AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF CONSUMER FOOD BUYING DECISIONS, LANSING, MICHIGAN

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ABSTRACT

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF CONSUMER FOOD BUYING DECISIONS, LANSING, MICHIGAN

by Mary Dalziel Zehner

This was an exploratory study of consumer food buying decisions. The three areas of investigation included homemakers' general approach to food buying decisions, homemakers' attitudes toward food management, and food management and shopping behavior patterns. Data for the study were obtained from 257 homemakers in Lansing, Michigan by personal interview. The questionnaire contained primarily open ended questions. Many of the responses were cross tabulated with the following characteristics of the family: age of the homemaker, education level of the homemaker, income level, recognized weight problems, and the stage in the family life cycle.

A majority of the homemakers reported that they originally arrived at the amount of money spent for food through one of two procedures (1) trial and error, and (2) by buying what food they wanted without being extravagant but also without fixed cost limits. The general approach to the food budget varied, but homemakers in higher income and higher educational groups used significantly more flexible spending guides or they placed no limits on spending.

In general, homemakers consider their original food expenditures uniform over time. A recognized weight problem in the family did not affect their per capita expenditure for food.

Homemakers reported that their husbands played an important role in family food buying decisions. Of the characteristics of the family

compared, the income level of the household had the most significant influence upon the attitude of the husband toward food buying decisions. As the income rose, homemakers reported that their husbands were more indifferent toward food buying decisions, were less likely to ask for an accounting for food expenditures, less frequently shopped for food and were less aware of food prices.

Three out of four homemakers made a shopping list before going to the store. A majority planned on supplementing their shopping list and making final decisions in the store. About 81 percent of the homemakers reported using the newspaper food advertisements as an aid before shopping, those homemakers with children using them significantly more than those without children. Almost one-half of the homemakers reported planning menus by buying the foods first and planning menus around the foods purchased.

Consumers' attitudes toward food management reflected their interest in their families. Homemakers reported that food played an important role in achieving their goals for their family. The three primary goals, as they relate to food, reported by homemakers were: (1) the preparation of satisfying appealing meals, (2) well-balanced, nourishing meals, and (3) staying within a budget. With increases in income level, homemakers tended to place more emphasis on the psychological aspects of food. The importance to the homemakers of cooking and eating depended upon the interest and responsiveness of the family members to the food being served.

Homemakers felt that they themselves were best equipped to do their family's grocery shopping. Some also reported they enjoyed the time away from the home, afforded by shopping. During the time spent in the grocery store, one-half of the homemakers said their attention focused on decisions related to food while 40 percent concentrated on others in the store or plans for after shopping. One-half of the homemakers, upon return from grocery shopping, expressed satisfaction with "a job well-done" while 22 percent were not pleased following the shopping trip. The feeling of pleasure rather than fatigue or complaining after shopping appeared to be related to the amount of money homemakers spent on groceries compared with the amount they had planned or hoped to spend. Those who found it unsatisfactory, seemed to feel that they had not been able to provide as much in the way of food for their family as they would have liked.

Homemakers were asked to indicate what types of food planning and buying information they would request if a food specialist were available to answer such questions. About one-third of the homemakers said they had no interest in further information on food buying and planning. The majority of those who did want information were most concerned about the need to keep menus varied while meeting the food preferences of the family.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER | Page

I. INTRODUCTION 1

Objectives of the Study 1
Sources and Nature of the Data 2
Selection of the Sample 2
Background Data 2
Description of the Sample Household. 3
Occupation of the Breadwinner. 3
Age Distribution of the Homemakers . . 4
Income of the Household Units. 5
Employment of the Homemakers. 6
Size of the Households 7
Composition of the Households. 7
Expenditures for Food 9
Discussion of the Literature Dealing with the Consumption Decision 9

II. AN ANALYSIS OF THE BASIC DECISION OF HOW MUCH TO SPEND FOR FOOD 16

The Original Food Expenditure Decision 16
The General Approach to the Food Budget 22
The Amount of Flexibility in the Basic Amount Spent for Food. 27
Reasons for Weekly Variations in the Amount Spent for Food 32
Background as a Factor in Attitude Toward Food Expenditures. 34
The Role of the Husband in Food Purchase Decisions 36
The General Attitude of the Husband Toward Food Purchases 36
Accounting to Husband of Food Expenditures . 41
Husband's Part in Planning Food and Other Expenditures 45

CHAPTER Page

III. FOOD MANAGEMENT AND SHOPPING BEHAVIOR . . 52

FOOD MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOR 52
Use of a Shopping List 52
Extent of Menu Planning 54
The Influence of Mass Media on Food Planning 60
Readership of The State Journal Food Advertisements 60
Use of Coupons 63
Readership of Magazines 67
Readership of Food Articles in the Newspapers 67
Influence of Weight Problems on Food Buying 68
Expenditures for Meals Eaten Away from Home 74
Expenditures for Lunches Eaten Away from Home 74
Expenditures for Dinners Eaten Away from Home 76
The Importance of Pre-planning. 77
The Consistency of Pre-planning 79
The Enjoyment of Pre-planning 84

FOOD SHOPPING BEHAVIOR 86
The Frequency of Shopping 86
The Place Where the Buying Decision Was Made and What Influenced This Decision. . 87
A Comparison of Homemakers' Buying Habits with Those of Their Friends 90
Homemakers' Use of New Recipes 91

IV. CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD FOOD MANAGEMENT 96

Consumers' Goals as They Relate to Food 97
Consumers' Interest in Economizing 101
Consumers' Feelings Upon Completion of Grocery Shopping 104

CHAPTER Page

Consumers' Thoughts While Pushing the Grocery Cart Through the Store 108
Consumers' Attitude Toward the Job of Shopping . . 109
Consumers' Attitude Toward Cooking 111
Consumers' Attitude Toward Eating 114
The Practices Consumers Regard as Important for New Homemakers in Food Planning and Shopping 115
The Factors Consumers Consider Essential for Achieving and Maintaining Harmony Within the Home 117
Consumers' Interest in Information on Food Buying and Planning 118

V. SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS 120

SUMMARY 120
What Influences the Homemakers' Basic Food Buying Decision 120
What Constitutes Food Management to the Homemaker 122
Consumers' Attitudes Toward Food Management 124

IMPLICATIONS 126

BIBLIOGRAPHY 132

APPENDICES 134

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		Page
1.	Occupation of Family Breadwinner for Sample and Larger Reference Sample	4
2	Age Distribution of the Homemakers for Sample and Large Reference Sample.	5
3	Income Level of Household Units for Sample and Larger Reference Sample	6
4	Percent of Homemakers Employed Outside the Home, Related to Income Levels	7
5.	Size of Household of Sample and Larger Reference Sample	8
6	Composition of Households of Sample and Larger Reference Sample	8
7	Original Food Expenditure Decision, Related to Income	19
8	Original Food Expenditure Decision, Related to Education	20
9	Original Food Expenditure Decision, Related to Stage of the Family Life Cycle	21
10	The Method of General Approach to the Food Budget, Related to Education	24
11	The General Approach to the Food Budget, Related to Income	25
12	The General Approach to the Food Budget, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle	26
13	Length of Time of Homemakers' Current Food Expenditures, Related to Education.	28

LIST OF TABLES--Continued

TABLE		Page
14	Length of Time of Homemakers' Current Food Expenditures, Related to Stage in Family Life Cycle. .	30
15	Length of Time of Homemakers' Current Food Expenditures, Related to Income	31
16	Homemakers' General Approach to the Food Budget, Related to the Length of Time Interval for the Current Food Expenditures	33
17	General Attitude of Husband Toward Food Purchases and Amount Spent, Related to All Households and Households with Husband Present	37
18	General Attitude of Husband Toward Food Purchases and Amount Spent, Related to the Size of the Households with Husband Present	38
19	General Attitude of Husband Toward Food Purchases and Amount Spent, Related to Stage of the Family Life Cycle with Husband Present	39
20	General Attitude of Husband Toward Food Purchases and Amount Spent, Related to Income of Households with Husband Present	40
21	How High Food Bill Would Go Before Husband Would Complain, Related to All Households and Households with Husband Present	41
22	How High Food Bill Would Go Before Husband Would Complain, Related to Size of Households with Husband Present	43
23	How High Food Bill Would Go Before Husband Would Complain, Related to Income of Households with Husband Present	44
24	How High Food Bill Would Go Before Husband Would Complain, Related to Stage In the Family Life Cycle of Households with Husband Present	46

TABLE		Page
25	Husband's Part in Planning and Other Steps, Related to All Households and Households with Husband Present	47
26	Husband's Part in Planning and Other Steps, Related to Size of Households with Husband Present.	48
27	Husband's Part in Planning and Other Steps, Related to Stage of Family Life Cycle of Households with Husband Present	49
28	Husband's Part in Planning and Other Steps, Related to Income of Households with Husband Present	51
29	Types of Shopping Lists Used, Five Independent Studies	53
30	Homemakers' Use of Shopping List, Related to Age. .	55
31	Homemakers' Use of Shopping List, Related to Stage in Family Life Cycle	56
32	Homemakers' Use of Shopping List, Related to Education	57
33	Homemakers' Menu Planning Before Shopping, Related to Stage in Family Life Cycle	59
34	Homemakers' Menu Planning Before Shopping, Relăted to Education	61
35	Homemakers' Menu Planning Before Shopping, Related to Age	62
36	Readership of The State Journal Food Ads, Related to Education	64
37	Readership of The State Journal Food Ads, Related to Age	65
38	Readership of The State Journal Food Ads, Related to Stage in Family Life Cycle.	66

TABLE Page

39 Homemakers' Weekly Per Capita Expenditure for Food, Related to Weight Problems 69

40 Homemakers' Original Food Expenditure Decision, Related to Weight Problems 71

41 Homemakers' Menu Planning Before Shopping, Related to Weight Problems 72

42 Homemakers' Thoughts as They Push Cart Through the Store, Related to Weight Problems 73

43 Homemakers' Goals as They Related to Food, Related to Weight Problems 75

44 Importance of Pre-planning to Homemakers, Related to Income 78

45 Importance of Pre-planning to Homemakers, Related to Age 79

46 Importance of Pre-planning to Homemakers, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle. 80

47 Homemakers' Consistency of Pre-planning, Related to Age 81

48 Homemakers' Consistency of Pre-planning, Related to Income 82

49 Homemakers' Consistency of Pre-planning, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle 83

50 Homemakers' Enjoyment of Pre-planning, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle 85

51 Homemakers' Enjoyment of Pre-planning, Related to Age 86

52 The Last Time Homemakers' Tried New Recipe, Related to Age 94

TABLE | Page

53 The Last Time Homemakers' Tried New Recipe, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle 95

54 Goals of Homemakers as They Relate to Food, Related to Income 99

55 Goals of Homemakers as They Relate to Food, Related to Stage in Family Life Cycle 100

56 Economy Measures Homemakers Employed, Related to Education 103

57 Economy Measures Homemakers Employed, Related to Age 105

58 Economy Measures Homemakers Employed, Related to Stage in Family Life Cycle. 106

59 Importance of Cooking to Homemakers, Related to the Stage in the Family Life Cycle 113

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This research was an exploratory study designed to increase the basic understanding of the process involved in consumer buying decisions. It has as its purpose to gain some insight into consumers' motives and attitudes in food buying and preparation, their food management and shopping behavior, and the varying influences upon the consumers' original food expenditure decision. This information, in turn, should prove useful in program direction for those responsible for food marketing, and those concerned with consumer education related to food.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were as follows:

1. To determine consumer food purchases and management behavior.
2. To determine the basic motives of Lansing consumers in food buying and preparation.
3. To determine the interests and needs of consumers for information in respect to food buying.

This report is divided into five chapters. Chapter II titled, "Analysis of the Basic Food Purchase Decision of How Much to Spend on Food," deals with the influences present and approaches used to determine the basic amount of money to be spent for food, and the flexibility of this decision. Chapter III titled, "Food Management and Shopping Behavior," goes into what actual steps constitute planning and shopping to the consumer and the time and place these activities are carried out. "The Consumers' Attitudes Toward Food Management," Chapter IV, deals with homemakers' feelings toward their roles as food buyers, in terms of their goals, values and interests. Chapter V gives the summary of the findings and implications for further research and consumer programs.

Sources and Nature of the Data

Selection of the Sample

The sample was selected by taking the resident addresses listed in the address section of the Lansing City Directory[1] in a systematic manner. In order to yield a total sample of 257[2] from a random start, every nth address was selected from the directory. Three addresses were selected, one primary and two alternates, in order to conserve survey funds. During the initial contact, if no one was at home, the interviewer attempted to find out when the homemaker of the primary address could be reached at home. If the second contact with the primary source did not yield a response, the interviewer tried the first alternate address on the card, which was the next address in the directory. For the third trip, the interviewer first tried the primary and then the first alternate address. If there were no results, the interviewer then substituted the second alternate address which was the address prior to the primary address in the directory.

Background Data

The data were collected over a period of about one year, primarily 1959. Since the emphasis of the study was upon the decision-making process in the purchase of food rather than the types of individual items selected, it was feasible to collect the data over an extended period of time.

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[1]Published by the R. L. Polk Company, Detroit, Michigan.

[2]3 (1.2 percent) were bachelors.

Personal interviews were conducted to collect the data. Two women did all of the interviews. The length of the interview varied from twenty minutes to ninety minutes with an average of one hour.

The fourteen page questionnaire was divided into six subject matter areas; specific expenses, basic decisions, planning, buying, food preparation, and general questions.[1] Open ended questions were used to obtain a wide variety of responses.

Description of the Sample Household

Data describing the homemakers and their families were tabulated giving a description of certain characteristics of the total sample. The purpose of the description of the sample is to orient the reader to the segment of the population included in the study and to serve later as a base for evaluation of the data. A comparison of the data was made with a sample census of the Lansing population to learn whether the characteristics of the sample used in the study resembled that of the larger reference sample. Some of the differences observed between the sample and the larger reference sample were due to sampling error, but the sample did have added bias because interviews were not made at night, and substitution of address was permitted as described above.

The larger sample was obtained by selecting in a systematic manner residents' addresses from the address listings in the Lansing City Directory. The larger sample census included a total of 1200 interviews conducted under the auspices of the Agricultural Economics Department of Michigan State University from April through August, 1958. No substitutions were permitted in the reference sample.

Occupation of the breadwinner

Table 1 shows the percentage of the family breadwinners falling

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[1]A copy of the complete questionnaire is included in the Appendix A.

into certain occupational groups. This table also includes the percentage distribution of the same occupational groupings for the larger reference sample. The classification by occupation was subjective and two different coders interpreted the data. This created an added possible source of difference between the sample, beyond the sampling error. The general distribution of occupations was of more concern than the differences between the samples.

The grouping "other" was larger in the sample and included the unemployed, those receiving income from real estate, and those households where nobody was employed, but where they were receiving outside assistance such as welfare, or veteran pensions.

Table 1.--Occupation of Family Breadwinner for Sample and Larger Reference Sample.

Occupation	Sample %	Reference sample %
Factory worker	16.3	20.8
Construction worker or laborer (except factory worker)	7.8	5.4
High level salesman or businessman	13.2	9.7
Professional	16.3	12.0
Other white collar workers	10.1	17.2
Other blue collar workers	12.1	20.0
Retired	14.0	12.2
Other occupations	10.2	2.7
	100.0	100.0
Number in sample	257	1200

Age distribution of the homemakers

The age distribution of the homemakers is shown in Table 2 with the percent of the totals falling into each age group for the sample, and a comparison with the larger reference sample.

The sample is made up of proportionately more homemakers under the age of thirty, and over the age of sixty, with an under-representation of homemakers 41-60 in age in comparison with the population of the city. Homemakers between the ages of 41 and 60, whose children were grown, frequently have returned to the work force, or spend more time away from home for other purposes. Thus, they were less frequently at home when the interviewer made the contact.

Table 2.--Age Distribution of the Homemakers for Sample and Larger Reference Sample.

Age	Sample %	Reference sample %
Under 30	24.9	18.5
31-40	25.3	25.2
41-60	25.3	37.0
Over 60	21.4	16.8
Household has no female head	1.2	2.4
Don't know	1.9	.1
	100.0	100.0
Number in sample	257	1200

Income of the household units

Table 3 indicates the percentages of household units in various income groups after federal taxes were deducted, both for the sample and compared with the larger reference sample.

The table shows that considerably more families in the sample were in the over \$2,000-\$4,000 income bracket than the larger reference group, and less in the over \$7,000 group. The sample included fewer working wives because a larger proportion of households had children of school age and, therefore, would be at home at the time of the interview. There were more families with the homemaker under the age of thirty, which would place them at the beginning stages of the family life cycle where the income would be on the upgrade, but relatively low.

Table 3.--Income Level of Household Units for Sample and Larger Reference Sample.*

Income	Sample %	Reference sample %
$2,000 or less	10.1	10.8
$2,001 - 4,000	23.8	14.4
$4,001 - 5,400	24.5	21.7
$5,401 - 7,000	21.4	22.8
$7,001 - 10,000	10.1	16.5
Over $10,000	7.0	5.5
Don't know	3.1	8.3
	100.0	100.0
Number in sample	257	1200

*Federal taxes deducted

Employment of the homemakers

Table 4 shows the number and percentage of married homemakers (with husbands present) employed outside the home by income groups. A larger proportion of the homemakers employed outside the home were in the middle income group. One-fifth of the middle income homemakers were employed while fewer of the women worked in order to obtain the necessities (income under $4,000) or to seek to increase the income over the $7,000 level for the family.

The level of employment in the sample of married homemakers was 14.4 percent compared to the 19 percent for the larger reference sample.

Table 4.--Percent of Homemakers Employed Outside the Home, Related to Income Levels.

Income	Number	Percent of homemakers in income group employed
Under $4,000	7	8
$4,001 - 7,000	24	20
Over $7,000	5	11
No answer	1	--
	37	

Size of the households

The percentage distribution of household size is shown in Table 5 for the sample, and compared with the larger sample census. The sample group tended to under-represent households with three or four members and over-represent the households with one or five or more members, in comparison with the larger reference sample. There was approximately the same proportion of over-representation of homemakers over the age of 60 as the number of households with one member.

Composition of the households

A comparison of the sample and the larger reference sample percentage distribution of households in the various stages of the family life cycle is shown in Table 6. It indicated an over-representation of households with children both 10 and 10-19, and an under-representation of households with children only under ten, and only 10-19 years old. The method of sampling with a primary, and two alternative addresses could be expected to result in this type of bias. Homemakers with one young child or just older children might more likely be away from home at the time the interviewer called than a homemaker with a larger family whose children's ages span more years.

Table 5.--Size of Household of Sample and Larger Reference Sample.

Size of household	Sample %	Reference sample %
One	13.3	9.3
Two	29.2	27.8
Three or four	26.8	38.1
Five or more	30.7	24.2
No answer	--	.6
	100.0	100.0
Number in sample	257	1200

Table 6.--Composition of Households of Sample and Larger Reference Sample.

Composition	Sample %	Reference sample %
No children--head under 40 years old	8.2	4.7
Children under 10	15.9	26.5
Children 10-19 only	10.5	14.7
Children under 10 and 10-19	28.4	14.2
No children--head over 40	36.2	36.8
No answer	.8	1.3
Unrelated persons		1.8
	100.0	100.0
Number in sample	257	1200

The two samples had the same percentage of families where the head was over 40 with no children at home. There was no separate grouping for single and married heads of households under 40 with no children.

Expenditures for food

The following shows the percentage distribution of per capita expenditure per week for food purchases at grocery stores and for meals away from home for the sample:

Below $4.00	8.9
$4.01 - 5.00	13.6
$5.01 - 6.00	12.8
$6.01 - 7.00	13.6
$7.01 - 8.00	8.6
$8.01 - 9.00	14.4
$9.01 - 11.00	12.5
$11.01 and over	14.4
No answer	1.2

The amount spent for food per week ranged from $1.00 to $24.00 per person. A single person buying juice and coffee for breakfast and eating the rest of his meals free at work spent the lower amount. A couple in their early sixties with an income over $10,000 who ate several meals out per week, plus entertaining at home, spent $24.00 per person per week. There was almost an equal distribution of those households who spend less than $7.00 and more than $7.00 per capita per week for food.

Discussion of the Literature Dealing with the Consumption Decision

The consumption decision is the focal point of any study of consumer behavior. It is, however, what lies behind the consumption decision which is of concern to the person who works with the individual as a consumer. He is interested in the many influences and considerations which lead to the "consumption decision." In order to understand how the homemaker decides on the food products to buy and how and why she chooses the particular food products available in the market, it is essential first to review some of the characteristics fundamental to all decisions.

As a framework for the discussion, the major components and influences of the consumption decision are outlined in this chapter. The framework was developed by drawing together the thinking and writing of authors in the field of consumption economics, consumer behavior, family economics and motivation research. The components included in the framework apply to any consumption decision. However, this discussion has been written with special emphasis upon those points which pertain to food purchasing decision.

The Basis for the Consumption Decision

The consumption decision is a function of two components: the nature of consumers on the one hand, and the nature of buying--that is, the alternative products available for the consumer to buy--on the other hand. Buying or rather the result of buying--consumption or possession--constitutes a very large and a very important part of the interests, values and actions of most of the people in the U.S.A. Much of our basic sense of importance, our ability to measure our attitudes towards other, roots in the things we own and use, and this fact is of very great importance in analyzing consumer buying.

The consumer today is faced with many conflicting variables in fulfilling his basic needs and maintaining his level of living. It is assumed that the consumption decision is a function of the physiological needs of the individual, modified by his social-cultural environment which has developed different desires, and the means by which these wants can be satisfied. Consumers are limited by the alternatives available to them. These choices become more extensive with increased incomes, with the techniques of mass production, and with the availability of consumer credit. The immediate influence of prices, habits, and especially expectations all have a direct influence on the way in which the consumer perceives the purchase situation.

The roots of the consumption decision stem from the physiological needs of the individual. It is important to consider these basic needs because they serve as an incentive for action. Thorndike states that the action of original wants may be the seed, but the nature of the tree from which it grows from this seed is far different than the original seed (24). The original need or want, or group of wants, when finally considered in terms of market goods and services may take many forms. The outward form of the decision is usually the subject of concern to people in food marketing firms, but an awareness of the original want in terms of its motivational implications is most important.

Many writers have stated that what people really desire is not specific products, but satisfying experiences. Dusenberry states, "People do not, for the most part, desire specific goods, but desire goods which will serve certain purposes" (7). Physiological needs are desires for experiences as opposed to desire for products. Thus basic needs serve as a motivating force in the consumption decision and become motivational considerations to be used in any type of program connected with consumers.

These basic needs might be used as motivational factors in the final consumption decision. Basic desires do not change, but their intensity will vary from time to time and from person to person. These differences are the result of changes in influences, situations, goals and expectations. Lewin's Vector Analysis can be used to describe the confluence of forces influencing the food purchase decision. The vector analysis is based on changes in internal psychic conflict to which plus and minus valences have been attached as a means of determining the point at which consumer reaction will take place. The pattern of the typical response for an individual will change over time on the basis of resources available and motivational factors. Hence, the relative intensities of the many wants will determine which wants will be satisfied. Over time the relative intensities will change.

Psychologists classify basic needs in a number of ways. Bayton discusses them in terms of biogenic and psychogenic needs which he says are two fundamental categories (3). This thesis considers only the psychogenic aspects of basic desires, for it is assumed that the level of living in America is such that the majority of the people today are largely influenced in their buying by their psychogenic wants--even though food in the first place, fulfills a biogenic need.

The consumer's desire for a particular item is not an absolute entity independent of everything else, but it is derived from related physiological needs. These needs are given weighting and direction through the value system of the individual. These determinants of a value system evolve as a continual process out of the level of living which in turn is socially and culturally determined.

The field of motivation research centers around the consumer's action as determined by a vast and complex set of intrapersonal forces and external forces. Carl Rogers describes this complex in terms of the self theory. According to Rogers, "the phenomenal self" is the most permanent part of the individual's self and the point of reference for his every behavior. It is a highly organized function which operates in a consistent and predictable fashion (22). The only reality which exists for an individual is the current phenomenal field. The manner in which an individual perceives the world, and what decisions he actually makes are strongly influenced by his experiences, interests, and needs (phenomenal field). A person's approach and attitude toward food expenditures would, therefore, be expected to be a unique reflection of his background and his field of experiences as he views the food purchase decision.

The differences in an individual's pattern of satisfaction are derived from differentiated value systems with which the individual feels identified. The individual is a member of a group, and group belonging exerts a powerful influence on his actions and behavior, even without consultation or discussion. The social class to which a person belongs also has a great deal to do with how he looks at everything in his environment. The environmental influences such as nationality, religious background, occupational differences, educational level and place of residence all contribute to different value systems among the socio-cultural groups. These influences would lead to many different food expenditure patterns.

An awareness of immediate influences of habit, price and expectation contributes to our understanding of consumer expenditure behavior by working out a relationship between desires, incomes and prices. The consumption pattern of the moment is conceived not as a part of the way of life, but a temporary adjustment to immediate circumstances.

The homemaker of today is striving to resolve problems created by her own desires for a higher level of living amid uncertainties arising from outside influences. The concept of demand in economic analysis is concerned primarily with making a choice in the presence of scarcity. To analyze the demand situation in today's economy would be to explain the problem of choice, which affects consumers, in the midst of abundance. Consumers are constantly shifting their values and behavior in light of present day society. Americans not only have more money today, they also have different values than 25 years ago. They are seeking satisfaction through commercial means outside the home rather than from home production. When translated into buying behavior, it means different homes in different areas, different kinds and forms of foods, and different kinds of stores in suburban locations.

Decisions or choices always face the consumer, but the degree of conscious deliberation before purchases may vary a great deal. Norris considers this element of consumer behavior when she sets forth three classifications of expenditures in the short run, dividing them into (1) areas where careful weighing is absent, expenditures are established by past commitments and "petty goods" (tips, five-and-ten cent store goods, etc.), (2) areas in which careful weighing occurs, and (3) dynamic residual--discretionary spending of what is left after commitments and habitually used goods are bought.

Katona reports that in the area of food expenditures, there is an opportunity to repeat the same behavior often and thus develop strong habits. To do again what has proved to be satisfactory in the past represents the simplest way to conserve psychic energy and time and overcome the tension and insecurity of making continual genuine decisions. The consumer is apt to prefer the short cuts, to follow rules of thumb and to behave in a routine manner. When she feels that it really matters, she will deliberate and choose to the best of her ability (16).

Katona has stated that "Expectations are attitudes which, like other attitudes, may shape behavior" (17). They are concerned with such questions as whether the consumer believes prices are going up or down, whether wages will change, or what he feels is his job future. His expectations and the degree of security which they bring will likewise be determinants of value in any consumption decision.

The institutional availability of products establishes the actual limits within which a consumer is free to act, both as to what he can buy and as to the procedures he must follow in making purchases. They affect the consumer's knowledge about the choices available to him and the merits and limitations of each choice. The products for sale within the shopping area of the consuming unit, the variation in quality, the relative prices, and the store services available all limit the alternatives open to the consumer.

Certain products are purchased frequently; others are once in a lifetime purchases. The purchase of food, leads to certain considerations in buying not present in the case of less frequent purchases. If a product is satisfactory, habitual buying patterns quickly develop when the product is standardized. Labels and brands identify the quality of the product desired. Frequent purchase makes it possible to learn quality characteristics more easily because recent experience is helpful to the learning process.

The relative degree of necessity vs. luxury will affect the purchase decision. "Necessity" will take precedence over "luxury," but the degree of "necessity" or "luxury" will be subjectively determined by the individual consuming unit. The values and standards placed on goods by outsiders will have weight only as they are accepted by the consumer. Education and advertising both attempt to establish a hierarchy of values.

There are many influences in present day living which attempt to fill the gap between expectation and realization. One of the implications of much advertising today is that if you use a certain product, a certain desirable result will occur. This is an influence calculated to change consumers' decisions to buy and is brought to bear upon their uncertainties as to product expectations. The appeal to consumers to stay with one brand or one store is another way to avoid uncertainty. To the extent that these influences do become a part of the consumers' frame of reference, they become components of the decision.

A brief discussion has been undertaken into some of the external and internal forces that influence and limit the consumer in her choice of goods. The consumer in the purchase decision is faced with a complex of intervening variables which explain why she does not exhibit a simple, automatic stimulus-response. Those intervening variables consist of motives, attitudes, and the frame of reference at the time of the decision.

To study the consumer in the food buying decision, then, it is essential to consider both the effect of the consumer's decision-making (the actual goods purchased) and the influences which lead to the final decision.

CHAPTER II

AN ANALYSIS OF THE BASIC DECISION OF HOW MUCH TO SPEND FOR FOOD

Food purchases constitute an important part of the expenditure of the family. Twenty percent of the average family's income is used for the purchase of food (1). No other segment of the family's expenditures constitutes as large a portion of the family's total income.

There is an essential difference in the approach to food purchases compared with buying a car or a house. This is because of the frequency of food purchases and the relative small cost of individual items but the large total cost. With frequently repeated purchases, consumers make decisions on the basis of many experiences. They build up preferences which may be flexible with changing conditions or which may become long established habits. This chapter will explore the various influences affecting the initial decision as to the amount of money to be spent for food and the flexibility of these decisions in relation to the characteristics of the sample.

The Original Food Expenditure Decision

The amount of money a family spends for food is a function of environmental influences, past and present, which come to bear upon the individual homemaker as she shops for food. The decision may represent a consciously carried out practice on the part of the homemaker, or it may have been acquired from the parents without any conscious decision. Some respondents thought they had never made this decision, perhaps because the need for planning expenditures did not arise, or because background or education limited the amount of planning that could be carried out.

The homemakers were asked the following question, "How did you originally decide on the actual amount you were to spend on food in a given period of time?" They responded as follows:

	%
Trial and error method	26.1
Buy what they want; cost is not a limiting factor	25.7
Budget by percentage of income	12.4
Pay other bills first; use what is left for food	12.1
Buy what is wanted, but not extravagant	7.0
Felt never made original decision	7.8
Pay food bill first, other bills later	5.8
Other decision	3.1

The reason that budgeting by percentage of income did not represent an important method used by the homemakers was, perhaps, because there is no adequate guide available upon which to base income allocations. One-third of the homemakers in the sample were able to buy generally what they wanted without severely felt cost limitations. Eight percent of the homemakers felt they had never made a conscious initial decision as to how much income should be used for food. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the consumer must make some decisions in relationship to food expenditures, whether it is several small decisions or one more important choice that results in the amount of money to be spent for food. One-eighth of the sample did not place the primary emphasis on the amount of money spent for food because they paid other bills first and used the remaining money for food.

The original decision as to the amount of money to be spent for food was cross-tabulated with income, education, and the stage in the family life cycle to determine what relationships existed.

A chi square test showed no statistically significant relationship between the educational level and the stage in the family life cycle, and the initial food expenditure decision. There were some statistically significant differences shown between income level and the original food expenditures decision. As income rose there was an increase in the percentage of homemakers who bought the food they wanted without regard to total expenditure (Table 7). Three times the percentage of families with income under $4, 000 felt they never made this initial decision as to the amount allocated for food expenditures as had the families with incomes over $4, 000.

Although no statistically significant differences were shown, there were some indications of differences between the educational level and the initial food expenditure decision (Table 8). Homemakers with a high school degree tended to place less emphasis on buying what they wanted without regard to cost. Fewer of these homemakers felt they had never made an initial food expenditure decision. The lower educational group more frequently bought without cost limits, and also felt they never had made an initial decision. This was somewhat unusual since a lower educational level is generally associated with lower income and with circumstances where the total cost of food would be of major concern.

Also, there were some indications of differences although not statistically significant, between the stage in the family life cycle, and how the family made their original food expenditure decision (Table 9). In those stages in the family life cycle where expenses were high and income was limited, such as with young children or with the establishment of the family, families felt they had made more initial decisions and fewer could buy without regard to cost. In the more advanced stages of the family life cycle, where there would be fewer demands on income as the size of the family declines or as single persons' expenses became stabilized, close to one-half of the homemakers felt that they either had

Table 7.--The Original Food Expenditure Decision, Related to Income.*

Original decision	Total sample %	A Under $4,000 %	B $4,000-$7,000 %	C Over $7,000 %	No answer %
Trial and error method	26.1	25.3	28.8	22.7	12.5
Buy what they want; cost is not a limiting factor	25.7	12.6	29.7	40.9	25.0
Budget by percentage of income	12.4	13.8	12.7	11.4	----
Pay other bills first, use what is left for food	12.1	14.9	10.2	9.1	25.0
Buy what food they want, but are not extravagant	7.0	4.6	9.3	4.5	12.5
Felt never made original decision	7.8	14.9	3.4	4.5	12.5
Pay food bills first, other bills later	5.8	10.4	3.4	4.6	----
Other decision	3.1	3.5	2.5	2.3	12.5
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and B at the 10 percent level and between columns A and C at the five percent level of significance.
However, a chi square test indicated no interdependence between the original food expenditure decision and the income level at the 10 percent level for the total table.

Table 8.--The Original Food Expenditure Decision, Related to Education.*

Original decision	Total sample %	Less than high school %	Completed high school %	More than high school %	No answer %
Trial and error method	26.1	18.6	31.5	30.8	5.9
Buy what they want; cost is not a limiting factor	25.7	28.6	20.7	29.5	23.5
Budget by percentage of income	12.4	10.0	14.1	12.8	11.8
Pay other bills first; use what is left for food	12.1	11.4	17.4	7.7	5.9
Buy what food they want, but are not extravagant	7.0	7.1	5.4	6.4	17.6
Felt never made original decision	7.8	14.3	3.3	7.7	5.9
Pay food bills first, other bills later	5.8	8.6	6.5	1.3	11.8
Other decision	3.1	1.4	1.1	3.8	17.6
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the original food expenditure decision and education at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Table 9.--The Original Food Expenditure Decision, Related to Stage of the Family Life Cycle.*

Original decision	Total sample %	Head under 40, no children %	Younger children %	Older children only %	Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	Single head over 40 %	No answer %
Trial and error method	26.1	23.8	30.7	22.3	33.3	8.3	----
Buy what they want; cost is not a limiting factor	25.7	23.8	21.9	25.9	31.6	27.8	50.0
Budget by percentage of income	12.4	14.3	13.2	18.5	8.8	8.3	50.0
Pay other bills first; use what is left for food	12.1	9.5	17.5	7.4	1.7	13.9	----
Buy what food they want, but are not extravagant	7.0	9.5	6.1	14.8	3.5	8.3	----
Felt never made original decision	7.8	4.8	1.8	7.4	12.3	22.2	----
Pay food bills first, other bills later	5.8	4.8	7.9	3.7	3.5	5.6	----
Other decision	3.1	9.5	.9	----	5.3	5.6	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=257

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the original food expenditure decision and the stage in the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

never made an initial decision or that they bought food without regard to cost.

The General Approach to the Food Budget

Homemakers choose as their way of spending, that method which in their experience best fits the needs of their family. Different value systems, the availability of resources, and the judgment of the homemakers all influence the choice which they make.

When the homemakers were asked, "Which method would you consider your way of spending?" they responded as follows:

	%
Formal budget	19.9
Flexible spending guide	16.3
Household allowance	14.4
No specific limitations (long range planning)	23.3
No limits at all	9.7
Combination of several methods	16.0
No answer given	0.4

Families who reported utilizing the formal budget felt it was the only system for staying solvent when income was limited, and when a variation in monthly income necessitated a systematic approach to expenditures on an annual basis. Those who found the flexible spending guide most satisfactory did so because a strict budget did not allow sufficient flexibility for special expenses. Also they felt that the time spent planning a rigid budget had only marginal value. The household allowance approach varied from a joint decision made by the husband and wife on the amount of money to cover only food expenses to a situation where all expenses were included, with supplemental amounts of money available as needed. Homemakers who stated they had no limitations at all, either planned in the short run to meet the needs and tastes of the family, or were limited only by the ability to consume.

Cross-tabulation was carried out to relate the general approach to the food budget with the education, income level and the stage in the family life cycle.

A statistically significant relationship existed between the educational level and the approach to the food budget (Table 10). It indicated that as the educational level increased, the spending guide was more extensively used while a combination of methods was less frequently used. Homemakers who had completed high school considered the household allowance the most satisfactory approach to spending. A system of spending with no limits at all was reported more often by homemakers with education beyond high school and also (as indicated later) by the higher income families.

There was a statistically significant difference between the level of income and the approach to the food budget. An inverse relationship is shown between the percentage of homemakers using the formal budget (Table 11) and income. The higher income households had a larger percentage of homemakers with no limits at all. This may indicate that the degree of latitude or rigidity in the approach to the food budget might be related to the total income, and the proportion of the income spent on necessities. Increases in income levels were associated with more frequent use of a household allowance.

A comparison of the approach to the food budget with the stages of the family life cycle (Table 12) revealed a statistically significant relationship. In those phases of the family life cycle where expenses were more pressing, the heads of the households chose more rigid approaches to spending. In the more advanced stages of the family life cycle, the families had increased per capita income, plus more experience. Thus, they felt they were better able to spend with no specific limits although they did use long range planning. To the homemaker with only older children present, the household allowance was the most usual approach to spending.

Table 10.--The Method of General Approach to the Food Budget, Related to Education.*

Approach to spending	Total sample %	A Less than high school %	B Completed high school %	C More than high school %	No answer %
Formal budget	19.9	20.0	18.5	19.2	23.5
Flexible spending guide	16.3	15.7	17.4	20.5	----
Household allowance	14.4	5.7	22.8	12.8	11.8
No special limitations, (long range planning)	23.3	22.9	20.6	26.9	23.5
No limits at all	9.7	8.6	6.5	11.6	23.5
Combination of several methods	16.0	27.1	13.0	9.0	17.7
No answer given	0.4	----	1.2	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between the method of general spending and education at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns B and C at the 10 percent level of significance.

Table 11.--The General Approach to the Food Budget, Related to Income.*

Approach to spending	Total sample %	A Under $4,000 %	B $4,000- $7,000 %	C Over $7,000 %	No answer %
Formal budget	19.9	30.0	17.8	9.1	----
Flexible spending guide	16.3	13.8	18.6	15.9	12.5
Household allowance	14.4	6.8	17.0	22.7	12.5
No specific limitations (long range planning)	23.3	17.2	28.8	20.5	25.0
No limits at all	9.7	9.2	7.6	18.2	----
Combination of several methods	16.0	23.0	10.2	13.6	37.5
No answer given	0.4	----	----	----	12.5
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between the method of general spending and the income at the one percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and B at the one percent level and between columns A and C at the five percent level of significance.

Table 12.--The General Approach to Food Budget, Related to the Stage in the Family Life Cycle.*

Approach to spending	Total sample %	A Head under 40, no children %	B Younger children %	C Older children only %	D Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	E Single head over 40 %	No answer %
Formal budget	19.9	19.1	23.7	18.5	14.1	16.7	50.0
Flexible spending guide	16.3	19.0	21.0	14.8	10.5	11.1	----
Household allowance	14.4	14.3	14.0	33.4	10.5	8.3	----
No specific limits (long range planning)	23.3	19.0	17.5	22.2	33.3	30.5	----
No limits at all	9.7	14.3	6.2	7.4	12.3	16.7	----
Combination of several methods	16.0	14.3	16.7	3.7	19.3	16.7	50.0
No answer given	.4	----	.9	----	----	----	----
N=257	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns B and D at the 10 percent level of significance.

However, a chi square test indicated no interdependence between the method of general spending and the stage in the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

The Amount of Flexibility in the Basic Amount Spent for Food

Change occurs slowly in any society. In the areas of food, particularly, there is the likelihood of homemakers repeating the same buying behavior often and thus developing strong habits. A discussion of the time span over which homemakers used current food expenditures should prove useful in terms of the homemakers' beliefs about the flexibility of their food expenditures. Especially is this true when the length of the time span is related to income level, education and the homemakers' stage in the family life cycle.

The homemakers were asked the following question: "How long have you spent the amount you are now spending for food?" They responded as follows:

	%
Less than one year	13.6
One year	17.5
Two years	19.5
Three to five years	24.9
Over five years	21.0
Not constant, fluctuates	1.5
No answer given	2.0

Homemakers believe that they have a more constant expenditure pattern than seems possible. One-half of the homemakers said the basic amount spent for food changed within the last two years. A very small proportion of the homemakers reported that the amount of money spent for food was not constant because of fluctuations in income, inflation and the size of the household.

A comparison of the education of the homemaker with the length of time during which current expenditures for food remained relatively constant showed no statistically significant difference (Table 13). Although no statistically significant differences were shown, there were some indications that homemakers with education beyond high school

Table 13.--Length of Time of Homemakers' Current Food Expenditures, Related to Education.*

Time interval of current food expenditure	Total sample %	Less than high school %	Completed high school %	More than high school %	No answer %
Less than one year	13.6	11.4	11.9	16.6	17.6
One year	17.5	12.9	17.4	19.2	29.4
Two years	19.5	18.6	27.2	12.8	5.9
Three-five years	24.9	31.4	19.6	23.1	35.3
Over five years	21.0	22.8	20.6	24.4	5.9
No answer given	2.0	2.9	1.2	1.3	5.9
No constant, fluctuates	1.5	----	2.1	2.6	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the length of time for current food expenditure and education at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

said they more frequently changed their current spending pattern in the last year than did homemakers who had completed high school educations or less than high school. Proportionately, more homemakers with a high school education felt they had changed the current amount of their food expenditures over a two-year interval than those with more or less than a high school education. More homemakers who had not completed high school felt they had changed their current food expenditure in the previous three to five year interval.

A statistically significant relationship was shown between the stage in the family life cycle and the length of time of current food expenditure (Table 14). When the head for the household was under 40 and without children, homemakers reported that a change within the last year occurred the most frequently. This may be related to the formation of new families and single people changing status. This proportion decreased in the more advanced stages of the family life cycle, with families having no children under 20 at home reporting the least change.

The tendency to establish a basic amount for food expenditure and retain it for a long period of time was reported by no families with the head under 40 and no children. Two-fifths of the homemakers with only older children or children who had left home, felt they had not changed the basic amount for food in over five years.

There was a statistically significant difference between the income level and the length of time for current food expenditures (Table 15).

An inverse relationship was shown between increases in the income level for households and the decreasing number of households who changed their current food expenditure for the year previous to the study. This shifted to a positive correlation when the period of change over five years was related to income level.

There was a statistically significant relationship shown between the general approach to food budgeting and the time interval of current food

Table 14.--Length of Time of Homemakers' Current Food Expenditures, Related to Stage in Family Life Cycle.*

Time interval of current food expenditures	Total sample %	A Head under 40, no children %	B Younger children %	C Older children only %	D Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	E Single head over 40 %	No answer %
Less than one year	13.6	33.3	14.9	18.5	3.5	11.1	----
One year	17.5	23.8	19.3	18.5	10.5	16.7	50.0
Two years	19.5	14.3	28.9	11.1	12.3	8.3	50.0
Three-five years	24.9	28.6	26.3	7.4	26.3	30.5	----
Over five years	21.0	----	7.9	44.5	40.3	27.8	----
No answer given	2.0	----	1.8	----	1.8	5.6	----
Not constant, fluctuates	1.5	----	.9	----	5.3	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=257

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between the length of time for current food expenditure and stage of the family life cycle at the ten percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns B and C, columns B and D, and columns B and E at the five percent or higher level of significance.

Table 15.--Length of Time of Homemakers' Current Food Expenditures, Related to Income.*

Time interval of current food expenditure	Total sample %	Under \$4,000 %	\$4,000-\$7,000 %	Over \$7,000 %	No answer %
Less than one year	13.6	14.9	14.5	11.4	----
One year	17.5	18.4	16.9	15.9	25.0
Two years	19.5	18.4	23.7	13.6	----
Three-five years	24.9	28.7	22.9	27.3	----
Over five years	21.0	16.1	20.3	25.0	62.5
No answer given	2.0	3.5	----	2.3	12.5
Not constant, fluctuates	1.5	----	1.7	4.5	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between the length of time for current food expenditures and income at the one percent level of significance for the total table.

expenditures of one year or less and over five years (Table 16). Forty-eight percent of the homemakers who used a flexible plan or were not limited at all in spending thought they changed their basic spending for food in the past year. The explanation as to why the large percentage of homemakers who used the formal budget recently changed their food expenditure pattern was because of the large number of low income families and young families who stated they changed their basic food expenditure within the last year. The use of the household allowance was not related to changes homemakers felt were made in the current food expenditure for the time period in the study.

A small number of homemakers used a budget or had a limit for food expenditures. Homemakers using the more flexible plans may not have been aware of the changes that were taking place in the price level of food, or they incorporated adjustments in their spending without any conscious change in expenditures.

Data for the United States show that, in the aggregate, American's per capita expenditure for food was more responsive to price and income changes from 1954-56 than for the 1957-59 time period. During the five years prior to the study, the per capita food expenditure declined. It moved from $397 in 1954 to $419 in 1956, but for the last three years it remained constant at $388 (1). The Market Basket index for food prices in the same time period increased from 112.6 in 1954 to 118.3 in 1959, with a dip in 1955 to 110.9 (15). Over time, consumers in this study believed their food expenditures were relatively constant. However, this uniformity was partially substantiated by the stable aggregate of per capita expenditure for food over the last three years.

Reasons for Weekly Variations in the Amount Spent for Food

The amount of money spent for food fluctuates each week with the needs of the individual homemaker. Homemakers felt that their weekly

Table 16.--Homemakers' General Approach to the Food Budget, Related to the Length of Time Interval for Current Food Expenditures.*

Time interval for current food expenditure	Formal budget %	Flexible spending guide %	Household allowance %	No specific limits, use long range planning %	No limits at all %	Combination of several methods %
A Less than one year	33.3	47.6	29.7	30.5	37.5	26.2
B Two years	19.6	16.7	24.3	15.3	16.7	19.0
C Three to five years	29.4	19.0	24.3	18.6	25.0	33.3
D Over five years	13.8	16.7	21.7	33.9	12.5	16.7
E No answer	3.9	----	----	1.7	8.3	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=257

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between rows A and D at the two percent level of significance.

However, a chi square test indicated no interdependence between the approach to general spending and the length of time for current food expenditures at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

food expenditure was flexible to short run changes in amount while their basic expenditure was more constant for long periods of time.

The homemakers answered the question, "How do you account for variations in amount of money spent for groceries in different weeks?" as follows:

	%
Supply of food depleted or higher than usual	49.8
Buying of food in quantity or on specials	27.6
Seasonal variation	8.9
Holiday, entertainment	36.6
Number of meals served at home	8.9
Price fluctuations in food	6.2
Splurge-extras for family	4.7
No variation existed	4.3
Other reasons	10.1
No answer given	1.2

Of the 407 responses, half of the homemakers altered the amount spent on food because of changes in the supply situation at home. The weather was a governing factor when families used staples instead of going outside the home for groceries, and also the time span since the last shopping trip. "Other" influences included cleaning supplies paid for from food money, shopping alone rather than with others, and going to the store hungrier one week than another so that foods appealed more. A very small group of homemakers felt there was no weekly variation in the amount spent for food; that, if necessary, items would be eliminated or a less expensive alternative substituted rather than going over the allotted amount of money.

More of the homemakers felt weekly variation was the result of supply changes of basic items at home rather than items for special occasions, price fluctuations, or seasonal variation.

Background as a Factor in Attitude Toward Food Expenditures

Food habits tend to persist for long periods of time because of the family associations and the symbolism connected with food. The homemakers' attitude toward food and the amount of money to be spent for food would thus reasonably be expected to be related to their background and experience.

When the homemakers were asked whether they thought their background had anything to do with their attitude toward the amount of money spent for food, they replied as follows:

	%
Yes	63.0
No	29.6
Perhaps	5.5
Don't know	1.9

Twice as many homemakers felt background was important as those who felt background was not relevant. However, some of the women who felt it was not important indicated reasons which showed that background was important to food expenditure decisions.

When asked in what way background was important, the homemakers responded as follows:

	%
Learned thriftiness as a child	39.3
Learned to eat well as a child, can't change now	23.8
Do as parents or mother	19.6
Profession or education	20.8
Other	8.3
No specific topic	1.8

Of the 39 percent of the homemakers who felt they learned thriftiness as children, different expenditure patterns evolved. Some learned of thrift early so they always looked for the best buy in the long run. Other homemakers who were raised during the depression had little but the bare essentials of food and clothing. As a result they do not skimp now. Twenty-four percent of the homemakers, because of learning to eat well as children, could not change now. They believed in good food above all, and a taste for foods was established regardless of cost.

A considerable proportion of homemakers felt that their own or their husband's education or experiences influenced their approach to food expenditures. Other factors mentioned as contributing to the amount of money spent on food for homemakers who felt background to be important, included income of the family and also attitude and personality of the individual homemaker.

Slightly under one-third of the homemakers felt that there were other factors more important than background in determining the expenditure for food. Listed in order of consequence, such homemakers put the emphasis on the individual family's system of likes and dislikes (diet and health restrictions, physical and emotional make-up), size of income, size of household, the work situation, and other factors such as marital state or the cost of living. These had a more direct bearing on the specific amount spent for food, but most of the homemakers would agree that their background did have an influence on food expenditure.

The Role of the Husband in Food Purchase Decisions

There has been a gradual change in the role of the husband within the home from that of authoritarian leadership over the household to that of a participant in cooperative decision-making of the family members. Just what, if any, part does the husband play in planning food money; and is there any relationship of the characteristics of the family to the degree of joint participation? A University of Michigan research team found that the power to make final decisions rested with the person who knew most about the problem, or could handle it better, whether it was the car they should buy or decisions related to food (6).

The General Attitude of the Husband Toward Food Purchases

The general attitude of the husband toward food purchases and the amount spent is shown in Table 17. Twenty-two percent of the households were without a husband (divorce, separation, husband deceased, or single). For the total sample of households there was approximately an equal distribution of those husbands with the attitude of complete indifference, mild to fairly interested, and very interested in planning food expenditures.

Table 17.--General Attitude of Husband Toward Food Purchases and Amount Spent, Related to All Households and Households with Husband Present.

Husband's general attitude	All households %	Households with husbands present %
No husband present	22.2	----
Complete indifference	28.4	36.5
Mild-fairly interested	24.1	31.0
Very interested	24.1	31.0
Other	1.2	1.5
	100.0	100.0
N=257		

The chi square test between the general attitude of the husband toward food purchases with the size of households and the stage in the family life cycle showed no statistically significant relationship for the total tables. Since the question pertains to the role of the husbands, the data in the discussion was based upon those households with the husband present.

Although no statistically significant differences were shown, there were some indications that the size of the household does have an influence on the attitude of the husband in food purchases (Table 18). As the size of the households increased, homemakers reported that the percentage of husbands who took a mild to fair degree of interest in food expenditures also rose. There was an inverse relationship, however, of husbands who were very interested, as the size of the household increased.

Table 18.--General Attitude of Husband Toward Food Purchases and Amount Spent, Related to the Size of the Households with Husband Present.*

Husband's general attitude	Total sample %	Two %	Three or four %	Five or more %
Complete indifference	36.5	37.1	35.9	36.5
Mild-fairly interested	31.0	25.8	28.2	35.1
Very interested	31.0	35.5	32.8	25.7
Other	1.5	1.6	3.1	2.7
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=200				

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the attitude of the husband toward food purchases and the size of the household at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Also, there were some indications that the attitude of the husband was related to the stages of the family life cycle in Table 19. There was a positive relationship between husbands very interested in food purchase decisions and increasing stages of the family life cycle. A mild to fair degree of interest on the part of the husband was shown to be highest for the head of the household under 40 with no children, and it declines with the advanced stages of the family life cycle.

Comparison of the income and the general attitude of the husband revealed a statistically significant relationship between the middle and high income families (Table 20). Only the income level of households was related to the attitude of complete indifference on the part of the husband toward food expenditures. Homemakers in the middle income group felt their husbands were less completely indifferent toward food

Table 19.--General Attitude of Husband Toward Food Purchases and Amount Spent, Related to Stage of the Family Life Cycle of Households with Husband Present.*

Husband's general attitude	Total sample %	Head under 40, no children %	Younger children %	Older children only %	Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %
Complete indifference	36.5	35.7	35.8	36.4	36.9
Mild-fairly interested	31.0	35.7	32.1	31.8	26.3
Very interested	31.0	21.4	28.3	31.8	36.8
Other	1.5	7.2	3.8	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=185					

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the general attitude of the husband and the stage of the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Table 20.--General Attitude of Husband Toward Food Purchases and Amount Spent, Related to Income of Households with Husband Present.*

Husband's general attitude	Total sample %	A Under $4,000 %	B $4,000- $7,000 %	C Over $7,000 %
Complete indifference	36.5	39.1	29.6	52.5
Mild--fairly interested	31.0	23.9	33.3	25.0
Very interested	31.0	37.0	32.5	22.5
Other	1.5	----	4.6	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=194				

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns B and C at the ten percent level of significance.

However, a chi square test indicated no interdependence between the general attitude of the husband toward food purchases and the income level at the ten percent level of significance for the total table.

buying decisions. In households where the income was over $7,000, the homemakers indicated their husbands were considerably more indifferent than the total sample of households with husbands present. One-third of the husbands in the middle income families indicated a mild to fair degree of interest, compared with one-quarter of the lower or higher income group. As the income level of the household increased, those husbands who were very interested in food expenditures declined.

Accounting to Husband of Food Expenditures

The homemakers judged how high the food bill would go before their husbands would ask for an accounting (Table 21). Over one-third of the sample reported that their husbands never asked for an accounting, regardless of the amount, or simply were not aware of the amount spent for food.

Table 21.--How High Food Bill Would Go Before Husband Would Complain, Related to All Households and Households with Husband Present.

Husband's accounting of food expenditures	All households %	Households with husband present %
Specific amount over which he would complain	35.4	45.7
Never ask for an accounting	23.3	30.2
Aware of prices and expenditures, he does not question costs	8.6	11.1
Would have to go very high	3.5	4.5
Husband not aware of the amount spent on food	3.1	4.0
Don't know	1.9	2.5
No one to account to	22.6	---
No answer given	1.6	2.0
	100.0	100.0

N=257

One out of eight homemakers felt that their husbands were aware of prices and expenditures, thus did not question costs. The responses varied substantially, indicating the amount of cooperative effort in food purchase decisions. Some husbands complain every time they pay the food bills, regardless of the amount; others felt their wives used good judgment, were good managers, and thus did not question expenditures.

The income, size of household, and stage in the family life cycle were cross-tabulated with the husbands' concern about the food bill.

There was a statistically significant relationship between the husbands asking for an accounting of food expenditures and household size (Table 22). Homemakers from large households (five or more members) reported most frequently to have a specific amount over which their husbands would complain. Fewer of this group never asked for an accounting, yet this group of husbands was less aware of prices than husbands in any other size household. There was more awareness of price among husbands in households of two, twice the percentage of the average of all the households.

A statistically significant relationship existed between the income of the households and the husband's desire for an accounting on food expenditures (Table 23). As income increased, fewer husbands asked their wives for an accounting, and more homemakers felt the food bill would have to go very high before complaining.

As income increased, there was a statistically significant inverse relationship between an increasing awareness of prices and expenditures, and specific amount over which the husbands would complain. This was to be anticipated because the husbands felt more concern for food expenditures when the need to watch expenses was greater, i.e., with the income lower and the proportion of income spent for food higher. Husbands of families with high incomes were perhaps less likely to be concerned with the actual amount of money spent for food, but more interested in having the homemaker serve satisfying and well-prepared food.

Table 22.--How High Food Bill Would Go Before Husband Would Complain, Related to Size of Households with Husband Present.*

Husband's accounting of food expenditures	Total sample %	A Two %	B Three or four %	C Five or more %
Specific amount over which he would complain	45.7	41.9	42.2	53.4
Never asks for an accounting	30.2	32.3	31.2	26.0
Aware of prices and expenditures, he does not question costs	11.1	21.0	7.8	5.5
Would have to go very high	4.5	1.6	9.4	2.7
Husband not aware of amount spent on food	4.0	1.6	4.7	5.5
Does not know	2.5	----	3.1	4.2
No answer given	2.0	1.6	1.6	2.7
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=199				

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between how high the food bill would go before the husband would complain, and the size of the household at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and C at the five percent level of significance.

Table 23.--How High Food Bill Would Go Before Husband Would Complain, Related to Income of Households with Husband Present.*

Husband's accounting of food expenditures	Total sample %	A Under $4,000 %	B $4,000-$7,000 %	C Over $7,000 %
Specific amount over which he would complain	45.7	55.3	42.1	40.0
Never asks for an accounting	30.2	17.0	30.8	45.0
Aware of prices and expenditures, he does not question costs	11.1	19.2	11.2	2.5
Would have to go very high	4.5	----	4.7	10.0
Husband not aware of amount spent on food	4.0	4.3	5.6	----
Does not know	2.5	2.1	2.8	2.5
No answer given	2.0	2.1	2.8	----

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between the husband's asking for an accounting and the income level at the two percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and B at the 10 percent level and between columns A and C at the one percent level of significance.

Comparison of the stages in the family life cycle with the interest of husbands in an accounting for food expenditures revealed a statistically significant difference (Table 24). Husbands without children at home appeared more aware of prices of food than those with children present. After the children were grown and had left home, the husband appeared to have a renewed interest in food expenditures. Some of this probably arose from shared marketing experiences. Homemakers with children under ten, reported that their husbands were more concerned about the specific amount of money spent on food, and fewer never asked for an accounting.

In over one-half of the households with only older children, either the husband never asked for an accounting or the homemakers felt it would have to go very high before he complained. By this time in the family life cycle, the husband had apparently accepted the homemaker's capabilities as food manager and left more decisions to her.

Husband's Part in Planning Food and Other Expenditures

The part of the husband in planning and other steps related to food expenditures is outlined in Table 25. Forty percent of the food purchase decisions were made by the wife independent of the husband since the husband was reported either to take no part in the decision or simply to put money into the checking account with little idea as to how it was to be spent. There was cooperative planning and shopping reported by 55 percent of the homemakers. The husband and wife either shopped together, a family decision determined the amount of money to be spent on food, or the husband did the shopping alone occasionally.

The part of the husband in planning and other steps was cross-tabulated with the size of the household, the stage in the family life cycle and the income level.

Table 24.--How High Food Bill Would Go Before Husband Would Complain, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle of Households with Husband Present.*

Husband's accounting of food expenditures	Total sample %	A Head under 40, no children %	B Younger children %	C Older children only %	D Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %
Specific amount over which he would complain	45.7	42.9	53.3	31.8	38.6
Never asks for an accounting	30.2	35.7	24.8	40.9	35.1
Aware of prices and expenditures, he does not question costs	11.1	21.4	6.7	4.5	19.3
Would have to go very high	4.5	----	4.8	13.6	1.8
Husband not aware of amount spent on food	4.0	----	3.8	9.2	1.8
No answer given	4.5	----	6.6	----	3.4
N=186	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between the husband's accounting of food expenditure and the stage of the family life cycle at the one percent level of significance for the total table.
A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and B at the one percent level of significance and between columns A and C at the two percent level of significance.

Table 25.--Husband's Part in Planning and Other Steps, Related to All Households and Households with Husband Present.

Husband's part in planning and other steps	All households %	Households with husband present %
None	23.0	29.3
No husband present	21.8	----
Gives wife defined amount which is determined together	5.0	6.5
Put money in account with little idea how much is spent for food	8.2	10.4
Shops with wife	22.5	28.9
Does grocery shopping alone occasionally or regularly	12.1	15.4
He determines amount--an independent decision of husband	2.3	3.0
Family session determines amount spent on food	3.1	4.0
Other	2.0	2.5
	100.0	100.0
N=257		

No statistically significant relationship was shown between the size of the household or the stage in the family life cycle and the part of the husband in planning and other steps associated with food expenditures. Although there were no statistically significant relationships shown, there were some differences indicated. Whether the decision was made independently by the wife, or a cooperative decision was made, was not related to the size of the household (Table 26). Also, when the head of the family was under 40, with no children, the homemakers made fewer independent decisions than was true later in the family life cycle (Table 27). The husband determined the amount to be spent in 14 percent of the households, compared to three percent of the total sample. Homemakers in households with only older children present, felt that they made more independent decisions.

Table 26.--Husband's Part in Planning and Other Steps, Related to Size of Households with Husband Present.*

Husband's part in planning	Total sample %	Two %	Three or four %	Five or more %
None	29.3	27.4	28.1	31.1
Gives wife defined amount which is determined together	6.5	3.3	6.3	10.8
Puts money in account or allowance with little idea how much is spent for food	10.4	12.9	9.4	9.5
Shops with wife	28.9	27.4	35.9	24.3
Does family shopping alone occasionally or regularly	15.4	19.4	12.5	13.5
He determines amount--an independent decision of the husband	3.0	3.2	3.1	2.7
Family session regularly determines amount; they shop together	4.0	3.2	1.6	6.7
Other	2.5	3.2	3.1	1.4
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=200				

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the husband's part in planning and the size of the household at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Table 27.--Husband's Part in Planning and Other Steps, Related to Stage of Family Life Cycle of Households with Husband Present.*

Husband's part in planning	Total sample %	Head under 40, no children %	Younger children %	Older children only %	Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %
None	29.3	21.4	31.1	31.8	26.3
Gives wife defined mount which is determined together	6.5	----	9.4	4.6	5.3
Puts money in account or allowance with little idea how much is spent for food	10.4	7.2	8.5	13.6	14.0
Shops with wife	28.9	21.4	29.2	27.3	31.6
Does family shopping alone occasionally or regularly	15.4	14.3	12.3	13.6	21.0
He determines amount--an independent decision of the husband	3.0	14.3	2.9	4.6	----
Family session regularly determines amount; they shop together	4.0	14.3	4.7	4.5	----
Other	2.5	7.1	1.9	----	1.8
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=185					

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the husband's part in planning and the stage of the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Comparison of the income level with the part of the husband in planning (Table 28) showed a statistically significant relationship to be present as the income level increased, the number of husbands and wives who jointly planned expenditures also increased. The number of independent decisions made by homemakers was higher for household with incomes over $7,000. Also with increasing income, more husbands put money into the checking account with little idea as to how it was to be spent.

One-half of the husbands in the middle and lower income families went shopping with their wives, and occasionally did the shopping alone. In the higher income only 20 percent participated in this way, compared to 44 percent of the total sample of households with husbands present.

Table 28.--Husband's Part in Planning and Other Steps, Related to Income of Households with Husbands Present.*

Husband's part in planning	Total sample %	A Under $4,000 %	B $4,000- $7,000 %	C Over $7,000 %
None	29.3	34.0	24.1	37.5
Gives wife defined amount which is determined together	6.5	2.1	7.4	12.5
Puts money in account or allowance with little idea how much is spent for food	10.4	4.3	11.1	17.5
Shops with wife	28.9	29.8	33.3	12.5
Does family shopping alone occasionally or regularly	15.4	19.1	16.7	7.5
He determines amount--an independent decision of the husband	3.0	----	3.7	5.0
Family session regularly determines amount, and they shop together	4.0	6.4	2.8	2.5
Other	2.5	4.3	.9	5.0
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=194

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between the husband's part in planning and the income at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and C and between columns B and C at the five percent level of significance.

CHAPTER III

FOOD MANAGEMENT AND SHOPPING BEHAVIOR

Planning and shopping constitute important segments of the total food purchase behavior. Once the basic amount of money to be spent for food is determined, the decision remains for the homemaker as to what planning and buying practices she will follow in spending the food dollar. This chapter is designed to define what actual steps constitute "planning" to the homemaker, her shopping practices and the time and place these practices are carried out.

FOOD MANAGEMENT BEHAVIOR

Use of a Shopping List

The entrance of the self-service supermarket has changed the number of store decisions and the amount of planning carried out by the homemaker prior to going to the store. Before going to the store, 41 percent of the homemakers said they had made a complete shopping list, 36 percent said they made a partial list and 22 percent used no list.[1] Three-quarters of the homemakers indicated that they had made some kind of list.

Table 29 shows the results from a representative sample of five studies which indicate a great variety in responses to questions pertaining to the use of a shopping list by homemakers. The bias of the sponsoring group may be another factor contributing to a wide range in the percentage

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[1]There was no mention made of whether the list made was a written or a mental list. It was assumed to be a written list since the study was conducted by personal interview, and any comments other than for a written list would have been noted.

Table 29.--Types of Shopping Lists Used, Five Independent Studies.

Study number*	Date of study	Area and food item studied	Consumers who used: Written lists %	Partially written lists %	Mental lists %
1	1954	U. S. -- all food	19	16	63
2	1949	U. S. -- all food	25	9	65
3	1948	Baltimore -- all food			
		Use regularly	45		
		Use occasionally	22		
		Never use list			33
4	1953	Louisville -- all food	65		
5	1955	Phoenix -- meat	52		
		College education	57		
		Grade school	47		
		Age over 60	59		
		Age under 40	49		

*The background of the studies is included in Appendix B.

of those reporting the use of lists. Those studies conducted by educational institutions reported a higher percentage figure for consumers using shopping lists (3, 4, 5). Those reported by industry, where there is interest in store decisions and impulse buying, indicated a lower percentage (1, 2).

In an attempt to determine the attitude of the homemakers toward shopping lists, in a three-city survey in Indiana, urban consumers were asked if "good homemakers" would keep a shopping list. The response indicated that in the minds of four-fifths of the homemakers, the use of a shopping list was desirable (19).

There was a statistically significant relationship between the completeness of the shopping lists and the age and education of the homemaker, and the stage in the family life cycle.

Homemakers who used a complete shopping list tended to be under 40 (Table 30), with a high school education and with children at home (Table 31). A smaller percentage of homemakers who had completed high school said that they went shopping without a list. The partial list was used more commonly by homemakers 40-65 years old with education beyond high school (Table 32), and who were married but with no children at home. A homemaker over 65 and single homemakers over 40) who had not completed high school more frequently indicated they used no shopping list. Older homemakers may have felt that if they did their own shopping, no list was needed because their shopping and eating habits were firmly established.

Extent of Menu Planning

The type of menu planning carried out by the homemakers before shopping can be divided into two categories: specific and flexible plans.

Table 30.--Homemakers' Use of Shopping List, Related to Age.*

List	Total sample %	A Under 40 %	B 40-65 %	C Over 65 %	No answer %
Make a complete list	41.2	45.5	32.9	46.5	37.5
Make partial list	36.2	33.9	47.1	25.6	12.5
Use no list	21.4	19.8	18.8	27.9	37.5
No answer	1.2	.8	1.2	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns B and C at the 10 percent level of significance.

However, a chi square test indicated no interdependence between the use of a shopping list and the age of the homemaker at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Table 31.--Homemakers' Use of Shopping List, Related to the Stage in Family Life Cycle.*

List	Total sample %	A Head under 40, no children %	B Younger children %	C Older children only %	D Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	E Single head over 40 %	No answer
Make a complete list	41.2	38.1	46.5	48.1	29.8	38.9	----
Make a partial list	36.2	42.8	31.6	33.4	52.6	22.2	50.0
Use no list	21.4	14.3	21.0	18.5	17.6	36.1	50.0
No answer	1.2	4.8	.9	----	----	2.8	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=257

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between the use of a shopping list and stage in the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns B and D at the five percent level and between columns D and E at the two percent level of significance.

Table 32.--Homemakers' Use of Shopping List, Related to Education.*

List	Total	A Less than high school %	B Completed high school %	C More than high school %	No answer
Make a complete list	41.2	31.4	53.3	37.2	35.3
Make a partial list	36.2	37.2	32.6	43.6	17.6
Use no list	21.4	28.6	14.1	19.2	41.2
No answer	1.2	2.8	----	----	5.9
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between the use of a shopping list and education at the five percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and B at the two percent level of significance.

The following lists the response of the homemakers to questions about the type of menu planning carried out before shopping:

	%
Plan menus ahead	31.8
Buy first and then plan meals around foods purchased	47.4
No planning-decide when they go to kitchen to prepare meals	4.6
Eat out--or have no part in decision	2.3
Combination of several methods	13.6
No answer	.3

The most common method of planning used was to buy the food first and then plan the meals around the foods purchased. Just how far the meals were planned ahead varied from specific menus for a few days in advance to deciding a specific menu long enough in advance to defrost food from the freezer. By planning menus ahead specifically and buying supplies accordingly (as 32 percent of the homemakers said they did) there was less left to chance. Some homemakers mentioned experiencing frustration and worry if they did not have menus set up in advance. For some, planning involved standing menus or generally repeating the same menu pattern each week. The homemakers using a combination of methods planned menus more specifically for entertaining or holidays, but used a more flexible plan at other times.

A chi square test indicated no statistically significant relationship between menu planning before shopping and the age of the homemaker, the education and the stage of the family life cycle of the household. Although there was no statistically significant difference, comparison of the stage in the family life cycle with the kind of menu planning before shopping (Table 33) indicated that the degree of family responsibility influenced the amount of flexibility in planning menus. Homemakers under 40 with no children and single homemakers over 40 reported less specific planning of menus, more meals eaten out, or had no part in the decision-making, compared with women with children at home. With younger children at home, homemakers tended to plan menus more specifically while more homemakers with older children only tended to buy the food

Table 33.--Homemakers' Menu Planning Before Shopping, Related to Stage in Family Life Cycle.*

Extent of menu planning	Total sample %	Head under 40, no children %	Younger children %	Older children only %	Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	Single head over 40 %	No answer %
Plan menus ahead	31.8	28.6	37.7	33.3	26.3	22.2	50.0
Buy first, then plan around food purchased	47.4	47.6	44.7	59.3	47.4	47.2	50.0
No planning, decide when they go to kitchen	4.6	9.5	3.5	----	3.5	8.4	----
Eat out	2.3	9.5	----	----	1.8	8.3	----
Combination of several methods	13.6	4.8	13.2	7.4	21.0	13.9	----
No answer	.3	----	.9	----	----	----	----
N=257	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the menu planning before shopping and stage in the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

first and then to plan menus around foods purchased. There were also indications that buying food first and then planning menus around the food purchased occurred with equal frequency for all educational levels (Table 34) and age groups (Table 35). Nearly half of these homemakers used this method.

The change from grocer-service to self-service supermarkets may be contributing to the homemakers' change from specifically planned menus to buying the food first and then planning the menus later around the food purchased. Programs for consumers should be evaluated from the standpoint of aiding homemakers to be more effective purchasing agents in making store decisions, and carrying through with planning of menus later in the home.

The Influence of Mass Media on Food Planning

Mass media are important means of contacting consumers with food information and of influencing them to buy. A great deal of information related to food is available in newspapers and magazines and to some extent through radio and television. Questions were asked of the respondents in order to learn the degree to which these medias influenced advanced planning before the shopping trip.

Readership of The State Journal Food Advertisements

When asked whether they read The State Journal[1] food ads before shopping, 81 percent of the homemakers said they had read the ads; 19 percent stated they had not read the ads. Included in the group which had read the ads were two percent of the sample who sometimes read the ads. More than four out of five homemakers read the ads more or less regularly each week.

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[1]The State Journal is Lansing's only daily newspaper.

Table 34.--Homemakers' Menu Planning Before Shopping, Related to Education.*

Extent of menu planning	Total sample %	Less than high school %	Completed high school %	More than high school %	No answer %
Plan menus ahead	31.8	28.6	36.9	32.1	17.6
Buy first, then plan around foods purchased	47.4	48.6	48.9	46.1	47.1
No planning, decide when they go to kitchen	4.6	5.7	1.2	6.4	5.9
Eat out	2.3	2.8	13.0	----	23.5
Combination of several methods	13.6	12.9	----	15.4	5.9
No answer	.3	1.4	----	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between menu planning before shopping and education at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Table 35.--Homemakers' Menu Planning Before Shopping, Related to Age.*

Extent of menu planning	Total sample %	Under 40 %	40-65 %	Over 65 %	No answer %
Plan menus ahead	31.8	34.7	32.9	23.3	25.0
Buy first, then plan around food purchased	47.4	46.3	49.4	46.5	50.0
No planning, decide when they go to kitchen	4.6	4.9	2.4	7.0	----
Eat out	2.3	1.7	1.2	2.3	25.0
Combination of several methods	13.6	11.6	14.1	20.9	----
No answer	.3	.8	----	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=257

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between menu planning before shopping and the age of the homemaker at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test between the educational level and the readership of the food ads (Table 36) showed a statistically significant relationship. As might be expected, the homemakers with the least education were less frequent newspaper readers. The largest group of readers of food ads were those who had completed high school.

There was a statistically significant relationship between the age of the homemakers and those reading and not reading The State Journal ads (Table 37). Homemakers over 65 made less use of the food ads before shopping trips than the younger homemakers. The older homemakers perhaps were more rigid in food habits and tended to have a more narrow outlook on food varieties, and less desire to take advantage of the specials.

Readership of The State Journal ads was statistically related to the stage of the family life cycle. Households with older children only, more frequently reported using the ads as a guide before shopping (Table 38). Single heads of households over 40 relied on the ads less often than others. In general, families who have, or have had children at home, utilized the food ads more consistently than households with no children.

Use of Coupons

In response to the question about the use of coupons, 39 percent said they redeemed coupons, 27 percent occasionally redeemed coupons, 11 percent redeemed coupons only if they already used the product,[1] and 23 percent never redeemed the coupons. Seventy-five percent of the homemakers said they redeemed coupons received through the mail at one time or another.

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[1]This may represent a conservative estimate, and may underrepresent the homemakers who actually use this method in deciding which coupons to redeem.

Table 36.--**Readership of The State Journal Food Ads, Related to Education.***

Response	Total sample %	A Less than high school %	B Completed high school %	C More than high school %	No answer %
Yes	81.4	71.4	87.0	84.6	76.5
No	18.4	27.2	13.0	15.4	23.5
No answer	.2	1.4	----	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=257

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between readership of The State Journal ads and education at the two percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and B at the five percent level and between columns A and C at the 10 percent level of significance.

Table 37.--Readership of The State Journal Food Ads, Related to Age.*

Response	Total Sample %	A Under 40 %	B 40-65 %	C Over 65 %	No answer %
Yes	81.4	83.5	85.9	69.8	62.5
No	18.4	15.7	14.1	30.2	37.5
No answer	.2	.8	----	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=257

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between readership of The State Journal ads and the age of the homemakers at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table. A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and C and between columns B and C at the five percent level of significance.

Table 38.--Readership of The State Journal Food Ads, Related to Stage in Family Life Cycle.*

Response	Total sample %	A Head under 40, no children %	B Younger children %	C Older children only %	D Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	E Single head over 40 %	No answer %
Yes	81.4	76.2	84.2	96.3	84.2	61.1	50.0
No	18.4	23.8	14.9	3.7	15.8	38.9	50.0
No answer	.2	----	.9	----	----	----	----
N=257	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between readership of The State Journal ads and stage in the family life cycle at the five percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns B and E and between columns C and E at the 10 percent level and between columns D and E at the two percent level of significance.

Readership of Magazines

Sixty-four percent of the homemakers reported the perusal of magazines or pamphlets before going to the store; 36 percent of the homemakers felt they did not use them as an aid in planning before shopping.

An analysis of the type of magazine read revealed that of 146 responses, more than eight out of ten homemakers used a nationally distributed magazine directed toward the homemaker. The distribution of the responses was as follows:

	%
Nationally distributed magazine directed toward the homemaker	66.4
Nationally distributed food chain magazine directed toward the homemaker	17.7
Nationally distributed magazine with emphasis other than food purchases and preparation	8.9
Other	2.0
Pamphets	5.0

Readership of Food Articles in the Newspapers

When the homemakers were asked about reading newspaper articles before shopping, 63 percent said they read the food marketing articles, 30 percent said they did not, and seven percent felt they sometimes read the food articles in the newspaper. Seven out of ten homemakers said they read the newspaper articles either regularly or occasionally. When asked to specify the articles read, 175 of the homemakers responded, but only one out of five was able to recall a particular article read. The following lists the distribution of the responses to the question about the specific articles homemakers read:

	%
Can name specific article	20.0
Can't name it, though read food marketing articles consistently	12.6
Don't read the same ones regularly	14.9
Read recipes only	13.7
Didn't name any food marketing articles	38.8

Of the 35 homemakers who listed a particular article read, 67 percent specified an article by the Consumer Marketing Agent[1] while 33 percent specified the food editor of The State Journal. The reasons given for not reading The State Journal articles centered around homemakers being too busy, the information and recipes not being geared to the needs of the family, or the homemakers were simply not interested in food or food preparation.

Influence of Weight Problems on Food Buying

It was hypothesized that there is a relationship between recognized weight problems in homemakers' families and their food purchase decisions. To an individual who recognizes a weight problem, whether it is overweight, underweight, or an imagined problem, food frequently takes on added significance. Food might be used as a crutch, or as a defense mechanism to avoid problem (unpleasant) situations. A discussion follows of the influence of a couples' weight problems upon the respective homemaker's approach to decisions concerning goals, menu planning, food buying and weight control.

Further study is needed in order to understand the relationship between weight problems and food buying. The data was severely limited because the information could be broken down into only two meaningful categories. Consideration should also be given to homemakers who believe a weight problem existed when in reality none was present. In other situations respondents thought no weight problems were present, but the interviewer observed an obvious weight problem (whether it was overweight or underweight).

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[1] A staff member of the Cooperative Extension Service, who has a weekly column under her byline in The State Journal.

Forty-three percent of the 257 homemakers thought that either they or their husbands had a weight problem while 48 percent of the homemakers felt there was no existing weight problem. Eighteen percent of the homemakers recognized a weight problem in their husband; the percentage was based on the 202 households which included a husband and wife. As expected, homemakers were more conscious of weight abnormalities in themselves than in their husbands. Forty-three percent of the homemakers recognized weight problems in themselves while 18 percent of the homemakers recognized weight problems in their husbands.

Homemakers, however, felt that a weight problem in the family had little effect on the food budget. Eighty-seven percent of the homemakers recognized no change in the food budget. Of the small number who considered it had an effect on the budget, more felt it increased costs rather than decreased them. The presence or the lack of a weight problem was not significantly related to the per capita expenditure for food (Table 39).

Table 39.--Homemakers' Weekly Per Capita Expenditure for Food, Related to Weight Problems.*

Expenditure	Recognized weight problem %	No recognized weight problem %	No Answer %
Under $6.00	34.1	33.9	50.0
$6.00 - 8.50	34.1	33.0	----
Over $8.50	29.5	33.1	50.0
No answer	2.3	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257			

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the per capita expenditure for food and weight problems at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

No statistically significant differences were apparent between homemakers with recognized weight problems in the couple and those with no recognized weight problems in respect to advance menu planning, their approach to the original food expenditure decision, goals while good shopping or thoughts while shopping.[1]

Even though there was no statistically significant relationship, there were some indications that homemakers without weight problems tended to place more emphasis on buying what they wanted without regard to cost than did women with weight problems (Table 40). Those who had a weight problem more commonly reported that they paid other bills first and used the remaining money for food. There may be some fiction in some of these responses because people with weight problems thought food was very important to them, but were unwilling to admit it to others, or even to themselves.

There was also some indication, although there was no statistically significant relationship shown, that homemakers with recognized problems tended to plan specific menus before going to the store, more than homemakers without a weight problem (Table 41). In addition, they placed less emphasis on buying first and then planning around the foods purchased than others.

Some evidence was also apparent that the thoughts of homemakers with a recognized weight problem in the family, while pushing the food cart through the store, centered more around food and the actual purchase of food in the store (Table 42). Fewer homemakers with weight problems were distracted by other persons in the store, by children or by the condition within the store itself; more of them expressed interest in prices, quality and the future enjoyment of the food. The goals while shopping

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[1]Homemakers' goals while shopping, and thoughts while shopping will be referred to in Chapter IV. The relationship to weight problems was discussed here for convenience.

*Table 40.--Homemakers' Original Food Expenditure Decision, Related to Weight Problems.**

Table 40.--Homemakers' Original Food Expenditure Decision, Related to Weight Problems.*

Original decision	Total sample %	Recognized weight problem %	No recognized weight problem %	No answer %
Trial and error	26.1	25.6	27.4	----
Buy what food they want; cost is not a limiting factor	25.7	21.7	29.8	25.0
Budget by percentage of income	12.4	13.9	11.3	----
Pay other bills first, use what is left for food	12.1	14.7	8.9	----
Buy what they want, but are not extravagant	7.0	7.0	7.3	----
Felt never made original decision	7.8	8.5	6.5	25.0
Pay food bills first, other bills later	5.8	4.7	7.2	25.0
Other decisions	3.1	3.9	1.6	25.0
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257				

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the original food expenditure decision and weight problems at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Table 41.--Homemakers' Menu Planning Before Shopping, Related to Weight Problems.*

Extent of menu planning	Total sample %	Recognized weight problem %	No recognized weight problem %	No answer %
Plan menus ahead	31.8	37.2	27.5	25.0
Buy first, then plan around food purchased	47.4	40.3	55.6	----
No planning, decide when they go to the kitchen	4.6	5.4	3.2	----
Eat out, or have no part in the decision	2.3	1.6	1.6	50.0
Combination of several methods	13.6	15.5	11.3	25.0
No answer	.3	----	.8	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257				

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between menu planning before shopping and weight problems at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Table 42.--Homemakers' Thoughts as They Push Cart Through the Store, Related to Weight Problems.*

Thoughts	Total sample %	Recognized weight problem %	No recognized weight problem %	No answer %
Prices	25.7	28.7	21.8	----
Food quality, list, menu planning	44.7	44.2	40.3	50.0
Children, getting finished, others in store, habit	39.7	29.4	43.5	25.0
Conditions within the store	7.4	6.2	8.9	----
Future enjoyment	4.7	5.4	4.0	----
Other	3.9	4.6	2.4	----
No answer	.8	.8	.8	25.0

N=257

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between homemakers' thoughts while shopping and weight problems at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

of those homemakers who thought they had a weight problem showed these homemakers to have less compulsion to stay within the budget, or to get the best value from money spent on food (Table 43), even though there was no statistically significant difference shown.

Authorities disagree as to the method they consider best for attaining a desirable weight level. The most logical method (though the most difficult) is to re-educate the individual to establish food habits which include three nutritionally balanced meals each day, and a reduction of the amount of high carbohydrate and high fat foods. The test of successful weight reduction is not the initial loss of weight, but maintenance of optimum weight. The majority of the homemakers were aware of the most appropriate way to correct weight problems by changing food habits, rather than aids such as pills and reducing machines. The use of will power and solving of emotional problems so that weight loss would be easier, was also mentioned. However, many said they resorted to other devices when their will power did not stand up. Because weight reduction is difficult to achieve, millions of dollars are spent each year on devices and pills designed to quicken weight reduction, although the directions for the products indicate that they should be accompanied by a diet. Thirteen percent of the homemakers reported they used pills to affect their appetite; less than one percent stated they used reducing machines.

Expenditures for Meals Eaten Away from Home

Expenditures for Lunches Eaten Away from Home

The percentage distribution of families spending money for lunches away from home per week was as follows:

	%
None	60.7
Less than $1.00	1.9
$1.00 - 4.99	20.2
$5.00 - 10.00	12.9
Over $10.00	1.9
No answer	2.4

Table 43.--Homemakers' Goals as They Relate to Food, Related to Weight Problems.*

Goals	Total sample %	Recognized weight problem %	No recognized weight problem %	No answer %
Satisfying appealing meals with variety to keep family happy	28.8	27.1	28.2	25.0
Well-balanced nourishing meals	36.6	36.4	36.3	25.0
Stay within budget, get most value from money	31.1	27.9	35.3	----
Have enough food for planned period	12.8	14.7	11.3	----
Matter of fact, to keep myself fed	11.3	10.8	11.3	25.0
No goals	2.3	.8	3.2	25.0
Other	5.4	5.4	3.2	----

N=257

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between consumers' goals while shopping and weight problems at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Sixty percent of the sample responded that their family spent no money for lunches in the week prior to the study. Three percent (six of the total sample) of the group that spent no money for lunches indicated that they ate lunches away from home, but were on expense accounts, or received meals as a fringe benefit. Of the 107 who ate lunches away from home, 51 percent paid \$1.00 to 4.99 per week, whereas 33 percent paid \$5.00 to 10.00 per week.

The manner in which those eating lunches away from home reflected this allotment in their over-all expenditure plan was:

	%
Part of food budget	15.0
Personal allowance	45.8
Another part of budget other than personal allowance or food budget	3.7
Expense account or fringe benefit	13.1
No special arrangement	14.9
No answer	7.5

Of those eating lunch out, almost two-thirds of the sample considered it as part of the planned spending of the family, with 46 percent of the total including it in the personal allowance. Only 15 percent considered it as part of the food budget.

Expenditures for Dinners Eaten Away from Home

Dinners eaten away from home present a somewhat different situation and approach to planning on the part of the family. The noon meal is eaten out regularly only by the labor force while dinner more frequently represents a social occasion where the husband and wife go out together. The following shows the percentage distribution of amount of money spent for dinners per week away from home by the total sample:

	%
None	59.9
Less than \$1.00	7.8
\$1.00 - 5.00	19.5
\$5.01 - 10.00	4.3
\$10.01 - 15.00	1.9
Indefinite amounts	5.4
No answer	1.2

Sixty percent said they ate no dinners out. Of the 100 who said they ate out, one-half spent an average of $1.00 - 5.00 per week and 70 percent spent $5.00 or less per week.

Families eating dinner out were less specific in planning the amount of money spent than those eating lunch away from home. Forty-nine percent of the families used no specific arrangement or an indefinite arrangement for the amount of money spent for dinners eaten out. Forty percent included the expenditure as part of their planned spending as follows: part of the food budget, 17 percent; personal allowance, 11 percent; and entertainment, 12 percent. Nine percent of the group who ate dinners away from home, received the meals as a fringe benefit or were on an expense account.

Expenditure for lunches averaged higher than for dinners eaten away from home. Of the group eating lunch out, 84 percent spent $1.00 - 10.00 per week whereas for dinners 70 percent averaged less than $5.00 per week. It is logical to expect that more planning for lunch expenditures was the result of the larger amount spent, and the regularity with which it occurs. Lunches are essential expenses which can be, and are planned for by most of the households. Dinners eaten out are less essential, thus they are more flexible and occur as circumstances of the family permit.

The Importance of Pre-Planning

The steps involved in planning for food expenditures and the relative importance of them vary with the needs of the family and the number of resources available to the homemaker. When the homemakers were asked "Is pre-planning important to you?" seven out of ten homemakers said it was important. Three percent stated that the desirability of pre-planning depended upon the number of payless days, whether company was expected, and the amount of experience the homemaker had. A few homemakers said pre-planning was more essential for married women. Twenty-eight percent of the homemakers considered that pre-planning was not important to them.

There was a statistically significant relationship shown between the importance of pre-planning and those households with income under $4,000 and those over $4,000 (Table 44). The low income families regarded as less important the job of pre-planning than the average of the sample, while the middle income group considered it most important.

Table 44.--Importance of Pre-planning to Homemakers, Related to Income.*

Importance	Total Sample %	A Under $4,000 %	B $4,000-$7,000 %	C Over $7,000 %	No answer %
Yes	68.1	57.5	75.4	70.4	62.5
No	27.6	32.2	24.6	27.3	25.0
Depends	2.7	2.3	----	2.3	12.5
No answer	1.6	8.0	----	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and B at the 10 percent level of significance.
However, a chi square test indicated no interdependence between the importance of pre-planning and income at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

No statistically significant relationship existed between the importance of pre-planning and the homemakers under 40 and those over 40 years old (Table 45). There were some indications, however, that over the age of 65, homemakers considered pre-planning less important. Older homemakers would be more likely not to have a family at home and have had more experience in managing expenditures, so they would place less emphasis in this area.

Table 45.--Importance of Pre-planning to Homemakers, Related to Age.*

Importance	Total sample %	Under 40 %	40-65 %	Over 65 %	No answer %
Yes	68.1	68.6	72.9	60.5	50.0
No	27.6	25.6	25.9	32.5	50.0
Depends	2.7	3.3	----	----	----
No answer	1.6	2.5	1.2	7.0	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the importance of pre-planning and the age of the homemaker at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Even though there was no statistically significant differences shown between the importance of pre-planning and the stages in the family life cycle (Table 46) for the whole table, there was a significant relationship between families with children at home placing more emphasis on the importance of pre-planning than single heads of families over 40 and the average of the whole sample. Homemakers in the advanced stages of the family life cycle considered it less essential than other groups, perhaps because of established food buying habits and experience.

The Consistency of Pre-planning

More homemakers felt that pre-planning was important than did homemakers who felt they carried out the process of pre-planning consistently. In response to the question, "Do you pre-plan consistently?" 57 percent of the homemakers felt they frequently did pre-plan while

Table 46.--Importance of Pre-planning to Homemaker, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle.*

Importance	Total sample %	A Head under 40, no children %	B Younger children %	C Older children only %	D Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	E Single head over 40 %	No answer %
Yes	68.1	66.7	72.8	74.1	63.1	58.3	50.0
No	27.6	33.3	21.9	22.2	31.6	38.9	50.0
Depends	2.7	----	3.5	----	----	----	----
No answer	1.6	----	1.8	3.7	5.3	2.8	----
N=257	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns B and E at the two percent level of significance.

However, a chi square test indicated no interdependence between the importance of pre-planning and the stages in the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

68 percent of the homemakers felt it was important. Thirty-six percent of the homemakers stated that pre-planning was not done frequently and seven percent did not respond to the question.

There was no statistically significant difference between the age of the homemakers or income level and the frequency of pre-planning. Although there was no statistically significant relationship, there were some indications that a smaller proportion of the older homemakers considered pre-planning important to them. However, a higher proportion of those older homemakers who considered it important said they followed through by frequently pre-planning (Table 47). Their actual practices were closer to their values than other age groups.

Table 47.--Homemakers' Consistency of Pre-planning, Related to Age.*

Consistency of pre-planning	Total sample %	Under 40 %	40-65 %	Over 65 %	No answer %
Yes	56.8	58.7	57.6	53.5	37.5
No	36.2	30.6	40.0	39.5	62.5
No answer	7.0	10.7	2.4	7.0	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the consistency of pre-planning and age of the homemaker at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Also there were some indications that as income increased, the difference between the importance of pre-planning and the frequency with which they carried it out increased (Table 48). Homemakers with higher incomes held pre-planning to be more important to them than did homemakers with low incomes, but they did not follow through by pre-planning as frequently as low income families. This may have been related to need.

Table 48.--Homemakers' Consistency of Pre-planning, Related to Income.*

Consistency of pre-planning	Total sample %	Under $4,000 %	$4,000-$7,000 %	Over $7,000 %	No Answer %
Yes	56.8	55.2	61.9	52.3	50.0
No	36.2	35.6	33.0	40.9	37.5
No answer	7.0	9.2	5.1	6.8	12.5
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N= 257					

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the consistency of pre-planning and income at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

There was a statistically significant relationship between the consistency of pre-planning and the stages in the family life cycle (Table 49). As might be expected, the homemakers with young children pre-plan the most frequently. They would tend to have more limited resources in the form of time, money and place so that pre-planning takes on a more important role. Single homemakers over 40 showed the closest correlation, and households with only older children showed the least correlation between the importance of pre-planning and the homemakers following through by frequently pre-planning. In the more advanced stages of the family life cycle, more homemakers stated they definitely did not plan consistently.

In general, the younger homemakers and the homemakers in the middle income group with younger children at home did the most frequent pre-planning. Older homemakers (over 40 years old) in higher income families with no children at home or single homemakers reported the least pre-planning. The lower income, and the older homemakers considered pre-planning less essential, but a higher proportion of those

Table 49.--Homemakers' Consistency of Pre-planning, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle.*

Consistency of pre-planning	Total sample %	A Head under 40, no children %	B Younger children %	C Older children only %	D Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	E Single head over 40 %	No answer %
Yes	56.8	57.1	62.3	55.6	50.9	52.8	----
No	36.2	38.1	27.2	40.7	42.1	47.2	100.0
No answer	7.0	4.8	10.5	3.7	7.0	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=257

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the consistency of pre-planning and the stage in the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns B and D and between columns B and E at the 10 percent level of significance.

homemakers who considered it important said they followed through by frequently pre-planning.

The Enjoyment of Pre-planning

The enjoyment the homemaker derives from the job of pre-planning was compared with the importance of pre-planning and the regularity with which it was carried out. In response to the question, "Do you enjoy pre-planning?" 63 percent of the homemakers enjoyed pre-planning and felt it was particularly beneficial when entertaining or for special occasions, because it saved time and confusion at the last minute. The reasons that 25 percent of the homemakers gave for not enjoying pre-planning centered around the repetition and the monotony involved. Nine percent of the homemakers said they sometimes did and sometimes did not enjoy pre-planning.

No statistically significant relationship existed between the age of the homemaker and the income of the homemakers who said they enjoyed pre-planning and those who did not enjoy it. There was a statistically significant difference between the stages in the family life cycle and enjoyment of pre-planning. Proportionately more homemakers with only older children reported they enjoyed pre-planning than the sample as a whole (Table 50). A higher percentage of homemakers in this stage of the family life cycle considered pre-planning important to them, but they also stated they carried through by pre-planning less frequently. Although there was no statistically significant difference shown, there was some indication that homemakers between 40-65 years old enjoyed pre-planning more than other age groups (Table 51). Also, homemakers in this age group made more food purchase decisions independent of the husbands.

Table 50.--Homemakers' Enjoyment of Pre-planning, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle.*

		A	B	C	D	E	
Enjoyment of pre-planning	Total sample %	Head under 40, no children %	Younger children %	Older children only %	Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	Single head over 40 %	No answer %
Yes	62.6	57.1	59.6	85.2	64.9	55.6	50.0
No	25.3	33.4	24.6	11.1	22.8	36.1	50.0
Yes and no	8.6	9.5	10.5	----	8.8	8.3	----
No answer	3.5	----	5.3	3.7	3.5	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=257

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and C and between columns C and E at the five percent level or better and between columns B and C at the 10 percent level of significance. However, a chi square test indicated no interdependence between the enjoyment of pre-planning and the stage in the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Table 51.--Homemakers' Enjoyment of Pre-planning, Related to Age of Homemaker.*

Enjoyment of pre-planning	Total sample %	Under 40 %	40-65 %	Over 65 %	No answer %
Yes	62.6	59.5	71.8	58.1	50.0
No	25.3	25.6	20.0	27.9	50.0
Yes and no	8.6	10.8	4.7	11.6	----
No answer	3.5	4.1	3.5	2.4	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between enjoyment of pre-planning and age of homemaker at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

FOOD SHOPPING BEHAVIOR

The Frequency of Shopping

The once-a-week shopping pattern was the most common one practiced among the homemakers, but the range varied from once a month to six times a week. The responses to the question, "How often do you shop for food?" were as follows:

	%
Less than once per week	9.3
One time per week	63.0
Two to three times per week	15.2
Four or more times per week	8.6
Irregular pattern	2.7
Other	1.2

More adequate storage space in homes and especially refrigeration has made it less essential for the homemaker to go shopping as frequently as it was 25 years ago.

The reasons homemakers gave to the question, "How do you decide when you will go to the store?" included:

	%
Limiting factors in family	
Pay day	15.2
Convenience (a)	34.2
Habit	4.7
Food supply condition in home	19.4
Less crowded	3.5
Factors of which food industry has control	
Double stamp day or specials	27.6
Selection better	4.3
Other	8.2
No particular reason	7.8

The homemakers listed 327 reasons why they chose a particular day for shopping. Seventy-seven percent mentioned that limiting factors of the family determined the shopping day while 32 percent felt that institutional factors influenced the choice of the day.

When asked why they preferred that particular time span, 279 responses were listed by homemakers. The reasons homemakers stated included pay day, 15.6 percent; convenience, 27.2 percent; specials or double stamp day, 10.1 percent; easy span for supplies and menu planning, 20.2 percent; pleasurable outing, 6.0 percent; no particular reason, 0.2 percent; and other reasons not itemized, 10.3 percent.

The Place Where the Buying Decision Was Made and What Influenced This Decision

The homemakers were asked "How many of the items you buy at the store would you say you decided upon before you got there?" They responded as follows:

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[a]Convenience included day off from work, transportation available, or someone to care for the children.

	%
All of them at home	20.2
Most of them at home	52.5
Some of them at home (50 percent or less)	23.0
None	2.0
No answer given	2.3

Seventy-three percent of the homemakers said they made half or more of the buying decisions before entering the store while 25 percent made half or more of the buying decisions in the store itself without previous planning. Homemakers in this study believe they plan purchases before shopping more than was indicated by other studies (8, 23).

The homemakers realized they do change their plans, as shown by 53 percent of the homemakers affirmatively answering the question, "Do you frequently not buy some of the things you planned to?" Forty-three percent felt they did not vary from the planned list, while three percent said they did not plan ahead.

The reason given for changing plans, by the 135 homemakers who said they did vary from planned purchases, included:

	%
Substitution of food	53.3
Price was too high	26.7
Quality was not up to standard	38.5
Money didn't stretch	5.9
Decided really didn't need items	4.4
Forgot to purchase them	8.0
Other	4.4

The homemakers who chose to substitute food items, most frequently did so because they found a product they liked better, or the store was out of the items they wanted. A number of homemakers felt the quality factor changed their decision to buy. This may have also been the reason for the substitution of foods.

In addition to omitting purchases originally planned, many of the homemakers frequently bought more than they had planned. In response to the question, "Do you frequently buy more items than you anticipated at the store?" 13 percent of the homemakers felt they did buy more than planned. Fifty-nine percent of the homemakers planned on supplementing their original list once they arrived at the store; 24 percent indicated they never bought more items than anticipated, and three percent said they did not plan ahead. The reason homemakers give for increasing their purchases included the influence of displays, and the desire to make the final decision in the store on the basis of the appearance, quality, and the price of the products. Also many of the homemakers bought extras when they were attracted to something that looked good, or which their family particularly liked.

While the retailer looks upon the amount of impulse buying as a measure of the success of point-of-sale promotion, the consumer at the same time uses a well-arranged display of goods as a device to help in planning. The trend toward supermarkets and one-stop shopping indicated that the consumer shopping trend may be away from planning at home, even though a high percentage of homemakers have reported in their studies that keeping a shopping list was an indication of good homemaking (19).

The point-of-sales promotion positively affected more than one-half of the homemakers. When asked whether displays in the store influenced their food purchases, 54 percent of the homemakers felt it affected their purchases while 45 percent indicated it did not influence them. A number of the homemakers said they were influenced only when items were on sale or when the display acted as a reminder of items they had forgotten to purchase. If the homemakers were planning to buy the product anyway, they mentioned sometimes being influenced to buy a different brand or new form. Some homemakers "relied on the displays to help decide what they really wanted."

Homemakers' readiness to use the many new products on the market indicated a willingness to accept change in the hope of achieving satisfactory results and saving time by purchasing prepared foods. In response to the question, "Do you use new food products?" 65 percent of the homemakers indicated they used new products, 18 percent did not use new products on the market, and 17 percent sometimes used them.

Of the 165 homemakers who said they used new foods, many different reasons were given for trying recently introduced food products, including the following:

	%
Enjoy experimenting to see if they can obtain better price and quality than current purchases	30.9
Depend on mass promotion to help make decision	10.3
Time limited, so try new products to attempt to same time	4.8
Curiosity	6.0
Recommendation of friend, relative	7.2
Other	5.4
No reason given	40.6

One out of ten homemakers recognized that mass promotion such as displays, advertising, television commercials, and sample products are influencial in making their decisions. Forty percent of the homemakers did not specify any reason for trying the new products on the market.

A Comparison of Homemakers' Buying Habits with Those of Their Friends

A comparison of homemakers' buying habits with those of their friends indicated that there are more differences than similarities. Almost one-third of the homemakers did not know about their friends' buying habits. They commented about exchanging recipes and discussing the quality of food with others, but generally did not discuss the methods of buying. When homemakers were asked "From what you know of your friends' buying habits for food, how do they differ from yours or how are they the same?" they responded as follows:

	%
Approximately the same	
On par with income, age or occupational group	18.3
Use same quality and type food	5.0
Other	5.0
Different in respect to	
Planning	10.1
Buying	19.8
Eating habits	19.8
Amount spent for food	25.7
Family size	3.5
Other areas	5.4
Do not discuss matter with friends	30.7

Of the 369 responses given by homemakers, the largest proportion mentioned that experience, circumstances, and the value system of the homemaker appeared to have more bearing upon their buying habits than the influence of friends. The percentage distribution was computed on the basis of the proportion of homemakers indicating buying habits in each area. Whether meals are eaten out or at home, or whether members are on a diet indirectly affect the buying habits. The homemakers believed the frequency of shopping, the amount of money spent, store loyalty, whether or not to follow specials, and the manner of shopping differed considerably between them and their friends. Different planning practices also evolved different buying practices.

Homemakers' Use of New Recipes

Homemakers' interest in food preparation and the use of new recipes indicates a desire to lend variety to meals, and it is one area of homemaking which provides an opportunity to satisfy a creative outlet.

When asked when they last used a new recipe homemakers responded as follows:

	%
This week	17.9
Last week	20.2
Within last 1-$\frac{1}{2}$ months	26.1
Over two months ago	16.7
Never	4.3
Can't remember	12.9
No answer	1.9

Thirty-eight percent of the homemakers had tried new recipes in the last two weeks while almost two-thirds of them used one in the last month and one-half.

Homemakers reported the sources of these new receipes included:

	%
Newspaper	28.8
Radio, television	8.9
Magazines and pamphlets	26.8
Recipe on the package	5.1
Cookbook	20.2
Friend or relative	40.5
Can't remember	8.2
Others	2.3

Of the 362 responses, the major single source mentioned by homemakers was exchange of recipes with a friend or relative. This seems to show that homemakers are interested in recipes which are proved successful. The mass media of radio, newspaper, and magazines constituted the largest source. Two-thirds of the homemakers mentioned this as sources of recipes.

Of the 139 responses to the question about the type of new recipes used, homemakers ranked desserts first with 45 percent of the homemakers indicating use of new recipes of this type; 31 percent of the homemakers mentioned new meat dish or casserole recipes. Thirteen percent of the homemakers could not remember the type of new recipe last used, seven percent used salad recipes, and four percent said they used bread recipes.

The chi square test between the age of the homemaker and the stage in the family life cycle, and the use of new recipes revealed no statistically significant differences. Although no statistically significant relationships existed, there were some indications that as the age of the homemaker increased, fewer homemakers tried new recipes (Table 52).

Also, the data revealed that as families advanced through the family life cycle, the proportion of homemakers using new recipes declined (Table 53). Heads of households under 40 with no children said they used the most new recipes in the week previous to the interview. Young homemakers without children presumably are employed outside the home, are looking for time-saving recipes, and do not have firmly established habits. They have more desire to experiment with foods and recipes, and are primarily concerned with providing satisfying meals with variety for their husbands.

Table 52.--The Last Time Homemakers' Tried New Recipe, Related to Age.*

Recipe last tried	Total sample %	Under 40 %	40-65 %	Over 65 %	No answer %
This week	17.9	20.7	10.6	23.3	25.0
Last week	20.2	20.7	24.7	14.0	----
Within $1\frac{1}{2}$ months	26.1	27.3	29.4	20.9	----
Over two months ago	16.7	17.3	20.0	9.3	12.5
Never	4.3	2.5	2.4	11.6	12.5
Can't remember	12.0	9.1	12.9	18.6	37.5
Other	1.9	2.4	----	2.3	12.5
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257					

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between homemakers' use of new recipes and the age of the homemakers at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Table 53.--The Last Time Homemakers Tried New Recipe, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle.*

Recipe last tried	Total sample %	Head under 40, no children %	Younger children %	Older children only %	Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	Single head over 40 %	No answer %
This week	17.9	28.6	17.6	14.8	15.8	19.4	----
Last week	20.2	14.3	22.8	14.8	22.8	16.7	----
Within $1\frac{1}{2}$ months	26.1	23.8	28.9	33.3	22.8	22.2	----
Over two months ago	16.7	14.3	17.5	22.3	17.5	5.6	50.0
Never	4.2	----	3.5	----	8.8	5.5	----
Can't remember	12.0	9.5	7.9	14.8	12.3	27.8	50.0
Other	1.9	9.5	1.8	----	----	2.8	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

N=257

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the homemakers' use of new recipes and the stage of the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

CHAPTER IV

CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD FOOD MANAGEMENT

The inventions and mass production of the 20th Century have revolutionized the American woman's life and thinking. Homemakers today have a broader outlook on life than 50 years ago. Women are interested in a greater variety of items that mass production has brought and most of these types of goods are within the price range of most Americans. Tastes and interests are more cosmopolitan, and more sophisticated than in our grandmother's day when the tastes and outlooks were limited almost to the confines of the community. A woman in 1900 had little way of knowing what other women outside of her community were doing or thinking, for the means of communication were very limited. Today is the age of the newspaper and magazine reading in which women are relatively well informed. Women are more interested in news about everything--products, services, and ways of living--all of which influence their attitude toward their roles as consumers.

The role of women has changed in our society. The Industrial Revolution has changed away from the orientation toward the family. Women obtain ways of satisfying needs through commercial means rather than through home production. By receiving these satisfactions from an outside source, there are many alternative products on the market for homemakers to choose from in order to receive these satisfactions. The mass media are a contributing influence in persuading homemakers to buy foods which will provide satisfaction for the family.

Women have tremendous interest in their homes and homemaking, but not equal enthusiasm for all the tasks involved. The more creative and social the job is, the more enthusiastic women are about doing it. On the creative side of the homemaking, food ranks as the number one interest with women (25).

Consumers' attitude toward food management is a reflection of their interest in the well-being of the family, and the effect upon the family of planning, buying and preparation of food. Their thoughts turn to food as a primary means of fulfilling their responsibilities to their family.

Consumers' Goals as They Relate to Food

A woman's interest in food is usually related to her interest in her family. Food plays an important role toward homemakers' achieving their goals for their family. When asked what their goals were in their food shopping, 29 percent of the homemakers stated that their primary goal was the preparation and serving of satisfying, appealing meals, with variety, as an essential step in keeping the family healthy and happy. A large portion of the homemakers (37 percent) listed well-balanced nourishing meals and the health of the family and staying within the budget (31 percent) as their major goals. However, there was an underlying tone of the ultimate desire to keep the family healthy, well-fed and satisfied. One working housewife felt that since her work kept her away from home so much of the time, she would feel really guilty about neglecting the children if they didn't have the things to eat that were good for them. Food and approach to food planning for most women take on added meaning beyond the necessity of just keeping fed. Food helps set the tone of the family living and, as such, has a considerable number of emotional ties.

To have enough food for the planned period was the goal of 13 percent of the homemakers, three percent stated no goals, while 12 percent of the sample of homemakers felt their primary goal was a matter of fact attitude to keep themselves fed. The percentage distribution of the

330 responses was based upon the proportion of the 257 homemakers indicating goals in each area.

The goals of the homemakers were cross-tabulated with the income level and the stage in the family life cycle. A statistically significant relationship was shown between the level of income and goals of the homemakers. It indicated that in higher income families homemakers placed more emphasis on providing appealing meals to keep the family happy (Table 54). The desire to stay within a budget and to obtain the most from money spent, decreased as income rose.

The middle income households more frequently mentioned the goal of having well-balanced nourishing meals and the health of the family. Perhaps this was related to the number of families with children in this income group. With increases in the income level, households appeared to place more emphasis on the psychological aspects of food rather than the reality of getting enough food to eat.

Even though the chi square test revealed no statistically significant relationship between the goals of homemakers and the stage of the family life cycle, there were some indications of differences in families where the head was under 40 with no children (Table 55). These homemakers reported the aesthetic satisfaction received from appealing meals more important, and nutrition less important than in other stages of the family life cycle. This represents the period of formation of the family where the homemakers are deeply concerned about providing pleasing and satisfying meals.

Families with children at home were also interested in satisfying meals. However, they are more limited financially and tended to express their goals with more concern for nutritionally balanced meals, and staying within the budget. Older homemakers with no children at home related their goals in terms of a matter of fact attitude of keeping fed, more than other stages of the family life cycle.

Table 54.--Goals of Homemakers as They Relate to Food, Related to Income.*

Homemakers' goals	Total sample %	A Under $4,000 %	B $4,000- $7,000 %	C Over $7,000 %	No answer %
Satisfying, appealing meals with variety to keep family happy	28.8	23.0	30.5	38.6	25.0
Well balanced, nourishing meals, health of family	36.6	27.6	44.9	29.5	37.5
Stay within budget, to get the most from money spent	31.1	37.9	29.7	20.4	37.5
Have enough food for planned period	12.8	10.3	12.7	20.4	----
Matter of fact, to keep myself fed	11.3	16.1	5.9	13.6	25.0
Other	5.4	8.0	4.2	4.5	----
No goals	2.3	4.6	.8	----	12.5

N=257

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between the goals of homemakers and income level at the five percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and B at the five percent level of significance.

Table 55.--Goals of Homemakers as They Relate to Food, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle.*

Homemakers' goals	Total sample %	Head under 40, no children %	Younger children %	Older children only %	Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	Single head over 40 %	No answer %
Satisfying, appealing meals with variety to keep family happy	28.8	47.6	28.1	18.5	29.8	27.8	33.3
Well balanced, nourish- meals, health of family	36.6	19.0	43.8	40.7	24.6	38.9	----
Stay within budget, to get most from money spent	31.1	28.6	34.2	40.7	28.1	14.0	----
Have enough food for planned period	12.8	14.3	12.3	3.7	15.8	10.5	----
Matter of fact, to keep myself fed	11.3	9.5	7.9	3.7	14.0	19.4	66.7
Other	5.4	9.5	2.7	----	7.0	5.6	----
No goals	2.3	4.8	----	3.7	3.5	5.6	----
N=257							

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the goals of homemakers and stage of the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

Consumers' Interest in Economizing

The homemakers were asked to report the specific economy measures they used. Eighty-five percent of the economy measures reported were related to food and 15 percent to non-food economies, as in the following list:

	%
Use of a less expensive alternative	29.2
Plan and shop on the basis of specials and seasonality of food	83.3
Use of freezer	15.6
Cutting waste	23.7
Do own preparation and canning	45.1
Use of meat and food stretching devices	12.8
None related to food	11.3
Using direct rather than indirect money income of family for services	20.2
Cut and conserve on expenditures	10.9
Take advantage of sales and bargains	5.4
Other (food and non-food)	7.8

Of the 682 economy measures reported by the 257 homemakers, the most frequently mentioned was planning and shopping on the basis of specials and seasonality of food. The categories of economy measures were not clear-cut. One classification shaded into another. Those homemakers who bought and planned on the basis of specials and seasonality of foods particularly referred to taking advantage of specials, buying foods in season, keeping supplies up or buying in quantity, use of coupons, and careful planning and shopping. Another method of economy practiced was the homemaker's own preparation and canning, home gardening and fishing. A number of homemakers used a less expensive alternative such as the cheaper cuts of meat, elimination of fancy foods, cheaper canned goods, and taking lunches instead of eating out. Meal and food stretching devices might also be included with these alternatives.

The possible use of the home freezer as an economy measure for a city family is limited. A home freezer tends to raise the level of living for a family. It can be considered to save money only when there is no cost for the food or a substantial difference exists between the cost of buying food in quantity, and the regular retail prices. The difference must be enough to cover the initial cost of buying and also operating of the freezer. Twenty-two percent of the homemakers in the larger reference sample in Lansing stated they owned a home freezer or rented a freezer locker. Fifteen percent of the homemakers in the sample classified the use of their freezer as an economy measure. This would indicate that a large portion of the homemakers who own freezers used them for economy purposes although it is difficult to justify it as a means of savings.

Almost one-sixth of the homemakers felt they utilized no economy measures and had no ideas about how they would reduce costs. Some thought it was worthwhile for the homemakers to seek employment outside the home in preference to economizing. The serving of nutritious meals was also mentioned as a thrift practice because it would save on doctor bills in the long run.

The non-food economies reported centered around the direct, rather than indirect money income of the family used for services. The homemaker used her time as a resource. The conserving reported on expenditures ranged from the homemaker doing her own sewing to saving on electricity by using a dry mop rather than a vacuum cleaner.

No statistically significant relationships were found to exist when list list of economy measures was cross-tabulated with age, education and stage in the family life cycle. Although not statistically significant, a comparison of the economy measures did indicate a divergent emphasis with the various groups according to need and level of knowledge. Homemakers with a higher level of education tended to utilize more food marketing information as a means of thrift while those who have not completed high school reported utilizing more economizing measures other than food (Table 56). It was more frequently stated by those with

Table 56.--Economy Measures Homemakers Employed, Related to Education.[*]

Economy measures employed	Total sample %[a]	Less than high school %	Completed high school %	More than high school %	No answer %
Less expensive alternatives	29.2	14.3	19.6	23.1	23.5
Plan and shop on the basis of specials and seasonality of food	83.3	48.6	51.1	59.0	41.2
Use of freezer	15.6	10.0	20.6	15.4	11.8
Cut waste	23.7	21.4	23.9	25.6	23.5
Own preparation and canning	45.1	35.7	33.7	35.9	47.0
Meat and food stretching devices	12.8	2.8	17.4	16.7	11.8
None related to food	11.3	15.7	10.9	9.0	11.8
Used direct rather than indirect money income of family for services	20.2	20.0	9.8	19.2	23.5
Cut and conserve on expenditures	10.9	12.8	4.3	7.7	11.8
Take advantage of sales and bargains	5.4	4.2	2.2	10.1	5.9
Other (food and non-food)	7.8	2.8	12.0	6.4	5.9

[*] A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the economy measures employed and the education of the homemaker at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

[a] The percentage of those homemakers of each educational level which listed the particular types of economy measures. The percentages were computed on the basis of 257 families.

less education that they used no measures for reducing food costs than was stated by homemakers with more education. Homemakers over 65 were more set in their ways and less disposed to use their own time as a resource to save money (Table 57). The middle age group tended to utilize their knowledge and experience gained to economize by the method of food purchase and cutting of waste. Families with young children constitute the largest single group in the family life cycle (44 percent of sample) and employed the most rigid methods of economy. They were less likely to feel they had utilized no way of saving (Table 58). The heads of households under 40 with no children present were associated with less necessity to cut expenses.

Consumers' Feelings Upon Completion of Grocery Shopping

Upon completion of shopping, the homemakers had mixed feelings. To some it meant the satisfaction of a job well done; for others it was a tiring experience with the job of putting the groceries away still ahead. The feelings expressed by homemakers upon returning from the store were:

	%
Job well-done, satisfaction	48.6
Tired, fatigue	15.2
Relief	27.2
Frustration and worry	8.6
Indifference	10.1
Gripe, complaining	10.1
Other	2.3

Multiple responses were recorded, totaling 314. The percentage distribution was based upon the 257 homemakers in the study. More detail was given than was indicated by the above classification. The reason for the open ended question was to get a variety of responses and ideas for further research.

Table 57.--Economy Measures Homemakers Employed, Related to Age.[*]

Economy measures employed	Total sample %[a]	Under 40 %	40-65 %	Over 65 %	No answer %
Less expensive alternatives	29.2	22.3	18.8	11.6	----
Plan and shop on basis of specials and seasonality of food	83.3	22.3	56.5	30.2	37.5
Use freezer	15.6	16.5	17.6	11.6	----
Cut waste	23.7	17.4	31.8	27.9	12.5
Own preparation and canning	45.1	37.4	37.6	25.6	50.0
Meat and food stretching devices	12.8	18.2	7.0	9.3	12.5
None related to food	11.3	12.4	5.9	20.9	12.5
Use direct rather than indirect money income of family for services	20.2	16.5	15.3	14.0	25.0
Cut and conserve on expenditures	10.9	6.6	16.5	7.0	----
Take advantage of sales and bargains	5.4	4.9	4.8	4.6	----
Other (food and non-food measures)	7.8	9.9	3.6	9.2	----

N=257

[*] A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the economy measures employed and age of the homemaker at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

[a] The percentage of those homemakers of each age group which listed the particular type of economy measures. The percentages were computed on the basis of 257 families.

Table 58.--Economy Measures Homemakers Employed, Related to Stage in Family Life Cycle.*

Economy measures employed	Total sample %	Head under 40, no children % [a]	Younger children %	Older children only %	Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	Single head over 40 %	No answer %
Less expensive alternatives	29.2	4.5	27.2	14.8	10.5	13.9	----
Plan and shop on the basis of specials and seasonality	83.3	42.8	60.5	51.8	49.1	33.3	50.0
Use of freezer	15.9	14.3	17.5	22.2	14.0	8.3	----
Cut waste	23.7	----	22.8	14.8	33.3	33.3	----
Own preparation and canning	45.1	19.0	44.7	29.6	33.3	25.0	50.0
Meat and food stretching devices	12.8	4.8	20.2	4.0	7.0	8.3	----
None related to food	11.3	28.6	6.1	11.1	15.8	13.9	----
Use direct rather than indirect money income of family for services	20.2	9.5	20.2	14.8	7.0	7.0	19.4
Cut and conserve on expenditures	10.9	4.8	9.6	4.0	10.5	13.9	----
Take advantage of sales and bargains	5.4	9.6	5.3	3.7	5.3	8.3	----
Other (food and non-food)	7.8	14.3	7.0	4.0	3.6	11.2	----

*A chi square test indicated no interdependence between the economy measures employed and stage in the family life cycle at the 10 percent level of significance for the total table.

[a]The percentage of those homemakers in each stage of the family life cycle which listed the particular type of economy measures. The percentages were computed on the basis of 257 families.

Almost one-half of the homemakers expressed the feeling of pleasure and satisfaction when they returned from the store. This was partially related to the homemakers' thinking of shopping as a pleasurable experience of giving the satisfying feeling that the family had food for the week. They had the feeling that it was stimulating and challenging to buy in today's supermarket and that the family would be pleased with the purchases.

One-quarter of the homemakers expressed a feeling of frustration, of worry and of being tired. Pressure of time, dislike of putting groceries away, worry about exceeding planned amount of money for food, and not getting good values for money spent, all contribute to these feelings.

Relief on the part of the homemakers was reported by about one-quarter of the homemakers upon completing shopping and putting the food away. For some, it was associated with satisfaction at the completion of an important job; for others, it represented an unpleasant task out of the way.

The major source of complaint centered around the high prices of foods, particularly meat. It appeared that reactions of pleasure or complaining were directly correlated with the amount of money spent on groceries as compared to the amount of money homemakers planned or hoped to spend.

In general, those homemakers who stated shopping was a small routine part of their life expressed the feeling of indifference. Homemakers who felt shopping was more important were pleased when they obtained good values for their money and bought food that pleased their family. Homemakers mentioned feeling fatigued and worried when they did not enjoy the experience of shopping, or felt food prices were out of line. They were perhaps not able to provide as much in the way of food for their families as they would have liked.

Consumers' Thoughts While Pushing the Grocery Cart Through the Store

Homemakers in this study shopped for groceries on the average of once a week. This frequent purchase of food could easily lead to establishment of a pattern for the homemaker in food buying behavior. During the process of food shopping the homemakers may encounter distractions which might divert their attention from the area of food. Just what the homemakers said they thought about as they pushed their carts through the grocery store were listed in multiple responses totaling 326. The percentages were computed on the basis of the proportion of homemakers listing each area of concentration while shopping.

One-half of the homemakers mentioned concentrating on food itself in the grocery store. This included 45 percent of the homemakers who considered either the meal planning, food quality, or their shopping list while in the store, and the five percent of the homemakers who were looking for foods the family would enjoy.

With the large proportion of the income spent for food, prices and budget limits were stated as the concern of 26 percent of the homemakers. Homemakers mentioned fear of getting to the checkout counter and finding they didn't have enough money for all the food they had picked up.

Forty-seven percent of the homemakers reported they concentrated on something other than food as they were shopping. Finishing the shopping and getting on to other business pre-occupied a large portion of this group. Time appeared to be a limiting factor with these homemakers who were anxious to make the shopping trip as short as possible. Children presented a distracting influence to their mothers as they tried to keep children off the shelves and tried to get through the checkout line without buying everything advertised on television. Homemakers with experience in shopping apparently felt they had such firmly established habits that they rarely thought of food while in the store. Shopping represented a social occasion for visiting informally with friends as a pleasant part of the shopping trip for five percent of the homemakers.

Consumers' Attitude Toward the Job of Shopping

Grocery shopping is an integral part of the total role of most homemakers. In the homemakers' response to the question, "Is shopping important to you?" 87 percent of the homemakers felt it was important, while 11 percent of the homemakers stated it was not important to them. The majority felt it was important, but two percent of the homemakers considered it less important than planning involved before shopping.

Homemakers who felt that shopping was important generally agreed that they also enjoyed it. Seventy-six percent of the homemakers affirmatively responded to the question, "Do you enjoy shopping?" while 19 percent did not. Five percent of the homemakers stated that they sometimes enjoyed it. The difference between the percentage of homemakers who enjoyed shopping and those who felt it was important centered on the limitation of resources. Homemakers expressed the idea that they enjoyed shopping more if they had enough time to shop leisurely, had no rigid budget restrictions or had no children along.

The attitude of the homemakers changed when the question was posed "Would you let someone else do the grocery shopping for you?" Fifty-three percent of the homemakers stated they would rather do the shopping themselves than allow someone else to do it, 46 percent would permit someone else to shop for them and one percent gave no response to the question.

Of the homemakers who would transfer this responsibility, the husband or someone else in the family was frequently mentioned as the only others who would be qualified for the job. Multiple responses totaling 130 were reported as follows by the 117 homemakers who would permit someone else to do the grocery shopping for them:

	%
More satisfied, can better meet needs of family, but allow others to shop	11.1
Enjoy shopping (important to me) but will allow other members of family to shop	32.5
Let others do it, but it is only opportunity to get out of the house	9.4
Would allow someone else to shop if necessary; person must be equipped with list	14.5
Chore--it must be done	24.8
Other categories	11.7
No answer	2.6

Homemakers who would let others shop, but preferred to do it themselves, generally felt more satisfied with the results of their own shopping and enjoyed it as an opportunity to obtain time away from the house. Some of the homemakers felt that health limitations and time restrictions would make it a hardship to do the shopping themselves. A few homemakers lacked confidence in their ability to shop so felt others would do a better job. To some "who" did the shopping was not important, but the homemakers liked to put away food in the refrigerator. They derived enjoyment and satisfaction from having a full refrigerator.

Homemakers who preferred not to let anyone else do the grocery shopping gave the following reasons:

	%
Know best families likes and needs, can better prepare meals to satisfy family	13.4
Habit, no one can do it the way I like it done	5.2
Enjoy it, a time out of the house, can't see reason for giving it to someone else	41.0
Part of total job (my responsibility), I want to do it	15.7
It is easier than detailed list for someone else	6.0
Like to make final decision on basis of what is available in store, save more money when do own shopping	35.1
Other	9.0
No answer	3.0

Multiple responses (totaling 179) were given. The percentages were based on the proportion of the 134 homemakers who preferred to do their own shopping who listed each reason. Seven out of ten of those homemakers mentioned it was part of their responsibility as a wife and/or mother to do the shopping in order to better satisfy the family, both in terms of obtaining the food the family needs and better preparing the meals. Homemakers felt that when their husbands shopped, they tended to buy luxury items rather than the basic essentials, and they also require a much more detailed list.

A few homemakers felt they were accomplishing something by doing the shopping while others looked forward to spending the money.

Consumers' Attitude Toward Cooking

On the creative side of homemaking, food ranks high with women. Food is one of the main subjects women talk about among themselves. Cooking is the home job they like best, yet this interest at times has only little to do with their own appetite (25).

Food, as far as women are concerned, is surrounded with emotional reactions. When friends and family celebrate a major event or holiday, food is usually an important part of the celebration. The woman is often called upon to prepare the food for the celebration, and through this food she can contribute a pleasant, comfortable atmosphere. In this way she obtains the approval and appreciation from her friends and family. A woman also finds being a good cook brings compliments. So many times, her basic interest in food is the approval it brings from other people.

Food also interests women greatly because it becomes a real problem. Most women fix over one thousand meals a year--for which they must plan, buy, prepare and serve. They want these meals to taste good, look good, be healthful, be fun to eat and rate approval. All of these things have to be done within a certain amount of time, energy and money.

When asked whether cooking was important to them, 79 percent of the homemakers stated that cooking was very important to them and to their families. Homemakers felt that through cooking, they could bring happiness and pleasure to others. Some said it was the most important thing a housewife does in raising a family. Some indicated they really didn't enjoy cooking, but their family was so responsive that they felt it was important. Others theorize it was cooking and the atmosphere created that was important, but not the food itself.

Some homemakers who felt cooking was important to them commented that cooking became discouraging at times because of the routine and monotony involved. It was important to them to the extent the food must be good, well-balanced and properly cooked, but they spent the minimum time at the task.

A chi square test showed a statistically significant relationship to exist between the importance of cooking and the stages of the family life cycle (Table 59). Homemakers who had children under 20 at home valued cooking much more highly than did those homemakers without children at home.

There was essentially no difference in the percentage response of homemakers to the question, "Is cooking important to you?" and "Do you enjoy cooking?" Some homemakers felt it was sometimes enjoyable, but the time element entered as a limiting factor. "Cooking" did not appeal to some homemakers, but they loved to bake and fix desserts where they could exercise some individuality.

When homemakers were asked whether they spent much time at cooking, 53 percent indicated that they spent quite a bit of time cooking. Some homemakers mentioned it was not as much time as when their family was at home. Homemakers said that they served more informal, quicker meals in the summer and spent more time cooking in the winter. Because of convenience foods and advanced processing techniques, 45 percent of the homemakers felt it was not essential to spend a lot of time cooking.

Table 59.--Importance of Cooking to Homemakers, Related to Stage in the Family Life Cycle.*

Attitude	Total sample %	A Head under 40, no children %	B Younger children %	C Older children only %	D Married head over 40, no children under 20 at home %	E Single head over 40 %	No answer %
Yes	78.2	66.7	86.8	85.2	73.7	58.3	50.0
No	20.6	28.6	11.4	14.8	26.3	41.7	50.0
No answer	1.2	4.7	1.8	----	----	----	----
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N=257							

*A chi square test indicated interdependence between the importance of cooking and the stage of the family life cycle at the one percent level of significance for the total table.

A chi square test indicated interdependence between columns A and B, between columns B and D, and between columns B and E at the five percent or better level, and between columns C and E at the 10 percent level of significance.

Two percent of the respondents did not answer the question. Homemakers felt they spend extra time preparing food for something special, or for entertaining then for the family meals.

Consumers' Attitude Toward Eating

The importance of eating to the homemaker is related to her interest in the well-being of the family. Part of her job is to see that her family gets enough to eat of the right kinds of food. In accomplishing these objectives, the homemaker feels she is being a good mother and derives satisfaction from this.

Multiple responses totaling 265 were reported by the homemakers to the question "Is eating important to you?" The attitude of most of the homemakers toward eating reflected more than the consumption of food for health's sake alone. Food and eating were important to 72 percent of the homemakers and were associated with forming a pleasant backdrop for the family or for friends. Meals are the one time during the day when the whole family generally gets together. Good food, well-prepared was a value held high by the homemakers in the study. Homemakers expressed disappointment when they tried but did not please their family with the food prepared.

The 14 percent of the homemakers who considered eating not important, ate many meals alone and felt their family was not responsive, or took little interest in the food being served. Eating became a necessity, rather than a pleasant experience, and it frequently was surrounded by boredom. The importance of eating fluctuated for 13 percent of the homemakers, and four percent were indefinite in their response as to the importance of eating to them.

Homemakers in the study felt that their families were happier and homelife was more pleasant when the meals were good, attractive, and plentiful. Description of the meal time and the atmosphere surrounding the eating of food varied, and was reported by the homemakers as:

	%
Pleasant	67.3
Nerve-racking, hectic	15.2
Uninteresting	8.6
Necessary, for health's-sake	7.4
Varying	2.7
Other	7.7

Over two out of three homemakers felt mealtime was a social, relaxing and pleasant time. It was looked forward to by many as the high point of the day when the family could get together and discuss the events of the day. If the mealtime was described as nerve-racking or hectic, it was usually related to irregular mealtimes for members of the family, discipline problems with the children at the table and getting the children to eat.

Homemakers who ate alone or stated that their husband read the newspaper during the meal characterized mealtime as uninteresting and dull. A varied atmosphere prevailed at mealtime according to the food on the menu, and whether finicky eaters were eating the food presented to them.

In general, homemakers felt mealtime was important and for the most part, enjoyable. The presence of young children and problem eaters detracted from the pleasant atmosphere. Homemakers who ate alone felt that company would make the mealtime more interesting and pleasant.

The Practices Consumers Regard as Important for New Homemakers in Food Planning and Shopping

Homemakers rarely take the opportunity to evaluate their own experience as food managers and place a value judgment on the areas which they feel are most important. They tend to hold these practices concerning planning and shopping for food above their actual practices.

By asking the homemakers to give advice to a bride-to-be about food management, it is assumed to be possible to gain an insight to the values the homemakers themselves consider most important. The homemakers included the following suggestions in response to the question, "If you were giving advice to a bride-to-be what would be your advice for a good start at food planning and shopping?"

	%
Planning phase	47.9
Buying--investigate all alternatives	40.9
Food preparation	27.6
Learn likes and dislikes of husband	13.2
No advice	12.1
Health--learn fundamentals of nutrition	8.6
Something they must learn for themselves	5.1
Positive attitude toward homemaking	4.7
Other	6.2

Multiple responses totaling 427 were given by the 257 homemakers. The bride-to-be was advised in the beginning to use detailed planning, to learn to know quality products and price relationships, to become familiar with varieties available, and to use shortcuts in planning and in buying the supplies needed for the household. These practices would help to establish a good basis for any future adjustments in the composition of the family. As to food preparation, homemakers advised learning to cook before marriage and keeping meals simple at first. The frequent use of a good cookbook, and acquiring "his" favorite recipes help complete the recommended steps in food planning and buying for the new family.

Seventeen percent of the homemakers felt they were not qualified to give advice, either because conditions changed so rapidly, or because they thought it was something that brides must learn for themselves. Because some felt they had not succeeded themselves, they were unwilling to advise others. Several homemakers indicated that learning the fundamentals of nutrition was important, including not letting the husband overeat in order to extend his life.

The homemakers agreed it was desirable for the bride-to-be to gain experience in food management by investigating the various alternatives available to them.

The Factors Consumers Consider Essential for Achieving and Maintaining Harmony Within the Home

Women's family interest has been strengthened by the increased emphasis in family living--the idea of doing and buying and thinking as a family unit. Mothers and fathers are not alone in making decisions, but the total family group is considered and the mother acts as the purchasing agent. The psychological influences are increasingly important where the homemakers now have become concerned about making a success of marriage and understanding their children and husband. They have been educated to realize the importance of a stable family group upon the character and psychological development of their children.

Multiple responses totaling 349 were given by the homemakers to the question "As 'first vice-president' in charge of maintaining, supervising and running your home in such a way to keep everyone happy and satisfied, how do you go about it?" The distribution of the responses was based on the percentage of the 257 families listing each of the factors essential for achieving and maintaining harmony within the home.

Fifty-four percent of the homemakers thought it was essential to provide the proper attitude and atmosphere, for it was the mother's approach which set the mood for the whole family. By treating all the family members fairly and as individuals, teaching them to respect the family rights and the rights of others, and the mother's willingness and enthusiasm for her job, the mother could maintain this harmony within the home.

Food and health were not the most important factors for achieving harmony to a large proportion of the families. The typical homemaker in the study realized that her family was happier, and the well-being of the family improved when the meals were good, attractive and plentiful. Forty-two percent of the housewives mentioned food and health as contributing toward the harmony within the home.

Regularity in life with self-discipline was a means suggested by 20 percent of the homemakers for achieving harmony. "Other" factors were mentioned by 16 percent of the homemakers and included the comment that some homemakers had not yet found a method for achieving harmony themselves and had made such a mess out of their lives that they could not advise others. Four percent of the homemakers did not respond to the question.

Consumers' Interest in Information on Food Buying and Planning

What are the specific food interests which homemakers have? It was assumed that the food topics which homemakers would request of a specialist in foods would be the most immediate concern to homemakers and lend insight for consumer programs. There were several pertinent points listed, such as the desire for help in menu planning which gave explicit ideas rather than vague suggestions and ideas that meal planning pointers be given with the average budget in mind. However, such suggestions as those regarding help with cake decorating and "fancy foods" must be considered in light of the general objectives of the consumer programs.

The homemakers offered the following suggestions to the question "If you could have at your service a specialist in food planning and buying, what information or suggestions would you want?"

	%
Help with meal planning (stated in terms of ideas with menus and recipes)	22.6
Economy--how to manage food money more economically	16.7
Food buying and selection	13.6
Preparation methods	11.7
Nutrition	9.7
Preservation, storage, spoilage	8.9
Time management	3.9
Other	6.6
No suggestions	33.5

Homemakers gave multiple responses totaling 327. The percentage was computed on the basis of the proportion of 257 homemakers making suggestions in each area.

Food interests and problems of homemakers centered around the constant job of keeping their menus varied and of meeting the food preferences of individual family members, while keeping food costs at a reasonable level.

The facilities for home storage and the trend toward use of frozen foods have shifted the pattern from frequent to infrequent shopping. This has resulted in longer storage periods within the home. This may contribute to the interest of homemakers in regard to methods of preservation, storage, and spoilage of food.

Very few homemakers expressed a desire for nutritional information. Homemakers had stated previously they were strongly interested in serving well-balanced meals to their families. Any nutritional information for a consumer education program, therefore, would need to be included as part of a subject matter area of more interest to homemakers.

Thirty-three percent of the homemakers had no suggestions. Included in this group were both those who had no particular interest regarding food and others who have a great deal of experience and who considered themselves to have no problems with planning and buying.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The research reported in this thesis was undertaken to increase the basic understanding of the process involved in consumer buying decisions by investigating the approach to food buying decisions, food management attitudes and shopping behavior patterns of selected Lansing homemakers. What constitutes and also what influences the homemakers' food purchase decision, and what are the basic motives of consumers in food buying and preparation? This research was an exploratory study designed to provide some basic information and ideas for future study, and also for use in program direction for food marketing and consumer education in marketing.

SUMMARY

What influences the homemakers' basic food buying decision?

1. The original food expenditure decision was primarily based on trial and error method, and the homemakers buying what food they wanted because cost was not a limiting factor. Significantly more heads of households in the low income level thought they had never made a conscious decision in respect to food expenditure where as income increased, more homemakers bought food without regard to cost.

2. The general approach to the food budget used by the homemakers varied, with the long range planning without specific limitations most commonly mentioned, followed by the formal budget and the flexible spending guide. Significantly more homemakers with education beyond high school indicated the use of the flexible spending guide, and long range

planning approach, while homemakers with a high school education and homemakers with only older children at home said they relied on the household allowance approach to best fit their needs. The high income level and high educational level were significantly associated with homemakers placing no conscious limits on spending. Homemakers in the low income households more frequently said they utilized the formal budget.

3. Homemakers thought their basic food expenditure was more or less uniform over long periods of time. The time previous to the study was a period of fairly stable prices so it was not out of line that the homemakers felt their food expenditures were relatively constant. One-half of the homemakers thought they had changed the basic amount spent for food in the last two years. Young heads of households without children at home were significantly more flexible in changing the basic amount of money spent for food while married heads of households with no children under 20 at home reported the least fluctuation. Increases in the income level of the households were inversely related to changes homemakers thought they made in the basic food expenditures for the year prior to the study. This shifted to a positive relationship for expenditure pattern over the period of five years with increases in income.

4. The husbands played an important role in food buying decisions. Of the households with husbands present, 31 percent of the homemakers thought their husbands were very interested in food buying decisions, 31 percent thought they were mildly to fairly interested, and 36 percent of the homemakers believed their husbands had an attitude of complete indifference toward food purchases and the amount of money spent on food. The income level of the household had the most significant influence upon the attitude of the husband toward food purchase decisions. Homemakers in the higher income group considered their husbands more indifferent toward food expenditures, and these husbands less frequently requested an accounting of expenditures. Thus, there were more independent

decisions made by the homemaker. In households where the head was under 40 with no children and where the head was over 40 and married with no children under 20 at home, homemakers thought their husbands were most aware of prices and expenditures and thus did not ask for an accounting.

<u>What constitutes food management to the homemaker</u>?

1. In relationship to planning, three out of four homemakers made a shopping list before going shopping. Homemakers with high school educations and under 40 were associated with making a complete list; those with education beyond high school, ages 40-65, and no children under 20 at home indicated the use of a partial list; and the homemakers who had not completed high school and over the age of 65 tended to use no shopping list.

A high percentage (72 percent) of the homemakers reported that they decided upon half or more of their food items before they reached the store. Over one-half of the homemakers planned on supplementing their shopping list and making the final decision in the store. In-store displays and promotions were a positive influence to homemakers, both as a reminder and a motivating factor in the decision to purchase products.

2. Before the shopping trip, menu planning, for almost half of the homemakers referred to buying the food first, then planning menus around the foods purchased. Planning specific menus before shopping was practiced by less than one-third of the homemakers. The tendency was to plan fewer specific items, but to plan in a general way for enough meat, vegetables, and staples, etc. to last until the next shopping trip. Only for entertaining did many of the homemakers plan a specific menu before shopping.

3. The influence of mass media in planning.

   a. Food advertisements in <u>The State Journal</u> were read by four out of five homemakers, more than any other media in planning. Those households who have or have had children at home utilized the food ads most frequently.

b. Sixty-three percent of the homemakers read the food articles in the paper, either occasionally or regularly. Recognition of special food articles, however, was limited.

c. Information from magazines was used in planning by 63 percent of the homemakers before shopping. A preference was indicated for nationally distributed magazines directed toward the homemaker.

d. Seventy-five percent of the homemakers stated that they redeemed the coupons recieved through the mail at one time or another.

4. A recognized weight problem with the homemaker and/or the husband had little effect upon the family's per capita expenditure for food. Although there was no statistically significant relationship, there were some indications that a greater proportion of homemakers with a recognized weight problem tended to emphasize the importance of food by proportionately planning more specific menus before shopping, less compulsion to stay within a budget, and more concentration on food, rather than other distracting factors, as they shopped in the grocery store.

5. Expenditures by the families for lunches averaged higher than for dinners eaten away from home. Families eating lunches out were more specific in planning for the amount of money to be spent. Almost two-thirds of the sample who ate lunches out considered it as part of the planned spending of the family while 49 percent of the families eating dinners out used an indefinite plan or no special arrangement for the expenditure.

6. Pre-planning was an important consideration for two out of three homemakers. It was more highly valued by households with young children and the middle income households. The frequency with which

pre-planning was carried through showed that as age and the stage of the family life cycle advanced, pre-planning was considered less important to the homemaker. However, of these homemakers who did not consider pre-planning as important, proportionately more of them carried through by frequently pre-planning if it was thought to be essential. The enjoyment derived from pre-planning was greatest among homemakers who felt it was important, but did it least consistently (homemakers with only older children). This group of homemakers made more food buying decisions independent of their husbands.

7. Once a week grocery shopping was the usual pattern for the homemakers. They decided on the day on which to shop because of the convenience, pay day, and because of specials or double stamp day.

8. Over one-third of the homemakers showed an interest in adding variety and interest into their meals, by the use of new recipes within the two weeks previous to the interview. The major single source of recipes mentioned by homemakers was the exchange of recipes with a friend or relatives, while the printed word represented the largest total source. Dessert recipes and meat main dish or casserole recipes were mentioned as the most frequent type of new recipe used.

Consumers' Attitudes Toward Food Management

1. Homemakers reported their goals as they related to food centered around providing well-balanced nourishing meals, getting the most "value" from food expenditures, and providing satisfying appealing meals for all the members of the family. With increases in the level of income, homemakers' goals expressed more of the psychological aspects of food, and fewer were concerned about staying within budgetary limits.

2. Among the many expenditure areas, food comes first when plans for economizing were made. Economy measures included both changes in quantity and quality. Homemakers with less education expressed

fewer ideas of how to economize and used more economy measures other than food.

3. Homemakers, upon return from the shopping trip, experienced mixed feelings. Almost half of the homemakers indicated satisfaction with "a job well-done." Pleasure versus fatigue, relief and complaining appeared to be related to the pressure of time, and the amount of money spent on groceries compared with the amount they had planned to or hoped to spend.

4. During the time spent in the grocery store, the homemakers' attention was not held completely by the thoughts of food, and decisions related to food. One-half of the homemakers mentioned concentrating on items of food, either planning, quality, or price, while the interest of 40 percent of the homemakers was on something other than food.

5. The job of food shopping was very important to most homemakers because it was considered an integral part of the total responsibility of the homemaker. Homemakers preferred to do their own shopping rather than to allow someone else to do it for them. This preference expressed the homemaker's feelings that she was best equipped to meet the needs of her family, shopping was an enjoyable experience, and better values could be obtained by making the final decisions in the store.

6. The importance of eating and cooking to the homemaker appeared to be related to the presence of a family at meals and the interest and responsiveness of the family members to the foods being served. Meal time provided a pleasant experience for most of the homemakers, but irregular time schedules of family and discipline problems with the children sometimes made meal time less enjoyable.

The homemakers' attitude toward cooking was shown by the feeling that through cooking, it was possible to bring happiness and pleasure to others. Cooking was significantly more important to and more highly valued by homemakers with children at home. Homemakers, however, felt that they were not spending as much time cooking because the convenience foods and the advanced processing techniques had reduced the time essential for food preparation.

7. The practices consumers regard as important for new homemakers in food planning and shopping were associated with the building of a broad base of information in food management by investigating all the alternatives, and deciding for themselves which methods best met the needs of the individual family.

8. To achieve and maintain harmony within the home was the long run goal of the homemakers. With the trend toward the total family group making decisions, the homemakers reported that the proper attitude and atmosphere was very important to them. Upon the homemaker's shoulders rested the responsibility for setting the tone for the family. Closely associated with the setting of the proper attitude and atmosphere was the role and contribution of food for the health and well-being of the family.

9. When asked about food planning and buying information they might request from a food specialist, the homemakers' responses centered around the need to keep menus varied while meeting the food preferences of the family. One out of three homemakers indicated they had no food problems. About one-quarter of the homemakers would welcome help in each of the two areas: meal planning; and selection buying and storage of food. Managing food money more economically was another important area of interest to the homemakers.

IMPLICATIONS

1. A large proportion of homemakers do not carefully consider the basic amount of money they spend for food and appear not to be primarily concerned about it. In respect to the food expenditure decision, two out of five homemakers stated they bought food without regard to cost or thought they had never made an initial decision in this respect. Further investigation is needed to determine the reasons behind homemakers in

low income and educational groups feeling that they did not make initial food expenditure decisions. Was this a lack of understanding of the question or do these consumers have less ability to make decisions? Also, were one-third of the homemakers actually able to buy food without cost as a limiting factor? Or do past habits and tastes establish the limits without any conscious considerations?

2. With increases in income and educational levels, more food buying decisions are being left to the homemaker. The increasing ability to buy without regard to cost and less joint decision on the part of these husbands and wives have led the homemaker to act as purchasing agent for the household. The direction of any program for consumers should, therefore, keep in mind the new role of the homemaker and the many interests of the family members--to husband's and the children's interest in food--as well as the homemaker's. Recognition must be made of the fact that conflicts in food preferences will exist among family members.

3. The usual shopping pattern for the homemakers was once a week--giving a clue to meaningful days for consumer information releases. Fourteen percent of the homemakers indicated they read special food marketing releases regularly, and four out of five used the ads in The State Journal newspaper as a guide before the shopping trip. However, since repetition is necessary if any program is to be effective, the information should not be confined to one or two days.

4. Different levels of planning for shopping were reported, and the shopping list was not the only evidence that planning was done. Consumers with more education and younger homemakers used shopping lists more, whereas the methods used by other segments of the population were not determined. Any methods used should be evaluated in terms of present day merchandizing methods which emphasize "store planning." Store displays can be a useful aid to food buying, and their use as a planning device is a choice the homemaker has. It is often to her advantage to rely

on brand, in-store selection, or repetitive buying as a means to more efficient buying--efficient as she sees it.

5. Although three out of four homemakers reported the use of a shopping list, over half of the homemakers preferred to make the final decision or to supplement their shopping list in the store. Present day merchandizing programs, therefore, can contribute to more effective store planning. There is the need, however, for the evaluation of the consumers' ability and level of knowledge in making these store decisions. Consumers value highly the ability of new homemakers to plan and purchase food to obtain the maximum value from the money spent. They indicated this is something that must be learned individually by the new homemaker. The question is where and how does this learning experience take place? Do educational institutions recognize this changing pattern of planning and buying practices of homemakers and incorporate it into their curriculum?

6. When consumers become interested in economizing, expenditures for both non-durables as well as durable goods are affected. Consumers recognize food as an important segment of their expenditures where costs can be reduced. This is in conflict with Katona's statement that spending during the 1958 recession for non-durables remain constant during a period of adjustment or recession.

Homemakers with less than a high school education expressed fewer ideas about economizing through reducing food expenditures and more concerning cutting other expenses. Whether this was because food expenditures were at a minimal position and could be reduced no further, or they actually knew less about economizing was not studied, but it warrants further investigation.

7. There was inadequate information regarding the methods which homemakers used to adjust their food budget, although some insight was gained in the study. Consumers tend to think in terms of total week's supply of food and its cost first; next they consider the whole meal plan

in terms of the next day's menu, with some thinking only in terms of the next meal; finally, they think of individual foods to be served at the meals. This points to the need to help consumers carry the cost per serving information, used in many consumer programs, back through their week's food experience to the grocery store trip.

8. Homemakers felt their greatest single source of new recipes was the exchange of recipes between friends or relatives. This showed that tried and proven recipes were more frequently accepted by homemakers. This would indicate that by lending authority to the person presenting data or information to the consumer, the chance for acceptance by the homemaker would be greater.

9. It was hypothesized that a recognized weight problem in a family would affect the family's planning and food expenditures. There were no statistically significant relationships existing between attitudes, planning and shopping practices and recognized weight problems. However, the data in the study was severely limited because it could be broken down into only two meaningful categories. Further investigation is needed to determine whether the following situations are related to food buying: a weight problem existed although the homemaker felt none to be present; the homemaker recognized a weight problem although no problem actually existed; the homemaker recognized a weight problem that actually existed; and the homemaker recognized that no weight problem actually existed. These weight categories should then be compared with the planning and attitudes of the homemakers to determine the relationships present.

10. A large portion of the homemakers (33 percent) indicated that they did not have any questions regarding buying or planning for a food specialist if a specialist were available. The potential audience for marketing information is, therefore, limited because of the lack of interest in food on the part of homemakers or the complacent feeling that the homemakers already know all they need to know regarding food planning and buying. Consumer education workers need to explore the

means of stimulating interest in the homemakers and to show that even the most experienced homemaker can benefit from the wealth of information available to her.

11. Before shopping homemakers used as a guide in their planning the food ads in the newspaper and magazines and pamphlets. They were also favorably influenced by in-store displays. According to this study, the advertising and promotion of agricultural products would include these media as effective means of communicating information to the consumer. One of the goals related to food that homemakers mentioned was to provide satisfying meals with variety. Advertising and promotion based on several agricultural products that could be used together, might benefit the producers as well as providing ideas for the consumer.

12. Once a week shopping was the usual pattern for the homemaker in the study. Since packaging and storage of both produce and meats are areas where homemakers have limited knowledge, it would appear advantageous for marketing firms to give accurate and complete directions for preservation and the length of time for normal storage. Much research has gone into maintaining the quality of perishable products in-transit to market. If information on storage is not passed on to the consumers, then the homemakers may be dissatisfied or disappointed with the products through lack of knowledge; thus they do not repeat the purchase of them.

With shopping once a week, and therefore the need for many of the meats to be frozen at home before use, homemakers might well appreciate purchasing food in the store wrapped in a material suitable for short term freezing at home.

13. There were strong feelings on the part of homemakers concerning the importance of food to their families, much more than the nutritional or biological considerations regarding food, but related to the basic motives of the family. Therefore, the capacity of the human stomach actually may not limit demand for foods because there are other appeals available and homemakers are able to obtain satisfactions through these other means.

14. The homemakers' motives and values in food buying and preparation focus around their concern for the health and well-being of their families. The experience of shopping, cooking and the use of new recipes appeared to be associated with the homemakers' use of food as a means of providing a pleasant, comfortable atmosphere and keeping the family satisfied. Food provides the daily opportunity for homemakers to satisfy a creative outlet. The approval and appreciation derived from serving pleasing and satisfying meals for the family was highly valued by the homemaker. Any program carried on with consumers would have the widest appeal if they used as a benchmark the goals and values of the homemakers.

15. It is not practical to summarize all of the facts nor draw out all the implications, but it is believed that this study provides background information important to have in mind when writing articles for consumers or in program planning. It should also prove useful in respect to promotion and merchandizing of food.

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APPENDIX A

Number: ____________________

Date: ____________________

Address of interview: ____________________

Interviewer's name: ____________________

<u>FOOD BUYING DECISIONS - SURVEY I</u>

November 1958

I. FAMILY DESCRIPTION

I. Number of members in family? ________________

II. Status	Age	Height	Weight	Sex	Years of formal education	Employed outside home
1. Homemaker						
2. Husband						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						

(Other members? ___________ List information reverse side)

III. Occupation of head of household. ________________________________

( )1. Retired
( )2. Factory worker
( )3. Construction worker or laborer except factory
( )4. High level salesman or business man
( )5. Professional
( )6. Other white collar worker
( )7. Other blue collar worker

IV. Which of these categories fits your best estimate of the total income of all members of your household from all sources after Federal income taxes were deducted for 1957? Check

( )1. $2,000 or under
( )2. 2,001 - 4,000
( )3. 4,001 - 5,400
( )4. 5,401 - 7,000
( )5. 7,001 -10,000
( )6. Over $10,000

II. SPECIFIC FOOD EXPENSES

I. Purchases per week for food eaten at home.

GROCERY STORE		
MILK		
CITY MARKET		
EGGS		
COFFEE		
BREAD		
WHOLESALE PURCHASES		
OTHER		
	TOTAL	

Explanation of any of above figures.

II. Amounts paid per week for meals eaten away from home.

REGULAR LUNCHES OUT			
DINNERS OUT			
	TOTAL		

Are lunches out paid for from food money? If not, what arrangement?

Are dinners out paid from food money? What other, if not?
If homemaker is eating out, what arrangements are made for meal for members at home?

III. BASIC DECISIONS

I. How did you originally decide on the actual amount you were to spend on food in a given period of time? Describe the process and important factors considered.

Guide for interviewer ......

a. budget by % of income
b. buy what like - cost doesn't matter
c. trial and error - over period of time set average figure
d. other bills paid first - remains is for food
e. someone else decided - food plan or freezer purchase
f. did it same as parents use to

II. What part does your husband play in planning the food money? In spending it? How high would the food bill have to go before he would complain or ask for an explanation?

III. Do you think your background has anything to do with your attitude toward the amount to be spent for food? Why?

IV.

A. Is the total amount you spend for food now habit of long standing or do you periodically take stock of the situation and change the basic amount?

B. How long have you spent the amount you are now spending?

C. What specific things might change the basic amount?

V. Which method would you consider your way of spending? Describe the details and discuss why you find the system satisfactory. What objections do you have to the others?

( ) A. Formal Budget - a system of strict limitations.

How do you stay within the limits you set for yourself?

( ) B. Spending Guide - defined but flexible limitations.

What are the actual dollar amounts that are your maximum and minimum limits?

How much would you allow yourself to vary above or below these points?

( ) C. Household allowance - set amount that homemaker handles for food and other expenses.

What are other things beside food paid from this amount?

( ) D. No Specified Limitations - but long-range planning and buying employing careful and conservative spending ways and means.

E. No Limits at all

F. Other

VI. How do you account for variations in amount spent for groceries in different weeks?

VII. What specific economy measures do you employ? List

IV. PLANNING

I. Once the amount is determined, do you plan at home how that food dollar will be spent? What actual steps constitute "planning" to you?

II. Before going to the store which of the following would you do?

A. 1. Make a complete shopping list
   2. Make a partial list
   3. Use no list
   4. Other

B. 1. Plan menus ahead
   2. Buy first and then plan meals around foods already purchased
   3. Other

C. 1. Read Thursday <u>State Journal</u> Ads
   2. Read newspaper articles (Name the specific article and newspaper)
   3. Magazines and pamphlets
   4. Use coupons received through mail

III. How important do you consider pre-planning? Do you do it consistently? Do you enjoy it?

IV. Do you consider any of the following factors in your planning? How?

A. Advertisements of specials

B. Articles about food in newspaper

C. Entertaining--purchase of special foods.

D. Likes and dislikes of children, husband, self?

E. Homemaker employed - need for quick - preparing foods

F. Weight problems

1. Do you or any member of your family have a weight problem and have to watch what you eat? Who? What?

2. Are any members of your family trying to lose or gain weight? Who? How?

3. How does it influence your food buying? Your budget?

4. List specific foods you use more of. Less of.

5. Do you or any other member of your family use any diet aids? What kinds?
   Guide--pills, reducing machines.

6. Have you consulted a doctor about a diet for weight? Did you continue under his care while dieting through periodic checkups?

G. Physical conditions requiring special diets.

H. Other factors considered in planning not discussed above.

V. BUYING

I. How often do you shop for food?
How do you decide when you will go to the store?
(Guide - certain day, every week, husband's day off, payday, whenever transportation is available, on way home from work, etc.)

II.

A. How many of the items you buy at the store would you say you decided upon before you got there?

B. Do you frequently not buy some of the things you planned to?

1. Why did you change your mind?
2. Do displays in the store influence your food purchases?
3. Do you try new products?

III. What do you think about as you push the cart through the store?

IV. What are your goals as you shop for food--what do you hope to accomplish?

V. How important do you consider the job of shopping for food? Would you let someone else do your shopping for you? Do you enjoy grocery shopping? Why?

VI. When you return from the store, what are your feelings?
(Guide--frustration, time for a change in system, relief, pleasure, job well done, no special feeling.)

VI. FOOD PREPARATION

I. How important is "eating" to your family? Describe meal time at your house.

II. How important is cooking to you? Do you enjoy it? Do you spend much time at it?

III. When was the last time you tried a new recipe? Where do you get new recipes?

IV. What plans do you make for dinner? For lunch? For breakfast? For in-between meal snacks?

VII. GENERAL QUESTIONS

I. From what you know of your friends buying habits for food, how do you differ? How are you the same?

II. If you were giving advice to a bride-to-be, what would be your advice for a good start at food planning and shipping?

III. Have you ever heard of the word CHOLESTEROL?

A. Where

B. What does it mean to you?

C. What foods are high in cholesterol?

D. Have the reports about cholesterol influenced your family eating habits at all? If so, how?

IV. As "first vice-president," in charge of maintaining, supervising and running your home in such a way to keep everyone happy and satisfied--how do you go about it?

V. If you could have at your service a specialist in food planning and buying, what information of suggestions would you want?

APPENDIX B

Study Number	Date of Study	Area Studied	Nature of Sample	Major Commodity of Subject Matter	Source
1	1955	35 selected cities	250 representative supermarkets, 5338 shoppers	Consumer Behavior	Commercial Research Agency
2	1949	8 selected cities	35 modern markets, 1,845 customers	Consumer Behavior	Commercial Research Agency
3	1948	Baltimore, Maryland	Stratified sample, middle income families, 469 households	Consumer Behavior	State Experiment Station Bulletin
4	1953	Louisville, Kentucky	Random sample 720 households	Consumer Behavior	Federal Government Publication
5	1955	Phoenix, Arizona	Random sample 502 households	Meat	State Experiment Station Bulletin