

Consumer Awareness Of Skin Type And Cosmetic Product Selection

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ABSTRACT

Skin care has become a very important topic in today's time, especially when consumers are showing increasing interest in the use of cosmetics and cosmetic products. Skin type varies for each individual and if the products are not selected accordingly, it can have an adverse effect on the skin. This research paper is based exclusively on secondary sources such as research papers, journals, reports and online databases, in which consumers' awareness related to skin type identification and product selection has been analyzed. The study shows that most consumers are unable to correctly identify the skin type and make decisions in the selection of beauty products under the influence of advertisements or brands. This results in skin problems. The research also revealed that the availability of scientific information, consultation with dermatologists, and the quality of promotional campaigns can influence the decision process of consumers in a positive direction. The aim of this study is to understand what are the trends in consumer behavior through secondary data and what measures are needed to improve them. Finally, this paper presents various strategies and suggestions to promote consumer awareness to select appropriate cosmetic products and improve skin health.

Keywords: Skin types, consumer awareness, cosmetic products, skin care, beauty products.

1. Introduction

Human skin is not only the largest organ of the body, but it is also the basis of our health, beauty and social confidence. Skin care has become extremely important due to today's fast-paced lifestyle, changing environment and increasing beauty consciousness. The beauty products and cosmetic industry has grown rapidly globally and with it the availability of products to suit different skin types has also increased. But the most important question among all is whether consumers recognize their skin type and choose cosmetic products accordingly? Skin types are mainly divided into five categories: normal, oily, dry, combination and sensitive. Each skin type has different skin care requirements and if not used with suitable products, the skin may suffer adverse effects such as allergies, acne, blemishes, or premature aging. Therefore, correct identification of skin type is very important while selecting cosmetic products.

In a diverse country like India, the consumer segment is also very wide - rural and urban, men and women, young and old. There is a tendency of interest and use of beauty products in all classes, but there is a difference in the level of awareness. Some consumers choose products under the influence of advertisements while some take decisions based on the brand image. At the same time, many consumers use products without any scientific information, which can harm the skin. The main objective of this research paper is to know to what extent consumers are aware of their skin type and on what basis they choose beauty products, based on data and studies obtained from secondary sources. Also to analyze what problems can arise due to lack of awareness and how consumers can be made more aware and conscious. Despite the increase in the sale of skin related products, lack of consumer education and information is a big challenge. In this research, an attempt has been made to develop a deep understanding in this subject through various research papers, reports and data and to give positive suggestions in the interest of consumers.

2. Review of Literature

According to Sharma and Verma (2019), consumers have low awareness of skin type identification, which leads to adverse effects due to wrong product selection. Mishra (2020) found that advertisements have a greater influence on consumers' decision-making process. According to Singh and Kaur (2021), women are found to be more interested in skin care, but lack of information creates problems. Kapoor (2022) reported that skin awareness campaigns have a positive impact on consumer choices. According to Rao and Mehta (2023), through informative labeling and promotion, consumers can make more conscious decisions. Steventon (2012) found that most consumers misunderstand their skin type, leading them to select inappropriate products. Oliveira et al. (2023) reviewed visual rating scales and self-report tools for skin type identification, which help consumers understand their skin characteristics.

Ayob et al. (2016) studied awareness, perception, and attitudes towards cosmetic products among Malaysian consumers, finding that consumers' awareness and attitudes influence product selection. Brewer and Zhao (2010) explored the relationship between brand awareness and consumer purchase decision, making it clear that brand awareness influences consumers' purchase decisions. Ruf et al. (2024) studied consumers' perception and evaluation towards natural beauty products in Germany, finding that consumers prefer natural products based on environmental values and health awareness. Ayob et al. (2016) studied awareness, perception, and attitudes towards cosmetic products among Malaysian consumers, finding that consumers' awareness and attitudes influence product selection. Steventon (2012) studied consumers' perception towards skin type and beauty care in different cultural contexts, finding that cultural attitudes influence consumers' product selection.

Oliveira et al. (2023) reviewed visual rating scales and self-report tools for skin type identification, which help consumers understand their skin characteristics. Ayob et al. (2016) studied awareness, perception, and attitudes towards cosmetic products among Malaysian consumers, finding that consumers' awareness and attitudes influence product selection. In a literature review based on consumer awareness of skin type and cosmetic product selection, various researchers have analyzed consumer behavior, skin type identification, and influencing factors in cosmetic product selection.

Reis-Mansur et al. (2023) presented a review focused on consumer behavior, skin phototype, sunscreen use, and photoprotection devices, which can explain consumers' awareness of skin protection. Tengli and Srinivasan (2022) identified gender-based purchase behavior of Indian consumers towards natural cosmetic products, thereby explaining different aspects of consumer awareness. Evangelista et al. (2022) examined the relationship between women's anti-aging cosmetic product usage patterns and self-esteem, thereby providing an in-depth understanding of consumer behavior. Ruf et al. (2024) studied the local availability and consumer perceptions of natural cosmetic products in Germany, highlighting the importance of product presentation and brand identity.

The above literature review makes it clear that correctly identifying skin type and selecting appropriate cosmetic products can be challenging for consumers. Factors such as brand awareness, cultural attitudes, and environmental concerns influence consumer behavior. Therefore, effective strategies are needed to educate consumers and provide them with the right information, allowing them to select appropriate products according to their skin type.

3. Research Methodology

The aim of this study is to understand the relationship between consumers' skin type and cosmetic product choices and to analyse the level of consumer awareness in this regard. Since this study is purely based on secondary sources, primary data has not been collected. The research methodology is designed to be based on authentic literary sources, scholarly articles, research papers, reports, online databases, published materials of governmental and non-governmental organisations and consumer behaviour analyses published by various cosmetic companies. The nature of the research is descriptive and analytical where previous studies have been reviewed to understand consumer behaviour. It includes consumer decision making process, scientific explanation of skin type, characteristics of beauty products and influence of social and cultural factors. The study covers various dimensions of consumer awareness through secondary data sources such as common skin categories (oily, dry, combination, normal and sensitive), scientific composition of cosmetic products, and consumer attitudes towards brand and quality. The major secondary sources used for data collection include academic databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, Science Direct, PubMed, MDPI. Research articles obtained from these sources were systematically analysed and studies published between 2015 and 2024 were prioritised to better understand current consumer trends. The research also uses statistical data, some of which are taken from government reports and corporate publications based on consumer surveys.

Since this study is based solely on secondary data, no direct field survey or questionnaire was used. The aim of the research is to consolidate previously available knowledge and facts to explain how consumers today choose cosmetic products, and to what extent their awareness of skin type helps them in making appropriate product selection. Comparative analysis has also been done in this study to know how awareness varies among different

social classes, age groups and gender-based consumer groups. The analysis is based on the data and observations available in previous studies and reports. Finally, this methodology not only explains the current scenario of consumer awareness but also suggests concrete steps to be taken in future for primary research in this area. This study is an attempt to develop a comprehensive understanding, through secondary sources, to elaborate the interrelationship between consumer behaviour and cosmetic product selection.

4. Skin type awareness and cosmetic product selection

A detailed description of all the major skin types is presented here, along with information about the cosmetic products suitable for each skin type. This description helps consumers to choose the right product according to their skin type.

4.1 Normal Skin

Normal skin is considered to be the most balanced skin type. It is neither too oily nor too dry. People with normal skin have soft, smooth, and even skin tone, with very few problems of acne or excessive sensitivity. This skin type has normal-sized pores and no significant imperfections on the skin. Such people should choose beauty products that maintain the natural moisture of the skin and keep the skin balanced. Mild cleansers, light moisturizers, and serums containing hyaluronic acid are ideal for normal skin. Apart from this, creams containing vitamin-C help in making the skin glow. To protect yourself from the sun, it is necessary to regularly use a sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher.

4.2 Dry Skin

Dry skin lacks natural oil (sebum), which makes it appear stretched, rough, and sometimes flaky or cracked. This type of skin often looks dull due to lack of moisture and wrinkles or fine lines appear early. People with dry skin need beauty products that provide intense nourishment and moisture. Cream-based cleansers, moisturizers containing ingredients such as glycerin, shea butter, and ceramides are beneficial for this type. Also, natural oils such as rosehip or jojoba help nourish the skin. Such people should stay away from cosmetic products containing alcohol as these can make the skin even drier.

4.3 Oily Skin

Oily skin has overactive sebum glands, causing excess oil on the skin, especially in the T-zone (forehead, nose and chin). This skin often appears shiny and its pores are large and open. People with oily skin are more prone to blackheads, whiteheads and acne. For oily skin, cleansers should be used that contain ingredients such as salicylic acid, tea tree oil or neem that can cleanse the skin deeply. It is important to use oil-free and non-comedogenic moisturizers so that the pores do not get clogged. Applying a clay-based mask such as kaolin or bentonite once a week can absorb excess oil and balance the skin. Combination Skin. Combination skin is a complex skin type in which some parts of the face (such as the T-zone) are oily while the rest of the skin is normal or dry. For this skin type, a single product is not suitable for the entire face. This skin type requires zone-based care – oil-control products should be used on the T-zone and hydrating creams on the cheeks. Cleansers with a balanced pH, light serums (such as those containing niacinamide) and hydrating products are useful. Skin toners and exfoliants can be used weekly to improve skin texture.

4.4 Sensitive Skin

Sensitive skin is extremely reactive and can easily become red, itchy, or irritated when exposed to external elements such as pollution, sunlight, or chemical products. This skin type commonly shows signs of inflammation or allergies. Those with sensitive skin should choose products very carefully. Fragrance-free, hypoallergenic, and dermatologist-tested products are ideal for them. Ingredients like aloe vera, ceramides, and colloidal oatmeal help soothe the skin and strengthen its protective layer. It is very important to do a patch test before applying any new product directly on the face.

4.5 Acne-Prone Skin

Acne-prone skin is usually oily, but it is not necessary. This skin suffers from frequent pimples, blackheads, and sometimes cystic acne. Special care is required for this type of skin. Products should be chosen that treat acne without harming the skin. Cleansers and serums containing salicylic acid, benzoyl peroxide and niacinamide are useful for this skin. Controlled use of retinoids also helps in the formation of new skin cells, but it should be used only after medical consultation. Oil-free, non-comedogenic and light moisturizers are best suited for acne-prone skin. Every skin type has its own specific needs, and it is very important to keep these needs in mind while choosing the right cosmetic products. If consumers correctly identify their skin type and choose products accordingly, they can not only avoid skin problems but also get a healthy and attractive skin. Below is the comparative analysis of different skin types and the cosmetic products suitable for them is presented through a table. Along with, SWOT analysis is also conducted based on the various research papers.

Comparative Analysis of Skin Types and Suitable Products

Skin Type	Key Characteristics	Suitable Cosmetic Products	Precautions
Normal Skin	Balanced oil and moisture, smooth texture	Mild cleansers, hyaluronic acid serums, SPF creams	Avoid chemical exfoliants
Dry Skin	Rough, tight, prone to wrinkles	Cream-based cleansers, shea butter, face oils	Avoid alcohol-based products
Oily Skin	Excess sebum, prone to acne	Salicylic acid cleansers, mud masks, oil-free lotions	Avoid comedogenic products
Combination Skin	Oily in the T-zone, dry on the cheeks	Zone-specific care products, niacinamide serums	Avoid excessively dry or oily products
Sensitive Skin	Redness, irritation, prone to allergies	Aloe vera creams, hypoallergenic moisturizers	Avoid products with parabens/fragrances
Acne-Prone Skin	Frequent pimples, cystic acne	Benzoyl peroxide, non-comedogenic gels	Avoid heavy creams or excessive scrubbing

SWOT Analysis (Consumer Behavior Based on Normal Skin)

Element	Analysis (Normal Skin)
Strength (Strengths)	Can use a wide range of products, minimal reactions
Weakness (Weaknesses)	Overuse may affect the natural skin structure
Opportunity (Opportunities)	Freedom to experiment with new products, possibility for DIY trials
Threat (Threats)	Environmental changes or wrong product use may cause imbalance

The direct cause of skin problems is wrong product selection, which is influenced by wrong information or advertising. Data shows that the youth (20-35 years) are more conscious about skin-friendly products.

Analysis of various studies on consumer awareness of skin type and cosmetic product selection reveals that there is diversity in consumers' knowledge, perception, and behavior, which affects their product selection. A study found that most consumers are aware of the safety of cosmetic products, but only 17.6% of them have adequate knowledge about harmful chemicals present in the products such as mercury, hydroquinone, and tretinoin. This indicates that there is a gap between awareness and knowledge, which can affect consumers' safe product selection. A study conducted in Sri Lanka observed that most consumers pay attention to the ingredients, brand, and medical recommendations of cosmetic products when selecting them. However, only 56.5% of consumers check the expiry date and manufacturing date of the product, and only 59.9% perform a patch test. This indicates that consumers lack awareness of the necessary precautions to be taken before product use.

A study conducted in India found that 59.3% of the participants select cosmetic products according to their skin type, while 23.8% do not. This indicates that a significant number of consumers do not select products according to their skin type, which may lead them to potential skin problems. Another study found that consumers in rural areas are more aware of their skin type and choose skin friendly products, while 81.4% of consumers in urban areas are not aware of their skin type. This indicates that consumers in urban areas need to be made more aware of skin type identification and product selection accordingly. A study found that consumers give more importance to brand (72.71%) and price (64.36%) while choosing cosmetic products, while giving less importance to herbal or natural ingredients (55.4%) and product components (45.21%). It shows that consumers give more importance to brand and price, while paying less attention to ingredients and quality of the product.

5. Discussion

The study on "Consumer awareness of skin type and cosmetic product selection" makes it clear that today's consumers have become more cautious and aware about beauty products than before. This awareness not only reflects their interest in beauty, but also brings out their understanding and concern about skin health. The study found that skin type has a direct impact on the effectiveness and usefulness of cosmetic products. Specific products are required for normal, dry, oily, combination, sensitive and acne-prone skin. For example, while oil-free, salicylic acid-containing cleansers and light serums are considered suitable for oily skin, dry skin requires products that provide deep moisture, contain glycerin and shea butter. An interesting aspect is that despite the increase in skin-specific knowledge among consumers, many times people choose the wrong products due to advertising, brand reputation, and social influence, leading to skin problems. This leads to the conclusion that not just product quality or brand credibility, but also identification of individual skin type and product selection is essential.

Analysis based on Likert scale revealed that about 58% of consumers select products according to their skin type, while the rest are still confused or unsure. This statistic shows that there is still a need to spread more awareness among the masses, especially in rural areas, among adolescents and senior citizens. Furthermore, during the analysis, it also emerged that consumers often make their own decisions instead of consulting a dermatologist or trained beauty consultant, which sometimes proves to be inappropriate. This behavior not only leads to wrong product selection, but can also cause long-term skin damage. For consumers with sensitive skin, choosing the right product is even more challenging as their skin is more susceptible to immediate reactions. Such consumers should make it a habit to read product labels such as 'hypoallergenic', 'fragrance-free' and 'dermatologist tested'.

Additionally, consumers were also inclined towards natural and Ayurvedic products, especially in a country like India where the belief in home remedies and natural treatments is deeply rooted. However, it was also observed that not every natural product is suitable for all skin types. Hence, even natural products should be selected carefully and based on skin testing. Finally, this discussion shows that there is a positive change among consumers towards skin awareness, selection and safe use of cosmetic products, but this behavior needs to be further strengthened through awareness campaigns, labeling systems, and education. To achieve better skin health and beauty, it is essential that consumers identify their skin type and select appropriate products with expert consultation.

6. Conclusion

This research study on the topic "Consumer awareness about skin type and cosmetic product selection" concludes that today's consumer has become more conscious about beauty and skin health than before. Different skin types – such as normal, oily, dry, combination, sensitive and acne-prone skin – require specific products, and their selection should be based on the characteristics of the individual's skin. Although there is a clear increase in awareness among consumers, there is still a large section that is either unaware of their skin type or chooses the wrong products due to advertisements and social influence. This makes it clear that relying only on the brand is not enough for the right product selection, but individual skin characteristics, product ingredients and the opinion of dermatologists are also of special importance. The research also revealed that the younger generation is more aware about skin type and product selection, while awareness is still lacking in rural areas and senior citizens. Additionally, consumers are getting attracted to natural and Ayurvedic products, but their use without proper information and testing can have adverse effects on the skin. Therefore, it is necessary that consumers are not only informed about cosmetic products, but also educated towards identifying their skin, reading the ingredients and consulting experts. This will not only enable consumers to protect their beauty but also maintain long-term skin health. Thus, this study is an important indication for consumer behavior and the beauty industry that greater transparency, scientific basis and appropriate guidance can make the use of cosmetic products more effective and safe.

7. Recommendations

Consumers should correctly identify their skin type and choose cosmetic products accordingly, so that skin problems can be avoided. In addition, they must follow the ingredients of the product, manufacturing date and the advice of the dermatologist. The government and the cosmetic industry should jointly promote consumer awareness campaigns and labeling systems based on scientific information.

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