

Reading memo

Sociology



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Consumers with a Conscience: Will they Pay More? With the constantly increasing prices of goods today and at the same time the increasing necessity of every consumer to purchase products that will satisfy a need or even a want, the purchase behavior changes. There are many different motivators for each consumer in buying a product. For most, it would be to satisfy a physiological need such as food and products promoting health. However, as the proliferation of advertisements bombard every consumer today on television, radio or print, people now buy products not only because they need them but because they want them, believing that a certain product can give them a certain identity or gain them the acceptance they long in the society. Because of these ideas that encapsulate a consumer's mind today, being a consumer with conscience, avoiding products that came from sweat shops and paying premium prices for those that did not is actually only hypothetical but not quite a reality.

With this said, should consumers choose to be a practical buyer, buying within their means or should they start being a conscientious buyer, not promoting products or brands that come from sweat shops by paying at a higher price? In my own opinion, it is just common knowledge and behavior to abhor companies that are involved in inhuman working conditions for their employees just to be able to cut on costs and be able to sell their products at a lower price to their customers. However, I strongly believe that being a “consumer with conscience” is very impractical especially when prices of goods that did not come from sweat shops are incrementally high. Also, conscientious buying would not stop these companies who are involved in sweat shop activities to stop their business. The least they would probably do if they do not reach a certain sale would be to sell a different product.

Also, I don't think the solution to put a stop to the proliferation of sweat goods is in promoting the campaign for conscientious buying, instead, should be more on the promotion of corporate social responsibility for these companies. I say so because consumers are not going to stop buying goods just because they come from sweat shops especially when it is a need needed to be satisfied. However, companies who are taught how to be "responsible" in doing business indeed can do a lot of great things to a company's image and profitability and being able to send this message across to them can stop many consumers from just saying what they say they will do in surveys, to pay a higher price for sweat-free goods.

Relating the concept or idea I got from this reading to my own life, I would say that I can liken this to my diet. There are a lot of videos and research about the importance of eating healthy, with emphasis on how unhealthy processed food and fast food are. However, it did not stop me from eating from fast food not only because I love the taste of it but more importantly because I could not afford to eat healthy food, priced twice as high as fast food. Aside from that, I could also liken it to getting into an active and healthy lifestyle such as regularly being able to exercise. As much as I want to get in shape and be physically healthy, it can sometimes be hard to achieve because sessions to the gym or boxing which is what I am interested in takes up a big chunk of my daily wage. Indeed, as a consumer I strongly believe that practicality is the strongest influencing factor on people's purchase behavior.

Bibliography:

Kimeldorf, H., Meyer, R., Prasad, M., & Robinson, I. (2006). Consumers with a Conscience: Will they Pay More?. U. S. A.: SAGE.

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