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Investigating Consumer Expectations of Convenience Store Attributes in Emerging Markets: Evidence in Chile

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Abstract

Convenience stores (c-stores) constitute a successful format in developed markets such as North America and Europe, but there is scant research in the retailing literature. Even less is known about convenience store behavior in emerging markets. This study attempts to provide a better understanding of consumer expectations regarding convenience stores in a Latin American context. Interviews were held with Chilean consumers to identify salient convenience store attributes. Further, a survey was applied to 400 consumers and results show that the salient attributes for Chilean consumers are related to the access dimension of convenience such as access to the store, parking facilities and hours of operation.

Keywords: Convenience stores, salient attributes, retailing, Chile.

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INTRODUCTION

Convenience stores (c-stores) constitute a successful format in developed markets such as the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Japan. As an example, 7-Eleven became the largest worldwide convenience store chain in March 2007, operating 34000 stores in 17 countries, even larger than the worldwide number of McDonald's stores (PlanetRetail, 2007). Large multinational retailers are also opening convenience store formats in different markets. For instance Tesco, the UK's biggest retailer, is planning to open its first Express convenience store this year in Shanghai (Rigby, 2008).

The demand for more convenience shopping reflects several societal trends, such as greater incomes, technological progress, increasing number of women in the workforce, and competition (Benway et al., 1987). Driven by time pressures, consumers value quick and easy shopping excursions. Additionally, c-store offerings have expanded to include ATMs, dry cleaning services, banking services, postal services, copy centers and internet access (Gaboda, 1997; Heller, 1998).

Only a few studies of convenience stores (c-stores) are found in the literature and they have all been held in a developed market context (Lassk, 2000; Rapp and Islam, 2006; Sparks, 2000; Sutton and Rafaeli, 1988; Welsh et al., 2003; Worthington, 1989). These studies show that salient convenience store attributes for consumers are location, product assortment, knowledge of sales associates, speed of checkout, service, store layout, and parking. Yet, little is know about consumer expectations of convenience store attributes and preferences of products and services in different countries. For example in Japan, due to consumer preferences convenience stores have organized themselves over the last decades to offer retail bank services (Rapp and Islam, 2006).

The retailing industry is becoming more global and convenience stores seem to be an attractive format with large growth potential in emerging markets (Deloitte, 2007). However, little is known regarding preferences and expectations of consumers regarding convenience retailing in Latin America. What do consumers in Latin America expect from convenience stores? To answer this question we need to understand better consumer's expectations of convenience stores in specific countries.

In the Latin American region, convenience stores are predominantly in the introduction stage, and most consumers still shop at neighborhood stores. However, this part of the world it potentially very attractive for smaller retail formats such as convenience stores. Research shows that consumers have a substantial purchasing power as a group and evidence shows that smaller scale retailers fit the needs of emerging consumers quite well (D'Andrea et al., 2006).

Within Latin America, Chile has the most developed retail industry in the region and the highest rate of retail sales per capita (AC Nielsen, 2006). Chilean retailers compete strongly in this small market, and this has these companies to look for new ways to improve profitability and share of wallet by introducing and developing new retail formats. Furthermore, Chilean retailers have expanded abroad and are becoming increasingly relevant retail actors in Latin American markets such as Argentina, Peru, Colombia, and Mexico (Bianchi and Ostale, 2006).

The convenience store retail format in Chile has grown rapidly due to the advanced level of development of the retail industry, as well as changes in society, such as greater income, more women incorporated in the work force, and less time for shopping (D'Andrea et al., 2006). Given the importance of the Chilean retail sector within Latin America, it is important to understand consumer behavior and expectations regarding convenience store retailing.

Thus, the main objective of this exploratory study is to identify the salient attributes of retail convenience for Chilean consumers. Data were collected through both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. In-depth interviews were held with Chilean consumers to identify the salient convenience-store attributes when shopping in this format. Further, a survey was applied to a sample of 400 consumers, to assess consumer preferences and expectations regarding c-stores. Overall this study attempts to provide a better understanding of consumer expectations regarding c-stores in a Latin American context, which can assist managers of local and international convenience store chains to focus their efforts on local salient store attributes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the acknowledged importance of convenience, it has received relatively little attention in the retailing literature. Most of the studies focus on the convenience orientation of consumers (Anderson, 1972, 1971; Brown, 1989; Bucklin, 1963; Gross and Sheth, 1989; Kelley, 1958; Morganosky, 1986; Nickols and Fox, 1983; Reilly, 1982; Yale and Venkatesh, 1986). These studies view convenience as anything that helps the consumer to reduce its time and effort during their shopping process, but are mostly focused on the product market.

According to the literature, several factors have influenced convenience store consumption preferences. On one hand, the lives of consumers have become more complex with less time for shopping (Bellizzi and Hite, 1986). Additionally, more women are working outside their homes, which means less time but more income (Bellante and Foster, 1984; Strober and Weingberg, 1980). Also, more people are living by themselves in smaller families and even alone (Yale and Venkatesh, 1986). All these conditions have led consumers to look for new ways to simplify their lives in a modern and stressful environment.

Although studies on convenience stores are scant, there is a large amount of studies that address consumer store patronage and store choice in the retailing literature (see Pan and Zinkhan, 2006). These studies suggest that several attributes affect consumer's preferences and expectations of retail stores, such assortment, service, product quality, store atmosphere, store location, price level, checkout speed, hours of operation, friendliness of salespeople, and parking facilities.

Regarding the effect of price on store choice, although some research has found a positive relationship between monetary price and perceptions of product quality (e.g., Dodds et al., 1991), nonetheless there is no evidence of a significant relationship between low-price offerings and retail store choice (e.g., Lumpkin and Burnett, 1991). This may be explained because consumer's responses to low prices may vary depending on the product category and retail format. Furthermore, consumer's perception of product and service quality is also found to be positively related to the store patronage (Baker et al., 2002; Darley and Lim, 1993; Sirohi and McLaughlin, 1998; Zeithaml and Berry, 1996). Other studies suggest that consumer demographic variables may also be related to store patronage (Bellenger et al., 1977; Korgaonkar et al., 1985), although no consensus exists on this relationship.

Berry and his colleagues looked at convenience in a service setting and define it as "all types of convenience that reduce consumer's time or effort in shopping, such as operating hours, or credit availability, belong to the domain of service convenience" (Berry et al., 2002, p.1). Attributes such as location, hours of operation, payment conditions, employee service and assistance, parking and store access, all belong to the concept of service convenience. Consumers perceptions of convenience is found to have a positive effect on their satisfaction with the service provided (Berry et al., 2002). In a retailing context, although there is no one clear definition of a *convenience* *store,* for the purpose of this paper we will define it as a small, centrally located store, featuring ease of access, late-night hours, and a limited line of merchandise, and that charges above-average prices compared to large supermarkets that generate large-volume sales.

Only a limited number of academic papers have specifically investigated the c-store industry (Lassk, 2000; Rapp and Islam, 2006; Sparks, 2000; Sutton and Rafaeli, 1988; Welsh et al., 2003; Worthington, 1989). This scant research suggests series of attributes that are salient for providing customer satisfaction with c-stores, such as customer service, cleanliness of the store, feelings of personal safety, appearance of the store and employees, and product assortment. Moreover, Seiders et al., (2000) argue that convenience in a retailing context is a multidimensional construct and the authors develop a model of convenience retailing with four dimensions: access convenience, search convenience, possession convenience, and transaction convenience.

Access convenience concerns the speed and ease with which consumers can reach a retailer. It considers attributes such as accessible location, parking availability, store hours, proximity to other stores, and telephone and internet access. The speed and ease that consumers can make contact with retailers powerfully influence their retail choices. Empirical evidence shows that easy accessibility has a high correlation with the choice of a shopping centre (Bellenger et al., 1977). In addition to a convenient location, other convenience incentives provided by retailers, such as longer operating hours or ample parking, can draw patrons to a store (Hansen and Deutscher, 1977). This is consistent with another study that finds that the main reason for consumers not patronizing a c-store was inconvenient location (Lassk, 2000).

Search convenience is the speed and ease with which consumers identify and select products they wish to buy. This dimension considers helping consumers find the right products through focused merchandising, intelligent store design and layout, knowledgeable sales persons, customer interactive systems, and visual merchandising practices, especially product displays, packaging, and signage. One study found that when shopping at convenience stores, customers want courteous and helpful clerks, but not too friendly so that they don't engage in extended conversations (Sutton and Rafaeli, 1988). Other literature suggests that consumer's evaluations of the store atmosphere also affects their perceptions of value and their store patronage intentions (Grewal et al., 2003).

Possession convenience is the speed and ease with which consumers can obtain desired products. It results from a retailer's strong in-stock position, timely production or timely delivery. One stop shopping offers consumers possession convenience by bringing together a vast variety of goods and services in one store. The literature supports this and several studies have found that merchandise assortment is positively related to retail store choice (Arnold et al., 1983; Koelemeijer and Oppewal, 1999; Louviere and Gaeth, 1987), and is found in some cases even more important than price for store choice (Stassen et al., 1999).

Transaction convenience refers to the speed and ease with which consumers can effect or amend transactions. Once the consumers selects a store, and selects the products they want to purchase, they still must participate in a transaction to complete the purchase. Transaction convenience concerns how quickly and easy it is to do the business with a firm, and considers attributes such as different payment methods, quick service, well trained employees, and well designed service systems. Time savings elements for consumers such as fast checkouts are also found to influence their retail choice (Lambert, 1979). In addition, consumers also enjoy talking to salespeople, and seek a social experience outside their home, thus this may drive some shoppers to stores in which they find friendly salespeople (Tauber, 1972). In fact a one study found that there is a positive correlation between consumer's perceived warmth of the service clerk and perceived quality and loyalty to the store (Lemmink and Mattsson, 1998).

Several authors have manifested the need to do more research in emerging markets (Cavusgil et al., 2005; Rialp and Rialp, 2006), however most of the studies of convenience stores have been held in developed markets such as the U.S. (Berry et al., 2002), Europe (Welsh et al., 2003), and Japan (Rapp and Islam, 2006). Following this call for more research, this study will draw from the work of Seiders et al., (2000) as a theoretical base and starting point for exploring consumer attribute saliency for convenience stores in a different country context. The saliency that consumers assign to c-store attributes across nations may vary due to economic and cultural differences.

Thus, the main objective of this study therefore is to assess what are the most salient attributes of convenience store retailing for Latin American consumers. Focusing on the Chilean convenience store industry, this study specifically addresses the following research questions (1) What are the convenience store preferences of Chilean consumers? (2) Which are the main reasons for Chilean consumers shopping at convenience stores? (3) What attributes are the most salient for Chilean consumers when shopping at convenience stores and are there gender differences? (4) What products and services are important for Chilean consumers to find at convenient stores, and are there gender differences? These questions attempt to have a deeper understanding of convenience store consumer behavior in developing market context.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To assess the previous research questions, this study utilized two phases. In phase one, in depth interviews were held with consumers to identify customer expectations regarding the salient attributes for convenience stores. Ten in-depth interviews were held with consumers of different sex and ages that lived in Santiago. The interviews ranged from 27 to 53 minutes, with an average of 40 minutes. Informants were recruited by the first author through a pre-specified procedure. Real names were changed for purposes of confidentiality. From the interviews as well as the literature, sixteen convenience store attributes emerged (see Appendix 1).

Drawing from the interviews, in phase two, a survey instrument was developed and pre-tested to identify potential errors in terms of wording, phrasing, and sequential questions. The degree of importance of convenience store attributes for consumers was measured on a five-point scale, and questions about patronage and choice motives along with expectations on products and services, and demographics were also included. All items were retained and the final survey was applied on January 2006 to 400 graduate and undergraduate students of a local university in Santiago.

Convenience Stores in Chile

Convenience shopping in Chile has traditionally consisted in corner grocery stores that provided basic-items, such as milk, bread, eggs, along with informal credit. Although these are still popular in low-income neighborhoods, over the last fifteen years, a new generation of convenience stores has emerged in Chile, and especially in the capital, Santiago. This new generation of convenience stores is targeting higher income consumers for whom time can be more important than money.

The main characteristics of the convenience format in Chile are stores of one thousand square meters, with approximately four hundred products, three cashiers, and a bank teller machine. According to A.C. Nielsen (2006), by the end of 2006, there were five hundred and thirty convenience stores in Chile, and a rapidly growing sector. Although convenience stores are still in the introduction stage in Chile, it is a new retail format with a high potential growth as urban suburbs expand. Although supermarkets offer discounts and "every day low price" strategies, convenience stores in Chile have chosen an "every day convenient price" strategy, which means that prices are five to ten per cent higher than supermarkets.

In Chile, convenience stores have developed from three different sources: gas service stations, drug stores, and bakeries (See Appendix 2). Service stations were the pioneers of Chile's new generation of convenience stores. After opening their first outlets in mid-1980s they have continued to dominate the market. Copec, a local gas and forestry corporation, opened its first convenience store inside a gas station in 1985, and offered basic food products, bank teller, and bathroom services, and by the end of 2006, Copec was the largest convenience store chain in Chile, with one hundred and thirty outlets all over the country (www.empresascopec.cl).

During 1980s, foreign gas corporations such as Esso and Shell opened convenience stores in Chile. Esso opened initially the *Tiger Market* convenience format, and overtime also introduced the *On The Run* format, with larger stores and wider product assortment. By the end of 2006, Esso owned one hundred and ten convenience stores in Chile (www.esso.cl). Shell started in 1996 its convenience store business under the format *Select*, and by the end of 2006, owned eighty six convenience stores in Chile (www.shell.cl). Repsol YPF, an international oil and gas company opened in Chile in 1995 a convenience store format *Full*, and by the end of 2006, YPF had seventy stores in Chile (www.repsolypf.com).

Chile's drug store chains have also followed the steps of the service stations. After experimenting with cosmetics and drugs for years, they recently entered the convenience industry, as they have expanded and occupy strategic locations on the streets. During the 90s, the leading drug store chain, FASA, introduced a new drugstore format, which offered in addition to drugs and beauty products, snacks, pet food, and video rental. By 2005, FASA had sixty convenience drug stores (www.fasa.cl). On April 2003, competitor SalcoBrand opened their convenience store format *Ok Market*”. This format is more similar to a small grocery store, where consumers can find products such as meat, vegetables, candies, wines and liquors, sausages, cheese, and bread. By the end of 2005, the company had twelve stores *“Ok Market”* with plans to open 12 more in Santiago, and the central part of Chile.

Finally, bakeries such as Castaño, and Lo Saldes, have also evolved towards a convenience store format, and have incorporated elements such as better lighting, location, prepared food (sandwiches), and diversified its assortment, and services such as extended hours of operation. By the end of 2006, Castaño operated thirty nine stores, and Lo Saldes ten stores in Santiago (www.losaldes.cl; www.castano.cl).

Interviews

Interviews were conducted individually to explore and identify attributes that consumers considered important when shopping at convenience stores. Five men and five women of middle income levels, but of different ages and marital status were interviewed. The main objective of the interviews was to understand the reasons that take consumers to prefer shopping at convenience stores, and identify the most salient store attributes for consumers regarding these stores.

Following (Spiggle, 1994), the analysis of this data identified consumer expectations regarding the salient attributes when shopping at convenience stores in Santiago. Although the academic literature has identified salient attributes for general store patronage, these interviews attempted to identify specific attributes for convenience stores.

One of the salient c-store store attribute for Chilean consumers is location. Stores are expected to be located close to homes, offices, in streets of high traffic or walking activity, and with long hours of operation. Another salient attribute mentioned is hours of operation of stores, which must be longer than traditional grocery stores.

"They must have good location, close to home or work, and with longer hours" (male, 44 year, employed).

Respondents also mentioned that accessibility to the store was important for them. When driving, respondents expect to access the store quickly, and find an available parking space easily. Respondents want to be able to enter the store, purchase and leave as quickly as possible, with no delay.

"Good access, parking space, and hopefully entrance for disabled, things that usually traditional neighborhood stores don't have" (female, 27 years, employed).

Another important attribute for convenience stores mentioned in the interviews was being assisted quickly by sales clerks in an easy purchase process, and in a safe environment. In addition, consumers expect to find everything they need quickly, and therefore, product assortment of the store is also relevant. Consumers also expect to be able to return or exchange product that are not fresh or suitable.

"The transaction must be quick. One must be able to enter and exit without problems: purchase, pay and leave quickly" (male, 54 years, employed).

Other reasons that emerge from the interview data for choosing convenience stores is being in a hurry, need to buy a few products, close to home/work.

"An ideal place for people that forget to buy things at the supermarket. It is a faster purchase, in a smaller place, with the basic products" (female, 27 years, employed).

Although low prices or promotions are not mentioned as salient attributes for consumers when shopping at c-stores, several interviewees mentioned that although prices are expected to be higher than grocery stores, they can't be too high or consumers will not be willing to purchase the merchandise.

Overall, the interview data, as well as the literature reviewed, identified 16 retail c-store attributes that were salient for consumers according to the four dimensions of convenience (see Appendix 1). These are location, close to home or office, quick and easy access to the store, parking availability, longer hours of store operation, employee service and assistance, tidy and clean store, store layout, product assortment, available cashiers, payment options, product returns and guarantees, low prices, discounts and promotions, safe environment, and sit down tables to have a quick meal in the store.

Survey

In phase two, a structured questionnaire was designed in Spanish using a subjective rating scale based on the attributes that emerged from the interviews and supported by the literature. The preliminary version of the questionnaire was pre-tested with five consumers that live in Santiago (2 men and 3 women) to assess the flow and readability of the text. The instrument was then refined for clarity with minor changes based on the feedback received before the final survey. The final survey was self-administrated to a sample of 400 undergraduate and graduate students in a business school of a Chilean university located in Santiago (200 male and 200 female respondents). Data were collected at the beginning of 2006 over a three week-period, until the 400 surveys were completed. Respondent had an average age of thirty eight years old (ranging from eighteen to sixty five years), and sixty four per cent of respondents were married. The average net family annual income was US$ 36.000, which corresponds to the middle to high-income segment of the Chilean population, which can afford to shop at convenience stores in Chile. The survey asked respondents to evaluate the importance of each attribute mentioned, when shopping at a convenience store, on a 5-point likert scale (1= not important at all, to 5 = very important). It also measured some demographic variables such as gender, age, income level, and marital status.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The analysis of the data addressed four specific research questions regarding convenience store expectations and preferences. Results are exposed in Tables 1 – 4. Tables show top box percentages, and mean scores for the convenience store attributes, products, and services evaluated in the questionnaire. Gender differences where statistically tested through a t-test applied to mean scores with a significance level of 95 per cent.

Question 1: Consumer Store Choice

The objective of this question was to identify consumer store choice. The questionnaire asked respondents to choose the convenience store were they shopped more often. Results of top box percentages are shown in Table 1.

(Insert Table 1 here)

The data shows that convenience stores that are attached to gas stations have a high preference among consumers, especially Copec, with 21 per cent of preferences. This is probably due to the fact that Copec is the largest convenience store chain in Chile with the largest number of retail outlets located all over the country. In addition, specialty formats such as Ok Market and FASA Drugstores also have higher preferences among Chilean consumers. Cross-tab analysis of gender differences showed that male consumers have higher preferences of convenience stores located in gas stations, than female consumers. Female consumers, on the other hand, prefer to shop at convenience stores such as FASA or OK Market, probably looking for a wider assortment of drug and beauty products and delicatessen.

Question 2: Reasons for Choosing to Shop at Convenience Stores

The objective of this question was to identify the reasons that lead consumers to shop at convenience stores instead of other formats. The questionnaire asked respondents to mention the most important reasons for shopping at a convenience store. Top box percentage results are shown in Table 2.

(Insert Table 2 here)

According to the data, the most important reasons for Chilean consumers shopping at convenience stores are: (1) buy few things, (2), close to home/work, (3), and in a hurry. Cross tab analysis shows that female consumers shop at convenience stores more because they need to buy a few things and don't want to go to a supermarket. This is consistent with the in-depth interviews, where they mentioned that women prefer to pay a little more when they are in a hurry in order to avoid a supermarket. For male consumers, closeness to home/work, and being in a gas station and decides to buy, are the most important reasons to shop at a convenience store.

Question 3: Salient Convenience Store Attributes

The objective of this question was to identify the salient attributes for consumers when choosing a convenience store to shop. The survey asked them to evaluate the importance of each attribute on a 5 point scale (1= not important at all, to 5= very important). Mean results for each attribute are shown in Table 3. To look for significant gender differences in the responses, a t-test was applied to mean scores.

(Insert Table 3 here)

Quick access to the store, and *payment options,* are among the most important attributes for respondents, followed by p*arking availability*. These are related to the access dimension of convenience (Seiders et al., 2000). Gender differences are identified in the data, and these show that payment options is significantly more important for male consumers than female consumers in Chile, and finding a store close to home or work is more important for females than male Chilean consumers. This may be explained by the traditional role of men and women in the Latin society.

Question 4: Salient Food and Products

The survey also asked them to evaluate the importance of several food products and services on a 5 point scale (1= not important at all, to 5= very important). Mean score results for each product and service item are shown in Table 4.

(Insert Table 4 here)

Bank teller machines and drug store services are considered the most important services for consumers when shopping at a convenience store. In both cases, they are significantly more important for female than male Chilean consumers.

Sodas, candies, and snacks, are the most important products for consumers of convenience stores, followed by fresh bread and prepared food. These items are more significantly more important for male than female consumers. Female preferences also differ from men in that they value more pet food, can food, and milk products.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Due to the aggressive level of competition in the retailing industry worldwide, it is important to understand consumer’s expectations of convenience stores in different countries. Overall, this study attempts to provide a better understanding of the most salient attributes for consumers in a Latin American context when shopping at convenience stores. Emphasizing these salient attributes can be essential for retailers in order to increase store patronage and achieve loyalty from consumers. Considering gender differences can also help c-store chains to develop segmentation strategies.

A first conclusion of this study is that convenience stores located in gas stations are the most preferred by consumers in Santiago, and this is even stronger among male consumers. This may be due to the fact that capital cities in Latin American countries are very large in size and concentrate more than 50% of the total population, which derives in heavy traffic and finding parking is a big problem for consumers. However, convenience store formats that are not attached to gas stations are also important, but for other occasions, and especially for female consumers that probably look for a wider assortment of pharmaceutical products and delicatessen, and that may have more time for shopping.

Secondly, the data also show that consumers prefer to shop at convenience stores when they need to but only a few things, due to the location close to home/work, or are in a hurry. This supports previous literature which finds that convenience has to do with reducing consumer’s time or effort in shopping (e.g., Berry et al., 2002; Lassk, 2000).

Third, the most salient attributes for Chilean consumers are related to the access dimension of convenience. For example, the most important attributes for consumers (with mean score evaluations over 4) are quick and easy access to the store, payment options, and parking availability. Another interesting finding is that *safe store environment* is considered a relatively salient attribute for Chilean consumers (mean score= 3.75), especially for women consumers. This attribute is not mentioned in previous literature and may be more salient for Latin American consumers than consumers developed markets, due to the unsafe institutional environment in emerging countries.

These results contribute to the retailing literature because they identify relative saliency of attributes related to the four different convenience dimensions. The results support Seiders et al.,(2000)´s proposal that retail convenience is a multi-dimensional construct., although more research is needed to understand the relative importance of these dimensions in a c-store retail context.

Regarding products and services, the most important for Chilean retailers (mean score over 4), are sodas and juices, and bank tellers. These are followed closely by pharmaceutical products, snacks, and drinks. Fresh bread is considered very important for these consumers, who consume this product on a daily basis and is a result of the Hispanic roots of consuming fresh bread in the mornings and evenings.

Based on the results of the study, several recommendations emerge for convenience store chains located in large cities of Latin America, or for companies that are thinking in opening these chains in this part of the world. First, convenience store retailers should provide conditions that assure the quickness and ease of the purchase, by having good access to the store, and available parking. Consistent with the previous recommendation, a second suggestion has to do with designing strategies that try to position convenience stores for specific demographic or psychographic segments, and more than just a place for buying drinks, candies and a snack, which is the regular way consumers think about these formats. This would probably achieve to attract a greater proportion of consumers that seem less willing to shop at these formats. Specialty c-store formats such as *"Ok Market"* are interesting due to their positive evaluations by respondents and wider assortment of products for countries that are growing in income. Managers must target their marketing communications to frequent shoppers which will increase the likelihood that they experience positive returns from their promotional efforts.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

A major limitation of the current study lies in the sample used. The choice of a database of 400 graduates of a high-level university in Santiago limits the generalizability, due to the selection of the sample solely targeting the middle-up income market of a large city. Despite the limitations, this study has identified significant differences, as well as some interesting commonality, between attribute saliency of shoppers in Chile. More importantly, the findings should enhance our knowledge of Latin American consumers. Future research can replicate this study in other Latin American markets and look for other demographic differences as well.

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Appendix 1: Convenience Store Salient Attributes for Consumers

C-Store Attributes	**Dimension of Convenience**
Quick Access to the Store	Access Convenience
Parking Availability	Access Convenience
Close to Home	Access Convenience
Close to Work	Access Convenience
Hours of Operation	Access Convenience
Tidy and Clean Store	Search Convenience
Employee Service and advice	Search Convenience
Safe Environment	Search Convenience
Store layout	Search Convenience
Payment Options	Transaction Convenience
Product returns and guarantees	Transaction Convenience
Available Cashiers	Transaction Convenience
Product Assortment	Possession Convenience
Low Prices	Possession Convenience
Discounts and Promotions	Possession Convenience
Sit down tables	Possession Convenience

Appendix 2: Convenience Stores in Chile by 2006

	Format Name	Store Size	Number of Stores in Chile
COPEC	Pronto Puente Punto	140 m2 - 1.200 m2	130
ESSO	On The Run Tiger Market	40 m2 --- 250 m2.	110
SHELL	Select Express	125 m2 --1.000 m2	86
YPF	YPF Full, Servicompras	200 m2	70
BIG JOHN	Big John	70 m2	13
CASTANO	Castaño	50-80 m2	39
LO SALDES	Lo Saldes	50-100 m2	10
SALCO BRAND	Ok Market	350 m2	12
FASA	Drugstore	400 m2	60

Table 1: Consumer Convenience Store Choice Preferences

C-Stores in Santiago	**Overall (n=400)**	**Women (n= 200)**	**Men (n= 200)**
Copec	21.2%	19.8%	22.5%
OK Market	16.5%	17.3%	15.7%
FASA	14.5%	14.2%	14.8%
Select Shell	12.3%	12%	12.5%
On the Run	11.5%	12.8%	10.2%
Castano	8.0%	7.5%	8.5%
Big John	6.3%	6.7%	6.0%
Lo Saldes	5.0%	5%	5.0%
YPF	3.9%	4.3%	3.5%
Others	0.8%	0.3%	1.3%

Table 2: Main Reasons for Shopping at a Convenience Store

Reasons for shopping at C-Stores	**Overall (n=400)**	**Women (n= 200)**	**Men (n= 200)**
Buy few things	23.0%	23.7%	22.3%
Close to home/work	21.8%	20.8%	22.7%
In a hurry	21.3%	22.2%	20.5%
In gas station and decides to buy	18.8%	18.0%	19.7%
After Supermarket closing time	15.1%	15.3%	14.8%

Table 3: Consumer Preferences for Convenience Attributes

C-Store Attributes	Overall (n=400)	Women (n=200)	Men (n=200)
Quick Access to the Store	4.24	4.26	4.22
Payment Options	4.16*	4.11	4.21
Parking Availability	4.13	4.15	4.11
Close to Home	3.91*	3.99	3.82
Employee Service	3.90	3.89	3.91
Hours of Operation	3.89	3.88	3.90
Tidy and Clean Store	3.89	3.89	3.91
Product returns & guarantees	3.84	3.83	3.85
Safe Environment	3.75*	3.65	3.85
Available Cashiers	3.65	3.62	3.67
Product Assortment	3.65*	3.74	3.56
Low Prices	3.57*	3.65	3.49
Close to Work	3.48*	3.54	3.42
Store layout	3.30*	3.22	3.38
Discounts and Proms	2.98*	3.05	2.90
Sit down tables	2,49*	2.51	2.47

Significance level 95%, p< 0.05

Table 4: Consumer Preferences of Products and Services for Convenience Stores

Services	**Overall (n=400)**	**Women (n=200)**	**Men (n=200)**
Bank Machine	4.62*	4.72	4.50
Drug Store	3.99*	4.13	3.85
Bathrooms	3.56*	3.64	3.48
Photocopy, Fax	3.13	3.16	3.04
Payment Centers	3.00*	3.06	2.95
Video Return	2.98	2.98	2.98
Internet (wifi)	2.91*	2.81	3.01
Cellular charger	2.31*	2.40	2.19
Photo services	2.27*	2.33	2.22
Laundry Service	2.06	2.08	2.04
Food Products	**Overall (n=400)**	**Women (n=200)**	**Men (n=200)**
Sodas, and juices	4.21*	4.09	4.32
Candies, ice creams and snacks	3.89	3.92	3.88
Alcohol and energetic drinks	3.69	3.70	3.68
Fresh Bread	3.63*	3.53	3.71
Prepared Food	3.51*	3.45	3.58
Newspapers and Magazines	3.42	3.37	3.48
Milk Products	3.27*	3.34	3.19
Cigars	3.17*	3.28	3.06
Canned products	3.12*	3.15	3.09
Gifts: chocolates, flowers	2.92*	2.84	3.01
Cheese and ham	2.81*	2.89	2.68
Baby products	2.49*	2.46	2.51
Perfumeries	2.44	2.43	2.45
Fruit and vegetables	2.38	2.37	2.39
Music, books, stationary products	2.34*	2.43	2.26
Pet Food	2.19*	2.31	2.07
Meat	2.18	2.19	2.17

** Significance level 95%, p< 0.05*