Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter will summarize the results of this study and explain on the managerial implications. Limitations and recommendations for future study are subsequently presented.

5.1 Research Conclusions and Implications

As mentioned earlier in previous chapter, cosmetic industry is a very fast paced industry where product innovation is the key to success (Kumar et al., 2006). In today's extreme competitive landscape, businesses demand continuous innovation and sustainable core competency to survive in the market. To outpace from the competition, fulfilling consumers' demand is the main key to win market share or penetrating into new market.

Marketers have presumed green product has emerged to become the direction for future product development and it is the answering call from public to conserve the environment due to extensive pollution and waste creation from corporations. However, as the literature review has shown, most of consumers purchase green products are actually based on personal needs and lifestyle, rather than buying them due to environment cause.

Hence, rather than focusing on how to devise effective marketing strategy, it is vital for marketers to realise the underlying reason of why consumers

should choose green products rather than conventional products. As such, the present research intends to contribute knowledge and insights into this area by studying the determinants of purchase intention for green personal care and cosmetic products.

Based on the research findings about demographic profile of consumers purchasing green personal care and cosmetic products, female are generally shown to have more favourable attitude and purchase intention on the products than male respondents. This is evident in many previous researches that women are consumers who are highly concerned with climate change and air pollution. They actively engage in environmental practices and environmental issues which make women tend to sway more towards green purchase behaviour (Furlow & Knott, 2009).

Besides, research results also finds that people with higher level of education level and income level possess high purchase intention than other groups on green personal care and cosmetic products. According to Peattie (2001) study shows that green purchasing behaviours are mostly governed by rationality and the cognition of a consumer, where consumer with higher level of education has deeper environmental knowledge. They are able to assess product attributes and judge on the quality of a product and the effort by the manufacturers.

For managerial implications, it is an added advantage for the producers of green product and services to be able to convey their green message to the intended target market. This points to the importance of market segmentation by a company as different marketing strategies needs to be applied to different segmentation (Lee, 2008). For instance, green marketers may market their products through market segmentation by gender-based, as the results have shown that female may respond more actively in green products than male do.

On the other hand, in respond to the first objective of the research, the results show that health consciousness, environmental consciousness and appearance consciousness are positively influence attitude towards buying green personal care and cosmetic product, which is contrary to Kim and Chung (2011) research result where only environmental consciousness and appearance consciousness are significant predictors. This suggests that Malaysian consumers not only emphasize on the external and tangible benefits (such as enhancement on appearance and environment) for personal care and cosmetic products, internal factor specifically health factor is also the important priority. Hence, it is suggested to marketers that other than focusing on health issue to market green products, the combination of environmental and appearance enhancement messages should be employed as well in order to generate more response from the market.

With regard to second and third objective of the research, results show that consumer's attitude is a salient determinant for purchase intention toward green personal care and cosmetic product, although its effect is insignificant when combine with other variables. However, the perceived behavioural control factor is not a significant moderator between attitude and purchase intention toward green personal care and cosmetic products. This implies that constraint factors such as money, availability or time may not be the reasons that can affect consumer's attitude to buying green products. According to Murphy, Graber and Stewart (2010) study on green marketing during recession period which was conducted in many countries including Asia, given the increasing awareness of environmental issues, while consumers currently are cost conscious and more attracted to real value and savings in a product, they still see green as an important factor. Despite the economic downturn in recent years, many consumers are interested in purchasing green products from companies that they perceive to be environmentally responsible. Hence, for managerial implications, instead of focusing on value-saving and cost effective advertising messages, marketers should not banish green marketing as the market still demand green products despite economic difficulties.

In addition, according to the present research results, Theory of Planned Behaviour model has proved to be a useful framework to predict consumer purchase intention for green products. In respond to the fourth objective of

the research, past purchase experience is identified as the most significant determinant for green personal care and cosmetic products purchase intention, which is also evident in Kim and Chung (2011) research. This reflects that a person's consumption pattern for personal care and cosmetic is strongly related to his/ her green and healthy lifestyle and experience. For managerial implication, it is suggested that marketers may focus more on customer retention programme during green marketing campaign as consumers purchase these products mostly base on their past usage experience.

Besides, as shown from the research, product-image dimension is significantly determining the purchase intention for green products. As such, symbolic, experiential and functional benefits of the green products maybe emphasised during devising advertising campaign as these messages can attract more consumers who practice green and healthy lifestyle. Marketers should realise that consumers will be more likely to react on green messages that strongly relate to their personal environments and lifestyles, which is evident in previous studies.

For corporate-image dimension, present research found that this factor is not a significant determinant for purchase intention of green personal care and cosmetic products. In Murphy, Graber and Stewart (2010) study, most of the respondents in the research were not able to identify of the name of

an individual company as being 'green' when asked the question directly. Consumers also found to be increasingly unlikely to trust corporate websites, yet they are most likely to trust and use consumer ratings and reviews and their friends, families or colleagues. Due to many false and exaggerated claims, many consumers already lack trust in many corporations, thus this make marketers harder to prove their products are truly green. Hence, to enhance consumer's corporate–image perception, it is suggested that marketers can use more word of mouth marketing tactics, such as viral marketing in social medias to spread the positive environmental messages. Besides, to make consumers aware of the green company existence and offerings, it is important for company to appear in the first stages of the green marketplace as rankings tend to favour the first mover in such situations (Murphy, Graber and Stewart, 2010).

In the context of Malaysia, statistic has shown that about half of the respondents (48 percent) have green personal care and cosmetic purchase experience. This shows that green products have immense marketability and potential for expansion in Malaysia.

Based on the research findings and limitation while conducting the research, some suggestions are recommended for future research. Firstly, due to convenience sampling method was used for data collection; the result may not be effective in reflecting the purchase pattern of the whole Malaysian

population. Hence it is suggested that future data collection should use random sampling method and data should be collected from all states of Malaysia to reflect true consumption pattern.

Secondly, the findings of this research may not be applicable to other product categories as current study only focuses on personal care and cosmetic products. Hence for future study, researcher need to refine product categories studied to obtain greater generalisation.