

Lifestyle Optimazion to Increase Interest in Purchasing Thrift Clothest among the People of Medan City

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of consumer lifestyle on the interest in purchasing thrift clothing in Medan City. Utilizing qualitative methods, we conducted in-depth interviews with 30 consumers and thrift sellers to gather insights into how lifestyle choices impact purchasing decisions. The findings reveal that consumers perceive thrift clothing as affordable, trendy, and unique compared to regular retail options. This perception drives increased consumer interest and contributes to the growth of thrift markets. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of collaboration with local government to enhance support for thrift businesses through improved facilities and marketing strategies. By promoting the sustainability and environmental benefits of thrifting, this research aims to foster a more conscious consumer culture and strengthen the market position of thrift retailers.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Human basic needs consist of food, clothing, and shelter. However, in modern times, human needs have become increasingly diverse. The rising complexity and continuous progression of societal needs have made it challenging for people to differentiate between primary and secondary needs (Afiany & Fajari, n.d.). Secondhand clothing has been traded in Indonesia for decades. However, in 1982, the import of secondhand clothing was banned. Despite this, these items continue to enter Indonesia through illegal means or smuggling. Customs data shows that the origin of these imported secondhand clothes is Malaysia. However, according to clothing traders, the secondhand clothing often comes from East Asia, such as Korea and Japan. The phenomenon of imported secondhand clothing remains a classic issue that has yet to be resolved. The clothes are not originally from Malaysia; Malaysia acts only as an intermediary in the illegal transshipment of these items. The countries of origin for secondhand clothing are varied, but Japan and Korea are predominant because the sizes of secondhand

clothing from these countries are generally similar to Indonesian sizes, and style and fashion are key factors in the selection of clothing to be sold (Hasibuan, 2019).

Consumer interest in secondhand clothing arises when a person feels attracted to a product they see, leading to a desire to try and ultimately purchase it. The high interest in secondhand clothing is evident from its purchasing levels, driven by factors such as affordable prices, economic conditions, and the alignment of the product with the consumer's personal style. Buying interest is a crucial factor in consumer purchasing decisions, influenced by both positive and negative trade aspects of the targeted product and aligned with consumer needs and expectations.

The emergence of secondhand markets represents a significant opportunity for teenagers who want to express themselves through fashion at minimal costs. (Suarningsih et al., 2022). The phenomenon of thrifting as a fashion lifestyle has garnered significant attention in studies on consumer culture and fashion trends (Haryanti & Falah, 2023; Zahro, 2022; Nadhila et al., 2023). Thrifting culture aims to protect the environment by reducing textile waste through the concept of reuse (Zahro, 2022; M Deden, 2023). Secondhand clothing, purchased from an initial consumer and resold to subsequent consumers, appeals to people due to its good quality and relatively low prices. Often, these items come from recognized brands and feature timeless styles (Wati, 2019). The style of secondhand clothing is rooted in consumerism, a characteristic of contemporary society. Fashion preferences and discrimination both contribute to the desire among secondhand clothing buyers, similar to those frequenting city centers and fashion showrooms (Robbie, 2011:240).

Fashion trends among youth are unavoidable, with fashion becoming a crucial aspect of their lives. Currently, purchasing decisions are influenced by evolving fashion trends (Haryanti & Falah, 2023). According to Minor & Mowen (in Dedeh Siti Soadah, 2017), lifestyle encompasses how a person spends their money, allocates time, and lives their life. Setiadi (2010:148) defines lifestyle as a way of living concerning how one spends time and perceives themselves and their surroundings. Nugroho (in Iwan Kesuma Sihombing, 2019) explains that buying interest involves choosing and integrating a product/service with knowledge to evaluate it. Amri (2019) argues that buying interest is a type of consumer behavior that emerges as a response to objects, reflecting the consumer's desire to make a purchase. Buying interest is an element of consumer behavior and attitude.

2. METHOD

This service method employs Focus Group Discussion and Collaboration to explore how lifestyle can foster consumer interest in purchasing Thrift clothing. By conducting in-depth discussions with several Thrift clothing sellers and consumers (marliyah et al., 2024), we aim to gain deeper insights into how consumer lifestyles influence their buying interest. The target population for this service includes consumers who purchase Thrift products in Medan and its surrounding areas (marliyah et al., 2022). The sample for this service consists of 30 respondents.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

After 15 days of community service and interaction with 30 consumers, it was found that lifestyle plays a significant role in driving Thrift purchases. Consumers perceive Thrift as more affordable, offering updated models and items that are not available in regular retail stores. Additionally, some Thrift sellers reported benefiting from the increased number of consumers visiting their shops. This rise in customer numbers not only boosts the sellers' revenue but also expands their market reach.

To support the sustainability of Thrift businesses, we are collaborating with the local government to facilitate their growth. Our initiative involves improving access to better facilities and more effective promotion. We plan to implement several steps: First, we will provide access to better facilities, such as adequate business spaces and efficient operational support. Enhanced facilities will improve service quality and consumer comfort, thereby strengthening the competitiveness of Thrift businesses. Second, we will focus on more effective promotion to boost the visibility and appeal of Thrift in the community. With government support, we intend to launch a broader and more strategic marketing campaign, including the use of social media and community events. The goal is to introduce more people to the benefits of shopping at Thrift and to enhance understanding of the variety and uniqueness of the products offered.

Through these measures, we hope that Thrift businesses will not only survive but thrive sustainably. This support is expected to positively impact Thrift entrepreneurs and consumers, while also promoting more environmentally friendly and economical consumption practices.

Discussion

Consumer lifestyle is a dynamic indicator that continually evolves with social, economic, and technological advancements. This transformation in lifestyle presents opportunities for companies to continually adjust their marketing strategies to remain relevant. In today's digital age, social media has become a primary factor in shaping consumer lifestyles, offering companies not only a marketing tool but also a channel to understand and influence their target market's lifestyle.

Moreover, product personalization is becoming increasingly important as consumer lifestyles heavily influence their buying interests. Technologies such as AI and big data enable companies to offer more personalized experiences that cater to both emotional and functional needs of consumers. Market segmentation based on lifestyle also allows for more targeted product innovation, such as creating eco-friendly products for sustainability-conscious segments or health-focused products for fitness-oriented consumers.

Globalization plays a crucial role in shaping hybrid lifestyles across various countries, and global companies must balance local cultural relevance with global trends. Additionally, ethical considerations are paramount, as companies need to carefully leverage consumer lifestyles without crossing ethical boundaries. Modern consumers are more inclined to support businesses that promote socially and environmentally responsible lifestyles.

Looking ahead, changes in consumer lifestyles will continue to influence their purchasing interests, with trends such as sustainability, wearable technology, and virtual reality likely to become central focuses. Companies that can respond to these changes with relevant innovations and marketing strategies focused on consumer lifestyles will have a significant competitive advantage. Therefore, a deep understanding of consumer lifestyles is not only important but essential for long-term success and business sustainability.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the community service conducted, it was found that consumers need to be made aware of the positive environmental impacts of thrifting, such as reducing textile waste and carbon footprints, through campaigns emphasizing sustainability. Additionally, highlighting the uniqueness and exclusivity of thrift items can attract consumers seeking different and authentic fashion. Both online platforms and physical stores should offer a seamless and enjoyable shopping experience, featuring appealing layouts and curated items.

Incentives such as discounts, loyalty programs, and collaborations with influencers can enhance the appeal of thrifting. Building a community through events like DIY workshops or swap meets can make thrifting more engaging and memorable, while also strengthening consumer loyalty. Finally, sharing authentic stories about the social mission behind thrifting can appeal to consumers seeking a more meaningful shopping experience, making thrifting not just an economic choice but also a sustainable lifestyle.

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