

PREFERENCE OF WOMEN TOWARDS PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS IN THANJAVUR CITY

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Introduction

Personal hygiene has been part of human life since the early days of civilization. Many ancient cultures had elaborate codes of hygiene, many of which related to preparation for religious activities, the preparation of food, or the prevention of disease. Hygiene practices have varied greatly by culture and era. For example, public bathing facilities were popular in ancient Roman times, while in medieval Europe public bathhouses fell out of favor because of concerns about the spread of disease and immoral behavior.

Some personal care and hygiene products, such as toothpaste and soap, have existed for thousands of years; others have been invented in the last decade or so. Ancient Egyptians began using a paste to clean their teeth around 5000 b.c. The ancient Romans, Greeks, and Chinese also used toothpaste. The ingredients used by members of these cultures were much different than those contained in modern-day toothpaste. According to a history of toothpaste from Colgate-Palmolive Company, toothpastes were made of the powder of hooves' ashes and burnt eggshells that was combined with pumice; crushed bones and oyster shells; powdered charcoal and bark; and salt, ginseng, and herbal mints. The modern production of toothpastes began in the 1800s. These products were typically powders. In 1873, Colgate started the mass production of toothpaste in jars, and in the 1890s, it began to produce toothpaste in tubes. Fluoride toothpastes became available in 1914, and today modern toothpastes fight cavities, whiten teeth, freshen breath, fight plaque, and satisfy any other reasonable need expressed by consumers.

Personal Care Industry in India

The Indian personal care industry is estimated at Rs 170 billion. The industry is divided into fabric wash, personal wash, hair care, oral cares, skin care, colored cosmetics, men's toiletries and fragrances. Most segments of this industry are going through a decline in 2002 with several leading players reporting lower sales in 2002 due to lower volumes as well as lower realization. The next phase of growth has to come from the rural market as the urban markets are near saturation levels in terms of penetration.

The industry has a low entry barrier and competition is severe. Besides the large multinational players, there are some leading domestic players as well as the huge unorganized players. Though most of the market share is with the larger players, companies

vie for the marginal market share. Cheaper imports and duplicate products are also affecting the major players. Companies have been adopting promotion schemes to dole out freebies and repackaging products in smaller packages to cater to a wider Consumer base are some recent trends.

The way ahead for the personal care companies is to introduce new and better product, improve penetration, and make the consumer trade up in price and quality. Rural marketing will be a major thrust area for all companies.

Statement of the problem

Usage of personal care products has become one of the common habits among women employees for personality development. There are various brands which provide different personal care products for its customers. Many companies which have established name in the field of business have more popular name among customers. Here the researcher takes women employees buying behavior of personal care products for research study.

Most of the brands want to popularize their brands image in the mind of public through their variety of products, quality products available in their brand. For this purpose, company will spend huge amount of money. All this will become waste if the company; does not recognize what the women employees prefer to buy from their brand. So the researcher wants to find out the women employees preference and needs in personal care products.

Scope the study

The scope of the study reveals the women employees buying behavior and preference in personal care products. The vital purpose of the study has been conducted to identify the customer and evaluate their preferences and find out the factors in which it decides the buying decisions regarding personal care products. The study creates a ground for further research in the similar field and would similar inferences that could be analyzed.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the various personal care products available in the market.
2. To identify the reasons for using personal care products by the women.
3. To study the relationship between the various factors influencing with women's preference for personal care products.
4. To know the degree of satisfaction levels of women in regarding various factors related to personal care products.

Research Methodology

Research methodology is the methods which are used to solve the research problem systematically. The study has been conducted by framing questionnaire for interviewing the consumer. This study is based on primary data only. The required information was collected through the questionnaire from the customers directly. Direct interview method or survey research approach has been adopted.

The sample size selected was 200. The respondents were selected from Thanjavur city. The sampling procedure adopted was convenience sampling method.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was prepared after gathering preliminary information and the main focus was on the objectives of the study, while preparing the questionnaire.

Sampling Procedure

The study is mainly based on convenience sampling method. For the purpose of the study 200 respondents have been chosen from Thanjavur city by using convenience sampling method. For the purpose of collecting data, a questionnaire was prepared and administrated in person to the respondent. The information collected have been edited for reliability and consistency and then presented in a master table for analysis.

About the study area

Thanjavur District is the Rice Bowl of Tamil Nadu. The Big Temple and the other famous temples in the district are known all over the world. Thanjavur was the cultural capital of the country in 1790. Thanjavur gained prominence during the period of Chola Kings, who made it as their capital. Thereafter, it was ruled by Nayaks and Maratta Kings, who nurtured art and culture. The cultural, the architectural and the scholarly pursuits of these rulers are reflected in the great monuments like Grand Anaicut, Big Temple and Serfoji Mahal Library etc. in the district.

Findings

- The majority 50 percent of the respondent's age is between 21 years to 30 years of age.
- It's observed that 70 % of the respondents were working in the private sector.
- It's found that 40 percent of the respondents were working in the software field.
- It's found that 37 % of the respondents have completed up to PG.
- It's found that 77 percent of the respondent's family type is nuclear family.
- It's known that 58 % of the respondent's family size is 3-4 members.
- It's found that 58 percent of the respondent's monthly income is in the range of Rs. 10,001 - Rs. 20,000.

- It is found that 39 percent of the respondents know their product through television.
- It is found that 63 percent of the respondents purchase their product on monthly basis.
- It is found that 40 % of the respondents spent amount Rs. 501 - Rs. 1,001 to purchase their product every month.
- It is found that 46 % of the respondents always use bath soaps.
- It is known that 77 % of the respondents choosing personal care product for fairness.
- It is found that 44 percent of the respondents choosing shampoo to fight against hair fall.
- It is found that 44 percent of the respondents preferring bath soaps to protect from pimples.
- It is observed that 45 percent of the respondents prefer fairness cream as it gives fairness.
- It is found that 27 % of the respondents prefer Dove brand.
- It is found that 23 percent of the respondents prefer clinic plus brand.
- The majority 25 % of the respondents prefer Lux brand.
- It is found that 28 percent of the respondents prefer vatikabrand.
- It is found that 34 % of the respondents prefer Axe brand.
- It is found that 28 percent of the respondents purchase the brand for quality.
- It is known that 53 % of the respondents switch over to another brand.
- It is found that 37 percent of the respondents switch over to another brand when prices increase.
- It is observed that 35 % of the respondents say advertisement is the excellent feature of personal care product.
- It is found that 57 percent of the respondents will recommend others to use personal care product.

Conclusion

Marketing plays a vital role in the development of our country. The development of marketing has always a kept place with the modern marketing places the high competition in their activities. There are lots of retail shops in the city which provides branded products to the consumers. A good company is the one which satisfies its consumers with its products. Every company should give products which are preferred by its consumers to improve its position in the market. Company should provide new products with consumer's preference and needs periodically to be successful in market.

This study reveals the preference and needs of customers in particular product. The researcher has ascertained the purpose of the customer preferences, factors influenced in buying behavior, mode of purchase and pricing of products in personal care. The study concludes that the customers prefer ambience and nearness from the personal care, their overall opinion about the personal care products are 'excellent'.