

Impact of Sales Promotion on Customer Intention to Purchase High Involvement Product

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ABSTRACT

Sales promotion is a very common targeting strategy used by retailers, yet personal value and sales promotion technique preferences that contribute towards customer satisfaction and intention to purchase high involvement product are largely unknown. This study adopted pseudo-experimental factorial design, with the aim of examining the difference in purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention between consumers' different personal value and sales promotion techniques preferences for high involvement product from retailing service perspective. The findings from this study expand current knowledge on similar areas of sales promotion where this study details the variance effect of personal value and sales promotion techniques preferences on purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention. The study suggests to practitioners that it is crucial to understand the impact of personal value and sales promotion techniques preferences, particularly when selecting appropriate strategies for better market segmentation and targeting for high involvement product.

Keywords: *personal values; purchase satisfaction; behavioral intention; sales promotion techniques preferences; high involvement product; retailing service*

INTRODUCTION

Sales promotion has been widely used by retailers worldwide as one of their competitive weapons (Carpenter & Moore, 2008). Such uses of sales promotion, particularly sales promotion techniques were widely known to encourage repeat patronage and boost these retailers' overall sales (O'Malley, 1998). Thus, by identifying which of the sales promotion that is more likely being preferred by consumers will help to boost up more sales and eventually encourage repeat patron to the retailers. Consistent with consumers' desires for retailing services, retailers use sales promotion techniques (such as coupon and discount) which add emotional or value to the service landscape (supermarkets or shopping malls) (Wakefield & Barnes, 1996; Yang, Cheung, Henry, Guthrie, & Fam, 2010). This can be done though the availability of consumers' sales promotion techniques preferences (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004; Williams, 1968), particularly on different type of products.

The identification of various sales promotion techniques that is more likely to be preferred by consumers will inevitably help to boost up more sales and eventually encourage repeat patron to the retailers. Nevertheless, not many studies accentuate sales promotion for high involvement product and the impact of sales promotion techniques preferences and personal value on customers' intention to purchase it (Lee & Yi, 2017; Patterson, 1993). Thus, an analytical approach to consumers' sales promotion techniques preferences, personal value, and their intention to purchase high involvement product may shed light on the influence of sales promotions development for markets and society (Lee & Yi, 2017).

Nevertheless, sales promotion techniques preferences require understanding consumers' personal value and intention to purchase prior to designing effective promotional and marketing strategies. This as personal value is mainly used as the criteria of preferences (Williams, 1968), and the indicator of consumers' attitude and behaviour (Jayawardhena, 2004; Shim & Eastlick, 1998). This is evident in the cases of high involvement product where it was normally associated with personal relevance (Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999) and preferences (Patterson, 1993; Rossiter & Percy, 2017). The issue raised here is that, do sales promotion techniques preferences and personal value have effect on the intention to purchase high involvement product? The rest of the paper

is organized as follows: first, a discussion of the relevant literature is presented, after that, methodology and findings; followed by discussion of the findings and conclusions of the research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sales Promotion

Studies done on sales promotion has grown in importance for retailers and manufacturers worldwide (Ndubisi & Chiew, 2005, 2006). Such sales promotion is commonly used by service producers as short term incentives directed at end users (Neslin, 2002; Neslin, Henderson, & Quelch, 1985), aimed at influencing their purchase behavior (Jee, De Run & Lo, 2016; McNeill, 2012, 2013). This is particular evident within retailing service landscape (Peattie & Peattie, 1995; Wakefield & Barnes, 1996). Past studies on sales promotion traditionally focus on how consumers response to coupons and price deals (Chandon, 1995; Lu & Moorthy, 2007), typically for packaged goods (e.g. Clemons & Row, 1993; DelVecchio, Henard, & Freling, 2006; Mela, Gupta, & Lehmann, 1997). However, limited studies were done on how such sales promotion techniques can be aligned towards the services provided by retailers in specific (Wakefield & Barnes, 1996). At the same time, little was also done on the high involvement consumption of services in general (Kauppinen- Räsänen, 2014; Magnier & Schoormans, 2015), and how it plays a role within service retailers sales promotion activities and high involvement products and/ or services context in particular (Dorotic, Bijmolt, & Verhoef, 2012).

A previous study done on sales promotional tools/techniques shows an effect on brand choice process where it was mainly affected by price promotion (Alvarez & Casielles, 2005). Apart from that, the previous study done also shows that the uses of sales promotions were primarily driven by factors such as; rise in advertising clutter and pricing, increasing influence of retailers, decreasing on planning time horizons, and the various positive snowball effect of micro-marketing and sales promotion activities (McNeill, 2013). Yet, sales promotion techniques' success has received little academic attention as compared to other forms of marketing techniques such as advertising despite the evidence on the growth and

importance of sales promotion (Peattie, 1998; Williams, 1979). Most of the studies on sales promotion were concentrated on the monetary or utilitarian benefits of sales promotion in retail environment, for example on the uses and characteristics of coupons, price pack and sweepstakes (Tellis, 1998).

Personal Value

Previous studies have shown that value was primary used to predict and explain sales promotion techniques preferences (Jee & De Run, 2013) and context where it provides a theoretical set of behavioral conduct and guiding codes. Apart from that, it was also used as the reflective phenomenon of individuals basic adaptation characteristics apart as the main guideline to shape and guide preferences (Jee & De Run, 2016), attitudes and behaviors (Kropp, Lavack, & Silvera, 2005). Most of the studies done were well documented in cross-cultural (Beatty, Kahle, Utsey & Keown, 1993; Kahle, Rose & Shoham, 1999) and domestic locale (Beatty, Kahle, Homer & Misra, 1985).

Personal values on the other hand was portrayed as the criterion for preferences (Carman, 1977; Williams, 1968). It primarily derived from the unambiguous scenario where it was partly determined by an individual's initial values and beliefs (Jee et al., 2016). A past study has show a link between consumer's personal values and preferences of sales promotion techniques (Chandon, Wansink & Laurent, 2000). Personal value constructs adopted in this study were sourced from Kahle's List of Values (LOV) that contain nine items that were categorized into internal values, external values and interpersonal values categories (Kropp et al., 2005). This is mainly because LOV has been identified as a more economical measure as compared to other approaches (Kale & McIntyre, 1991; Kropp et al., 2005). Internal values do not require any judgment from others, meaning that these internal values are self-motivated where those who rate internal values highly believe that they will control outcomes or be influential (Madrigal & Kahle, 1994). External values on the other hand are primary contrary with internal values where those who rate these values need judgments, opinions and even the presence of others (Homer & Kahle, 1988). Apart from that, interpersonal values are the values that are predominant to those that place higher score of value on

dyadic relationships or those who care more on others opinions (Netemeyer, Bearden & Teel, 1992).

Of prime concern in this study is the availability of personal values on influencing preferences of different sales promotion techniques, hence leading towards positive purchase satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Sales promotion can also be examined by product type. It was significantly related to the studies and identification of sales promotion techniques preferences (Jee et al., 2016; Jee & De Run, 2013). Product type adopted in this study was based on shopping product as it was generally categorized as high involvement product (Woodham & Stone, 2015).

Product Involvement and Shopping Product

Previous studies suggest that attitude differs in low versus high versus involvement situations, which are commonly associated with personal relevance (Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999) and preferences (Patterson, 1993; Rossiter & Percy, 2017). A product is considered highly involving when consumers make careful relevant consideration and purchase decision when selecting high involvement product. Such high involving products are commonly associated with economic and social risk, emotionally appealing, and functional (Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999), evident as well for retailing service landscape (Wakefield & Barnes, 1996). This is particularly true in the event of highly substitutable products such as automobile, electrical appliances, and furniture (Zaichkowsky, 1986), which are commonly affiliated with the service environment it operates in.

Furniture is also categorized as shopping product (Kotler & Armstrong, 2013). Shopping product can be either homogenous or heterogeneous (Watson, Viney & Schomaker, 2002). It is normally bought less frequently, with medium shopping effort as compared to convenience product (Gilbert, 1999; Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). When purchasing shopping product, consumers tend to spend more time and effort in choosing and comparing (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004; McCarthy & Perreault, 1993). It is also normally distributed through fewer outlets by marketers mainly to help consumers in the comparison effort and provide deeper sales supports to the retailers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2013). Thus, it

is anticipated that value based assessment would be made by consumers due to such characteristics of shopping product (Pitts & Woodside, 1983), particularly how consumers valued the service that they encountered while shopping.

Research Hypothesis

An assumption in this study is that preferences are different for high involvement product. Purchase satisfaction (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999) and behavioural intention (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) may also be significantly different depending on personal value backgrounds (Kahle, 1983). This was tested on purchase satisfaction and behavioural intention by personal value dimensions (internal, external, and interpersonal) for high involvement product. This led to the following hypotheses:

- H1: There is a significant difference in purchase satisfaction between dimensions of personal value (internal, external and interpersonal) for high involvement product.
- H2: There is a significant difference in behavioural intention between dimensions of personal value (internal, external and interpersonal) for high involvement product.

Moreover, it has also been suggested that preferences of different sales promotion techniques will lead to favourable level of purchase satisfaction and behavioural intention (Bowles, 1998; Nowell-Smith, 1954) and differ from each other (Ndubisi & Chiew, 2006; Norzaishah, 2007). This was tested on purchase satisfaction and behavioural intention by the most preferred and least preferred sales promotion techniques for high involvement product. This led to the following hypotheses:

- H3: There is a significant difference in purchase satisfaction between dimensions of sales promotion techniques preference for high involvement product.
- H4: There is a significant difference in behavioural intention between dimensions of sales promotion techniques preference for high involvement product.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a 3 (internal, external and interpersonal value) x 2 (most and least preferred sales promotion techniques) pseudo-experimental factorial design. Furniture is used as the proxy for this study, mainly used to guide the respondents to relate to their recent purchases of high involvement product. Consumers in the 21 to 55 years old age group have been identified as sampling targets, as these consumers are likely to be employed and have independent means for consumption of consumer goods. Respondents were drawn from a wide range of occupations, lifestyles and ethnicities, with Census Data providing a framework for representation proportions in Malaysia. The population for the age of 21 to 55 years old was estimated to be 16 million for the year 2016 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2016). A minimum sample size of 264 respondents was calculated for this study (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2006). Judgmental and snowball sampling approaches were used to ensure that the intended respondents were selected purposefully to accomplish the aim of the study. These sampling techniques were chosen as it is difficult to estimate the probability of one single person being included in the sample of a large population (Newby-Clark, McGregor & Zanna, 2002). Such sampling is acceptable when there are controls within the research design, which can serve to lessen the impact of non-response by ensuring that the results will be more representative of the population (Lerner & Keltner, 2001; Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2012).

The study data were collected using self-administered survey questionnaire. Self-administered survey questionnaire was used to capture the underlying constructs in the conceptual framework. These underlying constructs were measured using multiple indicators adopted from the previous research. The questionnaire is divided into two sections: Section one comprises items relating to demographic information to allow for the representative nature of the samples to be reviewed and sampling frames to be adjusted when necessary. Section two consist of items related to personal values, with scales sourced from List of Values (Kahle, 1983; Kropp et al., 2005), sales promotion techniques preferences sourced from previous studies; purchase satisfaction (Sanzo, del Rio, Iglesias & Vazquez, 2003) and consumer's behavioral intention (purchase intention and word of mouth) (Maheswaran & Sternthal, 1990; Soderlund, 2006). A 6-point scale indicating strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6) was

used in the questionnaires in order to obtain forced answer that is not median based (Chang, 1994). Six-point scale works best in the condition where it forces respondents to choose a point either before or after the mind set middle point. Using such finer tuned six-point scale would result in higher validity and reliability for the findings (Chang, 1994). The measurements used are detailed in Table 1.

The validity and reliability test are also presented in Table 2. The validity and reliability test are only conducted on list of values, purchase satisfaction and word-of-mouth. This as purchase intention and sales promotion technique preferences are measured on a single item basis hence does not warrant for any further validity and reliability tests.

Table 1: Summary of Sources of Key Measurement Scales

Measure	Author	No. of Items	No. of Variables	Scale Range	No. of Factors	Reliability	Validity	Scale Type
List of Values	(Kropp et al., 2005)	9	3	1-9	3	0.71-0.88	Yes**	L
Purchase Satisfaction	(Sanzo et al., 2003)	4	1	1-5	-	-	No	L
Purchase Intention	(Maheswaran & Sternthal, 1990)	1	1	1 - 7	-	-	No	L
Word-of-mouth	(Soderlund, 2006)	3	1	1-10	-	0.85	No	L

** = Exploratory Factor Analysis, L = Likert Scale.

Table 2: Summary of Final Measures

Measure	No. of Items	No. of Variables	Scale Range	No. of factors	Validity/Variance	Reliability
List of Values	9	3	1-6	3	57.81	0.71-0.81
Purchase Satisfaction	4	1	1-6	1	63.80	0.81
Word of mouth	3	1	1-6	1	64.79	0.72

The data was then analyzed using Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) to test the interaction between different personal value and sales promotion techniques preferences on purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention, followed by General Linear Model Analysis of Variance (GLM-ANOVA) to test the difference between the observed variables in this study. Prior to that, descriptive analyses and paired-sample t-test are used to evaluate the respondents' demographic and the sales promotion techniques preferences on furniture product tested in this study.

FINDINGS

The most preferred technique being identified for furniture product was Premium (Mean = 4.68, S.D. = 1.08) and the least preferred technique that had been identified was Game (Mean = 3.34, S.D. = 1.45). Paired-sample t-test shows that both Premium and Game sales promotion techniques were significantly different from each other ($t = 8.688, p < 0.05$).

A total of 279 respondents from various states in Malaysia were obtained for the final study. The majority of respondents were Malay (63%), followed by Chinese (23%) and other ethnicity (11%). 55% were female and most of the respondents were in their twenties and still single. Most had a secondary school qualification (60%) followed by those with diploma and first degree (38%). Their monthly gross income was between RM1000 and RM2000 (33%).

Table 3 depicts purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention by personal value (internal, external and intrapersonal) and sales promotion technique variables mean score for high involvement product.

MANOVA's main effects for personal value was found to be not significant (Pillai = 0.007, $F = 0.343, p = 0.849$) with all the dependent variables (purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention) tested for high involvement product. However, MANOVA main effect for sales promotion techniques preferences were found to be significant (Pillai = 0.045, $F = 4.919, p = 0.008$) with all the dependent variables (purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention) tested.

Table 3: Purchase Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention by Personal Value

Variables	Purchase Satisfaction		Behavioral Intention	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Internal Value (M=4.50, SD=0.85)	4.23	0.93	4.28	0.81
External Value (M=4.60, Sd=0.87)	4.32	0.85	4.28	0.81
Interpersonal Value (M=4.89, SD=1.08)	4.21	0.96	4.17	1.02
Least Preferred Sales Promotion Technique	4.04	0.92	4.00	0.92
Most Preferred Sales Promotion Technique	4.47	0.95	4.42	0.94

GLM-Univariate test was then employed to observe if there is a singular interaction between each dependent variable and the fixed factors (Townend, 2002). The GLM-Univariate results for the variables: sales promotion techniques, purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention (word of mouth and purchase intention) are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Findings Summary GLM-ANOVA for Shopping Product

Variables	Personal Value		Sales Promotion Techniques Preferences	
	F-Value	Sig.	F-Value	Sig.
Purchase Satisfaction	0.219	0.803	15.068	0.000**
Behavioral Intention	0.324	0.724	13.909	0.000**

**p<.01, *p<.05

The findings in Table 4 indicated that there is no significant difference between the variables: personal value against dependent variable purchase satisfaction (F = 0.219, p < 0.803) and behavioral intention (F = 0.324, p < 0.724) for high involvement product. This means that an interaction at single variable level does not exist. Such finding does not provide support for H1 and H2.

The findings in Table 4 however indicated that there was a significant difference between the variables: sales promotion techniques preferences against dependent variable purchase satisfaction (F = 15.068, p = 0.000) and behavioral intention (F = 13.909, p = 0.000). This means that

an interaction at the single variable level exists. Such findings provide support for H3 and H4. Assumptions about normality and equality of variance were checked for all the independent variables, appended in Appendix A.

DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Sales Promotion Techniques Preferences

There are various sales promotion tools that were normally preferred by consumers in the market, particularly price promotional tools (Carpenter & Moore, 2008). Yet, the issues of determining which sales promotion techniques are significantly preferred by Malaysian consumers is of great importance (Jee et al., 2016; Jee & De Run, 2013). This is particularly evident for the purchase of high involvement product such as furniture. Yet, there is no clear indication as to which tools are likely preferred by consumers for high involvement product. From the findings, the most preferred technique for high involvement product is premium. This type of promotional tools were normally offered at a lower price (for the purchase of one or numerous products) and mainly offered by the retailers (d'Astous & Landreville, 2003). It is known that such tools normally will encourage consumers to repeat purchase (Althuizen & Wierenga, 2003; Peattie, 1998).

The least preferred technique is game. It is less likely preferred as this promotional tool normally entails a lot of effort and time. This is particularly evident when consumers are considering purchasing high involvement product such as furniture. The idea of implementing a game in this study is to provide a clear indication between the least and most preferred promotional. Consumers' in collectivist society such as Malaysia clearly like reward and fulfillment, not further effort to obtain something. Such identification of the most and least preferred sales promotion technique will have a strong implication for consumers' overall behavioral intention and purchase satisfaction for the purchase of different types of consumer products (Banerjee, Gulas & Iyer, 1995). Sales promotion techniques such as premium promises monetary value and game offer more of a non-monetary value to the consumers (Ndubisi & Chiew, 2005). By inducing monetary value sales promotion techniques such as premium

on high involvement product, it will inevitably increase respondents' overall purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention.

Purchase Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention

The findings in this study show that there is no difference in purchase satisfaction by different personal value (internal, external and interpersonal) when consumers purchase high involvement product such as furniture. It contradicts with the previous study done that indicates differences in attitude by personal value (internal, external and interpersonal) (Finegan, 1994). Such condition happens mainly due to the characteristics of the product itself of having little or no impact on consumer values.

The same findings were shown for behavioral intention in this study. It shows that there is no difference in behavioral intention by personal value (internal, external and interpersonal) when purchasing high involvement product. It also contradicts the previous study that indicates differences in behavior by value (Finegan, 1994). This may have also occurred due to the fact for consumers in a collectivist society such as Malaysia, the common goal is to achieve the common interest of many (Singelis & Brown, 1995). These consumers were known to suppress the emotional part of their impulse buying (Kacen & Lee, 2002; Singelis & Brown, 1995). This indicates that these consumers' purchase decision happens promptly under impulse condition regardless of their personal value evaluation and beliefs, thus having no influence on their purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention.

The findings in this study show that there is a significant difference for purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention by sales promotion technique preferences. This is in line with previous studies that show difference in attitude (purchase satisfaction) and behavior (behavioral intention) by preferences (Bowles, 1998). This mainly happens as when consumers buy high involvement product (such as furniture), they will spend more shopping effort in comparing and choosing among similar product or brand, as compared to convenience product (such as sweets). Thus, by giving any gift along the way of a purchase decision will make the purchase easier for the consumers. This includes gifts that give them the most value of money. As such consumers in a collectivist society such

as Malaysia are known to be receptive to promotional tools that offer more of monetary benefits to them (Jee et al., 2016; Jee & De Run, 2013; Ndubisi & Chiew, 2005, 2006).

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

Personal value and sales promotion techniques preferences provided a strong basis for inference for purchase satisfaction and behavioral intentions. As past studies delved very little into interpreting such personal value and sales promotion techniques preferences, it provides strong theoretical ground for testing it within a collectivist context. It also explicates the constructions of intention to purchase high involvement product. From the managerial perspectives, managers and marketers alike need to devise a marketing strategy and sales promotion campaign meticulously to include what is shared across the collectivist society, and precludes what is not. In particular, when targeting high involvement product on promotional savvy customers, it is imperative to know what attributes of sales promotion techniques customers prefer and are likely to use in their purchases. This can be done by looking into factors such as the product involvement and type, tangibility and utilitarian of promotion techniques. It is equally important to recognize what sets sales promotion techniques and high involvement product apart to ensure effective sales promotion campaigns in the long term.

CONCLUSION

Consumer personal value and sales promotion techniques preferences were studied by noting their outcomes on consumer purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention. They were studied from the aspect of the consumers' perspectives of high involvement product such as furniture. Overall the findings suggest that sales promotion techniques preferences play a more dominant role in affecting consumers' purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention rather than based on personal value for high involvement product.

This study was limited to the understanding of the effect of personal value and sales promotion techniques on purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention for the purchase of high involvement product.

The researcher suggests that future studies should also look into other types of value measurements such as national value and cultural value, as well as expand this study for low involvement product. This will contribute a broader aspect point of view of the different value impacts and sales promotion technique preferences, especially in the satisfaction and behavior context.

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Appendix A

Assumptions about normality and equality of variance were checked for all the independent variables; personal value (KS = 0.187, $p < 0.000$ and SW = 0.219, $p < 0.000$ and Levene's Test, $F = 0.041$, $p < 0.959$) and sales promotion techniques preferences (KS = 0.143, $p < 0.000$ and SW = 0.278, $p < 0.000$ and Levene's Test, $F = 4.428$, $p < 0.036$) against dependent variable, purchase satisfaction.

Assumptions about normality and equality of variance were checked for all the independent variables: personal value (KS = 0.182, $p < 0.000$ and SW = 0.924, $p < 0.000$ and Levene's Test, $F = 2.061$, $p < 0.130$) and sales promotion techniques preferences (KS = 0.120, $p < 0.000$ and SW = 0.963, $p < 0.000$ and Levene's Test, $F = 2.491$, $p < 0.116$) against dependent variable, behavioral intention.

