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Compensatory Mechanism in Religious Context

Doctoral Dissertation Summary

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Abstract

Consumption activities driven by socio-psychological issues or ‘compensatory consumption’ have gained popularity among Marketing researchers in recent years. However, decades after its introduction, compensatory consumption has not been thoroughly discussed in the religious context. This dissertation aims to investigate compensatory consumption in the context of religions, most notably Islam. The majority of respondents in this study were Muslims, both as majority and minority groups. Previous research has shown that understanding Muslim spending patterns and consumption motivations are critical for avoiding marketing myopia. The researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative methods to reveal the mechanism behind religious compensatory consumption. This dissertation connects religious compensatory consumption with “moral” consumption concepts, such as green consumption, to provide a more comprehensive explanation of compensatory mechanisms. In total, this dissertation presents five articles that have been published in reputable journals. The results of this dissertation are expected to refine the theory of compensatory behaviour and give a framework for future research in a similar area.

Keywords: Religiosity, Compensatory Consumption, Moral Consumption, Green Consumption, Muslim

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1. Background

Islamic economic activities and consumptions have been gaining more spotlights in recent years not only from Muslim majority countries but also non-Muslim ones. Halal businesses that encompass various industries, from foods to cosmetics are perceived to be businesses that adhere to religious values and lifestyles. However, there has been growing evidence that the consumptions of Islamic products and services are not solely driven by religious ideals, but instead a compensatory mechanism of some sort (Sobh, Belk, and Gressel, 2011; Mukhtar and Mohsin Butt, 2012; Hassim, 2014; El-Bassiouny, 2017). Therefore, it becomes of paramount importance to understand the psychological issues that underlie seemingly religious consumptions to come up with the right marketing offerings.

In the last decade, Europe has witnessed a surge of Muslim immigrants, partly as a consequence of political, economic and social turmoil in the Middle East region, a period called Arab Spring (Salameh, 2019). A study by Pew Research (Hackett, 2017) revealed the top five countries in Europe with the biggest Muslim populations: France, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Netherlands and Spain. Refugees from the Middle East, especially those from conflict zones, came to Europe hoping for a better life. In *“The Future of Marketing”*, Rust (2019) argued that assimilating Muslims immigrants – a growing less-advantaged group – into European societies would be one of the key socio-economic trends that

call for rational companies to come up with special offerings for them. Conflicts between Muslim immigrants and local people have and will continue to occur when differences in cultures are not mitigated and certain basic needs remain unaddressed. This calls for an in-depth study of Muslim consumer behaviour, especially in Western countries, to avoid marketing myopia (Mossinkoff and Corstanje, 2011; Muhammad, Basha, and AlHafidh, 2019; Rust, 2019; Syahrivar and Chairy, 2019) by paying attention to the moral-belief of their consumers and their implications on the natural environment (Bouckaert and Zsolnai, 2011). In this regard, Islamic consumption that pays special attention to the wellbeing of the Muslim consumers, as well as the environment, goes hand in hand with more popular concepts, such as green consumption, sustainable consumption, ethical consumption and moral consumption.

The purpose of this dissertation was to investigate factors that motivate compensatory consumption in a religious context, especially among the Muslim minorities who lived in Europe thereby closing the theoretical gap within compensatory consumption theory (further on this issue is explored in section 1.1. To improve both its internal and external validity, this dissertation also took samples from Muslims as a majority group who regularly by Islamic products and also a Buddhist minority group as a comparative group. From the marketing point of view, it is vital to know how Muslims conduct their lives (e.g. purchase and consumption) outside Muslim-majority countries. This dissertation initially addressed two research

questions: 1) What is the role of (Islamic) religious religion in compensatory consumption? 2) Under which condition or circumstance does (Islamic) religious consumption become a compensatory consumption? Nevertheless, by the time this paper-based dissertation was completed, it accomplished so much more.

Among the basic needs of human beings is the maintenance and enhancement of self-esteem. According to Barkow (1975), there were two strategies by which this need might be achieved: 1) the pursuit of self-prestige and 2) the distortions of perceptions of self and environment. While the first strategy is considered adaptive and rewarding to the individual, the latter is often associated with various traits of self-deficits and neuroticism, such as lack of self-esteem, mood problems and an enduring sense of guilt. In 1997, Woodruffe popularized the term “compensatory consumption” which encompasses various chronic and maladaptive behaviours aimed at (re)solving socio-psychological issues. Since decades of its introduction, many studies have been published about the nature of compensatory consumption yet unfortunately very few researchers made an elaborate relationship between compensatory consumption and religious consumption thus a gap in compensatory behaviour theory.

Religious consumptions in the Islamic context can be geared towards (re)solving socio-psychological issues as illustrated by the studies conducted by Sobh et al. (2011) and El-Bassiouny (2017) in the Arabian Gulf. Their studies suggest that the consumptions of

Islamic products can be motivated by the need to project wealth or status and to instil envy in foreigners. The consumptions of religious products and services can also be triggered by the need to escape from the harsh reality of life, as in the case of Islamic pilgrimage (Lochrie et al., 2019). Moreover, it appears that compensatory consumption also occurs in other religions, such as in the study conducted by Wollschleger and Beach (2011) where they suggested that mediaeval church offered indulgences (e.g. religious books, accessories, etc.) to adherents as a compensatory mechanism for specific transgressions.

Woodruffe (1997) argued that compensatory consumption was widespread. Previous studies have studied compensatory consumption in the context of gender identity (Witkowski, 2020; McGinnis, Frendle, and Gentry, 2013; Holt and Thompson, 2004), musical movement (Abdalla and Zambaldi, 2016), luxuries (Rahman, Chen, and Reynolds, 2020; El-Bassiouny, 2017; Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010), fashion (Sobh et al., 2011; Yurchisin et al., 2008), games and virtual goods (Syahrivar et al., 2021a), and green consumption (Rahman, Chen, and Reynolds, 2020; Taylor and Noseworthy, 2020). One of the areas less explored in compensatory consumption is the consumption of religious products. A conceptual framework by Mathras et al. (2016) highlights the importance of incorporating religiosity or belief variable in future research of compensatory consumption.

The rest of this dissertation were organized as follows: the second section is the literature review

where the core theories concerning variables incorporated in this dissertation were introduced. The third section is the research methodology where details concerning theoretical framework, population and sample and proposed measures were discussed. The fourth section is the findings of the five featured articles. The fifth section is the conclusion that highlights scientific contributions of this paper-based dissertation.

2. Theoretical Foundation

2.1. *Moral Consumption*

The word “Moral” was derived from the Latin word “Mores” which means “Custom” (Jensen, 1930). Sometimes it is used interchangeably with the word “Ethic” which was derived from the Greek word “Ethos”, meaning “Nature” or “Disposition” (Melé, 2012). However, moral and ethics are two different things (Gülcan, 2015). The first refers to one’s values on the rightness or wrongness of an action whereas the latter means a set of guiding principles in an organization or a society.

The moral is generally defined as principles, values or beliefs concerning the right and wrong of one’s behaviour (Jeyasekar, Aishwarya, and Munuswamy, 2020). In this study, moral consumption refers to consumption activities driven by moral concerns or perceived moral deficits. There are several sources of morality, one of which is religion or religious doctrines (Perkiss, and Tweedie, 2017). Moral consumption becomes imminent these days: on one hand, competitive economics has

provided beneficial goods and services for people's quality of life; but on the other hand, it also comes with huge environmental costs (Tencati and Zsolnai, 2010; Keszey, 2020; Genoveva and Syahrivar, 2020). Moreover, when retailers infuse morality – be it halal or environmentally friendly – into their businesses, it will create personal and interpersonal harmony that eventually translates into sales growth (Alt, Berezvai, and Agárdi, 2020).

I argue that morality (e.g. moral concept or a moral dilemma) is behind religious compensatory consumption. According to Caruana (2007), the idea of “being good” was closely linked to the compensatory consumption concept. The concept of morality also appears in consumer behaviour studies, such as green consumption (Yaprak and Prince, 2019; Sharma and Lal, 2020). People who feel morally deficient will engage in moral cleansing behaviour (Conway and Peetz, 2012). That is why it is important to investigate compensatory consumption from a broader perspective.

2.2. *Compensatory Consumption*

Compensatory consumption occurs when there is a mismatch between the actual need and the subsequent purchase; therefore, such consumptions were intended to compensate for one's dissatisfaction for inability to acquire the desired products or fulfil the actual need (Woodruffe and Elliott, 2005). Compensatory consumption often occurs as a response to unfavourable psychological circumstances due to the disparity between the actual and ideal self-concept (Jaiswal and Gupta, 2015).

Mandel et al. (2017) argued that compensatory consumption was a result of self-discrepancy. People who experience self-discrepancy will participate in the compensatory process by directly confronting the source of self-discrepancy, symbolically signalling one's superiority in the area of self-discrepancy, disassociating oneself from the source of self-discrepancy, distracting oneself from the source of self-discrepancy, and compensating in other fields that are unrelated to self-discrepancy.

Compensatory consumption is a process by which consumers reduce their psychological tensions and retain their self-concept (Woodruffe-Burton and Elliott, 2005). Consequently, as indicated by Kim and Rucker (2012), compensatory consumption is not limited to self-enhancing consumption, but also involves self-verifying consumption to more accurately project one's self-concept (which can be a positive or a negative self-concept). For instance, Brannon (2019) argued that consumers with negative self-view would gravitate towards products that signalled or verified their negative self-view. Several known types of compensatory consumption are conspicuous consumption, retail therapy, compulsive buying, addictive consumption, self-gift giving, impulsive buying and compensatory eating (Woodruffe, 1997; Kang and Johnson, 2011; Koles et al., 2018).

Previous studies suggest that low-income (and low power) consumers will indulge in compensatory consumption by acquiring high-status goods to repair their ego and to protect themselves from potential

threats that may erode their sense of self-worth (Rucker and Galinsky, 2008; Sivanathan and Pettit, 2010; Jaiswal and Gupta, 2015). The acquisition of high-status or power-related goods is not the only method of compensatory consumption. In the extended model of conspicuous consumption, consumers may purchase rare products to project their unique-self (Gierl and Huettl, 2010). Alternatively, young people may search for inferior and counterfeit goods to instil envy and prevent social exclusion (Abdalla and Zambaldi, 2016).

As illustrated earlier, religious consumptions can be a compensatory mechanism by which “sinners” attempt to repent for their specific transgressions in life as well as (re)solving socio-psychological issues (El-Bassiouny, 2017; Hassim, 2014; Sobh et al., 2011; Wollschleger and Beach, 2011). Ellison (1995) argued that religious people perceived religious products as supernatural compensators and also products by which they derived existential coherence and meaning and emotional well-being. Moreover, people who feel morally deficient will engage in moral cleansing behaviour (Conway and Peetz, 2012) of which either religious products or green products (Yaprak and Prince, 2019; Sharma and Lal, 2020) may be chosen as the compensatory modes.

Compensatory consumption is made up of a large variety of consumption habits, some of which are chronic and neurotic. Consumers who engaged in conspicuous consumption, addictive consumption, compensatory eating and self-gift giving usually

placed some importance on the nature of products being purchased or consumed. Meanwhile, consumers who engage in compulsive buying, retail therapy and other therapeutic activities (e.g. travelling, religious/spiritual activities, etc.) were more processed oriented.

2.3. *Green Consumption*

These days, the word “Green” denotes environmental friendly. Various organizations are in the race to appear green to their existing as well as prospective consumers and it is a part of their marketing strategies (Chairy et al., 2019). Companies are said to be “green companies” when they fulfil the standards as defined in ISO 14000 pertaining to environmental management. On the other hand, “green consumers” are those who opt for green products or products with lower polluting effects. In this dissertation, green consumption is defined as consumption activities driven by environmental concerns.

As has been discussed at length in the previous section, compensatory consumption basically refers to a wide range of consumption activities generally aimed at minimizing perceived socio-psychological issues or self-deficits. All these are basically negative feelings about the self or the self-concept, from a bad mood to the lingering feelings of guilt due to the transgressions of moral values. In general, people have the need to maintain positive aspects about themselves, so-called self-worth which is a part of the self-esteem concept. When people experience negative feelings that erode their sense of self-worth

or importance, they would naturally gravitate – or for the sake of argument, compensate – toward something that makes them feel good about themselves. The means to achieve this goal vary between individuals but previous studies on compensatory consumption have noted various forms and instances, such as through green consumption.

Previous studies have highlighted the connection between compensatory consumption and green consumption. For instance, a study by Taylor and Noseworthy (2020) highlighted the effect of extreme incongruity mediated by anxiety on compensatory consumption in the form of green products. According to the schema congruity effect, people actively seek meanings. Meanings are beliefs that shape expectations and allow them to make sense of their experiences, most notably negative experiences. When these beliefs are challenged by new information or a so-called “incongruity”, people would experience negative feelings, such as anxiety, after which they would attempt to alleviate the tension that originates from expectancy violations by affirming ethical beliefs. For instance, consuming environmentally friendly products for the betterment of society. Other evidence was provided by Rahman, Chen and Reynolds (2020) where they argued that the preference for environmentally friendly products aimed at enhancing one’s social status.

3. Research Methodology

This dissertation employed a mixed-method, quantitative and qualitative. This is in line with the suggestion from Woodruffe (1997) who stressed the importance of methodological pluralism in compensatory consumption research. I highlighted in this section the specific methods employed in the five featured publications.

In general, I employed the method used by Woodruffe-Burton and Elliott (2005) to filter the respondents. Two filter questions were asked: “Do you like to go shopping for Islamic products or services when you are feeling down or in a bad mood?” and “How do you like to improve your mood when you are feeling down?” in which a range of options (multi-answer is allowed) are given, one of which was shopping for Islamic products or services.

In research that employed a quantitative method, I assessed the reliability of the measurements via SPSS (particularly the Cronbach’s Alpha). Third, we assessed the correlations among variables via SPSS to know whether there is a ground to proceed to regression. Fourth, we conducted Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to further determine the construct validity of each proposed factor. Certain items in each construct were removed if necessary to refine each construct. Lastly, once the data pass the EFA process, we conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) via AMOS to test the hypotheses and to prove the rigorousness of the proposed model. The guidelines from Schreiber et al. (2006) and Heir et al. (2006) and

Henseler, Hubona, and Ray (2016) were used to assess the fitness of the model.

3.1. *Qualitative Method*

In the work of Chairy and Syahrivar (2019) entitled “*Bika Ambon of Indonesia: history, culture, and its contribution to tourism sector*”, we employed in-depth interviews, observations and written materials to extract the data and build our arguments. This qualitative study can be classified as an ethnographic research focusing on a local food (and its transformation) as a part of culture and the meanings it may have in the lives of the locals. While this study did not exclusively discuss compensatory consumption, it did discuss the evolution of traditional cake called Bika Ambon into a Halal cuisine. Halal in Arabic roughly means "lawful". Previously the cake contained alcohol and alcohol is not lawful according to the Islamic law; however, the increasing numbers of Muslims in Indonesia, particularly those who live in Medan, have forced the local retailers of initially Indonesian-Chinese to use Halal ingredients only to suit with the locals' identity. It can be inferred that the Indonesians often have to negotiate between their local identities and their Muslim identity. Eating Halal foods while still retaining their local heritages is expected to strengthen their Muslim identity.

In the work of Syahrivar (2021) entitled “*Hijab No More: A Phenomenological Study*”, I employed phenomenological research design as

outlined by Groenewald (2004). My epistemological stance in this study could be formulated as follows: a) data were contained within the perspectives of educated Muslim women who were subject to an examined phenomenon (e.g. hijab dissociation phenomenon); and therefore b) I as the researcher engaged with the participants in the collection of data (e.g. by collecting their viewpoints) to unravel the phenomenon under investigation.

3.2. *Quantitative Method*

In the work of Syahrivar and Pratiwi (2018) entitled “*A Correlational Study of Religiosity, Guilt, and Compensatory Consumption in the Purchase of Halal Products and Services in Indonesia*”, we employed correlational research. Correlational research deals with the establishment of relationships between two or more variables in the same population or more. Two or more features of the same entity are often evaluated by a correlational design/method and the association between the features is then determined. The findings were then tabulated and contrasted between groups and respondents, and descriptive statistics were created to explore ties between religiosity, guilt and compensatory consumption.

In the work of Chairy and Syahrivar (2020) entitled “*You Reap What You Sow: The Role of Karma in Green Purchase*”, we employed Composite Confirmatory Analysis (CCA) to test our hypotheses and derive our conclusion. According to Hair Jr, Howard and Nitzl (2020),

CCA has been used as an alternative to Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) because it has several benefits, such as higher retained items hence improving construct validity. In this regard, PLS-SEM was used because of its ability to model composites (Henseler, Hubona, and Ray, 2016). We followed the guidelines prescribed by Henseler et al. (2016) and Hair Jr. et al. (2020). Moreover, a bootstrapping method involving 5,000 random subsamples from the original data set was also employed in this study.

In the work of Genoveva and Syahrivar (2020) entitled “*Green Lifestyle among Indonesian Millennials: A Comparative Study Between Asia and Europe*”, we employed Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) method via AMOS Software. We used the work of Schreiber et al. (2006) as the primary guideline for conducting SEM analysis. First, we conducted an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to test whether each item belongs to the construct (factor) it intends to measure. We examined several aspects in this phase, among others: the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) index, the Eigenvalues and total variance explained, and the factor loadings. Second, we conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to test the hypotheses and the model fitness. We examined several fit indices in this phase, among others: The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Normed-

Fit Index (NFI), Tucker Lewis index (TFI) and Comparative Fit Index (CFI). Lastly, we refined our model by removing variables with statistically non-significant relationships and presented an alternative (trimmed) model as suggested by Hays (1989).

3.3. *Populations and Samples*

The primary population of this dissertation are Muslim consumers, both as a majority and a minority group, who regularly bought Islamic products. There are several reasons as to why I chose Islam as the context. First, in the past decade, there have been mass Muslim migrations to the western world due to various factors, most notably the so-called Arab springs in the early 2010's. Along with the movements of people are cultures and businesses associated with the people, such as Islamic businesses.

The world has witnessed the rise of Islamic businesses coupled with a lucrative Muslim market that many western businesses are trying to take advantage of - the so-called Muslim gold rush (Tali, 2016). Companies, such as Nike, HandM, and DandG, have special products targeting Muslim consumers. However, there has been a report that western businesses are unable to penetrate the Muslim market due to their lack of understanding of Muslim cultures. Didem Tali, a multi-award-winning journalist, once commented that in her article that what these (Western) collections aimed to do was not to celebrate Muslim women but to make money off them. I

strongly believe that this is an indication of Marketing myopia and hence my dissertation aims to give insight into Muslim consumer behaviour. To be noted, my dissertation is in no way to suggest that all Islamic consumptions are compensatory or that all Muslims are compensatory consumers, rather it seeks to examine why and how compensatory consumption may occur among Muslims, especially in relation to Islamic products. Moreover, fashion wise, some Muslims are conspicuous (Croucher, 2008; McGilvray, 2011); they take pride in showing their identities through Middle-Eastern (Islamic) fashion (most notably the hijab) as a part of righteousness or perhaps an attempt to further spread Islamic values, especially in a foreign land. As has been noted in this dissertation, conspicuous consumption is a part of compensatory consumption. As a result,

Another reason to investigate Muslim communities is that they face increasing social pressures both as majority and minority groups that make religious compensatory consumption is relevant to this context. Muslims and their cultures have been at the centre of public debates and discussions nowadays. Some of the social conflicts that occurred in the West (e.g. Europe), between the locals and the Muslim immigrants, have been compared to Huntington's clash of civilizations (Weede, 1998; Rowley and Smith, 2009). Concerns about religious conservatism arise not only in countries where Muslims are a minority group, but also in countries where they are the majority, such

as Indonesia (Shukri, 2019). Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim majority country, has long valued a moderate form of Islam, a blend between Islamic and local values. Many Muslims, the young generation especially, have been struggling to consolidate between Islamic values and the local values as the two values are not usually in harmony. Increased social pressures on Muslims in many parts of the world, combined with the COVID-19 pandemic, may result in negative affective states (e.g., low self-esteem, discrepancy, bad moods) that necessitate compensatory strategies to alleviate these tensions.

In the work of Syahrivar and Pratiwi (2018) entitled "*A Correlational Study of Religiosity, Guilt, and Compensatory Consumption in the Purchase of Halal Products and Services in Indonesia*", 331 Muslim respondents in Jakarta, the capital city as well as the largest metropolitan city in Indonesia, were incorporated in the study. Jakarta has become the meeting point of various local cultures and foreign ones and the frontier of modernization (and westernization) in Indonesia.

In the work of Chairy and Syahrivar (2019) entitled "*Bika Ambon of Indonesia: history, culture, and its contribution to tourism sector*", local Bika Ambon retailers from Medan, one of the big cities in Indonesia, were incorporated in the study to reveal how the local cake evolved into Halal cuisine to capture the Muslim market in the country.

In the work of Syahrivar (2021) entitled *“Hijab No More: A Phenomenological Study”*, Muslim minority groups in the Western countries (e.g. Canada) were incorporated in the study for in-depth interviews. For this analysis, there were 26 participants or informants in total, but in the end, I felt there was only one informant who met a set of predetermined criteria, represented the phenomenon under investigation and agreed to a series of in-depth interviews. The remaining 25 informants partly fulfilled the criteria (e.g. removing their hijabs while residing in the West yet refusing to be considered hijab dissociation advocates or activists) and their standpoints on compulsory hijab were used to strengthen the validity of the research.

In the work of Chairy and Syahrivar (2020) entitled *“You Reap What You Sow: The Role of Karma in Green Purchase”*, Buddhist minority groups in Indonesia were the focus of the study. Buddhists as respondents were chosen to understand “moral” consumption in the context of non-Muslims to improve the external validity of the study. Both Muslims and Buddhists share similar interests in green purchase which cannot be separated from their religious convictions. A total of 148 Indonesian Buddhists were selected in this study.

In the work of Genoveva and Syahrivar (2020) entitled *“Green Lifestyle among Indonesian Millennials: A Comparative Study Between Asia and Europe”*, Millennial Muslims in both Asia and

Europe who engaged in green lifestyle were the focus of the study. A total of 204 valid respondents were successfully gathered, analysed and compared. Just like Chairy and Syarivar (2020), this study is featured in this study because it incorporated the religiosity and spirituality of targeted respondents as one of the factors that motivate them to consume morally or ethically.

4. Findings

Below I highlighted the findings of my featured publications:

4.1. *A Correlational Study of Religiosity, Guilt, and Compensatory Consumption in the Purchase of Halal Products and Services in Indonesia (Status: Published in Advanced Science Letter, Web of Science Article)*

The purpose of this research is to understand the correlations of religiosity, guilt and compensatory consumption in the purchase of halal products and services among 331 Muslim respondents in Jakarta, the capital city as well as the largest metropolitan city in Indonesia. Jakarta has become the meeting point of various local cultures and foreign ones and the frontier of modernization (and westernization) in Indonesia. Despite the significant growth of Halal businesses in the country, the purchase of Halal products and services are suspected to be a compensatory mechanism. The researchers employed correlational research; the results were then tabulated and compared across groups of

respondents and descriptive statistics were generated for the purpose of exploring linkages between religiosity, guilt and compensatory consumption. The results of this research indicated that Indonesian Muslims purchased Halal products and services as a compensatory mechanism although the intensity of such motive was considerably low. In general, Indonesian Muslims were high on religiosity and guilt levels. The research concluded that religiosity, guilt, and compensatory consumption had significant correlations whereby religiosity and guilt were positively correlated; meanwhile, both religiosity and guilt were negatively correlated with compensatory consumption.

Further reading: Syahrivar, J. and Pratiwi, R.S., 2018. A Correlational Study of Religiosity, Guilt, and Compensatory Consumption in the Purchase of Halal Products and Services in Indonesia. *Advanced Science Letters*, 24(10), pp. 7147-7151.

4.2. *Hijab No More: A Phenomenological Study (Status: Published in Journal of Religion and Health, Q1/D1 Scopus Journal)*

The consumption of Islamic products has been discussed quite extensively in many studies, yet the opposite case which is the dissociation from Islamic products is rarely discussed. This study aims to investigate the phenomena in which Muslim women who were raised with conservative values at home countries choose to dissociate from hijab when they

live in the western countries. Moreover, they become activists who discourage other Muslim women from wearing hijab. This study adopts a phenomenological research design. The results suggest that hijab dissociation is a form of compensatory mechanism aimed at minimizing self-discrepancy, restoring self-esteem, gaining personal control, reducing perceived alienation, and coping with psychological trauma. This study contributes to the theoretical gap in compensatory consumption literature by linking the theory with the non-consumption of religious products.

Further reading: Syahrivar, J., 2021. Hijab no more: A phenomenological study. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 60(3), pp. 1969-1991.

4.3. *Bika Ambon of Indonesia: History, Culture, and Its Contribution to Tourism Sector (Status: Published in Journal of Ethnic Foods, Q1 Scopus Article)*

Indonesia is an archipelago with more than 17,000 islands and more than 300 ethnic groups. Today, the country has 35 provinces, and each province has its own local culture, language, and ethnic food. Medan is the capital of North Sumatra province which is one of the most populated provinces in Indonesia. One of the popular and authentic food souvenirs for tourists who visit Medan is Bika Ambon. Arguably, it is one of the most delicate cakes in terms of preparation and taste. The ingredients of Bika Ambon are tapioca or sago, wheat flour, sugar, coconut milk, and eggs and added bread yeast for fermentation. Bika Ambon has been a magnet for

both local and international tourists visiting Medan. This article discusses the evolution of Bika Ambon from previously non-Halal food (due to alcohol as one of the ingredients) into Halal food to attract Muslim consumers in Indonesia.

Further reading: Chairy, C. and Syahrivar, J., 2019. Bika Ambon of Indonesia: history, culture, and its contribution to tourism sector. *Journal of Ethnic Foods*, 6(1), pp. 1-6.

4.4. *You Reap What You Sow: The Role of Karma in Green Purchase (Status: Published in Cogent Business and Management, Scopus Q2 Journal)*

In line with the growing popularity of the green economy in recent years, green marketing is also gaining more prominence in the academic world. One interesting research direction in this area is the role of religion in the consumption of green products. This is the first study that investigates the role of “Karma” on the Green Purchase Intention of Buddhist minority in Indonesia – most of them are Chinese descent. Karma, a doctrine most prominent in Buddhism, is the belief that one’s deeds in the present will influence his or her fate in the future or in the next life. In this study, Spirituality and Long-term Orientation were hypothesized to mediate the relationship between Karma and Green Purchase Intention. For this study, we gathered 148 Indonesian Buddhists. We employed Composite Confirmatory Analysis via ADANCO PLS-SEM software to analyse the hypotheses and derive our

conclusion. The results of this study reveal that 1) Karma has a positive effect towards Green Purchase Intention, 2) There is a partial mediation of Spirituality in the relationship between Karma and Green Purchase Intention and, 3) Karma has positive effects toward Spirituality and Long-term Orientation. Theoretical contribution as well as managerial implications of this study, especially for green marketing practitioners targeting Buddhist consumers, are discussed.

Further reading: Chairy, C. and Syahrivar, J., 2020. You reap what you sow: The role of Karma in Green purchase. *Cogent Business and Management*, 7(1), p. 1798066.

4.5. *Green Lifestyle among Indonesian Millennials: A Comparative Study between Asia and Europe (Status: Published in JEAM, Scopus Q2 Article)*

Unethical business practices coupled with irresponsible consumption activities come with painful environmental costs. Fortunately, various studies have indicated that ecological concerns are the highest among the millennial generation. The aim of this research is to investigate the factors influencing green lifestyle among Indonesian millennials who live in Asia and Europe. Cultural elements, such as religious passion and spirituality, are also incorporated in this study to understand how they influence green intention and lifestyle. To our best knowledge, this is the first comparative study to understand the green lifestyle of Indonesian

millennials in the two regions. This study gathered a total of 204 valid respondents. We employed a Structural Equation Modelling method to test our hypotheses. We found that 1) the New Environmental Paradigm is a predictor of green behaviour intention 2) religious passion, spirituality and green behaviour intention are predictors of green lifestyle. Theoretical contributions as well as managerial implications are offered in this study.

Further reading: Genoveva, G. and Syahrivar, J., 2020. Green lifestyle among Indonesian millennials: a comparative study between Asia and Europe. *Journal of Environmental Accounting and Management*, 8(4), pp. 397-413.

5. Conclusion

Compensatory consumption theory popularized by Woodruffe in 1997 suggests that consumers would attempt to compensate for what they are lacking, be it social or psychological in nature, by consuming products that symbolically offset their perceived weakness, bolster their strength or bolster their self-concept. In this context, believers who perceive either religious or moral deficit would attempt to compensate through religious-signalling (e.g. Islamic products) or moral-signalling products (e.g. green products). Indeed, the concept of compensatory consumption originated from symbolic consumption theory. In this dissertation, I explored a less investigated area in compensatory consumption which is religious compensatory consumption, most notably

in the Islamic context. Initially, I began my research with a humble question: is Islamic consumption a form of compensatory consumption? I might be the first to explicitly mention that the consumption of Islamic products can be compensatory in nature. But as I dig into the concept over the past two years of my PhD, especially through exploratory study, I slowly discovered new themes and other related concepts, such as green consumption. In the end, both religious consumption and green consumption were merged into a broader concept called "moral consumption" due to their overlapping consumption motives. Previous studies have noted that the idea of being good is closely connected to compensatory consumption (Caruana, 2007) and that people who feel morally deficient will engage in moral cleansing behaviour (Conway and Peetz, 2012). I believe Religious consumption and green consumption fit with this particular motivation (overlapping consumption motives). In total, I have published about 15 international journal articles in religious consumptions, 6 of which are Scopus publications, 2 Q1, 3 Q2 and 1 Q3 (2019-2020). Five of these publications were featured in my dissertation. To give a holistic picture of the phenomenon, I have combined both qualitative and quantitative studies. I think my greatest contribution is in the refinement of compensatory consumption theory through the inclusion of religiosity related factors which is hoped to further research in similar areas. Managerial wise, I hope to give some valuable insights to retailers in

Muslim and non-Muslim majority countries targeting Muslim consumers.

Compensatory consumption is a complex concept, involving several sub-concepts or dimensions that might have their own scales. If all these scales were to be used in a single study, it would be overwhelming to respondents and might result in loss of attention typically when respondents were asked to fill in a questionnaire with many items. Not to mention the scales of other variables within a theoretical framework. That is why previous researchers, such as Yurchisin et al. (2008), Kang and Johnson (2011), Syahrivar and Pratiwi (2018), and Syahrivar et al. (2021b), have attempted to develop their own compensatory consumption scales with reasonable numbers of items. Dissatisfaction regarding a compensatory consumption scale may occur as a result that the scale fails to encompass the whole spectrum of compensatory consumption. As such is what I experienced when I started this research back in 2018. I experimented with several scales and eventually formulated a religious compensatory consumption scale. In my case, this study was slightly more complex because I was dealing with religious products. As I have admitted in the limitation of my study, the social desirability effect might occur when Muslim respondents chose responses they believed were socially acceptable. Therefore, I agree with Woodruffe's suggestion that to understand the phenomenon, one must adopt methodological pluralism, meaning no scale is ever satisfactory. Eventually, I have developed, adapted and suggested

two scales to measure compensatory consumption in a religious context. One was in 2018 and the other one was in 2020 (see Table 3). Both scales were never introduced in any of my publications thus far which is why I insist that it is one of the contributions of this dissertation. All in all, I think that the quest to develop or refine the compensatory consumption scale to suit certain contexts is an ongoing process. New scales would be developed in the future when we have a better understanding of the so-called compensatory consumption.

In an attempt to improve both internal and external validities, it is important to research Muslims both as a minority and a majority. At one point, I also researched other religious groups, such as Buddhists as a minority group. Both Muslims and Buddhists share similar interests in green purchase which cannot be separated from their religious convictions. I hesitate to make a conclusion about other religious groups than the two mentioned. However, as Woodruffe (1997) suggested that compensatory consumption was widespread so I think it is very likely that compensatory mechanism occurs in other religious groups (e.g. Christians; see Wollschleger, and Beach, 2011). Moreover, to bring in a holistic picture about the phenomenon called compensatory consumption, it is also important to see in what way they (Muslim as a majority and a minority group) differ from each other. For instance, one of my findings is that Muslims in Europe faced bigger challenges to realize their passions or interests for Islamic consumptions, due to higher costs to obtain

such products or availability issue. For this reason, price sensitivity has been integrated into the theoretical framework.

5.1. Theoretical Contributions

The theoretical contributions of this dissertation can be summarized as follows:

- This dissertation integrates religious compensatory consumption and green consumption into a broader concept called “moral” consumption.
- This dissertation aims to close the theoretical gap in compensatory behaviour studies by examining compensatory consumption in the religious context.
- This dissertation fills in the empirical gap by supplementing evidence that lack of/low self-esteem is indeed one of the triggers of compensatory consumption.
- This dissertation fills in the knowledge gap by bridging the theology and marketing-related concepts within a new integrated framework.
- This dissertation fills in the methodological gap by approaching the compensatory consumption concept using qualitative and quantitative methods, a so-called methodological pluralism.
- This dissertation fills in the population gap in compensatory consumption research.

5.2. *Managerial and Societal Implications*

In the last decade, Europe has witnessed a surge of Muslim immigrants, partly as a consequence of political, economic and social turmoil in the Middle East region, a period called Arab Spring (Salameh, 2019). A study by Pew Research (Hackett, 2017) revealed the top five countries in Europe with the biggest Muslim populations: France, Germany, United Kingdom, Italy, Netherlands and Spain. Refugees from the Middle East, especially those from conflict zones, came to Europe in the hope of a better life. In “The Future of Marketing”, Rust (2019) argued that assimilating Muslims immigrants – a growing less-advantaged group – into European societies would be one of the key socio-economic trends that call for rational companies to come up with special offerings for them. Conflicts between Muslim immigrants and local people have and will continue to occur when differences in cultures are not mitigated and certain basic needs remain unaddressed. This calls for an in-depth study of Muslim consumer behaviour, especially in Western countries, to avoid marketing myopia (Mossinkoff and Corstanje, 2011; Muhammad, Basha, and AlHafidh, 2019; Rust, 2019; Syahrivar and Chairy, 2019; Syahrivar et al., 2021b) that can further escalate their tensions while living abroad. Moreover, businesses must also pay attention to the moral-belief of their consumers and their implications on the natural environment (Bouckaert and Zsolnai, 2011). In this regard, Islamic consumption that pays special attention to

the wellbeing of the Muslim consumers, as well as the environment, goes hand in hand with more popular concepts, such as green consumption, sustainable consumption, ethical consumption and moral consumption.

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Appendix

Author's List of Scopus Publications (2018-2021):

1. Syahrivar, J., Hermawan, S.A., Gyulavári, T. and Chairy, C., 2021. Religious compensatory consumption in the Islamic context: the mediating roles of religious social control and religious guilt. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-02-2021-0104>
2. Syahrivar, J., Chairy, C., Juwono, I.D. and Gyulavári, T., 2021. Pay to play in freemium mobile games: a compensatory mechanism. *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJRDM-09-2020-0358>
3. Syahrivar, J., Genoveva, G., Chairy, C. and Manurung, S.P., 2021. COVID-19-Induced Hoarding Intention among the educated segment in Indonesia. *SAGE Open*, 11(2), p. 21582440211016904. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211016904>
4. Syahrivar, J., Gyulavári, T., Jászberényi, M., Ásványi, K., Kökény, L. and Chairy, C., 2021. Surrendering personal control to automation: Appalling or appealing? *Transportation Research Part F*, 80, pp. 90-103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trf.2021.03.018>
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6. Chairy, C., Raharja, C., Syahrivar, J. and Ekananda, M., 2020. Waste not: selling near-expired bread in Indonesia. *International Review on Public and Nonprofit Marketing*, 17(4), pp. 391-407.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12208-020-00253-4>
 7. Chairy, C. and Syahrivar, J. (2020). You reap what you sow: The role of Karma in Green purchase. *Cogent Business and Management*, 7(1), p. 1798066.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2020.1798066>
 8. Genoveva, G. and Syahrivar, J. (2020). Green lifestyle among Indonesian millennials: A comparative study between Asia and Europe. *Journal of Environmental Accounting and Management*, 8(4), pp. 397-413.
<https://doi.org/10.5890/JEAM.2020.12.007>
 9. Chairy, C., Syahrivar, J., Ida and Sisnuhadi, 2019. Does the green image enhance student satisfaction? (Evidence from Indonesia). *New Educational Review*, 57(3), pp. 52-62.
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<https://doi.org/10.1186/s42779-019-0006-6>

Other works related to religious consumption:

1. Syahrivar, J., Selamat, F., & Chairy, C. (2020). The role of technology savviness in Muslim online shopping (MOS). *Jurnal Muara Ilmu Ekonomi dan Bisnis*, 4(2), 240-250.
<https://doi.org/10.24912/jmieb.v4i2.7865>
2. Syahrivar, J., Tunjungsari, H K., Selamat, F., & Chairy, C. (2020, June). Factors influencing career choice in Islamic multilevel marketing: The mediating role of company credibility. In *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference of Entrepreneurship and Business Management Untar (ICEBM 2019)* (pp. 1-5). Atlantis Press.
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3. Syahrivar, J. and Chairy, C., 2019. The role of religious commitment and conspicuous consumption in predicting compulsive buying of Islamic goods: a case study of Muslim consumers in Indonesia. In *Proceedings of the International Conference of Business, Economy, Entrepreneurship and Management (ICBEEM)*, 1, 5-11. ISBN 978-989-758-471-8.
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