

THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONAL VALUES ON SALES PROMOTION TECHNIQUES FOR CONVENIENCE PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify the impact of personal value and preferences of sales promotion tools by Malaysia consumers towards consumers purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention. It was done through the evaluation of purchasing convenience product (e.g. soap). The sample of study consists of randomly selected respondents from Malaysia. The results of the research show that sales promotion techniques preferences do have an impact towards consumers purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention. However, consumer personal value evaluation does not literally influence their preferences when purchasing convenience product. Hence, the study itself provides a prior understanding of the personal value and preferences of sales promotion techniques among Malaysia consumers hence will be forwarded to a more detail study in this nature. The discussion, implication and limitation are discussed in the following paper.

1.0 Introduction

Marketers and practitioners have long assumed that using certain sales promotion techniques that are based on their target market requirements can boost sales and eventually encourage repeat patronage (O'Malley, 1998). The ability to identify which sales promotion techniques are preferred by consumers would seem to be extremely attractive and profitable. Preferences allows for better targeting thus allowing a business's activities, services, products and promotions, to be directed to a specific group for the best possible outcome (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004; Williams, 1968).

Preferences on the other hand are affected by personal values. Personal values serve as the criteria of preferences where it practically will lead to a specific decision-making attitude, behavior and satisfaction (Homer & Kahle, 1988; Jayawardhena, 2004; Kahle, 1980; Williams, 1968). Personal values are an important determinant of attitude and behavior (Jayawardhena, 2004; Shim & Eastlick, 1998). Hence, the point of this study is to determine personal values effect on behavior and satisfaction of Malaysian consumers moderated by particular sales promotion techniques by product type. The rest of the paper is organized as follows: first a discussion of the relevant literature is presented; then the methodology and findings; followed by a discussion of the findings and conclusions of the research.

2.0 Literature Review

Studies on relevant literature have shown that sales promotion has grown in importance for both manufacturers and retailers worldwide. The use of sales promotions is driven by few factors which include a rise in advertising clutter and pricing, sales promotion has become more respectable, increasing influence of retailers, positive approaches towards micro-marketing, decreases on planning time horizons, and the various positive snowball effect of

sales promotion activities (Dickson & Sawyer, 1990; Kashani & Quelch, 1990; K. Peattie & Peattie, 1995). Yet, the success of sales promotion techniques have receive little academic studies despite the evidence on the growth and importance of sales promotion as compared to other forms of marketing techniques such as advertising (Peattie, S., 1998; Williams, 1979).

Values have been used to predict and explain behaviors and attitudes (Kropp, Lavack, & Silvera, 2005) and particularly in sales promotion techniques preferences (Williams, 1979). It was mainly used in more diverse contexts and situations where it provides a theoretical set of behavioral guiding codes (Williams, 1979). It also reflects the basic adaptation characteristics of individuals as well as a guideline to shape and guide behaviors, attitudes, and preferences (Kropp, Lavack, & Silvera, 2005; Williams, 1979).

Many studies in marketing research have used List of Value (LOV) scales introduced by Kahle (1980) to measure personal values (Kropp, Lavack, & Silvera, 2005). This is because LOV has been identified as an economical measure as compared to other approaches (Kale & McIntyre, 1991; Kropp, Lavack, & Silvera, 2005).

Studies on values were mainly related to social marketing (Kropp, Lavack, & Silvera, 2005) as well as cause related marketing (Kropp, Holden, & Lavack, 1999; Lavack & Kropp, 2003), ethics (Nonis & Swift, 2001; Rallapalli, Vitell, & Szeinbach, 2000), smoking and drinking behavior (Kropp, Lavack, & Holden, 1999; Lavack & Kropp, 2003), and in the area of other aspect of marketing such as, typecasting of international business (Soutar, Grainger, & Hedges, 1999) and salesperson recitals (Weeks & Kahle, 1990). Most of the values used were documented in cross-cultural (Beatty, Kahle, Utsey, & Keown, 1993; Kahle, Rose, & Shoham, 1999) and domestic locale (Beatty, Kahle, Homer, & Misra, 1985; Fisher & Katz, 2000). These studies were mainly concentrated in North America.

The focus of this study will be on the construct of Kahle's LOVs in personal value or individual value construct. Personal value that were used in this study contains of nine items that are categorized into internal values, external values and interpersonal values categories (Kropp, Lavack, & Silvera, 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 (Madriral & Kahle, 1994). External values at 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). When combining some aspects of internal and external values together will derived interpersonal values where these values are predominant to those that place higher score of value on dyadic relationships or those who cares more on others opinions (Netemeyer, Bearden, & Teel, 1992).

Sales promotion can be also be examined by product type (Norzaishah, 2007). It shows to be significantly related to the studies and identification of sales promotion techniques preferences (Jee & De Run, 2008). Product type consist of convenience product, shopping product, specialty product and unsought product (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). Hence, the focus of this study will be on convenience product. Convenience product is the type of

product that consumers normally buy with a minimum buying effort and comparison done with similar product (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). It is normally bought on impulse and usually is widely available and of low-priced (Bennett, 1995).

3.0 Methodology

This study is a part of a larger on-going study. A two-stage method was employed in this study. Initially pre-test were carried out to determine preferences of sales promotion techniques for convenience product. The most and least liked method was then used in the second stage. A factorial design was created and a questionnaire survey employed to obtain responses from purchasing enabled consumers (age group of 21 to 55, employed, have purchasing power) in Malaysia (Lucas, 2007).

A minimum sample size of 280 respondents was obtained (Churchill Jr., 1979). The questionnaire is divided into three sections: Section one comprises items relating to demographic information (e.g. age, gender, occupation, family size etc) to allow for the representative nature of the samples to be reviewed and sampling frames adjusted if necessary. Section two consists of items related to personal values, with scales sourced from established studies relating to LOVs (Kahle, 1983; Kropp, Lavack, & Silvera, 2005), sales promotion techniques preferences prior to pre-tests done earlier. The purchase satisfaction study was sourced from Sanzo, del Rio, Iglesias and Vazquez (2003) while consumer's behavioral measurements (Purchase intention and Word of Mouth) were sourced from Soderlund (2006) and from Maheswaran and Sternthal (1990). A 6-point scale indicating strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6) was used in the questionnaires in order to force an answer that is not median based (Chang, 1994). The data was then analyzed using the Means and General Linear Model (GLM) Univariate to determine the significance of the reactions.

4.0 Findings

From the pre-test stage, the most preferred technique was Sample (Mean = 4.63, S.D. = 1.22) and the least preferred was Game (Mean = 3.49, S.D. = 1.51). T-Test analysis shows that both sample and game sales promotion techniques were significantly different from each another ($t = -7.359, p < 0.000$). 281 respondents from various states in Malaysia were obtained for the final study. The respondents profile is summarized in Table 1 and the mean score for personal value variables is depicted in Table 2. Meanwhile, Table 3 depicts personal value (internal, external and intrapersonal) by sales promotion technique variables mean score.

Table 1: Respondent's Demographic Factors

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	156	56
	Male	125	45
Age Scale	21 to 25	171	61
	26 to 30	31	11
	31 to 35	33	12
	36 to 40	22	8
	41 to 45	13	5
	46 to 50	8	3
	51 to 55	1	0
Marital Status	Single	189	67

	Married	90	32
	Divorced	2	1
Highest Education Level	None	3	1
	Primary School	5	2
	Secondary School	153	54
	Diploma	27	10
	Degree	88	31
	Master	5	2
Monthly Gross Income	RM1,000 and below	91	32
	RM1,001 to RM2,000	89	32
	RM2,001 to RM3,000	44	16
	RM3,001 and above	22	8
Ethnicity	Malay	161	57
	Chinese	66	24
	Indian	14	5
	Others	40	14
Religion	Muslim	165	59
	Buddhist	33	12
	Christian	62	22
	Hindu	13	5
	Others	8	3
Sales Promotion Technique	Sample	123	44
	Game	158	56

Table 2: Personal Value Mean Score

Variables	Convenience Product	
	Mean	SD
Self-fulfillment	4.42	0.91
Self-respect	4.59	0.99
Accomplishment	4.34	0.91
Internal	4.46	0.88
Security	4.33	0.92
Belonging	4.38	0.91
Warm relationship	4.62	0.95
Being well-respected	4.48	1.04
External	4.57	0.81
Fun and enjoyment in life	4.76	0.99
Excitement	4.84	0.96
Intrapersonal	4.91	0.95

Table 3: Personal Value (Internal, External and Interpersonal) Mean Score by Technique

Variables		Mean	SD
Most Preferred Sales Promotion Technique	Internal	4.52	0.90
	External	4.56	0.84
	Interpersonal	4.87	1.06
	Purchase Satisfaction	4.20	0.91
	Behavioral Intention	4.23	0.98
Least Preferred Sales Promotion Technique	Internal	4.42	0.87
	External	4.58	0.79
	Interpersonal	4.94	0.85
	Purchase Satisfaction	3.68	0.97
	Behavioral Intention	3.57	0.97

This study then employed a GLM-Univariate test 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).

Table 4: Findings for GLM-Univariate

Variables	Internal Value		External Value		Interpersonal Value		Sales Promotion Techniques Preferences		Purchase Satisfaction	
	F-Value	Sig.	F-Value	Sig.	F-Value	Sig.	F-Value	Sig.	F-Value	Sig.
Sales Promotion Techniques Preferences	0.171	0.679	0.073	0.788	0.590	0.443	-	-	-	-
Purchase Satisfaction	3.141	0.078	0.422	0.517	0.494	0.483	17.941	0.000*	-	-
Behavioral Intention	8.347	0.004*	0.332	0.565	2.454	0.119	24.437	0.000*	180.769	0.000*

*p<.05

5.0 Discussion

The issues of determining which sales promotion techniques is significantly acceptable by consumers is of great importance in Malaysia context (Ndubisi & Chiew, 2005). A variety of sales promotion techniques are known and used, without any clear indication as to which technique is preferred by consumers for specific product or service. From the findings, the most preferred technique for convenience product is by sample. A sample provides utilitarian based benefits as consumers can use or try the product before purchasing (Chandon, Laurent, & Wansink, 1997). This reduces risk and uncertainty for future buying behavior (Chow & Baack, 2004). The least liked technique is Games. Games mainly give consumers the chance to win something, such as cash, trips, or goods, by luck or through extra effort (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). Such techniques imply much effort and time hence it make games a likely preferred technique as consumers will likely require less effort on comparison to purchasing a convenience product such as soap.

The findings indicate that there is no significant difference between the different types of personal values and sales promotion techniques preferences. Personal value was the important factor in consumer purchases that mainly relate to self-image (Shim & Eastlick, 1998). Yet, convenience product, as mention earlier, is the type of product that implies less comparison and buying effort (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). Thus, this shows that personal values will only be applicable in conditions when consumers purchase decisions are motivated by and a reflection of their self-image, even though these consumers have different preferences over different sales promotion techniques.

The findings also show that there is significant difference between sales promotion techniques and purchase satisfaction, and between sales promotion techniques preferences and behavioral intention. This is in line with previous studies that indicated preferences will likely influence a consumer's attitude, in this case purchase satisfaction, and behavioral intention (Shim & Eastlick, 1998). The findings also show that there is a

significant difference between purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention. It is in line with a previous study that indicates attitude, in this case purchase satisfaction, as the predictor of behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

The finding shows that there is no significant difference between the finding of internal, external and interpersonal value and purchase satisfaction. This contradicts previous studies that indicate personal value as the predictor of attitude, in this case purchase satisfaction (Smith, Peterson, & Schwartz, 2002). This is due to the characteristics of convenience products that were normally patronized with less comparison and choosing effort (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). So such condition will not literally influence consumers purchase satisfaction as there is less effort spent on choosing and the purchase normally happens under an impulse buying condition for convenience products (Kahle, Rose, & Shoham, 1999). However, the findings show that there is a significant difference between internal value and behavioral intention. Internal value is a self-motivated type of value (Kahle, 1983), hence consumers will likely repurchase the same brand and product if they feel it suits them, with less comparison and purchasing effort.

6.0 Conclusion

This study provides an insight to the preferences of sales promotion techniques in Malaysia especially from the angle of different preferences on different sales promotion techniques. This study also shows the impact of personal value on sales promotion techniques preferences, purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention. Apart from that, this study also shows the impact of sales promotion techniques preferences on purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention. The conclusion is that in a community or society that is established on the ground of multiple personal value, sales promotion techniques preferences and different purchasing behavior, there will be differences in preferences, purchase satisfaction and behavioral intention. This was mainly due to the different preferences and perceptions of the values provided by different sales promotion techniques to the consumers, personal values and the characteristics of the product type itself.

7.0 Limitation and Future Research

The sample size in this study is relatively small. Therefore, future research may choose to increase the number of samples. Apart from that, this study is literally too broad, looking at consumers as a whole. Future research should examine different ethnic groups in Malaysia in order to gain better understanding of the consumer's response level toward sales promotions. Apart from that, with the multi-culture communities such as prevailing in Malaysia, it is of significance for future research to look into the perspective of cultural values and their impact on preferences, attitude and behavior.

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