THE SPARTAN VILLAGE STUDY -- AN INVESTIGATION OF THE FOOD SHOPPING HABITS AND ATTITUDES OF A SELECT GROUP

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.

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Robert David Lustberg

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THE SPARTAN VILLAGE STUDY--AN INVESTIGATION OF THE FOOD SHOPPING HABITS AND ATTITUDES OF A SELECT GROUP

by

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AN ABSTRACT

Submitted to the College of Business and Public Service of
Michigan State University of Agriculture and
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MASTER OF ARTS

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1958

Approved: E. A. Brand

Statement of the Problem

The growing success of food retailing within our marketing system has been accompanied by the intensification of competition between store operators themselves. The food retailer, beset by problems of expansion and rising costs of operations, has withdrawn to a certain extent from contact with the ultimate consumer. Acceptance of the self-service principle by the consumer accompanied by technological advances have further complicated communications between retailer and consumer.

Although research relative to consumer shopping habits and attitudes is not new, the position of the consumer has been gaining in importance in the thinking centered on the problem of maintaining and increasing customer franchises. The dynamic nature of our society and economy call for continuing examination and reevaluation of ideas concerning the habits and attitudes of the changing consumer market.

Procedure

An exploratory study was designed to develop and test hypotheses relating to the food shopping habits and attitudes of a select group. The emphasis in this study is on young, married couples, newly arrived in an area, who are dependent on a car for shopping. In addition, the hope was that other marketing implications would develop out of a system of questioning designed to encourage respondents to talk freely on many aspects of their food shopping experiences.

Through the medium of a questionnaire, 40 personal interviews were conducted in the homes of respondents in the Spartan Village married housing development of Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan. The respondents were selected in an unrestricted, random manner.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

The principal findings relative to the food shopping habits and attitudes of the group involved in this study were as follows:

1. Where a one-car family is dependent on their automobile for shopping, husbands take an active role in food shopping.

2. Shoppers who are dependent on their car for transportation have added new meaning to our concept of "convenience" as a prime factor in their store selection.

3. Food store newspaper advertising has little influence on the store selection of new arrivals in an area.

4. The manner in which food store newspaper advertising is presented is confusing and irritating to many consumers.

5. While trading stamps are a minor factor in maintaining customer loyalty, they have become so much a part of the promotional scene that consumers regard them as an added attraction and derive satisfaction from saving stamps.

6. Although self-service meat departments have gained general acceptance, consumers are faced with their greatest food problem in selection of meat by themselves.

7. Habit is a dominant factor in maintaining customer loyalty and restricting movement of shoppers between stores.

8. Although non-foods have been accepted and are purchased by almost all consumers, most respondents looked with disfavor on the suggestion of adding more non-foods.

9. Packaged produce has gained greater acceptance than packaged meat but a substantial minority of consumers are still doubtful of the benefits of packaging produce.

10. The majority of respondents used shopping lists but only a small minority of those using lists restricted their buying because of the list.

11. Recipes and menus are great aids in solving food problems for the housewife.

12. Communications between consumer and store personnel is restrictd in nature and is the root cause of many consumer shopping problems.

These findings point up the fact that consumers can provide many insights leading to advantages to be gained

in the competitive struggle.

The problem for the store operator is to stimulate a positive consumer orientation on the part of all personnel involved in consumer-store relations, and to close the communications gap which currently exists between consumer and store personnel.

"The Food Distribution program at Michigan State University is under the sponsorship of the National Association of Food Chains."

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

One of the vital and genuine success stories of the post depression years is that of the supermarket industry. To keep pace with the increasing demands of a growing and shifting population, and to properly compete for the increasing real dollars which consumers have had available to spend, the supermarket has slowly evolved into a retail giant. The physical size of the supermarket structure and the variety of merchandise handled are only two of the basic elements related to supermarketing that have developed at a steadily expanding rate.

Today, the largest food chain operators dominate the entire retail business. A listing of the nation's twenty leading retailers in 1957 reveals that food chains occupy eleven positions.[1] Although every company in the top twenty showed sales increases over 1956, only two of the companies, both food chains, increased sales at a faster rate than they achieved in 1956. From a profit standpoint, however, the food chains reversed the trend of the non-food

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[1]"The Food Chains Lead the Way," Business Week, No. 1497 (May 10, 1958), 59.

retailers who reported profit percentages substantially below their sales increases. In contrast, eight of the eleven food chains reported net earnings increasing at a faster rate than the corresponding sales increases.

The marked success of the food industry in the face of the most serious post war recession is not beyond explanation.

> Of all the violent upheavals that have shaken and transformed the American Market, none have been bigger, or more baffling, that those affecting food. Back in 1941, Americans spent $20 billion for food. In 1953. . . they spent $60 billion. . . . In 1941 they were allocating 24 per cent of their cash income for food. In 1953 the figure was up to 27 per cent.[2]
>
> From now until the 1960's, it seems probable, calorie consumption will rise about 3 per cent faster than the population totals. Applying 3 per cent to a national food bill of $60 billion, it would seem that the food industry has some $2 billion worth of extra business implied in the changing size and age composition of the nation.[3]

The progress, growth, and general optimism surrounding the food retailing business are based, in the main, on well founded statistical data. However, it would be folly to ignore the signs which pointed to the pressures exerted by the increase in the over-all competitive situation.

> Many operators. . .have been fearing a saturation in number of supermarkets. While few believe that saturation is imminent, there was definite evidence

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[2]Editors of Fortune, The Changing American Market (New York: Hanover House, 1953), p. 131.

[3]*Ibid.*, p.37.

> last year that opportunities for successful new stores were narrowing. Members of Super Market Institute, a good cross section of the super market bloc, reported that 60% of the stores they opened in 1957 failed to do as much volume as expected, that each new super market competed directly with three other super markets, whereas in 1956 each new unit competed with only two others.[4]

The problem for supermarket operators is clear. The American market for food has expanded by $3.5 billion each year since 1955.[5] There are no indications as yet of any surcease in the population boom which has added an annual natural increase (excess of births over deaths) of 2,500,000 persons to the total population for the past seven years.[6] Although all the evidence points to an increased sales forecast for many years to come, there are indications that competition between food retailers is growing more intense. Continued prosperity and expansion are dependent on the broadest knowledge of marketing facts which can lead to any competitive advantage.

Need for the Study

With the obvious increase in the competitive situation the succeeding question would logically seem to be,

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[4]Robert W. Mueller, "1957 Grocery Store Sales," Progressive Grocer, Vol. 37, No. 4 (April, 1958), F2.

[5]*Ibid.*

[6]Harry Hansen (ed.), *The World Almanac for 1958* (New York: World Telegram and The Sun, 1958), p. 257.

"What are food retailers doing to meet the problem?"

> Depending on who is doing the talking this problem may be rising costs, shrinking margins, too many big stores, customer pilferage, cart losses, long store hours or anything else that the man may have on his mind.
> Our personal nomination for this number-one problem is the space in every store that should be occupied by a customer who isn't there. There are very few things wrong with any store that would not be cured by a few more customers.[7]

> Food retailers should be freely aware of their strength and advantages--but they must also recognize the definite changes taking place in the frame of mind of the consumer. . . . One hears more customers complaining that there are fewer worthwhile weekend specials, especially in perishables; more shoppers are keeping records of their food expenditures and comparing prices between stores; there is more interest in lower priced brands to see if they aren't just as good. . . . In the period ahead individual retailers who keep tuned in to consumers' attitudes, look for shifts in buying habits and preferences, and take appropriate action will not only hold their own but strengthen their positions in the "recession" era that promises to be with us for at least a few months to come.[8]

There may be disagreement as to the ultimate position of the consumer problem, but there is little doubt that it rates high on any list. An examination of the proposed agenda for the impending Twenty-First Annual Convention of the Super Market Institute reveals the intensified interest in the problem of consumer habits and attitudes:[9]

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[7]Lawrence Drake, "Store Talk," Chain Store Age, Vol. 34, No. 5 (May, 1958), 3.

[8]Robert W. Mueller, "Food Sales at High Level Despite 'Recession'," Progressive Grocer, Vol. 37, No. 4 (April, 1958), 6.

[9]"Sell More Impact, Impulse, and Ideas," Chain Store Age, Vol. 34, No. 5 (May, 1958), 80-81.

"See Ourselves As Others See Us."

"Do You Make These Impressions on Consumers?"

"How to Lay Out Stores to Take Advantage of Consumer Shopping Habits and Desires."

"Let the Customer Tell You How to Design Stores for Greater Sales."

"How to Make Super Market Advertising More Effective."

"What's on the Woman's Mind?"

Manufacturers in the food industry have long been aware of the need for information from the consumers themselves in order to maximize sales promotion and new product development. Marketing research has provided management with a problem solving tool to help close the communication gap between producer and consumer. The free flow of information between these sources had been complicated by increased specialization within the marketing system.

The food retailer, who has the prime responsibility for the transaction and continuation phases of marketing, has also withdrawn to a certain extent from intimate contact with consumers. Expansion and merger have created problems of organization, supply, and communication within the business firm itself. Standardization and specialization have been key factors in the economic success of chain store operations. The giant food stores of today are geared to run like a well oiled machine, with the emphasis on volume and increased experimentation in non-food lines. The individual customer behind the shopping cart has become a "face in the crowd," in the main, expressionless, except as a microscopic reflection in the total sales figure.

The growing competitive situation has forced supermarket operators to reevaluate the position of the consumer.

"Under dynamic conditions the organization planner takes account not only of the market and marketing channels but of the kind and size of market the firm must serve the day after tomorrow."[10]

"Periodic measurements of consumer perceptance, attitudes, and acceptance should be made not only for the usual purposes, such as to provide direction in product development and to guide advertising and marketing, but also to protect the company's investment in consumer good will."[11]

"By now, it should be clear, nothing is more important than the inclinations of the consumer. He has money, he has a big choice, he can buy as he desires, and he can stop buying many things for quite a while. What is he likely to do?"[12]

The problem of consumer research is further complicated by the dynamic nature of our economic and social

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[10]Wroe Alderson, Marketing Behavior and Executive Action (Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1957), p. 432.

[11]Rensis Likert, "Measuring Organization Performance," Harvard Business Review, Vol. 36, No. 2 (March-April, 1958), 49.

[12]Editors of Fortune, op. cit., p. 29

system. Advances in technology are constantly pressuring what were once considered standard methods, accepted products, and productive communications media, into obsolescence. To meet the needs of the socio-economic dynamics of our system, consumer research is challenged by the problem of meeting new frontiers in action and reaction on a continuing basis.

> Even a wholly representative sample cannot provide an answer that is good for more than the moment it is taken. As the individual becomes better informed, as he gains new experiences, his attitudes, preferences and plans change and are, in fact, bound to change under the impact of new developments.[13]

"Marketing research cannot make decisions for the executives. It may provide him with information, but that information will never be complete. Thus, the executive must still operate in an area of uncertainty. Research can only decrease the size of the area."[14]

The area of decision for the supermarket operator has been growing in intensity through competition, expansion, and rising costs of operations. Research relative to consumer interests can only help focus his marketing effort in the proper direction.

Review of Recent Literature

Research relative to consumer habits and attitudes has been attempted from many different approaches. In

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[13] H. W. Boyd, Jr. and Ralph Westfall, Marketing Research (Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1956), p. 25, quoting Illinois Business Review, Vol. X (November, 1953), 2, 6.

[14] Ibid.

recent years, the economists, sociologists, and psychologists have joined forces with business and government researchers in an attempt to make some sense out of the mysteries of consumer behavior. Although there is much activity in this field, it can be categorized as unorganized; the results usually reflecting the background of the writer or researcher. If the consumer would only stand still long enough to be classified as an "Economic Man," or a "Rational Man," or a "Group Product," the problem would be greatly simplified. However, the individual consumer refuses to mark time and be counted as a predictable, convenient statistic.

The following responsibilities sometimes assigned to consumers are, in the opinion of a leading consumer economist, no longer reasonable under modern conditions:[15]

1. That consumers should be able to judge the quality of merchandise before buying.
2. That consumers should always shop before buying.
3. That consumers should make their own decisions without being influenced by advertising and selling efforts and should attempt to develop sales resistance.
4. That consumers should act rationally in buying and should not be influenced by emotion.

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[15]Pearce C. Kelly, Consumer Economics (Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1953), p. 16.

The modern consumer, according to Dichter, is an "entirely new type" who exhibits these five major characteristics:[16]

1. Desire to be treated as an individual.
2. Desire for participation.
3. An increased maturity.
4. Desire for recognition.
5. Desire for creativeness.

Alderson in his attempt at a functional marketing synthesis of consumer motivations has categorized households by special types of organized behavior systems.

> While rational problem solving is believed to fill a central place in the behavior of the consumer buyer, the presence of irrational or nonrational factors cannot be ignored. Habit and impulse are often more in evidence than rational choice, and efficiency as a buyer is acquired only as the result of considerable experience.[17]
>
> This scheme of analysis obviously leads to a four-way classification by family type. The four classes as follows: co-ordinated and compatible; co-ordinated and incompatible; unco-ordinated and compatible; and unco-ordinated and incompatible. It seems reasonable to expect quite different types of buying behavior from these four types of families.[18]

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[16]Perrin Stryker, "What's the Motive?" in The Amazing Advertising Business by The Editors of Fortune (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957), p. 78.

[17]Alderson, op. cit., p. 163.

[18]Ibid., p. 177.

Economists and sociologists have noted a growing trend toward a homogeneity in consumer buying patterns.

> Having now followed the individual from childhood to the grave, we would like in these concluding remarks to touch on the specter of uniformity, both in careers and in consumer behavior, that specter which haunts so much of our, and European, thinking about America.[19]

In commenting on the intensive survey of consumer spending made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 1950 and the succeeding group of university research projects which had the advantage of many cross-classifications permitting the isolation of important variables relative to spending patterns, the following observations were made:

> However, the search for differences in spending patterns should not cause us to lose sight of the similarities. Indeed, many of the tables we have presented. . .are more remarkable for the similarity of consumption patterns they reveal that for the differences. There are regional and racial differences, and they may be important for the firm interested in a particular market or type of product. Generally, however, the dominant impression is one of uniformity. . . . Perhaps the major finding that will emerge is that the American Market is becoming a homogeneous whole, with variations attributable almost entirely to income differences rather than a market sharply segmented by regional, racial,occupational, and other differences. As far as markets are concerned, at any rate, the melting pot may well be on its way to the completion of its task.[20]

This tendency of the mass market of consumers to act as a unified whole has been of invaluable aid in many

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[19]David Reisman and Howard Roseborough, "Careers and Consumer Behavior," Consumer Behavior: The Life Cycle and Consumer Behavior, Lincoln H. Clark, editor (New York: New York University Press, 1955), p. 14.

[20]Irwin Friend and Irvin B. Kravis, "New Light on the Consumer Market," Harvard Business Review, Vol. 35, No. 1 (January-February, 1957), 115-116.

phases of marketing research and in the proper direction of marketing decisions and promotional effort. However, there are grave dangers inherent in the acceptance of the principle of the homogeneity of the consumer market or the predictability of consumer behavior in a dynamic economy. In spite of the fact that the American consumer is probably the best researched person in the world, he still represents an enigma of sizable proportions. The leading proponents of the social science approach to marketing problems are the first to admit that their efforts are still in the pioneer or frontier stage.

"Of course motivational research is not a panacea. . . . What is needed is a unified concept in research, dealing with the behavior and motives of human beings."[21]

> What seems badly needed is research on group factors in consumer behavior that will deal with phenomena falling between, let us say, brand preferences at one end of the scale and the national consumption function, as theoretical economists call it, at the other.[22]

> The realization that buyers come into the market to solve problems is more reliable than the notion that selling is simply a matter of implanting habits or taking advantage of impulses in passive and muddle-headed customers. A product, a service, or a retail store must function to survive the test of the

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[21]Ernest Dichter, "Scientifically Predicting and Understanding Human Behavior," Consumer Behavior and Motivation, Robert H. Cole, editor (University of Illinois Bulletin, Vol. 53, No. 45. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, February, 1956), p. 36.

[22]Nelson N. Foote, "The Autonomy of the Consumer," Consumer Behavior: The Dynamics of Consumer Reaction, Lincoln H. Clark, editor (New York: New York University Press, 1954), p. 16.

> market. . . The world of consumers may be willing to be flattered, cajoled, or entertained, but it does not wish to be deceived.[23]

From the fields of humanistic psychiatry has come the warning of both the limits and latitudes of our knowledge of human behavior.

> Undoubtedly the desire to know our fellow men and ourselves corresponds to a deep need in human beings. Man lives within a social context. . . . However complete rational knowledge is possible only of _things_. . . . _Man is not a thing_.[24]

> Indeed we can be quite certain that most of the theories we hold today in the areas of motivation, emotions, and personality will look very "corn" fifty years hence. To become intimidated by a conceptual structure which is little better, than a primitive word picture at best, however colorful and dramatic, is certainly not far from the height of folly.[25]

The current status of research relating to consumer behavior indicates that methodology and experimentation are approaching a more unified concept within the limits of the knowledge existing in the social sciences.

Purpose of the Study

Research studies on consumer habits, attitudes, and preferences are not new to the supermarket operator. However, the extent to which the survey approach is utilized

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[23] Alderson, _op. cit._, p. 184.

[24] Erich Fromm, "Man Is Not a Thing," _The Saturday Review_, March 16, 1957, p. 10.

[25] J. A. Gengerelli, "Dogma or Discipline," _The Saturday Review_, March 23, 1957, p. 40.

within retail operations varies greatly, even among the largest chain store operators. A survey made by the author on the extent of consumer research conducted within, or contracted for, by eight of the food chains represented in the Food Distribution Curriculum at Michigan State University revealed marked variance in the extent of consumer research. The extremes were represented on the one hand, by a company utilizing consumer opinion surveys, product testing panels, and the maintenance of a staff of part time resident interviewers in all parts of the country, and on the other extreme by a company using verbal reports from shoppers who evaluate stores from a customer's viewpoint. In all cases the replies from the food chains indicated an active and growing interest in this field.

In view of the increasing competitive nature of food retailing and the changing pattern of the consumer market, the author feels that the study of consumer habits and attitudes represents a primary and continuing need for the food retailer.

An exploratory study was designed to develop and test hypotheses relating to the shopping habits and attitudes of a select group. The emphasis in this study is on a select universe; young married couples, newly arrived in an area, dependent on a car for shopping. Inasmuch as this type of group will gain in market significance as the baby boom of the 1940's is translated into family formations in the

1960's, it was felt that information regarding their habits and attitudes could be helpful in the proper channeling of market effort.

Description of Methodology

Preliminary investigation. The married housing development, Spartan Village, of Michigan State University, presented an excellent example of a newly constructed garden apartment development, containing a population that was basically new to the East Lansing area. The apartments were occupied for the first time in September of 1957.

Secondary data relevant to the population of Spartan Village was available at the Married Housing Office of the University. Information relative to each household was available on individual cards filed alphabetically. The information contained on the card included the name of husband and wife, address, and name and date of birth of any children.

Prior to the construction of the questionnaire, four extensive, personal interviews were conducted with neighbors in Spartan Village. These interviews lasted from one to two hours. The respondents were informed of the general purpose of the study and were encouraged to talk on any and all phases related to their food shopping from the time of their arrival at Spartan Village. Notes were written down during the interview and then consolidated after the interview. The reports on these interviews are presented in Appendix A, page 78.

Questionnaire. On the basis of these interviews a questionnaire was drawn up and pretested in four interviews. The original questionnaire contained an abundance of multiple choice and dichotomous questions and only a few open questions. The results were far from satisfactory in obtaining the feelings of the respondents and establishing rapport between interviewer and respondent. The original questionnaire was revised so that fifty per cent of the questions were of the open type. Although this made for more difficulty in tabulation, the advantages gained in obtaining new ideas and relationships far outweighed the inconvenience in time. The final form of the questionnaire is presented in Appendix B, page 81.

Method of selecting respondents. Since the universe was a known quantity an unrestricted random sample of forty prospective respondents was obtained by using a table of random numbers and applying the numbers to the alphabetical file of residents which had been numbered consecutively from one to 508 (the total number of apartments). All forty respondents were interviewed either at time of first contact, by call back if out, or by appointment if busy at time of first contact.

Place and time of study. All interviews were conducted in the homes of the respondents in the Spartan Village married housing development of Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, during the period from May 20, to June 10, 1958.

The interviews were made by the author and his wife, who had been thoroughly briefed on data collection forms and field work procedure, and who had been involved with the study from its inception.

Hypotheses to be Tested

The following hypotheses were to be tested:

1. Where a one-car family is dependent on their automobile for shopping, husbands will take an active role in food shopping.

2. Shoppers who are dependent on their car for transportation have added new meaning to our conception of "convenience" as a prime factor in their store selection.

3. In a newly settled housing development, food store newspaper advertising in a local newspaper has little influence on the store selection of the new arrivals.

4. Food store newspaper advertising rather than accomplishing its objective of initiating consumer action, has the negative effect of instilling confusion, irritation, and antagonism on the part of consumers.

5. While trading stamps are a minor factor in maintaining and increasing customer loyalty, they have become so much a part of the competitive promotional scene that consumers regard them as an added attraction.

6. Although self-service meat departments have gained general acceptance, consumers are faced

with their greatest food shopping problem in selection of meat by themselves.

7. Although consumers like to feel that they have made a rational choice in the selection of their store, habit (the knowledge of their store lay-out accumulated over a period of time) is a dominant factor not only in maintaining loyalty but restricting movement between stores.

8. The proper presentation of non-food merchandise is not only regarded as acceptable to the consumer, but is looked upon as an added convenience.

In addition to these hypotheses the hope was that many other important marketing implications would develop out of a system of questioning that would encourage respondents to talk freely on their likes and dislikes regarding food store operations.

Limitations of the Study

This study involved the use of a select and limited universe and in no way claims to represent the real universe of food shoppers. However, the age group included in this study does represent a significant portion of the universe of food shoppers. In a recent study involving a non-random sample of 500 "in-store" shoppers, in East Lansing, it was found that 23.3 per cent of respondents were in the 20-29 age group.[26] In an earlier study, a restricted random sample of a limited area in Lansing, involving 150 "at home" interviews, it was found that 36 per cent of the

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[26] Byron E. Chalfonte, "A Study of Consumer Food Store Preferences"(unpublished Master's thesis, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, 1957), p. 8.

persons interviewed, almost all of whom were housewives, were between the ages of 17 and 32.[27] In the validation of his sample, McKenzie used the nationwide survey of the E. I. du Pont De Nemours and Company which reported that 36 per cent of the shoppers were in the 20-34 age group.[28]

Although a conscious effort was made to keep interviewer bias to a minimum, it should be pointed out that the interviewers were closely associated with the food business, and the relative importance of the responses to the open questions were subject to the interpretation of the individual interviewer.

Due to the limited sample, percentage results have been kept to a minimum, and the majority of the data are shown in numerical relation to total responses.

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[27]George F. McKenzie, "A Method of Diagnosing Customer Shopping Habits and Preferences of Retail Food Stores" (unpublished Master's thesis, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, 1951), p. 13.

[28]*Ibid*., p. 14.

CHAPTER II

CLASSIFICATION DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to present data relevent to the physical and economic composition of the households involved in this study. In addition, pertinent comparative data regarding the food stores in the area will be presented.

After a brief explanation of the housing requirements for residence in Spartan Village, the classification data will be presented in tabular form for simplicity.

Background Information

Spartan Village contained 508 apartments, divided almost equally between one and two bedroom apartments. There were 256 two bedroom apartments and 252 one bedroom apartments.

The requirements for a two bedroom apartment was the presence of proof of birth of at least one child. The requirements for a one bedroom apartment was the presence of proof of marriage. Thus the universe was established to be 100 per cent married couples with at least fifty per cent of the universe having one or more children.

In order to obtain a clearer picture of the number of children per household, a restricted random sample of

100 households was taken by selecting every fifth card in the secondary data file and recording the number of children by type of apartment. The following information on the number of children by type of apartment was obtained:

One Bedroom Apartment:	4%--1 child 96%--no children
Two Bedroom Apartment:	67%--1 child 27%--2 children 6%--3 or more children

Although all of the actual respondents to the questionnaire were the women of the house, the husband was present and participated in seventeen of the forty interviews.

Car transportation for food shopping was an absolute essential for the residents of Spartan Village due to their physical location. The closest food store until March 1958 was the Red Cedar Co-Op which is located one mile from the entrance of Spartan Village. In March of 1958 a gas station interior was converted into a food store (Campus Cupboard), located a half mile from Spartan Village. Walking to this store presented a problem until April 1958 when the paving of sidewalks was completed.

Data on Households

Age composition of husbands and wives. Table I on the following page shows the age composition of husbands and wives.

TABLE I

AGE COMPOSITION OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES

	Average Age	Range in Age
Husbands	26	20-39
Wives	24	18-32

Number of children per household. Table II below gives in tabular form the number of children per household.

TABLE II

NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER HOUSEHOLD

Number of Children	One Bedroom Household	Two Bedroom Household
No children	10	-
1 - child	7	13
2 - children	-	9
4 - children	-	1

The actual data on the number of children per household showed a marked variance with original information obtained from the random sampling of the secondary data. Further investigation revealed that six of the seven children found in the one bedroom apartments had been born after the parents moved into Spartan Village, and that the secondary data had not been kept current with the recording of new births. Although the secondary data was only six months old, in terms of true population statistics it could not be used with any degree of authenticity.

Weekly income per household. Data showing the weekly income per household is set forth in Table III.

TABLE III

WEEKLY INCOME PER HOUSEHOLD

Number of Households	Income Range
23	$50- 75 per week
14	$75-100 per week
3	$100+ per week

Weekly range of food expenditure per household. Food expenditures are difficult to determine with any degree of accuracy as few respondents kept any sort of records. In addition, many respondents mentioned the fact that they purchase cigarettes, beer, health and beauty aids, magazines, and many other non-food items at the food store. Further complications are added by the home delivery of dairy and bakery products. The attempt here was to obtain the respondents' best possible estimate of the amount spent at the food store for food alone.

TABLE IV

WEEKLY RANGE OF FOOD EXPENDITURE PER HOUSEHOLD

Number of Households	Number of Children	Total in Household	Range of Food Expenditures
10	0	2	$ 12-18
20	1	3	12-25
9	2	4	15-27
1	4	6	20

Monthly rent expenditures. Rentals established by the university are $75 per month for the one bedroom apartments and $81 per month for the two bedroom apartments.

Type of apartment. Twenty-three respondents resided in two bedroom apartments and seventeen respondents resided in one bedroom apartments.

Car ownership and ability to drive. All of the respondents owned one car and not more than one. All of the husbands were able to drive and thirty-three out of forty wives were able to drive.

Working wives. Sixteen out of forty wives were employed. Of the sixteen working wives, nine had children.

Data on Stores Shopped by Respondents

Table V, on the following page, presents pertinent information relative to the stores which respondents had shopped in the area.

All of the stores mentioned in Table V are free standing units except for the two supermarkets in the Frandor Shopping Center. The Frandor Shopping Center could be classified as a small Regional Shopping Center. The Center was built behind a Sears, Roebuck and Company Department Store, and, in the absence of any barriers to traffic flow, appears to be anchored by the Sears store. There is a Federal Department Store in the Shopping Center

TABLE V

DATA ON STORES SHOPPED BY RESPONDENTS

— Meijer's —

Data	Wrigley (Frandor)	Kroger (Frandor)	Kroger (E. Lansing)	National	Prince Bros.	A & P	Schmidt's	Co-op	Campus Cupboard
Distance from Spartan Village (miles)	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	3.1	4.7	1.0	.5
Selling Area (square feet)	16,000	13,000	10,000	8,000	7,000	9,000	13,000	3,000	300
Parking Spaces	1,800	1,800	45	45	30	180	200	20	5
Number of Checkouts	10	7	5	4	2	8	7	2	1
Approximate Weekly Volume (dollars)	75,000	60,000	15,000	12,000	10,000	35,000	25,000	5,000	600
Age of Store (years)	3	4	10	15	5	1/2	1/2	10	1/2
Frozen Food Display Space (feet)	96	84	52	30	24	96	108	12	12
Self-Service Meat Department	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no meat
Health and Beauty Aids	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Beer and Wine	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no
Magazines	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no
Hosiery	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no
Housewares	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	no
Service Sea Food	yes	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Service Delicatessen (plus self-service)	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	no	no
Barbecue	no	no	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no
On Premise Bakery (pies)	yes	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no
Parcel Pickup	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	no	no

plus forty additional stores including the two supermarkets, two variety stores (Kresge and Woolworth), and three nationally known shoe chains (Kinney, Thom McAn, and A. S. Beck).

With the exception of the two small food stores which are located on the campus, all of the other supermarkets must be approached by car in the following manner: On leaving Spartan Village, the shopper would drive for one and one-half miles on a two lane access road (Harrison Road) and then turn right or left on to a main, four lane, divided highway (Michigan Avenue). A left turn would take the shopper to the Shopping Center and a right turn would lead the shopper through the center of the town of East Lansing to all of the other supermarkets. All of the supermarkets have direct access to the main highway.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS OF HYPOTHESES TESTED

Hypothesis No. 1--The Role of Husbands in Shopping

Hypothesis. Where a one-car family is dependent on their automobile for shopping, husbands take an active role in food shopping.

Results. The need of a car for food shopping was established by the physical location of Spartan Village which precluded shoppers' walking to and from the food stores.

The respondents were asked questions 4-8 in the Questionnaire, Appendix B, page 82, in order to establish car ownership and the ability of husbands and wives to drive, and to determine the person or persons involved in food shopping.

All of the respondents questioned owned one car and not more than one car. Thirty-three of the forty wives (82.5 per cent) questioned were able to drive.

Table VI reveals the responses to the question, "Who in family does food shopping?"

In twenty-five per cent of the households, the food shopping was done exclusively by the wives; in seventy-five per cent of the cases, the husband was a participant in the food shopping experience.

TABLE VI

PERSON(S) INVOLVED IN FOOD SHOPPING

Person(s) Involved	Total
Husband only	3 (7.5%)
Wife only	10 (25.0%)
Both	27 (67.5%)
TOTAL	40 (100.0%)

Hypothesis No. 2--The Meaning of "Convenience"

Hypothesis. Shoppers who are dependent on their car for transportation have added new meaning to our conception of "convenience" as a prime factor in their store selection.

Results. Convenience, as a factor in store selection, has had the traditional meaning of the store located closest to the food shopper's home. Table VII, shows the responses to the question, "What does convenience mean to you in relation to your store selection?"

The point to be emphasized here is not that the distance customers travel can be minimized, but rather that a "convenient location" means more to a customer using a car than just the proximity of the store to her home.

This point is further illustrated in the information contained in Table XV, Appendix C, page 86, which lists the respondents' knowledge of the stores in the area and

TABLE VII

THE MEANING OF CONVENIENCE TO RESPONDENTS[1]

Responses	Number of Replies
"Parking"	24
"Distance--Closeness"	21
"Parcel Pickup"	12
"Variety--Brand Selection"	11
"Fast Checkout"	10
"One-stop Shopping"	9
"Less Crowded"	8
"Express Checkout"	7
"Time Saving"	6
"Shopping Carts With Seats for Children"	6
"Non-Food Items"	5
"Check Cashing"	5
"Good Store Layout"	4
"Clear Aisles"	3
"Convenient Hours"	3
"Self Service"	2
"Selection of Can Size"	2
"Packaged Meats"	1
"No Pressure"	1

[1]Some respondents gave more than one reason.

the movement between these stores. It can be readily seen that the two supermarkets located in the Shopping Center have monopolized the main shopping of the residents of Spartan Village, although the other supermarkets, in existence at the time of the respondents arrival to the area, were located no further from Spartan Village (see Table V, page 24).

The supermarkets located in the Shopping Center, by virtue of their advantage in physical size and extent of parking area, were in a position to capitalize on the added meanings of "convenience" for shoppers.

Hypothesis No. 3--The Influence of Advertising

Hypothesis. In a newly settled housing development, food store newspaper advertising has little influence on the store selection of the new arrivals.

Results. Table VIII contains respondents' replies to three of the four parts to question 8, in the Questionnaire, Appendix B, page 82.

TABLE VIII

THE INFLUENCE OF NEWSPAPER ADVERTISING ON THE STORE SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS

Question	Yes	No
"Do you read the local paper?"	15	25
"Do you read the food store ads before shopping?"	10	5
"Do food store ads influence store selection?"	6	4

Although fifteen out of forty respondents reported reading the Lansing State Journal, the only local newspaper, only ten of the fifteen reported reading the food store ads. Of the ten respondents reading the food store ads, six respondents reported being influenced by the ads in selecting a store to shop.

An attempt was made to obtain from those respondents reading the ads, an explanation of ad readership and influence. The four respondents who reported no influence on store selection were in general agreement that they read the ads primarily to be informed of the items on sale in the store or stores in which they regularly shopped. The six respondents who reported an influence on their store selection from food store advertising were in general agreement that price was the determining factor. Three of the six respondents departed from their regular routine in search of the best meat buy of the week. The other three respondents left their regular store under the influence of coupons on staple grocery, produce, and frozen food items, or significant price reductions on staples dependent on a $10 total food purchase. In no instance did any of these six respondents indicate a permanent change from the store in which they did most of their food shopping.

Hypothesis No. 4--Reactions to Adverting

Hypothesis. Food store newspaper advertising rather than accomplishing its objective of initiating consumer action has the negative effect of instilling confusion, irritation, and antagonism on the part of consumers.

Results. Table IX shows the responses to the question, "What do you think of food store newspaper advertising?"

In order to clarify the leading unfavorable comment "coupons are discriminatory," it should be pointed out that after January 1, 1958, coupons began appearing in the body of the food store newspaper advertisements. In the

TABLE IX

RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS ON FOOD STORE ADVERTISING[1]

Comments		Number
Favorable	Total	14
"Helpful"		8
"Like Coupons"		2
"Like Extra Stamps"		1
"Interested"		3
Unfavorable	Total	27
"Coupons are Discriminatory"		6
"Can't tell what's on sale"		4
"Sale items are least wanted"		3
"Lots of advertising is false"		3
"Confusing"		3
"Meaningless"		2
"Cluttered"		2
"Dislike"		1
"Forced quality buying"		1
"Waste of time"		1
"Deceptive"		1
Neutral	Total	12
"No opinion"		12

[1]Some respondents made more than one comment.

following six months, competitive promotion centered almost exclusively around this practice, reaching its height in the form of full page advertising made up exclusively of coupons. Since twenty-five of the forty respondents did not make use of the local newspaper in which these coupons appeared, it is not surprising that their resentment was focused on a promotion from which they were automatically excluded.

However, even if the comments on coupons are deducted from the total of unfavorable responses, there was still considerable feeling against the way in which food stores present their advertised specials, the items selected for specials, and the confusion resulting from the inclusion of items at regular prices.

There is no doubt that the average consumer is interested in obtaining information regarding weekly food sales. Respondents indicated this desire by a margin of three to one in response to the question, "Are you interested in being informed of weekly food sales?" This question was followed by, "What would be the best way of getting this information to you?" Thirty of the forty respondents suggested some method other than newspaper advertising to reach them with the message (see page 54 for results), thus giving further indication of the failure of food store newspaper advertising to fulfill its primary function.

Hypothesis No. 5--The Influence of Trading Stamps

Hypothesis. While trading stamps are a minor factor in maintaining and increasing customer loyalty, they have become so much a part of the competitive promotional scene that consumers regard them as an added attraction.

Results. Table X shows the responses to questions 17-19, in the Questionnaire, Appendix B, page 83.

TABLE X

THE INFLUENCE OF TRADING STAMPS

Question	Yes	No
"Do you save trading stamps?"	36 (90.0%)	4 (10.0%)
"Do trading stamps influence your store selection?"	14 (39.0%)	22 (61.0%)
"If your food store stopped giving stamps, would it change the amount you spent in that store?"	6 (16.7%)	30 (83.3%)

Ninety per cent of the respondents were stamp savers. Of those respondents who saved stamps, 61 per cent said that trading stamps had no influence on their store selection. When the group of stamp savers were asked if they would change the amount spent in their regular store if the store stopped giving stamps, 83.3 per cent indicated that there would be no change in their spending patterns.

On the basis of these results it would appear that the majority of shoppers are not influenced by stamps in either their store selection or spending patterns.

However, at a later point in the study, respondents were asked the question, "How do you feel about trading stamps?" The responses to this question are shown in Table XI.

The majority of respondents (65 per cent) indicated a liking for trading stamps as a promotional device. These

TABLE XI

RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS OF TRADING STAMPS

Responses		Number
Favorable	Total	26 (65%)
"Like them"		10
"Forced savings"		5
"They help a lot."		4
"A must."		1
"I like them but they are not essential."		1
"O.K. You may pay for them in the long run, but you feel as though you are getting something for nothing."		1
"I like them but my husband thinks I'm silly."		1
"They are of secondary importance, but sometimes you get carried away."		1
"You pay for what you get. You don't feel the extra few pennies each week and we've gotten some nice things."		1
"Good idea. I feel as though I'm paying for them but it's sort of a forced saving."		1
Unfavorable	Total	14 (35%)
"Nuisance."		5
"Prefer lower prices."		3
"Leave me cold."		1
"Can't stand them."		1
"Don't mean much."		1
"Prefer prices to stamps. Stamps mean higher prices or lower quality."		1
"Pain in the neck. Save them only because National gives double."		1
"Wish they didn't have them. Raises prices. Gives bigger profits to store."		1

findings indicate that the problem of accurate determination of the influence of trading stamps on store selection and spending patterns, call for a more intensive analysis of the problem utilizing the techniques of Motivation Research.

A summary of the results of a study by Dr. Bertrand Klass, Manager of Applied Social Science Research, Stanford Research Institute, Palo Alto, California, who utilized the projective technique, reported the following results.[29]

> 1. On the basis of surface attitudes alone, food consumers appear to have a feeling of indifference or casual acceptance toward trading stamps.
>
> 2. Subsurface behavior suggests that trading stamps might have a greater popularity than might be indicated by surface attitudes.
>
> 3. Subsurface attitudes reveal that stamp savers derive many inner satisfactions from collecting and would resist discontinuation of trading stamp plans.

The Klass findings are substantiated to a degree by the apparent conflict between the 83.3 per cent of respondents who indicated that they would not change their spending patterns if their store discontinued stamps, and the 65 per cent of respondents who indicated a liking for stamps.

The author feels that the basic contention of the hypothesis is correct. Although there are more important influences determining store selection and spending patterns, such as variety, assortment, prices, and quality of meat, almost all respondents saved stamps (90 per cent) and the majority of stamp savers (65 per cent) like the idea of saving stamps. At the present time there is no scientific

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[29] D'Arcy Whelan, "An Investigation of Trading Stamps in the Food Industry" (unpublished Master's thesis, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, 1957), pp. 47-48.

measurement available to predict how much a change in promotional tactics involving stamps would influence the food shopper.

Hypothesis No. 6--The Problem of Self-Service Meat

Hypothesis. Although self-service meat departments have gained general acceptance, consumers are faced with their greatest food problem in selection of meat by themselves.

Results. Table XII shows the responses of consumers to the question, "What do you think of self-service, packaged meat?"

The favorable and unfavorable responses were almost evenly divided. Where responses seemed to reflect indecision, they were placed with the group closest to the consumer's preference.

Table XVI, page 88, Appendix D, shows the responses made to questions 26 and 27 in the Questionnaire, Appendix B, which covered consumer likes and dislikes in the stores they shop. "Quality Meat" ranked third in total responses shown under the likes of the consumers. Under dislikes, "poor quality meat" and "packaged meat" between them received more than three times the number of responses than the third ranking complaint, "high prices."

Table XVII, page 89, Appendix D, shows the responses to the question, "If a new food store opened in the area,

TABLE XII

RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS OF SELF-SERVICE, PACKAGED MEAT

Responses		Number
Favorable	Total	22
"Like it"		10
"Convenient"		4
"Prefer it to service. It's faster."		1
"I like it, but selection could be improved."		1
"I like it. It's faster. But I have trouble getting smaller roasts."		1
"It's good. Efficient."		1
"I use it. It's quick."		1
"It's all right but I sure miss butchers."		1
"You get a larger selection and can put the packages right in the refrigerator or freezer, but service meat was better. I can't stand packaged lunch meats."		1
"It's all right if the quality is good and sizes are appropriate but when I want something special I feel as though I am interfering with the butcher's work."		1
Unfavorable	Total	18
"Poorer quality."		4
"Need help."		3
"Pay more for packaging."		2
"Prefer service."		2
"I like meat cut to order."		1
"Meat sits on cardboard and bleeds."		1
"With service you get quality and the right quantity. It's fresher and you can see it weighed."		1
"I don't buy it. Prefer service. It's fresher. I don't like to have to ask for service."		1
"I buy it but don't like it. You must take the amount cut. If you go to special service, they do you a favor and keep you waiting."		1
"I use it but prefer service."		1
"I like service meat. When meat is packaged you can't see the underside. It lays in packages too long."		1

what could they do to attract your patronage?" The importance of the problem of the quality and selection of meat is highlighted by the number of times "meat" was mentioned.

When respondents were asked to explain why they shopped in more than one store they gave the following reasons:

Cause	Number of Responses
"Fill-in shopping"	24
"Meat"	17
"Produce"	6
"Sales"	5
"Near work"	3
"Stamps"	1
"Groceries"	1
"Specialty foods"	1

Table XV, page 86, Appendix C, shows, in part, the extent of shopper movement between stores. The ten shoppers who are reported doing other shopping at Prince Brothers, do so exclusively for meat. This store has the reputation of carrying a better grade of meat, and the meat department is a service operation. Of further interest is the fact that this store has held the meat business of all the respondents who shopped the store at least once.

In recent studies of consumer shopping habits prepared by the Burgoyne Grocery and Drug Index, Incorporated, for the National Tea Company, shoppers' comments on the meat problem ranked in first position in the listing of things they do not like about supermarkets.[30] In two cities, Milwaukee and St. Louis, supermarket shoppers concentrated thirty per cent of their complaints on meat, dividing their responses between packaging, quality, service, and selection. The total adverse comments on meat packaging alone were as great as the second most significant complaint in each city.

Hypothesis No. 7--Habit versus Rational Choice

Hypothesis. Although consumers like to feel that they have made a rational choice in the selection of their store, habit (the knowledge of their store layout accumulated over a period of time) is a dominant factor not only in maintaining loyalty but restricting movement between stores.

Results. In the selection of their first food store, shoppers showed a decided preference for the store they had shopped at their last residence (see Table XV, page 86, Appendix C). The most serious loss of original shoppers was in the case of the National food store. This store was acquired by National from a local chain and was not similar in size or layout to the supermarkets which this chain builds themselves.

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[30]Burgoyne Grocery and Drug Index, Inc., "Food Shopping Habits Survey of Milwaukee and St. Louis Supermarket Customers," prepared for National Tea Company, Chicago, Illinois, August, 1957.

The most significant gain in customers doing their main shopping was made by The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company (A & P)*, the largest national chain. Although this store was not opened until well after consumer shopping patterns had been established, consumers had no difficulty in making the adjustment to the new store. Contrast the A & P success in attracting Spartan Village residents with the failure of the Schmidt's* supermarket which opened one week earlier with the benefit of strong promotional materials (stamps, contests, giveaways, and coupons), which were not present at the A & P opening. Schmidt's is a local, four store, supermarket chain which was at a distinct disadvantage in that they represented an unknown quantity to the new arrivals in the area.

Table XVI, page 88, Appendix D, which reports respondents likes and dislikes concerning the stores they shop, shows that three out of four shoppers believe they shop in the store with the lowest prices. The aforementioned Burgoyne studies indicate this trend is apparent even when customers are asked for their opinions of competitive conditions by store departments.[31] Apparently, once a habit pattern is established, a shopper justifies her store selection by convincing herself that her store is, at the very least, competitive.

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[31] *Ibid.*

*Stores located on Grand River Avenue (A&P--E.Lansing, Schmidt's--Okemos).

Although no direct question was asked to prove that habit is a strong force in maintaining customer loyalty, several respondents who indicated the greatest dislikes in the store they shop were asked why they had not made a change. In every case the respondents mentioned that they had tried other stores, but encountered considerable difficulty in finding merchandise.

Hypothesis No. 8--Attitudes Toward Non-Foods

Hypothesis. The proper presentation of non-food merchandise is not only regarded as acceptable to the consumer, but is looked upon as an added convenience.

Results. Table XIII shows the responses to the question "What items other than food do you purchase in food stores?"

Health and beauty aids headed the list, being mentioned by thirty-six out of forty respondents. This category includes such items as shampoo, tooth paste, and deodorants. The only other item mentioned more than 50 per cent of the time was kitchen utensils or housewares. Items mentioned by 20 per cent or more respondents included, in order of popularity: baby items, cigarettes, magazines, and comic books.

Table XIV shows the responses to the question, "Would you like to see more non-food items in the food store?"

TABLE XIII

NON-FOOD ITEMS PURCHASED IN SUPERMARKETS BY RESPONDENTS

Responses	Item
36	Health and beauty aids
22	Kitchen utensils
16	Baby items
15	Cigarettes
12	Magazines
8	Comic books
6	Plants
5	Nylons
5	Records
4	Films
2	Toys
1	Socks

Thirty of the forty respondents indicated that they would not like to see this trend continued. This result was not expected, but when the actual responses are examined and related to the items that the respondents do buy, it became clear that consumers accept those items which make reasonable additions to a shopping list of frequently purchased items. Only three of the negative responses indicated a moral objection, but two of these three respondents

TABLE XIV

RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ON MORE NON-FOOD ITEMS

Responses		Number
Favorable	Total	10
"Convenient."		4
"When there is no large shopping center, it helps."		1
"Yes. But don't over do it."		1
"Small items are all right, but they might add too much."		1
"Yes. But no clothes."		1
"I like the idea of one-stop shopping."		1
"Small items are all right, but a food store is a food store."		1
Unfavorable	Total	30
"Could use the space for food."		4
"Just right now."		4
"Don't like the idea."		3
"Stores cluttered now."		2
"Not interested."		2
"Don't want to be bothered."		2
"I like to go to the other stores for a change."		1
"Spend too much time now doing my shopping."		1
"You could never get the selection as in a non-food store."		1
"I like specialty stores for better service."		1
"Prefer non-food store."		1
"Would rather see more groceries."		1
"Don't have the time for a good look."		1
"There's enough junk there now."		1
"Small items are enough."		1
"Would probably be out of place."		1
"It's not right for food store to sell these items." [Buys toilet articles and housewares.]		1
"A food store is for food." [Buys toilet articles, housewares, and baby items.]		1
"I only buy food in a food store." [Buys cigarettes.]		1

reported buying non-food items. The balance of the unfavorable responses and many of the favorable responses point up the fear that stores will tend to overdo the promotion of non-foods at the expense of food items, clutter up the store with unwanted items, and still not present the selection which consumers like to see in certain non-food categories.

The author feels that the hypothesis as stated is still sound and would stress that added emphasis should be placed on the first three words of the hypothesis: <u>the proper presentation</u>.

CHAPTER IV

ADDITIONAL MARKETING IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to provide additional information relating to the habits and attitudes of the shoppers involved in this study. The Questionnaire, Appendix B, included a total of forty-three questions. Many of the questions were directed toward the testing of the proposed hypotheses and the accumulation of classification data. In addition, many questions were asked which, while not directly related to the classification data or the hypotheses to be tested, provide added marketing information.

The Day and Time of Day Respondents Shop.

In response to the question, "On what particular day and time do you do your main shopping?" the following results were obtained:

1. Seventy-five per cent of the respondents shopped on Friday or Saturday, evenly divided between the two days.

2. Friday night and Saturday morning were the most popular times mentioned by the weekend shopper. Sixty-seven per cent of the total shopping for each day was confined to these hours.

3. Aside from Friday night, three other nights [Monday, Wednesday, Saturday] were mentioned by one respondent each as the time selected for the main shopping trip. In terms of

percentages, 32.5 per cent of all main shopping was done at night, but only 7.5 per cent of all main shopping was done on nights other than Friday night.

Promotion of New Stores

Two new supermarkets (Schmidt's and A & P) were opened within the marketing area of Spartan Village in February of 1958. A series of questions were asked to determine whether respondents knew of these stores and had shopped in them. The following results were obtained:

1. Twenty per cent of the respondents had not heard about the new store openings.

2. Of the 80 per cent of the respondents who had heard of the new store openings, 25 per cent had not shopped in the new stores. Thus a total of 40 per cent of all respondents had not shopped in the new stores.

Neither store used circulars which reached Spartan Village in their opening week promotions, although they did advertise extensively in the local newspaper. This fact coupled with the 62.5 per cent of respondents who did not read the local paper probably did the most to contribute to the 40 per cent of all respondents who had not shopped in the new stores.

Eighteen respondents mentioned having shopped in the new A & P. Of these, seven reported that they were currently doing their main shopping at this store. Eleven respondents mentioned having shopped at the new Schmidt's market. Of these, three reported that they were currently doing their main shopping at this store. Regarding the group of respondents who tried the new store as potential regular customers, A & P lost 61 per cent of their group and Schmidt's lost 73 per cent of their group.

The foregoing facts would indicate the following needs in new store promotions:

1. At the very least, each household in the area should be aware of the presence of the new store, and the more direct the approach the better.
2. A continuing promotion would probably be more effective than the give-away fanfare accompanying opening week. In order to disengage consumers from their normal shopping habits, there is need for repeated visits on the part of the consumer.
3. Appendix D, page 87, contains tables showing the likes and dislikes of consumers related to the stores they have shopped and the things a new store could do to attract their patronage. The outstanding factors were:
   a. Quality of Meat: The one department of the store that needs extra attention during opening weeks is the meat department. This extra help should be focused on the shoppers in an effort to determine their needs and wants and the operation of the meat department should be directed toward these desires.

b. Prices: A low price impression is another prime factor in establishing confidence in the new store. Advertised specials should have meaning to the majority of shoppers. A small markdown on staple items would have a more beneficial effect than larger markdowns on those items which do not have general appeal. Over-all, pricing of all staple items should be competitive so as to allow no room for unfavorable comparisons.

c. Variety and Brand Selection: The shopper is confronted with a significant break in her regular shopping routine when she shops the layout of the new store for the first few times. First impressions are lasting, and every effort on the part of the store personnel should be directed toward acting the part of guide and host. As many customers as possible should be approached to insure against the impression that the store did not carry items which the customer just did not find. This policy should be continued for at least four to six weeks after opening, with customers encouraged to speak their mind. Customer requests for items not carried should be given prompt attention. Lastly, national brands should be given priority of display in an area where the stores' private label merchandise may be new to many customers. The author feels that the terms "variety" and "brand names" are synonomous to many consumers although they are considerably different in meaning to the store operator. Hence, the advertising, promotion, and display of national brand merchandise has the dual effect of satisfying the customers liking for both variety and brand names.

The Relative Importance of Price, Quality, and Variety

Price, quality, and variety are difficult to classify as to degree of importance to the individual shopper. Most studies have attempted to rate the relative importance of these factors, and, in the opinion of the author, are merely forcing respondents to make a choice between influences that are strongly linked.

In this particular study, the quality of meat seemed to be the most influential determinant in changing respondents' shopping habits. The quality of produce, another perishable, will also cause shoppers to seek other stores.

Variety and brand selection were the most often repeated responses under consumer likes in the stores they shop. This comment was directed principally toward the grocery department, but it would be a mistake to minimize its importance in the perishable departments.

Price influences are difficult to measure. Price as a factor seems to have the least influence in meat buying and the strongest influence in grocery buying. Consumers seem to understand that when it comes to meat, you pay for what you get, and that quality does not come cheap. On the other hand, a one cent differential on a name brand can of groceries causes considerable irritation. In addition, although most respondents indicated a willingness to pay more for quality merchandise, they feel a strong need for assurance that they are not overpaying for either quality or variety.

Respondents' Opinions of Packaged, Self-Service Produce

The general consensus is that consumer acceptance of packaged, self-service produce far exceeds the acceptance accorded packaged meat.

Respondents were asked the question, "What do you think of self-service, packaged produce?" As was expected, the favorable responses exceeded unfavorable responses (favorable, 26--65%; unfavorable, 14--35%). However, the number of unfavorable responses was surprising and the reasons are worth examining. The favorable responses were brief and to the point: "Like it," "Convenient," "Cleaner," "Neater," "Different."

The unfavorable responses are shown below:

"Buy it but don't like it. Can't tell the quality."(2)
"I buy it but prefer loose." (2)
"Use it but don't like it. I prefer my own selection."

"It's alright for carrots and radishes but I like to pick everything else."
"I feel that it's forced buying on too many items. A small family can't use the quantities they pack."
"It's alright for some things but I'm distrustful of what is packed."
"Don't like it when I can't see the item."
"Packages are more than we can use. There are just two of us."
"I can't see packaging everything. There are some items you have to pick."

Undoubtedly, many of the objections to packaged produce can be overcome with improved packaging materials which will permit greater visibility and help maintain the quality of the product. The objections to quantity buying could also be met by providing an assortment of package sizes to meet the needs of the small family.

However, there may still remain a small core of shoppers who gain satisfaction from the self-selection of produce. The decision to satisfy the needs of these shoppers is up to the individual operator, but further studies should be able to narrow the field to the key items which, if presented loose, would satisfy this group.

The Use of Shopping Lists

Respondents were asked the question, "Do you use a shopping list?" If they answered in the affirmative, they were asked to explain how they used the list. Twenty-eight respondents (70 per cent) reported using a shopping list and twelve respondents (30 per cent) shopped without a list. Twenty-two of the respondents using lists (78 per cent) were in general agreement that the lists were a collection of basic, needed items and were non-restrictive. Only six respondents indicated that the lists were restrictive in nature. Their comments were:

> "I stick to the list." (2)
> "I plan my menus and keep impulse buying to a minimum."
> "I stick to the list but will buy other items which are on sale and new items."
> "Use a list plus specials."
> "I'll see what the sales are, but I keep to the list."

If the foregoing six respondents are regarded as immune to impulse buying, the remaining respondents form an impressive 85 per cent who are prone to decision making in the store.

A recent study of consumer food buying made by the Indiana Experiment Station, reported by the United States Department of Agriculture, indicated that housewives do much of their meal planning at the store and often decide what to buy as they shop. Less than half of the country's housewives make any definite meal plans in advance and from 18 to 86 per cent of total purchases reported by homemakers were the result of decisions made at the store.[32]

There is currently some controversy as to the correct designation of the decisions made by consumers in the store. Some critics prefer the designation "unknown buying" to

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[32]"Housewives Plan Meals in Shopping," Supermarket News, Vol. 7, No. 12 (March 24, 1958), 4.

"impulse buying." However, the indications seem apparent that, whatever designation one chooses, the field of merchandising is still very much alive. This merchandising has only to be geared to the needs of shoppers to gain maximum advantages for the supermarket operator.

Respondents' Opinions of Food Advertising Other than Newspaper Advertising

Respondents were asked the question, "Do you have any opinions on other advertising involving food?" Responses to this question are shown below:[33]

Responses	Number
"Like recipes."	18
"Like radio."	10
"Circulars are good."	9
"Like coupons."	7
"Interested."	4
"Dislike coupons."	4
"Likes T.V."	2
"Likes window signs."	2
"Waste of time."	1
"No opinion."	13

Thirteen of the forty respondents had no opinion on the question. Of the remaining twenty-seven respondents, the most active interest centered around recipes, with two out of every three housewives mentioning this fact.

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[33]Some of the respondents made more than one comment.

A recent survey of consumer food shopping by the Purdue University (Indiana) Experiment Station, covering homemakers in three medium-sized cities in Indiana, indicated that the help most respondents wanted on the family feeding job revolved around menus and recipes.[34]

This information should provide both manufacturers and store operators with sensible direction to successful promotion, advertising, and display of food items.

Respondents were asked the question, "What would be the one best way to get information of weekly food sales to you?" The following responses were made:

Responses	Number
"Circulars."	21
"Newspapers."	11
"Radio."	3
"Window Signs."	2
"Signs in store."	1
"Post Card."	1
"College Paper."	1

The fact that respondents indicated a preference for circulars over newspapers by a margin of two to one, can be attributed in part to the lack of readership of the local newspaper.

However, food stores do use the medium of circulars with varying frequency and this method of advertising, when utilized, could easily be adapted to incorporate the menus and recipes which housewives seem to enjoy.

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[34]"Family Likes and Dislikes Determine Shopping Habits," Lansing State Journal, May 22, 1958, p. 30.

<u>Respondents' Reactions to "Out-of-Stock" Items</u>

According to Dr. Ernest Dichter, president of the Institute for Motivational Research, the supermarket shelves are considered by the housewife, to be an extension of her pantry and, therefore, empty shelves in a supermarket "are frightening" to her.[35]

Respondents were asked the question, "*If a store happens to be out of an item you intended to buy, what do you do?*" The responses to the question are shown as follows:

Responses	Number
"Substitute or go to another store."	9
"Nothing."	7
"Go to another store."	6
"Forget it. Might take a substitute."	4
"Substitute."	3
"Forget it."	3
"Would depend on what the item was."	2
"Do without it or go elsewhere if needed."	1
"May try a substitute or go to another store."	1
"Let it go, substitute, or go to another store. Depends on the item."	1
"Ask for it. Would take a substitute rather than go to another store."	1
"Put it on next week's list or if I needed it immediately I'd go to another store."	1
"Ask for it."	1

The action a shopper takes when confronted with an "out-of-stock" situation seems to depend primarily on

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35 "Advertise Philosophy, Not Just Food: Dichter," *Supermarket News*, Vol. 7, No. 22 (June 2, 1958), 37.

whether the item is needed immediately by the shopper. In no case did shoppers report fright or even irritation at the situation. In the majority of cases shoppers indicated that they would do nothing or substitute before they went to another store.

What does stand out is the fact that only two respondents indicated that they ask for the wanted item. This lack of initiative on the part of consumers to communicate with store personnel will be discussed in the next section. Considering the possibilities of the "out-of-stock" item being actually in the store warehouse or in the process of being moved to the sales area, makes this lack of communications stand out even more. Of concern to the supermarket operator should be the fact that most shoppers seem to favor the inconvenience of a trip to another store over an inquiry in their regular store.

Communications at the Consumer Level

Respondents were asked the question," Have you ever mentioned any complaints or made any suggestions to the store manager?" Of the forty respondents, twenty-nine answered in the negative. Of the eleven affirmative responses, ten involved refunds on merchandise, and only one respondent reported a complaint which did not involve merchandise.

Admittedly, the modern supermarket is a heterogeneous complex of merchandise, customers, and store personnel. Over the past few years the industry trend has reflected a preference for larger stores handling more varied types of merchandise. As stores grow in size, and the self-service concept is applied to the various departments within the store, the customer becomes further removed from direct contact with any store personnel.

This breakdown in communications between consumer and store personnel is highlighted by the results of every survey on shopping habits. The many problems which consumers face are readily reported to strangers taking surveys but are rarely discussed with the people closest to the scene who are in a position to take quick, constructive action.

All signs point to an increased complexity in store operations. Problems will increase for both consumers and store operating personnel. Increasing self-service operations have actually increased the service responsibility of the store operators, in the sense that the communications pipeline from consumer has virtually closed. What action is taken on this problem will in a great measure determine the success or failure of a marketing operation.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was exploratory in nature, designed to develop and test hypotheses relating to the food shopping habits and attitudes of a select group. In addition, the hope was that additional marketing information would be forthcoming through a system of questioning that would encourage respondents to talk freely on their shopping problems.

The Spartan Village married housing development of Michigan State University, was utilized as an example of a newly constructed garden apartment development, containing a population that was basically new to the East Lansing area. The apartments in Spartan Village were occupied for the first time in September of 1957.

After a series of four extensive, personal interviews were conducted with neighbors in Spartan Village, summaries of which are presented in Appendix A, a questionnaire was constructed to be utilized as a basis for the study. The questionnaire is presented in Appendix B.

The study involved the use of a select and limited universe and does not claim to represent the actual universe of food shoppers. However, the age group included in this study does represent a significant portion of the universe of food shoppers, and reflects responses of a group that will gain considerably in marketing importance within the next decade.

The material for this survey was obtained by forty personal interviews taken in the homes of the respondents.

The results of these interviews with the respondents were:

Characteristics of Respondents

1. The select nature of the universe established the fact that all of the respondents would be married and at least 50 per cent of the universe would have one or more children.

2. All of the respondents were housewives. Husbands were present and participated in seventeen of the forty interviews.

3. The average age of husbands was 26 years with a range in age from 20-39 years. The average of the wives was 24 years with a range in age of 18-32 years.

4. Twenty-three respondents resided in two bedroom apartments and paid a rental of $81 per month. Seventeen respondents resided in one bedroom apartments and paid a rental of $75 per month.

5. Twenty-five per cent of the respondents had no children, 50 per cent had one child, and 25 per cent had two or more children.

6. Twenty-three respondents had incomes between $50-75 per week, fourteen respondents had incomes between $75-100 per week, and three respondents had incomes over $100 per week.

7. All of the respondents owned one car. All of the husbands were able to drive and thirty-three out of forty wives were able to drive.

8. Sixteen out of forty wives were employed. Of the sixteen working wives, nine had children.

9. Pertinent data relative to the stores which respondents had shopped in the area is presented in Table V, page 24.

Results of Hypotheses Tested and Recommendations

1. The role of husbands. The need of a car for food shopping by all respondents was established by the physical location of Spartan Village, which precluded shoppers' walking to and from the food stores.

Although thirty-three of the forty wives (82.5 per cent) were able to drive the family car, only ten wives (25 per cent) did the food shopping by themselves. In 75 per cent of the cases, the husband was a participant in the food shopping experience, indicating that husbands take an active role in food shopping where a one-car family is dependent on their automobile for this shopping.

Recommendations--Hypothesis No. 1. Further study would be necessary to determine with more precision, the extent of the buying decisions made by husbands. However, the very presence of an increasing number of male customers in food stores, opens up many interesting merchandising and promotion possibilities, not only in foods, but in non-food lines as well.

In addition, a re-evaluation of the existing lines of non-food merchandise carried within a store might show that, by increasing the assortment within commodity groups, a store could profit from the tremendous amount of advertising specifically directed at the male market.

2. The meaning of convenience. Shoppers who are dependent on their car for transportation have added new meaning to our concept of "convenience" as a prime factor in their store selection.

Respondents mentioned "parking" with more frequency than "distance" when asked what "convenience" meant to them in relation to their store selection. Table VII, page 28, shows all the responses to this question, the most frequently mentioned after "parking" and "distance" being: "parcel-pickup," "variety" and "brand selection," "fast checkout," and "one-stop shopping."

Recommendations--Hypothesis No. 2. "Convenience" as a factor in determining shopper store selection has had the traditional meaning of "closeness to" or "distance from" the home. This term has been used in many consumer studies and usually shows up as a prime factor in store selection. There is no doubt that distance exerts an extremely important influence on store selection, but the increased use of the automobile for food shopping and the growth of the shopping center movement have added new dimensions to the traditional concept of convenience.

What the author would urge is a definite attempt on the part of all persons involved in research concerned with food shopping to re-evaluate much of the terminology which is utilized to describe consumer preferences. As the study progressed there were other examples of simple semantic problems which could conceivably make for significant changes in statistical presentations depending on the aim of the researcher or the misuse of a term by the respondent. When respondents speak of "variety" or "brand selection" or both, do they mean one and the same thing? The feeling on the part of the author was that these terms are used synonomously by many respondents, especially when referring to groceries. "Variety" and "assortment of package sizes" are synonomous expressions to many respondents when referring to packaged perishable foods.

3. The influence of newspaper advertising. Fifteen out of forty respondents reported reading the only local newspaper in which food store advertising appeared. Of the

fifteen newspaper readers, ten reported reading the food store advertisements, and six of these ten reported being influenced by the ads in selecting a store to shop.

The six respondents who reported an influence on their store selection were in general agreement that price was the determining factor.

Thus it was established that only six of the forty respondents were affected by the newspaper ads, indicating that food store newspaper advertising has little influence on the store selection of new arrivals in an area.

Recommendations--Hypothesis 3. A direct method of contact between store and potential customer should be made as soon as possible after the arrival of the family to the area. In the case of Spartan Village, there was no direct attempt to reach a potential market which represented, at the very least, $7,500 in weekly food sales. Left to their own devices, shoppers gravitated to the store they were familiar with at their last residence, followed the recommendations of neighbors, or selected the first store they happened to see.

4. Respondents' reaction to advertising. Regarding their opinions of food store advertising, respondents made more unfavorable than favorable comments, indicating that the manner in which this advertising is presented is confusing and irritating, and has created much antagonism on the part of consumers.

Recommendations--Hypothesis No. 4. Respondents provided the key to the answer by pointing out the problem areas.

a. To initiate action, sale items should be selected from the group of items having widest, basic appeal.

b. To provide added meaning, and impact, food advertisers should strive to add a conceptual framework to sale prices. On groceries, with fairly stable prices, net savings to consumers could be shown. In the case of those perishables which are subject to constant price fluctuation, the problem is more difficult, but should not be beyond solution.

c. Ads should be as simple as possible to avoid the confusion generated by a maze of prices and items.

d. Ads built around menu plans and recipes would be of considerable help in problem solving and at the same time provide enjoyable reading.

e. Items promoted at regular prices should be clearly separated from the body of sale items under such headings as "Shopping Reminders" or "Check Your Shopping List." Until such segregation does take place, items promoted at regular prices in the body of the ad will create doubts and confusion, and lessen the desired impact of the sale items.

f. Price reductions should be available to every customer. The store operator must decide whether he would rather see "price" shoppers with a coupon in hand or satisfied regular customers.

5. The influence of trading stamps. Ninety per cent of the respondents were stamp savers. Sixty-one per cent of the stamp savers said that trading stamps had no influence on their store selection, and 83.3 per cent of the stamp savers said they would not change their spending pattern in a store if that store dropped stamps.

However, 65 per cent of all respondents indicated a positive liking for stamps, which gives credence to the belief that, while stamps may not be one of the dominant factors in maintaining and increasing customer loyalty, they have gained consumer acceptance and are now an important part of the promotion scene.

Recommendations--Hypothesis No. 5. The conflicting nature of responses from the same individuals prohibited the positive estimation of results from a specific course of action regarding trading stamps.

An awareness of the strength of the satisfactions consumers derive from trading stamps seems to indicate that a course of action to abandon a stamp plan would necessitate intelligent promotion to create substitute satisfactions for consumers.

6. The problem of self-service meat. Consumer opinion was almost evenly divided on the question of their

liking of self-service, packaged meat. Most of the unfavorable responses were centered about the following reasons:

a. Doubts about quality and freshness.

b. Insufficient assortment of package sizes.

c. Lack of knowledge about meat. Need for assistance.

d. Service stations not adequately or properly manned.

e. Camouflage packaging.

f. Belief that consumers pay extra for packaging.

Further evidence that self selection of meat is the number one problem for shoppers was indicated by the following:

a. The leading cause for consumer shopping in more than one store, after "fill-in shopping," was "meat."

b. When respondents were asked what they disliked in the stores they shop, "poor quality meat" and "packaged meat" between them received more than three times the number of responses than the next ranking complaint, "high prices."

Recommendations--Hypothesis No. 6. Institutional advertising and consumer education through "in-store" promotional material would be of considerable help.

Improved packaging methods and constructive policies regarding freshness control and assortment of package sizes would also build consumer confidence.

The preceding suggestions, however, are long range in nature. In order to obtain immediate positive results an attempt should be made to face up to the service responsibilities created by the self-service operation. Genuine success will come, not by waiting for consumers to ask for help, but by approaching consumers through personnel who are trained to meet the public and can do a responsible selling job.

7. Habit versus rational choice. In selecting their first food store, shoppers showed a decided preference for the store they had shopped at their last residence.

The largest gains and losses in original shoppers were a reflection of previously accepted habit patterns. Three out of four shoppers believe they shop in the store with the lowest prices, indicating further that habit rather than rational choice is a dominant factor in maintaining customer loyalty.

Recommendation--Hypothesis No. 7. There is general agreement that a satisfied customer is the best advertisement a store can have. Evidence of this fact is the number of respondents who selected their first store on the basis of a recommendation.

Store operators should continually strive to fortify the shopper's belief that her selection of a particular store was the right one. The list of consumer likes and dislikes which appear in Table XVI, Appendix D, page 88, can provide a basic check list for a plan of action.

8. Respondents' attitudes toward non-foods. Respondents' acceptance of non-foods is indicated by the number of respondents who purchase these items in food stores. Table XIII, page 42, indicates the variety of non-food items and the extent to which they are purchased.

In spite of extensive non-foods purchases, respondents voiced a decided objection to the idea of increasing non-food lines, indicating that the proper presentation of existing or planned non-food items within the framework of consumer objections would be of vital necessity for the successful promotion of non-foods.

Recommendation--Hypothesis No. 8. A flexible policy toward non-foods seems essential to meet the paradox of consumer acceptance of non-foods on one hand, and their rejection of the idea to extend non-food lines on the other. Different decisions would be required depending on the store location, size, and marketing area. Non-foods should blend in with the physical layout. An effort should be made to eliminate any action which would create an impasse in the food shopping situation, which is, after all, the prime concern of the food shopper.

The current trend toward a combination food-department store is an indication that non-foods may be promoted with success when physically divorced from the food operation, at no sacrifice of food display space. Although this trend is in an early stage of development, indications are that non-foods may be promoted with even greater success when they are not in direct competition with food for the shopper's attention.

Additional Marketing Implications

1. Seventy-five per cent of the respondents did their shopping on the weekend, evenly divided between Friday and Saturday, with the favored times being Friday night and Saturday morning. Aside from Friday night, only 7.5 per cent of all main shopping was done on nights other than Friday night.

The current trend toward longer store hours is a major factor contributing to rising costs of operation. Undoubtedly the store that is never closed is satisfying the shopping needs of the total area population, but further study should indicate the exact "point of no return" for such operations in a competitive situation. The problem of satisfying the vast majority of shoppers within a reasonable number of store hours should be approached in a cooperative attitude by the food retailing industry.

2. Two new supermarkets were opened in the area in February of 1958. Both stores showed marked difficulty in retaining customers on a continuing basis indicating the need for:

a. Continuing promotion in order to disengage consumers from their regular shopping habits.

b. Extra help focused on shoppers in the meat department, emphasis on low prices on staple merchandise, and priority display of national brands to create the "variety--brand selection" impression.

c. Absolute coverage of all households in the area to insure that consumers are aware of the new store.

3. The quality of meat seems to be the most influential determinant in changing consumer shopping habits. "Variety" and "brand selection" were the most often repeated responses of what consumers like in the stores they shop. Price as a factor seems to have the least influence in changing habits of meat buying and the strongest influence in grocery buying.

4. Although consumers favored self-service, packaged produce, the objections which were raised to this form of merchandising point up the need for:

a. Wider range of package sizes to accommodate smaller families.

b. Better packaging materials to increase visibility.

c. Consumer assurance of quality guarantee.

d. Loose displays of certain items to satisfy the small, hard core of shoppers who insist on self selection.

5. Seventy per cent of the respondents used a shopping list but seventy-eight per cent of these respondents agreed that the lists were a collection of basic items and were non-restrictive. All told, eighty-five per cent of all respondents were prone to decision making in the store, indicating that store operators can still capitalize on their merchandising "know-how" as long as it is geared to the needs of their customers.

6. Respondents showed an active interest in recipes as an advertising form. Recent studies show that housewives do much of their meal planning in the store. This information should provide sensible direction to successful promotion, advertising, and display on the part of both manufacturers and retailers.

7. Respondents' reaction to "out-of-stock" situations did not indicate that this condition creates a serious problem for the shopper. What is important to the store operator is the fact that most customers will go to another store if they need the item, in preference to asking store personnel about the item. Additional evidence of a serious defect in communications is the fact that, except for merchandise refunds, consumers are reluctant to discuss their shopping problems with store personnel.

Shoppers should be encouraged to inquire about items that are either "out-of-stock" or which they cannot find. Store personnel should be trained in the proper method of handling customer inquiries and encouraged to approach customers who appear to be in difficulty.

Until such time as rapport and empathy are established between consumers and store personnel, the supermarket will remain a retail giant completely void of selling personality.

Conclusion

The results of this study have shown that there are many problems confronting consumers which may not be obvious to the store operator in the day to day operation of his business.

Although the reported findings are limited by the select nature of the group studied, there is abundant evidence that the problems of this group are in accord with those of the universe of food shoppers.

The answers to many research questions are often found in the proper definition of the problem. The problem facing the food store operator in his relations with the consumer is two-fold:

1. The problem of a positive consumer orientation on the part of personnel at all organization levels who are involved in operations affecting consumer-store relations.
2. The problem of closing the communications gap which currently exists between consumers and store personnel.

A positive consumer orientation on the part of the personnel involved in store operations will go a long way toward correcting many consumer complaints. However, mere exhortation of an idea is not enough. Policy decisions affecting many of the problem areas are made above the store operating level, and, unless these decisions are flexible enough to cope with the heterogeneous needs and desires of consumers, the problems will continue, in the main, unsolved.

A basic premise to the success of supermarket operations has been the consumer acceptance of the self-service principle. Of necessity, this acceptance has resulted in the alienation of interest in the functions of consumer and retailer. The retailer has become a production specialist and the consumer is absorbed in the specialty of consumption. It will take an active interest on the part of both the consumer and the retailer to solve this problem. Once this communications pipeline is opened there is no problem that should be beyond our powers to solve.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CASE STUDIES

CASE I: (2 bedroom apt.--1 child--Husband and wife participating.)

"We shop at Wrigleys. . .Started shopping there on the recommendation of a neighbor. . . . They have nice, wide aisles, but there is never anyone on the floor when you need them for something. . . .They carry the best variety of merchandise, but their produce is only so, so. . . . .We've tried Kroger [Frandor] and Schmidt's, and we do a lot of fill in shopping at the Co-op. . . .Schmidt's is a very nice store but a little too far. . . .We heard about Schmidt's through a neighbor. . . .Kroger's canned goods [private labels] did not impress us and their selection is not as good, but their courtesy has it over Wrigleys. . . . I buy mostly national brand items. . . .Spend $16 a week on food. . . .Both Wrigleys and Kroger are a mess on Saturday morning when we shop. . . .We don't get the paper so I don't see the food ads. I never could make much sense out of them anyway. . . .Prefer frozen foods to the same item fresh or canned. . . .Stamps are a drug; would not change stores if they dropped them. . . .I don't know why I keep shopping at Wrigleys. It's easy to shop there because I'm familiar with the layout. . . .Can you tell me why they don't sell single pack cigarettes?"

CASE II: (2 bedroom apt.--1 child--Husband and wife participating.)

"We do most of our shopping at Wrigleys, but go to the A&P for coffee and cigarettes. A&P's coffee is the best for the money. We buy our meat wherever it is good and on sale. . . .Started shopping at National because we shopped National at home and liked that store. It was a big market in a shopping center. This store is too small. . . .We changed to Kroger [Frandor] but they were too crowded and the variety was poor. . . .Wrigleys has the best selection. . . .Their meat is the best, but their prices are too high. . . .Frankly, we are on a very tight budget and will shop all over the lot to get the best value. . . .We get the <u>State Journal</u> delivered and read the food store ads thoroughly. We have a hard time trying to figure them out. . . .Can you tell us why they advertise baby food at the regular price week after week?. . .When we read an ad the main item is meat, with produce second, and frozen food next in importance. . . .I doubt that two grades of beef would make much difference to me. If I could afford it, I'd buy the better grade. If I couldn't afford the best grade, I'd shop for sales or go downtown and get the cheap meat. . . .We save stamps, several kinds. Doubt that they are of much importance. I did get that wagon over there with stamps. . . .Spend $16 a week on food. . . .Usually shop Thursdays because it's less crowded. . . .If I had the money, I would stick to Wrigleys. They have the best store around."

CASE III: (2 bedroom apt.--2 children--Husband and wife participating.)

"Started shopping at Wrigleys on the recommendation of a friend. Friend told me that Wrigleys was cheaper and gave stamps. . . .Saw a premium catalogue from National and spotted an item that I wanted but was not in the Wrigley catalogue. . . .I'll shop National occasionally, but only on Wednesdays when they give double stamps, in order to accumulate enough stamps for the premium. . . . Shop Kroger [East Lansing] occasionally when I'm in a hurry. It's close to the school. I know that National is just as close but I will only shop there on Wednesday. . . .Spend $22 a week on food. . . .We don't get the local paper. . . .Haven't heard about any new stores opening. . . By the way, where are they?. . .I like Wrigleys for variety and price. . . .How do you really check prices anyway?. . . The service at Wrigleys is terrible. I'd make a permanent change if I could find a market that could get me out in a hurry. Yes, even if they did not give stamps. . . .Two grades of beef would only confuse me. It's hard enough to get a good piece of meat now."

CASE IV: (2 bedroom apt.--2 children--Wife participating.)

"I'm not satisfied with any of the stores. The aisles are too narrow and crowded. . . .Stores are cluttered with displays of non-sale items. . . .There's no check cashing system like at home. Every week I have to go through the same identification with the manager. . . .I work during the week and have to shop Friday night or Saturday morning. . . .I do most of my grocery shopping at Kroger [Frandor]. I like their own brands of canned goods. . . .I buy meat only at Wrigleys. I'll occasionally go to a regular butcher department [service meat] for meat. Self-service meat is convenient but I can't always get what I want. . . .Newspaper advertising annoys me. Non-sale items are printed in large letters to make them seem like sale items. . . .At home I used to do all of my shopping at one store. It's inconvenient to shop at different stores but I can't find one store that has everything I like. . . .The one thing they do have here that I like is parcel pickup. . . .I buy a lot of non-food items at the supermarket. It's very convenient for me, but I hate to see them clutter up a store. . . .I like a store that's neat, clean, has good sales, and consistently good quality.

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Size of apartment (1 or 2 bedroom) 1-2

2. How many children do you have? 0-1-2-3-4

3. Does wife work? Y-N

4. Do you have a car? Y-N

5. Do you have more than one car? Y-N

6. Who in family can drive? H-W-B-N

7. Who in family does food shopping? H-W-B-N

8. Do you read the <u>Lansing State Journal</u>? Y-N

   If yes:

   8a. Do you read the food store ads before you shop? Y-N

   8b. Do the food store ads influence your store selection? Y-N

   8c. Explain ____________________________________

9. What food stores do you know of in the area? WF-KF-CO-N-K-AP-S-CC-Other________

10. What food stores have you shopped in the area? WF-KF-CO-N-K-AP-S-CC-Other________

11. In which food store do you presently do <u>most</u> of your food shopping? Use Code________

12. Do you presently shop at any other food stores? Use Code____________________

    12a. Explain ____________________________________

13. How often do you shop" (Weekly main and fill-in) M__F__

14. On what particular day and time do you do your main shopping? M-T-W-Th-F-S M-A-E.

15. Have you heard of any new food stores opening since you arrived? Y-N

    15a. If yes: Which Stores? AP-S-CC

16. Have you shopped in any of the new stores? Y-N

    16a. If yes: Which stores: AP-S-CC

17. Do you save trading stamps? Y-N

18. Do trading stamps influence your store selection? Y-N

19. If your food store stopped giving stamps would it change the amount you spent in that store? Y-N

20. How much do you spend on the average on weekly food shopping?____________________

21. What is your weekly income? A($50-$75). B($75-$100). C($100+)____________________

22. Husband's age? ____________________

23. Wife's age?____________________

General Questions:

24. Do you recall the first store in which you shopped?____

25. How did you happen to select that store?__________

*✓ 26. What do you like about the stores in which you shop?___

____

*✓ 27. What do you dislike about the stores in which you shop?

____

28. What does convenience mean to you in relation to your store selection?____________________

29. Do you use a shopping list? Describe how it is used.__

____

30. What do you think of self-service, packaged meat?______

____

31. What do you think of self-service, package produce?____

____

32. What do you think of food store newspaper advertising?

33. Do you have any opinions on other advertising involving food?

34. Are you interested in being informed of weekly food sales?

35. What would be the one best way to get this information to you?

36. If a new food market opened in the area, what could they do to attract your patronage?

37. If a store happens to be out of an item you intended to buy, what do you do?

38. How do you feel about trading stamps?

39. Would you like to see supermarkets offer more than one grade of beef? Why?

40. What items other than food do you purchase in food stores?

41. Would you like to see more non-food items in the food store? Explain

42. Have you ever mentioned any complaints or made suggestions to the store manager?

43. What other comments would you like to make regarding food shopping which would be helpful to a store attempting to meet your needs?

APPENDIX C

RESPONDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF STORES IN TABULAR FORM

TABLE XV

RESPONDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF STORES AND MOVEMENT BETWEEN STORES

Store	First[1] Store Shopped	Main Shopping Now	Other Shopping Now	Know of Store	Shopped at Least Once
Kroger (Frandor)	15	11	10	40	29
Wrigley (Frandor)	11	16	7	40	30
National	10	3	9	27	21
Co-op	2	-	13	26	19
Kroger (E. Lansing)	1	-	3	8	4
Prince Brothers	1	-	10	12	10
A & P	*	7	5	26	18
Schmidt	*	3	2	22	11
Campus Cupboard	*	-	7	18	15

*Stores not opened until February 1958.

[1]Reasons given for selection of first store:

Reason	Number
"Shopped at home."	14
"Closest."	10
"Recommended."	9
"Green stamps."	4
"First one seen in Shopping Center."	3

APPENDIX D

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM QUESTIONNAIRE IN TABULAR FORM

TABLE XVI

RESPONDENTS' LIKES AND DISLIKES IN STORES THEY HAVE SHOPPED

Number of Responses	Likes	Number of Responses	Dislikes
32	Good Variety and Brand Selection	20	Poor Quality Meat
30	Low Prices	12	Packaged Meat
20	Quality Meat	10	High Prices
14	Good Parking	9	No Speed Booth
12	Convenient	8	Cluttered
12	Not as Crowded	8	Crowded
11	Quick Checkout	7	Poor Check Cashing System
10	Good Check Cashing System	6	Slow Checkout
10	Know Layout	5	Narrow Aisles
9	Parcel Pickup	4	Displays of Non-sale Items
8	Shopping Center	4	Poor Brand Selection
8	Cleanliness	4	Poor Parking
8	Fresh Produce	4	Poor Produce
7	Courtesy	4	Quality of Private Brands
6	Trading Stamps	4	Discourteous Help
4	Magic-eye Doors	3	The Manager
4	Related item Displays	2	Late with New Items
3	Samples	2	No Parcel Pickup
2 ea.	Music, Private Brands, Non-Foods	1 ea.	Sales tax on food, Dirty, uninformed personnel, poor lighting, lights too bright.
1 ea.	Good lighting, Ice cream bags, No odor, large store, small store		

TABLE XVII

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "IF A NEW FOOD MARKET OPENED IN THE AREA, WHAT COULD THEY DO TO ATTRACT YOUR PATRONAGE?"

Responses	Number
"Meat selection most important."	6
"Incorporate quality meat with competitive prices."	4
"Carry quality meat."	2
"Quality meat most important. Then price."	1
"Quality meat, good prices, speed booth, music, closer."	1
"Quality meat, clean, parking, good layout."	1
"Quality meat, name brands, good sales, parking."	1
"Competitive prices."	4
"Low prices."	3
"Good Sales consistently."	2
"Prices, conveniently located."	1
"No stamps."	2
"Stamps, selection, clean, parking."	1
"Carry-out service, bagging service, clean."	1
"Brand selection, quick checkouts, larger carriages, larger variety of 8 oz. merchandise (frozen food package is too large for family of two)."	1
"Room to move around, well stocked, well lit."	1
"If the stores get any larger, they will have to have rest rooms."	1
"Improve checkout, parking, parcel pickup, layout store so that perishables are selected last."	1
"Build it closer."	3
"Good produce. Meat in portions for small families, offer legitimate sales."	1
"No suggestions."	2

TABLE XVIII

RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: "WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE SUPERMARKETS OFFER MORE THAN ONE GRADE OF BEEF? WHY?"

Responses		Number
Favorable	Total	29
"Would help budget."		10
"Lower price is most important."		6
"Would add to variety."		2
"Good idea. Widens choice."		1
"Yes, if labeled properly."		1
"Meat prices are too high. Cheaper meat can be prepared in a tasty manner."		1
"It's all right if you know how to use cheaper meat."		1
"Willing to pay more for better meat."		2
"It's all right but I wouldn't buy cheaper grade."		2
"O.K. But I would only buy best grade. Would sacrifice on something else, not meat."		1
"I'd like to see them carry prime meat."		1
"I like economy beef. It's leaner."		1
Unfavorable	Total	4
"Wouldn't buy it. But it might help the store's business."		1
"Don't like the idea."		3
Neutral	Total	7
"Don't buy meat in supermarkets."		3
"No definite opinion. Wouldn't matter."		4