

Research of Female Consumer Behavior in Cosmetics Market Case Study of Female Consumers in Hsinchu Area Taiwan

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ABSTRACT

The rapidly changing social situation in the latter part of the 20th century, such as revolutionary movement for women's equal rights, significantly affects the women consumer behaviors as well as improves their social status. The awakening of female consumer's consciousness during the recent years leads to alteration of consumer behavior, and influences the women's usual conception for pursuing fashion and cosmetics application, in fact, the makeup practice has already been regarded as a social politeness and necessary requirement for interpersonal activities. By employing the Means-End Chain theory, this study intends to explore the attribute, result, and value attached importance by female consumer towards cosmetic products, in order to realize consumer's cosmetics application process. The female consumers in Hsinchu are taken as research targets for this study to conduct variable analysis of their lifestyle and demographic statistics. Totally 550 questionnaires were released and 390 copies are effective among the retrieved ones. Methods as factor analysis and ANOVA are applied for examining various study hypotheses. Moreover, the implementation of Means-End Chain theory allows cosmetics industry to better understand the signification of product attribute valued by consumers so as to anticipate the details of consumer result and value recognition experienced by consumers.

Keywords: Lifestyle Variable, Demographic Statistics Variable, Product Attribute, Mean-End Chain, Consumer Behavior

1. Introduction

The rapidly changing social situation in the latter part of the 20th century, such as revolutionary movement for women's equal rights, significantly affects the women consumer behaviors as well as improves their social status. The female consumers hold a different view about applying cosmetics ever since, in other words, they consider wearing cosmetics not only for enhancing self-confidence but also as a form to express social politeness. According to the data provided by Industrial Technology Research Institute, as much as US\$ 0.1548 billion is worth the global cosmetics market in 2001, and the sum is expected to soar to US\$0.1817 billion in 2008 (*i.e.*, NTS 6.3595 billion) [1]. As indicated in the World Market for Cosmetics and Toiletries, a comprehensive analysis of the cosmetics and toiletries market offered by Euro monitor International in June 2007, covering 52 countries of global 95% GDP, and the global market size is expected to reach US\$ 0.23 billion in 2009, while Asia

would become the largest cosmetics market in the whole world from 2011 to 2013. In the meantime, the lifestyle and taste for fashion of women consumers will turn to far more diversified along with the constant market expansion. Lifestyle is definitely an important factor for studying consumer behavior; according to the lifestyle concept presented by Lazer [2], the lifestyle concept may facilitate revealing the potential consumer behavior, in addition, the Means-End Chain (MEC) offered by Gutman [3], the theory the most used for analyzing the association between product and customer in the marketing documentation. The major methods for measuring lifestyle frequently used in the market at present include Values and Lifestyle Survey (VALS) and AIO scale (Activity, Interests, Opinion Inventory). The Means-End Chain (MEC) theory presented by Gutman [3], is extensively applied for exploring consumer behavior, and explicitly defining the structure among three levels, namely, product attributes, purchase result, as well as outcome produced by individual value. The theory is based on the

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