

## INVESTIGATING THE POST-PURCHASE REGRET OF CONSUMERS IN MANADO

### MENGINVESTIGASI PENYESALAN PASCA-PEMBELIAN DARI KONSUMEN-KONSUMEN DI MANADO

By

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**Abstract:** The post-purchase regret of a consumer is one of the reactions that most influence almost all of the form of consumer behavior towards any kind of product they purchased, in this study, the main focus of type of product is the most daily usage product of the consumer. In term of marketing, which is one of the important part of the company, and which the product that produced from the producer or the seller themselves could be exposed to the consumer, the post-purchase regret is one of the factor that had been an important matter for the marketer to put in their agenda and composing better strategies or tactics of selling a product to the consumers and the customers. In this research, the study aim to find out and investigates how is the post-purchase regret of the consumer's most used and bought product. The researcher used a purposive sampling as a sampling technique to conduct the research. And the result of this study shows how strong the comparison factor between the products of consumer's usage as seemingly the most described factor among other indicators. Also it is important for marketer to find a better or unique ways in order to promote the product, or for producer to develop the trials and experiment of the product. The recommendations proposed from this study is better for a company to review the finished product in term of better quality and more sensible, affordable price before the product is sent out to the market.

**Keywords:** *post-purchase regret, consumers*

**Abstrak:** *Penyesalan pasca-pembelian dari konsumen adalah salah satu reaksi yang paling mempengaruhi semua bentuk sikap konsumen terhadap produk apapun yang mereka beli, dalam pembelajaran ini, fokus utama dari jenis produk adalah produk yang paling sering digunakan sehari-hari oleh konsumen. Dalam hal pemasaran, yang merupakan salah satu bagian penting dari perusahaan, dan dimana produk yang dihasilkan dari produsen atau penjual itu sendiri dapat terpapar kepada konsumen, penyesalan pasca-pembelian adalah salah satu faktor yang telah menjadi hal penting bagi pemasar untuk dimasukkan ke dalam agenda mereka dan menyusun strategi atau taktik yang lebih baik untuk menjual produk kepada konsumen dan pelanggan. Dalam penelitian ini, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mencari tahu dan menyelidiki bagaimana penyesalan pasca pembelian atas produk yang paling banyak digunakan dan dibeli konsumen. Peneliti menggunakan purposive sampling sebagai teknik pengambilan sampel untuk melakukan penelitian. Dan hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan seberapa kuat faktor perbandingan antara produk penggunaan konsumen sebagai faktor yang paling banyak dijelaskan di antara indikator lainnya. Juga penting bagi pemasar untuk menemukan cara yang lebih baik atau unik untuk mempromosikan produk, atau bagi produsen untuk mengembangkan percobaan atau uji coba produk. Rekomendasi yang diusulkan dari penelitian ini adalah lebih baik bagi perusahaan untuk meninjau kembali produk yang sudah siap dipasarkan dalam hal kualitas yang lebih baik dan harga yang lebih masuk akal dan terjangkau, sebelum produk dikirim ke pasar.*

**Kata Kunci:** *penyesalan pasca-pembelian, konsumen*

## INTRODUCTION

### Research Background

In the modern time, people of Manado city has also included in this community, the community where everyone do and involved in the trading, transaction and market system. More or less the society around the world became a 'serf' to the system, as a definitive meaning of a seller and buyer or the consumers. Businessman and marketer thought that the process of buying or purchasing or can be called the process of consumer's decision making is happening by random and that a certain product attracts certain customer, so that the process of transaction could be happening and could be not. Process of buying or purchasing is one of five stages in entire buying process or the consumer's decision making process.

For basic meaning, before the transaction occurred, the consumer must have a reason to think that what they want or expect is different from what they already possessed. The moment where the expectation does not meet the match with the reality, given rise to problem on consumer. When the behaviour of consumer had been studied for years, and had some definition from the experts, the consumer behavior of buying can affect how the company that produce products formulate operational strategy and marketing strategy.

When the consumer recognizes the problem of theirs, they would start to seek information in order to solve or find solution to that matter. If the problem took place in high specification of personal computer, they will look for a personal computer. If the problem took place in manual transmission car, then they will look for a car. That is why the marketer or the seller strengthens their brand in order to promote or to market their products.

Post-purchase regret is a feeling of guilt, mistaken or sense of regret and could be remorse after having made a purchase. Also this effect could went coincide with the status of purchasing associated with higher price of product, an expensive service and other more expensive purchasing can make the regret higher too. The regret is frequently associated with cognitive dissonance that usually happen when someone desires a product then made the purchase.

### Research Objective

To find out the post-purchase regret of consumers in Manado

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Marketing

Marketing is defined by the American Marketing Association (2007) as "the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large." The term developed from the original meaning which referred literally to going to market with goods for sale. From a sales process engineering perspective, marketing is "a set of processes that are interconnected and interdependent with other functions" of a business aimed at achieving customer interest and satisfaction.

Kotler (1980: 19) stated "Marketing is a human activity directed at satisfying needs and wants through an exchange process". The Chartered Institute of Marketing (2019) defines marketing as "the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements profitably." A similar concept is the value-based marketing which states the role of marketing to contribute to increasing shareholder value. In this context, marketing can be defined as "the management process that seeks to maximize returns to shareholders by developing relationships with valued customers and creating a competitive advantage."

### Consumer Behavior

Faison (1977: 172) explained that consumer behavior as "The assumption that people have series of needs which lead to drive state." Engel, Miniard, and Blackwell (1986: 5) explained that consumer behavior is "Those act of individuals directly involved in obtaining, using, and disposing of economic goods and services, including decisions processes that precede and determine these acts." Consumer behavior entails all activities associated with the purchases, use and disposal of goods and services, including the consumer's emotional, mental and behavioral responses that precede or follow these activities." The term, consumer can refer to individual consumers or organizational consumers. Solomon, et al. (2006: 7) define the consumer behavior as the study "of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas or experience to satisfy need and desires."

### Post-Purchase Regret

The term of consumer post-purchase regret is similar with generally known as buyer's remorse by definition. Geva and Goldman (1991: 141) stated that it is an emotional response, or the sense of regret perceived by the buyer or customer after having made a purchase, which may involve feeling of fear, depression or anxiety. Siggal (2017) explained human beings continually make decisions, large and small and afterwards, there are consequences. Sometimes the decisions did not lead to a desirable outcomes and wish to had made different choices, this is an experience of post-purchase regret or buyer's remorse. Although the notion of buyer's remorse is familiar to most of us and in our personal experience may feel common, social science research reveals that we are actually psychologically motivated to be satisfied with our decisions. On the simplest level, if our choices are informed by trustworthy data we increase the chances of good outcomes. That's why we hear parents and teachers emphasizing to kids the importance of "making good decisions." But beyond that, psychological processes, frequently active without our awareness, promote decision satisfaction.

The remorse may be caused by various factors, such as: the person purchased a product now rather than waiting, the item was purchased in an ethically unsound way, the property was purchased on borrowed money, the purchased object was something that would not be acceptable to others (Geva and Goldman 1991: 141).

Geva and Goldman (1991: 142) stated that in the phase before purchasing, a prospective buyer often feels positive emotions associated with a purchase (desire, a sense of heightened possibilities, and an anticipation of the enjoyment that will accompany using the product, for example); afterwards, having made the purchase, they are more fully able to experience the negative aspects: all the opportunity costs of the purchase, and a reduction in purchasing power.

Also, before the purchase, the buyer has a full array of options, including not purchasing; afterwards, their options have been reduced to:

1. continuing with the purchase, surrendering all alternatives
2. renouncing the purchase

Buyer's remorse can also be caused or increased by worrying that other people may later question the purchase or claim to know better alternatives. The remorse associated with some extreme shopping activity may be, again, a sign of some deeper disquiet. However, normal "buyer's remorse" should not be confused with the complex emotional dynamics of "shopaholic" behavior, just as a binge on a special occasion should not be confused with a serious eating disorder such as bulimia.

Geva and Goldman (1991: 143) stated the factors of buyer's remorse are:

1. Level of involvement: the more the buyer is involved in the buying process, the more the buyer is likely to have buyer's remorse at a later stage.
2. Amount of resources involves: If the buyer utilizes expensive resources like huge amount of money, long term savings, then the buyer tend to have more remorse.
3. Product compatibility with the expectation: If the product does not meet expectations of the buyer and the buyer purchased it, then the buyer is likely to have remorse and it compounds when heavy resources and involvement is added.

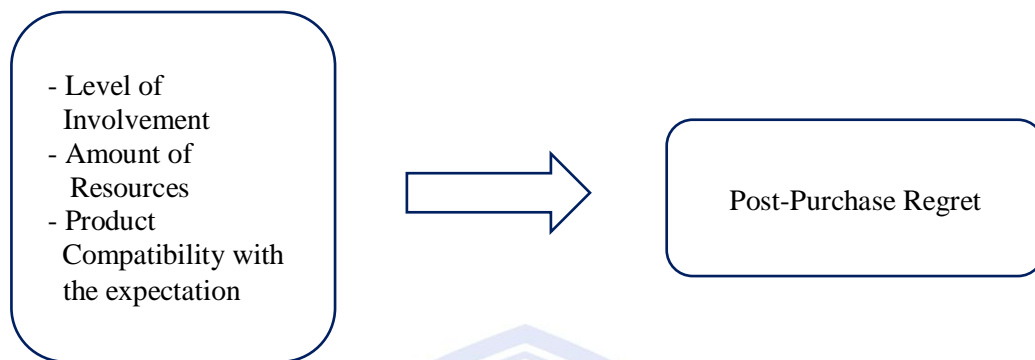
### Previous Research

Akbari, and Radmand, (2016) investigate the effects of the remorse after the buyer's purchase of products which cause a high level of rumination in consumers. The findings of this study indicate that the more a buyer feels remorseful of their decision, the lower the level of their satisfaction with the purchase product or service. Consumer had a sense of regret when the outcome of their comparison of their choice with other available options does not satisfy them. This unpleasant feeling causes the consumers to have negative attitudes towards the quality of the product or service which leads to a decrease in the level of their satisfaction.

AKÇI, and KILINÇ, (2016) investigated post-purchase consumer regret and the resulting consumer responses to this regret, concluded that possible low-price alternatives caused higher levels of regret. As to the post-regret responses, giving up shopping from the certain store and sharing this experience with family and friends were among the most common reactions. Responses were found to vary significantly depending on gender, marital status, age and level of education of the consumers.

### Conceptual Framework

From this conceptual framework, this study aims to investigate the post-purchase regret of consumers in Manado.



**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework**

*Source: Data Processed, 2019*

### RESEARCH METHOD

#### Type of Research

About process of this research, the researcher conducted a qualitative research methodology to investigate the post-purchase regret of consumers in Manado City. Bogdan and Taylor in Moleong (2002: 3) explained that qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of speech or writing and behaviour of the people being observed. Format qualitative research design consists of three models, namely descriptive format, format verification, and format grounded research. This study used a qualitative descriptive design methods, the research to draw on a carefully about specific individuals or groups on the circumstances and symptoms that occur (Koentjaraningrat, 1993: 89).

#### Time and Place of Research

The research will be conducted in Manado city while the interviews were conducted in separate places according to the location of every informant could be which is the consumers in Manado. This research will be conducted from April to July 2019.

#### Population, Sample, Sample Size and Sampling Technique

**Population**  
Population is identifiable group of elements (e.g, people, products, organizations) of interest to the researcher and pertinent to the information (Hair et. al, 2006: 310). The social situation of this research is all elements that can be informant that had been experience a post-purchase regret of daily usage products.

#### Sample

Sample is the subset or subgroup of population (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010: 444). While as quoted from Sugiyono (2007: 390-391), Sample in qualitative research is not called as respondent instead as a sources, participant, informant, friend and teacher in research process. Sample in qualitative research also is not statistical sample but a theoretical and constructive sample because the purpose is to gain theory and the source data is the source of constructed phenomenon that was previously unclear before.

#### Sample Size

From the calculation and consideration of what sample size, the researcher determined the 15 respondent or 15 informants as the sample size of this research, each of them has a differences in gender, age, status, occupation and financial background. Sample size that conducted in this research is the number of samples drawn

from a defined sample frame based on a certain sampling design. It is important to note that the sample size is an absolute value (if refers to the number of samples) while the sampling intensity is a relative value. The question about the required sample size cannot be answered directly.

### Sampling Technique

The technique used to determine sample or in this case 'informant' in qualitative study is different from quantitative study, as it is not based on statistical calculation. Sugiyono (2010: 119) stated that the definition of sampling technique is to determine the sample to use in the research. Therefore, in this research, purposive sampling will be used as a sampling technique, that is a technique with particular consideration (Sugiyono 2010: 122).

**Table 1. Operational Definition of Research Variable and Measurement**

Variable	Definition	Indicator
Post-Purchase Regret	The term of consumer post-purchase regret is similar with generally known as buyer's remorse by definition. Geva and Goldman (1991: 141) stated that it is an emotional response, or the sense of regret perceived by the buyer or customer after having made a purchase, which may involve feeling of fear, depression or anxiety	- Level of involvement - Amount of resources - Product compatibility with the expectation

Source: Data Processed, 2019

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

There is total of 15 respondents or informants as samples to gather the data, each and every single of them has a different background in general. The researcher took the respondents or informants who were met directly in the field as source of data, and there is also some respondent and informant who the researcher have made an appointment in the first place before going to meet them, and they all had a differences in gender, age, status, occupation and financial backgrounds. From all the data that gathered through face-to-face interview between interviewer and all 15 respondents or informants above, the researcher questioned the respondents and informants about their most used product along with the backup products, alternative products or substitution products they choose if their primary product or mainstay product are not available to them yet while all the product is frequently used in their own everyday life. In this research, the researcher investigates about a Post-Purchase Regret of consumers in Manado city.

And have been explained before that all the respondents and informants has a mainstay product and substitute product. The questions that can point out the post-purchase regret of the consumers are on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> question.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> question which asks about should the consumers have a substitute product, what kind of type would it been, there is just 1 out of 15 respondents or informants who does not has a substitute or backup product and instead just willingly wait till the product is available again.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> question which asked about what the reason behind of buying or choosing the mainstay product, it can be explain that every single of the respondent or consumer had a relatively strong logical reasoning and also some emotion-based reasoning.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> question, which asked about things they regret about the mainstay product, there is 10 out of 15 respondents or informants that still had their regrets right from the mainstay product. They had their regrets over the mainstay product such as price, quality or functions, availability, and adversity of access.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> question, which asked about the hardship or adversities of searching, finding and buying the product, 4 out of 15 respondents or informant stated that they does not have a significant difficulty in finding and

buying the product, but the others respondent or informant stated that they has a types of regret as follows; waiting the product long enough to be available, the limited access to found and buy the product, or availability of the product, the material of the product and the quality (endurances, function, etc.) of the product.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> question which asked about the personal view or opinion in general from the respondent towards the backup or substitute product, 14 out of the 15 respondent except for 1 respondent that does not have a backup or substitute product in the first place, come stated out their regret towards the backup product or the substitute product in term of price, quality, endurance, design, convenience or the coziness, boredom and saturation and the variant types of the product.

Despite all of the regret stated out by all of the respondent or informant above between their mainstay product and substitute product, there is one respondent that seemingly perceive both of his mainstay or primary product and his substitute product relatively in the same level of logical comparison.

The results of this interview shows that there were a number of things based on consumer purchasing behavior that influenced and make the consumers experienced a post-purchase regret such as the items they purchased were not as they expect. The results of this study showed that all of the respondents and informants had a variety of reasons and views regarding remorse for those who have purchased alternative products, because of the experience they experienced with the product and the disappointment that was gained from using the product.

Based on the interview results of research conducted in the field there are several products complained by the respondents, there are products that make them regret to use the products continuously because of diverse reason such as the performance, compatibility, expectation, design of the product, quality resulted from the functions within the product, materials, price and other distinguishable reason. On the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> question, the researcher can found out what and how the post-purchase regret in consumers with this particular question that can point out the level of involvement of consumers, amount of resources spent by consumers and how they perceive it in personal perspective, and the product compatibility with the expectation in the usage on real life.

For the explanation, it can be conclude that the consumer's post-purchase regret is strongly influenced on the comparison between the products they have been encountered in their personal as well as their environment's influence of their personal life, and through the personal comparison, there are responses that mediates within it, and can be explain that there are regrets that come out after the comparison and the experienced had been settled.

## Discussion

### Consumer Behavior

From the results of their explanations, it was acknowledged that their favorite product is a mainstay product, and did not disappoint them in most ways when using the product in term of performance, design, quality of the additional function, price, the materials and other designation, so it was seen from the respondents who answered that the substitution products or the alternative products was arguable. This is what makes these respondents very loyal to their favorite, primary, mainstay products. Therefore, it is not surprising if alternative products or the substitution products have many weaknesses in the eyes of the respondents and informants, because of their expectations, alternative products can closely match their favorite products but however, the outcome is contrary to the reality that occurs.

From the general perspective of the respondent and informant buying behavior, which have been an important part to know and investigates the post-purchase regret of consumers, the process is define by Solomon, et al. (2006: 7) that the consumer behavior as the study "of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas or experience to satisfy need and desires." And in specifications the consumer behavior is concerned with:

1. Purchase activities: the purchase of goods or services; how consumers acquire products and services, and all the activities leading up to a purchase decision, including information search, evaluating goods and services and payment methods including the purchase experience.
2. Use or consumption activities: concerns the who, where, when and how of consumption and the usage experience, including the symbolic associations and the way that goods are distributed within families or consumption units.
3. Disposal activities: concerns the way that consumers dispose of products and packaging; may also include reselling activities such as eBay and second-hand markets (Engel, Blackwell, Miniard, 2001: 614)

Buyer behavior has been defined as "a process, which through inputs and their use though process and actions leads to satisfaction of needs and wants" stated by Enis (1974: 228). Consumer buying behaviour has numerous factors as a part of it which are believed to have some level of effect on the purchasing decisions of the

customers. Alternatively, consumer buying behavior “refers to the buying behavior of final consumers, both individuals and households, who buy goods and services for personal consumption” stated by Kumar (2010: 218)

But when it comes to see the purchasing behavior in the perception of real life, “it is essential to mention that despite the great efforts to learn and understand the buying behavior of consumers, it is very difficult to identify the exact reason why consumer purchases and prefers one product or service over the others. Kotler and Keller (2013: 173) stated that consumer behavior is the study of how individuals, groups, and organizations select, buy, use, and dispose of goods, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy their needs and wants.

All the theories above show that the purchasing decision processes by consumers is determined by several factors, therefore the consumers will be loyal to a product if the product is in accordance with the needs, desires, situations or conditions when using the products, and expectations of the consumers. The theory is also very relevant and suitable in this study, all respondents claimed to be very happy with the desired product, and they also became consumers who were loyal to the product. There are various kinds of products that are of interest to all respondents from the results of this study, including soap, shoes, clothing, underwear, pens, books, fuel, toiletries, musical instruments and game tapes.

### **Post-Purchase Regret of Products**

Based on the results of the study, all respondents gave various reasons but yet, almost the same types of regrets regarding the products they bought. They explain that sometimes products that have become their “favorites” and are always bought and used by them are not available on the markets therefore they use alternative products to temporarily replace or complement their needs and desires. But they found an obstacle or incompatibility with these alternative or substitution products, so in other words it was not meet the match to the expectations of these respondents or informants, Geva and Goldman (1991: 141) stated that it is an emotional response, or the sense of regret perceived by the buyer or customer after having made a purchase, which may involve feeling of fear, depression or anxiety. Sigall (2017) stated that the human beings continually make decisions, large and small and afterwards, there are consequences. So the theory above is like the basics theory foundation and one of the references that can be spotted out from all the respondents and informants took as samples.

The remorse may be caused by various factors, such as: the person purchased a product now rather than waiting, the item was purchased in an ethically unsound way, the property was purchased on borrowed money, the purchased object was something that would not be acceptable to others (Geva and Goldman 1991: 141). Geva and Goldman (1991: 142) stated that in the phase before purchasing, a prospective buyer often feels positive emotions associated with a purchase (desire, a sense of heightened possibilities, and an anticipation of the enjoyment that will accompany using the product, for example); afterwards, having made the purchase, they are more fully able to experience the negative aspects: all the opportunity costs of the purchase, and a reduction in purchasing power. Based on the result of interviews that conducted by the researcher, the theories above are very supportive and proved the response and the reaction from the respondents. Respondents or the informants explained their experiences regarding the products that are often purchased, their favorite products, and as well as the substitution products or alternative products when the actual or their mainstay and favorite products is not available yet.

The respondents reveal all the outcomes as the theory above has pointed up. And also the respondents showed an emotional response like the theories above was put forward or put in advance. Therefore, if consumers do not get enough satisfaction or does not have a convenience in most ways from these alternative and substitute products, it could be conclude that the products will not gave a good outcome or the products will not gave a better selling to the producers.

The reason why all of the respondents and informants keep buying and still choosing their mainstay, priority product or first choice product and why they does not purchasing the alternative product again and again or continuously is mention in previous researches of Maziriri, and Madanga (2015) that resulted as the consumer’s remorse has got effects on the repeat purchase intention, indicating that when they experience a sense of regret after making purchase, they do not intend to re-purchase the same product again.

The interview result truly shows that there are some respondent and informant choosing another product beside their first priority product, the result shows that there are some reasons such as lack of product availability that make the respondent and informant choosing another product at that time being, and this is stated in previous research of M’Barek, and Gharbi (2011) that resulted as the one of regret moderators are situational moderators of regret. In this point of this research, it is that the respondent and informant tend to choosing and buying another

product in situational comparison, such as when they need the product in emergency or there is no mainstay product near them that available yet.

Based on interview results, it also shows the respondent and informant as a consumer's satisfaction and advance rumination towards the first priority product or the substitute product, in the previous research of Bui, Krishen, and Bates (2009) they found that the path of regret indicates that the negative emotion partially mediates the relationship between satisfaction levels and the extent of rumination. And because of that, it can be explain that the regret is involved in consumer's rumination of future comparison of buying a product to themselves. In previous research of M'Barek, and Gharbi (2012), they study also shows the result as follows; the regret like any negative or positive emotion has various consequences on the post-purchase evaluation of a product, through the impact of satisfaction.

## CONCLUSION AND RECCOMENDATION

### Conclusion

Based on the result and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher can conclude some points of here to point out:

1. From the results of the discussion above, the interviewer can conclude that purchasing behavior is something rather complex, namely in the purchasing experience that forms the expectations of a buyer and that can be seen from the answers shown by the respondents.
2. The results of discussions and interviews show that post-purchase remorse is shown from respondents who have directly bought and used a product that aims to complement their needs and desires, and also post-purchase remorse is a common thing produced by good people directly or indirectly more than one time has carried out buying and selling activities in a market.
3. Based on the results of the discussion and the results of the interviews that have been conducted, there are some respondents with the desired product that have reasons that make them regret, even if it is small or small but there are some things that still want to be improved or added according to most respondents.
4. Based on the results of interviews that have been conducted, it can be concluded that the desires and needs of the respondents can affect things that are regrettable of a product used. All respondents who have, have things that form an expectation on the purchase of a product, and if there are things that are not compatible with consumer expectations, then in the end it results in post-purchase regret.

### Recommendation

This research has been conducted in order to explore generally the post-purchase regret of consumer. Here are some recommendations proposed and found within this research:

1. It is better for product-producing businesses to review and add product trials before they are sold and make their products better in terms of quality and price, so that competitive competition can be created.
2. It is better for business people, especially in the field of staff and staple, to further increase promotion both in the field of advertising and promos at low prices to make consumers more interested in buying these products, because the price factor is very important for consumers to decide to buy a goods or products on the market.

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