

Purchase Factors for Products with Inelastic Demand: A Study on Tobacco Sector

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Abstract: This study investigates the purchase factors for a product with inelastic demand in the tobacco sector, specifically looking at cigarettes. Literatures in marketing and consumer behavior suggest that consumer's intention of purchasing a product is significantly influenced by factors such as media advertisements, brand, perceived value, product image and product quality. Tobacco companies in particular are in a limbo as they try to expand their business and achieve sales targets, despite the attempts of most governments and NGOs to de-market tobacco products. The aim of this study is to know the pattern of cigarette purchase behavior of smokers. From literatures, four factors were selected and measured as direct contributors to cigarette purchase. Three hundred respondents participated in this research, selected via purposive sampling method and voluntary participation of respondents. Data collection was quantitatively analysed using SPSS 20.0. The study found all four factors to significantly predict consumer purchase intention of cigarettes, i.e., media, brand, perceived value and product quality. These significant findings are a double-edged sword; as they can be used both by the tobacco industry that is trying to promote their products despite the de-marketing efforts surrounding it as well as by those who are trying to prevent consumers from buying tobacco products altogether such as policy makers, government and NGOs promoting health. Based on the findings, several recommendations are put forth for the industry as well as to government and policy makers.

Key words: Media, perceived value, brand, product quality, purchase intention, tobacco, cigarette

INTRODUCTION

Tobacco was first used by the people of pre-Columbian American. The plant was apparently cultivated and smoked in pipes for medicinal and ceremonial purpose by the Native American. According to Japan Tobacco Industry, tobacco was first discovered thousand years ago is a native plant of the Americans. From the 5000-3000 BC growing tobacco as crop was pioneered by the communities in Andes. From the Andes of South America, tobacco spread north and then on to the colonies islands and continents beyond. With a steady increase in demand, tobacco plants were transported for cultivation to countries all over the world (www.jti.com)

Tobacco types currently traded in the world:

- Cigarettes-full flavour, lights, menthol, capsule filter cigarette, high tar cigarettes, mid tar cigarettes, low tar cigarettes, ultra low tar cigarettes
- Cigars-cigars excluding cigarillos, large cigars, standard cigars and small cigars
- Smoking tobacco-RYO tobacco, pipe tobacco (Fig. 1)

Globally, cigarette industry is one of the most profitable and deadly industry in current world trend. The cigarette retail values in 2013 were worth \$722 billion with 5.7 trillion cigarettes to <1 billion smokers in the world. Global cigarette volume increased to 7% from year 2001-2013 and retail values increased to 117%. By 2018, the industry analysts predict the industry will have a growth volume by 4% and value by 29%.

Consumer has always been influenced by different factors when buying cigarettes of their choice. Taste, price, branding, perceived value and experience have been their factors in influencing them to perform a purchase decisions. This is because in marketing the main findings must be always in trying to find out the ways companies; suppliers and individuals perform their purchasing and consumption methods (Kotlerand, 2012). Mentioned in his research there is internal and external factors in purchasing decisions. Recently divided the factors into four divisions which are the cultural, personal, social and situational to understand better the purchasing decisions. Despite being a health hazard, consumption of cigarette are still prevalent among consumers. There are scarce literatures that discuss the factors which contribute to the

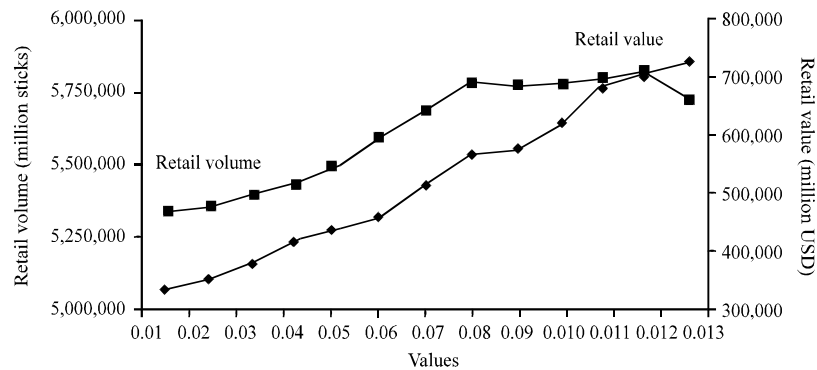


Fig. 1: Value of retail volume and retail value for the year 2001-2013; Euromonitor international (2013)

consumption of cigarette among smokers. Hence, this research seeks to investigate the factors that influence consumers purchased intention towards cigarette.

The aimed of this research is to identify four factors which influence the purchasing decision of consumer towards cigarettes. The researcher seek to address on the role of media, brand, perceived value and product quality towards the buying intention of cigarette among consumers. The objective of this research is to analyse how these factors play a role on the buying intention of cigarettes. The research will be significance as its help the cigarette companies to know their consumers better to motivate and understand both parties in delivering a quality product. Though, research on cigarettes is widely done, the researcher will be looking at consumer’s buying intention. This also will help the companies to know thus motivating them to compete wisely in the cigarettes industry. To know what the consumers need and want can motivate the companies to excel better in the market. For this study, the researcher will focus on the consumer buying intention towards cigarettes among the smokers in Malaysia especially in Malacca. This study also will analyze the factors in influencing the consumer intention in buying cigarette.

Despite various government and NGO’s effort to de-market cigarette products, the consumption of cigarettes has not been reduced significantly. Strangely, even when the government taxes on cigarette price to much higher consumer price the demand for the products is not significantly affected. Hence, the title of this research highlights the inelastic relationship between price and the products in the tobacco sector. Based on this scenario this study seeks to address several research questions, specifically on how media plays a role on the buying intention of cigarettes what are the effects of cigarette brands towards the consumer buying behavior how perceived value influence the buying and how product quality play a role on the consumers buying intention of cigarettes?

The cigarette industry consists of retail sales of cigarettes, loose tobacco, chewing tobacco, cigars and cigarillos. This study looks mainly to the consumption of cigarette among consumer in Melaka. The focus of this study will be British American Tobacco (BAT) brand portfolio are Dunhill, Kent, Benson and Hedges, Lucky Strike, Peter Stuyvesant and Pall Mall. Philip Morris Internatioanl (PMI) brand portfolios are world famous Marlboro, L and M and Sampoerna. Japan Tobacco Internatioanl (JTI) brand portfolios are Mevius, Camel and Winston. These products sold in targeted market in Melaka, Malaysia. According to South East Asia Tobacco Control Alliance, below is a market share of the cigarette companies in Malaysia.

Literature review: The Theory of Reason Action (TRA) by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) referred to the theory of social psychology which describes the mindful actions of consumers to identify the relationship between attitude and behavior. According to “Intention” is the measure of individual’s strength on the implementation of a particular behavior whereas “Behavioral intention” is the measure of intensity of individuals to portray a specific behavior. “Attitude toward behavior” is the individual’s perception on the implementation of the specific target’s positive or negative feeling. “Subjective norm” is an intuitive to the views of others to exercise that particular behavior. “Attitude toward behavior” on the other hand is the product of the consumer’s beliefs and evaluation of the results. The effects of external environmental on the personal attitudes are through the consumer’s adjusted mention belief structure and their personal behavior which will influence their attitude towards the particular actions.

In this study the factors of intention basically the behavioral like perceived value and brand are studied. As Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) stated, people can have general or specific behavior towards a product. In this study

the factors of brand, perceived value can be a behavior used by the consumer in purchasing cigarettes. Consumers generally are influenced by the media which is the external environment. This study will focus on how the intention and factors influent in consumers buying intention.

According to Sharma (2014) there are three types of consumer buying behaviour: routine response programmed behaviour which is the act of 'buying low' involves frequent of purchased of low cost items. The second is limited decision making. The final one is Impulse buying where there is no conscious planning. In this research the method of buying behaviour is influenced by media, product quality, brand and perceived value will be observed and analysed.

According to Assunta and Chapman (2004) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA), amendments were applied to the tobacco control regulations 1993 to ban all advertisements of tobacco brand but indirect advertising of cigarette brands in display cabinets are still legal in Malaysia. Apart from that, other control regulations such as designated smoke-free areas in 2004, restructuring of cigarettes tax in 2007, anti-smoking campaigns such as "Tak Nak" ("Say No") from 2004-2011, higher taxation and provision of smoking services at government health clinics have been implemented. From all the measures mentioned as well as other changes in the local socio-economic have changed the buying behavior and smoking pattern of Malaysian smokers over the time. According to Lane and Carter (2012) the process of giving information using the media and their advertising skills are aimed to change the mindset of the public. According to consumers look for products and services by searching the World Wide Web. Today popular media such as Twitter and Facebook play an important role in providing hands-on information to the people. In the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids May 2014, Point of Sale Material (POSM) is seen as a powerful means for cigarette advertising and sponsorship which is very useful to attract teenagers and cigarette user who have the idea to quit smoking. According to tobaccofreemaine.org, the social media always show the smokers as individual who have status and money. The social media can encourage new smokers by their advertisements. When there is an anti-usage cigarette advertisement the impact will discourage the smokers buying intention towards cigarette product. As such the cigarette users may or may not be influenced with the media when they buy the cigarettes. For this study, a few dimensions in media will be surveyed where customers will asked if POS motivates them in buying if they are attracted to store information. Even the way the cigarettes is displayed will be studied to

see if they are alert and the extent promotion can be an influence. Overall the users should know what's in a store promotion to better boost the users. Perceived values are the values that consumers are expecting when they do the buying intentions. Some consumers are addicted to a taste in a particular brand; as such they find it difficult to switch to other available brands. These types of consumers are loyal to certain brands of cigarette. Customer loyalty therefore refers to the attitudinal and behavioral response towards a store or a brand expressed over time by consumers (Dick and Basu, 1994)

Anderson mentioned that every satisfaction received is more of a psychological and social need. So even if there is bans on the advertisements the consumers will still buy the cigarette. So partial in advertisements for bans are not as efficient as totally ban adverts. For a customer to be satisfied, the past and present perception and experience as well as expectations must be taken into account (Oliver, 1980) even the after purchase which is often forgotten can influence their satisfaction level. Many research however linked perceived value and the emotions of customers in their study, making more problems in trying to differentiate the two variables. Loyalty and the satisfaction level are known to be separate concepts according to. So a consumer can be loyal but not satisfied depending on the choices they are given and provided.

Preferred smoking brands are usually segmented into full flavour, lights and menthol taste. This brand segmentation is usually represented by the type of packaging. These are differentiated by color; red for full flavor only, blue and white for lights segmentation and menthol is usually packaged in green color to represent the coolness. For long term consumption smokers they may bring out preferences for certain brands of cigarette or certain flavour of cigarette products due to habit that forms an impression of a certain brand. Mutsikiwa and Marumbwa (2013) examined the effect of package colors, instructions, material and typography on purchase intentions of dairy products. The results indicated that all elements of package design do not affect the purchase intentions but appealing package design can trigger purchase intention. Wakefield *et al.* (2008) also stressed that packaging done in a plain method are more highly superior compared to others. This is because the pictorial health warning can be focused and brand appeal can be reduced. Government should not only rely on increasing the warning pictures rather they must play a role in doing talks and educate the public of the side effects and also the harms in each brand. According to Lim *et al.* (2013), Malaysia cigarette industry is worth >USD2 billion yearly. This study will focus on the preferred brand the

packaging and design of the cigarette pack. Cigarettes are a category of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), other goods which are basically classified as ease goods, shopping goods and specialty goods. According to Rafi and Rafi (2015) this system is based on the criteria on the products convenience level. Specialty goods are mainly bought in based on the experience and also the mindset of the consumers and will be in high price category. The convenience goods is bought on a regular pattern as the goods are frequently been purchased. These convenience goods like cigarettes are easily available and sold in most of the Hotel, Restaurant and Cafe (HORECA), grocery and convenience store outlets. The cigarette products are flexible in providing for individual needs because they are easily accessible and aligned with the value and belief of a user. The product quality can be beneficial to both parties not forgetting giving the quality of the product needed by both parties. Cigarette products are usually available in convenience stores and places nearby to the consumers. Thus, cigarette products are always a speciality for the smokers. The product quality will be analysed to see the effects of this factor towards the buying intention of consumers. The quality and also characteristics of the cigarette products will be researched to help with the studies.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this research, primary and secondary data collection will be used. For the primary data collection, self-administered questionnaires which consists of seven questions each variable are used in this research. Stated that questionnaire with Likert scale and fixed answers can be an easier tool to tabulate and analyzed. Som mentioned that a questionnaire can answer findings quick and also the answers derived can also help the tabulations of results to be prompt and factual. Next the respondent's buying intention influencing factors will be asked to get a better view on the findings. A drop-off approach is administered to distribute questionnaires. Respondents are usually given a brief introduction and answers for them to choose. A basic overview is also mentioned so that respondents who are not smokers can be eliminated. Prospective respondent is approached, introduced with general purpose of the survey and questionnaire is left with the respondent to fill out on his or her own time. The questionnaires was administered to smokers aged 21 and above, working and non-working adults in Malacca. The study tried to identify suitable respondent both from male and female gender who purchase cigarette within the state of Malacca. Self-completed questionnaires where the data was collected in the form of quantitative would be

analysed by using Statistical Package Social Science 20.0 (SPSS). Four hypotheses were forwarded for testing in this study to answer the research questions. The four hypotheses are presented as follows:

- H_1 : media play a significant role in influencing consumer buying intention towards cigarettes

Wakefield *et al.* (2008) mentioned from his finding, about 40% of cigarette users are attracted to continue smoking after quit the habit when they saw how the advertisements or promotions being done. The finding even mentioned that out of 40% of cigarette user, 60% will purchase the cigarette and 20% will try not to be tempted by avoiding the cigarettes selling store. For this study, a few dimensions in media will be surveyed by asking customers either the POS (Point of Sales) will motivates them in the buying intention or are they attracted to the 'instore' information. Even the way the cigarettes are display will be study in order to know either the consumers alert on the extended influential promotion. Hence, H_1 is forwarded for testing:

- H_2 : brand play a significant role in influencing consumer buying intention towards cigarettes

Brand is about everything range from colour, logo, fonts, shapes, design; even sound, are used to enhance the brand personality for consumers to remember (AMA) To gain brand recognition, the product experience must include the design and the advertisement of the product's brand in which will be monitored by consumers and it is used as an influencing factor for their buying intentions. Bachler mentioned, current consumers who are loyal to a brand will go for it even with higher price as they want the attachment brand name to represent their personality and image. The higher price is regarded as a hidden goodwill cost in their mind and brand establishment is more important for further purchase. For alcoholic and smokers too, the brand factor play a significant role. Branding has a role in the packaging design. Polyakova studied the effect of package design on purchase intention. The findings indicated the graphics on the packaging, color and the information of the product are the key factors in buying decision. Based on this, H_2 is formulated:

- H_3 : perceived value play a significant role in influencing consumer buying intention towards cigarettes

Perceived value refer to the attitude of consumers on the usefulness and benefit of a product based on the consumption and experience. The consumers judgment

will be on the value and the contribution of the product being provide to them. This value is more on a personal view than the quality view of a consumer (Zeithaml, 1988).

Anderson make a point on every satisfaction received is more to psychological and social need. The reduction and bans on cigarette advertisement and promotion which is limited to ‘below the line’ advertisement does not create much effects and impacts on the consumer buying pattern of cigarette product. The cigarette companies practice ‘word of mouth’ promotions via the marketing representative to reach the source of business. The ‘above the line’ bans in cigarette advertisements are not as efficient as totally ban adverts. The past and present perception and experience as well as expectations must be taken into account to build customers believe and product satisfaction (Oliver, 1980). The purchase process, even the after purchase, consumer often has forgotten the influence of the products in their satisfaction level agreed that the satisfaction is influenced by the perceived value of the consumers (Woodall, 2003; Woodruff, 1997) believed on the satisfaction on a products actually is the perceived value. H₃ is forwarded for testing as below:

- H₄: product quality play a significant role in influencing consumer buying intention towards cigarettes

The family smoking prevention and tobacco control Act, defined any product made of tobacco is not a ‘drug’ or ‘device’. Product quality of cigarettes usually defined as the more expensive the product is the higher quality it is. Usually the consumers go for the product features rather than the product itself. The brand actually reflects the characteristics of the product thus the manufacture needs to show the attributes of the product by portraying a brand name or symbol based on the mind set of consumers. This will be benefit to both parties on the quality of the product. Cigarettes are a category of fast moving consumer’s goods, it can easily being purchase in any retail outlets.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reliability analysis is carried out to assess the reliability and internal consistency of the statements used in the questionnaire, using cronbach’s alpha. The research independent and dependent variables are tested using pearson correlation and multiple linear regression to confirm the research hypotheses. For this research, 300 questionnaires were distributed and collected which

Table 1: Demographic characteristic of respondents

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage/characteristics
Gender		
Male	184	61.30
Female	116	38.70
Age (years)		
18-30	45	15.00
31-40	150	50.00
41-50	84	28.00
Above 50	21	07.00
Education		
Primary	8	02.70
Secondary	66	22.00
Diploma/degree	151	50.30
Postgraduate	70	23.30
Professional	5	01.70
Race		
Malay	82	27.30
Chinese	135	45.00
Indian	79	26.30
Others	4	01.30
Occupation		
Student	11	03.70
Supervisor	77	25.70
Manager	93	31.00
Executive	92	30.70
Clerical	21	07.00
Others	6	02.00

Table 2: Cigarette consumption rate

No of packets (per week)	Respondent	Percentage
<10	19	06.30
8-10 packs	68	22.70
5-7 packs	99	33.00
2-4 packs	94	31.30
1 or less	20	06.70
-	-	100.00

comprised of 184 male respondents and 116 female respondents. The percentage for the gender distribution shows that male respondents are more than female respondents which is 61.3% for male and 38.7% for female. Respondent’s age group towards factors on customer’s buying intention towards cigarettes at Malacca was identified.

Table 1 explains, out of 300 respondents, 61.3% respondents were male and female respondents at 38.7%. For the age category, age gap of 31-40 year old contribute 50% of the respondents. On the education background, Diploma/Degree’s holders were the most respondents with 50.3%, Postgraduates at 23.3%. This two categories of the most participated respondent. Chinese are to most participated respondent at 45%, followed Malay and Indian subsequently at 27.3 and 26.3%.

Respondent’s cigarette consumption rate per week:

Table 2 explains most of the respondent’s frequencies of cigarette purchases are based on the smoking behavior of heavy, moderate or light smokers. From the result, 33% purchase 5-7 packs in a week whereas 31.3% purchased 2-4 packs. In contrast, only 6.3% or 19 respondents purchase >10 packs per week.

Table 3: Brand mostly preferred by participating users

Brands	Participate respondent	Percentage
Dunhill	105	35.0
Marlboro	58	19.3
Mevius	48	16.0
Peter Stuyvesant	33	11.0
Winston	29	9.7
Pall Mall	16	05.3
LM	6	02.0
Others	5	01.7
Total	300	100.0

Table 4: Reliability testing

Variables	*Cronbach's alpha	No. of items
Brand	0.819	7
Media	0.810	7
Perceived value	0.805	7
Product	0.804	7
Buying intention	0.758	4

Table 5: Correlations analysis for hypothesis

Independent variables	*Correlation coefficient		Significant correlation towards buying intention
	(r-value)	p-values	
Media	0.559	0.000	Yes
Perceived value	0.516	0.000	Yes
Product quality	0.511	0.000	Yes
Brand	0.403	0.000	Yes

*Sorted from highest to lowest

This result suggests respondents who participate in this study are frequent purchasers of cigarettes with an average of 5-7 packs per week or an average of a pack per day.

Respondent's preference of cigarette brands: Table 3 explains, most of the respondents preferred brand is Dunhill (35%). On the other hand, some respondents preferred Marlboro and Mevius with the percentage of 19.3 and 16%. Dunhill, Marlboro and Mevius are categorised as premium brand. The other brands categorised as aspirational premium are Pall Mall (5.3%), Peter Stuyvesant (11%), LM (2%) and others brands smokers contribute 1.7% from the 300 survey participant form collected. Other brands are commonly referred to as 'cheap white' cigarettes brands such as Manchester and Promax.

Table 4 shows Cronbach alpha value for the dependent variable is 0.758. The four independent variables have Cronbach's alpha values of; media is 0.810, brand is 0.819, perceived value is 0.805 and product is 0.804. All variables have values above 0.7 indicating adequate internal consistency.

Table 5 and 6 from the correlation analysis, media, perceived value and product quality and brand were found to have a significant and moderate correlation with the dependent variable. Hence, all four hypotheses are supported in this study. The participants agree on the contribution of media and buying intention had a strong

Table 6: Model summary for dependent variable of buying intention

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SE of the estimate
1	0.662	0.438	0.427	0.53512

R: Predictors: (Constant), product, price, retailer, brand, media and perceived value

Table 7: ANOVA

Model 1	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F-value	Sig.
Regression	065.435	6	10.906	38.085	0.000
Residual	083.902	294	0.286		
Total	149.337	300			

Table 8: Coefficients dependent variable in buying intention

Models	Unstandardized coefficients (B)	SE	Standardized coefficients (β)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
Constant	-0.554	0.299		1.853	0.07
Media	0.437	0.066	0.352	6.569	0.00
Price	0.031	0.049	0.031	0.643	0.52
Brand	0.159	0.068	0.125	2.348	0.02
Product quality	0.291	0.079	0.209	3.657	0.00

relationship with the correlation of 0.559. The significant value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) of these two variables, significantly shows that results of the variables are correlated with each other. This result is supported by where he stated the 'media have consistently found significant associations between exposure to 'Point of Sale' cigarette advertising, promotions and product displays with smoking initiation, susceptibility to smoking or intentions to smoke among cigarette smokers. The pearson correlation of perceived value is 0.516 which is a positive relationship with consumer's buying intention. The pearson correlation of brand is 0.403. This finding is supported by researcher of Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibanez (2012) determined the positive bond between product packaging and consumers purchase decisions. Similarly, the positive bond between product packaging and consumers buying intentions were confirmed (Sirgy, 2015).

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict buying intention based on media, brand, perceived value and product quality. A significant regression equation was found ($F 6.294 = 38.085, p < 0.000$) with an R^2 of 0.427. Participants predicted buying intention is equal to $-0.554 + 0.437(\text{media}) + 0.159(\text{brand}) + 0.202(\text{perceived value}) + 0.291(\text{product quality})$ (Table 7 and 8). All the four independent variables which is media, product quality, brand and perceived value were significant predictors of buying intention.

According to Table 8, media is found to significantly predict purchase intention (beta coefficient = 0.352, $t = 6.569, p < 0.000$). Hence, H_1 is supported in this study and the study concludes that media is a significant positive predictor of consumer purchase intention towards cigarette. Brand found to be significantly predict purchase intention (beta coefficient = 0.159, $t = 2.348,$

$p \leq 0.000$). Hence, H_2 is supported in this study and the study concludes that brand is a significant positive predictor of consumer purchase intention towards cigarette.

Perceived value is also found to significantly predict purchase intention (Beta coefficient = 0.152, $t = 2.424$, $p \leq 0.000$). H_3 is supported in this study and the study concludes that perceived value is a significant positive predictor of consumer purchase intention towards cigarette. Lastly, product quality is found to significantly predict purchase intention (Beta coefficient = 0.209, $t = 3.657$, $p \leq 0.000$). H_4 is supported in this study and the study concludes that product quality is a significant positive predictor of consumer purchase intention towards cigarette.

Besides, the result also shows lack of multi collinearity among the research variables. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were all below 3 and this shows that all the research variables were able to independently predict the dependent variable.

CONCLUSION

This study finds that consumer's buying intention towards cigarettes is influenced by media, brand, perceived value and product quality. The four hypotheses tested in the study are supported (media, brand, perceived value and product quality). It showed that cigarette users are influenced by certain factors in their buying intention towards cigarette. The study concludes that the factors contribute and influence the consumer's buying intention towards cigarette. According to correlation analysis the findings of the study are explained by the hypotheses.

The study indicates that media plays a significant role in consumer's buying intention towards cigarettes. Although, the consumer's know about the information on pictorial health warnings and also about the in store point of sales material from media they are still motivated to when exposed to the promotions from media. Furthermore, the consumers tend to believe in media in providing information which is interesting and motivating towards their buying intention in the cigarettes industry.

Brand play a significant role in influencing the consumer buying intention towards cigarettes. This study indicated that brand had a significant relationship in consumer's buying intention towards cigarettes. Consumers 'know that the brand resembles the quality, uniqueness of the cigarettes. Consumers are attracted by the packaging which the brand portrays and the colors resemble the taste of the product. Brand names convey information about unobservable quality of the brand and products itself. The companies provide the consumers on

time information for all the brands via toll-free numbers printed on the pack or via modern communication such as online and internet. Furthermore the respondents prefer the current top brand when buying cigarette.

Perceived value play a significant role in influencing the consumer buying intention towards cigarettes. This study indicated that perceived value had a significant relationship with the consumer's buying intention towards cigarette. Consumers are satisfied and comfortable with the cigarettes they purchased and gain the value they desire. The respondents find that the cigarettes they smoked resembled them in the community. The brand and packaging of the cigarette pack purchased, give the smoker the value self-reliant being in public place. Consequently, they believe that cigarettes provides them the perceived value they want when they have a buying intention. The cigarettes company provides timely feedback to cigarette buyer and glad with the satisfaction and feedback they get from smokers.

Product quality play a significant role in influencing the consumer buying intention towards cigarettes. This study specified that product quality had a significant relationship with the consumer's buying intention towards cigarettes product. Consumer feels the cigarette companies provides, up to date information on their high products quality and smoking satisfaction. High product quality can be obtained at higher cost. The cigarette quality reflects the quantity attributes that the manufactured cigarette contain. Product quality is viewed as inherent characteristic of products. Product quality reflects the presence or absence of measurable products attributes. Product quality is a very important factor for the cigarettes companies, cigarettes can be consider as one of the fastest changing stage for a smokers to pick up another brand once the product quality not meet.

This study, presents specific recommendations to the cigarette (tobacco) industry and to the government based on the findings of this study. This research finds that media, perceived value, cigarette brand and product quality as significant predictors of consumer buying attention towards cigarettes. This finding is significant to 'Fast Moving Consumer Good's (FMGC) industries as well in general. For example, in the cigarettes industry, media in retail level play a very important role in 'below the line' advertising to promote cigarettes to smoker. For other FMCG retail industry, the choice of advertisement applies to both 'above the line' and 'below the line' media advertising to promote goods and services to reach consumers mind. There are certain implications to government and policy makers. As media is revealed as the largest predictor that influences consumer's purchase of cigarette, the government may need to monitor media

more closely in order to reduce cigarette consumption of citizens in Malaysia. Although, mainstream media in Malaysia is forbidden from advertising cigarettes, tobacco and alcohol products/brands, manufacturers and retailers of these products are still able to achieve their target audience by other media options such as sponsorship of events and in-store advertising within shop or restaurant premises.

In addition this study only focuses on the mentioned factors, media, brand, perceived value and product quality. However, due to scope limitations this research could not mention relationship between the customer's buying intention and some other very important factors such as attitude and tax. Nevertheless, it can be hoped that such limitations would broadly suggest and encourage additional directions and guidelines for future studies.

Lastly, there is a need for future studies but with a larger number of respondents who are widely distributed in different geographic area in Malaysia. Finally, further study can include more information regarding the consumer's intentions of cigarette and their functions.

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