A study of Purchase Intention of Imported Organic Cosmetic in Thailand

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Abstract
The research determines in which factors that impact on purchase intention of imported organic cosmetics in Thailand. This research used mixed method designed by Creswell (2011) which includes two phases. The first phase is explanatory sequential design; and the second phase is exploratory sequential design. The researcher has started an interview with two Thais who have had experienced at least once in purchasing imported organic product. Accordingly, three variables have confirmed. In the second phase, researcher designed a questionnaire and distributed via Google Form and analyze the collected data by using SAS software. This research selected Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) Analysis. The results of MLR analysis show that health consciousness and environmental attitude impact on attitude towards imported organic cosmetic; attitude towards imported organic cosmetic and health consciousness impact on purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic. This research will help researchers and practitioners of organic cosmetic understand the determinants factors that impact on purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic and give inspiration to practitioners when formulating market strategies.

Keywords: Health Consciousness, Environmental Attitude, Purchase Intention, Imported Organic Cosmetic, Thailand

Introduction
In recent years, the administrative and marketing orientation of the beauty industry have changed a lot because of the changing in the attitudes towards the healthy life and environment. The demands of the organic cosmetics increased a lot (Dimitrova et al., 2009, p. 1156). According to the 2017 statistics from the Statistics Portal, the global sale of cosmetics is 66.4 billion USD and the sale of organic cosmetics is 14.8 billion USD (www.statista.com). Organic cosmetics account for 23% of the market share in total cosmetics market. Moreover, 29.3% of market share in organic cosmetics is in Thailand from the total 10 Association of Southeast Asia Nations (www.futuremarketinsights.com). Thus, not only local but also imported organic cosmetics are more attractive to consumers in Thailand. According to 2017 statistics shown on the World’s Top Exports (www.worldtopexports.com), organic product is the top 10 imported products in Thailand. As a result of two Thai interviewees, they prefer organic cosmetics partially from either Japan or Korea. This
research aims to find determinants factors that impact on purchase intention of imported organic cosmetics in Thailand.

**Literature Review**

**Purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic**

Green product purchase intention is related to a consumer's intention to buy a product that is less harmful to the environment and the society (Norazah, 2015). Purchase intention of green product is the willingness of a consumer to purchase a green products or eco-friendly products instead of normal ones (Rashid et al., 2009). In this study, the researcher applied this concept to the purchase intention (applied to organic cosmetic in this study). Purchase intention of organic cosmetic is that consumer's willingness of purchasing the cosmetics that are created from ingredients which have been certified organic by one of the numerous certifying institutions that operate worldwide. An organic is formally an ingredient, which has been harvested without the use of synthetic chemical compounds. Purchase intention is a key factor that can forecast consumer behavior for each industry and any kinds of products including organic ones.

**Health Consciousness**

Health consciousness represents the degree of readiness to undertake healthy actions (Ophuis, 1998). Health consciousness was always discussed in the research related to organic food. Consumers have high interest on research about health and food (Fagerli and Wandel, 1999). In this research, health consciousness is defined as the consciousness that whether Thai pay more attention on the health and are willing to buy the organic products without damage to their body. Consumers showed a lot of concerns about the safety of food which represented health consciousness is the key point of purchasing food. (Magnusson et al., 2001). The concern of the health and safety leads consumers to purchase organic food. Consumers with high health consciousness will seek to engage in activities that promote a healthy life (Kim and Chung, 2011). Based on the research of organic food, researcher thought health consciousness can be the important factor influences the purchasing of other organic products included the organic cosmetic. A research about female consumers' beauty product shopping behavioral patterns found that consumers' product attitudes and shopping behaviour are influenced by their health consciousness (Hunter et al., 2004).

H1. There is a significant relationship between health consciousness and attitude towards imported organic cosmetic.

H4. There is a significant relationship between health consciousness and purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic.

**Environmental Attitude**

Environmental attitude is the attitude towards the environment that customers not only focus on the price or quality of the products, but also consider about if the product damaged the environment. Consumers are increasingly demanding food products that are produced without environmental exploitation. The goals of organic agriculture are to protect the environment, to maintain the fertility of the land, and to preserve the natural properties of the food produced. Organic product is therefore perceived as less damaging to the environment than conventionally grown foods (Hammit, 2001). Previous studies had proved that
environmental concern is a major determinant of purchasing organic food (Van Dam, 1991). As an important part of the organic products, environmental attitudes may have impacts on purchasing organic cosmetic. This research aims to find whether environmental attitude affects the purchasing of imported organic cosmetic.

H2. There is a significant relationship between environmental attitude and attitude towards imported organic cosmetic.

H5. There is a significant relationship between environmental attitude and purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic.

**Attitude towards imported organic cosmetic**

Attitude toward a brand is related to the consumers’ preference and overall evaluation of a brand, which epitomizes their likes and dislikes (Solomon, 2014). In this study, the researcher applied the theory to the imported organic cosmetic. Attitude towards imported organic cosmetic is the consumers’ attitude towards the imported organic cosmetic that whether they like the cosmetic and how they evaluate the cosmetic. Many consumers believe that organically grown foods are safer and provide greater health benefit than conventional alternatives and have positive attitudes toward organic products (Beharrel and MacFie, 1991). The feelings of consumers and positive image of the products which are important parts of attitude impact the purchase intention of green products. (Thøgersen et al., 2015). This research applied these concepts to imported organic cosmetics and aimed to find whether the attitude toward imported organic cosmetics impacts the purchase intention of imported organic cosmetics.

H3. There is a significant relationship between attitude towards imported organic cosmetic and purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic.

Finally, the aim of this research is finding the significant relationship between health consciousness, environmental attitude, attitude towards imported organic cosmetic and purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic as shown in conceptual framework. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of this study below.

![Conceptual framework of this study](image)

**Figure 1: Conceptual framework of this study**

**Research Methodology**

This research used mixed method designed by Creswell (2011) which includes two phase, the first phase is exploratory sequential design and the second phase is explanatory sequential design.
Exploratory sequential design was selected for generally understanding purchase intention of imported organic cosmetics. In this phase, this research started an interview to collect qualitative data. This method multiplies details of operational component of each selected variable by randomly selected interviewees, who had experience of purchasing imported organic cosmetics in the past six months (April-October, 2018). The results of interview showed three variables of this research, two independent variables- health consciousness and environmental attitude; Independent variable- purchase intention. Based on the interview, validity of research question as well as research objective have been well-designed.

Exploratory sequential design presents quantitative and followed by qualitative. In this design, a researcher first collects and analyzes the quantitative (numeric) data. The qualitative (text) data are collected and analyzed second in the sequence and help explain, or elaborate on the quantitative results obtained in the first phase. The second qualitative phase builds on the first quantitative phase, and the two phases are connected in the intermediate stage in the study. The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data and their subsequent analysis provide a general understanding of the research problem. The qualitative data and their analysis is refined through those statistical results by exploring participants’ views in more depth (Ivankova, 2006).

For deeper analysis of the research problems, researcher designed the questionnaire with several questions for each variable and distributed these questionnaires to people who live in Thailand via Google Form. First of all, researcher collected 30 sets of questionnaire for pretest through Cronbach’s coefficient alpha. This research used the SAS software to test and analyze the data. Because of the reliability of the questions about environmental attitude is not good that researcher modified the questions and collected another 30 sets of questionnaire to pretest the reliability again. In the sampling procedure, researcher develops screening question to filter the prospect respondents to examine. Therefore, the researcher applied p=50% (p=0.50) and e=7% (e=0.07) into the n4Studies calculation. After the calculation, the result showed the sample size of 196 (n=196). Since the limitation of time and budget, the researcher designed to collect the sample size of 200 respondents (n=200) via Google Form as an instrument in order to collect the data from target respondents. The purpose of the questionnaire is to gather raw data for analyzing the relationships among independent variables and a dependent variable. This research has also applied the four-points Likert-scale to acquire answer from respondents.

Reliability and validity of the survey scale items were established based on both pilot study and principle survey administration, using frequency distributions, internal consistency reliability indexes, inter item correlations. As a consequence, this research used multiple linear regression to analyze the research data. Moreover, the researcher also used cross-tabulation and frequency to analyze the demographic information and the respondents’ answers to separate items on each of the four survey scales.
Table 1 Four main constructs and adapted items used for questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Literature review Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Health consciousness (5 items)</td>
<td>HC1-5 (pilot study)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Environmental Attitude (5 items)</td>
<td>EA1-5 (Mei-Fiang Chen, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Attitude towards imported organic cosmetic (5 items)</td>
<td>ATOC 1-5 (Norazah, 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic (3 items)</td>
<td>PIOC 1-2 (Barbara, 2015) and PIOC 3 (pilot study)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reliability
The researcher used the Cronbach’s coefficient alpha to test the reliability of the collected data. The result of the pretest with 30 respondents (2 rounds) and the final 200 respondents is shown in Table 1.

Table 2 Result of Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>No. of questions</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>Difference (Compare to round 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health consciousness</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.79 - 0.88 - 0.83</td>
<td>-5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Attitude</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.54 - 0.88 - 0.81</td>
<td>-7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards imported organic cosmetic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.73 - 0.77 - 0.83</td>
<td>+7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.78 - 0.73 - 0.78</td>
<td>+6.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the first round of pretest, the reliability of the questions about environmental attitude is only 0.54 which is less than 0.6 that researcher modified the questions about environmental attitude and distributed the new questionnaires. After collecting the data, researcher ran the second round pretest and each alpha is greater than 0.6 that researcher started to collect 200 sets of questionnaires and test the reliability of the 200 data. The reliability of 200 data for each variable is also greater than 0.6. Compared to round 2, the difference of the alpha for each variable is -5.6%, -7.9%, +7.8% and +6.8%.

Research Results

Descriptive Analysis
Researcher surveyed the gender, nationality, marital status, age, children, number of family members, income, education level, employment in the demographic profile. Researcher used SAS software analyzed the frequencies of each demographic items of the 200 respondents. The result showed that there are 78.5% female (157 respondents) and 21.5% male (43 respondents) of all respondents. The most frequent nationality in this research is Thai 67% (134 respondents). 75.5% (151 respondents) of respondents are single, most of the respondents are between 21-30 years old which is 70.5% (141 respondents), 82% (164 respondents) of respondents do not have children, and 59.5% (119 respondents) only have 1-2 members living in their households. 51% (102 respondents) of respondents’ income are less than 10,000 Baht which because there...
are 50.5% (101 respondents) are students. The highest frequency of education level is master degree which is 54.5% (109 respondents).

**Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) Analysis**

The first MLR analysis was applied to analyze the relationship between health consciousness, environmental attitude and attitude towards imported organic cosmetic. Based on the MLR result, all hypotheses have confidence interval at 99.99%. If health consciousness and environmental attitude equal to zero, the value of attitude towards imported organic cosmetic predicted as 0.65550. If the health consciousness for 1% plateau will affect attitude towards imported organic cosmetic 49% ($\beta_1 = 0.48982$). The environmental attitude for 1% plateau will affect attitude towards imported organic cosmetic 32% ($\beta_2 = 0.32104$). The formula is shown as follows:

$$\hat{Y} = 0.65550 + 0.48982 X_1 + 0.32104 X_2;$$

where: $\hat{Y}$ = Attitude towards imported organic cosmetic; $X_1$ = Health Consciousness; $X_2$ = Environmental Attitude.

The second MLR analysis was applied to analyze the relationship between health consciousness, environmental attitude, attitude towards imported organic cosmetics and purchase intention of imported organic cosmetics. As a result of backward elimination, the $Pr>|t|$ of intercept and ea-mean are greater than 0.05 that they were rejected. There are two variables have significant relationship with purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic. If the health consciousness for 1% plateau will affect purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic 15% ($\beta_1 = 0.15291$) at 95% confidence interval. The attitude towards organic cosmetic for 1% plateau will affect purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic 72% ($\beta_2 = 0.71858$) at 99.99% confidence interval. The formula is shown as follows:

$$\hat{Y} = 0.15291 X_1 + 0.71858 X_2;$$

where: $\hat{Y}$ = Purchase intention; $X_1$ = Health Consciousness; $X_2$ = Attitude towards imported organic cosmetic.

**Implications and Discussions**

According to the statistics in the part of the Mean of variables, this research found that the item with the highest Mean in health consciousness is HC3 which represents the awareness of the importance of health. The item with the highest Mean in environmental attitude is EA4 which represents the care of the green environment. The item with the highest Mean in attitude towards imported organic cosmetic is ATOC1 which represents imported organic cosmetic is harmless to skin. The item with the highest Mean in purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic is PIOC1 which represents that, consumers purchase imported organic cosmetic because of chemical free. Combining these results with the framework of this research, It indicates that if the consumers aware of the importance of health or care about the green environment, they will think the imported organic cosmetic is harmless; If the consumers aware of the importance of health or care about green environment, they will purchase imported organic cosmetic because of chemical free; If the consumers think the imported organic cosmetic is harmless, they will purchase it because of chemical free. This research found that attitudes towards imported organic cosmetic has the strongest influence on purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic. Norazah (2016) proved that consumers’ attitude toward green brands has a significant positive relationship with green product purchase intention. According to the
important influence of the attitude, imported organic cosmetic company has to take more actions which are
good for improving consumers’ attitude towards their products. Finding of this research showed that health
consciousness impacts the purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic. Barbara (2015) found that
consumers with high health consciousness have higher intention of purchasing natural cosmetics. So,
imported organic cosmetic company should use advertising or promotion to lead and improve consumers
health consciousness and show their products pay attention on consumers’ health. Besides, environmental
attitude and health consciousness will influence the attitude towards imported organic cosmetics that
imported organic cosmetic company should also show their care of the environment which will help improve
the positive attitude towards their product.

Conclusions
This research aims to find the determinant factors affect the purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic.
Researcher selected respondents who had experience of buying imported organic cosmetic and designed a
questionnaire with 18 questions distributed via Google Form. These questions are related to the dependent
variable- purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic, independent variables- health consciousness,
environmental attitude and Intervening Variable - attitude towards imported organic cosmetic. Researcher
collected 200 sets of questionnaire and analyzed these data by using SAS software.
Four of the five hypothesis were accepted and only hypothesis 5 which is there is a significant relationship
between environmental attitude and purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic was rejected. From the
results, researcher found that attitude towards imported organic cosmetic has the most important influence on
the purchase intention of imported organic cosmetic.

Recommendations
Imported organic cosmetic company should show more care about customers’ health. For example, post the
advertising posters with the slogan ‘fewer chemical, better life.’ These actions can help create positive attitude
towards imported organic cosmetic. Besides this, imported organic companies can consider about more other
actions to improve customers’ attitude towards their brand that motivates more purchasing. For the future
study, researchers should focus on other factors may impact the attitude towards imported organic cosmetics.

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