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THE IMPACT OF ATTITUDE, SUBJECTIVE NORM AND SAFETY ON CONSUMERS' PURCHASE INTENTION IN JOHOR, MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

The cabinet of Malaysia has acknowledged the Halal master plan that addressed the issue of halal development such as certification, integrity, implementation, responsibilities and timeframes around May 2008. Halal products and services could be a new sector that might help Malaysia's economic growth. Apparently, products that are permissible to be used by Muslims, or categorized it with Halal's products are dependent on manufacturers who must follow several requirements that are restricted mostly from the ingredients until the packaging of the products. Thus, the objective of this paper is to identify the predictors that influence the intention to purchase halal cosmetic products among consumers. In this research, data was analysed using Partial Least Squares Model Analysis (PLS). Findings indicated that these three predictors have influenced the intention to purchase halal cosmetic products among consumers in Johor, Malaysia.

KEYWORDS

Halal, Cosmetic Products, Attitude, Subjective Norm, Safety.

1. INTRODUCTION

The halal industry in Malaysia is consistently observed by the Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC) which promotes not only towards a healthy lifestyle but also through clothing and other activities. The Malaysian government has established HDC on 18 September 2006. Regardless of the growing demand of halal cosmetics among Muslim and non-Muslim population, there is a concern on halal products including cosmetics. As has been reported in Halal Media.net, on 7th December 2010, the consumer's awareness on Halal products is still very low in Malaysia. As there is a rising number of awareness among Muslim population, there is also a need for them to consume the products that are based on Islamic requirements. As a result, it will increase the demand on halal products among Muslim population all over the world.

Hence, perseverance is required for the researchers to study on the halal cosmetic products among consumers. Therefore, the main objective of this paper is to identify the predictors that influence the intention to purchase halal cosmetic products among consumers. Based on this premise, this study will present the Theory of Reasoned Action (attitude and subjective norm) as the underpinning theory with the help of extended variables namely safety.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory of Reasoned Action is applied from the social psychology setting and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) was introduced [1]. According to a study, individual intention is determined by two basic determinants, which are attitude and subjective norm [2]. Fishbein and Ajzen revealed that the person's relative strength of intention to perform a behavior can be measured by behavioral intention [1].

Furthermore, in a study, stated that attitude has a significant and positive effect on halal food purchasing intention [3]. Their study found out that attitude is an important factor in influencing the purchase of halal food products because high positive attitudes appeared to have greater intentions to purchase halal food products. Subjective norm refers to the person's perception of the social pressure for or against performing the behavior in question. According to a study, Muslim consumers may be

motivated to choose Halal cosmetic products because cosmetic products are Halal in Shaariah [4]. Their finding has pointed out that subjective norm must be recognized as the significant indicator of Muslim customers to choose halal cosmetic products.

Kim and Chung suggest that retailers need to develop effective marketing strategies by emphasizing ecological beauty or product safety to satisfy the values of potential consumers [5]. This is to produce a sense of brotherhood in dealing with business partners and consumers. Safety is also included in cosmetic products that are halal to purchase and use by the consumers. If the product is officially proven as harmful to the consumers, it cannot be qualified as halal. This is because halal is concern with the safety of the things when the consumers consume it. To be known and acknowledged as a halal cosmetic, the cosmetic products must also be safe from any things that may harm their users [6]. In addition, intention is referred to an individual position on a subjective probability dimension that connects himself with various actions [7]. As mentioned by other scholars, they explained that intentions work as a driver or motivation for individual to engage with a specific behaviour.

Given these arguments, this study postulates that:

H₁: Attitude has a significant influence on the intention to purchase halal cosmetic products among consumers.

H₂: Subjective norm has a significant influence on the intention to purchase halal cosmetic products among consumers.

H₃: Safety has a significant influence on the intention to purchase halal cosmetic products among consumers.

3. METHODOLOGY

Referring to Sekaran & Bougie, population refers to the entire group of people, event, or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate [8]. In this research, the population of this study is focusing on the consumers who are in Johor Darul Takzim. Furthermore, data was analyzed with Partial Least Squares Model Analysis (PLS). Some researchers suggest that PLS is useful to test theoretical conceptualization and the empirical validation [3,9]. Thus, the reason to use PLS in this study is to predict consumers' intentions to purchase halal cosmetic products.

The data were analysed using the following steps; first the model measurement was examined using confirmatory factor analysis and secondly the structural model measurement was assessed by examining the standard path coefficient and t-statistics ($t > 1.96$).

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Sample Profiles

Sample profiles showed that the respondents for this study were predominantly female with 54.7% and only 45.3% of the total respondents were male. It stated that 32% of the respondents aged from 18 to 25 years old. Moreover, 45% of the respondents were between 26 to 30 years old which represented the highest group. There were about 19.8% respondents whose age between 31 to 40 years old. However, respondents aged 41 – 50 years old and 51 years and above contributed to 1.8% and 1.4% respectively.

4.2 Measurement Model

As suggested by other researchers, convergent validity is determined by calculating item reliability, internal consistency, and average variance extracted (AVE) [10]. Item reliability assesses the loadings for each individual item. Table 1 presents the detailed item loadings. The loadings indicate the correlation of the items with their respective constructs. The results show that all items are greater than 0.7 which can be considered as acceptable.

This table also shows that all the AVE values are above 0.5. As referred to Average Variance Extracted (AVE), the largest value is 0.756 for subjective norm whilst the lowest is 0.612 for safety. Hence, Internal Consistency meets the criterion for a minimum value of 0.7. Based on the results after it has been revised, it is found that the lowest internal consistency is 0.887 for safety whilst the highest is 0.958 for Intention. The high internal consistency values for all the constructs are ensured by the reliability of the measurement model [11-15]. Therefore, the measurement model has satisfied all three necessary criterion and achieved the convergent validity. Thus, these results clearly indicate that the items in each construct are highly correlated and reliable.

The first criteria of discriminant validity is assessed by calculating the square root of average variance extracted (AVE). This value is then compared with the inter construct correlation. To meet the discriminant validity criteria, the square roots of the AVE were calculated and represented in the main diagonal of Table 2. The off-diagonal elements represent the correlations among the latent variables. Some researchers specify that discriminant validity is achieved when the square root of the AVE of a construct is larger than its correlation with other constructs. Table 2 confirms that the discriminant validity has been achieved [16]. Next, as for the cross-loading matrix, it explained that all items are loaded higher on the construct they were measuring than on any other constructs in the model. Therefore, the two criterion of discriminant validity were met. The implication is that all the reflective constructs in the measurement model are different from each other [17,18]

Table 1: Measurement Model

Construct	Item	Loading	AVE	Internal Consistency
Attitude	A1	0.865	0.750	0.938
	A2	0.848		
	A3	0.888		
	A4	0.864		
	A5	0.865		
Subjective Norm	S1	0.875	0.756	0.939
	S2	0.878		
	S3	0.888		
	S4	0.874		
	S5	0.831		
Safety	K1	0.727	0.612	0.887
	K2	0.783		
	K3	0.816		
	K4	0.806		
	K5	0.775		
Intention	I1	0.760	0.696	0.958
	I2	0.841		
	I3	0.892		
	I4	0.882		
	I5	0.873		

Table 2: Discriminant Validity

Construct	A	I	S	SN
Attitude (A)	0.866			
Intention (I)	0.818	0.835		
Safety (S)	0.651	0.663	0.782	
Subjective Norm (SN)	0.719	0.744	0.63	0.869

4.3 Result of Hypothesis Testing

Table 3: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Standard Path Coefficient	t-value	Results
H1	Attitude - Intention	0.401	6.876	Supported
H2	Subjective Norm - Intention	0.215	4.277	Supported
H3	Safety - Intention	0.131	2.475	Supported

*p< 0.05 or **p<0.01

Table 3 indicates the summarized hypothesis testing for the main model. The standardized path coefficient indicates whether the direction of the relationship is either positive or negative whilst the t-value assesses whether this relationship is significant or not. *H1, H2, and H3* examined the influence of attitude, subjective norm and safety on intention to purchase halal cosmetics product among consumers, respectively.

This table shows that all three variables for standard path coefficients are positive. More specifically, for H1 the standardized path coefficient is 0.401 whilst the t-value is 6.876. The result was accepted at $t > 1.96$. As for H2, it explained the standard path coefficient is 0.215 whilst t-value is 4.277. The result was accepted at $t > 1.96$. However, H3 explained the standard path coefficient is 0.131 whilst t-value is 2.475. The result was accepted at $t > 1.96$. In conclusion, three (*H1, H2, and H3*) of the hypotheses were statistically significant.

5 CONCLUSION

This study offers theoretical and practical contributions by demonstrating the applicability of TRA theory with an extended variable namely safety to evaluate the intention to purchase halal cosmetic products. This study proposed that there is a significant influence between independent variables (attitude, subjective norm, safety) and dependent variable i.e, intention. The findings of this study showed that Theory of Reasoned Action act as an important determinant for intention. The finding has also supported previous finding in which TRA has the capability to influence intention to purchase halal cosmetic products. Finally, it is hoped that Muslim countries are leading to be a global Halal-hub like Malaysia, so that the emergence of halal cosmetics will increase around the world especially in Muslim countries. It is hoped that the findings of this study could facilitate the industrial practitioners in improving halal industry and leading to the growth of the market size.

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