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## Cover Page Footnote

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# The Investigation of Product Involvement in Shopping Behaviors among Male College Students

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**Abstract** - We investigated the clothing shopping behaviors of male college students. This study is significant because there is limited published research on the shopping behavior of male college students in the area of two correlative product involvement and store type and yet, there is a large increase in market share of male apparel products. Male college students ( $n=285$ ) were surveyed via questionnaire. MANOVA and ANOVA were used to analyze the data. This research revealed that male college students are highly concerned about their physical appearance and clothing. The findings of this study demonstrate that male college students have unique shopping behaviors determined by the levels of the product involvement. The high level of the product involvement strongly influences their interests in brand commitment, shopping orientations, information sources, product attributes, and retail formats such as department stores, specialty stores, discount stores, catalog or mailing order, and internet.

**Keywords** - Shopping Behaviors, Male College Students, Clothing, Product Involvement, Retail Format

**Relevance to Marketing Educators, Researchers and/or Practitioners** -

This research paper discusses apparel shopping behaviors of the male college students. The information is useful for marketing educators, retailers, researchers, and practitioners because it will assist them in developing

accurate future market strategies and to improve current ones to meet the needs of the male college students segment.

## Introduction

Several studies have contradicted popularly held stereotypes about male shopping behaviors. According to an article (Male Marketplace, 2013) quoted “Men don’t hate shopping,” it is revealed that men are shopping for their casual clothing more than ever before. This finding was confirmed by recent studies (Harmon and Hill, 2003; Janowska, 2008; Kaplan, 2012; Male Marketplace, 2013; Ogden-Barne, 2011). Men tend to buy many different kinds of items for their own needs. They evaluate and make choices among a wide range of products. Many men become the primary purchaser in households with the number going up from 14 % in 1990s to 32% in 2010 (Ogden-Barne, 2011). Men of today are not typically the provider and protector of their wives and children any more. Modern lifestyle patterns have led to changes in the men’s roles (Harmon and Hill, 2003; Janowska, 2008; Ogden-Barne, 2011). Shopping is not “women’s work” anymore and continues to increase with many men, indicating their love to “kill time” at retail stores looking at new products. Many men consider shopping as entertainment (Albright, 2010; Arnaudovska et al., 2010; Janowska, 2008; Kaplan, 2012; Ogden-Barne, 2011). Today, men are much more concerned about their appearance and put more effort in improving their physical appearance with current fashion and clothing. The previous research has also shown that men can easily pick up famous fashion trend and clothing information from the internet and men’s high fashion publications (Henson and Deleon, 2012).

Many apparel companies and researchers target consumers between the ages of 18 and 24 years because these young consumers are more influenced by high fashion than other age groups (Ogden-Barne, 2011). Although young consumers have a limited budget, they have greater purchasing power. The purchasing power of college students, whose number is placed at 71 million people, has increased to \$105 billion (Valentine and Powers, 2013). Recent retail studies suggest that college consumers represent an important current market and potential future market (Valentine and Powers, 2013). Many studies reveal that young consumers have unique shopping behaviors and positive attitude toward shopping at retail and online stores (Arnaudovska et al., 2010 ; Valentine and Powers, 2013). Despite the increasing importance of men’s apparel markets, there is limited research focusing on college men’s clothing shopping behaviors.

Since 1947, the concept of product involvement has received increasing attention in the areas of consumer behaviors (Mittal and Lee, 1989; Seo et al., 2001; Warrington and Shim, 2000; Zaichkowsky, 1986). Many researchers

have investigated the concept of involvement in order to understand its nature. However, they did not find a clear definition of the concept of involvement. Over the years, the concept of involvement has been described in many ways because it represents the key element in revealing an individual's identity in the marketing and retailing fields (Eastman and Liu, 2012; Zaichkowsky, 1986). According to previous research, high involvement consumers are more motivated to look up to information from a variety of sources before the shopping. Moreover, consumers who have high involvement level tend to shop more frequently and spend more time to searching for product price and fashion information than low-involvement consumers (Shim and Kotsiopoulos, 1992; Seo et al., 2001; Warrington and Shim, 2000).

The concept of product involvement has been theoretically joined with brand commitment (Mittal and Lee, 1989; Traylor, 1981; Warrington and Shim, 2000). When consumers are shopping for their clothing or products, they prefer to buy the national or well-known brand name products familiar with them (Carpenter and Brodahl, 2011; Ogden-Barne, 2011). Many research studies show that there are significant relationships between brand commitment and shopping habits. Empirical evidence of the relationship between product involvement and brand commitment indicates that a high-degree of brand commitment has generally been related to a high level of involvement (Traylor, 1981; Zaichkowsky, 1986). However, some researchers report that the relationship between product involvement and brand commitment is more complicated (Mittal and Lee 1989; Traylor, 1981; Warrington and Shim, 2000). The concepts of product involvement and brand commitment are the appealing topics in this study. This research developed the previous work (Seo et al., 2001) with the brand commitment, which plays the other crucial role in consumer shopping behaviors. This study is investing to find the great influences on shopping orientation, information sources, product attributes, and types of stores.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of product involvement on the consumer shopping behaviors of male college students in regard to their brand commitment, product orientations, information sources, store attitudes, and patronage behaviors. The objective of this research is to confirm the relationship between product involvement and brand commitment in male college market. This study specifically focuses on the clothing for men and study explores how retail store preferences, product orientations, and information sources affect shopping behaviors toward clothing. Results can be used to assist apparel retailers and producers improve their marketing strategies and serve male consumers more

effectively. Moreover, this research helps to learn how college men shop in retail area.

## Literature Review

### Product Involvement

A general acceptable definition of the involvement was suggested by Rothschild (1984): “Involvement is a state of motivation, arousal or interest, evoked by particular stimulus or situation displaying drive properties” (p, 217). The concept of involvement has been widely investigated since the term was introduced initially by Krugman (1965). The involvement influences information searching, consumer behavior, and purchase decision (Traylor, 1981; Beatty and Kahle, 1988; Mittal and Lee, 1989; Rothschild, 1984). This involvement includes certain product classes, such as blue jeans, automobile, foods, and more (Traylor, 1981; Warrington and Shim, 2000).

Product involvement has been measured in many different ways. The Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) of Zaichkowsky is broadly used to define the concept of clothing and the other products involvement because it has been found to be a reliable and valid measure of the clothing and other product involvement construct (Fairhurst et al., 1989; Shim et al., 1991). Clothing involvement is the amount of time and effort a consumer spends and interacts in the selection of clothing. Involvement with apparel products has been addressed by several researchers (Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984; Traylor and Joseph, 1984; Laurent and Kapferer, 1985; Zaichkowsky, 1986; Beatty, et al., 1988; Bei and Widdows, 1999; Warrington and Shim, 2000). Involvement has been helpful in explaining consumer behavior and segmenting markets. There is a close correlation between the level of involvement and the purchasing of products. The concept of product involvement is a key element in helping to identify an individual shopping habit (Tigert et al., 1976; Fairhurst et al., 1989). Product involvement relates to consumer’s inherent needs, interest, and values (Zaichkowsky, 1986).

### Brand Commitment

Brand loyalty is also an ongoing topic of research in the marketing areas. Many researchers have adopted a conceptualization of brand loyalty that includes both positive attitudes and repeat purchase behavior (Beatty and Kahle, 1988; Traylor, 1981; Zaichkowsky, 1986). Because consumers have a limited time for shopping and collecting information on products, it is hard to compare the products before and after purchased or used. When consumers have a lack of knowledge and skill to estimate the products objectively, they first choose the well-known brand products because they can trust the brand name (Monroe, 1973; Carpenter and Brodahl, 2011). The concept of brand

loyalty is similar to the concept of brand commitment, and it is hard to distinguish between brand loyalty and brand commitment through the previous researchers (Lastovicka and Gardner, 1977; Traylor, 1981; Beatty et al., 1988; Warrington and Shim, 2000).

According to the research of Traylor (1981), consumers have strong and positive brand commitment for low-involvement products, such as soft drinks, vitamin tablets, and instant coffee because they frequently buy inexpensive low involvement products. There was a positive correlation between product involvement and brand commitment (Zaichkowsky, 1986; Warrington and Shim, 2000). The concepts of product involvement with brand-commitment are managerially considerate in market segmentation (Warrington and Shim, 2000). Consumers who have a high aspect of brand loyalty repeat purchase a single brand to reduce the purchasing risk, and they are not influenced by the competitor's advertising, promotions, and product reductions (Jin and Koh, 1999). With high-involvement products, the brand is the primary source for the purchasing decision (Traylor, 1981). Brand loyalty and brand commitment offer an important role in consumer purchasing behavior in marketing (Jin and Koh, 1999).

### **Shopping Orientations**

Shopping orientations is usually defined as related to general tendency toward the acts of shopping (Brown et al., 2003). Most consumers shop for both utilitarian and hedonic reasons (Arnaudovska et al., 2010; Ogden-Barne, 2011). It expresses consumer's level of knowledge when they choose products. Shopping is accompanied by a basic perception of risk for consumers as to a product's quality. Shopping is influenced by social and personal motivation (Shim and Kotsiopoulos, 1992; Carpenter and Brosdahl, 2011). Customers make purchases for many different reasons in addition to their needs for products or services. Shopping is a multifaceted experience. Hence, shopping involves many conceptions, and it is an important function to the retailers. The constructs referred to as shopping orientations include fashion conscious, individual orientation, status orientation, styles opinion, price conscious, and shopping habits (Tauber, 1972; Shim and Kotsiopoulos, 1992; Warrington and Shim, 2000; Carpenter and Brosdahl, 2011).

The literatures specific to shopping orientation include studies that examine the efforts of product involvement. Warrington and Shim (2000) and Seo et al., (2001) have studied on the relation between shopping orientation and product involvement. The studies mentioned that high product involvement consumers had a unique shopping style at the constructs in high price, brand, and fashion conscious, and style opinion leadership.

## **Patronage Behaviors**

Consumers' shopping orientations are related to their selection of shopping centers (Carpenter and Brosdahl, 2011). For example, consumers with different shopping orientations such as recreational or economic profile display their unique demands in their shopping center selection (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1992). Consumers with recreational profiles are more likely to consider the quality of products and hence they prefer to go to specialty stores and shopping malls, which furnish varieties of products and large numbers of related services. On the other hand, consumers with economic profiles prefer discount shopping centers. Lumpkin and McConkey (1984) also mentioned that economic shoppers are more interested in the product price than recreational ones.

Based on literature review about shopping orientations, the product involvement can be considered with the types of the retail format in order to discover the college male students shopping behaviors. The previous study of Seo et al., (2001) briefly reported on this issue such that, the place of the special stores is of no interest to low product involvement consumers, which demands further detailed research.

## **Information Source**

Research has revealed that consumers contact too many information before and after they make a purchasing decision (Ogden-Barne, 2011; Valentine and Powers. 2013; Warrington and Shim, 2000). Information sources, such as fashion publications (magazine/newspaper), commercial broadcasts (television/radio), peer group influences, and store displays, are generally used to find out information on clothing and other merchandise. A great number of old consumers prefer to use newspaper advertising to obtain clothing information. Broadcasting (television/radio) advertising does not influence older consumers in finding shopping information. Older consumers predominantly acquire fashion information from personal sources, such as friends, spouses, and salespersons. However, fashion print publications, broadcast advertising, and personal resources are influential information sources for the young age group. Young consumers usually use all of the information sources (Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1992). Mass media including internet is the dominant information sources for the young age group (Arnaudovska et al., 2010; Valentine and Powers. 2013). However, college consumers prefer to receive the product information from retailers and friends when they purchase for clothing and products (Arnaudovska et al., 2010; Ogden-Barne, 2011).

## **Product Attributes**



Previous researchers found the product attributes, such as brand image, and clothing style, engaged in extensive decision making. High product involved consumers have a great motivation to search and collect available information more fully and diligently than low product involved consumers (Meywe-Levy and Peracchio, 1996). Because consumers with high product involvement have more product attributes than the other consumers, they may have a greater ability to evaluate the quality, price, and detail information of products (Chandrashekar and Grewal, 2003). The image, as a product attribute, is highly correlated to high involved product consumers when they purchased a product (Warrington and Shim, 2000).

## Method

### Research Hypotheses

Despite of conducting lots of research on product involvement of college students for shopping behaviors, there is lack of study dependent on gender, which could display each unique shopping behavior. To understand male college students' choice of retail format, this research includes the study on their product involvement related to brand commitment, store type, information source, and product attribute. This study stated the following hypotheses:

- H1(a): Product involvement of male college students is highly correlated with brand commitment.
- H1(b): If this is the case, the level of product involvement of male college students' is significantly related to the brand commitment.
- H2: The level of male product involvement of male college students is significantly related to the shopping orientation.
- H3: The level of product involvement of male college students is significantly related to the patronage behaviors of types of stores.
- H4: The level of product involvement of male college students is significantly related to the information sources.
- H5: The level of product involvement of male college students is significantly related to the product attributes.

### Sampling and Data Collection

A convenience sample of students, from several southeastern universities, was used. Students from selected classrooms were asked to complete a questionnaire during a regular class session. The questionnaire took 15 to

20 minutes to complete. The sample consisted of 285 male college students for data analysis.

The respondents were freshmen 8.1%, sophomores 25.6 %, juniors 28.8%, seniors 30.5%, and graduate students 7.0%. The majority of respondents was ages 19 to 23 (76.8%) with ages 24 to 34 (16.1%). Overall, 95.1% of the respondents were full-time students, and 90.5% were single.

### **Questionnaire Design**

The questionnaire includes 8 items for measuring product involvement, 4 items for measuring brand commitment, 27 items for shopping orientation, 13 items for product attributes, 5 items for patronage behaviors, 10 items for information sources, and 10 questions for demographics. Some statements were developed by researchers.

**Product Involvement and Brand Commitment:** Zaichkowsky's Personal Involvement Index (PII) (1985) was used to measure product involvement for male college students. Respondents were asked to complete eight items on a 7-point semantic differential scale. A factor analysis of Principal-component with varimax rotation extracted only one factor. Reliability (Cronbach alpha) of product involvement of male college students in this sample was 0.901 ( $F=18.58$ ,  $p<.001$ ), indicating that 8 items were highly correlated.

In order to test hypotheses, the method of Warrington and Shim's research (2000) was adopted. Respondents were classified into two groups (high and low involvement) with the use of the mean scores ( $M = 4.65$ ) and standard deviations, ( $SD = 1.21$ ). The mean score plus or minus the standard deviation ( $M \pm \frac{1}{2}SD$ ) was used to create the groups. The classification results are as follows: high product involvement (HP,  $n= 93$ , 32.6%), medium product involvement (MP,  $n=113$ , 39.6 %), and low product involvement (LP,  $n=79$ , 27.7%). To see the significant difference between the groups, medium involvement group ( $n=113$ ) was eliminated.

Four statements were used to measure brand commitment. The respondents were asked to indicate their agreement of their level of agreement on a 7-point Likert-type scale. The scale ranged from 1 "strongly disagree" to 7 "strongly agree." A covariance matrix was used for analyzing the brand commitment. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for brand commitment was 0.769 ( $F=18.47$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Table 1 showed the result of the principle component factor analysis and reliability test of brand commitment.

**Table 1:** Factor Analysis and Reliability Test of Brand Commitment

<i>Factor Name</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>	<i>Eigenvalues</i>	<i>Percentage of Variance</i>	<i>Alpha Coefficient</i>
Brand Confidence	I buy only the brand of clothing that I like the most.	0.805	2.369	59.22	0.769
	I never buy another brand of clothing when my favorite brand is available.	0.798			
	Name-brand clothing is worth its high price.	0.747			
	If it is possible, I would rather buy clothing that shows a famous brand name.	0.726			

**Shopping Orientation:** The majority of the shopping orientation items were adopted from previous studies regarding the benefits sought from clothing products (Shim and Kotsiopoulos, 1992; Warrington and Shim, 2000). The scale ranged from a rating of 7 meaning “Strongly Agree,” to 1 meaning “Strongly Disagree.” A principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted on the 27 shopping orientation statements. Items loading less than 0.50 on a factor were excluded. The analysis extracted the following five factors: (1) fashion behavior, (2) fashion consciousness, (3) individuality, (4) comfort, (5) price consciousness, and (5) shopping behavior. To test the reliability of the scale, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient ranged from 0.591 to 0.832. The factor analysis results were shown in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Principal Component Factor Analysis and Reliability of Consumers' Shopping Orientations

<i>Factor Name</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>	<i>Eigen-values</i>	<i>Percentage of Variance</i>	<i>Alpha Coefficient</i>
Factor 1 Fashion Behavior	It is important to me that my clothes be of the latest style.	0.705	5.226	22.723	0.832
	Shopping malls are the best places to shop.	0.703			
	I select a brand name carefully because it reflects my image.	0.697			
	I believe that expensive clothing is worth the high price.	0.636			
	I usually have one or more outfits of the very latest style.	0.541			
Factor 2 Fashion Consciousness	I don't wear out-of-style clothing.	0.686	3.512	15.271	0.721
	I try to be alert to current fashion.	0.667			
	When I must choose between the two, I usually dress for fashion, not comfort.	0.666			
	I try to give others the impression that I dress well.	0.615			
Factor 3 Individuality	I like to wear clothing that isn't popular with other people.	0.824	1.790	7.782	0.760
	I like to wear a different style of clothing than others wear.	0.800			
	I am most concerned with the individuality of clothing.	0.722			
	I try not to wear clothing that is popular with other people.	0.613			
Factor 4 Comfort	Comfort and good fit are most important.	0.833	1.446	6.285	0.752
	I am most concerned with clothing that is well-made.	0.774 0.743			
	Comfort is more important than style.				
Factor 5 Price Consciousness	I do not buy clothing unless it is on sale.	0.807 0.775	1.183	5.145	0.678
	Price is the most important factor.				
	I buy several inexpensive clothing items rather than one or two expensive items.	0.599			
Factor 6 Shopping Behavior	I like to try new and different places to shop.	0.734	1.040	4.523	0.591
	I am willing to try new ideas about clothing fashion.	0.639			
	I think I am a good shopper.	0.531			

**Information Sources:** Ten information source items were selected from Lumpkin’s (1985) and Warrington and Shim (2000). The respondents were asked to what extent they were influenced by each information source when they purchased clothing using a seven-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1= “not at all” to 7 = “very much.” A factor analysis identified two factors responsible for 60.37% of variance. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was 0.838 for “Media Sources” and 0.813 for “Personal Sources.” Descriptions of the two factors were presented in Table 3.

**Product Attributes:** Thirteen product attribute items were adopted from previous studies (Lumpkin, 1985; Shim and Kotsiopulos, 1992; Warrington and Shim, 2000). The importance of product attributes was measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 being “Of no Importance,” to 7 being “Extremely Important.” In this study, two items were eliminated because a factor loading was less than 0.50.

Two factors labeled as “Image Attributes” and “Style Attributes” were identified through factor analysis. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficients of these factors were 0.866 and 0.793. The total variance accounted for by the two factors was 63.67%. Table 4 presented the results of principal component analysis for product attributes.

**Table 3:** Principal Component Factor Analysis and Reliability of Information Source

Factor Name	Items	Factor Loading	Eigen-values	Percentage of variance	Alpha Coefficient
Factor 1 Media Sources	Direct mail	0.810	4.581	45.813	0.838
	Newspaper ads	0.807			
	Fashion magazines	0.736			
	TV commercials	0.718			
	Internet	0.685			
Factor 2 Personal Sources	Friends	0.809	1.455	14.555	0.813
	Close family members.	0.805			
	Spouse or significant other	0.678			
	Store displays	0.676			
	Other people who wear brand name clothing	0.660			

**Table 4:** Principal Component Factor Analysis and Reliability of Product Attributes

Factor Name	Items	Factor Loading	Eigen-value	Percentage of variance	Alpha Coefficient
Factor 1 Image Attributes	Well-publicized image	0.844	4.787	43.520	0.866
	Well-known brand	0.825			
	Prestige	0.794			
	Brand symbol affixed to the outside of the clothing	0.733			
	Fashionability	0.668			
	Good reputation	0.641			
Factor 2 Style Attributes	Good fit	0.890	2.217	20.153	0.793
	High quality construction	0.824			
	Good match to my image and figure	0.654			
	Reasonable price	0.642			
	Nice color and stylish design	0.532			

**Demographics:** The questionnaire included age, marital status, major, school year, ethnicity, hometown state, and employment status.

## Results: Testing Hypotheses

### Testing Hypothesis 1

The mean product involvement score of male college students was 4.65 and the mean of brand commitment was 3.94. The Pearson correlation analysis showed that the correlation ( $r=0.238$ ) between the two constructs, product involvement and brand commitment, among male college students was statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). This study could not neglect the results because the relationship was over 0.20 (Cha, 1977; Warrington and Shim, 2000). The R-square was 0.057 ( $R^2=.0566$ ), which means there was a positive relationship between two constructs. Therefore, H1 (a) was accepted.

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was directly executed to determine how the level of product involvement differs from brand commitment (see Table 5). One-way ANOVA indicated that male college students is highly related to the brand commitment ( $F=7.22$ ,  $p < .005$ ). The high product involvement group had higher mean scores ( $M = 4.38$ ) of brand commitment. Hence, H 1(b) was accepted.

**Table 5:** The Result of One-Way ANOVA between Product Involvement (PI) and Brand Commitment

	Group Means		
	High PI <i>n</i> =79	Low PI <i>n</i> =93	Univariate <i>F</i>
<b>Brand Commitment</b>	<b>4.38</b>	<b>3.64</b>	<b>7.22**</b>

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.005 level (2-tailed).

## Testing Hypothesis 2

To further validate the classification results, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted on mean scores of product involvement. Univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was adopted to look at the means to determine how the level of product involvement differs from factors.

A summary of the statistical analysis of shopping orientations is shown in Table 6. According to Wilkes Lambda for the MANOVA, the shopping orientation factors differ by level of product involvement ( $F = 3.27, p < .001$ ). The individual ANOVA indicated that male college students is highly correlated with the factor Fashion Behavior ( $F=9.87, p < .001$ ), Fashion Consciousness ( $F=9.63, p < .001$ ), and Shopping Behaviors ( $F=10.83, p < .001$ ). The high product involvement group had higher mean scores on Fashion Behavior ( $M = 4.41$ ), Fashion Consciousness ( $M = 4.57$ ), and Shopping Behavior ( $M = 5.14$ ). Hence, H2 was accepted.

**Table 6:** MANOVA and ANOVA Factors of Shopping Orientations, Information Sources, and Product Attributes

	Group Means		Univariate	Multivariate
	High PI <i>n</i> =79	Low PI <i>n</i> =93	<i>F</i>	<i>F</i>
<b>Shopping Orientation</b>				2.62***
Fashion Behavior	4.41	3.61	9.87**	
Fashion Consciousness	4.57	3.87	*	
Individuality	4.12	3.88	9.63**	
Comfort	5.48	5.21	*	
Price Consciousness	4.26	4.22	1.72	
Shopping Behavior	5.14	4.41	2.08	
			1.01	
			10.83***	
<b>Information Sources</b>				1.55**
Media Sources	2.88	2.40	4.20*	
Personal Sources	4.12	3.38	6.73**	
<b>Product Attributes</b>				9.01***
Image Attributes	4.48	3.53		
Style Attributes	5.40	4.79	15.31***	
			7.19**	

\*\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.005 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### Testing Hypothesis 3

A statistical analysis of correlation of store types is presented in Table 7. MANOVA results indicated that the types of stores significantly differed by the level of product involvement ( $F = 2.83, p < .005$ ). ANOVA showed that the low and high involvement groups were significantly different on Specialty Store ( $F = 8.73, p < .001$ ), Department Store ( $F = 3.23, p < .05$ ), and Catalog or Mail Ordering ( $F = 3.66, p < .05$ ). Those in the high involvement group had a significantly higher mean score on Specialty Store ( $M = 4.71$ ), Department Store ( $M = 4.46$ ) and Catalog and Mail Ordering ( $M = 3.20$ ). Therefore, based on statistical results H3 was supported.

### Testing Hypothesis 4

The summary of MANOVA and ANOVA results of Information Sources were reported in Table 6. An overall difference existed at the multivariate level among the two groups ( $F = 4.28, p < .005$ ) in terms of the influence of Information Sources. ANOVA indicated that the two groups were highly different for Media Sources ( $F = 4.20, p < .05$ ) and Personal Sources ( $F = 6.73,$



$p < .005$ ). Respondents with high product involvement had the higher mean scores on both factors, Personal Sources ( $M = 4.12$ ) and Media Sources ( $M = 2.88$ ). Therefore, on the basis of these findings, H4 was supported.

**Table 7:** MANOVA and ANOVA Results of Patronage Behaviors of Types of Stores

	Group Means		Univariate <i>F</i>	Multivariate <i>F</i>
	High PI <i>n</i> =79	Low PI <i>n</i> =93		
<b>Stores</b>				2.83**
Department Stores	<b>4.46</b>	<b>3.86</b>		3.23*
Specialty Stores	<b>4.71</b>	<b>3.70</b>		8.73**
Discount Stores	3.64	3.74	*	
Catalog or Mail Ordering	<b>3.20</b>	<b>2.56</b>		1.21
Internet	2.68	2.31		3.66*
				1.76

\*\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.005 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## Testing Hypothesis 5

An overall difference at the multivariate level ( $F = 9.01$ ,  $p < .001$ ) showed that there was significant difference between product attributes and level of product involvement. ANOVA indicated that two groups were significantly different on the two attribute factors, Image Attributes ( $F = 15.31$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and Style Attributes ( $F = 7.19$ ,  $p < .005$ ). The high product involvement group had the higher mean scores on both factors, Image Attributes ( $M = 4.48$ ) and Style Attributes ( $M = 5.40$ ). Therefore, H5 was accepted. The statistical results of product attributes were presented in Table 6.

## Discussion

This research shows that most of male college students are highly concerned about their physical appearance and clothing as the second skin in human body. The average product involvement score is 4.65 above the middle point between 1 and 7, indicating strong apparel concern of male college students. This result is consistent with the previous works which reported that clothing was positively correlated with the high involvement product (Traylor and Joseph, 1984; Zaichkowsky, 1986; Warrington and Shim, 2000; Seo et al., 2001). As shown in Table 5, 6 and 7, male college students have unique shopping behaviors determined by the levels (high and low) of product involvement. The high level of product involvement intensively influences

their brand commitment, shopping orientations, choice of types of stores, information sources, and product attitudes.

Brand commitment, as well as Product involvement, is another important construct in marketing and retailing areas because these two constructs are helpful in developing marketing strategies and in maintaining market share. This research proves that the two constructs are positively related in male college students, although the correlation ( $r = .238$ ) between product involvement and brand commitment is weak. Because most male college students have limited budget (Brosdahl and Carpenter, 2012), they cannot frequently buy the well-known or national brand name of clothing. Hence, there is a weak relationship between product involvement and brand commitment. However, as shown in Table 5, male college students with the high level of product involvement are more interested in brand commitment than those with the low level of product involvement because they believe that higher price products have better quality. The previous research reports that most male consumers prefer to purchase a national or well-know brands of clothing (Ogden-Barne, 2011). This research suggests that the two constructs, product involvement and brand commitment, cannot be conceptually different. It is the different result from the previous work of Warrington and Shim (2000) under the study of the specific male group. The brand commitment is not a single aspect in a product involvement construct.

According to the shopping orientation results (Table 6), consumers with high product involvement are fashion innovators because they are more likely to wear or buy the latest fashionable clothing and alert to current fashion than those with low product involvement. Nevertheless, some factors in shopping orientation, such as individuality, comfort, and price consciousness, do not significantly affect college students' purchase behaviors (Table 6). This result indicates that most male college consumers want comfortable apparel and valuable clothing for their individuality within inexpensive cost.

Table 7 shows that male students with high product involvement are more likely to buy their clothing at the specialty and department stores than those with low involvement during the shopping for clothes. This finding is consistent with Shim and Korsipulos's study (1991) that consumers with high product involvement have more brand loyalty to special stores than those with low product involvement. The result also agrees with the finding of Carpenter and Brosdahl (2011) that brand loyal consumers are toward to shop at the department stores. Moreover, Table 7 shows that male college consumers with high product involvement prefer to shop through a catalog or mail ordering than those with low product involvement. The reason is that they do not have enough time to shop for their clothing due to heavy duties for school works (On Campus Research, 2012). Hence, they likely choose a convenient shopping method such as a catalog or mail ordering. Male college

students with high product involvement, who frequently shop through a catalog or mail ordering, are likely to have brand commitment and select a well-known brand name during the shopping for clothing.

However, shoppers with the high product involvement have less interest in discount stores. On the other hand, male shoppers with low product involvement are more likely to visit discount stores for clothing than those with high product involvement (Table 7). College students with low product involvement, who prefer discount stores, might sacrifice product quality and brand commitment in exchange for lower prices (Carpenter and Brodahl, 2011). The reasonable price in these discount stores is the most influential factor to college students with low product involvement. Another unexpected interesting result is that internet is not an attractive shopping place for male students as shown in Table 7 even though most college students are heavy users of internet (Valentine and Powers, 2013). This suggests that male shoppers still desire to touch and wear the clothing and see their looks before purchase. Hence, internet retailers need to improve interactive aspects of their websites to overcome this weakness in order to capture young consumers.

Male college students with high product involvement are actively using the information source when they purchase their clothing (Warrington and Shim, 2000). However, the media sources shown in Table 6 are less influential on male college consumers compared to personal sources. This result indicates that male consumers more easily trust their friends and close family members. They prefer to communicate through word-of-mouth with friends, close family members, and sales person of the store for their clothing.

Finally, the findings of this study indicate that male college consumers are influenced by product attributes during the shopping for clothing (Table 6). Because clothing is considered as a tool to show their unique personality, they intensively pay attention to product attributes - image and style attributes. Consumers with high product involvement are especially more likely to attend to product attributes (image and style attributes) than those with low product involvement.

## Conclusion and Retail Marketing Implication

This study demonstrates that male college consumers enjoy shopping with their closer friends and family members at department, special stores and catalog and mailing order. Personal opinions and media information greatly influence the male college consumers while male shoppers are shopping their clothing. They also like to shop at the specialty stores, such as GAP, Old Navy, Abercrombie, American Eagle Outfitters, and more. During shopping, most of male students consider the brand image and name as being very

important in their choice of clothing. There is a positive relationship between product involvement and brand commitment. Brand commitment is the important shopping factors to high involvement male students. The online and catalog stores are not a popular place for college students because most shoppers want to touch, feel, and try on their clothing. The other important factor is that there is not a consistent clothing size system in online and catalog stores. Even though online and catalog stores have their own standard clothing size chart, there are errors in charts which in most cases do not represent the real size for young shoppers. Hence, retailers need to develop a consistent standard clothing size chart for consumers.

## Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The limitation of this study is that it is only focused on male college students and one product, clothing. The convenience sample from several southeast universities suggests that the results of this study may not reflect broad geographic differences among male college students. It is possible that the results of this study would be different if variables such as generational group, gender (female), geographic location, and product were different. In addition, in-person interview instead of the questionnaire would have provided an opportunity to get more in-depth understanding of male shopping behaviors. Future research could explore other consumer characteristics such as income, house size, and situational variables with product involvement.

This research provides the specific knowledge of male college students' shopping behaviors. Based on this study, retailers can gain new knowledge on shopping behavior of male college students and can therefore develop future retail and online marketing strategies.

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