



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

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

TEO BOON CHUI

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AND THE ROLES OF HEDONISM AND CULTURAL VALUE ORIENTATION**

By

TEO BOON CHUI

**Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Management,
Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfillment of
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Abstract of Thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra
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Doctor of Philosophy

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Chair: Professor Samsinar Md. Sidin, PhD

Faculty: Graduate School of Management

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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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.

Kajian ini meneliti fenomena gelagat penggunaan status di kalangan wanita. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan perhubungan di antara 'vanity', sikap terhadap wang dan kelebihan hedonisme serta simbolik dari produk sebagai anteseden dengan niat terhadap penggunaan status. Kesan orientasi hedonisme individu sebagai pembolehubah pengantara dikaji. Tambahan pula, pengaruh nilai budaya individualisme-kolektivisme sebagai pembolehubah penyerderhana juga diteliti.

Metodologi dalam kajian ini menggunakan kaedah triangulasi dengan kaum wanita sebagai unit analisis. Tiga fasa kerja medan telah dijalankan. Fasa 1, sebagai kajian peringkat awal menggunakan pendekatan survei di mana data diperoleh dari 80 responden wanita untuk tujuan mengenalpasti produk yang boleh melambangkan status. Dalam kajian Fasa 2, kaedah kualitatif melalui perbincangan kumpulan tumpuan mengenalpasti faedah orientasi hedonisme dan simbolik dari segi produk serta orientasi hedonisme individu. Manakala kajian Fasa 3 melibatkan 500 responden wanita dengan menggunakan cara persampelan kuota. Pengumpulan data menggunakan kaedah survei soal selidik. Analisis data dijalankan dengan menggunakan 'Structural Equation Modeling' di mana hubungan struktur di antara tiga pemboleh ubah latent sebagai anteseden, satu pembolehubah pengantara dan dua pemboleh ubah penyerdahana dinilai.

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

'vanity' pengguna didapati tiada hubungan langsung dengan penggunaan status. Namun apabila perantaraan dengan orientasi hedonisme dimasukkan, ia menghasilkan kesan secara tidak langsung terhadap penggunaan status. Keputusan peranan penyerdahana menunjukkan dengan jelas kumpulan yang mempunyai nilai budaya kolektivisme lebih teguh dalam pengaruhnya berbanding dengan kumpulan individualisme. Hasil kajian menyumbangkan implikasi teori bahawa model status masih relevan dalam masyarakat pengguna yang moden. Hasil kajian juga memberi implikasi pengurusan dari segi pemasaran. Beberapa batasan yang dihadapi dalam kajian ini serta cadangan untuk penyelidikan masa depan disentuh.

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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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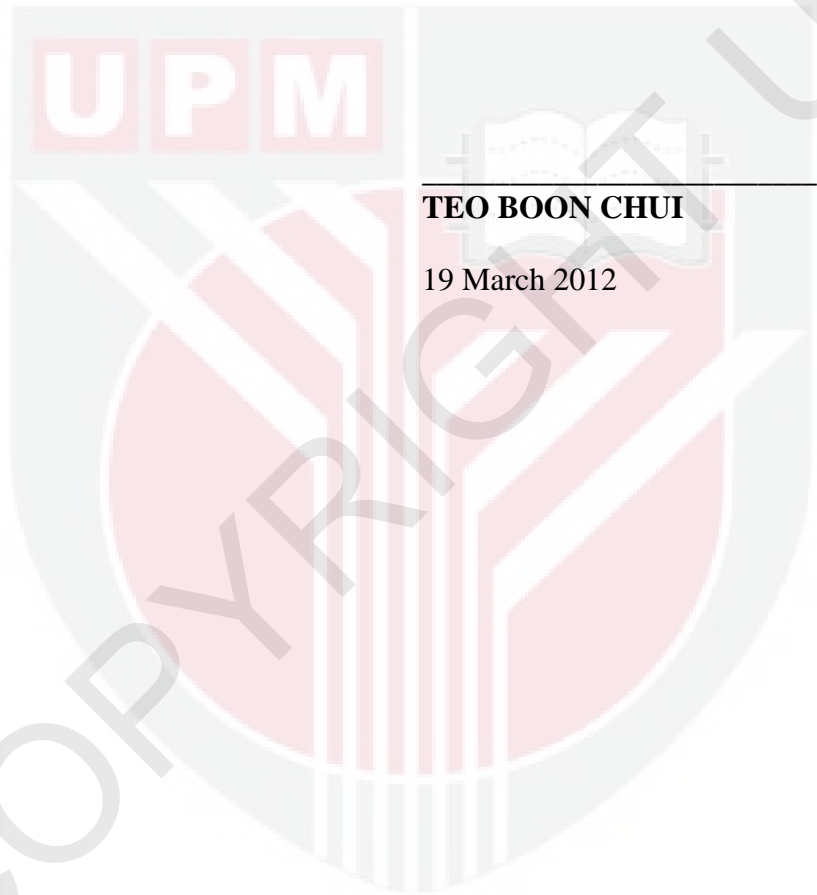
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DECLARATION

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.



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19 March 2012



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