

Chapter 9

Influence of Social Media on Women Buying Behaviour towards the Cosmetic Products With Reference to Chennai City

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Abstract

The rapid growth of social media platforms has significantly changed consumer purchasing patterns, especially in the beauty and cosmetic industry. This study examines how social media influences women's buying behaviour towards cosmetic products in Chennai city. Today, women are highly exposed to advertisements, influencers, reviews, and peer opinions through platforms like Instagram, YouTube and Facebook. These platforms not only create awareness but also shape brand perception and trust. The study analyses how online engagement, influencer credibility, product reviews and promotional content affect purchase decisions. A structured questionnaire method was used to collect responses from women consumers in Chennai. The findings indicate that social media plays a major role in product discovery, brand preference and impulse buying behaviour. The study concludes that social media marketing has

become more powerful than traditional marketing in influencing cosmetic purchase decisions among women.

Keywords : Social Media, Buying Behaviour, Cosmetic Products, Influencers, Online Reviews, Brand Trust, Impulse Buying, Chennai City.

1. Introduction

The cosmetic industry has witnessed rapid growth due to technological advancements and digital transformation. Social media platforms have changed the way consumers search for information, evaluate products, and make purchase decisions. Unlike traditional marketing channels, social media enables two-way communication, allowing consumers to interact with brands, influencers, and fellow users.

Women consumers actively use social media platforms to follow beauty trends, watch makeup tutorials, and seek recommendations before purchasing cosmetic products. Influencer marketing has become particularly powerful, as beauty influencers demonstrate real-time product usage and share honest opinions, which builds trust among consumers. Online reviews and peer recommendations further reduce perceived risk and influence purchase intention.

Chennai city, being a metropolitan area, has a large population of digitally active women consumers who are highly influenced by online content. Understanding their buying behaviour is essential for marketers to design effective social media strategies. This study attempts to analyse how social media impacts women's cosmetic buying behaviour with special reference to Chennai city.

2. Review of Literature

Wang & Kim (2022) found that social media engagement improves brand trust and perceived value, which directly affects repeat purchase intention among women consumers.

Chopra et al. (2023) analysed Indian consumers and observed that influencer marketing has a stronger impact than traditional celebrity endorsements in shaping cosmetic brand preferences.

Kumar & Gupta (2024) reported that short-form video content such as reels and tutorials significantly influences impulse buying behaviour among urban women.

Rathore & Sharma (2025) emphasized that social media-driven brand communities increase consumer engagement and encourage brand switching in the cosmetic industry.

3. Statement of the Problem

The rapid expansion of digital technology and social media platforms has transformed the marketing environment of the cosmetic industry. Women consumers are increasingly exposed to beauty-related content such as advertisements, influencer endorsements, tutorials and peer reviews on a daily basis. Unlike traditional media, social media provides continuous interaction and personalized recommendations, which may influence consumer perceptions and purchase decisions.

However, this constant exposure creates uncertainty regarding whether cosmetic purchases are made based on actual product need or social media influence. Many women tend to prefer trending and highly promoted products rather than evaluating product suitability, quality or necessity. Influencers, promotional offers and positive

online reviews may encourage impulse buying behaviour and brand switching.

In Chennai city, where social media usage among women is high, cosmetic brands heavily rely on digital marketing strategies to attract consumers. Yet, there is limited clarity on how strongly social media affects their buying behaviour and which factors — advertisements, influencers, peer opinions or reviews — play the most dominant role in decision making.

Therefore, it becomes necessary to examine the extent to which social media influences women's buying behaviour towards cosmetic products in Chennai city and to understand whether purchasing decisions are rational or socially driven.

3.1 Objectives

Primary Objective

- To analyse the impact of social media on women's buying behaviour towards cosmetic products in Chennai city.

how social media influences women's purchase decisions, brand preference, trust level, and impulse buying behaviour in the cosmetic sector. It focuses on identifying whether buying decisions are influenced by advertisements, influencers, reviews, or peer opinions.

- To examine the social media usage pattern among women consumers in Chennai.

how frequently women use social media, the amount of time spent daily, and the type of beauty-related content they engage with. Understanding usage patterns provides insight into their level of exposure to cosmetic promotions and online marketing.

- To identify the most preferred social media platforms for cosmetic information search.

which platforms (such as Instagram, YouTube, or Facebook) are most commonly used by women to search for cosmetic product information. It helps in understanding which platform plays a dominant role in influencing buying behaviour.

4. Impact of Social Media on Buying Behaviour:

4.1 Social Media Advertisements

Social media advertisements play a vital role in creating awareness about cosmetic products. Attractive visuals, celebrity endorsements, and discount offers increase attention and brand recall among women consumers.

4.2 Influencer Marketing

Influencers act as opinion leaders in the cosmetic industry. Their product demonstrations and personal experiences influence trust and positively affect purchase intention.

4.3 Online Reviews and Ratings

Before purchasing cosmetic products, women often rely on reviews and ratings shared by other users. Positive reviews reduce uncertainty and increase confidence in the product.

4.4 Peer Opinions and Social Proof

Recommendations from friends, family members, and online communities strongly influence cosmetic buying behaviour. Social proof increases acceptance of trending products.

4.5 Tutorial Videos and Content Marketing

Makeup tutorials and beauty tips help consumers understand product usage and results, which directly influences buying decisions.

5. Challenges of the Study

1. Respondent Bias

Some respondents gave socially acceptable answers instead of their real buying behaviour, especially regarding impulse purchases.

2. Limited Sample Coverage

The study focuses only on women consumers in Chennai city; therefore, findings cannot be generalized to rural consumers or other regions.

3. Rapidly Changing Trends

Social media trends change very quickly, so consumer preferences may vary within a short period of time.

4. Influencer Authenticity Issues

It is difficult to identify whether influencer opinions are genuine or paid promotions, which affects the accuracy of responses.

5. Platform Algorithm Variations

Each user receives different content based on algorithm personalization, making behavioural patterns inconsistent among respondents.

6. Product Experience Difference

Cosmetic products work differently for different skin types, so satisfaction levels vary and may affect response reliability.

7. **Time Constraint in Data Collection**

The study was conducted within a limited time period, which restricted the collection of larger and more diverse responses.

6. **Findings**

1. Majority of respondents use social media daily, and a large proportion spend more than 2 hours per day on beauty-related content such as reels, tutorials and product reviews.
2. Among various platforms, Instagram is the primary source for discovering cosmetic products, followed by YouTube, while Facebook is mainly used for offers and advertisements.
3. Most women become aware of new cosmetic products through influencers rather than official brand advertisements.
4. Respondents show higher trust towards micro-influencers and beauty reviewers compared to celebrity endorsements, as they feel the reviews are more realistic and relatable.
5. Before purchasing a cosmetic product, women prefer checking reviews, ratings and comment sections to ensure product safety and suitability.
6. Positive online reviews significantly increase purchase confidence, whereas negative reviews immediately discourage buying behaviour.
7. Social media discount offers, limited-time deals and trending challenges strongly motivate women to try new cosmetic brands.
8. A considerable number of respondents admitted purchasing cosmetic products without prior planning after seeing reels or tutorial videos, indicating impulse buying behaviour.

9. Many respondents reported brand switching after watching influencer recommendations even if they were satisfied with their previous brand.
10. Women give more importance to product results shown in tutorials than to product ingredients or technical specifications.

7. Suggestions

Women consumers should avoid blindly following social media trends and influencer promotions while purchasing cosmetic products. Before buying, they should check genuine customer reviews, compare different brands, and ensure that the product suits their skin type and personal needs.

It is also important to control impulse buying caused by reels, advertisements, and limited-time discount offers. Making informed and practical decisions will help in spending wisely and selecting products based on quality and suitability rather than popularity.

8. Future Scope of the Study

1. Future research can compare urban and rural women consumers to identify behavioural differences.
2. The study can be extended to include men's cosmetic buying behaviour, as the male grooming market is rapidly growing.
3. Researchers can analyse the influence of specific platforms (Instagram vs YouTube vs short-video apps) separately for deeper insights.
4. A longitudinal study can be conducted to examine how social media trends influence buying behaviour over time.

5. Future studies can include psychological factors such as self-image, lifestyle and social pressure influencing cosmetic purchases.
6. Research can be expanded to branded vs organic/natural cosmetic products preference influenced by social media.
7. Artificial intelligence–based recommendations and personalized advertisements can be analysed in future consumer behaviour studies.
8. Future studies can examine the relationship between influencer credibility and consumer loyalty towards cosmetic brands.
9. The impact of social media on post-purchase satisfaction and product regret can also be explored.
10. Researchers may use advanced statistical tools (correlation, regression, SEM analysis) for more accurate behavioural prediction.

9. Conclusion

The study concludes that social media has a strong influence on women's buying behaviour towards cosmetic products in Chennai city. Women rely on digital platforms to search information, compare products and build trust before purchasing. Influencer recommendations and online reviews were found to impact purchase decisions more than traditional advertisements.

Social media exposure also encourages trying new brands and leads to impulse buying behaviour. Although most consumers were satisfied with their purchases, some experienced expectation gaps due to promotional content. Overall, social media acts as a major

decision-making factor in cosmetic purchases, highlighting the need for responsible marketing and informed consumer choice.

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