

Survey the Effective Factor on Attitude & Purchase Intention of Organic Skin and Hair Care Products

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Abstract

Today, numerous illnesses by the consumption of chemical products caused people tend to consume natural products. Hence, in addition to respect environmental problems, companies have to care about consumer's health in producing their products. The aim of present paper is to study the affecting factors on the intention of using skin and hair organic cosmetic products by using theory on planned behavior.

In terms of this purpose, this is an applied research while it is a descriptive – survey (correlation) and a field study in terms of methodology nature. Needed information is gathered by a questionnaire while Pearson's correlation, regression analysis and SPSS software packages are used to analyze data. To this end, a 384 – subject sample was estimated and for more confidence, 400 questionnaires were distributed among Arak's citizens. Finally, 360 questionnaires were returned and analyzed.

The findings indicate that attitude toward skin and hair organic cosmetic products, consumer's perceived behavioral control and past pleasant experiences on consuming organic products impact on his/her intent to buy positively and directly while the hypothesis regarding the impact of consumer's subjective norms on intent to buy skin and hair organic cosmetic products are not supported.

Concerning research limitations, one can point that many people were unfamiliar with organic product terms despite of consuming it and it enforced the author to get them familiar with such products initially. Likewise, lack of organic cosmetic product shops made delays in questionnaire collection process. Finally, producers are recommended to take decisions and strategies to change consumers' attitudes toward consuming skin and hair organic cosmetic products.

By extending the theory of planned behavior, present paper studies affecting factors on skin and hair organic cosmetic products; so, it is considered as a novel study in this regard.

Keywords: Cosmetic Products, Green Marketing, Subjective Norms.

Introduction

Cosmetic product producers are working in a high income industry. They attempt to use all possible methods to increase their sales and profit. Different studies indicate that in such products, using types of toxic and dangerous chemicals are closely related to cancers, proliferation deficiencies, abortion and respiratory and skin sensitivities (Nigok, 2007). Types of lotions and supplied in pharmacies which contain diverse toxic and chemical ingredients such as maintainers, colors, anti-microbes and cleaners are delivered to consumers by such maxims as cleaner, whiter and healthier skin. In contrary to such trading campaigns, they have undesired impacts on the health, water and wildlife throughout the earth. In the meantime, their luxury and unnecessary packages are considered as a big source of trashes (Word Watch Institute, 2008). Perhaps, no one could imagine that one day, marketing would concern consumer's health in addition to profitability and sales. However, dynamism, hyper competition, increasingly concerns on environment as well as governmental regulations and consumers' increasingly awareness have motivated companies to contemplate on consumers' physical and mental health and environmental cleanness (Doaei et al., 2006). In present century, man's main challenge is to find a more sustainable and fairer way for production, consumption and living. In marketing, this challenge has two aspects: in short term, social and ecological discussions are changed to an important external affecting factor on companies and markets so that companies should react to

consumers' changing needs, new laws and increasingly social pressures on business social and environmental effects. In long term, sustainable searches need radical changes in dominated managerial paradigm so that it can influence over other marketing functions in accordance with social accountability (Saadat et al., 2007).

Green marketing is considered as a major tendency in modern business (Gurau & Ranchhod, 2005). Environment issue especially negative impacts by human communities on it are highly paid attention in recent years. In recent years, it caused a new trend in human knowledge and in producing different goods called as green technologies and movement toward green products. Today, many consumers can buy alternative and environment – friendly goods. Industrial and trading companies, governments and citizens that are concerning about the future of the world can use their power purchase to manufacture lower risky and healthier merchandises such as organic foods, chemical – free detergents and green power energy (World Watch Institute, 2008). Similar to many countries, Iran suffers from high levels of air pollution, low quality water, high volume of sound pollutions due to traffic, high amount of unburied trashes and rapid mitigation of its resources. Environmental problems are mainly due to abnormal consumerism. Small changes in life style and consuming habits can have valuable contribution in such movement. Iranian government can adopt different strategies in persuading sustainable consumption and green behavior development. Concerning increasingly environmental problems and the negative effects by consumerism on human

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physical and mental health, it is unavoidable to address such issues (Hamdi et al., 2011). Concerning the importance of green products in consumers' well – being, present paper aims at studying the affecting factors on intent to buy skin and hair organic cosmetic products.

The necessity and importance of the research

Today, environment is increasingly changed to a vital and highly important issue for all classes of people either customer or manufacturer. Traditional marketing emphasizes excessively on customers' demands and does not consider social welfare and environmental issues. It is entered into organizations in all aspects and has also influenced over marketing and emergence of green marketing concept (Tondkar, 2008). Although discussions on green marketing have a long history, it is not well considered due to different reasons. Although it seems that by revealing environmental problems to which today human generation suffers, it is necessary to consider it more than ever. Companies should consider being green as a part of their trading strategies and investment as another part to develop and expand their business. Simultaneously, Consumers should tend to buy environment friendly goods (Hamayeli Ghorbani & Ghazizadeh, 2009) and since health and behavior are interrelated (Keshavarz et al, 2010). Studying and recognizing consumer's behavior regarding intention to buy organic hair and skin products is one of the best ways for more return of active companies in manufacturing such products since green trading needs contribution and interaction of both manufacturers and consumers (Hamayeli Ghorbani & Ghazizadeh, 2009). Right understanding on consumers and consumption process involves several advantages such helping managers in their decision making, a cognitive basis to analyze consumers, helping lawmakers and regulators to adopt laws on buying/selling goods and services and finally helping consumers for better decision making. Besides, studying consumer's behavior can aid to understand factors on social science which impact on human behavior (Mowen and Maynor, 2009). Likewise, another main reason of studying consumer's behavior is that it includes various theories with research backup which can be used to identify and resolve problems related to managers and policymakers (Solomon, 1999). Concerning resource and energy consumption crises in recent years, Iran needs to develop marketing products more adaptable to environment. Lack of proper researches and relevant executive guidelines reveals the necessity of paying attention to consumers' behaviors (Tondkar, 2008).

Green marketing history

Tendency toward green marketing started in late 1970s when US Marketing Association organized the 1st ecological workshop. Then in 1979, its results were published in a book titled ecological marketing by Henion and Kenner. Despite of preliminary advances, it was in late 1980s that green marketing idea was seriously raised. The reason of this approach in that time was people's increasingly awareness. Consumers' propensity to green products increased due to people's increasingly awareness on buying green products (Hamayeli Ghorbani & Ghazizadeh, 2009).

Green marketing definitions

In the first definition of green marketing in Henion's book, plans to execute marketing conducted toward market environmental friendly segments are called as green marketing. Based on Henion's definition on green marketing, various definitions are also provided (Hamayeli Ghorbani & Ghazizadeh, 2009). Solomon and Stewart define green marketing as "a marketing strategy which supports building environmental recognizable advantages based on what customer expects (Hamdi et al., 2011). According to Polonsky, green marketing includes all activities to create and facilitate exchanges to meet human needs and demand by the lowest destructive impacts on environment (Tondkar, 2008). In 1976, US Marketers Association defined green marketing as: "studying positive and negative aspects of marketing on pollution and decrease in energy and other resources (Hamdi et al., 2011).

Consumer's behavior

Consumer's behavior addresses to study all processes including selecting and using goods, services, experiences and/or ideas by people, groups and organizations to meet needs and studying their impacts on customer and society (Hawkins and Roger, 2006). According to McDaniel, consumer's behavior explains purchase decision making by consumers and the way of using purchased goods/services (McFatter, 2005). Solomon believes that consumer's behavior aims at meeting needs and demands of different persons and groups and studies affecting process in the time of selecting, buying and using products, services, ideas and experiences (Solomon, 1999).

Theory of planned behavior (TPB)

Theory of planned behavior was developed by Ajzen and Fishbein. According to this theory, the first determinant of a behavior is behavioral intent which expresses "individual's impetus to adopt a behavior". Behavioral intent is an outcome of personal attitude toward behavior, personal understanding on social norms of other people and life space and personal understanding on the control to do or not to do a behavior (Solhi et al., 2012). In theory of planned behavior, the intent to conduct a certain behavior is impacted by three variables: attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control (King & Dennis, 2005). In other words, theory of planned behavior was shaped by this insight that behavioral intent forecasts behavior (Mehri, 2006). Attitude toward behavior points out a degree by which a person assesses a behavior as desired or undesired. Subjective norm refers to a perceived social pressure to do or not to do a behavior while perceived behavioral control reflects personal conceptions on individual and situational barriers for behavioral performance (Grandon, 2005).

Attitude

Attitude is a mental propensity to act in the same or opposite direction of a certain subject. In other words, attitude is more or less a sustainable mood in person's mental structure that prepares him/her to react to a related object or situation clearly. Alport defined attitude as a mental readiness toward reactions shaped by experiences and impacts on behavior directly and dynamically (Ranjbarian et al., 2007). Attitudes determine

behaviors. It implies implicitly that one can change individuals' behaviors via changing their attitudes (Karimi, 2000).

Subjective norms

Subjective norms are related to someone's previous opinions on "doing or not doing a behavior" and motivate him/her to do or accept a behavior (Shojaeizadeh, 2000). Subjective norm certain is an individual's belief in authorities' thoughts and opinions on doing a certain behavior by him/her. It motivates people to follow the opinions of authorities in doing a certain behavior (Volk, 2001). A person may be influenced by numerous people in his/her own social networks which proves that different people including parents, religious leaders and political leaders influence over his/her behaviors and opinions. Here, such person is enforced to balance contrary pressures by different people who may agree or disagree with his/her demands. Likely, His/her performance is highly influenced by the demands of the people who influence him/her extremely and are important for him/her (Shojaeizadeh, 2000). In fact, subjective norm is an individual's belief to a distinguished authority on doing or not doing a behavior (Li et al., 2009).

Perceived behavioral control

Another factor which impacts on people's intent to do or not to do a behavior is perceived behavioral control (Mehri, 2006). It is an extent of personal feeling on the fact that to what extent doing or not doing a behavior is controlled by him/her that two factors namely controlled beliefs and perceived capability build it (Beharati et al., 2011). Perceived behavioral control determines the behavior when perceived behavioral control reflects actual control over given behavior (Mehri, 2006).

Behavioral intent

A main factor in the theory of planned behavior is individual's intent to conduct a certain behavior. It is assumed that such intent controls over motivational factors that impact on behavior. Behavior intent refers to an individual's intent to do a given behavior. Strong intent is shown by an individual's subjective possibility by which he/she does that behavior. Combined behavioral intents express people's plans such as their practices and motivations to be involved in a given behavior. Therefore, it is more likely that motivated persons conduct a behavior successfully (Mehri, 2006).

Organic sanitary hair and skin products

In present paper, organic sanitary hair and skin products refer to such products of shampoos, soaps, lotions and body creams made from natural products which can be degraded and returned to nature and are free of any damaging materials for environment or cannot be returned to nature.

Theoretical framework and conceptual model

Theory of planned behavior is a powerful theory to predict people's behavior introduced by Eisen and Fishbein (Kim and Chung, 2011). It is a social – cognitive theory which draws a fruitful framework to predict and understand sanitary behavior. In Theory of Planned Behavior, Eisen asserts that attitude toward behavior, subjective norms on behavior and control over perceived behavior are three determining constructs for

propensity to a behavior and behavioral determinants include perceived behavior control and behavioral intent (Keshavarz et al., 2010).

Theory of Planned Behavior is broadly used sanitary behaviors such as nutrition regimes, sport, and participation in health screening and safe roads. This theory can explain about 40% of the relationship between behavioral intent and sanitary behavior. As a result, one can claim that this model enjoys a potential capacity to develop behavioral interventions (Solhi et al., 2012). In their research, Keshavarz et al, (2010) found that Theory of Planned Behavior and self – efficacy impact on nutritive behavior toward selecting healthy foods by women. In another research, Hamdy et al, (2011) found that environmental attitude, environmental concern, conceiving the importance of environmental difficulties, conceiving social responsibility, comprehending the effectiveness of environmental behavior and people's concerns on personal perception impact on youth's intent to green purchase. Gotschi et al, (2010) found that attitude associates purchase behavior and subjective norms on family members have a remarkable correlation with the intent and attitude to purchase organic products. Magistris and Gracia (2008) determined that attitude toward organic products is the most important stimulant for customers to buy organic products. Seyed Saleki et al, (2012) found that sensitivity to price, subjective norms, the experience of consuming organic foods and knowledge toward organic materials impact on attitude toward such materials and the attitude per se impacts on the intent to buy organic foods positively. In other fields, Theory of Planned Behavior can act as a strong behavior predictor. The efficiency of Theory of Planned Behavior in predicting the utilization of new technologies is proved (Baker et al., 2007). Chang et al., (2009) showed that Theory of Planned Behavior can predict well the behavioral intention of people in using online libraries. Laohapensang (2009) predicted the purchase behavior in Internet by using Theory of Planned Behavior. Likewise, Lee and Teo (2010) studying using this theory in using technology and indicated that such variables as attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control can predict using the technology well.

Present study is extracted from a model introduced by Kim and Chung (2011) and is modeled on Theory of Planned Behavior which is used to explain the grounds of intent to buy hair and skin organic products. In addition to the constructs of Theory of Planned Behavior by Eisen and Fishbein, it introduces customers' values as a factor to predict their attitudes and past experiences from other natural products as a factor to predict intent to buy. Consumers' values consist of three sections: attention to health, attention to appearance and attention to environment. Attention to health conducts people to be involved in sanitary behaviors. Those consumers who pay more attention to health may consider whether relevant product is trustable for skin and body or not. Therefore, compared to those consumers who have less awareness, they may have higher concerns on product ingredients. Furthermore, those people who pay more attention to environment are apt to change their purchase behaviors and in parallel to attention to environment, it is seen as a precondition for green consumption. Using hair and skin sanitary products is a purchase behavior which satisfies individual beauty needs. Some people who tend extremely to

keep their appearance are looking for nonchemical sanitary products (Kim & Chung, 2011).

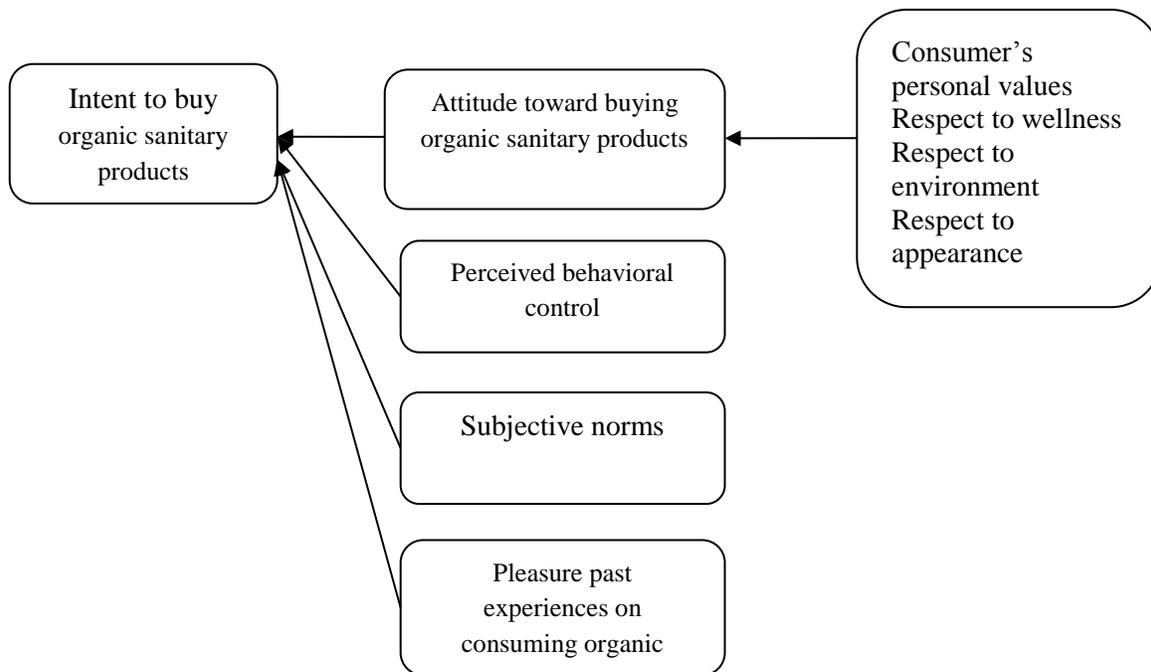


Figure 1: Research Conceptual Model

Research hypotheses

H1. Consumer’s personal values impact positively on consumer’s attitudes toward buying hair and skin sanitary products.

H2. Consumer’s attitudes toward buying hair and skin sanitary products impact on customer’s intent to buy positively.

H3. Consumer’s subjective norms impact positively on intent to buy hair and skin sanitary products.

H4. Perceived behavioral control impacts positively on intent to buy hair and skin sanitary products.

H5. Consumer’s past pleasure experiences impact positively on intent to buy hair and skin sanitary products.

Methodology

This is an applied research in terms of purpose while it is a descriptive survey (correlations) in terms of data collection method by which data is mainly gathered by a field study. The population consists of all hair and skin product consumers in Arak. Available sampling method is used in this research. Therefore, questionnaires were distributed in hair and skin product shops among those consumers who had already consumed such products at least one time. To this end, author should ask all individuals whether they had already consumed such products or not.

Since it was impossible to gather the information of all population (even if possible, it couldn’t be conducted due to limited time, costs and other needed facilities), a sample was selected. Due to

unlimited population, Cochran formulation was used to determine relevant sample (Azar and Momeni, 2001).

$$n = \frac{Z_{\alpha/2}^2 p(1-p)}{\epsilon^2}$$

Where $Z_{\alpha/2}$ and ϵ are estimation precise and critical normal distribution in level respectively, P and 1-P are successfulness and unsuccessfulness respectively and n is minimum sample size. In present study, confidence level and estimation precise are 95% and 5% respectively. Therefore, we have:

$$n = \frac{(1/96)^2(0/5)(0/5)}{(0/05)^2} = 384$$

In present paper, statistical sample is 384 concerning the broadness of the population. For more confidence, 400 questionnaires were distributed of which 360 usable questionnaires were analyzed.

Pearson correlation tests and regression analysis were used to analyze obtained information from questionnaires.

Questionnaire validity and reliability

Owing to the fact that in devising the present research questionnaire, international standard questionnaires were used that are naturally confirmed and used by well-known international marketing authors and connoisseurs, used questionnaire as a tool to collect data enjoys proper validity. To assure its reliability, the questionnaire was submitted to some experts including

commercial management and statistics and instructors and practitioners who support its reliability.

To assure no ambiguity in questions as well as localizing the scales and more adaptability to statistical population, initial studies were conducted and the reliability of the questionnaire was determined. To this end, the questionnaire was experimentally

distributed among 40 subjects. Cronbach's α value is used to measure questionnaire reliability. Cronbach's α value (0.935) was computed by using SPSS software package which shows high reliability of the questionnaire. The relevant values are shown in table 1.

Table 1: Questionnaire Resources

Variable	Questions	Cronbach's α value
Consumer's personal values	6	0.832
Attitude	4	0.820
Perceived behavioral control	3	0.760
Subjective norms	3	0.659
Past experiences in consuming the product	3	0.784
Intent to buy	3	0.852

Analyzing the results

Table 2 indicates average and standard deviation of such variables as consumer's personal values, attitude, perceived behavioral control, subjective norms and past experiences of buying organic products and intent to buy. Each variable is

obtained through diving total scores of relevant question on the total number of questions (as a result, the scores are between 1 and 5). Table 3 depicts correlations among studied variables.

Table 2: Averages and Standard Deviations of Studied Variables

Variable	Average	Standard deviation
Consumer's personal values	2.76	0.59
Attitude	2.84	0.66
Perceived behavioral control	2.73	0.63
Subjective norms	2.71	0.62
Past experiences in consuming organic product	2.89	0.66
Intent to buy	2.84	0.76

Table 3: Correlation Matrix among Studied Variables

Variable	Intent to buy	Past experiences	Subjective norms	Perceived behavioral control	Attitude	Consumer's personal values
Consumer's personal values	0.276**	0.209**	0.314**	0.345**	0.364**	1
Attitude	0.729**	0.467**	0.426**	0.607**	1	
Perceived behavioral control	0.718**	0.472**	0.564**	1		
Subjective norms	0.474**	0.376**	1			
Past experiences	0.626**	1				
Intent to buy	1					

**significance level in 0.01 level

Table 4: The Summary of Regression Results to Predict Attitude

Dependent variable	Predictor	B	β	t	sig
Attitude	(Fixed)	1.726		11.143	0.000
	Consumer's values	0.405	0.364	7.399	0.000

* $R^2=0.133$, $F(1.358) = 54.739$, $P = 0.000 < 0.01$

Table 5: The Summary of Results of Regression to Predict Intent to Buy Hair and Skin Sanitary Products

Predictor	B	β	t	Sig.	Dependent variable
(Fixed)	-0.492		-4.012	0.000	intent to buy hair and skin sanitary products
Attitude	0.441	0.383	10.225	0.000	
Perceived behavioral control	0.415	0.349	8.578	0.000	
Subjective norms	0.010	0.009	0.243	0.808	
Past experiences	0.317	0.279	8.235	0.000	
* $R^2=0.709$, $F(4.355) = 215.729$, $P = 0.000 < 0.01$					

H1: concerning the results in table 4, since t statistic is greater than 1.96 and significance level is smaller than 0.05, the association between consumer's values and consumer's attitudes toward purchasing hair and skin organic products is positive and significant in 95% as confidence level. Therefore, H1 is supported.

H2: concerning the results in table 5, since t statistic is greater than 1.96 and significance level is smaller than 0.05, the association between consumer's attitudes toward purchasing hair and skin organic products and consumer's intent to buy such products is positive and significant in 95% as confidence level. Therefore, H2 is supported.

H3: concerning the results in table 5, since t statistic is greater than 1.96 and significance level is smaller than 0.05, the association between consumer's subjective norms and consumer's intent to buy hair and skin organic products is positive but not significant in 95% as confidence level. Therefore, H3 is not supported.

H4: concerning the results in table 5, since t statistic is greater than 1.96 and significance level is smaller than 0.05, the association between consumer's perceived behavioral control and consumer's intent to buy such products is positive and significant in 95% as confidence level. Therefore, H4 is supported.

H5: concerning the results in table 5, since t statistic is greater than 1.96 and significance level is smaller than 0.05, the association between consumer's past experiences on hair and skin organic products and consumer's intent to buy such products is positive and significant in 95% as confidence level. Therefore, H5 is supported.

To predict attitude toward hair and skin organic sanitary products, consumer's personal value is used. Regression results in table 4 indicate that regression is significant in 0.01 levels. Likewise, the precise of predicating dependent variable from predictor is no so high ($R^2=0.133$). Significance level and t statistic from predictors indicate that in clarifying attitude toward hair and skin organic products, consumer's personal values have positive and significant impacts (t statistic is greater than 1.96 and significant level is smaller than 0.05).

To predict attitude toward hair and skin organic sanitary products, such variables as attitude toward hair and skin organic sanitary products, perceived behavioral control, subjective norms and past

experience of consuming other organic products are used. Regression results in table 5 indicate that regression is significant in 0.01 levels. Likewise, the precise of predicating dependent variable from predictor is high ($R^2=0.709$). Significance level and t statistic from predictors indicate that in clarifying attitude toward hair and skin organic products, except than subjective norms, other variables have significant impacts (t statistic is greater than 1.96 and significant level is smaller than 0.05). Likewise, comparing β ratios indicate that attitude toward hair and skin organic sanitary products has the highest impact on clarifying the intent to buy hair and skin organic products followed by perceived behavioral control and past experiences on consuming organic products. Positive predictors indicate that one unit increase in predictors would increase dependent variable too.

Conclusion

Since consumers are more interested today in environmental issues and their environmental awareness is remarkably grown, one can observe incremental changes in their consuming behaviors. On the other hand, entering social marketing and green marketing to the scope of organizational activities has caused that companies and institutes pay special attention to keep their survival. Present study starts by this question that which factors and variables do impact on consumers' intent to buy hair and skin organic sanitary products and cause that they prefer organic products to other products?

In present study, the impact of such factors as consumer's personal values, attitude toward hair and skin organic sanitary products, perceived behavioral control and past experiences on consuming organic product on intent to buy hair and skin organic sanitary products is tested and the results show that consumers' personal values influence over their attitude toward hair and skin organic sanitary products. Therefore, one should identify and rate consumers' values. Additionally, the findings indicate that consumers' attitude toward hair and skin organic sanitary products is the most important affecting factor on their intent to buy such products. Hence, it should be specially regarded and one should try to build positive attitudes toward such products. According to respondents, past experience of other organic products would persuade consumers to buy hair and skin organic sanitary products. Therefore, it should be noted to introduce the products, to advertise and to justify the consumers. In addition, perceived control behavior highly impacts on intent to buy hair and skin organic sanitary products. Therefore, it should be also noted in pricing and devising distribution strategies. In contrary, the findings suggest that subjective norms do not lead into intent to

buy hair and skin organic sanitary products. Therefore, higher consumers' subjective norms would not change green intent to buy.

Managerial recommendations

Today, environmental concerns have led to the emergence of a new type of consumer which indicates the importance of environment in decision making to buy different products. The findings of present study confirm this. Concerning the results of testing research hypotheses, one can provide below recommendations:

In accordance with the results from H1 on the impact of consumers' personal values on their attitude toward hair and skin organic sanitary products, manufacturers and sellers of hair and skin organic sanitary products are recommended to identify consumers' personal values precisely and after weight rating of each value, they should produce and distribute their products so that they are synchronized to customers' personal values. Ultimately, it would result in rapid acceptance of such products and persuading the consumers toward consuming such products.

In accordance with the results from H2 on the impact of consumers' attitudes toward hair and skin organic sanitary products, manufacturers and sellers of hair and skin organic sanitary products are recommended to adopt proper decisions and strategies to change consumers' attitudes and to create a positive attitude toward consuming hair and skin organic sanitary products. In this line, one can point out below actions:

Manufacturers' financial support of environment groups
Clarifying the advantages of hair and skin organic sanitary products compared to similar products in the format of brochures, handbooks and posters

Sending posters to their shops and franchises to make customers' more familiar with hair and skin organic sanitary products

In accordance with the results from H3 on the impact of perceived behavioral control on intent to buy hair and skin organic sanitary products, manufacturers and sellers of such products are recommended to devise pricing and distributing strategies so that they can be available with proper prices in all supplying shops. By organizing training courses for sellers, manufacturers can provide them with needed information so that they can also provide customers with adequate information and advantages of such products by which customers can buy these products confidently.

In accordance with the results from H4 on the impact of consumers' past experience of consuming such products on intent to buy hair and skin organic sanitary products, it is recommended to utilize local culture to introduce organic products. Owing to the fact that Iran is an ancient country with strong scientific roots and it has been a tradition to use herbal materials with profitable properties, such culture can provide manufacturers with a proper opportunity. To this end, the company can provide customers with propaganda tools and brochures to introduce its products and to explain their similarities to traditional and herbal materials and to assure consumers that their new products enjoy the same traditional natural ingredients albeit in new packages. Hence, based on their favored past experience, consumers are persuaded to consume hair and skin organic sanitary products more safely.

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