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# **Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Studies**

**April 13-16, 1998  
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina**

**Jo Ann and Jim Carland  
Co-Editors  
Western Carolina University**

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# Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Studies

## Table of Contents

ENHANCING THE DELIVERY OF QUALITY EDUCATION: A SERVICES MARKETING PERSPECTIVE .....	1
Mark Young, Winona State University	
AN EXPLORATION OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH RETAIL CENTERS .....	11
Mark Young, Winona State University	
DECISION MAKING STYLES OF HUSBAND - WIFE DURABLE GOOD PURCHASES: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE IMPACT OF GENDER ROLE ATTITUDES .....	18
Jo Anne S. Hopper, Western Carolina University Beverly Little, Western Carolina University	
AN EXPLORATORY LOOK AT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OPHTHALMOLOGISTS AND OPTOMETRISTS: THE MARKETING DIFFERENCE .....	22
B.J. Dunlap, Western Carolina University J. Brown, Bridgewater College	
THE MARKETING OF PAIN MANAGEMENT: HOLISTIC OR HULLABALOO? .....	23
B.J. Dunlap, Western Carolina University Myron Leonard, Western Carolina University	
CONTRIBUTION-BASED PRODUCT AND CUSTOMER LINES: THE MARKETING-ACCOUNTING NEXUS IN HEALTH CARE .....	24
W.R. Koprowski, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Steven J. Arsenault, Mazursky & Dunaway, LLP	
INDEX .....	25

# ENHANCING THE DELIVERY OF QUALITY EDUCATION: A SERVICES MARKETING PERSPECTIVE

Mark Young, Winona State University

## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this research is to consider the classroom setting from a Services Marketing perspective. Students take on a variety of different roles ranging from customer to end product as they enter and matriculate through their educational experience at a university. Given entrance prerequisites (job qualifications), course syllabus (job description), class assignments (job tasks), and course evaluations (performance appraisals) viewing the student as a “partial employee” may provide insights into enhancing the delivery of quality education. Considering students as “partial employees” is consistent with the Services Marketing perspective that views customers as “partial employees” (Mills, 1986). As a “partial employee” a student adapts to and comes to appreciate the values, norms and required behaviors of the classroom and university. This study examines the organizational socialization process in which students pass through by replicating and extending Hoffman and Kelly’s (1991) application of Feldman’s (1976) Contingency Theory of Socialization in an educational context. Implications for enhancing the delivery of quality education are presented based on the findings.*

## INTRODUCTION

Customers of service organizations frequently provide resources (time, task completion) that directly contribute to the delivery of the service suggesting that customers can also be viewed as “partial employees” of the service organization (Mills 1986; Mills, Chase, and Marguillies 1983). Students must meet entrance prerequisites (job qualifications), are provided with course syllabus (job description), complete class assignments (job tasks), and under go course evaluations (performance appraisal); therefore, viewing the student as a “partial employee” is consistent with the services marketing perspective. The classroom may not include buyers and sellers in the traditional sense, however, education is a service and many of the ideas and concepts pertinent to the service encounter are relevant to the instructor – student interaction.

When students are viewed as “partial employees” the concept of socializing the student to the organization (classroom) offers potential insights into enhancing the management of the student’s learning process. Feldman’s (1976) model of organizational socialization is based on learning theory, focuses on outcomes that facilitate learning, participation, and performance. Figure 1 presents Feldman’s model, which describes the sequence of stages an individual passes through during the socialization to an organization. Applications of the model in marketing include Dubinsky et al. (1986) in the context of salesforce and Hoffman and Kelly (1991) in the context of education.

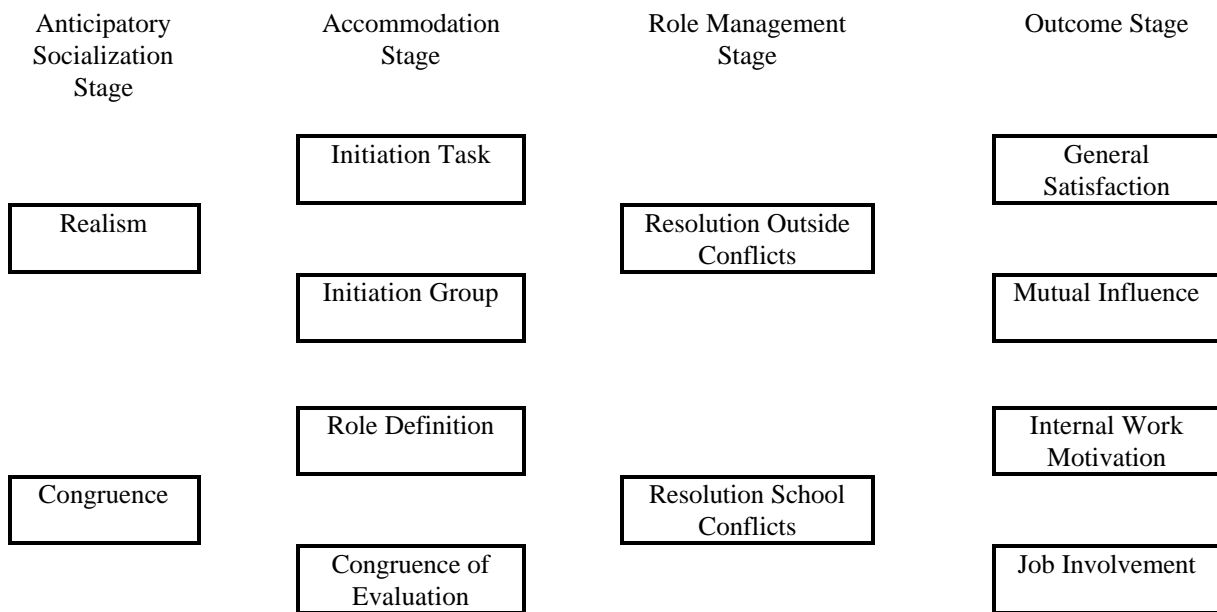
According to the model students proceed through four stages in the socialization process. The following is a brief introduction to Feldman’s model for a detailed literary review of the relationships among the variables refer to Hoffman and Kelly (1991).

Stage 1: Anticipatory Socialization - consists of two process variables Realism and Congruence which consider the student’s experience prior to enrolling in the class.

Realism – the degree to which the student has a complete and accurate picture of what this class is really like. E.g. I knew what the good and bad points were when I choose this class.

Congruence – the degree to which the class’s benefits and demands and a student’s needs and skills are compatible. It indicates how successful individuals have been in making decisions about selecting classes. E.g. This class will prepare me with the skills and abilities I’ll be able to use later in life.

Figure 1: Feldman’s Organization Socialization Model



Stage 2: Accommodation - where the student seeks to discover what the class is really like and become a member of it. The four process variables in the accommodation stage are:

Initiation to the Task – the degree to which students feel competent and accepted as a full working member in the class. It indicates how successfully the student has learned new tasks in this class. E.g. I feel confident enough in my abilities to answer questions in class.

Initiation to the Group – the extent to which a student feels accepted and trusted by fellow students in this class. It indicates how successful the student has been in establishing new interpersonal relationships. E.g. My fellow students actively try to include me in conversations about things in the class.

Role Definition – an implicit or explicit agreement on what tasks one is to perform and what priorities and time allocation for those tasks is to be. It indicates the extent to which students have fully clarified roles. E.g. I feel the course syllabus is accurate.

Congruence of Evaluation – the degree to which the student and the instructor agree concerning the student's progress in the class. E.g. The instructor frequently tells you how you are doing in this class.

Stage 3: Role Management Stage – how the student attempts to resolve outside life conflicts and conflicting demands at school.

Resolution of Outside Life Conflicts – extent to which the student has come to be less upset by home/work-life and school-life conflicts and the extent to which they have come to some decision rules for dealing with these conflicts. E.g. I often find the demands of this class interfere with my home-life.

Resolution of School Conflicts – the extent to which the student has become less upset by conflicts among assignments/classes and the extent to which they have come to some decision rules for dealing with these conflicts. E.g. I'm sure which class to study for the most when other classes have exams scheduled the same day as this class.

Stage 4: Outcome Stage – outcomes that facilitate student learning, performance and participation.

General Satisfaction – an overall measure of the degree to which the student is satisfied and happy in this class. E.g. Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this class.

Mutual Influence – the extent to which the student feels to have some control or power over the way work is carried out in this class. E.g. If I had an idea about improving the way assignments were done in this class, I think I could get action on it.

Internal Work Motivation – the degree to which a student is self-motivated to perform effectively in the class. E.g. I feel bad or unhappy when I do poorly on an exam or assignment in this class.

Class Involvement – the degree to which the student is personally committed and involved in this class. level of perceived personal importance and/or interest in this class. E.g. The most important things that happen to me involve my work in this class.

## METHOD

The sample in this study utilized to empirically test the Feldman Model, in the classroom environment, consisted of 162 Principles of Marketing Students. The questionnaire was administered after midterm and was distributed and completed in class. The typical student was at the end of their sophomore year and had completed the course prerequisites of accounting and microeconomics.

The questionnaire consisted of 34 statements that were agreed or disagreed with using a seven-point Likert-type scale. The original items used by Feldman were used to examine employees in a community hospital. The Hoffman and Kelly (1990) study modified these items to be more appropriate for a classroom setting. Items used in this study resulted from a literature review of the main constructs and then phrasing those items to be consistent in terminology for student response. For example, the Role Management Stage involves two constructs that measure Outside-Life Conflict

and Within-School Conflict. Duxbury and Higgins (1991) have tested a variety of scales measuring work-family conflict including work-related conflict (Kahn ET al., 1964) and work-family conflict (Pleck, 1979). These scales formed the foundation for the items measuring the two constructs in the Role Management Stage. Table 1 provides the statistical information on the items and scales used in this study. With fourteen primary constructs it was decided to keep the number of items per construct to two or three items in an effort to facilitate students completing the questionnaire. The implicit trade-off with fewer items is less reliability (lower coefficient alpha) on some of the scales. Taking the number of items into account the statistical performance of the scales indicates good reliability and provides a degree of variability in mean response across constructs.

Table 1: Scale Statistics

Scale	Number of Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Alpha
Realism	3	3.67	1.28	.75
Congruence	3	5.78	.88	.67
Initiation to Task	3	5.28	1.03	.76
Role Definition	3	5.78	.74	.62
Evaluation Congruence	2	4.97	1.26	.40
Initiation to Group	3	4.49	1.08	.47
Resolution of Outside Life Conflicts	3	4.83	1.13	.57
Resolution of School Conflicts	3	4.22	1.29	.64
Satisfaction	3	5.61	.86	.78
Mutual Influence	3	5.22	.87	.50
Internal Work Motivation	2	6.13	.69	.40
Class Involvement	3	4.86	1.06	.77

Partial correlation analysis was used to examine the relationships among the constructs in the model. Partial correlation analysis measures the strength of the relationship between a criterion variable and a single predictor variable when the effects of other predictor variables are held constant. Table 2 presents the zero-order correlations and the higher-order correlations for the constructs in the model. Figure 2 displays the Feldman Model with statistically significant partial correlations.

Table 2: Zero-Order and Higher-Order Correlations Among Scales

Variables	Zero-Order Correlation	Partial Correlation
Congruence with:		
Realism	.18	
Initiation to Task	.22	.04
Initiation to Group	.16	.24
Evaluation Congruence	.18	.14
Role definition	.34 <sup>2</sup>	.02
Resolution of Outside Life Conflicts	.35 <sup>2</sup>	.16
Resolution of School Conflicts	.42 <sup>1</sup>	.19
Satisfaction	.631	.313
Mutual Influence	.481	.12
Internal Work Motivation	.481	.332
Class Involvement	.791	.621
Realism with:		
Initiation to Task	.332	.07
Initiation to Group	.342	.352
Evaluation Congruence	-.07	.273
Role definition	.471	.352
Resolution of Outside Life Conflicts	.09	.01
Resolution of School Conflicts	.20	.04
Satisfaction	.371	.20
Mutual Influence	.322	.18
Internal Work Motivation	.24	.14
Class Involvement	.14	-.08
Initiation to Task with:		
Initiation to Group	.511	.403
Evaluation Congruence	.14	.06
Role definition	.283	.13
Resolution of Outside Life Conflicts	.352	.293
Resolution of School Conflicts	-.03	.322
Satisfaction	.591	.461
Mutual Influence	.391	.293
Internal Work Motivation	-.07	-.27
Class Involvement	.16	-.18

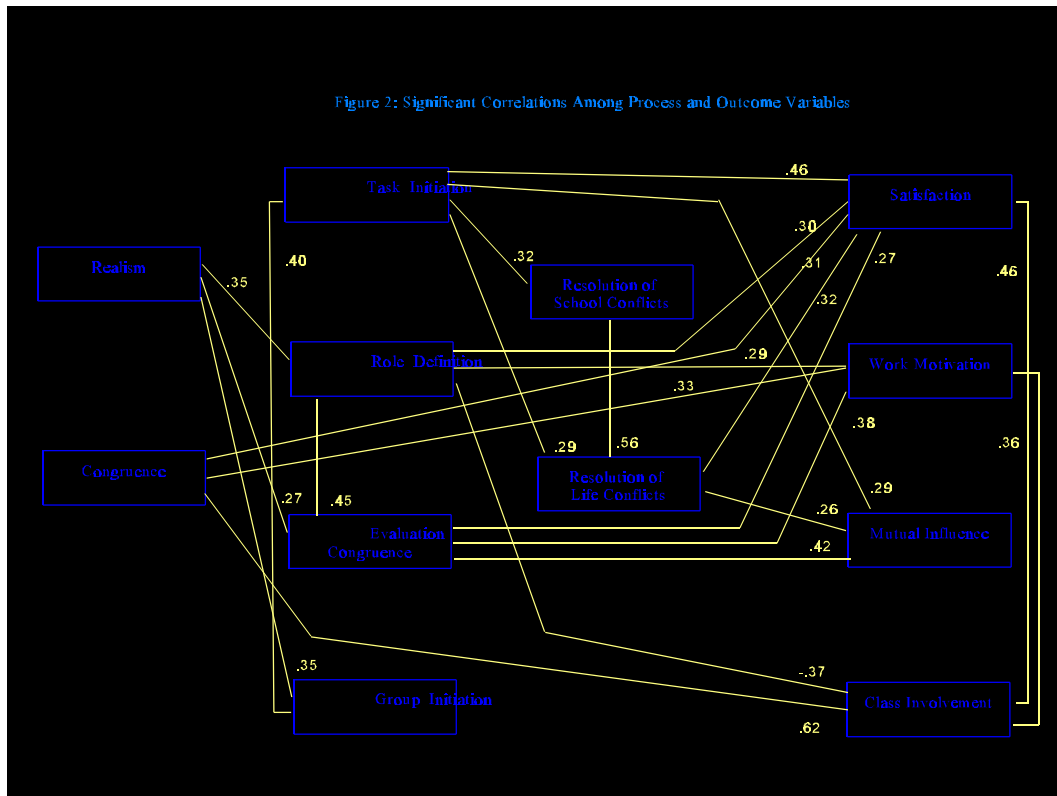


Table 2: Zero-Order and Higher-Order Correlations Among Scales

Variables	Zero-Order Correlation	Partial Correlation
Evaluation Congruence with:		
Role definition	.431	.451
Resolution of Outside Life Conflicts	.302	.23
Resolution of School Conflicts	.09	-.11
Satisfaction	.332	.273
Mutual Influence	.401	.421
Internal Work Motivation	.16	.382
Class Involvement	-.06	-.12
Initiation to Group with:		
Evaluation Congruence	.06	.02
Role definition	.20	-.16
Resolution of Outside Life Conflicts	.391	.15
Resolution of School Conflicts	.20	.13
Satisfaction	.461	.11
Mutual Influence	.332	.10
Internal Work Motivation	.03	-.11
Class Involvement	.283	.10
Role Definition with:		
Resolution of Outside Life Conflicts	.332	.07
Resolution of School Conflicts	.19	.11
Satisfaction	.411	.303
Mutual Influence	.391	.10
Internal Work Motivation	.20	.293
Class Involvement	-.03	-.372
Resolution of Outside Life Conflicts with:		
Resolution of School Conflicts	.541	.561
Satisfaction	.421	.322
Mutual Influence	.421	.263
Internal Work Motivation	.11	-.09
Class Involvement	.20	-.12
Resolution of School Conflicts with:		
Satisfaction	.11	-.15
Mutual Influence	.19	-.02
Internal Work Motivation	.11	.09
Class Involvement	.14	.13

Table 2: Zero-Order and Higher-Order Correlations Among Scales

Variables	Zero-Order Correlation	Partial Correlation
Satisfaction with:		
Mutual Influence	.431	.22
Internal Work Motivation	.20	-.06
Class Involvement	.521	.461
Mutual Influence with:		
Internal Work Motivation	.322	.23
Class Involvement	.322	.04
Internal Work Motivation with:		
Class Involvement	.431	.362
1 - p < .01	2 - p < .05	3 - p < .10



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Relationships among the constructs within a stage are examined followed by an examination of the relationships among constructs with the prior stages. In Stage 1: Anticipatory Socialization (student's past experience before entering the class) there was not a significant relationship between Realism (student's prior notion of the class) and Congruence (class coverage and demands match student's needs and skills). Students may have realistic expectations of the class, however, that may not have any significant relationship to the student's perception of the class meeting their needs or the skills they possess. Realism may be improved by having updated course descriptions, providing access to syllabi before the class (online), encourage word-of-mouth communication among students, and by having faculty that teach the prerequisites discuss sequential courses. Screening course prerequisites, explaining how this course ties into other courses, and relating the course to the 'real world' and potential careers can enhance Congruence.

Within the Accommodation Stage (discovering what the class is really like and becoming a member of it), Initiation to Task (feeling of competence in the class) and Initiation to Group (feeling of acceptance by class peers) were significantly related. Creating a classroom environment of success, encouraging participation, and treating students with respect will build self-confidence and the feeling of competence. Initiation to the Group may be enhanced by using group strategies that focus small groups on specific tasks and then rotating group memberships for different tasks. This would minimize problems associated with allowing self-selection of groups and conflicts among group members that last the entire term. Role Definition (clarity and priority of tasks) and Evaluation Congruence (agreement between student and faculty on performance) were related indicating that clearly communicating tasks and expectations assists students in performing well. Explicitly defining expectations on the syllabus with policies on attendance, assignments, exams and classroom participation, as well as, weighting schemes to provide guidance on time on task and reviewing the results of exams and assignments can improve both Role Definition and Evaluation Congruence. Realism in the previous stage was positively related to Role Definition, Evaluation Congruence and Group Initiation. The clearer the picture the student has of the class before they enroll in the class the easier it is for the student to become a working member and perform the tasks required in the class. This may be due to self-selection of instructors and teaching styles that best match with a student's capabilities/learning styles.

Resolution of Conflicts at School (conflicts among class assignments) and Resolution of Outside Life Conflicts (conflicts between work/home and school) were highly correlated in the Role Management Stage (resolving conflicting demands of a class). Students that have developed a sense how to resolve conflicting demands in one area tend to handle conflicts in other areas. Task Initiation was related to both of the Resolution of Conflict constructs. The feeling of self-confidence in completing tasks may also indicate the student has the self-confidence in making decisions about priorities and how to handle multiple tasks at the same time. Faculty advising students on the priority of work and class and providing class schedules that avoid conflicting class workloads can ease some of the conflicting demands on our students. Possibilities also include coordinating exams and projects among classes within the major.

Stage 4: Outcome Stage (learning, performance and participation) indicates that Class Involvement (personal commitment and involved in the class) is related to both Satisfaction

(satisfaction with class) and Work Motivation (self-motivated to perform in the class). Student's that are highly involved in the class tend to be more self-motivated and feel more satisfied in the class. Congruence is related to Class Involvement implying that if students think the class will be of benefit and they are prepared with the proper skills to take the class they will be more involved and committed to the class. This study also found a negative relationship between Role Definition and Class Involvement, which might imply that making tasks too clear might reduce the amount of involvement by limiting effort only to the required tasks. Work Motivation is correlated with Role Definition, Evaluation of Congruence, and Congruence suggesting that students who have the proper skills, know what to do and understand how they will be evaluated are self-motivated to perform well in the class. Overall Satisfaction is related to Congruence, Task Initiation, Role Definition, Evaluation of Congruence, and Resolution of Life Conflicts. Once again understanding why the class is important to the student and having the proper skills (Congruence) is critical in another Outcome construct, the student's Overall Satisfaction with the course. The results of the correlations with Satisfaction reinforce the importance of knowing what to do, how to do it and how the results will be evaluated. In addition the student's ability to resolve outside of school conflicts enhances satisfaction. Mutual Influence (student's control over how work is performed) is related to Evaluation Congruence and Resolution of Outside Conflicts. Providing flexibility in when and how assignments are to be completed helps resolve conflicting demands on the students.

Feldman's Organizational Socialization Model provides a rich framework in examining ways of enhancing the delivery of quality education. The data from this particular sample yielded some insights into areas to focus on and the interrelationships among the different stages of student socialization within the classroom. A key construct related to three of the four Outcome constructs was Congruence. It seems critical to clearly communicate why the class is relevant and how it fits into the student's academic program and their potential careers. In addition, students must have and perceive they have the necessary skills and prerequisites to perform the tasks required by the class. Congruence between the student and the instructor on progress evaluation also was related to three of the four Outcome Constructs. Strategies based on the results of the model were suggested to help develop aspects of the classroom experience that will facilitate enhancing learning outcomes.

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# AN EXPLORATION OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH RETAIL CENTERS

Mark Young, Winona State University

## ABSTRACT

*This study extends the inquiry into customer satisfaction by examining satisfaction at the retail center level rather than the more traditional product/service or store level. Structural equation methodology is employed to empirically test the compositional structure of customer satisfaction relative to a retail center. Results support customer satisfaction judgements at a retail center level. Implications are drawn, and suggestions are made for ongoing research.*

## INTRODUCTION

The principle focus of customer satisfaction research has been tangible goods (Bohn 1994, Ash 1978; Day & Bodur 1979) and services (Patterson 1997, Martin 1997, Lee 1997, Goode, Moutinho and Chien 1996, Brown and Swartz 1989; Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1985). Other areas in marketing have started receiving attention in the context of customer satisfaction research such as: retail stores (Westbrook 1981), nonprofit organizations (Garland & Westbrook 1989) and nations (Fornell 1996, Anderson 1994).

As competition among retail centers increases and downtown areas under go revitalization, the issue of evaluating customer satisfaction of retail centers has emerged as a topic in need of investigation. Most of the offerings provided at the retail center level do not require direct payment from consumers nor are they tied to a readily identifiable source. Therefore, customer satisfaction with retail centers may differ from customer satisfaction with goods and services in significant ways. Do consumers evaluate retail centers at an aggregate level? If a global evaluation does take place, what is the importance of the various components of retail center satisfaction? The purpose of this article is to explore the concept of retail center customer satisfaction and its structural composition.

## CONCEPTUALIZING RETAIL CENTER SATISFACTION

Westbrook's (1981) inquiry into the basic nature and composition of retail store satisfaction provides a useful foundation for investigating retail center satisfaction. Locke (1969) defined satisfaction as: a psychological construct describing the subjective emotional state that occurs in response to an evaluation of a set of experiences. Westbrook applied this definition to a retail establishment. Extending this definition, customer satisfaction with a retail center will be specified as an individual's emotional reaction to his or her evaluation of the total set of experiences realized from patronizing a retail center.

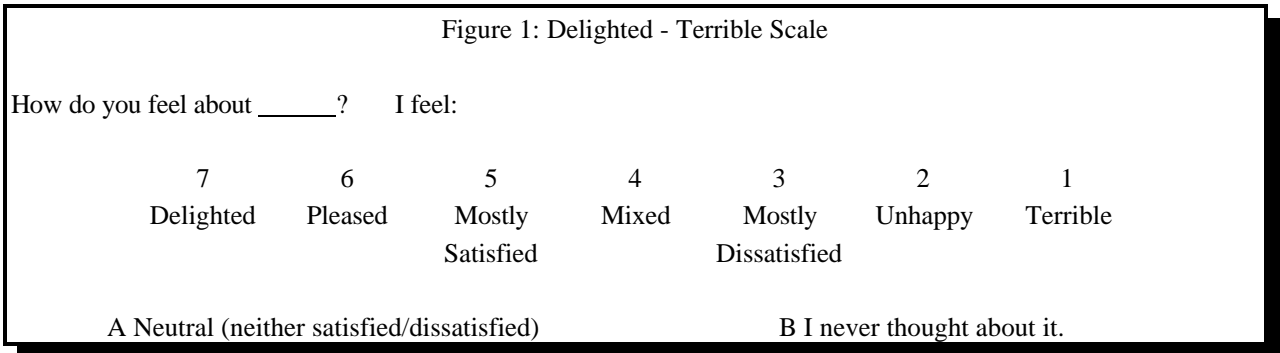
Westbrook proposed that the total set of experiences realized when patronizing an individual retailer is exceptionally diverse. Factors such as: products, services, people, polices, procedures, physical environment all interact and are experienced repeatedly over time. These factors were

categorized into experiences related to the store itself and experiences relating to consuming the products and services obtained from the retailer. An additional level of complexity is introduced when examining satisfaction at a retail center level. Travel to the center, retail drama, one-stop shopping, synergy among stores, common hours open etc. add to the experiences in evaluating retail centers.

### METHOD

During a two-week time period, personal interviews were conducted with 225 consumers in a downtown retail center. The intercept type interviews were distributed over various time periods to include responses from all days and hours the retail center was open. The community of 15,000 residents has two outlying shopping centers in addition to the downtown area, which was the focus of this study.

Statements presented on the questionnaire asked respondents to provide global level satisfaction evaluations in addition to domain level evaluations. The Delighted-Terrible (DT) scale (Andrews & Withey 1976) was used because it provides a common satisfaction metric, has been empirically evaluated (Westbrook 1980) and proved useful in similar customer satisfaction research (Garland & Westbrook 1989). Figure 1 provides the basic structure of the rating scale.



Overall customer satisfaction with the retail center was assessed with the Delighted-Terrible scale and also a question on how well the center was meeting their shopping needs (7-point scale). Table 1 provides sixteen retail center attributes selected to represent five hypothesized dimensions of retail center satisfaction. The dimensions and attributes were developed from Westbrook's 1981 work, a review of the retail image research and with consultation of business owners in the retail center under investigation.

### FINDINGS

Only ten of the 225 respondents checked either the 'Neutral' or the 'I never thought about it' response to the global satisfaction evaluation. The 215 respondents who did provide an overall rating on the one to seven DT scale also rated all of the sixteen attributes. The mean level of global satisfaction on the DT scale was 5.2 with a skewness of -.73.

A principle components factor analysis with varimax rotation was performed on the sixteen variables to examine their dimensionality. The results are presented in Table 2. The factor loadings with a five-factor solution strongly support the hypothesized dimensions. The highest loading for each variable was on the appropriate factor and the cross loadings were comparatively small.

Table 1: Hypothesized Dimensions of Retail Center Customer Satisfaction

<u>Dimension</u>	<u>Constituent Attributes</u>	<u>Indicator</u>
Physical Environment	Attractiveness of Retail Center	V1
	Ease of Parking	V2
	Ease of finding what you're shopping for	V3
	Cleanliness of retail center	V4
Merchandise	Quality level of merchandise	V5
	Assortment/selection of merchandise	V6
	General price level of merchandise	V7
Service Providers	Helpfulness of sales people	V8
	Friendliness of sales people	V9
	Knowledge of their products/services	V10
Service Policies	Merchants willingness to exchange/refund returns	V11
	Credit & Charge account procedures	V12
	Fairness in making adjustments with problems	V13
Promotions	Sales/specials the center offers	V14
	Information on promotions/activities	V15
	Special events held at the center	V16
Retail Satisfaction	Delight-Terrible Scale	V17
	Met Shopping Needs	V18

The hypothesized dimensional structure of retail center satisfaction was evaluated using confirmatory factor analysis (Bentler 1989). Figure 2 presents the structural model and the maximum likelihood estimates for the coefficients. For visual clarity the estimated correlations among the five factors are presented in Table 3 rather than in Figure 2. The model provides a reasonable fit, as shown by the goodness of fit statistics. The comparative fit index (Bentler 1988) is .919 and the fit index is .897. The chi square value of 267,  $p=.001$  indicates a departure from the data, however, the acceptance or rejection of a model based solely on this statistic is questionable (Bentler, 1989). The factor loadings and correlations among factors were statistically significant at the .05 level; however;



not all paths to the global satisfaction factor were significant. More parsimonious models were examined with no improvement in fit.

Variable	Physical Environment	Merchandise	Service Providers	Service Polices	Promotions
Attractiveness of Center	.7091	.0231	.1330	.0424	.3609
Ease of Parking	.6952	.3752	.0498	.1664	.0667
Ease of Finding things	.6984	.1290	.2654	.0722	.0496
Cleanliness of center	.6025	.1843	.3127	.2539	.3170
Quality Merchandise	.3500	.6104	.1103	.0880	.3060
Assortment/Selection	.0331	.7670	.1180	.0518	.2954
General Pricing	.1118	.5237	.0767	.0980	.4882
Salesperson Helpfulness	.0883	.1315	.9082	.1786	.1247
Salesperson Friendliness	.1560	.1551	.8456	.3063	.1444
Salesperson Knowledge	.1458	.2322	.7979	.2220	.1865
Return Polices	.1446	.1713	.1918	.8249	.1166
Credit/Charge Polices	.0768	.0143	.2025	.7452	.3183
Fairness in adjustments	.1254	.0804	.2582	.8630	.1262
Sales/specials	.1398	.4104	.1801	.1858	.6747
Information promotions	.1139	.2491	.1434	.2237	.7825
Special Events at center	.2186	.1173	.1614	.1897	.7810

Factor	<u>F1</u>	<u>F2</u>	<u>F3</u>	<u>F4</u>
F1 Physical Environment	1.0			
F2 Merchandise	.87	1.0		
F3 Service Providers	.70	.45	1.0	
F4 Service Polices	.63	.75	.63	1.0
F5 Promotions	.72	.63	.52	.57

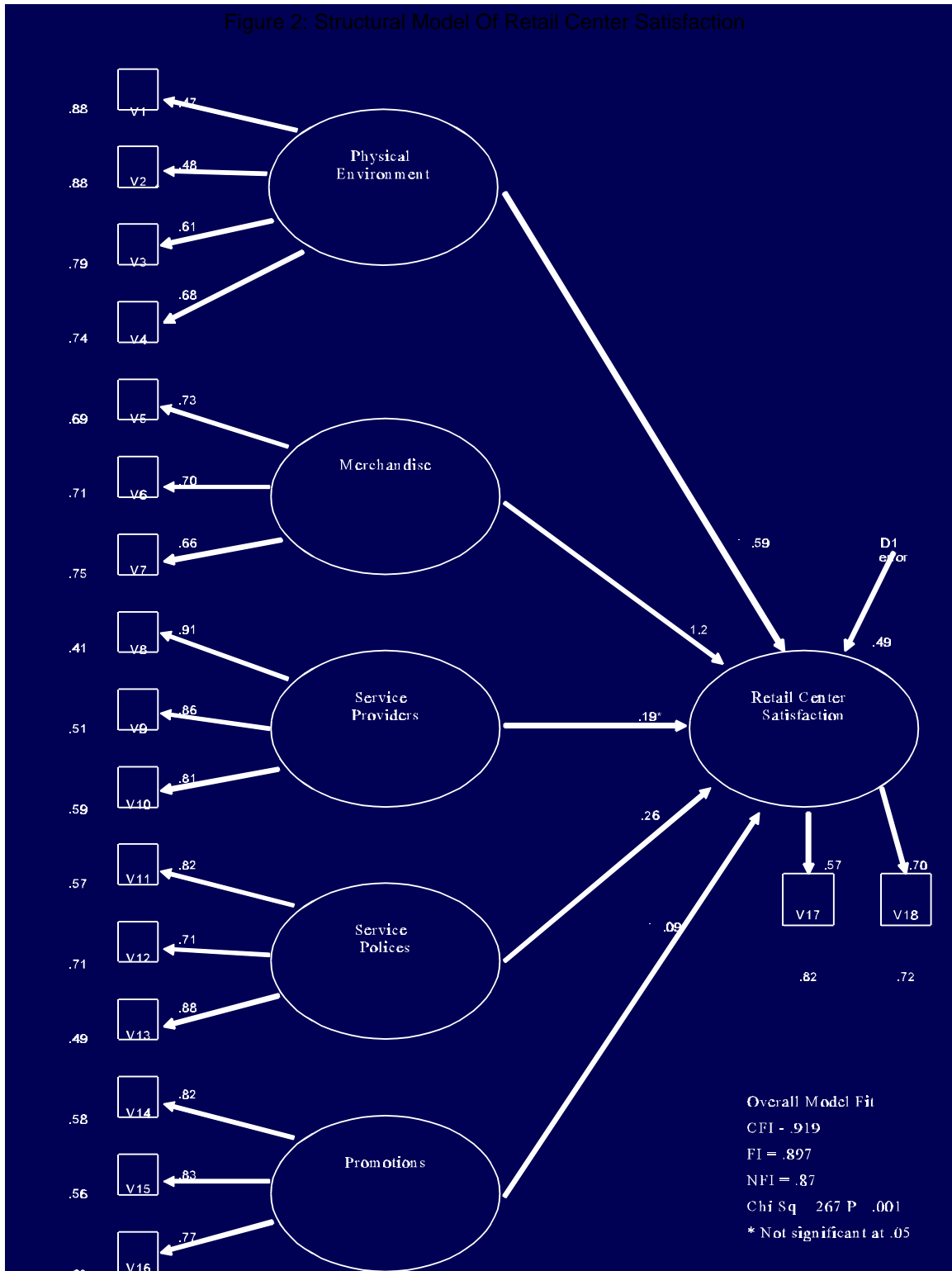
## DISCUSSION

Consumers were able to evaluate their satisfaction with the retail center as whole. The results support the five hypothesized dimensions of retail center customer satisfaction. These findings suggest that efforts of retailers to undertake marketing strategies at the retail center level do influence customer satisfaction. Establishing minimum standards in the areas of services, polices and physical environments for the entire retail center may be important regardless of the standards of any particular retailer. This may also indicate that it is possible to employ non-product and non-store related marketing strategies to raise the overall level of customer satisfaction.

Further research needs to be conducted to determine if the results from this study are generalizable to other retail centers with different configurations and competitors. In this study the factor most strongly related to global satisfaction was that of merchandise. This may indicate that

consumers have very specific product/service related shopping trips planned when they visit this particular downtown center. Since this center is not under one roof, has fewer exhibits and displays and is not centrally managed/promoted this may account for the negative signs on the physical environment and promotions factors.

Replication of this study in different settings and with varying types of retail centers should prove informative in specifying the retail center customer satisfaction model. Knowledge of the degree that different types of retail centers may influence customer satisfaction and the importance of the various dimensions would be very managerial beneficial. Future inquiry should also examine how retail center satisfaction is related to frequency of patronage and purchasing. Extending our knowledge in this area should help us make more informed decisions on allocating resources to the product/service level, the store level and the retail center level.



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# **DECISION MAKING STYLES OF HUSBAND - WIFE DURABLE GOOD PURCHASES: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE IMPACT OF GENDER ROLE ATTITUDES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This study replicates and updates previous work on husband-wife durable goods purchases. It finds that while husbands dominate automobile purchases and wives dominate furniture purchases, both types of decisions demonstrate more syncratic styles than previous studies.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Consumer decisions involving durable goods purchasing are of importance to marketers and academicians. Unfortunately the importance of understanding the role of husbands and wives in family purchase decisions is often overlooked. Joint purchase decisions (husband and wife couples) occur in approximately seventy percent of the 100 million households in the United States (Moore-Shag and Wilkie, 1988). Although joint decisions are more dynamic and complex than individual decisions, the role of each spouse in decisions made by families should not be ignored. Husbands and wives share decisions about services as well as durable good purchases.

Many changes have occurred within the last three decades that have had an effect on the roles husbands and wives undertake in family decision making behavior. Economic and sociological changes have had a major impact in the lives of women, including many wives (Rose et al, 1990). One of the most prominent changes is the large number of women entering the United States workforce. Presently, 64% of married couples with children have two incomes (BLS, 1998). The largest age group of working women are the baby-boomer females (70%), with over sixty percent of the 45-64 year old women employed outside of the home. Research has also indicated that members of dual-income households are on the average better educated than members of single income households (Zinn, 1991).

## **PREVIOUS HUSBAND - WIFE DURABLE GOODS PURCHASING STUDIES**

The earliest work in the husband-wife durable goods purchasing process area was completed by Davis (1970, 1971). Couples were surveyed about automobile and furniture purchases; questions included decision processes for both functional and aesthetic attributes. In general, husbands dominated functional (price, when to buy) decisions. With regard to furniture decisions, wives were the most influential spouse.

Shurprine and Samuelson (1976) replicated the Davis (1970, 1971) study. Questions were the same as previously asked in the Davis (1971) study. With an emerging change in women's

occupational and lifestyle roles, the researchers expected to find more influence by wives in the 1976 study. The results of the study confirmed product specific influence. Husbands tended to dominate automobile decisions, while wives had the highest level of influence in furniture decisions. The study did not indicate a significantly higher level of decision making with equal participation by both spouses (syncratic).

## THE STUDY

The data reported were collected from 88 husband-wife couples in a large city in the southeast United States. The study included couples from selected middle class neighborhoods. Although a convenience sample was collected, this type of data collection is considered acceptable practice in husband-wife research (Calder et al 1981, 1982, 1983). Data were collected through the use of a self-report questionnaire. Survey instruments were administered to each spouse independently in their homes in the presence of an interviewer. The instrument measured the influence of each spouse in automobile and furniture decisions. Respondents were asked to allocate 100 points between themselves and their spouse on a constant sum scale for each type of decision. Respondents indicated between 45-55% for the husband and between 45-55% for the wife were categorized as equal influence (syncratic). Subjects that indicated more than 56% influence of the husband were classified as husband dominant, and responses of 56% or greater wife influence were determined to be wife dominant.

Before analyzing the data, a determination of the reliability and validity of the data was undertaken. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .87-.93 for automobile decisions and .75-.90 for furniture decisions. The convergent diagonal of the Campbell and Fiske (1959) multi-trait multi-method matrix ranged from .49 to .64; these scores were considered consistent with convergent validity standards. The data was determined to be reliable, valid, and suitable for further analysis.

## RESULTS

The role of husbands in automobile decisions is clearly more dominant than the role of wives. In the majority of the couples surveyed, husbands dominate all of the decisions surveyed. However, over one-third of the families indicate a syncratic decision-making pattern with equal influence of both husbands and wives. Table 1 indicates the decision-making styles of the couples in the sample. The resource decisions of when to buy (45%) and how to finance (41%) displayed the highest level of syncratic decision-making. Decisions regarding how much to spend, where to buy the automobile, and make of automobile were most husband-dominated decisions.

In general, furniture decisions displayed a somewhat syncratic style of decision-making as shown in Table 2. In over 50% of the couples surveyed, the decisions regarding furniture were jointly shared by the couples. The highest level of wife-dominance occurred in variant decisions of where to buy, brand, and style of furniture. The highest level of husband-dominated decisions-making occurred in decisions regarding financing the purchase of furniture. Although furniture has traditionally been viewed as a wife-dominant purchase, the findings suggest a considerable amount of male participation in furniture decisions.

Automobile Decisions	Husband-Dominant	Syncratic	Wife-Dominant
How much to spend	62%	35%	3%
When to buy	54%	45%	1%
How to finance	55%	41%	4%
Where to buy	66%	32%	2%
What make to buy	65%	30%	5%
What model to buy	56%	41%	3%

Furniture Decisions	Husband-Dominant	Syncratic	Wife-Dominant
How much to spend	18%	58%	24%
When to buy	16%	62%	22%
How to finance	40%	51%	9%
Where to buy	8%	50%	42%
What make to buy	10%	45%	45%
What model to buy	5%	50%	45%

The average amount of influence of husbands and wives that participated in the study are reported in Table 3. Each spouse indicated on a scale of 1 to 5 the relative influence of each spouse. A numerical value of '1' indicated total influence by the husband, while a value of '5' indicated total influence by the wife. The data reported in Table 3 indicates the average perceptions of all the wives and husbands responses to the survey questions.

In general automobile decision-making is dominated by husbands. Although wives are somewhat involved with decisions regarding model and when to buy the automobile, both husbands and wives indicate male dominance in automobile purchase decisions. A review of the mean scores indicated good agreement between overall means of husbands and wives scores. The decisions of when to buy the automobile and make of automobile displayed the largest difference in overall mean scores.

Furniture decisions were more female-dominant for the majority of decisions surveyed. The style and brand of furniture were particularly female-dominated. A more syncratic pattern was evident in decisions regarding when to buy and how much to spend on furniture. Dominance by the husband was indicated only in the area of financing the furniture. Overall, the agreement between husbands and wives reported scores displayed larger differences for furniture decisions than automobile decisions. The largest difference is means (.31) was indicated in the decision about the style of furniture to buy. Previous studies have indicated heavy influence by wives (Davis 1971, Shurprtrine 1976); the results of this study indicate a more syncratic style of decision making for family furniture decisions.

Table 3  
Average Relative Influence in Selected Automobile and Furniture Purchase  
Decisions as perceived by Husbands and Wives

Who decided:	Mean response		Difference in means
	Husbands (N=88)	Wives (N=88)	
What make of automobile to buy?	2.21 (0.73)	2.29 (0.80)	-0.08
Where to buy the automobile?	2.26 (0.74)	2.20 (0.72)	+0.06
How much to spend for the automobile?	2.29 (0.70)	2.25 (0.80)	+0.04
How to pay for the automobile	2.29 (0.75)	2.33 (0.88)	-0.04
When to buy the automobile?	2.39 (0.69)	2.29 (0.70)	+0.10
What model of automobile to buy?	2.44 (0.72)	2.44 (.77)	+0.00
How to pay for the furniture?	2.68 (0.77)	2.59 (0.85)	+0.09
When to buy the furniture?	3.12 (0.70)	3.04 (0.84)	+0.08
How much to spend for the furniture?	3.16 (0.75)	2.98 (0.85)	+0.18
Where to buy the furniture?	3.42 (0.92)	3.46 (0.84)	-0.04
What style of furniture to buy?	3.69 (0.83)	3.35 (0.72)	+0.31
What color/brand of furniture to buy?	3.54 (0.91)	3.40 (0.84)	+0.14

## CONCLUSION AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The results of the study clearly indicate a pattern of husband-dominated decision making in automobile purchasing and wife-dominated furniture decisions. However, a movement toward syncratic decision making is evident in both automobile and furniture decisions. When compared to earlier studies in the 1970's, much more syncratic decision-making is evident. The study indicates that wives in the study are involved as an equal partner (syncratic style) in over one-third of the automobile decisions. With regard to furniture decisions over 50% of the couples report a syncratic style that indicates equal influence by husbands. From a marketing strategic perspective the results indicate that marketers cannot assume that only husbands make decisions about automobiles and wives exclusively decide on furniture. Marketers must address both husbands and wives in promotional campaigns as well as in selling activities. Although the sample size has limited generalizability, the patterns clearly indict strategic directions for marketing efforts. Future studies should include larger samples including a diversity income and educational backgrounds.

References Available Upon Request



# **AN EXPLORATORY LOOK AT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OPHTHALMOLOGISTS AND OPTOMETRISTS: THE MARKETING DIFFERENCE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*A concrete understanding of the different types of eye care is important relative to consumers' decision-making processes as to where to solicit professional eye care, as well as their perceptions of quality of providers. Ophthalmologists are medical doctors, while optometrists attend a four-year school of optometry trained to correct poor vision; yet, the increasing overlap of services provided by both types of eye care professionals is blurring consumers' lines of distinction concerning eye care.*

*According to Willis (1997), optometrists have made legislative advances into territory that previously belonged to ophthalmologists. They now are licensed to use diagnostic drugs in all fifty states. Further, by 1997, approximately 30 states permitted optometrists to prescribe oral drugs, while four out of 30 legislated them to perform limited surgery.*

*Consumers must now sort through many subtle (if detectable) differences between these two professional eye care providers while in their decision-making processes. And, these providers are marketing themselves in somewhat similar ways due to the above mentioned legislative actions. This paper focuses on an informational prospective that can provide a decision pathway for consumers when they make eye-care decisions. Some of which are vital for eye-sight, particularly among the elderly.*

## **THE MARKETING OF PAIN MANAGEMENT: HOLISTIC OR HULLABALOO?**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*According to a study conducted in 1985 (Harris et al.), 13 percent of all Americans suffer in excess of thirty days per year from headaches and 15 percent from backaches. Spain (1990) revealed that people with chronic pain have difficult and frustrating problems. However, they can significantly decrease same while increasing productivity.*

*While physicians, chiropractors and pharmacists have been treating pain for years, pain management has only become popular as a specialty within the past few years (Drug Topics, 1996). Lipman (1996) states there is the ability to manage pain today. However, he believes that medical experts are not taking care of the problem, rather, they turn to medication to arrest pain. Yet, studies have indicated that improperly managed pain leads to further hospital stays, longer visits at same, sleep deprivation and resulting physical injuries (Industry Week, 1996; Bonfield, 1990\_.*

*Literature specific to pain management is currently limited, yet growing. Thus, this paper focuses on physicians' and consumers' reaction to pain management as an alternative to costly and, often, unsuccessful surgeries, as well as the marketing of same to both groups.*

# **CONTRIBUTION-BASED PRODUCT AND CUSTOMER LINES: THE MARKETING-ACCOUNTING NEXUS IN HEALTH CARE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*As managed care penetration in the health care marketplace continues unabated, hospitals previously shielded from competitive forces find themselves under intense pressure to be more efficient and price competitive. Hospital marketing and accounting departments have been ill-prepared to deal with this new environment and the resulting excess capacity, it has produced.*

*The purpose of this paper is to examine the competitive pressures exerted by managed care organizations on “traditional” hospital marketing and accounting roles and to propose an alternative for improving performance. The paper argues that this new environment, with hospitals as price takers, requires a more integrated effort between hospital accounting and marketing functions in order to effectively negotiate contracts with managed care entities.*

*Specifically, this paper discusses the shortcomings of traditional “full-cost” absorption and more recent activity-based costing models for decision making in the health care environment and provides the theoretical framework for contribution-based product and customer line marketing. The paper concludes with a discussion of “how” accounting information can be used by marketing to set prices and negotiate profitable managed care contracts.*

## INDEX

Arsenault, S . . . . .	24
Brown, J . . . . .	22
Dunlap, B.J. . . . .	22, 23
Hopper, J . . . . .	18
Koprowski, W.R. . . . .	24
Leonard, M . . . . .	23
Little, B . . . . .	18
Young, M . . . . .	1, 11