What motivates people to shop at night?

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Keywords

Abstract
Purpose: To determine what motivates people to shop at night-time.
Methodology: A non-probability purposive sampling methodology was utilised to collect survey responses from 404 night-time grocery shoppers in Johannesburg, South Africa. The results were segmented based on Living Standard Measure (LSM) profiles, shopping pattern variables and shopping motivation variables.
Findings: The night-time shopper can be classified as functional, with efficiency and value-seeking behaviour forming part of the utilitarian shopping motives driving his/her behaviour.
Practical implications: Specific marketing or retail strategies which seek to target the night-time grocery shoppers in Johannesburg can be developed.
Originality: The study fills a gap in knowledge about the motivation of night-time shoppers.

Introduction

The South African grocery industry is renowned for its competitiveness, especially among the big grocery chains (Evangeldis, 1994). The continuous introduction of new retail formats into the market have offered consumers further convenience adding to the challenges faced by grocery retailers (Peter, Leszczyc & Timmermans, 2001; Paulins & Geisfield, 2003; Prinsloo, 2014). These circumstances have increased the importance of knowledge of what attracts the grocery shopper to the store (Paulins & Geisfield, 2003). Such knowledge would be invaluable to retailers as they are required to create marketing strategies which appeal to a variety of consumers, with a population exhibiting diverse tastes, cultures, and preferences (Geiger, 2007; Dhurup, 2008; Zeeman, 2013).

In some countries part of the competitive strategy of retailers is to extend trading hours (Freathy and Sparks, 1995; Cochrane, 1999). The adoption of night-time grocery shopping has evolved to such a point that there are widespread opportunities for customers to buy groceries 24-hours a day in these markets (Moore–Ed, 1993; Presser, 2003; Geiger, 2007). Large supermarket chains seek to serve a market previously served by small businesses, who could not compete with large national retailers on price, assortment, or variety of product choices, but competed on trading hours (Kreitzman, 1999). The advent of the 24-hour chain grocery retail offering now allowed customers to shop for a full basket of goods at supermarket prices, which according to Richbell & Kite (2007) has been highly valued among certain parts of the shopper profile spectrum.

There is a definite trend among retailers and landlords in South Africa to extend trading hours into the night (Prinsloo, 2014). This will allow more consumers to visit grocery stores at times that are more convenient for them allowing for the "colonisation' of the night-time for economic activity (Melbin, 1987). This fits in with the notion that customers are leading increasingly time pressured lifestyles in which convenience is key when considering grocery shopping motives (Olivier, 2008; Prinsloo, 2014).

Noting this change in the trading strategy; while considering the importance of customer knowledge in the current grocery retail industry (Baker, 2012), the aim of the study is to establish what motivates the grocery shopper to shop at night.

Literature review

Shopping motivations are defined as the psychological drivers of consumer behaviour, making it important to define consumer behaviour and describe the consumer decision making process.

Consumer behaviour can be described as the decision-making process in which resources are expended by the consumer in order to obtain goods and services (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010; Erasmus 2010). The manner and reason for the purchase is also of importance as all processes from product/service search to disposal, and all activities in between, are included under the definition of consumer behaviour (Schiffman *et al.*, 2010; Quester *et al.*, 2011; Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2013).

Hedonic shopping motives are less about function and more about emotional experiences/communications formed between shopper, the surrounding environment, and the product/service (To *et al.*, 2007; Evans *et al.*, 2009). The consumer is less motivated by the physical usefulness of the product/service once obtained and more motivated by the pleasure obtained from seeking the product/service through the shopping experience (Jin & Kim, 2003; Evans *et al.*, 2009; Ozen and Kodaz, 2012; Hoyer *et al.*, 2013). Spaces which are high in sensory stimulation, creating olfactory cues in store are the essence of what appeals to consumers' hedonic motivations (Jamal *et al.*, 2006; Wagner and Rudolph, 2010; Morrison *et al.*, 2011). There is also a need to satisfy consumers social needs concerning the shopping trip (Guido, 2006).

The value shopping motivated consumer derives pleasure from the feeling of having attained an economic advantage (Morschett *et al.*, 2005). This can manifest itself the feeling of having made intelligent product selection decision or through bargaining with the retailer (Chandon *et al.*, 2000). For the above-mentioned reasons, one would think that value shopping would be considered hedonic, however Rintämaki *et al.*, (2006) explain that "beating the system" by attaining value through purchasing a product at a reduced price is considered to contribute to utilitarian value. This view has been supported by Dhurup (2008) who included the derivation of value and bargain hunting as part of the functional shopper profile that was motivated by utilitarian values. For the purpose of this study, the value shopping motivation will be considered as utilitarian in nature.

According to Sheth (1983) and Dholakia (1999), grocery shopping is considered by many as functional, and is motivated by utilitarian factors as opposed to hedonic ones. The hedonic factors described in Woodroffe (1997) discuss the potential for retail activities to be considered a form of distraction and even enjoyment (especially for women). The overall impression which one gets from Geiger (2007) is that there is a narrow link between the psychological costs and gains which individuals derive from engaging in retailing activities. According to Geuens *et al.*, (2001) the perceived convenience attributed to extended trading hours is likely to be the driver of patronage and shopper satisfaction as opposed to the satisfaction of social or psychological needs.

Methodology
Data Collection

Data was collected by means of a questionnaire handed out over a two-month period to willing participants in Johannesburg in office, residential and educational settings. Completed questionnaires were received from 404 individuals, who were all over 18 years of age and had conducted a night-time grocery shopping trip within the two weeks prior to completing the questionnaire. Once a population exceeds n=5000, a sample size of 400 is sufficient (Leedy and Ormrod 2010; Richbell & Kite 2007; Geiger 2007).

The data was collated, coded, and analysed utilising descriptive techniques as well as exploratory factor analysis and cluster analysis. Results were then presented and compared to international literature in order to add context to the data obtained. Analysis was conducted using four profiles created by Dhurup (2008), a South African study which examined shopping motives among hypermarket customers and their relation towards demographic variables. This required four latent constructs to be calculated based on the arithmetic mean of the following statements grouped:

- Q1 to Q4 – The Diversion Shopper
- Q5 to Q8 – The Recreational Shopper
- Q9 to Q10 – The Sensory Stimulated Shopper

•Q11 to Q13 – The Functional Shopper

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics as a result of the creation of four latent constructs. The Cronbach's alpha for each of the four factors are all acceptable, with 3 of the four having strong internal consistency.

As can be seen from the descriptive statistics, the Functional Shoppers outweigh the other 3 constructs by virtue of mean scores obtained from the study. This seems to indicate that more night-time grocery shoppers are motivated by functional motivations.

In response to rating the reasons for shopping at night (after 6 p.m.), the ratings summarised in table 2 were obtained.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's alpha
Diversion shopper	404	1.00	5.00	1.9319	.95381	.856
Recreational shopper	404	1.00	5.00	1.9969	.98176	.902
Sensory stimulated shopper	404	1.00	5.00	1.7921	.95434	.826
Functional shopper	404	1.00	5.00	3.5025	1.02532	.670
Valid N (listwise)	404					

**Table 1: The descriptive statistics as a result of the creation of four latent constructs**

Motivations	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Need for essential items	4.44	404	0.902
Store less busy/Speed of Shopping	3.49	404	1.239
Fits well with work schedule	3.71	404	1.195
More relaxing shopping experience	3.29	404	1.297
Quality of Service	3.10	404	1.280
Bored and wanted to do something	1.93	404	1.010
Fits well with my child care schedule	2.12	403	1.185
Enjoy/like the atmosphere	2.43	404	1.321
Fits well into leisure/social activity schedule	2.62	404	1.309

Table 2: Reasons for shopping at night

The statement which appeared to be the key motivator when combining responses of both "agree" and "strongly agree" was that of fulfilling the need for essential items (89.6%). This was followed by the shopping trip fitting well into the work schedule of the respondent (59.9%) as well as the perceived busyness of the store and speed at which the shopping could be completed (53.2%). These motivations are synonymous with convenience and functionality and can be considered utilitarian in nature.

When analysing the listed motivations as scale variables, the biggest standard deviations occurred from statements which achieved varied mean scores (Table 3). The three motivations which achieved the highest mean scores were statements 8, 9 and 4 respectively. The most stable responses from a standard
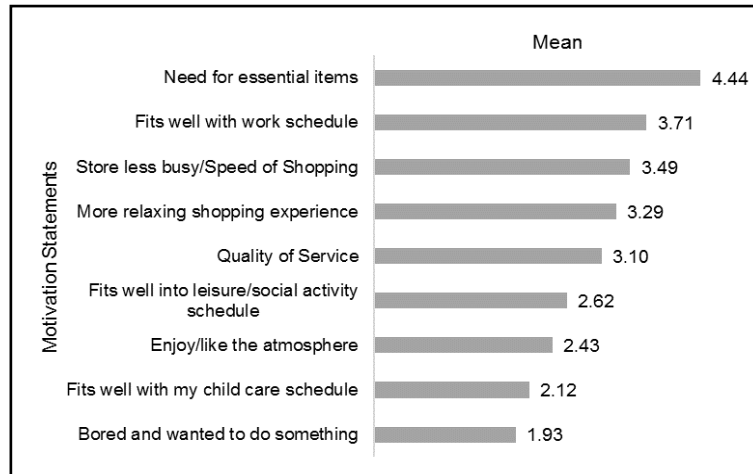
deviation perspective were obtained from the statements with variety of mean scores, viz. statements 1, 6 and 7 respectively.

Figure 1: Mean scores of motivational factors

	Statements	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Total
1	Need for essential items	4.5%	5.9%	89.6%	100.0%
2	Store less busy/Speed of Shopping	18.8%	28.0%	53.2%	100.0%
3	Fits well with work schedule	13.9%	26.2%	59.9%	100.0%
4	More relaxing shopping experience	24.8%	28.2%	47.0%	100.0%
5	Quality of Service	28.2%	37.4%	34.4%	100.0%
6	Bored and wanted to do something	70.3%	23.3%	6.4%	100.0%
7	Fits well with my child care schedule	60.3%	28.3%	11.4%	100.0%
8	Enjoy/like the atmosphere	52.0%	26.7%	21.3%	100.0%
9	Fits well into leisure/social activity schedule	41.8%	35.1%	23.0%	100.0%

Table 3: The results when treating listed variables as scale variables

Exploratory Factor Analysis

To reduce the dimensionality of the data, Principal Component Analysis with IBM SPSS Statistics 24 was used to examine patterns of correlations among the questions used to measure the extent to which certain reasons drive participants to go shopping at night. The factorability of the correlation matrix was investigated using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient. The correlation matrix, (table 4), demonstrated a number of coefficients of 0.3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was 0.819, well above the recommended minimum value of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1970, 1974) and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity reached statistical significance, $p<.001$ (Bartlett, 1954; Kaiser, 1970, 1974). Thus, the correlation matrix was deemed factorable.

Nine items were subjected to PCA, and this resulted in a 2-component solution, explaining 56.294% of the variation in the data. Component loadings of 0.5 and higher were allowed. However, one of the items (Q3) had a low communality (0.122) and did not load on either of the two extracted components and was excluded from further analysis. This item also did not correlate with any of the other items (see table 5). Eight items were then subjected to PCA and resulted in a 2-component solution that explains 62.719% of the variation in the data, a reasonable increase (table 6).

Varimax rotation, a rotation method that endeavours to avoid correlation among the latent constructs was performed (table 7). Orthogonal rotation was chosen since the analytical procedures are better developed than those of Oblique rotation. Varimax specifically was chosen since it results in a clearer

separation of factors/components (Hair *et al.*, 2006). This resulted in a reasonably simple structure, with both of the components showing a number of strong loadings (Thurstone, 1947).

Both of the extracted components demonstrate acceptable internal consistency as illustrated by the Cronbach's alpha coefficients listed in table 8. "The generally agreed upon lower limit for Cronbach's Alpha is 0.70, although it may decrease to 0.60 in exploratory research" (Hair *et al.*, 2006, p137). The subscales for the extracted components were obtained by calculating the meaning of the items loading on each of the subscales.

This resulted in 2 latent components being calculated and named, viz.
Component 1: Mixed Component 1
Component 2: Mixed Component 2

Statements	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9
Need for essential items	1	.190**	.122*	.009	.012	-.056	-.087	-.036	.025
Store less busy/Speed of Shopping	.190**	1	.510**	.504**	.366**	.068	.000	.254**	.229**
Fits well with work schedule	.122*	.510**	1	.441**	.318**	-.024	.049	.231**	.270**
More relaxing shopping experience	.009	.504**	.441**	1	.497**	.189**	.105*	.427**	.410**
Quality of Service	.012	.366**	.318**	.497**	1	.246**	.215**	.395**	.351**
Bored and wanted to do something	-.056	.068	-.024	.189**	.246**	1	.323**	.392**	.377**
Fits with my child care schedule	-.087	.000	.049	.105*	.215**	.323**	1	.419**	.343**
Enjoy/like the atmosphere	-.036	.254**	.231**	.427**	.395**	.392**	.419**	1	.588**
Fits well into leisure/social schedule	.025	.229**	.270**	.410**	.351**	.377**	.343**	.588**	1

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Coefficients among the original 9 items (N=404, Pairwise)
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Statements	Initial	Extraction
Q2 Store less busy/Speed of Shopping	1.000	.680
Q3 Fits well with work schedule	1.000	.646
Q4 More relaxing shopping experience	1.000	.654
Q5 Quality of Service	1.000	.570
Q6 Bored and wanted to do something	1.000	.585
Q7 Fits well with my child care schedule	1.000	.581
Q8 Enjoy/like the atmosphere	1.000	.695
Q9 Fits well into leisure/social activity schedule	1.000	.608

Table 5 : Communalities of the 8 items (Principal Component Analysis)

Statements	Component	
	1	2
Q32_6 Bored and wanted to do something	.765	
Q32_7 Fits well with my child care schedule	.759	
Q32_8 Enjoy/like the atmosphere	.756	
Q32_9 Fits well into leisure/social activity schedule	.694	
Q32_2 Store less busy/Speed of Shopping		.825
Q32_3 Fits well with work schedule		.803
Q32_4 More relaxing shopping experience		.751
Q32_5 Quality of Service		.596

Table 6: Total Variance Explained by Exploratory Factor Analysis

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.463	43.284	43.284	2.519	31.493	31.493
2	1.555	19.435	62.719	2.498	31.226	62.719
3	.662	8.278	70.997			
4	.563	7.040	78.038			
5	.549	6.865	84.902			
6	.487	6.092	90.994			
7	.379	4.732	95.726			
8	.342	4.274	100.000			

Table 7: Rotated Component Matrix: Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation (Kaiser Normalization) [Rotation converged in 3 iterations]

Components	Q32_C1 Mixed Component 1	Q32_C2 Mixed Component 2
Q32_C1 Mixed Component 1	1	.389**
Q32_C2 Mixed Component 2	.434**	1

Table 8: Reliability statistics for the 2 extracted components
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Subscale	Description	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
C1	Mixed Component 1	4	0.770
C2	Mixed Component 2	4	0.779
Overall	All dimensions	8	0.809

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics for the 2 latent constructs

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q32_C1 Mixed Component 1	404	1.00	4.50	2.2778	.93276
Q32_C2 Mixed Component 2	404	1.00	5.00	3.3967	.97184
Valid N (listwise)	404				

Table 10: Correlations (Pearson's / Spearman's) between the 2 latent constructs

The study sought to separate the statements into two distinct reasons or motivators, being Hedonic and Utilitarian. Though two components emerged that were statistically acceptable as demonstrated in tables 4 - 10, the statements contained in the components are a mix between hedonic and utilitarian statements. There was no doubt over the need for essential items which respondents felt strongly about, however the remaining statements yielded unexpected results. Component 2 as an example included a sensory motivational statement alongside aspects of convenience and a perceived increase in the speed of shopping. Component 1 meanwhile included an element of convenience related to childcare schedules in a set of statements which could otherwise be considered hedonic in nature.

Figure 2 illustrates that the overwhelming majority of respondents cited safety as Very Important. There were an almost equal number of respondents who cited safety as being either Important or Neutral.
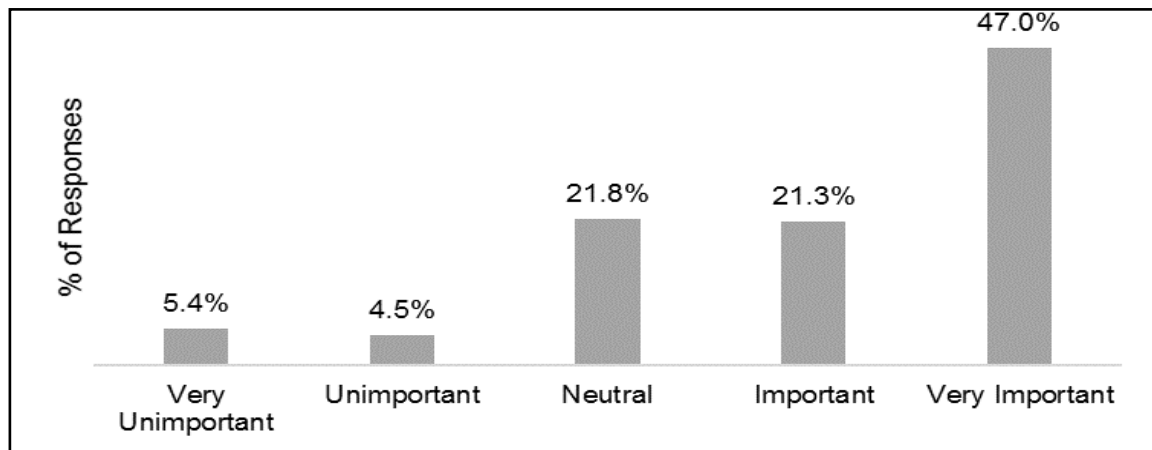

Figure 2: Importance of safety for the Night-time Grocery Shopper

Conclusion

The night-time grocery shopper is heavily motivated by personal safety when deciding whether to go grocery shopping at night. The shopper predominantly visits the store when in need of essential items, i.e., items that require immediate replenishment. The visit also fits well into the shoppers' work schedule with the shopper further motivated by the expectation of a speedier shopping trip. This shopper can be classified as functional (Dhurup, 2008), with efficiency and value-seeking behaviour forming part of the utilitarian shopping motives driving this shoppers' behaviour.

Discussion

Direct comparisons between Richbell & Kite (2007) and Geiger (2007) can be made with the following factors associated with Shopper Motivation:

Rich bell & Kite (2007) found that over half of the respondents cited the *need for essential items* as a motivator for going grocery shopping at night. This is in line with what was found in the subject study, firmly placing the need for essentials as a key motivator for night-time grocery shopping. The need for essential items also achieved a mean score of 4.44 out of 5 with 5 being considered a "very important" motivator. This was mirrored by the Geiger (2007) study.

As in the Richbell & Kite (2007) study, the *work schedule* was a key motivator for night-time grocery shopping in the subject as many individuals struggle to fit shopping into their day. This motivator as found in statement 3 was the second most important as cited by Richbell & Kite (2007) with a mean score of 3.1 but 49% of the sample ranking it as very important. The mean score in the subject study was 3.71. However far fewer individuals ranked this statement as "unimportant" and "very important" when compared to that of Richbell & Kite (2007). As previously discussed, Geiger's (2007) finding concurred with that of the subject study, however, the work schedule was the most important motivator followed by the need for essential items.

The third most important factor related to the *store being less busy.* Richbell & Kite (2007) cites this as a key motivation particularly when it comes to the customers perceived shopping duration. Richbell & Kite (2007) explain that consumers expect to complete a night-time grocery shopping trip at a much quicker pace than that of a regular day time trip. This is due to the perceived shorter ques and quicker check-out times as well as easier manoeuvring of trolleys through aisles and easier access to shelves. This motivator achieved a mean of 3.24 in that study, which was similar to the 3.49 achieved by the subject study. Geiger (2007) had a different result for the third most important motivator being that the night-time shopping trip fitted well into the shoppers' leisure schedule. The subject study mirrored the 3 motivation statements from Richbell & Kite (2007) while agreeing with two statements from Geiger (2007).

Geiger (2007) suggested that the key motivators in that study were clearly utilitarian as opposed to hedonic in nature and that many respondents particularly those who cited work schedules as being a key motivator for night-time grocery shopping needed convenience and access to services for tasks to be fulfilled in what were formerly "unconventional" hours. Based on that study, one could suggest the same for the subject study in which the two most important motivators were the same and the third in the subject study was also linked to speed and efficiency. Speed and efficiency can very much be linked to utilitarian motives as opposed to hedonic (Cardoso and Pinto, 2010; Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, 2013).

Considering the results, it would appear as though the night-time grocery shopper is seeking out speed as one of the key motivators. Retailers could group items together based on the most popular items which night-time grocery shoppers purchase as discussed in section B in order to reduce the need to walk the whole store. The improved check-out system to cater to individuals with 10 items or less will likely also reduce shopping trip duration.

The bottom two motivators in the subject study mirrored those of Richbell & Kite (2007) in which boredom and the night-time trip fitting well into the childcare schedule were cited as least important by virtue of their mean scores. It must be noted that a large number of respondents (48.5%) did not have children in their household which may have lessened the relevant of the statement surrounding the childcare schedule as a key motivator for night-time grocery shopping.

It was envisaged that exploratory factor analysis would unearth two very different sets of shoppers being hedonic and utilitarian motivated shoppers based on the motivation statements used in the question. Unfortunately, this did not appear to be the case and two very mixed components emerged. It must be noted that the study from which these statements were taken carried out descriptive analysis on the results as opposed to the more complex exploratory factor analysis as conducted in the subject study.

Based on the above analysis, the results suggest that night-time grocery shoppers are motivated by the need for essential items, a night-time trip fitting well into their work schedule and the perception that the store is less busy which will result in a speedier shopping trip in that order of importance.

Geiger (2007), when enquiring on whether respondents felt safe shopping at night, received an overwhelming 95% response in the affirmative. This was explained by Geiger (2007) as a possible

response to the highly visible presence of security personnel in and around the check-out area of the subject store during night-time hours.

Other Motivational Factors

The study sought to classify the night-time grocery shopper into one of the four categories as per an existing typology of hypermarket shoppers in South Africa created by Dhurup (2008). Each of the four classifications were arrived at through exploratory factor analysis of responses to various motivational statements relating to shopping. These very statements were utilised in the study to understand what motivates the night-time grocery shopper in Johannesburg to go shopping.

The findings of the exploratory factor analysis were conducted in two phases. The first phase set out to uncover two primary components, being hedonic and utilitarian as per the literature. This was established with both components meeting the statistical requirements to be considered valid for the purposes of analysis. As explained in Geiger (2007), the night-time grocery shopper identified more strongly with the components considered utilitarian in nature, achieving a mean score of 3.5 out of 5. These statements were: to take advantage of specials on promotion; to take a look at products considered for purchases and to find product assortment that I need. The remaining statements considered hedonic in nature achieved a mean score of 1.93, highlighting the strength of utilitarian motivations amongst the respondents of the subject study.

As previously discussed, four typologies of hypermarket shopper were created by Dhurup (2008). The statements which made up the utilitarian component above were the same statements used to identify the "functional" shopper. The results of the study suggest that the "functional" shopper makes up a large proportion of the night-time grocery shopping market. Dhurup (2008), explains the characteristic of these shoppers as being synonymous with utilitarian shopper motives, who are calculated and take shopping very seriously, wanting to maximise on value obtained from each trip (Stone, 1954: p 36; Stephenson & Willet, 1969: pp 316-322; Dholakia, 1999: p 156; Kim & Jin, 2001: p 245; Cox *et al.*, 2005: p 251). Words such as efficiency and speed are also used to describe this shopper as some research even suggests this shopper may be less likely to enjoy the activity of shopping all together (Bellenger & Korgaonkar, 1980). Further research will need to be conducted in order to ascertain whether the night-time grocery shopper dislikes the activity all together.

Based on the analysis above the results of the subject study seem to suggest that the night-time grocery shopper in Johannesburg is largely driven by utilitarian shopping motives.

Conclusions

The study has contributed to the body of knowledge by analysing the motivations of South Africa's night-time grocery shoppers. The study has provided an exploratory foray into this area, with the hope of encouraging furthermore in-depth research into shopping during this time frame.

This study provides a number of key findings around the attributes of the night-time grocery shopper in Johannesburg. Many of these variables form part of market research studies by landlords, retailers, and marketers alike. These variables are used to inform promotional material which targets specific market segments. Retailers could also use such information to better satisfy the needs of the shoppers (e.g., grouping products which night-time shoppers purchase in order to reduce the need to walk through the entire store), while simultaneously competing for market share with other retail formats. Landlords have a vested interest in the performance of the retailer and the satisfaction of the customer, as this may improve the return on their investment.

In summary, the study was designed to assist marketers, retailers, and landlords to improve their marketing efforts by allowing said parties to understand the profile of the shopper who does grocery shopping at night. This could assist retailers in maintaining and improving market share in the highly competitive grocery retail industry (Evangeldis,1994), while also ensuring that the needs of the night-time grocery shopper are adequately satisfied.

Recommendations

The study only considered responses relating to night-time grocery shopping which had to have taken place from 18:00 to 6:00 A.M. In order to test the differences between the day-time shopping and the night-time the study could be conducted from store opening during the day till store close at night. This will allow researchers landlords and marketers to understand if there are indeed unique characteristics which night-time shoppers possess when compared to their day-time counterparts. The study can also be conducted for different product categories such as apparel or entertainment, perhaps contributing to the creation of a night-time shopper profile.

The subject study utilised demographics, shopping patterns and motivations as the segmenting variables, however there are a plethora of variables utilised to segment shoppers which can be found in the literature. Using different variables to the ones used in this study or drilling deeper into aspects found within the study such as gender, race or income bands may reveal useful characteristics which can add to the profile of the night-time grocery shopper. A variable of particular importance would be age, with the generational profiles of shoppers proving key to marketing strategies (Williams & Page, 2011).

More focused research could be conducted in order to test the above typologies of night-time grocery shoppers segmented based on shopping patterns, particularly around trip frequency, mode of transport and basket size. The understanding of the shoppers' day-time grocery shopping patterns should also be included in any further work as this could have an impact on the night-time fill-in and major trip shopper segmentation. Links between the shoppers' feelings around safety as a decision maker when considering night-time grocery shopping should also be investigated further.

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