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## “Culture and consumer socialization effects on adolescent’s influence on family purchase decision of mobile phone: A comparison between mother’ and adolescent’ perceptions”

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**ABSTRACT:** Globalization has brought the need for companies to seek to better understand their consumers and, in particular, how they decide to buy. In this context, the family is the most relevant consumer unit for marketing managers. In that context, it is urgent to understand important cultural dimensions, such as the distance of power and individualism-collectivism that need further investigation in its application to the study of consumer behavior. Furthermore, the study of the family merits continued and more in-depth attention, in particular as regards the participation of its members and the extent of such participation in decisions to purchase products which currently have a high demand, such as mobile phone for his own use. In these, the role of the adolescent is not properly explained, having often been devalued or relegated. The adolescent tends to have a higher knowledge than his parents, which can constitute an important resource in his participation in those purchases, when comparing with their parents. Furthermore, technological products for family use and for adolescents’ use have not yet been adequately researched.

The main objective of this research is to examine the influences of the national cultural constructs of individualism-collectivism and distance of power, and the effects of consumer socialization on the purchase of a mobile phone for adolescent’ use, comparing the mother’ and adolescent’ perceptions on the adolescent’ influence on that decision.

A quantitative research method is utilized in high schools in Lisbon district, Portugal. 3,600 questionnaires were delivered in classrooms during May 2018. Adolescents’ students, aged 12 to 19 years, were instructed to fill their questionnaires in the classroom (a total of 1,800 questionnaires) and to deliver the remaining 1,800 questionnaires to their mothers and to return them, fully completed, some days later. Finally, the questionnaires were collected from the high-schools during May 2018. This resulted in a total of 726 questionnaires by mothers and 726 by adolescents. This meant a total of 1,452 validated questionnaires.

Results of logistic regression analysis point to power distance, internet influence, and television influence, as the main purchase explanatory variables. We can also find in the results a significant similarity of perceptions between the mother and the adolescent with regard to the participation that he has in the purchase decision under study. Despite this, it is also important to conclude that there are differences in the importance of including some variables depending on the family member surveyed. Here, from the adolescent’ perspective, the parents’ socio-oriented communication style, and the type of family are variables that contribute to explaining his/her influence on the purchase of mobile phones for personal use. When parents have a higher socio-oriented communication style, adolescent’ will show higher influence on the purchase of mobile phone. On the other side, in single-parent families adolescent’ will exert higher levels of influence than those in traditional families. Several contributions are made to this knowledge area. Firstly, the relevance of including the adolescent in purchases for his own use is reinforced.

Second, when considering mobile phone, marketing managers should direct their efforts to those adolescents who live in small power distance cultures, and to those adolescents who are more influenced by internet and television. Those results are innovative in this field of knowledge.

The present research contributes significantly to the companies by allowing to conclude that the adolescent has an active participation on family purchase decisions. Having the adolescent relevant role on those decisions, it is important that marketers focus their efforts on his satisfaction. Comparing the mother’ and adolescent’ perceptions on the adolescent’ influence on that decision allows us to reinforce those contributions.

**Keywords:** Consumer behaviour, Culture, Consumer socialization, Family decision making, Adolescent, Influence, Mobile phone

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The literature on consumer behavior has emphasized the importance of considering the most relevant dimensions of culture, mainly when considering the raising phenomena of globalization and its impact on decision making. In this field, power distance and individualism-collectivism can be considered the most relevant dimensions (Al-Zu'bi 2016, Yang et al. 2014, Marbell&Grolnick 2013, Feng et al. 2011). For marketers, the search for new markets, and the consolidation of their actual ones, is very important in the context of global market, and being the family the most fundamental unit of consumption, it is crucial to understand how families behave in different cultures (Ishaque&Tufail 2014, Kaur&Medury 2013, Leng&Botelho 2010). Besides that, the family buying decision process is considered to be one of the most difficult subjects in the area of consumer behavior, needing deeper research (Aleti et al. 1995, Akinyele 2010, Beatty & Talpade 1994). Within family, adolescents constitute an important segment for companies, mainly because of their attempts to influence family purchases, and because some day they'll be heading their own families (Al-Zu'bi 2016, Mau et al. 2014, Medury 2013, Luczak&Younkin 2012). For these reasons, it is important for marketers to understand the patterns of adolescent influence in the family context (Luczak&Younkin 2012).

For those products where they are primary users, like breakfast cereals, clothes, music, adolescents have autonomy to decide, in many cases (Ishaque&Tufail 2014, Kaur & Singh 2006, Beatty & Talpade, 1994), or in certain services for family consumption, like eating out, traveling, or products like groceries (Baía 2018, Ashraf & Khan, 2016; Chikweche et al., 2012; Chitakunye, 2012).

The first researchers to consider adolescent's influence on technological products on family purchase decisions were Foxman and Tansuhaj (1988). Results indicated some adolescent's influence on that purchase decision.

Consumer socialization is the processes through which consumption related skills, knowledge, and attitudes are transferred between generations (Aleti et al. 2015, Yang et al. 2014, Watne et al. 2014, 2011, Ward 1974). Parental communication has been the most recurrent construct used in consumer socialization and considered a reliable and successful predictor of adolescent's socialization. However, the effect of parental communication style in adolescents' influence on buying decisions is still under-researched and needs deeper investigation (Sharma & Sonwaney, 2013).

Currently, theorists have explored the socialization agents' effect on adolescents, including television (Kushwaha 2017, Barber 2013, Luczak&Younkin 2012). However, there's also a lack of research about the internet impact on adolescents' consumer socialization (Barber 2013, Sharma & Sonwaney 2013, Niu 2013, Luczak&Younkin 2012).

Marketing managers need to understand the adolescent purchase behavior for current sales and their participation on family decisions, given their growth as a target (Niemczyk 2015, Srivastava 2015, Shahrokh&Khosravi 2014, Yang et al. 2014). Past research which has clearly shown that adolescents' role on family purchase decisions varying by product, decision stage, adolescent, parental, and family characteristics (Aleti et al. 2015, Ishaque&Tufail 2014, Shahrokh&Khosravi 2014, Ali et al. 2013, Shergill et al. 2013, Chaudhary & Gupta 2012). Despite that, the effects of cultural variables remain unexplored on adolescents' participation on family decision making field (Neulinger&Zsoter 2014, Barber 2013, Akinyele 2010).

This study examines influence of the national cultural individualism-collectivism and power distance constructs, and consumer socialization effects on adolescent's influence on family purchase decision, considering one technological product: mobile phone for adolescent use, whose interest is confirmed (Barber 2013, Akinyele 2010, Neulinger&Zsoter 2014, Kaur & Singh 2006, Commuri& Gentry 2000). Little is known about purchasing behavior or the patterns of consumption of technological products in households (Kaur & Singh 2006, Chavda et al. 2005, Neely 2005). The present research presents a holistic approach to adolescent influence, also considering the role of product knowledge on his/her influence, and the influence of demographic variables such as family type and income and adolescent's gender (Baía 2018, Ali et al. 2015). This paper also explores the role of television and internet as antecedents of adolescent's consumer socialization and its effects on his purchase influence.

The variation per respondent when there are several respondents has been dominant in studies on the influence of adolescents (Shoham&Dalakas 2005, 2003, Beatty & Talpade 1994, Foxman et al. 1989a, b; Foxman & Tansuhaj 1988, Belch et al. 1985). These divergences between the different perceptions about the adolescent's relative influence cause a problem of internal consistency of the scale (Kim & Lee 1997, Corfman 1990b), so the testimony of a family member who can issue an impartial and rigorous opinion, it will be a way to contribute to its resolution (Mangleburg 1990). Many authors have pointed to the mother as the element in the family capable of providing a credible and rigorous testimony regarding the adolescent's influence on purchasing decisions (Neely, 2005; Mangleburg et al. 1999, Ahuja et al. 1998, Kim & Lee 1997, Zick et al. 1996, Ahuja & Walker 1994, Ahuja & Stinson 1993, Roberts et al. 1981, Szybillo&Sosanie 1977). However, many researchers pointed out the relevance and interest on inquiring both adolescent and one parent (Al-Zu'bi 2016, Ashraf & Khan 2016, Mau et al. 2016, 2014, Goswami& Khan 2015, Sondhi&Basu 2014).

The research problem deals with a theoretical dimension concerning the answer to the following questions: What is the impact of the national cultural constructs and consumer socialization on adolescent's influence on mobile phone for adolescent's own use decision? What are the family demographic characteristics that impact the adolescent's influence on family purchase decision of buying a mobile phone for him/her? What is the mother's perception about the adolescent's influence? What is the adolescent's perception about his/her own influence? Are mother's perception and adolescent's perception about his/her own influence different?

Even though past literature considered adolescent as an active participating member on family purchases (Khoo-Lattimore et al. 2016, Niemczyk 2015, Kaur & Medury 2011, Mangleburg 1990, Foxman et al. 1989a, b), a holistic approach to the adolescents' influence on mobile phone for adolescent's own use on final decision stage remain unexplained (Barber 2013, Akinyele 2010, Neulinger & Zsoter 2014, Kaur & Medury 2011, Kaur & Singh 2006). The subject of the present investigation is the consumption behavior of family purchases for mobile phone.

The paper begins by reviewing the literature and the definition of the research hypotheses. The methodology used will be characterized also. The main study results will be presented and discussed, as well as the main conclusions, limitations and directions for future research.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

The domain of family consumption behavior presents some gaps, namely the amount and extent of adolescent influence on family purchases, which has been consecutively neglected or disregarded (Khoo-Lattimore et al. 2016, Watne & Winchester 2011, Kaur & Medury 2011, Carr 2006, Commuri & Gentry 2000). The adolescent has been considered a less important or secondary member when studying family consumption decisions.

### *The adolescent role*

Adolescents can play three main roles as consumers: (1) buyers who have purchasing power and make purchases, (2) direct or indirect influencers of purchases made in the family context, and (3) a future large market potential for the purchase of various products and services (Aleti et al. 2015, Srivastava 2015, Shahrokh et al. 2014). Adolescents are influencing family members on purchasing decisions by actively acting on a certain decision direction, or also considered direct influence (Kaur & Singh 2006, Beatty & Talpade 1994, Mangleburg 1990). Adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions is still not properly explained (Aleti et al. 2015, Shergill et al. 2013, Chaudhary & Gupta 2012, Kaur & Singh 2006).

### *Cultural dimensions*

Culture is the "collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from those of another" (Hofstede 1994, p. 4). Hofstede (2001) has identified several dimensions of national culture including individualism vs collectivism and power distance, to determine the culture constructs' impact on individual consumer behaviour (Al-Zu'bi 2016). Individualism versus collectivism refers to the individual or group relevance, that is, to what extent is the individual or society more valued in a certain country's cultural position (Chan & McNeal 2003, Hofstede 1983).

### *Individualism vs collectivism*

Individualism refers to a society's cultural position relative to major individual relevance. On the other side, collectivism means that group's interests must overlap individual relevance (Chan & McNeal 2002a; Hofstede 1998, 1983). Individuals from a collectivist culture devote more attention to their families and sacrifice their individual interests to the interests of the community by comparison with individuals from individualistic cultures (Al-Zu'bi 2016). For Mooij & Hofstede (2010), on individualist cultures, individuals use the term "I" in their statements, while the individuals from collectivist cultures frequently use the term "We" in their arguments. Some researchers have pointed that "in Western cultures, the development of self is more separate, distinct, and independent of others. Therefore, acceptance and support from parents are sufficient for adolescents to establish a strong positive attitude toward themselves" (Yang & Laroche 2011, p. 9). So, the second hypothesis is:

H1: The adolescents will be perceived as having more influence on family purchases if they are in individualism culture than if they are in collectivism culture.

### *Power distance*

Power distance can be defined as "the degree of inequality among people which the population a country considers as normal: from relatively equal (that is small power distance) to extremely unequal (large power distance)" (Hofstede, 1993, p. 89). Thus, power distance concept is related to a society desire for hierarchy versus egalitarianism (Chan and McNeal 2003). That reflects members who hold less power accept that power is distributed with iniquity (Hofstede 1980). Western Europe countries traditionally hold a low power distance (Hofstede, 1993). This means that in those countries, parents value adolescents' obedience when compared to parents living in a higher power distance culture (Baía 2018). Therefore, those parents are more

likely to encourage and be more open to adolescents' influence on family decisions (Shergill et al. 2013). Thus, the first hypothesis is:

H2: The adolescents will be perceived as having more influence on family purchases if they are in small power distance culture than in large power distance culture.

#### *Consumer socialization*

From a consumer socialization approach, adolescents' influence on family consumption decisions largely depends on socialization agents influence such as parental communication style, internet influence, and television influence (Aleti et al. 2015, Watne et al. 2015, 2011, Haq & Rahman 2015, Barber 2013, Kaur & Medury 2011). Past research has focus mainly on parents, peers and media (Aleti et al. 2015, Dotson & Hyatt 2005, Moschis & Churchill 1978).

#### *Parental communication style*

Parental communication style effect on adolescent's socialization process depends, largely, on parental orientation, being more restrictive or more permissive (Kushwaha 2017, Al-Zu'bi 2016, Kim et al. 2015, Yang & Laroche 2011). When considering concept-oriented and socio-oriented styles, four types of parental communication patterns can be considered: (i) Laissez-faire (low COS, low SOS); (ii) Protective (low COS, high SOS); (iii) Pluralistic (high COS, low SOS); and (iv) Consensual (high COS, high SOS) (Sharma & Sonwaney 2013, Rose et al. 1998, Moschis & Moore 1979). The laissez-faire style family believed to have weak correspondence between parent and adolescent, the protective family demonstrates social amicability where adolescent could gain knowledge alone to some limited extent; the pluralistic family fosters adolescent practice of open communication, while the consensual family allows adolescent to develop his/her own perspective on family cohesiveness (Carlson & Grossbart 1990). Past research pointed that parents with concept-oriented style value adolescents' opinion on purchase decisions and tend to consult them (Sharma & Sonwaney 2013, Rose et al. 1998, Moschis & Moore 1979).

Watabe and Hibbard (2014) pointed that parents with socio-oriented communication style foster adolescents' obedience by monitoring and controlling their' consumer learning and behavior. In permissive parenting style, adolescents noted that "mother did not view herself as responsible for directing and guiding my behavior as I was growing up" (idem, p. 364).

For Rose et al. (1998), "consensual and pluralistic mothers held more negative attitudes toward advertising than laissez-faire mothers" (p. 80). Therefore, the third hypothesis ((a) and (b)) are:

H3a: There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with respect to adolescents with pluralistic parents being perceived as having more influence on family purchases than those with laissez-faire parents.

H3b: There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with respect to adolescents with consensual parents being perceived as having more influence on family purchases than those with protective parents.

#### *Internet influence*

Internet has contributed and influenced in a decisive way the way adolescents socialize (Kaur & Medury 2011). Adolescents demonstrate greater internet skills compared to their parents. For those reasons, the use of the Internet by adolescents is a subject of great interest and lacking the greatest depth for academics and marketers (Kaur & Medury 2011, Belch et al. 2005). Therefore, the study of the effects of the socialization of consumption by agents such as the internet and television in adolescents is an area of great interest today. The increasing use of the Internet as a communication tool makes it a socializing agent with high potential (Lee et al. 2003).

For adolescents, internet is considered as a physical and social space, alternative to the traditional physical environment, allowing people to talk, form relationships, discuss issues, and perform many of the tasks, and relevant experiences (Kaur & Medury 2011).

The internet should constitute a potential socializing agent with a major impact on adolescents' behavior (Barber, 2013), particularly related to his/her role in decision making (Kaur & Medury 2011). Thus, it is expected that:

H4: There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with respect to adolescents with internet influence being positively related to the adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions.

#### *Television influence*



The media has played a relevant role in guiding consumers to products and brands, providing reliable evidence (Barber 2013), and by using credible informants, having also persuasion power over deciders. Television has been the most influential mass media channel, influencing consumers through the brands' advertising that are supported by celebrities or acceptable by society (Churchill & Moschis 1979). Television has helped adolescents on developing product-related knowledge, perception of the consumer's role, and influence their purchasing intentions (Haq & Rahman 2015). Television influence has been a very important socialization agent, affecting attitudes and behaviors such as desire for products, preference of brand and willingness to buy (Barber 2013).

The amount of television viewing improves the market's knowledge and its products (Mangleburg & Bristol 1998). In addition, parents who regularly watch television with adolescents feel the need for less intervention because they can control the content to be observed (Kushwaha 2017). For Sharma and Sonwaney (2013), "children who received more parental restriction regarding television viewing tended to be less conscious of brand names" (p. 34). So, one can expect that:

H5: There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with respect to adolescents with television influence being positively related to the adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions.

#### *Product knowledge*

Social power means a person's ability, based on some attribute such as knowledge or expertise, to influence another person's behavior or to persuade him/her (Aleti et al. 2015, Beatty & Talpade 1994). When considering adolescents, such power comes from expertise and knowledge about a certain product or service (Watne et al. 2011, Beatty & Talpade 1994). Chitakunye (2012) pointed that adolescents are encouraged by parents to use their cognitive skills in consumer decisions. Adolescents tend to be most knowledgeable and interested in technological products, which will lead them to more influence attempts (Foxman & Tansuhaj 1988). Baía (2018) found that adolescents actually revealed a relevant participation on decisions when their knowledge is higher.

Thus, the product knowledge should lead to greater adolescents' influence attempts and also to more parental receptiveness (Chitakunye 2012, Belch et al. 2005, Shah & Mittal 1997, Beatty & Talpade 1994). So, the sixth hypothesis is:

H6: There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with respect to adolescents with greater product knowledge being positively related to the adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions.

#### *Adolescent's gender*

The adolescent gender's one of the main explanatory aspects for their influence on family consumer decisions (Ali et al. 2013, Watne & Winchester 2011, Shergill et al. 2013, Gentina et al. 2013, Kaur & Singh 2006). Moschis and Mitchell (1986) concluded that female adolescents appear to be more likely than male adolescents to participate in all phases of the family purchasing decision process, in general, and to decide to particularly purchase products. Lee and Collins (2000) have also concluded that female adolescents exert higher levels of influence than male adolescents in those decisions. Watne and Winchester (2011) concluded that female adolescents produce higher levels of influence specifically on family vacation purchases. Thus, the second hypothesis is:

H7: There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with concerning to female adolescents as having more influence on family purchases than male adolescents.

#### *Family type*

The family type is an important aspect when explaining the adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions, with the adolescents in single-parent families presenting higher levels of influence comparatively to those from traditional ones (Mangleburg et al. 1999, Ahuja et al. 1998, Ahuja 1993, Ahuja & Walker 1994, Ekstrom et al. 1987). The change in adolescent's influence seems to emerge from a number of factors, including the increasing divorce rates (Caruana & Vassallo 2003, Lackman & Lanasa 1993, Ekstrom et al. 1987). Ahuja (1993) concluded that adolescents in single-parent households could also participate in decision-making process at a higher level than the ones in traditional families, in their role as junior partners performing management activities and in mother's emotional support. Ahuja and Walker (1994) stated adolescents seem to have more influence on family purchasing behavior in single-parent families (Caruana & Vassallo 2003, Mangleburg et al. 1999, Ahuja 1993, Darley & Lim 1986). The rise of single-parent families have led to an increase in the participation adolescents have in family purchase decisions (Ashraf & Khan 2016, Lackman & Lanasa 1993, Ekstrom et al. 1987). Thus:

H8: There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with concerning to adolescents as having more influence on family purchases if they live in single-parent families than if they live in traditional families.

#### *Family income*

Family income has being pointed as an explanatory variable of adolescent's influence on family purchasing decisions, with adolescents presenting higher levels of influence in those households with higher income (Ali et al. 2013, Kaur & Medury 2011, Isin & Alkibay 2011, Lee & Beatty 2002, Lee & Collins 2000). In families with higher levels of income, adolescents tend to have more opportunities and may be allowed to participate in more decisions (Isin & Alkibay 2011, Lee & Collins 2000, Beatty & Talpade 1994). Thus:

H9: There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with concerning to adolescents living in higher income families being perceived as having more influence on family purchases than adolescents in lower income households.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This research is exploratory, aiming to study the influences of national cultural constructs of individualism-collectivism and power distance, and consumer socialization effects on adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions of mobile phone, according to mother' and adolescent' perceptions.

The study universe is formed Portuguese families, with at least one adolescent (between 12 and 19 years). There is no knowledge of research on impact of cultural constructs and socialization consumer on adolescent's influence on family mobile phone purchases in Europe, so this study provides a contribution in this area.

Due to the lack of information provided by official organisms, it was necessary to use a non-probabilistic sample, which is in line with past studies (Aleti et al. 2015, Srivastava 2015, Kim & Lee 1997). The collected sample was focused on households with at least one adolescent between the ages of 12 and 19 (Aleti et al. 2015, Srivastava 2015, Kim & Lee 1997, Beatty & Talpade 1994).

Several authors have pointed out the importance of study product or service categories for adolescent use (Belch et al. 2005, Beatty & Talpade 1994). In this research, the selection of the product category to be studied derives from the literature review, with the decision on the mobile phone (Foxman & Tansuhaj 1988). More, little is known about the adolescent's influence in this product category in the family final purchase decision.

The questionnaire survey was the method of data collection, which is also consistent with past studies (Aleti et al. 2015, Srivastava 2015, Shoham & Dalakas 2005, 2003, Beatty & Talpade 1994).

The questionnaire structure aimed to pursue the research goals outlined. A pre-test was carried out that led to small changes in the questionnaire final structure. The suggestions presented by the 18 respondents in that phase concerned some difficulty in certain expressions understanding used in the initial version.

The measurement scales for variables studied were adapted from past research on this field (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Linking the Model to the Questionnaire**

Variables in study	Adapted from...
<b>Explained variable</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adolescent Influence on Family Purchase Decisions</li> </ul>	Shoham e Dalakas (2003); Beatty e Talpade (1994)
<b>Explanatory variables</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Power distance,</li> <li>Individualism vs collectivism,</li> <li>Parental communication style,</li> <li>Internet influence,</li> <li>Television influence,</li> <li>Product knowledge,</li> <li>Adolescent's gender</li> <li>Family type</li> <li>Family income.</li> </ul>	Wu (2006), Hofstede (2001); Wu (2006), Hofstede (2001); Chan and McNeal (2003); Kaur and Medury (2011); Kaur and Medury (2011); Beatty and Talpade (1994); Lee and Beatty (2002); Ahuja and Stinson (1993); Ahuja and Stinson (1993).

#### *Explained variable*

Past research have used likert scale to measure adolescent's influence on final decision considering parents and adolescents participation (Shahrokh & Khosravi 2014, Mangleburget al. 1999, Kim & Lee 1997, Beatty & Talpade 1994).

The measurement scale used on the explained variable was based on past referential authors (Shoham & Dalakas 2003, Beatty & Talpade 1994). The mother's perception about adolescent's influence may in a range from 1 to 7 points (where 1 = I had no influence, and 7 = I had all influence).

#### *Explanatory variables*

The "individualism vs collectivism" is measured using the Hofstede (2001) scale. For this variable, twelve items were used, each one in a seven-point Likert scale. For parental communication style was used the Chan and McNeal (2003) seven-point Likert scale, ranked completely disagree (1) to completely agree (7). The "internet influence" variable used Kaur and Medury (2011) nine items with seven-point Likert scale, ranked completely disagree (1) to completely agree (7). The "television influence" variable also used Kaur and Medury (2011) nine items adapted to television, with the same seven-point Likert scale, ranked completely disagree (1) to completely agree (7).

The adolescent's age and product knowledge served as explanatory variables. The variable "age" is an ordinal variable, so it can assume values between 12 and 19 years, according to the proposal of Lee and Beatty (2002). The "product knowledge" represents the subjective knowledge, and will be measured according to Beatty and Talpade (1994) scale. A seven-point Likert scale is used, ranked completely disagree (1) to completely agree (7). The item to be measured will be translated by the phrase: "before buying this product I would describe myself as being very familiar with this product category." Finally, the family type and family income variables used scales proposed by Ahuja and Walker (1994).

#### *Data collection procedures and sample*

Research was conducted in May 2018, and data collection was carried out in 15 high-schools, on Lisbon district. Lisbon district presents an important demographic profile in Portugal, namely as regards the average size of family households. Consequently, letters were sent to the Executive Councils of several schools in Lisbon area, and all the schools contacted agreed to participate in the study. Then, for each school level the form teachers were contacted, and instructed the teachers in each class to provide a questionnaire and a letter to the mother of each student, requesting her participation. During this phase, 3,600 questionnaires were delivered by the teachers in the classrooms during May 2018. Students, aged 12 to 19 years, were instructed to fill their questionnaires in the classroom (a total of 1,800 questionnaires) and to deliver the remaining 1,800 questionnaires to their mothers and to return them, fully completed, some days later. At the final stage, the questionnaires were collected from the high-schools during May 2018. This resulted in a total of 726 questionnaires fully answered by mothers and 726 by adolescents, which meant a response rate of 40.3%. That represents a higher rate than previous studies (Kaur & Medury 2013, Shergill et al. 2013, Wu 2006). Only questionnaires answered by adolescents whose mothers also completed their questionnaires were considered validated. Thus, it was possible to carry out a correspondence between the questionnaires answered by both.

#### *Statistical techniques used*

In line with past research, we used linear regression to study the adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions as the data analysis' method to be used (Mangleburg et al. 1999, Beatty & Talpade 1994). Nonetheless, is scarce the use of logistic regression when studying this research area (Baía 2018). There are two main reasons to use logistic regression: a binary explained variable and the variables level of measurement.

#### *Variables measurement*

The use of logistic regression is adequate to the nature of the explanatory variables considered (Hutcheson and Sofroniou 1999). The explanatory variables involve three types of scales: categorical, ordinal and interval. Individualism-collectivism, parental communication style, internet influence, television influence, service knowledge are interval variables, with one or more items classified in Likert scales with seven points. The family size is an ordinal variable, ranging from 2 to 6 or more persons, and family type is a binary variable classified in single-parent family or traditional family.

#### *The explained variable*

The explained variable, measured through a seven-point range scale, was transformed into a dichotomous variable. Therefore, the values that are in the range of 5 to 7, will correspond to 0 = does not influence; and values from 1 to 4 will correspond to the value 1 = influence (Baía 2018).

#### *Variables selecting method for the logistic regression model*

The Forward LR method of inclusion of variables will be used in logistic regression model in study. For Hutcheson and Sofroniou (1999), the ordinal or interval data can be transformed into dichotomous data, allowing its analysis the use of logistic regression models.

## **IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

#### *Internal consistency*

Cronbach's  $\alpha$  ranks high in most researcher preferences to estimate internal consistency. The reliability of a measure refers to its ability to be consistent (Maroco & Garcia-Marques 2006). The Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , which must vary from 0 to 1 when the mean correlation between the items is positive (idem 2006). Regarding the

internal consistency presented, mostly Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficients indicated good reliability, presenting values above 0.8.

#### *Respondents' profile*

**Table 2.** *Respondents' profile (percentage)*

Demographics	Valid percent	Cumulative percentage
<i>Adolescent's age range</i>		
12 to 15	38.5	38.5
16 to 19	61.5	100
<i>Adolescent's gender</i>		
Male	46.6	46.6
Female	53.4	100
<i>Mother's age range</i>		
25 to 34	6.6	6.6
35 to 49	70.1	76.7
50 to 64	22.4	99.2
More than 64	0.8	100
<i>Mother's educational level</i>		
No Schooling	1	1
Basic education	28	29
High school	36	65.6
Bachelor's Degree	5.8	71.4
University graduation	23.3	94.8
Masters or PhD	5.2	100
<i>Mother's professional category</i>		
Housewife	11.5	11.5
Low-qualified or Unskilled Workers	8.8	20.3
Plant and Machine Operators and Assembly Workers	12.7	33.1
Workers, Builders and Similar Workers	17.6	50.7
Farmers and Skilled Workers in Agriculture and Fisheries	18.2	68.9
Service and Sales Personnel	1.7	70.6
Administrative and Similar Personnel	6.4	77
Technicians and Professionals of Intermediate Level	3.4	80.4
Specialists of the Intellectual and Scientific Professions	7.3	87.7
Senior Management and Directors	12.3	100
<i>Family income</i>		
Less than 500 euros	4.5	4.5
From 500 to 1,000 euros	24.5	29
From 1,001 to 1,500 euros	30.7	59.7
From 1,501 to 2,000 euros	15.2	74.9
From 2,001 to 2,500 euros	13.2	88.2
From 2,501 to 3,000 euros	5.9	94.1
From 3,001 to 5,000 euros	4.5	98.6
More than 5,000 euros	1.4	100

Results show a distribution of 53.4% for female adolescents of the total number of adolescents under study, with the age group from 16 to 19 years old representing 61.5% of the total sample collected (see Table 2).

The most frequent age group is from 35 to 49 years, with a rate of 70.1%, with regard to mother's age. The second most frequent age group is 50 to 64 years, with a rate of 22.4% of the total of respondents.



The most frequent category of mother's educational level corresponds to high school education, with a rate of 36% of the total of respondents. The second most frequent category is basic school, with 28% of the total. Only 23.3% had a university graduation level (see Table 2).

Farmers and skilled workers represent the most frequent category concerning mother's professional category, with a rate of 18.2% of respondents. The second most frequent category corresponds to workers, builders and similar workers, with 17.6% of the total.

The most frequent household monthly post-tax income interval is the 1,001 to 1,500 euros range, with 30.7%. The second most frequent monthly income range is 500 and 1,000 euros, with 24.5% (see Table 2).

**Table 3.** Family demographic characteristics (percentage)

Demographics	Valid percent	Cumulative percentage
<i>Family Size</i>		
2 persons	4.7	4.7
3 persons	18.9	23.8
4 persons	35.5	59.6
5 persons	27.5	87.4
6 or more persons	12.5	100
<i>Family type</i>		
Single-parent	29.9	29.9
Traditional	70.1	100

The most frequent category of family size, with a rate of 35.5% of the total of respondents, is four persons. The second most frequent category corresponds to five members households, with 27.5% of the total (see Table 3). The traditional family represent the most frequent category concerning family type, with a rate of 70.1% of respondents, which also means that for each ten adolescents, three of them lives in a single-parent household.

#### *Explanatory variables*

From now on, the adolescent's influence on family vacations purchase explanatory variables will be analyzed.

#### *Power distance*

The results show that adolescents will be perceived as having more influence on family purchases if they are in small power distance culture than in large power distance culture. Thus, H2 is verified (see Tables 4 and 5).

#### *Internet influence*

H4: There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with respect to adolescents with internet influence being positively related to the adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions. We consider H4 is verified, so that adolescents with internet influence being positively related to the adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions from both mother' and adolescent' perceptions (see Tables 4 and 5).

#### *Television influence*

H5: There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with respect to adolescents with television influence being positively related to the adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions. Thus, H5 is verified, so adolescents with television influence being positively related to the adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions from both perceptions (see Tables 4 and 5).

**Table 4.** Logistic regression for mobile phone (variables in equation for mother's perception)

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 3c	Power distance	-0,159	0,07	5,232	1	0,022	0,853
	Television Influence	0,562	0,168	11,15	1	0,001	1,753
	Internet Influence	1,543	0,192	64,57	1	0	4,678
	Constant	-2,838	0,519	29,86	1	0	0,059

**Table 5.** Logistic regression for mobile phone (variables in equation for adolescent's perception)

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 4d	Socio-oriented communication	0,312	0,11	8,001	1	0,005	1,366
	Internet Influence	0,292	0,12	5,932	1	0,015	1,34
	Television Influence	1,28	0,302	17,92	1	0	3,597
	Family type	0,626	0,296	4,459	1	0,035	1,87
	Constant	-2,824	0,843	11,22	1	0,001	0,059

*Individualism vs collectivism*

Regarding the hypotheses that did not verified. The adolescents will not be perceived as having more influence on family purchases if they are in individualism culture than if they are in collectivism culture. Thus, H1 is not verified (see tables 6 and 7).

*Consumer socialization*

There is difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with respect to adolescents with pluralistic parents being perceived as having more influence on family purchases than those with laissez-faire parents. However, when we consider the adolescent's perception, they do have more influence on family purchases with pluralistic parents being perceived as having more influence on family purchases than those with laissez-faire parents. So, H3a is not verified.

There is difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with respect to adolescents with consensual parents being perceived as having more influence on family purchases than those with protective parents. Thus, H3b is not verified (see tables 6 and 7).

*Product knowledge*

There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with respect to adolescents with greater product knowledge not being positively related to the adolescent's influence on family purchase decisions. So, H6 is not verified (see tables 6 and 7).

*Adolescent's gender*

There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with concerning to female adolescents as not having more influence on family purchases than male adolescents. Thereby, H7 is not verified (see tables 6 and 7)).

*Family type*

There is difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with concerning to adolescents as not having more influence on family purchases if they live in single-parent families than if they live in traditional families, when considering the mother's perception. Thereby, H8 is not verified. However, when we consider the adolescent's perception, they do have more influence on family purchases if they live in single-parent families than if they live in traditional families (see Tables 5 and 7).

*Family income*

There is no difference in the perception of mother and adolescent with concerning to adolescents living in higher income families being perceived as not having more influence on family purchases than adolescents in lower income households. Thus, H9 is not verified (see tables 6 and 7).

**Table 6.** Logistic regression for mobile phone(variables not in equation for mother's perception)

Step 3	Variables	Score	df	Sig.
	Adolescent's gender	0,007	1	0,931
	Family income	1,225	1	0,268
	Individualism vs collectivism	0,13	1	0,718
	Concept-oriented communication	2,215	1	0,137
	Socio-oriented communication	3,493	1	0,062
	Family type	0,471	1	0,492
	Adolescent's product knowledge	1,349	1	0,246
Overall Statistics		12,57	10	0,249

**Table 7.** Logistic regression for mobile phone (variables not in equation for adolescent's perception)

Step 4	Variables	Score	df	Sig.
	Product Knowledge	0,464	1	0,496
	Adolescent's gender	0,103	1	0,748
	Family income	2,94	1	0,086
	Concept-oriented communication	0,083	1	0,774
Overall Statistics		5,248	7	0,63

*Explanatory variables interpretation*

In the present research for adolescent's influence on decision to buy mobile phone for adolescent's use, the -2LL analysis allows us to conclude that the exogenous variables add explaining capacity to adolescent's influence on that service purchase. This is reinforced by the Chi-square value, when pointing out that there is a large part of the model explained variance when considering power distance, internet influence, and television influence, as purchase relevant explanatory variables.

## V. DISCUSSION

In this research, a total of 1,452 fully completed questionnaires was reached, which is a larger sample than most past studies (Al-Zu'bi 2016, Ashraf & Khan 2016, Ali et al. 2013, Chikweche et al. 2012, Chitakunye 2012, Mangleburg et al. 1999, Darley & Lim 1986).

In line with most past studies on household purchases, the present research used a convenience sample (Al-Zu'bi 2016, Ashraf & Khan 2016, Ali et al. 2013, Chikweche et al. 2012, Chitakunye 2012).

*Internal validity*

Family members' divergence of opinions when questioned about adolescent's influence raised internal validation issues, in past research (Beatty & Talpade 1994, Foxman et al. 1989b, Belch et al. 1985).

Several researchers have collected data questioning one or both parents and the adolescent in past studies on adolescent influence on family purchase decisions (Watne & Winchester 2011, Ishaque and Tufail 2014, Shoham & Dalakas 2005, Beatty & Talpade 1994, Foxman et al. 1989a, b, Belch et al. 1985), which has raised the issue lack of model internal validity, due to perception differences between the members questioned. Several authors pointed out the mother has as the most reliable member of the family when measuring adolescents' influence (Neely 2005, Mangleburg et al. 1999, Kim et Lee 1997). However, the mother's and adolescent's inquiries were chosen, preserving internal validation of the influence construct, shown by the presented. This is reinforced by several past researchers have chosen to inquire both adolescent and one parent (Al-Zu'bi 2016, Ashraf & Khan 2016, Mau et al. 2016, 2014, Goswami & Khan 2015, Sondhi & Basu 2014).

When comparing mother's influence with adolescent's influence, or what one can call relative influence, the scale used shall also provide external validation (Baía 2018).

*Internal consistency*

Independent variables scales' internal consistency was measured, and the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient was used for individualism-collectivism and power distance, parental communication style, internet influence, and television influence scales. The individualism-collectivism scale presents values above 0.7, and being above 0.7, is taken as acceptable reliability (Gliem & Gliem 2003). The power distance scale presented values above 0.8, almost excellent according to Gliem & Gliem (2003). Therefore, the mother's and adolescent's inquiries were chosen, preserving internal validation of the influence construct, due to Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficients indicated good reliability, presenting values above 0.8.

The parental communication style scale has values above 0.8, which represents a good Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient. For the internet influence, values above 0.8, also good. As for the television influence scale, a even better Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient was found, with a 0.828 value (idem 2003).

These values are consistent with past research (Ahuja & Stinson 1993). Generally, previous researchers omitted scales' internal consistency values on their studies (Al-Zu'bi, 2016, Ashraf & Khan 2016, Ishaque & Tufail 2014, Ali et al. 2013, Chikweche et al. 2012, Watne & Winchester 2011).

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

The present research has found several results, which allow us to conclude that: There is a significant adolescent's influence on family technological purchases, particularly on mobile phone for his own use. Power distance, internet influence, and television influence, as purchase relevant explanatory variables are explanatory variables of the adolescent's influence for that purchase. The adolescent has more influence on mobile phone

purchase in low distance of power cultures. He/she also has more influence on those purchases when he/she's exposed in higher degree to internet influence and to television influence.

We can also find in the results a significant similarity of perceptions between the mother and the adolescent with regard to the participation that he has in the purchase decision under study. Despite this, it is also important to conclude that there are differences in the importance of including some variables depending on the family member surveyed. Here, from the adolescent's perspective, the parents' socio-oriented communication style, and the type of family are variables that contribute to explaining his/her influence on the purchase of mobile phones for personal use. When parents have a higher socio-oriented communication style, adolescent will show higher influence on the purchase of mobile phone. On the other side, in single-parent families adolescent will exert higher levels of influence than those in traditional families.

#### *Research contributions*

The present research provides several contributions to this area of knowledge. In the first place, the main contribution of the present research is the suggestion of a theoretical-conceptual framework that provides explanatory capacity of national cultural constructs and consumer socialization effects on adolescent's influence on mobile phone decisions for adolescent's, according to the mother's and adolescent's perceptions. Those results are innovative in this field of study. It also reinforces the importance of including the adolescent in the final decision for that product, which is an innovation in this area of research.

Several contributions are made to this knowledge area. Firstly, the relevance of including the adolescent in purchases for his own use is reinforced. Second, when considering mobile phone, marketing managers should direct their efforts to those adolescents who live in small power distance cultures, and to those adolescents who are more influenced by internet and television. Those results are innovative in this field of knowledge.

More, collecting data from mothers and adolescents is a very importance advance in this field, in line with some past research (Al-Zu'bi 2016, Ashraf & Khan 2016, Mau et al. 2016, 2014, Goswami & Khan 2015, Sondhi & Basu 2014), but finding very convergent perceptions between mother and adolescent.

The present research contributes significantly to the companies by allowing to conclude that the adolescent has an active participation on family purchase decisions. Having the adolescent relevant role on those decisions, it is important that marketers focus their efforts on his satisfaction. Comparing the mother's and adolescent's perceptions on the adolescent's influence on that decision allows us to reinforce those contributions.

The results of the logistic regression analysis point to power distance, internet influence, and television influence as purchase important explanatory variables on the considered purchase. These results are innovative in the study of family purchases.

Finally, the results point to the relevance of considering adolescent as an influencer on mobile phone final decision, indicating that he/she has an important role when considering relevant products for adolescent's own use. These results are confirmed not only by himself, but also by his/her mother, which is an innovative result in traditional families.

#### *Limitations and recommendations*

Although the present research adds some important contributions to the theoretical-conceptual framework in this field, providing a response to national cultural constructs and consumer socialization effects on adolescent's influence on family vacation decisions, the results don't entirely explain the phenomenon. Thereby, other variables must also be considered in order to provide a more complete explanation on the adolescent's influence for this product decision. Furthermore, in this study, the use of a convenience sample does not allow us to extrapolate the results, although this procedure is consistent with past research (Aleti et al 2015, Yang et al. 2014, Chaudhary & Gupta 2012, Feng et al. 2011).

Finally, it is suggested that future research studies the effect of friends as agents of socialization in the influence of adolescents. This aspect has been little studied and needs the most attention from researchers. Many have seen the internet as a way of socializing through the conviviality of teens with their peers. However, this relationship does not run out on the internet.

#### *Business implications*

The study offers a contribution to the companies by providing evidence of the adolescent's influence on the purchases of mobile phone. Given the adolescents relevance within family decisions, it is important that marketers focus their efforts on adolescent satisfaction, adopting strategies adjusted to the families. Should those professionals direct the marketing messages to adolescents living in low distance to power cultures. Marketers approach to family markets should also be more precise if they target adolescents with higher internet influence, and with higher television influence. These results are innovative in the study of family purchases when it comes to buying mobile phone.

If a decision is considered to be largely influenced by adolescents, then the messages should be addressed to him/her. In the present investigation it was concluded that adolescents represent an active influential market in the mobile phone within family, and so marketers should adopt strategies that reflect the adolescent's relative importance in those decisions. On the other hand, marketers should focus more their efforts on adolescent satisfaction in products/services for their personal use.

#### *Suggestions for Future Research*

In addition to the products/services that may be more associated with certain patterns of consumption characteristic of families, it is important to point out as research opportunity the study on the adolescent's influence in the purchasing decisions in those households for several other products/services. Application to other technological products for family consumption, like computers, tablets, ipads, and technological services, internet purchases, vacation's sites. It's important to explore the behavior nature of adolescents living on single-parent contexts, and to consider specific product and service categories that those family structures demand for. On the other hand, the services/products of perceived adolescent's influence are not properly exhausted. Research in this area should focus on the influence of adolescents in the choice of services/products that are shared by the family versus those used by the parents; explore the mechanisms of decision making between male and female across this age range; explore differences between income ranges; and to go deeper in the study of the impact of mothers' occupational status on adolescents' influence. More studies are needed comparing the mother's and adolescent's perceptions on the adolescent's influence on buying decision which allows us to advance with more reliable and consistent results and contributions to science.

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