

## Article

# International Students' Nostalgic Behaviour towards the Purchase of Products and Services

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**Abstract:** The literature has highlighted that international students abroad exhibit a strong preference for products from their country compared with foreign products and services, thus suggesting that the cultural disposition of consumers influences their purchasing decisions. Therefore, this current research aimed to determine how the feeling of groundedness could affect international students' purchasing behavior in Malaysia through cultural products and services. To this end, quantitative data were collected from international students at the University of Malaya and the University Utara Malaysia and then analyzed using a structural equation model (SEM). The findings of this research highlighted that consumer behavior was influenced by a "feeling of groundedness". This suggested that cultural services and products are valued by international students in foreign universities because of their ability to evoke a feeling of groundedness. The theoretical contributions of this study, particularly to the consumer behavior literature, are extensive, including how it highlights the influence of the feeling of groundedness on international consumers' purchasing behavior. The marketing implications of this research are also valuable for businesses targeting international students.

**Keywords:** feeling of groundedness; consumer behavior; cultural products; cultural services; product and service attractiveness



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## 1. Introduction

In modern marketing, the understanding of consumers' behavior has become a crucial agenda for companies [1]. In earlier studies, the knowledge of consumer behavior was discussed in terms of four major dimensions, namely complex buying behavior [2], dissonance-reducing buying behavior [3], variety-seeking behavior [4] and habitual buying behavior [5]. Kutaula and Gillani [6] highlighted that consumers in different countries and social settings react differently to the advertisement of products and services. It is important to understand the nostalgic behavior of consumers from different dimensions to enhance their experience of purchasing products and services [7]. The small amount of attention paid to the far side of nostalgic consumer behavior has led different scholars to consider consumers' behavior as secondary and nostalgic consumers' purchasing power and marketing as the primary factor for the successful delivery of products and services [8]. The existing studies on nostalgic consumer behavior offer useful suggestions related to the attitude and behavior of consumers that promote the purchase and consumption of products and services [9].

In the existing body of knowledge and research, scholars have extensively discussed consumer behavior in relation to the income and savings of consumers [7]. Similarly, the relevance of cognitive dissonance and socialization theories to consumer behavior has been highlighted in the extant studies [10,11]. Other studies have also focused on the effect of economics and information on sustainable consumer behavior [12]. However, as highlighted by Eichinger and Schreier [13], there is still a gap in the body of knowledge and literature on the association of cultural services and products with consumer behavior [13]. Likewise, the cultural aspect of the consumption behavior of foreigners or tourists has not been widely explored in the existing literature [1,4,14]. Therefore, this study aimed to enhance the literature on consumer behavior by exploring other factors affecting consumers' purchase of products and services.

The proposed research model of this study was designed to enhance the literature on consumer behavior by exploring the influence of the feeling of groundedness, as recommended by Eichinger and Schreier [13]. The concept of being grounded refers to a feeling of being stable, at ease and consciously present. When people feel grounded, they are able to accept and let go of the momentary tough moments throughout the day and are not easily influenced by others' ideas or feelings. The research model adopted in this study also bridged the significant research gaps identified by Schiessl and Korelo [15]. Specifically, it created a new relationship path between consumer behavior and the attractiveness of products and service by introducing new variables such as cultural services, cultural products, "moving home" and a feeling of groundedness. Moving home is "the process of leaving one's dwelling and settling in another" [13].

The proposed research model will enrich the consumer behavior literature through significant contributions, such as the development of relationships that were not considered in earlier studies. As suggested by Eichinger and Schreier [13], moving home and feelings of groundedness are important factors that need to be investigated in terms of the attractiveness of products and services in international market. This would add value to the field of business by highlighting the drivers of international students' consumption. Apart from the theoretical contribution, this study has some practical implications, which can benefit business owners and marketers. The outcomes of this research are expected to guide marketers in designing and benefiting from quality cultural products and services supplied to foreign students abroad. This study also highlights significant research gaps, which may be considered for future studies [15].

The rest of the article is organized as follows. The literature review and development of the hypotheses are discussed in Section 2, followed by the materials and methods used in the study, which are presented in Section 3. Section 4 presents the study's results and findings, while Section 5 discusses the discussion. The theoretical and practical implications of the study are discussed in Section 6. The direction for future studies and the conclusion of the study are presented in Section 7.

## 2. Literature Review and Development of Hypotheses

### 2.1. Cultural Services, Cultural Products, and Moving Home

Cultural services refer to the provision of services in a way that represents the culture of a particular community [16]. Cultural services may be exemplified in a restaurant by providing food to consumers in a culturally representative manner [17]. To illustrate, in American culture, takeout or fast-food services are the most preferred [16], and the delivery of similar food services to American tourists in other countries would be considered a cultural service. Similarly, cultural products are products that are merchandised in accordance with specific cultural values [18], and these can be perishable or nonperishable [19]. According to Schwarz and Liebl [20], sushi is a cultural food of Japan, which is available to consumers all over the globe. When Japanese consumers purchase sushi from other countries, they feel more satisfied [21]. In the same way, products with cultural identification and symbolic representation are more attractive to consumers who are concerned about their culture [22]. In European countries, consumers are concerned about purchasing products

and services that are related to their culture. Different surveys have also disclosed that people with cultural associations are more interested in purchasing products and services that represent their cultural identity [21,23]. According to Morling and Lamoreaux [24], highlighting the cultural importance of products and services can significantly influence the purchasing decisions of consumers. In modern times, in which an effective logistics system is available, consumers from all over the world can be provided with products that resonate with their culture [25]. The representation of cultural products can also improve the post-purchase decision-making of different consumers [16]. Furthermore, Santamaria and Escobar-Tello [26] demonstrated that consumers who have not been at home for a long time are always interested in purchasing products and services that represent their culture. For instance, students from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Abu Dhabi in Malaysia were observed to show more interest in purchasing products manufactured and imported from their countries [17]. This cultural association with the products and services provides international consumers with a sense of belonging [27]. On the basis of this literature review, the following hypotheses were developed:

**Hypothesis 1.** *Cultural services have an impact on moving home.*

**Hypothesis 2.** *Cultural products have an impact on moving home.*

## 2.2. Cultural Services, Cultural Products and Feelings of Groundedness

In the current era of globalization, students, mostly from developing countries, travel to advanced countries to secure an education [28,29]. International students are careful when purchasing products and services in international markets [30]. They are concerned about purchasing a product that represents their culture [31]. American consumers in Europe tend to purchase American foods and clothes [32], while European travelers in America also prefer European foods in the American market [33]. Culture plays a significant role in the international market, as it influences the selection and purchase of the products and services for daily consumption [34]. Nostalgic consumers are more motivated to purchase cultural products and services [35] to retrieve their memorable experiences. In Malaysia, Indian consumers show a preference for products and services that are a true representation of their culture [36]. According to different surveys on consumer behavior, the concept of culture influences the selection of products and services [37]. In Denmark, Pechlaner and Raich [16] stated that students from Pakistan and India were more interested in purchasing products and services that represent Indian culture or are imported from India. People who considered culture as a long-established way of life are more interested in purchasing products and services that promote their culture [38]. Culture is one of the fundamental determinants of consumer behavior. Every individual has a set of cultural values [37], which influence their decision to purchase [39]. In Norway, students from China and Hong Kong were found to be more interested in purchasing Chinese-manufactured products because of beliefs in the quality and sustainability of Chinese products [40]. Cultural norms and values are also considered by international students in their career and educational pursuits [7]. In light of this literature review, we proposed the following hypotheses:

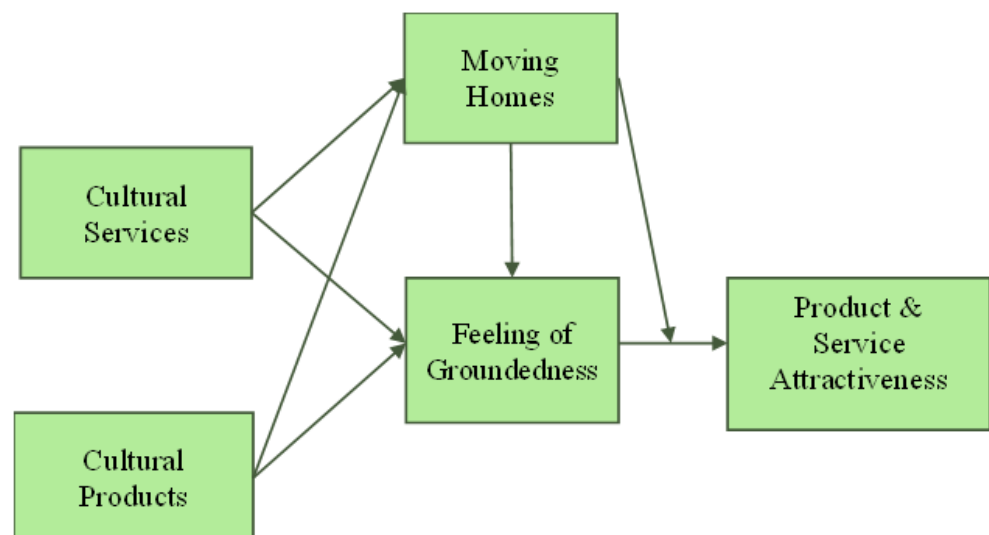
**Hypothesis 3.** *Cultural services have an impact on the feeling of groundedness.*

**Hypothesis 4.** *Cultural products have an impact on the feeling of groundedness.*

## 2.3. Moving Home and the Attractiveness of Products and Services

The attractiveness of products and services refers to the attention paid to the products and services by the consumers [5]. Because attractiveness is a subjective phenomenon [41], international students place little emphasis on products that do not meet the same specifications as those available in their home country [42]. Consumers buy products with the

hope of deriving satisfaction in their daily routine use. However, in the decision-making process regarding a product or service purchase, the model and variant of the product also play a crucial role [19]. Emekci [40] stated that American consumers are mature and are consistently interested in purchasing products and services that are sustainable. Waller and Fam [23] highlighted that sustainability and durability are fundamental concerns for American consumers because of their aversion to the early destruction of a product during consumption. The design and logo of the product play a limited role in product branding [33]. Santos and Gonçalves [43] pointed out that mature consumers are not attracted to the branding but are more concerned with the usability of the product. Similarly, American consumers favor products that are highly usable and durable [44]. Consumers have various values and attitudes, which influence their purchasing decisions [15]. Interestingly, international students in developed countries were found to show a keen interest in products and services that came with greater attractiveness [3]. This attractiveness is subjective and may be related to the cultural value [45]. It was observed that Indonesian students in Denmark and Norway showed more interest in the purchase of products that were good-looking and usable [15]. Similarly, Taghikhah and Voinov [3] indicated that students from South Asia in Malaysian universities tended to prefer products with sensitive decision-making capability. The decision-making of the consumers is based on different sets of values and consumer behavior [46]. Most consumers in advanced countries are interested in purchasing products and using services with better quality and durability [4]. Moreover, 87% of the consumers from Abu Dhabi and the UAE residing in Malaysia prefer to purchase products and services manufactured in or that have cultural associations with Gulf countries [47]. When consumers encounter a product that is relevant to their culture, they may undertake an impulsive purchase of the product, as discussed by Salamat and Farahani [48]. Indian students in American universities have also been observed to demonstrate their cultural values by preferring the purchase of products originating from India to products made in the USA [15]. However, in the absence of a substitute for a product that projects their cultural values [46], these students tend to consider the available products [7], despite their cultural irrelevance [16]. On the basis of this literature review, the following hypotheses were proposed and Figure 1 indicates the conceptual framework of study:



**Figure 1.** Proposed research model.

**Hypothesis 5.** *Moving home has an impact on the feeling of groundedness.*

**Hypothesis 6.** *The feeling of groundedness has an impact on the attractiveness of products and services.*

**Hypothesis 7.** *Moving home mediates the relationship between cultural services and the feeling of groundedness.*

**Hypothesis 8.** *Moving home mediates the relationship between cultural products and the feeling of groundedness.*

**Hypothesis 9.** *Moving home moderates the relationship between the feeling of groundedness and the attractiveness of products and services.*

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Measurement Scale

Most studies conducted in the field of social sciences rely on quantitative data collected through a survey for reliable and satisfactory results. Survey questions based on the Likert scale can reduce the time and cost of data collection. For this study, scale items were developed from past literature and then reviewed by 5 Australian experts from the Australian National University (ANU) and 3 Malaysian experts from the University of Malaya (UM) to ascertain the validity of the measurement scale. Following the experts' validation of the scale items, they were deployed for a pilot study to check their reliability and validity. For the pilot study, 110 international PhD students (49 participants from Bangladesh, 31 from the United Arab Emirates, 31 from Pakistan and 9 from Indonesia) at UM were recruited. The participants of the pilot study comprised 79 men and 31 women. According to the results of a confirmatory factor analysis, Cronbach's alpha for each variable was greater than 0.80, and the factor loadings for each scale item were greater than 0.60. Therefore, the developed scale items for this study had clear reliability and validity, and were thus considered in the final questionnaire. Table 1 shows the developed measurement scale and the results of the confirmatory factor analysis.

**Table 1.** Developed measurement scale.

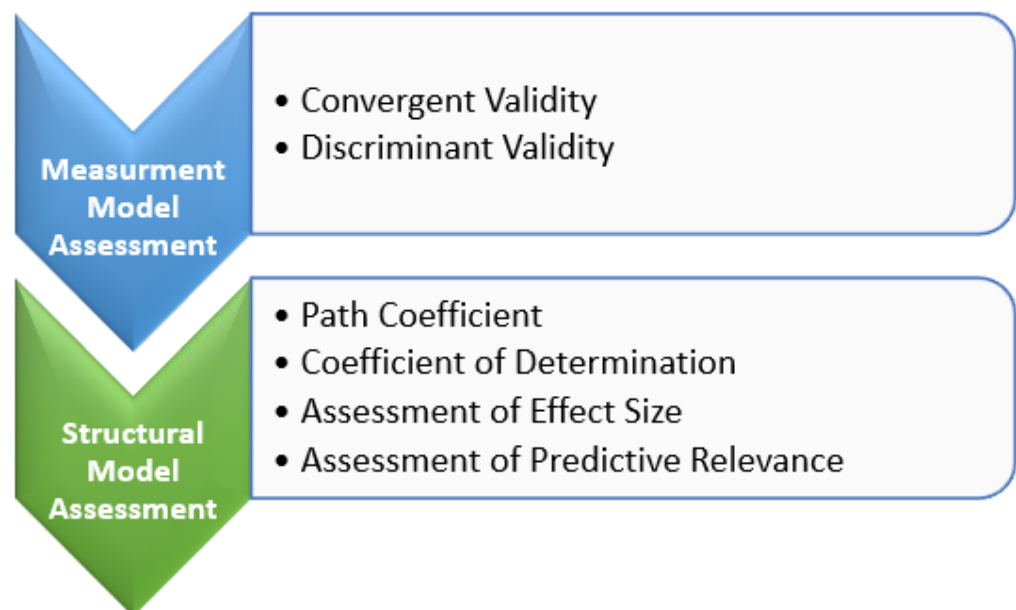
Variables	Measurement Scale	Cronbach's Alpha
Moving home	I am happy to change my residence. I accept my new residence. I accept the culture of my new residence.	0.832
Cultural products	I find my cultural products and services at my new residence. I purchase products that represent my culture. I purchase products associated with my culture. I use products that project my cultural values. Cultural products attract me.	0.871
Cultural services	Cultural services are satisfactory. Every culture has a specific service. Cultural services satisfy my needs every time. Culture influences my purchasing choice.	0.864
Feeling of groundedness	Purchasing products influences my values. I feel at home purchasing cultural products. I always feel at home using cultural services. Behavior influences my purchase decision.	0.811
Attractiveness of products and services	I engage in impulsive purchasing of cultural products. I request services that attract. I purchase products that attract. I avoid purchasing products from other cultures. I feel happy with good products.	0.896

### 3.2. Data Collection Process

For this study, the data were collected on a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The literature suggests that the five-point scale appears to be less confusing and to increase the response rate [49]. Moreover, most of the current studies have used five-point Likert scales for data collection [50,51]. To collect the data from international students in Malaysia, the assistance of two research scholars from Malaysia was sought. They were provided with questionnaires and a document highlighting the purpose of the research, which were distributed among the students from two universities: University Utara Malaysia and the University of Malaya. Specifically, non-Malaysian students were approached in different research labs and classes for collection of the data without discriminating between the genders. Consequently, of the 990 questionnaires distributed, only 617 valid questionnaires were retrieved. The respondents were assured of the confidentiality of their information. It is also worth noting that the subjects of the pilot study were excluded from the final data collection.

## 4. Findings

The findings of this study are divided into two different sections. First, an assessment of the measurement model was conducted to examine the reliability, consistency, convergent validity and discriminant validity of the individual items. Second, an assessment of the structural model was performed to assess the significance of the path coefficients, variance explained, effect size and predictive relevance. Figure 2 depicts a graphic description of the steps of assessing the measurement model and the structural model.



**Figure 2.** Two-step process of assessment of the PLS path model.

In this research, the skewness and kurtosis values were determined to check the normality of the data for validating the findings and for data analysis. In this regard, when the skewness value is greater +1.0, the distribution is right-skewed, but when the value is lower than −1.0, the distribution is said to be left-skewed [52,53]. On the other hand, kurtosis values greater than +1.0 and less than −1.0 indicate leptokurtic and platykurtic distributions, respectively [54]. As indicated in Table 2, the kurtosis and skewness of this study were normal.



**Table 2.** Kurtosis and Skewness for Normality of Data.

No.	Constructs	Missing	Mean	Standard Deviation	Excess Kurtosis	Skewness
1	CS1	0	3.540	1.252	−0.791	−0.480
2	CS2	0	3.247	1.319	−1.436	0.151
3	CS3	0	3.757	0.965	−0.806	−0.369
4	CS4	0	3.473	1.162	−0.883	−0.493
5	CS5	0	4.093	0.795	−1.401	−0.169
6	CP1	0	4.130	0.973	−1.103	−0.569
7	CP2	0	4.363	0.886	0.321	−1.186
8	CP3	0	4.277	0.812	−1.277	−0.548
9	CP4	0	3.730	0.961	−0.813	−0.342
10	MH1	0	3.493	1.159	−0.836	−0.526
11	MH2	0	3.717	0.957	−0.857	−0.277
12	MH3	0	3.820	0.984	−1.127	−0.202
13	MH4	0	3.463	1.337	−1.139	−0.312
14	MH5	0	3.490	1.162	−0.854	−0.520
15	FG1	0	3.330	1.291	−1.130	−0.241
16	FG2	0	3.487	1.274	−0.837	−0.456
17	FG3	0	3.730	0.961	−0.813	−0.342
18	FG4	0	3.550	1.114	−0.603	−0.395
19	PSA1	0	3.757	0.975	−0.845	−0.363
20	PSA2	0	3.490	1.162	−0.854	−0.520
21	PSA3	0	3.330	1.291	−1.130	−0.241
22	PSA4	0	3.487	1.274	−0.837	−0.456
23	PSA5	0	3.730	0.961	−0.813	−0.342

Note: CS, cultural Services; CP, cultural products; MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness; PSA, attractiveness of products and services.

#### 4.1. Assessment of the Measurement Model

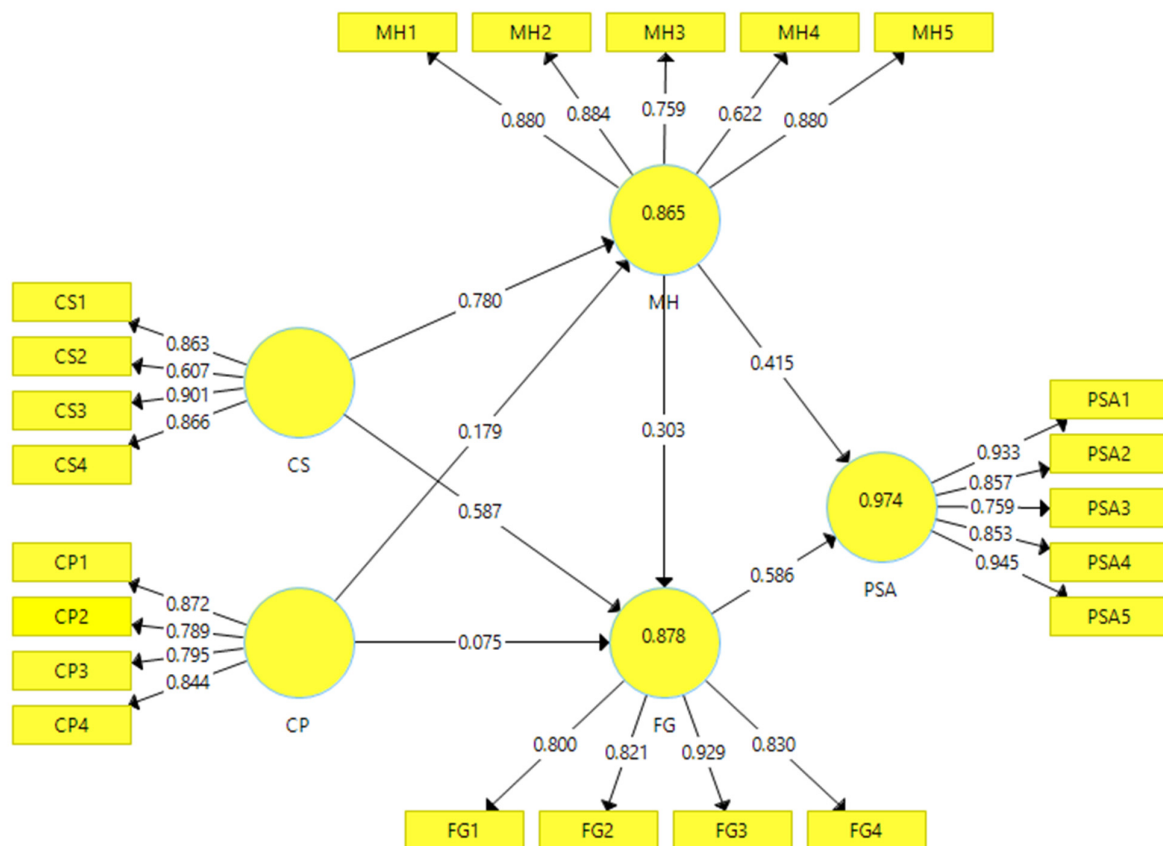
##### 4.1.1. Convergent Validity

The PLS Algorithm calculator was used to determine the convergent validity of the study. Smart PLS is used in advanced and modern social science studies to determine the reliability and validity of a study's model and measurement scale [55]. The reliability and validity were tested to check the usefulness of data in this research in terms of accuracy and significance. For this study, the PLS Algorithm calculator was used to identify the value of Cronbach's alpha, the factor loadings, the average variance extracted (AVE) and the composite reliability (CR), consistent with prior research [53]. To ensure the reliability and validity of the measurement scale, the value of Cronbach's alpha must be above 0.80 [56], the value of the factor loadings for each measurement scale must be greater than 0.60, the value of CR must be greater than 0.80 and the value of AVE must not be below 0.50 [55]. According to the findings of this study (see Table 3), all the aforementioned criteria were fulfilled, highlighting the reliability and validity of the measurement scale and the study's model. Figure 3 presents a visual description of the factor loadings on the measurement scale of this study.

**Table 3.** Factor loadings, Cronbach’s alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted for reliability and validity.

Variables	Measurement Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach’s Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
Cultural products	CP1	0.872	0.855	0.939	0.895	0.682
	CP2	0.789				
	CP3	0.795				
	CP4	0.844				
Cultural services	CS1	0.863	0.828	0.866	0.888	0.669
	CS2	0.607				
	CS3	0.901				
	CS4	0.866				
Feeling of groundedness	FG1	0.800	0.868	0.884	0.910	0.717
	FG2	0.821				
	FG3	0.929				
	FG4	0.830				
Moving home	MH1	0.880	0.868	0.896	0.905	0.659
	MH2	0.884				
	MH3	0.759				
	MH4	0.622				
	MH5	0.880				
Attractiveness of products and services	PSA1	0.933	0.920	0.926	0.940	0.761
	PSA2	0.857				
	PSA3	0.759				
	PSA4	0.853				
	PSA5	0.945				

Note: CS, cultural services; CP, cultural products; MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness; PSA, attractiveness of products and services.



**Figure 3.** Measurement model, PLS 3.0. Note: CS, cultural services; CP, cultural products; MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness; PSA, attractiveness of products and services.



#### 4.1.2. Discriminant Validity, Cross-Loadings and HTMT

In this research, the discriminant validity of the study was checked by the cross-loadings and heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) analysis. The discriminant validity was tested via cross-loading to check the ability to discriminate between the data for each variable of the study. Discriminant validity at the item level establishes the existence of a high correlation between items from the same construct and a very weak correlation between items from different constructs. For the cross-loading test, Smart PLS was used, and the findings showed that the results of cross-loading were significant, indicating the presence of a weak correlation in this study between the items representing different measurement scales (see Table 4).

**Table 4.** Cross-loadings for discriminant validity.

	CP	CS	FG	MH	PSA
CP1	0.872	0.623	0.610	0.662	0.615
CP2	0.789	0.433	0.404	0.448	0.423
CP3	0.795	0.491	0.414	0.432	0.429
CP4	0.844	0.901	0.929	0.897	0.945
CS1	0.676	0.863	0.777	0.740	0.805
CS2	0.498	0.607	0.559	0.467	0.534
CS3	0.820	0.901	0.906	0.868	0.918
CS4	0.609	0.866	0.750	0.874	0.848
FG1	0.465	0.682	0.800	0.709	0.759
FG2	0.734	0.879	0.821	0.786	0.853
FG3	0.844	0.901	0.929	0.897	0.945
FG4	0.585	0.630	0.830	0.638	0.688
MH1	0.608	0.863	0.756	0.880	0.855
MH2	0.809	0.867	0.896	0.884	0.907
MH3	0.699	0.594	0.724	0.759	0.678
MH4	0.547	0.461	0.473	0.622	0.480
MH5	0.611	0.865	0.757	0.880	0.857
PSA1	0.835	0.879	0.910	0.874	0.933
PSA2	0.611	0.865	0.757	0.880	0.857
PSA3	0.465	0.682	0.800	0.709	0.759
PSA4	0.734	0.879	0.821	0.786	0.853
PSA5	0.844	0.901	0.929	0.897	0.945

Note: CS, cultural services; CP, cultural products; MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness; PSA, attractiveness of products and services.

In the modern social science research, HTMT is used widely for discriminant validity tests. HTMT is a measure of the similarity between latent variables. In this study, the PLS Algorithm calculator was utilized to determine the HTMT. According to Gold and Malhotra [57], for the HTMT discriminant validity test, no value should be greater than 0.90. The findings of this research confirmed the discriminant validity of the measurement scales, since the values of HTMT were not above 0.90 (see Table 5).

**Table 5.** HTMT for discriminant validity.

	CP	CS	FG	MH	PSA
CP					
CS	0.870				
FG	0.800	0.799			
MH	0.855	0.781	0.762		
PSA	0.807	0.749	0.735	0.713	

Note: CS, cultural services; CP, cultural products; MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness; PSA, attractiveness of products and services.

4.2. Assessment of the Structural Model

4.2.1. Partial Least Squares Analysis of the Direct Hypotheses: Results

The direct relationships hypothesized in this study were investigated using Smart PLS 3.0 bootstrapping calculations. This test was used to determine the outcomes of each path, and the t-value must be greater than 1.90 for a significant direct impact [58]. The findings showed that the path coefficients of all direct impact hypotheses were significant. In other words, the results for the path coefficients support H1 of a direct relationship between CS and MH ( $\beta = 0.780$ ,  $T = 22.738$  and  $p = 0.000$ ), H2 of a direct relationship between CP and MH ( $\beta = 0.179$ ,  $T = 4.350$  and  $p = 0.000$ ), H3 of a direct association between CS and FG ( $\beta = 0.587$ ,  $T = 10.215$  and  $p = 0.000$ ), H4 of a relationship between CP and FG ( $\beta = 0.075$ ,  $T = 3.308$  and  $p = 0.001$ ), H5 of a relationship between MH and FG ( $\beta = 0.303$ ,  $T = 5.271$  and  $p = 0.000$ ) and H6 of a relationship between FG and PSA ( $\beta = 0.586$ ,  $T = 25.891$ , and  $p = 0.000$ ). The results of the direct impacts are displayed in Table 6 and Figure 4.

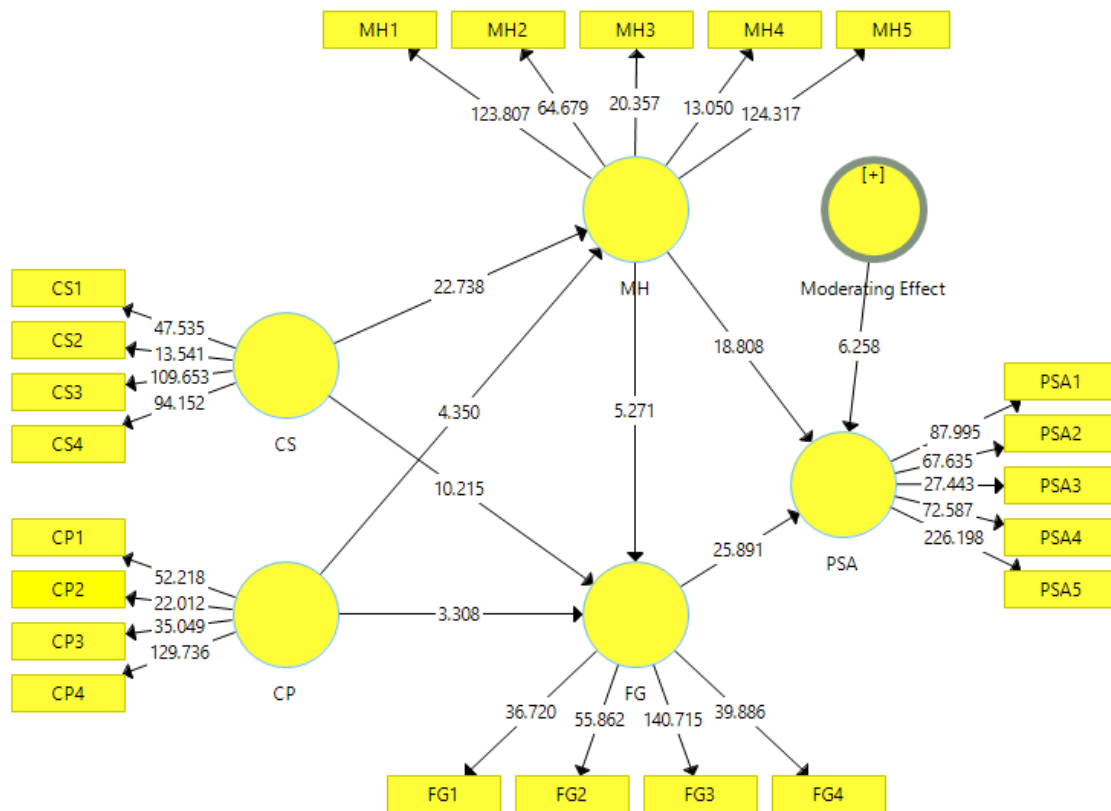


Figure 4. Findings of the PLS 3.0 structural path model. Note: CS, cultural services; CP, cultural products; MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness; PSA, attractiveness of products and services.

Table 6. Results of the hypotheses of direct impacts.

Direct Hypotheses	Beta Value	Standard Deviation	T Statistic	p-Value	
H1. CS -> MH	0.780	0.034	22.738	0.001	Accepted
H2. CP -> MH	0.179	0.041	4.350	0.001	Accepted
H3. CS -> FG	0.587	0.057	10.215	0.001	Accepted
H4. CP -> FG	0.075	0.023	3.308	0.001	Accepted
H5. MH -> FG	0.303	0.058	5.271	0.001	Accepted
H6. FG -> PSA	0.586	0.023	25.891	0.001	Accepted

Note: CS, cultural services; CP, cultural products; MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness; PSA, attractiveness of products and services.

#### 4.2.2. Results of the Mediation Hypotheses

The results of the test of the mediating effects were examined using Smart PLS 3 bootstrapping calculations. A t-value of more than 1.90 is recommended for a significant mediation effect [58]. The findings support H7 of a significant mediation by MH in the relationship between CS and FG ( $\beta = 0.237$ ,  $T = 5.415$  and  $p = 0.000$ ) and H8 of a significant mediation by MH in the relationship between CP and FG ( $\beta = 0.054$ ,  $T = 3.033$  and  $p = 0.003$ ). The findings of the mediating effects are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Results of the mediating effects.

Mediating Hypotheses	Beta Value	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	<i>p</i> -Values	
H7. CS -> MH -> FG	0.237	0.044	5.415	0.000	Accepted
H8. CP -> MH -> FG	0.054	0.018	3.033	0.003	Accepted

Note: CS, cultural services; CP, cultural products; MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness.

#### 4.2.3. Results of the Moderating Hypotheses

A test of the moderating impacts was also performed using Smart PLS bootstrapping calculations. A t-value greater than 1.90 is recommended for a significant moderating effect [58]. According to the findings of H9 in Table 8, there is a significant positive moderation by MH in the relationship between FG and PSA ( $\beta = 0.055$ ,  $T = 6.258$  and  $p = 0.000$ ). In other words, MH strengthens the relationship between FG and PSA (see Figure 5).

**Table 8.** Results of the hypotheses of moderating effects.

Moderating Hypothesis	Beta Value	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	<i>p</i> -Values	
H9. Moderating effect -> PSA	0.055	0.009	6.258	0.000	Accepted

Note: PSA, attractiveness of products and services.

#### 4.2.4. Coefficient of Determination

To test the coefficient of determination of the research model, PLS Algorithm calculations via Smart PLS 3.0 were used.  $R^2$  values of 0.67, 0.33 and 0.19 are considered substantial, moderate and weak, respectively [55]. Based on the results in Table 9, the variation in the study's framework variable was 97%, given the substantial  $R^2$  value of 0.974.

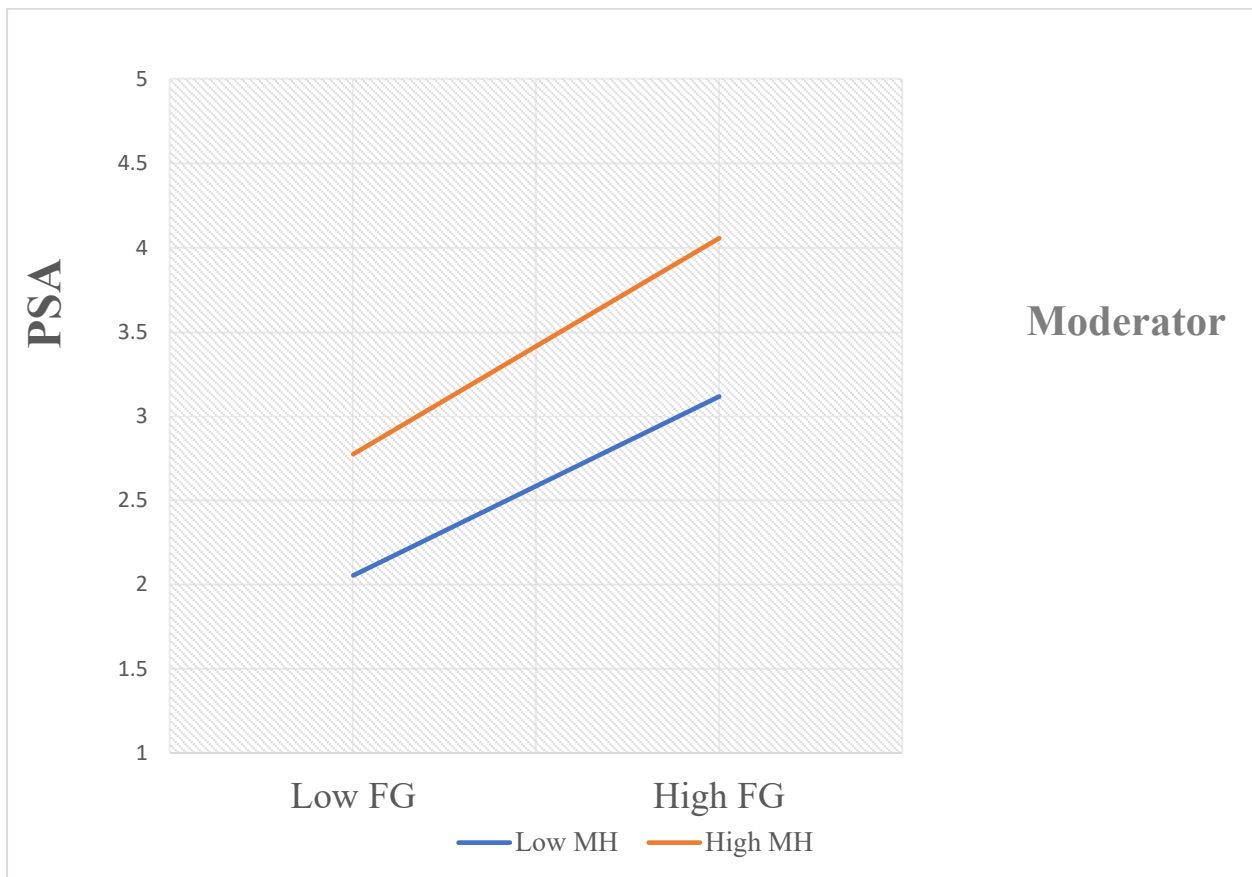
**Table 9.** Results of  $R^2$ .

Variables	$R^2$	$R^2$ Adjusted
PSA	0.974	0.974

Note: MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness; PSA, attractiveness of products and services.

#### 4.2.5. Assessment of the Effect Size

The effect size of the study model was determined by PLS Algorithm calculations, in which  $f^2$  values of 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 are considered small, medium and large, respectively [55,59]. The results of the  $f^2$  values (see Table 10) indicate that CP, CS, FG and MH have small, large, large and small effects on PSA, respectively.



**Figure 5.** Moderating effect of moving home. Note: MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness; PSA, attractiveness of products and services.

**Table 10.** Results of  $F^2$ .

Variables	$F^2$
CP	0.015
CS	0.384
FG	2.365
MH	0.102

Note: CS, cultural services; CP, cultural products; MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness.

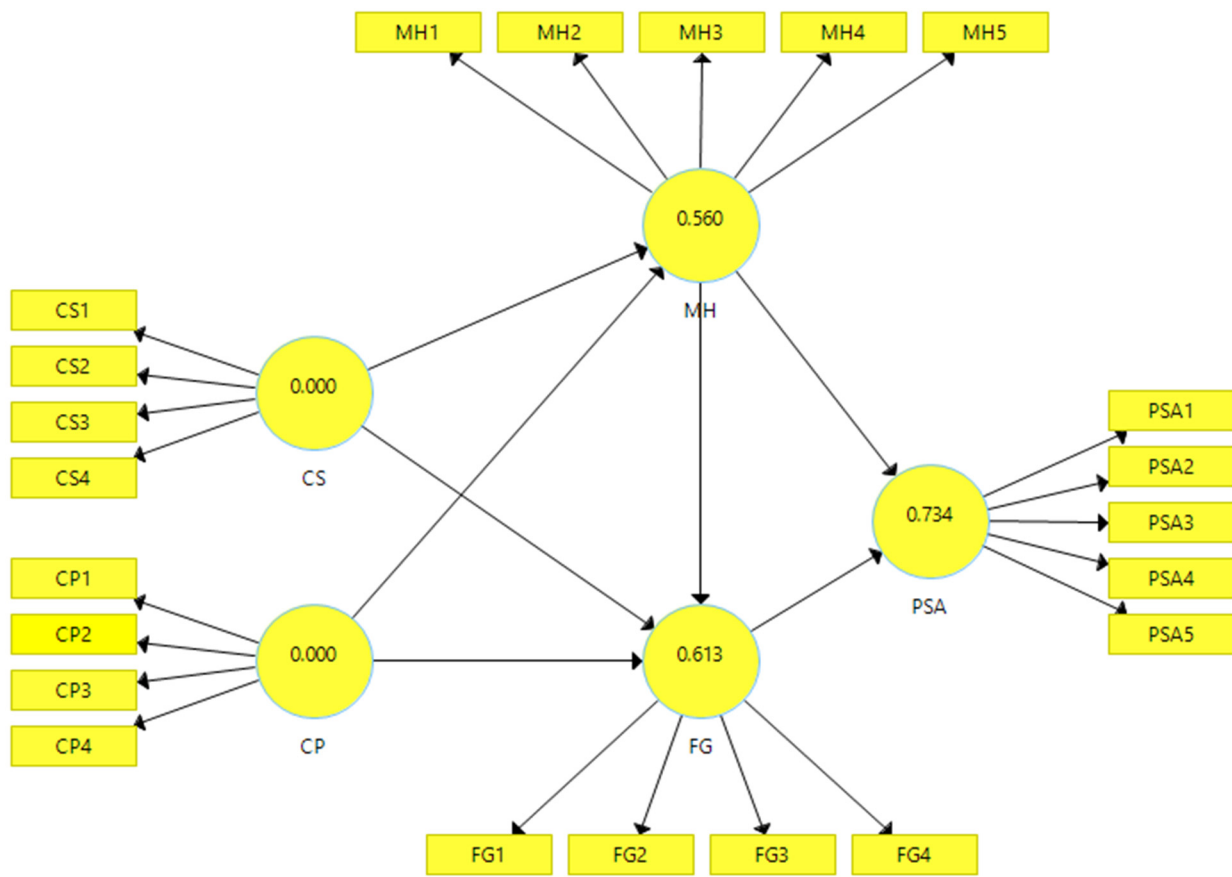
#### 4.2.6. Assessment of the Predictive Relevance

In this research, PLS blindfolding values were utilized to determine the predictive relevance of the study's framework. According to Hair and Sarstedt [59,60], the value of  $Q^2$  should be greater than 0. The results of  $Q^2$  in Table 11 and Figure 6 reveal the strong predictive relevance of the study's framework, since the  $Q^2$  value is greater than 0.

**Table 11.**  $Q^2$  results.

Variables	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1 - SSE/SSO)$
FG	1200	463.903	0.613
MH	1500	659.438	0.560
PSA	1500	398.332	0.734

Note: MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness; PSA, attractiveness of products and services.



**Figure 6.**  $Q^2$  Effects on PSA. Note: CS, cultural services; CP, cultural products; MH, moving home; FG, feeling of groundedness; PSA, attractiveness of products and services.

## 5. Discussion

Although a large number of studies have been published in the area of consumer behavior, none of these studies have considered the role of the feeling of groundedness in consumer behavior. As a result, significant hypotheses have been developed in the proposed framework of the study, with significant theoretical and practical implications for practitioners. The results of all direct relationships examined in this study were significant, thus validating the hypothesized significant relationships between cultural services and moving home, cultural products and moving home, cultural services and a feeling of groundedness, cultural products and a feeling of groundedness, moving home and a feeling of groundedness, and between a feeling of groundedness and the attractiveness of products and services. The results of this research are consistent with those of earlier studies related to consumer behavior [2,7,11,61,62]. However, the variable of “feeling of groundedness” is still relatively new in the customer behavior literature, thus representing a novel contribution of this study [15]. Studies have shown that consumers are inclined toward the purchase of products from their home country, which is logical [6]. Even in advanced and developed countries, consumers were found to show a preference for products from their countries [3,4,14,15,63]. Therefore, marketers and retailers are recommended to emphasize culture-centric products and services to their international student customers, since they tend to be nostalgic about their own culture [47]. This phenomenon has been observed across various cultures. For example, Indian students in Hong Kong were found to prefer the consumption of Indian products because of their strong association with their culture [64]. In addition, South Asian international students and tourists in Europe are inclined to purchase South Asian mangoes [16,20]. The cultural aspects of products and services cannot be overlooked in the purchasing behavior of consumers [65]. The behavior of consumers is subjective and

can be influenced by the agreement of products with their cultural values [66]. Indeed, the results of the direct relationships examined in this research are supported by earlier studies. Some of the hypotheses developed in this research are an addition to the existing literature, thus bridging the research gaps found in the existing literature. The results of the indirect relationships examined in this study were also significant, thereby validating the hypothesized mediating roles of moving home in the relationship between cultural services and a feeling of groundedness, as well as the relationship between cultural products and a feeling of groundedness. This study also indicated the significant moderating role of moving home in the relationship between the feeling of groundedness and the attractiveness of products and services. This observation is in agreement with earlier studies on the attractiveness of products and services. In general, this study highlights the important role of culture in the consumption of products and services [67,68]. This salient point was illustrated by Morling and Lamoreaux [24] who they observed that Indian customers of McDonald's abroad are averse to the consumption of beef because of their strong bond with their culture, which prohibits the consumption of beef. Furthermore, consumers are filled with nostalgia when they encounter products and services that properly represent their culture [69]. In line with Khraim [69], this study pointed out the significance of culture in the purchasing of products and services. Marketers are therefore advised to focus more on the development of culture-centric products and services to evoke consumers' nostalgic feelings of groundedness and, in turn, stimulate their purchasing decisions. This, ultimately, will improve the performance and sustainability of businesses. Although the moderating and mediating relationships explored by this study have rarely been discussed in the previous literature, they are backed by the findings of similar research.

## 6. Implications

### 6.1. Theoretical Implications

Existing research on the role of consumer behavior has largely ignored the role of cultural products and services in improving consumer behavior. This study contributes to the existing research by highlighting the critical role and importance of cultural products and services in the purchasing decisions of international consumers. This research also extended the theoretical knowledge of consumer behavior by adding the new factor of "feelings of groundedness" and by explaining how cultural products and services provide a feeling of groundedness to international consumers. This significant contribution would enhance the experience and understanding of future researchers on consumer behavior. Based on the outputs of this research, future scholars can also investigate more critical factors of consumer behavior. Theoretically, this research enriches the literature with information related to the relationships among cultural products, cultural services, moving home and a feeling of groundedness. The study also addressed the theoretical outlook that is critical to understanding consumer behavior for the development of products and services for international consumers. In summary, this study's implications would be beneficial for future researchers in the development of a framework for future studies on consumer behavior. Research emphasizing cultural products, cultural services and feelings of groundedness is still required to improve the sales of products and services to international consumers.

### 6.2. Marketing Implications

The marketing implications of this research are extensive, as the entire pathway for changing consumer behavior has been explored in this study. First, this study demonstrated that the alignment of products and services with the cultural values of people can influence their decision to purchase products and services. This study highlights that marketers should focus on the products' relevance to cultural identity because most international and local consumers are willing to purchase products and services that represent their culture. In this way, this study highlights that a sense of association can be provided to



international students and travelers in the form of products and services representing their culture. Therefore, packaging the products and services in a way that reflects the cultural context of purchasers can positively influence their purchasing decisions. Similarly, this study shows that the feeling of groundedness could affect international consumers' behavior or purchases in Malaysia through cultural products and services, and the introduction of cultural variety into the color and taste of product packaging could enhance the users' experience and provide a cultural touch that would influence consumer purchasing behavior. Similarly, for consumers to associate products with the past, marketers should create products and services that represent their culture and memories. The majority of consumers in international institutions spend a significant amount of time away from home, which could intensify their thirst for products and services that recreate their cultural values. Therefore, marketers' emphasis on the cultural context of products and services may encourage nostalgic consumers towards the impulsive purchase of products and services. Multinational marketing firms must associate their products and services with cultural contexts to improve the perceptions of their products and services by international consumers. By focusing on the cultural and personal needs of international consumers, brands and other companies can enhance the experience of international travelers. In general, this research points out that culture plays a critical role in the consumption of products and services, and marketers are required to put more focus on the cultural development of products and services to grow the market potential of international students and tourists.

## 7. Conclusions and Future Directions

This research concludes that the cultural projection of products and services is critical for improving the consumption behavior of international students. This is highlighted in the observed preference of international students and tourists for products and services that are associated with their culture. This research significantly addressed the gaps identified in the literature and enriched the literature on consumer behavior by providing related information on the feeling of groundedness. The marketing implications of this research are also weighty, as they suggest ways to improve consumer behavior with the help of the variable of a feeling of groundedness. This study is a fine contribution to the knowledge and practice associated with consumer behavior.

This study discussed the impact of feelings of groundedness on the purchasing decisions of nostalgic international customers in Malaysia, thereby contributing to the existing body of knowledge on consumer behavior. Notwithstanding, the study has some limitations, which may be addressed in future studies. First, the findings of this study are limited to the Malaysian context. Future research would be needed to ensure the findings of the present study would hold for other cultures and other demographics. Secondly, future research may explore the effect of a feeling of groundedness on business performance. Lastly, scholars may focus on the role of a feeling of groundedness in preventing consumers from leapfrogging.

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