

A Study on the Differences in Motivation and Online Purchasing Behavior between Male and Female Muslim Consumers in Thailand

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of e-commerce has transformed consumer purchasing behavior globally, with online shopping gaining significant traction among Thai consumers. Among these, Muslim consumers represent a unique segment whose purchasing decisions are shaped by both general consumer behavior factors and religious-cultural considerations. This study addresses this gap by examining the utilitarian and hedonic motivations of Muslim consumers in Thailand and their influence on online purchasing behavior, with a focus on gender differences. Using an Independent Samples Test, significant differences were found in both hedonic and utilitarian motivations between male and female consumers, with women exhibiting higher levels of both motivational drivers. Additionally, women demonstrated significantly higher levels of online purchasing behavior compared to men. Multiple Regression Analysis revealed that hedonic motivation significantly influenced online purchasing behavior for both genders, while utilitarian motivation had no significant impact. Hedonic motivation explained 8.9% and 12.4% of the variance in online purchasing behavior for male and female consumers, respectively, highlighting its role as a key driver. However, the relatively low explanatory power suggests the need to explore additional factors influencing this behavior.

Keywords: Online Shopping, Muslim Consumers, Hedonic Motivation, Utilitarian Motivation, Gender Differences

Introduction

The rapid growth of e-commerce has significantly changed consumer purchasing behavior worldwide (Statista, 2023). In Thailand, online shopping has become increasingly popular, with consumers preferring the convenience and variety that digital platforms offer (Kasikorn Research Center, 2023). Among various consumer groups, Muslim consumers represent a distinct segment whose purchasing decisions are influenced not only by general consumer behavior factors but also by religious beliefs and cultural values (Al-Hyari et al., 2012).

Understanding the motivation and behavior of Muslim consumers in online shopping is crucial for businesses looking to penetrate or expand in this market segment. Factors such as halal certification, trust, security, and product authenticity play important roles in their purchasing decisions (Koc et al., 2025).

However, despite the growing number of Muslim consumers in Thailand and their increasing involvement in online shopping, there is a lack of research focusing on their specific motivations and purchasing behavior. Addressing this gap will not only contribute to academic knowledge but also help e-commerce businesses develop appropriate marketing strategies and product offerings to better serve this important consumer group. Therefore, this study aims to explore purchase motivation and online shopping behavior among Muslim consumers in Thailand.

Literature Review

1. Online Shopping Behavior

Online shopping behavior refers to consumer decision-making processes and actions when purchasing goods or services via digital platforms. In recent years, technological advancements and the COVID-19 pandemic have significantly accelerated the growth of e-commerce. Factors influencing online shopping behavior include perceived trust, convenience, website quality, security, and social influence. In Thailand, recent studies found that key drivers for online purchases are product variety, price competitiveness, promotional offers, and reliable delivery services. Moreover, mobile commerce (m-commerce) is becoming increasingly dominant, emphasizing the importance of user-friendly mobile applications (Yassierli et al., 2019).

2. Purchase Motivation

Purchase motivation continues to be categorized into two major types: utilitarian and hedonic motivations (Babin et al., 1994).

Utilitarian motivation refers to practical, goal-oriented shopping behaviors, where consumers focus on rational benefits such as efficiency, functionality, time-saving, and financial value. In an online environment, factors like fast delivery, clear product information, and seamless payment systems strongly influence utilitarian motivation (Babin et al., 1994).

Hedonic motivation refers to emotional and experiential desires, where consumers seek pleasure, enjoyment, entertainment, and sensory stimulation from the shopping experience (Ozen & Kodaz, 2016). Interactive features, gamification, personalized recommendations, and engaging content can enhance hedonic motivation and promote impulse buying behaviors. In online shopping, both motivations often coexist and can vary based on demographic, cultural, and situational factors (Babin et al., 1994).

3. Muslim Consumer Behavior

Muslim consumer behavior is guided by religious principles, ethical norms, and cultural considerations. Halal compliance, transparency, honesty, and seller credibility are essential attributes influencing purchase decisions (Hasan, 2019). Recent studies emphasize that Muslim consumers are increasingly using online platforms but remain cautious, placing high importance on halal certification, trustworthy sellers, and privacy (Muflih et al., 2023).

4. Gender Differences in Online Purchasing Behavior

Gender has been widely studied as a key factor influencing consumer behavior, including online shopping habits. Research consistently suggests that males and females exhibit distinct motivations, preferences, and behaviors when engaging in e-commerce. These differences can be categorized into multiple aspects: shopping orientation, purchasing patterns, decision-making processes, and the role of emotions and social influences.

4.1 Gender and Utilitarian vs. Hedonic Motivation

Studies have shown that males tend to have a stronger focus on utilitarian motivations, seeking efficiency, convenience, and functionality in their online shopping behavior (Akhlq & Ahmed, 2016). Males typically prioritize product specifications, price comparison, and value for money when purchasing products online (Alimo, 2020). They are more likely to engage in goal-

oriented shopping, often seeking to fulfill a specific need rather than engaging in the emotional or recreational aspects of shopping.

On the other hand, females are often more motivated by hedonic factors, such as enjoyment, entertainment, and emotional satisfaction. Women tend to focus more on the experience of shopping itself, valuing aspects such as aesthetics, personalized recommendations, and the ability to browse freely. In online environments, women are more likely to be influenced by social interactions, reviews, and engagement with brands that offer a sense of community (Utami et al., 2021).

4.2 Gender and Purchase Behavior

Gender differences also manifest in purchasing patterns. Females are generally found to be more impulsive buyers, influenced by emotional appeal, promotional offers, and social media advertisements (Ozen & Kodaz, 2016). Studies suggest that women are more likely to make unplanned purchases or engage in shopping as a leisure activity, using online platforms for enjoyment rather than necessity (Akhlaq & Ahmed, 2016).

In contrast, males tend to exhibit more planned and functional shopping behaviors, prioritizing product knowledge and completing purchases more efficiently. Men are less likely to be swayed by aesthetics or social factors, focusing primarily on the functional benefits of the product (Akhlaq & Ahmed, 2016).

5. Previous Studies and Research Gap

Recent research has focused on various factors influencing online shopping motivation and consumer behavior (Babin et al., 1994; Ozen & Kodaz, 2016). While numerous studies explore general online purchasing patterns, research focusing on Muslim consumers' behavior in the digital marketplace, particularly in Southeast Asia, is emerging (Hasan, 2019). In Thailand, limited studies have addressed the intersection of consumer motivation and online shopping behavior within the Muslim community. Therefore, there is a clear research gap in understanding how utilitarian and hedonic motivations drive online purchasing behavior among Muslim consumers in Thailand. This study aims to address this gap.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

- 1) To study the utilitarian and hedonic motivations of Muslim consumers in online purchasing, with a focus on gender differences.
- 2) To examine the online purchasing behavior of Muslim consumers, comparing male and female consumers.
- 3) To examine the influence of hedonic motivation and utilitarian motivation on online purchase.

Research Framework

Based on the literature review and research objective determination, the researchers developed the conceptual research framework as illustrated in Figure 1

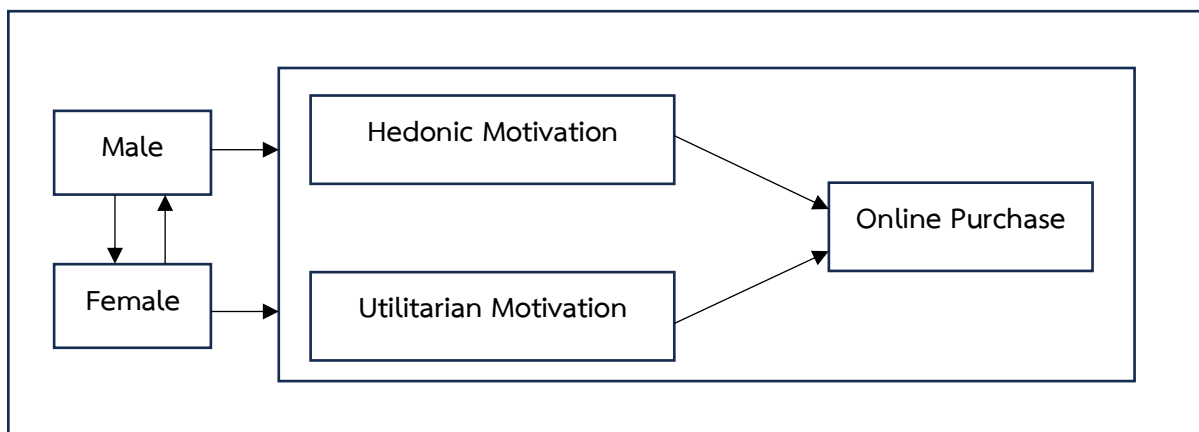


Figure 1: Research Framework

Research Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research approach to investigate the online purchasing behavior of Muslim consumers, focusing on utilitarian and hedonic motivations. The data was collected through an online questionnaire, which was distributed to a sample of 256 respondents. Hair et al. (2013) stated that research involving samples from multiple groups

should have at least 100 samples per group. This study compares two groups, requiring a minimum of 100 samples per group, totaling at least 200 samples across both groups. The researchers collected 256 samples, with each group having no fewer than 100 samples, making the sample size appropriate for data analysis. To ensure the quality of the measurement tools, the validity of the questionnaire was tested. The results revealed that all items had an Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) value greater than 0.5, indicating sufficient validity. Additionally, the reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. The Cronbach's Alpha values for the sections on utilitarian motivation, hedonic motivation, and purchasing behavior were found to be 0.815, 0.860, and 0.968, respectively. These results demonstrate that the questionnaire exhibits high reliability, ensuring the quality and consistency of the data collection process. The researchers employed an independent t-test to analyze potential differences in hedonic and utilitarian motivations between male and female consumers. Additionally, multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which these motivational factors influence online purchasing behavior.

Results

Characteristics of Respondents

The research survey involved a total of 256 participants, with a fairly balanced gender representation. Slightly more than half of the respondents were male, accounting for 131 individuals (51.2%), while females comprised 125 participants (48.8%).

The age distribution revealed a diverse range of respondents. The largest age group was individuals between 40-50 years old, representing 70 participants (27.3%). Young adults aged 18-21 years followed, with 55 participants (21.5%). The 22-30 years age group consisted of 50 individuals (19.5%), while the 31-40 years category included 42 participants (16.4%). The smallest age group was those over 50 years old, with 39 participants (15.3%).

Regarding educational background, the sample showed variation across different academic levels. The majority of respondents held a bachelor's degree or equivalent, accounting for 108 participants (42.2%). Those with educational qualifications below bachelor's level numbered 70 individuals (27.3%), while those with a master's degree represented 69 participants

(27.0%). A small proportion of highly educated respondents held doctoral degrees, with just 9 participants (3.5%) in this category.

These demographic details are comprehensively illustrated in Table 1, providing a comprehensive overview of the survey participants' characteristics.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents

Sample group	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	131	51.2
Female	125	48.8
Total	256	100
Age		
18-21 years	55	21.5
22-30 years	50	19.5
31-40 years	42	16.4
40-50 years	70	27.3
over 50 years	39	15.3
Total	256	100
Education		
Below bachelor's degree	70	27.3
Bachelor's degree (or equivalent)	108	42.2
Master's degree	69	27.0
Doctoral degree	9	3.50
Total	256	100

Results of the Analysis According to Research Objective 1

According to the first objective, which states: "To study the utilitarian and hedonic motivations of Muslim consumers in online purchasing, with a focus on gender differences," the results of the data analysis are as follows:

The analysis of differences in hedonic motivation between male and female online shoppers, conducted using the Independent Samples Test, revealed a statistically significant difference (Sig.=0.000). Specifically, male participants exhibited lower levels of hedonic motivation compared to their female counterparts when engaging in online shopping.

Similarly, the analysis of utilitarian motivation differences between genders also demonstrated a statistically significant disparity (Sig.=0.008). In this case, male shoppers reported lower levels of utilitarian motivation in online shopping activities than female shoppers.

These findings suggest that gender plays a significant role in shaping both hedonic and utilitarian motivations among online consumers. Female shoppers appear to be more driven by both pleasure-oriented (hedonic) and goal-oriented (utilitarian) factors when making online purchases, whereas male shoppers exhibit relatively lower motivation in both dimensions. (Table 2)

Table 2: Analysis of gender differences in motivations for online shopping

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Hedonic	Equal variances assumed	6.400	0.012	-3.630	254	0.000	-0.43872	0.12087	-0.67675	-0.20069
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.614	241.005	0.000	-0.43872	0.12140	-0.67785	-0.19958
Utilitarian	Equal variances assumed	1.385	0.240	-2.652	254	0.008	-0.22901	0.08635	-0.39905	-0.05896
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.651	252.807	0.009	-0.22901	0.08639	-0.39914	-0.05887

Results of the Analysis According to Research Objective 2

According to research objective 2, which states: "To examine the online purchasing behavior of Muslim consumers, comparing male and female consumers," the results of the data analysis are as follows:

The researchers assessed the variables of hedonic motivation and utilitarian motivation by employing three questions to measure each variable. Hedonic motivation was measured by examining behaviors related to entertainment or pleasure, while utilitarian motivation was assessed by evaluating behaviors associated with necessity or functional benefits.

Results of the analysis of differences in online purchasing behavior between male and female consumers using the Independent Samples Test. The analysis revealed a statistically significant difference (Sig. = 0.000) in online purchasing behavior between male and female consumers. Specifically, male consumers exhibited lower levels of online purchasing behavior compared to their female counterparts. These findings are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Analysis of gender differences in online purchasing

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Online Purchasing	Equal variances assumed	9.445	0.002	-4.006	254	0.000	-0.525	0.131	-0.783	-0.267
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.991	243.415	0.000	-0.525	0.131	-0.784	-0.266

Results of the Analysis According to Research Objective 3

According to research objective 3, which states: " To examine the influence of hedonic motivation and utilitarian motivation on online purchase " the results of the data analysis are as follows:

The influence of motivations on online purchasing behavior among male consumers was examined using Multiple Regression Analysis. The analysis began with a series of diagnostic tests to ensure the appropriateness of the data for regression analysis. The Durbin-Watson statistic, used to test for autocorrelation, yielded a value of 2.044, which falls within the acceptable range of 1.5–2.5, indicating that there was no significant autocorrelation in the data. Additionally, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was calculated to assess multicollinearity, and the result was 1.133, well below the threshold of 10. This confirmed that multicollinearity was not a concern, and the data were deemed suitable for further analysis.

The results of the regression analysis revealed that Hedonic Motivation had a statistically significant influence on online purchasing behavior among male consumers. In contrast, Utilitarian Motivation did not demonstrate a significant impact on their online purchasing decisions. Interestingly, Hedonic Motivation was found to explain only 8.9% of the variance in online purchasing behavior, as indicated by the Adjusted R Square value of 0.089. This relatively

low percentage suggests that while Hedonic Motivation plays a role in driving online purchases, other factors beyond the scope of this study may also significantly influence this behavior.

Based on these findings, the regression equation for predicting online purchasing behavior among male consumers can be expressed as: $\text{Online Purchase} = -1.273 + 0.310 (\text{Hedonic Motivation})$

In summary, the analysis highlights the importance of Hedonic Motivation in shaping online purchasing behavior among male consumers. However, its limited explanatory power underscores the need for further research to explore additional factors that may contribute to this behavior. These results provide valuable insights into the dynamics of consumer motivations and their implications for understanding gender-specific purchasing patterns in online environments.

The influence of motivations on online purchasing behavior among female consumers was examined using Multiple Regression Analysis. The analysis began with diagnostic tests to ensure the suitability of the data for regression analysis. The Durbin-Watson statistic, used to test for autocorrelation, yielded a value of 1.831, which falls within the acceptable range of 1.5–2.5, indicating no significant autocorrelation in the data. Additionally, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was calculated to assess multicollinearity, and the result was 1.379, which is well below the threshold of 10. This confirmed the absence of multicollinearity, affirming that the data were appropriate for analysis using Multiple Regression Analysis.

The results revealed that Hedonic Motivation had a statistically significant influence on online purchasing behavior among female consumers. Conversely, Utilitarian Motivation was found to have no significant impact on their online purchasing decisions. Notably, Hedonic Motivation explained 12.4% of the variance in online purchasing behavior, as indicated by the Adjusted R Square value of 0.124. While this percentage reflects a relatively low explanatory power, it underscores the role of Hedonic Motivation as a contributing factor in driving online purchases among female consumers. Based on these findings, the regression equation for predicting online purchasing behavior among female consumers can be expressed as: $\text{Online Purchase} = -1.623 + 0.362 (\text{Hedonic Motivation})$

In summary, the analysis highlights the significance of Hedonic Motivation in shaping online purchasing behavior among female consumers. However, its limited explanatory power suggests that other factors beyond the scope of this study may also play a substantial role in

influencing this behavior. These findings provide valuable insights into the dynamics of consumer motivations and contribute to a deeper understanding of gender-specific purchasing patterns in online environments. Further research is recommended to explore additional variables that may enhance the explanatory capacity of the model.

Conclusion and Discussion

Based on the data analysis results, the researchers conclude and discuss as follows:

1) The study reveals that Muslim women exhibit higher levels of both hedonic motivation and utilitarian motivation in online shopping compared to men. This aligns with prior research indicating that women are often more influenced by emotional and experiential factors (hedonic) as well as practical, goal-oriented benefits (utilitarian) when engaging in online purchasing (Babin et al., 1994; Childers et al., 2001). For Muslim women, these motivations may be further amplified by cultural and religious considerations, which shape their preferences for products and services that align with their values. In contrast, Muslim men demonstrated lower levels of both motivational factors, suggesting a potentially different set of priorities or external influences driving their online shopping behavior. These findings emphasize the need for gender-specific marketing strategies tailored to the unique preferences of Muslim consumers, particularly in e-commerce platforms targeting this demographic.

2) The data analysis reveals that Muslim women exhibit higher levels of online purchasing behavior compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, Muslim women demonstrate stronger hedonic motivation and utilitarian motivation in online shopping than men. However, the study found that only hedonic motivation significantly influences online purchasing behavior, while utilitarian motivation does not appear to have a significant impact.

These findings align with recent research highlighting the dominance of emotional and experiential factors in driving online shopping behavior, particularly among women. For instance, a study by Ozen and Kodaz (2016) found that hedonic motivations, such as enjoyment and escapism, play a pivotal role in shaping consumer engagement in e-commerce platforms.

Interestingly, the lack of influence from utilitarian motivation—despite its higher reported levels among women—suggests that practical considerations, such as convenience or efficiency, may not be sufficient to drive actual purchasing decisions. This observation is consistent with the findings of Hu et al. (2022), who argued that while utilitarian factors are important, they are often secondary to emotional drivers in online shopping contexts.

For Muslim men, the lower levels of both hedonic and utilitarian motivations, coupled with reduced online purchasing behavior, suggest that their engagement with e-commerce may be influenced by external factors such as social norms, product availability, or trust in online platforms—areas that warrant further investigation. These insights emphasize the need for gender-specific marketing strategies that address the distinct motivational drivers of Muslim consumers.

Future Research

This study provides a broad overview of online purchasing behavior without focusing on specific product or service categories. While the findings offer valuable insights into general consumer motivations, future research could build upon these results by examining online purchasing behavior within specific product or service categories. Such an approach would allow for a more in-depth understanding of how different types of products—such as fashion, electronics, halal goods, or digital services—may elicit varying motivational drivers and behavioral patterns among consumers.

Furthermore, future studies could explore additional factors influencing online shopping behavior, such as trust in e-commerce platforms, cultural or religious considerations, and technological advancements like mobile shopping applications or virtual reality experiences. By narrowing the scope to specific contexts or segments, researchers can uncover more targeted and meaningful insights that contribute to both academic understanding and practical applications in the rapidly evolving landscape of online retail.

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