**Journal of Marketing Thought**

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information: [http://www.ejmt.org](http://www.ejmt.org)

**Why We Buy What Do Not Want To Buy? Effect Of Filed Pressure On Willingness To Buy In Face To Face Service Encounter**

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Online publication date: 15 May 2014

To cite this Article  Ichiro Furukawa, Chungji Jin, Assarut Nuttapol, Donghu Hahna, Ming-Hung Kao & Zhuomin Shi (2014) ’Why We Buy What Do Not Want to Buy? Effect of Filed Pressure on Willingness to Buy in Face to Face Service Encounter’, Journal of Marketing Thought, 1: 1-11

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Ichiro Furukawa, Chunji Jin, Assarut Nuttapol, Donghu Hahn, Ming-Hung Kao, & Zhuomin Shi

Why We Buy What We Do Not Want To Buy? Effect Of Filed Pressure On Willingness To Buy In Face To Face Service Encounter

Consumers’ emotional response is a key factor that affects their satisfactions in the face to face service encounter. Past research in the area of service encounter tried to explain consumers’ responses to their negative feeling when they received a bad service encounter. While introducing a new concept of “field pressure”, the authors aim to interpret the behavior of consumers in purchasing products or services that they do not truly want to buy in a good service encounter setting. Through reviewing prior research, an analysis model and hypotheses are developed to clarify the relationship between field pressure and one’s willingness to buy, with four moderating variables (service category, customer-employee relationship, product involvement and face consciousness). Experiment researches were conducted to test the hypotheses in four Asian countries (Japan, China, Korea, and Thailand). The results are presented, and the limitations of this study are also noted.

Keywords: Filed Pressure, Willingness to Buy, Service Encounter, Service Category, Customer-Employee Relationship

Consumers are often considered to be rational, and in their decision-making process they are thought to always make a careful comparative review of multiple alternatives before finally deciding on the best choice and price.

Two of our research members recently had similar experiences, but seemingly different from the typical consumer behavior. One of them recently bought a new apartment in Bangkok, Thailand and visited a big furnishing store to buy furniture. The salesperson was very kind and proposed various types of interior furnishings. The research member did not like some of the items, but, in the end, decided to buy all of those the salesperson had recommended.

The other coauthor visited a cosmetics counter in a department store in Tokyo, Japan. The salesperson was very kind as well, and finally the team member purchased some products that she did not actually want.

As in the above cases, people sometimes buy products or services they do not want or need. In this study, we focus on this consumption phenomenon, and try to interpret why it occurs. One of the keywords in these situations is ‘face to face’; they mainly occur in face to face service encounters, and the consumers feel some pressure to purchase even when they do not want to.

This study will explain the consumer behavior in these situations with a new concept, “field pressure”. “Field pressure” exists primarily in face to face service categories where the interaction between employee and customer is one of the service elements. It happens from the moment the services begin, or sometimes even before. Field pressure is derived from an essential opposition between seller and buyer, and the most interesting thing is that, the higher

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* This study was supported by the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (JSPS)(No.24530520), the National Science Foundation of China(No.70972078) and Tokken of Seijo University(“The effects of emotions on consumer behavior”).
the service performance is, the more effectively the pressure works. In cases when the service performance is low, a consumer can easily resist the pressure. However, in cases when the performance is high, a consumer finds it hard to resist and often yields to this pressure.

### Theoretical Foundation and Hypotheses

#### Customer Embarrassment and Field Pressure

Though, field pressure is the new concept introduced in this study, past literature has tried to explain consumer behavior that linked to their feeling in the face to face service encounter (Grace 2007, 2009; Lloyd and Luk 2011; Mattila and Enz 2002). Among the studies, embarrassment is the concept that closes to field pressure. Embarrassment is an unpleasant emotion in response to inappropriate behavior, and occurs primarily in face-to-face service categories. People, in turn, try to avoid such behaviors or situations evoking embarrassment (Modigliani 1968, 1971). Embarrassment, unlike “shame”, involves no guilt, sadness, fear or disgust, and lasts for only a short time (Babcock and Sabini 1990; Richins 1997).

There are a great number of studies in psychology, sociology, social psychology and marketing about the situations that evoke embarrassment as well as the causes, (e.g. Edelmann 1981, 1987; Grace 2007; Keltner and Buswell 1996; Miller 1992, 1996; Modigliani 1968; Sharkey and Stafford 1990). As to the causes of embarrassment, in a study led by Goffman (1956a, 1956b, 1967a, 1967b), several theories are proposed. For instance, loss of self-esteem (Goffman 1956a, 1967a, 1967b; Modigliani 1968, 1971; Parrott and Smith 1991), dramaturgic theory (Goffman 1956a, 1967a, 1967b; Heider 1958; Miller 1987, 1995a, 1995b; Silver, Sabini and Parrott 1987), social evaluation (Goffman 1956a, 1967a, 1967b; Miller 1987, 1995a, 1995b; Parrott and Smith 1991; Sabini et al. 2000; Withers and Sherblom 2008), personal standard (Babcock 1988; Babcock and Sabini 1990), centre of attention (Heider 1958; Lewis 1995; Sabini et al. 2000), empathic embarrassment (Goffman 1956a, 1967a, 1967b; Miller 1987, 1995a, 1995b). The degree of embarrassment makes an inverted U-shaped curve according to the psychological distance in one’s viewpoint. With a stranger, the degree is low, and with an acquaintance, it reaches the highest level, although with a close friend it becomes low again (Tsutsumi, 1992).

But to date, little is known about many of the significant effects that such embarrassment has on consumers in the area of marketing/consumer behavior. Research within this domain has concentrated on examining embarrassment in relation to particular product categories, or sources of embarrassment and stimuli. For instance, embarrassment tends to occur in purchasing sensitive or embarrassing products, such as hearing aids, feminine hygiene products, and impotence drugs (Dahl, Manchanda and Argo, 2001). The sources of embarrassment (the service provider, the consumer and others present) and the stimuli (specifically, six particular categories, i.e., criticism, violations of privacy, awkward acts, image appropriateness, forgetfulness/error, and environment) are also investigated (Grace 2007, 2009; Wu and Mattila 2013).

Past research on customer embarrassment focused mostly on the negative employee responses in the face to face service situations. The research indicated the importance of good service interaction which will lead to higher customer satisfaction and loyalty (Wieseke, Geigenmüller, and Kraus 2012). There are few studies investigated negative feelings that arise even in cases when the service is good. As an exception, Kao (2011) discovered cases of this consumer embarrassment phenomenon at the cosmetics counters of department stores in Taiwan and Japan. According to the interview survey, Kao found that in spite of good service, a customer may experience feelings of discomfort, that is, embarrassment. When feeling embarrassed, customers tend to pass up service from a known salesperson or avoid meeting him/her.

To understand more about the mechanism of customer embarrassment in the good service situation, the present study introduces the concept of field pressure, and tries to explore the relationship between the concept and one’s willingness to buy the products and services.

#### Customer-Employee Relationship and Service Category

Customer-employee relationship has received broad attention because it is believed that an ongoing relationship between customer and employee is closely tied to market share and profits (Chaudhuri and Holbrook 2001; Reichheld 1996). Especially in the service industry, the social bond forged through interactions between a customer and an employee can create a significant competitive advantage (Lovlock and Wirtz 2004).

The relationship between a customer and an employee is for business only at first. However, as the relationship continues, it turns into one similar to a friendship (Butcher, Sparks and O’Callaghan 2002; Goodwin and Gremeler 1996; Price and Arnold 1999). Then customer and employee take part in "communal behaviors" including self-disclosure, present-giving, etc. Eventually, these behaviors affect the evaluation of the service or product, and therefore strengthen the commitment (Goodwin and Gremeler 1996). As a result, a friendly relationship with customers is recommended in order to strengthen commitment to an employee and a brand/company (Jones, Taylor and Bansal 2008).

However, some problems with the “friendly relationship” are also pointed out. Firstly, if customer and employee form a relationship as friends, "communal behavior" such as casual conversations and other interactions may interrupt service (Bove and Johnson 2001), and therefore decrease actual service quality. Secondly, as the customer-employee relationship becomes one like friendship, the interaction will assume characteristics of not only an economic exchange relationship, but also a communal relationship (Butcher, Sparks and O’Callaghan 2002). In this case, the customer’s decision-making will take into consideration not only the economic aspects, but also social norms (Bat-
Ichiro Furukawa, Chunji Jin, Assarut Nuttapol, Donghu Hahn, Ming-Hung Kao, & Zhuomin Shi (1993; Clark and Mills 1993; Gremler, Gwinner and Brown 2001; Heide and Wathne 2006). For instance, a customer may make a purchase with the idea of “I should help my friend’s business”, and not based on a judgment of the product or service.

Returning to the subject of embarrassment, as a customer-employee relationship becomes long-lasting and closer, the customer will feel more embarrassed and find it more difficult to reject the service or product than in a less close relationship. That is, the customer will be more strongly influenced by the field pressure as the relationship with the employee becomes closer.

Moreover, the impacts of field pressure differ by service categories. In some service categories, customer contact is more frequent and closer, a good customer-employee relationship will directly affect the customer’s commitment comparing to the service categories that have lower customer contact (Chase 1978; Grove and Fisk 1983; Mills and Margulies 1980; Stiff and Pollack 1983). Therefore, in the full service categories, like medical care, hair salons, or other welfare activities, the customer tends to perceive more pressure to buy the services or products offered than when he she/he is in the partial service categories, as with food, clothing or jewelry retail stores (Rathmell 1966). In this respect, we propose the following hypotheses:

H1: The higher the degree of closeness of consumer-employee relationship, the higher the relationship between field pressure and one’s willingness to buy.

H2: The higher the degree of customer contact, the higher the relationship between field pressure and one’s willingness to buy.

Product Involvement

Product involvement is a well-known concept to interpret a consumer’s decision making, and one of the most famous consumer behavior models with product involvement is the “Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)” (Petty and Cacioppo 1986). ELM provides a useful framework to understand the attitude change and choice influences in decision making. According to this model, there are “central” and “peripheral” routes to persuasion. Although much of the time the two routes are mixed in the persuasion process, the main activated route depends on the consumer’s degree of motivation in the process (Petty and Briñol 2012). When the motivation, that is, involvement, is high, the message will be processed mainly through the “central route”, in which issue-relevant thinking tends to be the most direct determinant. And when product involvement is low, the acceptance or rejection of the appeal is not based on the careful consideration of issue-relevant information, but rather on peripheral cues. Peripheral cues affect attitudes in the absence of argument processing. For instance, the same messages from an attractive source could be more effective than those from an unattractive one.

Field pressure, which is being discussed in this study, also can serve as one of those peripheral cues. Especially when product involvement is low, regardless of judgment of service or product, field pressure is more effective from an emotional aspect. For instance, customers will decide to purchase just because of the positive emotion elicited by an employee’s good service performance, because of a desire to help a familiar employee’s business, or because of concerns about face consciousness as we discuss below. Thus,

H3: The higher the degree of product involvement, the lower the relationship between field pressure and one’s willingness to buy.

Face Consciousness

Face means respect, pride, and dignity of an individual as a consequence of his/her social achievement and practice of it (Leung and Chen 2001, p.1575). Although concerns about face are common in both the East and West, as a complex social and psychological phenomenon, no consensus has yet been reached on “what face is” (Shi, Furukawa and Jin 2011). But there are certainly significant differences between East and West (Zhou and Ho 1994). For instance, people in collective societies in East Asia seem to have

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**FIGURE 1**

Model and Hypotheses

![Diagram of the model and hypotheses](image-url)
stronger face consciousness than those in Western countries (Hawkins et al. 2004, Hofstede and Hofstede 2005, Solomon 2007). Furthermore, Confucianism and guilt/shame culture are often pointed out as important cultural backgrounds (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005). People in these societies are more expected to respect others and the social norms to prevent either themselves or others from losing face (Wong and Ahuvia 1998) and tend to feel embarrassed easily (Miller 1996). For instance, in a service category, as the employee performs a good service, the customer’s face consciousness will have influence on the impact of field pressure. And the stronger the face consciousness is, the greater the impact that field pressure will have. Thus,

H4: The higher the degree of face consciousness, the higher the relationship between field pressure and one’s willingness to buy.

According to the above discussions, our research model and all of the hypotheses are indicated in Figure1.

Method

Two experiments were conducted in this study. The first aimed to test the proposed hypotheses using the data collected from the Japanese participants. Then, to confirm the generality of the findings, the second experiment was conducted with participants from three other Asian countries - China, Korea, and Thailand.

Experiment 1

Experimental Design and Stimuli

A questionnaire-based experiment was employed in Experiment 1 using 2 (service category by degree of customer contact: high vs. low) between subjects X 2 (customer-employee relationship: first visitor & regular customer) within subjects design. Salon and food service were chosen as the cases in this study. These two services are routinely used by the undergraduate female students who are the participants in the experiment. The salon service represents a high customer-contact service, while food service represents a low customer-contact service. Table 1 shows the four scenarios used in the experiment.

The participants are female undergraduate business school students from a well-known university in Tokyo, Japan. They were randomly assigned to two groups which answered the questionnaire about either the case of salons (scenario 1 and 2) or food service (scenario 2 and 3). There were 153 participants in the experiment, including 77 participants in the salon scenarios and 73 participants in the food service scenarios.

Procedure

The participants received a questionnaire that showed either the scenarios of salons (scenario 1 and 2) or food service (scenario 3 and 4). They were asked to imagine that they were in the two presented scenarios, and answered seven questions about the degree of field pressure they feel to purchase in each situation, based on a five-point likert scale (very much disagree - very much agree). Then, they rated their intention to purchase the product recommended by the employee in each scenario with a five-point likert scale (certainly not purchase -- certainly purchase). Finally, the participants rated their face consciousness as well as product involvement (hair care product in the salon scenarios and food in the food service scenarios) on a five-point likert scale (very much disagree - very much agree).

The seven field pressure questions were developed from the qualitative work of Kao (2011) and in-depth interviews with five undergraduate female students. The ten face consciousness questions were adapted from Oetzel and Ting-Toomey (2003), and the seven product involvement questions were derived from Mittal and Lee (1989). The questions were pretested as a pilot test in the other groups of undergraduate female students.

Results

Effects of Customer-Employee Relationship and Service Category:

The correlation coefficients between field pressure and willingness to buy were calculated in each of the four scenarios - 2 service categories (salon vs. food service) X 2 customer-employee relationships (first visitors vs. regular customers). The degree of field pressure was the average score of the seven questions that the participants answered.

TABLE 1

The Scenarios Used in the Experiments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scenario 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2 shows the comparison of the correlation coefficients of all four scenarios.

Considering the effects of customer-employee relationships, the result in figure 1 shows that the correlation coefficients of the regular customers in both types of service categories (\( r \) [salon] = 0.561, \( p \)-value < 0.01; \( r \) [food] = 0.605, \( p \)-value < 0.01) tend to be higher than those of the first visitors (\( r \) [salon] = 0.530, \( p \)-value < 0.01; \( r \) [food] = 0.205, \( p \)-value < 0.10). This means that the relationship between field pressure and willingness to buy is higher when there is a close relationship between the customer and employee (regular customers). Thus, the hypothesis 1 is supported.

Regarding the effects of the service categories, the result shows that for the first visitors, the correlation coefficients between field pressure and willingness to buy for the high-contact service (salon) (\( r = 0.530, p \)-value < 0.01) is higher than for low-contact service (food) (\( r = 0.205, p \)-value < 0.1). In the case of regular customers, the result was the same but does not show a big difference between the correlation coefficients of the two service types (\( r \) [salon] = 0.561, \( p \)-value < 0.01; \( r \) [food] = 0.605, \( p \)-value < 0.01). Thus, the hypothesis 2 is supported.

**Effect of Product Involvement.**

In order to test the moderate effect of product involvement, the participants' degree of product involvement was calculated by averaging the scores of seven product involvement questions. With the cut-off criteria at the middle score of the scale – 3-point scale, the participants in each type of service category were separated into two groups. For salon service, there were 53 participants who had high involvement on hair care products (mean = 3.906) and 45 participants who had low involvement (mean = 2.219). On the other hand, in the case of food products, there were 34 participants who had high involvement on food (mean = 4.062) and 40 participants who had low product involvement (mean = 2.672).

Then, the correlation coefficients between the field pressure and willingness to buy were calculated across 2 (service categories: salon vs. food service) X 2 (customer-employee relationship: first visitors vs. regular customers) X 2 (high involvement vs. low involvement) scenarios. The results are presented in Figure 3.
clearly different between the regular customers. The regular customers who have high product involvement tend to have lower correlation coefficients than do the low involvement customers. This means that the more customers are concerned about the products, the less the effects of field pressure on their willingness to buy.

On the other hand, in the case of low-contact service (food), the result shows that the correlation coefficients of new visitors with low product involvement (r = 0.327, p-value < 0.1) is higher than those with high involvement (r = 0.099, p-value > 0.10). However, the correlation coefficients were significant at nearly the same level between the regular customers who have high and low involvement (r[high involvement] = 0.630, p-value < 0.01; r[low involvement] = 0.568, p-value < 0.01).

The results suggest that product involvement has limited effect on the correlation between field pressure and willingness to buy. The customers who have higher product involvement are less affected by field pressure than those who have low product involvement. However, the effects are large only for the regular customers in the case of high-contact service, and for new visitors in the case of low-contact service. Thus, the hypothesis 3 is partially supported.

**Effect of Face Consciousness.**
In a similar fashion to the analysis of product involvement, the participants were classified into groups according to their degree of face consciousness. However, as suggested in the existing research, there are two dimensions of face consciousness - other-face consciousness and self-face consciousness. In the present study, there are six questions measuring other-face consciousness and four questions measuring self-face consciousness. The average scores of both dimensions of face consciousness were calculated.

**TABLE 2**
Classification of Participants According to Degree of Face Consciousness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-face consciousness</th>
<th>Other-face consciousness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Number of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salon</td>
<td>3.786</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food service</td>
<td>3.815</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 3**
Comparison Effects of Service Categories on Correlation Coefficients between Field Pressure and Willingness to Buy across Customer-Employee Relationship and Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First visitors</th>
<th>Regular customers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salon</td>
<td>Food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>0.411***</td>
<td>&gt; 0.225*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>0.530***</td>
<td>&gt; 0.205*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>0.313**</td>
<td>&gt; 0.256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>0.418***</td>
<td>&lt; 0.441***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Sample size of first visitors and regular customers are equal for each country.
Sample size of salon case: Japan = 98; China = 73; Korea = 55; Thailand = 71
Sample size of food supermarket case: Japan = 78; China = 70; Korea = 33; Thailand = 38
*** p-value <= 0.01; ** p-value <= 0.05; * p-value <=0.10
Based on the cut-off criteria at the middle score in the scale – 3-point score, the results in Table 2 suggest that most of the participants in both the salon and food service cases rated high in other-face consciousness. This means that other-face consciousness is not a criterion to classify the participants. Thus, only self-face consciousness was employed to classify the participants in this analysis.

The participants were divided into two groups according to their self-face consciousness. In the salon case, there are 62 high self-face conscious participants (mean = 3.786) and 36 low self-face conscious participants (mean = 2.507), while in the food service case, there are 42 high self-face conscious participants (mean = 3.851) and 36 low self-face conscious participants (mean = 2.590).

Figure 4 shows the correlation coefficients between field pressure and willingness to buy across the scenarios - 2 (service categories: salon vs. food service) X 2 (customer–employee relationship: first visitors vs. regular customers) X 2 (high self-face conscious vs. low self-face conscious). The result shows that self-face consciousness affects the correlation between field pressure and willingness to buy only in the case of high-contact services (salon). For the first visitors of the salon case, the result shows only a small difference between the correlation coefficients of those with high self-face consciousness (r = 0.528, p-value < 0.01) and those with low self-face consciousness (r = 0.519, p-value < 0.01).

However, the correlation coefficients are clearly different in the case of regular customers. The regular customers with high self-face consciousness (r = 0.646, p-value < 0.01) tend to be more concerned with field pressure when making a decision than those with low self-face conscious (r = 0.508, p-value < 0.01). In this case, the hypothesis 4 is supported.

However, regarding the low-encounter service (food), the result shows that the participants with high self-face consciousness have lower correlation coefficients than those with low self-face consciousness among both first visitors and regular customers. The differences in the coefficients were not large, though, which shows that the results do not support the hypothesis 4. Thus, the overall analysis suggests that the hypothesis 4 is only partially supported.

**Experiment 2**

**Experimental Design and Stimuli.**

According to the results in experiment 1, the H1 and H2 were supported and can be explained. However, the H3 and H4 were not fully supported and were unable to be explained by the experiment alone. Thus, in this experiment 2, the study focuses on H1 and H2 to confirm the generality of the results across countries. The same questionnaire-based experiments were replicated with participants in three other Asian countries – China, Korea, and Thailand. The participants were also female undergraduate students in well known universities of each country. They are 143 students from a university in China, 88 students from a university in Korea, and 109 students from a university in Thailand.

**Results.**

**Effects of Service category.**

Table 3 shows the analysis focusing on the difference between types of service categories. The comparison of correlation coefficients across four countries reveals that the correlations between field pressure and willingness to buy of the first visitors involved in salon service are higher than those involved in food service, in most of the countries except Thailand. On the other hand, for the regular customers, there are no large differences between the correlation coefficients in the countries other than Thailand.

**Customer-Employee Relationship.**

Regarding the effect of customer–employee relationships, the analysis results show more generality of the effects in each country. According to Table 4, other than the salon case in Thailand, the results clearly show that the regular customers are more concerned with field pressure than the first visitors in making the purchase decision on the recommended products.
Conclusions

This study introduced the concept of field pressure in the consumer decision-making process, and investigated the factors that influence the effect of field pressure on one’s willingness to buy. The results from the experiment I with Japanese participants suggest that close customer-employee relationships cause the customers to feel pressured in the purchasing situation, and thus result in the tendency of consumers to purchase the products recommended even when they, in fact, do not want to buy them.

The results also show that there is not a large difference between the effects of service types in the case of regular customers, but for the first visitors, the field pressure plays a more important role in customers’ decisions when faced with the high customer-contact services (salon) than when faced the low-contact services (food service).

There were limited effects of the factors related to customers’ individual characteristics like product involvement and face consciousness. The results suggest that the product involvement modifies the impact of field pressure only in the case of regular customers in high-contact services and of first visitors in the low-contact services. In these cases, the customers with high product involvement tend to be less influenced by the field pressure.

Self-face consciousness has effects only on the regular customers of high-contact services (salon). The customers with high self-face consciousness tend to be influenced more strongly by the field pressure. The reason may be that face consciousness is related to how much importance people place on interpersonal relationships, and thus it would affect customers’ decisions only in the case that they have high interpersonal relationships like regular customers in high customer-contact services.

Experiment 2 shows the generality among the consumers from three East Asian countries - China, Japan, and Korea. Thai customers seem to have different responses to field pressure from those of other Asian countries. This may be the result of differences in the cultures of these countries. China, Japan and Korea are countries with quite similar cultural roots, i.e. the Confucian way of thinking, which are different from those of Thai culture. Thus, further study about the effects of cultural differences on field pressure is recommended.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has tried to interpret the consumer behavior by which people sometimes buy unwanted products or services. Especially when the service is good, consumers often feel some pressure that makes it hard for them not to purchase. By introducing the concept of field pressure and conducting experiments, the study confirms the impact of field pressure and describes the modulating factors involved. However, there are several limitations. First, the effects of product involvement and face consciousness cannot be interpreted clearly in our model. The causes and solutions must be found in future research. Second, the results were different among the four Asian countries. Especially consumers in Thailand showed differences from those in the three East Asian countries. There also remain issues concerning the differences among cultural backgrounds. Cultural factors must be introduced in future research design, especially when broadening the scope to include Western consumers.

Furthermore, only the impacts of field pressure on willingness to buy were considered, but other factors in the decision-making process are not discussed. For instance, what will happen with consumers after buying the services or products? How does this purchasing affect consumer satisfaction, or loyalty? It is not always true that consumers are left unsatisfied by the experience of purchasing some

| TABLE 4 |
| Comparison Effects of Customer-Employee Relationship on Correlation Coefficients between Field Pressure and Willingness to Buy across Service Categories and Countries |

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>0.411***</td>
<td>&lt;</td>
<td>0.505**</td>
<td>&lt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>0.530***</td>
<td>&lt;</td>
<td>0.561**</td>
<td>&lt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>0.313**</td>
<td>&lt;</td>
<td>0.448**</td>
<td>&lt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>0.418***</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
<td>0.363***</td>
<td>&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Sample size of fist visitors and regular customers are equal for each country.

Sample size of salon case: Japan = 98; China = 73; Korea = 55; Thailand = 71
Sample size of food supermarket case: Japan = 78; China = 70; Korea = 33; Thailand = 38

*** p-value <= 0.01; ** p-value <= 0.05; * p-value <=0.10
products or services they do not really want. Especially in Asian societies, the social ties are extremely important, and people are often willing to go to great lengths to maintain or strengthen such relationships, even at the sacrifice of economic benefit, in order to gain more satisfaction from other affective aspects. The future research should develop a comprehensive framework to clarify the mechanisms regarding field pressure, and interpret the differences among different cultural backgrounds.

Appendix. Questions for Field Pressure

1. If I decline an offer, the salesperson will think of me as a bad customer.
2. If I decline an offer, I will feel as if I betray his/her trust.
3. If I decline an offer, I will disappoint the salesperson.
4. If I decline an offer, I may cause the salesperson trouble.
5. If I decline an offer, I will feel sorry for the salesperson.
6. I appreciate the salesperson's kindness.
7. I am worried that the relationship with the salesperson will be deteriorated.

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