University of Surrey

School of Management

Consumer Decision Processes and Dried Sea Products:
Insights from Canton and Hong Kong

by

Ying-kwok CHAN

Submitted in part - fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Business Administration

September 2009
Abstract

Given the continuing economic development and rising standards of living in Mainland China it is expected that Chinese citizens' disposable income will grow over time. In addition to this competition for sales of dried sea products will undoubtedly increase along with that of demand. Understanding the research problem and how consumers make decisions in purchasing dried sea products in Canton and Hong Kong can help the store retailers to develop effective marketing strategies so as to achieve growth and obtain more revenue. This researcher is an owner manager of one such store.

There are a lot of studies on consumer behaviour whereby some include a consumer decision model while others are related to Chinese aspects of decision making (Wai-sum and Chan, 1997; Cormone et al, 1998; Shuk-ching and Fangfang, T, 2006). However, there is a lack of theoretical and empirical research about the Chinese consumer decision process related to dried sea products. To bridge this gap this study aims at investigating the consumer decision process in dried sea products in the location of Canton (with Hong Kong). It focuses on how consumers make decisions and investigates factors that most influence the consumers in decision making.

This study initially integrated the findings of in-depth interviews, focus groups and the adaptation of the Engel, Blackwell and Miniard Consumer Decision Process Model (1993) to form a workable Consumer Decision Process Model on dried sea products in order to describe purchasing decisions and shopping behaviours of high and low involvement consumers.

Results are based on responses of 200 Hong Kong and Chinese consumers. The methodology was based upon a mixed method approach and a sequential mixed method study is adopted. Involvement scores were used to develop understanding of low and high involvement groups. Involvement score refers to the score obtained by a respondent using a Personal Involvement Inventory (a bipolar adjective scale). The scale is used to measure the concept of product involvement (Zaichosky, 1985). This study reveals that high involvement consumers are normally more likely to seek information on location of store, price comparison availability and detailed information
of dried sea products. Concerning shopping orientation factors, high involvement consumers scored higher on comparison shopping behaviours and country of origin consciousness than low involvement consumers. High involvement consumers were more likely influenced by situation; they are 'shopping advantages' and 'convenience'. High involvement consumers were more willing to purchase dried sea products after shopping. Besides these factors, if they had previous experience in a store they had a higher likelihood of future purchase in that store. In conclusion, the results indicated that dried sea products shopping behaviours were affected by different levels of product involvement.

The findings of this study provide dried sea retail and product managers with increased understanding of consumers' behaviour so that they can implement improved retail management changes. These changes include product mix, communication and sales strategies. Details of the full range of management benefits of the findings are available in Chapter Six of this study.
Declaration of Originality

I declare that my thesis entitled Consumer Decision Process and Dried Sea Products: Insights from Canton and Hong Kong for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) of the University of Surrey, embodies the results of an original research programme undertaken by me. I have included specific references to any other work, by me or other sources, whether published or not.

Signature: Chan Ying-kwok

Ying-Kwok CHAN

Date: 15 September 2009
Table of Contents

Abstract........................................................................................................... i
Declaration of Originality ........................................................................ iii
Table of Contents....................................................................................... iv
List of Tables ............................................................................................... vii
List of Figures ............................................................................................... viii
Acknowledgements..................................................................................... ix
Chapter One .................................................................................................1
  Introduction.................................................................................................1
Chapter Two ..................................................................................................8
  Literature Review .......................................................................................8
  1. Introduction.............................................................................................8
  2. Dried Sea Products................................................................................11
  3. Decision making theory and consumer decision process model ..........20
     3.1 A Consumer Decision Making Model ...........................................28
  4. Information Search ..............................................................................34
  5. Pre-purchase evaluation of alternatives ........................................... 40
  6. Culture .................................................................................................46
  7. Social Class ...........................................................................................49
  8. Involvement .........................................................................................53
  9. Situations .............................................................................................62
 10. Shopping Orientations .........................................................................66
 11. In-store Retailing ..................................................................................69
 12. Consumer Resources..........................................................................74
 13. Summary...............................................................................................76
Chapter Three .............................................................................................77
  Methodology ..............................................................................................77
  1. Introduction...........................................................................................77
  2. Research Philosophy........................................................................... 77
     i) The reasons for selecting a mixed methods approach in this study .......80
     ii) Qualitative Method........................................................................ 83
     iii) Quantitative Method ......................................................................83
     iv) Survey Strategy ...............................................................................84
  3. Methodology ..........................................................................................84
     A) Qualitative Research ........................................................................84
        i) Interview.......................................................................................85
        ii) In-depth Interview .....................................................................88
        iii) Focus Group ............................................................................90
        iv) Content Analysis .......................................................................97
     B) Quantitative Research .....................................................................100
        i) Hypothesis .................................................................................100
        ii) Survey Method ..........................................................................101
        iii) Questionnaire ...........................................................................104
        iv) Measurement and Scaling Methods ........................................105
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Four</th>
<th>Qualitative Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In-depth interview</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Dried sea products attributes</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intended uses of dried sea products</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Consumer value</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Discussion</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Focus Group</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Findings</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Hypotheses</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Summary</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Five</td>
<td>Pilot Test and Data Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pilot Study</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Purpose of pilot study</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Survey questionnaire</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Data Analysis</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) Results</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) Description of Respondents</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) Dried Sea Products Shopping Characteristics</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) Product Involvement</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v) Statistical Procedures to be utilized</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi) Shopping Orientation</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii) Information Source Influence</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii) Situational Influences</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ix) Hypothesis Testing</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Summary</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter Six
Conclusion
A) Introduction
B) Final summary
Reflective Diary
References
Appendix I
List of Tables

Table 2.1 Rational to review key areas in the literature ...................................9
Table 3.1: The Flow of Questions for Focus Group Interview .......................95
Table 3.2: The Questions to be Asked in the Focus Group Interview............ 95
Table 5.1: Profile of Respondents .................................................................159
Table 5.2: Frequency and Percentage of Searching Dried Sea Products
Information ..................................................................................................161
Table 5.3: Shopping Orientation of Dried Sea Products ..............................161
Table 5.4: Principal Component Analysis of Shopping Orientation Scale... 168
Table 5.5: Principal Component Analysis of Information Source Influences
..............................................................................................................170
Table 5.6: Test for Normality of Distribution of Scores of Total Involvement
..............................................................................................................173
Table 5.6-1: Mann-Whitney U Test for males and females .......................174
Table 5.7: Chi-square analysis (x^2) for the Types of Product Information
between High and Low Product Involvement Groups.............................176
Table 5.8: Correlation between Shopping Orientation Factors and Information
Search Effort ..............................................................................................178
Table 5.9: Correlations between Information Source Influence Factors and
..............................................................................................................180
Table 5.10 Chi-square Analysis (x^2) for Purchase in the Same Store between
High and Low Involvement Groups ......................................................182
Table 5.11 Chi-square Analysis (x^2) for Purchase in Same Store in Future
between High and Low Product Involvement .......................................182
Table 5.12 Summary of Results of Hypotheses Testing..............................185
Table 6.1: Mean Scores of Involvement Group on Information Search Effort
..............................................................................................................189
Table 6.2: Count of Involvement Group that Look for Product Information
..............................................................................................................190
Table 6.3: Mean Scores of Involvement Group on Shopping Orientation
Factors .......................................................................................................190
Table 6.4: Mean Scores of Involvement Group on Information Source
Influence .................................................................................................190
Table 6.5: Mean Scores of Involvement Group on Situational Influence
Factors .......................................................................................................191
Table 6.6: Count of Involvement Group on Willingness to Purchase in Same
Old Store .................................................................................................191
Table 6.7: Count of Involvement Group on Likelihood of Future Purchase in
the Same Old Store ................................................................................192
Table 6.7-1: Characteristics of High Product Involvement Consumers ........192
Table 6.8: Correlation between Shopping Orientation Factors and Information
Search Effort ..............................................................................................193
Table 6.9: Correlation between Information Source Influence Factors and
List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Engel, Blackwell and Miniard's Consumer Decision Process Model (1986) .................................................................................................................. 5
Figure 2.1: A Model of Consumer Decision Making Process in Shopping Dried Sea Products ............................................................................................... 33
Figure 3.1: Flowchart Showing the Stages of Sequential Mixed Method Approach ........................................................................................................ 82
Figure 3.2: Steps of Conducting a Focus Group ............................................. 92
Figure 3.3: Examples to be Asked in the Questionnaire ............................... 110
Figure 4.1: The Relationships among Dried Sea Product Attributes, Consumption Values and Intended Uses ................................................................. 131
Figure 4.2: Mindmap Showing Important Elements Mentioned in the Decision Making of Dried Sea Products Purchase ...................................................... 147
Figure 4.3: Consumer Decision Making Model in Dried Sea Products ....... 153
Figure 5.1: The Respondents' Summed Scores of Product Involvement ....... 163
Figure 6.1: Revised Model of Consumer Decision Making Process in Shopping for Dried Sea Products ............................................................................... 197
Figure 7.1: Kolb's Learning Cycle .................................................................... 211
Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of the following people for their help in the preparation of this thesis. First, I had the great fortune to study under the supervision of Professor D. Gilbert. I am very grateful for his guidance and encouragement. His profound knowledge of research skills provided me with the opportunity to broaden my knowledge and to make significant progress. I would also like to make lifelong progress after this. I would additionally like to express my gratitude to my other supervisor Dr. Sue Halliday. She was able to address my weaknesses and offer helpful suggestions on how to overcome these obstacles.

I would like to thank my parents for their enthusiasm. Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my dearest wife, Mei-fun Yam, for her constant love, support and patience, which is something I will always cherish.
Chapter One

Introduction

The dried sea products market has experienced tremendous growth in the past few years. The reasons for such growth are argued to be due to more Chinese becoming wealthy and that they are enthusiastic about purchasing dried sea products (Common and Dong, 1998).

Dried sea products are one of the most popular types of food. Dried sea products are normally used for self-consumption, while sometimes they are also used as a kind of greeting gift or as thoughtful gifts for medical patients (Sun, 2003). Chinese people prefer them because dried sea products can supplement the ordinary food. Apart from being full of flavour, many people believe that dried sea products can increase vitality and strengthen the body's natural functions and health. Furthermore, consuming dried sea products can show a person's social status and achievement (Yau et al., 1999).

During recent years, the economy in China has been growing rapidly. Its gross national income in Year 2002 and Year 2006 were ¥ 1,879,808 million and ¥ 3,004,674 million respectively. (Euromonitor, 2008). These figures illustrate that both China's national income and individual disposable income are rising tremendously. Certainly, this growing market can attract dried sea products merchants to fight for a greater market share and provide for higher profit.

Nowadays, the retail environment is gradually being transformed from the traditional market place into a cyber-market place, because most traditional retailers have created their own websites to catch, or hold their new electronic commerce customers. The percentage of consumers that have purchased products and services on the Internet is increasing significantly.

Moreover, the Internet is rapidly substituting for, or complementing traditional channels, as consumers can easily access the Internet for searching, browsing and shopping for goods. They can search or shop anytime via the Internet (Allen and Fjermerstad, 2001).
In fact some researchers have assumed that the future of the retail market depends on the Internet (Pastore, 2001).

In this study, an in-depth interview was conducted with a prominent dried sea products retailer. It was revealed that several years ago some dried sea products retailers predicted that Internet sales would become an important channel in the retail industry. Some retailers created their own websites to attract e-commerce customers. However, this method was not successful. While the Internet market channels for other products were growing, very few customers were willing to buy dried sea products through the Internet. It is due to the fact that the price of the dried sea products is affected by the products’ quality, size, appearance and the degree of dryness. Since some of the dried sea products are very expensive, a wrong purchase will lead to heavy financial loss. Therefore, the potential buyers have to evaluate the products at the point of sale. Thus, traditional retail stores still remain the only sales channel for dried sea products and they are an important location for sales to take place.

Apart from dried sea products, Chinese consumers also prefer to buy other luxury products. They include watches, jewellery, gold ornaments and expensive electronic appliances. With a fixed amount of disposable income, dried sea products retailers have to attract those Chinese consumers to spend more on their products. Therefore, knowing their consuming behaviour is certainly of great advantages in developing effective marketing strategies.

**Purpose of the study**

It is argued previously that the dried sea products retailers want their consumers to consume more dried sea products. Therefore, consumers’ decisions to purchase, or not, become important. If consumers purchase, the business can gain revenue or at least get greater marketing share. It means that the consumers’ motives and actions determine the economic viability of the firm.

There is a large body of related work to explain consumer behaviour towards food in general (Sparks and Shepherd, 1992; Conner and Sparks, 1996). Ajzen (1985) proposes
three determinants of behavioural intention: attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control.

Conner and Armitage (1998) identified habit as one determinant of behavioural intention. Self-identity is considered another predictor variable (Biddle et al., 1987). In addition, acculturation is believed to have a big influence on food behaviour (Lion and Contents, 2001).

Some studies have applied the Theory of Planned Behaviour to food related behaviour (Sparks and Shepherd, 1992; Bissonette et al., 2001). Bonne et al. (2007) have used the theory of planned behaviour to investigate the determinants of Halal meat consumption within a Muslim migration population. It is found that a positive personal attitude, the influence of peers and the perceived control are the main determinants in Halal meat consumption. But the predictive power of the classic theory of planned behaviour is limited.

As far as consumer behaviour and Chinese food are concerned, there are a series of studies examining the determinants of choice of food (Wai-sum, S. and Chan, P. 1997; Cormone et al., 1998; Suk-ching and Fangfang, T., 2006).

Although the above work are all related to the consumer behaviour and food, including Chinese food, there are no dried sea products consumer decision process studies. To bridge this gap, this study focuses on the consumer decision process in dried sea products, the study area is Canton, which includes Hong Kong.

In this research, the Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (EBM) Consumer Decision Process Model (1993) is chosen as the basis of this study. It is the most widely recognised consumer behaviour model. The model includes five basic decision process stages. They are: (1) problem recognition, (2) information search, (3) evaluation, (4) purchase and (5) outcome (Figure 1.1).

Below shows the reasons for choosing Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (EBM) Consumer Decision Process Model (1993):
i) Most existing consumer decision process models have their own peculiar deficiencies (See comments on consumer decision making models in literature review).

ii) EBM Consumer Decision Process Model is widely accepted as logical and manageable. The 5-stage process acts as backbone and some flesh is added on it in order to develop a consumer decision process model on dried sea products trade.

iii) Many consumer behaviour models are highly 'academic'. Zeithaml's model is regarded as 'reasonable and intuitive' (Chan and Widlt, 1994). However, to decide if a product should be purchased, the customer has to go through a lengthy abstract process to arrive its perceived value for making decision. As most dried sea products retailers are practical, they will accept recommendations only if they understand the stories behind. Therefore, an understandable model will definitely arouse their interests as the constructs as well as the process are more concrete. Also, the EBM model is developed from two of the author's earlier model - Engel, Kollat and Blackwell (EKB) of 1968 which formed the basis a great deal of consumer behaviour research. (Engel, Kollat and Blackwell, 1973). This model is a classic consumer model for retail purchase, and as such was favoured for this research study. The EKB model itself was constructed...to advance generalizations and propositions from the evidence' and 'to assess practical implications'. (Engel, Kollat and Blackwell, 1973).

This study focused on the concept of product involvement in understanding consumer behaviour. Product involvement is defined as 'the degree of personal relevance, interest and/or subjective importance of the product category or purchase decision’ (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Consumers’ product involvement with a particular product category has yielded rich research on product choice behaviours for retail market strategy (Warrington and Shim, 2000). Therefore, it is worthwhile to include product involvement in studying dried sea products consumer decision process behaviour.
Nearly all the dried sea products sales are based upon the place of distribution in a retail store setting. Therefore, it is important to know the consumers' shopping behaviours in such stores. The concept of shopping orientation has been used to understand consumers' shopping behaviours in retailing and marketing (Darden and Howell, 1987). It is beneficial to include this concept in the study of dried sea products consumer decision process. Shopping orientation is defined as 'a shopper's style that places particular emphasis on certain activities (Hawkins, Best and Coney, 1989).

The emphasis on this study is based on the impact of product involvement. It will:
1) classify consumers based on the level of product involvement, 
2) investigate the purchasing decisions of high and low individual groups, and,
3) investigate other significant factors (based on analysis of qualitative method) having impact on the dried sea products consumer decision making process.

By having a deep understanding of the consumer decision process in dried sea products, the store retailers can develop the necessary marketing strategies to target their customers in order to increase sales and maintain market share.
This study is also of particular importance in the academic world. Firstly, it can verify the applicability of the EBM consumer decision process model in the dried sea products trade. Secondly, it gives valuable contemporary knowledge on Chinese consumer decision process behaviour. Based on this study, it contributes some useful dimensions to conduct other research in order to obtain a clear picture of Chinese consumer behaviours.

Loyalty is viewed as a behavioural concept (Assael, 1998). It is evidenced by the purchase of a particular brand over a period repeatedly as a behavioural measure. Although there are research studies on loyalty (Zaichousky, 1985; Byoungho and Koh, 1999; Warrington and Shim, 2000), this study does not include it as part of the research design. This is because it appears from the studies that loyalty leads the consumer to minimize the effort in searching and evaluation, the effect is to distort the more normal decision making process in Hong Kong of visiting the area for dried fish purchases. Such distortion will affect the researcher to understand the main decision making process and to improve the way consumers may purchase. The researcher has a shop in a general area where many shops offer dried fish products.

Objectives of the study

1. To provide insight into the consumer decision process for dried sea products. It does this by examining the EBM consumer decision model, extract relevant factors, and integrate them with other important components into a proposed consumer decision process model for dried sea products.

2. To validate, or otherwise, the final proposed model by analysing deductively by hypothesis and using descriptive statistics and other statistical techniques.

3. To outline marketing strategies in order to improve sales and satisfy the dried sea product consumers.

4. To investigate the role of the level of product involvement on consumer decision processes in the purchase of dried sea products.
5. The researcher is the owner of a dried sea products retail store. He has many years of experience in that trade. To investigate the consumer decision process in purchasing dried sea products will help him to synthesize his intrinsic practical experience and new acquired theoretical knowledge which result in the formation of a consumer decision making model in the purchase of dried sea products. The findings of the study can help him to allocate the resources better. It means that added values can be provided to the researcher's own dried sea product business through the content of this thesis.

Outline of the study

This thesis is outlined as follows: Chapter One presents an overview of the issues relating to Chinese consumer decision process in dried sea products, the current Chinese economic environment and the reasons this study was initiated. Chapter Two provides a thorough examination of the literature associated with dried sea products in Canton and Hong Kong, the theories concerning the consumer decision process model and their criticisms. Chapter Three describes the methodology of this study, it is concerned with the justification of choosing an appropriate approach to collect, analyze and interpret data under investigation. It then discusses the data collection method and data analysis method for qualitative data and survey data. Chapter Four describes the qualitative research in this study. How the in-depth interview and focus groups added to the research are concluded. The outcome is the generation of important components relating to the consumer decision making process related to dried sea products. Based on these components, a consumer decision model in dried sea products is developed and hence hypotheses can be deduced from this model. Chapter Five presents the survey method, it includes a pilot study, descriptive statistics, factor analysis and the analysis of hypotheses. Chapter Six concludes the study and provides a discussion of the significance to academicians and dried sea products retailers, limitations and recommendation for further study.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

1. Introduction

Consumer behaviour is a relatively new subject in marketing. A thorough examination of the literature cannot locate any study concerned with the consumer decision process of dried sea products in Canton and Hong Kong, but such review can contribute some useful dimensions to the study. Therefore, it is worthwhile to generate a theory to bridge the gap in consumer decision process knowledge. The following presents an extensive review of literature associated with dried sea products in Canton and Hong Kong, the theories concerned with consumer decision process model and their criticisms. As information search and pre-purchase evaluations of alternatives are crucial in selecting dried sea products, it is beneficial to have a deeper understanding of this. Traditionally, dried sea products are essential components of formal banquets, a detailed review of their literature is justified. The price of dried sea products ranges from a few dollars to a thousand dollars per unit. It is therefore apparent that the constructs of involvement and situations play a significant part in the purchase decision and they merit to be studied in detail. Unlike a wide variety of goods, their transactions can be completed via telephone, Internet or mail, etc. However, nearly all transactions of dried sea products take place in shops. Therefore, those factors including shopping orientations, in-store retailing and store atmospheres that potentially influence consumers to make purchase decisions in dried sea product shops are reviewed. Apart from money, consumers have to spend time on an information search in order to purchase dried sea products. A review on these consumer resources can help to realise how consumers allocate their consumer resources in information search.

This thesis utilizes the different literatures in order to underpin the overall approach to the study of decision processes for dried sea products. As such the literature is not a conventional assessment of all other historical approaches to the models and decision making aspects of consumer behaviour. The literature is covered in a way that provides
an underpinning to the further development of insight into the specific aspects of
decision making in the area of dried sea products.

The purpose of this thesis is to describe the consumer decision process in dried sea
products in Canton and Hong Kong. The complexity of consumer behaviour factors are
considered to influence the consumer's decision process. The literature review has been
compiled to help the researcher to conduct an exploratory study which is expected to
generate a theory which is concerned with the consumer decision making process in
dried sea products. It also assists to design tests in quantitative research. This chapter
reviews literature on dried sea products, consumer decision process models, information
search, pre-purchase evaluation of alternatives, culture, social class, involvement,
situation, shopping orientation, in-store retailing and consumer resources. Based on the
literature, appropriate methodology will be designed.

In this chapter, section 1 covers the subject matter of dried sea products. Sections 2-4
give a comprehensive discussion of the consumer decision process. Sections 5-11 give
an insight of important concepts which underpin the development of consumer decision
process model for dried sea products.

The rationale to review the key areas in the literature is shown in the following table
2.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key areas</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dried Sea Products</td>
<td>They are the subject matter of the thesis, a deep understanding of them can explain why they are valuable and demanded by the dried sea products consumers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making Model</td>
<td>It discusses the development of decision making theory, some modern consumer decision process models and their comments. It further justify why the Engel, Blackwell and Miniard's Consumer Decision Process Model (1993) is chosen, and its general idea is explained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Search</td>
<td>The mode of information search is unique for each particular kind of product. A thorough understanding of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Purchase Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Dried sea products are rather expensive. A deep understanding of pre-purchase evaluation can help to explore how their consumer evaluating the products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture</strong></td>
<td>Dried sea products have been the Chinese favourite for centuries. Culture certainly plays a very important part in influencing those consumers' behaviour particularly beliefs, values and customs. Understanding culture can explain how it affects the uses and values of dried sea products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Class</strong></td>
<td>Some dried sea products are very expensive. An understanding of social class can explore how it plays a role in the decision making process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involvement</strong></td>
<td>The level of involvement can affect the consumer behaviour. As it has marketing significance. It is necessary to known what is its nature and how it is measured.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situations</strong></td>
<td>Pre-purchase evaluation is critical in making purchase decision. Situation can affect the evaluation process and it merits to have a deeper insight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shopping Orientation</strong></td>
<td>All purchase of dried sea products are carried out in a store, it is naturally to include shopping orientation in the literature review for studying different shopping approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In-store retailing</strong></td>
<td>As all purchase happens in a store. How the store performs and what the store image is perceived by the consumers provide a context in the purchase decision making naturally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consumer Resources</strong></td>
<td>In dried sea products purchase, consumers need to spend money, time and attention. Knowing the customer resources well can help the marketers design relevant marketing strategies in dried sea products purchase.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Dried Sea Products

As the most populous nation in the world, with steadily rising income level, and continuing economic growth, China has become the most attractive market to businesses (Lauffs and Tan, 2002). Because the domestic supply cannot satisfy the increasing demand, more and more of the dried sea products have to be exported to China from different parts of the world. (Saulnier, 1996).

In Hong Kong, dried sea products consumption is very high. These products have been a traditional part of the population’s diet for thousands of years. Although this trade is not a major economic concern, it does play a significant part in influencing the citizens’ quality of lives.

The most popular dried sea products are shark fins, fish bladders, scallops, shrimps, squids, sea cucumbers and abalones. Most of them have to go through the process such as washed and sun dried before they are sold. Within these products, abalones are sold in whole or thinly sliced while dried mushrooms, although not belonging to sea products in nature, are classified in dried sea products categories.

There are a lot of fish products, the Chinese consumers are not interested in paying attention to all of them. What they are really interested in are those expensive dried sea products such as shark fins, fish bladders, sea cucumbers and abalone. Having a detailed understanding of these four products is necessary for this research design.

The following section describes the dried sea products market, the consumption trend, the source of dried sea products, the nature of main dried sea products and their uses.

The dried sea products market in China

Dried sea products are expensive and the demand is very high in China. In order to explore why it is so popular, it is necessary to have a deep understanding of China. The following will describe its geography, climate, demography, ethnic, religions, family and economy.
China:

China is home to one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. Its gross domestic product (GDP) exceeded $7 trillion in 2007 (CIA, 2008). Close to 1 billion dollars worth of Chinese-made goods and services are exported to other countries each year. In fact, China is the second-largest exporter in the world and the United States is the largest. China’s strong export income is helping its economy grow. At home, China also has a massive market of more than 1.3 billion consumers. Since the introduction of economic reforms in 1978, the Chinese economy has grown at an average rate of 9 percent.

Before the economic reform period, the state and rural collective farms controlled purchasing and marketing activities of fisheries products based on planned allocation and supply. Prices for fishery products were set by the state at artificially low levels with little distinction between high and low-valued products. No enterprise was given the right to import and export fish products and consequently the volume of supply was low and there were little choices for the types of fish products (Conover and Dong, 1998).

Following the termination of the state monopoly in 1985, enterprises had more control over the sales of their fisheries products. This rapid development of the industry allowed private enterprises to flourish. Dried sea products were reintroduced to China and the Chinese began to enjoy the previous important traditional dried sea products. However, their quality was poor, the choices were few, and the prices were high. In order to buy high-quality dried sea products, they had to visit the dried sea products centre in Hong Kong.

In recent years, marketers have been anxious to satisfy China’s rapidly expanding wealthy customers’ appetite for consumer goods. In 2004, the wealthiest 20 percent were from urban Chinese households (about 80 million people) and this constitutes a highly attractive market. The annual household income of these affluent urban Chinese consumers ranged from US$3,200 to US$9,500. On first glance, this does not seem like much yet such a conclusion can be a real error (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). With
small families and housing and other costs subsidized by the government, an urban Chinese family is able to have a relatively good lifestyle on a relatively small income. Because those households have a fairly large amount of a family’s income as discretionary income, in other words, those Chinese who prefer dried sea products can afford to buy high quality goods in Hong Kong.

The dried sea products market in Hong Kong

Although Britain ruled Hong Kong up to 1997, the latter was in fact a part of China in terms of culture and races. The Hong Kong population is 6,980,412 (CIA, 2007), 98% are Chinese, while the area of Hong Kong is 400 square miles. For more than 125 years, it has been the centre for trade with Mainland China. However, Hong Kong is now a modern, international financial and trade centre with a highly educated workforce. Hong Kong is the main gateway for trade in China whereby many western merchants rely on Hong Kong’s experience and strong contacts with the mainland. Actually, it is Hong Kong’s ability to serve as a conduit of goods to the Mainland China hinterland that allows it to dominate this dried sea products market.

In 1999, the Hong Kong import in quantity of unprocessed shark fin was 5,842 metric tonnes, the Hong Kong import quantity of abalone with shell was 1,395 metric tonnes and the Hong Kong import quantity of dried salted sea cucumber was 3,616 metric tonnes (FAO, 2001)

Hong Kong Dried Sea Products Centre

The dried sea products centre is located in Hong Kong at Sai Ying Poon. The alternative name is Western District. Prior to reclamation, sea freight to the Victoria Harbour waterfront was the method for delivering goods. After reclamation, merchants continued to trade in this area, it is characterised by different types of goods vehicles. In fact, these dealers mainly sell dried sea products (Lam, 1990). At Sai Ying Poon, the main dried sea products centre includes Des Voeux Road West, Bonham Strand West, Eastern Street, several small streets and alleys that bisect these roads. The dried sea products retailers aim at selling dried sea products, they also offer a broad range of products to their customers. As the sale of dried sea products is seasonal, this additional
offer can smooth the selling activities. These products mainly are dried shrimps, dried squid, dried oysters, dried mushrooms, bird’s nest and ginseng.

The retail stores located here are characterised by heavy competition and limited shelf space.

Consumption Trend

China is a collection of regional markets with vast cultural differences and varying income level. Seafood consumption is primarily concentrated in the coastal areas.

Generally speaking, coastal communities used to be the only consumers to eat fish regularly. As the income levels throughout China increase it is linked to seafood consumption slowly rising farther inland. As Chinese consumers demand specific choices for their money, leading traders import more seafood to satisfy the market. Fish products then become more affordable and available in a greater variety than ever before (Conover and Dong, 1998). Therefore, it is seen that both coastal and inland communities began to eat dry fish products as they gained the ability to afford to do so.

In Hong Kong, preferences are now leaning toward more convenient foods that require less preparation time. But Hong Kong citizens are still willing to spend more time for cooking if the menu is related to dried sea products. Interestingly it is generally believed that most companies judge that the demand for dried sea products is increasing, especially in the high end (Conover and Dong, 1998b).

Selected dried sea products

Dried sea products have a long, important history in China. In the broad sense, they come from a variety of products and product forms. They include all types of fish, shrimps, mussels, clams, abalone, scallops etc. In the specific meaning, dried sea products include shark fin, sea cucumber, abalone and fish bladder only. These four types are sufficiently common and are widely recognised by public nowadays. They make up most of the value of the dried sea products market. They are regarded by most as a gourmet dried seafood that are believed to strengthen the body as a whole (Choi,
2007). The following sections introduce general product characteristics, each product in terms of its history of use, its position characteristics in the trade.

A) General dried sea products characteristics

Shark fins, fish bladders and sea cucumbers are washed, sun dried and sold whole. Abalone is sold whole or thinly sliced. The quality of dried sea products is judged by the smell, taste, texture and weight. Some products such as shark fins and sea cucumbers have no smell or taste, but most products have a strong distinct smell and taste that allow the buyers to judge their freshness and estimate remaining shelf life. Products that do not have a distinct taste such as shark fins acquire the taste of other ingredients added to the products. Texture and weight usually indicate the amount of moisture in the products. If the product is heavier than it should be, it probably has too much moisture, predisposing it to rapid spoilage. Each type of dried sea products has its own unique texture, an experienced person can judge the quality of dried sea products by examining the texture (Conover and Dong, 1998a). The amount of moisture in the dried sea products is an important quality consideration. The less moisture, the better the product.

In most dried sea products, the colour of the products allows the experienced eyes to judge its quality. Usually, the lighter the colour the product is, the higher the quality. In addition, the size of the product and uniformity of size will dictate the price. The larger the size the product is, the higher the price.

Unlike other products sold in department stores, most dried sea products are sold in bulk and require no packaging. A typical retail store will display the products in burlap bags, baskets, trays or hanging. (Conover and Dong, 1998a)

Nowadays, because of aggressive promotion, consumers are becoming very brand conscious, attracted by packaging, price and quality.
B) Traditional uses of dried sea products

Different parts of China have their own particular cuisine. They varied from place to
place, and they reflect seasonal availability. Hom (2005) indicates that in the south
western part of China, Yunnan, pork is eaten regularly. Vegetables and bean curd
dominate the ordinary family table, simply because those inhabitants enjoy the
freshness of seasonal vegetables. Fish is eaten occasionally, as it is expensive and
reserved for special occasions (Hom, 2005).

The central part of China, Sichuan, is seen to be the home of the fabled hot and spicy
cuisine. The Sichuanise usually eat mostly rice and vegetables with very little meat
(Hom, 2005).

Guangzhou is situated in southern China. Its cuisine combines quality, variety and a
nutritional effectiveness that allows it to sustain more people per acre than many other
areas. The Cantonese cooks are thought excellent as they insist on the freshest and
highest quality ingredients. Cantonese apprentice chefs must learn to ‘hear’ when the
shellfish, vegetables, or food is perfectly cooked. (Hom, 2005).

1) Diet

The Chinese diet is different from the Western diet in many areas. The western diet
focuses on weight loss. The Chinese diet also treats illness apart from weight loss.
The Western diet focuses on vitamin, carbohydrate and proteins. Chinese diet focuses
on flavours energies and restoring body balance (Lin, 1986).

A typical home-style Chinese meal will include 4-5 courses. Holiday times are often
marked by an endless preparation of elaborate dishes. Dried sea products have long
been a main staple in the Chinese diet, both for their cooking and medicinal uses.
Lower valued products such as fish, shrimps are commonly used in everyday cooking,
while high valued dried sea products are common fare during the holidays and for
medicinal uses (Conover and Ding, 1998a).
Every Chinese family has its own unique, favourite ways to prepare dried sea products. The popular ways include:

i) Reconstituted dried sea products stir-fried with vegetables.

ii) Dried sea products are used to make soup stock or combined with fresh meat or fish and vegetables as a main ingredient in soups. (Conover and Ding, 1998a)

2) Medicinal

According to Chinese medicine, all things must be kept in harmony with the natural order of life. This harmony, or balance, is what is known as yin and yang. Yin is cool and watery. It represents the moon, air and water. Yang is hot and heavy. It represents earth and sun. Yin and yang exist in all things, living or non-living, in various proportions that are subject to constant change. Certain types of food are categorised into groups of varying degrees of ‘cold’ and ‘hot’. In relation to the body, Tao is kept in balance through proper diet, exercise and life style. To ensure a balanced diet the body needs equal amounts of each group.

Dried sea products are the food which can help the body to be kept in a balanced state (Conover and Ding, 1998a).

C) Selected Dried Sea Products

In China, dried sea products have special uses. A sound knowledge of Chinese food culture is necessary to understand why dried sea products are so important.

All Chinese regard food as a very important thing in their daily life. They like fresh food especially. In the markets, Chinese prefer to buy fresh vegetables, fresh meats and swimming fish (Lin, 2000). Instead of paying attention to nutrition content, Chinese people often select food based on its aroma, flavour, texture, and colour. Chinese usually serve desserts after dinner.
When the Chinese feel that they are weak, they need to get some special ingredients from a particular kind of food (gin bou). Most Chinese believe that dried seafood contain such special ingredients which can restore their health (Lin, 2000).

1) Shark fins

Shark fins soup is very popular in Chinese society, around 90% of Chinese people have enjoyed them at least once every year (Ng, 2000). Consumers often buy shark fins in winter. Therefore, merchants have to purchase shark fins in slack season before the peak season arrives. Shark fins are mainly come from Japan, South Asia and Spain. Hong Kong is the main distribution centre of raw shark fins and China is the main processing centre (Clarke, 2002).

2) Abalone

Abalone was a traditional cuisine in coastal China. Emperor Ling Bang (220 A.D.) is the one who first introduced this cuisine. Abalone is believed to restore health and improve eyesight. The main exporting countries are Japan, South Africa, Mexico and Australia (Oakes and Porte, 1996). Japanese abalone is the dearest one because of highest quality. Because of over exploitation, limited harvests are imposed (Huang, 1998). Hong Kong is the main distribution centre of abalone in the world. The price of abalone is affected by the source countries. It ranged from HK$400 to HK$20,000 per catty. As it is difficult to cook dried abalone canned abalone has become very popular.

3) Dried sea cucumber

It is the dried body wall of sea cucumbers. The alternative names are hoi sam, heche-de-mer and hai chen. The first historical account of the dried sea cucumbers trade back from 1,000 years ago. In the 18th century, New Caledonia and Papua New Guinea began to export dried sea cucumbers to China. Before the products are exported to China, there are several steps involved in preparing dried sea cucumbers for shipment, the process includes repeated soaking, washing and boiling before drying. (Jenkins and Mullileen, 1999). Hong Kong is the largest centre for dried sea cucumbers. It controls 80% of global supply. In 1980s, only lower value products were re-exported to China.
Currently, all range of dried sea cucumbers are evenly re-exported to China as its economy expands. (Tankins and Mulliben, 1999).

The value of dried sea cucumbers is affected by the supply, the country of origin, the technique of processing and the degree of dryness. In terms of price, the products of Japan and Australia are dearer than Indonesia and the Philippines (Clarke, 2002).

Sea cucumbers have long been prized for their comforting and healing powers. For medicinal purposes, it is generally used in the form of a tonic. It is especially known for treating kidney problems and strengthening one’s vital energy. Other common uses include treatment to increase energy, lower blood pressure, impotence, night time emissions and related problems, and to regulate the bladder and bowels. Many Chinese believe the medicinal use of dried sea cucumbers can also stop the growth and spreading of cancer cells in the body (Conover and Dong, 1998a).

4) Dried fish bladder

The alternate names of dried fish bladder are ‘fish glue’ and ‘yu du’. The earliest cuisine dated as earliest as in the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.).

Traditionally, dried fish bladders are consumed in south China only. They are believed to have medicinal use whereby they can restore the health, strengthen one’s muscles, blood vessels and kidneys. Usually, dried fish bladders are boiled with chicken. When particular herbs are added, they can create specific effects that can cure certain kind of illnesses (Conover and Dong, 1998a). Recently, people living in north China became aware of these medicinal uses and the demand led to the retail price of dried fish bladder increasing a lot.

The supply chain of dried fish bladders is the same as that of shark fins, dried abalone and dried sea cucumbers. As the species of Bangladesh are very valuable, Hong Kong merchants have to go there to supervise the initial processing work (Clarke, 2002).

Consumers prefer male fish bladders, as they believe these bladders have more therapeutic value. For female fish bladders, they are usually fried to produce a
ready-prepared form. Usually, the larger the size of the dried fish bladder, the more valuable they are. The retail price of dried fish bladders ranged from as low as HK$400 per catty up to HK$100,000 per catty.

3. Decision making theory and consumer decision process model

2.1 Decision making theory

This theory borrows concepts from psychology, and economics and marketing.

Distinguished psychologists such as Watson and Pavlov (Howes, 1990) illustrate that previous learning and conditioning can affect future behaviours of animals. Based on this idea, it is expected that buyers will make purchase decisions based on past transactional experiences. This is included in recent models reproduced in this thesis. In addition, Cognitive psychology has been introduced to decision making in 1879 by Windt, it was later discarded and re-introduced in the 1930-40’s by Lewin (Anderson, 1985). Cognitive psychology describes that decision making is based on a process of thinking, reasoning and information processing and then attitude is formed.

Another important aspect of behaviour is the influence of attitude. Rosenberg (1956) assumes that objects are used to help decision makers to achieve their goals and the magnitude of attitudes depends on the extent of object to achieve the goal.

Katz’s Functional Theory of Attitude (1960) claims that attitude is affected by utilitarian, value experience, knowledge obtained and ego defensive. Fishbein (1963) states that attitude is the total of cognitive beliefs of a product weighted by the evaluation of outcomes. This attitude is further affected by social norms. Given the importance of any attitude formed is it will affect behavioural intentions.

Based on the above theory, four attitudinal steps are developed (Lavidge and Stainer, 1961). These series of dimensions are cognition (thinking), affect (feeling), conation (intention to act) and finally action.
Krugman (1965), Sheth and Mittal (2004) believe that involvement can affect purchase decision. When the buyer's involvement is high, more effort is needed to process the decision making.

In economics, an economic individual will make a decision based on perfect information, sufficient energy and time. That decision maker aims to maximize his/her benefits which include utility, pleasure and satisfaction (Baumol and Blinder, 1985).

Expected Utility Theory (Plous, 1993) states that if different alternatives give rise to different outcomes, they will be weighted by their probabilities and the highest one is chosen. This theory is later modified by Subjective Expected Utility Theory which include elements which cannot be objective. For example, the choice of brand.

In reality, to maximize utility is impossible. Simon (1955) introduced the concept of bounded rationality. A decision maker has to aim at satisfaction because of incomplete information, insufficient effort and time. A decision is made once an alternative exceeds another alternative.

Kahneman and Tversky (1979) introduced Prospect Theory. The concept of framing is introduced with a very good example as the internal reference price. The price is set based on how information on alternatives is presented. In this theory, losses are overvalued (Thaler, 1980). The concept of utility is replaced by the concept of value. Value is the total of the elements gain, utility, losses and costs.

In marketing, the evolution of decision making theory is illustrated by different schools of thought. In Commodity school of marketing in 1920s cited by Branchik (2005) classifies products into different categories based on buyer decision processes.

In the Institutional school of thought of the 1930s there is an emphasis on store location based on different types of buyers. The Systems school differentiate their products to different buyer market segments.

Engel, Blackwell and Miniard's Consumer Decision Making Model (1993) incorporates much of the above and which focuses on a series of phases in a decision making process.
The element of involvement is introduced in the model. This model is the theme of this study as it has greater marketing significance in consumer behaviour.

Decision making theories have been widely applied in many disciplines including economics, marketing, medicine and management. Many consumer decision making models have been proposed. One of the more frequently referred to and well-known models is Engel, Blackwell and Miniard’s Consumer Decision Process Model (1993) (Butler and Peppard, 1998; Field 2000; Livette 2006; McCaughey and Mason, 1998; Branchik, 2005; Teng and Laroche, 2007; Lin and Cheng, 2006; Seo 2005).

Dewey (1933) first suggested that decision making takes place step by step. Witte (1972) supports that such step by step decision making process is effective and regards it as a phase theorem.

Simon (1960) expands this theory to form a widely accepted decision-making model which includes satisfying concept and bounded rationality concept. Bounded rationality means that economic rationality is confined by different constraints.

Based on this phase theorem, many decision making models are formed (Lipshitz and Bar-Ilan (1996). The phases ranged from two to eight. Maier (1964) divides it into two phases, it includes idea getting and idea evaluation. Bransford and Stein (1984) divides it into four phases, it includes problem identification, problem definition, evaluation of solutions and action. Pounds (1969) divides it into eight phases. It includes selecting a model, compare the model to reality, identify their differences, select a difference, consider the solutions, evaluate such solutions, choose a solution, and implement it.

Among such models, the most popular model is the one proposed by Simon (1960). This model divides the phases into three, these include intelligence, design and choice. These phases are in sequence and its validity is supported by Lipshiz and Bar Ilan (1996). The intelligence phase includes to identify a problem, analyse and then define it. In this phase, data is obtained, processed and input as clues. The next phase is design. It involves the process to generate the solutions and to evaluate them. The choice phase involves selecting a solution from alternatives. The Simon’s decision making model is expanded by Engel, Kollat and Blackwell (1973) into a Buyer Decision Making Process
Model. It involves five phases namely as problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post purchase behaviour. In comparison with Simon’s model, information search phase is an additional one. The aim of such a phase is to develop alternative solutions. Post purchase behaviour is another additional phase when compared with Simon’s model. It generates satisfaction and dissatisfaction which affects future purchase decision. Spreng, MacKenzie and Olshasky (1996) view that problem recognition, evaluation of alternative and post purchase behaviour phase belong to cognitive process. Information search and purchase belong to action process. The evaluation of alternative phase is the most prominent one which is studied by many researchers for its mechanisms (McGaughey and Mason, 1998, Kaheman and Tversky, 1979). It is found that preference arises from product selection as well as groups of vendors. The earliest preferential choice decision is based on rational choice assumption. The latter Attribute-Based and Attitude-Based Preferences approach receive wider attention (Mantel and Kardes, 1999). When a consumer has sufficient information, attribute-based preference is developed. However, when the consumer cannot study detailed information, attitude-based preference is formed.

As indicated earlier, attitude plays a significant part for a consumer to make purchase decision. Attitude is the product of a consumer’s thoughts, feelings and actions. Many attitude models and theories are developed to describe how consumers make decisions. The most widely applied model is the Fishbein model and the extended Fishbein model (Arnold, Price and Zinkhan, 2002).

The Fishbein model is represented by

\[ A = \sum_{i=1}^{n} B_i a_i \]

Where \( A \) is attitude, \( B_i \) is strength of the belief that attitude, \( a_i \) is related to the object, \( a_i \) is the value of attitude of this attribute to the consumer and \( n \) is the number of salient attributes. The difference between the extended Fishbein model and the Fishbein model is that the former adds in the components of motivation to comply with personal normative beliefs (Fishbein, 1980). These models have been criticised that they only deal with actual purchase behaviour. However, these outcomes may not all intentional but impulsive.
Discussion of these approaches

Many textbooks employ the stages outlined above by using slightly different terminology for each stage of consumers’ decisions (Peter and Olson, 2005; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). It is noted that the factors influencing each particular model are not totally the same. In other words, there is not a generally accepted consumer decision model up to now.

Schiffman and Kanuk have identified the formation of models of consumer behaviour are based on four views: 1) an economic view, 2) a passive view, 3) a cognitive view and 4) an emotional view.

An economic view is that the buyer can make rational decisions under perfect competition (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). This would seem unrealistic because most buyers are limited by their judgement, habits, knowledge, existing values and goals (Simon, 1965). In practice, the customer is willing to settle a satisfactory decision instead of engaging in extensive decision-making activities (James and Simon, 1958). Apart from price haggling, the customers also need achievement, affiliation and dominance (Jones, Trocchia and Mothersbough, 1989).

A passive view assumes that the consumer is basically submissive to the self-serving interests and promotional efforts of marketers. This view fails to recognise that the consumers will seek information about product alternatives and select the product that appears to offer the greatest satisfaction or satisfies the mood at the moment of purchase (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

A cognitive view assumes that consumers are viewed as information processors. Information processing helps the consumers to develop attitudes and intention to act. They will choose the alternative that will give them the greatest satisfaction (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). Consumers are goal directed. They will find difficulty in evaluating new products (Bagozzi and Dholakin, 1999).
An emotional view is that the consumers associate deep feelings or emotions with certain purchases or possessions (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004), such feelings or emotions are highly involving. When an emotional purchase decision takes place, the consumer’s decision is affected by feelings and moods rather than active information processing.

Emotion is a response to a particular environment. Mood is defined as a feeling state or a state of mind (Barbin, Darden and Griffin, 1992), it is in an unfocused and pre-existing state. Moods are lower in intensity and longer lasting and are not directly coupled with action tendencies (Bagozzi, Gopinath and Nyer, 1999). Mood is important in consumer decision making especially in shopping. Retailers attempt to create moods for shoppers as the shoppers mood can influence the time they are willing to spend in the shop (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). Research suggests that shoppers in a positive mood can recall more information about a product than those in a negative mood. Consumers in a positive mood deliberately avoid investing cognitive effort in any task unless it promises to maintain the positive mood.

The study of consumer behaviour has borrowed many ideas from psychology and economics so as to develop integrated models for decision making. These models rely on a correspondence of belief rather than any logical proof of superiority. These models cannot be validated, they only offer intuitive criteria based upon existing knowledge to predict the likely process of decision making (Gilbert, 2003).

Despite the classical Consumer Decision Making Model has many weaknesses, it is still widely accepted and applied in studying online shopping environment as well (Butler and Peppard, 1998; McGaughey and Moson, 1998; Rowley, 2000; Karaatli, 2002).

It is reasonable to expect a consumer will iterate between the steps in decision making process, especially the speed at which information is updated so frequently, adding loops in the traditional consumer decision making process is necessary (Butler and Peppard, 1998; Iellwegger, 1997). Below shows the traditional modal modified by Butler and Peppard.
These researchers contend that such iterations occur more frequently in purchase through the market space of the Internet. Furthermore, they believe that although the marketing issues on marketplace and marketspace are different, the traditional model of consumer behaviour is also applicable in consumer purchasing on the Internet.

**The means and end chain models**

Apart from the traditional Consumer Decision Model, it is worthwhile to study some models especially the modern ones.

In fact, the consumer decision process is viewed as a means-end model (Blackwell et al., 1999) while Gutman (1982) explains that means are objects which are consumed so as to achieve desired ends (valued states). The researcher considers that consumer values are very important in understanding consumer behaviour. In Gutman's means-end chain model, the researcher links the perceived product attributes to values.

Reynolds and Jamieson (1985) argue that it is the consumer's perception of attributes of a product / service to attain the desired values. They regard such perceptions can be divided into three levels of abstraction; they are values, consequences and attributes respectively.
Based on both literature review and an exploratory research, Zeithaml (1988) assimilates them to develop a means-end chain model of consumer perceptions of price, quality and value. In this model, Zeithaml (1988) links the three constructs beginning from product evaluation to purchase. The researcher defines and discusses those constructs in detail. They include objective price, perceived monetary price, actual quality, perceived quality, perceived sacrifice and high-level abstractions. This model has been tested by Chang and Wildt (1994). To the contrary of what Zeithaml proposes, they found that as the number and importance of intrinsic cues increase, the influence of objective price on perceived quality decreases. Besides, the product cue was only found to be an indicator of perceived quality.

Also, Engel et al (1986) develop a comprehensive consumer decision-making process model, which is an all-encompassing model. In essence, the process consists of 5 stages including need, information search, evaluation process, purchase and outcome.

**Comments on the consumer decision process models**

Although there are a lot of consumer behaviour models, many of them have not been tested and validated empirically (Field, 2000). Some models were difficult to test. Farley and Ring (1970) find difficulties in using existing data collection techniques and procedures to test the Howard-Sheth model. Even the latter sounds theoretical, it does not provide operational definitions of the concepts. There are many quantitative "management science" approach to consumer behaviour. Those models appear convincing, but they have not been proved by analytic techniques yet and in addition many alternatives to EBM have been found to be empirically weak (Ehrenberg, 1988). In addition the stages of other models such Howard and Sheth mirror in a similar way the aspects of brand comprehension, attitude and intention to purchase that are found in EBM.

Some models are difficult to implement in practice. For instance, the construct 'quality' in Zeithaml's (1988) Means-End Model is rather abstract and liable to change over time, management has to go through a lengthy process to identify which intrinsic and extrinsic cues are signals of quality. Therefore, the researcher chooses to use the traditional consumer decision making model in this study.
There are two kinds of approach to study consumer behaviour. One is practical and the other is academic. Practical ones mainly collect facts while academic ones mainly develop theories. Those two approaches are developed separately. Ehrenberg (1988) criticizes that those academic theories are intuitive and seldom supported by empirical evidence. Although some theories are based on quantitative management science approach, it does not mean that they are sufficiently analyzed, proved empirically and can be generalisable.

Those models developed in the past are either academic ones (Zeithaml, 1988; Engel, Blackwell and Miniard, 1993; Howard-Sheth, 1969) or specifically developed for certain purposes (Seo, 2005; Patwardhan and Ramaprasad, 2005; Chung and Pysarchik, 2000; Gnewal et al., 1998, Verbeke, 2000). Since knowledge relating to consumer behaviour on dried sea products is insufficient, it is essential to develop a particular consumer behaviour model of dried sea products in order to meet business needs. In addition these business needs are of upmost importance to the researcher as they may lead to important changes to his own dried fish retail business activities.

3.1 A Consumer Decision Making Model

A simple model of consumer decision making consists of three major components: input, process and output. It reflects the cognitive and emotional view (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). The input component regards those external influences are the sources of information about a goods / service which can affect the formation of attitudes. These external influences can be divided into the sellers' marketing efforts and the social-cultural environment.

The firm’s marketing efforts consist of product, promotion, price and channels of distribution factors which aim at reaching, informing and persuading customers to buy and use its products. The success of these efforts depends on the degree of the consumer’s perceptions of these efforts.
The socio-cultural environment consists of the family, other non-commercial sources including culture and social class elements. Those factors affect how consumers evaluate and adopt products. The unwritten codes of conduct communicated by culture subtly indicate which consumption behaviour should be considered right or wrong (Rose, 1999).

The input and process components are to and fro as the influences may be directed to or actively sought by the individual. The process component is concerned with the stages of how consumers make decisions. They consist of need recognition, pre-purchase search and evaluation of alternatives (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

A need is triggered when the consumer is facing a ‘problem’. There are two different types of needs. An actual state type is that a consumer who needs to buy a new one when the original product cannot function well. A desired state type is that the consumer desires for something new and if major trigger the decision process (Bruner, 1987).

Pre-purchase search takes place when the consumers think that they need to buy a new product. The consumers search their memories, marketing and non-commercial information before making decisions. When they think that the risk is high, they will search more. The higher the risk, the more complex and extensive the information search is (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

Shopping is a form of external information search. Research reveals that more women enjoy shopping than men (Klein, 1998). Smart-shopping indicates that some consumers are willing to spend more energy and time to aim at price saving.

Research suggests that the external search effort was greatest for consumers who had the least amount of product category knowledge (Beatty and Smith, 1987). Consumers high in subjective knowledge rely more on their own evaluations than on peer recommendations (Spreng, Divine and Page, 2001). The Internet plays a significant part in pre-purchase search, suppliers can provide consumers with much of the information they need about the products and services they are considering (Krizner, 2001).
Situational factors affect the amount of information which a consumer will gather. These factors include experience, social acceptability and value-related consideration (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). A consumer can either conduct a personal or impersonal search. A personal search includes asking friends, neighbours, relatives, co-workers or salespeople. An impersonal search includes reading newspapers, magazines, consumer reports, direct-mail brochures, information from product advertisements and internal web sites.

To evaluate alternatives, the consumers use evoked set and criteria approach. The evoked set means that a consumer will select some particular brands among a product category. Usually a consumer's evoked set consists of only three to five brands. Research suggests that a consumer's consideration set increases in size as experience with a product category grows (Sen and Johnson, 1997). Sometimes a consumer feels there are too many choices being offered.

The criteria consumers used for evaluating brands are based on their relevant attributes. Research indicates that information acquired later is given more weight than information that had been acquired earlier (Jahar, Jedidi and Jacoby, 1997). For example, consumers have a positive attitude on a rebate coupon. When making a remote purchase, the leniency of the retailer's return policy has a positive impact on the decision process (Wood, 2001). Sometimes consumers prefer some products because of a 'just feel right', as the product reflects their personality characteristics and will ignore the prices or brand names of such products.

Consumers often prefer to use decision rules to evaluate alternatives, such rules can reduce the task to make complex decisions by providing guidelines. These rules are grouped into compensatory and non-compensatory decision rules (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). In following a compensatory decision rule, a consumer will evaluate a brand by its product attributes with weighting. In following a non-compensatory decision rule, a consumer will ignore the product if there is a negative evaluation on some other attribute.

A study identifies that life styles affect evaluation criteria on purchase behaviour. Boomers are seeking new, "reduced", less extravagant lifestyles (Goldberg, 1995).
Time pressure makes special offers and in-store displays offering a special price more attractive.

When consumers face incomplete information and non-comparable alternatives on which to base decisions, they adopt the following strategies. 1) To delay the decision until missing information is obtained. 2) To ignore missing information and decide to continue with the current decision rule. 3) To change the customarily used decision strategy to one that better accommodates missing information. 4) To infer the missing information (Gardial and Schumann, 1990). Often, the customers may lower their expectations and choose the best alternatives when the purchase is urgent. At times, the consumers may attempt to compare non-comparable alternatives and choose the ones which offer more pleasure. A research demonstrates that the attitudes and search behaviour of consumers differ greatly when the purposes of purchases are different (Boyus, 1991).

Output is the last component of the model of consumer decision making. This can be divided into purchase and post-purchase evaluation.

Schiffman and Kanuk (2004) identify that purchase can be grouped into three types; tried purchase, repeat purchase and long-term commitment purchases. Trial purchase is that the consumers buy small quantities in attempt to evaluate them. If they are satisfied with the products, they will repeat purchases. For most durable goods, the consumers have to engage in long-term commitment purchases without the opportunity for an actual trial.

As consumers use the products, they will evaluate if the performances are over, equal or below expectation, the consumers will try to reassure their purchases are justified.

Numerous studies have proved that buyer's decision making is very complex and a wide range of variables have been found to affect this process (Karaatli, 2002). Peter and Olson (2005) argue that the Consumer Decision Making Model often provides an imperfect account of actual problem-solving processes. One reason is that actual consumer problem solving seldom proceeds in a linear sequence. For instance, a buyer will evaluate alternatives before all alternatives are found. Second, actual
problem-solving processes involve multiple, continuous interactions among consumers' cognitive processes, their behaviours and aspects of the physical and social environments (Punj and Stewart, 1983). For instance, the consumers' cognitions changed as a function of environmental information they encountered. Third, most problem-solving processes actually involve multiple problems and multiple decisions. Actual problem-solving processes usually involve several choices that produce multiple behavioural intentions. Each intention is a step in an overall decision plan.

Because of such weaknesses, Peter and Olson (2005) suggest a cognitive processing model of consumer decision making to account for the nonlinear, continuous flow of interactions among behaviours, environments and cognitions and for the multiple decisions that occur in actual consumer problem-solving episodes.

Numerous studies have proved that the consumer decision making process is very complex and a wide range of variables have been found to affect this process. The following proposed Consumer Decision Model is based on Hawkins et al.'s (2004) one. As the Hawkins et al. (2004) model is simple to understand, concise and based on EBM model, it is worthwhile to treat it as starting point to prepare questions for in-depth interviews and focus group interviews. It is further modified by a model proposed by Jung (2005) which best represents Consumer Dried Sea Products Shopping Decision Process (Figure 2.1). Based on this proposed model, research design will follow the flow of such a path.
Figure 2.1: A Model of Consumer Decision Making Process in Shopping Dried Sea Products

Source: Adapted from Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1993); Hawkins et al. (2004) and Seo (2005)
4. Information Search

Understanding information search can help the store retailers to design appropriate marketing communication strategies at the information search stage of the consumer decision making process. At this stage, supplying relevant information can influence the consumer on how to choose from the alternatives. Wilson suggests that there are three levels of information: information behaviour, information seeking and information search. Information search is part of information seeking and the latter is part of information behaviour (Rowley, 1999). Information behaviour relates to the way in which individuals and organization use information for work, education and leisure. Information seeking relates to the different methods used to gain access to information resources. Information search behaviour relates to the information between the information user and information systems. Cacippo and Petty (1986) propose that information search depends on a person’s motivation and ability.

The consumer decision making process takes place because of the necessity of choice from limited resources. The limited resources include available time and cognitive effort expended in conducting an active search for information regarding products the individual needs to purchase (Styler, 1961). The chief cost is time. Most people agree that a rich person’s time is more valuable than others. The optimum amount of search is its expected marginal return equal to its cost of research. The search costs include time, out-of-pocket monetary expenses, psychological discomforts, the satisfaction forgone by delaying purchase and the danger of information overload (Jang, 1996). Leisure activities and various household production activities compete for the limited time that is not spent working. Time pressure and consumer habits will cause consumers to change their behaviour, only if the benefits of doing so outweigh the effort needed to switch (Unbany et al, 1996).

Time availability is defined as the amount of time consumers have to educate themselves about a product category and the alternatives that are available, prior to making a decision (Blodgett et al., 1995). Time availability includes time for searching information physically and time for processing information mentally. Some studies find that time pressure is inversely proportional to information search. But some studies find
that they have no relationships (Blodgett et al., 1995). A recent study supports that when an Internet shopping environment has only price or product information displays, no relationship between time pressure and consumer involvement is found (Nelmapius et al., 2005).

If consumers are influenced by physical stimuli experienced at the point of purchase, the practice of creating influential atmospheres should be an important marketing strategy for most exchange environments, atmospheric planning can affect the degree of business success or failure (Bitner, 1990). However, most retailers plan, build and change the physical surroundings of their stores in an attempt to affect their consumers without knowing the impact of a specific design on their consumers. The stimulus-organism response (S-O-R) from environmental psychology explains the atmospheric mechanism (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982). Applying S-O-R into retail atmospheric, the atmosphere is the stimulus (S) that causes a consumer’s evaluation (O) and causes some behavioural response (R).

Shoppers respond to the atmosphere either positive or negative (Mehrabian and Russel, 1974). Positive means that the shoppers want to stay in the shop longer. Negative means that the shoppers do not want to stay in it. The purchase and consumption of many products can be attributed to consumers’ need for information. One reason the Internet has become so popular is that it enables consumers to satisfy their informational needs easily (Walker, 1999). Consumers’ need for information is also important because of its role in the persuasion process. In reading an advertisement, close attention is needed to get relevant product information.

Search means that a person tries to retrieve information from memory or the environment. Internal search means a person tries to get information from memory. External search means that a person tries to get information from family, friends or even the market (Punj, 1987), Schmidt and Spreng (1996) argue that a person will carry out external search if he / she cannot get information from memory.

The search may be passive as it is receptive to information. Sometimes the search may be active when the consumers look for publications, advertisements, Internet or venture to stores.
The search may be situational. When a refrigerator breaks suddenly, replacement is needed, but the time to search is limited. The extent of search depends on past experiences, value of goods, brand name, personal income, social class and personality (Moorthy et al., 1997).

Internal search involves retrieving knowledge from memory. The exact meaning of retrieval is to transfer the stored information from long term memory to short term memory. The ability to transfer depends on the strength of the memory trace of that information. Some information can be recalled easily and spontaneously. Some may be much weaker (Blackwell et al., 2001). Sometimes the memory trace is so weak that retrieval may succeed only if helped by retrieval cues. A retrieval cue is a stimulus that activates information in memory relevant to the to-be remembered information. For example, a picture to stimulate the to-be-remembered information. According to the concept of spreading activation, activating one memory node causes a ripple effect that spreads throughout its linkages to other nodes (Mornin, 1999). If the to-be-remembered node is strongly associated with another, then retrieving the latter may help in retrieving the former. Searching memory will have a great opportunity to activate the to-be-remembered node.

The failure to retrieve something from memory is known as forgetting. According to decay theory, memories grew weaker with the passage of time (Blackwell et al., 2001). Unless information is reactivated after initial learning, decay sets in and the memory trace becomes weaker, and then retrieval may be impossible. Forgetting occurs even though the memory trace remains strong. One will not remember a thing at an exact moment, but the information can be recalled later. Research discovers that information appearing to be forgotten was simply inaccessible at the time retrieval was attempted initially, this information can be remembered because of retrieval cues (Tulving and Pearlstone, 1966).

Failure to retrieve something may be also due to interference. According to interference theory, the chances of retrieving a particular piece of information become smaller as interference from other information becomes larger (Miniard et al., 1991). Advertising leads to activating the advertised brand’s name in short-term memory, but it in turn
interferes with the ability to retrieve other brand names from the product message
delivered by an advertisement when this advertisement is either preceded or followed
by advertising for competitive products (Brown and Rothschild, 1993).

There are two types of retrieval of information. One type is recognition and other type is
recall. Recognition is to identify whether something is familiar. One typical example is
answering multiple choice questions (Blackwell, 2001). Recall is more cognitively
demanding. One typical example is answering questions. People appear to have a better
memory of something when it is measured using recognition rather than recall (Singh,
1988).

Recall can be divided into two types – unaided and aided. Unaided means that it does
not contain any retrieval cues. The other one is aided. Consumers remember more when
they answer aided rather than unaided (Blackwell, 2001). When consumers form their
consideration sets and decide which brands are worthy of purchase consideration, these
sets are freely recalled from memory, recognition of brand is less relevant than recall.
When non-habitual consumers are at the point of purchase, they want to see what is
available and what to consider further recognition becomes more relevant (Quelch and
Kenny, 1994). Research reveals that showing the product packaging in the
advertisement facilitates consumer's ability to recognise it on the shelf (Schmidt, 2000).

Determining whether recall or recognition is the most relevant measure of product
awareness is necessary. First, it will be cheaper if brand recognition is needed rather
than brand recall. Second, certain business tactics depend on whether it is brand
recognition or brand recall. For instance, educating consumers to recognise brand
packaging is easier than brand name (Rossister and Percy, 1985).

When internal search cannot meet the needs, consumers have to carry out an external
search. There are two types of external search. One is pre-purchase search and the other
is ongoing search. Pre-purchase search is motivated by an upcoming purchase decision.
Consumers searching for information because of a forthcoming purchase belongs to this
type. The aim is to make better consumption choices (Bloch et al., 1986). Ongoing
search is that information acquisition takes place regularly no matter the need to
purchase arises or not. Consumers who enjoy searching for information on certain
products for their own sake are engaging ongoing search. Because the search is ongoing, a wider knowledge base is developed that can be used in future decision making. Consumers like an ongoing search because of enjoyment derived from such activities. Browsing through a mall because of fun is a good example (Bloch, 1986). However, Schmidt and Spreng (1996) point out that it is difficult to isolate pre-purchase and ongoing search from each other.

As consumers want to obtain information to make product choices, they have to search a variety of sources. There are two common sources: one is marketer dominated sources of information which are generated by advertising, salespersons, infomercials, web sites and point-of-sales materials (Blackwell et al., 2001). Non-marketer dominated sources over which the suppliers have little control. They include family, friends, news, opinion leaders and consumer reports. Internet becomes an important source of information. Research reveals on-line retailing decreases the cost of searching in obtaining price information and this make buyers become more sensitive to price (Lynch et al., 1997). By altering web design and making it easy to search for quality information, consumers are more willing to search for quality products. It means that web design will influence the consumers to make purchase decisions.

Shopping is one form of information search. It may be for fun or just a chore. If it is for fun, the experience is more important that information obtained from the search (Blackwell et al., 2001). If it is a chore, the retailers should minimize the time and effort required to obtain information. It is certain that buying a dress is for fun, whereas buying a microwave may be a chore. Catalogue shopping is a simplified version of the traditional shopping experience. The advantage is that the typical catalogue page provides more information for less effort than does the typical retail store.

In processing information, a series of steps takes place which involves exposure, attention, reasoning, forming attitude and store in memory (Blackwell et al., 2001). Because only very few messages can be retained by consumers, firms should help the consumers get their messages into their memories.

Sometimes substantial amounts of time and effort are invested into collecting information for a pending purchase situation such as purchasing an apartment.
Sometimes only a few seconds are involved in making a purchasing decision, such as searching for Campbell soup for 15 seconds (Brass, 1990). These can be explained by cost versus benefit perspective. It states that people search for decision-relevant information when the perceived benefits of the new information are greater than the perceived costs of acquiring this information (Srinwasan and Ratchford, 1991). In this situation, time and effort are equivalent to cost. The search will go on until benefit no longer outweighs the costs. Putreru and Ratchford (1977) identify that search cost consists of mobility constraints and limited time. The search will go on until benefit no longer outweighs the costs. Although economic theory suggests that the lower the search cost, the higher the amount of search, Johnson et al. (2000) argue that such behaviour does not exist in the web-based marketspace.

Search cost depends on how easily information can be acquired. Consumers will search more when it is easy. Consumer will have greater search when unit price information is presented on list than on separate tags (Ruses, 1977). Internet changes consumer behaviour as it helps consumers search much more easily and efficiently than ever before. The benefit of pre-purchase search is affected by perceived risk. The latter represents consumers’ uncertainty about the potential positive and negative consequences of the purchase decision. By searching more, consumers hope to reduce the chances of making a poor purchase (Altaner, 2000). Greater search becomes more likely when the outcome is uncertain or important. Consumers will invest more effort into the search as the price of the product increases.

Understanding consumer search can help marketers develop appropriate marketing strategies. As Campbell realised that customers are reluctant to select soups, the company streamlined its soup so that shoppers could locate what they want as quickly as possible. Consumer research can help pricing decisions. If consumers typically compare the prices charged by retailers this would highlight the need to pay particular attention to the competitor’s prices. Grocery executives are more likely to respond to a competitor’s price cut for high-visibility items when consumers engage in more price comparison shopping (Urbany and Dickson, 1988). When the retailers know their consumers only visit a single retailer before making their purchase decisions, the retailers can have greater flexibility to charge higher prices. Promotional strategies also benefit from consumer search. A store should put more promotional efforts on those
areas where consumers prefer to search for. Firms will invest more in advertising and in-store promotional materials if these represent important sources of information used during decision making (Blackwell et al., 2001). As experts or friends may be critical sources of information, promotional efforts could be focused on gaining a favourable opinion from those people. Knowing what nature of consumer search may also benefit. Each time a company discovers that search of a particular kind enhances the odds of its products being purchased, it has uncovered another opportunity for gaining more customers. If the firm knows that shoppers will not buy the goods if they engage in a specific search activity, the firm should attempt to discourage search (Morales, 1997).

Once a person has collected sufficient information for making a purchase decision, he/she will start to evaluate that information. In other words, a dried sea product consumer will evaluate the alternatives after he/she has collected sufficient product information.

5. Pre-purchase evaluation of alternatives

Pre-purchase evaluation is the first step in the consumer decision process. The objective is to evaluate different options found during information search. It is done by comparing the attributes of different products. As a result, less alternatives are selected (Blackwell et al., 2001). Alternatives are evaluated by determinant attributes and salient attributes. Consumers usually use salient attributes to evaluate the choices. When the salient attributes cannot differentiate the choices, determinant attributes will be adopted. Sellers can monitor the quantity, size, quality and price. When consumers think that changes are unfair, purchase intention will be lower.

For experience goods, research reveals that apart from word-of-mouth and critical reviews are the elements affecting the choice process, Luce et al. (1999) discovers that the choice process is affected by latent product interest and emotional expectations. Emotion-laden tradeoffs affect the evaluation of product attributes.

Mourali and Laroche (2005) suggest that interpersonal non-commercial sources are more important than other information sources in influencing a consumer’s purchase decisions. They discover that the antecedents of consumer relative preference for
interpersonal information search include the consumers' product knowledge, need for cognition, self-confidence and are susceptible to interpersonal influence.

Trust is another important component which affects the pre-purchase evaluation of alternatives. In the food industry, trust can be established by supply of intrinsically safe products, and also effective and reliable communication (Verbeke, 2000).

At the moment product information is acquired, some evaluation has taken place, the undesirable choices are excluded immediately. It is highly unlikely that all alternatives are included in the consideration, only the consideration set is considered (Roberts and Lattin, 1991). A consideration set typically contains a selection of all alternatives that a consumer can find. The size of consideration set varies, the most loyal consumers only have a particular brand in their consideration set. Gaining entry into the consideration set is important for marketers, otherwise, the consumers will not buy the products (Briones, 1988).

National thoroughbred Racing Association spent around $150 million for four years in order to gain consideration from the potential consumers. To ask is one of the method, the other is to change the 4 P's, the third way is by means of attraction effect. To ask is the simplest way to gain entry into consideration set. The four P's, that is, product, price, promotion and physical distribution can be adjusted to gain consideration. If the price tag is too high, a price cut will make the product become attractive (Blackwell et al., 2001). By means of attraction effect, a seller may find it beneficial to encourage consumers to consider not only its brand, but competitive brands as well (Simonson, 1989). The alternative may be more attractive when a clearly inferior alternative is added to the consideration set.

Construction of the consideration set can be done by external search and internal search. External search can be done through the use of outside materials. Internal search is done by using retrieval set, this is a kind of consideration set depending on the recall of choice alternatives from memory (Alba and Chattopadhay, 1985). Not all alternatives are included into the consideration set, the unfavourable ones will be removed. First-time buyers do not have any consideration set. They can search through the yellow pages or all brands available at the store (Alba and Chattopadhay, 1985). The way to
construct the consideration set can shape marketing strategy. If the construction depends on recall from memory, the marketer should help consumer recall the product. If recognition is important in determining the consideration set, recognition of alternatives available at the point of purchase would determine the consideration set, the firm should teach consumers about what its product packaging looks like so that it can be easily recognised (Seyan, 1985).

There are two options to decide how to evaluate the choice alternative 1) rely on pre-existing evaluation or 2) construct new evaluations (Blackwell et al., 2001). Relying on pre-existing evaluations is possible if prior consumption of these products has led to the formation of evaluations that are stored in memory. If these evaluations are retrieved during internal search and compared, purchase decisions can be made. Sometimes second hand experiences can act as substitute for consumption experiences. Generally, consumers are more confident in consumption experiences than second hand experiences.

By means of internal or external search, information is acquired for constructing new evaluations. It is suitable for inexperienced consumers as they lack pre-existing evaluations. It is also suitable for experienced consumers if they question whether they are adequately informed about current offerings (Blackwell et al., 2001).

Nowadays, there is a plethora of product information. Due to time constraints and processing abilities, consumers have to use shortcuts or a limited problem solving approach (Olshavsky and Granbois, 1979). However, some researchers have discovered that increased extended search can increase confidence, satisfaction and improve quality of decisions (Punj and Staelin, 1983; Widing and Talarzyk, 1993). Consequently, it is ideal for the consumers to be more sure of purchase by carrying out extensive internal and extended search.

Consumers can construct evaluations through the use of the categorization process and piecemeal process. The categorization process means that to put alternatives on a category and then evaluate them (Soyan, 1985).
Categories can be very general or specific. The valuation category can be transferred to any object assigned to the category. This process can also be applied to form initial evaluations of a product. Marketers need to understand whether consumers are using their process to evaluate products as it affects consumer demand (MaMath, 1997). Unsuccessful attempts to place soft drinks at a breakfast table cannot increase tremendous demand. Marketers can use categorisation to their advantage by means of brand extensions. It means to extend a distinguished brand name from one product category to other ones. Dole has tried to extend fresh and canned fruit business to frozen section by using same brand name. But the effectiveness of this strategy is lessened when the extension is very dissimilar (Loken and Roedder, 1993).

The piecemeal process is the evaluation of a choice alternative by the use of bits and pieces. Consumers determine the particular criteria used in evaluating choice alternatives (Park and Smith, 1989). Apart from concrete attributes, abstract attributes such as necessity and status may also be employed. The evaluation of each consideration alternative can be done by means of assessing its strengths and weaknesses. Consumer can retrieve information from memory. If it is insufficient, an external search is necessary. Cut off is a simple rule to exclude alternatives from consideration (Petroshuis and Monroe, 1987). If the ranking of an alternative exceed the limit, that alternative will be excluded from consideration. Consumers may rely on signals to judge product performance, they can also use signals to judge other product attributes (Boulding and Kirami, 1993). Consumers will perceive the quality of a watch bearing the Rolex brand name.

Applying the piecemeal process to evaluate performance of the considered alternatives, consumers can use two evaluation strategies they are compensatory and non-compensatory. Understanding how these evaluations are made may reveal a number of opportunities for businesses to influence consumer behaviour (Blackwell et al., 2001).

Evaluation of alternatives is by means of attributes. The product and brand choices can be affected by any changes in the attributes (Campbell, 1999). Quantity, size, quality and price are the usual attributes to monitor. But the price is the most common one to monitor as it is easy to use. Because of this, it is necessary to know more about the
effect of price change. Very often, when there is a price change, consumers will react differently. Knowing which variables that mediate the effects of the price cue will help retailers select the right price (Peterson and Wilson, 1985). In fact, some research discovers that a high involvement consumer is unwilling to choose lower price alternatives because of risk and averse attitude (Cohen, 2000). It implies that a dried sea product retailer may have the opportunity to charge a higher price.

Another study reveals that price only affects choice decision indirectly. The research proposes that, ‘price affects perceived quality, which in turn affects attitude, which affects buying intention at the end’ (Hasen, 2005).

Zeithaml (1988) examines the price literature in marketing and discovers that the consumers encode and interpret the price cue by perceived quality, competitive context, perceived savings and value for money. Stimuli must first be perceived and interpreted before they can affect decision processes and overt behaviour. The level of involvement influences the manner in which consumers process and interpret external stimuli (Petty and Capicippo, 1979). Empirical evidence indicates that involvement, source credibility and location are the three variables in mediating how buyers obtain and evaluate stimuli (Gotlieb et al., 1992). Studies suggest the ways for buyers to perceive and interpret stimuli are affected by the credibility of information source (Swartz, 1984). Source of credibility comprises of expertise and trustworthiness. Jacoby and Olson (1977) believe that consumers may alter the form of received information in the process of encoding, thus the actual price may be translated into a psychological price by the encoding process. It is supported by cognitive response theory and empirical evidence (Park and Young, 1986). They further suggest that consumers view a product as having both a time and money cost. Such costs are integrated into the psychological price of the product with other information. Time cost is reflected by retail patronage which measures the proximity of the retailer by time or distance (Black et al., 1985).

Although involvement, source credibility and location are variables to mediate the ways buyers perceive and interpret stimuli. Gotlieb et al. (1992) indicate that the mediating process for some credibility and location depends on the level of involvement.
For a high involvement product, a consumer thoroughly analyses a message in the process of establishing beliefs, forming attitudes and developing behavioural intentions (Petty and Cacioppo, 1979). When pricing information is processed, a message may be ignored or distorted, generating a lot of counter arguments and resistance to persuasion. Consequently, relatively large price differences are required to induce consumers to blunt the counter arguments and the resistance to persuasion. Source credibility can affect how the consumer evaluates the price message by suppressing the generation of negative cognitive responses. Only small price differences may be required to induce the consumer to change suppliers if fewer negative cognitive responses are generated. After the buyer changes the actual price to a psychological one, the latter is integrated with the location and other information to form a perception of the value. For high-involvement product, consumers have a relatively high personal value on the outcome of the purchase decision, they are willing to put more effort and time to assess it.

When purchasing a low-involvement product, less time is spent in analysis of the price message, less counterarguments and resistance to persuasion (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). A highly credible source, serves as a strong positive peripheral cue. Consequently, a smaller price difference may be able to induce consumers to change suppliers. For low involvement product, consumers feel that it is relatively unimportant, they will not spend more time in making purchase decision (Betty and Smith, 1987). In fact, empirical evidence has been presented by Gotlieb et al. (1992) that the degree of price change for the buyers to change suppliers is affected by the source credibility, involvement and location factors, such factors should be considered in making strategic pricing decisions.

Having discussed the consumer decision process in detail, the following sections will cover culture, social class, involvement, situations, shopping orientations, in-store retailing and consumer resources which are believed to be relevant in the development in the consumer decision process model on dried sea products.
6. Culture

Culture is a society’s personality. It plays a significant part in influencing consumer behaviour naturally and automatically. Culture consists of beliefs, values and customs which guide the behaviour of the members of a society (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). Belief is the members’ knowledge expressed in a lot of statements. Values are comparatively few but they are widely accepted in a society (O’Giurin and Shrum, 1997). Beliefs are values are mental images that help the consumers to form attitude. Customs are culturally approved ways to behave in certain situations.

Apart from helping to solve human problems, culture can help the buyers to determine whether a particular goods is of necessity or not (Demo Memo, 1998). Consumers are willing to follow culture as long as they get satisfaction from it.

Marketers need to overcome or define culture as to increase demand. It is evidenced by efforts to encourage young adults to respond positively to gourmet coffees (Forbes.Com, 2002). Culture continuously provides standard for marketers to follow. When the specific standard cannot meet the current needs, it can be modified or replaced.

Culture is learned, a child begins to acquire from the social environment or set of beliefs, values and customs that make up the culture. Cultural learning can be divided into formal learning, informal learning and technical learning. Formal learning is that a child learns directly from adults. Informal learning means a child learns by imitation. Technical learning means a child learns from school (Backmann, 1993). Advertising and peer influence can affect informal learning.

Advertising messages can create or reinforce a culture. Exposure to advertising appeals stressing the flexibility of the pricing plans of wireless phone service, teaches consumers to desire them (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). Such specific product advertising may reinforce the benefits that consumers want from the product. By means of different consumption-related vehicles, cultural meaning can be integrated into consumer products and then to the buyers. Such vehicles include advertising or imitation from fashion shows. Sometimes consumers cannot really participate in the real
situations, they may try to get virtual identities, such as buying a Las Vegas T-shirt to create the impression that they have been there (Dewan, 2001).

As culture can be learned, marketers can more easily sell their products in foreign markets. Acculturation is the learning of a new or foreign nature. Marketers can study the specific culture of their potential target markets to determine whether their products will be acceptable in this market. If it is positive, they can communicate the characteristics of their products to persuade the target market to buy. Culture can be acquired through the use of language, symbols and ritual (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

A common language is used to communicate so as to share meanings. Symbols are used to convey desired product images or characteristics. Symbols can be verbal or non-verbal. Verbal symbols may be television announcements. Non-verbal symbols include figures, colours or shapes added to trademarks, packaging or product designs. A symbol is anything that stands for something else. As human minds can process symbols, it makes marketers easier to sell the products to the consumers by associating the symbols and products. However, the advertiser must ascertain exactly what the symbol is communicating to its intended audience. Misinterpretation can bring the opposite effect. A definite combination of marketing mix are symbols that provide commercial messages of quality to consumers.

Osborne (2002) defines that ritual is a series of symbolic activities taking place in a certain time. These rituals can be very public, elaborate, religious or civil ceremonies, or they can be mundane as an individual's grooming behaviour or flossing. One particular point is that rituals tend to replete with ritual artefacts, markets are keen to enhance the performance of rituals. For example, some specific kinds of stocking, trees and food are related to ritual of Christmas festival (McCracken, 1996).

Culture is a group custom that links together the members of a society. These people share values, experiences and customs using common language. Some social institutions help transmit the elements of culture. They are family, educational institutions, houses of worship and mass media (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). Family is charged with imparting basic cultural beliefs, values and customs to the children. Educational institutions serve as agents to academic knowledge, technical training and ethics needed to prepare people for significant roles within society. Different kinds of
religion provide moral guidance and spiritual consciousness include print and broadcast media which impart a wide range of cultural values (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004). Advertising is an important agent for social change, it disseminates information about products, ideas and causes which help enforce new values, beliefs and customs. As culture is always changing, sellers need to be alert to the socio-cultural environment if they want to increase their revenue. Culture will change, as it can be affected by the influences of foreign culture, technology breakthrough and change in demographic contents. One best illustration is expanded role options open to women (Canedy, 1998), career women are increasingly not waiting for marriage. In monitoring cultural changes, sellers can increase their sales revenue. For example, the merchants should change the advertising strategy by knowing how feminism shifts. Many techniques can be employed to study culture. It includes content analysis, consumer fieldwork, value measurement instruments, projective techniques, attitude measurement methods. The former three methods are frequently used to examine culture (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

Content analysis focuses on the content of verbal, writing and pictorial communication. It can assess what cultural and social changes have occurred in a specific society or as a way of contrasting aspects of two different societies (Maynard and Taylor, 1999).

Consumer fieldwork is that a small sample of people is chosen from a particular society and carefully observe their behaviour. Researchers use field observation or participant observer method to observe consumers’ emotional response, cognitions and behaviours during their ordinary daily lives. Based on this rich and detailed data, researchers interpret or infer the values and key meanings of the culture (Sherry, Jr., 1990). Using a combination of direct observation, interviews, video and audio recordings, researchers can examine consumer behaviour at flea markets and ‘swap’ meets.

Rokeach Value Survey is a popular measure of values in which consumers rank over 36 general values in terms of their importance. Marketers can then use these data to segment consumers in terms of their dominant value orientation (Kamakura and Mazzon, 1991). Using this Survey, adult Brazilians were categorized into six distinctive value segments.
7. Social Class

The words social class and social standing are used interchangeably to mean societal rank, one’s position relative to others on one or more dimensions valued by society. Social standing ranges from lower class, those with few or none of the socioeconomic factors desired by society, to the upper class, who possess many of the socioeconomic characteristics considered by society as desirable. Individual with different social standings tend to have different needs and consumption pattern (Hawkins et al., 2004).

Societies have hierarchical groups of individuals and that individuals in these groups do exhibit unique behaviour patterns that are different from behaviours in other groups.

Social class structure has existed in all countries throughout the history of human existence. People who are better educated or have prestigious occupations are more highly valued than other people. Members of a particular class share same values attitudes and behaviour.

Social class is formed by dividing members of a society into smaller groups with more or less social status (Shiffman and Kanuk, 2004). This social status is commonly determined by wealth, power and prestige.

Social comparison theory indicates that people’s social standing is judged by their own possessions. Merchants judge the status by means of a customer’s purchasing power. It means that a customer’s status can be increased by more purchase (Saunders, 2001). In making a comparison, a person may compare with someone who is poorer in order to bolster his self-esteem. That person may also compare with someone who is better, which is likely to make that person feel inferior.

From another marketing perspective, status consumption can also be used to determine a person’s relative social standing. Higher status can be achieved by higher consumption. Eastman et al. (1999) discovers that luxury or status products are belonging to status-enhancing possessions. As the market is growing, sellers need to
have a deeper understanding on the relationship between social class and status consumption.

Another approach to measure social class is by means of socioeconomic variables, many marketing practitioners use family income, occupational status and education as a basis to measure social class.

Social class is hierarchical, ranging from low to high status. Social-class membership guides its members to develop certain attitudes and behaviour. New members may be expected to turn to other members of the same class for clues regarding behaviour. Or they may imitate their behaviour of fellow members (Holt, 1998).

Members may buy some products which are favoured by other fellow members. They avoid to buy other products which reflect lower class. Thus, different market segments can be formed. After market segmentation has been done, marketers can relate the values and attitudes to this segment and specific products can be supplied to meet those members’ needs. (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

Researchers discover that some products have different meanings to members of different strata. Blue jeans may serve as economical, functional clothing items to working-class members and as stylish, self-expressive items to upper class individual. Likewise, different purchase motivations for the same product may exist between social strata. Individuals in higher social classes use credit cards for convenience (they pay off the entire balance each month); whereas individuals in lower social classes use them for instalment purchases (they do not pay off the entire bill at the end of each month) (Hawkins et al., 2004).

Social class can be grouped into many forms. They are from two-category social-class scheme to nine-category social-class scheme. It is easier to describe the class by clear class divisions. The choice of how many separate classes to use depends on the amount of detail that the researcher wants to describe clearly the attitudes or behaviour under study.
There is no general agreement on how to measure social class. There are many techniques to measure social class. The measuring techniques include subjective measures, reputational measures and objective measures. The subjective measure means to assess the social class based on people’s self-perception or self-images. This feeling is known as class consciousness. However, such measure gives rise of a lot of middle-class. In Japan, close to 90% of respondents categorize themselves as middle class (Shuji, 2000). In practice, this subjective measure is useful to reflect one’s self image in terms of consumption preferences.

In reputational measure, selected participants make a first assessment concerning the social class membership of others within the community. The final task of assigning community members to social-class positions belongs to the trained researcher (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

In the objective approach, selected socioeconomic variables are used to measure social class. Most researchers favour the variable including occupation, income, education and residence. These variables can make a segment of a specific social class. In practice, segmenting markets with these measures are relatively easy. To reach a desired target market, marketers simply match the members of a particular social class to a selected advertising media (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

There are two basic categories of objective measures of social class. They are single variable indexes and composite variable indexes. For single variable index, social class membership is measured by one socio-economic variable. Occupation is most widely used, because people feel that it is very important. Although the status of a particular occupation may change significantly over time, evidence supports that there is a high degree of status consistency in 40 occupations (Heath, 1997).

Another widely accepted socioeconomic variable is the educational level. A highly educated person is expected to have a higher pay and being admired (Crispell, 1994).

The level of an individual’s family income is also sometimes used to measure social status. However, not all researchers agree that it is a good measure. How people decide to spend incomes reflects different values. It is the difference in values that is an
important discriminant of social class between people, not the amount of income they earn. Thus, attitude and behaviour is a better measure than family income (Rodkin, 1990).

The socioeconomic variables include dwelling area and total assets are used to prove social class membership.

Composite variable indexes are some selected socio-economic variables used to measure social class standing. Some consumer researchers prefer these as they can measure the social class standing. These variables include source of income, occupation and dwelling area.

Multi-item measures of social status are clearly superior as a means of indicating a person’s or family’s overall standing in a community. If it is a study of opinion leadership, a multi-item index such as Warner’s instrument would be most appropriate. However, marketers are rarely interested in social standing per se. Instead, they are more likely to focus on demographic characteristics as direct influences on consumer behaviour. Thus, research on taste and intellectually oriented activities such as magazine readership or television viewing should consider education as the most relevant dimension. In fact, marketers frequently combine demographic measures, not to produce a measure of status but to provide a more complete understanding of the target market (Hawkins et al., 2004). Individuals can shift from their own class position. Often people of lower social class admire the lifestyle and possessions of higher ones. Thus, marketers can incorporate the symbols of higher class in the products and advertisement to attract lower social class consumers (Kennedy, 1997).

Recently, some marketers begin looking to geo-demographic clustering to measure social class. This cluster identifies a variety of socioeconomic and demographic factors (education, income, occupation, family life cycle, ethnicity, housing and urbanization) drawn by census data. These factors are combined with survey and panel data on actual consumer behaviour to locate concentrations of consumers with similar characteristics. Marketers can direct their attention to the target segment.
Research has revealed that different social classes have their own particular features including saving, spending, clothing, leisure activities and home decoration style (Schiffinan and Kanick, 2004). Thus, astute marketers tailor specific product and promotional strategies to each social-class target segment. One study indicates that social class has a positive relationship with many types of shoppers including confident shopper, brand conscious shopper, catalog shopper, credit user and economic shopper (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1992).

8. Involvement

The origin of the term involvement lies in Sherif and Hovland’s work (Sherif and Hovland, 1953). Who used social judgement approach to evaluate attitude. Who considered a situation in which subjects expressed themselves on an issue on which they have a strong personal involvement, in an extreme position. These researchers hypothesized that, if required to establish their own scales, such subjects would construct a scale with a smaller number of categories, in comparison with other subjects not so strongly involved with the issue. Furthermore, these researchers suggested that subjects with a strong personal involvement with the issue would tend to have a higher threshold of acceptance, and a lower threshold of rejection.

Many researchers have defined the term involvement. Festinger (1950) defined involvement as concern with an issue. Freeman (1964) defined involvement as ‘concern about, interested in or commitment to a particular position on an issue. A subject is said to be involved when the social object is in the subject’s ego domain (Sheriff and Cantril, 1947).

Krugman (1965) first brought and applied the involvement concept into marketing. He explained how low the involvement concept had a television commercial effect. With this low involvement concept, it does not only bring a huge influence on advertisement, but also on marketing research concerning the consumer behaviour theory. After this, involvement discussion gradually becomes part of major stream in consumer behaviour research.
Depending on different involvement objects, involvement can be divided into advertising involvement, product involvement and purchasing involvement. To understand the differences among these three involvements, they can be reclassified as enduring involvement, situational involvement and response involvement (Lin and Chen, 2006).

Advertising involvement refers to a consumer's involvement level or response after receiving advertising information based on a consumer’s concern about advertising information. The involvement level ranges from absolute concentration to complete ignorance. Product involvement refers to a consumer’s self concern over purchase decision and purchasing activity (Slama and Tashchian, 1985).

Enduring involvement means that a person gives a response to a specific behaviour environment. Houston and Rothschild (1978) indicate that enduring involvement originated from two sources, which are a consumer's personal subjective appreciation system in a product's meaning to a consumer or consumer's experience in using this product in the past. Situational involvement refers to when a consumer intends to research outside goals about product purchasing or application, or has temporary concern about the product. After the goal is achieved, the situational involvement would immediately decrease. Response involvement means combining situational involvement and enduring involvement, thus causing a mental condition about something (Arora, 1982).

Based on a meta-analysis on sources selected from 30 journals, books and conference proceedings, Broderick and Mueller (1999) defined involvement as a person is characterised by an incremental cognitive process to a certain degree, which connects the individual to a product. The individual may progress through a number of mental states; the relevance of a product to the individual’s wants, needs and emotions; a general interest within the product category, overtime; specific interest between products at a particular time and then the assessment of importance/probability of product risk. It is hypothesised that these status are linked sequentially. Moreover, each state may influence a behavioural response in isolation.
Consumer decision making is affected by different levels of involvement. Friedman and Smith (1993) discover that a high involvement consumer will search for more information. Petty et al. (1983) discover that product involvement has positive correlation with purchase intention. In a research concerning automobiles comparison advertisement, it is found that high involvement consumer has a distinctly positive intention.

Product involvement has moderate effects on consumer purchase decisions. In a comparative research between three kinds of service businesses, they are medicine, beauty shop and insurance. It is found that involvement theory could be adapted in service marketing. Besides, the relationship between expected service quality and recognised quality under different levels of involvement would help constitution of service marketing strategy (Arora, 1993). Another research discovers that a high involvement consumer has a higher level product information search intention, product evaluation and purchase intention (Chin, 2002). Petty et al. (1983) highlight that when a high involvement consumer considers purchasing a product he/she will carefully evaluate product advantages and disadvantages.

To study involvement consumer behaviour, one needs to measure the level of involvement. There is no widely recognised method to measure involvement. A more common measure is a bipolar adjective scale, known as Zaichkowsky’s Personal Involvement Inventory PII, it is used to capture the concept of involvement for products.

Involvement is an abstract moderating variable, which cannot be measured directly. It can be inferred by using involvement factors and post-purchase conclusions indirectly. Zaichkowsky (1985) adopts a semantic differential method and develops a set of inventory. This personal involvement inventory has gone through various reliability and validity examination, and widely accepted by others researchers (Chim, 2002).

A study has assessed several methods of measuring involvement (Goldsmith and Emmert, 1991). It is found that Zaichkowsky’s scale has internal consistency. Laurent and Kapferer scale has good validity but poor internal consistency. Mittel scale is good in convenience and validity.
Researchers generally use the resulting behaviours as indicators of the level of involvement. These measures have the following weaknesses. If the results are contradicting, it is caused by different behaviours or different measures? Second, many scales are single-item measures and may not capture the total involvement concept. Finally, single-item measures have low reliability. If multiple-item measures are used, they should be tested for internal reliability, stability or validity. A measure ‘Personal Involvement inventory PII’ was developed. It allowed the researcher to use the same measure across various research studies (Zaichkowsky, 1985). The measure was sensitive to the personal, physical and situational areas that affected a person’s involvement level. Zaichkowsky adopted the semantic differential scale. They are a series of bipolar items, each measured on a seven-point rating scale. It is easy to administer as it only requires few minutes to complete and is applicable to a wide array of objects.

The steps taken to develop the measure were

1. Define the construct to be measured.
2. Generate items that pertain to the construct.
3. Judge the content validity of generated item.
4. Determine the internal reliability of items judged to have content validity.
5. Determine the stability of internal reliable items over time.
6. Measure the content validity of the 20 selected items as a whole.
7. Measure the intension-related validity, which is the ability of the same people and different situations for the same product and same people.
8. Test the construct validity by gathering data and test whether the scale discriminates on self-reported behaviour.

The scale has been tested for construct validity, content validity, internal reliability and intention-related validity. As a result, this scale is widely accepted by consumer behaviour researcher in measuring low and high involvement consumer behaviour.

The theory of hemispheral lateralisation gives rise to the idea of involvement theory. It proposes that the human brain consists of two hemispheres (right-brain and left-brain)
each of which specialises in a specific information process (Du Plessis and Rousseau, 2003). The left hemisphere is rational, active, realistic and is responsible for perceiving, processing and expressing information. The right brain is responsible for intuitive, emotional and holistic behaviour (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

Consumer involvement affects the amount and type of information processing. Based on the theory of hemispherical lateralisation, consumers can be classified according to their degree of involvement into either low or high involvement. Low-involvement purchases are related to purchasing unimportant things, have very little relevance to the consumer, have little perceived risk associated with them and are characterised by little motivation to expend cognitive effort and time on processing information associated with a message.

High involvement causes the experience of a high level of motivation, arousal or interest that causes greater searching, information processing and decision-making by individuals. Under high-involvement conditions there exists a strong link between the message and long-term memory, which means attitudes formed under high involvement conditions should remain stable over time (Sengupta et al., 1997). One study reveals that there is no relationship between time pressure and consumer involvement regardless of the information available to the Internet shopper (Nelmapius et al., 2004).

Consumer involvement is widely accepted as a measure of purchasing importance (Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984). Most research on involvement is social-psychology based, dealing with the nature of involvement. Originally, involvement viewed the link between an object and ego, later, it was viewed as the centrality of beliefs (Sherrif, Sherrif and Neberdl, 1965). Many researchers have their viewpoints on involvement. Krugman (1996) views involvement is intensity related. Cohen (1982) argues that involvement is not caused by situational factors. Houston and Rothschild (1977) suggest that the evaluation stage involves both active processing and comparison with the content stored in the memory. Bloch and Richons (1983) identify that involvement is risk related internal valuable. Lynch et al. (1988) point out that when memory fades, a buyer will increase the use of brand for evaluation. Park and Mittal (1985) argue that variation in consumers’ decision process depends on the level of involvement and the
latter will produce different outcomes. They identify that motivational force is affected by situational factors.

Many researchers agree that involvement takes an important role as the basis to understand consumer behaviour. Krugman (1967) views involvement as a personal relevance for a thing or activity.

Antil (1984) argues that product involvement has both affective and cognitive aspects. The affective aspect is related to feelings and emotions while the cognitive aspect is related to the knowledge of outcomes by using a product.

Peter and Olson (2005) view that the focus of an involvement may be an environment, a product, a brand, a situation or a combination of them. The means-end basis for involvement relates to the customers’ knowledge about self to their product knowledge. The stronger the relationship, the higher the involvement (Peter and Olson, 2005).

Such level of involvement is also affected by intrinsic self-relevance and situational self-relevance.

Intrinsic self-relevance is the consumers’ means-end knowledge kept in memory. It depends on perceived risks, product characteristics and consumer characteristics (Bloch, 1982). Product characteristics are the product attributes. Consumer characteristics are their values and life themes.

Situational self-relevance relates to the important consequences that are caused by immediate social and physical environment (Peter and Olson, 2005).

Social and physical environment can create situational self-relevance. Consumers’ overall level of involvement is always determined by a combination of intrinsic and situational self-relevance. The involvement process occurs only at a certain period of time. Involvement declines after the purchase because most of the involvement the consumer experienced concerned the decision process but not the product.
Means-end analysis can help marketers identify the key attributes and consequences underlying a product purchase decision and to understand the meaning of those concepts to consumers (Peter and Olson, 2005). Having understood the cognitive and affective aspects of these consumer-product relationships, the marketers can segment the market in terms of consumers’ intrinsic self-relevance (Lechmann, 1987). Those segments are divided according to the degree of feelings. They are brand switchers, different marketing strategies are required to address the unique types of product knowledge, intrinsic self-relevance and involvement of consumers in these market segments. If the marketers understand what make up consumers’ intrinsic self-relevance, they can relate the attributes of their products to the consumers’ values and life themes.

Lacksonen (1994) views that product involvement can influence a consumer’s cognitive and behavioural responses. They include attention, memory, search, information processing and satisfaction. Many products having cultural meanings can influence the product involvement. Interpersonal influence places a significant part in product involvement, people are willing to buy the products related to particular activities with anticipation of social benefits (Ditton, Loomis and Choi, 1992). Such behaviour supports Zaichkowsky (1985) idea that product involvement is affected by a consumer’s values and life themes.

Traylor (1981) suggests that brand commitment is formed by attitude, which is psychological attachment to a product brand. However, Ratchford (2001) indicates that involvement may not relate to brand commitment as consumers always switch to other brands. This idea is supported by Fournier (1988) as she supports that further research should be done in this area.

Coulteer et al. (2003) argue that both brand commitment and product involvement are influenced by macro-environmental factors, values and social influences. Consumers try to interpret cultural ideologies and their activities. Such interpretations will affect brand commitment and product involvement. Cultural ideologies include culturally shared values which provide social order and sense of belonging (Hieschman).

Cultural ideologies can be brought by cultural intermediaries which include various media, advertisers and manufacturers. Advertisers help to dive meanings to the products
by associated them to cultural ideologies. When consumers interpret the cultural ideologies, product involvement is activated (Thompson, 1977).

Product evaluation is affected by social influence, consumers try to interpret information based on their life themes and life projects. The latter two are shaped by cultural ideologies and social influence (Huffman, 2000). Life themes are the concerns always focused by a person while life projects are their construction of their identities.

Product involvement is indicated to be influenced by the macro-environmental factors, life themes, life projects cultural ideologies and social influences (Coulter et al., 2003).

Consumers’ means-end knowledge can be influenced by various marketing strategies in the long term (McCracken, 1987) only. But consumers’ situational self-relevance can be created by various marketing strategies.

When consumer involvement is high, the greater importance of the purchase causes consumers to be reluctant to risk a switch to an apparently identical alternative brand even if the alternative is at a lower price (Cohen, 2000).

Product involvement is defined as the personal relevance or importance of a product category. It significantly influences consumers’ cognitive and behavioural response – including memory, attention, processing, search, brand commitment, satisfaction, early adoption and opinion leaderships (Lacksonen, 1994).

Macro-environmental factors may produce a consumption context conducive to product involvement. Bloch and Richins (1992) argue that certain product classes tend to have significant meanings within a culture and are likely to be more involving for most consumers. They also indicate that interpersonal influence and a supportive social content might be significant in initiating and sustaining product involvement. Research on recreational activities and related products affirms that involvement in an activity is associated with support from significant others and with anticipation of social benefits (Ditton, Loomis and Choi, 1992). The aim is to develop or reinforce friendships or family bonds. Whether the product affects the consumer’s life, this in turn will affect enduring product involvement. Zaichkowsky (1985) proposes that consumer values, life
goals and life themes affect product development. Self-relevance affects involvement with and processing of marketing communications.

Brand commitment is an emotional or psychological attachment to a brand within a product class. Traylor (1981) suggests that it is attitudinally rather than behaviourally based. Research suggests that the origins of brand commitment as an outcome of product involvement. Involvement will most likely precede or lead to commitment (Bently et al., 1988). Ratchford (2001) suggests that involvement may or may not be related to brand commitment, because even consumers who are happy with their current brand may continue to search for and try other brands as an investment in future consumption choices. Fournier (1998) argues that brand commitment may originate without product involvement. She observes that to understand better whether consumers are primarily involved with the product class or the brand would require research that simultaneously explores product involvement and brand commitment within the broader content of consumers' lives.

Coulter et al. (2003) consider macro-environmental factors, social influence, consumer life themes and projects have a great impact in product involvement and brand commitment. Within the context of their own personal histories and their life themes and projects, customers interpret cultural ideologies and the activities of cultural intermediaries. These interpretations give rise to ideological positions that determine product involvement and brand commitment.

Cultural ideologies are culturally shared values and meanings that allow for a collective sense of identity, co-ordinate social functions and maintain social order (Hieschman, 1993). These ideologies affect consumption desires, motivations and the symbolic meanings consumers attach to products, services and brands. In other words, cultural ideologies may influence the appropriateness of various products and brands for achieving life themes and goals, this in turn may influence involvement with those products and brands.

Cultural intermediaries are conduits connecting the world of culturally constituted meanings to consumption meanings (McCracken, 1989). These intermediaries include manufacturers, advertisers, retailers, news reporters, media producers, fashion
merchandisers, they provide a communicative link between cultural ideologies and consumers’ interpretated product and brand meanings, which may prompt involvement and brand commitment. Advertisers determine what cultural ideologies pertain to their products and then give voice to these meanings by prostrating objects, persons and contexts already associated with these ideologies. Thompson (1997) suggests that consumers’ interpretations of cultural intermediaries’ activities and cultural ideologies play a role in activating product involvement and subsequently in invoking brand commitment.

Social influence is important on consumers’ product evaluations, as well as on product and brand choices. Consumers tend to define the social concept locally, they look to local sources of support for social rewards, feedback and identities that consumers interpret information from social networks within the content of their personal history, life themes and life projects.

Life themes are existential concerns that individuals address in everyday life. Life projects are the construction and maintenance of key life roles and identities (Huffman et al., 2000). Life themes and life projects are modified and shaped by cultural ideologies, cultural intermediaries, personal history and social networks. Huffman (2000) link life projects with product consumption and brand preferences. The attractiveness of a particular product is related to social and cultural contexts, life themes and life projects. Coulter et al. (2003) demonstrate that “prominent political-cultural discourses, cultural intermediaries, social influences, life themes and life projects collectively prompt product involvement.”

9. Situations

The social and physical environments possess a huge number of elements, some of them can influence consumers’ affect, cognitions and behaviours. A situation means a period of time, a series of goal-directed interactions occur among the consumers’ effect, cognitions and environmental factors. Situations have a start, middle, end and aim. (Peter and Olson, 2005). This view of situations as a series of goal-directed interactions is very similar to the Wheel of Consumer Analysis. This analysis is composed of four
elements: behaviour, environment, marketing strategies and the internal factors of affect and cognition. These factors interact and influence one another. There are two types of complexity in situations. Simple situation involves a single physical and social environment, a simple goal, relatively few behaviours and few affective and cognitive responses. Complex situation involves multiple physical and social environments, several goals, many different behaviours and cognitive and affective responses (Peter and Olson, 2005). Many situations are recurring. As consumers' experiences accumulate over time, consumers form clear goals, develop consistent problem representations for those recurring situations and then learn appropriate behaviours to solve the problem. When consumers do not have any ideas when facing situations, marketers can guide these consumers to behave with familiar situations.

To understand environmental influences needs to analyse the situations in which the consumer experiences the environment. To understand them is preferably from the viewpoint of consumers (Fennell, 1978). To analyse a situation, the marketers should first identify the aim of the situation. The next step is to understand the characteristics of the physical and social environments. Then, it is necessary to understand what are the consumers' cognitive, affective and action responses to these characteristics. Based on these understandings, the marketers can develop appropriate marketing strategies to affect the consumers (Belk, 1976).

Marketing strategies aim at identifying situations that large numbers of consumers experience rather than a single consumer. Even a shop has different use situations (Miller and Ginter, 1979). A study of fast-food restaurants identified four consumption situations: they were lunch, snack, shopping trip and evening meal. Different restaurants provide different environments to meet the respective situations.

Different researchers identify different types of situations. Lai (1991) identifies communication, purchase and consumption situations. Peter and Olson (2005) identify five generic consumer situations: information acquisition, shopping, purchase, consumption and disposition. Once the situations are identified and analysed, the marketers can develop marketing strategies to change, facilitate or maintain the key behaviours.
In an information acquisition situation, consumers aim to find information related to a problem solving goal. It may be achieved by choosing a particular store or brand. This situation may contain social and physical factors that can influence consumers’ affect, cognitions and behaviours. Marketers can influence the information environments by sales promotion, promotion mix, placing signs in stores and the front windows of shops, ending direct-mail material, advertising on TV, billboards and in magazines (Russo, 1986). They can even add information to packages and labels.

In information acquisition situations, two especially important generic characters are information contact and communication. A study reveals that two-thirds of retail purchases are based on decisions made in the store. Providing information in the store therefore becomes important. Advertising on shopping carts and paper grocery bags are common features in supermarkets (Agnew, 1987). Many grocery stores have electronic coupon dispensers connected to the checkout scanners that issue different coupons depending on what products a consumer buys. Carion Cosmetics has developed an interactive computer display. By answering a few simple questions, consumers can receive the best available information on products. Communication is most effective via salespeople. The salespeople of Toyota are trained to deliver all information to their consumers. In case of complaint with auto services, diagnostic experts will contact their consumers directly.

In a shopping situation, consumers are in a shopping environment which has spatial, physical and social characteristics (Peter and Olson, 2005). The environments may be boutiques, department and discount stores, malls, in the home via Internet, flea markets and auctions. The physical factors include store design and layout, lighting and display fixtures, colours, the overall size of the store, temperature and noise level. Shopping situations also include the merchandise displayed in the stores.

Social characteristics of shopping environment includes the number of staff in the store, how the staff act towards customers, the pressure of friends and relations accompanying the consumer, the degree of crowding and its types (Illingworth, 1991). Many shoppers want to search for information without the interruption of sales assistants.
Store contact and product contact are the two generic behaviours in shopping situations. Many incentives are designed to attract consumers to go to the stores. Location strategies are different types of stores. Fast food restaurants are located in high-traffic locations. Many specialty stores locate in the well-travelled aisles of shopping centres, malls and airports to facilitate store contact (Fins, 1987). The location of smaller boutique-type stores in shopping malls can have a critical effect on store contact behaviours. They try to be close to the entrance of one of the large, popular anchor stores, usually department stores, formed at the ends or middle of the mall. The smaller stores benefit from the traffic flowing past their doors (Trachtenberg, 1990). In the early 1990s recession, the failure of big stores evidenced the importance of location. When some anchor malls failed, the surrounding smaller stores began to deteriorate and fail later.

Product contact can be affected by shopping situations. When there are too many competing products, the probability of product contact is reduced. It is also affected by overcrowding or aggressive behaviour of salespeople. Some stores use restful music, warm colour schemes and low-key salespeople to encourage shoppers to linger. Signs are hung from the ceilings to identify product locations. The retailers try to make the shopping environment attractive, informative and easy to use (Gardener et al., 1986). In designing in-store environment, the ideal atmosphere should be less stressful, more fun and exciting (Nelson, 2000). There are other types of environments, these include at home by telephone, by mail or via the Internet, garage sales, flea markets, auctions and sidewalk sales. These types of shopping environments have their own designs to fit their businesses.

In a purchasing situation the environment may be different from that of a shopping situation (Peter and Olson, 2005). In some cases the purchasing environment is similar to the shopping environment such as self-service stores. In some cases, the purchasing environment is entirely distinct from the shopping environment such as automobile showroom. In a purchasing situation, the generic behaviour is finding access. Most stores have installed scanner equipment to speed up the checkout process. When a large sum of money is involved, a credit will be instituted to facilitate transaction.
The consumption situation is concerned with the environment where the consumers use or consume the products. This environment has its own specific physical and social characteristics (Peter and Olson, 2005). For some businesses such as restaurants, bars, nightclubs and ice-cream the design of the consumption environment may be critical to consumers’ satisfaction (Milliman, 1986). The ideal consumption environments should be clean, tidy, well-lighted and attractively decorated. For some businesses such as clothing, car or furniture sale, the consumption situation involves multiple consumption behaviours over long periods. The consumption environment changes during the useful life of the product, and this can affect consumption – related cognitive and affective responses. The best marketing strategy is to monitor consumer’s satisfaction levels and behaviours over the life-time of the product (Peter and Olson, 2005).

For service businesses such as doctors, hotels and hairstylists, the consumption environment is under total control. The main concern is to make the environment perfect and attractive. Some restaurants endeavour to make special decoration so as to enhance the dining experience (Reill, 1991).

The disposition situation is mainly concerned with the disposal of products. Many people simply throw away unwanted products or give them to charity. Others sell their unwanted products at flea markets (Belk et al., 1988). Disposal situations are relevant for public policy issues. The consumers place more attention to preserve the natural environment, the markets for recycled goals and used products are likely to increase.

10. Shopping Orientations

Consumers tend to form general approaches or patterns of external search. The general approaches form shopping orientations (Darden, 1988). Some individuals have substantial variation from the general pattern across situations and product categories, many do have a stable shopping approach to most products. Shopping orientation is defined as a shopping style that puts particular emphasis on certain activities or shopping modifications (Hawkins et al., 2004). Shopping orientations are closely related to general lifestyle and are subject to similar influences. Another study uncovers six orientations (Hassay and Smith, 1996), they are chameleons, collectors, foragers,
hibernaults, predators and scavengers. Chameleons are situation-specific, their shopping approach is purpose oriented, they may aim at purchase or shopping. Collectors aim at bulk purchase in order to save money. Foragers aim at buying specific products. Hibernaults are consumers who are willing to buy when the best opportunity comes. Predators are planned consumers who like to buy in outlets without waiting their time in shopping. Scavengers are consumers who enjoy shopping especially when the store is in sale.

A study compares the mall shopping behaviour of Chinese and U.S. consumers. It discovers that U.S. shoppers visited the mall for diverse reasons. Chinese shoppers visited the mall with purchase intention mainly. (Li et al., 2004).

Marketers can develop marketing strategies based on shopping orientation (Paden and Stell, 2000). As predators might respond to home delivery and scavengers might respond to entertainment-focused malls and outlets. A warning is that no single store can target too many shopping orientations at one time.

Shopping orientations are influenced by social status, age and household life cycle (Haukins et al., 2004). Middle income individuals shop more than those at higher or lower levels. Shopping appears to decrease as the age of the shopper increases, this may be explained in part by increased learning and product familiarity gained with age.

Elderly consumers consider the store reputation important when shopping (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1992). Many elderly consumers are recreational shoppers, they shop for social reasons rather than for making a purchase. Younger consumers consider the brand, colour, style and features of products when they purchase new products more so than adults (Darian, 1998). Although young adults have lower income, they pay less attention to the price of a product. The number of family members and their respective ages also affect consumers’ shopping orientations (Szymanski and Hise, 2000). Consumers having children are more likely to buy products from direct markets such as television, catalogue, mail order and the Internet because of lack of time. A study reveals that recreational consumers are more interested in the quality of products, they prefer to go to speciality stores or shopping malls that furnish expensive varieties of products and large numbers of related services. (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1992).
Economic consumers prefer to choose shopping furnishing lower-priced products, as the price is the most determining factor for economic shoppers.

Apart from the above factors, shopping orientations are also influenced by interests, individuals’ attitudes and opinion statements (Geht and Cater, 1992). Some consumers purchase products because of the store layout, displays, salespeople and the store name.

A study identifies many factors that are important to shopping orientation (Tauler, 1992), they include fashion consciousness, brand consciousness, local and catalogue shopping preference and store choice. Such factors affect the variation of information need. Shopping orientations are useful in explaining the consumer decision process in information search and evaluating alternatives (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1992).

When consumers scored high on the above shopping orientation factors, they spent more time to collect information from a variety of information sources than those who scored low. Such consumers who scored high frequently used mass media information such as newspaper advertisement, fashion publication and magazines. It is supported by the evidence that mass media has a positive impact on discount store patronage and personal sources have a positive impact on mall shoppers (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1992). Another study uncovers that shopping orientation is affected by the level of involvement are highly concerned with shopping orientation factors, low involvement consumers are less concerned with shopping orientation factors. While shopping on the Internet, high product involvement consumers scored higher on shopping orientation factors; brand consciousness, individuality, store choice alternatives and Internet shopping preference than low product involvement consumers (Seo, 2005). Shopping orientation is a consumer particular shopping style which includes the interests, values and behaviours. Darden and Dorsch (1990) regard shopping is a combination of economic, social and recreational activities. It is affected by the consumers’ values, lifestyles and past shopping experiences. As the factors are continually changing, so is the shopping orientation.

Seock (2003) argues that shopping orientations affect shopping behaviours. Different shopping orientation have different demographics, psychographics, choices of information sources and stores.
Stone (1954) first introduced the concept of shopping orientation. He identifies four kinds of shoppers and this identification is confirmed (Liampkin et al., 1986). The shoppers include economic, apathetic, ethical and personalizing. Economic shoppers aim at value for money. Apathetic shoppers are those who are not interested in shopping. Ethical shoppers are those who like to purchase at smaller merchants so as to help them to survive. Personalizing shoppers are those who like to shop in familiar stores.

Atlanta et al. (1980) conducted a research and identified two kinds of shoppers; recreational and economic. Recreational shoppers pay more attention on store atmosphere, the quality and variety of products. They prefer extensive information search in the store and continue to shop even after purchase. They are willing to buy whenever they have the positive mood. Economic shoppers are neutral or even dislike shopping. However, a research concerning patronage behaviour of apparel shopping discovers that shopping orientation factor does affect economic shoppers in specialty stores patronage and mall shoppers in department store shopping (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1992).

11. In-store Retailing

Consumers’ store choices were influenced by convenience; how the store performed on the details and the perception they had about the store (Blackwell and Blackwell, 1998). Therefore, the retailer should develop strategies to improve in-store shopping experience and store image.

According to the Engel, Blackwell and Miniard Consumer Decision Making model (1993), during the purchase decision process, consumers need to decide whether to buy, when to buy, what to buy (product type and brand), where to buy (type of retailer and specific retailer) and how to buy (Blackwell et al., 2001). Consumers can make purchase from the Internet, catalogue or direct sale instead of store purchase. Consumers may also cancel or defer purchase because of changed motivations and circumstances, new information or lack of available products (Dhar, 1997). When
consumers buy, they buy in three different ways. They include fully planned purchase, partially planned purchase and unplanned purchase.

Fully planned purchase means that consumers choose the product and brand in advance. It can take place in both high involvement and low involvement conditions. Consumers may not work as planned because of time pressures and in-store factors such as special displays, price reductions and special packaging. Studies indicate that coupon advertisement can help consumers switch brands and attractive pictures can help loyal consumers try new brands (Leclerc and Little, 1997). Partially planned purchase means that a product is chosen in advance and a brand is chosen at point of sale. Low involvement consumers will select their favourite brands, but they may shift to other brands because of other promotional factors such as price reductions or coupons (Walters, 1991). Unplanned purchase is a consumer chooses the product at point of displays. It is found that more than half of purchase happen by POP displays in the store, those purchases are affected by in-door marketing strategies (Chintagunta and Haldor, 1998).

The choice of a selected retailer is the product of the interaction of store, purchase and consumer characteristics. Consumers will use different criteria to evaluate which store best meets their needs depending on the type of purchase (Blackwell et al., 2001). Past experience and store image will guide consumers right to the specific store choice. If it is the first purchase or a bad experience was gained before, customers will make an evaluation of store choice. The top-of-mind response is known as automatic cognitive processing which means that consumers can recall the name and its attributes of a store immediately (Woodside and Trappey, 1992). Store image is the way in which a store is perceived by the shopper. It is affected by its functional qualities and store atmosphere. Consumers prefer to purchase in a store with good image. Therefore, store image measurement is an important tool for marketers. The attitude research methods range from semantic differentials to multidimensional scaling (McDougall and Fry, 1975; Doyle and Fenwick, 1974/1975). Perceived level of crowding may affect shopping behaviour. Some consumers do not like large crowds as they lead to reductions in shopping time; they will postpone purchases (Hiu and Bateson, 1991). Young consumers believe that crowded store implies popularity of the store and its products, shopping there gives rise a sense of ‘fitting in’.
The following ten variables are the determinants of store choice, location, physical store attributes, store atmosphere, the price, variety and quality of products, sales people, quality of services, customer segments, promotion, store atmosphere, post-transaction service and satisfaction (Blackwell et al., 2001).

Location is the time for a consumer to arrive at that store. It also includes the activity to walk to the location or the availability of public transportation. Consumer perception of store locations is more important than actual location (Mackay and Olshavsky, 1975). The consumer perception is affected by factors of store setting, price of goods and helpfulness of sales personnel.

Depth, breadth and quality are the three characteristics in designing assortments. Some speciality stores such as Gap present narrow but deep assortments appealing to a particular kind of consumer (Levy, 1987). Category killers are mass merchandisers which specialize in one category of merchandise. They are more successful than department stores in terms of higher inventory turns, lower operating expenses, higher sales per square foot and smaller inventory losses. A typical example is Toys ‘R’ Us.

The importance of price as a determinant of store choice varies by type of product and nature of buyer. Supermarkets pay particular attention on price (Williams et al., 1978). Some consumers accept a higher price if it is more convenient. When Sears position was taken over by WalMart, the former tried to cut the prices but failed to win back consumers. It was only when Sears treated its consumers in a more friendly way that the position became better. Research indicates that buyers accept the price of a product within a certain range and it is value for money. The effect of price promotion as to increase sales remains uncertain, but it can stimulate the consumers to buy the products earlier, or from one brand to another within the store. A study uncovers that price promotions and in-store displays have both brand substitution effects and store substitution effects on a retailer.

A retail brand is a summary of consumer perceptions about the store and overall image. Advertising and promotion can maintain or alter the existing retail brand (Blackwell et al., 2001). Image advertising involves using visual displays or films that help the
shoppers to form expectation of the store and the nature of store clientele. Retail advertising places more emphasis on image advertising than price advertising. In order to change perceptions of the store, more marketing activities should be conducted.

To get satisfaction is important in the retailing business. Research reveals that even satisfied consumers switch brand and retailers (Buta, 1996). Many highly satisfied consumers switch brands due to boredom. In order to avoid switching retailers, the latter tries to satisfy consumers’ needs by offering quality products and fair price. In addition, the retailer has to entertain them in order to keep them interested in the store. From shopping experience, consumers receive hedonic and utilitarian value (Babin et al., 1994).

Retailer interest is the extent to which the consumer has interest in that store. The more curious the shopper is, the more willing is the shopper to know more about the store. Retailer interest is a cognitive state that reflects a motivation but not emotion (Richins, 1997). Retailer interest reflects an overall response to a given retailer. The perception of interest can be updated as new information and experiences are integrated into a consumer’s existing level of interest in a retailer (Anderson et al., 1994).

Retailer interest was formed to have a significant effect on re-visiting the store again. Retailer interest was also found to have a significant interaction with satisfaction in predicting repatronage intentions and positive word of mouth (Jones and Raynolds, 2005). Both in-store and out-of-store factors can influence the interest level of a store. In-store factors include sales or promotion, knowledge and helpful salespeople, existing products, variety, excellent merchandising, appealing atmosphere and new products. Out-of-store factors reflect aspects of the store that are somewhat unrelated to an in-store experience and include factors such as word-of-mouth, advertising and store image. High levels of interest appear to act as a safeguard for times when satisfaction levels may decrease. A service failure, too high a price may lead to lower levels of satisfaction and if the consumer still has high level interest in the store, the former may not switch retailer. Measuring consumers’ interest level of competitors’ stores can predict consumers’ choice of store and this helps the marketers design appropriate marketing strategies.
Although the majority of consumers like self-selection in store, knowledge and helpful salespeople are still needed (Gilbert et al., 1985). The ideal salespeople should be of good character, knowledge and helpful. Skill and high morale can be improved by training and career development. To win a buyer's confidence it is helpful to complete a transaction successfully. It can be achieved by the following factors, perceived knowledge and expertise, perceived trustworthiness and consumer knowledge. Studies suggest that shoppers are more willing to purchase products from salespeople of expertise (Busch and Ulson, 1976). If a buyer has prior beliefs about a seller's trustworthiness, he is willing to make concessions, and the seller can be in a tougher position than usual (Schurr and Ozanne, 1985). When a salesperson is familiar with a consumer, the possibility to complete a deal is higher. As the salesperson has knowledge about traits, motives and behaviour of the consumers, he can deal with the situation easily (Leong et al., 1989). Some stores such as Home Report train salespeople to help consumers in order to gain consumers confidence in stores. Some stores such as Starbucks improve the quality of their workforce by providing stock options and well organised training programmes (Schultz and Yang, 1999).

Good services will enhance store image, these services include longer credit period, prompt delivery, ease of goods return policy. Some large retailers such as Loblaw endeavour to become a leader and innovator in providing services to consumers, their strategy is to build consumer loyalty and sales with ancillary services in addition to great products (Baglole, 1999).

Very often there is a particular type of consumer shopping in a particular kind of store. Some consumers like to shop there because they want to match their self-image with that of the store. Some people prefer department stores over supermarkets because they consider they are ‘smart’ to shop there (Blackwell et al., 2001). Young people like to shop where there are ‘many young people there’. Old people like to shop where there are ‘not too many young people there’. Some restaurants like to build up an image to match with its target clientele.

Point-of-purchase POP displays and signs can draw consumers’ attention, thus stimulate purchase and increase sales (Kumer and Leone, 1988). Reports indicate that up to 70% of purchase decisions in grocery are made in stores with the aid of POP displays. There
are many advantages to use POP. First, they are inexpensive; second, they reach people at point of purchase; third, they add atmosphere to retail stores (Schlossberg, 1991). The informative and easy-to-use nature of POP materials can decrease number of salespeople hired.

Consumer logistics involves the time required and ease for a shopper to complete the shopping process (Blackwell and Blackwell, 1998). It starts from the time they begin the shopping process to the time they take the products home. The purchase process can be adjusted by consumer logistics. If it is too crowded in the checkout, offering an express checkout lane for small purchases is an alternative (Hui and Bateson, 1991). Stores can also put staple items such as milk, in the front of the store so as to attract small purchases, which are often a strategy in convenience stores. Waiting time can be decreased by adding technology, personnel and training to improve service. Consumers are frustrated if they see unused resources such as closed checkout lanes in a grocery store (Baker and Cameron, 1996). It is good to distract people while waiting. Moving employees from the back of the store to open more checkout lanes when possible makes the shopping experience more satisfactory.

Traditional retailers rely on location-based retailing, merchandising techniques and markdowns to sell goods rather than a good understanding of what consumers want (Blackwell and Talarzyk, 1983). It is a trend for more modern buyers purchasing from a variety of retailing formats. Multi-channel retailing means reaching diverse consumer segments through a variety of formats based on their lifestyles and shopping preferences. It includes location-based retailing, direct selling, direct marketing and electronic retailing.

12. Consumer Resources

Consumers spend money, time and attention to buy products, they are the economic, time and cognitive prices that consumers have to pay. The more money people earn, the busier they are, the higher the value of their time. Their timestyles affect their allocation of time (Vors and Blackwell, 1979). A person’s time is divided into three parts, paid time, obligated time and discretionary time. Obligated time is time occupied by physical
obligations and social obligations. Physical obligations and social obligations increase with rise in income (Vors, p. 91-106). Discretionary time means when individuals feel no sense of economic, legal, moral, social or physical compulsions or obligation. The time available for shopping activities is inversely proportional to the amount of money earned. If consumers trust a brand, they can spend less time to purchase products.

Time-money goods are those requiring the use of time. For those high income people, they are willing to buy time with money, this leads to increase of market for travel and eating out (Blackwell, 2001).

Time-spending goods are money spent in goods and services as direct substitutes for time obligations. For example hiring a neighbourhood teenager to mow the lawn may free a consumer. Polychronic time is contribution of activities simultaneously, consumers use their time to accomplish several goals at the same time. For instance, eating while watching television. Many products are aimed at enriching the time budgets of consumers through polychronic time usage (Kaufman et al., 1991) Cellular phones sales figure rises rapidly as they enable people to walk and talk simultaneously. As time has value, some marketers emphasize time saved for products, a typical example is higher-horsepower lawn mowers.

When consumers purchase products, they must utilize their cognitive resources. Cognitive resources are the mental capacity available for understanding various information-processing activities. Capacity is the cognitive resource that an individual has available at any given time for processing information (MacKenzie, 1986). The allocation of such capacity is known as attention. It is formed by direction and intensity. Direction means to focus the attention because of scarce resources. Intensity is the amount of capacity focus in a particular direction, consumers only pay a reasonable amount of capacity to identify a stimulus before paying attention to other things. By understanding the nature of cognitive resources, marketers should design appropriate marketing strategies to gain consumer attention.

Point of purchase is a key area to gain consumer attention. Eye-catching POP displays, special packaging can help customers pay attention. If the objects fail to receive a sufficient amount of capacity, the impression will be short (Betteman, 1975). Because
of limited capacity, information overload may occur. But there are different perspectives. Some suggest that consumers will stop further processing when there is information overload. Others argue that there is no information overload problem. The amount of attention a consumer gives to a product depends on such factors as involvement, situation personality and characteristics of involvement (Blackwell et al., 2001).

13. Summary

This chapter reviews dried sea products and consumer decision process models. Factors including information search, pre-purchase evaluation of alternatives, culture, social class, involvement, situation, shopping orientations, in-store retailing, consumer resources and store atmosphere, which are believed to have big influences on consumer decision making in shopping for dried sea products are discussed thoroughly. This review uncovers that there is no research on consumer decision making process in shopping for dried sea products in Canton and Hong Kong. This is a gap in knowledge which deserves to be studied in detail. Based on the literature review, an appropriate methodology will be designed and justified in the following chapters.

Although the literature review looks like a purely academic one, it does not have practical value to the researcher. However, this knowledge can help him to enrich the conservation content in business and social activities. Besides, such knowledge can provide him an underpinning to his argument in persuading his customers' when making deal.
Chapter Three

Methodology

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the consumer decision making process in dried sea products. This research investigates the decision making process in Canton (with Hong Kong). The final version of the consumer decision making model may be very different from the proposed ones. This section will consider the justification of choosing an appropriate approach to collect, analyze and interpret data under investigation. The choice of qualitative or quantitative approach depends if it can adequately describe, explain or understand the phenomenon (Al-Sukkar, 2005).

This chapter will discuss the principles of paradigms before selecting the qualitative and quantitative approach. It will then discuss the data collection method including in-depth interview, focus group interview and questionnaire techniques which are used in this study. The data analysis methods include content analysis for qualitative data and statistical method for survey data. Statistical methods include descriptive statistics and data analysis method. Descriptive statistics is for analysing the demographic data of participants and provide a guide for conducting data analysis. Data analysis method is used to analyse hypothesis testing and MANOVA is used to evaluate the research model.

2. Research Philosophy

A paradigm is a group of basic beliefs which directs researchers to explore the nature by identifying the relationship between variables and to specify appropriate methods for conducting particular research (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). It acts as a guide or map, dictating the kinds of problems scientists should address and the types of explanations that are acceptable to them.
The principles of paradigms are ontology, epistemology and methodology (Neuman, 2003). Ontology is a theory of being, concerned with what exists, the form and the nature of the world. It relates to the kinds and conditions for the things to exist and their relationships. Epistemology is the study of knowledge. It is about its nature, validity, value, methods and scope. All research is based on certain assumptions, some methods are used and results are suggested in order to understand, explain or predict that they have these presuppositions allows researchers to control their research approach (Thietart et al., 2001). Methodology concerns how the reality at issue is investigated. These principles are interconnected as the researcher who adopts one of the principles is constrained on the position that may be taken on the others. Among the paradigms for social science, positivism and interpretivism are considered to be the most appropriate to apply in this study. There are many paradigms such as positivism, interpretivism, critical theory, constructivism and post positivism.

Positivism based upon a deductive approach assumes that universal laws and truths drive one reality. It assumes the analyst is objective to interpret collected data free of value. Its methodology is highly structured so that other researchers can verify it by repetition (Gill and Johnson, 1997). As the data collected is numerical, therefore, statistical analysis is possible to carry out. Interpretivism based upon inductive approach argues that business situations are affected by different situations and individuals. It is too complicated that they cannot be formulated by a set of laws. Moreover, to reduce this complication to a set of laws will lose insights in the reality (Saunders et al., 2003). As the business situations are always changing, it leads little value for generalisation.

It is common for positivists to use deductive approach and the interpretivists to use inductive approach. By induction, a theory can be proposed which can be subject to test rigorously.

In inductive approach, by means of observation, a theory can be developed. It means that qualitative data can be collected for interpretation and a quantifiable set of observations that lend themselves to statistical analysis. However, as positivism drives one reality, it is not a suitable paradigm in this study as the latter deals with variables in a complex environment.
Interpretivism based upon the inductive approach argues that business situations are complex and unique. They are a function of a particular set of circumstances and individuals. They cannot be theorised by definite laws in the same way as the physical sciences. Rich insights into this complex world would be lost if such complexity is reduced entirely to a series of law-like generalisations (Saunders et al., 2003). Interpretivists argue that generalisability is not of crucial importance as the business circumstances are ever changing.

Critical theory is a philosophy based on one reality which is subject to social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender forces. Researchers adopting this view aim at changing the world where respondents live (Perry et al., 1997). But this paradigm is not suitable for this study as the aim is to understand how the consumers make decisions in purchase.

Constructivism is a paradigm which is the construction of a world based on the researcher's experience. Based on this construction, the researcher tries to explore the respondents' perception of reality (Crabtree et al., 1993).

Post positivism takes the view as positivism, the exception is that the world is independent of researchers and open to different perceptions. Thus, post positivism allows multiple measures and observations. Triangulation can be applied to a research problem in order to obtain a better picture of what is happening in reality. This paradigm emphasises the objectivity of the researcher but also allow the probability of bias (Easton, 1998; Throchin, 2003).

Different types of approaches attach to the different types of paradigms, the deductive approach owes more to positivism and the inductive approach owes more to interpretivism. Induction involves the development of a theory that is subject to rigorous tests.

An inductive approach involves the development of a theory as a result of the observation of empirical data. Qualitative data is collected from a close understanding of the research content. Besides, the researcher can get rich, real and deep information only by getting closer to the phenomenon under study (Carson and Coviello, 1996).
i) The reasons for selecting a mixed methods approach in this study

A quantitative approach is one in which the investigator primarily uses post-positivist claims for developing knowledge. It is most suitable to identify factors that influence an outcome or understand the best prediction of outcomes (Creswell, 2003). However, no research has been done on the consumer decision process in dried sea products, the researcher does not know which important variables should be examined. The only use of quantitative approach in this study is not suitable alone here.

Therefore, qualitative approach is also involved in this study. “A qualitative approach is one in which the inquirer makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives. In this approach, the researcher collects open-ended, emerging data with the primary intent of developing themes from the data with intent of developing a theory” (Creswell, 2003).

This study is concerned with the consumer decision process in dried sea products. As no study has been done on this area, a theory can be proposed by using qualitative approach. However, this theory is not guaranteed for truthfulness, as it has not been verified. Therefore, the inductive process was not considered sufficient. This led to a choice of mixed methods approach.

A mixed method approach is useful to study the consumer decision process in dried sea products. This approach adopts both qualitative and quantitative approaches. In this approach, the researcher first explores generally to learn about what variables to study and then studies those variables with a large sample of variables (Creswell, 2003).

Creswell (1995) classifies mixed method designs into simultaneous one and sequential one. In simultaneous mixed method, both qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously and analysed complementary. This method is most suitable in answering similar questions. As this study aims at building a theory and then test it, simultaneous method mixed method is not appropriate.
Sequential mixed method means that the researcher performs a qualitative phase of a study first and then a quantitative phase, or vice versa. This method is easier to use than simultaneous one. Besides, as this research tries to develop a theory and then tests it. It is ideal to use sequential mixed method here.

As qualitative data is able to make unknown phenomenon visible, it is more useful in interpretation of observation. While quantitative data can effectively analyse phenomenon on an aggregate level, it is more suitable in explaining finding (Creswell, 2003; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998).

This sequential mixed methods study consists of two phases. The first phase will be a qualitative exploration of consumer decision process in dried sea products by collecting data from in-depth interview and focus group. Themes from this qualitative data will then be developed into theory. Hypotheses are deduced from this theory and tested by relating independent variables with dependent variables. The quantitative data will be collected by conducting surveys on dried sea products consumers. In this study, the types of consumers will be the independent variables.

By adopting mixed method approach, the validity of results is strengthened. As more instruments to collect data for analysis can increase understandings of findings. In doing interview, the researcher is more alert to issues which can be classified later. When the researcher is performing mixed method approach, who can modify the data collection and analysis methods whenever necessary. Because data is collected through multiple methods and sources, this approach can produce more reliable and richer research results, and these will add rigor to the study (Patton, 1990; Mingers, 2001).

A dried sea products consumer decision process model proposed through the adoption of mixed method approach is certainly more creditable and reliable. This will provide the researcher more confidence to refer it in setting marketing strategies.
The following will give a description how the methodology will be carried out in detail (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Flowchart Showing the Stages of Sequential Mixed Method Approach

**Aim**

**Stage 1**

- **In-depth Interview**
  - To obtain general ideas from 3 experts

**Stage 2**

- **Focus Group**
  - To obtain important factors and provide a consumer decision model in dried sea products

**Stage 3**

- **Survey**
  - Responses of questionnaire concerning opinion behaviour and attribute variables are collected from a sample size of 200

**Stage 4**

- **Survey Data Analysis**
  - To evaluate the hypothesis associated with the research model using SPSS for Windows

Source: Adapted from Creswell (1995)
ii) Qualitative Method

The qualitative method is based on induction. The emphasis is on understanding from the respondent's point of view. The researcher is process oriented. This method is a mixture of rational, explorative and intuitive. It adopts an interpretation approach. The findings of the qualitative method are to build a theory for further testing (Aaker et al., 2001).

In this study, qualitative method is chosen to build a consumer decision making model in dried sea products for some of the following reasons. Although there are numerous types of consumer models in marketing, no consumer decision making model in dried sea products has been found. In the early stages of theory development, where phenomena are not well understood and the relations between phenomena are not known, prematurely used quantitative research methods can lead to inconclusive findings (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Using qualitative research, the researcher can explore the issues and gather information in a more flexible way. The information collected can be used to propose a theory that will be tested by quantitative method. By using qualitative method, the researcher can obtain rich, real and deep information with non-statistical data analysis. However, only being close to the phenomenon can obtain deep insight of qualitative data (Carson and Coviello, 1996).

iii) Quantitative Method

The quantitative method is chosen to test the proposed consumer decision making model. It emphasizes the measurement and analysis of causal relationship between variables (Neuman, 2003). These quantitative research findings are based on the researcher's interpretations of events and the relationship between the variables. This method allows detailed planning prior to data collection and analysis because they provide tools for measuring concepts, planning design stages and for dealing with sampling issues.

Quantitative methods utilise statistical measures and control procedures that decrease the bias level and confound variables as much as possible. They address the problems of
reliability, internal validity and the external validity of measures and procedures (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Therefore, the quantitative method is appropriate to be chosen to test the consumer decision making model in this study.

iv) Survey Strategy

In this study, survey strategy is adopted for the quantitative approach. A large amount of data can be collected from a population more economically. Data collected by the use of a questionnaire can be standardised for comparison purpose (Saunders et al., 2003). In this research, as the respondents are not subject to control, a survey strategy is adopted so that the variables of interest cannot be manipulated.

A survey is a suitable method to test a hypothesis and measure variables such as awareness, knowledge, behaviour and opinions (Zikmund, 2003). The main part of the study is concerned with the consumers’ perceptions and how these perceptions affect the purchasing decision behaviour. However, the design and pilot test of questionnaire are time consuming. It also need a lot of time to analyse the results (Saunders et al, 2003).

In order to evaluate the consumer decision making model and the hypothesis, SPSS will be employed to examine the relationships, differences and trends of data. Descriptive statistics are used to analyse the demographic variables of respondents and to provide a guide for conducting meaningful analysis (Sekaran, 1992).

3. Methodology

A) Qualitative Research

Information required to develop a consumer decision making model concerning dried sea products will be collected through exploratory research procedures. Through the use of quantitative research, the proposed model can be verified and statistically validated.
The lack of published research in the area of dried sea products buyer behaviour and the corresponding lack of detailed knowledge required about the dried sea product consumers, their motivations, values, attitudes and behaviour support the development of an exploratory research approach (Churchill, 1995). This approach supports the development of rich preliminary insights of the broader issues and influences concerning dried sea products purchasing. The exploratory research includes a literature review about consumer decision making model and relevant factors in order to gain insights about research problem. Further information will be obtained by conducting in-depth interviews and focus groups so as to build a theory.

i) Interview

An interview is a conversation where one person – the interviewer – is seeking responses for a particular purpose from the other person: the interviewee (Gillham, 2004). An interview can therefore provide information which is full of richness and vividness.

In addition a semi-structured interview can deliver an elaborated ‘in-depth’ response. It is a key technique in ‘real-world’ research. Questions set on this need to be distinct from each other – each dealing with a separate facet of the topic.

An interview is shaped by the four main stages (Gillham, 2004)

i) the introductory phase

ii) the opening development

iii) the central core

iv) closure

The introductory phase includes giving a clear idea of why they have been asked to respond, basic information about the purpose of the interview and the time required for the interview. The physical setting and its arrangement should be properly prepared.
The opening development includes an explanation about how the ways to transcribe and analyse the content including the issue of confidentiality (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005).

The central core of the interview mainly consists of questions concerning a topic which are entirely different. Those questions should be logical and open.

The closure involves pulling together the content and the social element. To summarize what has been learnt from the interviewee so that important additional material may emerge at this point.

In answering 'open' questions, people may need encouragement to say what they think (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005). The interviewer needs to remind respondents of points that they have not mentioned (prompts). Supplementary questions may also be asked to clarify or extend the response (probes) (Patton, 2002; Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006).

Prompts may be used when each interviewee comes up with elements that are unique or peculiar to them, it may also be used when a related topic is talked about so that the prompt can seem like a natural follow-in.

The use of particular kinds of probes depends on what the interviewee is saying. The ideal qualities of good probes should be simple, clear, direct and potent. The different kinds of probes include clarification, show appreciation and understanding, justification, relevance, giving an example, extending the narrative, accuracy and reflecting (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005; Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006).

Clarification involves clarifying things for what the interviewee has just said. It helps the interviewer understand (Patton, 2002).

Showing appreciation and understanding will make people expand on what they are saying. The tone of voice, the compassionate note or a straightforward comment can attain it (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005).
The interviewee often makes judgement statements – about themselves, about others, about circumstances. Understanding them means to unpack and examine them. Justification leads to an active process of rethinking (Gillham, 2004).

During an interview, people often leap from one thing to another which is connected in their minds but slightly bewildering to an outsider. To relate the things that have been mentioned is conveying an importance that the interviewer is listening (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005). Giving an example is necessary when the interviewee uses abstract words such as confusing, irrelevant, because these words mean different things to different people so that interpretation is speculative (Patton, 2002).

When the interviewee gives an account of something that happened, the interviewer feels there is some development or some need for further reflection. Extending the narrative will keep the interviewee going in the direction as desired.

Actual factual recall is a problem. Things that have happened may not be in order. Internal consistency of what people tell should be checked. To summarise at the closure phase of the interview the interviewer can check on the interviewer’s understanding. Accuracy of self-knowledge is more difficult to obtain, as the interviewee’s behaviour or history may well contradict what has been affirmed (Gutek, 1978).

Reflecting is the technique of offering back, essentially in the interviewee’s own words, the essence of what they have just said. This can vary from repeating a ‘key’ phrase or word to focus the interviewee, to some sort of paraphrasing.

Reflecting can be done by direct questioning, summarizing the overt content it focuses the interviewee on the essence of what has just been said or indicating an awareness of the emotional state behind what has been said. Reflecting encourages the interviewee to explore further.
ii) In-depth Interview

The purpose of conducting an in-depth interview is to provide the research context for the focus group study. After talking to these executives, effort is made to find out the relationship among dried sea product attributes, the impacts of social status and culture, consumption values and intended uses. This was planned so that the topics and key words generated from the in-depth interviews can form a context in a focus group study and the subsequent development of a consumer model.

Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005) highly recommends the use of interviews to collect data. The in-depth interview is one type of unstructured interview. In an unstructured interview, the participant can freely express opinions and reactions. The interview is there just to give lead questions and to record so as to understand 'why' and 'how'. The questions and answers are often unstructured and are not systematically coded beforehand. An unstructured interview differs from a structured interview in that it demands greater skills from the interviewer. The interviewer is required to obtain information regarding personal values and attitudes. The interviewer may also be required to deal with matters that call for social sensitivity in their own right (Jankowiz, 1991). An unstructured interview is considered advantageous in the context of discovery. As the interviewer is well acquainted with the research area, asking subsequent questions and enriching the data collected is possible. The in-depth interview can describe a participant’s behaviour more accurately. As the questions are open-ended, the participants can freely elaborate their answers. However, such interview requires a competent interviewer to take the job. The interviewer should have a complete understanding of the research problem, its purpose and what information is being sought. However, the in-depth interview is time-consuming, it may even require several sessions with the same respondent. Such an interview is difficult to interpret and analyze. The researcher's background may greatly influence the interpretations and cause problems of objectivity. Coding of in-depth interviews is also a difficult task in spite of improved techniques and systems.
Fieldwork

The purpose of an in-depth interview is to generate topics and key words which are used as a context in a focus group. The results of a focus group are then used to develop a consumer decision making model in dried sea products. This model is then verified and statistically validated through quantitative research.

In this method of data collection, for this research three interviewees are selected. They are all leading executives in very large dried sea products retailing businesses in Hong Kong. They have at least thirty years retail experiences in dried sea products. The interviews are structured around a general set of predetermined questions based on the simple consumer decision making as outlined in the literature review. The content of interview will focus on the participants’ experiences and opinions (Thompson, 1997). However, the interviewer does not strictly follow this guide, rather the informants are encouraged to start out with describing the view of in-store experiences held within their company and with this as a point of departure (Blackstrom and Johansson, 2006), the interviewer occasionally put in questions that according to the view presented appeared as appropriate. The interviews will be conducted in Cantonese and last between 2-3 hours. Afterwards, they will be later written out and scrutinized in their whole in order to facilitate the analysis.

The in-depth interview also uses the Critical Incident Techniques (Jones, 1999) to generate data on consumer purchase. This is essentially one type of content data analyses using events of critical incidents. In this method, the participants describe certain incidents which may be positive or negative. This is not simply any one incident being considered, but incidents that are memorable because they are considered particularly positive or negative.

Looking for the critical case is particularly important where resources may limit the evaluation to the study of only a single site. Under such conditions, it will produce more information for analysis (Patton, 2002).
iii) Focus Group

Focus group means a small group of people interacting with each other to seek information on a focused number of issues (Bryman and Bell, 2003). An ideal focus group should be a small number of individuals, normally from six to around ten people who discuss a particular topic under the direction of a moderator who keeps the discussion focused. Too small or too large can make the focus group ineffective as the participation of individuals can become too fragmented or too little (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005).

This discussion may last from half an hour to around two hours. The moderator’s role is to keep the discussion on the focus issue and ensure that it goes smoothly. The moderator aims at securing interaction between the focus group members and ensuring that they address topics believed to be important. Prior to a focus group a list of topics or key words is prepared. The moderator aims at securing discussion on all the topics, but not necessarily in the same order as listed. Turning back to a topic to get it clarified is sometimes necessary. Introducing a topic is by asking a series of questions on the topic. As the discussion proceeds, the questions tend to be more specific. The amount and the nature of direction provided by the interviewer influence the quality and depth of data collected. An ideal situation is that the members of a focus group should be more or less the same, as they can easily acquaint with one another, thus, they can feel more easily in expressing their ideas (Cowley, 2000). This make the interviewer better understands the members’ behaviour. It also helps the researcher probe into each one’s view through discussion and reasoning. By arguing with each other’s view, this reveals how people really think about different issues. Focus group is a quick, flexible and inexpensive method of data collection. The researcher can observe the reactions of people in open and free conversation with each other, he/she can interact directly with respondents, to react and build upon the discussion as it goes. A focus group allows the collection of data from people even if they are not literate. The results from data collected in this manner are easy to understand (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005). The disadvantage is that it is rather difficult to categorise the data. An unskilled moderator can find difficulties in getting really useful information. Sometimes, it may be difficult to gather people at a location, the small numbers who are willing might not be
representative of the population. The responses of the group members can be influenced by a dominant group member (DeLorme and Reid, 1999). The researcher may have greater faith than is actually warranted because of live participation and observation. Besides, the researcher may bias the respondents, knowingly or unknowingly.

A focus group allows spontaneity of discussion and the disclosure of attitudes, opinions and information on present or prospective buying and use behaviour (Green et al., 1988). It is appropriate to select a focus group in this study to collect data.

Focus groups are small structured groups with selected participants, normally led by a moderator. They aim at explaining specific topics, individuals' views and experiences through group interaction (Litoselliti, 2003). A focus group is ideally conducted in a non-threatening environment where participants share and respond to comments, ideas and perceptions. Interaction means participants respond to and build on the views expressed by others in the group that produces a range of opinions, ideas and experiences, and thus generates insightful information. A focus group can be stimulated by topics supplied by the researcher, this leads to uncover new, open-ended pathways for discussion.
Krueger (1998) suggests the following steps to conduct a focus group (Figure 3.2).

**Figure 3.2: Steps of Conducting a Focus Group**

1. **Planning Focus Groups**
2. **Developing Questions**
3. **Moderating Focus Groups**
4. **Analysis and Interpretation**
5. **Reporting**

Source: Adapted from Krueger (1998)

In this study, a smaller group of six participants is appropriate as its aim is to explore complex topics. It offers more opportunity for people to talk. Three focus groups will be conducted as it is the minimum number suggested by some researchers (Litoselliti, 2003).

The focus group in this study is composed of dried sea products consumers. They are homogenous, like-minded individuals as all purchase dried sea products. They can be different from other aspects such as age, economic or educational background, because it can maximise the possibility of exploring subjects from different perspectives.

The focus group may last between one and a half to two hours, sessions are tape recorded to facilitate analysis.
The moderator will guide the discussion using some designed open-ended questions with minimal intervention (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005). The moderator maintains the group’s focus and ensures that the key questions are discussed. All participants are ensured to contribute (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006).

In the focus group session, the participants will give different perspectives on the same topic. These include their views, attitudes, beliefs, responses, motivations and perceptions on a topic, why people think or feel the way they do (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006).

Focus group methodology has the following limitations and they will be handled accordingly (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006).

a) Bias and manipulation

Participants saying what they think you want to hear. This can be avoided by explaining that they are not expected to reach consensus before session. By avoiding the use of leading and yes/no questions and by encouraging a balance of contribution among participants (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005).

b) ‘False’ consensus

Some participants may dominate the discussion (Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2005; Patton, 2002). This can be dealt with through firm, yet non-intrusive, moderating and with the help of a topic guide, in order to keep the discussion on track.

c) The issue of generalizability

It is due to limited number of participants and the difficulty of having a really representative sample. Although the results may not be generalizable or representative, it is indicative, it illustrates particular social phenomena. The validity of a focus group can be improved by selecting a problem that is suitable for focus group inquiry (Krueger, 1994). Furthermore, if other researchers can relate their studies to these results, it increases generalizability (Marshall and Rossman, 1999).
d) Difficulty of analysis and interpretation of results

It is because the discussion is open-ended and the pressure of many immediate situational factors. Participants may modify their positions during the discussion, all comments must be interpreted under a particular situation. Analysis of the pilot focus group, orientation before the discussion, recorded debriefing with observers after the session and follow-up interviews with participants, all these data considered will aid verification in analysis and avoid the pitfalls of selective perception (Dawson et al., 1993).

For the three focus group sessions concerned, the first one is treated as a pilot focus group. It is slightly different from the following two focus group sessions. In the pilot focus group, the themes and participants' responses will be used to plan the topic guide. If some topics appear vague, complex or lead to conflict, alteration of the sequencing of questions, the wordings of questions and the planned timings may be required.

The process of the interaction can be influenced by the questions asked and their wording so as to minimize unpredictability. The pilot focus group can offer opportunity to improve the physical settings. Further, the pilot focus group allows the researcher to make more informed decisions about the possibility to change the research design.

It is worthwhile to develop a topic guide as it can generate a broad yet focused, in-depth discussion on the context and various components of the topic. To prepare this guide, it needs to clarify the research questions of the project, brainstorm a number of key topics and questions, before drafting a question order with timings.

The number of questions will be not more than ten, They start from general to specific, more to least important. As this study is concerned with consumer behaviour, the questions will be related to behaviours, opinion/values, feeling, knowledge and sensory questions about what people have seen, heard and so on (Patton, 1990).

In this study, the flow of questions for focus group interview follows the suggestion by Krueger (1998) (Table 3.1).
Table 3.1: The Flow of Questions for Focus Group Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Type</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Participants get acquainted and feel connected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory</td>
<td>Begins discussion of topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>Moves smoothly and seamlessly into key questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key</td>
<td>Obtains insight on areas of central concern in the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ending</td>
<td>Helps researchers determine where to place emphasis and brings closure to the discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Listed below are the questions to be asked in the focus group interview.

Table 3.2: The Questions to be Asked in the Focus Group Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Time (mins)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Opening</td>
<td>Tell us your name and where you are</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Introduction</td>
<td>When you hear the words dried sea products, what comes to your mind?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Transition</td>
<td>Are you dried sea products consumers?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Transition</td>
<td>How have you been involved with dried sea products?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Key</td>
<td>What drives you to purchase dried sea products?</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Key</td>
<td>Do you carry pre-purchase search before purchase?</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Key</td>
<td>How do you search?</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Key</td>
<td>What factors are likely to increase pre-purchase search?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Key</td>
<td>What criteria are used for evaluating dried sea products?</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Key</td>
<td>Would you purchase these dried sea products if they meet the criteria?</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Ending</td>
<td>Out of all the factors we discussed, what factors are most important to you?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Ending</td>
<td>Did I correctly describe what was said?</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

Ideally, the questions to be asked in the focus group interview should be as fully open ended as possible. However, as group consists of six participants and the duration of the sessions is limited to two hours. To set the questions slightly closed ended will ensure all questions will be covered on time. The ending question reminds the participants that any aspects they want to raise are welcome.
The aim of analysis is to establish a variety of important links between the research questions and the data gathered. Full transcripts will be used as they allow a more intimate understanding of the content of the talk, the flow of discussion and the group dynamics. The analysis will contain some transcribed examples.

Analysis will begin after each meeting is finished. Because it will help revise the topic guide or moderate techniques in the light of the information gathered.

Attempt will be made to identify the substantial parts in the transcript that relate to the research questions. What the participants repeat will be marked. All questions asked among participants will be coded and illustrative quotes are used to show how questions influence the discussion. The coded data will fit into a category as exclusively as possible. It is necessary to modify the researcher’s insights, taking different perspectives and questioning the interpretations during the analysis process. It includes modifying the wording of category headings, shifting the content of categories, adding new categories and evaluating the interpretations many times during the process.

The analysis of the focus group statement is to produce a crude costing of data. There are two aims in doing the analysis. The first one is to find themes in the texts that could be related to aspects mentioned in the consumer decision making model. The second one is to investigate the possible presence of themes that lie outside these aspects (Backstrom and Johansson, 2006). Attempts will be made to identify all the aspects that will be involved in the formation of the consumer decision making model, those occurring frequently in the texts as well as aspects that were less frequent. Having reached an overall view of the themes included in the material, each text will be then thoroughly analysed and all relevant aspects of the formation of the model are identified. The stories told by the leading retailers and the focus group will provide evidence of the concepts. A comparison of similarities and differences between retailers and consumers perspectives will enrich our understanding on constructs on constructing the consumer decision making model in dried sea products.

In-depth interviews provide rich understanding of the background and problems relating to consumer decision making. Through such understanding and literature review,
valuable concepts and information are listed which will help in preparing leading questions in conducting focus group discussion.

In a focus group, the researcher records data on papers. The whole interview will be tape-recorded so that any missing points can be located. The themes emerged are used for creating concepts and generate research hypothesis later on. Learning how respondents talk about the phenomenon may help in designing questionnaires. The focus group members should be representative of the population as far as possible. After the group members are recruited, their consent should be obtained.

**iv) Content Analysis**

Once the data has been collected by focus group, it will be reduced and analysed. Many methods have been developed to do this task as to avoid subjective interpretation which leads to the risk of distorting information. The most common ones are cognitive mapping and content analysis.

The objective of cognitive mapping is to establish and analyse the contents of a person’s representation (Axelrod, 1976). The concepts and their relations are represented by knots and arrows. It aims at capturing a person’s perceptual filters and idiosyncretic vision, or the interactions and influence of different groups (Langfed-Smith, 1992).

Content analysis assumes that the repetition of units of analysis of interview reveals the interests and concerns of the interviewee.

In content analysis, the text is broken down and rearranged in terms of the units of analysis, they are then categorised. Content analysis is most suitable in analysing responses to open-ended survey questions or discerning the interests of individuals (Allard-Poesi, 1998). Therefore, this study adopts content analysis method to analyse the data produced by focus group.

In the focus group, the text produced is broken down into units of analysis before classification. There are two types of classification. Thematic analysis is to choose
sentences or groups or sentences as units of analysis, it is common in organizational studies. Lexical analysis is to choose words as the units of analysis, it is common in analysing discourse (Dougherty and Bowman, 1995). As the words expressed by the members of focus group are rather simple and straightforward. Lexical analysis is adopted in this study and words are the unit of analysis.

Categories take the form of themes or concepts. The form chosen is affected by the units of analysis. Themes include group of words or paragraphs. Concepts include words with similar meanings. As the units of analysis in this study are words, concepts are therefore accepted as the forms of categories. The advantages are that less time is needed in defining and validating categories. Standardisation and comparisons with other studies are easier (Allard-Poesi, 1995).

Categories are either defined before or after coding. In the priori method, categories are defined prior to coding. It is based on the results of earlier research or experience. It is more common in verifying hypothesis in earlier studies. In the ex post method, the text is read several times in order to isolate the essential themes. The themes are then suggested ideas for category headings. In this study, ex post method is chosen as it aims at identifying factor influencing consumer decision making process.

After the data has been categorised, the final step is analysis. There are two types of analysis. The qualitative analysis and the quantitative analysis. Qualitative analysis is to judge the importance of the themes in the discourse taking into account the context of the discourse. It is more common in revealing the relations between different concerns of interviewees (D'Aveni and MacMillan, 1990).

Quantitative analysis simply means counting the frequency of the units of analysis. Its importance depends on the level of frequency. Particular attention should be paid when the words carry different meanings in terms of their contexts, pronouns may be ignored which affect the accuracy of frequency level (Boland and Tondy, 1986). In this study, quantitative analysis is chosen as words are taken as the units of analysis.

Content analysis properly comes after the interview material has been transcribed. In essence, it is about putting the substance content of the interview into categories.
Arriving at categories is troublesome and time-consuming (Gillhan, 2004). To group the substantive statements to categories, it should follow the principles of exhaustiveness and exclusiveness.

Steps in carrying out content analysis:

a) The interview’s content is completely written down, it includes main questions, prompts and probes. Main headings are treated as sub-headings.

b) Take each transcript in turn, highlight substantive statements. For similar statements, mark up extra points.

c) Go back to the first one and extract any missing statements.

d) Derive a set of categories for the responses to each question. It is easier to deal with one main question at a time. Give a simple heading to each category.

e) Look at the list of categories, combine or split up the categories.

f) Check each substantive statement against the category list. For those statements cannot be assigned to any categories, modify the wording of the category headings so as to include query statements.

g) For those unclassifiable statements but important, treat it separately (Gillham, 2004).

The above content analysis is only on the surface. Some statements are expressed in different ways. Making judgements about latent meanings (i.e. what they ‘meant’ by what they said) can improve the validity of the analysis. However, such categorisation is only a matter of personal judgement as to include actual category content statements in presenting analysis can help when making assessments.

The ability of categorisation is a characteristic of human intelligence. The drawbacks are that definite categories cannot be achieved and the category headings cannot convey
the essential character of statements. These weaknesses can be lessened by peer review. Peer review can be used to challenge the category construction. An academic expert can assist to highlight any ‘missing’ substantive statements or disagree any highlighted statements. This forms a basis for reviewing the researcher’s judgement and makes the analysis more rigorous.

After the qualitative data is analyzed and interpreted, a consumer decision process model for dried sea products is proposed which is then verified by quantitative research.

B) Quantitative Research

The results of exploratory research design give a full picture of the consumer decision making process in purchasing dried sea products. These results can also produce a consumer decision making model on purchasing dried sea products. The validity of the model will be verified by conducting and testing hypothesis by quantitative research.

This quantitative research includes hypothesis, survey method and sampling, pilot study and data analysis procedure.

i) Hypothesis

A hypothesis is a statement of the relationship between two variables. A hypothesis does not have to be correct, it just has to be testable (Raymono, 1999). It is based on existing theoretical material, previous empirical results, or even personal impressions or simple conjecture. If researchers want to use statistical tests to prove a research hypothesis, they must first translate the hypothesis into a statistical hypothesis (Thietart et al., 2001). A statistical hypothesis is presented in two parts: the null hypothesis describes a situation in which there is no major shift from the status quo. The alternative hypothesis describes that there is a major shift from the status quo. The researcher’s goal is then to disprove the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative hypothesis. Statistical tests are used to assess the validity of statistical hypothesis (Thietart et al., 2001).
ii) Survey Method

The outcome of the in-depth interviews and focus group is to produce a consumer decision making model in purchasing dried sea products and reveals the most important elements which strongly influence the purchase process. This model will be tested by the following stages (Robson, 1993).

1. Deduce operational hypotheses from the theory.
2. Test if there is a relationship between the two variables.
3. Based on the results, modify the theory when necessary.

These stages will be highly structured to facilitate replication. The problems will be reduced to the simplest possible elements for better understanding.

a) Sample Size

Non-probability sampling will be used due to lower cost and the difficulty to specify a sampling frame in this study. Convenience sampling is adopted. Respondents are selected at convenience. They will be selected until the target is reached. As only convenient samples are selected, the data may be biased. Unrepresentative samples render statistical inferences impossible. In fact, it is still able to generalise from non-probability samples about the population but not on statistical grounds (Saunders et al., 2003).

In testing hypothesis, Olejnik (1984) points out that a suitable sample size is affected by level of statistical significance, statistical power, effect size and statistical analysis strategy.

The arbitrary rule of thumb in the social science is 0.05 level of significance. This level is also normally adopted in marketing research. From a practical point of view, the criteria of 0.05 level of significance is accepted here.
Statistical power measures the chance for the occurrence of Type II error. Type II error is to accept null hypothesis but it should not do so. Olejnik (1984) suggests it should not be less than 0.5. For a sample size of 200, the minimum figure for significance power is 0.05.

As this study does not assess this difference, the effect does not need to be considered (Olejnik, 1984).

In determining differences between population, sample size (i.e. effect size) should be assessed (Olejnik, 1984). As this study is not attempting to determine differences between population, the effect size is not considered of consequence.

Statistical analysis strategy affects the minimum sample size required. For complex factorial design, the total sample size needs to exceed 200 as to achieve reliability (Olejnik, 1984).

Based on the above factors, the sample size selected for this survey is 200. This section below will describe how the sample is selected through the purchase intercept technique.

b) Survey Method

In this research, it is important to understand the behaviour of Hong Kong (with Canton) consumers who purchase dried sea products. It includes examining the characteristics of those consumers who purchase dried sea products, determining their perception and attitude towards dried sea products attributes and examining the association between consumers' attitude and behaviour intentions. Hence, descriptive research is relevant for describing those characteristics (Malhotra, 1996).

Data collection can be done by either observation or survey. The greatest advantage of observation is that the data recorded are more objective as they measure the actual behaviour rather than intended behaviour. Moreover, there is no reporting bias, potential bias caused by the interviewers and any interviewing process. A serious disadvantage is that it cannot observe people's motivations, beliefs, attributes and preference (Sun,
Therefore, observation method is not suitable in this study. Survey method is adopted as it can obtain unobserved information such as consumers' beliefs, attitudes, preferences and behavioural intentions. The main disadvantage of survey method is that errors will incur during the survey process. The source of errors may come from non-response errors, inaccuracy in responses and errors caused by interviewers. However, these errors can be minimised by careful questionnaire construction and survey administration (Sun, 2003). A modified mall intercept interview known as the purchase intercept technique (PIT) is selected to collect data (McIntyre and Bender, 1986). Similar to mall intercept approach, PIT involves intercepting consumers while they are in a shopping environment. In addition, PIT combines both in-store observation and in-store interviewing to access purchase behaviour and the reasons behind that behaviour. Like a mall intercept, PIT involves intercepting consumers while they are in a shopping environment. The difference is that PIT is administered at the time of an observable specific product selection (just purchased dried sea products in this study) rather than while consumers are simply in the shop location. The main advantage of PIT is that it is specifically targeted and it aids buyer recall. Interviewing at the point of purchase minimizes the time lapse between purchase and data collection and provides a natural set of memory cues for the respondent while the purchase is still salient (Sun, 2003).

One disadvantage of the PIT is the potential for interviewee bias in their answers to question because of low interest in the purpose of the survey (Aaker and Day, 1990). To minimize this bias, the purpose of the survey is explained to interviewees as being for the improvement of services if the consumers' needs can be better understood. The rationale for this approach is to ensure that the interviewee's personal interest is directly associated with the quality of their answers to the questions.

Data are collected from a sample of 200 consumers at Hong Kong dried sea products shopping district. Consumers are selected during Summer and Autumn seasons in 2007. This district is claimed by the president of Hong Kong. Dried Sea Food and Grocery Merchant Association Limited constitutes more than 90% of total Hong Kong dried sea products trade. A typical dried sea products store is chosen from the district, it will collect 50% of total samples. People who go the store and wandering around are treated as customers. The other 50% will be chosen along the streets in the district. People who
carry bags marked with the dried sea products shop name are treated as customers. Convenience sampling method is adopted. The next respondent will be selected after the former has finished the survey. The residence status will not be considered so far as the respondents are willing to participate the survey. The questionnaire is the instrument to collect data.

c) Survey

This section includes a description of the survey. It includes a description of each variable and how each variable is measured, consumer demographics are also included. The demographic questions are gender, marital status, education, age, classification of income, employment status and hometown.

iii) Questionnaire

All participants answer the same set of questions (Devoss, 2002). This is an efficient method to collect large samples. Clear layout and clear explanation of the purpose of the survey to respondents can improve validity, reliability and response rates. Besides, it is efficient to carry out pilot testing.

The questionnaire will be administrated by structured interviews where interviewer meet the participants and ask the questions directly. This type of questionnaires has a higher response rate than self-administrated questionnaires.

In this study, opinion, behaviour and attribute variables will be collected. Opinion variable record the feelings and beliefs about something. Behaviours variables record did do and will do within a given period. Attribute variables record the demographics of the respondents in order to differentiate them.

A valid question is one which is really understood by the participant and the answer must be really understood by the researchers (Foddy, 1994). Well designed questions can improve the validity and reliability of the data. I shall try to adopt or adapt questions used in other questionnaires as it is more efficient than developing my own questions.
The wording of questions will be familiar to respondents so as to improve validity. Forced-choice questions are chosen as this type is quicker and easier to answer. The researcher will choose Likert-style rating scale to collect opinion data. On a five-point rating scale, the respondent will express to what extent he/she agrees with it.

The questionnaire is prepared in English, it will be translated in Chinese. When the source documents are translated, particular attention will be paid to lexical meaning, idiomatic meaning, experimental meaning and grammar, so that source questionnaire carries the same meaning as target questionnaire. Back translation approach will be adopted, it means source questionnaire to target questionnaire to source questionnaire. By comparing the original and new source questionnaires, any discrepancies can be located, clearance of these will generate a good final version.

**iv) Measurement and Scaling Methods**

Attitude is a very complicated entity consists of thought and feelings about some objects such as food (Olsen, 1999). Attitudes are measured by direction and extremity. Direction is either positive or negative. Extremity is commonly measured by bipolar semantic differential scales described by satisfaction, dissatisfaction, positive-negative etc. (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993).

Bipolar continuum is chosen as the measurement tool for attitude in this study. One reason is that it is the most popular one to evaluate dimensions of attitude direction and extremity due largely to its intuitive appeal. The other reason is that it holds the most promise for predicting behavioural reactions towards the attitude objects (Olsen, 1999).

One disadvantage of measuring attitude along the bipolar continuum is that it is difficult to know the meanings of middle-most mark on attitudes preference items. Kaplan (1972) suggests a modification that respondents are presented with two distinct unipolar scales. One is from not at all positive to extremely negative. The interviewees are requested to scale them twice. If this approach is taken, the time taken for interviewees to answer such questions will increase significantly and this will increase cost. In the mall intercept, the interviewee is normally patient for no more than 3 to 5 minutes in
answering questions (Malhotra, 1996). Therefore, Kaplan's approach will not be followed in this study from a practical point of view.

**Rating scales**

Having decided to measure attitude on a polar continuum basis, rating scales is chosen to provide a set of numbered rankings to express what the judgement is. There are may types of rating scales such as itemized category, rank order, constant sum, Likert and semantic differential. Each has its own strengths and weaknesses. Aaker and Day (1990) note that the choice of scaling method should be based on

1. The specific information that is required to satisfy the research objectives.

2. The adaptability of the scale to the data collection method and budget constraints and

3. The compatibility of the scale with the structure of the respondent’s attitude.

In fact, an open-ended question or unstructured question can be used to measure attitude, but its weaknesses includes the difficulties in analysis, interpretations and comparison (Alreck and Settle, 2004). In order to overcome such weaknesses, specific rating scales can be employed. The three most common types are the Stapel scale, the Likert scale and the semantic differential scale. These were each considered for this research. In this study of consumer’s behaviour, a scale is chosen as giving a measure of respondents’ agreement levels, or a series of statements with levels of agreement to measure objects (Javalgi and Joseph, 1991).

The Stapel scale is a 10-category unipolar rating scale ranging from +5 to -5. It allows finer discriminations, but it is rather difficult to apply and confusing (Peterson, 2000).

Likert scale is a five-point bipolar response with ranges from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’. It can be modified to allow a seven-point category. Likert recommends it is preferable to use a wider scale as it permits collapsing the responses into condensed categories for analysis (Allen and Seaman, 2007). The scale consists of a declarative statement and a list of constant response categories. Making the scale
'constant' is by means of labeling the extremes and numbering the intermediate scale points with equal distance between them.

Likert scales are relatively simple to design and manage, even a participant with low education can use it. This disadvantage can be minimised when a competent interviewer gives assistance during the process of completing the questionnaires. The major advantages of adopting a Likert scale are flexibility, economy and ease of composition. Apart from obtaining the result of each item, a Likert scale permits the researcher to obtain a summated value (Alreck and Settle, 2004). However, Likert scales are not as sensitive as required and therefore other types of scale were considered.

In this research, a semantic differential scale is utilised to measure the constructs, as it can provide a more sensitive measure than a five point Likert scale. The chosen semantic differential scale is a seven-category, bipolar rating scale with the polar opposites of adjective at the extreme ends. This scale can provide interval level data by modification. It is considered to be a fundamental rating scale especially for identifying small differences (Peterson, 2000).

The principal advantage of the semantic differential scale is that it can give a profile of the construct both effectively and clearly. This is done through the use of several pairs of bipolar adjectives chosen from the earlier mixed method inputs. However, it is a difficult task to select the adjective on the ultimate ends of the spectrum limiting to a single dimension. Furthermore, it is difficult to determine the antonym. Where a Likert scale is argued to be most effective in measuring opinions, a semantic differential scale is most suitable for measuring constructs and things (Alreck and Settle, 2004).

In order to improve the validity of the survey questions, this study adapts different research to measure the constructs and 'things' including dried sea products, dried sea products attributes, information search, shopping orientations, information sources and situational influences. As those question types all employ the semantic differential scale to facilitate comparison purposes, then the semantic differential scale is chosen as most beneficial in this study of a retail consumer's behaviour.
Participants in this survey will be asked to respond to each statement, selecting the numbers which best represents their answers. A copy of the questionnaire is attached (Appendix I).

Development of the scale measures

After the semantic differential scale is chosen, the next step is to develop the measure.

The technique is shown as follows:

1. Define the constructs and generate the items

Wherever possible, the definition of the constructs and items were understood and where appropriate adopted from the literature - as they have often been previously assessed and documented. The meanings must be relevant to study of retail though.

2. Determine content reliability

The items generated should be related to the construct. Content validity means 'how well the chosen items represent the defined construct' (Zaichowsky, 1985). Experts are asked to comment on the suitability and representiveness of the questionnaire in order to validate it.

3. Determine internal scale reliability

It is done in this case through SPSS and Cronbach’s alpha and factor analysis using varimax rotation. Cronbach’s alpha refers to the degree to which items that make up the scale ‘hang together’ (Pallant, 2005). High correlation means that the items are measuring the same construct. In addition to this factor analysis can produce internal scale reliability by grouping a large set of items into a smaller set of factors (Pallant, 2005).

4. Measure test-retest reliability
It is a further test of reliability. It can be achieved by administering the same questionnaire to the same respondents under similar conditions twice (Saunders et al. 2003). In order to set more accurate results, the time intervals of the two administrations should not be too long.

5. Determine the construct validity

Zaltman et al. (1977) defines construct validity as ‘the extent to which an operationalization measures the concept which it purports to measure’. Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005) propose that face validity can give a good measure on the concept which it purports to be. It is simply asking the experts on that topic to give opinion on the scales. Also, face validity can be achieved by ensuring that the retail literature underpins the question content.

In this study, the development of scaling measures is performed after the qualitative research has been completed and the constructs are also generated from the needs of the proposed consumer decision making model in dried sea products.

Contents of the questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part covers the factors that are important to influence the decision making process of dried sea products purchase. They include

1. The way consumers buy things.
2. The attitude to dried sea products.
3. The process of deciding how to select dried sea products.
4. What factors have most influence on decision to purchase?

Participants in the survey will be asked to respond to each statement, indicating their level of agreement or disagreement using a seven point scale. A copy of the questionnaire is attached to the appendix.

The following two examples are questions to be asked in the questionnaire.
Figure 3.3: Examples to be Asked in the Questionnaire

Example 1

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following items.

1. The price of the product

   Strongly agree  |  Strongly disagree
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Source: This Study

The seven-point scale represents

1. Strongly agree
2. Slightly Agree
3. Agree
4. Uncertain
5. Disagree
6. Slightly disagree
7. Strongly disagree

Example B

What is the chance of you buying dried sea products again?

   Definitely will buy  |  Definitely will not buy
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Source: This Study

The second part contains statements about previous purchasing frequency, the intended use for the dried sea products purchase and the intention to buy again. Information on consumers' purchase frequency will allow the researcher to examine the relationship between consumers' cognitive patterns and purchase power. The question of intended use will allow the mapping of the distribution of different intended uses of dried sea...
products among the population of consumers. The intention to buy next time will be measured at the levels of very unlikely to very likely. In general, the scale should be balanced in order to obtain objective data. However, if the distribution of respondents is likely to be skewed either positively or negatively, an unbalanced scale with more categories in the direction of skewness may be appropriate. The examination of relationship between consumers’ attitude and intentions can affect repurchase intention.

The third part contains statements relating to the demographic information. It includes age, family income, gender, occupation and education.

This questionnaire will be pre-listed, modified and refined before the fieldwork started.

v) Survey Form

The questions in the questionnaire should flow logically so that the participants can fill the answers easily (Saunders et al., 2003). The initial questions should be straightforward that the respondent will enjoy answering. Questions about attributes and behaviours rank first than those collecting data on opinions. Personal and sensitive questions should be towards the end of the questionnaire, their purpose should be clearly explained so as to increase the response rate. Questions at the beginning should be obviously relevant to the objective of the questionnaire, thus, the participants can feel that they have great contribution to the study. However, many researchers discourage the development of longer questionnaire as it will lead to lower response rate (de Vaus, 2002), the acceptable length for structural interviews is the one which requires a few minutes to complete if the data is collected in the street.

To achieve as high a response rate as possible, it is necessary to explain clearly and concisely the reason for a respondent to complete the survey. It is preferably to be done in the beginning of questionnaire. The heading of the questionnaire should be clear, unbiased and sound interesting. The subtitle should convey the research nature of the topic. At the end of the interview, the interviewer should thank the respondent for giving valuable information. Before the questionnaire is used, pilot test should be performed to make sure the respondents can answer the questions easily and the
interviewer has no difficulties to record data. Preliminary analysis using the pilot test data should ensure that the data collected will enable the investigative questions to be answered (Saunders et al., 2003).

vi) Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

By assessing the questionnaire, the validity and reliability of the data can be improved. Content validity can be established by asking an expert to give opinions on the suitability and representativeness of the questions. The expert can comment on the structure of the questionnaire also (Mitchell, 1996). In this study, the three experts participated in the in-depth interviews were requested to assess the degree to which the questions appear to ask what they purport to be.

Face validity reveals whether the questionnaire appears to make sense. This can be achieved by choosing some persons for a pilot. The researcher will invite ten participants to participate in the pilot test as it is the minimum number suggested (Fink, 1995). A trial run can give some guarantee that the questionnaire will succeed. It ensures that the participants can follow the instructions and answer the questions correctly. After completing the pilot test, the participants are encouraged to give opinions. It includes the clearness of questions, any major topic omissions and any other comments.

The researcher will also pilot test the questionnaire with interviewers to discover whether they can follow the questionnaire and answer the questions correctly. During pilot testing, the researcher can discuss with the interviewees if there are any problems arise.

The reliability of the questionnaire means the consistency of responses in answering questions. This will be tested by test re-test method and internal consistency method (Mitchell, 1996). Test re-test estimates of reliability are done by collecting data from the same questionnaire under identical position as much as possible. It means administering the questionnaire twice to participants. This method has two problems. Firstly, the same participants may refuse to answer the same questionnaire twice. Secondly, the
participants may not give the same answers if the duration between two administration is long. In this study, the pilot group will be asked to do test re-test activity two weeks after the first interview. The first five participants who are willing to participate the re-test activity will be invited to act as the pilot group.

vii) Data Analysis Procedures

Statistical analysis included frequency distribution, principal component factor analysis, chi-square tests of independence, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and correlation analysis.

Descriptive statistics are used to describe characteristics of the sample.

Factor analysis is one kind of multivariable statistical methods to define the structure in a data matrix. The factors are a group of common dimensions. The aim of factor analysis is to assess how the variable is explained by the dimensions. In this study, exploratory factor analysis is used to discover some underlying but unknown structure. Two common techniques are employed in exploratory factor analysis. One is common factor analysis and the other is principal component analysis. This study uses principal component analysis. It aims at minimizing the number of variables which explain behaviours. Eigenvalues will be used to select the factors for further study. Factor scores are then generated by SPSS statistical software using the raw data and combining it with the factor loadings to compute weights for each item in the factor, while maintaining the same correlation between the items as the factor loadings (Johnson, 1998).

In this study, shopping orientations, information source influences and situational influences consist of numerous items. Factor analysis is used to group them into small sets of dependent variables so that it is easier to conduct hypothesis testing.
viii) MANOVA

MANOVA is an extension of ANOVA. The characteristics are that there are several related dependent variables. This technique involves forming a new summary dependent variable from the combined dependent variables (Pallant, 2005). MANOVA will show if the two groups are different based on the significance on the summary dependent variable. Furthermore, it can show the multivariate results for those dependent variables independently. In this study, factor analysis has grouped items included in shopping orientations, information source influences and situational influences into smaller set of factors known as dependent variables. MANOVA will be adopted to test for significant difference of those several dependent variables. The results for the dependent variables are considered separately by ANOVA. ANOVA will tell which individual dependent variable produces a result of significant difference.

When comparison of two different groups of participants on one variable is required, a univariate test such as t test can serve the purpose. When analysis is required on separate dependent variable, a lot of univariate tests can be performed but the risk of Type I error increases. This risk can be removed by performing a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). In MANOVA, the dependent variables are combined to provide a composite dependent variable to test for the effect of the independent variable.

MANOVA can be applied to assess whether there is significant difference between groups. If this is the case, it does not infer that significant differences also exist between each dependent variable and the independent variable (Manly, 1994). Subsequently, separate univariate tests for each dependent variable will be made in detail (Hair et al., 1998).

MANOVA has many assumptions, they include normality, homogeneity of variance and particularly homogeneity of covariance.
ix) Correlation Analysis

Correlation coefficients are statistics that indicate the existence and type of relationship between two variables. They indicate the manner and strength of the relationship of two variables.

In behavioural sciences research, the most common method to measure association of two variables is Pearson Correlation coefficient (Raymondo, 1999). The name of this statistic is given by its developer, Karl Pearson, but the more common name is known as the Pearson r. The Pearson r is appropriate for examining two interval or ratio level variables for evidence of a linear relationship.

When the Pearson r is computed for a pair of variables, the resulting correlation coefficient will range between -1 and 1. A correlation coefficient of -1 means perfectly negative, a correlation coefficient of +1 means perfectly positive. A positive Pearson r indicates a positive relationship; that is, as X variable increases, there will be a corresponding increase in the Y variable. A negative Pearson r indicates a negative relationship, meaning that when Y variable decreases, the X variable correspondingly increases. A correlation coefficient equal to zero indicates no relationship between the two variables. In this study, hypothesis will be made to test whether two variables will have relationship, if yes, how strong?

x) Chi Square Test

It is a nonparametric statistical procedure “used to determine if the pattern of observed results in a contingency table is statistically significant different from what would be expected by chance” (Raymondo, 1999). It can be said as a test of independence. Independence refers to how well the observed pattern of results uniform to the pattern of results we would expect by chance.

In this study, many hypotheses will be set to test if the existence of relationship between two variables.
C) Ethical Considerations

This research will follow the steps as mentioned in the ethics guidelines issued by the Ethics Committee of the University of Surrey.

The informed consent of the following people will be obtained at the beginning of the study.

- The three experts in in-depth interviews.
- The focus group participants.
- The sample of consumers selected in the survey.
- The informed consent of those people will be sought whenever they are approached during the study.

All information pertaining to participants remains the property of the researcher and will not be used for any purpose except for execution of this study.

4. Summary

The chapter has shown a general discussion of research paradigms and their relationship with different types of research approach. The reasons for selecting a mixed methods approach in this study are given. The qualitative research data is collected through exploratory research procedures. It includes the in-depth interview and focus group techniques. The methodologies are fully discussed and justified. The results of these exploratory research procedures are planned so as to generate a consumer decision making model on purchasing dried sea products. This chapter also covers the methodologies of the quantitative research approach. The quantitative research techniques include details of the hypothesis, survey method and various data analysis procedures. At last, ethical considerations are mentioned. The next chapter will give a full description of the qualitative research in this study.
Chapter Four

Qualitative Research

1. Introduction

The exploratory approach in this study will be conducted by means of depth interview and focus group respectively.

As there is a lack of detailed knowledge about dried sea products and the corresponding consumer behaviour, depth interviews were carried out to give general ideas about dried sea products consumer behaviour in Hong Kong. It identifies dried sea products attributes relevant to Chinese buyers, the intended uses of these products, the related social, cultural background and consumption values. The purpose of the in-depth interview is to generate topics and key words which are used as a context in a focus group.

Having obtained a general understanding of the nature of dried sea products and their consumer behaviour, a number of focus group questions can be developed to investigate the important components relating to the consumer decision making process in dried sea products. Based on these components, a consumer decision model in dried sea products will be developed. This proposed model will be verified by quantitative research. Hypotheses will be deduced from this model and tested by relating independent variables with dependent variables.

2. In-depth interview

Convergent in-depth interview is useful for primary research where there is uncertainty about what information is to be collected (Dick, 1990). There is no information about why, when and how Chinese consumers purchase dried sea products. Interviews were used to collect qualitative information about dried sea product attributes appealing to Chinese buyers, the intended uses of dried sea products for buyers, and the related social and cultural background to that behaviour. The process involves a series of three
interviews, unstructured in content. Information generated from each interview is interpreted in relation to findings from previous interviews. Using this technique, data is interpreted tentatively at first, with the information becoming firmer as the data converged. Convergence is achieved from interview to interview by attaching lower importance to one-off or infrequent comments.

Three in-depth interviews were held over the month of January in 2007. All the interviewees were responsible for selling dried sea products in large retail shops with experience of over 30 years. One was a sole proprietor who was in charge of purchase and sales departments. The other two were sales managers in large retail stores. All the interviews were performed in their own stores. The interviews lasted approximating two hours. These were held either at lunchtime or early evening. All conversations were tape recorded. An initial grouping by topic was made. Those groupings were then examined. A comparison of the three interviews was made, recurring themes were identified. In order to illustrate key issues, this section will select some relevant quotations and reproduce these below. The quotations are the verbatim of participants.

3. Dried sea products attributes

This term was the main focus of the discussions and in all cases appeared to be the area of the most interest and concern to the retailers and consumers. They include physical and symbolic attributes. Those attributes are subjective. The composite of those attributes have significance in determining the degree of acceptability of that product by the buyer. Physical attributes consist of appearance, packaging, less chemical residues, good and different tastes. Symbolic attributes consist of achievement, wealth, personality and social status.

A) Appearance and packaging

These relate to visual quality of dried sea products to Chinese consumers. (Table 4.1, entries 1.1 - 1.5)
**B) Less chemical residue**

It was mentioned that less chemical residue is an important attribute to attract consumers to buy dried sea products. (Table 4.1, entries 2.1-2.5)

**C) Better and different tastes**

Dried sea products taste better and different from meat and vegetables. (Table 4.1, entries 3.1-3.2)

**D) Symbolic attribute**

Purchasing and consuming dried sea products have symbolic meaning. It indicates a person’s achievement, wealth, personality and social status. (Table 4.1, entries 4.1-4.5)
Table 4.1: Quotes relating to dried sea products attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appearance and Packaging</th>
<th>Proprietor</th>
<th>Manager 1</th>
<th>Manager 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 'I am not certain what attributes should be, perhaps evenness of colour, large size, high quality packaging are regarded as physical attributes.'</td>
<td>1.3 'Quality reflects prestige, consumers like to buy high quality dried sea products because of prestige element.'</td>
<td>1.5 'Usually, those dried sea products with better appearance and packaging charge higher price.'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 'What you mean by quality depends on intended use of consumers.'</td>
<td>1.4 'I always emphasize large size, bright, even colour when I persuade consumers to buy.'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 'Consumers believe that dried sea products contain maximum nutrition.'</td>
<td>2.3 'Although Chinese government has detailed regulations on the use of various chemicals used on fruit and vegetables, chemical residues in fruit and vegetables are a serious problem. Small-scale family farmers find it difficult to adopt and implement new technologies in relation to pre or post-harvest practices due to financial constraints.'</td>
<td>2.4 'Poultry are contaminated and the meat contains residues of hormones and medicine.'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 'Vegetable and fruits produced in China contain pesticide residues. Poor sanitation contaminates those plants. Chinese farmers are poor in personal hygiene.'</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.5 'Dried sea products are collected in the ocean, they are free of chemical residues.'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Less chemical residue |  |  | |
|-----------------------|  |  |  |
| 3.1 'Consumers prefer to enjoy dried sea products as they taste better.' | 3.2 'Citizens living in western part of China like to enjoy dried sea products as they taste different.' | |

Less chemical residue

2.1 'Consumers believe that dried sea products contain maximum nutrition.'

2.2 'Vegetable and fruits produced in China contain pesticide residues. Poor sanitation contaminates those plants. Chinese farmers are poor in personal hygiene.'

2.3 'Although Chinese government has detailed regulations on the use of various chemicals used on fruit and vegetables, chemical residues in fruit and vegetables are a serious problem. Small-scale family farmers find it difficult to adopt and implement new technologies in relation to pre or post-harvest practices due to financial constraints.'

2.4 'Poultry are contaminated and the meat contains residues of hormones and medicine.'

2.5 'Dried sea products are collected in the ocean, they are free of chemical residues.'
4. Intended uses of dried sea products

The quality of dried sea products are represented by the illustrated different attributes. Consumers indicated different reasons and preferences in relation to those attributes. Such differences are affected by the intended uses of the dried sea products and the associated social and cultural factors also affect the consumer’s attitude towards the product, which in turn affect consumer behaviours.

The intended use of dried sea products includes gift, self-consumption and visiting patients.

A) Purchasing dried sea product as a gift

A culture shapes people’s beliefs, norms and customs, and consequently influences people’s behaviour toward purchasing and consumption (Sun, 2003). A personal value is a basic belief which directs behaviour aiming at the final goal. Cultural values are normative beliefs by which individuals are expected to behave in certain ways. Personal values are beliefs of individuals, they may be modified when a person’s situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbolic attributes</th>
<th>Proprietor</th>
<th>Manager 1</th>
<th>Manager 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 ‘Consumers are proud to purchase high quality dry sea products.’</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.3 ‘In China, only people whose monthly income above average can afford to buy high quality dried sea products.’</td>
<td>4.4 ‘In ancient times, only Chinese emperor and his senior officials could enjoy dried sea products.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 ‘Most Chinese believe dried sea products purchase represents a person’s achievement, glory.’</td>
<td>4.4 ‘In ancient times, only Chinese emperor and his senior officials could enjoy dried sea products.’</td>
<td>4.5 ‘All Chinese adore dried sea products as they come overseas. Consume those products represent personality and social status.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
changes, such as their occupation, position, living standard and friendship groups (Sun, 2003).

Very often, the cultural value and personal value is difficult to distinguish clearly. From the three in-depth interviews, three cultural values were identified which influence Chinese consumers to purchase dried sea products. They were Guanxi, reciprocity and face. All three aimed to maintain social interdependence, balanced between the group’s needs and that of the individual to maintain the social hierarchy and to legitimate affiliation to society.

**Guanxi and the presentation of gifts**

Guanxi means the social relationship between two persons under a particular bonding. Guanxi can become weak if not maintained properly. It can be strengthened if maintained purposely and carefully. One tool is regular visits accompanied by dried sea products. (Table 4.2, 5.1-5.2)

Reasons for the presentation of gifts (Table 4.2, entries 5.3-5.8)

a) Stabilizing a person’s position and promotion in the workplace.
b) To secure future help from people in the network.
c) Benefits from resource allocations in the social network.
d) The social network a person belongs to can represent his or her social status.

**Reciprocity and the presentation of gifts**

The essence of reciprocity is when a person does a favour for another reason, that person may oblige the recipient to repay. (Table 4.2, entries 6.1-6.2)

**Keeping face and presentation of gifts**

By means of continuous success and ostentation in one’s life, reputation is gradually gained. This reputation is known as ‘face’ in Chinese culture. Face work means the
projection of self-image and impression management (Yan et al., 1999). (Table 4.2, entries 7.1-7.2)

Why choose dried sea products as gifts

Gift presentation relates to cultural values. But the motives are different in Hong Kong and China. In Hong Kong, presenting dried sea products simply builds trust or facilitates social etiquette. In China, it has changed from facilitating social relationships to bribery (Sun, 2003). (Table 4.2, entry 8.1)

Situations in presenting dried sea products

Situations exert an influence on consumer behaviour. The situation favouring presenting dried sea products as gifts include special occasions or the time needing someone to do a favour. (Table 4.2, entries 9.1-9.2)
Table 4.2: Quotes relating to purchase of dried sea products as a gift

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guanxi and the presentation of gifts</th>
<th>Proprietor</th>
<th>Manager 1</th>
<th>Manager 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1 ‘It is common for a consumer to approach a recipient with dried sea product as a gift, as it reduces the risk of being refused.’</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.4 ‘If you want to keep social relationship with somebody, presenting gift regularly is the best way.’</td>
<td>5.6 ‘Everyone needs help. Most Chinese hesitate to help a stranger unless there is some bond. When somebody approaches a government officer to sign a certificate, it is easier to get a signature if that person is in the same social network, otherwise such a request will be delayed. Presenting dried sea product as a gift will improve administration efficiency.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 ‘In China, no matter if you work in private businesses, government offices and any level of management in state-owned enterprises, you have to maintain good relationship with your boss. When a firm needs to sack people, the boss will normally dismiss a member of staff who has less good relationship with him. Presenting dried sea product as a gift is an effective means to maintain a person’s position.’</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.5 ‘In Chinese society, when a resource allocator is trying to make decisions, he/she will employ various norms of social exchange to interact with people of different degrees of intimacy. This resource allocator will consider the givers from the family, then in his/her network and finally outsiders. Presenting dried sea products to the resource allocator regularly can certainly strengthen social relationships.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 ‘In a Chinese government organization, top leaders always have their own network to facilitate their power manipulation. People will have more chance to be promoted if they have a close relationship with the top leader. Presenting dried sea products regularly is an effective means to do this.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.7 ‘In China, social connections are important factors that are frequently taken into consideration by others in judging overall social status, presenting dried sea products is one way to strengthen a person’s social relationship that it has become part of a person’s daily life.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 (Cont'd): Quotes relating to purchase of dried sea products as a gift

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Proprietor</th>
<th>Manager 1</th>
<th>Manager 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reciprocity and</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.1 'Reciprocity is informed and its effectiveness is very much derived from the recipient’s memory. The more frequent a giver presents dried sea products, the higher the chance the giver will enjoy repayment of gratitude.'</td>
<td>6.2 'If a potential petitioner expects reciprocity from the gift recipient by presenting gift, that gift should be special, meaningful and expensive. The gift is expected to form a deep impression in the recipient. Dried sea products meet these criteria.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>the presentation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>of gifts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Keeping face</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.1 'People who wrongly behave in gift giving will end up breaking their relationships with the recipients. Presenting dried sea products as gifts will avoid this risk.'</td>
<td>7.2 'Face is an important issue in social interaction. If a giver does not act correctly, he / she has no face, losing it may result loss in many kinds of privileges. Presenting dried sea products is a serious work for the giver.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>and presentation of</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>gifts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why choose</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>dried sea</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>products as gifts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situations in</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>presenting</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>dried sea</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>products</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.1 'Dried sea products are special in China because no one has the chance to enjoy it before 1980's. Now, only wealthy people can consume them. No chemical residues means good intention to recipient.'

Source: This Study
B) Self-consumption

It divides into regular self-consumption and occasional self-consumption. Regular self-consumption refers to people who consume dried sea products becoming part of their lifestyle. Occasional self-consumption refers to people who buy dried sea products out of fashion, ostentation and curiosity.

Regular self-consumption

This is limited to a small group of high income people in China. The motives are health concerns, hedonism and consumption that corresponds to their wealthy status (Table 4.3, entries 10.1 – 10.3)

Occasional self-consumption

People may purchase dried sea products sometimes because of fashion, ostentation or curiosity. (Table 4.3, entries 11.1-11.3)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Proprietor</th>
<th>Manager 1</th>
<th>Manager 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regular self-consumption</strong></td>
<td>10.1 'Wealthy people have high purchasing power. They can consume luxury dried sea products that correspond to their status in society. They will buy the dried sea products when they need them for daily consumption.'</td>
<td>10.3 'Once people have a comfortable house to live in, they will consume delicious dried sea products as they taste better and taste different.'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.2 'Ladies prefer dried sea products as they can improve health and delay the aging process. Dried sea products consumption is the secret of living longer.'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occasional self-consumption</strong></td>
<td>11.1 'Traditional self-contentment is gradually replaced by showing off. Consumers like to show other people that they have purchased and consumed dried sea products. They like to show off that they regularly purchase dried sea products even it is not true.'</td>
<td>11.2 'In the western part of China, the local citizens seldom enjoy dried sea products. As their income increased, they are willing to purchase dried sea products so long as they can afford.'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11.3 'Many Chinese people would think that dried sea products might be different to domestically produced food in taste. Curiosity persuades them to purchase dried sea products.'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
C) Purchasing dried sea products for aged parents

Respect for parents is the key theme among Chinese populations across the world. It is a socially desirable and culturally approved behaviour. (Table 4.4, entries 12.1-12.2)

D) Purchasing dried sea products for patients

According to traditional Chinese medicine, the most common food recommended by doctors for patients during the rehabilitation period is dried sea products. (Table 4.4, entries 13.1-13.2)

Table 4.4: Quotes relating to purchasing dried sea products for aged parents and patients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Proprietor</th>
<th>Manager 1</th>
<th>Manager 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purchasing dried sea products for aged parents</strong></td>
<td>12.1 ‘In China, a son is obliged to make regular financial contributions to his parents after he has left home. Buying dried sea products for his parents could receive admiration and praise from neighbours, friends and relatives.’</td>
<td>12.2 ‘Buying dried sea products for parents are still limited to the wealthy sons, as it is a very expensive gift.’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purchasing dried sea products for patients</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>13.1 ‘Presenting dried sea products to patients is the most effective means to show love and care. However, this action is limited to wealthy givers.’</td>
<td>13.2 ‘It is the greatest respect to patients if you present dried sea products during visit.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
5. Consumer value

In-depth interviews indicate that there are four main consumption values. They are A) Basic need consumption, B) Health related consumption, C) Hedonistic consumption and D) Symbolic consumption.

A) Basic need consumption
Some rich people believe that dried sea products can supplement livestock, poultry and vegetables in their diet. (Table 4.5, entries 14.1 – 14.2)

B) Health related consumption
Some people believe that dried sea products have no chemical residues and are free from food poisoning. (Table 4.5, entry 15.1)

C) Hedonistic consumption
Some people purchase dried sea products for enjoyment. (Table 4.5, entry 16.1)

D) Symbolic consumption
Dried sea products consumption carries strong symbolic meanings. There are three reasons to buy dried sea products as gifts. Firstly, it shows the giver’s generosity, success or prestige. Secondly, it shows the giver’s care, respect and good wishes to the recipient. Thirdly, it shows the recipient’s social status. (Table 4.5, entries 17.1-17.4)
Table 4.5: Quotes relating to consumer value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic need consumption</th>
<th>Manager 1</th>
<th>Manager 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.1 'Many rich persons consume dried sea products in their daily diet. They believe those products contain valuable nutrients and minerals which can supplement the ordinary food.'</td>
<td>14.2 'Dried sea products are good for health. They can help ladies keep fit.'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health related consumption</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.1 'Newspapers and television always reveal that vegetables contain pesticide residue, livestock and poultry suffer epidemic diseases. These encourage people to consume more dried sea products.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonistic consumption</td>
<td>16.1 'Basically, most Chinese like to consume dried sea products as they taste different. If they are good in cooking, they can make the products taste better.'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbolic consumption</td>
<td>17.1 'Consume dried sea products regularly can show the consumers’ social group and their achievement.'</td>
<td>17.3 'Buying for aged parents means family success.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17.2 'Present dried sea products as gifts will never make giver and recipient lose ‘face.’'</td>
<td>17.4 'Eating dried sea products in restaurants can tell other people about their achievement. It also shows respect to their guests.'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
6. Discussion

Understanding the appealing attributes of dried sea products uncover why Chinese prefer them. Exploring the intended uses of dried sea products and related consumption values, in the light of China's cultural and social background, provides a deeper and more informed understanding why Chinese are willing to purchase and consume them even though they are 10 times to 100 times dearer to livestock, poultry and vegetables. By examining the quotes generated by the three in-depth interviews, recurring themes were identified, the relationships among dried sea product attributes, consumption values and intended uses were uncovered and shown in figure 4.1. The findings of the in-depth interviews can provide topics and key words to be used as a context in focus group study.

Figure 4.1: The Relationships among Dried Sea Product Attributes, Consumption Values and Intended Uses

Source: This Study
7. Focus Group

The purpose of a focus group is to understand the views of the participants. In this study, the participants are encouraged to produce a range of opinions, ideas, attributes and experiences related to the decision making process in purchasing dried sea products. Focus group study is an effective way to probe their views they are expressing.

During March 2007, three focus groups were arranged to explore the consumer behaviour in purchasing dried sea products. Each group had six participants, a facilitator and an assistant. The purpose of the facilitator was to guide the discussion from topic to topic, probe and encourage discussion, and ensure that all participants contributed their views. The assistant mostly remained silent, recorded their impressions of the meeting in note form, and helped administratively.

In order to make the participants selection more representative, each group were recruited from the consumers of a retail dried sea products store located in the largest shopping area in Hong Kong. As the majority of consumers were from Hong Kong rather than Canton, two groups consisted of Hong Kong citizens and the third group were Canton citizens. The two Hong Kong groups were divided on age basis, holding one group with 30 to 50 year olds, and another with people aged 50 to 75. All participants were recruited on the same day on first in, first selected basis. This grouping would make them easier to familiarize with each other and thus facilitate interaction.

The sessions were informal with refreshments held at early evening, lasting approximately one and a half hours. They were held inside a dried sea products store after business hours. A small fee was paid to the participants to thank them for their discussion because it was quite lengthy.

As the discussion was held inside a shop, all participants were surrounded by products. Thus, comments on the products experienced were possible without the display of pictures.
All discussion was tape recorded. Each session followed the same structure with twelve identical questions being put to the group. Apart from the first question, the eleven questions were all concerned with the theme. At some points participants wandered off topic, they were led back, but if the point they were making was relevant to one of the other issues under investigation they were allowed to make some statement before being led back. Sometimes the participants were asked about more specific situations. At the end each focus group interview, the participants were requested to make recommendation on the content and process of the interview. Some suggestions were accepted so as to improve content validity. For example, the questions are fully explained in order to avoid ambiguity.

Following each focus group, the proceedings were transcribed word-for-word from the audio tape. The contents were initially grouped. They were examined and recurring themes were identified. In order to illustrate key issues, some relevant quotations are selected and reproduced below. They are the verbatim from respondents.

Table 3.2 shows the 12 questions to be asked in the focus group interview. They consist of introducing, transition, key and ending questions. From which seven key questions are relating to the construct of EBM Consumer Decision Process Model (1993) which are shown in the table 4.6 below and will be posed in each of the groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4-6 : Focus Group Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constructs</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What criteria are used for evaluating dried sea products?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How have you been involved with dried sea products?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you carry out pre-purchase search before purchase?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Those questions mainly follow the flow of EBM Consumer Decision Process Model. The findings of earlier in-depth interview provide a deeper understanding why Chinese consumers are willing to engage in making decisions in dried sea products purchase.

1. What drives you to purchase dried sea products?

This question related to the need of dried sea products. The consumers desire for them that triggered the decision process. Some participants purchased them as gifts. Some were for self-consumption. Some were for their aged parents. Cultural and personal values affected their intended uses of dried sea products. The consumption values affected why they choose them.

Gifts:

'I usually present dried shark fins and dried sea cucumber to business friends, they are very promising gifts. In China, Guanxi is a very important element in doing business. If you do not have Guanxi with your business friends, build it up, maintain it, then strengthen it if possible. Guanxi can help you to operate the business successfully. I work in a construction company, many jobs are obtained by means of bidding tender. The tender will never be accepted if you only possess the expertise and offer the lowest price. Guanxi is the determining element in obtaining contract.'

'Some people like dried shark fins, some like dried abalone. One of my business actually is to presents gifts to them based on their favourite.'
'Apart from working hard in your firm, you have to maintain good relationships with your boss. Presenting dried sea products can achieve this purpose. One common Chinese old saying is that 'if you don’t respect and treat your senior well in normal daily lives, you can’t expect this person will help you when you are in a emergency situation.' Most Chinese remember what favour they have received before, they believe they have obligation to repay when there is opportunity.'

'I cannot consume all these products within a short time. Half of them are presented to my aged parents. Every son should not forget the grace of rearing.'

'Unlike Europeans who visit relatives or friends in hospital with bunch of flowers, Chinese visit patients in hospital with fruit. Wealthy Chinese visits patients with dried sea products.'

Self consumption:

'Dried sea products are my daily diet. I like high quality food. Eating well is my lifestyle. My father comes from a rich family. He recalled that dried sea products were his daily diet in his childhood. This kind of food could only be consumed by the millionaire at that time. Since 1949, the Communists ruled the country, no Chinese citizens had the chance to eat dried sea products. The duration is almost 40 years. Only after the economic reform in 1978 helps the Chinese economy grow tremendously, the purchase of dried sea products becomes affordable. As I am the leader in a large manufacturing concern. My monthly income can afford me to spend more. Now, I can afford to consume dried sea products everyday, these products are really good for health.'

'I consume dried sea products occasionally. After I have monthly salary at the beginning of the month, I’ll use a portion of my salary at the beginning of the month. I’ll use a portion of my income to buy dried fish bladder and dried shark fin for use later.'
'I come from Canton. I usually buy dried sea products on my boss's behalf. He has relatively high purchasing power, he consumes them to show his wealthy personal status.'

'My husband prefers dried sea products as they are environmentally friendly products. These correspond to nature and are less polluted. Chinese agricultural product is full of poisonous substances. Farmers use the pesticide with no control. Vegetables and fruits have a lot of chemical residues. As the poultry are fed by such agricultural products, it means that all the Chinese food are polluted to a small and large extent. As most of the dried sea products come from nature, it means that it is free of food poisoning. One should eat them more if he can afford to do so.'

'Enjoying life means living well and eating well. Consuming dried sea products leads to a long life.'

'I like to expose my lifestyle to my friends. After I have purchased these dried sea products, I like to show people what I have purchased on the way walking back to my home.'

'Dried shark fins and fish bladders are bright in colour and attractive. I display them on a cupboard to express my success and achievements.'

2. What criteria are used for evaluating dried sea products?

Participants used physical and symbolic attributes to evaluate dried sea products. These attributes included good appearance, less chemical residues, good tastes, different taste, achievement, wealth and social status.

Different participants indicated different attributes as contributing to perceived higher quality.

'For all dried sea products including abalones, sea cucumbers, shark fins, fish bladders. The ideal one should be evenness of colour, large size, bright, sufficiently dry.'
Country of origin is also a factor to evaluate the quality of dried sea products. Usually the Japanese products are of highest quality. It is because of the good texture and Japanese know how to 'dry' the products properly. If the products are sufficiently dry, they are shiny in appearance, the colour is bright, the texture is good and can be kept longer in room temperature. The dried sea products from other countries are usually poorer in quality. The main reason is that the products are not dry enough. As higher water content in those products result in heavier weight, it implies that the suppliers can earn more if they sell them in terms of weight. However, such treatment will only produce dried sea products of lower quality. Lower quality means products of lower value.

Although good quality is a basic requirement appealing to prospective buyers, superior packaging can add value to dried sea products as many consumers seek prestige.

When I buy food, I prefer fresh food as it contains maximum nutrition. However, all the local food contains chemical residues to a more or less extent. For good safety issues concerns, only the dried sea products contain least chemical residues as they come from the ocean.

Before Chinese modernization, most Chinese have no chance to enjoy dried sea products. As their income increases, they can afford to buy luxury goods. My friends like them as they taste different to local produced products.

Most of my friends are high income people, eating dried sea products as a normal diet reflects our social status. Eating dried sea products in restaurants are very expensive. It may cost HK$ 10,000 per person. My friends like to enjoy dried sea products, this is the reason for them to do dried sea products shopping occasionally. People who can consume more are highly valued by other people.

Dried abalone and dried fish bladder are very expensive products, only wealthy Chinese can afford them.

Presenting dried sea products to patients reflects my personality. It shows my care, respect, generosity and good wishes to the recipient.
3. How have you been involved with dried sea products?

It is the degree of personal relevance of dried sea products. Some consumers have high product involvement. Some consumers have low product involvement. Their level of product involvement influences information searching behaviours and the purchasing decision process.

'I like shopping. I often go to the dried sea products shopping centre to take a look at the products.'

'Some of my friends often use bags with the names of dried sea products stores, as hand-bags.'

'To select good dried sea cucumber and abalone requires much relevant knowledge. To know how to cook well is also important. My mother has told me the criteria in choosing high quality dried sea products. I often read cookery books which teach me how to prepare excellent cuisine. Sometimes, there are recommendations on how to select good dried sea products. These advices can help me to verify the knowledge which I have obtained from my mother. Besides, my mother also recommends which dried sea products shops are trustworthy. It reduces the risk to have bad purchase.'

'Good dried sea products taste good. Bad dried sea products taste bad. Therefore, selection of the right one is important.'

'I seldom purchase dried sea products. I only purchase it in Mid Autumn Festival and Lunar New Year.'

'I seldom consume dried sea products. I only purchase them in Mid Autumn Festival and Lunar New Year as gifts. In fact, I do not have any special favourite. To have a fit body, you should not be too fat.'
Eating too much will certainly increase your body weight. Delicious cuisines will only increase your appetite. As the purchase of dried sea products are mainly for presenting gifts. I shall not spend too much on it, it must be within budget.'

'Gifts reflect one’s status. Present high quality dried abalone to recipients reflect their status.'

'A lot of time is used to inspect the size, colour, smell, size and appearance of dried sea products. Price is of less importance because you can expect high quality products are more expensive.'

'As dried sea products are expensive, you should spend more effort to search for information.'

'I am very busy. I never spend time and effort to buy dried sea products.'

'There are a variety of dried sea products. I usually consult my mother about the relevant information before I visit the retail stores.'

4. Do you carry out pre-purchase search before purchase?

The participants searched for current product information before they made a purchasing decision. They would search, compare and analyze information about different types of dried sea products before purchase. The information source includes print publication, personal information and broadcast information. The limited resources include available time and cognitive effort expended in conducting an active search for information regarding products the participants need to purchase.

'I usually read the newspapers advertisement about dried sea products. This will notify me what types of products are on sale.'

'Sometimes the magazines have articles which teach you how to cook dried sea products. I will read it and try to get the named products for cooking.'
'Before I go to shop for dried shark fins, I try to get product information from my colleagues. If they do not have such information, I will get it from my friends.'

'During Mid-Autumn Festival and Lunar New Year Festival, television and radio always provide extensive information on how to select good dried sea products. The advice is very useful. It is a normal practice for me to present gifts to my relatives and business friends before traditional Chinese festivals. Basically, I have no ideas on the kind of dried sea products to purchase. If there is no hint, I shall buy the same kind of products as before. Luckily, those public media remind me there are some their alternatives which are also worthy to buy.'

'Shopping for dried sea products are leisure activities. I usually go to dried sea products retail shop centre with my mother. There is no time pressure for me. I like shopping, therefore, I like to stay in a shop to look for any new products. I am the person who is easily forgettable. The goods displayed on the shelves remind me their existence. Actually, browsing through the shelves give me a lot of fun. For canned abalone, I can only recognise it by its special packaging.'

'I am experienced in selecting dried sea products. I only get information from the salesperson when the product is new to me.'

'I visit the dried sea products stores regularly because of enjoyment derived from such activities.'

'You can get product information from other persons or mass media but the most effective one should be shopping, because you can get most relevant information by observation and discussion with salespersons.'

'If you present dried sea products to your valuable recipients, greater search is necessary before the final purchase decision is made. Wrong presentation may weaken a relationship. As the recipients are very valuable, you must present expensive dried sea products to show your regard or respect. As it is expensive, you must expect the goods should be very beneficial to your recipients. Purchasing poor products by using a lot of money is very risky. Therefore, you should find a good retail store. Select your target
gifts which are value for money. In other words, you must acquire sufficient product information before making the purchase.'

'Before going to dried sea products stores centre, I’ll visit my neighbouring market to take a preliminary search first.'

'I do not need to carry out a pre-purchase search. I go to the same old shop to buy dried sea products. I have confidence with the salespeople. Their recommendation is very good.'

5. How do you search?

Unlike buying other products such as electronic equipments, they can be bought by direct mail or through internet. All purchases of dried sea products are done by shopping.

Different people have different shopping styles that put particular emphasis on certain activities. The participants made purchases for many different reasons in addition to their need for products.

'I usually shop at a number of stores. I buy my targeted dried sea products in the shop which offers the lowest price.

Usually these stores are the ones which I am rather familiar with, I know all the salespeople in those stores. They all take initiatives to introduce good quality products to me. So that I can make comparison among different kinds of dried sea products and buy them from the shop which offers me the lowest price.'

'I like to shop at one particular store only. The salespersons at that store are very helpful.'

'I prefer to shop in a small store instead of a large store, because the store atmosphere is more friendly. In a large store, the salespeople are always changing. The salespeople only introduce the products to me. Their facial expression is mechanical. Although the
store layout looks great and bright, it gives me a ‘cool’ feeling, I have to stand there to select dried sea products. In a small store, the atmosphere is entirely different. I can sit there and the store owner deal with me pleasantly. Apart from talking about the goods, we also chat freely. It gives me a ‘warm’ feeling.

‘I am very busy. I don’t like shopping. I only buy dried sea products at the store which is most convenient to me.’

‘The reputation of a store is very important to me. The dried sea products are very expensive. The risk of poor purchase can lead to heavy loss of money.’

‘Buying dried sea products is my second purpose. My chief purpose is to make it a social activity. I like to shop with my friends rather than alone.’

‘I do not hesitate to buy expensive dried fish bladder if I really like it.’

‘I am willing to spend more time to search and examine good quality dried abalone at a number of stores.’

6. What factors are likely to increase pre-purchase search?

Most participants suggest that buying dried sea products for gifts increase the kind of information sought, the extent of search, the price limit and the source of information sought, especially when the gift is for special occasions such as festivals. Low involved consumers are less influenced by such consumption situations, they are more concerned with price only.

‘A gift carries special meaning to a recipient. If this person belongs to upper class, your gift should match with that person’s status. You must pay more attention to select expensive dried sea products. One of the best opportunities for you to present gift is on your recipient’s birthday. The best period is to present the dried sea products in the recipient’s dinner party. As this product is good to health and expensive, this presentation must be very promising.’
'Unlike electronic products which are standardised, the quality of a particular kind of dried abalone varies every year. I must pay more attention to select them in order to present them to my mother-in-law as a Mid Autumn gift. Mid-Autumn festival is a very important festival in China. Presenting gifts to your respected persons in important festival is a custom that must be followed. It is essential for a person to select expensive dried sea products to his mother-in-law as a kind of respect during Mid-Autumn festivals.'

'I heard some people say that appearance and thickness of Japanese dried abalone are better this year. This should be an ideal gift to my boss regardless the price.'

'I don't pay much attention to examine any particular kind of dried sea products. I only care about the price.'

'You should be very careful to select your 'optimum' dried sea products for Lunar New Year gifts. You can collect information from newspapers, television and your peers and friends.'

7. Out of all the factors we discussed, what factors are most important to you?

Most of the participants were experienced shoppers. They mentioned that the best evidence of consumers' satisfaction is intent to purchase and repeat purchases. Some people engage in trial purchases. Some people engage in repeat purchases and some engage in long-term commitment purchases.

'When I purchase dried sea products from a store for the first time, I usually buy a small quantity. I visit the dried sea products centre just for fun. From there, I can obtain up to date product information so that I can have something to discuss with my friends during party. At first, I try to purchase a small quantity of dried sea products. If the quality is good, I shall persuade my friends to purchase in bulk.'

'When I consume the products, I shall evaluate if the performances are over, equal or below expectation. If it is alright, I'll buy more next time.'
'As I have spent a lot of time and effort to search and evaluate dried sea products, there is no doubt that I am really willing to make a purchase.'

'I visit the dried sea products store only to kill time, I have no intention to buy.'

'If I am satisfied with this purchase, I'll recommend other people to visit this store in the future.'

'We come from Canton, we are introduced by our relatives to visit this store. In Canton, there are a lot of stores selling dried sea products. The number of stores are more than that in Hong Kong. However, the quality is generally inferior. Besides, some products are frititious and poisonous, eating them will endanger your life. That is why I must come to Hong Kong to purchase the dried sea products even they are more expensive.'

'As I have spent nearly half day to shop in this area, I must buy something for back home no matter if I am willing or not.'

8. Findings

Overall, in all three focus groups, the discussion with respect to the consumer purchase decision making process was lively, serious and constructive. Those participants gave valuable points and some interesting examples during the interview.

The following is a mind map of some important elements mentioned in the course of decision making process of dried sea products purchase. This will help to develop a consumer decision making model in dried sea products in Hong Kong (with Canton).

Looking at the mind map (Fig. 4.2), the themes and the quotes from the participants are illustrated. It is found that product involvement; shopping orientations; information source influence; information effort, and, situational influence (gift) are important elements in the purchasing decision process of dried sea products.
In the mind map, the figures in brackets represent the frequencies which interviewees had made similar points during the focus group study. Below is the discussion of the findings of the qualitative search. Concerning the need element. It is noted that need is triggered by self-consumption, visiting aged-parents and presentation of gifts. Among them, self-consumption is most frequently mentioned. Based on the remarks made by the interviewees in in-depth interview, it is due to dried sea products consumption forms a part of Chinese lifestyle. Purchasing dried sea products for aged parents is regarded as of the need (Hu, 2008). Because Confucius suggested that all good food should be first served to their parents (Cooper, 2008). Presenting dried sea products can maintain social relationship. The latter includes maintaining Guanxi, reciprocity and face (Sun, 2003).

According to the focus group findings, the consumers obtain information mainly from non-marketer dominated sources rather than marketer dominated sources. The non-marketer dominated sources include relatives, friends and peers. The marketer dominated sources include broadcast information and print publications. This is supported by the evidence that the purchase of dried sea products is absolutely shopping activity. Atlanta et al. (1980) identifies that some shoppers are recreational type. They treat shopping as a kind of social activity. Naturally, they will share information while shopping. In this way, they will obtain valuable information.

The product information which the interviewees seek are physical and symbolic attributes. The most important physical attributes are that people are interested in products' appearance and good taste. Nearly all of them believe that consuming expensive dried sea products are a symbol of wealth. This opinion is supported by Eastman et al. (1999) that luxury or status products are belonging to status – enhancing possessions. Eastman et al. (1999) express that higher status can be achieved by higher consumption. Social class is hierarchical. High consumption can act as a frame of reference for some people to advance their social standing (Holt, 1998). Because dried sea products are the common cuisines for rich people, public are willing to imitate such behaviour by consuming dried sea products.

Although Hassay and Smith (1996) uncover six shopping orientations, this focus interview reveals that only three shopping orientations are found in dried sea products
purchase. They are local store loyalty, recreational and economic. Most of them are belonging to local store loyalty. It may be due to the fact that dried sea products are expensive, a poor purchase in a new shop will lose money substantially.

The focus group interview reveals that one of the main reasons to purchase dried sea products is for gift purpose. According to the findings in in-depth interview, presenting gifts are to build trust, facilitates social etiquette and even bribery. Therefore, the consumers have to spend more time and effort to carry out information search. These activities are corroborated by the statements made by the focus group.

Furthermore, this focus group study discovers that some interviewees do not pay attention in dried sea products purchase, but some spend significant time and effort in this purchase. These people spend more time to search for product information, and locate the reputable stores. Besides, they spent more time in shopping and buy more. This behaviour is supported by the study of levels of involvement (Friedman and Smith, 1993; Chin, 2002; Petty et al., 1983).

Based on EBM Consumer Decision Process Model (Engel et al., 1986), the consumers' Internet Shopping Decision Process model (Seo, 2005) and the above important elements found, a conceptual consumer decision making model of dried sea products is developed (Fig. 4.3). Further, focus groups revealed the following phenomenon. Product involvement affected information search, evaluation and purchase on making decision. It also affected shopping orientations and information source influence, and they in turn affect information search effort.

In fact, involvement has been shown to influence a number of behavioural outcomes, including information search and evaluation (Mantel and Kardes, 1999). High involvement consumers are believed to be more motivated to search for and actively process product and store related information. They spend more time to search for and processing information. As product involvement has a positive correlation with purchase intention (Petty et al., 1983). It is worthwhile to include the level of involvement in the proposed consumer decision making model in dried sea products.
Figure 4.2: Mindmap Showing Important Elements Mentioned in the Decision Making of Dried Sea Products Purchase

Social Relationship (3)

Aged Parents (4)

Self consumption (14)

Moretime (8)

More effort (8)

Low (5)

High involvement (10)

Previous Experience (12)

Intent to Purchase

Need

Product Information

Physical Attribute

Good appearance (8)

Less residue (3)

Good taste (10)

Different taste (2)

Symbolic Attribute

Achievement (5)

Wealth (8)

Social status (6)

Pre-Purchase Search

Print Publications

Newspaper (2)

Magazines (1)

Personal Information

Peers (5)

Relatives (7)

Friends (3)

Broadcast Information

T.V. (3)

Radio (1)

Consumer Decision Making

Shopping Orientation

Economic (4)

Recreational (6)

Local Store Loyalty (8)

Situational Influence (Gift)

Increase type of information sought (10)

Increase depth of search (10)

Lower Price Limit (14)

Increase source of information (8)

Source: This Study
Following a thorough study of the proposed model and its important components, the hypotheses relating to the components were presented.

Based on the detailed findings of in-depth interviews, focus group and the components generated from the conceptual consumer decision making model of dried sea products. A questionnaire is developed.

8a. Development of the Questionnaire

The development of the questionnaire follows the procedure of the development of measures as described in the Measurement and Scaling Methods of Methodology (Chapter Three).

Below shows the definitions of constructs and their related items. All of them were adopted from literature. As soon as they are developed, a series of tests for validity and reliability were undertaken. To test content reliability, two well experienced dried sea products retailers were asked to comment on the suitability and representiveness of the questionnaire. A few wordings of the items were changed to make it easier to understand. It is necessary for the scales to meet the criteria of internal scale reliability ( Zaichkowsky, 1985). The scale for the involvement construct has successfully complied with standard internal scale reliability measures. After performing factor analysis for the constructs shopping orientation items, information source influence items and situational influence items, the results of the factor analyses produced items which met internal scale reliability. Such reliability was further supported by the high Cronbach’s alpha value.

Reliability is further tested by test-retest reliability. Five respondents who promised to perform this test were asked to complete the scale. After one week, they were asked to complete the scale questions again. By comparison, the two results were almost the same. It meant the question based scales passed the test-retest reliability assessment.

In order to check construct validity, a face validity test was conducted. Two separate DBA students were asked to give an opinion on these scales. Following this a slight rearrangement of the scale were suggested to make them more presentable. The scales
were later submitted to the DBA programme supervisor for assessment and approval (it was one part of the thesis).

After the measures were developed and tested for validity and reliability, hypotheses were formulated.

Most of the items for the questionnaire surveyed were adapted from previous research which investigates the consumer behaviour as discussed in the literature review. This adoption will improve the validity of the questions. Those final selected questions are operationized so that they can measure the constructs accordingly. Some wordings are modified from the original scales in order to target at the consumer decision making process of dried sea products.

8b. Definition of the Constructs

According to the results of the qualitative research, many important elements are mentioned in the course of dried sea products purchase. They include product involvement, information search effort, shopping orientation, information source influence, intention to purchase, likelihood to repurchase and product attributes. They are integrated into the model in figure 4.3 and will be operationalised in carrying out quantitative research.

Before the constructs are operationized, they need to be defined. The following definitions are all found from the literature review.

Product Involvement is defined as a consumer's self concern over purchase decision and purchasing activity (Salma and Tashchian, 1985).

Information search effort is defined as available time and cognitive effort expended in conducting an active search for information regarding products the individual needs to purchase (Styler, 1961).

Shopping orientation is defined as a shopping style that puts particular emphasis on certain activities or shopping modifications (Hawkins et al., 2004).
Information source influence is the external influence that serves as the source of information about a particular product and influences a consumer’s product-related values, attitudes and behaviour (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2004).

Situational influence is defined as the factors particular to a time and place of observation that have a demonstrable and systematic effect on current behaviour (Seo, 2005).

Intent to purchase means the intention to purchase after shopping activity. (This Study) In the process of survey, only those consumers present in the store or those who have already purchased dried sea products are included in the sample, a simple answer ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ can serve the purpose instead of making a set of rating scale.

Likelihood to repurchase means likelihood of future purchase in the same store (This study).

Table 4.5 a The Constructs Used in the Survey showing the theories and the Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Product Involvement</td>
<td>Zaichkowsky’s PII (1985) to show degree of importance and relevance (8 items)</td>
<td>Warrington and Shim (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information search effort</td>
<td>To show how often and how long respondents search for information. Time spent before giving up search (5 items)</td>
<td>Georgia Institute of Technology Graphics Visualization and Usability Center’s 10th WWW user survey (1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Types of information search (6 items)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information source influence</strong></td>
<td>To indicate the degree of influence of information sources (9 items)</td>
<td>Warrington and Shim (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situational influences</strong></td>
<td>To show the influence of situational factors affected by place or time (9 items)</td>
<td>Shim and Drake (1990) Bruner and Hensel (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intent to purchase</strong></td>
<td>Intent to purchase after shopping (1 items)</td>
<td>Seo (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Likelihood to repurchase</strong></td>
<td>Intent to repurchase next time (1 item)</td>
<td>Seo (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product Attributes</strong></td>
<td>To indicate how important the attributes are (9 items)</td>
<td>This Study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Hypotheses

The following seven hypotheses were formulated for the purposes of the present study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Basis of Hypothesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1a</td>
<td>High product-involved consumers spend more time searching for product information and more cognitive effort considering product choice and store choice. (Peterson and Merino, 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1b</td>
<td>Consumers with high product involvement have better knowledge of product attributes and price, they have greater ability to evaluate products. (Chandrashekaran and Grewal, 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>High involvement consumers are more concerned with shopping orientation factors such as price orientation, brand consciousness and fashion consciousness. (Warrington and Shim, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>Consumers who scored high on shopping orientation factors spend more time to search than consumers who scored low on shopping orientation factors. (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4</td>
<td>High involvement consumers are more likely to search, compare and analyze information about products than low involvement consumers. (Bei and Widdows, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>High involvement consumers spend more time to collect product information using a variety of information sources. (Mittal, 1989)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6</td>
<td>High involvement consumers are affected by product attributes for purchases under different consumption situations. (Quester and Smart, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7a</td>
<td>High involvement consumers have a greater intention to purchase the product than low involvement consumers. (Warrington and Shim, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7b</td>
<td>Consumers having positive previous experience with shopping have greater intention to purchase in this store again in future. (Lohse, Bellman and Johnson, 2000)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis H1a, H2, H4 and H6 are related to tests on significance difference between high and low product involvement consumers. As the independent and dependent variables are more than one. High and low product involvement consumers are treated as independent variables. The other variables are all treated as dependent variables.
Figure 4.3: Consumer Decision Making Model in Dried Sea Products

Source: This Study
10. Summary

In this study, the qualitative research was conducted by in-depth interviews and focus group.

After the in-depth interview has given a general idea about dried sea products consumer behaviour in Hong Kong (with Canton). A few questions were developed to investigate the components and their relationships in the consumer decision making process. Based on these findings and with reference to some relevant consumer decision making models, a consumer decision making model of dried sea products was proposed. Once the components of this model were identified, a set of hypotheses were deduced from them. They were then tested by the use of the quantitative method.

This chapter has defined the factors to be utilised and indicated how they are then incorporated in the questions of the survey. It also indicated the sources of the questions generated in order to validate their inclusion.

From the researcher’s point of view, the use of an in-depth interview technique has its practical value. In the course of running business, there is sometimes a sudden drop of sales and the researcher may not know the cause. Since an in-depth interview is flexible to operate, the researcher can arrange an ad hoc in-depth interview to collect data. By analysis and interpretation, the researcher can develop a contingency plan to tackle the problem accordingly.
Chapter Five

Pilot Test and Data Analysis

1. Introduction

After a survey questionnaire is developed, a pilot study will be carried out. The aim of the pilot test is to ensure that the questionnaire is actually valid, reliable and workable (Al-Sukkar, 2005). The administration of the questionnaire is followed immediately by the study’s data analysis. This chapter gives a detailed description of the demographic characteristics of respondents and their shopping behaviour. Such description will help the researcher to perform interpretation of results later. Furthermore, the chapter describes how different levels of product involvement are created; how numerous items in shopping orientation, information source influences and situational influence are transformed into smaller sets by applying principal component analysis so as to simplify the later data analysis. Finally, testing the hypotheses were achieved by employing MANOVA, chi-square test and correlation applications.

2. Pilot Study

i) Purpose of pilot study

To ensure that the survey questionnaire can collect the data accurately for analysis, a pilot test was conducted.

The purpose of a pilot test is to prove a particular instrument of investigation workable. It can indicate which area the survey method may fail or be inappropriate (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001).

In this study, the researcher intended to collect data from different areas in Hong Kong. He attempted to collect data from two markets and two retail centres. However, the response rate was very low. It may be due to the fact that the potential interviewees were not dried sea products consumers. He later conducted the survey in dried sea
products centre and the response rate was much higher. It was mainly because the respondents were consumers and they had already allocated efficient time in dried sea products shopping where the interviews took place.

As the aim of this pilot test was to test a proposed theoretical model with no intention to generalise, convenience sampling is considered suitable (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). In this study, the research decided to collect data by means of convenient sampling in the dried sea products centre in Hong Kong.

At the very beginning, arrangement was made among the researcher and ten retail shops that the questionnaire was placed on the concerns in those shops. Participants were encouraged to complete the survey questionnaire. Those who completed the survey questionnaire would be given a gift for thanks. However, the response rate was extremely low. A few responses were returned, but many statements were left unanswered. Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct the survey by means of direct contact.

ii) Survey questionnaire

A questionnaire was prepared. Those questions are concerned with demographic valuables and constructs. After the questionnaire was prepared, it was pre-tested with five of the researcher’s friends. Based on their suggestions, some questions were modified. The revised questionnaire was then pre-tested with two doctoral students at University of Surrey. Some wordings of the questions were re-phrased so as to improve clarity. The final draft of the questionnaire was submitted to the researcher’s supervisor for approvals, as the questionnaire formed part of the thesis.

As the respondents were all Chinese and the questionnaire was prepared in English. Two teachers who taught English in middle schools were requested to translate the questionnaire. One middle school English teacher was asked to translate the original version into Chinese, the other middle school English teacher was asked to translate back to English. The original and final versions were compared for discrepancies. Any
differences were noted and revised, so that the final Chinese versions carry same meaning as the original one.

There is no generally accepted sample size in pilot study. A small sample is considered enough (Spector, 1992). Therefore, a convenient sample of 10 were chosen from the dried sea products consumers in a Hong Kong dried sea products shopping centre. The response rate was 100%. Some valuable comments on the location of interview and suitable time to complete the survey were suggested. They were being followed in field work. One doctorate student was requested to observe and make suggestions on the interview of the 10 samples, thus reliability can be established (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

The questionnaire acts as a survey instrument for data collection in fieldwork. The data collected is then analyzed by SPSS 12 software.

3. Data Analysis

i) Results

This chapter includes a description of the sample, factor analysis results, scale reliability analysis. The results of hypothesis were produced by MANOVA, correlation and chi-square tests. Data were analyzed using the SPSS 12 software.

ii) Description of Respondents

The population of the consumers include Canton and Hong Kong citizens. They cover all the dried sea product consumers. Because of financial resources and time constraints for this thesis study. The sampling frame is confined to the main dried sea products centre in Hong Kong. It is believed that more than 80% of the total worldwide dried sea products trade is carried in this area. In order to obtain data easily, non-probability sampling is chosen, it implies some samples are more likely to be drawn. Hence making valid statistical inferences is impossible because it fails to determine the error of estimation. However, it can still gain insights into a particular phenomenon (Ghauri and
Gronhaug, 2005). Convenience sampling is chosen, it means that the samples willing to participate in the survey is accepted as respondents. Because it is unnecessary to determine the degree of confidence associated with the estimate, sample size can be ignored. But the assumptions of some statistical techniques can be affected by sample size. However, violation of normal distribution and power of a test are not an issue if the sample size is large (Pallant, J., 2005). In this study, 200 samples are selected. Data were collected by the researcher from July to August 2007. Survey data were obtained from 200 shoppers. All were usable as they promised to participate in the survey. Demographic characteristics of respondents are shown in Table 5.1. The sample included more females (73%) than males (27%). The majority of respondents were married (78%) and unemployed (54%). Around 63% of the respondents were aged from 41-60. More than 32% earned yearly gross income ranging from $100,000 to $390,000. 44% of respondents reported their yearly gross income ranging from $200,000 to $190,000. Concerning citizenship, around 86% were Hong Kong citizens and the remaining were Cantonese.
Table 5.1: Profile of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency (n)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married / Co-habiting</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>78.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 30</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 60</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yearly Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rather not say</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $100,000</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000-$190,000</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000-$290,000</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$300,000-$390,000</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $400,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Citizen</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Citizen</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
iii) Dried Sea Products Shopping Characteristics

A summary of how often consumers searched for dried sea products information is shown in Table 5.2. Around 87% of consumers searched for dried sea products information at least once every 3 months. More than 50% of consumers searched for dried sea products every 3 months.

A summary of dried sea products shopping characteristics is presented in Table 5.3. About 77% of respondents reported that they have studied detailed information of dried sea products. 72% of respondents were price alert. More than 55% of the respondents were concerned with location of store. 65% of respondents mentioned that they paid attention to the availability of dried sea products.

Participants were asked to identify the reasons for their purchase of dried sea products in the same store. The main reason was that they had confidence in that store (36%). The other main reason was saving time. 24% of respondents reported that they could save time.

Looking at the frequency of dried sea product items purchase in the past 12 months (Table 5.3.1), it was found that at least 73% of the respondents had purchased dried fish bladder. It was followed by dried abalone (67%), dried shark fins (56%) and dried sea cucumber (44%).

Table 5.3.2 gave a rough idea about the average amount of money spent by respondents on purchase of dried sea products. More than 80% of respondents spent less than $2,000 per purchase. About 42% of respondents spent around $1,000 to $2,000 per purchase.

Table 5.3.3 showed that the percentage of respondents who intended to purchase after dried sea products shopping, it was noted that about 80% of respondents would purchase after shopping.
Table 5.3.4 summarised the percentage of participants who intended to purchase in the same store in the future. It was found that about 65% of respondents prepared to do so. Less than 20% respondents had no such intention.

Table 5.2: Frequency and Percentage of Searching Dried Sea Products Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How often search</th>
<th>Frequency (n)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t do at all</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About once a month</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About once every 3 months</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>50.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About once every half a year</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About once a year</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

Table 5.3: Shopping Orientation of Dried Sea Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Detailed Information</th>
<th>Frequency (n)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>77.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Price Information

| Yes                  | 145 | 72.5 |
| No                   | 55  | 27.5 |

Location

| Yes       | 110 | 55  |
| No        | 90  | 45  |

How long engaging in purchase of dried sea products

| 6-10 years | 48  | 24  |
| 11-15 years| 45  | 22.5|
| 16 years or more | 107 | 53.5|

Availability of products

| Yes | 131 | 65  |
| No  | 69  | 35  |

Source: This Study

Table 5.3.1: Frequency of Dried Sea Product Items Purchased in the Past

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Frequency (n)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dried fish bladder</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried Abalone</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>67.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried shark fins</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried sea cucumber</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
Table 5.3.2: Amount of Money Spent on Purchase Dried Sea Products on Average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount (HK$)</th>
<th>Frequency (n)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $1,000</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 to $1,999</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,000 to $2,999</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000 or more</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

Table 5.3.3: Intention to Purchase after Dried Sea Products Shopping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intention to purchase</th>
<th>Frequency (n)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

Table 5.3.4: Intention to Purchase in the Same Store in Future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency (n)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very unlikely</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly unlikely</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately likely</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very likely</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

iv) Product Involvement

As the level of involvement having impact on the information search, evaluation process and decision stage in the decision making process in shopping for dried sea products was revealed in the qualitative analysis. High level involvement shows a higher intention to purchase which is of significant marketing significance (Petty et al., 1983). It is justified to investigate the influence of the level of involvement on the decision making process on dried sea products.

In this study, Zaichkowsky’s Personal Involvement Inventory PII is used to measure the level of product involvement. This is a bipolar adjective scale. It has been tested for validity and reliability and possessed high internal consistency (Chim, 2002). The results of product involvement score help to classify high and low product involvement.
The distribution of product involvement scores is summarised in Figure 5.1. Responses to the eight product involvement items were summed to create a product involvement score ranging from 12 (low) to 51 (high). The mean score for product involvement was 34.76 with a standard deviation of 7.24395. The distribution of scores was very slightly skewed toward medium to low product involvement indicating that the curve is fairly normally distributed.

The respondents' summed scores of product involvement were recorded in Figure 5.1. The next step was to divide two distributed groups. High and low involvement groups were created by sorting respondents into one of two groups. 73 respondents who scored lowest were regarded as low involvement group. 60 respondents who scored highest were regarded as high involvement group. The classification results were as follows: the range of summed scores of low involvement was from 12 to 32, the range of summed scores of high involvement was from 39 to 51. Respondents whose mean scores clustered around the means were not classified into the group and were eliminated from further analysis (n=67, 34%).

As soon as the high and low involvement groups are classified, factor analysis is applied to group the items of shopping orientation, information source influence, situation influence into smaller set of factors.

Figure 5.1: The Respondents’ Summed Scores of Product Involvement
v) Statistical Procedures to be utilized

a) Principal component analysis

Principal component analysis with varimax rotation were performed on the shopping orientation items, information source influence items and situational influences items in order to identify smaller set of factors respectively.

The item factor analysis encompasses a variety of different techniques. The most common ones are principal components analysis and factor analysis. They do differ in a number of ways.

Principal components analysis is a method for re-expressing multivariate data. "It allows the researcher to reorient the data so that the first few dimensions account for as much of the available information as possible" (Lattin, Carroll and Green, 2003). The dimension reduction can simplify data analysis later. However, the researcher has to take a compromise of simplicity and completeness. The principal components solution has the property that each component is uncorrelated with all others, which has the advantage of eliminating multicollinearity when using the results in an analysis of dependence.

Although both principal components analysis and exploratory factor analysis are used for dimension reduction of multivariate data, they are based on different theories.

Exploratory factor analysis is based on a different underlying model known as the common factor model. This model makes explicit assumptions about how each variable in the data set is measured (Lattin, Carroll and Green, 2003). In this model, the observed variance in each measure is due to a single specific factor and some common factors. The objective in this model is to identify these common factors and explain their relationship.

Unlike exploratory factor analysis, principal components analysis has no underlying measurement model but simply re-expressing the data. Each principal component is an
exact linear combination of the original variables. As principal components analysis is based on accounting for variation in the data, it is highly susceptible to the presence of outliers and influential observations.

Similar to exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis is to identify common factors and explain their relationship to the observed data, but it begins with a prior notion about the structure of the factor solution and then tests to see if it holds true. For this type of analysis, the underlying model is the same, but the solution procedure is quite different from exploratory factor analysis.

Hair et al. (1998) pointed out that the factor analysis considers all variables at the same time so as to maximize their exploration of the entire variables set, not to predict a dependent variable or variables. They also pointed out that the purposes of factor analytic techniques can be achieved from either an exploratory perspective where researchers consider it only helpful in identifying a structure among the variables, or confirmatory perspective where researchers may use it to test hypotheses involving issues such as which variables should be grouped together on a factor or the precise number of factors.

Steven (1996) prefers principal component analysis as it is psychometrically sound and simpler mathematically, it avoids the problems with 'factor interminancy' associated with factor analysis. Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) conclude the ‘If you are interested in a theoretical solution uncontaminated by unique and error variability, factor analysis is your choice. If on the other hand you want an empirical summary of the data set, principal component analysis is the better choice.’

The weaknesses of factor analysis are as follows: first, there are many techniques for performing factor analysis and controversy exists over which technique is the best. Second, the subjective aspects of factor analysis (eg. deciding how many factors to extract, which technique should be used to rotate the factor axes, which factor loadings are significant) are all subject to many differences in opinion. Third, “when the data change because of changes in the sample, the results of the analysis also change” (Hair et al., 1998).
The results of any single analysis looks like plausible, but such plausibility does not prove validity.

b) Cronbach’s Alpha

In conducting principal component analysis, it is necessary to look at Cronbach’s Alpha for internal consistency purpose. This refers to the degree to which items that make up the scale ‘hang together’ (Pallant, 2005). Cronbach’s coefficient value varies between 0 and 1. The closer to it is to 1, the stronger the internal cohesion of the scale. Pallant (2005) contended that the ideal Cronbach’s coefficient should be above 0.7. However, a study by Nunally (1978) mentioned that reliability of 0.6 is acceptable in exploratory studies and some even suggest a lower value of 0.5.

vi) Shopping Orientation

23 items were used to measure shopping orientation. Most items taken from studies of apparel products (Shim and Bickle, 1994; Warrington and Shim, 2000). A few were taken from Georgia Institute of Technology Graphics Visualization (GVU) Center’s 10th WWW user survey (1998). As this study is concerned with dried sea products, some words are modified. This adoption of previous research improved both validity and reliability.

There were 23 shopping orientation items. In order to identify a smaller set of factors, a principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was performed.

In determining the suitability of the data for factor analysis, it was necessary to consider several issues. The relevant figures and tables of factor analysis on shopping orientation were listed on Appendix III. As the overall sample size was 200, the assumption of linearity would only have very little impact on the test (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001).

Factor analysis was sensitive to outliers. By comparison with the mean and 5% Trimmed mean values (34.76 and 34.9), they were slightly different. In order to avoid
violation of assumptions, 5 extreme values of highest and lowest involvement values were removed.

The correlation matrix showed some values exceeding 0.3. KMO value is 0.888 which exceeds the suggested value of 0.6. The Barlett’s Test of Sphericity value was 0.000 which is lower than the Sig. Value of 0.05. Those results all indicated that the conducting factor analysis was suitable.

Looking at the Total Variance Explained table, the first five components recorded eigenvalues above 1 (7.909, 4.407, 2.131, 1.200, 1.024).

Using Kaiser criterion, there was a change of screeplot after the third component. The results of Parallel Analysis showed only three components with eigenvalues exceeding the corresponding criterion values for a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (23 variables X 200 subjects).

Based on the above three tests, the researcher determined to retain the first three components for factor analysis.

To aid interpretation, Varimax rotation was used to present a pattern of loadings on the three components. The three components explain a total of 55% with component 1 contributing 16%, component 2 contributing 18% and component 3 contributing 21%.

Factor 1 was labelled Comparison Shopping Behaviour with factor loading between 0.665 to -0.832, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for this factor was -0.243. After removing items 15 and 17, the final alpha value became 0.925. Factor 2 was labelled ‘Country of Origin Consciousness’. Factor loadings on items ranged from 0.735 to 0.892, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for this factor was 0.905. Factor loadings on these items of Factor 3 ranged from -0.649 to 0.844. Its Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was 0.324. After removing item 12, the new alpha value became 0.873.

The interpretation of the components 1 and 2 was consistent with previous research on shopping orientation factors (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1993, Seo, 2005). For component 2, other studies use the term ‘Brand Consciousness’. However, most dried sea products do
not have brands. Their consumers place particular emphasis on ‘Country of Origin’ to stand for quality and image. ‘Country of Origin’ is regarded as a product attribute which affects the evaluation stage (Albaum and Smith, 2002). Therefore, ‘Country of Origin’ is treated as brand in this study for comparison purpose.

Table 5.4: Principal Component Analysis of Shopping Orientation Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor Name</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>Percent of Variance</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1</strong> Comparison Shopping Behaviour (2 Items)</td>
<td>16. Familiar stores are a good place to shop for dried sea products.</td>
<td>-0.832</td>
<td>16.153</td>
<td>0.925</td>
<td>9.63</td>
<td>3.598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. When I shop for dried sea products, I choose the store first and then decide on the particular products to buy.</td>
<td>-0.755</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2</strong> Country of Origin Consciousness (4 Items)</td>
<td>1. I bought the dried sea products of a particular place of origin that I liked most.</td>
<td>0.892</td>
<td>18.425</td>
<td>0.905</td>
<td>19.72</td>
<td>4.858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. It is important to buy dried sea products for a particular place of origin.</td>
<td>0.879</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. If it is possible, I would rather buy dried sea products that belong to a particular place of origin.</td>
<td>0.875</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. I believe that dried sea products of a particular place of origin is worth its price.</td>
<td>0.735</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 3</strong> Price Consciousness (3 Items)</td>
<td>8. When I purchased dried sea products, price was the most important factor.</td>
<td>0.801</td>
<td>21.371</td>
<td>0.873</td>
<td>13.46</td>
<td>4.754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21. I carefully watch how much I spend.</td>
<td>0.844</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23. I consider price first.</td>
<td>0.834</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
vii) Information Source Influence

To identify a smaller set of information source factors from the nine information sources items, a principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted. The process and criteria adopted was similar as that described in the shopping orientation section.

The relevant figures and tables of factor analysis on information sources were listed on Appendix IV. It is necessary to assess the suitability of data for factor analysis, the correlation matrix revealed that some have a value greater than 0.3, KMO has a value 0.622 which is greater than suggested value 0.6. The Barlett’s Test of Sphericity value is 0.000 which is lower than the significant value 0.05. The results of these tests indicate that conducting factor analysis is suitable.

Looking at the Total Variance Explained table, the first three components recorded eigenvalue 1 (2.459, 2.001, 1.022).

Using Kaiser criterion, there is a change of the screeplot after the second component. It supports that the first two components worth exploring. These two components explain 26% and 23% of variance respectively.

The results of Parallel Analysis showed only two components with eigenvalues exceeding the corresponding criterion values for a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (9 variables X 200 subjects). It further supports the retention of the first two components.

Applying varimax rotation could help interpretation (Thurstone, 1947). In the Rotated Component Matrix, the main loadings on Component 1 were 2, 1, 3, 4 and that on component 2 were 5, 6, 8.

Factor 1 was labelled Commercial Information sources including newspapers, magazines, TV commercials and radio. The factor loadings ranged from 0.705 to 0.790. Its Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was 0.742. Factor 2 was labelled Personal Information. The factor loadings ranged from 0.674 to 0.848. The factor contained information
sources such as family members, spouse and friends. Its Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was 0.626. The interpretation of the two components was consistent with previous research on information source influence (Seo, 2005).

Table 5.5: Principal Component Analysis of Information Source Influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor Name</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>Percent of Variance</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>2. Newspaper ads</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>25.977</td>
<td>0.742</td>
<td>7.47</td>
<td>3.222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>1. Magazines</td>
<td>0.766</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 Items)</td>
<td>3. TV commercials</td>
<td>0.761</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Radio</td>
<td>0.705</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>5. Friends</td>
<td>0.848</td>
<td>23.576</td>
<td>0.626</td>
<td>8.42</td>
<td>2.479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>6. Close family members</td>
<td>0.827</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3 Items)</td>
<td>(eg. Parents, siblings)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Store Displays</td>
<td>0.674</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cumulative Percentage of Variance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49.553</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

viii) Situational Influences

To identify a smaller set of situation influence factors from the eight situational influence items, a principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted. The process and criteria adopted is similar as that described in the above two sections. The relevant figures and tables of factor analysis on situational influences were listed on Appendix V.

Looking at the correlation matrix, there are some correlations above 0.3. The KMO was 0.718, which was higher than the suggested value 0.6. Barlett’s Test of Sphericity was statistically significant at value of 0.000.
Inspection of Total Variance Explained table indicated that the first three components of Initial Eigenvalues recorded eigenvalues of 3.405, 1.424, 1.020. The screeplot showed that there was a change in shape of the plot after the second component. This evidences supported that the first two factors were worth exploring. These two factors explained 61% of total variance.

The results of Parallel Analysis showed only two components with eigenvalues exceeding the corresponding criterion values for a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (8 variables X 200 subjects). To aid interpretation, Varimax rotation was performed.

The Rotated Component Matrix indicated that the main loadings on Component 1 were 4, 6, 1. The main loadings on Component 2 were 7, 8. These two factors explained 60% of the variance.

Factor 1 was labelled Shopping Advantage with Factor loading between −0.8 and 0.85. The original Cronbach’s alpha was −0.272, after item 1 was removed it became 0.955.

Factor 2 was labelled Convenience with Factor loading between 0.754 and 0.798. The Cronbach’s alpha was 0.604.

After the high and low involvement groups are classified, those constructs have been undergone factor analysis, it was ready for hypothesis testing.
Table 5.5.1: Principal Component Analysis of Situational Influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor Name</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>Percent of Variance</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping Advantage</td>
<td>4. The dried sea products stores are attractive places to shop.</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>42.566</td>
<td>0.955</td>
<td>7.34</td>
<td>3.422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. I enjoy shopping.</td>
<td>0.845</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>7. When I find what I like, I usually buy it without hesitation.</td>
<td>0.798</td>
<td>17.803</td>
<td>0.604</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>2.611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. I buy more dried sea products in order to save a lot of time.</td>
<td>0.754</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Percentage of Variance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
ix) Hypothesis Testing

For the purpose of testing hypotheses, MANOVA, chi-square test and correlation were used to analyze these data.

Before the tests were carried out, it was necessary to assess normality and see if males and females differ in terms of their levels of involvement.

a) Assessing normality

As there is no direct test for assessing multivariate normality (Hair et al., 1998), Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic, Normal Q Plots and Detrended Q-Q Plot were used to assess the normality of the distribution of scores. In Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic, a non-significant result (Sig. value of more than 0.5) indicates normality. In this case the Sig. value is 0.20 for male and 0.007 for female (see Table below) suggests violation of the assumption of normality. This is quite common in larger samples (Pallant, 2005). In Normal Q-Q Plots, if an apparent straight line is formed by plotting the observed value of score against the expected one, it indicates normal distribution. If there is actual deviation from the straight line, it is Detrended Normal Q-Q Plots. They were most collecting around the zero line and they suggested normality.

Based on the above three tests, the distribution of scores for total involvement was considered reasonably 'normal'. (Table 5.6)

Normality no longer has a severe effect on results. When the sample size was large enough (i.e. 100 or more), reasonable normality in the scales can be assumed (Stat Soft Inc., 2003). In this study, 200 samples were chosen.

Table 5.6: Test for Normality of Distribution of Scores of Total Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnov</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Statistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.089</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
b) Do males and females differ in terms of their levels of involvement?

As the samples were composed of males and females, it was ideal if the ratio between them was approximately equal. As there was a rather big difference of males and females in this study (54 males and 146 females), it was necessary to see if there was a difference in males and females and if so, to reweight the data as necessary. Mann-Whitney U Test was used and the results were chosen below. (Table 5.6.1)

Table 5.6-1: Mann-Whitney U Test for males and females

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Statistics(a)</th>
<th>Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mann-Whitney U</td>
<td>3316.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilcoxon W</td>
<td>4801.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>-1.723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.085</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Grouping Variable: Sex

In this test, the Z value was \(-1.723\) with a significance level of \(p=0.085\). The probability value \((p)\) was not less than or equal to 0.05, so the result was not significant. There was no statistically significant difference in the involvement scores of males and females.

H1a – Consumers with high product involvement have higher scores on search effort than consumers with low product involvement.

A one-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance was performed to investigate product involvement on search effort. Three dependent variables were tested: how often search, time spent on search, minutes on average. These three dependent variables were originated from three questions relating to information search in the survey. The relevant figures and tables of MANOVA on information search effort were listed on Appendix VI.

Before MANOVA was performed, checking whether the data met the assumptions is necessary. As the sample size is 200, it reasonably robust to violation of normality. Checking for the univariate and multivariate outliers, there were a few outliers and deleted accordingly. Box’s Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices showed a value of 0.25 which was larger than 0.01, it does not violate the assumption.
Correlation test was run to check for multicollinearity. It was found that the dependent variables were moderately correlated.

Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances showed that the dependent variables having values exceeded Sig. Value 0.05, it meant no violation of assumption of equality of variances.

The Wilk’s Lambda of multivariate tests was 0.000, it was less than Sig. Value 0.05. It concluded that a statistically significant difference existed between high and low levels of involvement on the combined dependent variables: F(3,98) = 28.9, p=0.000; Wilks’ Lambda = 0.53, partial eta squared = 0.47. When the results for the dependent variables were considered separately, they were statistically significant as their Sig. Value were less than 0.05.

How often search [F(1,100) = 72.06, p = 0.000] partial eta squared = 0.419  
Time spent on search [F(1,100) = 23.95, p = 0.000] partial eta squared = 0.193  
Minutes on average [F(1,100) = 35.61, p = 0.000] partial eta squared = 0.263

An inspection of the mean scores indicated that high involvement consumers reported higher levels on How often search (M = 4.34), Time spent on Search (M=4.26) and Minutes on Average (M = 4.55).

H1b: Consumers with high product involvement are more likely to look for product information (detailed information on features, price comparison, location of store, availability of product) than consumers with low product involvement.

The assumption of lowest expected frequency in any cell of 5 was met as the minimum expected count was for those X² tests were 19.4 (detailed information), 19.85 (price comparison), 21.2 (location of store) and 18.5 (availability of product) respectively.
Table 5.7 presents the statistical results of Hypothesis 1b. Significant differences were found for “detailed information” ($x^2=9.563$, $p=0.002$), “price comparison” ($x^2=9.105$, $p=0.003$), “location of store” ($x^2=10.065$, $p=0.002$), “availability of product” ($x^2 = 8.959$, $p=0.003$).

Based on the chi-square tests, Hypothesis 1b was supported.

Table 5.7: Chi-square analysis ($x^2$) for the Types of Product Information between High and Low Product Involvement Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Product Information</th>
<th>Involvement Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$x^2$</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed Information</td>
<td>Yes Count</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Count</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price Comparison</td>
<td>Yes Count</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Count</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of Store</td>
<td>Yes Count</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Count</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Product</td>
<td>Yes Count</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Count</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Yes Count</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

H2 Consumers with high product involvement will have higher mean shopping orientation scores than consumers with low product involvement.

A one-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance was performed to investigate level of product involvement on shopping orientation. Based on the findings
of Factor analysis three dependent variables were used: comparison shopping behaviour, Country of Origin consciousness, price consciousness. The independent variable was involvement.

Assumptions testing MANOVA were conducted below. The relevant figures and tables of MANOVA on shopping orientation factors were listed on Appendix VII. As the sample size reached 200, it is reasonably robust to violations of normality (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). As MANOVA is sensitive to outliers, there were a few univariate and multivariate outliers found and they were removed accordingly.

Correlations were used to check multicollinearity they were moderately correlated. Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices was used to check the assumption of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices. As the Sig. value is 0.003 which is larger than 0.001, the data did not violate the assumption.

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances was used to test the assumption of equality of variance. As the first and second factors had Sig. value 0.000 which were lower than 0.05, a more conservative alpha level 0.025 was used in later individual analysis.

There was a statistically significant difference between high and low involvement on the combined dependent variables: $F(3,125) = 11.4, p = 0.000$, Wilk's Lambda = 0.785, partial eta squared = 0.215.

When the results for the dependent variables were considered separately, the only differences to reach statistical significance, using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of 0.083, were comparison shopping behaviour. $F(1, 127) = 16.4, p = 0.000$, partial eta squared = 0.115 and Country of Origin Consciousness $F(1, 127) = 28.3, p = 0.000$, partial eta squared = 0.82.

An inspection of the mean scores of Comparison Shopping Behaviour indicated that high involvement consumers reported higher value ($M = 11.17, SD = 2.58$) than low involvement consumers ($M = 8.73, S.D. = 3.91$).
For the mean scores of Country of Origin Consciousness, high involvement consumers reported higher value ($M = 21.80$, $SD = 3.38$) than low involvement consumers ($M = 17.54$, $SD = 5.24$).

H3: Consumers’ shopping orientation score will have a positive correlation with scores on information search effort.

To determine if a relationship existed between shopping orientations and information search effort, correlation was conducted. This can be done by Pearson correlation since both variables were continuous. Table 5.8 summarizes the results of correlations between the shopping orientation factors and information search effort. The correlation analysis revealed that there were medium correlations between information search effort and shopping orientations factors, comparison shopping behaviours, country-of-origin consciousness and individuality. “Time spent on search” ($r=0.421$, $p=.001$ for price consciousness). “Minutes spent on average” ($r=0.429$, $p=.001$) for price consciousness. As those shopping orientation factors have medium correlation with information search effort, hypothesis 3 was supported.

Table 5.8: Correlation between Shopping Orientation Factors and Information Search Effort.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shopping Orientation Factors</th>
<th>Information Search Effort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factors</td>
<td>How often search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison Shopping Behaviours</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country of Origin Consciousness</td>
<td>0.238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price Consciousness</td>
<td>0.148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note  *  $\alpha=0.05$ (2-tailed)  
**  $\alpha=0.01$ (2-tailed)  

Source: This Study

H4 Consumer with high product involvement will have higher mean scores on information source influence than consumers with low product involvement.

A one-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance was performed to investigate level of product involvement on information source influence. Based on the
findings of Factor analysis, two dependent variables were used: commercial information and personal information.

Assumptions testing on MANOVA were conducted below. The relevant figures and tables of MANOVA on information source influences were listed on Appendix VIII. As the sample size reached 200, it was reasonably robust to violations of normality (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001).

It was noted that MANOVA was sensitive to outliers. Checking for the univariate and multivariate outliers, there were a few outliers found and deleted accordingly.

Correlation test was run to check for multicollinearity, it was found that the dependent variables were moderately correlated.

Box’s test of equality of Covariance Matrices showed a value of 0.108. It did not violate the assumption as it exceeded the Sig. Value 0.05.

Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances showed the dependent variables having values exceeded Sig. value 0.05, it meant no violation of assumption of equality of variances.

The Wilk’s Lambda of multivariate tests was 0.000, it was less than Sig. value 0.05. It concluded that a statistically significant difference between high and low levels of involvement on the combined dependent variables. F(2, 124) = 8.41, p = 0.000, Wilk’s Lambda = 0.88, partial eta squared = 0.12. When the results for the dependent variables were conducted separately, it showed that personal information variable reached statistically significant. F(1, 125) = 16.75, p = 0.000, partial eta squared = 0.118.

An inspection of the mean score indicated that high involvement consumers reported on high level on personal information (M=9.25, SD = 2.14) than lower involvement consumers (M = 7.52, SD = 2.52).

H5: Consumer scores on information source influence will have a positive correlation with scores on information search effort.
Correlation analysis was conducted to determine a significant relationship existed between information source influence and information search effort. Table 5.9 displayed the results of correlations between information source influence and information search effort. According to the result of Pearson correlation $r$, there was very small correlation between them. Based on the statistical result, hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Table 5.9: Correlations between Information Source Influence Factors and Information Search Efforts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Source Influence Factors</th>
<th>How often Search</th>
<th>Time spent on search</th>
<th>Minutes on average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Information</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Information</td>
<td>0.295</td>
<td>0.321</td>
<td>0.331</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note ** $p<0.01$ (2-tailed)  
Source: This Study

H6: Consumers with high product involvement will have higher scores on situational influence factors than consumers with low product involvement.

A one-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance was performed to investigate product involvement on situational influence. Two dependent variables, shopping advantages and convenience, were tested.

Before MANOVA was performed, checking whether the data meet the assumptions is necessary. The relevant figures and tables of MANOVA on situational influences were listed on Appendix IX.

As the sample size was 200, it was reasonably robust to violation of normality. MANOVA was sensitive to outliers. Checking for the univariate and multivariate outliers, there were a few outliers found and deleted accordingly.

Correlation test was run to check for multicollinearity. It was found that the dependent variables were modestly correlated. Box’s Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices
showed a value of 0.152. It did not violate the assumption as it exceeded the Sig. value 0.05.

Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variance showed that the dependent variables having values exceeded Sig. value 0.05, it meant no violation of assumption of equality.

The Wilk’s Lambda of multivariate tests was 0.000, it was less than Sig. value 0.05. It concluded that a statistically significant difference between high and low levels of involvement on the combined dependent variables: \( F(2, 126) = 60.57, p = 0.000 \), Wilk’s Lambda = 0.510, partial eta squared = 0.490.

When the results for the dependent variables were concluded separately, they were statistically significant as their Sig. value were less than 0.05.

Shopping Advantage \( F(1, 127) = 100.53, p = 0.000 \), partial eta squared = 0.442
Convenience \( F(1, 127) = 46.08, p = 0.000 \), partial eta squared = 0.266

An suspicion of the mean scores of shopping advantage indicated that high involvement consumers reported higher value (M = 9.84, SD = 3.12) than low involvement consumers (M = 4.90, SD = 2.47).

For the mean scores of Convenience, high involvement consumers reported higher value (M = 8.42, SD = 2.46) than low involvement consumers (M = 5.68, SD = 2.11).

H7a: Consumers with high product involvement are more willing to purchase dried sea products in the same store than consumers with low product involvement.

The assumption of lowest expected frequencies of 5 is met the minimum expected count was 10.38.

Table 5.10 presents the Chi-square Analysis results of Hypothesis 7a. Significant difference was found for purchase in the same store (\( \chi^2 = 10.09, p = 0.001 \)). Based on this result, H7a was supported.
Table 5.10 Chi-square Analysis ($x^2$) for Purchase in the Same Store between High and Low Involvement Groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purchase in the same old store</th>
<th>Involvement Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$X^2$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Involvement</td>
<td>High Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

H7b: Consumers with previous dried sea products experience in a store and high product involvement will have a higher likelihood of future purchase in that store than that of low involvement.

Table 5.11 presents the statistical results of Hypothesis 7b. Significance difference was found for a higher likelihood of future purchase in that store ($x^2=10.14$, $p=0.001$). Based on this result, H7b was supported.

Table 5.11: Chi-square Analysis ($x^2$) for Purchase in Same Store in Future between High and Low Product Involvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purchase in the same old store</th>
<th>Involvement Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>$X^2$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Involvement</td>
<td>High Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent %</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
4. Summary

This chapter has presented the analysis of the data. First, it has looked at a description of respondents so that a rough picture of the sample is produced. It includes gender, marital status, employment, age, yearly income and citizenship.

Second, it has studied the shopping characteristics of dried sea products, so that it can help to interpret the results of hypothesis testing later. It includes how often search, shopping orientation, frequency of purchase, amount of money spent, intention to purchase after shopping and in future.

Both the analysis of demographic characteristics of respondents and their dried sea products shopping characteristics can help to interpret the purchase behaviour in the following chapter.

As product involvement is an important element in the hypothesis, it has described how to identify high and low involvement.

There are a lot of items in shopping orientation, information source influences and situational influences. It is necessary to transform them into smaller sets principle component analysis which can achieve the purpose. In this chapter, the nature, strengths and weaknesses of factor analysis are discussed. The internal consistency purpose of the variables extracted is assessed by Cronbach’s Alpha.

Many of the statistical techniques used in this chapter assume normal distribution, normality is therefore assessed. As there was a big difference of males and females in this study, it is necessary to assess if there is a difference between them.

For the purpose of testing hypotheses, MANOVA, chi-square test and correlation were used to analyse these data.

Among the results of hypotheses testing produced, one of them do not support the tests. A summary of the results is contained in the following table.
The next chapter will discuss the important findings, note the conclusion and describe future work.
Table 5.12: Summary of Results of Hypotheses Testing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product Involvement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information search effort</td>
<td>MANOVA</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1a - Consumers with high product involvement have higher scores on search effort than consumers with low product involvement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1b - Consumers with high product involvement are more likely to look for product information (detailed information on features, price comparison, location of store, availability of product) than consumers with low product involvement.</td>
<td>X² test</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping Orientation</td>
<td>MANOVA</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2 - Consumers with high product involvement will have higher mean shopping orientation scores than consumers with low product involvement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Source Influence</td>
<td>MANOVA</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4 - Consumers with high product involvement will have higher mean scores on information source influence than consumers with low product involvement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situational Influence</td>
<td>MANOVA</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6 - Consumers with high product involvement will have higher scores on situational influence factors than consumers with low product involvement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7a - Consumers with high product involvement are more willing to purchase dried sea products in the same store than consumers with low product involvement.</td>
<td>X² test</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7b - Consumers with previous dried sea products experience in a store and high product involvement will have a higher likelihood of future purchase in that store than that of low involvement.</td>
<td>X² test</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Accepted/Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H3-</strong> Consumers' shopping orientation score will have a positive correlation with scores on information search effort.</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>H5</strong>: Consumer scores on information source influence will have a positive correlation with scores on information search effort.</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
Chapter Six

Conclusion

A) Introduction

Overall, the main purpose of this research was to contribute to the understanding of consumer behaviour in the context of a special shopping environment known as the dried sea products market. As there is a lack of research about dried sea products shopping behaviours, a systematic study of consumer behaviour in this area was planned. This study was designed to investigate these behaviours using the Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (EBM) purchasing decision process model (1993). It also set out to examine high and low product involvement consumers and their relationship with dried sea product shopping orientations, information source influences, search effort, types of product information sought and situational influences.

Previous research mainly focuses upon the factors affecting information search and evaluation in the decision making process. It pays little attention to intention to purchase after shopping and the likelihood of future purchase in the same store elements. In fact, these two elements are very important from the retailers’ point of view. It is meaningless to the retailers if the consumers do not purchase in the end.

In comparison, the majority of previous research has focused on consumer behaviour in the western world rather than Asia. In this study, there is the benefit that it provides some insight into the consumer behaviour in an Asian context.

Dried sea products are expensive. A lot of consumers give much effort and time during the purchase process. Level of involvement in this process subsequently plays an important part in the consumer decision making process. This study tries to relate involvement with a number of factors affecting consumer decision making.

Summary of the results and findings, contribution of this research, possible implications, limitations and suggestions for future studies are presented in this chapter.
I) Summary of the results and findings

The following is a summary of results on dried sea products shopping, product involvement, high and low involvement, shopping orientations and information source influences.

Dried sea products shopping

Consumers purchase dried sea products for the purpose of self-consumption, gifts and aged parents. Most consumers (76%) had been engaging in the purchase of dried sea products for more than 11 years. 57% of respondents spent more than $1,000 for each purchase. The most favourable item was dried fish bladder (73% chance to buy for each purchase). The popularity of dried fish bladder was reflected by the 100% increase in its market price in 2007.

When shopping, 77% of respondents paid attention to detailed information of dried sea products, they tried to compare appearance, quality, place of origin, size and freshness. 65% were interested in the availability of particular products, 55% of respondents paid attention to the location of dried sea products store as they believed that those located in the dried sea products centre could give them more confidence, 72% of the respondents paid attention to price, comparing prices of products was another reason for dried sea products shopping.

Product involvement

This study used Zaichkowsky’s (1985) Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) to measure the product involvement of respondents. The mean score for product involvement was 34.76 with a standard deviation of 7.243. The range of product involvement score ranged from 12 (low) to 51 (high).
High and low product involvement

Each high and low involvement group were composed of 60 and 73 subjects respectively. The range of summed scores of high involvement was from 39 to 51. The range of summed scores of low involvement was from 12 to 32. According to the results, the high product involvement consumers had higher scores on search effort than low product involvement consumers. High involvement group members would search dried sea products information more frequently. The time spent on studying those informations was longer, and the time spent on the shopping centre was also longer. Table 6.1 presents the mean scores of involvement groups on information search effort.

Table 6.1: Mean Scores of Involvement Group on Information Search Effort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Search Method</th>
<th>Mean Scores of Involvement Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often search</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Spend on Search</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minutes on Average</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

High involvement consumers were more likely to seek information on ‘location of stores’, ‘availability of product’, ‘detailed information’ and ‘price comparison’. This result supported previous research that high product involvement consumers were more likely to search and collect product information than low involvement consumers (Goldsmith and Emmert, 1991; Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1993; Peterson and Merino, 2003; Chandrashekaran and Creswell, 2003). Table 6.2 shows the count of involvement group on looking for product information.
Table 6.2: Count of Involvement Group that Look for Product Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Product Information</th>
<th>Count of Involvement Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed Information</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price Comparison</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location of Store</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Product</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

Although this study only focused on dried sea product’s shopping, the results were more or less similar to previous studies of traditional shopping behaviours. This study found that high product involvement consumers were more affected by shopping orientation factors; comparison shopping behaviours and country of origin consciousness. Table 6.3 presents the mean scores of involvement group on shopping orientation factors.

Table 6.3: Mean Scores of Involvement Group on Shopping Orientation Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shopping Orientation Factors</th>
<th>Mean Scores of Involvement Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison Shopping Behaviours</td>
<td>8.736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country of Origin Consciousness</td>
<td>17.541</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

This study revealed that high product involvement consumers were more affected by personal information but not commercial information. Table 6.4 presents the mean scores of involvement group on information source influence.

Table 6.4: Mean Scores of Involvement Group on Information Source Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Source Influence Factors</th>
<th>Mean Scores of Involvement Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Information</td>
<td>7.366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Information</td>
<td>7.521</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study
Situational influences influenced high and low product involvement consumers differently (Shim and Kotsipulos, 1993). High product involvement consumers were more influenced by shopping advantages. Besides, they were more likely to shop for ‘convenience’ than low involvement consumers. The mean scores of involvement group on situational influence factors are presented in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Mean Scores of Involvement Group on Situational Influence Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shopping Influence Factors</th>
<th>Mean Scores of Involvement Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping Advantages</td>
<td>4.900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>5.685</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

79% of respondents intended to purchase again after dried sea products shopping. High involvement consumers indicated that they were more willing to do so than low involvement consumers. This was because high involvement consumers had a higher degree of interest and enthusiasm than the low involvement consumers. Table 6.6 reveals the count of involvement group on willingness to purchase in the same store.

Table 6.6: Count of Involvement Group on Willingness to Purchase in Same Old Store

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purchase in same old store</th>
<th>Count of Involvement Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study combined product involvement and previous dried sea products shopping experience to study the future intention to shop in the same store. The result was that consumers who had previous shopping experience in a store and high product involvement would have a higher likelihood of future purchase in that store than that of low involvement. This finding supported past research in this area (Lohse Bellman and Johnson, 2000; Yoh, Damhorst, Sapp and Lacznick, 2003). Table 6.7 presents the count of involvement group on likelihood of future purchase in the same store.
Table 6.7: Count of Involvement Group on Likelihood of Future Purchase in the Same Old Store

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelihood of Future Purchase in same old store</th>
<th>Count of Involvement Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

Concerning the influence of information sources, there was no statistical difference between high and low involvement consumers. The result did not support high product involvement consumers were more influenced by personal information source.

Based on the findings of qualitative search (p.137) and hypothesis testing in this section. It is noted that a high involvement consumer possesses the following characteristics.

Table 6.7-1: Characteristics of High Product Involvement Consumers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A) More activated to search for, activity process product and store related information. Spend more time to search for and processing information. Has a positive correlation with purchase intention</td>
<td>Mantel and Kardes (1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) more affected by personal information more influenced by ‘shopping advantages’ more likely to shop for ‘convenience’ have a higher likelihood to repurchase in that store.</td>
<td>This Study</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Shopping orientation and information sources influence

Previous studies found that both shopping orientation and information source factors significantly affected consumers' information search effort (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1993; Peterson and Merino, 2003). This study supported that the consumers' orientation score had a direct relationship with information effort. Consumers who had high scores on comparison shopping behaviours, country of origin consciousness and individuality spent a longer time searching for information than others. These results supported the findings of previous research studies that shopping orientations were related to information search (Darden and Howell, 1987; Shin and Kotsiopulos, 1992). Table 6.8 presents the correlation between shopping orientation factors and information search effort.

Table 6.8: Correlation between Shopping Orientation Factors and Information Search Effort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shopping Orientation Factors</th>
<th>Information Search Efforts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time Spent on Search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison shopping behaviours</td>
<td>0.421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minutes spent on search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.429</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

Although many studies found that a consumers' search effort was influenced by commercial and personal information based on the level of product involvement (Mittal, 1989; Peterson and Merino, 2003; Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1993), this study did not support this statement. This study revealed that only consumers' scores on personal information had direct relationship with dried sea products information search effort based on the level of product involvement. Table 6.9 shows the correlation between information source influence factors and information search effort. As the correlation is moderate meaning that other factors were more important in explaining buying behaviour.
Table 6.9: Correlation between Information Source Influence Factors and Information Search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Source Influence Factors</th>
<th>Information Search Efforts</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time Spent on Search</td>
<td>How often search</td>
<td>Minutes on average</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Information</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.125</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Information</td>
<td>0.321</td>
<td>0.295</td>
<td>0.331</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: This Study

Discussion

Up to now, there is no generally accepted definition of product involvement. In this study, this term defined by Shama and Tashchian (1985) is adopted. It refers to a consumer's self concern over purchase decision and purchasing activity.

High involvement consumers possess the following characteristics. They search for more product information (Peterson and Merino, 2003). They have a higher level of product information search intention, product evaluation and purchase intention. They tend to shop more frequently and spend more money than other consumers. (Arora, 1993; Chin, 2002; Petty et al., 1983; Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1993). The results of a focus group of this study validate that product involvement affects information search, evaluation and purchase stages of the consumer decision process.

The research tested the application of Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (EBM) consumer decision process model on dried sea products in Canton (with Hong Kong). The study found that the level of product involvement significantly influenced shopping orientation and situational influence factors related to dried sea products shopping.

At the information search process stage (the second stage) of the EBM consumer decision process model, the high involvement consumers more frequently searched for dried sea products information. This is similar to previous research that high involvement consumers will search for more product information (Friedman and Smith, 1993). Those high involvement consumers spent more time in the dried sea products
shopping centre and looked for dried sea products information. They were more likely to look for ‘detailed information’, ‘price comparison’, ‘location for store’ and ‘availability of product’.

High involvement consumers scored higher on shopping orientation than the low involvement consumers. This was similar to previous research that high involvement consumers were more concerned with shopping orientation than consumers who had low product involvement when shopping in traditional stores and internets (Warington and Shim, 2000; Sea, 2005). The high involvement group enjoyed shopping. They liked to visit many stores for comparison, they are engaged in more information seeking and willing to spend time shopping even after market purchase (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1992).

However, this study found that high involvement dried sea products consumers behaved differently from low involvement dried sea products consumers under the influence of personal information only. This was in contradiction with the findings of previous research. As they stated that high involvement consumers were more likely to use both market and personal sources of information (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1992; Warrington and Shim, 2000; Sea, 2005). The reasons probably are that i) More than 80% of consumers had been engaging in the purchase of dried sea products for more than 11 years. ii) Dried sea products are traditional goods, all stores sell similar products. Therefore, the consumers can make their own judgement in selecting stores and dried sea products without the ‘advice’ from external source influences. Advertising only serves the purpose to activate the advertised store’s name. Those shoppers like searching for their own sake as enjoyment derived from shopping activities (Bloch, 1986). This study further found that personal information had some direct relationship with information search effort, but its influence is less influential than other factors.

At the third stage (evaluation process) of EBM consumer decision process model, consumer involvement was affected by situational influence. Both ‘shopping advantage’ and ‘convenience’ factor affected the purchasing behaviour of the high and low involvement groups. The high involvement group had significantly higher mean scores on ‘shopping advantage’ and ‘convenience’. They claimed that convenience could save their time and they could visit the stores more frequently. In fact, locating dried sea
product's stores in shopping centres can create a ‘convenience’ situation to facilitate store contact (Fins, 1987). Those shoppers also expressed that they liked to shop at the dried sea products store.

At the last stage of the purchase decision process, high product involvement consumers were more willing to purchase dried sea products after shopping. In addition, those who had made a previous purchase in that store would have a higher likelihood of future purchase in that store. If those high involvement consumers are satisfied, they are expected to develop store loyalties. They tend to shop more frequently and spend more money than other consumers (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1993). Definitely, creating a positive store atmosphere will encourage the consumers to linger in store longer (Mehrabian and Russel, 1974).

Overall, the results of this research provide sufficient support to confirm that the EBM consumer decision process model also applies in dried sea products purchase process. Based on a conceptual consumer decision model of dried sea products (Figure 4.3) developed in the findings of qualitative research (Chapter 4). A revised model is presented which eliminates the relationship of ‘information source influence’ factor and information search effort (Figure 6.1). ‘Gift’ is one of the main reasons for the purchase of dried sea products. Future study should include items of ‘gifts’ in the situational influence for investigation. Qualitative research reveals that the purposes for both Canton and Hong Kong citizens in purchasing dried sea products are nearly the same. The only exception is that some Cantonese purchase them for presenting gifts aiming at facilitating ‘doing business’, it is typically due to cultural differences. Therefore, before hypothesis testing, it is beneficial to test if Cantonese and Hong Kong citizens differ in terms of ‘gift’ situation. Any indication of statistically difference in the result implies that the retailers have to adopt specific marketing strategies accordingly.
Figure 6.1: Revised Model of Consumer Decision Making Process in Shopping for Dried Sea Products

Product Involvement
- High Involvement
- Low Involvement

Shopping Orientations

Information Source Influence

Information Search
- Product Information
- Information Search Effort

Evaluation Process
- Situational Influences

Purchase

Outcome

Source: This Study

197
Academic contributions of the study

This study shows that while the EBM consumer decision process model (1993) is applied to many types of consumers' shopping behaviour, it can be applied to the dried sea products shopping environment also. The concept product involvement is introduced in this model as it is an important factor in formulating marketing strategies aiming at larger market share.

Previous consumer behaviour research has included shopping orientation as a means of differentiating consumers. This study confirmed that shopping orientation is also important when studying dried sea product purchasing behaviour. 'Comparison Shopping Behaviours' and 'Country of Origin Consciousness' were identified as important. These factors should be included in consumer behaviour models in future research.

Although several studies of purchasing behaviour have identified that information source influence can affect information search of high and low involvement consumers differently, this study only support personal information source influence. Thus, future research on this area should continue to include this variable for further testing.

This research has added to the literature regarding the EBM consumer decision process model for dried sea products purchase.

This study was quite specific in a particular area. The findings were not necessary applicable to other geographic areas or trade. However, there was some justification for claiming that Hong Kong has much in common with other Chinese cities and Hong Kong consumers can well represent the population of dried sea product's consumers. The findings of this study can contribute to the retail academicians for further study in consumer behaviours. Most importantly, this research will hopefully fill part of the gap that exists with respect to much needed empirical research in dried sea products consumer shopping behaviour.
Implications of the study to retailers

Based on the results of the study, implications for dried sea products retailers to respond to the needs of consumers are presented.

This study reveals that the most popular item was dried fish bladder. Therefore, the retailers should display more varieties of dried fish bladder in high-traffic areas to capitalize on increased exposure.

Around 80% of respondents paid attention to detailed information of dried sea products. The social and cultural influences will affect their product choices. The respondents’ purchasing behaviour will be driven by the hedonic and symbolic values. Those who can afford to purchase expensive items of dried sea products not only want to have high quality products but also want to gain some pleasure and symbolic benefit from the products. Findings from qualitative research show that consumers desire the benefits that dried sea products can convey, such as the symbolic meanings of achievement, wealth and social status. In fact, dried sea products have an image of ‘superior appearance’, ‘expensive’ and ‘high prestige’. These products are consumed by people of wealth and high social status. Thus attracting people who try to link the brand’s image to their desired self-image. Ideally, the dried sea products of a particular type should be displayed together so that consumers can compare their appearance, quality, place of origin and size of freshness.

As the high product involvement consumers are more willing to purchase after shopping, those having previous experience in one store are more willing to purchase in that store in future. In other words, loyalty plays a more important part in high involvement consumers. Marketing strategies should aim at those consumers. Allocating more resources on those consumers is more cost effective. Maintaining a higher volume of high product involvement consumers is more profitable.

It is difficult to point out high involvement consumers apparently. However, some researchers have provided some characteristics of high involvement consumers (Petty et al., 1983). They search for more information, spend more time to evaluate products, have higher purchase intention. Thus, the salespeople can guess that those consumers
are of high involvement if they visit their stores frequently or spend more time and effort to search for product information. In fact, such ongoing search will make better consumption choices (Plvch et al. 1986; Altaner, 2000). Therefore, the retailers should develop retailer interest for those consumers to prevent the latter to switch retailers. This can be achieved by using helpful salespeople, offering products of a wide variety and appealing atmosphere (Jones and Raynolds, 2005).

High product involvement consumers are more interesting in 'location of store', 'availability of product', 'detailed information' and 'price comparison'. Hence, the retailers preferably should locate their stores in the shopping centre wherever possible. The retailers should seek information on the types of most popular products from suppliers and consumers and display them in the prominent places of their stores. For each particular kind of dried sea products, catalogues which contain characteristics of products, benefits and methods of cooking should be readily available for those consumers who want to know more about the products.

Price is one of the important product attributes. Any changes in the attributes can affect the product choices (Campbell, 1999). This study found that high involvement consumers were more likely to look for price comparison. It is for certain that the retailers can attain the target sales volume by adjusting price.

One of the keys to success in markets is adopting a consumer-oriented strategy to serve the desires and the needs of consumers. The flow of information is to and fro. The best source of information on a product is its consumers. Salespeople can receive feedback from consumers regarding preferred varieties and consumer preference. Apart from disposing products and receiving proceeds, the salespeople can supply product characteristics (eg. country of origin, health benefits), answering queries and ensuring the maintenance of product integrity to consumers. Salespeople should be trained to deliver more detailed product information such as its benefits and undesirable effects, so as to increase consumers’ satisfaction with the purchasing process. The salespeople’s advice can help their consumers to make better evaluation and comparison of products and obtain a more satisfactory shopping experience. If possible, the selling price of each product should be set at a lower price for comparison and competition purposes. Although dried sea products are a luxury product and price insensitive to ‘wealthy’
customers. Selling products at a lower price can stimulate an emotional purchase decision. Retailers might be surprised to realise just how impulsive some of the consumers were.

The result of hypothesis showed that high involvement consumers showed stronger ‘comparison shopping behaviour’ and ‘country of origin behaviour’. These consumers like to shop at a number of stores. Therefore, the retailers should pay attention to the store image. Knowing what particular profile of their existing consumers are, the marketers can design a specific shopping situation to meet the needs of those consumers. Such design should include the physical, spatial and social characteristics of store (Peter and Olson, 2005). Concerning ‘country of origin consciousness’, it implied that those consumers are more alert on quality. Therefore, the particular product of origin should be highlighted so as to facilitate evaluation. As the market for status products continues to grow, the marketers should seek out which products of particular country of origin belonging to status-enhancing possessions. Such status-enhancing possessions probably can charge at a price of higher profit margin.

Concerning ‘availability of product’, store should be designed with high visible shelves and overhead signs to make locating items (an information-processing task) as early as possible.

For easy ‘price comparison’ purchase, stores provide reference prices to increase consumers’ abilities in interpreting price information accurately (Hawkins et al., 2004). Unit price information by types may be displayed on a separate sign in ascending or descending order to facilitate price comparisons.

Consumers’ need for information is important in the persuasion process (Walker, 1999). This study reveals that high involvement consumers engage in information search more actively, and personal information has a positive relationship with information search effort. Therefore shop assistants of expertise who deliver relevant product information can complete the deals more easily (Busch and Ulson, 1976). On the other hand, time and attention are valuable resources (Vors and Blackwell, 1979). By delivering comprehensive product information, it will save the consumers’ resources and make them more satisfied.
As retailers and friends are important sources of information used during decision-making. The marketing manager should put more effort to serve the consumers in order to gain a favourable opinion from these people (Blackwell et al., 2001). Those salespeople should be helpful, good in communication skill and having a sound knowledge on the products.

As commercial information influences do not differentiate high and low product involvement consumers, in advertising, the retailers need only to emphasize the location of the stores to the public.

More than half of the respondents are those whose yearly income is above HK$100,000. Their (83%) expenditure on dried sea products was below HK$2,000 per purchase. In order to increase sales, retailers should highlight the consumption values and intended uses of these products, the advantages of current offers and discounts to the consumers.

As all the dried sea products transactions take place at the store, it is beneficial to create positive atmosphere to stimulate a consumer’s evaluation process and causes some behavioural response (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982). This can be achieved by displaying the most popular products in prominent areas to stimulate purchase decision.

High product involvement consumers find ‘convenience’ is an important factor for dried sea products shopping. The retailers should advise the most convenient traffic route for the consumers to reach their stores.

Retailers should focus on managing their relationships with the existing customers in order to encourage loyalty. In fact, retaining an existing customer is less expensive and difficult than getting a new customer.

Crowding produces negative outcomes for the consumers (Howkins et al., 2004). When more people are in a store or this store is fully filled with products, it is certain that some consumers feel uneasy. Thus, they may spend less time in the store to search, evaluate and make purchase decisions. This kind of shopping trip is definitely unpleasant less satisfactory. The outcome is that they are less willing to patronize in future. In order to reduce such unsatisfactory perceptions of crowding, retailers can
balance the expense of having a larger store than required most of the time against the cost of unsatisfied customers during key shopping periods. Using extra personnel, adding additional checkout lines and similar measures can enhance the flow of consumers through a store during peak periods and reduce the crowding sensation.

**Limitations**

More research, both those replicating the findings of this research and others expanding on the theoretical discussions presented here is necessary to establish a strong theoretical base for the proposal relationships presented in this research (Dodds, Monroe and Grewal, 1991).

This study has certain limitations that must be considered:

1. This study adopted a cross-sectional design. As it did not show how the consumers’ behaviour might change over time, it could not ascertain whether or not the consumers’ behaviour would change over time.

2. All respondents came from a shopping centre. Respondents should include those who come from other dried sea products centres as well.

3. The findings did not reflect broad geographic differences among consumers. All data were collected from Hong Kong. Another study should be conducted in Mainland China particularly Canton so as to obtain a clearer picture.

4. Sample size problem. Although data were collected from 200 respondents, only 80 from the data, representing high and low product involvement consumers, were considered. A larger sample size can give more accurate results.

5. This study focused on four items of dried sea products only. They might represent the favourites of a particular market segment only. The results might not be representative of purchasing behaviour of all dried sea products consumers.
6. This study concentrated on those consumers (60%) earning yearly gross income that ranged from HK$100,000 to HK$390,000. It may not represent the purchasing behaviour of wealthy customers. As Chinese citizens become wealthier, another separate study focusing on those 'wealthy' customers is justified. It can help dried sea product retailers to provide the right products and services to suit the consumers' needs.

7. Theoretically, random sampling can give the best result. Since the main purpose of this research was theory testing, using a convenience sample was acceptable (Berkowitz and Donnerstein, 1982; Gokham, 2002). However, the level of participants' attention, or how much effort subjects put in their participation is always a concern in research studying consumer behaviour. Some participants may not have put forth the most effort in reflecting their true opinion or actual behaviour in this research as well.

Ideally, the survey of this research should include more participants and the design of the questionnaire should include more items. Practically, further increases in sample size will lead to a huge increase in resources demanded which is beyond the researcher's capability and not necessarily required for a DBA study. To include more items in the questionnaire will further increase the time and effort required from the voluntary participants, it might reduce the results with respect to reflecting actual consumer behaviour (To complete a questionnaire needs 15 minutes at least). Some participants may refuse to complete the questionnaire if it is too lengthy and hence lead to a 'mission impossible'.

Despite the limitations, as shown from the main findings this research can provide some valuable insights for researchers.

Recommendations for further study

This research has led to some interesting questions that can be explored in future research. This study was limited to Hong Kong respondents. It would be of greater value if similar studies could be conducted in Canton as it covered a broader geographic area.
This study did not explore gender differences in dried sea products shopping behaviours. However, gender differences might relate to the different levels of product involvement. Future study should include a well ‘balanced’ sample of respondents between males and females.

Since dried sea products are rather expensive products and Chinese disposable income increases very rapidly, it is justifiable to conduct an independent study on purchase behaviour of ‘wealthy’ customers. As this marketing segment is increasing in size, having a deeper understanding on these ‘wealthy’ customers’ behaviour becomes necessary.

As high product involvement consumers have a higher likelihood to purchase in the same store, the relationships between product involvement and loyalty should be investigated. Future study is needed to test loyalty and product involvement in dried sea products shopping.

Some studies found that personal information had a relationship with levels of involvement, marketing strategies to aim at increasing personal information influences will certainly utilize a lot of resources. Future study should verify if this relationship really exists in dried sea products purchasing behaviour.

‘Convenience’ is one of the factors of situational influences which relates to level of product involvement. This study adopted too few items from previously used scales that were developed to measure situational influences. Identifying a broader set of items of ‘convenience’ is necessary to fully measure ‘convenience’ related to level of product involvement in dried sea product purchasing behaviour.

This study did not show how the consumers’ behaviour may change overtime. Longitudinal studies (or at least a series of cross-sectional studies) could detect the changes and factors could be identified to explain the changes under study. If it is substantially changed, it would be of value for researchers to conduct similar studies to obtain an up-to-date picture of dried sea products consumer behaviour in the new environment.
B) Final summary

In summary, the results have shown which factors have an impact in consumer decision making process in dried sea products. They can help the retailers to have a better use of resources in some particular area so as to increase sales.

This study has pointed out the limitations and recommendation for future work. It locates some insight for future studies in this area. Furthermore, this study helps the dried sea product retailers to have a deeper understanding of their customers' behaviour. Based on this understanding, it is hoped that those retailers can work out better marketing strategies.

The researcher in this study has many years of trading experience in dried sea products. Although he has wide academic business knowledge, it is not directly related to consumer behaviour. At the very beginning of DBA study, he searched through the literature and discovered some consumer behaviour models. However, none of them focused on dried sea products business. He decided to develop a consumer decision process model for his own needs. By means of sophisticated investigation, he gained a deep understanding in his customers' behaviour.

Besides, the formulation of an empirical dried sea products decision process model enables him to diagnose and predict his customers' needs. He will adopt the recommendations suggested by the implications of this study to retailers as they are practical and specific. As this research indicates that high involvement consumers are more willing to purchase, more resources will be allocated to them in order to get more profit. Besides, the study reveals that only personal information instead of commercial information has influence on dried sea products consumers. The researcher will transfer most of the resources from the commercial information area to the personal information area so as to maximize benefits. In conclusion, this study can help the researcher to formulate effective marketing strategies to improve his business and satisfy his consumers.
Reflective Diary

Introduction

The researcher’s reflective diary includes what a researcher has learnt from the DBA taught modules. How the researcher applies them in conducting a research and how the DBA programme has made an impact in his career. The diary divides into three sections. They are Part I. What the researcher has learnt from the taught modules. Part II. Impact from doing research. Part III. The reflective practitioner. The researcher’s progress through DBA has enabled him to improve his ability in managing his business more effectively. There is improvement identified in communication skills. In oral communication, the researcher can deliver his message in a more logical way. In written communication, the researcher can express his opinion more convincingly. Concerning personal effectiveness, the researcher can more easily identify the main issue in a complex business environment and takes a course of action to tackle it. As the researcher has actually conducted a research, he can review the research work of other scholars in a more critical way. Also, he can really take out ‘meaningful’ knowledge and apply it in his daily work. Above all, the most important aspect is to change the researcher’s learning style. It can maximize his learning capability.

The DBA is a part time programme. Since the researcher is a very busy businessman, he has to manage time very carefully, so that he can finish assignments on time without disturbing his business. Unlike a PhD, the majority of Hong Kong citizens cannot differentiate DBA from PhD. It gives the researcher a chance to explain their differences to his friends and suggest that the DBA programme is worthy to study.

Part I:
What the researcher has learnt from the taught modules.

1. Philosophical underpinning of research methods
This module provided some insight into the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of research. It explains the differences between an inductive and deductive approach to research design. How to identify a research question in detail, refine and revise the questions on the basis of understanding research designs and
methodology. Based on these philosophical underpinnings, the researcher has learnt to have insight in choosing the most appropriate method to conduct the research.

2. Qualitative module
The purpose of this module is to explain how to apply the main qualitative designs and techniques to the collection and analysis of management data in a real world setting. Qualitative analysis techniques include discourse analysis, text analysis, cognitive mappings, computerised support packages are introduced. Particular attention is paid to in-depth interview, focus group interview and case study research design. During the class, the practical issues and problems of those techniques are fully discussed. Therefore, the researcher feels adequate to apply chosen methods rigorously in conducting qualitative method in aspects of research.

It is mentioned that interpersonal contact will inevitably occur in performing qualitative research. The interpersonal data collection skills from the class enable the researcher to collect relevant data effectively. Such a technique also helps the researcher to communicate complex ideas and issues effectively to suppliers.

The in-depth interview is a very powerful tool to uncover problems and issues embedded in the customers’ mind. By direct contact with customers whose purchases of dried sea products has become less frequent, it is found that a modified in-depth interview can uncover the issues and the researcher can then remedy them.

3. Quantitative Module
This module helps the researcher to understand both research approach and research design. The researcher has learnt the usefulness of SPSS as the research aid to run business statistics. Further, this module explains the uses of parametric statistical techniques, non-parametric statistical techniques and their assumptions. As a result, the researcher can apply these to conduct hypothesis testing correctly. From this module the researcher has learnt the quantitative research process and its pitfalls so that he can follow it to carry out quantitative research effectively. In this module, the researcher has also learnt to select the appropriate statistical methods in order to test a given hypothesis.
Last year the researcher’s shop was scheduled for demolition by a land developer. He was forced to relocate his shop. It was a critical incident. If the new shop could not attract the existing customers, he had to close the business. There were a lot of similar cases for all those who had transferred to new shops and were forced to close their businesses within one or two years. At this moment, the researcher knew that it was necessary to prepare a contingency plan. As he was a DBA student and just acquired the technique to conduct a focus group, he tried to obtain information on how to inform existing customers and how to persuade them to go to the new shop from the focus group interviews. Based on the information he could prepare a contingency plan to attract the existing customers to his new shop. As the researcher had acquired the knowledge to carry out a survey from quantitative research, he could prepare a questionnaire on what an ideal dried sea products store should be. Based on the information collected, this researcher could provide a comfortable shopping environment for the existing customers who were willing to revisit the new store in the future.

4. Critical evaluation of research
This module helps the researcher to review literature that focuses on in-depth critical analysis of individual tests. It specifies the requirements of a good literature review. It assists the researcher to understand the basic ways to approach literature from a critical perspective. After studying the module, the researcher has learnt how to assess the strengths and weaknesses of a literature by justification of the approach taken, conceptual underpinning, methodology, addition to knowledge, logic, adequacy, extent of findings and clarity and style of storyline.

Certainly, this academic skill can help the researcher to evaluate the features of a book and extract relevant information for thesis preparation.

5. Research planning and proposal writing
This module explains how to find a topic, choose a good research problem and refine it. It identifies the elements to make a good research. It advises what the components of a thesis and research proposal should be. This advice can direct the researcher to write to the correct standard research proposal and then thesis.
Part II:

Impact from doing research
In choosing a research topic for the research, the researcher has gone through a period of brainstorming exercise. He tried to review hundreds of books and articles. He arranged discussions with friends and relatives with the aim to locate areas of particular interest. At last, an appropriate topic was selected from a long list of proposed topics. In real life, when the researcher meets a particular business problem, he tries to select the most promising strategy by following this process.

In developing the methodology for the research, the researcher had to justify the design decisions from a series of alternatives. The researcher adopts this practice to justify his course of action to solve business problems.

During the process of doing the research, the researcher supervisor monitors the researcher’s progress by setting deadlines for submitting specific research work and providing sufficient feedback. The researcher adopts this attitude and tries to monitor the purchase from suppliers.

In doing a literature review, the researcher has to select the useful materials from a particular text. Such practice facilitates the researcher to identify the most significant issue from many causes of a particular business problem.

Part III.

The reflective practitioner
Although studying a DBA programme is a linear learning process, it changes the researcher’s learning style to a very great extent. Looking back at those DBA learning experiences and reflecting how they affected subsequent business activity is a process best characterised by Kolb’s Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984). The principal elements of which are set out below.
Concrete Experience

Before the researcher ran his business, he worked as a professional accountant. The examination subjects he had to pass were substantially quantitative. The remaining subjects all consisted of laws, guidelines and standards. Accountants were taught how to process information during their careers.

In an accounting programme, one subject was costing. The traditional approach to absorb production overhead is by direct labour hours. However, modern production methods tend to be more mechanised, the use of machine hours as an absorption base can help to overcome the problem. Standard costing is an approach which focuses on achieving and maintaining standards. It uses historical data to establish standards to work to these standards and compare actual results with predetermined standards. Maintaining standard means the target is achieved. Both absorption costing and standard costing can give 'value' to work-in-progress and finished goods.

In my DBA studies I found that I had learned new ways of dealing with business and management. My studies opened up my mind to lifelong learning and continual improvement and I realise the DBA is just one step along the way. However, it is an important step as it trained me to look at retailing business in a different way.
In 1970’s, Western countries were proud of having these systems developed and to issue an audit report relating to stock based on this approach. If the stock system was not sound, the auditor advised the client to improve it in the management letter. If the situation was serious the auditor would ‘qualified’ it in the Auditor’s Report. In those years, most accountants complained that Japan was very poor in accounting especially in the stock system.

In the DBA study, the researcher was taught how to conduct research. How to find an appropriate research problem. What the qualitative and quantitative methods were. How to write a research proposal. How to perform a literature review. How to decide in doing methodology. How to analyse and interpret. Apparently, it was a linear learning process.

Reflective Observation

Because the researcher's professional qualification was a UK qualification. Every textbook he used over the years was an English one. The content was designed as ‘necessary’ knowledge for an accountant. This source of knowledge was regarded as authoritative. Although the accounting knowledge was acquired more than 20 years ago, the experience of attaining it was quite fresh, because the researcher had paid much effort on it. And this knowledge was frequently used to assess current economic issues and public companies’ performance.

Recently, the researcher revisited an accounting text. It astonished him that it involved a substantial disconfirmation of previous accounting learning in terms of content. It also mentioned that there was impact of other countries on the accounting systems especially Japan.

In this ‘new’ accounting textbook, a technique called activity-based costing has been introduced. This method analyses all activities to identify what drives the cost incurred. It results in more realistic product costs which reflect the resources used in bringing a product to its present location and condition. Clearly, this technique is superior than traditional absorption costing. The Japanese use Kaizen costing (Japanese term) for continuous improvement in all aspects of a company’s performance at every level.
In order to strive to continually achieve cost reductions, an annual (or monthly) a
Kaizen cost goal is established. Actual results are then compared with the Kaizen goal,
and then current actual cost becomes the base line for setting the new Kaizen goal the
following year that is continually striving to achieve cost reduction. Kaizen costing is
superior than standard costing as the latter only aims at maintaining standard.

In 1960 and 70’s, accounting was battling for academic credibility and acceptance. The
pathway to credibility was seen as being quantitative or ‘scientific’. Accounting, to be
respectable as an academic discipline, was a science, not an art.

Based on the ‘scientific nature’ of the content of Accounting, the researcher has
progressively adopted a scientific approach to accounting issues. Later, when the
researcher engaged in trading business, he also adopted a scientific approach to business
issues. The approaches were: I) The belief was that all or almost business problems
could be solved if one approached them with determination and sufficient resources. II)
A solution already existed for most business problems, it was really only a matter of
knowing the solution and then ‘plugged it in’.

So the learning was not merely academic knowledge but the ‘scientific’ approach that
integrated into work experience.

The drawback is that the accountant may not fully understand the problem and may
solve it incorrectly. He may not have enough information to analyze before making a
decision. If the selected method is not the best one, it may yield a sub-optimum
solution.

When Japanese companies came to the U.K. in the 1980’s, they brought Total Quality
Management, Kaizen Costing and Just-in-time method which formed part of modern
management accounting systems. The latter two affected the values of absorption
costing and stock systems.

If auditors in 1960’s and 1970’s found accounting ‘weaknesses’ in Japanese companies,
they went a step further by conducting in-depth interviews. They could uncover the
'real' situation that Japanese companies had excellent management accounting system. Thus, they could avoid using their benchmark to downgrade other countries' systems unrealistically.

In the DBA approach, a good deal of unlearning has to be done. In order to fully understand a problem, one has to know how things get to be how they are in the first place. What sustains the situations that appear to be? Therefore, the researcher has to do a literature review, carry out field research by means of qualitative or quantitative approach. In carrying out the research on consumer behaviour relating to dried sea products, the researcher clearly realised how substantial the Chinese cultural influence played on consumers' values. One difference of DBA with profession is that it does not accept all materials supplied by experts without question. DBA student needs to take a critical perspective before accept them.

Abstract Conceptualisation

The passage from Accountancy to MBA was similar to climbing the ladder of knowledge. Based on common sense, to study the DBA meant further accumulation of knowledge. But the researcher got the experience of a ladder crumbling under him because of its intrinsic weaknesses and having survived the fall, building a new ladder of more robust components that would prove of much greater durability and usefulness over the years.

Followed the philosophical school of Positivism, accounting was characterised by three fundamentals beliefs (Schon, 1983). First, empirical science was not merely a form of positive knowledge, but was, in fact, the only source of positive knowledge of the physical world. Second, there was pseudo-science. Third, it was necessary to extend scientific knowledge and technical control to human society and to make technology primarily a political and moral force in that society.

According to the model of Technical Rationality (Schon, 1983), professional activity consisted of instrumental problem solving made vigorous by the application of scientific method and technique. The profession developed outside of universities and to be accepted into universities, they had to accept the Positivist epistemology of practice
which was by them deeply ingrained into the psyche of the universities. Typically, accounting followed that model.

After revisiting the modern accounting tests, it was discovered that the old accounting theories only told part of a picture. It ignored other perspectives such as Japanese view. Definitely, knowing other perspectives can widen one’s eyesight.

Active experimentation

After the researcher was qualified as a professional accountant, the researcher started to work in dried sea products trade. This company was the researcher’s family business. He enjoyed complete autonomy as regards products launched, strategies used and management philosophy advocated, as long as the products were marketable and profitable. This practice adopted accounting point of view. Positivist epistemology of practice only accepted the project as long as it was profitable. It was ‘the one best way’.

The essence of management was to keep everything under control. The manager did not favour ‘surprise’. Even more, the accountant took a conservative point of view. His attitude was risk adverse. Consequently, the researcher seldom took new business he was not familiar with. The researcher only purchased substantial quantity of dried sea products if he was confident that the price would certainly rise. When the researcher talked with his business friends about his business environment, he only addressed the economic aspects as he thought that it was the most important issue. He confined himself to a small scope of ideas.

In the process of doing the thesis, the researcher’s business philosophy was affected by what had been learnt in the DBA programme. When the researcher met a problem, he would not get a ‘right’ solution before considering enough data and options. For example, before the launch of new products, a small survey was conducted to see if the product could be accepted by consumers. If the answer was positive, the researcher performed a pilot test by placing a small order to the supplier first. Before there was a new store layout, a focus group relating to the store design was conducted to collect information for analysis and interpretation. It was found that the final decisions were
more sophisticated. The improvement provided an impetus for the researcher to adopt new approaches.

Reflecting upon the Active Experimentation Phase

Looking back the period after being qualified as a professional accountant, the researcher's success in active experimentation could be attributed to a number of factors.

Profitability concept in decision making was an excellent base upon which to form strategies in doing business.

Risk adverse attitude in developing strategies did not lead to large scale disasters as they often occurred in other businessmen.

A 'right' solution to a business problem was very straightforward and easy to implement. The weaknesses to this approach were that the solution would be sub-optimum. The alternative solution might be better.

Usually, 'high risk, high profit', but there might be situations that the high level of risk could be lowered by taking some precautionary measures without much effort, and high profit could be obtained from the transaction.

In order to reduce the chance to adopt sub-optimum solution, the researcher could conduct an in-depth interview or survey to examine the issue and choose the best strategy from a series of alternatives.

In the DBA programme, what the most important thing the researcher has learnt was not upon the content but upon the process. Whist content would become obsolescent as time goes by, the process is more everlasting and forms the basis of the most significant learning experience that a person can have.

Some subjects that the researcher has learnt from Accountancy were never referred to or used in subsequent business practice. On the other hand, the techniques and approaches
learnt in the DBA programme were more applicable. The researcher could use them to formulate business problems, collect data, build theory, solve the problems and maintain the solutions in turbulent environments.

Summary

The researcher is happy to point out that apart from acquisition of academic skill from the DBA programme he has changed his learning style in a more sophisticated way. He has also developed personal skills (self-management), interpersonal skills (interacting with / managing others) and organizational skills (managing organizational resources) from the DBA programme. This researcher could identify crisis and be more capable now of implementing appropriate strategies to tackle it. When there is a difficult business problem, the researcher can more easily conduct practical research to solve it effectively. The DBA programme is an expensive course and time consuming (it takes four years). The researcher is frustrated in some types of situation but worked hard or his studies. Should he abort or continue to study was sometimes the question? No doubt, only completion of the DBA can prove to the researcher that he has grim determination.
References


South-Western Thomson Learning, pp. 71.


Cohen, J.B. (1982) Involvement separating the state from its causes and effects at the Involvement Colloquium, New York University, New York, N.Y., 3-4 June.


Dowson, S. et al. (1993) A manual for the use of focus groups. Boston: INFDC.


Appendix I:

Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

I am a doctoral student studying consumer behaviour. I am attempting to determine the factors that lead to the purchase of dried sea products in Canton (with Hong Kong).

You have been randomly selected from a population of shoppers located in the dried sea products centre. The questionnaire has been designed so that you can answer it very quickly and easily. It will take you approximately 10-15 minutes. Please do not spend too long on any one question, your first thought is usually the best.

You can be sure that all of the information you provide will remain strictly confidential, and no individuals will be identified. Your answers will be combined with those of many others and used for statistical analyses.

I genuinely appreciate your valuable assistance. Your responses are vital to this study in order to make sure that the information available to the dried sea product retail market serves consumers as effectively as possible.

Thank you for your support and co-operation.

Yours Sincerely,

CHAN Ying-kwok
Instructions

Please circle the number which best describes your opinion about dried sea products. Although some questions may sound repetitive, it is important for you to respond. Please answer each question.

In this study, dried sea products include dried abalone, dried cucumber, dried shark fins and dried fish bladders only.

To me, dried sea products are:

- Unimportant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Important
- Of no concern 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Of concern
- Nonessential 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Essential
- Worthless 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Valuable
- Not needed 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Needed
- Unexciting 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Exciting
- Not beneficial 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Beneficial
- Doesn’t Matter 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Matter to me
1. What dried sea product items have you purchased in the past 12 months? (Please tick the appropriate box)

- [ ] Dried Abalone
- [ ] Dried Sea cucumber
- [ ] Dried shark fins
- [ ] Dried fish bladder

2. On average how much do you pay for buying dried sea product per purchase?

- [ ] Less than $1,000
- [ ] $1,000 to $1,999
- [ ] $2,000 to $2,999
- [ ] $3,000 to $3,999
- [ ] $4,000 to $4,999
- [ ] $5,000 or more

3. Do you consider to purchase dried sea products today?

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

4. How likely will you be to purchase dried sea products in the same store in the future?

- [1] Very unlikely
- [2] Neutral
- [3] Very likely

What reason, please specify one only.

1. Availability of information from vendors
2. Confidence in that store
3. Reviews and recommendations from experts
4. Saving time
5. Convenience
6. No pressure from sales people
7. Personalized information
Dried Sea Products Attributes

Please indicate how important each of the following product attributes is to you when purchasing dried sea products.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Of No Importance</th>
<th>Moderate Importance</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Appearance</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Packaging</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Less chemical residues</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Good Taste</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Different Taste</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Achievement</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Wealth</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Personality</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Social Status</td>
<td>1 2</td>
<td>3 4 5</td>
<td>6 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information Search

Please read each question below, indicate your general behaviour of searching for information about dried sea products. Please tick the appropriate box which best describes your opinion about searching for information.

1. On average, how often do you search for information of dried sea products?

   1. Don’t do at all
   2. Do about once each month
   3. Do about once every 3 months
   4. Do about every 1/2 year
   5. Do about once a year
2. What kind of information do you look when selecting dried sea products? (Please check all that apply)

1. Detailed information (Feature) □
2. Price comparison □
3. Location of store □
4. Availability of product □
5. Other information □
   Please specify if yes ____________________________
6. Not applicable □

3. On average, how many minutes do you spend searching in the retail shopping centre before you find the first piece of useful information?

1. Less than 5 minutes □
2. 6-15 minutes □
3. 16-30 minutes □
4. 31-45 minutes □
5. 46-60 minutes □
6. More than 60 minutes □
7. Don’t know □
8. Not applicable □

4. When you are searching for information about dried sea products when in a retail shop, what percentage of the time do you take to find what you are looking for?

1. Close to 100% □
2. Close to 75% □
3. Close to 50% □
4. Close to 25% □
5. Close to 0% □
6. Not Applicable □
5. How many minutes on average does it take you to give up to purchase if you cannot find the particular items of dried sea products you are looking for?

1. Less than 5 minutes □
2. 6-15 minutes □
3. 16-30 minutes □
4. 31-45 minutes □
5. 46-60 minutes □
6. More than 60 minutes □
7. Don't know □
8. Not applicable □

6. How long have you been engaging in purchasing fried sea products?

1. Less than 1 year □
2. 13 months to 5 years □
3. 6-10 years □
4. 11 to 15 years □
5. 16 years or more □
Shopping Orientations

Please read each statement about buying dried sea products, and then circle the number that indicates how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. I bought the dried sea products of a particular place of origin that I liked most
   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   Neutral

2. I believe that dried sea products of a particular place of origin is worth its high price.
   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   Neutral

3. When I shop for dried sea products, I choose the store first and then decide on the particular products to buy.
   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   Neutral

4. If it is possible, I would rather buy dried sea products that belong to a particular place of origin.
   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   Neutral

5. I try to be alert to popular dried sea products.
   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   Neutral

6. I think I am a good shopper.
   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   Neutral

7. It is important to buy dried sea products for a particular place of origin.
   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   Neutral

8. When I purchased dried sea products, price was the most important factor.
   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   Neutral

9. I would not buy dried sea products unless it is on sale.
   Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   Neutral

10. I make it a rule to shop at a number of stores before I buy.
    Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    Neutral

11. I am most concerned with dried sea products that are most popular.
    Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    Neutral

12. I do not hesitate to buy dried sea products if I really like it.
    Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    Neutral

13. I like to buy new species of dried sea products.
    Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    Neutral

14. I selected the most popular type of dried sea products because there was less risk.
    Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    Neutral

15. I like to try new and different stores to shop.
    Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    Neutral

16. Familiar stores are a good place to shop for dried sea products.
    Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    Neutral

17. All stores are good places to shop for dried sea products.
    Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    Neutral

18. The reason I like shopping is that it makes it easy to compare prices.
    Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
    Neutral
19. The reason I like shopping is that it gives consumers’ recommendations.
20. I usually visit at least three stores before choosing.
21. I carefully watch how much I spend.
22. The lowest price products are usually my choice.
23. I consider price first.

Information Sources

Please indicate how much you are influenced by the following information sources. Please circle the number which best represents your answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Source</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Magazines</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Newspaper ads</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. TV commercials</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Radio</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Friends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Close family members (e.g., Parents, siblings)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Other people who make comments on dried sea products.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Store Displays</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Spouse or significant other.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Situational Influences**

Please read each statement about dried sea products shopping. Please circle the number that indicates how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I shop where it saves my time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I usually buy at the most convenient markets.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I do not like to spend too much time planning to buy dried sea products.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The dried sea products stores are attractive places to shop.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The dried sea products stores just do not meet shopping needs.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I enjoy shopping.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. When I find what I like, I usually buy it without hesitation.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I buy more dried sea products in order to save a lot of time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Demographics

Please place a check (\(\checkmark\)) in the square that best describes you. This section of the questionnaire is for statistical purpose only.

1. Are you
   - Male [ ]
   - Female [ ]

2. What is your marital status?
   - Single [ ]
   - Divorced / Separated [ ]
   - Married / Co-habiting [ ]
   - Widowed [ ]

3. Are you presently working?
   - Yes [ ]
   - No [ ]

4. Please indicate your yearly gross family income in H.K. dollars?
   - Rather not say [ ]
   - $ 200,000-$290,000 [ ]
   - $100,000-$190,000 [ ]
   - $300,000-$390,000 [ ]
   - Over $400,000 [ ]

5. What is your age?
   - Under 30 [ ]
   - 31-40 [ ]
   - 41-50 [ ]
   - Over 60 [ ]

6. How would you classify yourself?
   - Hong Kong citizen [ ]
   - Cantonese [ ]
   - Others [ ]

Thank you for your participation.
Appendix II:
Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

先生 / 女士：

您好！

本人是英国大学的研究生，现在正为顾客的购物行为进行研究。这个题目是要找出一些会促使广东省（包括香港）的顾客购买海味的因素。

阁下在众多顾客中抽样选中进行问卷调查。这些问卷简单易答，需时大约10-15分钟。请不要花太多时间在每个问题上，你最初的想法是最好的。此问卷不会涉及个人资料，内容全部保密，所有答案仅用作统计分析。

本人在此衷心感谢您的协助。阁下提供的数据将有助于市场更有效地满足顾客的需要。谢谢！

陈应国 上
問卷

指示
請圈起以下最足以代表閣下意見的數字。雖然有些問題類似重覆，請閣下務必回答所有問題。

我覺得海味是：

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>不重要</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>不感興趣</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>不必</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>無價值的</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>不需要</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>多餘的</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>無益的</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>無所謂的</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

重要
感興趣
必需
有價值的
需要
令人興奮的
有益的
有所謂的
1. 你在過去一年來，有否購買下列貨品？
   (若有的話，請在合適的空格內加上 ✓ 號)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>鮑魚</th>
<th>魚翅</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>海參</th>
<th>魚肚</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. 每一次選購，閣下花費若干？

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>少於 $1,000</th>
<th>$3,000 - $3,999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$1,000 - $1,999</th>
<th>$4,000 - $4,999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$2,000 - $2,999</th>
<th>$5,000 或以上</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. 今日您會否購買海味？

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>會</th>
<th>不會</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. 下一次購買海味時，您會否重回相同的海味店選購海味？

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>不會</th>
<th>不肯定</th>
<th>會</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
海味貨品本質

當您用海味貨品本質去選購貨品時，它們的重要性如何？

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 外表</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 包裝</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 殘餘化學物</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 好味道</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 不同味道</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. 成功感</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. 富有</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. 性格</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. 社會地位</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

資料搜尋

閱讀以下的問題後，請發表如何搜集海味資料的行爲。請在合適的空格上加上 √ 號。

1. 您大約隔多久才搜集有關海味資料？

   1. 不會去搜集  □
   2. 約每月一次  □
   3. 約三個月一次  □
   4. 約半年一次  □
   5. 約一年一次  □
2. 您會找尋那些有關海味的資料? (可選擇多於一項)

1. 貨品特徵 □
2. 比較價格 □
3. 商店地點 □
4. 有否存貨 □
5. 其他資料 □

請略述

6. 不適用 □

10. 您逛海味街時，當您尚未認真搜尋海味資料時，您會用多少時間逛海味街?

1. 少過 5 分鐘 □
2. 6-15 分鐘 □
3. 16-30 分鐘 □
4. 31-45 分鐘 □
5. 46-60 分鐘 □
6. 多過 60 分鐘 □
7. 不知道 □
8. 不適用 □

11. 當您在海味街搜尋海味資料，有多少時間真正花在搜集資料上?

1. 幾乎百分百 □
2. 大約 3/4 時間 □
3. 大約 1/2 時間 □
4. 大約 1/4 時間 □
5. 幾乎沒有 □
6. 不適用 □
12. 當您搜集某一種特定貨品而又未能找到時，您願意總共花多少？

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>選項</th>
<th>□</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 少過 5 分鐘</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 6-15 分鐘</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 16-30 分鐘</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 31-45 分鐘</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 46-60 分鐘</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. 多過 60 分鐘</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. 不知道</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. 不適用</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. 您有多少購買海味經驗？

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>選項</th>
<th>□</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 少過 1 年</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 1-5 年</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 6-10 年</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 11-15 年</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 多過 16 年</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
購物定位

閱讀下列有關購買海味的見解後，請圈起您最認同的數字。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>項目描述</th>
<th>極度不同意</th>
<th>無意見</th>
<th>極度同意</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 我會購買某一產地的海味</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 我相信產地會影響海味的價格</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 若果我想買海味，我會先選擇熟店然後才選擇貨品</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 可能的話，我會先選擇某一產地的海味</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 我會留意流行的海味</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. 我認爲我是一個好的採購者</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. 去買海味，留意產地是非常重要的</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. 當我去買海味時，價格是一個非常重要的因素</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. 我只會購買特價海味</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. 在我未決定購買海味時，我會貨比三家</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. 我會關切那些海味是最流行</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. 若我真的喜歡那些海味，我會毫不猶豫地購買</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. 我喜歡買新品種的海味</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. 以防損失，我會挑選那些最多人購買的海味</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. 我喜歡到新的或不同的商店購買海味</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. 最好去光顧相熟的海味店</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. 所有海味店都是可以光顧的好地方</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. 選海味店的原因是能夠格價</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. 選海味店能夠獲得店方的推介</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. 我起碼逛三間海味店後才挑選貨品</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. 我會很謹慎的去花費購買海味</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. 我最喜歡買最低價的海味</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. 我最注重價格</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
資料來源
請指出您受資料來源影響的程度，請圈選最能代表您答案的數字。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>不受影響</th>
<th>普通</th>
<th>極受影響</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>雜誌</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>報章廣告</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>電視</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>收音機</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>朋友</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>親戚（如父母、兄弟姊妹）</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>海味品評人</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>陳列在海味店的貨品</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>伴侶</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

場合/情況影響
下列為選購海味的見解，請圈選數字以代表您同意與否的程度。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>極度不同意</th>
<th>無意見</th>
<th>極度同意</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>我會去那些不用浪費時間的商店購買海味</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>我通常會去方便的地方購買</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>我不喜歡花太多時間去計劃選購海味</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>海味街是一個非常有吸引力的購物商場</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>海味街不能迎合選購上的需要</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>我愛逛海味街</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>當我找到我喜歡的海味時，我會毫不猶豫地去購買</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>爲了節省時間，我會買多一些數量的海味</td>
<td>1 2 3</td>
<td>4 5 6 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
受訪者的個人普通資料

此部分純作統計分析之用，請在合適的空格上加上 ✓ 號。

1. 閣下性別
   男 □   女 □

2. 閣下的婚姻狀況
   未婚 □   離婚 / 分居 □
   已婚 / 同居 □   經 / 喪 □

3. 閣下是否在職？
   是 □   否 □

4. 閣下的每年家庭收入(港幣)為？
   不方便講 □   $200,000-$290,000 □
   Under $100,000 □   $300,000-$390,000 □
   $100,000-$190,000 □   $400,000 以上 □

5. 閣下年齡
   30 歲以下 □   51-60 □
   31-40 □   60 以上 □
   41-50 □

6. 閣下現居於？
   香港 □   其他 □
   廣東省 □

多謝閣下參加此問卷的調查
Appendix III:

Relevant figures and tables of factor analysis on shopping orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.610</td>
<td>.399</td>
<td>.319</td>
<td>.329</td>
<td>.364</td>
<td>.776</td>
<td>-.095</td>
<td>-.365</td>
<td>.056</td>
<td>.275</td>
<td>.214</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>-.124</td>
<td>-.216</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>-.174</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>.084</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>-.018</td>
<td>-.510</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.610</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.366</td>
<td>.609</td>
<td>.196</td>
<td>.232</td>
<td>.587</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>-.324</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>.073</td>
<td>-.268</td>
<td>-.250</td>
<td>.309</td>
<td>-.055</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.035</td>
<td>.154</td>
<td>-.034</td>
<td>-.231</td>
<td>-.030</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.399</td>
<td>.366</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.597</td>
<td>-.008</td>
<td>-.507</td>
<td>.491</td>
<td>-.344</td>
<td>-.547</td>
<td>-.497</td>
<td>-.083</td>
<td>.407</td>
<td>-.168</td>
<td>-.129</td>
<td>-.739</td>
<td>.854</td>
<td>-.618</td>
<td>-.289</td>
<td>.480</td>
<td>.480</td>
<td>-.395</td>
<td>-.400</td>
<td>-.450</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.319</td>
<td>.196</td>
<td>.597</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.251</td>
<td>.467</td>
<td>.810</td>
<td>-.165</td>
<td>-.447</td>
<td>-.083</td>
<td>.213</td>
<td>-.358</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>-.122</td>
<td>-.372</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td>-.302</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.193</td>
<td>-.067</td>
<td>-.147</td>
<td>-.455</td>
<td>-.162</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.329</td>
<td>.609</td>
<td>.196</td>
<td>.251</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.207</td>
<td>.268</td>
<td>.138</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.376</td>
<td>.757</td>
<td>.655</td>
<td>-.388</td>
<td>-.066</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.220</td>
<td>.315</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.421</td>
<td>-.174</td>
<td>-.262</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.364</td>
<td>.232</td>
<td>.507</td>
<td>-.008</td>
<td>-.507</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.421</td>
<td>-.407</td>
<td>-.395</td>
<td>-.198</td>
<td>-.153</td>
<td>.305</td>
<td>-.166</td>
<td>-.044</td>
<td>-.273</td>
<td>.479</td>
<td>-.278</td>
<td>-.157</td>
<td>.489</td>
<td>-.154</td>
<td>-.360</td>
<td>-.393</td>
<td>-.315</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.776</td>
<td>.587</td>
<td>.491</td>
<td>.810</td>
<td>.268</td>
<td>.421</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-.032</td>
<td>-.368</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>.218</td>
<td>-.224</td>
<td>-.047</td>
<td>-.181</td>
<td>-.301</td>
<td>.358</td>
<td>-.206</td>
<td>.145</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>-.065</td>
<td>-.448</td>
<td>-.022</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-.095</td>
<td>-.344</td>
<td>-.165</td>
<td>-.032</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>.435</td>
<td>.549</td>
<td>.257</td>
<td>.472</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>-.071</td>
<td>-.272</td>
<td>-.304</td>
<td>.446</td>
<td>.483</td>
<td>.477</td>
<td>.441</td>
<td>.600</td>
<td>.287</td>
<td>.684</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-.268</td>
<td>-.129</td>
<td>-.122</td>
<td>-.085</td>
<td>-.044</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>-.071</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>-.061</td>
<td>-.047</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.124</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.029</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.338</td>
<td>.854</td>
<td>.473</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.479</td>
<td>.358</td>
<td>-.304</td>
<td>.513</td>
<td>-.462</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>.396</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>-.124</td>
<td>.743</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.600</td>
<td>.245</td>
<td>.504</td>
<td>-.448</td>
<td>.283</td>
<td>-.412</td>
<td>-.380</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.174</td>
<td>-.035</td>
<td>.193</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.489</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>-.477</td>
<td>-.397</td>
<td>-.531</td>
<td>-.054</td>
<td>.453</td>
<td>.163</td>
<td>-.069</td>
<td>.376</td>
<td>.504</td>
<td>-.421</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td>.443</td>
<td>.297</td>
<td>.528</td>
<td>.439</td>
<td>.517</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.480</td>
<td>-.087</td>
<td>.421</td>
<td>-.154</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.441</td>
<td>.386</td>
<td>.870</td>
<td>.478</td>
<td>.264</td>
<td>.246</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.612</td>
<td>.448</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td>.448</td>
<td>.519</td>
<td>.504</td>
<td>.519</td>
<td>.504</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-.018</td>
<td>-.034</td>
<td>-.593</td>
<td>.174</td>
<td>-.360</td>
<td>.555</td>
<td>.600</td>
<td>.491</td>
<td>.602</td>
<td>.270</td>
<td>.517</td>
<td>.032</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.336</td>
<td>.283</td>
<td>.443</td>
<td>.466</td>
<td>-.554</td>
<td>.519</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.266</td>
<td>.707</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-.510</td>
<td>-.331</td>
<td>-.400</td>
<td>-.455</td>
<td>-.145</td>
<td>-.393</td>
<td>-.448</td>
<td>.287</td>
<td>.469</td>
<td>.204</td>
<td>-.145</td>
<td>-.272</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>.247</td>
<td>.612</td>
<td>.297</td>
<td>.129</td>
<td>.233</td>
<td>.164</td>
<td>.266</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-.017</td>
<td>-.030</td>
<td>-.450</td>
<td>-.162</td>
<td>-.262</td>
<td>-.315</td>
<td>-.022</td>
<td>.684</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td>.753</td>
<td>.543</td>
<td>-.445</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td>.416</td>
<td>-.360</td>
<td>.517</td>
<td>-.567</td>
<td>-.583</td>
<td>.663</td>
<td>.797</td>
<td>.304</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation Matrix
### KMO and Bartlett's Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.</th>
<th>0.883</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</td>
<td>Approx. Chi-Square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Total Variance Explained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Initial Eigenvalues</th>
<th>Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% of Variance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.909</td>
<td>34.386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.407</td>
<td>19.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.200</td>
<td>5.217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.024</td>
<td>4.452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.792</td>
<td>3.444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.649</td>
<td>2.823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.611</td>
<td>2.657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.549</td>
<td>2.388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.500</td>
<td>2.172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.459</td>
<td>1.996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.414</td>
<td>1.802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.391</td>
<td>1.701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.326</td>
<td>1.417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.294</td>
<td>1.279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.287</td>
<td>1.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.221</td>
<td>0.964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.204</td>
<td>0.886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.188</td>
<td>0.819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.147</td>
<td>0.638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>0.531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>0.436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.094</td>
<td>0.410</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

### Scree Plot

![Scree Plot](image-url)
Shopping Orientation

Table 1: Comparison of eigenvalues from principal component analysis (PCA) and the corresponding criterion values obtained from parallel analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component number</th>
<th>Actual eigenvalue from PCA</th>
<th>Criterion value from parallel analysis</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.909</td>
<td>1.6712</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.407</td>
<td>1.5490</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.131</td>
<td>1.4626</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.200</td>
<td>1.3947</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.024</td>
<td>1.3234</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rotated Component Matrix(s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient21</td>
<td>.844</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient23</td>
<td>.839</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient8</td>
<td>.801</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient12</td>
<td>-.649</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient10</td>
<td>.639</td>
<td>.538</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient19</td>
<td>-.622</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient18</td>
<td>.594</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient9</td>
<td>.520</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient6</td>
<td></td>
<td>.892</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient1</td>
<td></td>
<td>.879</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient4</td>
<td></td>
<td>.875</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient2</td>
<td></td>
<td>.735</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient22</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.584</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.832</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.830</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.755</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.665</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient20</td>
<td>.525</td>
<td>.577</td>
<td></td>
<td>.817</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.779</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.755</td>
<td>.952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ShopOrient14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Rotation Sum of Squared Loadings</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
<th>Cumulative %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.915</td>
<td>21.371</td>
<td>21.371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.238</td>
<td>18.425</td>
<td>39.796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.715</td>
<td>16.153</td>
<td>55.948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.686</td>
<td>11.677</td>
<td>67.626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.117</td>
<td>4.855</td>
<td>72.480</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
### Appendix IV:

Relevant figures and tables of factor analysis on information source influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>InfoSources1</th>
<th>InfoSources2</th>
<th>InfoSources3</th>
<th>InfoSources4</th>
<th>InfoSources5</th>
<th>InfoSources6</th>
<th>InfoSources7</th>
<th>InfoSources8</th>
<th>InfoSources9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources1</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.483</td>
<td>.325</td>
<td>.514</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>-.048</td>
<td>-.112</td>
<td>-.062</td>
<td>-.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources2</td>
<td>.483</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.639</td>
<td>.298</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>.330</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources3</td>
<td>.325</td>
<td>.639</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.351</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources4</td>
<td>.514</td>
<td>.298</td>
<td>.351</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-.018</td>
<td>-.065</td>
<td>-.025</td>
<td>-.061</td>
<td>-.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources5</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>-.018</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.461</td>
<td>.599</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>-.069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources6</td>
<td>-.048</td>
<td>.095</td>
<td>-.046</td>
<td>-.065</td>
<td>.461</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.359</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>-.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources7</td>
<td>-.112</td>
<td>.330</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>-.025</td>
<td>.599</td>
<td>.359</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.187</td>
<td>-.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources8</td>
<td>-.062</td>
<td>-.037</td>
<td>-.022</td>
<td>-.061</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.187</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources9</td>
<td>-.038</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>-.079</td>
<td>-.069</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>-.169</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy: .622
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity
Approx. Chi-Square: 416.341
df: 36
Sig.: .000

Total Variance Explained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Initial Eigenvalues</th>
<th>Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings</th>
<th>Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% of Variance</td>
<td>Cumulative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.001</td>
<td>22.229</td>
<td>49.553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.022</td>
<td>11.354</td>
<td>60.907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>.987</td>
<td>10.965</td>
<td>71.873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>.864</td>
<td>9.595</td>
<td>81.467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>.576</td>
<td>6.396</td>
<td>87.863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>.499</td>
<td>5.542</td>
<td>93.405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>.344</td>
<td>3.825</td>
<td>97.230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>.249</td>
<td>2.770</td>
<td>100.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Scree Plot
Information Source

Table 2: Comparison of eigenvalues from principal component analysis (PCA) and the corresponding criterion values obtained from parallel analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component number</th>
<th>Actual eigenvalue from PCA</th>
<th>Criterion value from parallel analysis</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.459</td>
<td>1.3347</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.001</td>
<td>1.2190</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.022</td>
<td>1.1303</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rotated Component Matrix (a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources2</td>
<td>.790</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources1</td>
<td>.766</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources3</td>
<td>.761</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources4</td>
<td>.705</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources7</td>
<td>.848</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources5</td>
<td>.827</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources6</td>
<td>.674</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InfoSources9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


a Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Component Transformation Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.858</td>
<td>.514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-514</td>
<td>.858</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix V:

Relevant figures and tables of factor analysis on situational influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>SitInfluences1</th>
<th>SitInfluences2</th>
<th>SitInfluences3</th>
<th>SitInfluences4</th>
<th>SitInfluences5</th>
<th>SitInfluences6</th>
<th>SitInfluences7</th>
<th>SitInfluences8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correlation</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.772</td>
<td>-.122</td>
<td>-.520</td>
<td>-.354</td>
<td>-.525</td>
<td>-.060</td>
<td>-.085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences2</td>
<td>.772</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-.119</td>
<td>-.469</td>
<td>-.338</td>
<td>-.468</td>
<td>-.125</td>
<td>-.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences3</td>
<td>-.122</td>
<td>-.119</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>.242</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>-.148</td>
<td>-.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences4</td>
<td>-.520</td>
<td>-.469</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.509</td>
<td>.911</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>.276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences5</td>
<td>-.354</td>
<td>-.338</td>
<td>.242</td>
<td>.509</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.496</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td>.306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences6</td>
<td>-.525</td>
<td>-.468</td>
<td>.172</td>
<td>.911</td>
<td>.496</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.240</td>
<td>.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences7</td>
<td>-.060</td>
<td>-.125</td>
<td>-.148</td>
<td>.209</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td>.240</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences8</td>
<td>-.085</td>
<td>-.175</td>
<td>-.071</td>
<td>.276</td>
<td>.306</td>
<td>.286</td>
<td>.421</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### KMO and Bartlett's Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure</td>
<td>.718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampling Adequacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</td>
<td>715.566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approx. Chi-Square</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Total Variance Explained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Initial Eigenvalues</th>
<th>Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings</th>
<th>Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% of Variance</td>
<td>Cumulative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.405</td>
<td>42.566</td>
<td>42.566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.424</td>
<td>17.803</td>
<td>60.369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.719</td>
<td>8.992</td>
<td>82.108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.626</td>
<td>7.820</td>
<td>89.928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.503</td>
<td>6.291</td>
<td>96.219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.215</td>
<td>2.683</td>
<td>98.902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>1.098</td>
<td>100.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

### Scree Plot

![Scree Plot](image-url)
Situational Influences

Table 3: Comparison of eigenvalues from principal component analysis (PCA) and the corresponding criterion values obtained from parallel analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component number</th>
<th>Actual eigenvalue from PCA</th>
<th>Criterion value from parallel analysis</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.405</td>
<td>1.3042</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.424</td>
<td>1.1953</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.020</td>
<td>1.1105</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rotated Component Matrix(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences4</td>
<td>.850</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences6</td>
<td>.845</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences1</td>
<td>-.800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences2</td>
<td>-.764</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences5</td>
<td>.654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences7</td>
<td></td>
<td>.798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences8</td>
<td></td>
<td>.754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitInfluences3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Total Variance Explained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.537</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Appendix VI:

Relevant figures and tables of MANOVA on information search effort

Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Involvement (Banded)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>howofteensearch</td>
<td>&lt;= 32.00</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>1.137</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.00+</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>1.072</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1.453</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timespendonsearch</td>
<td>&lt;= 32.00</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.603</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.00+</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>1.884</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>1.897</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minutesonaverage</td>
<td>&lt;= 32.00</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.572</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.00+</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>1.688</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>1.872</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Box's M</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.991</td>
<td>2.409</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>39928.862</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

Multivariate Tests(b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Pillai's Trace</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Hypothesis df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>.914</td>
<td>345.273</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>98.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>345.273</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>98.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.570</td>
<td>345.273</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>98.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.570</td>
<td>345.273</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>98.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.469</td>
<td>28.898</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>98.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.531</td>
<td>28.898</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>98.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.884</td>
<td>28.898</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>98.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.884</td>
<td>28.898</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>98.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.469</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Exact statistic
b Design: Intercept+Level
Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>howoftensearch</td>
<td>.571</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timespends</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.493</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minutesaverage</td>
<td>.720</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.398</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>hownoftensearch</td>
<td>89.353(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>89.353</td>
<td>72.065</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timespends</td>
<td>70.233(b)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>70.233</td>
<td>23.952</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>minutesaverage</td>
<td>92.957(c)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>92.957</td>
<td>35.615</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>hownoftensearch</td>
<td>1085.824</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1085.824</td>
<td>875.734</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timespends</td>
<td>1105.762</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1105.762</td>
<td>377.100</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>minutesaverage</td>
<td>1212.368</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1212.368</td>
<td>464.502</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>hownoftensearch</td>
<td>89.353</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>89.353</td>
<td>72.065</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timespends</td>
<td>70.233</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>70.233</td>
<td>23.952</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>minutesaverage</td>
<td>92.957</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>92.957</td>
<td>35.615</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>hownoftensearch</td>
<td>123.900</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.240</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timespends</td>
<td>293.228</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2.932</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>minutesaverage</td>
<td>261.004</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2.610</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>hownoftensearch</td>
<td>1211.000</td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timespends</td>
<td>1399.000</td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>minutesaverage</td>
<td>1474.000</td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>hownoftensearch</td>
<td>213.343</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timespends</td>
<td>365.461</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>minutesaverage</td>
<td>353.951</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R Squared = .419 (Adjusted R Squared = .415)
R Squared = .193 (Adjusted R Squared = .185)
R Squared = .265 (Adjusted R Squared = .255)
Appendix VII:

Relevant figures and tables of MANOVA on shopping orientations factors

Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S01</td>
<td>&lt;= 32.00</td>
<td>8.7361</td>
<td>3.91056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.00+</td>
<td>11.1754</td>
<td>2.58514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9.8140</td>
<td>3.58985</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S02</td>
<td>&lt;= 32.00</td>
<td>17.5417</td>
<td>5.24589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.00+</td>
<td>21.8070</td>
<td>3.77705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19.4264</td>
<td>4.97772</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S03</td>
<td>&lt;= 32.00</td>
<td>12.9861</td>
<td>5.98588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.00+</td>
<td>14.0351</td>
<td>4.35055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13.4496</td>
<td>4.72685</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box’s M</th>
<th>20.620</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>3.347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df2</td>
<td>101348.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig.</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a Design: Intercept+Level

Multivariate Tests(b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Hypothesis df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>Pillai’s Trace</td>
<td>.970</td>
<td>1354.536(a)</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>125.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wilks’ Lambda</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>1354.536(a)</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>125.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelling’s Trace</td>
<td>.32509</td>
<td>1354.536(a)</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>125.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roy’s Largest Root</td>
<td>.32509</td>
<td>1354.536(a)</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>125.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Pillai’s Trace</td>
<td>.215</td>
<td>11.398(a)</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>125.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wilks’ Lambda</td>
<td>.785</td>
<td>11.398(a)</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>125.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotelling’s Trace</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>11.398(a)</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>125.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roy’s Largest Root</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>11.398(a)</td>
<td>3.000</td>
<td>125.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Exact statistic

b Design: Intercept+Level
### Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SO1</td>
<td>22.750</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO2</td>
<td>15.273</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>2.077</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>.152</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a Design: Intercept+Level

### Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>SO1</td>
<td>189.303(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>189.303</td>
<td>16.464</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO2</td>
<td>578.798(b)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>578.798</td>
<td>28.351</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>35.007(c)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35.007</td>
<td>1.574</td>
<td>.212</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>SO1</td>
<td>12613.272</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12613.272</td>
<td>1097.008</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO2</td>
<td>49258.147</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>49258.147</td>
<td>2412.797</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>23228.805</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23228.805</td>
<td>1044.299</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>SO1</td>
<td>189.303</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>189.303</td>
<td>16.464</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO2</td>
<td>578.798</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>578.798</td>
<td>28.351</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>35.007</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35.007</td>
<td>1.574</td>
<td>.212</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>SO1</td>
<td>1460.232</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>11.498</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO2</td>
<td>2592.722</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>20.415</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>2824.916</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>22.243</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>SO1</td>
<td>14074.000</td>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO2</td>
<td>51854.000</td>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>26195.000</td>
<td>129</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>SO1</td>
<td>1649.535</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO2</td>
<td>3171.550</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SO3</td>
<td>2859.922</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a R Squared = .115 (Adjusted R Squared = .108)
b R Squared = .182 (Adjusted R Squared = .176)
c R Squared = .012 (Adjusted R Squared = .004)
Appendix VIII:

Relevant figures and tables of MANOVA on information source influences

Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involvement (Banded)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IS1 &lt;= 32.00</td>
<td>7.3662</td>
<td>2.80428</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.00+</td>
<td>7.8214</td>
<td>3.67353</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7.5669</td>
<td>3.21107</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS2 &lt;= 32.00</td>
<td>7.5211</td>
<td>2.52337</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.00+</td>
<td>9.2500</td>
<td>2.14264</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8.2835</td>
<td>2.50681</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box’s Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices (a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box’s M</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.190</td>
<td>2.027</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3312701.763</td>
<td>.108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

Multivariate Tests (b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Hypothesis df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>.944</td>
<td>1050.874(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>124.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.055</td>
<td>1050.874(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>124.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>16.950</td>
<td>1050.874(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>124.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
<td>16.950</td>
<td>1050.874(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>124.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>8.415(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>124.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.880</td>
<td>8.415(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>124.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>8.415(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>124.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
<td>.136</td>
<td>8.415(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>124.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Exact statistic
(b) Design: Intercept+Level
Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IS1</td>
<td>5.135</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS2</td>
<td>2.468</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>.119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a Design: Intercept+Level

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>IS1</td>
<td>6.488(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.488</td>
<td>.627</td>
<td>.430</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IS2</td>
<td>93.577(b)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>93.577</td>
<td>16.753</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>IS1</td>
<td>7221.417</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7221.417</td>
<td>698.292</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IS2</td>
<td>8805.766</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8805.766</td>
<td>15756.71</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>IS1</td>
<td>6.488</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.488</td>
<td>.627</td>
<td>.430</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IS2</td>
<td>93.577</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>93.577</td>
<td>16.753</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>IS1</td>
<td>1292.693</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>10.342</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IS2</td>
<td>698.218</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>5.586</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>IS1</td>
<td>8571.000</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>5.354</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IS2</td>
<td>9506.000</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>7.552</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>IS1</td>
<td>1299.181</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>10.342</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IS2</td>
<td>791.795</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>6.354</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a R Squared = .005 (Adjusted R Squared = -.003)
b R Squared = .118 (Adjusted R Squared = .111)
Appendix IX:

Relevant figures and tables of MANOVA on situational influences

Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involvement (Banded)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S11 &lt;= 32.00</td>
<td>4.5000</td>
<td>2.47392</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.00+</td>
<td>9.8475</td>
<td>3.12837</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7.1628</td>
<td>3.72238</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S12 &lt;= 32.00</td>
<td>5.6857</td>
<td>2.11648</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.00+</td>
<td>8.4237</td>
<td>2.46495</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6.9380</td>
<td>2.65386</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices(a)

| Box's M  | 5.991 |
| F        | 1.963 |
| df1      | 3     |
| df2      | 60652487.93 |
| Sig.     | .152  |

Tests the null hypothesis that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables are equal across groups.

a  Design: Intercept+Level

Multivariate Tests(b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Hypothesis df</th>
<th>Error df</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>.932</td>
<td>859.850(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>126.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>859.850(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>126.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>13.648</td>
<td>859.850(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>126.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
<td>13.648</td>
<td>859.850(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>126.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>.490</td>
<td>60.577(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>126.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilks' Lambda</td>
<td>.510</td>
<td>60.577(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>126.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotelling's Trace</td>
<td>.962</td>
<td>60.577(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>126.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roy's Largest Root</td>
<td>.962</td>
<td>60.577(a)</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td>126.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.490</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a  Exact statistic
b  Design: Intercept+Level

293
Levene’s Test of Equality of Error Variances(a)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S11</td>
<td>1.774</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>.185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S12</td>
<td>.765</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>.383</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a Design: Intercept+Level

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>S11</td>
<td>783.654(a)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>783.654</td>
<td>100.537</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S22</td>
<td>240.011(b)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>240.011</td>
<td>46.060</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>S11</td>
<td>6962.972</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6962.972</td>
<td>893.296</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S22</td>
<td>240.011</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>240.011</td>
<td>46.060</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>S11</td>
<td>783.654</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>783.654</td>
<td>100.537</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S22</td>
<td>240.011</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>240.011</td>
<td>46.060</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>S11</td>
<td>989.927</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>7.795</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S22</td>
<td>661.492</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>5.209</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>S11</td>
<td>8392.000</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>64.694</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S22</td>
<td>7111.000</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>56.071</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>S11</td>
<td>1773.581</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>12.923</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S22</td>
<td>501.504</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>3.907</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a R Squared = .442 (Adjusted R Squared = .437)

b R Squared = .266 (Adjusted R Squared = .260)