-John, 1999) trying to give an overview of the information available in consumer socialization-oriented papers, there has not been a paper giving an overview of the family factors that affect the influence that adolescents have on the family decision-making process. The goal of this thesis is to give such an overview for a part of the process, namely, the family factors affecting the influence of adolescents in the family decision making process (FDM).

1.4 Problem statement:
**In what way do the suggested independent “family” variables affect the influence of adolescents in the family decision making process?**

1.5 Research Questions:
1. What is the influence of adolescents in the family decision-making process?
2. How does the family structure affect the influence of adolescents in the family decision-making process?
3. How does the influence of Gender Role Orientation affect the influence of adolescents in the family decision-making process?
4. How does the influence of Gender Role Orientation affect the influence of adolescents in the family decision-making process, mediated by Mothers Occupational Status?
5. How do different parental communication patterns affect the influence of adolescents in the family decision-making process?

1.6 Structure of the thesis
The next chapter will present the theoretical framework with the definitions of the different variable. After that, the different aspects of the theoretical framework will be discussed in a top-to-bottom order. Chapter three will cover how the family structure affects the influence of adolescents in the family decision making process. In chapter four, the Gender Role Orientation’s direct affect on the influence of adolescents in the FDM process will be introduced. The Gender Role Orientation mediated by Mother’s occupational status affects on the influence of adolescents in the family decision making process is discussed in this chapter as well. Chapter five will present how parental communication patterns affects the influence of adolescents in the family decision making process. Chapter six will organize the topics discussed in the chapters three to five and will suggest some ideas for future research.
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework consists of the following variables:

The dependent variable in this thesis is “The influence of adolescents in the family decision making process”. The independent variables are: (1) “Family structure”, (2) the Gender Role Orientation (GRO). (This independent variable is partially mediated by the mother’s occupation. This means that there is a direct connection between gender role orientation and the influence of adolescents on the FDM process, as well as a connection from GRO through the mother’s occupational status. There is an expectation that the working-situation of the mother is affected by the GRO of the family. Less cryptic: Traditional families are expected to have a significant higher number of non-working women and egalitarian families is expected to have a significant higher number of working women.) (3) Parental Communication Patterns.

In the next paragraphs, some background about all the variables in our theoretical framework will be given. The definitions of the different variables addressed will be provided in this chapter as well, so let us start with the overview of the theoretical framework:

2.1 Influence of Adolescents on the Family Decision Making process (FDM):
In order to describe this variable properly it is important to give clear definitions of the concepts: influence, adolescents and family decision-making process.
2.1.1 Influence:
Ekström (1995) describes influence (in the FDM process) as “a change in a person’s dispositions, as a result of interaction between parents and children”. This means that a person who is influencing tries to move the final decision-maker away from their own personal preference towards an option (more) preferred by the one who tries to influence. As Belch, Belch and Ceresino (1985) state, there is another degree to influences in the FDM process. A more implicit way described as: parents being aware of the child’s preferences and trying to live-up to these expectations without actually interacting with the child (Nørgaard et al. 2007). This intangible way of influencing, however, is very difficult to measure and although there have been several acknowledgements of the findings of Belch et al (1985) concerning the existence of this phenomenon, (e.g. Jensen, 1990) there has been little explicit research on this particular subject. Therefore, when referred to influence in this review, the implicit influence without actual interaction is not taken into account. Only actual influence as a result of verbalizing thoughts in order to change the final outcome towards a more pleasant result is meant. Moreover, in most studies involving children, the perceived influence by children is greater than the influence that is admitted by the parents. In general, the studies taken into account for this literature review give more credit to the values given by the parents, assuming they have a better understanding of the total picture and can exert control over their children (e.g. Foxman et al, 1989; Beatty and Talpade, 1994). However, expectations are that the different “perceived” influences will not lead to conflicting results since the exaggeration by children is found in all cases. They are not linked in any way to the chosen independent variables. In other words, because in this study all findings are relative to each other, it does not matter whether children’s perceived influence is measured or parents’ perceived influence, as long as they are not crossed, mixing children’s perceptions of group A with the perceptions of the parents in group B.

2.1.2 Adolescents:
With adolescents in this case, the definition of Olsen and Ruiz (2008) is as follows. They drew a sample of 13 to 18 year olds and qualified them as adolescents. This is preferred over, for instance, the Palan and Wilkes (1997) definition of 11 to 16 year olds, mainly because a lot of research would have had to be excluded, because they included 17 and 18 year olds (i.e. Olsen and Ruiz, 2008 and Belch et al., 1985).

2.1.3. Family decision-making:
Family decision-making is usually divided into two parts: on the one hand the actual family decision-making with products that concern the whole family, on the other hand the decisions that concern the adolescents specifically, for instance personal clothing. In this literature review interest is on the products that actually concern the whole family. The products that might end up in the FDM process but are actually products for the adolescents themselves are not of our interest. This is because interest in this research is in the “pure” influence on the FDM process by adolescents.

Furthermore, the FDM process consists of different stages. The amount of stages differs in the research found. For instance: Davis, 1976; Ferber, 1975 state there are 4 stages: “The classic four stages of the family decision-making process: problem recognition, information search, final choice and actual purchase”. However, Tinson and Nancarrow (2007) speak of 3 stages that form the FDM-process: “three stages of decision making (searching or information gathering; negotiating; and making the final decision)”.

Although it is acknowledged that the influence exerted by adolescents might differ between the different stages in the FDM process, this thesis focuses on the overall influence of adolescents in this process. The reason for not using these stages is that it would divert too much attention from the key components of this study, which are of course the family variables in combination with the influence that adolescents can exert in the FDM process.

2.2 Family structure:
In this review the term “Family structure” is defined as the qualification of the family, i.e. the adults in the family and how they are related to the children. Rindfleisch, Burroughs and Denton (1997) put it this way:

“Over the past 30 years, the traditional American family has undergone dramatic structural changes, as evidenced by double-digit increases in the rates of divorce, remarriage, cohabitation, and single-parent families.”

Distinguished was between the nuclear family (existing of the biological mother and father), single-parent female-headed families, blended family (existing of biological parent, non-biological parent and perhaps step-siblings).

Important note: Single-parent fathers are not taken into account, because there is a lack of research concerning this group. This will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3.
2.3 Gender Role Orientation

Gender Role Orientation can be seen as a line from traditional families to more egalitarian families. In a traditional home the father/husband takes all the decisions without interference of the other members in the family. Lee and Beatty (2002) describe egalitarian parent(s) as being more "liberal in their attitude towards family decision making. The more egalitarian tend to share responsibilities and decisions in the household. This being the case it is posited where egalitarian parents are present then it is more likely the egalitarian disposition might extend to children and purchase decisions."

In this literature review, the goal is to reach a comparison between different groups. Therefore the independent variable Gender Role Orientation will be divided into two groups: Traditional families and Egalitarian families.

For this part of the study only dual-parent families are considered, because there is no research done about the Gender Role Orientation of single-parent families, because originally the term stems from a husband-wife comparison. So in chapter four only dual-parent families are considered. No distinction between nuclear and blended families will be made. But because it is so applicable to the current review and because there has been so much research done with children and gender role orientation, it is important to give it a place in the theoretical framework presented above. Moreover, GRO is a big factor in the family side of the FDM process (e.g. Tinson and Nancarrow 2007).

2.4 Parental Communication Patterns

In the research done on the FDM process a reoccurring phenomenon is the way the parents choose to communicate with their children. The most common way of defining parental communication behavior in the papers read for this chapter, is defining concept-oriented and socio-oriented communication patterns. (e.g. Moschis 1985 and Caruana and Vassallo 2003) Important to note is that one does not exclude the other.

Parents can use both socio- and concept-oriented communication patterns, they can also choose to use neither of the two pattern and they can opt to use either one of these patterns as well. The definitions of Concept-orientation and Socio-orientation:

Concept-orientation:

“Concept-orientation is a pattern that focuses on positive constraints that help the child to develop his/her own views about the world (Moschis, 1985).”
This is the degree to which parents make children familiar with controversy and the fact that there are more sides to a story. This leads, as Moschis stated, to own thinking patterns and conclusions.

**Socio-orientation:**

*the type of communication that is designed to produce deference and to foster harmonious and pleasant social relationships at home* (Moschis, 1985).

In other words, the degree to which parents’ communicating styles teach their children to avoid confrontations with other members of the family and to stay out of fights between family members.

In 1953, Newcomb developed a paradigm that is still used nowadays, it has become known as the A-B-X-paradigm. This paradigm was used by McLeod and Chaffee to explain concept- and socio-orientated communication structures. A quote to state the importance of their work:

*The typology of parent-child communication structures and patterns as developed by McLeod and Chaffee (1972) (figure 1 below) provides a useful vehicle for analyzing the quality of family interaction and its effects on consumer learning. The family communication patterns typology utilizes Newcomb's (1953) co-orientation model. Family communication structures refer to the two relatively uncorrelated dimensions which have been found repeatedly. The socio-oriented dimension is characterized by stressing A-B relationships and seems to produce deference and to foster harmonious and pleasant social relationships. On the other hand, the concept-oriented structure stresses A-X relationships and emphasizes helping the child to develop his/her own individual views of the world by imposing positive constraints*. (Moschis, Prahasto and Mitchell, 1986)

Now that the definitions are clear, let us work towards a scheme that McLeod and O'Keefe (1972) came up with: a four-fold typology arises when you distinguish high and low socio- and concept-oriented families. The terms which will be used in this review are the following: “Laissez-faire”, “Protective” “Pluralistic” and “Consensual”. A precise definition of these four terms will be given in chapter 5. For now, they are presented in a scheme by McLeod and O'Keefe (1972).
2.5 Mother’s Occupational status

In Schanninger and Allen (1984) the writers used a three-way distinction for the mother’s occupational status. This distinction is preferred over the simpler working vs. non-working mother difference. It is also necessary because there have been studies which were unable to find a significant difference between the two types of mothers (e.g. Strober and Weinberg 1977, 1980). There is the non-working wife on the one hand, the high-occupational status working wife (in short HSW) on the other hand. This is the career orientated wife. Between them, there is a third class which Schanninger and Allen (1984) called the Low-occupational status working wife (in short LSW). These are the women who are having a job primarily for the money.

This factor is chosen as a partial mediator of gender role orientation for several reasons; the most profound one is that it is expected that more egalitarian than traditional women occur in the high-occupational group, percentage-wise.

Why it cannot be a mediator for all independent variables has the same argument used in Gender Role Orientation; only dual-parent families are considered. That is; only families existing of both father and mother (and children, of which at least one adolescent) are considered in the research used for this review (belch et al, 1985). And the occupational status of the mother has no affect in the other independent variable: Socio- and Concept-oriented parents. The reason for this is because the occupational status of the mother has no influence
on the type of communication chosen by the parents. Perhaps the amount of time used for communication is influenced; however this is not a factor in the Socio- and Concept-orientation of parents.
Chapter 3: The family structure's affect on the influence of adolescents on the family decision-making process.

3.1 Introduction:
In this chapter, the goal is to find proof for a straight line from low to high influence by adolescents in the FDM process, as the family structure becomes more difficult. That means in this study expectation is to find the most influence in single-parent female-headed households, followed by nuclear families and finally the blended families. This chapter will first deal with findings that support this expectation, followed by contradicting findings and will conclude with a reflection of the presented findings. But first, the different family structure definitions will be repeated.

Because this is a literature study, it is limited by the research done previously. The different family structures used in this literature study are: first (1) the nuclear family, consisting of the two biological parents. Secondly (2) the single-parent female-headed family; meaning a couple has divorced each other and now the children are with the mother. There is a lack of research on the single-fathers, mainly because there is such a high percentage of mothers that are getting custody over the children that it has been far more interesting to look at the single-mothers than the single-fathers. As Ahuja and Stinson (1993) stated in 1989, 88% of the single-households was headed by women. They perceive this as the main reason why there has not been (much) research on single-fathers. This lack of research forces this literature review to exclude the single-fathers as a group. And the third group are the (3) blended families, a family of 2 parents, but only one of them is an actual biological parent or as Chaudhury (2009) put it:

“Cohabitation and re-marriage result in step-families where the child has to contend with step-parent and step-siblings, the latter often with wide age gaps.”

3.2 Consistent literature

In this thesis, references are made to Tinson and Nancarrow (2008), Flurry (2006), Mangleburg, Grewal and Bristol (1999) and Darley and Lim (1986), but there are many more papers supporting the same views.
Tinson and Nancarrow (2008) called the earlier mentioned assumption the *simplicity-complexity hypothesis*. Following this hypothesis, it is expected that a distinct line is found in all studies done in the field of influence in the FDM process with reference to family types. The expectation is that the most influence is exerted in the single-parent female-headed households, followed by the nuclear families and the least influence for adolescents is expected to be in the blended families. This is an important indicator, because it gives this chapter a basis to start from. It is an assumption that can be found throughout the literature about family type in combination with the FDM process.

To test this hypothesis they worked out two products, one being a product for the children’s own use (in this case: clothing) and the other, a holiday, a family-oriented matter. The surprise in this research was not so much that the expected line in the clothing case came through, but that there could not be determined significantly that there was a significant difference between either of the three distinct groups in the holiday part. Of course, there are reasons that might explain this, but the result of this paper was, in part, that there are no differences between the family structures when it comes to the influence that children can exert. Please note that there was a tendency towards this line, it just was not significant.

Flurry (2006) and Mangleburg, Grewal and Bristol (1999) found the same build-up of influence. However, they failed to give these findings a name. They simply stated that a child (in our case adolescent) is able to exert more influence in single-parent families than in nuclear families. It should be noted that Flurry did not distinguish between blended families and nuclear families; she just describes the difference between single- and dual-parents. Mangleburg et al. did a more distinguishing study with reference to the different family types:

“On the basis of our results, family type was found to be significantly related to differences in adolescents’ purchase influence, as perceived by a parent, for both family- and teen-related decisions. Specifically, adolescents in single-parent families had greater influence in both types of decisions as compared with adolescents in step-families and intact families.”

Both papers did present a significant result to prove the expectation uttered earlier.

The final paper taken into account in this chapter is the paper by Darley and Lim (1986). It is a shame that in this older study there is a distinction between single- and dual-parents only. Nevertheless, it makes a relevant contribution to the point of view demonstrated by the studies mentioned earlier. In this exploratory study, the hypothesis is supported that there can be
more influence exerted by children living in a single-parent family than those living in a dual-parent family.

3.3 Inconsistent literature

In his paper (1990), Mangleburg addresses some contradicting literature (e.g. Jenkins (1979), Nelson (1978) and Stinson and Ahuja (1993)). In some studies a positive relation between the number of humans in the family and the influence that children could exert, where in other studies there was a negative relationship between the same two variables. Mangleburg solves this as follows: There might be a reduced amount of influence exerted by the parent(s) in greater families, because the total decision-making has to be divided by more people. The individual child however loses influence as well, as the number of siblings- and therefore the number of decision makers in the family- increases. After this paper there has been only one study that resulted in an objection against the simplicity-complexity hypothesis (Stinson and Ahuja, 1993).

3.4 conclusion

To conclude, the studies that support the general idea mentioned as the simplicity-complexity hypothesis by Tinson and Nancarrow (2008) outweigh the outdated and neutralized (by Mangleburg, 1990) findings. In this hypothesis it is expected that the more complex a family’s structure is, the less influence an individual adolescent can exert.

Concluding, adolescents that live in a single-parent female-headed family can exert more influence in the FDM process than adolescents who are living in a dual-parents family. It has been shown that the dual-parents can be further subdivided into nuclear and blended families. Where the adolescents in the nuclear families can exert more influence in the FDM process than their peers in the blended families.
Chapter 4: The affect of Gender Role Orientation on the influence of adolescents on the family decision-making process, partially mediated by the mother’s occupational status.

4.1 Introduction
This chapter is about the direct effect of GRO on adolescents’ influence in the FDM process, as well as the part of GRO that is mediated by the mother’s occupational status. The expectation, for the direct effect is that adolescents from egalitarian families can exert more influence in the FDM process than adolescents from traditional families. The chapter will start with a short explanation of the egalitarian and traditional families. Since all literature on this subject is rather aligned, this chapter starts with the newest source and works its way back in time.

The partially mediated by mother’s occupational status part will also be addressed. The expectation for this part is that this mediation lessens the effects found in the first part of the chapter. The mediated part will start with quickly restating the definitions of the three different statuses found in the literature. In the subsequent part the link between GRO and the mother’s occupational status will be addressed. That part will be followed by the studies that address the mother’s occupational status and the affect it has on the influence that adolescents can exert on the FDM process. At the end of the chapter a short concluding paragraph will recapitulate the findings of the direct effect of GRO on adolescents’ influence on the FDM process and an additional paragraph will conclude on the mediated by mother’s occupational part.

In gender role orientation (GRO) differences are between traditional and egalitarian families. As defined by Tinson and Nancarrow in both 2005 and 2007: “That is, both parents and children can be categorized along a "traditional” to more egalitarian continuum depending on their preferences towards traditional household tasks such as childcare”.

Egalitarian families are considered as making decisions on the basis of discussion and equality, whereas in traditional families, decision is typically made by the head of the household. In traditional families the man typically is the head of the household.

4.2 Literature review for the direct effect of GRO on the influence of adolescents on the FDM process
Tinson and Nancarrow (2005) presented a study where the amount of influence exerted by adolescents on the FDM process was measured by GRO. There were some “gaps”, that do not exactly match our expectation that the more egalitarian a family is, the more influence the adolescents can exert. These incurred due to the way they conducted their research. In general, however, their findings confirm the expectation uttered earlier in this chapter, that children can exert more influence as the family becomes less traditional and thus more egalitarian.

Lee and Beatty (2002) found the same correlation as mentioned as Tinson and Nancarrow in the previous paragraph. Because it supports the theory that the egalitarian adolescents can exert more influence to the FDM process than their traditional peers, it is a useful contribution to this part of the chapter.

In a further past there have been a lot of studies that found the same relationship between GRO and the influence in the FDM process. In this review not all these studies will be treated explicitly, because their findings are all very similar and in line with the earlier mentioned expectation that adolescents can exert more influence. The study done by Qualls in 1987 will receive some extra attention. The recap of the Qualls study will represent, among others, the following: Bonfield (1978), Green and Cunningham (1970), Qualls (1982) and Rosen and Granbois (1983). Please remember that these are not identical papers but the views are in great lines equal and they all conclude that in their studies the relationship is as predicted above.

Qualls’ study in 1987 did not include children, which is typical for the studies of the 70s and 80s. However the contribution of these papers lies in the fact that they prove that a model for explaining the FDM process is significantly more accurate when GRO is included in the model.

4.3 Introduction of the mediating variable
This part focus is on the gender role orientation of the family, mediated by the mother of the family’s occupational status. Interest is, again, in the affect these factors have on the influence that adolescents can exert in the FDM process.

The Gender Role Orientation, is partially mediated by the occupational status of the mother, as explained in chapter two. In this chapter, Schanninger and Allen (1984), who were the first to make a three-way distinction within this concept, are followed. They determined that the
reason for not finding any significant differences between families with working and families with non-working mothers, in the past, was in the reason why they had the job. (E.g. Strober and Weinberg, 1977; 1980) So, next to the obvious Non-working woman (NWW) they divided the working women between the career-orientated women, and, the women who worked in order to gain additional funds for the family. The career-oriented woman was in their study called: high-occupational status working wife (in short HSW), on the other hand, the less high-profile working women were determined: Low-occupational status working wives (in short LSW).

4.4 linking mother’s occupational status to GRO

Now that the constructs are clearly defined and before the findings of the literature will be represented, it is important to show that there is actually a link between Gender Role Orientation and the mother’s occupational status. There are enough papers to link the occupational status of the mother to the family decision-making process, (unfortunately not too many to the children’s influence in this process) but finding papers that link GRO to the working status of women was a lot harder. However it seems self-evident that mother’s going to work outside of the house steers away from the traditional GRO and towards a more egalitarian household. The same conclusion is derived by Lee and Beatty (2002) who refer to a sex-role paradigm presented in Kaufman (2000) and Qualls (1987). As earlier mentioned, Qualls failed to make a distinction between the two working wives (LSW and HSW) Yet, Qualls did report that the increasing number of women with jobs would lead to a change in the Gender Role Orientation of those families. This may seem a connection in the opposite direction, but the findings by Kaufman (2000) suggest that the connection is the other way around as well. In her paper she finds significant evidence that egalitarian women are more likely to pursue an active career and to have a job. So the papers of Lee and Beatty, Kaufman and Qualls indicate that there is a link between the two variables that goes back and forth. This confirms the connection between GRO and Mother’s occupational status. Furthermore, it provides proof for the expectation that egalitarian women are more likely to have a job, either for career purposes or to earn additional money for the family.

4.5 The literature about GRO mediated by mother’s occupational status on the influence of adolescents in the FDM process.

In 2002, Lee and Beatty presented a study that provided some insights on the mediating role
that the mothers’ occupational status plays when linking GRO to the influence exerted in the FDM process. Their findings lead them to conclude that there is a different effect for egalitarian and traditional families. For the egalitarian families, the comparative resource theory first introduced by Blood and Wolfe (1960), that states that the amount of influence a person can exert is positively correlated to the amount of money they bring in, holds. This is very interesting since the expectation is that there are more LSW and HSW in the egalitarian corner and a higher percentage NWW is expected in the traditional corner (e.g. Lee and Beatty, 2002). Because the comparative resource theory expects influence to increase parallel with income, expectation is that LSW and HSW exert more influence. It is expected and proven by Lee and Beatty that the amount of influence that the adolescents can exert on the FDM process decreases, because of the increasing amount of influence that the mothers have, in egalitarian families. So this confirms the expectation that the mediation of the Mothers’ occupational status has a decreasing affect on the influence that adolescents can exert in the egalitarian FDM process.

For the traditional families, a different theory is introduced by Lee and Beatty (2002). In traditional families, adolescents with career orientated mothers had more influence, in contrast with the egalitarian families, where they had less influence. To explain these findings, they presented a theory that was based on guilt. They proposed that the traditional mothers who work let their children have more say in the FDM process, because from a traditional point of view, the role of the mother is to take care of the children. The theory suggests that the different results between egalitarian and traditional mothers is a reflection of this guilt felt by the traditional mothers.

Unfortunately, these findings have not been researched in any other study, so the findings are not backed up or attacked by other studies. Luckily, there are some studies that address the comparative resource theory (e.g. Green and Cunningham, 1970). This at least collaborates a part of this chapter. The guilt-theory, however, is in need of some serious testing.

4.6 conclusions

In the first part of the chapter the objective was to give an overview of the papers addressing GRO, particularly in the relationship with influence in the FDM process. This literature review has addressed papers out of several time frames and all papers supported the expectation that adolescents in traditional families were able to exert significantly less
influence in the FDM process, when compared to the adolescents in egalitarian families. Because the different studies all pointed in the same direction it would seem that the correlation between these two variables is proven.

The mothers occupation mediator works differently for the two GROs. For the egalitarian families the comparative resource theory by Blood and Wolfe (1960) is suggested and proven to explain the findings. To explain the findings for the traditional families a theory with guilt as a key component is suggested. Since there is no paper to counter these findings and the paper by Lee and Beatty (2002) is a sound and convincing one, the results presented by them are followed.
Chapter 5: The parental communication patterns’ (PCP) effect on the influence of adolescents in the family decision-making process.

5.1 Introduction
In this chapter, the parental communication pattern construct will be introduced as an independent variable that has an effect on the influence that adolescents can exert in the FDM process. The expectation is that the concept-orientation plays a bigger role than the socio-orientation. Furthermore, it is believed that the high-concept orientated communication pattern gives more opportunity for adolescents to exert influence on the FDM process. To a lesser extent adolescents from families with low-socio oriented communication patterns are expected to have more influence on the FDM process than their peers from high-socio oriented communication patterns. For the four typologies this means that the order is expected to be as follows: The most influence will be in families typed “pluralistic”, followed by “consensual” families. After that the most influence is expected to be in “laissez-faire” families and the least influence in the FDM process is expected to be exerted by the adolescents from “protective” families.

This chapter will start with a reminder of the facts stated in chapter two and the definitions of the four typologies that are labeled earlier in this chapter. The chapter will continue with literature that is consistent with the expectations just mentioned. The most complete paper will be introduced first, followed by a paper that (partially) collaborates the facts stated by the key paper. The chapter will close with a short conclusion.

The introduction of this variable in the second chapter has been quite extensive, because it is quite a comprehensive variable. In the end it boils down to the four different communication patterns presented in figure 1. (McLeod and O’Keefe, 1972) It was necessary to present it in the framework because that is where the variables are explained, however, there is the need to repeat them here because it is easy to get confused on what is what. So as a reminder it is presented below. Also, the definitions used for the socio- and concept oriented styles -as they were given in the theoretical framework chapter- are repeated:

5.1.1 Concept-orientation:
“Concept-orientation is a pattern that focuses on positive constraints that help the child to develop his/her own views about the world (Moschis, 1985).”
5.1.2 Socio-orientation:

“the type of communication that is designed to produce deference and to foster harmonious and pleasant social relationships at home (Moschis, 1985).”

With the table above as a start, it is now time to define the four different types of communication as mentioned in chapter 2: “Laissez faire”, “protective”, “pluralistic” and “consensual”.

5.1.3 Laissez faire:

“Families lack emphasis on both socio-oriented and concept-oriented communications. There is little communication in the families. Parents have relatively less influence on the consumption of the young generation.” (Hsu and Chang, 2006)

5.1.4 Protective:

“Protective families emphasize the socio-orientation dimension, stressing obedience and social harmony, and are not concerned with conceptual matters.” (Moschis et al., 1986)

5.1.5 Pluralistic:

“Pluralistic families stress the concept-orientation dimension with emphasis on respect for one’s interests and those of others, where children are encouraged to discuss ideas openly without fear of punishment.” (Caruana and Vassallo, 2003)

5.1.6 Consensual:
Consensual parents tend to be both concept- and socio-oriented.” (Rose, Bush and Kahle, 1998)

5.2 The literature on the role of PCP on the influence of adolescents on the FDM process.
Now, the findings of the Bakir, Rose and Shoham paper (2006) are discussed. This paper tried to answer the question that is the title of this chapter, for the people of Israel. The hypotheses state that for durable, non-durable and children’s goods it is expected that the influence of children from pluralistic and consensual families on the FDM process is higher than that of the children from laissez-faire and protective families. These hypotheses were all met. The results were identical (in relative terms) across all three goods. The children from pluralistic families can exert the most influence in the family decision-making process, followed by the children from consensual families. Third on the influence of FDM process scale were the children from laissez-faire families. And the children from protective families can exert the least influence in the FDM process. This paper gives us a start as to how the ranking of these variables could be. Now it is important to find collaboration for these findings.

Foxman et al. (1989) made an interesting attempt to indicate children from which family have more influence in the FDM process, concept-oriented or socio-oriented. For this purpose they only distinguished between pluralistic and protective families, leaving laissez-faire and consensual families out of their study. This is very unfortunate, yet this paper can still support the earlier findings in part. If it supports the Bakir et al. paper (2006), the influence that children from pluralistic families (high concept-, low socio-orientation) can exert should be considerably higher than the influence that children from protective families (low concept-, high socio-orientation) can exert. Their hypothesis concerning this part of the study suggests that the writers expected such a result beforehand, and quite to the benefit of the earlier findings and the progress of this chapter, this expectation was backed by the study conducted. This proves the assumption made in the introduction that concept-orientation plays a more eminent role in the division of influence in the FDM process than socio-orientation does. So this is an important indicator that the findings of Bakir et al. (2006) as well as the expectation uttered in the beginning of this chapter were accurate.

5.3 conclusion
To conclude, Bakir et al. (2006) gave quite an extensive overview of the variables viewed
upon in this chapter. It is important that it is (partially) backed by the Foxman et al. paper (1989).

As it turned out this topic is heavily under researched, even though the step from family communication pattern to children’s influence on the FDM process seems not that farfetched. Nevertheless, for now, the literature is unanimous in confirming the expectation uttered in the first paragraph of this chapter. Important implication of the limited sources is that the evidence is less strong that some of the other relationships, even though there are no contradicting sources available. Concluding: adolescents can exert influence in the FDM process from most to least in the following order: First Pluralistic, followed by Consensual, then Laissez-faire and finally Protective families.
Chapter 6: General Discussion

In this chapter the conclusion is drawn and some limitations and suggestions for further research are introduced. This literature review will end with a managerial implication.

6.1 Conclusion

In this literature the goal has been to give an overview of how some of the important family variables that are scattered around in different studies, play a role in the amount of influence that adolescents can exert in the family decision-making process. In this paper, the variables family structure, gender role orientation (partially mediated by mother’s occupational status) and parental communication pattern have been included.

The expectations about family structure revealed that adolescents from single-parent female-headed families have more say than their counterparts from nuclear and blended families. Where the adolescents from nuclear families, in turn, have more say than those from blended families. In the third chapter it was concluded that these expectations were met. It has been proven that the conclusion is that the simplicity-complexity hypothesis introduced by Tinson and Nancarrow (2005) holds.

For the gender role orientation part the evidence that egalitarian families allow for more influence of adults in the FDM process than traditional families proved superfluous. The more interesting (because less obvious) conclusion drawn in this paper is the one that tells us that the effect of mother’s occupational status has a lessening effect on the amount of influence that adolescents from egalitarian families can exert in the FDM process. This means that egalitarian mother’s who are working (both for money and career) allow for less influence by the adolescents than their non-working peers. In contrast, the literature supports that adolescents from a traditional family have more influence when their mother’s work. The egalitarian findings can be determined as results from the comparative resource theory developed by Blood and Wolfe (1960). The findings for the traditional families can be ascribed to the ‘guilt’ that traditional mothers feel for leaving their children when they go to work.

For the parental communication parental variable the expectation was uttered and supported that the concept-orientation part was of more importance than the socio-orientation part. Since high concept-orientation and low socio-orientation lead to higher influence of adolescents in
the FDM process the different groups are ordered from most to least influence in the following way: “pluralistic”, “consensual”, “laissez-faire” and “protective”.

6.2 limitations and suggestions for further research
This literature was limited in a number of ways. First of all, the papers used were for the greatest part Western European and American. This means that the validity in other parts of the world cannot be guaranteed. Furthermore, the constructs chosen are not all variables that determine a family. A final limitation of the thesis presented here is the fact that family variables are only one side of the story, the product in question, and the salesperson doing the selling are examples of factors that run outside the family, but play a decisive role in the family decision-making process.

As the research for this literature became more vast, it became clear that there were some parts missing for a complete picture, a few of them will be suggested for further research. The first problem encountered was the single-father aspect in the family structure part. The number of divorces continues to increase, and even though a very low percentage of single-parent families is male-headed, they are growing substantially in number. Another part missing in the family structure part of this literature review is the lack of distinction between the different blended constructions. It would be useful to make a distinction between families with step-siblings and families without, for instance. Unfortunately such a paper is not yet presented.

In the mother’s occupational status research it turned out to be hard to find papers that included the influence of children in the FDM process. Whilst there were plenty of papers describing the implications of working women for the husband-wife relationship, children were hardly ever taken into account. Although Lee and Beatty (2002) presented a very convincing study about the subject, it would be useful to have further research to match their findings. Especially the guilt-theory would benefit from collaborating findings.

The same problem with limited papers was found addressing the parental communication pattern regarding the family decision-making process. It would be very beneficial to have other studies linking these constructs together, preferably some that are not limited to a country or region.
6.3 Managerial Implications

The objective for this literature review was to present the scattered family variables together in one framework. A manager that reads this overview can better understand the families that are his or her “targets”. If they can better understand which person has what role in the family decision-making process the manager can make a better ‘pitch’. This paper’s aim will be met if the manager that reads the paper understands and implements the findings presented here.
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