

The Marketing Mix Factors Affecting Purchasing Decisions for Non-animals Testing Cosmetic and Skincare Products.

Thitiphada Khrueanugool^a, Paitoon Chetthamrongchai^b

^aBBA International Program in Marketing, Department of Marketing, Kasetsart University, Thailand.

^bDirector of BBA International Program in Marketing, Department of Marketing, Kasetsart University, Thailand. Email: fbusptc@ku.ac.th

Abstract: This study has an objective to examine the impact of marketing mix factors on purchasing decisions of non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products on students and employees at HEG University, Switzerland. This research is descriptive causative research aims to find the influence of an independent variable that is in this research is product, price, promotion and distribution to dependent variable that is purchase decision. The number of samples is 68 respondents. Analytical technique used is mean and standard deviation. The study revealed that Product and Promotion were extremely important factors affecting consumer purchasing decision. And then Place about cosmetic retail stores and Price respectively. On the other hand, marketing factors that respondents gave the least importance is Product about packaging. The respondents gave neutral important at this point. For the content and motivation in communicating and convincing consumers of cosmetic companies and organizations that banned animals testing found that most respondents purchase cosmetic and skincare products once a month. They agreed that cosmetic and skincare companies that prohibit animal testing have a better image than the cosmetic and skincare company that used animals-testing. And also, it is not necessary to experiment on animals for cosmetic industry because nowadays there are many volunteers who willing to experiment and have the lab to grow artificial human skin for cosmetics and skincare testing. Moreover, non-animal test logo on cosmetic and skincare products were reliabilities and affecting the consumer purchasing decision. And most respondents tend to have intention to purchase cosmetic and skincare products that are non-animals testing.

Keywords: Non-animals testing, skincare products, marketing content, marketing mix

1. Introduction

Ethical consumers are increasingly aware of the power they have when making an ethical buying decision, and they believe that they can impact ethical dilemmas by altering their purchasing behaviour (Gillani and Kutaula, 2018). In the past decade, many businesses included ethicality as a key component of their business strategy as a result of the rising attitude towards ethical issues among customers (Yeow et al., 2014). Most corporations have realized that it is mandatory to not only be perceived as sustainable and ethical but to genuinely practice it in order to avoid scandals and to satisfy stakeholders (Ojasoo, 2016). Furthermore, ethical consumers increase in number and their awareness of the impact of their consumption will likely affect corporations' strategies (Sebastiani, Montagnini and Dalli, 2013). In other words, if more consumers are aware of the impact that their consumption has, it is then more likely that they would drive the market towards becoming significantly more ethical (Gillani and Kutaula, 2018; Sebastiani et al., 2013).

The pressure for cosmetic companies to invest in alternative methods for animal testing is being altered by many different actors such as policymakers, industry professionals, and most importantly individual consumers (Hou and Lampe, 2015). Using animals to test the safety of cosmetics is still a common practice for many companies. Additionally, Groff, Bachli, Lansdowne, and Capaldo (2014) acknowledge the implications of animal-testing on the environment. Every year millions of animal carcasses used in research laboratories are discarded and are mostly contaminated with toxic and hazardous chemicals.

In recent years, the beauty industry has been criticized for practices surrounding: false claims and misleading advertisements, the unethical sourcing of ingredients, child labor, the use of harmful ingredients, animal testing, and excessive packaging. Some of these issues are more publicized than others, leading to unequal awareness of all problems. For example, many consumers are aware that companies used to rely heavily on animal testing before launching beauty products. What they may not be aware of is that animal testing in the United States is not banned, and unless a product is labeled cruelty-free, it may have been tested on animals (Kangas, 2017). The situation gets even more complicated when you take into consideration the laws surrounding animal testing in other countries. Another well-known topic of unethical behavior is the false claims and misleading advertisements commonly associated with the beauty industry. A recent study examining three categories of claims including

scientific, performance, and subjective showed that more claims are classified as deceptive rather than truthful (Carlson, Fowler, and Reisenwitz, 2015). Although unsettling, this fact would not surprise many consumers.

2. Marketing Mix and Consumer decision-making

According to American Marketing Association (2013), "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for consumers, clients, partners, and society at large". Marketing mix means the product, distribution, promotion and pricing strategies to produce and carry out exchanges and achieve the target markets. "Marketing mix - interrelated actions and solutions to meet consumer needs and to achieve the company's marketing goals, a whole" (Rad and Akbari, 2014). According to Singh (2012), marketing is a complex range of marketing mix solution variables used in the company seeking to sell their goods and services.

Product is defined as a physical product or service to the consumer for which he is willing to pay. It includes half of the material goods, such as furniture, clothing and grocery items and intangible products, such as services, which users buy (Singh, 2012 and Liu, et al ,2019). Isoraite (2016) argued that the product is the first and one of the key marketing elements. It can be offered to the market, to get attention, to be the acquisition of used or used, and can satisfy the wants or needs.

According to Ehmke, Fulton, Lusk, (2016), price is not only one of the key factors in a competitive situation, which directly affects the company's sales and profitability indicators, but also one of the most flexible marketing mix elements, which can quickly adapt to environmental changes. The company attempt to deliver value to customer-make a good product, make it available through accessible channels, communicate the product's benefits clearly (Isoraite, 2016). Kotler and Keller (2016) said that a low price usually means an inferior good in the consumer eyes as they compare your good to a competitor. Consequently, the prices are too high will make the costs outweigh the benefits in customers eyes, and they will therefore value their money over your product. Therefore, marketers need to know how to set prices and understand how customers process perceptions of prices and know how prices will be received affecting demand.

Another important element of marketing is a place or distribution, which is defined as the process and methods by which products or services reach customers (Odunlami, 2013).In order to control and manage these processes, companies need to develop an appropriate marketing channel, to coincide with the company's goals (Isoraite, 2016). Kotler and Keller (2016) states that Distribution - that helps customers and users to find and keep purchase those products from those manufacturers / providers with them at the time of need. Thus, the distribution may become a functioning complex system where producers, brokers and independent trade and the interests of consumers wholly compatible with each other in a certain environment and a certain time. Therefore, placement or distribution comes with a deep understanding of where your target market is, and how do you distribute your product to them. Product could be distributed by choosing distribution strategies which are intensive distribution, exclusive distribution, selective distribution and franchising (Odunlami, 2013).

In the final element, the promotion represents the various aspects of marketing communication, that is, the communication of information about the product with the goal of generating a positive customer response (Isoraite, 2016). Promotion is one of the critical success factors of a marketing program. No matter how good a product is, if the customer has never heard it before or the product is useful to customers, they will never buy it. That is why promotion is a very important component of marketing as it can boost brand recognition and sales (Odunlami, 2013). The main objective of the promotion process is to identify the firm and its products or services for the target market, and to increase the level of purchasing. In an effective marketing promotion strategy, you need to know how can send marketing messages to your potential buyers. When is the best time to promote your product? The best channel to reach them such as the use the social media in promoting the product. The effectiveness of your promotion competitor's strategy (Odunlami, 2013 and Akroush, 2011).

Customer decision-making is a complex mechanism that involves everything from problem identification to post-purchase activities (Daily and Furmanski, 2014). Each consumer has different needs in his or her day-to-day life and these are the needs that make different choices. (Javed and Liu, 2020; Mahmoudi, 2019) pointed out that decision-making is one of the most important tasks of human beings and the quality of decision determines the quality of actions, e.g., buying decision, selection of a product, choosing a service, etc. As stated by Wolny and Charoensuksai, 2014; Ashman, Solomon and Wolny, 2015; Kotler and Armstrong, 2012 described the purchase decision process through seven stages: recognition of the need, information search, and evaluation of pre-purchase alternatives, purchase, consumption, post-consumer evaluation and disposal.

However, as stated by Mitul 2012 and Miyuri 2015, they mentioned that the consumer decision model is applicable for the majority of customers but there are exceptions. Some customers are making their buying decision straight ahead from recognizing the need to making the actual purchase if they are familiarized with the products or services. Additionally, nowadays, companies design and develop new marketing strategies to make

their products in a distinctive way in order to compete with other competitors. Recently, more than thirty countries and governments across the world have pushed the need for innovation within the cosmetics industry by passing through restrictions and bans on animal testing in the production of cosmetics (Blumenauer and Locke, 2015). Moreover, consumers are now aware of the importance of the product mix elements and its role on their buying decision especially, in purchasing decisions for non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products Chitrakorn, K. (2016). In addition to the uncertainty that rises from the lack of knowledge of the features of marketing mix elements in the understanding the target on purchasing decisions for non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products. Therefore, the current research paper attempts to identify the relationship between product mix elements and consumer's buying behavior in Geneva, Switzerland.

3. Research Methodology

This study was designed to examine the marketing mix factors affecting consumer purchasing decisions for non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products in HEG university, Geneva, Switzerland. The methodology for conducting this study was based on the overall data, including the review from secondary data and data collection from the survey or questionnaire. The online questionnaire was distributed by an internal mail system to e-mail addresses of all staff and students. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. The questionnaire focuses on the respondents' purchasing decision-making behaviour on non-animal testing cosmetic and skincare products, and the decision-making process regarding market factors and non-animals testing products of respondents. The sample of Swiss consumers is chosen based on judgment and convenience as to the subjects' willingness to participate. They are university students and colleagues, staffs and professors at the University of HEG in Geneva, Switzerland during I participated in exchange program with the university. A total of 250 survey questionnaires were distributed. The study is performed using exploratory and descriptive statistics; data tables including frequency and percentage distributions are used and supported by their respective figures by SPSS. Mean average and standard deviation were performed.

4. Results and Findings:

After collecting the questionnaires and the results from the complete 250 questionnaires. The results and findings will represent a descriptive statistical analysis of the data collected. General demographic data collection of 250 respondents, including gender, age, education, occupation, and region. The results presented that the ratio of male to female is almost 25: 75. The majority of the respondents representing 85.0% out the sample were aged between 15 and 25 years old about 65%. The level of students indicated that preponderance of the respondent are bachelor's degree representing 82.35%. All participants were social media users. However, the intensity of social media usage varied among different participations and social media network site. The majority of the respondents representing 61.77 are European.

Table 1: Frequency of purchasing non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products.

How frequency you purchase cosmetic and skincare products?	Frequency	Percentages
2 – 3 times per week	11	4.4
Once a week	26	10.4
2 – 3 times per month	44	17.7
Once a month	121	48.4
3 – 5 times per year	37	14.8
Once a year	11	4.4
Total	250	100

Approximately half of the participants bought non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products once a month, followed by nearly 18% who bought non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products 2-3 times per week.

Table 2: The channel of awareness about non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products of the respondents.

The channel of awareness about ban animals-testing with cosmetic and skincare products.	Frequency	Percentages
Communication campaign of cosmetic and skincare companies or related organizations.	48	19.2
Promote through the store of cosmetic and skincare companies.	77	30.8
Website and social media of cosmetic and skincare companies and related organizations.	70	28.0
Know through social media that other people share via timeline posts or news feed.	55	22.0
Total	250	100

The majority of participants had heard about the about non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products of the respondents in shops. Whereas, the new media such as website and social media were account for around 28%, followed by people shares or posts were nearly 22%.

Table 3: The respondent's opinion about the necessary to use animals-testing in cosmetic industry.

In your opinion, Is the cosmetic industry currently required to experiment with animals?	Frequency	Percentages
I think it is not necessary because animals should not be abused and painfully from cosmetics and skincare tested. And nowadays there are many volunteers who willing to experiment and have the lab to grow artificial human skin for cosmetics and skincare testing. So, we do not need to test with animals anymore.	195	78.0
I think it is necessary in some cases because some new ingredient has never been researched before. So, it should be tested by animals first for the safety of consumers. And the animals tested were sacrificed for the benefit of humankind.	33	13.2
I am not sure.	22	8.8
Total	250	100

Over 77% of the participants presented their opinion that they think it is not necessary because animals should not be abused and painfully from cosmetics and skincare tested. And nowadays there are many volunteers who willing to experiment and have the lab to grow artificial human skin for cosmetics and skincare testing, whereas, small number of respondents presented their opinion as they are not so sure "Is the cosmetic industry currently required to experiment with animals?" count for 8.82%.

Table 4 The respondent's opinion about the reliability of Cruelty-free logos.

The reliability of Cruelty-free logos on cosmetic and skincare products.	Frequency	Percentages
Yes, I can trust it because I believe that the products with Cruelty-free logos must be verified by the relevant organization.	195	78.0
No, I do not think so because I still hear that some brands are falsely using Cruelty-free logos. Despite they still testing their product with animals	29	11.6
I am not sure.	26	10.40
Total	250	100

Approximately, 78% of the participants said they trust "cruelty-free logos on cosmetic and skincare products". On the 12% of respondents, they do not trust "cruelty-free logos on cosmetic and skincare products" from any brands.

Table 5 The percentage of cruelty-free logos on non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products are affecting to respondents' purchasing decision.

Are the Cruelty-free logos indicating cosmetic and skincare products that are non-animals testing can affect your purchasing decision?	Frequency	Percentages
Yes, of cause. Because Cruelty-free symbol made me feel that I was helping to save the poor creatures from testing and making the world a better place.	176	70.5
Yes, I do. Because Cruelty-free symbol are cute.	18	7.4
No, I do not. Because Cruelty-free symbol on the label do not affect my decision about choosing a product.	51	20.6
I am not sure.	4	1.5
Total	250	100

More than 70% of the respondents indicated that cruelty-free logos indicating cosmetic effecting their purchase decision because cruelty-free symbol made me feel that I was helping to save the poor creatures from testing and making the world a better place. However, 20.59% of respondents said that cruelty-free logos was not having an affecting their purchase decision because cruelty-free symbol on the label do not affect my decision about choosing a product.

Table 6 The marketing factors affecting the respondents' decision to purchase non-animals testing cosmetics and skincare products.

Marketing Factors	Important Level					\bar{x}	S.D.	Mean Important
	Extremely Important	Very Important	Neutral	Slightly Important	Not Important			
Quality	176 (71%)	47 (19%)	27 (10%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.6	0.67	Extremely Important
Packaging	26 (10%)	40 (16%)	85 (34%)	40 (16%)	59 (24%)	2.74	1.28	Neutral
Brand	74 (29%)	29 (12%)	144 (46%)	22 (9%)	11 (4%)	3.53	1.14	Very Important
Label	62 (25%)	37 (15%)	77 (31%)	44 (18%)	30 (12%)	3.24	1.33	Neutral
Price	66 (26%)	118 (47%)	62 (25%)	4 (1%)	0 (0%)	4.00	0.76	Very Important
Advertising	77 (16%)	96 (38%)	62 (25%)	15 (6%)	0 (0%)	3.21	0.93	Neutral
Sales Promotion (Discount)	169 (68%)	66 (26%)	11 (4%)	4 (1%)	0 (0%)	4.60	0.65	Extremely Important
Beauty Advisor	66 (26%)	85 (34%)	37 (15%)	44 (18%)	18 (7%)	3.54	1.26	Very Important
Public Relation	118 (47%)	88 (35%)	40 (16%)	4 (1%)	0 (0%)	4.28	0.88	Extremely Important
Cosmetic Retail Store	166 (66%)	62 (25%)	18 (7%)	0 (0%)	4 (1%)	4.54	0.76	Extremely Important
Purchase via online shop	106 (43%)	96 (38%)	44 (18%)	4 (1%)	0 (0%)	4.22	0.79	Extremely Important
Total						3.86	0.22	

The statement of “Quality and Appearance”, “Sales Promotion”, “Cosmetic retail stores”, “Public Relation” and “Purchas via online shop” were higher than 4.60, 4.60, 4.54, 4.28 and 4.22 respectively, indicating that these factors are an extremely marketing factors affecting the respondents’ decision to purchase non-animals testing cosmetics and skincare products.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study aims to explore the marketing content and motivation in communicating factors affecting consumer purchasing decisions for non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products. The results of this research showed: the shopping behavior of female is significantly higher than that of male; the shopping behavior of people at the age of 15-25 is significantly greater than that of people in other ages. The study found that product, promotion in marketing factors, quality, appearance, and sales promotion (discount) are extremely importance factors affecting the decision-making to purchase non-animals testing cosmetics and skincare products. This means that “Quality and Appearance”, “Sales Promotion”, “Cosmetic retail stores”, “Public Relation” and “Purchas via online shop” can exert significant effects on consumer purchasing decisions for non-animals testing cosmetic and skincare products. These results are similar with those studies by Alom and Haque (2011); Oloko, Anene, Kiara, Kathambi and Mutulu (2014) Al-Muala and Al-Qurnch (2012) who found the relationship between product; pricing; place (distribution); promotion and customer satisfaction. Moreover, the findings also revealed that the content and the motivation for communication tend to be factors to convince the consumers in buying an against animals-testing cosmetic. A greater support was provided by certain scholars who found advertising as one of the key predictors of store image. Similar findings were also reported in the study of Hameed, (2013). Therefore, to develop positive consumer perceptions, organizations should proactively ensure that they increase the budgets on advertising programs for the purpose of communicating the benefits of selecting a particular brand over another. This is in line with similar studies suggested by Jermsittiparsert, K. (2019). Therefore, it is suggested that the management in retail stores should focus on social responsibility activities which aim at providing greater values to the community and business stakeholders in order to differentiate themselves in the presence of competition. By focusing on CSR programs that can be valued by business stakeholders, it may lead to greater brand image. Moreover, the policy makers in retail sector may focus their efforts on digital and social media tools in target markets in order to foster customer relationships and create positive impression about themselves in consumers’ minds, as is corroborated with the relevant studies by Rungsisawat, S., Joemsittiprasert, W., and Jermsittiparsert, K. (2019).

There are two limitations in this study. First, the data collection was based on a survey method whereby structure-ended questions were designed for obtaining consumers’ responses. Therefore, future studies can adopt the qualitative approaches to gain further insights by designing unstructured questions which would result in greater pool of information about consumers’ perception. Finally, the sample size and sampling methodology employed in this study may limit the generalizability of the findings without further testing. Consequently, it is recommended to enlarge the sample size and use different sampling methodologies in future research to obtain at better conclusions and findings.

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