

FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR TOWARD AYURVEDIC COSMETIC PRODUCTS IN THE PUTTLAM DISTRICT OF SRI LANKA

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INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a prevalent and safest method of treatment. Ayurvedic products are created using herbs or a combination of herbs, metals, minerals, or other things (Khanal, 2019). Ayurveda emphasizes prevention and promotes health maintenance by paying particular attention to life balance, proper thinking, nutrition, lifestyle, and medicines (Murugan et al., 2021). The statistics show that the Ayurvedic market will be US \$ 7273.3 million in 2021, with an estimated growth of 12% from 2022 to 2028 (Industry Research Biz, 2022). Hence, consumers are changing their purchasing towards purchasing Ayurvedic products.

Consumers are increasingly concerned about the harmful effects of cosmetics' chemical constituents on their health, environment, and social welfare (Zhang, 2019). Non-Ayurvedic cosmetic products cause various health issues, including skin abnormalities, dermatitis, allergic reactions, hormone-dependent dermatitis, pigmentation, and hair damage (Liang, 2020). According to a recent study, using hazardous cosmetic items increased breast cancer risk by 31% compared to not using them (Tosh, 2020). Hence, non-Ayurvedic products diminish the safety of its consumers' health.

Sri Lanka has historical significance in the Ayurvedic sector in Asia. Hence, Spa Ceylon, Nature Secret, Soba Ceylon, Bella Herbal Goods, Herbal line, Biseka, Ceylon Herbal, Chandanalepa, and Lavish Natural are popular Ayurvedic cosmetic companies that make skin care, hair care, and oral care products (Export Development Board, 2021). Sri Lanka's natural cosmetics revenue is projected to reach \$22.25 million in 2023, with a 4.42% annual growth rate (Statista Market Insights, 2022).

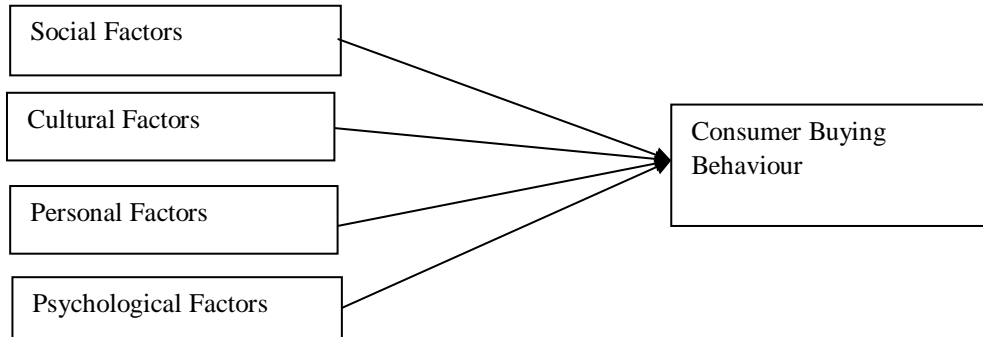
Consumer behavior is evolving, with a growing preference for health-related items and varying regional and country-specific characteristics influencing purchase decisions (Chand, 2022). Furthermore, Sri Lanka is a multi-cultural country with high inflation, low economic development, high unemployment, and political insecurity. As a result, to attract and retain customers over competitors, Ayurvedic cosmetics companies must detect shifting consumer behavior. Hence, this study mainly focused "on identifying the factors affecting consumer buying behavior towards Ayurvedic cosmetic products in Puttlam district of Sri Lanka."

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a deductive technique and positivist philosophy, collected and analyzed data using a quantitative method, and was conducted over a cross-sectional period. The study population was identified as all Ayurvedic cosmetics consumers in the Puttlam district of Sri Lanka. The online questionnaire [e-mail] was distributed using a convenience sampling technique among the 150 consumers because the minimum sample size to conduct the research study is 100 (Green, 1991), and for the non-response rate, 50 responses. It was identified that the 149 questionnaires were valid due to non-response data. Hence, the study response rate is

99.33%, and the data analysis process was preceded because the response rate was more than 60 percent (Baruch, 1999).

Figure 1
Conceptual framework



The study analyzed customer purchasing behavior by considering information, alternatives, promotions, advertising, personal preferences, prices, opinions, impulse purchases, production dates, and manufacturing nations (Udupa & Malavika, 2020). The social factor dimensions considered included friends, family, relatives, roles in society, and position in society (Premi et al., 2019). The cultural elements were also measured using culture, subculture, and social class (Hemapatil & Bakkappa, 2012). The personal characteristics were measured using age, income, occupation, lifestyle, and personality (Kokoi, 2011). Motivation, perception, learning, beliefs, and attitudes were used to examine psychological factors (Chukwu et al., 2019).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study used frequency and percentage analyses to interpret the study's demographic characteristics.

Table 1
Demographic Analysis

Demographic factor		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	60	40.3
	Female	89	59.7
Age	Below 18	10	6.7
	18-24	43	28.9
	25-34	63	42.3
	35-44	25	16.8
	Above 45	8	5.4
Marital Status	Married	53	35.6
	Unmarried	96	64.4
Education Level	O/L	19	12.8
	A/L	43	28.9
	Certificate of Diploma	22	14.8
	Degree	62	41.6
Monthly spent on Ayurvedic products	Postgraduate	3	2.0
	< 1,000	33	22.1
	1,001- 2,500	61	40.9
	2,501- 5,000	48	32.2
	5,001 <	7	4.7

The study revealed that most consumers are females [59.7%] and from the age of 25 years to 34 years [42.3%]. Further, the study revealed that the majority of consumers are unmarried [64.4%] and have a "Degree" level of qualification [41.6%]. The majority was spent LKR "1,001- 2,500" [40.95%] for cosmetic product purchasing.

Table 2*Descriptive Analysis*

	CF	PF	PYF	SF
Mean	3.996	4.226	4.208	4.077
Median	4.200	4.400	4.400	4.200
Mode	4.400	4.400	4.400	4.400
Std. Deviation	0.767	0.640	0.570	0.671

The descriptive values of the cultural, personal, psychological, and social factors highlighted that most consumers of Ayurvedic cosmetics agree that factors influence Ayurvedic cosmetic products users' purchasing decisions.

Reliability Analysis

The reliability analysis of the study determines that questionnaire items related to Social, Cultural, Personal, and Psychological factors and Consumer buying behavior have higher internal consistency at 0.7 levels.

Table 3*Reliability Result*

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha value
Social Factors (SF)	0.792
Cultural Factors (CF)	0.838
Personal Factors (PF)	0.808
Psychological Factors (PYF)	0.774
Consumer Buying Behavior (CBB)	0.873

Validity Analysis

In SPSS, the KMO value was used to test the validity, displaying higher internal validity of independent and dependent variables.

Table 4*KMO and Bartlett's Test value*

Variables	KMO and Bartlett's Test value
Social Factors (SF)	0.796
Cultural Factors (CF)	0.838
Personal Factors (PF)	0.782
Psychological Factors (PYF)	0.772
Consumer Buying Behavior (CBB)	0.854

Correlation analysis

Correlation analysis is employed to examine the relationship between quantitative and categorical variables. According to the result of correlation analysis, personal [$r=-.698^{**}$],

social [$r=.701^{**}$], and psychological factors [$r=.692^{**}$] have a strong positive relationship with consumer purchasing behavior. In addition, consumer purchasing behavior and cultural factors [$r=.776^{**}$] have a positive moderate relationship. Thus, independent variables, including social, cultural, psychological, and personal factors, have a significant positive relationship with consumer purchasing behavior.

Regression analysis

The model summary table's R-value revealed an 82.8% association between the independent and dependent variables. The ANOVA table results revealed that the study model is statistically significant at 0.05. The coefficient table revealed that social (sig= 0.023), personal (sig=0.002), and psychological (sig=.000) have a positive impact on consumers' purchasing decisions, and cultural component (sig= 0.437) had little impact on consumer purchasing patterns. Moreover, Psychological variables have the most significant influence on customer behavior when it comes to buying Ayurvedic cosmetics.

Table 5

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Correlation	Regression	Accept/Reject
H ₁	0.701 ^{**}	0.023	Accept
H ₂	0.692 ^{**}	0.000	Accept
H ₃	0.776 ^{**}	0.437 ^{**}	Reject
H ₄	0.698 ^{**}	0.002 ^{**}	Accept

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study's main objective is "to examine the factors influencing consumer buying behavior towards Ayurvedic cosmetic products." The results revealed that social, psychological, and personal factors strongly positively impact Ayurvedic product consumer purchasing behavior, whereas cultural factors do not. Furthermore, the psychological factor was the most influential factor on the consumer buying behavior towards Ayurvedic cosmetic products.

The following implications apply to organizations in the Ayurvedic cosmetic product industry to attract and retain consumers towards the cosmetic industry.

Making advertising themes based on family, relatives, or co-workers; The study reveals that social influence, including coworkers, family, and relatives, significantly influences consumer behavior, suggesting that advertising techniques can effectively communicate these influences.

Use female-centric advertising techniques.; The Ayurvedic cosmetic organization can target female consumers by focusing on female-centric strategies.

Increase social influence by using social media; Social media marketing offers numerous benefits, influencing people's thinking and enabling businesses like Ayurvedic cosmetics to connect with and engage with customers.

Identify customer expectation and their lifestyle; The study reveals that personal factors influence consumer decisions to buy Ayurvedic cosmetics. Companies should conduct marketing research to understand customers, their wants, and motivations, enabling sales reps to adapt.

Use customer Connection to enhance their psychological aspects regarding products; One of the points was about giving customers different ways to get in touch with the company, but it was only to answer a question.

Increase social influence by using celebrity endorsement to market product; Celebrity endorsement, also known as celebrity branding or advertising, utilizes a celebrity's fame and image to promote a brand or product, boosting short-term sales and long-term brand awareness.

Keywords: Consumer buying behavior, cultural factors, psychological factors, personal factors

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