PRODUCT PURCHASE MOTIVATION AND NON-USE CONSUMPTION IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the relationship between purchase motivation and reason for non-use among consumers in Malaysia. This paper hypothesized the direct impact of purchase motivation on purchasers’ reason for non-use in Malaysia context. Purchase motivation and reason for non-use were conceptualized as 4- and 4- dimensional constructs, respectively. Two hundred Malaysian voluntarily participated in this study. Three dimensions of purchase motivation, namely self-presentation, impulse purchase and satisficing have positive direct relationships with three dimensions of reason for non-use known as self-consciousness, lack of enthusiasm, and disappointing result variables. Finding and Implications of the findings were discussed further.

Keywords: Purchase Motivation, reason for non-use, self-presentation, self-improvement, satisfaction, impulse purchase
Introduction:
Consumer lifestyle has changed in this fast paced world as compared to few decades ago. More and more people are caught up in an endless cycle of buying and throwing away, and seeing consumption as a means of self-fulfillment. Purchase motivation is an area that has received substantial research attentions and it is one the keys to successful marketing today. In a study of luxury products by Amatulli and Guido (2011), purchase motivation are driven by social, interpersonal (external motivation), subjective and reserved (internal motivation). External motivations to purchase these products are influenced by social positioning and status symbol, whereas internal factors are motivated by aesthetic pleasures, cultural or personal sensibility to certain values. However, Beatty & Ferrell, (1998) pointed that impulse purchase is an immediate purchase with no pre-shopping intentions either to fulfill a specific buying task or to purchase the specific product category. Prior research has shown that numerous factors influence impulsive purchasing behaviour, including the consumer’s mood (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Rook & Gardner, 1993), the presence of others (Luo, 2005); trait impulsiveness (Rook & Fisher, 1995; Weun, Jones & Beatty, 1998; Jones, Reynolds, Weun & Beatty, 2003), product category impulsiveness (Jones et al., 2003), evaluation of the appropriateness of engaging in impulse buying (Rook & Fisher, 1995), individual and environmental touch (Peck & Childers, 2006), self-identity (Dittmar, Beattie & Friese, 1995; Lee & Kacen, 1999), cultural orientation (Kacen & Lee, 2002; Lee & Kacen, 1999).
In view of that, the unfortunate economic consequences of the wasteful purchases may often be associated with the consumers’ feelings of remorse, anger and guilt. Problem arises when consumers may even face financial problems in order to store the unused goods. Thus, it is important to identify the reasons why consumers purchase items which are eventually not consumed. In addition, researchers in the past concluded that it is important to identify how customers perceived the marketers and the products so that they can establish the correct combination of unique elements (Martinez-Ruiz, Jimenez-Zarco, & Cascio, 2011) that would allow the marketer to generate synergies and subsequently to base their strategies in order to remain competitive (Davis, Mentzer, & Stank, 2008). Non-use is a characteristic of shopping that marketers need to understand, since the repurchase decision would depend on the satisfaction on the product purchased. Malaysia’s consumer lifestyle has been evolving and changing due, in part, to rising affluence and education levels. They have moved on from the simple need for sustenance to key leisure themes like health, beauty, lifestyle and fitness. Hence, the purpose of this study is to examine the consumers’ motivations in purchasing unused product(s) and their reasons for subsequent non-consumption in Malaysia. The major concern of this research is to determine whether purchase motivation would influence reason for non-use among Malaysian. This research attempts to answer the following questions:

- Does self-presentation affect consumers’ reason for non-uses?
- Does self-improvement affect consumers’ reason for non-uses?
- Does satisficing affect consumers’ reason for non-uses?
- Does impulse purchase affect consumers’ reason for non-uses?

Literature Review:
Motivation along with other factors will shape and guide consumers’ behaviour. Instead of purchasing a product(s) itself, consumers purchase the benefit(s), or motive satisfaction that the product(s) offer(s) (Foxall & Goldsmith, 1994). Literatures in the past have indicated that the key stimuli that lead consumers to make their purchase decisions in complex business environment are prices, quality, brands of product(s), advertisements, consumers’ previous purchase experiences, and influences by friends and families. Other reasons for purchase can be due to protection against development of diseases or other negative experiences (Pornpitakpan & Green, 2010, Pornpitakpan & Green, 2007), environmental concerns or organic nature of the products (Hustvedt & Dickson, 2009, Dunlap & Jones, 2002). Furthermore, consumer’s personality traits determine how these external stimuli affect consumers’ purchasing power (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). There are four main dimensions that determine consumer purchase motivation and they are discussed in the next section.

Self-Presentation:
Self-presentation is defined as a person constructing a self image for his or her personal identity, and presents himself/herself in a manner that is consistent with that image (Schlenker, 1980). In fact, self-presentation can be
better known as self-enhancing, regardless of the reality (Pornpitakpan & Green, 2010) and hence many studies have concluded that unrealistic optimism would often leads to negative events (Otten & Van DerPligt, 1996; Pornpitakpan & Green, 2007). Self-presentation is also a process in which individuals attempt to control the impressions of what others perceived of them and this would eventually leads to fad purchases in order to maintain the strong desire for acceptance among their peers and this is especially among the teenagers (Leary & Kowalski, 1990, Lilly & Nelson, 2003).

Self-Improvement:
Self-improvement shares the same meaning as self-guided improvement (VandenBos, 2007). It means that people purchase item(s) in order to improve themselves in certain ways to fulfill their physical, mental, or emotional satisfaction. The concept of favourable self also refers to an individual’s conceptualization of the person they would like to be (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Sirgy, 1980, 1982). People are motivated to purchase product(s) and service(s) that they later might never fully utilize or consume in order to attain the ideal self.

Satisficing:
Customer satisfaction is a fulfillment reaction from the customer (Oliver, 1997). The fulfillment can be either from the product(s) or service(s) that the customer received; or from the feature of the product(s) or service(s); or from both the feature and the product(s) or service(s) itself (Oliver, 1997; Andaleeb & Conway, 2006). Nonetheless satisficing refers to the purchasers’ willingness to compromise as they are unwilling to exert substantial effort to search for the products.

Impulse Purchasing:
Impulse purchase is an immediate purchase with no pre-shopping intentions either to fulfill a specific buying task or to purchase the specific product category (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). People purchase item(s) because they feel a sudden urge to do so. Prior researches have shown that numerous factors influence impulsive purchasing behaviour, such as consumer’s mood (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Rook & Gardner, 1993), the presence of others (Luo, 2005); trait impulsiveness (Rook & Fisher, 1995; Weun, Jones & Beatty, 1998; Jones, Reynolds, Weun & Beatty, 2003), product category impulsiveness (Jones et al., 2003), evaluation of the appropriateness of engaging in impulse buying (Rook & Fisher, 1995), individual and environmental touch (Peck & Childers, 2006), self-identity (Dittmar, Beattie & Friese, 1995; Lee & Kacen, 1999), and cultural orientation (Kacen & Lee, 2002; Lee & Kacen, 1999).

Self-Consciousness:
Self-consciousness is defined as a preoccupation with oneself, as such opposed to the philosophical state of self-awareness, which is the awareness that one exists as an individual being (Lipka & Brinthaupt, 1992). Individuals are reluctant in using the purchased product(s) as they would portray them in a negative light. In addition, self-concept represents the totality of the individual’s feelings and thoughts which usually is made up of self-esteem and self-image (Phau & Lo, 2004). To maintain the ideal-self, an individual might not consume the product(s) which does (do) not suit them.

Lack of Enthusiasm:
Lack of enthusiasm is defined as deficiency or absence in interest, desire, and driving force (Sasson, 2001). In other words, it refers to a drop in an individual’s interest level in the purchased product(s) and consequently the product(s) go unused. Previous studies have indicated that “interest” has often been used as a motivational variable (Kardes, 1994). This is because interest is a major criterion to evaluate a person’s perceived relevance of an object (Zaichkowski, 1985). Additionally, consumer interest level is the most common element in the definition of involvement as a general motivational variable (Bearden, Netemeyer & Mobley, 1993).

Disappointing Results:
Disappointing results can be defined as the results failing to meet one’s expectations, hopes, desires, or standards and it happened when the gap exists between customers’ expectation and the actual performance (Kernan, Hunt &
Conlon, 2007; Oliver, 1980; Woodruff et al., 1983). In view of that, this would affect the level of customer satisfaction (Oliver, 1980; Woodruff, Cadotte & Jenkins, 1983).

Concern about Injury:
Prior research examined the correlation coefficients between consumers’ confidence about safety levels and intended future consumption and it was concluded that there is a positive relationship between confidence about safety level and future consumption (Smith and Riethmuller, 2000). Discussions on development of research hypothesis is in the next section.

Development of Research Hypothesis:
Individuals who purchase because of self-presentation may later realize that the products do not satisfy their actual needs. Fads can be defined as fashion that enters quickly, adopts with great zeal, peaks early, and declines very fast (Kotler & Armstrong, 1994). Hence, individuals may be conscious of the unnecessary purchases and might become afraid to use the outdated product(s) as these would portray a negative image. Thus, it might result in purchases which might fall into the category of product(s) purchased with subsequent non-consumption. As a result, the following hypothesis was proposed.

H1: There is a positive relationship between self-presentation and reason for non-use such as self-consciousness, lack of enthusiasm, disappointing results, and concern about injury.

Some reasons pertaining to the later non-use effect of self-improvement buyers could be due to interruptions such as disappointing results, lack of enthusiasm and concern about injury, just to name a few. For example, an individual may not continue to consume the diet pills as it does not make any difference to their weight. Thus, the disappointing results lead to the non-use situation. Hence, the following hypothesis was suggested.

H2: There is a positive relationship between self-improvement and reason for non-use such as self-consciousness, lack of enthusiasm, disappointing results, and concern about injury.

Purchases motivated by satisficing could be another factor that leads to non-consumption at a later stage. An individual who purchased product(s) which they feel is “good enough”, but might not be appropriate in accordance with their tastes and subsequently feel disappointed about their purchase. Therefore, the following hypothesis was proposed.

H3: There is a positive relationship between satisficing and reason for non-use such as self-consciousness, lack of enthusiasm, disappointing results, and concern about injury.

Prior research that examined the consequences of impulse purchasing on the individual and society found some potential negative effects such as financial problems, guilt, or social disapproval (Rook, 1987; Rook & Fisher, 1995; Rook & Hoch, 1985; O’Guinn & Faber, 1989). The link between impulse purchase and unmet expectations appears logical as an individual who purchase a product(s) without proper deliberation may later lead to non-consumption situation. Hence, the following hypothesis was investigated.

H4: There is a positive relationship between impulse purchase and reason for non-use such as self-consciousness, lack of enthusiasm, disappointing results, and concern about injury.

Methodology:
This study aims to investigate the factors that motivate consumers to purchase product(s) and service(s) that they either would never use or underutilize, and to identify the reasons why these consumers ultimately did not consume their purchased items in the Malaysian context. In this study, judgemental sampling method was used to conform some criterion towards the sample and this depended on the experience of the respondents. The respondents were required to meet three criteria. Firstly, they must have purchased the product(s) themselves. Secondly, they must
not have used the product(s) or felt as though the product(s) was/ were grossly underutilized and thirdly, the respondents must never have returned the product(s) for a refund. This study focuses on manufacturing employees in Malaysia as a population of interest. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed. Data was collected through survey questionnaires and only 200 consumers responded to the survey.

Findings:

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents.

### Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>64.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>71.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>50.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bumiputera</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Income (in RM)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1000</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001 – 3000</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3001 – 5000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5001 and above</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 illustrates the intercorrelations among the subscales obtained using Pearson correlation to determine whether the subscales were independent measure of the same concept. Generally, intercorrelations among the four dimensions of purchase motivation registered value of .16 to .34 ($p < .01$), whereas, the intercorrelations for the subscales of reason for non-use ranged from .18 to .40 at the level of $p < .01$. On the whole, the results have demonstrated acceptable levels of correlation.

### Table 2: Pearson Correlation of Purchase Motivation and Reason for Non-Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Self-Presentation</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Self-Improvement</td>
<td>.341**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Impulse Purchase</td>
<td>.126</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Satisficing</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.157*</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Self-Consciousness</td>
<td>.214**</td>
<td>.181*</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.268**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Concern about Injury</td>
<td>.215**</td>
<td>.204**</td>
<td>-.149*</td>
<td>.223**</td>
<td>.400**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Disappointing Results</td>
<td>.185**</td>
<td>.105</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>.154*</td>
<td>.379**</td>
<td>.373**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Lack of Enthusiasm</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>.128</td>
<td>.093</td>
<td>.122</td>
<td>.215**</td>
<td>.184**</td>
<td>.239**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of item</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>.7487</td>
<td>.7218</td>
<td>.7527</td>
<td>.8135</td>
<td>.763</td>
<td>.825</td>
<td>.789</td>
<td>.786</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**$p< 0.01$, *$p< 0.05$**

Multiple regression analysis was carried out to test the hypotheses that comprised the direct effects of purchase motivation and reason for non-use. Table 3 presents the results of the analyses. The analyses showed that only 2 dimensions of purchase motivation namely, self-presentation and satisfaction were significantly related to self-
consciousness at $\beta = .17$ ($p < .05$) and $\beta = .25$ ($p < .01$), respectively. Three dimensions known as self-presentation ($\beta = .17, p < .05$), impulse purchase ($\beta = -.21, p < .01$), and satisfaction ($\beta = .18, p < .05$), were found to have significant impact on concern about injury. With regards to disappointing results dimension, only one purchasing motivation which is self-presentation, was found to have positive relationship with reason for non-use.

Table 3: Regression analysis of Reason for Non-Use and Purchase Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion Variables</th>
<th>Reason for Non-Use</th>
<th>Self-Consciousness Std Beta</th>
<th>Concern about Injury Std Beta</th>
<th>Disappointing Results Std Beta</th>
<th>Lack of Enthusiasm Std Beta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predictor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Presentation</td>
<td>.172*</td>
<td>.171*</td>
<td>.154*</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Improvement</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>-.008</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impulse Purchase</td>
<td>.034</td>
<td>-.206**</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfying</td>
<td>.249**</td>
<td>.179*</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < 0.01, *p < 0.05

Discussion and Conclusion:

This research investigates the relationship between purchase motivation and reason for non-use among consumers in Malaysia. Considering the potential cascading effect that purchase intention can have on reasons for non-use, previous researches may have underestimated the impact of consumer purchasing power in Malaysia. Firstly, this study represents the theoretical or empirical research regarding purchase motivation and reason for non-use in Malaysia. There have been very few empirical researches on reasons for non-use among consumers in the purchase motivation researches. Thus, this study’s framework has allowed for a better understanding of how consumers’ perceptions were formed and the mechanisms linking consumers’ purchase motivation to their reasons for not using. Contrary to expectation, results of this study reveal a moderate link between purchase intention and reasons for non-use among Malaysian consumers. In addition, statistical analysis reveals that self-improvement is not a reason for consumers not using the products purchased. Inevitably, this study has contributed to the small but growing body of research on antecedents to purchase motivation and intention. It is believed that this study would have added value to the literatures on consumers’ behavior, especially in the Malaysian settings since there were limited literatures done on similar setting.

The main two reasons which accelerated the growing of consumers’ spending ability was due to the economic growth in Southeast Asia (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004) which has created the “the new rich” (Amatulli & Guido, 2011) and the increase in purchasing power and hence this has resulted in an issue of non-use for goods that were purchased and thus it has triggered the research interest on this topic. Based on the results, self-presentation and satisfying have significant positive relationship with three dimensions of reason for non-use namely, self-consciousness, concern about injury, and disappointing results. This is supported by previous researchers where the obvious reason for those self-presenter to purchase was based on the preferences of others and due to his/her self-consciousness (Trocchia & Janda, 2002). Furthermore, the purchase intention would be worsen if there is product-harm crisis (Lauffer, Silvera, & Meyer, 2005) and disappointing results for using the products due to expectation gap (Kernan et al., 2007; Oliver, 1980; Woodruff et al., 1983). This is further supported by a recent study where consumer has a propensity to seek the opinions of their friends and peer groups and this is more obvious among the younger consumers (Beirne, 2008; Kinley, Josiam, & Lockett, 2010). On the other hand, it was found that impulse purchase has a negative relationship with concern with injury. This could be due to the fact that impulse purchase is an immediate purchase with no pre-shopping intentions either to fulfil a specific buying task or to purchase a specific product category (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998) and hence purchasers were not concerned if the products were harmful.

References:


(Ed.), *The handbook of attitudes* (pp. 173-221).


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