

The Influence of Marketing Stimuli on Consumer Purchase Decision of Malaysia's Cosmetic Industry

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Abstract— Cosmetics play essential roles and have an impact on consumers' everyday lives on building one self-esteem and confidence. Young consumers have become beauty conscious and engaging in the beauty lifestyle. Demand for cosmetics is dynamic in Malaysia, however, less attention dedicated to the cosmetic industry in the local setting in the literature. One main issue faced by marketers is their changing behaviour, tastes, and preferences. Marketers have the challenges in trying to cope with their behavioural changes and understanding their decision-making factors and processes correctly and accurately. Hence, the paper aims to examine the influence of product, price, promotion, and place on consumer purchase decision of makeups. The researchers applied store intercept model (convenience sampling) by using self-administered survey. Multiple regression was employed. The researchers conducted a pilot study of 102 respondents aged from 18 to 25 years old who shopped at shopping malls in Klang Valley, Malaysia. The empirical results confirm that promotion is the only construct that has a significant relationship with consumer purchase decision.

Keywords— Marketing stimuli, consumer purchase decision, cosmetic industry, Malaysia

1. Introduction

In this competitive business world, it is vital for every organisation to put considerable effort on researching consumer buying behaviour to find out detailed information on what consumers purchase, where, when and why they purchase, how and how much they purchase [1]. The purchase decision in the context of the study is "series of choices made by a consumer before making a purchase that begins once the consumer has established a willingness to buy" [2]. Despite the abundant

research on consumer behaviour field in the western market, studies on makeups purchasing in the Asian context are just starting to grow with a minimal stake. India, Malaysia, and Thailand are examples of Asian countries that have a lot of great business potential, especially in the cosmetic segment [3]–[7]. Studies on purchase decision of makeup products are insufficient, hence, the researchers is focusing on makeups because this product line has more significant values and dynamic in the long term [8]. The issue arises when changing behaviour and lifestyle of the young Malaysian consumers make it difficult for the marketers to identify, follow and understand the patterns of consumption [9], [10]. The fact that marketing activities require more time to implement is a challenge for marketers in the industry.

About makeups, it is part of cosmetic products which have wider ranges such as skincare, haircare, fragrances and hygiene products. Among all of these products, skincare is the highest used product, and hygiene products are the least. However, the makeup category is driving the cosmetics market growth worldwide [8]. The makeups market is growing faster than the overall cosmetics market. Statistically, Asia Pacific is the most prominent cosmetic market in the world at 36.9% and the least Africa and the Middle East at 2.9% of the total market. The consumption is stable even in an economic uncertainty [11]. Hence, the firms have to take this massive opportunity by producing and selling more of these products and services.

Since consumer purchase decision is an essential study in consumer behaviour, Stimulus-Response

Model (S-R model) is an appropriate underpinning model by [1] which applied in the context of the study. In fact, not much study underpinned this model. The study aims to examine the effect of product, price, promotion and place on consumer purchase decision of makeups. The paper starts from the literature review and provides the hypotheses of the study; further the conceptual model and applied methodology were presented; following discussion of results and conclusions.

2. Literature review

The current study uses the S-R model to model essential factors that influence the consumer purchase decision. This model is also known as Black's Box Model. This model is the most appropriate model for explaining the actual buying action. Hence, the model is selected for study the factors influencing consumer purchase decision. The literature review will focus on the underpinning model and will discuss the proposed hypotheses of the study.

2.1 Linkage between product attributes and consumer purchase decision

Product in this context of study defined as "texture of product, promised effects, previous usage experience and suitability to skin type" [12]. Product attributes play a significant role in determining the success or failure of product and marketing strategies [13]–[20]. Without having attractive features or package, marketers will have issues in selling products. Nowadays, consumers demanded new features for product and the tangible quality of the sold product lead to the repeated purchase of a single brand or switch to several brands [21]. Consumers always refer product attributes with product quality. It can be in term of product features, functions and packaging. For cosmetics and makeups, the attributes are like breathable, quick-dry, lightweight, waterproof and durability are an essential consideration in buying cosmetics [22]. Scholars confirmed that product attributes have a significant influence on consumer purchase decision [15], [19], [23]. Hence, the researchers hypothesised that:

H1: Product attributes has a significant influence on consumer purchase decision.

2.2 Linkage between price and consumer purchase decision

Price is "the amount of money to pay for a product or service, or the value of the exchange help customers receive a product or service for a certain amount" [2]. Previous studies discovered that price considered as one of the most concerned issue whenever making a buying decision [15], [24]–[32]. Most scholars suggested that consumers' evaluation of the value of a good or service based on their perceptions that what they receive and what they expected of having it [33]. Price seems to be the priority for customers to judge in the market offering [24], [34]. A research finding confirmed that price had the highest relative importance compared to brand, country of origins and ethical attributes among young consumers [15]. Consumers' positive attitudes towards prices associated with value with quantity, price bargaining and standard pricing reportedly lead to goods [35]. Price has a significant influence on consumer purchase decision [15],[24]–[32]. Therefore, the researchers posits:

H2: Price has a significant influence on consumer purchase decision.

2.3 Linkage between promotion and consumer purchase decision

Promotion defined as "a marketing activity that firms use to attract consumers into stores and generate sales by publicising current offerings to targeted consumers" [36]. Many customers do not have an intention to buy prior seeing promotional activities. However, after seeing the fascinating promotion by a brand, consumers become interested and later buy [37]. Promotional tools not only can stimulate interest to buy a product brand but can increase sales by sales switched from other stores or brand [37], [38]. Later, increased in consumption from existing consumers [39]. Besides, some customers gain psychological satisfaction after buying from the purchase process [37]. A research finding suggested that consumers shopped health and beauty products not just because of the product quality but also attractive promotions such as "3 for 2s", loyalty points and GST-free promotion [23]. It assumed that promotion has a significant factor in consumer purchase decision [29], [31], [37]–[46]. Hence, the researchers proposed that:

H3: Promotion has a significant influence on consumer purchase decision.

2.4 Linkage between place and consumer purchase decision

Place or location is another area that sparks the interest of scholars on consumer purchase decision. When choosing a location for business, marketers need to consider several factors such as demography of customers, competitors, local socio-economic conditions, law, government policy, facilities and other infrastructure [47]. Place consists of two parts: 1) channel of distribution, which refers to “the path through which goods or services transportable from the vendor to the consumer or cost for those products to transportable from the consumer to the vendor” and 2) market logistics. It means “activities involved in moving goods from the vendor to the consumer”. The concern of the process is transportation, storage, warehousing and inventory management. Thus, the agents of the process are a producer, intermediaries and consumers. Location often associates with convenience, accessibility and availability of a premise. These can reach consumers via numerous channels such as beauty specialist retailers like Watson, The Body Shop, supermarket, wholesaler and pharmacy. It also includes hours of operation, product availability and process simplicity [19]. In the previous literature, studies on consumer buying behaviour and decision making recorded that one of the primary variables that were significant were location [23]. Customers shopped at a store not only because of product quality, promotion, and loyalty scheme but also because of convenience location [23].

For beauty and health, Jimisiah et al. (2016) confirmed that one of the critical success factors of retail was location. In other words, location is the “must have” factor that marketers need to consider in offering beauty and health products. It can be deduced that, place has a significant factor on consumer purchase decision [15], [19], [23], [29], [35], [45], [48]–[50]. Based on the above arguments and supports, there are indications suggested the relationship between place and consumer purchase decision:

H4: Place has a significant influence on consumer purchase decision.

3. Conceptual framework

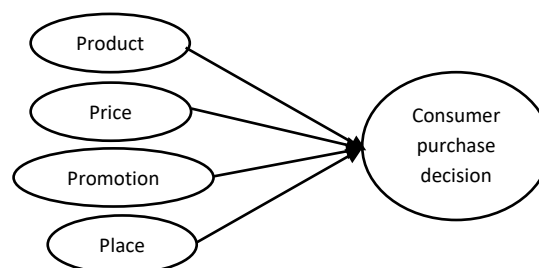


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

4. Research methodology

The research applied a quantitative approach by using non-probability sampling specifically store intercept technique (exit interviews) from customers, while them leaving the stores. Respondents randomly selected, and the participations were voluntary. Store intercept technique is much easier to handle the interview’s process and situation with the respondents. The survey was self-administered survey. For the pilot study, a total of 102 collected through distributing the seven-point Likert scale questionnaire. The questionnaire divided into three parts: 1) Background of the research, 2) A set of questions about the influence of product, price, promotion and place on consumer purchase decision, and 3) Demographic information. Reliability test conducted to measure the consistency of questions. The Cronbach’s alpha test result showed that all the items were above 0.07.

The proposed model in this study consisted of four exogenous variables (4Ps) and one endogenous variable (consumer purchase decision). Based on theoretical considerations which are 1) The nature of the construct 2) The direction of causality and 3) The characteristics of the items used to represent the construct, it appears that marketing stimuli best conceptualised and measured using a formative model [51], [52]. Additionally, the consumer purchase decision considered as a reflective measurement model. However, this study did not test and prove the formative and reflective measurement models empirically.

5. Results and Findings

To establish the validity of any instrument, research must conduct a content validity to ensure that the

respondents understand the purpose of the researcher without difficulty. The researcher had conducted three experts for validating the questionnaires as recommended by Hawkins et al. (2014) and Rubio et al. (2003). The respondents' descriptive statistic results summarised in Table 5.1. The analysis showed that 79.4 percent of the respondents were female and 20.6 percent were male. Majority of the respondents were single (91.2%) and a student (65.7%). Also, the majority of the respondents spent once a month (46.1%) and had no specific allocation of budget for makeups (37.3%).

Table 1. Respondents' general descriptive statistics

Gender	Frequency	%	Cumulative percentage
Male	21	20.6	20.6
Female	81	79.4	100.0
Total	102	100.0	100.0
Status	Frequency	%	Cumulative percentage
Single	93	91.2	91.2
Married	9	8.8	100.0
Total	102	100.0	
Position	Frequency	%	Cumulative percentage
Student/ internship	67	65.7	65.7
Entrepreneur	2	1.9	67.6
Executive	7	6.9	74.5
Currently seeking for job	9	8.8	83.3
Others	17	16.7	100.0
Total	102	100.0	
Frequency of buying makeups in a month	Frequency	%	Cumulative percentage
Once a month	47	46.1	46.1
Two to four times a month	26	25.5	71.6
More than four times a month	3	2.9	74.5
Uncertain	26	25.5	100.0
Total	102	100.0	

Your budget allocation on makeup in a month	Frequency	%	Cumulative percentage
No specific budget	38	37.3	37.3
Less than RM100	34	33.3	70.6
RM101-200	23	22.5	93.1
RM201-300	4	3.9	97.1
More than RM301	3	2.9	100.0
Total	102	100.0	

5.1 Measurement models

The analysis procedure would begin with an assessment of validity and reliability of the formative (4Ps) and reflective constructs (consumer purchase decision). For testing reflective construct, validity and reliability, the assessment needed are internal consistency, individual indicator reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). The purpose of conducting internal consistency is to check data quality.

It also to check whether indicators of each construct measure what they are supposedly measured. The researcher assessed the internal consistency by running composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. The acceptable value for reliability is above the value of 0.70 and 0.60 for Cronbach's alpha. In this research, the range of composite reliabilities was .787 to .896, and the result of Cronbach's alpha extracted was between to .582 to .888. Both composite reliabilities and Cronbach's alpha value exceeded the acceptable values except for the value of Cronbach's alpha of Price (.582).

To establish convergent validity, the researchers consider the loading factors of the indicators and the average variance extracted (AVE). The AVE values of constructs were more than .50 which implying a sufficient convergent validity except for Product (.481). In other words, these constructs are valid.

However, validity assessment for formative measurement is the most controversial issue [55] because there are limitations of the applicability of statistical procedures [56].

In formative measurement models, indicator validity refers to “the importance of each indicator of the related formative construct” [57], [58]. It should critically examine whether a particular indicator should enter into the formative index [59]. However, Straub et al. (2007) suggested that the item weights for indicators that insignificant indicators eliminated [60], or remain insignificant indicators to preserve content validity [61]. Elimination of formative indicators carries the risk of changing the theoretical perspective of the constructs [62] and the empirical and conceptual meaning [58]. Therefore, any criteria of cut-off value for formative constructs are approached with caution [60]. Table shows the results of the indicator validity test.

Table 2. Measurement model

Variables	Name of item	Loading	AVE	CR	Alpha
Consumer purchase decision	CPD1	.719	.553	.787	.842
	CPD2	.748			
	CPD3	.764			
Product	PDCT1	.590	.481	.865	.805
	PDCT2	.708			
	PDCT3	.743			
	PDCT4	.649			
	PDCT5	.708			
	PDCT6	.830			
	PDCT7	.597			
Price	PR1	.818	.766	.867	.582
	PR2	.929			
Promotion	PRO1	.657	.538	.852	.745
	PRO2	.680			
	PRO3	.784			
	PRO4	.841			
	PRO5	.690			
Place	PL1	.837	.742	.896	.888
	PL2	.887			
	PL3	.860			

5.2 Assessing the structural model collinearity

The purpose of conducting collinearity analysis is to see whether if there is a redundancy in measuring indicators as single item in two or more constructs. An applied measure of collinearity in this study is the variance inflation factor (VIF). VIF is defined as the reciprocal of the tolerance. Heart et al. (2009) concluded that construct reliability of formative should be performed by

multicollinearity, test of indicator validity (path coefficients significance), and optionally, if appropriate, test-retest [63]. The results of the collinearity assessment shows that the VIF values of all indicators are less than 1.600 indicating that multicollinearity did not exist among the constructs and not a concerned in this study.

Table 3. Collinearity of constructs

Construct	S.D	VIF
Product	.7879	1.600
Price	1.042	1.343
Promotion	1.121	1.220
Place	1.250	1.500
Consumer purchase decision	1.105	-

5.3 Hypotheses testing

The hypotheses conveyed in this study proved by assessing the statistical importance of the path coefficients with t-statistics, which were computed using the bootstrapping method for 1000 samples. After conducting bootstrapping, hypotheses testing were performed to reject or accept the relationships. Based on the result, only one hypothesis not rejected, while the rest of them (3 hypotheses) rejected. Hypotheses testing results presented in Table 4:

Table 4. Hypotheses testing result

Hypotheses	Coefficient	T Statistics	p-Value	Result
H1: Product attributes has a significant influence on consumer purchase decision.	.215	1.475	.143	Rejected
H2: Price has a significant influence on consumer purchase decision.	.173	1.708	.091	Rejected

H3:Promotion has a significant influence on consumer purchase decision.	.182	3.023	.003	Not rejected
H4: Place has a significant influence on consumer purchase decision.	.271	2.047	.043	Rejected

6. Discussion and conclusions

The objective of this research is to examine the influence of product, price, promotion and place on consumer purchase decision. The statistical result confirms that promotion had a significant influence on consumer purchase decision of makeups ($t=3.023$, $p=.003$). This result supported by few scholars [29], [31], [37]–[46]. However, the rest of the constructs were not significant (product, $t=1.475$, $p=.143$, price $t=1.708$, $p=.091$ and place $t=2.047$, $p=.043$). For hypotheses testing, the result showed that only promotion was not rejected (H3). The rest of other hypotheses rejected (H1, H2, H4) because there were too many competitive makeup brands in the market, both local and international brands. The young consumers need more than just unique product design, quality and affordable price to buy makeup.

The results of the study offer valuable implications for marketers in drawing the young consumer to buy makeups. The marketers need to be active in doing the promotional campaign to fascinate the young consumer to buy makeups such as sale promotion, TV and print advertising like magazines, point-of-purchase, and loyalty programs. Although this research conducted carefully, still there were limitations. This study did not race the demographic profile of respondents in the survey. By having race in the survey, the researchers would be able to see the pattern of makeups spending by races. Moreover, the result of the research may only be applicable in Malaysia's cosmetic industry. The result in other countries and settings may not be the same as this study. Future research should similarly examine the Black Box's model to compare the research findings in different data set and sectors. This study can extend by add in other constructs such as buyer's characteristics (social, personal, cultural and psychological factor) as mediators. Additionally, there are potential

studies to be discovered further such as the effect of social media influencer on consumer purchase decision, especially in cosmetic products.

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