

THE CONTRIBUTION OF MARKETING
COMMUNICATION TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY
OF MB GLOBAL

by

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ABBREVIATION DEFINITION

SME	Small Medium Entrepreneur
HIMP	Halal Industry Development Master Plan
4Ps	Product, Price, Place, Promotion
IMP	Islamic Manufacturing Practice
GST	Good and Service Tax

ABSTRAK

Kajian kes ini telah dijalankan untuk menganalisa sumbangan komunikasi pemasaran ke arah kelestarian MB Global. Kebimbangan terbesar bagi syarikat itu adalah jualan yang tinggi syarikat tetapi tidak mewakili keuntungan yang baik. Didapati apabila jualan meningkat, perbelanjaan juga meningkat dan ini menyebabkan keuntungan rendah. Ini merupakan satu cabaran besar bagi MB Global untuk bertahan dalam industri ini kerana terdapat persaingan yang hebat dalam industri makanan berfungsi. MB Global perlu mempunyai kefahaman yang jelas tentang strategi pemasaran mereka, mengenalpasti segmen pasaran yang betul, melaksanakan komunikasi pemasaran terbaik dan mencipta nilai bagi pelanggan untuk memastikan mereka bertahan dalam industri ini.

Pengumpulan data bagi kajian kes dan analisis kes diperolehi daripada temuramah dan perbincangan, e-mel, panggilan telefon, dan penyemakan data yang berkaitan. Kajian kes ini telah menggunakan tiga (3) kaedah analisa seperti Rajah Kesan dan Punca untuk menganalisa bagaimana 4P (produk, harga, tempat, dan promosi) mempengaruhi amalan komunikasi pemasaran oleh syarikat, Kitaran Hayat Produk untuk menjawab soalan bagaimana strategi komunikasi menyumbang kepada hasil dan kelestarian syarikat dan analisa SWOT untuk meneroka kekuatan, kelemahan, peluang dan ancaman kepada syarikat.

,

Hasil daripada kajian kes, dapat dirumuskan bahawa punca utama masalah ini adalah strategi pemasaran yang tidak efektif. Syarikat tidak memahami objektif promosi, memilih kaedah komunikasi pemasaran yang kurang berkesan dan menggunakan pendekatan komunikasi pemasaran yang sama, walaupun kematangan produk berbeza.

Hasil daripada analisa yang telah dibuat, dicadangkan supaya MB Global mengawal dan merombak semula strategi pemasaran yang kurang efektif, memantau kitaran hayat produk yang dijual serta membuat perancangan kos pemasaran sebelum melaksanakan sebarang aktiviti promosi. Adalah diharapkan hasil kajian dan cadangan daripada kajian ini dapat membantu MB Global untuk lebih berdaya saing, bertahan lama dalam industri dan terus berkembang ke peringkat antarabangsa.

ABSTRACT

This case study has been conducted to analyze the contribution of marketing communication towards sustainability of MB Global. The biggest concern for the company is the high sales of the company would not represent a good profit as if sales increased, expenses also increased, and it will result in lower profit. It is a great challenge for the company to sustain in the industry as there are intense competitions in the functional food industry. In order to survive, the company should have a clear understanding of their marketing strategies, identify true market segments, exercise the best marketing communication, and creating value for customers to make sure that they can sustain in the industry.

Data collection for the case issues and case analysis are derived from interview, discussion, emails, phone calls, and reviewing related data. For the case study, we are using three (3) analysis tools which are Cause-and- Effect Diagram to analyse on how the elements of 4Ps influence the marketing communication practices of the company, Product Life Cycle to answer the questions on how the marketing communication strategies contribute to the revenue and sustainability of the company, and SWOT analysis to explore the strength, weaknesses, opportunity, and threat of the company.

From the case analysis and discussion, we can summarize that major cause of this issue is the ineffective marketing strategies. The company is not really sure about their promotional objective, investing in less effective marketing communication channel and using the same marketing communication approach, even though the maturity of the products is not same.

The results from the analysis are used to propose sound recommendations to MB Global such as controlling and reengineering marketing mix, create product life cycle monitoring chart and marketing cost planning. It is hoped that the findings and recommendations from this study could assist MB Global to stay at the competitive advantage, sustain in the industry, and expand the business globally.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

The increase in the awareness of health issues and exposure to serious diseases nowadays has created a good demand for functional food and supplements products. Trade source comments that Malaysia has become big market share of functional foods, Nutraceuticals and organic nutrients (Stanton, 2011). In 2020, Malaysia will become upper income country with a good economic environment. With the population of 30,073,353 people in 2014, 60% of the citizens are middle income consumers, and with the literacy rate at about 92%, Malaysia becomes an attractive country to have a business in.

The demand of Halal products is very important as almost 63% of Malaysian population are Muslims. Malaysia also has become the leader of world's *halal* industry with consistent economic growth as well as political and social stability. It is reported that the annual export value of *halal* products is RM35.4 billion and contribute to 5.1% of total exports of Malaysia. Today, Malaysia is leading global *halal* hub and Malaysia's *halal* standard is widely applied by global multinational companies such as Nestle. *Halal* portfolio also has been expanded not only for food and beverage, but also cosmetics, logistics, pharmaceutical, and tourism (Malaysia – The world's leading Halal hub, 2015).

Marketing Communication is a mode that helps a business to get relationship with customers. For a business, no matter how well the product is, how reasonable is the price offered to customers, and accessible distribution channel provided, it still cannot survive in the market without effective marketing communication. If companies want to introduce new products, or try to increase their sales of existing products, they need to communicate with customers. The main function of marketing communication is to introduce the products to customers, make them confident with the products, and end up with the action of buying the products. An effective marketing communication will create competitive advantage for the company over their competitors.

Business sustainability is the management and organization of environmental, social, and financial demands to ensure that a business is successful. There are three elements of sustainability which are social, environment, and economy. Although sustainability is now generally realized to be a combination of environmental, societal, and economic performance, this study finds that economic sustainability is the most significant element. Finding out how businesses actually stay in the industry is the issue that will be discussed in order to make sure that its economic performance is effective.

It is a great challenge for a business to sustain in the industry as there are intensifying competitions in the functional food industry. A business should have a clear understanding of their marketing strategies, identify true market segments, exercise the best marketing communications, and create value for customers to make sure that they can sustain in the industry.

1.1 Problem Statement

Malaysian market for food and beverages is estimated to be at RM30 billion. Trade sources estimated that functional food consists about 40% of total processed and retail packed food and drinks market (Stanton, 2011). Small Medium Entrepreneur (SME) plays very important roles in the emergence of functional food products. Many of the successful businesses in Malaysia and worldwide were actually started from small business.

SME also contributes to the national economy by offering job opportunities, increase exports of the nation, and supply good for manufacturing and trading company (SME Corp Malaysia Laman Web Rasmi, 2015). The increasing of awareness, nutrition food, and food protection for health influence the demand of functional food. Functional food produced by Malaysian's manufacturer is in the variety of products such as drinks, natural food, and food products. Some of them develop joint venture or strategic alliances with manufacturers from other countries.

The concern for *halal* and *haram* products becomes an opportunity for Muslims entrepreneurs to be involved in this industry. For the Muslims, *halal* refers anything which is allowed by the *Syariah*, and the term applies to daily activities including handling and consumption of food. All Muslims; regardless of whether or not they are fully practicing Islam as a way of life; are very concerned with the halal status of the food that they consummate in their everyday lives.

Muslim entrepreneurs should grab the huge opportunities developing from the success of *halal* industry in Malaysia. There are about USD600 billion to USD2.2 trillion potential values for halal food industry. This huge potential provides great chances for Malaysian manufacturers, especially Muslim entrepreneurs to venture into this marketplace (Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA), 2015).

Most of the functional food companies in Malaysia used the media as a mode of marketing communication to introduce and promote their products. Media can be outlined as a facilitating institution that suggests an appropriate message inside the operational constraints of space and is considered to be one of the most effective advertising methods. The companies will advertise their products through publication media such as newspaper, magazine, and the internet. Some of them will use media such as television, radio, posters, and billboard. The choice of the marketing communication channels is based on the allocation of budget and the channel that they think the most effective to advertise and promote their products.

Newspapers are one of the most popular forms of advertising media that is widely used by functional food companies. The choice of magazines to advertise the brand has been undertaken according to their readability by the target customer segment of the company. The product advertisements will utilize the whole page in order to maximize the positive impact of the marketing communication activities.

Internet or online marketing is another channel that is usually used by the companies. Some of them develop a very attractive website and also use online advertisement through pop-ups and on-site sponsorship. Many functional food products also have been promoted through television and it incurred a high budget. The advertisement is created based on the characteristics of a local culture in order to avoid any misunderstandings and maximize the positive effect.

Some companies, especially SMEs, prefer to use radio as a medium of advertisement. Functional food advertisement through the radio usually lasts only for a few seconds, but nevertheless is considered to be highly efficient in terms of increasing the level of brand awareness and customer loyalty. Posters and billboards are also widely used. The billboards are usually placed around the city centers as well as highways. Posters, on the other hand, normally displayed at the premises, some of the shops and restaurants.

Companies use different marketing activities to communicate with the environment. These decisions are often a result of past experiences, habits, or certain influences. Measuring the efficiency of a communication mix as well as analyzing the effect of using a specific marketing communication activity on different business performance determinants are usually neglected.

It is advisable to use as many marketing communication activities that the companies can afford; however, the activities should be chosen on the basis of professional marketing management such as research, data gathering and analysis, setting measurable objectives. When developing their marketing communication mix, managers of companies should take into consideration the correlations between the frequency of using certain marketing communication activities and business performance variables.

Having an effective marketing communication strategy is the ultimate tool for guiding leader towards making decisions that will provide sustainable growth for the company.

1.2 Case Issues

MB Global is one of SMEs that is involved in sales and promotion of AB Basyirah products. AB Basyirah products are products that are formulated based on dates cider (*sunnah* food). These products are categorized as functional food as they may provide health benefits beyond basic nutrition.

The sales of the company is not stable as it increased from 2010 to 2012 but keep decreasing since 2013. The company is worried about the declining profit despite increasing marketing cost. The company has done various types of marketing strategies in order to increase their sales and profit such as advertising the products in TV Al-Hijrah, IKIM F.M radio and also advertised in Kosmo and Harakah newspapers; and these strategies are proven highly costly to the company.

It was noted that the high sales of the company do not represent a good profit for the business. If sales increased, expenses also increased, and it will result in lower profit. MB Global was in dilemma to either stay in the competitive advantage, or at least to stay as one of the active players in the market for *halal* and functional food industry. This situation shows that this company is not performing very well, even though the functional food industry is growing.

It is very important for the management of MB Global to know whether the marketing communication strategies that have been implemented by the company are really effective and can contribute to the sustainability of the company. As a company that only focuses in the sales and promotion of AB Basyirah products, MB Global should exercise the best practice and have a better understanding of their marketing communication strategies. This determination is very important because it will have implications on the organization's performance.

The research questions for this research are:

1. How do the elements of 4Ps influence the marketing communication practiced by the company?
2. How can the marketing communication strategies contribute to the revenue and sustainability of the company?
3. What are the marketing communication strategies that should be exercised by the company in order to sustain in the industry?

1.3 Organization of the Thesis

This report will cover 7 (seven) chapters and the outlines are as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter contains an introduction of the case study including background of study, problem statement, case issues, and organization of the thesis.

Chapter 2: Industry Profile and Analysis

This chapter provides an overview on the functional food industry, marketing communication, and environmental practice of SMEs in the functional food industry. This chapter also provides past research about functional food and marketing communication practices of SMEs.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter describes the design of the research study of data collection, list of people interview, list of document review, data linkage, interview protocol, and tools used in analyzing this case study.

Chapter 4: Case Write- Up- Background of the Company

This chapter contains the background of MB Global.

Chapter 5: Case Write-up – Case Issues

The main discussion in this chapter is about issues in MB Global. The focus of this chapter is about the marketing strategies practiced by the company.

Chapter 6: Case Analysis

This chapter discusses the tools that are adopted in this case. The tools used to answer research questions are Cause- and- Effect Diagram, Product Life Cycle and SWOT analysis.

Chapter 7: Recommendations and Conclusion

The final chapter covers the recommendations and conclusion for the company. Results from data analysis will be used to propose suggestions and it is ended with the conclusion of this study.

CHAPTER 2

INDUSTRY PROFILE AND ANALYSIS

2.0 Nature of the Industry

In Malaysia, there is no official definition of functional food. Most of the companies that sell functional food do not register under Food and Drug Act 1983, but the products are registered under food category. In order to control and monitor the quality of functional food, Ministry of Health has assigned Department of Food Quality, Malaysian National Codex Committee, and The National Pharmaceutical Bureau to take part in the implementation of laws for functional food.

Functional foods are foods that may provide health benefits beyond basic nutrition (Tino Bench-Larsen, 2003). If we consumed functional food, we can have healthier lives without changing our eating habit (Jonas, 1998). Actually, the awareness about healthy food are already established since long ago. There are a lot of traditional and herbal medications usually handed down through generations. Currently, in Malaysia, there are no official definition and specific regulation of functional food (Lau, 2011). Functional food in Malaysia are usually regulated under conventional food category. Unlike countries such as Japan, China, South Korea, and Taiwan, Malaysia has not yet developed national regulation for functional food as those countries have.

According to trade sources, functional food covers 40% of retail packed and drinks market. The food is in the form of fruit juice, Asian herbs, energy drinks, milk formulas, energy bars, and cookies. In 1990s, the functional food and drinks were introduced to the market by multinational companies such as Nestle and Kellogg. Customers chose to buy functional food based on the health reason as they think that the products can improve the health (Mäkelä, 2005). The functional food products must have features such as naturalness and high quality. It is challenging for the functional food manufacturers and marketers to make sure the market is not worried about the quality of the products. Some customers did not trust such products and they feel that the products are not secured. It is the responsibility of the company to make sure customers are confident with functional food products.

The increasing market share of functional food and the growth of this industry encourage many entrepreneurs to be involved in manufacturing and marketing of functional food products. However, it is very important for the manufacturer not to overestimate the power and quality of the product and charge expensive price. The marketers must convince the customers that the benefit justify the monetary value paid by customers (Dallas, 2014). Limited communication between marketers and customers is one of the major barriers in this industry. Customers may not be willing to pay premium cost if they don't know the benefit and quality of the products (Heer, 2002). Based on the research that have been done, it can be summarized that every company involved in functional food industry should practice the marketing communication that able to influence customers' attitude, behavior, as well as their mindset that may result brand awareness, association, and loyalty.

2.1 Definitions of Functional Food

In the eighties, Japan has introduced food with special ingredients that provide physiological benefits with the term of “functional food”. Since then, the concept of functional food was accepted by US, Canada, Europe, and other nations around the world. However, there is no unitary accepted definition of functional food as the term varies across countries. National agencies, academicians, and food industry specialists generally understood functional foods as food that contain bioactive components with nutrients to offer health benefits beyond basic nutrients – similar in appearance to conventional food and intended to be eaten as part of the everyday diet (Lau, 2011). Most of the countries understood that functional food contains bioactive components that provide extra health benefit. The form of functional food may in the form of natural, conventional, and consumed as a daily diet.

2.2 Market Size, Structure and Development Trends in Malaysia

It is estimated that RM 30 billion is the market for food and beverages in Malaysia. It shows that Malaysia has an attractive and largest food and drink market. The functional food in Malaysia is highly diversified and it is difficult to estimate the overall market size in Malaysia (Stanton, 2011). Estimated number of 18.3 million Muslims in Malaysia contribute largely to the huge success of the market. In addition, *halal* products are not only purchased by Muslim customers, but also the non-Muslims, and they are also sold in international market.

It also helps that Malaysian government is being thoroughly supportive of the halal food industry in the country. *Halal* Industry Development Master Plan (HIMP) is a master plan to drive *Halal* as new source of economic growth. HIMP addresses the issues of certification, sector development, *halal* integrity, implementation, time frames, and responsibilities. The master plan covers three phases starting from 2008 until 2020. From Table 2.1, it can be seen that we are in phase two, where Malaysia is one of the preferred locations for *halal*-related business. The main focus in this phase is to become global knowledge base and global brand recognition.

Table 2.1. HIMP Implementation Phase

PHASE 1: 2008-2010	PHASE 2: 2011-2015	PHASE 3: 2016-2020
Establish Malaysia as a global leader in <i>Halal</i> Integrity	Establish Malaysia as the preferred locations for <i>halal</i> -related businesses	Broaden geographic footprint of homegrown companies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved certification process • Global <i>Halal</i> Support Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global knowledge base • Global brand recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global knowledge base • Global brand recognition

Source: *Halal* Industry Development Master Plan

2.3 The Main Players

Generally the main players of functional food are multinational companies such as Nestle Malaysia, Yakult, and F&N which offer health and wellness products, pharmacies, Small Medium Entrepreneurs (SMEs) of the food industry, retail companies, and supplier of functional ingredients. There are a lot of Small Medium Entrepreneurs (SMEs) that involved in manufacturing and selling of functional food. Based on information from SME Corp Malaysia official website, there are 715 SME businesses involved in food and beverages.

Nowadays, there are a lot of firms in Malaysia producing the same concept of product like MB Global. *Sunnah* food is becoming the latest trend and highly demanded, particularly among Muslim entrepreneurs. More companies are trying to grab the market share with a variety of *Sunnah* food such as honey, raisins, and *habatussauda*. The positive support of government towards *halal* food industry also contributes to the flooded of *halal* and *Sunnah* food in the market. Even though MB Global is among the pioneers in *halal* and *Sunnah* food product, but now it is trapped in the red ocean as more companies are competing in grabbing the market share.

There are few firms in Malaysia with similar concept of product as MB Global, which sells dates cider. Table 2.2 shows analysis on competitors.

Table 2.2. Competitor Analysis

COMPANY'S NAME	MB GLOBAL	MINSHAM SDN BHD	PERNIAGAAN QURBA	ANT BERJAYA BERHAD
PRODUCT BRAND	AB Basyirah	Minsham	Various brands: e.g Khal and Faqeh	Noor
TAGLINE	Believe Sunnah	Sunnah Food	Islamic Medical Heritage	Sunnah Food
REGISTRATION DATE	23/11/2009	13/11/2009	11/4/2001	2011
LOCATION	Bangi, Selangor	P.J, Selangor	Jitra, Kedah	Batu Pahat, Johor
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	9	More than 50	No information	No information
FACEBOOK	Yes (16k likes)	Yes (5,031 likes)	Yes (837 likes)	Yes (6 likes)
WEBSITE	No longer active	www.noorsunnah.com	www.qurba.com.my	www.minsham.com
WEBSITE CONTENT	Company profile, products, promotion	Company profile, products, promotion, agents	Company profile, products, agents	Company profile, products, promotion
GOOGLE SEARCH	18,700	128, 000	23, 500	Invalid (search includes individual name Noor)
NUMBER OF PRODUCT	8	8	7	3
PRICE RANGE	RM 45 – RM 90	RM 60	RM 90	RM 25
PRODUCT CONCEPT	Mostly dates cider-based and honey products	Mostly olive-based products. Only one with dates cider based products	Honey and herbs. Only one with dates cider products	Pomegranate and dates cider-based products
	Liquid in sachet	Liquid form in bottle, 2 tablespoons per intake	Liquid form in bottle, 15ml per intake	Liquid form in bottle
	Own formulation	Imported exclusively from Syria	No information	Imported from middle east
TARGET MARKET	Muslim consumers only	All consumers	All consumers	All consumers
MARKETING STRATEGY	1.Direct selling 2.Stockist and Pharmacy 3.Radios & TV 4.Printing materials 5.Events	1.Direct selling 2.Stockist 3.Radios & TV 4.Printing materials 5.Events	1.Direct selling 2.Stockist	1.Direct selling 2.Stockist
QUALITY STANDARD	IMP and GMP	No information	GMP	No information
STRENGTH	1.Able to control the product's quality due to own formulation 2. Packed in sachet for convenient daily consumption. 3. Moderate easy of availability	1.Attractive website and full of necessary information and videos 2.Reliable due to good image and size of organization 3.Moderate easy of availability 4.Comprehensive target market	1. Active official website with company background and product information. 2. Comprehensive target market	1. Active official website with company background and product information 2. Limited product range makes it easier to maintain the quality and focus. 3. Comprehensive target market
WEAKNESSES	1.No official website to disseminate necessary information 2.Limited target market	1.Less convenience to eat the products	1.Various brand for products and no identity of the company 2.Low ease of availability	1. Less known brand 2.Low ease of availability
SIMILARITIES	1. Promoting <i>Sunnah</i> foods 2. Promoting similar benefit from the products 3. Product distribution through stockist or agents 4. Almost the same price range			

Source: (Sapawi, 2015)

2.4 Marketing Communication

Marketing Communication is a mode that helps a business to develop relationship with customers. There are four (4) medium in marketing communication which are advertising, direct marketing, public relation, and sales promotion. Advertising is non-personal form of communication that is able to persuade the target audience to think and behave in expected particular way. Usually, the audience is less likely to believe the message delivered through advertisement that resulted in advertising suffering a low credibility among the consumers. However, most of the companies prefer to use advertisement as the channel of communication because a lot of people can be reached at the same time with a message even though the cost is extremely high. The common channel of advertising is through television, radio, newspapers, and billboard.

Sales promotion consists of activities such as personal selling, advertising, and public relation to stimulate the customers to purchase the products offered by the seller. The purpose of sales promotion is to provide added value to the products and increase sales. Generally, sales promotion is the short run tools to stimulate immediate increase in demand. Sales promotion also is non-personal form of communication, but has a greater capability in targeting smaller group of audience. Examples of sales promotion activities include free sample, coupon, voucher, trade show, and contest premium. The cost of sales promotion is lower than advertising. Although the credibility of sales promotion is not very high, sales promotion is able to add value

and increase future sales, as well as improving financial performance in shorter duration.

Personal selling is the communication tools that involve face to face activities in an attempt to influence the consumers. The purpose of personal selling is to inform, persuade, or remind an individual to take action as expected by the seller. To define, personal selling is planned presentation for buyers which can either be face to face or over phone call. Nowadays, personal selling also is contributing in maintaining long-term relationship with customers other than solely focusing on making the business. Even though the cost of sales promotion is high, the salesperson is free at the point of contact to deliver a message other than that intended. Generally, personal selling is important when the product has high value, and customers are concentrated.

Public relation evaluates public attitude, identifies issues that may cause public's concern, and executes programs to gain public understanding and acceptance. Public relation can become part of the corporate strategy of a business. Marketers are not only using public relationship in order to maintain a positive image of the company, but also to educate the public about the company's goal and objective. Examples of public relation activities are event management, sponsorship, and lobbying.

According to Brexendorf (2010), marketing communication is a medium to influence customers' attitude, behavior, and mindset that may result in brand awareness and product loyalty. Brand loyalty is able to create barriers for competitors, increase sales volume, and contribute to the company's growth. Usually, companies will spend massive budget on their marketing communication plans as it builds competitive advantage for the companies.

Marketing communication is the integrated effort of marketers to convey the message to target customers. They will choose an appropriate channel with the aim to get a positive response and better feedback from customers. Marketing communication is also used to persuade and remind customers about the brand that they sell. Marketing communication represents the voice of brand and establishes relationship with customers (Kotler, 2012).

A company should have an effective marketing communication in order to smoothly reach their target customers. The flows of information are very important as it will make sure that the information about related products are conveyed to the target customers. In addition, marketing communication helps in nurturing the relationship between sellers and customers. The positive image of the company is formed in the mind of customers not only because of the good experience that they have with a product or service, but it also substantially rests upon how well the seller communicates with the clients in the long run (Haque, 2011)

2.5 Past Research of Marketing Communications

There are a lot of researches analyzing the correlation between marketing communication and business performance. Some of the researchers analyze the effect on sales and customer satisfaction (Reid, 2001). N.H. Damijan (2007) conducted research regarding the connection between communication activities and business performance. The research revealed that there are no correlation between number of marketing communicating activities to the net sales and customer's loyalty. It means that companies should not increase the number of marketing communication activities, but they can choose other strategies in order to increase their sales. Companies which have more loyal customers use fewer marketing communication activities as they already have strong relationship with customers. The outcome of the research reveals that a company can increase their sales by focusing on a greater extent of the frequency of practicing specific marketing communication activities, and not on how many marketing communication activities they should apply. This research can be used as a guideline when a company decides on a marketing communication plan.

Reid (2001) has done a research on Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) mini-audit developed by Duncan and Moriarty (1998) to measure the extent of marketing communication implementation among organizations in the Australian market place. The IMC mini-audit views communication integration across five dimensions encompassing organizational infrastructure, interactivity, mission

marketing, strategic consistency, and planning. The study found positive relationships between IMC and brand, sales, and related performance measures.

In another organization-based study, Low (2000), surveyed marketing managers on the use of IMC in their organizations. Items related to planning centralization, communication consistency, and media multiplicity were employed to measure the use of IMC. The study reported significant positive correlations between the use of IMC and organization performance pertaining to sales, market share, and profitability.

Based on the past research, it is noticed that some marketers are aware that marketing communication is an important resource of the business performance but others ignore of its efficacy and neglect its application. In order to communicate with customers, most managers use irrelevant and inefficient marketing communication that produced no result and inflicted a negative impact on the business performance.

Another disturbing aspect of the application of marketing communication is most of the managers fail to appreciate the importance of monitoring and evaluation of the marketing communication that have been applied by them. The neglect has made it impossible for marketing managers to measure the effectiveness of marketing communication in their business performance.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This research will provide a clear understanding on the contribution of marketing communication towards sustainability of MB Global. It will develop the knowledge of effective marketing communication along with its cost and benefits of the sustainability of the company.

3.1 Data Collection

Interviews, discussion, phone calls, emails, and reviewing of the related documents are the methods used to gather data and information on the company, products, existing marketing strategies, and customers. Interviews are used as a primary data collection. Several interviews have been conducted with the manager, staff, stockist and customer. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain information for this study. During the interview session, note-taking is used to capture the important facts and information. Besides the method of interview, related documents such as MB Global company's profile, record of total sales, and total marketing cost for the past 5 years are used to get further information about the issues that are faced by the company. The flow of data analysis for this study is represented in Figure 3.1

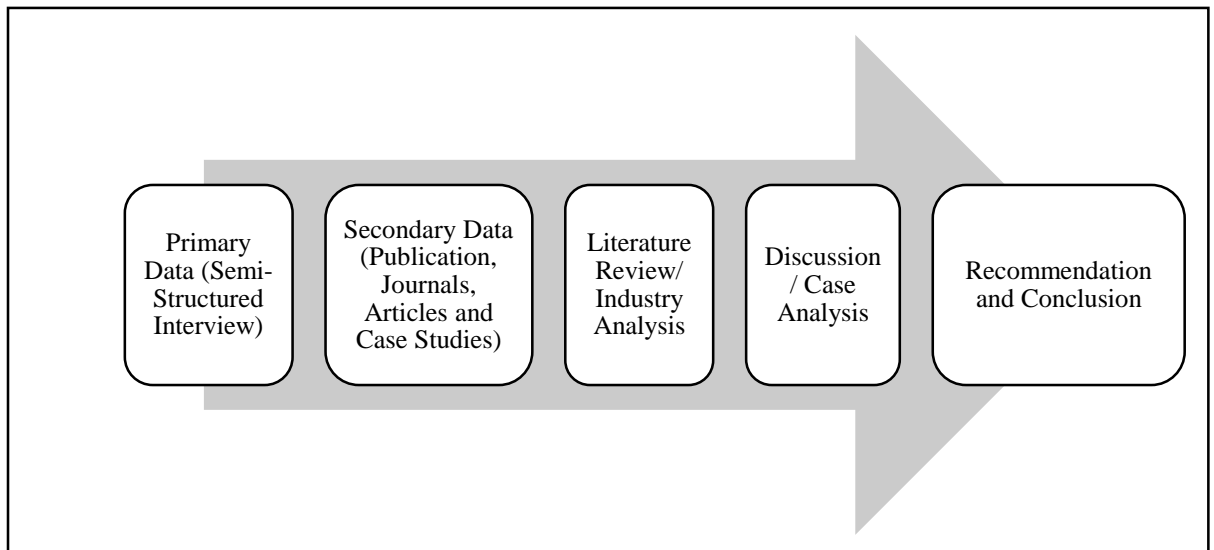


Figure 3.1. Data Analysis Methodology

3.2 Interview Protocol

The interview protocol is important in conducting interviews as it contains guidelines that serve as rules for the interviewer. In most cases, an interview is used as a method for data collection to gather information from individuals about their opinion, belief, and practices.

In this study, an interview protocol begins with self introduction, intention of the study, and reasons of the interviewees being chosen to take part in the interview. Questions were prepared in the open-ended form and in daily conversation to ensure that respondents understand and provide accurate answers to facilitate this study. To ensure the conversation is running smoothly, two types of questions were used, namely non directive and critical incidents. Non-directive questions are asked for respondents to describe their daily activities. They were modified to ask respondents

to describe their experience and the business activities. The critical questions on incident are constructed to understand further about the best and worst experience in the business. In order to capture important information during interview session, note-taking technique was used. Table 3.1 shows the list of people interviewed for this study.

Table 3.1. List Of People Interviewed For This Study.

INTERVIEWEES PROFILE	DATE INTERVIEWED	TIME FRAME
Encik Zahir Bin Zamzam Manager of Sales and Marketing Department in MB Global	25 March 2014	10.00am – 11.30am
	20 September 2015	10.00am – 12.00 noon
Puan Nora Binti Mazlan Sales and Marketing Clerk in MB Global	20 September 2015	12.00 noon- 1.00 pm
Stockist 1 (Bangi)	20 September 2015	3.00pm – 4.00pm
Customer 1 (Ipoh)	5 October 2015	4.00pm – 5.00pm

3.3 Document Review

The following documents are referred in conducting analysis in this study.

1. MB Global Company's Profile
2. Record of total sales from 2010 to 2014
3. Record of total sales by products from 2010 to 2014
4. Record of total expenses from 2010 to 2014
5. Record of marketing cost from 2010 to 2014
6. Record of marketing cost based on marketing channel