



**FACTORS AFFECTING PRE-LOVED ITEMS PURCHASE  
INTENTION AMONG MALAYSIAN YOUTH CONSUMERS**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

The main focus of this research is to determine the factors affecting pre-loved items purchase intention among Malaysian youth consumers by using the theory of planned behavior (TPB). A pre-loved item is not new and has been owned and used before. The word *pre-loved* is used to make the item seems more attractive among Malaysian consumers, especially the youth. The higher awareness among Malaysian youth to purchase pre-loved items has driven the promotion of these items by marketers in view of the increasing demand in the country. The sale of pre-loved items has become a trend in the trading sector nowadays. To identify the factors affecting Malaysian youth's intention to purchase pre-loved items, data were randomly collected from 248 respondents comprising Malaysian youth from all the states in Malaysia. TPB was used as the conceptual framework and the variables identified are attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. The data collected were tested using multiple regression analysis in SPSS. The findings show that all the variables are significant and can be accepted and supported. The result also shows that the theoretical framework used in this study is successful in achieving the research objectives. This research is useful for practitioners and marketing managers, especially those involved in the trading industry, as well as being beneficial for the government. Researchers and academicians will also reap benefits through the findings highlighted as they can understand better the intention of Malaysian youth in purchasing pre-loved items and its implication to Islamic practices.

## مُلخَصُ البَحْثِ

يُرَكِّزُ هذا البَحْثُ على تحديد العوامل التي تؤثر في نية شراء السلع المستخدمة مسبقاً المعروفة بالسلع المحبوبة مسبقاً بين المستهلكين الشباب الماليزيين باستخدام نظرية السلوك المخطط، وتُعرَّفُ السلعة المحبوبة مسبقاً بأنها سلعة غير جديدة؛ أي إنها امتلكت واستُخدمت في وقت سابق، ويُستخدم مصطلح "المحبوبة مسبقاً" لجعل السلعة تبدو أكثر جاذبية للمستهلكين، ولا سيما الشباب منهم، وقد أدَّى ارتفاع الوعي بين الشباب الماليزي حول السلع المحبوبة مسبقاً إلى تشجيع المسوّقين لترويج هذه السلع؛ نظراً إلى تزايد الطلب عليها، حتى غدا بيعها توجُّهًا في قطاع التجارة في الوقت الحاضر؛ ولتحديد العوامل التي تؤثر في نية الشباب الماليزي لشراء السلع المحبوبة مسبقاً جُمعت عشوائياً بيانات من 248 مشاركاً من الشباب من جميع الولايات الماليزية، واستخدمت الباحثة نظرية السلوك المخطط إطاراً نظرياً للبحث، واختبرت البيانات باستخدام تحليل الانحدار المتعدد عبر البرنامج الإحصائي SPSS، وقد حُددت المتغيرات التابعة للدراسة كما يأتي: الموقف، والمعايير الذاتية، والسيطرة السلوكية المتصورة، وبيّنت النتائج أن جميع المتغيرات معنوية، وأن جميع فرضيات البحث يمكن قبولها، كما أوضحت نجاح الإطار النظري المستخدم في تحقيق أهداف البحث، ويُعد هذا البحث مفيداً لممارسي مهنة التسويق، ومديري التسويق، ولا سيما المشاركين في النشاطات التجارية، فضلاً عن أنه مفيد للحكومة؛ ويمكن للباحثين والأكاديميين أيضاً الاستفادة من نتائجه إذ تُمكنهم من فهم نية الشباب الماليزي شراء السلع المحبوبة مسبقاً وتأثيرها في ممارساتهم الإسلامية.

## APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Master of Science in (Marketing).

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## DECLARATION

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

A pre-loved item or used good is a piece of personal property that is being purchased by or otherwise transferred to a second or later end user. A pre-loved item can also simply mean it is no longer in the same condition as it was when transferred to the current owner. When the term used means that an item has expended its purpose (such as a used diaper), it is typically called garbage, instead. Pre-loved items can benefit the purchaser as the price paid is lower than that of the same items bought new. If the reduction in price more than compensates for the possibly shorter remaining lifetime, lack of warranty, and so on, there is a net benefit. The internationalization of pre-loved items industry has created a huge impact on consumers' interest and buying behaviour with respect to their preferences (Subhani, 2011).

Pre-loved items have their own fans. They are visual items representing a person's identity and personality-gender, age, race, occupation, social and financial status, fashion tastes, stores preferences, time orientation, liking, pride, attitudes, degree of maturity, self-confidence and self-esteem (Rosenfeld, 1977). The emergence of the sale of second-hand goods in Malaysia meets the needs of consumers in uncertain economic conditions, as well as offering items in various categories under one roof. Most items are sold in the used market, such as health and beauty products, vehicles, property, seasonal decoration, home appliances, glassware, food utensils, used oils,

home cleaning supplies, toys, souvenirs, antiques, bags, clothes, shoes, electrical and electronic tools, pet needs, books and so on. Somehow, some customers are willing to travel far to get the goods they are looking for. This fact is well supported by the study by Khan et al. (2016) whereby most Malaysian youth consumers spent their time in the shopping mall during weekends, public holidays and even during weekdays (Euro monitor International 2013). Usually, buyers need to look at all the items in the store first. Also, they can bargain the price with the seller to obtain the best price. They may be sold for a fraction of their original price at garage sales, in bazaar-style fundraisers, in privately owned consignment shops, or through online auctions. Some things are typically sold in specialized shops, such as a car dealership that specializes in the sale of used vehicles or a used bookstore that sells used books. In other cases, such as a charity shop, a wide variety of pre-loved items might be handled by the same establishment. High-value used luxury goods, such as antique furniture, jewellery, watches, and artwork, might be sold through a generic auction house such as Sotheby's or a more specialized niche like Bob's Watches.

## **1.2 GLOBAL TRENDS OF PRE-LOVED ITEMS**

Buying and selling of pre-loved items have been done for many years. Throughout the last 2 decades, quick development of pre-loved items consumption has attracted researchers and raised the question of why customers are keen to buy pre-loved items (Alam M. D., 2014). With today's technological advances, pre-loved items already have their own fans and standard. In fact, people know where to find affordable pre-loved items with good quality and value.

New purchases of goods are always made in the global marketplace, and once the old goods are thought to be useless, they are given a new look or sold as pre-loved items that have their own function and value. The pre-loved items segment is quickly developing and has become an important section of the retail market. Past studies did not concentrate in-depth on the epicurean and social influences of pre-loved items shopping, the monetary variables, and the time taken to shop for pre-loved items (Hobbs, 2016).

The phenomenon of sales and purchase of products has been born since human being era. Used products are defined as products that are no longer in the same state, but they can perform all the functions of new products (Rashida Bashir, 2016). The pre-loved segment is constantly developing, and the population included in its promotion continues to expand. The price of pre-loved items should not be too high or equal to the price of new items sold in the market. Typically, the pre-loved items are well priced according to the condition or popularity of each item.

Pre-loved item advertising is considered as the space where items that have already been used are resold by the proprietor, a charity or a for-profit entity (Hobbs, 2016). Even though today's society is familiar with the practice of buying and selling of used goods, not everyone likes to purchase pre-loved items because they are claimed to be of inferior quality, not durable, and of a lower standard especially to the high-income individuals residing in the city. Luxury goods can also be sold as pre-loved items, which indirectly benefits low-income earners.

Since the pre-loved items concept is a frame for reusing and recycling, this too would relate to having items that are more naturally inviting and economical (Gerlaugh, 2011). The consumption of pre-loved items keeps increasing based on demand and

supply. The increase in the number of second-hand stores, either online or offline, appears to fulfil the demand for pre-loved items by their fans. An example of an offline second-hand store is Cash Converters Sdn Bhd in Klang Valley, while the online second-hand stores are the local buy-and-sell platforms such as Malaysia Market FB, Mudah, Carousell, Lelong, and e-Bay Malaysia. Somehow, people meet their needs by using pre-loved items with affordable value.

### **1.3 PRE-LOVED ITEMS TRENDS IN MALAYSIA**

Malaysia is a melting pot of different societies and religions. As a result, a pre-loved items industry bound together by the distinguished Malay culture has developed. The modern Malaysia has a unique fusion of Malay, Chinese, and Indian conventions, culminating in a pluralistic and multicultural nation that has its character emphatically established in social concordance, religion and pride in its ancestral foundation. With such a wealthy social legacy, acquiring important ability and cultural information is pivotal for conducting a successful business in Malaysia (Jodie R Gorrill, 2007).

Malaysia is classified as an upper middle-income economy and many people have the highest purchasing power in the Asian Continent. Many changes have taken place in the country that are ultimately aimed at elevating the status of Malaysia from a developing country to a developed nation. Although the Malay people are highly sensitive about prices, they have also become brand conscious and are demanding for better quality products and services. Shopping is their favourite pastime. The majority of the population consists of young people aged 25–40 years old. Targeting young consumers in Malaysia is not difficult, as many international brands have been targeting young consumers in the country. For instance, fashion and clothing brands have created



a highly competitive market in Malaysia even though the country is considered as a developing country. Other growing sectors are food and beverages, fashion, transport, education, hotel, environment, telecommunication, tourism, healthcare, and lifestyle services and products.

Buying pre-loved items may be all the rage now, but it is far from being a new trend. The sale of pre-loved items has been around for decades, commonly at charity outlets, pawn shops, car boot sales, and flea markets. Back then, shopping for used items was associated with being poor as most items were sold at only a fraction of the original price. However, time has changed. Pre-loved sellers are ordinarily couples with children who are well versed in exchanging pre-loved merchandise online. Customers are more often than not young couples or those from the middle-income bracket. Buyers purchase second-hand items as they think it is inefficient to spend an enormous sum on a new item that they are going to use briefly before disposing of the items.

The pre-loved item trade is as old as capitalism. Malaysian consumers have a different understanding of pre-loved items and their phenomenon as compared to consumers in western countries. According to Market (2017) for 2016, domestic retail sales expanded by 1.7%, which was not much stronger compared to 1.4% growth in 2015 — the year in which goods and services tax was introduced. The weak ringgit has affected the costs of many retail goods sold locally. Many retailers have begun to raise prices, including prices of food and beverages, household goods, and other daily necessities.

According to Sofian (2016), the pre-loved business is growing with a variety of renewed concepts. The evolution of the pre-loved business is very progressive, especially in the increasingly challenging economic environment. The perspectives on

used items are also changing, and the public has begun considering used items to meet their needs. Starting from online to on-premise sales, the pre-loved business transition will be more productive if it is run using user-friendly concepts.

The pre-loved items business has shown a favourable development lately because its business trends differ from other businesses. Back in 2016, the Malaysian economy has experienced a slight decline, but demand for pre-loved goods has increased. This is because pre-loved goods have become an alternative for people to own branded items at lower prices than new ones (Bachtiar, 2018).

#### **1.4 YOUTH PURCHASING POWER IN MALAYSIA**

Malaysia is one of the countries in the world that has a high purchasing power (Bernama, 2018). Its population comprises a higher proportion of youth as compared to other nations. Consequently, to understand the industry patterns, it is important to begin with the youth purchasing behaviour in Malaysia. Purchasing power depends on productivity, which should increase in tandem with income and wage. If productivity is low or remains at the same level, despite an increase in salary, the living costs would continue to rise because old products, which were cheap before, would become expensive as they are produced by high-salaried workers. Therefore, workers, especially the young generation, should embrace noble living values by being hard-working citizens who do not break promises or demand for excessive wages but focusing on high productivity. Given the country's economic climate today, consumers are constantly finding other alternatives to stretch their ringgit further. With the same amount of money spent on a new item, consumers can purchase more things at a lower price at pre-loved stores. Ramlan (2017) affirmed the finding that the expansion in this segment is minor

in influencing the economic development in Malaysia. According to Kotler (2012) items such as furniture, personal and healthcare goods, shoes, appliances, and garments are considered as needs products. Such products are usually purchased infrequently.

Ng (2018) state that the per capita income for a country can be very high, but that is merely based on the country's total monetary measure of the market value of all final goods and services produced in a period divided by the per capita population. The purchasing power and disposable income of most Malaysians have reduced substantially over the past few years due to huge loans (housing, car, and others) and now, lagging salary increments compared to the rise in the cost of living. Despite the implementation of the goods and services tax (GST) (now repealed), personal income tax has not been reduced to address the financial woes of the middle-income wage earners. Corruption has also caused the cost of living to increase while reducing the quality of people's lives. For example, a project may cost only RM1 million, but it is raised to RM2 million; hence, when the people have to pay to use the facilities, the cost is now doubled and "justified" by the final cost of the project.

In 2015, the number of youths in Malaysia was 13.88 million representing 45.8 percent of the 30.26 million Malaysian population. Of these, 7.26 million (52%) were male youth and 6.62 million (48%) were female youth (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2015). With a high percentage of youth, this means youth are a key asset in determining the direction and success of the country by 2020. According to Joha (2018), youth participation as policymakers is increasingly important as the number of youths aged 15 to 40 years worldwide reaches 2.8 billion or 39 per cent, with Malaysian youth making up 46 percent of the country's 31.7 million population.

According to Market (2018), the monetary amount to billions of ringgit of consumer spending in Malaysia decreased to RM174,550 million in the fourth quarter of 2018 from RM179,339 million in the third quarter of 2018. Consumer spending in Malaysia averaged RM109,757.63 million from 2005 until 2018, reaching an all-time high of RM179,339 million in the third quarter of 2018 and a record low of RM56,768 million in the second quarter of 2005. Figure 1.1 illustrates Malaysia’s consumer spending from January 2016 to January 2019.

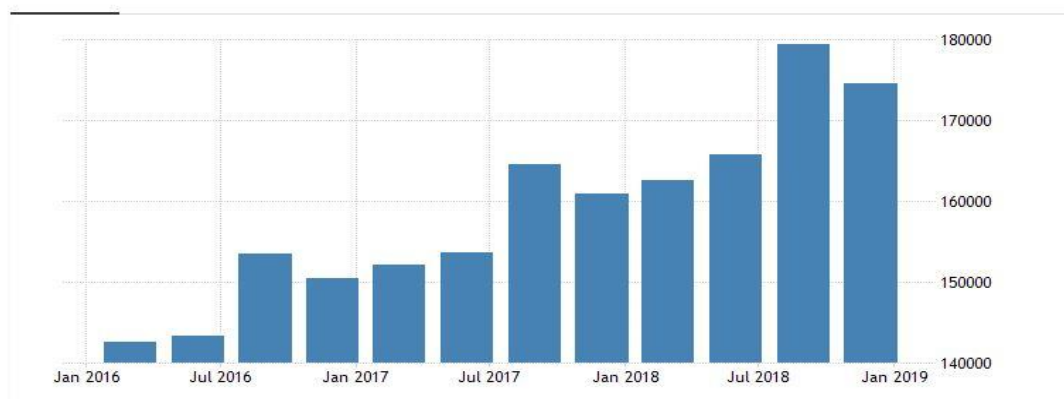


Figure 1.1 Malaysia’s consumer spending (Source: Tradingeconomics.com)

Youth is defined by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Malaysia in the paper “The National Youth Development Policy Proposal” (1995) as a person between the ages of 15 and 40. However, in Malaysia, the age of voting is 21 years old. It means that people who are 21–40 years old are eligible to be called youth since the 20 years old individuals are usually still studying at the university or just starting their working life, while the 40 years old individuals have a stable life with a stable income. In this study, the researcher chooses 21 – 40 years old as the age range of youth.

## **1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The lack of awareness about using pre-loved items has been associated with the use of new items by most people. Based on the literature review, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is limited research on factors affecting pre-loved items purchase intention among Malaysian youth consumers. This study intends to ascertain the reasons why people choose pre-loved items. It also has economic incentives with resource reduction practices. The situation is different now as the society, especially the youth, begins to highlight their own creativity by producing a variety of pre-loved items from used goods. The use of waste by producing a useful one is better than removing it even though there is a difference between its appearance and its original function. This action can indirectly help reduce the waste and wreak havoc on the use of natural resources. (Aziz, 2016).

According to (Patricia, 2019), when traders produce less items of purchase, the use of raw materials can be reduced in producing pre-loved items. Reduction in production costs also caused huge amounts of profits. It can be streamed directly to consumers in the form of low-priced items. Reducing waste produced waste will save the cost of solid waste disposal. It also helps to save economies for communities, businesses, schools and individual users. The growth in demand and supply has attracted marketers. Marketers identify their customers' preferences to enhance their marketing communication strategies. With the change of preferences and trends in this era, Malaysian youth are slowly changing their buying attitude to accept the pre-loved items. Hence, this research is expected to identify and investigate the factors influencing Malaysian youth consumers to choose pre-loved items within the online retailing; these influences may come from family, family friends, reference groups, and society in

general. For example, when consumers purchase pre-loved products, they do so due to their family's decision, comfort, satisfaction, price and quality while tolerating the risk that comes with owning pre-loved products.

Therefore, the problem addressed by this study is the investigation of the direct effect of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control on the intention to buy pre-loved items among Malaysian youth consumers. Furthermore, this study's problem is routed through Malaysian youth consumers' characteristics that may provide a broader perspective of the influence in relation to the scope of the pre-loved industry. Without these data, marketers and researchers may not have all the information needed to optimise on the critical intention to buy pre-loved items.

## **1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

In order to better understand the objectives, the followings research question have been asked.

The specific questions of the study are:

1. What is the effect between attitude and the intention to purchase pre-loved items among Malaysian youth consumers?
2. What is the effect between subjective norms and the intention to purchase pre-loved items among Malaysian youth consumers?
3. What is the effect between perceived behavioural control and the intention to purchase pre-loved items among Malaysian youth consumers?

## **1.7 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

In general, the topic that the researcher intends to study is the factors affecting Malaysian youth consumers' intention to purchase pre-loved items.

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the effect between attitude and the intention to purchase pre-loved items among Malaysian youth consumers.
2. To investigate the effect between subjective norms and the intention to purchase pre-loved items among Malaysian youth consumers.
3. To identify the effect between perceived behavioural control and the intention to purchase pre-loved items among Malaysian youth consumers.

## **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study is expected to help and benefit other researchers by providing insights about how to create awareness and exposure among youth on pre-loved items. Marketers can study the purchasing behaviour and purchasing power of youth towards pre-loved items and identify their preferences so that their needs and wants could be fulfilled. The government can create awareness about pre-loved items and provide opportunities for youth to use, sell, and consume pre-loved items. Serious involvement in producing products from waste can also be a source of income in producing pre-loved items. This is because the people love the stuff that looks beautiful and attracts the result of modifying the used items. Through social media, nature lovers can share ways to adopt pre-loved items and highlight commercially produced products.

## **1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Below is the list of key terms used throughout this study.

### **Pre-loved items**

A pre-loved item is not new and has been owned and used before by the first owner. Marketers use this term as a strategy to make the items seem more attractive, especially to avoid using the word “second-hand” which might have an unfavourable connotation.

### **Purchase intention**

Purchase intention is a decision-making action that investigates a customer’s reason to buy a particular brand (Shah, 2012). Purchase intention is the situation where a buyer is willing to buy a certain product in a certain condition that satisfies two parties.

### **Attitude**

Attitude of the mind is shaped through a person’s subjective assessment (including a careful appraisal of costs and benefits) and is also affected by emotional and passionate reactions and related convictions. Allport (1935) defined attitude as the mental or neural state of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence on the individual’s response to all objects and situations to which it is related.

### **Subjective norms**

Subjective norms are standard rules of conduct that facilitate our intuitive revulsion with others. Once a specific way of doing things has been fixed, it proceeds to constrain the individual as humans tend to comply with the expectations of others (Lewis, 1969).

### **Perceived behavioural control**

Perceived behavioural control can be defined as the extent of control that a person perceives to exert in performing a behaviour and could be influenced by second-hand information regarding the behaviour, such as experiences of acquaintances and friends