

Customer Decision Making Vis-à-Vis *Halal* Branding

by

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ABSTRACT

Understanding the preference of Muslim youth for halal (religiously permissible) certified products in their search for branded items was the underlying motive behind this research. Since sportswear brand owners usually target youth market segments, Muslim youth in the Malaysian market were selected as the main respondents for this study. The collective perceptions of quality, brand awareness, brand association and consumer loyalty constitute brand equity and this study focused on brand equity research in the Malaysian marketing environment.

Empirical research was conducted to determine the “on the ground” reality of the market, with a view to suggesting marketing policy directions to brand managers in the Malaysian sportswear industry. In the Malaysian context, the findings of the research do not completely support all the dimensions of Aaker’s (1991) brand equity model.

This paper recommends that brand managers use *halal* certification of sportswear products to penetrate the Malay youth sub-segment of the Malaysian sportswear market. *Halal* certification will not have a negative effect on penetration of the other market sub-segments consisting of youth from other races in Malaysia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Malaysia has one of the fastest growing populations of youth in the ASEAN market.

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