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Factors Influencing the Purchase Intention of Pop Mart Products

Evidence from Filipino Consumers in Metro Manila, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the factors influencing the intention to purchase among Filipino consumers toward Pop Mart products using a predictive-correlational research design. 383 Pop Mart customers in Metro Manila took part in both online and on-site surveys. The data were analyzed using statistical tools such as weighted mean, frequency and percentage distribution, and multiple linear regression analysis. The findings revealed that Attitude towards Behaviour, Perceived Value, and Word-of-Mouth had a significant influence on purchase intention among Filipino consumers when buying Pop Mart products, whereas Uncertainty did not. This study would greatly help marketers, brand managers, and even business owners who are aiming to enhance their purchase intention among their target markets like young Filipino consumers. Despite knowing that attitude, perceived value, and word-of-mouth significantly influenced intention to purchase, similar brands like Pop Mart may develop a strategy that highlights emotional satisfaction beyond owning the collectibles, uniqueness of the product, and the power of social influence that drives purchase intention.

Keywords
Attitude towards Behavior
E-WOM
Perceived Value
Purchase Intention
Uncertainty

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Introduction

In this generation, the thrill of unboxing a product and discovering a random item inside has piqued consumers' interest. The thrill, a sense of curiosity, and the element of surprise are factors in why people are into blind boxes [1]. Globally, blind boxes continue to show exponential growth. According to Mangal [2], International markets are projected to generate 13.1 billion CYN (approximately USD 1.83 billion), an increase of 5 billion CYN in 2024. The leading contributor of this is Pop Mart, a Chinese company that collaborates with artists to create collectible toys and figurines. Its most famous product line is the "Blind box", which offers consumers the thrill and uncertainty due to the mystery item that resides inside the box that will remain unknown until opened.

Among all the collections that Pop Mart offers, Labubu is the one that gained the most attention. In 2019, after the partnership was made, Labubu gained massive attention worldwide, ever since K-pop artist Lisa showcased her collection on social media platforms. Beijing is planning to expand Pop Mart's footprint in the Philippines [3]. In 2024, Pop Mart opened their first store in Mall of Asia (MOA). This event attracted a massive number of collectors and fans. Additionally, the brand's visibility among the Filipino youth received a considerable boost as local celebrities, including Heart Evangelista, Vice Ganda, and many more, publicly displayed their own collections.

Several studies have explored the variables that lead consumers to buy blind box items. Bläse et al [30] found that fear of missing out (FOMO) is a major psychological factor that affects buying behavior. Diokno and Ramilio [3], focusing on Pop Mart and Filipino customers, determined income to be a critical component. People who have a higher income are most likely the ones to repeat purchases. Apart from this, their study also indicates that the promotion methods adopted by Pop Mart, more so those that entail exclusivity and surprise, can induce spontaneous purchasing behavior. The uncertainty of buying a blind box seems to increase emotional attachment and make the product more desirable to consumers.

Despite previous studies probing consumer purchase intentions toward Pop Mart in nations such as China, Thailand, and South Korea, there remains a lack of studies in the local context, particularly in the Philippines. Much of the current literature generalizes psychological and social constructs across broader markets without addressing cultural or

regional differences, and only a few have investigated how behavioral attitudes, perceived value, word of mouth both online and offline, and uncertainty drive consumer choices among Filipino consumers. This study seeks to fill this literature gap by analyzing the psychological, cultural, and economic factors that drive Filipino consumers' influence to purchase Pop Mart products. The research objective of this study is to evaluate the factors that influence the purchase intention of Pop Mart products among Filipino consumers. However, the study is limited to selected variables and a specific geographic context, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Overall, this article contributes to the existing body of knowledge by providing localized empirical insights into consumer purchase intention and offering practical implications for marketers and future researchers in the Philippine setting.

Literature Review

A. Attitude towards Act or Behavior on Purchase Intention

Attitude is relevant because it indicates how individuals feel about something and how likely they are to carry out the same. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, individuals with a positive attitude towards a behavior are likely to engage in the same, for example, purchasing a product. For instance, research indicated that individuals who had positive attitudes toward Sharia mutual funds or e-commerce were more inclined to purchase [4],[5]. Other research indicated that attitude, as well as social pressure and behavioral control, contributed to raising the intent to purchase items such as processed noodles or green products [6].

Attitudes also influence the effect of ads on people. If people have a positive attitude towards an ad, they will have a higher desire to purchase the product [7]. Attitudes are also influenced by influencers. Muslim fashion influencers, for instance, made people feel more positively about brands and ads, so they desired to purchase more [8]. User-generated content, such as reviews and videos of ordinary individuals, also contributes to constructing good attitudes and driving online buys [9].

Attitudes can link what people want to do and what they do. Some research revealed that possessing a good attitude causes more robust buying intentions and purchases, such as purchasing apartments or organic food [10][11].

- Hypothesis 1**:** Attitude towards the act or behavior significantly influences intention to purchase

B. Perceived Value

Perceived value is the extent to which a consumer believes a product is valuable. It can be in terms of usefulness (utilitarian), enjoyment (hedonic), or social. Studies have proved that all three dimensions make individuals more satisfied and more inclined towards purchase, with usefulness being the most effective [12]. For instance, individuals interested in the

environment find greater value in secondhand luxury fashion and are more likely to purchase secondhand luxury fashion [13]. Perceived value also accounts for how promotion and customer attitudes influence purchase decisions [14].

Circumstances also come into play. If individuals are hurried or care deeply about a product, they notice its utility, emotional and social appeal more carefully before purchasing [8]. In the case of products such as upcycled products, environmentally oriented values, emotions, and appearance assisted in enhancing positive attitudes and buying intentions [15]. Additional research supports that the greater the value individuals perceive in a product, the higher the chances of them purchasing it [16].

Online experiences create an extra layer. When individuals used live streams for their usefulness and enjoyment, they found the streamers and products more trustworthy, which increased their desire to purchase again [17]. Good-reviewing products that appeared enjoyable were also used more [18]. Influencers enabled consumers to place greater value on products, but their influence was still greater than simply the value created [19].

- Hypothesis 2: Perceived value significantly influences intention to purchase

C. Electronic Word-of-Mouth on Purchase Intention

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) plays a significant role in intention to purchase. Online review or comment quality and quantity influence whether individuals are willing to purchase something [20]. Gen Z consumers and younger consumers are likely to purchase if they believe online reviews are helpful [21]. Individuals who engage with more eWOM messages also purchase more [20]. Online reviews' credibility makes them more helpful and enhances buying intentions [22]. A large study concluded that eWOM has a significant influence on buying intentions all the time [21].

eWOM not only affects intention to purchase but also individuals' perceptions of products. Encouraging online comments lead individuals to believe a product is helpful, and they are motivated to purchase [23]. Observing others make a product purchase multiple times through eWOM increases its value [24]. On TikTok Shop, many individuals focused their purchase choices on eWOM [25]. Trust closes the gap from eWOM to purchase intention [26], and eWOM establishes brand awareness and perceived quality of the product that leads to greater purchase intentions [27].

- Hypothesis 3: Electronic word of mouth (WOM/eWOM) significantly influences intention to purchase

D. Uncertainty on Purchase Intention

Uncertainty influences buying intention, especially in blind boxes where consumers do not know what is inside the box. This uncertainty may render the product more emotionally precious and enhance the likelihood of purchase [28]. They also purchase blind boxes because

they are lucky or like the emotional rush [29]. Curiosity can generate impulse purchases, and individuals occasionally make illogical choices because of immediate rewards or gambling-like cognition, particularly when products are in short supply [13].

Meanwhile, uncertainty also generates unfavorable emotions such as tension and anxiety [14], and sometimes results in compulsive purchasing [30]. Nevertheless, most consumers like the thrill and suspense involved in not knowing what they will receive [31]. There are consumers who enjoy the thrill so much that they are willing to pay for it [32]. Uncertainty makes shopping more enjoyable in hedonic contexts but less rewarding when the intention is utilitarian [31]. However, blind box marketing also carries risks because it can be addictive and is sometimes likened to gambling [32].

- Hypothesis 4: Uncertainty does not significantly influence intention to purchase

Material and Methods

This quantitative study aimed to understand and assess the relationship between selected psychological and social factors and the purchase intention of consumers toward Pop Mart products in the Philippines. The research approach employed was a predictive-correlational design. A thorough validation and reliability testing process was conducted to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the research instrument used in this study. The questionnaire was adapted from previously published studies and was reviewed to assess its relevance, clarity, and appropriateness in capturing the constructs of Attitude toward Behavior, Perceived Value, Word-of-Mouth, Uncertainty, and Purchase Intention. Necessary revisions were made to align the items with the research objectives and improve coherence. Following the review process, the reliability of the instrument was confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha based on established reliability results from prior studies.

The constructs demonstrated acceptable to excellent internal consistency: Attitude toward Behavior ($\alpha = 0.857$), Perceived Value ($\alpha = 0.906$), Word-of-Mouth ($\alpha = 0.844$), Uncertainty ($\alpha = 0.873$), and Purchase Intention ($\alpha = 0.792$). A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.70 and above is considered acceptable, indicating that the instrument consistently measures the intended constructs. These reliability scores confirmed that the survey tool is dependable and internally consistent across all factors.

The survey questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part is about the demographic profiling of the respondents. Using the frequency and percentage distribution based on the Age Group, it reveals that the majority of respondents were aged from 18 to 24 years, corresponding to 329 respondents or 86% of the total sample; respondents aged 25 to 29 years were 35 individuals or 9%, those aged 30 to 35 years were 11 respondents or 3%, and

individuals aged 36 years and above accounted for 8 respondents or 2%, indicating a strong concentration of young adult consumers.

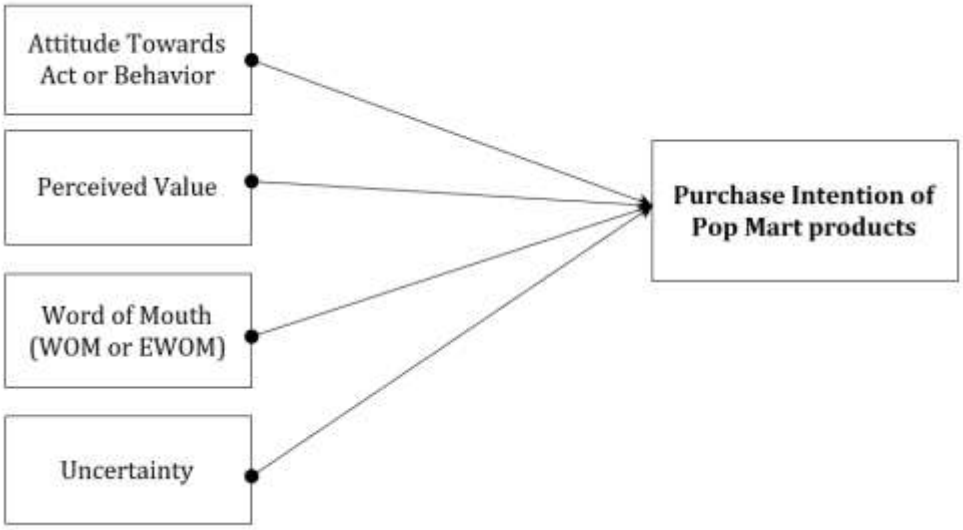


Fig. 1. Research Paradigm

Based on gender, 226 respondents or 59% were female, 118 respondents or 31% were male, 33 respondents or 9% identified as LGBTQIA+, and 6 respondents or 2% preferred not to state their gender, suggesting a predominantly female and gender-diverse audience. In terms of residence, 108 respondents or 28% lived in Manila, 90 respondents or 23% in Quezon City, 32 respondents or 8% in Pasig, 29 respondents or 8% in Makati, 24 respondents or 6% in Caloocan, 20 respondents or 5% in Taguig, 19 respondents or 5% in Mandaluyong, 2% lived in Las Piñas, Pasay, and San Juan, and 1% lived in Malabon, Muntinlupa, Navotas, and Parañaque, highlighting the concentration of Pop Mart consumers within these cities in Metro Manila.

In terms of educational attainment, 165 respondents or 43% were high school graduates, 156 respondents or 41% held bachelor's degrees, 20 respondents or 5% were vocational graduates, 1% were master's or doctorate holders, and 34 respondents or 9% preferred not to state their education level, showing that the respondents were mostly students or recent graduates. In terms of Civil Status, 368 respondents or 96% were single, 13 respondents or 3% were married, 2 respondents or 1% were widowed, and none were separated.

Based on occupation, 255 respondents or 67% were students, 44 respondents or 11% were working students, 41 respondents or 11% were employed, 18 respondents or 5% were self-employed, 15 respondents or 4% were unemployed, 6 respondents or 2% preferred not to mention their occupation, and 4 respondents or 1% were reviewees.

As to their monthly income, 233 respondents or 61% earned below ₱15,000, 75 respondents or 25% earned ₱15,000 to ₱30,000, 33 respondents or 9% earned ₱30,001 to

₱50,000, 19 respondents or 5% earned ₱50,001 to ₱75,000, and 3% earned ₱75,000 and above, showing that Pop Mart products appeal mostly to lower- to middle-income consumers.

Parts two and three of the research instrument refer to factors affecting purchase intention and, in terms of attitude towards behavior, perceived value, and uncertainty, which is answerable by a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. See Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Measured Variables

	Total Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Factors Affecting Purchase Intention		
1. Attitude towards Behavior	4.08	Agree
2. Perceived Value	3.71	Agree
3. Word of Mouth	4.09	Agree
4. Uncertainty	3.57	Agree
5. Purchase Intention	3.81	Agree

Table 2 presents the total weighted means and corresponding verbal interpretations of the study's key variables using mean scores to determine the overall level of agreement among respondents. The results revealed that all measured variables were generally interpreted as "Agree," which indicates favorable perceptions across variables. Word of Mouth obtained the highest mean score (M = 4.09), followed closely by Attitude (M = 4.08), both reflecting strong positive evaluations and a high likelihood of recommending or speaking positively about the subject of the study.

Purchase Intention (M = 3.81) also fell within the "Agree" range, suggesting that respondents demonstrate a relatively strong intention to engage in purchasing behavior. Meanwhile, Perceived Value (M = 3.71) indicates that respondents recognize the benefits and overall worth of the offering, though at a slightly more moderate level of agreement. Uncertainty recorded the lowest mean score (M = 3.57), yet it remains within the "Agree" category, implying the presence of some hesitation or perceived risk, but not at a level that significantly undermines favorable evaluations.

These findings are supported by previous studies which emphasize that positive attitudes significantly enhance purchase intention [4], that higher perceived value increases consumers' likelihood to buy [12], and that credible electronic word-of-mouth strongly influences purchasing decisions [33]. Moreover, literature explains that uncertainty can simultaneously create excitement and mild hesitation in purchase contexts [34], which aligns with the moderate agreement observed in this study. Overall, the results provide empirical support for established findings that attitude, perceived value, word-of-mouth, and uncertainty collectively shape consumers' purchase intentions.

Results and Discussions

Table 2 presents the results of the multiple regression analysis examining the effects of attitude toward behavior, perceived value, electronic word of mouth (eWOM), and uncertainty on the purchase intention of Filipino consumers toward Pop Mart products. The analysis revealed that attitude toward behavior (β = .305, p = .000), perceived value (β = .447, p = .000), and eWOM (β = .112, p = .010) had statistically significant positive effects on purchase intentions. These results support the respective hypotheses, indicating that consumers who hold favorable attitudes, perceive high value in the products, or encounter positive online reviews are more likely to intend to purchase Pop Mart items.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Beta	T	P-value	Decision	Remarks	Decision
Attitude towards Behavior	.305	6.346	.000	Reject H_0	Significant	H1 Accepted
Perceived Value	.447	8.788	.000	Reject H_0	Significant	H2 Accepted
Word of Mouth	.112	2.595	.010	Reject H_0	Significant	H3 Accepted
Uncertainty	-.015	-.529	.597	Failed to reject H_0	Insignificant	H4 Rejected

Conversely, uncertainty (β = -.015, p = .597) did not show a significant effect, indicating that perceived risk or doubt regarding the products does not meaningfully influence consumers' purchase intentions in this context. This finding suggests that Filipino Pop Mart consumers are less concerned with potential risks and are instead primarily motivated by factors that enhance their emotional and experiential satisfaction, such as novelty, excitement, and brand affinity.

The results provide important insights into consumer behavior for collectible products. The strong positive influence of perceived value implies that the uniqueness, design, and quality of Pop Mart items directly encourage purchase intention. Similarly, the significance of eWOM highlights the role of social influence and online communities in shaping buying decisions, where positive reviews and endorsements from peers or influencers strengthen consumer trust and engagement. Attitude toward behavior reinforces that individual preference and interest play a crucial role in motivating purchases, showing that emotional connection and personal enjoyment are central drivers of collectible purchases.

Conclusion

This study concluded that Filipino consumers' purchase intention toward Pop Mart products was primarily driven by emotional satisfaction, perceived value, and social influence, while uncertainty played only a minimal role. The majority of respondents were young, single, and low-income students residing in urban areas, revealing that Pop Mart's primary market appeal lay within the youth segment who found enjoyment and personal expression in collectible culture. Consumers demonstrated favorable attitudes toward Pop Mart products,

perceiving them as enjoyable, aesthetically pleasing, and worth their price. Perceived value emerged as the strongest predictor of purchase intention, emphasizing the importance of product quality, uniqueness, and fair pricing. Word of mouth and online reviews also played a significant role in shaping consumer confidence and purchase behavior, reflecting the power of digital communities and peer influence in modern consumer decision-making. In contrast, uncertainty did not significantly affect purchasing intention, indicating that Filipino consumers valued assurance and brand trust over unpredictability. Overall, the findings highlighted that emotional engagement, perceived worth, and social validation were key to maintaining consumer interest and encouraging continuous purchase behavior.

Limitation and Suggestions

This study examined the factors influencing purchase intention towards Pop Mart products among Filipino consumers, focusing on attitude towards act or behavior, perceived value, word of mouth (WOM/eWOM), and uncertainty. While the results revealed that attitude towards act or behavior, perceived value, and word of mouth significantly influenced the intention to purchase, uncertainty was not found to have a significant influence. These findings provide a solid foundation for future studies in the local context and highlight several avenues for further investigation. First, this study was limited to Pop Mart consumers residing within Metro Manila. Future research may expand the scope of the study, such as including other regions, which may allow for a more representative sample of Pop Mart consumers across different locales. Examining regional differences in consumer behavior could provide helpful insights into how local cultures, socio-economic factors, and product availability shape intention to purchase. Second, future studies may explore adding potential variables that were not included in this study. For instance, factors like brand trust and advertising exposure may influence purchase intention either directly or indirectly. Future research may also incorporate potential mediators or moderators like perceived scarcity. Third, given the strong influence of eWOM on consumers, future studies may investigate emerging trends in digital marketing, social media engagement, and influencer-driven campaigns in order to understand how these platforms strengthen consumer perceptions and encourage purchases, which can inform both theory and practical marketing strategies in the collectibles market. Lastly, future studies may employ alternative research designs and statistical techniques, such as correlation analysis to examine the strength and direction of associations among variables, and structural equation modeling (SEM) to test complex relationships, including moderating and mediating effects.

Recommendations

To sustain and strengthen purchase intention among Filipino consumers, Pop Mart may focus on strategies that emphasize value creation, emotional connection, and community

engagement. Pop Mart may begin by conducting detailed market segmentation to identify responsive consumer groups, particularly students and young professionals, and align marketing programs to their preferences. Collaborations with campus influencers and interactive events could enhance brand visibility among younger audiences. Pop Mart may also reinforce perceived value by ensuring consistent product quality, transparent pricing, and storytelling that evokes emotional appeal and nostalgia. Since word-of-mouth greatly shaped buying behavior, encouraging user-generated content, online reviews, and influencer partnerships could further amplify brand credibility. Lastly, while uncertainty had no significant impact, Pop Mart may still address potential consumer hesitation by maintaining product transparency, offering authenticity certificates, and providing reliable customer support. Strengthening these aspects could build stronger trust, deepen emotional attachment, and enhance overall consumer loyalty toward Pop Mart products in the local market.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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