

Determinants of Consumers' Supermarket Selection: Empirical Evidence on East Malaysian Shoppers' Behavior

Oriah Akir
Normah Sidi
Senian Malie

ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to ascertain the determinants that drive consumers to patronize a supermarket. In addition, the study also looked into stores' attributes that were most preferred and attracted consumers to frequently utilize those supermarkets. The relationship of consumers' religious orientation and consumers' shopping behavior types was also determined. A non-probability sampling technique was applied to collect the data. The data was collected via mall intercepts with a structured questionnaire used to interview the consumers at six supermarkets under the jurisdiction of Dewan Bandaraya Kuching City North, Sarawak. A new mix cluster of shopper types emerged from the study, namely: demanding-practical shoppers, thoughtful-innovative shoppers, while some are indifferent-confused shoppers. The results also indicated the existence of a relationship between the customers' religious orientation and their shopping behavior types. Essentially, the study revealed some similarities and differences from previous studies with respect to the determinants and store (supermarket) physical attributes most preferred by consumers when deciding on a supermarket. It also showed some similarities and differences in shoppers' behavior types. Therefore, understanding consumers' shopping behavior and what drives them to visit a supermarket, is of prior importance to both retail managers and marketers in order to guide them in developing and executing strategies to sustain consumers' loyalty. This is due to the fact that consumers' behavior may differ across nationality, cultures, regions and locations.

Keywords: *Consumer determinants, customers' preference, religious orientation, shopping behavior types, store physical attributes*

Introduction

To be viable in the business arena, it is extremely important for today's marketers to have an in-depth understanding of the customers' needs and preferences. Understanding the customers' behavior is a prerequisite skill necessary for any managers and marketers alike in developing effective businesses and marketing strategies, especially in a retailing scenario. In the past decades, Malaysia had witnessed rapid progress in retail changes and new trends of retailing had emerged such as from supermarkets and superstores to retail warehouses and convenience stores (Lim, Badruzaman & Ghafar, 2003). However, traditional small retailers and provision shops / sundry shops still exist side by side with the modern retailing landscape especially in the suburban and rural areas. They serve customers that cannot be reached by big retailers.

Retailing activities have long been one of the most active sectors in the Malaysian economy and the second biggest contributor to the national GDP (Eight Malaysia Plan 2001). In Malaysia, the development of supermarkets / retail outlets had seen tremendous growth since the 1990s, encouraged by changing patterns in consumers' preferences, higher disposable income, and a more affluent and affordable society. For example, the retail growth rate of supermarkets in Malaysia was at 8.6 percent between the year 1990 to 1995 (Seventh Malaysia Plan, 1996). This positive growth rate indicated that supermarkets would be more likely than not, a permanent and prominent feature in the Malaysian retail landscape. The food retail store / retailing activities in Malaysia is made up of wet markets, dry markets, night markets, sundry / provision shops, convenience stores, discount stores, specialty stores, supermarkets, department stores and

hypermarkets. Traditionally, the provision shops made up a large segment of the food retail sector. As time progresses and due to various factors such as more sophisticated consumers' lifestyles, price disadvantages and limited working capital, the number of these provision shops had been on the declining trend.

There has been an increasing presence of supermarkets, hypermarkets and direct selling activities in Malaysia. The popularity of this new trend of retailing and the evolvement of shopping habits among consumers as evidence from a survey conducted in 1997 which found out that the number of shoppers at supermarkets had increased by 1.5 times since 1995, while at hypermarkets, shoppers had increased by more than double since 1995 (Eight Malaysia Plan 2001-2003). Nevertheless, the small provision shops segment remains an important part of the food retail sector, contributing around 25 percent of all retail sales in Malaysia (Shamsudin & Selamat, 2005). Additionally, the retail industry in the country was expected to experience 8 percent growth for 2007, which was higher than the targeted growth within the Third Industrial Master Plan period 2006-2010. It was targeted at an average of 6.8 per annum (Borneo Post, 2007). In the year 2006, the retail sector recorded the highest growth of 5.4 percent over other sectors, led by supermarkets and hypermarkets sub-sectors which reported high increased in sales of 9.5 percent. Department stores which was part of the supermarkets sub-sectors, recorded a growth in sales of 5.3 percent (Borneo Post, 2007). The growth in retail industry were driven by Malaysia's gradual market liberalization, declining domestic input, boosting tourist inflows, and increasing dependence on imported food (RNCOS, 2006). Beyond doubt, consumers play an important role in contributing to the strength of the Malaysian economy.

Malaysian consumers' lifestyles have been evolving due to among others, the rising income and higher education level among Malaysian consumers. High profile international retailers and global mass media further play a role in shaping the consumers' shopping behavior. Hence, to gain market sustainability and gain market viability, the retailers cannot generalize its customers' buying behavior. This is because customers have diverse cultural background. This cultural norms and traditions may have a great impact on their shopping behavior which affects their preferences. This may indirectly influence the determinants and attributes of their shopping behavior. In addition, they shall also affect customers' selection of supermarket types. As such, the main objective of this study is to answer the below research questions. The researchers hope to gain insights and understanding of the East Malaysian customers' preferences and shopping behavior as they may be different if compared to their West Malaysian counterparts and others elsewhere around the globe:

- i. What are the main determinants that influence consumers' selection of a supermarket?
- ii. What attributes attract consumers to patronize a particular supermarket?
- iii. Which shopper types are typical of the East Malaysian consumers?
- iv. Is there any relationship between consumers' religious orientation and their shopper types?
- v. Is there any indication that consumers will revisit the chosen supermarket/ recommend it to others (friends, family) to go to the chosen supermarket in future?

Literature Review

Shoppers often patronize many stores but their affiliation for 'main stores / preferred stores' captured much of their purchases (Rhnee & Bell, 2002). Being consumers' 'first choice supermarket' is especially important for grocery retailers because loyal shoppers spend twice as much in the main stores as compared to other stores which were not considered as the main stores / preferred stores by consumers (Knox & Dension, 2000).

There are many reasons that drive consumers to shop at or to patronize one supermarket as compared to the others. For example, by price, depth of assortments, different modes of payment, and convenience location. Store attributes and after sale services offered by the retailers were found to be of lower importance (GFK, 2004). Wide assortment of products was also reported to be the most important determinant for store patronage (Ani & Vouk, 2005). On the other hand, some studies suggested that, service and shopping convenience were ranked top for store

patronage motive while price was a weak fifth (Jin & Kim, 2003).

Essentially, “the religiosity variable is also expected to significantly influence consumer evaluative criteria of various retail stores and the extent to which key retail store attributes are viewed as important to consumers” (McDaniel & Burnett, 1990). Esso and Dibb (2004) reported that casually religious people found to differ in their shopping behavior in comparison to their highly religious counterparts. They also added that casually religious persons are trendier and more innovative as compared to their counterparts, attaching more importance to brand names, availability of well-known brands in retail stores and always buying up-market brands, and trying any new product once and not favoring a particular brand. The findings of their study also suggested that casually religious individuals are more practical and demanding, attaching more importance to price deals and credit availability in comparison to their counterparts who are found to be more disciplined and behaved in a much responsible manner (Esso and Dibb 2004).

Proximity to home may be also formed as an important factor affecting the decision of which retail outlet to patronize. In a study on retail activities in Malaysia, there was a significant correlation between places of residence with the preferred shopping places (Lim, Badruzaman & Ghafar, 2003). It was reported that shoppers would place the greatest preferences to places nearest to their home, then followed by good variety of products, spacious interior shopping space, competitive prices, attractive and trendy products, the availability of public transport, not crowded, clean and comfortable interiors, ample parking facilities and satisfactory services from sales assistants (Lim, Badruzaman & Ghafar, 2003). Some studies indicated that consumers prefer to shop at the end of the week, while others prefer to shop during weekdays and this preference also influenced by consumer shopper types (Mueller & Broderick, 1995; Boedeker, 1995).

Further, past studies revealed that the availability of a good assortment of quality foreign-made products may also perhaps be a determining factor to patronize a retail outlet. For example, Behandria (1998) contended that, despite many good quality Malaysian-made products in the global market, Malaysian consumers still preferred foreign-made products. From a different perspective, consumers may also prefer music in their shopping experience (Holbrook & Anand, 1990). The use of music is also one of the features in Malaysian retailing environment to attract consumers to visit the stores / retail outlets. To what extent do the consumers favor music while doing their shopping needs to be taken into consideration by the retailers. Though the usage of music in the stores’ background may not be popular neither common in the Malaysian scenario, but in other places, background music was thought to improve store image, made the employees happier, reduced the employee turnover and stimulated customer purchasing (Milliman, 1982).

In contrast to other studies, Oates, Shufeldt and Vaught (2005), found out that price and price-related aspects, were of lesser importance, which could explain the preference for retail outlet; and only “a small set of consistently significant food store parameters, indicated price and location as being the most important attributes of store patronage across different markets and across time” (Arnold, Oum & Tigert, 1983). Similarly, contradictory to most studies, Garton (1995) discovered that the perception of quality and services provided by the stores contributed relatively little to the customer’s intention to return to the store. Likewise, although, it was also reported that the availability of a wide range of assortments in the store was critical to making the customer’s shopping experience a positive one, conversely, it may be that “a wide range of products assortments to choose from, sometimes, made shoppers’ purchase decision-making difficult” (Stiglitz, 1979).

Research Design and Method

Research Design, Sampling and Data Collection Procedure

This study was exploratory in nature and a non-probability sampling technique was applied to collect the data. The data was collected via mall intercept interviews. Six supermarkets were selected within the jurisdiction of Kuching North City Council, Sarawak, Malaysia. All these supermarkets were chosen based on their size and the fact that they operated with less than ten branches and were considered as small chain business operations (Berman, 1996). At an

individual level, respondents were selected and interviewed when they left the supermarkets using a structured questionnaire. They were picked randomly after they had paid and passed the cashier counter. They were asked whether they would like to participate in the survey, that is, for every five of the customers who left the supermarkets, one of them was picked and the process went on for the day until the desired number of sample was reached. The interview was conducted from 10.00 a.m to 9.00 p.m daily. A total of 292 interviews were conducted and only 281 questionnaires were fully completed and useable for the analysis of findings and interpretation. The interview was carried out over a period of two weeks, which started from mid-August to mid-September 2007. To motivate the customers to participate in the survey, a small gift was given as a token of appreciation.

Scales and Measurements

The measurement used in the study to examine the determinants and store attributes that influence consumers to patronize a retail outlet or supermarket was adapted from Sproles and Kendall, (1986) decision-making styles constructs. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each of the determinants that influence them most and the store attributes that they preferred the most and considered as important with "5" anchored as very important and "1" as very unimportant. To examine the shopping behavior of the respondents, they were required to rate their agreement and disagreement with the decision-styles statements and was measured using a five-point Likert scale with "5" as strongly agree and "1" as strongly disagree. The respondents' religious orientation was measured by adapting Allport and Ross (1967), 20-items religious-orientation scale (I-E Scale). Respondents were asked to state their opinion on their religious-orientation. The religious-orientation scale (ROS) are scored on a scale of 1 to 5, with 4 and 5 indicating an extrinsic orientation, 1 and 2 an intrinsic orientation, and 3 expressing no opinion. The total score of the 20-items represented the degree of religiosity. Respondents were also asked to state their demographic profiles, such as gender, age, marital status, number of children in the household, children age range, household size, occupation, organizational sectors, income, education level, ethnicity, and religion. Respondents future intention to revisit the supermarkets of their choices in future were measured by using five items with a scale of "1" as definitely will not patronize and "5" will definitely patronize, which was adapted from Shiffmann and Kanuk (2004). The statistical tools such as frequency and cross-tabulation distribution, a mean test, correlation analysis, principal component factor analysis (PCA), and ANOVA were applied to analyze the data. Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was used to establish the constructs reliability.

Results and Discussion

Most Preferred Supermarkets

Among all the supermarkets chosen, Choice Super Mall (67 respondents / 23.40%) was ranked as the most popular supermarket to be patronized by the respondents, followed by Choice Ria (48 respondents / 17.10%), and Choice Food Centre (47 respondents / 16.70%), while Everrise Supermarket, Giant Supermarket, and Super Mart were among the last three. The popularity of the first three supermarkets was not surprising since the majority of the respondents were Malay and Muslims. Further more, based on researchers' observation, these three supermarkets also strictly observed Islamic requirements and sold "halal food." On top of that, they segmented the location of the "halal food" and the "non-halal food."

Respondents' Profile

The majority of the respondents were female (184 respondents / 65.50 %). Most of the respondents were within the age range of less than 30 years old (107 respondents / 38.10 %) and 30 to 40 years old (117 respondents / 41.60 %). The majority of the respondents were married (204 respondents / 72.60 %) and most of them reported that they had at least three children (102

respondents / 36.30 %) at home and more than three persons (196 respondents / 69.80 %) in the family / household. In terms of occupation, the majority of them were working people and most were employed by the public sectors / government (164 respondents / 58.4 %) and held a position of at least an assistant executive. The results also implied that the traditional role of female / women's obligation to do the shopping chores for basic essentials was still very strong among the traditional Malay community (most of the respondents are female Malay Muslims). Most of the respondents were in the productive age and many of them had small child at home as well as a number of school-going children. The results indicated that the respondents were mostly from the lower-upper to middle-upper class social / community group. They were all educated people with at least "O" level education (secondary education) and a large number of the respondents held college diploma and university degree education level. The results of the study seemed to indicate that the majority of the respondents (most of them were Muslims) had a strong belief in marriage institutions with very low percentage of single-parents existed within the community. However, it can also be noted that the trend of single people was also prevalent (75 respondents / 26.70 %) and this was a common scenario in the modern society with a new generation of individuals who tend to delay their marriage to a later age and preferred to pursue their career first over marriage life, especially among female and career women. An alarming proportion of the respondents also did not have any children (91 respondents / 32.40 %) and this was to be expected since some were still single.

Determinants that Influence Respondents' Decision to Patronize a Supermarket

The results of the study revealed that the first three determinants that were considered as very important in influencing the respondents decision to patronize or not to patronize a supermarket were: the quality of the products (176 respondents / 62.6 %), price of the products (174 respondents / 61.9 %), and the assurance (guarantee) or cooling-off time (141 respondents / 50.2 %) promised by the supermarkets to return products if they were not satisfied with the products that they had purchased, for example, in case of spoilt or contaminated products. While the other seven determinants such as experience, COO, reputation, packaging, brands, advertising and others' opinion were found to be less important in influencing the consumers' decisions to patronize or not to patronize a supermarket. The results seemed to imply that consumers were quality and price-conscious people and they were very concerned for the safety of the products that they purchased and consumed. This was particularly true for the basic items and food products, which can be inferred by a high proportion of the respondents that had stated quality, price and guarantee as very important determinants. A high proportion of the respondents also did not seem to be too concerned or indifferent on what determinants do they preferred as the most important factor upon deciding which supermarket to patronize.

Store Physical Attributes Preferred and Attracted Respondents to Patronize a Supermarket

The findings of the study indicated that, the first three store attributes most preferred by the respondents and attracted them to patronize a supermarket were: the availability of ample parking facilities (159 respondents / 56.6 %), efficient shelving and easy to locate merchandise (146 respondents / 52.0 %), and a wide variety of merchandise selection (139 respondents / 49.5 %). Whereas, the other ten stores attributes namely: stocks availability, price range, quality of service, convenience location, operating hours, spacious, shopping experience, credit card acceptance, service after sale and advertising tend to be considered as less important in affecting and attracting the consumers' preference to patronize a supermarket. The implication that can be drawn from the findings of this study revealed that the tangible aspects of the supermarkets were perceived as the most important / very important attributes that attract consumers to patronize a supermarket. These attributes included parking facilities and efficient shelving and easy to locate merchandise.

The other very important attributes were the reliability factor as inferred by the high proportion of the consumers who reported that a wide variety of merchandise selection, the availability of stocks on request and the quality of service by staff, motivate them to patronize a supermarket. Consumers also seemed to be price-sensitive and preferred a fair price range to

choose from. Apart from that, consumers also preferred a convenient location and convenient operating hours since most of them (260 respondents out of 281 / 92.6 %) were working people and naturally would prefer to shop at supermarket nearest to their home and carry out their shopping chores after office hours and during weekends. Advertising was not considered as very important since quite a high proportion of the consumers (134 out of 281 respondents / 47.6 %) were very skeptical, undivided by advertisement and did not believe the advertising to be truthful.

Respondents' Shopping Behavior Types

The study revealed that, the majority of the respondents tend to believe that quality denoted high price and vice-versa, which can be inferred by a high proportion of respondents who strongly agreed that quality and high price were related (102 respondents / 36.3 %). Those who enjoyed shopping (87 respondents / 31.0 %) was consistent with previous studies conducted which reported that Asian consumers considered shopping as one way of socializing (Schutte & Ciarlante, 1998), and Malaysian consumers, in particular, "consider shopping trips as an outing with family or friends and for entertainment" (Lim, Badruzaman & Ghafar, 2003). The next pattern of shopping behavior indicated in the study was that the respondents' main aim to shop was to buy items that they considered necessary and loyalty to a brand that they were happy with (69 respondents / 24.6 % respectively). While others were indifferent, the results showed a mix shopping behavioral reactions. This can be inferred by quite a high proportion of the respondents who reported that they disagreed and were undecided with a number of statements such as waiting for sales bargain, waiting for others before trying new products, seeking for friends' opinions, preference for music in the background, preference for up-market brands and foreign products, and believed advertising was truthful. The findings also seemed to suggest that consumers were of ethnocentric and not brand conscious. They did not favor foreign-made products as inferred by quite a high proportion of the respondents, approximately more than half out of 281 respondents, who reported that they strongly disagree (16 respondents), disagree (95 respondents) and neutral (75 respondents) with the statement of preference for foreign and up-market brands.

The results indicated that the shopper types of the current study did not seem to be consistent with shopper types as categorized by Stone (1954) and Sood and Nasu (1995). They had characterized shoppers' behavior / types as demanding, practical, trendy, traditional, economic, thoughtful and innovative. This inconsistency could be explained by the number of variables used to measure shopping behavior, that was 20-items for the former studies, while the current study used 12-items only and many other variables were not included and explained in the current study. Another possible explanation could be due to the fact that, the current study was conducted in a different cultural setting and locality and the majority of the respondents were female from a Muslim community.

In order to confirm the result of the current study pertaining to shopper types, a factor analysis was conducted. It was found that, demanding and practical shoppers were loaded into one factor, thoughtful and innovative shoppers were loaded in one cluster, and while others were a mixture of few characteristics and were named as indifferent and confused shoppers by the researchers, which was a new shopper type and was not mentioned in the previous studies. A principal component factor analysis was performed to reduce the dimensionality of the twelve shopping behavior statements and summarized the information into a smaller set of variables. The correlation matrix was checked to determine the presence of multi-co linearity between the variables and a mean test was also used to establish a check on the existence of outliers. All the twelve variables correlated well and were significant at level $p < 0.01$ and $p < 0.05$ and the mean test indicated there was no prevalent presence of outliers. The other purpose to perform principal component factor analysis (PCA) was to establish the psychometric property of the measurements / scales used (Nunnally, 1978, p.113). A reliability test was performed to test the internal consistency of the measurements with a satisfactory Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 0.65 (Malhotra, 2004, p. 268) for the 12 items. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test of sample adequacy was 0.70 and the Barlett test of sphericity was significant at $p < 0.05$, which denotes that the data were deemed fit for factor analysis and indicated that the items measured what it intended to measure with factor loading for each factor to satisfy the Kaiser criterion of above 0.50 as a

benchmark. Three factors with eigen values greater than one emerged from the analysis and the factors were subjected to varimax rotation. Factor loadings greater or equal to 0.50, accounting for at least 21.449 percent of variance were chosen and the three factor loadings were categorized as indifferent and confused shoppers ($F1, Eigenvalue-2.574$), demanding and practical shoppers ($F2, Eigenvalue-1.942$), and thoughtful and innovative shoppers ($F3, Eigenvalue-1.239$).

Religious Orientation, Shopper Types and Post-Purchase Behavior

In addition, the relationship between religious orientation and shopper types was also determined by applying the correlation analysis test. The result revealed that there was a positive relationship between consumer religious orientation and shopper types with correlation statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). One way ANOVAs and Tukey's Post Hoc test was applied to establish the strength of association between variables with shopper types were treated as dependent variables and religious orientation as the independent variable. The relationship between variables, were significant statistically, but thoughtful-innovative ($F-3.331, sig.value-0.000$) and indifferent-confused shoppers ($F-3.023, sig.value-0.000$) were found to be more religious as compared to demanding- practical shoppers ($F-2.376, sig.value-0.001$). Additionally, a cross-tabulation was conducted to examine the consumer post-purchased behavior / intention to revisit the supermarket chosen in future and the finding indicated the direction that about half of the consumers would like to revisit (138 respondents / 49.10 %) the supermarket again and would like to recommend (134 respondents / 47.7 %) the supermarkets chosen to others (friends and family members) in future.

Conclusion and Implications

In essence, it can be concluded that there were similarities and differences pertaining to the determinants and store physical attributes that influenced and attracted consumers to patronize one supermarket over the other. However, price and quality of the products offered by any supermarket were found to be consistent and remained the pivotal determinants and attributes that drove consumers to patronize or not to patronize a supermarket / retail outlet across nationality, regions, cultural background, religious orientation and across time (for example, GFK, 2004; Sung and Young, 2005; Esso and Dibb, 2004). While other determinants and store attributes that affect consumers to patronize or not to patronize a supermarket / retail outlet suggested regional and locally oriented phenomenon. The current study also indicated that consumers were price and quality conscious and their shopping behavior tend to be shaped by their religious orientation. Hence, a new cluster of shopper types emerged from the study, namely: demanding-practical shoppers, thoughtful-innovative shoppers and indifferent-confused shoppers which were partly consistent and different from previous studies elsewhere across the globe. The implications that can be drawn from the current study were threefold:

- i. Retail managers and marketers should not underestimate the importance of price and that the value of price charged was worth the quality of the products that the consumers purchased. Retailers and marketers should be fully aware that consumers had to balance their income among the various alternatives available and offered in the market place. When consumers were faced with budget constraints, they were willing to trade off price with other attributes, such as quality, proximity to homes, service and convenience, previous experience; store brands / image, music, friends influence, advertising, a wide variety of merchandise selection and many others (for example, Milliman, 1982; Garton, 1995; Oates, Shufeldt, and Vaught, 2005; Mueller and Broderick, 1995; Sproles and Kendall, 1986; Lim, Badruzaman and Ghafar, 2003; Jin and Kim, 2003; Ani and Vouk, 2005; Behandria, 1998).
- ii. In certain cultural background and religious beliefs as well as locality where the consumers domicile; marketers and retailers should not make an assumption that they

were similar in their shopping behavior. There were differences between consumers who were strongly religious and those who were not strongly committed to their religion taboos and rituals. Based on researchers' observation and the finding of the current study, the result suggested, supermarkets that were sensitive to the requirements of the specific community's belief, were among the most popular three supermarkets (Choice Super Mall, Choice Ria, and Choice Food Centre) being patronized by the majority of the Muslim community with a simple initiative of locating the "halal food" items and "non-halal food" items separately. Though simple, it had been proven to be a successful strategy. However, due to its sensitivity, very few studies were done on this specific consumers' religious orientation by researchers and practitioners alike. Nevertheless, understanding specific consumers' religious beliefs was becoming more important because consumers' religious orientation may directly or indirectly influence their purchase behavior and what types of products and services to offer (for example, in Hirschmann, 1981; Delener, 1990; Delener, 1994; McDaniel and Burnett, 1990; Sood and Nasu, 1995; Bailey and Sood, 1993; Esso and Dibb, 2004).

- iii. Empirically, the current study contributed to the body of knowledge by the finding of new clusters of shopper characteristics that had emerged from the study: demanding-practical, thoughtful-innovative, and indifferent-confused shoppers.

As a conclusion, a word of caution in generalizing the results of the current study because the focus was limited to consumers residing at Dewan Bandaraya Kuching City North Council locality area. Hence, further study is recommended to investigate the related areas in a wider perspective. Nonetheless, the current study had provided critical information and supported the notion of previous studies that suggested consumers' motive to patronize a supermarket was driven by several different determinants and attributes; and that consumers' religious orientation correlated with their shopping behavior types.

References

- Allport, G.W., & Ross, M. (1967). Personal religious orientation prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 5, 432-443.
- Ani, I.D., & Vouk, R. (2005). *Exploring the relationship between store patronage motives and purchasing outcomes for major shopping trips in the Croatian Grocery Retailing*. Retrieved August 8, 2007, from <http://www.hrack.scree.hr/index.php>.
- Arnold, S.J., Oum, T.H., & Tigert, D.J. (1983). Determinants attributes in retail patronage: Seasonal, temporal, regional and international comparisons. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 20 (2), 149-157.
- Bailey, J.M., & Sood, J. (1993). The effects of religious affiliation on consumer behavior: A preliminary investigation. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 5 (3), 328-352.
- Behandria, M. (1998). *Positioning the local manufacturing industry*. Retrieved February 4, 2005, from <http://www.highbeamresearch.com>
- Berman, B. (1996). *Marketing Channels*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Boedeker, M. (1995). New-type and traditional shoppers: a comparison of two major consumer groups. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 23 (3), 17-26.
- Borneo Post (2007, August 12). Retail industry expected to see eight percent increase this year. *Business Column*.

- Delener, N. (1990). The effects of religious factors on perceived risk in durable goods purchase decisions. *The Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 7 (3), 27-38.
- Delener, N. (1994). Religious contrasts in consumer decision behavior patterns: Their dimensions and marketing implications. *European Journal of Marketing*, 28 (5), 36-53.
- Esso, N., & Dibb, S. (2004). Religious influences on shopping behavior: An exploratory study. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 20, 263-712.
- Garton, P.A. (1995). Store loyalty? A view of differential congruence. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 23 (12), 29-35.
- GFK (Croatia). (2004). *Shopping habits of Croatian consumer, comparison 2001 vs. 2002 vs. 2003*. Retrieved July 31, 2007, from http://gffk.hr/archive/shopping_habits_crotian_consumer
- Hirschman, E.C. (1981). American Jewish ethnicity: Its relationship to some selected aspects of consumer behavior. *Journal of Marketing*, 43, 102-110.
- Holbrook, M.B., & Anand, P. (1990). Effect of tempo and situational arousal on the listener's perceptual and effective responses to music. *Psychology of Music*, 18, 150-162.
- Jin, B., & Kim, J. (2003). A typology of Korean discount shoppers: Shopping motives, store attributes and outcomes. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 14, 396-418.
- Knox, S.D., & Dension, T.J. (2000). Store loyalty: its impact on retail revenue – an empirical study of purchasing behavior in the UK. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 7, 35-45.
- Kumar, V., & Leone, R.P. (1988). Measuring the effect of retail promotion on brand and store substitutions. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 25, 178-185.
- Lee, N. (2007). *Data analysis training program: Factor analysis using SPSS*. [Training Manual], International Medical University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- Lim, L.M, Badruzaman, N., & Ghafar, A. (2003). *Retail activity in Malaysia: From shop house to hypermarket*. Retrieved August 06, 2003, from http://www.press.net/papers/lim_et_al_retail_activity_in_Malaysia_from_shop_house_to_hyper_market.
- Malhotra, K.N. (2004). *Marketing research: An applied orientation*. USA: Prentice Hall International.
- McDaniel, S.W., & Burnett, J.J. (1990). Consumer religiosity and retail store evaluative criteria. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 18 (2), 101-112.
- Milliman, E. R. (1982). Using background music to affect the behavior of supermarket shoppers. *Journal of Marketing*, 46 (3), 86-91.
- Mueller, R.D., & Broderick, A.J. (1995). East European retailing: A consumer perspective. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 23 (1), 32-40.
- Nunnally, J.C. (1978). *Psychometric theory (2nd edition)*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.
- Oates, B., Shufeldt, L., & Vaught, B. (2005). *What retail store attributes are important to the elderly*. Retrieved July 31, 2005, from <http://www.sbaer.edu/research/sma/1996/pdf/05>.

- Rhnee, H., & Bell, D.R. (2002). The inner-store mobility of supermarket shoppers. *Journal of Retailing*, 78 (4), 225-237.
- RNCOS (Retail Sector Research). (2006). *Malaysia confident of 8 % retail growth in 2007*. Retrieved August 9, 2007, from [http://www.rncos.com/bolg/2006/11/Malaysia Confident-of-8-retail-growth.html](http://www.rncos.com/bolg/2006/11/Malaysia%20Confident-of-8-retail-growth.html).
- Schutte, H., & Ciarlante, D. (1998). *Consumer behavior in Asia*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Shamsuddin, M.N., & Selamat, J. (2005). *Changing retail food sector in Malaysia*. Retrieved July 31, 2007, from http://www.pecc.org/food/papers/2005-2006/Malaysia_presentation.
- Shiffmann, L.G., & Kanuk, L.L. (2004). *Consumer behavior*. USA: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Sood, J., & Nasu, Y. (1995). Religiosity and nationality: An exploratory study of their effect on consumer behavior in Japan and the United States. *Journal of Business Research*, 34, 1-9.
- Sproles, G.B., & Kendall, E.L. (1986). A Methodology for Profiling Consumers' Decision-Making Styles. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 20, 267-279.
- Stiglitz, J.E. (1979). Equilibrium in product markets and imperfect information. *American Economic Review*, 69, 339-345.
- Stone, G. (1954). City Shoppers and Urban Identification: Observations on the Social Psychology of City Life. *American Journal of Sociology*.
- Sung, J.Y., & Young, J.C. (2005). An exploratory research on the store image attributes affecting its store loyalty. *Seoul Journal of Business*, 11 (1), 19-41.

ORIAH AKIR & SENIAN MALIE, Universiti Teknologi MARA Sarawak.
oriah_akir@yahoo.com

NORMAH SIDI, Zona Enterprise, Sarawak, Malaysia