

## **Kids and retailing, future trends**

The contributions to this double issue in Issues 10 and 11 are the best papers presented at the Second International Colloquium on Kids and Retailing held in June 2015 in Budapest at the initiative of ESSCA's Research Lab. in Retailing and NovaChild Innovation Network for Children. Budapest, at the crossroads between Europe and the Orient, was an ideal setting to present and discuss current and relevant research in the topical subject of kids and retailing. The theme was "Future Trends" based on the view that children are young people engaged in a moving world shaping them as consumers while retailing is reinventing itself. This issue focusses on contributions under the heading "children, shopping and their representation" and reflects their thinking of the shopping activity.

## **Children, shopping and their representation**

This issue has a child focus within shopping from three perspectives. The submissions include the representation of shopping that children are given through books as well as the perception they have of the ideal shopping, the store retail landscape studied from the viewpoints of discretionary consumption and the store atmosphere, and finally two aspects of retail catalogues (the children's reaction to incongruent images and the meaning of the absence of children).

The first paper by Badot, Bree, Damay, Guichard, Lemoine and Poulain presents the results from the exploration of shopping through children's books. The purpose is to identify the representations, figures and process of commerce that may build the commercial vision of children that are exposed to them. A semiotic analysis of 50 books has been undertaken showing a broad diversity in the images of shops given to children and a wealth of information given to children to help them assimilate the process of a shopping transaction.

The second contribution by Deli-Gray, Pinto, McLaughlin and Szilas investigates the perception of ideal shopping by very young children (three to six years old). The research was conducted in two European countries using a three stages methodology: 176 kids participated in focus groups, then 30 children and their parents were interviewed, and finally drawings of actual and ideal shopping were analysed. It appears that French young kids focus on the products they buy whilst Hungarian children talk about how they take part. When French kids want to replace offline shopping by online shopping, Hungarian children find it is a bad idea. But wherever the children live they want to spend more time with their parents.

The third paper by Marshall represents in-store observations of young Japanese consumers in their discretionary food consumption. The research shows that they visit "konbini" (a kind of convenience store) two to four times per week and they are actively engaged in independent purchasing decisions. The paper contributes to understanding how young consumers interact with a unique retail landscape and what is the role of food environment on food choice.

The fourth paper by Ayadi and Cao examines children's responses to store atmosphere. In total, 41 in-store observations and 20 semi-directive interviewed were undertaken with children aged 7-11 in two stores. A grounded-theory approach has

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been used and shows that the impact of store atmosphere on children's responses to store environment and behaviour is a complex phenomenon. Positive outcomes have been delineated but store atmosphere could also become a source of conflicts between parents and children.

The fifth paper by Ulrich and Ezan aims at exploring the children's reactions to catalogue revolutionizing gender norms by using gender-incongruent images and their associated toys. The methodology combined in one session participant observation, interview with visual stimuli and a collage exercise. Among the 27 children aged 5-10 of the sample, only girls aged 9-10 tended to notice incongruent images. The children's acceptance of the gender-incongruent images is influenced by the gender-constancy stage, children's own gender-flexibility and the collective nature of the game.

The last paper by la Ville (de) and Krupicka examines furniture manufacturers' catalogues and press advertisements to highlight the multi-layered process involved in conveying meaning to the "parent-child cluster" consumer. Using an interpretive semiology perspective, the research shows that the scenes portrayed foster positive values but also promote discourses about contemporary childhood and parenthood.

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