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The effects of information sources in the purchase of consumer services.

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THE EFFECTS OF INFORMATION SOURCES
IN THE PURCHASE OF CONSUMER SERVICES

Thesis - for Master's Degree Presented

By

Barry Mason Bresnick

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial
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Business Administration

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

Background.-- The age of mass media communication began with the invention of the printing press in the middle 1800's. Following the invention of the printing press, newspapers, books, and magazines began reaching larger and larger numbers of people. Radio came into existence in the early 1900's and television in the 1930's enabling single messages to reach even greater masses of people. The implications of mass media communication for the marketer of goods and services grew in proportion with the growth of the media. Television, radio, and print provided the marketer with a means of reaching vast numbers of people, not thought possible a few decades earlier, with a single publication or broadcast.

The rapid order inventions of print, radio, and then television signaled the need for new marketing theories to explain the effects of mass media communication on the consumer. The overriding question concerning the marketer was, and still is, how are the messages being perceived and acted upon by the consumer. Although theories dealing with the effects of mass media communication have become more sophisticated, research is continuously conducted to explore the effects of media communication on various consumer purchase decisions.

The initial theory of mass media communication suggested that the media message was perceived and acted upon by each consumer individually.

This theory was termed the single or one step flow. Later experiments and analysis revealed that a two step rather than a one step flow of communication best explained buyer behavior.¹ The second step of the two step flow was defined as the interpersonal communication which took place in between media messages. The theory of the two step flow defined mass media as an information source and defined interpersonal communication as a source of influence.

Over recent years, more and more attention has been focussed on the second step of the two step flow of communications. The second step suggests to the marketer that he must be concerned with more than just the effect of his advertising message on the individual consumer. He must also be aware that his potential buyers often seek counsel from their friends and families and may not rely solely or even heavily upon his messages in making purchase decisions.

Definition of interpersonal communication.-- Many aspects of interpersonal communication and influence have been the subject of research studies. Studies have explored the use as well as the influence of interpersonal communication regarding consumer purchase decisions. Such concepts as conformity, opinion leadership, risk, aspiration, and social influence have been shown to result from interpersonal communication.

Recent studies have used the term "Reference Group" rather than "interpersonal communication" to describe some aspects of interpersonal

¹The theory of the two step flow of communication is described by Elihu Katz in "The Two Step Flow of Communication: An Up to Date Report on an Hypothesis", Public Opinion Quarterly, Spring 1957, pp.61-78.

influence. The term "interpersonal" tends to imply simply the communication between two individuals. The term "Reference Group" is more commonly used in conjunction with in depth analysis of how interpersonal communication effects consumer purchase behavior. Reference group theory examines the psychological as well as the sociological pressures brought to bear on the consumer.

This study will define interpersonal communication as any person or group of people with whom either another person interacts on a one-to-one basis or to which he draws comparisons in the establishment of his behavior. Reference group influence will specifically refer to the process of drawing comparisons between oneself and others in the establishment of behavior. Therefore, reference group influence is only a part of interpersonal communication and will be treated as such.

Nearly all past research dealing with interpersonal communication and influence has been in conjunction with product purchase decisions. Few studies have emphasized how this phenomenon applies to the purchase of consumer services. In fact, little research has been conducted concerning any aspects of consumer services. In order to develop a clear understanding of how interpersonal communication effects the purchase of services a further definition of terms is required.

Definition of services.-- One difficulty in studying consumer services stems from the ambiguity by which consumer services are defined. The American Marketing Association defines services as "Activities, benefits, or satisfaction which are offered for sale,

or provided in connection with the sale of goods.² This definition as well as others tends to distinguish between three types of services. These types are "1) intangible benefits offered for sale independently of other goods or services (insurance, investments, legal service); 2) intangible activities which require the use of tangible goods (amusement, house rental, transportation service); 3) intangible activities purchased jointly with products or other intangible activities (credit, training dealer salesman)."³ Service types 1 and 2 have no direct bearing on the sale of a product and are thus primary in importance to any associated product. Service type 3 accompanies a product and is secondary in importance to that product. Most definitions of consumer services or references to the service industry refer only to the first two types of service. This study will consider only those services which are described by service type 1 and 2 .

Examples of services in the service industry are personal services (dry cleaning establishments, barber shops), automobile repair services (mechanical repair), recreational services (commercial sports, movies, concerts), professional services (legal, medical) and others. A more in depth view of consumer services and reasons for studying them will be presented in Chapter Two. A list of major service categories appears in Table 2.1 (Chapter 2) and a

²William J. Stanton, Fundamentals of Marketing, McGraw-Hill, 1971, p. 567.

³Ibid., pp. 567-568.

complete list of service categories and service types within each category is presented in Appendix 1.

Purpose of the Study

It is the purpose of this study to explore the roles played by alternative sources of information in the selection of several types of consumer services. The sources of information will be analysed individually as well as aggregated into impersonal and personal sources.

This study will provide information relating to the following research questions: 1) Do consumers use personal sources of information more often than impersonal sources of information in the purchase of a service? 2) Are consumers influenced more by personal sources of information than impersonal sources of information in the purchase of a service? 3) Is the use and influence of information sources constant among service types? 4) Is the use and influence of information sources (in regard to the purchase of a service) constant among respondent family income levels?

Several variables will be examined within this study. The main variable or dependent variable is the information sources. Information sources will be studied individually but the emphasis will be on the study of personal vs impersonal sources. Source use and influence will be analyzed by service type and by respondent income level. For example, it might be shown that people who desire information on auto repairs will seek out friends and neighbors while people who seek information on doctors tend to rely primarily on professional opinions.

Also, a relationship between certain economic levels of the respondent (high, middle, low income) and specific information sources consulted might become evident. For example, it might be indicated that consumers on the lower level of the economic spectrum tend to seek out friends and family while consumers on the higher level of the economic spectrum use more impersonal sources like newspaper advertisements. The results might reveal that this example only holds true for some service categories.

It might be useful for both service marketers and product marketers to know how family income level (which is a main component of socioeconomic level) effects information use and influence. If significant differences exist between how income levels use and are influenced by sources of information, the marketer might obtain a better idea of how to allocate his promotional effort by analyzing the income characteristics of his market.

Research procedure.-- Interpersonal sources of information will be compared and contrasted with impersonal sources of information so that a relative importance can be established. The use of all sources of information by the consumer in reaching his purchase decisions will be explored. Purchase decisions, no matter how planned or impulsive, are based on the recall of past or present sources of information. These sources are termed as either impersonal, as in the electronic and printed media, or interpersonal, as in face to face communication.

The spectrum of possible impersonal sources of information

are: 1) television, 2) radio, 3) newspaper, 4) magazine, 5) other electronic or printed media, and 6) signs, store or yellow pages(search). Possible personal sources of information include 1) family, 2) friends, 3) professionals, and 4) other personal sources. Each source represents a means of gaining useful information in completing the decision process. The question is, how useful do consumers find alternative sources of information for various purchase decisions.

The consumer's information search and use will be examined in regard to his purchase of four consumer services. No prior research exists to indicate how the consumer uses information sources in service purchase decisions. Therefore, services were selected simply on the basis that they represent different service categories. The services to be studied are: 1) mechanical automobile repair, 2) barber or beauty shop, 3) family doctor, and 4) movies. The categories represented by these services are: 1) major asset service, 2) personal service, 3) personal professional service, and 4) recreational service, respectively. Other service categories are presented in Exhibit 2.1.

The use of information sources by the consumer will be viewed in two dimensions. First, the number or frequency of respondents using a particular source of information for a particular service will be noted. By analyzing the frequency of use of a particular information source, a measure of its importance to the consumer can be established. However, just because the use of a source is recorded by the highest percentage of respondents does not necessarily

imply that that source is as influential in helping the respondent reach a decision as other sources. In other words, the frequency of use does not necessarily equal the importance attached to the source by the consumer. For example, 80 percent of the respondents might report exposure to the television advertising of movies. However, the influence of those advertisements on the purchase decision may be less than some other source of information which the respondents were exposed to less often.

The second dimension on which the data will be analyzed deals with the perceived importance of each source by the respondent. For each service under consideration the respondent will be asked to indicate the importance of each information source which he came in contact with in reaching his purchase decision.

In order to measure the level of importance assigned to information sources by respondents a scale or continuum was needed. The use of such a continuum was necessary for three reasons. First, the use of a standard structured scale insures uniformity of responses. Each respondent is forced to reply in a way which is directly relatable to every other response. Second, the use of a standard scale eliminates the problem of interpreting the meaning of many differently worded responses. Third, a standard tool of measurement allows for the comparisons of importance levels between service types and respondent income level. The design and origin of the importance scale will be discussed in the Methodology Chapter.

The importance of information is being measured in the context of the purchase decision. Importance of an information source is

actually the degree to which a source helps in making the decision. Therefore, the measure of importance of an information source will be defined as the influence of that source.

The purpose of this study is to measure the "use" and "influence" of information sources in purchase decisions. "Use" is defined as frequency of use of information sources among respondents. "Influence" is defined as the importance of information sources in making purchase decisions. The total "impact" of information sources would be a function of both the "use" and "influence" of the sources on the consumer's purchase decisions for the various services.

The use and influence of these sources are to be studied in conjunction with the purchase of the fore-mentioned types of services. It might also be interesting to discover whether respondents from different income levels use information sources to the same degree and/or attach equal amounts of importance to them. The use and influence of the sources of information will also be related to the economic level of the respondent. The economic level of the respondent will be defined as his total annual family income. Family income has been divided into three levels: low, medium, and high. The range of income within each income level as well as the method of reaching and classifying respondents will be stated in the Methodology Chapter.

Implications and limitations of the study.-- Knowledge regarding how consumers utilize information to reach purchase decisions is of great value to the marketer of any product or service. By

exploring the frequency of use, influence and total impact of information sources the marketer would gain valuable insights into the total importance of each information source regarding consumer purchase decisions. The marketer would have a better idea of how to allocate his marketing effort between alternative information channels.

One of the questions this study will not answer is whether information utilization by consumers regarding service purchase is comparable or similar to information utilization regarding product purchase. Further application of the results to other services is somewhat limited because the services used in this study are not necessarily a true representation of all services. However, distinct patterns emerging from the data concerning respondents from different income levels and concerning different services will make possible tentative generalizations about consumer purchase behavior. Limitations resulting from sampling method and services selected will be mentioned in the Methodology Chapter.

This study is exploratory in nature. While the results of this study are tentative pending future investigation, they serve as a reference for others who wish to learn more about this important area.

Organization of the remainder of the thesis.-- Chapter 2 will present past research which bears on the design and purpose of this study. Several studies will be cited which have in part dealt with some of the questions to be explored in this study. Consumer

services, information search, and interpersonal influence will be reviewed. Chapter 3 will provide a detailed account of the study's methodology. Hypotheses will be introduced which explore the relationships previously indicated. Sampling methods and questionnaire design will be reviewed. Analytical techniques used to interpret the data will be presented. Chapter 4 will present the results and findings of the study. Chapter 5 will present the conclusions and summarize the implications. Tables and exhibits describing the data will be located in Appendix 1, and Appendix 2 presents the completed instrument administered in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

SECTION ONE: THE LITERATURE PERTAINING TO SERVICES

Introduction

The first section of Chapter 2 will explain why consumer services deserve to be researched and analyzed separately from consumer products. The second section of Chapter 2 will deal with how sources of information are utilized by the consumer in making purchase decisions. By examining 1) consumer services and 2) the effects of information sources on consumer purchase decisions, the stage will be set for a study which incorporates both of these variables.

Consumer Services

The terms "consumer services" and "the service industry" have been used several times within the context of this paper. Exhibit 2.1 presents a table of the service categories which comprise the service industry. The table is adapted from Donald D. Parker's book The Marketing of Consumer Services.¹ A complete list of service categories and service types within each category is presented in Appendix 1.

¹Donald Parker, Marketing of Consumer Services, University of Washington, 1960.

EXHIBIT 2.1

MAJOR CATEGORIES OF SERVICES

- I Household Operations
 - II Housing
 - III Health
 - IV Transportation and Communication
 - V Financial
 - VI Insurance
 - VII Personal
 - VIII Recreational
 - IX Educational
 - X Miscellaneous
-

Source: Donald D. Parker, The Marketing of Consumer Services
University of Washington, 1960, pp. 11-16.

Lack of research.-- The lack of research concerning the effects of interpersonal communication on service purchasing is not surprising considering the negligible amount of research conducted on any aspect of the service industry. Relatively few books or articles have been published which deal specifically or in part with the marketing of consumer services. One previously stated reason for the lack of published materials is the problem in defining "services". The

delineation between products and services becomes more ambiguous with the expansion of the economy. Alternate lists rarely include exactly the same services. For example, when referring to commercial services, transportation and insurance are usually included. When referring to consumer services, transportation and insurance are sometimes not included.

Another reason for the lack of attention paid to the marketing of services is the general belief that product marketing and service marketing are fundamentally the same. The goal of product and service marketing is essentially the same but the marketing principles and techniques are often dissimilar.

Service vs product.-- The principle differences between product and service marketing are intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, and perishability.² Products are tangible but services are not. Because the consumer has no use of his physical senses to evaluate the services, personal promotion by the individual providing the service becomes very important. To some extent a product's attributes can be judged by observation. Services can only be evaluated by the reputation (word of mouth), personal selling, and promotional program of the service provider. Without these inputs the purchase decision would be a trial and error situation. The point is, interpersonal communication must play a stronger role in the marketing of a service than in the marketing of a product.

² The terms intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, and perishability were devised and discussed by William J. Stanton in Fundamentals of Marketing, McGraw-Hill, 1971, pp. 572-573.

Inseparability refers to the fact that many types of services can not be separated from the individual providing the service. Without a barber there is no haircut. Inseparability limits the size of the service operation because sales can only be made on a direct basis. Services can not be stored or shipped in quantity.

Heterogeneity means that no two services or servicings are exactly the same. No two service establishments provide exactly the same service. And no one person ever services two customers in exactly the same manner. The non standardization of service quality complicates the problem. Therefore, consistent quality and maintenance of reputation are larger problems for service marketers than for product marketers. This points to the extra importance of word of mouth communication as an information source for the marketer as well as for the consumer.

Perishability is another property special to consumer services. A service is only as valuable as the amount of people who take advantage of it. Every moment that a barber or mechanic lays idle represents permanently lost business. In contrast, a product that does not sell does not disappear. It can be stored or inventoried until it sells. But idle time can not be stored or inventoried for when business gets busy. Thus, it is very important for the marketer of a service to schedule his time and rates in correspondence with fluctuation in demand.

Service growth.-- A third rationale for subordinancy of consumer services to consumer products stems from the historical imbalance

between product sales volume and service sales volume; an imbalance which has become less and less pronounced with the passage of time. Each year since 1947 has brought an increase expended for consumer services in both total sales volume and percent of consumer expenditures. Over the 21 years between 1950 and 1971 the growth of consumer services, in terms of percent of national income and gross national product, has been greater than the growth of any other industry except for government enterprises. Exhibit 2.2 illustrates the growth rate of the service industry between 1947 and 1971.

Exhibit 2.3 presents the relationship between the service industry and other industries in terms of national income. Total national income is defined as the sum of the earnings of the national work force. Exhibit 2.4 illustrates the relationship between expenditures for consumer services and expenditures for durable and non-durable goods.

Exhibits 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 illustrate the exceptional growth of the service industry. Consumer services now account for more dollar expenditures than either durable or non-durable goods. The facts presented in these exhibits indicated a continuous significant increase in the use and importance of consumer services to the consumer.

EXHIBIT 2.2

EXPENDITURES FOR PERSONAL SERVICES AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT AND TOTAL PERSONAL CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURES FOR SELECTED YEARS, 1947-1971

Year	Services	Personal consumption expenditures	Gross national product	Service expenditures as percentage of:	
				Personal consumption expenditures	Gross national product
(in billions of current dollars) ¹					
1947	49.8	160.7	231.3	31.0	21.5
1950	62.4	191.0	284.8	32.7	21.9
1955	91.4	254.4	398.0	35.9	22.9
1960	128.7	325.2	503.8	39.6	25.5
1965	175.5	432.8	684.9	40.8	25.8
1966	188.3	466.3	749.9	40.5	25.1
1967	204.2	492.3	793.5	41.4	25.7
1968	222.8	536.6	865.7	41.5	25.7
1969	242.6	576.0	932.1	42.1	26.0

Source: Adapted from William J. Stanton, Fundamentals of Marketing, McGraw-Hill, 1971, p. 569 and The Statistical Abstract of the United States, Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1971, p. 313.

¹Current dollars refers to the level of expenditure at present dollar value. Current dollars, because of inflation, present an inflated percent change between time periods.

EXHIBIT 2.3

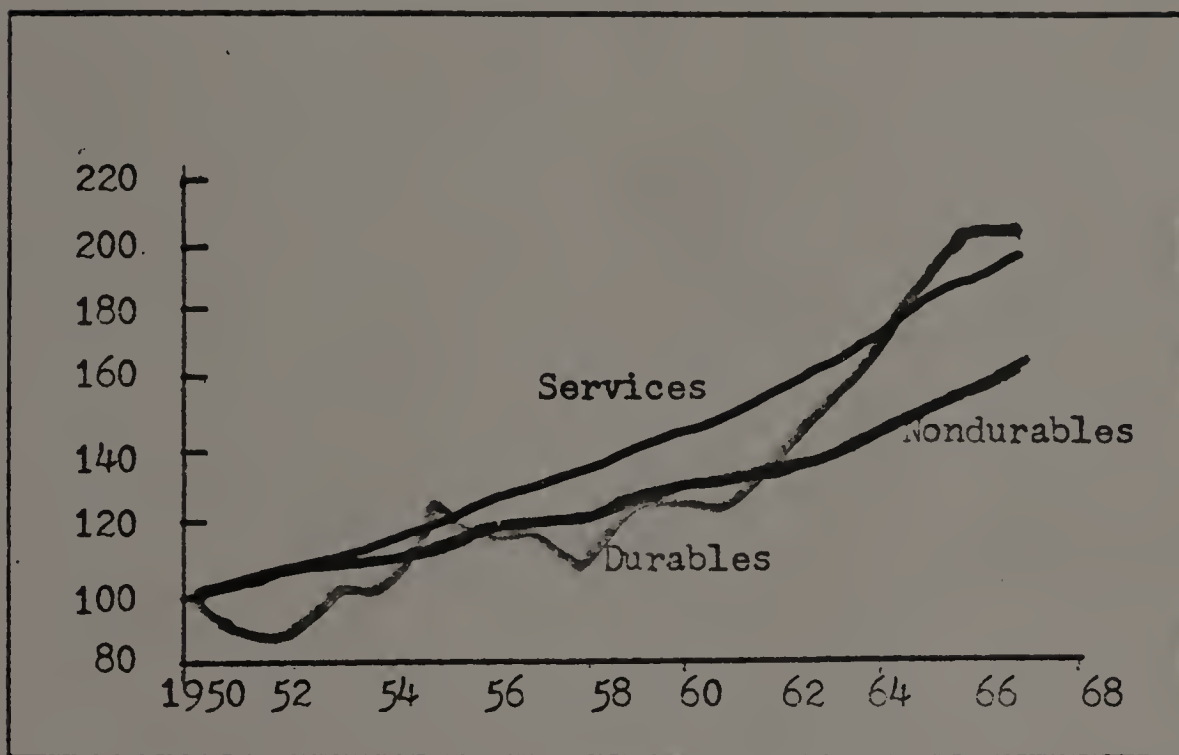
NATIONAL INCOME BY PERCENTAGE OF INDUSTRY

Year	<u>1950</u>	<u>1955</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries	7.3	4.7	4.1	3.7	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.0
Mining and construction	7.1	6.8	6.4	6.2	6.0	6.2	6.2	6.1
Manufacturing	31.6	32.6	30.3	30.6	29.9	29.1	27.4	26.6
Transportation	5.6	4.8	4.4	4.1	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8
Communications and utilities	3.0	3.6	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9
Wholesale and retail trade	17.0	15.8	15.5	14.9	14.9	15.0	15.3	15.5
Finance, insurance, and real estate	9.1	10.3	11.1	11.0	10.9	10.8	10.9	11.1
Services	9.0	9.4	10.7	11.4	12.1	12.4	13.0	13.1
Government and government enterprises	9.8	11.5	12.8	13.3	14.7	15.0	15.9	16.2
Rest of the world	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.7
Percent of all industries	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: The Statistical Abstract of the United States, Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1971, p. 318.

EXHIBIT 2.4

EXPENDITURE TRENDS FOR GOODS AND SERVICES
(Based on constant dollars. Index numbers, 1950= 100)



Source: William J. Stanton, Fundamentals of Marketing, McGraw-Hill, 1971, p. 570.

Causes of expansion in the service industries.-- To fully understand the nature of the service industry and the marketing problems it faces, a brief look should be taken at the causes behind the industry's growth and expansion. Victor Fuch in his book called The Service Economy cites three main reasons behind the growth of the service industry. These reasons are "1) a more rapid growth of final demand for services; 2) a relative increase in intermediate demand for services; and 3) a relatively slow increase in output per man in services."³

The growth in final demand for services is related to the level of national income. The higher the income, the better fed, clothed, and equipped consumers become. Thus, any further increases in disposable income lead to more purchase of non material objects.

The second reason for the growth of the service industry refers to the increase in demand for intermediate services. As the economy expands, a division of labor occurs. Services which were formally an intermediate aspect of a larger organization have become areas of specialization. The growth of our economy continues to open new types of services to the individual. Examples of recently established services are tax counselling, expanded rentals, child day care centers, and even commercial airline transportation.

The third explanation concerns the slow increase in output per man in services. First, there has been a faster decline in the

³Victor Fuch, The Service Economy, Columbia University Press, New York, 1968, p. 3.

work hours per man in service than in other industries. Second, wages and quality of work associated with the service industry lags behind those of other industries. Lower wages and quality lead to relatively lower prices.

Other reasons for service growth and expansion include increases in 1) leisure time, 2) population 3) life expectance 4) early retirement 5) female employment and 6) technological development.

Marketing of consumer services.-- The marketing of consumer services involves basically similar problems as the marketing of consumer products. First, the product or service must be established. The establishment of a new product is a much easier task than the establishment of a new service. New products can be produced and promoted with the idea of creating non existing interest. For example, little or no interest had been expressed in an electric toothbrush prior to its creation. Once created, the marketer had the national media at his disposal to present the attributes of his product and register its image in the consumer's mind. The electric toothbrush quickly moved into existing channels of distribution and onto the retailers shelves where the consumer could superficially evaluate it. The electric toothbrush was further aided by the familiar brand name appearing on its front as well as on the fronts of the neighboring items. To a great extent, the electric toothbrush was assured acceptance by the consumer before it hit the shelves.

The creator of a new service, the new establisher of an old service and the established service provider all must develop marketing programs vastly different from the product marketer. Very

few service establishments are large enough to even consider national advertising. The services that are regional or national have a more difficult task in presenting an image of their service. The service marketer can only present qualities of his service per se. For example, Midas Muffler advertises the high quality, large inventory, warranty and timeliness of their service. The viewer is forced to believe or not believe the advertisement solely on the promise of the advertiser. Although believability (in performance) is a part of product advertising, the marketer of a product has the advantage of actually displaying (for evaluation) the image of his product.

Service marketers, unlike most product marketers, are small, local, and limited in types of services performed. A barber shop can only provide a service dealing with hair. Yet many different types of products (some multiple line, and nationally distributed) exist within the barber shop for sale to customers.

Service pricing is far less standardized than product pricing. This is largely attributed to the fact that most consumer products are nationally distributed and face extensive national competition.

All these facts add up to the difference between service marketing and product marketing. Then how should services be marketed? First, local service marketers do have the marketing advantage of being extremely close to their customers. This is especially true of personal services. Service marketers should take better advantage of their closeness with their customers in building good will, a reputation and referrals.

Because services establishments are generally small, they have a great flexibility in tailoring themselves to their customer's desires as well as flexibility in adapting to social change. Those barbers who were sensitive to the vast change in consumer attitudes towards hair length and styling adapted by switching to hair styling salons.

The marketer of consumer services must align himself very carefully with the wants and desires of his market. This is unlike the product marketer who more often than not aligns the consumer with his wants and desires. Consumer service marketing must be more concerned with personal contact and reputation since he often works closely with consumers and is judged by the quality of his work. The media would seem to be most important in creating awareness of the service he performs. Use of local media would help establish a steady clientele more rapidly but would not insure the success of a poor quality operation.

Summary of section one.-- The continuous increase in the expenditures for consumer services coupled with their broad scope seem to nullify the assumption that services represent a second class industry and require no special attention. The special marketing properties of consumer services such as intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity and perishability signal the need for research to develop special marketing strategies.

In order to develop effective marketing strategies, the service marketer must understand how the consumer utilizes alternative sources of information in reaching purchase decisions. The erroneous assumption

suggesting that effective product marketing and service marketing are one in the same has led to the untested assumption that no difference exists between how consumers utilize information sources for products and for services.

The remainder of this chapter will explore how the consumer utilizes information sources in the formulation of his purchase decisions. The use and influence of impersonal sources of information (mass media) and personal sources of information will be examined and reviewed through existing research studies.

SECTION TWO: INFORMATION SOURCE USE AND INFLUENCE

Introduction

The remainder of this chapter will discuss the use and influence of impersonal (mass media) and personal sources of information on consumer purchase decisions. The discussion of mass media communication will mention historic areas of research as well as the intervening variables in the mass communication process. Interpersonal communication will be discussed in the context of both individual and reference group influence. Several studies will be reviewed which bear on the use and influence of the various information sources.

Mass Media

Historical view.-- When mass media communication first began its march into the homes of America, two general opinions regarding mass media came into prominence. On the positive side, many people believed that mass media communication would act as a net in forming links between all members of the population. The media could reach masses of people with up-to-date information and thus could create a feeling of togetherness and mutuality.

Others prophesized something very different. Many felt that the media would be used as a powerful propaganda tool. People would be charmed and/or coerced into patterns of thought and behavior consistent with the messages being carried via the media. Free thinking and the democratic society would be destroyed

Parts of both points of view are reflected in the mass media as we know them today. Certainly the mass media have increasingly spread national and international news among every receptive member of the population. Messages regarding all facets of life (political, news, education, entertainment, etc.) reach millions of people at the same instant. Civil Defense and public interest bulletins can reach any or all regions of the country simultaneously.

However, the early cynics also are correct in that mass media have the potential for creating false impressions and conditioned attitudes. Many countries--especially communist countries--broadcast messages to achieve a desired effect. Propaganda by way of mass media is a very real and historic happening. Numerous product commercial messages have been proven false and misleading. However, democratic societies such as the United States have proven that strict monitoring and control of mass media messages can, to a large extent, control the evils of mass media communication. To more fully understand mass media communication, a careful look should be taken at some of the effects and the impact of such transmissions.

Historical research areas.-- The three historic areas of mass media research are 1) audience research, 2) content analysis, 3) effect analysis.⁴

⁴Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld discuss these three types of research in Personal Influence (Glencoe: Free Press, 1955) pp. 17-19.

First, audience research was conducted to establish what kinds and how many people hear a particular message or messages. Second, researchers began examining alternate methods or techniques for wording media messages. Third, researchers delved into the effects of mass media communication.

Research into mass media effects encompassed both audience research and content analysis. Audiences comprising various different characteristics were analyzed to determine how they reacted to the same or similar media messages. Alternatively worded media messages were analyzed in terms of their impact on the same or similar audiences. In other words, whether audience or content was the subject of study, the dependent variable was the impact of the message.

Intervening variables in the mass communication process.-- There are five contributing variables in the mass communication process. These variables are 1) exposure, 2) differential character of the media 3) message content, 4) personality traits of the individual and 5) interpersonal communication.⁵

These five variables are explained below. Exposure to media messages is not as random or extensive as first believed. A positive correlation exists between a person's interest or receptability and the messages to which he is exposed. In other words, media messages are often avoided by those people whom the message was designed to reach. The reduced size of the audience is further

⁵ These five intervening variables are stated and discussed by Katz and Lazarsfeld in Personal Influence (Glencoe: Free Press, 1955) pp. 21-25.

illustrated by the average television viewer who intently watches the programming but decides to go to the kitchen during the commercial message.

"Differential character of the media" implies the same message presented by two different media will differentially effect the audience. Each medium requires a different mode of perception. Print is seen, radio is heard, and television is seen and heard.

The effect of a particular message will to some degree depend on its content. (content refers to the presentation, language or style.) Given the same media, two differently worded or delivered messages expressing basically the same thought will differentially effect the audience.

A fourth variable which effects the impact of media messages stems from examining audience pre-dispositions. The mass of attitudes and beliefs held by an audience (grouped or individual) will bias their perception of any communication. For example, a speech by a political leader will be perceived and reacted to extremely differently by people who differ only in political affiliation.

The interpersonal relationships between audience members is a fifth variable which relates to the impact of mass media communication. As previously stated, the two step flow of communication established that mass communicated messages are not perceived and acted upon individually by consumers. "We are suggesting, in other words, that the response of an individual to a campaign cannot be accounted for without reference to his social environment and to the

character of his interpersonal relations."⁶

Interpersonal Communication and Influence

Defining terms.-- The process of obtaining information from other people or giving information to other people is often termed "interpersonal communication". Other terms expressing the same phenomenon are "personal communication", "interpersonal information", and "personal information". For the purpose of this paper, "personal" will equal "interpersonal" and "communication" will equal "information". As previously mentioned, "reference group" implies interpersonal communication either on a one to one basis or on a individual to group basis. "Reference group influence" refers to the influence directly (through communication) or indirectly (through perceived social pressure) exerted on the individual.

Interpersonal influence.-- Interpersonal communication is generally considered to be the primary source of influence effecting the consumer's purchase decision. The consumer can be influenced by personal contacts in two ways. First, the consumer might request or be given information about a purchase decision. In this case, the consumer receives information specifically regarding the object of his purchase decision. He may consult with one or more personal sources ranging from his immediate family to a stranger on the street corner.

Opinion leaders.-- Sometimes the consumer will consult one friend or a small group of friends about all those purchase decisions which

⁶Ibid, p. 25.

require information. However, usually the consumer consults different sources of personal information for different types of purchase decisions. Some friends or acquaintances seem to be better informed about certain products.

Marketers refer to those people who are sought out for information regarding their product as opinion leaders. To take advantage of interpersonal communication and influence, a marketer must find out characteristics of his opinion leaders. The better he satisfies his opinion leaders, the more interpersonal communications will favor his product.

Reference group influence.-- A second manner in which interpersonal communication effects consumer purchase decisions is through reference group influence. The consumer might not directly consult personal sources of information when making his purchase decision but will act according to how he feels others would act. In other words, the consumer takes into account the norms and values of those groups to which he belongs before reaching a purchase decision. He acts consistent with the expectations of his family, friends, or other groups to which he belongs. If a particular group is perceived as having no norms or values regarding a specific purchase, then that group will have no bearing on his purchase decision.

Anywhere from one to an infinite number of people can serve as a reference point for an individual's behavior and actions. However, certain standard norms and values seem common to a large number of individuals and groups. These common standard norms become a part of society in general. Francis S. Bourne wished to explore the

possibility that society establishes norms and values in regard to purchasing behavior. In other words, Bourne⁷ believed that certain products and brands are more subject to social influence (ie. socially conspicuous).

Social influence.-- In 1957 Francis S. Bourne showed that social influence (group or reference influence) differentially effects the purchase of various products and brands. To accomplish this, Bourne condensed and interpreted results of some earlier experiments.

Social influence was shown to be especially strong in the purchase of both products and brands in the case of cars, cigarettes, beer (premium vs regular) and drugs. The purchase of products but not brands was strongly effected by social influence in the case of air conditioners, instant coffee, and television. The purchase of brands but not products was subject to strong social influence in the case of clothing, furniture, magazines, refrigerator (type) and toilet soap. There was no influence associated with either products or brands in the case of soap, canned peaches, laundry soap, and refrigerators (brand).

Bourne's results definitely supported his hypothesis that the purchase of various products and brands are differentially effected by social influence. Bourne attributed this phenomenon to what he termed the "social significance" of the product or brand. He believed that the degree of influence exerted on the consumer is a function of the perceived social significance attached to the product or brand by the consumer.

⁷ Francis S. Bourne "Group Influence in Marketing", Some Applications of Behavioral Science Research, 1957.

Bourne's study raises two important questions for a study dealing with information source use and influence in the purchase of a service. First, does the degree of personal influence exerted on the consumer in the purchase of a service depend on what that service is? Second, will the consumer use personal sources of information differentially among service purchase decisions?

Personal influence.-- Bourne's study established the phenomenon of social influence in the purchase of consumer products and brands. A study by Michael Perry and Curtis Hamm⁸ explores the effects of personal influence in the purchase of products. Where Bourne grouped brands and products by social significance, Perry and Hamm grouped products by social and economic significance. Thus, Perry and Hamm explore the relationship between personal influence and the socioeconomic risk associated with various products.

Perry and Hamm defined socioeconomic risk as "the possibility of significant social or economic injury associated with making an incorrect purchase decision in a particular situation of consumer uncertainty".⁹ They stated two main strategies in which risk reduction can take place. Risk can be reduced either by brand loyalty or by actively seeking information regarding the purchase decision. The second strategy of actively seeking information, can be assisted by advertising and/or work of mouth. The object of their study was to analyze word of mouth influence on the consumer

⁸Michael Perry and Curtis Hamm, "Canonical Analysis of Relations between Socioeconomic Risk and Personal Influence in Purchase Decisions", Journal of Marketing Research, August 1969, pp. 351-354.

⁹Ibid, p. 351.

during various purchase decisions. The hypothesis stated "the higher the socioeconomic risk involved in a particular purchase decision the greater the importance of personal influence, as compared with other sources of influence."¹⁰

A questionnaire was developed and administered to rate the socioeconomic risk and interpersonal influence associated with twenty-five purchase decisions. The first part of the questionnaire individually asked the subjects to rank the significance of the twenty-five product purchase decisions according to social risk and according to economic risk.

In the second section of the questionnaire the respondent is presented with a fictional illustration of a friend who is impressed by an advertisement for product L. The respondent is then presented with a list of seven possible sources of information to aid his friend's purchase decision. The respondent is asked to rate (from 1 to 7) how significant each information source is upon his friend's purchase decision.

The seven information sources used in the questionnaire were:

- 1) advertising for that product
- 2) advertising not directed at the specific product
- 3) unbiased information sources (Consumer Reports)
- 4) observed attitudes of others regarding the product (owner)
- 5) expressed opinions of others regarding the product
- 6) past personal experience
- 7) information source from a source not listed above

Information sources 4 and 5 represent interpersonal purchase decision influence. The list of products was selected with regard

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 351.

to plausibility of purchase by the respondents, advertisability, inclusion of products and services, and diversity in potential socioeconomic risks.

Each product was scored and ranked according to risk and according to personal influence. The correlation between risk and influence was significant at the 99% confidence level. The results supported the hypothesis that as socioeconomic risk increases so increase the personal influence on the decision.

Perry and Hamm, as well as Bourne, explored how two different forms of personal influence effected consumer purchase decisions. Both studies concluded that interpersonal influence is related to the social significance of the product.

Perry and Hamm's experiment illustrated the first manner in which interpersonal communication effects the consumer's purchase decisions. The consumer directly used personal sources of information to solve purchase decision problems. The "riskier" the decision, the more the consumer relied upon personal sources of information.

Bourne's experiment illustrated the second manner in which interpersonal communication effects the consumer's purchase decision. The consumer indirectly uses personal sources of information by acting as he feels others would act in the same situation. In other words, the consumer draws comparisons to members of his reference group.

Having established the two manners in which consumers' uses are influenced by interpersonal communication, our attention shall now focus on a study which compares the use and influence of interpersonal communication to various other sources of information.

Impersonal and personal information source use and influence.--

In 1966 a study was conducted by George Haines Jr.¹¹ to rank the impact of various stimuli associated with consumer purchasing. A questionnaire was developed and administered to consumers following the purchase of non-durable items. The three main questions asked were "How did you find out about the product?, How did it happen that you decided to purchase this product?, Did you plan to buy this product before you came to the store?"

The results indicated that 56.7% of the people purchasing a new product (to them) reported exposure to advertising directed at the product. However, only 17.2% of the 56.7% felt that the television advertisements were instrumental (effective exposure) in their purchase decision. Pre purchase sampling was also rated instrumental in purchase decisions by 17.2% of the respondents. However, pre-purchase sampling was reported by only 26.3% of the respondents. Personal sources of information were utilized by a reported 18.2% with 11.1% of those being effectively exposed. Magazine advertising had a total exposure of 5% and an effective exposure of 2%.

Haines established what he termed the total "impact" of information sources. He did so by dividing the number of respondents reporting effective exposure from a particular source by the total number of respondents reporting exposure to that source. The recorded impact of different information sources as influences on consumer purchasing was ranked as follows: 1) sampling, 2) personal

¹¹---, "Sampling, Word of Mouth Top Media, in Impact on Consumers, AMA Told", Advertising Age, Sept. 12, 1966, pp. 71-72.

contact, 3) magazine advertising, 4) availability, 5) television advertising. Note the distinction between an information source and an influencing agent. A media advertisement is not necessarily a consumer purchase stimulus.

Several conclusions might be derived from Haine's research. First, a wide disparity exists between the use of various sources of information by consumers. Second, a disparity exists between how various sources of information influence consumers. Third, a relationship does not necessarily exist between a source's exposure and its influence (ie., between number of consumers exposed to a source and that source's perceived influence). Fourth, personal sources of information are more influential than the mass media.

The last study dealing with information source use and influence will explore how the consumer utilized information sources in a purchase decision regarding a service. The study, authored by Feldman and Spencer,¹² traced the process involved in a consumer's selection of a physician.

Information search regarding the purchase of a service.--

When buying a product, the consumer is exposed to tangible, visible, and illustrated material, such as packagings, ingredients, and advertisements. These illustrations are designed to create a more complete pre-purchase knowledge of the product. Such tangible, visible and illustrated material about a particular service is often unavailable or even impossible to obtain. What there is of service advertising usually creates only an awareness that such a service

¹²Sidney Feldman, and Merlin Spencer, "The Effects of Personal Influence in the Selection of Consumer Services", American Marketing Association Proceedings, Fall, 1965, pp. 440-452.

exists, where it can be found, and promises of prompt effective service.

In 1962, Sidney Feldman and Merlin Spencer presented their findings on an experiment designed to trace the process involved in a consumer decision to buy a personal service. The study dealt with the decision making process of a consumer in selecting a physician. Selection behavior was assumed to be a function of mediating factors and situational factors and their interrelation. Selection behavior was sub-divided into three categories; early selection, late selection and non-selection. Mediating factors were categorized as; precipitating factors (need immediacy, need uniqueness), decision responsibility (individual, multiple), information sources (impersonal, personal professional, personal non-professional), and information content (scope, quality). Situational factors were categorized as; household socioeconomic factors, pre-purchase search and experience, environmental adaptation, intra-household psychological environment.

The findings indicated that 53 percent of newcomers arriving in a new area selected a physician within the first month, and 90 percent within four months. In 74 percent of the cases, the selection was made primarily by the housewife. In 62 percent of the cases the selection was based on non-professional information sources with the information having a narrow scope and low quality. Non-professional personal information sources most often were over thirty-five years of age and in the same range of the socioeconomic spectrum as the

service buyer. Only a small percentage of households had no prior experience in selecting a physician.

Further questioning of the households who reported non-professional information as being their primary source indicated several findings. First, an individual seeking information generally consulted people who were on an equal socioeconomic level. Furthermore, the relationship between respondents and referents was overwhelmingly close. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents had visited the home of the referent. There was also a high degree of mutual club, church, and employment affiliation. In 41 percent of the cases the referent was asked for advice regarding other products or services.

Summary.-- It appears, then, that the purchase of a service (or at least a medical service) is highly influenced by personal sources of information. Previous research has emphasized the degree of influence exerted by personal sources of information. Personal communication was shown to be a direct cause of purchase behavior. Personal communication in the form of social or reference group influence was shown to be somewhat less direct or obvious but never the less a very real source of influence. Haines illustrated that for non-durable products, sampling, and word of mouth communication were far more influential than mass media communication. Information source use was indicated to have little, if any, bearing on that source's influence. And finally, the choice of a professional medical service has shown to be very susceptible to personal influence.

Chapter 3 will next discuss the methodology of a study designed to incorporate or test much of the results of the previously reviewed research studies. Like Haine's study, this study will explore personal as well as impersonal sources of information. These sources will be explored in terms of use (exposure or frequency consulted) and influence. A combined view of use and influence will establish an overall impact of each source. Unlike Haine's study, the following study will view information source use and influence in regard to purchase of consumer services. This study will also recognize the economic distinction between respondents; responses will be categorized and analyzed by respondent income level as well as by service purchase decision.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

As previously mentioned, this study is designed to examine the use of information sources by the consumer in the purchase of consumer services. The study is also designed to explore the use of information sources by consumers from three different income levels. Therefore, the three variables under examination are: 1) information sources, 2) service categories, and 3) family income levels. These variables are defined below.

1. Information Sources

- Impersonal 1) Television, Radio (electronic media)
- 2) Newspaper, Magazine, Pamphlet (printed media)
- 3) Signs, Store, Yellow Pages (Search)
- Personal 4) Family, Friends
- 5) Professional (To service)

2. Service Categories

- 1) Mechanical auto repair (Asset repair service)
- 2) Barber or beauty shop (Personal service)
- 3) Family doctor (Personal professional service)
- 4) Movies (Recreation service)

3. Family Income Level

- 1) Under 8,000 (Low)
- 2) 8,000-14,999 (Middle)
- 3) 15,000 and above (High)

As previously stated, the data will be analyzed in two dimensions. First, the number or frequency of respondents using a particular source of information for a particular service will be analyzed. Second, the importance values assigned to information sources will be examined. Chapter 1 described the need for a standard structured scale to measure importance levels of information sources. Such a scale insures uniformity of responses, ease of interrelation, and ease of comparison. The importance of an information source to the purchase decision will be termed the influence of that source on the respondent. The analysis of these two dimensions will establish the total importance of each information source for each service type and each income level.

The literary alternative hypotheses are as follows:

1. Personal sources of information are more frequently used than impersonal sources of information for each service.
2. The use of an information source is independent of the service type.
3. The degree of influence exerted by personal sources of information is greater than the degree of influence exerted by impersonal sources of information for each service category.
4. The influence of an information source is independent of the service category.
5. Personal sources of information are more frequently used than impersonal sources of information for each income level.

6. The use of an information source is independent of the respondent's income level.
7. The degree of influence exerted by personal sources of information is greater than the degree of influence exerted by impersonal sources of information for each income level.
8. The influence of an information source is independent of the respondent's income level.

In testing these eight hypotheses all relevant relationships between the three variables will be explored. Personal sources are to be examined in total as well as separately. The same is true for impersonal sources.

The Sample

The sample consists of 990 families selected in the bordering towns of Springfield, Holyoke, and Chicopee, Massachusetts. This area was selected for the following reasons:

1. Ease of obtaining the sample population because of geographic proximity.
2. Area provides a wide dispersion of family incomes.
3. Method of drawing the sample population required street directory information available only at town halls.

A target sample of 1,000 families was reduced to 990 because of numerical and copy errors. Two hundred or approximately twenty percent return was desired and expected. Since one of the variables to be examined is income, an equal number of respondents within each income level was desired.

As previously mentioned, respondents were divided into three income levels or categories. A finer division of income levels was not used because a balance was needed between the number of levels and the number of respondents with each level. Table 3.1 illustrates the three family income levels to be used. These income levels represent the low, middle, and high income categories of the Springfield, Holyoke and Chicopee, Massachusetts area.

TABLE 3.1

FAMILY INCOME LEVELS

<u>Level</u>	<u>Annual Family Income</u>
1 (Low)	Under 8,000
2 (Middle)	8,000-14,999
3 (High)	15,000 and Over

A goal of 66 respondents per level has been established. However, a disproportionate return among income levels and/or a lesser response rate could result in a substantially lower number of responses within each category.

To achieve this goal, it has been estimated that a disproportionately high number of lower income families is necessary in the sample population. Similarly, it is estimated that a disproportionately low number of higher income families is necessary in the sample population. This reasoning is based on information

from several sources indicating that response rate and income level have a decreasing relationship. The sample population was drawn assuming the validity of this relationship.

A method was devised to extract a sample population with a disproportionate number of respondents in each income level. To accomplish this, census tract information was secured from the U.S. Census Block Statistics, 1971, to find differing income levels by census tract within the sample area. Census tract mean income ranged from \$5,958 to \$17,725 and median income ranged from \$5,119 to \$13,866. Presented in Appendix 1 is a table of the census tracts selected for the sample population along with the town, tract number, median income, mean income, and number of families. These tracts represent the lowest, highest, and most exactly middle income levels of the area. Of the 990 families in the sample population, 446 were from low income tracts, 297 were from middle income tracts, and 247 were from high income tracts.

Streets within each tract were obtained from census tract block statistic maps. Streets were located in the town-street directory or voting list, from which a stratified random sample of names were taken. The sample was restricted to a geographical area and to specific census tracts while the families within the tract were considered homogeneous and randomly selected.

Therefore, the persons included in the sample represent the vast portion of the economic spectrum found in the geographical population under study. This economically diverse sample was used

to allow conclusions regarding consumer information search and influence regarding service purchase among persons of different income levels.

The Questionnaire

A mail questionnaire was developed and administered to explore the relationships between the variables and to test the hypotheses. Many factors were considered in deciding which of the three application techniques would be most effective. The justifications for using a mail instrument are as follows.

1. A telephone or personal interview creates difficulty in reaching a specific member of the family. A mail questionnaire can be put off until the most appropriate respondent within the family is available.
2. If put in verbal rather than visual form, the question areas would require a longer attention span and deliberation than a telephone interview would allow.
3. Since only mail questionnaires can be anonymous, the variable of income is most successfully obtained by mail.
4. Personal interviewing is extremely time consuming and expensive.
5. Mail questionnaires do not vary in application as telephone and personal interviewing do.
6. It is expected that mail questionnaires will sufficiently explore the question areas.

The completed instrument and cover letter are presented in the Second Appendix.

The final questionnaire was constructed in a matrix design with the information sources listed vertically and the importance

continuum listed horizontally. This design was judged to be more clear and compact than alternative designs.

Importance scale.-- Stuart C. Dodd and Thomas R. Gerbrick published a study titled Word Scales for Degrees of Opinion¹ in which several attitude scales were developed and tested. One of the scales they developed was designed to measure importance levels. Dodd and Gerbrick believed a good scale would be "a) a unidimensional scale, ie., one showing degrees of one kind of entity, b) a cardinal scale, ie., having equal units or intervals, c) a range specified scale, ie., having its origin or zero point and its limiting points known."² Each word describing a degree of importance was tested for several properties. First, respondents were asked to rate the word on a 1 to 9 scale (least importance to most importance). Next, the words were tested for ambiguity, simplicity, and familiarity. A value was established for each word by analyzing these four properties. The value was then rounded off to the nearest whole number 1 through 9.

The continuum used in this study was taken from the results of Dodd's and Thomas' research. Based on their research, very important received a weight of 8, important 7, unimportant 3, and very unimportant 2.

¹Stuart C. Dodd and Thomas R. Gerbrick, Word Scales for Degrees of Opinion, University of Washington, p. 19.

²Ibid p.15

Services.-- Four types of services were selected, each representing a different service category. The services are mechanical automobile repair, barber or beauty shop, movies, and family doctor. A complete list of service categories and services within each category appears in Appendix One.

Sources.-- Information sources are combined in some cases because analyzing each and every source independently would be too complex and cumbersome. Therefore, television and radio are combined to represent the electronic media, newspapers and magazines represent the printed media and search represents the physical acts of either driving by and seeing the sign, or looking for listings in yellow pages. These three sources, along with any impersonal sources that might be listed in the "other" category, represent the impersonal sources.

The personal sources are divided into two categories; friends-family and professional sources. Professional sources are defined as people who make their living by providing the service mentioned in the category. In other words, if a respondent consults a professional in a particular service category before making a definite purchase no-purchase decision for that category of service then the respondent has consulted a professional source. This is to be distinguished from those situations when a respondent initiates conversation with the professional while he is in the process of providing his service. If the professional could be considered a friend (by the respondent) then the respondent would indicate his source as being both a friend and a professional.

Total personal sources consulted is obtained by combining friends, (defined as friends, neighbors, colleagues, club members) family, professional, and "other" personal sources.

Data Analysis

As previously mentioned in Chapter One, the use and influence of personal sources of information will be compared and contrasted to the use and influence of impersonal sources of information. A total impact of each source will be computed by simultaneously analyzing use and influence. Various mathematical methods and table formulations will be used to establish the use, influence, and impact of each information source.

Establishing the "use" of information sources.-- The use of an information source will be expressed by the percentage of respondents who stated the use of such a source. For example, out of 156 respondents who answered questions dealing with automobile repair, 38 indicated the use of television or radio in their decision process. Therefore 24.4% (38 divided by 156) indicated the use of television or radio in their purchase decision.

Comparison of uses (or percentages) will be made between service types, sources, and respondent income levels. In the above example 24.4 percent of the respondents reported the use of television and radio for automobile repair purchase decision. This value can be compared to the 29.5% of respondents who reported the use of newspapers or magazines for the same decision. Similarly the

24.4% of respondents reporting the use of television or radio for automobile repair can be compared to the 16.0% of respondents reporting the use of television or radio for purchase decisions regarding barber shop selection. In other words, percentages will be compared horizontally (holding the service or income level constant) in establishing use differences between information sources and vertically (holding the information source constant) in establishing use differences between services or income level. Exhibit 3.1, presented below, illustrates an example of the type of table to be used in the comparison of percentages.

EXHIBIT 3.1

COMPARISONS OF PERCENTAGES (USE)

Total Respondents		T.V., Radio	News, Mags.	Search	Friend, Family	Pro.	Total Imper.	Total Pers.	
	↓ Services or Income Levels ↓	→ comparison of sources →							
		↓ comparison of services or income levels							
Totals									

The use of information sources is expressed in terms of percentages instead of actual numbers (of respondent) because the total numbers of respondents responding to each service is unequal. For example, 156 respondents answered questions about auto repair

but 166 respondents answered questions regarding family physician. Therefore, comparing actual numbers of respondents would distort comparisons between service types. The use of percentages accounts for discrepancies in totals and allows for more accurate comparisons.

Establishing the "influence" of information sources.-- This chapter previously discussed the method and rationale behind the formulation of source influence (importance). Source influence will be expressed as the mean of the weighted observations in each cell. The analysis of influence ratings between the various sources of information will proceed similarly to the method of comparison used for percentages. The same form of table (Exhibit 3.1) will be used to indicate the comparisons. Comparisons will be established between information sources, service types, and consumer income level.

Establishing the total "impact" of information sources.-- As previously mentioned, the impact of a source of information will take the use and influence of that source into account. Use and influence will be combined by direct multiplication. The assumption underlying the impact values is that use and influence deserve equal weights in formulating an impact index. However, such an index will establish a useful summary of the comparisons between information sources and between service types or income levels. Comparisons between impact values will similarly proceed as illustrated by Exhibit 3.1.

Use vs influence.-- The "use" of an information source will be compared to the "influence" of that source. Sources will be ranked from 1 through 5 for both use and influence. Each information source will be totaled vertically (ie. totalling all service types) and those totals will be ranked from 1 through 5.

Review of data analysis.-- The comparisons of information sources will consider sources individually (ie. comparisons between each of the five sources) as well as grouped (ie. personal vs impersonal).

Comparison tables such as Exhibit 3.1 will indicate relationships between services, income levels, and information sources. The purpose of such comparisons is to reveal differences between information sources in terms of use and influence regarding various service purchase decisions. It is further hoped that a trend or trends in the use and influence of information sources between respondent income levels will occur. The comparisons and/or trends indicated by this study will expose research areas in need of further indepth study and analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

STUDY RESULTS

Introduction.-- Chapter four will first present the results of the sampling methodology. Table 4.1 will illustrate the expected and actual number of respondents reporting within the census tracts. Table 4.2 will present the expected and actual number of respondents reporting within each income level.

Next, the results of the study will be presented. Table 4.3 will indicate the frequency of information use among the services and Table 4.4 will illustrate the frequency of information source use among the income levels. Tables 4.5a through 4.8b will bear on each of the eight hypotheses respectively. The method of table analysis for exploring each hypotheses is presented in Exhibit 4.1 on page 58. Table 4.9a and 4.9b will help summarize the total impact of each information source and Table 4.10 will aid in establishing comparisons between information source use and information source influence.

Sampling results.-- A random quota sample consisting of 990 families was selected from the Springfield, Massachusetts area on the basis of mean (and median) family income level. Table 4.1, presented below, summarizes the number of questionnaires sent to each income level. (ie. census tracts representing each income level) as well as the expected and actual numbers and percentages of returns.

TABLE 4.1

SAMPLING RESULTS FROM CENSUS TRACTS

Census Tract Income Level	Census Tract Mean Income	Number Sent	Percent Sent	Number Returned*		Percent Returned*	
				Expected	Actual	Expected	Actual
1) Low	6,408	446	45%	67	42	33.3%	25.1%
2) Middle	10,312	297	30%	67	50	33.3%	29.9%
3) High	16,477	247	25%	67	75	33.3%	44.9%
Total		990	100%	200	167	100%	100%

*Represents usable returns

Note:

A further break down by census tract is presented in Appendix 1.

Table 4.1 represents the returns for census tracts within each income level. However, respondents from these census tracts do not necessarily earn incomes consistent with the income level of the tract. Some percentage of families living within low income census tracts actually earn incomes as high as the average respondent from the high income census tracts. The reverse is also true. Table 4.2 illustrates the expected and actual numbers and percentages of respondents reporting incomes within each established income level. The established income levels, as discussed in Chapter 3, are low (below 8,000), middle, (8,000 to 14,999), high (15,000 and above) and are numbered one through three respectively.

TABLE 4.2

SAMPLING RESULTS REGARDING ESTABLISHED INCOME LEVELS

Income Level	Number Returned*		Percent Returned*	
	Expected	Actual	Expected	Actual
1) below 8,000	67	39	33.3	23.4
2) Middle 8,000-14,999	67	75	33.3	44.9
3) High 15,000 and above	67	53	33.3	31.7
Total	200	167	100%	100%

*Represents usable returns

The sampling results indicate that: 1) a more severely disproportionate sample (higher percentage of low income sampling) was needed to satisfy the established income categories and 2) less middle income sampling was needed. Census tract sampling of both income extremes provided enough income variability among respondents to heavily contribute to the middle income level. However, response rate and diversity of respondents regarding income levels is more than adequate to proceed in analyzing the results among and between variables.

The remainder of this chapter will explain the results of the study. The frequency of information source use by the respondents among the service types and income levels will be explored next.

Frequency of Information Source Use

By service type.-- Table 4.3 presents the frequency or total number of respondents who indicated the use of a particular

source (or sources) of information in purchase decisions involving each of the services under consideration.

TABLE 4.3

SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED IN THE SELECTION OF SERVICES
(BY SERVICE TYPE)*

Service	Type of Information Source				Personal			Total Info. Sources	Total Respondents
	Impersonal		Search	Total	Friends	Prof.	Total		
	T.V., Radio	News., Mag.					Family		
Auto	38	46	62	150	119	99	228	378	156
Barber	26	44	69	139	123	81	205	344	162
Doctor	18	22	49	89	148	112	265	354	166
Movie	100	147	34	284	135	25	160	444	160
Total	182	259	214	662	525	317	858	1520	644

*Data represents frequency of use of each information source for each service.

By income level.-- Table 4.4 presents the frequency of total number of respondents within each income level who indicated the use of a particular source (or sources) of information in service purchase decisions.

TABLE 4.4

SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED IN THE SELECTION OF SERVICES (BY INCOME LEVEL)*

Total Respondents		Impersonal			Personal		Total Pers.	Total Impers.	Total Sources
		T.V. Radio	News. Mag.	Search	Family Friend	Profes-sional			
146	level 1	47	68	54	119	83	206	170	376
290	level 2	86	112	99	239	139	386	300	686
208	level 3	49	79	61	167	95	266	192	458
644	Total	182	259	214	525	317	858	662	1520

*Data represent frequency of use of each information source for each income level.

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 indicate the number of respondents reporting within each cell. The cells indicate the number of people from which percentage and influence value tables have been derived. The percentage (or use) tables and influence value tables will be used for comparisons between and among variables and will be labeled 4.5a through 4.8b.

COMPARING THE RESULTS

Procedure.-- Tables 4.5a through 4.8b will be used to indicate relationships and explore hypotheses concerning variations between and among variables. As previously stated, these comparisons will proceed on two dimensions. The tables will compare information source use and information source influence among services and income levels. These two dimensions will be analyzed regarding

service types and income levels. Tables 4.5a through 4.6b will establish relationships between information sources and service types.

Tables 4.7a through 4.8b will establish relationships between information sources and respondent income levels. Exhibit 4.1 illustrates the procedure in which tables and comparisons will be presented regarding tables 4.5a through 4.8b.

Tables 4.9a, 4.9b and 4.10 will conclude the presentation of the results. Tables 4.9a and 4.9b will establish the impact of each information source. Impact was defined as the multiplication of percentage (use) times the influence value for each cell. Table 4.10 will present the previously discussed rank comparisons between information source use and information source influence among the services. These three tables will help summarize the results of the study.

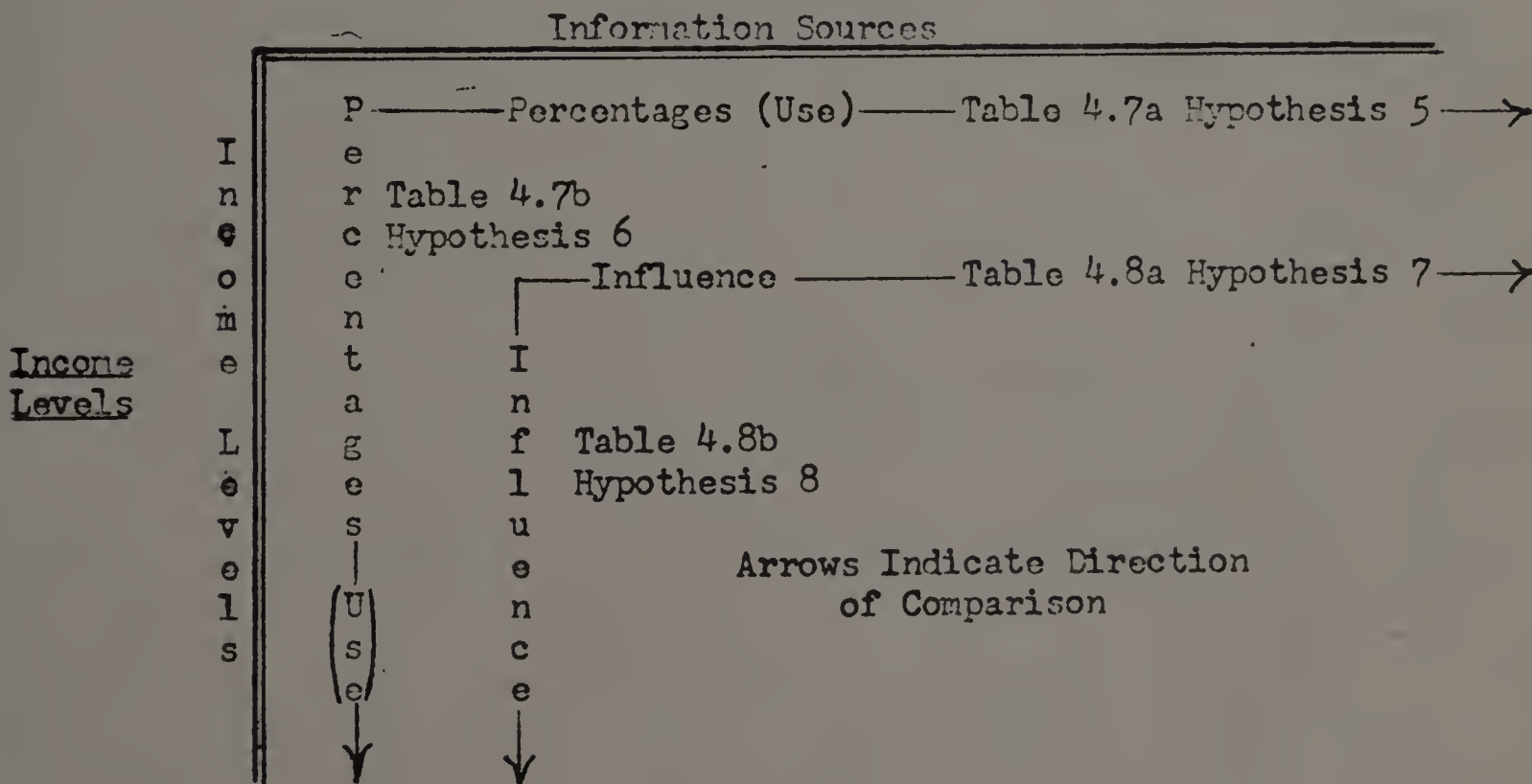
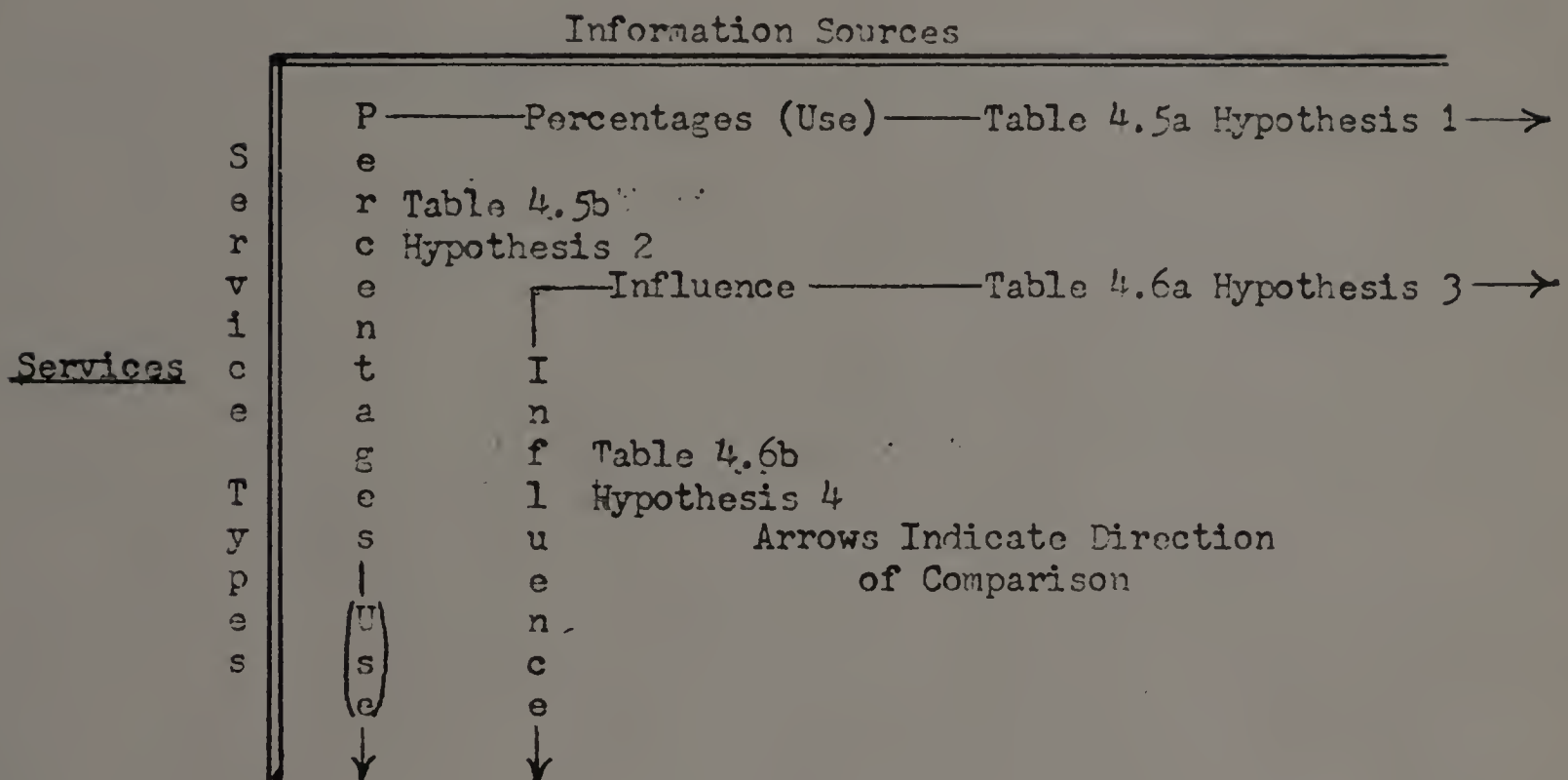
Comparisons Between Information Sources and Service Types

Analysis of "use" between information sources.-- Table 4.5a relates to hypothesis number one which states; personal sources of information are more frequently used than impersonal sources of information for each service type under consideration. The table will also indicate specific relationships between the use of various information sources for each service type.

The values appearing within the table represent the percentages of respondents using the various sources of information for each service type. For example, 24.4% of the respondents who answered questions concerning auto repair reported the use of television and/or

EXHIBIT 4.1

PROCEDURE FOR INTRODUCING COMPARISON TABLES



radio in making their purchase decision. The Total Personal and Total Impersonal Columns represent the addition of the sources (the small differences between the total columns and the addition of the individual percentages are due to the inclusion of "other" information sources in the total columns).

TABLE 4.5a

USE OF INFORMATION SOURCES FOR EACH SERVICE TYPE (PERCENTAGES)

Total Respondents		Impersonal			Personal		Total Pers.	Total Impers.
		T.V., Radio	News., Mag.	Search	Friends, Family	Profes-sional		
156	Auto	.244	.295	.397	.763	.635	1.462	.962
162	Barber	.160	.272	.426	.759	.500	1.265	.858
166	Doctor	.108	.132	.296	.892	.675	1.596	.536
160	Movie	.625	.918	.212	.844	.156	1.000	1.775
644	Total	.283	.402	.332	.815	.492	1.332	1.027

Hypothesis 1

Personal sources of information are more frequently used than impersonal sources of information for each service type under consideration.

Table 4.5a does not support hypotheis number one. Personal sources of information were used by more respondents than impersonal

sources for purchase decisions regarding automobile repair (mechanical), barber service, and doctor service but not information leading to the purchase of a movie ticket. Thus, hypothesis one must be rejected.

Table 4.5a indicates a general trend or similarity in the gathering of information for auto, barber, and doctor services. In the case of auto and barber services respondents reported the use of personal sources of information about one and one half times as much as impersonal sources. Personal sources were used almost three times as often as impersonal sources for doctor services. However, people wishing information about movies frequent impersonal sources approximately one and three quarters as much as personal sources.

The bottom or total line in Table 4.5 indicates the total use of each information source (collapsing services). It is interesting to note that family and friends are used (total) more than twice as much as any impersonal source. The total use of professional sources of information was reported by more respondents than any impersonal source.

Analysis of the use of each impersonal source of information again indicates a somewhat standard usage among auto, barber, and doctor services. Television and radio are used consistently the least. Newspapers and magazines are consistently used more often, and physical search (sign, store, yellow pages) is reported being the most used impersonal source. Again, however, the use of impersonal sources of information is very different for movies in that newspaper and magazines

and television and radio are used much more often than for any other service.

Table 4.5a points to the variance of information use among some but not all services. On the whole (or at least from these four services), personal sources of information appear to be used substantially more often than impersonal sources. Friends and family are used more often than professional sources in every case. The use of each impersonal source of information shows a standard relationship for some services but not for all services.

Analysis of "use" between service types.-- Table 4.5a illustrated the use of all the information sources for a particular service (horizontal relationship). Table 4.5b illustrates the use of a particular source of information for all the services (vertical relationship). The table percentages are the same, only the direction of analysis has changed.

Table 4.5b relates to hypothesis number two which states: Information source use is independent of service type. This hypothesis could be restated as: Each information source is used to approximately the same degree for all service types.

Analysis of Table 4.5b clearly indicates the varying use of information sources among services. The use of personal sources of information is 59.6% higher for doctors than for movies. The use of impersonal sources of information is 124% higher for movies than for doctors. These results necessitate the rejection of hypothesis two. Information source use is clearly not independent of the service type.

These differences further point to the greater stability of the use of personal sources of information in contrast to the use of impersonal sources of information. For example, the difference between the use of personal information for auto and doctor is 13%. However, the difference between the use of impersonal information for auto and doctor is 43%

TABLE 4.5b

USE OF EACH INFORMATION SOURCE AMONG SERVICES (PERCENTAGES)

Total Respond.		Impersonal			Personal		Total Pers.	Total Impers.	Total Sources
		T.V. Radio	News., Mag.	Search	Friends Family	Profes-sional			
156	Auto	.244	.295	.397	.763	.635	1.462	.962	2.423
162	Barber	.160	.272	.426	.759	.500	1.265	.858	2.123
166	Doctor	.108	.132	.296	.892	.675	1.596	.536	2.132
160	Movie	.615	.918	.212	.844	.156	1.000	1.775	2.775

Hypothesis 2

Information source use is independent of service type.

Family, friends, and search showed less fluctuation between services than the other sources. Television, radio and newspaper, magazines, and professional sources of information all showed large variations in their use among services. Again, most of these fluctuations are due to the movie service.

The "Total" column in Table 4.5b (far right) indicates which service purchase decisions require the most and least number of information sources. Movies prompted the use of most types of sources, followed by auto repair, doctor, and barber in that order. These values reflect the availability of information as well as intensity of information search.

Summary of Tables 4.5a and 4.5b.-- Tables 4.5a and 4.5b reveal that information source use is dependent on the particular service purchase decision. However, the use of friends, family and search are relatively stable among service types. Three of the four services under consideration showed relatively similar usages of information sources. Possible explanations of how large variations occur between some services and not others will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Analysis of influence between information sources.-- Table 4.6a illustrates the variations in influence between information sources for each service category. The table bears on hypothesis three which states: The degree of influence exerted by personal sources of information is greater than the degree of influence exerted by impersonal sources of information for each service type under consideration.

As previously explained, the influence values are derived by averaging the importance values (eight point scale) reported by the respondents. A value of eight would be most influential.

TABLE 4.6a

INFLUENCE OF INFORMATION SOURCES FOR EACH SERVICE TYPE

Total Respondents		Impersonal			Personal		Total Pers.	Total Impers.
		T.V., Radio	News., Mag.	Search	Friend, Family	Profes-sional		
156	Auto	4.45	5.04	5.23	7.45	7.34	7.40	5.06
162	Barber	3.62	4.89	5.01	7.49	7.35	7.43	4.71
166	Doctor	3.56	4.14	4.55	7.78	7.76	7.75	4.28
160	Movie	6.02	6.70	3.67	6.99	4.52	6.60	6.10
644	Total	5.15	5.88	4.76	7.44	7.27	7.37	5.33

Hypothesis 3

The degree of influence exerted by personal sources of information is greater than the degree of influence exerted by impersonal sources of information for each service type under consideration.

Table 4.6a supports the hypothesis that personal sources of information are more influential than impersonal sources of information for each service type. Given the purchase of a movie ticket was more dependent on personal sources of information.

Other results indicated by this table are: 1) friends and family are the most influential information source for all the services, 2) professional sources of information are nearly as influential as friends and family except for movies, 3) the impersonal sources of information are very similar in influence power among services, and

4) three out of the four services indicate physical search to be more influential in the purchase decision than the other impersonal sources (the electronic and printed media).

Analysis of "influence" between service types.-- Table 4.6b illustrates how each information source varies in influence between service types. This relates to hypothesis number four which states: information source influence is independent of service type.

TABLE 4.6b

INFLUENCE OF EACH INFORMATION SOURCE AMONG SERVICES

Total Resp.		Impersonal			Personal		Total Pers.	Total Impers	Total Sources
		T.V., Radio	News., Mags.	Search	Friends Family	Profes-sional			
156	Auto	4.45	5.04	5.23	7.45	7.34	7.40	5.06	6.47
162	Barber	3.62	4.89	5.01	7.49	7.35	7.43	4.71	6.35
166	Doctor	3.56	4.14	4.55	7.78	7.76	7.75	4.28	6.87
160	Movie	6.02	6.70	3.67	6.99	4.52	6.60	6.10	6.28

Hypothesis 4

Information source influence is independent of service types.

Table 4.6b indicates the following relationships. One, the influence values for auto, barber, and doctor are quite similar. However, as in the case of source use, source influence regarding movies is the exception to the rule. Two, the electronic and printed media are far more influential for movies than for other services.

Thus, the hypothesis that source influence is independent of service type is not supported.

Summary of tables 4.6a and 4.6b.-- Tables 4.6a and 4.6b indicated that influence values depend on both the source of information and on the service type. It was shown that information source influence is quite similar for some services but not for others. Personal sources of information - especially friends and family- are shown to have extremely high influence values (between "important" and "very important"). Except for movies, television and radio have the lowest influence rating of any source of information. Considering the large sums of money invested in electronic commercial advertisements, the electronic media influence values are quite startling.

Thus far the presentation of the results have been concerned with the use and influence of information sources in the purchase of selected services. Next, information source use and influence will be analyzed in terms of the respondents' income level. The hypotheses will investigate whether people from different economic backgrounds use and are influenced differentially by information sources in purchasing services.

Comparisons Between Information Source and Economic Levels

Analysis of "use" between information sources.-- Table 4.7a is designed to indicate whether people from a given economic environment tend to use information sources differently. Hypothesis number five states: personal sources of information are more frequently used than

impersonal sources of information for each income level. Table 4.7a presented below bears on this hypothesis.

TABLE 4.7a

USE OF INFORMATION SOURCES FOR EACH INCOME LEVEL (PERCENTAGES)

Total Respondents		Impersonal			Personal		Total Pers.	Total Impers.
		T.V., Radio	News., Mags.	Search	Friend, Family	Profes- sional		
146	Level 1	.322	.466	.370	.815	.568	1.411	1.164
290	Level 2	.297	.386	.341	.824	.479	1.331	1.034
208	level 3	.236	.380	.293	.803	.457	1.279	0.923
644	Total	.283	.402	.332	.815	.492	1.332	1.027

Note:

Income levels 1 through 3 represent the income categories; below \$8,000, \$8,000 to \$14,999 and \$15,000 and above respectively. The "Total Respondents" column refers to the addition of the respondents by income level reporting on each service. For example, the number of income level 1 respondents reporting on auto, barber, doctor, and movie are 32, 37, 38 and 39 respectively adding to 148. Of the 146, 32.2% reported the use of television and/or radio among the services. Thus, the 32.2% represents the average use of television and/or radio among the services by income level 1 respondents.

Hypothesis 5

Personal sources of information are more frequently used than impersonal sources of information for each income level.

Table 4.7a supports the validity of hypothesis five. Each economic level uses personal sources of information more than impersonal

sources in the purchase of services (those services under consideration). And the difference between personal source use and impersonal source use is almost exactly the same for each income level.

Analysis of "use" between income levels.-- Table 4.7b presents some very interesting relationships and trends between income levels. The hypothesis associated with table 4.7b illustrated below states: information source use is independent of income level.

TABLE 4.7b

USE OF EACH INFORMATION SOURCE AMONG INCOME LEVELS (PERCENTAGES)

Total Resp.		Impersonal			Personal		Total Pers.	Total Impers.	Total Sources
		T.V., Radio	News., Mags.	Search	Friend, Family	Profes-sional			
146	Level 1	.322	.466	.370	.815	.568	1.411	1.164	2.575
290	Level 2	.297	.386	.341	.824	.479	1.331	1.034	2.365
208	Level 3	.236	.380	.293	.803	.457	1.279	0.923	2.202

Hypothesis 6

Information source use is independent of income level.

Table 4.7b does not bear out hypothesis six. Not only is information source use dependent on income level but a definite trend in source usage between economic levels is indicated.

For every source except friends and family, the use of each source decreases with an increase in the economic level of the respondent. The higher the income the fewer sources consulted. The only exception to the rule is friends and family which is most used by middle income

but still used least by high income. This trend holds steady for personal, impersonal, and total source use. The decreasing intervals in source use between income levels is somewhat variable between individual sources but quite uniform between total, impersonal, total personal, and total sources.

Summary of tables 4.7a and 4.7b.-- Tables 4.7a and 4.7b indicate that any personal source of information is more important than any impersonal source of information in purchasing the services under consideration. The most startling fact illustrated by these tables concerns the decreasing use of information in the higher income levels. The next set of tables will establish if the influence of information sources between economic levels is similar in trend to the previously observed use of those information sources.

Analysis of "influence" between sources.-- Table 4.8a is designed to show whether people from a given economic environment are influenced differentially by various sources of information. Table 4.8a presented below bears on hypothesis 7 which states: the degree of influence exerted by personal sources of information is greater than the degree of influence exerted by impersonal sources of information for each income level.

Hypothesis 7 is supported by the data. For each income level, personal sources of information are more influential than impersonal sources. The difference between personal source influence and impersonal source influence is approximately the same for each income level.

TABLE 4.8a

INFLUENCE OF INFORMATION SOURCES FOR EACH INCOME LEVEL

Total Respondents		Impersonal			Personal		Total Pers.	Total Impers.
		T.V., Radio	News., Mags.	Search	Friend, Family	Profes-sional		
146	Level 1	5.64	5.88	4.67	7.47	7.39	7.42	5.44
290	Level 2	5.34	5.92	4.72	7.43	7.29	7.37	5.37
208	level 3	4.35	5.82	4.90	7.43	7.14	7.32	5.16
644	Total	5.15	5.88	4.76	7.44	7.27	7.37	5.33

Note:

Similar to table 4.7a, the influence values represent the average influence of each information source among the services. For example, level 1 respondents reported an average 5.64 influence value (on the eight point scale) for television and radio among the four services.

Hypothesis 7

The degree of influence exerted by personal sources of information is greater than the degree of influence exerted by impersonal sources of information for each income level.

Analysis of "influence" between economic levels. -- Table 4.8b,

bears on hypothesis 8 which states: information source influence is independent of economic level.

Table 4.8b neither strongly supports nor refutes hypothesis 8. The trend between economic levels and source influence is similar, though less pronounced, to the trend between economic level and source use. Personal and impersonal sources of information appear to be more

influential for lower income levels. However, the intervals between income levels are not as pronounced. Also, the relationships between source: influence and income levels are in some cases mixed or reversed. Therefore, hypothesis 8 can neither be supported or refuted.

TABLE 4.8b

INFLUENCE OF EACH INFORMATION SOURCE AMONG INCOME LEVELS

Total Resp.		Impersonal			Personal		Total Pers.	Total Impers.	Total Sources
		T.V., Radio	News., Mags.	Search	Friend, Family	Profes-sional			
146	Level 1	5.64	5.88	4.67	7.47	7.39	7.42	5.44	6.52
290	Level 2	5.34	5.92	4.72	7.43	7.29	7.37	5.37	6.49
208	Level 3	4.35	5.82	4.90	7.43	7.14	7.32	5.16	6.41

Hypothesis 8

Information source influence is independent of economic level.

Summary of tables 4.8a and 4.8b.-- Tables 4.8a and 4.8b established that any personal source of information is more influential than any impersonal source of information among the income levels. Family and friends are not only used more than any other source but are also more influential than any other source. Physical search is indicated to be most used but least influential for the lower income level. Conversely, physical search is indicated to be least used but most influential for the higher income level.

The next section of this chapter will analyze the total impact of each information source among service types and economic levels.

Index of Information Source Impact

Index of information source impact among services.-- Table 4.9a, presented below, represents the multiplication of table 4.5a use values times table 4.6a influence values. The multiplication results in a single table which gives equal weight to both information source use and information source influence. For example, the multiplication of television and radio use for auto (.244) times television and radio influence for auto (4.45) equals an impact index number of 1.09.

TABLE 4.9a

INDEX OF INFORMATION SOURCE IMPACT (FOR EACH SERVICE)

Total Respondents		Impersonal			Personal		Total Pers.	Total Impers.	Total Sources
		T.V., Radio	News., Mags.	Search	Friend, Family	Profes-sional			
156	Auto	1.09	1.49	2.07	5.68	4.66	10.82	4.87	15.68
162	Barber	0.58	1.33	2.13	5.68	3.68	9.40	4.04	13.48
166	Doctor	0.38	0.55	1.34	6.94	5.24	12.37	2.29	14.64
160	Movie	3.76	6.15	0.79	5.90	0.71	6.60	10.83	17.43
644	Total	1.46	2.36	1.58	6.06	3.57	9.82	5.47	15.29

As expected, table 4.9a indicates that the total impact of an information source is very dependent on the associated service purchase

decision. Personal sources of information have a much larger impact than impersonal sources for auto, barber, and especially doctor. The opposite relationship is true for movies. The total column to the far right of the table illustrates that information in total has varying amounts of impact on different service purchase decisions.

Friends and family have the greatest impact and television and radio have the lowest impact of all the sources except for purchase decisions regarding movies.

Index of information source impact among income levels.-- Table 4.9b presented below illustrates the same general trends observed in tables 4.7a through 4.8b. Impact values were derived by the multiplication of "use" table 4.7a times "influence" table 4.8a.

TABLE 4.9b

INDEX OF INFORMATION SOURCE IMPACT (FOR EACH INCOME LEVEL)

Total Resp.		Impersonal			Personal		Total Pers.	Total Impers.	Total Sources
		T.V., Radio	News., Mags.	Search	Friend, Family	Profes-sional			
146	Level 1	1.82	2.74	1.73	6.09	4.19	10.47	6.33	16.79
290	Level 2	1.59	2.29	1.61	6.12	3.49	9.81	5.55	15.35
208	Level 3	1.03	2.21	1.44	5.97	3.26	9.36	4.76	14.11
644	Total	1.46	2.36	1.58	6.06	3.57	9.82	5.47	15.29

Except for friends and family, each individual source as well as aggregated sources (personal, impersonal, total) shows a decreasing

impact in the higher income levels. Friends and family have more similar impacts among income levels.

The trends illustrated by this table indicate that the total impact of information sources are dependent in most cases on the respondent's income level.

Comparisons between source use and influence.-- Tables 4.5a through 4.8b have discussed the use and influence of information sources. Analysis of these tables has indicated that information source use and influence hold similar rankings within the cells of the tables.

Table 4.10 illustrates the ranking of the information sources in terms of use and influence among the services. The number 1 indicates the highest rank.

TABLE 4.10

RANKING OF INFORMATION SOURCE USE AND INFLUENCE AMONG SERVICES

	<u>Use</u>				<u>Influence</u>			
	Auto	Barb.	Doctor	Movie	Auto	Barb.	Doctor	Movie
Friend, Family	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
Professional	2	2	2	5	2	2	2	4
Search	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	5
News., Mags.	4	4	4	1	4	4	4	2
T.V., Radio	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	3

Information source use and influence are equally ranked for auto, barber and doctor. But the impersonal sources of information are used by respondents and influence respondents to a much larger degree for movie than for the other services.

Summary of the Results

The results of this study have indicated trends and relationships which require further analysis and research. Chapter five will interpret the results of this study as well as point out areas in need of further research. Presented below is a synopsis of the results.

- 1) The use of personal sources of information is greater than the use of impersonal sources of information for auto, barber, and doctor but not movie (hypothesis one is not supported). However, the influence of personal sources of information is greater than the influence of impersonal sources of information for each service decision (hypothesis three is supported).
- 2) The use, influence and impact of an information source is dependent on what type of service is being considered for purchase (hypotheses two and four are not supported.)
- 3) Personal sources of information are both used more and exert a greater influence than impersonal sources of

information for each income level (hypotheses five and seven are supported.

- 4) The use and impact of an information source is dependent on the economic level of the respondents (hypothesis six is not supported). It is not clear if the influence of an information source is dependent on the economic level of the respondents (hypothesis eight is neither supported or denied.)

The results summarized above explored specifically the eight hypotheses under consideration. The following results relate to the hypotheses but deserve special recognition.

- 5) Decisions concerning auto, barber, and doctor services, as a group, showed a relatively similar usage and influence of information sources compared to movies.

- 6) For every source except friends and family, the use of each source of information decreases as the economic level of the respondents increase. The same trend does not hold true for source influence.

- 7) The use of impersonal sources of information decreases more rapidly than the use of impersonal sources as the income level rises.

- 8) Professional sources of information are nearly as influential

as family and friends even though friends and family are used to a much larger degree.

- 9) The use and influence of friends and family is more stable among services and income levels than any other source.
- 10) The number of information sources consulted and the total influence of information sources (across all sources) is dependent on the particular service purchase decision.
- 11) In total (combining services), friends and family are the most used and most influential sources of information and television and radio are the least used and next to least influential sources of information.

Chapter five will discuss explanations, conclusions and implications of the results.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Interpretations

Introduction.-- The conclusions and implications to be drawn from the results will be discussed in the same general sequence as the results are presented in the summary section of chapter four. The eight hypotheses will be explored first followed by the discussion of other significant trends and relationships found in the data. The studies presented in Chapter Two will be cited to help explain the results of this study.

Source use and influence among services.-- Hypotheses one through four were concerned with the use and influence of information sources among services.

Personal sources of information were more extensively used than impersonal sources for auto, barber, doctor, but not movie. The question is, why was the use of information sources in the purchase of a movie ticket radically different than the use of information sources in the purchase of the other three services. Before that question may be answered, it is necessary to first determine what characteristics of a service determine the means and method of information search by the potential buyer. In other words, what is it about a service that determines how a consumer seeks and is influenced by information relative to its selection.

Perhaps the best answer to this question is brought out by the studies of Bourne and Perry and Hamm. Bourne's study indicated that the amount of personal influence involved in a purchase decision depends on the "social significance" of the product or brand. Perry and Hamm's study indicated that the use and influence of personal sources of information depends on the social as well as the economic significance of the purchase decision. Therefore, it follows that the use and influence of personal sources of information should be dependent on the price and social significance of the service. Let's examine each service to determine if the variations in information source use and influence between services are related to the economic and social significance of the services.

For purposes of comparison, the examination of the use and influence of personal information sources in the purchase of a movie ticket and the selection of a doctor will be used as extreme examples of differing economic and social significance.

A hypothesis based on the two studies just cited might state that; the use and influence of personal sources of information depends on the social and economic significance of the service purchase decision. It is relatively clear that economic significance refers to the price of the service; it is not so clear what social significance refers to.

Social significance for a product or brand was defined as the perceived social conspicuousness of the product or brand. Since the only visible result of a service is its apparent effect (change, alteration, reinstatement) on a person or object, the social

conspicuousness of significance would relate to the apparent effect (or potential effect) of that service on the person or object. Also, the social significance would relate to the importance of the service being provided. For example, open heart surgery would be more important to the recipient than the hair cut he received yesterday or the oil change for his car. Obviously a potential or actual change, alteration or reinstatement concerning ones self would seem more socially significant than such a change to one's possessions. Therefore, the social significance of a service depends on the personalness, visualness, and importance of the service.

The selection of a family doctor is more economically significant than the selection of a movie because of the higher costs involved and the higher costs associated with a poor decision. The selection of a doctor is socially more significant than the selection of a movie because of the very personal and important nature of a medical service. Therefore, this reasoning would predict a greater use and influence for personal information sources in the selection of a doctor than in the selection of a movie.

This prediction and the reasoning behind it is consistent with the results. Personal information sources are used more and are more influential in the selection of a doctor than in the selection of a movie.

The observed use and influence of auto repair service and barber service also seems to be related to the economic and social significance of the services.

Auto repair is less personal but often more visual and expensive than barber service. Therefore, it would follow that the use and influence of personal sources of information would be approximately the same for both services. The results confirm this prediction.

We have explored a possible reason for the variability in use and influence of personal information sources among services. But how do we explain the variability in use and influence of impersonal sources among services.

One explanation centers around the availability of information. Every person has a friend or family member who knows a good auto garage or a good barbershop or has had experience with just about any type of service. But the only information that a person can receive from the media is that information which he hears broadcasted or sees printed. If information does not exist then it can not be used. This study as well as Haines' study indicates that impersonal sources are reportedly used by less people than personal sources because people attach less importance and are less influenced by impersonal sources of information.

This study suggests that the personal sources are more influential than impersonal sources primarily because of the persuasiveness of face to face communication and secondly because of a lack of belief in impersonal sources of information. This statement is based on the following interpretations of the results.

The electronic and printed media as well as professional

sources of information (profession to the observed service) all present a one-sided point of view designed to lure the customer into the purchase of a product or service. However, the results of this study indicate professional sources of information to influence the purchase decision to a far greater degree than the media and almost as much as friends and family. Therefore, it would seem to follow that it is the face to face communication which influences rather than the actual content of the message. This conclusion is of course based solely on the results of one study and would need further research to establish its validity.

Thus far, possible explanations and conclusions have been explored regarding information source use and influence among services (hypotheses one through four). The following selection will look at possible explanations and conclusions regarding information source use and influence among economic levels (hypotheses five through eight).

Source use and influence among income levels.-- Hypotheses five through eight were concerned with the use and influence of information sources among income levels.

The use of personal sources of information was shown to be greater than the use of impersonal sources for all income levels. However, as income level increased the difference between personal source use and impersonal source use widened. The higher income people paid less attention to impersonal sources compared to personal sources.

Not only did higher income people pay less attention to impersonal sources relative to personal sources but higher income people used both personal and impersonal sources of information to a lesser degree than did the lower income people. In other words, higher income people use less information than lower income people and the decrease in the use of impersonal sources was greater than the decrease in personal sources.

Two alternate hypotheses might explain this phenomenon. First, people in lower income levels may require more information than higher income people in making purchase decisions regarding services. Second, people in lower income levels may report the use of information to a larger degree than higher income levels even though no actual difference exists.

The validity of either hypothesis is difficult to determine without further research dealing specifically with this question. However, let us try to make a case for the first hypothetical alternative.

The use of more information by lower income people than higher income people in making service purchase decisions might be explained by the following hypothesis. People on lower income levels are less sure of themselves (less confident) than higher income people in making service purchase decisions. Because of their lack of confidence (relative to higher income people) lower income people feel the need to consult more sources (personal as well as impersonal) before reaching a decision.

The lack of confidence is further added to by the intangibility of the service under consideration. The lesser degree of confidence, in part, might be explained by the generally lower education level of lower income people.

This hypothesis is supported by two aspects of the data.

First, if this hypothesis were true it would follow that higher income people, being more confident of purchase decisions, would decrease their attention to impersonal sources even more than they would decrease their attention to personal sources. In other words, a lack of felt need for information would logically affect the use of impersonal information to a larger extent than the use of personal information. This, of course, was already shown to be the case.

The second aspect of the data which supports the hypothesis and also bears on the first explanation just stated is the observed decreasing amount of influence in information (personal and impersonal) as the economic level increases.

If people in higher income levels have more confidence than lower income people in their ability to make purchase decisions, then it would follow that higher income people would be less influenced than lower income people by extraneous sources of information. The data on information influence among income levels supports this reasoning even though the trend in information influence is not as pronounced as the trend in information use.

Therefore, the hypothesis that people in lower income levels

use more information than people on higher income levels because of a lack of confidence on the part of lower income people is supported by the two aspects of the data. Those aspects were that 1) people in higher income levels decrease their attention to impersonal sources of information at a faster rate than they decrease their attention to personal sources of information and 2) people in higher income levels are less influenced by information (personal and impersonal). Lack of confidence can be partly attributed to the intangibility of service purchase decisions.

Thus far, possible explanation and interpretations have been examined regarding information source use and influence among services and among income levels. The implications of this study will now be explored in the context of how service marketers can best develop effective marketing strategies. The implications will stem from the results and interpretations previously discussed in this chapter as well as the results indicated in chapter four.

Implications

Differences between services.-- This study indicates several relationships and trends which have important implications for the marketer of a service. First, the use and influence of information sources was shown to be dependent on the particular service purchase decision. Past studies indicate this dependence to be based on the economic and social conspicuousness of the service.

Economic conspicuousness refers to the price of the service and social conspicuousness would logically refer to the personalness, visualness and importance of the service. The higher the cost and the more socially conspicuous a service is, the more used and important personal sources of information become and the less used and influential impersonal sources become. Of course, the use of impersonal sources of information is also dependent on its availability.

Thus, the marketer must analyze the character of his service. He must determine how economically and socially conspicuous his product is. He can do so by simply analyzing the price of his service in relation to other types of services and by monitoring his customers to determine the social conspicuousness of his service. Once a marketer has an understanding of consumer's attitudes about the service he performs (service type) he can better determine what sources of information would most effectively reach and influence the consumer.

Importance of interpersonal communication.-- Section One of Chapter Two indicated that the marketing of consumer services is differentiated from the marketing of consumer products in that consumer services are intangible, inseparable, heterogeneous, in quality, perishable, less diverse geographically, and associated with a single person or small group of people. All these properties or qualities add up to the overall increased importance of personal sources of information in the purchase of a service

relative to the purchase of a product. Haines' study indicated that sampling followed by word of mouth was the most important sources of information regarding product purchase decisions. But service purchasing does not afford the opportunity to sample. Therefore, personal information has even greater importance.

The overwhelming importance of personal sources of information in the purchase of a product indicates that the marketer should take advantage of the often close relationship between himself and his client. The marketer's success ultimately depends on the building of his good will, reputation and referrals. The more economically and socially conspicuous his service is, the more important personal sources of information become.

This study also indicated that professional sources of information are nearly as influential as family and friends. Such a fact would further underline the importance of good customer relations. Not only does the customer listen to the marketer, but he also believes in what the marketer says.

Importance of impersonal communication.-- The use and influence of the electronic media is also shown to be dependent on the particular service purchase decision. The purchase of a movie ticket involved the use and influence of the mass media to a large degree. Ninety-two percent of the respondents reported the use of television and radio and more than sixty-two percent of the respondents reported the use of newspapers and magazines. The mass media rated almost "important" on the eight point scale and very close to the rating of friends and family.

Such a result points to the potential benefit of media advertising to the service marketer. Marketers of services which are relatively less expensive and/or socially less conspicuous (such as many recreational services) can find great benefit in media advertising. The media advertisement creates an awareness or the existence of the service.

For services which are not very expensive or personal in nature awareness can practically equal influence. Just the knowledge that a service exists (plus location and brief description) can be enough to create a substantial demand. For example, a media message stating the existence of a bowling establishment is sufficient to bring in customers. This is not to say that personal influence or quality of service is not important but rather that media messages are important in creating a demand for some services.

Just because the media is not widely used by the consumer or highly influential for personal services does not mean that the media should not be used by the marketer. As previously stated, one of the logical reasons why media messages are not used in the selection of services by consumers is because they frequently do not exist. Any product or service can benefit from the awareness, if nothing else, that the media can provide. Even though much of what is perceived from the media is purposely or voluntarily perceived, much of what reaches the consumer is not purposely or voluntarily perceived. Therefore, media messages have a potential

for reaching every person within the range of the media. Once an awareness is established, potential consumers may seek opinions which will bear on the message. In other words, for any service (especially non personal or less expensive services) the media message can add the advertised service to the consumers set of possible purchase choices.

Search.-- Another possible source of impersonal information is physical search. This study showed that the use of physical search in the decision process by the respondent varied between 21% and 43% among the services. The influence values among services ranged between 3.67 for movies and 5.23 for auto.

These figures indicate to the marketer of all services that their store, sign, and use of the yellow pages are significant factors in the consumer purchase decision. As in the case of the mass media, the consumer must be aware of the existence of a place of service before he can consider buying the service offered by that establishment.

Income levels.-- This study indicated two basic trends in information source use and influence among income levels. First, as the income level increases, information source use decreases. Second, impersonal information source use decreases more rapidly than personal information source use as the income level rises.

Neither of these trends suggest the use of radically different marketing strategies between income levels. The marketer should concentrate his efforts in both the personal and impersonal channels

of communication regardless of the income category(s) his market comprises. The sharper decreasing trend in impersonal source use relative to personal source use in the higher income levels indicates that personal sources of information may be more important for marketers established in a higher income area than marketers established in a lower income area.

The most significant implication to be drawn from comparing the income levels is that variation between high and low income respondents was not pronounced enough to warrant significantly different marketing strategies between income levels.

Future Research

Many of the results and accompanying interpretations illustrate the need for further research into questions regarding consumer service purchase decisions. First, and foremost, a study should be conducted similar to Bournes' or Perry and Hamm's to establish exactly what characteristics of consumer services determine the method of information search and the influence of such information. Second, more types and categories of services should be examined in a manner similar to this method of study. Such a study would test the validity of this research as well as create broader implications for other services and for services in general. Third, a study could be conducted to determine the degree to which service marketers take advantage of the various sources of communication in the marketing of their services.

Such studies would go a long way in shedding light on some very dark areas of consumer service research.

Limitations

This study was designed to broaden the limited prior research regarding consumer services. The results and analysis of the data were presented for the purpose of indicating possible relationships and trends in information source use and influence among several services.

However, this study was not designed to establish concrete, precise relationships between information source utilization and any or all consumer services. To establish such specific relationships several study design and analytical criteria would have to be met.

First, to generalize about all consumer services, all consumer services would have to be tested. Second, to generalize about all or specific groups of people, a sampling of all those people would be required. Third, to confirm or reject the eight hypotheses strong statistical techniques would be needed to establish the confidence of accepting or rejecting such hypotheses. Fourth, other similar studies would have to be conducted in order to confirm or deny the results and conclusions of this study. Only after all these steps were accomplished could any definite conclusions be made about the relationships between information source utilization and service type. Even then, the results would still be in question.

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APPENDIX 1

EXHIBIT A1.1

SIGNIFICANT SERVICES FOR WHICH CONSUMERS MAKE EXPENDITURES

- I. Household Operations
 - A. Utilities
 - 1. Electricity
 - 2. Gas
 - 3. Telephone^a
 - 4. Telegraph and cable^a
 - 5. Garbage collection
 - 6. Sewer Service
 - B. Equipment repairs
 - 1. Appliances
 - 2. Furniture and upholstery
 - 3. Rugs, draperies and mattresses
 - 4. Jewelry, watches, and clocks
 - 5. Tools and other equipment
 - C. Equipment rentals
 - 1. Appliances
 - 2. Furniture
 - 3. Gardening and lawn equipment
 - 4. Linens
 - 5. Tools and other equipment
 - 6. Refrigerated food lockers
 - 7. Tools and other equipment
 - D. House repair and maintenance
 - E. House cleaning
 - F. Landscaping, gardening, and tree surgery
 - G. Domestic service
 - H. Child care
 - I. Moving and storing
 - J. Rug, curtain, and drapery cleaning
 - K. Interior decoration counseling
 - L. Disinfecting and exterminating

II. Housing

- A. Rentals
 - 1. Nonfarm houses
 - 2. Farm houses
 - 3. Apartments
 - 4. Hotels
 - 5. Motels and tourist cabins
 - 6. Trailer parks
 - 7. Dude ranches
 - 8. Private clubs, camps, schools, and institutions
- B. Property management

¹Appears as presented in Donald Parker, Marketing of Consumer Services, University of Washington, 1960.

^aAlso cross-classified under Communication (IV-B).

EXHIBIT A1.1 (continued)

III. Health

- A. Diagnostic, medication, and prescription
- B. Surgery
- C. Chiropractic and osteopathy
- D. Optometry
- E. Psychiatry
- F. Dentistry
- G. Nursing
- H. Hospitalization
- I. Nursing home care
- J. Miscellaneous curative and healing services

IV. Transportation and communication

A. Transportation

1. Private

- a. Automotive maintenance and repair
 - (1) Servicing, repairing, and towing
 - (2) Washing and polishing
- b. Rentals
 - (1) Automobiles
 - (2) Trucks
 - (3) Trailers
- c. Automotive parking and storage
- d. Automobile club membership
- e. Driving instructions
- f. Driver licensing

2. Public

- a. Domestic
 - (1) Intracity
 - (aa) Motor buses
 - (bb) Electric street railways
 - (cc) Elevated and subway lines
 - (dd) Taxicabs
 - (ee) Sightseeing limousines and buses
 - (2) Intercity
 - (aa) Motor Buses
 - (bb) Railways
 - (cc) Airlines
 - (dd) Coastal and inland waterways
 - (ee) Toll bridges, tunnels, and roads
 - (ff) Ferries
 - (gg) Baggage service
- b. Foreign
 - (1) Railways
 - (2) Airlines
 - (3) Motor buses
 - (4) Ships

EXHIBIT A1.1 (continued)

- IV. Transportation and communication (continued)
 - B. Communication^b
 - 1. Telephone^b
 - 2. Telegraph and cable^b
 - 3. Postal
 - 4. Advertising

 - V. A. Consumer loans
 - 1. Commercial banks
 - 2. Saving and loan associations
 - 3. Sales finance companies
 - 4. Consumer finance companies
 - 5. Credit unions
 - 6. Other financial institutions
 - B. Banking^c
 - C. Security brokerage
 - D. Retail credit
 - E. Investment counseling
 - F. Tax counseling
 - G. Estate planning
 - H. Transmissions of money
-
- VI. Insurance
 - A. Personal
 - 1. Life
 - 2. Disability
 - 3. Surety bonding
 - B. Property
 - 1. Fire and allied lines
 - 2. Casualty and liability
-
- VII. Personal^d
 - A. Clothing
 - 1. Cleaning
 - 2. Pressing
 - 3. Dyeing
 - 4. Laundering
 - 5. Altering
 - 6. Repairing
 - 7. Storing
 - 8. Rentals
 - B. Care of the person
 - 1. Barbering
 - 2. Beauty
 - 3. Bathing
 - 4. Weight control and body building

^b Also corss-classified under Household Operations (I).

^c Other than loans

^d Some of the other classes of consumer services--such as medical and insurance--are also of a "personal" nature.

EXHIBIT A1.1 (continued)

VIII. Recreational

A. Non-participation

1. Motion picture theaters
 - a. Indoor
 - b. Outdoor
2. Legitimate theaters
3. Operas, ballets, and concerts
4. Circuses and carnivals
5. Vaudeville
6. Exhibitions and shows
7. Spectator sports^e
 - a. Amateur
 - b. Professional
8. Museums, gardens, galleries, and displays
9. Pay television

B. Participation^f

1. Indoor^g
 - a. Billiards and pool
 - b. Bowling
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Instruction
 - c. Roller skating^h
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
 - (3) Instruction
 - d. Ice skating^h
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
 - (3) Instruction
 - e. Swimming^h
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
 - (3) Instruction
 - f. Dancing^h
 - (1) Instruction
 - g. Athletic clubs
 - h. Social and fraternal organizations
 - i. Nonvending machines
 - j. Otherⁱ

^e Includes baseball, basketball, football, boxing, wrestling, hockey, tennis, jai alai, soccer, track, swimming and diving, and racing (horse, dog, car, motorcycle, bicycle, and boat).

^f In several of the participation activities, it is common for consumers to pay fees to observe. For example, this is true at skating rinks and dance halls.

^g Includes the basic fee paid for participation, admission, or membership for each class designated by a letter.

^h Both indoors and outdoors.

ⁱ Includes less common participation recreational activities, such as badminton, handball, squash, curling, and card playing.

EXHIBIT A1.1 (continued)

VIII. Recreational (continued)

2. Outdoor³

- a. Horse riding
 - (1) Instruction
- b. Golf
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
 - (3) Instruction
 - (4) Caddies
- c. Private flying
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
 - (3) Licenses
 - (4) Instruction
- d. Skiing
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
 - (3) Instruction
 - (4) Tows
- e. Hunting
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
 - (3) Licenses
 - (4) Guides
- f. Fishing
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
 - (3) Licenses
 - (4) Guides
- g. Camping and boating
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
- h. Water skiing
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
 - (3) Instruction
- i. Skin Diving
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
 - (3) Instruction
- j. Cycling
 - (1) Equipment rentals
 - (2) Equipment repairs
- k. Amusement parks^h
- l. Other^j

IX. Educational

A. Public

- 1. Elementary and secondary
- 2. College
- 3. Trade and correspondence

^j Includes less common participation recreational activities, such as tennis and lawn bowling.

EXHIBIT A1.1 (continued)

IX. Educational (continued)

B. Private

1. Nurseries
2. Elementary and secondary
3. College
4. Commercial, trade, and correspondence
5. Music, art, and dancing

X. Miscellaneous

A. Religious

B. Social welfare

C. Labor union membership

D. Photography

1. Developing, printing, photocopying, and blueprinting
2. Enlarging
3. Portraiture
4. Equipment rentals
5. Equipment repairs

E. Funeral

F. Animal Care

G. Legal

H. Employment

I. Professional organization membership

J. Architectural

EXHIBIT A1.2

This is the sample population obtained from Census tracts in the greater Springfield area. Family incomes within the tracts range from under 1,000 dollars to over 50,000 dollars.

Lower Income Census Tracts

Town	Holyoke	Springfield			
Tract	8115	8008	8012		
Median	\$5,662	\$5,119	\$6,359		
Mean	\$6,421	\$5,958	\$6,896		
Families	972	788	704	Total	2,464

Middle Income Census Tracts

Town	Chicopee	Springfield			
Tract	8112	8015.03			
Median	\$9,976	\$9,592			
Mean	\$10,301	\$10,337			
Families	1,693	836		Total	2,529

Higher Income Census Tracts

Town	Springfield	Holyoke			
Tract	8016.04	8119			
Median	\$13,549	\$13,866			
Mean	\$14,483	\$17,725			
Families	738	1,180		Total	1,918

APPENDIX 2

Dear Family:

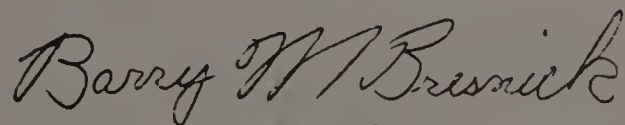
Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Barry Bresnick and I am presently trying to finish the requirements for a degree in marketing. In order to complete my responsibilities I must gather information which is important to the marketing field. Until I can complete this information I will be unable to graduate.

I am asking you for just a few minutes of your time to answer a few short but very important questions. The questions are related to some of your family's purchase decisions. Please give careful consideration to each question. All answers will remain anonymous and confidential.

Due to the high cost of mail, I have been able to send only a small number of these questionnaires. Therefore, I am relying heavily on people like yourself to give a few minutes of your time. To assure no cost to yourself, I have included a pre-stamped self-addressed envelope for your use.

I cannot fully express my gratitude and the importance of your time and consideration. Please answer quickly in order to assure my receiving your vital information within the one week allotted to me. Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,


Barry M. Bresnick

This questionnaire will mention four different types of services. These services are as follows:

1. Mechanical Automobile Repair Service
2. Barber or Beauty Shop Service
3. Movies (motion picture)
4. Family Doctor

For each of the above services you will be asked a few short questions. First, you will be asked to show what kinds of information you came in contact with before your decision to buy each service. Second, you will be asked to show how important the different kinds of information were in making your buying decision. It makes no difference how long ago you (or your family) had to make a decision about any of these services. The questions below should be answered by a member of your family who has been involved in each buying decision.

Presented below is an example of how questions about Shoe Repair Service might be answered.

SHOE REPAIR SERVICE

Please mark all those sources of information listed below which you have seen or heard or talked with before deciding on a Shoe Repair establishment. Please use the left hand column marked COLUMN 1. for your responses.

After completing column 1, use the columns marked Very Important, Important, Unimportant and Very Unimportant to show how important each of the information sources you marked in column 1 is (was) in making your buying decision. If you have made the decision more than once, consider them as a group or on the whole.

COLUMN 1.	INFORMATION SOURCES	Importance To Buying Decision			
		Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant
	1. T.V., Radio				
X	2. Friends, Family	X			
X	3. Search (saw building, sign or Yellow Pages)			X	
X	4. Newspaper, Magazine, Pamphlet		X		
	5. Professional Shoe Repairman				
	6. Other (please describe)				

MECHANICAL AUTOMOBILE REPAIR

Any mechanical automobile repair not performed under warranty

COLUMN 1.	INFORMATIONAL SOURCES	Importance To Buying Decision				
		Very Important	Important	Un-important	Very Unimportant	
	1. T.V., Radio					(9)
	2. Friends, Family					(14)
	3. Search (saw building, sign or Yellow Pages)					(11)
	4. Newspaper, Magazine Pamphlet					(10)
	5. Professional Automobile Mechanic					(15)
	6. Other (please describe)					(12-13)

BARBER OR BEAUTY SHOP

COLUMN 1.	INFORMATION SOURCES	Importance To Buying Decision				
		Very Important	Important	Un-important	Very Unimportant	
	1. T.V., Radio					(17)
	2. Friends, Family					(22)
	3. Search (saw building, sign or Yellow Pages)					(19)
	4. Newspaper, Magazine, Pamphlet					(18)
	5. Professional Barber or Beautician					(23)
	6. Other (please describe)					(20-21)

MOVIES (Motion Picture)

COLUMN 1.	INFORMATION SOURCES	Importance To Buying Decision				
		Very Important	Important	Un-important	Very Unimportant	
	1. T.V., Radio					(25)
	2. Friends, Family					(30)
	3. Search (saw building, sign or Yellow Pages)					(27)
	4. Newspaper, Magazine, Pamphlet					(26)
	5. Movie Theater Employee					(31)
	6. Other (please describe)					(28-29)
						()

FAMILY DOCTOR

COLUMN 1.	INFORMATION SOURCES	Importance To Buying Decision				
		Very Important	Important	Un-important	Very Unimportant	
	1. T.V., Radio					(33)
	2. Friends, Family					(38)
	3. Search (saw building, sign or Yellow Pages)					(35)
	4. Newspaper, Magazine, Pamphlet					(34)
	5. Medical Doctor					(39)
	6. Other (please describe)					(36-37)

Please mark the boxes which best describe you and your family.

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD
(principle wage earner)

Sex: Male Female

Occupation:

Type of Business (describe)

Job Description

FAMILY INCOME

- Under 3,000
- 3,000-5,999
- 6,000-7,999
- 8,000-9,999
- 10,000-11,999
- 12,000-14,999
- 15,000-19,999
- 20,000-30,000
- Over 30,000

Please make sure that this page and all other pages are fully and accurately completed. All information is anonymous and confidential. Please mail today or as soon as possible. Thank you for helping me!

