



A Study of Consumers' Buying Behaviour on Herbal Products (with special reference to cosmetic products)

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Abstract

Purpose: The objective research is to analyse the factors that influence the purchasing behaviour of the consumers regarding herbal and non-herbal cosmetic products.

Research methodology: The research is descriptive in nature. The researcher has chosen quantitative data collection method and secondary method in order to conduct the research.

Findings: Herbal products have a great influence over non-herbal products because people nowadays prefer herbal products as compared to non-herbal products. It is because in the recent times it has been observed that there has been an exponential growth of herbal skin care products in the market replacing the non-herbal products.

Limitation of the study: The prime limitation of the study was timescale and budget. This study is conducted via secondary analysis, it is compulsory for the researcher to develop proper questionnaires and select appropriate options for questions.

Keywords: purchasing behaviour, consumers, herbal and non-herbal cosmetic products, consumer behaviour, cosmetic industry.

Introduction

For this research work, the chosen company is Patanjali (Patanjaliayurved.net, 2018). Patanjali is one of the leading suppliers of cosmetic products in India. This section will reflect the background based on which the research will be conducted. The cosmetic industry is growing rapidly in India. Patanjali is a company that provides the people with herbal products for skin care purposes. In India, the people are oriented towards herbal products as compared to non-herbal products. The consumer behaviour of people in India is changing at a rapid rate regarding the cosmetic and skin care products. The perception of Indians are getting oriented towards herbal products as they believe that herbal products are more effective for skin as it does not contain any kind of chemicals and artificial things. As non-herbal products, contain chemicals and artificial materials people think that it might affect their skin in a negative manner and could be harmful. Patanjali promises to provide the customers with pure herbal cosmetic products to tap the growing favourability for the herbal products.

1. Objectives

The aim of the research is to analyse the factors that influence the purchasing behaviour of the consumers regarding herbal and non-herbal cosmetic products.

- To identify the factors that influence the buying behavior of consumers towards Herbal and non-herbal products
- To recognize the likes and dislikes of consumers regarding Herbal and non-herbal products

2. Literature Review

Factors affecting consumer behaviour in the cosmetic industry

It has been observed that the demands for the cosmetic products in women have increased to a higher level, benefiting the cosmetic industry. However, it is necessary to understand the concept of consumer behaviour to retain customer base (Solomon *et al.*, 2014). Consumer behaviour is the attitude, which determines the purchasing pattern of the customers. The behaviour is observed during purchasing and post using the products. The factors affecting consumer behaviour help in determining the consumer decision-making ability. There are several factors that contribute in influencing the consumer behaviour in buying herbal and non-herbal products of the cosmetic industry, Patanjali which are discussed below:

Social factors

Social class: The income level influences the purchasing factor of the customers largely (Joshi and Rahman, 2015). As herbal products are costly in nature, customers belonging to the higher class of the society prefer to buy cosmetics product to suit their fashion in the cosmetic industry and society.

Reference: Customers are often influenced by the neighbours or other individuals' choices and tastes. For example, if the neighbour has a good experience with the products then the individual gains trust in the product and purchases the same product. While if the customer had a bad experience with the product, the purchasing factor of the other individual is affected. Reference plays a vital role in influencing the purchasing nature of the customers.

Psychological factors:

Perception:

When a customer has prior knowledge of the products, the purchasing behaviour is affected. Having knowledge about the products through advertisements or reviews, the customers build a trust for the product. Having no perception significantly leads to confusion in choice.

Personality:

An individual belonging to the higher class may not prefer to buy herbal products rather prefers non-herbal products of luxury brand. The personality is depended on the status and the brand image of the company. While middle class people prefer herbal products as it is affordable to them. Choices of the individuals determine the personality affecting consumer buying process (Rani, 2014).

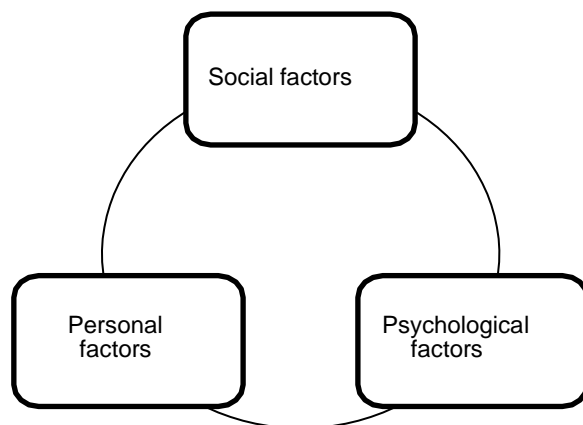


Figure 1: Factors affecting Consumer Behaviour
(Source: Created by learner)

Favourability of the consumers for herbal cosmetic products

As consumers are nowadays more concerned about their health, herbal products have created a positive influence on the customers. Consumers have shifted their focus from non-herbal to herbal products as it has no side effects and offers good quality products. Customers have increased their demand for buying herbal products like Patanjali (Jaggi and Ghosh, 2017). Research has stated that maximum customers feel satisfied with the quality of the herbal products and have gained a trust the products are less prone to create any kind of health hazards.

It has been concluded from a research that about 80% of the customers shifted their focus to herbal products due to its unadulterated herbal products (Sulaiman *et al.*, 2017). Herbal products are natural in nature and from the traditional age given benefits to the customers curing them from many diseases and injuries. Customers have a belief that herbal products help in improving the health of the individuals than consuming piles of medicines, increasing the expense of the individuals and having side effects. Customers favour herbal products as they are aware of the preparation of the products with the help of advertisements. The customers having a perception of the products, increases their favourability for the products.

Likes and dislikes of consumers for Herbal and non-herbal products

Herbal Products:

The customers have a growing *likability* for the herbal products as many herbal companies use preservative to protect the customers from health issues. As herbal products are broadly advertised in the commercials along with the manufacturing process, customers have developed a perception of the products and are aware of the ingredients used in the products. Promotion of the herbal brand and their ingredients has persuaded the customers to buy herbal products in large scale. Having no side effects has been a great factor in encouraging the customers to buy the products. However, there are few customers who have generated *dislikes* for the products as the products are costly in nature and consist of side

effects due to consuming or applying the non-herbal products. Customers now demand products that are quick in action and offering quick remedies. Herbal products have failed to give quick remedies to customers.

Non Herbal Products:

As many herbal products are not safe in nature and lacking knowledge of the proper usage of the products can cause harm to the health of individuals. Customers so prefer non-herbal products as they are either prescribed by the doctors or usage method is written in the label of the products. Brand image plays a vital role in affecting customers to buy non-herbal products. Celebrities are endorsed to advertise about the non-herbal products creating a good impression on the customers. However, many customers have a dislike for non-herbal products as the customers are not aware of the ingredients used in the manufacturing process and are sometimes not suitable to the health of the customers creating hazards like swelling of skin, allergy.

Literature gap

The purpose of the research to be conducted is its failure to show the importance of factors affecting consumers' behaviours in purchasing cosmetics products. Earlier, the research failed to have a data analysis of the customers using herbal and non-herbal products. In this research, the consumer behaviour is focused to determine the increase in the productivity of the companies. This research has been undertaken to highlight the influence of the consumer behaviour in affecting the growth of the sector. The likes and dislikes of the consumers have not been taken into account in the earlier research study.

6. Research Methodology Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is defined as the process of perception and belief generally for the growth of knowledge. An effective procedure helps the researcher to gather proper and reliable information for the research work (Hughes and Sharrock, 2016). As per the nature of the research work, the researcher selects the research philosophy in order to conduct the study in an efficient manner. It helps the researcher to specify the specific methodology of research that will be used in order to conduct the research. Selection of proper research philosophy also helps the learner to understand the purpose of the research. There are basically three types of research philosophy realism, positivism, and Interpretivism. In this research work, the researcher has chosen the philosophy of positivism in order to gather reliable information to conduct the research work properly.

Research Approach

Research approach is stated as one of the most effective stage of the entire research work. It mainly concentrates on determining the different approaches to the research work. On the other hand, research approach enables the researcher to have a better understanding of the project. As per the nature of the topic of research, the researcher selects the variables for the conduction of the study. Research approaches are basically of two types inductive approach and deductive approach (Stage and Manning, 2015). According to the theories and models, the research work can be constructed in a well-structured manner. Thus, it could be said that selection of essential theories and models is necessary for the research work to be conducted in a proper way. In this research work, the researcher has chosen the method of deductive approach in order to conduct the research in an effective manner. Deductive approach primarily concentrates on the models and theories that already exist and can be utilized for better recognition and construction of the study. Based on several different layer of the research work the researcher is able to make easy approach towards the study so that it is more reliable and productive.

Research Design

Research design is one of the most essential parts of the entire research work. The researcher must select the right research design in order to make the research work more dynamic and eye catching for the learners. It is required for the completion of the study. With proper selection of research design, the researcher is able to collect suitable and appropriate data and information in order to carry out the research work. It makes it easier for the researcher to display the data accumulated.

Appropriate selection research design helps the researcher to build up a strong content for the research work. There are generally three types of research design descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory (Wohlin and Aurum, 2015). In this study, the researcher has chosen the explanatory research design to conduct the study.

With the help of explanatory research design, the researcher is able to explain the things in an easy manner. It recognizes and develops a relationship amid the parameters and variables selected for the research topic.

Data Collection and Analysis Technique

Data collection and analysis technique is another important aspect of research methodology. It is vital for the researcher to select appropriate tools and techniques in order to conduct the research in a proper way.

There are generally two types of data collection method namely primary data collection and secondary data collection. Primary data collection method helps the researcher to collect the data easily by carrying out survey and personal interviews. Primary data collection is further divided into two parts quantitative data collection (Field, 2015) and qualitative data collection.

In quantitative data collection researcher prepares a set of questionnaire for the target audience and in qualitative data collection (Creswell and Creswell, 2017) the researcher conducts face-to-face or personal interview with executive department of the organizations. On the other hand, secondary data collection method helps the researcher to collect relevant data from various sources like internet, journals, books etc. in this research work the researcher has chosen quantitative data collection method and secondary method in order to conduct the research.

Sampling Technique

According to the nature of the research topic, the researcher selects the sampling technique. It is another aspect of research methodology that is significant to conduct the research.

With the help of sampling technique, the researcher is able to decide the target or the sample audience for the survey (Emerson, 2015).

In order to conduct this research, the researcher has chosen 500 people for the survey and prepared 10 questions for them in order to have an idea regarding the purchasing behaviour of the consumers and their preference of herbal products over non-herbal products.

Ethical Considerations

In order to conduct the research, it is important for the researcher to maintain the ethics in a proper manner.

The researcher while conducting the research must maintain the ethical codes of practice to conduct the research work in a right way. The researcher must follow the "Data protection Act 1991".

It is vital to conduct the entire research work in a legal way so that it does not harm the ethics of the people. The researcher must use accurate and reliable information for the study to make it clear to the learners.

7. Data Analysis *Quantitative data analysis* Please specify your gender

| Particulars | Percentage of respondents | Number of respondents | Total number of students |
|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Male | 75% | 375 | 500 |
| Female | 25% | 125 | 500 |

Table 1: gender of respondents

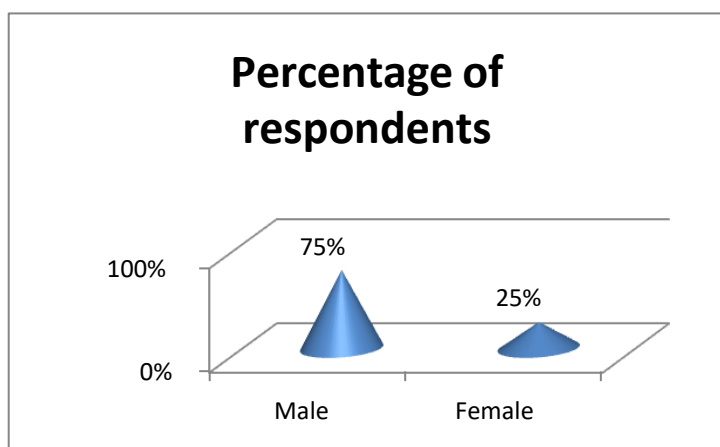


Figure: 1.1

Analysis: The above figure shows that number of female participants is much higher as compared to male participants. How far do you agree that Patanjali offers herbal cosmetic products to its consumers?

| Particulars | Percentage of respondents | Number of Respondents | Total number of respondents |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Highly agreed | 30% | 150 | 500 |
| Agreed | 25% | 125 | 500 |
| Neutral | 15% | 75 | 500 |
| Disagreed | 20% | 100 | 500 |
| Highly disagreed | 10% | 50 | 500 |

Table 2: Patanjali offers herbal cosmetic products to its consumers

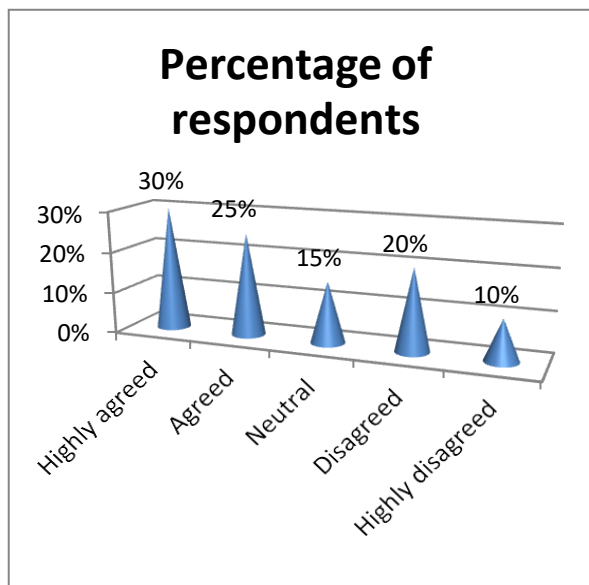


Figure 2.1

Analysis: the above figure shows that 55% of the respondents agree with the point that Patanjali offers herbal cosmetic products to its consumers whereas 15% people are neutral and 30% people are disagreeing with this point How far do you agree that herbal products are more skin friendly than non-herbal products?

| Particulars | Percentage of respondents | Number of Respondents | Total number of respondents |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Highlyagreed | 40% | 200 | 500 |
| Agreed | 30% | 150 | 500 |
| Neutral | 10% | 50 | 500 |
| Disagreed | 10% | 50 | 500 |
| Highly disagreed | 10% | 50 | 500 |

Table 3: herbal products are more skin friendlythan non-herbal products

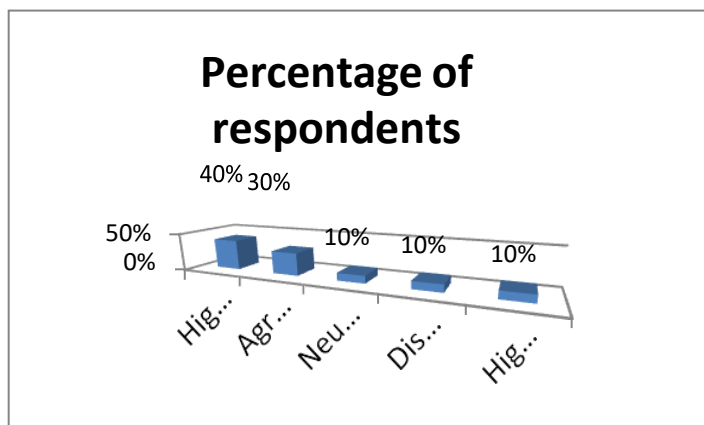


Figure 3.1

Analysis: As per the data in above figure, it can be observed that majority of the people areagreeing with the point that herbal productsare more skin friendly than non-herbal products. Whereas 105 people are neutral and 20%, people are disagreeing with this point.

How far are you satisfied with the herbal skin care products offered by Patanjali?

| Particulars | Percenta ge of respondents | Number of respondents | Total number of respondents |
|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Highly satisfied | 40% | 200 | 100 |
| satisfied | 25% | 125 | 100 |
| Likely | 15% | 75 | 100 |
| Dissatisfied | 10% | 50 | 100 |
| Highly dissatisfi ed | 10% | 50 | 100 |

Table 4: satisfied with the herbal skin careproducts offered by Patanjali

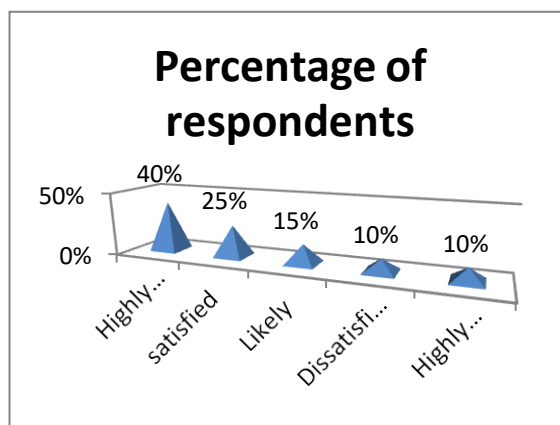


Figure 4.1

Analysis: As per the figure, 65% of people are satisfied with the herbal skin care products offered by Patanjali. On the other hand, 15% of people are neutral and 20% people are dissatisfied.

How far do you agree that of the ingredients mentioned on the package affects the purchasing intentions of the customers?

| Particulars | Percentage of respondents | Number of Respondents | Total number of respondents |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Highly agreed | 20% | 100 | 500 |
| Agreed | 20% | 100 | 500 |
| Neutral | 10% | 50 | 500 |
| Disagreed | 30% | 150 | 500 |
| Highly disagreed | 20% | 100 | 500 |

Table 5: ingredients mentioned on the package affects the purchasing intentions of the customers

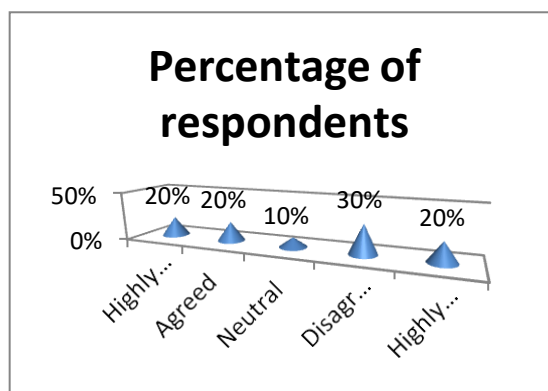


Figure 5.1

Analysis: According to the data, 50% people are disagreeing with the point that ingredients mentioned on the package affects the purchasing intentions of the customers. On the other hand, 10% people are neutral and 40% agree with this point.

8. Conclusion and Recommendation

In this research work, difference between herbal and non-herbal cosmetics has been discussed and the way it influences the purchasing intentions of the consumers. The researcher has used several tools and techniques in order to conduct the survey to have an idea regarding the usage of herbal skincare products over non-herbal products. The researcher while conducting the research came to know that it affects the purchasing intention of the consumers. The research has been conducted in proper way to make a clear understanding of herbal and non-herbal products and its influence over the buying behaviour of people. Questionnaires and themes have been developed by the researcher to collect information on the research topic. Lastly, the researcher has made sure to use appropriate tools and techniques to collect accurate and reliable information to make the research understandable for the learners. To develop effective strategies for the betterment of the herbal skin care products offered by Patanjali. Patanjali must come up with innovative products to compete in the market. The company must make their client base aware of the duplicate herbal cosmetics supplied by other companies. Thus, these are some of the recommendations to influence the purchasing intentions of the consumers concerning herbal products.

9. Limitation of the study

The researcher while carrying out the study faced numerous challenges. The prime limitation of the study was timescale and budget. It became quite tough for the researcher to complete the entire research work within the stipulated period. Before conducting the study, the researcher must have proper understanding of the topic. Since this study is conducted via secondary analysis, it is compulsory for the researcher to develop proper questionnaires and select appropriate options for questions. To develop proper questionnaire and select appropriate options for the questions that are going to be asked in the survey it becomes very difficult for the researcher to do it within a short amount of time. Due to time limitation it also becomes quite difficult for the researcher to accumulate accurate and reliable data for the research work.

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