

CHAPTER TWO

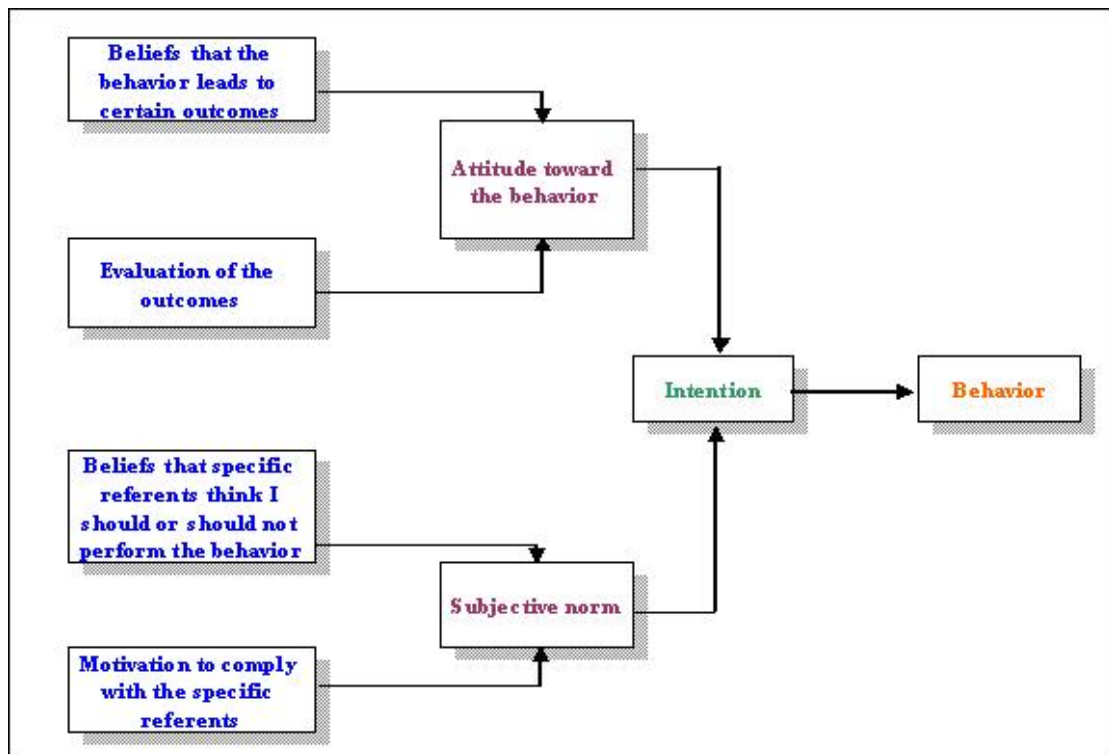
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature in three main areas along with a summary: (1) The Theory of Reasoned-Action Model, (2) Symbolic Interactionism, and (3) Relevant Research and Survey

2.1 THE THEORY OF REASONED-ACTION MODEL

The theory of reasoned action represents a comprehensive integration of attitude components into a structure that is designed to lead both explanation and predictions of behavior. The theory is based on the assumption that human beings are usually quite rational and make systematic use of the information available to them. It explains that a person's intention is a function of two basic determinants, attitude toward the behavior (the personal factor) and subjective norm (the person's perception of the social pressures). It also mentions that attitudes are a function of beliefs. For example, a person who believes that performing a given behavior will lead to mostly positive outcomes will hold a favorable attitude toward performing the behavior, while a person who believes that performing the behavior will lead to mostly negative outcomes will hold an unfavorable attitude.

Figure 2. A simplified version of the theory of reasoned action



From: *Understanding Attitudes and Predictions Social Behavior*, by I. Ajzen, & M. Fishbein, 1980, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

In accordance with the expanded model, to understand intention we also need to measure the subjective norms that influence an individual's intention to act. A subjective norm can be measured directly by assessing a consumer's feelings as to what relevant others would like of the action being completed.

2.2 SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Symbolic interactionism is a social constructionist approach to understanding social life that focuses on how reality is constructed by active and creative actors through their interactions with others. Blumer (1969) set out three basic premises of the perspective:

1. Human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings they ascribe to.
2. The meaning of such things is derived from the social interaction that one has with others and the society.

3. These meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.

In other words, Blumer claimed that people interact with each other by interpreting or defining each other's actions instead of solely reacting to each other's actions. Their response is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions. Thus, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions.

2.3 RELEVANT RESEARCH AND SURVEY

An in-depth interview of 10 persons (5 males and 5 females) Thai employees who are working in companies in Bangkok and who always drink at least 2 cups of coffee a day was carried out in November 2007 (In-depth interview with Informants, November 2007). It reveals that the four aspects of coffee drinking — the coffee consumer's behavior, the effect of price on a consumer's decision, health issues, and the perception of coffee - have played an important role on their decision in choosing to drink coffee.

- **Consumer Behavior:**

The interview reveals that nine out of ten informants prefer roasted coffee to other kinds of coffee such as instant coffee because of its taste and scent. They usually drink coffee when working or reading. Concerning the place where they usually purchase their coffee drink, small kiosks around offices are the most favorite and coffee houses are their second choice. The type of coffee drank depended mainly on their preferences. For example, if they drink their first cup of coffee in the morning, they will drink hot coffee (150 cc/a cup). However, if they drink coffee in the afternoon, they prefer iced coffee (300 cc/a cup).

- **Price Influencing Buying Decision:**

All of them report that price does not affect their decisions in the adoption of coffee drinking. Some believe that the more expensive price they pay, the higher quality of coffee they will receive while some suggest that the higher price of the

coffee is the marketing cost. However, some say that they can buy coffee next to their place of work everyday for about 25-35 baht a cup. For coffee at luxury coffee houses such as Starbucks or Au Bon Pain which cost about 80-140 baht a cup, these coffees are consumed seldom because of the high price. They can only afford to purchase them about once or twice a month.

- **Effects of Coffee Drinking:**

All the informants state that they are aware of the ill-effects from drinking coffee, but no one has concerns about these health issues. They believe that they can control the risk of overdosing on caffeine in coffee. Some say that they never drink more than 2 cups a day while others admit that they limit their coffee intake to only 3 cups a day. All of them feel that as far as nothing wrong has happened to their health at this moment, they will still keep drinking coffee. Some insist that they can not quit drinking coffee because coffee makes them awake and boosts their energy, but they will reduce the quantity of coffee if they have had some serious health issues. Some feel that drinking a cup of coffee will help sharpen their mind, especially during the examination period.

- **Perception of Coffee Drinking:**

When asking the informants about their perception about coffee drinking, their attitude to drinking coffee is quite similar. Eight out of ten think that coffee symbolizes the stimulant and freshness. One suggests that coffee is like a herb—it is healthy to drink coffee as a laxative, a medicine to help to get rid of the solid substances from the body while one thinks that coffee is an international beverage, like coca-cola. Most informants perceive that employees can be characterized as coffee drinkers; that is, they are more likely to reach for a cup of coffee whenever they are working regardless of their actual need for drinking coffee or not. On the other hand, some of them think that coffee is coffee. The adoption of drinking coffee is similar to the drinking of the other kinds of beverage.

In **Caffeine Blue** by Cherniske (1998), it was found that many people receive ambiguous information about the effects of caffeine. The wrong beliefs about

drinking coffee and unclear information make people overlook the side effects of coffee. Cherniske wrote this book based on his real experience of over-consuming caffeine intentionally and admitted that he was one of these addicted to coffee. As he was a medical doctor, he had claimed that caffeine was not addictive. However, he started to learn from his painful experience that the truth was the opposite. He thinks that everyone receives unclear information about drinking coffee, especially the amount of caffeine which should be consumed each day. “The deception has been well coordinated by an industry whose goal is quite simple: to get as much caffeine into your body as possible. If the caffeine industry can accomplish that, they have you as a customer for life” (p. 4). He gives the real fact that:-

a) Caffeine does not provide energy—only chemical stimulation. The perceived ‘energy’ comes from the body’s struggle to adapt to increase blood levels of stress hormones. In most case, this induced emergency state leads to well-defined side effects collectively known as caffeinism. Ironically, caffeinism is characterized by fatigue.

b) Caffeine does not give a lift. Using coffee for mood enhancement is a short-term blessing and a long term curse. While the initial adrenal stimulation may provide a transient anti-fatigue ‘lift,’ caffeine’s ultimate mood effect is a letdown, whether subtle or profound.

c) Caffeine does not sharpen your mind. While caffeine users may feel more alert, the experience is simply one of increased sensory and motor activity. The quality of thought and recall is improved no more than the quality of music is improved when played at a higher-volume or speed.

Moreover, many people have unclear information about the quantity of caffeine they consume per day. They just only know that they should not drink more than 2 cups per day. However, they do not know exactly about the amount of coffee which is referred to in the ‘research paper’ and in the ‘real commerce.’ He explains that “The majority of researchers refer to the standard coffee cup as a six-ounce serving, but most people drink from mugs, which contain twelve to fourteen ounces or more” (Cherniske, 1998, p. 24). In most studies, the standard serving of coffee is 5 or

6 ounces which is equal to 150 or 180 cc. With a standard serving, people will gain 80-120 mgs of caffeine, which mainly depends on the type of coffee. Moreover, people generally consume a 12 or 14 ounces (middle size) cup of coffee which means 360 or 420 cc. The fact is that people should not be exposed to caffeine levels of more than 250 mg for female and 300 mg for male per day—this caffeine consumption is individually dependent. In conclusion, many people receive only some parts of information about caffeine. The full and accurate information about coffee has been left out. As a consequence, they continue to drink coffee with a misconception as to the true facts until they become seriously ill such as having high blood pressure or heart disease due to the long-term effects of coffee addiction.

Figure 3. The amount of caffeine in coffee

Caffeine in Coffee		
	Caffeine (mg)	
	Average	Range
Coffee (5 0z/ cup)		
Brewed, drip method	115	60-180
Brewed, percolater	80	40-170
Instant	65	30-120

From: Drugs, Society, and Human Behavior (p. 300), by Oakley Ray, & Charles Ksir, 1996, Boston, MA: WCB/McGraw-Hill.

According to the random telephone survey of the National Coffee Association, 'The 2006 National Coffee Drinking Trends' (NCA, 2006) of USA in January, it was revealed that most American adults prefer to drink a cup of coffee daily, 57% of nearly 3,000 adults accepted that they love to drink coffee more than other soft drink. The NCA Chief Executive, Rober Nelson, 2006, said that American consumers enjoy drinking coffee and expanding menu of options and exploding café culture. Coffee sometimes is considered to symbolize "maturity" or social-acceptance.

'The Consumer Behavior on Coffee: A case study of Bangkok' by Mali Nuntiya (2006) discovered that the flavor of the coffee taste and its quality as a stimulant attracted people to adopt it. The aroma of coffee was the second reason. The research also indicated that the customers focus on the price and the quality of the

product. Television advertisements were the most effective way to promote the product while internet ads attracted low interest from the customers.

From the research of Aumnart Suwadipong (1997), 'The Behavior of Medias Consumer and Consumer Behavior toward the Canned Coffee of Thai Laborers', it was mentioned that the media and advertising affected Thai laborers directly on their purchasing behavior of the canned coffees. Most laborers preferred to have their coffee drink in the form of canned coffees as they believed that the quality of the canned coffee could work as the stimulant to make them work for longer hours. This was the influence of the ads or media about the image of presenters that had a sudden freshness after drinking coffee from the canned coffees. This consumer behavior did not relate to their incomes at all. It meant that they usually buy canned coffees despite their low incomes.

The independent study of Pannapa Phetdachai (2005), a Graduate student of Ramkhamhang University, in the topic 'Consumer Behavior of coffee drinking among Thai employees' which was mentioned by *FourP* magazine on June 2005 was a survey research using quantitative modal by convenience sampling with a limit of 400 sets of surveys. It presented that the main reasons of for drinking coffee were its flavored taste (57%) and its quality of caffeine (53%). The factors which affected the decision to purchase coffee were its taste (90%), its aroma (83%), and its convenience (79%). The most favorite taste was Cappucino (50%) followed by Mocca (34%). The popular place to get coffee was offices (77%).