

Raising Halal Cosmetic Awareness among the respective Consumers

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ABSTRACT

At the present time Muslims comprise one of the biggest world markets with a value of billions of dollars on Halal products in the Islamic markets and same value for cosmetics consumption in Middle East. The new term of Halal cosmetics has born in recent years, but in some Islamic countries, most of Muslim people are still unfamiliar with it and believe that the term Halal is just used for food products not for cosmetics and health care products. Therefore, the development of these products in Islamic markets cannot be attached to the reality unless measures are taken in order to raise the Muslims awareness about these products and its advantages. This important issue needs many steps and much effort. Determining Halal cosmetics knowledge level of cosmetics consumers and sellers of these products, and finding the responsible people or organizations for introducing and promoting these products to the Muslim people in Islamic countries from consumers and sellers viewpoints is the goal of this study.

Keywords:

Halal cosmetics knowledge, cosmetics consumers, cosmetics sellers, consumer's awareness, seller's awareness

1. Introduction

Halal as a Quranic term applies to allowed, legal products according to the Islamic thoughts. Halal cautious consumers have a high attention towards Halal concept, and they try to adapt their behavioral traits decision making with it (Bonne et al., 2007; Wilson and Liu, 2011). Halal logo can be placed on the Halal products for Muslims to know that the product has Halal quality (Cheng 2008). Halal is considered in all affairs including eating, drinking, clothing, cosmetics, and job functions and so on (Lada et al 2009). In other words, a Halal product is a product fit to consume by Muslim people, it can be used for food products, meat, cosmetics/ healthcare products and their ingredients (Nuradli et al.,2007). Most people, even non- Muslim are almost familiar with Halal foods, but the term of Halal cosmetics sometimes is completely new even for Muslim consumers. Therefore, in this study it is tried to measure the consumers and related sellers' awareness towards this term.

Since Dubai World Beauty Middle East is one of the biggest cosmetics and healthcare products exhibition in an Islamic country and even in the world and can attract large number of visitors especially from the other Islamic countries, it provided a big opportunity to measure the level of Halal cosmetics knowledge of the cosmetics consumers of different countries.

This study includes two parts in the level of consumers and seller awareness about Halal cosmetics and healthcare products. The first part was done in Dubai World Beauty Middle East on May 26-28 of 2015 (Beauty 2015) on exhibition visitors; and the second part on the sellers of the Dubai cosmetics stores. For introducing and promoting Halal cosmetics to people especially Muslim people, the same question was asked from both the groups and the results were compared with each other.

2. Literature review

2.1. Halal cosmetics awareness

Halal cosmetics are almost a new word and most of cosmetics consumers and manufacturers have little knowledge about it. There are different factors that can affect the consumers' awareness about these products, for example the availability of Halal cosmetics is a factor for the ones who are willing to purchase Halal cosmetics and personal care if, and when these products are available in market (Kamaruzaman 2008). Other studies in this arena include awareness and perception of Muslim consumers on non- food Halal products and identification of its influencing factor (Farlina 2013), awareness investigation on Malaysian Halal consumers

(Teng & Wan 2013), amount of intention to use Halal cosmetics and personal care products based on the race and awareness (Teng & Wan 2013), positive impact such as “Advertising and progress”, “Halal products relative quality”, “subjective norm”, “religious”, on attitude towards products with Halal brand and negative impact such as “consumption barriers” and “attitude towards other products” (Kordnaeij 2013) and also about some governmental and non-governmental organizations [NGO] and private companies that engaged in promoting awareness of the consumers towards Halal products by conducting Halal conference, Halal seminar, Halal auditor training, Halal forum and so on (Farlina 2013).

Muslim should consume Halal products and services but a survey conducted by KasihDia Consulting about Halal cosmetics specified that the level of awareness among the Muslims is still low (Kamaruzaman 2008). It is same for some countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates with little knowledge about these products though in Malaysia they have been available for about 30 years and even with a strong growth in recent years (Patton 2009). Conversely a new wave of Halal cosmetics and personal care products showed a new trend in the global cosmetics industry because of increasing global Muslim populations and their awareness towards cosmetics ingredients which made the mainstream cosmetics industry to listen their voice and try to satisfy them by the products according the Islamic rules (Swidi et al. 2010).

The consumers’ attitudes towards different Halal products are not same. For example a KasehDia survey in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) showed least awareness about Halal cosmetics products in comparison to consumers in Europe and Asia. “For them, Halal is only about meat products,” said Sungkar (Patton 2010). Another report from World Halal Forum (2010) presented 94-98% awareness level for meat and meat-based products, 40-64% for food and starting to increase between 18-30% for Pharmaceuticals and cosmetics and personal care products. This big growth in Halal business shows that many food and non-food products such as cosmetics, logistic, pharmaceutical are going towards Halal in the future (Hassan et.al. 2011). In 2012 Hunter claimed that the Halal awareness of Muslim community about Halal cosmetics is still low and Muslim consumers are increasing in affluence and starting to demand Halal cosmetics according to their religious rules, he mentioned that about 20% of Muslim consumers do not care about Halal logo when they want to purchase a cosmetic product. In other hand, a study in Malaysia about consumers’ awareness, usage and intention to use Halal cosmetics and personal care products specified that there were significant differences between respondents’ race and awareness towards these products and strong relationship with year of study and study in religious school about their intention to use these products (Teng & Wan 2013).

3. Methodology

For determining the Halal cosmetics knowledge level of consumers of cosmetics/ health care products, two questionnaires are designed. The number of visitors in the Dubai World Beauty

Middle East 2014 reported to be 28632 (Beauty 2014). According to the Cochran formula, the statistical population obtained was 379, and totally 421 useful questionnaires were collected from the exhibition visitors or in other words cosmetics/ healthcare products consumers. In next step, from the 227 cosmetics and toiletries companies (Dubai yellow pages) , the statistical population obtained was 143, but because the sellers were intended for this study, and usually more than one seller were available in the stores, totally 194 useful questionnaires were collected from the cosmetics/ healthcare products stores and finally the version 21 of SPSS software used for data analysis.

4. Results and discussion

The demographic results of consumers' questionnaires are showed in table 1. Except of demographic section, this questionnaire included 14 questions. According to the demographic results, based on the more cosmetics consumption by women, more than 87 percent of the respondents were women. The most consumers were Muslim with age range of 21 to 30 years old.

Table 1- The demographic results of consumer's questionnaire

Characteristics	percentage	Characteristics	percentage
<i>Gender</i>		<i>Status</i>	
Women	87.2	Single	72.4
Men	12.8	Married	27.6
<i>Educational level</i>			
Diploma & less	13.5		
Bachelor	59.9		
Master & higher	26.6		
<i>Religion</i>		<i>Age</i>	
Muslim	86.2	<20	29
Christian	6.7	21- 30	50.3
Hindu	3.6	31- 40	12.6
Buddhist	1	41- 50	6.9

Characteristics	percentage	Characteristics	percentage
Others	2.6	>50	1.2
Nationality		Nationality	
Iran	16.4	Bahrain	2.1
Algeria	10.7	Morocco	1.9
Syria	7.8	Saudi Arabia	1.4
UAE	5.9	Canada	1.2
Palestine	5.7	Kuwait	1
Egypt	5.7	Bangladesh	1
India	5.5	Philippines	1
Iraq	5.5	Yemen	0.5
Jordan	5	Somalia	0.2
Sudan	2.9	Oman	0.2
Pakistan	2.6	others	13.5
Lebanon	2.4		

The results of questions 1 to 4 of questionnaire no 1 are showed in table 2. In accordance with results, more than 62 percent of respondents have never heard about Halal cosmetics. About 68 percent were familiar with this term and used these products, and the most reason for using Halal cosmetics were the Islamic thoughts, although more than 75 percent of them did not look for these products in non-Islamic countries.

Table 2- The results of questions 1 to 4

Questions		percentage
1- Have never heard about Halal cosmetics?	No	62.3
	Yes	37.7
2- Do you consume these products?	No	67.9
	Yes	32.1
3- Are you looking for these products in non-Islamic countries?	No	75.3
	Yes	24.7
4- The reasons for using Halal cosmetics:	Islamic thoughts	62.3
	Family/ friends/ Doctors recommendation	22.3
	More product quality and safety	15,4

Table 3 shows the response of respondents to the multiple choice questions 5 to 8, they were allowed to choose more than one answer from the provided options.

Table 3- The results of questions 5 to 8

Questions	Frequency	percentage
5- If you know Halal cosmetics are more safe than other products:		
Will buy only these products	193	22.4
Will buy if you find them easily	240	27.9
Will recommend to others	245	28.5
It is not enough to encourage you to buy them	183	21.3
6- How will ensure that the products are Halal?		
By asking from sellers	244	27.9
By Halal logo on the products	185	21.1
By checking of ingredients	263	30
Looking for Halal brand via internet	184	21
7- The most important factors of buying cosmetics product:		
Quality	326	45
Price	116	16
Brand	114	15.7
Offers	45	6.2
Halal logo	123	17
8- Who do you think is responsible to introduce and promote Halal cosmetics to the people?		
Islamic governments	215	25.8
Islamic associations	77	9.2

Islamic missionaries	33	4
Halal cosmetics manufacturers	222	26.7
Healthcare institutes	145	17.4
Media	141	16.9

According to the results (table 3), reason of those Muslim people who do not look for Halal cosmetics in non- Islamic countries can be explained by the obtained most important factor on choosing cosmetics products which was quality not Halal logo. In addition, the results showed that if the people know about the Halal cosmetics safety, only 22.4 percent of them will buy only these products although the accessibility of the products and sellers' knowledge will play important roles in this regard. And finally the respondents believed that the Halal cosmetics manufacturers and Islamic governments have more responsibility towards introducing and promoting these products to the people.

The remaining questions (as 5-point Likert type) only should be answered by the consumers with Halal cosmetics knowledge (table 4). According to the results, although the consumers had average level of knowledge of Halal cosmetics but they believed to the consumption and the advantages of these products and are interested to raise their knowledge about these products.

Table 4- The Likert type results of questions 9 to 14

Questions	Mean	Results
<i>9-Halal knowledge level</i>	2,83	Ave
<i>10-Importance of consumption</i>	3.37	High
<i>11-Tendency to purchase</i>	3.41	High
<i>12-Usage advantages</i>	3.55	High
<i>13-Recommendation to others</i>	3.36	High
<i>14-Tendency to have more knowledge</i>	3.49	High

Since the results showed that the seller's knowledge have important role on consumer decisions to purchase Halal cosmetics (Q 6), in the next step, the second questionnaire designed to know about the seller's Halal cosmetics knowledge. The following demographic data (table 5) collected from 194 useful questionnaires from the sellers of cosmetics and healthcare products in Dubai.

Table 5- The demographic results of seller's questionnaire

Characteristics	percentage	Characteristics	percentage
<i>The field of cosmetics activity</i>		<i>Halal cosmetics knowledge</i>	
Retailer	63.4	Never heard	32.5
Distribution	23.7	Low	10.8
production	12.4	Average	23.7
Packing	0.5	High	33
<i>Religion</i>		<i>Education</i>	
Christian	53.1	Bachelor and less	77.8
Muslim	35.6	Master and higher	22.2
Hindu	6.2		
Buddhist	3.1		
Others	2		

Totally about 63.4 percent of cosmetics companies, which have store in Dubai, were active in sales only and 36.6 percent in addition to sales were active in other fields. The results showed that about 64 percent of the cosmetics/ healthcare supply centers managed by non-Muslim sales person, and 43.3 percent of the total respondents had low or no knowledge about Halal cosmetics, so this figures reflected the vulnerability of these products in Dubai Market and showed that because of less Halal knowledge of sellers, they cannot help to encourage consumers to buy Halal cosmetics.

The seller’s opinions about the responsible persons or organizations to introduce and promote these products to the people provided in table 6.

Table 6- The responsible authority from seller's opinion to introduce Halal cosmetics to people

<i>Who do you think is responsible to introduce and promote Halal cosmetics to the people?</i>	Frequency	percentage
Islamic governments	95	20.9
Islamic associations	15	3.3
Islamic missionaries	17	3.7
Halal cosmetics manufacturers	122	26.8
Healthcare institutes	93	20.4
Media	113	24.8

A comparison between the sellers and consumers opinions regarding the responsible persons showed that the manufacturers have the most important role to introduce and promote Halal cosmetics to the people in both groups (Figure 1). While the second and third ranks were different. For example, the sellers gave more points to the media and less to the Islamic governments. Totally, Halal manufacturers, Islamic governments and media had important roles in both sections.

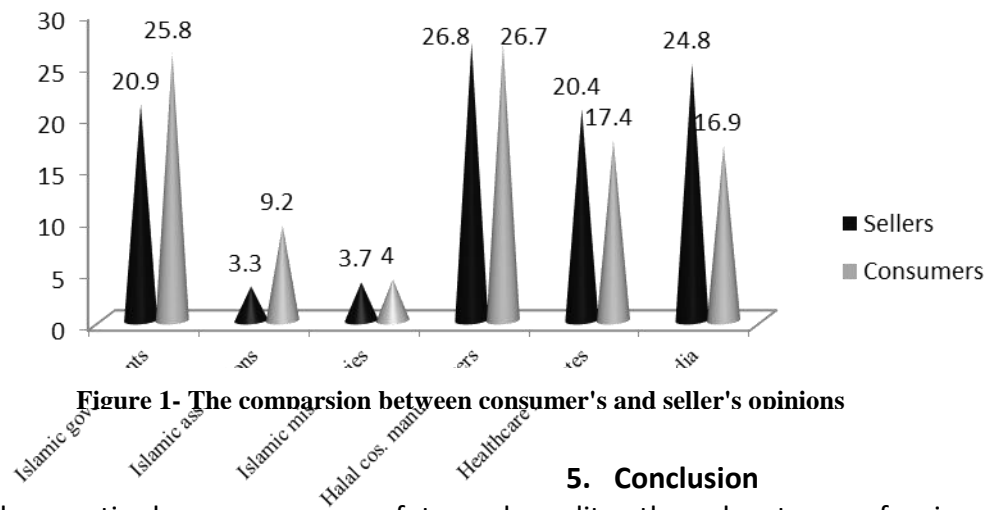


Figure 1- The comparison between consumer's and seller's opinions

5. Conclusion

Since the Halal cosmetics have more safety and quality, the advantages of using these products are considerable but if the consumers do not have enough awareness or accessibility to these products in markets, developing of these products by consumer tendency towards purchasing of Halal cosmetics cannot be attached to the reality. Therefore, as a first step, the responsible persons or organizations should be properly recognized and with various programs

help to augment the consumers Halal cosmetics awareness and in next step, help to make them accessible for Muslims or any interested consumers to these products.

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