

Abstract

An exploration of convenience and recreational shopping value orientations among men and women in various age categories was performed. Four hundred and eighty five consumers responded to a questionnaire requesting information about their shopping values. The findings suggest that, although men and women have similar values, there are differences when age category is considered. For example, it appears that older women more strongly value convenience factors, whereas older men are interested in the recreational aspects of shopping. The discussion includes some implications for retail marketing and future research.

Introduction

The factors that affect consumer shopping values have been described by a variety of authors. Demographic variables such as income, life cycle, social class, age, and gender have been studied and are presumed to have validity when used as segmentation factors (Berman and Evans 1986). It is the latter two variables, age and gender, which are the basic concerns of this investigation.

Basic values toward shopping are likely to effect the entire purchasing act from awareness and identification of need through postpurchase evaluation. Thus, many studies have identified consumer values and attempted to link segments of consumers with similar values to their purchasing behavior (Mitchell 1981; Shay 1978; Veltri and Schiffman 1984; Yankelovich 1974).

Several value orientations have been described in recent years and studies have investigated the relationships among these values, demographics, psychographics, and such purchase processes as store choice, shopping frequency, and patronage motives (Bellenger, Robertson, and Greenberg 1977; Crask and Reynolds 1978; Stephenson 1969; Williams, Painter and Nicholas 1978).

The research of Bellenger, Robertson, and Greenberg (1977) is of particular relevance to this investigation because they identified two value orientations among their affluent female responders. The convenience oriented shopper placed high importance on convenience and low prices and had a very low interest in shopping as a leisure-time activity. On the other hand, the recreational shoppers were interested in quality, variety, service, and were highly interested in shopping as a recreational activity.

Many years ago Martineau (1957) speculated that shopping is viewed by women in a recreational manner. He felt that women received power and prestige from the shopping act and enjoyed the flattery and mastery which came from this role. During this time period, women were primarily in subordinate roles both at home and in the

economic system. If this view was valid for its time, does it remain valid today and to what extent? Bellenger, Robertson, and Greenberg's (1977) findings suggest that the recreational orientation is valid for a select segment of the female shoppers but not for all female shoppers.

The purpose of this research is to explore these two value orientations --- convenience and recreational --- as applied to both male and female shoppers. It is felt that historical changes in both women's roles and the influence of these changes upon men and their roles will reveal age specific value trends.

Methodology

Sample

An area stratified sample survey was conducted. Residential trading areas were identified and weighted according to population density. Street addresses were then randomly selected from within each area according to county maps. A total of 1250 households were contacted by the researchers. After introductions and an explanation of the study was performed, a self-administered questionnaire was left with the resident. Questionnaires could be returned via a prepaid mailer.

Four hundred and eighty five usable responses were received, representing a 39% response rate. Based upon census data, characteristics of the sample group were externally representative of the trading area. An overview of the survey participants is as follows: Males-29%, Females-71%; Median Annual Household Income was between \$15,000 and \$20,000; 60% of the sample were high school graduates or below; 71% were married and the ages ranged from 18 to over 65 years of age. The area was primarily rural and semi-rural.

Instrumentation

A self-administered questionnaire was devised to measure basic shopping values and selected demographics. The values were quantified by using Likert type statements. The respondent indicated his or her degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement on a 7-point scale. Recreational orientations were measured through such statements as "Shopping should be exciting and fun" and "I like to shop for and try new products". Statements such as "I shop for necessities" and "Convenient location is important" indicated a convenience orientation.

Results

A summary of the study findings are presented in [Tables 1 and 2](#). The research objective was to investigate whether there were differences in shopping values among male and female shoppers. The t test findings suggest that, as a whole, males and females have similar shopping

values. The one exception is that males were more likely to agree that they shopped for basic necessities ($t = 3.15$, $p < .001$).

The differences in shopping values were then analyzed by age groupings. Analysis of Variance revealed that there were significant age differences for all three of the recreational values and for one of the convenience values --- convenient location.

Since shopping values were influenced by the age factor, it was reasonable to perform a cross sectional analysis of the shopping values by age groupings. The ability of the shopping values to discriminate male shoppers from female shoppers was tested separately for each of the three age groups --- (1) 55 years and over; (2) 35-54 years; and (3) 18-34 years. The selection criteria for the discriminant analyses was to maximize Rao's V.

In the age category of 55 years and older four variables discriminated between male and female shoppers at the $p < .05$ level, based on the change in Rao's V. Two of these were convenience classified and two were recreational classified. Interestingly, the convenience factors --- convenient location and economic considerations --- were more strongly valued by the female sample. In addition, the recreational values --- style and fashion conscious and like to try new products --- were more strongly valued by the male sample.

TABLE 1
RESULTS OF VARIANCE TESTS FOR DIFFERENCES IN GENDER GROUPS AND AGE GROUPS ON SHOPPING VALUES.

ORIENTATIONS	GENDER ^a (T SCORES)	AGE ^b (F SCORES)
SHOP FOR NECESSITIES	1.90	.52
CONVENIENCE		
CONVENIENT LOCATION	-1.36	2.61*
ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS	3.25***	.93
RECREATIONAL		
SHOPPING SHOULD BE EXCITING AND FUN	1.82	2.68*
LIKE TO TRY NEW PRODUCTS	.22	3.21**
STYLE AND FASHION CONSCIOUS	1.96	4.13***

a Analysis Method --- t tests
b Analysis Method --- Analysis of Variance
* $P < .05$
** $P < .01$
*** $P < .001$

TABLE 2
CROSS SECTIONAL RESULTS FROM DISCRIMINANT ANALYSIS

AGE 55 YEARS AND OVER					
VARIABLE	WILKS' LAMBDA	SIGNIFICANCE	CHANGE IN RAO'S V	SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGE	COMPARISON OF MALE TO FEMALE SHOPPER
CONVENIENT LOCATION	.96	.008	.7169+001	.007	LESS IMPORTANT
STYLE AND FASHION CONSCIOUS	.93	.003	.5210+001	.022	MORE IMPORTANT
LIKE TO TRY NEW PRODUCTS	.90	.001	.5785+001	.016	MORE IMPORTANT
ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS	.88	.001	.3711+001	.050	LESS IMPORTANT

CLASSIFICATION MATRIX		
ACTUAL	PREDICTED MALES	PREDICTED FEMALES
MALES 51	31 (61%)	20 (39%)
FEMALES 110	37 (34%)	73 (66%)
CORRECTLY CLASSIFIED: 65%		

AGE 35 - 54 YEARS					
VARIABLE	WILKS' LAMBDA	SIGNIFICANCE	CHANGE IN RAO'S V	SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGE	COMPARISON OF MALE TO FEMALE SHOPPERS
SHOP FOR NECESSITIES	.95	.004	.8358+001	.003	LESS IMPORTANT
SHOPPING SHOULD BE FUN AND EXCITING	.93	.007	.1870+001	.171	LESS IMPORTANT

CLASSIFICATION MATRIX		
ACTUAL	PREDICTED MALES	PREDICTED FEMALES
MALES 43	17 (39.5%)	26 (60.5%)
FEMALES 106	21 (19.8%)	85 (80.2%)
CORRECTLY CLASSIFIED: 68.5%		

AGE 18 - 34 YEARS					
VARIABLE	WILKS' LAMBDA	SIGNIFICANCE	CHANGE IN RAO'S V	SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGE	COMPARISON OF MALE TO FEMALE SHOPPERS
SHOP FOR NECESSITIES	.86	.000	.2404+002	.000	LESS IMPORTANT
SHOPPING SHOULD BE FUN AND EXCITING	.83	.000	.6325+001	.011	LESS IMPORTANT

CLASSIFICATION MATRIX		
ACTUAL	PREDICTED MALES	PREDICTED FEMALES
MALES 40	20 (50%)	20 (50%)
FEMALES 108	19 (17.6%)	89 (82.4%)
CORRECTLY CLASSIFIED: 73.7%		

For shoppers aged 35-54 years, a different profile emerged. Two values -- shop for necessities and shopping should be fun and exciting --- were entered in the discriminant analysis but only the first step was significant at $p < .05$

level for change in Rao's V. Shopping for necessities was more important for females in this age group than for males.

In the final group, persons aged 18-34, shop for necessities and shopping should be fun and exciting were both significant discriminators of gender. Both values were more important for females than for males.

In all the age groups, the results indicated that shopper gender could be correctly classified with an accuracy rate significantly greater than that attributable to chance alone.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore convenience and recreational value orientations among males and females in different age groups. The findings were revealing. Among the older consumers, the females placed higher importance on the convenient/economic factors whereas the males were more recreational in their orientation. In this sample, many of the males were either retired or considering retirement from their work roles. One interpretation may be that the men are influenced by decreased demands upon their time and a new interest in the recreational aspects of shopping activity (novelty, risk taking, etc.). The females in this population, however, remain tied to home and community chores and have less time and money than their male counterparts.

The younger group seems to have an orientation which combines both convenience and recreation. The females place a higher value on both economics and recreation than the males. This is also true, although to a lesser extent, among the middle group in terms of age. The shoppers aged 35-54 years were more similar to the younger group than to the older group of consumers.

These findings suggest that value orientations are different among males and females and that the specific differences are effected by age. This has important implications for retail marketing and management. For instance, retail firms could target the older male segment who, at least in this rural location, is interested in the adventuresome aspects of shopping. Fashion shows, new product demonstrations, and newsletters with information about style and new products could be distributed among this segment to enhance their perception of shopping activity. The older female, concerned about time and money, could be attracted to stores which emphasized their concern with her problems. Transportation, specials and discounts, time saving features might well be welcomed by this segment.

The younger female groups, who desire both fun and value, seem to require a combined approach. It appears important to design retail environments that are accessible, well-designed, and

yet provide interesting atmosphere and variety. Media promotions could be developed to help the young female consumer recognize her needs, deliver product and purchase information, and hint at the enjoyment received from shopping.

It is suggested that future research investigate further the phenomenon of the recreationally oriented older male consumer to discover if this trend exists in other geographic locations. Also, it seems important to further study younger male shoppers. As women require equal support in the caretaker roles, it appears that more and more males will be shopping for general merchandise. This younger group needs further study.

References

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