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COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCE, CHENNAI.



DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND IQAC

ASIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, THAILAND

Organizes
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
PANORAMIC ADVANCEMENTS IN BUSINESS PARADIGM :
A SUSTAINABLE PERSPECTIVE



ISBN No : 978-81-979165-4-4

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23rd JANUARY 2026

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**“BRAND EXPERIENCE AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY: INTEGRATING
QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS & QUANTITATIVE MEASUREMENT”**

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ABSTRACT

A unique brand experience captures customers attention, provides excellent customer care and encourages authentic engagement, leading to an elevated customer experience. Happy and engaged consumers are more likely to spend time interacting with your brand and explore the offerings with an open mind. This exploratory study examines the impact of brand experience and customer loyalty in the cosmetic products industry. The study aims to identify the effect of brand experience on customer loyalty, measure customers overall satisfaction, and analyze factors influencing purchase decisions. The findings reveal that product quality and brand image & reputation are key dimensions of brand experience driving customer loyalty. Brand trust emerged as the primary factor influencing purchase decisions (76% mean score Analysis), followed by service, quality, packaging, location, online availability, and affordability. The study also found that the majority of customers are overall satisfied with the brand. The results of this study have important implications for cosmetic brands, highlighting the need to prioritize brand experience and trust in order to build lasting customer relationships.

INTRODUCTION:

A unique brand experience captures customers' attention, provides excellent customer care and encourages authentic engagement, leading to an elevated customer experience. Happy and engaged consumers are more likely to spend time interacting with your brand and explore the offerings with an open mind.

When a good brand experience fuels your customer experience, it enables businesses to connect with customers on an emotional level that turns casual buyers into repeat customers. It increases the chances of customers becoming brand advocates, sharing their positive experiences on social or through word-of-mouth.

When a customer has a powerful brand experience and feels the brand aligns with their personal value, they use that as a benchmark when engaging with other brands. Our 2022 Index shows that 40% of consumers will choose such a brand over its competitors. This raises your brand's perceived value, which ultimately leads to higher brand equity.

All the above advantages of a great brand experience contribute to a higher customer lifetime value (CLV) that increases profitability. Customers who truly feel connected to a brand tend to be less price sensitive because they value quality over price. They also contribute to a recurring sales revenue model.

Experience marketing provides a competitive advantage

Designing customer experiences that can help retain and bond the customer to the brand is integral to contemporary marketing. Companies do not compete on the basis of their products, but on the basis of customer experience. Experience marketing adds value to the firm and to the customer. Hence, the focus has to be on the totality of the experience.

Customer focus

Customer focus presumes an understanding of customers with the primary objective of customer retention and profit maximisation. It requires aligning firms' systems and processes to satisfy the customer. It also requires integration of all functions of the organisation and hence, Customer satisfaction is not just confined to the marketing department but has to be the goal of the organisation itself. As Peter Ducker said, the purpose of any business is the customer. Hence, customer acquisition and retention must be the credo of the organisation.

Customers have to be treated as assets that have the potential for appreciation and not depreciation. Hence, one has to understand the lifetime value of the customer and arrest customer churn in the brand.

Customer Retention

The purpose of marketing is not only to acquire customers but also to retain them. More often than not, customers leave the firm and the brand soon after the first purchase cycle. By the time

the second and third purchase cycles get over, a firm loses 90% of its acquired customers. To retain customers, firms need to focus on their profitable customers. This implies that not all customers are going to give the firm a good return on investment. One needs to analyse why customers become unprofitable and what can be done to retain them. Often either the company misunderstands the customer expectations or mishandles them regardless of their purchase volumes. In any of these situations, the firm needs to reassess its relationship with the customers. If the customer is inclined to understand the company's position, he/she should be educated further and the firm should explore any other way to maximise value for the customer before abandoning the relationship.

Customer Loyalty

Being loyal to the brand is the way by which customers reward the company. To maximise loyal customers, marketers need to categorise customers on the basis of benefits sought by them and also on basis of serving them. This can help in developing customer clusters which can then be used for the purpose of evolving appropriate marketing strategies.

NEED FOR THE STUDY:

In today's competitive business landscape, customer loyalty has become a crucial differentiator for companies seeking to establish a sustainable market presence. Customer experience, in particular, has emerged as a key driver of customer loyalty, with studies suggesting that companies that prioritize customer experience tend to outperform their competitors.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To identify the effect of brand experience on customer loyalty.
2. To measure customers overall impression of the brand by assessing their level of satisfaction.
3. To analyse the factors influencing the purchase of cosmetics products.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

1. The study is limited to Chennai city only, which may not be representative of other cities or regions in India.
2. The number of respondents is limited to 50 only, which may not be sufficient to generalize the findings to the larger population.
3. Time Constraint: The study was conducted within a limited timeframe, which restricted the scope of the study and the number of respondents that could be reached.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This exploratory study employed a descriptive research design to investigate the relationship between customer experience and customer loyalty in the cosmetic products industry. A structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of 100 customers in Chennai, India. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were used to analyze the data and identify patterns.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Isabel baser,(2016), "Examining the Effect of Brand Experience on consumer satisfaction,Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty"Examined to investigate the direct and indirect

effects of brand experience on consumer satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty, and to develop a model explaining the relationships between these constructs. The findings revealed that brand experience has a direct and positive impact on consumer satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty, and also has an indirect effect on brand loyalty through consumer satisfaction and brand trust. The results highlight the significance of brand experience in driving brand loyalty, both directly and indirectly, and provide insights into the mediating roles of consumer satisfaction and brand trust.

HowardiViszaAdha, (2021), "The Effect of Brand Experience, Brand Personality and Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty" studied to determine the effect of brand experience, brand personality and brand trust on brand loyalty with 150 respondents. It is found that (1) brand experience has positive effect on brand personality, (2) brand experience has positive effect on brand trust, (3) brand personality positive effect on brand loyalty, (4) Brand trust has positive effect on brand loyalty (5) Brand experience has positive effect on brand loyalty.

Objective 1:

CHI-SQUARE TEST

❖ Calculation of chi square, to identify the effect of brand experience on customer loyalty.

NULL HYPOTHESIS

Ho: There is no need to identify the effect of brand experience on customer loyalty

ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS

Hi: There is need to identify the effect of brand experience on customer loyalty

Calculations:

O	E	(O-E)	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
25	10	15	225	22.5
16	10	6	36	3.6
3	10	-7	49	4.9
2	10	-8	64	6.4
4	10	-6	36	3.6
			Total	41

$O=50/5=10$

$(O-E)^2/E=41$

CONTENT	VALUE	DEGREE OF FREEDOM
Chi- square	41	
Degree of freedom = (N-1) = 5-1 = 4		4

Table value (TV) = 22.5

Calculated value = 41

$$\begin{aligned} O.A &= 3 + (25/50) = 3 + 0.5 = 3.5 * 20 = 70\% \\ AF &= 3 + (17/50) = 3 + 0.34 = 3.34 * 20 = 66.8\% \\ Pa &= 3 + (30/50) = 3 + 0.6 = 3.6 * 20 = 72\% \end{aligned}$$

INTERPRETATION:

The main score analysis of the above table shows that Brand Trust is the first factor which influence the purchase decision with 86% mean score. This is followed by service (mean score 76.4%), quality (mean score 75.2%), packaging (mean score 72%) location of outlet (mean score 70.4%) online availability (mean score 70%) and Affordability (mean score 66.8%)

FINDINGS:

- Demographics: The majority (90%) of customers are female, while 80% of respondents fall within the 18-25 age group. Additionally, 78% of respondents are at the undergraduate level.
- Brand Familiarity: Most respondents are familiar with Maybelline and M.A.C brand products, followed by Wow, Clarins, Forest Essentials, Revlon, and Estee Lauder.
- Customer Engagement: Customers rarely interact with the brand through websites, social media, or store visits.
- Customer Satisfaction: The majority of respondents rated their interactions with the brand as "Good." Furthermore, most customers are satisfied with the customer service they received from the brand during their last interaction.
- Brand Experience: Product quality and brand image and reputation are the key dimensions of brand experience that drive customer loyalty in the cosmetic products industry.
- Purchase Decision Factors: Mean score analysis reveals that brand trust is the primary factor influencing purchase decisions, followed by service quality, product quality, packaging, location, online availability, and affordability.
- Customer Retention: The majority of customers intend to continue purchasing products from the brand in the future.

SUGGESTIONS:

To drive business growth and customer loyalty, consider the following strategies: Develop a strong online presence through social media, websites, and influencer partnerships to engage with customers. Focus marketing efforts on females aged 18-25, undergraduates, and young professionals. Encourage customers to interact with the brand through websites, social media, and store visits. Continuously monitor and improve product quality to reinforce brand image and reputation. Build on the existing brand trust by providing excellent customer service and delivering high-quality products.

CONCLUSION:

The cosmetics industry boasts a diverse product range, catering to various skin types and concerns, with brands like Forest Essentials and Clarinsemphasizing natural ingredients& plant ingredient, and Shiseido and M.A.C offering innovative formulas. Affordability is also a key factor, with Revlon,wow and Maybelline providing quality options at budget-friendly prices. However, the industry also faces challenges, such as intense competition, changing consumer

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preferences, and the need for sustainable and eco-friendly practices. Despite these challenges, brands that develop a strong online & offline presence, focus on young demographics, encourage customer engagement, and prioritize product quality and customer service are likely to drive business growth and customer loyalty, ultimately leading to a positive impact on the industry.

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