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Research paper



Brief Lifestyle of Malay Adolesecents

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Abstract

The research is to explore briefly the lifestyle of Malay adolescent in terms of buying habits, fashion preference, interest, activities, time management and self-perception. The previous literatures have found that adolescents' population have been increasing substantially. Their influenced over shaping the business focus and environment is getting stronger as their consumption in term of dollar is getting more significant. The knowledge of their lifestyle and behavior is vital for marketers as they have becoming the future potential and lucrative target market. We have conducted self-administered survey for data collection. Approximately ninety respondents have completed the self-administered questionnaires. The finding of this study has shown that fashion and self-perception have significant relationship with Malay adolescents lifestyle.

Keywords: *Life Style; Malay; Adolescents*

1. Introduction

1.1 Definition of Life Style

Lifestyle is a popular concept for understanding consumer, perhaps because it is more contemporary than personality and more competitive than values. According to Wikipedia.org, lifestyle was originally coined by Austrian psychologist Alfred Adler in 1929. The current broader sense of the word dates from 1961. Lifestyle consisted of activities, interests, opinions, leisure time, work and consumption of the buyer, either alone or with others, with respect to both general behavior and the specific product class. In other word, lifestyle is a person's pattern of living as expressed in activities, interest and opinions. In terms of marketing, lifestyle segmentation entails dividing buyers into different groups based on their social class, lifestyle and personal characteristics. In business, lifestyles provide a means by which advertisers and marketers endeavor to target and match consumer aspirations with products, or to create aspirations relevant to new products.

1.2 Definition of Malay

According to Wikipedia.org, Malay is the ethnic group located primarily in the Malay Peninsula, and parts of Sumatra and Borneo, a racial category encompassing the people of South East Asia and sometimes the Pacific Islands and a constitutionally defined group of Muslim Malaysian citizens. Malay also are an ethnic group of Austronesian peoples predominantly inhabiting the Malay Peninsula, the east coast of Sumatra, the coast of Borneo, and the smaller islands between these locations. The Malay ethnic group is distinct from the concept of a Malay race, which encompasses a wider group of people, including most of Indonesia and the Philippines.

1.3 Definition of Adolescent

Oxford English Dictionary (Eleventh Edition) define adolescent as a person (a boy or a girl) in the process of developing from a child into an adult. According to Wikipedia.org, adolescent is a transitional stage of physical and mental human development that occurs between childhood and adulthood. This transition involves biological, social and psychological changes, though the biological or physiological ones are the easiest to measure objectively. The end of adolescence and the beginning of adulthood varies by country as well as by function, as even within a single country there will be different ages at which an individual is considered mature enough to be entrusted with particular tasks, such as driving a vehicle, having sexual relations, serving in the armed forces, voting, or marrying. Also, adolescence is usually accompanied by an increased independence allowed by the parents or legal guardians and less supervision, contrary to the pre-adolescence stage.

Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1995) stated, companies were increasingly embracing target marketing or market segmentation. In most of the countries adolescents form majority of the population and have its own lifestyles.

According to the World Health Organization (2009), 50% of the world's populations are below twenty-five (25) years of age and almost one third are ten (10) to twenty-four (24) years old. They are known as adolescence. Adolescence is often divided by psychologists into three distinct phases: early, mid and late adolescence.

Generally this study is to explore adolescents' lifestyle. More specifically, the objectives are:

- To determine Malay adolescents buying habits.
- To identify Malay adolescents fashion preference.
- To examine Malay adolescents interest, activities and time management.

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- To find the adolescents opinion about self-perception.

Many adolescents' researches have been done in various countries and this research is done purposely to study on Malay adolescents in Malaysia. There are several factors influence the Malay adolescents lifestyle such as buying habits, fashion preference, their interest, activities and time management and also their opinion on self-perception.

Adolescent gained experience and knowledge from home, school and community. Mass media also play an important role. They formed and shaped the basis for the habits, character, attitude and the behavior. Meanwhile, mass media provide and act as the role model through the famous and glamorous people.

Based on this, the adolescent develop their own lifestyle which is generally accepted by the adolescents' community who are usually concerned regarding the trend. The adolescents' trend in marketing term is associated with adolescents' lifestyle. Thus, by knowing the lifestyle, firms and business people will produce products popularly used by them or in more advance marketing strategy, the firms will try to produce new products and set a new trend of lifestyle. Thus, this study can become the foundation by providing perspectives on Malay adolescents.

2. Literature Review

According to Yearbook of Statistics Malaysia (2000), 20.7% of adolescents were in the age group 10 to 19 years old from 23.3 million of the Malaysian population in 2000. It has been estimated that the young people increases by 2.3% per annum, from 4.47 million in 1996 to 4.82 million in 2000. Adolescence brings with it capacities for abstract, critical thought and contemplating the future. However, the use of these new capacities depends on the environment in which adolescents live.

Marketing to adolescents is a challenge. (Scammon and Christopher, 1981).
To successfully sell to adolescents and teens, marketers conduct extensive market research; segment youth audiences; design advertising campaigns that are language, culture and image-sensitive; and track young consumers' responses.

Market research has shown that adolescents spend their money on clothing, entertainment, fast-food, snacks and personal-care products. (Heather, 2001).
Market segmentation capitalizes on the belief that different group of consumers have diverse attitudes, interests and behaviors. By acknowledging these differences marketers can increase their chances of influencing consumers' purchasing. The overwhelming characteristic of the adolescent market is its desire to fit in. Teenagers are notoriously fickle; they are marketing savvy, and they don't like a hard sell. Gender and ethnicity affect marketing strategies targeting youth, however socioeconomic status does not. Effective marketing succeeds in representing customer lifestyles and making products relevant to their lives (Heather, 2001)

2.1 Market Research to Adolescents

Marketing to the adolescent audience starts with a basic marketing principle: 'know your audience'. To obtain opinions, feedback, and insights from children and teenage youth, market researchers typically use standard research methods. These include focus groups, surveys, interviews, picture drawing, story-telling, secret ballot and observation (Kraak and Pelletier, 1998). Market research may seek input on several factors: product, concept, commercial tests, audience segmentation, packaging, promotions, print advertisements, brand name identification or pricing (Harrigan, 1991). When designed and conducted well, youth market research reveals pearls for those who will listen. For example, research indicates that adolescents are spending most of their money on clothing, followed by entertainment. After these items, fast-food, snacks and personal-care products share third place (Lippe, 2001). Adolescents identify products more frequently by brand name rather than food category (Arnott, 1993; and Guber, 1987). Market researchers have identified characteristics adolescents look for in their favorite restaurants: best food, best toys and prizes, best meal packs, the most fun, best playgrounds and the opportunity to accompany friends with their parents (Guber and Berry, 1993).

2.2 Market Segmentation of Adolescent

Market segmentation helps advertisers target their efforts more effectively. It involves dividing the population into groups based on demographic variables such as age, gender and ethnicity (Monash University, 2000). The basic criteria of market segmentation is that different groups of consumers have diverse attitudes, interests and behaviors. And by acknowledging these differences, marketers believe they can increase their chances of influencing consumers' behaviors (Ngo, 1993).

However, large gaps exist in understanding young consumers' behavior (Stipp, 1993). The overwhelming characteristic of the adolescent market is its desire to fit in, to belong (Ebenkamp, 1999; Goldstein, 1999). Advertisers can fall into the 'cool' trap, forgetting that like everyone else, teens want utility, things that help improve their quality of life (Lippe, 2001).

One of an important variable in segmentation among the adolescents is culture. Culture is often demonstrated in terms of family, friendship, eating habits and values. While each Asian culture is distinct, all share common traits: reverence for family, a high level of responsibility, respect for elders, honoring traditions, importance of unity and harmony. An effective advertising message for all Asian groups would be to position the product as helping to improve family health and lifestyle.

Communications using Asian's native language have strong influence on their attitudes as customers, image perceptions of the product and what they buy. Demographic variables including income and occupation may be used in the description of market segments. However, socioeconomic status does not deter marketers from marketing to low-income adolescents (Monash University, 2000). They are seen first as adolescents, a segment that is particularly susceptible to what marketers call the emotional sell.

2.3 Adolescents Buying Habit

The numbers of adolescents are increasing year by year. As consumers, teenagers or adolescents buying power has been increased and they share the active part in the market. Schiffman and Kanuk (1987) estimated of adolescents spending power range from USD40 billion a year.

Michman (1991) stated that typical teens spent USD2331 billion in 1988, twice as much as in 1978. He has continued that the impact of adolescents consumption was to be USD248.7 billion on the United States economy. A total USD149 billion was spent by parents influenced by adolescents and another USD33.5 billion was spent by the adolescents for groceries purchased for household consumption. Some of the adolescents also save some money for the future. However, though there is tendency towards saving, most of the saving is earmarked for expensive future purchases. They spent most of their money on themselves immediately. They are not inclined to postpone purchasing gratification.

This spending power is changing year by year as noted by Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1995). The numbers of adolescents have been increasing during 1990s. This trend has created the growing

market for clothing, music and entertainment, fast food and other products.

Schiffman and Kanuk (1994) also have reported about how the adolescents used their money and the things that they have bought. Another study found that the adolescents are more likely to save money than those who received money as a gift. But dual income adolescents (allowance and earnings) are more inclined to spend money for themselves.

Helitzer and Heyel (1970) wrote about youth market. They generally have shown low brand loyalty and highly interested in new products. Helitzer and Heyel also explained why youth could be an attractive market. They gave the reasons as youth are more receptive to trying new products, they are more oriented towards spending than saving and they will be buying products for longer time. Thus adolescents are an important market segment not only because they influence family consumption decisions, but because adolescent groups have been formative ones in terms of later consumption patterns. Adolescents market will become young adult market. Then become mature market and finally adult or oldies market. This means that they will stay as consumers for a long time.

2.4 Adolescents and Fashions

O'Shaughnessy (1987) wrote that one fashion expert word it out as "fashion allows us to become temporarily what we are not – to slip into new identities". It enables us to that people through fashions seek to fit themselves to sources of power and influence. He concluded that a lot of the influence can be seen on adolescents. Thus O'Shaughnessy (1987) explained that is why some people identify with both celebrities and images promoted by advertising. Adolescents like to do this as they want to imitate their idol, social reasons for buying.

Coleman and Hendry (1993) have agreed with O'Shaughnessy. They have suggested that experimentation with hairstyles and fashion have been used as identifying symbols of particular groups. Involvement with pop music can also be associated with certain fashions. Adolescents get some of their ideas for fashion from pop culture but shop windows, friends, discos, magazines and television are clearly used as sources of inspiration.

2.5 Adolescents and Interest

Mohammed (1983) found that adolescent like to read the textbooks (84.8%), additional references (62.8%), newspaper (59.8%), magazines (39.2%), story books (35.5%) and comics (16.6%). Williams (1984) reasoned out that due to mass media development, more adolescents like to read just to enjoy, have fun and at the same time to gain some knowledge. The types of book read by boys and girls have been different. Most of the boys like to read books on travel and adventures while girls on beauty care, fashion, family and novels.

Adolescents also like reading rather than involved in social activities (Hurrock, 1976). Hurrock (1976) found that boys like to read materials on monetary and humor more than girls. Mohammed (1983) and Hurrock (1976) concluded that teens use more of their time on academic activities that other daily activities.

Anthony (1985) found that youngsters like to go to shopping complexes at least once a month (44%), twice a week (40%) and (4%) like to go every day. Other than shopping complexes, youngsters also like to fill their time going to fast food restaurants such as KFC, McDonalds and Pizza Hut (44%), shopping (27%) and entertainment centers (13%).

Zafar, Gingold and Dahari (2007) found that Post-secondary students in the Klang Valley of Malaysia were frequent and long-staying visitors to shopping malls, typically visiting six stores per 2.5 hours mall visit. More than one-third of respondents visited three or more different shopping malls during the previous 30 days. Shopping malls are major spending destinations for Malaysian students. 56 per cent of respondents spent more than 10 per cent of their monthly expenditures in malls, and more than 37 per cent spent over 15 per cent of monthly expenditures in malls. Malls are clearly strong draws for young adult Malaysians and their money as they are in Western countries.

2.6 Adolescents and Activities

Adolescent have their own lifestyle or their life pattern; things they do, their interests, their activities, their opinions and their use of time. Thus, there are many studies in various fields have been done about them. Such research was done by Vorontsov and Zurkhavov (1984) who have studied adolescent activities that were living in rural areas and urban areas. They found that adolescents living in towns like to do social activities such as going to movies (65.9%), watching television (60%), reading (43.7%), visiting friends and relatives (27.1%), culture (25%), sports (17.6%), going out (16.1%), with family (12.3%) and music (5.6%).

Hurrock (1976) had found that adolescents like activities such as watching television, movies and sports because the activities are joyful and fun and it involved peer group. In other research, William (1984) found that adolescents are more interested in social activities including going to cinema, watching television, reading magazines and story books or going out.

In Malaysia, there have been studies and reports on adolescents activities especially in the urban areas. Harian Metro (1991) reported that many secondary school children like to loiter after school especially in shopping complexes or go to fast food restaurants.

Woodward and Frank (1988) found that majority of adolescents in Nebraska, USA also like to do social activities such as club activities (91%), visiting friends (90%), with family (85%), recreation (83%), listening to music (98%), watching television (69%), fishing (61%) and sports (55%). Woodward and Frank explained that the adolescents like to do the mentioned activities because they want to get rid of their loneliness, boring and to enjoy themselves.

Hansen and Graham (1991) found that adolescents in rural areas used their daily routine positively compared to urban adolescents. Unlike cities, rural areas are lack of entertainment centers, cinemas and shopping complexes. Most of the young living in rural areas helps their family. Thus, less time are spent for other activities.

2.7 Adolescents and Time Management

Banks and Finlayson (1973) have studied about time management on youth high academic performance. They found that these students do most of their activities on academic. The activities were revision, do homework, attending extra class and tuition. Those revision and studies take most of the time. Other than studying, they also help their parents. Thus, Banks and Finlay concluded than high performance youth use more of their time on studies and they prefer to do academic work and beneficial work than to waste their time on their activities. Socioeconomic status also influences the activities of teenagers.

Rokiah (1997), Taha (1977), Horrocks (1971) and Mayer (1974) have studied whether parents income influence time management

for the academic activities of adolescents. The study found that most of the teenagers from the higher socioeconomic status use more of their time on academic related activities and social activities than the lower socioeconomic status teenager.
Mayer (1974) who studies on Black Americans who lives in the Southern religion of United State found that these youth use little time on academic and help their parent more because the parent have low income. Thus, according to Mayer (1974) poverty influences the attitude of teenager and their parent. Money problems made the parent to encourage the children to be absent from schools and asked them to work to get some money. The youth also realized that they need to work in order to help their parent in their daily livelihood. Taha (1977), Horrocks (1971) and Mayer (1974) concluded that socioeconomic status influences the time management of the youth.

Hasiah (1984) has also studied on time management and activities done by adolescent. She chose respondent who stayed with their parents. She found that, there was significant different between boys and girls in studies and self-care. Percentage of time used for studies and self-care is higher for the girls than the boys. The boys do more leisure activities than the girls. The girls used more time in eating as they have to help in food preparation and in household cleanliness. Girls used more time on academic which more important than the boys who used more of their time in self-care as they like to be seen beautiful.
Hasiah (1980), Mohammad (1983) and Steward (1980) concluded that gender was also an important and significant variable which influence the time management pattern and the activities done by the adolescents.

Meanwhile Banks (1971) concluded another important variable which was the environment. Environment is also another significant variable which influence the time management and the activities they do.

Schiffman and Kanuk (1987) stated that the lifestyles of girls that have working mothers were somewhat different from girls whose mothers were housewives. Adolescents with housewives mother were more involved in homemaking activities.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

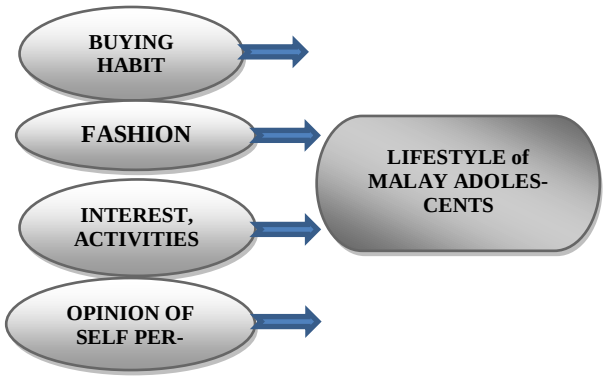


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.9 Hypotheses

To test the variables stated in Conceptual Model, the following hypotheses have been constructed:

H1: Buying habit has no significant relationship with lifestyle of Malay adolescents.
H2: Fashion has no significant relationship with lifestyle of Malay adolescents.
H3: Interest, activities and time management have no significant relationship lifestyle of Malay adolescents.
H4: Opinion on self-perception has no significant relationship lifestyle of Malay adolescents.

3 Methodology/Materials

3.1 Data Collection Method

This study adopted the convenience sampling method. A survey using self-administered questionnaire is used to collect the data. About ninety (90) University Technology MARA students in Malaysia have been selected as the respondent. Their age is between eighteen (18) to twenty-three (23) years old.

The survey consisted of personal information questions for the background of the respondents, followed by the statements which have been divided into buying habits; fashion; activities, interest, and time management; and opinions on self-perception.

Respondents were presented with Likert scales in which they gave their responses as strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree or strongly disagree. The AIO inventories were developed by first formulating a large number of questions regarding the respondents AIOs and then selected a smaller number of questions that best define the respondents segments. The AIO statements were divided into buying habits; fashion; interest, activities and time management; and also opinions on self perception.

3.2 Pretest of Survey Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of items concerning segmenting lifestyles was specially developed specifically for this study. The questions should be understood by the sample of the study. Therefore, it was necessary to carry out a pretest of the instrument in order to identify potential weaknesses and also to ensure the level of the English used could be understood by all respondents; if there were errors or problems of data collection. The pretest has been conducted to thirty (30) students.

The final survey was conducted in the same campus after the pretest. The survey was self-conducted. A cover letter was also clipped together with each of the questionnaires explaining the main purpose of the study. The respondents were also assured of the confidentiality and the results would be only reported in aggregate form. The questionnaires collected were numbered as identification so as to help retracing of any missing values.

4 Results and Findings

Completed questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS program, 'Statistical Package for the Social Sciences'. Statistical analysis included ANOVA, frequencies and regression have been used in data analysis.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Characteristics

Table 1: Composition of Respondent Age

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18 - 19	30	33.3	33.3	33.3
	20 - 21	48	53.3	53.3	86.7
	22 - 23	12	13.3	13.3	100.0
	Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 has shown the composition of respondents according to age. There were 33.3% students between eighteen to nineteen (18–19) years old. Majority students (53.3%) age between twenty to twenty-one (20–21) years old. While there were only 13.3% students between twenty-two to twenty-three (22-23) years old.

Table 2: Composition of Respondent Gender

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	39	43.3	43.3	43.3
	FEMALE	51	56.7	56.7	100.0
	Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Table 2 has shown the composition of respondents according to gender. Out of ninety (90) respondents, 43.3% were male students and 56.7% were female students.

Table 3: Composition of Respondent – Parents' Income

Income

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	,RM1500	30	33.3	33.3	33.3
	RM1501 - RM3000	27	30.0	30.0	63.3
	RM3001 - RM4500	11	12.2	12.2	75.6
	RM4501 - RM6000	16	17.8	17.8	93.3
	.RM6001	6	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 has shown the categories of parents' income in more detail. Parents' incomes refer to the combination of father's and mother's income. They were divided into five categories. Thirty three percent (33.3%) of the parents' income were below RM1500; thirty percent (30%) were between RM1501 – RM3000, about twelve percent (12.2%) were between RM3001 – RM4500, while about eighteen percent (17.8%) were between RM4501 – RM6000. There were about seven percent (6.7%) respondents with parents' income of more than RM6001.

4.2 Reliability and Validity

In Table 4, forty items that make up the four constructs were tested for their reliability. The scores were consistently high in all dimensions. The Cronbach's Alpha is 0.892, which means that our measuring is very consistent. Nunnally (1978) suggested that the minimum acceptable alpha for scale reliability is .70.

Table 4: Reliability Analysis – Scale (Alpha)

Reliability Coefficients	
N of Cases = 90	N of Items = 40
Alpha = .8920	

4.3 Regression Analysis of Variance

A multiple regression analysis was done using SPSS. The model explained 36.6 % of the variance. This means our model explain 36.6% of the variance in lifestyle of Malay adolescents. However, to assess the statistical significance of the result; it is necessary to look the ANOVA in Table 6. This tests the null hypothesis that multiple R in the population equals 0. The model in this research reaches statistical significance (sig. = 0.000; means p<0.0005).

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.605(a)	.366	.336	.78032

a Predictors: (Constant), opi_self_perc, buy_habit, fashion, int_acti_tim_mgt

b Dependent Variable: lifestyle

Table 6: Anova

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.844	4	7.461	12.253	.000(a)
	Residual	51.756	85	.609		
	Total	81.600	89			

a Predictors: (Constant), opi_self_perc, buy_habit, fashion, int_acti_tim_mgt

b Dependent Variable: lifestyle

5. Test of Hypotheses

Table 7: Coefficient Matrix

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	3.013	.692		4.354	.000		
	fashion	.997	.165	.669	6.058	.000	.613	1.633
	buy_habit	-.381	.266	-.167	-1.431	.156	.548	1.824
	int_acti_tim_mgt	-.157	.227	-.100	-.693	.490	.355	2.814
	opi_self_perc	-.432	.134	-.331	-3.219	.002	.705	1.418

a. Dependent Variable: lifestyle

In this research, P value of buying habit, the first variable (H1), is 0.156 means P>0.05. Thus H1 is accepted which means that buying habit, does not have a significant relationship with lifestyle of Malay adolescents.

The P value of fashion (H2) is 0.000 means P<0.05. Thus H2 is rejected which means that fashion does have significant relationship with the lifestyle of Malay adolescents.

Interest, activities and time management (IATM), the third variable (H3), is 0.490; means P>0.05. Thus H3 is accepted which means that IATM does not have a significant relationship with lifestyle of Malay adolescents. The opinion on self perception, the fourth variable (H4), is 0.002 means P<0.05. Thus H4 is rejected which means that opinion on self-perception does have a significant relationship with lifestyle of Malay adolescents.

5. Conclusion

The finding of this study has shown that fashion and self-perception have significant relationship with Malay adolescents lifestyle. In term of fashion, the majorities of Malay adolescents are moderate in their dressing and follow the latest fashion style. Religion and culture are still binding them in choosing type of dress and in dressing up to suit the place and occasion.

In term of Self Perception, Malay adolescents wanted a healthy lifestyle, successful in life, believe the important of the family, religion and ethnocentrism about their nation.

This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge for consumer behavior and sustainable marketing strategies. The understanding of adolescent behavior is vital for any company to survive in the very competitive market. As adolescents grow, nurture into certain behavior and to be adult consumer, they will prefer and loyal toward certain products and brands. By depth understanding Malay Adolescents Lifestyle, marketers can suit their sustainable marketing strategies with their limited resources.

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