

USERS' PERSPECTIVES ABOUT COSMETIC PRODUCTS – AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

Dr. K. TAMIZHJYOTHI

Assistant Professor

Department of Business Administration

Annamalai University, Annamalainagar, Tamilnadu, India

ABSTRACT

Cosmetic products are widely used by people nowadays and hence the number of players enter into this business has increased considerably. Companies try to identify the consumer's attitude towards these cosmetic products so that they position their products to the particular category of people, rather spending unnecessarily on non-targeted people. This study has provided a platform for the corporate to think on different dimensions what consumers prefer, which make them in deciding on Marketing Mix of different products, like modify the product or change in product design, fixing of price that better suit the targeted audience, appropriate promotion mix namely sales promotion, advertising, publicity and personal selling, and finally change in distribution channel. This study concludes that people were buying brands based on others approval depends on, how they are influenced to buying the cosmetic product. Advertisement and Family members seem to have a significant influence. So there seems to be a direct correlation on their family and friend's approval to the brand they use and the association with what the brand advertises. It is also concluded that quality, value for money, loyalty, and familiarity are the key factors consumers look for while considering about cosmetic products.

Keywords: Cosmetics, Brand, Advertisements, Reference Groups, Perception

INTRODUCTION

Cosmetics are necessities for women. Cosmetics include skin care products and makeup products (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmetics>). Some women use skin care products only, and some women use both skin care products and makeup products. There are many brands and types of cosmetics on the market and female consumers have many options. Some female consumers buy cosmetics because of brand, some buy cosmetics because of price, some buy cosmetics because their friends' recommendations and others buy cosmetics because of packaging design. Therefore, this study investigates and analyzes consumers' purchasing behavior. As people know, different interests and preferences of consumers based on different nationalities, different age groups, different personalities, etc, therefore, the author researched and analyzed the psychology of consumers.

Personal care products are the products which a consumer uses for his/her personal intention. It includes different types of cosmetic and skin care products like talc, cold cream, fairness cream, toothpaste, toothbrush, perfume, deodorant, hair oil, shampoo, soap, and all type of baby care and beauty care products. Any person need for these products every day. As the time passes away, the demand for personal care products is also increasing day by day and future of these products are also very bright and beneficial. Nowadays, men and women both they have conscious about their appearance than ever before. This behavior creates high growth in cosmetics market. After careful investigation of the review of literature, lot of research works are carried out in marketing aspects of cosmetics. However, those research works performed in the western countries. As far as Indian cosmetic industry is concerned, research work on cosmetics in Indian context considering different brands needs greater attention.

Background of the Study

Several research works have been conducted in this emerging research area. Sturrock and Pioch (1998) argued that the body image is an important component of the self-concept and has stimulated the demand of certain products and services, such as dietary, slimming, exercise and cosmetic items. Cosmetic is important in order to look more stylish and beautiful as cosmetic plays a significant role in the creation

of an image or being presentable to the others (DeLong and Bye, 1990). In western cultures, one of the commonly recognized reasons women uses cosmetics is to improve their physical attractiveness.

Women's aspiration for beauty is universal. A number of studies have addressed the impact of the representation of attractive women on female consumers. The desire to improve one's physical attractiveness seems to be an inherent characteristic of most individuals (Winston, 2003). Kumar, et al. (2006) stated that cosmetics fulfill the inner desires, fantasies and dreams; there is a sense of euphoria and aesthetics as consumers achieve the desires of being beautiful and feeling like a celebrity. Sameer *et al.*, (2006) stated about the cosmetic industry is a very lucrative, innovative, and fast paced industry where product innovation is the key to success. The study found that each of these cosmetic companies is unique. They each offer something different to the industry; selling method, marketing strategy, product line, and distribution channel. Coupland (2007) has also identified that the desire to maintain a youthful appearance is a culture of idealization of the body which requires a strict set of demands for the preservation of youthfulness. Their concern about the effects of ageing and the maintenance of a youthful appearance are prevalent motives for their consumption of grooming products. Vinith and Prakash (2007) analyzed the purchase patterns and spending styles of people belonging to different segments of Cosmetic consumers in Kerala. About a third of the consumers purchased cosmetics with their spouses. Percentage of respondents who purchased cosmetics with friends comes to 12. Seven percent of the respondents purchased it with their children. Fifty eight percent of the respondents selected the specific brands of cosmetics individually by themselves. Around 22 percent of the respondents entrusted the brand selection to their spouse.

Cosmetics have been traditionally used by women to control their physical appearance and, presumably, their physical attractiveness (Vanessa *et al.*, 2011). In the earlier age, only people in a high stratum of society had the ability to purchase cosmetics because cosmetics were the luxury goods for the public. The attitudes of consumers can have a significant effect on buying behaviour. *Attitude* is defined as general, durable evaluations of attitude objects. An attitude object can be a person, object, advertisement or an issue that a consumer has strong feelings towards. Kotler and Keller (2011) define attitude as a lasting favourable or unfavourable feeling, emotion, evaluation or action tendency toward an object or idea. Attitudes can be extremely difficult to change because of their enduring and emotional nature.

According to Evans et al. (2006) an attitude consists of three components which are a *cognitive*, *affective* and *conative* component. Evans et al. (2006) discuss that cognitive component includes things that a consumer knows and believes about a certain topic. Cognitive component is about a consumer's thoughts and beliefs; it is what the consumer thinks about a certain topic. Affective component of attitudes is related to the feelings that a consumer has toward a certain attitude object. The feelings and emotions in the affective component emerge from what is known about the topic, that is, the cognitive component. (Evans et al. 2006). Chang and Wan (2010) stated that the awakening of female consumer's consciousness during the recent years leads to alteration of consumer behavior, and influences women's usual conception for pursuing fashion and cosmetics application.

Taehyun and Hoon (2011) compared and validated the results of two clustering methods for the segmentation of the market for prestige cosmetics in Korea. The study identified that segmentation by traditional K means clustering was not judged useful, whereas segments generated by the innovative alternative of mixture regression modelling had clear marketing strategy potential.

Fong and Susan (2012) analysed the purchasing behaviour of the younger generation on skin care products. The results concluded that as far facial skin care product, the factors that influence the buyer would include: beliefs in product attribute, environmental concern, demographic and personal characteristic which induce the consumer to purchase the facial skin care product.

Vidhya and Tamizhjyothi (2013) conducted a study with the main purpose to investigate the influence of attitude on cosmetics buying behavior. The research question was "What kind of attitudes do the customers have towards buying behavior of cosmetic products?". The result of the study confirms that age, occupation, marital status have positive influence towards cosmetic products. But income does not have any influence on attitude towards cosmetic products. Vidhya and Tamizhjyothi (2014) have conducted a study on impulsive buying of cosmetics and found that most of the respondents do impulsive buying because of reasonable or low price. They also identified that the respondents feel happy after doing

impulsive purchase and most them prefer impulsive buying because of recommendations from their friends as far as cosmetic products are concerned.

Sharmila et al., (2015) aimed to explore the factors influencing the purchasing patterns of eco-friendly cosmetics and beauty care products among female customers in Mauritius. The results of the regression analysis have also suggested that the behavioural intention and referral of female customers is primarily derived from one predictor factor related to “women lifestyles, self-image, health and economic conditions”.

Objectives

The major objectives of the present study are

1. To find out the users' attitude towards cosmetics in Bangalore City
2. To analyze the influence of demographic variables on consumers' attitude

Methodology

This chapter explains the research methodology chosen for this study. First, the research method is discussed after which the data collection and analysis procedures are explained. The analytical approach chosen for this study was deductive. Deductive approach was chosen for this study because there is an existing, strong theoretical background in consumer behaviour to which this research could be based on. The research strategy used in this study was quantitative. The data collection method chosen for this study was through questionnaire and the sampling method was convenience sampling which is a form of non-probability sampling. The population chosen for this study was the 492 people who are residing in Bangalore city (Friends, neighbors and colleagues). Because the population chosen for this study was so limited, the whole population could also be used as the research sample.

Analysis and Discussion

The data collected from all the respondents was fed into a spreadsheet and sorted based on various independent factors which was responded to. SPSS was used to perform t-test and ANOVA for each of the factors and their respective independent factors. There were 21 factors or dependent variables where respondent were asked to take a position from strong agreement to strong disagreement. For each of these factors where the independent variable was significant from p-value perspective, the same was chosen for further analysis to draw certain inferences and the same is explained in the next few chapters.

Table-1: Mean and standard deviation of the individual factors

FACTORS	Mean	SD
I generally purchase cosmetics brands that I think others will approve it	2.84	1.20
I often observe what others are buying and using cosmetics	2.72	1.17
If I have little experience with cosmetics, I often ask others about them	3.19	0.96
I often gather information from others about cosmetics before purchasing	3.46	1.06
It is very important that others like the cosmetics and brands I buy	2.54	1.05
I have favorite brands of cosmetics I buy again and again	3.99	0.90
Once I like a brand, I stick with it	3.82	0.99
I go to the same stores each time I shop for cosmetics	3.09	1.24
I regularly change the brands of cosmetics I purchase	2.16	1.06
I think of myself as a cosmetic loyal consumer	3.11	1.28
I am very cautious in trying new cosmetic products	3.40	1.22
I enjoy taking chances in buying unfamiliar brands of cosmetics for comparison	2.26	1.28
I would never buy cosmetics I don't know about at the risk of making a mistake	3.29	1.56
I am the kind of person who would try any new cosmetics once	2.27	1.03
I would rather wait for others to try a new selling cosmetics than try it myself	3.12	1.28
I prefer purchasing the well-known brands of cosmetics	3.73	1.07
The most advertised brands of cosmetics are usually very good choices	2.81	1.14
Getting very good quality cosmetics is very important to me	4.26	0.84
I make special effort to choose the very best quality cosmetics	3.99	0.96
The higher the price of a cosmetic, the better its quality	2.59	1.15
I look carefully to find the best value for the money	4.05	0.90

Table shows the mean and standard deviation of the respondents' attitude towards cosmetic products. It is noted that respondents give importance to the quality of the cosmetics (mean = 4.26; SD = 0.84), and they look carefully to find out the best value for the money which they spend (mean = 4.05; SD = 0.90). Next important criteria they consider is brand (mean = 3.99; SD = 0.90). Respondents frequently buy their favourite brands again and again. And also, they put special effort to choose the very best quality cosmetics (mean = 3.99; SD = 0.99). Loyalty and familiarity are the other dimensions the consumers look for before purchasing any cosmetic products. However, the respondents do not accept that they change the brands of cosmetics regularly (mean = 2.16; SD = 1.06). Further, they do not take chances in buying unfamiliar brands of cosmetics for comparison (mean = 2.26; SD = 1.28), and they won't try any new cosmetics, even once (mean = 2.27; SD = 1.03). Hence, it is concluded from the table that quality, value for money, loyalty, and familiarity are the key factors consumers look for while considering about cosmetic products.

Table-2: Influence of Age on Overall Attitude

Age	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Up to 20 years	2.9233	1.037	4.586	0.014
21 to 30 years	3.1312	.979		
31 to 40 years	3.5305	1.088		
41 to 50 years	3.3904	1.023		
Above 50 years	3.1857	1.212		
Total	3.1969	1.048		

Table shows the influence of age on overall attitude of the respondents towards beauty cosmetic products. In order to find out the influence, Anova was performed and the result shows a significant outcome ($F = 4.586$; $p = 0.014$). That is, the respondents differ significantly with respect to their age towards their attitude on beauty cosmetic products. On observing the mean values, it is noted that the respondents who are in the age group of 31 to 40 years (mean = 3.5305; SD = 1.088) significantly differ from the respondents who are in the age group of 21 to 30 years (mean = 3.1312; SD = 0.979) and below 20 years (mean = 2.9233; SD = 1.037). Hence it is concluded that the middle aged people have positive attitude towards beauty cosmetic products compared to young aged people.

Table-3: Influence of Gender on Overall Attitude

Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
Male	3.3208	1.009	2.801	0.047
Female	3.1750	1.059		
Total	3.1969	1.048		

Table shows the influence of gender on overall attitude of the respondents towards beauty cosmetic products. In order to find out the influence, Anova was performed and the result shows a significant outcome ($t = 2.801$; $p = 0.047$). That is, the respondents differ significantly with respect to their gender towards their attitude on beauty cosmetic products. On observing the mean values, it is noted that the male respondents (mean = 3.3208; SD = 1.009) significantly differ from the female respondents (mean = 3.1750; SD = 1.059). Hence it is concluded that the male respondents have positive attitude towards beauty cosmetic products compared to female respondents.

Table-4: Influence of Monthly Family Income on Overall Attitude

Monthly Family Income	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Less than Rs.2000`	3.0634	1.139	1.577	0.187 (NS)
Rs.20001 to Rs. 40000	3.4066	1.100		
Rs.40001 to Rs.60000	2.9416	1.101		
Rs.60001 to Rs.80000	3.1429	1.119		
More than Rs.80000	3.2910	.879		
Total	3.1969	1.048		

Table shows the Influence of Monthly Family Income on Overall Attitude of the respondents towards beauty cosmetic products. In order to find out the influence, Anova was performed and the result shows a non-significant outcome ($F = 1.577$; $p = 0.187$). Hence it is concluded that the monthly income of the family does not have any influence on the attitude towards cosmetic products.

Table-5: Influence of Occupation on Overall Attitude

Occupation	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Private Employee	3.0169	1.047	3.396	0.025
Business	2.9923	1.038		
Housewife	3.5106	1.017		
Student	2.9233	1.037		
Total	3.1969	1.048		

Table shows the influence of occupation on overall attitude of the respondents towards beauty cosmetic products. In order to find out the influence, Anova was performed and the result shows a significant outcome ($F = 3.396$; $p = 0.025$). That is, the respondents differ significantly with respect to their occupation towards their attitude on beauty cosmetic products. On observing the mean values, it is noted that the respondents who are housewives (mean = 3.5106; SD = 1.017) significantly differ from the respondents who are privately employed (mean = 3.0169; SD = 1.047) and those are in business (mean = 2.9923; SD = 1.038). Hence it is concluded that the housewives have positive attitude towards beauty cosmetic products compared to private employed people and those doing business.

Table-6: Influence of Marital Status on Overall Attitude

Marital Status	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
Married	3.2275	1.052	4.099	0.017
Unmarried	2.9215	1.021		
Total	3.1969	1.048		

Table shows the influence of marital status on overall attitude of the respondents towards beauty cosmetic products. In order to find out the influence, Anova was performed and the result shows a significant outcome ($t = 4.099$; $p = 0.017$). That is, the respondents differ significantly with respect to their marital status towards their attitude on beauty cosmetic products. On observing the mean values, it is noted that the respondents who are married (mean = 3.2275; SD = 1.052) significantly differ from the respondents who are not married (mean = 2.9215; SD = 1.021). Hence it is concluded that the married people have positive attitude towards beauty cosmetic products compared to unmarried people.

Table-7: Effect of influencer to use cosmetic products on Overall Attitude

Influencer to use beauty cosmetic products	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Advertisements	3.2734	1.058	3.157	0.048
Friends	2.9548	1.129		
Family members	3.2451	.998		
Retailers	3.6107	.803		
Total	3.1969	1.04863		

Table shows the influence of effect of influencer to use the cosmetic products on overall attitude of the respondents towards beauty cosmetic products. In order to find out the influence, Anova was performed and the result shows a significant outcome ($F = 3.157$; $p = 0.048$). That is, the respondents differ significantly with respect to the effect of influencer towards their attitude on beauty cosmetic products. On observing the mean values, it is noted that the respondents are influenced by Retailers (mean = 3.6107; SD = 0.803) significantly differ from the respondents who are influenced by advertisement (mean = 3.2734; SD = 1.058) and those influenced by family members (mean = 3.2451; SD = 0.998). Hence it is concluded that the people who buy from Retailers have a positive attitude towards beauty cosmetic products compared to those influenced by Advertisement and family members.

Findings and Suggestions

It is noted that respondents give importance to the quality of the cosmetics and they look carefully to find out the best value for the money which they spend. Next important criteria they consider is brand. Respondents frequently buy their favourite brands again and again. Loyalty and familiarity are the other dimensions the consumers look for before purchasing any cosmetic products. However, the respondents do not accept that they change the brands of cosmetics regularly. The respondents differ significantly with respect to their age towards their attitude on beauty cosmetic products. On observing the mean values, it is noted that the respondents who are in the age group of 31 to 40 years significantly differ from the respondents who are in the age group of 21 to 30 years and below 20 years.

The respondents differ significantly with respect to their gender towards their attitude on beauty cosmetic products. On observing the mean values, it is noted that the male respondents significantly differ from the female respondents. It is concluded that the monthly income of the family does not have any influence on the attitude towards cosmetic products. The respondents differ significantly with respect to their occupation towards their attitude on beauty cosmetic products. On observing the mean values, it is noted that the respondents who are housewives significantly differ from the respondents who are privately employed and those are in business. The respondents differ significantly with respect to their marital status towards their attitude on beauty cosmetic products. On observing the mean values, it is noted that the respondents who are married significantly differ from the respondents who are not married. The respondents differ significantly with respect to the effect of influencer towards their attitude on beauty cosmetic products. On observing the mean values, it is noted that the respondents are influenced by Retailers significantly differ from the respondents who are influenced by advertisement and those influenced by family members.

According to this study the Brand, Quality and No side effect are very much influencing factors of choosing the products. Advertisement and Family members seem to have a significant influence. With Bangalore context, this makes sense because most of these products are brought from shopping Malls through window shopping with Family members or friends. People go by Brand, This a typical of Indian psyche where they don't want to go through the approval cycle all over again and hence stick to the already approved brand by Family and Friends. It is therefore quite conclusive that the various product manufacturers of cosmetic products tap well into this consumer behavior and attitude towards cosmetic products.

Conclusion

Cosmetic products are widely used by people nowadays and hence the number of players enter into this business has increased considerably. Companies try to identify the consumer's attitude towards these cosmetic products so that they position their products to the particular category of people, rather spending unnecessarily on non-targeted people. This study has provided a platform for the corporate to think on different dimensions what consumers prefer, which make them in deciding on Marketing Mix of different products, like modify the product or change in product design, fixing of price that better suit the targeted audience, appropriate promotion mix namely sales promotion, advertising, publicity and personal selling, and finally change in distribution channel.

This study concludes that people were buying brands based on others approval depends on, how they are influenced to buying the cosmetic product. Advertisement and Family members seem to have a significant influence. So there seems to be a direct correlation on their family and friend's approval to the brand they use and the association with what the brand advertises. In Bangalore context it makes sense because most of these products are brought from large retailers through window shopping and with Family members or friends. Interestingly those who agreed to this also agreed that promotion and advertisement influenced them towards a particular brand. They also answered affirmative to question on brand loyalty. This a typical of Indian psyche where they don't want to go through the approval cycle all over again and hence stick to the already approved brand by Family and Friends.

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