

## Determinants of Brand Awareness towards Cosmetic Products: An Empirical Study in Himachal Pradesh

<sup>1</sup>\*Reena Kumari, <sup>2</sup> Dr. Pawan Garga, <sup>3</sup> Dr. Kusum Tripathi, <sup>4</sup> Dr. Aditya Prakash, <sup>5</sup>Ms. Sangbida Bhadury, <sup>6</sup>Dr. Atikur Rahman, <sup>7</sup> Dr. Prakash Bhadury

<sup>1</sup>PhD Scholar, Management, Himachal Pradesh University Business School, HPU, Shimla, India. Email: [reena.hpubs@gmail.com](mailto:reena.hpubs@gmail.com).

<sup>2</sup> Professor, Management, Himachal Pradesh University Business School, HPU, Shimla, India  
Email: [pkgarga@yahoo.co.in](mailto:pkgarga@yahoo.co.in)

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, English, IIMT University, Meerut, Email: [kusummsharma24@gmail.com](mailto:kusummsharma24@gmail.com)

<sup>4</sup>Associate Professor, English, NIT Jalandhar. Email: [prakasha@nitj.ac.in](mailto:prakasha@nitj.ac.in)

<sup>5</sup> Independent Researcher, Email: [sangbida1998@gmail.com](mailto:sangbida1998@gmail.com)

<sup>6</sup> Assistant Professor, History, Mangalayatan University, Aligarh. Email: [atikur.rahman@mangalayatan.edu.in](mailto:atikur.rahman@mangalayatan.edu.in)

<sup>7</sup>Independent Researcher, Email: [prakashbhadury@gmail.com](mailto:prakashbhadury@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

Brand recognition plays a crucial role in customer decision-making within the competitive cosmetics industry. This paper investigates brand awareness levels among cosmetics in Himachal Pradesh, focusing on demographic differences. A quantitative research approach was employed, collecting primary data from 450 respondents across Kangra, Mandi, and Shimla. Metrics for assessing brand awareness included brand recall, recognition, and perceived brand attributes, gathered through a structured questionnaire. The study utilised independent samples t-tests and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to analyse demographic differences, complemented by descriptive statistics for overall knowledge assessment. Findings reveal a moderate level of brand awareness among consumers, indicating that while they recognise cosmetic brands, their understanding remains limited. Significant variations in brand awareness were linked to district, educational level, and place of residence. However, no notable differences were found regarding gender, age, marital status, occupation, or income. The study offers valuable insights for marketers, emphasising the influence of regional and educational factors in fostering customer awareness. It suggests that businesses should focus more on rural areas and underrepresented consumer segments to enhance brand awareness and interaction. Overall, the findings advance understanding of consumer behaviour within the cosmetics sector.

**Keywords:** Himachal Pradesh, Brand Awareness, Consumer Behaviour, Cosmetics, Demographics, Quantitative Study.

**How to cite this article:** Kumari R, Garga P, Tripathi K, Prakash A, Bhadury S, Rahman A, Bhadury P.

Determinants of Brand Awareness Towards Cosmetic Products: An Empirical Study in Himachal Pradesh. Int J Drug Deliv Technol. 2026;16(31s):855-872. DOI: 10.25258/ijddt.16.31s.93

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### Introduction

The global cosmetics industry has significantly expanded in recent decades, becoming highly competitive and dynamic. Key factors driving this growth include rapid urbanisation, changing lifestyles, increased disposable income, and heightened awareness of personal hygiene and beauty. Cosmetics have evolved from luxury items to essential daily products that support social identity, self-expression, and confidence (Patel and Prajapati, 2020). The term "cosmetics" originates from the Greek word *kosmetikos*, highlighting the importance of beautification throughout history. Regulatory bodies like the U.S. Food and Drug Administration define cosmetics as substances used to cleanse, beautify, or enhance appearance without altering the body's structure (Patel & Prajapati, 2020). Today, cosmetics encompass a variety of products essential to everyday life, including skincare, haircare, perfumes, oral care, and personal hygiene items. In today's fast-paced world, cosmetics have become a means of self-expression and cultural identity, influencing psychological well-being beyond improving

physical appearance. The use of cosmetics is linked to higher self-esteem and better social interactions, enhancing overall quality of life. People now use cosmetics not just for aesthetics but to showcase individuality and gain social acceptance (Sharma and Miglani, 2024). The Indian cosmetics industry has transformed significantly due to globalisation and technological advances. Increased local manufacturing and demand for natural products have driven market expansion and innovation, with both national and international businesses contributing to this growth (Patel & Prajapati, 2020). Consumer behaviour is crucial to the cosmetics industry's dynamics, influencing how individuals make purchasing decisions. Factors such as economic, social, cultural, and psychological elements play a role in this behaviour. Marketers must understand these factors to develop effective product strategies (Patel & Prajapati, 2020).

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) provides insights into consumer decision-making, with attitudes, subjective norms, and behavioural control impacting purchase intentions (Ajzen, 1991). In the cosmetics

\*Author for Correspondence: [reena.hpubs@gmail.com](mailto:reena.hpubs@gmail.com).

industry, influences like media coverage and peer pressure primarily affect younger consumers (Singh et al., 2025). Brand awareness is a key factor in purchasing decisions, as it reflects consumers' ability to recognise and recall brands. Higher brand knowledge correlates with greater consumer confidence and lower perceived risk. Familiar brands are often preferred due to their association with quality and reliability, significantly impacting younger consumers' preferences (Keller, 1993; Sharma and Miglani, 2024).

Product characteristics such as quality, price, packaging, and availability significantly influence consumer behaviour alongside brand recognition. Product quality is often the most important factor in purchasing decisions, followed by brand image and price, all evaluated based on consumer expectations and perceived value. Additionally, there is a notable increase in brand awareness among consumers in various areas (Patel and Prajapati, 2020). Digital technology has transformed consumer behaviour in the cosmetics sector, with social media, online reviews, and influencer marketing emerging as key influences. Consumers increasingly rely on digital content, peer recommendations, and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) to make purchasing decisions. Media and advertising play crucial roles in driving cosmetic demand and shaping brand perceptions (Patel and Prajapati, 2020).

Interest in eco-friendly and sustainable products is on the rise as consumers become more aware of environmental issues. This shift towards natural and organic cosmetics is influenced by social factors, product knowledge, and environmental concerns (Mamta and Prakash, 2025; Singh et al., 2025). The Indian cosmetics market is diverse, with urban consumers being more brand-conscious due to higher incomes and internet access. In contrast, rural and semi-urban populations are increasingly adopting cosmetics. Understanding consumer awareness and buying behaviour is essential, as the industry evolves rapidly due to changing preferences and technological advancements. The interplay between digital media, sustainability, and product quality makes consumer decision-making complex, highlighting the need for effective marketing strategies.

## 2. Review of Literature

Brand awareness is one of the best-studied concepts in marketing because it affects the recognition, memory, evaluation, and final brand selection among consumers. It is an essential component of brand equity that is based on consumers and can usually be viewed as the extent to which individuals are able to identify a brand and also relate it to a product category (Keller, 1993, 2003; Aaker, 1996). Brand awareness reduces confusion, enhances familiarity, and chances are higher that a brand will be considered by consumers when they make purchases in competitive markets (Hoyer and Brown, 1990; Macdonald and Sharpe, 2000). Through time, it has been established that awareness influences brand relationship, trust, loyalty, and brand performance in the

long term as opposed to being a cognitive phase (Erdem and Swait, 1998; Yoo et al., 2000; Yoo and Donthu, 2001; Keller and Lehmann, 2006).

### 2.1 Brand Awareness as a Foundation of Brand Equity

Brand awareness is a fundamental concept in brand equity development, historically recognised in early branding literature. Aaker (1996) linked awareness to familiarity and consumer response, while Keller (1993) suggested it impacts brand memory through recognition and recall. Further studies support the idea that awareness facilitates perceived quality, brand associations, and loyalty rather than existing as an isolated factor (Yoo et al., 2000; Yoo and Donthu, 2001). Keller (2003) emphasised its role in enhancing brand meaning.

Additionally, research indicates that awareness affects customer choice heuristically. Hoyer and Brown (1990) found that customers tend to favour familiar brands without objective information, highlighting awareness's role in decision-making. Similarly, Macdonald and Sharp (2000) demonstrated that awareness directly influences brand choice by aiding in the retrieval and evaluation of familiar brands, ultimately impacting purchasing behaviour.

### 2.2 Brand Awareness and Consumer Behaviour

The argument that awareness is directly related to brand choice and behavioural intention is justified by the greater amount of literature on consumer behaviour. Although Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) showed that trust and affect lead to brand success with the result of loyalty, Erdem and Swait (1998) emphasised that brands serve as signals that reduce perceived risk and increase consumer confidence. All these implications lead to the conclusion that awareness improves brand meaning and increases brand-selection chances in crowded or uncertain markets.

This relationship has been proven to be important. Subsequent research on brands has also been established. Keller and Lehmann (2006) suggest that branding success depends on establishing strong consumer knowledge structures, with awareness being the first and most crucial layer of the structure. Moreover, awareness affects emotional aspects, such as brand love, authenticity, and engagement, as Machado et al. (2019) and Safer et al. (2021) note. This implies that customers will tend to become emotionally attached to the brands that they know and remember. Thus, studies indicate that the influence of awareness on consumer behaviour occurs in both affective and cognitive channels.

### 2.3 Brand Awareness in the Cosmetics and Skincare Sector

Since cosmetics and skincare products are directly associated with appearance, self-image, identity, and trust, brand recognition is even more vital in this industry. The dependability of brand familiarity, brand reputation and symbolic connotations related to the

brands is often the main factor for customers, since they cannot fully evaluate the quality of cosmetics before consuming them. Jose (2025) also proved that brand awareness and brand experience have a significant impact on loyalty in the skincare industry, and brand awareness is significant not only at the time of purchase but also at the stage of building relationships after the purchase. Similarly, Widayat et al. (2023) have found that in highly competitive beauty markets, the perceptions concerning the brand and the features of the product affect the purchasing behaviour of cosmetics.

The cosmetics industry is not like many others, as the brand is commonly linked to the societal image as well as personal expression. Brakus et al. (2009) demonstrated the significance of brand experience in shaping the sensory, emotional, and behavioural responses, which is especially relevant to cosmetic products. Sohaib et al. (2023) presented the fact that brand experience, brand love, and engagement reinforce equity formation. These findings suggest that awareness, as a concept when it comes to cosmetics, is not merely a facade but an entry point to more well-developed brand relationships and longer-term consumer loyalty.

#### **2.4 Digital Media, Influencer Marketing, and Brand Awareness**

The shift of the brand awareness creation to digital and social media platforms rather than prioritising traditional advertising can be considered one of the most notable changes over the recent years. Studies have shown that brand visibility is being impacted by influencers, interactive content, and peer-generated communication. Although Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) demonstrated that the influence of online celebrity credibility determined the purchasing choice of the customers, particularly young females, De Veirman et al. (2017) found that Instagram influencers significantly influenced the perceptions of a brand. Moreover, Lou and Yuan (2019) indicated that the message value and the source trustworthiness reinforce the customer trust in branded social media content.

This area of research has become more relevant in the case of cosmetics, where aspirational appeal and visual demonstration are of utmost importance. Sokolova and Kefi (2020) found that influencer reputation and parasocial interaction impact purchase intention, and it turns out that customers use the relations and symbolic approaches to perceiving beauty products instead of merely seeing them online. Lim et al. (2024) note that Gen Z are highly influenced by social media marketing when it comes to product awareness in the cosmetic industry. Moreover, Hossain et al. (2025) confirmed that the credibility of the celebrities, attractiveness, and social media influence on trustworthiness, perceived quality, and buy intention of natural beauty care products. All these studies demonstrate that social engagement, influencer validity, and digital visibility are becoming mediating factors in contemporary cosmetics brand recognition.

#### **2.5 Green Cosmetics, Sustainable Consumption, and Emerging Brand Awareness Patterns**

The rising interest in sustainable and eco-friendly cosmetics is a significant trend in recent literature. Consumers are increasingly associating brand familiarity with ethical and environmental implications. Amberg and Fogarassy (2019) noted that shifts in lifestyle values influence green consumer behaviour in cosmetics. Quoquab et al. (2020) found that green purchase behaviour varies among cultural groups, while Chin et al. (2018) highlighted that pro-environmental attitudes affect intentions toward green skincare products.

Recent studies reveal that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control influence organic cosmetics purchase intentions (Phu et al., 2024; Meliniasari and Masod, 2024). Bevan-Daye and Synodinos (2025) emphasised the complexity of behavioural antecedents in buying green beauty brands. Mamta and Prakash (2025) identified themes of sustainable consumption and green marketing, while Singh et al. (2025) focused on the role of subjective norms and perceived behavioural control in green cosmetic purchases. Overall, these studies indicate a growing relationship between ethical positioning and sustainability narratives in the cosmetics industry.

#### **2.6 Brand Image, Brand Meaning, and Awareness Expansion**

Studies show that a positive brand image and emotional relevance enhance brand recognition. While awareness helps remind consumers of a brand, it's the image and experience that shape preference. Chen et al. (2020) found that green brands influence purchase intentions through brand associations and attitudes, suggesting that awareness is more impactful when paired with positive emotional evaluation. Ratajczak et al. (2023) highlighted that authenticity, safety, and trend alignment are increasingly influencing the natural cosmetics market, with higher awareness leading to greater expectations. Related literature supports this idea. Isa et al. (2023) emphasised the role of symbolic and trust-related factors in halal cosmetics acceptance, while Cabeza-Ramírez et al. (2022) noted that perceived risks in influencer recommendations impact follower attitudes and intentions. Thus, an advanced understanding of brand awareness should consider social, emotional, and ethical implications alongside memory-based recognition.

#### **2.7 Recent Directions in Brand Awareness Research**

The more recent literature shows that brand awareness research assumes three primary routes. The manner in which awareness is generated is evolving and shifting with the social media presence and influencer ecosystems (De Veirman et al., 2017; Lou and Yuan, 2019; Lim et al., 2024; Hossain et al., 2025). Second, awareness is becoming more experiential due to its linkage with engagement, authenticity, and brand love (Brakus et al., 2009; Machado et al., 2019; Safer et al., 2021; Sohaib et al., 2023). Third, consumers are becoming more aware of cosmetic products of ethical

and environmentally friendly brands (Amberg and Fogarassy, 2019; Quoquab et al., 2020; Phu et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2025; Mamta and Prakash, 2025).

Nevertheless, due to the fact that it illuminates the cognitive mechanisms behind these later developments, some of the earlier branding literature is still rather significant. The theoretical context of understanding the importance of awareness in even new market environments is still furnished by Keller (1993, 2003), Aaker (1996), Hoyer and Brown (1990), Erdem and Swait (1998) and Yoo and Donthu (2001).

### 2.8 Research Gap

Although the literature has a great amount of information on brand awareness, there remain some gaps. To begin with, the number of brand awareness studies that specifically focus on the Cosmetics business is relatively low, and most of the literature on branding is either general or focused on any other industry other than the cosmetics industry. Second, instead of integrating these perspectives into a more integrated system of brand awareness, modern research in the cosmetics sector usually concentrates on digital marketing, influencer impact, or green purchasing behaviour singly. Third, although there is an evident importance of regional and sociocultural background in the determination of cosmetic use, the lack of region-specific empirical evidence concerning such a state as Himachal Pradesh remains.

Moreover, the earlier studies often focus on purchase intention or loyalty without paying sufficient attention to the complexity of brand awareness, as such, consisting of awareness of brand benefits, memory, recognition, and uniqueness. An empirical study that explores the brand awareness of the cosmetics industry in relation to customer attitude and demographic diversity in a geographically based setting is consequently clearly required. The present study will fill this gap by researching the brand awareness of cosmetic products in Himachal Pradesh through a systematic empirical framework.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the extent of brand awareness of cosmetic products among consumers in Himachal Pradesh?
2. Are there any strong relationships between demographic and regional factors and brand awareness of cosmetic products?

### Objectives of the study:

1. To establish the level of brand awareness of the consumers of the cosmetic products in Himachal Pradesh.
2. To test the aspects of brand awareness, such as brand recall, recognition and differentiation.
3. To test the contribution of the demographic variables to the brand awareness of cosmetic products.
4. To investigate the regional difference in brand awareness of consumers in the districts of Himachal Pradesh.

## 3. Research Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design

The research design employed in the current study is a quantitative and descriptive study because the research aims to examine the brand awareness of Himachal Pradesh consumers regarding cosmetic products. The level and the dimensions of brand awareness, including brand recall, recognition, distinctiveness, and brand knowledge, are the primary focus of the research.

Quantitative approach has been employed because it helps to measure and statistically analyse the responses of customers systematically. The descriptive design is appropriate for determining the trends and variations in brand awareness across different demographic groups.

Besides, the research employs statistical tools, such as the independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA, to explore the influence of demographic variables on brand awareness. The techniques will assist in identifying significant differences in brand awareness among various customer segments.

### 3.2 Data Collection Method

The main data of the research were collected through the standardised questionnaire developed specifically to measure the brand awareness of cosmetics. The questionnaire had two main sections:

#### Question 1: Brand Awareness.

This section contains statements relating to a myriad of brand awareness, such as: I recall brands

- i Recognition of brands
- ii Description: The brand personality.
- iii Differentiating your brand

#### Knowledge of the product characteristics and benefits.

The responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale, where:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral.
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly agree

The higher the score, the more brand awareness among respondents.

Alpha of Cronbach was calculated in order to check the reliability and internal consistency of the measuring scale.

#### Section 2: Demographic Profile

The second section gathered demographic data of the respondents, such as:

- i Gender
  - ii Age
  - iii Marital status
  - iv Occupation
  - v Educational level
  - vi Monthly income
- Place of residence (Rural/Urban)  
District (Kangra, Mandi, Shimla)

These variables were to be applied in order to examine variations in brand awareness among various consumer groups.

awareness among customers of cosmetic products were assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. Nine elements were analysed in this analysis. Tables 1, 2, and 3 show the reliability analysis's findings.

### 3.3 Reliability of the Scale

The reliability of the measurement scale and internal consistency of the items used in accordance with brand

**Table 1: Reliability Statistics**

Measure	Value
Cronbach's Alpha	0.818
Number of Items	9

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

### Interpretation

As indicated in Table 1, Cronbach's Alpha is 0.818 when there are nine items. This finding indicates a high level of internal consistency across the items, and it is beyond the recommended level of 0.70. Consequently, the brand awareness scale is credible, and it can be further statistically analysed.

**Table 2: Item Statistics**

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
I exactly know the brand of the product	1.96	1.034	450
I can recognise the brand among other competing brands	2.09	0.907	450
I am aware of the brand	2.07	0.918	450
The brand has a strong personality	2.18	0.860	450
The features and benefits come to mind quickly	2.28	0.986	450
I can recall the symbol/logo of the brand	2.28	0.963	450
The company creates brand awareness effectively	2.15	0.892	450
The company differentiates its products from competitors	2.16	0.874	450
The company generates recall of brand benefits	2.17	0.836	450

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

### Interpretation

The descriptive data for each item used to gauge brand awareness are shown in Table 2. According to the mean values, respondents show a modest degree of agreement with the brand awareness assertions. Diverse customer

perceptions are reflected in the standard deviation numbers, which indicate a reasonable variance in responses. Overall, the findings show that every item is pertinent and makes a significant contribution to determining customer brand awareness.

**Table 3: Item-Total Statistics**

Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
I exactly know the brand of the product	0.519	0.799
I can recognise the brand among other competing brands	0.533	0.797
I am aware of the brand	0.588	0.790
The brand has a strong personality	0.515	0.799
Features and benefits come to mind quickly	0.525	0.798
I can recall the symbol/logo	0.492	0.802
The company creates brand awareness	0.544	0.796

The company differentiates its products	0.487	0.803
The company generates a recall of benefits	0.447	0.807

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data

**Interpretation**

Table 3 contains the corrected item-total correlation and value of Cronbach's Alpha in case each of the items is dropped. All items are positively and significantly associated (more than 0.40), which indicates that all items contribute widely to the entire scale. In addition, the deletion of any element does not result in a great rise in the Alpha values of Cronbach, meaning that every single item has a positive influence on the scale's reliability. As a result, all the items are retained, and the scale provides a reliable and consistent evaluation of brand awareness by the consumers of cosmetic products.

**3.4 Sample and Participants**

The sample of the current study has 450 respondents who were selected in three districts of Himachal Pradesh: Kangra, Mandi, and Shimla. Due to the practical constraints such as time constraints, accessibility and availability of respondents, the convenience sampling method was employed. This method is commonly used when a study is needed in a consumer behaviour study with a huge and diverse population.

The sample will include respondents of different demographic backgrounds, which will ensure the presence of representatives of different categories, such as gender, age groups, education levels, income groups, and residential areas. The inclusion of both rural and urban area respondents will provide a complete understanding of consumer behaviour in the selected region. The results of the study are more credible and generalizable because the sample size is rather large.

**3.5 Data Analysis Techniques**

The collected data were subjected to analysis using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) program. Descriptive as well as inferential statistical techniques were utilised. The extent of brand awareness was

examined under descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation). The independent sample t-test was used to examine differences in brand awareness by gender and residential location. The one-way ANOVA was employed in the analysis of differences in brand awareness based on age, marital status, occupation, education level, income, and district. These statistical procedures facilitated the intensive analysis of consumer perception and helped to find significant correlations between variables as well.

**3.6 Data Analysis Techniques**

i The collected data were analysed using the aid of the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS). In order to achieve the objectives of the study, different statistical methods were applied.

ii Descriptive statistics, including the mean and standard deviation of consumer awareness of cosmetic products, were used.

iii The independent samples t-tests and the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were performed to examine the variation in brand awareness among the demographic variables.

iv To compare brand awareness between two groups, independent samples t-tests were applied, e.g., for respondents of both genders and for urban and rural consumers. One-way ANOVA was used to explore differences in brand awareness across groups of respondents, including: marital status, job, education level, monthly income, and district (Kangra, Mandi, Shimla). A significance level of 5% ( $p < 0.05$ ) was applied to all statistical tests.

**3.7 Hypotheses of the Study**

Independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA were used to test a set of hypotheses and determine whether brand awareness differs between the chosen demographic features.

**Table 1: Hypotheses**

Hypothesis	Description	Statistical Test	p-value	Decision
H1	Brand awareness differs significantly between male and female consumers	Independent t-test	0.616	Rejected
H2	Brand awareness differs significantly between rural and urban consumers	Independent t-test	0.032	Accepted
H3	Brand awareness differs significantly across different age groups	ANOVA	0.276	Rejected
H4	Brand awareness differs significantly across marital status groups	ANOVA	0.209	Rejected
H5	Brand awareness differs significantly across occupational groups	ANOVA	0.933	Rejected

<b>H6</b>	Brand awareness differs significantly across districts	ANOVA	0.000	Accepted
<b>H7</b>	Brand awareness differs significantly across educational levels	ANOVA	0.013	Accepted
<b>H8</b>	Brand awareness differs significantly across income groups	ANOVA	0.258	Rejected

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data

**Interpretation**

Table 1 provides details of the hypotheses tested in the study, the statistical tests used, the p-values obtained, and the conclusions made. The results indicate that place of residence, district, and educational level have a considerable influence on brand awareness, considering that the p-values are less than 0.05. On the other hand, age, gender, occupation, income, and marital status do not indicate any significant variances. This implies that there is a rather high homogeneity in brand awareness among these demographic groups. These results show that geographical and educational variables influence

brand awareness more significantly than the rest of the demographic variables.

**4. Data Analysis, Results and Interpretation**

**4.1 Brand Awareness**

Brand awareness was determined using nine statements that addressed the ability of consumers to identify, recall, recognise, and differentiate cosmetic brands. Mean and the standard deviation were computed as the descriptive statistics using the rating of the respondents to each statement. Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics of items on brand awareness.

**Table 1: Brand Awareness**

Statement	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
I am able to recall the symbol/logo of the brand	450	2.28	0.963
The features and benefits of the product come to my mind quickly	450	2.28	0.986
The brand has a strong personality	450	2.18	0.860
The company has been able to generate a recall of brand benefits	450	2.17	0.836
The company has been able to differentiate the product from competing brands	450	2.16	0.874
The company has been able to create brand awareness in the minds of consumers	450	2.15	0.892
I can recognize the brand among other competing brands	450	2.09	0.907
I am aware of the brand	450	2.07	0.918
I exactly know the brand of the product	450	1.96	1.034

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** As indicated in Table 1, the means of brand awareness items range between 1.96 and 2.28, which implies that the degree of brand awareness among the respondents is relatively low to moderate. The highest mean scores were observed with the items I can remember the symbol/logo of the brand and The features and benefits of the product come to my mind quickly (M = 2.28 each), which indicates that logo recall and product association are relatively more impressive brand awareness elements. The lowest mean score (M = 1.96) was achieved with the statement related to the exact

knowledge of the product brand, which means that the ability of consumers to identify the brands precisely is still rather weak. In short, the findings indicate that the respondents possess a certain level of familiarity with the cosmetic brands, but the level of their awareness and recognition towards those brands is not very strong.

**4.2 Brand Awareness by Gender**

To determine whether there are differences in brand awareness between males and female respondents, an independent samples t-test was conducted. Table 2 demonstrates the group statistics.

**Table 2: Brand Awareness by Gender**

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
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Male	162	2.1296	0.66716
Female	288	2.1586	0.53783

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** The average brand awareness score of female respondents (M = 2.1586, SD = 0.53783) was a little higher than that of male respondents (M = 2.1296, SD = 0.66716) as shown in Table 2. The two groups also have minor differences, which indicate that the level of brand awareness between male and female consumers is almost equal.

**Table 3: Independent Samples t-test for Brand Awareness by Gender**

Variable	Levene's Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Brand Awareness (Equal variances assumed)	0.068	-0.501	448	0.616	-0.02894

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** The test by Levene gave a significance value of 0.068, which is more than 0.05; thus, it was assumed that the variances were equal. The result of the t-test shows that the difference in brand awareness between males and female respondents does not have significant values (t = -0.501, p = 0.616). In the present study, therefore, gender appears to play no significant role with regard to brand awareness.

### 4.3 Brand Awareness by Place of Residence

The independent samples t-test was conducted to determine whether there is a difference in brand awareness between the rural and urban respondents. The descriptive statistics are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Brand Awareness by Place of Residence**

Place of Residence	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Rural	406	2.1286	0.56001
Urban	44	2.3283	0.78016

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** According to Table 4, the mean brand awareness score for urban respondents (M = 2.3283, SD = 0.78016) is higher than that of rural respondents (M = 2.1286, SD = 0.56001). It implies that the urban consumers may be more exposed to the cosmetic brands because of their presence in retail, advertising campaigns, and online.

**Table 5: Independent Samples t-test for Brand Awareness by Place of Residence**

Variable	Levene's Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Equal variances assumed	0.000	-2.151	448	0.032	-0.19966
Equal variances not assumed.	—	-1.652	47.921	0.105	-0.19966

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** Since the outcome of the Levene test is significant (p = 0.000), the assumption of equal variances is not possible. Thus, the appropriate row to look at is that of equal variances not assumed. On the basis of this finding, the

brand awareness that exists between the rural and urban respondents is not significantly different (t = -1.652, p = 0.105). Although the urban respondents are higher in the mean score, place of residence does not play an important role in brand awareness in this research.

were categorized into different age groups. Table 6 presents the mean scores and standard deviations.

#### 4.4 Brand Awareness by Age Group

To explore the possibility of the difference in brand awareness between different age groups, the respondents

**Table 6: Brand Awareness by Age Group**

Age Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
18–25	222	2.1757	0.55691
25–35	171	2.0884	0.57025
35–50	42	2.1799	0.77174
50 and above	15	2.3333	0.60858
Total	450	2.1481	0.58710

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** As shown in Table 6, the mean brand awareness score was highest for respondents aged 50 and over ( $M = 2.3333$ ,  $SD = 0.60858$ ) and lowest for those aged 25–35 ( $M = 2.0884$ ,  $SD = 0.57025$ ). Although one could trace some difference between various age groups, it is not significant.

**Table 7: ANOVA for Brand Awareness by Age Group**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta	Eta Squared
Between Groups	1.336	3	0.445	1.295	0.276	0.093	0.009
Within Groups	153.429	446	0.344				
Total	154.765	449					

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** The ANOVA result demonstrates that the difference in brand awareness between various age groups is not significant ( $F = 1.295$ ,  $p = 0.276$ ). The eta squared of 0.009 is insignificant. Therefore, the age factor is not of much influence on brand awareness among the respondents.

#### 4.5 Brand Awareness by Marital Status

Married, unmarried, divorced, and widowed were the categories in which the respondents were classified to explore whether there were any differences in brand awareness depending on marital status. The group statistics are shown in Table 8.

**Table 8: Brand Awareness by Marital Status**

Marital Status	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Married	111	2.1872	0.70956
Unmarried	329	2.1435	0.53758
Divorce	5	2.1111	0.80508
Widow	5	1.6222	0.32961

<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>2.1481</b>	<b>0.58710</b>
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Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** Table 8 showed that the mean brand awareness was highest among the married respondents (M = 2.1872, SD = 0.70956) and lowest among widowed respondents (M = 1.6222, SD = 0.32961). The categories of widows and divorce, though, are not very many respondents, so one must take these differences with care.

**Table 9: ANOVA for Brand Awareness by Marital Status**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta	Eta Squared
Between Groups	1.566	3	0.522	1.520	0.209	0.101	0.010
Within Groups	153.199	446	0.343				
Total	154.765	449					

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** The outcome of ANOVA shows that the difference in brand awareness between groups based on marital status is not statistically significant ( F = 1.520, p = 0.209). Also, the effect size is minimal (Eta squared = 0.010). In this research, therefore, brand awareness does not depend greatly on marital status.

#### 4.6 Brand Awareness by Occupation

To determine the effects of occupation on brand awareness, the respondents were classified into different occupational groups. The descriptive statistics are shown in Table 10.

**Table 10: Brand Awareness by Occupation**

Occupation	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Govt. Employee	42	2.1402	0.59914
Private Employee	112	2.1419	0.71593
Businessman	47	2.0827	0.51934
Others	247	2.1624	0.53453

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** As illustrated in Table 10, the “Others” category had the highest mean brand awareness score (M = 2.1624, SD = 0.53453), while businessmen had the lowest (M = 2.0827, SD = 0.51934). However, differences between professional categories are not significant.

**Table 11: ANOVA for Brand Awareness by Occupation**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta	Eta Squared
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Between Groups	0.459	5	0.092	0.264	0.933	0.054	0.003
Within Groups	154.307	444	0.348				
Total	154.765	449					

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** The obtained results of ANOVA show that occupation does not significantly influence brand awareness ( $F = 0.264, p = 0.933$ ). The t-test value of eta-squared is also 0.003, which indicates the effect is negligible. Consequently, occupation is not an effective distinguishing variable of brand awareness among the respondents.

#### 4.7 Brand Awareness by District

To explore the possible differences in brand awareness across the districts, the respondents were identified as per Kangra, Mandi and Shimla. Table 12 indicates the average scores and standard deviations.

Table 12: Brand Awareness by District

District	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Kangra	203	1.9666	0.43448
Mandi	135	2.4148	0.74957
Shimla	112	2.1558	0.47504
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>2.1481</b>	<b>0.58710</b>

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** Table 12 shows that there is a large difference in brand awareness by district. Respondents from Mandi had the highest mean brand awareness score ( $M = 2.4148, SD = 0.74957$ ), followed by those from Shimla ( $M = 2.1558, SD = 0.47504$ ). Conversely, the

respondents of Kangra obtained the lowest mean score ( $M = 1.9666, SD = 0.43448$ ). This implies that differences at the district level might exist regarding exposure to brands, marketing efforts or market access.

Table 13: ANOVA for Brand Awareness by District

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta	Eta Squared
Between Groups	16.296	2	8.148	26.304	0.000	0.324	0.105
Within Groups	138.469	447	0.310				
Total	154.765	449					

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** The ANOVA result indicates that the difference in brand awareness across districts is significantly different ( $F = 26.304, p = 0.000$ ). The eta squared value is 0.105, which implies a moderate effect size. Therefore, the district is an important demographic determinant that influences brand awareness within the study area. This means that the geographical position plays an important role in the perception and recognition among consumers of cosmetic brands.

#### 4.8 Brand Awareness by Educational Level

To analyse the effect of the level of education on brand awareness, the respondents were grouped into undergraduates, graduates, postgraduates and professionals. The group statistics are shown in Table 14.

**Table 14: Brand Awareness by Educational Level**

Educational Level	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Under Graduate	31	2.3011	0.83306
Graduate	125	2.1964	0.62872
Post Graduate	216	2.0586	0.50435
Professional	78	2.2578	0.58726
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>2.1481</b>	<b>0.58710</b>

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** Table 14 indicates that brand awareness is somewhat different in various educational groups. The mean score was highest among undergraduate respondents (M = 2.3011, SD = 0.83306), followed by professional respondents (M = 2.2578, SD = 0.58726). The lowest mean was that of postgraduate respondents (M = 2.0586, SD = 0.50435).

**Table 15: ANOVA for Brand Awareness by Educational Level**

Source	Sum Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta	Eta Squared
Between Groups	3.685	3	1.228	3.627	0.013	0.154	0.024
Within Groups	151.080	446	0.339				
Total	154.765	449					

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** The result of ANOVA shows that the difference in brand awareness of various levels of education is statistically significant (F = 3.627, p = 0.013). Even though the effect size is small (Eta squared = 0.024), it seems that educational level has a significant impact on brand awareness. The result suggests that differences in education level can be a factor that

determines how consumers get exposure to, understand and engage with cosmetic brands.

**4.9 Brand Awareness by Monthly Income**

To examine how the monthly income influences brand awareness, the respondents were grouped into different groups based on income levels. The descriptive statistics are shown in Table 16.

**Table 16: Brand Awareness by Monthly Income**

Income per Month	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Below 25,000	176	2.1408	0.56857
25,000–50,000	196	2.1117	0.57559
50,000–1,00,000	52	2.2927	0.67498
1,00,000 & above	26	2.1838	0.59872

\*Author for Correspondence: [reena.hpubs@gmail.com](mailto:reena.hpubs@gmail.com).

<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>2.1481</b>	<b>0.58710</b>
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Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** As it is demonstrated in Table 16, the surveyed respondents with a monthly income between 50,000 and 1,000,000 presented the highest mean brand awareness score (M = 2.2927, SD = 0.67498), and those with a monthly income between 25,000 and 50,000 reported the lowest mean score (M = It has certain variations, but these are not really substantial).

**Table 17: ANOVA for Brand Awareness by Monthly Income**

Source	Sum Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta	Eta Squared
Between Groups	1.390	3	0.463	1.348	0.258	0.095	0.009
Within Groups	153.375	446	0.344				
Total	154.765	449					

Source: Author’s Compilation from Primary Data.

**Interpretation:** As per the ANOVA value, there is no statistically significant difference between income groups in terms of brand awareness (F = 1.348, p = 0.258). Also, the eta squared figure is 0.009, which means that the effect size is very small. Therefore, the monthly income of the respondents does not influence the brand awareness significantly.

**4.10 Overall Findings of Brand Awareness Analysis**

The general discussion indicates that the level of brand awareness among respondents in relation to cosmetic products is low to moderate. Among the demographic variables under analysis, the only ones that have statistically significant differences in brand awareness are district and educational level; the other variables, including gender, place of residence, age, marital status, occupation, and monthly income, have no differences. This implies that the geographical location and education are more important in explaining the differences in the awareness of cosmetic brands among consumers in the study area.

**5. Discussion**

This research was to examine the brand awareness of cosmetic products among the consumers of Himachal Pradesh by examining different facets of brand recognition, recall and differentiation. Besides, the article examined how brand awareness differs among various demographic factors, including gender, place of residence, age, marital status, occupation, district, educational level and monthly income. The findings provide useful insights into how demographic variables influence brand perception and the degree of consumer awareness.

**5.1 Overall Level of Brand Awareness**

The study findings reveal that consumer brand awareness in the cosmetics sector is low to moderate, with mean scores between 1.96 and 2.28. Respondents exhibit basic familiarity with brands, remembering logos and associating product features, but their ability to accurately identify and recognise specific brands is lacking. This indicates that while cosmetic brands have some market presence, they have not achieved strong cognitive positioning among consumers. The lower-than-expected average values suggest that brand awareness is still developing and requires more effective marketing communication. This may be due to limited exposure to advertisements, particularly in semi-urban and rural areas, and lower engagement with digital media.

**5.2 Gender and Brand Awareness**

The results of the independent samples t-test indicate that the gender variable has no significant influence on brand awareness of the consumers. Despite the fact that the average scores of female respondents were a bit higher than those of male respondents, this difference was statistically insignificant (p > 0.05). This observation indicates that both male and female consumers can share an equal measure of exposure to cosmetic brands, probably because of the ubiquity of the products and the increasing role of the media in reaching diverse consumer groups. It implies that marketing plans that aim at increasing brand awareness need not be gender-based.

### 5.3 Place of Residence and Brand Awareness

The analysis of brand awareness shows that urban respondents have slightly higher mean scores than rural respondents, but this difference is not statistically significant. Urban consumers may experience more brand exposure due to better access to retail and advertising; however, the gap in brand awareness perception is minimal. This suggests that brands are increasingly reaching rural areas, likely due to the rise of digital media, online shopping, and greater availability of cosmetic products.

### 5.4 Age and Brand Awareness

The results of ANOVA show that age does not significantly affect the brand awareness of consumers. Although the respondents aged 50 years and above had a slightly higher mean score, the age differences were not found to be significant. This observation means that the brand awareness is relatively similar among different age brackets, which means that consumers in all age brackets are equally exposed to cosmetic brands. Age gap in brand awareness could be gradually reducing with the increased power of social media, digital marketing and mass media communication.

### 5.5 Marital Status and Brand Awareness

The segmentation based on marital status indicates that there were some differences in the mean scores, with the married respondents having a slightly higher brand awareness as compared to other categories. The outcomes of ANOVA, however, confirm that these differences are not significant. This means that the marital status does not play a crucial role in brand awareness. Irrespective of their marital status, consumers appear to have a similar level of awareness of cosmetic brands. It could be because of regular exposure to marketing communication and product availability.

### 5.6 Occupation and Brand Awareness

The findings indicate that brand awareness does not significantly differ across occupational categories. Although there are slight variations in average scores among government employees, private employees, and businessmen, the ANOVA test shows these differences are not statistically significant. This suggests that occupation does not notably influence brand awareness, possibly due to the high availability of information online, which lessens professional disparities in recognising cosmetic brands.

### 5.7 District and Brand Awareness

The findings indicate that brand awareness does not significantly differ across occupational categories. Although there are slight variations in average scores among government employees, private employees, and businessmen, the ANOVA test shows these differences are not statistically significant. This suggests that occupation does not notably influence brand awareness, possibly due to the high availability of information online, which lessens professional disparities in recognising cosmetic brands.

### 5.8 Educational Level and Brand Awareness

The results indicate that education level significantly influences brand awareness ( $p < 0.05$ ). Individuals with undergraduate and professional qualifications demonstrate higher awareness than those with postgraduate degrees. This suggests that education enhances consumers' information processing, brand recognition, and product recall. Those with specialised education may have better access to information and media, leading to increased brand awareness. This highlights the importance of consumer knowledge in brand awareness.

### 5.9 Monthly Income and Brand Awareness

The analysis of the brand awareness of different income groups shows that there are certain differences in average scores, though the results of ANOVA show that the differences are insignificant. This observation means that brand awareness is not largely influenced by the level of income. Apparently, consumers in different income groups are equally exposed to cosmetic brands. This can be explained by the availability of goods in various price ranges and the wide coverage of advertisements and online media.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper explores brand recognition of cosmetic products among consumers in Himachal Pradesh, focusing on brand recall, recognition, and differentiation. It assesses variations in brand awareness based on demographics such as gender, age, and income. The findings indicate low to moderate brand awareness, with consumers primarily familiar with logos and product associations rather than accurate brand recognition. Most demographic factors showed minimal impact on brand awareness, suggesting a mass market approach rather than targeting specific segments. However, district and education level significantly influenced brand awareness, highlighting the importance of geographical factors and information processing skills. Overall, awareness is shaped by both exposure and the consumer's ability to comprehend brand-related information.

This study highlights the importance of brand awareness in consumer-based brand equity, particularly in new and regionally focused markets. It emphasises contextual factors over traditional demographics in explaining brand awareness differences in semi-urban and rural areas. Cosmetic companies should implement region-specific marketing strategies, invest in consumer education, and improve retail presence in areas with low brand awareness. Increasing brand knowledge and differentiation is crucial, as higher awareness can positively influence purchasing behaviour. The study suggests that while consumers' underlying brand awareness is high, enhancing its depth and quality is possible through focused communication, regional differentiation, and education, ultimately strengthening brand recall, recognition, trust, preference, and long-term success in the competitive cosmetics market.

## 7. Managerial Implications

**7.1 Strategic Enhancement of Brand Awareness:** The study indicates that brand awareness among consumers is low to moderate, suggesting that current marketing efforts are insufficient for strong brand recall and differentiation. Cosmetic companies need to adopt more strategic communication methods. Managers should focus on high-frequency, consistent marketing campaigns that reinforce brand identity through logos, packaging, and colour schemes. To strengthen memory structures and keep brands top-of-mind during decision-making, it's essential to reiterate brand cues across various communication channels. Organisations should aim to create deep, lasting brand memories rather than just basic awareness.

**7.2 Regional and District-Level Marketing Strategies:** The study finds that the district should be a key factor in brand awareness, as geographical differences significantly influence consumer perceptions. This suggests that uniform marketing strategies are ineffective across regions. Instead, firms need to adopt region-specific strategies that consider market development, infrastructure, and consumer exposure. Localised marketing, using local languages, and targeting audiences through area-specific media can enhance brand awareness. Additionally, improving retail presence and distribution in less-aware regions can help diminish disparities and boost overall market penetration.

**7.3 Consumer Education and Informational Marketing:** The fact that educational level has a significant influence on brand awareness supports the fact that consumers can process and interpret the information about the brands. This means that exposure is not the only factor that affects awareness, but also cognitive comprehension. Therefore, marketers should be more concerned with educational and informational marketing strategies which enhance consumers' understanding of product features, benefits and positioning of the brand. Through the use of digital means to provide tutorials and demonstrate and explain the content, one can bridge the gap between simple awareness of the brand and a more in-depth knowledge of it. The engagement with consumers can be strengthened, and brand awareness can be reinforced by making communication easier and increasing the availability of information.

**7.4 Leveraging Digital Media and Influencer Marketing:** The modern marketing landscape emphasises the importance of digital media in shaping consumer perceptions and brand awareness. Businesses should leverage social media and influencer marketing to boost engagement and interaction. Digital channels facilitate personalised communication, allowing brands to connect more closely with consumers. Influencer partnerships and online advertising can significantly enhance brand awareness, especially among younger

audiences, while also fostering emotional connections with the brand.

**7.5 Strengthening Brand Differentiation and Positioning:** The study shows that while consumers are generally aware of cosmetic brands, they struggle to distinguish between them, indicating weak brand positioning. To address this, companies should build a strong and differentiated brand identity by clearly articulating their value propositions, product quality, and unique features. Emphasizing these aspects can help consumers better differentiate brands. Strengthening brand positioning is essential for turning casual consumers into preferred and loyal ones.

**7.6 Integrated Mass and Targeted Marketing Approach:** The findings show that most of the demographic variables, such as gender, age, occupation and income, do not have a significant influence on brand awareness. This implies that a mass marketing approach can be used by companies to reach a large number of people. This strategy ought to be complemented by region and educational level-specific approaches, which have been identified as significant. The ability to reach a broad audience and target it strategically will enable the companies to maximise the efficiency of their marketing efforts and meet the specific needs of consumers, with an integrated marketing approach.

**7.7 Strategic Implications for Long-Term Brand Development:** Overall, the study indicates the importance of cosmetic companies transitioning away from one-size-fits-all awareness efforts to more targeted approaches that are informed by knowledge and region-specific. There is a need to create brand awareness on a wide and deep level to facilitate consumer engagement, brand equity, and sustainable competitive advantage. Firms that strive to gain a better understanding of consumer behaviour and develop a region-based strategy will stand a better opportunity to succeed in the highly competitive cosmetics market.

## 8. Limitations and Future Research

### 8.1 Limitations of the Study

While this study offers valuable insights into cosmetics brand awareness, it has several limitations. First, the use of a convenience sampling technique may affect the sample's representativeness, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Second, the research focuses on three districts in Himachal Pradesh—Kangra, Mandi, and Shimla—so the results may not apply to different sociocultural and economic contexts. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data through structured questionnaires can introduce biases such as social desirability and recollection errors, impacting the accuracy of the responses. Finally, the cross-sectional research design captures consumer opinions at a single point in time, failing to account for changes in brand awareness and consumer behaviour influenced by market trends and technological advancements.

Finally, unless other criteria are considered, such as brand loyalty, the intention to purchase, the perceived quality and the trust against the brand, the study primarily focuses on brand awareness as an independent construct. When these factors are not present, it proves harder to achieve a greater understanding of customer behaviour and the overall effect of brand awareness on purchasing habits.

## 8.2 Future Research Directions

i To enhance the representativeness and validity of the findings, future research could adopt probability-based sampling methods like stratified or random sampling. Additionally, including more states or districts could broaden the scope of the research. By carrying out cross-regional and cross-cultural research, researchers can expand the geographic reach. Such comparative studies would allow gaining deeper insights into the influence of regional and cultural factors on brand recognition and customer behaviour.

ii Third, it can be stated that a longitudinal research design could be applied in the future to investigate the change of brand awareness in the long run. This method would allow researchers to record the impact of the changing consumer trends, digital transformation, and market conditions on the brand perception.

iii The inclusion of constructs like brand loyalty, purchase intention, brand image, perceived quality, and customer happiness can enhance research and provide a clearer understanding of how brand awareness influences behaviour.

iv Future research should examine the effects of social media, influencer marketing, and digital marketing on brand awareness in cosmetics, where visual impact is essential. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods, such as focus groups and interviews, could offer deeper insights into customer attitudes and experiences with cosmetic brands.

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