

## THE DETERMINANTS OF VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFTS CONSUMPTION AMONG MALAYSIAN MIDDLE-CLASS ART CONSUMERS: A PLS-SEM ANALYSIS OF PURCHASE INTENTION

Mei-Yin Liong<sup>1,3\*</sup>, Yee-Mun Chin<sup>2</sup>, Yun-Fah Chang<sup>3</sup>, Annie-Wong Kai Sze<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Graphic Design and Multimedia, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia  
Email: liongmy@utar.edu.my

<sup>2</sup> Department of General Studies, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia  
Email: chinym@utar.edu.my

<sup>3</sup> School of Accounting and Finance, Taylor's University, Malaysia  
Email: yunfah.chang@taylors.edu.my

<sup>4</sup> Department of Early Childhood, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia  
Email: anniewong@utar.edu.my

\* Corresponding Author

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### Abstract:

Empirical studies on Malaysian middle-class visual arts consumption are crucial for positioning the nation's creative industry internationally. While vast Western research has explored art consumption patterns from the perspective of the sociology of art and culture. Very few studies have examined the key determinants of purchase intention among Malaysia's middle-class art consumers from the marketing perspective. This study investigates the factors influencing visual arts and crafts consumption in Malaysia, focusing on attitudes, personal motivation and preferences, emotional response, price sensitivity, and brand association. The primary objective is to develop a model that explains how these determinants shape the purchase intention of visual arts and crafts among Malaysian Middle-Class Non-Art Practitioners (MMCNAPs). Findings from PLS-SEM analysis indicate that attitude, personal motivation and preference strongly influence purchase intention, whereas brand association, emotional response and price sensitivity have indirect impacts. These insights highlight the importance of both intrinsic and extrinsic values in shaping consumer behaviour. Art retailers and producers can leverage these findings to enhance Malaysian visual arts and crafts' presentation, branding, and appeal, ultimately strengthening the local creative industry's marketability.

**Keywords:**

Determinants, Malaysian Middle Class, PLS-SEM Analysis, Purchase Intention, Visual Arts And Craft Consumption

## Introduction

### *Background Of Study*

Purchase intention is a crucial factor influencing the consumption patterns of visual arts and crafts, particularly within Malaysia's creative industry. Understanding the determinants of purchase intention is essential for sustaining and expanding this sector, as consumer demand directly impacts the growth and sustainability of creative enterprises. However, despite the increasing recognition of the creative industry's role in economic development, research on Malaysian middle-class consumers' purchase behaviours in the visual arts and crafts sector remains limited.

Malaysia's creative economy has experienced significant growth, driven by an expanding middle class, increasing digital literacy, and evolving consumer preferences. The country's creative industry contributed RM29.4 billion to the GDP in 2019 (Department of Statistics Malaysia [DOSM], 2019) and continues to receive substantial governmental support, with RM160 million allocated under the Malaysia Budget 2024 to accelerate its development (Malaysia MADANI, 2024). A key component of this industry, the visual arts and crafts sector, embodies a blend of traditional and contemporary influences. It is supported by national galleries, independent art spaces, and artist collectives, reflecting Malaysia's diverse cultural heritage. Traditional art forms such as batik, songket, and wood carving are increasingly being reinterpreted as premium design products to meet modern consumer demands (British Council, 2021). Despite this growth, consumer behaviour research in Malaysia's visual arts and crafts sector has primarily focused on market trends, government policies, and industry development, with limited emphasis on the psychological and behavioural factors influencing purchase intention (Cendana Report, 2021). Existing studies on consumer behaviour in the arts often highlight the importance of attitudes, brand perception, and personal motivations in shaping purchase decisions (Bourdieu, 1984; Kotler & Keller, 2016). However, the specific role of factors such as emotional response, brand association, and price sensitivity in the Malaysian middle-class context remains underexplored. This study aims to bridge the gap in understanding the key determinants influencing the purchase intention of Malaysian middle-class consumers in the visual arts and crafts sector. Specifically, it investigates the direct effects of attitude, brand association, emotional response, personal motivation and preference, and price sensitivity on purchase intention. To achieve this, the study seeks to develop a conceptual framework that models these determinants, providing a structured understanding of Malaysian Middle-Class Non-Art Practitioners' (MMCNAPs) visual art consumption patterns. By doing so, it offers valuable insights for artists, policymakers, and businesses seeking to enhance engagement with middle-class art consumers and promote sustainable growth in Malaysia's creative industry.

### ***Research Question and Aim and Objective***

The main objective of this study is to explore and model these determinants, establishing their direct effects on purchase intention and offering a comprehensive framework for understanding MMCNAPs' visual art consumption behaviour.

### **Literature Review**

Based on the literature review and past studies. The literature reviews has been conducted for the relevant constructs of the research paper.

#### ***Antecedents of Purchase Intention of Visual Arts and Crafts Products.***

Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behaviour by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), this theory is one of the most significant marketing frameworks for predicting consumer purchase intention. Therefore, this study extends the theory by incorporating brand association, emotional response, personal motivation and preference, and price sensitivity.

The researchers hypothesise that these antecedents directly influence the purchase intention of Malaysian Middle-Class Non-Art Practitioners (MMCNAPs) in their visual arts and crafts consumption. The following section presents relevant studies supporting the development of these hypotheses.

#### ***Attitude***

To date, numerous studies have found that individuals' attitudes towards people or objects—defined as feelings of approval or disapproval (Hanel, Foad, & Maio, 2021), which may influence their actions (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Ajzen & Madden, 1986; Bargh, Chen, & Burrows, 1989, 1990; Bettiga, Bianchi, Lamberti, & Noci, 2020).

When consumers purchase products or services, diverse feelings are evoked. Generally, they experience a mix of fantasy, emotion, and fun while striving to satisfy these desires (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Researchers have reported that emotions and feelings are key factors in determining people's perceptions, thoughts, judgments, decisions, motivations, and behaviours, including consumer behaviour (Pham & Lee, 2019). While both practical and pleasure-oriented products evoke emotional reactions in consumers, their physical responses may not always align with how they describe their feelings (Bettiga et al., 2020). Increased consumer self-awareness can lead them to make decisions based on their feelings rather than logic, resulting in a higher perceived value of decision outcomes.

Furthermore, numerous scholars have found a positive relationship between attitude and purchase intention. Recent studies confirm that a positive attitude towards cultural and creative products correlates with higher purchase intention (Xing & Jin, 2023). For instance, Zhang et al. (2021) found that consumers' perceived values significantly influence their attitudes toward cultural and creative products, ultimately shaping their purchasing intentions (Zhang, Pang, Wei, & Bae, 2021). Similarly, Nidal and Albaity (2023) demonstrated that perceived value, emotional value, and trust significantly affect attitudes, which in turn drive purchasing decisions in the visual arts sector (Nidal & Albaity, 2023).

Beyond consumer purchasing behaviour, attitude formation is crucial in shaping perceptions of cultural and artistic experiences. Studies suggest that Generation Z consumers perceive and engage with visual arts not merely through traditional subcultures but as part of a broader

cultural information network, reinforcing the impact of perceived value on their attitudes (Bresler, 2023). Additionally, convention attendees' attitudes towards cultural events are significantly shaped by their perceived value and co-creation experiences, which affect their overall engagement and satisfaction (Ho, Sia, Lee, & Yap, 2021).

In emerging digital environments, attitudes toward artistic consumption continue to evolve. Research on metaverse events highlights how perceived values influence attitudes and behavioural intentions, further supporting the relationship between attitude formation and perceived value (Choi et al., 2023).

These findings reinforce the notion that attitudes significantly impact consumer perceptions and behaviours in various artistic and cultural contexts.

H1: There is a significant relationship between MMCNAPs' attitude and their perceived values in visual arts consumption.

### ***Brand Association***

Extensive studies have documented the impact of brand association on consumer behaviour. For instance, brand associations are integral to festival branding; however, demographic factors do not significantly influence brand association (Dreyer & Slabbert, 2012). Consumers who regularly consume or rely on a product or brand are more likely to develop positive associations with it (Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel, 2013). Brand associations are cultivated through consumers' shared experiences, fostering a symbolic connection to meaning (Thellefsen & Sørensen, 2015).

James (2005) noted that extending a brand into a new product category, particularly with a partner, could alter consumer perceptions and influence brand attitudes. Measuring brand association effectively requires examining its density rather than merely counting different associations, as Vriens, Chen, and Schomaker (2019) suggested. Mann and Ghuman (2014) highlighted that consumer attitudes toward a company and its products are shaped by corporate brand associations, including dimensions such as perceived ability, growth potential, symbolic value, external prestige, ethical conduct, social responsibility, visual identity, and communication strategies. Río, Vázquez, and Iglesias (2001) explained that brand association concerns factors like guarantee, personal identity, and social status. These factors increase the likelihood of consumers recommending the brand, paying premium prices, and accepting brand offerings.

Brand associations also facilitate brand extension. Consumers prioritising social status are often influenced by brand associations tied to symbolic meanings, emotional responses, and alignment between self-image and brand image, impacting their purchase behaviour (O'Cass & Frost, 2002). Schroeder (2005) emphasised that a strong brand image influences art consumers' purchasing decisions and effectively integrates with business strategies. This connection between visual arts and branding deepens consumers' understanding of branding as a strategic practice for creating meaning. Zou (2023) reaffirmed that brand image plays a crucial role in consumer behaviour, serving as a valuable business asset when incorporated into strategic plans. Ferreiro-Rosende et al. (2021) demonstrated that the relationship between a brand, artwork, artist, and museum is shaped by factors such as the product or artwork itself, symbolic meaning, organisational structure, local connections, and digital presence.

H2. There is a significant relationship between MMCNAPs' brand association and their perceived values in visual arts consumption.

### ***Emotional Response***

As highlighted in the literature review, positive or negative emotions significantly impact consumer decision-making and purchase intention (Bagozzi et al., Sun, Zhang, & Zheng, 2023; Yu, 2022). According to one of Holbrook's (1999) key findings on experiential consumption, consumers derive value from their consumption experiences through efficiency, improved social status, self-esteem, enjoyment, aesthetics, ethics, and spirituality.

Emotions from past experiences can substantially affect future decision-making. These emotions influence risk assessment and monetary value evaluations, ultimately shaping consumer decisions. Research indicates that emotions embedded in marketing messages, information, and tools can impact decision-making by activating cognitive processes (Achar, So, Agrawal, & Duhachek, 2016). For instance, consumers may prioritise functional attributes over social responsibility when evaluating products. However, when considering the experience of consuming those products, they may value social responsibility more than functional capabilities (Johnson & Ashoori, 2018).

Prior studies have emphasised the importance of emotions in consumer behaviour. The emotions evoked by an experience can significantly influence consumption preferences and behaviours. These emotions can encourage or discourage product consumption, affecting whether a product is beneficial or harmful (Bagozzi et al., Belanche, Casaló, & Flavián, 2016). Furthermore, research has found that negative emotions related to sensitivity to product visuals, impulsivity, and unplanned consumption significantly influence both men and women. In contrast, positive emotions appear to influence only men in this regard (Sun et al., 2023).

Recent studies further confirm the significant role of emotional responses in shaping perceived value in visual arts consumption. For instance, emotional value plays a crucial role in determining consumer attitudes toward purchasing visual arts, as emotions, trust, and perceived value collectively drive purchase intentions (Nidal & Albaity, 2023). Additionally, Bi (2024) found that narrative brand design enhances consumers' emotional connection with visual products, ultimately increasing their perceived emotional value (Bi, 2024).

Moreover, the assessment of aesthetic emotions in visual art consumption is gaining prominence. Abukhodair et al. (2023) introduced the Visual Aesthetic Wheel of Emotion (VAWE), which systematically measures the emotional responses evoked by visual artworks, reinforcing the deep connection between aesthetic perception and emotional engagement (Abukhodair, Song, Pekçetin, & Dipaola, 2023). Similarly, Ge (2024) explored how emotional value in branded goods, such as collectables and designer toys, shapes consumer behaviour, demonstrating that emotional responses can significantly impact brand loyalty and purchase decisions (Ge, 2024). These findings further reinforce the argument that emotional responses play a crucial role in shaping consumer attitudes and perceived value in visual arts consumption.

H3: There is a significant relationship between MMCNAPs' emotional responses and their perceived values in visual arts consumption.



### ***Personal Motivation and Preference***

Personal motivation and preferences refer to personal taste (subjective taste) in visual art consumption. The factors behind collecting visual art or visiting art exhibitions vary, and these experiences can significantly enhance individuals' understanding of artistic value (Chen, 2009). Past studies indicate that when consumers engage in experiential consumption, they are driven by the pursuit of emotional gratification and aesthetic appreciation rather than purely functional needs (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). This is supported by Jantze et al. (2012), who found that experiential consumption shifts consumers' focus from product ownership to creating memorable and enjoyable experiences. While experiential purchases may better suit materialistic individuals, the impact of materialism on happiness might be limited and dependent on the specific motivations behind such consumption (Pandelaere & Pandelaere, 2016).

Furthermore, Goulding (1999) reported that cultural identification, self-perception, authenticity, nostalgia, and social motivations are essential factors influencing consumers' desires and perceptions of value regarding art collections. Modern art collectors often emphasise their taste and knowledge of art to maintain their social standing, claiming to select high-quality artworks (Wohl, 2019) independently. Additionally, Kackovic et al. (2023) noted that third-party endorsements, such as reviews, awards, and gallery affiliations, positively influence the sales of contemporary artists, especially among expert-agent buyers. Rojas and Lista (2022) confirmed that some art collectors are motivated by social status and financial gain, while others are driven by personal connections and shared values with artists and art organisations. For example, motivations such as decoration purposes, educational background, or family heritage can inspire individuals to collect art. These collectors may employ hierarchical strategies to elevate their social status and financial situation. Brown (2019) demonstrated that private art collecting can influence cultural trends and decision-making, potentially creating a biased perspective on art history that aligns with the interests of wealthy collectors. These collectors may promote specific intellectual, social, and aesthetic values.

Their characteristics shape consumers' assessment of a product or service adopted cultural values and norms, as well as the external contextual factors surrounding them (Overby, Woodruff, & Gardial, 2005). Research confirms that motivation and individual taste influence art consumption, showing a statistically significant link between subjective behavioural factors and personal cultural capital (Ushkarev, 2018). Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed:

H4: There is a significant relationship between MMCNAP's personal motivation and consumption preference (subjective taste) and their perceived values in visual arts consumption.

### ***Price Sensitivity***

Price sensitivity refers to consumers' willingness to pay for a product or service they consume. (Wathieu, 2004). Previous studies suggest that consumers are less concerned about the price when they perceive a brand as offering the best value for its cost when they can only compare brand names and when they receive additional information about the brand's quality (Huber, Holbrook, & Kahn, 1986). Nam and Lee (2009) found that consumers with utilitarian shopping values and those making personal purchases of fashion products tend to be sensitive to price. They also revealed a significant relationship between the purpose of the purchase and the social context. Goldsmith, Flynn, and Kim (2010) further supported this by showing that consumers' desire to purchase products for social status can influence their price sensitivity. Their study

also noted that price sensitivity is primarily affected by consumer involvement with the product, the innovativeness of the product's attributes, and brand loyalty.

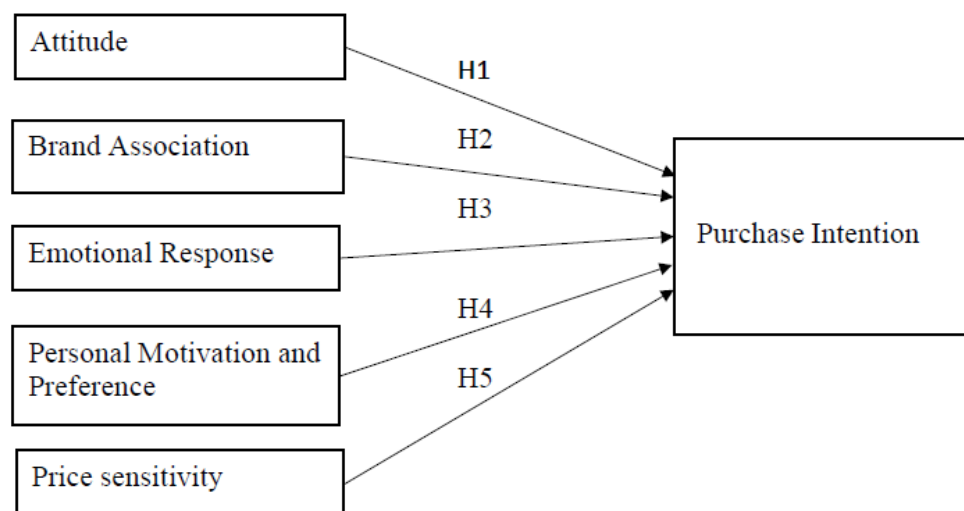
Recently, Otika et al. (2021) found that price sensitivity influences the relationship between consumption patterns, production methods, and ethical consumption behaviour. In addition, Nguyen, Godichaud, and Amodeo (2023) reported that the price sensitivity coefficient, market demand, and unit production costs play a more significant role in determining the profitability of sustainable product models than other parameters.

In the context of visual arts and crafts consumption, Schönfeld and Reinstaller (2007) found that the price of highbrow artworks, such as paintings, drawings, and sculptures, tends to be higher if the artist has a good reputation or profile. However, the price may decrease if these artworks are sold through a gallery with a strong reputation. Conversely, the price of lowbrow artworks, such as crafts, influences consumer behaviour regarding artwork attribution and the quantity of artwork consumed (Yuan, 2018). Arfa, Nasr, and Benrached (2021) highlighted that consumers' awareness of their purchasing power, financial well-being, and rising financial concerns have led to greater price sensitivity, shaping a new perspective on the shopping experience. Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed:

H5: There is a significant relationship between MMCNAPs' emotional price sensitivity and their perceived values in visual arts consumption.

Hence, the research model is outlined below, and the relevant hypotheses testing is discussed in the subsequent subsections. The research model flow chart is shown in Figure 1.

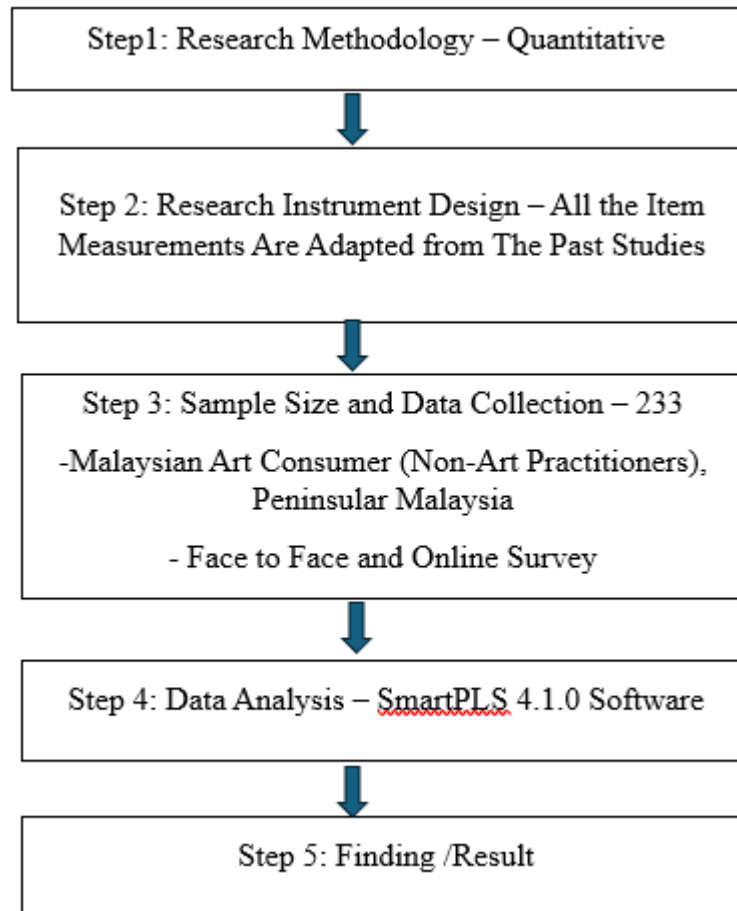
**Figure 1: Research Model**



## Method

A quantitative research methodology was employed in this study to achieve the research objectives. Data were collected using a non-probability, purposive sampling technique. The methodology flow chart is shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: The Methodology Flow Chart**



## Sample Size

The sample size was 233, with the target respondents being Malaysian middle-class non-art practitioners (MMCNAP) who have been involved in visual arts and crafts consumption for more than two years. The research sites included locations with tourist attractions, museum galleries, art expos, and art retailer stalls in Peninsular Malaysia. Participants had a household income ranging from RM 4,880 to RM 10,900 and were 18 years of age or older.

## Measurements

The survey questionnaire was divided into five sections. A pretest was conducted with three art collectors who own art galleries in the Klang Valley's museum and gallery sector. Based on their feedback, minor amendments were made before distributing the final survey questionnaire to respondents.

All measurement items were adapted from previous studies and assessed using a five-point Likert scale. Attitude measurement items were adapted from Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) and



Pani (2021). Brand association items were sourced from Aaker and Keller (1990), Del Rio et al. (2001), and Jaggi and Nim (2020). Emotional response measurements were adapted from Brakus et al. (2009).

Personal motivation and preference items were based on human values and product attribute measurements, drawing from Schwartz (1992, 2006), Boorsma and Chiaravalloti (2009), Leutner (2016), and Fingerhut et al. (2021). Price sensitivity was primarily adapted from Goldsmith and Newell (1997).

The dependent variable, purchase intention for visual arts and crafts, was adapted from Armbrecht, Mason et al. (2023) and Mishra et al. (2023).

### ***Respondent's Demographic Information***

Out of 233 respondents, 95 were male (40.8%), and 138 were female (59.2%). The majority were from Selangor (40%), followed by Kuala Lumpur (15%) and Penang (13%).

In terms of ethnicity, 54.1% of respondents were identified as Malay, 39.5% as Chinese, and 6.4% as Indian. Regarding age distribution, the largest age group comprised individuals aged 30 to 39 (42.9%). Among the respondents, 65.2% were employees, while the highest educational attainment was a degree/professional qualification (42.9%), followed by postgraduate studies. Most participants (61.4%) were married, and 45.1% had a monthly household income between RM 4,850 and RM 5,979. Overall, the sample exhibited diversity across all major demographic categories.

### **Data Analysis**

Refer to Table 1. The data were analysed using SmartPLS 4.1.0 software.

**Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of Item**

Na me	N o.	Ty pe	Miss ings	Me an	Me dia n	Sc ale mi n	Sc ale m ax	Obse rved min	Obse rved max	Stan dard devia tion	Exc ess kurt osis	Skew ness	Cra mér- von Mise s p valu e
D1 a	1	M ET	0	3.2 4	3.00	1.0 0	5.0 0	1.00	5.00	1.16	- 0.61	-0.37	0.00
D1 b	2	M ET	0	4.3 9	4.00	3.0 0	5.0 0	3.00	5.00	0.62	- 0.64	-0.49	0.00
D1 c	3	M ET	0	3.1 6	3.00	1.0 0	5.0 0	1.00	5.00	1.08	- 0.44	-0.25	0.00
D1 d	4	M ET	0	4.4 0	4.00	3.0 0	5.0 0	3.00	5.00	0.63	- 0.62	-0.56	0.00
D1 e	5	M ET	0	4.1 4	4.00	2.0 0	5.0 0	2.00	5.00	0.84	- 0.58	-0.57	0.00
D1 f	6	M ET	0	3.9 6	4.00	2.0 0	5.0 0	2.00	5.00	0.87	- 0.87	-0.31	0.00

D1g	7	M	0	3.12	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	-0.23	-0.07	0.00
		ET				0	0						
D1h	8	M	0	3.60	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	0.98	-0.51	-0.19	0.00
		ET				0	0						
D1i	9	M	0	3.60	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.05	-0.16	-0.55	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1a	10	M	0	4.09	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.74	-0.28	-0.41	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1b	11	M	0	4.18	4.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	0.61	-0.43	-0.11	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1c	12	M	0	4.16	4.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	0.60	-0.36	-0.08	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1d	13	M	0	3.85	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.75	-0.64	-0.04	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1e	14	M	0	3.78	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.82	-0.67	-0.08	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1f	15	M	0	3.87	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.87	-0.77	-0.25	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1g	16	M	0	3.09	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.07	-0.60	-0.04	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1h	17	M	0	3.24	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.05	-0.48	-0.32	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1i	18	M	0	3.11	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.12	-0.67	-0.08	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1j	19	M	0	2.85	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.05	-0.07	0.27	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1k	20	M	0	3.23	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.12	-0.53	-0.32	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1l	21	M	0	4.09	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.74	-0.31	-0.40	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1m	22	M	0	4.30	4.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	0.68	-0.82	-0.47	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1n	23	M	0	4.12	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.74	-0.48	-0.39	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1o	24	M	0	3.73	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.76	-0.91	0.32	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1p	25	M	0	3.70	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	0.91	-0.37	-0.10	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1q	26	M	0	3.82	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.87	-0.73	-0.22	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1r	27	M	0	3.97	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.80	-0.50	-0.34	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1s	28	M	0	3.84	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.80	-0.46	-0.22	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1t	29	M	0	4.26	4.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	5.00	0.67	-0.80	-0.36	0.00
		ET				0	0						
E1u	30	M	0	4.03	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.83	-0.84	-0.32	0.00
		ET				0	0						

F1a	31	M	0	4.03	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.17	-0.20	-0.91	0.00
F1b	32	M	0	3.89	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.15	0.31	-1.01	0.00
F1c	33	M	0	3.81	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.25	-0.04	-0.91	0.00
F1d	34	M	0	4.28	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.79	-0.18	-0.80	0.00
F1e	35	M	0	2.99	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.26	-0.86	0.08	0.00
F1f	36	M	0	2.28	2.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.28	-0.63	0.66	0.00
F1g	37	M	0	2.43	2.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.40	-0.88	0.61	0.00
F1h	38	M	0	2.42	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.32	-0.84	0.46	0.00
F1i	39	M	0	3.72	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.02	0.65	-0.85	0.00
F1j	40	M	0	3.86	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	1.02	0.76	-0.96	0.00
F1k	41	M	0	3.97	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	5.00	0.84	-1.09	-0.16	0.00
G2a	42	M	0	4.38	4.00	3.00	9.00	3.00	9.00	1.31	6.67	2.50	0.00
G2b	43	M	0	4.47	4.00	3.00	9.00	3.00	9.00	1.27	7.14	2.62	0.00
G2c	44	M	0	4.31	4.00	2.00	9.00	2.00	9.00	1.35	6.05	2.34	0.00
G2d	45	M	0	4.06	4.00	1.00	9.00	1.00	9.00	1.48	5.14	1.92	0.00
G2e	46	M	0	4.26	4.00	2.00	9.00	2.00	9.00	1.37	6.04	2.29	0.00
G2f	47	M	0	4.19	4.00	1.00	9.00	1.00	9.00	1.44	5.23	1.97	0.00
G2g	48	M	0	4.32	4.00	2.00	9.00	2.00	9.00	1.41	4.93	1.96	0.00
H1a	49	M	0	3.30	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	0.82	0.41	-0.79	0.00
H1b	50	M	0	3.20	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	0.80	0.12	-0.64	0.00
H1c	51	M	0	2.98	3.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	0.98	-0.51	-0.53	0.00
I2a	52	M	0	3.56	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	0.90	-0.37	-0.24	0.00
I2b	53	M	0	3.57	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	0.86	-0.42	-0.11	0.00
I2c	54	M	0	3.55	4.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00	0.80	-0.16	-0.21	0.00

I2d	5	M	0	3.5	4.00	1.0	5.0	1.00	5.00	0.83	-	-0.20	0.00
	5	ET		3		0	0				0.29		
I2e	5	M	0	3.6	4.00	1.0	5.0	1.00	5.00	0.85	-	-0.34	0.00
	6	ET		3		0	0				0.26		

## Result

A total of 233 responses were received and used for data analysis. Before assessing the measurement model, the data was checked for non-response and common method biases. Next, the composite reliability and average variance extracted were confirmed within the recommended threshold (Hair et al., 2017). Refer to Table 2 below.

**Table 2: The Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted**

Composite reliability (rho_c)	
AT	0.90
BA	0.95
ER	0.96
MP	0.92
PS	0.80
PV	0.94

Note: AT- Attitude, BA- Brand association, ER- Emotional response, MP- Personal motivation and preference, PS- Price sensitivity

Table 3 presents the outcomes of the Fornell-Larcker criterion for the measurement model. The Fornell and Larcker criterion suggested that the items should load stronger in their constructs than any other constructs in the model. As revealed in table 3, all diagonal values (AVE) are greater than the off-diagonal correlation values, discriminant validity is established based on the Fornell-Larcker criterion. This means that each construct is distinct from the others, indicating a valid measurement model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

**Table 3: Discriminant Validity (The Fornell-Larcker Criterion)**

	AT	BA	ER	MP	PS	PI
AT	<b>0.83</b>					
BA	0.14	<b>0.89</b>				
ER	0.05	-0.10	<b>0.92</b>			
MP	0.06	0.04	-0.02	<b>0.86</b>		
PS	0.19	0.05	-0.10	0.24	<b>0.76</b>	
PI	0.33	0.10	0.05	0.41	0.25	<b>0.80</b>

Note: AT- Attitude, BA- Brand association, ER- Emotional response, MP- Personal motivation and preference, PS- Price sensitivity, PI- Purchase intention

Then, the Heterotrait-monotrait ratio approach (HTMT) was used to assess discriminant validity. Table 3 presents All HTMT values between the dependent variable (PI) and independent variables (AT, BA, ER, MP, PS, PI) that are well below the threshold of 0.85. This confirms that the dependent variable (PI) is distinctive; thus, all constructs are distinctive

(Henseler et al., 2015). Resource and capability constructs were developed using the repeated indicators approach (Hair et al., 2017).

**Table 4: Discriminant Validity Test (HTMT Analysis)**

	AT	BA	ER	MP	PS	PI
AT						
BA	0.15					
ER	0.06	0.11				
MP	0.08	0.06	0.06			
PS	0.22	0.18	0.13	0.27		
PI	0.37	0.10	0.07	0.45	0.24	

Note: AT- Attitude, BA- Brand association, ER- Emotional response, MP- Personal motivation and preference, PS- Price sensitivity, PI- Purchase intention

Furthermore, table 5 presents a collinearity test performed before the hypotheses test. All VIF values were below five without any issue of collinearity.

**Table 5: Collinearity Test**

VIF
AT -> PI
BA -> PI
ER -> PI
MP -> PI
PS -> PI
1.06
1.03
1.03
1.06
1.11

Note: AT- Attitude, BA- Brand association, ER- Emotional response, MP- Personal motivation and preference, PS- Price sensitivity, PI- Purchase intention

### **Hypotheses Testing**

Table 6 presents the result of the hypotheses testing among the attitudes, brand association, emotional response, personal motivation and preferences, and price sensitivity to the dependent variable of purchase intention of the MMCNAP's visual art consumer. The significance of the hypothesised relationships showed that the dependent variables of attitude, personal motivation and preferences are both supported, with p-values <0.05.

**Table 6: Hypotheses Testing**

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values
AT -> PI	0.28	0.28	0.06	4.85	0.00
BA -> PI	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.65	0.52
ER -> PI	0.06	0.05	0.08	0.82	0.41

MP					
-> PI	0.37	0.37	0.06	6.19	0.00
PS					
-> PI	0.11	0.12	0.06	1.87	0.06

Note: AT- Attitude, BA- Brand association, ER- Emotional response, MP- Personal motivation and preference, PS- Price sensitivity, PI- Purchase intention

### Finding and Discussion

This study examines the determinants influencing the purchase intention of visual arts and crafts among Malaysians. The findings provide empirical evidence that attitude, personal motivation, and preferences significantly influence the purchase intention of Malaysian middle-class new art patrons (MMCNAPs). By bridging the gap between the antecedents and consequences of MMCNAPs' purchase intention and consumption patterns from a marketing perspective, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of visual arts and crafts consumption in Southeast Asia, particularly among the M40 income group.

The findings align with past studies, which suggest that individuals consume visual arts and cultural products due to diverse personal motivations and tastes. These motivations include home decoration, early exposure through education or family heritage, and collecting artworks (Rojas & Lista, 2022). The individual characteristics of artworks, shaped by cultural values, norms, and external contextual factors, play a critical role in consumers' assessment of a product or service (Overby, Woodruff, & Gardial, 2005). This assessment results in personal feelings of liking or disliking visual arts and crafts products. Recent studies by Xing and Jin (2023) further support this, demonstrating that a positive attitude toward cultural and creative products is strongly associated with purchase intention.

Additionally, Duarte and Silva (2018) highlight that a positive attitude toward a cause is a robust predictor of purchase intention, particularly when combined with consumer identification. Furthermore, this study explores the antecedents of purchase intention and subsequent consumption patterns among MMCNAPs, focusing on factors such as attitude, brand association, emotional response, personal motivation, preferences, and price sensitivity.

#### *The findings reveal several key insights:*

Contrary to initial expectations, hypothesis testing revealed that brand association does not directly impact the purchase intention of visual arts and crafts. While past studies, such as Niekerk and Conradie (2016), suggest that a museum's association with an artist can enhance its value and identity, this study found that such associations do not directly translate into purchase intention among MMCNAPs. This indicates that other factors, such as personal preferences and motivations, may play a more significant role in shaping purchase decisions. The findings also indicate that emotions do not directly impact the decision-making process of art consumers regarding specific products (Bagozzi et al., 2016; Belanche, Casaló, & Flavián, 2016). This suggests that emotional responses may be more nuanced or indirect in shaping purchase intentions.

Moreover, the study reveals that price sensitivity indirectly influences the purchase intention of visual arts and crafts among MMCNAPs. This aligns with the findings of Wathieu (2004), Hsieh and Chang (2004), and Otika et al. (2021), who note that price sensitivity has moderate effects. Consumers with higher levels of participation in consumption decisions tend to exhibit



lower price sensitivity as they are more aware of the value offered. However, price sensitivity does not directly impact the perceived value of visual arts and crafts consumption, suggesting the presence of mediating or moderating factors.

This suggests that price sensitivity does not directly influence the purchase intention of visual arts and crafts. This may be due to its mediating or moderating effect on MMCNAPs' art consumption patterns. This could be further explained by the fact that most MMCNAPs consume lowbrow arts and crafts products primarily in shopping malls and tourist sites for functional and emotional consumption values, handicrafts for utilitarian and aesthetic values, as well as souvenirs and gifts for sentimental and conditional values. None of them purchased highbrow artworks from primary markets such as galleries.

The research findings have significant implications for art retailers and policymakers. Art retailers should focus on strategies that emphasize personal motivations, preferences, and attitudes, as these factors have a more direct impact on purchase intention than brand association. Policymakers are encouraged to support initiatives that enhance the accessibility and appreciation of visual arts and crafts, fostering a vibrant cultural economy in line with the development of the creative economy.

### **Limitation and Recommendation for Future Research**

This study suggests further exploration of the mediating and moderating effects of brand association, price sensitivity, and emotional responses on the purchase intention of visual arts and crafts. Future research should expand the sample size to include respondents from East Malaysia, providing a more comprehensive understanding of regional variations in art consumption patterns.

### **Conclusion**

This study, based on a sample of 233 middle-class art consumers in Malaysia, provides empirical evidence that attitude, personal motivation, and preferences are the primary determinants influencing the purchase intention of Malaysian middle-class non-art practitioners (MMCNAPs). These findings highlight the significance of understanding art consumers' subjective tastes and how they shape their consumption behaviours.

Interestingly, brand association and emotional responses were found not to have a direct impact on purchase intention, contradicting some previous studies. This suggests that MMCNAPs prioritize intrinsic and utilitarian values over external branding when making purchasing decisions. Additionally, price sensitivity was found to influence purchase intention indirectly, indicating that consumers with higher engagement in art consumption tend to focus more on the perceived value and cultural significance of visual arts and crafts rather than just the price factor.

These findings have practical implications for art retailers and policymakers. Art retailers should develop consumer-centric strategies that emphasize personal motivations and preferences, as these factors have a greater impact on purchase intention than brand association. Meanwhile, policymakers should focus on initiatives that improve accessibility and appreciation of visual arts and crafts, thereby fostering a more vibrant cultural economy in Malaysia.

Furthermore, this study identifies opportunities for future research. It recommends further exploration of the mediating and moderating effects of brand association, price sensitivity, and emotional responses on purchase intention. Additionally, expanding the study to include respondents from East Malaysia would provide a more comprehensive understanding of regional variations in art consumption.

By addressing these factors, art retailers and producers can enhance the perceived value of visual arts and crafts, foster deeper consumer engagement, and contribute to the growth of Malaysia's creative economy. Ultimately, these efforts will strengthen Malaysia's cultural identity and position it as a key player in the regional creative industry.

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