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A Study on Consumer Buying Behaviour and Usage of Cosmetic Products with Special Reference to College Students in Erode City

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Abstract

This study explores the consumer buying behaviour towards cosmetic usage of college-going female students in Erode City. It involves examining the diverse range of cosmetic products preferred by college-going students, encompassing makeup, skincare and hair care items. The study delves into the specific brands, formulations and features that attract this demographic. Additionally, exploring the factors influencing purchasing decisions is crucial. This may include societal norms, cultural values, online influence, situational factors and personal motivations. Understanding how these elements intersect can provide valuable insights into the psychological and social aspects shaping cosmetic choices. So, the researcher has mainly focused on examining the consumer buying behaviour towards cosmetic usage of college-going students. For this, 265 female college-going students were selected by the stratified random sampling method. A structured questionnaire was prepared consisting of personal details and 5-point Likert scaling technique is used in the statements related to the factors influencing the consumers to buy the cosmetic product. The statistical tools namely percentage analysis, weighted average ranking and the Henry Garrett ranking technique, have been used in this research. The results found that 78% of the respondents strongly agreed that celebrity endorsement factors influenced them to buy cosmetic products.

Keywords: Consumer Buying Behavior, Cosmetic Products and Students

1. Introduction

The buying behaviour of women is crucial in today's market. Women often make purchasing decisions influenced by a variety of factors, including personal preferences, societal trends, and brand perception. Examining these factors can provide valuable insights for businesses seeking to tailor their products and marketing strategies to meet the diverse needs and preferences of female consumers. Moreover, women's buying behaviour is often shaped by lifestyle, values and cultural influences. They prioritise product quality, functionality and the overall brand experience. Social media plays a significant role in influencing women's purchasing decisions, as they seek recommendations and reviews and engage with brands online. Understanding the emotional and practical aspects that guide women in their buying journey allows businesses to build stronger connections, enhance customer satisfaction, and ultimately thrive in the competitive market. The buying behaviour is crucial as it delves into the intricate dynamics influencing consumer choices, which is pivotal for businesses to understand effective marketing strategies, product development, and customer satisfaction. Understanding why and how consumers make purchasing decisions helps businesses to tailor their offerings, improve customer experience, and stay competitive in the market. Moreover, it provides insights into societal trends, cultural influences, psychological factors and economic conditions that shape consumer behaviour, making it a rich area for research and analysis. Thus, the present study has been undertaken to understand consumer behaviour towards the usage

of cosmetic products with special reference to college students in Erode City.

2. Review of Literature

Anitha and Ruba[1] examined consumer satisfaction with Patanjali products. The study revealed that the majority of the consumers were satisfied with the Patanjali products and the variables namely marital status, period of usage, amount spent and purchase suggestions were associated with the level of satisfaction with Patanjali products. Christeena Thomas and Princy Hebshibha[2] attempted to study the brand loyalty of college students towards cosmetic products, residential status and annual spending on cosmetic products by young people. The findings showed that the majority of respondents highly rated cosmetic brand's quality followed by customer satisfaction and brand name as the important factor influencing brand loyalty. Vidhya and Keerthana[3] analysed the consumer preference towards cosmetics with reference to the Coimbatore city. They concluded that people considered quality as the most important factor in purchasing cosmetics. It was found that consumers value a combination of the attributes with brand reputation and ingredients, quality being the most important factor.

3. Need for the Study

Exploring the cosmetic buying habits of college students in Erode town is enriching. This survey paves way to gain insight into individual preferences and factors related to cosmetics usage. Analysing this data provides a valuable opportunity to understand the dynamics of consumer behaviour within the local community and how it aligns with personal choices and trends. In addition, studying purchasing behaviour in the realm of cosmetics offers a unique perspective on self–awareness and self-expression. By examining the factors influencing choices, such as social norms, personal preference, psychological factors, situational factors, online influence and economic factors, one can gain a deeper understanding of own identity and how external factors shape consumer decisions.

4. Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To study the demographic characteristics of the respondents towards buying cosmetic products.
- To gain knowledge about the types of cosmetic products and brands used by consumers.
- To find out the factors influencing the consumers to buy cosmetic products.

5. Research Methodology

The present study intends to examine consumer buying behaviour towards cosmetic usage of college-going students in Erode city. The primary data have been collected through the survey method with a structured questionnaire. The required primary data for the present study were collected from 265 respondents by using stratified random sampling. The collected data were organised into simple tabular forms with the help of simple statistical tools like percentage analysis, weighted average ranking method and Henry Garrett ranking technique.

6. Analysis and Discussion

This section has clearly explained the consumer buying behaviour towards the usage of cosmetic products with special reference to college-going students in Erode City. The results and discussions are given below.

6.1 Age of the Respondents

Table 1 shows the age of the respondents.

It is noted from Table 1 that 55% of the respondents' age is between 18-20 years, 37% of the respondents' age is between 21-23 years and 8% of the respondents' age is above 23 years.

Table 1. Age of the respondents

Age	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
18-20 years	146	55
21-23 years	99	37
Above 23 years	20	8
Total	**265**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data

6.2 College Categories of the Respondents

Table 2 shows the college categories of the respondents.

Table 2. College categories of the respondents

College Categories	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Arts and Science	166	63
Engineering	40	15
Pharmacy	16	6
Nursing	20	7
Others	23	9
Total	**265**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data

It is observed from Table 2 that 63% of the respondents are Arts and Science college students, 15% of the respondents are Engineering college students, 6% of the respondents are Pharmacy college students, 7% of the respondents are Nursing college students and 9% of the respondents belong to Diploma and Medical college categories.

6.3 Respondents' Monthly Spending on Cosmetic Products

Table 3 shows the respondents' monthly spending on cosmetic products.

Table 3. Respondents' monthly spending on cosmetic products

Amount Spent Monthly on Cosmetic Products	No. of. Respondents	Percentage(%)
Upto Rs 500	71	27
Rs 501 – Rs1000	75	28
Rs 1001 – Rs1500	75	28
Above Rs 1500	44	17
Total	**265**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data

It is derived from Table 3 that 27% of the respondents spend up to Rs500 for cosmetic products, 28% of the respondents spend Rs 501-Rs1000 and Rs 1001-Rs1500 for cosmetic products per month and 17% of the respondents spend above Rs 1500 for cosmetic products monthly.

6.4 Period of Usage of Cosmetic Products

Table 4 shows the period of usage of cosmetic products.

Table 4. Period of usage of cosmetic products

Period of Usage of Cosmetic Products	No. of Respondents	Percentage(%)
Below 1 year	51	19
1 – 3 years	150	57
Above 3 years	64	24
Total	**265**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data

It is identified from Table 4 that 19% of the respondents are using cosmetic products nearly for less than a year, 57% of the respondents are using cosmetic products for 1-3 years and 24% of the respondents are using cosmetic products for more than 3 years.

6.5 Time Spent on Grooming

Table 5 shows the time spent by the respondents on grooming.

Table 5. Time spent on grooming

Time Spent on Grooming	No. of. Respondents	Percentage(%)
Below 15 minutes	103	39
15 – 30 minutes	103	39
30 – 45 minutes	47	17
Above 1 hour	12	5
Total	**265**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data

It is observed from Table 5 that 39% of the respondents typically spend below 15 minutes and also 15 - 30 minutes for their grooming daily, 17% of the respondents spend 30 - 45 minutes on their grooming and 5% of the respondents spend more than 1 hour on their grooming daily.

6.6 Type of Cosmetic Products Purchased

Table 6 shows the type of cosmetic products purchased by the respondents.

Table 6. Type of cosmetic products purchased

Type of Cosmetic Products Purchased	No. of. Respondents	Percentage (%)
Makeup products	126	48
Skincare products	79	30
Nail care products	48	18
Hair care products	12	4
Total	**265**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Data

It is noted from Table 6 that 48% of the respondents purchased makeup products, 30% of the respondents purchased skincare products, 18% of the respondents purchased nail care products and 4% of the respondents purchased hair care products.

6.7 Frequency Level of Using Cosmetic Products

Table 7 shows the frequency level of using cosmetic products analysed by using weighted average ranking analysis.

It is identified from Table 7 that the respondents are using shampoo at the highest level as it scored first rank with a weighted score of 78.4 followed by hair oil (78.0), moisturizer (77.9), sunscreen (75.0), lip balm (74.7), lipstick (74.1), eyeliner (73.3), nail polish (72.1), hair conditioner (68.5), perfumes (68.0), nail polish remover (64.1), mascara (61.6), face mask (59.2), foundation (57.5) and blush (38.1).

6.8 Brands Purchased by the Respondents

The famous 10 brands purchased by the respondents are analysed by applying Henry Garrett's ranking technique and the results are shown in Table 8.

It is noted from Table 8 that the preference of cosmetic brands purchased by the respondents is ranked from 1 (most important) to 10 (least important). It is evident from the above table that Lakme with Garrett's score of 81.3 is the most important brand purchased by the respondents followed by, Maybelline New York (63.8), Loreal (55.6), Mamaearth (54.4), NY bae (46.8 scores), Himalaya (44.9), MAC (43.3), Dazzler (42.1), Revlon (36.1) and Biotique (35.6).

6.9 Factors Influencing Respondents to Buy Cosmetic Products

A total of 15 factors are considered to be the most important factors influencing the respondents to buy

Table 7. Frequency level of using cosmetic products

A – Always **VO** – Very Often **S** – Sometimes **R** – Rarely **N** - Never

Cosmetic Product Category	A	VO	S	R	N	Total Weighted Score	Rank
Face mask	255	332	213	56	32	59.2	XIII
Foundation	255	332	141	102	33	57.5	XIV
Mascara	395	284	141	72	32	61.6	XII
Eyeliner	710	220	129	32	9	73.3	VII
Lip stick	610	236	120	48	20	74.1	VI
Perfumes	535	220	201	56	8	68	X
Hair conditioner	650	128	189	40	20	68.5	IX
Nail polish	670	252	120	24	16	72.1	VIII
Moisturizer	965	96	60	40	8	77.9	III
Sunscreen	905	128	24	48	20	75	IV
Blush	120	96	144	86	126	38.1	XV
Lip balm	715	252	120	30	4	74.7	V
Hair oil	940	128	60	34	8	78	II
Shampoo	940	128	72	32	5	78.4	I
Nail polish remover	670	128	60	48	55	64.1	XI

Source: Computed

Table 8. Brands purchased by the respondents

Brands	Rank Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total Score	Mean Score	Mean Rank
	X	82	70	63	58	52	48	42	37	30	18			
Lakme	F	106	55	24	30	27	8	5	7	3	0	265	81.3	1
	Fx	8692	3850	1512	1740	1404	3840	210	259	90	0	21567		
Maybelline New York	f	45	96	63	4	18	7	17	3	0	12	265	63.8	2
	fx	3690	6720	3969	232	936	336	714	111	0	216	16924		
Mamaearth	f	24	37	21	75	9	17	28	22	30	2	265	54.4	4
	fx	1968	2590	1323	4350	468	816	1176	814	900	36	14441		
Loreal	f	36	20	55	16	57	27	0	39	3	12	265	55.6	3
	fx	2952	1400	3465	928	2964	1296	0	1443	90	216	14754		
Himalaya	f	12	31	42	33	0	85	28	1	21	12	265	44.9	6
	fx	984	217	2646	1914	0	4080	1176	37	630	216	11900		
NY bae	f	9	5	5	47	45	3	99	37	0	15	265	46.8	5
	fx	738	350	315	2726	2340	144	4158	1369	0	270	12410		
Dazzler	f	16	3	30	34	67	0	37	0	42	36	265	42.1	8
	fx	1312	210	720	1972	3484	0	1554	0	1260	648	11160		
MAC	f	15	10	0	1	9	72	42	85	10	21	265	43.3	7
	fx	1230	700	0	58	468	3456	1764	3145	300	37	11499		
Biotique	f	2	0	25	16	15	1	4	68	71	63	265	35.6	10
	fx	164	0	1575	928	780	48	168	2516	2130	1134	9443		
Revlon	f	0	8	0	9	18	45	5	3	85	92	265	36.1	9
	fx	0	560	0	468	864	2160	210	1110	2550	1656	9578		

Source: Computed

cosmetic products and are analysed with weighted average ranking analysis. The results are shown in Table 9.

It is identified from Table 9 that the respondents have given a score of 77.9 for celebrity endorsement and ranked it as first followed by influence of beauty advertisement (75) and ranked it as second, online reviews and rating (73.3)as third. The other factors are financial situation impact on spending (71.6), contributing self-image (70.9), brand reputation (70.2), enhancement of self-esteem (69.8), ingredients in cosmetic products influence to purchase (68), cosmetic products are easily available (67.4), influence of cultural factor (65.4), natural cosmetic product (61.5), influence of friends (61.4), availability of discount (59.9), affects overall wellbeing (55.1) and the least important factor is recommending cosmetic product with friends (53.7).

Table 9. Factors influencing respondents to buy cosmetic products

SA – Strongly Agree **A** – Agree **N** - Neither Agree nor Disagree
D – Disagree **SD** – Strongly Disagree

S. No.	Factors	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total Weighted Score	Rank
1.	Cosmetic products contribute to self-image and confidence.	355	556	129	24	0	70.9	V
2.	Particular cosmetic products are essential for enhancing self-esteem.	335	556	129	24	4	69.8	VII
3.	The preference of friends influences to use the cosmetic product.	205	316	333	56	12	61.4	XII
4.	The ingredients in cosmetic products influence to buy the cosmetic products.	535	220	201	56	8	68	VIII
5.	Celebrity endorsement influences buying of a product.	965	96	60	40	8	77.9	I
6.	The financial situation impacts spending on cosmetic products.	690	268	36	64	16	71.6	IV
7.	Like to purchase cosmetic products that are easily available.	315	36	120	24	16	67.4	IX
8.	Brand reputation influences to choose a cosmetic product.	465	416	120	48	4	70.2	VI
9.	Willing to spend on premium or natural cosmetic products.	395	284	141	70	33	61.5	XI
10.	Advertisements influence the decision to try a new cosmetic product	905	128	24	48	20	75	II
11.	The psychological impact of using cosmetic products affects overall well-being.	255	204	213	126	29	55.1	XIV
12.	Online reviews and ratings play a role in influencing the decision-making process when considering cosmetic products.	710	220	129	32	9	73.3	III
13.	The availability of discounts influences the decision to purchase cosmetic items.	260	320	231	64	24	59.9	XIII
14.	Willing to share cosmetic product recommendations with college friends.	120	235	381	46	24	53.7	XV
15.	Cultural or regional factors influence the choice of cosmetic products.	200	236	285	252	8	65.4	X

Source: Computed

7. Suggestions

- The companies can gather detailed and actionable insights into cosmetic product usage patterns based on climatic conditions and environmental situations.
- A proper communication can be created with doctors and beauticians and the companies can involve them in advertisements to make the products more attractive, effective and reliable.
- Marketers may include their attitude and personal appeal in their advertising communication as the consumer buys cosmetic products on their own.

8. Conclusion

The study on buying behaviour towards cosmetic products among college students in Erode city reveals significant insights into their consumer habits. The findings suggested that certain demographic factors exhibit particular preferences and behaviours when it comes to purchasing, so the companies could target this demographic effectively. By identifying patterns such as preferred shopping channels, product preferences, and factors influencing purchase decisions, businesses can tailor their marketing strategies to better appeal to the needs and preferences of female college students in Erode.

This study provides valuable insights that can inform marketing efforts and enhance customer satisfaction and engagement within this demographic segment. Moreover, the study highlights the importance of considering socio-economic factors and cultural influences that may impact buying behaviour among female college students in Erode City. Factors such as family background, peer influence and societal norms play a significant role in shaping their purchasing decisions. By recognising these contextual elements, businesses can develop more targeted marketing campaigns and product offerings with unique needs and preferences of the demographic. It is concluded that celebrity endorsement also plays a crucial role in influencing cosmetic purchases.

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