

A Study of Cosmetic Brand Preferences among College Girls

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K. Rohini

*M.Com CA, Department of Commerce with CA
Idhaya College for Women, Sarugani, Sivagangai District
(Affiliated to Alagappa University, Karaikudi)*

Abstract

This study looks at college girls' preferences for cosmetic products. It emphasizes factors such as brand image, price, quality, social media influence, and satisfaction levels. College-bound girls completed a structured questionnaire to share their views, intentions to purchase, and brand choices. The results indicate that pricing, peer pressure, social media ads, and brand quality significantly affect consumers' buying decisions. The conclusion provides suggestions for cosmetic marketers on how to better reach young female consumers with their products and marketing strategies.

Keywords: Cosmetic Brands, Consumer Preference, College Girls, Brand Image, Purchasing Behaviour, Social Media Influence.

Introduction

The cosmetic industry has grown quickly in recent years. This growth is due to increased awareness of personal grooming, beauty standards, and self-image among young consumers. College girls make up a large group of cosmetic users. Fashion trends, social media, peer groups, brand image, and celebrity endorsements heavily influence them. Products like skincare, makeup, haircare, and personal care have become a key part of their daily routine.

Consumer preferences for cosmetic brands depend on several factors. These include product quality, price, brand reputation, packaging, availability, ingredients, and promotional strategies. Understanding the preferences and buying behaviour of college girls can help cosmetic companies create better products and marketing plans. Therefore, this study aims to examine the factors that influence cosmetic brand preference among college girls and their level of satisfaction.

Scope of the Study

The study looks specifically at college girls as buyers of cosmetic products. It explores their preferences for skincare, makeup, haircare, and personal care items. The findings will assist cosmetic marketers, retailers, and researchers in understanding the buying habits of young female consumers. The study offers insights that can aid in product development, setting prices, and planning promotions.

Statement of the Problem

The cosmetic market is very competitive, featuring many national and international brands that offer similar products. College girls often find it hard to choose cosmetic brands because of the vast variety available, heavy advertising, and the influence of social media and their peers. It is important to understand what factors mainly affect their brand preference and buying decisions. This study aims to identify the main elements that influence cosmetic brand choice among college girls and the challenges they encounter when purchasing cosmetic products.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the awareness level of cosmetic brands among college girls.
- To analyze the factors influencing consumer preference towards cosmetic brands.
- To identify the most preferred cosmetic brands among college girls.
- To examine the role of price, quality, brand image, and promotion in brand selection.
- To study the level of satisfaction towards cosmetic products used by college girls.

Research Methodology

Descriptive research design is used to analyse consumer preferences and behaviour towards cosmetic brands. The study is conducted among selected colleges of Sivagangai District. A sample of 120 College girls is selected for the study. Convenience sampling method is adopted for collecting data. The primary data collected through structured questionnaires. The Secondary Data: Collected from journals, magazines, websites, books, and research articles. A structured questionnaire with both multiple-choice and Likert scale questions. Percentage analysis and Mean score analysis were used.

Limitations of the Study

- The study is confined only to college girls and does not include other age groups.
- The results are based on respondents' opinions, which may be biased.
- The sample size is limited and may not represent the entire population.
- Time constraints may affect the depth of the study.
- Changes in fashion trends and consumer tastes may affect the relevance of findings over time.

This study is both descriptive and analytical as it describes and examines the behavior of women when they buy and use cosmetics. It looks into why women purchase cosmetic products and how socioeconomic factors affect their buying habits, particularly among college girls.

Review of Literature

Haritha Senthilvel et al. (2025) studied cosmetic usage patterns, attitudes, and behaviour among female college students in Chennai, finding widespread use of skincare and highlighting social media as a primary influence on product choice and awareness.

Uma Badgujar & Kunjal Sinha (2025) focused on online cosmetic buying behaviour, showing that brand perception and customer satisfaction are strong predictors of online purchase intentions among female consumers.

A primary investigation by Anand (2023) focused specifically on college girls' preferences toward cosmetic brands in Coimbatore, India. The study found that this cohort actively engages with diverse cosmetic products, demonstrates brand awareness, and makes purchasing decisions based on quality and perceived effectiveness of products. These findings indicate that college girls prioritize brands that balance quality, affordability, and aesthetic appeal in their choice of cosmetic products.

Singh and Verma (2023) focused on cosmetic awareness among girl students in the Ayodhya district. The researchers observed that quality and suitability to skin type were the most influential factors affecting brand selection. The study also noted that students preferred brands that assured safety and dermatological testing, reflecting growing awareness and cautious buying behaviour among young consumers.

Research Methodology

The study uses a descriptive research design to describe and examine the preferences, attitudes, and buying behaviour of college girls toward cosmetic brands. It is conducted among college girls at selected colleges in Sivagangai. The population includes female college students who use cosmetic products. A sample of 120 respondents has been chosen for the study. The study applies the Convenience Sampling Method since the respondents are easily reachable and willing to participate.

Sources of Data

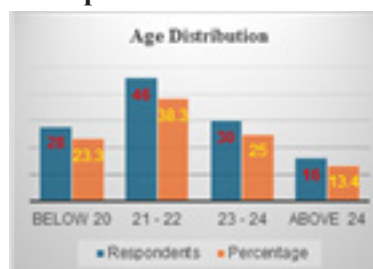
- Primary Data: Collected through a structured questionnaire.
- Secondary Data: Collected from journals, books, magazines, research articles, websites, and reports.
- A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire consists of two parts:
 - Part A: Demographic profile of respondents
 - Part B: Statements related to consumer preference towards cosmetic brands measured using a 5-point Likert scale.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

1. Percentage Analysis

Table 1 Age-wise Distribution of Respondents

Age (Years)	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Below 20	28	23.3
21 – 22	46	38.3
23 – 24	30	25.0
Above 24	16	13.4
Total	120	100



The majority of respondents (38.3%) belong to the age group of 21–22 years, indicating that early college-age girls form the dominant consumer segment for cosmetic products.

2. Mean Score Analysis - Factors Influencing Cosmetic Brand Preference (5-point Likert Scale: 5 = Strongly Agree ... 1 = Strongly Disagree)

Table 2 Mean Score of Influencing Factors

Factors	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
Product Quality	540	4.50	I
Brand Image	516	4.30	II

Price	492	4.10	III
Advertisement	468	3.90	IV
Packaging	444	3.70	V
Availability	420	3.50	VI

Product quality ranks first with the highest mean score (4.50), indicating it is the most influential factor in cosmetic brand preference among college girls.

3. Standard Deviation - Consistency of Opinion on Influencing Factors

Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation
Product Quality	4.50	0.62
Brand Image	4.30	0.68
Price	4.10	0.74
Advertisement	3.90	0.81
Packaging	3.70	0.85

Lower standard deviation for product quality indicates high consistency of opinion, while higher deviation for packaging shows varied opinions among respondents.

4. Chi-Square Test

Relationship between Monthly Allowance and Cosmetic Spending

Monthly Allowance	Low Spending	Medium Spending	High Spending	Total
Below ₹5,000	18	12	6	36
₹5,001 – ₹10,000	14	20	10	44
Above ₹10,000	8	16	16	40
Total	40	48	32	120

- Calculated χ^2 value = 9.84
- Table value (df = 4, α = 0.05) = 9.49

Since the calculated value is greater than the table value, the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant relationship between monthly allowance and cosmetic spending.

5. Ranking Method - Preferred Cosmetic Brands

Brand	Total Score	Rank
Lakme	280	I
Maybelline	260	II
Himalaya	240	III
Mamaearth	220	IV
L'Oréal	200	V

Lakme is the most preferred cosmetic brand among college girls, followed by Maybelline and Himalaya.

Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion of the Study

Based on the analysis of data collected from 120 college girls, the following findings were drawn:

1. The majority of respondents (38.3%) belong to the 21–22 years age group, indicating that early college-age students form the dominant consumer segment for cosmetic products.

2. Product quality emerged as the most influential factor in cosmetic brand preference, securing the highest mean score (4.50), highlighting the importance of performance and reliability.
3. Brand image ranked second, suggesting that college girls prefer well-known and trusted cosmetic brands.
4. Price plays a significant role in purchase decisions, reflecting the price sensitivity of college students who depend on limited income sources.
5. Advertisement has a moderate influence on brand preference, but its effectiveness increases when supported by product quality and brand reputation.
6. The standard deviation analysis revealed consistent opinions among respondents regarding product quality and brand image, while opinions varied more on packaging and promotional aspects.
7. The chi-square test confirmed a significant relationship between monthly allowance and cosmetic spending, indicating that spending behaviour increases with higher allowance levels.
8. Correlation analysis showed a strong positive relationship ($r = +0.68$) between advertisement exposure and brand preference, proving that promotional efforts positively influence buying behaviour.
9. The ranking method revealed that Lakme is the most preferred cosmetic brand among college girls, followed by Maybelline and Himalaya.
10. Overall, college girls demonstrate a balanced purchasing approach, considering quality, brand trust, and affordability while making cosmetic purchase decisions.

Suggestions: Based on the Findings of the Study, the Following Suggestions are Offered

1. Cosmetic companies should prioritize product quality and safety, as these are the primary determinants of brand preference among college girls.
2. Brands should maintain affordable pricing strategies and introduce student-friendly product ranges or discounts to attract price-sensitive consumers.
3. Marketers should strengthen brand image through ethical branding, dermatologically tested products, and transparent ingredient information.
4. Advertisements should focus on realistic beauty standards and product benefits, especially through social media platforms preferred by college students.
5. Influencer marketing should be used strategically by collaborating with trusted and relatable influencers rather than celebrity endorsements alone.
6. Packaging can be improved by adopting eco-friendly and travel-friendly designs, appealing to environmentally conscious young consumers.
7. Cosmetic brands should conduct campus-based promotions and product trials to increase awareness and encourage first-time usage.

Conclusion

The present study titled “A Study of Consumer Preference towards Cosmetic Brands among College Girls” provides valuable insights into the purchasing behaviour of young female consumers. The findings reveal that cosmetic brand preference among college girls is primarily influenced by product quality, brand image, and price, while advertisements and promotions play a supportive role.

The study also confirms that economic factors such as monthly allowance significantly affect cosmetic spending patterns. Furthermore, the positive relationship between advertisement exposure and brand preference highlights the importance of effective marketing communication. The preference for established brands like Lakme and Maybelline indicates a strong inclination toward trusted and reputed brands.

In conclusion, understanding the preferences of college girls is essential for cosmetic companies aiming to build long-term customer relationships. By aligning product quality with affordability and ethical marketing practices, brands can successfully cater to this influential consumer segment. The study contributes to academic literature and offers practical insights for marketers, while also providing scope for future research on emerging trends such as sustainable and organic cosmetics.

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