CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

This study represented an attempt to understand factors affecting the intention to continue to use the brand, which, in this regard, is the weight controlling dietary supplement (CLA 600 / CLA Advance). Specified down on the factors, the study had examined the influences of Marketing and Non-marketing activities on the attitude toward this particular supplement. Besides, the profile of the current users was also explored for further understanding.

We could then conclude that, in term of causal relations, it was found that attitude toward the brand was the significant determinant of intention to continue to use the brand for CLA 600/ CLA Advance users. Attitude toward the brand was positively affected by perceived confidence and perceived price or value for money and perceived sales promotion.

Demographic profiles of the users were also worth mentioning. Nearly all of the respondents are female with majority of the age ranges are in 20-40 years of age. Most of them had bachelor degree and worked with the private companies or privately owned business. The marital status between single and married were equally but 75% were with their lovers. The average income was in the range of a bit over 20000 baht and their average BMI was 22.38. These profiles were tally with the previous studies of Duangtim (1999) and Sakunsonkdat (2003).

The respondents' perception on their shapes was rather negative compared to what their friends/ surrounding colleagues perceived. The average amounts of CLA capsules taken were confined mainly to 2-3 capsules/day and their average monthly expense for the product was nearly 1500 baht/month. The other weight controlling methods they

mostly employed were also similar to Duangtim (1999) study i.e. diet control and exercise. These group of CLA users also consumed other DS including vitamins, other weight controlling DS and skin health/ beauty DS although the prevalence didn't go beyond 50%. The usual places to buy CLA were normal drug stores and modern/franchise drugstores only. For advertising media, TV and magazine were the media most mentioned. When we took a look on promotional campaign, we found out that all kinds of offering were well accepted by the users including discount, duo or trio packs, free CLA or other items as a gift, lucky draw or even the mailing back of the leaflet inside for free gift. The last investigation was on the influential people for decision making, in this regard, we just observed that pharmacist ranked as the first, followed by friends, product consultant at the shelf and doctors.

5.2 Managerial Implications

As we can see from the result of the study that attitude toward the brand, which determine the intention of the consumer to continue to use the brand, was positively affected by perceived confidence together with perceived price or value for money and perceived sales promotion, therefore, for the company future strategy so to develop the market further, the implications for management should then be discussed based on all of the marketing mixes (besides the three shown above, the insignificant variables were product attribute, advertising and channel of distribution or accessibility) however, we would focus mainly on these three significant perceptions.

5.2.1 Perceived confidence

It was clearly seen that the perceived confidence (impact on the attitude was 0.19) came from the items of well established in the market and was number one in term of sales in this weight controlling DS, therefore, the company should work further from these two strengths. Any activities to be designed for CLA (such as advertisement) should then be focused on these two points so to create more positive attitude toward the brand. Certain small point to

be considered is whether the company should maintain the number 1 sticker on the packaging or to print this number 1 on the carton. The popularity of placing the sticker on fresh fruit nowadays might be a good example to work on and decide.

5.2.2 Perceived value for money

This item (impact on the attitude was 0.15) could be a bit tricky since value for money is a comparative term because it could be compared to other weight controlling DS, efficacy found or the money spent. By the way, since this item had the highest impact to attitude (0.62), therefore, we have to handle this subject seriously. The company should then focus on the subjects that could be addressed i.e. compare to the weight controlling DS and the efficacy since the money spent might be out of control because it could be correlated to further factors. The most important point should be the efficacy, therefore, to communicate well to the consumer on the efficacy together with the additional measures to help maintaining or even reducing weight should be handled properly. The company should not make an over or under claim but should communicate the information on this subject to the consumer transparently and sincerely. From the demographic data, the average amount spending for CLA fell in the range of 1500 baht/month; therefore, the company should confine the consumer spending to this level. As well, for cost containment, the company should find the ways to help reducing the production cost as much as possible so to maintain the selling price so long.

5.2.3 Perceived promotional program

This item had the lowest significant impact on the attitude (0.15), however, it should be addressed properly as well. Since details of the promotional programs were all ranked high, therefore, the company should then utilize the program alternately. However, the discount program should be handled sensitively since the impact might be negative (from the group interview outcome). As well, the

perception on the discount price on consumer might reduce the actual price in their mind once and for all; therefore, it should be implemented with great care. The other programs were of high value especially the offering CLA itself as the free gift or fill in the coupon and send to the company for CLA product free goods and the duo or trio pack offering. This indirect activity of loading more products to consumer will discourage them to find other comparable products as well as provide more sales to the company.

For other marketing mixes, since they were not the determinants of attitude, the company should then address them on a normal basis. These are such as the advertisement, although must be maintained so to keep the momentum of the product, but should focus purely on the three significant determinants i.e. value for money, confidence and promotional programs. For the channel of distribution, the company should make sure that the product is easily to find so not to irritate the customers whenever they need the products.

5.3 Limitations and Research Directions

This study has provides certain relevant information of the profile and behavior of the current users of one of the most popular weight controlling DS, but, the study, itself contained many limitations. And so to address these limitations properly, we have as well suggest some research directions so to get a better understanding in the future, as follows:

5.3.1 The study is necessarily limited in generalizability. The data in this study were obtained from the users of just one product of weight controlling DS although there are more than 50 different brands of similar purposed products available in the market in Thailand. Besides, our samples were the current users of the product only. Therefore, the results of this study are exploratory and preliminary in nature and should be

used with great care. The replication of this kind of study but in a wider scope such as more weight controlling DS items and different group of users as the samples should be recruited. Moreover, to conduct the studies in the regional area (Asia Pacific) or cross cultural (overseas) might be of great value and is essential in validation and generalization of the finding.

5.3.2 Since the study is a cross sectional study, the most important limitation is the exclusion of the assessment of the actual purchasing behavior. It would be useful to explore more on the relationship between the intention and the actual behavior in future works.

5.3.3 The profile of the sample is of great value; therefore, it might be useful to assess the role of these additional factors in influencing customers' future purchasing behavior. For example, do certain individual characteristics such as personality traits (e.g. gender, age, education and job detail), income level for both self and family, lifestyle and even the reference group or influencing people encourage or discourage the future purchasing behavior. Which cultural values are important in the consumers' decision making process? Additional of these factors would definitely enhance the understanding for people in the industry toward their customers and thereby increasing the effectiveness of the going to be implemented marketing strategies and programs.