How Do In-Store Environmental Cues Influence Malaysian Shoppers?
A Study of Hypermarket Customers in Malaysia

By
Wee Yu Ghee
yughee@umk.edu.my
University Malaysia Kelantan

Kamarul Zaman Ahmad
drkamphd@yahoo.com
University of Malaya

ABSTRACT

The importance of retail store design and merchandising policies rests in the ability of the physical retail environment to alter shopping reactions and behaviour. Specifically, this research paper examines relationship between physical hypermarket environments, Malaysian shoppers' emotions and their subsequent shopping behaviour besides considering the role of self regulation as moderator of relationships between consumers' shopping emotions and their post shopping evaluations. Overall, the findings of this study refute the general postulation that shopping emotions directly influence resource expenditure and shopping values. Results also contradict with previous research which indicates that action oriented shoppers are less responsive to environmental stimuli and subsequently spend less on resource expenditure because puzzled findings from this study reflects that Malaysian shoppers spend more money than they expect despite having high self degree of control. Significantly, findings show that feelings of dominance, previously dismissed as unimportant, significantly alter the shopping behavior of Malaysian shoppers. Therefore, this study proves the relevancy of measuring 'dominance' in the shopping emotions analysis. And finally, the last test result of this study postulates the rise of hedonic values experienced by Malaysian shoppers resulted from increased resource expenditures.

Keyword : In-store environmental cues – Shopping emotion – Shopping behaviour

INTRODUCTION

This research paper examines how the physical setting of hypermarket or better known as the in-store environmental cues, influences human behaviour. So far there is no clear evidence that proves any direct causality between the environment and the overt human behaviour. Nevertheless, it has been established and observed that the physical environment can, to some extent, be supportive or act as catalyst to certain behaviour, i.e. influence resource expenditure and shopping values of shoppers, in particular the hypermarket shoppers.

Kotler first introduced concepts relating to store environments more than two decades ago (Kotler, 1973). In advocating the significance of the store environment in stimulating a customer's desire to purchase, Kotler maintained the importance of store atmospherics, which he defined as the conscious design of a shopping environment to produce specific emotional effects that would enhance purchase probability. Since then, many researchers have studied the ways in which various in-store environmental cues might influence the behaviour of shoppers. With the subsequent introduction of Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) in-store emotions model, investigation into the relationship between consumer responses and

environmental cues further mushroomed. This stream of investigation shows positive relationship between intensified shopping emotions and resource expenditure (Dawson et al., 1990; Donovan and Rossiter, 1982; Hui and Bateson, 1991). Borrowing heavily from Mehrabian and Russell's work, Babin and Darden (1995) have further proposed an integrative framework (B-D) model to explain the relationships between environmentally aroused shopping emotions, resource expenditure and shopping values. They have also introduced an additional personality variable, self-regulation into their framework to examine how it might moderate the relationships.
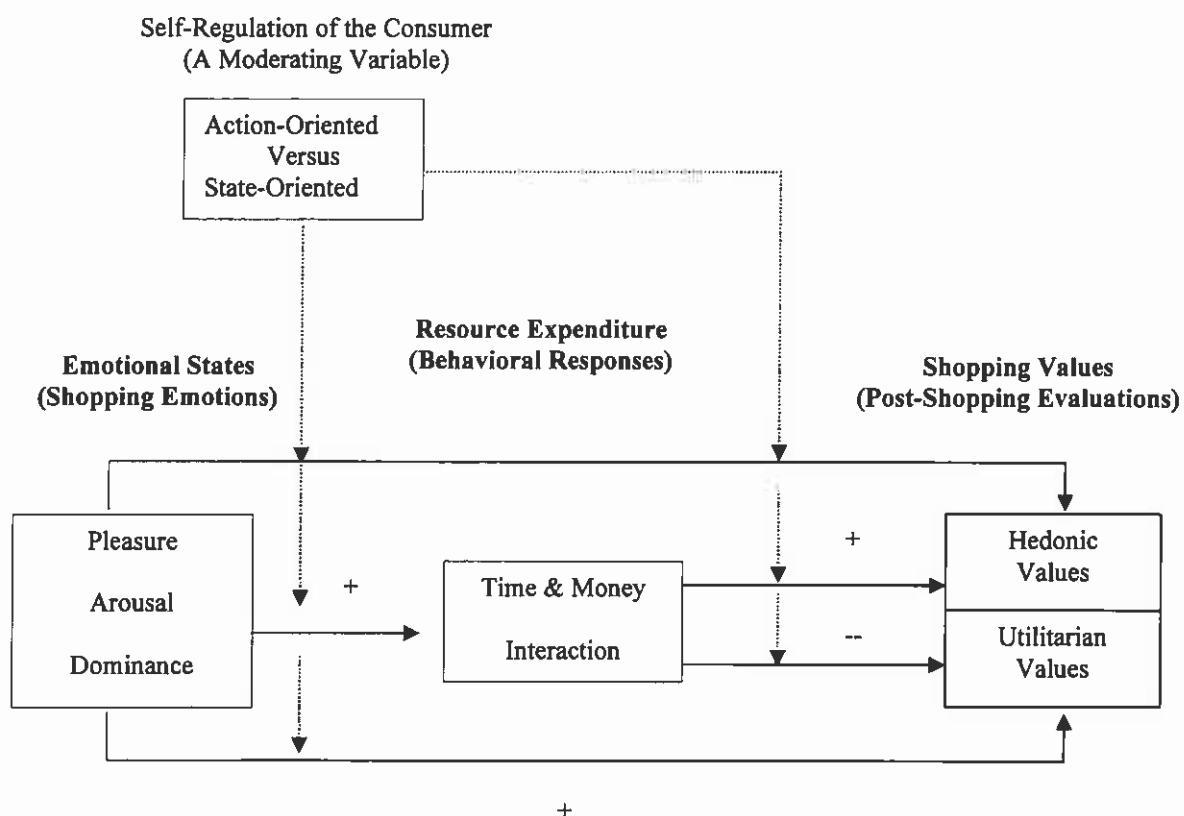
Following the framework of Babin and Darden (1995), this research paper aims to study the applicability of B-D model (Figure 1) to Malaysian shoppers. This paper also seeks to examine consumer self-regulation as a partial explanation for this variance in consumer behaviour. Further, it looks beyond differences in shopping intentions and examines variation in the store environment's effect on post shopping evaluations. The study results will have potential theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the results extend knowledge concerning the effects of the retail environment on behaviour by empirically including the role of consumer individual differences. In addition, it adds to the body of consumer behaviour theory concerning consumers' self-regulatory abilities (Bagozzi, Baumgartner and Yi, 1992). Practically, retailers can consider the effectiveness of store design and merchandising policies on their particular clientele in light of the findings presented here

LITERATURE REVIEW

The effective management of person-environment interactions is increasingly becoming a viable retail management tactic. Specialty chains like the Knot Shop and Victoria's Secret consider management of the physical environment an important element in both their financial success and in providing customers with a valuable shopping experience (Eroglu and Machleit, 1993). A key assumption justifying management's reliance on tactical atmospherics is that consumer actions can be influenced precisely at the critical "moment of truth" where direct interaction with the service providing environment takes place (Bitner, 1992; Bitner, Booms and Mohr, 1994, p. 95).

Basic marketing research supports the assumption that the physical service providing environment influences customer behaviour through studies documenting systematic variation in consumer cognitions and behaviour attributed to physical consumption environment characteristics (Bitner, Booms and Tetreault, 1990; Cole and Gaeth, 1990; Eroglu and Machleit, 1990; Iyer, 1989). Specifically, research on store atmospherics documents the retail environment's capacity for altering consumer emotions (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982; Kotler, 1974). In promoting the significance of the store's environment in stimulating a customer's desire to purchase, Kotler maintained the importance of store atmospherics, which he defined as the conscious design of a shopping environment to produce specific emotional effects that would enhance purchase probability.

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Figure 1   A Graphic Representation of the B-D Model

Self-Regulation of the Consumer
(A Moderating Variable)

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        ┌─────────────────┐
        │  Action-Oriented │
        │     Versus       │·····················
        │  State-Oriented  │                    ┊
        └─────────────────┘                    ┊
               ┊                                ┊
               ┊                                ┊
  Emotional States      Resource Expenditure         Shopping Values
  (Shopping Emotions)   (Behavioral Responses)       (Post-Shopping Evaluations)
               ┊                                ┊
  ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐         ┌──────────────┐
  │  Pleasure    │      │              │    +    │  Hedonic     │
  │              │  +   │ Time & Money │         │  Values      │
  │  Arousal     │─────▶│              │────────▶├──────────────┤
  │              │      │ Interaction  │    --   │  Utilitarian │
  │  Dominance   │      │              │────────▶│  Values      │
  └──────────────┘      └──────────────┘         └──────────────┘
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                                +

Note:
+ and -- refers to positive and negative influences respectively
--------- refers to possible moderating effects from self regulation

Since then, many other scholars have studied the relationship between in-store shopping behaviour and such cues as background music (Milliman, 1982), store space (Markin at al., 1976), crowding (Hui and Bateson, 1991; Eroglu and Harrell, 1986), music and lighting, and social interaction (Baker et al., 1992). The change in emotions alters a consumer's mood affecting both shopping behaviour and consumers' post-shopping evaluations (Babin, Darden and Griffin, 1994; Dawson, Bloch and Ridgway, 1990; Gardner, 1985). Emotions evoked by a retail environment also may affect shopping task performance (Bitner, 1990; Eroglu and Harrell, 1986) and can contribute to impulsive and compulsive purchase decisions (O'Guinn and Faber, 1989; Rook, 1987). Thus, there is strong empirical, conceptual, and anecdotal evidence for propositions suggesting a consumer emotion-patronage behaviour relationship.

However, potential variation in the strength and/or nature of these effects across consumers has not been investigated substantially (Dawson et al., 1990). The 'servicescape' model posits the issue conceptually suggesting that personal characteristics, labelled 're-sponse moderators,' may alter the strength and direction of relationships among environ-mental response variables (Bitner, 1992). This study's main research question addresses this proposition empirically. Do some consumers possess traits that diminish or change the effects of environmentally induced shopping emotions on behaviour and/or on the value received from a retail shopping experience? Specifically, consumer self-regulation is examined as a

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potential response moderator of relationships between in-store emotions and subsequent consumer reactions.

Environmental Cues and Shopping Emotions

Based on the classical premises of environmental psychology, studies on shopping emotions often take the view that a retail environment arouses emotions among shoppers. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) proposed a model to explain the relationship between shoppers and the environment, which advocates that there are three basic emotional bipolar dimensions: (1) pleasure-displeasure; (2) arousal-unarousal; and (3) dominance-submissiveness (Baker et al, 1992; Bateson and Hui, 1987; Donovan and Rossitter, 1982). Pleasure-displeasure refers to the degree to which a person feels good, joyful, happy or satisfied in a particular setting; arousal-unarousal refers to the degree to which a person feels excited, stimulated, alert, or active in a given situation; and dominance-submissiveness refers to the extent to which an individual feels in control of the environment.

More solid explanations were provided in studies combining environmental psychology with a growing interest in consumer emotions (Holbrook, 1986; Russell and Pratt, 1980). Shoppers experiencing relatively high pleasure and arousal generally spend more time in a store and are more willing to make a purchase than are displeased or unaroused counterparts. Empirically, the emotional states of shoppers, especially pleasure and arousal, are found to be significant determinants of their approach-avoidance behaviour (Babin and Darden, 1995; Donovan and Rossiter, 1982; Mehrabian and Russell, 1974). A higher arousal will induce such behaviour as spending more time and money in the store; and interacting more frequently with sales personnel (Baker et al., 1992; Donovan et al., 1994).

Although dominance is also expected to exert considerable bearing on approach-avoidance behaviour by making shoppers feel free to act in various ways (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974), the findings with respect to dominance are less clear. In view of this, some researchers have proposed the deletion of dominance from the analysis of shopping emotions (Donovan and Rossiter, 1982), whereas others have respecified it as an antecedent of pleasure and arousal (Bateson and Hui, 1985). Nevertheless, in developing their B-D model, Babin and Darden (1995) argue that lack of an overall relationship between shopping emotions and post-shopping evaluations is due to the presence of a moderator, namely self-regulation. Using structural equation modelling technique, they have shown that dominance exerts more positive influences on subjects with low self-regulation than on those high self-regulation.

Shopping Values as Post-Shopping Evaluation

Growing research interest in consumer experiences has revealed that shopping involves experiential as well as instrumental outcomes (Babin et al., 1994). Alongside this, Hirshman and Holbrook (1982) have conceptualised post-shopping experiences as comprising both utilitarian and hedonic shopping values.

In short, utilitarian shopping values refer to instrumental benefits that result from the successful completion of the shopping chore, whereas hedonic shopping values largely concern experiential benefits (e.g. fun and novelty) that are derived directly from the shopping process itself (Babin and Darden, 1995).

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In addition to advancing the understanding of various kinds of consumption behaviour, such as impulsive buying and browsing, these shopping values are regarded as consequences of emotional states (Babin et al., 1994). As generally advocated, a change in shoppers' emotional state alters their shopping mood and ultimately their shopping behaviour and post-shopping evaluations (Allen et al., 1992; Babin et al., 1994; Dawson et al., 1990; Gardner, 1985; Holbrook, 1986). Among the three emotional dimensions, pleasure and arousal seem to exert more readily observable influences on shopping values. For instance, previous studies have demonstrated that these two dimensions are positively correlated with hedonic values (Babin et al., 1994; Mano and Oliver, 1993; Unger and Kernan, 1983). Although the degree of association is not as strong as in the case of hedonic values, pleasure and arousal have also been found to relate positively to utilitarian shopping values (Eroglu and Harrell, 1986; Isen, 1987; Kroeber-Riel, 1979). However, the findings of these studies cast doubt on the role of dominance in inducing desired post-shopping responses.

Although B-D model hypothesizes that resource expenditure, due to the impact of shopping emotions, will influence both types of shopping values, the influence in different in sign. While resource expenditure is postulated to positively affect hedonic shopping values, it is advocated to have a negative impact on utilitarian values. This negative impact could be attributed to the unexpected increase in resource expenditure, which undermines the successful completion of the shopping chore. In other words, under the influence of emotion-provoked environmental cues, increases in resource expenditure often imply a shopper's use of more time and money than originally expected in accomplishing the shopping task. The failure to comply with an original budget would thus have an adverse effect on the shopper's utilitarian shopping values.

Consumer Self-Regulation

Compared to the considerable work addressing store-based consumer emotions' consequences, relatively little attention has been given to the effect of personal characteristics on these relationships. The servicescape model (Bitner, 1992), which offers an explanation of behavioural responses to a retail environment, suggests that personality variables may represent response moderators explaining differing consumer reactions to the same physical environment. This is consistent with personality's definition as the individual difference characteristic determining one's reactions to environments (Kassarjin, 1971).

The basic issue becomes locating consumer characteristics that make them more or less prone to these store-based emotions or that lead to a catastatic mode of behaviour. One such trait is a consumer's self-regulatory tendency (Kuhl, 1992 for a review). Kuhl's (1986) action-control theory addresses this person characteristic. Action-control theory's basic premise is that current action depends upon establishing a single dominant action tendency from among many competing action tendencies. The basic dichotomy drawn by Kuhl (1985, 1986, and 1992) is between people who are "action" oriented versus people who are "state" oriented.

Action oriented individuals generally form relatively firm intentions prior to starting an activity and are less susceptible to competing contextually derived action tendencies that interfere with original intentions. These intentions are supported by action oriented individuals' tendency to develop emotional and environmental control mechanisms that suppress inherently occurring competing action tendencies presenting themselves during some activity (Kuhl, 1986). The key mechanism operationalising this tendency is the fully developed

cognitive structure of action-oriented individuals resulting in greater justification of an action prior to its performance. Architecturally, rules (propositions) guiding behaviour are more detailed and have greater strength.

Conversely, state oriented individuals possess a cognitive structure guided more by social and emotional elements of some internal or external state (Kuhl, 1986). The result is degenerated intentions and a greater susceptibility to perform behaviour without prior justification. Their cognitive structure is characterized by rules with low strength and greater susceptibility to interference. Thus, state oriented individuals are characterized by a relatively low ability to self regulate behaviour.

Substantial empirical evidence describes differences in behaviour attributable to self-regulatory tendency (Kuhl, 1992). Task performance, for example, can be affected by an action or state orientation. One experiment showed that state oriented individuals display relatively poor performance on a difficult task compared to action oriented counterparts (Kuhl, 1981). Differences in performance were attributed to state oriented subjects' tendency to concentrate more on their inevitable failure and its related emotional consequences, while action oriented individuals concentrate more on task performance itself (Harackiewicz and Elliot, 1993). Other evidence shows action oriented individuals to be more likely to perform recreational activities as planned (Kuhl, 1982), have lower test anxiety (Kuhl, 1985), and to be affected less by heightened emotional intensity (Kuhl, 1983).

The same self-regulatory tendencies that affect behaviour elsewhere may influence consumer behaviours as well. Bagozzi et al. (1992) in commenting on variation in the consumer attitudes-intentions-behaviour link note, " . . . one theme that cuts across most explanations is the role of self-regulation in decision making." Their study suggests self regulation as a moderator of the consumer attitudes-intentions relationship. Specifically, a significantly higher correlation between attitudes toward coupon usage and intentions to use coupons was observed among action-oriented consumers (high in self-regulation) than was observed among state oriented consumers (low in self-regulation). Similar effects were hypothesized for both the attitude-behaviour and intentions-behaviour relationships, but neither was supported. The authors conclude by calling for additional research into the effects of consumer self-regulation.

Given that consumer behaviour is commonly perceived as goal-oriented, consumers' self-regulatory abilities may affect decision making by determining the dominant goals in a given situation. Further, a shopper's evaluation of a shopping trip where he/she is unable or fails to complete a specific shopping task because of distractions caused by an exciting store environment may vary with self-regulatory tendency. Thus, the pervasive role of self-regulation seems relevant as a potential moderator of environmentally induced effects on shopping behaviour and outcomes.

Possible Moderating Effects of Self-Regulation In Retail Environment

Self-regulation refers to the personality trait that establishes a single dominant action tendency among many competing action tendencies. This trait is considered to have significant bearing on shoppers' emotional response to the in-store environment. Depending on their degree of self-regulation, people can be classified as either action or state oriented (Kuhl, 1981). Action-oriented individuals or people with high self-regulation are those who emphasize on task performance, whereas state-oriented individuals or people with low self-regulation are those who focus on emotional consequences (Kuhl, 1981; 1984; Bagozzi et al. 1992). As evidences in previous studies (e.g. Kuhl, 1992; Babin and Darden, 1995), state

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oriented individuals are less likely to regulate their behaviour, and more susceptible to influences of environmental stimuli. In the context of shopping, this differentiation implies that, given the same set of in-store environmental cues, state-oriented shoppers are more likely to be emotionally induced to spend larger amounts of resources and derive higher shopping values than their action oriented counterparts.

With reference to Kuhl's (1986) action-control orientation instrument, eight measurement items were adopted in the present study to capture hypermarket shoppers' degrees of self-regulation.

OBJECTIVES

Although considerable research efforts have been devoted to developing theories to explain the interactions between retail environments and consumer responses, most have only been verified in Western countries. As such, whether they are applicable in other cultural settings has yet to be tested. However, such cross-cultural testing is considered necessary as most of these theories are concerned with the consumer's psychological states, which, in turn, are heavily bound by culture (Triandis, 1982).

The present study aims to examine the applicability of the B-D model to Malaysian shoppers. With reference to the basic premises of the B-D model, this study specifically involves examination on the exact inter-relationships among shopping emotions, resource expenditure and shopping values of the Malaysian. Following Babin and Darden's approach, this study also explores the possible moderating role of self-regulation on consumers' emotional responses. Undoubtedly, the findings of this study can help assess the external validity of the B-D model and advance retail practitioners' understandings of the mindset of Malaysian shoppers. While previous studies only applied B-D model in a Western cultural setting, the present study differentiates from them by externally validating this popular American-based shopping behaviour model in Malaysian multi-cultural context. Specifically, below are the research objectives of this study:

1. To investigate and understand the unique mindset and emotional responses of Malaysian shoppers towards hypermarket environment.

2. To investigate the relationship between shopping emotions and consumer resource expenditures among state oriented customers and action-oriented customers.

3. To assess the net impact of environmental cues on customers short-term and long-term perceptions towards hypermarket in Malaysia.

HYPOTHESES

The B-D model postulates a direct influence of environmentally provoked emotions (shopping emotions) on evaluations of shopping expenditures (shopping values). It further postulates an indirect impact of shopping emotions on shopping values, through the mediator of resource expenditure. The relationships between these three variables are, in turn, hypothesized to be moderated by shopper's self-regulation, a personality trait that determines an individual's susceptibility to environmental cues (Gardner, 1985). Therefore, with the

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given model, we propose to analyze the same situation in Malaysian society context. Firstly, to examine if Malaysian shopping emotions influence their resource expenditure, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1:   Malaysian shoppers' shopping emotions will exert insignificant influence
          on their resource expenditure.

Self-Regulation in the Retail Environment

Drawing on previous empirical and theoretical research, we suggest that the effects of the retail environment on shopping behavior and post shopping evaluations are moderated by consumer self-regulation (action/state orientation). Two general patterns of relationships are expected.

First, state-oriented consumers' increased susceptibility to context effects (competing action tendencies) suggests that in-store emotions are likely to impact them significantly more than action oriented shoppers. If so, positive relationships between shopping emotions and resource expenditures demonstrated in previous studies should be greater among state oriented than they are among action-oriented shoppers. Impulsive consumer acts provide a specific example.

A key factor explaining impulsive consumer behavior is heightened emotional arousal (Rook, 1987). Consistent with evidence in non-consumption contexts discussed, action-oriented shoppers may possess control mechanisms making them less affected by these emotions. Hypothetically, an action oriented shopper might intentionally leave a credit card at home in an effort to control overspending in a highly arousing shopping environment. Likewise, other controlling propositions may become part of the action-oriented consumers' shopping schema and be conspicuously absent from the cognitive structure of state oriented shoppers (Kuhl, 1986; Bitner et al., 1994). Thus, the action-oriented shopper is more likely to focus their efforts on acquiring only planned purchases rather than reacting to stone-based emotions in the form of impulsive acts.

Similar inferences can be drawn with respect to non-monetary resource expenditure. Previous studies support positive relationships between both pleasure and arousal and the economic and time resources expended in a retail environment (Dawson et al., 1990; Donovan and Rossiter, 1982; Hui and Bateson, 1991). However, an action-oriented shopper may overcome strong negative emotions, evoking an avoidance response among some consumers. Conversely, a state oriented shopper may succumb to the competing action tendency of leaving a store rather than following through with their original shopping plans. The weight of evidence suggests self-regulation as a moderator, leading to the construct of second hypothesis:

H2:   The relationship between shopping emotions and consumer resource expenditures is
        greater among state oriented consumers than it is among action-oriented consumers.

Relationship Between Resource Expenditure and Utilitarian Shopping Values

The B-D model postulated that resource expenditure would have a negative impact on utilitarian shopping values. This negative impact could be attributed to the unexpected increase in resource expenditure, which undermines the successful completion of the

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shopping chore. In other words, as the shopper is unable to accomplish his shopping task within planned monetary budget and time frame, the increase in resource expenditure would have a negative impact on his utilitarian shopping values.

Therefore, with the given model, we propose to analyze same situation but in a multi-cultural context in Malaysia. Our study proposes this last hypothesis:

> H3: Increased resource expenditure will have insignificant adverse impact on the utilitarian shopping values of Malaysian shoppers.

METHODOLOGY

To accomplish the aforementioned research objectives, a survey approach was adopted. A modified shopper-intercept format was used to obtain a sample and collect the necessary data. The data collection followed procedures used to assess the retail environment's impact on shopping behavior (Babin et al., 1994; Dawson et al., 1990; Donovan and Rossiter, 1982; Ward, Bitner and Barnes, 1992).
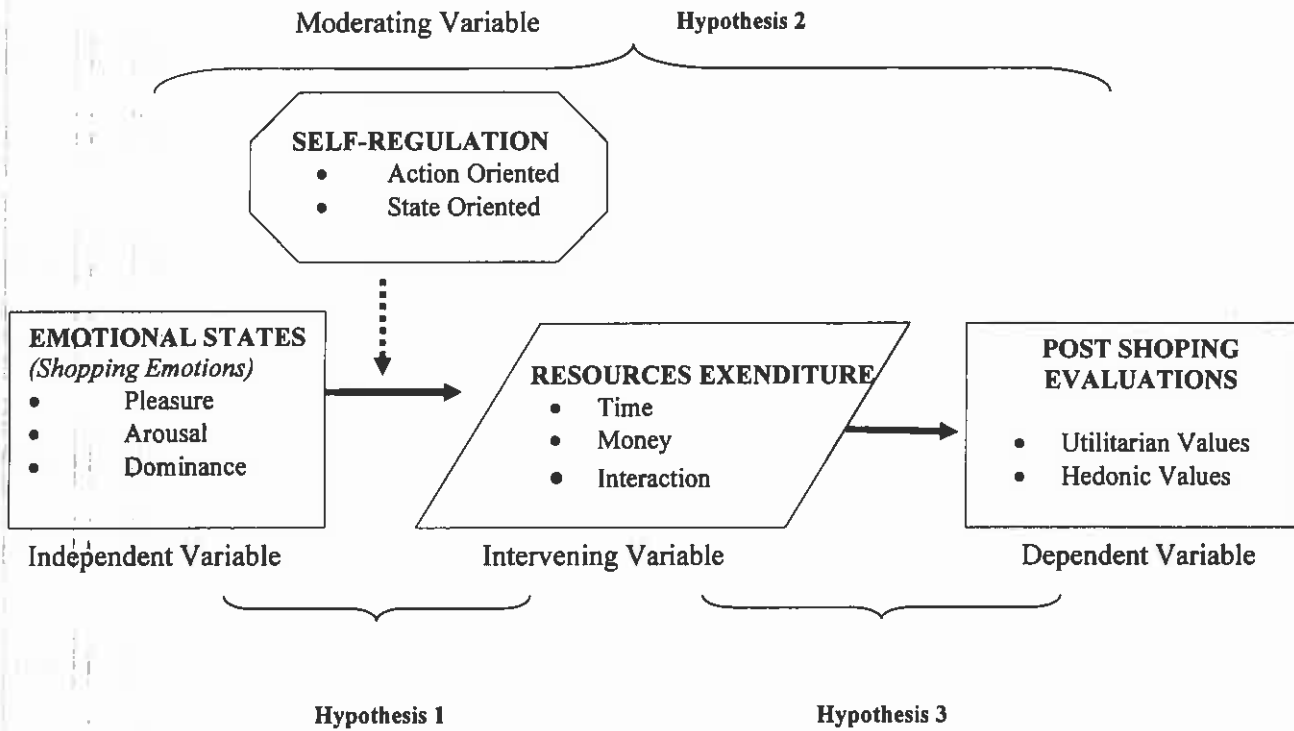
The Research Model

This study is based on the shopping emotions model of Babin and Darden (1995), which evaluates the effect of the retail environment on shopping behavior with the shopper self-regulation as a moderator.

Briefly, the B-D model postulates a direct influence of environmentally provoked emotions (shopping emotions) on evaluations of shopping experiences (shopping values). The model further postulates an indirect impact of shopping emotions on shopping values, through the mediator of resources expenditure. The relationships between these three variables are hypothesized to be moderated by shoppers' self-regulation, a personality trait that determines an individual's susceptibility to environmental cues (Gardner, 1985). This last postulation draws heavily on Kuhl's (1981) self regulation theory, which suggests that personality variables often play a significant role in explaining idiosyncratic consumer reactions to the same environmental cues. For reference, the framework of this study examines the applicability of B-D model in Malaysia, as simplified in Figure 2 below.

The Measures

A total of 150 hypermarket patrons were successfully interviewed. Shoppers were intercepted while shopping at two out of the five major hypermarkets in the country. The researchers identified themselves as associated with a local university and asked every fifth adult exiting the hypermarket to complete the survey. Respondents were intercepted near the exits within each store and provided with necessary materials to complete the questionnaires comfortably. Only one respondent was approached at a time in the given store and interviewers were instructed to answer any questions that might arise. The questionnaire used in this study is similar to Babin and Darden's, (1995) with slight modifications done. The questionnaire is divided into four parts. Each of the parts targets to test on particular variable of the respondent namely shopping emotions, resources expenditure, post shopping evaluations and self-regulation.

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Figure 2   A Graphic Representation of the B-D Model

Moderating Variable   Hypothesis 2

SELF-REGULATION
- Action Oriented
- State Oriented

EMOTIONAL STATES
(Shopping Emotions)
- Pleasure
- Arousal
- Dominance

RESOURCES EXENDITURE
- Time
- Money
- Interaction

POST SHOPING EVALUATIONS
- Utilitarian Values
- Hedonic Values

Independent Variable   Intervening Variable   Dependent Variable

Hypothesis 1   Hypothesis 3

Part A of the questionnaire consists of items concerning the respondent's personal and job demographic details. The items included in Section A are:

Personal and Job Demographics

Gender
Age
Race
Marital Status
Educational Level
Employment Status
Monthly Income

This is followed by Part B, which aimed at measuring respondents' shopping emotions. All the items to measure pleasure, arousal and dominance are coded on a 5-point scale ranging from "1 = strongly disagree" to "5 = strongly agree". 'R' scores are reversed prior to statistical analysis.

Pleasure
I feel happy in this hypermarket.
I feel satisfied in this hypermarket.
I feel disgusted in this hypermarket. (R)

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I feel annoyed in this hypermarket. (R)

Arousal
I feel aroused in this hypermarket.
I feel stimulated in this hypermarket.
I feel excited in this hypermarket.
I feel sleepy in this hypermarket. (R)

Dominance
I feel in-control in this hypermarket.
I feel powerful in this hypermarket.
I feel bold in this hypermarket.
I feel free in this hypermarket.

Part C of the questionnaire continues to measure how much resource expenditure shoppers are spent at the hypermarket, in terms of time, money and interaction with sales personnel. These questions examine how Malaysians' shopping emotions influence their resource expenditure:

How many sales staff did you talk to while shopping?
I spent more time than expected in this hypermarket.
While shopping, I spent more money than I expected.
I spent _____ minutes in this hypermarket.
I spent RM_____ in this hypermarket.

Part D of the questionnaire requires respondents to reflect on their post-shopping evaluation. All the items to measure shopping values are coded on a 5-point scale ranging from "1 = strongly disagree" to "5 = strongly agree". The first six statements concern utilitarian values whereas the other four statements measure hedonic values:

Utilitarian Values
I continued to shop here, not because I had to, because I wanted to.
I enjoyed being immersed in exciting new products at this hypermarket.
I enjoyed this shopping trip for its own sake.
When shopping in this hypermarket, I feel excitement of the hunt.
While shopping here, I was able to forget my problems.
Compared to other things, I could have done, the time spent here was truly enjoyable.

Hedonic Values
I accomplished just what I wanted to while in this hypermarket.
I could not buy the things that I really needed.
While shopping, I found just the item(s) I was looking for.
I feel disappointed because I'll have to go another store to complete my shopping.

The final part, Part E of the questionnaire consists of statements assessing self-regulation of respondents. Eight statements are established to ascertain Malaysian shoppers' degree of self-control (action-oriented as opposed to state-oriented). Shoppers with high scores will be

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classified as 'action-oriented' and shoppers with low scores will be classified as 'state-oriented'. All these items are coded on a 5-point scale ranging from "1 = strongly disagree" to 5 = strongly agree".

When I have a lot of important things to take care of, it is easy for me to make a plan and stick to it.
When I have two things that I would like to do and can only do one, I decide between them pretty quickly.
When I have to complete a difficult assignment, I can concentrate on the individual parts of the assignment.
When I have planned to do something unfamiliar in the following week, I stick with what I've planned.
When I know that something has to be done soon, I just think about how I can finish it the fastest.
When I have to solve a difficult problem, I think about which way would be the best to try first.
When I'm trying to solve a difficult problem and there are two solutions that seem equally good to me, I make a spontaneous decision for one of the two without thinking much about it.
When I've planned to buy just one piece of clothing but then see several things that I like, I usually don't think about it very long and decide relatively soon.

RESULTS

Although all the constructs under investigation of this study were drawn from existing literature and purified by the opinions of experts and focus groups, a statistical procedure was adopted to ensure their validity. Overall, the reliability coefficient of the 42 items undertaken in the study was tested and found at alpha of 0.7991. This implies that all constructs in the questionnaire are highly reliable and it further assures the degree to which these measures are free from error, yielding consistent results.

For the first hypothesis, the relationship between the shopping emotions and resource expenditure spent by shoppers is ascertained. To begin with, the sum of total shopping emotions and total resource expenditure were computed. These two sums, namely total shopping emotions and total resource expenditure were then correlated using statistical tool to examine if any significant relationship existed. It was found that there was no significant relationship between these two variables -- shopping emotions and resource expenditure. Therefore, we did not reject this first hypothesis. This is in contrary with previous studies, which dictated that, the emotional state of shoppers, specifically pleasure, arousal and dominance were significant determinants of shopper's subsequent behavior such as spending more time and money in the store. This puzzled findings reflected that, Malaysian shoppers tend to be less susceptible to environmental cues than the Westerner shoppers. Even when emotionally provoked, Malaysian shoppers would be less inclined to spend additional resources than what has been suggested in Western literature.

In relation to this hypothesis statement, we further analyzed the relationship between each subcomponent of shopping emotions and that of resource expenditure. Specifically, four items measuring pleasure were totaled and correlated individually with total money spent, total time spent and total interaction undertaken; this procedure was repeated for arousal and dominance variables. Surprisingly, out of these subcomponents analysis, one significant

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relationship was found. Pleasure was found to have significantly influenced the amount of time spent by Malaysian shoppers at the store, with the correlation coefficient of 0.189.

The last section of the questionnaire -- Part E, assessed shoppers' self-regulation abilities (action-oriented as opposed to state-oriented). Eight statements were established to ascertain Malaysian shoppers' degree of self-control. Responses to these eight statements were summed. Shoppers with high scores were classified as 'action-oriented' and shoppers with low scores were classified as 'state-oriented'. As recommended by Kuhl (1985), a median split should be benchmarked against the scores so as to classify respondents.

Therefore, the mean and median for total scores of all respondents were computed through frequency. The average score was found to be 27.5667 and median 28. This enables us to conclude that respondents who scored 28 and above are regarded as action oriented, and those below 28 are considered as state oriented shoppers. Upon such computation, more than 50% of the population, i.e. 80 respondents out of the 150 total samples were found to be highly self-regulated person (action oriented).

To test on the second hypothesis, two main analyses were conducted. Firstly, we analyzed the relationship between total self-regulation and total shopping emotions. Secondly, the relationship between total self-regulation and total resource expenditure was examined. Since the items in the study measured the degree of action orientation among Malaysian shoppers, the rational behind this analysis is that, should the relationship between total self regulation and total shopping emotions be significant, it indicates that action-oriented persons tend to be more responsive to environmental cues. At the same time, it also implies that state oriented persons, as opposed to action-oriented, tend to be less susceptible to shopping environment.

Statistical findings indicated that overall, no significant relationship was found between self-regulation and shopping emotions. Similarly, there was no significant relationship between self-regulation and resource expenditure. In relation to this, we further analyzed the relationship between self regulation and the subcomponent of shopping emotions namely pleasure, arousal and dominance, followed by the subcomponent of resource expenditures including time, money and interaction. As a result, self regulation was found to have significant relationship with dominance state of shopping emotion, with correlation coefficient reported at −0.209. This implies that Malaysian action oriented shoppers tend to feel dominant in shopping environment where they feel in-control, powerful and free in the hypermarket.

Besides, findings also indicated that there was significant relationship between self-regulation and total money spent at the hypermarket, with correlation coefficient reported at 0.188. This result contradicts previous literature which suggested that action oriented people, having high degree of self control tend to be less responsive to environmental cue and consequently spent less resource expenditure. When emotionally revoked, action oriented shoppers in Malaysia still spent more money than they expected. Here, the relationship between resource expenditure and the respective post-shopping evaluations -- utilitarian and hedonic values is determined. Since there was no significant relationship between resource expenditure and utilitarian values, we did not reject this final hypothesis. This certified that increased resource expenditure had no impact on utilitarian values of Malaysian shoppers.

However, significant relationship was found between resource expenditure and hedonic values, with overall correlation coefficient found at 0.413. Specifically, two subcomponents of resource expenditure, namely time and money had significant relationship with hedonic values, with correlation coefficient reported at 0.397 and 0.332 respectively.

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In addition to the above hypothetical analysis, the demographic details of the total sample were analyzed and could be summarized as follows. Overall, 61 male shoppers and 89 female shoppers made up the total sample. Most shoppers participated in the study were either in the range of under 25 years old (39.3%) or between 25 to 35 years old (35.3%), and only 2 shoppers were in the age of above 55 years old. In terms of race, Chinese made up the most population (47.3%), followed closely by Malay shoppers (36%), Indian (12.7%) and others (4%). More than half of these shoppers (54.7%) reported to be single. Besides, in terms of educational level, most shoppers (44%) held bachelor degree and 16% of the total sample obtained master degree as their qualifications. However, out of the total sample of 150 shoppers, only 91 were employed or self-employed. The remaining ones reported as not working. Since one third of the total population in the study reported as not having any occupation, 29.3% respondents had monthly income less than RM1000 whereas 36% respondents earned an income of between RM1000 to RM3000 every month. Only 7.3% respondents had monthly income reported at RM5000 and above.

DISCUSSION & PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

This section is devoted to discussing implications derived from the aforementioned empirical findings. Firstly, implications relating specifically to hypothesis testing will be examined and this is subsequently followed by demographic analysis and other implications in practical terms as regards to in-store environmental cues.

Regarding the testing of first hypothesis, we failed to reject this hypothesis, which stipulated that, "Malaysian shoppers' shopping emotions will exert insignificant influence on their resource expenditure." Specifically, the test result of the first hypothesis indicates that overall, the shopping emotions of Malaysian shoppers do not influence their resource expenditure significantly. This puzzled findings is contrary to previous studies which suggested that emotional state of shoppers, especially pleasure and arousal will induce such behavior as spending more time and money in the store and interacting more frequently with sales personnel.

These findings may be attributed to the different temperamental characteristics between Malaysians and Westerners. Malaysians which are composed by multi-cultural races, tend to make up their unique "personal activity orientation". The nature of Malaysian multi-cultural norms and socialization practices which emphasizes on obedience, conformity, self-abasement and harmonious relationships lead us to believe that most Malaysians have high self-degree of control. Therefore, given Malaysian's general tendency to control their impulses and refrain from expressive spontaneity, it is likely that they would be less responsive to in-store environmental cues. And even when they are emotionally provoked, it is very unlikely that they will spend additional resource as what has been suggested for Westerners.

In practical terms, the above result helps remind retailers of the minor effects or minimal impact that in-store environmental cues have on Malaysian shoppers. Although results of previous study have proven how effective emotion-provoked environmental cues in generating in-store resource expenditure, this has not been the case in Malaysia. In view of this, there may be a need for retailing practitioners operating in Malaysia to further improve on their in-store environmental cues and see if there is any impact on Malaysian shoppers' behavior. Upon improving on the current in-store environmental settings, should findings reflect positive relationship between Malaysian shopping emotions and their resource

expenditure, it indicates that the current in-store environmental cues have been poorly designed that it fails to provoke shopping emotions and hence improvement needed to be done. Or, alternatively, the retailers can look for other ways besides in-store environmental cues to induce Malaysian shoppers to stay longer and spend more in the store.

While the test results of the first hypothesis tend to contradict the findings of previous study, the second hypothesis hints at potential effects of shopping emotions and resource expenditure on action-oriented shoppers. Overall, there was no significant relationship between self regulation and shopping emotions, and neither was there significant relationship between self regulation and resource expenditure. However, new finding was discovered when analyzed subcategorically, dominance was found to have significant relationship with self regulation. This implies that action-oriented shoppers in Malaysian, despite having high-degree of self control, tend to feel powerful, in control and free in the hypermarket. Although previous literature dictates that action oriented shopper would be less susceptible to environmental stimuli, Malaysian action oriented shoppers, in contrast, appeared responsive to in-store environmental cues to the extent where they feel dominant.

This findings should be practically precious to retail practitioners operating in Malaysia. Although first hypothesis proves that Malaysian are less inclined to spend additional resources even when emotionally provoked due to their high degree of self-control, second hypothesis hints that Malaysians' emotional state does get affected despite being action-oriented shoppers. Hence, retail practitioners operating in the country should realize the importance of in-store environmental cues in inducing not only state-oriented but also action-oriented shoppers.

Furthermore, previous findings with respect to dominance are less clear and some researchers have proposed the deletion of dominance from the analysis of shopping emotions. However, our finding has clearly proven that dominance has exerted considerable effects in making shoppers feel free to act in various ways. Hence, dominance should not be eliminated in this shopping emotions analysis. Instead, it should be the key interest for retail practitioners because of the close link between store layout and control of shopper movement through a store.

Besides, the second hypothesis illustrated another puzzled findings where analyzed subcategorically, total money spent was found to have significant relationship with self regulation. This again refuted previous findings, which state that action-oriented shopper, are less responsive to environmental cues and hence they do not spend additional resource expenditure in the store. Surprisingly, Malaysian shoppers, having high degree of self control, still spent more money than they expected in the hypermarket. This finding proves that in-store environmental cues provoke not only the state-oriented shoppers, but also action-oriented shoppers to spend more. No matter how impulsive or high well the shopper regulates his behavior, he tends to be emotionally induced to spend larger amounts of resources and derive higher shopping values. This phenomena can be explained by the third hypothesis which test results provide evidences that, the more time and money spent by Malaysian, the happier and more fun they feel, indicating a rise in hedonic values.

This last finding from third hypothesis contradicts with previous findings, which stipulates that increased resource expenditure resulted from intensified shopping emotions, exerts highly adverse impact on the utilitarian values of shoppers. Given such stipulation, previous researcher theorized that these negative values may dampen repatronage intention, and ultimately store's profitability. In other words, the previous results suggested that environmental designs that aimed at encouraging shoppers to spend more time and money in a store may be harmful in building customer loyalty.

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Fortunately, this is not the case for Malaysian shoppers who enjoy shopping for the sake of experiencing fun, happiness and novelty shopping, regardless of how much time and money they spend in the store. Since the test results indicated no significant relationship between Malaysians' resource expenditure and utilitarian values, retail practitioners operating in Malaysia need not worry about the adverse impact of these values, as illustrated by previous researcher. The environmental designs aimed at inducing Malaysian shoppers to spend more time and money will not pose any negative effects nor will it affect the hypermarket's profitability because no significant relationship found between resource expenditure and utilitarian values among Malaysian shoppers. And true enough, test results further indicated significant relationship between Malaysians' resource expenditure and their hedonic values.

Taken together, the above findings highlight both the potential advantages and disadvantages associated with the use of environmental cues. While previous findings suggested how cues may induce more on-the-spot resource expenditure among Westerner shoppers, the theories may not work well on Malaysian shoppers who have different temperamental characteristics. Therefore, retail practitioners operating in Malaysia should carefully assess the use and net impact of these environmental cues on both short and long term corporate performance before applying them.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The results of this study provide an encouraging start to understanding of how shopping emotions work among Malaysian consumers at hypermarket. Like most others, this study is not free from limitations.

Firstly, due to the absence of an appropriate sampling frame, a truly random sampling method was prohibited in this study. To overcome this limitation, the survey was administered at a regular interview rate (i.e. to every fifth shopper) across all the opening hours of the hypermarket over the whole week. Having done so, hopefully this procedure can help retain a reasonable degree of representativeness. Secondly, some respondents in this study found it hard to understand and answer questions posed in the questionnaire. Several respondents commented that questions asked in the survey were too difficult to be understood. This may be due to the nature of survey, where only English was used as the medium of instructions. Hence, given such a problem, chances are that these respondents may have given inaccurate ratings. To avoid such limitation, future research done should have its survey translated into Malay, Chinese and Indian so as to facilitate multi-race respondents' understanding.

Lastly, although the use of a single retail setting can help enhance the internal validity of this study, it is important to note the possible drawbacks inherent therein. The research findings derived from hypermarket settings may not be generalizable to other types of retail environment such as supermarket or shopping mall etc. To leverage and further verify the present findings, future retail research investigating environmental cues under Malaysian cultural setting should therefore be extended to other shopping environments to assess the moderating effect of store type.

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