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Buying behavior of Japanese second-hand furniture: Online channels; Facebook and Instagram

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Abstract

This research aims to study consumer behavior and factors related to the decision-making process of buying second-hand furniture from Japan through online channels, namely Facebook and Instagram. The research employed a survey with 384 participants, using descriptive statistics, frequency, percentages, averages, and Chi-Square testing to examine the relationship between two variables. The results showed that female participants were more prevalent than males, with the majority aged between 20 and 40 years old. Most of the participants had an income range of 30,001 - 50,000 baht, and the majority were self-employed. The most popular type of product purchased was sofas/chairs, bought primarily for personal use. Most customers discovered the products through store advertisements. The highest frequency of purchases occurred on weekdays (Monday-Friday) between the hours of 18:00-23:59. Most customers would inquire about additional information from the stores before deciding to make a purchase, with the majority making the purchasing decision by themselves. In terms of motivation, a high percentage (67.0%) of the participants had a strong intention to buy second-hand furniture from Japan. A significant proportion (57.6%) also expressed a high level of preference for second-hand Japanese furniture. In terms of brand value, 45.2% of participants found it highly influential in their decision to buy second-hand furniture from Japan, while 33.0% found it moderately influential. The perceived safety and trustworthiness of Facebook and Instagram were moderately influential in their purchase decision, with 42.9% of participants agreeing. The aesthetic appeal of product images displayed on the Facebook or Instagram platforms was found to be highly influential (60.4%) in their purchase decision. The convenience and service quality of stores on the Facebook or Instagram platforms were also found to be highly influential (59.1%) in their purchase decision. The current COVID-19 situation was found to significantly affect their decision to buy second-hand furniture from Japan, with 53.6% agreeing. Therefore, entrepreneurs can use the data from this study as guidelines to effectively improve their online second-hand furniture business.

Keywords: Second-hand furniture; Buying behavior; Online purchasing; COVID-19

1. Introduction

Furniture and home decor are one of the essential elements that play a significant role in our residences. According to the statistics of furniture manufacturing in Thailand, the furniture industry index has not changed significantly, implying that Thai furniture remains popular even during the COVID-19 situation. However, the COVID-19 crisis has led to an economic downturn, causing several businesses to encounter problems, but the second-hand market flourishes. Second-hand furniture, therefore, becomes an alternative for those who need to purchase furniture or those who love home decoration, making second-hand furniture increasingly interesting. Currently, rapidly increasing second-hand Japanese furniture stores are nearly ubiquitous in every province in Thailand. Simultaneously, due to the current COVID-19 outbreak, second-hand stores need to adapt by adding online sales channels to keep the business running. This includes applications like Facebook, Instagram, Shopee, Lazada, etc. Nowadays, online trading includes both goods and services.

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Examples include consumer goods, various utensils, and furniture, which has become more popular due to the COVID-19 situation as customers need to work from home, possibly making furniture more popular in online orders. Information from the data and technology service agency revealed a survey of 28,000 people in 17 countries worldwide; Thai people have the highest rate of online shopping in the world. Especially during the COVID-19 outbreak, 94% of consumers said online shopping helped them in 2020, the highest proportion in the world compared to the global average of 72%. Thai consumers spend more money online, averaging 1,000-8,000 THB in online shopping. Although overall offline spending is still higher, online shopping tends to increase and remain high in the future. 62% of Thai consumers found themselves spending more online during COVID-19, and 92% said they would continue to shop online as usual after the epidemic ends." This is for your research use.

Therefore, the researcher aims to study and understand the behavior of purchasing second-hand Japanese furniture online. This study is intended to benefit stores and serve as a guideline for developing a business in second-hand Japanese furniture. The focus will be on customers who purchase items from online second-hand Japanese furniture stores via Facebook and Instagram. The objectives of this research are to investigate the purchasing behavior of second-hand Japanese furniture and to study the factors associated with the behavior of purchasing second-hand Japanese furniture from Japan through online channels like Facebook and Instagram.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Purchase Intention

The intention or the desire (Intention: I) refers to an individual's plan, effort, possibility, or desire to perform a particular behavior. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, intention is a predictor of behavior as it measures an individual's readiness to perform the behavior and directly influences the behavior. Intentions arise from the influence of three factors: 1. Attitudes towards behavior, 2. Conformity with reference groups, and 3. Perceived ability to control behavior (Francis et al., 2004; Patcharee Duangjan, 2007).

2.2. Consumer Behavior

The concept of consumer behavior (Siriwan Serirat and others, 2003) refers to the behavior of consumers in searching, thinking, buying, using, and evaluating products and services, which are expected to meet their needs and satisfaction. The questions used to search for consumer behavior characteristics are 6Ws and 1H, which consists of Who? What? Why? Who? When? Where? and How? This is used to find answers to the 7 categories or 7Os, which include Occupants, Objects, Objectives, Organizations, Occasions, Outlets, and Operations. As shown in the table using the 7 questions to find 7 category answers about consumer behavior, including defining marketing strategies that align with the answers about consumer behavior, and the figure showing the application of 7Os for target groups and questions related to consumer behavior for consumer behavior analysis.

2.2.1. Buying Behavior

Buying Behavior (Siriwan Serirat and others, 2003) refers to the characteristics of consumers when making purchasing decisions for different types of products. It can be divided into four types: 1. Habitual Buying Behavior, 2. Dissonance-Reducing Buying Behavior, 3. Complex Buying Behavior and 4. Variety-Seeking Buying Behavior.

2.2.2. Marketing Mix

Kotler (1997, p. 92) stated that the Marketing Mix refers to the controllable variables or marketing tools that companies often use together to satisfy the needs and desires of their target customers. The traditional marketing mix consisted only of four variables (4Ps): Product, Price, Place (or distribution channels for products), and Promotion. Later, three additional variables were added: People, Physical Evidence, and Process, to align with the key concepts of modern marketing, especially in the service business. Thus, it is collectively referred to as the 7Ps marketing mix.

2.2.3. Motivation

The term "motivation" comes from the Latin verb "Mover" (Kidd, 1973:101), which corresponds to the English word "to move", meaning "something that inclines or persuades a person to perform or act" (To move a person to a course of action). Hence, motivation receives considerable attention in all sectors. For Lovell (Lovell, 1980:109), motivation is defined as "a process that induces a person to have the momentum to strive to satisfy a certain need to achieve success". Michael Domjan (1996:199) explains that "motivation is a state of enhancing the behavioral activity of a person by consciously performing that behavior to achieve desired goals". Mark E. Hanson (1996: 195) defines motivation as "an internal state that stimulates action or movement, with channels and behaviors leading to the goal". In summary,

motivation is a process in which an individual is stimulated by an intentional inducement to act or strive to achieve some purpose. The behavior resulting from motivation is not merely a response to a normal stimulus. An example of a normal stimulus response is answering a call when hearing it. However, a response to a stimulus is considered behavior resulting from motivation, such as an employee intentionally working in hope of praise or approval. The nature of motivation can be divided into two types: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual, which may be attitudes, thoughts, interests, intentions, value perceptions, satisfaction, desires, etc. These things have a somewhat lasting influence on behavior. For example, a worker who sees an organization as a place that provides life for him and his family will be loyal to the organization, and some organizations, despite losses in operations and not providing good compensation, still have dedicated employees who collectively reduce costs and work hard due to commitment. Extrinsic motivation comes from external stimuli that prompt behavior, such as receiving rewards, honors, reputation, praise, or commendation. This motivation is not enduring. Individuals demonstrate behavior in response to such motivation only in cases where they desire compensation.

2.2.4. Online Shopping Behavior

The term "Online Shopping Behavior" pertains to the various actions related to the online purchasing decisions of consumers (Pappas, Kourouthanassis, Giannakos & Lekakos, 2017). Nowadays, online consumer behavior has increasingly adapted towards self-protection. Prior to making purchasing decisions, consumers often look for trustworthy certifications on the website to boost their confidence, or they read product reviews from actual buyers to prevent potential problems, such as receiving products that don't meet their expectations, substandard quality, or encountering difficulties in contacting the seller. Moreover, online shopping behavior refers to the ultimate consumer activity of buying products and services for personal use. Consumers worldwide differ in demographic characteristics, such as age, income, level of education, religion, culture, traditions, values, and tastes, resulting in different eating, usage, and purchasing behaviors, as well as perceptions towards products. This results in the consumption of a diverse range of products and services. Aside from these demographic characteristics, there are other factors that cause different consumption behaviors (e-Commerce Division, 2017).

3. Research Methodology

The present study is quantitative research using a questionnaire as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire is divided into four sections: a screening questionnaire, a personal information questionnaire for the respondents, a questionnaire regarding the behavior of purchasing second-hand furniture from Japan via online platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, and a questionnaire on the motivations for purchasing second-hand furniture from Japan via the same online platforms.

The population for this study is the individuals who purchase second-hand furniture from Japan via online platforms like Facebook and Instagram, totaling 384 respondents. Given the large and uncertain size of the population, the sample size was calculated using W.G. Cochran's (1953) formula, assuming a confidence level of 95% and an acceptable margin of error = 0.05. After substituting the values into the formula, the sample size is determined to be 384.16 respondents.

The statistics used in this study include descriptive statistics for analyzing frequency, average, and percentage values, and inferential statistics using Chi-Square test to test the relationship between two variables.

4. Research Findings

4.1. Results of personal data analysis from respondents

- The respondents included 151 males (38.3%) and 243 females (61.7%). 245 of them were aged between 20 and 40 years (62.2%), 137 were between 40 and 60 years old (34.8%), and 12 were over 60 years old (3%). Regarding income, 15 respondents (3.8%) earned 10,000 Baht or less, 155 earned between 10,001 and 30,000 Baht (39.3%), 142 earned between 30,001 and 50,000 Baht (36%), and 82 earned over 50,000 Baht (20.8%). As for occupation, 98 were government officials/state enterprise employees (24.9%), 199 were self-employed (50.5%), 24 were students (6.1%), and 73 were in other professions (18.5%).
- The most popular product type purchased was sofas/chairs with 162 respondents (41.1%), followed by other items with 87 respondents (22.1%), display cabinets with 59 respondents (15.0%), wardrobes/drawers with 40 respondents (10.2%), dining sets with 34 respondents (8.6%), and the least popular was beds with 12 respondents (3.0%).

- The reasons for choosing to buy second-hand furniture from Japan were primarily for personal use with 347 respondents (88.1%), for resale with 11 respondents (2.8%), and for both personal use and resale with 36 respondents (9.1%).
- The channels through which customers found out about second-hand furniture from Japan were shop advertisements with 298 respondents (75.6%), search engines with 77 respondents (19.5%), and other channels such as recommendations from friends or familiarity with the shop with 19 respondents (4.8%).
- The most popular time to purchase is between 18.00-23.59, with 232 respondents (58.9%). The second most popular time is 12.00-17.59, with 132 respondents (33.5%), followed by 6.00-11.59 with 25 respondents (6.3%) and 0.00-05.59 with 5 respondents (1.3%). The most popular days to purchase are weekdays (Monday-Friday) with 266 respondents (67.5%) and weekends (Saturday-Sunday) with 128 respondents (32.5%).
- The decision-making period to purchase products is often after the customer has asked for more information from the store, with 204 respondents (51.8%), immediately if they like the product with 124 respondents (31.5%), and after visiting the store with 66 respondents (16.8%). The platforms customers use to buy are Facebook with 201 respondents (51.0%) and Instagram with 193 respondents (49.0%), which are not significantly different.
- The people involved in the decision to buy second-hand furniture from Japan are the individuals themselves with 274 respondents (69.5%), followed by spouse/partner with 69 respondents (17.5%), parents/siblings with 24 respondents (6.1%), and children with 7 respondents (7.0%).

In conclusion, the research sample found that there are more female than male customers, the majority of the customers are aged between 20 and 40, with an income between 30,001 – 50,000 baht, most of them are self-employed, and the majority of the products purchased are sofas/chairs. The reason for purchasing is for personal use, and the products are found through store advertisements. The most frequent days and times of purchase are weekdays (Monday-Friday) and between 18.00-23.59. Most customers will ask for more information from the store before deciding to purchase, and it was found that the customers themselves are the ones making the purchasing decision.

4.2. Summary of data analysis on internal and external motivations to purchase second-hand furniture from Japan through online channels such as Facebook and Instagram.

- In terms of internal motivations, 264 respondents, or 67.0%, indicated a high intention to purchase second-hand furniture from Japan. 227 respondents, or 57.6%, expressed a high preference for second-hand furniture products from Japan. The value given to the brand of the second-hand furniture products from Japan had a significant effect on their purchasing decision, with 178 respondents, or 45.2%, indicating high value, followed by 130 respondents, or 33.0%, indicating moderate value.
- Regarding external motivations, 169 respondents, or 42.9%, indicated moderate importance to the safety and reliability of Facebook and Instagram. The aesthetic quality of product images appearing on Facebook or Instagram platforms was highly important to 238 respondents, or 60.4%. The convenience and service of the shop on Facebook or Instagram were also of high importance, with 233 respondents, or 59.1%. The COVID-19 situation was of high importance to 211 respondents, or 53.6%. Considering the average scores of all 7 aspects of motivation, the aesthetic quality of product images on Facebook or Instagram had the highest average score of 4.22, followed by the convenience and service of the shop on Facebook with an average score of 4.09. The preference for second-hand furniture products from Japan was third, with an average score of 4.05. The COVID-19 situation was fourth, with an average score of 3.98. The intention to purchase second-hand furniture from Japan was fifth, with an average score of 3.96. The value given to Japanese brand products was sixth, with an average score of 3.81. Lastly, the safety and reliability of Facebook and Instagram had the lowest average score of 3.60.

4.3. Summary of hypothesis testing according to the research objectives

4.3.1. Hypothesis 1

Demographic factors, namely gender, age, education level, occupation, and income, are related to the behavior of purchasing second-hand furniture from Japan via online channels, Facebook and Instagram. The testing results are shown in Table 1.

From Table 1, it can be observed that gender is related to the behavior of choosing products, types of products, timing of product purchases, and duration of decision-making in product purchases. Age is associated with the behavior of choosing products, the reasons for product purchases, timing of product purchases, dates of product purchases, channels for product purchases, and participants in product purchases. Income is related to the behavior of choosing products, reasons for product purchases, timing of product purchases, dates of product purchases, duration of decision-making in product purchases, and channels for product purchases. Education level is associated with the behavior of choosing products, types of products, reasons for product purchases, timing of product purchases, and dates of product

purchases. Occupation is related to the behavior of choosing products, dates of product purchases, and channels for product purchases.

Table 1 The results of the hypothesis test relating demographic factors to the behavior of purchasing products.

Consumer Behavior Demographic Factors	Product Type	Reasons for Choosing to Purchase	Channels Where Products Were Found	Time of Purchase	Purchase Date	Time Spent Deciding on Purchase	Purchase Channels	People Involved in the Purchase Decision
Gender	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗
Age	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Income	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Occupation	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗

4.3.2. Hypothesis 2

Motivational factors, namely internal factors consisting of product purchase intentions, product liking, brand value, and external factors including the safety and reliability of the platform, the beauty of the product images appearing on the platform, the convenience and services of online shopping, and the COVID-19 situation, are related to the behavior of purchasing second-hand furniture from Japan via online channels, Facebook, and Instagram. The testing results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Results of testing the hypothesis regarding demographic factors and motivational factors

Consumer Behavior Factors related to motivation	Product Type	Reasons for Choosing to Purchase	Channels Where Products Were Found	Time of Purchase	Purchase Date	Time Spent Deciding on Purchase	Purchase Channels	People Involved in the Purchase Decision
Intention to purchase	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗
Preference towards the product	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
Value given to the product brand	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
Safety and reliability of the platform	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓
Beauty of the product images displayed on the platform	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Convenience and service of the online store	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗

COVID-19 situation	x	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x
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From Table 2, it can be seen that internal factors such as the intention to purchase are related to purchasing behavior, including the reasons for choosing to purchase, the period of purchase, and the decision-making time to choose to purchase. A preference for products is related to purchasing behavior, including channels where products are found, the period when products are found, and the decision-making time to choose to purchase. The perceived value of the brand is related to purchasing behavior, including channels where products are found, the period when products are found, and the decision-making time to choose to purchase.

External factors such as the safety and reliability of the platform are related to purchasing behavior, including the channels where products are found, the period when products are found, the decision-making time to choose to purchase, and the parties involved in the decision to purchase. The convenience and service of the store in online purchasing is related to purchasing behavior, the period when products are found, and the decision-making time to choose to purchase.

Lastly, the COVID-19 situation is related to purchasing behavior, including the reasons for choosing to purchase, and the period when the purchase is made.

5. Discussion

From the study results, it can be seen that 1. demographic factors including gender, age, education level, occupation, and income are related to the behavior of purchasing second-hand furniture from Japan via online platforms like Facebook and Instagram as follows:

Gender and different occupations are related to purchasing behavior in terms of types of products and channels of purchasing, respectively, which is consistent with the research by Jeeranan Wuttiornpattara, Siriuhk Rakthin, and Syamol Lumlongrut (2019), 'Factors Influencing the Behavior of Second-hand Furniture Purchasing of Consumers in Thailand.' They found that demographic characteristics, such as gender, significantly affect expenditure on second-hand furniture purchases, and different occupations influence second-hand furniture purchasing behavior among Thai consumers. Different age groups have an association with purchasing behavior in terms of the purchasing period. For instance, those aged between 20 to less than 40 years old tend to choose to purchase between 18.00 to 23.59, while those aged 40 and above prefer to shop between 12.00 to 17.59. Additionally, those aged between 20 to less than 40 years old tend to choose to purchase via Instagram, while those aged 40 and above prefer Facebook. These findings do not align with the research by Jeeranan Wuttiornpattara, Siriuhk Rakthin, and Syamol Lumlongrut (2019), 'Factors Influencing the Behavior of Second-hand Furniture Purchasing of Consumers in Thailand,' which found that consumers who frequently buy second-hand furniture are those aged 46 years and above. Consumers with different incomes and education levels are related to the purchasing channel and product type. This is because nowadays, consumers can access the online world anytime, anywhere, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, education, or even income. They have the right to choose freely without any restrictive rules or regulations.

Internal motivational factors: This comprises the factors related to consumers' intentions to purchase. It was found that consumers have a high intention (67%) to purchase second-hand furniture from Japan. This indicates that the intention to buy is related to the behavior of product selection in terms of reasons for choosing a product, the time at which the product is purchased, and the duration of the product selection process. The reason consumers choose to buy these products is mainly for usage, which aligns with the planned behavior theory where intention predicts behavior because it is an indicator of a person's readiness to perform the behavior. Intentions arise from influences from three key factors: 1. Attitudes towards behavior, 2. Conformity with reference groups, and 3. Perception of control over behavior (Francis et al., 2004; Patcharee Duangjan, 2007).

Regarding likability, it was found that consumers have a high level of liking (57.6%) for second-hand furniture products from Japan. In terms of brand value, it was found that consumers highly value the brands of these products (45.2%). This is in line with Motivation Theories by Michael Domjan (1996), who explains that "Motivation is the state of increasing an individual's behavior or activity intentionally performed by the individual to achieve the desired goal." This also aligns with research by Jeeranan Wuttiornpattara, Siriuhk Rakthin, and Syamol Lumlongrut (2019) on factors influencing consumer behavior in purchasing second-hand furniture in Thailand. It was found that product-related

factors and other factors influence the purchase of second-hand furniture when consumers see value in the product, which leads to an increase in the consumer's buying behavior.

External factors, such as the security and reliability of the platform, were found to be of moderate importance to consumers, with 42.9% rating them as such for Facebook and Instagram. The convenience and service of shops on the platform were rated as highly important by 59.1% of respondents. The attractiveness of product images displayed on the platform was deemed highly important by 60.4% of respondents. Consumers highly valued the convenience and service of shops on the platform, aligning with the research of Jutarat Kiadrasamee (2015), which found that factors influencing consumer purchases via online applications in Bangkok and its vicinity had a positive effect on their decision to buy products online. Identifiable application, reliable customer data storage, secure payment systems, clear policies on customer data collection, convenience and security in tracking payment and delivery from the application, and immediate customer service in case of errors, such as wrong product delivery, were among these factors. These factors indicate that a secure payment system and the protection of customer data are crucial for online retail shopping.

The COVID-19 situation was found to greatly motivate purchasing behavior, with 53.6% of respondents indicating that it influenced their purchasing decisions. The reasons for choosing a product and the timing of the purchase were related to this motivation. Most consumers purchased for personal use, and preferred to shop between 18:00 and 05:59. This does not align with the research of Jeeranan Wuttiornpattara Siriuhk Rakthin Syamol Lumlongrut (2019), which studied the factors influencing consumer behavior in purchasing second-hand furniture in Thailand. It was found that the purpose of purchasing was related to the behavior of buying second-hand furniture. Consumers who bought for resale spent more money on second-hand furniture than those who bought for personal use or for occasional resale, with the highest average purchase per time being 25,192 baht. The inconsistency in research results may be due to different circumstances and times of the researchers.

6. Conclusion

This research study examined only two online channels. It is suggested that business operators should increase their channels for product communication, enhancing their Public Relations strategy, using news to attract consumers. This marketing strategy is deemed suitable for the current lifestyle environment where various media have increased influence in society. Such strategy helps to boost positive attitudes towards the product among consumers and can create a good image for the product as well. The research found that customers most often encounter products from stores through advertisements.

As the Covid-19 situation begins to ease, consumers' needs may change from the past, but the rate of online shopping does not decrease. Therefore, the researcher hopes that this will be beneficial to readers or business operators to further plan marketing or business plans to align with current consumption the most. The research found that the majority of customers are females, aged between 20 and not exceeding 40 years old, self-employed, with an income of 10,001 – 30,000 Baht. The most chosen type of product is sofas/chairs, the time to purchase the product is 18.00 -23.59 hrs., and they usually inquire for more product details from the store before deciding to purchase the product. Moreover, the research found that there is a relationship between demographic aspects and buying behavior, such as gender and type of product, time of purchasing, etc. Hence, business operators can benefit from this relationship in planning marketing strategies, promoting products online appropriately. For example, males often buy sofas, chairs, and usually buy from 18.00 hrs. onwards. Therefore, if the products that the business operator has are of this type, they can choose to advertise specifically for this group, which increases the chances of sales, which is very beneficial to the business operators.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this manuscript. In addition, the ethical issues, including plagiarism, informed consent, misconduct, data fabrication and/or falsification, double publication and/or submission, and redundancies have been completely observed by the authors.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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