

Analysis of Consumer Perception of Fairness Cream in Delhi and NCR

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Abstract – Skin-lightening or 'fairness' creams are big business in India, an over \$200 million industry that comprises the largest segment of the country's skin cream market.. Fairness cream is an article which is found in every home today. Even when we are watching television and advertisements come in between the show, at least one advertisement is that of a fairness cream. With so many brands doing the rounds in the market, people even have a variety in choosing which cream they want. The situation is such that we have fairness creams for every age, every skin-type, every weather and it goes for both the sexes. With the fairness cream for men also out in the market, even the males are openly using them now. And, girls' demand for make-up and to look fair is well known since ages. All have their own ways by which they maintain the fair complexion of their skin. So, no doubt that fairness creams sells like hot cakes even today. This paper is an attempt to find and analyze the factors affecting the perception of fairness creams in Delhi and NCR.

Keyword: Fairness Creams, Cosmetics, Consumer Perception, Brand Preference

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INTRODUCTION

The word cosmetics is derives from the Greek, meaning "technique of dress and ornament". Cosmetics (colloquially known as makeup or make-up) are care substances used to enhance the appearance or odor of the human body. They are generally mixtures of chemical compounds, some being derived from natural sources, many being synthetic.

According to science, our skin gets darkened because of production of melanin cells secreted by the pineal gland. The gland becomes active when our skin gets exposed to the sun. In order to prevent our skin from sunburn, melanin gets produced which protects our skin from harmful rays of sun. Due to these melanin cells' production, our skin gets tanned and thus, darkened. That is why people living in snowy and less sunny regions have a fairer complexion than those living in hot and sunny regions. Thus, by applying fairness cream on our faces, the cream acts as a shield. Since it acts as a barrier between sunrays and our skin, the melanin need not be produced and hence, our skin does not get tanned and darkened.

Time and again it has been proved in scientific journals that fairness creams do not make one fair. But nowadays, there are creams that actually make your skin fairer. Such creams contain tropical salts.

They remove the layer of melanin that gets deposited on our skin due to tanning due to sunrays. So, they react with melanin & remove it from our face and thus our skin looks fairer than before. The major markets for fairness creams are:

- (i) India and Sri Lanka (largest market)
- (ii) Saudi Arabia
- (iii) Gulf
- (iv) Africa
- (v) Malaysia
- (vi) Thailand
- (vii) Far East
- (viii) Bangladesh

According to most dermatologists, achieving fairness up to 20% is possible, but not more than that. The fairness cream block sun rays and prevents secretion of melanin, which gives the dark colour to the skin. So, in effect fairness cream reduces tan, prevents the skin from getting darker by preventing melanin secretion; but they cannot change a person's natural skin colour.

Values in clients' personal lives have changed and that leads to a change in how they consume. People are spending more time with friends and family, and are focusing on what they consider to be the more important things in life. Consuming for the sake of consumption is no longer a way of life. Cosmetic consumers are demanding more quality products with multiple benefits, and what is inside the package will soon become more important than the package itself. Although packaging and presentation will always be very important, it will not be enough to hold a client, and it will not be the foundation upon which to build a business.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Das S (2013) identified the importance of fairness creams among Indian youths which helps the FMCG companies to increase their sales according to the importance given by people to the beauty products especially fairness creams.

Watson et al (2010) elaborated that the society has identified three skin tones and relates the caste system in accordance to these skin tones. Burger et al. (2016) stated that the advertisements do not influence for the product purchase. The advertisements only creates feelings which through emotions helps a customer to buy the product. So, the feelings and emotions can be used interchangeably as an important signifiers.

Jha (2016) emphasized that the social pressure for good looking skin is one of the prominent factors to purchase beauty products. The latest and updated technology in beauty products plays a critical role in advertisements of the products. With this, companies are able to relate beauty products with confidence, empowerment and Desirability of the customers. Sindhushree M T (2018) analysed through their primary research that the confidence level and belief system of a customer is directly linked with the type of skin tone the customer possessess. The advertisements of fairness creams and beauty products creates a discrimination in the society about skin tones. These advertisements have also tried relating personality of an individual with the types of skin tone. And which apparently have increased the consumption of beauty products and fairness creams.

Sarkar & Gosh (2017) elaborated that buying a product not only gives us physical possession of the product but also tries to link the sentiments for which it is bought. Values are created by the marketers and the customers buy these values from the marketers. Thus, the advertisements focus on the values created and try to create needs so as to trap various prospective customers.

Jha (2016) justifies that the Indian consumers have a great fascination towards fair skin tone. The advertisements effect of fairness creams is great and

positive in the minds of the customers. The customers who have dark complexion buy these fairness creams and changes their skin tone for a limited period of time. The advertisement of fairness creams encourages the obsession for the fairness creams and fair complexion.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The basic and foremost objectives of the study are:

- (a) To study the consumer perception regarding their preferences towards Fairness Creams
- (b) To understand the various factors influencing the brand preference of the customers

SCOPE OF STUDY

In this report, basically the perception of customers towards Fairness Cream in India with respect to Fair & Lovely, Olay, Garnier and Ponds is studied. In order to carry on the study, a structured questionnaire was drafted which deals with various questions regarding the preferences of the fairness cream, and the factors influencing the customer's decision. The study was carried out in various regions of Delhi, i.e, West Delhi, East Delhi, North Delhi, South Delhi and NCR (National Capital Region) Noida and Gurugram respectively. The study is done both on males and females. While conducting the survey, the demographical outlook was considered, i.e, educated and uneducated respondents were approached, and people within various age groups and income groups were considered. The functional area which is emphasized in this report is marketing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology is a way to systematically carry out the research. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done systematically. In order to study the customer perception towards fairness cream, a field survey was conducted. The survey was carried out in various regions of Delhi. Males and females, educated and uneducated people, and people within various age groups and income groups were approached. Random Sampling method has been adopted in the survey. The samples were drawn from 125 respondents. Questionnaires have been designed and distributed to the respondents to extract primary data.

Research Design is the basic frame work which provides guidelines for the rest of the research process. It is a map or a blue print according to which the research is to be conducted. The research design specifies the methods of data collection and data analysis. The research design

in this study is exploratory till identification of customer preferences parameters. Later, it becomes descriptive when it comes to evaluating customer perception. Descriptive research, also known as statistical research, describes data and characteristics about the population or phenomenon being studied. Descriptive research answers the questions who, what, where, when and how.

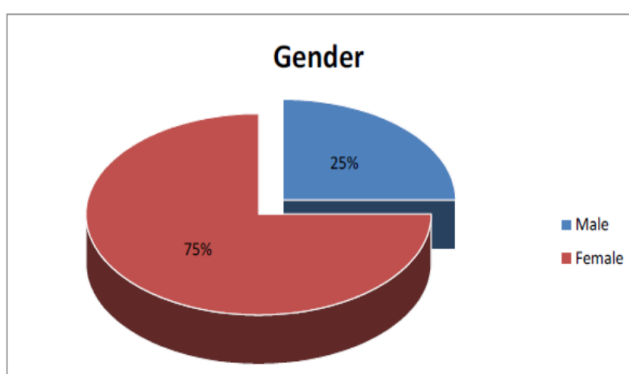
Although the data description is factual, accurate and systematic, descriptive research cannot be used to create a causal relationship, where one variable affects another. In other words, descriptive research can be said to have a low requirement for internal validity. The description is used for frequencies, averages and other statistical calculations

DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

In order to extract meaningful information from the data collected, the data analysis and interpretation is carried out. The data is first edited, coded and then tabulated for the purpose of Analysing. The analysis is basically aimed at giving inferences of associations or difference between various variables. The collected data may be analysed by using diagrams, graphs, charts, picture etc. Finally the meaning of data may be extracted from the analysis. The data collected in this report is based on primary data and is collected with the help of a questionnaire in which 125 people were surveyed regarding their preferences towards Fairness Creams with reference to Fair & Lovely, Olay, Garnier and Ponds. The data is therefore, presented in the form of pie diagrams by taking the sample size as 125.

Classification of Respondents by Gender

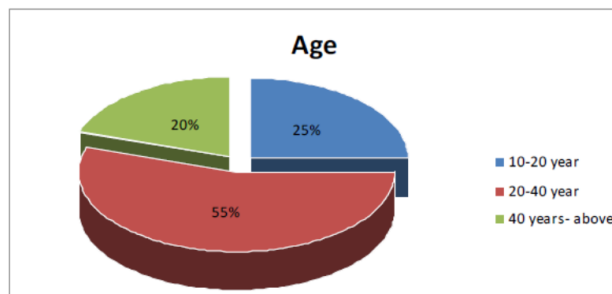
Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	25	25
Female	75	75
Total	100	100



It is clear from the table and pie chart that 75% of the respondents are Female respondents, while the remaining 25% of the respondents are Male respondents

Classification of respondents on the basis of age

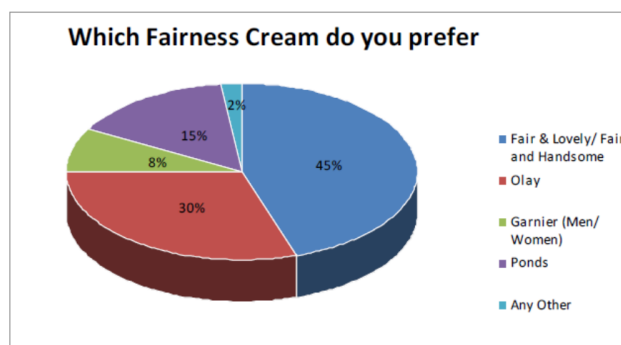
Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
10-20 year	25	25
20-40 year	55	55
40 years – above	20	20
Total	100	100



It is clear from the table and pie chart that 55% of the respondents are in the age group of 20-40 years, whereas 25% and 20% of the respondents are in the age group of 10- 20 years and 40 years-above respectively.

Preference of Fairness Cream

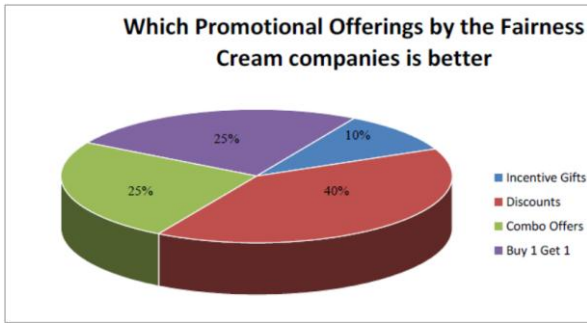
Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Fair & Lovely/ Fair & Handsome	45	45
Olay	30	30
Garnier (Men/ Women)	8	8
Ponds	15	15
Any Other	2	2
Total	100	100



It is evident from the table and pie chart that 45% of the respondents prefer using Fair & Lovely/ Fair & Handsome, 30% of the respondents prefer using Olay, 15% prefer using Ponds and only 8% of the respondents prefer using Garnier (Men/ Women).

Promotional Offer inducing Purchase

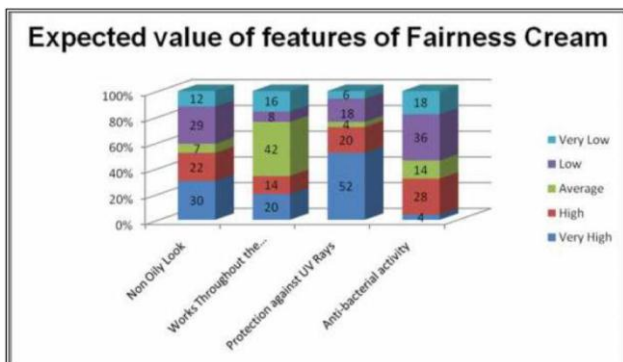
Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Incentive Gifts	10	10
Discounts	40	40
Combo Offer	25	25
Buy 1 Get 1	25	25
Total	100	100



It is clear from the table and pie chart that 40% of the respondents prefer Fairness Creams because the company offers Discounts, whereas 25% of the respondents prefer because of Combo Offers and Buy 1 Get 1 offers each, and only 10% of the respondents prefer cream because of Incentive Gifts.

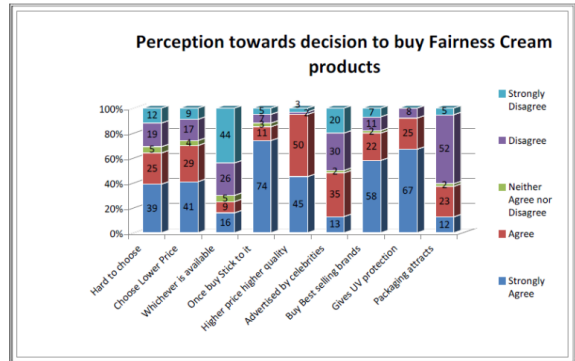
Expected Value of features of fairness cream

Options	Frequency					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Non-oily look	30	22	7	29	12	100
Works Throughout the day	20	14	42	8	16	100
Protection against UV Rays	52	20	4	18	6	100
Anti-bacterial activity	4	28	14	36	18	100



Factors influencing the decision to purchase a fairness cream

Options	Frequency					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Sometimes it is hard to choose which brand to buy	39	25	5	19	12	100
Usually choose lower price fairness cream	41	29	4	17	9	100
Purchase brand whichever is available	16	9	5	26	44	100
Once buy a fairness cream, stick to it	74	11	3	7	5	100
Higher price means higher quality	45	50	0	2	3	100
Choose products advertised by celebrities	13	35	2	30	20	100
Prefer buying best selling brands	58	22	2	11	7	100
Product which also gives UV Protection	67	25	0	8	0	100
Packaging of the product attracts	12	23	2	58	5	100



It is clear from the table and charts that for maximum number of respondents it is difficult to choose which brand to buy. They usually choose the brand which has lower price, gives UV protection and are the best-selling brands. And once chosen, they prefer sticking to it. They do not switch brands on the basis of availability, or celebrity endorsements.

RESULT OF THE STUDY

- (i) According to the survey, out of 125 respondents, 80% of the respondents are found to be users of Fairness Cream.
- (ii) Taking these 100 respondents as users of fairness cream, it is found that most of them are females.
- (iii) Majority of them are in the age group of 20-40 years with a monthly income of Rs.10,000-Rs.20,000.
- (iv) They are using fairness cream since 2 years or more.
- (v) Most of the respondents use fairness creams for the purpose of sunscreen and then for make-up. They hardly use it for the fragrance purposes.
- (vi) The market leaders of Fairness Cream according to the survey conducted is "Fair & Lovely". Olay is the close competitor of it. Garnier is the least preferred brand.
- (vii) The respondents came to know about their preferred brands majorly through television commercials, and then from friends and relatives. Only a small percentage of them got aware through newspapers, retailers, or any other means. Also, the users prefer buying fairness cream usually when they get discounts on it.
- (viii) They prefer using brands which give them protection against UV rays, and also nonoily look.
- (ix) It is found that for users it is difficult to choose which brand to buy. They usually

choose the brand which has a lower price and in this low cost, gives UV protection with being the best-selling brands. Once chosen, they prefer sticking to it. They do not switch brands on the basis of availability, or celebrity endorsements.

CONCLUSION

Fairness creams contribute a considerable portion of revenue for FMCG companies in India. As majority of Indians are concerned about their skin tones and complexion, the fairness creams enjoys a good market growth. Change in lifestyle and rise of consumerisms has also led to the surge demand for fairness creams in India. Another factor attributing growth is awareness of fairness creams in rural area and increase male spending on such products. Indian markets are experiencing huge demand in fairness cream due to high media exposure and celebrity endorsements. In the country where fair is considered to be lovely it will take time to change the perception that brown is also beautiful.

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