

# THE ANALYSIS OF BUYING MOTIVES IN PURCHASE DECISION OF VIRTUAL GOODS IN ONLINE GAME

ANALISA MOTIF PEMBELIAN PADA KEPUTUSAN PEMBELIAN BARANG VIRTUAL DI PERMAINAN ONLINE

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**ABSTRACT:** This study is aimed to analyze consumers' buying motives to purchase virtual goods in online games. The sample technique used purposive sampling technique because respondents selected in accordance with characteristic that meet the criteria in the study. Structured interviews were used to analyze respondents' buying motives in purchase decision of virtual goods in online games. The data were collected by interviewing the respondent one-to-one discussion session. The buying motives has divided into 2 variables: product buying motives and patronage buying motives. The result shows 7 indicators strongly influence consumer to do the purchasing of virtual goods in online games. The study finally recommended to the game developer to usually focus on improve the model of virtual goods and for the future study hopefully can do some research with focus on 1 game online.

**Keywords:** Buying Motives. Purchase Decision. Online Game. Virtual Goods.

**ABSTRAK:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis motif beli konsumen untuk membeli barang virtual dalam game online. Teknik pengambilan sample menggunakan purposive sampling karena responden yang dipilih sesuai dengan karakteristik yang memenuhi kriteria dalam penelitian ini. Wawancara terstruktur digunakan untuk menganalisis motif pembelian responden dalam keputusan pembelian barang virtual di game online. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara sesi diskusi responden satu per satu. Motif pembelian telah dibagi menjadi 2 variabel: motif pembelian produk dan motif pembelian patronase. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 7 indikator yang sangat mempengaruhi konsumen untuk melakukan pembelian barang virtual dalam penelitian game online ini, yang pada akhirnya direkomendasikan untuk pengembang game untuk bisa lebih fokus untuk memperbaiki model barang virtualnya dan untuk studi peneliti selanjutnya mudah-mudahan dapat melakukan penelitian dengan fokus pada 1 game online.

**Kata Kunci:** Motif pembelian. Keputusan Pembelian. Barang virtual. Game online.

## INTRODUCTION

### Research Background

People use the internet for communication, social interaction, business transactions, and entertainment. Internet provides games, as the world entertainment center. There are many games can be installed to computer, laptop, pc, tablet, smartphone, and gadget. Online game is game that require internet network and also provides the user and environment in which the player can meet another player in virtual world. In the recent years, online game industry has experienced a very rapid progress.

Every year about 100 new games was born by the game developers and gains so many profits from this industry. The ways that game developers gain profit are from using affordable payment system for accessing the game and the best income comes from selling virtual items or virtual goods (Mastel, 2016). Looking at that needs and demand it becomes the responsibility of game developer to selling virtual goods or virtual item in order to achieve profit. Online game players have a variety of motivation to do virtual goods purchasing.

Motivation becomes one of the reasons of game players in making virtual goods purchasing decisions. As a human, needs is never fully satisfied. People has motive is the driving force behind to purchase the goods. Same as in online game, virtual goods becomes the desire of gamers to satisfy their needs in playing the game. Knowledge of the buying motives will make it easier for marketers to define and implement a marketing strategy. Understanding of the buying motives also has an important role in the buying process itself in order to create strategy to selling virtual goods. The situation above also has been happening in Manado which becomes the location of this study.

### Research Objective

The objective in this research study to achieve is to know the player buying motives in purchase decision virtual goods in online game.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Motivation

Motivation is the driving force within individuals that implies them to action. (Schiffman and Kanuk 2003). According to Hoyer and Macinnis (1999) Motivation is an inner force that reflects goal-directed arousal.

### Buying Motives

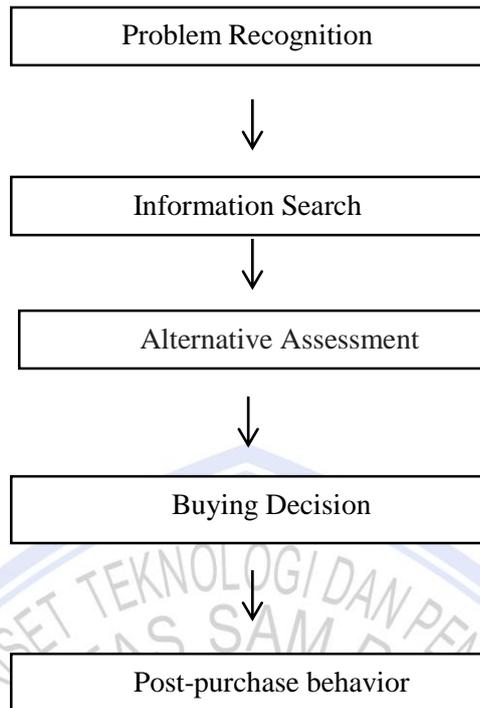
Motives is a fairly pressing need for direct a person looking for a way to satisfy the needs" (Kotler, 1997). The motive is a state in a person that drives the desire of individuals to undertake certain activities in order to achieve a goal (Dharmmesta, 2000). Buying Motives are those influences or considerations which provide the impulse to buy, induce action and determine choice in the purchase of goods and services (Nair, 2004)

### Classification of Buying Motives

According to Prof D. J. Duncan in Nair (2004) the classifications of buying motives are divided into product buying motives and patronage buying motives which have 4 sub classification into Emotional product buying motives, Rational Product Buying Motives, Emotional Patronage buying motives, and Rational patronage buying motives.

### Purchase Decision

Engel, et al. (1968) have developed a model of consumer buying decision process in five steps which are problem/need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives to meet this need, purchase decision and post-purchase behavior. According to Kotler (2007) the stages in the buying process shows in figure below:



**Figure 1. Stage in the buying decision-making process**

*Source: Data Processed, 2016*

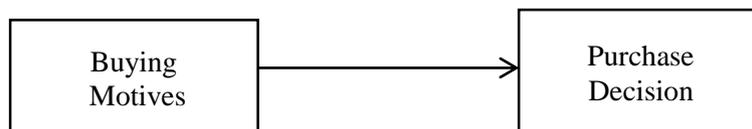
**Virtual Goods in Online Games**

According to Lin and Sun (2007) Virtual goods are non-physical objects and money purchased for use in online communities or online games. Virtual goods have become one of the primary sources of revenue for online game developers and suppliers. Lehdonvirta (2009) showed that virtual goods have functional, emotional, and social qualities. Functional qualities include performance and functionality. Emotional and social qualities include appearance, source, customization capability, and rarity.

**Previous Research**

Zhaohui (2012), Motivation of virtual goods transaction, in this paper, they took one popular online game “World of Warcraft” as a case study, using structural equation model, and explored the relationship between gaming motivations and virtual goods’ multi-dimensional values, as well as the inter-relationship of multi-dimensional values of virtual goods.

**Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 2. Conceptual Framework**

*Source: Data Processed, 2016*

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## RESEARCH METHOD

### Type of Research

This research is a type of exploratory study with qualitative methods

### Place and Time of Research

This research was conducted in several game centers in Manado. This research conducted from December to January 2017

### Population and Sample

In this study population are all online game players in Manado who have ever purchased virtual goods. The total sample in research is 10 informants who interviewed at several game center (warnet).

### Operational Definition and Measurement of Research Variables

Buying Motives are those influences or considerations which provide the impulse to buy, induce action and determine choice in the purchase of goods and services (Nair, 2004). The indicators are Pride or prestige, Emulation or Imitation, Affection, Ambition, Desire for distinctiveness, Desire for pleasure, relatively low price, Suitability, Utility or versatility, Convenience.

Purchase decisions which become the reason that drives gamers decides to purchase virtual goods in online games is regarding the step of buying process, the indicators are Problem recognition, Information research, Evaluation of alternative, Purchase decision, Post purchase evaluation.

### Data Analysis Method Validity and Reliability Test

Hair, et al. (2007) describes in qualitative research, reliability is the degree of consistency in assignment of similar words, phrases or other kinds of data to the same pattern or theme by different researches. Validation in qualitative research is the extent to which qualitative findings accurately represent the phenomena being examined. In this research, method triangulation and data triangulation were employed. The data were gathered from in-depth interviews with different informants, observation in different places and observation, and also reviewing different literature from various researchers.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The researcher has interviewed the online game players in Manado who ever purchased virtual goods that conducted at several game centers (warnet), in order analyze buying motives in purchase decision of virtual goods in online games.

### Informant 1

The first Informant is Irone. According to the Informant pride/prestige become one of the reasons why she purchases virtual goods. The purchase makes her hero/avatar looks more beautiful than before. Informant purchases the virtual goods because she wants to just like her friend in group which also had bought virtual goods. Affection or love for others does not influence Informant 1 decision to purchase virtual goods. Ambition as the desire to achieve a goal in online game influences her purchase. By purchasing virtual goods she could make the game experience increase faster and she has more opportunity for winning a bonus. In fulfilling the desire for distinctiveness, Informant purchases virtual goods in order to be different from new player in the game. In fulfilling the desire for pleasure, Informant purchases virtual goods in order to be happy to look her avatar/hero

become more beautiful.

According to Informant 1, she does not want to buy virtual goods of low prices because it would be looking the same with her competitors; she rather chooses virtual goods of higher prices. Informant would purchase virtual goods which is suitable for her avatar/hero. Utility/versatility of virtual goods does not influence her choice of the product or virtual goods because it does not affect on how she plays the game. Convenience of virtual goods also does not influence her purchase because it does not make the game easier for her.

In the case of the online game that Informant 1 has been playing, she answered that there is only one shop that sell the virtual goods; hence she could only buy its virtual goods in the shop available.

### **Informant 2**

The second Informant is Randy. According to the informant, pride/prestige becomes one of the reasons he purchases virtual goods. By purchase virtual goods he can get the rare item which other players cannot found it easily. His friends who already bought virtual goods drives him challenged to purchase virtual goods. The factor of affection/love for others also influences him to purchase virtual goods, because he wanted to share items with his friends. Ambitions as the desire to achieve a goal in game influence her purchases. He has ambitious to purchase rare virtual goods because it helps him to complete the game mission. In fulfilling the desire for distinctiveness, informant purchases virtual goods in order to be different from new player because he does not want his avatar/hero looks like new player. In fulfilling the desire for pleasure, Informant purchases virtual goods because he feels happy to experience the new items.

According to Informant 1, he considers about the price because if virtual goods worth it with to use for his avatar/hero, he purchase it. Informant 2 also considers about the suitability to purchase virtual goods in order to review which one is suitable for him. Utility/versatility of virtual goods influences him to purchase because it has special effects on the avatar/hero he used. Convenience of virtual goods influences his purchase because it helps him to achieve some additional bonuses and free items in the game.

In the case of the online game that Informant 2 has been playing, he answered that there is only one shop that sell the virtual goods; hence he could only buy its virtual goods in the shop available.

### **Informant 3**

The third informant is Stevano. According to the informant, pride/prestige not becomes the reason why he purchases virtual goods but he just satisfied. Informant 3 not imitates other player to purchase because he bought virtual goods for his own desires. Affection/love for others also not influences him to purchase virtual goods. Ambition as the desire to achieve a goal in game influences his purchase which is the virtual goods increase the game experience faster. In fulfilling the desire for distinctiveness, informant purchases virtual goods in order to be different from new player because he does not want his avatar/hero looks like new player. In fulfilling the desire for pleasure, purchase virtual goods makes informant looks different with other player.

According to informant, price not influences his purchases because as long as he likes the virtual goods he will buy it. He also not consider about the suitability of virtual goods. Utility/versatility influences him to purchase because it has special effects on the avatar/hero. Convenience of virtual goods influences his purchase because the game becomes easier by using virtual goods.

In the case of the online game that Informant 3 has been playing, he answered that there is only one shop that sell the virtual goods; he could only buy it in the shop available.

### **Informant 4**

The fourth informant is Brian. According to the informant, pride/prestige has become one of the reasons he purchase virtual goods because it makes his avatar/hero different than other player. Informant also imitates his friends to purchase virtual goods. Affection/love for others influences him to purchase virtual goods in order to exchange and share items to others. Ambition as the desire to achieve a goal in game influences his purchase to get the achievement. In fulfilling the desire for distinctiveness, informant purchases virtual goods in order to be

different from new player because he does not want his avatar/hero looks like new player. In fulfilling the desire for pleasure, purchase virtual goods makes informant looks different with other player. In fulfilling the desire for distinctiveness, informant purchases virtual goods in order to be different from new player because he does not want his avatar/hero looks like new player. In fulfilling the desire for pleasure, purchase virtual goods makes informant looks different with other player.

According to informant, price does not influence him because he purchases what he liked. Informant considers about the virtual goods suitability in order to compare which one is suitable to his avatar/hero. Informant also consider about the utility/versatility which one has a special effect when used. Convenience of virtual goods influences his purchase because it helps to achieve additional bonus in the game.

In the case of the online game that Informant 4 has been playing, he answered that there is only one shop that sell the virtual goods; hence he could only buy its virtual goods in the shop available.

### **Informant 5**

The fifth informant is Michael. According to the informant, pride/prestige become of reason why he purchase virtual goods because it makes him more confident to play with friends. Informant also purchases virtual goods because wanted to imitate his friend to compete with. Affection/love for others influences him to purchase because he wanted to attract people to play the same game. Ambition influences informant to purchase virtual goods because it can complete the game missions easily. Desire for distinctiveness also influences him to purchase virtual goods in order to look different than his friends. In fulfil the desire for pleasure, fulfill the spare time by playing online games and purchase some virtual goods.

According to informant, price influence him because he has money to purchase virtual goods he liked. Informant considers about virtual goods suitability to purchase because he wanted to choose which one is suitable for his avatar/hero. Informant considers about virtual goods utility/versatility because it depends on the game and the effect of the item itself. Convenience of virtual goods influence informant consideration to purchase, because he wanted to make his enemy will feel intimidated.

In the case of the online game that Informant 5 has been playing, he answered that there is only one shop that sell the virtual goods; hence he could only buy its virtual goods in the shop available.

### **Informant 6**

The sixth informant is Imam. According to the informant pride/prestige not become his reason to purchase, because he is not feeling proud. Informant 6 friends do not influences him to imitate purchases, but only because his own desire. Informant purchase virtual goods influences by affection/love for others; he just wanted to exchange it with friends. Ambition as the desire to achieve a goal in online game also becomes the reason he purchase virtual goods. Desire for distinctiveness not becomes the reason informant purchases because he has no desire to be different with his friends. In fulfil the desire for pleasure, informant wanted to make his appearance of the game looking better.

According to informant 6, he not consider about the price because how many money spent to purchase, as long as he satisfied, it is fine for him. Informant consider about the suitability of virtual goods which is suitable for his avatar/hero to purchase. Informant also considers about the virtual goods utility/versatility to purchase. He does not consider about the convenience of virtual goods because it does not make the game easier to play.

In the case of the online game that informant 6 has been playing, he answered that there is only one shop that sell the virtual goods; hence he could only buy its virtual goods in the shop available.

### **Informant 7**

The seventh informant is Daniel. According to the Informant pride/prestige not become the reason why his buy virtual goods. He purchases virtual goods in order to imitate his friends. The affection/love does not become reason he purchase virtual goods; he said that he did purchasing just for self-using. Ambition as the desire to achieve a goal in online game influences him purchase virtual goods in order to make the game level increase

faster than the others players. Desire for distinctiveness does not affect the informant to make a purchase because she did not feel any different though had bought the virtual goods. In fulfil the desire for pleasure; Informant 7 said the purchase make the game more attractive to be played.

According to Informant, he did purchasing because of the price of virtual goods are cheap. He does not thinking the suitability between virtual goods and the character before decide to purchase it. He consider the utility/versatility or the quality of virtual goods before buy it, in order to make the game easier. Convenience of virtual goods influences him to purchase because it makes the game level increase faster.

In the case of the online game that Informant 7 has been playing, he answered that there is only one shop that sell the virtual goods; hence he could only buy its virtual goods in the shop available.

### **Informant 8**

The eight informant is Ibnu. According to the Informant pride/prestige become reason why he purchases virtual goods because he wanted to show off to his friend and make them jealous. Informant makes purchases by imitating his friend who buys virtual goods, because he wants to contend the game for winning new items. Affection or love for others did not influence him to purchase the virtual goods. Ambition is one reason he buy virtual goods, he said there are some rare item that only can get if follow the event by buying the virtual goods. In fulfilling the desire for distinctiveness he purchases virtual goods in order to be different from new player in the game. In fulfil the desire for pleasure, informant 8 purchase virtual goods because he satisfies with the model of the items.

According to Informant price does not have effect for him he said he will buy it, if he likes the items. The Informant considers about suitability between the looks of virtual goods and its price before decide to purchase. Informant also considers about utility/versatility before purchase the effect of the item make him satisfy and happy playing the game. Convenience influences him by purchase the virtual goods the game becomes easier to play.

In the case of the online game that Informant 8 has been playing, he answered that there is only one shop that sell the virtual goods; hence he could only buy its virtual goods in the shop available.

### **Informant 9**

The ninth informant is Sulisty. According to Informant pride/prestige become his reason to purchase virtual goods because he wants to be different than others. He does not purchase virtual goods to imitate his friends. Affection or love for others also not influences him to purchase virtual goods. Ambition as the desire to achieve a goal in online game influences him purchase virtual goods in order to make the game level increase faster than the others players. In fulfil the desire for distinctiveness; he has desire to be different than his friends by buying virtual goods and make his hero like what he want. In fulfil the desire for pleasure; In fulfil the desire for pleasure; Informant 9 said the purchase make the game more attractive by using the virtual goods to the avatar/hero.

According to Informant price does not have affect him to purchase because he owned some expensive virtual goods he buy the item by seeing the model of that items. He thinking the suitability between virtual goods and the game before decide to purchase it. He also consider the utility or quality of virtual goods before he buy it, he said the effect that owned or attribute in virtual goods is important for game. Convenience influences him to purchase because it makes the game easier.

In the case of the online game that Informant 9 has been playing, he answered that there is only one shop that sell the virtual goods; hence he could only buy its virtual goods in the shop available.

### **Informant 10**

The tenth informant is Renais. According to Informant answers that pride/prestige not become reason he buy virtual goods because he only seeking for his own pleasure. He purchases virtual goods in order to imitate his friend; he wants his avatar/hero not looking the same with his friends. He buy virtual goods not influences by affection/love to share it with others; he said that he did purchasing just for his private collection. Ambition as the

desire to achieve a goal in online game influences him purchase virtual goods in order to make the game level increase faster than the others players, and he wanted to build his own spirit to play the game character more fun. In fulfil the desire for distinctiveness; Informant 10 has desire to be different and better than his friends by buying virtual goods. In fulfilling the desire for pleasure; he said wants to satisfy his pleasure with his virtual goods collection.

According to Informant answers that he purchase because of the price of virtual goods is affordable. He does thinking the suitability between virtual goods and the game before decide to purchase it because he do not want to feel disappointed in the future. He also considers the utility/versatility or the quality of virtual goods before buys it, he said he must think it first in order the virtual goods could be sell again in the future. Convenience of virtual goods for Informant 10 influences him to purchase because it makes game easier to play and motivate him to play better.

In the case of the online game that Informant 10 has been playing, he answered that there is only one shop that sell the virtual goods; hence he could only buy its virtual goods in the shop available.

## **Discussion**

There are many reasons people decide to purchase physical-goods or virtual-goods. One of the reasons comes from inside the individual itself. Based on the interview to 10 informants, which selected in accordance with characteristic that meet the criteria in From six factors of emotional buying motives, there are five factors that influence and become the reason why player decide to purchase virtual goods which is pride/prestige, emulation/imitation, ambition, desire for distinctiveness, and desire for pleasure. However there is one factor that not influences and become the reason why player decide to purchase virtual goods, which is affection/love for others. Rational product buying motives also become the reason why players purchase virtual goods in online games.

Rational product buying motives is when a buyer decides to buy a certain thing after careful consideration (i.e. after thinking over the matter consciously and logically), s/he is said to have been influenced by rational product buying motives. The rational reason that influences players purchase decision is suitability, versatility/utility, and product convenience. However one rational reason that is not influence players purchase decision, it is price.

In this case Patronage buying motives not become one of the reason that influences online game player to purchase virtual goods, because virtual goods itself only can use inside the game itself

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **Conclusion**

Emotional product buying motives is one of the reasons why buyer decides to purchase a product without thinking much reason; it mostly motivated by emotional factors from the buyers itself. This research found emotional product buying motive that influence online game players decide to purchase virtual goods are pride/prestige, emulation or imitation, ambition, desire for distinctiveness or individuality, and desire for pleasure. Emotional buying motive that not influence player to do the purchasing is affection.

Rational product buying motive is one of the reasons why buyer decides to purchase a product by thinking and considering rational factors of the product itself. This research found rational product buying motive that influence online game player decide to purchase virtual goods are suitability, versatility and utility, convenience. Rational product buying motive that not influence to do the purchasing is relatively low price.

Patronage buying motives is the reason that motivated buyer decides to purchase a product by comparing one shop to another in order to buying a product at the right shop as they wanted. In this case, virtual goods in online games have only had one shop which has no others shop sell virtual goods, so online game player could not compare a particular shop in preference to other shops. It means this factor has no influences in this case of research in purchasing virtual goods in online game.

## Recommendation

Regarding what this research has found about emotional buying motives that become the reason that influences player to purchase virtual goods, researcher suggest for online game developer and marketers to keep focus on creating virtual goods which after player purchase virtual goods, it can increase their social prestige/status, it will influences their friends to have the same virtual goods, creating more attractive game to drives players' ambition in finish the game, creating virtual goods which has it sense of distinctiveness, and they can satisfied of all of virtual goods they purchase.

Regarding what this research has found about rational buying motives that influences player to purchase virtual goods, researcher suggest for online game developer and marketers to creating virtual goods which consider about its suitability, versatility/utility, and convenience in the product.

In complement of the limitation of this research, researcher suggest for universities and future researcher to explore more about buying motives in focusing on one online game, because this research only examine buying motives in general online games, which as researcher know that every online game has different strategy to sell virtual goods. The researcher found that most of respondent are playing DOTA2.

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