

ABSTRACT

As a consequence of a human evolution history, each individual cannot live independently from other people, but he or she lives in a social environment. An individual would like to be accepted by other people and compares himself or herself to them in deciding to consume a product. Therefore, a consumer does not act independently from his or her social environment. The vulnerability towards social influence, family, and high reference group has the evolutionary roots and it is the characteristics of universal humans. Credit decision making is a socio-cultural phenomenon, where the culture itself can emerge because of an interaction process among humans or between a human and an environment. This phenomenon needs to be seriously paid attention, since a customer's decision in selecting a financial institution, especially in terms of credit, is important for the financial institution itself. Taking into account this phenomenon, it is necessary to conduct research which can be a reference for a financial institution to perceive the social influence, in this case, it tends to focus on the reference group. In this study, the researcher investigated the phenomenon of credit decision making influenced by reference group, family, and close relationship with bank officers at BCA bank in Semarang by using phenomenological method. The result of the study is one of the ways to discern the influence of reference group in influencing a customer's credit decision making in a particular financial institution.

Keywords: *social environment, social influence, reference group, socio-cultural phenomenon, family, decision making*