

Male Consumer Preferences And Satisfaction Towards Cosmetics: A Comprehensive Study

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Abstract

This study investigates the factors influencing male consumer preferences and satisfaction with cosmetic products in the Indian market. Using multiple linear regression, the research identifies product quality as the strongest predictor of both preference and satisfaction. Brand image also exerts a significant positive influence on both. Peer influence has a moderate positive impact on preference, while packaging moderately influences satisfaction. Price exhibits a negative relationship with preference, though less influential than quality and brand. The findings highlight the importance of product excellence and brand building for cosmetic companies targeting male consumers in India. Limitations include a sample size of 103, suggesting a need for future research with larger, more diverse samples and exploration of cultural and regional variations. This research provides insights for market segmentation and targeted marketing strategies in the growing Indian male cosmetic market.

Keywords: Male Consumer Behavior, Consumer Preferences, Consumer Satisfaction Cosmetic Products, India.

1. INTRODUCTION

The evolving landscape of the cosmetics industry reveals a significant shift in consumer demographics, with men increasingly participating in beauty and personal care practices (Khan et al., 2017). The global cosmetics industry has evolved dramatically over the past few decades. What was once considered a luxury limited to women and high-income groups has now become a basic element of daily personal care for people across all demographics and regions. Today, the global cosmetics industry is recognized as one of the most dynamic and fastest-growing consumer goods sectors (Venkataramani et al., 2020). This growth is fueled by several factors, including rising disposable incomes, increased consumer awareness about personal care, and the growing influence of social media and celebrity culture (Hassali & AL-Tamimi, 2015). Historically, dermatological research has largely overlooked male consumers in the realm of cosmetics and medical cosmetic procedures, but this is changing as men's grooming habits evolve and their use of cosmetic products increases (Elsner, 2012). This transformation necessitates a comprehensive understanding of male consumer preferences and satisfaction levels concerning cosmetic products (Oblong, 2012). Understanding the nuances of male skin and grooming habits is essential for developing products that meet their specific needs (Shiel, 2012). The traditional marketing strategies employed for female consumers may not resonate effectively with men, thus necessitating tailored approaches grounded in empirical evidence and a deep understanding of male grooming habits (Lee & Kwon, 2021). Furthermore, the growing emphasis on personal image and its correlation with social status and professional development are key factors driving men's engagement with cosmetics (Lee & Kwon, 2021). This study aims to bridge the gap in existing literature by providing an in-depth analysis of male consumer behavior in the cosmetics market, exploring their motivations, preferences, and satisfaction levels, while also identifying key factors influencing their purchasing decisions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing research indicates that men's grooming habits and attitudes toward personal care products are critical for understanding their consumption patterns (Thota et al., 2014). Understanding these underlying motivations is crucial for cosmetic companies aiming to effectively target and cater to this demographic. The rise in demand for men's grooming products has spurred companies to diversify their

offerings beyond traditional shaving gels, razors, and deodorants to include customized shampoos and fairness creams (Ota et al., 2023). There is growing interest among men in anti-aging treatments, sun protection, and products designed to address specific skin concerns such as acne, sensitivity, and hyperpigmentation (Schlessinger, 2007). Due to historical and cultural emphasis on female beauty and appearance, skincare products have been predominantly developed and tested for women (Makino et al., 2018). Men's unique skin structure and aging patterns, as well as lifestyle and behaviors, present unique challenges that require different treatment strategies than those used for women. Moreover, the increasing demand for natural ingredients and additives in cosmetic products, as a replacement for synthetic compounds with possible negative effects on health and the environment, is also influencing the male cosmetics market (Gubitosa et al., 2019). It has been found that peer pressure can significantly influence men's decisions to seek cosmetic treatments, possibly because men are concerned about how they are perceived in the workplace (Girdwichai et al., 2018). Men tend to prefer products that offer practical benefits, such as oil control and skin hydration, and they also value convenience, effectiveness, and simplicity in their grooming routines. Consumer behavior is a complex interplay of psychological, social, and economic factors (Infante et al., 2016). In the context of cosmetics, understanding these factors is crucial for marketers and product developers aiming to cater to the male demographic. Qualitative studies, such as focus groups, provide marketers with valuable insights into the deep motivations and behaviors of individual consumers, facilitating a better understanding of their needs and preferences (Barta et al., 2022). Focus groups, for instance, can create a comfortable environment that favors the examination of specific issues and help analyze individuals' deep motivations and better understand their behaviors (Barta et al., 2022). The interpretative paradigm's capacity to elicit new knowledge of emerging concepts in the social science area makes it particularly valuable. The paradigm's adaptable, emergent design enables comprehensive insights into difficult consumer behaviors, providing a thorough knowledge base for strategy formulation. Furthermore, the rise of digital platforms and social media has significantly impacted consumer behavior, with online reviews and influencer marketing playing a pivotal role in shaping purchasing decisions (Khan et al., 2017). Augmented reality has emerged as a transformative tool in the online cosmetics industry, potentially improving the online user shopping experience through social media and AR advertising (Baliyan et al., 2024). Understanding the role of augmented reality and its ability to influence online cosmetics purchasing activity becomes imperative (Baliyan et al., 2024). The influence of social media and digital marketing on male consumer behavior is substantial; men are increasingly exposed to cosmetic products through these channels, and their purchasing decisions are often significantly influenced by online reviews, influencer endorsements, and targeted advertising campaigns (Baliyan et al., 2024). Men's cosmetic products are at different stages of their life cycle in various countries, and consumer attitudes and motivations for purchasing cosmetics differ accordingly (Souiden & Diagne, 2009), highlighting the importance of considering market-specific strategies in the male grooming segment. Celebrity endorsements, particularly by male figures, can significantly influence consumer attitudes toward cosmetics, despite the historical perception of cosmetics as a predominantly female domain (Dwiatmaja & Perbawani, 2021). The male gaze, perpetuated through social media and opinion leaders, also shapes perceptions of beauty standards and influences behaviors in the display of beauty (Yang et al., 2022).

3. METHODOLOGY

The research uses an inductive approach in conjunction with explorative and qualitative research. Both primary and secondary data were gathered to generate strong and complete conclusions (Baliyan et al., 2024). Primary data was collected through surveys that were distributed through online channels, social media, and email. Semi-structured interviews, web log entries and blog postings were used to collect knowledge for a qualitative study. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to provide a holistic understanding of male consumer preferences and satisfaction towards cosmetics. The quantitative phase involves a large-scale survey distributed to a diverse sample of male consumers, gathering data on their usage patterns, purchasing habits, and satisfaction levels with different cosmetic products. The questionnaire design incorporates validated scales to measure

key constructs such as perceived product quality, brand image, and customer satisfaction (Baliyan et al., 2024). Statistical analysis, including descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression modeling, is employed to identify significant relationships between variables and to assess the impact of various factors on consumer satisfaction. The qualitative phase consists of in-depth interviews with a smaller group of male consumers, selected to represent a range of age groups, socioeconomic backgrounds, and cosmetic usage habits. The interview guide is structured around open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed insights into their motivations, perceptions, and experiences with cosmetics. The data from the surveys and interviews are analyzed to provide insights into the factors influencing male consumer preferences and satisfaction, helping to develop targeted marketing strategies and product innovations. To ensure the reliability and validity of the research findings, several measures are taken. The quantitative survey instrument is pre-tested with a pilot sample to identify and address any ambiguities or inconsistencies in the questions. The qualitative interview protocol is reviewed by experts in consumer behavior and marketing to ensure its alignment with the research objectives.

The sampling strategy for the survey is designed to achieve a representative sample of the male population, using stratified random sampling to ensure adequate representation across different age groups, regions, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Qualitative data is analyzed using thematic analysis, identifying recurring patterns and themes in the interview transcripts to provide a deeper understanding of the underlying motivations and attitudes driving consumer behavior (Barta et al., 2022).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the factors that influence male consumer preferences for cosmetic products.
2. To assess the level of satisfaction among male consumers with the cosmetic products they currently use.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the key factors that influence male consumers' preferences for cosmetic products, including product attributes, brand image, and marketing strategies?
2. How satisfied are male consumers with the cosmetic products they currently use, and what are the key drivers of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

4. RESULTS

Table: 1 Age Distribution of Respondents

AGE	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
15-20	20	20.2%
20-25	52	50%
25-30	20	19.2%
30-35	11	10.6%
TOTAL	103	100%

Table: 2 Occupation Profile of Respondents

Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Private Sector	23	22.3%

Public Sector	25	24.3%
Student	41	39.8%
Business	14	13.6%
TOTAL	103	100%

Table: 3 Educational Qualification of Respondents

QUALIFICATION	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
High school or below	29	28.2%
Bachelor's degree	34	33%
Master's degree	40	38.8%
TOTAL	103	100%

Table: 4 Marital Status of Respondents

MARITAL STATUS	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Married	73	70.9%
Unmarried	30	29.1%
TOTAL	103	100%

Table: 5 Monthly Income Distribution of Respondents

MONTHLY INCOME	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
15000-20000	32	31.1%
20000-30000	26	25.2%
Above-30000	27	26.2%
Nil	21	20.4%
TOTAL	103	100%

Table: 6 Correlation Coefficients between Influencing Factors and Male Consumer Preferences and Satisfaction

Influencing Factor	Correlation with Preferences (r)	Significance (p-value)	Correlation with Satisfaction (r)	Significance (p-value)	Interpretation
Product Quality	0.72	$p < 0.01$	0.76	$p < 0.01$	Strong positive correlation with both

					preferences and satisfaction.
Brand Image	0.58	$p < 0.01$	0.55	$p < 0.01$	Moderate positive correlation; brand perception significantly influences outcomes.
Price	-0.22	$p < 0.05$	-0.15	$p > 0.05$	Weak negative correlation; price sensitivity is not a dominant factor.
Packaging	0.35	$p < 0.05$	0.50	$p < 0.01$	Visual appeal moderately influences satisfaction more than preference.
Peer Influence	0.45	$p < 0.01$	0.40	$p < 0.05$	Moderate influence from social factors on both preference and satisfaction.
Advertising	0.40	$p < 0.01$	0.30	$p < 0.05$	Advertising has a supporting role in shaping attitudes.
Consumer Preference (as factor for Satisfaction)	—	—	0.81	$p < 0.01$	Strong positive link: preferences align closely with satisfaction.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS INTERPRETATION

Regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which various factors influence male consumer preferences and satisfaction with cosmetic products. Two separate multiple linear regression models were developed to address each research objective.

OBJECTIVE 1: FACTORS INFLUENCING MALE CONSUMER PREFERENCES

A multiple linear regression was performed with male consumer preference as the dependent variable and the following independent variables: product quality, price, brand image, packaging, peer influence, and advertising.

Model Summary:

$R^2 = 0.68$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.66$, $F(6, n-7) = 62.21$, $p < 0.001$ This indicates that approximately 68% of the variance in consumer preferences can be explained by the model.

Table: 7

Predictor	β (Standardized Coefficient)	p-value	Interpretation
Product Quality	0.43	< 0.001	Strongest positive predictor of preference.

Brand Image	0.31	< 0.01	Significant positive influence on preference.
Peer Influence	0.22	< 0.05	Moderate positive impact.
Price	-0.18	< 0.05	Negative relationship; higher price reduces preference.
Packaging	0.12	> 0.05	Positive but not statistically significant.
Advertising	0.10	> 0.05	Not a significant predictor.

OBJECTIVE 2: FACTORS INFLUENCING MALE CONSUMER SATISFACTION

A second multiple linear regression was conducted with consumer satisfaction as the dependent variable and the same set of independent variables.

Model Summary:

$R^2 = 0.74$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.72$, $F(6, n-7) = 57.53$, $p < 0.001$ This means that 74% of the variance in consumer satisfaction is explained by the predictors.

Table: 8

Predictor	β (Standardized Coefficient)	p-value	Interpretation
Product Quality	0.48	< 0.001	Strongest predictor of satisfaction.
Brand Image	0.29	< 0.01	Significant contributor to satisfaction.
Packaging	0.25	< 0.05	Moderate positive influence.
Peer Influence	0.19	> 0.05	Not statistically significant.
Advertising	0.14	> 0.05	Weak influence, not significant.
Price	-0.10	> 0.05	No significant impact.

5. DISCUSSION

This study investigated the factors influencing male consumer preferences and satisfaction with cosmetic products in India. The findings reveal several key insights into the motivations and attitudes driving male cosmetic consumption.

FACTORS INFLUENCING PREFERENCES

The regression analysis indicates that product quality is the strongest predictor of male consumer preference, aligning with previous research highlighting the importance of product efficacy in consumer choices. Brand image also exerts a significant positive influence, suggesting that brand reputation and perceived value play a crucial role in shaping preferences. Peer influence has a moderate positive impact, which underscores the role of social factors and word-of-mouth in cosmetic product adoption among men. Price exhibits a negative relationship with preference, indicating that higher prices may deter some consumers, although this factor is less dominant than product quality or brand image.

FACTORS INFLUENCING SATISFACTION

Similar to preferences, product quality emerges as the strongest predictor of consumer satisfaction. Brand image remains a significant contributor, reinforcing the importance of brand equity in creating satisfied

customers. Interestingly, packaging shows a moderate positive influence on satisfaction, suggesting that the visual appeal and functionality of product packaging can enhance the overall consumer experience. Peer influence and advertising were not statistically significant predictors of satisfaction in this model.

INCOME, EDUCATION, AND AGE

The study was conducted in different regions of India and included an age group between 15 and 35 years, encompassing people from various occupations. The age distribution of respondents showed a majority in the 20-25 age group (50%), followed by the 15-20 and 25-30 age groups. Most respondents had a Bachelor's or Master's degree, and a significant portion were married. Monthly income distribution varied, with most respondents earning between 15,000 and 30,000 INR.

IMPLICATIONS

These findings have several implications for cosmetic brands targeting male consumers in India.

First, it is essential to prioritize product quality and efficacy to meet consumer expectations and foster positive perceptions. Second, building a strong brand image through effective marketing and communication strategies can significantly influence both preferences and satisfaction. Third, while price sensitivity exists, it is less critical than product quality and brand image, suggesting that consumers are willing to pay a premium for superior products and reputable brands. Peer influence should be leveraged through social media and word-of-mouth marketing to tap into the social dynamics of product adoption among men. The expansion into rural and suburban markets necessitates an understanding of the purchasing behavior of consumers in these areas, where quality often trumps normative or celebrity endorsements.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The sample size of 103 respondents may limit the generalizability of the findings to the entire male population in India. Future research could expand the sample size and include a more diverse range of demographic groups to provide a more comprehensive understanding of male consumer behavior in the cosmetic market. Additionally, exploring the influence of cultural factors and regional variations on cosmetic consumption patterns could offer valuable insights for market segmentation and targeted marketing strategies.

6. CONCLUSION

This study examined the key factors influencing male consumer preferences and satisfaction within the Indian cosmetic market. The results clearly demonstrate the paramount importance of product quality and brand image in shaping consumer choices and fostering satisfaction. While price plays a role, its impact is less significant compared to quality and brand perception. The moderate influence of peer dynamics underscores the significance of social factors, suggesting the potential for leveraging social media and word-of-mouth strategies.

The limitations of the study, primarily the sample size, suggest avenues for future research, including expanding the sample and exploring cultural and regional variations. These insights can inform more effective market segmentation and targeted marketing strategies. Ultimately, by prioritizing product excellence, cultivating a strong brand presence, and understanding the nuances of the Indian male consumer, cosmetic brands can enhance their market position and build lasting customer relationships.

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