

## Review on Relationship Between Co-Operative, Credible, Conversational, and Consistency of Sustainable Brand as a Determinant Factor of Consumer Buying Behaviour for Cosmetics Products

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### ABSTRACT

*In the globalization era, the improvement of technology, science, society, economy, and education provide people to have a better standard of living and styles and lead to a major emphasis on beauty and physical attractiveness. Cosmetics and skincare are important today because they help to enhance people's appearance and make them feel more confidence and assurance of individual to meet the challenges of society than ever before. This study aims to examine the co-operative, credible, conversational, and consistency as a determinant factor which influence consumer buying behaviour in cosmetics products manufactured in Malaysia or overseas which marketed within Malaysia. Besides that, this study will only be focusing on Gen Y and Gen Z respondents those staying in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Secondary data will be used to identify the relationship between co-operative, credible, conversational, and consistency and consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics products. This study finding expected to determine factors influence consumers buying behaviour towards cosmetics products and contribute to the existing theory of this study. Thus, based on the previous studies shown significant relationship between co-operative, credible, conversational, and consistency and consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics products.*

## INTRODUCTION

In the globalization era, the improvement of technology, science, society, economy, and education provide people to have a superior way of life and styles and lead to a major emphasis on beauty and physical attractiveness. Cosmetics and skincare are important today because its help to upgrade people appearance and make them feel more confidence and assurance of individual to meet the challenges of society than ever before. According to Britannica (2018), the word of "cosmetics" is derived from the Greek word Kosmetikos, which means "skilled at decorating". It refers to any of several preparations (excluding soap) that are applied to the human body for beautifying, preserving, or altering the appearance or for cleansing, colouring, conditioning, or protecting the skin, hair, nails, lips, eyes, or teeth. Besides that, according to Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN, 2008), cosmetics are defined as "any substance or preparation intended to be placed in contact with the external parts of the human body or with the teeth and the mucous membranes of the oral cavity with a view exclusively or mainly for cleaning them, perfuming them, changing their appearance, and/or correcting body odors and/or protecting or keeping them in good condition. However, Azmi, et al. (2016) study stated, The Global Beauty Market usually divided cosmetics into five main business segments which are skincare, hair care, colour (make-up), fragrances and toiletries.

Due to the global economic development and the change of industrial types in Malaysia, the development of cosmetics industry was diversified. The increase of the amount of cosmetics users and people also care about their skin condition. In recent years, not only more and more worldwide cosmetics brands come to Malaysia but also the rise of local cosmetic brands in Malaysia.

However, whether consumers will continue buying the similar brand is a serious concern for all cosmetics companies. This is because the Malaysian cosmetics industry appears and there is high competition among local brands and worldwide brands. In the nutshell, according to the report from Asia Personal Care and Cosmetics Market Guide (2016) stated Malaysian External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) Malaysia's domestic manufacturers of cosmetics and toiletries export US\$270 million of cosmetics and toiletries in year 2015. It is MATRADE's hope to increase this number by 5% for 2016. Besides that, Asia Personal Care and Cosmetics Market Guide (2016) reported that from January to August 2016, domestic exports amounted to US\$194 million. Notwithstanding, in cosmetics and personal care sector, the make-up and skin-care product category command the largest market share. Lately, a critical number of local skin-care companies are moving towards having their own private label skin care and colour cosmetics brands instead of representing foreign brands. This is particularly valid for skin care products focusing on the restorative expert channels like dermatologists, and plastic specialists. In Malaysia, the majority of the demand comes from spas and salons, retail stores, and multi-level marketing or direct selling channel because of the majority of the consumer will purchase cosmetics products at those place.

Last but not least, based on the discussion above, it shows that cosmetics nowadays are important to everyone because it can help people enhance their appearance and make them feel more confidence. However, this paper focus on co-operative, credible, conversational, and consistency as a determine factor which influence consumer buying behaviour in cosmetics products manufactured in Malaysia or overseas which marketed within Malaysia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Consumer Buying Behaviour

Consumer behaviour refers as the behaviour that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using evaluating and disposing of products and services that they expect will fulfil their necessities (Patil & Bakkappa, 2012). Consumer behaviour focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their accessible assets which are time, cash, and exertion on utilization related things. This includes what they purchase, why they get it, when they get it, where they get it, how every now and again they get it, how consistently they use it, how they assess it after the buy and the effect of such assessments on future buys, and how they organize it (Green, 1992; Khaniwale, 2015) to satisfy their wants and the effect. Besides that, based on Solomon (1995) consumer behaviour covers a lot of ground which is the different settings, the study of the processes connected with when individuals or groups choose, buy, utilize or discard of products, services, concepts or experiences to satisfy needs and wants. A behaviour that consumers demonstrate in searching for, paying for, using, assessing and disposing of products and services that they anticipate will satisfy their needs (Solomon, 1995). Anjanappa and Megharaj (2016) mentioned customer behaviour study is based on consumer buying behaviour, with the customer playing the three distinct roles of user, payer and buyer. Research has shown that consumer behaviour is difficult to predict, even for experts in the field. However according to Anjana (2018), consumer buying behaviour is a decision process as well as an attitude of the people involved in purchasing and using products. It means that before purchase either small or large products, consumers will recognize needs and wants and after that consumer start searching for products or services that suitable for them which can fulfil their needs and wants in terms of having good quality with low or more affordable price, and should deliver them with value-added features.

### Co-operative

According to Lutsykiv (2016), cooperation referred to the solutions to the main socio-ecological problems associated with products along the entire life cycle requires both in the process of innovating and marketing sustainable products and services which is co-operation with suppliers, retailers, consumers, scientists, and other non-market actors (e.g. NGOs). Besides that, cooperative is considered collaboration within two or more companies so the small and start-up companies can gain entry and penetrate the market. However, nowadays those large cosmetic companies also co-operation with other companies to combine and develop certain values with external partners to accomplish their key objectives. Nevertheless, Christensen (2003) mentioned cooperation between companies, retailers, and suppliers would be very important. It can create valuable understanding and success among parties involve. For instance, according to Kumar, Massie, and Dumonceaux (2006), P&G's four keys to success are understanding the customer, transferring technology across categories, making unobvious connections between what is needed and what is possible and technical mastery. Members of cosmetic supply chain can cooperate to improve their efficiency and reduce their costs in order to achieve a higher total margin to the benefit of all of them including consumers.

### Credible

According to Lutsykiv (2016), credible refers to fundamentals of credibility are first the solving of key socio-ecological problems associated with companies' products and second tying sustainability to the core business. Co-operations with trustworthy partners and the use of independent, third-party labels such as a high level of transparency can additionally increase the credibility of sustainability brands. Credibility of brand is one of the biggest reasons that make people repeatedly buy and consume the brand. Customers believe and

trust in a big brand name, yet they will not buy or consume it if they don't trust the brand. However, Sobel (1985) believed that credibility must be earlier to any action or signal so that it can influence customers in an excellent way and recognized that trust is the first and the most important factor which forces consumers to make decisions. In his view, people will trust different parties based on their trustworthy behaviour during a period of time. Brand credibility can give a positive influence on consumers' brand consideration and choice because it has a positive impact on word of mouth recommendation and also it could create switching propensity.

### Conversational

Sustainability branding is more effective as a two-way conversation, rather than a one-way announcement. Inviting consumers to enter into dialogues about the sustainability process strengthens the brand-consumer relationship (Lutsykiv, 2016). For example two-way conversation is using social media such as using online forum to share opinion, discussion, and communicate between consumer and consumer or between organization and consumer. An online forum, commonly called discussion group which individuals participate in text-based discussions on specific topics at social media. Besides that, many forums offer search facilities, private mailing capabilities and icons for interpreting messages (Preece, 2001). Discussions at social media are managed by moderators, who are trained to read and edit posts, facilitate discussions and ensure members abide by forums rules and guidelines (Webb, Burns, & Collin, 2008). Online forums also unique in that their content is generated not only by the site provider but also by the members (Hsu, Chiang, & Huang, 2012). In forums, people can exchange their ideas and experiences allowing them to learn from the experts, as well as other people experiences. They can set agendas, convey experiences, and clarify values, facilitate selective social affiliation, transmit information and values,

and assist decision making and consumption (Okleshen & Grossbart, 1998). Furthermore, forums can also help in problem solving, information sharing and understanding (Savolainen, 2011) due to online communities like to review the comment by others in online forum. For example according to Chung and Kim (2008), they stated that cancer patients and companions found blogging to be most helpful for emotion and information sharing, followed by problem solving and prevention and care.

### Consistency

According to Lutsykiv(2016) if sustainability is key to brand positioning, this requires a kind of integrated approach to sustainability communication. It is important to communicate in a consistent way, including advertising, personal selling or online communication. In addition to that, the sustainability product brand has to be consistent with the overall environmental and social performance of the company. (Arens, 2005; Ahmed & Ashfaq, 2013) stated, advertising is a type of communication proposed to persuade an audience which is viewers, readers or listeners to purchase or take some action upon products, information or services. It is important for all advertisers to convey good advertising message and information to buyers (Zahid, Mufti, Shaker, & Naeem, 2016). This is because advertising is important and useful tool which conscious, illuminate and influence the group of audience.

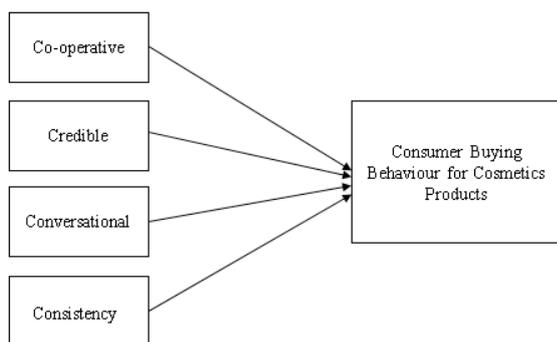
In addition, online communication refers to a seller sells goods and services to buyer through internet. The increasing usage of the Internet nowadays has enabled both companies and consumers, providing a means of sharing information and opinions both from business to consumer and other way around (Jalilvand, Esfahani, & Samiei, 2011) and it known as electronic word of mouth (eWOM) (Silvermann, 2011). eWOM communication can be positive or negative comments that are expressed about a brand and its' product

or service through the Internet such as online social networking sites, blogs, online discussion forums, virtual communities, and rating/reviews sites (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004; Goldsmith, 2006). Thus, eWOM have a bigger influence due to the rapid growth of internet user and platform availability in spreading the information (Beneke, Mill, Naidoo, & Wickham, 2015).

Other than that, personal selling also defined as seller sells products and services to consumers through face-to-face. Personal selling is the most costly type of promotion. This is because personal selling generally close to home selling that includes the structure of relationship through communication for the purpose of creating a sales transaction (Murithi, 2015). According to Weitz and Castleberry (2004), personal selling refers to interpersonal process whereby a seller attempts to reveal and fulfil buyer's needs in a common long term beneficial manner which is suitable for both parties. Hence, personal selling is interpersonal communication relating to goods and services.

### Proposed Framework

Based on critical review above, the study proposes the framework as follows:



**Figure 1** Proposed framework

The literature review explains the formation of relationship between co-operative, credible, conversational, and consistency of sustainable brand as a determinant factor of consumer buying behaviour for cosmetics products. Besides that,

co-operative, credible, conversational, and consistency of sustainable brand suggested of having positive relationship on consumer buying behaviour for cosmetics products.

### METHODOLOGY

Data collection can be collect from primary or secondary sources. Primary data refers as information obtained first hand by the researcher on the variable if interest for the specific purpose of study while secondary data can be internal or external to the organization and accessed through internet or published such as reports, journals, articles, and books (Sekaran, 2003). This study used secondary information from previous studies held to identify study gaps. All concepts namely; co-operative, credible, conversational, and consistency towards buying behaviour analysed properly and showed based on number of publications, year published, country, variables and findings.

### FINDINGS

According to Shyamsundar and Babu (2016) study to examine sales promotion and service quality of new retail stores influence consumer buying behaviour mediated by frequency of visit, mode of payment, amount spent and moderate by demographic. By using survey questionnaire with convenience sampling, it found that that sales promotion and service quality positively relate to buying behaviour of consumers in modern retail shops in Karnataka. The study shows that the respondents are aware of retail formats which they prefer to shop, because they get pleasure while shopping. Besides that, in this study, the authors suggest that both hypermarkets and malls were preferred by the respondents for shoppertainment. Focusing on these factors is of great importance as they influence on the buying behaviour of the consumers in the modern retail stores, and would enable

the retailers to identify their strengths and weaknesses.

Fareed, Tariq, Mian, Uddin, and Hassan (2016) study on the factors which are store association, store awareness, store perceived quality, store convenience, product assortments, store employee's service, perceived price affecting consumer buying behaviour in supermarkets in Pakistan mediating by retailer loyalty. In their study found that all these factors having significant positive relation with purchase intention with the mediation role of retail loyalty. Furthermore, in this study suggested that relevant guidelines for developing future business plans and making changes or improvements in the current activities of players in the Pakistani retail market.

The study Sheeraz, Iqbal, and Ahmed (2012) conducted to examine association of brand credibility and consumer values with consumers' brand purchase in Pakistan using survey questionnaire from 102 students from different universities. In this study found that brand credibility and consumer values are significantly and positively associated with consumer purchase intentions in Pakistan. The more credible the brand, the higher is the purchase intention toward that brand. It is same result that conducted by Wang and Yang (2010) study which investigates the impact of brand credibility on consumers' brand purchase intention in emerging economies, focusing specifically on China's automobile industry and moderate by brand awareness and brand image.

Mo, Li, and Fan (2015) explored that impact of online reviews on consumer buying behaviour by using survey questionnaire on brand of cleanser more than 400 Taobao shops. In this study found the influential factors of online reviews on consumer buying behaviour include positive reviews, description rating, picture reviews, additional reviews and cumulative reviews. The four factors which are

moderate reviews, negative reviews, service star rating and logistics star rating, are not significant in this research. Therefore, the sellers can take the incentives for consumers to make positive reviews and high quality reviews in the sales process.

On the other hand, according to Malarout and Shetty (2016) study on fashion bloggers can influence their followers to purchase branded products and also to find if they can create awareness about the latest trends among these social media users. By using structured questionnaire of 140 internet users and face to face interview, the study found that women constitute the major part of followers of fashion bloggers. Most of the followers are unmarried and believe that bloggers have a positive influence on their buying behaviour of branded products.

Kazim and Kantharaj (2015) conducted study in Bangalore City, India with a sample size of 100 youths between 15 to 24 years which is study about to determine cosmetics advertisement influence consumer buying behaviour. In this study found that there is a strong relationship between the cosmetic advertisements and customer purchase decision. This is because the increase of the female income, the purchase of cosmetic products also increases. Thus, the increase in expenses on cosmetic product is made possible by the advertisement made on them.

Based on Vidhya and Ramesh (2017) study found that personal mix has been used which are advertisement, sales promotion, public relations and personal selling on consumer buying behaviour of natural cosmetic products in Chennai city with the survey questionnaire of 100 customers. In their study found that there is a significant and strong influence of promotional mix on consumer buying behaviour of natural cosmetic products. It also found that advertisement and sales promotion are considered as a major influencing factor to prefer natural cosmetic

products. The personal mix today is important because to enhance sales and purchase decision of the consumers, a company has to espouse effective advertisement and personal selling so the consumer can build up a strong relation with the products in the long term.

According to Xiao, Zhang, Li, and Samutachak (2016) study on the relationships among country image, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) and purchase intention of Korean cosmetic products. A survey questionnaire was conducted and collected from 255 customers in Beijing and Shanghai. The results show that the country image of Korean cosmetic products has a positive influence on the e-WOM and purchase intention of Korean

cosmetics, and that e-WOM is an intermediary between the country image of Korea and purchase intention of Korean cosmetics. This is because consumers and professional Korean cosmetics buyers through film and drama have become interested in Korean cosmetics, and gather information and convey information about Korean cosmetics through the internet so the consumer will review it before purchasing a product.

Table 1 shows the summary of critical literature analysis from various studies. Nevertheless, based on the previous studies, it proves that the relation between the concept of co-operative, credible, conversational, and consistency and consumer buying behaviour in cosmetics products are mostly significant.

**Table 1 Findings of previous studies**

Author	Country	Variable		Method	Findings
		IV	DV		
1. Co-operative					
Shyamsundar and Babu, 2016	Karnataka, India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sales promotion of new retail stores</li> <li>- service quality of new retail stores</li> <li>- Mediating ( Frequency of visit, mode of payment, amount spent)</li> <li>- Moderate(demographic)</li> </ul>	Consumer buying behaviour	Survey Questionnaire	The outcome shows that sales promotion and service quality positively relate to buying behaviour of consumers in modern retail shops in Karnataka.
Fareed, Tariq, Mian, Uddin, and Hassan, 2016	Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Store Association</li> <li>- Store Awareness</li> <li>- Store perceived quality</li> <li>- Store convenience</li> <li>- Product Assortments</li> <li>- Store Employee's Service</li> <li>- Perceived Price</li> <li>- Mediating (retailer loyalty)</li> </ul>	Consumer buying behaviour	Survey questionnaire	The results of the study revealed that all these factors having significant positive relation with purchase intention with the mediation role of store loyalty.

2. Credible					
Sheeraz, Iqbal, and Ahmed, 2012	Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brand Credibility</li> <li>- Consumer Values</li> </ul>	Purchase Intention	Survey Questionnaire (102 respondent)	Brand credibility and consumer values are significantly and positively associated with consumer purchase intentions.
Wang and Yang, 2010	China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brand Credibility</li> <li>- Moderation (Brand Awareness, Brand Image)</li> </ul>	consumers' brand purchase intention	Survey Questionnaire	Brand credibility significantly and positively impacts consumers' brand purchase intention; brand awareness and brand image are found to be important moderators in the relationship between brand credibility and brand purchase intention.
3. Conversational					
Mo, Li, and Fan, 2015	China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review rating (positive/negative/moderate review)</li> <li>- Review content (shop reputation/quantity of reviews)</li> </ul>	Consumer buying behaviour	Survey Questionnaire	The results show that the influential factors of online reviews on consumer buying behaviour include positive reviews, description rating, picture reviews, additional reviews and cumulative reviews. The four factors, moderate reviews, negative reviews, service star rating and logistics star rating, are not significant in this research.

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Malarout and Shetty, 2016	India	- Fashion bloggers	Purchase decision making	Survey Questionnaire, interview	The study infers that women constitute the major part of followers of fashion bloggers. Most of the followers are unmarried and believe that bloggers have a positive influence on their buying behaviour of branded product
4. Consistency					
Kazim and Kantharaj, 2015	Bangalore	- Cosmetic advertisement	Consumer purchase decision	Survey Questionnaire	There is a strong relationship between the cosmetic advertisements and customer purchase decision.
Vidhya and Ramesh, 2017	Chennai	- Advertisement - Sales promotion - Public relations - Personal selling	Consumer buying behaviour	Survey questionnaire	It was found that there is a significant and strong influence of promotional mix on consumer buying behaviour of natural cosmetic products.
Xiao, Zhang, Li, and Samutachak, 2016	China	- Country Image - Mediating (e-WOM)	Purchase intention	Survey Questionnaire	The country image of Korea cosmetic products have a positive influence on the e-WOM and purchase intention of Korean cosmetics, and that e-WOM is an intermediary between the country image of Korea and purchase intention of Korean cosmetics.

## CONCLUSION

Co-operative, credible, conversational, and consistency of sustainable brand as an important factor of consumer buying behaviour for cosmetics products. Thus, based on the previous studies shown significant relationship between co-operative, credible, conversational, and consistency and consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics products. However, in this paper expected to determine factors influence consumers buying behaviour towards cosmetics products and contribute to the existing theory of this study. Moreover, the findings also will help the industrial to create a product that can fulfil consumer needs and wants. As overall, future researchers could or would apply and extend the proposed research model as the framework of their future research.

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