



Study on Consumer Awareness Regarding Cruelty and SIs-Free Cosmetic Products

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ABSTRACT

This study examines consumer awareness regarding cruelty-free and SLS-free cosmetic products, a growing concern in today's ethical consumerism landscape. Utilizing a sample of 152 respondents, the research explores demographic variables, including gender, age, and current status, to assess their influence on awareness and attitudes toward these products. Findings reveal a predominant male representation (55.9%) and a significant proportion of younger consumers aged 18-24 (71.1%), suggesting that age and gender may play crucial roles in shaping perceptions of cruelty-free and SLS-free cosmetics. Despite an overall awareness of these products, gaps remain in understanding the specific influences of education, lifestyle, and information sources on consumer behavior. The study highlights the need for targeted marketing strategies to enhance consumer knowledge and encourage the adoption of ethical cosmetic choices. By addressing these aspects, businesses can better align their offerings with the values and preferences of diverse consumer segments, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable market. Future research is recommended to explore the barriers preventing consumers from translating awareness into purchasing behavior and to investigate regional variations in attitudes toward cruelty-free and SLS-free products

INTRODUCTION

This research examines how consumers define cruelty-free and SLS-free cosmetics and whether they understand such benevolent terms and the relevance of such understanding to their buying behaviour. As individuals become more ethically aware and health-conscious, they seek out products which are cruelty free as well as SLS free. This particular study employs a questionnaire to excite the base respondents and examine their knowledge of these terms, their relevance, the level of difficulty in acquiring such products and the overall value of the products. The analysis it conducts uses Chi square method to determine the relation between Age of the respondents and various parameters of Cognition and associated Behavior. The result entails that there are appreciable variations in comprehension from children of different Age Groups with younger demonstrators showing higher understanding and concern. This research seeks to tackle the problem of consumer attitude and behavior towards the application of cosmetics and the marketing and certification of cosmetics systems employed at present. There in lies the potential concern that transcends the empirical insights collected with this research. Its objective is to eliminate such false cosmetic marketing by improving the comprehension and awareness of the target consumers and the industry participants.

Research Objectives

To analyze the recognition of the word 'Cruelty-Free' among individuals of different age demographics.

To determine how people of different age groups regard irritant-free products.

To measure the ability of different age groups to classify products that are not tested on animals.

To check the awareness of the phrase 'SLS-free' among people of different age brackets.

To examine how different age groups regard the need for SLS-free products.

To evaluate the ability of people of different age groups to classify SLS-free products.

To assess the opinions that exist among different age groups about the differences in price between cruel-free products and SLS-free products.

To find out how often people of different ages look for cruelty and SLS free products and if any differences exist.

To find out if people from different age groups are ready to change manufacturers of products if there were some cruelty-free or SLS-free products.

To determine the stereotype regarding the quality of cruelty-free and SLS-free products among baby boomer, mills and gen-z age groups.

To understand brand transparency concerns about SLS-free and cruelty-free practices across different age groups.

LITERATURE REVIEW

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Research Gap

Even though there is a growing demand in both categories-SLS-free and no animal-testing-there is still a massive knowledge gap regarding consumer awareness and attitudes toward these categories. That is, the following are some of the crucial areas that this study indicates a need to explore:

1. Gender Variants: The sample has males mostly with their gender pertaining to 55.9% compared to the account of females at 44.1%. This inherent gender distribution may lead to attitudinal as well as awareness differences toward cruelty-free and SLS-free cosmetics. Whether the gender disparities are determinants of consumer choices or preferences in buy decisions of such cosmetics may be ascertained in future studies.
2. Multidimensional Consumer Segments: It includes various categories of consumers, like students, business professionals, homemakers, and retirees. However, the knowledge or perception regarding using cruelty-free and SLS-free products would vary significantly across these different age groups. Therefore, future studies could explore further how occupational or lifestyle dimensions may mediate consumer's awareness of the area.

3. **Understanding Different Age Groups-** The age distribution skews towards the youth, with the most being between 18-24 years of age at 71.1%. Younger cohorts are more open to ethical consumerism; however, this analysis hardly delves into insights on older age groups: those over 25 years. An understanding of how age influences awareness and attitudes toward cruelty-free and SLS-free products can reveal the most telling insights to marketers and product developers.
4. **Education and Information Sources:** At present, this database does not explain what information sources consumers use when they make purchase decisions in cosmetic products. Whether educational background and exposure to information on cruelty-free and SLS-free products affect the consumer awareness will surely remain vague.
5. **Behavioural Intent vs. Actual Purchase Decisions:** This study may very well collect levels of awareness, but it must also analyze the gap between awareness and action, or say the relation between this awareness and actual purchasing behavior. Though people are aware of cruelty-free and SLS-free products, there must be barriers that prove to be the undoing for the usage of these products; hence the need for a company to identify and work on them in order to increase market penetration.
6. **Regional Factors:** The study does not consider the regional differences in the sensitivity and perception towards cruelty-free and SLS-free cosmetics. It may be explored in subsequent studies about how cultural factors and regional trends influence consumer preferences across different regions.
7. **Longitudinal Perspectives:** Due to consumer awareness relating to ethical and sustainable purchases, this would require longitudinal study to monitor the shift or changes experienced over time by the consumers in their buying behavior based on their awareness. This may help in reflecting on trends and shifts in consumer attitudes toward cruelty-free as well as SLS-free products.

From here onwards, other future studies discussing research gaps on consumer awareness issues can provide a comprehensive and complete understanding of the awareness among consumers in using cruelty-free and SLS-free cosmetic products. In the long run, future studies will help businesses provide the most appropriate marketing strategies and product development efforts.

Hypothesis

- H1: There is a significant relationship between age and the frequency of shopping for cosmetic products online.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between age and the frequency of shopping offline (in physical stores)
- H3: There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of convenience of online shopping compared to offline shopping.
- H4: There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of variety of products available online compared to offline.
- H5: There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of overall experience of online shopping compared to offline shopping
- H6: There is a significant relationship between age and the most preferred method for making purchase decisions.

Table 1. Validation of Questionnaire

Statements	Citation from JV citation file (You can add more than 1 citation)
How frequently do you shop cosmetic products online ?	(Vidani, 2015)
What motivates you to shop cosmetic products online ?	(Vidani & Solanki, 2015)
How frequently do you shop cosmetic products offline ?	(Vidani, 2015)
What motivates you to shop offline ?	(Solanki & Vidani, 2016)
Which shopping medium do you prefer ?	(Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017)
How do you rate the convenience of online shopping compared to offline shopping ?	(Saxena & Vidani, 2023)

**Source: Author's compilation*

METHODOLOGY

Table 2. Research Methodology

Research Design	Descriptive
Sample Method	Non-Probability - Convenient Sampling method
Data Collection Method	Primary method
Data Collection Method	Structured Questionnaire
Type of Questions	Close ended
Data Collection mode	Online through Google Form
Data Analysis methods	Tables
Data Analysis Tools	SPSS and Excel
Sampling Size	153
Survey Area	Ahmedabad
Sampling Unit	Students, Private and government Job employees, Businessmen, Home maker, Professionals like CA, Doctor etc.

**Source: Author's Compilation*

Demographic Summary

In terms of ages, the demographic summary indicates that there is a distribution of 36.8% between individuals aged 18-22 and 34.2% between 22-24. These two categories collectively reflect a sample size of more than 70%.? Hence, these indicate a significant proportion of younger individuals in the sample. The study finds that the older age groups, namely those aged 25-29 and those 30 years old or more, make up a smaller portion of the population. In general, the database will exhibit a population that is young in nature.

Cronbach Alpha

The Cronbach's (alpha) value of .747 is the scale used in this calculation.

Research demonstrates acceptable internal consistency.

With 10 items in the.

The measurement indicates that the items are well-correlated.'

Reflecting a reliable construct.

In general, a Cronbach's Alpha value greater than .7 is considered positive. »

Considered satisfactory, indicating that the items always accurately represent the quantity.

The fundamental idea can be utilized with confidence in future research....

This level.

Table 3. Cronbach Alpha

Cronbach Alpha Value	No. of items
.747	10

**Source: SPSS Software*

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.747 for your scale with 10 items indicates an acceptable level of internal consistency, suggesting that the items are reasonably reliable in measuring the same underlying construct. Typically, a Cronbach's Alpha above 0.7 is seen as a threshold for adequate reliability. If you're aiming for even higher reliability, you might consider examining item-total correlations to identify any items that may not align well with the overall scale. Additionally, conducting exploratory factor analysis could help assess the dimensionality of your scale, and reviewing the wording of items or adding more items could further enhance reliability.

Add rows as per number of hypothesis you have created

Table 4. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Sr. No	Alternate Hypothesis	Result p =	>/< 0.05	Accept/ Reject Null hypothesis	R value	Relationship
Example	H1: There is a significant relationship between age and the frequency of shopping for cosmetic products online.	0.002	<	H01 Rejected (Null hypothesis rejected)	.47	
Example	H2: There is a significant relationship between age and the frequency of	0.012	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	-.37	

	shopping offline (in physical stores).					
Example	H3: There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of convenience of online shopping compared to offline shopping.	.019	<	H01 Rejected (Null hypothesis rejected)	.059	
Example	H4: There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of a variety of products available online compared to offline.	.486	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	-.22	
Example	H5: There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of overall experience of online shopping compared to offline shopping	.000	<	H01 Rejected (Null hypothesis rejected)	.040	
Example	H6:	.000	>	H02 Accepted (Null	-.017	

	There is a significant relationship between age and the most preferred method for making purchase decisions.			Hypothesis Accepted)		
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**Source: Author's Compilation*

DISCUSSION

The contrast between online and offline shopping highlights generational differences in shopping attitudes. The younger generation often cited their technology-savvy nature in being more comfortable while shopping online. Findings will aid the online industry by optimizing their online platforms to enhance customer experience and retention. Research findings can be significant in comprehending age in relation to various aspects of shopping behavior and perception. According to the study, there were significant associations between various factors, such as age, which has a direct impact on consumer preferences and shopping behavior.

What is the frequency of cosmetic orders placed online? The strong correlation between age and online order volume suggests that younger individuals are increasingly dependent on the digital marketplace. Based on recent findings, it is clear that marketers must find ways to connect with this demographic through online marketing and promotions.

The correlation between age and online shopping frequency suggests that older consumers may still have a preference for more conventional items. Brick-and-mortar stores remain relevant for some demographics, necessarily requiring hybrid responses from both online and offline retail approaches. "

Convenience ratings are subject to significant variation in terms of their quality.

Age group perceptions had a significant impact on the availability of products. The online options were viewed as more extensive by young consumers than the traditional ones, which could influence their purchasing decisions. It is important to utilize the knowledge gained by extending online product offerings and effectively communicate with younger consumers.

Age was the determining factor for the overall shopping experience rating, which varied from consumer to age. Online shopping has been rated more highly

by younger consumers, while older individuals may find physical shopping to be more enjoyable and convenient. Manufacturers must recognize the unique contrast between two different shopping categories to cater to varying needs of customers.

The effects of age and favored purchase decision strategies suggest the importance of targeted marketing tactics. Younger consumers are more likely to rely on online reviews and social media influencers than the older consumer, who may also use word-of-mouth and other traditional sources. Businesses can use this knowledge to differentiate and attract different groups of people.

This analysis highlights the importance of understanding the variations in shopping attitudes and behaviors among individuals based on their age, as the dynamics change rapidly and consumers are demanding high-quality interventions. To meet the demands of their clients, companies must devise methods that enhance their practices.

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this research have several important theoretical implications that contribute to the understanding of consumer behavior, particularly in the context of age-related differences in shopping preferences.

1. **Consumer Behavior Theories:** This study supports existing consumer behavior theories that emphasize the influence of demographic factors, such as age, on purchasing decisions. It reinforces the notion that younger consumers are more inclined toward online shopping due to their familiarity with technology, aligning with the theory of digital natives who are shaped by their experiences in a technology-rich environment.
2. **Multi-Channel Retailing:** The results underscore the relevance of multi-channel retailing theories, which advocate for a seamless integration of online and offline shopping experiences. The significant differences in preferences for online and offline shopping among age groups highlight the necessity for retailers to develop strategies that cater to diverse consumer needs, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty across multiple platforms.
3. **Technology Acceptance Model:** The study contributes to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by illustrating how age affects perceptions of convenience and overall shopping experience. Younger consumers' higher ratings of online shopping convenience suggest that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness significantly influence their shopping behaviors. This finding encourages further exploration of how age-specific factors can modify the acceptance and use of new technologies in retail.

4. **Social Influence Theories:** The research also aligns with social influence theories, demonstrating that younger consumers may be more susceptible to social media and peer influences when making purchasing decisions. This suggests a shift in marketing strategies, as brands may need to engage with younger audiences through social platforms to effectively influence their shopping behaviors.
5. **Segmentation and Targeting Models:** The findings emphasize the importance of demographic segmentation in marketing strategies. The distinct shopping preferences observed across age groups suggest that businesses should employ targeted marketing strategies that reflect the specific needs and behaviors of different consumer segments. This could lead to more effective resource allocation and improved marketing outcomes.
6. **Implications for Future Research:** This research lays the groundwork for future studies examining the interplay between age and other demographic variables, such as socioeconomic status and educational background. Further exploration in these areas could provide deeper insights into consumer behavior and refine existing theories within the field of marketing and consumer research.

Practical Implications

The findings of this research have several practical implications for marketers, retailers, and businesses aiming to optimize their strategies in response to age-related shopping preferences.

1. **Targeted Marketing Strategies:** Given the significant differences in shopping behaviors across age groups, businesses should develop targeted marketing strategies that cater to the specific needs and preferences of each demographic. For instance, younger consumers may respond more positively to digital marketing campaigns on social media platforms, while older consumers might appreciate more traditional marketing approaches, such as print advertising or in-store promotions.
2. **Enhancing Online Shopping Experiences:** The research highlights that younger consumers find online shopping more convenient and enjoyable. Retailers should focus on improving the online shopping experience by optimizing website design, streamlining navigation, and enhancing mobile accessibility. Features such as personalized recommendations and easy-to-use payment options can further attract and retain younger shoppers.

3. **Hybrid Retail Approaches:** The significant presence of older consumers preferring offline shopping underscores the importance of a hybrid retail approach. Businesses should invest in creating a seamless integration between online and offline experiences, such as offering click-and-collect options or personalized in-store services. This approach can enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty across various age groups.
4. **Product Variety and Availability:** The perception that online shopping offers greater variety presents an opportunity for retailers to expand their online product offerings. Ensuring that diverse and unique products are available online can attract younger consumers and differentiate brands in a competitive market.
5. **Training and Support:** As older consumers may not be as familiar with online shopping technologies, businesses should provide educational resources and customer support to enhance their confidence in using digital platforms. Workshops, tutorials, and personalized assistance can help bridge the gap and encourage more inclusive participation in online shopping.
6. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Implementing feedback mechanisms to gather insights from consumers across age groups can provide valuable data on their shopping experiences and preferences. This information can help businesses refine their strategies and make data-driven decisions to enhance customer engagement and satisfaction.
7. **Promoting the Benefits of Online Shopping:** Retailers should actively promote the advantages of online shopping, such as convenience, time savings, and the ability to browse a wider range of products. Tailoring these messages to resonate with different age groups can effectively influence their perceptions and behaviors.

In conclusion, the practical implications of this research emphasize the need for businesses to adapt their strategies to accommodate the diverse preferences of consumers across age groups. By leveraging these insights, retailers can enhance their marketing efforts, improve customer experiences, and ultimately drive sales in an increasingly competitive landscape.

CONCLUSIONS

This research provides valuable insights into the impact of age on shopping behaviors and preferences, revealing significant differences in how various age groups engage with online and offline retail environments. The findings indicate that younger consumers are more inclined toward online shopping, valuing convenience and product variety, while older consumers demonstrate a preference for traditional shopping methods.

These insights highlight the importance of tailored marketing strategies that address the unique needs of each demographic, suggesting that businesses must adopt a multi-channel approach to effectively engage consumers. By enhancing online shopping experiences and integrating offline and online retail strategies, retailers can better serve their diverse customer base.

Furthermore, this study underscores the need for continued research into consumer behavior across different demographic segments. As the retail landscape evolves, understanding the motivations and preferences of consumers will be crucial for businesses seeking to remain competitive. Ultimately, leveraging the findings of this research can guide practical applications that improve customer satisfaction and drive sales in a dynamic market.

FURTHER STUDY

1. **Broader Demographic Analysis:** Future studies should consider additional demographic factors, such as income level, education, and geographic location, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of shopping behaviors. This broader analysis can reveal nuanced insights into how these variables interact with age-related preferences.
2. **Longitudinal Studies:** Conducting longitudinal studies would help track changes in shopping behaviors over time, particularly as technology evolves and consumer attitudes shift. Understanding how age groups adapt to new shopping platforms and trends can provide valuable information for retailers.
3. **Impact of Emerging Technologies:** Research could explore the influence of emerging technologies, such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), on shopping experiences across different age groups. Investigating how these technologies affect consumer perceptions and behaviors could inform future retail strategies.
4. **Cross-Cultural Comparisons:** Comparative studies across different cultural contexts would enhance the understanding of how cultural factors influence shopping preferences. This could help global retailers tailor their approaches to various markets more effectively.

5. **Psychographic Factors:** Investigating psychographic factors, such as lifestyle, values, and motivations, alongside age can provide deeper insights into consumer behavior. Understanding the underlying motivations for shopping preferences could help businesses create more effective marketing messages.
6. **Influence of Social Media:** Future research should examine the role of social media in shaping shopping behaviors, particularly among younger consumers. Analyzing how social media influences purchasing decisions and brand perceptions can inform marketing strategies.
7. **Consumer Experience Studies:** More detailed studies focusing on consumer experiences—both positive and negative—during online and offline shopping could yield insights into specific pain points and areas for improvement. Gathering qualitative data through interviews or focus groups can complement quantitative findings.
8. **Environmental and Sustainability Considerations:** As consumers increasingly prioritize sustainability, future research could explore how age influences attitudes toward eco-friendly shopping practices. Understanding these preferences can guide businesses in developing sustainable practices that resonate with different age groups.

By addressing these areas, future research can build on the findings of this study and further enhance the understanding of consumer behavior in an ever-evolving retail landscape. This will ultimately contribute to more effective marketing strategies and improved customer engagement across diverse demographics.

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