

The Influence of Self Care on Mindful Consumption Behaviour

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Abstract

The progress and the developmental changes in consumer behavior have been obvious for eras. The major transformation in the new consumer behavior because of the current economic and financial situation has become the major concern with sustainable consumption as its prime focus. This paper discusses the empirical finding from the preliminary study based on the research of Mindful Consumption (MC). The study is expected to explore the mindful consumption behavior (MCB) among working people. The role of mindful mindset, specifically self care in influencing MCB in Malaysia, will be the main subject of this study. The data was collected by using questionnaires that were converted into the Google Form prior the study. Forty-five responses were secured from an online survey which was conducted for a month and those responses were automatically being stored in Google Form platform. SPSS version 23 was used to retrieve the data from the online storage and to analyze relevant statistical measurement. The result of Pearson Correlation analysis has indicated the positive influence of self care on MCB.

Keywords: Mindful consumption behaviour; Mindful mindset; Consumer behaviour; Self care; Sustainable consumption.



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1. Introduction

The study on Mindful Consumption (MC) is important in addressing consumption sustainability. MC is a new concept that deserved further theoretical refinement and it is prefaced on awareness in pondering outcomes of consumption. The dynamic progress of consumer behavior areas has brought the development and the seeds of progress have been obvious for eras. The major transformation in the new consumer behavior, due to the current economic and financial situation will be stressed with the focus on the angle of sustainable consumption. Basically, this study is expected to explore the mindful consumption behavior (MCB) among the government and private employees in Malaysia. The role of mindful mindset specifically on self care in influencing MCB in Malaysia will be the main subject of the study. Thus, it is also important to know the contribution level of supporting variables such as the elements of mindful mindset, namely self care, on MCB itself.

As the number of people who live in debts in Malaysia as well as around the world is alarming, the practice of MC among consumers is important. However, the research on MC remains scarce and has begun to gain interest only in 2011 as stated in [Sheth et al. \(2011\)](#). Yet, the influencing factors of MC are to be identified. Therefore, an investigation in determining these factors is crucial.

The concept of self care is about mindful mindset that concern on individual. It is focusing on individual's well-being and concern. In advance, the main aspects of self care are eudemonic, which means blissing or thriving, and another is concerning on the financial aspects ([Sheth et al., 2011](#)). Furthermore, self care is something concerning with a personal aspect in which it manages how one intra-relates with oneself as to the significance, reason and values in life ([Gomez and Fisher, 2003](#)).

As reported by AKPK (Credit Counselling and Debt Management Agency, established by Bank Negara Malaysia) (2014), almost 300 thousand individuals have attended its counseling services with more than 30% of them have enrolled in a program named Debt Management Program. Those individuals were from different kinds of backgrounds. Throughout the program, it was found that the elements which lead to their over-obligation and powerlessness to reimburse their obligations are the poor money related arranging, numbness and absence of budgetary train to live within their means. Hence, the identification and understanding of mindful mindset factors involving self care that influenced MCB is necessary especially in dealing with the consumerism issues.

This research will study the role of an independent variable in implementing or influencing MCB which focuses on the self care and MCB itself. At the same time, the influences of other variables are also being considered to be investigated. However, there are lack of studies were found that focus on the aspects related to influencing factors of

MCB. The statistical findings on these factors are infrequent and needs to be explored further. Nevertheless, a study conducted by [Ndubisi \(2012\)](#) that examined the existing exploration on mindfulness as a rule, inferred that mindfulness has been considered by specialists crosswise over various disciplines and subjects. The study also revealed that only a few researches were conducted regarding the mindfulness itself in addressing the consumption sustainability.

Therefore, this study on self care and the relationship with MCB will contribute on hypothetical refinements and further advancement as a construct. It is expected to recognize components that will give impact to the feeling of mindful mindset and behavioral temperance ([Sheth et al., 2011](#)). They have argued that the “nature of (the) relationship between a caring mindset and temperate consumption behavior ...needs to be investigated”. However, [Phipps et al. \(2013\)](#) has stated that the question stays on how to consider the relationship amongst behavior and the wide assortment of individual variables identified with behavior.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Mindful Consumption

The concept of mindful consumption is derived from the related concept of sustainability consumption, ethical consumption, green consumption and many other consumption theories. Since the development of MC is considered quite new, the limitation of the study regarding MC itself has so far unable to put appropriate standard benchmarking to the previous studies conducted on MC by the previous researchers.

However, the similarity of MC with other areas of consumption has allowed the researches to conduct the study through the adaptation and the customization of a model with the reference to the study conducted by [Chowdhury and Fernando \(2013\)](#) about the influences of spiritual well-being on ethical consumption.

The understanding of mindful aspects is related with care includes capacity to reason about new sorts of jolts, capacity to look at, differentiation and make judgments about likenesses and contrasts, familiarity with the attributes of specific circumstances and changes in such circumstances, seeing things from various perspectives and focusing on the prompt circumstance ([Sternberg, 2000](#)).

2.2. Mindful Consumption Behavior

In order to change behavior, the focal topic in MC is moderation. Moderation or temperance does not infer to a dismissal of consumption as such, but rather it is gone for contributing ideal consumption for consumer's prosperity and reliable with their qualities. Moderation or temperance has to be practiced in a few types of behaviors, namely accumulative, repetitive, and aspirational, that are most often associated with overconsumption. These behavioral affinities have been proven, now and again, to cover and additionally to give common support to the moderation or the temperance itself ([Sheth et al., 2011](#)). [Mansoor \(2011\)](#); on the other hand, noted that, the temperance is reflected with the statements that even rich individuals make a saving, in spite of the fact that this is not priorities to do as such. This is one way the consumers demonstrate their disappointment on excessive consumption. They started to reuse and to show their children conventional qualities.

Intemperate or excessive consumption causes the consumer needs to raise known as over-utilization and deficient promoting causes the consumer should be ignored called as under-utilization ([Malhotra et al., 2005](#)). These outcomes confirm the view that the impacts of mindfulness are vigorous and that they can't be subsumed by propensity, a conclusion that is in accordance with propensity hypothesis and with the hypothetical meaning of mindfulness ([Brown and Ryan, 2003](#)).

2.3. Self Care

Self care is a part of mindful mindset where the center value of MC is depending on the consumers' mindset itself to administer it to themselves. It changes the conduct into hardening their self-vanquishing surpluses related with acquisitive, repetitive, and aspirational consumption ([Sheth et al., 2011](#)). According to [Fisher \(2011\)](#); self care is alluding to the certification of life in connection to oneself. At the end of the day, high individual prosperity reflects reason and significance in life. It is communicated through self-esteem and self-worth.

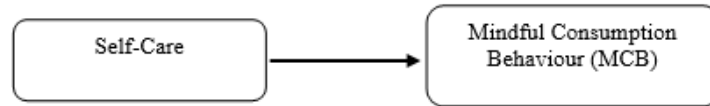
The focus on mindful mindset as studied by [Subrahmanyam and Gould \(2013\)](#) consists a few aspects such as balance in consumption since less, consumption in view of requirements as opposed to propensity or societal weight, consumption that considers consequences for other individuals and additionally nature, sharing one assets, diminishing eagerness and narrow minded consumption. The concept of mindful mindset is related to spiritual well-being that was introduced by [Fisher \(1999\)](#) and [Gomez and Fisher \(2003\)](#). One of the focused area in this research is the personal well-being (self care), and others are community care and environmental well-being (nature care).

Self care is about mindful mindset that stresses on individual's care and does not reflects one's narrow minded or egotistic. It is rather focusing on individual's well-being. The two main aspects aspects are eudemonic which mean bliss or thriving, furthermore financial ([Sheth et al., 2011](#)). Self care is something to do with the personal domain where it manages how one intra-relates with oneself as to significance, reason and values in life. [Gomez and Fisher \(2003\)](#).

[Brown and Ryan \(2003\)](#) have reported that mindfulness is not connected with the measures of open reluctance that taps propensities to be worried about the self as saw by others. Besides, it has been exhibited observationally that mindfulness does not mirror a distraction with others' sentiments but rather an expanded consciousness of inward encounters and unmistakable behavior. One way that a mindful mindset helps people to be satisfied with their goals is by reinforcing the capacity for discretion; that is, the capacity to remain the concentration on the satisfaction

of arrangements and control counter deliberate contemplations that regularly degrade individuals from following up on their aims.

Figure-1.Theoretical Framework



Based on Figure 1, the framework helps the researcher to find out the influences of independent variable on the MCB. Further, the influences will be examined to determine whether they affected the components of mindful consumptions such mindsets and behavior. This proposed model is expected to be a guide for an organization and its consumer towards the sustainability.

3. Materials and Methods

Convenience sampling was used in this study. The method of sampling was implemented to ensure the accuracy and validity of data in line with the subject of the study. It also allowed the respondents to join the discussion whenever they felt convenience to do so. It was also suitable with the online data collection method that will be used in this study. As stressed by [Hulland et al. \(2018\)](#); this type of sampling is appropriate when the aim of the research is to test the veracity of some proposed theoretical effects. For this study, the researcher focused on the employees in two sectors, public and private. So the respondents were selected from both of these sectors.

Measurement instrument for this study is a questionnaire using the Likert Scale. According to [Zikmund et al. \(2010\)](#); Likert Scale is a measurement of attitudes designed to allow respondents to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with carefully constructed statements, ranging from very positive to very negative attitudes toward some object. In measuring the dependent and independent variables, the researcher has adapted a measurement items from the previous study conducted by [Chowdhury and Fernando \(2013\)](#) which stresses on the measurement item of mindful mindset: self care, while the measurement items for MCB were adapted from [Pepper et al. \(2009\)](#).

As indicated above, the measurement items for the questionnaire used in this study were adapted or adopted from previous studies. The items for each construct and their scale of measurements are described in Table1 below.

Table-1.Measurement Items Used in the Survey Questionnaire

Variable/Authors	Items
Mindful consumption behaviour: acquisitive consumption Adapted from Pepper et al. (2009) Three items Five-point Likert scale	1. I buy things when I need them. 2. I buy only the things I need. 3. I don't purchase something on impulse when out shopping.
Mindful consumption behaviour: repetitive consumption Adapted from Pepper et al. (2009) Two items Five-point Likert scale	1. I replace my clothes when they are worn out. 2. I make the things I buy last as long as possible.
Mindful consumption behaviour: aspirational consumption Adapted from Pepper et al. (2009) Three items Five-point Likert scale	1. I don't admire people who own expensive homes, cars and clothes. 2. The thing I own don't say a lot about how well I am doing in life. 3. I don't like to own things that impress people.
Mindful mindset: Self-care Adapted from Chowdhury and Fernando (2013) Five items Five-point Likert scale	1. I am concerned about developing a sense of identity. 2. I am concerned about developing self-awareness. 3. I am concerned about developing joy in life. 4. I am concerned about developing inner peace. 5. I am concerned about developing meaning in life.

To ensure the reliability of the research methodology, a pretest was conducted among 10 respondents from the government sectors and the other 10 respondents were from private sectors in Terengganu. The participants were interviewed and guided by the researcher to answer the questionnaire. Based on the feedback from the pretest, a few amendments were made in order to increase the accuracy and relevancy of the questionnaires.

The online survey was conducted among respondents from both public and private sector staffs in Malaysia. This online survey was relevant according to [Rhodes et al. \(2003\)](#) since it is the most practical technique to gather

information. The time between arranging a study and reporting its discoveries is diminished in light of the fact that many respondents can get to an information online and present their information at any given time. Moreover, there is no trying site or arrangement/outreach planning, and information section is eliminated. Unquestionably, making an overview is required; nonetheless, cheap and easy to use programming exist that can encourage the procedure.

In this preliminary study, the data was collected by using questionnaires which was converted into the Google Form. Then this online questionnaire was distributed and available via online for a month by using social apps such as Facebook and WhatsApp started from 24 March 2016 to 24 April 2016.

It was expected that more than thousand sharing of this questionnaires circulated through Facebook groups and individuals WhatsApp via a link <http://goo.gl/forms/6J6KonW9GC>. The exact number of circulated questionnaire is unknown due to the nature of this online survey. Forty five responses were secured from the one-month-online survey, in which the responses were automatically stored in Google form. The SPSS version 23 was used in order to retrieve data from the online storage and also to analyze relevant statistical measurement.

4. Results

The summary of demographic profile is presented in Table 2. There were more male respondents (53.5%) participated in this study compared to female respondents (46.7%). The respondents were all over 20 years of age, which qualified them as a representative of working people, in this review. A large portion of the respondents were in the middle age group, aged in the vicinity of 40 and 49 years of age. Most of them also were in professional occupation with majority of them have an income between RM 4001-RM6000 and well educated by bachelor degree and above. Based on race, the Malay responded most (88.9%) and Muslim (93.3%). The majority of the respondents (62.2%) were public or government sectors employee.

Table-2. Demographic profile

Demography	Category	Percentage
Gender	Female	46.7
	Male	53.3
Age	20-29	8.9
	30-39	20
	40-49	55.6
	50-59	8.9
	60 and above	2.2
	Below than 20	4.4
Marital status	Married	33.3
	Married with children	44.4
	Married without children	4.4
	Single	17.8
Occupation	Lower management	6.7
	Middle management	20
	Others, please specify	6.7
	Professional	53.3
	Supporting staff	2.2
	Top management	11.1
Occupation Sector	Private	37.8
	Public / government	62.2
Income level (RM)	Below RM2000	4.4
	RM10,001 and above	13.3
	RM2001-RM4000	17.8
	RM4001-RM6000	37.8
	RM6001-RM8000	20
	RM8001-RM10,000	6.7
Education level	Bachelor degree	37.8
	Certificate/Diploma	13.3
	Master degree	35.6
	PhD	13.3
Race	Chinese	6.7
	India	2.2
	Malay	88.9
	Sabah / Sarawak Bumiputera	2.2
Religion	Hinduism	2.2
	Buddhism	2.2
	Christian	2.2
	Islam	93.3

Table 3 indicated that most of the respondents (77.8%) did not prefer to purchase on credit but surprisingly half of them (53.3%) were found to use the credit purchase for about one to five times monthly. Additionally, the majority of the respondents (62.2%) used credit card and it was found that the housing loan contributed the largest portion of respondents' ongoing loan. Almost half of the respondents had monthly debt commitment between RM2001 to RM4000 (46.7%). The most reason given by the respondents for their ongoing loan, is mostly for investments (55.6%). There were 13.3% of the respondents with no saving and majority of them (37.8%) with RM101 to RM 500 savings monthly.

Table-3. Debt & Spending Related Profile of Respondents

Question	Responses	Percentage
Prefer to purchase on credit	No	77.8
	Yes	22.2
Frequent of credit purchase	1 – 5 times per month	53.3
	6 – 10 times per month	8.9
	More than 15 times per month	2.2
	Never	35.6
Credit Card User	No	37.8
	Yes	62.2
The largest portion of ongoing loan	Hire purchase	26.7
	Housing loan	42.2
	Nil	6.6
	Personal loan	24.4
Monthly debt commitment	Below RM 1000	37.8
	RM 3001 – RM 4000	11.1
	RM 4001 more	4.4
	RM2001 – RM 3000	46.7
Purpose of your ongoing loan	nil	11.1
	Accommodation	2.2
	Credit card for daily purchase	2.2
	Education	11.1
	Home	2.2
	Housing loan	2.2
	Investment	55.6
	Medical expenses	2.2
	Renovating	2.2
	Shelter	2.2
	Shopping	6.7
Monthly savings	Below RM 100	4.4
	No saving	13.3
	RM 1001 more	17.8
	RM 500 – RM 1000	26.7
	RM101 – RM 500	37.8

Table 4 shows the test of the variables indicating Cronbach's alpha coefficients score for the variables. The scores indicated that the Cronbach's alpha for mindful consumption behavior is (0.860) whereas mindful mindset : self care is (0.854). Based on the suggestion by Nunnally (1978); all the variables are considered to have adequate reliability since the minimum acceptable alpha for scale reliability is 0.70.

Table-4. Mean, standard deviation and reliability value of variables

ID	Variable items	No. of items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's alpha
MCB	Mindful Consumption Behavior	10	3.48	0.52	.860
MMSC	Mindful Mindset : Self Care	10	3.87	0.52	.854

The result of the coefficient of multiple determination (R²) was 0.860. This indicates that about 86 percent of the total variation in mindful consumption behavior can be explained by the variable in the independent variable of mindful mindset. The high R² implies that the independent variables chosen can account for a significant fraction of the variation in mindful consumption behavior.

Table-5. Pearson Correlation Test Result

Variable		Mindful Mindset : Self Care
Mindful Consumption Behavior	Pearson Correlation	.501*
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.000
	N	45

* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

To conduct hypotheses testing, the relationship between mindful consumption behavior and mindful mindset is statistically tested by Pearson Correlation test. Based on Table 5, the result concluded that there was significant relationship between the variables. This hypothesis does find a support and it is possibly indicated that self-care leads toward influencing mindful consumption behavior.

Pearson Correlation was used to determine the relationship among variables. It shows clearly the independent variables are statistically significant with the p-value of 0.000 at 0.01 significant levels. The result implies relatedness on the strength of association between self care and MCB. The correlation analysis was conducted in order to examine the association between self care and MCB. As indicated by the correlation result, the variables have a positive correlation. A one-tailed test showed that the independent variable was significant ($p < 0.01$) as indicated by the result of 0.501.

From the finding, empirically, it indicates that all the two variables have positive correlation respectively relating to the strength of association. The Pearson Correlation analysis suggested that there is significant relationship between independent variables namely self-care with MCB.

5. Discussion

The study on MC and the relationship between self care with MCB which suggested by the researchers will contribute to the hypothetical establishments and advance improvement in the area of study. Research is expected to distinguish components that impact the sense of caring in mindset and temperance in behavior (Sheth *et al.*, 2011). Once more, Sheth *et al.* (2011) who examine on the "idea of (the) connection between a minding outlook and temperate consumption conduct ... should be explored", yet as concerned by Phipps *et al.* (2013) the inquiry remains as how to consider the relationship among behavior and the wide collection of individual parts related to behavior. Advance, all the while tending to environmental (e.g., physical and socio cultural), personal, and behavioral factors is critical.

The finding indicated that the positive relationship between self care towards mindful consumption behavior is in line with Sheth *et al.* (2011) who proposed that caring to oneself is not about being narrow minded or conceited, but rather it is about paying regard to one's financial prosperity. It is additionally supported by Malek *et al.* (2016) who stated that caring to self is practiced by respondents in which they are arranging their monetary or budgetary position in a superior position. Each of the respondents offers a reasonable picture where they are focusing on their monetary prosperity by taking an interest in an investment. In this context, making a very self-concerned or self-care investment can be considered as manifestation of MCB.

A possible explanation for this finding might be that respondents are very cautious about their spending especially concerning to the individual or personal aspects. Further research may be undertaken in future to study the underlying motives. The self care element is one of the consideration in order to practice mindful consumption behavior where it leads toward the temperance in consumption and further more striving toward consumption sustainability.

The study has indicated an understanding of the MC specifically towards the element of self care and mindful consumption behavior. The finding of this review will have a few ramifications which would without a doubt be useful to a few parties, for example, clients, marketers, government and others. Developing business sector signals recommend that an attention on MC can be profitable in making an arrangement between consumer self-enthusiasm for liberating oneself from an unrewarding and unsustainable example of consumption, and business self-enthusiasm for satisfying its maintainability commitments to meet the desires of many key partners. Indeed, even as the message frame researchers merit consideration from business, what is important most for managers and marketers is the behavior and mindset of the customer (Sheth *et al.*, 2011).

6. Conclusions

In that regard, the indication of "new normal" in consumption is unmistakable: Malaysian consumers in expanding numbers are swinging to frugality, and a larger part of them are probably not going to swing back to overconsumption. The finding of this research is one of the small signal that indicated the changes of consumer mindset and behavior on the optimal, temperance and sustain consumption.

From the consumerism and environmental point of view, MC is an unpreventable need. MC is profoundly alluring for individual and societal prosperity, and fits well with the new frugality grasped by the consumer. It will likewise relieve some conceivably genuine business dangers, including prosecution and unwelcome new administrative weights. The ways in which consumer makes a spending are also important consideration since this factor will contribute to the mindful consumption behaviour. Thus, education on the aspects of the ethical consumerism plays a significant role in creating mindful consumption towards sustainability consumption

Surely, mindful consumption aspect will enhance consumers' quality of life. Furthermore, it is strongly believed that the mindful consumption will enhance consumption sustainability hence eradicate the issues of spending, cost of

living, uncontrolled debt and quality of life. Future study on the relationship of mindful consumption and sustainability consumption is highly recommended. Meanwhile, exploring various factors contributing toward mindful consumption is also a vital consideration.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflicts of interest.

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