

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE AND
SOME SELECTED ASPECTS OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR:
A STUDY OF MALAYSIAN ADOLESCENTS**

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2011

ABSTRACT

People's consumption patterns are subject to a range of influences and youth are no different in this respect. Globalization creates an explosion of products and images for consumers to choose from. In consequence, one is left with questions concerning how young consumers construct meaningful identities and how strategies may be evoked as lifestyles and subculture fragment.

This study endeavours to explain the impact of American Popular Culture on the behaviour of Malaysian adolescents as well as to determine the impact of popular music as the prominent source of American Popular Culture. This is done to understand the influence of American Popular Culture on Malaysian adolescents' consumption patterns. The pervasiveness of American popular culture through out the world can be seen through extensive reports in all printed and electronic media. However, there are gaps in the body of knowledge investigating the impact of popular culture on the consumption patterns of adolescents. The current study includes the following consumption patterns: conspicuous consumption, price sensitivity, brand sensitivity, fashion consciousness and music television exposure. The reviewed literature points to the existence of significant relationships between American Popular Culture and consumption patterns. Furthermore, the literature indicated that a positive relationship exists between conspicuous consumption, brand sensitivity, fashion consciousness and music television exposure, while a negative relationship prevails between American Popular Culture and price sensitivity.

Using self-administered questionnaires, a survey was conducted in four major geographical areas in Peninsular Malaysia, i.e., Northern, Southern, Central and Eastern region. In total 1200 questionnaires were distributed, 900 were received within two months period. However, about 820 adolescents between the ages of 16 and 19 years completed all the questions. The Simple Linear Regression and Hierarchical Regression were employed to test the six hypotheses of the study, including the moderating affects of religiosity, gender, ethnicity, family income level and primary education streams on the relationship between American popular culture and five selected areas of consumer behaviour.

The results indicated that four out of five hypotheses for direct relationship between independent and dependent variables showed significant relationships. The relationship between American popular culture and price sensitivity was found significant but in the opposite direction. All moderating variables indicated mixed findings. Religiosity showed a moderating effect towards all relationships except American music television exposure. In terms of gender, the results showed a moderating effect on all relationships except price sensitivity and American music television exposure. Furthermore, ethnicity showed a moderating effect towards fashion consciousness but partially supported hypotheses for conspicuous consumption, brand sensitivity and American music television exposure. All family income levels integrations showed significant results as moderator except for conspicuous consumption and price sensitivity. Lastly, the primary education streams indicated four out of five hypotheses with partially supported results.

ABSTRAK

Corak penggunaan manusia adalah berdasarkan kepada kepelbagaian pengaruh-pengaruh dan remaja adalah tidak berbeza dari orang lain dalam perspektif ini. Cetusan globalisasi yang telah menghasilkan ledakan produk-produk dan imej bagi pengguna memilih. Dengan itu, satu persoalan timbul bagaimana pengguna dari golongan muda membina identiti dan bagaimana strategi boleh digunapakai dalam perubahan gaya hidup dan sub budaya.

Penyelidikan ini cuba menerangkan pengaruh budaya popular Amerika terhadap kelakuan pengguna di kalangan para remaja Malaysia serta mengkaji pengaruh muzik popular sebagai sumber utama budaya popular Amerika. Ini dapat dilakukan dengan memahami pengaruh Budaya Popular Amerika terhadap corak penggunaan para remaja di Malaysia. Pengaruh budaya popular Amerika yang sangat meluas di seluruh dunia boleh dibaca melalui laporan-laporan di dalam media cetak dan elektronik. Terdapat kekurangan kajian terhadap kesan budaya popular ke atas corak penggunaan para remaja. Kajian ini mengambilkira corak-corak penggunaan berikut: penggunaan bagi menarik perhatian, tahap sensitif terhadap harga, tahap sensitif terhadap jenama, kepekaan terhadap fesyen dan pendedahan muzik televisyen Amerika. Tinjauan kajian pustaka menunjukkan hubungan signifikan di antara budaya popular Amerika dan corak penggunaan iaitu, penggunaan bagi menarik perhatian, tahap sensitif terhadap jenama, kepekaan terhadap fesyen dan pendedahan muzik televisyen. Akan tetapi, hubungan negatif wujud di antara budaya popular Amerika dan tahap sensitif terhadap harga.

Melalui kaedah borang soal selidik yang diisi sendiri, kajian telah dijalankan di empat kawasan utama di Semenanjung Malaysia, iaitu kawasan Utara, Selatan, Tengah dan Timur. Sebanyak 1200 borang kaji selidik telah diedarkan dan sebanyak 900 borang telah dikembalikan dalam tempoh dua bulan. Akan, tetapi, hanya 820 remaja berusia antara 16 dan 19 tahun telah menjawab kesemua soalan yang diajukan. "Simple Linear Regression" dan "Hierarchical Regression" telah digunakan untuk menguji kesemua enam hipotesis termasuk kesan moderator iaitu komitmen terhadap agama, jantina, bangsa, tahap pendapatan keluarga dan jenis aliran di peringkat sekolah rendah bagi hubungan antara budaya popular Amerika dan lima jenis corak penggunaan.

Hasil kajian mendapati empat daripada lima hipotesis utama menunjukkan hubungan signifikan. Hubungan antara budaya popular Amerika dan tahap sensitif terhadap harga didapati signifikan tetapi pada arah berlawanan. Komitmen terhadap agama menunjukkan kesan moderator kecuali budaya popular Amerika dan pendedahan muzik televisyen Amerika. Jantina menunjukkan kesan moderator kecuali bagi tahap sensitif terhadap harga dan pendedahan muzik televisyen Amerika. Bangsa menunjukkan kesan moderator terhadap kepekaan terhadap fesyen dan menyokong sebahagian hipotesis penggunaan bagi menarik perhatian, tahap sensitif terhadap jenama dan pendedahan muzik televisyen Amerika. Tahap pendapatan keluarga menunjukkan kesan moderator kecuali bagi penggunaan bagi menarik perhatian dan tahap sensitif terhadap harga. Akhir sekali, kajian juga mendapati jenis aliran di peringkat sekolah rendah menunjukkan empat daripada lima hipotesis menyokong sebahagian hipotesis.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foremost, *Alhamdulillah* with the help of Allah the ultimate creator, I managed to complete this thesis.

Most of all, a very special “thank you” is extended to Professor Dr. Md Nor Othman for being a most inspirational, generous and compassionate supervisor throughout my PhD years. There simply are not words enough to express how deeply grateful I am to for his assistance in my doctoral pursuit.

Immerse gratitude also goes to a number of experts that contributed their opinion during the present study. They are Professor Dr. Azizah binti Hamzah (Department of Media Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Malaya), Associate Professor Dr. Rashidah binti Arshad (Centre of Business Management Studies, Faculty of Economics and Management, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia) and Dr. Sharifah Faridah binti Syed Alwi (Department of Marketing and Information Systems, Faculty of Business and Accountancy, University of Malaya). Last but not least to Encik Zahari Ishak (Department of Education Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, University of Malaya) for his endless assistance and advice in making the survey for the study a great success.

A special thanks is also offered to my PhD colleagues for their insight and recommendations that contributed towards the completion of this study.

I am deeply indebted to both my parents, Haji Zainal Ariffin bin Haji Ahmad and Hajah Saodah binti Abdul Ghani for their unlimited sacrifice and prayers throughout my studies. This thesis is dedicated to both of them as it is also a part of their dreams.

To my beloved husband, Mohd Adib bin Ibrahim for his continuous love, support, understanding and encouragement. Finally to my children, Muhammad Ariff and Nur Alya for their patience and love.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

χ^2 (df, p)	Chi-square
GFI	Goodness-of-fit
AGFI	Adjusted Goodness-of-fit
RMSEA	Root mean-Square Error of Approximation
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
RM_1_1	Role Model Item 1
RM_7_2	Role Model Item 2
RM_19_3	Role Model Item 3
RM14_4	Role Model Item 4
RM_5_5	Role Model Item 5
IM_11_6	Imitation Item 6
IM_16_7	Imitation Item 7
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