



## Brand consciousness among male consumers of cosmetic products

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### Abstract

Brand consciousness is the new trend in the consumer market. Today's male are going for brands which involves big name, trendy looks and style. The market is now dominated by brands which the people in the earlier days would not have thought of because of the prices and their mind set. The kind of fierce brand loyalty that male consumers have today for their respective brands is commendable. The trend of being brand conscious is a similarity between the young male and the working class. The prices and extensive promotions of brands are also one of the main reasons for male to become brand conscious. Male are multiple markets they buy for themselves, they buy for their families, in increasing numbers, and they buy for their business. He is the chief purchasing agent of the family. He is extremely brand – attuned and does a lot of research before buying. Thus it is high time that marketers and manufacturers realize, understand and recognize male as a lucrative segment and start developing concepts and create branded products that are male centric, which reap high growth potential. Hence the present study was undertaken to study the level of brand consciousness existing among male consumers and its effect on family buying behavior. Some of the major findings of the study were older male have high brand consciousness due to their experience with their favorite brand compared to middle aged male. High Brand Consciousness is found among male consumers employed in private organization.

### Introduction

Successful brands live in the hearts and minds of the consumer. A brand is been defined as, "an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant unique added values that match their needs most closely."(Freire and Caldwell, 2004) Brands have a social and emotional value for the users. According to a study by Mademoiselle Magazine, today's males are "more likely to know what brands they want before they go shopping."(Parks, 1997).In comparison with males, females shop more, and they search for more information when they make purchase decisions. It is assumed that females will pay more attention to brands and place more value on brand names.

Male, with him increasing financial power, has a greater discretionary income and utilizes it to satisfy wants that have gone beyond these to include holidays abroad, personal vehicles, electronic goods etc. Males are the most influential consumer group because they directly purchase or determine purchasing decisions for not less than 80 percent of all products sold. Males are multiple markets they buy for themselves, they buy for their families, in increasing numbers, and they buy for their business. He is the chief purchasing agent of the family.

He is extremely brand – attuned and does a lot of research before buying. Thus it is high time that marketers and manufacturers realize, understand and recognize male as a lucrative segment and start developing concepts and create branded products that are male centric, which reap high growth potential.

### Personal Care Product Industry

Personal care products are generally used for personal health and hygiene. It includes products like body talc, body scrub, tooth paste, tooth brush; tongue cleaner, tooth powder, bathing salts, bathing gel, essential oils, moisturizer, skin creams, face wash, hair oil, hair shampoo, hair conditioner, soap, nail and cuticle care products. The personal care product market was a success on all counts in 2005-2006 with good performances. The major demand is for the products that are of basic need for the consumers like soap, shampoo, hair oil etc. The personal care products industry consists of four major sub-sectors manufacturing a range of products. These sub-sectors are:

- Face Care Products
- Hand and Foot Care Products
- Hair Care Products
- Cosmetics

#### Factors Influencing the Growth of Personal Care Products.

The global personal care products industry is growing at a very rapid pace; some of the factors responsible are:

- Rise in consumer spending power,
- Increased demand due to people consciousness,
- Key demographic factors,
- Entry of herbal and organic products,
- Lifestyle and climactic changes, and
- Massive advertising and promotion strategy

### Literature Review

Brand consciousness means being aware of popular brands and wanting to buy particular brands rather than others (Cambridge Dictionaries Online). Someone who is brand consciousness only likes to buy products made by certain famous companies (Financial Times, Lexicon). Brand consciousness is defined as the need or desire to purchase well-known national brands, high priced brands and/or the most advertised brands. Sproles and Kendall (1986), well-known brand names often make a social statement about an individual's status, such as Rolex watches, BMW vehicles, Sony electronics, and GUCCI textiles Wanke, Bohner, and Jurkowitsch (1997). This belief may or may not be accurate or realistic; however, it reflects a specific decision-making outcome for the consumers who purchase these items. Brand consciousness plays an important part in society and breeds the belief that higher prices mean high quality. Recently, the rising of Brand consciousness has made male consumers choose to purchase their familiar and favorable brand. Therefore, if businesses want to defeat their competitors, they have to make consumers love to buy their products and brands.

Griese and Kilzer (1997); Sethuraman (2000) in their previous research has shown that various components of utility must first be identified when observing brand consciousness. In addition to aspects of quality and risk reduction, well-known brands may be preferred because of their prestige, their emotional value, or the ethical behaviour on the part of the company.

Strebinger (2001) in a study on CBC studied the social, emotional or normative motives for brand-conscious behaviour, which is defined as the strength of the consumer's conviction that well-known brands as a rule

provide greater expectancy value of quality than those which are not widely advertised or are not so well-known. But even when focusing on this quality- based dimension of brand consciousness time seems to be considerable heterogeneity, not only between consumers, but also within individual consumers. From a aggregate perspective it can be seen that the level of CBC varies greatly between product categories, being high for consumer durables than for consumer nondurables.

Lachance, J.J. Beaudoin, P. and Robitaille, J. (2003) analysed consumption attitudes by examining brand consciousness. Brand consciousness is a notion that brands play an important role in the psychological process that precedes the buying act. Gentry J.W., Putrevu

S, Schutz C.H. and Commuri S. (2001) mention brand consciousness as a method to gauge how consumers feel about or process information related to imitation brands. Consumers also feel that „only loyal or brand conscious customers can pick out differences from a counterfeit product.

Grimm (1995); Kaplitz (1997) defined brand consciousness as the belief that well- known brands are superior to less well-known brands, thus becomes one of the most important influences on the purchasing decision. While commercial market research is mainly concerned with regular observation of brand consciousness, academic research has traditionally placed more emphasis on investigation into the measurement of, motives for and effects of brand consciousness Meffert and Bruhn (1984); Kapferer and Laurent (1992); Bekmeier-Feuerhahn (1998); Burton *et al.* (1998); Sethuraman (2000); Ailawadi *et al.* (2001); Koppe (2001).

Gwen Achenreiner and Leah Rausch (2001) mentioned brand consciousness is more than an awareness or preference for brand names. It is the understanding that brand names, have personal relevance or value in that they serve as a signal of functional or symbolic value. Kapferer J.N. and Laurent, G. (1985) and Shim, S., Synder L. and Gehrt K.C. (1995) studied brand consciousness or sensitivity as a concept to manage brands. It is a way to understand consumer socialization process.

Nelson M.R. and Devanathan N. (2005) mention brand consciousness like materialism, is not the same for everyone and should be regarded as an individual difference variable. Some individuals are particularly attuned or conscious of brands in general and this consumer style impacts how likely they attend to and think favorably of brand names.

Keum H., Devanathan N., Deshpande S., Nelson M.R. and Shah D.V. (2004) in their research shows that those consumers who are brand-conscious look to and appreciate the media and celebrities for information related to the latest fashions, trends and brands. Marketing to male delivers a better return on the marketing dollar through both high customer acquisition and greater customer retention. Because male are more inclined to long term brand relationships, enhanced loyalty means every marketing dollar invested in acquiring female customers" results in a high retention rate Barletta (2003). If marketers recognize the growing importance of male consumers and cater to their needs and likings, it will surely result in a win-win situation for both.

## Objectives of the Study

- To find the reasons for brand shift existing among male consumers.
- To measure the time period of usage of selected brand of personal care products. To find the relationship of brand consciousness with consumers brand awareness, brand association, brand performance, brand knowledge and brand loyalty.
- To identify the association between brand consciousness and demographic characteristics of the male consumers.

## Research Methodology

Descriptive research was used for the study. The data was collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected with the help of a structured and undisguised questionnaire among 500 male consumers residing in Raipur in the age group 18 and above, who use personal care products such as bathing soap, talcum powder, shampoo, tooth paste. Secondary data was collected from previous dissertations/research papers/marketing journals/magazines/text books and websites. Convenience sampling technique was employed and the statistical tools used were chi square, K- means cluster analysis, ranking analysis and Co-relation analysis.

## Data Analysis

### Profile of respondents

Table 1.1 Profile of the respondents

Description	No. of respondents	% of respondents
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 25	87	17.4
26-35	35	7.0
36-45	229	45.8
Above 45	149	29.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational qualification</b>		
School level	71	14.2
Diploma/ UG	116	23.2
Post graduation	248	49.6
Professional	65	13.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	307	61.4
Unmarried	193	38.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Occupation</b>		
Govt. Employee	103	20.6
Private Employee	204	40.8
Business	40	8.0
Self employed	59	11.8
Student	94	18.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Family Income</b>		
<5000	234	46.8
5000 – 25000	101	20.2
25001 – 45000	48	9.6
45001 – 65000	23	4.6
Above 65000	94	18.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Family Size</b>		
2 Only	248	49.6
3-5	116	23.2
6 and above	136	27.2

TOTAL	500	100
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Table 1.1 shows that majority of the respondents are in the age group of 36-45 years, having post graduation as their qualification. These male are married, employed in private organization having a family income less than Rs.65000 per month and their family size consists of two members.

### Brand Awareness of Respondents towards Personal Care Products

Table 1.2 Awareness of Respondents towards Personal Care Products

Yes/No	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	447	89.4
No	53	10.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

Out of 500 respondents 447 respondents are aware about the various brands in personal care products.

### Respondents Opinion towards Brand Shift

Male respondents of various profiles are very receptive and much concerned about the type of brand they use. They look and search for brands which define their inner self. Since the market is flooded by various brands, male consumers have wider choice to select their favourite brand, which defines themselves. The following table 1.3 displays the opinion of male consumers towards brand shift.

Table 1.3 Respondents Opinion towards Brand Shift

Brand Shift	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No	441	88.2
Yes	59	11.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

From the above table, it is found that 441 of male respondents say no to brand shift followed by 59 of male say yes to brand shift of personal care products. This reveals that male consumers stay loyal to their favorite brands.

#### 1.1 Reasons for Brand Shift

The primary data regarding the reason for brand shift of personal care products is collected through ranking method. Various options like Price, Quality, Quantity, Advertisement, Influence of friends or relatives, to have change in the usage of the brand, free gifts or offers are given to the consumers to mark their preference. The ranking analysis is performed on these seven different options to ascertain the reason for brand shift. The following ranking table 1.4 displays the reason for brand shift of male consumers towards personal care products.

Table 1.4 Reasons for Brand Shift

Reason for Brand Shift	N	Mean	Rank
Price	500	3.5086	1
Quality	500	4.4029	7
Quantity	500	3.6657	2
Advertisement	500	3.9657	3
Influence of Friends or Relatives	500	4.2200	6
To have change in the usage of the brand	500	4.1857	5
Free gifts or Offers	500	4.1486	4

Source: Primary Data

From the above table 1.4, it is identified that the male consumers consider Price, quantity and advertisement to be the important reason for brand shift followed by free gifts, to have a change in the usage of the brand, influence of friends and quality to be the other reasons for brand shift when purchasing personal care products.

#### Time Period of Using the Same Brand

Brand audience can access information more quickly than ever before. They have greater choice in products than any previous generation has had. They are more discerning, savier, and better connected than generations of the past. They can voice their opinions online or elsewhere, to tell brands what they think and to choose from any competitor if one brand fails to meet their expectations. Male consumers are usually brand loyal towards personal care products. The following table 1.5 depicts the time of usage of preferred brand of personal care products.

Table 1.5 Time Period of Using the Same Brand

Personal care products	Less than 3 years	3-5 years	5-7 years	7-9 Years	More than 10 years	Total
Shampoo	10 (2%)	46 (9.2%)	13 (2.6%)	324 (64.8%)	107 (21.4%)	500 (100%)
Talcum powder	30 (6%)	60 (12%)	44 (8.8%)	264 (52.8%)	102 (20.4%)	500 (100%)
Bathing Soap	60 (12%)	226 (45.2%)	0 (0%)	181 (36.2%)	33 (6.6%)	500 (100%)
Tooth Paste	46 (9.2%)	294 (58.8%)	20 (4%)	89 (17.8%)	51 (10.25%)	500 (100%)

Source: Primary Data

From the above table 1.5, it is inferred that male consumers use their preferred brand of shampoo and talcum powder for 7-9 years, followed by male consumer using bathing soap and tooth paste of the same brand for 3-5 years. This shows that when it comes to personal care product purchase male consumer remain loyal to their respective brands at least for some years.

## 1.2 Relationship of Brand Consciousness with Brand Elements

Many national and international literatures acknowledged that Brand Consciousness and its association with brand consciousness elements will have relationship with the elements such as brand awareness, brand association, brand performance, brand knowledge, and brand loyalty. This statement is verified through parametric Karl Pearson's co-efficient of correlation. This helps to establish the nature of relationship between brand consciousness elements and their influence on brand awareness, brand association, brand performance, brand knowledge and brand loyalty.

**Hypothesis 1:** Brand awareness, brand association, brand performance and brand knowledge do not predict brand consciousness.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between brand consciousness and brand loyalty among male consumers of personal care products.

In this section the researcher is interested to establish the relationship between brand consciousness and its elements. This hypothesis is verified by parametric Karl Pearson's Co-efficient of correlation. The following table 1.6 depicts the relationship of brand consciousness and brand elements.

Table 1.6 Correlations between Brand Consciousness and Brand Elements

Elements of Brand consciousness	Correlation	Brand Awareness	Brand Association	Brand Performance	Brand knowledge	Brand Loyalty	Brand Consciousness
Brand Awareness	Pearson Correlation	1	.678(**)	.613(**)	.465(**)	.592(**)	.660(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	500	500	500	500	500	498
Brand Association	Pearson Correlation	.678(**)	1	.578(**)	.627(**)	.798(**)	.542(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	500	500	500	500	500	498
Brand Performance	Pearson Correlation	.613(**)	.578(**)	1	.480(**)	.559(**)	.449(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	500	500	500	500	500	498
Brand knowledge	Pearson Correlation	.465(**)	.627(**)	.480(**)	1	.716(**)	.436(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	500	500	500	500	500	498
Brand Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.592(**)	.798(**)	.559(**)	.716(**)	1	.530(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	500	500	500	500	500	498
Brand consciousness	Pearson Correlation	.660(**)	.542(**)	.449(**)	.436(**)	.530(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	498	498	498	498	498	498

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the above analysis it is evident from the above analysis that brand awareness, brand association, brand performance and brand knowledge predict brand consciousness and similarly there is an association between brand consciousness and brand loyalty of personal care products.

### 1.3 Segmenting Male Consumers Based on the Level of Brand Consciousness

The application of K-means cluster analysis on brand conscious elements namely brand awareness, brand association, brand performance, brand knowledge, brand loyalty classifies the sample unit into two predominant heterogeneous groups. These groups possess various heterogeneous characteristics in varying degrees of awareness, association, performance, knowledge and loyalty. These heterogeneous groups and their characteristics are identified through the average mean scores for various elements of brand awareness, brand association, brand performance, brand knowledge and brand loyalty. The following table 1.7 indicates the output of K means cluster analysis.

Table 1.7 Final Cluster Centers

	Cluster	
	1	2
Brand Awareness	3.40	4.97
Brand Association	3.35	4.94
Brand Performance	3.65	4.99
Brand Knowledge	3.16	4.90
Brand Loyalty	3.39	5.00

Source: Primary Data

Table 1.7.1 Number of Cases in each Cluster

	Clusters	Frequency	Percentage
Moderate Brand conscious		31	6.2
High Brand conscious		469	93.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary Data

From the above table 1.7.1 it is found that the average mean scores of brand awareness, brand association, brand performance, brand knowledge and brand loyalty in the first cluster is moderate. Whereas in second cluster the perception towards the elements of brand consciousness is very high.

The first group consists of 31 male respondents (6.2%) with moderate brand conscious towards personal care products. And the second cluster comprises the maximum number of 469 male respondents (93.8%) who express strong agreements for brand awareness, brand association, brand performance, brand knowledge and brand loyalty. Therefore this cluster is known as high brand conscious cluster.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant association between brand consciousness and demographic characteristics of the male consumers.

In this section the researcher is interested to establish the association between different segmentation of demographic characteristics and moderate as well as high brand conscious segmentation.

## Chi square Analysis

Chi square analysis was employed to know whether time exists a significant association between demographic variables and brand consciousness of male consumers.

Table 1.8 Showing the relationship between Demographic variables and Brand consciousness of Male

Description	Chi square value	Df	Significant value
Age	8.683(a)	3	.034
Educational	2.946(a)	3	.400
Occupation	11.406(a)	5	.044
Income	19.098(a)	4	.001
Marital Status	1.336(b)	1	.248
Family size	1.559(a)	2	.459

At 5% significant level

From the above analysis chi-square value is .034, .044, .001, are statistically significant at 5% level. Therefore it can be concluded that hypothesis 3 is rejected at 5% level and concluded that this is a significant association between the level of brand consciousness and demographic characteristics of the male consumers.

## 4. Findings

- ❖ Majority of the male are above 45years, having an educational qualification up to School level. These male are married, employed in private organization having a family income less than Rs.5000 per month.
- ❖ Family size is an important factor while purchasing personal care products. 49.6% of male consumers have two members in their family.
- ❖ Brand shift is found among 89.4% of male consumers whereas 10.6% of male consumers shift their respective brand of personal care products.
- ❖ Ranking analysis was performed to analyse the reasons for brand shift. It was found that male consumer consider price, quantity and advertisement to be the important reason for brand shift followed by free gifts, to have change in the usage of brand, influence of friends and quality to be other reasons.
- ❖ Male consumers use the preferred brand of shampoo and talcum powder for 7-9 years, followed by bathing soap and toothpaste used between 3-5 years.
- ❖ K-means cluster analysis revealed the existence of two predominant heterogeneous groups. The first group consists of 31 (61.2%) male respondents with moderate brand consciousness and 469 (93.8%) of male respondents with high brand consciousness.
- ❖ Chi-square technique was employed to know whether or not time exists a significant association between socio-economic characteristics and brand consciousness of male consumers. It is found that time is a strong association between age, occupation, Income of the male consumers and their perception towards brand consciousness. It is also evident that older male have high brand consciousness due to their experience with their favourite brand compared to middle aged male. High Brand Consciousness is found among male consumers employed in private organization.
- ❖ Male consumers having more income have moderate brand consciousness compared to male having less income possess high brand consciousness. Time is no significant association between education, family size and marital status of male consumers and the level of brand consciousness.
- ❖ Karl Pearson's co-efficient of correlation was applied to analyse the relationship of brand consciousness with its elements. Brand consciousness is positively related to brand awareness ( $r = .660$ ), brand association

( $r = .542$ ), brand performance ( $r = .449$ ), brand knowledge ( $r = .436$ ) and brand loyalty ( $r = .530$ ). It is also proved from the analysis that brand awareness, brand association, brand performance, brand knowledge predicts brand consciousness and time is an association between brand consciousness and brand loyalty of personal care products.

## Conclusion

Brands have gained renewed interest in recent years. Brand Consciousness can create advantages and benefits for the firm, the trade or the consumer. From the firm's perspective brand consciousness imparts competitive advantages to the firm. These aspects of brand consciousness typically involve uncertainties that are difficult to quantify in brand valuation studies. A strong brand can serve as an umbrella under which to launch new products or to license existing one. Brand consciousness also helps companies to endure during crisis situations, periods of reduced corporate support or shifts in consumer tastes. Strong brands also provide resistance from competitive attacks. Well-known consumer brands pay lower slotting fees and are given more half facings for new products than weaker brands. Brand consciousness also helps to make the brand dominant in the consumers mind.

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