

An Analytical Study of Brand Preference among Women Consumers for Indian and International Hair Oil Products

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Abstract—The hair oil segment occupies a distinctive position in the personal care market in India, especially among women consumers, where usage is deeply rooted in tradition while simultaneously influenced by modern branding and global trends. With the growing presence of international hair oil brands alongside well-established Indian brands, women consumers today evaluate products not only on functional benefits such as nourishment and hair health, but also on brand image, ingredient safety, packaging, availability, and trust. The present study aims to analytically examine and compare the preference of women consumers toward Indian and international hair oil brands and to identify the most preferred Indian hair oil brand among them. The study highlights how emotional attachment, familiarity, and perceived effectiveness play a vital role in shaping brand preference and loyalty. The findings of the study reveal a significant difference in preference between Indian and global hair oil brands, with Indian brands receiving substantially higher preference scores among women consumers. The results further indicate that long-established Indian brands continue to dominate consumer preference due to strong brand trust, perceived reliability, and value for money. The study also identifies Parachute Hair Oil as the most preferred Indian brand among women consumers, followed by other trusted ayurvedic and mass-market brands. Overall, the research provides valuable insights into women consumers' buying behaviour and contributes to a better understanding of brand preference dynamics in the evolving hair oil market.

Index Terms—Brand Preference; Women Consumers; Indian and Global Hair Oil Brands

I. INTRODUCTION

Hair oil occupies a unique place in the personal care routines of Indian women because it is linked not only to grooming, but also to tradition, wellness, and daily self-care practices. Over time, women consumers have

become more aware of different hair concerns (hair fall, dandruff, dryness, damage, frizz, premature greying) and they increasingly look for products that match their hair type, lifestyle, and local climate. Because of this, hair oil is no longer seen as a “single functional product”; instead, it is evaluated as a mix of benefits such as nourishment, fragrance, texture, non-sticky feel, ease of wash, and visible results.

At the same time, the hair oil market has become highly competitive due to the presence of multiple Indian brands (coconut, amla, ayurvedic, herbal, cooling oils, and light hair oils) along with international hair-care brands that influence category expectations through modern packaging, premium positioning, and “science-backed” claims. Many women now compare Indian and international options on parameters like perceived quality, safety of ingredients, suitability, hair-health claims, and brand trust. This comparison is also shaped by social media, online reviews, salon recommendations, and influencer-led product education, making brand preference more dynamic than it was earlier.

Brand preference among women consumers is influenced by both product-related and marketing-related factors. Product-related factors include perceived effectiveness, ingredient beliefs (natural/herbal vs. chemical-free vs. clinically tested), fragrance, texture, price-value perception, and compatibility with frequent washing or styling. Marketing-related factors include advertising recall, brand familiarity, availability across outlets, discounts, packaging appeal, and word-of-mouth from family, friends, doctors, or beauticians. Prior studies in the hair oil and personal care context highlight that women's choices are often guided by a mix of value-for-money, quality perception, suitability, familiarity, and ease of availability rather than only price.

In addition, women consumers are not a homogeneous group—age, income, education, occupation, and urban–semi-urban exposure often create meaningful differences in brand preference. Younger consumers may be more experimental and influenced by branding and trends, while older consumers may prioritize trust, tradition, and proven results. Urban consumers may show greater openness to premium or international brands, while many semi-urban and rural consumers may prioritize availability, affordability, and habitual usage patterns. Therefore, studying brand preference requires capturing socio-economic profiles along with perception and satisfaction variables.

Against this background, the present study titled “An Analytical Study of Brand Preference among Women Consumers for Indian and International Hair Oil Products” is important for understanding what drives women to choose Indian brands over international alternatives (or vice versa), what factors strengthen loyalty, and what causes switching behavior. The study can help marketers position products more effectively, help retailers plan assortments, and contribute academically by adding evidence on consumer behavior, perception, satisfaction, and loyalty in a culturally rooted but modernizing personal-care category.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Adrita & Sarker (2013), In the research titled “An analytical approach of brand preference towards hair care oil in Bangladesh” the study concludes that brand preference for hair oil is strongly influenced by perceived quality, brand reputation, price affordability, and promotional activities. Consumers tend to favor brands that offer a balance between traditional benefits and modern packaging and branding. The findings highlight that emotional attachment and familiarity with a brand significantly contribute to repeat purchase behavior, indicating that brand loyalty in the hair oil segment is shaped by both functional performance and psychological trust.
2. Das (2018), In the research titled “Study on consumers’ brand preference towards cosmetics products of Berhampur Town” the study concludes that consumers’ brand preference is largely determined by product quality, brand image, price, and availability. The research

emphasizes that cosmetic and personal care consumers place high importance on safety, effectiveness, and brand credibility. Advertising and peer influence also play a key role in shaping consumer perception, suggesting that consistent communication and reliable product performance are essential for sustaining brand preference.

3. Dhevika, et.al (2013), In the research titled “A study on brand loyalty of hair oil among college student” the authors conclude that brand loyalty among young consumers is influenced by satisfaction, habitual usage, and perceived effectiveness of the product. The study reveals that college students often stick to familiar brands due to trust developed through long-term usage and family influence. Promotional schemes may encourage trial, but sustained loyalty depends primarily on product performance and positive usage experience.
4. Ghatule & Chopade (2015), In the research titled “Customer satisfaction and preferred characters of Parachute hair oil with special reference to Pandharpur city” the study concludes that customer satisfaction is closely associated with specific product attributes such as quality, purity, fragrance, consistency, and price value. The research highlights that Parachute hair oil enjoys strong preference due to its perceived reliability and long-standing market presence. The findings indicate that satisfaction with core product characteristics leads to strong brand loyalty and resistance to switching behavior.
5. Jagadeesan & Vani (2017), In the research titled “Consumer satisfaction towards Parachute hair oil usage among college students in Salem City” the study concludes that high levels of consumer satisfaction are derived from consistent quality, ease of availability, and positive brand image. College students perceive the brand as trustworthy and effective, which reinforces continued usage. The study further notes that satisfaction acts as a mediating factor between product experience and repeat purchase intention, strengthening long-term brand preference.
6. Kasar & Desai (2023), In the research titled “A study on factors influencing on buying behaviour of consumer towards Parachute hair oil in Dharwad District, Karnataka, India” the authors conclude that buying behavior is influenced by a

combination of product quality, price, brand awareness, promotional strategies, and distribution reach. The study highlights that consumers give priority to brands that offer consistent results and value for money. Social influence and brand familiarity further enhance purchase decisions, confirming the dominance of trusted Indian hair oil brands in regional markets.

7. Naik (2019), In the research titled “Brand preference of female consumers towards cosmetic products” the study concludes that female consumers’ brand preference is shaped by perceived quality, safety, suitability to skin and hair type, brand image, and prior experience. The research emphasizes that women consumers are highly conscious of product ingredients and effectiveness, and they rely heavily on brand reputation and recommendations. The findings suggest that emotional satisfaction and trust play a more decisive role than price alone in determining brand preference.

III. RESEARCH GAP

The review of existing studies reveals that most prior research on hair oil and cosmetic brand preference has focused on specific brands (such as Parachute), limited geographic regions, or narrowly defined consumer groups like college students. While these studies comprehensively examine factors such as quality, price, satisfaction, loyalty, and brand image, they do not provide a direct comparative analysis between Indian and international hair oil brands, particularly from the perspective of women consumers, who are the primary decision-makers in this category.

Moreover, limited attention has been given to understanding how traditional beliefs, herbal/natural ingredient perceptions, and emotional attachment toward Indian brands compare with modern branding, premium positioning, and global quality perceptions associated with international brands. There is also a lack of integrated analysis linking socio-economic characteristics of women consumers with preference, switching behavior, and loyalty across domestic and global brands. Hence, the present study addresses this gap by analytically examining and comparing brand preference determinants for Indian and international hair oil products among women consumers.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine brand preference among women consumers for Indian and international hair oil products. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire administered to 140 women respondents, selected through a suitable sampling method. The questionnaire covered demographic variables such as age, occupation, and educational qualification, along with preference-related statements measured using appropriate rating scales. To achieve the research objectives, statistical tools such as Paired Sample t-test were used to compare preference between Indian and global brands, while the Friedman Test was applied to identify differences in preference among selected Indian hair oil brands. The collected data was analyzed using statistical software to ensure accuracy, reliability, and meaningful interpretation of results.

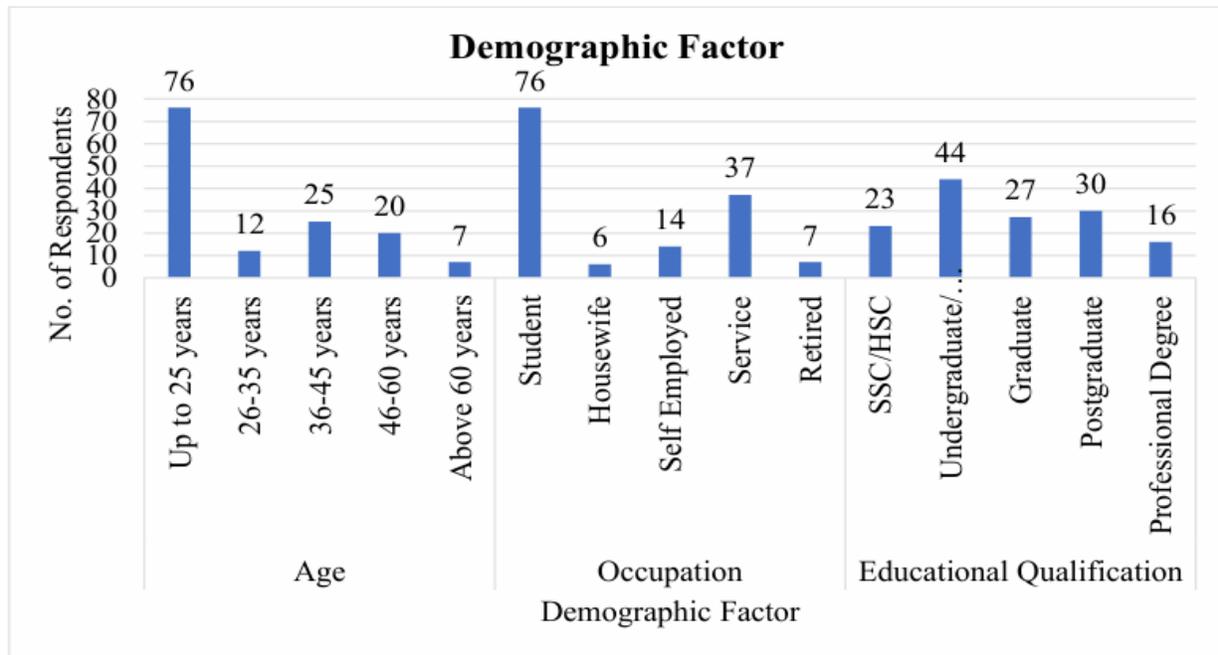
V. DATA ANALYSIS

Demographic Factor				
Sr No.	Particular	Category	Frequency	Percent
1	Age	Up to 25 years	76	54.3
		26-35 years	12	8.6
		36-45 years	25	17.9
		46-60 years	20	14.3
		Above 60 years	7	5.0
2	Occupation	Student	76	54.3
		Housewife	6	4.3
		Self Employed	14	10.0

		Service	37	26.4
		Retired	7	5.0
3	Educational Qualification	SSC/HSC	23	16.4
		Undergraduate/ Diploma	44	31.4
		Graduate	27	19.3
		Postgraduate	30	21.4
		Professional Degree	16	11.4

The demographic profile of the respondents indicates that a majority of the women consumers belong to the up to 25 years age group, accounting for 76 respondents (54.3%), followed by those aged 36–45 years with 25 respondents (17.9%) and 46–60 years with 20 respondents (14.3%), while 26–35 years and above 60 years comprise 12 respondents (8.6%) and 7 respondents (5.0%) respectively. In terms of occupation, students form the largest group with 76 respondents (54.3%), followed by women engaged in service (37 respondents; 26.4%), self-employed (14

respondents; 10.0%), housewives (6 respondents; 4.3%), and retired respondents (7 respondents; 5.0%). Regarding educational qualification, the sample shows a diverse educational background, with 44 respondents (31.4%) holding undergraduate or diploma qualifications, 30 respondents (21.4%) being postgraduates, 27 respondents (19.3%) graduates, 23 respondents (16.4%) educated up to SSC/HSC, and 16 respondents (11.4%) possessing a professional degree, indicating a relatively well-educated respondent base for the study.



VI. OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESIS

Objective 1 To Study and compare the preference of hair oil between India brand and global brand by women consumers.

Null Hypothesis H₀₁: There is no significant difference in preference of women consumers between Indian hair oil brands and global hair oil brands.

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To study the above Null Hypothesis, Paired sample Test is applied and results are as follows:

Paired Samples Test					
	Paired Differences		t	df	P-value
	Mean	Std. Deviation			
Preference-oil (Indian) - Preference-oil (Global)	21.625	31.449	8.136	139	.000

Interpretation: The above results indicate that calculated p-value is 0.000. It is less than 0.05. Therefore, paired sample test is rejected. Hence Null hypothesis is rejected and Alternate hypothesis is accepted.

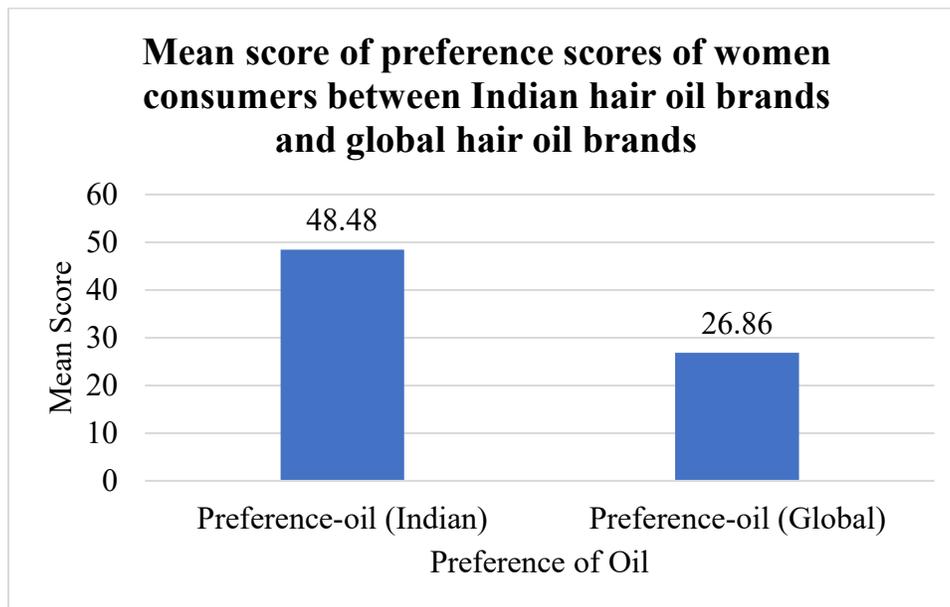
Conclusion: There is a significant difference in preference of women consumers between Indian hair oil brands and global hair oil brands.

Findings: To understand the findings of hypothesis, mean score of preference scores of women consumers between Indian hair oil brands and global hair oil brands is obtained and shown below:

Paired Samples Statistics				
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Preference-oil (Indian)	48.48	140	26.589	2.247
Preference-oil (Global)	26.86	140	26.365	2.228

The paired sample statistics indicate a clear difference in the preference levels of women consumers for Indian and global hair oil brands. The mean preference score for Indian hair oil brands is 48.48, which is substantially higher than the mean score of 26.86 recorded for global hair oil brands, based on responses from the same 140 women consumers. This suggests that women consumers exhibit a stronger inclination toward Indian hair oil brands. Although the standard

deviations for both Indian (26.589) and global (26.365) brands are relatively high, indicating variability in individual preferences, the noticeably higher mean score for Indian brands reflects an overall stronger preference. The relatively low standard error values further suggest that the sample mean estimates are reliable, providing a stable basis for comparison between Indian and global hair oil preferences.



Objective 2 To identify the most preferred Indian brand among the women consumers in India.

Null Hypothesis H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the level of preference among women consumers for different Indian hair oil brands.

Null Hypothesis H_{a2}: There is a significant difference in the level of preference among women consumers for different Indian hair oil brands.

To study the above Null Hypothesis, Friedman Test is applied and results are as follows:

Test Statistics	
N	140
Chi-Square	169.666
df	7
P-value	.000
a. Friedman Test	

Interpretation: The above results indicate that calculated p-value is 0.000. It is less than 0.05. Therefore, paired sample test is rejected. Hence Null hypothesis is rejected and Alternate hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusion: There is a significant difference in the level of preference among women consumers for different Indian hair oil brands.

Findings: To understand the findings of hypothesis, mean score of level of preference among women consumers for different Indian hair oil brands is obtained and shown below:

Ranks	
	Mean Rank
5.1 Parachute Hair Oil (Marico)	5.90
5.2 Mamaearth Onion Hair Oil (Mamaearth)	4.30
5.3 Bajaj Almond Hair Oil (Bajaj)	4.99
5.4 Navratna Hair Oil (Emami)	4.33
5.5 Patanjali Kesh Kanti Oil (Patanjali)	4.16
5.6 Biotique Hair Oil (Biotique)	3.25
5.7 Indulekha Bringha Hair Oil (Indulekha, India)	4.62
5.8 Dabur Amala Hair Oil (Dabur)	4.45

The ranking analysis of Indian hair oil brands reveals clear differences in preference among women consumers. Parachute Hair Oil (Marico) secured the highest mean rank of 5.90, indicating that it is the most

preferred Indian hair oil brand, likely due to its long-standing presence, strong brand trust, and perceived reliability. This is followed by Bajaj Almond Hair Oil (4.99) and Indulekha Bringha Hair Oil (4.62), suggesting that both mass-market and premium ayurvedic brands enjoy considerable acceptance. Dabur Amla Hair Oil (4.45), Navratna Hair Oil (4.33), and Mamaearth Onion Hair Oil (4.30) occupy the middle ranks, reflecting moderate but stable preference among consumers. Patanjali Kesh Kanti Oil (4.16) also shows reasonable acceptance, driven largely by its herbal positioning and affordability. In contrast, Biotique Hair Oil (3.25) received the lowest mean rank, indicating comparatively lower preference among respondents. Overall, the results suggest that traditional, well-established Indian brands continue to dominate women consumers' preferences, while newer or niche brands face stronger competition in gaining widespread loyalty.

VII. FINDINGS

The findings of the study clearly indicate that women consumers show a significantly higher preference for Indian hair oil brands compared to global hair oil brands, as evidenced by the paired sample test results where the mean preference score for Indian brands (48.48) was substantially higher than that for global brands (26.86). This demonstrates that Indian brands continue to enjoy stronger acceptance due to factors such as familiarity, long-term usage, perceived effectiveness, and cultural relevance. The demographic analysis reveals that a large proportion of respondents were young women and students with relatively good educational backgrounds, suggesting that even younger and educated consumers strongly prefer Indian hair oil brands despite increasing exposure to international products. The Friedman test results further confirm that there is a significant variation in preference among different Indian hair oil brands, with Parachute Hair Oil emerging as the most preferred brand, followed by Bajaj Almond Hair Oil, Indulekha Bringha Hair Oil, and Dabur Amla Hair Oil, while Biotique Hair Oil ranked the lowest. Overall, the findings suggest that women consumers prioritize quality trust, consistent quality

VIII. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that there is a significant difference in brand preference between Indian and international hair oil brands among women consumers, with Indian brands being clearly more preferred. This strong inclination toward Indian brands is primarily driven by long-standing brand trust, perceived product effectiveness, familiarity, and alignment with traditional hair care practices. Additionally, the ranking analysis confirms that Parachute Hair Oil is the most preferred Indian brand, followed by Bajaj Almond and Indulekha Bringha Hair Oil, highlighting the dominance of established and trusted brands in the market. Overall, the findings emphasize that emotional satisfaction, cultural relevance, and consistent product performance play a more decisive role than mere global branding in shaping women consumers' hair oil preferences.

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