



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***EFFECT OF ANTICIPATORY GUILT, ARGUMENT QUALITY AND  
SOURCE CREDIBILITY ON ATTITUDE TOWARDS VOLUNATARY  
SIMPLICITY VALUE DIMENISONS AMONG MALAYSIAN YOUTH***

**RAJAT SUBHRA CHATTERJEE**

**FEM 2022 24**



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By

**RAJAT SUBHRA CHATTERJEE**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**January 2022**

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of  
the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**Chairman : Associate Professor Sharifah Azizah binti Haron, PhD**  
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Engagement in Voluntary Simplicity behaviour can be strongly attributed to contributing towards environmental protection through consumption reduction. The attitudinal inclination towards adopting VS values has mostly been observed on the degree of awareness and current behaviour of individuals. In the present study, the main scope of this study is to observe the relative effect of causal intervention of anticipatory guilt, argument quality, and source credibility manipulation through message design on attitude towards voluntary simplicity value adoption. The study was designed as a quasi-experimental observation of the manipulated variables on attitude towards adoption of the VS value dimensions. The chosen target population was Malaysian youth from different ethnic background. The sample was drawn from the Malaysian youth population using the multi-stage cluster sampling method. The message design and manipulation were duly verified by a panel of experts. The result of ANCOVA analysis shows significant direct effects on each of the VS values namely material simplicity, social responsibility, self-sufficiency, and spiritual growth. Subsequently by undertaking the mean comparison of the interaction effects between the manipulated variables, the study also found strong interaction effects of anticipatory guilt and argument quality at high and low intervention levels towards youth attitude. The result clearly establishes the effect of persuasive message design towards changing attitude through both central and peripheral route and provides a new orientation towards propagating VS value dimensions and its respective adoption within the youth community. The outcome implies that attitude towards voluntary simplicity values can be manipulated through message communication. It further signifies that consumption attitude of Malaysian youth can be further improved through competent and effective message design.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KESAN RASA BERSALAH TERDUGA, KUALITI HUJAH DAN  
KREDIBILITI SUMBER SIKAP TERHADAP DIMENSI NILAI  
KESEDERHANAAN SUKARELA DALAM KALANGAN BELIA MALAYSIA**

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Penglibatan dalam tingkah laku Kesederhanaan Sukarela boleh dikaitkan dengan sumbangan terhadap perlindungan alam sekitar melalui pengurangan penggunaan. Kecenderungan sikap ke arah mengamalkan nilai VS kebanyakannya diperhatikan pada tahap kesedaran dan tingkah laku semasa individu. Dalam kajian ini, skop utama kajian ini adalah untuk memerhatikan kesan relatif campur tangan penyebab perasaan bersalah, kualiti hujah, dan manipulasi kredibiliti sumber melalui reka bentuk mesej mengenai sikap terhadap penerimaan nilai kesederhanaan sukarela. Kajian ini direka bentuk sebagai pemerhatian kuasi eksperimen terhadap pembolehubah dimanipulasi terhadap sikap terhadap penggunaan dimensi nilai VS. Sasaran populasi yang dipilih ialah belia Malaysia daripada latar belakang etnik yang berbeza. Sampel diambil daripada populasi belia Malaysia menggunakan kaedah persampelan kluster pelbagai peringkat. Reka bentuk dan manipulasi mesej telah disahkan dengan sewajarnya oleh panel pakar. Hasil analisis ANCOVA menunjukkan kesan langsung yang ketara terhadap setiap nilai VS iaitu kesederhanaan material, tanggungjawab sosial, sara diri, dan pertumbuhan rohani. Seterusnya, dengan melakukan perbandingan min kesan interaksi antara pembolehubah yang dimanipulasi, kajian juga mendapati kesan interaksi perasaan bersalah dan kualiti hujah pada tahap intervensi tinggi dan rendah terhadap sikap belia. Hasilnya jelas mewujudkan kesan reka bentuk mesej persuasif terhadap perubahan sikap melalui kedua-dua laluan pusat dan persisian serta memberikan orientasi baharu ke arah menyebarkan dimensi nilai VS dan penerimaan masing-masing dalam komuniti belia. Hasilnya membayangkan bahawa sikap terhadap nilai kesederhanaan sukarela boleh dimanipulasi melalui komunikasi mesej. Ia seterusnya menandakan bahawa sikap penggunaan belia Malaysia boleh dipertingkatkan lagi melalui reka bentuk mesej yang efektif dan berkesan.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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## Declaration by Members of Supervisory Committee

This is to confirm that:

- the research conducted and the writing of this thesis was under our supervision;
- supervision responsibilities as stated in the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Graduate Studies) Rules 2003 (Revision 2012-2013) are adhered to.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

VS	Voluntary Simplicity
MS	Material Simplicity
SR	Social Responsibility
SS	Self- Sufficiency
SG	Spiritual Growth
AG	Anticipatory Guilt
AQ	Argument Quality
SC	Source Credibility
ELM	Elaboration Likelihood Model
HG	High Anticipatory Guilt
LG	Low Anticipatory Guilt
SAQ	Strong Argument Quality
WAQ	Weak Argument Quality
HSC	High Source Credibility
LSC	Low Source Credibility
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
ANCOVA	Analysis of Co-Variance



# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of Study

The concept of Voluntary Simplicity (VS henceforth) emerged around seven decades ago in 1930-40s being enumerated by Richard Gregg as a spiritually oriented lifestyle consumption reduction (Leonard-Barton, 1981). Subsequent developments in the concept allowed it to metamorphose into social way of living and consuming with certain value patterns. Over the years, various notable researchers have contributed towards establishing and specifying the dimensions and values instilled within this concept which can be evidenced through the way it has evolved with time ( Rich et al., 2017).

It is also being observed that even though primarily being a value-oriented concept, VS has been propagated as a lifestyle which requires adoption of certain practices. The term lifestyle was primarily coined to define a set of habits and practices being adopted by individuals or societies at large (Kaynak & Kara, 2001; Painter et al., 2019). Lifestyles and values share an intricate relationship, which is evident from psychographic models such as VALS which clearly establishes how value orientations can be utilised to identify definitive lifestyle segments (Lawson & Todd, 2002; Lubowiecki-Vikuk et al., 2021). Lifestyle and also been linked with behavioural manifestation of individuals with reference to their spending and consumption patterns(Adnan et al., 2017) which was being inferred earlier as their lifestyle behaviour(Ahmad et al., 2010; Tagoe & Dake, 2011). In similar manner, VS focusses on the adoption of certain practices with reference to a given value orientation.

To dwell deeper, the adoption of VS as a lifestyle has gained momentum over the last few decades as a movement towards intentional non –consumption and well-being (Alexander & Garrett, 2017) . This value orientation has been found to be useful in resource reduction and consumption control and generating life satisfaction with limited resource use(Bekin et al., 2005). It can be clearly envisaged that any such reduction would involve attitude development and behavioural actions, with effective measurement indicators.

However, disparity in terms of the value dimensions encompassing this concept is evident and being critiqued in recent studies. This emanates confusion as to what practices in exactitude should be adopted to be considered a voluntary simplicity lifestyle orientation, except reduction of materialistic consumption (Kuanr et al., 2020; Osikomiu & Bocken, 2020). Furthermore, studies on such adoption have not critically examined whether external influences can be utilised to imbibe or facilitate such adoption.

A foray into the measurement of this construct and its relative value orientations revealed that various qualitative and quantitative methods over the years have been utilised. However, the focus of the measurements has been developing an understanding of VS and its relative practitioners, the various level of Voluntary Simplifiers and the reasons behind adopting such practices (Chang, 2021; McGouran & Prothero, 2016). Also, very few studies have concentrated their efforts on interpreting VS from an attitudinal perspective especially in context of message design and appeal as exploring motives and behavioural manifestation was considered more appropriate (Alexander & Ussher, 2011; McArthur & Stratford, 2020) .

This is being envisaged as a critical issue of consideration. It can be further substantiated from the fact that younger populations do not clearly identify this value orientation and not readily inclined to incorporate such practices either in literal or moral form (Alekam, et al., 2018) . The reason for this can be attributed to primarily being an awareness to behaviour gap, whereby in most of the cases individuals are not aware of what contains a “simplicity” oriented behaviour (Pravet & Holmlund, 2018).

This has led to a gap in addressing the real value orientations and whether it is possible to create a positive attitude towards its adoption. However, no actual development on how it can be propagated has been in evidence. Moreover, consumption reduction, though being identified as a significant achievement of this value adoption, has very limited quantitative explorations.

Consumption reduction or frugality in terms of simple living can inevitably lead to one specific outcome achievement; availability of more goods and services for consumption by the population, who are deprived of even deriving the necessities for their everyday sustenance (Celep & Diktaş, 2021; Roiland, 2016). This further helps to achieve sustainable consumption through collective understanding of consumption resources and its impact across a population (Bocken, 2017).

In Malaysian context controlling consumption across population is deemed essential. Currently it is coping with rapid consumption increase, evident from its rapidly augmenting material flow since the past three decades (Hezri, 2011). Negative effects of consumption have been evidenced across different sectors including hospitality and tourism which contributes greatly to the economy (Asadi et al., 2020). It has also been observed that overemphasizing on the policy implementation have led to an overlook on the real cause towards environmental degradation, which is an attitude among Malaysians to overconsume or practice a high consumption-oriented lifestyle(Mat Said et al., 2003; Sharifah A et al., 2005).

Furthermore, studies have reflected that being materialistic among the Malaysian youth population is more socially induced than a self-acquired norm (Kasim & Wickens, 2018). Also, improved income has created a propensity among young Malaysians to explore the brand proliferation advantages and an ability to augment their materialistic

possessions and satisfaction, especially in metropolitan cities (Ahamad & Ariffin, 2018). Therefore, the challenge lies towards developing a sense of urgency and realizations of Malaysian youth to augment the lifestyle transition.

However, from the government side, necessary steps are being undertaken to address this. The policies being implemented include both environmental and communal actions. This country is being revered for its economic progress and commitment towards protecting its richly endowed biodiversity with at least 50% of its land as forest cover (Varkkey et al., 2018; Wicke et al., 2011). It has undertaken excellent policy measures towards augmenting the sustainability orientation among its key sectors such as energy, transportation and supply chain management among others (Petinrin & Shaaban, 2015; Thong & Wong, 2018; Zailani et al., 2014). However, the degree of resource consumption as social level specially across certain strata still requires certain degree of exploration to achieve the true potential of such initiatives.

To further explain the “middle class” strata of the Malaysian society is most evident whereby sustenance and well-being is gradually being replaced by an indulgent lifestyle and an inherent attitude towards practicing conspicuous consumption (Aziz, 2012; Heng, 2017). Therefore, it can be inferred that an exploration on attitudinal influence towards curbing such excessive consumption especially within the youth population would be beneficial towards the entire society at large.

In summary it can be envisaged that the augmented levels of consumption among the Malaysian youth population is on the rise. This fact has not been addressed from the viewpoint of value orientations that does influence the attitude of individuals towards curbing such conspicuous consumption. In fact, in a recent study this gap was being highlighted which addressed conspicuous consumption attitude among the Malaysian youth (Zakaria et al., 2020). The study further inferred that from value orientation viewpoint, materialism, and lack of religiosity among the Malaysian youth are dominant factors, among others which instigates a higher luxurious consumption propensity.

Moving forward, certain models and theories have been found to be appropriate for inducing attitude change through messages. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) (Cacioppo & Petty, 1981; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) is a well-researched and widely used model in the field of psychology and social psychology towards measuring attitude change (Cook et al., 2004; SanJosé-Cabezudo et al., 2009). It is one of the most popular models utilised in context of persuasive messages (Li, 2013), in measuring attitude change in context of the persuasive communication effects and the resultant attitude strength (Cook et al., 2004; Manca et al., 2020).

Argument Quality and Source Credibility have been observed to be the main constructs of this theory along with degree of involvement towards the issue being observed (Petty, Kasmer, et al., 1987). The relative strength of the argument (strong/weak) is directly associated with the level of issue involvement being felt by the reader, which dictates

his route to persuasion and behavioural manifestation in both verbal and nonverbal context (Guyer et al., 2019; Kao, 2012). Also, the source credibility of the message has been found to be instrumental towards influencing attitude under both high and low elaboration condition (Baker & Petty, 1994; Cacioppo et al., 1994) . The level of trustworthiness being attributed to a message source can be associated with the degree of message scrutiny, which in turn influences the degree of felt persuasion (Hussein et al., 2014).

It is generally accepted fact in social and consumer psychology studies that high involvement messages lead to higher personal relevance and consequences or show improved self-connectivity than the low involvement messages (Petty et al., 1983). This involvement is crucial towards creating a message impact leading to attitude change. Guilt appeal has gained substantial academic interest as a potent message appeal type, directed towards generating emotional and affective response Drawing parallel with sustainability research and green marketing, emotional appeals such as fear and guilt has been utilised in message communication (Pelletier & Sharp, 2008) , mass media campaigns addressing public health (Gomes & Casais, 2018; Guignard et al., 2018) . The role of guilt as an appeal has been instrumental in context of environmental advertising (Baek & Yoon, 2017; Lee et al., 2020). Specifically, in context of attitude towards pro-environmental and sustainable advertising guilt has been observed to be a significant influencer (Muralidharan & Sheehan, 2018) . Therefore, in summary it can be safely ascertained that guilt is a potential inducement in any message design context towards emotional arousal leading to attitude effect.

Also, it can also be inferred that consumption reduction through VS value adoption would require an effective exploration of attitude towards VS. To further substantiate in a recent study, messages with strong arguments and highly credible sources were found to generate strong acceptance and attitudinal intent towards health-related information (Fang et al., 2017). Another study involving specifically meat consumption has revealed that feelings of anticipatory guilt through induced anthropomorphism about animal friendliness negates such consumption among individuals (Wang & Basso, 2019). Therefore, it can be assumed that similar outcome might be evident through guilt inducement for avoidance towards simplistic living.

Therefore, it can be inferred that moderating the argument and the source would show differential effect of guilt manipulation on attitude towards VS.

Furthermore, the current focus of consumption related studies on Malaysian context have been more towards industry and energy consumption due to rising industrial development (Islam et al., 2013; Shapi et al., 2021). A comprehensive investigation reveals greater emphasis on food and dietary behaviour (Al Mamun et al., 2020; Daud et al., 2018) and technology consumption (Ojo et al., 2019) and tourism (Harun et al., 2018; Kasim & Wickens, 2018) among others. Though such foray is important from economic sustainability point of view, it does not comprehensively address the attitude and value orientation of the individuals and societies at large.

Therefore, to summarize in entirety this study primarily focusses on exploring the effect of guilt, argument quality and source credibility as potential inducement towards influencing attitude on VS value orientations. The objective of such exploration is to identify the degree of VS Value adoption attitude change that can be achieved through this experimental approach. This pioneer observation aims to target the consumption reduction aspect of the Malaysian youth population as it is evident from the above discussion that the elevated consumption or materialistic aspiration among youth population may requires an exploration to allow the governmental efforts towards a sustainable economy and society to be more effective in its implementation.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

In global parlance, Voluntary Simplicity (VS henceforth) addresses consumption reduction in an effective manner (Kuanr et al., 2020; Rebouças & Soares, 2021). VS encompasses certain specific value adoption that leads to behavioural manifestation reflecting a simple life, devoid of unnecessary materialistic attachments and consumption. Recently, it is also considered a subset of sustainable consumption behaviour whereby certain behaviours such as reducing wastage and encouraging recycling of products are examples of such commonalities (Cengiz & Torlak, 2021; Marteau, 2017). So adopting VS values does lead to improvement in the consumption practices and therefore knowledge of such a mechanism is crucial for any society striving to control conspicuous consumption and augment effective resource management (Çınar, 2021; Jin, 2020).

However, emphasis towards VS value awareness and adoption has been reflected strongly in mostly developed countries (Balderjahn et al., 2021; Kraisornsuthasinee & Swierczek, 2018) with a few exceptions. Also, felt attitude towards sustainable orientation through curbing of materialistic attachments among the young population is not a natural phenomenon and requires presence of certain values (Arthur et al., 2020; Chaplin et al., 2019). This is a serious threat towards reducing overall consumption and a foray into VS values and attitude development is considered an effective pathway to address this issue.

It is evident that VS has gained momentum as a mechanism to reduce consumption and materialistic aspirations. Several identified sustainable practices such as recycling of products, reduced shopping culture and improved consumption ethics has been linked to VS value identification and adoption (Martin-Woodhead, 2021; McArthur & Stratford, 2020). However, the growth does not reflect a strong attitude to behaviour conversion across every society or community as a natural phenomenon. The deliberate reasons is identified to be the attitude to behaviour gap towards adopting sustainability or environment related consumption practices (Park & Lin, 2020; Ru et al., 2019). Societies require greater impetus and emotional instigation and attitudinal inclination to partake in such activities. Thus, only subjective evaluation of VS adoption cannot completely address this issue.

Furthermore, the major issues concerning adoption lies on external factors and stimuli pertaining to environmental and societal concern (Ahmed et al., 2021; Pellegrini et al., 2019). In VS context, practitioners among themselves develop such stimuli through understanding of the related benefits and a consistent attitude towards adopting frugality, which propagates to the new generation (Balsa-Budai et al., 2019; Pelikán et al., 2020). However again, such examples are still being reported only from western countries. Hence, further exploration of VS value impact and propagation among the common mass in Asian context is still largely unexplored.

It is also worth noting that knowledge and awareness of sustainability and excessive consumption effect does not warrant engagement in VS value. Sustainability awareness and knowledge about its related pathways such as environmental protection, energy consumption and the 3R (reduce, reuse, recycle) is now a commonality. However, achievement of such goals are still at a nascent stage, especially among the new generation (Arora & Mishra, 2019; Jasanoff, 2018). Also, consumption reduction and non-materialistic lifestyle requires stronger value and attitude orientation at personal level. It is a well-known fact that values govern individual attitude and model such as Value-Attitude-behaviour [ VAB] (Homer & Kahle, 1988) have established attitude as a mediator between value to behaviour relationship. Impact towards environmental attitude and sustainability are visible when individual have strong value orientation (Jacobs et al., 2018; Shin et al., 2017). However, quantitative measurements on values to attitudinal development lacks a comprehensive theoretical underpinning about VS value dimensions.

Furthermore, materialism is considered a key factor inhibiting any sustainable growth at both personal and societal level (Afzal et al., 2019; Moldes & Ku, 2020). Materialism manifests itself from multiple perspectives which ranges from simple greed towards possession to meeting societal aspiration through brand acquisition and conspicuous consumption (Burns et al., 2019; Zakaria et al., 2020). VS value orientation primarily addresses this issue and improves attitude towards reduced materialism through practices such as collaborative consumption and resource sharing (Becker-Leifhold & Iran, 2018; Hüttel et al., 2020; Lindblom et al., 2018; Ziesemer et al., 2019). However, the major focus of VS values has been on the behavioural manifestation from a simplifier (practitioner) standpoint. It has been emphasized that measurement of attitude change through value orientation in context of VS lacks empirical observation (Chatterjee, 2020). Hence, both from a theoretical and practical standpoint, the attitude towards VS value adoption is deemed essential.

At a local level, the materialistic attitude pertaining to consumption among the Malaysian young population is quite prevalent and permeates across different levels of society and organisations (Mahdzan et al., 2022; M. Rahman et al., 2020; Zainudin et al., 2019). This may be either external communication driven which has been influential in different demographic settings (Bindah & Othman, 2011; Moschis et al., 2009; Nguyen et al., 2019) or value driven, which may involve functional, social or epistemic values(Suki, 2013a, 2013b). The relative attitude of Malaysian population reflects a certain degree of irresponsibility when comes to realizing the consequences of

consumption towards environment and society and their relative attribution of such responsibilities to government at large (T. B. Chen & Chai, 2010; Yahya et al., 2015; Yahya & Hashim, 2011). The reason for the above is attributed to a general surge among the youth towards fulfilling their materialistic aspirations through possessions and absence of religiosity leading to inner happiness and spiritual wellbeing (Hamzah et al., 2014; Idris et al., 2019). The essence of the problem lies in availability of multiple resources and excessive use of social media which instigates strong consumption propensity (Rosliza et al., 2020). Also strong awareness on negative consequences of consumption and unsustainable practices requires more impetus at societal level (Kasim & Wickens, 2018).

Furthermore, a general awareness and understanding of the government policies encouraging sustainable consumption practices does not necessarily implicate a strong attitudinal inclination towards adoption of such practices among youth population (Ahamad & Ariffin, 2018; Tan et al., 2019). In fact, anxiety and emotional stress in the current lifestyle is influencing the Malaysian youth attitude towards adopting an unregulated consumption choice behaviour (Mohamad et al., 2014, 2018; Ong et al., 2021). Therefore, exploring the attitudinal inclinations of youth towards value-based lifestyle orientations focusing on consumption effects is considered a pathway to assess future avenues for controlling unsustainable habits and leading them towards a simpler lifestyle.

In reference to above it is worth noting that the role of consumption reduction in any form, does not only restrict to societal benefit but concurrently leads to the well-being of the individuals adopting to such practices and lifestyles (Briceno & Stagl, 2006; Iyer & Muncy, 2016; M. Lee & Ahn, 2016). Hence, taking this logic, the relative importance of the consumption reduction and wellbeing of the Malaysian youth cannot be ignored considering the various Government initiatives such as “Transformasi Nasional 2050” and others which are highly youth oriented and strives to achieve such goals (Mohamed et al., 2018). Taking a methodological standpoint, attitude towards consumption reduction or simplicity requires assessment of consumer awareness and realization of the well-being associated with such adoption (Antonides, 2017; Hartmann & Siegrist, 2017).

Similarly addressing the well-being adequacy among the current Malaysian youth is also considered equally important towards continuation of a simplistic lifestyle. It has been diminishing compared to earlier times at both personal and professional state of existence (Aboobaker et al., 2019). This can be explored through the other VS values namely Social Responsibility (SR henceforth), Self Sufficiency (SS henceforth) and Spiritual Growth (SG henceforth) which are proven to improve well-being aspect at both societal and personal level, through augmented life satisfaction (Hook et al., 2021; S. Rich et al., 2017). SR has been linked intrinsically towards environmental awareness which again augments environmentally oriented consumption practices (Celep & Diktaş, 2021; Kropfeld et al., 2018). Similarly, SS has been traditionally related to development of personal efficiency towards becoming self-aware and self-dependant through effective value creation (Tosun & Sezgin, 2021).

This can be justified as the current Malaysian youth in general require a stronger mental and spiritual balance (Achour et al., 2015; Choong et al., 2013). Considering the current economic situation and youth behaviour, a deeper understanding of their consumption attitude and value orientations governing them, is deemed to be of importance.

Exploring strong VS value attitude can be undertaken through induced messages as they have established intrinsic influence in case of environmental behaviour adoption (Trivedi et al., 2018; Zelenski et al., 2015). In fact, in attitudinal context such influences differs in accordance with the degree of manipulation being induced (high/low) resulting in strong or weak attitudinal inclination towards the message (Leong et al., 2019; Sebastian Morris, 2005; Tu et al., 2021) . The Elaboration Likelihood Model (Neimeyer et al., 1989; Petty & Cacioppo, et al., 1987; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) has been extensively used towards measuring such influences. The suitability of this model towards exploring attitude change on both social and organisational issues are evident across literature.

To further explain in line with the study objective, the key aspect of this model lies in its ability to gauge to what extent an individual ability and motivation towards message processing can influence their judgment and whether it will be high or low in its impact(Petty & Briñol, 2015; Sher & Lee, 2009). It has been observed that the relative change in attitude via the dual processing routes ( central and peripheral) will be differ in their relative magnitude, whereby manipulating different message constructs such as argument quality, message relevance and source credibility will support towards recognition of the route being followed (Han et al., 2018; Ruiz-Mafe et al., 2018) . Such measurement will be effective in addressing the pathway to instigate VS adoption.

Though , there has been some earlier criticism of this model based on the fact that the in certain cases both central and peripheral routes have been found to be quite effective and also nonexclusive when processing the messages(Cyr et al., 2018). It has also been questioned in the past that involvement may sometimes be induced external influences s and there may be other factors involved in it (Manca et al., 2020). However subsequently these arguments have softened as recent studies on dual-mediation models proved that the central and peripheral processes are not mutually exclusive, and the individual may be influenced by both the routes(John & De’Villiers, 2020; Younghwa Lee et al., 2020). Therefore, taking the current issue into consideration, the applicability of this model towards gauging youth VS value attitude is deemed to be most effective.

Also, the model has been extensively utilised in measuring attitudinal influences from message exposure which ranges from environmental and sustainability oriented advertising to corporate social responsibility (CSR) based research (Browning et al., 2018; Jacobson et al., 2019). Therefore, it would not be wrong to argue that this model is also suitable to be utilised in measuring casual effects of manipulated message exposure which the current study proposes to undertake.



Furthermore, to justify the contextual inducement of guilt in message design, a short discussion of emotion and consumption reduction is important. The role of emotion in influencing attitude towards environment or sustainability related behaviour is evident in academic literature. However, emotion-based manipulation towards augmenting value or sustainability lifestyle adoption has been limited mostly to fear appeal-based message design (Mueller, 2009; Shin et al., 2017; Song & Luximon, 2019). Given the power of guilt emotion towards influencing prosocial behaviour (Renner et al., 2013; Wonneberger, 2017), it can be definitely assumed that guilt will be instrumental towards creating a strong adoption attitude towards VS lifestyle.

In fact anticipatory guilt (AG henceforth) (Renner et al., 2013) has been utilised extensively in advertising communications across both print and electronic media to test consumer attitudinal influences (Jiménez & Yang, 2008; Shahin et al., 2019). As VS adoption is assumed to require an instigative approach, this guilt inducement through message will be helpful to measure both direct and inverse relationship with attitude (Muralidharan & Sheehan, 2018). Its ability to instigate a prevention oriented action towards avoidable negative consequences and also towards inducing responsible consumption (Baghi & Antonetti, 2017; Huhmann & Brotherton, 1997) has further substantiated its credibility as an effective appeal. Therefore, utilizing AG in message intervention is considered essential towards exploring a causal implication on VS value adoption among the Malaysian youth.

The above discussion leads to a definite gap in academic parlance considering the importance of consumption reduction across various societies. In context of VS observing such causal effects can provide new insights on whether this behaviour can be induced across young population. This can lead to more effective propagation of this value-oriented lifestyle and contribute to sustainable consumption goals. VS in qualitative aspect does lead to achievement of such goals and enhance sustainable product choices (Craig-Lees & Hill, 2002; Zvestoski, 2002). However, empirical observation relating to instigating VS attitude and its subjective variance across a given population, is not evident (Balsa-Budai et al., 2019; Pelikán et al., 2020; Rahman, 2018).

Therefore, undertaking such exploration through effective message design and appeal is considered a new paradigm to interpret the acceptability of VS. It addresses the gap concerning experimental effect on attitude towards VS value orientations, which can open possibilities of better adoption. Also, from a practical standpoint this study tried to address the macro issue of consumption reduction whereby a strong attitude influence through message design can be further utilised in designing message communications to target the youth population consumption propensities.

### 1.3 Research Questions

In reference to the above discussion this study addresses the following research questions:

- Q1 Do anticipatory guilt appeal in message design influence the attitude towards Voluntary Simplicity value adoption (material simplicity, social responsibility, self-sufficiency, spiritual growth)
- Q2: Do Argument Quality in message design influence the attitude towards Voluntary Simplicity value adoption (material simplicity, social responsibility, self-sufficiency, spiritual growth)?
- Q3: Do Source Credibility of the message influence the attitude towards each dimension of Voluntary Simplicity values (material simplicity, social responsibility, self-sufficiency, spiritual growth)?
- Q4: Does the interaction of the manipulated guilt, argument quality and source credibility in message design influence the attitude towards Voluntary Simplicity value adoption (material simplicity, social responsibility, self-sufficiency, and spiritual growth)?

### 1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are primarily to identify the relative effect of message appeal and its relative manipulation on the attitude towards Voluntary Simplicity (VS henceforth) value dimensions, namely Material Simplicity (MS), Social Responsibility (SR), Self- Sufficiency (SS) and Spiritual Growth (SG), among the Malaysian youth. It observes the attitudinal difference through comparison of pre and post manipulation responses on the VS value dimension scale.

The study further observes the relative influence of each manipulated variable namely anticipatory guilt appeal, argument quality and source credibility on the attitude towards VS values. Therefore, the study focusses on the following specific objectives enumerated as under.

1. **To determine whether the main effect of the manipulation of anticipatory guilt appeal (AG henceforth) through messages can lead to an attitudinal difference towards VS value dimensions (MS; SR; SS; SG)**
  - 1a. To examine the main effect of AG appeal as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards MS value dimension
  - 1b. To examine the main effect of AG appeal as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards SR value dimension.

- 1c. To examine the main effect of AG appeal as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards SS value dimension.
- 1d. To examine the main effect of AG appeal as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards SG value dimension.
  
2. **To determine whether the main effect of the manipulation of argument quality (AQ henceforth) through messages can lead to an attitudinal difference towards VS value dimensions (MS; SR; SS; SG)**
  - 2a. To examine the main effect of AQ as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards MS value dimension
  - 2b. To examine the main effect of AQ as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards SR value dimension.
  - 2c. To examine the main effect of AQ as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards SS value dimension.
  - 2d. To examine the main effect of AQ as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards SG value dimension.
  
3. **To determine whether the main effect of the manipulation of Source Credibility (SC henceforth) through messages can lead to an attitudinal difference towards VS value dimensions (MS; SR; SS; SG)**
  - 3a. To examine the main effect of SC as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards MS value dimension
  - 3b. To examine the main effect of SC as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards SR value dimension.
  - 3c. To examine the main effect of SC as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards SS value dimension.
  - 3d. To examine the main effect of SC as a manipulated factor in a message design on attitude towards SG value dimension.
  
4. **To determine the interaction effects between the manipulated variables (AG; AQ; SG) at different levels of manipulation and their relative impact on the attitude towards VS value dimensions (MS; SR; SS; SG)**
  - 4a. To examine the interaction effect at two levels of AG, AQ and SC in a message design on the attitude towards MS value dimension.
  - 4b. To examine the interaction effect at two levels of AG, AQ and SC in a message design on the attitude towards SR value dimension.
  - 4c. To examine the interaction effect at two levels of AG, AQ and SC in a message design on the attitude towards SS value dimension.

- 4d. To examine the interaction effect at two levels of AG, AQ and SC in a message design on the attitude towards SG value dimension.

## 1.5 Research Hypothesis

A comprehensive review of the academic literature has recognized that there is a lack of proper investigation pertaining to the relative effects of message manipulation through the three interventions on attitude towards each value dimensions of Voluntary Simplicity Behaviour.

The following section would elaborate on the research hypothesis being undertaken for this study, with reference to the specific objectives being enumerated in the above section. The enumerated hypothesis is being empirically examined in the data analysis section of this study.

### 1.5.1 The main effect of the manipulated intervention [AG; AQ; SC]

The main effect of the study explores the relative influence of each of the manipulative inducements namely, anticipatory guilt appeal, Argument quality and source credibility on attitude towards each value dimension of the Voluntary Simplicity. They are being presented as under:

1. **Anticipatory Guilt Appeal (AG):** The hypothesis concerning the main effect of this variable manipulations for the four value dimensions (MS; SR; SS; SG) are enumerated as under:
  - 1a. AG as a manipulative inducement at both levels will be influencing attitude towards MS value dimension.
  - 1b. AG as a manipulative inducement at both levels would influence the attitude towards the SR value dimension.
  - 1c. AG as a manipulative inducement at both levels would influence the attitude towards the SS value dimension.
  - 1d. AG as a manipulative inducement at both levels would influence the attitude towards the SG value dimension.
2. **Argument Quality (AQ):** The hypothesis concerning the main effect of this variable manipulations for the four value dimensions (MS; SR; SS; SG) are enumerated as under:
  - 2a. AQ as a manipulative inducement at both levels will be influencing attitude towards MS value dimension.

- 2b. AQ as a manipulative inducement at both levels would influence the attitude towards the SR value dimension.
- 2c. AQ as a manipulative inducement at both levels would influence the attitude towards the SS value dimension.
- 2d. AQ as a manipulative inducement at both levels would influence the attitude towards the SG value dimension.

3. **Source Credibility (SC):** The hypothesis concerning the main effect of this variable manipulations for the four value dimensions (MS; SR; SS; SG) are enumerated as under:

- 3a. SC as a manipulative inducement at both levels will be influencing attitude towards MS value dimension.
- 3b. SC as a manipulative inducement at both levels would influence the attitude towards the SR value dimension.
- 3c. SC as a manipulative inducement at both levels would influence the attitude towards the SS value dimension.
- 3d. SC as a manipulative inducement at both levels would influence the attitude towards the SG value dimension.

#### 1.5.2 The interaction effect of the manipulated intervention [AG; AQ; SC]

The interaction effect of the study explores the relative influence of interaction of each of the inducements (AG; AQ; SC) at both levels of manipulation on attitude towards each VS value dimension (MS; SR; SS; SG).

In reference to the theory of ELM, it is being hypothesized that at high or strong level of intervention/inducement will be considered to follow the central route to persuasion pathway. Similarly, the low or weak level of intervention/inducement condition will be considered as the peripheral route to persuasion.

The below hypotheses are being derived with reference to the objective four of this study. The hypothesis is presented for each intervening variable and its hypothesized interaction effect for each of the VS value dimension in sequential manner.

4. **Anticipatory Guilt Appeal (AG) and Argument Quality (AQ):** The hypothesis concerning the relative influence of the interaction effects of AG with different levels of AQ [irrespective of SC level] for each VS value dimension (MS; SR; SS; SG) is presented as under:

- 4a. The interaction effect of AG at both levels of AQ [irrespective of SC levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards MS value Dimension.
- 4b. The interaction effect of AG at both levels of AQ [irrespective of SC levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards SR value Dimension.
- 4c. The interaction effect of AG at both levels of AQ [irrespective of SC levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards SS value Dimension.
- 4d. The interaction effect of AG at both levels of AQ [irrespective of SC levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards SG value Dimension.

5. **Argument Quality (AQ) and Source Credibility (SC):** The hypothesis concerning the relative influence of the interaction effects of AQ with different levels of SC [irrespective of AG level] for each VS value dimension (MS; SR; SS; AG) is presented as under:

- 5a. The interaction effect of AQ at both levels of SC [irrespective of AG levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards MS value Dimension.
- 5b. The interaction effect of AQ at both levels of SC [irrespective of AG levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards SR value Dimension.
- 5c. The interaction effect of AQ at both levels of SC [irrespective of AG levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards SS value Dimension.
- 5d. The interaction effect of AQ at both levels of SC [irrespective of AG levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards SG value Dimension.

6. **Anticipatory Guilt (AG) and Source Credibility (SC):** The hypothesis concerning the relative influence of the interaction effects of AG with different levels of SC [irrespective of AQ level] for each VS value dimension (MS; SR; SS; AG) is presented as under:

- 6a. The interaction effect of AG at both levels of SC [irrespective of AQ levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards MS value Dimension.
- 6b. The interaction effect of AG at both levels of SC [irrespective of AQ levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards SR value Dimension.

- 6c. The interaction effect of AG at both levels of SC [irrespective of AQ levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards SS value Dimension.
- 6d. The interaction effect of AG at both levels of SC [irrespective of AQ levels] as the intervening conditions will be significant in its influence on attitude towards SG value Dimension.

## 1.6 Significance of Study

Malaysia as a country has taken strong policy and process initiatives in terms of adopting sustainability production and consumption practices and incorporating the SDG goals. The government initiatives are evident from stringent guidelines being followed across various manufacturing and service industries and the academic research exploring this domain. It is evident from recent studies that the country is efficiently managing the large-scale sustainability paradigms such as deforestation, household waste and energy management to name a few (Fernando & Hor, 2017; Yong et al., 2019). However, when it comes to societal consumption reduction and sustainable lifestyle, the foray seems quite narrow and restricted only to certain specific consumption practices. The recent and prominent among them are either specific behaviours such as food waste (Jereme et al., 2018; Papargyropoulou et al., 2019), halal food consumption (Azmi et al., 2020; Zailani et al., 2020), or macro perspectives such as sustainable manufacturing and consumption practices (Abdul-Rashid et al., 2017; Mahat et al., 2017; Zen et al., 2020). This study aims to augment the academic literature on attitude of Malaysian youth when comes to consumption reduction attitude.

It is also being envisaged that the focus of youth attitude-based observation is more product specific rather than consumption specific. To be precise, value orientation-based studies on Malaysian youth population has been more focussed on certain specific financial economic or spiritual values. The youth associations being created under government's initiatives are required to have mandatory programmes addressing community development, personality development and national principles (Krauss et al., 2020). This paves the pathway for a strong youth who are aware of their national and social responsibilities. However, to what extent are they non- materialistic in their attitude towards consumption? It has been observed that youth around the world exert their preferences. A recent study identified them to have 4E's namely electronically engaged, Educated, having strong Entrepreneurial attitude, and Empowered to make decisions (Tjiptono et al., 2020). However prior and recent studies have highlighted that their consumption attitudes are still quite conspicuous towards luxury with strong shopping and compulsive buying orientation (Abdul Adzis et al., 2017; Aw et al., 2018; Khare, 2013; Sharif et al., 2021). Therefore, this study would try to gauge the materialistic aspiration among the youth population along with other pertinent value orientations and whether they can be manipulated through messages to certain extent.

To further explain the above context of this study, VS is considered an innovative value-oriented mechanism. It is worth noting that though being extensively researched in

certain Asian countries such as Taiwan (Chang, 2016, 2021), Japan (Ohira & Akiko, 2020) and India (Kuanr et al., 2020), the concept of Voluntary Simplicity is not being explored among the Malaysian population. It would be certainly helpful to observe how the youth population thinks about the values governing this orientation and whether message inducements can lead to a positive attitude towards the values governing this principle. As it is evident that consumption propensities among the Malaysian youth population has been on the rise, such observations can open new avenues to further explore the motivation and value orientations that needs to be emphasized for the future consumers of Malaysia.

Taking a theoretical standpoint, this study contributed to further entrench the causal effect of the elaboration likelihood model on value orientations. In this respect, it has been observed that use of persuasive messages in pro-environmental based campaign have been quite exhaustive, however the relative outcome of such elaboration has not been always quite definitive, which has been emphasized in recent studies (Manca et al., 2020). It is also being observed that the model has been critiqued on the grounds of unclear measurement with reference to participants relative involvement, which may be induced through external rewards (Cyr et al., 2018). It is being implied that the strength of the model lies more towards implicit attitudes (Bos et al., 2018; Ksiazkiewicz & Hedrick, 2013) though the model has been also influential in the designed dual process route to persuasion quite effectively. This study has proven that from a methodological standpoint, effective message and appeal manipulation can vary the degree of involvement and attitude towards value dimensions.

This study further addresses the relative effect of guilt manipulation on Voluntary Simplicity attitude. Even though past studies have observed guilt in context of environment and prosocial behaviour, experimental design through guilt manipulation has not been undertaken. In context of appeal, the exploration of “awareness” and its relative “manifestation” were considered more important rather than the element of “persuasiveness”, as the target market addressed for voluntary simplicity adoption were people who had the capability initiative and develop motivation and desire to undertake extensive consumption cuts and were able to still felt their primary needs being fulfilled in an effective manner (McGouran & Prothero, 2016; Pravet & Holmlund, 2018). It can be clearly evidenced that anticipatory guilt would be most appropriate to create awareness and the same point lead to feeling of guilt, which is considered important towards addressing current and controlling future transgressions (Mkono & Hughes, 2020) and produce a change of attitude towards the value ordinations.

Finally, even though the emotion fear has been empirically tested on this theorized model over the time with empirical findings, (see Gleicher & Petty, 1992; Hockett & Hall, 2007; Muñoz et al., 2013), the use of guilt as an emotion within the message design parlance is not much evident. It is now a known fact that ad effectiveness amplified through emotional inducement leads to arousal of nostalgia better consumer-brand connection (Pashkevich, 2019) . However, how emotion-based message inducement can improve consumption reduction, has not been explored in VS context.



Hence this study has augmented the current academic literature on the use of guilt-based message design to test the outcome of relative elaboration using Elaboration Likelihood Model as a theoretical base. It has contributed towards testing such a phenomenon whereby the relative effect of guilt message appeal, argument quality and source credibility towards the attitudinal influence on Voluntary Simplicity values has been observed. The study follows the procedural approach based on the theory of Elaboration Likelihood Model, which propagates that persuasive messages can influence the attitude and create attitudinal change.

This study would strive to further address the relevant gap in the Voluntary Simplicity field of research in context of its adoption whereby none of the previous researches have forayed into the marketing aspect of this movement from the appeal context. At the same time, it would explore the attitude of Malaysian youth towards the Voluntary Simplicity Values and the relative outcome of the undertaken manipulations towards influence their attitude.

## **1.7 Operational Definitions**

This section elaborates on the conceptual definition and operational definition for all the constructs and variables being utilised for this study. Please refer to the below headings to view detailed overview of each.

### **1.7.1 Voluntary Simplicity**

#### **Conceptual Definition**

A lifestyle which constitutes of low consumption coupled with ecological responsibility and an augmented self-dependency among individuals (Shama, 1985). It further involves adopting a certain degree of simplification towards living through adoption of five basic values namely material simplicity, ecological awareness, self-determination, human scale, and personal growth (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977; Leonard-Barton, 1981).

#### **Operational Definition**

Voluntary Simplicity is value-oriented lifestyle that propagates consumption reduction through adoption of its values. live a simple and happy life. It constitutes of four value dimensions namely Material Simplicity, Social Responsibility, Self Sufficiency and Spiritual Growth.

The attitude towards VS represents attitude towards the four value dimensions of VS. It measures both pre and post attitude towards the values after induced manipulation.

## **1.7.2 Material Simplicity**

### **Conceptual Definition**

Material Simplicity constitutes of “uncluttering” one’s life by reducing overconsumption of products and services (Kraisornsuthasinee & Swierczek, 2018; Shama & Wisenblit, 1984). This value dimension encompasses economizing spending patterns towards reduction of conspicuous consumption in a voluntary manner (Jaikumar et al., 2018; Lim, 2017)..

### **Operational Definition**

Material Simplicity is a value dimension which constitutes of measuring an individual’s propensity to reduce overconsumption through attitude towards adopting this value. It subsumes the human scale value dimension which relates to reducing materialistic aspiration.

## **1.7.3 Social Responsibility**

### **Conceptual Definition**

This value orientation had been originally defined as an awareness towards the interdependence existing between human and environment which ensues responsibility towards the latter (Shama, 1981; Shama & Wisenblit, 1984). Over the time, the value orientation has been observed to be synonymous with responsibility towards the environment by the individuals and society at large (Aydin & Kazancoglu, 2017; Chang, 2016).

### **Operational Definition**

This value orientation defines the social responsibility dimension of voluntary simplicity which dwells on the degree of awareness and concern of an individual towards the environment. Its further influences attitude towards environmental concern.

## **1.7.4 Self-Sufficiency (Self-determination)**

### **Conceptual Definition**

In originality this value was stated a “self-sufficiency” and considered a hallmark value central to voluntary simplicity adoption (Elgin & Mitchell, 1977). It attributes to development of one’s moral judgements and control over his or her actions, which improves self-reliance and reduces dependency (Shama, 1988). In due time, this value was synonymous with self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2008, 2012), whereby

the strong constituents were independence and autonomy. Subsequently self-sufficiency was understood as one's ability to reduce physical or financial dependency by improving their abilities (Aidar & Daniels, 2020).

### **Operational Definition**

Self-sufficiency is defined as the value dimension that constitutes of an individual's ability to reduce dependency by developing their own skill set towards professional growth. It influences attitude towards physical and financial well-being of the individual through greater autonomy.

### **1.7.5 Spiritual Growth (Personal Growth)**

#### **Conceptual Definition**

Personal growth is being defined as the desire of an individual to restrain their mind from external clutter by developing the psychological and spiritual aspects of the inner self (Shama, 1981). This value orientation aligns to mental and spiritual growth of an individual which generates a sense of happiness and fulfilment through family and religious attachment (Chang, 2021; Chowdhury, 2018; Peifer et al., 2020).

#### **Operational Definition**

Spiritual growth value orientation which encompasses the psychological and spiritual well-being of individual achieved through stronger attachment with family and spending time on spiritual upliftment. The attitude towards this value dimension measures felt spiritual attachment.

### **1.7.6 Anticipatory Guilt Appeal**

#### **Conceptual Definition**

Rawlings (1970) defines anticipatory guilt is a resultant experience when individuals visualize a potential violation of their internalized standards (Huhmann & Brotherton, 1997) . It is one of the more positive forms of guilt whereby, its evocation may lead towards undertaking certain actions which allows individuals to avoid posterior guilt such as reactive guilt (Labarge & Godek, 2006; Lwin & Phau, 2008)

#### **Operational Definition**

Anticipatory guilt is the priori guilt form which is felt in anticipation towards high consumption practices. The attitude towards anticipatory guilt measures the felt guilt towards the overconsumption habits of an individual.

### **1.7.7 Argument Quality**

#### **Conceptual Definition**

Argument quality is the subjective perception of the individual of the strength of the argument being presented (Areni & Lutz, 1988; Cacioppo & Petty, 1981). It is one of the important parameters in terms of message component also being defined as valence of the related thought being evoked (Shen & Seung, 2018). Argument strength in message design attributes to factors such as the accuracy, timeliness, the comprehensiveness of the message and the relevance to the issue presented (Abid et al., 2020).

#### **Operational Definition**

Argument quality represents the relative strength of the argument in terms of its relevance and proximity (geographic) of the issue presented to the target respondents. The manipulation in message design will measure the influence on the valence of thought being generated towards the message.

### **1.7.8 Source Credibility**

#### **Conceptual Definition**

Source credibility is defined as the extent to which an information source is perceived to be believable, competent, and trustworthy by information recipients (Petty, Kasmer, et al., 1987). It is one of the most utilised and highly referenced cues within the context of elaboration likelihood model.

#### **Operational Definition**

Source credibility represents the authenticity and credibility of the source of the message in the message design. It will be measured as the influence of high and low credibility on attitude towards adoption of VS value dimensions.

## **1.8 Organisation of the Thesis**

This thesis is being organized in five chapters. Chapter one introduces the concept of voluntary simplicity and the nature of the problem that is being addressed in the study with reference to the Malaysian youth population. It further explains on the theory and the model being adopted for the study. The chapter further establishes the objectives, hypothesis, and significance of the study. It concludes with a conceptual and operational definition of the terms.

Chapter two depicts the literature review which includes discussion on the independent and dependent study constructs namely voluntary simplicity, guilt, elaboration likelihood model, argument quality and source credibility. It provides the theoretical and the conceptual framework. The chapter addresses the research gaps and establishes the hypothesis being undertaken for this study.

Chapter three involves description of the methodology which includes research philosophy, research design factors, message design, study location and population and data collection method. The chapter describes the assessment of the measurement model which includes message validity and exploratory factor analysis. The chapter also includes description of the pilot study being undertaken to ascertain construct validity, reliability, and scale impact of the experimental design. The chapter concludes by describing the preliminary test being conducted on the final data.

Chapter four describes the data analysis being undertaken to ascertain the relative impact of the experimental manipulation. The chapter is broadly divided into two phases. Phase one addresses the main effects of the manipulation variables on the VS value dimensions which includes the absolute and the relative impact on each of the values. The second phase involves depicting the analysis of interaction effects between the manipulating variables and their combined interaction effect and significance. The chapter concludes by discussion of the acceptance/rejection of the undertaken hypothesis for this study.

Chapter five dwells on the discussion of the analysis and the summary of findings for each of the study objectives. It also includes the research implications that elaborates on the theoretical and practical implications of the study. The chapter ends by discussing the limitation and future recommendations for other researchers planning to undertake such studies. The chapter ends with a concluding remark on the entire study.

## **1.9 Study Limitation**

The primary limitation of this study in terms of its scope lies on the extent of observation of the causal effect intervention. The study observes two intervention from Elaboration Likelihood Model, whereby the degree of involvement is derived from the proximity of the issue being presented. Such intervention, even though being supported through past literature may slightly influence the outcome of the data analysis. However, to address this issue, the message design involved a strong allegiance towards presenting the issue in local context as suggested by the panel of experts.

The second limitation with reference to the scope of this research can be attributed to the population of the study. The focus of observation is only restricted to youth population in reference to their propensity to consume as evidenced in the academic literature. However, it is evident that Voluntary Simplicity varies in its degree of adoption and

behaviour across different age groups. Therefore, the scope of this study is limited in nature whereby the intervention is restricted to only youth.



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