

PARENTAL INFLUENCE ON CONSUMER AND PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR OF GENERATION Y

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OPSOMMING

Die vaardighede, kennis en houdings om verbruikersbesluitneming te verwesenlik word bekom deur, onder andere, sosialisering. Sosialisering van verbruikers om te besluit oor die aankoop, verbruik en wegdoen van goedere geskied deur verskeie partye, onder andere rolmodelle. Verskeie studies het bevind dat rolmodelle 'n invloed het op verbruikersgedrag, waarvan die uitkoms behels dat verbruikers soortgelyke besluite neem as hul rolmodelle. Die familie is een van die belangrikste eenhede waarbinne sosialisering geskied en bied 'n gulde geleentheid vir rolmodelle om die gedrag van jong verbruikers te beïnvloed. Binne 'n familie sal verskeie partye wat as kennisbron geag word optree as rolmodelle. Binne die familie vervul ouers dikwels die rol van beide sosialiseringssagente en rolmodelle, en hierdie rolle mag oorvleuel. Die vertroue wat tussen ouer en kind gebou word te midde van die noue saamleefverhouding binne die familie skep 'n veilige omgewing om rolmodelle (ouers) se gedrag na te boots. Indien die invloed van ouers as rolmodelle die verbruikersgedrag en aankoopgedrag van Generasie Y bepaal, word strategieë om jong volwassenes se gedrag te beïnvloed grotendeels toegeskryf aan sosialisering. Hierom sou die poging om Generasie Y verbruikers te behou as klante of om nuwe klante vanuit Generasie Y te bekom dus deur ouers beïnvloed kon word. Die doel van die studie was om die Sosiale Kognitiewe Teorie te gebruik as 'n riglyn om te verstaan hoe direkte rolmodelle soos ouers die aankoopgedrag van Generasie Y beïnvloed. Bo en behalwe die persepsie dat ouers as rolmodelle beskou word, kan ouers as rolmodelle die verbruikersgedrag van Generasie Y beïnvloed, hetsy met betrekking tot positiewe gedrag (byvoorbeeld om die produkte of handelsmerk aan te beveel) of negatiewe gedrag, soos om te kla by ander klante. Nie-waarskynlike, geriefssteekproeftrekking is gebruik om data onder Generasie Y respondente in te samel en drie honderd nege-en-sestig bruikbare vraelyste is ontvang. Data is ontleed deur strukturele vergelyking modellering toe te pas nadat die betroubaarheid en geldigheid van die meetinstrumente bepaal is. Die resultate van die studie ondersteun die

Sosiale Kognitiewe Teorie omdat ouers as rolmodelle Generasie Y se verbruikersgedrag beïnvloed het en verbruikersgedrag het weer aankoopgedrag beïnvloed. Die verbruikersgedrag en aankoopgedrag van Generasie Y weerspieël dus hul ouers se opinies, omdat hul nog steeds hul ouers as rolmodelle beskou. Alhoewel vorige studies getoon het dat Generasie Y geneig mag wees om nie hul ouers as rolmodelle te beskou of wil erken nie, is hierdie bevindinge 'n aanduiding dat die invloed van ouers as rolmodelle tog die gedrag van Generasie Y in terme van hul verbruikersgedrag asook hul aankoopgedrag beïnvloed. Hierdie bevindinge plaas nie net 'n onus op ouers nie maar bied ook verskeie voordele vir beleidmakers en bemerkingsbestuurders. Veldtogte om sekere verbruikersgedrag of aankoopgedrag aan te moedig of om negatiewe gedrag te ontmoedig kan van ouers gebruik maak om die aanbevole gedrag te versterk en aan te moedig binne die volgende generasie jong volwassenes wat nog gesosialiseer word deur hul rolmodelle. Kwessies soos materialisme sal dus binne die familie deur die invloed van ouers as rolmodelle vir hul kinders aangespreek moet word. Die familie is hierom 'n belangrike eenheid vir analise in toekomstige navorsing wat waardes en beleidsisteme oorweeg.

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INTRODUCTION

“Listen to your mother, she knows best...” the colloquial saying goes, highlighting parents’ influence as role models. This influence can be extended to consumer and purchase behaviour as well. Consumer behaviour can broadly be explained as the consumer’s attempt to satisfy needs and wants through the purchasing of products or services (Gunay & Baker, 2011:325). The decision, however, in making the purchase to satisfy the consumer’s needs and wants is influenced by numerous variables, of which a prominent variable is the influence of role models (Ruvio *et al*, 2010:61). Dix *et al* (2010:37) agree by stating that young consumers base their behaviour and attitudes on role models, like those of celebrities and parents – playing an integral part in the development of product and service choices of young adults.

These product and service choices are the result of consumer socialisation. Consumer socialisation can be defined as the process whereby young people acquire the needed skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace (Ward, 1974:2). Neetu (2016) posits that socialisation agents such as parents, peers or marketing communication such as advertising assist children in this consumer socialisation process. However, there are “significant gaps in our conceptualisation and understanding of exactly what role social environment and expertise play in socialization” (John, 1999:205) especially focusing on consumer socialisation in students (Roberti, 2014:65). The social environment in which consumers are raised thus influences their socialisation, and socialisation occurs throughout a consumer’s life, irrespective of age.

To classify consumers, according to their age based on the time context in which they are raised, generational cohorts are used. Although the importance, relevance and value of the influence of role models on consumer’s purchasing intent and behaviour has been established amongst teenagers (Makgosa, 2010; North & Kotzé; Ruvio *et al*, 2010; Martin & Bush, 2000), the evidence of such role model influences on the younger Generation Y are very scarce. Furthermore, such research is often only conducted in developed countries (for example, Roberti, 2014) or focussed on general parental role model research such as work involvement (Wiese & Freund, 2011) and entrepreneurial

intent (Morales-Alonso *et al*, 2016).

University students as adolescents currently form part of the younger Generation Y cohort, which is recognised worldwide as an increasingly significant group in terms of their consumer and purchasing behaviours, attitudes and their impact on the national economy (Clark *et al*, 2001). This study specifically investigates this younger group of the Generation Y cohort by including respondents aged between 18-25 years. Reasons for the consideration of Generation Y as an important market segment include significant current spending power, with potentially high future spending power (Bevan-Dye, 2015:10; Lazarevic, 2012:45), earning money much earlier in their lives than previous generations (Miller & Mills, 2012:1474), the ability to be trendsetters, receptivity to new products, as well as the potential to become life-time customers (Wolburg & Pokrywczynski, 2001). Generation Y thus represents a great opportunity for marketers and as a result are often targeted in advertising and promotional strategies.

Generation Y consumers are also the generation that is the most marketing-aware (Van den Bergh, 2013). However, some researchers have reported that Generation Y is often sceptical of advertising (Bevan-Dye *et al*, 2009:177) and resistant to advertising efforts (Lazarevic, 2012; Wolburg & Pokrywczynski, 2001). Reasons for this scepticism and resistance could be Generation Y’s belief that marketing communications attempt to mislead consumers (Kinley *et al*, 2010:566) and possibly being overexposed to advertising messages. In fact, and, therefore, traditional advertising methods have been unsuccessful in gaining this market’s attention (Schawbel, 2015). It has also been shown that loyal buying patterns are developed during adolescence and these patterns tend to continue throughout adults’ lives (Martin & Bush, 2000; Moschins, 1985).

Furthermore, limited research is available to provide insight into the possible changes, if any, in the consumer behaviour and purchase intent, which may occur as young adults leave home – especially in an emerging market, such as South Africa. Therefore, this study will address the need to focus on university students, in order to shed light on this very unpredictable – but yet valuable market segment – and also to add to the limited current research available on role model influence on consumer and purchase behaviour.

The objectives of this study are therefore to determine whether a father and a mother could indeed be seen as good role models to follow (parental role model influence) and subsequently to find whether these role models could significantly influence the consumer and purchasing behaviour of Generation Y, as reflected by students.

A quantitative structural equation modelling (SEM) approach was used to test the conceptual framework, based on the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) (Bandura, 1986). This study's contribution lies in the specific focus on parental role model influence on Generation Y in an emerging market context.

The article will firstly provide a discussion of the theoretical foundations of the conceptual framework, based on the extant literature on role model influence and consumer behaviour. Next, the research methodology and the results will be presented. The article concludes with the implications and recommendations, limitations and some recommendations for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer behaviour is the process of how consumers select, use and dispose of products, services, brands or ideas, in order to satisfy their needs and wants (Solomon *et al*, 2012:3). These behaviours are an outcome of the socialisation process, amongst others, and they are of great importance to marketers because they are related to positive (favourable) and negative (unfavourable) behaviours exhibited towards a product or brand (Bush *et al*, 2004). Positive behaviour, for example, could include spreading positive word-of-mouth or paying premium prices while negative intention can lead to switching brands. Therefore, it is important to understand a consumer group's behaviour to stimulate or attempt to create positive consumer behaviour such as positive word-of-mouth to reference groups.

Family is an important reference group that influences consumer attitudes (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2014; Peter & Olson, 199;), resulting in family members also establishing values (Engel *et al*, 1993:79). Du Plessis *et al* (2007:261-262) identify the family as one of the environmental influences that could affect consumers' purchase behaviour. Family influence is regarded as a member of the household being considered as an expert and one whose knowledge is trusted, and parents frequently

fulfil this role. An argument can thus be made that parents' opinion and advice on products and services can have a strong influence on their children's consumption attitudes. Feltham (1998:372) as well as Minahan and Huddleston (2013) confirm that much of the information and attitude development concerning product and services is based on family influences since most consumer behaviour is learned as a child. Families are not only a primary source of information of products and brands, but also of the transmission of values and behaviours (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). Children learn and understand consumer behaviour by observing their parents' consumption practices in the family environment (Ruvio *et al*, 2010:44). Therefore, children would be likely to replicate parents' consumption patterns of product and services.

Consumer socialisation encompasses the process whereby young people acquire abilities, information, skills and attitudes relevant to their consumer behaviour in the marketplace (Sharma & Sonwaney, 2015). This process is influenced by individuals who have regular contact with, are important to, or control the rewards and consent given to child consumers (Lachance *et al*, 2003). Silén and Uhlin (2008) report that especially students are likely to adopt and cultivate new behaviours more readily if they see someone they can relate to successfully apply behavioural strategies. This process is closely related to the definition of role models, where these individuals are the parents of the child consumers, who act as the influencers (Alexitch *et al*, 2004).

Parents as role models could thus influence the child's consumer behaviour. Fan and Yixuan (2010:171) argue that socialisation agents, such as parents, peers, the mass media, retail stores, brands, and even celebrities are viewed as the primary influence on consumers' individual perceptions, values and norms. White *et al* (2009:324-325) maintain that an individual's perception and beliefs about a significant other are formed during childhood and that the process of forming the specific perception of the significant other during this time will be replicated in situations, as the individual grows older. Dix *et al* (2010:7) agree, by stating that young consumers base their behaviour and attitudes on role models' behaviour, such as parents. Parents, therefore, play an integral part in the development and choices of young adults. Direct role models, like parents, could therefore influence consumers' purchasing

behaviour (Martin & Bush, 2000: 444). Consumer socialisation suggests that the learning process is core to the concept of consumer behaviour and that it consists of a few stages, which child consumers will go through, in order to develop into adult consumers.

Parental influence is a critical stage in this learning process (Ironico, 2012:31). Fan and Li (2010:171) agree and they state that parents are the primary socialisation agents, and are the most influential educators of the child's consumer behaviour – stretching their influencing power well into adulthood. The child would, in time, be able to act as an independent consumer – due to the transfer of knowledge and skills observed in the parents' consuming behaviour. Shopping habits, as well as product and store preferences, are passed on from generation to generation by the parents, and therefore, they influence the child's consumer behaviour (Minahan & Huddleston, 2010:171). The positive influence of parents, when socialising their children (Basu & Sondhi, 2014:803) and the possible negative outcomes thereof relating to conspicuous consumption, materialism, and irrational impulse consumption (John, 1999:201), in the context of both developed and emerging markets (Yang *et al*, 2014:231) has received attention. However, evident from recent special issues on contemporary issues in family consumption (Kerrane *et al*, 2014) and on women and what is termed 'producing family' (Cappellini & Holloway, 2014), socialisation remain topical issues. Hence, previous researchers recognise that people learn through observation and imitation of others (Bandura, 1986) and as such, these individuals are often considered as role models (King & Multon, 1996). It is argued that role models would influence the behaviour of the younger Generation Y cohort through socialisation; through observing role models, Generation Y would learn how to behave as consumers. This type of learning is best explained by the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT).

The Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) entails learning directly correlated to the observation of role models (Bandura, 1986), where such role models can be directly observed, such as parents, family members and lecturers (Merino & Aucock, 2015) or removed others, such as celebrities, media sources and retailers (Lenka, 2015). Therefore, the parental role model influence on consumer behaviour is supported and explained by the SCT. Because celebrities are viewed as role models to be imitated, the

use of celebrities for brand endorsements is common. Such brand endorsements are positively related to brand equity in terms of brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty (Dwivedi *et al*, 2015:457). It is thus possible that parents as direct role models should also make an impact on consumer behaviour and purchase behaviour.

The focus of this study is specifically on direct role models in terms of fathers and mothers (parents). While mothers were found to be the most influential role model for daughters (Minahan & Huddleston, 2010:174-175), making recommendations regarding price and quality, often accompanying their mothers in the purchasing process (Ogle *et al*, 2014:72), the influence of both parents as roles models is also supported (McNeil & Turner, 2013; Martin & Bush, 2000:445; Moschis, 1985).

Since the quality of interaction between the parent and the child drives socialisation (Drever *et al*, 2015:25-26), parents may not necessarily be regarded as good role models to imitate. Sen Das (2016) noted that parents are vulnerable to loss of power as socialisation agents. Previous research found that children aged 11 to 16, did not want their parents to recommend products (Norh & Kotzé, 2001:98). The research question examined in the present study is thus not an obvious consequence of the parental socialisation processes, especially with regard to Generation Y. Although some may argue that with the transformation of personal relationships between parents and children in late adolescent, the influence of parents may lessen (Mascarenhas & Higby, 1993), several studies found that this does not always hold true (McNeil & Turner, 2013; Fry *et al*, 1973; Koolat *et al*, 1970). Although Feltham (1998) found that the parental influence declined, it did not disappear altogether. Peter and Olson (1996) and Feltham (1998) found substantial correspondence between parental-brand choice and student-brand choices. Thus, we argue, based on the Social Cognitive Theory and the literature review presented here, that parental role model influence should not only affect purchase behaviour, but also consumer behaviour (be it positive or negative). It is therefore hypothesised that:

Ha1: Parental role model influence positively effects purchase behaviour.

Ha2: There is a positive relationship between

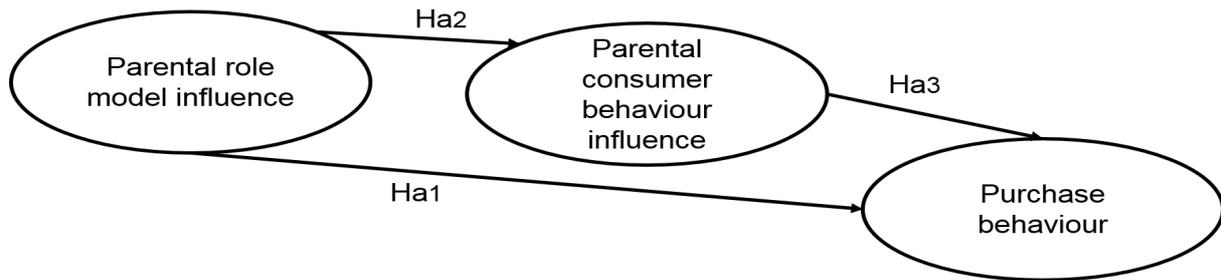


FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF PARENTAL ROLE MODEL INFLUENCE

parental role model influence and parental consumer behaviour influence.

Furthermore, according to the very definition of consumer behaviour, entailing the selection, use and disposition to satisfy needs (Solomon *et al*, 2012:3), there would be a positive relationship between consumer behaviour and purchase behaviour, and it may be argued that parental consumer behaviour influence should affect purchase behaviour accordingly. It is, therefore, hypothesised that:

Ha3: Parental consumer behaviour influence positively effects purchase behaviour.

Figure 1 presents a graphical illustration of the conceptual framework of parental role model influence in this study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The target population of the study comprised university students representing the younger Generation Y cohort (aged 18-25). In addition to previous studies adopting such a sample, university students – as compared to non-university students – have been exposed to a broader diversity of media sources (Fugate & Phillips, 2010) and, they were deemed appropriate since their age profile reflects the typical younger Generation Y cohort. In addition, university students are associated with potential higher future earnings (Bevan-Dye *et al*, 2009:174), providing them with more spending power. Non-probability convenience sampling was used since it was not practically possible to reach students randomly selected from a complete sample frame list.

After ethical clearance was obtained, the data were collected by means of a self-administered questionnaire on a University campus over a three week period. The questionnaire included a cover letter explaining the objectives of the study, obtained informed consent from respondents, and included a section on the

demographics of the respondent, as well as the measurement scales. Participation was voluntary and no incentives were offered to the respondents to participate in the survey. The measurement scales were adapted from Martin and Bush (2000) to reflect direct role models with a Likert-type scale anchored by seven-points, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7).

The general parental role model influence scale, hereafter referred to as *parental influence*, consisted of five items and included items such as: 'My (mother/father) provides a good model for me to follow' and 'My (mother/father) leads by example'. The parental consumer behaviour influence scale, hereafter referred to as *consumer behaviour*, consisted of 11 items (e.g. 'The opinions of my (father/mother) influence me to say positive things about products or brands to other people' and 'The opinions of my (father/mother) influence me to continue to do business with certain companies – even if it increases its prices). Purchase behaviour was measured by a single item. The respondents had to complete all the items for both parents. The questionnaire was pretested with 20 respondents and no adjustments were required.

Internal consistency reliability was considered, where a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 and higher was considered sufficient evidence of internal consistency, as recommended by Bagozzi (1988:80). This study measured all items separately for respondents' fathers and mothers. As the aim of this study is to consider parents as role models, the *per item difference* was calculated for each item accounting for possible response bias in answering the same statement twice, albeit for a different role model. Owing to this adaptation of the scales from previous studies, the underlying dimensions of the scales used in this study were considered through an exploratory factor analysis, followed by the investigation of convergent and discriminant validity through a confirmatory factor analysis. An average variance extracted

(AVE) above 0.5 not only indicates that an acceptable amount of variance is explained by each factor (Fornell & Larcker, 1981:46), but also convergence in measurement (Bagozzi, 1981:375-376). Discriminant validity was considered by comparing the square root of the AVE of two factors to the correlation between the two factors, and this square root of the AVE should be higher than the correlation to claim discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981:46).

RESULTS

Sample profile

A total of 369 respondents participated in the study, comprising more respondents than similar studies conducted by Martin and Bush (2000) and Makgosa (2010), which used only 228 and 200 respondents, respectively. The majority of the respondents were females (73.4%), with only 26.6% being males. The mean age of the respondents was 20.28 years, with the majority (97%) of the respondents representing a typical younger Generation Y profile, between the ages of 18-25 years old. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents were either White (52.6%) or Black (38.8%), with a minority (8.6%) of the participants being from other ethnic groups such as Indian or Coloured (11%).

Reliability and validity

All the items were measured separately with regard to respondents' fathers and mothers. To account for possible response bias, and to obtain a score for parents – and not fathers or mothers separately – the *per item difference* was calculated for each item. Measures relating to the father preceded the measures relating to the mother in the questionnaire. Therefore, the score per item that respondents gave for their mothers was subtracted from the score per item respondents gave to their fathers for all items.

The per item difference calculation necessitated the consideration of the validity and reliability of the scales used in this manner. An exploratory factor analysis was done to examine the underlying dimensions of all the multiple item

measures used in this study.

The data were found to be suitable for factor analysis as Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p < 0.001$) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) was above 0.5 (MSA = 0.917). Maximum likelihood factor analysis with the direct Oblimin rotation method was used, as parental influence and consumer behaviour have been found to be correlated. Coefficients below 0.4 were suppressed.

From the exploratory factor analysis, three factors were clearly identifiable based on the Eigenvalues, which explained 61.87% of the variance. The five items used to measure parental influence loaded onto one factor, while the 11 items used to measure consumer behaviour loaded onto two factors. By examining the wording of the items to measure consumer behaviour, it became evident that the first seven items, which loaded onto one factor, referred to specific positive consumer behaviour choices which would not tarnish the reputation of the company, product or brand, while the last four items, which loaded onto another factor, referred to negative consumer behaviour choices reflecting complaint behaviour. The factors were labelled accordingly. Table 1 presents the labelled factors with the number of items, which loaded on each factor and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient values (α) for the factors uncovered in this study, based on the per item difference between the scores for the father and those for the mother.

Table 1 indicates that the three factors uncovered in this data, based on the per item difference scores, all had Cronbach's alpha coefficient values above 0.7, indicating that each construct exhibits internal consistency (reliability), as recommended by Şimşek and Tekeli (2014:436).

In order to investigate convergence in measurement and discriminant validity of the scales, as used in this study, a confirmatory factor analysis was done. The average variance extracted for negative complaint behaviour was 0.498. Therefore, item 10, the item with the

TABLE 1: FACTORS UNCOVERED IN THIS STUDY, NUMBER OF ITEMS LOADING ONTO EACH FACTOR AND THE CRONBACH'S ALPHA COEFFICIENT VALUES

Factor	Label	n items	α
1	Parental influence	Five	0.954
2	Positive consumer behaviour	Seven	0.883
3	Negative complaint behaviour	Four	0.796

TABLE 2: STANDARDISED WEIGHTS, AVERAGE VARIANCE EXTRACTED (AVE) AND CONSTRUCT RELIABILITY (C.R.) OF THE FACTORS

Factor	Item	Standardised weight	AVE	C.R.
Parental influence	Item 1 - Good model for me to follow	0.925	0.811	0.955
	Item 2 - Leads by example	0.902		
	Item 3 - Sets a positive example for others	0.899		
	Item 4 - Exhibits the kind of behaviour that I try to imitate	0.846		
	Item 5 - Acts as a role model for me	0.929		
Consumer behaviour	Positive consumer behaviour	0.914	0.789	0.882
	Negative complaint behaviour	0.862		
Positive consumer behaviour (not tarnishing reputation)	Item 1 - Say positive things about a company	0.795	0.534	0.888
	Item 2 - Recommend products or brands	0.839		
	Item 3 - Encourage my friends or relatives to buy	0.802		
	Item 4 - Buy fewer products	0.721		
	Item 5 - Buy some products elsewhere	0.743		
	Item 6 - Willing to pay more	0.616		
	Item 7 - Keep supporting a company	0.557		
Negative complaint behaviour	Item 8 - Switch to a competitor	0.699	0.519	0.764
	Item 9 - Complain to other customers	0.744		
	Item 11 - Complain to company's employees	0.718		

TABLE 3: INVESTIGATING DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY

Factor	Parental influence	Consumer behaviour	Purchase behaviour
Parental influence	0.901*		
Consumer behaviour	0.729	0.888*	
Purchase behaviour	0.567	0.760	1.00

*Square root of the AVE.

lowest standardised weight, was eliminated from any further analyses. Consumer behaviour was regarded as a reflective second order factor with positive consumption behaviour and negative complaint behaviour as indicators, based on the proposed scale of Martin and Bush (2000:448), while purchase behaviour was included as an exogenous variable. The Bollen-Stine Bootstrap was used to estimate the chi-square. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis, without item 10, are presented in Table 2.

From Table 2, it is evident that the AVE for all three factors was above 0.5, an acceptable amount of variance explained (Fornell & Larcker, 1981:46), indicating convergence in measurement (Bagozzi, 1981: 375-376). Furthermore, all the values for construct reliability were above 0.7, indicating reliability (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988:80). To investigate discriminant validity, the square root of the AVE of two factors should be higher than the correlation between the two factors (Fornell & Larcker, 1981:46).

The results to investigate discriminant validity are presented in a correlation matrix in Table 3.

From Table 3, it can be deduced that large positive correlations (Cohen, 1988:79-81) exist between parental influence and consumer behaviour ($r=0.729$), between parental influence and purchase behaviour ($r=0.567$), and between consumer behaviour and purchase behaviour ($r=0.760$). Furthermore, discriminant validity is evident.

The model fit indices considered for this study included the normed chi-square, with guidelines ranging between a 2:1 and 3:1 ratio (Kline, 2011:204), the comparative fit index (CFI) and the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), where a value 0.90 or higher is considered to be satisfactory (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988:82), and the root mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) with values ranging up to 0.08 is considered as being appropriate (Van de Schoot *et al*, 2012:488).

The measurement model was found to fit the data acceptably. The relative chi-square (CMIN/

TABLE 4: STRUCTURAL PATHS IN THE MODEL

H _a	Path	Estimate	BBCI Lower	BBCI Upper	p-value*
H _{a1}	Parental influence → Purchase behaviour	0.033	-0.129	0.194	0.380
H _{a2}	Parental influence → Consumer behaviour	0.503	0.410	0.614	0.002
H _{a3}	Consumer behaviour → Purchase behaviour	1.210	0.939	1.540	0.002

*One-tailed p-value.

$df = 270.707/100 = 2.707$) was below 3. The CFI (0.960), TLI (0.952) and RMSEA (0.068, [LO90 = 0.058; HI90 = 0.078]) indicated good model fit. Structural paths were then added to the model. The fit of the structural model was also adequate (CMIN/ $df = 270.707/100 = 2.707$; CFI = 0.960; TLI = 0.952; RMSEA = 0.068 [LO90 = 0.058; HI90 = 0.078]).

Hypotheses testing

Table 4 presents the structural paths, in terms of the hypothesis (H_a), the standardised regression weight (Estimate), the bias-corrected confidence interval (BBCI) and the statistical significance at the 0.05 level (p-value).

From the results summarised in Table 4, H_{a1} stating that parental role model influence positively effects purchase behaviour is rejected ($p=0.380$). Furthermore, H_{a2}, stating that there is a positive relationship between parental role model influence and parental consumer behaviour influence is accepted ($p=0.002$) and H_{a3} stating that parental consumer behaviour influence positively effects purchase behaviour is accepted ($p=0.002$). It is therefore evident that parents as role models influence consumption behaviour of respondents in this study, confirming the assumption of the social cognitive theory that learning how to behave is based on observed behaviour (Bandura, 1986) and in-line with Roberti's (2014) findings that the consumption patterns of students correspond with those that students learned in their families.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Simpson *et al* (2008:200) contend that "cognitive and social theories provide the bases for understanding the consumer tendency to observe others when making consumption choices" as these suggest that consumers are inclined to conform to others' behaviours and that the tendency to observe is likely to affect consumer behaviour in all consumer choice situations. The Social Cognitive Theory was used to investigate parental influence on the consumer behaviour and the purchase

behaviour of Generation Y. The results concur with the use of cognitive theories to investigate role model influence and contribute to the limited research available on parents as socialisation agents for students' marketplace behaviour.

The findings suggest several interesting implications – by shedding light on the influence of parents as role models on the consumer behaviour of this important and growing target market. Based on the results from this study, the general perception of parents as role models (influence of parents) does not affect the purchase behaviour. However, the general perception of parents as role models (influence of parents) does affect consumer behaviour; and this, in turn, affects purchase behaviour. Firms can successfully make use of brand extensions as students (Generation Y) is receptive to new products (Wolburg & Pokrywczynski, 2001) and have significant spending power (Lazarevic, 2012). The brand choice and shopping behaviour that students learn from their parents could be used as the bases for brand extensions.

The findings are in agreement with those of previous research (Makgosa, 2010; Ruvio *et al*, 2010; Martin & Bush, 2000). The results thus support the consumer socialisation through parents, which is evident in the literature. The consumer (measured in terms of positive and negative consumer choice behaviours) and the purchase behaviour of Generation Y respondents was influenced by their perceptions of their parents, as role models. Even though previous findings found some resistance to the parental role model influence (North & Kotzé, 2001:98), these findings suggest that the parental role model influence is an important variable in Generation Y consumer and purchase behaviours. Evidently, each generation influences the next with regard to consumer and purchasing behaviour. If policy makers thus wish to change negative consumer behaviour, such as an extreme focus on materialism to achieve personal happiness, success and self-fulfilment (John, 1999:202) or consumerism - parents should be the first point

of entrance to influence the following generation's behaviour (Lenka, 2015). Thus, by encouraging parents to spread positive word-of-mouth about a cause or brand using competitions, loyalty programmes or referral-rebates, could be an example of ensuring that their children follow suit. The results also place a huge responsibility on fathers and mothers as it is evident that the learning transferred from parents throughout childhood are carried through even after young adults leave the home. Embedding materialism, compulsive buying and/or over-spending could be carried over from one generation to the next. However, the reverse is also true, if parents set good examples of behaving as responsible consumers by comparing prices, complain about poor services and considering the carbon footprint of products, this influence would also be evident in the consumer and purchasing behaviour of their children.

It is expected that the longer Generation Y consumers are removed from their parental role model influence, the more opportunity there would be to experience several different brands. Although students are likely to model their consumer and purchase behaviour on their parental behaviour when they leave home, this loyalty could thus be short-lived when other influences on consumer behaviour and brand choice intervene.

The research has several limitations. Firstly, the sample group is limited in geographical scope as the students from only one university was used and due to non-probability sampling, the generalizability of the findings is limited. Future research could focus on a broader geographical range of students. Additionally, intergenerational influence (the transmission of cognitions, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes and behaviours from one generation to another during socialisation) is culture- and dyad-specific (Kulkarni, 2014:326). Future research could specifically examine possible cultural differences on the parental role model influence, consumer behaviour and purchase behaviour.

Finally, the purchase behaviour of the students was captured by means of a single-item rating scale and a multiple-item rating scale could yield different results for purchasing behaviour.

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