THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIALIZATION AGENTS AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES ON BRAND CONSCIOUSNESS

A thesis submitted to the Graduate School in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Science (Management), Universiti Utara Malaysia

by

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ABSTRAK

ABSTRACT

Brand consciousness is more than simply an awareness or preferences for brand names. It is the understanding that brand names, in general, have personal relevance or value in that they serve as a signal of functional or symbolic value. In the United States, the importance of brand names is well established. However, there is little understanding of the importance brand names hold in other cultures. Therefore, the objective of this study was to investigate how socialization agents—media, parents, and peers—influence on students' brand consciousness in apparel and influences differ according to students demographic characteristics. Participants were 230 students in second semester, who undertaking Bachelor of Business Administration in Universiti Utara Malaysia. Overall, peers exert the greatest influence. The results by using Pearson correlation coefficients analyses suggested that, the students' brand consciousness is, significantly correlated to each socialization factor. However, of the media related analysis, only movie viewing shows a significant correlation. The other two have significant correlation with parental influence and peer influence. Moreover, gender and ethnicity differences were also analyzed on socialization agents and brand consciousness. As the results have indicated, media exposure analyses revealed the most significant differences: female students were more likely to watch TV, listen to music (radio, CDs), and spend time online than were males, while Malay students were more likely to listen to music and spend time online than were Chinese, Indian, and other (Siamese, Singaporean, Indonesian, Other). For influence from parents and peers, only gender played a factor: female students were more likely to be influenced by parents and peers than males. Other significant differences were found for brand consciousness across gender and ethnicity: female students were more likely to have higher brand-consciousness than males, while students of other ethnic groups were more likely to be highly brand-conscious than Malay, Chinese, and Indian. Family and consumer educators should consider findings of this study as a guide to give better education to students as consumers.
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DEDICATED

I would like to dedicate this part of my life's work to my loving parents, Hj. Rugayah and Hj. Abbas. You truly earned this degree as much as I did. Your enduring love and support is the reason for my success. When the challenges of the Master's program became overbearing, both of you were there to encourage me to persevere, to remind me of my ultimate objective, and to help me have some fun along the way. I am eternally grateful for all that you had to sacrifice, and I love you both very much.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The first chapter will discuss the background of the research which explains the general ideas on the scope of the study. The research problems are then stated, followed by the purpose and also the significance of the study for the managerial and marketing field, as well as future use.

1.2 Background of the study

As every person is a consumer, it is certainly reasonable to inquire about shopping behaviors, such as the motivations underlying where people shop and what they buy. Shopping centers and mall developments provide consumers with increased shopping alternatives within a localized central business district. Consumers are expected to derive greater utility from larger areas because of larger product classification, even though they are likely to spend more money and incur increased indisposition by traveling more distant shopping areas (Bell, 1999).

During the 1980's, three-fourths of the national consumer population, in the United States, went to shopping malls at least once a month (Stoffel, 1998). Dual incomes increased flexible spending in this population, but individuals had less time for shopping (Kotler & Amstrong, 2001). Today, consumers
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success when their advertising targets parents as well. *Marketing Weeks.* 41-45.


