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ABSTRACT

In the face of accelerating globalisation, consumers have to face new challenges and threats, and they also have to confront the flooding of goods and services in local markets as never before. Due to the lack of the skills and information for making choices on purchasing that are safe, reflect value for money and for workers and the environment, consumer protection becomes even more important. Consumer complaint behaviour involves third parties who have become important in our society. This study investigates two main research objectives. The first main objective is to observe whether the Tribunal for Consumer Claim (TCC) is a speedy and effective forum for consumers. The second main objective is to examine what factors affect consumers to make decision for seeking redress in the companies or the third party complaint agencies.

Some researchers (Singh, 1989; Bonner and Metzen, 1992; Tipper, 1997) consider Small Claims Court as a legal entity for consumer complaint on the small claim in America. In Malaysia, the government uses the Tribunal for Consumer Claims for protecting consumers. However, all these mediators conduct consumer complaint services that are designed to act as a communication intermediary in the complaint process. Based on the suggestions from Tipper (1997) and Feick (1987) that third party complaint action is the most powerful and high-order action, this research selected the Tribunal for Consumer Claims, the National Consumer Complaints Centre as third party complaint agencies to investigate consumer complaint behaviour in Malaysia.

Based on these two main objectives, two methods, both secondary data and primary data, were used to examine consumer complaint behaviour in this study. The secondary data that is the complaint records data from the TCC in Kuala Lumpur were examining. 340 cases from the Tribunal records were selected for this study. Content analysis was conducted to test Hypotheses 1 of this study. Cross-sectional survey data were used to observe the factors affect consumers to make decision for seeking redress in the companies or the third party complaint agencies. The questionnaire used three main languages of Malaysia, ó English, Malay and Chinese. Quota sampling was used for choosing the respondents in the areas of Selangor and Kuala Lumpur, within the selected gender and ethnicity groups. Three shopping malls ó One Utama, Mid Valley Megamall, and Sunway Pyramid ó in the area of Selangor and Kuala Lumpur were selected as these two areas and its surrounding vicinity function as trade, administrative, and cultural centre for the country. A total of 834 sets of questionnaires were available. Structural Equation Modelling was conducted to test Hypotheses 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 for this study.

According to the tribunal records, the study found that the TCC in Kuala Lumpur is unbiased as the outcome of the tribunal is not dependent on the gender, race and age of the claimant or type of claim. The TCC is speedy as the duration from filing to hearing cases is completed within 60 days. The TCC is an effective forum as the award of the

age of claimant, issues in dispute, claim on goods, claim on
m. Evidence of complaint is non-significant indicating that
the award depending on the claimant's convincing story
rather than document evidence.

Based on the survey data, the study found that in predicting the complaint intention, the internal locus of control as a personal trait plays the most important role ($\beta = 0.261$), followed by societal benefits ($\beta = 0.216$), probability of successful complaint ($\beta = 0.170$), knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies ($\beta = 0.158$), and attitude towards complaining ($\beta = 0.109$). Regarding predicting the complaint actions, the weight of complaint intention is the most important ($\beta = 0.542$), followed by the knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies ($\beta = 0.154$), societal benefits ($\beta = -0.128$), and perceived value of complaint ($\beta = -0.127$). The present study proved that complaint intention as a mediator influenced the relationship between the societal benefits and probability of successful complaint, knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies, and internal locus of control to complaint action. The current study also found that situational influences such as the difficulty of making a complaint and the importance of the product as moderating variables can influence the relationship between complaint intention and complaint action. Other empirical findings provide meaningful and comprehensive demographic differences analysis to understand consumer complaint behaviour. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilised to determine the significant differences for the study constructs.

Based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour, additional theories which are the Expectation Disconfirmation Theory, Theory of Social Learning, Locus of Control, Theory of Transaction Cost and situational influence are applied together to examine the consumer complaint behaviour in the current study. This present study firstly attempt to use court records data and survey data together to investigate the research objectives. This study has important implications for business managers or executives and policy makers in government or consumer organisations interested in the determinants of consumer complaint behaviour. Lastly, this study also gives some suggestions for future studies in examining consumer complaint behaviour.

ABSTRAK

Dasar yang semakin pesat ini, pengguna perlu berhadapan dengan cabaran dan ancaman baru, dan mereka juga perlu menghadapi kebanjiran barangan dan perkhidmatan dalam pasaran tempatan yang belum pernah mereka alami sebelum ini. Disebabkan kekurangan kemahiran dan maklumat untuk membuat pilihan dalam pembelian yang selamat, mencerminkan nilai wang, pekerja dan persekitaran, perlindungan pengguna menjadi lebih penting. Gelagat aduan pengguna melibatkan pihak ketiga yang telah menjadi penting dalam masyarakat kita. Kajian ini menyiasat dua objektif utama penyelidikan. Tujuan utama pertama adalah untuk memerhatikan sama ada Tribunal Tuntutan Pengguna (TCC) merupakan forum yang cepat dan berkesan untuk pelanggan. Tujuan utama yang kedua adalah untuk menguji faktor yang mempengaruhi pelanggan dalam membuat keputusan untuk mencari ganti rugi di syarikat atau agensi aduan pihak ketiga.

Beberapa orang penyelidik (Singh, 1989; Bonner dan Metzen, 1992; Tipper, 1997) mempertimbangkan Mahkamah Tuntutan Kecil sebagai badan undang-undang untuk aduan pengguna dalam tuntutan kecil di Amerika. Di Malaysia, kerajaan menggunakan Tribunal Tuntutan Pelanggan untuk melindungi pengguna. Namun, kesemua pengantara ini menjalankan perkhidmatan aduan pengguna yang direka bentuk untuk bertindak sebagai perantara komunikasi dalam proses aduan. Berdasarkan saranan daripada Tipper (1997) dan Feick (1987) yang menyatakan bahawa tindakan aduan pihak ketiga adalah tindakan yang paling berkuasa dan tindakan bertahap tinggi, maka kajian ini telah memilih Mahkamah Tuntutan Pengguna, Pusat Aduan Pengguna Negara sebagai agensi aduan pihak ketiga untuk menyiasat gelagat aduan pengguna di Malaysia.

Berdasarkan dua objektif utama ini, dua kaedah iaitu data sekunder dan data utama digunakan untuk mengkaji gelagat aduan pengguna dalam kajian ini. Data sekunder, iaitu data rekod aduan daripada TCC di Kuala Lumpur telah diuji. 340 kes daripada rekod Tribunal telah dipilih untuk kajian ini. Analisis kandungan dilakukan untuk menguji Hipotesis 1 kajian ini. Data kaji selidik keratin lintang digunakan untuk mengamati faktor yang mempengaruhi pengguna dalam membuat keputusan untuk mendapatkan ganti rugi di syarikat atau agensi aduan pihak ketiga. Soalan kaji selidik menggunakan tiga bahasa utama di Malaysia, iaitu bahasa Inggeris, bahasa Melayu dan bahasa Mandarin. Kuota pensampelan digunakan untuk memilih responden di kawasan Selangor dan Kuala Lumpur dalam lingkungan kumpulan jantina dan etnik. Tiga pusat membeli-belah iaitu One Utama, Mid Valley Megamall, dan Sunway Pyramid yang terletak di dalam kawasan Selangor dan Kuala Lumpur dipilih kerana dua kawasan ini dan persekitarannya berfungsi sebagai pusat perdagangan, pentadbiran dan kebudayaan negara. Sebanyak 834 set soalan kaji selidik disediakan. Model Persamaan Struktural dijalankan untuk menguji Hipotesis 2, 3, 4, 5 dan 6 untuk kajian ini.

Dengan berpandukan rekod tribunal, kajian ini mendapati bahawa TCC di Kuala Lumpur adalah adil kerana hasil daripada tribunal tidak bergantung pada jantina, bangsa dan usia penuntut atau jenis tuntutan. TCC beroperasi dengan pantas di mana tempoh

ada pemfailan hingga kepada perbicaraan kes selesai dalam
akan sebuah forum yang berkesan, dan ini dapat dilihat
ounal yang ditentukan berdasarkan usia pihak menuntut, isu
perikatan, tuntutan barangan, tuntutan perkhidmatan dan jumlah tuntutan. Bukti aduan
adalah tidak penting dan ini menunjukkan bahawa hakim tribunal memberi award
berdasarkan laporan penuntut yang meyakinkan dan bukannya bukti dokumen.

Berdasarkan kaji selidik, kajian ini mendapati bahawa dalam meramalkan tujuan aduan, lokus kawalan dalaman sebagai suatu ciri peribadi memainkan peranan paling penting ($\beta = 0.261$), diikuti dengan manfaat sosial ($\beta = 0.216$), kebarangkalian aduan berjaya ($\beta = 0.170$), pengetahuan tentang hak pengguna dan agensi pengguna ($\beta = 0.158$), dan sikap terhadap aduan ($\beta = 0.109$). Berkenaan dengan meramalkan tindakan aduan, pemberat niat aduan adalah paling penting ($\beta = 0.542$), diikuti dengan pengetahuan tentang hak pengguna dan agensi pengguna ($\beta = 0.154$), manfaat sosial ($\beta = -0.128$), dan nilai yang dirasakan dari aduan ($\beta = -0.127$). Kajian yang dijalankan ini membuktikan bahawa tujuan aduan sebagai orang tengah mempengaruhi hubungan antara manfaat sosial dan kemungkinan aduan berjaya, pengetahuan tentang hak-hak pelanggan dan agensi pelanggan, dan lokus dalaman kawalan untuk tindakan aduan. Kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa pengaruh situasi seperti kesukaran membuat aduan dan kepentingan produk sebagai pembolehubah moderator boleh mempengaruhi perkaitan antara tujuan aduan dan tindakan aduan. Penemuan empirik lain memberikan analisis perbezaan demografik yang bermakna dan menyeluruh untuk memahami gelagat aduan pengguna. Analisis varians satu-cara (ANOVA) telah digunakan untuk menentukan perbezaan penting untuk pembinaan kajian.

Berdasarkan Teori Gelagat Terancang, iaitu teori tambahan yang merupakan *Expectation Disconfirmation Theory*, *Theory of Social Learning*, *Locus of Control*, *Theory of Transaction Cost* dan pengaruh situasi digunakan bersama untuk mengkaji gelagat aduan pengguna. Kajian ini pada mulanya cuba menggunakan data rekod mahkamah dan data kaji selidik untuk mengkaji objektif kajian. Kajian ini mempunyai implikasi penting bagi pengurus perniagaan atau eksekutif dan pembuat dasar dalam kerajaan atau pertubuhan pengguna yang berminat dalam menentukan gelagat aduan pengguna. Akhir sekali, kajian ini turut memberikan beberapa cadangan untuk kajian di masa depan dalam mengkaji gelagat aduan pengguna..