WHAT ARE GENDER SPECIFICS THAT AFFECT HOW MEN AND WOMEN DO OFFLINE SHOPPING?

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ABSTRACT

Previous research suggests that men and women exhibit different behavior when it comes to offline shopping. This study seeks to explore the relation between gender and consumer shopping behavior in shopping. Apparently, there are many factors that influence consumer purchasing decision, gender being one of them, and, in fact, the most important and significant one. In this study we review what those gender specifics are that affect how men and women are making buying decisions when shopping offline.

Keywords: Gender differences, shopping behavior, gender influence on shopping, offline shopping traits, shopping research, brand loyalty, utilitarian shopping, hedonic shopping, Web advertising.
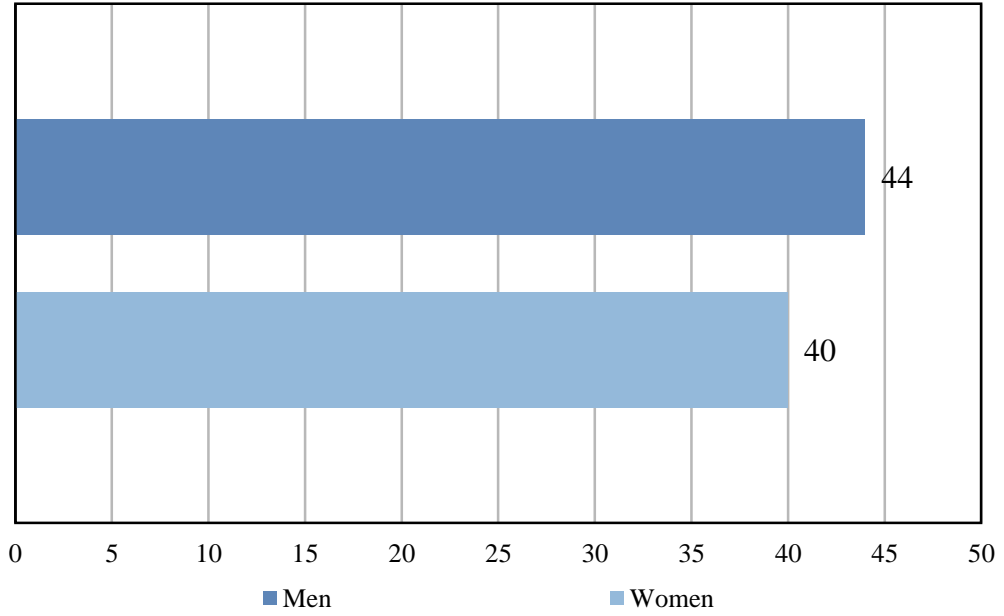
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Women	15

12   16

■ Men   ■ Women

```
Expenditure
------------------------------------
                               .
                         Coef./Se.
------------------------------------
Gender                   3268.3350
                         (2353.29)
Age                      706.6147***
                         (240.25)
Util                     976.5535
                         (935.87)
Research                 -1086.0027
                         (885.41)
WebAd                    258.9465
                         (897.91)
Enjoy                    926.4908
                         (1138.56)
BrandLoyal               2266.3200*
                         (1188.69)
Constant                 -2923.9514
                         (6610.55)
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N                        193.0000
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Standard errors are in the parenthesis: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
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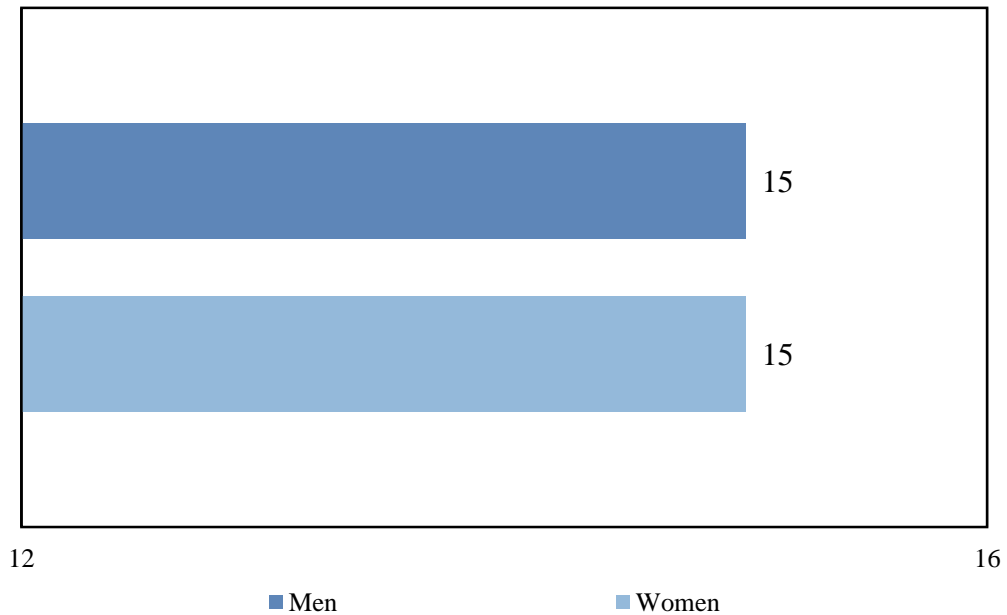
```
Expenditure

------------------------------------
                               .
                         Coef./Se.
------------------------------------
Age                      668.1958***

                         (249.17)
BrandLoyal               2333.0013**

                         (1089.89)
Constant                 2425.9904

                         (5173.73)
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N                        197.0000
------------------------------------
Standard errors are in the parenthesis: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
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Introduction

General Introduction: Although not much research has been done on gender specifics in shopping, there is enough evidence to arrive to certain conclusions about the gender inherent differences.

The reason this study was decided to be conducted is because business sector is in need of better understanding their customers. A lot of business are gender-based on mainly gender-based (f.e. "Harley Davidson" motorbike company targets mostly men), others have different gender-based sectors. Shopping malls and centers, traditionally targeting mostly women, are now engaging more and more men because of the changes in cultural trends. This study will clearly indicate how 2 genders[1] are different in their behavioral patterns in offline shopping. This may help various companies to have a better insight into their chosen category, which indeed can help foster intercommunication and help with advertising efforts. Different shopping centers may now better understand how their customers are different in their shopping patterns and thus target them better.

Preparing for the Literature Review: Here are some studies and scientific works that we will be investigating to get information from.

- Lori D. Wolin, Pradeep Korgaonkar, "Web advertising: gender differences in beliefs, attitudes and behavior", 2003.

- Mitchell, V. and Walsh, G., Gender differences in German consumer decision-making styles. Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 2004.

- Hayian Hu, "Men and Women. A Comparison Of Shopping Mall Behavior", Journal of Shopping Center Research, 2004.

These scientific works provide a lot of information about gender differences and shopping interests. Other works are also quickly peaked at for a piece of information, but were not thoroughly examined.

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[1] There is an ongoing debate about whether gender is a spectrum or not. Since there is not enough scientific information to back up this argument, the thesis assumes gender is binary, and there are 2 genders only.

Methodology: First, we will analyze how men and women are different in their shopping patterns and experiences based on three major studies conducted in this field. A list of studied facts was extracted. Then we will carry on a study in Armenia with 200 (100 men, 100 women) participants. The list of observed facts will be tested on them to find out if they results are similar. Armenia is one of the societies that is considered to be more or less patriarchal. However, the number of men actively participating in shopping has been increasing over the last years. The main purpose here is to examine if the societal system and gender role perceptions in a given country affect gender-based shopping behavior or not.

A separate survey including 200 participants will be conducted in Armenia to test the findings from the studies. If the findings from the survey show similar results, it would with higher probability imply that purchasing patterns are inherently sex-based rather than constructed by society. Survey will be done in a questionnaire format with both online and face-to-face conversations.

Data Overview: Online questionnaire will be offered to 200 participants. The number should be this high, because among one gender itself there are many differences, so to study and compare both of them, we need an amount of respondents as high as 200. We will then place interviewers into categories based on characteristics and conduct an analysis to derive conclusions and to compare with what we know already.

Literature review

The research was done holding the presumption that there are two genders and rejecting the counter-assumption that gender is a continuous spectrum. Research participants identify themselves having the generally accepted attributes and behavior associated with the biological sex they were assigned at birth, and the papers did not research people who do not fit into a specific gender category, and, therefore, people who were questioned and researched are assumed to fit the gender category that corresponds their biological sex.

Although limited research has been conducted to investigate differences and similarities of shopping patterns and behavior between the two genders, data on the issue is pretty clear. Simple form of hypothesis was developed as follows:

Male and female consumer decision-making traits will vary. (Mitchell and Walsh, 2004). Different approaches and methods were used to test this hypothesis throughout years (Wolin and Kargaonkar, 2003). In this thesis we will look deeper into the question of gender-based shopping behavior based on factors researchers developed as models to base assumptions on (Mitchell and Walsh, 2004).

A big study conducted by Hu and Jasper in 2004 seeks to explore the core differences between male and female consumers when shopping in mall centers. The study is interesting in several aspects. First, it is done in such a way that it includes both men and women who are equally active in mall shopping. Since previous research indicates that there has been a tremendous increase in number of male consumers who are actively engaging in housework, women are engaging more into workforce, this allows men to be more active in shopping (Mazumdar and Papatla, 1995). So this fact allows us to look into a fair picture and not fall into the fallacy that shopping malls should be appealing only to women.

The fundamental core of the study is the generic description of the shopping pattern of male and female consumers. Research claims that men appear to be more utilitarian shoppers, meaning they shop mainly for the sake of the finding the exact product they were searching

for, and women are more hedonic, meaning they view shopping as a way to entertain themselves and have emotional experiences (Babin, Darden and Griffin, 1994, Wolin and Kargaonkar, 2003). According to this study, 17 percent of women shopped only for hedonic reasons, while only 5 percent of men did. A similar pattern is experienced when it comes to online advertising. Since women tend to search more and be intrinsic in their shopping patterns, men tend to have more positive attitude towards Web advertising than women, though usually find it annoying (Wolin and Kangaonkar, 2003). This finding is further proved by data that shows that females tend to be more comprehensive information processors, they take into account both objective and subjective information, while men tend to concentrate more on objective part with limited pre-hand research about the product.

The study shows that although men and women visit shopping malls equally, there is a huge difference in the amount of time they spent in mall. This is due to the fact that women are more hedonic in their shopping patterns and men are more utilitarian. On average, women spent around half an hour more than men per trip. However, data shows that the amount of money men and women spent per trip is somewhat equal. This shows that women wander around shops not looking for a specific product, but rather gathering information, relieving from stress, getting emotional experiences and looking for potential deals. Men spend less time, because a lot of time they visit malls for a specific product. The money they spent is somewhat equal, because men do like to purchase more expensive and special products, like electronic ones, more than women do.

Another aspect the study focuses on is enjoyment and fulfillment two genders get from visiting malls. The study found that women in general tend to enjoy mall trips more than men, 51 % of women claimed they enjoy their trips, while only 34 % of men did. 15 % of women enjoyed one-stop shopping convenience through the mall, 5 % of men do. Women tend to love shopping in general, not only when it comes to mall, 55 % of women claimed they love shopping for different products and reasons, while only 22 % of men did.

The study focuses on other aspects more, such as what products interest men more than women, what are specific reasons for visiting malls, etc., but for our study they are not relevant. We can conclude from this study that

    a) Men spent on average half an hour less when shopping than women.

b) Men are more utilitarian in their shopping pattern than women.

c) Women enjoy the shopping process more than men do.

Another study worth looking at was conducted by German researchers Mitchell and Walsh in 2004. This is a more substantial study including more than 300 participants who were interviewed face-to-face. This study is peculiar in a sense that it views men and women based on common shopping traits, male-specific shopping traits, and female-specific shopping ones. We will look at some of the factors that are also connected with the previous study and would be relevant for further research.

Three main characteristics were previously discovered that typically describe a shopping behavior – perfectionist trait, novelty-fashion consciousness trait, confused by overchoice trait.

Perfectionist trait is typically associated with someone who seeks to maximize the quality and get the best choice possible. It was studied that males are less likely to use specialist magazines as a source of viable information (Wiedmann and Walsh, 2000), spend less time shopping (American Enterprise, 1994) and are consistently reported to be more risk taking (Areni and Kiecker, 1993), so men generally tend to score lower on perfectionist trait.

Novelty-fashion seeking trait is associated with someone who is fashion conscious and likes to keep up to date with styles. Men are less externally motivated than women and show less interest for fashion products. So, hypothesis follows that men are usually taking lower scores on novelty-fashion seeking trait.

Confused by overchoice trait generally refers to someone who learns more and more about the products and thus is often times confused about the correct choice. This factor is mainly female; very few men have identified themselves having this trait. It has been suggested that this is because men attend to advertising less or find it more annoying than women do (Bauer and Greyser, 1968). Male consumers tend to be less persuaded by marketing practices (McGuire, 1985), which was discussed in the previous study as well.

One more important trait discussed in the study is impulsiveness, carelessness. High scores on this factor do not plan their shopping and show carelessness towards the price. Study showed that male and female consumers show relatively equal results on impulsiveness

trait, they would both declare that they have to watch carefully on how they spend their money, but because women generally do more shopping, they are inclined to score higher on this trait.

Concluding and combining the results we obtained from 2 major studies, we can see similar traits and deciding factors being discussed. Thus, we can draw our final list of hypothesis to be further analyzed:

a) Male and female consumers differ significantly when it comes to shopping.

b) Male consumers tend to shop in a utilitarian style, while women prefer more hedonic shopping.

c) Women spend more time researching the product, while men are inclined to believe Web advertising more easily.

d) Women enjoy shopping, men generally do not.

e) Because women do a lot of research, they are more than men inclined to be confused about their choice.

Further research will be conducted in Armenia, where we will prepare online questionnaires for male and female consumers to test the hypothesis. Then we will analyze the results and compare to those obtained in US and Germany. In the end, we want to see if traits and factors are similar irrespective of the social structure and societal norms a country has.

The Survey in Armenia

Questions are asked to respondents to find out their behavioral interests and shopping patterns when shopping clothes in a shopping center. The survey is anonymous and contains a total of 5 questions.

Respondent's gender

> *Male / Female*

Respondent's age

> *22 / 23 - 28 / 29 - 34 / 35 - 40*

Respondent's average money spent on shopping clothes

> *0 - 20.000 / 20.000 - 40.000 / 40.000 - 80.000 / 80.000 and higher*

Respondent's occupation

> 1. Typically, I go shopping for a specific product without browsing and looking at other items.
>
>   *1 2 3 4 5*
>
> 2. I spend enough time researching the needed product.
>
>   *1 2 3 4 5*
>
> 3. Web advertisements, in general, can be effective tools influencing my brand choice.
>
>   *1 2 3 4 5*
>
> 4. In general, I enjoy my time spent shopping.
>
>   *1 2 3 4 5*
>
> 5. In general, I am a brand-loyal person and have one preferred brand for different types of clothes and shoes.
>
>   *1 2 3 4 5*

The Results

Findings from the survey were not surprising, however, they had some alterations that weren't expected to occur. For each of the statements that respondent's answered, a chart was composed to show the differences between behavioral patterns of each gender.

1. **Utilitarianism trait**: Beforehand, it was concluded that men and women show a slight difference in their patterns being utilitarian or hedonic: men were more utilitarian and women were more hedonic (Hu and Jasper, 2004). The survey conducted in Armenia showed only a slight 4 percent difference between 2 genders. Although still we can confirm that men are more utilitarian in their shopping patterns in Armenia, the difference is not significant. This could be explained by another finding in this study: vast majority of both men and women tend to spend up to AMD 40000 for shopping clothes, shoes and related products. Since the money is not big enough to afford rambling around the shopping centers, the percentage difference of utilitarianism was not high enough.

Utilitarianism in shopping
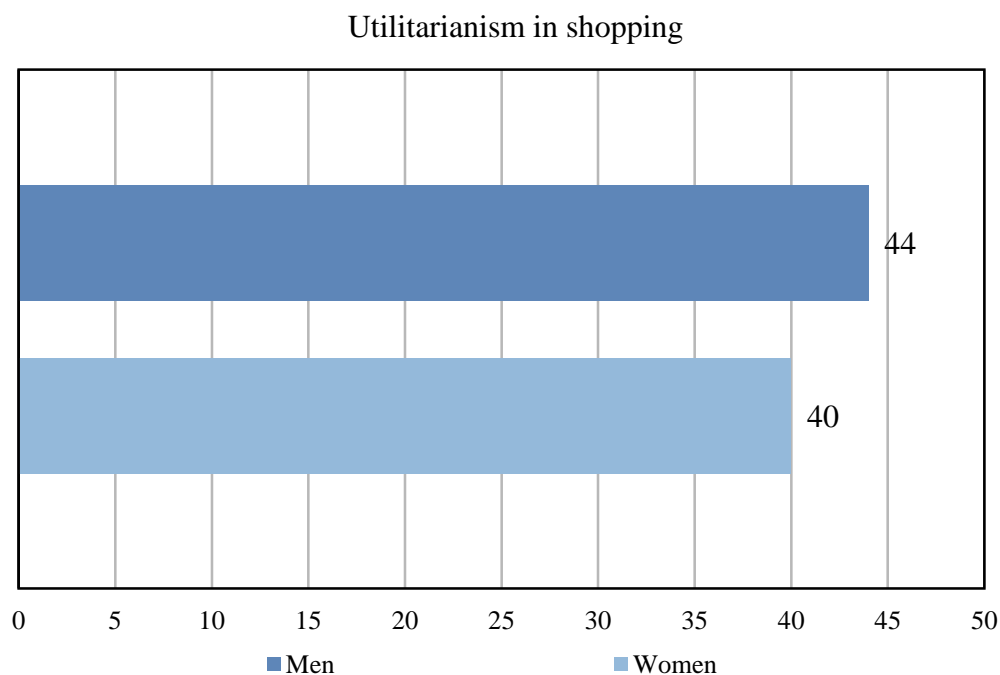
2. **Careful pre-hand research**: It was found that men tend to use specialist magazines to gather information much less than women (Wiedmann and Walsh, 2000), constantly reporting to be more risk-taking (Areni and Kiecker, 1993) and are inclined to believe Web advertising more easily (Wolin and Kargaonkar, 2003). The survey in Armenia tested whether men indeed show less proclivity towards pre-hand deliberate research before making a decision. The survey found that 57 percent of women would claim that they spent enough time researching the needed product, while only 40 percent of men did. Although this suggests that, indeed, women are more inclined to conduct a careful research, the percentage of men who research the product is quite high. This could be explained, again, by the finding that they spend less money per month for shopping. This means that there is less chance for failure, therefore, they need to be careful choosing needed products.
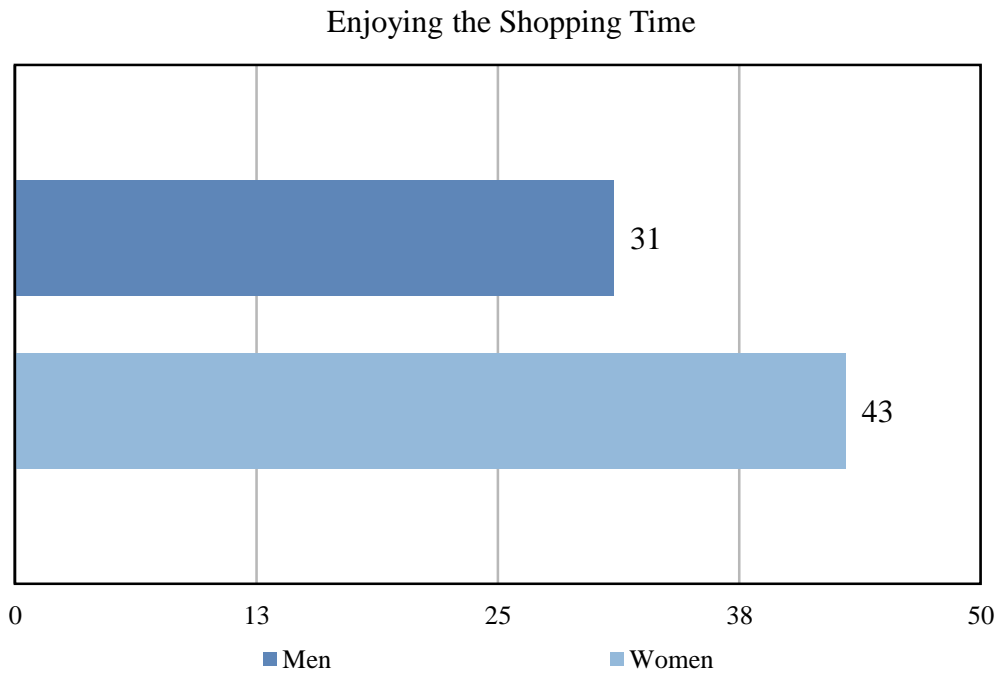
Research Beforehand

Legend
■ Men   ■ Women
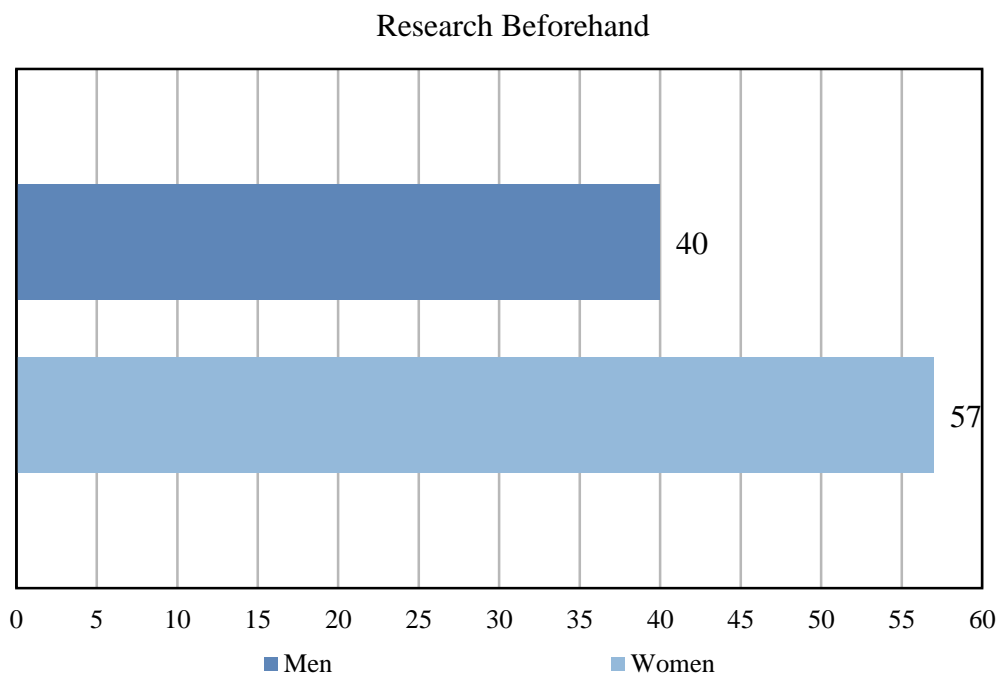
3. **Web advertisement's influence**: The study about wed advertising and its influence on making purchasing decisions (Wolin and Kargaonkar, 2003) claimed that men tend to be affected by Web advertisements more easily than women do. The survey in Armenia, however, showed seemingly surprising results. The percentage of both men and women claiming that Web ads can be effective tools influencing their decision-making is absolutely identical. For further clarification, men were asked why they tend to mistrust advertising. 90 % of male respondents claimed that

Armenian market of Web advertising is not trustworthy in general. This could be explained by less frequency of Web ads being displayed on TV channels or social media, or problems they face with translating original ads. These factors make ads related to shopping products less reliable.

Web advertisement influence

Men	36
Women	36

30   40

■ Men   ■ Women
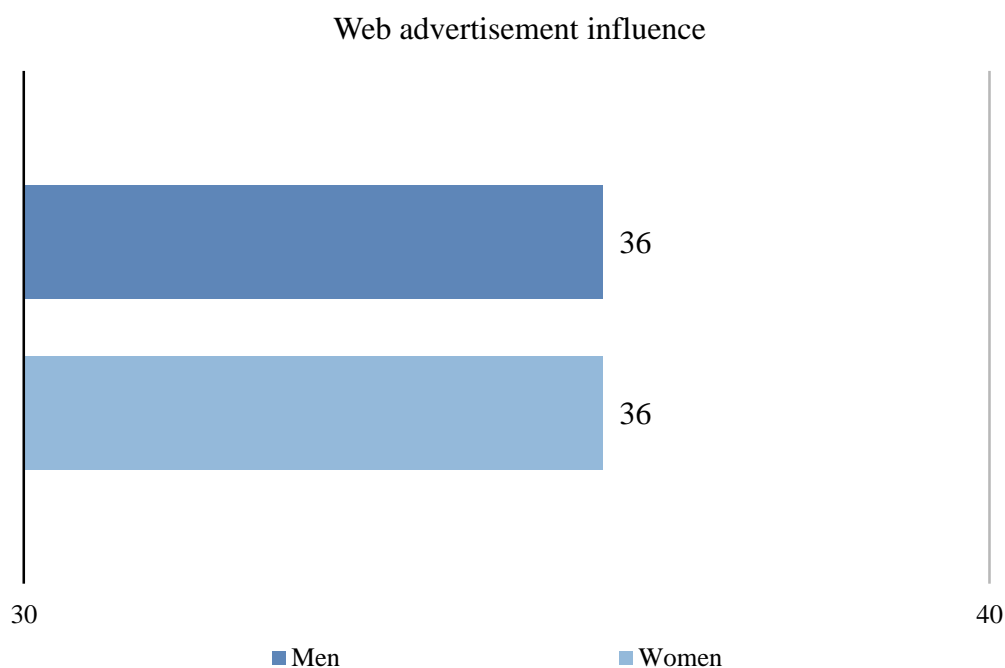
4. **Enjoying the shopping time**: The study about shopping mall behavior (Hu and Jasper, 2004) found that women, in general, tend to enjoy their shopping experience than men. This is due to the assumption that women are more hedonic in their shopping patterns. In fact, according to the study, 51 % of women enjoyed their shopping experience, while only 34 % of men did so (Hu and Jasper, 2004). The survey in Armenia found very similar results. According to the survey, 43 % of women generally enjoy their shopping time, only 31 % of men do.

Enjoying the Shopping Time

5. **Brand Loyalty**: It was suggested that confused by overchoice trait is mainly a female one (Mitchell and Walsh, 2004). This is because women tend to spend more time shopping and more time researching their needed product beforehand (Hu and Jasper, 2004). Respondents were asked if they are inclined to trust a certain brand for a specific category of a product and be loyal to that brand. Findings, however, were surprising. The percentage of men and women claiming that they are brand loyal when it comes to a category of a product is identical. This could be explained by an assumption that Armenian consumers value price and quality ratio much more than brand. This could be backed up again by the fact that they do not spend much money per month for shopping products. However, there is a lot of room for research here.

Brand Loyalty
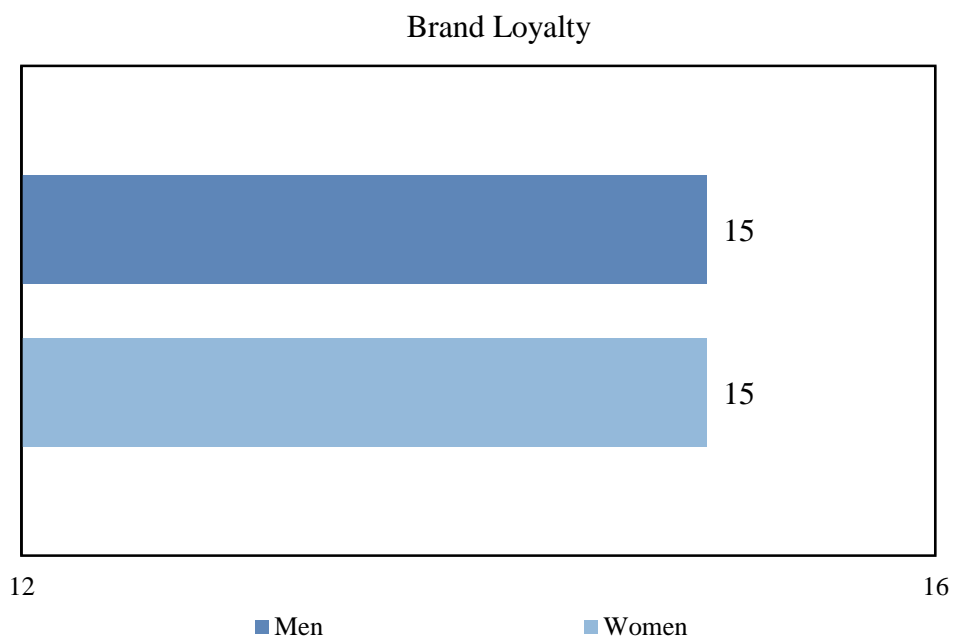
Other Findings

Two-sample analysis

We established that the findings for our survey for the 3 out of 5 statements matched those derived from literature research.

For our first trait, which is utilitarianism, p1 = 0.40 (the proportion of women in the sample who claimed to be utilitarian) and p2 = 0.44 (the proportion of men in the sample who claimed to be utilitarian),   so our hypothesis is:

 Ho: $\pi2 - \pi1 \leq 0$,

 H1: $\pi2 - \pi1 > 0$.

We consider 3 significance levels: 10%, 5% and 1%. (Sample size = 100 each)

Pooled estimate ($\underline{p}$) = (40 + 44) / (100 + 100) = 0.42, therefore Z = (0.44 − 0.40) $\sqrt{0.42}$ * 0.58 * 0.02 = 0.04 / 0.0698 = 0.57

1) For α = 1%, Z_α = 2.33, Z_{stat} = 0.57<2.33, therefore there is not significant evidence to claim that the proportion of utilitarian men is higher than the proportion of utilitarian women.

2) For α = 5%, Z_α = 1.65, Z_{stat} = 0.57 < 1.65, therefore there is not significant evidence to claim that the proportion of utilitarian men is higher than the proportion of utilitarian women.

3) For α = 10%, Z_α = 1.29, Z_{stat} = 0.57, 0.57<1.29, therefore there is not significant evidence to claim that the proportion of utilitarian men is higher than the proportion of utilitarian women.

We disregarded ''Web advertising's influence'' and ''Brand loyalty'' traits, because genders scored identical results on those (36% and 15% respectively), so there is no need to testify the significance. The same two-sample test method was implemented for the 2 other shopping traits. The results were as follows:

For ''Doing careful pre-hand research'' we considered p_2 to be women's proportion (0.57) and p_1 to be men's proportion (0.40), because here women's proportion is the larger one and we want to get an upper-tail test:

Pooled estimate = 0.485, Z_{stat} = 2.408

1) For α = 1%, Z_α = 2.33, Z_{stat} = 2.408 > 2.33, therefore there is significant evidence to claim that the proportion of women who do careful pre-hand research is higher than the proportion of men how do careful pre-hand research.

2) For α = 5%, Z_α = 1.65, Z_{stat} = 2.408 > 1.65, therefore there is significant evidence to claim that the proportion of women who do careful pre-hand research is higher than the proportion of men how do careful pre-hand research.

3) For α = 10%, Z_α = 1.29, Z_{stat} = 2.408 <1.29, therefore there is significant evidence to claim that the proportion of women who do careful pre-hand research is higher than the proportion of men how do careful pre-hand research.

Here we note that even for just 1% of significance level, we can claim that the evidence is significant enough.

Finally, for ''Enjoying the shopping time'' trait we considered p_2 = women's proportion (0.43) and p_1 = men's proportion (0.31):

Pooled estimate = 0.37, Z_{stat} = 1.75

1) For α = 1%, Z_α = 2.33, Z_{stat} = 1.75 < 2.33, therefore there is not significant evidence to claim that the proportion of women who typically enjoy their shopping time is higher than the proportion of men who typically enjoy their shopping time.

2) For α = 5%, Z_α = 1.65, Z_{stat} = 1.75 > 1.65, therefore there is significant evidence to claim that the proportion of women who typically enjoy their shopping time is higher than the proportion of men who typically enjoy their shopping time.

3) For α = 10%, Z_α = 1.29, Z_{stat} = 1.75 > 1.29, therefore there is significant evidence to claim that the proportion of women who typically enjoy their shopping time is higher than the proportion of men who typically enjoy their shopping time.

Here, in order to be able to claim that women typically enjoy their shopping time more than men do, we have to estimate our significance level to be 5% or higher.

In conclusion, out of 5 traits we can firmly claim that 2 of them, namely, ''Doing careful pre-hand research'' and ''Enjoying the shopping time'' can be declared true for the entire population.

We also developed a regression to find out the relationship between average money monthly spent on shopping and other variables. We found it interesting to study how other traits affect the money spent on shopping.

To be able to do it, we made several adjustments. We needed to average the amounts they respondents claimed to spend on shopping monthly, so we took the means of all the ranges to represent the declared amount (f.e. for 0-20000 rage we had 10000 as the average number). We also had 0 for men and 1 for women since this is a binary variable.

It turned out there was an issue of heteroscedasticity, so we used robust standard error test to get rid of it. We therefore had two separate tables in which you can see our findings.

The experiment showed that money spending is positively affected by changes in age variable and brand loyalty variable and not affected by other variables – pre-hand research, utilitarianism, enjoying the shopping time, Web ad influence and, most importantly, gender. It was previously suggested (Hu and Jasper, 2004) that both genders spend equal time and money on shopping, we can confirm it now for Armenia.

It is not surprising that age and brand loyalty affect the expenditure positively. We tend to normally think that with age people tend to become richer, and hence can afford bigger budget on shopping. Similarly, when being a brand loyal customer, people tend to follow updates and new offers and are tempted to buy new products from favorite brand.

```
Expenditure
--------------------------------------
                              .
                        Coef./Se.
--------------------------------------
Gender                  3268.3350
                        (2353.29)
Age                      706.6147***
                         (240.25)
Util                     976.5535
                         (935.87)
Research               -1086.0027
                         (885.41)
WebAd                    258.9465
                         (897.91)
Enjoy                    926.4908
                        (1138.56)
BrandLoyal              2266.3200*
                        (1188.69)
Constant               -2923.9514
                        (6610.55)
--------------------------------------
N                        193.0000
--------------------------------------
Standard errors are in the parenthesis: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
```

```
Expenditure
===================================
                              .
                        Coef./Se.
-----------------------------------
Age                      668.1958***
                         (249.17)
BrandLoyal              2333.0013**
                        (1089.89)
Constant                2425.9904
                        (5173.73)
-----------------------------------
N                        197.0000
===================================
Standard errors are in the parenthesis: * p<0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01
```

Conclusion & Implications

We saw that some purchasing patterns were in fact repetitive in different types of cultures. Some of the traits showed very similar results. This allows us to conclude that at least some of the mentioned offline shopping traits are inherently gender based and not socially constructed. To put in other words, psychological aspects of some shopping traits are interpretations of biological differences between men and women are not affected by social forces of the society.

Findings can be used by shop owners in implementing marketing practices. Since today clothes and shoes market is effectively divided in gender based sectors, knowing these traits can be a useful tool in targeting preferred segment.

Shops that target mostly women, for instance, can now put more emphasis on product information in websites and be more careful and specific about details, since now they know women's proclivity towards deliberate pre-hand research.

Similarly, shop that target mostly men could use the finding about enjoying the shopping time to persuade men to stay longer and get entertained while shopping. Various marketing efforts could possibly be implemented to make men enjoy their time and increase their shopping motivation. While this should be done for women too, they don't need to put much effort into that, because women naturally enjoy their shopping time.

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