CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the whole research will be explained in details from the first introduction section until the fourth analysis part. From those explanations, this paper will draw a conclusion about consumer confusion in low-involvement context among university students in Indonesia especially in D.I. Yogyakarta area. Moreover, limitations and suggestions were added to help other researcher if they would like to do the future research.

5.2 Conclusions

The target of this research is to examine what dimension of confusion that present on low-involvement product. The main journal is by Leek and Kun (2006) for the basic idea of this research. The questionnaire for this research was originally carried by Leek and Kun (2006) and several adjustments were made in order to match the condition in Yogyakarta as the area to distribute the questionnaire. The conclusions for this research derived from these two research questions:

1. What factors cause consumer confusion proneness in the context of low-involvement purchases?

2. How do consumers cope with confusion in the context of low-involvement purchases?

3. Does consumer confusion in the low-involvement purchase differ between male and female consumers?

This research found that consumer confusion does not apparent only in a high involvement product purchase even in a low involvement purchase. Consumers may feel confused especially with the similarity of the products. The results of the study of consumer confusion in low-involvement product among university students can be completed as follows:

a. Respondents' Perceptions Toward Confusions

1. The student samples indicated that unclarity, similarity and overchoice confusion does exist on low-involvement product. It indicated that similarity as the main confusion in this context since there are a lot of brands and advantages available in the market. Followed by overchoice confusion and unclarity confusion.

2. The student samples indicated that they forgot their initial purchase because they are distracted by other function. It seems that the number of functions offered by manufacturers may become a big problem for consumers instead of advantages since it has the lowest mean rating (the highest degree of confusion) amongst other aspects of unclarity confusion. It also indicated that consumers in Yogyakarta rarely narrowing down their criteria when they have

to buy toiletries product, if they have a specific criteria, they will not face this kind of confusion.

3. The student samples indicated that even when they prefer to choose the brand first then the function, it is not an indication of brand loyalty. Since they strongly perceived that every product is similar and actually which brand that they choose is not a big matter for them.

4. The student samples indicated that liquid soap was the most confusing product categories followed by toothpaste and shampoo. The student samples perceived that most of the liquid soap product is similar, it might be happened because there are too many liquid soaps available in the market but even they offered various advantages, it seems that consumers do not experience the differences.

b. *Confusion Comparisons between Genders*

1. The student samples indicated that male respondents have a higher degree of confusion rather than female respondents from every dimension of confusion and product categories. It indicates that female respondents have a better experience on these product categories, means that they could cope with confusion better than male.

2. The student samples indicated that female respondents tend to be loyal to one specific brand. Since they perceived that it is clearly important which brand of toiletries product that they choose and they also perceived that there is

significance advantage difference amongst the manufacturers. On the other hand, male respondents tend to be more efficient consumers because they prefer to choose the function first then the brands. They also perceived that there is no significance advantage difference amongst the manufacturers and it would not make much difference which brand of toiletries product that they choose.

3. The student samples indicated that similarity confusion still became the highest degree of confusion for both male and female respondents followed by overchoice confusion and unclarity confusion. It indicated that both female and male respondents felt that there are too many products available in the market but there is no significance advantage difference amongst those products.

c. *Consumer Confusion Coping Strategy*

1. The student samples indicated that most of them have enough information before they made their purchase decision. From each product category less than 15% felt they have too much information or even not sufficient information before they made their purchase decision. It supposed to be a good condition when consumers have enough information that makes them did not struggle with confusion. Unfortunately they still struggle with confusion, this situation arises when consumers only absorb information partially and they thought that they already understand every aspects of the products.

2. The student samples indicated that they would not make much effort to search for information and they are not willing to spend extra time shopping in order to get more information.

3. The student samples indicated that advertisement is the most important source of information, later this was supported by the result that more than half of the respondents enjoy most toiletries products advertisement and almost half of the respondents also agreed that most of toiletries advertisements are dependable and reliable.

4. The student samples indicated that word of mouth is the second most important source of information. As collectivist country it is not surprising that word of mouth became one of the most important sources of information. This result was quite similar with what Leek and Kun found. They found that in China, also as collectivist country, word of mouth played an important role there.

5. The student samples indicated that credibility and reliability was the main reason why they chose their main source of information. The second most important factor when they chose their main source of information was due to its comprehensiveness.

6. The student samples indicated that they enjoy most toiletries products advertisements and they perceived that those advertisements are dependable and reliable.

7. The student samples perceived that most sales people are very helpful even though only 1% of the respondents who chose sales people as their main source of information. It indicates that most of the respondents have good experiences with sales people.

8. The student samples indicated that they need a channel for obtaining knowledge or information about a product and they are more attracted with manufacturers that provide information.

5.3 Research Limitation

The research has numerous flaw concerning about the limitation that happens naturally. Nevertheless, several works were done in this study to minimize the problems. These are the list of limitations that this study encountered:

1. The samples are universities students and did not represent all students who studies in Yogyakarta, because the sample were come from 10 universities.

2. The participants' ages were between 16-30 years old. Different age group might indicate in different results since they have better products experiences.

3. This paper did not ask respondents' income on the questionnaire, there might be a possibility that income can be a factor that influence purchase decision.

4. Consumer confusion especially on low-involvement context is not a familiar topic yet in Indonesia. Toiletries product is not an absolute indicator of low-

involvement as a whole context. The result might be different if other product categories were chosen.

5. Due to the respondents' limitation to understand consumer confusion or low-involvement product itself, there might be a possibility that the respondents gave a bias answer. Even though they used it in daily life and they often struggle with confusion when they buy such products but they felt that it was not confusion, which might cause a bias answer.

5.4 Future Research Directions

These are some suggestions that were made by summarized all the research result. The expectation is these suggestions can be a consideration in case other researcher plans to manage similar or related study.

Some suggestions were listed to support the coming research. It will be more accurate to put income and educational background as demographic variables, perhaps there might be a relation between income and educational background with consumer confusion in low-involvement context. Researcher should consider taking a look older age group or those who have better experience with the product category, whether they are struggle with similar degree of confusion or not? Wider range of age might give the researcher new insights or perceptions toward consumer confusion. Cultural difference might lead to different confusion and coping strategy, Indonesia and China are collectivist society, and the result

might be different if this kind of study was conducted in individualist society such as Japan or Germany.

When consumers perceived that all aspects similarity confusion did not exist when they made a purchase decision, would it be an indication of brand loyalty, or not? Based on that concern, researcher can examine the relationship between those variables with brand loyalty. When researcher would like to examine university student, it would be better for researcher to ask permission from the lecturer to conduct or distributed questionnaires at the end of the session or during class. Because, if the questionnaires were distributed outside the class, there might be a bigger chance that the respondents will fill it incorrectly since they are not interested on the topic or they are too lazy to completing the questionnaire.

5.5 Managerial Implications

It is apparent from the research that all three aspects of confusion are present in the low involvement categories. The number of brands and advantages for low involvement product categories are so many. It makes consumers struggle to narrowing down their criteria. As the result, similarity confusion becomes the major source of confusion that leads consumers to over choice confusion. If manufacturers and marketers recognize that there were confused consumers in their market, they should take an action by examine the source of confusion and tried to reduce the confusion itself. Similarity confusion was found to be a major problem in the marketplace for the consumers of particular goods. Marketers and

manufacturers in this business need to differentiate the products from their competitors by trying to develop current products that can bring different experience for the consumers.

To attract consumers, manufacturers and marketers should provide clear information about their product, perhaps by using advertisement or salesperson. Because, it is not easy to make consumers satisfy and loyal to one specific brand, unless manufacturers tried to reduce consumers confusion.

If over choice confusion was found to be a problem in the marketplace, marketers and manufacturers might consider reducing their product in the market, so consumers will have less choice that makes easier to narrowing down the product that met consumers' criteria. By reducing consumer confusion, manufacturers and marketers can increase consumer decision making quality, which is a great advantage for the manufacturer to compete with other companies. Reducing consumer confusion also prevents consumers to buy "wrong" product or product that did not meet their criteria which might lead into dissatisfaction.

Marketers and manufacturers might consider revising their jargon. Currently it was seen as confusing and quite difficult to understand it all. Marketers and manufacturers should make professional jargon that provide accurate information and easy to understand.

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