

Benefits Sought by Grocery Shoppers: An Exploratory Study in Oman

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the dimensions of benefits sought by Omanis in shopping for groceries. The data were gathered through a combination of thirty five in-depth open ended interviews and two consensus group discussions. Content analysis was performed on interview transcripts with the use of QSR NUD*IST software. Consensus group discussions were audio and video-taped. The patterns of benefits established from the data set suggest that there are eight dimensions of benefits sought: Getting the job done; Convenience; Monetary saving; Time saving; Enjoyment; Relaxation; Freedom; and Recognition. Despite its usefulness grocers have not paid sufficient attention to benefit segmentation. This study reveals that Omani grocery shoppers in Oman seek specific benefits and grocers should be mindful of them.

Keywords: benefit segmentation, grocery retailing, and segmenting retail markets.

Introduction

Segmenting markets is a key step in developing a marketing plan (McDonald, 1999) and this is also a necessary preparation for implementing a product positioning strategy (Ries and Trout, 1969 and 1981). Marketing managers would rarely argue against adopting market segmentation, target marketing, and positioning philosophy for managing consumer markets because those techniques offer benefits - they enable marketers to use their limited resources to satisfy their customers. But which segmentation method should a company use? Companies, by and large, prefer to use the traditional approach in segmenting their customers, i.e., segmenting them in a priori with the use of demographical and socio-economic data. Based on a review of thirty-three methods of segmenting mature markets, Bone (1991) found that managers preferred to use a range of demographical and socio-economic data and the most commonly used was chronological age.

Socio-economic and demographical data, however, are only able to explain the discriminatory factors at the general level which concern with customer bases and not with consumption behavior. Antonides and Van Raaij (1998) regarded the traditional method of using socio-economic and demographical data as a backward type of segmentation analysis. Other authors proposed the use of psychographical data (for example, Well and Gubar, 1966; Mitchell, 1983; Riche, 1989) because those data can explain consumption behavior better than socio-economic and demographical data. Moschis (1996) combined gerontological and psychographical variables and used them to segment older consumers. According to Moschis, the combined data are more reliable predictors of consumption behavior of older consumers. Differences in consumer wants, apparently, can also be explained by consumers' attitudes, interests and opinions and proponents of this theory argued that consumers can be segmented on the basis of their

attitudes, interests and opinions. Dorney (1971) and Peterson (1972), for instance, argued for the use of generalized personality traits of consumers to segment markets. This approach is grounded on personal psychology theory which recognizes the predictive power of personality traits.

The traditional approach of segmenting consumer markets has many limitations. In order to illustrate and justify the relevance of various 'benefits sought' as variables that may be used to segment consumers this article reports the results of an exploratory study done on Omani grocery consumers in Muscat, Oman.

The main objective of this study is to explore the dimensions of benefits sought by Omani grocery shoppers in Oman. In addition, this study also aims to provide the much needed boost in the publication of marketing information on the 'Arab World'.

Segmenting customers in terms of benefit sought

Market segmentation has been identified as one of the important steps in developing a workable marketing plan (McDonald, 1999). Previous attempts to define market segmentation revolve around aggregating consumers into groups that share some common characteristics (see, Kotler et al., 1999; Smith, 1956; Tonks and Farr, 2001). The objective of segmenting markets is to group consumers into relatively homogeneous groups so that they respond in a similar manner to marketing activities (Rao and Steckel, 1998).

The seminal work of Smith (1956) defined market segmentation as 'viewing a heterogeneous market as a number of smaller homogeneous markets, in response to differing preferences, attributable to the desires of consumers for more precise satisfaction of their varying wants'. Perreault, Cannon, and McCarthy (2010) distinguished one segment from another in terms of within and between-group

differences with respect to their likely responses to marketing mix variables(i.e., homogeneous responses within and heterogeneous between groups).

Besides using the traditional approach of segmenting markets, which categorizes them in a priori, authors have proposed the use of alternative types of data and in particular gerontological and psychographical data (see, Antonides and Van Raaij, 1998; González and Bello, 2002; Riche, 1989; and Well and Gubar, 1966). A grocer would find it useful to use socio-economic and demographical data to identify the size of the market or to judge its attractiveness. Psychographical data may also be useful for the purpose of predicting consumption and/or buying behavior of grocery shoppers. However, certain psychographical data such as individual interests and opinions on specific issues tend to change frequently over time (e.g., political affiliations of individuals).

Haley (1968) argued that the benefits that people seek in consuming a given product are the basic reasons for the existence of true market segments. Benefits segmentation explains the reasons why consumers choose to buy a particular brand or prefer to patronize a particular supplier and on that basis it offers more utility than the traditional approach that merely rationalizes the associations of different variables (e.g., level of income with level of spending on luxury products). Benefit segmentation is an approach that marketers may use to segment consumers on the basis of desired or sought benefits from looking for, acquiring, and using a product. The objective of benefit segmentation is to identify groups of customers having similar preferences for benefits sought (Haley, 1968) that marketers may target with specific sets of marketing mix (Haley, 1968; Wind, 1978). The segments that are formed as a result of commonality of benefits sought are established as an ex-post rather than an a priori theory of consumption. The usefulness of benefit segmentation approach in a wide range of industry is already well established (see Calantone and Sawyer, 1978; Haley, 1984; Locker and Perdue, 1992; McDougall and

Levesque, 1994; Moriarty and Reibstein; Myers, 1976; 1986; Soutar and McNeil, 1991; Tynan and Drayton, 1987). In retail banking services, McDougall and Levesque (1994) used benefits attributed to service quality dimensions to identify groups of retail banking customers. They identified two groups of customers on the basis of primary benefits they sought: one group prefers convenience and the other prefers performance of banking services. They also reported that primary benefits sought from retail banking services were independent of demographic characteristics. These findings reinforce the greater utility of benefit segmentation over the traditional approach of using demographical and socio-economic data. Benefits sought by grocery shoppers in general and by shoppers in Oman in particular are lacking.

In the remaining space, the value of benefit segmentation approach when applied in the retailing industry and specifically in retail outlets in Oman will be argued. Oman is a member country of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) together with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, and Bahrain. According to the 2003 census, Oman has a total population of 2.341 million comprising 76 % Omani and 24 % expatriates and a total gross domestic product of \$20.15 billion (Oman, 2006). Administratively, Oman is divided into eight governorates/regions and Muscat Region accounted for 21.4 % of total Omani population or 382,000. Oman has a large and growing proportion of young people – in 2003, 93.25% of the population is under 55 years old. The demographical characteristics of Oman suggest that demand for groceries will continue to grow and that grocery market will become larger, and will become more competitive in the future. In addition to numerous corner and convenience stores, Oman currently has several large retail formats such as supermarket and hypermarket chains (e.g., Al-Fair, LuLu, Carrefour, Safeer, and Sultan).

Within the last few years Omani consumers in Muscat Region have been exposed to new retail formats and in particular the hypermarket retail format. The landscape of retail industry in Oman is changing rapidly on the backdrop of modernization and economic liberalization. Omani consumers are expected to be more discerning in the coming years. Higher level of education and continuing growth in the income of Omani families will lead to a greater diversity of consumers wants. Changes in the socio-economic and demographical characteristics of Omani would compel grocers to re-examine their market segmentation strategy. Findings of the present research are aimed to promote the process of re-examining market segments of grocery shoppers in Oman. In the remainder of this article, the research methodology, study findings and results are presented and are followed by a brief conclusion.

Research Methodology

Understanding consumer behavior in Oman is quite challenging because Omanis and various nationalities that make up the expatriate communities have substantial differences in their cultural orientation. In this regard, we consider it more meaningful to focus only on a more homogenous group of Omanis, which in a long-term, is going to be the dominant group of consumers in Oman.

Research on retailing in Oman is lacking in academic journals. Hence, preliminary understanding of shopping behavior of Omanis required an exploratory research. This study was divided into three stages. The first stage involved reviewing the literature for "benefits of shopping" that might be sought by Omanis in shopping for groceries in Muscat, and relevant to the purpose of the present study.

In the second stage, a qualitative inquiry of thirty-five in-depth open-ended interviews of informants was performed. These informants were Omanis who used to shop for

groceries for their families on a regular basis (i.e., did the major shopping at least once a week and additional top-up shopping as and when necessary). These informants were recruited by using referrals and the snow-ball method. This technique is considered to be the most cost-effective method and convenient because people in this society tend to feel more comfortable and willing to participate when they are approached and persuaded by someone they already knew. Each interview lasted for between sixty and ninety minutes. During these interviews informants were asked to describe their experiences in shopping for groceries. They were also probed into unraveling the benefits they sought from their grocery shopping trips and while shopping for groceries. In-depth interviews were used because it provided the researcher with a deep understanding of a phenomenon from consumer's perspective (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). The guide on conducting exploratory unstructured interview suggested by Jarrat (1996) and Bernard (1988) were also applied, in which the researcher assured anonymity of informants and conveyed the objective of the interview, and asked for their permissions prior to taking notes during the interview and/or audio taping the interviews. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. A content analysis was then done on all thirty-five interview transcripts for the purpose of searching for recurring patterns of comments made by informants that referred to benefits sought in grocery shopping. Using QSR NUD*IST software¹ the author applied the categorizing process developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) which involved sorting themes into groups based on similar characteristics. Comments about benefits were assorted into a string of related complementary and supportive comments. In the process, five interview transcripts were discarded because, based on the contents, the interviewees were not providing information on their shopping motives. Appendix A shows examples of two strings of related comments that converged into two benefits: "felt comfortable" which is impliedly sought by 37% of informants; and "have the

opportunity to enjoy”, which is impliedly sought by 33% of informants. Two judges were asked to examine the sixteen conceptualized benefits and strings of informants’ comments supportive of them. Both judges came into an agreement on fifteen conceptualized benefits.

The third stage involved organizing all forty conceptualized benefits (i.e., twenty-nine from literature review and fifteen from in-depth interviews including a benefit that emerged from both processes, see first column in Table 1) into eight themes of benefits sought as shown in the second column in Table 1. The descriptions of these eight benefits were then presented to two focus groups for discussions. The researcher ascertained that all members of the focus groups had never participated in a shopping benefit study or being recruited as informants in the present study. Taking into consideration of the local custom, women and were separated from each other and were organized into two groups: the first group was comprised of eight women and the second group was comprised of eight men. The consensus group discussions were video-and audio-taped.

The meaning of all themes of benefit was explained to all participants of consensus group discussions. The researcher prompted and supervised the discussions and took notes of important junctures. These discussions had two objectives. First, to discuss the meaning and description of all tentative themes of benefits sought and to solicit participants into providing relevant indicators of those headings of benefits. Second, to solicit revelation of potential benefits that had not been revealed by the literature review or by informants during the in-depth interviews. Each group discussion lasted for about three hours. After an intermission for each group, the researcher summarized the discussions and presented the findings to the group for members' discussions and concurrence. The researcher, assisted by a colleague, reviewed the summaries of discussions and when necessary

played back the video and audio tapes. The use of this method is consistent with the recommendations by Haresty and Bearden (2004) on the use of expert judges in scale development. A consensus of experts (i.e., Omani shoppers) was obtained on the face validity of the proposed dimensions of benefits sought. The results of both discussions, essentially, were similar: a list of eight themes of benefits that had been identified from both literature and in-depth interviews. The discussions, nevertheless, had enabled the researcher to solicit participants into providing relevant indicators of benefits. For example, the broadcasting of verses of Quran through supermarkets' overhead audio systems is something that created a relaxing atmosphere.

Findings and discussions

An initial list forty-four benefits sought from grocery shopping have been identified from the literature and the results of in-depth interviews as shown in Appendix A. Appendix A (second column) also shows the tentative grouping of benefits sought. Item 44 ('did something for others') was then deleted from the final list because it was judged to be unimportant; the results of the content analysis on interview transcripts did not show strong support for it to be retained. The conception of eight dimensions of benefits was then discussed and concurred by two groups of Omani grocery shoppers for their consensus. Findings of the present research suggest that there are eight dimensions of benefits.

1. Getting the job done

Consumers regularly purchase things that they consume or use on a daily, weekly or at other periodic intervals. Obtaining specific grocery products is generally the predominant reason why people go to a supermarket. There are a number of utilitarian reasons why consumers go shopping including to obtain the 'right product' and that they

can shop efficiently (Botschen, et. al., 1999). Consumers also benefited from having choice of product/brand and prices (Consumer reports, 1993), and efficient check-out services (Arnold, et. al., 1983). Consumers, basically, wanted to get their job (shopping for...) done. Based on the present qualitative study, it was found that Omanis, when visiting a supermarket, stressed the importance of finding the groceries that they wanted, and that they were able to pick and buy them with ease.

2. Convenience

Consumers would trade-off their sacrifices (monies and inconvenience) for product benefits that satisfied their needs. Consumers benefited from shopping outlets that were close to their homes and easy or convenient to access to (Arnold, et. al., 1983, Hortman, et. al., 1990, Consumer reports, 1993). Omanis, were found to consider the ease of finding and accessing the supermarkets to be an important criterion in choosing a supermarket.

3. Monetary saving

In shopping, economically rational consumers are expected to seek monetary benefits. It is expected that some consumers are value seekers who would choose first, products that they perceive to offer more value than the price paid for (value, in terms of periodic low prices, e.g., through special offers – see Arnold, et. al., 1983; value, in terms of low prices relative to product quality, Hortman, et. al. 1990; value, in terms of perceived value for money a store offers such as a discount store; Grace and O’Cass, 2005), and second, the functional benefits of a shopping centre, in terms of money saving, concentration of complementary and competing shops, and the amount of diverse products and service information available (Terblanché, 1999). In buying groceries,

Omanis were found to seek both perceived and actual monetary savings, in terms of trade-offs between price and quality and/or quantity.

4. Time saving

Consumers that are time poor or scarce are expected to seek for the benefits of saving time. More time spent in shopping means less time available for doing other things including working and the opportunity to earn more income. Certain shopping behaviors are rational and need-driven and this has been commonly perceived as the basic model of consumption behavior (Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard, 1993, 2001) and by the consumer information processing model (Bettman, 1979). Shoppers are expected to use their time efficiently especially in getting the shopping job done. Some shoppers, therefore, would consider time saving as a rational and beneficial behavior. Omanis were found to be concerned with saving time.

5. Enjoyment

In general consumers seek to enjoy themselves by simply having fun (Botschen, et. al., 1999), having a pleasant experience, in terms of the shopping environment (Arnold, et. al., 1983), and atmosphere (Hortman, et. al. 1990), as well as getting the social benefits, in terms of the benefits of open spaces, availability of benches to sit, presence of food courts and promotional areas (Terblanché, 1999). In the case of shopping in a departmental store, some consumers enjoyed consumption feeling (Grace and O’Cass, 2005). Other consumers looked for affiliation with various reference groups and for getting sensory stimulation (Westbrook and Black, 1985). Shoppers obtained sensual enjoyment from seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching various products, from performing social activities (Dholakia, 1999), and in general, from doing adventure activities, from bargaining, and getting best buys, from experiencing the process of seeking for ideas on the latest fashions and innovations, and experiencing socialization,

from doing the shopping for others, and from treating oneself (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003). Omanis were found to appreciate the feeling of comfort while shopping for groceries, the opportunity to enjoy, without necessarily being entertained, the opportunity to win prizes, the benefits of learning something from their visits to supermarkets, and the pleasure from doing something for others. Omanis were also found to seek some form of enjoyment when they went out for their grocery shopping and during the process of shopping.

6. Relaxation

Unsatisfied needs are unresolved problems and if left unsatisfied they can lead to stress. Shopping can be a stressful activity when shoppers could not find what they needed. A relaxing shopping trip, in which shoppers feel more certain to get what they were looking for should be more beneficial than a shopping trip that was full of uncertainty. Botschen, et.al., (1999) identified a benefit that consumers sought was the ability to reduce uncertainty, and the feeling of being secured (i.e., did not have to worry about security and safety while shopping). This did not mean that shoppers enjoyed but simply they felt relaxed, and in the case of grocery shopping, Omanis did not want to worry about any thing other than the groceries that they had come for.

7. Freedom

Individuals, generally, seek freedom to choose and consume what they desire. Botschen, et. al., (1999) identified shoppers' ability to make their own decisions, control the contact moments with sales staff, the opportunity to develop attachment or loyalty to the store, and the opportunity to exercise their drive to buy as three forms of benefits of shopping that can be associated with freedom to shop. Freedom, based on a study on customer visits to a super regional shopping center, also extends to choosing and making use of recreational facilities, such as movie theatres/cinemas, rest areas and screen showing

cartoons or sport events (Terblanché, 1999). The results of the present qualitative inquiry shows that Omanis also want to feel free in purchasing the items that they like, and they want to be able to choose what they want from a variety of products. Additionally, they also want to, during their grocery shopping trips, do other things other than buying groceries.

8. Recognition

A type of higher level need is recognition. Consumers tended to feel better when shop assistants recognized and helped them in making decision as well as acted courteously (Botschen, et. al., 1999). Not surprisingly, Omanis do appreciate good treatment from supermarket staff and they regarded ‘good treatment’ as a benefit they would seek.

A potential higher order constructs

Benefits of satisfying utilitarian needs

The notion that consumers buy products that offer utilities has been well documented. The traditional explanation (see Bloch and Richins, 1983) on the reason people go shopping is acquiring products to satisfy consumers’ utilitarian needs. It has also been characterized as task-related and rational (Batra and Ahtola, 1991), and accomplishing a goal to acquire a product (Babin, Darden, and Griffin, 1994). According to Engel, et al. (1993) utilitarian shoppers look for functional product benefits. To utilitarian grocery shoppers, shopping is a job (i.e., to get the groceries in the most convenient and cost efficient way).

Benefits of experiencing pleasure – satisfying non-utilitarian needs.

Bloch and Richins (1983) view did not seem to fully reflect the totality of consumers’ shopping experience. Other authors contended that there are other fundamental but non-

utilitarian reasons – a contention well-supported by a number of related studies (see Babin et al., 1994; Langrehr, 1991; Roy, 1994; and Wakefield and Baker, 1998), which recognized the importance of the hedonic aspects of shopping in particular its potential entertainment and emotional worth. What are these non-utilitarian aspects of a product and what are the reasons that motivate people to shop? Fulfilling consumers' psychological and emotional needs has been identified by many authors as the reasons for shopping (see among others Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982; Westbrook and Black, 1985; Sherry, 1990; Fischer and Arnold, 1990; Babin, et al., 1994). Westbrook and Black (1985) suggested that shopping behavior arises for three fundamental reasons: 1) to acquire a product; 2) to acquire both a desired product and provide satisfaction with non-product-related needs; or 3) to primarily attain goals not related to product acquisition. Goals that are not related to product acquisition have infinite possibilities that may range from to satisfy a curiosity to simply feel good. The attainment of non-utilitarian goals is bound to encompass numerous aspects of consumption behavior. According to Babin, et al., (1994) hedonic motives are those that are concerned with hedonic fulfillment such as experiencing fun, amusement, fantasy, and sensory stimulation. A facet of experience may be unique to an individual shopper and in this respect a specific product attribute such as the ambience of a shopping mall may not appeal to everyone. It is therefore reasonable to expect that grocery shoppers also seek for other benefits other than obtaining groceries. To non-utilitarian grocery shoppers, shopping is for enjoyment and relaxation; it is about exercising freedom, and getting recognition.

The first four components (Getting the job done, convenience, monetary saving, and time saving) are concerned with the utilitarian purpose of shopping while the remaining four components (enjoyment, relaxation, freedom, and recognition) are concerned with pleasure or hedonic aspects of shopping.

Conclusions

Benefit segmentation is an alternative approach or technique for segmenting retail customers that aggregate customers on the basis of benefits their desired or sought. In this study the commonality of benefits sought had been established as a result of an ex-post rather than ex-ante or an a priori theory of consumption. The benefits sought by Omani grocery shoppers was found consist of eight dimensions: Getting job done; Convenience; Monetary saving; Time saving; Enjoyment; Relaxation; Freedom; and Recognition. This information should be useful to managers in developing and orientating retail formats to meet the needs of Omani shoppers.

Although this study was done in a limited scale (i.e. thirty-five interviewees and sixteen members of two consensus group discussions) the qualitative methodology used had enabled us to obtain rich information about motives of Omani shoppers. Further study may now be carried out to establish a model of benefits sought by Omani grocery shoppers.

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¹ QSR NUD*IST (Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theorizing) is a software that has been designed to aid users in handling non-numerical and unstructured data in qualitative analysis by supporting the process of coding data in an index system, searching text or patterns of coding, and theorizing about data.

Appendix A – Potential benefits sought by Omani grocery shoppers

A list the benefits and sources	Themes of benefits
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have fun ^a. 2. Had a pleasant experience ^b [Pleasant shopping environment]. 3. Had a pleasant experience ^d [atmosphere]. 4. Social benefits ^e [in terms of the presence of open spaces, benches, food courts and promotional areas; this is based on a study on customer visits to a super-regional shopping center.]. 5. Consumption feeling ^f [in the case of departmental store model]. 6. Affiliation with various reference groups ^g 7. Received sensory stimulation ^g. 8. Enjoyment from seeking adventure, seeking bargains and best buys, seeking for ideas on the latest fashions and innovations, experiencing socialization, doing the shopping for others, and treating oneself^h, [categorized as adventure, value, social, idea, social, role, and gratification shopping]. 9. Felt comfortable ⁱ [while shopping for groceries]. 10. Have the opportunity to enjoy ⁱ [without necessarily being entertained]. 11. Have the opportunity to win prizes ⁱ. 12. Learnt something from visiting supermarkets ⁱ. 	<p>5. Enjoyment [A form of social, psychological, or hedonic benefit]</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Obtain help in making decision ^a. 14. Obtain help from sales staff ^a [friendly courteous service]. 15. Good treatment ⁱ [by the supermarket's staff]. 	<p>8. Recognition [a form of psychological benefits]</p>

<p>16. Able to make own decision ^a. 17. Able to control contact moment ^a. 18. Develop loyalty to the store ^a. 19. Got urge in buying ^a. 20. Recreational benefits ^e [in terms of availability of facilities designed for recreation such as movie theatres, rest areas and screen showing cartoons or sport events. This is based on a study on customer visits to a super-regional shopping center]. 21. Felt free to purchase the items one likes ⁱ. 22. Able to do other things other than purchasing groceries ⁱ [before, during or after shopping for groceries]. 23. Able to choose from a variety of products ⁱ.</p>	<p>7. Experiencing freedom</p>
<p>24. Able to have efficient shopping ^a. 25. Able to get the right product ^a. 26. Efficient check-out service ^b [‘fast check-out, and hence short queue]. 27. Product/brand variety and price ^c. 28. Able to get the groceries that one wants ⁱ. 29. Able to pick and buy groceries with ease ⁱ [while in the supermarket].</p>	<p>1. Getting the job done.</p>
<p>30. Able to reduce uncertainty ^a. 31. Felt secured ^a [don’t worry about security]. 32. Did not have to worry about any other things other than groceries ⁱ.</p>	<p>6. Relaxation Not stressful</p>
<p>33. Closeness to home ^b. 34. Convenience ^b [easy to access the supermarket]. 35. Closeness to home ^c. 36. Closeness to home ^d [distance]. 37. Ease of finding and accessing the supermarkets ⁱ.</p>	<p>2. Convenience</p>

<p>38. Receive value for money ^b [low price, in general, and periodically, special offers on selected products].</p> <p>39. Received value for money ^d [low prices, quality of products sold].</p> <p>40. Functional benefits ^e [in terms of saving of cost, concentration of complementary and competing shops, and the amount of diverse products and service information available at a shopping center. This is based on a study on customer visits to a super-regional shopping center].</p> <p>41. Perceived value for money ^f [in the case of discount store model] and on the groceries in a particular supermarket ⁱ.</p> <p>42. Saved monies in buying groceries ⁱ.</p>	<p>3. Monetary saving</p>
<p>43. Perceived time saving from shopping for groceries ¹.</p>	<p>4. Time saving</p>
<p>44. Did something for others ¹.</p>	<p>Excluded.</p>

Sources:

- a. Botschen, G., Thelen, E. M., and Pieters, R. (1999).
- b. Arnold, S. J., Oum, T. H., and Tigert, D. J. (1983).
- c. Consumer reports (1993).
- d. Hortman, S. M., Allaway, A. W., Mason, B., and Rasp, J. (1990).
- e. Terblanché, Nic S. (1999).
- f. Grace, D. and O’Cass, A. (2005).
- g. Westbrook, R. A., and Black, W. (1985).
- h. Arnold, M. J. and Reynolds, K. E. (2003).
- i. Author [based on a qualitative inquiry done in Oman]

Appendix B– Examples of benefits deduced from in-depth interviews of Omani grocery shoppers

Benefits deduced from a qualitative study of Omani grocery shoppers in Oman	Relevant comments by interviewees
<p>Felt comfortable [while shopping for groceries].</p> <p>Note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This benefit (felt comfortable) is listed as benefit number ‘9’ in Appendix A. 2. This benefit is impliedly sought by 11 of the 30 (37%) interviewees. 	<p>Interviewee 3, “I feel comfortable. Less crowd”.</p> <p>Interviewee 6, The design and space is nice, very spacious”.</p> <p>Interviewee 11, “The place is clean”.</p> <p>Interviewee 12, “The place is clean”.</p> <p>Interviewee 13, “Also it is a good place for my family because of air-conditioned”.</p> <p>Interviewee 14, “There is not much crowd”.</p> <p>Interviewee 19, “I feel comfortable. In <i>store one</i> cheap prices, also feel comfortable, nice decoration, environment, spacious, not crowded”.</p> <p>Interviewee 21, “It is clean. The place is like in the UK. It is like what I was used to”.</p> <p>Interviewee 24, “It is bigger and I like the layout. Although it is packed and crowded, it is still spacious”.</p> <p>Interviewee 29, “Cleanliness is better than <i>store two</i>.”</p> <p>Interviewee 30, “The standard, I don’t mind the extra cost, it is comfortable, and things are displayed well, neatly displayed, and labeled”.</p>

<p>Have the opportunity to enjoy¹ [without necessarily being entertained]</p> <p>Note:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This benefit is listed as no. 10 in Appendix A. 2. This benefit is impliedly sought by 10 of the 30 (33%) interviewees. 	<p>Interviewee 3, “I am bored staying at home. It is a kind of trip to see or meet people. It is one way of spending my money”.</p> <p>Interviewee 5, “Sometimes it is changing atmosphere. All day with children”.</p> <p>Interviewee 8, “Entertainment for the family. I let them the freedom to have anything they want especially the ladies. Then we have some foods and drink together after shopping. Relation between members of family is good, social relation”.</p> <p>Interviewee 19, “To kill boredom”.</p> <p>Interviewee 22, “It depends, if I go alone it is a sort of quiet time for me. If I go with my husband and son it is only for fun. I go with my kid; he likes choosing fruits and that gives him the chance to choose. A change in routine and environment”.</p> <p>Interviewee 25, “I enjoy shopping”.</p> <p>Interviewee 27, “Spend free time instead of sitting at home, for a change”.</p> <p>Interviewee 28, “Spend time with family; family welfare they go out of home. My wife is not employed”.</p> <p>Interviewee 33, “It is quiet, not crowded especially when shopping with my wife. We spend time together.....Enjoy walking around, seeing new items, discuss what we need to buy”.</p> <p>Interviewee 34, “Just to spend monies. Like to spend time with my family, such as with my mother, sisters, brothers, brothers-in-law”.</p>
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Five interview transcripts were discarded because, based on their contents, the interviewees were not providing information on their shopping motives. However, the original interviews’ codes (e.g., interviewee 34 – registered in QSR NUD*IST are retained).