Chapter 6

Brand Consciousness and Brand Loyalty: A Study on Foreign Brand Beauty and Skin Care Products

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ABSTRACT

It is often argued that consumers become loyal to a particular brand based on their perception of the brand itself. This study investigates the relationship between brand consciousness and three key variables: perceived quality, emotional value, and brand involvement. It also examines the influence of these three variables on students’ brand loyalty to foreign-brand beauty and skin care products. A total of 318 female students from a public university in Malaysia participated in the survey. Using multiple regression analysis, the study found that brand consciousness is positively related to perceived quality and emotional value, but not brand involvement. Perceived quality and emotional value positively influence loyalty toward foreign beauty and skin care products, while brand involvement negatively influences brand loyalty.

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INTRODUCTION

Although the marketing literature has largely focused on the study of foreign brands, very limited research has been conducted on brand loyalty in Asian markets. Against the background of major changes in the marketplace in global brands, scholars strive to understand the reasons why consumers are loyal to a brand choice and the key factors that influence their loyalty to their brand choice. People want a better standard of living, and improvements in technology, science, economics, and education stimulate the desire for current styles and new products. In the era of globalization, consumers exposed to foreign products seek to consume foreign products from foreign countries and are more aware of branded products as a way to represent their identity and image. Malaysians are no exception, especially in the area of beauty and skincare products.

As the Malaysian economy becomes stronger, the income level of the general population gets higher as well. The rising income has led to a change in a new lifestyle. According to Hassan, Rahman, and Sade (2015), Saat, Shaari, and Ahmad Fauzi (2017), and Idowu, Ja’afar, Shari, and Dahlan (2018), Malaysians are becoming more westernized, sophisticated, and cosmopolitan. One product that has shown a considerable increase in demand over the last decade is the beauty and skincare product category. Skincare products are designed to moisturize, cleanse, tone, and maintain the skin (Yee, Chin, & Suan, 2012; Jan et al., 2019), and Malaysians are now more than ever concerned with beauty regimens, such as skin and hair care, out of a desire to look beautiful, young, and trendy.

In Malaysia, skin care was one of the most dynamic product categories in 2014 (Euromonitor.com, 2014). Make-up brands and skincare products made in Malaysia are now coming to the fore. Meanwhile, the younger crowd, heavily influenced by Korean music and drama series, go for branded Korean make-up and skincare products used by their favorite celebrities. Continuous innovation by industry players, especially foreign brands, has also attracted consumer attention to skincare products.

Due to marketing and advertising, beauty and skincare products are in high demand, including home-grown cosmetic products. The strong performance of home-grown cosmetic products can be attributed to many factors. Rapid urbanization has resulted in many people having an office job. As a result, many see that a professional and well-groomed appearance is required. Social media, such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, which are primarily founded by fashion entrepreneurs, professional make-up artists, and celebrities, as well as social media influencers, also contribute toward the growth of home-grown cosmetic products (Badarudin, 2018).

There is a high demand for cosmetic products due to age-related skin problems in Malaysia (countrymeters.info, 2015). As people age, their skin changes. Women consumers in their 20s to 40s use beauty and skincare products to maintain a
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