

**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),  
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by

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## ABSTRAK

Kesedaran jenama boleh dianggap sebagai perhatian atau keutamaan yang lebih terhadap barangan berjenama. Ini bermakna pengaruh jenama, pada umumnya, mempunyai kepentingan dan nilai yang tersendiri iaitu ia menggambarkan suatu lambang keefisyenan atau simbolik. Di Amerika Syarikat, kepentingan terhadap jenama adalah amat kukuh. Walau bagaimanapun, terdapat sedikit jurang fahaman terhadap kepentingan ini di lain-lain negara. Justeru, tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji bagaimana agen-agen sosialisasi—media, ibubapa, dan rakan sebaya—mempengaruhi kesedaran jenama di kalangan pelajar, dan bagaimana pengaruh ini berbeza berdasarkan karektor demografik mereka. Responden seramai 230 orang merupakan pelajar semester kedua, yang mengikuti kursus Sarjana Muda Pengurusan Perniagaan di Universiti Utara Malaysia. Keseluruhannya, rakan sebaya dibuktikan sebagai pengaruh utama. Keputusan daripada analisis korelasi Pearson menunjukkan, kesedaran jenama pelajar mempunyai hubungan dengan setiap faktor sosialisasi. Walaupun demikian, bagi pengaruh media, hanya menonton wayang berhubungan dengan kesedaran jenama. Dua lagi analisis menunjukkan hubungan di antara pengaruh ibubapa dan rakan sebaya dengan kesedaran jenama. Merujuk kepada hasil kajian, analisis pendedahan terhadap media mendapati wujudnya perbezaan: pelajar perempuan lebih kerap menonton TV, mendengar lagu (radio, CDs), dan melayari internet berbanding lelaki, manakala pelajar Melayu lebih kerap mendengar radio dan melayari internet berbanding Cina, Indian, dan lain-lain (Siam, Singapura, Indonesia, Lain-lain). Bagi pengaruh ibubapa dan rakan sebaya, hanya jantina menunjukkan perbezaan: pelajar perempuan lebih dipengaruhi oleh ibubapa dan rakan sebaya berbanding lelaki. Perbezaan juga wujud pada faktor jantina dan kaum terhadap kesedaran jenama: pelajar perempuan lebih cenderung kepada barangan berjenama berbanding lelaki, manakala pelajar kaum lain-lain lebih cenderung kepada barangan berjenama berbanding Melayu, Cina, dan India. Keluarga dan pakar pengguna perlu menimbangkan keputusan kajian ini sebagai satu panduan untuk pendidikan yang lebih baik berikutan pelajar juga dianggap sebagai pengguna.

## 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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## DEDICATION

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PERMISSION TO USE.....	i
ABSTRAK.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
DEDICATION.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
<b>CHAPTER</b>	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background of the study.....	2
1.3 Problem statement.....	5
1.4 Purpose of the study.....	6
1.5 Research questions.....	7
1.6 Limitations.....	7
1.7 Definition of terms.....	8
1.8 Significance of the study.....	8
1.9 Organization of the study.....	10
2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
2.1 Introduction.....	11
2.2 Meaning of shopping style.....	12
2.3 Importance of brand consciousness.....	13
2.3.1 The reality of brands.....	14
2.3.2 Factors of consumer's brand consciousness.....	15
2.4 Conceptual framework.....	18
2.4.1 Consumer socialization model.....	19
2.4.2 Employment of Moschis' model.....	22
2.5 Review of related studies.....	24

2.5.1	Brand consciousness in apparel .....	25
2.5.2	Different shopping patterns between male and female consumers .....	22
2.5.3	Socialization agents.....	29
2.6	Targeting the student market.....	33
2.7	Consumer learning process for shopping.....	36
2.8	Hypotheses .....	37
2.8.1	Differences of demographic factors on socialization agents... ..	37
2.8.2	Differences of demographic factors on brand consciousness.. ..	38
2.8.3	Socialization influences on brand consciousness .....	39
2.9	Conclusion .....	41
3	<b>METHODOLOGY</b> .....	43
3.1	Introduction .....	43
3.2	The population.....	43
3.3	Sample selection.....	44
3.4	Description of the instruments .....	44
3.4.1	Brand consciousness .....	45
3.4.2	Socialization agents.....	46
3.5	Pilot testing .....	48
3.6	Data collection.....	48
3.7	Data analysis .....	49
3.7.1	Reliability analysis.....	49
3.7.2	Descriptive statistics .....	50
3.7.3	Hypotheses testing .....	50
3.8	Conclusion .....	51
4	<b>FINDINGS</b> .....	53
4.1	Introduction.....	53
4.2	Responses rate .....	53
4.3	Descriptive statistics of the samples .....	54
4.3.1	Demographic description .....	54
4.3.2	Central tendencies and dispersion.....	56
4.4	Reliability analyses of the measurement scales .....	57
4.5	Specific analyses related to the research questions .....	58



4.5.1	Differences of demographic factors on socialization agents...	59
4.5.2	Differences of demographic factors on brand consciousness..	64
4.5.3	Socialization influences on brand consciousness .....	66
4.6	Conclusion .....	68
4.6.1	Differences of demographic factors on socialization agents...	68
4.6.2	Differences of demographic factors on brand consciousness..	69
4.6.3	Socialization influences on brand consciousness .....	70
5	DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS .....	71
5.1	Introduction.....	71
5.2	Discussion .....	72
5.2.1	Differences of demographic factors on socialization agents...	72
5.2.2	Differences of demographic factors on brand consciousness..	74
5.2.3	Socialization influences on brand consciousness .....	75
5.3	Implications.....	77
5.3.1	Theoretical implications.....	78
5.3.2	Practical implications.....	78
5.4	Suggestion for additional research .....	80
4.5	Conclusion .....	80
	REFERENCES.....	81
	APPENDICES.....	89
	Appendix 1 .....	89
	Appendix 2 .....	92
	Appendix 3 .....	93
	Appendix 4 .....	94
	Appendix 5 .....	95
	Appendix 6 .....	96
	Appendix 7 .....	99
	Appendix 8 .....	101
	Appendix 9 .....	102
	Appendix 10 .....	103
	Appendix 11 .....	104

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
3.1 Hypotheses testing of differences on socialization agents .....	38
3.2 Hypotheses testing of differences on brand consciousness .....	39
3.3 Hypotheses testing of relationship .....	41
4.1 Responses rate .....	53
4.2 Frequency distribution and percentage of gender .....	54
4.3 Frequency distribution and percentage of ethnicity .....	55
4.4 Central tendencies and dispersion of variables .....	57
4.5 Reliability analyses of the measurement scales .....	58
4.6 Mean values of media exposure, parents, and peers variables by gender .....	60
4.7 Results of independent sample <i>t</i> -test by gender on socialization agents .....	60
4.8 Mean values of media exposure, parents, and peers variables by ethnicity .....	62
4.9 Results of one-way ANOVA by ethnicity on socialization agents .....	63
4.10 Results of independent sample <i>t</i> -test by gender on brand consciousness .....	65
4.11 Results of one-way ANOVA by ethnicity on brand consciousness .....	65
4.12 Pearson correlation coefficients matrix of seven variables .....	67
4.13 Hypotheses and results of demographic factors on socialization agents .....	69
4.14 Hypotheses and results of demographic factors on brand consciousness .....	69
4.15 Hypotheses and results of socialization agents on brand consciousness .....	70

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
2.1 Moschis' consumer socialization model .....	18
2.2 A conceptual model of consumer socialization and brand consciousness .....	23
4.1 Frequency of gender distribution .....	55
4.2 Frequency of ethnicity distribution .....	56
4.3 Frequency of media exposure distribution by gender .....	61
4.4 Frequency of media exposure distribution by ethnicity .....	63

# 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 & Armstrong, 2001). Today, consumers

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