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FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE PURCHASE INTENTION OF SECOND-HAND PRODUCTS

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

Product reuse is one of the strategies in reducing the consumption of fresh resources in the production industries. Reuse plays a significant role in the minimization of waste as envisioned by waste prevention and zero waste strategies. However, for reuse to occur, there needs to be both a supply of used items and a demand for these goods. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the factors which influence college students and their families' purchase intention of second-hand products. The quantitative study utilised an online survey for data collection and its research instrument was an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed using snowball sampling among university students to determine the factors influencing their decision in buying second-hand products. The study hopes to address two research questions. a) What are the factors which influence purchase intention of second-hand products? b) What are the factors which deter the consumers from purchasing second-hand products? Based on the data analysis it was found that the main deciding factors for the respondents' purchase intention was the condition of the second-hand items followed by the price and finally the brand. The respondents who have never bought second-hand products stated that

the main factor that deter them from purchasing second-hand products is, they are considered unhygienic.

1.   Introduction

The popularity of purchasing second-hand products in Malaysia has been increasing in recent years. According to Carousell Group Recommerce Index 2021 report, eight out of ten people in Malaysia have made second-hand purchases (Aman, 2021). During the Covid 19 pandemic, the demand for used items or thrift shopping had increased due to economic reasons. However, the demand for second-hand items such as gadgets, furniture, toys, tableware, and kitchenware (Lai, 2023) used clothes (Pfordten, 2023) still continue to rise even after the pandemic. The boom of second-hand market is not entirely due to the consumers' lack of funds or based on social class, as it was observed that individuals from various levels of income participate in this activity (Chan, 2020).There are other factors that affect the purchase of second-hand goods such as the rise of hipster subculture where finding a rare or unique items at a thrift shop is considered as increasing one's social capital (Chan, 2020). Other than that, more people are becoming environmentally conscious that they indulge in second hand buying to help lighten the load at landfills. Whether Malaysians are thrifty or environmentally conscious, the country has become one of the world's biggest markets for used clothes (Pfordten, 2023).

2.   Literature Review

The present scenario sees second-hand stores flourishing across the world. The rising interest and preference to buy second-hand goods are driven by factors such as sentimental value and nostalgia, originality, a platform for self-expression and personal style (Bae, Choi, Gantumur, & Kim, 2002). Consequently, second-hand stores are most often cheaper as compared to an outlet in a shopping mall and their prices are inexpensive for lower incomes (Pierce & Paulos, 2011). Besides second-hand stores selling generally cheaper used clothing, including shoes and bags, another business model for second-hand clothing can also be seen. In 2019, a report on the Wall Street Journal revealed that the market for second-hand luxury goods is growing at a fast pace (Tu, Hsu & Creativani, 2022). Namely, in Taiwan, the business of second-hand luxury goods is booming as it allows consumers to find goods which are limited editions or discontinued (Tu et al., 2022).

The utilisation of pre-owned, refurbished, repaired, preloved, recycled, and rental goods symbolise positive things for the environment, as it means extending their lifespans and providing novelty to consumers (Tu et al., 2022). This, however, does not mean that consumers of second-hand goods are environmentally aware. Yang, Shuai, Song, and Tong (2017) reported that consumers normally sell their clothing to second-hand shops for the sole reason of earning extra money, not for sustainable reasons.

Nevertheless, a more positive prospect can be assumed for the younger generation. In a study on millennials and their perceptions on fast fashion and second-hand clothing, Lam, Hau-Yan, Yurchisin, and Cook (2016) found that the younger generation specifically millennials who were born between 1980 and 1995, as compared to their predecessor, are comparatively more environmentally aware. They possessed the realisation and social responsibilities of how the fashion industry is affecting the environment (Lam, et al., 2016). It is safe to assume that the personal values

that consumers possess are highly relevant to their 'green consumption behaviour' (Tu et al., 2022). However, this might not be the case for millennials worldwide, while millennials believe in certain values and expectations regarding the environment, these aspects seem to contradict one another, research has also found that while they do care about sustainable issues, they still purchase fast fashion products (Johansson et al., 2017).

Similarly, in India, Tarai and Shailaja (2020) opined that while there is increased global awareness on the impacts of the fashion industry on the environment, this is greatly outweighed by the habits of the consumers' contemporary lifestyle. Such lifestyle constitutes overconsumption of resources, which one of them meant consuming fast fashion. i.e., rapid change in fashion with easy and cheap availability of textiles. Subsequently, consumers remain unaware or lack awareness in purchasing eco-friendly garments.

According to Tarai and Shailaja (2020), the level of acceptance for second-hand goods is noticeably significant compared to the past. Most consumers nowadays accept that second-hand goods will improve environmental issues such as pollution and waste. Mass production is always associated with some type of pollution, for instance, mass production of clothing and footwear has an environmental impact of 2% to 10% of environmental impact and this constitutes to 70% to 80% of environmental impact due to overconsumption. Unfortunately, in their study, Tarai and Shailaja (2020) revealed that only 38.84% of their participants acknowledged the positive facet of second-hand garments such as a more useful and environment-friendly option. Alternatively, their study revealed that the majority associated second-hand goods with being out of style and unhygienic. On their part of managing their own preloved clothes, 71% of the participants preferred to donate their second-hand garments, 26% would throw them away meanwhile, a minimal 4% would redesign and reuse the garments again for other purposes (Tarai & Shailaja, 2020).

In their study in Taiwan, Tu et al. (2022) indicated that 79.5% of their respondents had never purchased second-hand goods and in the future, have no intention to purchase second-hand goods. The respondents revealed their reasons which include unable to accept second-hand goods, feeling ashamed of the stigma associated with purchasing second-hand product, the questionable quality of second-hand goods, simply having no interest in second-hand goods, money issues in purchasing second-hand goods and lastly, the worry regarding the origins of the second-hand goods.

Since purchasing of second-hand products is not a simple form of commercialism, the study is conducted to create new knowledge in second-hand products consumption and customer buying behaviour by identifying factors that influence purchase intention of second-hand products.

3. Methodology

The study used an online survey as its data collection method. Snowball sampling, also known as respondent, driven sampling, was used in this study as proposed by Naderifar (2017). The research instrument used was an online questionnaire, which was divided into 3 sections. Section A is for the respondents' demographic, section B caters to the respondents who have had experienced purchasing second-hand products while section C is for the respondents who have never purchased second-hand products. The link to the online survey was initially shared with thirty (30) students from a Report Writing class at a public university in Malaysia. These students were

asked to fill in the questionnaire and share the link with their friends or family members. The questionnaire link was open for one week from 10 to 16 September 2023.

4.   Results and Discussion

By the end of the study period, the number of respondents who participated in the survey was sixty (60). The results are presented in the following sub-sections.

a)   Section A: Respondents' Demographic

The pie charts in Figure 1 and 2 show the respondents' age group and their gender distribution respectively. Based on figure 1, the majority of the respondents (48.2%) were below the age of twenty while 8.3% were older than 35 years old.

Meanwhile, Figure 2 shows that sixty percent (60%) of the respondents were females, while forty percent (40%) were males.

Age Group:
60 responses

● 20 years old or younger
● 21-25 years old
● 26-30 years old
● 31-35 years old
● older than 35 years old
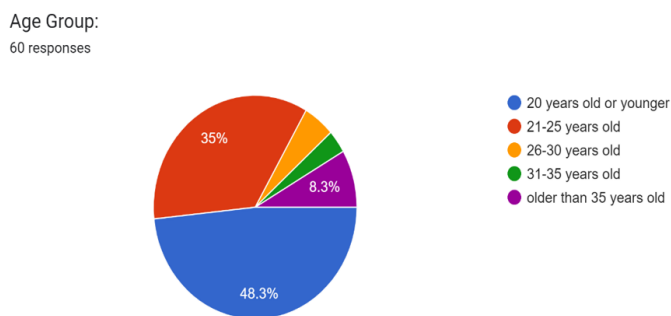
Figure 1. Respondents' Age Group.

Meanwhile, Figure 2 shows that sixty percent (60%) of the respondents were females, while forty percent (40%) were males.

Gender:
60 responses

● Male
● Female
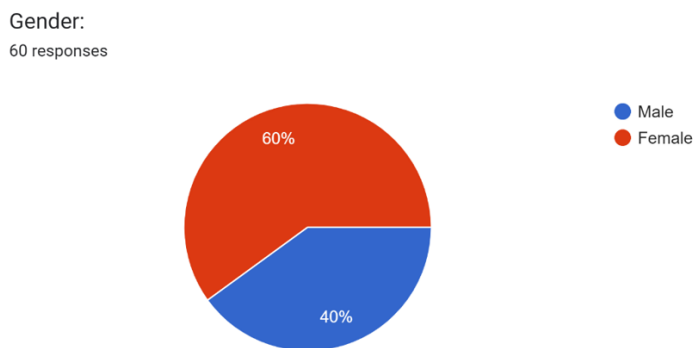
Figure 2. Respondents' Genders.

b)   Section B: Results for multiple choice questions.

The first question in section B of the questionnaire was aimed at dividing the respondents into two group of consumers, those who have had experience buying second-hand products and those who have never experienced second-hand purchase. Based on Figure 3, the majority (90%) of the respondents have had second-and product purchase and only 10% have never had the experience.

1. Have you ever bought second-hand products?
60 responses
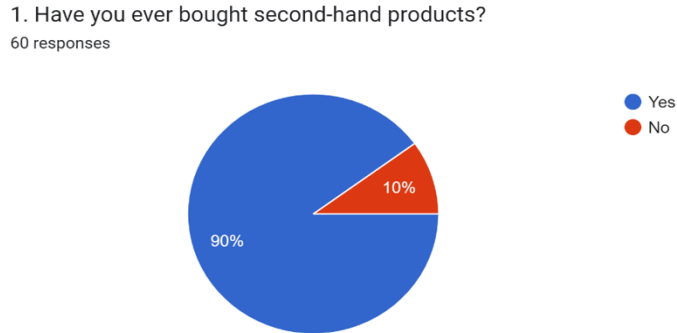
Figure 3. The percentage of respondents' who have made second-hand purchase.

The second question of section B was intended to identify the main reason why the respondents made their second-hand purchase. Based on the pie chart in Figure 4, Most of the respondents stated that the main reason why they bought second-hand products was the price. Only a small fraction of the respondents (1.9%) bought second-hand products due to their concern for the environment, while 11.1% of the respondents bought second-hand products because of their brands.

2. If yes, what is the main reason why you buy second-hand product? Choose only one answer:
54 responses

Figure 4. The main reason for buying second-hand products

c)   Second-hand product categories

Table 1
Categories of second-hand products

Product Category	Examples of products
Personal	Clothes, shoes, jewellery, handbag, bag, accessories etc.
Leisure & Hobbies	Books, video games, DVD, music instruments, toys etc.
Home	Lamp, kitchen utensils, furniture, tableware, bed sheets etc.
Vehicles	Car, motorcycle, bicycle etc.
Electronics	Mobile phone, camera, computers etc.

Question 3 requires the respondents to choose the categories of second-hand products (based on Table 1) they had purchased up to the time of study, which means they could choose more than one category.

3. What categories of item do you buy? You may choose more than one answer:
54 responses
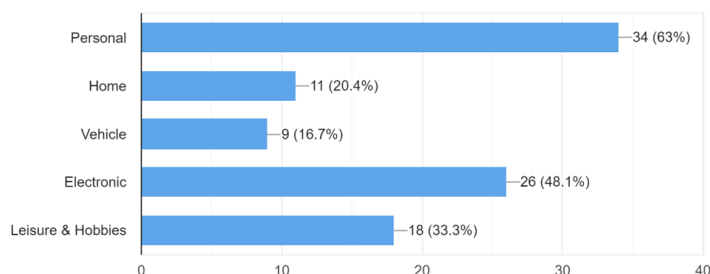
Figure 5: The categories of second-hand products bought by the respondents

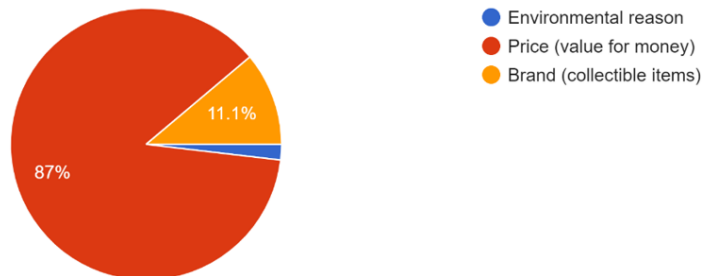Based on Figure 5, the second-hand product category which is the most popular among the respondents is personal item where 34 (63%) out of the 60 respondents had bought items in that category. It is followed by electronic, where 26 (48.1%) out of 60 respondents had made second-hand purchases from that category. Leisure and hobby category is the third most popular with 18 (33.3%) out of the 60 respondents admitting making a second-hand purchase of items in that category while the least popular are home and vehicle categories where only 11(20.4%) and 9 (16.7%) out of 60 respondents had made purchases from the categories respectively.

d)   Results from 5-point Likert scale questions

For question 4 and 5, the respondents were asked to rate their agreement to three statements based on 5-point Likert Scale as follows: 1=strongly disagree (1 point); 2 =disagree (2 points); 3= neutral (3 points); 4=agree (4 points); 5= strongly agree (5 points). Table 2 and 3 show the average scores for each of the statements for question 4 and 5 respectively.

Question 4: "When deciding to buy the second-hand product, what are the factors that influenced you to make the purchase?"

Table 2
The average score for question 4

The Statements	Average Score
The factor that influences my decision to buy a second-hand product is the **price**.	3.98
My decision to buy a second-hand product is influenced by the **brand**.	3.5
I will look at the **condition of the product** before deciding to buy.	4.13

Based on Table 2, the factor which has the biggest influence on the respondents' decision of purchasing a second-hand item was the product condition, followed by the price. The product brand has the least influence on their decision.

Question 5: "What is your main concern when buying second-hand products?"

Table 3
The average score for question 5

The Statements	Average Score
I am concerned about **the hygiene** of the second-hand products such as clothing, shoes and other personal items	3.83
When buying second hand products, I worry about **the quality** because usually the warranty period has expired	3.80
I worry about the **negative stigma** attached to buying second-hand products	3.30

Based on Table 3, the respondents' major concerns are hygiene (3.83) and the quality (3.80) of the second-hand products. They are least concerned about the stigma (3.30) attached to buying second-hand items.

e)   Section C: Respondents' who have never made second-hand purchase

Finally, section C was intended for the respondents who had never made second-hand purchase to choose the factors which deter them from purchasing second-hand products. Based on Figure 3 only 10% (6) out of 60 respondents had never made second-hand purchase. The main factor which had deterred the respondent from purchasing second-hand products is 'hygiene' as 5 (83.3%) out of the 6 respondents had chosen this category followed by the 'perceived quality of the products' which was chosen by 3 (50%) respondents. Other factors such as 'negative stigma', 'the products may be from someone with contagious diseases' and 'can get new one at a cheaper price' share the same percentage of 16.7% since only one respondent had made purchase from these categories.

7. If no, what are the reasons why you do not buy second-hand product? You may choose more than one answer:
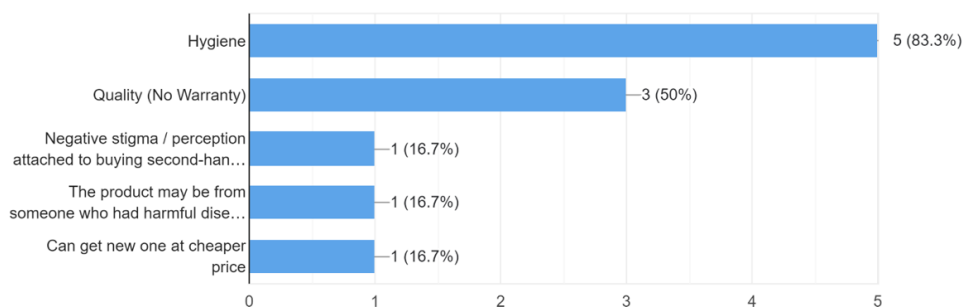
6 responses

Figure 6: The factors that deter the respondents from buying second-hand products

5.   Conclusion

Based on the survey, it can be concluded that the majority or 90% of the respondents have had experienced with purchasing second-hand products. The percentage is higher than the percentage reported by Carousell Group Recommerce Index 2021 which found that 80% of Malaysians have had second-hand purchase experience (Aman, 2021). The findings are in contrast with the study by Tu et al. (2022) who found that 79.5% of the Taiwanese consumers in their study had never purchased second-hand goods and have no intention of making second-hand purchase in the future.

It can also be concluded the respondents in the study are not environmentally conscious since only 1.9% of them bought second-hand products due to their concern for the environment. The percentage is much lower than reported by Tarai and Shailaja (2020) who conducted their study among Indian consumers. They found that 38.84% of their participants acknowledged that buying second-hand products was an environment-friendly option.

In addressing the first research question, although the respondents chose 'price' as the main reason for them to purchase second-hand products and not for 'environmental reason' or for 'branded item collection', the main factor influencing their purchase is the condition of the products. They would buy if it is still in good condition and 'is value for money', not simply because the product in question is cheap. Like the issue that discourages those who have not considered or purchased second-hand products, the respondents who have purchased second-hand items cite hygiene as their top concern. This is consistent with the study conducted by Tarai and Shailaja (2020) which revealed that the majority associated second-hand goods with being out unhygienic.

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Authors Contributions

Nor Ashikin Ab Manan was primarily responsible for the conceptualization and design of the study, while Nor Nadia Raslee was actively engaged in the comprehensive literature review and led the data collection efforts. Nor Ashikin Ab Manan is responsible in drafting the initial manuscript, conducted statistical analyses, and provided critical input throughout the manuscript revision process.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest associated with this publication.

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