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Int. J Sup. Chain. Mgt   Vol. 8, No. 6, December 2019

Outcome or Process Regret in Online Purchasing: Consequences of Brand Trust to Consumer Purchase Regret

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Abstract— nowadays, online purchasing is one of the most popular internet activities. Consumers often purchase various types of online products. Some factors in online purchases are availability access and time efficiency. When consumers purchase an online product, there are certain expectations as regards its uses/functions. They will experience post-purchase regrets if the product is not following the initial expectations. These regrets are due to outcome purchase and process purchase. This study was carried out by having two important objectives. First was to find out the influence of brand trust on consumer purchase regret. The second was to examine brand reliability, and brand intentions were determinants of outcome and process regret. The questionnaire technique was employed for the collection of data, and this involved 305 participants. The result confirmed that brand trust was a significant influence on consumer regret in online purchasing. It also revealed that brand reliability of the online product to be a significant predictor of reducing consumers' outcome and process regrets. These findings indicated that a brand plays a vital role in becoming an identifiable online product and protects consumers from unpleasant psychological stages.

Keywords— *outcome regret, process regret, brand reliability, brand intention, post-purchase, online product*

1. Introduction

The numbers of products sold by online stores attract attention and buying an interest in consumers. They come with diverse interests and needs. Along with the emergence of these needs, there is an urge for consumers to attain them. Consumers will search for and select a product according to their behavior [1]. After purchasing, consumers will then evaluate the product they have purchased, whether the product, to know how well it meets their need. They have a tendency to judge products based on their ability to produce the desired outcomes. When a consumer buys an online product, there is a specific expectation on its use/function. If the product is purchased for a particular purpose but turns out it cannot fulfil this purpose, then the consumer's perception about the product's usefulness/function will change from the time of purchase to the time after use and will result in regret [2].

Post-purchase regret positively correlates with brand switching intentions, and on the other hand, has a negative correlation with satisfaction levels [3]. Thus, the role of regret has crucial implications for marketers who are interested in developing brand loyalty, and for managers looking to repair relationships with consumers who have had a negative experience with their brand. The brand of online product is expected to be a description of the product's quality. When it is appraised continuously to be good for consumers and meets consumer expectations, there is a development of brand trust. It is the customer's confidence in a brand with risks faced due to expectations of the brand and will result in positive results. Online Products of well-known brands will be of good quality. Consumers who have previously used online product of a particular brand to establish a level of trust in the brand can easily assume that subsequent outcomes of the brand will not disappoint or lead to post-purchase regret [4].

Post-purchase regret is an awful feeling that could arise from having an experience which is no match expectations with the expectation of results obtained after purchasing and using an online

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product [2]. In cases of online shopping, there are products and financial risks that will be experienced, which can bring about immediate impressions on buyers if there is a failure to derive satisfaction from the product's performance. In both scenarios, buyers will experience instant dissonance and regret their purchase decisions [5].

An unrecognized brand by consumers will have an impact on consumer regret, especially when an unknown brand with good quality is added to two real choices [6]. At the post-purchase evaluation stage, this makes other brands that better brand a promising alternative, which aggravates consumer regret (comparison up). Consumers often make purchase decisions while unaware of their accurate valuations for a product. Such choices have emotional consequences once uncertainties are resolved, and consumers learn in hindsight that they have made, in retrospect, the wrong choice [7].

The combination of post-purchase dissatisfaction and remorse brings about negative emotions (for example, anger, disappointment, worry, anxiety, and frustration) in consumers [8]. In addition to this aggravated level of excitement, there is also a high tendency for consumers to switch to other brands. When consumers come to regret their brand choices, they seek information about other alternative brands, making them more likely to switch loyalties.

The brand of an online product is one of the factors influencing post-purchase regret [9]. Consumers tend to choose expensive products of well-known brands to avoid feelings of regret. As a result, it is not uncommon nowadays for some consumers to priorities brands well known to them when shopping online. It is done with the brand's assumption that the brand's products must be following consumer expectations and will be minimizing the risk of disappointment or regret when the ordered items are beyond expectations [10].

This study aims to examine the impact of brand trust on post-purchase regret. Several studies have explained that brand trust is related to both brand reliability and brand intentions. The model in this study is to investigate the impact of brand reliability and Brand Intension on the outcome and process regret.

2. Literature Review

Customers who recognize a particular brand or its reputation pay minor attention to the risk of losing time and product performance chance when making

purchases from a website [11]. Regrets greatly influence repurchase intentions, i.e., the tendency to buy back a brand or product of the same brand [12]. If the performance of the rejected alternative product performance is better than that which was chosen an alternative product, consumers tend to reject alternative products that are discarded in the next purchase opportunity that should be better [10]. Customers make changes to live with current losses and prevent future losses by dissolving any relationship with the company [12].

There are two components of post-purchase regret, namely: outcome regret and process [2]. Outcome regret occurs when consumers feel some remorse for choosing a product over others. Alternatives chosen by individuals are considered less favorable than others. Individuals feel remorse if the outcomes of other alternatives appear to be better than those of their choices [12]. Besides, regrets arise due to the individual's perception of the underutilized product after making a purchase. Individuals have the tendency of judging a product based on its ability to satisfy their needs.

Process regret occurs when an individual feels remorse for insufficient consideration and doubts about the process, which led them to make the purchase. They will feel regret if they believe they have failed to abide by their originally planned decision process. Consumers will regret if they think that they lack essential information for making the right decision. In addition to insufficient information, excess information also causes a consumer to feel remorse. They will believe they have spent too much time and energy in the buying process. When someone takes too much into consideration during the decision process, they end up regretting to have received unnecessary information that is not needed [2].

The unrecognized brand has an impact on consumer regret, especially when an unknown brand with good quality is added to two real choices [13]. At the post-purchase evaluation stage, this makes other brands that better brand a promising alternative, which aggravates consumer regret (comparison up). Consumers often make purchase decisions while unaware of their actual valuations for an online product. Such choices have emotional consequences once uncertainties are resolved, and consumers learn in hindsight that they have made, in retrospect, the wrong choice [7].

Consumers feel that if the choice of a brand turns out to be wrong, this can influence the preference

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between well-known brands with high prices and lower and well-known brands with low prices [14]. To ensure consumers do not regret their purchase decision, the producer should maintain brand strength and quality. In the minds of consumers, a strong brand is an inherent one. Therefore, whenever they need a product, they will choose the brand of product they are familiar with.

Brands have become an important criterion for purchasing an online product [15]. The brand chosen brand will result in either satisfaction or regret. A brand is not selected (purchased) by consumers for its inability to satisfy their needs, but rather because of the confidence of consumers that the brand cannot fulfill it, otherwise the brand is perceived to be capable of providing some level of satisfaction [16].

The brand of online product is considered enough description for the quality of its outcome [2]. A product quality that is continuously appraised to be good for consumers and capable of meeting consumer expectations will steadily develop a brand trust, which is the customer's desire to rely on a brand notwithstanding risks faced because expectations of the brand will yield positive results. Products originating from well-known brands are deemed to be of good quality. Besides, consumers who have used and are satisfied with a product of a specific brand will develop trust in the brand, leading to the assumption that any product from the brand will neither disappoint nor cause any form of regret.

Brands have become an essential criterion for purchasing online product. In the minds of consumers, a strong brand is an inherent one. Therefore, whenever they need a product, they will choose the brand of product they are familiar with. Customers who recognize a particular brand or its reputation pay minor attention to the risk of losing time and chance of product performance when making purchases. The poor performances of person psychographic factors are due to the consumer perception of price and quality association toward brand [17]. Consumers have a belief that the brand they have selected is capable of providing the required satisfaction. It is because the brand of a product is considered enough description for the quality of its product. A product quality that is continuously appraised to be good for consumers and capable of meeting consumer expectations of consumers will steadily develop brand trust.

Brand trust reflects two things, namely: brand reliability and brand intentions [18]. Brand reliability is the consumer's belief that a product is capable of meeting needs and providing satisfaction. The ability of brands to fulfill their promised value will make consumers put a sense of confidence in getting what they need. On the other hand, Brand Intension is the consumer's belief that a brand is capable of prioritizing the interests of customers when problems in product consumption arise unexpectedly.

Consumers who have used and are satisfied with a product of a specific brand will develop trust in the brand, leading to the assumption that any product from the brand will neither disappoint nor cause any form of regret. A study also revealed that even if the performance of an alternative product from an unselected brand is better than that of the selected brand, consumers will continue to buy products of the brand chosen. Regret also has an impact on repurchase intention; that is, consumers tend to buy back the brand or product from the same supplier who has previously been a cause of regret after buying a product. Based on the literature review, we propose hypotheses: (1) brand trust negatively correlates to post-purchase regret. (2) brand trust negatively correlates to outcome regret. (3). brand trust negatively correlates to process regret. (4) brand reliability and brand intentions negatively correlate to outcome regret. (5) brand reliability and brand intentions negatively correlate to process regret.

3.   Research Method

3.1 Participants

Three hundred and fifty-five questionnaires distributed to respondents and three hundred and five questionnaires returned with complete answers. The response rate of this study was 86%. Gender-related, most of the participants (224 participants or 73.4%) were females. In terms of age, roughly, half of the participants (186 participants or 61%) aged 16 to 20 years.

3.2 Instrument

Data was collected by post-purchase regret scale and brand trust scale. The validity of instrument measured by constructs validity that designed to measure whether certain factors are capable of fulfilling their functions. Post-purchase regret scale is conducted by two dimensions, which are

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outcome regret and process regret [2]. Factor analysis of outcome regret indicated that the total variance explained was one component, and eigenvalue explained 61.50%. The loading factor value ranges from 0.504 to 0.847. The Alpha Cronbach coefficient of reliability of outcome regret is 0. 819. Meanwhile, as regards the factor analysis of outcome regret, the total variance explained was one component, and eigenvalue explained 60.42%. The loading factor value ranges from 0.530 to 0.808. The Alpha Cronbach coefficient of reliability of process regret is 0.824.

The brand trust consists of two aspects, which are brand reliability and brand intentions [18]. As regards the factor analysis of brand reliability, the total variance explained was one component, and eigenvalue explained 51.29%. The loading factor value ranges from 0.668 to 0.736. The Alpha Cronbach coefficient of reliability of brand reliability is 0. 841. In analyzing brand intentions, the total variance explained was one component, and eigenvalue explained 51.29%. The loading factor value ranges from 0.685 to 0.758. The Alpha Cronbach coefficient of reliability of brand intentions is 0.829.

Table 1 Summary of correlations among variables

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Post-purchase regret	23.406	2.858	1				
2. Brand trust	45.150	10.380	-.272**	1			
3. Outcome regret	11.416	1.618	.792**	-.212**	1		
4. Process regret	11.990	1.861	.847**	-.233**	.347**	1	
5. Brand reliability	22.619	5.390	-.294**	.961**	-.240**	-.242**	1
6. Brand intensions	22.531	5.406	-.229**	.961**	-.168**	-.206**	.849**

$**p < 0.01$

4. Results and Discussion

The result of Pearson correlation analysis established that brand trust is correlated with post-purchase regret. Pearson correlation analysis indicated that brand reliability and brand intentions significantly correlate with post-purchase regret, outcome regret, and process regret. The data is illustrated in table 1.

Based on the regression analysis in step 2, brand reliability has become a key determinant of post-purchase regret. For outcome regret and process regret, it was found that brand reliability also became a key determinant for all variables. It can thereby be concluded that brand reliability is the best predictor of post-purchase regret. Results presented in table 2.

The result derived from the data analysis supports the research hypothesis that brand trust negatively and significantly influenced post-purchase regret. Increasing brand trust will be followed by a decrease in consumer's post-purchase regret. Brand trust plays a significant role in influencing purchasing decisions. Trust in sellers, products, and services are highly dependent on brand trust.

The result of this study revealed brand reliability to be a significant determinant of outcome and process regret. Brand reliability is one of the

requirements for a brand to be successful in the market. Brand reliability is an important aspect to be considered by customers in deciding the purchase of a product. Even though the prices of substitute brands may be lower, but are not reliable, customers will still not consider them.

Reliable and familiar brands will offer customers comfort, intimacy, and trust. Customers will pay attention to new products of brands well known to have better quality than the unfamiliar ones. When a customer has a brand trust, a relationship emerges between regret with the choice between the brand and price. Consumers tend to choose expensive products of brands that are already known to them to avoid feelings of regret [10].

When consumers choose their most liked brands they like most, they attribute remarks positively to the brand and more negative ones to themselves, compared to consumers who choose brands that are less preferred brands 19]. Those who have chosen their most preferred brands tend to see their prior trust in brands will be strengthened after they have experienced positive results and linked them with the brand. When the most preferred brands do not perform well, the customer will learn to tolerate them. On the other hand, when consumers go for less preferred brands, they associate negative

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remarks with the brands and not positive ones. It depicts the relatively unfavorable position of the less favorite brands. Buyers experience a higher regret from products of less preferred brands experience more regret than those of much more preferred brands. It could be attributable to a long-standing attachment to a brand or a desire to keep choosing even after the regret.

Brand involvement develops good relationships with consumers, even at times of dissatisfaction occurs [20]. Customers and brand trust play a vital role in evaluating consumer attitudes after the service received well or service has failed to perform to expectation. The quality of customer relationships with a trusted brand gives a halo effect that supports the impact of the delay on repurchase intentions. It does not mean that businesses are free to disappoint customers, but they must make efforts to establish a strong brand involvement in the customer's mind of customers, which increases their chances of retaining and winning back their customers.

Table 2 Results for stepwise regression analysis

Variables	B	SE B	β	R²	ΔR²	F
Post purchase regret step 1				.052	.052	16.771
Constant	26.135	.685				
Brand intensions	-.121	.030	-.229**			
Step 2				.088	.035	11.683
Constant	26.804	.701				
Brand intentions	.038	.055	.072			
Brand Reliability	-.188	.055	-.355**			
Outcome regret Step 1				.028	.028	8.785
Constant	12.548	.393				
Brand intentions	-.050	.017	-.168**			
Step 2				.062	.034	11.056
Constant	12.922	.402				
Brand intentions	.039	.032	.129			
Brand Reliability	-.105	.032	-.350**			
Process regret Step 1				.042	.042	13.396
Constant	13.586	.448				
Brand intensions	-.071	.019	-.206**			
Step 2				.059	.016	9.395
Constant	13.882	.464				
Brand intentions	-.001	.036	-.001			
Brand Reliability	-.083	.036	-.241**			

$**p < 0.01$

5. Conclusion

This study has provided insights on consumer regret experience regarding the purchase of online products. They regret because of the outcome (feel remorse for choosing a product instead of the alternatives) or process (fee ls remorse for inadequate consideration). Unknown brands influence consumer regret. Brand trust is capable of protecting the brand from negatively charged emotions attributable to unfavorable brand comparisons. It protects consumers from unpleasant psychological stages caused by poor purchasing choices. This finding implies that brands can facilitate regulation of regret. Building strong relationships with brands is one of the strategies for minimizing effective regret, and consumers will feel better about the "bad" purchasing decisions if they involve brand choice. Brand Trust can be realized if a product has met the expectations and needs of consumers, making them satisfied with the product. For consumers who feel comfortable and believe in a product, it will not be easy to leave or replace the product with those from other brands. Therefore, brands also play a crucial role in becoming identified with the product. A brand must be able to give trust to consumers for it to be genuinely perceived as trustworthy. The

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consequences of regret are costly for companies as they lose customers.

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