

Chapter 20

Moderating Effect of Races towards Consumers’ Feeling of TCM Usage

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ABSTRACT

Malaysia has a multiple number of traditional medical systems that represent of several ethnic varieties of its community. These can be cluster into four main group namely, traditional “native”, traditional Indian, traditional Chinese, and modern medicine. This study was conducted to identify the moderating effects of races on the relationships between safeness, efficacy, trust, holistic view and health awareness, and feeling of TCM usage. About 288 self-administered questionnaire data analysis was carried out using Structural Equation Modeling Approach to the public in Labuan and Sabah, East Malaysia. The moderating effect of races on the relationships between predictor variables such as safeness, efficacy, trust, holistic view and health awareness and criterion variable (i.e. feeling) was evaluated. The study showed that holistic balance view of TCM not significantly influences the TCM usage. Thus, the results of this study are importance to the practical industry application and future research.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing of traditional and complementary (TCM) in both developed and developing countries, including Malaysia, have raised significant essential value and efficacy for health promotion, prevention and treatment in Malaysia. The Malaysia Government had initiated the TCM Division in the Ministry of Health in 2004, which led to the ruling to allocate integrated hospitals in 2006 such as Kepala Batas

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Hospital in Pulau Pinang, Putrajaya Hospital in W.P. Putrajaya, Sultan Ismail hospital and others (Abuduli, Ezat WP & Aljunid (2011). This hospitals offers, acupuncture, traditional Malay massage, postnatal massage and herbal oncology. The Malaysia Government supported the Traditional and Complementary Medicine (TCM) which is related to any traditional medical practices among the local communities except registered and certified medical or dental practices in Malaysia healthcare system. Traditional and Complementary Medicine (TCM) known as knowledge and beliefs incorporating plant, health practices,, animal, and/or mineral based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises applied singularly or in combination to maintain well-being as well as to treat diagnose or prevent illness (WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2002-2005).

Traditional medicine is referred to the sum total of the knowledge, whether explicable or not, use in the maintenance of health, skills and practices based on the theories, beliefs and experiences indigenous to different cultures, as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illnesses (World Health Organisation, 2000). Previous research found that consumers mainly use TCM in addition to conventional medicine rather than using TCM alone and in place of conventional medicine (Eisenberg, et al., 1993; Lam, 2001; Lindenmeyer et al., 2011; Singh, Raidoo and Harries, 2004; Sirois, 2008; Tam, Chang and Norazah, 2014). Eisenberg et al. (1993) inferred that a substantial amount of complementary therapy was used for non-serious medical conditions, health promotion, or disease prevention rather than for life-threatening medical conditions.

The use of TCM has been widely utilised and growing rapidly in Malaysia. Malaysian nationwide survey conducted in 2004 regarding TCM utilization by the Malaysian public shown that the prevalence of the population who has ever used TCM in their life time is 69.4% (67.6%-71.2%). Furthermore a 55.6% (53.8%-57.4%) of the population found that they have used TCM in the last 12 months prior to the survey (National Policy of Traditional and Complementary Medicine, 2007).

The objective of this research is to investigate the moderating effects of races on the relationships between safeness, efficacy, trust, holistic view and health awareness and feeling of TCM usage. Results offer a clearer perspective for both the TCM service providers and academician enabling them to identify the behaviour of TCM users for better market segmentation and marketing strategy planning as well as a more thorough understanding on the consumer behaviour in this industry.

It is important for academic and applied perspective to understand and explain the choice of consumers towards the use of TCM in health promotion behaviour. Nonetheless, the previous researches conducted were focused on using social-demographic factors to predict the users of TCM (Frass et al., 2012; Singh et al., 2004; Siti et al., 2009), little has been looking into the attitude of TCM users and its impact on the usage and frequency of TCM patronisation. Therefore, there is a need to investigate further the moderating effect of races on the relationships between predictor variables such as safeness, efficacy, trust, holistic view and health awareness and criterion variable (i.e. feeling).

This paper will begin with the literature review in the next section, follows by the discussion of the methodology used to carry out survey in the study. This paper will then present the analysis of the data collected and discussion of the results. The final section will conclude this paper by including the implications of the study, limitations and direction for future research.

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