

Psychosocial Determinants of Women Consumers' Purchase Behaviour Towards Herbal Cosmetic Products in Erode District

Dr. S. Poongodi¹, S. Barathi²

¹Associate Professor and Head, PG Department of commerce CA, Vellalar College for Women (Autonomous), Erode, Tamil Nadu, India

²Ph.D Research Scholar in Commerce, Vellalar college for women (Autonomous), Erode, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract- The increasing preference for herbal cosmetic products reflects a broader shift toward health-conscious and sustainable consumption, particularly among women consumers. This study examines the psychosocial determinants influencing women consumers' purchase behaviour towards herbal cosmetic products in Erode District. Using a descriptive and analytical research design, primary data were collected from 250 women consumers through a structured questionnaire. The study employs a robust multivariate analytical framework comprising Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to identify latent psychosocial constructs, validate the measurement model, and examine the structural relationships between these determinants and purchase behaviour. The results of EFA reveal three dominant psychosocial dimensions, namely psychological factors, social influence, and perceived product attributes. CFA confirms the reliability and validity of the identified constructs, with satisfactory model fit indices. SEM findings indicate that psychological factors exert the strongest influence on purchase behaviour, followed by perceived product attributes and social influence, all of which demonstrate statistically significant positive effects. The study provides localized empirical evidence highlighting the complex interplay of psychological and social factors in shaping women's buying decisions for herbal cosmetic products. The findings offer valuable insights for marketers, manufacturers, and policymakers to design consumer-centric strategies that align with women's preferences, enhance product acceptance, and promote sustainable consumption practices within the herbal cosmetic industry.

Keywords: Psychosocial Factors; Women Consumers; Herbal Cosmetic Products; Purchase Behaviour; Structural Equation Modeling.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the global cosmetics market has experienced significant transformation as consumers increasingly prioritize natural and sustainable product alternatives. Among these, herbal cosmetic products have emerged as a prominent category, driven by growing health consciousness, environmental concerns, and the perception that natural ingredients are safer and more wholesome than their synthetic counterparts (Chattaraj et al., 2018; Singh et al., 2025). This trend is especially notable in India, where centuries-old traditions of herbal care and Ayurveda intersect with modern consumer markets to shape unique patterns of product adoption. Empirical studies reveal that women, in particular, have been central to this shift, exhibiting strong preferences for herbal cosmetics due to their perceived benefits for skin health and wellness (Rajakrishnan & Karpagam, 2024; Chattaraj et al., 2018). Understanding the psychosocial determinants underlying such purchase behaviour is therefore essential for both scholars and practitioners aiming to decipher consumption patterns within this dynamic segment.

Consumer behaviour encompasses a complex interplay of psychological, social, and cultural forces that shape how individuals perceive, evaluate, and ultimately decide between products. Psychological

dimensions such as attitudes, beliefs, perceived behavioural control, and risk perceptions have been found to significantly influence purchase intentions for natural personal care products, including cosmetics (Tengli & Srinivasan, 2022). Studies applying structured models have shown that constructs such as environmental concern, product knowledge, and perceived behavioural control indirectly or directly affect purchase behaviour among consumers of natural and green cosmetics (Tengli & Srinivasan, 2022; Singh et al., 2025). Similarly, social factors such as influence from peers, family, and media play a crucial role in shaping attitudes toward buying decisions, particularly in markets where social norms around beauty and wellness are evolving rapidly (Singh et al., 2025). These multifaceted psychosocial factors underscore the need for robust analytical approaches that extend beyond simple frequency analyses to investigate latent constructs and their structural relationships.

The cosmetics industry's rapid digitalization has further accelerated the complexity of consumer decision-making. Digital platforms and social media have become powerful vectors of influence, disseminating product information, shaping brand perceptions, and amplifying the role of influencers in creating purchase desire among consumers (Shankar, 2024; R & R, 2023). Research in adjacent sectors suggests that attributes of social media influencers and online communication strategies significantly sway consumer intentions, particularly within fashion and beauty contexts where visual appeal and aspirational cues are prevalent (Shankar, 2024; R & R, 2023). Consequently, integrating digital influence into the broader psychosocial framework becomes imperative when examining women's purchase behaviour toward herbal cosmetics in contemporary settings.

Despite these advancements in understanding cosmetic consumer behaviour at a general level, there remains a critical research gap in localized studies that explore how psychosocial determinants specifically influence women's purchase behaviour toward herbal cosmetic products at the district or community level. Regions such as Erode District in Tamil Nadu present distinctive cultural, economic, and social landscapes that may shape consumer preferences differently than metropolitan or pan-India samples. Localized research

can uncover nuanced behavioural patterns rooted in community norms, socio-economic conditions, and region-specific influences that broader national studies might overlook.

In response, this study seeks to identify, validate, and examine the structural relationships among psychosocial determinants influencing women consumers' purchase behaviour towards herbal cosmetic products in Erode District. By employing advanced multivariate techniques such as Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the research aims to contribute methodologically rigorous and contextually grounded insights to the interdisciplinary literature on consumer behaviour and sustainable consumption. Such insights are particularly relevant for marketers, policymakers, and researchers striving to understand and engage with the evolving preferences of women in emerging consumer markets.

II. PROBLEM FOCUSED

The Indian cosmetic industry has undergone a significant shift in recent years, marked by a growing consumer preference for herbal and natural cosmetic products. This transition is largely driven by heightened awareness of health, safety, and environmental sustainability, alongside concerns regarding the adverse effects of synthetic ingredients. Women consumers, as primary decision-makers and end-users in the cosmetics market, play a pivotal role in shaping demand for herbal cosmetic products. However, their purchase behaviour is not solely guided by functional product attributes but is deeply embedded within a complex network of psychological and social influences that shape perceptions, attitudes, and intentions.

Despite the expanding market for herbal cosmetics, existing research has predominantly focused on general factors such as product quality, price, and brand image, often overlooking the underlying psychosocial determinants that drive women's purchase behaviour. Psychological factors including attitudes, beliefs, perceived safety, self-image, and personal values, combined with social influences such

as family opinions, peer groups, cultural norms, and media exposure, interact in nuanced ways to influence buying decisions. The absence of a structured understanding of these latent psychosocial constructs limits the ability of researchers and practitioners to comprehensively explain why women consumers prefer herbal cosmetic products over conventional alternatives.

Furthermore, most empirical studies in this domain have adopted broad geographic scopes or metropolitan samples, offering limited insight into localized consumer behaviour patterns. Regions such as Erode District possess distinctive socio-economic, cultural, and consumption characteristics that may significantly influence women's cosmetic purchase decisions. The lack of district-level empirical evidence restricts the development of context-specific marketing strategies and policy interventions tailored to local consumer needs.

In addition, there is a methodological gap in the application of advanced multivariate techniques capable of uncovering and validating the complex relationships among psychosocial factors and purchase behaviour. Without the use of robust analytical models, existing findings remain fragmented and insufficient for theory building.

Therefore, the problem addressed by this study lies in the inadequate empirical understanding of the psychosocial determinants influencing women consumers' purchase behaviour towards herbal cosmetic products in Erode District, necessitating a systematic and methodologically rigorous investigation to bridge this gap and contribute meaningful insights to consumer behaviour literature.

III. LITERATURE SAMPLES

Existing literature on consumer behaviour toward cosmetic products highlights a growing shift from synthetic to herbal and natural alternatives, largely driven by rising health awareness, environmental concerns, and perceived product safety. Several studies indicate that women consumers demonstrate stronger inclinations toward herbal cosmetics due to beliefs associated with skin friendliness, reduced side

effects, and alignment with traditional wellness practices (Chattaraj et al., 2018; Tengli & Srinivasan, 2022). These studies establish that purchase behaviour in this segment extends beyond functional attributes and is significantly shaped by psychological perceptions and value-driven motivations.

Psychological factors such as attitudes, beliefs, perceived quality, self-image, and trust have been identified as key determinants influencing purchase intentions for herbal and eco-friendly cosmetic products. Research on green and natural cosmetics reveals that positive attitudes toward sustainability and perceived behavioural control enhance consumers' likelihood of purchasing herbal products (Singh et al., 2025). Similarly, studies on eco-friendly consumption in Indian contexts suggest that personal values and ethical considerations play a decisive role in shaping buying decisions (Babu Ramesh et al., 2018). These findings reinforce the importance of examining latent psychological constructs rather than relying solely on observable variables.

Social influences further intensify cosmetic purchase behaviour, particularly among women. Peer influence, family opinions, cultural norms, and media exposure significantly affect brand perceptions and purchase choices. Prior research highlights the growing impact of promotional activities and social media advertising on women consumers, demonstrating how digital platforms shape attitudes and reinforce social approval mechanisms (Kalaivani & Shankar, 2017; Sivakumar & Shankar, 2019). Recent studies also emphasize the role of social media influencers in stimulating purchase desire within beauty-related categories (Shankar, 2024; R & R, 2023).

Although prior studies provide valuable insights into cosmetic consumption patterns, most research adopts broad geographic or sectoral perspectives and employs limited analytical techniques. There remains a notable gap in localized, methodologically rigorous investigations that integrate psychological and social dimensions using advanced multivariate approaches. Addressing this gap is essential to develop a comprehensive understanding of women consumers' purchase behaviour toward herbal cosmetic products

within specific regional contexts such as Erode District.

IV. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To identify, validate, and examine the structural relationships among psychosocial determinants influencing women consumers’ purchase behaviour towards herbal cosmetic products in Erode District

V. METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine psychosocial determinants influencing women consumers’ purchase behaviour towards herbal cosmetic products in Erode District. The target population comprises women consumers who regularly purchase and use herbal cosmetic products within the district. The study relies on primary data, collected through a structured

questionnaire administered using a survey method. A sample size of 250 respondents is selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure adequate representation across age, income, and educational groups.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- H₁: Psychosocial determinants have a significant influence on women consumers’ purchase behaviour towards herbal cosmetic products.
- H_{1a}: Psychological factors significantly influence purchase behaviour.
- H_{1b}: Social factors significantly influence purchase behaviour.
- H_{1c}: Perceived product attributes significantly influence purchase behaviour.

Table 1: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA): Psychosocial Determinants

Variables	Psychological Factors	Social Influence	Perceived Product Attributes
Health consciousness	0.812	–	–
Self-image	0.784	–	–
Attitude towards herbal products	0.801	–	–
Peer influence	–	0.846	–
Family opinion	–	0.793	–
Media influence	–	0.765	–
Product safety perception	–	–	0.831
Natural ingredients belief	–	–	0.812
Environmental friendliness	–	–	0.778

KMO = 0.864 | Bartlett’s Test: $\chi^2 = 1246.38, p < 0.001$ | Total Variance Explained = 68.4%

The KMO value indicates excellent sampling adequacy, and Bartlett’s test confirms the suitability of data for factor analysis. EFA extracted three distinct psychosocial factors explaining a substantial proportion of variance. This confirms the multidimensional nature of psychosocial determinants influencing herbal cosmetic purchase behaviour.

Table 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA): Measurement Model Results

Construct	CR	AVE	Standardized Loadings
Psychological Factors	0.89	0.62	0.71 – 0.84
Social Influence	0.87	0.59	0.69 – 0.85
Perceived Product Attributes	0.88	0.61	0.72 – 0.83
Purchase Behaviour	0.91	0.65	0.75 – 0.88

Model Fit Indices: $\chi^2/df = 2.41, CFI = 0.957, TLI = 0.948, RMSEA = 0.052, SRMR = 0.046$

The CFA results demonstrate strong convergent validity and internal consistency for all constructs. Fit indices fall within recommended thresholds, confirming the adequacy of the measurement model. Thus, the identified psychosocial constructs are statistically valid and reliable.

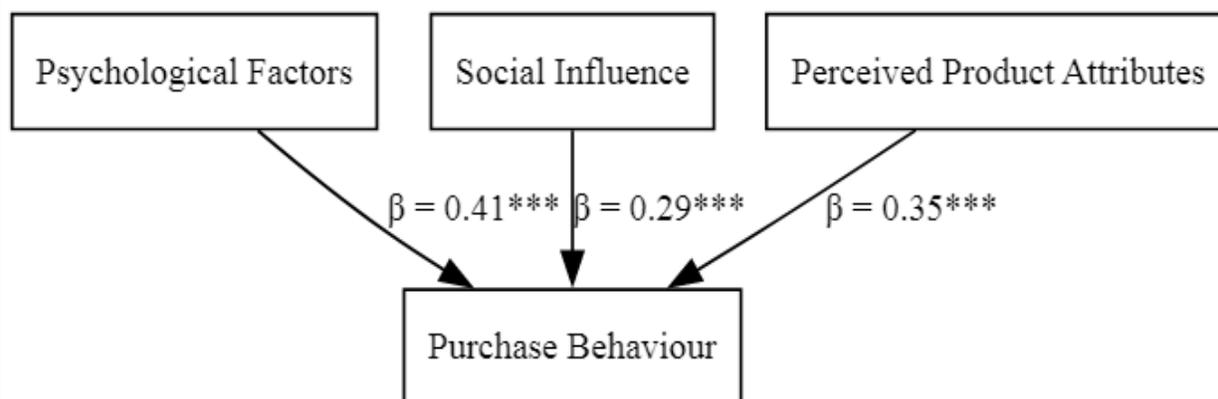
Table 3: Structural Equation Modeling (SEM): Path Analysis

Path	Standardized β	t-value	p-value	Result
Psychological Factors \rightarrow Purchase Behaviour	0.41	5.82	<0.001	Supported
Social Influence \rightarrow Purchase Behaviour	0.29	4.37	<0.001	Supported
Perceived Product Attributes \rightarrow Purchase Behaviour	0.35	5.11	<0.001	Supported

Model Fit: $\chi^2/df = 2.56$, CFI = 0.951, RMSEA = 0.054

All psychosocial determinants exert a significant positive influence on purchase behaviour. Psychological factors emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by perceived product attributes and social influence. Hence, H1, H1a, H1b, and H1c are accepted.

Figure 1: Model Fit



VII. CONCLUSION

The present study provides a comprehensive understanding of the psychosocial determinants influencing women consumers' purchase behaviour towards herbal cosmetic products in Erode District. By applying robust multivariate techniques such as Exploratory Factor Analysis, Confirmatory Factor Analysis, and Structural Equation Modeling, the study systematically identified, validated, and examined the underlying psychological and social constructs shaping consumer decisions. The findings clearly establish that women's purchase behaviour in the herbal cosmetic segment is multidimensional and extends beyond functional considerations, reflecting deeper psychological orientations and social influences.

The results reveal that psychological factors, including health consciousness, self-image, and positive attitudes toward herbal products, exert the strongest influence on purchase behaviour. This underscores the

growing importance of wellness-oriented thinking and personal values in cosmetic consumption. Perceived product attributes, particularly beliefs regarding product safety, natural ingredients, and environmental friendliness, also play a significant role, highlighting the relevance of trust and perceived authenticity in herbal cosmetic markets. Social influences, though comparatively moderate, remain significant, indicating that peer opinions, family influence, and media exposure continue to shape women's purchasing decisions.

Overall, the study contributes empirically and methodologically to the literature on consumer behaviour by offering a localized and structured examination of psychosocial determinants using advanced analytical models. The insights derived from this research are valuable for marketers, policymakers, and product developers seeking to design targeted strategies that resonate with women consumers' psychological needs and social contexts, while also

promoting sustainable and responsible consumption practices in the herbal cosmetic industry.

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