

INFLUENCE OF ATTITUDE ON CONSUMERS' BEHAVIORAL INTENTION TOWARD HALAL COSMETICS IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract

The cosmetics industry in Malaysia is growing steadily due to great demand from working women and intense urbanization. Even though government efforts began in 2006, however there is still more to do in ensuring the Muslim consumers aware of what they consume and applied to their skin. The study proposed four variables which may contribute to consumers' awareness of halal cosmetics. Data was collected from 250 respondents who are the users of cosmetic products. Partial least squares analysis reveals that all three antecedents significantly influence the consumers' attitude on halal concept and their behavioral intention to purchase halal cosmetics. Although all four variables indicated a significant relationship, this may not be transformed into actual buying behavior. Overall the success of the halal cosmetics industry requires coordination and participation of various parties and strategic marketing strategies in addition to other several contributing factors in making "halal" one of the attributes that consumers should consider in purchasing cosmetics products.

Keywords: *Halal Cosmetic, Attitude, Cosmetic in Malaysia*

PENGARUH SIKAP KE ATAS TINGKAH LAKU DAN KEINGINAN PENGUNA TERHADAP PRODUK KOSMETIK HALAL DI MALAYSIA

Abstrak

Industri kosmetik di Malaysia semakin berkembang dengan pesat disebabkan oleh pembandaran yang semakin maju dan permintaan yang tinggi dari wanita yang berkerjaya. Walaupun usaha kerajaan telah bermula semenjak tahun 2006, namun masih banyak yang perlu dilakukan untuk memastikan pengguna Islam mengetahui apa yang mereka guna pakai ke atas tubuh badan mereka. Kajian ini mencadangkan empat pembolehubah yang boleh menyumbang kepada kesedaran pengguna terhadap kosmetik halal. Data telah dikumpulkan dari 250 responden yang merupakan pengguna produk kosmetik. Analisis menggunakan Partial Least Squares (PLS) mendedahkan bahawa ketiga-tiga faktor dengan ketara mempengaruhi sikap pengguna terhadap konsep halal dan tindakan pengguna untuk membeli kosmetik halal. Walaupun keempat-empat pembolehubah menunjukkan hubungan yang signifikan, ini mungkin tidak akan berubah menjadi tabiat membeli yang sebenar. Secara keseluruhan kejayaan industri kosmetik halal memerlukan penyelarasan dan penyertaan pelbagai pihak dan strategi pemasaran yang strategik di samping beberapa faktor lain yang turut menyumbang dalam menjadikan "halal" sebagai salah satu daripada sebab yang pengguna harus pertimbangkan sebelum membeli produk kosmetik.

Kata Kunci: *Kosmetik Halal, Sikap, Kosmetik di Malaysia*

INTRODUCTION

In line with the Malaysian government's effort in making the country a halal hub the cosmetics industry in Malaysia is growing rapidly at an annual rate of 15%, in which it has pushed the cosmetics industry to move in the same direction. Halal cosmetics and toiletries have great potential to drive the halal economy. Even though government efforts began in 2006, however, there is still plenty to do in initiating the awareness among Muslim consumers of what they use in relation to halal and shariah compliance. The focus of this paper is to identify the factors that contribute to consumer awareness of halal cosmetics and toiletries in Malaysia. Malaysia is currently on track towards becoming a developed country by the year 2020. To achieve such a vision, Malaysia is not only depending on a particular sector but also focuses on several economic drivers that can contribute to the country's economic growth. In this context, one of the most important sectors is the halal product sector that is no longer merely an industry that conforms with religious requirements but is becoming an economic force in itself, both

domestically and globally. Hence, Malaysia's government is tasked in making the halal hub a reality in few years to come. However, there is still a lot to do in making Muslims consumers aware of what they eat, drink, and use in relation to halal and shariah compliance. When we discuss halal products, people will always associate the halal issue with food and drinks, as this is the most common issue that is being talked about. However, the demand in halal today is not just focusing on food products but also capturing other non-product categories, such as cosmetics. Halal is not only about a brand element, but also part of a belief system and moral code of conduct in our daily living (Aziz, A. et al, 2010).

THE HALAL MARKET

The word halal is derived from an Arabic word that means "permissible" or "lawful" under Islamic law (Syara'). Halal practices are referred to in Al-Quran and Sunnah. It explains that the use of halal is when the object or action is according to Islamic law. The opposite of halal is known as haram, which means "forbidden". It refers to anything that is prohibited under Islamic law (Syara's) (Roland, 1996) but this is not only restricted to food products. The Halal Industry Development Corporation in Malaysia also defined halal as the way of life which promotes a healthy and Shari'ah compliant life style by recommending how to eat, live, and conduct business and all other life activities (Abdullah, et al., 2008).

As the halal industry has grown all over the world at an estimated 20 percent a year, it is becoming the fastest growing consumer market in the world. The halal market does not only focus on Islamic countries but also non-muslim environments (Ibrahim A. K., 2010). The halal label on a product is not just a guarantee that the product is permitted for Muslims but has also become a global symbol for quality assurance and lifestyle choice (NASDAQ, 2013). A study on American Muslim consumers indicated that 86% of them believe American companies need to do more and make an effort to understand products for Muslims and do more to promote Muslim values (Hussin, N, 2010). Thus the issue of halal ingredients in cosmetics products today poses serious challenges. In the context of the current study, cosmetics and personal care products are part and parcel of our daily lives. These include baby products, bath products, oral care products, skin care products, personal hygiene products, fragrances and colored and non-colored cosmetics. Like many other emerging economies, Malaysia is not spared from the global marketing onslaught wielded by majority cosmetics manufacturers. By rights, all cosmetics products must comply with government safety regulations, but how many actually follow the requirements is yet to be confirmed. In reality, it is difficult to find ethical cosmetics products that are not just free of animal by-products, harmful chemicals, or alcohol, but are also halal. Halal in cosmetics products is not only about being permissible but also carries the meaning of safe, clean, and not harming the users. Therefore, the main motivation for the study is to fill the gap in knowledge about the awareness of, and consumer's attitudes toward, halal cosmetics in Malaysia. Most other traditional research reflects the global

concern about halal food amongst Muslim consumers, which is confined to the usage of meat products (Aziz and NyenVui, 2012; Omar and Jaafar, 2011; Rezai and Shamsudin, 2012; Talibet. Al, 2010).

MALAYSIAN COSMETICS INDUSTRY

The cosmetics industry in Malaysia has contributed billion of Ringgit Malaysia in annual sales and growing rapidly at 15% annually due to great demand for premium products (Matrade, 2012). Malaysia people annually spend an estimated amount of US \$500 million on cosmetics and their spending on these products grew at the rate of more than 40% during the last few years due to the increased number of women who have entered the labor force and the increase of urbanization. In addition the increase in consumers' satisfaction affect sales of the product, which leads to the estimated worth of Malaysia's cosmetics and toiletries industries is approximately RM3.6 billion with a health projected annual growth of 13% (Matrade, 2012). This is an upward development from previous years, and reflects an increasing trend among Malaysian consumers to purchase beauty products.

Cosmetic products in Malaysia comprise both local and foreign brands. Generally the brands in Malaysia can be categorized into several groups. Some production of cosmetics is from local brands that are owned and manufactured by local companies; there are also some local brands owned by local companies but manufactured abroad; a few other brands are foreign brands owned by international companies but the products are manufactured locally; and finally there are foreign brands which are owned by international companies and manufactured abroad. With plenty of brand choices, it has led to the total value of Malaysian local brands reaching US\$7 billion in the year 2010, with 15 to 20 percent in annual growth (Amalia, Giovanni, & Kankamon, 2011). At the same time, imports of cosmetic brands from overseas to the local market are also increasing, as these companies are seeking a good market opportunity, and this trend is expected to continue into the future. This relatively high market value is due to people now placing greater emphasis on beauty and personal appearance (Market-research, 2013). Without doubt, cosmetic and beauty products are inseparable from women. Undeniably the sales of beauty products are increasing in Malaysia with the majority concerned about various issues regarding cosmetics and their impact on users. Beauty product consumers are cautious when making their selections, especially new users. With many new brands of cosmetics in the market competing for attention from consumers' eyes and minds, consumers are even more concerned with their choices.

As mentioned before, the certification body that is in charge of permitting halal certification is JAKIM (Malaysian Department of Islamic Development). For the cosmetics and personal care products to require halal certification, the product must comply with the Malaysian standard MS 2200:2008 requirements. According to this standard cosmetic products must be safe and has no chemical side effects to

the users. In another way to explain, halal cosmetics products must not have any human parts or ingredients that contain any animal forbidden to Muslims or are not slaughtered according to shariah law, no contamination from 'najis' during the process and manufacturing and safe for usage (MOSTI, 2008). It also means that the products have certain qualities that have met the requirements of consumers in terms of its benefits and usage and effectiveness.

ATTITUDE ON HALAL COSMETICS

Consumers put trust in information received from the sources especially when they are from the authorities or religious leaders. With a vast array of beauty products available in the market, some of which mislead consumers, consumers may not be aware of what they have taken or applied on their skin. Patnood (2001) suggests that one of the best ways of making people conscious of what they are consuming is through education. Education would empower consumers with the wisdom to make the right choice about what they apply on their body. The major responsibility of the government or agency in charge of halal products lies in education. This is supported by a study done by Ahmad et al. (2013) that stated people's exposure to halal consumption is accomplished through the media.

Halal certification is one of the indicators of purchasing decisions among Muslim consumers. In reality, consumers are forced into selecting from a broad selection of consumer products when some of them are somewhat doubtful. In case of Muslim consumers in Malaysia, looking for authentic halal certification such as the one issued by JAKIM is considered a must to ensure the product's use is permissible. The introduction of the halal logo by JAKIM has generated more awareness among Muslims as the purchase of manufactured products or engaging in services that follow Islamic guidelines and principles. Malaysia's determination to set standards for halal products according to Islamic principles is anticipated as a new effort by JAKIM to bring the credibility of the halal logo to cosmetics as well. However, how does this issue capture consumers' awareness, especially female Muslim users in Malaysia? According to Baker (2010), although branding to Muslims could use branding methods adapted from western experts, it has to take into consideration the spiritual needs of the targeted Muslim consumers. Previous studies conducted in some Muslim countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan, share similar findings in consumer behavior, especially when it comes to personal values and beliefs that would affect modern consumption (Hussain, N., 2010).

Despite having JAKIM to monitor and to ensure the product available in the market is safe and permissible for usage, there are still many alarming news regarding unsafe cosmetics product. Reason being, the cosmetic company itself did not go through the process of getting JAKIM approval before making the products available in the market. An incident in 2012, when most Malaysian were shocked with what appeared to be well-known brand of skin solutions product of local brands is actually a killing time-bomb (The Star, 2012). This skin solution

product contained a harmful amount of toxic chemical, in which if it is applied on skin for quite sometimes will result in skin cancer problem. In addition the Health Ministry has warned the public's against the use of six cosmetics products including one from a French manufacturer, found to contain proscribed poisons and some other products were afraid to contain tretinoin (Ministry of Health, 2012). These prolong use of topical steroid may result in systemic side effect such as suppression of the adrenal glands, metabolic disturbances and immune response impairment (The Star, 2012). Moreover, issues regarding harmful cosmetic products catch the attention of people when the users themselves make an official report due to their concern on its side effect. Thus, the hypotheses formulated are as follows:

H1: Attitude has a positive effect on consumer's behavioral intention of purchasing halal cosmetic products

H2: Availability of Halal label has a positive effect on consumer attitude on halal cosmetic

H3: Consumers' religious belief has a positive effect on consumer attitude on halal cosmetic

H4: Consumer's Exposure to halal concept has a positive effect on consumer attitude on halal cosmetic

METHODOLOGY

For this study, 250 questionnaires were distributed and only 216 can be used for further analysis. The participants were from Kuala Lumpur, mostly aged 18 and above, and came from various institutions and organizations. Among the participants, some were self-employed and some also were retirees who seemed to have decent income and purchasing power. In order to obtain quick and efficient data, the convenience sampling method was chosen. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire. Although the respondents have a common understanding on the meaning of halal, a definition of halal was provided at the beginning of the questionnaire. The respondents were from the members of population who were conveniently available to the researchers. This study also took into consideration the participants or consumers from various age groups, education level, occupations and income level which are described under the demographic background of the participants in Table 1. The questionnaire was designed based on prior related literature (Tan, Kwan, and Eze, 2009; Lee, 2009; Kwan and Eze, 2012). Demographic profile was designed and placed under section A while section B asked the responses on the key constructs for the conceptual framework. The constructs were measured using multiple elements as follows: exposure to halal concept (7 questions), attitude towards halal (6 questions), availability of halal label (7 questions), religious belief (6 questions), attitude regarding halal concept (7 questions), and consumers' behavioral intention on purchasing halal cosmetic (11 questions). We used a 5-point Likert scale to measure the variables

where 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree. The Likert scale is used to measure how strongly subjects agree and disagree with statements.

Respondent's Profile

Table 1 presenting the demographics of the respondents. The female respondents far outnumbered their male counterparts where there were 176 (81.5%) female respondents and 40 (18.5%) male respondents. This finding is expected since women are the major customers of cosmetic products. In terms of age, the majority of the respondents were under 44 years old where 81 (37.5%) of them were in the age bracket of 35 to 44 years old, 73 (33.8%) were in the age bracket of 25 to 34 years old, 47 (21.8%) were in the age bracket of 18 to 24 years old, and the remaining 15 (6.9%) were in the age bracket of 45 to 54 years old. With regard to marital status, the majority of the respondents were married with 111 (51.4%) respondents, followed by single with 97 (44.9%) respondents and the remaining 8 (3.7%) respondents were divorced. In terms of race, Malays dominated the study with 202 (93.5%) respondents, followed by Chinese with 8 (3.7%) respondents, Indian with 5 (2.3%) respondents and others with 1 (0.5%) respondent. When asked on their highest education levels, 73 (33.8%) respondents specified that they have high school qualification, 67 (31.0%) have college diploma qualification, 60 (27.8%) have bachelor degree qualification and 15 (6.9%) respondents specified graduate qualification. With regards to average monthly income, the majority of the respondents have incomes of less than RM5000 where 97 (44.9%) respondents indicated their incomes were less than RM2500 and 80 (37.0%) indicated that their incomes were between RM2500 to RM5000. The other respondents stated their income levels as RM5001 to RM10000 with 28 (13.0%) respondents, RM10001 to RM15000 with 5 (2.3%) respondents, RM15001 to RM20000 with 2 (0.9%) respondents and more than RM20000 with 2 (0.9%) respondents.

Table 1: The Findings on The General Background of The Study Are Summarized in The Following Table.

Demographic Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	40	18.5
Female	176	81.5
Age		
18 – 24	47	21.8
25 – 34	73	33.8
35 – 44	81	37.5
45 – 54	15	6.9
Marital Status		
Single	97	44.9
Married	111	51.4
Divorced	8	3.7
Race		
Malay	202	93.5
Chinese	8	3.7
Indian	5	2.3
Others	1	0.5
Highest Education Level		
Less than high school	1	0.5
High School	73	33.8
College Diploma	67	31.0
Bachelor Degree	60	27.8
Graduate	15	6.9
Average Monthly Income (RM)		
Less than 2500	97	44.9
2500 – 5000	80	37.0
5001 – 10000	28	13.0
10001 – 15000	5	2.3
15001 – 20000	2	0.9
More than 20000	2	0.9

Results

Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis technique using SmartPLS 3.0 software was used to analyse the research model (Ringle et al. 2015). Based on the suggested two-stages analytical procedures by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), the researcher tested the measurement model reliability of the measures) followed by an examination of the structural model (Hair et al, 2014; Ramayah et al. 2013) Bookstrapping method was used to test the significant path coefficients and the loadings.

Measurement Model Evaluation

Two types of validity were engaged in order to evaluate the measurement model. The first known as the convergent validity followed by discriminant validity. In the case of convergent validity, it is a measurement model that is examining the loadings, average variance extracted (AVE) and also the composite reliability (Gholami et al. 2013). As suggested by Hair et al. (2014), the loadings were all higher than 0.7, the composite reliabilities were all higher than 0.7 and the AVE were also higher than 0.5.

Table 2: Convergent Validity of Measurement Model

CONSTRUCT	ITEMS	LOADINGS	AVE	CR
Attitude	attitude10	0.783		
	attitude11	0.622	0.502	0.888
	attitude2	0.642		
	attitude3	0.684		
	attitude4	0.774		
	attitude5	0.726		
	attitude6	0.599		
Religious Belief	attitude9	0.804		
	belief1	0.964		
	belief2	0.967	0.905	0.983
	belief3	0.973		
	belief4	0.963		
	belief5	0.967		
Exposure to halal	belief6	0.869		
	exposure1	0.879		
	exposure2	0.873	0.567	0.777
	exposure3	0.892		
	exposure4	0.833		
	exposure5	-0.451		
	exposure6	-0.491		
Halal label	<i>exposure7</i>	<i>0.71</i>		
	label2	0.758		
	label3	0.765	0.564	0.881
	label4	0.739		
	label5	0.874		
	label6	0.87		
	label7	0.399		
Behavioral Intention	purchase1	0.868		
	purchase2	0.826	0.58	0.872
	purchase3	0.803		
	purchase4	0.625		
	purchase5	0.658		

Note: Attitude1, Attitude7, Attitude8, label1, label8, purchase6 and purchase7 were deleted due to low loadings

The discriminant validity of the measures was tested according to Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion of comparing the correlations between constructs and the square root of the AVE for the construct (Refer to Table 3). Based on Table 3, the square root of the AVEs as characterized by the bolded values on the diagonals were greater than the corresponding row and column values (correlation between constructs) representing the measures were discriminant.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity of Measurement Model

	Attitude	Awareness	Exposure to halal	Halal Label	Religious belief
Attitude	0.708				
Behavioral Intention	0.63	0.762			
Exposure to halal	0.555	0.652	0.753		
Halal Label	0.538	0.63	0.642	0.751	
Religious belief	0.547	0.664	0.76	0.622	0.951

Note: Values on the diagonal (bolded) represent the square a root of AVE while the off-diagonals represent the correlation

Structural Model Evaluation

The structural model involved by calculating R^2 , beta and the corresponding t-value (Hair et al. 2014), and a bootstrapping procedures with 5000 resamples was applied. The researchers also reported on the predictive relevance (Q^2) and effect sizes (f^2) (Hair et al. 2014). First thing is to look into the antecedents of attitude, in which the Exposure to halal ($B=0.225$, $p<0.01$), Halal label ($B=0.261$, $p<0.01$) and Religious belief ($B=0.213$, $p<0.01$) were positively related to Attitude, explaining 38.2% of the variance in Attitude.

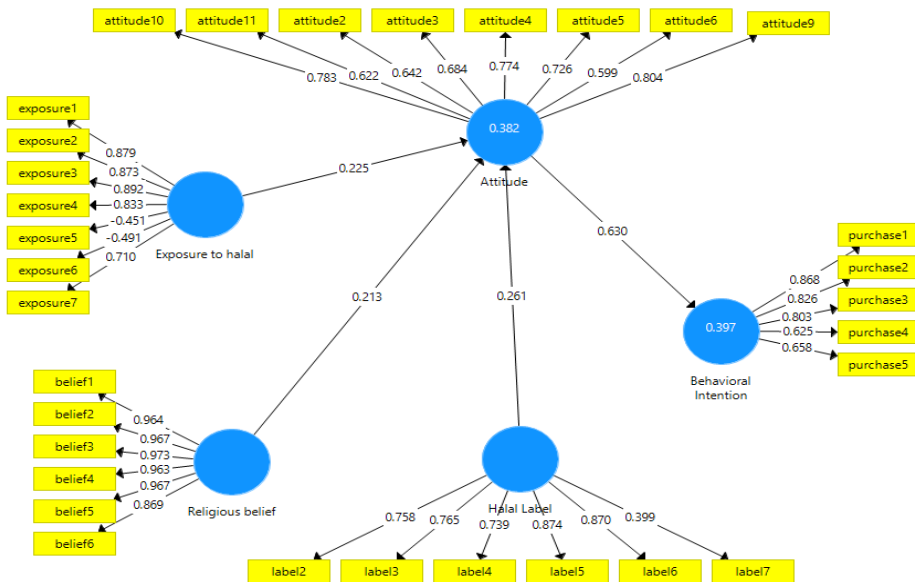
Additionally, the predictor of consumers' Behavioral Intention which is Attitude ($B=0.630$, $p<0.01$) was also positively related to the behavioral intention of purchasing halal cosmetics explaining 39.7 of the variance in purchasing halal cosmetic (refer to Diagram 1). Halal label was the strongest predictor of attitude, followed by exposure to halal concept and surprisingly religious belief is the lowest predictor of attitude, and supporting the hypotheses of H2, H3, and H4 of this study. The result of the structural model analysis (hypothesis testing) is summarized in Table 4. The R^2 value of 0.397 was higher than the 0.35 (substantial) value suggested by cohen (1988).

The study also measured effect sizes (f^2) as recommended by Sullivan and Feinn (2012). Hair et al (2014) proposed that the change in the R^2 value should also be studied. The method suggested is to examine the R^2 change when a specified exogenous constructs is absent from the model. As suggested by Cohen (1988), the standard to measure the magnitude of the effect size is 0.02 (small), 0.15 (medium), and 0.35 (Large). Looking at the f^2 value in Table 4, it can be perceived that the relationship of all predictors was ranged from small to large. In addition we also calculated the predictive relevance of the model by using the blindfolding procedure. According to Chin (1998) and Henseler et al (2009) blindfolding is a sample reuse technique that remove every d th data point in the endogenous construct's indicators and estimates the parameters with the remaining data points. Furthermore, Hair et al (2014) stated that if the value of Q^2 is larger than 0 the model has predictive relevance for a certain endogenous construct and otherwise if the value is less than 0. From Table 4 we can see that all the Q^2 values are more than 0 (0.172 and 0.206) suggesting that the model has sufficient predictive relevance.

Table 4: Result of the Structural Model Analysis (Hypotheses Testing)

Hypot hesis	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t- valu e	Decis ion	R2	F2	Q2
H1	Attitude >Behavioral Intention	- 0.63	0.041	15.2	supp ort	0.3	0.6	0.1
H2	Exposure to halal Attitude ->	0.225	0.098	2.30	supp ort		0.0	
H3	Halal Label Attitude ->	0.261	0.094	2.76	supp ort	0.3	0.0	0.2
H4	Religious belief Attitude ->	0.213	0.101	2.10	supp ort		0.0	
				9	ort		29	

Diagram 1



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results in previous discussion, the action taken by cosmetic companies to provide a quality and eco-friendly beauty products is most welcoming. Consumers views on companies participation in ensuring that consumers have enough knowledge on halal cosmetics, issues on safe and unharmed should be the main discussion before buying decision are made (Smith, 2000; Dawkins and Lewis, 2003; Auger, Devinney, and Louviere, 2004). It is also crucial for the respective authority like JAKIM in Malaysia to assist in providing more exposure on the importance of halal certification for cosmetics products, because halal does not only means permitted but also carry the meaning of clean and safe to use. The successfulness of halal certified product also relies on how well the consumer understands the principles of halal and its benefits to the consumers. Educating the consumer is essential to highlight the significance of consuming halal product not only for the Muslim but to the non-Muslim as well. Based on this current study although consumers understand there are some exposure of halal cosmetics done by the government, and they also aware of some halal cosmetics availability in the market but that might not be enough to influence further their attitude of buying halal cosmetics product. The results of the study also mentioned that consumers need to be updated on the latest information of halal product especially cosmetics brands in the market. The information dispersed not only through appropriate and formal channels but also through interactions with religious community as evident in Mukhtar and Butt (2012). Overall the successfulness of Halal cosmetics industry requires coordination and participation of various parties and strategic marketing strategies in addition to other various contributing factors in putting Halal as one of the attributes that consumer consider in purchasing cosmetics products.

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