

Consumerism Lifestyle of Middle Adults Based on Body Sign and Gesture
Study Object : Middle Adult Consumerism Lifestyle, Surabaya-Indonesia

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Abstract

Consumerism lifestyle has become an important part in meeting the needs of life, which can be seen with how popular the department stores these days. Department store visitors which mainly consists of middle adults tend to show a different side of consumerism that may be influenced by internal and external factors of physical appearance and body language. This research aims to identify the consumerism lifestyle in society based on gesture and body sign. The research is conducted by visual observation, which consists of physical aspects of gesture and body sign and literatures data that related to the psychology of middle adult, life necessities and the meaning of body sign and gesture. Consumerism lifestyle of visitors displays that high consumers wear semi-formal appearance to represent their social class, have a fast movement and affect display gesture. Meanwhile, the low consumers tend to have a slow movement, adaptor and regulator gesture.

Keywords: *Consumerism lifestyle, Middle adult, Body sign, Gesture.*

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In the modern era in which human resources and technology has developed rapidly, it's bringing out the very practical lifestyle with adequate access. All the necessities of life and services can easily we get without having to find or do something on our own. Coupled with the rise in living standards has led to people becoming more frequent to do consumption activities. Consumption activity that has existed since a long time ago is now a critical factor in meeting the needs of life, which gave birth to the lifestyle of consumerism. Consumerism Lifestyle, according to Ugi Suharto (2003), in view of the economy is a lifestyle that promotes the desire to consume goods or services in excess. Lifestyle of consumerism becomes the factors in affecting each individual habits that lead the way to behave in the process of consumption.

Consumerism activity in the society can be seen in public shopping areas that provide a wide range of products of daily needs such as grocery stores and markets. One of the large department stores in the city of Surabaya is Hypermart. Hypermart is a network of hypermarkets that have many branches in Indonesia. Hypermart is a supermarket which sells foods, clothes, necessities of daily life, electronic appliances, sports, stationery office and so on. Hypermart provides complete facilities and the place is quite strategic because it is located inside of mall which makes it easier for people who want to shop and the reason of why this shopping center is always crowded. Hypermart visitors segmentation are mostly middle adults or parents. Visitors usually come with the intention to shop wholesale and other household needs.

Shopping activities in Hypermart is closely related to the consumerism lifestyle in society. According to Minor and Mowen (2002), lifestyle shows how one lives, how they spend money, and how to allocate time. This theory shows that each individual has means and processes which different from each other as a consumer. That difference can be marked on various signs of lifestyles, such as through gestures and body sign. Gesture is a form of behavior which is characterized by body movements and body sign is the lifestyle sign which most likely influenced by the visual aspects, including ways of dressing and accessories used.

1.2 Study Purpose

Consumerism lifestyle of middle adult visitors of Hypermart cause behavior like consuming products of primary and secondary, this lifestyle can be seen from their behavior when shopping. The purpose of this study is to identify the consumerism lifestyle in middle adult visitors of Hypermart through gestures and body sign and examine the factors that affect the incidence of consumerism lifestyle.

1.3 Research Scope

The scope of study in this research is consumerism lifestyle of middle adult visitors of Hypermart which is located in Royal Plaza Surabaya. Consumerism lifestyle including signs of

lifestyle that are given through the body sign, such as clothes, accessories, items carried and gestures include body movements when performing the process of consumption. As for the analysis is obtained from observation of middle adult visitors of Hypermart and supported by scientific theories signs of lifestyle as an idea of the consumerism lifestyle in society.

2. Literature Study

2.1 Psychology of Middle Adulthood

According to Mappiare (1983), Middle adulthood is a middle step adult age, which theoretically-psychological is occurred in the age range between 40-60 years old. Also according to Elizabeth B. Hurlock (1996), adult intermediate/middle adulthood is a time of transition from young adults to the elderly, the process when men and women leave the physical characteristics and behavior of adult life and in the process of entering a new period in life with new behavior. According to Hurlock (1996), middle adulthood is a time of fear, because at this age there is a change (decrease) of physical ability and reproduction which causing an imbalance of psychological condition that resulted on one to be easily depressed and stressed.

Middle adulthood is also a time of achievement in life. According to Schaie and Willis (1991), achievement at the age of middle adult is a positive picture of an individual. At the age of 40, normal people have had enough experience in education and association, so they already established a definite attitude and values of the social relationships. Financial condition and social status of middle adult usually have been established, and they have had a clear view of the future and goals to be achieved.

Based on the definition of psychological characteristics of middle adulthood, it can be concluded that middle adults tend to make adjustments in various things around them as a form of self-defense in facing psychological pressures. Influence exerted in middle adult is the higher awareness on the importance of health care, the responsibilities of life and the emergence to give reward to themselves.

2.2 Consumerism Lifestyle

Lifestyle according to Kotler (2002) is a pattern of life in the world which is expressed in activities, interests, and opinions. Lifestyle describes the entire pattern of how someone act and interact in the world. According to Assael (1984), lifestyle can be defined as a life style that is recognizable by how people spend their time (activity), what people consider as important in environment (interest), and what people think about themselves and the world around them (opinion). Meanwhile, according to Minor and Mowen (2002), lifestyle shows how one lives, how to spend the money, and how to allocate time.

Nugraheni (2003) stated that the factors that affect a person's lifestyle is divided into two factors, namely that comes from within the individual (internal) and the factors that come from outside (external). Internal factors include: attitudes, experiences and observations, personality, motives, self-concept and perception. The external factors may occur due to the influence of the reference group, family, social class and culture.

Consumerism lifestyle, according to Ugi Suharto (2003), in view of economy is a lifestyle that promotes the desire to consume goods or services in excess. These traits tend to ignore the factors of income and the availability of economic resources, which should be a primary consideration before committing the act of consumption. Meanwhile, in the psychological perspective, consumerism is a product of hedonist culture from a society that is experiencing a clash of culture (culture shock). This life pattern formed consciously or unconsciously derived from how each human living life everyday. The process of formation of human behavior, including behavior of consumerism generally comes from the stimulus received by the five senses through a social process or through audio-visual media which will be internalized and shape the personality.

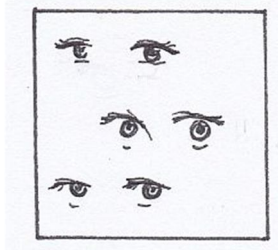
According to Awaliyah (2008) factors that affect consumerism lifestyle consist of: a) Income, adults who are already working and have their own income tend to be consumptive using their earnings in an effort to reward themselves. Their income is used to buy goods and services which cannot be produced by themselves. b) Tradition, the hereditary behavior which is believed in society and should be done. In this case a family had certain customary to eat something that makes an impact on their offspring to do the same. c) Trend, a trend that spread through the process of socialization within the community affects other communities to do the same. d) Taste, interests and tastes associated with personal satisfaction of each individual. e) Advertising, the media can influence the minds of the public and directing a community through brainstorming.

2.3 Body Sign and Gesture

According to Alo Liliweri in the book "Verbal and Nonverbal Communication", he explained that gestures or body language is a body movement that can be delivered through as symbols of communication to others. This behavior is very dependent on the close correlation with others.

Ekman and Friesen (1969) explained that gesture is a form of nonverbal behavior on the movement of the hands, shoulders, fingers and toes. Someone often used limb movements consciously or unconsciously to emphasize a message. It can be seen that actually humans have many varied ways in moving the body and limbs while talking. Each body movements can communicates various functions, a variety of gestures or body movements can be seen from the following illustration:

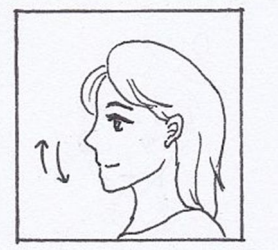
Picture 1. Different kinds of Gesture



Emblem: eyes movement that have a precise meanings .



Illustrator; Rhythmic Movement, dancing suggesting as happy expression.



Illustrator; Emblematic Movement, nodding means agree.



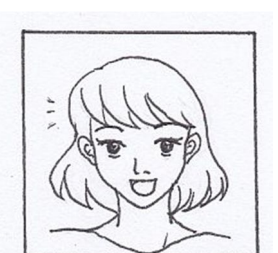
Self Adaptor specific gestures to self, scratching head signifies confusion.



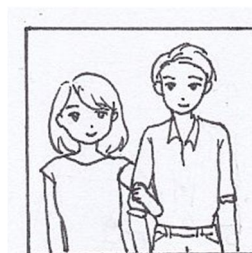
Alter Adaptor: specific gestures toward others, rubbing other head signifies affection.



Regulator: gestures which coordinates interaction, eye contact is a sign of listening.



Affect Display: facial gestures that describe emotions and feelings.



Touch: a spontaneous form of personal communication as a form of affection.



Posture: body sign which reflects emotion and self-concept.

Source: Author's illustration.

3. Research Methods

The method of collecting data using observation studies consists of:

a. Data from visual observation on the visitors of Hypermart.

Observations were carried out directly on-site in Hypermart of mall Royal Plaza Surabaya by selecting 10 random samples from middle adult visitors. The visitors of Hypermart which is the object of observation selected and grouped by the number of products purchased which is an indicator of the level of consumerism lifestyle every visitor. Data observation consumerism lifestyle of Hypermart visitors using two approaches on signs of lifestyle, which consists of:

1. Body Sign

Body sign focuses on physical appearance such as the type of clothes used, way of dressing, types of accessories used and the amount of goods they carry.

2. Gestures / Body Language

Gestures or body language focuses on the body movements that indicate a non-verbal communication such as illustrator, adaptor (specific body movements), regulators (social interaction) and Affect display (expression of emotions and feelings) from each visitor.

b. Literature Data

Data using the theory of scientific literatures related to the psychology of middle adulthood, life necessities and social orientation and the meaning of body sign and gesture.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Hypermart Situation

Based on observations that had been implemented on Sunday, May 8, 2016, Hypermart was crowded of visitors. Hypermart which is a large department store in Surabaya at that time were holding a lot of promos as a celebration for the new month. Hypermart visitors consisted of all ages, with the majority of visitors are adults, ranging from young adulthood to middle adulthood. The majority of adult visitors came in groups; as in a group of family or spouse, and a few other visitors came alone.

The busiest section in Hypermart which was full of people is the foods section such as oil, rice, meat and fish; followed by section of toiletries and cosmetics, snack foods, household cleaning tools and stationery supplies. Atmosphere on the checkout area were full of visitors queuing, and the queue process on that day run smoothly.

Picture 2. Hypermart entrance, and



Picture 3. Situation in the Checkout Area



Source: Author documentation, 2016

4.2 Consumerism Lifestyle Obsevation

The observation of consumerism lifestyle in middle adult visitors of Hypermart through body sign and gestures is using the trolleys as a parameter level of consumerism. The level of consumerism each visitors are measured from the type of trolley they used, namely shopping basket and shopping cart. Shopping basket users representate the low consumers, because consumers who use shopping basket tend to consume products of primary necessity and not interested to buy products outside of their interest. While the visitors who use shopping cart that has a larger scale tend to buy many products including the products of primary necessity to tertiary and those visitors belong to the category of high consumers.



Picture 4. Shopping Basket



Picture 5. Shopping Cart

Source: Wikipedia (Cart).

4.2.1 Consumerism Lifestyle Based on Body Sign

Observation on Hypermart visitors based on body sign is indicated from the physical aspects of the visitors appearance, such as the type of clothes, way of dressing, accessories, and type of trolley they used. The number of visitors who have become the sample of observations are 10 visitors from different group randomly. The type of visitor clothes broadly categorized into two types of cloth which is worn the most, namely T-shirts and shirts. Here is an observation of body sign of Hypermart visitors, shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Body Sign Observation on Hypermart Visitors

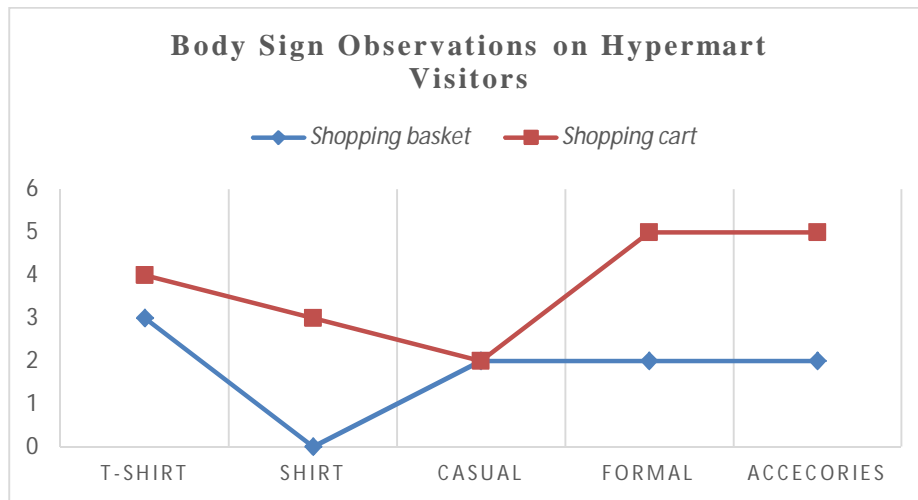
Num.	Cloth		Way of dressing		Accecories	Trolley	
	T-shirt	Shirt	Casual	Formal		Shopping basket	Shopping cart
1.		•		•	Watch		•
2.	•				-		•
3.	•			•	Jewelry		•
4.	•		•	•	Watch	•	
5.		•		•	Watch		•
6.	•			•	Watch		•
7.		•		•	Jewelry	•	
8.	•		•		-	•	
9.		•	•		-		•
10.	•			•	Watch		•
Total	6	4	3	7	7	3	7

Source: Observer's Data, May 8, 2016

* Info: Shopping basket: portable to carry, used for visitors who are not buying many goods.

Shopping cart: large trolley, used for visitors who are buying large scale of goods.

Diagram 1. Body Sign Observation on Hypermart Visitors



Source: Observer’s Data, May 8, 2016

Based on the table above, the majority of Hypermart visitors used the type of clothes T-shirts and shirts with nearly the same ratio of 6: 4. The type of clothes used by the visitors are different whether the visitors came in a group or separately. Also, the type of clothes used by the visitors are not related by social class and age range, as it is shown in how different styles which applied are depends on each individual.

Hypermart visitors tend to wear semi-formal dressing. Out of 10 visitors, 7 visitors wears their clothes neatly. The way of dressing neatly indicates on the atmosphere of Hypermart that cater to the middle to upper middle class of segmentation. Visitors who dressed neatly and wear a shirt generally also used accessories such as watch or jewelry. The data showed that out of 7 visitors who use shopping cart, 5 of them are neatly dressed, wear shirts and accessories. While 2 of 3 visitors who dress casually by wearing a shirt with minimal accessories tend to use shopping basket.



**Picture 6. Visitors who use Shopping Cart,
and Picture 7. Visitors who use Shopping Basket.**

Source: Author’s Documentation, 2016.

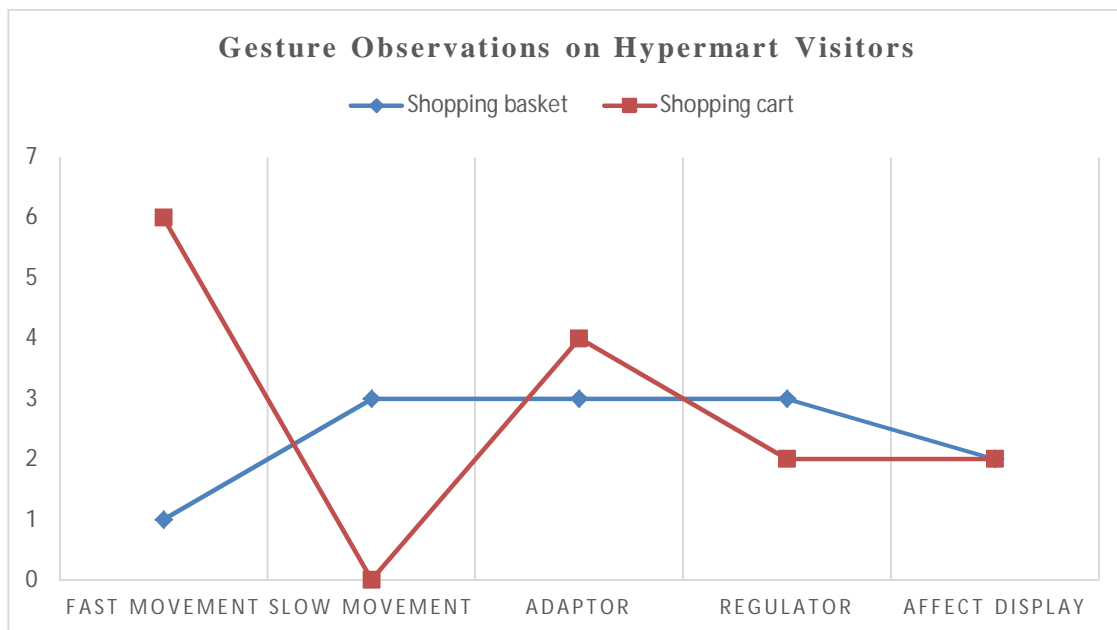
4.2.2 Consumerism Lifestyle Based on Gesture

Observation on Hypermart visitors based on gesture using the type of gestures in theory of gesture by Ekman and Friesen (1969), which consists of; a) illustrator, gesture of body movement which indicates a communication through body's pace, b) adaptor, a specific gesture to conclude the calculative consumers that in this case is observed from whether the visitors compare each products, c) regulator, which is a gesture that tend to oversee and coordinate others which is shown on visitors interaction with employees, and d) Affect display, which is a form of interest in a product which is shown on whether the visitors like to pay attention on product's description. Here is the result of observation of gesture of Hypermart visitors, shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Gesture Observation on Hypermart Visitors

Num.	Gesture				Trolley		
	Illustrator		Adaptor	Regulator	Affect Display	Shopping basket	Shopping cart
	Fast movement	Slow movement	Comparing products	Interaction with employee	Read products description carefully		
1.	•		•		•		•
2.		•	•	•	•	•	
3.	•			•		•	
4.		•	•			•	
5.	•			•	•		•
6.	•		•	•			•
7.		•	•	•	•	•	
8.	•		•				•
9.	•						•
10.	•		•				•
Total	7	3	7	5	4	4	6

Source: Observer's Data, May 8, 2016

Diagram 2. Gesture Observation on Hypermart Visitors

Source: Observer's Data, May 8, 2016

Based on observations on the gesture of Hypermart visitors above, the illustrator gesture data showed that 7 out of 10 visitors have a fast body movement while shopping. The majority of Hypermart visitors who have a fast movement used shopping cart, meanwhile the visitors who have a slow body movement tend to use shopping basket. That kind of propensity may be caused by two factors; the first factor is the efficiency of shopping cart that makes the user move faster than the user who use shopping basket (which should be lifted by the user themselves), and the second factor is viewed in terms of consumerism is that shopping cart which have larger scale commensurates to users who buy many products, those users usually already had a definite purpose when shopping and has a tendency to move quickly.

Analysis about the Hypermart visitors who have a slow body movement is that those visitors tend to spend a lot of time in picking and comparing products which is showing the signs of adaptor gestures (a specific movement which has meanings). The regulator gestures are marked on the interaction between the visitor with employees, 4 out of 10 visitors tend to ask the Hypermart employees regarding the quality of products and the latest promo. Visitors who possess the adaptor and regulator gestures are the calculative type of visitor, they are very cautious of price and concerned about the quality of products and those kind of traits belong to the category of low consumers.

The last gesture which is observed is the affect display gesture that indicates that the number of visitors who appeared to show the expression of interest in a particular product is a bit few. Affect display gesture is facial gestures that describe emotions and interest of visitors, visitors who like to read the product description carefully are the kind of visitor who have an open mindset, they tend to not hesitate to spend more money for the desired product. From the results, only 4 out of 10 visitors have the affect display gesture.



Figure 8. Visitor who use Shopping Cart, and

Figure 9. Visitor who use Shopping Basket.

Source: Author's documentation, 2016.

5. Conclusion

Observation data on body sign indicates that the type of cloth the visitor wear does not reflect the behavior of consumerism, because the type of clothes varied depending on the comfort and preferences of each visitor. However, the visitors dress code which is divided into the casual type and formal type shows that the majority of visitors who dress neatly and semi-formal is high consumers. Visitors who used a lot of accessories such as watch and jewelry tend to come from the middle to upper class of society and have a personality that upholds the prestige/authority. Visitors of middle adult who have a high prestige value according to the psychology of middle adult are tend to give rewards for themselves and not hesitate to spend money on products they desired. On the

other hand, visitors who dressed casually tend to use shopping basket and belong to the category of low consumers.

Observation data on gesture shows that the majority of visitors who have a fast body movement are high consumers. Fast movement indicates the satisfaction of visitors and a sign that the visitors are not too concerned about the price of the product. Meanwhile, Hypermart visitors who have a slow body movement also possess the adaptor and regulator gesture that can be seen with how they like to compare products and interaction with Hypermart employees. Visitors who have a slow movement, adaptor and regulator gestures have a cautious and calculative personality which belonged to the low consumers. The number of visitors who showed the affect display gesture is relatively few, it can be concluded that the consumerism behaviour are more influenced by needs instead of interests.

Consumerism lifestyle of middle adult visitors from the observation can be concluded that the majority of visitors who have semi-formal appearance represents the social status of visitors. Visitors who are high consumers majority come from middle to upper class of society and have a fast body movement while shopping. The age factor is also affecting the consumerism behavior, middle age of adult which is the age of achievement and had an established financial condition tend to become more lax in spending money on consumption activities. Additionally, coupled with the changes on health functions caused middle adults be more concerned about their health and other needs in addition to the primary needs that makes them tend to adopt a lifestyle of consumerism.

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