# Toward a shopping typology of primary male grocery shoppers


## Abstract

***Purpose* –** The purpose of this paper is to segment primary male grocery shoppers based on store and product attribute evaluations. A rich profile for each segment is developed. These developed contemporary shopper typologies are contrasted against earlier works.

***Design/methodology/approach* –** Data of 280 male grocery shoppers was attained by a survey questionnaire. Factor analysis, cluster analysis and ANOVA were employed to develop specific segments of male shoppers.

***Findings* –** Four distinct cohorts of male shoppers emerge from the data of eight constructs, measured by 46 items. One new shopper type, not found in earlier typology literature, emerged from this research. This shopper presented as a young, well educated, at the commencement of their career and family lifecycle, attracted by a strong value offer and willingness to share the family food shopping responsibilities.

***Practical implications* –** Research outcomes encourage supermarket retailers to implement targeted marketing and rationalized operational strategies that deliver on attributes of importance. Comparisons between earlier grocery shopping typologies are accordingly facilitated, demonstrating dynamic consumer segments exist.

***Originality* –** This research makes a contribution to segmentation literature and grocery retail practice in several ways. It presents the first retail typology of male supermarket shoppers, employing a cluster analysis technique. The research provides insights into the modern family food shopping behaviour of men; a channel in which men are now recognised as equal contributors. The research provides the basis for further gender comparative and cross-contextual studies.



***Keywords* –** supermarkets, grocery shopping, male shoppers, cluster analysis, segmentation

***Paper type* –** Research Paper

**Introduction**

Until recently, grocery shopping was considered to be the female's domain and the woman was considered the household's primary purchasing agent (Franciscy *et al.* 2004; Lindquist and Kaufman-Scarborough 2004; DeKervenoael *et al.* 2006; Helgesen and Nesset 2010). However, modern social and demographic movements are causing changes to traditional gender roles within the household (Bhatti and Srivastava 2003; Richbell and Kite 2007). There has been significant growth in male shopping as more women enter paid labour outside the family home (Mattingly and Smith 2010). The presence of male shoppers in retail formats, such as supermarkets, has become common place with male shoppers at almost parity with their female counterparts (Nielsen 2010). While regular grocery shopping by men is on the rise (Otnes and McGrath 2001; Cockburn-Wootten 2003; Walker 2003; Richbell and Kite 2007), the perceptions and realities of male shopping behaviour remain largely unexplored (Harmon and Hill 2003; Tuncay and Otnes 2008; Beynon *et al.* 2010; Hughes 2011).

Typology based studies, examining attribute importance, shopping motivations, frequency and attitude, have emerged as the preferred method of market segmentation, as they are considered more comprehensive than just segmenting consumers based purely on demographic data (Geuens *et al.* 2004; Ganesh *et al.* 2007; Ganesh *et al.* 2010; Memery *et al.* 2011). Yet, even such studies have failed to examine and explore the behavioural segments of male shoppers in retail settings (Bakewell and Mitchell 2006). The male shopper has been either ignored in early typographic work (Stone 1954; Darden and Reynolds 1971; Darden and Ashton 1975; Shim and Kotsiopulos 1993; Smith and Carsky 1996) or underrepresented (Sullivan and Savitt 1997; Bakewell and Mitchell 2006; Ganesh *et al.* 2007; Merrilees and Miler 2010; Ganesh *et al.* 2010; Memery *et al.* 2011). Segmentation studies relating to retail channels accepted as male dominant, such as online shopping (Kau *et al.* 2003) or airport retailing (Geuens *et al.* 2004) appear to be the only context where typologies of male shopping behaviour is investigated.

More recent shopper typology research has recognised this limitation and has approached sample gender split considerations more equitably, albeit not specifically in relation to grocery shopping behaviour (Pentecost and Andrews 2010; Lockshin and Cohen 2011; Watchravesringkan and Punyapiroje 2011; Yue-Teng *et al.* 2011). As men are now recognised as an equally important participant in family food shopping, an opportunity to examine the behaviours of this emergent shopper exists.

Therefore this study seeks to develop a deep understanding of the behaviour of this emergent male grocery shopper. The conceptual scope of this work is limited to the male grocery shoppers' demographic and psychographic attributes, which are pivotal in understanding the store choice behaviour. The research has two aims; to develop a typology of male grocery shoppers which may enable later comparative studies across genders and contexts and; to contrast identified male shopper types with previous typographical work to ascertain if cross contextual similarities exist.

This study contributes to marketing theory and strategic retail management. As presented above, it is accepted that although men are now equally engaged in family food shopping, to date no research has attempted to comprehensively profile male grocery shoppers. Further, the research aims to compare newly formed grocery shopper profiles against earlier typographical work to ascertain if contextual changes have occurred.

Segmentation theory suggests that groups of consumers with similar needs and purchasing behaviours are likely to demonstrate a more homogeneous response to marketing programs (Tsai and Chiu 2004; Schultz 2002). Yet, the problem of whether identified segments remain stable or are dynamic in nature is largely neglected (Mitchell and Wilson 1998; Fonseca and Cardosa 2007). Dynamic stability refers to whether identified segments at a given time remain unchanged over time, in terms of number, size and profile (Lockshin *et al.* 1997; Soutar and Sweeney 2003). This study contributes to segmentation theory by contrasting modern segments of male grocery shopper types with profiles developed in earlier research. As theory posits, segments may change over time as a result of external market factors, this research will detect emergent or altered segments (Hoek *et al.* 1996; Mattingly and Smith 2010; Angell *et al.* 2012). In addition, this study provides the foundation for similar research in other countries.

## Literature review

### *Gender identity and roles*

This study examines the contemporary issue of male shopping behaviour in the context of supermarket shopping. As such, the literature pertaining to gender roles and identity will be briefly addressed. Gender theory, suggests a system of inequality, that is created and recreated in daily experiences (West and Zimmerman 1987). Gender scholars have increasingly adopted a social constructionist approach to understanding and explaining gender (Palan 2001; Poggio 2006). Simply, gender is shaped through the institutional and social mores we experience and that gender is constantly redefined and negotiated in the everyday practices (Collinson and Hearn 2000; Blume and Blume 2003). The approach of this research is to regard the term sex to refer to physical differentiation (i.e., male and female), whereas the term gender is used to refer to social construction (i.e., masculine or feminine) (Palan 2001).

Consumer behaviour studies have long been coupled with gender research and as such consumer researchers often examine the effects of these variables on behaviour (Sullivan and Savitt 1997; Palan 2001). As presented above, segmentation theory proffers shopper profiles may change over time as a result of external social and market forces. Macro-economic motivators as well as social drivers have stimulated interest in the investigation of gender roles (Allen and Webster 2001). Researchers have suggested that there is a trend for more equal sharing of family tasks, especially when both spouses are employed (Mattingly and Smith 2010). Researchers have also identified the existence of demographic sub-groups of couples who divide tasks more equally, each having varying degrees of joint responsibility (Hochschild 1989). These findings have been supported by other studies into the changing nature of gender roles and the adoption by men of traditionally female gendered activities, such as food shopping (Zeithaml 1985; Otnes and McGrath 2001). This research supports the social constructionist theories constituting gender identity. It is suggested that traditional male gendered roles have transitioned and that there no longer exists clearly defined social barriers to familial roles. The blurring of traditional familial roles, and society's acceptance of these shifts, will lead more men to undertake traditional female gendered roles, such as grocery shopping and this will be evident in longitudinal changes observed in consumer typologies.

*Earlier typology research*

Although male shopping behaviour in the context of supermarket shopping has received some academic attention, there has been little effort to model these behaviours in order to form distinct profiles. It is contended an opportunity exists to examine shopper profiles (Kau *et al.* 2003; Lee *et al.* 2005; Kureshi *et al.* 2008; Tuncay and Otnes 2008). Life style and psychographic segmentation studies have been employed for developing retail target marketing strategies as retailers found it increasingly necessary to segment fragmented markets (Lesser and Hughes 1986; Reynolds *et al.* 2002; Carpenter and Moore 2006; Park and Sullivan 2009; Yue-Teng *et al.* 2011). No studies have developed a typology of male shopping behaviour in relation to grocery food shopping.

Stone's (1954) study of 150 Chicago housewives is one of the first published attempts to profile specific groups of grocery shoppers. His analysis illustrates four shopper types;

economic, personalising, ethical and apathetic. Darden and Ashton (1975) explored grocery shopper profiles further, establishing seven types of female supermarket shopper. These earlier works and others omitted male shoppers from their sample (Darden and Reynolds 1971; Shim and Kotsiopulos 1993; Smith and Carsky 1996). Accordingly, it is argued a gap in research that defines characteristics and segments of male grocery shoppers, specifically in the context of food shopping, is present.

Lesser and Hughes (1990) approached a typology of shopper types by merging twenty-one previous segmentation studies. Their study merged both male and female American shoppers, across twelve states and a variety of retail channels and therefore limited the ability to make cross gender comparisons. They identified seven types of shopper, including active and inactive shoppers, service, traditional, dedicated, price and transitional shoppers. Similar to previous studies, linkages were noted. Inactive shoppers demonstrated behaviours that parallel the apathetic shopper (Stone 1954; Darden and Ashton 1975). Price shoppers were concerned about price and were prepared to shop around to save money, like the economic shopper and '*stamp preferer*' shoppers (Darden and Ashton 1975).

Other general segmentation studies identified shopper types based on levels of involvement, identifying such shopper types are smart and economic/efficient (Smith and Carsky 1996). Online shopping, that presented simplifiers, bargain shoppers, routine followers and traditional shoppers (Hamilton 2000; Kau *et al.* 2003). Sports and clothing store studies have identified shopper profiles, such as purposive patrons, purposive non-patron and browser (Kureshi *et al.* 2008). Retailer brand studies have presented ultra-loyal and less-attached (Merrilees and Miler 2010). Mail catalogue shoppers identifying smart shoppers, economic/efficient shoppers, assortment shoppers (Reynolds 1974; Korganonkar 1984; Jasper and Lan 1992; Eastlick and Feinberg 1999). A secondary aim of this research is to contrast identified male shopper types with previous typographical work to ascertain if cross contextual similarities exist. The preceding section offers a description of the constructs that will be operationalized and measured in the methodology section.

*Constructs*

The constructs employed for testing were derived from the literature surrounding supermarket shopping behaviour, consumer segmentation, store attributes, gender roles and family decision making. The direction of the literature review was informed by a small qualitative study of twenty male grocery shoppers. The constructs related to responsibility for grocery shopping, level of enjoyment, extent of comparison shopping, degree of price checking, catalogue usage, reported unplanned purchasing, extent of product evaluation and importance of store attributes.

*Shopping responsibility*

Women's mounting presence in the labor force is widely recognised as a driving force behind males undertaking the grocery-shopping task (Piron 2002; Mattingly and Smith 2010)). Other factors, aside from the mobilization of the female workforce, also influence men's role in grocery shopping. Men who undertake responsibility for grocery shopping consider their relationship with their partners as egalitarian and are more likely to work in white-collar occupations, be well educated and live in inner-city, middle-class suburbs (Hochschild 1989). In addition, younger males tend to share responsibility for, or even be the primary undertakers of, grocery shopping and do not perceive supermarket shopping as 'women's work'(Thomas and Garland 2004; Mattingly and Smith 2010). It has been reported that some men strongly believe that grocery shopping is a joint responsibility ((Fischer and Arnold 1994; Piron 2002). To examine the male supermarket shoppers' level of responsibility, five attitudinal, five-point scale statements, similar to those in Piron (2002), were posed to male grocery shoppers.

*Shopping enjoyment*

Men who claim responsibility for the grocery shopping task report they enjoy the activity. Literature identifies three variables likely to affect levels of shopping enjoyment for males: demographics, the types of products purchased and the extent to which there is pressure to perform the grocery shopping task (Dholakia 1999). Research suggests that age impacts on enjoyment levels because older men seem bored or disinterested, while younger men present as engaged and interested when shopping (Otnes and McGrath 2001). Occupation also has some impact on enjoyment levels (Piper and Capella 1993). Some suggest that men who undertake the grocery shopping task claim to enjoy the responsibility. To examine the level of enjoyment, six statements were presented to male respondents. These statements were constructed from previous academic research into grocery shopping enjoyment (Dawson *et al.* 1990; Urbany *et al.* 1996).

*Store characteristics*

Male shoppers consider quality, fresh produce and meat, one-stop shopping and a wide product range to be the most important criteria when selecting a shopping destination (Donegan 1986). Men also rate clearly identifiable pricing, one-stop shopping and the ability to complete shopping in the fastest possible time to be important store characteristics (Fitch 1985). Key determinants of store choice for men relate to the ease and speed of shopping, whereas late trading hours, easy car-parking facilities, discount coupons, helpful staff and value-added services (such as dry cleaning or home delivery), appear to be of less consequence (Donegan 1986; Lockshin and Cohen 2011). For example, men rate friendly, efficient and knowledgeable staff as minimally important to them (Torres *et al.* 2001).

Thirty items relating to important store characteristics were developed from the literature. Three items measured the importance of in store promotions and weekly specials (Polegato and Zaichkowsky 1994). Three items measured the importance placed on the effective staffing of serviced departments, such as Delicatessen and Butchery (Torres *et al.* 2001). Three items measured the importance of the availability of advertised specials and promotional lines (Polegato and Zaichkowsky 1994). Three items measured the importance of friendly, efficient and accurate register operations (Zeithaml 1985). Three items measured how important consumers considered easy access, egress and sufficient car parking and three items measured the importance placed on product availability, being in stock and limited stock outs (Memery *et al.* 2011). Three items measured the importance of convenience associated with trading times and locality (Zeithaml 1985). Three items measured the importance cleanliness and hygienic practices in relation to food handling and three items measured the importance of quality fresh food (Donegan 1986). Finally, three items measured the importance of consistent, stable, everyday low prices (Polegato and Zaichkowsky 1994). Male grocery shoppers were asked to rate the relevant importance of each store characteristic.

*Comparison shopping behaviour, price checking and catalogues*

Saving, or thrift, is one of the most important activities in the experience of grocery shopping (Miller 1998). The experience of saving during a shopping experience concerns the specific search for lower prices based on systematic comparative shopping. When men shop for basic groceries, they seldom employ lists or comparison shop, and are more likely to purchase on impulse (Underhill 1999; Thomas and Garland 2004). Other research shows men often shop at one regular supermarket rather than drive to other stores in search of a good special

(Marmorstien and Fishe 1992; Reid and Brown 1996). Such a tendency to avoid or limit comparison shopping aligns with the male shoppers' desire to expedite the shopping process and generally appear as apathetic grocery shoppers who avoid any form of product attribute comparison (Otnes and McGrath 2001; Thomas and Garland 2004; Noble *et al.* 2006). To test the extent to which men will shop around for lower prices (comparison shop) three, five-point items were presented to respondents (Putrevu and Ratchford 1997). To measure the extent of price checking by men an adapted and shorten scale was employed (Lichtenstein *et al.* 1990). To test the extent to which men reference store promotional catalogues, a five-point, five-item scale was adopted (Putrevu and Ratchford 1997).

*Unplanned and impulse purchasing*

Although research suggests men approach supermarket shopping in a task-driven, deliberate method and often routinely purchase the same products, they also purchase unplanned items (Underhill 1999; DeNoon 2004; Thomas and Garland 2004). The terms unplanned and impulse purchases are used interchangeably because an item purchased on impulse is an item purchased without prior planning. Men like to experience new products, particularly confectionery, soft drinks and specialty foods (Harnack *et al*., 1998; Franciscy *et al*., 2004). They also purchase unplanned items to satisfy children who may be in their company (Underhill 1999). To test the tendency of male supermarket shoppers to buy spontaneously, unreflectively, immediately and impulsively, nine, five-point Likert-type scale items were employed (Rook and Fisher 1995).

*Product evaluative criteria*

There are a number of specific evaluative criteria that shoppers will reference when purchasing grocery products. Price and brand may be the most widely considered; however, when purchasing food items, nutritional information, ingredients, freshness, taste, quality and value for money are also considered. Urbany *et al*. (1996) measured supermarket shoppers' levels of evaluation on the criteria: price, brand, nutritional information, and ingredients. Meyers-Levy et al. (1998) the evaluative criterion of 'freshness'. Other have considered the criterions of 'taste', 'quality' and 'appetising' (Peracchio and Tybout 1996). To measure the extent of referencing of evaluative criteria, a ten five-point Likert-type scale items, was adapted from these previous academic studies of supermarket product evaluation.

**Method**

A three stage methodological approach was undertaken for this research. Firstly, a systematic review of the literature was undertaken in relation to previous shopper typology measures and store attributes. This literature informed the second stage, a series of in-depth interviews with shoppers in order to identify and validate the important attributes and constructs to be measured. A four stage approach was adopted for the collecting and reducing the qualitative data (Malhotra *et al.* 2006).

Twenty five male and twenty five female undergraduate students with grocery shopping experience tested a pilot questionnaire that pointed towards several modifications for a final survey. The final version incorporated 71 items representing various aspects of the shopping experience. The questionnaire structure featured five-point Likert-type scales, anchored (1) = 'strongly agree/very important' to (5) = 'strongly disagree/very unimportant'. Measures included a (3) = 'not important, don't care' option. A five-point scale was consider appropriate to the subject context, as a more extensive scale may have appeared more difficult and cumbersome for respondents (Hand *et al.* 2009). Distribution of the questionnaire took place at four supermarkets one major capital city. Data, in relation to household income, employment status and level of social security payments, from the

Australian Bureau of Statistics aided the selection of two significantly different socio-economic groups across four suburbs. Collection of data was via a face-to-face questionnaire administered by one researcher over 12 weeks. Shoppers were timed as they entered the store and only approached once they arrived at the checkout area. A total of 580 approaches were made in order to attain 280 usable questionnaires. Shoppers were invited to complete the questionnaire while waiting to be served and their total items purchased and total cost of purchases were also recoded. In an effort to reduce sample bias, every fifth shopper was a potential participant in the study.

To begin, a correlation analysis was conducted on the 71 items to determine an initial sense of the data. It was evident some items relating to the construct, *Store Evaluation* did not correlate to acceptable levels (Pallant 2007). Accordingly, items measuring price, product or service were removed from this group and from further analysis, resulting in 46 items remaining.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax rotation and internal consistency reliability results are reported in Table 1 below, and include item mean, construct mean, standard deviations, KMO’s, Cronbach’s Alphas, Eigenvalue’s and percentage variance extracted for each construct. The dimensionality of each scale was checked, ensuring items held to the suggested constructs. The scales performed well, with the lowest construct alpha being 0.917 - *Store Evaluation* (Pallant 2007). These constructs enabled the identification of specific male shopper types using a cluster analysis technique. A further seven items recorded demographic data, including age, education, income, marital status, employment and home ownership.

| CONSTRUCT<br>ITEM | ITEM MEAN<br>MALE | CONSTRUCT<br>MEAN | KMO (sig.)<br>EXTRACTION | CRONBACH'S ALPHA | CONSTRUCT<br>ITEM | ITEM MEAN<br>MALE | CONSTRUCT<br>MEAN | KMO (sig.)<br>EXTRACTION | CRONBACH'S ALPHA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **SHOPPING RESPONSIBILITY (SD)** | **2.1 (1.08)** | **2.6** | **.897 (sig .000)** | **0.973** | **PRODUCT EVALUATION (SD)** | **2.5 (.51)** | **1.9** | **.922 (sig .000)** | **0.953** |
| Happy to share the task (SD) | 1.8 (.98) | | 0.907 | **Eigenvalue = 4.52** | Price is important to me (SD) | 1.8 (.52) | | 0.605 | **Eigenvalue = 7.16** |
| It is a joint responsibility (SD) | 1.9 (1.13) | | 0.954 | **% Variance = 90.47** | Brand is important to me (SD) | 2.4 (.92) | | 0.696 | **% Variance = 71.68** |
| Men should be involved (SD) | 1.9 (1.16) | | 0.954 | | Nutritional information is important (SD) | 3.0 (.83) | | 0.816 | |
| Should be left to women* (SD) | 2.6 (1.40) | | 0.773 | | Product Ingredients are important to me (SD) | 3.2 (.85) | | 0.851 | |
| Men should not be involved* (SD) | 2.1 (1.23) | | 0.936 | | Product freshness is important to me (SD) | 2.3 (.68) | | 0.677 | |
| **SHOPPING ENJOYMENT (SD)** | **2.5 (.88)** | **2.3** | **.833 (sig .000)** | **0.943** | Taste is important to me (SD) | 2.9 (.83) | | 0.831 | |
| Look forward to shopping (SD) | 2.9 (.87) | | 0.975 | **Eigenvalue = 4.67** | Product quality is important to me (SD) | 2.3 (.70) | | 0.697 | |
| Like grocery shopping (SD) | 2.6 (.90) | | 0.812 | **% Variance = 77.74** | Appetising products are important to me (SD) | 2.9 (.73) | | 0.802 | |
| Enjoy grocery shopping (SD) | 2.6 (.98) | | 0.784 | | Product value is important to me (SD) | 2.1 (.59) | | 0.635 | |
| Grocery shopping is a chore* (SD) | 2.5 (1.09) | | 0.782 | | Discount is important to me (SD) | 2.1 (.53) | | 0.659 | |
| Grocery shopping is boring* (SD) | 2.2 (1.19) | | 0.801 | | **STORE EVALUATION (SD)** | **2.5 (.69)** | **1.9** | **.808 (sig .000)** | **0.917** |
| Grocery shopping is a pain* (SD) | 2.0 (1.18) | | 0.712 | | Easy parking (SD) | 2.2 (.91) | | 0.661 | **Eigenvalue = 3.86** |
| **COMPARISON SHOPPING (SD)** | **1.7 (1.02)** | **3.1** | **..885 (sig .000)** | **0.960** | Easy access to carpark (SD) | 3.0 (1.14) | | 0.707 | **% Variance = 77.35** |
| Not willing to put in extra effort (SD) | 1.7 (1.13) | | 0.944 | **Eigenvalue = 4.81** | Convenient locations (SD) | 2.3 (.71) | | 0.827 | |
| Will shop at more than one store* (SD) | 1.9 (1.11) | | 0.955 | **% Variance = 96.25** | Easy to find (SD) | 2.5 (.79) | | 0.845 | |
| Not worth the time I put in (SD) | 1.8 (1.04) | | 0.973 | | Easy to get to (SD) | 2.6 (.84) | | 0.827 | |
| Never shop at more than one store (SD) | 1.7 (1.06) | | 0.976 | | **UNPLANNED PURCHASING (SD)** | **3.1 (.81)** | **3.9** | **.940 (sig .000)** | **0.965** |
| Not worth the effort to shop around (SD) | 1.7 (1.06) | | 0.965 | | I buy spontaneously (SD) | 3.0 (1.12) | | 0.805 | **Eigenvalue = 7.19** |
| **PRICE CHECKING (SD)** | **2.7 (1.23)** | **2.0** | **.773 (sig .000)** | **0.985** | Just do it describes shopping style (SD) | 3.4 (.96) | | 0.829 | **% Variance = 79.10** |
| I read price tags when I shop (SD) | 2.7 (1.24) | | 0.956 | **Eigenvalue = 2.91** | Buy without thinking (SD) | 3.4 (1.04) | | 0.81 | |
| I check prices before buying (SD) | 2.8 (1.26) | | 0.978 | **% Variance = 97.03** | I see it I buy it (SD) | 3.4 (1.05) | | 0.818 | |
| I check the prices of my purchases (SD) | 2.8 (1.25) | | 0.977 | | Buy now think later (SD) | 3.4 (1.06) | | 0.809 | |
| **CATALOGUE USAGE (SD)** | **4.2 (.86)** | **2.9** | **.793 (sig .000)** | **0.985** | Buy spur of the moment (SD) | 2.6 (1.05) | | 0.771 | |
| I prepare a list of catalogue specials (SD) | 4.1 (.865) | | 0.972 | **Eigenvalue = 2.91** | Buy how I feel in the moment (SD) | 2.6 (.99) | | 0.788 | |
| Prepare list from the catalogue (SD) | 4.4 (.948) | | 0.974 | **% Variance = 97.25** | I carefully plan purchases* (SD) | 3.0 (.83) | | 0.797 | |
| Plan purchases based on specials (SD) | 4.3 (.933) | | 0.972 | | Sometimes I'm a bit reckless (SD) | 3.5 (1.09) | | 0.693 | |
| *Scale items reversed prior to analysis | * 1 = Stongly Agree/Very Important, 3 = Neutral/Don't Care, 5 = Strongly Disagree/Very Unimportant | | | | | | | | |

***Table 1 Items, Means, Standard Deviations and Scale Coefficient Alphas***

To prepare the data for cluster analysis the sample was randomly split, equally, allowing for a holdout sample to be used to enhance the validity of findings (Hair *et al.* 2006). A two stage cluster analysis technique was employed as it was determined the best approach and had been used in previous typology research (Breazeale and Lueg 2011; Hansen *et al.* 2011; Memery *et al.* 2011). A four cluster solution emerged for the sample based on examinations of the changes in the RMSSTD, SPR and RS, and the distance between clusters as described within the Agglomeration table. A K-means cluster procedure identified the final construction of the clusters (cluster membership table) using the initial inputs from the hierarchical analysis (Pallant 2007). The procedure was then duplicated on both holdout samples, allowing for a comparison of results. The proportion of cluster members remained sufficiently stable. The holdout sample was then combined. Table 2 presents the results of the cluster analysis, the means and standard deviations of each construct under each cluster, ANOVA between the constructs and Post Hoc (Tukey) tests between clusters.

| Male Shoppers (n=280) | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Cluster Name** | **Convenience/Busy** | **Equitable** | **Apathetic** | **Economic/Budget** | ***F*-value** | **Sig.** |
| **% of Sample (n)** | 41% (115) | 8% (22) | 27% (76) | 24% (67) | | |
| **Construct** | | | | | | |
| Shopping Responsibility (SD) | 1.9 (.38) | 1.3 (.40) | 3.6 (.91) | 1.7 (.68) | 172.86 | 0.000 |
| Shopping Enjoyment (SD) | 2.5 (.33) | 1.9 (.37) | 3.5 (.82) | 2.1 (.59) | 132.60 | 0.000 |
| Comparison Shopping (SD) | 1.4 (.41) | 1.5 (.99) | 1.6 (.56) | 4.3 (1.01) | 110.11 | 0.000 |
| Price Checking (SD) | 4.5 (.59) | 2.2 (.50) | 2.1 (.65) | 1.6 (.59) | 303.48 | 0.000 |
| Catalogue Usage (SD) | 4.7 (.37) | 4.4 (1.16) | 4.1 (.36) | 2.5 (.96) | 73.29 | 0.000 |
| Unplanned Shopping (SD) | 2.5 (.74) | 3.3 (.36) | 3.1 (.74) | 4.1 (.63) | 34.67 | 0.000 |
| Product Evaluation (SD) | 2.6 (.51) | 2.8 (.31) | 2.5 (.43) | 1.8 (.46) | 19.53 | 0.000 |
| Store Evaluation (SD) | 2.4 (.68) | 2.7 (.41) | 2.6 (.75) | 1.9 (.56) | 10.24 | 0.000 |
| No. Stores Shopped at Weekly (SD) | 1.3 (.49) | 1.9 (.64) | 1.1 (.35) | 1.2 (.39) | 8.76 | 0.000 |
| Shopping Time (SD) | 20 mins (10.65) | 23 mins (13.44) | 15 mins (7.89) | 21 mins (9.97) | 5.12 | 0.002 |
| No. Items Purchased each Visit (SD) | 22 (18.31) | 26 (20.51) | 17 (17.56) | 26 (17.82) | 2.83 | 0.039 |
| Total Cost of Purchases (SD) | $85.17 ($67.45) | $86.10 ($82.29) | $57.90 ($55.58) | $80.54 ($66.69) | 4.57 | 0.000 |
| Cost per Item ($ Spend/Items) (SD) | $3.87 | $3.31 | $3.40 | $3.09 | | |

| | | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Construct** | **(I) Male Cluster** | **(J) Male Cluster** | **Mean Difference (I-J)** | **Std. Error** | **Sig.** | **Lower Bound** | **Upper Bound** |
| Shopping Responsibility | Convenience/Busy | Equitable | .00654 | .14975 | 1.000 | -.3805 | .3936 |
| Shopping Enjoyment | Convenience/Busy | Equitable | .05396 | .13287 | .977 | -.2895 | .3974 |
| Comparison Shopping | Convenience/Busy | Apathetic | .08596 | .10297 | .838 | -.1802 | .3521 |
| Product Evaluation | Convenience/Busy | Economic/Budget | .12815 | .07136 | .278 | -.0563 | .3126 |
| Product Evaluation | Convenience/Busy | Apathetic | -.01535 | .06897 | .996 | -.1936 | .1629 |
| Store Evaluation | Convenience/Busy | Economic/Budget | .07203 | .10084 | .891 | -.1886 | .3327 |
| Store Evaluation | Convenience/Busy | Apathetic | .23333 | .09746 | .081 | -.0186 | .4852 |

***Table 2: Cluster Profiles***

## Results

In order to label each cluster with an appropriate name, clusters were analysed and interpreted according to the protocol for phenomenology (Breazeale and Lueg 2011). Using various perspectives and constantly questioning the interpretation, these descriptors were combined into larger themes. The authors developed a description to elaborate identified themes and provide descriptive names for each cluster. This research developed four clusters of male, as summarised above in Table 2. Analysis of Variation (ANOVA) identified significant statistical differences between all measures pertaining to the four male shopper clusters; strengthening the proposition that four distinct clusters exist. Results of Post Hoc tests revealed commonalities between *Convenience/Busy* type male shoppers and other male clusters on certain constructs. There were no significant statistical differences between clusters *Convenience/Busy* and; *Equitable* with regard to willingness to accept responsibility for shopping (sig. 1.00) or level of enjoyment (sig. 0.97); *Apathetic* with regard to comparison shopping (sig. 0.83), product evaluation (sig. 0.99) or store evaluation (sig. 0.081); *Economic/Budget* with regard to product evaluation (sig. 0.278) and store evaluation (sig. 0.891).

***Male Cluster 1 – Convenience/Busy***

This cluster comprised the largest proportion of the sample, 41%. They are described as a busy, professional male. Almost half this group is married, working fulltime in management or professional roles. Aged between 28-36 years, they are the highest educated and earn on average over AU$65,000 per year. They shop quickly, buying on average 22 items in less than 20 minutes. They spend the most per item ($M$ = AU$3.87) and this appears to be related to their avoidance of price checking ($M$ = 4.5), catalogue usage ($M$ = 4.7) and willingness to shop around for bargains ($M$ = 1.4). Product attributes ($M$ = 2.6) and store characteristics ($M$ = 2.4) are skewed toward neutral, suggesting these men are more concerned with completing the task quickly rather than making extensive evaluations.

***Male Cluster 2 - Equitable***

Only 22 shoppers (8%) fell into this small cluster. They are described as young, 25-30 years of age, earning the second lowest income of the other groups but well educated. More than half reported to being unmarried, but cohabiting with a female partner. A high proportion of this sample reported employment in 'female-centric' occupations, such a retail, office/clerical and teaching. There was also determined a higher proportion of part-time/casual employment within this group. Grocery shopping was considered a joint responsibility ($M$ = 1.3), not specifically a gendered task, hence this group were considered equitable. This group reported the highest levels of enjoyment ($M$ = 1.9) and willingness to shop at more than one supermarket ($M$ = 1.9) of all other clusters. They tended to agree with items measuring 'price checking' ($M$ = 2.2). Interestingly, although purchases were planned (they disagreed with unplanned purchasing, $M$ = 3.3) this segment did not use catalogues to improve product knowledge or aid in planning ($M$ = 4.4). This may be because the 'Equitable' shopper has a high degree of experience in shopping and plans without the use of catalogues.

***Male Cluster 3 – Apathetic***

This large group, representing 27% of the sample, tended to demonstrate similar characteristics to the traditional version of the male shopper; uninterested, apathetic with a penchant for a ‘grab n’ go’ style (Otnes and McGrath 2001). Earning the highest incomes, these highly educated shoppers reported an unwillingness to share or undertake the task ($M$ = 3.6) and the lowest levels of enjoyment ($M$ = 3.6). Responses to scale items were generally skewed toward neutral, no opinion or don’t care. They limited their time spent shopping, on average, to 15 minutes, spent the least amount, purchased the fewest items, yet spent the second highest cost per item ($M$ = AU$3.40) of all other clusters. They reported avoiding using catalogues to aid in planning ($M$ = 4.1) and considered shopping around (comparison shopping) to not be worthwhile ($M$ = 1.6).

***Male Cluster 4 – Economic/Budget***

This final group of male supermarket shoppers represented 24% of the sample. They reported to be the lowest paid, oldest and least educated of the clusters. Cost per item purchased was the lowest ($M$ = AU$3.09) and this may possibly be related to a preference for cheaper, generic, private label products. Price checking ($M$ = 1.6) and catalogue usage ($M$ = 2.5) was reported as most important for these shoppers. Car parking, convenient trading times and easy access ($M$ = 1.9) and product attributes ($M$ = 1.8), were considered highly by these shoppers in comparison to other groups.

## Discussion

The typologies of male grocery shoppers are now broadly discussed, compared and contrasted. This research contributes one new segment descriptor, *Equitable*, not reported elsewhere in earlier segmentation studies of grocery shopper behaviour. This interesting finding and emergent shopper type will demand further research. Shopper segmentation research relating specifically to grocery shopping behaviour has not been undertaking extensively since the 1970's (Darden and Ashton 1975; Williams *et al.* 1978). Later research of food shopper segments has examined specific constructs relating to levels of involvement, time or shopper demographics (Smith and Carsky 1996; Sullivan and Savitt 1997; Chetthamrongchai and Davies 2000; Angell *et al.* 2012). It is argued that external market and socio-economic forces cause segments to evolve over time, as such, this emergent shopper type, *Equitable*, demonstrates structural changes to shopper segments (Soutar and Sweeney 2003).

Male shoppers in general reported to be willing to undertake or share responsibility for the grocery shopping task. This behaviour does not appear reported in early research (Piper and Capella 1993; Piron 2002). Stereotypically, the traditional view that suggests men hate shopping and are generally relegated to being dragged around supermarkets by their female partners was only identified and partially validated in the *Apathetic* cluster (Otnes and McGrath 2001). Yet, even these male shoppers tended to report indifference and unimportance, rather that dislike or hatred. Apathetic types, identified in this research, could be somewhat aligned with 'Inactive', 'Hurrier' or 'Grab n' Go' shoppers (Darden and Ashton 1975; Williams *et al.* 1978; Shorney and Carney 1988).

'Economic' or 'price-focused' types (Lesser and Hughes 1986; Cullen 1990) were represented in male clusters. This shopper was attracted by a strong value offer, focusing on price, value and promotional discounts. As discussed briefly above, the *Equitable* shopper did not appear in any other earlier segmentation studies. These shoppers presented as the youngest cohort, mostly considered *Gen-Y*, at the early stages of their career and life cycle, generally single or cohabiting with a female partner. This group is happy to take responsibility or share the task of grocery shopping and did not consider such an activity to be gender role specific. It is posited that this segment will continue to grow, while the older, *Apathetic* shopper diminishes, in line with segmentation theory. This will present opportunities and challenges for retailers and marketers.

The *Convenience/Busy* shopper type is often identified within consumer segmentation studies, and in this research, behaved similarly to Lesser and Hughes' (1986) 'Service' shopper, Shorney and Carney's (1988) 'Working Single' shopper, as well as the other 'Convenience' type shoppers identified in additional research (Darden and Ashton 1975; Williams *et al.* 1978; Bellenger and Moschis 1982). *Convenience* types considered well-staffed service departments, store inventory levels, efficient register operators, car-parking facilities and convenient location important (Jackson *et al.* 1985; Mattingly and Smith 2010).

As depicted in Table 2: *Cluster Profiles*, some shopper types reported certain constructs equally important, that is per se, no significant differences could be identified, which to some extent validates the clusters. The *Convenience/Busy* male shoppers appeared happy to undertake the grocery shopping, as did the *Equitable* male shopper. Comparison shopping was determined as not important by both *Convenience/Busy* and *Apathetic* male shoppers. If for men, expediting the shopping task is important, instinctively the 'convenience' motive would be pronounced across other male cluster types.

These results provide insights into contemporary grocery shopping behaviour for supermarket executives. This research finds that a third of male supermarket shoppers approach the task with a sense of disinterest, indifference and apathy, hence an opportunity for supermarket managers to limit and rationalise range, simplify promotion and cut innovative and complex marketing appeals. Apathy, may also account for the growth on online grocery shopping, as shoppers seek more novel and innovative approaches to this mundane and repetitive task (Hand *et al.* 2009; Ganesh *et al.* 2010). Nearly half (41%) of all male shoppers sort convenience, hence, an opportunity to further explore deregulator trading hours, smaller store footprints and service efficiencies, as the proportion of male grocery shopper grows (Richbell and Kite 2007).

Findings suggest men are an attractive consumer group for supermarket retailers. They shop regularly and appear committed to their local supermarket. Most rarely check prices or consider complex product evaluative criteria. Most do not plan their purchases before entering the supermarket and, when shopping, many will purchase unplanned and impulse items. The male grocery shopper is documented as a growing and important market for supermarket retailers internationally. As such, supermarket retailers can no longer describe their core shoppers as simply *female*, nor can they continue to ignore that the male shopper presents as a committed and regular shopper. Supermarket executives should consider strategies to target attract and retain male shoppers

**Future research and limitations**

As grocery shopping by men reaches parity with women, this work has moved to provide new insights into this under-researched group of consumers. This research has suggested direction for supermarket retailers and serves as a particularly useful tool in areas of corporate research, merchandise planning, buying, store development and design. Most importantly, the development and identification of distinct grocery shopper cohorts directs an opportunity for future comparative shopping behaviour research, in areas such as generational differences, cross gender, cross-cultural and cross-contextual differences. Further, a deeper understanding of male shopping behaviour in the context of grocery shopping provides for further opportunities of a comparative nature, such as an extension of the work into store switching (Findlay and Sparks 2008), investigating which genders are more inclined to switch between competitors, or purchase private label products adoption (Lin *et al.* 2009).

As with most research, limitations often exist and should be duly noted. Methodologically, it is recognised that the adoption of a single source questionnaire may have lead to common method variance. The potential for self-report biases may exist, specifically consistency bias and social desirability bias (Crowne and Marlowe 1964). The author has attempted to control these common method biases by obtaining measures of the predictor and criterion variables from different sources, socio-economic suburbs, genders and supermarket brands (Tourangeau *et al.* 2000). Further, the careful construction of the items themselves, based on a qualitative stage and literature review, has to some extent, made it possible to reduce method biases.

As data were collected from shoppers from one Australian capital city, it is recognised findings may not be fully representative of a broader population. It is noted that by selecting only two major supermarkets, the researcher may have overlooked grocery shoppers who patronise smaller, independent grocers for greater convenience.  Associated with the recruitment of respondents and given the speed and urgency of grocery-shopping behaviour, it is recognised that some respondents may have answered the questionnaire quickly, without careful consideration of all aspects and participant fatigue may have been present. Although steps were taken to ensure a simple five-point scale was employed, non-sampling respondent error may have occurred (Hand *et al.* 2009).

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