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An Empirical Study of Personality and Cosmetics Consumer Behavior

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Abstract

There is a relationship between personality and consumer behavior. An individual's personality tends to be both consistent and enduring. Although marketers cannot change consumers' personalities to conform to their products, if they know which personality characteristics influence specific consumer responses, they can attempt to appeal to the relevant traits inherent in their target group of consumers. Even though consumers' personalities may be consistent, their consumption behavior often varies considerably because of the various psychological, sociocultural, environmental and situational factors that affect behavior. Therefore In this research using factor analysis the formation of cosmetics personality is identified.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, cosmetics, personality.

Introduction

Individuals are distinguished based on their inner characteristics like specific qualities, attributes, traits, factors and mannerisms. These are deeply ingrained characteristics that we call as personality. These characteristics are likely to influence the individuals' product choices: They affect the way consumers respond to marketers' promotional efforts, and when, where, and how they consume particular products or services. Therefore, the identification of specific personality characteristics associated with consumer behavior has proven to be highly useful in the development of a firm's market segmentation strategies. As a reason it is important for cosmetic marketers to understand the personality of cosmetics consumers.

Cosmetics: The desire to improve one's physical attractiveness seems to be an inherent characteristic of most individuals[1, 2, 3]. A number of studies have addressed the impact of the representation of attractive women on female consumers. Cosmetics have been traditionally used by women to control their physical appearance and, presumably, their physical attractiveness. Although, the literature is by no means voluminous, several researchers have examined the psychological correlation and consequences of cosmetic use[2, 4-8]. Cash[4] reviewed some of the available research evidence, and from a self-presentational perspective, argued that cosmetics are used specifically for grooming behaviors and in general function to manage and control not only social impressions but also self-image (for example, body image, self-perceptions, and mood states).

Since grooming products are considered as a pervasive element of women's culture. As a general result, the exposure to pictures of good-looking and even slightly above-average-looking females lowered the self-image of exposed women and increased dissatisfaction with their own appearance[9-12].

The body image is an important component of the self-concept and has stimulated the demand of certain products and services, such as dietary, slimming, exercise and cosmetic items. In western cultures, one of the commonly recognized reasons women use cosmetics is to improve their physical attractiveness. For example, Cash and Cash[4] found women to express a more positive body image and self-image when wearing makeup compared to when not wearing makeup.

Personality: Personality dispositions and consumer behavior personality is a relatively enduring characteristic that makes an individual unique and different from every other individual. It relates to people's characteristic tendencies to behave, think and feel in certain ways. Personality traits are usually identified by what people do, and the behavior they exhibit. An individual's behavior in a given situation is also better understood by his or her personality. These suggest that there is a relationship between personality and behavior. Personality attributes could either be assets or liabilities in any given context. A personality refers to the relatively stable pattern of behaviors and consistent internal state that explain a person's behavioral tendencies. Several researchers have recognized that it is important to identify what types of consumers are inclined to engage in retail relationships.

Given the relevance of personality in predicting behavior, numerous efforts have been made by researchers to draw a link between personality and consumer behavior. For example, Mowen and Speers found that individual differences in personality, act to influence behavior across a variety of situations and it is also argued that personality accounts for

more variance in behavior and intentions than recognized in past literature. In fact, the five-factor model, commonly referred to as "The big five" has been identified as one of the most basic and robust descriptions of personality.

Previous research has linked personality characteristics (e.g. self-monitoring, extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability) in a range of studies related to consumer behavior such as purchasing, risk-taking, societal influence, fear appeals, changes in attitude, compulsive buying and brand preference (Albanese, 1990). In fact, in the context of complaint behavior, there have been a number of personality characteristics examined, which include risk-aversion, assertiveness, confidence, conservatism, individualism, negative affectivity, agreeableness, control, self-presentation, extroversion (Kowalski, 1996), self-monitoring and self-esteem.

Consumer behavior: Consumer behavior focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, effort) on consumption related items, That includes what they buy, why they buy it, when they buy it, where they buy it, how often they buy it, how often they use it, how they evaluate it after the purchase and the impact of such evaluations on future purchases, and how they dispose it.

Research in consumer behavior is a top priority for marketers both in the third world[13] and in Eastern Europe[14]. Once a company has ensured both economic and physical access to its products it needs to evaluate the buying behavior of consumers in the country that it is seeking to enter. However, little is known about consumer attitudes, buying habits, purchase motives, lifestyles, etc. in Eastern Europe and Third World countries[14]. Marketers who seek to enter these markets might therefore find it necessary to engage in some a priority marketing research relating to such issues[15].

Consumers and their behavior represent an important arena for inquiry, which has attracted researchers from several disciplines[16]. Consumer behavior is 'the active interplay of competing theories[17]. Several studies can be identified as central to the work and worldview of behavioral economists and other behavior analysts[18-23]. Hursh[24-25] argues that the behavior–environment relationships observed by operant psychologists can be construed as economic in nature.

Research Methodology

The study uses both exploratory and descriptive research design to get clarity of research problem. The research tool used is Likert Scale and the statistical tool used is Factor Analysis. The sample size was finalized using the formula $n = \frac{z^2\sigma^2}{H^2}$ with 95% confidence level and 0.05 level of significance. The sample size finally obtained was 1024 and area is Davangere, Karnataka (state), and India. The sampling technique used was *probabilistic Cluster Sampling (two stage cluster sampling) using systematic random sampling method.* The primary data was collected with the help of a questionnaire from the woman of Davangere. A total of 1200 women from different areas were contacted and aptly filled questionnaires were obtained. The respondents were given a list of statements that measured their extent of agreement towards the variables. The items were measured on a 5 point Likert scale with 1 representing low score (Strongly dis agree) and 5 representing a high score (strongly agree). These statements were selected after three rounds of pilot testing with the factor loadings above 0.70. For the reliability of the research tool *Crown Basch alpha test* was performed, and obtained the alpha value of 0.78, this shows the tool is reliable.

Need of the study: Consumers have a variety of enduring images of themselves. These self-images, or perceptions of self, are very closely associated with personality in that individuals tend to do buy products and services and patronize retailers whose images or personalities relate in some meaningful way to their own self-images. In essence, consumers seek to depict themselves their brand choices-they tend to approach products with images that could enhance their self-concept and avoid those products that do not. Sometimes consumers wish to change themselves to become a different or improved. Cosmetics offer consumers the opportunity to modify their appearance and thereby to alter their selves. Therefore it is very much needed for cosmetics marketers to study the formation of cosmetics personality

Objectives: Based on the literature review and the conceptual model framework, the study was designed to explore the following: i. To know personality reasons for using cosmetics. ii. To identify the personality factors responsible for the purchase of cosmetics. iii. To understand the formation of cosmetics personality.

Results and Discussion

Analysis and Interpretation: The factor analysis was performed on the data collected with respect to *personality*. KMO and Bartletts test, communalities, total variance explained and component matrix table are obtained as a result of factor analysis. The details of the analysis are presented in table-1.

The suitability of data can be checked from the above KMO and Bartlett's Test table, i.e., from the table-1. For the variable *personality*, KMO measure for sampling adequacy was above 0.5.

It can be understood from the table-2 that a factor is extracted from personality variables; the communality is 0.608 for item 1, 0 .624 for item 2, and 0.558 for item 3 and so on. It means that 60% of variance of item 1, 62% of variance of item 2, and 55% of variance of item 3 are captured for framing factors. These large communalities indicate that, a large number of variance has been accounted for by the factor solution.

Table-1
KMO and Bartlett's Test for personality

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.657
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	**Approx. Chi-Square**	169.780
	D f	3
	Sig.	.000

Table-2
Communalities for personality

	Initial	**Extraction**
Usage of cosmetics reflects my personality	1.000	.608
I will be more appreciated in my group when I use cosmetics	1.000	.624
Cosmetics reflect our self-image	1.000	.558
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

Table-3
Total Variance Explained for personality

Component		**Initial Eigenvalues**			**Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings**		
		Total	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**
dimension0	1	1.790	59.682	59.682	1.790	59.682	59.682
	2	.644	21.453	81.135	-	-	-
	3	.566	18.865	100.000	-	-	-
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.							

Table-4
Component Matrix for personality

	Component
	1
Usage of cosmetics reflects my personality	.780
I will be more appreciated in my group when I use cosmetics	.790
Cosmetics reflect our self-image	.747
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.	
a. 1 components extracted.	

Table-5
Consolidated factor analysis for Personality

Factor	**Factor interpretation**	**Loading**	**Factor items**
Cosmetics personality formation	This factor explains 59 % of variance	0.78	Usage of cosmetics reflects my personality.
		0.79	I will be more appreciated in my group when I use cosmetics.
		0.75	Cosmetics reflect our self-image.

The table-3 explains total variance explained for consumer behavior element *personality*. From the table it can be found that, the factor has Eigen values more than1. The Eigen value for factor was 1.79. From the percentage of the total variance, what the variables together presents can be understood. The index for the present solution accounts for 60% of total variance for choosing items influencing *personality*. It is pretty good extraction as it can economize on a number of factors while we have lost 40% of information content for factor in choosing the variable from *personality*. The first factor of *personality* explains 59.682 percentage of variance.

From the table-4 the loading of the factor can be observed. Anything above 0.44 could be considered salient and the increased loading becomes more vital in determining factor. The summarized *personality* factor analysis is shown in table -5.

Findings: This research has identified three items regarding cosmetics personality formations. The first item is *"The usage of cosmetics reflects my personality"*; the second item is *"I will be more appreciated in my group when I use cosmetics"*; the third item is *"cosmetics reflect our self- image"*. The factor '*cosmetics personality formation'* is explained by these three items together explaining a cumulative variance of 59%. It means that '*usage of cosmetics reflects their personality';' they will be more appreciated in their group when they use cosmetics' and 'cosmetics reflect their self- image'*.

Conclusion

As cosmetics are personality altering products it is basics for companies to understand the formation of personality and alteration of personality amongst consumers. From this research it can be concluded that consumers are of the opinion that usage of cosmetics reflects their personality; they will be more appreciated in their group when they use cosmetics and cosmetics reflect their self- image.

Scope for Further Research: This research is focused only on personality; the same research would yield different results if conducted to know motivation, perception, attitude etc. Interesting results can be obtained if the research is conducted to know the impact of culture, reference group, and social class. The research would contribute good inferences if the research is conducted to know the personality of consumers at villages.

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