

The Role of Family Communication and Television Viewing in the Development of Materialistic Values among Young Adults. A Review.

Eric Vincent Bindah, PhD Scholar

University of Malaya
Department of Marketing
Faculty of Business & Accountancy Building
50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Prof. Dr. Md Nor Othman

Professor and Head of Marketing Department
University of Malaya
Faculty of Business & Accountancy Building
50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Abstract

While studies of communication effects on consumer behavior of children and adolescents have focused mainly on the effects of mass media (advertising in particular), little research has examined the effects of interpersonal communication among young adults. One finds relatively little theoretical and empirical work regarding the role of interpersonal communication in the development of materialistic values of young adults. This article deals with one important type of interpersonal communication—family communication. It conceptualizes the family communication processes and effects based on scientific and empirical research, and propose a conceptual framework which encompasses family communication, television viewing and materialism. The role of family communication and television viewing on materialism is examined and in particular, the role of family communication on materialistic values among young adults, through television viewing is examined. Lastly, a set of propositions on the basis of theory research is developed.

Key words: Materialism, Family Communication, Television Viewing, Young Adults.

1. INTRODUCTION

There are at least eight major socialization agents in modern societies (Reimer and Rosengren, 1990). Traditional socialization agents include family, peer group, work group, church, law and school; they can be found in most societies (Reimer and Rosengren, 1990). Studies have found that people often interact with socialization agents and then take in consciously and unconsciously social norms, values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors endorsed by these agents (for example, Kasser, 2002; Schor, 1999; Korten, 1999). As postmodern society grows more and more atomistic, individualistic and alienated, socialization agent becomes more and more powerful, (Croteau and Hoynes, 2000). Ward (1974a) offered a classical definition of consumer socialization: “the processes by which young people acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace” (p. 2). Materialism among today’s youth has also received strong interest among educators, parents, consumer activist and government regulators for several reasons (Korten, 1999). For instance, in a study conducted by Korten (1999) in the U.S, it was found that two-thirds of college students in 1967 mentioned the importance of developing a meaningful philosophy of life was very important to them, and money was not at the forefront of their preoccupation. However, by 1997, those figures were reversed.

Although materialism has long been of interest to consumer researchers, surprisingly however, with such a growing concern about adolescent becoming too materialistic, research into this area has paid little attention to young adults’ and their endorsement of materialistic values. The purpose of this paper is to propose a conceptual model based primarily on existing scientific and empirical research to explain the mechanism responsible for young adults’ development of materialistic values (see figure 1). The role of television and family communication in the development of materialistic values among young adults are re-examined. Specifically, family communication is conceptualized and its role in the development of materialistic values is examined. Based on theoretical and research perspectives a set of propositions is developed.

1.1 Objectives of Study

1. To examine the role of family communication on materialistic values among young adults.
2. To examine the role of television viewing on materialistic values among young adults.
3. To examine the role of family communication on materialistic values among young adults, through television viewing.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Framework

Graph Insertion - about here

2.1 Materialism. Materialism is defined from various social, cultural, psychological, and economic perspectives: a way of life, a value orientation, a cultural system, a personality trait, a second-order value, an aspiration (e.g., Daun, 1983; Fox and Lears 1983; Ward and Wackman, 1971; Inglehart, 1981; Mukerji, 1983; Belk 1984; Richins and Dawson, 1990; Kasser and Ryan, 2002). Daun (1983) described materialism as a lifestyle in which a high level of material consumption functioned as a goal and served as a set of plans. Materialism lends meaning to life and provides an aim for everyday work. Fox and Lears (1983) regarded materialism as the ceaseless pursuit of the “good life” through consumption. Ward and Wackman (1971) defined materialism as “an orientation which views material goods and money as important for personal happiness and social progress” (p. 422). And Inglehart (1981) considered materialism as an economic orientation to life, a cultural or structural variable, giving precedence to economic values over other values such as freedom, civil power, aesthetics, and friendship. He argued that materialism was a value situated within the constellation of a value system. Similarly, Mukerji (1983) regarded materialism as a cultural system in which material interests are not made subservient to other social goals and material self-interests are prominent.

Belk (1984) observed that materialism reflects the importance a consumer attaches to worldly possessions. At the highest levels of materialism, such possessions assume a central place in a person’s life and are believed to provide the greatest sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. More relevant to this paper, Richins and Dawson (1990) considered materialism a value orientation with at least three components: a status component, which reflects the intended and actual use of material objects as a means of social recognition and to symbolize one’s personal success; the expectation or aspirational component of materialism concerns the extent to which an individual believes that acquisitions of material objects will lead to personal happiness and enjoyment of life; and an affective component represented by the degree to which an individual actually does find possessions to be a source of satisfaction. Materialism is “an organizing or second-order value that incorporates both the importance placed on certain end states (achievement and enjoyment values) and beliefs that possessions are appropriate means to achieve these states, (Richins and Dawson, 1990).

Richins and Dawson’s (1992) view of materialism rests on the two processes of acquisition and possession. They believe that these processes organize and guide the materialist’s plans and behaviours under the expectation of certain favourable end states. There are three themes in their concept of materialism. First, acquisition is central to the lives of materialists. It not only serves as a focal point, but also organizes behavioural patterns. Acquisition serves as a set of plans and goals that directs and guides daily endeavours. Second, acquisition is a means of achieving happiness and well-being in life. To materialists, both acquisition and possession of goods are essential to satisfaction and well-being in life. Finally, materialists use possessions to display success or status. They judge their own and others’ success by the number and quality of possessions accumulated. They view themselves as successful to the extent they can possess products that project the desired self-image.

Materialism represents a mind-set or constellation of attitudes regarding the relative importance of acquisition and possession of objects in one’s life. For materialists, possessions and their acquisition are at the forefront of personal goals that dictate their “way of life.” They value possessions and their acquisition more highly than most other matters and activities in life. For Richins and Dawson (1992), materialism is a value that “guides people’s choices and conduct in a variety of situations, including, but not limited to consumption areas” (p.307). It should be able to influence not only the type of products purchased, but also the quantity. For Kasser (2002) and his colleagues, materialistic values can be assessed by a six-item aspiration index. Their respondents were asked to rate how important their aspirations of financial success were, from not at all to very important. For example, respondents might choose to identify with “You will have a job that pays well.”

Wishes for financial success, an appealing appearance, and social recognition are considered people's extrinsic aspirations, while self-acceptance (desires for psychological growth, autonomy, and self-esteem), affiliation (desires for a good family life and friendships), and community feeling (desires to make the world a better place through one's own actions) are regarded as intrinsic aspirations. This paper adapts the view of materialism as a value orientation, which is centred on three main components: acquisition centrality, acquisition as the pursuit of happiness, and possession-defined success (Richins and Dawson, 1990). According to Richins and Dawson (1990), materialism viewed as a value, is described as an organizing central value that guides people's choices and behaviour in everyday life. It is an enduring belief that acquisition and possessions are essential to happiness and success in one's life. Broadly defined, materialism is any excessive reliance on consumer goods to achieve the end states of pleasure, self-esteem, good interpersonal relationship or high social status, any consumption-based orientation to happiness-seeking and a high importance of material issues in life (Ger and Belk, 1999).

2.2 Age and Materialism. Generally, age diminishes people's materialism; that is, when people grow old, they attach less importance to material possessions than other things (for example, Chaplin and John, 2007). Several generational differences in materialism were identified in previous research. For instance, Furby (1978) suggested that infants attempted to overcome dependence on others by actively acquiring possessions. Many studies of children's wishes indicated that interest in money and material possessions declined with age (e.g., Cobb, 1977; Horrocks, 1976). As children grow into adolescence, they display less selfish retention of possessions (e.g., Emler & Rushton, 1974; McNeal, 1987). Adolescents were concerned with their identities, and they developed a tendency to define their selves through identification with things and activities. Moore and Moschis (1981) surveyed respondents from 6th through 12th grade students, using six items measuring materialistic attitudes. Their findings indicated that age was a strong predictor of materialistic values. A study by Belk (1984) have proposed and tested three measures of materialistic traits: possessiveness, nongenerosity, and envy. In the study exploratory data relating these traits to age, were examined. The results indicated that two of the three materialism measures were found to be significantly related to the age of the subjects. Envy showed a slight negative correlation with age while non-generosity showed a slight positive correlation with age.

The apparent decline in envy with age might be due to having achieved a greater proportion of one's material goals, having adjusted material goals to financial means, or having come to place less social importance on material goods. Chaplin and John (2007) conducted a study with children and adolescents in the age group of 8 to 18 years old to find an explanation for age differences and its effect on materialism. The study was based on a conceptual model similar to the one proposed by Kasser et al. (2004) which specified that materialism developed through two paths: (1) from experiences that induce feelings of insecurity and (2) from exposure to social models that encourage materialistic values (Kasser et al. 2004). The results of their study revealed that age differences in materialism existed among children and adolescents. More specifically, early adolescents (ages 12–13) tended to be more materialistic than younger children (ages 8–9). And late adolescents (ages 16–18) were found to be less materialistic than early adolescents (ages 12–13). The differences in the level of materialism among children and adolescents were attributed to the level of self-esteem among children and adolescents.

A study conducted by LaFerle and Chan (2008) to examine the influence of marketing communication factors (advertising viewing and responses to marketing promotions) as well as social influence factors (from peers, and media celebrities) on adolescents' (age group of between 13 to 18 years) endorsement of materialistic values in Singapore have found that materialistic values decreases with age. This finding model was consistent with Chaplin and John (2007) study, whereby materialism achieved a maximum level in early adolescent stage as adolescents experience a decline in self-esteem. By late adolescence, self-esteem rebounded and the tendency to use material possessions for self definition decreased. Middle-aged people (40-50 years of age) were more likely to cite power and status as the reasons why people own things than are those in other age groups. Old people treasure their past experiences and value keepsakes and mementos, both in the form of possessions and special places. According to Sheldon and Kasser (2001), older people appears to care less about material possessions and feel happier than younger people, and empirical research conducted by LaFerle and Chan (2008) points towards the same direction.

2.3 Family Communication and Materialism. The degree of influence that a child has in purchasing is directly related to patterns of interaction and communication within the family (Carlson and Grossbart, 1988; Carlson, et al., 1992; Rose, 1999). Research on family communication has linked the type or quality of communication to a variety of parental practices and consumer competencies in children.

Family communication provides a foundation for children's approach to interact with the marketplace is inextricably linked to parental approaches to child-rearing (Carlson and Grossbart, 1988; Rose, 1999), and influences the development of children's consumer skills, knowledge, and attitudes (Moschis, 1985). Research in this area has generally utilized a single respondent, with early research primarily focusing on adolescents (Moschis and Mitchell, 1986) and later research examining the perceptions of mothers of younger children, under the age of 10 (Carlson, Grossbart and Tripp, 1990; Rose, Bush and Kahle, 1998).

The domain of family communication includes the content, the frequency, and the nature of family member interactions (Palan and Wilkes, 1998). The origins of family communication research in marketing can be traced to a study conducted in political socialization which utilized two dimensions from Newcomb's (1953) general model of affective communication, (McLeod and Chaffee, 1972). The first dimension, *socio-orientation*, captures vertical communication, which is indicative of hierarchical patterns of interaction and establishes deference among family members (McLeod and Chaffee, 1972). This type of interaction has also resulted in controlling and monitoring children's consumption-related activities (Moschis, 1985). The second dimension, *concept-orientation*, actively solicits the child's input in discussions, evaluates issues from different perspectives, and focuses on providing an environment that stimulates the child to develop his/her own views (McLeod and Chaffee, 1972). This type of communication results in earlier and increased experience and learning of different consumer skills and orientations among children (Moschis, 1985).

Several studies of consumer socialization have utilized these dimensions to create a four-category typology of family communication (e.g., Carlson, Grossbart and Walsh 1990; Moschis and Moore 1979a; Rose, Bush and Kahle, 1998). Pluralistic parents (low socio-orientation, high concept -orientation) encourage their children to engage in overt communication and discussions. This communication pattern results in children that possess independent perspectives and become skilled consumers. Consensual parents (high socio-orientation, high concept-orientation) encourage children to formulate independent ideas, but maintain a hierarchy of power within the family and control and monitor their children's consumption environment. Laissez-faire parents (low socio-orientation, low concept-orientation) can be characterized as having low levels of parent-child communication in general. Children in this type of environment are more influenced by external socialization agents such as the media and peers. Finally, protective parents (high socio-orientation, low concept-orientation) emphasize obedience. They promote vertical relationships with their children, focus less on issue-oriented communication, and tightly control and monitor their children's consumption (Moschis, 1985).

Studies have shown that the family environment affects the endorsement of materialistic values (e.g., Moschis and Moore, 1979; Moore and Moschis, 1981; Flouri, 2000). Research have found that family environments were very important predictors of the adolescents' materialism to the extent that their mothers' materialism level and report of family communication style alone could reliably predict their child's level of endorsement of materialistic values (Flouri, 2000). Children in families that use socially-oriented communication patterns, which stress harmony among family members and the avoidance of conflict demonstrate higher levels of materialism (Moschis and Moore, 1979). Children in families that use concept-oriented communication patterns, which encourage independent thinking, demonstrate lower levels of materialism (Moore and Moschis, 1981). Adolescents who communicate less frequently with their parents about consumption have been found to be more materialistic (Moore and Moschis, 1981). It should be stressed, however, that socially-oriented and concept-oriented communication patterns are not mutually exclusive. For example, a survey found that Chinese families exhibited high levels of socially-oriented as well as concept-oriented family communication (Chan and McNeal, 2003).

Furthermore, evidence suggests that the influence of family communication, as generalized to other situations, persists well into adulthood; it appears to become part of the developing individual's personality that he carries outside the home (Moschis, 1985). Chang et al. (2008) conducted a study to examine the relationship between family communication structure and vanity traits, and investigated different traits in consumption behavior. A convenience sample of 504 vocational high school students in northern Taiwan was used in the survey. The study findings indicated that when people are socio-oriented, they tended to care about physical appearance and when people are concept-oriented, they tended to have an achievement trait. Another study from Nguyen et al. (2009) used the life course approach, as an overarching framework for studying the development of materialism in Thailand. Following a survey among young adults (aged 20 to 32), the result of their study indicated that family disruption influences materialism among those young adults from lower social classes.

In a recent study, Moschis et al. (2009) incorporated the influences of family structure and socialization processes into the 'life course' perspective. The researchers explained that the integration of the literature with life course perspective facilitates the investigation on the nature of materialism and its impact on consumer behaviour. Data were collected among young Malaysian adult (aged 18 to 22 years), and a positive relationship was hypothesized between the person's exposure to a socio-oriented family communication environment during the adolescent years and the materialistic values held as a young adult. A product-moment correlation was used to test the relationship between these two variables. The relationship was however not significant. Chaplin and John (2010) took a different approach, in viewing parents and peers as important sources of emotional support and psychological well-being, which increase self-esteem in adolescents. Supportive parents and peers boost adolescents' self-esteem, which decreases their need to turn to material goods to develop positive self-perceptions. In a study with 12–18 year-olds, we find support for our view that self-esteem mediates the relationship between parent/peer influence and adolescent materialism. As expected, we find a negative relationship between overall parental support and adolescent materialism. Adolescents with more supportive parents were less materialistic.

Benmoyal- Bouzaglo and Moschis (2010) have examined the direct and indirect effects of family structure on the development of materialism in France. Among the hypothesis developed for the study, a positive relationship between the person's exposure to a socio-oriented family communication environment during his or her adolescent years and the strength of materialistic values held as a young adult was posited. However; the partial correlation between the two variables was not significant. Recently, Moschis et al. (2011) examine the role of family communication and television, by assessing their effects on youths in four countries that represent the Eastern and Western cultures: Japan, Malaysia, USA, and France. The study used an anonymous self-administered survey of young adults aged 18 to 32 years in two diverse Eastern countries: Japan and Malaysia. The findings suggested that the influence of the socio-oriented family communication structure on materialistic attitudes in Western cultures might be indirect by affecting the youth's patterns of television viewing.

The findings also suggested that concept-oriented family communication had no effect on youth's development of materialistic values, regardless of cultural background. On the other hand, Vega and Donald (2011) have examined the roles that television, advertising and family communication played in stimulating materialism in children. A survey was administered to children aged 10 to 14 demonstrated that higher levels of television exposure, advertising recognition, trust in advertising, and consumer communication each predicted higher levels of materialism. Neither socio-oriented nor concept-oriented family communication patterns moderated the relationship between advertising/television and materialism.

2.3 Family Communication, Television Viewing and Materialism. Family communication patterns have been related to a wide variety of outcomes, including adolescents' mass media use (Chaffee, Ward and Tipton, 1970). Studies which examine mass media and interpersonal influences on adolescent consumer behavior show that young people are likely to discuss with their parents (e.g., request) products they have seen advertised on television (Churchill and Moschis, 1979). Previous researches found materialistic attitudes to be related to social utility motivations for watching television commercials and programs, for example, watching commercials and programs to learn what products to buy to make good impressions on others (Ward and Wackman, 1971; Moschis and Churchill, 1978), such motivations may also be the result of family communication structure at home. Research have suggested that families characterized by socio-orientation communication structure may be encouraging their children to turn to the media to learn appropriate social orientations or consumption behaviors appropriate to certain roles. This may in turn lead to the learning of materialistic orientations (Moschis and Moore, 1979b).

The findings of several studies have also established the presence of relationships between family communication processes - including family communication patterns—and the individual's interaction with other socialization agents (e.g., Lull, 1980; McLeod et al., 1972) that subsequently affect behavior. This indirect pattern of family influence has also been found in studies of consumer socialization (e.g., Moore and Moschis, 1981; Moschis and Moore, 1982). Different communication processes that take place within the home may lead to differential exposure to and use of the mass media (newspapers and television) which, in turn, could lead to the development of various consumer orientations (Moore and Moschis, 1981). One study examined whether motivations for TV viewing could be the result of family communication structure at home (Moore and Moschis, 1981).

The results were in line with this expectation, suggesting that families characterized by a socio-oriented communication structure may be encouraging their children to turn to the media to learn social orientations or consumption behaviors appropriate to certain roles. This may then lead to the learning of materialistic orientations, since people are believed to learn the "expressive" aspects of consumption from mass media (e.g., Moschis and Moore, 1982). Similar findings were reported by Lull (1980), whose research has shown that socio-oriented individuals use television for social purposes. Additional support for these speculations came from previous research (Moschis, 1976; Ward and Wackman, 1971), which found materialistic attitudes to be related to social motivations for watching television commercials and programs (e.g., watching commercials and programs to learn what products to buy to make a good impression on others), and such motivations to be the result of family communication structure at home (Moore and Moschis 1981; Moschis and Moore 1979b). Buijzen and Valkenburg (2005) investigated the effectiveness of various types of parental mediation of three potentially undesired effects of television advertising. In a survey among 360 parent-child dyads with children in the 8–12 age range, the researchers investigated how different styles of advertising mediation (active vs. restrictive) and family consumer communication (concept-oriented vs. socio-oriented) moderated the relations between the children's advertising exposure and their materialism, purchase requests, and conflicts with their parents. The findings suggested that concept-oriented consumer communication is more effective in reducing the relations between advertising exposure and children's materialism, than socio-oriented consumer communication.

2.4 Television Viewing and Materialism. Television has a number of essential qualities that may contribute to its impact as an agent of consumer socialization. First, television is ubiquitous. In terms of exposure, television rivals many traditional socialization agents such as school, church, and even parents. Second, television's effects are often invisible. Because so many people watch television, its effects can become obscured. In addition, television has other characteristics that contribute to its socializing effect. Television supplies its viewers with images, accounts, and stories of life that are often far removed from the viewer's daily experience and social milieu (O'Guinn and Shrum, 1997). Cultivation theory would assert that television will influence personal values as well as societal perceptions, as dominant program content becomes assimilated into personal value structures over time. Because content analyses have shown that materialism is commonly and favorably portrayed in television programming (O'Guinn and Shrum 1997; Shrum et al., 2005).

Studies have also examined the influence of mass media, on youth's development of specific consumer related motives and values in the context of consumer socialization, and the findings indicates that the correlation between the strength of favorable attitudes toward materialism and the amount of television viewing is statistically significant (Moschis and Churchill, 1978). A study conducted by Churchill and Moschis (1979) to assess the interrelationships among television viewing and materialism among adolescents found that the amount of television viewing was positively correlated with materialistic values. They found that the amount of television viewing among adolescents decline with age and that materialistic values tend to increase with the amount of television viewing. Other studies conducted among children to examine the effect that television has on children found that young heavy viewers of television are more vulnerable to televised materialistic values, (Bybee, Robinson and Turow, 1985). Brand and Greenberg (1994) compared Channel One viewers and non-viewers among middle and high school adolescents in the United States. In the study, Channel One is the television program targeting to high school students whose founder gives schools audiovisual equipment in exchange for showing students a twelve-minute program with two minutes of commercials. More Channel One viewers than non-viewers reported that they usually wanted what was featured in television commercials and that designer clothing labels were important to them. The result suggested that those who watch television tended to be more materialistic.

Harmon (2001) conducted two secondary analyses to determine whether a correlation existed between heavy television viewing and materialistic values. After analyzing the data from Simmons Market Research Bureau, 1996, and the General Social Survey, 1972-1996, Harmon noticed that the data showed strong correlations between television viewing and materialism. In the United States and South Korea, Kwak et al. (2002) analyzed and tested the cultivation effects model of television shows and television advertising. Kwak and his associates found that heavy exposure to television advertising increased the audience's perceptions of a materialistic society in the United States and South Korea. Smith and Roy (2008) conducted a study across western developed nation (United States and New Zealand) and several culturally homogeneous regions, including New Europe, Latin

America, the Middle East and the Far and Southeast to examine the relationship between television viewing, core values (religiosity and materialism), and perceived well being factors (perceived socioeconomic status and life satisfaction). The study examines the role played by religiosity as a cultural value, and its effects on materialism and on life satisfaction among college students undergoing their undergraduate studies. Countries included in the sample were Argentina, Chile, China, Croatia, India, Lebanon, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and the United States. The result revealed that the Far South East region (China and India) watched the least television. The research investigates on whether or not television programming and advertising content influence people to be materialistic. The results revealed that the quantity of television viewing was positively shown to influence materialism, directly in some cases, as well as indirectly through perceived realism in others. Shrum, Burrough and Rindfliesch (2005) extended research which shows that television viewing cultivates perceptions of the prevalence of societal affluence through a memory-based process that relies on the application of judgmental heuristics. The paper extended the research by examining 1) whether cultivation effects generalize to consumer values such as materialism, and 2) whether these values judgments are also processed in a heuristic manner, using a survey sample of individuals from the United States. Their findings revealed that television viewing was positively related to materialism.

More recently, in Moschis et al. (2009) study, where the influences of family structure and socialization processes were incorporated into the 'life course' perspective, the relationship between exposure to television during adolescent years and the person's strength of materialistic values in early adulthood was statistically significant. Benmoyal- Bouzaglo and Moschis (2010) have examined the direct and indirect effects of family structure on the development of materialism in France. It was found that the amount of television viewing during adolescent years correlated significantly with the respondent's materialistic values held as a young adult.

2.4.1 Mediating Effects. There is considerable evidence to suggest that television modify the effects of other socialization agents, particularly family communication processes. For example, studies (Churchill and Moschis, 1979; Moschis and Moore, 1982) found that the effects of television advertising on consumer learning were contingent upon the adolescent's frequency of communication with his/her parents about consumption matters, with television advertising effects having a stronger impact for families in which discussions about consumption are less frequent. Television mediation is often the result of a child's requests for advertised products. For example, Atkin (1982) found that parents and children often discuss and argue over consumer purchase decisions that are stimulated by television advertising. Such discussions and opportunities for mediation can be attributed to high adult-child co-viewing behavior, which has been estimated to be as high as 70 percent for prime-time programming. There are some evidence to suggest that the impact of outside-the-family influences such as television advertising is greater under conditions of parental restrictiveness (Atkin, 1982). Similarly, Hawkins and Pingree (1982) found reduced effects of television for youngsters in families that are low in conflict and parental control. These findings may be attributed to family communication patterns.

For example, it has been found that protective families stress obedience and social harmony and make a conscious effort to protect the child from controversy within the home. Since parental control using restrictiveness is likely to be present in these families, parental efforts to protect the child within the home may leave the youngster unprotected from outside influences (McLeod and Chaffee, 1972). Thus, it is not surprising that studies find children from protective homes to be susceptible to the influence of external sources, such as television advertising (Moore and Moschis, 1978). To summarize, the evidence indicates that television mediates the effects of socialization agents on the development of materialistic values among young adults. Such mediation is the result of opportunity for mediation, such as parent-child television co-viewing behavior. Based on scientific and empirical research documented in the literature, there appears to be reasonably good supportive evidence that family is instrumental in teaching young people basic rational aspects of consumption, and in the development of their materialistic values. It influences the development of materialistic orientations related to a hierarchy of consumer decisions delineated by previous writers. This leads to the following sets of propositions:

Family Communication and Materialism

P1. There are differences between young adults' family communication patterns and their level of materialistic values.

- a.** There is a positive relationship between young adults who are characterized by a socio oriented family communication and their level of materialistic values.

b. There is a negative relationship between young adults who are characterized by a concept oriented family communication and their level of materialistic values.

Television Viewing and Materialism

P2. There are differences between young adults' amount of exposure to television viewing and their level of materialistic values.

a. There is a positive relationship between young adults, who are exposed to television viewing, and their level of materialistic values.

Family Communication and Materialism Mediated through TV viewing.

P3. The relationship between young adults' family communication patterns and their materialistic values is mediated by the individual exposure to television viewing.

a. The relationship between young adults who are characterized by socio oriented family communication and their level of materialistic values is mediated through the exposure to television viewing.

b. The relationship between young adults who are characterized by concept oriented family communication and their level of materialistic values is mediated through the exposure to television viewing.

3. CONCLUSION

The information presented in this article suggests some generalizations supported by reasonably adequate evidence and others which are more speculative and require additional research. Based on scientific and empirical research conducted in different cultural setting, and sample populations, age appears to diminish people's materialism; that is, when people grow old, they attach less importance to material possessions than other things. Different communication processes are involved in the direct transmission of specific values (materialism) from parent to child, and based on several findings these processes vary by socio-demographic characteristics. Most studies on materialism and family communication have primarily emphasised on children and adolescents. Given that the influence of family environment, particularly communication effect, persists well into adulthood, it remain important to explore how various communication patterns at home would influence young adults' development of materialistic values. This paper has also reported some findings which indicates that there are differences between young adults' family communication patterns and their level of materialistic values.

Specifically scientific and empirical research indicate that there exist a relationship between young adults who are characterized by a socio and concept oriented family communication at home and their level of materialistic values. The effect of television viewing on materialism among children and adolescents has also been well documented in prior and well established researches. It is reasonable to suggest that there are significant differences between young adults' amount of exposure to television viewing and their level of materialistic values. This paper has also been an attempt to highlight the indirect relationship between family communication and materialism, namely through the effect of television viewing. It is suggested that the relationship between young adults' family communication patterns at home will influence their materialistic values through the individual's exposure to television viewing. The research reviewed here suggests that family communications have been examined in the context of how parents affect the development of materialistic values of their children, and whether these communication effect could have an influence into adulthood.

In summary, this article has presented an update on the present knowledge and research on the role of family communications and television viewing in the development of materialistic values. It has also integrate much of the information in the area and has presented propositions to guide future research and theory development.

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Graph

Adapted from Mochis & Churchill (1979).

