Influence of Shopping Orientations, Selected Environmental Dimensions with Apparel Shopping Scenarios, and Attitude on Store Patronage for Female Consumers

by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

Clothing and Textiles

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January 27, 2000

Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords: Female Consumers, Shopping Orientations, Environmental Dimensions, Attitude, Store Patronage, Shopping Scenarios

INFLUENCE OF SHOPPING ORIENTATIONS, SELECTED ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS WITH APPAREL SHOPPING SCENARIOS, AND ATTITUDE ON STORE PATRONAGE FOR FEMALE CONSUMERS

by

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Near Environments

(ABSTRACT)

The decision to patronize a particular store usually starts with a set of characteristics or attributes that consumers consider important. Consumers then use these attributes to make decisions regarding what store or stores can cater to their particular needs. Past retail and marketing studies have identified several consumer-oriented store attributes such as price, quality, variety, discounts, store reputation and their relationship to store patronage, but these studies overlooked how the physical environment affects retail store patronage. In addition, very few studies have addressed the issue of shopping scenarios and how they affect store patronage. The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of selected environmental dimensions on store patronage using specific apparel shopping scenarios.

Data were collected using a random sample of women age 18 and over throughout the United States. The final sample consisted of 151 women. Four hypotheses were formulated and tested using factor analysis, cluster analysis, MANOVA, and Chi-square. The hypotheses tested for differences in (a) importance of environmental dimensions relative to three shopping scenarios, (b) importance of environmental dimensions relative to shopping orientations, (c) perceptions of first store choice relative to shopping orientations, and (d) attitude toward first store choice.

Results revealed no difference in importance ratings of two environmental dimension factors, *Sensory/Layout* (Factor 1) and *Music/Aesthetics* (Factor 2), for three shopping scenarios (i.e., a dress for a formal social gathering, family gathering, work or community activity). Significant differences were found in the importance ratings of the *Sensory/Layout* and *Music Aesthetics* dimension factors across shopping orientation clusters. The clusters were named *Decisive Apparel Shoppers* (Cluster 1), *Confident Apparel Shoppers* (Cluster 2), *Bargain*

Apparel Shoppers (Cluster 3), and *Appearance Conscious Apparel Shoppers*. The *Bargain Apparel Shoppers* had higher mean scores on the environmental factors than the other shopper groups. With regard to first store choice, the department store was chosen most often as first store choice. Furthermore, differences were found in perception of the environment for first store choice across the shopping orientation clusters. No differences were found for the *Ventilation/Sensory* factor; however, differences were found for the *Signs* perception factor. Respondents expressed relatively unfavorable attitudes toward their first store choice. However, of those that expressed an unfavorable attitude, several respondents indicated they were likely to visit their first store choice again.

Acknowledgments

I would like to extend sincere thanks to Dr. Doris H. Kincade, my advisor, for her time, encouragement, and especially for assisting me with my research while I was away from the University. Sincere gratitude is extended to the members of my advisory committee for your time, ideas, and assistance with the research process. Thank you Dr. Jessie Chen-Yu, Dr. Pamela A. Weaver, Dr. Lennie Scott-Webber, and Dr. Sherry Schofield-Tomschin.

A special thanks is extended to all of my friends and family for your support throughout the years.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Today the only constant in the retail industry is change. Beginning in the 1980s, U. S. retailers experienced unprecedented turmoil with increased competition. After years of rapid growth, total retail sales began to slow in the mid-1980s. Some researchers contribute this decline to the success of mail order, while others believe it is a result of market saturation (Lucas, Bush, & Gresham, 1994; Shim & Drake, 1990; Shim & Mahoney, 1992). Shim and Drake reported that in 1980 mail order grew at twice the rate of sales in retail stores. According to Shim and Mahoney, catalog retailers outnumbered annual store sales at a rate of 10%. In 1992, catalog and mail order houses reported that orders for apparel products totaled more than 9,000 and accounted for $5.6 million in sales (Shim & Mahoney).

Over the years, the number of stores in which to shop has greatly increased. In 1989, the United States had 34,683 malls, equating to a 22% increase over the number in 1986. In addition, U. S. retail square footage grew by 75%, although the population increased only by 10%. In terms of square footage, in 1990 there were 18 square feet or 4.5 billion square feet of retail space for every person in the United States. As compared to earlier years, this dramatic increase in retail space resulted in the saturation of several market areas, which left retailers to compete for the same pool of consumers and their dollars (Lucas et al., 1994). Similarly in 1989, direct mail retailers doubled from ten years earlier the number of catalogs and pamphlets placed in consumers' mailboxes to more than 14 billion. Not only were more store retailers competing for the same market, but also direct mail retailers were competing with store retailers for the same consumer dollars.

Several consumer-oriented factors have also contributed to challenges in apparel retailing. Some of them include fluctuations in the economy, changes in consumer demographic and lifestyle profiles, and loss of consumer markets. Based on what is known about the industry, retailers will continue to encounter changes in their environment in the future. As retailers experience these changes, the retail market becomes more difficult to capture (Robinson, 1986). One of the most important tasks of store retailers will be how to attract and retain consumers.

The four forms of retail competition are systems, vertical, intratype, and intertype

(Lucas et al., 1994). Systems and vertical competition represent very small segments of retail competition. Intratype and intertype are most often discussed when referring to apparel retailers. Systems competition is competition among vertical marketing systems for consumer dollars. Vertical marketing systems are designed to foster economies in the production and distribution of products to consumers. An example of systems competition is that of The Gap and The Limited, which are specialty retailers that own or control their own production and distribution systems (Lucas, et al.). Vertical competition occurs when businesses at different levels in the channel of distribution compete for sales. For example, a manufacturer, Esprit, sells products in company-owned boutiques and engages in vertical competition with Saks Fifth Avenue, a department store that carries Esprit products. Intratype competition involves the competitiveness of two or more retailers with the same type of business format. For example, in a regional shopping mall, two anchor department stores, Dillard's and JC Penney, compete with each other. Although intratype competition is the form of competition of which marketers typically think when defining competition between businesses, it represents only a small part of the total competitive environment.

Intertype competition is competition among businesses with different operating formats and strategies to sell the same type of merchandise. An example of this form of competition would be Walmart or Target, both discount stores, and Nordstrom, a department store, competing to sell Levi's jeans (Lucas et al., 1994; Robinson, 1986). Another example of intertype competition would be retail stores such as those mentioned above, competing with non-store retailers to sell apparel products such as, jeans, sweat shirts, or brand name shoes. Non-store retailing has been described as an alternative to store retailing. Darden and Dorsch (1990) categorized non-store retailers as catalog, computer, television, and direct mail shopping. Store retailing includes retailers whose primary outlet is a physical building in a mall, strip center, downtown or freestanding location.

From the consumer's perspective, non-store retailers are perceived as more convenient and, in some cases, offer greater selection than retail stores. In comparison to store retailers, the non-store consumer does not have to drive, walk, search for merchandise, wait in lines, or carry large items. Additionally, the non-store retailer offers an increased level of consumer service that consists of greater product assortment, ease of orders, increased geographical scope, at-home

delivery and liberal return polices. Generally non-store consumers receive more information on features, benefits, and options than store shoppers do. A disadvantage to non-store or in-home shopping is a greater perceived risk associated with in-home shopping. Consumers can not personally inspect the merchandise. Furthermore, the consumer can not make comparisons of the product characteristics (i.e., price, quality, size, color, style), and consumers must also plan shopping time so that merchandise is delivered before they need it (Lucas et al., 1994).

As stated by Lucas et al., some of the disadvantages of store shopping are planning time, transportation time, money for transportation, in-store search, waiting to be served, and carrying goods. On the other hand, the advantages of store shopping include diversion from routines of everyday life, sensory stimulation, social experiences outside the home, and comparison of prices and quality of goods.

Stores vary by classification and the major categories include discount, department, and specialty stores (Jarnow & Guerreiro, 1991). Consumers are attracted specifically to discount stores because they offer a wide variety of brand names (i.e., national or manufacturers' brands) and private label merchandise at low prices. Merchandise selection is wide but very shallow. These stores appeal to the needs of the economic-minded or price-conscious shopper. The discount store's strategy is to entice consumers with attractive prices on hard goods in hopes that they will make unplanned soft goods purchases. Most discount stores operate massive, carnival-like environments that require consumers to walk long distances. Generally, most of these stores are self-service operations with very little assistance from store personnel.

In comparison to shopping discounters, consumers shop department stores for a wide variety of quality merchandise lines with some depth of selection. Department stores normally appeal to middle and upper income consumers. These stores are largely soft-goods retailers, but they offer approximately 20% hard-goods. Unlike shopping at discount retailers, consumers often shop department stores because they carry a wide selection of popular brand name, store label, and designer label merchandise at multiple price points (Lewison, 1994). In addition, consumers prefer to shop department stores for store services, such as gift wrap, alterations, liberal return policies, and home delivery (Lucas et al., 1994). One of the major disadvantages of department stores is their inability to react to changes in consumer preferences because of high levels of inventory.

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Specialty stores are more consumer-oriented and offer high levels of service with helpful sales personnel. In contrast to discount and department stores, specialty retailers carry highly defined or limited line merchandise. Specialty stores have a narrow product mix, but deep assortments within its product categories. These stores deal with single category merchandise or related categories and carry private label merchandise (e.g., clothing and accessories) (Jarnow & Guerreiro, 1991; Lewison, 1994; Lucas et al., 1994).

A major asset of store retailers is their ability to appeal to consumers using the physical environment. Retailers could modify or enhance their physical environments, while providing needed goods and services, to attract consumers to their stores. Often the retailer appeals to all five senses (i.e., sight, sound, scent, touch, taste) to entice consumers and to create a favorable store image (Lewison, 1994). Regardless of the sensory appeals used, store retailers should create images that will be suitable for their target consumers and that will influence consumer patronage. Store retailers can exploit these sensory appeals to compete with non-store retailers that lack access to these consumer attributes, as well as have a competitive advantage over stores that fail to meet the needs of their consumers. Stores that present pleasing and attractive physical environments through sensory appeals will create a competitive environment among stores and most likely entice more consumers to patronize their stores.

Consumer Patronage

The decision to patronize a store usually starts with a set of characteristics or attributes that consumers consider important. Consumers often use these attributes to determine which stores can cater to their needs. Patronage studies in the past have attempted to identify determinants of store choice in relation to attributes, such as price, quality, variety of merchandise, credit availability, return policies, and well-known labels/brands (e.g., Jones of New York, Liz Claiborne). Physical facilities or attributes have been included among other attributes in some studies, but they have not been fully addressed in these studies. In general, no research to date has focused on which of those environmental dimensions are important in choosing a retail store and how the physical environment affects patronage behavior. According to Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995) environmental dimensions such as air quality, lighting,

layout, carpeting, and aisle width and placement are physical store attributes used to project store image and influence store choice.

Store retailers must provide a setting that will allow consumers to shop for their needs and wants in the marketplace. Because apparel store retailers have experienced problems with declining sales and faced competition from non-store retailers, they must understand the importance of the environment and what can be done to influence store patronage. Today's retail market is characterized as being more competitive; thus, store retailers must develop effective strategies to gain a competitive advantage. One of the major differences between the store retailer and the non-store retailer is the environment. Store retailers should find ways to tailor their environments to attract consumers and increase patronage.

To succeed in a competitive market, retailers must understand that, as the market changes so will their target consumers. Categorizing consumers into patronage groups based on one particular store-type for all purchases is not logical. Consumers may shop several retail store-types depending on the product sought and its usage (Robinson, 1986). Therefore, studying the retail environment with specific shopping scenarios based on product/usage and ways to encourage consumer patronage is a significant area of research.

Significance of the Study

A study of patronage or choice for types of retail stores (i.e., department, discount, specialty) is important for several reasons. First, retailers attempting to determine why consumers shop their store will find this research important. Empirical studies such as this will provide retailers with the tools necessary to attract and retain consumers. Second, this research will contribute to a better understanding of the environmental needs of consumers by store type, extend current research and provide a basis for further study. Finally, it will help retailers gain a competitive advantage over non-store retailers by producing a pleasing environment for store consumers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to determine the influence of selected environmental dimensions on store patronage. Specifically, this research determined differences in (a)

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importance ratings of selected environmental dimensions for each shopping scenario, (b) importance ratings of selected environmental dimensions for each shopping orientation, (c) perceptions of store environment for each shopping orientation, and (d) attitude toward the store environment based on first store choice.

A conceptual framework of consumer patronage adapted from previous research was used to display these relationships with specific shopping scenarios. The variables, importance and perception of the store environment, shopping orientations, and store patronage was measured using a survey questionnaire. The section on importance of selected environmental dimensions asked respondents to rate 12 dimensions on a 7-point Likert-type scale of agreement relative to a particular shopping scenario. Perception of the store environment was based on respondents first store choice relative to a shopping scenario. Respondents were asked to describe their perception of each store type by placing a mark closest to the adjective, on the semantic differential scales, that best describes the store. Shopping orientations reflect categories of shopper styles. Respondents rated their shopping styles (i.e., economic, brand-conscious, convenience/time-conscious, fashion-conscious) on a 5-point Likert-type scale of agreement. Store patronage was measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale to determine how often respondents would consider shopping at each store type (i.e., department, discount, specialty, other) and to determine respondent's first choice relative to shopping scenarios.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

The purpose of this research was to determine the influence of environmental dimensions on store patronage. More specifically, this research determined the importance of the environment by shopping scenario, importance of the environment relative to shopping orientations, perceptions of the store environment relative to shopping orientations, and attitude toward stores based on first store choice for female consumers. The review of literature included the following sections (a) overview of retailing (i.e., types of retail stores, trends in stores, comparison of store types); (b) general definition of environment (i.e., environmental dimensions in retail environments, impact of the environment); (c) patronage behavior; (d) shopping orientations; and (e) product and usage.

Overview of Retailing

Retailing involves the selling of goods and/or services to the final consumer. Retailers serve as middlemen or intermediaries between the consumption and production levels in the marketing channel of distribution. They are often categorized as goods or services retailers. The goods retailer sells products such as apparel and provide appropriate complimentary services (e.g., alterations, gift wrap) (Lewison, 1994). With regard to apparel, the goods retailer serves as an information source to consumers and stimulates a demand for apparel products (Jarnow & Guerreiro, 1991). The services retailer sells services such as hair styling, insurance, and medical care and provides the complimentary goods that might be sold or given in support of services (Lewison). Retail stores in the United States total nearly 1.5 million. Of these retailers, approximately 135,000 retailers specialize in apparel and accessories and 70,000 include apparel and accessories in their merchandising mix (Frings, 1991). Stores magazine reported Walmart, Sears, Kmart, JC Penney, and Dayton Hudson as the top five retailers of 1998.

Types of Retail Stores

Classification of retail stores overlap in many ways, and experts often disagree on the categorization of stores. Over the years, retailing has changed to reflect the varying needs of

consumers. New categories of stores have evolved and existing categories have combined which makes classification difficult (Frings, 1991; Jarnow & Guerreiro, 1991). Most often retailers are categorized by their product strategy (i.e., merchandising assortment) and pricing strategies. However, with the success of specialty retailers, perhaps classifying these stores by target consumer is also necessary. Specialty stores target specific groups of consumers (e.g., young men, ladies, sports enthusiast, children, big and tall) that may or may not have a special need for products and services. Mass merchandisers target mass markets that are not segmented.

According to Hasty and Reardon (1997), stores are categorized by product strategy as general-line and limited-line retailers. Department stores, discount stores, and membership warehouses are characterized as general-line retailers. Traditionally, department stores carried a combination of hard goods, soft goods, and home furnishings. These stores feature a wide variety of merchandise lines, including men's and children's wear, dry goods, household linens, housewares, furniture, and home furnishings. Some examples of department stores are Dillard's, Hecht's, and JC Penney. Discount stores such as Walmart and Kmart are departmentalized, self-service stores with low markups achieved through high volume sales. These stores carry diversified product lines that concentrate mainly on national brands. Membership or wholesale clubs (i.e., Sam's) focus on goods such as household cleaning supplies, canned goods and toiletries. Generally, prices are low and consumers give up several amenities and/or services to purchase products in bulk (Hasty & Reardon; Jarnow & Guerreiro, 1991).

Limited-line retailers carry a considerable assortment of goods within one or few related product lines. Included in the limited-line category are specialty stores and boutiques. Specialty stores deal with one or a few lines of merchandise within a broader category. They compete with other retailers on uniqueness of offerings that are geared to a specific target consumer. An example of a specialty store is Lane Bryant that specializes in fashions for tall and large women. Boutiques are similar to specialty stores, but they are smaller and appeal to more limited target markets. Most boutiques are located in downtown areas, fashionable shopping districts, large upscale shopping centers, and self-contained areas within department stores (Hasty & Reardon, 1997). A further review of store types will focus on two general-line retailers (i.e., department and discount stores) and one limited-line retailer (i.e., specialty stores).

<u>Department Stores</u>

Before the establishment of stores, peddlers migrated to different cities selling their goods. After cities experienced growth, and stores were constructed, peddlers ceased to exist. Many of these first stores included department stores, which originated in the middle and late nineteenth century, during the time when mass production began. Rich's of Atlanta and Macy's of New York, who sold feathers, hosiery, and gloves, were among the first large, well-known stores developed in the nineteenth century. These department stores as well as several others expanded into the suburbs as young families moved in the 1950s. Early department stores were free standing or downtown stores; however, most department stores moved into shopping centers as they were constructed in the suburbs (Jarnow & Guerreiro, 1991).

<u>Trends in Department Stores</u>. Of all types of retail stores, the department store has experienced the greatest decline in performance in the past three decades. No single reason has contributed to their decline; however, Dotson and Patton (1992) offer four reasons: competition, over-storing, lost magic and declining service. Competition is one of the significant contributions to the problem. Specialty stores (e.g., Gap, Limited) and Category killers (e.g., Home Depot, Circuit City) challenged department store markets in the 1970s and 1980s, and continue to create uncertainty for retailers in this category. Additionally, discount stores, particularly Walmart, have continued to challenge department stores by offering branded merchandise, appropriate service, and lower prices.

Yet another reason for the decline in department stores is over-storing or the influx of too many malls, strip centers, and freestanding stores. Over-storing has lead to a steady drop in margins and returns on assets, which in turn has led to takeovers or Chapter 11 bankruptcy for several department stores (Dotson & Patton, 1992).

In addition, many consumers no longer perceive shopping as fun; therefore, consumers are shopping less (i.e., lost magic). In the last ten years, the average number of hours spent shopping has decreased from 12 hours to 4 hours per month, and shopping trips have decreased by one third. Dotson and Patton (1992) suggest the lack of interest in shopping is due to homogenization of department stores, which makes distinguishing between merchandise assortments, prices, and promotion extremely difficult. For this reason, many consumers have

decided to patronize other types of retailers, particularly specialty stores, discounters, and various forms of non-store retailing. Consumers often choose specialty stores for unique merchandise and higher levels of consumer service, discounters for variety of merchandise and lower prices, and non-store retailers for convenience. Finally, many department stores have failed to offer desired services.

In an attempt to solve some of these problems, Sears and several other stores have redesigned their merchandise lines, adopted aggressive pricing policies, and increased promotions. To compete with other store types, Sears has redecorated many of its stores and launched an aggressive nationwide campaign, *The Softer Side of Sears*. Stores, such as JC Penney, have developed product niches and even attempted to solve the problem through the use of various technologies (Dotson & Patton, 1992). JC Penney has incorporated several private-label items, such as Arizona and Cabin Creek, to compete with specialty retailers. The catalog division has developed specialty catalogs for consumers with special needs or for special occasions (e.g., tall women, African-American women, mature adults, big and tall men, weddings, maternity)

Other ideas have been offered as a possible solution for department stores. Dotson and Patton (1992) report that the key element for department stores and other retailers experiencing problems is to adopt a *service strategy*. This strategy would provide services that consumers want and that make them satisfied rather than dissatisfied. In addition to developing higher levels of consumer service, department stores should create comfortable and attractive stores that would appeal to their consumers by manipulating environmental attributes, such as store décor, layout, and background music. Effective use of the store environment could not only draw consumers to the store, but would encourage consumers to stay in stores for longer periods of time. Perhaps, a combination of better consumer service and an attractive store environment will influence purchase decisions, which in turn will help declining performance of department stores.

<u>Specialty Stores</u>

As stated by Jarnow and Guerreiro (1991), specialty shops or stores started in the second half of the 1800s. Most of these stores began as small independently owned establishments in small towns or developing cities. In contrast to the department store's wide variety of merchandise lines, specialty stores sell merchandise of a single category (i.e., jewelry, shoes, books, furniture, apparel) or specialize in related categories of merchandise such as clothing and accessories for men, for women, or for children. Furthermore, specialty stores cater to a particular type of consumer and carry merchandise targeted to the specific needs and wants of the targeted consumer (Jarnow & Guerreiro).

<u>Trends in Specialty Stores</u>. Whereas department stores experienced decline over the past three decades, specialty retailers have thrived on the unfortunate loss of department stores. In 1990, specialty stores made more than 60 percent of general merchandise sales (Lucas, Bush, & Gresham, 1994). Much of this success was due to excellent consumer service; nevertheless, specialty stores also rely heavily on private-label merchandise, which is designed specifically to meet the preferences of target consumers. This merchandising strategy allows specialty stores to serve markets not captured by department stores. Sarkissian (1989) reports that specialty retailers must continue to provide private labels and small focused assortments of merchandise in great depth, as well as aggressively promote their store name and brands to continue their success.

<u>Discount Stores</u>

In general, discount stores sell merchandise at lower prices and concentrate mainly on national brands. To keep prices approximately 20 to 30 percent below other retailers, discount stores operate self-service establishments in low-rent locations that have no mail or telephone orders and no free deliveries. In the 1950s, discounters became successful after World War II by selling nationally advertised branded appliances at prices below the manufacturers' suggested retail price. As families moved, stores expanded into cities and suburban communities. They offered not only appliances but also low-priced, unbranded apparel (Jarnow & Guerreiro, 1991). Walmart is the largest discount store and the largest United States retailer. Walmart's annual sales are three times the volume of the next largest retailer, Sears (Stores Magazine, 1998).

Trends in Discount Stores. Discount stores originated to meet the consumer's need for hard goods such as kitchen and home appliances, lawn and garden equipment, toys, and hardware. In response to competition from department stores and other store types, discount stores began in the early 80s to restructure their operations. In addition to providing hard goods, discounters began to expand their merchandise assortments and offer soft goods such as fashion items, housewares, and food products. Recently, these stores have increased automotive repairs, home appliance repairs, restaurants, and personal care and styling salons to compete with other retail establishments (Lucas et al., 1994).

In the 1990s, to compete with specialty stores, discount stores, especially Walmart, have emphasized the importance of consumer service. In addition to implementing better consumer service policies and expanding their merchandise lines, some discounters have made changes in store environment, location and pricing policy. Discount stores that once operated in low-cost facilities have enhanced the exterior and interior of their stores. For example, Kmart has redecorated the interior of most of its stores. This refurbishing project was estimated between $80,000 and $500,000 for a single store. Total renovations averaged more than $1.25 billion (Lucas et al., 1994).

<center>Comparison of Store Types</center>

Traditionally, one of the main differences between department, specialty, and discount stores is the service component. Services are features or variables that can be exploited to establish an advantage over competition. All retailers provide service of some sort, but the types and amounts of services offered vary. Services can be classified into one of three categories. These categories include services that provide convenience (e.g., store location, effective store layout, appearance, knowledgeable sales staff), services that facilitate sales (e.g., store credit cards), and auxiliary services (e.g., gift certificates, layaway, gift wrapping, special orders, mail orders) (Hasty & Reardon, 1997). Department stores provide store cards, alteration service, special order, gift-wrap, and mail order service not present in other stores, particularly discounters (Jarnow & Guerreiro, 1991). Although department stores provide these services, most stores are not very consumer-oriented and lack convenience services. Several department stores have decreased sales staff to cut costs, and as a result, many employees work in multiple

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locations throughout the store. Sales personnel are often unfamiliar with the merchandise, which reduces convenience services and creates dissatisfaction among shoppers. In addition, department stores have begun to charge for many auxiliary services.

Specialty retailers have recognized the importance of customer service and are willing to provide an array of services not available in most department and discount stores. Specialty retailers offer some of the same services as department stores, but maintain a competitive advantage by providing higher levels of convenience services, including a consumer-oriented sales staff. They provide speedy transactions, accessible stores, and easy returns. Often specialty stores are successful because they think of themselves as purchasing agents for their consumers. Their merchandising policies and marketing programs are designed specifically with the target consumer in mind (Lucas et al., 1994). Traditionally, discount stores operated as self-service establishments (i.e., very little assistance is provided by store employees) to keep prices at a minimum. Auxiliary services such as alteration service, special order, gift-wrap, and mail order service present in most department stores are not available in discount stores. Store layout has traditionally not been convenient. However, with the trend among discounters for improved consumer service, the gap between discounters and other store types is declining. For example, Walmart initiated the concept of better consumer service by providing door greeters, and Target provides scanners throughout the store that allow consumers to check the price of goods. Discounters are also creating store layouts that are more specialty-store oriented. Service differences among the three store types are disappearing.

According to Lewison (1994), another traditional difference between the three store types is the target consumer and product positioning for that targeted consumer. Department stores normally appeal to middle and upper income consumers and offer brand name and designer label merchandise at multiple price points (e.g., budget, moderate, better). Similar to the department store, specialty stores appeal to those in the middle to upper income groups. Specialty retailers cater to a more narrowly segmented consumer (Jarnow & Guerreiro, 1991) and carry just clothing and accessories specifically geared for this well-defined target consumer. Moreover, specialty store assortments have price points in the better and bridge points, which are in the upper-middle to highest price ranges. In contrast, discount stores target the economic-minded consumer and use mass merchandising techniques to offer national or manufacturers' brand and

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private label merchandise at prices below traditional department store prices (Lewison). Merchandise is positioned at budget and moderate price points.

Furthermore, different store types have traditionally had different place strategies. Department stores are normally located in high-rent areas. Most of these stores are located in an anchor or end position at major suburban shopping centers. Both the interior and exterior of department stores are designed to create an image of prestige. The inside of the store is designed to facilitate buying by appealing to the consumer's five senses (Lewison, 1994). Specialty stores or shops are located in both small towns, major cities, and in shopping malls. These stores range from small mom-and-pop apparel and accessories shops managed by one or two people to major, prestigious specialty shops with several branches (Jarnow & Guerreiro, 1991). Specialty stores may range in size from less than 200 square feet to 10,000 to 50,000 square feet. Most stores of this type portray an upscale, exclusive and intimate environment, while some specialty stores operate in warehouse format. Unlike specialty retailers, discount stores select suburban locations, serve as anchors for community shopping centers, or are freestanding units on low cost real estate. Recently, discount stores have located as major anchors of regional shopping centers. With respect to interior environment, discount stores create a carnival-like setting using bright, bold store décor, special sales events, and storefront, row checkouts (Lewison).

As discussed by Lewison (1994), the last difference between department, specialty, and discounters is promotion strategy. The department store focuses on product selection and quality, service offerings, and shopping atmosphere in its promotional appeals. The goal of each appeal is to create a quality image of the store. Most promotions are designed to communicate a shopping theme consistent with the needs of the consumer, the seasons, current events, the merchandise, and the store's environment. Promotions are also designed to communicate store sales. Promotional pricing is directed at lower to middle income consumers, regular prices to those that want neither low no high priced merchandise, and prestige prices are directed at the upper-income consumer. Department stores promote sales and current events through television and newspaper advertisements. In addition to similar promotion appeals produced by department stores, specialty retailers design their appeals with a specific type of consumer in mind (e.g., sports-active men, career women, brand-conscious, children). Specialty stores promote sales and current events by direct mailings and/or through phone calls to their consumers. Finally, discount

stores have more price and product emphasis in their promotion strategy. They promote product variety, brand name selection, and low price. Discounters use a sale pricing strategy of every day low prices. Newspapers are used as a primary medium, although television and radio promotions are gaining appeal. Point of purchase displays, bargain tables, bins, and stacks of merchandise are often used to persuade consumers to purchase as they enter, checkout, and exit the store (Lewison).

Summary of Store Types

Over the years, the retail industry has changed to reflect the varying needs of their consumers. Competition among stores has forced many retailers to revisit their product and service strategies, and to improve their overall image. To compete with specialty retailers, department stores have introduced private label merchandise, hired knowledgeable sales staff, and redecorated stores to portray a smaller, more consumer-oriented environment. Specialty stores have continued to offer higher levels of consumer service, and to promote the store name, while appealing to fashion and brand conscious consumers. In response to competition from department stores, discounters have implemented aggressive consumer service programs by providing store greeters, store credit cards, restaurants, banks, layaway, and food centers.

In the future, department stores without intervention will continue to experience decline due to competition from specialty stores, and from discount stores. Discounters will continue to promote every day low pricing and improve consumer service to sustain its competitive advantage. Specialty retailers will continue to provide specialized merchandise in intimate environments for their target consumers. Perhaps, the key to successful department stores will be to enhance the physical environment by using the five sensory appeals (i.e., sight, sound, smell, touch, taste) discussed by Lewison in 1994.

General Definition of the Physical Environment

Sundstrom and Altman (1989) state the "physical environment refers to offices, factories, and other buildings controlled by organizations and features of their internal layout, equipment, furniture, and ambient conditions" (p.176). The physical environments of retail stores, hotels,

restaurants, professional offices, banks, and hospitals reflect the overall image of the organization and influence individual consumer behavior in these service organizations (Bitner, 1992). Specifically, the physical environment creates a tangible representation or image of a service organization and its services (Baker, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1988). A store image is the way stores are defined in the shopper's mind (Martineau, 1958).

In a discussion of bank facilities, Baker et al. (1988) stated that image allows service organizations to differentiate themselves from others and influences why consumers choose one organization over another. If organizations (i.e., banks) are perceived as having similar pricing, product mix, and branch locations, consumers often use the physical environment as an important determinant in choosing organizations. According to Holman and Wilson (1982), consumers shop stores that provide a proper environment relative to image and services. Often consumers evaluate the environment to determine the firm's capabilities for providing a particular service before a purchase. Therefore, the environment of service organizations should reflect the needs and preferences of the consumers and its employees (Bitner, 1992).

The needs and preferences of retail consumers relative to the environment has been discussed in terms of physical dimensions, as well as other store attributes. These attributes are thought to produce the store's image. The physical dimensions are facilities in stores such as elevators, lighting, air conditioning, washrooms, store layout, aisle placement and width, carpeting and architecture (Engel et al.,1995). However, other store attributes are studied more often than physical attributes and include categories of merchandise, service and clientele (Lindquist, 1974-75). Besides the factors of location, price and merchandise offerings, Martineau (1958) states that the store's personality draws shoppers to one store rather than another. Martineau says that not only should retailers be concerned with value and quality of merchandise, but also with a wide range of other factors (e.g., environmental dimensions). All of these factors are expected to play a critical role in the success or failure of stores.

Environmental Dimensions in Retail Environments

Store managers often have difficulty determining the appropriate interior or in-store environment. Store décor varies across stores and sales data used to determine effective styles of

décor are poor representations of how decor affects shopping behavior. Deciding which elements are critical to the success or failure of stores presents a challenge for retailers (Yalch & Spangenberg, 1988). In empirical studies, consumers are often questioned about their store environmental preferences; however, Yalch and Spangenberg state that individuals have difficulty verbalizing how environmental factors influence their choice behavior. For this reason, very few retail and marketing studies have investigated the influence of environmental dimensions in retail stores. Of the studies that exist, most have discussed environmental dimensions or physical surroundings relative to banks, travel agencies, hotels, restaurants, hospitals, and workplace settings. Table 1 shows some of the environmental dimensions that have been discussed in the literature.

Table 1

Commonalities of Environmental Dimensions Identified by Previous Authors

Dimensions	Baker et al. (1988)	Bitner (1992)	Engel et al. (1995)	Lewison (1994)
Temperature	X	X		
Air quality		X	X	
Lighting	X	X	X	
Noise	X	X		X
Scent	X	X		X
Music	X	X		X
Layout	X	X	X	X
Flooring	X		X	X
Fixtures/Racks			X	
Aisle placement			X	
Signs	X	X		
Style of décor	X	X		X

Note. Baker et al. studied banks, Bitner discussed a typology based on who performs actions within the environment and proposed a conceptual framework for three typoes of service organizations: self-service, interpersonal services, remote service, and Engel et al. and Lewison provided textbook discussion on the environmental dimensions.

Bitner (1992) developed a conceptual framework that can be applied to several service organizations to examine the impact of physical surroundings on consumers and employees. The framework suggests that both consumers and employees in service organizations perceive a

variety of environmental factors. These dimensions are categorized as ambient conditions (e.g., temperature, air quality, noise, music, scent); space/function (e.g., layout, equipment, furnishings); and signs and symbols, and artifacts (e.g., signage, personal artifacts, style of décor). Ambient conditions are described as having an affect on the five senses; that is, they affect perception of and human responses to the environment. Consumers view the environment and develop a perception of the store. The space dimension refers to how machinery, equipment and furnishings are arranged in an environment and function refers to the ability of these items to facilitate performance and accomplish goals in the environment. Signs can be used to communicate image and as labels to state the company's name, for directional purposes (e.g., entrances, exits) and to communicate rules of behavior (e.g., no smoking).

Based on perceptions of the environment and its dimensions, consumers and employees respond cognitively, emotionally, and physiologically. Cognitive responses are represented by people's beliefs about the environment or people and products found in an environment. Perceptions of the environment often lead to categorization, which is accomplished by assigning a label to an object. For example, in the retail industry a particular set of environmental dimensions or physical surroundings suggest discount stores (i.e., high degree of noise, bold signage, bright lighting); whereas, other dimensions suggest department stores (i.e., soft background music, attractive décor, adequate aisle space). In addition to cognitive responses, the perceived environment may also contribute to certain emotional responses that in turn influence behavior.

Bitner discusses emotional responses in terms of previous research conducted by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) and Donovan and Rossiter (1982). Mehrabian and Russell found that people express emotion in two dimensions: pleasure-displeasure and degree of arousal or the amount of stimulation or excitement. Furthermore, in those environments where feelings of pleasure are displayed, people want to spend time and money (i.e., approach), while unpleasant environments, particularly those with lots of stimulation, noise or confusion are avoided.

Baker (1987) discussed the role of the environment in marketing services from the consumer's perspective. The purpose of her paper was to classify environmental elements, to develop propositions about the consumer's relationship with the service environment, and to discuss implications of and suggestions for research based on propositions. Baker proposed three

basic components of the environment: ambient factors, design factors, and social factors. Ambient factors refer to background conditions such as air quality, noise, scent, and cleanliness that impact the subconscious. In general, most ambient conditions exist below the consumer's level of awareness. Consumers are less than totally conscious of these conditions in the environment. Most consumers expect a certain level of ambient conditions and may be unaware of these conditions (i.e., ambient conditions), unless they are absent or exist at an unpleasant level. Design factors encompass both aesthetic and functional components and may apply to the interior or exterior of a service organization. Aesthetic components include architecture, color, scale, materials, texture/pattern, shape, style, and accessories. Functional components consist of layout, comfort, and signage. Baker describes design factors as existing "at the forefront of our awareness (p. 79)". In other words, these components are more perceivable and play more of a role in motivating purchase behavior than ambient conditions. Social factors are the people component of the environment and include the consumers and service personnel in the service environment. Two of the three factors in this study were similar to those discussed by Bitner in 1992. Ambient factors were similar to Bitner's ambient conditions, and design factors resemble Bitner's space/function dimension. However, Bitner did not discuss social factors.

Baker et al. (1988) designed a study to measure the importance of the environment and expectations about the environment for bank consumers and employees. Questionnaires were mailed to 3,000 consumers and 2,000 employees. Thirty-two environmental variables were investigated; however, they were categorized into five categories. The categories included ambient conditions (e.g., temperature, lighting, noise, music, scent); aesthetics (e.g., color, style, use of materials, art work); privacy (e.g., use of enclosed offices); efficiency/convenience (e.g., transaction areas that are easy to find, directional signs); and social conditions (e.g., appearance of consumers, bank personnel). Ambient conditions in the Baker et al. study were similar to Bitner's (1992) and Baker's (1987) ambient conditions/factors. The aesthetics dimension and efficiency/convenience dimensions resemble Bitner's signs, symbols, and artifacts dimension. In addition, the aesthetics dimension and social conditions are similar to Baker's design factors and social factors, respectively. Results indicated that employees rated the importance of the physical environment significantly higher than did consumers. This result was expected because bank employees spent more time in facilities. Significant differences in importance were found

between employees and consumers for four of the five environmental dimensions, ambient, aesthetics, privacy and social. Important categories of the environment for consumers were privacy, efficiency/convenience, ambient, social and aesthetics, respectively. In addition, consumers had higher expectations on the ambient and privacy dimensions, while employees had higher scores on the aesthetics dimension. With respect to the ambient dimension, consumers and employees felt that banks should not have noticeable scents and temperature. Compared to consumers, employees were more likely to want background music and less likely to desire a quiet environment. Consumers were less likely to want bright lighting. In addition, respondents had several dimensions in which they desired improvements. Employees wanted to improve on several aspects of the physical environment. These areas included décor, ambient conditions and space. Of this list, ambient conditions were the number one environmental improvement category for employees. Specific dimensions mentioned were temperature and ventilation, better lighting, and lower levels of distracting noise.

Lewison (1994) discussed the store environment relative to the five senses (i.e., sight, sound, scent, touch, taste). The store and its environment are important because 70-80% of purchase decisions are made in the store while inspecting the merchandise. Retail management should attempt to create a motivating, comforting store environment, with exciting store interior and appealing merchandise presentation. Lewison describes how a retailer can use sensory appeals, sight, sound, scent, touch and taste appeal to effect a favorable store image and a pleasant shopping environment. For example, the retailer might use sight appeal to arouse the consumer's attention. The use of sight appeal can be accomplished by creating harmonious, contrasting, or clashing visual relationships in display, layout, or physical arrangement of the store. In general, harmonious relationships are seen in quieter, plusher, more formal retail settings, while contrasting and clashing relationships are found in more exciting, cheerful, and informal stores.

Sound can also enhance or hinder a store's environment. It can be used as a mood setter, an attention grabber, and an informer. Often music is used in retail stores to promote buying, to set the stage for a particular shopping theme, or to remind consumers of a special season or holiday, such as Christmas. However, retailers should remember that the type of music (e.g., rock, classical, soul) must be suitable for the target consumer and the overall store image. In the

creation of scent appeal, retailers must remember to avoid unpleasant odors and create pleasant scents. Inadequate ventilation, insufficient humidity control, and inferior placed and maintained sanitation facilities are the main causes of undesirable odors. Retail environments should encourage and facilitate a consumer's sense of touch. The store's layouts, fixtures, equipment, and displays should allow for personal inspection and provide touch appeal. Taste appeal is important more so for food retailers than apparel retailers (Lewison, 1994). The retail literature lacks empirical studies on the five appeals. Some have focused on individual (e.g., sight, sound) appeals; however, very few have studied all appeals.

Hegde (1996) examined lighting quality and Yalch and Spangenberg (1988) examined environmental music in retail stores Hegde's study examined the implications of retail lighting quality and quantity for product sales. One of the most important functions of retail stores is to encourage the sale of merchandise. How the consumer visually perceives the product can affect their purchasing behavior. Hegde selected three retail stores in Texas with similar light sources to study. In the merchandising areas of the stores, there was a combination of recessed fluorescent, recessed incandescent cans, and track halogen and incandescent lamps. Perimeter lighting included fluorescent lamps and incandescent wall washers. Recessed fluorescent light was used in the fitting rooms. The researcher observed lighting and measured the illuminant levels and quality of lighting in women's apparel/sleepwear areas and in fitting rooms. Results revealed that lighting was inadequate in all three stores on two of the three lighting categories observed. Illuminant levels in both the merchandising area and fitting rooms of the stores was far less than the recommended levels. Furthermore, observed levels in the fitting room were lower than the merchandising areas in two stores. Results suggested that differences in lighting between merchandising areas and fitting room might lead to inaccurate assessments of apparel color. Although retailers provided warm store environments by using lamps with low color temperatures, these conditions have failed to meet adequate illuminant levels and hindered the consumer's ability to evaluate products.

Yalch and Spangenberg (1988) studied the effects of environmental music (i.e., foreground, popular top-40 with lyrics, background, easy listening without lyrics, no music) played in two men's departments of a clothing store on consumers after they shopped. Specifically, this study was conducted to examine the relationship between types of music

provided in a retail store and in-store shopping behavior. The experiment was conducted at a major department store on the West Coast over a four-day period. Observations occurred every two hours during a variety of time periods (i.e., morning, afternoon, evening, weekday, weekend). The sample included 86 shoppers in two departments: young men's active clothes department and men's sportswear department. Results revealed that shoppers perceived the background music as less desirable than the foreground music. Respondents reported greater stimulation when exposed to foreground music than background music; however, no difference was found for leisurely (i.e., individuals shopping in evenings, weekends) shoppers. These shoppers were expected to be more affected by environmental music than purposeful shoppers (i.e., individuals shopping in the morning). In addition, younger shoppers felt they spent more time shopping when background music was played, while the opposite was true for older shoppers.

Impact of the Environment

In a service organization (i.e., banks), the physical environment has an impact on consumer satisfaction and eventually store patronage (Baker et al., 1988). Holman and Wilson (1982) studied consumer responses to the environment relative to time. They state that consumers with and without time pressures respond to retail environments differently. For example, if a consumer is very busy and has limited time to make purchase, often the consumer will move through the environment ignoring the décor and other environmental dimensions and becomes annoyed when the environment hinders them in locating merchandise. On the other hand, a consumer that has unlimited time to shop, strolls casually, enjoying the ambience. In both cases, if the consumers are dissatisfied with the image and/or services presented by a particular retailer, oftentimes they locate another store for future purchases (Holman & Wilson, 1982). Therefore, retailers should identify store attributes, especially environmental dimensions that directly impact the physical environment and result in positive responses from their consumers, as well as those attributes that will affect future patronage decisions.

General Definition of Patronage Behavior

Haynes, Pipkin, Black, and Cloud (1994) define patronage as how individuals choose an outlet for shopping. Store choice and patronage patterns are based on consumer's perceptions, images, and attitudes formed from experiences, information, and need. Furthermore, patronage behavior involves a decision process related to where consumers shop, how they shop, and what they purchase. This decision process is often initiated by patronage motives, which determine why consumers shop and make purchases at certain retail stores (Moschis, 1992; Stafford & Stafford, 1986).

As stated by Haynes et al. (1994), the patronage decision process involves three basic components: retailer attributes, consumer characteristics and the choice context. Preference for certain retailer attributes differs by consumer and these preferences are reflected in store choice. Retail and marketing literature identify several retailer attributes as reasons for store patronage. Some of these attributes are store prices and values, merchandise selection, purchasing convenience, services offered, merchandise quality, treatment by store personnel, and store reputation (Michman, 1991). Consumer characteristics influence patronage behavior at each stage in the decision process and choice involves how the consumer decides where a particular purchase will be made. Additionally, Pessemier (1980) states that patronage behavior is influenced by consumer characteristics (e.g., demographics), store characteristics (e.g., merchandise offerings, store image), competitive environment (i.e., number of stores in an area), and socio-economic environment (e.g., lifestyle). Both customer characteristics and store characteristics in the Pessemier were the same as the consumer characteristics and retailer attributes discussed by Haynes et al.

Environmental psychologists discuss patronage in terms of approach-avoidance behaviors. According to Mehrabian and Russell (1974), approach behavior is described as a willingness or desire to stay, explore, work, or affiliate. In contrast, avoidance behaviors are represented by opposite behaviors, a desire not to stay, explore, work, and affiliate. Donovan and Rossiter (1982) used the approach-avoidance concept by Mehrabian and Russell to study graduate students in retail settings. The study found that approach behaviors (i.e., shopping enjoyment, returning, attraction and friendliness toward others, spending money, time spent

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browsing, exploration of the store) influenced perceptions or responses to the environment. Donovan and Rossiter suggested that physical approach is linked to store patronage, that is, approach is defined by store patronage. Based on this research, businesses should encourage approach behaviors and the ability of consumers and employees to carry out their plans, while discouraging avoidance behaviors.

Several research studies at the retail level have been conducted to explain or predict patronage for several consumer types. These studies included patronage preferences for children's wear consumers (Norum & Wang, 1994), female consumers (Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1992a, 1992b), discount store shoppers (Summers and Wozniak, 1990) and rural and urban women (Summers & Wozniak, 1991). These studies are discussed in the next section.

<u>Patronage Behavior and Retail Consumers</u>

Norum and Wang (1994) investigated the store patronage patterns of the children's wear consumer. This study focused on differences between shoppers and non-shoppers for seven store types: discount store, mass merchandiser, department store, specialty store, factory outlet, catalog order and used clothing store. Randomly selected households from a mid-western state with at least one child in kindergarten or fourth grade public schools participated in the study. Results indicated that a majority of the respondents (91%) shopped discount stores to purchase playwear for their youngest child. Mass merchandisers were patronized by more than half of the respondents, while 30% used catalogs. Approximately 20-30% shopped factory outlets, department stores, and used clothing stores however only 9% shopped specialty stores for children's playwear. Results suggested that those who placed importance on appearance would most likely shop at department stores or mass merchandisers and least likely to shop at discount stores. Furthermore, if respondents placed importance on performance characteristics such as durability and easy care features, they would most likely shop mass merchandisers or catalog retailers. Importance of functional concerns (e.g., mix and match features, growth features) suggested that respondents would most likely shop discount stores and less likely shop department stores or mass merchandisers for children's playwear.

Shim and Kotsiopulos (1992a) conducted a two-part study of apparel patronage behavior. Questionnaires were mailed to 1,400 females in the U. S. and the District of Columbia. The final

sample consisted of 482 women age 18 and over. Part I of the study examined relationships among patronage behavior, store attributes, shopping orientations, information sources, and personal characteristics. More specifically, the objectives were to predict apparel patronage behavior, to predict store attributes, which impact patronage, to predict shopping orientations, which impact store attributes, and to predict information sources, which impact shopping orientations. Overall results revealed that all four variables, personal characteristics, information sources, shopping orientations and store attributes, had some degree of predictability in choosing among four types of stores (i.e., discount, specialty, department, catalog) for apparel shopping. However, shopping orientations and the importance of store attributes were more important in explaining patronage behavior.

Part II of Shim and Kotsiopulos (1992a) tested and extended Darden's (1980) patronage model of consumer behavior, which included the variables of personal characteristics, information sources, shopping orientations, store attributes, and patronage behavior. Darden proposed that only antecedent variables had an impact on sequential variables. Part II investigated five additional relationships to test the influence of non-antecedent variables on patronage behavior and store attributes. Results revealed no direct linkages between personal characteristics and patronage, information sources and patronage, and personal characteristics and store attributes. Additionally, patronage behavior was explained by shopping orientations and store attributes, although shopping orientations had a stronger impact. Results implied that consumers should be segmented according to their shopping orientations rather than store attributes when predicting patronage behavior (Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1992b).

Summers and Wozniak (1990) examined the discount store patronage preferences of rural and urban women. The sample included 309 women age 18 and over. Respondents were asked to rate their willingness to purchase 17 apparel items in a discount store. Apparel items were categorized according to perceived risk associated with the purchase and classified by type (i.e., social/economic) and level (i.e., high/low). Results showed no differences in patronage preferences of rural and urban consumers. Economic risk seemed to influence patronage behavior more often than social risk. Respondents shopped discount stores for apparel items with low social/low economic risk. Economic risk rather than social risk increased preference for discount stores. With respect to education, women with high school education were most likely

to purchase apparel with low social/low economic risk and high social/low economic risk in discount stores than women with a college education or graduate study. Compared to women in the highest income group, those with household incomes of $20,000 or less was more likely to purchase low social/low economic risk apparel items at discount stores.

Summers and Wozniak (1991) studied the influence of extrinsic (i.e., price, quality, store image) and intrinsic cues (i.e., apparel quality knowledge) and demographics on store patronage preferences for rural and urban consumers. Three questions regarding store patronage served as the dependent variables. Statements of awareness of purchase attitudes and demographic characteristics were the independent variables. Subjects were 341 female consumers age 18 and older from one southern state. Results indicated no significant differences in rural and urban consumer awareness of apparel quality, purchase attitudes, and store patronage preferences. Selected demographic characteristics of race, age, marital status, education, and household income were significant predictors of selected store patronage, although these characteristics were poor predictors of store patronage. Perceptions of price, quality and store image were better predictors of store patronage preference.

Apparel patronage behavior represents an individual's choice for a particular retail store type for purchasing apparel products (Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1992a). Researchers have studied the patronage for several consumer types. They include children's wear consumers, female consumers, discount store shoppers, and rural and urban women (Norum & Wang, 1994; Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1992a; Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1992b; Summers & Wozniak, 1990; Summers & Wozniak, 1991). Of these studies, some have addressed differences among shoppers by store type and geographical location (i.e., rural, urban) (Norum & Wang; Summers & Wozniak). Store types included in previous studies were discounters, mass merchandisers, department stores, specialty stores, and factory outlets. In addition, several variables have been used to predict store patronage: personal characteristics, information sources, shopping orientation, and store attributes (Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1992a). Among these variables, shopping orientations had the strongest impact on patronage behavior (Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1992b).

Previous studies have identified the influence of several variables on store patronage (i.e., personal characteristics, information sources, shopping orientations, store attributes); however, very few have studied the influence of environmental dimensions on store patronage.

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Furthermore, these studies have not addressed the importance and perceptions of the store environment relative to apparel shopping scenarios.

<div align="center">Shopping Orientations</div>

Shopping orientations reflect categories of shopper styles and represent consumer needs for products and services (Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1993). Moschis (1992) defined shopping orientations as shopper patterns that include consumer activities, interests, and opinions about the shopping process. "Shopping orientations are mental states that result in various general shopping patterns" (Bellenger & Moschis, 1981, p. 374). Darden and Dorsch (1990) state that orientations are based on past shopping experiences and the personal-value system. Additionally, shopper orientations reflect personal, economic, recreational, and social motivations for shopping (Lumpkin, Hawes, & Darden, 1986; Shim & Mahoney, 1992).

Stone (1954) pioneered the concept of shopping orientations. He interviewed 150 Chicago housewives to determine their orientations towards shopping with local independent merchants and large chain department stores. Stone grouped responses to the question, "why would you rather do business with local independent merchants or large chain stores?" into four categories: economic, personalizing, ethical, and apathetic shoppers (p. 38). The economic shoppers were identified as having concern for finances and preferred to shop large chain stores because of cheaper prices; smaller stores were perceived as more expensive. Personalizing shoppers preferred to shop local stores for better service because shoppers perceived chains as impersonal. On the other hand, ethical shoppers preferred to shop specific local or neighborhood stores rather chain stores to give smaller merchants a chance for success. Unlike the other three orientations, apathetic shoppers had little or no interest in shopping and no preference in store type. In addition to the categories of shoppers identified by Stone, several other researchers have studied shopper orientations (Bellenger & Korgaonkar, 1980; Darden & Reynolds, 1971; Gutman & Mills, 1982; Lumpkin, 1985; Lumpkin et al., 1986; Moye, 1998; Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1993; Tatzel, 1982).

Darden and Reynolds (1971) studied the shopping orientations and product usage rates of 12 health and personal care products for 177 housewives in Athens, Georgia. This study

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attempted to test statements and shopping orientations (i.e., economic, personalizing, ethical, apathetic) that emerged as a result of interviews conducted by Stone in 1954. Stone's personalizing shopper was divided into two categories (i.e., personalizing big stores, personalizing small stores). In contrast to Stone, Darden and Reynolds considered the possibility that subjects identified with more than one orientation. Shopper orientations scales included economic buyer, depersonalization in big stores, shopping apathy, support for local merchants, and small store personalizing. Findings indicated that respondents with high scores on variables of chain (i.e., big store) depersonalization and economic shopper and low scores on local store (i.e., small store) personalizing were similar to Stone's economic shopper. These respondents had high product usage rates for items that were socially visible (e.g., liquid face makeup base). Similar to Stone's personalizing shopper were those with low scores on economic and chain depersonalization and high scores on local store personalization. Products such as hair shampoo, roll-on stick deodorant, and face cream or lotion had high usage scores for these respondents. The ethical consumer from Stone's research compared with those scoring low on chain depersonalization and shopping apathy, as well as high on ethical support for local merchants and local store personalizing. High product usage included cleansing face cream or lotion, hair spray, and cream deodorant. Finally, respondents with high scores on chain depersonalization and shopping apathy and low scores on ethical support for local merchants and local store personalizing resembled to Stone's apathetic shopper. Subjects in this shopper category had high product usage scores on medicated face makeup base and hair shampoo.

Bellenger and Korgaonkar (1980) obtained a profile of 324 recreational shoppers in Atlanta, Georgia. Every fifth shopper was intercepted at mall and non-mall locations and asked to complete a questionnaire and mail it to researchers. A total of six hundred shoppers were intercepted which yielded a response rate of 54%. The dependent variable, shopping enjoyment was measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Subjects were divided into two groups: recreational shopper who either enjoy shopping or enjoy it very much and economic shopper who either was neutral toward, disliked or strongly disliked shopping. The four independent variables were shopping and information-seeking behavior, demographics, enjoyment of selected leisure activities, and patronage factors. Results revealed that 69% of the respondents were categorized as recreational shoppers (i.e., enjoy shopping as a use of their leisure time). This shopper tends to

be an active woman who prefers a pleasant store atmosphere with a large variety of high quality merchandise. In comparison to the economic shopper, the recreational woman shopper spends more time shopping even after making purchases, tends to buy something she likes regardless of urgency or need, and spends less time deliberating before purchases. Furthermore, the recreational shopper engages in more information-seeking than the economic shopper does. When choosing a store, she considers the quality of merchandise, variety of merchandise, and décor of malls rather than shopping centers and downtown areas.

Gutman and Mills (1982) described consumers as leaders, followers, independents, neutrals, uninvolveds, negatives, and rejectors. A total of 6,261 female consumers in 11 major geographic areas of Los Angeles participated in the study. The questionnaire included 67 lifestyle items (i.e., attitudes, interests, opinions, behaviors), perceived self-image inventory measured on 4-point bipolar scales, store patronage (i.e., all stores shopped in last 90 days, stores shopped most in last 90 days), and demographics used for descriptive or classification purposes. Findings indicated that leaders scored high on factors of fashion leadership, they enjoyed shopping, were not cost-conscious, practical or traditional. Followers resembled the leaders; however, they scored lower on the leadership dimension and higher on traditionalism. Similar to the leaders and followers, independents were aware of fashion, but had higher scores on antifashion attitude measurements (i.e., resent designers, other fashion experts dictating tastes to them) and cost consciousness. The neutrals, uninvolveds, negatives, and rejectors were similar to Stone's (1954) apathetic shoppers, which had little or no interest in shopping. These shopper groups had moderate or neutral scores on all fashion orientation factors.

Lumpkin (1985) studied the shopping orientations of elderly consumers. The study included 373 persons age 65 and older. Consumers were categorized into three orientation groups: uninvolveds or apathetic, economic, and active apparel shoppers. The uninvolveds shopped less often than other groups, regardless of store type. The economic shoppers in this study resembled those in Stone's research in that both were described as having concern for finances. Comparable to the leaders studied by Gutman and Mills (1982), the active apparel shoppers enjoyed shopping, were interested in fashion and were described as fashion innovators and opinion leaders. These shoppers spent more on clothing during the previous year than any other group.

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Lumpkin et al. (1986) categorized rural consumers into three shopping orientation groups. Consumers were identified as inactive inshoppers, active outshoppers, and thrifty innovators. Differences between the groups were discussed in terms of outshopping behavior. Outshoppers were those that shopped outside their hometown or those that used other buying methods such as catalog shopping. Approximately 37% of the consumers were classified as inactive inshoppers. Of the three groups, these shoppers scored lower on active consumer, leisure-time orientation, and opinion leadership scales. Similar to Stone's (1954) ethical shoppers, they expressed high levels of loyalty for local merchants and favorable attitudes toward local shopping. The active outshoppers were approximately 32% of the respondents. These shoppers resembled the leaders studied by Gutman and Mills and were identified as very active and leisure-time oriented, expressed high levels of opinion leadership, and did not shop several stores for lower prices. Thrifty innovators were described as economic shoppers because they tend to shop around for the lowest price. Consumers in this group were time managers and more oriented toward in-home shopping.

Moye (1998) studied relationships between (a) shopping orientations and the importance of store attributes, (b) age and shopping orientations, and (c) shopping orientations and physical approach-avoidance for a sample of 208 elderly consumers. Six statements developed by Shim and Kotsiopulos (1993) were used to form the shopper categories: brand conscious/loyal, economic/price conscious, and convenience/time conscious. Results indicated that brand conscious elderly shoppers placed importance on lighting, temperature, quality products, store reputation, and well-known labels/brands. These findings were similar to Bellenger and Korgaonkar's (1980) recreational shopper, as well as Shim and Kotsiopulos' (1993) highly-involved apparel shoppers. For the convenience/time conscious shopper, quality products, store reputation and well-known labels and brands were important. Sales, credit availability, and discounts were important to the economic shoppers. These shoppers resembled the economic shoppers studied by Lumpkin (1985) and Stone (1954). Results revealed that age was not significantly related to the three shopper orientations. With regard to physical approach-avoidance or store patronage, no significant relationships were found between the three shopping orientations and department stores. However, significant relationships were found among

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economic shoppers, mass merchandisers, and catalog shopping. In addition, significant results were found between the brand conscious shoppers and specialty stores.

Shim and Kotsiopulos (1993) classified female consumers into three shopping orientation segments. A random sample of 482 shoppers were identified as highly involved apparel shoppers, apathetic apparel shoppers, and convenience-oriented catalog shoppers. Highly involved apparel shoppers represented the largest segment (46%) of female shoppers. They were described as fashion leaders with high involvement in clothing and serious about the clothing shopping process. Shoppers in this group were concerned with appearance, liked to be considered well groomed, believed that dressing well was an important part of their lives, and kept their wardrobe up-to-date with fashion trends. Those in the second largest group (34%) were labeled apathetic apparel shoppers. Unlike the highly involved shoppers, women in this segment were uninterested in clothing and the shopping process. They were least confident in clothing shopping for themselves, were not concerned with the impact of success-oriented dressing, not interested in fashion and brand, and were least likely of all groups to engage in catalog shopping. The last shopper segment, the convenience-oriented catalog shopper preferred to shop by catalog rather than retail stores. They were concerned with convenience/time required for clothing shopping, were moderately confident in clothing shopping, and were interested in appearance, fashion, and brand.

Tatzel (1982) integrated concepts from previous research to study the skill and motivation in clothes shopping for types of shoppers: fashion-conscious, independent, anxious, and apathetic. Fashion-conscious shoppers were identified as being more oriented toward the social world. They were more gregarious, likeable, and active participants of society. These shoppers tend to be competitive, venturesome and self-confident. Fashion-conscious shoppers were both skilled and motivated and needed little help or encouragement while shopping. A novel and entertaining store environment would be most appropriate for these shoppers. Independent consumers were capable of shopping and dressing themselves, but remain indifferent about the shopping process. These consumers were described as self-confident; they take a practical, businesslike approach to shopping for clothes and prefer quality and traditional clothes. To appeal to these consumers, the store environment should be non-distracting to facilitate task-oriented shopping. The anxious shopper was often fearful of dressing incorrectly,

being out of place, unattractive, or even looking ridiculous. These shoppers often needed reassurance and guidance from others when shopping for clothing. The shopping environment should promote a feeling of security. Finally, the apathetic consumer did not like to shop, wants to get through the shopping activity with minimum time and effort and has negative views of stores and their policies. These shoppers often establish relationships with salespeople, usually in specialty stores to select their clothes. Stores should emphasize trouble-free shopping environments with no waiting in line, easy to find garments, and salespeople to handle the entire transaction.

Several researchers have studied shopping orientations to describe consumers and shopper types vary by research and study (Bellenger & Korgaonkar, 1980; Darden & Reynolds, 1971; Gutman & Mills, 1982; Lumpkin, 1985; Lumpkin, Hawes, & Darden, 1986; Moye, 1998; Shim & Kotsiopulos, 1993; Tatzel, 1982). Orientations reflect shopper categories, and are based on shopping experiences and include consumer activities, interest, and opinions (Moschis, 1992; Shim & Kotsiopulos). The most common categories were those studied by Stone in 1954. He categorized shoppers as economic, personalizing, ethical, and apathetic. Economic shoppers were described as having a concern for finances. The personalizing shoppers preferred to shop local stores; however, ethical shoppers preferred neighborhood stores. Unlike the other shoppers, the apathetic shoppers had no interest in shopping.

Previous studies have examined shopping orientations in relation to product usage for health and personal care products, and describe shoppers based on their skill and motivation for shopping (Darden & Reynolds, 1971; Tatzel, 1982). However, no studies have examined shopping orientations relative to importance and perceptions of the store environment and with specific product/usage situations (i.e., apparel shopping scenarios).

<u>Product and Usage</u>

Very few empirical studies have examined product and usage situations, specific to apparel shopping scenarios for female consumers. In general, one exploratory study was found that focused on breath freshening products and specific usage situations. Retail and marketing studies have also focused on the decision process involving the purchase of apparel products, and

product importance. These studies have included dresses, skirts, casual clothes, pant suits, bras, and panties. Further information can be drawn from textbook classifications because they represent how the apparel industry categorizes products. Fashion textbooks have classified the women's apparel market into several categories. This section will begin with a review of apparel product classifications within the industry, and then discuss empirical studies related to product and usage.

The women's wear industry includes apparel merchandise in several product and size classifications at multiple price points. Participants at all levels of the industry share a common goal, to cater to a particular market. Some U. S. manufacturers specialize in particular product lines (e.g., coat/suit), while others manufacture products in numerous categories (e.g., sportswear, dresses). These categories include sportswear/coordinated separates, knitwear, activewear/sports, coats/suits, daytime dresses, evening wear, and intimate apparel. Table 2 identifies several product types within each category.

The sportswear industry began in the 1930s and 1940s in America (Diamond & Diamond, 1997). This category includes two-piece sets of skirts, pants, blouses, and sweaters available in all store types. Sportswear allows the wearer to mix and match separates to form many different outfits. The activewear classification developed as physical fitness became popular and as concerns about weight caused women to join fitness clubs where particular types of apparel (e.g., sweatshirts, sweatpants, sports bra, tank tops) are needed. Specialty stores, such as Champ Sports, department stores and discounters carry activewear. Manufacturers often specialize in coats and suits because these products require highly skilled workers, and machinery not used to produce other apparel products. However, some manufacturers (e.g., Jones of New York) produce apparel products in other product classifications. Often department stores carry a wide selection of coats and suits, however specialty retailers (e.g., Wilson's, LaVogue) have entered the market. Dress manufacturers produce either daytime dresses or evening wear. Dresses range in style from one or two piece outfits to fancy ballgowns. After-five lines, prom/party dresses, and bridal are included in the evening wear category. Intimate apparel or lingerie (i.e., innerwear) is one of the fastest growing product classifications. Specialty retailers, such as Victoria's Secret and Cacique have captured the lingerie market. Designers (e.g., Calvin Klein) and department stores are also expanding into the intimate apparel

Table 2

Classifications of Women's Wear Markets

Sportswear/Coordinated Separates	Suits	Outerwear
Blouses	Dressy	Coats
Jackets	Casual	Capes
Shorts	Wardrober: Jacket/Skirt/Pants	Rainwear
Casual Weekend		
Tops and Bottoms		
Jumpsuits or Jumpers		
Knitwear/Sweaters	**Evening/Special Occasion**	**Dresses**
Bulky	Gowns	After 5/Cocktail
Pointelle	Bridal	Country Club wear
Jacquard	Prom/Party	Career
Novelty	Party Pajamas	
Sweater Sets	Maternity	
Pullovers		
Outerwear		
Activewear Sportswear	**Intimate Apparel/Lingerie**	**Uniforms**
Golf	Foundations/Bodywear	Dentistry
Tennis	Daywear (camisole, tap pants, slips, teddys)	Medicine
Ski	Sleepwear (nightgowns/pajamas)	Airlines
Swimwear/Cover-ups	Loungewear	Restaurants
Bicycling	Sleepshirts/Nightshirts	
Rollerblading	Robes	
Exercise/Aerobics		

Note. Adapted from Diamond & Diamond (1997); Frings (1991); and Mueller & Smiley (1995)

market. Sportswear, knitwear, activewear, coats/suits, evening wear, and intimate apparel are available in several size classifications.

Size classifications vary within the U. S. apparel industry. Apparel manufacturers size garments according to company standards or those standards dictated by their consumers (i.e., retailers, vendors). For consistency of fit, a perfect production pattern is developed for apparel products based on company standards, a set of procedures that provide a basis for

resource and product decisions. Standards are established to provide a basis for resource and product decisions. Standards communicate fit, quality, and performance. They should reflect the capabilities of the end product, and what target consumers are willing to pay for the product (Glock & Kunz, 1990). Standards are communicated through product specifications.

Product specifications are brief written descriptions of materials, procedures, dimensions, and performance for each style in the product line. They ensure consistency among products of the same type in each product line. Without exact communication between the manufacturer and its consumers, inconsistencies in appearance, performance, fit and quality will occur. The more information included in the specifications, the less variation allowed, and the more consistent the end product. Specifications for apparel products include design, raw material, product, and packaging and shipping specifications. Design specifications include a sketch of the garment, design details, size and pattern miniatures, and suggested fabric. Swatches, shade specifications, vendor samples, and fabric defect maps are included in the raw material specs. Product specifications should identify what characterizes a defect. They should consist of sequence of construction, job standards for each individual, production operation, in-process inspection and final inspection specs. Packaging and shipping specs are used after the product is manufactured (Glock & Kunz, 1990).

Manufacturers produce women's apparel in a variety of size categories that include misses, juniors, petite, women's, maternity, and tall, and size ranges for specific styles vary across manufacturers (Diamond & Diamond, 1997). For example, a size 6 dress purchased from Store A may fit, but a size 6 in Store B is too small. Typically, the misses' category features fuller-figured and longer waisted apparel that ranges in size from 6 to 16. However, some manufacturers produce for a smaller figure, starting at size 2 up to size 12, while others start at size 8 and produce up to size18 for the larger figure. Junior refers to age and not size in the apparel industry. Apparel is produced to fit a youthful, slender and shorter waisted figure. Clothing size ranges from 5 to13, but sizes 1, 3, and 15 are also available. Petite sizes are produced for the shorter, smaller-proportioned woman, and some manufacturers have introduced shorter versions of their misses sizes, which are even-numbered. Apparel is typically manufactured to fit women measuring 5'4" and under to minimize alterations. Sizes are odd numbered, starting at size 1 to size 13. Women's wear is for larger, fuller-figured women of

average heights. Clothing sizes range from 14 to 24. Stores, such as Lane Bryant and Lerner Woman carry clothing in these size ranges. Tall sizes can be as small as size 8 and range up to size 20. Clothing features include longer hemlines, sleeves, and waistlines. Finally, maternity clothing is available in regular misses and junior sizes, but allows for expansion of the garment. Today, maternity shops carry fashionable apparel, and most offer narrow-legged jeans, knit pants, swimsuits, and shorts. In the past, pregnant women had to buy clothing in larger, regular clothing or settle for less fashionable maternity wear. Because the clothing needs of women are very diverse, more research is needed to determine how women make clothing decisions.

Blackwell and Hilliker (1978) studied the decision process of women for selected garments (i.e., dress, skirts, casual clothes, pant suits, bras, panties). This study used the Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB) model as a framework for presentation. The EKB model involves the five stages of problem recognition, internal search, external search, purchase process, and outcome. The researchers conducted an exploratory study using ten focus groups. Each group consisted of 6 to 12 women, an average of 10, selected by a consumer marketing research organization based on their interest in fashion (i.e., very interested, somewhat, no interested). Only women very interested in fashion were selected to participate. Women wore average clothing sizes, and were described as having a greater interest in fashion compared to the population as a whole. Focus group interviews were conducted in Atlanta, Boston, Columbus (Ohio), Dale City (California), and San Antonio, Texas at marketing research organizations. Results revealed that dresses were not as important to respondents' lifestyles as they once were. Respondents often used pants as a replacement for dresses on several occasions. The decision to buy a dress was initiated by a special occasion, to adopt a new fashion look, changing of the seasons, or by a significant other (i.e., boyfriend, husband). Dresses were perceived as more appropriate for weddings, funerals, and nice restaurants. Career women felt dresses were still appropriate for work, but high school students felt students that were "out of it" (i.e., strange), very stylish, and country club kids wore dresses. Two types of dress shoppers were identified, women who shopped in large department stores for good selection, and women that preferred small, unique shops. The specialty shoppers disliked department stores due to lack of variety in merchandise (i.e., "you see yourself on the street"). Furthermore, most of the comments received about dresses related to skirts. Casual clothes were clothes appropriate for home or leisure

activities. A majority of the women identified jeans or pants with coordinating tops as casual clothing. Women indicated that just as dresses are worn to many activities, jeans and pants could be worn to activities, such as work, parties, dinners on the town, and religious activities. Store displays, husbands, and family members were credited with influencing the type of casual clothes purchased. In addition, respondents indicated the use of pant suits varied with age. However, younger women perceived them as a dressy item, and too "dressed up" for younger women. Several high school students indicated their mothers and grandmothers wore pant suits to work, parties, movies, and other places. An older woman indicated pant suits are good for women over 25 who want to look neat, could not wear jeans, and did not want to wear a dress.

Based on the product categories studied by Blackwell and Hilliker (1978) and those categories discussed by Diamond and Diamond (1997), classifications of apparel products do exist in the retail industry. However, responses to these classifications differ among retail consumers (e.g., young, old), those influencing the purchase of these products differ (e.g., husband, boyfriend, friend, family), and the usage or occasion (e.g., wedding, dinner) in which the product is needed differs. Retailers often use classifications to facilitate the shopping process; that is, they place similar products in the same departments or areas within the store. Classification of products in retail stores makes the search for merchandise easier, which allows consumers to get in and out of stores in a timely manner. In addition to product classifications, empirical research has also discussed the importance of products.

Bloch and Richins (1983) studied product importance perceptions. The purpose of this research was to review product importance and related constructs in the consumer behavior literature, and to develop a framework for the analysis of product importance. Product importance is used to represent consumers perceived importance rather than objective levels of importance within the product itself. Perceived product importance is defined as the extent to which a consumer links a product to a specific situation. Concepts related to product importance are classification of goods, perceived risk, product involvement, and importance of purchase, and task involvement. Classification of goods refers to classifying goods into convenience, shopping, and specialty categories. Perceived risk involves the amount at stake in a purchase situation, and includes the consumer's feelings of certainty about favorable product performance. The general level of interest in a product refers to product involvement (i.e., situational, enduring, response).

Intensity of motives that influence buying activities determines the importance of purchase. Moreover, task involvement is related to perceived risk. If a product has a higher degree of perceived risk, the product is deemed more important, and the consumer becomes more involved with the purchase. Finally, a conceptual framework was developed to incorporate the five variables: classification of goods, perceived risk, product involvement, importance of purchase, and task involvement in the study of product importance perceptions.

Srivastava, Shocker, and Day (1978) examined the influence of usage situation on perceptions of the breath freshener market. This market was chosen because there was variability in product choice across usage situations, and it would be a familiar product class to graduate students. The research was conducted in two stages. Stage I was used to determine the initial set of products and usage situations. A focus group was conducted with 10 graduate students in administration at a major Eastern university to determine the products and usage situations. Group interviews were then conducted with an additional 8-10 student to check for duplications in products and to add other products. Some examples of products were fruit flavored chewing gums, ultrabrite toothpaste, binaca breath spray, listerine, dynamints, and close-up toothpaste. Some usage situations included to clean mouth in the morning, before an important meeting late in the afternoon, before a formal party, and when you have a sore throat. An additional sample of 46 graduate students responded to 18 usage situations to indicate whether each product was appropriate, inappropriate, or no opinion. Results revealed that commercial products as opposed to home remedies were associated with breath freshening. Toothpaste and mouthwash were closely related in all situations. For social situations, mint-flavored gum and candy products were more appropriate breath fresheners than fruit-flavored gums and candies. Stage 2 of the study involved a session with 46 respondents that participated in Stage 1 to identify troublesome situations, and revise the study. The researchers developed a situational taxonomy based on the results of Stage 1. Four dimensions were included: personal vs social concerns, privacy of use and access to alternatives, risk of being noticed, and amount of time to prepare. Thirty-eight respondents in the Graduate School of Management at a major West Coast University indicated the appropriateness of 48 products for 14-15 randomly assigned situations. Data was also collected to determine the overall effectiveness of each product, the importance, frequency of occurrence, and realism of the situation. Results revealed that situational influences did affect the

choice of products/brands. The respondents perceived fewer distinctions in toothpastes, mouthwashes, breath sprays, and cough drops, and were perceived similarly in terms of their appropriateness to most usage situations. Furthermore, cough drops were perceived differently from other candies.