CONSUMERS PREFERENCE AND BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF AYURVEDIC COSMETIC PRODUCTS IN PUDUCHERRY

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Abstract

Cosmetics market is one of the wide and progressing market in India and especially in Puducherry. In recent years, people have got awareness about ayurvedic cosmetic products and started to buy it. Every manufacturer is trying to widening their market, it is possible only when they understand the preferences and buying behaviour of the customers. This study has analysed the above aspects regarding ayurvedic cosmetic products in Puducherry. The sample size of the study is 180 respondents. The study found that the consumers in the study area preferred more on the aspects of quality of ayurvedic cosmetic products followed by price and discount and availability. Significant differences were evidenced in preferences of consumers towards ayurvedic cosmetic products with the demographic factors of gender, marital status and age. Significant differences were also found in consumers' preferences towards ayurvedic cosmetic products with the economic factors of monthly income and monthly spending on ayurvedic cosmetics. The consumers' had high positive behaviour towards Financial aspect of ayurvedic cosmetic products followed by product aspect. Their behaviour level was low in the psychological aspect and general aspect. Consumers' buying behaviour had significant positive relationship with the demographic factors of gender, marital status and age. Consumers' buying behaviour had significant positive relationship with the economic factors of Whether the respondent is an Earner?, Monthly income and Average spending on cosmetics.

Key words: Consumer preference, buying behaviour, cosmetics, ayurvedic and product.

Introduction

Among various products cosmetic products are popular among women. A cosmetic product is defined as substance in any form or any mixture that is purposed to go into contact with the external human body parts, including the hair system, epidermis, lips, nails, teeth, external genital organs, and the mucous membranes of the oral cavity. These products are used mainly for perfuming, changing the appearance, cleaning, protecting, correcting body odours, or maintaining the good condition of these body parts. Nowadays, people have been using a large level of cosmetic products, especially women are using many varieties of cosmetic products to reveal them more beauty. In the market many varieties of cosmetic products are available and many brands are available for each type of cosmetic products used by the women population in the country. Hence many small to giant companies have entered into the field of manufacturing cosmetic production and they are always trying to market their products in efficient manner. Efficient marketing of a product is mainly depend on how well the manufacturer fulfils the expectations of their products by the customers. Hence, the marketers should understand the preference and buying behaviour of the customers about the product. Studying buying behaviour of customers also helps other customers to buy better products. Presently majority of cosmetic products in the market are being manufactured by chemical contents. There is general opinion by the customers that using such cosmetic products which are made by including chemical contents will harmful for their health or skin or hair etc. In order to avoid it, a portion of the customers have been switching over from non-ayurvedic cosmetic products to ayurvedic cosmetic products.

Ayurvedic Cosmetics refer to cosmetics that use active ingredients with Ayurvedic references and are effective in delivering the promised results. According to recent studies, consumers worldwide are increasingly turning to green products, which is especially true in the cosmetics market. Beauty product growth has been driven by natural or herbal components, whose market share has been gradually increasing. Companies are under pressure to consider sustainability and reduce their environmental footprint, while customers are equally aware and well-informed about the constituents, ingredients, and resources used in these products. In the supply chain, companies are primarily involved in advanced research on plant-derived substances, clinical testing, and manufacturing products that are wholeheartedly accepted by these well-aware consumers. Ayurvedic contract manufacturing is effectively managing this growing demand. Study of consumers' preference and buying behaviour towards ayurvedic cosmetic products will be helpful for the manufacturers of ayurvedic cosmetic products to enhance their market. Hence the study has been undertaken to study consumers' preferences and buying behaviour of ayurvedic cosmetic products in Puducherry.

Literature Review

Chopra P and Baxi B.O. (2019) in their study examined consumer behavior of Ayurvedic products used by the customers living in Ahmedabad city. It found that consumer behavior towards over-the-counter (OTC) Ayurvedic products often changes and that promotional tools can have an impact on consumer behavior. The researcher suggests that companies offering OTC products need to better understand consumer needs and usage patterns in order to effectively target the right customers. By doing so, companies can improve their marketing strategies and reach their target market more effectively. **Dhanya P and Pranitha V (2021)** studied consumer preferences towards herbal cosmetic products in Coimbatore city. According to the study, the majority of customers showed satisfaction with herbal cosmetics. The price, quality, variety, and ingredients were at a satisfactory level for the respondents. The most influential factor for customers was the brand name, and the reason for preferring a particular brand of herbal cosmetics was its quality. However, some respondents were uncomfortable with the availability of the herbal cosmetic product. **Gawas N.M. (2022)** conducted a study in Panjim City of Goa, India to analyze the buying behavior

of customers in India towards Ayurvedic cosmetic products. The primary focus of the study was to identify the important factors that influence the green buying behavior of people who purchase Ayurvedic cosmetic products. The study found that consumers considered both factors in terms of qualitative and quantitative while buying Ayurvedic products. **Balasubramaniam S and Aruna (2018)** conducted a study on the consumer buying behavior of herbal cosmetic products in Pune region. The findings revealed that women preferred using herbal cosmetic products for both for the purposes of fashion and health. It was found by the study that beauticians were the most effective source of awareness about brand, and medical stores were the most trusted channel of distribution. **Mishra R, Singh S and Mahajan R (2020)** in their research work aimed to study the recent surge in the growth rate of Ayurvedic Market and explore the factors inhibiting or driving this pattern. The study identified the factors that influenced preferences of brand and how the factors were influenced by demographic variables. The results of the study showed that trust and satisfaction had a positive and significant influence on brand preferences, while price had a insignificant negative impact on brand preferences.

Priyanka (2021) A study was conducted to analyze consumer behavior towards the use of ayurvedic products. The study found that herbal products have a greater influence on consumers as compared to non-herbal products. This is because people nowadays prefer herbal products over non-herbal products. The market has seen an exponential growth of herbal skin care products replacing non-herbal products in recent times. **Murugan V (2021)** studied about consumer buying behavior in Tiruvarur district of Tamil Nadu, India, regarding their attitudes toward herbal medicine and the purchase of ayurvedic products. The study found that customers were aware of the various ayurvedic medicines and brands available. Additionally, most respondents were familiar with herbal cosmetics. Many consumers considered cosmetics a luxury item, and felt that they contained harmful chemicals which could cause side effects. As a result, they have started switching to herbal-based cosmetics. **Nalina K B, Adarsh A and Puttabuddhi A (2023)** in their study found that that the purchase behaviour of consumers was impacted by several factors, which included their preferences of family members, pricing considerations, ingredients in the products, and the advertisements' influence.

Objectives

The study has been undertaken with the following specific objectives,

- To study the demographical and economic background of the consumers who bought ayurvedic cosmetic products in Puducherry.
- To study the consumers' preferences and buying behaviour of ayurvedic cosmetic products in Puducherry and
- To study the relationship between demographical and economic factors with consumers' preferences and buying behaviour towards ayurvedic cosmetic products.

Methodology

The presents study has been undertaken to analyse the consumers' preferences and buying behaviour towards ayurvedic cosmetic products in Puducherry. For this purpose the researcher selected a total of 180 consumers from the study area using convenient sampling method. The selected consumers were served a well structured questionnaire for collecting primary data. The collected primary data were analysed using appropriate statistical tools such as simple percentage, mean, standard deviation, coefficient of variation, One-way ANOVA and correlation analysis. The researcher also collected secondary data in form of earlier articles in the similar study area and selected articles are reviewed in the research paper.

Results and Discussion

The study has been carried out for analysing the consumers' preferences and buying behaviour towards ayurvedic cosmetic products in Puducherry. For this purpose, primary data were collected from 180 sample consumers and they are analysed. This part of the research paper presents the results and discussion. Table 1 presents the results regarding demographical profile of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographical Profile of the Respondents

Sl. No.	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender			
1	Male	22	12.2
2	Female	158	87.8
Marital Status			
1	Married	117	65.0
2	Unmarried	63	35.0
Age			
1	Below 20 years	32	17.8
2	21 to 30 years	36	20.0
3	31 to 40 years	54	30.0
4	41 to 50 years	31	17.2
5	Above 50 years	27	15.0
Educational Status			
1	Illiterates	5	2.8
2	School level	19	10.6
3	UG degree	92	51.1
4	PG degree	39	21.7
5	Professional & Others	25	13.8
Occupation			
1	Employee	49	27.2
2	House-wife	57	31.7
3	Business	21	11.7
4	Student	46	25.6
5	Others	7	3.8
	Total	180	100

Source: Primary Data

The results of the table 1 reveals that majority of the respondents in the study are female (87.8 per cent), majority of the respondents are married (65 pre cent). Age of a considerable portion of the respondents (30 per cent) is between 31 and 40 years and majority of the respondents' (67.8 per cent) age was less than 40 years. Majority of the respondents (51.1 per cent) completed upto under graduate level of education. It was also observed that majority of the respondents are well educated. A considerable portion of the respondents (31.7 per cent) are house wives and 27.2 per cent of the respondents are employees. Table 2 brings out the economic profile of the respondents.

Table 2: Economic Profile of the Respondents

Sl. No.	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Are you an earner?			
1	Yes	71	39.4
2	No	109	60.6
Monthly Family Income			
1	Below ₹20,000	29	16.1
2	₹20,001 to ₹30,000	46	25.6
3	₹30,001 to ₹40,000	54	30.0
4	₹40,001 to ₹50,000	21	11.7
5	Above ₹50,000	30	16.6
Average expenses on Ayurvedic Cosmetics			
1	₹500 p.m.	42	23.3
2	₹501 to 1,000 p.m.	52	28.9
3	₹1,001 to 1,500 p.m.	33	18.3
4	Above ₹1,500 p.m.	53	29.5
Place of Purchase			
1	Local shops	19	10.6
2	Specialised Ayurvedic shops	70	38.9
3	Super markets	56	31.1
4	Online shopping	35	19.4
	Total	180	100

Source: Primary Data

It could be known from table 2 that majority of the respondents (60.6 per cent) are not income earners. Monthly income of a considerable portion of the respondents (30 per cent) is from ₹30,001 to ₹40,000 and it was observed that monthly income of majority of the respondents (58.3 per cent) is above ₹30,000. A considerable portion of the respondents (28.9 per cent) spent between ₹501 and 1,000 p.m. for buying ayurvedic cosmetic products in the study area. A considerable portion of the respondents (38.9 per cent) bought ayurvedic cosmetic products from Specialised Ayurvedic shops and 31.1 per cent of the respondents bought it from super markets. Hence Specialised Ayurvedic shops and super markets were the prominent choice of the respondents to buy ayurvedic cosmetic products in the study area. Table 3 presents the results regarding consumers' preferences towards ayurvedic cosmetic products in the study area.

Table 3: Consumers' Preferences towards Ayurvedic Cosmetics

Sl. No.	Preferences	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Quality	3.84	1.34	1
2	Brand	3.08	1.22	4
3	Product information	2.96	1.06	5
4	Package	2.78	1.41	6
5	Price and Discount	3.61	1.73	2
6	Availability	3.21	1.01	3

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 reveals that the calculated mean value of consumers' preferences towards ayurvedic cosmetic products in the aspect of quality is 3.84, it is highest, hence this aspect is ranked first, followed by the consumers' preferred more on the aspects of Price and Discount and availability, since their calculated mean values are also high at 3.61 and 3.21 respectively and these aspects are ranked 2nd and 3rd respectively. The aspects of Package and Product information of ayurvedic cosmetic products were found to be least preferred by the consumers in the study area, since their calculated mean values were low at 2.78 and 2.96 respectively and they are ranked 6th and 5th respectively. The calculated values of standard deviation showed that there was moderate level of deviation in consumers' opinion regarding all the aspects of ayurvedic cosmetic products in the study area.

In order to know whether there is any significant differences in consumers' preferences on ayurvedic cosmetic products on the basis of demographical factors, One-way ANOVA is applied and the results are presented in the following table. For this purpose the following null hypothesis is framed.

H_o1: There is no significant differences in consumers' preferences and demographical factors.

Table 4: ANOVA on Demographical Factors and Consumers' Preferences

Sl. No.	Demographical Factors	F-value	Sig.	Ho
1	Gender	6.246	Significant	Rejected
2	Marital Status	3.267	Significant	Rejected
3	Age	8.316	Significant	Rejected
4	Education	1.794	Not-significant	Accepted
5	Occupation	1.334	Not-significant	Accepted

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 reveals that the calculated F-values of consumers' preferences and the demographical factors of gender, marital status and age of the respondents stood at 6.246, 3.267 and 8.316 respectively, they are statistically significant at one per cent level, hence the null hypothesis is rejected for the above cases and therefore there is no significant differences in consumers' preferences on various aspects of ayurvedic cosmetic products on the basis of gender, marital status and age of the respondents in the study area. No significant differences were found between consumers' preferences and demographical factors of education and occupation.

In order to know whether there is any significant differences in consumers' preferences on ayurvedic cosmetic products on the basis of economic factors of the respondents, One-way ANOVA is applied and the results are presented in the following table. For this purpose the following null hypothesis is framed.

H_o2: There is no significant differences in consumers' preferences and economic factors.

Table 5: ANOVA on Economic Factors and Consumers' Preferences

Sl. No.	Economic Factors	F-value	Sig.	Ho
1	Whether the respondent is an Earner?	2.013	Not-Significant	Accepted
2	Monthly income	4.219	Significant	Rejected
3	Average spending on cosmetics	3.129	Significant	Rejected
4	Place of purchase	1.674	Not-Significant	Accepted

Source: Primary Data

Table 5 exhibits that the calculated F-values of consumers' preferences and the economic factors of monthly income and average spending on ayurvedic cosmetic products by the respondents stood at 4.219 and 3.129 respectively, they are statistically significant at one per cent level, hence the null hypothesis is rejected for the above cases and therefore there is no significant differences in consumers' preferences on various aspects of ayurvedic cosmetic products on the basis the economic factors of monthly income and average spending on ayurvedic cosmetic products. Table 6 brings out the results regarding consumers' buying behaviour towards ayurvedic cosmetic products in the study area.

Table 6: Consumers' Buying Behaviour

Sl. No.	Buying Behaviour Aspects	Mean	SD	Rank
1	General	2.99	1.39	4
2	Personal	3.19	1.71	3
3	Psychological	2.73	1.54	5
4	Financial	3.69	1.06	1
5	Product	3.57	1.34	2

Source: Primary Data

Table 6 evidences that the calculated mean value of consumers' buying behaviour ayurvedic cosmetic products in the financial aspect is 3.69, it is highest, hence this aspect is ranked first, followed by the consumers' buying behaviour is also scored high mean value in the aspects of 'Product' and 'Personal', they are 3.57 and 3.19 respectively and these aspects are ranked 2nd and 3rd respectively. The mean value of psychological aspect and General aspect of ayurvedic cosmetic products are low at 2.73 and 2.99 respectively and they are ranked 5th and 4th respectively. The calculated values of standard deviation showed that there was moderate level of deviation in consumers' buying behaviour regarding all the aspects of ayurvedic cosmetic products in the study area.

In order to know, whether there is any significant relationship between consumers' buying behaviour and demographical factors of the respondents, correlation analysis is applied and their results are presented below. For this purpose the following null hypothesis is framed.

H_o2: There is no relationship between in consumers' buying behaviour and demographical factors.

Table 7: Correlation between Demographical Factors and Buying Behaviour

Sl. No.	Demographical Factors	Correlation coefficient	p-value	Ho
1	Gender	0.675	0.000	Rejected
2	Marital Status	0.742	0.000	Rejected
3	Age	0.436	0.000	Rejected
4	Education	0.136	0.224	Accepted
5	Occupation	0.211	0.337	Accepted

Source: Primary Data

It could be known from table 7 that the calculated correlation coefficients between consumers' buying behaviour and the demographical factors of gender, marital status and age of the respondents stood at 0.675, 0.742 and 0.436 respectively, their corresponding p-values indicate that the results are significant at one per cent level, hence the null hypothesis is rejected in these cases and therefore there is significant relationship between consumers' buying behaviour and the demographical factors of gender, marital status and age of the respondents. No significant relationship was found with the demographical factors of education and occupation of the respondents. It was observed that the quantum of relationship was high with the factor of marital status.

In order to know, whether there is any significant relationship between consumers' buying behaviour and economic factors of the respondents, correlation analysis is applied and their results are presented below. For this purpose the following null hypothesis is framed.

H_o2: There is no relationship between in consumers' buying behaviour and economic factors.

Table 8: Correlation between Economic Factors and Buying Behaviour

Sl. No.	Economic Factors	Correlation coefficient	p-value	Ho
1	Whether the respondent is an Earner?	0.429	0.005	Rejected
2	Monthly income	0.689	0.012	Rejected
3	Average spending on cosmetics	0.729	0.000	Rejected
4	Place of purchase	0.239	0.085	Accepted

Source: Primary Data

It could be observed from table 8 that the calculated correlation coefficients between consumers' buying behaviour and the economic factors of whether the respondents is an earner?, monthly income and average spending on cosmetics of the respondents stood at 0.429, 0.689 and 0.729 respectively, their corresponding p-values indicate

that the results are significant at either one per cent or five per cent level, hence the null hypothesis is rejected in these cases and therefore there is significant relationship between consumers' buying behaviour and the economic factors of whether the respondents is an earner?, monthly income and average spending on cosmetics of the respondents. No significant relationship was found with the economic factor of place of availability. It was observed that the quantum of relationship was high with the factor of average spending on ayurvedic cosmetics.

Conclusion

Cosmetics market is one of the wide and progressing market in India and especially in Puducherry. In recent years, people have got awareness about ayurvedic cosmetic products and started to buy it. Every manufacturer is trying to widening their market, it is possible only when they understand the preferences and buying behaviour of the customers. This study has analysed the above aspects regarding ayurvedic cosmetic products in Puducherry. The study found that the consumers in the study area preferred more on the aspects of quality of ayurvedic cosmetic products followed by price and discount and availability. Significant differences were identified in preferences of consumers towards ayurvedic cosmetic products with the demographical factors of gender, marital status and age. Significant differences were also found in consumers' preferences towards ayurvedic cosmetic products with the economic factors of monthly income and monthly spending on ayurvedic cosmetics. The consumers' had high positive behaviour towards Financial aspect of ayurvedic cosmetic products followed by product aspect. Their behaviour level was low in the psychological aspect and general aspect. Consumers' buying behaviour had significant positive relationship with the demographical factors of gender, marital status and age. Consumers' buying behaviour had significant positive relationship with the economic factors of Whether the respondent is an Earner?, Monthly income and Average spending on cosmetics.

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