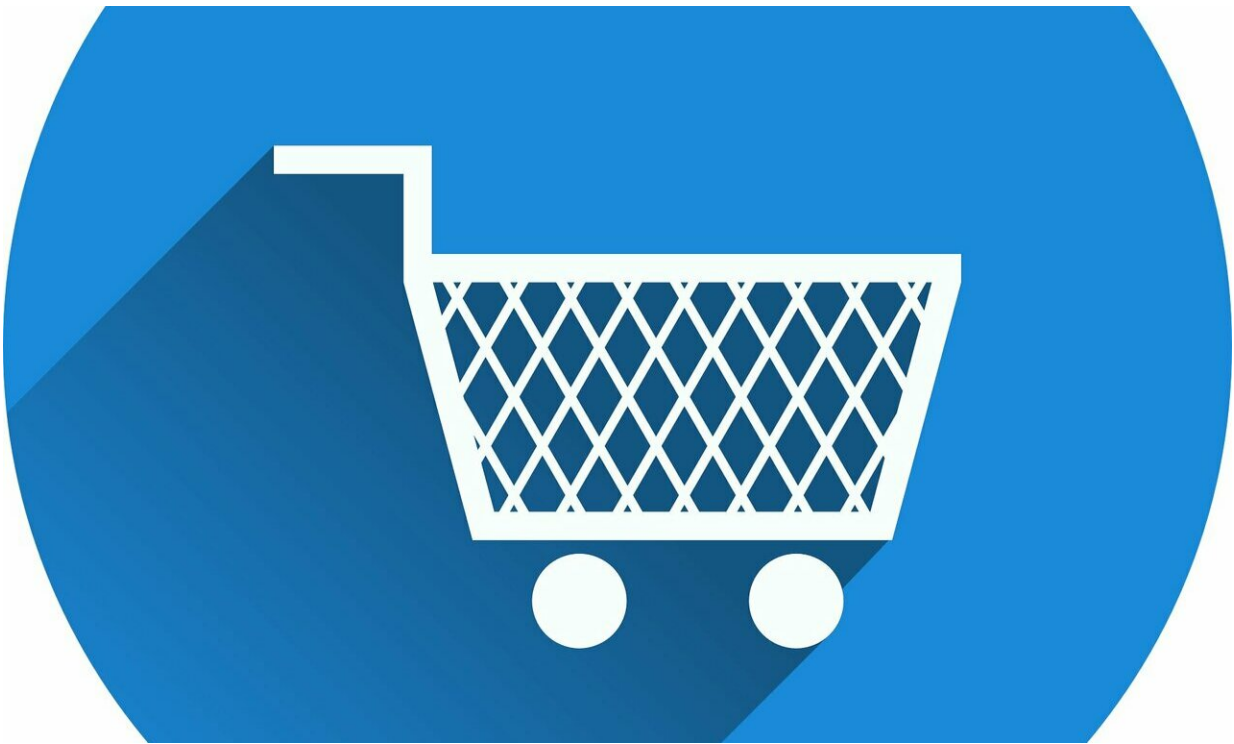


Daylight savings sees 'sleepy consumers' with a wider variety in their shopping carts

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A recent study from the UBC Sauder School of Business found that sleepier consumers reach for more variety at their local stores to help them stay awake, including those impacted by loss of sleep due to Daylight Savings Time.

The study examines the consumption behaviour of people in North America and Asia who were experiencing fatigue for a variety of reasons. Study participants were presented with various situations—from bowls of candy to chocolate bars to different coloured sticky notes—in which they were asked to make choices. For example, one group of sleepy [consumers](#) was asked to choose four candies from five bowls, each filled with a different type of candy, in any combination. The objective of the study was to track how variety-seeking behaviour is used by the sleep deficient consumer as a tool to help him or her stay awake.

Sleep deficiency of varying levels is a common occurrence among adults, but its impact on consumer behaviour has rarely been studied until now.

"The day after daylight savings people tend to be sleepier as they get less sleep, on average about 30 to 60 minutes," explains Charles Weinberg, a professor of marketing and behavioural science at UBC Sauder and one of the authors of the study. "So, we wanted to see how this would play out in the real world, and through the study we're seeing that you tend to buy more different types of candy bars, for example, on the day after daylight savings time than you would on other days of the week. That's even after controlling for how many candy bars you choose."

You might think that the sleepier the consumer, the less likely he or she is to care about what is going into the shopping cart. But, in fact, that's not the case. In all four scenarios presented in the study, the majority of consumers experiencing sleepiness sought variety to help them stay awake, much like drinking coffee or listening to loud music.

Merchants can even vary their own promotions or [marketing strategies](#) to capture the attention of the sleep deprived. Weinberg suggests that restaurants and bars with food and drink specials vary the selection

throughout the day or from day to day to help draw the attention of those trying to stay awake.

"We also suggested situations where variety might be more important, so right after daylight savings time you might offer a larger variety of products that might, if nothing else, encourage the sleepy consumer's sampling behaviour," says Weinberg.

Charles Weinberg is the SMEV Presidents Professor in Marketing and Professor Emeritus in the Marketing and Behavioural Science Division at the UBC Sauder School of Business He co-authored "The sleepy consumer and variety seeking" with Zhongqiang (Tak) Huang from The University of Hong Kong, Yitian (Sky) Liang of Tsinghua University, and Gerald J. Gorn of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The study was published in the January 2019 edition of the *Journal of Marketing Research*.

More information: Zhongqiang (Tak) Huang et al, The Sleepy Consumer and Variety Seeking, *Journal of Marketing Research* (2019).
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