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A Descriptive Study of Consumer Behavior in Philippines Pop Music Industry: A Further Interpretation of Stimuli behind the Choice

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge about marketing and management was presented and summarized by the black box model. This model explains how certain stimuli integrate together to produce a specific result, which is consumer behavior. This study explores the stimuli that are entered into the black box, or the human mind, that later lead to the formation of a certain level of consumer behavior. This was done in the context of the Philippine music industry, an artistic industry that was found resilient by continually surviving in the face of the change of time. Two hundred and eighty-four (284) respondents participated in a survey done in two music stores at the SM Baguio city, Philippines and descriptive statics method was applied in data treatment. This survey solicited information about the consumers regarding their self-identity, which represented the inner stimuli, and their attitude toward the environmental and marketing stimuli, which represented their outer stimuli. These stimuli were asked within the context of the music industry. It was found out that the respondents have different or varied self-identity but have a similar attitude toward the outer stimuli (environmental and marketing stimuli). By knowing who these consumers are can further enhance the service provided by music companies and later on, increase their revenues while fulfilling the existentialistic need of the consumer, which is to maximize the meaning in the way they buy music products.

Keywords: *Consumer behavior, Environmental Stimuli, Marketing Stimuli, Pop music Industry, Self-Identity.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviors are functions of inner and outer stimuli (Li,2020a,2020b). Inner stimuli represent personal factors or characteristics of respondents. Outer stimuli refer to factors influencing consumer behavior that are outside the person. In the present study, they are environmental and marketing stimuli. The black box model considers the buyers' response as a result of a conscious, rational decision process, in which it is assumed that the buyer has

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recognized the problem. However, in reality many decisions are not made in awareness of a determined problem by the consumer.

II. INNER STIMULI: SELF-IDENTITY

People buy products that are compatible with their self-concept, or rather that enhances their ideal-self (Zaphiris et.al., 2007). At any age, a person's identity serves as an information processing filter that structures the activation of identity-relevant information. The concepts and information relevant to the self also have an instrumental influence on decisions to pursue particular goals. While all individuals have some sense of identity, individuals vary in the degree to which they possess a stable sense of self. As such, variations in identity stability should have implications for that information which guides goal-related decisions in identity-relevant contexts. From the previous discussion, we can see clearly that in popular music market, the consumer behavior is a series of actions which involve the goals—to address certain problems or needs, information of different source and a purchasing decision-making after analytic evaluation. In this context, the self-identity has a definite influence on the consumer behaviors.

Self-concept or self-identity is the sum total of a person's knowledge and understanding of his or herself (Kleine et al., 1993). The self-concept is different from self-consciousness, which is an awareness of one's self (Gleitman et al., 2004). Components of the self-concept include physical, psychological, and social attributes, which can be influenced by the individual's attitudes, habits, beliefs and ideas. These components and attributes cannot be condensed to the general concepts of self-image and the self-esteem.

Self-esteem is a term used in psychology to reflect a person's overall evaluation or appraisal of his or her own worth (Koole et al., 2003). Self-esteem encompasses beliefs (for example, "I am competent") and emotions such as triumph, despair, pride and shame (Greenwald et al., 2000). Self-esteem can apply specifically to a particular dimension (for example, "I believe I am a good writer, and feel proud of that in particular") or have global extent (for example, "I believe I am a good person, and feel proud of myself in general").

Psychologists usually regard self-esteem as an enduring personality characteristic ("trait" self-esteem), though normal, short-term variations ("state" self-esteem) also exist (Maslow, 1987). With the aforementioned view on self-identity, one can distinguish how important this concept is in influencing consumer behaviors. Other than this, one must also look into outer stimuli, or the factors within the environment in which the consumer decides on his/her behavior.

In the Philippines, ethnicity goes with the concept of indigenous people (Agoncillo, 1960). Such identity is not salient in Baguio City. What is more salient is nationality, because Baguio City, like other capital cities of the world, has a multinational population. Collective identity and political identity were also excluded.

Collective identity refers to group membership. In the Philippines, the salient group membership is among religious organizations (Pe-pua et al., 1998). Thus, religious identity already captures collective identity for Filipino subjects. Unlike other nations, Filipinos have no fixed political party membership (Agoncillo, 1960). It is very hard to distinguish who belongs to the political majority or minority. This problematic situation made political identity another variable that this study was not able to measure.

III. OUTER STIMULI: ENVIRONMENTAL AND MARKETING STIMULI

Outer stimuli refer to anything that influence buying behavior that is outside the person. To limit these factors, two stimuli were named in this study: environmental stimuli and marketing stimuli.

Grewal, Baker, Levy, and Boss' (2003) research explores the influence of retail store environmental cues on consumers' price acceptability. Their empirical study examines the effects of three types of environmental factors: ambient, social and design. Results indicate that the price of an item is more acceptable in a high- social store environment than is the same product at the same price in a low-social store environment. The results also provide partial support for the effects of store ambient and design factors on the acceptability of the price of the picture frame. Three distinct concepts made environmental stimuli a significant factor in buyers' response. They are social, ambient, and design. However, one must not confuse these stimuli with marketing stimuli, which are stimuli that are specific to efforts in encouraging people to buy products.

Grewal et al's environmental stimuli model (2003) refers to the environmental situation within the store and not the macro socio-cultural-political-economic-and- technological .system. This approach is to "minimize" the "insurmountable" environmental stimuli that exist within a society (Grewal et al., 2003). In this limited model, the scope was focused on a part of the environment where the consumer and the dealer meet. In such part of environment, the individual will have to interact with another individual (interpersonal encounter), which entails a sociological relationship between the people delivering the service and the consumer (Wind et al., 2002). That refers to the social aspect. That also makes the physical environment of the store a very significant stimulus in the way the consumer purchases products. This physical

environment is different from marketing in such a way that marketing refers to conscious efforts directed to attract consumers. This physical environment involves the design and the ambient. Hence, the physical environment of the store, in this research, does not refer to the arrangement but on the consumer's attitude toward the physical environment itself.

With afore-cited dichotomy, this research combined design and ambient to make a clear impact on the physical environment as a stimulus of consumer behavior. Thus, environment stimuli shall be divided into two: the software (social component) and the hardware (physical component).

Consumer Behaviors

There are three important concepts in consumer behavior in music industry. The first concept is the consumers, the exhibitor of the behavior. The second concept is the behavior, which indicates the observable action that defines the role of the consumer. The third concept is the music industry, the parameter or the phenomenology of where the behavior transpires.

In this study, the researcher uses behaviorism theory as manner of explaining consumer behavior. Behaviorism in its simplest sense, states that a behavior is a function of a stimulus provided by the environment and the situation where such behavior or response took place (Gleitman, Fridlund & Reisberg, 2004; Skinner, 1984). Thus, consumer behavior will be looked upon as a result of factors or stimuli interplaying in the environment and within the individual.

Consumer behavior is the result of the process brought about by the black box model. It is a combination of all stimuli therein, and therefore consumer behavior can be explained by explaining the extent of how the stimuli go together. Consumer behavior is a conscious choice of the respondents, and thus an existentialist choice, a choice that is defined by the meaning of a person's existence. However, a person's existence is limited within the parameter or boundaries of the condition of his/her existence. This condition is called environment, or situation, or phenomenology. It is therefore important to explain consumer behavior in the level of the outer stimuli or the environment (macro scope) and it is in the level of the individual (micro scope) who makes the choices.

Research Questions

This study intends to present the different levels of consumer behaviors as defined in this research which are the number of music products bought, most preferred genre, and most preferred artist as an expression of product choice; the most preferred recording company of the respondents as an expression of brand DVD choice; the time spent in selecting music

products and the number of purchases made in a month as an expression of purchasing timing; and the amount spent in buying music products per month as an expression of purchase amount. To be more specific, this study intends to present the respondents' self-identity as well as how they were affected by environmental and marketing stimuli presented to them by music stores. Specifically, this study will answer:

- 1) What are the self-identity characteristics of the respondents?
- 2) What are the relevant demographic characteristics that describe the respondents' characteristics?
- 3) What is the extent of environmental stimuli affecting the respondents?
- 4) What is the extent of marketing stimuli affecting the respondents?

Method

There were 284 music buyers who participated. They bought music products at the SM Baguio city. They were interviewed and asked to answer the questionnaire soliciting information regarding their self-identity and how much they are affected by environmental and marketing stimuli. They were also asked about their different levels of consumer behavior.

The survey-questionnaire asked the respondents to give information about how they are affected by different marketing and environmental stimuli. Because marketing stimuli and environmental stimuli are enormous and hard to reduce into measurable variables, they are rated attitudinally. Attitude is an important determiner of consumer behavior because buying is an indicator of positive behavior towards a product. Thus, respondents are asked about their attitude towards stimuli in a global or holistic fashion, since a consumer buys holistically. This is also aligned to the philosophy of existentialism that consumers buy as a choice and this choice came from different factors that involve holistic judgment. The part of the judgment that is affect-based is measured here attitudinally.

Respondents are also asked about their attitude about the price of music products, estimating how well they perceive each music product's value. They are also asked about the effectiveness of promotional activities and people delivering the service, and also about the efficiency of service process and appropriateness of physical surrounding and store ambiance.

Demographics are gathered in the last part of the questionnaire. This is done to keep the interest of the respondent in answering. Gender, professional, national, and religious identities were also asked in this section. Professional and religious identities were asked with a free answer format, in order to be bias-free. Professional identity is coded as either student or blue collar

or white collar, in order to collapse or to join occupations that are alike. Other demographics include age, educational attainment, and place of residence.

The survey forms solicited direct information about consumer behavior. Respondents were asked to state their preferred genre, number of music products they buy, their preferred music artist and indicate whether the artist is a male, female, or the artist they refer to is a band, amount of time they spend in selecting music products, number of times they buy music products, and the amount they spend in buying music products. Variables that require time duration are given a duration of one month.

The rating scale used was a seven-point semantic differential scale. Semantic differential scales show extreme choices. Respondents are asked to locate their attitude within the scale. The scale was seven-point in order to capture the variability of responses. A neutral answer is possible, since there are times that people become ambivalent with what they feel (Eagly & Chaiken, 1995).

The survey does not, however, give information about which price would be affordable or which service is necessitated by respondents. The survey is limited to the attitude of the respondents toward different variables.

Attitude Measurement

Attitude is a construct that represents an individual's degree of like or dislike for an item. Attitudes are generally positive or negative views of a person, place, thing, or event—this is often referred to as the attitude object. People can also be conflicted or ambivalent toward an object, meaning that they simultaneously possess both positive and negative attitudes toward the item in question (Eagly et al., 1998).

Attitudes are judgments. It is the way one perceives a certain thing or phenomenon. Most attitudes are the result of either direct experience or observational learning from the environment.

In this study, variables like price, promotion, process, social, ambient and design are measured as attitudes. These variables are not easily measured because of differences in measurement. Price, for an instance, can be measured by the amount, but such amount is meaningless unless a certain qualifier is attached to it...such as affordable. A high or low amount is relative to the person who interprets it. However, if a person feels that a certain amount is affordable, then, no matter how much the amount would be, one would be certain that that person has a positive attitude towards the amount. Promotion will be measured differently from amount, if it will not be measured attitudinally. Thus, attitudinal measures or measuring the attitude of a respondent

towards the variables will make a uniform measure for this study and will result to a reliable standard of how the respondents evaluate each variable.

Respondents are asked how much affordable they perceive the amount. They were also asked how they perceive the effectiveness of promotional strategies. They were also asked about their perception on the efficiency of the service process and the effectiveness of people delivering the service. Lastly, they were asked about their attitude on the ambient and design, on how appropriate they are to the music store.

Self-Esteem Measure

To measure the self-esteem as part of the self-concept, the researcher used the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. This scale is free to use and is a reliable measure of self-esteem. This was made by Dr. Morris Rosenberg in 1965 and is used by numerous researchers in the field of psychology and social sciences.

IV. RESULTS

Among 284 respondents, the following information were gathered as per regard to their self-identity (inner stimuli) and their reaction to environmental and marketing stimuli (outer stimuli).

Tables 1A and 1B shows the self-identity estimates for the respondents. The age range of respondents is between 14 and 54 (See Table 1B). The pool of respondents includes people in early adolescents up to middle-aged people. The typical age of respondents was 26.63, an age of young adulthood. With a standard deviation of 11.385, typical respondents would be 15 to 38 years old. This shows that most of respondents are in the age of students and there are few who are in the middle age.

The Self-Esteem measure was measured by a Likert scale, which is rated from 1 to 5. The score range respondents were able to get was between 2.1 and 5.0. The mean score is 3.863, with a standard deviation of 0.562. This means that typically, respondents score from 3.301 to 4.425. Any score lower or greater than that, is relatively low or high. Self-esteem, which is part of self-identity, shows how much respondents value themselves. Relatively, the score is towards having higher self-esteem. This means that there are few respondents who evaluate themselves negatively. Most respondents have a positive outlook towards themselves.

Table 1A. Self Identity (Nominal)

<i>Self identity variables</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Self identity variables</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Self image			National identity		
Religious identity			Filipino	205	72.2
Roman Catholic	266	93.7	Korean	62	21.8
Iglesia Ni Cristo	5	1.8	Others	17	6.0
Born again Christian	3	1.1	Total	284	100.0
Baptist	1	0.4	Demographics		
Buddhist	1	0.4	Educational attainment		
Islam	2	0.7	High school	45	15.8
Mormons	1	0.4	Technical/vocational	16	5.6
Pentecostal	1	0.4	College	172	60.6
No answer	4	1.4	Graduate school	51	18.0
Total	284	100.0	Total	284	100.0
Professional identity			Place of residence		
Student	134	47.2	Baguio city	255	89.8
Blue collar	14	4.9	Outside Baguio city	29	10.2
White collar	129	45.4	Total	284	100.0
No answer	7	2.5			
Total	284	100.0			
Gender identity					
Male	119	41.9			
Female	165	58.1			
Total	284	100.0			

Religious identity of respondents resulted to eight levels, with four respondents without mentioning of having any religion (1.4%). Great majority of the respondents are Roman Catholics. They compose 93.7% of the population. The remaining is divided into seven religious identities: Iglesia Ni Cristo (1.8%), Born again Christian (1.1%), Islam (0.7%), and Baptist, Buddhist, Mormons and Pentecostal having one respondent each or 0.4%. Philippines is a predominantly Catholic country. The data confirmed that fact. The way one perceives his or her religion is the way s/he sees him/herself religiously. Thus, this shows how respondents classify or identify themselves religiously.

Table 1B. Self Identity (Interval)

<i>Self identity variables</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Self-esteem	3.863	0.562
Age (Demographics)	26.63	11.385

Because of too many levels of professional identity, they were collapsed into three categories, namely student (includes high school and college students), blue collar (includes professional identities that imply manual labor) and white collar (professional identities beyond manual labor). The category where most of respondents fall is student, which includes 47.2% of the

respondents. This was followed by white collar workers, which composes 45.4% of the respondents. The least professional identities were blue collar workers, which is composed of 4.9%. There were 2.5% among the respondents who did not respond to this category.

Most respondents are female, but the gender difference is meager. About 58.1% of the respondents are female. The remaining 41.9% are male.

The majority or 60.6% of the respondents are either in college or finished college education. This was followed by respondents currently taking one or another course in a graduate school or had finished graduate course with a percentage of 18. High school consumers compose 15.8% of the respondents. People who either accomplished or currently taking technical/vocational courses are about 5.6%. This shows how well educated the respondents are. Since 88.6% of respondents are in college up to graduate school, it shows that most respondents belong to higher educational status. This is in consonance with the place of study - music stores in malls.

Most respondents live in Baguio City. About 89.8% of the respondents live within Baguio City. The remaining 10.2% live outside Baguio City. This result may show how many people buy music products occasionally. However, this finding does not show where the buyers work, that may further explain their consumer behavior.

Last among self-identity factors was national identity. Most of respondents, 72.2%, are Filipinos. A relatively significant percentage of 21.8 are Koreans. Other national identities are collapsed to variable level "others". Others include 6% of the respondents. SM Baguio city is one of the most diverse malls when it comes to nationality. But the number in this research implies that most respondents who volunteered to be participants are either Filipino or Korean. Other nationalities include American, Indian, and South African.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on Environmental Stimuli

<i>Stimuli</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Software (Social)	Effectiveness of people delivering services	6.13	.827
Hardware (Ambient and design)	Appropriateness of store surrounding and ambiance	6.11	.907

The defined environmental stimuli are social, ambient and design. The social aspect was measured by estimating the attitude of the respondents regarding the effectiveness of people delivering the service. Ambient and design were collapsed into one variable, which refers to the appropriateness of ambiance and design for the respondents.

The scale used for estimating attitudes regarding stimuli was semantic differential composing of seven levels, with the extremes representing a total negative attitude with the stimulus given (the rating is 1) and a total positive attitude (the rating is 7). Thus, ratings 1 to 3 represent negative attitude toward a specific stimulus and ratings 5 to 7 represent positive attitude. The rating of 4 is in the middle represents ambivalence.

Respondents are generally positive for people. The minimum answer was four, which is the center of the semantic differential scale. The mean for people's effectiveness in delivering service was 6.13, plus the standard deviation will almost be 7 or totally positive. Most respondents, if not all, are definitely satisfied with the social aspect of the environment.

For ambient and design, the result is similar, except for the minimum value which reached the value of two. Even though the minimum value was two, most respondents responded positively for the mean almost reached the extremely positive rating of the scale. Thus, there would be very few respondents who would not be contented with the stores' ambient and design.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics on Marketing Stimuli

<i>Stimuli</i>	<i>Estimate</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Price	Affordability of music products	4.57	.950
Promotion	Effectiveness of promotional activity	5.51	.903
Process	Efficiency of service process	5.58	.908

Two hundred eighty-four (284) respondents completed the form asking them about marketing factors. Table 3 shows that responses are biased towards the positive part of the scale. This is expected because respondents came from those who already decided to buy music products in the particular store where the study was conducted. It means that from the start, they were already attracted or influenced by the marketing of such stores.

The minimum value answered was three. The maximum was seven, the extreme positive rating. Nobody chose either two or one. Typical respondents have a rating of 4.57 when it comes to

price, which is represented by their attitude towards affordability of music products. Although the result is practically positive, it can be noticed that it is less than the respondents' attitude towards promotional activities and service process. This shows how negative respondents would perceive product price. The rating 4.57 is near the neutral part of the scale. When the standard deviation is subtracted from that mean, it shows that typical respondents are neutral or ambivalent when it comes to price.

The venue of the study is in the mall, which indicates the prices of music products are relatively higher as compared to music products sold outside malls. Among the three distinguished marketing stimuli, price or affordability is the one perceived negatively as compared to others. Promotional activity and efficiency of service process were rated relatively more positively than price or affordability. The typical answer for promotional activity was 5.51, which is in the positive part of the scale. The standard deviation indicates that typically, respondents would rate promotional activity perfectly. This is the same for effectiveness of service process, which is slightly higher than promotional activity. Respondents, thus, are typically positive when it comes to effectiveness of promotional activity and efficiency of the service process.

Table 4. Consumer Behavior of Respondents

<i>Consumer Behavior</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Consumer Behavior</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Product choice			Purchase timing		
<i>Number of music products bought</i>			<i>Time spent in selecting music product</i>		
One	186	65.5	15 minutes or less	102	35.9
Two	50	17.6	30 minutes	118	41.5
Three	42	14.8	One hour	60	21.1
Four	5	1.8	More than one hour	4	1.4
No answer	1	0.4	Total	284	100.0
Total	284	100.0			
<i>Most preferred genre</i>			<i>Number of times buying music product per month</i>		
Hiphop	53	18.7	Once	160	56.3
Rock	44	15.5	Twice	25	8.8
Pop	57	20.1	Thrice	31	10.9
Classical	43	15.1	Four times	6	2.1
Ballad	41	14.4	Five times or more	61	21.5
Folk	5	1.8	No answer	1	0.4
Jazz	41	14.4	Total	284	100.0
Total	284	100.0			
<i>Most preferred artist</i>			Purchase amount		
Male	48	16.9	<i>Amount spent in buying music product per month (in pesos)</i>		
Female	65	22.9	200 or less	157	55.3
Band	131	46.1	201-500	25	8.8
No answer	40	14.1	501-1000	32	11.3
Total	284	100.0	1001-3000	7	2.5
			More than 3000	62	21.8
			No answer	1	0.4
			Total	284	100.0
Brand choice					
<i>Most preferred recording company</i>					
Sony	155	54.6			
Star	36	12.7			
GMA	7	2.5			
BMG	33	11.6			
Vicor	5	1.8			
Viva	35	12.3			
Ivory	4	1.4			
No answer	9	3.2			
Total	284	100.0			

Inner and outer stimuli affecting a person's choice is the main course of explanation of the black box model (Parsons & Shils, 1976). The original black box model is not focused on the process, however, but rather on the relation between the stimuli and the response of the consumer (Huang & Tang, 2008). This follows the behavioristic view as forwarded by this study. By presenting the inner and outer stimuli as they exist in the respondents, one can have an idea on how these stimuli may have gone together to influence consumer behavior, and later, how they constructed the phenomenon and made the respondents existentially exhibit their behavior.

Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior is an expression of consumers' decision or choice (Baudrillard, 1998).

Such expression is an outcome of a decision making process that involves interaction of stimuli from the environment and some internal conditions (Trusov et al., 2009). This process is better represented by the black box model, where the human mind was considered as a black box that processed the stimuli or input and produces a response or output (Sandhusen, 2000).

Consumer behaviors directly describe the consumers, since they are a representation of what the consumers decided to do. Majority of the respondents of this study purchased one or two music products in the time of data gathering. This indirectly shows how well the respondents can afford music products.

In the point of view of this research, which is anchored on value creation, the findings regarding consumer behaviors might be explained as follows:

- 1) Majority of the respondents preferred the following music genres Hiphop, Rock, Jazz, and Pop. The meaning of their existence, expressed through music, can be described by these genres.
- 2) Almost half of respondents favor bands over single artists. This explicitly presents a great number of respondents favoring more bands than single artists.
- 3) Mostly preferred recording companies were Sony, Star, Viva and BMG. Consumers were hesitant to answer this part of the survey for they are not much aware of the recording companies. When they were presented with names that was the time they choose one. More than half of the respondent chose Sony. This might show that the choice of recording company has less contribution to a respondent's buying choice, which is an action by nature that indicates his realization of the meaning of self-essence and existence (refer to diagram 1 of this research), and thus, has a less level of value creation as the final outcome that such brand choice may incur. Respondents seem not to care much of recording companies. For them, genre or artists were more relevant. Respondents' preference of a recording company is relative to their choice of genre or artist.
- 4) Majority of respondents spent 30 minutes or less in selecting music products. This behavior shows how much they value selecting music products. Behaviorally, the more the time one spends in selecting means more choices considered (Yalch, 1993). If consumers spend time in considering choices, then the consumer consider buying music products important. More time in considering choices means greater importance or value (Kleine et al., 1993).
- 5) Majority of respondents buy music products only once a month or less.

- 6) This means that they buy for some special reasons. Some respondents disclosed that they buy music products for a course requirement. The time of data gathering was also during a pay day. Thus, the value of buying a music product may be affected by availability of resources and situational interference. And since a person can be limited by his/her resources in buying music products, s/he spends more time in selection. This consumer behavior once again provides an indirect description of the situation the consumer was in.
- 7) Most respondents spent 200 pesos or less in buying music products per month. This is coherent with the previous finding that most of them buy music products once a month or even less. This shows that respondents find essence in buying music products but is somehow limited by the economic situation. This limitation is demonstrated by the finding that the majority of the respondents would spend a meager amount on music products.

There is a trace, therefore, of a trail that leads to the production of consumer behaviors based on the influence of internal and external stimuli. These stimuli are within the context of the condition of existence, or of the phenomenology where the respondents are in. These limits to choice is dependent on the unique individual process. In time of sameness or similarity of existential conditions, uniqueness will determine the choice made by individuals. But in times of varying conditions, the differences in the environment become salient or important.

V. INNER STIMULI: SELF IDENTITY

From the point of view of this research, which is anchored on the realization of meaning of self-existence, which leads to value creation, the findings regarding inner stimuli might be explained as follows:

- 1) The inner stimuli of respondents are composed of different identity measures as a representation of their self-image, their self-esteem, and other relevant demographics that show their uniqueness over others. Most respondents of this study were adolescents and young adults. This identity of the respondents connotes idealism and giving importance to arts and aesthetics (Odum, 2006). Thus, respondents are predetermined to purchase music products. Their inner stimuli, their youth, influence their interest to be involved in music (Odum, 2006). Young adults in this study were mostly young professionals. Having their own money, their decision to buy music products (because they already bought when they were asked to participate in the study) is an existentialistic choice that may have been rooted in the interest of persons their age.

Thus, age contributes to the situation why they purchase music products. Age is part of the phenomenon they were in, the phenomenon that led them to purchase music products. Age, as a component of self identity, may have an important part in any human action. And this action will lead to certain value creation. These statements are supported by diagram 1 and 2 in study one of this study (refer to diagram 1 & 2 of this study).

- 2) The vast majority of respondents are Christians. Although most religions use music to venerate their deity, Christian denominations and sects are better known in incorporating music in their worship and in their daily lives (Fowler, 1997). Thus, consumers purchasing music products are among the people who use music in their spiritual activities. This high regard for music makes music product consumption a way of life, a way of healing oneself, even if it is not directly intended for religious purpose (Ho, 2004). Purchasing music product, thus, may have deeper meaning for the respondents. This meaning is unique and is constructed within the consumers' perception of reality. In this way, music had become a function of existence, and buying music product is therefore an expression of value.
- 3) Almost all respondents are either students or white collar worker (professional identities whose jobs do not include manual labor). This shows that the professional identity limits a person's music patronage, or that only these professional identities were able to purchase music products in legitimate stores. It was mentioned a while ago that for the people living in a Philippine-like environment (who are mostly Christians), music is a part of life. Thus, the low presence of blue collar worker in making purchases of music products may indicate that poverty results on people either not to buy music products or to buy music products in illegitimate sources. Either way, one can verify that the choice made by respondents who participated in this study is in the function of their environment. Because they belong to the student class who have allowances and to the white collar class who receive payment above the minimum rate of labor (Dessler, 1997), they were able to express their interest in music by buying music products. This is enough to say that internal stimulus such as professional identity or occupational situation directly influences a person's buying behavior. In this manner, one can also say that one's existence is holistic, which includes the economic side. Although consumer behavior is a matter of choice, it has been limited by environmental contingencies (Parsons, 1951). One's internal stimuli, thus, are also affected by his/her

surroundings or in other words, by his/her environment or condition of existence (refer to diagram 2 of this study).

- 4) The above observation was confirmed by the educational attainment of the respondents, which states that most of them were either enrolled or finished college to graduate levels. This implies that the respondents who participated and were able to buy music products were able to afford college and graduate level education. They are both economically and academically well off, enough for them to appreciate and to afford the art in popular music industry. This does not mean that their impoverished counterparts, the poor and uneducated, cannot or do not appreciate popular music. They may have or may have wanted to, but because of the limits of their environment, their choice was limited to either not to buy at all or to buy it from illegitimate sources where no tax is paid and where music products are extremely cheap. Once again, the power of the phenomenon over the person can be seen. The power to make choices, which is existentialist, is limited by the environment (Parsons, 1961). Thus, the individual must be more aware of the limits of his/her environment to make better choices (refer to diagram 2 of this study). People with higher educational status are the ones who are more aware of their limits (Clausen, 1968). Thus, they are expected to make better choices. Most respondents have relatively high educational status that is why they purchase legitimate music product, which is considered as a better choice.
- 5) Most respondents came from Baguio City, which indicates the phenomenology of location and the role of environment in the development of self-identity or self-image (Yalch, 1993). City living creates a popular culture that is the source of commerce in the popular music industry (Herr, Kardes & Kim, 1991). Adding up to this is proximity, which is an environmental contingent leading to the development of self-identity or personality (Travis, 2007). Self-identity or internal stimuli, therefore, independently influences consumer behavior but develops in an environmental context. And this environmental context is the condition that existentialism has been emphasizing (refer to diagram 2 of this study). Hence, internal stimuli can be considered as “internalized” stimuli, or a product of enculturation from the environment. This makes the choices a personal choice but is limited by the phenomenon, the situation, or the environment.
- 6) The majority of respondents are Filipinos who are described as “music lovers by blood” (Torre, 2005). Ever since the pre-historic Philippines, Filipinos were lovers of music (Clewley, 2000). With the influence of Christianization, Philippines integrated the original music-loving culture to the Christian religion (Agoncillo, 1960). Thus, the

national identity created by being a Filipino may have influenced the respondents to choose to buy music products. This deeply-rooted explanation is unconscious for the respondents, but the existentialist nature of human being puts together segments of his/her being into a choice (Parsons et al., 1976). Thus, one can see partly the being of existence developing to his/her present state based on the conditions of existence (refer to diagram 2 of this study). Better condition results to a better being. Better being results to better choices.

When consumers decide to buy, they made a choice that is a realization of the meaning of their existence. This existential view is anchored on phenomenology—stating that the decision is within the parameters of the environment (Parsons et al., 1976). These parameters interact with the person's inner stimuli, his/her self-identity. The interaction is processed by the human mind, like a black box, and result to the manifestation of consumer behavior (Kleine et al., 1993).

It is important to be aware that self-identity or internal stimuli did not develop independently from external stimuli. They might be working together in a collaborative manner, which leads to value creation. Moreover, internal stimuli are also products of external stimuli and the existential nature of the individual to form and develop to being and becoming. Thus, more than self-identity, one must also be aware of the environmental context where the respondent lives and had constructed reality. Only in such a way that the person can be understood fully—that is in the context of his/her environment or in the phenomenon s/he is in (refer to diagram 1&2 of this study).

VI. EXTERNAL STIMULI AND THE POPULAR MUSIC INDUSTRY

The level of explanation external stimuli had depended on how positive, or negative, the respondents perceive the external stimuli provided by the store where they bought music products, which represented the popular music industry. These external stimuli were divided into two—environmental stimuli and marketing stimuli.

From the point of view of this research, which is anchored on the realization of meaning of self-existence, which leads to value creation, the findings regarding inner stimuli might be explained as follows:

- 1) Respondents' responses were generally positive. Respondents of this study, on the one hand, already purchased music products to the store they rated. This means that even before their responses are recorded, they already had a positive attitude towards the music store. If one buys from a music store, it means that from the start, s/he liked the

store (Chen, 2001). Having a positive bias towards the store will limit the answer to positive responses. The store preference is actually a manner of condition of his buying. This is supported by diagram 2 which stresses the conditions of human actions.

- 2) Filipinos are known for maintaining smooth interpersonal relationships (Pe-pua et al., 1998). This character trait results for a person to rate other people more positively (Pe-pua et al., 1998). Most respondents are Filipinos. Thus, it is plausible that rating people delivering the service would be positively rated. More than that, it is also plausible that people serving in malls are more pleasant and effective than people who sell music products outside malls or in black market. This is due to the fact that service personnel in malls are constantly evaluated and scrutinized (Katsumata, 2008). People selling music products in the black market do not have professional training in dealing with customers. Thus, it can also be assumed that results are restricted and positively biased because, in the first place, the social aspect is really effective and positive. Social interaction between customer and salesperson in the store is actually a manner of condition of his buying. This is supported by diagram 2 which stresses the conditions of human actions. And this positive interaction leads to a certain value creation for the customer (refer to diagram 1&2 of this study).
- 3) Ambient and design were constant. Ambient and design in malls are following specific standards set by mall operators (Grewal et al., 2003). Thus, by default, environmental stimuli are pleasant, if not satisfying, the consumers' taste. The store ambient and design is actually a manner of condition of his buying actions. This is supported by diagram 2 which stresses the conditions of human actions. And this preferred physical condition of purchasing leads to a certain value creation for the customer (refer to diagram 1&2 of this study).
- 4) Respondents rating on ambient and design ranged from two to seven, but the typical answers (as indicated by mean and standard deviation) are limited from five to seven. This means that majority of the respondents are positively biased or evaluated ambient and design positively. This confirms Grewal et al's (2003) statement that because ambient and design are controlled, they automatically result to positive responses.
- 5) Marketing stimuli such as affordability of music products, effectiveness of promotional activities, and efficiency of service process had a range of responses restricted from three to seven. The mean and standard deviations suggest that the range of typical answers would include perfect seven down to a rating of four or five. This response is

expected because of the limitation of this study. The study was limited to be done in legal music stores that are found in malls. Such restriction would result to similarity in responses because all respondents were exposed to the same marketing stimuli.

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