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INDUSTRY-BASED COMPETENCIES FOR ENTRY-LEVEL RETAIL  
MANAGEMENT POSITIONS: A NATIONAL DELPHI STUDY

by

KERRI M. KEECH, B.B.A., M.B.A.

A DISSERTATION

IN

CLOTHING, TEXTILES, AND MERCHANDISING

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty  
of Texas Tech University in  
Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements for  
the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Approved

*Shelley Harp*

Chairperson of the Committee

*Joseph Chussock, Ph.D.*

*Luinda C. Hoover*

*Zane B. Long*

*Patricia Horridge*

Accepted

*D. J. Schmitt*

Dean of the Graduate School

August, 1998

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## ABSTRACT

Retailing has become a complex, competitive, and changing business. Successful retail organizations are placing increased emphasis on recruiting, developing, and retaining executive talent to gain a competitive edge in the marketplace. Changing demographics have resulted in a shrinking labor pool, mandating proper staffing, head count and skill set in today's cost-conscious retail environment. Undergraduate curricula should reflect these changes to ensure that graduates have the appropriate knowledge, attitudes, and skills to become successful retail managers. Due to an emergence of financial accountability, retailing and merchandising specializations need to determine if existing curricula effectively meet marketplace needs. The identification of competencies desired by retail recruiters of collegiate graduates is critical in retailing and merchandising curriculum development.

The purposes of this study were (a) to identify entry-level retail management competencies from a broad, multi-company perspective, (b) to assign each competency to a category of learning, and (c) to assess the level of importance assigned to each competency by retail recruiters for the store division and the merchandising division. The Delphi method of group consensus was used in this study to identify knowledge, attitude, and skill competencies (KAS competencies). The expert panel consisted of 25 recruiters from a cross section of retail organizations throughout the United States. KAS competencies

were identified consisting of 24 knowledge, 26 attitude, and 26 skill competencies. Levels of hierarchy were established within the KAS competencies for the store division and the merchandising division based on the mean importance ratings.

An exploratory study of differences among recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators regarding competencies was also conducted. The participants in the educator survey included 23 educators from 4-year institutions of higher education. Information regarding educators' opinions with respect to agreement and importance levels for the store division and merchandising division were compared. Recruiters and educators also identified retail trends increasing and decreasing in importance for graduates entering entry-level retail management positions.

Findings indicated that differences existed among recruiters merchandising educators, and marketing educators with regard to specific competency categories. These results suggest the importance of industry-based competency identification in effectively matching collegiate retailing and merchandising curricula to marketplace needs.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Retailing has become a business in which excellence in execution will distinguish success from failure. Achieving excellence in execution at the organizational level within the retail industry will require a greater emphasis on different competencies crucial for retail executives in the 21st century than in the past. Competencies often cited in contemporary retail literature as essential for excellence in execution in the present retail environment include: marketing skills, organizational skills, logistical skills, problem solving skills, decision making skills, merchandising skills, management information skills, communication skills, collaborative skills, and leadership skills. The successful retail organizations of the year 2000, will have learned how to recruit, develop, and retain executive talent with a mix of skills needed to achieve excellence in execution (Gush, 1996; Heitmeyer & Grise, 1992; Mikitka & Stampfl, 1994).

Savvy retailers realize that achieving and maintaining a competitive edge in an increasing consumer driven marketplace requires a labor-intensive commitment across a wide base of employees. In this context, retailers need bright, motivated applicants with the appropriate competencies required to become managers who can gain and maintain leadership in a demanding, competitive environment. The fundamental source for entry-level retail management positions has been the university undergraduate retailing and

merchandising degree programs. However, one of the primary human resource challenges facing retailers today is a shortage of educated labor. Demographic trends illustrate a labor force slowing significantly in the United States as a result of the “baby bust” beginning in the late 1960s, and continuing through the 1970s and 1980s. Due to the evaporating pool of young workers, retailers in many areas of the United States are having trouble attracting, recruiting, and retaining college graduates for entry-level management positions (Anderson, Stanley, & Parker, 1992; Blackwell, 1981; Heitmeyer & Grise, 1992).

Proper staffing, head count, and skill set have emerged as primary concerns in today’s cost-conscious retail environment. In response to the shrinking labor supply and a fast changing labor pool, human resource programs in the retail sector have become more employee oriented in a concerted effort to turn a complex labor environment into a competitive advantage. The implementation of innovation in human resource development has impacted recruiting on college campuses. Retail organizations have become more strategic, committed, and selective in the recruiting process for entry-level executive training positions. In turn, the educational outcomes of academic retailing and merchandising programs are being more closely scrutinized by retail institutions (Gush, 1996; McCuaig, Lee, Barker, & Johnson, 1996).

A major criticism leveled at higher education by corporate America in recent years is the failure to adequately prepare graduates for the “real world” of business. Given corporate America’s disillusionment with educational outcomes

and the competition for a shrinking pool of students, the academic retailing and merchandising programs that will succeed in the next decade will be industry driven. In this context, the mandate for retailing and merchandising education, while sensitive to student interests, is to respond to the emerging trends and changing needs of retail organizations, the customers that provide employment to students upon graduation. Failure to address this deficit in the retailing and merchandising curricula may result in the loss of significant market share to corporate training programs or other academic disciplines preparing students with the skills required by retail employers (Arora & Stoner, 1992; Kelly & Gaedeke, 1990; Mason, 1992).

Educators in the university community are faced with an enormous responsibility in deciding what to teach and how to teach it. Recent trends in higher education emphasize two distinct philosophies which guide the partnership between academia and the profession. The first advocates that education should stay abreast of professional advancement in the preparation of students. The second endorses education as the pacesetter for the profession. Whichever focus a program elects to follow, the underlying issue is industry-based skill standards (Alden, Laxton, Patzer, & Howard, 1991; Turnquist, Bialaszewski, & Franklin, 1991).

From an academic perspective, competencies desired by the retail sector appear to be a significant area to be explored in collegiate retailing education. Identification of industry-based competencies and the level of importance a

broad cross section of retail organizations place on each competency are essential factors in the development of curricula that prepares graduates to successfully enter the industry (Done, 1979; McCuaig, Lee, Barker, & Johnson, 1996; Wheelen, Wheelen, & Rakes, 1974). To date, little documentation exists of industry-based competencies necessary for entry-level store and merchandising management positions from a cross section of retail organizations.

### Statement of the Problem

The primary purpose of this study was to identify entry-level retail management competencies from a broad multi-company perspective that could serve as a guide for developing, evaluating, and restructuring retailing and merchandising curricula at the collegiate level. A secondary purpose was to assign each competency to a category of learning that could serve as a catalyst in setting instructional objectives and measuring educational outcomes. A third purpose was to assess the level of importance assigned to each competency by corporate recruiters from a broad cross section of retail organizations that could assist in establishing priorities in retailing and merchandising curricula. It was hypothesized that through the examination of industry-based competencies and the delineation of competency significance within learning categories, an industry-wide conceptual framework could be developed which could serve as a benchmark for retailing and merchandising curricula.

### Assumptions

The major assumption of this study was that each corporate recruiter had exposure to recruiting standards for and performance appraisals of entry-level management hires within his or her retail organization from which to base his or her perceptions. An additional underlying assumption was that the corporate recruiters with their broad, multi-company perspective were representative of the retail industry as a whole. Finally, it was assumed that faculty in retailing and merchandising academic programs were abreast of professional advancement in the preparation of students.

### Research Questions

To determine the industry-based competencies needed by retailing and merchandising graduates for entry-level employment into management positions in retail organizations and to classify the competencies into domains of learning, and to determine hierarchies within learning domains, the following research questions were investigated:

**RQ.1** What knowledge, attitude, and skill competencies were desired by corporate recruiters for entry-level retail management positions?

**RQ.2** What levels of hierarchy were determined by corporate recruiters in the knowledge, attitude, and skill competency categories?

- RQ.3** What were the differences among corporate recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators on the level of agreement and level of importance ratings of competencies for entry-level retail management positions?
- RQ.4** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for product knowledge in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?
- RQ.5** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for leadership/team building in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?
- RQ.6** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for problem solving/decision making in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?
- RQ.7** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for retail related work experience in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?
- RQ.8** What did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive as future retail trends increasing and decreasing in importance for graduates entering entry-level for entry-level retail management positions in the next decade?

### Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined for the purposes of this study:

Apparel Store—retailer that concentrates on apparel lines.

Attitude—beliefs, feelings, values, opinions, ethics, expectations: the philosophy that an individual needs to endorse or possess (Chamberlain, 1992).

Competency—ability (including knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes) to perform a specific set of related tasks successfully to meet a specified standard (Chamberlain, 1992).

Consensus—tendency to converge toward agreement on a particular subject; determined by statistical agreement among the participants as a total group. (McKenna, 1994).

Curriculum—detailed plans of student activities, study materials, learning strategies, and program usage (Lewy, 1977).

Delphi Technique—systematic approach to group decision making which utilizes several rounds of specific questions interspersed with feedback from the respondents (Dalkey, 1969).

Department Store—large retailing institution that carries a wide variety of merchandise lines with a reasonably good selection within each line (Lewison, 1994).

Destination Store—retail store to which a consumer generally makes a special trip with the intent of shopping (Bennett, 1995).



**Discount Store**—large retail store that incorporates aspects of supermarket merchandising strategy to a high degree, attempts to price merchandise at a relatively low markup, carries stock, and renders only limited types of consumer services, usually on the basis of a specific extra charge (Bennett, 1995).

**Drug Chains**—a group of retail stores centrally owned and with some degree of centralized control of operation, specializing in prescription and over-the-counter drugs and health care products (Bennett, 1995).

**Educators**—individuals employed in higher education involved in teaching and/or research in merchandising or marketing curriculum areas.

**Entry-Level Retail Management Positions**—entry-level management positions in the store division and merchandising division offered to graduates of four-year universities.

**Expert Panel**—individuals selected to participate in the Delphi technique of group consensus based on their knowledge or expertise in a particular area (Goodman, 1987).

**Generic Statements**—general ideas which are inclusive of many others relating to competencies (Forrest et al., 1995).

**Graduate**—student who has completed degree requirements for graduation majoring in a retailing or merchandising program at a four-year institution of higher education.

**Home Improvement Stores**—a retail specialty store combining the traditional hardware store and lumber yard (Bennett, 1995).

**Human Sciences**—subject area formerly known as home economics.

**Knowledge**—recall of specifics and universals, methods or processes, or of a pattern, structure, or setting (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1956).

**Leadership**—an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perceptions and expectations of the members (Bass, 1990).

**Merchandising Division**—an administrative unit responsible for the merchandising activities of a related group of selling departments or divisions (Ostrow & Smith, 1995).

**Merchandising**—the planning involved in marketing the right merchandise, at the right place, at the right time, in the right quantities, at the right price. Merchandising is the buying and selling of goods to target markets for the purpose of making a profit (Jernigan & Easterling, 1990).

**Priorities**—preferential rankings assigned to statements based on perceived importance or value (Misener, Watkins, & Ossege, 1994).

**Problem Solving/Decision Making**—a logical step-by-step method that enables the decision maker to narrow down a body of information, identify the main problem, and choose among alternative plans (Fulmer & Franklin, 1982).

**Product Knowledge**—educates sales associates, which enables them to educate their customers, help interpret customer's needs, and, in turn (through the sale of that product), provide for those needs. Retailers and vendors alike supply the information to the sales associates about merchandise that helps them answer questions and resolve problems knowledgeably. Some products require more selling and product knowledge than others, and often the vendor must help provide the information for a sales associate to relay to the customer (Rabolt & Miler, 1997).

**Recruiters**—individuals whose occupation involves hiring employees for entry-level retail management positions.

**Retail Education**—educational program which focuses on retail issues including: store management, merchandise planning, selling and sales promotion, customer service, staffing, management control, business environment, corporate planning, marketing strategy and retail location (Jones & Vignali, 1994).

**Retailer**—any business establishment that directs its marketing effort toward the final consumer for the purpose of selling goods or services (Lewison, 1994).

**Retailing**—a set of business activities carried on to accomplishing the exchange of goods and services for the purposes of personal, family, or household use, whether performed in a store or by some form of nonstore selling (Bennett, 1995).

**Skill**—the ability to do things involving the use of one or more of senses: can be primarily manual or cognitive, psychomotor or perceptual (Dunnette & Hough, 1966).

**Store Division**—an administrative unit responsible for the profitable operation of the store (Ostrow & Smith, 1985).

**Supermarkets**—a retail store offering a relatively broad and complete stock of dry groceries, fresh meat, perishable produce, and dairy products, supplemented by a variety of convenience, nonfood merchandise and operated primarily on a self service basis (Bennett, 1995).

**Team building**—improving relationships among members and the accomplishment of the task by diagnosing problems in team processes affecting the team's performance (Bass, 1990).

### **Limitations of the Study**

The present investigation was limited to a nationwide sample of corporate level human resource professionals representing 24 retail organizations and merchandising and marketing educators at the assistant, associate, or full professor rank in 23, 4-year institutions of higher education. Expert panel members participating in Rounds I, II, and III were limited to corporate recruiters from retail organizations listed in the American Express Top 100 Retailers (Schultz, July 1997) and the American Express Top 100 Specialty Stores (Schultz, August 1997). Educators participating in the Educator Survey were

limited to American Collegiate Retailing Association (ACRA) members listed in the 1997 association directory. Since panelists were purposively selected rather than randomly selected, the reliability of the results may be questioned when generalizing to all retail executives and educators.

The Delphi technique was used to generate competencies.

Misinterpretations and personal biases of the researcher may have distorted the development of the generic statements as a result of Round I. The experience level of the expert panel members and type of retail organization were not included in the competency data analysis portion of this study. Additionally, as with all mail survey research methods, the instructions to the panelists may have been vague or ambiguous resulting in inaccurate responses.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The business environment in the United States is experiencing many rapid changes including changing demographics of the workforce, the emergence of time-conscious, quality-focused, technology-minded, and value-oriented consumers, corporate downsizing/rightsizing and consolidations, a global economy, and increased financial accountability. Related undergraduate academic programs should reflect these changes to ensure that graduates have the appropriate knowledge, attitudes, and skills to cope with these new challenges. Political issues such as budget deficits and taxes have placed increased pressure on colleges and universities to be held more financially accountable for specialized program areas. Changing demographics have resulted in a decrease in the number of students seeking degrees in higher education. In an era of public accountability for tax dollar usage, this reduction in enrollment necessitates continual program evaluation. If a specific curriculum does not attract and/or appropriately prepare students to meet the needs of employers with their rapidly changing job requirements, the survival of that discipline is threatened. It is, therefore, critical to both retailers and educators to continually evaluate retailing and merchandising curricula.

Marketing educators need to identify their markets and ensure that product offerings effectively match market needs (Fram, 1996; O'Brien & Deans,

1995). Courses and curricula should be viewed as a product, students as the intermediate market, and employers as the consumer (Done, 1979; Joyner, 1996; Meyer, 1990). Although educators and employers agree curricula should be evaluated, many differing opinions exist about the focus and future direction of curricula. The theoretical base of fashion merchandising curriculum was addressed by Winakor (1988). The author argued that although fashion merchandising is an applied field, the importance of a theoretical framework cannot be ignored. Hudson (1978) agreed with the importance of the theoretical framework and stated that business curriculum which emphasized mathematics, accounting, marketing, business, and management skills was the most effective method of preparing students for careers in business regardless of program titles. Hudson personally believed theoretical courses such as mathematics, accounting, and retailing applications should be the foundation which prepares students for a career in retailing. However, the majority of educators in Hudson's survey indicated college programs should be less theoretical and more practical. It is important to recognize conflicting opinions on business curricula when considering retailing and merchandising curricula assessment.

In order for higher education to appropriately develop courses which will effectively educate students for the corporate environment, a national study that establishes competencies for entry-level retail management positions is needed. Recent studies (Conover & Byron, 1988; Schleede & Lepisto, 1984; Tinsley, 1981; Turnquist, Bialaszewski, & Franklin, 1991; Ursic & Hegstrom, 1985) have

emphasized the importance and relevance of marketing curriculum development as well as how the discipline's focus changed during the 1970s (McDaniel & Hise, 1984). However, none of these studies identify specific competencies cited by recruiters as necessary for entry-level retail management positions. Most studies have been either descriptive, historical, or regionally based, and therefore, do not identify specific competencies desired by retail recruiters throughout the United States.

Retailing is one specific area in the marketing discipline. The development of retailing in marketing education, as well as the implications of cross-disciplinary programs, has been the focus of a number of studies (Alden, Laxton, Patzer, & Howard, 1991; Mikitka & Stampfl, 1994; Rudolph, 1981). Hise (1975) was one of the first researchers to examine marketing curriculum and he determined that a lack of quantitative skills and concepts existed. Wheelen, Wheelen, and Rakes (1974) studied retailing curriculum using a written questionnaire; however with a sample size of 50, and only 18 respondents, the relevance of the research may be questioned for broad application. Also, both of the studies were conducted in the 1970s, and more recent research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the current retailing and merchandising curricula. The purpose of this review was to examine retailing/merchandising education, retailing/merchandising curriculum development, competency-based curriculum assessment, and the Delphi technique of group consensus.



## Retailing/Merchandising Education

### A Business School Perspective

As U.S. businesses face increasing competition from international organizations, the importance of qualified managers is more critical today than ever before. Behrman and Levin (1984) discussed how businesses, journalists, and academicians criticize business schools, yet fail to identify the causes or offer solutions to adapt business curriculum to meet the needs of business managers. Specific criticisms included an overemphasis on quantitative analysis, bureaucratic management rather than entrepreneurial activities, a focus on concepts and models instead of more qualitative and complex thinking, and lack of attention to interpersonal relationships. Behrman and Levin (1984) also criticized the lack of research which prepares faculty or students for well-integrated management programs. The authors suggested that business education should incorporate a long-term, rational, qualitative, entrepreneurial, integrative, and socially sensitive approach. Behrman and Levin (1984) provided a descriptive overview of the current business curricula. However, both authors are collegiate educators, and therefore, the opinions about business education may not be the same as corporate recruiters.

Business curriculum generally offers majors in accounting, computer analyses, finance, management, and marketing. Since retailing curriculum is offered to students as part of a marketing education, one must first understand

the history of marketing education and how it has evolved into its current discipline. Current marketing curriculum, as well as the impact of cross-disciplinary education must be identified to fully understand marketing education and how it impacts retailing curriculum development.

Marketing education has undergone an evolutionary change beginning as an offspring of economics and then to the recognition of disciplines such as psychology and sociology. Marketing education then separated from other disciplines and developed a distinct focus. This is contrary to a study by Green (1992) in which corporate recruiters questioned the value of hiring large numbers of business students who were not as well prepared as peers with liberal arts degrees. Wilson and Darley (1982) surveyed educators and marketing executives and determined that six courses should be offered in the undergraduate marketing curriculum: marketing research and information systems, marketing strategy/planning, promotion/advertising management, consumer behavior, marketing new products/product development management, and sales management. Evaluation of marketing education, and its relevance to educating students for careers in business, has required academic institutions to make necessary changes in the curriculum in order to better meet the needs of students and employers. Some of these recommended changes are represented in current marketing curriculum.

Marketing education can involve various academic departments, but the most common interaction exists with merchandising programs offered in liberal

arts or family and consumer sciences departments. Many institutions have simply added liberal arts courses without specific objectives, rather than integrating those courses with the business curriculum (Stark & Lowther, 1988). Alden, Laxton, Patzer, and Howard (1991) suggested developing better linkage between marketing and other areas such as business and liberal arts. They argued that cross-disciplinary marketing education helps develop a student's ability to manage integrated organizational functions. Other authors have addressed marketing in liberal arts/consumer affairs departments (Goldsmith & Vogel, 1991; Rudolph, 1981). Rudolph (1981) provided a history of the liberal arts influence during the 1960s and questioned the recent trend emphasizing vocationalism and trade skills. He argued that liberal arts education has a vital contribution to the development of educated and culturally balanced students. In contrast, Goldsmith and Vogel (1991) believed students should be encouraged to acquire an interdisciplinary academic background with an emphasis on internships.

A study by Turnquist, Bialaszewski, and Franklin (1991) provided an overview of the current marketing curriculum. The four most common courses offered at American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accredited schools were marketing research, principles of marketing, consumer behavior, and retailing. The results indicated that most of the accredited schools with marketing degree programs provided a relatively broad-based marketing curriculum with emphasis on managing innovation, change, and developing

decision making skills. Surveys of executives and recent graduates however ranked principles of marketing, marketing research, and marketing management important courses for marketing majors (Coyle, 1975; Tinsley, 1981; Ursic & Hegstrom, 1985).

Another issue which has influenced marketing education is the changing demographic and psychographic characteristics of marketing students. Blackwell (1981) identified three emerging changes in recent marketing students: the increased number of women, more intelligent students, and students with better mathematical and computer skills. Blackwell further questioned whether or not business schools had appropriately evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of programs and if programs were compatible with company philosophies and students' needs. Yet Blackwell offered no specific suggestions as to how this should be accomplished.

Conover and Byron (1988) examined specialization in marketing curricula. Results indicated retail management was the specialization most offered in business schools. However, no evaluation of the usefulness of specialization courses was conducted in this study. Research on current marketing curriculum has focused on courses and specializations offered in marketing programs, marketing courses viewed most important to executives and graduates, changing demographic and psychographic characteristics of students, and curriculum development models. However, a more current marketing curriculum assessment is needed to reflect the dramatic changes in the business

environment such as increased competition, corporate takeovers, downsizing/rightsizing, and the influence of the global economy.

### A Human Science School Perspective

Textiles and apparel merchandising educational programs, often called fashion merchandising programs, originally developed as a content area in home economics (now known as human sciences) curricula. In 1917, the University of Washington created the first collegiate fashion merchandising program (Garner & Buckley, 1988). Fair, Hamilton and Norum (1990) identified two major goals of contemporary fashion/apparel curricula: educate students about needs of the industry, and encourage students to accept responsibility for the consumer. The latter is the basis for collegiate merchandising programs as a curriculum area in human sciences.

A study by Greenwood (1972) evaluated fashion merchandising programs by course objectives and merchandising professionals' appraisal of competencies. The sample was limited to buyers and assistant buyers in major department stores in the central part of the United States, so the study only provided competency information for entry-level merchandising positions. Beery (1980) also examined fashion merchandising programs. The sample consisted of postsecondary educators of fashion merchandising and business personnel in fashion merchandising. Six competency categories were developed: (a) selling, (b) sales promotion, (c) buying, (d) operations, (e) market research, and (f)

managerial. Respondents ranked 51 competency statements from 1 to 11 for both entry-level and mid-management fashion merchandising positions.

Numbers from 7 to 11 indicated that the competency was important. The largest percentage of respondents in the business sample held positions as store managers/owners or personnel directors. Human relations skills including working with employees and customers was the highest rated competency. This questionnaire focused solely on fashion merchandising positions, and therefore cannot be generalized to other curriculum areas. Another criticism of this instrument is the inability of respondents to include additional competency statements that were not listed in the questionnaire.

As human sciences curriculum has undergone changes during the last few decades, some merchandising programs have expanded their focus to include other areas beyond that of the traditional textile and apparel areas. With this expanded merchandising curricula, the distinction between retailing and merchandising programs is less easily defined. Although similarities exist between merchandising and retailing educational programs, one distinction in merchandising curricula is the emphasis placed on product knowledge to teach students the importance of identifying consumer needs in the marketplace (Fair, Hamilton, & Norum, 1990; Garner & Buckley, 1988).

Table 2.1 provides a timeline of retailing and merchandising curriculum research. This summary table illustrates the vacillation between theoretical and application-oriented emphases in both retailing and merchandising curriculum

Table 2.1

Summary of Retailing and Merchandising Curriculum Research

<b>Authors and Journal</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Research Topic</b>
<b>Wheelen, Wheelen, &amp; Rakes Journal of Marketing Education</b>	<b>1974</b>	<b>Fortune Directory of Retailing Companies</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Views of retail executives on retailing education</b>
<b>Hudson Journal of Retailing</b>	<b>1978</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Important subject areas in retailing education</b>
<b>Lazarus Journal of Retailing</b>	<b>1978</b>	<b>Retailers</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Views of entry-level retailers on retailing education</b>
<b>Beery Dissertation</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>Postsecondary Educators and Business Personnel</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Midmanagement and entry- level fashion merchandising competencies</b>
<b>Horridge, Timmons, &amp; Geissler College Student Journal</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Historical</b>	<b>Student work experience in merchandising education</b>
<b>Jones &amp; Vignali Journal of Marketing Education</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Development of retail marketing degree program</b>
<b>Sheldon Clothing and Textiles Research Journal</b>	<b>1985- 1986</b>	<b>Retailers and Educators</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Attitudes of retailers and educators toward fashion retail internships</b>

Table 2.1 (cont.)

<b>Authors and Journal</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Research Topic</b>
<b>Garner &amp; Buckley Clothing and Textiles Research Journal</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>Apparel Retailers, Educators &amp; Graduates</b>	<b>Illinois</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Curriculum content needed for fashion marketing careers</b>
<b>Winakor Clothing and Textiles Research Journal</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Development of theoretical base in fashion merchandising</b>
<b>Levy Journal of Retailing</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Shift in focus of retail managers</b>
<b>Fair, Hamilton, &amp; Norum Clothing and Textiles Research Journal</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>Graduates</b>	<b>Midwestern University</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Importance of textile knowledge in retail jobs</b>
<b>Stretch &amp; Harp Marketing Education Review</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Development of structurally controlled retail internship programs</b>
<b>Anderson, Stanley, &amp; Parker Journal of Marketing Education</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>Undergraduates</b>	<b>Two Universities</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Student perceptions of retailing careers</b>
<b>Heitmeyer, Grise, &amp; Force Perceptual and Motor Skills</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>Retail Executives</b>	<b>Southeastern Department Store</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Skills and knowledge important for merchandising careers</b>



Table 2.1 (cont.)

<b>Authors and Journal</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Research Topic</b>
<b>Kotsiopoulos, Oliver, &amp; Shim Clothing and Textiles Research Journal</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>Buyers, Managers and Undergraduates</b>	<b>Western, Midwestern, Southeastern, and Eastern United States</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Comparison of importance ratings for competencies</b>
<b>Mikitka &amp; Stampfl Journal of Marketing Education</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Historical</b>	<b>Current and historical cross- disciplinary context in marketing and retailing education</b>
<b>Moore International Journal of Computers in Adult Education and Training</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>Retailers</b>	<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>Survey and Interview</b>	<b>Information technology requirements of retailers</b>
<b>Gush Education &amp; Training</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>Managers and Graduates</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Interview</b>	<b>Need for graduate skills and role of higher education in retail sector</b>
<b>Donnellan Clothing and Textiles Research Journal</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>Human Resource Vice Presidents</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Importance ranking of skills</b>
<b>McCuaig, Lee, Barker, &amp; Johnson Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>Graduates, Apparel Recruiters, Educators and Undergraduates</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Survey</b>	<b>Comparison of perceptions about retail merchandising competencies</b>

development. Although retailing and merchandising curriculum research has been consistently studied over the last two decades, a national study of industry-based competencies for entry-level retail management positions has not been conducted.

Another difference between retailing and merchandising disciplines is that merchandising curriculum tends to be more theoretically based and retailing curriculum more applied (Winakor, 1988). Other studies contradict this opinion stressing the importance of student work experience and internships within merchandising education (Horridge, Timmons, & Geissler, 1980; Sheldon, 1985-1986; Stretch & Harp, 1991).

Specific competencies necessary for entry-level fashion merchandising management positions were evaluated by Beery (1980). In this study, business personnel and educators in postsecondary programs (not four-year programs) were surveyed as to the importance rankings of specific competencies. The findings from this study suggest differences between competencies necessary for entry- and mid- level management positions. The primary competencies for entry level managers involved those in advising and selling to customers. Limited to fashion merchandising positions, this study could not be generalized to all areas of merchandising or retailing. Additionally, this study focused on entry-level managers graduating from two year junior college programs and not on merchandising graduates from four-year universities.

### Retailing/Merchandising Curriculum Development

Two important components of retailing education include the development of the current curriculum and the retailing skills and individual characteristics emphasized in retailing educational programs. As in marketing education and merchandising education, retailing education has continually shifted its focus from theoretical to practical applications.

Retailing curriculum development has undergone the same types of changes as marketing curriculum development vacillating between theoretical emphasis (Fair, Hamilton, & Norum, 1990; Winakor, 1988) and practical applications (Knudson, Woodworth, & Bell, 1973; Stretch & Harp, 1991). The importance of strategy development and implementation as an acquired skill (Harris & Walters, 1992) are critical elements in retailing courses to prepare retailing graduates to handle the challenges of today's competitive retail environment.

Garner and Buckley (1988) surveyed Illinois apparel retailers, graduates of textiles and clothing programs at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Association of College Professors of Textiles and Clothing (ACPTC) members to determine which curriculum elements were most relevant. The results indicated practical skills such as inventory management, merchandise buying methods, pricing, and salesmanship were most valuable for students interesting in pursuing careers in retailing. As a regional study, some

implications for national retailing curriculum development exist. However, a weakness of this study was that respondents were not given the opportunity to add curriculum elements which were not included in the questionnaire. Laric and Tucker (1982) used a descriptive approach to retailing education analysis. Although this article offered insight into general categories which are necessary for retail graduates, it failed to specifically identify competencies for retail management positions.

### **Retail Industry-Based Needs Assessment**

An important element in retailing/merchandising curriculum development is the identification of those academic areas most critical to business employers. Specific personnel requirements must be identified to effectively develop curricula that will provide the necessary knowledge and training to offer graduates a competitive advantage in the retail business environment.

Problem solving, financial perspectives, leadership, and communication skills are necessary qualities marketing managers must possess, but are areas in which managers view graduates as deficient (O'Brien & Deans, 1995). Recruiters, personnel managers, and marketing managers were surveyed to determine their specific requirements for knowledge, skills, and attributes of business graduates. Marketing managers identified basic management skills, human relations, and marketing as important areas of knowledge. Organization, communication, and ability to work with people were identified as significant

skills. Personal attributes marketing managers recognized were motivation, leadership, and honesty (Boatwright & Stamps, 1988; Edge & Greenwood, 1974).

Marketing personnel directors feel strongly that business professionals should have input into curriculum development (Futrell, 1976). In Futrell's study, 80% of the personnel directors stated graduates were lacking necessary skills in sales or marketing jobs that should have been learned in collegiate marketing programs. The best method of appraising employers' needs is difficult to determine. Futrell only examined local marketing programs. Edge and Greenwood (1974) conducted a regional study which provided insight into employers' needs, yet did not provide adequate basis to extrapolate to a national level. Wheelen, Wheelen, and Rakes (1974) surveyed national retail companies, but a small sample size (50 with only 18 respondents) was used, and more recent analysis is needed.

Researchers have focused on graduates' satisfaction with business education (Fair, Hamilton & Norum, 1990; King & Rawson, 1985) and the opinions of marketing faculty (Hise, 1975; Conover & Byron, 1988; McDaniel & Hise, 1984), but a comparison between what is offered in current retailing education and what is desired by retail employers would provide more applicable and relevant information to retail educators concerning retail curriculum development. Various combined samples including employers, graduates, and educators have also been utilized to evaluate the business curriculum (Coyle,

1975; Garner & Buckley, 1988; Ursic & Hegstrom, 1985; Wilson & Darley, 1982) however, these studies focused on marketing education rather than retailing education. Other authors provide descriptive analyses which question the capabilities of business schools (Behrman & Levin, 1984; Muller, Porter, & Rehder, 1988). However, none of these studies used statistical data to evaluate the effectiveness of retailing education on a national basis.

The National Retail Federation (1994) identified job skill standards to improve the quality of the workforce by developing more qualified and productive workers. This project was national in its focus and included a cross section of retail organizations, but focused only on skills necessary for sales associate positions and did not include management positions.

### Competency-Based Curriculum Assessment

Competency-based curriculum assessment has been used in other disciplines to define and/or certify specific academic programs. Kohlmann (1975) developed a model for competency-based teacher education. The author stated demands for accountability, relevance, and cost-effective education as reasons for the emphasis shift from performance to competency. Although this model focused on home economics education teachers, it offered insight into relationships between instructional treatment, objectives, learning opportunities, and means of evaluating the achievement of objectives. The narrow focus of this model makes it inappropriate to generalize to a broader population.

Competency based education in high schools was discussed by Spady (1977). In addition to successful completion of typical high school courses, in 1972 the Oregon State Board of Education passed new graduation requirements to include a mastery of three competency areas: personal development, social responsibility, and career development. The author attributed the significant increase of competency-based education to the 1972 Oregon regulation.

Two academic disciplines that place significant importance on competency-based education are dietetics and interior design. A critical factor in program accreditation is the compliance of standards and performance requirements within the collegiate curriculum (ADA, 1998; FIDER, 1996). Olson (1995) identified knowledge and skill competencies needed for intergenerational professional practice in interior design. In this study, competency statements were evaluated as to level of importance and whether they should be obtained in the workplace or collegiate setting.

Albanese, Hines, and Rainey (1995) evaluated how professionals ranked the importance of entry-level interior design skills. Each skill was evaluated using the Foundation for Interior Design Education Research (FIDER) achievement levels: competency, understanding, and awareness. Asthana (1997) further evaluated employer preferences in interior design graduates to include not only competencies but also attributes.

The application of competency-based curriculum assessment has been used by academic disciplines to increase validity and professionalism for the

program area. Competency-based curriculum is an integral part of accreditation programs. In turn, accredited programs also are positioned to have a greater potential for funding opportunities.

The accreditation agency for undergraduate business curricula is the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). The accreditation standards include: mission and objectives, faculty composition and development; curriculum content and evaluation; instructional resources and responsibilities; students; and intellectual contributions (Dillard & Tinker, 1996). Although the traditional AACSB accreditation process focused on course offerings and faculty resources, the emphasis is changing to place more consideration on the quality of graduates (Fogarty, 1997). Dillard and Tinker (1996) discussed the use of total quality management (TQM) in business and accounting accreditation. The focus of TQM is the customer, and the AACSB addressed this issue in the identification of accreditation standards priorities including the characteristics of students served by the academic program. The employer is viewed as the customer of higher education. Fogarty (1997) also cited the need for educational outcomes assessment, but noted the difficulty of measuring the acquisition of knowledge and the mastery of skills.

Accreditation for human science curricula (also known as family and consumer sciences) is conducted by the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS, 1994). Accreditation standards include the analysis of course offerings and faculty resources. Although accreditation



standards for business and human science curricula may not guarantee quality graduates, accreditation of academic programs is a critical element in enhancing the professionalism of specific disciplines in higher education and industry.

### Delphi Technique

Survey research, in general, has several limitations. Low response rates and the inability to clarify questions or expand upon responses are some of the major limitations to this research method. Another weakness of survey research is that although statistics may be used to describe the survey results, a true group consensus is not achieved. Group consensus can be met through qualitative research methods such as focus groups or the Delphi technique which uses an expert panel. Focus groups are extremely time consuming and are much more costly. The Delphi technique allows researchers to have respondents reach group consensus without the higher costs associated with focus group research in addition to maintaining the anonymity of the participants.

The Delphi technique utilizes several rounds of specific questions interspersed with feedback from the respondents to arrive at a group consensus on a particular subject. The participants are a group of experts familiar with the topic being studied and able to provide a specific area of expertise. The Delphi technique is a systematic approach to group decision making which has been used to forecast trends, arrive at consensus, or assess a particular need.

Table 2.2 provides a timeline of Delphi research in a variety of discipline areas. The table also illustrates the extensive use of the Delphi technique to identify priorities in research or higher education.

### Background

During the 1950s the RAND Corporation conducted a study entitled "Project DELPHI" (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963). The purpose of this experiment was to obtain the most reliable consensus of opinion from a group of experts. The results from the study were to identify, from a Soviet strategic planner's viewpoint, the selection of an optimal industrial target in the United States, and the estimation of the number of A-bombs necessary to complete its destruction. In this original study, seven experts were given a series of five questionnaires submitted at weekly intervals. Interviews were followed up after the first and third questionnaires with each of the respondents. All the questions focused on one primary subject area. Feedback between the rounds of questionnaires was designed to identify the respondent's reasoning of his response, relevant factors in his response, and information other respondents suggested which might assist the respondent in developing a more confident answer to the original question.

This technique allowed for the development of an opinion without being overly influenced by opinions of others. Final responses were corrected based on the median of the responses. Smallest estimates of bomb requirements

Table 2.2

## Summary of Delphi Research

AUTHOR	YEAR	INITIATIVE
Dalkey and Helmer	1963	Technique development: military
Dalkey	1969	Technique development: military
Dowell	1975	Forecasting: higher education
Driskill	1975	Educational priorities: secondary school physics
Strauss and Zeigler	1975	Technique refinement: social sciences
Goodman	1987	Technique critique: nursing
Reid	1988	Application: competencies for health care fields
Buriak and Shinn	1989	Research priorities: agricultural education
Hoover	1989	Model development: health care foodservice operations
Azani and Khorramshahgol	1990	Technique refinement: location planning
Kors, Sittig, and vanBemmel	1990	Application: diagnostic knowledge for cardiology
Miles-Tapping, Dyck, Brunham, Simpson, and Barber	1990	Research priorities: physical therapy
Whitman	1990	Technique refinement: nursing
Bartu, McGowan, Nelson, Ng, and Robertson	1993	Research priorities: nursing
Ferretti	1993	Research priorities: interactive multimedia technology

Table 2.2 (cont.)

AUTHOR	YEAR	INITIATIVE
Green, Khan, and Badinelli	1993	Testing a decision model: foodservice systems
Texas Department of Human Services	1993	Validate goals and goal indicators: nutrition education
de Loe	1994	Technique refinement: climate change and water management
Jenkins and Smith	1994	Technique refinement: nursing
Misener, Watkins, and Ossege	1994	Research priorities: public health nursing
Raskin	1994	Research priorities: social work
Salmond	1994	Research priorities: orthopaedic nursing
Walker	1994	Research priorities: clinical physiotherapy
Hartman and Baldwin	1995	Technique refinement: utilization of computer technology for the Delphi method
Forrest et al.	1995	Research agenda: dental hygiene
Hollis, Davis, and Reeb	1995	Research priorities: clinical nursing
Murry and Hammons	1995	Application: higher education
Broome, Woodring, and O'Conner-Von	1996	Research priorities: nursing of children and families
Demi, Meredith, and Gray	1996	Research priorities: urologic nursing

increased from 50 to 167, while the largest estimate decreased from 5000 to 360. Although this study developed the Delphi technique as a plausible research methodology to generate group decision making, there were several criticisms of the experimental procedure. Some members of the expert panel had contact with other members due to work assignments. This was counter to the advantage of complete anonymity. The time frame between rounds of questionnaires was limited to approximately one week which may not have allowed adequate time between rounds, but was necessary to ensure national security. Another criticism the authors cited was the possibility of "leading" by the researchers as to the selection of the information supplied by the respondents. This subjective quality is inherently a weakness to all qualitative studies.

Dalkey (1969) continued research on the Delphi method of decision making by evaluating the effectiveness of Delphi procedures in formulating group opinions. In this article, Dalkey identified three major features of this research method: anonymous response, controlled feedback, and statistical group response. These three features minimize biases and personal, nonrelated discussions as well as the domination of one individual or group pressure for others to conform to a particular opinion. Dalkey examined the results of 10 experiments, involving 14 groups ranging in size from 11 to 30 participants. By calculating the average error of groups of various sizes, he found a dependence on group size of the mean accuracy of a group opinion.

Another important finding from Dalkey's (1969) study was the discussion of reliability. It is critical that the experts in a panel have similar degrees of expertise, and therefore should not be randomly selected from a possible pool of participants. Dalkey compared the accuracy of face-to-face group discussions and the median of individual estimates in a Delphi panel and found that the latter was more often accurate. However, he also stated the accuracy of a Delphi panel depends largely on the researchers conducting the panel.

### Critiques of the Delphi Technique

Content validity is assumed if it can be shown that the participants in the study are representative of the group or area of knowledge being studied. (Goodman, 1987) However, since the panelists are purposively selected rather than randomly selected, it is imperative that the researcher justify the selection procedures used. Goodman also states that the emphasis of a Delphi study should be to enable communication and decision making between individuals, not to accept the findings as definitive.

Goodman (1987) expressed concern for the validity of the panelists' responses. Since anonymity decreases accountability for expressed opinions, decisions may be made hastily or without in-depth consideration. Typically during the second round of questionnaires respondents are asked to comment on statements from the first round using either a Likert-type scale or an allocation of a finite number of points. The Likert-type scale does not require a

panelist to evaluate a statement in relation to another, and therefore may not accurately express the degree of agreement with that comment. Disadvantages of a points allocation rating system, include low response rate or adherence to an original statement.

Jenkins and Smith (1994) discussed the importance of combining both quantitative and qualitative research techniques with the Delphi technique. This systematic approach to group decision making increases the reliability of the group decisions while avoiding problems such as the bandwagon effect. However, limitations to the Delphi methodology include the length of time to complete the study, the difficulty of identifying panel experts, mortality of panelists, and the necessity of using a purposive sampling to find panelists willing to complete the multiple rounds of questionnaires (Murry & Hammons, 1995).

Whitman (1990) stated that another criticism of the Delphi technique is how the Delphi procedures contribute to the formation of group consensus and the lack of standardized methods for open-ended questions. Whitman argued that it is unclear whether group consensus is achieved through agreement or through the tendency to conform, although this also occurs in face-to-face group discussions. Whitman also discussed the importance of limiting the rounds to three or four iterations to limit respondent fatigue and a tendency to conform to expedite the study completion.

Strauss and Ziegler (1975) also identified other criticisms of the Delphi technique. One criticism was the lack of brain-storming in face-to-face discussions which can stimulate new ideas. Strauss and Zeigler also cited the possibility of respondents or researchers misunderstanding the comments of the participants due to the vagueness and ambiguousness of questions or responses. Although the authors offered criticisms of the Delphi technique, one of the conclusions stated the opinion that the Delphi research methodology can be an effective tool for the formulation, development and assessment of new policy options.

Delphi panel size is typically small which may question the ability to generalize the results if the panel selection cannot be justified as representative of the population studied. (Reid, 1988). The primary decision of the viability of the Delphi technique for a particular research topic is the availability of alternatives. Postal surveys and face-to-face interviews or group discussions offer advantages over the Delphi technique, but also have disadvantages that must be weighed when choosing a research methodology.

In summary, the major criticisms cited about the Delphi technique include the use of a purposive sample of experts rather than random sampling, poor response rate, lack of accountability, and scientific respectability (McKenna, 1994). As in all studies, the validity and reliability of research findings depend largely on the systematic approach to research procedures. Reid (1988) argued that the Delphi technique has been unfairly criticized for the poor research



procedures used in isolated studies, yet survey research is accepted as a viable research methodology even though countless bad questionnaires have been designed. Reid further stated that it is unfair to criticize the Delphi technique research method merely on the grounds of its use in some practical settings.

### Delphi Technique Research Applications

Strauss and Zeigler (1975) identified three types of Delphi research: numeric, policy, and historic. The numeric Delphi solicits quantitative estimates of dates, amounts, or values from panel participants. Policy Delphis are commonly used to supplement or initiate committees and result in verbal responses. The authors developed the historic Delphi to systematically examine historic political philosophers and apply their expertise to contemporary and future societal problems through the use of expert panelists. Although the Delphi technique usage and procedures are varied, Strauss and Zeigler stated the value of the Delphi technique in the formulation, development, and assessment of new policy decisions.

Policy questions relating to climate change and water management were examined by de Loe (1995) and included the advantages of low cost, breadth of discussions, and facilitation of groups of up to 50 people. Hoover (1989) applied the Delphi technique in the health care foodservice operations model development phase of the research study. Green, Khan, and Badinelli (1993) also used the Delphi research technique in foodservice systems, but instead

used the technique to test a decision model rather than to develop a model. The authors found the Delphi technique to be a logical foundation to examine a topic by individuals with varying opinions and little theoretically-based research. The incorporation of qualitative research with quantitative data was studied by Miller (1993) in urban planning and economic development regional analysis. The author determined that the Delphi technique may provide an effective means of combining regional planning analysis with policy applications.

Other applications of the Delphi technique are the classifications of ECGs by cardiologists (Kors, Sittig, & van Bommel, 1990) managing workplace stress of Canadian human resource managers (Loo, 1996), and development of predictors for selection and classification decisions for entry-level enlisted personnel (Person et al., 1990). These studies illustrated the variability of practical usage of the Delphi research technique, although usage in these areas is limited.

The Delphi technique of group consensus has been used extensively to identify research priorities (Alderson et al., 1992; Bartu et al., 1993; Broome, Woodring, O'Connor-Von, 1996; Buriak & Shinn, 1989; Buriak & Shinn, 1993; Demi et al., 1996; Ferretti, 1993; Griffin et al., 1992; Harrington, 1993; Hollis, Davis, & Reeb, 1995; Jenkins & Smith, 1994; Miles-Tapping et al., 1990; Misener et al., 1994; Raskin, 1994; Salmond, 1994; Walker, 1994). Some of the research priorities studied include the following subjects: nursing, agricultural

education, special education, occupational medicine, family therapy, field instruction, and physiotherapy.

Policy decisions and research priorities are two of the most commonly used areas in Delphi research. However, according to Murry and Hammons (1995), the Delphi method has been used in higher education to develop goals and objectives, improve curriculum, assist in strategic planning, and develop criteria. These four areas of study in higher education do not lend themselves to more traditional research methodologies. The advantages of the Delphi technique far outweigh the disadvantages of this approach for the evaluation of existing retailing and merchandising curriculum and the development of competencies for entry-level retail management positions.

### Summary of Literature Review

With the decline of college student enrollment and the increased financial pressures facing higher education (Schleede & Lepisto, 1984), colleges and universities must continually evaluate programs for the ability to attract new students (recruitment) and to keep current students enrolled (retention). Retailing educators must examine existing curriculum to determine which courses should continue to be offered and to identify which courses do not adequately prepare students for the retail environment.

Studies of marketing curriculum have been conducted (Conover & Byron, 1988; Coyle, 1975; Tinsley, 1981; Ursic & Hegstrom, 1985), but a national study

has not been conducted since 1984. Retail curriculum assessment, and the importance of strategy development and implementation in retailing courses (Harris & Walters, 1992) has been researched, but a specific study which focuses on the identification of competencies from an industry-based perspectives has not been researched on a national level. Some studies have surveyed retailers, but the studies have either been dated (Lazarus, 1978; Wheelen, Wheelen, & Rakes, 1974); concerned only with fashion or apparel merchandising (Beery, 1980; Garner & Buckley, 1988; McCuaig, Lee, Barker, & Johnson, 1996; Sheldon, 1985-1986); regional (Heitmeyer, Grise, & Force, 1992; Kotsiopoulos, Oliver, & Shim, 1993; Moore, 1995); or limited by the sample (Gush, 1996; Donnellan, 1996).

Retailing curriculum assessment is necessary to ensure that the retailing education offered today is thorough, relevant, and applicable to students and employers. With the changing business environment, it is even more critical in retailing education today that curriculum evaluation becomes a continual process. The needs of the industry must be accurately identified to appropriately prepare collegiate retailing graduates to meet the changing demands of entry-level retail managers.

The importance of the development of competencies is critical for curriculum assessment. Merchandising and marketing educators need to know which specific competencies are necessary for students seeking entry-level retail management positions. Although there are many research methodologies

which can be utilized to gather information about competencies desired by corporate recruiters, the most effective method is the Delphi technique of an expert panel. Survey research is less time consuming than the Delphi technique, but does not allow for interaction between respondents which may limit the creative input and the in-depth analysis of the issues. Face-to-face interviews allow for group consensus, but the expenses involved with gathering a representative group of experts from different geographical locations is time and cost prohibitive. These interviews also have the possible disadvantage of individuals being persuaded by a dominant participant which may lead to a misrepresentation of group opinion. Considering the research purpose of identifying knowledge, attitude, and skill competencies desired by corporate recruiters for entry-level retail management positions, the Delphi technique is the most cost-effective and most accurate method to arrive at a group consensus on the identification of these specific competencies.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The retail industry has changed greatly in the last two decades. The proliferation in number and variety of products and service offerings available, consumers' increased demand for quality merchandise, increased emphasis on customer service, new technology available to lend increased sophistication to a wide range of functions, growth of sales via non-store formats, and heightened importance of developing a market niche have combined to alter dramatically the retail landscape in the 1990s. Many of these forces of change have possible implications for competencies needed by entry-level retail management employees. The procedure which was followed in this study is divided into the following sections: (a) Conceptual Framework, (b) Research Design, (c) Selection of Sample, (d) Research Instrument, (e) Collection of Research Data, (f) Variables for the Study, and (g) Statistical Analysis of Data.

#### Conceptual Framework

The effectiveness of a specific educational curriculum is the result of careful curriculum development. Lewy (1977) discussed the evolution of the term curriculum. The traditional meaning of curriculum has been merely a brief list of educational objectives and the content taught in schools. This definition

has been expanded in more recent years to encompass activities, study materials, learning strategies, and program implementation.

### Curriculum Development

Curriculum development refers to the process of deciding what to teach and learn, along with all the considerations needed to make such decisions (Schubert, 1986). Hence, curriculum development and review is a continual process as illustrated in Figure 3.1 (Schleede & Lepisto, 1984). This model identified four major areas which initiate the curriculum development process: faculty philosophy and objectives, faculty resources, competitive analysis, and marketplace needs. This research focused on the fourth section of the curriculum development process, the marketplace needs.

### Competency-Based Education

The competency-based approach to education emerged in the late 1960s out of the growing emphasis in many sectors of society for accountability. Educational programs that utilize competencies are known as competency-based education (CBE). Accountability as it relates to the curriculum, within academic degree programs emphasize relevancy, adequacy, effectiveness, and efficiency (Kohlman, 1975). For students, CBE can be thought of as criterion-referenced education in which the desired outcomes relating to knowledge, attitude, and skill are stated as behavioral objectives. CBE assumes that all

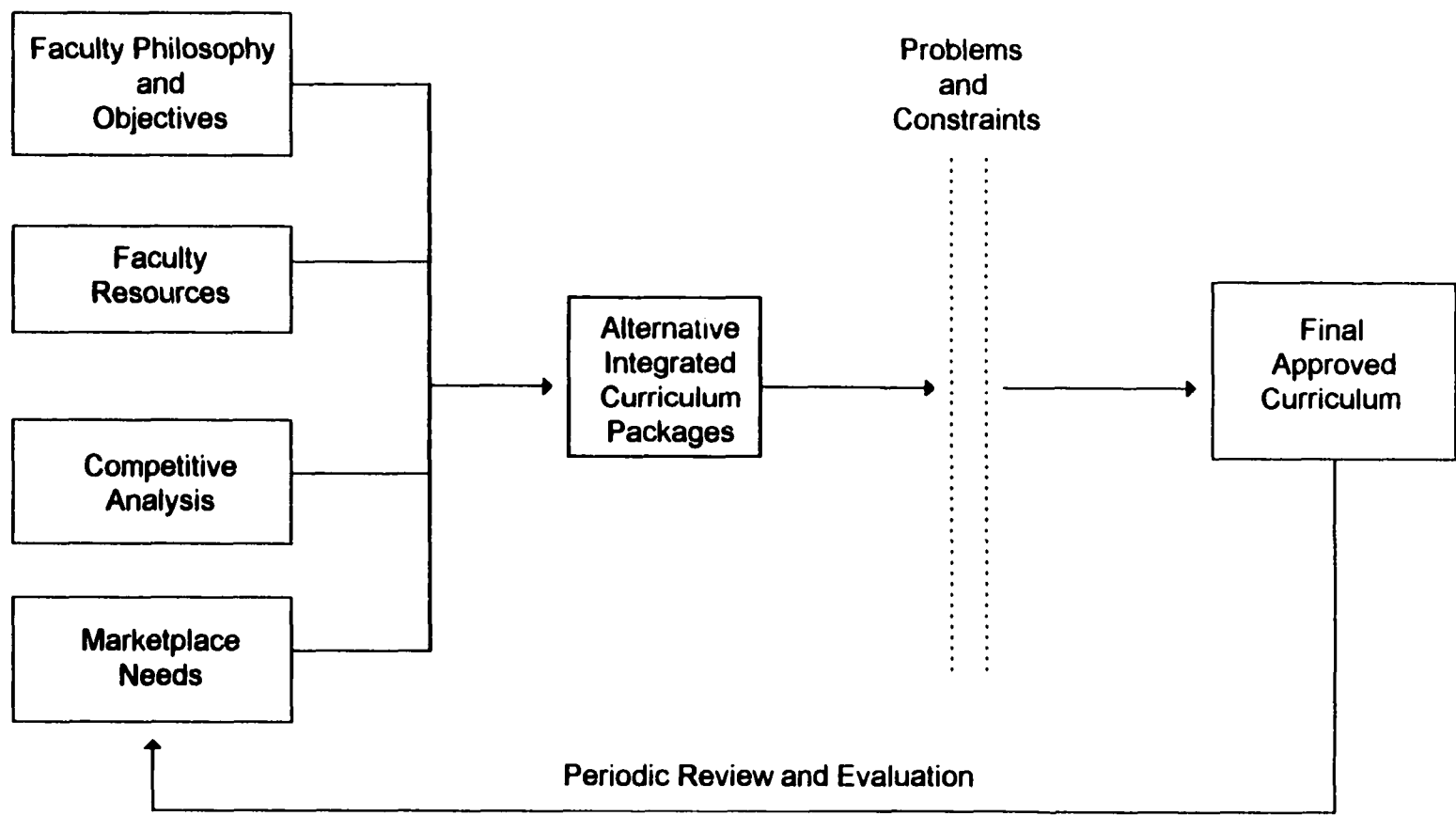


Figure 3.1

Model of Curriculum Development and Review



students will master the objectives at the specified level of performance (Chamberlain, 1992; Simpson, 1970). Competencies that students are expected to achieve form the foundation of CBE. Competencies (knowledge, attitude, skill) to be demonstrated by the learner are derived from tasks performed in specified work roles and are stated so as to make possible assessment of a learner's behavior in relation to specific competencies (Chamberlain, 1992; Dunnette & Hough, 1966; Lewy, 1977). Competencies describe the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will enable the learner to perform the task if he or she were in that role. In this research project, corporate recruiters and collegiate educators were queried in order to determine what knowledge, attitudes, and skills are needed by graduates to successfully enter management career paths in the retail industry.

### Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

The first step in curriculum development is the identification of educational objectives. Numerous classification systems exist for educational objectives. These objectives have been subdivided into three separate areas or domains of learning: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor (Chamberlain, 1992).

The cognitive domain is concerned with rational learning—knowing and thinking. Knowledge, use of the mind, and intellectual abilities are emphasized. The affective domain deals with emotional learning—caring and feeling. Attitudes, interests, values, and adjustments are considered. The psychomotor

domain relates to physical learning—doing and manipulating. Speed, accuracy, and dexterity in the development of physical skills are emphasized in this domain (Chamberlain, 1992).

Most educational objectives are based on the cognitive domain. Bloom (1956) developed six levels of learning: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The cognitive variable studied in this research project is labeled knowledge. Knowledge in this context refers facts, concepts, principles; the information or subject matter that an employee needs to know by memory or can be looked up when needed.

Affective educational objectives are not as easy to formulate as cognitive educational objectives. The affective domain includes attitudes, values and interests (Lewy, 1977). Chamberlain (1992) described five learning levels: receiving, responding, valuing, organization, and characterization. The affective variable in this study is labeled attitude. Attitude in this context refers to beliefs, feelings, values, opinions, ethics, expectations; the philosophy that an employee needs to endorse or possess.

The psychomotor domain involves the acquisition of skills and habits (Chamberlain, 1992; Lewy, 1977; Simpson, 1970). Simpson (1970) identified five levels of learning: perception, set, guided response, mechanism, and complex overt response. The psychomotor variable studied in this research project is labeled skill. Skill in this context refers to the ability to complete tasks

involving the use of one or more of the senses; the aptitude for and proficiency in performing functions an employee needs to demonstrate.

Although the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains have been used extensively in establishing educational objectives, the three variables in this study (knowledge, attitude, and skill) have also been used to set objectives and evaluative guidelines in industry (Dunnette, 1966).

### Research Design

A systematic qualitative research design was used for this study. The Delphi method utilizes a panel of experts to achieve group consensus on a particular topic through a series of carefully designed sequential questionnaires interspersed with feedback from the participants. Using the Delphi technique permits the avoidance of face-to-face discussions which are costly and may lead to inaccurate results due to the dominance of an opinion leader. The purpose of this study was to identify industry-based competencies which are necessary for college graduates seeking entry-level retail management positions. Competency categories elicited included: (a) knowledge, (b) attitude, and (c) skill, heretofore referred to as the KAS competencies. Each competency category was identified through a review of the relevant related research and literature.

Threats to external validity were controlled with the expert panel for Round I Questionnaire. The sampling error was controlled through the use of purposive sampling, and participants were selected based on their knowledge

and expertise in recruiting and hiring college graduates for executive positions in retail organizations. The non-response error was controlled by: (a) increasing response through the use of preliminary telephone screenings and (b) increasing response through the use of follow-up telephone interviews, facsimiles, and mailings. The measurement error was controlled by increasing rater-reliability after completion of Round I. Interrater reliability was ensured by requiring two independent coders to reach consensus before final wording of each competency. These competencies were then compared with a third researcher for accuracy.

Threats to external validity were controlled with the pilot test participants. The sampling error was controlled through the use of purposive sampling, and participants were selected based on their knowledge and expertise in collegiate retailing and merchandising curriculum. The non-response error was controlled by increasing response through the use of preliminary telephone screenings and increasing response through the use of follow-up telephone interviews, electronic mail, facsimiles, and mailings.

Content validity for the Educator Questionnaire was established by the pilot test. The sampling error was controlled through the use of purposive sampling, and participants were selected based on their knowledge and expertise in collegiate retailing and merchandising curriculum. Reliability of the results was increased by testing the participant fatigue factor through the development of two questionnaires with the competency statements placed in

reverse order. The non-response error was controlled by increasing response through the use of preliminary telephone screenings, follow-up telephone interviews, electronic mail, facsimiles, and mailings.

Content validity for Round II Questionnaire was established by the pilot test. The non-response error was controlled by increasing response through the use of follow-up telephone interviews, facsimiles, and mailings. Content validity for Round III Questionnaire was established by the level of agreement rating as a result of Round II Questionnaire. Competencies were deleted if the level of agreement rating received a mean of less than 3.0 or if the group did not reach consensus on agreement. A quartile deviation of 1.00 or less indicated consensus by the group.

### Selection of Sample

#### Expert Panelists

The population for this study was corporate recruiters from retail organizations in the United States. The sample ( $n = 25$ ) for the expert panel consisted of corporate recruiters in the United States who: (a) represented a variety of store segments, (b) represented major geographical areas, (c) recruited and hired graduates for entry-level retail management positions, and (d) represented retail organizations listed in the American Express Top 100 Retailers (Schultz, July 1997) and the American Express Top 100 Specialty Stores (Schultz, August 1997).

Participants for the expert panel were purposively selected based on their knowledge and expertise in recruiting for entry-level retail management positions. Seven store segments were selected for the sample including two supermarkets, two home improvement stores, three discount stores, two drug chains, seven department stores, three apparel stores, and seven value retailers.

During the week of November 5, 1997, the researcher contacted 27 corporate recruiters by telephone to explain the research study and elicit participation as an expert panelist for the Industry-Based Retail Competency Project. As a result of the telephone interviews, 25 agreed to participate in the study, one recruiter did not meet the criteria due to the discontinuation of the recruiting program at that organization, and one recruiter declined to participate. Table 3.1 summarizes the store segment and retail organization representation.

### Pilot Test Participants

The population for this study was merchandising and marketing collegiate educators in the United States. The sample ( $n = 6$ ) for the Pilot Test Questionnaire was educators in the United States holding membership in the American Collegiate Retailing Association (ACRA). The ACRA membership directory was edited ( $n = 272$ ) to exclude industry and international members. Participants that were selected met the following criteria: (a) listed as

Table 3.1

## Summary of Expert Panel by Store Segment and Retail Organization

Store Segment	Retail Organization	Location
Supermarkets	HEB	San Antonio, TX
	Kroger	Houston, TX
Home Improvement Stores	Home Depot	Dallas, TX
	Lowe's	N. Wilkesboro, NC
Drug Chains	Walgreen	Deerfield, IL
	Eckerd	Largo, FL
Discount Stores	Wal-Mart	Bentonville, AR
	K mart	Nanetca, CA
	Target	Smyrna, GA
	Target	Plano, TX
Department Stores	Sears	Hoffman Estates, IL
	JCPenney	Dallas, TX
	Neiman Marcus	Dallas, TX
	Dayton Hudson	Minneapolis, MN
	Foleys	Houston, TX
	Proffitt's	Alcoa, TN
Apparel Stores	Stage Stores	Houston, TX
	Stein Mart	Jacksonville, FL
	Eddie Bauer	Dallas, TX
Value Retailers	Toys R Us	Paramus, NJ
	Barnes & Noble	New York, NY
	Zales	Irving, TX
	CompUSA	Dallas, TX
	Office Depot	Irving, TX
	PetsMart	Phoenix, AZ
	Pier 1 Imports	Ft. Worth, TX

NOTE: Two recruiters represented Target: store division and merchandising division

current members in the ACRA directory, (b) represented a cross-section of merchandising and marketing curriculum areas, (c) represented diverse geographical locations, and (d) taught and conducted research in merchandising and/or retailing areas.

Participants were purposively selected based on the reputation and stature of the individual in their respective disciplines. The participants represented an equal distribution of merchandising and marketing educational disciplines.

During the week of February 9, 1998, the researcher contacted six educators by telephone to explain the research study and elicit participation for the pilot test. As a result of the telephone interviews, all six agreed to participate in the pilot study. Table 3.2 summarizes the pilot test sample by academic area and university affiliation.

**Table 3.2**

**Summary of Pilot Test Sample by Academic Area  
and University Affiliation**

<b>Academic Area</b>	<b>University Affiliation</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>San Francisco State University</b>	<b>San Francisco, CA</b>
	<b>Texas Woman's University</b>	<b>Denton, TX</b>
	<b>Texas Tech University</b>	<b>Lubbock, TX</b>
<b>Marketing</b>	<b>Texas A &amp; M University</b>	<b>College Station, TX</b>
	<b>University of Oklahoma</b>	<b>Norman, OK</b>
	<b>University of Tennessee</b>	<b>Memphis, TN</b>



### Educator Participants

The population for this study was merchandising and marketing collegiate educators in the United States. The sample ( $n = 24$ ) for the Educator Questionnaire was educators in the United States holding membership in the American Collegiate Retailing Association (ACRA). The ACRA membership directory was edited ( $n = 266$ ) to exclude industry and international members as well as pilot test participants. Participants that were selected met the following criteria: (a) listed as current members in the ACRA directory, (b) represented a cross section of merchandising and marketing curriculum areas, (c) represented diverse geographical locations, and (d) taught and/or conducted research in merchandising and/or marketing areas. The participants represented an equal distribution of merchandising and marketing academic disciplines.

During the week of February 16, 1998, the researcher contacted 25 educators by telephone and electronic mail to explain the research study and elicit participation for the Industry-Based Retail Competency Project. As a result of the telephone interviews, 24 agreed to participate in the study, and one elected not to participate. Table 3.3 summarizes the educator sample by academic area and university affiliation.

Table 3.3

## Summary of Educator Sample by Academic Area and University Affiliation

Academic Area	University Affiliation	Location
Merchandising	Oklahoma State University	Stillwater, OK
	University of Kentucky	Lexington, KY
	University of Georgia	Athens, GA
	Louisiana State University	Baton Rouge, LA
	University of South Carolina	Columbia, SC
	University of Tennessee	Knoxville, TN
	University of North Carolina	Greensboro, NC
	Auburn University	Auburn, AL
	University of Arizona	Tucson, AZ
	University of Tennessee	Chattanooga, TN
	North Dakota State University	Fargo, ND
Michigan State University	East Lansing, MI	
Marketing	Loyola University	New Orleans, LA
	Miami University	Oxford, OH
	Hofstra University	Hempstead, NY
	California State University	Los Angeles, CA
	Texas A & M University	College Station, TX
	Texas Tech University	Lubbock, TX
	University of Oklahoma	Norman, OK
	Rollins College	Winter Park, FL
	Santa Clara University	Santa Clara, CA
	Kennesaw State University	Kennesaw, GA
	Georgia Southern University	Statesboro, GA
University of Akron	Akron, OH	

Research Instrument

The research instrument consisted of five questionnaires: Rounds I, II, and III questionnaires, Pilot Test Questionnaire, and Educator. Copies of Round I Questionnaire, Pilot Test Questionnaire, Educator Questionnaire, Round II Questionnaire, and Round III Questionnaire appear in Appendixes A, B, C, D, and E respectively.

### Round I Questionnaire

Round I Questionnaire was developed to elicit information from corporate recruiters ( $n = 25$ ) regarding (a) knowledge competencies necessary for entry-level retail management positions, (b) attitude competencies necessary for entry-level retail management positions, (c) skill competencies necessary for entry-level retail management positions, and (d) demographic profiles. The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The questionnaire was formatted into a booklet, contained questions on both the front and back pages, was reproduced on white paper, was personally addressed with the participant's name, and was individually signed by the researcher and faculty advisor.

The first section elicited demographic information. These six questions included the following items: (a) years employed in the retail industry, (b) years employed with current organization, (c) job title, (d) recruitment responsibilities, (e) gender, and (f) educational level. The second, third, and fourth sections elicited information regarding entry-level retail management competencies for the areas of (a) knowledge, (b) attitude, and (c) skill. The competency sections required respondents to submit no more than five nor fewer than three statements for each of the KAS competency areas. Participants were instructed to determine if the competency statement generated applied to the store division, merchandising division, or both divisions. A copy of Round I Questionnaire appears in Appendix A.

### Pilot Test Questionnaire

Responses to Round I Questionnaire were independently analyzed by two researchers using content analysis to categorize the statements while retaining the integrity of the responses. The resulting competencies were then compared with a third researcher for accuracy and reduced to generic competencies by combining similar statements with appropriate substatements required for clarification. Competencies were categorized by knowledge, attitude, and skill, resulting in 45 knowledge competencies, 38 attitude competencies, and 44 skill competencies. The KAS competencies generated from Round I were then pilot tested. For all KAS competencies generated from Round I, similar statements were categorized into generic competencies in all capital letters, with clarifying statements in parentheses written in lower case letters.

The Pilot Test Questionnaire was developed to elicit information from collegiate educators ( $n = 6$ ) regarding (a) the agreement level with the KAS competencies developed as a result of Round I Questionnaire, (b) the store importance level for each of the KAS competencies, (c) the merchandising importance level for each of the KAS competencies, and (d) demographic information. The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first, second, and third sections elicited information regarding agreement level, store importance level, and merchandising importance level for each of the KAS competencies. A 5-point Likert scale was used for the agreement ratings, a 5-point Likert-type

scale was used for the store importance ratings, and a 5-point Likert-type scale was used for the merchandising importance ratings. The fourth section was designed to obtain demographic information and perceptions regarding the emphasis placed on product knowledge, leadership/team building, problem solving/decision making, retail related work experience, and future retail trends. The 14 demographic questions included the following items: (a) academic program, (b) undergraduate student enrollment, (c) annual graduates, (d) graduate employment placement, (e) salary ranges, (f) internship program, (g) undergraduate work experience, (h) educational outcome assessment, (i) academic experience, (j) employment status, (k) academic rank, (l) instructional responsibilities, (m) gender, and (n) educational background.

The Pilot Test Questionnaire was pretested for comprehension of the instructions, length of completion, and terminology and clarity of the competencies. A copy of the Pilot Test Questionnaire appears in Appendix B. Based on the analysis of pilot test data, 10 revisions were made in the questionnaire. The following changes were made prior to mailing the Educator Questionnaire to the 24 collegiate educators and Round II Questionnaire to the 25 corporate recruiters purposively selected to participate in this study.

1. In the instructions section of the questionnaire, definitions were stated for Store Division and Merchandising Division. It was believed that the additional definitions would more accurately describe the two divisions.

2. Additional definitions were inserted in the KAS competency sections.

The additional definitions were identical to those given on Round I Questionnaire. It was believed that the additional definitions would more accurately describe the competency categories.

3. The instructions for the level of importance scale was changed from "perceived level of importance of the competency in collegiate retailing/merchandising curricula" to "perceived level of importance of the competency for entry-level retail management positions." It was believed that the revised instructions would more accurately describe the action required for completion of the questionnaire.

4. Store division competencies were combined with store and merchandising division competencies. It was believed that this would alleviate confusion as to why some competencies were only listed under the store division, others listed under store and merchandising divisions, and none listed under merchandising division. It was believed since some panelists only recruited for one division, that these competencies may also apply to the other division. It was also believed that the agreement ratings and mean importance ratings could be used to delete any competencies the expert panel deemed inappropriate for a specific division.

5. Competencies which were duplicated within competency categories were deleted and listed under one KAS competency category. It was believed that eliminating competency duplication would decrease confusion and

participant fatigue. This resulted in 24 knowledge competencies, 26 attitude competencies, and 26 skill competencies.

6. The five-point Likert-type importance scale was divided into two importance scales: store division and merchandising division. It was believed that the additional scale would more accurately describe the action required for completion of the questionnaire.

7. The order of the five-point Likert agreement scale was reversed to place Strongly Disagree first and Strongly Agree last. It was believed that this would eliminate confusion and result in more accurate responses.

8. The order of the five-point Likert-type store division and merchandising division importance scales were reversed to place Not Important At All first and Extremely Important last. It was believed that this would eliminate confusion and result in more accurate responses.

9. Three questions, "How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on product knowledge in course offerings in the program or specialization leading to career positions in retail management?", "How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on leadership/team building in course offerings in the program or specialization leading to career positions in retail management?", and "How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on problem solving/decision making in course offerings in the program or specialization leading to career positions in retail management?", were changed to "How much emphasis does your academic unit/department

place on product knowledge in course offerings”, “How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on leadership/team building in course offerings”, and “How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on problem solving/decision making in course offerings?.” It was believed that the revised questions would eliminate confusion and result in more accurate responses.

10. The question, “What retail trends has your academic unit/department identified as: increasing in importance with regard to competencies undergraduate students will need in order to be prepared to successfully enter retail management positions in the next millennium, and decreasing in importance with regard to competencies undergraduate students will need in order to be prepared to successfully enter retail management positions in the next millennium?” was changed to “What retail trends has your academic unit/department identified as: increasing in importance for undergraduate students entering retail management positions in the next decade, and decreasing in importance for undergraduate students entering retail management positions in the next decade?.” It was believed that the revised question would eliminate confusion and result in more accurate responses.

### Educator Questionnaire

The Educator Questionnaire was developed to elicit information from the collegiate educators ( $n = 23$ ) regarding (a) the agreement level with the KAS



competencies developed as a result of Round I Questionnaire and the Pilot Test Questionnaire, (b) the store importance level for each of the KAS competencies, (c) the merchandising importance level for each of the KAS competencies, and (d) demographic information. The KAS competencies generated from Round I, and then pilot tested were included on the Educator Questionnaire. For all KAS competencies generated from Round I, similar statements were categorized into generic competencies in all capital letters, with clarifying statements in parentheses written in lower case letters. The KAS competencies were placed in random order on the Educator Questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The questionnaire was formatted into a booklet, contained questions on both the front and back pages, was reproduced on white paper, and was personally signed by the researcher and faculty advisor.

The first, second, and third sections elicited information regarding agreement level, store importance level, and merchandising importance level for each of the KAS competencies. A 5-point Likert scale was used for the agreement ratings, a 5-point Likert-type scale was used for the store importance ratings, and a 5-point Likert-type scale was used for the merchandising importance ratings. The fourth section elicited demographic information. The fourth section was designed to obtain demographic information and perceptions regarding the emphasis placed on product knowledge, leadership/team building, problem solving/decision making, and retail-related work experience. The 14 demographic questions included the following items: (a) academic program, (b)

undergraduate student enrollment, (c) annual graduates, (d) graduate employment placement, (e) salary ranges, (f) internship program, (g) undergraduate work experience, (h) educational outcome assessment, (i) academic experience, (j) employment status, (k) academic rank, (l) instructional responsibilities, (m) gender, and (n) educational background. A copy of the Educator Questionnaire appears in Appendix C.

Because of the length of the questionnaire (12 pages), there was concern that a fatigue factor could exist which would evidence as less variance of responses between the first and the last pages. Therefore, two questionnaires were developed with the KAS competencies placed in reverse order. The two questionnaires were equally divided and randomly distributed between the participants to test for fatigue. Testing for variance using a t-test between alternate forms of the questionnaire showed that out of 228 items, only two items were significant beyond the .001 level, less than 1% of the items, so it was concluded that fatigue was not a factor, so the pages were not rotated for the expert panelists in Round II.

### Round II Questionnaire

Round II Questionnaire was developed to elicit information from the corporate recruiters ( $n = 19$ ) regarding (a) the agreement level with the KAS competencies developed as a result of Round I Questionnaire and the Pilot Test Questionnaire, (b) the store importance level for each of the KAS competencies,

and (c) the merchandising importance level for each of the KAS competencies. Round II Questionnaire and the Educator Survey were identical with regard to the agreement level, store importance level, and merchandising importance level ratings for each of the 76 KAS competencies. The questionnaire was reproduced on white paper and was personally signed by the researcher and faculty advisor. The questionnaire consisted of three sections. The first, second, and third sections elicited information regarding agreement level, store importance level, and merchandising importance level for each of the KAS competencies. A 5-point Likert scale was used for the agreement ratings, a 5-point Likert-type scale was used for the store importance ratings, and a 5-point Likert-type scale was used for the merchandising importance ratings. A copy of Round II Questionnaire appears in Appendix D.

### Round III Questionnaire

The mean rating, median, standard deviation, and interquartile range for each of the KAS competencies were calculated for the total group for Round II Questionnaire for: (a) agreement rating, (b) store division importance rating, and (c) merchandising division importance rating. All KAS competencies generated from Round I were included in the final listing of KAS competencies as a result of the data analysis conducted on Round II. Only those KAS competencies in which the expert panel did not reach consensus as to importance ratings were included on Round III. Statistical consensus was

derived by determining the quartile deviation. A quartile deviation of 1.00 or less indicated consensus by the group. Competencies with consensus on agreement and an agreement rating mean of 3.0 or greater were reported to the expert panelists during Round III along with the respective ratings for store division importance and merchandising division importance.

Round III Questionnaire was developed to elicit consensus from the corporate recruiters ( $n = 16$ ) regarding (a) the store importance level for each of the KAS competencies, (b) the merchandising importance level for each of the KAS competencies, (c) demographic profiles, and (d) perceptions regarding future retail trends. The questionnaire was reproduced on white paper and personally signed by the researcher and faculty advisor. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section elicited information regarding the store importance level and merchandising importance level for each of the KAS competencies in which the expert panel had not reached consensus on Round II Questionnaire. Round III Questionnaire contained the median and interquartile range for each competency statement computed for the group in Round II, the panelist's original ratings, and a space by each competency for a new rating. Each panelist was asked to compare the median and interquartile range with his or her first rating for each competency when determining a new importance rating.

The second section was designed to obtain demographic information, the emphasis placed on product knowledge, leadership/team building, problem

solving/decision making, and retail related work experience, and perceptions regarding future retail trends. The six demographic questions included the following items: (a) educational recruitment requirements, (b) college recruitment practices, (c) executive training programs, (d) employment needs, (e) internship programs, and (f) starting salaries. A copy of Questionnaire III appears in Appendix E.

### Collection of Research Data

A modified Delphi procedure consisting of three rounds of questionnaires, a pilot test, and educator survey was used in conducting this study.

Questionnaires were distributed to participants via priority mail and/or facsimile.

#### Round I

On November 18, 1997, the following items were mailed via priority mail to the 25 corporate recruiters who responded affirmatively to the expert panel participation request during the preliminary telephone screening: (a) a cover letter with instructions for completing Round I Questionnaire, (b) Round I Questionnaire, which consisted of a demographic profile and competency sheets with blanks for entering competencies, and (c) a self-addressed, stamped envelope for convenience in returning the questionnaire. A copy of the cover letter and Round I Questionnaire may be found in Appendix A.

Fourteen days were allowed for the return of Round I Questionnaire.

Participants who did not return the completed questionnaire after fourteen days were contacted by telephone. During the follow-up telephone interviews, 10 participants requested a facsimile copy of Round I Questionnaire. Seven weeks after the initial mailing, a total of 25 expert panelists returned a completed Round I Questionnaire; resulting in a 100% response rate.

### Pilot Test

On February 16, 1997, the following items were sent by facsimile to the six collegiate educators who responded affirmatively to the participation request during the preliminary telephone screening: (a) a cover letter with instructions for completing the Pilot Test Questionnaire and (b) Pilot Test Questionnaire which consisted of a demographic profile and KAS competencies with clarifying statements. A copy of the cover letter and the Pilot Test Questionnaire appear in Appendix B.

Three days were allowed for the return of the Pilot Test Questionnaire. Participants who had not returned the completed questionnaire after three days were contacted by telephone. Six days after the initial sending, a total of six participants returned completed questionnaires, resulting in a 100% response rate.

### Educator Survey

On February 26, 1997, the following items were sent via priority mail to the 23 collegiate educators who responded affirmatively to the participation request during the preliminary telephone screening: (a) a cover letter with instructions for completing the Educator Questionnaire, (b) Educator Questionnaire which consisted of a demographic profile and KAS competencies with clarifying statements, and (c) a self-addressed, stamped envelope for convenience in returning the questionnaire. The cover letter and Educator Questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

Two weeks were allowed for the return of the Educator Questionnaire. Participants who had not returned the completed questionnaire after two weeks were contacted by telephone. Three weeks after the initial mailing, a total of 23 participants returned completed questionnaires, resulting in a 95.83% response rate. One questionnaire was returned after the statistical analyses was completed, and was therefore not included in the data analysis portion of this study.

### Round II

On March 22, 1998, the 25 corporate recruiters who had returned Round I Questionnaire were contacted by telephone to inform them that on March 23, 1998, Round I Questionnaire would be sent via priority mail or facsimile. Two participant mortalities resulted from the individuals leaving the organization. On

March 23, 1998, 23 corporate recruiters were sent via priority mail or facsimile a cover letter with instructions for completing Round II Questionnaire, and Round II Questionnaire which contained the KAS competencies with clarifying statements including: (a) a five-point Likert agreement scale, (b) a five-point Likert-type store importance scale, and (c) a five-point Likert-type merchandising importance scale. The cover letter and Round II Questionnaire can be found in Appendix D.

One week was allowed for the return of Round II Questionnaire II. Participants who had not returned the completed questionnaire after one week were contacted by telephone. Three weeks after the initial mailing, a total of 19 participants returned completed questionnaires, resulting in a 82.61% response rate. After three attempts were made to contact panelists by telephone, those failing to return a questionnaire were dropped out of the study.

### Round III

On April 20, 1998, the 19 corporate sent via priority mail or facsimile: (a) a cover letter with instructions for completing Round III Questionnaire, and (b) Round III Questionnaire which consisted of an organization profile, and KAS competencies with the group median, interquartile range, expert panelist's initial rating , and blanks for making changes in the level of importance rating. One participant mortality resulted from the individual taking an unexpected, indefinite



leave of absence from the organization. A copy of the cover letter and Round III Questionnaire may be found in Appendix E.

One week was allowed for the return of Round III Questionnaire.

Participants who had not returned the completed questionnaire after one week were contacted by telephone. Two weeks after the initial mailing, a total of 16 participants returned completed questionnaires, resulting in a 88.89% response rate. After three attempts were made to contact panelists by telephone, those failing to return a questionnaire were dropped out of the study.

#### Variables for the Study

The variables for the study were:

1. Knowledge competencies were comprised of competencies generated from Round I, which were validated and refined in the Pilot Test, Educator Survey, and Round II, resulting in 24 knowledge competencies. In the Educator Survey and in Round II each respondent rated the extent of his or her agreement with each competency statement on a 5-point Likert scale. In the Educator Survey and Round II, the respondents rated the level of importance for the store division and the level of importance for the merchandising division of each competency in the preparedness of graduates entering retail management career paths on a 5-point Likert-type scale. In Round III, the expert panelists rated the level of importance for the store division and the level of importance for the merchandising division for any KAS competency in which consensus was not

achieved in Round II. Knowledge was treated as a continuous variable.

Individual agreement scores generated in Round II and III were averaged and an interquartile range of 1.00 or less was used for congruity.

Validity of the knowledge competency variable was established by data analysis of the agreement rating mean and interquartile range as a result of Round II. All 24 knowledge competencies attained an agreement rating mean of greater than 3.00, corresponding to a rating "Agree or Strongly Agree" that the competency was necessary for entry-level retail management positions. Additionally, all 24 knowledge competencies had an interquartile range of 1.00 or less establishing congruity.

Reliability for knowledge agreement was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For the corporate recruiter sample, a coefficient of .86 was calculated on the 24 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale. For the collegiate educator sample, a coefficient of .93 was calculated on the 24 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale.

Reliability for the knowledge store importance rating was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For the corporate recruiter sample, a coefficient of .83 was calculated on the 24 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale. For the collegiate educator sample, a coefficient of .94 was calculated on the 24 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale.

Reliability for the knowledge merchandising importance rating was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For the corporate recruiter sample, a coefficient of .91 was calculated on the 24 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale. For the collegiate educator sample, a coefficient of .93 was calculated on the 24 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale.

The reliability for the knowledge agreement scale, knowledge store importance scale, and knowledge merchandising importance scale indicated acceptable levels of reliability. Based on the reliability, it was concluded that the knowledge competencies were reliable and valid as necessary for entry-level retail management positions.

2. Attitude competencies were comprised of competencies generated from Round I, which were validated and refined in the Pilot Test, Educator Survey, and Round II, resulting in 26 attitude competencies. In the Educator Survey and in Round II each respondent rated the extent of his or her agreement with each competency statement on a 5-point Likert scale. In the Educator Survey and Round II, the respondents rated the level of importance for the store division and the level of importance for the merchandising division of each competency in the preparedness of graduates entering retail management career paths on a 5-point Likert-type scale. In Round III, the corporate recruiters rated the level of importance for the store division and the level of importance for the merchandising division for any KAS competency in which consensus was not

achieved in Round II. Attitude was treated as a continuous variable. Individual agreement scores generated in Round II and III were averaged and an interquartile range of 1.00 or less was used for congruity.

Validity of the attitude competency variable was established by data analysis of the agreement rating mean and interquartile range as a result of Round II. All 26 attitude competencies attained an agreement rating mean of greater than 3.00, corresponding to a rating "Agree or Strongly Agree" that the competency was necessary for entry-level retail management positions. Additionally, all 26 attitude competencies had an interquartile range of 1.00 or less establishing congruity.

Reliability for attitude agreement was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For the corporate recruiter sample, a coefficient of .91 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale. For the collegiate educator sample, a coefficient of .87 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale.

Reliability for the attitude store importance rating was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For the corporate recruiter sample, a coefficient of .92 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale. For the collegiate educator sample, a coefficient of .89 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale.

Reliability for the attitude merchandising importance rating was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For the corporate recruiter sample, a coefficient of .91 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale. For the collegiate educator sample, a coefficient of .94 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale.

The reliability for the attitude agreement scale, attitude store importance scale, and attitude merchandising importance scale indicated acceptable levels of reliability. Based on the reliability, it was concluded that the attitude competencies were reliable and valid as necessary for entry-level retail management positions.

3. Skill competencies were comprised of competencies generated from Round I, which were validated and refined in the Pilot Test, Educator Survey, and Round II, resulting in 26 skill competencies. In the Educator Survey and in Round II each respondent rated the extent of his or her agreement with each competency statement on a 5-point Likert scale. In the Educator Survey and Round II, the respondents rated the level of importance for the store division and the level of importance for the merchandising division of each competency in the preparedness of graduates entering retail management career paths on a 5-point Likert-type scale. In Round III, the expert panelists rated the level of importance for the store division and the level of importance for the merchandising division for any KAS competency in which consensus was not

achieved in Round II. Skill was treated as a continuous variable. Individual agreement scores generated in Round II and III were averaged and an interquartile range of 1.00 or less was used for congruity.

Validity of the skill competency variable was established by data analysis of the agreement rating mean and interquartile range as a result of Round II. All 26 skill competencies attained an agreement rating mean of greater than 3.00, corresponding to a rating "Agree or Strongly Agree" that the competency was necessary for entry-level retail management positions. Additionally, all 26 skill competencies had an interquartile range of 1.00 or less establishing congruity.

Reliability for skill agreement was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For the corporate recruiter sample, a coefficient of .87 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale. For the collegiate educator sample, a coefficient of .94 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale.

Reliability for the skill store importance rating was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For the corporate recruiter sample, a coefficient of .87 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale. For the collegiate educator sample, a coefficient of .91 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale.

Reliability for the skill merchandising importance rating was calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For the corporate recruiter sample, a

coefficient of .91 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale. For the collegiate educator sample, a coefficient of .94 was calculated on the 26 items, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scale.

The reliability for the skill agreement scale, skill store importance scale, and skill merchandising importance scale indicated acceptable levels of reliability. Based on the reliability, it was concluded that the skill competencies were reliable and valid as necessary for entry-level retail management positions.

4. The product knowledge variable was division specific: store and merchandising. Product knowledge was initially measured by the response to item 6 on Round III Questionnaire distributed to the expert panelists in Round III and item 7 on the Educator Questionnaire. Respondents rated the emphasis their organization or academic unit placed on product knowledge on a 6-point Likert-type scale. Product knowledge was measured by combining the individual store and merchandising division scores. Product knowledge was treated as a continuous variable. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the variable.

5. The leadership/team building variable was division specific: store and merchandising. Leadership/team building was initially measured by the response to item 7 on Round III Questionnaire distributed to the expert panelists in Round III and item 8 on the Educator Questionnaire. Respondents rated the emphasis their organization or academic unit placed on leadership/team building

on a 6-point Likert-type scale. Leadership/team building was measured by combining the individual store and merchandising division scores.

Leadership/team building was treated as a continuous variable. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the variable.

6. The problem solving/decision making variable was division specific: store and merchandising. Problem solving/decision making was initially measured by the response to item 8 on Round III Questionnaire distributed to the expert panelists in Round III and item 9 on the Educator Questionnaire. Respondents rated the emphasis their organization or academic unit placed on problem solving/decision making on a 6-point Likert-type scale. Problem solving/decision making was measured by combining the individual store and merchandising division scores. Problem solving/decision making was treated as a continuous variable. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the variable.

7. The retail-related work experience variable was division specific: store and merchandising. Retail-related work experience was initially measured by the response to item 9 on Round III Questionnaire distributed to the expert panelists in Round III and item 10 on the Educator Questionnaire. Respondents rated the emphasis their organization or academic unit placed on retail-related work experience on a 6-point Likert-type scale. Retail-related work experience was measured by combining the individual store and merchandising division scores. Retail-related work experience was treated as a continuous variable.



Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the variable.

8. Retail trends increasing and decreasing in importance for undergraduate students entering retail management positions in the next decade were compiled from responses to item 10 on Round III Questionnaire and item 13 on the Educator Questionnaire using content analysis. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the variable.

### Statistical Analysis of Data

Qualitative and quantitative procedures were employed to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics including frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations were used in describing the samples. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for performing all statistical tests and determining reliability levels. For all statistical tests, .05 was used to determine significance. The Delphi rounds, pilot test, educator survey, and research questions one through eight were analyzed as follows:

#### Round I

KAS competencies necessary for entry-level retail management positions were elicited from the expert panelists. Responses were analyzed by two researchers using content analysis to categorize the competencies while retaining the integrity of the responses. The resulting competencies were then

compared with a third researcher for accuracy and reduced to generic competencies by combining similar statements with appropriate substatements required for clarification. A total of 45 knowledge competencies, 38 attitude competencies, and 44 skill competencies were developed.

### Pilot Test

The Pilot Test Questionnaire was pretested for comprehension of the instructions, length of completion, and terminology and clarity of the competencies. Based on the analysis of pilot test data, 10 revisions were made in the questionnaire.

### Educator Survey

The KAS competencies generated from Round I, and then pilot tested were included on the Educator Questionnaire. For all KAS competencies generated from Round I and pilot tested, similar statements were categorized into generic competencies in all capital letters, with clarifying statements in parentheses written in lower case letters. The KAS competencies were placed in random order on the Educator Questionnaire.

Because of the length of the questionnaire (12 pages), there was concern that a fatigue factor could exist which would evidence as less variance of responses between the first and the last pages. Therefore, two questionnaires were developed with the KAS competencies placed in reverse order. The two

questionnaires were equally divided and randomly distributed between the participants to test for fatigue.

The alternate forms of the questionnaire were analyzed using a t-test to determine differences in response patterns. The alternate form reliability and instrument internal consistency was established using Cronbach's alpha for each of the nine scales: Knowledge Agreement, Knowledge Store Importance, Knowledge Merchandising Importance, Attitude Agreement, Attitude Store Importance, Attitude Merchandising Importance, Skill Agreement, Skill Store Importance, and Skill Merchandising Importance. Table 3.4 summarizes the alternate form reliability coefficients. The testing for variance between the two alternate forms of the questionnaire showed that fatigue was not a factor, so the pages were not rotated for the expert panelists in Round II.

### Round II

The revised KAS competency statements resulting from the pilot test were rated for level of agreement and level of importance for the store division and merchandising division by the expert panelists. Corporate recruiters rated the level of agreement using a 5-point Likert scale, the level of importance for the store division using a 5-point Likert-type scale, and the level of importance for the merchandising division using a 5-point Likert-type scale. Frequency distributions were obtained for the KAS competency statements. Medians, standard deviations and interquartile ranges were calculated for each of the KAS

Table 3.4

## Alternate Form Reliability Coefficients

Instrument	Type	Items	Score Range	Cronbach's Alpha
Agreement Form 1	Likert	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .88$
Store Importance Form 1	Likert-type	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .90$
Merchandising Importance Form 1	Likert-type	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .89$
Agreement Form 2	Likert	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .90$
Store Importance Form 2	Likert-type	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .93$
Merchandising Importance Form 2	Likert-type	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .93$

competencies. A quartile deviation of 1.00 or less indicated consensus by the group.

Means for level of agreement with the competency statements were calculated using a 5-point Likert scale to determine which KAS competency statements should be included in the final development of the KAS competencies. Group consensus was considered for any KAS competency statement with a quartile deviation of 1.00 or less and a level of agreement mean of 3.0 or greater.

### Round III

The KAS competencies which were developed by group consensus in Round II were evaluated using descriptive statistics. Importance ratings for each competency were established and ordered based on the expert panel's mean

ratings for the store division and merchandising division. A level of hierarchy within each KAS competency category was established.

### Research Questions

RQ.1 What knowledge, attitude, and skill competencies were desired by corporate recruiters for entry-level retail management positions?

Data resulting from Round I were analyzed by two researchers using content analysis to categorize the competencies while retaining the integrity of the responses. The resulting competencies were then compared with a third researcher for accuracy and reduced to generic competencies by combining similar statements with appropriate substatements required for clarification. The competencies were evaluated using descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation, and interquartile range).

Validity of the KAS competencies was established by data analysis of the agreement rating mean and interquartile range as a result of Round II. All 24 knowledge competencies, 26 attitude competencies, and 26 skill competencies attained an agreement rating mean of greater than 3.00, corresponding to a rating "Agree or Strongly Agree" that the competencies were necessary for entry-level retail management positions. Additionally, all 24 knowledge competencies, 26 attitude competencies, and 26 skill competencies had an interquartile range of 1.00 or less establishing congruity. Reliability for the KAS agreement rating scale, store importance scale, and merchandising importance

ratings were established with all nine scales attaining an alpha coefficient greater than .82, indicating an acceptable level of reliability for the scales. It was concluded that the KAS competencies were reliable and valid as necessary for entry-level retail management positions.

**RQ.2** What levels of hierarchy existed in the knowledge, attitude, and skill competency categories?

Data resulting from Rounds II and III were analyzed to establish levels of hierarchy within the competency categories. Descriptive statistics (mean, median, and standard deviation) were calculated to analyze the KAS competencies. Based on the mean for the store division importance rating and the merchandising division importance rating, a hierarchy was established within the knowledge, attitude, and skill competency categories.

**RQ.3** What were the differences among corporate recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators on the level of agreement and level of importance ratings of competencies?

Data resulting from Rounds II and the Educator Survey were analyzed to determine differences between the level of agreement and level of importance ratings of competencies desired by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators. In order to assess significant differences among the dependent variables, (KAS level of agreement, KAS store importance, and KAS merchandising importance) on the independent variable of subject category (merchandising educator, marketing educator, and recruiter), a one-way analysis

of variance (ANOVA) was used. Based on the results of the one-way analysis of variance, a multiple comparison of analysis was conducted to assess the existence of significant differences between subject categories. If a significant  $F$  ratio was found, a post hoc comparison, Tukey's HSD test, was applied to determine where significant differences existed.

**RQ.4** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for product knowledge in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?

Data resulting from Round III and the Educator Survey were analyzed to determine the perceived need for product knowledge by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the perceived need for product knowledge in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions. Product knowledge was measured by combining the individual store and merchandising division scores.

**RQ.5** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for leadership/team building in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?

Data resulting from Round III and the Educator Survey were analyzed to determine the perceived need for leadership/team building by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the perceived need for leadership/team

building in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions. Leadership/team building was measured by combining the individual store and merchandising division scores.

**RQ.6** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for problem solving/decision making in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?

Data resulting from Round III and the Educator Survey were analyzed to determine the perceived need for problem solving/decision making by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the perceived need for problem solving/decision making in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions. Problem solving/decision making was measured by combining the individual store and merchandising division scores.

**RQ.7** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for retail-related work experience in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?

Data resulting from Round III and the Educator Survey were analyzed to determine the perceived need for retail-related work experience by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the perceived need for retail-related work experience in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management



positions. Retail-related work experience were measured by combining the individual store and merchandising division scores.

**RQ.8** What did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive as future retail trends increasing and decreasing in importance for graduates entering entry-level retail management positions in the next decade?

Data resulting from Round III and the Educator Survey were analyzed to identify retail trends increasing and decreasing in importance. Content analysis was used to analyze the trends in competencies for entry-level retail management positions. These were compiled by two independent researchers and then compared for accuracy with a third researcher from responses to items 10 on Round III Questionnaire and item 13 on the Educator Questionnaire using content analysis. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the data.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The primary purpose of this study was to identify entry-level retail management competencies from a broad multi-company perspective that could serve as a guide for developing, evaluating, and restructuring retailing and merchandising curricula at the collegiate level. A secondary purpose was to assign each competency to a category of learning that could serve as a catalyst in setting instructional objectives and measuring educational outcomes. A third purpose was to assess the level of importance assigned to each competency by corporate recruiters from a broad cross section of retail organizations that could assist in establishing priorities in retailing and merchandising curricula. It was hypothesized that through the examination of industry-based competencies and the delineation of competency significance within learning categories, an industry-wide conceptual framework could be developed which could serve as a benchmark for retailing and merchandising curricula. Information regarding knowledge, attitude, and skill (KAS) competencies was obtained through responses to three rounds of the Delphi technique of group consensus and an Educator Survey. Rounds I, II, and III questionnaires and the Educator Questionnaire appear in Appendixes A, C, D, and E, respectively.

Data were analyzed to determine (a) KAS competencies, (b) levels of hierarchy within the KAS competency categories for the store division and

merchandising division, (c) differences among corporate recruiters, merchandising collegiate educators, and marketing collegiate educators on the level of agreement and level of importance ratings of competencies for entry-level retail management positions, (d) what degree corporate recruiters, merchandising and marketing collegiate educators perceived the need for product knowledge, leadership/team building, problem solving/decision making, retail-related work experience, and (e) what retail trends corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceived as increasing and decreasing in importance for graduates entering entry-level retail management positions in the next decade.

Data were collected from corporate recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators in the United States during the winter of 1997 and spring of 1998. The results of the study are reported in five sections: (a) description of the sample, (b) demographic characteristics, (c) reliability of the scales, (d) analysis of research questions, and (e) summary of data analysis.

### Description of the Sample

The population for this study was corporate recruiters from retail organizations in the United States. The sample ( $n = 25$ ) for the expert panel consisted of corporate recruiters in the United States who: (a) represented a variety of store segments, (b) represented major geographical areas, (c) recruited and hired graduates for entry-level retail management positions, and (d) represented retail organizations listed in the American Express Top 100

Retailers (Schultz, July 1997) and the American Express Top 100 Specialty Stores (Schultz, August 1997). A total of seven store segments were represented: two supermarkets, two home improvement stores, two drug chains, three discount stores, five department stores, three apparel stores, and seven value retailers.

The population for the Educator Survey was merchandising and marketing collegiate educators in the United States. The sample ( $n = 24$ ) for the Educator Questionnaire was educators in the United States holding membership in the American Collegiate Retailing Association (ACRA). The ACRA membership directory was edited ( $n = 266$ ) to exclude industry and international members as well as pilot test participants. Participants that were selected met the following criteria: (a) listed as current members in the ACRA directory, (b) represented a cross section of merchandising and marketing curriculum areas, (c) represented diverse geographical locations, and (d) taught and/or conducted research in merchandising and/or marketing areas. Participation was voluntary and the subjects were informed to rights as human subjects.

### Round I

In Round I, 25 questionnaires were sent via priority mail or facsimile to corporate recruiters, of which 25 were returned, resulting in a 100% response rate. Table 4.1 summarizes the expert panel participants in Round I.

### Educator Survey

In the Educator Survey, 24 questionnaires were mailed or sent via facsimile to collegiate educators. A total of 23 were returned by respondents, resulting in a 95.83% response rate. Table 4.2 summarizes the collegiate educators in the Educator Survey.

### Round II

Prior to the initial mailing of Round II, two participant mortalities occurred. In Round II, 23 questionnaires were sent via priority mail or facsimile to corporate recruiters, of which 19 were returned by respondents, resulting in an 82.61% response rate. After three attempts were made, nonrespondents were dropped out of the study. Table 4.3 summarizes the expert panel participants in Round II.

Table 4.1

## Round I Expert Panel Participants

Store Segment	Retail Organization	Location
Supermarkets	H.E.B.	San Antonio, TX
	Kroger	Houston, TX
Home Improvement Stores	Home Depot	Dallas, TX
	Lowe's	N. Wilkesboro, NC
Drug Chains	Walgreens	Deerfield, IL
	Eckerd	Largo, FL
Discount Stores	Wal-Mart	Bentonville, AR
	K-mart	Nanetca, CA
	Target	Smyrna, GA
	Target	Plano, TX
Department Stores	JCPenney	Dallas, TX
	Neiman Marcus	Dallas, TX
	Dayton Hudson	Minneapolis, MN
	Foley's	Houston, TX
	Proffitt's	Alcoa, TN
Apparel Stores	Stage Stores	Houston, TX
	Stein Mart	Jacksonville, FL
	Eddie Bauer	Dallas, TX
Value Retailers	Toys "R" Us	Paramus, NJ
	Barnes and Noble	New York, NY
	Zale	Irving, TX
	CompUSA	Dallas, TX
	Office Depot	Irving, TX
	PETSMART	Phoenix, AZ
	Pier 1 Imports	Ft. Worth, TX

NOTE: Two recruiters represented Target: store division and merchandising division.

Table 4.2

## Educator Survey Participants

Academic Area	University Affiliation	Location
Merchandising	Oklahoma State University	Stillwater, OK
	University of Kentucky	Lexington, KY
	University of Georgia	Athens, GA
	Louisiana State University	Baton Rouge, LA
	University of South Carolina	Columbia, SC
	University of Tennessee	Knoxville, TN
	University of North Carolina	Greensboro, NC
	Auburn University	Auburn, AL
	University of Arizona	Tucson, AZ
	University of Tennessee	Chattanooga, TN
North Dakota State University	Fargo, ND	
Michigan State University	East Lansing, MI	
Marketing	Loyola University	New Orleans, LA
	Miami University	Oxford, OH
	Hofstra University	Hempstead, NY
	Texas Tech University	Lubbock, TX
	University of Oklahoma	Norman, OK
	Rollins College	Winter Park, FL
	Santa Clara University	Santa Clara, CA
	Kennesaw State University	Kennesaw, GA
	Georgia Southern University	Statesboro, GA
	Texas A & M University	College Station, TX
University of Akron	Akron, OH	

Table 4.3

## Round II Expert Panel Participants

<b>Store Segment</b>	<b>Retail Organization</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>Supermarkets</b>	H.E.B.	San Antonio, TX
<b>Home Improvement Stores</b>	Home Depot Lowe's	Dallas, TX N. Wilkesboro, NC
<b>Drug Chains</b>	Walgreens	Deerfield, IL
<b>Discount Stores</b>	Wal-Mart K-mart Target Target	Bentonville, AR Nanetca, CA Smyrna, GA Plano, TX
<b>Department Stores</b>	JCPenney Dayton Hudson Proffitt's	Dallas, TX Minneapolis, MN Alcoa, TN
<b>Apparel Stores</b>	Stage Stores Stein Mart Eddie Bauer	Houston, TX Jacksonville, FL Dallas, TX
<b>Value Retailers</b>	Toys "R" Us Zale CompUSA PETsMART Pier 1 Imports	Paramus, NJ Irving, TX Dallas, TX Phoenix, AZ Ft. Worth, TX

**NOTE: Two recruiters represented Target: store division and merchandising division.**



Round III

Prior to the initial mailing of Round III, one participant mortality occurred. In Round III, 18 questionnaires were mailed or sent via facsimile to corporate recruiters, of which 16 were returned by respondents, resulting in an 88.89% response rate. Table 4.4 summarizes the expert panelists in Round III.

**Table 4.4**  
**Round III Expert Panel Participants**

<b>Store Segment</b>	<b>Retail Organization</b>	<b>Location</b>
Supermarkets	H.E.B.	San Antonio, TX
Home Improvement Stores	Lowe's	N. Wilkesboro, NC
Drug Chains	Walgreens	Deerfield, IL
Discount Stores	Wal-Mart K-mart Target Target	Bentonville, AR Nanetca, CA Smyrna, GA Plano, TX
Department Stores	JCPenney Dayton Hudson Proffitt's	Dallas, TX Minneapolis, MN Alcoa, TN
Apparel Stores	Stage Stores Stein Mart	Houston, TX Jacksonville, FL
Value Retailers	Toys "R" Us Zale CompUSA PETS MART	Paramus, NJ Irving, TX Dallas, TX Phoenix, AZ

**NOTE: Two recruiters represented Target: store division and merchandising division.**

## Demographic Characteristics

### Corporate Recruiters

Demographic data were collected using the demographic information section on Round I Questionnaire. The demographic characteristics of the corporate recruiters included gender, educational level, years employed in the retail industry, years employed with current organization, employment status, and recruitment responsibilities. The percentage distribution of corporate recruiters by demographic characteristics appears in Table 4.5.

The corporate recruiters represented seven store segments including two supermarkets, two home improvement stores, two drug chains, three discount stores, six department stores, three apparel stores, and seven value retailers. The corporate recruiters included both female (60.0%) and male (40.0%). The majority of recruiters had some college education including a bachelor's degree (68.0%) or a master's degree (20.0%). Recruiters had been employed in the retail industry an average of 13.4 years, and had been employed an average of 9 years with their current organization. Eighty percent of recruiters were corporate-level employees and 16.0% were regional personnel. A total of 44.0% recruited for both the store and merchandising divisions, 48.0% recruited only for the store division, and 8.0% recruited only for the merchandising division. For those recruiters who recruited for the store division, the majority of respondents planned recruiting efforts (87.0%), coordinated recruiting efforts

Table 4.5

## Personal Characteristics of Recruiters

Characteristic	n	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	15	60.0
Male	10	40.0
<b>Educational Background</b>		
High school diploma/equivalent	1	4.0
Associates degree	2	8.0
Bachelors degree	17	68.0
Graduate degree	5	20.0
<b>Years Employed in Retail Industry</b>		
1 - 5	7	28.0
6 - 10	3	12.0
11 - 15	8	32.0
16 - 20	2	8.0
21 +	5	20.0
<b>Years Employed at Present Organization</b>		
1 - 5	13	52.0
6 - 10	5	20.0
11 - 15	6	24.0
16 +	1	4.0
<b>Employment Status</b>		
Corporate level	20	80.0
Regional level	4	16.0
<b>Recruitment Area</b>		
Store Division	12	48.0
Merchandising Division	2	8.0
Both Store and Merchandising Divisions	11	44.0
<b>Recruitment Responsibilities for the Store Division</b>		
Plan recruiting efforts	20	87.0
Coordinate recruiting efforts	17	73.9
Personally recruit applicants	13	56.5
Participate in other recruiting activities	5	21.7

Table 4.5 (cont.)

Characteristic	n	%
<b>Recruitment Responsibilities for the Merchandising Division</b>		
Plan recruiting efforts	12	92.3
Coordinate recruiting efforts	11	84.6
Personally recruit applicants	10	76.9
Participate in other recruiting activities	3	23.1

(73.9%), and personally recruited applicants (56.5%). For those recruiters who recruited for the merchandising division, 92.3% of respondents planned recruiting efforts, 84.6% coordinated recruiting efforts, and 76.9% personally recruited applicants.

### Retail Organizations

Demographic data were collected using the demographic information section on Round III Questionnaire. The demographic characteristics of the retail organizations included entry-level retail management positions, executive training program, and internship program. The percentage distribution of organizations by demographic characteristics appears in Table 4.6.

The retail organizations represented seven store segments including one supermarket, one home improvement store, one drug chain, three discount stores, three department stores, two apparel stores, and four value retailers. Fifty percent of the organizations required a college degree for entry-level retail

Table 4.6

## Characteristics of Retail Organizations

Characteristic	Store	Store	Mdsg	Mdsg
	Division	Division	Division	Division
	n	%	n	%
<b>ENTRY-LEVEL MANAGEMENT POSITIONS</b>				
<b>Educational Requirement</b>				
<b>College Degree</b>				
Yes	8	50.0	5	62.5
No	8	50.0	3	37.5
<b>Recruit on Campus</b>				
Yes	16	100.0	8	100.0
No	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>If Yes: Number of Campuses</b>				
<b>Recruited</b>				
1 - 50	10	62.5	7	87.5
51 - 100	3	18.8	1	12.5
101+	2	12.5	0	0.0
<b>If Yes: Academic Areas</b>				
<b>Recruited</b>				
Management	6	37.5	6	75.0
Marketing	5	31.3	7	87.5
Merchandising	6	37.5	7	87.5
Retailing	6	37.5	6	75.0
Other	2	12.5	3	37.5
No specific area	2	12.5	2	25.0
<b>GPA Requirement</b>				
Yes	13	81.3	4	50.0
No	3	18.8	4	50.0
<b>If Yes: Minimum GPA</b>				
2.0 - 2.5	3	23.1	1	25.0
2.5 - 3.0	10	76.9	3	75.0

Table 4.6 (cont.)

Characteristic	Store Division n	Store Division %	Mdsg Division n	Mdsg Division %
<b>Average Annual Salary</b>				
<b>Offered to College Graduates</b>				
\$17,000 - \$19,999	2	12.5	0	0.0
\$20,000 - \$22,999	0	0.0	2	25.0
\$23,000 - \$25,999	3	18.8	1	12.5
\$26,000 - \$28,999	5	31.3	3	37.5
\$29,000 - \$31,999	4	25.0	2	25.0
\$32,000 - \$35,999	2	12.5	4	50.0
\$36,000 +	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>EXECUTIVE TRAINING PROGRAM</b>				
<b>Executive Training Program</b>				
Yes	14	87.5	6	75.0
No	2	12.5	2	25.0
<b>If Yes: Recruited and Hired</b>				
Corporate level	5	35.7	6	100.0
Store level	13	92.9	2	33.3
<b>If Yes: Planned and Supervised</b>				
Corporate level	9	64.3	6	100.0
Store level	12	85.7	4	66.7
<b>If Yes: Length of Executive Training Program</b>				
1 - 20 weeks	6	42.9	4	66.7
21 - 50 weeks	2	14.3	0	0.0
51 + weeks	2	14.3	2	33.3
<b>If Yes: Number of Employees Hired Annually</b>				
0 - 500	8	57.1	6	100.0
501 - 1000	5	35.7	0	0.0
1001 +	3	21.4	0	0.0
<b>If Yes: Employees Hired Annually College Graduates</b>				
0 - 500	12	85.7	6	62.5
501 - 1000	2	14.3	0	0.0

Table 4.6 (cont.)

Characteristic	Store Division n	Store Division %	Mdsg Division n	Mdsg Division %
<b>INTERNSHIP PROGRAM</b>				
<b>Internship Program</b>				
Yes	14	87.5	6	75.0
No	2	12.5	2	25.0
<b>If Yes: Number Hired Annually</b>				
0 - 100	11	78.6	5	83.3
101 +	3	21.4	1	16.7
<b>If Yes: Level Recruited and Hired</b>				
Corporate	6	42.9	6	100.0
Store	13	92.9	2	33.3
<b>If Yes: Level Planned and Supervised</b>				
Corporate	10	71.4	6	100.0
Store	10	71.4	3	50.0
<b>If Yes: Length of Internship</b>				
0 - 10 weeks	9	64.3	3	50.0
11 + weeks	4	28.6	3	50.0
<b>If Yes: Recruit for Internship Program</b>				
Yes	12	85.7	6	100.0
No	4	28.6	0	0.0
<b>If Yes: Number of Campus Visited to Recruit Interns</b>				
0 - 50	9	64.3	4	66.7
51 - 100	3	21.4	2	33.3

management positions for the store division and 62.5% for the merchandising division. For the store division, academic areas in which organizations recruited were merchandising (37.5%), retailing (37.5%), management (37.5%), marketing (31.3%), other (12.5%), and no specific area (12.5%). For the merchandising division, academic areas in which organizations recruited were merchandising (87.5%), marketing (87.5%), retailing (75.0%), management (75.0%), other (37.5%), and no specific area (25.0%). Organizations (81.3%) had a GPA requirement for the store division and 50.0% for the merchandising division. All the organizations recruited on campuses for both the store division and the merchandising division. The average number of campuses recruited for the store division was 53 and for the merchandising division 25. The average salary offered to college graduates for entry-level retail management positions in the store division was between \$23,000-\$28,999 and \$26,000-\$31,999 in the merchandising division.

A majority of the organizations offered executive training programs for the store division (87.5%) and the merchandising division (75.0%). The average number of employees hired annually for the store division was 746 and for the merchandising division was 55. A majority offered internships for the store division (87.5%) and for the merchandising division (75.0%). Organizations (85.7%) recruited for the internship program for the store division and 100.0% recruited for the merchandising division.



### Collegiate Educators

Demographic data were collected using the demographic information section on the Educator Survey. Twelve merchandising educators and 11 marketing educators responded to the Educator Survey. Educators were female (60.9%) and 39.1% were male. All educators had a doctoral degree. The majority of collegiate educators were employed in higher education over 21 years (52.1%) and 47.8% had been employed at their current institution less than 10 years. The majority of educators were professors (52.2%), and associate professors (43.5%), and 4.3% were assistant professors. Almost all the educators taught courses (95.7%), followed by conduct research (78.3%), supervise internships (52.2%), and direct an institute or center (30.4%). The percentage distribution of collegiate educators by demographic characteristics appears in Table 4.7.

### Academic Units

Demographic data were collected using the demographic information section on the Educator Survey. Academic units were marketing (43.5%), followed by merchandising (30.4%), retailing (21.7%), and other (4.3%). Academic units had 100 students or less enrolled (47.8%), with 21.7% having up to 200 students, 13.0% up to 300 students, and 13.0% with over 300 students. Annual graduates were 100 or less (69.6%), with 17.4% up to 200 graduates, and 8.7% up to 350 graduates. Academic units had the highest percentage of

Table 4.7

## Personal Characteristics of Educators

Characteristic	Mdsg	Mdsg	Mktg	Mktg	Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	12	100.0	2	18.2	14	60.9
Male	0	0.0	9	81.8	9	39.1
<b>Educational Background</b>						
Doctoral degree	12	100.0	11	100.0	23	100.0
<b>Years Employed In Higher Education</b>						
0 - 10	4	33.3	0	0.0	4	17.4
11 - 20	6	50.0	1	9.1	7	30.4
21 - 30	2	16.7	9	81.8	11	47.8
31 +	0	0.0	1	9.1	1	4.3
<b>Years Employed at Present Institution</b>						
0 - 10	9	75.0	2	18.2	11	47.8
11 - 20	2	16.7	3	27.3	5	21.7
21 - 30	1	8.3	5	45.5	6	26.1
<b>Academic Rank</b>						
Assistant Professor	1	8.3	0	0.0	1	4.3
Associate Professor	8	66.7	2	18.2	10	43.5
Professor	3	25.0	9	81.8	12	52.2
<b>Employment Responsibilities</b>						
Teach courses	12	100.0	10	90.9	22	95.7
Conduct research	10	83.3	8	72.7	18	78.3
Supervise internships	5	41.7	7	63.6	12	52.2
Direct an institute/center	2	16.7	5	45.5	7	30.4
Other	4	33.3	4	36.4	7	30.4

graduates accepting entry-level retail management positions (52%). The average annual salary offered to graduates was \$23,000 - \$25,999 (35%), followed by \$26,000 - \$28,999 (30%). The majority of academic units offered internships (87.0%), with 4-6 hours the most common credit hours earned (43.5%). Programs had less than 25 students participating in internships annually (39.1%), while the second highest number of students was less than 50 (26.1%). For most academic units, 11-20 retail organizations participated in internships (34.8%). Academic programs (47.8%) did not require an internship for graduation. Educational/student outcomes are measured by most academic units (91.3%), while the most common methods are written internship employer appraisals (82.6%), post graduation surveys (78.3%), capstone courses (73.9%), written internship student appraisals (65.2%), internship student conferences (56.5%), internship employer conferences (47.8%), employers of recent graduates (43.5%), exit interviews with graduating seniors (34.8%), and program advisory boards (30.4%). Table 4.8 summarizes characteristics of the academic units.

Table 4.8

## Characteristics of Academic Units

Characteristic	Mdsg	Mdsg	Mktg	Mktg	Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>STUDENT STATISTICS</b>						
<b>Academic Units</b>						
Management	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Marketing	1	8.3	9	81.8	10	43.5
Merchandising	7	58.3	0	0.0	7	30.4
Retailing	3	25.0	2	18.2	5	21.7
Other					1	4.3
<b>Student Enrollment</b>						
1 - 100	6	50.0	5	45.5	11	47.8
101 - 200	5	41.7	0	0.0	5	21.7
201 - 300	3	25.0	1	9.1	3	13.0
301 +	0	0.0	4	36.4	3	13.0
<b>Annual Graduates</b>						
1 - 100	12	100.0	7	63.6	16	69.6
101 - 200	0	0.0	1	9.1	4	17.4
201 - 350	0	0.0	2	18.2	2	8.7
<b>CAREER PLACEMENT</b>						
<b>% Graduates Which Accept Entry-Level Retail Management Positions</b>						
1 - 25	0	0.0	4	36.4	4	17.4
26 - 50	1	8.3	3	27.3	4	17.4
51 - 75	2	8.3	1	9.1	3	13.0
76 - 100	9	16.7	3	27.3	12	52.2
<b>% Graduates Accept Retail Positions in Store Division</b>						
0 - 25	1	8.3	1	9.1	4	17.4
26 - 50	1	8.3	2	18.2	2	8.7
51 - 75	6	50.0	5	45.5	10	43.5
76 - 100	4	33.3	3	27.3	6	26.1

Table 4.8 (cont.)

Characteristic	Mdsg	Mdsg	Mktg	Mktg	Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>% Graduates Accept Retail Positions in Mdsg Division</b>						
0 - 25	6	50.0	3	27.3	9	39.1
26 - 50	5	41.7	6	54.5	11	47.8
51 - 75	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
76 - 100	0	0.0	2	18.2	2	8.7
<b>Average Salary Offered to Graduates</b>						
\$17,000 - \$19,999	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
\$20,000 - \$22,999	2	16.7	1	9.1	3	13.0
\$23,000 - \$25,999	4	33.3	4	36.4	8	34.8
\$26,000 - \$28,999	3	25.0	4	36.4	7	30.4
\$29,000 - \$31,999	3	25.0	0	0.0	3	13.0
\$32,000 - \$35,999	0	0.0	2	18.2	2	8.7
\$36,000 +	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>INTERNSHIP PROGRAM</b>						
<b>Internship Offered</b>						
Yes	12	100.0	8	72.7	20	87.0
No	0	0.0	3	27.3	3	13.0
<b>If Yes: Internship Credit Hours</b>						
0 - 3	0	0.0	5	45.5	5	21.7
4 - 6	9	75.0	1	9.1	10	43.5
7 +	3	25.0	1	9.1	3	13.0
<b>If Yes: Number of Annual Interns</b>						
0 - 25	5	41.7	4	36.4	9	39.1
26 - 50	4	33.3	2	18.2	6	26.1
51 - 75	1	8.3	0	0.0	1	4.3
76 - 100	1	8.3	1	9.1	2	8.7

Table 4.8 (cont.)

Characteristic	Mdsg n	Mdsg %	Mktg n	Mktg %	Total n	Total %
<b>If Yes: Number of Participating Organizations</b>						
0 - 10	3	25.0	3	27.3	6	26.1
11 - 20	6	50.0	2	18.2	8	34.8
21 - 30	2	16.7	2	18.2	4	17.4
31 +	1	8.3	0	0.0	1	4.3
<b>If Yes: Internship Required for Graduation</b>						
Yes	7	58.3	2	18.2	9	39.1
No	5	41.7	6	54.5	11	47.8
<b>PROGRAM ASSESSMENT</b>						
<b>Educational/Student Outcomes</b>						
Yes	12	100.0	9	81.8	21	91.3
No	0	0.0	2	18.2	2	8.7
<b>If Yes: Educational/student outcomes method</b>						
<b>If Yes: Capstone courses</b>						
Yes	9	75.0	8	72.7	17	73.9
No	3	25.0	1	0.1	4	17.4
<b>If Yes: Program advisory boards</b>						
Yes	4	33.3	3	27.3	7	30.4
No	8	66.7	6	54.5	14	60.9
<b>If Yes: Internship employer conferences</b>						
Yes	8	66.7	3	27.3	11	47.8
No	4	33.3	6	54.5	10	43.5

Table 4.8 (cont.)

Characteristic	Mdsq		Mktg		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>If Yes: Written internship employer appraisals</b>						
Yes	12	100.0	7	63.6	19	82.6
No	0	0.0	2	18.2	2	8.7
<b>If Yes: Internship student conferences</b>						
Yes	9	75.0	4	36.4	13	56.5
No	3	25.0	5	45.5	8	34.8
<b>If Yes: Written internship student appraisals</b>						
Yes	9	75.0	6	54.5	15	65.2
No	3	25.0	3	27.3	6	26.1
<b>If Yes: Exit interviews with graduating seniors</b>						
Yes	5	41.2	3	27.3	8	34.8
No	7	58.3	6	54.5	13	56.5
<b>If Yes: Post graduation student surveys</b>						
Yes	11	91.7	7	63.6	18	78.3
No	1	8.3	2	18.2	3	13.0
<b>If Yes: Employers of recent graduates</b>						
Yes	4	33.3	6	54.5	10	43.5
No	8	66.7	3	27.3	11	47.8
<b>If Yes: Other method</b>						
	1	8.3	1	9.1	2	8.7

Reliability of Scales

Reliability for the nine competency scales was determined using a Cronbach's alpha statistic for the corporate recruiter sample and collegiate educator sample. Table 4.9 summarizes the alpha levels of the scales for the recruiter sample and Table 4.10 summarizes the alpha levels of the scales for the educator sample.

Table 4.9

**Multi-Item Scale Reliability Coefficients for Recruiter Sample**

Instrument	Type	Items	Score Range	Cronbach's Alpha
Knowledge Agreement	Likert	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .86$
Knowledge Store Importance	Likert-type	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .83$
Knowledge Merchandising Importance	Likert-type	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .91$
Attitude Agreement	Likert	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .91$
Attitude Store Importance	Likert-type	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .92$
Attitude Merchandising Importance	Likert-type	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .91$
Skill Agreement	Likert	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .87$
Skill Store Importance	Likert-type	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .87$
Skill Merchandising Importance	Likert-type	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .91$



Table 4.10

## Multi-Item Scale Reliability Coefficients for Educator Sample

Instrument	Type	Items	Score Range	Cronbach's Alpha
Knowledge Agreement	Likert	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .93$
Knowledge Store Importance	Likert-type	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .94$
Knowledge Merchandising Importance	Likert-type	24	1 - 5	$\alpha = .93$
Attitude Agreement	Likert	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .87$
Attitude Store Importance	Likert-type	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .89$
Attitude Merchandising Importance	Likert-type	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .94$
Skill Agreement	Likert	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .94$
Skill Store Importance	Likert-type	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .91$
Skill Merchandising Importance	Likert-type	26	1 - 5	$\alpha = .94$

Analysis of Research Questions

Eight research questions were developed for the study. Statistical calculations were analyzed using the SPSS statistical package. For all statistical tests, differences were considered significant at the .05 probability level. Level of acceptance was considered with a mean agreement rating of greater than 3.00, and consensus was determined with an interquartile range of 1.00 or less. Research question 1 was tested using content analysis and descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation, and interquartile range)

to determine which knowledge, attitudes, and skills were desired by corporate recruiters for entry-level retail management positions.

Research question 2 was tested using descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation, and interquartile range) to determine which levels of hierarchy existed in the knowledge, attitude, and skill competency. The levels of hierarchy within the knowledge, attitude, and skill (KAS) competencies were established based on the mean store division importance level ratings and merchandising division importance ratings.

Research question 3 was tested using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Tukey's HSD multiple comparison test to determine if differences existed among corporate recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators (independent variables) on the level of agreement and level of importance ratings (dependent variables) for the store division and merchandising division for each of the 76 KAS competencies. When significant  $F$  ratios resulted from the analysis of variance, Tukey's HSD multiple comparison test was employed to identify where significant differences existed among groups. ANOVA is a statistical procedure used to compare groups which differ on two or more areas.

Research question 4 was tested using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) to determine the perceived need for product knowledge in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators. Product knowledge was

measured by combining the individual store division and merchandising division scores.

Research question 5 was tested using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) to determine the perceived need for leadership/team building in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators. Leadership/team building was measured by combining the individual store and merchandising division scores.

Research question 6 was tested using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) to determine the perceived need for problem solving/decision making in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators. Problem solving/decision making was measured by combining the individual store and merchandising division scores.

Research question 7 was tested using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) to determine the perceived need for retail related work experience in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators. Retail related work experience was measured by combining the individual store and merchandising division scores.

Research question 8 was tested using content analysis to determine the perceived future retail trends increasing and decreasing in importance for graduates entering entry-level retail management positions in the next decade

by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators. Content analysis was conducted by two independent researchers to categorize the information, and a third researcher was used to validate the findings. Statistical results are presented in the following sections.

### Research Question 1

Content analysis was used to determine the knowledge, attitude, and skill competencies that were desired by corporate recruiters for entry-level retail management positions. Table 4.11 summarizes the KAS competencies developed as a result of the three Delphi rounds. All 24 knowledge competencies, 26 attitude competencies, and 26 skill competencies attained an agreement rating mean of greater than 3.00, corresponding to a rating "Agree or Strongly Agree" that the competencies were necessary for entry-level retail management positions. Additionally, all the KAS competencies had an interquartile range of 1.00 or less establishing congruity.

Table 4.11

## KAS Competencies Developed by Recruiters

Knowledge	Attitude	Skill
Legal restraint/issues Retail work schedules Situation analysis Organization strategies	Adventuresome Leadership Goal-oriented Innovative thinker	Stress management Oral communication Delegation Decision making
Product knowledge Critical thinking Sourcing Accounting	Action-oriented Open to criticism Responsive Detail-oriented	Problem solving Prioritization Written communication Retail experience
Finance Global and multicultural issues	Self-confident Customer-oriented	Negotiation Human resource management
Operational procedures	Optimistic	Interpersonal communication/relationships
Contingency planning	Team player	Risk/crisis management
Retail environment Analytical thinking Competitive analysis Strategic planning	Ethical Assertive Open-minded Competitive	Motivation strategies Conflict management Supervision Data analysis
Marketing concepts Visual presentation Trend analysis Vendor analysis	Enthusiastic Flexible People-oriented Strong work ethic	Precision/accuracy Salesmanship Diversity management Time management
Computer literacy Academic preparation in merchandising or retail management Merchandise planning and control	Proactive Focused Energetic	Public relations Computer literacy Employee development/mentoring
Business ethics	Self-disciplined Responsible Creative	Evaluation Persuasiveness Team building

## Research Question 2

Descriptive statistics (mean, median, and standard deviation) were calculated to analyze the KAS competencies. Based on the mean for the store division importance rating and the merchandising division importance rating, a hierarchy was established within the knowledge, attitude, and skill competency categories. As a result of Round III, consensus as to the level of importance for the store division and the merchandising division was not achieved on 10 knowledge competencies, 4 attitude competencies, and 6 skill competencies. Although the expert panel reached consensus as to the inclusion of all the KAS competencies, the interquartile range for these competencies was greater than 1.00 indicating nonconsensus with regard to importance ratings. Table 4.12 summarizes the competencies in which consensus was not achieved as to the level of importance ratings.

Competencies that did not reach consensus as to the level of importance ratings for the store division and merchandising division were included in the final rank ordering within the competency categories. The hierarchy within the competency categories were division specific: store division and merchandising division. Table 4.13 summarizes the store division knowledge competencies hierarchy established by the corporate recruiters. Table 4.14 summarizes the merchandising division knowledge competencies hierarchy established by the corporate recruiters. Table 4.15 summarizes the Table 4.16 store division attitude competencies hierarchy established by the corporate recruiters. Table

**Table 4.12**

**Competencies In Which Consensus Was Not Achieved**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Competency</b>	<b>Division</b>	<b>Interquartile Range</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Legal Restraints/Issues</b>	<b>Store</b>	<b>1.13</b>
	<b>Sourcing</b>	<b>Store</b>	<b>2.00</b>
	<b>Sourcing</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>1.25</b>
	<b>Finance (i.e. resource allocation, capital management, productivity)</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>1.25</b>
	<b>Global and Multicultural Issues</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>1.50</b>
	<b>Contingency Planning</b>	<b>Store</b>	<b>2.00</b>
	<b>Contingency Planning</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>2.00</b>
	<b>Vendor Analysis</b>	<b>Store</b>	<b>2.00</b>
	<b>Academic Preparation in Merchandising or Retail Management</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>1.13</b>
<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Adventuresome</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>1.50</b>
	<b>Leadership</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>1.63</b>
	<b>Optimistic</b>	<b>Store</b>	<b>1.75</b>
	<b>Assertive</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>1.50</b>
<b>Skill</b>	<b>Conflict Management</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>1.50</b>
	<b>Diversity Management</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>2.00</b>
	<b>Public Relations</b>	<b>Store</b>	<b>1.13</b>
	<b>Public Relations</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>1.50</b>
	<b>Persuasiveness</b>	<b>Store</b>	<b>1.50</b>
	<b>Persuasiveness</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	<b>1.50</b>

Table 4.13

**Store Division Knowledge Competencies  
Hierarchy Established by Recruiters**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>
Retail Work Schedules	4.80
Business Ethics	4.60
Visual Presentation	4.20
Operational Procedures	4.07
Product Knowledge	4.00
Retail Environment	4.00
Situation Analysis	3.87
Critical Thinking	3.87
Analytical Thinking	3.73
Legal Restraints/Issues	3.65
Competitive Analysis	3.47
Marketing Concepts	3.47
Organization Strategies	3.40
Merchandise Planning and Control	3.40
Contingency Planning	3.33
Academic Preparation in Merchandising or Retail Management	3.27
Computer Literacy	3.23
Trend Analysis	3.05
Accounting	3.00
Strategic Planning	3.00
Sourcing	2.96
Finance	2.68
Global and Multicultural Issues	2.68
Vendor Analysis	2.53



Table 4.14

**Merchandising Division Knowledge Competencies  
Hierarchy Established by Recruiters**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>
<b>Business Ethics</b>	<b>4.62</b>
<b>Vendor Analysis</b>	<b>4.54</b>
<b>Merchandise Planning and Control</b>	<b>4.54</b>
<b>Analytical Thinking</b>	<b>4.46</b>
<b>Trend Analysis</b>	<b>4.46</b>
<b>Computer Literacy</b>	<b>4.46</b>
<b>Marketing Concepts</b>	<b>4.39</b>
<b>Product Knowledge</b>	<b>4.35</b>
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	<b>4.31</b>
<b>Competitive Analysis</b>	<b>4.31</b>
<b>Accounting</b>	<b>4.05</b>
<b>Retail Environment</b>	<b>4.00</b>
<b>Visual Presentation</b>	<b>3.90</b>
<b>Academic Preparation in Merchandising or Retail Management</b>	<b>3.85</b>
<b>Situation Analysis</b>	<b>3.83</b>
<b>Sourcing</b>	<b>3.70</b>
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	<b>3.70</b>
<b>Contingency Planning</b>	<b>3.62</b>
<b>Organization Strategies</b>	<b>3.54</b>
<b>Operational Procedures</b>	<b>3.50</b>
<b>Legal Restraints/Issues</b>	<b>3.42</b>
<b>Finance</b>	<b>3.30</b>
<b>Global and Multicultural Issues</b>	<b>3.20</b>
<b>Retail Work Schedules</b>	<b>2.53</b>

Table 4.15

**Store Division Attitude Competencies  
Hierarchy Established by Recruiters**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>
Customer-Oriented	4.88
Team Player	4.88
People-Oriented	4.88
Strong Work Ethic	4.88
Ethical	4.81
 Action-Oriented	 4.73
Leadership	4.69
Goal-Oriented	4.69
Responsive	4.63
Flexible	4.69
Energetic	4.69
Responsible	4.63
 Self-Disciplined	 4.50
Self-Confident	4.44
Competitive	4.44
 Enthusiastic	 4.38
Proactive	4.38
Focused	4.31
 Adventuresome	 4.25
Open to Criticism	4.25
Assertive	4.25
Creative	4.25
Innovative Thinker	4.21
 Detail-Oriented	 4.13
Optimistic	4.13
 Open-Minded	 4.06

Table 4.16

**Merchandising Division Attitude Competencies  
Hierarchy Established by Recruiters**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>
<b>Ethical</b>	<b>4.92</b>
<b>Team Player</b>	<b>4.62</b>
<b>Strong Work Ethic</b>	<b>4.62</b>
<b>Responsible</b>	<b>4.62</b>
<b>Goal-Oriented</b>	<b>4.54</b>
<b>Responsive</b>	<b>4.54</b>
<b>Detail-Oriented</b>	<b>4.54</b>
<b>Self-Disciplined</b>	<b>4.54</b>
<b>Open to Criticism</b>	<b>4.46</b>
<b>Self-Confident</b>	<b>4.46</b>
<b>Proactive</b>	<b>4.46</b>
<b>Innovative Thinker</b>	<b>4.38</b>
<b>Competitive</b>	<b>4.38</b>
<b>Flexible</b>	<b>4.38</b>
<b>Focused</b>	<b>4.38</b>
<b>Energetic</b>	<b>4.38</b>
<b>Action-Oriented</b>	<b>4.33</b>
<b>Customer-Oriented</b>	<b>4.31</b>
<b>Creative</b>	<b>4.23</b>
<b>Open-Minded</b>	<b>4.15</b>
<b>Assertive</b>	<b>4.08</b>
<b>Enthusiastic</b>	<b>4.08</b>
<b>Optimistic</b>	<b>4.00</b>
<b>Leadership</b>	<b>3.95</b>
<b>People-Oriented</b>	<b>3.92</b>
<b>Adventuresome</b>	<b>3.54</b>

4.16 summarizes the merchandising division attitude competencies hierarchy established by the corporate recruiters. Table 4.17 summarizes the store division skill competencies hierarchy established by the corporate recruiters. Table 4.18 summarizes the merchandising division skill competencies hierarchy established by the corporate recruiters. Competencies with the highest mean ratings were rank ordered at the top of the hierarchy and competencies with the lowest mean ratings were rank ordered at the bottom of the hierarchy.

### Research Question 3

Research question 3 was tested through the use of ANOVA to identify differences in rating each of the 76 KAS competencies. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to assess the differences among corporate recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators on the level of store importance ratings and the level of merchandising importance ratings of the competencies.

Table 4.17

**Store Division Skill Competencies Hierarchy  
Established by Recruiters**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>
Stress Management	4.69
Prioritization	4.63
Interpersonal Communication/Relationship	4.63
Oral Communication	4.56
Decision Making	4.56
Problem Solving	4.56
Team Building	4.56
Conflict Management	4.50
Diversity Management	4.44
Time Management	4.38
Human Resource Management	4.31
Supervision	4.31
Employee Development/Mentoring	4.31
Delegation	4.25
Evaluation	4.20
Salesmanship	4.19
Motivation Strategies	4.13
Persuasiveness	4.08
Public Relations	4.04
Retail Experience	4.00
Precision/Accuracy	3.94
Risk/Crisis Management	3.63
Written Communication	3.56
Data Analysis	3.44
Computer Literacy	3.44
Negotiation	3.13

Table 4.18

**Merchandising Division Skill Competencies  
Hierarchy Established by Recruiters**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Mean Rating</b>
Data Analysis	4.77
Precision/Accuracy	4.77
Negotiation	4.69
Decision Making	4.62
Time Management	4.62
Computer Literacy	4.62
Problem Solving	4.54
Prioritization	4.54
Stress Management	4.46
Oral Communication	4.46
Written Communication	4.31
Interpersonal Communication/Relationship	4.31
Team Building	4.15
Evaluation	4.15
Persuasiveness	4.08
Delegation	4.00
Diversity Management	3.90
Conflict Management	3.85
Employee Development/Mentoring	3.77
Supervision	3.69
Retail Experience	3.62
Salesmanship	3.54
Public Relations	3.54
Motivation Strategies	3.46
Human Resource Management	3.38
Risk/Crisis Management	3.38

The independent variables were the subject categories (merchandising educator, marketing educator, and recruiter) while the dependent variables were the KAS competencies.

The ANOVA indicated subject group had a significant effect on nine knowledge agreement ratings: retail work schedules ( $F(2, 35) = 10.80, p < .01$ ), critical thinking ( $F(2, 35) = 5.19, p < .05$ ), global and multicultural issues ( $F(2, 35) = 3.74, p < .05$ ), strategic planning ( $F(2, 35) = 4.07, p < .05$ ), trend analysis ( $F(2, 35) = 4.35, p < .05$ ), vendor analysis ( $F(2, 35) = 6.32, p < .05$ ), computer literacy ( $F(2, 35) = 6.48, p < .01$ ), academic preparation in merchandising or retail management ( $F(2, 35) = 6.77, p < .01$ ), and merchandise planning and control ( $F(2, 35) = 15.52, p < .01$ ). Table 4.19 summarizes the ANOVA results. The Tukey's HSD test found that significant differences existed among the recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Table 4.20 summarizes the differences in means with regard to specific competencies and subject categories.

Table 4.19

**One-Way ANOVA Results: Knowledge Competencies  
By Agreement According to Group**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Retail Work Schedules</b>	Among groups	2	8.73	10.80**
	Within groups	35	14.14	
	Total	37	22.87	
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	Among groups	2	3.99	5.19*
	Within groups	35	13.48	
	Total	37	17.47	
<b>Global and Multicultural Issues</b>	Among groups	2	8.55	3.74*
	Within groups	35	40.00	
	Total	37	48.55	
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	Among groups	2	7.61	4.07*
	Within groups	35	32.71	
	Total	37	40.32	
<b>Trend Analysis</b>	Among groups	2	5.77	4.35*
	Within groups	35	23.20	
	Total	37	28.97	
<b>Vendor Analysis</b>	Among groups	2	5.40	6.32*
	Within groups	35	14.95	
	Total	37	20.34	
<b>Computer Literacy</b>	Among groups	2	4.73	6.48**
	Within groups	35	12.77	
	Total	37	17.50	
<b>Academic Preparation in Merchandising or Retail Management</b>	Among groups	2	6.97	6.77**
	Within groups	35	18.00	
	Total	37	24.97	
<b>Merchandise Planning and Control</b>	Among groups	2	4.42	15.52**
	Within groups	35	4.98	
	Total	37	9.40	

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .



Table 4.20

**Tukey's HSD Multiple Comparison Test Results: Knowledge  
Competencies By Agreement According to Group**

Competency	Recruiter M	Mdsg M	Mktg M	p
Retail Work Schedules	4.77 <sup>a</sup>	3.90 <sup>b</sup>	3.73 <sup>b</sup>	.01
Critical Thinking	4.18 <sup>b</sup>	4.70 <sup>b</sup>	4.91 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Global and Multicultural Issues	3.24 <sup>b</sup>	3.60 <sup>b</sup>	4.36 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Strategic Planning	3.65 <sup>ab</sup>	3.30 <sup>b</sup>	4.46 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Trend Analysis	3.77 <sup>b</sup>	3.80 <sup>ab</sup>	4.64 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Vendor Analysis	3.59 <sup>b</sup>	3.70 <sup>b</sup>	4.46 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Computer Literacy	4.12 <sup>b</sup>	4.70 <sup>ab</sup>	4.91 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Academic Preparation in Merchandising or Retail Management	3.77 <sup>b</sup>	3.60 <sup>b</sup>	4.64 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Merchandise Planning and Control	4.18 <sup>b</sup>	4.80 <sup>a</sup>	4.91 <sup>a</sup>	.01

Groups that do not differ significantly from each other are assigned the same letter.

The ANOVA indicated subject group had a significant effect on 13 knowledge store importance ratings: retail work schedules ( $F(2, 36) = 7.19, p < .01$ ), critical thinking ( $F(2, 37) = 19.89, p < .001$ ), accounting ( $F(2, 37) = 4.76, p < .05$ ), finance ( $F(2, 37) = 3.74, p < .05$ ), global and multicultural issues ( $F(2, 36) = 3.50, p < .05$ ), analytical thinking ( $F(2, 37) = 7.82, p < .01$ ), competitive analysis ( $F(2, 37) = 5.01, p < .05$ ), strategic planning ( $F(2, 37) = 4.845, p < .05$ ), marketing concepts ( $F(2, 36) = 7.61, p < .01$ ), visual presentation ( $F(2, 37) = 3.27, p < .05$ ), vendor analysis ( $F(2, 37) = 6.46, p < .01$ ), computer literacy ( $F(2, 37) = 13.11, p < .001$ ), and academic preparation in merchandising or retail management ( $F(2, 37) = 6.78, p < .01$ ). Table 4.21 summarizes the ANOVA results. The Tukey's HSD test found that significant differences existed among the recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Table 4.22 summarizes the differences in means with regard to specific competencies and subject categories.

The ANOVA indicated subject group had a significant effect on the eight knowledge merchandising importance ratings: legal restraints/issues ( $F(2, 33) = 4.10, p < .05$ ), organization strategies ( $F(2, 33) = 5.36, p < .05$ ), product knowledge ( $F(2, 33) = 3.35, p < .05$ ), critical thinking ( $F(2, 33) = 4.82, p < .05$ ), sourcing ( $F(2, 34) = 7.46, p < .01$ ), analytical thinking ( $F(2, 34) = 4.26, p < .05$ ), strategic planning ( $F(2, 34) = 3.41, p < .05$ ), and academic preparation in merchandising or retail management ( $F(2, 34) = 4.18, p < .05$ ).

Table 4.21

**One-Way ANOVA Results: Knowledge Competencies  
For The Store Division By Importance According to Group**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Retail Work Schedules</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5.64</b>	<b>7.19**</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>14.11</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>19.74</b>	
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7.97</b>	<b>19.89***</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>7.41</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>15.38</b>	
<b>Accounting</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5.89</b>	<b>4.76*</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>22.89</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>28.78</b>	
<b>Finance</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7.98</b>	<b>3.74*</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>39.41</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>47.38</b>	
<b>Global and Multicultural Issues</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7.73</b>	<b>3.50*</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>39.71</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>47.44</b>	
<b>Analytical Thinking</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5.04</b>	<b>7.82**</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>11.93</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>16.98</b>	
<b>Competitive Analysis</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6.18</b>	<b>5.01*</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>22.80</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>28.98</b>	
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11.20</b>	<b>4.85*</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>42.77</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>53.98</b>	
<b>Marketing Concepts</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6.51</b>	<b>7.61**</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>15.39</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>21.90</b>	

Table 4.21 (cont.)

Competency	Source	df	SS	F
Visual Presentation	Among groups	2	4.38	3.27*
	Within groups	37	24.73	
	Total	39	29.10	
Vendor Analysis	Among groups	2	12.92	6.46**
	Within groups	37	36.98	
	Total	39	49.90	
Computer Literacy	Among groups	2	19.86	13.11***
	Within groups	37	28.04	
	Total	39	47.90	
Academic Preparation in Merchandising or Retail Management	Among groups	2	10.72	6.78**
	Within groups	37	29.26	
	Total	39	39.98	

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Table 4.22

**Tukey's HSD Multiple Comparison Test Results: Knowledge Competencies  
for the Store Division By Importance According to Group**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Recruiter M</b>	<b>Mdsg M</b>	<b>Mktg M</b>	<b>p</b>
Retail Work Schedules	4.82 <sup>a</sup>	3.91 <sup>ab</sup>	4.55 <sup>b</sup>	.01
Critical Thinking	3.88 <sup>b</sup>	4.55 <sup>a</sup>	4.92 <sup>a</sup>	.001
Accounting	3.24 <sup>b</sup>	4.09 <sup>a</sup>	3.92 <sup>ab</sup>	.05
Finance	2.88 <sup>b</sup>	3.55 <sup>ab</sup>	3.92 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Global and Multicultural Issues	3.24 <sup>b</sup>	3.40 <sup>ab</sup>	4.25 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Analytical Thinking	3.82 <sup>b</sup>	4.64 <sup>a</sup>	4.42 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Competitive Analysis	3.65 <sup>b</sup>	4.00 <sup>ab</sup>	4.58 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Strategic Planning	3.18 <sup>b</sup>	3.18 <sup>b</sup>	4.33 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Marketing Concepts	3.59 <sup>b</sup>	4.36 <sup>a</sup>	4.46 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Vendor Analysis	2.65 <sup>b</sup>	2.73 <sup>b</sup>	3.92 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Computer Literacy	3.24 <sup>b</sup>	4.55 <sup>a</sup>	4.75 <sup>a</sup>	.001
Academic Preparation in Merchandising or Retail Management	3.29 <sup>b</sup>	3.55 <sup>b</sup>	4.50 <sup>a</sup>	.01

Groups that do not differ significantly from each other are assigned the same letter.

Table 4.23 summarizes the ANOVA results. The Tukey's HSD test found that significant differences existed among the recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Table 4.24 summarizes the differences in means with regard to specific competencies and subject categories.

The ANOVA indicated subject group had a significant effect on two attitude agreement ratings: optimistic ( $F(2, 37) = 4.56, p < .05$ ), and assertive ( $F(2, 36) = 7.57, p < .01$ ). Table 4.25 summarizes the ANOVA results. The Tukey's HSD test found that significant differences existed among the recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Table 4.26 summarizes the differences in means with regard to specific competencies and subject categories.

The ANOVA indicated subject group had a significant effect on four attitude store importance ratings: adventuresome ( $F(2, 39) = 4.66, p < .05$ ), assertive ( $F(2, 39) = 5.30, p < .01$ ), competitive ( $F(2, 39) = 4.55, p < .05$ ), and flexible ( $F(2, 39) = 7.17, p < .01$ ). Table 4.27 summarizes the ANOVA results. The Tukey's HSD test found that significant differences existed among the recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Table 4.28 summarizes the differences in means with regard to specific competencies and subject categories.

Table 4.23

**One-Way ANOVA Results: Knowledge Competencies for the  
Merchandising Division By Importance According to Group**

Competency	Source	df	SS	F
Legal Restraints/Issues	Among groups	2	6.37	4.10*
	Within groups	33	25.63	
	Total	35	32.00	
Organization Strategies	Among groups	2	4.00	5.36*
	Within groups	33	12.31	
	Total	35	16.31	
Product Knowledge	Among groups	2	4.56	3.35*
	Within groups	33	22.44	
	Total	35	27.00	
Critical Thinking	Among groups	2	2.48	4.82*
	Within groups	33	8.49	
	Total	35	10.97	
Sourcing	Among groups	2	13.67	7.46**
	Within groups	34	31.14	
	Total	36	44.81	
Analytical Thinking	Among groups	2	2.55	4.26*
	Within groups	34	10.16	
	Total	36	12.70	
Strategic planning	Among groups	2	6.63	3.41*
	Within groups	34	33.10	
	Total	36	39.73	
Academic Preparation in Merchandising or Retail Management	Among groups	2	4.49	4.18*
	Within groups	34	18.27	
	Total	36	22.76	

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

Table 4.24

**Tukey's HSD Multiple Comparison Test Results: Knowledge Competencies for the Merchandising Importance According to Group**

Competency	Recruiter M	Mdsg M	Mktg M	p
Legal Restraints/Issues	3.62 <sup>b</sup>	3.82 <sup>ab</sup>	4.58 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Organization Strategies	3.64 <sup>b</sup>	3.64 <sup>b</sup>	4.36 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Product Knowledge	4.14 <sup>b</sup>	4.46 <sup>ab</sup>	5.00 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Critical Thinking	4.29 <sup>b</sup>	4.46 <sup>ab</sup>	4.91 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Sourcing	3.50 <sup>b</sup>	4.46 <sup>a</sup>	4.92 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Analytical Thinking	4.43 <sup>b</sup>	4.46 <sup>ab</sup>	5.00 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Strategic Planning	3.64 <sup>ab</sup>	3.18 <sup>b</sup>	4.25 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Academic Preparation in Merchandising or Retail Management	3.86 <sup>b</sup>	3.82 <sup>b</sup>	4.58 <sup>a</sup>	.05

Groups that do not differ significantly from each other are assigned the same letter.

Table 4.25

**One-Way ANOVA Results: Attitude Competencies By Agreement According to Group**

Competency	Source	df	SS	F
Optimistic	Among groups	2	3.71	4.56*
	Within groups	37	15.06	
	Total	39	18.78	
Assertive	Among groups	2	7.58	7.57**
	Within groups	36	18.01	
	Total	38	25.59	

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .01.



Table 4.26

**Tukey's HSD Multiple Comparison Test Results: Attitude  
Competencies By Agreement According to Group**

Competency	Recruiter M	Mdsg M	Mktg M	p
Optimistic	4.47 <sup>a</sup>	3.80 <sup>b</sup>	4.55 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Assertive	4.61 <sup>a</sup>	3.70 <sup>b</sup>	4.82 <sup>a</sup>	.01

Groups that do not differ significantly from each other are assigned the same letter.

Table 4.27

**One-Way ANOVA Results: Attitude Competencies  
for the Store Division By Importance According to Group**

Competency	Source	df	SS	F
Adventuresome	Among groups	2	4.21	4.66*
	Within groups	39	17.63	
	Total	41	21.83	
Assertive	Among groups	2	7.08	5.30**
	Within groups	39	26.07	
	Total	41	33.14	
Competitive	Among groups	2	5.12	4.55*
	Within groups	39	21.95	
	Total	41	27.07	
Flexible	Among groups	2	3.05	7.17**
	Within groups	39	8.29	
	Total	41	11.33	

\*p < .05. \*\*p < .01.

Table 4.28

**Tukey's HSD Multiple Comparison Test Results: Attitude Competencies  
for the Store Division By Importance According to Group**

Competency	Recruiter M	Mdsg M	Mktg M	Sign.
Adventuresome	4.16 <sup>ab</sup>	3.73 <sup>b</sup>	4.58 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Assertive	4.37 <sup>a</sup>	3.46 <sup>b</sup>	4.42 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Competitive	4.47 <sup>a</sup>	3.64 <sup>b</sup>	4.33 <sup>ab</sup>	.05
Flexible	4.68 <sup>ab</sup>	4.27 <sup>b</sup>	5.00 <sup>a</sup>	.01

Groups that do not differ significantly from each other are assigned the same letter.

The ANOVA indicated subject group had a significant effect on four attitude merchandising importance ratings: optimistic ( $F(2, 36) = 4.22, p < .05$ ), assertive ( $F(2, 36) = 4.08, p < .05$ ), competitive ( $F(2, 36) = 5.37, p < .01$ ), and energetic ( $F(2, 35) = 5.30, p < .05$ ). Table 4.29 summarizes the ANOVA results. The Tukey's HSD test found that significant differences existed between the merchandising educators and marketing educators. Table 4.30 summarizes the differences in means with regard to specific competencies and subject categories.

The ANOVA indicated subject group had a significant effect on six skill agreement ratings: written communication ( $F(2, 36) = 3.69, p < .05$ ), retail experience ( $F(2, 36) = 3.34, p < .05$ ), motivation strategies ( $F(2, 35) = 4.07, p <$

Table 4.29

**One-Way ANOVA Results: Attitude Competencies for the Merchandising Division By Importance According to Group**

Competency	Source	df	SS	F
Optimistic	Among groups	2	6.60	4.22*
	Within groups	36	28.17	
	Total	38	34.77	
Assertive	Among groups	2	7.35	4.08*
	Within groups	36	32.39	
	Total	38	39.74	
Competitive	Among groups	2	4.92	5.37**
	Within groups	36	16.51	
	Total	38	21.44	
Energetic	Among groups	2	3.08	5.30*
	Within groups	35	10.18	
	Total	37	13.26	

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

Table 4.30

**Tukey's HSD Multiple Comparison Test Results: Attitude Competencies for the Merchandising Division By Importance According to Group**

Competency	Recruiter M	Mdsg M	Mktg M	p
Optimistic	4.19 <sup>ab</sup>	3.46 <sup>b</sup>	4.50 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Assertive	4.25 <sup>ab</sup>	3.55 <sup>b</sup>	4.67 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Competitive	4.44 <sup>ab</sup>	3.91 <sup>b</sup>	4.83 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Energetic	4.50 <sup>ab</sup>	4.00 <sup>b</sup>	4.73 <sup>a</sup>	.05

Groups that do not differ significantly from each other are assigned the same letter.

.05), conflict management ( $F(2, 36) = 6.69, p < .01$ ), precision/accuracy ( $F(2,36) = 5.94, p < .01$ ), and computer literacy ( $F(2, 36) = 10.72, p < .001$ ). Table 4.31 summarizes the ANOVA results. The Tukey's HSD test found that significant differences existed among the recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Table 4.32 summarizes the differences in means with regard to specific competencies and subject categories.

The ANOVA indicated subject group had a significant effect on seven skill store importance ratings: written communication ( $F(2,38) = 8.13, p < .01$ ), retail experience ( $F(2,38) = 3.33, p < .05$ ), motivation strategies ( $F(2,38) = 3.46, p < .05$ ), conflict management ( $F(2,38) = 6.11, p < .01$ ), supervision ( $F(2,38) = 3.29, p < .05$ ), data analysis ( $F(2,38) = 8.01, p < .01$ ), and computer literacy ( $F(2,38) = 15.33, p < .001$ ). Table 4.33 summarizes the ANOVA results. The Tukey's HSD test found that significant differences existed among the recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Table 4.34 summarizes the differences in means with regard to specific competencies and subject categories.

Table 4.31

**One-Way ANOVA Results: Skill Competencies  
By Agreement According to Group**

Competency	Source	df	SS	F
Written Communication	Among groups	2	2.00	3.69*
	Within groups	36	9.75	
	Total	38	11.74	
Retail Experience	Among groups	2	4.94	3.34*
	Within groups	36	26.65	
	Total	38	31.59	
Motivation Strategies	Among groups	2	3.66	4.07*
	Within groups	35	15.71	
	Total	37	19.37	
Conflict Management	Among groups	2	5.81	6.69**
	Within groups	36	15.63	
	Total	38	21.44	
Precision/Accuracy	Among groups	2	2.95	5.94**
	Within groups	36	8.95	
	Total	38	11.90	
Computer Literacy	Among groups	2	7.26	10.72***
	Within groups	36	12.18	
	Total	38	19.44	

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Table 4.32

**Tukey's HSD Multiple Comparison Test Results: Skill  
Competencies By Agreement According to Group**

Competency	Recruiter M	Mdsg M	Mktg M	p
Written Communication	4.28 <sup>b</sup>	4.50 <sup>ab</sup>	4.82 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Retail Experience	4.00 <sup>ab</sup>	3.70 <sup>b</sup>	4.66 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Motivation Strategies	4.28 <sup>ab</sup>	3.78 <sup>b</sup>	4.66 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Conflict Management	4.50 <sup>a</sup>	3.60 <sup>b</sup>	4.46 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Precision/Accuracy	4.00 <sup>b</sup>	4.40 <sup>ab</sup>	4.64 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Computer Literacy	3.94 <sup>b</sup>	4.80 <sup>a</sup>	4.82 <sup>a</sup>	.001

Groups that do not differ significantly from each other are assigned the same letter.

Table 4.33

**One-Way ANOVA Results: Skill Competencies for the  
Store Division By Importance According to Group**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Written Communication</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8.36</b>	<b>8.13**</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>19.54</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>27.90</b>	
<b>Retail Experience</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4.11</b>	<b>3.33*</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>23.50</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>27.61</b>	
<b>Motivation Strategies</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3.22</b>	<b>3.46*</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>17.66</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20.88</b>	
<b>Conflict Management</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6.35</b>	<b>6.11**</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>19.75</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>26.10</b>	
<b>Supervision</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.80</b>	<b>3.29*</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>10.39</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>12.20</b>	
<b>Data Analysis</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8.78</b>	<b>8.01**</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>20.83</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29.61</b>	
<b>Computer Literacy</b>	<b>Among groups</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16.93</b>	<b>15.33***</b>
	<b>Within groups</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>20.98</b>	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37.90</b>	

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Table 4.34

**Tukey's HSD Multiple Comparison Test Results: Skill Competencies  
for the Store Division By Importance According to Group**

Competency	Recruiter M	Mdsg M	Mktg M	p
Written Communication	3.56 <sup>b</sup>	4.27 <sup>a</sup>	4.58 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Conflict Management	4.56 <sup>a</sup>	3.82 <sup>b</sup>	4.83 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Supervision	4.33 <sup>b</sup>	4.55 <sup>ab</sup>	4.83 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Data Analysis	3.39 <sup>b</sup>	4.18 <sup>a</sup>	4.42 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Computer Literacy	3.33 <sup>b</sup>	4.46 <sup>a</sup>	4.75 <sup>a</sup>	.001

Groups that do not differ significantly from each other are assigned the same letter.

The ANOVA indicated subject group had a significant effect on six merchandising importance ratings: stress management ( $F(2, 35) = 8.22, p < .01$ ), decision making ( $F(2, 35) = 4.32, p < .05$ ), retail experience ( $F(2, 35) = 11.16, p < .001$ ), negotiation ( $F(2, 35) = 4.02, p < .05$ ), computer literacy ( $F(2, 35) = 3.39, p < .05$ ), and evaluation ( $F(2, 34) = 4.32, p < .05$ ). Table 4.35 summarizes the ANOVA results. The Tukey's HSD test found that significant differences existed among the recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Table 4.36 summarizes the differences in means with regard to specific competencies and subject categories.



Table 4.35

**One-Way ANOVA Results: Skill Competencies for the Merchandising  
Division By Importance According to Group**

Competency	Source	df	SS	F
Stress Management	Among groups	2	5.46	8.22**
	Within groups	35	11.62	
	Total	37	17.08	
Decision Making	Among groups	2	2.34	4.32*
	Within groups	35	9.48	
	Total	37	11.82	
Retail Experience	Among groups	2	14.40	11.16***
	Within groups	35	22.58	
	Total	37	36.97	
Negotiation	Among groups	2	3.19	4.02*
	Within groups	35	13.89	
	Total	37	17.08	
Computer Literacy	Among groups	2	1.67	3.39*
	Within groups	35	8.64	
	Total	37	10.32	
Evaluation	Among groups	2	4.77	4.32*
	Within groups	34	18.80	
	Total	36	23.57	

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Table 4.36

Tukey's HSD Multiple Comparison Test Results: Skill Competencies for the Merchandising Division By Importance According to Group

Competency	Recruiter M	Mdsg M	Mktg M	p
Stress Management	4.53 <sup>a</sup>	3.82 <sup>b</sup>	4.75 <sup>a</sup>	.01
Decision Making	4.73 <sup>ab</sup>	4.36 <sup>b</sup>	5.00 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Retail Experience	3.73 <sup>b</sup>	3.46 <sup>b</sup>	4.92 <sup>a</sup>	.001
Negotiation	4.67 <sup>ab</sup>	4.18 <sup>b</sup>	4.92 <sup>a</sup>	.05
Evaluation	4.00 <sup>ab</sup>	3.64 <sup>b</sup>	4.25 <sup>a</sup>	.05

Groups that do not differ significantly from each other are assigned the same letter.

#### Research Question 4

Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the perceived need for product knowledge in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions. On the Educator Survey the product knowledge variable was not division specific, while on the Round III Questionnaire the product knowledge variable was division specific. As a result of this difference, data were combined to determine the frequencies and percentages for the corporate recruiters. The emphasis ratings on product knowledge by recruiters and educators tended to be evenly distributed between important and unimportant. Table 4.37 summarizes the results of the product knowledge emphasis by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators.

Table 4.37

Summary of Emphasis by Recruiters and Educators

Emphasis Area	Sample	Extremely Important		Moderately Important		Important		Moderately Unimportant		Unimportant		Extremely Unimportant	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Product knowledge	Recruiter	4	14.8	6	22.2	5	18.5	6	22.2	6	22.2	0	0.0
Product knowledge	Educator	6	27.3	4	18.2	3	13.6	3	13.6	5	22.7	1	4.6
Leadership/team building	Recruiter	13	48.1	7	25.9	5	18.5	1	3.7	1	3.7	0	0.0
Leadership/team building	Educator	11	50.0	5	22.7	5	22.7	1	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Problem solving/decision making	Recruiter	17	63.0	9	33.3	1	3.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Problem solving/decision making	Educator	13	59.1	8	36.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Retail-related work experience	Recruiter	10	35.7	10	35.7	5	17.9	3	10.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Retail-related work experience	Educator	12	54.5	6	27.3	3	13.6	1	4.5	0	0.0	0	0.0

### Research Question 5

Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the perceived need for leadership/team building in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions. On the Educator Survey, the leadership/team building variable was not division specific, while on the Round III Questionnaire the variable was division specific. As a result of this difference, data were combined to determine the frequencies and percentages for the corporate recruiters. The emphasis ratings on leadership/team building by recruiters and educators tended to be more important than unimportant. A majority of educators rated the emphasis as extremely important. Table 4.37 summarizes the results of the leadership/team building emphasis by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators.

### Research Question 6

Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the perceived need for problem solving/decision making in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions. On the Educator Survey, the problem solving/decision making variable was not division specific, while on the Round III Questionnaire the variable was division specific. As a result of this difference, data were combined to determine the frequencies and percentages for the corporate recruiters. A majority of recruiters and educators rated the emphasis on problem solving/decision making as extremely important. Table

4.37 summarizes the results of the problem solving/decision making emphasis by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators.

#### Research Question 7

Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze the perceived need for retail-related work experience in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions. On the Educator Survey, the retail-related work experience variable was not division specific, while on the Round III Questionnaire the variable was division specific. As a result of this difference, data were combined to determine frequencies and percentages for the corporate recruiters. The emphasis ratings on retail-related work experience by recruiters and educators tended to be more important than unimportant. A majority of educators rated the emphasis as extremely important. Table 4.37 summarizes the results of the retail related work experience emphasis by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators.

#### Research Question 8

Content analysis was used to analyze the retail trends increasing and decreasing in importance for graduates entering entry-level retail management positions in the next decade. Frequencies and percentages were used to order the trends. A total of 19 retail trends increasing in importance for graduates

were identified by corporate recruiters. Table 4.38 summarizes the retail trends increasing in importance. Two retail trends decreasing in importance for graduates were identified by corporate recruiters: product knowledge ( $n=1$ , 6.3%) and fashion selection skills ( $n=1$ , 6.3%).

A total of 39 retail trends increasing in importance for graduates were identified by collegiate educators. Table 4.39 summarizes the retail trends increasing in importance. A total of 18 retail trends decreasing in

Table 4.38

Summary of Retail Trends Increasing in Importance: Recruiter Sample

Statement	$n$	%
Computer literacy	4	25.0
Previous retail/work experience	3	18.8
Diversity management	3	18.8
Analytical skills	3	18.8
Customer service skills	2	12.5
Managing and recruiting	2	12.5
Geographic mobility	2	12.5
Realistic expectations	1	6.3
Work ethic	1	6.3
Leadership	1	6.3
Situational analysis skills	1	6.3
Personal flexibility	1	6.3
Managing decreasing workforce	1	6.3
Improved retail work hours/schedule	1	6.3
Continued training	1	6.3
Retail internships	1	6.3
Problem solving skills	1	6.3
Negotiation skills	1	6.3
Recruitment at colleges where previously hired graduates	1	6.3

Table 4.39

## Summary of Retail Trends Increasing in Importance: Educator Sample

Statement	n	%
Computer literacy	8	34.8
Team building	7	30.4
Problem solving/critical thinking	6	26.1
Database marketing/information systems management	6	26.1
Analytical skills	5	21.7
Written and oral communication	4	17.4
Global perspective	4	17.4
Previous retail/work experience	3	13.0
Flexibility/cross-training	3	13.0
Partnerships/relationships	3	13.0
Customer service skills	3	13.0
Leadership	3	13.0
Creativity	2	8.7
Statistical analysis procedures	2	8.7
Logistics expertise	2	8.7
Communication via technology/global retailing	2	8.7
International sourcing	2	8.7
Loyalty programs	1	4.3
Diversity management	1	4.3
Labor relations	1	4.3
Product quality evaluation	1	4.3
Emphasis on skills rather than knowledge	1	4.3
Women in upper marketing management positions	1	4.3
Liberal arts	1	4.3
Marketing/branding strategies	1	4.3
CAD/CAM	1	4.3
Trends forecasting	1	4.3
Retail positioning	1	4.3
Competitive environment	1	4.3
Niche marketing	1	4.3
Professional attitudes	1	4.3
Legal issues	1	4.3
Financial skills	1	4.3
Industry structure/organization	1	4.3
Negotiation skills	1	4.3
Self-motivation	1	4.3
Faster promotion track	1	4.3
Better working conditions	1	4.3

importance for graduates were identified by collegiate educators. Table 4.40 summarizes the retail trends decreasing in importance.

### Summary of Data Analyses

In the analyses of findings related to the eight research questions, differences were noted through one-way analyses of variance, descriptive statistics, and content analyses. Research question 1 was tested through the use of content analysis and descriptive statistics. Results identified 76 industry-based competencies in the categories of knowledge, attitude, and skill (KAS). Corporate recruiters identified 24 knowledge competencies, 26 attitude competencies, and 26 skill competencies for the store division and the merchandising division. Consensus was reached on all 76 KAS competencies as necessary for entry-level retail management positions.

Research question 2 was tested through the use of descriptive statistics. The mean importance ratings were used to establish levels of hierarchy with the KAS competency categories for the store division and for the merchandising division. Differences were evidenced in the levels of hierarchy between the store division and the merchandising division.

The knowledge competencies rated highest by corporate recruiters for the store division were retail work schedules, business ethics, and visual presentation. Rated lowest were finance, global and multicultural issues, and vendor analysis. The attitude competencies rated highest by corporate



Table 4.40

## Summary of Retail Trends Decreasing in Importance: Educator Sample

Statement	n	%
Product knowledge (fabric, color)	7	30.4
Strategic planning	2	8.7
Retailing or business degree or major	2	8.7
Merchandising mechanics (OTB, fashion)	2	8.7
Store organization	2	8.7
Need to sew	1	4.3
Buying as a career	1	4.3
Functional perspective	1	4.3
Site selection	1	4.3
Store design	1	4.3
Staffing (now computerized)	1	4.3
Visual merchandising	1	4.3
Retail credit	1	4.3
General marketing	1	4.3
Retail security	1	4.3
Personal selling	1	4.3
Sourcing	1	4.3
Finance	1	4.3

recruiters for the store division were customer-oriented, team player, people-oriented, and strong work ethic. Rated lowest were detail-oriented, optimistic, and open-minded. The skill competencies rated highest by corporate recruiters for the store division were stress management, prioritization, and interpersonal communication/relationships. Rated lowest were data analysis, computer literacy, and negotiation.

The knowledge competencies rated highest by corporate recruiters for the merchandising division were business ethics, vendor analysis, and

merchandising planning and control. Rated lowest were finance, global and multicultural issues, and retail work schedules. The attitude competencies rated highest by corporate recruiters for the merchandising division were ethical, team player, strong work ethic, and responsible. Rated lowest were leadership, people-oriented, and adventuresome. The skill competencies rated highest by corporate recruiters for the merchandising division were data analysis, precision/accuracy, and negotiation. Rated lowest were motivation strategies, human resource management, and risk/crisis management.

Research question 3 was tested statistically through the use of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA). Differences among subject groups on KAS agreement ratings indicated: (a) marketing educators gave higher ratings to more knowledge agreement competencies than did corporate recruiters and merchandising educators, (b) recruiters and marketing educators gave higher ratings to attitude agreement competencies than did merchandising educators, and (c) subject groups were different on skill agreement competencies, but no pattern emerged.

Differences among subject groups on KAS store importance ratings indicated: (a) marketing educators rated knowledge competencies for the store division higher than corporate recruiters and merchandising educators, (b) marketing educators rated attitude competencies for the store division higher than merchandising educators, and (c) marketing educators rated skill competencies for the store division higher than merchandising educators.

Differences among subject groups on KAS merchandising importance indicated: (a) marketing educators gave higher ratings to more knowledge competencies for the merchandising division than corporate recruiters, (b) marketing educators rated attitude competencies for the merchandising division higher than merchandising educators, and (c) marketing educators rated skill competencies for the merchandising division higher than merchandising educators.

Research questions 4, 5, 6, and 7 were tested through the use of descriptive statistics. Recruiters' and educators' emphasis on product knowledge ratings tended to be distributed among the importance ratings. Recruiters and educators tended to rate leadership/team building and retail-related work experience as more important than unimportant. The majority of recruiters and educators rated problem solving/decision making as extremely important.

Research question 8 was tested through the use of content analysis and descriptive statistics to determine retail trends increasing and decreasing in importance for graduates entering entry-level retail management positions in the next decade. Corporate recruiters identified 19 trends increasing in importance and 2 trends decreasing in importance. Recruiters and educators identified computer literacy, previous retail/work experience, analytical skills, customer service skills, leadership, improved retail work hours/schedule, problem solving skills, and negotiation skills as trends increasing in importance. Recruiters and

educators identified product knowledge and merchandising mechanics/fashion selection as trends decreasing in importance.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a direct result of an evolving global economy, the retail business environment in the next millennium will be dominated by organizations that maintain a competitive edge by recruiting, developing, and retaining managers with the appropriate competencies required to succeed in a complex marketplace. As retailers face increased competition both domestically and internationally, the importance of recruitment for entry-level retail management positions is being considered as a priority in strategic planning.

The primary source for entry-level retail management positions has been undergraduate retailing and merchandising degree programs. However, due to changing demographics, fewer students are currently pursuing undergraduate study. In a period of increasing retail competition and shortage of educated labor, retail organizations and institutions of higher education need to ensure that students preparing for careers in the retail industry have the appropriate competencies. Specialized program areas that do not adequately prepare graduates to meet the changing needs of the marketplace may be faced with lower student enrollment, decreased financial support, and possible program discontinuation. Therefore, it is critical that corporate recruiters and collegiate educators assess existing curricula to identify any deficiencies and make necessary changes to overcome inadequacies.

While researchers have investigated retailing and merchandising competencies, questions regarding specific competency categories across store formats and store or merchandising division specific remain unanswered. This investigation was an exploratory study in an effort to identify knowledge, attitude, and skill (KAS) competencies across store formats as well as the importance levels of the KAS competencies for the store division and the merchandising division. This chapter includes the following five aspects of the research project: (a) summary of the study, (b) summary of the findings, (c) interpretation of results, (d) conclusions and implications, and (e) recommendations for future research.

#### Summary of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to identify entry-level retail management competencies from a broad multi-company perspective that could serve as a guide for developing, evaluating, and restructuring retailing and merchandising curricula at the collegiate level. A secondary purpose was to assign each competency to a category of learning that could serve as a catalyst in setting instructional objectives and measuring educational outcomes. A third purpose was to assess the level of importance assigned to each competency by executive recruiters from a broad cross section of retail organizations that could assist in establishing priorities in retailing and merchandising curricula.

Competency-based education and the taxonomy of educational objectives was the conceptual framework which guided this study. Competencies are derived from tasks performed in specified work roles and are stated so as to make assessment possible in relation to specific competencies (Chamberlain, 1992; Dunnette & Hough, 1966; Lewy, 1977). Chamberlain (1992) assigned educational objectives into three domains of learning: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. In this study, three competency categories were identified: knowledge (cognitive), attitude (affective), and skill (psychomotor), labeled the KAS competencies.

The population for the expert panelists was corporate recruiters from retail organizations in the United States. The expert panel ( $n = 25$ ) consisted of corporate recruiters. Seven store segments were selected for the sample including two supermarkets, two home improvement stores, three discount stores, two drug chains, seven department stores, three apparel stores, and seven value retailers. The population for the pilot test was merchandising and marketing collegiate educators in the United States holding membership in the American Collegiate Retailing Association (ACRA). Participants ( $n = 6$ ) were collegiate educators. The population for the educator survey was merchandising and marketing collegiate educators in the United States. The collegiate educators ( $n = 24$ ) were ACRA members. The participants represented an equal distribution of merchandising and marketing academic disciplines.

Eight research questions were established in this study. Research questions included: (a) identification of knowledge, attitude, and skill competencies, (b) levels of hierarchy within the KAS competencies, (c) differences among corporate recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators on the level of agreement and level of importance ratings for the KAS competencies (d) perceived need for product knowledge by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators, (e) perceived need for leadership/team building by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators, (f) perceived need for problem solving/decision making by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators, (g) perceived need for retail-related work experience by corporate recruiters and collegiate educators, and (h) future retail trends important for entry-level retail management positions.

Data from this study were collected from Rounds I, II, and III questionnaires and the Educator Questionnaire. These questionnaires appear in Appendixes A, C, D, and E, respectively. Round I Questionnaire requested respondents to submit no more than five nor fewer than three competencies in the areas of knowledge, attitude, and skill. Demographic information was also elicited. A total of 45 knowledge competencies, 38 attitude competencies, and 44 skill competencies were developed as a result of Round I Questionnaire.

The questionnaire was then pilot tested for comprehension of the instructions, length of completion, and terminology and clarity of the competencies. The pilot test questionnaire requested respondents to rate their



level of agreement and level of importance for each of the competencies, as well as provide demographic information. Based on the results of the pilot test, 10 revisions were made prior to mailing the Educator Questionnaire.

Because of the length of the questionnaire (12 pages), there was concern that a fatigue factor could exist which would evidence as less variance of responses between the first and the last pages. Therefore, two questionnaires were developed with the KAS competencies placed in reverse order. The two questionnaire formats were equally divided and randomly distributed between the educators to test for fatigue. The Educator Questionnaire requested respondents to rate their level of agreement, level of importance for the store division and level of importance for the merchandising division for each of the 24 knowledge competencies, 26 attitude competencies, and 26 skill competencies, and also elicited demographic information. A 5-point Likert scale was used for level of agreement, a 5-point Likert-type scale was used for level of importance for the store division, and a 5-point Likert-type scale was used for level of importance for the merchandising division. The testing for variance between the two alternate forms of the questionnaire showed that fatigue was not a factor, so the pages were not rotated for the expert panelists on Round II Questionnaire.

Round II Questionnaire requested corporate recruiters to rate their level of agreement, level of importance for the store division, and level of importance for the merchandising division for each of the 76 competencies. Round III Questionnaire contained the median, interquartile range, the expert panelist's

initial rating, and a blank for entering a new rating for each of the KAS competencies in which the expert panel had not reached consensus on Round II Questionnaire. Round III Questionnaire also elicited demographic information.

A modified Delphi procedure consisting of three rounds of questionnaires and an educator survey were used in conducting this study. Competencies were initially submitted by the expert panelists in Round I, analyzed by two independent researchers and then compared with a third researcher to ensure accuracy, and pilot tested. These KAS competencies were then validated statistically as result of the Educator Survey and Delphi Rounds II and III.

In the winter of 1997, 25 corporate recruiters were mailed Round I Questionnaire. A total of 25 questionnaires were returned resulting in a 100% response rate. In the spring of 1998, 6 educators were sent by facsimile the pilot study, and a total of 6 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 100% response rate. After the pilot study, 24 collegiate educators were mailed the educator survey. A total of 23 participants returned completed questionnaires resulting in a 95.83% response rate. The 25 corporate recruiters who had returned Round I Questionnaire were contacted in the spring of 1998 by telephone to inform them that they would be receiving Round II Questionnaire. Based on responses to requests by corporate recruiters, Round II Questionnaire was sent via priority mail or facsimile to participants. Two participant mortalities resulted from the individuals leaving the organization. Twenty-three corporate recruiters were sent via priority mail or facsimile Round II Questionnaire. A total

of 19 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 82.61% response rate. Those failing to return a questionnaire were dropped out of the study. Of the 19 expert panelists who returned questionnaires in Round II, one participant mortality resulted from the individual taking an unexpected, indefinite leave of absence from the organization. Eighteen expert panelists were sent via priority mail or facsimile Round III Questionnaire. A total of 16 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 88.89% response rate.

Data resulting from the three Delphi rounds and the educator survey were analyzed using a variety of statistical methods. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were calculated for scale consistency and internal reliability. Research questions were tested using content analyses, one-way analyses of variance, Tukey's HSD multiple comparison tests, and descriptive statistics. Differences were considered statistically significant at the .05 level.

### Summary of the Findings

Data obtained from the three Delphi rounds and the educator survey were used to determine the findings of the study. The questionnaires elicited information from corporate recruiters and collegiate educators with regard to: (a) demographic information, (b) identification of the KAS competencies, (c) agreement rating with each of the KAS competencies, (d) level of importance rating for each of the KAS competencies, (e) product knowledge emphasis, (f) leadership/team building emphasis, (g) problem solving/decision making

emphasis, (h) retail-related work experience emphasis, and (i) identification of retail trends. Rounds II and III questionnaires requested corporate recruiters to delineate importance levels for the store division and the merchandising division. Findings of the study are discussed in the following sections.

### Profile of Corporate Recruiters

- (1) Recruiters were both female (60%) and male (40%).
- (2) Twenty percent of recruiters had a graduate degree, 68% bachelor's degree, 8% associate's degree, and 4% high school degree.
- (3) Recruiters had been employed in the retail industry an average of 13.4 years and had been employed an average of 9 years with their current organization.
- (4) A total of 84% of recruiters were corporate level employees and 16% were regional level personnel.
- (5) A total of 44% recruited for both the store and merchandising divisions, 48% recruited only for the store division, and 8% recruited only for the merchandising division.
- (6) For those recruiters who recruited for the store division, a total of 87% planned recruiting efforts, 74% coordinated recruiting efforts, 57% personally recruited applicants, and 22% participated in other recruiting efforts.

- (7) For those recruiters who recruited for the merchandising division, a total of 92% planned recruiting efforts, 85% coordinated recruiting efforts, 77% personally recruited applicants, and 23% participated in other recruiting efforts.

### Profile of Retail Organizations

- (1) Fifty percent of the organizations required a college degree for entry-level retail management positions for the store division, and 63% required a college degree for the merchandising division.
- (2) For the store division, the following percentages of academic areas from which graduates were recruited include: 38% management, 38% merchandising, 38% retailing, 31% marketing, 13% other, and 13% no specific area.
- (3) For the merchandising division, the following percentages of academic areas from which graduates were recruited include: 88% marketing, 88% merchandising, 75% retailing, 75% management, 38% other, and 25% no specific area.
- (4) One hundred percent of organizations recruited on campuses for both the store division and the merchandising division.
- (5) The average number of employees hired annually for the store division was 746 and the average number of employees hired annually for the merchandising division was 55.

- (6) Thirty-three percent of employees hired were college graduates in the store division and 89% were college graduates in the merchandising division.
- (7) The average salary offered to college graduates for entry-level retail management positions in the store division was between \$23,000-\$28,999 and \$26,000-\$31,999 in the merchandising division.
- (8) Eighty-eight percent of organizations offered executive training programs for the store division and 75% offered executive training programs for the merchandising division.
- (9) Eighty-eight percent of organizations offered internships in the store division and 75% offered internships in the merchandising division.

#### Profile of Collegiate Educators

- (1) Educators were both female (61%) and male (39%).
- (2) One hundred percent of educators had a doctoral degree.
- (3) Fifty-two percent of educators represented merchandising and 48% marketing.
- (4) Educators had been employed in higher education an average of 21 years and had been employed an average of 13 years with their current institution.
- (5) Fifty-two percent were professors, 44% were associate professors, and 4% were assistant professors.

- (6) A total of 96% were involved in teaching, 78% conducted research, 57% supervised internships, and 33% directed an institute or center focusing on retailing and merchandising issues.

### Profile of Academic Units

- (1) Forty-three percent of academic units were marketing degree programs or specializations, 30% were merchandising degree programs or specializations, 22% were retailing degree programs or specializations, and 4% were other programs.
- (2) The average annual number of undergraduate students enrolled in the program were 239.
- (3) The average annual number of students graduating from the program was 78.
- (4) Sixty-one percent of the undergraduate students pursuing degrees worked in retail organizations while completing their course work. The average annual salary offered to graduates entering the store division was \$23,000-28,999, and entering the merchandising division was \$26,000-28,999.
- (5) Eighty-seven percent of the academic programs offered an internship.
- (6) Forty-five percent of the academic programs required an internship for graduation.

(7) Ninety-one percent of the academic units assessed educational/student outcomes.

(8) Of the educational/student outcome assessment methods used, 91% were written internship employer appraisals, 91% capstone courses, 86% post graduation student surveys, 71% written internship student appraisals, 50% internship employer conferences, 62% internship student conferences, 48% employers of recent graduates, 38% exit interviews with graduating seniors, 32% program advisory boards, and 10% other.

**RQ.1** What knowledge, attitude, and skill competencies were desired by corporate recruiters for entry-level retail management positions?

A total of 76 KAS competencies were identified by corporate recruiters.

Corporate recruiters identified and reached consensus on 24 knowledge competencies, 26 attitude competencies, and 26 skill competencies. The KAS agreement scales were used to identify the KAS competencies.

#### **Knowledge Agreement Scale**

(1) A high reliability level of .92 was observed.

(2) Recruiters reached consensus on all 24 knowledge agreement ratings.



**Attitude Agreement Scale**

- (1) A high reliability level of .89 was observed.
- (2) Recruiters reached consensus on all 26 attitude agreement ratings.

**Skill Agreement Scale**

- (1) A high reliability level of .92 was observed.
- (2) Recruiters reached consensus on all 26 skill agreement ratings.

**RQ.2** What levels of hierarchy were determined by corporate recruiters in the knowledge, attitude, and skill competency categories?

Importance ratings for the store division and the merchandising division were determined by the corporate recruiters. A level of hierarchy within each KAS competency category for the store division and the merchandising division was established based on the mean importance ratings.

**Knowledge Store Importance Scale**

- (1) A high reliability level of .93 was observed.
- (2) Recruiters reached consensus on the store importance rating on 20 knowledge competencies. Competencies in which consensus did not occur as to the level of importance for the store division were legal restraints, sourcing, contingency planning, and vendor analysis.

- (3) The highest rated competencies were retail work schedules, business ethics, visual presentation, and operational procedures. The lowest rated competencies were vendor analysis, global and multicultural issues, finance, and sourcing.

#### **Knowledge Merchandising Importance Scale**

- (1) A high reliability level of .93 was observed.
- (2) Recruiters reached consensus on all 19 knowledge store importance ratings. Competencies in which consensus did not occur as to the level of importance for the merchandising division were sourcing, finance, global and multicultural issues, contingency planning, and academic preparation in merchandising or retail management.
- (3) The highest rated competencies were business ethics, vendor analysis, merchandise planning and control, analytical thinking, trend analysis, and computer literacy. The lowest rated competencies were retail work schedules, global and multicultural issues, finance, and legal restraints/issues.

#### **Attitude Store Importance Scale**

- (1) A high reliability level of .91 was observed.
- (2) Recruiters reached consensus on 24 attitude store importance ratings. One competency in which consensus did not

occur as to the level of importance for the store division was optimistic.

- (3) The highest rated competencies were customer-oriented, team player, people-oriented, strong work ethic, and ethical. The lowest rated competencies were open-minded, optimistic, detail-oriented, and innovative thinker.

#### **Attitude Merchandising Importance Scale**

- (1) A high reliability level of .93 was observed.
- (2) Recruiters reached consensus on all 23 attitude merchandising importance ratings. The competencies in which consensus did not occur as to the level of importance for the merchandising division were adventuresome, leadership, and assertive.
- (3) The highest rated competencies were ethical, team player, strong work ethic, and responsible. The lowest rated competencies were adventuresome, people-oriented, leadership, and optimistic.

#### **Skill Store Importance Scale**

- (1) A high reliability level of .91 was observed.
- (2) Recruiters reached consensus on all 24 skill store importance ratings. The competencies in which consensus did not occur as to the level of importance for the store division

were public relations and persuasiveness.

- (3) The highest rated competencies were stress management, prioritization, interpersonal communication/relationship, oral communication, decision making, problem solving, and team building. The lowest rated competencies were negotiation, computer literacy, and data analysis.

#### **Skill Merchandising Importance Scale**

- (1) A high reliability level of .93 was observed.
- (2) Recruiters reached consensus on all 22 skill merchandising importance ratings. The competencies in which consensus did not occur as to the level of importance for the merchandising division were conflict management, diversity management, public relations, and persuasiveness.
- (3) The highest rated competencies data analysis, precision/accuracy, negotiation, decision making, time management, and computer literacy. The lowest rated competencies were risk/crisis management, human resource management, and motivation strategies.

**RQ.3 What were the differences among corporate recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators on the level of agreement and level of importance ratings of competencies for entry-level retail management positions?**

**Differences existed among corporate recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators on the level of agreement and level of importance ratings for the KAS competencies.**

**(1) Recruiters and educators disagreed on nine knowledge agreement ratings: retail work schedules, critical thinking, global and multicultural issues, strategic planning, trend analysis, vendor analysis, computer literacy, academic preparation in merchandising or retail management, and merchandise planning and control.**

**Differences existed among recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Marketing educators rated knowledge agreement higher than recruiters and merchandising educators.**

**(2) Recruiters and educators disagreed on 13 knowledge store importance ratings: retail work schedules, critical thinking, accounting, finance, global and multicultural issues, analytical thinking, competitive analysis, strategic planning, marketing analysis, visual presentation, vendor analysis, computer literacy, and academic preparation in merchandising or retail management. Differences existed among recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing**

educators. Marketing educators rated knowledge competencies for the store division higher than recruiters and merchandising educators.

- (3) Recruiters and educators disagreed on eight knowledge merchandising importance ratings: legal restraints/issues, organization strategies, product knowledge, critical thinking, sourcing, analytical thinking, strategic planning, and academic preparation in merchandising or retail management. Differences existed among recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Marketing educators rated knowledge competencies for the merchandising division higher than recruiters.
- (4) Recruiters and educators disagreed on two attitude agreement ratings: optimistic and assertive. Differences existed among recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Recruiters and marketing educators rated attitude agreement higher than merchandising educators.
- (5) Recruiters and educators disagreed on four attitude store importance ratings: adventuresome, assertive, competitive, and flexible. Differences existed between merchandising educators and marketing educators. Marketing educators rated attitude competencies for the store division higher than merchandising educators.
- (6) Recruiters and educators disagreed on four attitude merchandising importance ratings: optimistic, assertive, competitive, and energetic.

Differences existed between merchandising educators and marketing educators. Marketing educators rated attitude competencies for the merchandising division higher than merchandising educators.

(7) Recruiters and educators disagreed on six skill agreement ratings:

written communication, retail experience, motivation strategies, conflict management, precision/accuracy, and computer literacy. Differences existed among recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Subject groups were different, but no pattern emerged.

(8) Recruiters and educators disagreed on seven skill store importance

ratings: written communication, retail experience, motivation strategies, conflict management, supervision, data analysis, and computer literacy. Differences existed among recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Marketing educators rated skill competencies for the store division higher than merchandising educators.

(9) Recruiters and educators disagreed on six skill merchandising

importance ratings: stress management, decision making, retail experience, negotiation, computer literacy, and evaluation.

Differences existed among recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators. Marketing educators rated skill competencies for the merchandising division higher than recruiters and merchandising educators.

**RQ.4** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for product knowledge in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?

The emphasis ratings on product knowledge by recruiters and educators tended to be evenly distributed between important and unimportant, although a higher percentage of educators rated the emphasis on product knowledge as extremely important than did recruiters. A higher percentage of recruiters rated the emphasis on product knowledge as moderately important, important, and moderately unimportant than did educators. Twenty-two percent of recruiters and educators rated the emphasis on product knowledge as unimportant.

(1) Fifteen percent of recruiters rated emphasis on product knowledge as "Extremely Important" compared to 27% of educators, 22% of recruiters rated "Moderately Important" compared to 18% of educators, and 19% of recruiters rated "Important" compared to 14% of educators.

(2) Twenty-two percent of recruiters rated emphasis on product knowledge as "Moderately Unimportant" compared to 14% of educators, 22% of recruiters rated "Unimportant" compared to 25% of educators, and 0% of recruiters rated "Extremely Unimportant" compared to 5% of educators.



**RQ.5** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for leadership/team building in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?

The emphasis ratings on leadership/team building by recruiters and educators tended to be more important than unimportant. Approximately fifty percent of recruiters and educators rated the emphasis on leadership/team building as extremely important. A slightly higher percentage of recruiters rated the emphasis on product knowledge as moderately important than did the educators. A higher percentage of educators rated the emphasis on leadership/team building as important, moderately important, and moderately unimportant than recruiters. A higher percentage of recruiters rated the emphasis on leadership/team building as unimportant.

- (1) Forty-eight percent of recruiters rated emphasis on leadership/team building as "Extremely Important" compared to 50% of educators, 26% of recruiters rated "Moderately Important" compared to 23% of educators, and 19% of recruiters rated "Important" compared to 23% of educators.
- (2) Four percent of recruiters rated emphasis on leadership/team building as "Moderately Unimportant" compared to 5% of educators, and 4% of recruiters rated "Unimportant" compared to 0% of educators.
- (3) No recruiters or educators rated emphasis on leadership/team building as "Extremely Unimportant".

**RQ.6** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for problem solving/decision making in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?

A majority of recruiters and educators rated the emphasis on problem solving/decision making as extremely important. A higher percentage of recruiters rated the emphasis on problem solving/decision making as extremely important than did the educators. A higher percentage of educators rated the emphasis on problem solving/decision making as moderately important. A higher percentage of recruiters rated the emphasis on problem solving/decision making as important.

- (1) Sixty-three percent of recruiters rated emphasis on problem solving/decision making as “Extremely Important” compared to 60% of educators, 33% of recruiters rated “Moderately Important” compared to 36% of educators, and 4% of recruiters rated “Important” compared to 0% of educators.
- (2) No recruiters or educators rated emphasis on problem solving/decision making as “Moderately Unimportant”, “Unimportant”, or “Extremely Unimportant”.

**RQ.7** To what degree did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive the need for retail-related work experience in the preparedness of graduates for entry-level retail management positions?

A higher percentage of educators rated the emphasis retail-related work experience as extremely important than did the recruiters. A higher percentage of recruiters rated the emphasis on retail-related work experience as moderately important, important, and moderately unimportant than did the educators.

(1) Thirty-six percent of recruiters rated emphasis on retail-related work experience as "Extremely Important" compared to 55% of educators, 36% of recruiters rated "Moderately Important" compared to 27% of educators, and 18% of recruiters rated "Important" compared to 14% of educators.

(2) Eleven percent of recruiters rated emphasis on retail-related work experience as "Moderately Unimportant" compared to 5% of educators, and no recruiters or educators rated "Unimportant", or "Extremely Unimportant".

**RQ.8** What did corporate recruiters and collegiate educators perceive as future retail trends increasing and decreasing in importance for graduates entering retail management positions in the next decade?

The most frequently identified retail trend increasing in importance by both the recruiters and the educators was computer literacy. The most

frequently identified retail trend decreasing in importance by both the recruiters and the educators was product knowledge.

- (1) Recruiters identified 21 retail trends increasing in importance for undergraduates compared to 39 identified by educators.
- (2) The four most frequent retail trends increasing in importance for graduates entering retail management positions in the next decade identified by recruiters were computer literacy, previous retail/work experience, diversity management, and analytical skills. Twenty-five percent of recruiters identified computer literacy compared to 35% of educators. Nineteen percent of recruiters identified previous retail/work experience compared to 13% of educators. Nineteen percent of recruiters identified diversity management compared to 4% of educators. Nineteen percent of recruiters identified analytical skills compared to 22% of educators.
- (3) The five most frequent retail trends increasing in importance for graduates entering retail management positions in the next decade identified by educators were computer literacy, team building, problem solving/critical thinking, and database marketing/information systems management. Thirty-five percent of educators identified computer literacy compared to 25% of recruiters. Twenty-six percent of educators identified team building compared to 0% of recruiters. Thirty percent of educators identified problem solving/critical thinking

compared to 6% of recruiters. Twenty-six percent of educators identified database marketing/information systems management compared to 0% of recruiters.

- (4) Only two trends decreasing in importance for undergraduate students entering retail management positions in the next decade were identified by recruiters: product knowledge and fashion selection skills, compared to 18 identified by educators.
- (5) Six percent of recruiters identified product knowledge as a decreasing trend compared to 30% of educators.
- (6) The five most frequent retail trends decreasing in importance for undergraduate students entering retail management positions in the next decade identified by educators were product knowledge (30%), strategic planning (9%), retailing or business degree or major (9%), merchandising mechanics (9%), and store organization (9%).

### Interpretation of Results

#### Knowledge Competencies

The level of hierarchy within the knowledge category differed between the store division and the merchandising division. Retail work schedules was ranked first for the store division and last for the merchandising division. Business ethics ranked second for the store division and first for the merchandising division. Previous studies have not included retail work

schedules or business ethics as knowledge competencies (Kotsiopoulos et al., 1993; McCuaig et al., 1996). Business ethics is a growing issue in the workplace and is expected to continue to be viewed important as greater emphasis is placed on higher standards of ethical conduct (Wysall, 1998). The extended hours, weekends, and holidays required for the store division attribute to high turnover within the retail industry (Buckley, 1991). Graduates must be aware of the retail work schedules when considering careers in the store division. Recruiters and educators identified improved retail work hours/schedules as a trend increasing in importance for graduates entering entry-level retail management positions.

Visual presentation ranked third for the store division and ninth for the merchandising division. Although visual presentation is often considered a merchandising function, floor presentation which effectively differentiates merchandise is important to enhance store image and expedite and encourage product purchases by consumers (Lewison, 1997). The importance of product presentation in the store division was not addressed in the study by Heitmeyer et al. (1992) in which retail executives ranked the ability to create window and interior displays as least important.

Product knowledge ranked fifth for the store division and fifth for the merchandising division. In the current study, little differences were found between recruiters and educators on product knowledge. This is contrary to a previous study by McCuaig et al. (1996) in which product knowledge was found

less important to recruiters than educators. Recruiters who represented value retailers and department stores tended to rate product knowledge important. This finding is most likely due to the technological and specialized nature of many products offered by value retailers and the historical nature of product knowledge within department stores. Both value retailers and department stores offer high levels of customer service, and therefore may rely more heavily on product knowledge in the selling process. Product knowledge was the most often identified retail trend decreasing in importance by both recruiters and educators.

Merchandise planning and control ranked tenth for the store division and second for the merchandising division. This would appear to be on target as more merchandise planning and control functions are conducted in the merchandising buying office, rather than at the store level. The importance of merchandise planning for the merchandising division is further supported by the ratings of apparel retailers in the study by Garner and Buckley (1988).

Educators identified information systems management, partnerships/relationships, statistical analysis procedures, and trends forecasting as retail trends increasing in importance. These functions are included in merchandising planning and control.

Differences existed among recruiters, merchandising educators, and marketing educators including higher ratings given by marketing educators than recruiters and merchandising educators for knowledge competencies. These

higher ratings may be attributed to the theoretical emphasis placed on the delivery of subject matter in marketing academic programs. Knowledge competencies such as finance, accounting, organizational strategies, and strategic planning are often competencies necessary for mid-management positions, yet not as critical for entry-level management positions. Differences among educators from different academic disciplines and recruiters have not previously been researched (Donnellan, 1996; Heitmeyer et al., 1992) and offer insight into the emphasis academic programs place on knowledge, attitudes, and skills in their respective curriculum.

#### Attitude Competencies

Less differences in the level of hierarchy for the store division and merchandising division existed for attitude competencies. However, customer-oriented ranked first for the store division and seventh for the merchandising division. Increased customer-orientation is becoming more prevalent in retail businesses (Berman, 1991). This focus on customer service is critical for the store division since interaction with customers is a fundamental basis for generating and maintaining sales. Previous studies have not included customer-oriented as an attitude competency (Donnellan, 1996; Heitmeyer et al., 1992), but in a consumer-driven marketplace with the emergence of strategic shoppers and value-oriented consumers, a focus on customer service can differentiate one retailer from another (Berman, 1991). Recruiters and educators identified



customer service skills as a trend increasing in importance for graduates entering entry-level retail management positions.

Ethical was ranked second for the store division and first for the merchandising division. Again, other studies have not included ethical as a competency (Kotsiopoulos et al., 1993; McCuaig et al., 1996). However, ethical issues are being emphasized in the workplace which is reflected in the higher ranking (Whysall, 1998). Team player was ranked first in the store division and second in the merchandising division, while leadership ranked fourth in the store division and twelfth in the merchandising division. Organizations are adopting a team approach to the workforce, which is prevalent in other countries (Carnevale & Stone, 1994; Gardenswartz & Rowe, 1994). The workforce is increasingly becoming more diverse including minorities, ethnic backgrounds, aging workers, and varying lifestyles (Baytos, 1992). Effective team building values diversity, and in turn, results in increased productivity, customer satisfaction, and competitive advantage (Baytos, 1992; Carnevale & Stone, 1994; Gardenswartz & Rowe, 1994). Educators identified team building as a retail trend increasing in importance. The highest ranked attitude competencies for the store division and the merchandising division (customer-oriented, ethical, team player) have not been previously identified (Gush, 1996; Mikitka & Stampfl, 1994). Merchandising educators rated attitudes lower than recruiters and marketing educators and may be evidenced in the application-oriented nature of merchandising academic programs.

### Skill Competencies

Differences existed in the hierarchy for skill importance for the store division and the merchandising division. Stress management ranked first for the store division and fifth for the merchandising division. The study by McCuaig et al. (1996) supported this finding for the merchandising division. The ability to effectively manage stress can be integrated into merchandising and marketing curricula through the use of actual retail-related work experience and projects designed to require adherence to specified deadlines and levels of execution. Prioritization ranked second in the store division and fourth in the merchandising division. Prioritization has not been identified in previous studies (Donnellan, 1996; Kotsiopoulos et al., 1993). Effective stress management and prioritization of tasks can result in increased productivity, and should therefore be incorporated into course projects and assignments.

Data analysis ranked first in the merchandising division and eighteenth in the store division. Heitmeyer et al. (1992) also found data analysis rated high by retail executives for the merchandising division. Precision/accuracy ranked first in the merchandising division and fifteenth in the store division. Precision/accuracy is a critical element in data analysis, yet this competency has not been identified in previous research. Educators statistical analysis procedures as a trend increasing in importance. Precision/accuracy is critical for correct statistical analyses.

Oral communication ranked third for the store division and fifth for the merchandising division. Donnellan (1996) found that vice presidents of human resources in department, specialty, and discount stores rated oral communication as important. Written communication ranked sixth for the merchandising division and seventeenth for the store division. Written communication is vital for the merchandising division in transacting vendor contracts (Lewison, 1997). However, the store division focuses more on relationships with consumers and employees, emphasizing the need for oral communication (Lewison, 1997).

Negotiation ranked last for the store division and second for the merchandising division. In the study by Kotsiopoulos et al. (1993), buyers and managers rated negotiation skills as highly important. The significant differences between the current study and the study by Kotsiopoulos et al. (1993) may be due to the delineation of importance between divisions in this study. Recruiters and educators identified negotiation skills as a retail trend increasing in importance for graduates.

Computer literacy ranked third for the merchandising division and eighteenth for the store division. Computer output has become more user friendly, decreasing the need for advanced computer literacy for entry-level management positions in the store division. However, merchandising managers rely heavily on POS systems to control inventory levels and ultimately costs. McCuaig et al. (1996) also found computer skills rated important by recruiters.

Buyers and suppliers utilize electronic data interchange (EDI) to conduct business transactions electronically (Lewison, 1997). Computer literacy is critical in electronic communication. Merchandising and marketing educators rated computer skill importance for the store division higher than recruiters. The study by McCuaig et al. (1996) found educators rated computer skills higher than recruiters in the merchandising division. Computer literacy was the most commonly identified trend increasing in importance by both recruiters and educators.

### Product Knowledge

Recruiters and educators were almost equally divided as to whether product knowledge was important or unimportant. This contradicts the findings of McCuaig et al. (1996), that found educators significantly rated product knowledge and product quality high, whereas the rating by recruiters was extremely low. Store segments which rated product knowledge as extremely important were predominately value retailers and department stores. Product knowledge is an element of customer service by creating competitive advantage through high product reliability, ease of use, determination of product adequacy, and ease of repair (Berman, 1991). Educators rated product knowledge slightly more important than unimportant. Differences in product knowledge emphasis ratings may be attributed to the type of store segments represented by recruiters or to an increased awareness by educators of a decreasing emphasis on

product knowledge in curriculum. While the emphasis on product knowledge received mixed results, this study did not ascertain whether product knowledge was to be gained in collegiate studies or corporate training programs.

### Leadership/Team Building

The majority of recruiters and educators rated the emphasis on leadership/team building as extremely important or moderately important, which is supported by Donnellan (1996) who found leadership ranked high in importance by vice presidents of human resources. In the study by McCuaig et al. (1996), recruiters and educators also rated leadership important. Team building ranked third in the store division and seventh in the merchandising division. Team building involves setting goals and priorities, analyzing work allocation, establishing interpersonal relationships, and understanding group dynamics (Coghlan, 1994). Previous studies have not identified team building as a competency (Heitmeyer et al., 1992; Kotsiopulus et al., 1993), although 80% of leading businesses in the United States use some form of teams (McNerney, 1994). Leadership skills and team building strategies can be integrated into curricula through the study of team building processes, group dynamics, and the utilization of team projects. Recruiters and educators identified leadership as a trend increasing in importance. Educators identified team building as an increasing trend.

### Problem Solving/Decision Making

The majority of recruiters and educators rated the emphasis on problem solving/decision making as extremely important or moderately important. Problem solving and decision making also were ranked high in the skill hierarchy for the store division and the merchandising division. Recruiters and educators identified problem solving skills as a retail trend increasing in importance. The process of systematically solving problems and making concrete decisions should be addressed and integrated in merchandising and marketing curricula through the use of case studies and computer simulation exercises. Previous studies have not identified problem solving/decision making as competencies (Donnellan, 1996; McCuaig et al., 1996).

### Retail-Related Work Experience

The majority of recruiters and educators rated retail-related work experience as important, although educators tended to rate the emphasis on retail-related work experience slightly higher in importance than recruiters. Retail experience was identified as a skill competency, but was ranked fourteenth for the store division and the merchandising division by corporate recruiters. Although recruiters rated retail experience low as a competency, both recruiters and educators identified previous retail/work experience as a trend increasing in importance. Additionally, all of the retail organizations offered internships to undergraduates.

### Retail Trends

Recruiters and educators identified computer literacy, previous retail/work experience, analytical skills, customer service skills, leadership, improved retail work hours/schedule, problem solving skills, and negotiation skills as trends increasing in importance. Computer literacy was identified as an increasing trend by recruiters and educators more often than any other trend. As the retail industry becomes more technology driven, the expectations and uncertainty of rapidly changing technology become a greater concern for organizations facing a shrinking supply of educated workers. Recruiters and educators identified product knowledge and merchandising mechanics/fashion selection as trends decreasing in importance, although few recruiters listed any trends decreasing in importance (6%). The continual changing nature of the retail environment results in numerous increasing trends impacting graduates entering entry-level retail management positions. Hence, the expansion of knowledge, attitudes, and skills attained by graduates should be considered in merchandising and marketing curricula assessment.

### Conclusions and Implications

Due to the exploratory nature of this study with a relatively small sample, implications for curriculum development should be made with caution until findings are validated with a larger sample. However, while the sample may appear small, the most common sample size for the Delphi technique of group

consensus is 11-15 participants. The KAS competencies were generated from Round I had a sample size of 25, much larger than the typical Delphi panel. The KAS competencies were validated and rank ordered based on the results of Rounds II and III, with sample sizes of 19 and 16, respectively. Therefore, based on the analyses of the data and interpretation of the findings, the following conclusions appear to have implications for curriculum assessment.

1. The Knowledge Agreement Scale, Knowledge Store Importance Scale, and Knowledge Merchandising Importance Scale used in the study all had a high reliability which was maintained even though the sample was small. This implies that the Knowledge Agreement Scale, Knowledge Store Importance Scale and Knowledge Merchandising Importance Scale would be useful to collegiate educators when assessing industry needs in curriculum revision.
2. The Attitude Agreement Scale, Attitude Store Importance Scale, and Attitude Merchandising Importance scale used in the study had a high reliability which was maintained even though the sample was small. This implies that the Attitude Agreement Scale, Attitude Store Importance Scale, and Attitude Merchandising Importance Scale would be useful to collegiate educators when assessing industry needs in curriculum revision.



3. **The Skill Agreement Scale, Skill Store Importance Scale, and Skill Merchandising Importance Scale used in the study had a high reliability which was maintained even though the sample was small. This implies that the Skill Agreement Scale, Skill Store Importance Scale, and Skill Merchandising Importance Scale would be useful to collegiate educators when assessing industry needs in curriculum revision.**
4. **Collegiate educators were found to rate knowledge agreement higher than corporate recruiters. Marketing educators were found to rate knowledge agreement higher than corporate recruiters. This indicates that collegiate educators place a greater importance on knowledge competencies than corporate recruiters and might consider a more balanced curriculum that would include attitude and skills more in line with industry needs.**
5. **Collegiate educators were found to rate knowledge merchandising importance higher than corporate recruiters. Marketing educators rated 11 knowledge merchandising importance ratings higher than recruiters. This indicates that collegiate educators place a greater importance on knowledge merchandising importance than corporate recruiters and should consider balancing the emphasis placed on knowledge competencies for the merchandising division.**

6. Corporate recruiters and marketing educators were found to rate attitude merchandising importance higher than merchandising educators. Marketing educators rated attitudes higher than merchandising educators. This indicates that merchandising educators might consider placing more emphasis on attitudes for the merchandising division and should consider adjusting curriculum to be better in line with industry needs.
7. Collegiate educators rated the importance of written communication, data analysis, and computer literacy higher for skill store importance than recruiters. The only differences for the skill merchandising importance ratings were between marketing and merchandising educators. Marketing educators rated skill merchandising importance competencies higher than merchandising educators.
8. Collegiate educators were found to place a slightly higher emphasis on product knowledge than corporate recruiters. This indicates that collegiate educators should consider balancing the emphasis placed on product knowledge. Collegiate educators appear to be decreasing the emphasis as evidenced in 30% of the educators identifying product knowledge as a retail trend decreasing in importance for graduates entering entry-level retail management positions.
9. Leadership/team building were rated important or extremely important by both recruiters and educators. This agreement of importance

validates the need for leadership/team building to be included as a fundamental component throughout the curriculum.

10. Problem solving/decision making also were rated important or extremely important by recruiters and educators. These competencies should be integrated across the curriculum.
11. Recruiters and educators rated retail-related work experience as important and previous retail/work experience as a trend increasing in importance for graduates entering entry-level retail management positions in the next decade. Therefore, retail-related work experience should be highly encouraged for students to gain practical work experience while enrolled in collegiate studies in addition to internships.
12. Trends increasing as important for graduates entering entry-level retail management positions appear to be not as much an immediate need for existing curricula, but should be considered in future curriculum development. Computer literacy was most often identified by both recruiters and educators as a trend increasing in importance and should be integrated into retailing and merchandising curricula. The emphasis on product knowledge by store segment should be considered as curriculum is assessed.

### Recommendations For Further Research

This research was an exploratory investigation into identifying and ranking industry-based knowledge, attitude, and skill competencies necessary for entry-level retail management positions for the store division and the merchandising division. Additional research is recommended in the following areas before application to curriculum design:

#### Instrument Design

1. Develop a more sensitive method for measuring the emphasis on product knowledge, leadership/team building, problem solving/decision making, and retail-related work experience. Findings would assist collegiate educators in identifying assignments and projects which would enhance the development of these competencies.
2. Expand the questionnaire to delineate between the level of learning for each competency: awareness, understanding, or proficiency. Defining the level of learning will assist educators in evaluating what emphasis level to place on competencies.
3. Revise the academic unit and organizational demographic profiles by limiting the number of open-ended questions so that the resulting data would be easier to analyze statistically and would yield more generalizable results.

### Sampling

1. Administer the revised questionnaire to corporate recruiters from the entire listing of the retail organizations listed in the Top 100 Retailers and the Top 100 Specialty Stores in STORES. A larger sample of corporate recruiters will assist in validating the identification of the competencies and the levels of hierarchy within each competency category for the store division and the merchandising division. Differences between levels of hierarchy and store segments may be evidenced.
2. Administer the revised questionnaire to collegiate educators from the entire listing of ACRA members. A larger sample of collegiate educators will assist in validating the identification of the competencies and the levels of hierarchy within each competency category for the store division and the merchandising division. Differences between levels of hierarchy and academic area may be evidenced.
3. Administer the revised questionnaire to entry-level and mid-level management personnel within the store division and the merchandising division from the entire listing of the retail organizations listed in the Top 100 Retailers and the Top 100 Specialty Stores in STORES. This would validate the findings with practicing professionals.

**Data Analysis**

1. **Assess data from a larger sample group using factor analysis to find similarities within the competencies. This would be useful in categorizing the competencies for inclusion in curriculum development and continued competency-based research.**

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**APPENDIX A**  
**ROUND I QUESTIONNAIRE**



**TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY**

College of Human Sciences  
Department of Merchandising,  
Environmental Design and  
Consumer Economics

November 18, 1997

John Retailer  
100 Main Street  
Anywhere, USA 00000

Dear Mr. Retailer:

Thank you for your agreement to participate in the Industry-Based Retail Competency Project which I am conducting under the direction of the Merchandising, Environmental Design and Consumer Economics Department of Texas Tech University. This project will use the Delphi Technique which involves the use of experts in a particular field to achieve group consensus on specific competencies in the areas of knowledge, attitude, and skill. You have been specifically selected to be a participant of this panel based on your knowledge and expertise in retailing. Participation is voluntary. All your responses will be kept confidential and will be used for statistical analyses as part of this dissertation research project.

The objective of the project is a progressive movement toward consensus on one or more competencies in each area: knowledge, attitude, skill. Your participation in this project should be mutually beneficial. First, it will give you the opportunity to compare your views on the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for entry-level retail management positions with those of other retail executives. Secondly, it will give you the opportunity to impact the future of retail curriculum development. Finally, the results of this project will be made available to retail educators and retailers throughout the United States. This is an opportunity for you to provide information that can improve the quality of retailing education.

Please use the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope to mail your completed competencies to me by December 3, 1997. If you have any questions, please call me at (304) 293-3402 ext. 1788 or (304) 594-2224. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Keri M. Keech, M.B.A.  
Project Director

Shelley S. Harp, Ph.D.  
Faculty Advisor

P. S. When you complete and return all three rounds of questionnaires, an executive summary will be mailed to you in appreciation for your participation in this project.

**INFORMATION ABOUT YOU**

1. How many years have you been employed in the retail industry?  
\_\_\_\_\_ years

2. How many years have you been employed with your current organization?  
\_\_\_\_\_ years

3. What is your job title?  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What are your responsibilities in the recruitment process for entry-level retail management positions?

**Store Division**

**Merchandising Division**

(check all that apply)

(check all that apply)

- Plan recruiting efforts
- Coordinate recruiting efforts
- Personally recruit applicants
- Other: Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- Not involved in recruiting

- Plan recruiting efforts
- Coordinate recruiting efforts
- Personally recruit applicants
- Other: Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- Not involved in recruiting

5. Your gender:

- Female
- Male

6. What is your educational background?

- High School Graduate
- Associate degree/some college Major area of study \_\_\_\_\_
- Bachelor's degree Major area of study \_\_\_\_\_
- Graduate degree Major area of study \_\_\_\_\_

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

**All your responses will be kept confidential and will be used for statistical analysis as part of this dissertation research project. Carefully read the instructions in each section of the questionnaire. Write your competency statements based on your knowledge and expertise in recruiting and hiring graduates for entry-level retail management positions in your organization. There are no right or wrong statements.**

**In this first round, enter at least three, but not more than five, competencies in the blanks on the following pages. In all cases, the competencies are open-ended. Your competencies do not necessarily need to be related to each other in any way.**

**In the context of this research project, the following definitions are considered:**

**Store Division - entry-level retail management positions include: assistant department/area manager, department /area manager, assistant store manager**

**Merchandising Division - entry-level retail management positions include: assistant buyer, associate buyer, buyer, merchandise analyst**

## KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCIES

For this study, knowledge is defined as facts, concepts, principles; the information or subject matter that an employee needs to know by memory or can be looked up when needed.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** In the spaces provided below, enter your competency statements. Your competencies should pertain to entry-level retail management positions, but within that context your competencies may be as broad or specific as you wish. In this context, entry-level retail management positions are considered in both the store and/or merchandising divisions. Please enter at least three (3) statements but not more than five (5).

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

### ATTITUDE COMPETENCIES

For this study, attitude is defined as beliefs, feelings, values, opinions, ethics, expectations: the philosophy that an employee needs to endorse or possess.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** In the spaces provided below, enter your competency statements. Your competencies should pertain to entry-level retail management positions, but within that context your competencies may be as broad or specific as you wish. In this context, entry-level retail management positions are considered in both the store and/or merchandising divisions. Please enter at least three (3) statements but not more than five (5).

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division



3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

### SKILL COMPETENCIES

For this study, skill is defined as the ability to complete tasks involving the use of one or more of the senses: the aptitude for and proficiency in performing functions an employee needs to demonstrate.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** In the spaces provided below, enter your competency statements. Your competencies should pertain to entry-level retail management positions, but within that context your competencies may be as broad or specific as you wish. In this context, entry-level retail management positions are considered in both the store and/or merchandising divisions. Please enter at least three (3) statements but not more than five (5).

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The competency statement listed above applies to: (check all that apply)

Store Division       Merchandising Division

**USE THE SPACE BELOW FOR ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

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**PLEASE MAIL THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE ON OR BEFORE  
DECEMBER 3, 1997. YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THIS ROUND OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT IS APPRECIATED.**

**APPENDIX B**  
**PILOT TEST QUESTIONNAIRE**



**TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY**

College of Human Sciences  
Department of Merchandising,  
Environmental Design and  
Consumer Economics

February 18, 1998

Mr. John Educator  
100 Main Street  
Anywhere, USA 00000

Dear Mr. Educator:

Thank you for your agreement to participate in the Industry-Based Retail Competency Project which is being conducted under the direction of the Department of Merchandising, Environmental Design and Consumer Economics at Texas Tech University.

This project involves the use of experts in retailing and merchandising education with regard to specific competencies in the areas of knowledge, attitude, and skill important for entry-level retail management positions. You have been specifically selected based on your knowledge and expertise in this area as one of twenty-four retailing and merchandising educators in the United States to receive this questionnaire. Your responses will be kept confidential and will be used as part of this dissertation research project.

The knowledge, attitude and skill competencies you are being asked to assess were generated from responses to a survey of corporate level recruiters representing twenty-four retail organizations. The sample was purposively selected from retail organizations in the United States who: (a) represent a cross-section of store formats, (b) represent major geographical areas, (c) recruit and hire graduates for entry-level retail management positions, and (d) represent retail organizations listed in the American Express Top 100 Retailers and the American Express Top 100 Specialty Stores published in *STORES* July and August 1997.

Please use the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope to mail your completed questionnaire to me by **February 19, 1998**. If you have any questions, please call me at (304) 293-3402 ext. 1786 or (304) 594-2224. Thank you again for your participation in this research project.

Sincerely,

Kerri M. Keech, M B A.  
Project Director

Shelley S. Harp, Ph.D.  
Faculty Advisor

## INSTRUCTIONS

The competencies are listed under three main categories: Knowledge, Attitude, and Skill. Based on the responses from recruiters, competencies are listed as specific to entry-level retail management positions for Store Division and Store and Merchandising Divisions. For this questionnaire, you are to rate the competencies for level of agreement and level of importance.

The level of agreement means the extent to which you agree or disagree the competency is necessary for entry-level retail management positions. Rate your level of agreement for each competency with a SA, A, N, D, or SD using the following criteria:

I strongly agree this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - SA

I agree this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - A

I have no opinion whether this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - N

I disagree this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - D

I strongly disagree this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - SD

The level of importance means your perceived level of importance of the competency in collegiate retailing/merchandising curricula. Rate the level of importance of each competency with a 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 using the following criteria:

Very important in collegiate retailing/merchandising curricula - 1

Important in collegiate retailing/merchandising curricula - 2

Moderately important in collegiate retailing/merchandising curricula - 3

Unimportant in collegiate retailing/merchandising curricula - 4

Most unimportant in collegiate retailing curricula - 5

**KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCIES**

**Store Division**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>TEAM BUILDING</b> Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Store Division OR <input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>RETAIL WORK SCHEDULES</b> Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Store Division OR <input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>EMPLOYMENT LAW</b> Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Store Division OR <input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions	1	2	3	4	5

**KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCIES**

**Store and Merchandising Divisions**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>SITUATION ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>STRESS MANAGEMENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ORGANIZATION STRATEGIES</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ORAL COMMUNICATION</b>	1	2	3	4	5

Agreement Rating Key: SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = no opinion, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = unimportant, 5 = most unimportant



**KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCIES**

**Store and Merchandising Divisions**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SA	A	N	D	SD	PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	DELEGATION	1	2	3	4	
SA	A	N	D	SD	BUSINESS ETHICS	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	CRITICAL THINKING	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	ACCOUNTING (i.e., profit planning, expense budgeting, assessment management)	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	SOURCING	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	DECISION MAKING	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	PROBLEM SOLVING	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	PRIORITIZATION	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	WRITTEN COMMUNICATION	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	RETAIL APPLICATION/EXPERIENCE	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	FINANCE (i.e. resource allocation, productivity, capital management)	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	GLOBAL AND MULTICULTURAL ISSUES	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	CONTINGENCY PLANNING	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	RETAIL ENVIRONMENT (i.e. retail formats, functional relationships, competitive strategies)	1	2	3	4	5

Agreement Rating Key: SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = no opinion, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = unimportant, 5 = most unimportant

**KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCIES**

**Store and Merchandising Divisions**

<b>AGREEMENT RATING</b>					<b>COMPETENCY</b>	<b>IMPORTANCE RATING</b>				
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>NEGOTIATION</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ANALYTICAL THINKING</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>GOAL SETTING</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>RISK/CRISIS MANAGEMENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>MARKETING CONCEPTS</b> (i.e. marketing mix, positioning, market segmentation, consumer decision making)	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION/RELATIONSHIPS</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>SALESMANSHIP</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>VISUAL PRESENTATION</b> (i.e. merchandising plansograms, selling zones, fixturing, floor merchandising)	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>TREND ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>MOTIVATION STRATEGIES</b>	1	2	3	4	5

Agreement Rating Key: SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = no opinion, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = unimportant, 5 = most unimportant

SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>VENDOR ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>COMPUTER LITERACY</b> (i.e. word processing, database management, electronic technology)	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>CONFLICT MANAGEMENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ACADEMIC PREPARATION IN MERCHANDISING OR RETAIL MANAGEMENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>INNOVATIVE THINKING</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>MERCHANDISE PLANNING AND CONTROL</b> (i.e. mathematical calculations—terms of purchase, markup sales planning, stock planning, open-to-buy, sales productivity ratio; interpretation of numerical relationships)	1	2	3	4	5

**ATTITUDE COMPETENCIES**

**Store Division**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ADVENTURESOME</b> Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one)	1	2	3	4	5
					<input type="checkbox"/> Store Division OR					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions					
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>HUMBLE</b> Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one)	1	2	3	4	5
					<input type="checkbox"/> Store Division OR					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions					

**Agreement Rating Key:** SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = no opinion, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree  
**Importance Rating Key:** 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = unimportant, 5 = most unimportant

**ATTITUDE COMPETENCIES**

**Store Division**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>INSPIRED</b> Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Store Division OR <input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>TOLERANT</b> Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Store Division OR <input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>PATIENT</b> Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Store Division OR <input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions	1	2	3	4	5

**ATTITUDE COMPETENCIES**

**Store Division**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ACTION-ORIENTED</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>INITIATIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>MOTIVATED</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>EFFICIENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5

Agreement Rating Key: SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = no opinion, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = unimportant, 5 = most unimportant

**ATTITUDE COMPETENCIES**

**Store and Merchandising Divisions**

<b><u>AGREEMENT RATING</u></b>					<b><u>COMPETENCY</u></b>	<b><u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u></b>				
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>OPEN TO CRITICISM</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>RESPONSIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>DETAIL-ORIENTED</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>MATURE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>CUSTOMER-ORIENTED</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>OPTOMISTIC</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>RESPONSIBLE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>TEAM PLAYER</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ETHICAL</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ASSERTIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>OPEN-MINDED</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>COMPETITIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ENTHUSIASTIC</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>FLEXIBLE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>PEOPLE-ORIENTED</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>STRONG WORK ETHIC</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>PROACTIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5

Agreement Rating Key: SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = no opinion, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = unimportant, 5 = most unimportant

**ATTITUDE COMPETENCIES**

**Store and Merchandising Divisions**

<b><u>AGREEMENT RATING</u></b>					<b><u>COMPETENCY</u></b>	<b><u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u></b>				
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>FOCUSED</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>SELF-RELIANT</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>HONEST</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>POSITIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>CULTURALLY ASTUTE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>COMMITTED</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ENERGETIC</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>SELF-CONTROLLED</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>GOAL-ORIENTED</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>OBJECTIVE/SUBJECTIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>DECISIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>CREATIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5

**Agreement Rating Key:** SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = no opinion, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree  
**Importance Rating Key:** 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = unimportant, 5 = most unimportant

**SKILL COMPETENCIES**

**Store Division**

<b><u>AGREEMENT RATING</u></b>					<b><u>COMPETENCY</u></b>	<b><u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u></b>				
<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
					<b>DETAIL-ORIENTED</b>					
					Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one)					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Store Division					
					<b>OR</b>					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions					
					<b>TOLERANCE</b>					
					Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one)					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Store Division					
					<b>OR</b>					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions					
					<b>VISUAL MERCHANDISE PRESENTATION</b>					
					Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one)					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Store Division					
					<b>OR</b>					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions					
					<b>RETAIL APPLICATION EXPERIENCE</b>					
					Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one)					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Store Division					
					<b>OR</b>					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions					
					<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>					
					Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one)					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Store Division					
					<b>OR</b>					
					<input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions					

**Agreement Rating Key:** SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = no opinion, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree  
**Importance Rating Key:** 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = unimportant, 5 = most unimportant

**SKILL COMPETENCIES**

**Store Division**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SA	A	N	D	SD		1	2	3	4	5
					<b>FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT</b>					
Do you believe the competency listed above applies to: (check one)										
<input type="checkbox"/> Store Division										
OR										
<input type="checkbox"/> Both Store and Merchandising Divisions										

**SKILL COMPETENCIES**

**Store and Merchandising Divisions**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SA	A	N	D	SD		1	2	3	4	5
					<b>PRIORITIZATION</b>					
					<b>FLEXIBILITY</b>					
					<b>CONFLICT MANAGEMENT</b>					
					<b>GOAL SETTING</b>					
					<b>SUPERVISION</b>					
					<b>SITUATION ANALYSIS</b>					
					<b>STRESS MANAGEMENT</b>					
					<b>SALESMANSHIP</b>					
					<b>LEADERSHIP</b>					
					<b>HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>					

**Agreement Rating Key:** SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = no opinion, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree  
**Importance Rating Key:** 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = unimportant, 5 = most unimportant



**SKILL COMPETENCIES**

**Store and Merchandising Divisions**

<b><u>AGREEMENT RATING</u></b>					<b><u>COMPETENCY</u></b>	<b><u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u></b>				
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>NUMERICAL INTERPRETATIONS/ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>NEGOTIATION</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ACCOUNTING</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>MOTIVATION</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>PRECISION/ACCOURACY</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>INITIATIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION/RELATIONSHIP</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>PROBLEM SOLVING</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>SELF-DISCIPLINE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>DECISION MAKING</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>TIME MANAGEMENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT/MENTORING</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>DELEGATION</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>COMPUTER LITERACY</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ANALYTICAL THINKING</b>	1	2	3	4	5

**Agreement Rating Key:** SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = no opinion, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree  
**Importance Rating Key:** 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = unimportant, 5 = most unimportant

**SKILL COMPETENCIES**

**Store and Merchandising Divisions**

<b><u>AGREEMENT RATING</u></b>					<b><u>COMPETENCY</u></b>	<b><u>IMPORTANCE RATING</u></b>				
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>WRITTEN COMMUNICATION</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>EVALUATION</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>PERSUASIVENESS</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>TREND ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>CREATIVE THINKING</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ARTICULATE</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>VENDOR ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>TEAM BUILDING</b>	1	2	3	4	5
SA	A	N	D	SD	<b>ORGANIZATION STRATEGIES</b>	1	2	3	4	5

**Agreement Rating Key:** SA = strongly agree, A = agree, N = no opinion, D = disagree, SD = strongly disagree  
**Importance Rating Key:** 1 = very important, 2 = important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = unimportant, 5 = most unimportant

**ACADEMIC UNIT/DEPARTMENT PROFILE**

1. How does your academic unit/department prepare undergraduate students for entry-level retail management career positions? (check one)
  - Management degree program or specialization
  - Marketing degree program or specialization
  - Merchandising degree program or specialization
  - Retailing degree program or specialization
  - Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_
2. Approximately how many undergraduate students are currently pursuing degrees in one of these programs or specializations leading to career positions in retail management?  
\_\_\_\_\_ (#) of Students
3. Approximately how many undergraduate students graduate each year with degrees in one of these programs or specializations leading to career positions in retail management?  
\_\_\_\_\_ (#) of Students
4. Approximately how many graduates with degrees in one of these programs or specializations accept career positions in retailing upon graduation?  
\_\_\_\_\_ (#) of Graduates

Approximately how many of these graduates accepting career positions in retailing upon graduation enter executive training programs?

**Store Division**  
\_\_\_\_\_ (%) of Graduates

**Merchandising Division**  
\_\_\_\_\_ (%) of Graduates

5. Which of the following income categories comes closest to the average annual salary offered to graduates accepting entry-level retail management positions (check one for each division)

**Store Division**

- Under \$17,000
- \$17,000 - \$19,999
- \$20,000 - \$22,999
- \$23,000 - \$25,999
- \$26,000 - \$28,999
- \$29,000 - \$31,999
- \$32,000 - \$35,999
- \$36,000 and over

**Merchandising Division**

- Under \$17,000
- \$17,000 - \$19,999
- \$20,000 - \$22,999
- \$23,000 - \$25,999
- \$26,000 - \$28,999
- \$29,000 - \$31,999
- \$32,000 - \$35,999
- \$36,000 and over

6. Does your academic unit/department offer an internship for academic credit?

- Yes       No

**If Yes:**

How many credit hours are assigned to the internship? \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Hours

Approximately how many students annually participate in the internships? \_\_\_\_\_ (#) of Students

Approximately how many retail organizations annually participate in the internships? \_\_\_\_\_ (#) of Retail Organizations

Is the internship required for graduation?  Yes       No

7. How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on product knowledge in course offerings in the program or specialization leading to career positions in retail management? (check one)

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

8. How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on leadership/team building in course offerings in the program or specialization leading to career positions in retail management? (check one)

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

9. How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on problem solving/decision making in course offerings in the program or specialization leading to career positions in retail management? (check one)

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

10. Does your academic unit/department encourage undergraduates to gain retail related work experience during their academic study?

- Yes
- No

**If Yes:**

How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on retail work related experience? (check one)

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

11. Approximately how many undergraduate students pursuing degrees in one of the programs or specializations work in retail organizations while completing their course work? \_\_\_\_\_ (%) of Students

12. Does your academic unit/department assess educational/student outcomes?

- Yes       No

If Yes:

How are educational/student outcomes assessed? (check all that apply)

- Capstone courses
- Program Advisory Boards
- Feedback from internship employer conferences
- Feedback from written internship employer appraisals
- Feedback from internship student conferences
- Feedback from written internship student appraisals
- Exit interviews with graduating seniors
- Post graduation student surveys
- Feedback from employers of recent graduates
- Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

13. What retail trends has your academic unit/department identified as:

increasing in importance with regard to competencies undergraduate students will need in order to be prepared to successfully enter retail management positions in the next millennium?

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decreasing in importance with regard to competencies undergraduate students will need in order to be prepared to successfully enter retail management positions in the next millennium?

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### INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

1. How many years have you been employed in higher education? \_\_\_\_ Years
2. How many years have you been employed at your current institution of higher education? \_\_\_\_ Years
3. Your academic rank:
  - Instructor
  - Assistant Professor
  - Associate Professor
  - Professor
  - Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_
4. How are you involved in preparing undergraduates for careers in retailing? (check all that apply)
  - Teach courses
  - Conduct research
  - Supervise internships
  - Direct an institute or center (education and/or research) focusing on retailing and merchandising issues
  - Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_
5. Your gender:
  - Female
  - Male
6. What is your educational background? (check all that apply)
  - Bachelors degree                      Major area of study \_\_\_\_\_
  - Masters degree                         Major area of study \_\_\_\_\_
  - Doctoral degree                         Major area of study \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX C**  
**EDUCATOR QUESTIONNAIRE**





**TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY**

College of Human Sciences  
Department of Merchandising,  
Environmental Design and  
Consumer Economics

**February 26, 1998**

**Mr. John Educator  
100 Main Street  
Anywhere, USA 00000**

**Dear Mr. Educator:**

**Thank you for your agreement to participate in the Industry-Based Retail Competency Project which is being conducted under the direction of the Department of Merchandising, Environmental Design and Consumer Economics at Texas Tech University.**

**This project involves the use of experts in retailing and merchandising education with regard to specific competencies in the areas of knowledge, attitude, and skill important for entry-level retail management positions. You have been specifically selected based on your knowledge and expertise in this area as one of twenty-four retailing and merchandising educators in the United States to receive this questionnaire. Your responses will be kept confidential and will be used as part of this dissertation research project.**

**The knowledge, attitude and skill competencies you are being asked to assess were generated from responses to a survey of corporate level recruiters representing twenty-four retail organizations. The sample was purposively selected from retail organizations in the United States who: (a) represent a cross-section of store formats, (b) represent major geographical areas, (c) recruit and hire graduates for entry-level retail management positions, and (d) represent retail organizations listed in the American Express Top 100 Retailers and the American Express Top 100 Specialty Stores published in *STORES* July and August 1997.**

**Please use the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope to mail your completed questionnaire to me by **March 10, 1998**. If you have any questions, please call me at (304) 293-3402 ext. 1788 or (304) 594-2224. Thank you again for your participation in this research project.**

**Sincerely,**

**Kerri M. Keech, M.B.A.  
Project Director**

**Shelley S. Harp, Ph.D.  
Faculty Advisor**

## INSTRUCTIONS

The competencies are listed under three main categories: Knowledge, Attitude, and Skill. For this questionnaire, you are to rate the competencies for level of agreement and level of importance. In the context of this research project, the following definitions are considered:

**Store Division**—entry-level management positions include: assistant department/area manager, department/area manager, assistant store manager

**Merchandising Division**—entry-level management positions include: assistant buyer, associate buyer, buyer, merchandise analyst

The level of agreement means the extent to which you agree or disagree the competency is necessary for entry-level retail management positions. Rate your level of agreement for each competency with a SD, D, N, A, or SA using the following criteria:

**I strongly disagree** this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - SD

**I disagree** this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - D

**I have no opinion** whether this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - N

**I agree** this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - A

**I strongly agree** this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - SA

The level of importance means your perceived level of importance of the competency for entry-level retail management positions. Rate the level of importance of each competency with a 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 using the following criteria:

**Most unimportant** for entry-level retail management positions - 1

**Unimportant** for entry-level retail management positions - 2

**Moderately important** for entry-level retail management positions - 3

**Important** for entry-level retail management positions - 4

**Most important** for entry-level retail management positions - 5

### KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCIES

**facts, concepts, principles; the information or subject matter that an employee needs to know by memory or can be looked up when needed**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>					<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>LEGAL RESTRAINTS / ISSUES</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>RETAIL WORK SCHEDULES</b> (i.e. nights, weekends, holidays)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>SITUATION ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>ORGANIZATION STRATEGIES</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>SOURCING</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>ACCOUNTING</b> (i.e. profit planning, expense budgeting, assessment management)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>FINANCE</b> (i.e. resource allocation, capital management, productivity)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>GLOBAL AND MULTICULTURAL ISSUES</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>CONTINGENCY PLANNING</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>RETAIL ENVIRONMENT</b> (i.e. retail formats, functional relationships, competitive strategies)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>ANALYTICAL THINKING</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

**Agreement Rating Key:** SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
**Importance Rating Key:** 1 = Most Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Most Important

### KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCIES

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>	<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>					<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SD D N A SA	<b>COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	<b>MARKETING CONCEPTS</b> (i.e. marketing mix, positioning, market segmentation, consumer decision making)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	<b>VISUAL PRESENTATION</b> (i.e. merchandising plansograms, selling zones, fixturing, floor merchandising)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	<b>TREND ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	<b>VENDOR ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	<b>COMPUTER LITERACY</b> (i.e. word processing, database management, electronic technology)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	<b>ACADEMIC PREPARATION IN MERCHANDISING OR RETAIL MANAGEMENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	<b>MERCHANDISE PLANNING AND CONTROL</b> (i.e. mathematical calculations—terms of purchase, markup, sales planning, stock planning, open-to-buy, sales productivity ratio; interpretation of numerical relationships)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	<b>BUSINESS ETHICS</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

**Agreement Rating Key:** SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
**Importance Rating Key:** 1 = Most Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Most Important

**ATTITUDE COMPETENCIES**  
**beliefs, feelings, values, opinions, ethics, expectations:**  
**the philosophy that an employee needs to endorse or possess**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>					<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>ADVENTURESOME</b> (i.e. geographical relocation, career path)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>GOAL - ORIENTED</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>INNOVATIVE THINKER</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>ACTION - ORIENTED</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>OPEN TO CRITICISM</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>RESPONSIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>DETAIL - ORIENTED</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>SELF - CONFIDENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>CUSTOMER - ORIENTED</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>OPTIMISTIC</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>TEAM PLAYER</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>ETHICAL</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>ASSERTIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>OPEN - MINDED</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>COMPETITIVE</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

**Agreement Rating Key:** SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
**Importance Rating Key:** 1 = Most Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Most Important

**ATTITUDE COMPETENCIES**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>	<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>	<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>
SD D N A SA	ENTHUSIASTIC	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	FLEXIBLE	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	PEOPLE - ORIENTED	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	STRONG WORK ETHIC	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	PROACTIVE	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	FOCUSED	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	ENERGETIC	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	SELF - DISCIPLINE	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	RESPONSIBLE	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	CREATIVE	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

**SKILL COMPETENCIES**

*ability to complete tasks involving the use of one or more of the senses;  
the aptitude for and proficiency in performing functions an employee needs to demonstrate*

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>	<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>	<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>
SD D N A SA	STRESS MANAGEMENT	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	ORAL COMMUNICATION	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	DELEGATION	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Agreement Rating Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = Most Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Most Important

### SKILL COMPETENCIES

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>					<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SD	D	N	A	SA	DECISION MAKING	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	PROBLEM SOLVING	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	PRIORITIZATION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	WRITTEN COMMUNICATION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	RETAIL EXPERIENCE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	NEGOTIATION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION / RELATIONSHIPS	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	RISK / CRISIS MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	MOTIVATION STRATEGIES	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	CONFLICT MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	SUPERVISION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	DATA ANALYSIS	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	PRECISION / ACCURACY	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	SALESMANSHIP	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	TIME MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Agreement Rating Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = Most Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Most Important

### SKILL COMPETENCIES

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>	<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>					<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SD D N A SA	PUBLIC RELATIONS	1	2	3	4	5					
SD D N A SA	COMPUTER LITERACY (i.e. word processing, database management, electronic technology)	1	2	3	4	5					
SD D N A SA	EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT / MENTORING	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	EVALUATION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	PERSUASIVENESS	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	TEAM BUILDING	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Agreement Rating Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = Most Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Most Important

### ACADEMIC UNIT/DEPARTMENT PROFILE

1. How does your academic unit/department prepare undergraduate students for entry-level retail management positions? (check one)
  - Management degree program or specialization
  - Marketing degree program or specialization
  - Merchandising degree program or specialization
  - Retailing degree program or specialization
  - Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_
2. Approximately how many undergraduate students are currently enrolled in one of these programs or specializations?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (#) of Students
3. Approximately how many undergraduate students graduate each year with degrees in one of these programs or specializations?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (#) of Students



4. Approximately how many graduates with degrees in one of these programs or specializations accept entry-level retail management positions upon graduation?

\_\_\_\_\_ (%) of Graduates

Approximately how many of these graduates accepting positions in retailing upon graduation enter executive training programs?

**Store Division**

**Merchandising Division**

**Other Division**

\_\_\_\_\_ (%) of Graduates

\_\_\_\_\_ (%) of Graduates

\_\_\_\_\_ (%) of Graduates

5. Which of the following income categories comes closest to the average annual salary offered to graduates accepting entry-level retail management positions (check one for each division)

**Store Division**

**Merchandising Division**

Under \$17,000

Under \$17,000

\$17,000 - \$19,999

\$17,000 - \$19,999

\$20,000 - \$22,999

\$20,000 - \$22,999

\$23,000 - \$25,999

\$23,000 - \$25,999

\$26,000 - \$28,999

\$26,000 - \$28,999

\$29,000 - \$31,999

\$29,000 - \$31,999

\$32,000 - \$35,999

\$32,000 - \$35,999

\$36,000 and over

\$36,000 and over

6. Does your academic unit/department offer an internship?

Yes  No

**If Yes:**

How many credit hours are assigned to the internship? \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Hours

Approximately how many students annually participate in the internships? \_\_\_\_\_ (#) of Students

Approximately how many retail organizations annually participate in the internships? \_\_\_\_\_ (#) of Retail Organizations

Is the internship required for graduation?  Yes  No

7. How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on product knowledge in course offerings? (check one)
- Extremely Important
  - Moderately Important
  - Important
  - Moderately Unimportant
  - Unimportant
  - Extremely Unimportant
8. How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on leadership/team building in course offerings? (check one)
- Extremely Important
  - Moderately Important
  - Important
  - Moderately Unimportant
  - Unimportant
  - Extremely Unimportant
9. How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on problem solving/decision making in course offerings? (check one)
- Extremely Important
  - Moderately Important
  - Important
  - Moderately Unimportant
  - Unimportant
  - Extremely Unimportant
10. Does your academic unit/department encourage undergraduates to gain retail related work experience during their academic study?
- Yes       No
- If Yes:
- How much emphasis does your academic unit/department place on retail work related experience? (check one)
- Extremely Important
  - Moderately Important
  - Important
  - Moderately Unimportant
  - Unimportant
  - Extremely Unimportant

11. Approximately how many undergraduate students pursuing degrees in one of the programs or specializations work in retail organizations while completing their course work? \_\_\_\_\_ (%) of Students

12. Does your academic unit/department assess educational/student outcomes?

- Yes       No

If Yes:

How are educational/student outcomes assessed? (check all that apply)

- Capstone courses
- Program advisory boards
- Internship employer conferences
- Written internship employer appraisals
- Internship student conferences
- Written internship student appraisals
- Exit interviews with graduating seniors
- Post graduation student surveys
- Employers of recent graduates
- Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

13. What retail trends have your academic unit/department identified as:

Increasing in importance for undergraduate students entering retail management positions in the next decade?

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decreasing in importance for undergraduate students entering retail management positions in the next decade?

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### INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

1. How many years have you been employed in higher education? \_\_\_\_ Years
2. How many years have you been employed at your current institution of higher education? \_\_\_\_ Years
3. Your academic rank:
  - Instructor
  - Assistant Professor
  - Associate Professor
  - Professor
  - Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_
4. How are you involved in preparing undergraduates for entry-level retail management positions? (check all that apply)
  - Teach courses
  - Conduct research
  - Supervise Internships
  - Direct an institute or center (education and/or research) focusing on retailing and merchandising issues
  - Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_
5. Your gender:
  - Female
  - Male
6. What is your educational background? (check all that apply)
  - Bachelors degree    Major area of study \_\_\_\_\_
  - Masters degree      Major area of study \_\_\_\_\_
  - Doctoral degree      Major area of study \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE MAIL YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE  
BY MARCH 10, 1998. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT.**

**APPENDIX D**  
**ROUND II QUESTIONNAIRE**



**TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY**

College of Human Sciences  
Department of Merchandising,  
Environmental Design and  
Consumer Economics

**March 23, 1998**

**Mr. John Retailer  
100 Main Street  
Anywhere, USA 00000**

**Dear Mr. Retailer:**

**Thank you for your continued participation in the Industry-Based Retail Competency Project which is being conducted under the direction of the Department of Merchandising, Environmental Design and Consumer Economics at Texas Tech University.**

**This is Round II of the research project and is less time consuming than Round I. The Knowledge, Attitude, and Skill competencies are the compilation of the competencies generated from all of the expert panelists in Round I. In this round, you are to evaluate each competency as to your level of agreement and level of importance for the Store Division and the Merchandising Division, even if you only recruit for one of these divisions. Please respond to the best of your knowledge in these areas.**

**This round is extremely important to develop the final list of competencies needed for entry-level retail management positions. Your continued participation is critical for the validation of the initial findings. These competencies will be made available to retailing and merchandising educators throughout the United States. This is an opportunity for you to impact the future of retail curriculum development and provide information that can improve the quality of retailing education and in turn, the quality of students recruited for your organization.**

**Please fax your completed questionnaire to me by March 31, 1998, at (304) 293-2750. If you have any questions, please call me at (304) 293-3402 ext. 1788 or (304) 594-2224. Thank you again for your participation in this research project.**

**Sincerely,**

**Kerri M. Keech, M.B.A.  
Project Director**

**Shelley S. Harp, Ph.D.  
Faculty Advisor**

## INSTRUCTIONS

The competencies are listed under three main categories: Knowledge, Attitude, and Skill. For this questionnaire, you are to rate the competencies for level of agreement and level of importance. In the context of this research project, the following definitions are considered:

**Store Division**—entry-level management positions include: assistant department/area manager, department/area manager, assistant store manager

**Merchandising Division**—entry-level management positions include: assistant buyer, associate buyer, buyer, merchandise analyst

The level of agreement means the extent to which you agree or disagree the competency is necessary for entry-level retail management positions. Rate your level of agreement for each competency with a SD, D, N, A, or SA using the following criteria:

**I strongly disagree** this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - SD

**I disagree** this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - D

**I have no opinion** whether this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - N

**I agree** this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - A

**I strongly agree** this is a competency necessary for entry-level retail management positions. - SA

The level of importance means your perceived level of importance of the competency for entry-level retail management positions. Rate the level of importance of each competency with a 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 using the following criteria:

**Most unimportant** for entry-level retail management positions - 1

**Unimportant** for entry-level retail management positions - 2

**Moderately important** for entry-level retail management positions - 3

**Important** for entry-level retail management positions - 4

**Most important** for entry-level retail management positions - 5

### KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCIES

facts, concepts, principles; the information or subject matter that an employee needs to know by memory or can be looked up when needed

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>					<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SD	D	N	A	SA	LEGAL RESTRAINTS / ISSUES	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	RETAIL WORK SCHEDULES (i.e. nights, weekends, holidays)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	SITUATION ANALYSIS	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	ORGANIZATION STRATEGIES	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	CRITICAL THINKING	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	SOURCING	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	ACCOUNTING (i.e. profit planning, expense budgeting, assessment management)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	FINANCE (i.e. resource allocation, capital management, productivity)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	GLOBAL AND MULTICULTURAL ISSUES	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	CONTINGENCY PLANNING	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	RETAIL ENVIRONMENT (i.e. retail formats, functional relationships, competitive strategies)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	ANALYTICAL THINKING	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Agreement Rating Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = Most Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Most Important



### KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCIES

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>					<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>MARKETING CONCEPTS</b> (i.e. marketing mix, positioning, market segmentation, consumer decision making)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>VISUAL PRESENTATION</b> (i.e. merchandising plannograms, selling zones, fixturing, floor merchandising)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>TREND ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>VENDOR ANALYSIS</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>COMPUTER LITERACY</b> (i.e. word processing, database management, electronic technology)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>ACADEMIC PREPARATION IN MERCHANDISING OR RETAIL MANAGEMENT</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>MERCHANDISE PLANNING AND CONTROL</b> (i.e. mathematical calculations—terms of purchase, markup, sales planning, stock planning, open-to-buy, sales productivity ratio; interpretation of numerical relationships)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	<b>BUSINESS ETHICS</b>	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

**Agreement Rating Key:** SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
**Importance Rating Key:** 1 = Most Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Most Important

**ATTITUDE COMPETENCIES**  
**beliefs, feelings, values, opinions, ethics, expectations:**  
**the philosophy that an employee needs to endorse or possess**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>					<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SD	D	N	A	SA	ADVENTURESOME (i.e. geographical relocation, career path)	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	LEADERSHIP	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	GOAL - ORIENTED	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	INNOVATIVE THINKER	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	ACTION - ORIENTED	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	OPEN TO CRITICISM	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	RESPONSIVE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	DETAIL - ORIENTED	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	SELF - CONFIDENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	CUSTOMER - ORIENTED	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	OPTIMISTIC	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	TEAM PLAYER	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	ETHICAL	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	ASSERTIVE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	OPEN - MINDED	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	COMPETITIVE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Agreement Rating Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = Most Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Most Important

**ATTITUDE COMPETENCIES**

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>	<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>					<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SD D N A SA	ENTHUSIASTIC	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	FLEXIBLE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	PEOPLE - ORIENTED	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	STRONG WORK ETHIC	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	PROACTIVE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	FOCUSED	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	ENERGETIC	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	SELF - DISCIPLINE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	RESPONSIBLE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	CREATIVE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

**SKILL COMPETENCIES**

ability to complete tasks involving the use of one or more of the senses;  
the aptitude for and proficiency in performing functions an employee needs to demonstrate

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>	<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>					<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SD D N A SA	STRESS MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	ORAL COMMUNICATION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD D N A SA	DELEGATION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Agreement Rating Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = Most Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Most Important

### SKILL COMPETENCIES

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>					<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>					<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>				
SD	D	N	A	SA	DECISION MAKING	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	PROBLEM SOLVING	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	PRIORITIZATION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	WRITTEN COMMUNICATION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	RETAIL EXPERIENCE	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	NEGOTIATION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION / RELATIONSHIPS	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	RISK / CRISIS MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	MOTIVATION STRATEGIES	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	CONFLICT MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	SUPERVISION	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	DATA ANALYSIS	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	PRECISION / ACCURACY	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	SALESMANSHIP	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
SD	D	N	A	SA	TIME MANAGEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Agreement Rating Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree  
 Importance Rating Key: 1 = Most Unimportant, 2 = Unimportant, 3 = Moderately Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Most Important

<u>AGREEMENT RATING</u>	<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>STORE DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>	<u>MERCHANDISING DIVISION IMPORTANCE RATING</u>
SD D N A SA	<b>PUBLIC RELATIONS</b>	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	<b>COMPUTER LITERACY</b> (i.e. word processing, database management, electronic technology)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	<b>EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT / MENTORING</b>	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	<b>EVALUATION</b>	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	<b>PERSUASIVENESS</b>	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
SD D N A SA	<b>TEAM BUILDING</b>	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Agreement Rating Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = No Opinion, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Importance Rating Key: 1 = Not Important At All, 2 = Slightly Unimportant, 3 = Slightly Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Extremely Important

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT.**  
**PLEASE FAX YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE TO ME AT (304) 293-2750 BY MARCH 31, 1998.**

**APPENDIX E**  
**ROUND III QUESTIONNAIRE**



**TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY**

College of Human Sciences  
Department of Merchandising,  
Environmental Design and  
Consumer Economics

April 20, 1998

Mr. John Retailer  
100 Main Street  
Anywhere, USA 00000

Dear Mr. Retailer:

Thank you for your continued participation in the Industry-Based Retail Competency Project. I realize that the questionnaires have been time consuming; your time and effort assisting in the development of these competencies are greatly appreciated. Please be assured that this is the shortest questionnaire and will only take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

This is the final "round" and your feedback is extremely important for the validation of the findings. Please follow the instructions to complete this part of the project. The purpose of this round is to achieve group consensus on the importance ratings of each competency statement for the Store Division and Merchandising Division. Based on the results of this final round, a list of competencies necessary for entry-level retail management positions will be developed and listed in order of importance. Please fax your completed questionnaire to me at (304) 293-2750 by **April 27, 1998**.

Your time and efforts are very much appreciated. Feel free to call upon me if I can ever be of assistance to you. You will receive an executive summary for your participation in this project when the results are finalized.

Sincerely,

Kerri M. Keech, M.B.A.  
Project Director

Shelley S. Harp, Ph.D.  
Faculty Advisor

## INSTRUCTIONS

For this questionnaire, each competency that the expert panel did not reach consensus on in Round II is included for you to reevaluate your initial rating. The purpose of Round III is to achieve consensus on the importance ratings.

The Division refers to the division in which the competency is important – Store or Merchandising.

Your Rating used the following criteria:

Not important at all for entry-level retail management positions - 1

Slightly unimportant for entry-level retail management positions - 2

Slightly important for entry-level retail management positions - 3

Important for entry-level retail management positions – 4

Extremely important for entry-level retail management positions - 5

The Median is the rating in which half of the ratings were above that number and half of the ratings were below that number.

The Range is the interquartile range in which most of the ratings existed.

Your New Rating is the importance rating you now assign to each competency after reviewing the expert panel ratings.

**NOTE: Your earlier rating may be repeated, or you may use a new rating that may be either a whole number or a decimal.**

If you have any questions regarding these instructions, please call me at (304) 293-3402 ext. 1786 or (304) 594-2224. Thank you again for your contribution to this important research project.



**KNOWLEDGE**

**facts, concepts, principles; the information or subject matter that an employee needs to know by memory or can be looked up when needed**

<b><u>COMPETENCY</u></b>	<b><u>DIVISION</u></b>	<b><u>YOUR RATING</u></b>	<b><u>MEDIAN</u></b>	<b><u>RANGE</u></b>	<b><u>NEW RATING</u></b>
<b>LEGAL RESTRAINTS/ ISSUES</b>	<b>Store</b>	_____	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.0 – 4.25</b>	_____
<b>PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>Store</b>	_____	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.0 – 5.0</b>	_____
<b>PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	_____	<b>5.0</b>	<b>3.25 – 5.0</b>	_____
<b>SOURCING</b>	<b>Store</b>	_____	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.0 – 4.0</b>	_____
<b>SOURCING</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	_____	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.25 – 5.0</b>	_____
<b>ACCOUNTING (i.e. profit planning, expense budgeting, assessment management)</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	_____	<b>4.5</b>	<b>3.0 - 5.0</b>	_____
<b>FINANCE</b>	<b>Store</b>	_____	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.0 – 4.0</b>	_____
<b>FINANCE</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	_____	<b>4.0</b>	<b>2.0 – 5.0</b>	_____
<b>GLOBAL AND MULTICULTURAL ISSUES</b>	<b>Store</b>	_____	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.0 – 4.0</b>	_____
<b>GLOBAL AND MULTICULTURAL ISSUES</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	_____	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.0 – 4.75</b>	_____
<b>OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	_____	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.0 – 4.75</b>	_____
<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>	<b>Store</b>	_____	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.0 – 4.0</b>	_____
<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	_____	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.0 – 5.0</b>	_____
<b>VISUAL PRESENTATION</b>	<b>Merchandising</b>	_____	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.0 – 4.75</b>	_____

<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>DIVISION</u>	<u>YOUR RATING</u>	<u>MEDIAN</u>	<u>RANGE</u>	<u>NEW RATING</u>
TREND ANALYSIS	Store	_____	3.0	2.0 – 4.0	_____
COMPUTER LITERACY	Store	_____	3.0	2.0 – 4.0	_____
ACADEMIC PREPARATION IN MERCHANDISING OR RETAIL MANAGEMENT	Merchandising	_____	4.0	3.0 – 4.75	_____

**ATTITUDE**

beliefs, feelings, values, opinions, ethics, expectations;  
the philosophy that an employee needs to endorse or possess

<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>DIVISION</u>	<u>YOUR RATING</u>	<u>MEDIAN</u>	<u>RANGE</u>	<u>NEW RATING</u>
LEADERSHIP	Merchandising	_____	4.0	3.0 – 5.0	_____
INNOVATIVE THINKER	Store	_____	4.0	3.0 – 5.0	_____
CREATIVE	Store	_____	4.0	3.0 – 5.0	_____

**SKILL**

ability to complete tasks involving the use of one or more of the senses;  
the aptitude for and proficiency in performing the functions an employee needs to demonstrate

<u>COMPETENCY</u>	<u>DIVISION</u>	<u>YOUR RATING</u>	<u>MEDIAN</u>	<u>RANGE</u>	<u>NEW RATING</u>
DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT	Merchandising	_____	3.5	3.0 – 5.0	_____
PUBLIC RELATIONS	Store	_____	4.0	3.0 – 5.0	_____
EVALUATION	Merchandising	_____	4.0	3.0 – 5.0	_____
PERSUASIVENESS	Store	_____	4.0	3.0 – 5.0	_____

### ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

1. Does your organization require a college degree for employees hired in entry-level retail management positions?

**Store Division**

Yes  No

**If Yes:**

From which academic areas are graduates recruited?  
(check all that apply)

- Management
- Marketing
- Merchandising
- Retailing
- Other: Please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- No specific academic areas

Is there a GPA requirement?  Yes  No

**If Yes:** What is the minimum GPA? \_\_\_\_\_

**If No:**

What educational requirements does your organization require?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Merchandising Division**

Yes  No

**If Yes:**

From which academic areas are graduates recruited?  
(check all that apply)

- Management
- Marketing
- Merchandising
- Retailing
- Other: Please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- No specific academic areas

Is there a GPA requirement?  Yes  No

**If Yes:** What is the minimum GPA? \_\_\_\_\_

**If No:**

What educational requirements does your organization require?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Does your organization recruit for entry-level retail management positions on college campuses?

**Store Division**

Yes  No

**If Yes:**

Approximately how many college campuses are visited annually  
to recruit graduates? \_\_\_\_\_ campuses

**Merchandising Division**

Yes  No

**If Yes:**

Approximately how many college campuses are visited annually  
to recruit graduates? \_\_\_\_\_ campuses

3. Does your organization offer an executive training program for entry-level retail management positions?

Store Division

Yes  No

If Yes:

Which organizational level are executive trainees recruited and hired? (check all that apply)

Corporate level

Store level

At which organizational level is executive training planned and supervised? (check all that apply)

Corporate level

Store level

How long is the executive training program? \_\_\_\_ weeks

If No:

How are entry-level retail management trainees trained?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Merchandising Division

Yes  No

If Yes:

Which organizational level are executive trainees recruited and hired? (check all that apply)

Corporate level

Store level

At which organizational level is executive training planned and supervised? (check all that apply)

Corporate level

Store level

How long is the executive training program? \_\_\_\_ weeks

If No:

How are entry-level retail management trainees trained?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Approximately how many employees does your organization annually hire for entry-level retail management positions?

\_\_\_\_ Store Division

\_\_\_\_ Merchandising Division

How many of these employees are college graduates?

\_\_\_\_ Store Division

\_\_\_\_ Merchandising Division

5. Does your organization offer an internship program?

**Store Division**

Yes  No

**If Yes:**

Approximately how many interns does your organization hire for internship positions? \_\_\_\_\_ interns

At which organizational level are interns recruited and hired? (check all that apply)

- Corporate level
- Store level

At which organizational level are internship programs planned and supervised? (check all that apply)

- Corporate level
- Store level

How long is the internship program? \_\_\_\_ weeks

Does your organization recruit for the internship program on college campuses?

Yes  No

**If Yes:**

Approximately how many college campuses are visited annually to recruiting interns? \_\_\_\_\_ campuses

**Merchandising Division**

Yes  No

**If Yes:**

Approximately how many interns does your organization hire for internship positions? \_\_\_\_\_ interns

At which organizational level are interns recruited and hired? (check all that apply)

- Corporate level
- Store level

At which organizational level are internship programs planned and supervised? (check all that apply)

- Corporate level
- Store level

How long is the internship program? \_\_\_\_ weeks

Does your organization recruit for the internship program on college campuses?

Yes  No

**If Yes:**

Approximately how many college campuses are visited annually to recruiting interns? \_\_\_\_\_ campuses

6. How much emphasis does your organization place on product knowledge in recruiting and hiring for entry-level retail management positions?

**Store Division**

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

**Merchandising Division**

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

7. How much emphasis does your organization place on leadership/team building in recruiting and hiring for entry-level retail management positions?

**Store Division**

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

**Merchandising Division**

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

8. How much emphasis does your organization place on problem solving/decision making in recruiting and hiring entry-level retail management positions?

**Store Division**

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

**Merchandising Division**

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

9. How much emphasis does your organization place on retail related work experience in recruiting and hiring entry-level retail management positions?

**Store Division**

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

**Merchandising Division**

- Extremely Important
- Moderately Important
- Important
- Moderately Unimportant
- Unimportant
- Extremely Unimportant

10. Which of the following income categories comes closest to the industry average annual salary offered to college graduates for entry-level retail management positions? (check one for each division)

**Store Division**

- Under \$17,000
- \$17,000 - \$19,999
- \$20,000 - \$22,999
- \$23,000 - \$25,999
- \$26,000 - \$28,999
- \$29,000 - \$31,999
- \$32,000 - \$35,999
- \$36,000 and over

**Merchandising Division**

- Under \$17,000
- \$17,000 - \$19,999
- \$20,000 - \$22,999
- \$23,000 - \$25,999
- \$26,000 - \$28,999
- \$29,000 - \$31,999
- \$32,000 - \$35,999
- \$36,000 and over

Is the annual salary offered for entry-level?  Higher than nongraduates  Equal to nongraduates  Lower than nongraduates

11. What retail trends have your organization identified as:

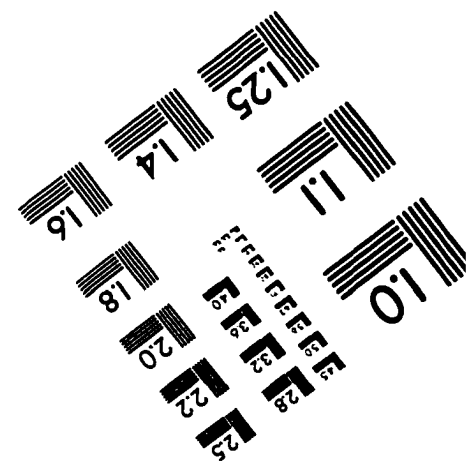
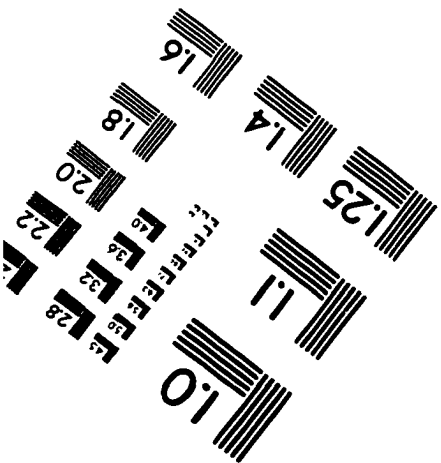
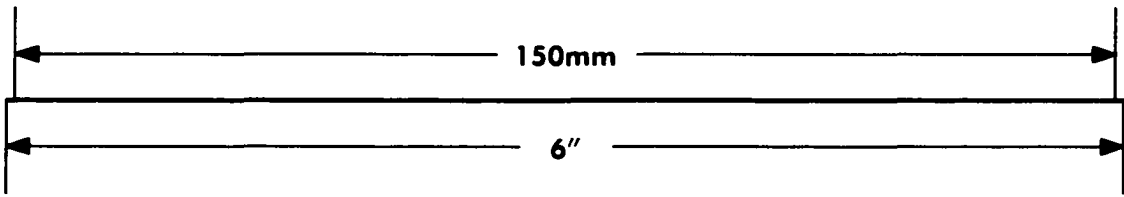
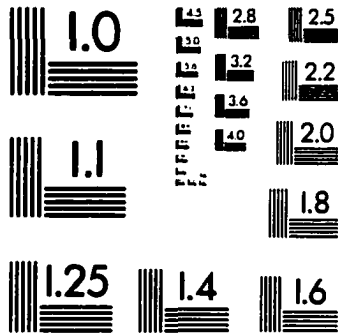
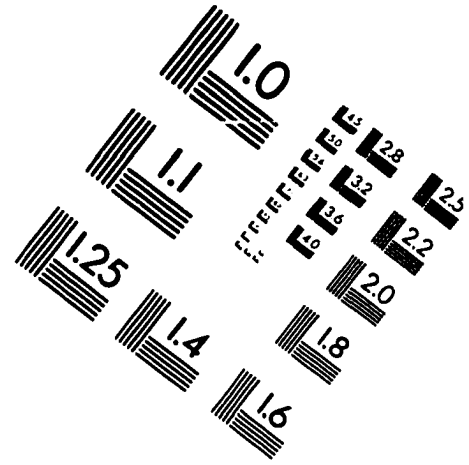
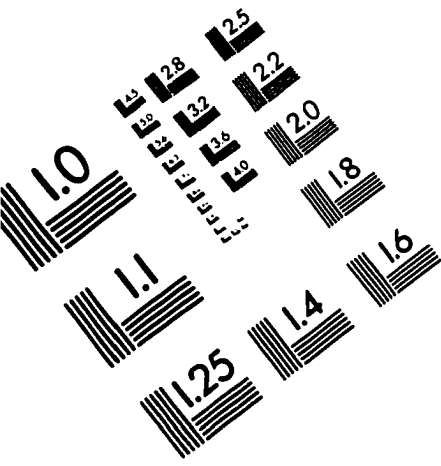
increasing in importance for undergraduate students entering retail management positions in the next decade?

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decreasing in importance for undergraduate students entering retail management positions in the next decade?

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# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



APPLIED IMAGE, Inc  
1653 East Main Street  
Rochester, NY 14609 USA  
Phone: 716/482-0300  
Fax: 716/288-5989

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