Consumer Behavior

Selected topics of recent consumer behavior research are reviewed in terms of their stage in a product life cycle—introduction, growth, and maturity.

By

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In the past few years much research activity, ferment, and excitement have emerged from the field of consumer behavior. Indications of this level of activity are a review article in the Annual Review of Psychology,1 several new textbooks,2 and a new journal, the Journal of Consumer Research.

From the consumer behavior literature, it is evident that a large number of concepts, theories, models, and approaches are being applied at any point in time. Like any product, a theory or construct passes through some sort of life cycle with respect to its prominence in the literature. Concepts typically enter the introduction stage of the life cycle in an isolated article in one of the major journals or proceedings. Many ideas die at this stage, as do many products, and some are destined to be short-lived fads with a rapid growth, however, has not yet been fully realized in the majority of most fru...
rapid growth stage and even more rapid decline. Other topics, however, have a somewhat slower growth period characterized by research that is typically distinguished not in its level of sophistication but by its ability to generate ferment and excitement. It is at these stages of introduction and growth that marketing practitioners are most frustrated in their attempts to ascertain the implications of the research or its applications in the marketplace. The theory usually is not yet well enough developed or researched to allow the potential for applications to be easily grasped.

During the maturity stage of a concept sophisticated research begins to emerge. Very technical and powerful research tools and experimental designs are brought to bear in research studies. Further, it is often at this stage that the theory becomes useful to practitioners in the marketplace. Finally the decline stage sets in. There is no room in the literature for exploratory research or simplistic experimental designs. The fine tuning, the polishing, the honing of ideas are continued by a few people, while pioneers and researchers in the field turn to new ideas and concepts.

In this article research of the recent past is organized in terms of a product life cycle. The first topics treated are those in the decline stage, followed in order by those in the maturity stage, growth stage, and finally the introduction stage.

It is clearly beyond the scope of a single article to review all recent developments in consumer behavior. Therefore, this article is limited with respect to both the time span and the range of topics included. For this first issue of the *Review of Marketing*, we decided to limit coverage largely to publications in 1976 and 1977, with selected references to 1975 research. Earlier research, although clearly important, is included sparingly.

Similarly, some topics are chosen for emphasis rather than others. We decided to omit consideration of studies of pricing and advertising effects, because these are major marketing decision areas and can be treated adequately only in separate reviews. Other topic areas are omitted also, not because of lack of importance, but because of
space and time constraints (e.g., conjoint measurement, perceptual mapping, stochastic models).

DECLINE STAGE

A comparison of the recent literature with that of just a few years ago indicates that many topics have declined dramatically in popularity.

Personality

Perhaps the best example of a declining topic is the correlation of psychological measures of personality with product use and purchase. By 1977 more than 200 studies could be found in the marketing literature relating personality variables to consumer behavior. A review of this literature shows that the findings can be summarized by a single word—“equivocal.”¹³ The relationships between personality test scores and variables such as product choice and media preferences are weak at best and thus of little value in prediction.

Cognitive Dissonance

Perhaps one of the most widely researched topics in early consumer research, cognitive dissonance, has received little recent attention. Cummings and Venkatesan review this prior work and discuss problems with the theory and the current status of the empirical evidence.⁴ There may be renewed interest in this area of research as it relates to social identity theory.⁵ Social identity theory is essentially an outgrowth of symbolic interactionism, in that it posits that attitude statements are interpersonal communications rather than strictly covert individual responses. As such, any attitude statement must be viewed in context to assess its real meaning. Most often, consumers’ self-reported attitudes can be viewed simply as their attempts to create favorable impressions of themselves in the eyes of the observer.
**Perceived Risk**

Although there has been some recent research on risk, the level of interest in the topic has clearly declined. Ross provides a critical review of the area, and notes that crucial problems of measurement and conceptualization must be addressed before further research is likely to be fruitful.

**Other Topics**

Similarly, the decline stage has set in on other topics. For example, one now sees little in the areas of culture, subculture, social class, diffusion of innovation, self concept, and brand loyalty.

**Maturity Stage**

Turning to the maturity stage, one finds topics that have been, and continue to be, researched extensively in the academic domain. Furthermore, these “mature” constructs are fairly widely accepted by marketing practitioners and are often used as input to managerial decision making.

**Life Style**

Life style, also referred to as psychographics or AIO, is perhaps one of the most managerially important areas in consumer research. Wells provides an outstanding overview of the types of life style studies which are conducted and their uses. Other perspectives on this area of research are offered by Kinnear and Taylor and Mehrotra and Wells. Though numerous applications in the form of psychographic profiles appear in almost every issue of any marketing journal, an excellent example of AIO research is available in an article by Darden and Perreault.
More than a decade of research has clearly established the value of life style research to the practitioner. However, two issues seem worthy of mention here. A troublesome choice faced by the researcher is whether to use a “general” AIO battery or a more “product-specific” set of statements. Though the segmentation literature offers clearcut evidence that situation-specific variables are superior to general customer characteristics, in many cases product-specific AIO research is too costly. The issue then becomes one of sampling the “stimulus statement” domain. Though careful attention typically is paid to respondent sampling procedures, there is no theory to guide the sampling of AIO statements. The researcher can never be certain that all important aspects of consumer life styles have been represented. Thus, the development of a firmer conceptual foundation for AIO research would be of some utility for future research and application.

A second problem with much life style research reported in the literature is the use of consumption rate as the “dependent” variable. Though the “heavy half” or “users versus nonusers” may be of interest in some cases, the more fundamental segmentation base probably is some sort of benefit preference profile. In other words, knowing how life style relates to benefit desirability is more critical than knowing how life style relates to level of consumption. In future AIO research more attention should be devoted to the benefit profile because of its superior capability for suggesting marketing strategies.

**Attitudes and Intentions**

Research on consumer attitudes continues to be one of the cornerstones of contemporary consumer research. Numerous studies either directly investigating the attitude construct or, in some ways more importantly, using it to better understand a substantive problem have appeared over the past few years. Though it is impossible even to mention all of these studies, several significant clusters of research warrant attention.
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Multiattribute Models. For almost 10 years research on multi-
attribute models has dominated the consumer attitude literature.
The Wilkie and Pessemier review paper has become a classic and is
perhaps the most frequently cited paper in marketing during the past
five years. It provides excellent coverage of research prior to 1973
as well as a preview of research over the next five years, much of
which has been reviewed by Lutz and Bettman and is not treated
further here.

Several significant trends are emerging in the multiattribute atti-
tude literature at the present time. Measurement of the model com-
ponents (i.e., attribute perceptions and weights) continues to be a
source of concern. Following Beckwith and Lehmann's work on halo
effects in attribute measurement, numerous other authors have
turned their attention to this rather knotty problem. Beckwith
et al. provide an updated overview of this critical area. At the
present time, it is unclear to what extent halo effects are present in
multiattribute measurement and how they can be accounted for or
overcome. Most past research has had an econometric focus and has
succeeded in documenting, but not explaining, halo effects. Future
research must take a more explanatory approach to understand the
phenomenon and its causes. Only then can measurement be sys-
tematically improved.

The true value of multiattribute models lies in their diagnostic
capabilities with regard to attitude change. Several recent studies
using multiattribute data in attitude change situations show the
model to be relatively useful. Demonstrating that changes in attri-
but perceptions lead to changes in attitude is vital to the validation
of the theory underlying multiattribute models; furthermore, at a
managerial level, these models are useful only if they can suggest
appropriate attitude change strategies. Though the halo effect re-
search suggests that high correlations between cognitive structure and
attitude may not necessarily be diagnostic, the little research that
has been done on attitude change is encouraging for the diagnostic
utility of multiattribute attitude models.
Other studies of multiattribute models explore several interesting areas. Modern economic theory is introduced into the multiattribute literature by Geistfeld and Ladd and Zober.\textsuperscript{24} Troutman and Shanteau and McElwee and Parsons\textsuperscript{25} undertook further studies of the "cognitive algebra" underlying multiattribute models of attitude first investigated by Bettman et al.\textsuperscript{26} Bernardo and Blin studied multiattribute problems with an "assignment model" approach.\textsuperscript{27} Other aspects of multiattribute models also are reported.\textsuperscript{28}

The Fishbein Model of Intentions. Emerging from the multiattribute literature is research using the so-called "extended Fishbein model" for the prediction of consumer intentions from both attitudinal and normative variables. Ryan and Bonfield provide an excellent review of marketing-related studies in this area.\textsuperscript{29} In a later paper, Ryan reviews the results of a series of interrelated studies on the model.\textsuperscript{30} Finally, Woodside and Bearden\textsuperscript{31} and Lutz\textsuperscript{32} report results of empirical studies using the model. At present, the model appears to have considerable potential for application to marketing decision making. There is a nagging measurement problem with respect to the normative component, however, and this may be an obstacle to wide-scale use of the model in practical settings.

Children's Attitudes and Television Advertising. One important substantive area in consumer attitude research is the impact of television advertising on children.\textsuperscript{33} Findings are mixed, some studies indicating that children are relatively pliable and others showing that children are skeptical of advertising. Because of the salience of this particular area to regulatory bodies such as the Federal Trade Commission, careful attention should be devoted to it by marketers in the future.

Interpersonal Influence

Although studies of reference group influence continue to appear in the consumer behavior literature,\textsuperscript{34} the two areas receiving the most attention recently are customer-salesperson interaction and family decision making.
Salesperson-Customer Interaction. Several studies of the interaction between a salesperson and customer show that the perceived expertise of the salesclerk and the perceived similarity between salesperson and customer have significant influence on the purchase decision.\textsuperscript{35} This research also indicates that though both expertise and similarity are important factors, expertise seems to be the more important of the two. In related research, Weitz found salesperson performance to be significantly related to the ability to form accurate impressions of customer decision elements and the ability to select appropriate targets for persuasive communications.\textsuperscript{36}

In addition to this empirical work, much of the recent effort in the area is devoted to new conceptualizations of the interaction process, which may lead to important new research streams. Capon et al. review earlier empirical research, and also summarize several conceptual papers presented at a special topics session during the 1976 Association for Consumer Research Conference.\textsuperscript{37} Other important theoretical work also is reported.\textsuperscript{38}

Family Decision Making. Davis, in his excellent review of the literature in this field, concludes that despite the many studies that have been conducted, the field is still relatively young and little is known about the roles of various household members (including children) in information gathering and storage, product use, and postdecision evaluation or about family-member roles across product domains.\textsuperscript{39} It has been pointed out that even descriptive questions—such as how and to what extent feedback of information from past experiences influences family decisions, who evaluates the family experience, who stores the information for future use, and who draws on the information storage—have received little attention.\textsuperscript{40} However, the major need in studies of family decision making, as noted by Davis and others,\textsuperscript{41} is more consideration of the processes underlying family choices, particularly how choice conflicts among family members are resolved. Hempel and Ayal report some encouraging first steps in this direction in their study of the home purchase decision.\textsuperscript{42}
GROWTH STAGE

In this section, theories or approaches which are just beginning to receive major attention from consumer researchers are considered. We anticipate that research in these areas will flourish during the next several years and that numerous contributions to the practice of marketing will be forthcoming.

Information Processing

There has been much recent interest in the study of consumer information processing. Information processing research examines the ways in which consumers acquire, interpret, and combine information in making a choice. Although some earlier research examined information processing notions, most of the work in this area has been done very recently. Several major contributions derive from this work: a process-oriented view of choice has been taken, new methods for studying choice have been considered, studies of information acquisition behavior and of the use of particular choice heuristics have been undertaken, and some new areas for research have been tapped.

Choice as a Process. One major contribution of the recent research on information processing has been a shift from the static view of choice prevalent in some previous consumer research. The focus is not on cataloguing traits or simply examining outcomes, but on attempting to measure and understand the detailed processes occurring during choice. Thus, there is concern not only for the observation that Brand X was chosen over Brand Y, but for what information about Brand X and Brand Y was examined, what specific comparisons were made, how these comparisons were explicitly integrated to make the choice, and so on.

Methods for Studying Choice Processes. Researchers have developed many ingenious techniques for "observing" underlying processes. One of the earliest methods considered was verbal protocols, where the consumer is asked to "think out loud" while making choices. Doing wit...
choices. Such data then provide clues about what consumers are doing with the information available to them.44

Jacoby and his associates45 and Payne46 independently developed another approach to examining process, information monitoring. In this method, consumers are asked to acquire information about alternatives from an information display, often a matrix display board with information cards available for various brand-attribute combinations (e.g., the price of Cheerios). The actual sequence of information acquired by the consumer from the display while making a choice can be measured and examined.47

Other process methods, such as eye movement studies, response time measures, and information integration, have also been used. For reviews and comparisons of many of these methods, see Bettman48 or Russo.49

Such methods have led to more detailed examination of the choice processes used by consumers. Successful commercial applications have also been reported (e.g., Palmer and Faivre for protocol analysis, commercial use of eye movement data50). Thus use of such approaches by both researchers and marketers should be more widespread as details of choice processes become a focus of concern. It should be stressed that no single method is best; rather, combinations of several different methods may prove most valuable in any particular situation.

Information Acquisition. Several researchers have examined how consumers acquire information by using information monitoring approaches. One of the major findings of these studies is that two major strategies seem to be used for acquiring information. Some subjects acquire information about several attributes for a single brand, then examine another brand, and so on (brand processing). Other subjects acquire information on several brands for a given attribute (e.g., price), then examine another attribute, and so on (attribute processing). Which strategy is used appears to depend on degree of brand loyalty and consumption frequency,51 amount of information,52 format of the information,53 and other factors.54
Researchers also have examined how much information is acquired. In research using information monitoring approaches, Jacoby et al. showed that presence of brand name led to levels of acquisition that were much lower than those when brand name was absent. Brand name thus appears to summarize much other information for the consumer. Other studies have shown that consumers acquire only a small portion of the information available. These findings parallel those in studies of prepurchase information search carried out by other methods. Typically survey studies of search show that few stores are visited or sources of information consulted even for purchases of durables (see Newman or Bettman for reviews). However, these findings may be biased by the fact that only external search for information is measured, not internal search of what is stored in memory. This possibility has important implications for the marketer, in that typical questionnaire approaches for measuring what information was considered and the sources from which it was obtained may be misleading if use of information in memory is ignored.

*Use of Choice Heuristics.* One of the chief concerns in consumer information processing research has been to examine the specific choice rules used by consumers. This work has important implications for marketers as the promotional strategies which might be most effective depend on the particular heuristics consumers use. For example, three particular heuristics which consumers might use are a lexicographic rule, a conjunctive rule, or a linear rule (for others see Bettman).

The specific beliefs held and heuristics used by consumers determine which promotional strategies might be most effective. Thus one would like to ascertain which heuristics consumers appear to be using. This is not an easy task, although many researchers have used the process methodologies discussed above to attempt to answer this question. The general finding appears to be that the rules or type of processing used depend on the situation. That is, consumers appear to be very adaptive and use types of processing or rules which are easy to apply in a given situation. Several researchers have studied what types of processing are easy or difficult in given situations,
because they appear to be easier to characterize than the exact rule being used.\textsuperscript{60}

Russo argues that if a marketer or public policymaker wishes to encourage use of a rule involving attribute processing, then information must be presented in ways which make that type of processing easier.\textsuperscript{61} Russo showed that posting an overall list of unit prices for a product category on a supermarket shelf led to more usage of unit price information than use of individual shelf tags for unit price for each brand, presumably because the unit price information was easier to process in the form of an overall list. Bettman and Kakkar also argue that the format of information can be an important element in getting consumers to process and use that information.\textsuperscript{62}

Finally, other authors have shown that the rule of type of processing used may depend on the amount of information presented. For example, Payne finds that for small numbers of alternatives, linear or additive difference rules may be used more often, but for large numbers of alternatives, conjunctive or elimination by aspects rules may be used.\textsuperscript{63} Several studies also have shown that if large numbers of alternatives are present, choice may proceed in two phases—an initial elimination phase to reduce the number of alternatives to manageable size and a comparison phase where the remaining alternatives are examined in more detail.\textsuperscript{64} There is some support for the notions that conjunctive rules are used in the elimination stage and that lexicographic or additive difference type rules are used in the comparison phase.\textsuperscript{65}

Thus, researchers have shown that the ease of processing information and the particular choice rules used may be affected by factors such as time pressure, format and other factors relating to how information is presented, and amount of information. The general implication is that the marketer and the public policymaker, if they wish to accomplish certain goals, must present information in ways that make the type of processing desired as easy as possible.\textsuperscript{66}

\textit{Other Aspects of Information Processing}. There is much other recent research on consumer information processing. Some has
focused on the information processing characterizing special populations, such as children\textsuperscript{67} and the elderly.\textsuperscript{68} Such research could be very useful to marketers for whom these groups form a significant portion of the target market.

One area that is in its emergent stage is research on consumer memory.\textsuperscript{69} Consumer researchers are beginning to see the importance of studying what information consumers have in memory, what factors influence memory, and how consumers use what is in memory.

**Attribution and Self-Perception Theories**

Research in attribution and self-perception has begun to make contributions to understanding consumer behavior. Although there are several distinct paradigms within the theory, attribution theory is in general concerned with how individuals infer causes for effects (e.g., why another person behaved in a certain way, the reasons for a product’s performance). Self-perception theory, a paradigm closely related to attribution theory, is in general concerned with how individuals make inferences about the causes for their own behavior.

*Attribution Theory Research.* Attribution research has dominated social psychology in recent years, but early consumer research in the area has had limited impact in marketing. As Burnkrant\textsuperscript{70} and Hansen and Scott\textsuperscript{71} forcefully argue, this lack of impact may be due to inadequate conceptualization and application of attributional principles in earlier consumer research on the topic. Some recent research using the attributional framework appears to be on solid theoretical ground,\textsuperscript{72} although the design of the experiment was such that attributions about personality traits were forced upon the subjects by asking explicit questions about them.

Research on attributions also may be fruitful in understanding the inferences consumers make about the causes for purchase outcomes, about why a product performed the way it did. Concern with consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction and its attendant responses (e.g., complaint, satisfaction, and Walle satisfaction) actions to performance faction itself, in turn, satisfaction values as the case may be, the product quality, and so on. For instance, consumers perceive the perceptual theory i making depend (i.e., att external

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complaint behavior) has fostered a research area of some magnitude.\textsuperscript{73} Some of this research has had an attributional focus. Valle and Wallendorf consider such attributions of the causes for product satisfaction and dissatisfaction and relate these attributions to the actions taken (if any) in complaining about dissatisfaction performance.\textsuperscript{74} Their subjects tended to attribute their product dissatisfaction to others (e.g., retailers, manufacturers) rather than to themselves. In addition, there is some evidence that potential attributions which are made salient to an individual are likely to be seen as the causes for an event.\textsuperscript{75} For example, if consumers were misusing the product and attributing poor performance to poor product quality, the marketer might wish to make attributions to failure to follow usage instructions more salient.

\textit{Self-Perception Theory Research.} Perhaps the greatest amount of consumer research on causal inference processes has centered on self-perception theory. The basic premise underlying self-perception theory is that individuals use their own past behavior as data for making inferences about their attitudes and beliefs. Such inferences depend on whether the past behavior is perceived to be caused by (i.e., attributed to) factors internal to the individual or plausible external factors.

Several researchers have applied self-perception notions to examining the effects of foot-in-the-door strategies and incentives (e.g., coupons) on the behavior of consumers. The foot-in-the-door strategy consists of getting the consumer to comply with a small initial request (e.g., a limited trial offer for a newspaper) and then making a subsequent larger request (e.g., asking for a full subscription). Scott,\textsuperscript{76} using newspaper subscriptions, and Reingen and Kernan,\textsuperscript{77} using requests for interviews, investigated this strategy. The findings in both cases offer mixed support for self-perception theory, particularly with respect to the effect of incentives. Finally, several studies examine the impact of source credibility on causal inferences, with mixed results.\textsuperscript{78} For further discussion of self-perception theory, see Scott.\textsuperscript{79}
Low Involvement

Most researchers would agree that the behavior of the consumer in the marketplace from time to time involves major decisions that have been well thought out and planned, but they would also agree that much of the consumer's behavior involves mundane, unimportant, low involvement decisions. Except for a few scattered articles and papers, interest in low involvement has been a very recent occurrence, with perhaps the major impetus revolving around the 1977 American Marketing Association Attitude Conference which focused on the topic.

Robertson, in his review of the literature, points out that the distinguishing characteristics of the low involvement model are basically a passive audience, evaluation based on trial rather than attitude or other cognitive elements, weakly held beliefs, minimal personal influence, minimal cognitive dissonance in the postpurchase state, and, most important, a collapsed hierarchy of effects. One basic assumption in this area is that the behavior of the consumer differs substantially under conditions of high involvement and conditions of low involvement. This assumption is seriously challenged by Calder, who manages to expand the original hierarchy of effects model to include both low and high involvement situations.

Recent empirical research on the topic of low involvement consumer behavior and marketing has been relatively sparse. In a conceptual piece, Rothschild presents strategies that can be used in low involvement marketing, suggesting a highly repetitive advertising strategy with short messages in broadcast media. Because in the low involvement case attitude change presumably follows behavior, initiating product trial is even more important in such cases.

Situational Influence

For the past few years, research on situational influences on consumers has been growing at a rapid pace. The first systematic work in the area of situational influence have been scattered, but a major report that in the process is gated the horizon's focus on times for consumption and analysis that in a of other

INTRODUCTION

The initial research in this area has been scattered, but a major report on times for consumption and analysis that in a of other...
work in the area originated with Belk. Further conceptual contributions have been made by Barker, Wicker, Russell and Mehrabian, and Belk. A major unresolved conceptual issue is the distinction between an "objective" characterization of the situation and a "subjective" or consumer-reaction-oriented view. Though the former view implies more marketer control, measurement problems are multitudinous. The latter view may offer more explanatory power, but at the expense of direct relationships between consumer response and controllable marketing variables.

Applications. Despite conceptual difficulties, empirical work has proceeded on several fronts. Jacoby et al. reviewed research on time, a major situational variable. Hames and Arndt and Grönmo report the results of empirical studies related to time and consumption, and Wright and Weitz published an innovative study on "time horizons" in consumer decision making, pointing out that time affects consumption behavior in several ways (e.g., time for search, time for decision making, amount of time over which product is consumed).

Park, Bearden and Woodside, and Berkowitz et al. investigated the impact of situational variables on consumer information processing; Belk and Ryans conducted interesting studies of consumer gift-buying, a special kind of situation.

Finally, Lutz and Kakkar take a situational perspective in the analysis of interpersonal persuasion. It seems clear, at this time, that in addition to time and the physical environment, the presence of other people is a major situational variable.

INTRODUCTION STAGE

The introduction stage includes those topics for which the research is still in an embryonic phase. Much of the work is exploratory and in many cases the newly introduced concepts may die before their potential is fully explored. Others will die when their impact on consumer behavior does not live up to its initial promise.
Several topics in this stage appear to have importance for the field and should generate considerable research in the future.

Values

Several recent studies have shown significant correlations between values and consumer behavior. In a splendid review of past research on values in other disciplines, Clawson and Vinson point out that marketing practitioners have become very sophisticated in developing advertising appeals involving important human values. Apparently marketing practitioners understand what marketing academics as yet have not fully researched—that human values play an important part in consumer behavior.

One note of caution is necessary, however. Values are a very general characteristic of the individual, in much the same domain as personality variables. Whether values ultimately will hold much explanatory value for specific consumer behaviors is thus very much in question. The early research cited does not incorporate any "situation-specific" perceptual variables akin to the "expectancy" term in the expectancy-value model (e.g., Burnkrant). Future research on consumer values may have to move in this direction to prove fruitful.

Cognitive Response

A promising area of research on the effects of persuasion which has received too little attention to date is the cognitive response framework introduced in the marketing literature by Wright. Cognitive response data are difficult to collect and analyze but offer tremendous potential for understanding the effects of marketing communications. Petty summarizes several studies conducted in psychological domains. Lutz and Swasy and Olson et al. relate cognitive responses to the more familiar cognitive structure (i.e., multiattribute) model of attitude. For an excellent overview of

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The cognitive transformations of the social institutions, ascertained by sociologists, require the acceptance of the model. Concord and the Monitorseller inherently. Researchers and marketers monitor the acceptance of the new discipline as a vital aspect of the on
the cognitive response approach and some early marketing applications, see Wright.105

Sociology of Consumption

A very recent trend has been the re-emergence of a broader view of the context of consumer decision making. Loosely labeled the “sociology of consumption,” the main idea is to examine the institutions, cultural values, and role structures of society in order to ascertain their impact on consumption.

Conceptual approaches to this new area are offered by Nicosia and Mayer, Zaltman and Wallendorf, and Mayer and Nicosia.106 Bonoma107 and Mayer108 offer sociologically based analyses of buyer-seller interactions and “socially conscious” consumption, respectively. Finally, the increasing attention being paid by marketing researchers to elderly consumers109 and the changing role of women110 is closely related to this sociological perspective. Continuous monitoring of broad cultural trends should become increasingly important to marketers as the rate of cultural change continues to accelerate.

CONCLUSION

The scope of consumer research continues to expand rapidly. Future RM reviews of consumer behavior will almost certainly have to be broken down into subareas as the bulk of research becomes unmanageable. As Jacoby (1976) notes, the field is still very young.111 Perhaps consumer behavior can be characterized best as being in the growth stage of its product life cycle. Thus, the broader discipline of marketing can expect even greater contributions from the subfield of consumer behavior as it enters the maturity stage in the near future. The challenge for consumer researchers in the not-too-distant future will be to sustain the field in the maturity stage as a vital contributor to marketing decision making and to postpone the onset of the decline stage.
ENDNOTES


8. Flemming and S. Bennett

9. Fredric and M. Scott

10. Arun K. Implici

11. Everett

12. George

13. Yoram


41. Harry L. Davis, same as reference 39; Alvin C. Burns and Donald H. Granbois, “Factors Moderating the Resolution of Preference


54. Jacob Jacoby, 1977, see reference 45.

55. Jacoby, Szybillo, and Busato-Schach, see reference 45.


63. John W. Payne, same as reference 46.


65. Peter L. Wright and Frederic Barbour, same as reference 64; John W. Payne, 1976b, see reference 46.


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100. C. Joseph Clawson and Donald E. Vinson, "Human Values: An Historical Analysis,” in Advances in Consumer Behavior,


107. Thomas V. Bonoma, see reference 38.


111. Jacob Jacoby, same as reference 1.