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## Understanding and Overcoming Green Walls; a Study on Consumer Perception

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### **Abstract:**

*Cosmetics have been the part of our lives since ages. Earlier too many products were not there as ages passed there were enumerable products offered in market by competent companies with a lot of chemical components in it. Presence of a huge amount of chemicals in cosmetic products not only led to environmental destruction but also had devastating impact on the skin. Now as the understanding of people grew and they aim to achieve sustainability and healthy green environment. This has led them to pave the way to GO GREEN. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the consumer understanding of green cosmetics and how far have consumers gone to overcome the green walls. Core analysis of paper is based on literature review and is presented in paper.*

**Keywords:** *Consumer behaviour, green, green cosmetics, green purchase behaviour, environment, Conscious attitude and behaviour*

### **1. Introduction**

Consumer is a significant part of every society. Ours is a growing economy and people forms its indispensable part. The existence of Cosmetics dates back to human civilization.

Women and men rouged their lips and cheeks, stained their nails with henna, and lined their eyes and eyebrows heavily with kohl (dark coloured powder made of crushed antimony, ash, burnt almonds). Cosmetic industry has been catering to the demands of all sex, ages and seasons. The new born to nonagenarians, all have the penchant for looking young and attractive. Cosmetics generally form a part of self-esteem needs for consumers. A boom in the Indian fashion industry has also been linked to the increased awareness of Indian people about their appearances and consequently contributed to an increase in demand for cosmetics. With the increase in standard of living, people are using more cosmetics either to increase their confidence or to improve their appearance. But, the scenario is changing rapidly. With increased concern about the environment customers buying green products or eco-friendly products (which are biodegradable and recyclable and in addition to their organic production, they have minimal packaging). But in entire range of cosmetics slowest growth is experienced towards green cosmetics the market and store are flooded with countless number of products and brands giving number of choices for the consumers to buy. Major players in this field are Lakme, L'Oreal, Dabur, Colorbar, Revlon, Maybelline, Chambor and Mac while Herbal Range is offered by Lotus, Shehnaz, Himalaya, Biotique, Body shop, Amway."GREEN" environment friendly; Products which are presumed to be environmentally safe. Green Products are the ones that are grown originally and doesn't cause

Health hazard to the people, animals or nature. They are efficient in its use of resources during manufacture, use and disposal and do not leads to excessive waste. They are the ones intended to be applied to human body for beautifying, cleaning or altering the appearance without affecting body structure or functioning. "GREEN MARKETING" refers to developing and improving the pricing system, promotion and distribution of the products which do not harm the environment. Environmental concern is indisputably an important area for marketing practitioners not only because of growing awareness amongst consumers but also due to increased pressure to incorporate environmental and social responsibility as in 21st century. Corporate Social Responsibility is a base requirement for corporate to usher their profits in business. So, Green Marketing is an essential part of their business strategies. This isn't purely altruistic it can be profitable endeavour for sustainable growth. It provides competitive advantage to companies which are least concerned for environment and there is a growing interest among the consumers all over the world regarding protection of environment. Sooner or later we will have to adopt GREEN, SOONER the better! It is visualized that urban and higher middle income groups are less price sensitive and more brand conscious. Their buying perception is based on the level of trust and celebrity endorsement makes the brand more noticeable for them. Earlier researches have shown that there exist barriers which affect the customer's rational choice and buying behaviour towards green purchase. The perception of the individual towards the intensity, hazardous and seriousness of environmental problems is affecting their green purchasing Behaviour. Consumers are found to buy environmentally hazardous products regardless of their concern for green alternatives. It may be due to weak linkage between attitude and behaviour in environment, social marketing while other reasons may include lack of awareness, their Perception that green is not for everyone as people who have more money and time can only

Afford it, less of marketing of green cosmetic, their unwillingness towards sacrifice of previous brands. All these questions make it even more important to study the perception of consumers towards green cosmetics.

## 2. Literature Review

- Lavanya.D (May, 2014) stated that cosmetic industry is growing fast and undergoing a lot of Changes and due to globalisation there has been witnessed a need of updating and brand loyalty as it is always better to retain customers than acquiring new ones. Paper identified the Demographic profile of customers and factors that can be manipulated and exploited to attract consumers. Age, income, education, occupation, lifestyle are the independent variables which affect brand, price, advertisement and socio economic variables. It is witnessed that income affects the brand buying, gender is related to price of the cosmetic product and gender is as well related to brand of cosmetic product.

- Khan Faisal Asiya and Khan Faisal mohd (2013) focuses on determining the women's Perception to product quality, buying behaviour and their awareness of product ingredients in Skin care products in Madhya Pradesh. As the future of Indian skincare market seems to be Promising. Entry of more international and national brands is adding thrust to market. Indian Women have become more conscious towards hygiene and beauty. Companies are striving hard to explore new natural ingredients which are safe and effective in usage. The focus is on green consumerism thereby stating eco marketers to carefully frame their products and analyze their promotional materials that advertise environmental consciousness. There is an infusion of green consumerism with environmental aesthetic which caters to personal health and ecological well-being. Moreover, products belief, environmental concern, personal and demographic characteristics induce the purchasing decision.

- Rawat Surya Rashmi and DR Garga.K. Pawanobserved that due to threat of climatic changes, global warming; GREEN MARKETING to a large extent played a major role to overcome disturbance. Consumers have become ecofriendly leading to usage of green or bio cosmetics. Bio cosmetics symbolizes more utilization of natural components of environment which guarantees environmental conservation. Boom is being witnessed in green marketing. Despite of comparatively high cost of green cosmetics to chemical one's perception of buying is changing. As there is growing awareness and rising concern for health and environment Consumers have adopted organic cosmetics. Cost is not an issue for women's as the economic and demographic environment has witnessed change Emerging double income group, changing household size, changing attitude, lifestyle of people are some of the factors which lead to change in buying pattern. People are willing to pay extra for eco-friendly products but their main concern is to look good, young and attractive without hampering the motherland. The issue is the awareness for green cosmetics is less but people are willing to know so that their pattern of consumption can be judged as they have a setback of clean motherland. Lack of consumer's faith on product as they feel it lacks credibility. To overcome this issue companies, ngo's and government bodies have to launch strong awareness drive. Proper authentication of green claims, proper education, labels, strict government laws and norms can be made mandatory; imparting necessary knowledge of green concepts will surely convince people to go green.

- Desai Shivajirao Kisan (2014) revealed that Indian cosmetic industry had witnessed rapid Growth. Large numbers of products are offered. Due to increase in demand of Indian Cost Effective products and purchasing power of average Indian has increased greater growth potential is witnessed in Cosmetic Industry. People have become conscious regarding their purchase preferring to purchase quality products with a greater inclination towards ayurvedic concept. Consumer behaviour is encompassed by their consumption pattern and preferences, their motivation & shopping behaviour which is influenced by social, cultural, demographic, Economic and personal factors. They are willing to wait for their chosen brands. Television, Advertisement, Internet, Renowned beautician has an impact on their buying behaviour. Thus

Companies need to analyse the need and have exclusive products with prompt distribution Channel.

- Hessami Zand hessam, youssefi Parisa (2013) identified that consumer idea, values, attitude, awareness of green products, concern for environment and his environmental responsibilities affect his purchasing behaviour. As many individuals are least aware of green products or have a thought that government or corporate needs to put up enough efforts for making environment healthy and greener. Consumers behaviour is influenced by their functional, social, emotional, cognitive and conditional values. Schools and universities are putting up efforts with which government too have to make drives to create awareness about environmental deterioration and its consequences so that green purchasing graph can be made higher.

- Mahapatra Savita stated though respondents are aware of green products but price, availability, convenience of usage, personal benefits, performance are the factors influencing green purchase. Thus for promoting green products government and organizations need to have educating campaigns, certifications and effective advertising so has to have a positive perception and increased sale of green purchase.

- Narula A Sapna & Desore Anupriya inferred that there are many definitions to green products but government and competitive pressure, social responsibility and customer expectation are the key motivators for green marketing. But there are many barriers such as standardization green products, high pricing, Trust which are hindering the green purchase. So companies need to position the products rightly and communication strategy should strongly affect the green products sale.

- Cervellon Cecile Marie, Rinaldi Jose Marie and Wernerfelt Sophie Anne concluded that undoubtedly there is boom in demand for green cosmetics but lack of information and consumer trust are hindrance in its purchase. Though women and youth are keen towards going green as they form a part of health conscious consumers still a wide gap is witnessed towards their intention to purchase and actual purchase. This widen gap can be narrowed if the packaging contains apt labelling, proper mentioning of ingredients and percentage proving product to be green.

### 3. Findings

Companies need to launch more of clinically tested environmentally safe products with a unique selling strategy and more use of natural ingredients will surely lead to increase in product demand. Environmental changes, changed lifestyle, increase cautiousness towards healthy living contributed to the movement towards green cosmetics. But drove to conclusion that though consumers are enthusiastic towards green purchase but lack of awareness about green products identification, less marketing of green cosmetics makes it difficult for them to Go Green. So corporate, government and other concerned bodies need to market the products effectively and bring certain standards, authentication and labelling of products assuring the product to be green.

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