

FROM FUNCTIONAL INTO POSITIONAL DESIRE

The Transforming of Ethical Consumer Decision on Religiosity Perspective

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengasumsikan bahwa perilaku konsumen dapat dilihat sebagai suatu bidang multi-disiplin dengan sub-disiplin yang lebih maju. Penelitian ini melibatkan paradigma baru dalam memandang perilaku konsumen. Riset perubahan konsumen merupakan pendekatan yang relatif baru dalam memahami identitas konsumen. Berpijak pada kenyataan bahwa banyak orang mengkonsumsi sesuatu bukan hanya untuk memenuhi kebutuhan akan tetapi keinginan mereka. Untuk itu, mereka harus menghabiskan banyak uang terus menerus sehingga Islam melarang dan menyebutnya *israf*, perilaku buruk, *tabdzir*, bahkan dapat membuat strata sosial di masyarakat. Hal ini menjadi menarik untuk dianalisis bagaimana pergeseran ini terjadi. Desain penelitian ini adalah kualitatif dan berbicara tentang keputusan konsumsi oleh manusia dimana banyak faktor yang mempengaruhinya seperti budaya dan religiusitas. Religiusitas juga berperan dalam proses pengambilan keputusan. Di samping itu, konsumsi dipandang dari perspektif identitas moral, perlu integrasi antara sistem moral dan diri. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa hasrat memiliki hubungan yang mendalam dengan proses imitasi, identitas diri dan komitmen agama serta adanya fenomena pergeseran tentang fungsi nilai: dari fungsional menjadi hasrat posisional yang terjadi di sekitar masyarakat.

Keyword: desire; consuming decision; religiosity.

INTRODUCTION

Ethics has been one of the principal issues in economy, even in Islamic perspective, in public and private sector. This research will try to understanding what actually happen from somebody before he or she

makes the decision to consume about something. It is very simple to look but it needs the deeply intention form many factors that probably cause it be a good or bad decision. Undoubtedly, sensory stimulation in modern condition is dominated especially by the visual (Falk, 1994: 11). Its closer connected with cultural dimension, that the human body as cultural entity is always already a subject interacting with the “outside” in term of representations (Falk, 1994: 12). In many ways, the environment and culture often influence the consumer character. Its very dangerous because it can stimulate the bad decision and bad behaviour consuming. Not only because it related with spend a lot of money, that in Islam is prohibited and it call *israf*, a bad behavior, *tabdzir*, but also make class structuring of society. Lee said that the value stolen from one of class from another class happened. This research involved the new paradigm of consumer behaviour. As we know that the decision is very important for someone before he behave later. That’s transformation consumer decision, from functional into potitional desire. Firstly we know that things or commodity is object as usual, after they became the needy. As an object thing, the commodity changes from the functional desire and ideal meaning into positional desire and symbolic meaning.

As symbolic meaning, the people get more the commodity more than others, to make their high value. But its important to note that the ethical decision making of an individual could be influenced by many factors like the individual attributes, social and cultural environment (Rashid, 2008: 907). By the background of research that we mention before, we have distinctive question that needs a holistic analysis. The question is are there happen the transformation in consuming decision? If we found, how the process of transformation happen in Islamic perspective?

This research has two data source, are primary data source, that is the literature which serve the concept of psychology decision, the culture, the self concept and self identity, and the norm of consumption in Islamic perspective, from the journal and other document which mention about the concept directly. The secondary data source, that is the document or journal which mention about the concept we need indirectly. The circular model will be arising comparison between the data to identify, to develop and to connect the concepts into research object (Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, 1998), that’s the transformation of consumer decision in Islamic perspective.

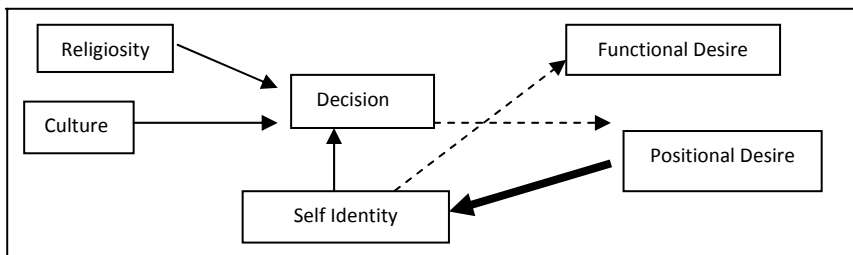
RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Theoretical Foundation

Belk (1988) said that material object will be important thing in developing human identity and reflection of that: who we are, our perception about ourself, and self esteem (influenced from what we have) (Lee, 2006: 45). So, this research clearly see many dimensions: self identity, the meaning of consumption, ethics in Islamic prespective like what Afzalur Rahman and Abdul Manan stated and other scholars had also, and culture, that simultaneously makes the transformation of consuming behaviour happen. Similar with structuralism scholar like Baudrillard Daughlas and Isherwood, that the material meaning from onething can be separate from the social meaning. By this, onething has two meaning: material and social. It is very important for the next development culture.

From religion prespective, Fararo and Skrovestz (1986) said that it produces both formal and informal norms and provides people with freedom/ constraint duality by prescribing behaviors within some acceptable boundaries, such norms, values and beliefs are often codified into a relious code such as the Koran (Parboteah, 2008: 387). The religiousness could affect ethical decision making in three ways, namely the cultural environment, the personal characteristic dan religion., which is often a dominant basis for individual ‘s deontological norms. Thus religiousness has some influence on people’s values, habits and attitude (Rashid, 2008: 907). Magil (1992) mentioned that personal religiosity provides a basic foundation to understand the nature of one’s ethical behavior. In other word, the behavior influenced by religious self identity (Rashid, 2008: 909). Relationship between religion, culture and self identity into decision making as a transformation process can be learn in figure 1.

Figure 1.
The Process of Transformation Consumer Decision



Anyone who has actually made an important decision, however, knows that thinking is only part of what goes on, and not always the most important part. Making a decision is not just a matter of deliberating thinking, it involves strong emotions as well. Emotions were seen as a source of irrationality, and therefore as something that had to be kept under control. As a result, decision related emotions were pushed to the edge of research attention, or ignored altogether (Beach, 2005).

McDaniel and Burnett (1990) defined religiosity as a belief in God accompanied by a commitment to follow principles believed to be set by God. They suggested that religiosity could be measured in terms of cognitive and behavioral dimension. Even Okleshen and Hoyt (1996) showed evidence to support that religious orientation affect an individual's moral reasoning (Beach, 2008: 909). But now many evidence about consumption not to fullfil the human need anymore, but they more looks like to get a higher value, and then rising the class structuring, like Fearsthone said that the new middle class same with their freely life style and more expressive (Lury, 1998:136).

Religiosity is very likely to be an antecedent of self-control. Religion facilitates self-control by providing standards for the individual. Furthermore, religion provides one's self control mechanism with the necessary for actually exercising self control. Geyer and Baumeister (2005) mentioned that religious beliefs can supply one with the "motivation, hope and comfort that can allow them to maintain virtuous behavior," even when this may be difficult. Additionally, religion may even "reinforce the power of guilt for promoting prosocial behavior" because religion provides one with clear moral standards enabling one to know when he or she fails to meet these standards. In short, religion clearly tends to impact self control in variety ways, and this has been supported by empirical research.

In recent study, Welch et.al (2006) found that people high in religiosity tend to exhibit a higher level of a self-control. They specifically point out that "the effect of religiosity may be especially intense among those with strong self-control". Furthermore, a study by Rohrbaugh and Jessor (1975) showed that religiosity directly and positively influenced self control. However, neither the Welch et.al. (2006) nor Rohrbaugh and Jessor (1975) study measured extrinsic religiosity as assessed by the Allport and Ross (1967) measurement. Rather, both studies measured intrinsic aspects of religiosity, and

subsequently concluded that religiosity was a single factor (Vitellet.al., 2009: 604).

Analysis

Consumer decision making model has various approaches. Schiffman and Kanuk (2007: 513) proposed a model that consists of input, process and output. The input include external influence that affect consumer in making decision such as the marketing effort of an organization (product, promotion, price and place/ distribution) as well as the socio-cultural environment (family, informal, resource, other non-commercial resource, social class and culture). The process of consumer behavior decision making consists of needs, recognition, pre-purchase search, alternative evaluation, psychological realm (motivation, perception, learning, personality and attitude), as well as experience. The output of consumer decision making is the form of post-purchase behavior in the decision making that is the purchase itself (tries and re-purchase behavior) and post-purchase evaluation (Ismail and Rohman, 2013: 67).

Prescriptive decision theory relies on the assumption that all value, whatever its source, can be measured on one scale, called utility. Further, it is assumed that the utility of an anticipated outcome of a decision is some combination (usually the sum) of the utilities of each of the outcome's component parts. These are very convenient assumptions, because both theory and application would become quite complicated if different classes of outcomes and components of outcomes were to have different kinds of simple manner. Of course, different kinds of utility are precisely what is implied by Thaler's (1985) work on "mental accounting", but the differences that Thaler has identified are perhaps less disruptive to first generation theory than those implied by a deontological analysis.

The difference between social and deontological influences on decision are subtle but important. At the risk of oversimplifying, social norms exercise their influence by threatening approbation and ostracism if they are violated. In contrast, moral and ethics, although they derive from the community, are internal to the decision maker, exercising their influence by a sense of obligation, commitment and duty, with conscience (and perhaps avoidance of guilt) rather than fear providing the motivation.

Etzioni (1988) begins his exploration of deontological influences of decision making with three questions. The first is about what the decision maker is trying to do. The utilitarian answer is that he or she is trying to maximize pleasure or self-interest. The social answer is that he or she is conforming to social norms and cultural demands in order to avoid punishment. The deontological view is that, indeed, decision makers evaluate their options in light of utilitarian and social considerations, but both of these are subsidiary to moral and ethical considerations. That is, utility, social norms, and morals must be taken into account if we are to understand human decision making.

The second question is about how decision makers choose the means for doing what they are trying to do. The utilitarian view is that they weigh the costs and benefits and select the course of action that promises the greatest net utility. The social view is that they select the course of action that conforms to the expectations of their reference group or the larger community. The deontological view is that they use their emotions and value judgments to reject courses of action that violate their moral or ethical codes or to select courses of action that are compatible with or prescribed by those codes.

The third question is about who makes decisions. The utilitarian answer is that individual decision makers do so on their own. The social answer is that, in effect, the decision is made by the reference group or community because it sets down the rules about how to behave, and the decision maker merely conforms to those rules. The deontological answer is that individuals make decisions in the context of groups and communities, guided by their own moral and ethical principles, which in large part from those groups and communities (Beach & Connolly, 2005: 154-156).

Transformative consumer research is a relatively new approach in understanding consumer identity, as researchers have highlighted the link between public policy and consumer response (Mick, 2008; Ozanne, 1992; Ozanne&Saatcioglu, 2008). Disadvantaged or vulnerable consumers have been studied (Hill, 1991; Hill and Stamey, 1990). Adkins and Ozanne (2005) study low-literate consumers, Wong and King (2008) research patients with chronic diseases, Kjeldgaard and Askegaard (2006) study children and adolescent consumers and Crockett and Wallendorf (2004) focus on minority consumers. Moisio and Beruschvalli (2010) explore the supportive community of Weight Watchers. The dark side of consumption-obsessive and compulsive

behaviors, such as uncontrolled credit card debt, alcoholism and other addictions- has also received attention (Bernthal, Crockett, and Rose, 2005; Henry 2010; Penalzoa and Barnhart, 2011) (see Li and Joy, 2012: 149). It should to know about why many people change their behavior in consumption through the concept of body. Geabuer (1982) mentioned that the history of the instrumentalizing and individualizing of the body is also the history of the equalizing of bodies. Organically connected with this is the birth of the general concept of body.

The formation from the trend in human scientific discourse. In the 'oldest' archaeological stratum of human scientific discourse, anatomical-clinical medicine, the dead body really is the 'model of the body', as has been pointed out by Baudrillard (1982), but examination of the pathological corpse at the same time provides the key to the mysteries of the living body (Foucault, 1976). In anatomical-clinical medicine, the human body features simultaneously as both a generally (a body) and as individual (medical) case. In this dual role the human being and especially the human body, becomes in object and medium for positive knowledge (Foucault, 1976). Man is objectified (the body in general) but is also subjectified and individualized (as a case).

On the other hands, the equalizing of bodies is a political process: it is a thread in the development of a (modern) society of equals. Gebaurer (1982) calls this concept based on the equality of the bodies 'symbol theoretical' and further distinguishes it from the 'quasi-biological' concept of the human body that still prevailed in the sixteenth century.

According to the latter concept the body is the bearer of certain given biological properties, which biological properties to a great extent conformed with the social (estate) position of the bearer. The various estates in fact represented different races: the peasant was also physically 'peasant-like', as distinct from the nobleman and his body, just as a workhorse differs from a thoroughbred racing horse. Gebaurer (1982) explained that according to 'symbol theoretical' concept that really gained ground in the nineteenth century (that is, alongside the anatomical-clinical concept of the body), the body is more of a 'symbolic manifestation' of certain properties.

One interesting approach to this theme is developed by Jean Baudrillard (1981) especially in his (earlier) interpretation of capitalist commodity production as 'sign production' and of consumption as consumption of sign. It is precisely capitalist commodity production as

mass production, that creates the prerequisites for the birth of (relatively) independent 'language of goods'. The world of goods constitutes a constantly growing and shifting system of signs which consumers use in their (silent) speech. This system of sign has a productive effect its users, as a language in general. But in addition it also has its own dynamics as capitalistic commodity production (Falk, 1994: 54-55).

This research should to learn about utility theory which is another way of assigning numbers to events and not a theory about what is valuable to decision makers. In application, however, utility theory is used to represent preferences among potential (or obtained) outcomes of a decision, and the question is how usefully it does its job. As Yates (1990) has pointed out, there are two ways of relating preference to the 'objective' value of outcomes. The first is called a *value function*, which represents the increase in the strength of the decision maker's preference as a function of the outcomes' objective value. It is as if there were a scale in the decision maker's head on which the various outcomes are placed, such that the ordering of their locations are consistent (higher scale values mean higher preference), and the distances between the ordered outcomes (the scale is ordinal). This first kind of scale is the most common view of utility –the relative preference of various outcomes. The second way of relating preference to the objective value of outcomes is called a *utility function*. Here the assumption is that preference reflects both the value of the outcome to the decision maker and his or her feelings about risk (i.e uncertainty about wheter the outcome will or will not occur) (Beach and Connolly, 2005: 74-75).

The whole economic system is redefined in the marginalistic theory. Goux (1990) pointed that the three 'factors of production' capital, labour and land (nature) –are complemented by the energetic principle of *desire* which takes a primary position in relation to the three other factors, as the prime stimulus to the economy. If the basis for and 'cause' of economic values does not concern primarily the satisfaction of the desire itself. Otherwise there would not be any production of 'value'. The consumer society outlined in marginalists economics is at once a society of abundance and of scarcity. It must produce both plenty and paucity, both repletion and appetite, satisfaction and desire. Desire itself is conceived of as socially constructed and as a phenomenon gaining general significance in the mobile modern condition, making both

positions and possessions more attainable than ever before –starting from the higher levels of the hierarchy and expanding gradually to the lower ones.

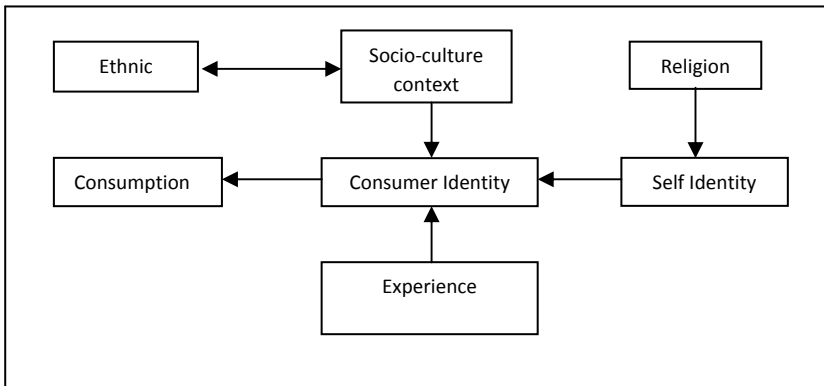
Tarde (1962: 215) reduces to a dyadic situation, they end by imitating each other reciprocally, although, of the two, the one imitates much more, the other much less. He replaces the energetic principle of desire with that of imitation. Imitation is regarded as contagious aspect of social interaction reaching from the lower level of stimulus and response (contagious yawn or laughter) to the higher level of ideas and manners. Tarde's concept of imitation gains the status of a transcendental principle and in this respect it is reminiscent of the concept of mimetic desire' presented by Rene Girard (1977). Furthermore, his mimetic desire is postulated as a universal principle of human conduct and cultural evolution, and even beyond this applicable in an ethological context too. A desire expressed toward an object is not constituted due to its representational role –'as standing for', being symbol of, or representing something valued and desired. An object is desired only derivatively on the basis of an imitative relation to the other subject; proceeding 'from within to without' to 'expression', or by adopting mimetically the other's desire (Falk, 1994: 117-119).

Of course this analysis need the Islamic caring about this paradigm. As Shacht said that *Shari'ah* concern itself with all areas of human activity, not always in an imposing and overbearing way, but in the form of moral encouragement and persuasion. It thus helps to provide the individual with a code of reference consisting of moral, legal and cultural values that can be reassuring and purposeful. It is due primarily to the influence of *tawhid* that the *Shari'ah* has been characterised as a coherent body of doctrines that "guarantees its unity in all its diversity" (Shacht, 1964: 200). Human acts and relationships are measured on a scale of values which is reflective of its unity of origin and purpose (Kamali, 1989: 215-218).

In religiosity and consumer behavior, self identity becomes the next key that's play important role in consuming decision making. When someone has adopted value and beliefs of particular sub-culture, then this person's identity will be bind tighter to the particular sub culture that he has adopted (Green, 2001 in Ismail and Rohman, 2013). In the sociology perspective, Soekanto (1990) stated that social interaction is the main factor in social life: the form of social interaction can be either associative or dissociative processes. The associative process may guide

us to the acculturation and assimilation on certain culture. The interaction among sub cultures initially will help people to build then define an identity that someone takes when he joins certain sub culture. According to Shamir (1992) identity has two elements: first, it is an identity that is commonly labeled that shows how far a person reacts to the sub-culture activity into his self-concept. Second, social identity that is commonly labeled that represents how far this person know them within the activities that he has for the particular sub-culture. So, identity plays principal role in consumption (Green in Ismail and Rohman, 2013: 67). Briefly the role of identity in consuming decision and relation with religion is drawn in figure 2.

Figure 2
The Process of Consumer Identity



It has been argued that religion is highly personal in nature and therefore its effects on consumer behavior depend on individuals' level of religious commitment or the importance placed on religion in their life. McDaniel and Burnett (1990) investigated the influence of religiosity on the importance of various retail department store attributes held by consumers. The result show that one aspect of religiosity, religious commitment, particularly measured by cognitive religiosity and one aspect of behavioral religiosity are significant in predicting the importance individuals place on certain retail evaluative criteria.

Consumers with a high degree of cognitive religious commitment viewed sales personal friendliness, shopping efficiency and product quality as being of greater importance in selecting a retail store than did those low in cognitive religious commitment. Religious

contribution, a behavioral component of religious commitment, was positively and significantly associated with sales personnel friendliness/ assistance and credit availability.

Religious commitment has been measured both cognitively (feeling or affect) and behaviorally. The cognitive dimension focuses on the individual's belief or personal religious experience while the behavioral dimension concerns the level activity in organized religious activities. These two dimensions of religiosity appear theoretically sound and empirically substantiated and investigations into religiosity effects must consider both factors. Individuals may perceive themselves to be highly religious (cognitive component) but for whatever reason, are not behaviourally expressive in their religious beliefs, e.g. they do not attend church, tithes and so forth (behavioral component) or they may be motivated to give generously of their time and money to organized religion by appeals to their for prestige and social appearances while not ascribing strongly to religious precepts (Mokhlis, 2009: 79).

Safiek found that both dimension of religiosity (intrapersonal and interpersonal) may be significant in predicting certain aspects of shopping orientation. More specifically, three shopping orientation factors, namely price conscious, quality conscious and impulsive shopping, were found in the present study to be consistently related to religiosity. It appears that highly religious individuals, as defined by both intrapersonal and interpersonal measures of religiosity are most likely to be concerned with price (i.e. prone to look for deals), look for quality in product when they shop and less likely to make impulsive purchase decision.

CONCLUSION

This research found that desires have a deep relation with imitation process, self identity and religious commitment. In many cases, someone would like to do something like consumption not based on the equality between goals and plans anymore but on the maximum satisfaction. Not on are the object actually give an utility or function to helps one's need, but to gain the position between social interaction, so it's easily for us to look ourselves or around we stay, the people will buy something, again, again and again without they do not know, are they actually need or just wants to buy (impulsive behavior). The pointed that show us, there was unbalance between goals and plans on behavior

purchasing. So the shifting phenomena about value function: from functional into positional desire happened around people.

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