

PREFERENCE AND CONSUMERS BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF NATURAL / HERBAL COSMETICS IN PALAKKAD CITY

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ABSTRACT

The concept of beauty and cosmetics is as ancient as mankind and civilization. Women are obsessed with looking beautiful. So, they use various beauty products that have herbs to look charming and young. A 'herbal / natural cosmetic product' means any product which, subject to production (obtained and processed) from natural / herbal substances. The *natural cosmetics* are usually made from food and other nutritional ingredients. The fragrances for the natural cosmetics are obtained from the natural oil. It is the responsibility of the user to ensure that he is not allergic to the plants. Customer is the central point and all the marketing activities revolve around him. Manufacturer produces what the customer wants. Consumer behaves in a particular manner as directed by his inner motive. The marketer is to study and analyse the consumers' behaviour in order to sell and improve the product.

Keywords: Herbal/Natural cosmetics, customer.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of beauty and cosmetics is as ancient as mankind and civilization. Women are obsessed with looking beautiful. So, they use various beauty products that have herbs to look charming and young. Indian herbs and its significance are popular worldwide. Herbal Cosmetics have growing demand in the world market and is an invaluable gift of nature. A 'herbal / natural cosmetic product' means any product which, subject to production (obtained and processed) from natural / herbal substances. Within the meaning of these paragraphs, 'natural / herbal substances' include any substances of botanical, animal or mineral origin as well as their mixtures. Natural cosmetic products containing any of these preservatives must clearly bear the information 'preserved with' and the name of the preservative near the indication 'natural cosmetic product'.

Customer is the central point and all the marketing activities revolve around him. Manufacturer produces what the customer wants. As the customers' behaviour differs from person to person the producer must understand it. Customer purchases an article as a consequence of certain mental and economic forces creating desires or wants which he understands can be satisfied by the articles offered for purchase. Thus, producer so that he can offer a complete article purchaser to purchase. Such buying motives may be fear, desire for money, vanity, pride, fashion, possession, sex or romance, affection or comfort. Consumer behaves in a particular manner as directed by his inner motive. The marketer is to study and analyse the consumers' behaviour in order to sell and improve the product.

Safety of Natural Cosmetic Products

In evaluating the safety of natural cosmetic products, consideration must be given to the most relevant available toxicity data for all ingredients present, including natural ingredients, with particular attention being given to the following considerations:

Natural ingredients are complex mixtures which must be defined with sufficient precision so as to enable the composition and effects of a given ingredient to be identified; scientific justification must be given in cases where some of the toxicological data on natural ingredients is unavailable.

The *natural cosmetics* are usually made from food and other nutritional ingredients. The fragrances for the natural cosmetics are obtained from the natural oil. It is the responsibility of the user to ensure that he is not allergic to the plants.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prasad Nagappa and Anantha Naik (2005) in their market research shows upward trend in the herbal trade with the herbal cosmetic industry playing a major role in fuelling this worldwide demand for herbals. The recent interest of consumers in herbal cosmetics has been stimulated by the decline of faith in modern cosmetics, the belief that plant remedies were natural and thereby superior to man-made synthetic cosmetics and the reference to successful historical use by different cultures. **Dr. Vinith Kumar Nair and Dr. Prakash Pillai R (2007)** concluded that male consumers generally prefer to purchase and make the brand selection of cosmetics individually. Quality is the major factor influencing the purchase decision of male consumers. They tend to buy cosmetic items from a single shop of their convenience. It is also observed that male consumers buy all their cosmetic items from one shop. **Sowmya (2012)** said that a large number of cosmetic and toiletry formulations have been developed based on Indian Herbs recently. The study reveals the preference of consumers for herbal products, mainly due to increased consciousness about the harmful side effects of chemical cosmetics. **Kavitha and Anish Fathima, (2017)** in their article stated herbal products plays an important role in people's life to protect them against various health issues. The study aims to identify the satisfaction of the customers towards herbal products in Erode district. The study was based on questionnaire with a sample of 100 respondents. The findings were analyzed using simple percentage analysis, chi-square test and friedman ranking test. Findings reveal that age, gender, educational qualification and type of family have significant association with customers level of satisfaction towards herbal products. **S. Anupriya (2017)**, indicated that the Indian herbal market is flooded with numerous well-known and recognized herbal brands. Consumers of this millennium have become more concerned about their health and also inclined to maintain quality of life which is reflected through the preferential consumption of those products that protects the good state of their health as well as provide maximum satisfaction. In pursuit of a healthy lifestyle Indian have become more inclined to Ayurvedic or Herbal therapy as alternative healthcare for natural cure. The choice and usage of a particular brand by the consumer over the time is affected by the quality benefits offered by the brand especially when it comes to brand of eatable and cosmetics. Consumer satisfaction is derived when he compares the actual performance of the product with the performance he expected out of the usage.

OBJECTIVES

- i. To study the preference and buying behavior of herbal cosmetics by consumers in Palakkad City.
- ii. To find the relationship between negative factors for Herbal Cosmetics and opinion of using Herbal Cosmetics in Future
- iii. To suggest measures for the growth of herbal cosmetic segment.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the study can be simply explained as the statistical tools & other strategies we use for conducting & evaluating the study. The methods used for analyzing, tabulating, calculations & for interpreting the data. Primary and secondary data are used for the study. Survey method is used for systematic gathering of data from the respondents through questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed after taking into consideration the multiple aspects of the study & consideration of the required in line with the objectives of the study. Convenience sampling method was used to conduct survey among the customers. The sample unit includes consumers located in main areas of Palakkad city. The total number of respondents taken for the study was 175. Tools used for the study are Percentage analysis, Weighted Average and Chi-square test.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to Palakkad city only so the result may not be applicable to other parts. The sample size was limited to 175 respondents was mainly due to time and cost constraints.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table – 1 : Respondents' opinion about the duration of using the cosmetics

Duration of using cosmetics	No of Respondents	% of Respondents
Less than 1 year	68	39
1 to 2 years	66	38
Above 2 years	41	23
Total	175	100

The above table shows that 39% of the respondents are using the cosmetics for less than 1 year, 38% of the respondents are using between 1 and 2 years and the remaining 23% of the respondents are using above 2 years.

Table – 2: Respondents opinion about the Quality of Natural / Herbal Cosmetics when compared to other products

Quality	No of Respondents	% of Respondents
Excellent	78	45
Good	62	35
Average	35	20
Poor	0	0
Total	175	100

The above table shows that 45% of the respondents stated excellent about the quality of herbal / natural cosmetics when compared to other products, 35% of the respondents revealed good and the remaining 20% of the respondents reported average.

Table – 3: Respondents opinion the negative factors on Herbal / Natural Cosmetics

Negative Factors	No of Respondents	% of Respondents
Slow Result/Healing	32	18
Sticky Natured	44	25

Costly	59	34
Short Life Span / Quick Expiry	40	23
Total	175	100

The above table shows that 34% of the respondents stated cost as the negative factor of herbal / natural cosmetics, 25% of the respondents revealed it is sticky in nature, 23% of the respondents opined it had short life span / quick expiry problems and the remaining 18% of the respondents reported slow result / healing of the product.

Table – 4: Respondents opinion about using the Herbal / Natural Cosmetics in Future too

Opinion of using Herbal Cosmetics	No of Respondents	% of Respondents
Definitely Yes	132	75
Probably will use	43	25
Definitely No	0	0
Total	175	100

The above table shows that majority (75%) of the respondents stated definitely yes about using herbal / natural cosmetics in future and 25% of the respondents revealed that they probably use herbal / natural cosmetics in future.

Table – 5: Respondents opinion about repurchasing of the Herbal / Natural Products

Reasons for repurchasing	No of Respondents	% of Respondents
High Quality Product	85	49
Company's Reputation	39	22
Elegant & Attractive Packing	28	16
Availability	23	13
Total	175	100

The above table shows that less than half (49%) of the respondents stated that they repurchase herbal / natural cosmetics for its high quality, 22% of the respondents indicated company's reputation, 16% of the respondents opined elegant & attractive packing and the remaining 13% of the respondents reported availability of the natural / herbal cosmetic in the market.

Table – 6: Respondents ranking on the commercial factors considered as their preference

Sl. No.	Factors	Rank-1	Rank-2	Rank-3	Rank-4	Weighted Mean
01.	Advertisement	115	28	15	17	3.37 (I)
02.	Price	43	104	23	5	3.05 (II)
03.	Recommendation by Friends, Retailers, etc.	46	58	66	5	2.82 (III)
04.	Brand Image	31	88	43	13	2.78 (IV)

It can be inferred from the above table that the rating on the commercial factors such as Brand image, price, advertisement and recommendation by friends, retailers, etc considered by the respondents. It is understood that the advertisement of the product ranks first position with a weighted average score of 3.37. It is clear that the second rank 3.05 is obtained by the price factor for consideration by the respondents. It is evident that the third position was obtained with the weighted score of 2.82 is obtained by the recommendations by friends, retailers etc., as their second consideration after price for preferring the cosmetics. It is found that the weighted average carries less points (2.78) towards the Brand image as their consideration towards cosmetics by the respondents.

Table – 7: Relationship between the negative factors for Herbal / Natural Cosmetics and opinion of using Herbal / Natural Cosmetics in Future

Negative Factors of Cosmetics	Opinion of using Herbal Cosmetics		Total
	Definitely yes	Probably will use	
Slow Result/Healing	23	9	32
Sticky Natured	32	12	44
Costly	44	15	59
Short Life Span / Quick Expiry	33	7	40
Total	132	43	175

O	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
23	37.259	2.205
32	76.878	3.309
44	165.071	5.299
33	141.134	6.683
9	12.222	2.221
12	19.643	2.595
15	23.542	2.320
7	0.014	0.002
		24.634

H₀ : Null Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between the negative factors for Herbal / Natural Cosmetics and opinion of using Herbal / Natural Cosmetics in Future

H₁ : Alternative Hypothesis

There is significant relationship between the negative factors for Herbal / Natural Cosmetics and opinion of using Herbal / Natural Cosmetics in Future

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} = 24.634$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Degree of Freedom (df)} &= (c-1)(r-1) \\ &= (2-1)(4-1) \\ &= 1 \times 3 \\ &= 3 \end{aligned}$$

$$TV = 7.815$$

RESULT = SIGNIFICANT

The result of the chi-square test reveals that the calculated chi-square value is less than the table chi-square value at 5% level and therefore, relationship between the negative factors for Herbal / Natural Cosmetics and opinion of using Herbal / Natural Cosmetics in Future is significant. Thus the hypothesis is that the relationship between the negative factors for Herbal / Natural Cosmetics and opinion of using Herbal / Natural Cosmetics in Future holds good. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected.

FINDINGS

It is found that 39% of the respondents are using the cosmetics for less than 1 year. It is found that 45% of the respondents stated excellent about the quality of herbal / natural cosmetics when compared to other products. It is found that 34% of the respondents stated cost as the negative factor of herbal / natural cosmetics. It is found that majority (75%) of the respondents stated definitely yes about using herbal / natural cosmetics in future. It is found that less than half (49%) of the respondents stated that they repurchase herbal / natural cosmetics for its high quality. It is found that advertisement as the major commercial factors considered for preferring herbal cosmetics and the least is for brand image.

SUGGESTIONS

Due to the economic and social changes that are taking place in our country, more and more people are buying products to suit their requirements. This gives plenty of scope for the manufacturers of durable products to tap not only the growing market but also the potential market. Price is the most important factor that influences the purchase decision of mass. Hence enough care has to be taken to bring a reasonable price. Herbal / Natural Cosmetics could be given lot of weightage that would help to maintain and also improve the brand image. The consumer products manufacturers shall keep their focus on the sources of information from where the consumers get information about the products. Therefore, Word-of-Mouth can be play a significant role in generating business which is only possible by keeping the existing customers happy and satisfied.

COMPETENCY TO MEET THE FUTURE STUDY

The above article reveals the truth that using Herbal cosmetics ecofriendly. The result is long lasting and healthy. It attracts the consumers. The beauty conscious customers pave way to the generating to the business. The exposure of the market in the future is safe in Herbal / Natural cosmetics.

CONCLUSION

The basis for the buying behaviour of the Natural /herbal Cosmetic products is the requirement of customers. It is evident from the study that requirement and the own choice of customers dominate their decision making. The role of price, sales, promotion should be taken with enough care so that the consumer trial of purchasing the product will be satisfied and the preference towards buying behaviour develops in due course of time.

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