

COMPLAINT BEHAVIOUR

This chapter provides the literature review on consumer complaint behaviour. First an overview of the previous studies on complaint behaviour is present. The second section examines the determinants of consumer complaint behaviour. Theories and factors used in this study will be presented one by one. These include the expectation disconfirmation theory, theory of planned behaviour, theory of social learning, locus of control, theory of transaction cost, and situational influence. The proposed framework will be interviewed in this section. Finally, the demographic background of complainers in previous studies is also presented.

3.1 Previous Research on Complaint Behaviour

Many studies focus on consumer complaint behaviour. These studies address the dyadic interaction between consumers and businesses by investigating the characteristics of complainers (e.g., Barnes and Kelloway, 1980; Bearden and Mason, 1984), consumer expectations (e.g., Bearden and Teel, 1980; Oliver, 1980; Singh, 1990), attitudes (e.g., Jacoby and Jaccard, 1981; Sharma, Marshall, Reday and Na, 2010), and personality traits (e.g., Singh, 1989, Stilwell and Salamon, 1990; Davidow and Dacin, 1997, Jacoby and Jaccard, 1981). Other studies concern third parties complaint handling mechanisms (e.g. Tipper, 1997; Singh, 1989; Fisher, Garrett, Arnold and Ferris, 1999; Ursic, 1985; Zussman, 1985; Cornwell, Bligh, and Babakus, 1991; Hogarth, English and Sharma, 2001; Hogarth, Hilgert, Kolodinsky and Lee, 2001; Geistfeld and Choy, 1978;

3). However, no previous studies have addressed the

consumer complaint behaviour to companies and third parties together. Accordingly, this study will explore the factors that motivate consumers to seek redress from companies and third parties.

3.1.1 Classification of Consumer Complaint Responses

Dissatisfied consumers may engage in multiple (behavioural and non-behavioural) responses. Singh (1990) and Crie (2003) suggest that classifying these dissatisfied responses in delicate groups is more important. Based on the reason for dissatisfaction, intensity of dissatisfaction, the nature and importance of the product or service of concern, consumers may mix or connect several response types for the same dissatisfaction (Crie, 2003). Thus, a typology of consumer complaint behaviour responses is determined by two or more groups of consumers, whereby each consumer group tends to engage in similar response styles when they face a dissatisfying situation. For example, the more expensive and complex the product, the more consumers are inclined to initiate public action, however, the greater the likelihood is that they will stay inactive or choose private action (Day and Landon, 1977; Richins, 1987). Table 3.1 presents the classifications of consumer complaint responses.

Referring to the consumer complaint behaviour responses, Hirschman (1970) proposes three type actions, i.e., exit action, voice action and loyalty action. Exit action is defined as where consumers break the relationship with the supplier, or retailer of the product or brand; this action can be seen as a destructive response; but voice action shows that

tives, friends, consumer associations or other third parties.

This action can be seen as a constructive response for expectation of change in business practices, and policies. However, for loyalty action (repurchase), which means consumer still remain the relationship with the supplier, retailer of product or brand, this action can be observed as constructive and passive, as the individuals in this action hope that things will evolve in positive ways, hence, consumers can suffer in silence, confident that things will soon get better (p. 38).

Table 3.1: Classification of Consumer Complaint Responses in Previous Studies

	Consumer Complaint Responses and Definition
Hirschman (1970)	Exit action: consumers break the relationship with supplier, retailer of product or brand. Voice action: consumers complain to relatives, friends, consumer associations or other third parties. Loyalty action: consumers keep the relationship with supplier, retailer or product or brand.
Warland, Herrmann, and Willits (1975)	Upset-action: consumers are upset with the way they are treated and do something about it. Upset no Action: consumers are upset with the way they are treated and do nothing about it. Not upset: consumers are not upset with the way they are treated.
Day and Landon (1977)	Take no action: consumers would like to forget about the dissatisfaction with the product or services. Private actions: consumers choose to warn family and friends about the seller or product, and stop purchase. Public actions: consumers seek redress from the business, third party consumer agency and taking legal action.
Day (1980)	Seeking redress from a responsible party within the channel of distribution or from a third party. Complaining or communicating with the company or the business other than seeking redress. Boycotting or take personal decisions to discontinue usage or patronage.
Singh (1988)	Voice responses: consumers seek redress from the seller or do not take action. Private responses: consumers complain to their social circle (friends or family) or just exit out from that business or company. Third party responses: consumers seek redress from consumer agency or take legal action.

With deep understanding of the complaining consumer, Warland, Herrmann, and Willits (1975) propose three distinct groups of consumers: upset-action, upset no-action, and not upset. Separately, the upset-action group are those consumers who are upset with the way they are treated and do something about it; those consumers who are upset with the way they are treated and do nothing about it, are named the upset no-action group; those consumers who report they are not upset with the way they have been treated are called the not upset group. Warland, et al. (1975) found that the upset-action group appears to be a distinct group in that they are more active in organizations, more politically liberal, and more politically committed than the other two groups. The upset no-action and not upset groups are much more similar to each other than they are with the upset-action group.

In another study, Day and Landon (1977) propose two levels of hierarchical classifications for dissatisfied consumers. The first level is to take no action (non-behavioural) or take action (behavioural). The second level consists of various alternative actions for dissatisfied consumers to take; the actions are subdivided into private and public responses. However, private actions include warning family and friends about the seller or product, and making decisions to stop purchase (e.g. word-of-mouth). Public actions are presented directly to seek redress from the business, third party consumer agency (e.g. consumer affair offices or Better Business Bureau) and taking legal action (see Figure 3.1).

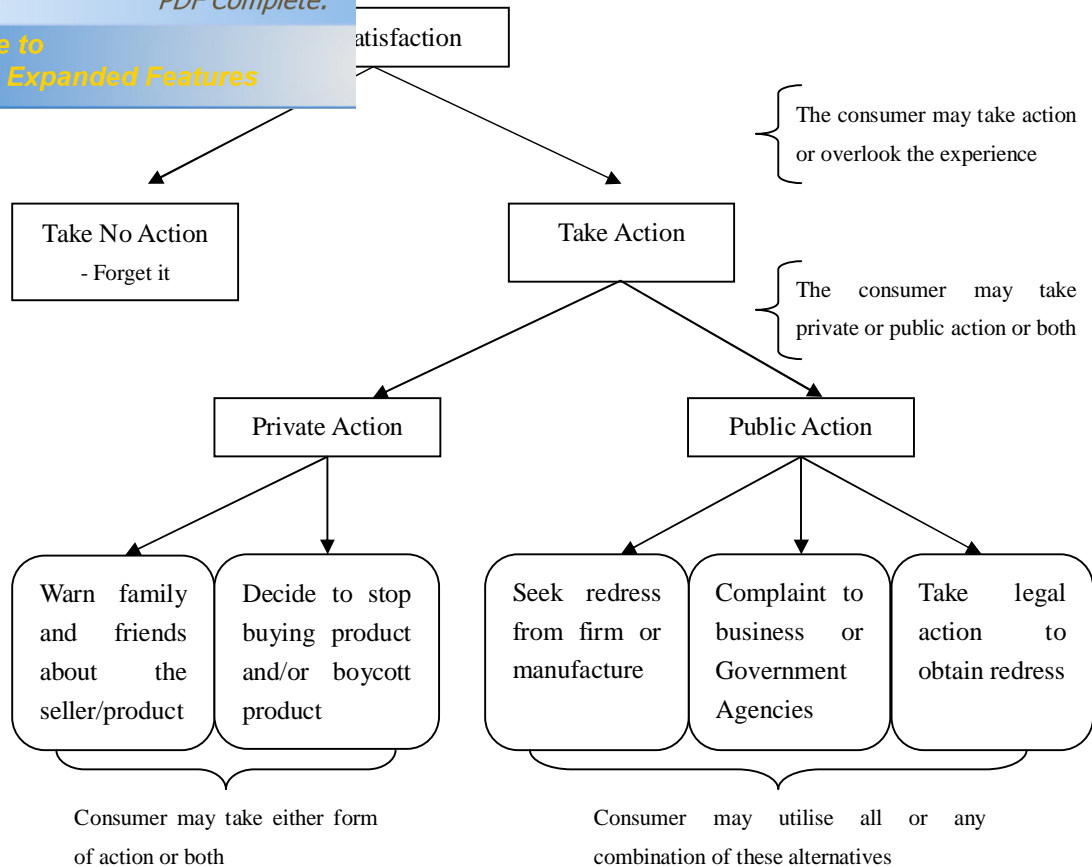



Figure 3.1: Overview of the Consumer's Post-dissatisfaction Alternatives
By Day and Landon (1977)

In an extension of Day and Landon's (1977) article, Day (1980) argues that consumers take action in an attempt to achieve specific objectives. Based on the purpose of complaining, Day (1980) suggests that dissatisfied consumer's action can be categorized into three categories: (1) seeking redress from a responsible party within the channel of distribution or from a third party outside the channel (e.g. Better Business Bureau, attorneys, the federal government); (2) complaining or communicating other than seeking redress; and (3) boycotting or take personal decisions to discontinue usage or patronage. However, Richins (1983) recognises that complaining behaviours should involve at least three activities: switching, making a complaint to the seller, and telling



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consumption experience.

Based on four different situations of medical care, grocery, auto repair and the bank of Singh (1988) investigates consumer complaint responses. According to these complaint phenomenon, he suggests that consumer complaint responses are a set of behavioural and non-behavioural responses, some or all behaviours are triggered by perceived dissatisfaction with a purchase episode (p. 94). Singh (1988) categorises consumers' dissatisfaction responses into three response groups (see Figure 3.2): voice action, private action and third party action. The responses that are directed to objects, which are external to the consumer's social circle and are directly involved in the dissatisfying exchange (e.g. seeking redress from the seller), can be defined as voice action; private action shows the objects are not external to the consumer's social circle and are not directly involved in the dissatisfying experience (e.g. word-of-mouth communication or exit); however, the objects of the responses that are external to the consumer, and not directly involved in the dissatisfying transaction, can be regarded as third party action (e.g. reporting to a consumer agency or to taking legal action).

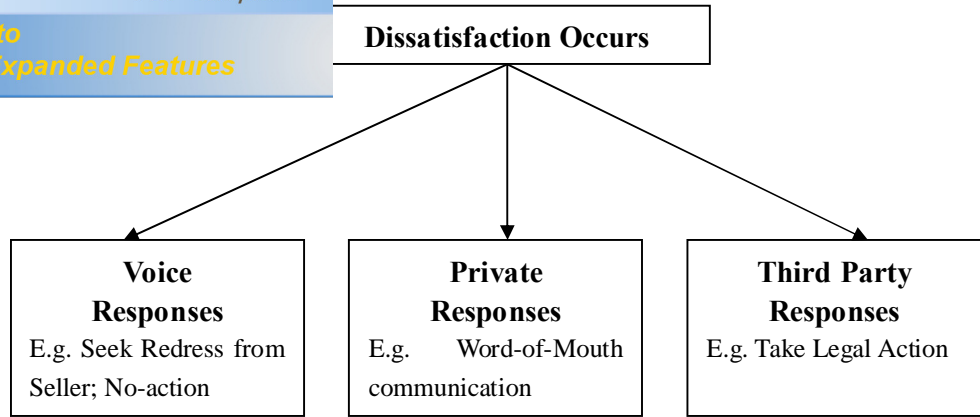


Figure 3.2: Proposed Taxonomy of Consumer Complaint Behaviour Responses by Singh (1988)

However, Singh (1990b) provides a typology of four clusters from consumer complaint intention to capture the consumer complaint behaviour responses: (1) Passive consumers present people who are least likely to take action or no action against sellers/service providers. (2) Voice consumers refer to people who have little desire to engage in word-of-mouth or go to third party or switch off from the service provider/seller. (3) Irate consumers include people who are angry and have a tendency to complain directly to sellers/service providers and switch patronage, but are less likely to take third party actions. (4) Activist consumers refer to people who are more likely to complain to sellers/services providers or family members and particularly to third party; this cluster belongs to the consumers who not only seek individual redress but also for social good.

3.1.2 Definition of Consumer Complaint Behaviour

Complaining is defined by Gove (1981) in the Webster's Third New International Dictionary as an expression of discontent, dissatisfaction, protest, resentment, or regret.

that complaining is a behavioural expression of an unfavourable attitude towards an object, person, or situation. Generally, most literature discusses complaining as a behavioural outcome of a perceived discrepancy between an individual's expectation and the actual performance of the product (Bearden and Teel, 1983; Day et al., 1981). Jacoby and Jaccarb (1981) believe that complaining can be seen as one way to relieve consumers' feeling when they encounter unfair sales practices, disappointment with poor product standard, and general disapproval of business conduct. Therefore, Phau and Sari (2004) define consumer complaint behaviour as consumer's responses "triggered by perceived dissatisfaction which is neither psychologically accepted nor quickly forgotten with consumption of a product or service" (p. 408).

Fornell and Wernerfelt (1987) argue that a complaint is an attempt by the customer to change their unsatisfactory situation. Thus, consumer complaint behaviour explains an individual's action involving negative communication regarding a product or service to the firm, manufacturer or marketer where they purchased the product or service, or to some third party organisational entity (such as the Better Business Bureau). Day et al. (1981) suggest that consumer dissatisfaction occurs in all nations of the world, but the way in which consumers deal with it can be expected to vary from country to country. It seems reasonable to assume that a common conceptualisation of complaining and non-complaining can be applied in different countries. Tipper (1997) suggests that consumer complaint behaviour can be defined as "a choice made by consumer which is based on judgement that the outcome of the complaint will outweigh the time and costs

222). Based on Singh (1988) and other previous studies, the

consumer complaint action can be defined as complaint behaviour that includes voice complaint action, private complaint action and third party complaint action, the definitions are shown as follows in the current study:

- Voice actions are defined as complaint behaviours that are directed towards the consumer's external social circle and that are directly involved in the dissatisfying exchange (such as going to the retailer, manufacturer, and seller). None of the actions of dissatisfied consumers are included in this category due to non action consumers are reflected feelings towards the seller's exchange (Singh, 1988).
- Private actions are defined as complaint behaviour that are not directed towards the consumer's external social circle (such as informing friends or relatives, etc.) or those involved in the dissatisfying experience (e.g. Word-of-Mouth, exit) (Singh, 1988).
- Third party actions are defined as complaint behaviours that are directed towards one or more agencies that are not directly involved in the exchange relationship (Singh, 1989). Jacoby and Jaccarb (1981) suggest that the third party refers to formally constituted organisational entities, such as governments (at the federal, state, or local levels) and special-interest groups (such as trade associations and non-profit groups). For third party actions, several multiple options are available to a dissatisfied consumer, such as, contacting the Better Business Bureau, the

public consumer protection agencies, and/or the small claims

court (Singh, 1988). Research by Best and Andreasen (1977) says that third party complaint action is one of the less chosen, and normally it is not the first-choice complaint action approach (Grønhaug, 1977).

In the current study, consumers refer to people acting on their own behalf (or their family's behalf) that are purchasers, non-purchasers, users, or non-users of the product or service (Annual Report of Tribunal for Consumer Claims Malaysia, 1999). A third party refers to the Tribunal for Consumer Claims, a legal entity and government organisation; and the National Consumer Complaints Centre, which is the mediator for consumers and firms as the special-interest group.

3.2 Determinants of Consumer Complaint Behaviour

Over the years, many studies have been conducted to examine which factors determine consumer complaint behaviour and why an individual participates in complaint behaviour depends on a variety of factors. For example, Phau and Sari (2004) suggest that personality and attitudes may be major reasons underlying complaint behaviour that lead to different responses from different people when they face unsatisfactory situations. In their study, Phau and Sari (2004) also propose that consumer's feelings about the business (such as seller's reputation for quality of products or services, speed and commitment of seller's response for dealing with complaints, and sales pressure exerted by sales personnel) and attributes of product (price, quality, etc.) are associated with consumer complaint behaviour. In a research by Tipper (1997), he found that

business, consumers with knowledge of consumer rights

and consumer protection responses from government influence consumer complaint behaviour.

Determinants refer to certain factors that potentially influence the behaviour in question.

In the decision to seek legal redress, Ursic (1985) classifies the determinants of consumer complaint behaviour into three categories: (1) perceived costs (this refers to the sum of emotional, financial, and temporal costs); (2) perceived benefits (this refers to the sum of emotional and financial benefits); and (3) perceived probability of success (this refers to consumer's feeling of whether success in court is probable). However, in his study, Ursic (1985) argues that perceived costs are associated with time availability, anxiety about going to court and accessibility to court. Perceived benefits are influenced by budgetary pressure for money, amount of claim and anger of seller. Whereas, perceived probability of success can be affected by perceived effectiveness in court and the amount of search for evidence.

Concerning the redress action in third party complaint behaviour, Singh (1989) proposes that attitude towards the act of complaining, perceived probability of success and perceived costs and benefits are associated with complaint intention for third parties to engage in one or more third party behaviours. Singh (1989) believes that situation factors may vary from individual to individual and from episode to episode, however, he depicts action as composed of several specific options that are determined by a person's intention and unspecified situational factors. In his study, Singh (1989) also

ables (e.g. locus of control, self-monitoring) are important

for future research in consumer complaint behaviour study.

Mueller (1986) suggests that the way people respond with opinions, beliefs, feelings, prescriptions (such as behavioural intentions), statements of fact, and statements about their own behaviour can make highly effective responses. Moreover, these psychological concepts are part of the attitude domain, which cannot be observed or measured directly (Mueller, 1986). Thus, consumers' opinions, beliefs or perceptions will be used to predict the consumers' attitude concerning their complaint behaviour in the present study. Ajzen (1985) suggests that many factors can influence the stability of behavioural intention, such as salience of beliefs, new information, and individual's personal traits. Phau and Sari (2004) and Singh (1989) also suggest that various factors concerning characteristics of consumers can change human behaviour.

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) consider that the leaning theory, expectancy-value theory and cognitive dissonance theory can be viewed as contemporary theories of attitude. In order to categorise the above factors that affect complaint behaviour, some of the theories will be used in the following section based on the suggestion from Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). Thus, in this particular study on the complaint behaviour domain, the expectation disconfirmation theory (EDT), the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), theory of social learning, personality trait, theory of transaction cost and situational influence will be the basis of the proposed research framework.

Confirmation Theory

Expectation Disconfirmation Theory (EDT) model is used to explain the process model of individual behaviour whereby users form an initial pre-usage expectation (belief) about a product, experience its usage over time, and then form post-usage perception of the product (Bhattacharjee and Premkumar, 2004, p. 231). EDT is an extension of the cognitive dissonance theory to understand consumer complaint behaviour (Bhattacharjee and Premkumar, 2004). Oliver (1980) suggests that expectancy disconfirmation plays a key role in understanding consumer satisfaction in the social psychology literature (Emir, 2011). Yim, Gu, Chan and Tse (2003) note that EDT is the most commonly used theory to evaluate consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (CS/D). Bhattacharjee and Premkumar (2004) suggest that a discrepancy between individual's initial expectations and actual performance forms the disconfirmation (Watson and Spence, 2007).

Oliver (1980), Oliver and Desarbo (1988) and Day, Grabiske, Schaetzle and Staubach (1981) suggest some key elements concerning an individual's satisfaction/dissatisfaction: (1) prior basis of evaluation (such as brand connotation, symbolic elements and consumer's expectations of product performance); (2) an evaluation triggered from circumstances of the particular purchase or consumption experience (such as communication from salespeople and social referents); (3) individual characteristics, such as persuadability and perceptual distortion; and (4) a judgment that the experience is noticeably better or worse than anticipated (positive or negative disconfirmation of expectations) leading to feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

elements that are associated with the initial expectation to determine the individual's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the product, subsequently determine the continued product usage or non-usage (Bhattacharjee and Premkumar, 2004).

For product or service performance, only the consumer can make the decision for the dissatisfaction (Day, 1984). However, as a consequence in increasing sales, firms indulging in excessive promotions may increase consumers' expectations (Phau, et al., 2004). If actual performance does not meet consumers' expectations, they will be disappointed and engage in complaining behaviour (Mowen and Minor, 1998). Singh and Widing (1991) suggest that if the consumer's perceptions on seller's actions are really poor, these perceptions have a potent effect on the final satisfaction/dissatisfaction evaluation. Hence, the strength of satisfaction/dissatisfaction feelings is the primary determinant of repeat purchase behaviour or making complaint behaviour (Bearden and Teel 1983). McAlister and Erffmeyer (2003) suggest that the degree of consumer dissatisfaction, company or firm's unresponsiveness or some relevant factor can make consumers attempt to expend more effort on third party complaint behaviour.

Nevertheless, complaints can result in the loss of market share for a company (Jacob and Jaccard, 1981). Mitchell and Critchlow (1993) suggest that good complaint handling by the retailer produces confidence in consumers, provides a good company image and helps to reduce defect rates. Hence, effectively and efficiently responding to consumer

area for retailers to address in providing differentiation in the marketplace and maintaining customer loyalty. If effective systems are in place, dissatisfied customers may start to complain (Fornell and Wernerfeit, 1988).

Generally speaking, consumers with feelings of dissatisfaction may or may not intend to seek redress or make a complaint. Day, Grabicke, Schaetzle and Staubach (1981) suggest that consumers who have consciously experienced dissatisfaction at a level that they readily recall these feelings and circumstances of the experience will consider taking complaint actions. Bearden and Teel (1983) point out that the level of perceived satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the marketplace is presumed to influence subsequent attitudes, intentions and complaint behaviour. Keng, Richmond and Han (1995) suggest that the reputation of the retailer for responsiveness will influence the complaint behaviour. According to the suggestion from Day, et al. (1981), strong feelings of dissatisfaction can be seen as an emotional or attitudinal state that can provide motivation for possible action. Therefore, to capture the study purpose, consumers who qualify as 'dissatisfied', which is based on the consumer's perception about the responsiveness about the dissatisfaction and reputation of the retailer, will be included in order to study their complaining behaviour in the current study.

3.2.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

Ajzen (1985) suggests that human's actions are controlled by intentions, but not all intentions can carry out the relevant actions. In fact, the intention can change over time based on the individual's provisional nature. Referring to normal circumstances, human

under volitional control, as people perform their actions if they are inclined to do so. If the individual's behaviour is under volitional control, it means a person is prepared to exert maximum effort. Thus, intention can affect the action.

Bamberg, Ajzen and Schmidt (2003) suggest that behavioural models from social psychology can explain the behaviour as well as behavioural intentions of individuals. Therefore, the relations between intentions and actions can be seen as the goals and plans that guide behaviour (Ajzen, 1985). Based on the assumption that humans behave in a sensible manner, Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) and Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) suggest using the theory of reasoned action (TRA) to predict volitional behaviour and to understand the human's psychological determinants. The postulation of this theory is that an individual's intention to perform or not to perform behaviour is the determinant of that action (Armitage and Conner, 2001; Ajzen, 2002). According to the TRA, attitude towards the behaviour (refers to the personal in nature) and subjective norms (refers to the social influence) are important determinants of the intention, but the weight of the attitudinal and normative factors may differ from person to person (Ajzen, 1985, 1991).

Armitage and Conner (2001) suggest that the TRA is able to explain behaviours that are under a person's volitional control, however, these internal and external constraints might constrain someone in real life from performing the intended behaviours. Whereas, the degree of successfully achieving that special behaviour will depend on the person's

as partly on non-motivational factors as a requirement of opportunities and resources, such as time, money, skill (such as knowledge or information) and cooperation of others (Ajzen and Driver, 1992). Therefore, Alcalay and Bell (2000) suggest that the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) provides a better framework for understanding people's actions than the TRA.

The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is frequently used to explain a variety of behaviour and behavioural intentions in social psychology models (Ajzen, 1991). This theory has been used extensively to determine human social behaviour (Ajzen, 2001). The TPB model is an extension of the TRA by adding perceived behavioural control (PBC) as the third determinant (Ajzen, 1985; 1991). However, this extension model (TPB model) has demonstrated that volitional control is more problematic and that the addition of PBC significantly improves the prediction of intentions as well as the prediction of behavioural achievement (Ajzen and Driver, 1992). The perceived behavioural control construct in the TPB model was added to take account of non-volitional behaviours (Doll and Ajzen, 1992). Therefore, Cherry (2006) argues that the TRA may not be sufficient for explaining certain specific behaviours.

Bagozzi and Warshaw (1990) and Singh and Wilkes (1996) suggest using complaint intention as intermediate goal-directed behaviours to explain consumers' complaint behaviour. However, consumer complaint responses as an intermediate goal-directed behaviour may be problematic because performance impediments (such as time, knowledge and so on) exist when consumers make an effort to perform complaint

s, 1996; Ajzen, 1991). Therefore, this current study applies the TPB model instead of the TRA model to predict complaint behaviour as complaint behaviour is postulated to be not totally under the consumer's volitional control.

There are some control factors that may affect an individual's complaint behaviour, such as time constraints, complaint value (including complaint cost and benefit), responses from business or company and so on. Hence, it is deemed that understanding the complaint behaviour is more necessary in the TPB model. This suggestion is proved by East (1996, 2000) which is complaining (or seeking redress) can be seen as planned behaviour. East (1996, 2000) apply the TPB model in examining the consumer seeking redress, but, the result is not supported well due to scenario method is used in measuring consumer complaint behaviour (Cheng, Lam and Hsu, 2005). Cheng, Lam and Hsu (2005) suggest that the variables in the TPB model can be used as mediating variables to influence the relationship between the past behaviour and complaint intention in the restaurants in China. The result found that subjective norm and perceived behavioural control mediate the relationship between past behaviour and voice complaint intention (Cheng, Lam and Hsu, 2005). However, based on the researcher's knowledge, no study has been made that applying the TPB model by the survey method in the complaint behaviour domain.

A structural model of the theory of planned behaviour is shown in Figure 3.3. Based on the study of Hrubes, Ajzen and Daigle (2001), attitude towards behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are the determinants of behavioural intention.

Attitude refers to the individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behaviour; it is produced by behavioural beliefs about the likely consequences of the behaviour. Rhodes and Courneya (2003) suggest that cognitive attitude influences the perceived benefit of an individual about a particular behaviour, such as whether the judgment of behaviour is good, beneficial and wise. **Subjective norm** is defined as the individual's perceived social pressure put on him or her to perform or not to perform the specific behaviour; it is determined by normative beliefs about the normative expectation of others (Hrubes, Ajzen and Daigle, 2001).

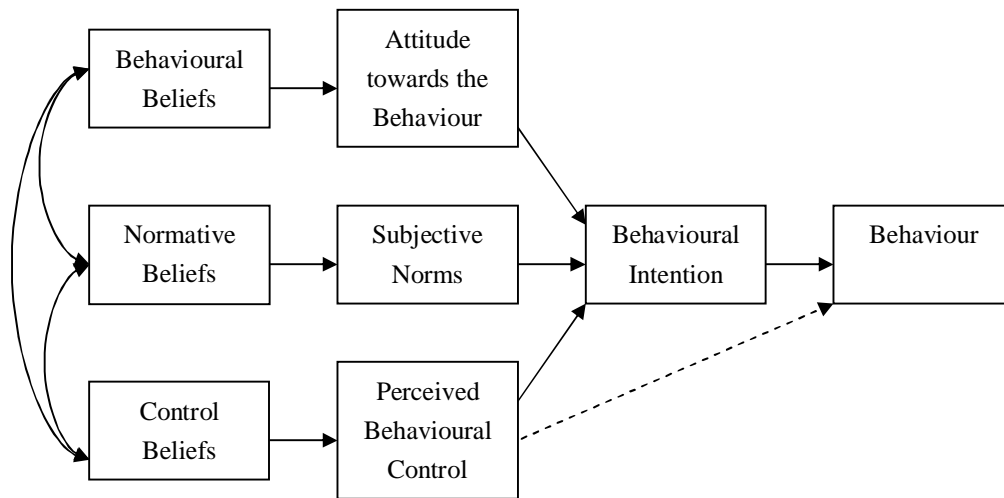


Figure 3.3: Theory of Planned Behaviour

Source: Adopted from Hrubes, Ajzen and Daigle (2001), p. 165

Perceived behavioural control refers to the individual's perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour, it is influenced by control beliefs which is related to the personal capacity to that behaviour according to the individual's confidence, knowledge, opportunity and so on (Hrubes, Ajzen and Daigle, 2001). However, if a person has relatively more resources and opportunities about the behaviour, perceived behavioural

...e realistic than for a person with few resources and opportunities about the behaviour (Ajzen and Driver, 1992). Ajzen (1985) suggests that when the extent of resources and opportunity become realistic, perceived behavioural control can be used to predict the probability of a successful behavioural attempt.

Ajzen, (1991) suggests that perceived behavioural control may have both direct and indirect effects on behaviour. There are two effects between the perceived behavioural control and behaviour in the TPB model, the first effect assumes that perceived behavioural control has an indirect association on behaviour through behavioural intention. For instance, even if different consumers have equally strong intentions to make a complaint, and try to do so, those who are confident of a high probability of winning are more likely to persevere than those who doubt the probability of winning their complaint. It may indicate that consumers with a high perceived behavioural control have a stronger intention to complain than consumers with low perceived control. Thus, the effect of perceived behavioural control on behaviour is mediated by intention. The second effect is a direct link between perceived behavioural control and behavioural achievement. Ajzen and Driver (1992) argue that people's perceived behavioural control may increase due to the effort expended to bring a successful behaviour. For example, if a consumer believes that the probability of success is high, he or she is likely to complain to the company, business or third party directly.

However, Ajzen (1991, 2002) proposes that perceived behavioural control and the conception of locus of control from Rotter (1966) are two empirically distinguishable

states that perceived behaviour control is the expectancy of success. It can be defined as the perceived probability of succeeding in a particular behaviour. Whereas locus of control refers to the extent that an individual perceives that reinforcements are under their own control (internal locus of control), or control by external variables such as luck, fate and powerful others (external locus of control) (Rotter, 1975). They are not only different in terms of their conceptualisation, but also, a person's perceived behavioural control may vary across situations and actions, while the locus of control is a generalized belief that remains stable across situations and forms of actions (Ajzen, 1991). For instance, a person may believe that his or her complaining outcome is determined by the business or the third party (external locus of control), at the same time he or she may also believe that the probability of the successful complaint may be higher (greater perceived behavioural control).

Generally, attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norm, and perception of behavioural control lead to the association of a behavioural intention. Thus, the more favourable the attitude towards the behaviour, subjective norms, and the greater the perceived behavioural control, cause to the stronger the individual's intention to perform that particular behaviour (Ajzen and Driver, 1992; Miesen, 2003). Finally, the person's perceived behavioural control can be used to predict the behaviour in question (Ajzen, 1991).

However, for non-volitional control, some previous studies suggest that certain factors can influence the successful performance of the intended behaviour, such as personality

able, when a person intends to perform a behaviour, he or she may discover that they lack the needed information), expectancy value (expectancy for achieving the aspired goal by the personal value) and past experience on present performance (Ajzen, 1985, 1991; Singh, 1988; Fornell and Westbrook, 1979; Tipper, 1997). Ajzen (1985) suggests that social behaviour follows more or less well developed plans, the success of an attempt to perform the behavioural plan depends not only on the effort invested (the strength of the attempt) but also on the individual's control over other factors, such as information knowledge, willpower, presence of mind, time, opportunity and so on. On the other hand, additional variables are allowed to add into the TPB model (Ajzen, 1991; Bailey, 2006).

A large number of studies have applied the theory of planned behaviour in various content domains. These include smoking cessation (e.g. Norman, Conner and Bell, 1999), getting hormone replacement therapy (Quine and Rubin, 1997), drinking alcohol (Morrison, Gillmore, Simpson and Wells, 1996) eating low-fat food (Paisley and Sparks, 1998), moral value (Ajzen and Driver, 1992b), literary reading (Miesen 2003), ethnic judgments (Cherry, 2006), hunting (Hrubes and Ajzen, 2001), exercise behaviour (Biddle and Nigg, 2000), unethical behaviour (Chang, 1998) and so on, however, there is no study applying the theory of planned behaviour in consumer complaint behaviour, especially concerning third party complaint behaviour except the study by East (2000) and Cheng, Lam and Hsu (2005).

3.2.3 Theory of Social Learning

reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioural, and environmental influences, the social learning theory can be used to explain human behaviour (Bandura, 1997), and, sometimes, the learning theory can be a contemporary theory of human attitudes (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Ormrod (1999) claims that individual cognition plays an important role in the learning process, and awareness and expectations of future reinforcement or punishments can have a major effect on the behaviours that people exhibit. Bandura (1997) proposes that the individual, the environment and the behaviour can influence each other. Individuals expect certain behaviours to bring reinforcement, however, the reinforcement response only increases when the learner is aware of that connection (Ormrod, 1999).

As Ajzen (1985) argues that people's beliefs represent the information that individuals have about their worlds, their behaviour is ultimately determined by this information. Andreasen (1977) believes that personal judgment is affected by the individual's standards and expectations, which, in turn, is a function of personal characteristics or past experience. Ajzen (1988) suggests that frequent performance of behaviour can influence on the formation of a habit. This is especially true for a dissatisfied consumer. Regarding complaint behaviour, the individual has learnt some experience from their prior purchases, learnt from some other consumers, or learnt from their own knowledge concerning consumer rights, or information on consumer protection from official publicity. These backgrounds of learning habit can affect an individual's intention towards dissatisfaction with products or services and affect their complaint behaviour (Andreasen, 1977).

Ormrod (1999) argues that human behaviour can be affected by the frequency of an individual's previously learned behaviours. Howard (1977) suggests that behaviour is a function of prior learning. Thus, experience which is obtained from previous complaint behaviour provides the information on consumer rights and complaint channels to the dissatisfied consumers. Crie (2003) observes that learning theory can be used to explain the function of past experiences concerning the inclination of complaint behaviour. Bagozzi and Warshaw (1990) suggest that frequency of past behaviour can be one of the determinants of behavioural intention and action. When an individual is unclear about his or her true intention with respect to some action, the frequency of past behaviour will be one of independent factor to influence that particular action. Singh (1990) proposes that the learning model posits that complaint behaviour is a function of prior learning, such as past behaviour, knowledge of unfair practices, information about consumer rights and complaint channels, that can influence the consumer's attitudes and their behaviour.

As people can learn through observation, an individual's learning may not necessarily show in their performance, therefore, learning may or may not lead to a behaviour change (Ormrod, 1999). In the present study, the consumer's complaint process is one of the social learning processes that consumers learn from others via observation or imitation or some modelling about complaint behaviour when they face dissatisfied products or services. Therefore, the variable of knowledge about consumer rights and complaint agencies as complaint channels and consumers prior complaining experience

present study (Andreasen, 1977; Ajzen, 1985; Sing, 1990; Crie, 2003).

3.2.4 Locus of Control

Keng, Richmond and Han (1995) suggest that personality variables correlate with complaint behaviour and individual differences have more power in predicting people's reactions to dissatisfying events. Singh (1989) argues that aggressiveness, assertiveness, self-confidence, locus of control and so on can be used as personality variables in future investigations, particularly concerning third party complaint behaviour. Jacoby and Jaccarb (1981) suggest that personality factors such as self-confidence, external versus internal locus of control for personal concepts can affect the complainers and that complaint can be viewed as an attempt to maintain a sense of personal control (Stilwell and Salamon, 1990).

Davidow and Dacin (1997) report that personality is one of the major reasons of complaint behaviour and, different people will show different responses when they face unsatisfactory situations. Thus, personality has been widely examined in consumer complaint behaviour. Many studies have found that personality variables correlate with complaint behaviour, such as self-confidence, individualism, aggressiveness, assertiveness, conservatism and so on (Keng, et al., 1995; Singh, 1989; Lau and Ng, 2001, Bearden and Mason, 1984; Richins, 1982). However, there are a few studies that consider locus of control as a personality variable in complaint behaviour research. Singh (1989) suggests that locus of control can be used as an important variable to

t behaviour for future study.

Locus of control is a personality factor that originated from the social learning theory, and which attempts to integrate concepts from both the behavioural and learning theory (Rinehart, 1995). As people interact with the environment, they learn from the consequences of their behaviour that the environment is more or less controllable (Rotter, 1966). Rotter (1966) argues that locus of control can explore individuals' general and daily expectancies about the causes of their reward and punishment. Thus, the personality construct of locus of control has held an important position in personality research since its introduction in the mid-1960s (Busseri and Kerton, 1997).

The original definition of locus of control by Rotter (1975) is:

Internal versus external control refers to the degree to which persons expect that a reinforcement or an outcome of their behaviour is contingent on their own behaviour or personal characteristics versus the degree to which persons expect that reinforcement or outcome is a function of chance, luck or fate, is under the control of powerful others or is simply unpredictable (p. 58).

As discussed by Rotter (1966), individuals have different beliefs about the extent to which his or her actions influence the outcomes in their lives. Thus, Busseri, Lefcourt and Kerton (1998) argue that an individual's locus of control orientation, which includes external (uncontrollable external variables such as luck, fate and powerful others) and internal (lives or events can be controlled by individual themselves), explains the perception of personal control and responsibility for individual successes

events. In certain belief areas, an internal locus of control

orientation contrasts with the external locus of control and has been found to be associated with more active attention to and assimilation of information pertinent to those outcomes (Busseri, Lefcourt and Kerton, 1998).

For predicting the relationship on specific behaviour, Ajzen (1985) suggests that personal traits are assumed to have no direct effects on behaviour. The empirical study from Kowalski (1996) suggests that locus of control influences the dissatisfaction threshold of a person's subjective experience of dissatisfaction. However, locus of control and its relationship to consumer complaint behaviour has not received much attention in previous literature. Thus, in the current study, to explore the role of the locus of control construct in the context of complaint behaviour and provide the relationship between locus of control and consumer complaint behaviour becomes more important.

Locus of control, as one of the most popular personality or psychological constructs (Lam and Mizerski, 2005, Riehart, 1995), has been widely reported in a variety of fields, such as service (Bradley and Spark, 2002), health care service (Dolinsky, Gould, Scotti and Stinerock, 1998; Winefield, 1982), fitness and exercise behaviours (Biddle and Nigg, 2000), word of mouth communication (Lam and Mizerski, 2005), consumer purchase behaviour (Busseri, Lefcourt and Kerton, 1998; Busseri and Kerton, 1997; Rinehart, 1995), economic (Furnham, 1986), organizations (Spector, 1988), ethical judgments and intention (Cherry, 2006), voluntary union membership (Parkes and

search behaviour (Srinivasan and Tikoo, 1992) and so on.

However, no study has focused on consumer complaint behaviour as locus of control to examine consumer complaint behaviour except the complaint study on the health care service from Dolinsky, Gould, Scotti and Stinerock (1982).

3.2.5 Theory of Transaction Cost

Gronhaug and Gilly (1991) suggest that the theory of transaction cost can be used to explain consumer complaint behaviour. Landon (1977) proposes that the complaint benefit is the complaint outcome minus the complaint cost. Davidow and Dacin (1997) argue that consumers will associate with complaint if an organization decreases the cost or increases the benefits of complaining. Crie (2003) suggests that transaction costs affect complaint behaviour by time and effort. However, originally the transaction cost theory was proposed in economics to explain the governance of contractual relations by Williamson (1979). Three dimensions are used to explain the consumer complaint behaviour by Gronhaug and Gilly (1991) ó asset specificity, uncertainty and exchange frequency under the transaction cost. Asset specificity and uncertainty play key roles in consumer behaviour.

Concerning asset specificity, purchasing requires time and effort, it implies various types of costs, such as opportunity costs of time spent, costs associated with thinking, and travelling costs. Particularly in complaint behaviour, complaining needs time spent costs, effort costs (deliberation and transportation), thus, these can be called transaction costs in complaint behaviour (Gronhaug and Gilly, 1991). These costs cannot be paid

Transaction costs can be used in the learning stage to reduce the specific costs in a later complaint. Uncertainty prevails in any transaction (such as purchasing behaviour, complaint behaviour) as consumers lack the knowledge to adequately assess certain behaviour (Gronhaug and Gilly, 1991). Thus, consumers need to search for information to reduce that uncertainty to a bearable level. Exchange frequency can refer to complaint frequency in the current study. If complaints to a business or company or third party consumer agencies are frequent, consumers will be familiar with the complaint alternatives and it will become routine, therefore, this will reduce the associated costs with complaint behaviour. This transaction cost theory explains how consumers can reduce the complaint costs: if consumers have a superior educational level by knowing their rights, the uncertainty and perceived costs of a complaint will decrease generally.

Landon (1977) suggests that the complaint benefit is the complaint outcome minus the complaint cost. If consumers perceive the emotional, financial, or temporal costs to be high, they are more reluctant to make complaints to the company, especially take third party actions or legal redress (Bonner and Metzen, 1992). Thus, transaction cost can be seen as one of the important determinants influencing a consumer's perceived value concerning making a decision to seek redress.

3.2.6 Situational Influence

Among complaint behaviour constructs, Richins (1982) proposes that attitudes is affected by beliefs, which, in turn, influence the general propensity (or intention) to

wards that attitude, and this propensity should impact the further actual behaviour in general cases. Keng, Richmond and Han (1995) suggest that situational factors, such as price of the product, and seriousness of the problem, are important in explaining complaint behaviour. Lau and Ng (2001) argue that negative word-of-mouth behaviour, as one complaint behaviour, can be explained by situational factors such as circumstances or location (Kim and Chen, 2010). However, Richins (1982) believes that situational variables (such as dependence on the product, difficulty of making a complaint, nature of the specific dissatisfaction, and so on) can be used as moderating variables between an individual's tendency and actual behaviour in any specific case. Complaint intention as a function of complaint action, Singh (1989) argues that there are some situational factors that may influence the relationship between intention and action, such as the location of third party, the relationship with the lawyer; thus, these kinds of situational factors may vary between different individuals and different episodes. Therefore, complaint action should be determined by the individual's intention and some specific factors. Based on the previous studies of Richins (1982) and Singh (1989), the situational variable should exist in different individual and different episodes to affect complaint action. Situational factors can be seen as important variables to explore consumer complaint behaviour in the current study.

3.3 The Proposed Research Framework of This Study

Based on the previous theories mentioned earlier, the proposed research framework of this study is shown in Figure 3.4. The EDT (Expectation Disconfirmation Theory) is

to evaluate consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Oliver, 1980; Yim, Gu, Chan and Tse, 2003). In addition, the level of perceived satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the marketplace is presumed to influence subsequent attitudes, intentions negatively or positively (Bearden and Teel, 1983; Singh and Widing, 1991). As suggested by Keng, Richmond and Han (1995), the reputation of the retailer for responsiveness should influence the complaint behaviour. According to previous studies, consumer perception about the business responsiveness and reputation is one of the important factors to predict the degree of dissatisfaction of the consumer, which then influences consumer complaint behaviour later on. In some studies, authors refer to the business responsiveness and reputation as attitude towards business in general (Keng, Richmond and Han, 1995; Phau and Sari, 2004; Tipper, 1997; Lau and Ng, 2001 and so on).

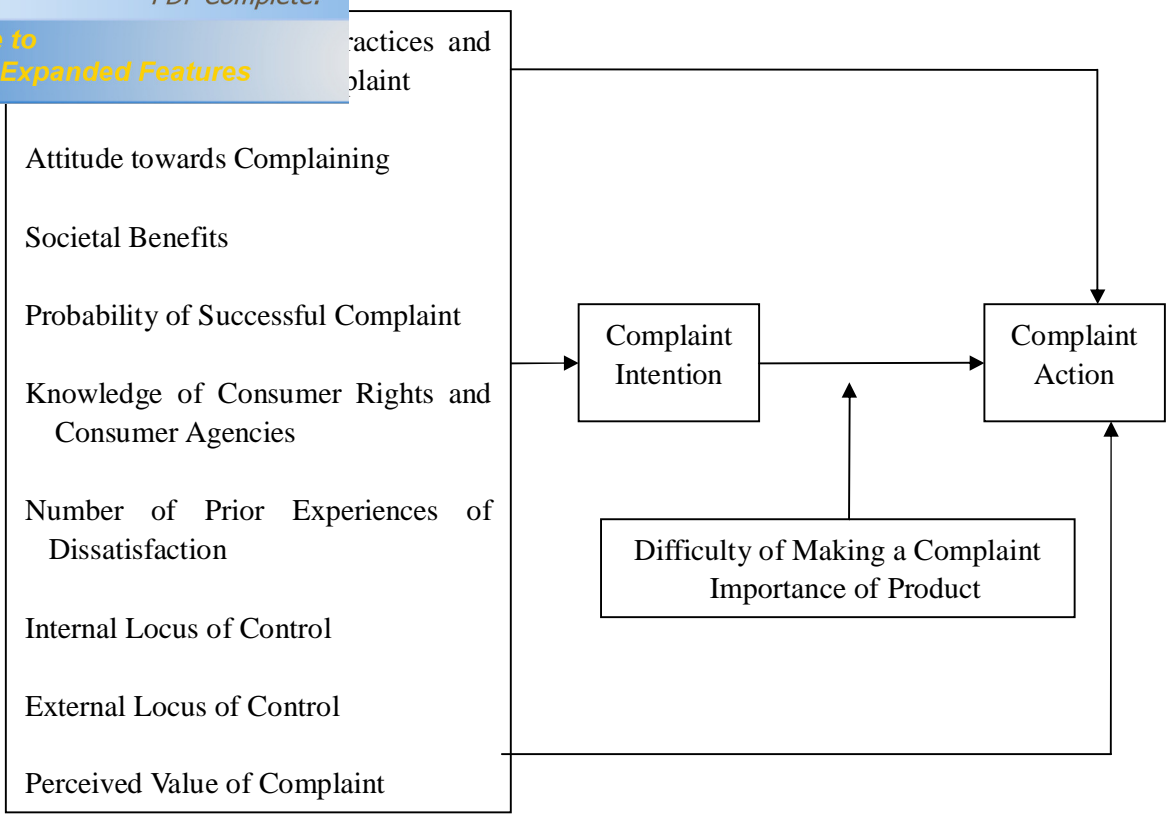


Figure 3.4: The Proposed Research Framework of This Study

There are three predictors of attitude towards behaviour, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control as posited in the original TPB model. In the current study, attitude towards complaining, societal benefits and probability of successful complaint replace the three original predictors in the TPB model to influence the complaint intention which later affect complaint actions. However, based on the researcher's knowledge, there is no study made where the social cognitive constructs in the TPB model are applied in the complaint behaviour situation except East (1996, 2000). However, the TPB model is not supported well in the study by East (1996, 2000).

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) point out that the social learning theory can be used to

actions. Bandura (1997) and Ormrod (1999) observe that individual awareness of specific behaviour and previous learned behaviour influence human behaviour. In the current study, the consumer's knowledge (information) about consumer rights and consumer protection agencies and the number of previous experiences of dissatisfaction are used as two variables to predict the complaint intention and complaint action.

Based on the previous studies on the locus of control construct and the suggestion from Singh (1989) about the locus of control as the personality factor to predict the complaint intention, various studies have focussed on service (Bradley and Spark, 2002) and purchase behaviour (Busseri, Lefcourt and Kerton, 1998; Busseri and Kerton, 1997; Rinehart, 1995), however, no studies have applied the locus of control factor in consumer complaint behaviour. Thus, to fill this gap, this study uses locus of control to explain consumer complaint intention and action.

Crie (2003) and Gronhaug and Gilly (1991) suggest that consumer complaint behaviour requires complaint transaction costs that consumers spend on time and effort. These costs are specific in influencing the consumer's further decision on whether complaint behaviour will become actual or not. Crie (2003) points out that consumers should search for information to reduce the uncertainty elements to an acceptable level. Additionally, Williamson (1979) argues that the discrete-contracting paradigm occurs in all kinds of standardized transactions, for example, the complaint frequency from consumers has an influence on the firms or the business, in the long term, the complaint

perceived cost of making complaints (Crie, 2003 and Gronhaug and Gilly, 1991).

The majority of studies concerning consumer complaint behaviour only focus on complaint intention or complaint action. No studies have proposed a comprehensive model for complaint action through complaint intention. Although Singh (1989) suggests the two stage complaint behaviour in which the complaint intention, as the function of complaint action, should be considered, in his study, he proposes that individual intention and unspecified situation factors in third party to explain the third party complaint action, however, he predicts complaint intention instead of the complaint action in his study. Thus, the focus of his proposed model explains and predicts consumers' intention only. As mentioned in the situational influence section, Richins (1982) and Singh (1989) clarify the moderating effect of situational factors influence on complaint intention and complaint action, whereas, there are no previous studies made on this moderating effect in consumer complaint behaviour. Based on the suggestion from Richins (1982) and Singh (1989), this current study attempts to address this gap in consumers' complaint behaviour from business firms and third parties.

The TPB also allows for additional variables in this model (Bailey, 2006; Ajzen, 1985, 1991). In this case, other variables, such as perception of business practices and responsiveness to complaint, knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agency, number of prior experience of dissatisfaction, internal locus of control, external locus of control and perceived value of complaint have been added as individual difference

intention and complaint action. According to the above theories and previous studies, the framework for present study is illustrated in Figure 4.4. The framework consists of four sets of variables: (a) independent variables, i.e., perception of business practices and responsiveness to complaint, attitude towards complaining, societal benefits, probability of successful complaint, internal locus of control, external locus of control, knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agency, number of prior experiences of dissatisfaction and perceived value of complaint; (b) mediating variable is complaint intention; (c) dependent variable is complaint action; and (d) moderating variables are difficulty of making a complaint and import of product.

As depicted in Figure 3.4, the research framework suggests that a variety of factors are perceived by consumers and that these factors may influence the consumers' complaint intention. Next, the complaint intention in turn will affect the consumers' complaint actions. Situational influences are included in this study as the moderating factor in order to see the differences among them concerning the influence on the relationship between complaint intention and complaint action. This section will argue the relationship between these constructs.

Theoretically, the three constructs which are attitude towards behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (PBC) are very distinct concepts (Ajzen, 1991). Numerous studies have been conducted to examine their conceptual differences

ent constructs stand in predictable relations to intention and behaviour (Armitage and Conner, 2001). Based on the suggestion of Ajzen (1991) and Bailey (2006), additional variables are allowed to add into the TPB model, the present study will first discuss the links between independent variables and complaint intention, followed by discussing the relationship between independent variables and complaint action, relationship between complaint intention and complaint action, complaint intention as mediating variable to affect the relationship between independent variables and complaint action, and moderating variables influence on the relationship between complaint intention and complaint action.

3.3.1 Relationship between Independent Variables and Complaint Intention

This subsection will elaborate the relationship between independent variables and complaint intention (the mediating variable for the study), e.g. perception of business practices and responsiveness to complaint, attitude towards complaining, societal benefits, probability of successful complaint, knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agency, number of prior experience of dissatisfaction, internal locus of control, external locus of control, and perceived value of complaint. Each proposition will be supported with empirical evidences and/or solid theoretical arguments.

a) Perception of Business Practices and Responsiveness to Complaint and Complaint Intention

Keng, Richmond and Han (1995) argue that market factors should influence consumer complaint behaviour. The factor includes business reputation for quality and service,

the business to complaints. Landon (1977) suggests that a good image of a firm can encourage consumers to make complaints when they are dissatisfied with products or services. Granbois, Summers and Frazier (1977) delineate that consumer's perception about a firm's willingness to provide redress has the most significant correlation with complaint behaviour. Jacoby and Jaccard (1981) observe that a business's reputation and responsiveness to a complaint from the manufacturer and the retailer relevant to the marketing channel, and it affects consumer complaint behaviour (Nasir, 2004).

Richins (1982) points out that the efficacy of complaining and the retailer's willingness to solve complaints can be a major factor in consumer's complaint behaviour. If the customer responsiveness or firm-related failure from firms or business causes individual's dissatisfaction, consumers are more likely to tell others about their unhappiness since they tend to perceive the firm to be at fault, and consumers may feel angry and desire to hurt the firm's business (Lau and Ng, 2001). Weiser (1995) argues that the willingness to address consumer's complaints by the company predicts the choice of complaint response type. Davidow and Dacin (1997) observe that an organization with a positive image can encourage consumers to lodge their complaints, and handling complaints well is one way of improving the organization, business or retailer's image. Based on the previous literature review, the reputation of the business practice or retailer and the retailer's willingness to address complaints causes consumer's dissatisfaction and may influence the consumer's complaint behaviour (Richins, 1982; Keng, et al., 1995; Phau and Sari, 2004; Lau and Ng, 2001; Crie, 2003).

In the current study, perception of business practices and responsiveness to complaint demonstrates an individual's feeling about business behaviour and consumption of products or service in the marketplace (Phau and Sari, 2004). This construct can be defined as the consumer's perception about business practices and business responsiveness to their complaint (Keng, et al., 1995). Liu and McClure (2001) suggest that ineffective handling of the consumer's complaint will increase the degree of consumer's dissatisfaction and harms the marketer's reputation.

Regarding to the previous studies, not many studies have been done on concerning the relationship between business practice and responsiveness to complaint handling construct and complaint intention (see Table 3.2). Halstead and Droge (1991) found that business practices and responsiveness to complaint have no significant relationship with complaint intention. However, Landon (1977) suggests that "if a firm has a strong image for quality and a well-known reputation for making adjustments, consumers are more likely to complain when they are dissatisfied" (p. 33). Richins (1982) argues that if consumers perceive that a business is willing to remedy the complaint they are more likely to make a complaint. This present study would propose as following:

Proposition 2a: Consumers with a positive perception of business practice and responsiveness to complaint will be more likely to have high complaint intention.

Relationship between Perception of Business Practice and Complaint (PRC) and Complaint Intention: A Review

Reference	Results
Keng, et al., (1995)	Definition: Consumer's perception about business practice and business responsiveness to their complaint.
Landon (1977)	PRC is positively related with complaint intention.
Richins (1982)	PRC predicts complaint intention significantly.

b) *Attitude towards Complaining and Complaint Intention*

Attitude towards behaviour is a core factor in the TPB model, and it is used as one of the important constructs in the studies applying TPB. Ajzen (1985) believes that attitude towards behaviour is determined by salient beliefs about that behaviour, and each salient belief should link the behaviour with some valued outcome. For example, people may believe that making a complaint (behaviour) is their duty, or it makes them feel good, or is unreasonable (outcome). Attitude towards behaviour concerns the individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behaviour (Ajzen, 1985). Hence, Armitage and Conner (2001) suggest that attitude towards behaviour has been seen as the least controversial construct. Ajzen and Fishbein (2004) suggest that researcher must clear about the conceptualisation of attitude construct and be able to differentiate between general attitude (e.g. attitudes towards physical objectives, racial, ethics, institutions, policies, events, or other targets) and attitudes towards performing the target behaviour in question. Therefore, this current study will estimate attitude towards behaviour as attitude towards complaining in the consumer complaint behaviour domain. Most studies have demonstrated the existence of a relationship between attitudes towards complaining and consumer complaint behaviour (e.g. Richins,

In the research by Kim, Kim, Im and Shin (2003), attitude towards complaining refers to the dissatisfied consumers' tendency to seek compensation from the firm. On the other hand, attitude towards complaining as described by Singh (1989) is 'an individual's stable evaluations regarding the "goodness" or "badness" of complaining per se, irrespective of the specifics of the dissatisfaction episode' (p. 335). The conception from Singh (1989) is similar with the concept of attitude towards behaviour by Ajzen (1985), which is the individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behaviour. To be consistent with the TPB model, attitude towards complaining is defined as 'individual perception regarding complaining to sellers or providers' (Singh, 1990, p. 68). According to the previous studies, attitude towards complaining refers to the individual feeling regarding whether complaining to a business or firm is or is not an appropriate activity in the current study (Halstead and Droge, 1991; Richins, 1982; Singh, 1990).

Before making complaints to a business/firm or a third party, many consumers are concerned about whether complaining is an appropriate behaviour, and some feel that they do not like to be seen or see themselves as complainers or troublemakers. Hence, this kind of feeling sometimes inhibits consumers to release their dissatisfaction about the products or services (Richins, 1982). However, some consumers have a distinctly opposite point of view; they feel that they should complain, because making complaints about discontent with products or services is their moral obligation (Richins, 1982).

st that people are likely to make a complaint if they believe their complaint behaviour is appropriate, but some consumers may hesitate to complain if they perceive negative reactions to complaint behaviour by others.

According to the TPB model, Ajzen (1985, 1991) suggests that an individual's attitude towards performing a particular behaviour is likely to be positive if that person perceived that there are positive outcomes resulting from the behaviour. Thus, using a deductive logic, favourable attitude is likely to increase a person's intention to participate in a given behaviour. Singh and Wilkes (1996) found that consumers with a more positive attitude towards complaining will have more intention to complain at voice and third parties; there is no influence on the private complaint intention. Richins (1982) found that attitude towards complaining is positively related with the intention of making a complaint. Thus, consumers who believe that making a complaint is their moral obligation are more likely to complain than those who feel that complaining is not appropriate behaviour.

Referring to complaint studies (see Table 3.3). Kim, Kim, Im and Shin (2003) found that consumers with a positive attitude towards complaining are more likely to have a complaint intention to the firm compared with consumers who are reluctant to seek redress for their discontent with products or services in Korea. Singh (1989) found that attitude towards complaining was positively significant with the complaint intention, and attitude towards complaining plays an important role in understanding complaint intention. It can be explained that complainers consider complaining as an "appropriate"

and that attitude towards complaining is associated variable which is positively related with complaint intention in the condition 1 of scenario study; however, it is not the strongest predictor of complaining. In examining the dissatisfaction responses in restaurants, Cheng, Lam and Hsu (2005) found that attitude towards complaining is positively related with voice complaint intention, negative word-of-mouth intention and exit intention in China. Based on the previous studies, the proposition is suggested as following:

Proposition 2b: Consumers with a higher attitude towards complaining will be more likely to have a high complaint intention.

Table 3.3: Relationship between Attitude towards Complaining and Complaint Intention: A Review

Reference	Results
Singh (1989)	Definition: An individual's stable evaluations regarding the "goodness" or "badness" of complaining per se, irrespective of the specifics of the dissatisfaction episode.
Singh and Wilkes (1996)	Attitude towards complaining positively and significantly influence on third party complaint intention.
Richins (1982)	Attitude towards complaining positively predicts complaint intention.
Kim, Kim, Im and Shin (2003)	Complaint intention is affected by attitude towards complaining.
Singh (1989)	Attitude towards complaining is a significant predictor of complaint intention.
East (2000)	Attitude towards complaining is positively related with complaint intention in conditions 1 of scenario study.
Cheng, Lam and Hsu (2005)	Voice complaint intention, negative word-of-mouth intention and exit intention are affected by attitude towards complaining.

c) Societal Benefits and Complaint Intention

key factor in the TPB model, and it is used as one of the important constructs in the studies of applying TPB. Ajzen (1985) believes that subjective norm is determined by beliefs about the normative expectations of others (normative beliefs) (Hrubes, Ajzen and Daigle, 2001). For example, people may believe that making a complaint (behaviour) is their responsibility in the society. The subjective norm concerns the individual's perceived social pressure put on him or her to perform or not to perform the specific behaviour (Ajzen, 1985). Some researchers (such as Magnusson, Arvola, Hursti, Aberg and Sjoden 2001) intentionally excluded subjective norm in their model, while others used the social related components factor in their model instead of subjective norm, for example, social support (such as Rhodes, Jones and Courneya, 2002) and social negativity (such as Okun, Ruehlman, Karoly, Lutz, Fairholme and Schaub, 2003). In the consumer complaint domain, Singh (1990) and Richins (1982) found that societal benefits are associated with complaint behaviour. Therefore, this current study will apply societal benefits instead of subjective norms to predict the complaint intention and complaint action.

For the definition of societal benefits, Richins (1982) suggests societal benefits as an important variable for explaining consumer's attitude about registering complaints which have societal as well as personal benefits. Singh (1990) proposes that societal benefits can be defined as individual beliefs about societal benefits resulting from complaining. This concept of societal benefits is similar to the concept of subjective norms by Ajzen (1985), which is the individual's perceived social pressure put on him or her to perform or not to perform a specific behaviour. Hence, the conception from

the current study.

Armitage and Conner (2001) argue that subjective norm is a relatively more controversial construct within TPB literature compared with the attitude construct. Based on 185 respondents, Armitage and Conner reveal that the relationship between the subjective norm and intention is positively significant but weaker than the attitude towards behaviour, perceived behaviour control and intention. Richins (1982) argues that if enough consumers are quick to complain or point out the particular product or service with which they feel discontented, the product or service will eventually be removed from the marketplace or improved. However, other consumers may disagree with this view. As the argument from Richins (1982) is that societal benefits about the consumer's complaining influences the consumer's intention for making a complaint and complaint behaviour. Singh (1990) suggests societal benefits as a variable for explaining the consumer's attitude about the dissatisfaction to predict the consumer's complaint behaviour.

Based on the TPB model, subjective norms should positively influence the behaviour intention of specific behaviour (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). In consumer complaint behaviour (see Table 3.4), Singh (1990) found that societal benefits is not related the complaint intention. This means that individual beliefs about societal benefits resulting from complaining do not influence the complaint intention. However, Richins (1982) found that societal benefits is positively related with the intention of complaint. It can be explained that consumers who believe that complaining is beneficial for society are

in those who do not agree with this perception. East (2000) found that societal benefits on making complaining is the most associated variable which is positively related with complaint intention in the condition 1 of scenario study. In examining the dissatisfaction responses in restaurants, Cheng, Lam and Hsu (2005) found that societal benefits on making complaining is positively related with voice complaint intention, negative word-of-mouth intention and exit intention in China. In the current study, based on limited previous studies the proposition is suggested as follows:

Proposition 2c: Consumers who believe that complaining is beneficial for society is more likely to have high complaint intention.

Table 3.4: Relationship between Societal Benefits and Complaint Intention: A Review

Reference	Results
Singh (1990)	Definition: Individual beliefs about societal benefits resulting from complaining.
Singh (1990)	Societal benefits is not related with complaint intention.
Richins (1982)	Societal benefit positively predicts complaint intention.
East (2000)	Societal benefits positively affect complaint intention.
Cheng, Lam and Hsu (2005)	Voice complaint intention, negative word-of-mouth intention and exit intention are affected by societal benefits on making complaining.

d) Probability of Successful Complaint and Complaint Intention

The TPB model extends the TRA by adding perceived behavioural control as a third determinant and perceived behaviour control is the main variable to predict the

fore, the perceived behavioural control is added in the TPB model to take account of non-volitional behaviours (Ajzen and Driver, 1992; Doll and Ajzen, 1992; Cherry, 2006). Ajzen (1985) believes that perceived behavioural control is determined by control beliefs, which is related to the personal capacity to that behaviour according to the individual's confidence, knowledge, opportunity and so on, that may further or hinder performance of that specific behaviour (Hrubes, Ajzen and Daigle, 2001). Ajzen (1985) suggests that when the extent of resources and opportunity become realistic, perceived behavioural control can be used to predict the probability of a successful behavioural attempt. Ajzen (1991) predicts that perceived behavioural control influences a person's intention to perform a given behaviour. using a deductive logic, an individual's behavioural intention tend to increase when there is increase in that person's confidence level and perceptions of the amount of control he or she has over that particular behaviour.

Several meta-analyses found support for strong association between perceived behaviour control and behaviour intention, such as Armitage and Conner (2001) found that perceived behavioural control contribute increments of 6% in the explained variance in predicting intentions after taking attitudes and subjective norms into account. Hagger and Chatzisarantis (2005) argue that perceived behavioural control hold a considerable strong correlation with exercise intention. Kalafatis, Pollard, East and Tsogas (1999) found that intention in green marketing is significantly explained by the perceived behavioural control in Greek. Hrubes, Ajzen and Daigle (2001) found hunting intention is positively predicted by perceived behavioural control. According to the

, this current study will estimate perceived behavioural control as the probability of a successful complaint in the consumer complaint behaviour domain.

In consumer complaint behaviour, the probability of successful complaint can be defined as an individual's perception about the chances that satisfying outcomes (such as refund) will result if one or more third party complaint behaviour is exercised (Singh, 1990). Based on the definition from Singh (1990), Kim, Kim, Im and Shin (2003) suggest that the probability of successful complaint is the consumer's perceived likelihood of getting a reward from the firm, such as a refund, exchange, or apology. Some studies have demonstrated the existence of a relationship between probability of successful complaint with consumer complaint behaviour (Singh, 1990; Kim, Kim, Im and Shin, 2003; Lau and Ng, 2001).

Referring to the relationship between perceived behavioural control and complaint intention (see Table 3.5), Cheng, Lam and Hsu (2005) found that perceived behavioural control as easily executed dissatisfaction to restaurant managers is positively related with voice complaint intention, negative word-of-mouth intention and exit intention in China. East (2000) found that perceived behavioural control is the dominant variable which is positively associated with complaint intention in the condition 2 of scenario study. Day and Landon (1976) suggest that complaint intention is positively predicted by the probability of successful complaint.

(1990) found that the probability of successful complaint is positively related to the complaint intention on the third party and it plays a central role in understanding complaint intention. This result shows that consumers with a higher subjective probability of successful complaint will have more intention to take third party action. For Korean consumers, Kim, Kim, Im and Shin (2003) suggest that if consumers believe their complaints will be accepted by the firm, they are more likely to express their complaining feelings to the firm, however, if they believe that the firm does not have any interest in their complaint, they may think the complaints will be meaningless and prefer to keep silent and never shop there again. They found that higher individual's perception on the probability of successful complaint can increase complaint intention. Based on the above discussion, the following proposition is suggested:

Proposition 2d: Consumers with a higher probability of successful complaint will be more likely to have a high complaint intention.

Table 3.5: Relationship between Probability of Successful Complaint and Complaint Intention: A Review

Reference	Results
Kim, Kim, Im and Shin (2003)	Definition: The consumer's perceived likelihood of getting a reward from the firm, such as a refund, exchange, or apology.
Cheng, Lam and Hsu (2005)	Perceived behavioural control is positively related with complaint intention.
East (2000)	Perceived behavioural control is significantly predicted complaint intention.
Day and Landon (1976)	Complaint intention is positively predicted by the probability of successful complaint.
Richins (1985)	Probability of successful complaint is significant contribution to the prediction of complaint intention.
Singh (1990)	Probability of successful complaint plays a central role in understanding complaint intention.
Kim, Kim, Im and Shin (2003)	Complaint intention is positively explained by probability of successful complaint.

Intention

Bandura (1997) proposes that the individual, the environment and the prior behaviour can influence each other. Individuals expect certain behaviours to bring reinforcement; however, the reinforcement response only increases when the learner is aware of that connection (Ormrod, 1999). Ormrod (1999) suggests that reinforcement responses only increase when the learner is aware of the connection of that behaviour. In the complaint behaviour, understanding or awareness of consumer's rights and consumer protection is important for consumers when they are making the decision to seek redress for their dissatisfaction to firms or business or third party, and that information which is recognized by the individual will ultimately influence their future behaviour based on the learning theory (Ajzen, 1985; Singh and Wilkes, 1996).

Singh and Wilkes (1996) suggest learning theory as common theory in learning about mechanisms and options of complaining, such as knowledge of unfair practices, consumer rights, and complaint channels. Agbonifoh and Edoreh (1986) argue that market imperfections are one of the market factors that make consumers feel helpless when they face discontent. Hence, consumer protection agencies are the ways to seek help for their dissatisfaction. Those agencies can guide consumers to enjoy their rights and the awareness of existence of regulations and provisions becomes important when they encounter frustrations or depression about the dissatisfied products or services (Agbonifoh and Edoreh, 1986).



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In America, Haefner and Leckenby (1975) suggest that consumer's awareness or understanding the functions of various consumer protection agencies determine the consumer complaint behaviour. Moyer (1985) found that complainers with relatively good information concerning their consumer rights and who are more aware of possible help from third parties are more active in seeking information and more likely to express their dissatisfaction to sellers. Day (1984) suggests that consumer's knowledge about where to complain affects the consumer's complaint behaviour. Predicting the complaint behaviour in the third parties, Tipper (1997) used respondents understanding of consumer rights and consumer laws to define knowledge of consumer right. Based on the studies by Haefner and Leckenby (1975) and Tipper (1997), the current study defines knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies as the individual's awareness or understanding of consumer rights and consumer protection agencies. This construct is determined by the response to a question relating to consumer's understanding of consumer rights and consumer protection agencies in Malaysia.

In examining the relationship between knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies, Day and Landon (1976) suggest that consumers who are more knowledgeable will have more intention to seek redress and make complaint actions for their discontent with products or services. There have not been many studies made on the knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agency construct on complaint intention. Therefore, this study would like to propose as following:

consumers with more knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies are more likely to have high complaint intention.

f) Number of Prior Experiences of Dissatisfaction and Complaint Intention

From a practical point of view, Ajzen (1985, 1991) suggests that past experience may be an important factor to correlate with a realistic perception of behaviour, and experience can create quite an accurate perception of self-efficacy; past performance of behaviour exerts an influence on present behaviour. Crie (2003) observes that learning theory can be used to explain the function of past experiences concerning the inclination of complaint behaviour. Bagozzi and Warshaw (1990) suggest that frequency of past behaviour can be one of the determinants of behavioural intention and action. When an individual is unclear about his or her true intention with respect to some action, the frequency of past behaviour will be one of independent factor to influence that particular action. Miesen (2003) found that reading intention is positively predicted by past behaviour. For the current study, in accordance with previous studies, prior experience of complaining is defined as the number of times a complaint is addressed to the seller/provider, or any third party (Singh, 1990). Singh (1990) suggests that the response to the voice complaints to firms or business about consumers' discontent with products or services can be posited as prior experience of dissatisfaction.

Carmel (1985) argues that consumers who are dissatisfied in the past are easy to lead to greater dissatisfaction in the future in health service. Hogarth, Hilgert, Kolodinsky and Jinkook (2001) suggest that third party complaining process as the last approach to

action from discontent product or service, consumers who

seek redress in the third party have past dissatisfied experience into the firm or business.

Therefore, Reibodlt (2003) suggests that complainers to a third party are likely to have prior complaining or dissatisfaction experience, however, it is not necessarily only third party complaining experience.

Table 3.6: Relationship between Prior Experiences of Dissatisfaction and Complaint Intention: A Review

Reference	Results
Singh (1990)	Definition: The number of times a complaint is addressed to the seller/provider, or any third party.
Singh and Wilkes (1996)	Greater prior experience of complaining is likely to have intention for third party complaint.
Singh (1990)	Prior experience of voice action positively influences the voice complaint intention.
Cheng, Lam and Hsu (2005)	Past dissatisfaction behaviour influence on the voice complaint intention and negative word-of-mouth intention.

To examine the relationship between number of prior experience of dissatisfaction and complaint intention (see Table 3.6) Singh and Wilkes (1996) suggest that prior experience can have a direct relationship with the complaint intention, and found that consumers with greater prior experience of complaining are likely to have intention for third party complaint. Singh (1989) proposes that prior experience of complaining to a third party has an indirect effect on the complaint intention, however, he found that prior experience positively influences the complaint intention to engage in future third party actions if the situation is somewhat similar with previous experience. Singh (1990) found that prior experience of voice action positively influences the voice complaint intention. Cheng, Lam and Hsu (2005) found that past dissatisfaction behaviour

complaint intention and negative word-of-mouth intention. Thus,

based on previous studies, the following proposition is suggested:

Proposition 2f: Consumers with a higher number of prior experiences of dissatisfaction are more likely to have a high complaint intention.

g) Internal Locus of Control and Complaint Intention

Rotter (1966) suggests that people with different beliefs about their action will affect the outcome of their lives, their personal orientation can be used to explain personal successes and failures about their control and responsibility. Personal orientation ranges from external to internal. Hence, the internal locus of control, as one of the basic dimensions of locus of control, can be used as the personality or psychological construct to explain the behaviours pertinent in various fields (Biddle and Nigg, 2000; Cherry, 2006; Busseri and Kerton, 1997; Dolinsky, Gould, Scotti and Stinerock, 1998 and so on). Generally speaking, the locus of control construct is used to capture an individual's daily expectancies about the reasons for reward or punishment (Rotter, 1966). Individuals with internal locus of control expect predictable outcomes based on their own action.

Busseri, Lefcourt and Kerton (1998) develop the consumer locus of control to predict differences in consumer purchasing behaviour. They found that consumers with internal locus of control are more satisfied than those with external locus of control. Lefcourt (1982) found that internal locus of control orientation is associated with more active

of information pertinent to the outcome than the external locus of control orientation. Rudnice and Deni (1980) found that consumers with internal locus of control have more interest about personal dissatisfaction with goods (see Busseri, Lefcourt and Kerton, 1998). Busseri, Lefcourt and Kerton (1998) suggest that consumers with internal locus of control may have greater consumer search capital¹, and bring more personal resources for their decision, such as collecting more product knowledge, put more attention into information gathering, and develop more shopping experience.

In studies concerning the purchasing of a product, consumers with more internal locus of control will make greater effort in seeking purchasing information, and have more knowledge about the product at the time of purchase (Busseri, Lefcourt and Kerton, 1998). Hoffman, Novak and Schlosser (2000) suggest that consumers with internal locus of control are more action-oriented, they believe in their capabilities to perform behaviours for controlling events, they have their own goals, they exert more effort on mastering situations, and they can get more satisfaction from situations around them. Kowalski (1996) suggests that individuals with internal locus of control are more active, have a problem-solving approach, and experience fewer negative reactions in response to stressful events.

In the physician health care services in American, Dolinsky, Gould, Scotti and Stinerock

¹ It can be defined as an individuals collecting knowledge or information for decision-making, to increase the consumer decision effectively, and at the same time it grows with personal and shared collective experiences (Kerton, 1980).

h locus of control influence on elderly complainers, who complain about an unsatisfactory experience in the health service, and the non-complainers. They found that an internal health locus of control is not a significant factor about physician care. Ajzen (1985) suggests that personal traits are assumed to have no direct effect on behaviour. Thus, internal locus of control as one of personal traits should have direct effect on consumer complaint intention. People with an internal locus of control are more self confident and in charge and tend to take more dramatic social actions in an attempt to alter situations that they perceive as aversive or uncomfortable (Mirels, 1970).

In the study of sociology, Lefcourt (1982) found that persons with an internal locus of control are more resistant to social influences and, also, that an internal locus of control results in greater differences in using resources and social support. Rinehart (1995) argues that consumers with an internal locus of control lead to higher levels of perceived service and satisfaction, and are also more likely to be engaged in firm directed complaint behaviour based on the perception that outcomes are contingent upon their own behaviour. In an empirical study, Kowalski (1996) suggests that people with internal locus of control are more ready to make a complaint as they believe that making a complaint can bring about change for their dissatisfaction. Not many researches have examined the relationship between internal locus of control and consumer complaint intention except Dolinsky, Gould, Scotti and Stinerock (1998).

Hence, this study would like to suggest the proposition as following:

Consumers with a higher internal locus of control are more likely to have high complaint intention.

h) External Locus of Control and Complaint Intention

Rotter (1966) suggests that people with different beliefs about their action will affect the outcome of their lives; their personal orientation can be used to explain personal successes and failures about their control and responsibility. Personal orientation includes external and internal. Hence, the external locus of control as another basic dimension of locus of control can be used as the personality or psychological construct to explain the behaviours pertinent to various fields (Biddle and Nigg, 2000; Cherry, 2006; Busseri and Kerton, 1997; Dolinsky, Gould, Scotti and Stinerock, 1998 and so on). Generally speaking, individuals with external locus of control expect that the outcome is unpredictable due to some external variables (such as fate, luck or powerful others) (Rotter, 1975).

Dessart and Kuylen (1986) found that consumers with external locus of control orientation are more likely to experience financial difficulties and to act impulsively, and that they are less likely to take action according to their plan. Livingstone and Lunt (1992) suggest that consumers with external locus of control orientation have problematic personal debt and are more likely to use consumer credit unsuccessfully (Tokunga, 1993). In the consumer purchasing behaviour, Busseri, Lefcourt and Kerton (1998) argue that consumers with external locus of control orientation believe that the shopping process is overwhelming and unpredictable; they are less likely to collect



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knowledge in a purposive manner, and have lower consumer search capital.

Hoffman, Novak and Schlosser (2000) argue that individuals with external locus of control are less likely to learn the skills that are necessary for achieving their aims or solving the problem. Hence, they are more likely to procrastinate, withdraw, retreat or escape. Busseri and Kerton (1996) argue that consumers with external locus of control are likely to fall prey to misconceptions and are likely to become vulnerable consumers who repeatedly buy *öðudsö* (p. 44).

Ajzen (1985) suggests that personal traits are assumed to have no direct effect on behaviour. Thus, external locus of control as one of personal traits should have direct effect on consumer complaint intention. Rinehart (1995) argues that individuals with a high external locus of control tend to have lower perceptions of service quality and satisfaction, but they will be more likely to engage in word of mouth responses and firm directed complaint behaviour. Based on the definition of locus of control and previous studies, there are no researches examining the relationship between external locus of control and complaint intention, hence, the proposition is stated as following:

Proposition 2h: Consumers with a higher external locus of control are less likely to have high complaint intention.

i) Perceived Value of Complaint and Complaint Intention

at making a complaint involves a lot of trouble, time, and monetary costs, however, some consumers may think that making complaints is quite simple (Richins, 1982). If a consumer believes that making a complaint to a firm is implemental method to achieve some desired result, and that this result provides desirable value, this cognitive consistency may motivate the consumer to engage in higher complaint intention and further complaint actions (Kim, Kim, Im and Shin, 2003). Richins (1982) suggests that costs or trouble involved in complaining may affect consumer complaint behaviour.

In the study of Kim, Kim, Im and Shin (2003), perceived value of complaint is defined as the individual's evaluation of the gap between the benefit and the cost of complaint. Singh (1989) suggests the definition of perceived value of complaint as the consumer's evaluation of the tradeoffs between benefits stemming from one or more third party actions and the costs associated with taking those actions (p. 336). Generally speaking, refunds, exchange or apologies from the firm can be presented as the benefit of complaint behaviour, whereas the time and effort in making the complaint presents the cost of the complaint behaviour.

Ursic (1985) suggests that benefits and costs are separate factors for estimating the court action, however, Singh (1985) argues that benefits and costs can be a single construct based on theoretical and pragmatic reasons. The theory of voice and exit from Hirschman (1970) suggests that a cost/benefit evaluation is a major predictor of complaint behaviour (see Singh, 1989). Singh (1989) argues that the benefits are

s, and, generally, the possibility of greater benefits always involves greater costs, for example, a consumer who is filing a case for damages and compensation needs to pay more time and effort than accepting a compromise through a consumer agency. Landon (1977) also posits payoff (such as benefits) minus the costs as a joint consideration in predicting consumer complaint behaviour.

Singh (1990) found that the perceived value of the complaint has a positive and significant influence on the consumer's complaint intention. However, the weight of the perceived value of the complaint is significantly on marginal value ($p < 0.1$), thus, this construct does not play an important role in his research. Richins (1982) found that the perceived value of the complaint has a positive relationship with the intention to complain. It can be said that if the perceived value is higher, the likelihood of a consumer making complaint will also be higher. Kim, Kim, Im and Shin (2003) found that the perceived value of complaint positively influences the complaint intention. This can be explained as consumers are more likely to have the intention to complain if the potential benefit of the complaint behaviour is greater than the cost of making the complaint. According to the previous studies, the proposition is suggested as following:

Proposition 2i: Consumers with a higher perceived value of complaint are more likely to have a high complaint intention.

3.3.2 Relationship between Independent Variables and Complaint Action

This subsection provides theoretical and empirical justifications for the support of the

the relationship between independent variables and complaint action. Independent variables include perception of business practices and responsiveness to complaint, attitude towards complaining, societal benefits, probability of successful complaint, knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agency, number of prior experience of dissatisfaction, internal locus of control, external locus of control, and perceived value of complaint. It is observed that most studies on the TPB model do not focus on examining how well attitude and subjective norms predict behaviour. The common practice in the literature is to include only intention and perceived behavioural control into stepwise or hierarchical regression analysis based on the tenets of the TPB (Ajzen, 1991).

a) Perception of Business Practices and Responsiveness to Complaint and Complaint Action

With regard to predicting complaint action from business practices and responsiveness to complaint (see Table 3.7), Bearden and Mason (1984) found there is non significant relationship between firm's practice and responsiveness to consumer complaints and complaint behaviour. Keng, et al., (1995) apply the t-test differences about the consumers' perception of the business practice and responsiveness to complaint between the complainers and non-complainers in Singapore. They found that non-complainers believed that business don't take care of consumers' complaints and cheat consumers in Singapore. But, complainers believe that firms have responsive on their business in Singapore, it means that firms are willing to replace faulty products and make efforts to ensure good condition for sales products or services.

Table 3.7 Relationship between Perception of Business Practice and Responsiveness to Complaint and Complaint Action: A Review

Reference	Results
Bearden and Mason (1984)	Business practice and responsiveness to complaint is not related with complaint behaviour.
Keng, et al. (1995)	Complainers in Singapore perceive business practice and responsiveness to complaint is positively predicted complaint behaviour. Non-complainers in Singapore believe the negative relationship between business practice and responsiveness to complaint.
Richins (1982)	Business practices and responsiveness to complaint is negatively influence on complaint action.
Phau and Sari (2004)	Perception of business practices and responsiveness to complaint is negatively and significantly affect complaint action in Indonesia.
Tipper (1997)	Third party complaint action is negatively related with the consumer's perception of business practice and responsiveness to complaint.

Richins (1982) found that complainers believe that they are more likely to take complaint action if business responsiveness is low in USA. Moyer (1985) found that complainers in the third party hold negative expectations concerning an organization's responsiveness to their complaints. Phau and Sari (2004) found that Indonesian complainers and non-complainers have a negative perception concerning business practice and responsiveness to complaint. Regarding third party complaint actions, Tipper (1997) found that American consumers with a negative feeling about business practice and responsiveness to complaint are more likely to address their complaint to the Better Business Bureau, Consumer Agency, State Attorney General's Office, Federal Agency and Legal Action. This means that consumers with a negative perception concerning business practice and responsiveness to complaint are more likely to seek

less than other consumers. This study proposes the negative relationship between the perception of business practice and responsiveness to complaint due to Malaysia and Indonesia are developing country in South-East Asia. Thus, this study suggests the statement as following:

Proposition 3a: Consumers with a negative perception of business practice and responsiveness to complaint will be more likely to take complaint action.

b) *Attitude towards Complaining and Complaint Action*

Testing the influence between attitude towards complaining and complaint action (see Table 3.8), Oh (2003) suggests that attitude towards complaining influences complaining action by the library users who are dissatisfied with the library service. However, he found that attitude towards complaining is not related to third party complaint action. Richins (1982) used personal norms to explain attitude towards complaining, she found that attitude towards complaining have the strongest negative relationship with actual complaint actions. It maybe consumers feel that the actual complaint action is not appropriate behaviour and against their moral obligation.

In studying Indonesian consumers, Phau and Sari (2004) used the t-test to investigate the differences in attitude towards complaining between complainers and non-complainers, they found that Indonesian complainers possess a negative relationship between attitude towards complaining and actual complaint action. This means that Indonesian complainers believe that making complaints is not an appropriate

complaint against their moral obligation and that complaining embarrasses them. In order to capture the associations of attitude towards complaining and complaint action in the present study, the following proposition is suggested:

Proposition 3b: Consumers with a higher attitude towards complaining will be less likely to take complaint action.

Table 3.8: Relationship between Attitude towards Complaining and Complaint Action: A Review

Reference	Results
Oh (2003)	Attitude towards complaining is not related to third party complaint action.
Richins (1982)	Attitude towards complaining is negatively and significantly predict the complaint action.
Phau and Sari (2004)	Complaint action is negatively influenced by attitude towards complaining in Indonesia.

c) Societal Benefits and Complaint Behaviour and Complaint Action

Referring to the links between specific subjective norm components and behaviour, Okun, Ruehlman, Karoly, Lutz, Fairholme and Schaub (2003) and Hagger and Chatzisarantis (2005) found subjective norms demonstrate positive and significant relationship with exercise behaviour. Nevertheless, only one study by Richins (1982) is using the societal benefits as subjective norms to explain the influence on the complaint behaviour. Richins (1982) found that societal benefits is negatively related with third party complaint action. It can be explained that consumers who believe that making a complaint is beneficial for society are less likely to take third party complaint action as they disagree that complaining can eventually improve or remove the faulty product

on the researcher's knowledge, no other studies extend the relationship between societal benefits and complaint action. Logically saying, consumers believe that making complaint is beneficial for society are more likely to making complaint action, however, when they consider about the cost on making complaint action, such as time or money consuming, they might reluctant to take actually complaint action due to they feel it is not worth their effort. Therefore, the suggestion for the proposition is as following:

Proposition 3c: Consumers who believe that complaining is beneficial for society will be less likely to take complaint action.

d) Probability of Successful Complaint and Complaint Action

As for the perceived behavioural control, most of studies found significant correlation between perceived behavioural control and behaviour, such as Hagger and Chatzisarantis (2005), Norman, Conner and Bell (1999). However, a few of previous studies examine the relationship between perceived behavioural control and complaint behaviour, e.g. Oh (2003) and Ursic (1985). Oh (2003) found that the likelihood of success of dissatisfied library users significantly affects negative word-of-mouth, indicating that dissatisfied consumers are more likely to talk about their discontent experience concerning the library service using negative words and that they dislike directly or indirectly complaining to the library or third parties. In predicting the complaining in court action, Ursic (1985) found that the only positively direct empirical evidence is between the probability of successful complaint and a consumer's decision

It can be seen that if consumers feel that success in court is probable, they are more likely to take action than consumers who do not feel that winning in court is probable. According to the limitation of studies, the following proposition is suggested:

Proposition 3d: Consumers with a higher probability of successful complaint are more likely to take complaint action.

e) Knowledge of Consumer Rights and Consumer Agencies and Complaint Action

Investigating the relationship between knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies and complaint action (see Table 3.9), Agbonifoh and Edoreh (1986) suggest that awareness of consumer rights should affect complaint behaviour; however, they found that there is insignificant influence between the awareness of consumer rights and complaint behaviour for Nigerian consumers in their study. Moyer (1985) found that complainers who seek more information and have more interest in the consumer protection laws are more active in expressing their dissatisfaction to sellers. Haefiner and Leckenby (1975) found that 97 percent and 87 percent of respondents indicate awareness of the Better Business Bureau and the small claims court respectively. Thus, a consumer having accurate knowledge about understanding their rights is positively related to seeking redress through third parties. Tipper (1997) suggests that knowledge of consumer rights is one of the key factors in predicting third party redress. He found that knowledge of consumer rights has a significant positive influence on third party redress. It can be viewed that American consumers with more knowledge about

inclined to utilize federal agencies and legal action as their third party redress options than other consumers. Referring to the scant previous literature, the proposition on knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies can be suggested as following:

Proposition 3e: Consumers with more knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies are more likely to take complaint actions.

Table 3.9: Relationship between Knowledge of Consumer Rights and Consumer Agencies and Complaint Action: A Review

Reference	Results
Agbonifoh and Edoreh (1986)	Awareness of consumer's rights is insignificantly related with complaint action.
Moyer (1985)	Knowledge of consumer rights and consumer protection agencies is positively predicted the complaint action.
Haefiner and Leckenby (1975)	Knowledge about understanding their rights is positively related to third parties complaint action.
Tipper (1997)	Complaint action is positively predicted by knowledge of consumer rights.

f) Number of Prior Experiences of Dissatisfaction and Complaint Action

To investigate the relationship between the number of prior experiences of dissatisfaction and complaint action (see Table 3.10), Huppertz (2003) suggests that the number of prior experiences of complaining have a positive influence on the complaint action. This means that consumers with more prior experience of complaining are more likely to make complaints. Explaining the consumer complaint behaviour from an economic aspect, Kolodinsky (1995) found that the number of prior experiences of complaining produce a positive relationship with private and public complaints in repair

t in medical services. Reiboldt (2003) suggests that the number of prior experiences of complaining is important in detecting third party complaining, and the number of prior complaint actions taken will increase the intensity of complaint action. The evidence leads the present study to suggest proposition as following:

Proposition 3f: Consumers with a higher number of prior experiences of dissatisfaction are more likely to take complaint action.

Table 3.10: Relationship between Number of Prior Experience of Dissatisfaction and Complaint Action: A Review

Reference	Results
Huppertz (2003)	Number of prior experiences of complaining has a positive influence on the complaint action.
Kolodinsky (1995)	The number of prior experiences of complaining produces a positive relationship with private and public complaints in repair services but is insignificant in medical services.
Reiboldt (2003)	The number of prior complaint actions taken will increase the intensity of complaint action.

g) Internal Locus of Control and Complaint Action

In the empirical study, Kowalski (1996) suggests the negative relationship between locus of control and complaining action. First, individuals with an internal locus of control may be less likely to complain than individuals with an external locus of control as they feel that they have control over their environment and are responsible for their actions. Thus, their level of frustration is lower. In addition, individuals with an internal locus of control are more ready to accept responsibility for their failures as well as their

make internal, stable attributions for their own behaviour).

Therefore, they are less likely to seek the actually complaint action (Kowalski, 1996).

No research has examined the relationship between internal locus of control and complaint action. Thus, Regarding to the suggestion from Kowalski, the proposition is suggested as following:

Proposition 3g: Consumers with a higher internal locus of control are less likely to take complaint action.

h) External Locus of Control and Complaint Action

According to the previous study, consumers with external locus of control are more likely to procrastinate, withdraw, retreat or escape from consumer behaviour (Hoffman, Novak and Schlosser, 2000). In purchasing behaviour, consumers with an external locus of control may be less likely to seek the help of people with expert knowledge or search out information about a product before buying it, and externally oriented people may consider that the control of a person's experiences will be useful for predicting the amount of effort expended and awareness of methods, this control can minimise uncertainty in shopping (Busseri and Kerton, 1997). Mirels (1970) found that individuals with an external orientation tend to be anxious, aggressive and dogmatic, less trusting of others and have lower self esteem than individuals with a more internal sense of control. No studies have been done on predicting the relationship between external locus of control and complaint action. Therefore, based on the previous experimental study on the external locus of control, the proposition is suggested as

Proposition 3h: Consumers with a higher external locus of control are less likely to take complaint action.

i) Perceived Value of Complaint and Complaint Action

In predicting the relationship between perceived value of complaint and complaint action, Day, Grabiske, Schaetzle, and Staubach (1981) point out that low-cost options for those consumers who want to do something but are unwilling to devote the time and effort to seek redress or publicly complain, they just simply boycott the brand or store and/or warn family and friends. Based on the study by Day (1984), dissatisfied consumers do not complain because they believe that it was not worth the time and effort. Bonner and Metzen (1992) propose that persons who perceive that the emotional or financial benefits are high are more likely to pursue legal redress. Therefore, consumers choose complaint actions when they perceive the complaint value is the best trade-off.

For the dissatisfied consumers who did not go to the court in Nigeria, Agbonifoh and Georeh (1986) found that 47.27% of dissatisfied consumers feel that complaining wastes too much time, 33.94% of complainers believe it costs too much and another 18.79% of consumers feel the award or compensation from the court is insignificant. These results show that most consumers are less likely to take complaint action for their dissatisfaction. On the other hand, Richins (1982) found a negative relationship between

and complaint actions. This result means that consumers are less likely to take action for their discontent because complainers feel that the perceived cost is higher and involves a lot of trouble. Based on previous studies the proposition is posited as following:

Proposition 3i: Consumers with a higher perceived value of complaint are less likely to take complaint action.

3.3.3 Relationship between Complaint Intention and Complaint Action

In both the TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) and TPB (Ajzen, 1991) models, the intention construct is considered as the mediation role between the beliefs and the behaviour. It is viewed as one immediate antecedent of that actual behaviour (Hrubes, Ajzen and Daigle, 2001; Ajzen, 2002). Godin and Kok (1996) define intention as "the expressed motivation to perform some behaviour or achieve some goal" (p. 94). Ajzen (1991) suggests that intention can be referred to as the amount of effort a person exerts to engage in actual behaviour. Ajzen and Driver (1992) argue that intention can be assumed to "capture the motivational factors that influence behaviour, it is indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behaviour" (p. 208). Hence, the more an individual intends to carry out, the more likely he or she will. Conner, Povey, Sparks, James and Shepherd (2003) define intention as "what the person intends or plans to do" (p. 76). Ajzen (2001) suggests that intention plays "an important role in guiding human action" and it can "perform a goal-directed behaviour" in a specific context (p. 47). Ajzen and

the mediating role of intention can be best illustrated with

respect to the attainment of outcomes.

Many studies have reported strong positive relationship between behavioural intention and actual behaviour in a variety of settings, such as leisure activities (e.g., Ajzen and Driver 1992), dietary supplement use (e.g., Conner, Kirk, Cade, and Barrett 2003), recycling behaviour (e.g., Terry, Hogg and White 1999), health-protected behaviours (e.g., McCalul, Sandgren, O'Neill, and Hinsz 1993), organic food purchase (e.g., Tarkiainen and Sundqvist 2005), online purchased and information search behaviour (e.g., Pavlou and Fygenon 2006) and so on. Sheppard, Hartwick and Warshaw (1988), Hausenblas, Carron and Mack (1997) and Saunders, Motl, Dowda, Dishman and Pate (2004) separately found an average correlation of 0.53, 0.47 and 0.33 between intention and behaviour in their studies.

In an attempt to evaluate the intention in the complaint behaviour, Kim, et al., (2003) suggest that complaint behaviour cannot be predicted by attitude and perception factors, complaint intention is much better than complaint behaviour as the outcome of consumers' attitudinal perspectives. This suggestion is more consistent with the TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) and TPB (Ajzen, 1991). Hence, the TPB model can be applied to consumer complaint behaviour. In the study of Richins (1982), she suggests that the propensity (intention) to complain is better predicted than the actual complaint behaviour by consumers' attitudinal perspectives. Consumer complaints to the firm can be seen as the consumer's protest to the firm to obtain an exchange, refund, or apology,

and Shin (2003) believe that consumers complaint behaviour provides an opportunity to analyze and rectify the consumers dissatisfaction to a firm.

The research by Kim, et al., (2003) define the complaint intention as the intention of the dissatisfied consumer to make a complaint to the firm (p. 354).

Table 3.11: Conceptual Definition of Intention Construct

Author(s)	Definition
Ajzen (1991)	Intention is the amount of effort a person exerts to engage in actual behaviour.
Ajzen and Driver (1992)	Intention captures the motivational factors that influence behaviour, such as how hard people are willing to try, how much of an effort they are planning to exert in order to perform the behaviour.
Godin and Kok (1996)	Intention is the expressed motivation to perform some behaviour or achieve some goal.
Conner, et al., (2003)	Intention is what the person intends or plans to do.
Ajzen (2001)	Intention plays an important role in guiding human action and it can perform a goal-directed behaviour in a specific context.
Singh (1990)	Voice complaint intention is the propensity for actions directed at the seller/manufacturer. Private complaint intention is the propensity for complaining to friends/relatives and/or exit. Third party complaint intention is the propensity for complaining to third parties that is not involved into the exchange.
Kim, Kim, Im and Shin (2003)	Complaint intention is the intention of the dissatisfied consumer to make a complaint to the firm

Singh (1990) defines three types of complaint intention: voice complaint intention refers to the propensity for actions directed at the seller/manufacturer; private complaint intention is defined as the propensity for complaining to friends/relatives and/or exit; third party complaint intention is noted as the propensity for complaining to third parties that is not involved in the exchange such as Better Business Bureau,

ing consumer complaint behaviour, most studies consider complaint behaviour as the outcome of consumers' attitude (Tipper, 1997; Phau, et al., 2004; Keng, et al., 1995; Oh, 2003). However, Singh (1990) pays much attention to complaint behaviour through complaint intention. Hence, this researcher applied the definition of complaint intention from Singh (1990) in the present study. Table 3.11 shows the conceptual definition of the intention construct.

The studies of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) and Ajzen (1991, 1985) demonstrate that the attitudes and other components should always predict the intention and the behaviour if using the appropriate measurement of intention. The ability to predict behaviour will depend on the strength of the intention-behaviour relationship. Ajzen and Driver (1992) suggest that the stronger the intention of the individual to engage in behaviour or to achieve their behavioural goal, the more successful they are predicted to be. Hurbes and Ajzen (2001) found that intention contributes positively significant prediction on the hunting behaviour. Singh (1988) found that consumers with private and third party complaint intention are actually more engaged in private and third party actions. Also, Richins (1982) suggests that propensity to complain is significantly related with actual behaviour. Singh (1988) found that the private, voice and third party intention are positively significant with the private, voice and third party actions in which complainants actually engage. Therefore, the stronger the intention of the consumer to engage into complaint action, the more successful they are predicted to be. The proposition between complaint intention and complaint actions is suggested as following:

Proposition 4: Consumers with a higher complaint intention are more likely to take complaint action.

3.3.4 Complaint Intention as a Mediating Variable Affecting the Relationship between Independent Variables and Complaint Action

In this section, the mediating role of complaint intention between independent variables and complaint action will be explored. No study has been done on testing the complaint intention as mediating variable between independent variables and complaint action.

a) Complaint Intention as a Mediating Variable between the Perception of Business Practices and Responsiveness to Complaint and Complaint Action

As originally formulated by Ajzen (1991), individual's attitudinal perception is proposed to influence the target behaviour through effects mediated by behavioural intention. Supportive report is conducted in the study by Richins (1982) in which perception of business respondent is found to significantly related with the propensity to complain, and the propensity to complain is associated with complaint behaviour, this result indicates that perception of business respondent influence on complaint behaviour through the propensity of complain. To demonstrate the complaint intention playing mediation relationship between the perception of business practices and responsiveness to complaint and complaint action, the proposition would likely to pose as following:

Proposition 5a: Complaint intention will mediate the relationship between the



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practice and responsiveness to complaint and complaint

action.

b) Complaint Intention as a Mediating Variable between the Attitude towards Complaining and Complaint Action

As originally suggested by Ajzen (1991), individual's attitude towards that behaviour is proposed to influence the target behaviour through effects mediated by behavioural intention. Several empirical studies have indicated supports for the mediating role of intention. For example, in examining hunting behaviour, Hrubes, Ajzen and Daigle (2001) found that hunting intention is mediated the influence of attitude and hunting behaviour. In the complaint study by Richins (1982), she found attitude towards complaining is significantly influenced on complaint behaviour through the propensity of complain. To demonstrate the complaint intention playing mediation relationship between the attitude towards complaining and complaint action, the present study would likely suggest the proposition as following:

Proposition 5b: Complaint intention will mediate the relationship between attitude towards complaining and complaint action.

c) Complaint Intention as a Mediating Variable between the Societal Benefits and Complaint Action

As originally formulate by Ajzen (1991), individual's subjective norms to that

influence on the target behaviour through behavioural intention. Besides attitude construct to intention and behaviour path, Hrubes, Ajzen and Daigle (2001) also found that subjective norms on hunting behaviour is mediated by the hunting intention. In the complaint study, Richins (1982) also found expectation of social benefits from complaining are directly influenced on the propensity of complain and complaint behaviour, and the propensity of complain is significantly related to the complaint behaviour. To demonstrate the complaint intention playing mediation relationship between the societal benefits and complaint action, the current study would likely to propose as following:

Proposition 5c: Complaint Intention will mediate the relationship between societal benefits and complaint action..

d) Complaint Intention as a Mediating Variable between the Probability of Successful Complaint and Complaint Action

As suggested from Ajzen (1991), individual's perceived behaviour control is proposed to influence on the target behaviour through behavioural intention. Supportive results (e.g. Hrubes, Ajzen and Daigle, 2001; Hagger and Chatzisarantis, 2005) are found that perceived behavioural control is predict the specific behaviour through behavioural intention in hunting behaviour or exercise behaviour. No previous study can be found in examining the complaint intention as mediating affection on the probability of successful complaint and complaint action. Therefore, to demonstrate the complaint intention playing mediation relationship between the probability of successful

ion, the proposition is suggested as following:

Proposition 5d: Complaint intention will mediate the relationship between the probability of successful complaint and complaint action.

e) Complaint Intention as a Mediating Variable between the Knowledge of Consumer Rights and Consumer Agencies and Complaint Action

Ajzen (1991, 1985) suggests that the effect of relevant information on that specific behaviour is mediated by the behavioural intention. No previous study can be found in examining the complaint intention as mediating affection on the knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies and complaint action. Therefore, to demonstrate the complaint intention playing mediation relationship between the knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies and complaint action, the proposition is suggested as following:

Proposition 5e: Complaint intention will mediate the relationship between knowledge of consumer rights and consumer agencies and complaint action.

f) Complaint Intention as a Mediating Variable between the Number of Prior Experiences of Dissatisfaction and Complaint Action

Ajzen (1991, 1985) suggests that the effect of past behaviour on that specific behaviour is mediated by the behavioural intention. No previous study can be found in examining the complaint intention as mediating affection on the number of prior experience of

complaint action. Therefore, to demonstrate the complaint intention playing mediation relationship between the number of prior experience of dissatisfaction and complaint action, the proposition is suggested as following:

Proposition 5f: Complaint intention will mediate the relationship between the number of prior experiences of complaining and complaint action.

g) Complaint Intention as a Mediating Variable between the Internal Locus of Control and Complaint Action

Ajzen (1991, 1985) suggests that individual's personal trait is not directly related with specific behaviour, this suggestion indicates that personal trait should predict specific behaviour through by the behavioural intention. Based on the suggestion by Singh (1990) and Richins (1985) that internal locus of control can be used as personal traits to influence on the consumer complaint behaviour. However, no previous study can be found in examining the complaint intention as mediating affection on the internal locus of control and complaint action. Therefore, to demonstrate the complaint intention playing mediation relationship between the internal locus of control and complaint action, the proposition is suggested as following:

Proposition 5g: Complaint intention will mediate the relationship between the internal locus of control and complaint action.

h) Complaint Intention as a Mediating Variable between the External Locus of

Action

Ajzen (1991, 1985) suggests that individual's personal trait is not directly related with specific behaviour, this suggestion indicates that personal trait should predict specific behaviour through by the behavioural intention. However, no previous study can be found in examining the complaint intention as mediating affection on the internal locus of control and complaint action. Therefore, to demonstrate the complaint intention playing mediation relationship between the external locus of control and complaint action, the proposition is suggested as following:

Proposition 5h: Complaint intention will mediate the relationship between the external locus of control and complaint action.

*i) **Complaint Intention as a Mediating Variable between the Perceived Value of Complaint and Complaint Action***

As originally formulated by Ajzen (1991), individual's attitudinal perception is proposed to influence the target behaviour through effects mediated by behavioural intention. supportive report is conducted in the study by Richins (1982) in which perceived value of complaint is found to significantly related with the propensity to complain, and the propensity to complain is associated with complaint behaviour, this result indicates that perceived value of complaint indirectly influence on complaint behaviour through the propensity of complain. To demonstrate the complaint intention playing mediation relationship between the perceived value of complaint and complaint action, the proposition would likely to pose as following:

Proposition 5i: Complaint intention will mediate the relationship between the perceived value of complaint and complaint action.

3.3.5 Situational Influence as Moderating Variable of the Relationship between Complaint intention and Complaint Action

As suggested by Richins (1982), she believes that situational variables (such as dependence on the product, difficulty of making a complaint, nature of the specific dissatisfaction, and so on) can be used as moderating variables between an individual's complaint tendency and actual complaint action. Singh (1989) argues that there are some situational factors that may influence the relationship between intention and action, such as the location of third party, the relationship with the lawyer; thus, these kinds of situational factors may vary between different individuals and different episodes. This study attempts to investigate the difficulty of making a complaint and the importance on product as situational variables to influence the relationship between complaint intention and complaint action. According to the previous study, the moderating roles of the difficulty of making a complaint and the importance of product between complaint intention and complaint action will be examined in this section.

a) Difficulty of Making a Complaint as a Moderating Variable of the Relationship between Complaint Intention and Complaint Action

Richins (1982) argues that many consumers believe that making a complaint is troublesome and involves a lot of time and monetary costs. Day and Landon (1976)

are likely to obtain redress locally and conveniently if they feel extremely dissatisfied about goods or services. Richins (1982) argues that difficulty of making a complaint can be one of the moderating variables predicting the relationship between complaint intention and complaint action. In her study, Richins suggests that the researcher should do on examining difficulty of making a complaint as one of moderating variable between complaint intention and complaint action. However, until now no research examine this relationship. In this study, we would like to examine the following proposal:

Proposition 6a: The relationship between complaint intention and complaint action is moderated by difficulty of making a complaint.

b) Importance of Product as a Moderating Variable of the Relationship between Complaint Intention and Complaint Action

Generally, consumers tend to perceive that high price products or services have a high quality and that if the quality of the product or service is below their expectations they will be discontented. Day (1977) suggests that the higher the price of the products or services, the higher the expectation will be. In addition, for luxury products, such as those that influence the consumers' status, Day (1977) found that if the actual performance of the product or service dilutes the consumer's status, they will be more likely to make a complaint. Keng, et al., (1995) argue that the consumers' perception of factors pertaining to the importance of the product, such as the price of the product, how socially visible the product is, and the durability and frequency of using the product, are

complaint action. In addition, Phau and Sari (2004) found that consumers who believe luxury products that reflect the consumer's status, or that are used frequently, or over a long period of time, and where the price of an unsatisfactory product is expensive, are more likely to take complaint action.

Richins (1982) suggests that the importance of product can be one of the moderating variables to predict the relationship between complaint intention and complaint action. However, no study has been made on the moderating effect regarding the importance of the product. Based on the research suggestion from Richins (1982), Singh (1989), the following proposition is suggested:

Proposition 6b: The relationship between complaint intention and complaint action is moderated by importance of product.

3.4 Demographic Characteristics of the Complainers

Many researchers have suggested that demographic characteristics of consumers are expected to predict consumer complaint behaviour, such as gender, ethnicity/race, occupation, age, marital status, education level and income (Liefeld, Edgecombe, and Wolfe, 1975; Hogarth, English and Sharma, 2001; Tipper, 1997; Singh, 1989; Richins, 1982; Reiboldt, 2003; Keng, Richmond and Han, 1995; Phau and Sari, 2004 and so on). The current study will investigate how the demographic variables can influence the complaint behaviour of Malaysian consumers.

There have been varying results regarding the impact of gender on complaining behaviour in previous studies; some researchers believe that males are more likely than females to seek third party redress from a consumer agency (Hogarth, English and Sharma, 2001; Tipper, 1997; Reiboldt, 2003). Richins (1982) argues that males believe that complaining has greater societal benefit than females. In health care research, Singh (1989) found that male consumers have significantly greater previous experience of complaining to third parties than female consumers. Referring to the perceived value of complaint, women feel they can find benefit if the health care system assists them in obtaining redress.

Keng, Richmond and Han (1995) found that females are more likely than males to seek redress regarding complaints in a study of Singapore consumers. Huefner and Hunt (2000) reported that females are more likely than males to engage in negative word of mouth behaviour, yet males are more likely to use their voice and retaliate in response to dissatisfaction. Kolodinsky (1995) suggests that females are more likely to use public complaint or private complaint, and both public and private complaining for medical services, but less likely to use private complaining about auto repair services.

However, some other researchers suggest that there are no differences concerning complaint behaviours by gender (Phau and Sari, 2004; Carmel, 1985; Liefeld, Edgecombe and Wolfe, 1975; Garrett, Meyers and West, 1997). Zussman (1983) found that consumers with awareness of complaint handling service have no difference by

ng to Nigerian consumers, Agbonifoh and Edoreh (1986)

found that gender is not significantly different in the level of awareness of rights, it can be reported that men and women are equally aware or unaware of their consumer rights.

3.4.2 Race/Ethnicity

Many researches have looked at race or ethnicity and its impact on complaint behaviour (Cornwell, Bligh and Babakus, 1991; Crie, 2003; Reiboldt, 2003). Foxman and Raven (1994) suggest that Asians are more likely to seek third party redress about low involvement or durable products than non-Asians. Asians may feel that their complaints will be more effective when using a third party authority such as a consumer agency due to their external locus of control and belief in fatalism (Foxman and Raven, 1994). However, Liu and McClure (2001) found no significant differences in reporting to a third party agency when comparing South Korea and the United States. In a study of Singaporean consumers, Keng, Richmond and Han (1995) discovered that there is no significant relationship between complaint behaviour and ethnic grouping. But Day and Landon (1976) suggest that ethnic minorities may tend to be unfamiliar with consumer knowledge and less likely to make public complaints.

3.4.3 Occupation

Kolodinsky (1993) reports that those who are employed and working an increased number of hours in labour market employment are less likely to take public complaining behaviour. Therefore, those engaged in full-time employment might be less likely to complain compared to those exhibiting lower levels of employment. In the Los

of consumer affairs, Reiboldt (2003) found that 55 per cent of complainers who are employed full-time are likely to take third party action. Zussman (1983) suggests that consumers with an awareness of the complaint handling service are the members of the workforce, and that they are positively related to make a complaint in the province of British Columbia in Canada.

For Canadian complainers, Liefeld, Edgecombe and Wolfe (1975) report that managerial/professional and unemployed consumers complain more than office-clerical and tradesman. It can be seen that managerial/professional consumers purchase more goods and services; they may have different expectations, attitudes and perceived value of products. For the unemployed, they may have greater need or in the case of the chronically unemployed due to attitudinal or personality differences. In comparing studies, Lau and Ng (2001) found that Canadian complainers are employed in managerial, professional, supervisory, or technical positions, while Singapore complainers hold clerical, sales or production jobs.

3.4.4. Age

Studies on looking at the impact of age have produced contradictory findings (Reiboldt, 2003). Lee and Soberon-Ferrer (1996) found that 24 per cent of people, 65 years of age and *older*, complain to third parties, with 9 per cent choosing a consumer agency for third party redress, as older consumers have more market experience and are more confident that their dissatisfaction can be resolved (Bernhardt, 1981). In a recent study, Hogarth, English and Sharma (2001) found that third party complaint survey

complainers compared to the general population. Lau and Ng

(2001) found that Canadian complainers are older than Singaporean complainers.

Richins (1982) found that age shows a positive relationship with individual norms concerning complaining (attitude towards complaining) and that older consumers are more likely to believe that complaining is an appropriate behaviour. Day and Landon (1976) suggest that consumers of younger age may be unfamiliar with consumer knowledge and less likely to make public complaints.

For Canadian complainers, Liefeld, Edgecombe and Wolfe (1975) report that consumers of *middle age* (around 25-54) are more likely to take complaint action, maybe because middle age consumers purchase larger amounts of goods and services than older and younger aged consumers. Moyer (1985) found that consumers of middle age are more likely to complain in the Ontario province in Canada. In the Los Angeles County department of consumer affairs, Reiboldt (2003) found that the average age of complainers is 47.01 years.

It has also been reported that *Younger people* are more likely to complain (Bearden, 1983; Keng, Richmond and Han, 1995; Phau and Sari, 2004), especially if they are more likely to seek third party redress (Bearden, 1983; Duhaime and Ash, 1997; Hogarth, Hilgert, Kolodinsky and Lee, 2001). Tipper (1997) reported that younger people are more likely to seek redress from a consumer agency, but not from a third party in general. Finally, younger people are more likely to retaliate than older consumers. Bearden and Mason (1984) discover that younger consumers are more

complaint action (Warland, Herrmann and Willits, 1975). Zussman (1983) found that consumers with awareness of complaint handling services are between 18 and 29 years of age, and they are positively related to make a complaint in the province of British Columbia in Canada. Singh (1989) found that young complainers with prior experience are more likely to complain to third parties, and younger consumers tend to have more positive attitudes towards complaining. Koeske and Srivastava (1977) suggest that older consumers are less aware of their rights than younger consumers, because, as Waddell (1975) argues, older consumers "do not know where to obtain reliable consumer information and or help with consumer problem" (p. 170).

However, referring to Nigerian consumers, Agbonifoh and Edoreh (1986) found that age is not significantly different in the level of awareness of rights, it can be reported that young adults are as knowledgeable of their rights as older people.

3.4.5. Marital Status

In Canada, Liefeld, Edgecombe and Wolfe (1975) found that married, divorced or separated consumers are more likely to take complaint action than single and widowed. Hogarth, Hilgert, Kolodinsky and Lee (2001) report that those who complain to third parties are tend to be single. Perhaps because there is more time available, unlike the time crunch experienced by married couples with children. Huefner and Hunt (2000) report that married consumers are simply exiting from companies or firms that they are dissatisfied with without voicing their dissatisfaction. From the Los Angeles County

airs, Reiboldt (2003) found that 53% of complainers are married and 46% have children. However, a study of Singaporean consumers, by Keng, Richmond and Han (1995) discover no significant relationship between complaint behaviour and marital status.

3.4.6. Education

Reiboldt (2003) suggests that education is *positively* connected with complaint behaviour. Consumers with higher levels of education are more likely to seek third party redress (Bearden, 1983; Keng, Richmond and Han, 1995; Phau and Sari, 2004; Lau and Ng, 2001; Moyer, 1985). Tipper (1997) suggests that educated consumers are more likely to seek redress from a consumer agency, but not from a third party in general. Lee and Soberon-Ferrer (1996) found that more educated consumers tend to use all avenues of recourse available to them, including third party redress. Zussman (1983) found that consumers with an awareness of complaint handling services have higher education (such as post-secondary degree), and they are positively related to make a complaint in the USA. Day and Landon (1976) suggest that consumers with higher education tend to be familiar with consumer knowledge and are more likely to make public complaints. Referring to Nigerian consumers, Agbonifoh and Edoreh (1986) found that consumers with a higher level of education have a higher level of awareness of rights. Richins (1982) argues that consumers with a higher education level are more likely to believe that it is worth the effort to make a complaint. For Canadian complainers, Liefeld, Edgecombe and Wolfe (1975) discover that consumers with a higher education are more significantly taking complaint action; they have higher competence to write the letters

expectation of value and higher cognizance of reasons for

complaint.

Hogarth, Hilgert, Kolodinsky and Lee (2001) reported that those who complain to third party agencies tend to be *less educated*. In another study, Hogarth, English and Sharma (2001) found that survey respondents were more likely to be high school educated than the general population. Singh (1989) found that less educated complainers with prior experience are more likely to complain to third parties. However, Bearden and Mason (1984) discover that education is *not a significant* influence on taking public complaint action in America.

3.4.7. *Income*

Reiboldt (2003) believes that income is one variable that is almost inextricably connected with complaint behaviour. Consumers with *higher income* are more likely to seek third party redress (Bearden, 1983; Bearden and Mason, 1984; Keng, Richmond and Han, 1995; Lau and Ng, 2001; Phau and Sari, 2004; Morganosky and Buckley, 1987; Zussman, 1983)). Tipper (1997) suggests that consumers with higher incomes are more likely to seek redress from a consumer agency, but not from a third party in general. Singh (1989) found that higher income complainers with prior experience are more likely to complain to third parties.

However, consumer's incomes have a *negative relationship* with probability of successful complaint. This implies that as a consumer's income level increases, the

third party actions will decrease. Liefeld, Edgecombe and

Wolfe (1975) report that consumers with higher family incomes are more expected to make complaint action as consumers with higher incomes purchase more goods. However, Hogarth, Hilgert, Kolodinsky and Lee (2001) reported that consumers who complain to third party agencies tend to be from lower income group.

3.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides the framework of this study. It reviews the literature on complaint intention and complaint action, as well as complaint intention as the mediating variable, and situational influence as the moderating variable in this study. The main purpose is to set up a context for discussing the interrelationship between the constructs mentioned. The discussion began with a brief introduction of previous studies on consumer complaint behaviour, followed by a discussion on the background to the theories on dissatisfaction and complaint behaviour. The propose research framework was based from couple of theories. The later discussions were organised on the linkages between the main constructs of the study based on the study framework. Propositions of the study were also presented and discussed in this chapter. The next chapter presents the research methodology of the study.