The Effects of Lifestyles on Sustainable Consumption: A Conceptual Study of Cosmetics and Personal Care Products

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Abstract: Nowadays, it is noticeable that marketing strategies are moving towards sustainability due to several unsustainable consumption problems and one of the problems is packaging waste. Central to the problem is lifestyle. Lifestyle is one of the variables which fall within psychographic segmentation. Segmentation is the process where the market is divided into relevant groups that can be targeted by marketers. Previous study has employed VALS and AIO in India to predict lifestyle. Thus this study will also employ both measurement systems to re-validate the study findings in Malaysia and at the same time complement each measurement system deficiencies in defining lifestyles. Therefore, this study aims to identify the effect of consumers' lifestyles of cosmetics and personal care products on sustainable consumption that can allow marketers and researcher to predict their different consumption habits that are reflected by different lifestyles. This conceptual study is solely based on an extensive review from literature and previous data. The sources of collecting literature are Google search and digital library. This study is expected to prove that self-fulfilment, self-identity, feeling of uniqueness and believers segment is the dominant lifestyle that makes more sustainable consumption.

Keywords: Sustainable Consumption, Psychographic Segmentation, VALS, AIO, Cosmetics and Personal Care Products

1. Introduction

The development of cosmetic industry has been growing globally in both developed and developing countries (Azmi Hassali and AL-Tamimi, 2015). According to (Khan *et al.*, 2017), cosmetic industry growth is shifted from Western region to developing hemisphere of Asia. Meanwhile Malaysia's total trade volume for personal care and cosmetics products had increased about US$2.24 billion in 2015 (Cheong *et al.*, 2016). This continuous growth and evolution in cosmetics industry offers great consumption and thus wastes. Moreover Malaysians had generated about 30, 000 metric tonnes of rubbish each day (Jereme *et al.*, 2015). As a result, solid waste and solid waste management have given rise to many pressing issues in Malaysia and product packaging is a big contributor to the landfills in a near future (MHLG, 2006).

There are several problems emerged due to unsustainable consumption such as solid waste which is already a significant problem for Malaysia government (Haron, Paim and Yahaya, 2005). These consumption problems occurred due to the socio economic structure, industrial development, an urbanization process, increase population and individual actors' options and choices and a changing lifestyle (Briceno and Stagl, 2006); (Haron, Paim and Yahaya, 2005). Therefore this study will discuss about problem emanated from consumers' lifestyles through these consumption habits. Moreover understanding what determines

consumer behaviour provides a useful starting point for identifying the lifestyles of Malaysian consumption behaviour. Therefore making recommendations as to develop conceptual framework for sustainable consumption might help marketers or researchers to enrich the field of sustainable consumption research that is relatively new (Reisch *et al.*, 2016).

This study aims to identify the effect of consumers' lifestyles of cosmetics and personal care products on sustainable consumption that can allow marketers and researchers to predict their different consumption habits that are reflected by different lifestyles. Hence, these lifestyles that fall under psychographic segmentation might help the marketers to tap Malaysian market and to empower the sustainable marketing. There are two questions that have been developed which are (1) How consumers' lifestyles of cosmetics and personal care products give an impact to sustainable consumption? and (2) Which consumers' lifestyles of cosmetics and personal care products make more impacts on sustainable consumption?

1.1. Packaging Waste

(Vranjanac and Spasic, 2017) cited that packaging waste from personal care and cleaning products such as plastics bags and bottles caps, cardboard and plastic boxes should not be scattered around the environment but deposited at predetermined locations in compliance with local or national legislation. When cosmetics and personal care products are used up, tons of wastes are generated from the package that ends up in landfills (Girotto G., 2012); (Vranjanac and Spasic, 2017). According to Malaysian environment and waste management specialist, Dr Theng Lee Chong said that solid waste generation had created a major problems which are lack of landfill space, low recycling rate (Noor, 2016), pollution (Samah *et al.*, 2013) and littering. Hence these problems should be solved from the source. Waste initially requires certain economic means to be managed properly, including the costs of collection, transport, storage and treatment (Vranjanac and Spasic, 2017). Composition of solid waste from personal care products and cleaning products had been determined in a study by Pejcic and Vranjana (2016) that was cited in (Vranjanac and Spasic, 2017). The study was done in Serbia, and the result showed that plastic packaging had the biggest mass percentage of the four categories (46%). It was followed by glass packaging (34%), aluminium packaging (12%), and paper and cardboard packaging (8%) of the total packaging waste mass.

Due to the lack of data collection on packaging waste composition in Malaysia, the actual figures for packaging waste composition in Malaysia are not available. But the study that was done by (Periathamby, Hamid and Khidzir, 2009) had categorized the solid waste composition in Malaysia from 1975 to 2005 according to organic, paper, plastic, glass, metal, textiles, wood and others, and it was categorized more clearly by National Solid Waste Management Department (NSWMD), Ministry of Housing and Local Government Malaysia (National Solid Waste Management Department, 2011). NSWMD categorized the types of solid waste composition in 2005 according to organic waste contributed approximately 45%, followed by plastic (24%), paper waste (7%), metal (6%), glass (3%) and others (15%).

According to (National Solid Waste Management Department, 2011), the category of plastic that are used to produce personal care products fall under easy plastics to recycle, meanwhile the type of plastic resins and their respective symbol codes and classification fall under number 2 which reserved for high density polyethylene plastics (HDPE). The most used polymer United Kingdom (UK) is HDPE which is 20% of total consumer (household) plastic packaging. The majority of HDPE plastic packaging is bottles (54%) and it is mainly used to package milk and personal care products, due to its chemical resistant properties (WRAP, 2013). But somehow the product packaging might be hazardous when these formulating with the substances that would react with others, produce additional compounds that when attaining

with certain additional concentration levels might be capable of causing severe environmental and public health damage (Adamcová *et al.*, 2016).

1.2. The Importance Of Psychographic Segmentation

The task of the marketers is to identify the appropriate number and nature of market segments and decide which (one)s to target. According to (Kumar *et al.*, 2012), marketing strategy comprises of segmentation, targeting and positioning and marketing mix of the company. The first process in marketing strategy is segmentation that divides a market into a smaller group of buyers with distinctive needs, characteristics or behaviours who might require marketing mix separately (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008). Market segmentation is an essential element of marketing as we want to develop the most profitable segment by giving them what they need, want and how to communicate with them accordingly (Cahill, 1997). Without segmentation, it is difficult for marketers to do market targeting strategy precisely. With respect to that, it is impossible to create a marketing mix which is solid and cost-effective.

Psychographics variable is one of the market segmentation which scientifically uses psychology and demographics to understand the consumers. In psychographic segmentation, a market is divided into different groups of psychological/personality traits, lifestyle or values (Kotler and Armstrong, 2008). Generally, most of the definition of lifestyle is the way we live our lives, but it is not that easy to define a lifestyle (Jensen, 2007). This statement is also supported by (Ryden *et al.*, no date). According to (Nora, Liza & Minarti, 2016), lifestyle is about what they do, what do they buy and how they spend their time. Meanwhile (Sjöberg and Engelberg, 2005) defines lifestyles to three different meanings:

- The value shown by referring to a limited number of basic dimensions (freedom, justice, equality, etc.).
- Groups or groups of attitudes, opinions, interests and activities.
- The real behavior pattern. According to (Ryden *et al.*, no date), lifestyles come from a series of special and occasional behaviors forming a pattern that can be called a lifestyle.

In this study the definition of lifestyle will be discussed in three different meanings which are values, groups of attitudes, opinions, interests and activities and consumption patterns.

The marketers need to utilize the precise information from subgroups of psychographic segmentation to develop their commercial direction (Abduljalil and Tat, 2011) and to predict their behaviour; particularly in consumer behaviour that reflects consumer values that best show their lifestyle (Aydın and Ünal, 2015). Thus, different life styles will result in different consumption habits. In this case lifestyles must be measured appropriately plus with cultural differentiation. Measurement systems that are commonly employed to measure the first meaning of lifestyles which is values and consumption patterns which are The List of Values (LOV), Values and Lifestyles (VALS) (Abduljalil and Tat, 2011); (Aydın and Ünal, 2015); (Ghosh, 2014); and the Rokeach Value Survey (Vinson, Munson and Nakanishi, 1977). Meanwhile Activities, Interest and Opinions (AIO) (Narang, 2011) is used to measure another meaning of lifestyles which is groups of attitudes, interests, opinions and activities. Each of measurement systems has its strengths and limitations as according to Table 1.

Table 1. Strengths and Limitations of Measurement Systems in Lifestyles

Measurement Systems	Strengths	Limitations
Values & Lifestyles (VALS)	• It comprises demographics, attitudes, activities, consumption patterns, brand preferences & media graphics (Sathish and Rajamohan, 2012). • It can stand alone without including extra demographic variables (Novak and MacEvoy, 1990).	• It is a general framework to understand (Winters, 1989). • It is very weak at predicting people's purchase & too culturally specific for international use (Yankelovich and Meer, 2006).
ROKEACH Value Survey (RVS)	• It is a values hierarchy that enables researchers to describe quantitatively (Vinson, Munson and Nakanishi, 1977).	• It is positive response bias in cross cultural comparison (Jabes, no date).
Attitudes, Interest & Opinion (AIO)	• It is self-administered (González and Bello, 2002).	• Lengthy (a wide range of features) (González and Bello, 2002).
List of Values (LOV)	• It is easy to understand the cultural aspects based on social values (Begunca, 2017); . • It obtains demographic predictions separately & simple to administer (Lynn R. Kahle, Sharon E. Beatty, 1988).	• It is less predictive when there is no extra demographic variable (Novak and MacEvoy, 1990).

1.3. Sustainable Consumption

The concept of sustainable consumption that was coined in Oslo in 1994 was in line with the Brundtland commission definition of sustainable development. The definition of sustainable production and consumption is "the use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while protecting the environment, so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations" (Nations, Programme and Unep, 2010). Meanwhile (Maria Geiger *et al.*, 2017) defined sustainable consumption behaviour (SCB) as "individual acts of satisfying needs in different areas of life by acquiring, using and disposing goods and services that do not compromise the ecological and socioeconomic conditions of all people (currently living or in the future) to satisfy their own needs".

Therefore in this study, sustainable consumption is defined as a process that focuses on acquiring and disposing the cosmetics and personal care products while protecting environment. This study will employ SBC cube that is proposed by (Fischer *et al.*, 2017) to define sustainable consumption whereby the sustainability dimension is ecological, the consumption phase is acquiring and disposing and the consumption area is cosmetics and personal care products. Meanwhile the impact assessment approaches reported by (Fischer *et al.*, 2017), have a strong tradition with ecological realm.

There are several studies that are dealing with both consumers' lifestyles and sustainable consumption such as studies from (Fraj and Martinez, 2006); (Adnan, Ahmad and Khan, 2017); (Aydın and Ünal, 2015) as shown in table 2.

Table 2. Findings from Previous Studies Dealing With Consumers' Lifestyles And Sustainable Consumption

Authors / Country	Measurement systems	Findings
Fraj and Martinez (2006) / Spain	VALS	Ecological segment is best characterised with self-fulfilment feeling. They have ecological lifestyle (environment consciousness, selecting and recycling products and taking part in events to protect environment).
Adnan, Ahmad and Khan (2017) / India	VALS and AIO	Ecological segment is best characterised with self-identity and feeling of uniqueness. They have ecological lifestyle (selecting and recycling products and taking part in events to protect environment).
Aydin and Unal (2015) / Turkey	VALS	Consumers' lifestyles have an impact on their sustainable consumption trends. Innovators and thinkers carry more information about environmental problems and have more positive attitude. Meanwhile thinkers and believers make more sustainable consumption.

2. Problem Statements

VALS and AIO are both measurement systems that will be employed in this study since the definition of lifestyles consists of three different meanings which are values, groups of attitudes, interests, opinions and activities and consumption patterns. This study employs both of the measurement systems to complement each measurement system in defining lifestyles. According to one of the strengths of VALS, it shows that VALS can measure almost every meaning of lifestyles. Meanwhile the employment of AIO might give results which measurement is much stronger in predicting lifestyles between VALS and AIO in terms of activities, interests and opinions. Meanwhile previous study was done by (Adnan, Ahmad and Khan, 2017) in India. Hence this study will be done in Malaysia that might help to re-validate the study findings in other cultural differentiation.

3. Research Methodology

This conceptual study is solely based on a review from literature and data. The sources of collecting literature are Google search and digital library. The terms such as sustainable consumption, VALS, cosmetics and personal care products and solid waste were used and there was limited amount of information were found. The most helpful pieces of literature were studied by (Aydın and Ünal, 2015), (Fraj and Martinez, 2006) and (Adnan, Ahmad and Khan, 2017).

4. Conclusion

From the previous study by (Aydın and Ünal, 2015), the model exploring the influence of lifestyles, environmental knowledge and environmental attitude on sustainable consumption, environmental knowledge and attitude towards environmental protection have an influence on sustainable consumption. They might also have ecological lifestyle (environment consciousness (Fraj and Martinez, 2006), selecting and recycling products and taking part in events to protect environment (Adnan, Ahmad and Khan, 2017)). Meanwhile ecological segment is best characterised with self-fulfilment feeling (Fraj-Andrés and

Martínez-Salinas, 2007), self-identity and feeling of uniqueness (Adnan, Ahmad and Khan, 2017). Moreover the ecological segment might consists of thinkers who are the most lifestyle that engage in sustainable consumption more compared to the others and followed by believers (Aydın and Ünal, 2015).

Lifestyles are the central to all the consumption habits. Marketers and researchers have to study the consumers' lifestyles of cosmetics and personal care products since the consumption of the products has expanding and growing although in uncertain environment. There might be changing in consumers' lifestyle in the future and changing lifestyle might not agitate the marketers if they have the scale of lifestyles that is able to predict consumers' consumption habits.

Meanwhile the marketers could strategize the market targeting as well as positioning and marketing mix precisely and above all, all the marketing strategies which in line with sustainable consumption especially to protect environment. It is suggested that an extensive study should be done using different lifestyles scale systems.

In the future, the facts and figures of packaging wastes composition should be categorized accordingly to mitigate the waste management and recycling and might also to facilitate the researchers and policymakers in identifying which aspect (any brand or product) has contributed most to the packaging wastes.

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