

**FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENT'S BOOKS BUYING BEHAVIOR IN
MALAYSIA HIGHER LEARNING INSTITUTIONS**

Teh Teik Lee

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ABSTRAK

Kepentingan pengajian tinggi yang semakin meningkat (Mahdzan & Fauziah, 1999) dengan bertambahnya bilangan kemasukan pelajar sememangnya akan meningkatkan pembelian buku di pasaran pengajian tinggi. Tetapi, jualan buku teks didapati jauh berkurangan daripada yang dianggar. Penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji tahap dan corak pembelian buku serta factor-faktor pasaran yang mempengaruhi kelakuan pembelian buku oleh pelajar di institusi pengajian awam dan swasta di Malaysia. Rangka kerja teori diambil dari model Cohen (1991) berserta dengan hipotesis untuk menguji perhubungan di antara 4Ps dan gantian terhadap buku yang dibeli. Rekabentuk kajian kuantitatif dengan borang soal selidik diedar untuk mengumpul data yang digunakan dalam analisis statistik untuk menguji model dan hipotesis dalam penyelidikan ini. Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa jantina, jenis institusi, kursus, jenis program, tahun pengajian dan sumber kewangan mempengaruhi corak pembelian buku oleh pelajar. Hipotesis yang diterima menunjukkan bahawa isi kandungan, promosi, kewujudan gantian dan alternatif mempengaruhi bilangan buku yang dibeli. Hipotesis yang ditolak menunjukkan bahawa tiada perhubungan diantara nilai produk, harga, kedai buku dan bilangan buku yang dibeli. Hasil kajian ini juga menyokong hipotesis bahawa pengaruh pensyarah ke atas pembelian buku adalah berkesan apabila nilai buku rendah, peluang mendapatkan gantian tinggi, harga buku tinggi dan promosi berkurangan. Sumbangan hasil kajian ini meningkatkan kefahaman terhadap pasaran buku teks di institusi penagajian tinggi di Malaysia. Ia berharap akan memanfaatkan golongan akademik, pencetak dan penjual buku supaya mengetahui kesan factor luaran ke atas corak pembelian buku di kalangan pelajar, dan juga kepentingan pengaruh pensyarah ke atas pembelian buku oleh pelajar.

ABSTRACT

The growing importance of higher education (Mahdzan & Fauziah, 1999) with the rapid growth of student enrollments is expected to increase the textbooks purchase in higher education market. However, the textbook sales seem to be much lower than the expected. This study undertakes to explore the current level and patterns of textbook purchase and the influence of external market factors on student's books buying in public and private institutions in Malaysia. The theoretical framework adapted from Cohen's (1991) buying decision process model proposed hypotheses to assess the relationship between the 4Ps and substitutions and the books purchased. Quantitative research design with a survey questionnaire used to gather data for descriptive data analysis, factor analysis and regression analysis to validate the theoretical model and to test the proposed hypotheses in the study. The findings showed that gender, institution types, courses, program mode, year of study and source of funding have impact on the student's books buying pattern. Hypotheses were accepted where product content, promotion, availability of substitutions and alternatives have significant influence on the textbooks purchased. Hypotheses were rejected where there were insufficient evidence to support the relationship of product value, price and availability of books and the textbooks purchased. Besides, the hypotheses were accepted where the lecturer has significant moderating effect on the relationships when low product value, high substitution opportunities, high price and low promotion. The major contribution of this study towards better understanding of current textbook market in Malaysia would benefit the academicians, publishers and booksellers in knowing the impacts of external factors on student's books buying pattern and the importance of lecturer in influencing student's books purchase.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Education being one of the most important elements in ensuring the progressive and continuous growth and development of a nation, has been given highest attention by most governments especially in developing countries (Mahdzan & Fauziah, 1999). Malaysia, as a developing country, is in need of continuous supply of qualified professional and skilled workers to fill the work force at all areas of expertise. Hence, tertiary education becomes an essential enrollment after one completes secondary education. In view of increasing market demands, public universities are challenged to increase the intakes of students each year, followed by the mushrooming of private higher educational institutions that offer various alternatives for the students to obtain their diplomas and degrees (Lee, 2002)

1.2. Background

In Malaysia, government funded higher learning institutions includes public universities, polytechnics, public colleges and community colleges. Private funded higher learning institutions comprise of private colleges, private universities and foreign universities having branch campuses in Malaysia. There are currently 16 local public universities and one international university providing undergraduate and postgraduate studies for Malaysian and also foreign students. Student intakes in these government funded higher learning institutions reach 80,000 annually (Study In Malaysia handbook, 2002). On the other hand, numbers of private funded learning institutions in Malaysia seems increase dramatically in recent years. With

liberalization and privatization of education at tertiary level after year 1996, sources from Private Education Department (see Table 1.1) indicated that there are about 11 private universities, 516 private colleges and 5 foreign university branch campuses with enrolment of more than 270,900 students including 15,000 international students. These private funded higher learning institutions offer a wide range of diploma and franchised degree programs with extensive links to their foreign university partners. This shows the rapid growing trend of higher education in Malaysia.

Table 1.1
Number of Private Universities and Colleges in Malaysia (2002)

IPTS (Private Higher Educational Institution)	Number
Private University	11
Private University Branch Campus in Malaysia	3
University College	1
Foreign University Branch Campus in Malaysia	5
Private Colleges / Institutes (Non-University status)	516
Total	536

Source: Jabatan Pendidikan Swasta, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2002)

Books as conventional media in facilitating the classroom teaching process remain its primary role in the tertiary education institutions. With significance increase of student enrolments in both public and private funded higher learning institutions each year (see Table 1.2), the textbook market becomes the main focus by both local and foreign publishers. The potential growth in the textbook market has been encouraging with the implementation of using English as the teaching medium in Science and Mathematics subjects at all primary and secondary schools in Malaysia. Government's support on the recruitment of foreign students into private higher learning institutions further expands the textbook market's growth potential. Therefore, it is interested to explore if the students in higher learning institutions are

buying the textbooks for the courses they are enrolled in, giving the facts of textbook market expansion.

Table 1.2
Number of Students Enrolled in Private Universities and Colleges in Malaysia (2001)

IPTS (Private Higher Educational Institution)	Academic Streams			Total
	Arts	Science	Technology	
Private University	5,988	6,993	6,215	19,196
Private University Branch Campus	3,580	791	1,061	5,432
Foreign University Branch Campus	1,369	689	383	2,432
Private College / Institute	123,281	87,374	33,189	243,844
Total	134,209	95,847	40,848	270,904

Source: Jabatan Pendidikan Swasta, Kemeterian Pendidikan Malaysia (2001)

The Association of American Universities Research Libraries estimated that 20% of scientific and medical literature is likely to be transformed into digital form by year 2015 (McPherson, 1996). The electronic publishing trend may also transform the entire publishing industry into a paperless environment. As such, it would certainly impact the book dealers and retailers that distribute the books via bookshop as it significantly reduces the number of books purchased by the students (Wilson, 1997).

Wills (1996) defined electronic publishing as the use of electronics in a cost-effective manner to facilitate the publishing processes. As argued by Donald (2003), electronic publishing can be substantially cheaper than producing and distributing printed materials with the use of network and storage technology. However, McPherson (1996) stated that electronic printing might not reduce the initial costs of publishing that associated with peer review and marketing costs. Nevertheless, there are benefits in e-publishing (Wills & Wills, 1996) which included the ease of search ability and ease of maintaining the information up to date. Problem associated with

the electronic version of books is the portability of the content and the physical feel of the product. With the possible conversion of physical textbooks in electronic form in near future, students may then have opportunities to substitute the physical textbooks with electronic media. This may result in low purchase of physical textbooks by the students.

There are very few articles and research on Malaysian publishing industry and statistics on publications are also not widely available. However, foreign publishers remain the major players in the book market, representing about 90% of the titles available in Malaysia (Hoffman, 1994). As to fulfill the market demand on a timely manner, some foreign publishers print the books locally and Malaysia publishers' also buying copyrights on foreign titles and publish them for local market. The English language textbook market as of today is still shared by United States and United Kingdom publishers. However, Hoffman (1994) suggested that American books have greater presence in higher education market as compared to British books. He also argued that importers often causing delay in delivering new titles to Malaysia as to wait for less expensive paperback editions.

1.3. Problem Statement

The existing higher education textbook market in Malaysia is large and there is high potential for rapid growth in the near future. Hence, one would expect that publishers of academic textbooks would enjoy great profits once the books are adopted as main texts in the courses offered in higher learning institutions. However, a survey conducted on University Malaya students (Tey, 2002) revealed that 14% of students never buy any book in a semester. A similar survey conducted on students in United Kingdom universities (Publishers Association, 2003) concluded the same

findings that textbooks purchase among students in higher learning institutions seems not much encouraging. The feedback from local and foreign publishers admitted that sales of textbooks in higher education market seems to be not in consistence with the growth of student enrollment in higher learning institutions. It is therefore critical to explore the current level of textbooks purchase by students in Malaysia higher learning institutions and the provide insights on the factors that influence the book purchase.

As we may be aware, each year the government spends millions of dollars providing scholarships and education loans to thousands of students enrolled in public universities and colleges. Similarly, private institutions have also facilitated various education funds aiming to provide financial assistance for students to complete their study in private colleges. Hence, it is interesting to explore if the students are making good use of the abovementioned financial assistance in purchasing textbooks adopted in the courses they enrolled.

In some courses, lecturers may distribute lecture notes as course supplement materials. Students may therefore solely rely on these lecture notes to prepare for their examination. Questions may be raised on whether it is the right attitude of acquiring knowledge without having to read at least one recommended textbook in the course. Some may argue that there are other alternative sources of acquiring information such as getting the books from library, source second hand books from seniors or browsing the Internet. However, lecturer's encouragement may influence student book purchase decision if the textbook is adopted as main reference in the course. It is very common to find at least one photocopy shop either inside or outside campus of every colleges and universities. The photocopy shops provide convenience for making copies of

printed materials including textbooks. Awareness on copyrights is often ignored, as concern is more on savings made when students photocopy the entire textbook.

In summary, the problem of this study is that the mushrooming of higher learning institutions with the rapid growth of student enrollments seems not matching the level of textbooks purchase by students. It is therefore interested to understand the level and the pattern of textbook purchase by students in higher learning institutions in Malaysia and the external factors such as product, price, place, promotions and substitutions effect that influence the student's books buying behavior, in specific within the northern region. It is also critical to understand if the lecturers as an important facilitator in determining the textbooks to be used for the courses, could influence the students in books buying decision. With the threat of substitutions, alternative resources and uncontrolled copyrights infringement, an understanding of student's books buying behavior can provide insights to the problem and one that would then encourage students to purchase and read more books.

1.4. Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to explore the current level and pattern of textbooks purchase and the influence of external factors such as product, price, place, promotion and substitutions on the textbooks purchase by students in higher learning institutions. Books as the conventional media of information goods play a major role in knowledge distribution. Students in higher learning institutions, being the largest market for higher education textbooks, are having various alternatives in acquiring knowledge, besides having to buy books. In addition, the enforcement authorities have not addressed threats from illegal photocopying of books and copyright

infringement issues. Thus, this study intends to understand student's books buying behavior and the reasons for non-purchase.

Specifically, this research aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To understand the current level of textbook purchase by students in public and private higher learning institutions
2. To find the pattern of textbook purchase with student demographics
3. To investigate external factors i.e. product, price, promotion, place and substitutions that influence student's books buying in higher education textbook market.
4. To investigate lecturer's role as a moderator in influencing student's books buying decision.

1.5. Research Questions

Having the research objectives stated above, this research attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of textbook purchase in higher learning institutions?
2. What is the pattern of textbook purchase by student demographics?
3. What are the impacts of external factors influencing textbook purchase by students in higher learning institutions?
4. Does the lecturer's role moderating the factors influencing higher education book purchase?

1.6. Scope of the Study

This study targets students currently enrolled in both public and private Universities and colleges in northern region of Malaysia as respondents. Three states covered in the study are Perlis, Penang and Kedah states.

1.7. Definition of Key Terms

The definitions of key terms in use in this study are listed in Table 1.3 below. The terms that appear in anywhere of this research report shall carry the meaning as described in the definitions.

Table 1.3
Definition of Key Terms

Terms	Definition
Alternatives	Other information sources such as library, e-books or Internet that may replace the use of physical textbooks
Books	Local and foreign published academic textbooks used in the courses offered in higher learning institutions
Higher Learning Institutions	Public or private institutions in Malaysia that offers tertiary academic programs
Lecturers	Instructors that facilitates the teaching of courses offered in higher learning institutions
Place	The bookshops located in Malaysia that sell academic textbooks
Private Institutions	Institutions consists of private universities, branch universities, private colleges and private institutes that registered in Malaysia
Price	The selling price of the book.
Product	The physical copy of the book.
Promotions	The marketing effort by the booksellers and/or publishers to encourage selling of the book
Public Institutions	Institutions consists of public universities, public college universities, polytechnics, matriculation center and community colleges
Respondents	Individuals who have responded to the survey questionnaire
Students	Individuals who enrolled in any tertiary academic programs in Malaysia higher learning institutions
Substitutions	Replacement products such as lecture notes, second hand books, books borrowed from friends and photocopied materials

1.8. Significance of the Study

There were very few studies conducted on student's books buying in higher learning institutions. Hence, it is essential to conduct a research to provide insight on the factors that influencing higher education textbook purchase by the students. The findings of the study is hoped to help all parties involved in taking measures that would encourage students to purchase and read more books as to better equip themselves with the knowledge and skills needed in the demanding job market. The findings also hope to help lecturers understand the importance of their presence in influencing student's books buying decision, as to encourage students to buy at least one book for the subject they enrolled.

Publishers and booksellers, with better understanding of the student's books buying behavior, may help in setting book price that is affordable. They could work closely with lecturers to ensure the content of the adopted books are appropriate and suitable for student's learning and arrange the stock availability at the right time it is needed. Lastly, the findings of the study also hope to create higher awareness on the intellectual property rights infringement on illegal photocopying of textbooks that are very common at higher learning institutions.

1.9. Organization of Remaining Chapters

This research is organized into five major chapters. The first chapter provides an introduction and background to Malaysia higher education environment, defines the problem statement of the study, sets the objective of the study, outlines the research questions, define the scope and highlights the significance of the study. The second chapter reviews literatures of previous studies on the consumer behavior, student's book purchase, marketing mix included product, price, place and promotion,

substitutions and the lecturer influence on student's books buying decision. A proposed theoretical framework is constructed at the end of the second chapter. The third chapter discusses the research methodology applied on this study covering research design, variables, sampling process, measurements and data analysis methods. Chapter four presents profile respondents, descriptive data analysis, results of factor analysis and reliability test, results of regression analysis and hypotheses testing. Finally, chapter five concludes with the recapitulation of the study, discussions, outlines implications and limitations, and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

There has been very little research undertaken on the student's books buying behavior in higher learning institutions worldwide. Dunn and Wharton (2003) in their research on the decision making process of students entering Higher National Diplomas expressed the same that university students decision making process in education have not been widely explored. Thus, this research will further explore the student's books buying behavior in higher learning institutions given the importance of understanding the tertiary textbooks market would lead to the encouragement of more textbooks purchase by students. This chapter shall covers review of related literatures in consumer buying behavior, the 4Ps of marketing mix and the student's buying decision.

2.2. Review of the Literature

2.2.1 Consumer Behavior

Foxall (1993) defined behavior as any response that involves the whole organism where its frequency can be systematically related to the consequences previously produced. In analyzing consumer markets and buyer behavior, Kotler (2003) pointed to the stimulus-response model where cultural, social, personal and psychological factors are said to have most influences to consumers' buying behavior. In a research examining how college students managing their credit cards (Muniro & Hirt, 1998), it was found that race and financial status revealed significant relationships towards college students' buying behavior. Another research about the

differences in spending habits among college students (Hayhoe, Ray, Lauren, Pamela, Bruin & Lawrence, 2000) found that gender was more influential in predicting student buying behavior. The result showed evidence of the influence of gender on the types of goods purchased. Hence, student demographics have impacts while investigating purchase behavior of books by students in higher learning institutions (Hayhoe, et. al., 2000)

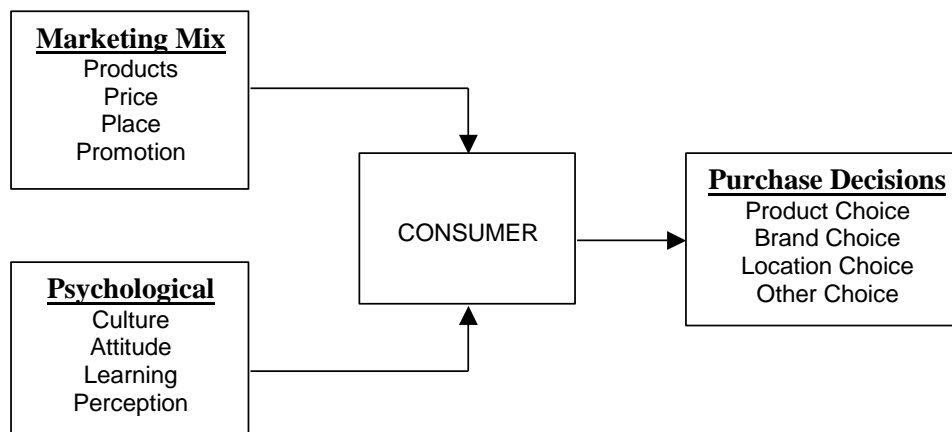
2.2.2 Student's Book Purchase

The most recent survey conducted by Book Marketing Limited (BML) in year 2003, on behalf of the Council of Academic and Professional Publishers (CAPP) in Europe (Publishers Association, 2003), revealed that books remain the most used information source in higher learning institutions. The survey also supported the trend where first year students are the most likely ones to buy books as compared to their seniors. This trend is consistent with the Higher Education Impact Assessment Survey conducted by Total Research for Council of Academics and Professional Publisher in year 2002 (Hahessy, Carr & Forrester, 2002) where the survey found first year students buy 20% more of the books than fourth year students. This shows year of study of students is a factor on students book buying. However, they only make use of 50% or less of the contents of the book purchase. Thus, frequency of usage of the books may determine the intention for book purchase. Another important finding in the above survey was students major in Business study tend to buy more books than those major in Science. This trend indicated that course of study of students may contribute to the variation of book purchase. Wilson (1994) in his research on students information needs also reported that students seldom buy new books but resorted in

alternative methods such as library, internet or second hand books to obtain required information.

2.2.3 Marketing Mix

The model of buying decision process by Cohen (1991) as shown in Figure 2.1 suggested that the 4Ps of marketing mix that is product, place, promotion and price are the major inputs on top of psychological inputs such as culture, attitude, learning and perception. These inputs lead to purchase decisions such as selection of product, brand and location choices.



Source: http://www.marketingteacher.com/Lessons/lesson_consumer_buying_behaviour.htm

Figure 2.1. Cohen (1991): Buyer Decision Process.

Turnbull (2000) in his research on consumer behavior in purchasing of organic food products in Australia also recognized external marketing inputs as major variables on top of internalized and psychological consumer factors. In another research, Verma and Thompson (1999) who studied the management of service operations have identified the four constructs related to marketing factors which are cost, delivery, flexibility and product quality as the major determinants of customer preferences. Lofquist (1999) pointed that the educational systems, the language skills,

the pricing and availability, and the income level are the factors influencing demand for books. Further details on product, price, place and promotion and their role in textbook trade is discussed below.

2.2.4 Product

In this study, the product is the textbook that published by either local or foreign publisher. The physical appearance of the books and its pedagogy play essential role in attracting potential buyers. A book's characteristics include its size, cover page design, hardcover or paper back type, graphics and colors, contents arrangement, presentation and language difficulty. Michiyoshi (1998) in his article about some thoughts on book design, pointed that as the book face competition with the many and varied books available in the book shop, the book designer has a vital role in influencing the reader to select the book on the merits of its exterior design, beauty and readability of the arranged content. Gourville and Soman (2002) argued that the way of how buyers use the product will have a lasting impact. Their argument is justified when the customer may not even consider buying the product if it is not used at all after the purchase. This prompts into measuring the frequency of use of a product when assessing purchase intention. Thus, the physical product itself is a potential factor in influencing the sales of the product.

2.2.5 Price

Generally, the economic theory predicted that increase in pricing of the product would reduce its sales in the market. The same also applies to the sales of textbooks in tertiary education market. In the survey conducted on University Malaya student's books buying trend (Tey, 2002), while students were asked of the reasons

for non-purchase of the books, price and availability are the two main factors. Other reasons include borrowing from senior students, too many books to buy, stock unavailable and poor value perception. Kirschner (2003) in his article mentioned that all the while, textbook publishers are getting blasted over pricing, as the cost of educational books and supplies has soared 238% over the past two decades, this is partly due to students no longer buying all their required texts. Nevertheless, all major foreign publishers such as Pearson, McGraw-Hill, John Wiley and Thompson usually provide International Editions of textbooks for sale outside America and Canada. The International Editions textbooks carried special pricing that is much lower price as compared to the same textbook sold in America to encourage student purchase and address their affordability. On top of special pricing, some bookshops give extra 10% to 15% discounts to the students when facing strong market competition. Thus, the price of the book, it's perceived value and the discounts offered are important dimensions to be investigated in factors influencing student's books purchase.

2.2.6 Place

In the context of higher learning institutions, students who wanted to purchase the textbooks may either visit campus bookstores or retail bookshops outside the campus. The place where textbooks are sold plays a crucial role in terms of distribution of books to the students. Traditionally, campus bookstores supplies all required textbook as recommended by lecturers in the reading lists. However, the low barrier of entry invited many booksellers setting up textbook store nearby Universities or colleges. As reported in the article by Chin (1999), there are 11 universities in Malaysia with all the campuses are served by onsite bookshops. Several of the universities operate multiple campuses make the total number of university bookshops

increase to 15. Kukanesan (1998) pointed out that lacking of good bookshops both in urban and rural areas is ineffective as a channel of the sale of books. Thus, despite successful efforts to inculcate the reading habit and arouse interest, avenues are lack in even if there is purchasing power. Furthermore, with books being produced in electronic media, online bookstore thus evolves in facilitating the sales and distribution of books all over the world via Internet. Chin (2000) argued that conventional bookshops especially those involve in high-end book trade may lose competitiveness to online bookshops in terms of pricing, variety and delivery speeds in the long run. Thus, the bookstore presence is one of the major determinants in the book purchase decision as supported by findings from Barnes and Lorimer (1996) in researching book buying among Canadians.

2.2.7 Promotions

Promotion in marketing inputs involves creating awareness and communicating the products to potential buyers (Kotler, 2003). Ganzach, Weber and Ben (1997) in their research about message framing and buying behavior on credit card usage, concluded that negatively framed message is more persuasive in the real market environment as compared to positively framed message in promoting a consumer product. Thus, the products shall be promoted in such a way that consumers are made aware of loss in not having the product instead of the benefits of having the product. In the higher education textbook market, textbook sellers often organized book exhibitions at the beginning of each semester in the campus to promote the textbooks that have been recommended by the lecturers in the course list. The book exhibition usually encourage high sell through of the textbooks especially it is conducted nearby lecture halls. Besides, bookshop's sales representatives also

distribute promotion handouts or paste them on the school's notice board to promote the recommended textbooks. The various promotion mechanism used have directly or indirectly affected the sales of textbooks in higher learning institutions.

2.2.8 Substitutions

Beside the 4Ps of marketing inputs, another aspect of the factors that possibly influence student books buying behavior is the presence of substitutions to the textbooks recommended for the courses. Varian (2000) conducted various researches on information goods, concluded that books are often facilitated by libraries and bookstores. He further argued that the presence of library and used books stores reduce the purchase of books. Moreover, with the advances in technology, students in higher learning institutions are enjoying the benefits of retrieving information from various sources, from physical printing materials to digital texts and images just a click from their desktops. As technology continues to change in a rapid manner, Feather (1997) forecasted that when institutions fully embraced mass education, there would be a shift in information source from physical books to other information products such as electronic books and Internet resources. However, Kebede (2002) argued that the physical form or carrier in which information content is made available is still an important factor that affects users' information needs. This means printed materials in hardcopies might not be fully obsolete and replaced by electronic form. People generally feel more comfortable with the physical touch on the printed materials and conveniences of carrying the hardcopies when moving around.

Other form of substitutions to the textbooks included lecturer handouts, Internets, books borrowed from the library or friends and illegal photocopying. The most recent survey conducted by Book Marketing Limited (BML) in year 2003, on

behalf of the Council of Academic and Professional Publishers (CAPP) in Europe, revealed that books remain the most used information source in higher learning institutions. However, books owned by students have been dropped substantially when the abovementioned alternative sources are available to the students. The result from the survey also found that insufficient copies of books at libraries tend to make students more likely to buy books. At the same time, there was significant increase of students purchase second-hand books from used books stores or their seniors.

Books as other information media have high fixed cost of production but a low marginal cost of reproduction. A part of 1976 Copyright Act of America stated that photocopying should not substitute for the purchase of books. Hoffman (1994) in his article mentioned that although Malaysia has signed the Berne Convention that recognizes international copyright laws, high price of textbooks often resulted in illegal copying within students' community at the University level. The illegal photocopying remains a major threat to the business of textbook selling in higher learning institutions as pointed out by Varian (1998) that setting intellectual property laws and enforcement of such laws are two different matters in addressing illegal copying problem. A recent effort from American Association of Publishers (AAP) and Domestic Trade authorities in initiated a series of raid on photocopy shops in the state of Penang (The Star, 23 November 2003) hope to signal a strong warning to photocopy operators in respecting textbook copyrights. The prosecutions on the photocopy shop owners involved in above two raids still in progress.

2.2.9 Lecturer

In the setting of higher learning institutions, the publishers' marketing representatives would promote new textbooks to the lecturers for review before the

semester begins. Once the lecturer find the textbook suitable for the course offered, it will be listed in the course recommended reading list. For each course, usually one textbook will be identified as main text and the rest being supplement texts. The lecturer will then make the announcement while distributing the course recommended booklist to the students during the first class. Varying by the college or university's policies, the lecturer may encourage or make it mandatory for students to purchase one or more textbooks listed in the recommended reading list. The result of the survey conducted by Book Marketing Limited (BML) in year 2003, on behalf of the Council of Academic and Professional Publishers (CAPP) in Europe shown that over 70% of books purchased by the students are deemed essential as appeared on the reading list and recommended by the lecturer, while only 10% of books purchased are not on the reading list. It is therefore imperative to study if the recommendation by the lecturer moderates the relationship between the 4Ps and substitutions and the book purchase among students.

2.2.10 Summary of Literature Review

The literature review above justified the importance of marketing inputs, 4Ps (product, price, place, promotion) and substitutions in investigating factors that influence student's books purchase in Malaysia higher learning institutions. The product itself, the book's price, the bookshop location, the promotion mechanics and the availability of substitutions are variables of interest in studying student books buying behavior. Besides, student demographics such as age, gender race, program, course, year of study and source of funding are closely related to the books purchased among students. Giving time constraints, this research will adapt the model of buyer decision process from Cohen (1991), and focus only on studying the marketing inputs

and substitutions as major factors influencing students book buying behavior as shown in Figure 2.2. This model is chosen as it clearly establish the relationship of external factors towards buyer’s decision process.

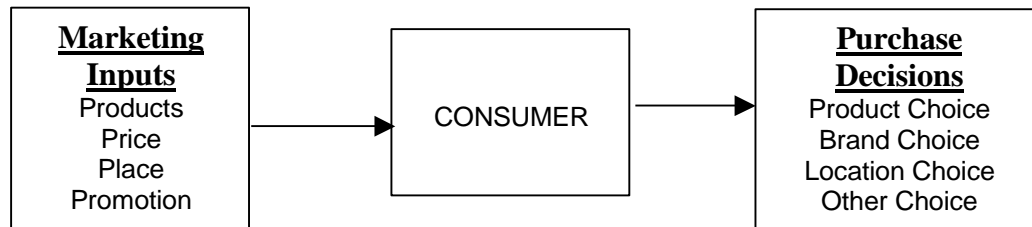


Figure 2.2. Adaptaion of Cohen’s Model in this Study.

2.3. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

From the above literature reviews, it is established that the 4Ps of marketing mix i.e. product, price, place and promotion and substitution will be used to form the conceptual framework in this study. While this study intends to explore the external marketing factors that influence student’s books buying behavior, internal factors i.e. psychological factors such as culture, attitude, learning and perception are not included in this study due to time, resource and budget constraints. The dependent variable in this study is books purchased. There are five independent variables in this study, which are product, price, place, promotion and substitution. With the nature of the lecturer as an indirect stimuli to the student purchase decision on textbooks and tends to have a strong contingent effect on the relationship between the five independent variables (product, place, price, promotion and substitution) and the dependent variable (books purchased), this research model propose the lecturer as the moderating variable. The proposed theoretical framework is as shown in Figure 2.3.

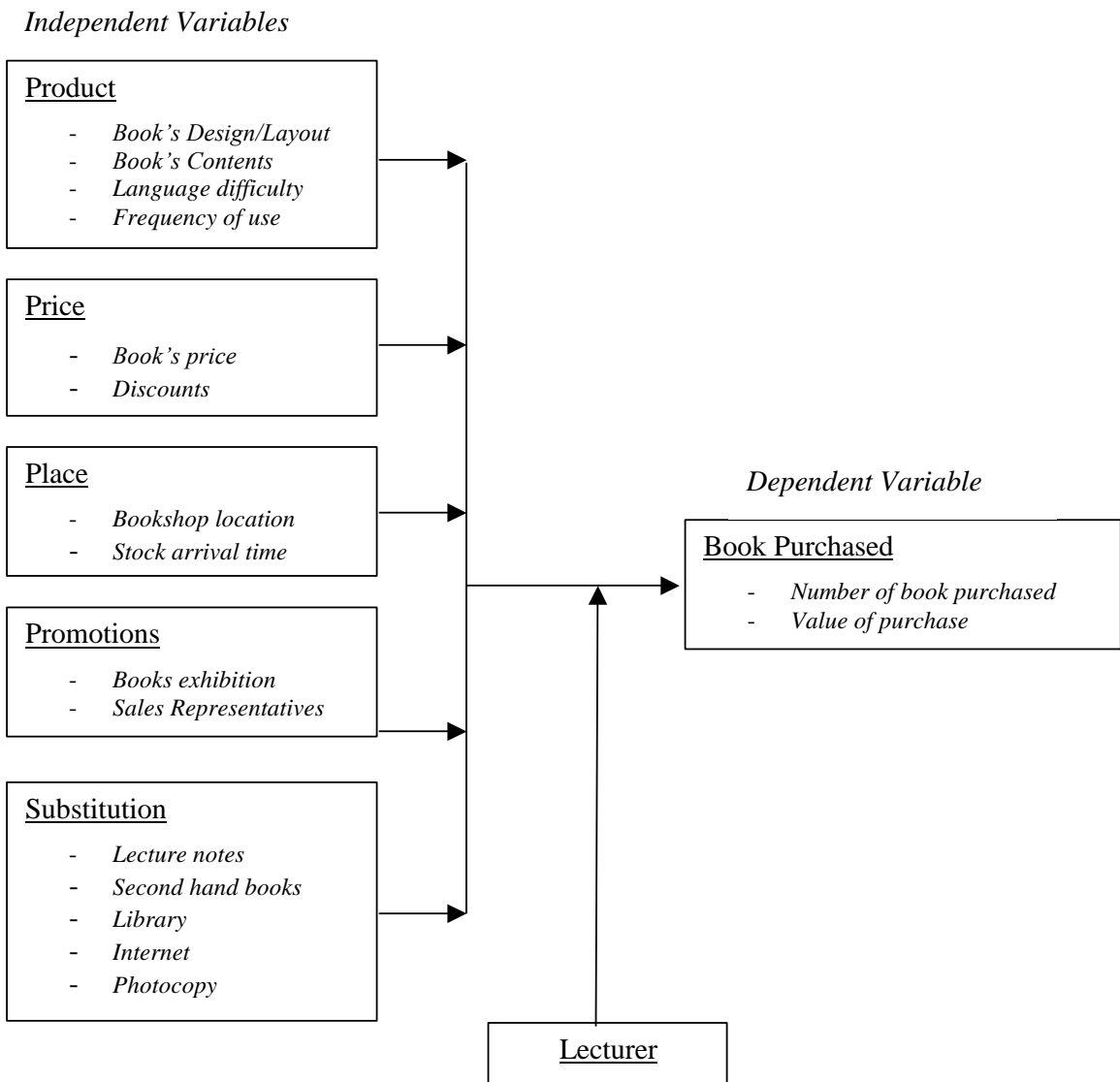


Figure 2.3. Theoretical Framework.

The objectives of this study are to investigate the factors influencing student book purchase in higher learning institutions. This theoretical model proposed six hypotheses as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1
Proposed Hypotheses

Hypotheses	
H1	The physical product of the textbook positively influences student's books purchase in higher learning institutions
H2	The high price of the textbook reduces student's books purchase in higher learning institutions
H3	The promotion by the booksellers increases student's books purchase in higher learning institutions
H4	The availability of the books in the bookshop increases student's books purchase in higher learning institutions
H5	The availability of substitutions reduces student's book purchase in higher learning institutions
H6	The lecturer's recommendation positively moderates the relationship between the external factors and the books purchased by students in higher learning institutions.

The first hypothesis proposed that the physical design of the books including its layout, contents, language used and usage have positive influence on the number and value of books purchased by the students in higher learning institutions. The second hypothesis proposed that the increase in pricing of the books would reduce the sales of the books to the students. The third hypothesis proposed that the promotions of the books by publisher's representatives and book exhibitions conducted by booksellers would increase the book purchase by students. The fourth hypothesis proposed that the sales of the books would increase if the books were readily available in the bookshop. The fifth hypothesis proposed that the availability of substitutions such as lecture notes, second hand books, library, Internet and photocopying would reduce the number and value of books purchased by the students in higher learning institutions. Lastly, the final hypothesis proposed that the lecturer's recommendation would positively moderates the relationship between the external factors including the

4Ps and substitution and the books purchased by the students in higher learning institutions.

The details on research design, variables, sampling, questionnaire design, data collection methods and data analysis will be discussed in next Chapter.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

There were past studies that explored the factors influencing consumer buying behavior as well as college students spending behavior. However, only very few research focus on student textbook buying in higher learning institutions. The purpose of this study is to examine the factors that influence student books buying behavior in tertiary education institutions. This chapter shall discuss the research design, the variables in the study, sampling, questionnaire, data collection method and data analyses.

3.2. Research Design

The nature of this study is to validate the theoretical model and proposed hypotheses. Thus, quantitative research design is chosen for descriptive data analyses and hypotheses testing. The type of investigation is a correlational study attempting to explain the variation of dependant variable (books purchased) by five independent variables (product, price, place, promotion, substitution) and the effect on the presence of moderating variable (lecturer). The horizon of this study is cross sectional in an uncontrived environment where data are collected only at one point of time for analysis. A survey instrument of self-administered questionnaire is designed to collect primary data for this study.

3.3. Variables

There are five independent variables, one dependent variable and one moderating variable in this study. The variables are listed in Table 3.1. The five