ANTECEDENTS OF STATUS CONSUMPTION AMONG WOMEN
AND THE ROLES OF HEDONISM AND CULTURAL VALUE ORIENTATION

By

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People crave for status and status recognition. This status struggle plagues today’s consumer societies. The fetish with status-seeking which manifests into consumption of status goods has emerged among women who have experienced increased economic and social influence. While previous studies have presented different factors influencing status consumption, few studies have delved into individual traits such as consumer vanity and attitudes toward money as antecedents on status desires. Marketing research has largely ignored female consumers’ capacity for hedonic orientation associated with status purchase motivations. The current study investigates the phenomenon of status consumption behavior among Malaysian
women. Specifically, vanity, money attitude and non-functional product benefits are investigated as antecedents of status consumption. The mediating effects of individual hedonic orientation and moderating role of cultural values of individualism-collectivism are also examined.

Methodology utilized mixed methods research approach. Women form the unit of analysis. Three phases of field studies were conducted. Phase 1, a preliminary study using survey approach on 80 respondents identified status-signaling products. In Phase 2, focus group discussions probed hedonic and symbolic product benefits and characteristic of individual hedonic orientation among women. Using quota sampling, Phase 3 involved a survey on a sample of 500 female respondents. Using Structural Equation Modeling, path relationships between three latent antecedent factors and dependent variable, one mediator variable and two moderators were evaluated.

Findings suggest the prevalence of status consumption among Malaysian women. Findings indicate women exhibited power, quality and achievement attitude towards money and were associated with status consumption. Attitude towards non-functional product benefits in the form of imaginal, voyeuristic and symbolic benefits stimulated status consumption. Contrary to popular beliefs, vanity did not relate to status consumption among Malaysian women. Individual hedonic orientation mediated the relationships between attitude towards money and non-functional product benefits with status consumption. Consumer vanity had no direct effects with status consumption via individual hedonic orientation. Moderating results revealed collectivists were stronger than individualists in influencing interrelationships. Findings offered theoretical implication that status model is still relevant today. Managerial implications followed by limitations and future research directions were addressed.
Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

ANTESEDEN-ANTESEDEN PENGGUNAAN STATUS DI KALANGAN WANITA DAN PERANAN HEDONISME SERTA ORIENTASI NILAI BUDAYA

Oleh

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Pengerusi: Profesor Samsinar Md. Sidin, PhD
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Kebanyakan daripada kita menginginkan status serta pengakuan status. Perebutan untuk status ini sering mengganggu para pengguna hari ini. Obsesi terhadap gejala ini serta pencapaian tahap yang diakui jelas dilihat melalui pembelian serta penggunaan barangan berstatus. Sungguhpun kebanyakan kajian yang dijalankan terdahulu telah mengkaji pelbagai faktor yang mempengaruhi tabiat penggunaan barangan berstatus ini, namun cuma terdapat segelintir pengkaji yang meninjau faktor yang mempengaruhi sifat keperibadian pengguna, tingkah laku mereka bertindak akibat pengaruh wang serta pengaruh hedonisme ke atas keinginan status. Pada
umumnya, penyelidikan pemasaran jelas mengabaikan keupayaan pengguna kaum wanita untuk menikmati perasaan hedonisme yang berkaitan dengan motivasi pembelian barangan berstatus.


Keputusan kajian ini menunjukkan kewujudan penggunaan status di kalangan wanita Malaysia. Keputusan analisis ‘path’ menunjukkan bahawa dua antecedent iaitu sikap wanita terhadap wang sebagai sumber kuasa, kualiti dan pencapaian serta sikap terhadap faedah hedonisme dan simbolik dari produk dengan jelasnya mendorongkan penggunaan status. Faktor
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Approval

I certify that an Examination Committee met on 31 October 2011 to conduct the final examination of Teo Boon Chui on her Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled ‘Antecedents of Status Consumption among Women and the Roles of Hedonism and Cultural Value Orientation’ in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or any other institutions.

____________________________
TEO BOON CHUI

19 March 2012
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