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Table of Contents

SERVICE QUALITY: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF EXPECTATIONS VERSUS PERCEPTIONS IN THE DELIVERY OF FINANCIAL SERVICES 1
James B. Bexley, Sam Houston State University
Paul Hewer, University of Stirling, Stirling, UK
Leigh Sparks, University of Stirling, Stirling, UK

AN INTEGRATED PRODUCT TAXONOMY 3
Corbett F. Gaulden, Jr., UT - Permian Basin

ATTITUDES TOWARD COUNTERFEIT PRODUCTS: AN ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE 11
Cecilia Maldonado, University of Texas – Pan American
Evelyn C. Hume, Longwood University

THE ACADEMY OF MARKETING STUDIES JOURNAL: AN ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST SEVEN YEARS 13
Michael W. Preis, Long Island University/C.W. Post Campus
Gregory M. Kellar, Penn State University, Delaware County

SOUTH AFRICAN CONSUMERS' USE OF QUALITY CUES WHEN BUYING VENISON 15
Laetitia Radder, Port Elizabeth Technikon, South Africa

A STUDY OF MARKET ORIENTATION IN AMERICAN BUSINESS SCHOOLS 21
Robert L. Webster, Ouachita Baptist University
Kevin L. Hammond, University of Tennessee at Martin
Harry A. Harmon, Central Missouri State University

THE IMPACT OF BUSINESS SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, TOP MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS, AND AFFILIATION ON MARKET ORIENTATION TOWARD EMPLOYERS 23
Kevin L. Hammond, The University of Tennessee at Martin
Robert L. Webster, Ouachita Baptist University
Harry A. Harmon, Central Missouri State University
J. Mike Rayburn, The University of Tennessee at Martin

Authors' Index 25

SERVICE QUALITY: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF EXPECTATIONS VERSUS PERCEPTIONS IN THE DELIVERY OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to relate service quality to the expectations of consumers and bankers versus the perceptions of consumers in the delivery of banking services in community banks within the United States of America. A questionnaire based upon a 22-question modified version of SERVQUAL was designed to obtain information about expected versus perceived levels of service quality from consumers. A second 22-question instrument seeking bankers' perceptions of expectations was also devised. The data collected were then contrasted. The paper concludes by discussing the implications of the study's findings for community banks and in particular for corporate strategy and performance.

AN INTEGRATED PRODUCT TAXONOMY

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ABSTRACT

This paper approaches the task of product classification from a different perspective than is commonly used in either consumer or non-consumer (industrial, commercial, business) categorizations. The framework presented attempts to integrate classification schema from the two major sub-disciplines into a single system. The framework also allows for integration of thinking on types of customer decision making processes. The paper proposes that the simple matter of “why” the purchase is being made can be the basis for classification. In that context the paper proposes a simple concept that can be used as the starting point for the integrated taxonomy. A number of problems associated with such a framework are also discussed and specific areas for further discussion are suggested.

INTRODUCTION

Product classification schema are a concern of both marketing academics and practitioners. A number of useful classification schema have emerged over time, but taxonomic work related specifically to the *raison d’etre* for buying products has not been produced. This situation has been compounded by lack of consistency in efforts to describe consumer and non-consumer products. Herein, a framework is proposed which considers a product to be a product, without regard to the identity of the buyer. This framework bases taxonomic distinctions on the basis of “why” the product is purchased rather than how it is to be used, or the effort required in the decision making process, or the actions marketers take. The framework also concerns itself with the “how” of product-related decision making and makes an initial attempt to integrate both “how” and “why” for both consumer and non-consumer products into a single taxonomic matrix system.

CONSUMER PRODUCT TAXONOMIES

Over the years, a variety of classification systems for consumer goods have been proposed. We may handily bookend those between Copeland (1923) and Murphy and Enis (1986). Such goods classification schema have focused primarily on consumer response variables, such as willingness to exert effort (e.g. Copeland, 1923), or on specific characteristics of the product such as durability or frequency of purchase (e.g. Aspinwall, 1962). Enis and Roering (1980) proposed a synthesis on two dimensions of consumer behavior (expected effort and perceived risk) and two proposedly congruent dimensions of marketer behavior (product differentiation and marketing mix differentiation). They cast the two into a unified taxonomy. Their model emphasized consumer behavior and marketer behavior variables, albeit in an integrated framework.. In the same era, Kotler (1980) presented a slightly different product taxonomic treatment. He proposed a series of

now familiar, concentric concepts: core product, formal product and augmented product. Kotler's "core product" is of particular interest in this paper. The term, *core product* implies the basic need(s) filled by the product.

NON-CONSUMER PRODUCT TAXONOMIES

A variety of taxonomies of industrial products exists, but, unlike the consumer products situation, there seems to be only one type of taxonomy. Generally, the taxonomies are based on the purpose to which the product is put. Corey, for example, listed eight classes of industrial products as early as 1976. McCarthy listed six classes in 1978. Taxonomists in this area do not look at markets differently. What they produce is more a matter of greater or lesser differentiation among classification limits rather than different taxonomies.

An analysis of the literature points out that consumer *products* and non-consumer products (in this case, industrial products) are thought of in different terms and along different taxonomic dimensions. Literature analysis also reveals that the same condition holds for other categories of non-consumer customer categories. At the same time, the discussion points out that *decision types* involving these different products can be fairly handily compared and, as presented herein, fall into the same essential taxonomy. Further, the review points out that consumer and non-consumer products can be classified in essential isolation from classifications of behaviors related to their acquisition. The arguments to follow are based on the two-fold contention that decision types can be classified analogously and that product taxonomies have analogous characteristics. We will extend the argument to suggest that product types and decision types might be integrated into some meaningful framework.

PREVIOUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTEGRATION

Fern and Brown (1984) suggested the usefulness of the logical juxtaposition of "consumer goods" and "industrial goods" continua following Sheth (1979). In so doing, they proposed that the industrial-consumer dichotomy was too limiting. In their words, the dichotomy "establishes artificial intradisciplinary boundaries which inhibit the development of marketing theory." While they propose simultaneous taxonomies, they did not fully develop the notion.

Murphy and Enis (1986) accepted a similar logic. The thrust of their contribution was the extension of the original work by Copeland (1923), (which has been the baseline for consumer product taxonomy development ever since) to cover services and ideas. They combined all types of products into the one, unified taxonomy based on the Copeland formulation. They also argued for simultaneous consideration of consumer and industrial products within the context of the "strategic classification" taxonomy they offered in their paper. They bolstered the consumer product taxonomy, but did not develop the argument for taxonomy integration.

UTILITY

This paper seeks to classify products by asking only one question of the buying unit. The question is “Why?” If consumers purchase products to use them, they logically consume products to extract from them whatever utility the products possess. Consider, for example, the concept of the “utility bundle,” provided by Schewe and Smith in 1980. A term like this one implies “realized utility.”

Some writers, such as Lancaster (1966) discuss non-consumer buying units and their behavior in terms of utility from the standpoint of enhancing one or more types of utility. For instance, industrial producers can be viewed as enhancers (value adders) of “form” utility. Retailers can be similarly viewed as enhancing place utility, and wholesalers can be viewed as purveyors of “time” utility.

The familiar concept of utility can be useful for integration of thought on the two basic kinds of markets. Consider Kotler’s (1980) idea of “derived demand.” The basic difference between consumer and non-consumer markets would seem to be very straightforward: consumers purchase in order to extract utility from products, and non-consumer buying units buy in order to add utility to either the purchased item or some other item involved in production or distribution processes. The term “utility motive” is offered to express this relationship:

*Utility motive - the purpose for which a buying unit engages in the buying process.
There are two utility motives: “extraction” (related to consumers) and “addition”
(related to non-consumer buyers).*

This concept provides a unified perspective from which to answer the question “Why?” when it is asked of a consumption event.

The question can solicit answers at three different levels. First, the question relates to the utility motive as defined and discussed above. Second, the question may elicit response as to the type of utility to be added or extracted. Third, the answer to the question may reveal why the particular set of utilities is sought to begin with.

The first and third levels of answers to the “why” question are important to the framework under development in this paper. The middle level is primarily useful in distinguishing among types of non-consumer markets, although there are some implications for analysis of such issues as product form and product differentiation.

Maslow (1954) proposed a series of levels of needs along a continuum of complexity and homeostasis. If such a framework could be generalized to non-consumer as well as consumer markets, it might make a useful integrative device. Figure 1 presents an initial attempt to accomplish that. The figure presents existing continua for consumer and non-consumer product types. It also presents a set of newly proposed labels. Finally, it presents a pair of continua of need types from bio-homeostasis (b) and organizational homeostasis (W) to more abstract buying motives.

FIGURE 1
COMPARATIVE NEED TYPE CONTINUA

| CONSUMER | | | NON-CONSUMER | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|---|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| <u>Existing</u> | <u>Proposed</u> | | | <u>Existing</u> | <u>Proposed</u> |
| Convenience | Primary | b | W | Raw Material/ components | Direct |
| Shopping | Secondary | ↓ | ↓ | Installations/ accessories | Direct Adjunct |
| Specialty? | Facilitative | q | q' | Supplies/ services | Indirect Adjunct |

This synthesis of the two streams of ideas is highly simplified, but from here, we can launch the new framework proposed in this paper.

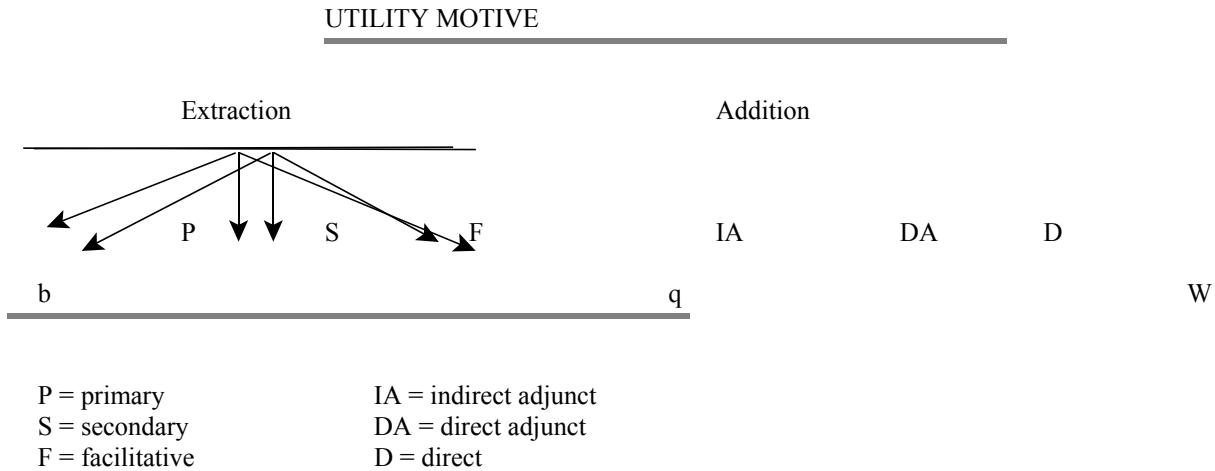
THE FRAMEWORK

This framework allows classification of both consumer and non-consumer products. It also allows classification of decision types, regardless of product type. Finally, it continues to allow for differentiation among types of non-consumer products. Figure 4 presents the proposed new taxonomy for consumer products based on the extractive (consumer) utility motive.

For the sake of space, a full development of the two utility continua is not presented in these proceedings. A fuller explication is available in the complete paper available from the author.

In terms of actual products purchased to satisfy needs, there is very little resemblance between raw material for production and raw material for people (e.g., compare iron ore to carrots). However, at the other end of the two continua, one may often find considerable overlap. For example, stationary or ball point pens may be consumed by both organizations (indirect adjunct) and consumers (facilitative) in precisely the same form. Figure 2 combines the two in a simplistic way.

FIGURE 2
PROPOSED COMBINED PRODUCT TAXONOMY



So far, the discussion of the proposed framework has focused primarily on product taxonomies. The paper also considered decision types. The remaining task is to integrate the two. A familiar matrix approach can be employed to accomplish this. Figure 3 presents such a matrix.

FIGURE 3
PROPOSED PRODUCT CLASSIFICATION MATRIX

| PRODUCT TYPE: DECISION TYPE: | Primary/ Direct | Secondary/ Direct Adjunct | Facilitative/ Indirect Adjunct |
|---|--------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Extensive Problem Solving / New Task | | | |
| Limited Problem Solving / Modified Rebuy | | | |
| Routinized Response / Straight Rebuy | | | |

“LET’S DO LUNCH”

Let’s look at a fairly simple, but common, situation in which the general implications of this model might be considered.

Undeniably, the need for food (nourishment) is one that we all share. This very basic need is quite important in terms of biological homeostasis, and all human beings engage in activities that result in its acquisition. We eat, and in spite of modern dietary theories, we eat fairly often. At the same time, modern man is infrequently involved in the production of food. As a consequence, food

is a product. It seems quite obvious that food comes in many forms. In addition, food is a highly contextualized product in terms of consumption. People consume raw produce, fast food, or even high-end restaurant meals for the same underlying reason. It just gets “dressed up” in varying degrees in different circumstances.

Food and its consumption are so important that employers actually build in a time allowance for food consumption into employment conditions. Sometimes, however, the employee may mix the need for food with business related activities. For example, the sales representative may even be strongly, supported and even rewarded for sharing the context of food consumption with a client on behalf of her employer. She eats and fulfills biological needs in so doing. At the same time, she may further the interests of her employer with the client. Is the food, then, a biological need satisfier, or is it a business need satisfier? Of course it is both. In this scenario, the same meal is a highly augmented “primary” product from a consumer perspective and an “indirect adjunct” from the non-consumer perspective. The example is even richer when we consider that she may be on an expense account and may make such decisions on a purely discretionary basis. She may even carry a company credit card for such purposes. She might even allow the client to select the cuisine and even the location for the “business” “lunch.” Individual need is very heavily augmented by business need in this situation. Food is both a consumer and a non-consumer product at one and the same time. The example demonstrates that utility extraction and utility addition may occur simultaneously. Given the hard work food accomplishes in the business lunch, to try to cast the meal as a consumer good or a non-consumer good is quite a task. The model presented herein suggests that is not necessary.

The proposed taxonomy contained herein probably raises more questions than it answers. That is, unabashedly, its purpose. If taxonomy relates to theory, the theory in the area of product taxonomy is essentially at a standstill as is implied by the literature. Reopening the discussion of product taxonomy might well result in the integration argued for, but not developed by marketing scholars in the last part of the last century.

CONCLUSIONS

A taxonomic system for integrating thought on consumer products and non-consumer products has been presented in this paper. This framework is based on the basic motivation to consume rather than the more traditional criteria. The framework was tentatively related to a decision-type taxonomy. Such a taxonomic framework is needed to provide consistency in thinking about products and product-related behavior. Several problem areas were also suggested. These problems are probably not trivial to the development of an integrative framework for marketing thought. This paper proposes that the taxonomic framework presented herein provides a starting point for consideration of such questions.

More pragmatically, the framework has much more scope than existing classification schema. Marketing academicians can benefit by having a single classification framework and systematic vocabulary for consumption in terms of needs, motives, and products. Practitioners, too, can benefit from a more systematic perspective on products, needs and customers. This is particularly true of that rather significant range of products, such as furniture, with appeal to both

consumer and non-consumer markets. This more unified perspective could lead to elimination of some artificial market delineations and better fit existing market conditions.

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All references and a full copy of this paper are available from the author. Please direct e-mails to gaulden_c@utpb.edu.

ATTITUDES TOWARD COUNTERFEIT PRODUCTS: AN ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Counterfeit products cause a considerable amount of damage in the free market economy. Moreover, future investment in research and development is placed at risk from the unfair competition generated by counterfeit products. Despite the importance of this phenomenon, there is lack of understanding of the factors that may influence customers to buy and evaluate these counterfeit products. The purpose of this study is to empirically investigate some ethical and personal traits, plus product characteristics, to assist in understanding and ultimately addressing this phenomenon. Some cross-cultural comparisons are made between Anglos and Hispanics.

A cross section of consumers in a small city in south Texas was surveyed about their preferences for and buying intentions regarding counterfeit products. A total of 211 usable questionnaires were gathered. Results show that consumer ethics and locus of control are strong predictors of the evaluation of counterfeit products. The results also suggest that the more evaluation the subject has for the counterfeit products, the more intention the subject would have to purchase the counterfeit product. The results of this study advance the literature by demonstrating a relationship between consumer ethics and individual locus of control.

THE ACADEMY OF MARKETING STUDIES JOURNAL: AN ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST SEVEN YEARS

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ABSTRACT

In response to the growing need for publication outlets, the “Academy of Marketing Studies Journal” was started in 1997 with the stated goals of publishing “empirical and theoretical manuscripts which advance the discipline, and applied and pedagogic papers of practical value to practitioners and educators” (Carland & Carland, 1997). The purpose of this study is to examine the content published in the first seven volumes (14 issues) of AMSJ in order to achieve a better understanding of how well the journal is achieving its mission and to gain a deeper appreciation of the position the journal holds within the marketing discipline. This article joins the growing number of serial retrospective analyses examining the characteristics of articles published by a journal over a period of years.

Results should be of great interest to marketing researchers because a basic job requirement of marketing faculty at collegiate schools of business is the performance of original research and the subsequent publication of results in refereed journals. An individual faculty member’s performance with respect to this requirement is frequently measured by the number of articles published (Hawes & Keillor, 2002). Among AACSB accredited institutions, the single most important criterion in faculty evaluations is journal publications (Tong & Bures, 1987). Thus, faculty researchers are vitally interested in the refereeing and publishing process.

In addition to the increasingly high standards set by the top-tier journals, faculty at teaching institutions face other challenges in fulfilling their research responsibilities. Faculty at primarily teaching institutions generally have more limited access to graduate student researchers, research assistants, expensive data bases, and other resources while shouldering heavier teaching loads than their peers at research institutions. Thus, the results of this study will be highly relevant to researchers, particularly researchers at predominantly teaching institutions.

Specifically, we analyze and summarize the lengths of articles throughout the life of the journal, the use of figures and tables, the numbers of references and citations used by authors, and the sources of citations. We examine the authorship of articles including the numbers of sole-authored and coauthored articles, institutional affiliations of authors, characteristics of those educational institutions, and the marketing topics that are researched. We discuss the sizes of data sets analyzed in empirical studies and comment on the depth of analyses performed. In addition, we compare the characteristics of articles published as Research Award winners at conferences with articles published through the direct submission process. Finally, we compare some key characteristics of articles published in “AMSJ” with articles published in “Journal of Marketing” and “Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice.”

We conclude, based on the evidence, that the journal is fulfilling its purposes. Legitimate and valuable research on current, interesting, and relevant topics is being published in the journal. At the same time, the journal represents a credible publication outlet for manuscripts prepared by researchers at predominantly teaching institutions.

SOUTH AFRICAN CONSUMERS' USE OF QUALITY CUES WHEN BUYING VENISON

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ABSTRACT

South African venison offers a healthy alternative to other red meat types such as beef and lamb as it results from animals in their natural habitat, is free from human intervention in terms of hormones and antibiotics and is characterized by low levels of fat and high levels of protein.

When consumers have to choose between meats, they often base their comparisons on subtle differences in the attributes of the products. One of the most popular attributes is that of perceived quality.

Since the consumption of venison is still low and little research into consumers' quality perceptions could be found, this study investigated the importance South African venison consumers attached to a variety of quality cues when buying fresh venison.

Sensory cues, particularly at point-of-purchase, but also at point-of-consumption, were found to be the most important in judging the quality of venison. These were followed by point-of-purchase information cues. Prior-to-purchase cues such as origin of the meat, the treatment of the animal in the slaughtering process and the use of hormones were least important.

INTRODUCTION

South African venison offers a healthy alternative to other red meat types. The meat results from animals in their natural habitat, is still free from human intervention in terms of hormones and antibiotics and is characterized by lower levels of fat and higher levels of protein compared with beef and lamb. Despite these qualities, the consumption of venison is still low.

When consumers have to choose between similar packages of meat, they often base their comparisons on subtle differences in the attributes of the product (Melton & Huffman, 1996). Quality is one of the most popular attributes used in this regard (Issanchou, 1996). Since research on consumers' quality perceptions of exotic meats are sparse, findings resulting from work done on other meat types such as beef and pork served as a theoretical basis for the current study. It furthermore reports on the importance of cues used by South African consumers when buying venison.

MEAT QUALITY

Traditionally perceptions of meat quality were described in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic cues (Mannion, Cowan & Gannon, 2000). Intrinsic characteristics are *part of* the physical product, while extrinsic cues are merely *related to* the physical product (Glitsch, 2000, Hoffman, 2000).

Lister (1995) points out that the determinants of perceived quality of a given product could be considered within the context of three stages, namely: prior-to-purchase; at point-of-purchase; and upon consumption. Becker (2000) uses the same differentiation, but terms the stages credence quality, search quality and experience quality. Although prior-to-purchase or credence quality attributes are of concern to the consumer, they cannot be easily verified in the process of buying and consuming. Point-of-purchase or search quality attributes, on the other hand, become available at the time of shopping, while experience quality attribute cues only become available with consumption.

According to Glitsch (2000), quality judged at the point-of-purchase highlights the role of “quality in the shop”, or expected quality. This includes both extrinsic and intrinsic cues (such as colour, texture and leanness). Experience or “eating quality” refers to perceived quality based on sensory characteristics, for example, flavour, tenderness, colour, smell and juiciness.

METHODS

Five hundred randomly selected consumers who passed the screening question (whether they ate any red meat) were interviewed with the aid of a structured questionnaire upon leaving either a supermarket with a meat section or an independent butchery. Two hundred and sixty two respondents never bought venison and were hence excluded from further analysis.

Since little previous research depicting consumers’ quality perceptions of South African venison could be found, 28 possible quality cues were identified from studies on meat quality. Respondents were asked to rate each of these 28 statements on a four-point Likert-scale ranging from “not important” to “extremely important” (1-4). A four-point scale was chosen so as to prevent respondents from choosing a middle value. According to Elmore and Beggs (1975), research indicates that a 5-point scale is just as good as any other scale and that reliability is not improved by increasing the rating scale from 5 to 7 to 9 points.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Item analysis was conducted to determine which of the 28 items in the questionnaire should be used to measure the items serving as quality cues. Exploratory factor analysis, incorporating principal component analysis with direct quartimin oblique rotations, resulted in four factors: prior-to-purchase cues (item loadings from 0.3938 to 0.82480); point-of-purchase information cues (item loadings from 0.4968 to 0.7595); point-of-purchase sensory cues (item loadings from 0.3844 to 0.7740 and point-of-consumption cues (item loadings from 0.4889 to 0.8647). One item (cholesterol in the meat) was excluded from the analysis because it did not have an acceptable loading. Inter-item consistency reliability was measured by means of Cronbach’s coefficient alpha. The resulting values ranged from 0.731309 to 0.853833, indicating a high level of reliability.

Table 1 shows the importance rating respondents attached to the individual cues.

| Factor | Item | Mean value | Standard deviation |
|---|--|--|--------------------|
| Pre-purchase quality cues | The amount of bacteria in the meat | 3.390476 | 0.987920 |
| | The use of antibiotics to treat the animals | 2.923810 | 1.154937 |
| | The use of hormones to treat the animals | 2.861905 | 1.223759 |
| | The country where the meat was produced | 2.823810 | 1.050133 |
| | How the animal was treated in the slaughtering process | 2.809524 | 1.178721 |
| | How the animal was treated on the farm | 2.719048 | 1.158335 |
| | What the animal was fed on | 2.485714 | 1.202981 |
| | Whether the meat was organically produced | 2.476190 | 1.103238 |
| | The name of the farmer | 1.952381 | 1.122889 |
| | Point-of purchase information cues | Reputation of the supermarket/butchery | 3.423810 |
| The quality stamp (Grade A, etc.) on the meat | | 3.295238 | 0.895751 |
| The quality label on the packaging | | 3.200000 | 0.932148 |
| The information on the packaging | | 3.123810 | 0.909232 |
| Notices displayed near the meat counter | | 2.761905 | 0.968635 |
| Information supplied by the staff of the shop | | 2.738095 | 1.036638 |
| Point-of-purchase sensory cues | How fresh the meat looks | 3.780952 | 0.553042 |
| | The smell of the raw meat | 3.776190 | 0.588896 |
| | Cleanliness of supermarket/butchery | 3.776190 | 0.604928 |
| | The colour of the raw meat | 3.623810 | 0.736216 |
| | The price of the meat | 3.323810 | 0.896514 |
| | The texture of the raw meat | 3.280952 | 0.807927 |
| | The visible fat on the raw meat | 3.157143 | 0.937814 |
| Point-of-consumption cues | The tenderness of the cooked meat | 3.576190 | 0.675196 |
| | The flavour of the cooked meat | 3.490476 | 0.713777 |
| | The juiciness of the cooked meat | 3.476190 | 0.733286 |
| | The texture of the cooked meat | 3.471429 | 0.713267 |
| | Whether the meat was frozen or fresh | 3.252381 | 0.932209 |

Table 1 shows that the most important prior-to-purchase quality cue was the perception regarding the amount of bacteria in the meat. This was also the only item in this factor where the mean value was above 0.30000 on the 4-point scale. The use of antibiotics and hormones also attracted fairly high ratings. This shows that South African consumers deem factors relating to the safety of the meat as important indicators of its quality. As venison originates from animals in their natural habitat and is free from human intervention in terms of antibiotic and hormone treatments, the meat is still safe to use.

The prior-to-purchase cue of least importance was the name of the farmer. This was also the cue of the least overall importance. The reputation of the supermarket or butchery (the most important point-of-purchase information cue), however, was of more importance than the name of the farmer, indicating that South African consumers are not as concerned about the *origin* of the production of venison as they are about the particular retailer. All venison available to South African consumers is produced locally and has not yet been subjected to scares related to diseases such as foot-and-mouth. However, it must be noted that it is not customary to mention the farmer's name on the packaging of venison available locally.

All point-of-purchase information cues can be regarded as extrinsic. The reputation of the supermarket or butchery had the highest mean value and hence highlights the role of information in influencing consumers' perceptions. Other important point-of-purchase information cues were linked to direct indicators of quality. Communication of information about the meat by means of notices and views of staff received lower ratings, possibly indicating that consumers valued this type of information less than they did objective quality indicators.

Point-of-purchase sensory cues all attracted high importance ratings (mean values exceeding 3.0000 on a 4-point scale). It is interesting that the perceived cleanliness of the retail outlet, a sensory cue not directly associated with the meat itself, was also deemed very important. Price, which could possibly be considered as a point-of-purchase information cue, loaded with the other point-of-purchase sensory cues. The perception that high price is indicative of high quality, and not the price per se, might have played a role in this regard.

The most important intrinsic sensory cue at point-of-purchase was the perceived freshness of the meat, followed by its smell and colour. Visible fat on the meat attracted the lowest importance among the point-of-purchase sensory cues. This might be explained by the fact that venison typically does not contain much visible fat when compared with other meat types such as lamb.

Intrinsic point-of-purchase sensory cues are likely to create expectations regarding point-of-consumption experiences. The most important point-of-consumption cues were the tenderness of the meat, flavour and juiciness. This was to be expected, as venison is often perceived as tough, dry and having a "gamey" taste. The tenderness, flavour and juiciness are, however, greatly influenced by the harvesting and cooking processes. If animals are not treated correctly during the harvesting process, the adrenaline released can result in bad tasting, tough meat. Furthermore, the perception that venison is dry often results from incorrect cooking methods.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

South African consumers use four sets of quality cues when purchasing venison. The most important cues are those of the appearance and smell of the raw meat and the cleanliness of the supermarket or butchery. All of these are of a sensory nature and form part of the point-of-purchase cues. Other important quality cues are linked to the point-of-consumption.

It is hence important that all members in the supply chain work together to provide the consumer with a high quality product. The producers should be aware of the influence of the slaughtering process, while the sellers of venison should pay attention to the messages they project to consumers and ensure that when the product appears on the shelves, it is fresh and appealing.

Consumers, on the other hand, have to be informed of the correct preparation methods. Providing recipes and detailed instructions, cooking demonstrations and training, could play an important role in this regard.

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A STUDY OF MARKET ORIENTATION IN AMERICAN BUSINESS SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Marketing literature documents a number of various strategic orientations that a business may adopt. Examples of these strategic orientations include market orientation, production orientation, and selling orientation. The market orientation strategy is based upon the acceptance and adoption of the marketing concept. The market-oriented business recognizes the importance of coordinating the activities of all departments, functions, and individuals in the organization to satisfy customers by delivering superior value to the customer. The market-oriented business continually monitors customer information, competitor information, and marketplace information to design and provide superior value to its customers. Theory and empirical research suggest that greater levels of market orientation result in a greater ability of the organization to reach its objectives, in other words, higher levels of market orientation suggest better performance. The literature on market orientation however is quite sparse in the area of market orientation within nonprofit organizations such as churches, healthcare providers, and colleges and universities. This paper extends the current research on the use of the market orientation strategy by investigating market orientation levels within college and university schools of business in the United States and comparing their levels of market orientation to levels of previously studied for-profit businesses. Academic vice presidents and deans of business schools in the United States were surveyed by way of a national mail survey. All of the academic officers (VPs and Deans) were from four-year colleges or universities. The market orientation scores of these officials were compared to scores reported in the literature for business managers. Each respondent was asked to provide market orientation information about multiple customer or stakeholder groups. The results of the research indicated that market orientation was significantly higher in the business organizations than in the schools of business. The paper presents details of the research process and findings and discusses the implications of the research for schools of business.

THE IMPACT OF BUSINESS SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, TOP MANAGEMENT EMPHASIS, AND AFFILIATION ON MARKET ORIENTATION TOWARD EMPLOYERS

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ABSTRACT

The marketing concept is recognized by academics and practitioners as one of the most effective philosophies that organizations can employ to reach their objectives. The extent that an organization uses the marketing concept can be measured (Kohli and Jaworski 1990; Jaworski and Kohli 1993; Narver and Slater 1990) and is indicated by its level of "market orientation."

This manuscript reports the results of an empirical study examining levels of market orientation exhibited in university schools of business toward the employers of their graduates. The Narver and Slater (1990) scale, composed of three equally important component parts (customer orientation, competitor orientation, coordination), was reworded and used in this study to measure employer market orientation. Part of a larger effort, the study extends previous research by reporting levels of employer market orientation and also examining possible antecedents to employer market orientation within university schools of business. We specifically consider the effects on employer market orientation exhibited by public / private classification, allowing for the possible confounding effects of other organizational characteristics (business school size and highest degree awarded), and management emphasis on employer market orientation. We also allow for the possible effects of affiliation (AACSB, ACBSP) within the analysis.

Research questions were formulated and addressed by use of a national survey of AACSB and ACBSP affiliated business school deans. Cover letters and surveys were sent to deans of 1052 schools of business in the United States. Completed questionnaires were received from 225 respondents. We examine and report mean levels of market orientation toward employers based on business school size, public/private classification, and highest degree awarded by the school. We employ analysis of variance to examine any possible effects of these organizational characteristics on levels of employer market orientation.

A summary of the findings is presented. Limitations of the research are discussed and suggestions for future research are presented.

Authors' Index

| | |
|--------------|--------|
| Bexley, J.B | 1 |
| Gaulden, C.F | 3 |
| Hammond, K.L | 21, 23 |
| Harmon, H.A | 21, 23 |
| Hewer, P | 1 |
| Hume, E.C | 11 |
| Kellar, G.M | 13 |
| Maldonado, C | 11 |
| Preis, M.W | 13 |
| Radder, L | 15 |
| Rayburn, J.M | 23 |
| Sparks, L | 1 |
| Webster, R.L | 21, 23 |