Factors that influence Consumer Buying Decision on Contact Lens in Malaysia

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Abstract:The Malaysian contact lenses and market size is growing steadily over the last few years. In this context, this study aims to examine the factors that affect the consumer buying decision on Contact Lens in Malaysia. This research explores the expansion of costs, labels, product efficiency and recommendations for contact lenses in Malaysia. A questionnaire-based survey method was employed to gather the data from 417 respondents in Malaysia and the data was analyzed using SPSS. The findings revealed that price, brand, product efficiency and advice had a positive effect on customer buying behavior. The findings of this study offer a better explanation of how to implement competitive plans for customer experience and client satisfaction to the marketer of contact lens companies. It is advised that contact lens producers may need to go through a sequence of R&Ds to create contact lens features that will support customers' everyday lives and represent product success in their advertising and promotion strategies.

Keywords: Consumer buying behaviour, Contact Lens, Factors, Malaysia

1. Introduction

Contact Lens is a special made material intended to be positioned on the surface of the eyes so that the user can see clearly (Su and Shen, 2015). Efron and Lindsay (2017) also clarify that main uses of the contact lens are in the treatment of vision impairment such as short-sightedness, hyperopia, astigmatism and presbyopia. However, a healthy consumer who has no visual deficiency will also wear cosmetic contact lenses to improve the appearance of a cosmetic lens that can be called a colour contact lens, a large eye contact lens or a decorative contact lens (Abdelkader, 2014). The contact lens has thus become popular among the young women and students from secondary schools, colleges and universities in any advance and developing countries (Abahussin, AlAnazi and Ogbuegi et al., 2014).

Likewise, the Contact lens business is gradually growing in the optical industry of Malaysia for many years. According to Gfk Asia report, the value of contact lens sales in Malaysia from July 2009 to June 2010 was estimated at USD 25.16 million (Gkf Asia, 2010). Besides that, the colour contact lenses in Malaysia was growing 31% in the year 2013 compared to 2012 (The Star, 2017). In 2016, Gfk data reported that Malaysia was the largest growth contact lens business with approximately 4 per cent compared to 2015, the main reason for this growth was the recent development of the contact lens industry (McCormick, 2016). However, the study of contact lenses is still in its beginnings and it is in very initial stages of development. Based on past studies (e.g., Hanasya, 2016; Hanasya, 2018; Jan, Haque and Abdullah et al., 2019; Mashahaidi and Mohaiyidin, 2015; Ong and Woon, 2018; Song et al., 2016), it is evident that there is empirical research into how prices, brands, product quality and recommendations can influence the buying decision of consumers in Malaysia. While there are many studies on consumer buying behaviour, there are limited studies that address the issues that affect the consumer's choice to buy contact lenses by what factors?

This study is considered important for Malaysia's contact lens companies under the circumstances of Ministry of Health (MOH) is in the midst of resolving its attempts to control and develop the industry. However, the concerns such as contact lens consistency, contact lens branding, contact lens product efficiency and advice effect on consumer buying decisions remain a major problem for many contact lens companies in Malaysian optical industry. For that reason, this study aims to understand the determinants and effects of consumer buying behavior on contact lens in Malaysia underlying the related dimensions.

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It has become evident from the debates that the philosophical and analytical study practices are being addressed in a wide variety of motivators that motivate customers to purchase. However, there are still some issues that can also be found and areas for improvement. In comparison, the prior research works reviewed in this study explicitly focuses on some areas that are important for the understanding of consumer purchase decisions. Thus, this paper attempts to address the significant research discrepancy as to what factors influence the choice of customers to buy contact lenses in Malaysia.

To sum up, the main objective of this study is to understand how contact lens price, contact lens brand, contact lens product performance and recommendation can influence consumer buying behaviour. The remainder of the paper structured as follows: firstly, the review of the related literature, secondly, the study's methodology, thirdly, the findings, and finally, the study's discussion and implication, where the limitations and recommendation for the future research will be discussed in this paper.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Consumer Buying Behavior

Consumer buying behavior can be defined as exploring the mechanism of person thinking about choosing and buying a product or service to suit their needs (Kuester, 2012; Jisana, 2014). Orji, Sabo and Mukhtar et al. (2017) further identified that consumer buying behavior may have an effect on several main variables and factors that contribute to decision-making, shopping behavior, buying behavior, or what products we choose to purchase. Consumer buying behavior, however, can be social, behavioral, physical as well (Rani, 2014).

By recognizing the consumer buying process, it is important for the firm and the marketer to come up with a proper marketing strategy that is suitable for the target customer (Muniady, Al-Manun and Permarupan et al., 2014). There are several aspects that can affect consumer buying behavior, such as their psychological behavior, environmental influence and shopping experience, which are important factors for the marketer or company owner to consider and devote to their shopping experience. According to Khaniwale (2015), consumer buying behavior involves in five phases of the purchase process as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Consumer Buying Behavior Process

However, this study only evaluates the third phrase of the entire consumer buying behavior process, namely the evaluation of alternatives. This phrase involves the inspiration and reasoning behind the consumer's choice. In addition, this phase mainly contrasts the benefits and disadvantages with the internal and external consequences, such as how cost, positioning, product efficiency and feedback can affect the decision of the consumer. (Ayed et al., 2016; Deliya and Parmar, 2012).

2.2 Price

Price defined as the amount of money that a person must pay in order to gain the authority to own a good or service (Anjana, 2018; Vibuthi, Kumar and Pandey, 2014). During the phrase of evaluation of alternatives in the consumer buying behavior process, the consumer will make a comparison in price (Patel and Barad, 2016). In general, the price will become a reference or predictor of the quality of the commodity and the buyer can assess the price in terms of the perceived benefits that can be obtained from the consumption of the offer, whilst the consumer will have the option to select from the variety and the price will be a predictor during the buying process (Alfred, 2013; Jaafar, Lapl and Naba, 2012). Consumers can equate costs with comparable goods or services because they have a deep confidence in the worth of the quality of the commodity chosen (Anjana, 2018; Patel and Barad, 2016). Consumers can make a price comparison in a comparable commodity when they have a firm belief in the value and benefits of the product chosen. Hence, it leads to first hypotheses:

H1: Price has an influence in consumer buying behaviour on contact lens in Malaysia.

2.3 Brand

Brands can be defined as names, logos, styles or patterns or variations of both of them for the purpose of distinguishing the goods or services of a business that sells and differentiates them from competitors (Adenan, Ali

and Rahman, 2018; Rubio, Villasenor and Oubina, 2015; Letchuman and Sam, 2016). Strong and successful branding would improve the consumer buying behavior towards a specific product and, the customer satisfaction and loyalty will be increased, if the consumers are pleased with the product results, (Oladepo and Abimbol, 2015). In this regard, the consumers will minimize the time spent in the evaluation of the alternatives process, if they agreed that the product brand will bring rewarding and satisfying results (Zhang, 2015). Brand name, brand knowledge and brand association are the main considerations that marketers should pay attention to, since it is a core component of increasing competitive advantages over their rivals, so customers can easily be exposed and reached via media such as TV, magazines, social media that support the marketplace (Letchuman and Sam, 2016). In order to see if branding can have an effect on the consumer's buying decision and preference, this would lead to the construction of the second hypothesis as follows:

H2: Brand has an influence on consumer buying decision on contact lens in Malaysia.

2.4 Product Performance

Product performance plays a critical role in determining the consumer purchase intention, it can increase the positive impact towards a product, if the performance of the product can fulfil the consumer requirement (Anjana, 2018). Product performance, quality, availability, services, distribution and branding play a key role in influencing the level of consumer satisfaction (Stankevich, 2017). The level of consumer satisfaction is referred to as the consumer's general view of their shopping experience with selected goods and services (Zhang, 2015). Consumers would be pleased or unhappy whether the product they have bought meets their expectations or otherwise (Kaura, Prasad and Sharma, 2015). Therefore, product performance is a critical element of the brand image (Zhang, 2015). High-quality and high-performance goods will grow and sustain consumer confidence in the product and improve repurchase (Priyanga and Krishnaveni, 2016). In order to make a firm competitive edge on the market, a company must raise and concentrate on product growth and retain product efficiency in order to increase the consumer 's trust in its product (Anjana, 2018). To make the business firm to be competitive advantage, it is important to develop and maintain a good product performance of the contact lens, so the third hypothesis is developed:

H3: Product performance has an influence consumer buying decision on contact lens in Malaysia.

2.5 Recommendation

Recommendation is the act of providing positive information to another customer about a product, service, brand (Hanashya, 2016; Rosario, Sotgiu and Valck et. al., 2016). After the customer purchases the product, interpersonal experience is a main advertisement itself, and the sharing of information could have an effect on the future consumer buying behavior (Huete-Alcocer, 2017;). According to Khan, Ramzan and Shoaib (2015), recommendation has a positive impact on consumer buying behavior because recommendation is a more creditable communication and can minimize the risk in the consumer mind. Recommendation also highly accepted as a key traditional and highly effective marketing communication tool compare with print advertising, radio advertising and face-to-face selling, it can be quickly transferred among consumers at a minimal cost (Hanashya, 2016; Taghizadeh, Taghipourian and Khazaei, 2013). When a consumer would like to buy a product who required professional knowledge, a recommendation from the professional service provider will decrease the risk in buying assessment phase and it will be more remarkable when the source is trustworthy (Jaakola, 2007; Meng and Wei, 2015). Thus, the recommendation from consumer and eye-care practitioner can reshape their purchase intention and this leads to the construction of fourth hypothesis:

H4: Recommendation has an influence on consumer buying decision on contact lens in Malaysia.

2.6 Theoretical Perspective-Theory of Reasoned Action

The purpose of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is to figure out what kind of attitude it has generated and how it influences customer behavior; thus, this theory is very suitable to be supported as a fundamental theory for cultivating behavioral attitudes in the decision-making process (Dakduk et al., 2017). People 's behavior is a general context of the TRA, focused on people's behavioral purpose to behave, their behavioral attitude and their subjective norm (Ajzen and Fishbein , 1980). It is addressing a person's behavioral pattern depends on their behavioral intent (Dakduk et al., 2017). In addition, Pikkarainen et al. (2014) note that the TRA is a theory that assumes customer behavior is rational, and that the information is systematically gathered and interpreted by the customer. This also represented that a customer should evaluate the danger of that action based on this rational decision-making, and decide their next steps (Balabanoff, 2014).

3. Conceptual Framework

The variables identified in the previous section were used to shape a conceptual framework for introducing the hypothesis to be evaluated as below.

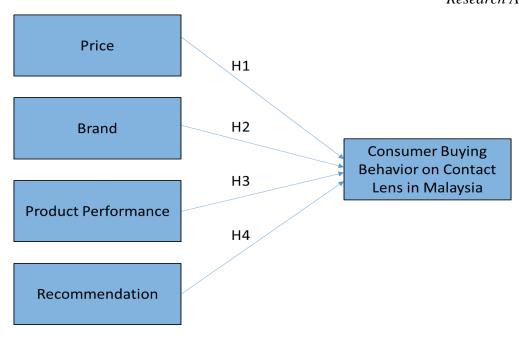


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

4. Research Methodology

The data obtained in this study is from a web-based Survey-Google Form which is spread via e-mail and various social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger. The questionnaires were circulated to all customers who wear contact lenses. A total of 417 questionnaire sets are obtained from respondents across Malaysia on the basis of 95 per cent confidence and 5 per cent sample size error (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970).

The questionnaires were divided into five sections: demographic information, consumer buying behavior, price, brand, product performance and recommendation. A five-point Likert scale, anchored from strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agreed and strongly agreed for all the items were used. Many questions from the relevant previous studies (Ahuja, 2015; Inoni, 2017; Kaushal and Kumar, 2016; Maisam and Mahsa, 2016; Nijeru, 2017; Victor et al, 2018; Visheh and Vali, 2018) were adopted and adapted to ensure the validity and reliability.

A pilot test of the reliability analysis was carried out to examine the reliability and validity of the questionnaire to achieve the research objective. This was achieved by subjecting the 5 main variables to a test of consistency for the pilot study of 80 respondents. Table 1 shows the summary of the reliability test results.

Table 1: Reliability Test for Pilot Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Consumer Buying Behaviour	0.845	5
Price	0.710	4
Brand	0.744	3
Product Performance	0.907	4
Recommendation	0.883	4

The Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine reliability index for this study. The value of the Cronbach's Alpha is between 0.710 to 0.907. As these values exceed the minimum value of 0.70, it can be concluded that the reliability index is acceptable (Liew and Idris, 2017).

5. Results and Discussion

Descriptive and regression analysis was analyzed using SPSS version 25. The following section is discussed in two parts: descriptive analysis and multiple regression analysis, which evaluated Hypotheses H1, H2, H3 and H4

5.1 Descriptive Analysis

Table 2: Summary of the demographic information of the respondents.

		1	Neseurch Arnete
Respondents Background	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Gender of Respondents			
Male	171	41.00	41.00
Female	246	59.00	100.00
Income Level			
Above RM 9,500	84	20.10	20.10
RM 4,500 to RM 9,500	241	57.80	77.90
Below RM 9,500	92	22.10	100.0
State of Residence			
Wilayah Persekutuan (Kuala Lumpur/	69	16.50	16.50
Putrajaya/ Labuan)			
Selangor	96	23.00	39.60
Pulau Pinang	66	15.80	55.40
Johor	44	10.60	65.90
Melaka	10	2.40	68.30
Perak	22	5.30	73.60
Kedah	19	4.60	78.20
Pahang	8	1.90	80.10
Kelantan	5	1.20	81.30
Terengganu	15	3.60	84.90
Negeri Sembilan	21	5.00	89.90
Perlis	12	2.90	92.80
Sabah	18	4.30	97.10
Sarawak	12	2.90	100.00

Table 2 shows the summary of the demographic information of the respondents in this study.

5.2 Validity and Reliability of Measures

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) began with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkim (KMO) and Barlett 's Sphericity Test. According to Kiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Tests of Sampling Adequacy provided in Table 3, KMO values are 0.841, 0.636, 0.615, 0.776 and 0.685, which are greater than 0.6 (Liew & Idris, 2017). These values are more than the general index 0.6, which is deemed acceptable (Zikmund and Babin, 2015). This indicates that the sample size was sufficient to determine the factor structure. In addition, the purpose of the Barlett Sphericity Test is to assess the acceptability of the factor analysis and to show the strength of the relationship between the variables (Liew and Idris, 2017). The findings are shown to be significant with a p-value of 0.000.

Table 3: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Barlett's Test of Sphericity

			Consume	Price	Brand	Product	Recommendatio
			r Buying			Performanc	n
			Behaviour			e	
Kaiser-M	leyer	-Olkin	0.841	0.636	0.615	0.776	0.685
Measure of S	Samp	ling					
Adequancy							
Barlett'		Appro	1026.665	330.17	427.99	776.343	791.566
s Test of	X	Chi-		5	3		
Sphericity	Squ	iare					
		df	10	6	3	6	6
		Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

In view of these aggregate indicators, the EFA proceeded with the Varimax rotation of the Principle Component Analysis (PCA) for all 20 items. The minimum loading factor cut-off point in this analysis is 0.5 (Zulkepli, Sipan and Jibril, 2017). Factor loading describes the relationship between each component and the underlying element (Yong and Pearce, 2013). At the same time, the reliability check is conducted to ensure that each attribute is reliable internally. The result of the loading factor and the alpha coefficient values of Cronbach are shown in Table 4. Based on the outcome of the factor analysis, the loading of the factor is between 0.646 and 0.945, which conform with the thumb rules of 0.6 and above (Zulkepli et al., 2017). The alpha coefficient of Cronbach is 0.703 and above, which matched the thumb rules with a value of 0.7 and above (Haradhan, 2017).

Table 4: Factor Loading and Cronbach Alpha's result

			Research Article
No	Question	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
B1	I would intend to buy contact lens in the future.	0.821	
B2	I intended to purchase contact lens from the eyecare practitioner in the next 12 months.	0.874	
В3	I search for contact lens information from time to time.	0.801	0.867
B4	I willing to recommend my friends or relatives to buy contact lens.	0.668	0.867
В5	Purchasing of contact lens is beneficial of my daily life.	0.866	
P1	Overall, the contact lens price is an important factor toward my purchase decision.	0.646	
P2	I will track the price of the contact lens which I intend to buy the contact lens for a few days before purchase.	0.704	
Р3	I will buy a brand I don't recognize simply because it is cheap.	0.761	0.703
P4	I'm not likely to switch my current contact lens brand because I like its low price	0.793	
BB1	I have used this contact lens brand for long time, and I have not change it.	0.693	
BB2	I feel personally satisfied when I buy current contact lens brand.	0.905	0.739
BB3	The current contact lens brand I am using is special and unique	0.875	
PP1	I think contact lens performance is an important criterion when I buy contact lens.	0.816	
PP2	I like my contact lens product performance.	0.882	
PP3	My current contact lens provides high quality of comfort and vision to me.	0.833	0.853
PP4	It is important for me to buy a high-quality of contact lens.	0.803	
R1	The favorable customer reviews about the contact lens helps me decide favorably toward buying the contact lens.	0.811	
R2	The recommendation of my friend/relatives for any contact lens brand will help me decide favorably to buy the contact lens.	0.808	0.827
R3	The recommendation of the optical stores for any contact lens brand will affect my decision to purchase that contact lens.	0.806	

			Research Arncie
R4	I believe product recommendation very useful to me.	0.836	

5.3 Multiple Regression Analysis (Hypothesis Testing)

Multiple Regression Analysis is a statistical technique used to measure the relationship between two or more variables caused and implications and to make a forecast for the topic using the relationship (Uyanık and Güler, 2013). Table 5 displays the outcome of the Multiple Regression Analysis of customer buying behaviour as dependent variable and price, brand, product performance and recommendation as independent variables.

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	B-coefficient	Sig	
Price	0.103	0.007	
Brand	0.211	0.000	
Product Performance	0.302	0.000	
Recommendation	0.215	0.000	
R	0.661***		
\mathbb{R}^2	0.437***		
Adjusted R ²	0.432		
F	80.063		

Significant levels: ***p<0.001; **p<0.01; *p<0.05

Based on the above finding, the effect of price, brand, product performance and recommendation on customer buying behaviour has been demonstrated. The significance of R-squared showed that 43.2% of the variation in the spectrum of consumer buying behaviour can be expected from price, brand, product performance and recommendation variables. Among the four independent variables, price (β =0.103, p<0.001), brand (β =0.211, p<0.001), product performance (β =0.302, p<0.001) and recommendation (β =0.215, p<0.001) have a significant positive influence on consumer purchasing behavior on contact lenses in Malaysia. In the end, the product performance of the contact lens has the biggest influence on consumer buying behaviour.

6. Discussion and Implication

The focus of this research is to figure out how price, brand, product performance and recommendation factors can affect the consumer's decision to buy contact lenses in Malaysia. The results of the Multiple Regression Analysis have shown that customers have diverse opinions on purchase decisions for contact lenses in Malaysia. In the first case, the findings revealed that the price seemed to have a substantial effect towards the consumer buying decision on contact lenses in Malaysia. The finding is consistent with the prior research conducted by Rani (2014) and Ramya and Ali (2016) who claimed that the consumer buying behavior is determined by the level of income of the consumer and that the low-income consumer will have more concerned on the price of the product. This study also further endorsed by Al-Salamin and Al-Hassan (2016) who argued that pricing should continue to affect customer buying decisions on the basis of their income and demographic characteristics. Even, Optician (2013) reported that only 11 per cent of the contact lens buyers are price drives. While there is a difference of opinion, the results of this research have shown that the market in Malaysia is still influenced by product pricing (CooperVision, 2016; Optician, 2013).

Second, the brand of the contact lens has seen to have a statistically important impact on the consumer's buying behavior. Based on the results, it has been seen that the brand image can affect the consumer's decision to buy the contact lens through effective branding strategy. It is because branding is the recognition of the consumer to the contact lens brand and will create a brand association between the consumer (Zhang, 2015). Additionally, it is further supported that consumer will link a brand to their product performance and product quality (Letchuman and Sam, 2016). Besides that, a good branding strategy will create a positive and secure image in the consumer's mind (Oladepo and Abimbol, 2015).

Thirdly, the product performance of the contact lens was found to have a major effect on the decision to purchase the consumer and was the most influential factor in the decision to purchase the consumer relative to other independent variables. According to Optician (2013), consumers are willing to pay 25 per cent extra for contact lens comfort, 27 per cent extra if they can provide more excellent vision, 20 per cent more if the lens can provide healthy eyes and 22 per cent more for UV protection. Those existing contact lens wearers are willing to switch their contact lens which provides longer-lasting comfort because discomfort is the leading of the drop out of contact lens (Grant and Tang, 2020). Moreover, Priyanga and Krishnaveni (2015) further state that product

performance is the main criterion for the consumer to switch product because high product performance will increase the consumer's confidence.

Lastly, the results also found that the recommendation has a significant relationship to influence consumer buying behavior on contact lenses in Malaysia. It reinforced the study conducted by Optician (2013) which reported that recommendation from the eye-care practitioner will has a positive effect towards the consumer buying decision on contact lens by approximately 50%. Besides that, recommendation is seven times more effective than a print advertisement, four times more effective than face-to-face sales and two times more effective than radio advertising (Taghizadeh et al., 2018; Vishesh and Vali., 2018).

The practical implications are manifested in this study and it demonstrated that contact lens companies should focus in creating a high quality and performance contact lens which can provide long lasting comfort to the consumer alongside with the pricing strategy, brand awareness and recommendation. As price is the main moderator, marketer of the contact lens companies must do the market research and consumer survey on how their contact lens performance will influence the consumer purchase decision to increase the competitive advantage in the industry. Consumer and product segmentation needed to be study to promote their contact lens to different income-level and characteristic of the consumer.

Furthermore, recommendations and reviews via e-commerce platforms, social media, friends, relatives and eye-care practitioners is the next significant factor to influence consumer's purchase on contact lenses. Marketer of the contact lens companies can engage with KOL or the influencer to promote how the contact lens features would benefit their daily lives online. Marketing campaign by encouraging consumers to review and comment on the performance of products on the e-commerce and social media platforms will increase the exposure of the brand in the online platform. A reward program to the consumer who actively recommend the product to their friends and relatives can be in place to increase the confidence level of the new contact lens wearer. In the meantime, companies must engage with the retailer as eye-care practitioners to recommend their products through their optical retail store.

This study is suffering from certain limitations that could offer potential research opportunities. First, the limitation is due to the small sample size and second, there are respondents from all over Malaysia and the researcher noted that the responses were not within the relative spectrum based on population count and responses to income levels. Therefore, more respondents from all Malaysian states should considered. This would enable the ratio to roughly match the contact lens wearer of Malaysia 's market size.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study managed to identify and better understand the variables that would affect the consumer's buying choice when selecting the contact lens. However, based on the results of the Multiple Regression Study, it concluded that price, brand, product performance and advice had a major effect towards the consumer buying behavior on contact lens in Malaysia. Furthermore, the product performance of the contact lens us the most influential factor relative to other variables. The consumer will tend to buy a contact lens that can provide better comfort and vision compared to the price.

Therefore, eye care practitioners should continue to recommend outstanding contact lens performance to wearers of contact lenses. In the meantime, marketers should use their contact lenses to influence customer buying decisions based on product performance. However, since pricing would also impact customer buying decisions, we should not neglect the pricing strategy. Retailers and marketers should evaluate their pricing strategy for contact lenses based on demographic characteristics and the level of consumer income. The results of this study offer a better understanding of how to implement strategic plans for consumer engagement and customer loyalty to contact lens companies' marketers.

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