

"Do Demographics Matter? An Empirical Analysis of Consumer Behaviour in the Indian Hair Care Market: Evidence from Himachal Pradesh"

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ABSTRACT

Background

This paper, looking at the effect of demographic factors in Himachal Pradesh, examines the factors that affect consumer behaviour as far as shampoo products are concerned.

Materials and Methods

Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire that involved 450 respondents in three districts, namely Kangra, Mandi and Shimla, to design a quantitative study. The survey evaluates the customer satisfaction concerning the key product attributes such as overall hair wellness, dandruff management, smoothness and cleanness. The data analysis was done using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) to examine differences in consumer behaviour across demographic groups by using descriptive statistics, independent samples t-tests, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Results

The findings indicate that most demographic variables, including gender, the place of residence, age, marital status, occupation, education, and income, do not have a statistically significant influence on consumer behaviour. Conversely, geographic variation by district indicates a significant influence, which implies the significance of location-specific preferences in making purchasing decisions.

Conclusion

Offering genuine statistics of a local environment and providing valuable information regarding the little impact of traditional demographic characteristics on consumer choice, the study contributes to the already existing body of knowledge. Practically speaking, the results indicate that instead of depending only on demographic segmentation, marketers should give priority to spatially customised initiatives. The research will help us understand customer behaviour in the hair care industry and pave the way to further research in developing countries.

Keywords: Himachal Pradesh, consumer behaviour, shampoo products, demographic factors, hair care, ANOVA, t-test, regional analysis, consumer preferences.

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1. Introduction:

The global market of personal care and cosmetics has grown rapidly over the past few years due to the changing lifestyle of consumers, the growing interest in grooming and cleanliness, and the growing popularity of digital technologies. Because they are frequently used and are directly related to one's look, health, and self-confidence, hair care products, especially shampoo, represent a sizable portion of this market. Shampoo is also being considered by contemporary consumers as a multifunctional product that can provide additional

benefits like dandruff care, reduce hair loss, provide nutrients to the scalp, etc. This shift in the personal care industry can be explained by the emergence of the value-based consumer behaviour and the heightened expectations of the product's performance and differentiation (Mishra et al., 2021; Paul et al., 2021; Sharma and Singh, 2021).

In the hair care industry, consumer behaviour is intrinsically complicated and influenced by a variety of social, psychological, and functional elements. Before making a purchase, consumers evaluate a variety of product features, such as quality, brand

image, ingredients, price, packaging, and perceived effectiveness, according to recent empirical studies (Kaur & Kaur, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2023). Additionally, by making it easier for consumers to obtain product information, online reviews, and influencer endorsements, the quick growth of digital platforms has drastically changed how consumers make decisions. As a result, social influence and digital communication now play a bigger part in influencing customer attitudes and purchase intentions (Naeem, 2021; Kumar et al., 2022; Verma and Yadav, 2023).

The Theory of Planned Behaviour provides a quite popular theoretical framework to understand consumer decision-making. This theory believes that behavioural intentions are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. The impact of positive attitudes towards product quality, environmental sustainability, and brand trust on customer purchase intentions has been demonstrated to be significant in the case of personal care goods (Jaini et al., 2020; Yadav and Pathak, 2021; Paul et al., 2021). Furthermore, new research highlights how consumer behaviour in the beauty and hair care industry is influenced by emotional and experiential elements such as self-image, perceived social approval, and identity expression (Rathore and Panwar, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2023).

Demographic information, such as gender, age, income, education, and employment, is often used in market segmentation strategies that have traditionally been viewed as influential factors influencing customer behaviour. Nevertheless, the outcomes of the recent studies on their explanatory worth are conflicting. Although a part of the literature suggests that demographic factors significantly influence consumer purchasing behaviour in the cosmetics sector (Sharma and Singh, 2021; Kaur and Kaur, 2022), other studies argue that the consumer purchasing behaviour is increasingly being driven by psychographic factors, lifestyle preferences, and contextual influences (Quoquab et al., 2020; Kumar et al., 2022). This gap indicates the need to conduct more empirical studies to clarify the role of demographic variables in specific product categories.

Shampoo remains a neglected product category despite increasing research on consumer behaviour in cosmetics and personal care. Most studies are general and do not focus on individual consumption patterns and functional demands specific to hair care. There is also a lack of regional studies, particularly in places like Himachal Pradesh, where socioeconomic and geographic factors influence consumer decisions. Furthermore, few studies use inferential statistics to explore demographic differences in consumer behaviour, such as t-tests and ANOVA.

The proposed research aims to fill these research gaps by studying the factors that determine consumer behaviour as relates to shampoo products and studying the effects of demographic factors on consumer purchase behaviour in Himachal Pradesh. The present research provides empirical data on consumer behaviour within a regional context in terms of a quantitative research design and adequate statistical instruments. The findings are expected to contribute to the literature that already exists by providing a deeper understanding of the importance of demographic features and real-world applications to marketers to create effective and geographically-based strategies in the competitive hair care market.

2. Review of Literature

Due to growing market rivalry, changing customer tastes, and quick digital development, consumer behaviour in the personal care and haircare sector has drawn a lot of scholarly attention. Being a need-based fast-moving consumer good, the shampoo products are influenced by several factors, including the quality of the products, brand image, price, advertisement, and demography. The process by which people choose, buy, utilise, and assess goods to meet their requirements is referred to as consumer behaviour (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Solomon, 2018). Recent research indicates that consumer decisions regarding personal care products are not only functional but also psychological and social (Amberg and Fogarassy, 2019; Jaini et al., 2020), and consumers also relate the product to their identity, lifestyle, and well-being. Also, the use of social media and digital platforms has radically transformed the perceptions and evaluation of customers when it comes to shampoo goods (Wang et al., 2021; Kumar et al., 2022).

2.1 Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo and Personal Care Products

Shampoo product consumer behaviour is influenced by both utilitarian and hedonistic reasons. According to Jaini et al. (2020), consumers are moving towards personal care products that portray their ideals concerning the environment and health awareness. On the same note, Quoquab et al. (2020) found that sustainability and ethical consumption play a significant role in influencing individuals to purchase personal care products.

Research conducted by Wang et al. (2021) has found that online reviews and digital exposure raise product awareness and influence purchase intention. Kumar et al. (2022) claim that interaction in social media and influencer marketing has a significant impact on consumer perceptions of the brands of shampoo. Moreover, Chakraborty and Paul (2022) observed that customers often depend on the experience and product enjoyment to make purchase decisions of the products in the form of shampoo.

2.2 Product Quality and Perceived Effectiveness

One of the most important factors influencing consumer behaviour is product quality. The study by

Khan et al. (2021) indicates that consumers focus on functional capabilities of smooth hair, dandruff-free and scalp-healthy when purchasing shampoo products. Similarly, Patel and Sharma (2022) found that the perceived product effectiveness has a significant effect on brand preference and repurchase intention.

Also, it is suggested that people evaluate the quality of shampoos according to their long-term effects and the safety of the ingredients (Ghazali et al., 2017; Zollo et al., 2021). Moreover, quality in perception is an important element in the competitive market as it directly influences customer satisfaction and loyalty.

2.3 Brand Image, Trust, and Loyalty

Brand image and trust are major factors that can impact the decisions made by consumers. High brand equity enhances consumer value and loyalty, as Aaker (1997) explains. Singh et al. (2023) found that brand trust significantly influences the purchase intention and repeat purchasing behaviour in the case of shampoo products.

According to Rishi (2013), shampoo is a type of product that is based on trust, and customers mostly depend on the familiarity of the brand and promotion. Additionally, new research indicates that positive word-of-mouth and sustained loyalty are influenced by brand attachment and emotional connection (Confente & Scarpi, 2021).

2.4 Price and Affordability

Price is one of the factors, particularly in emerging countries. Kotler and Keller (2016) argue that customers are rational in evaluating products in terms of perceived value as a balance between the affordability and quality. Gupta et al. (2022) note that Indian consumers are highly price-sensitive, especially when it comes to FMCGs such as shampoo.

Additionally, Yadav and Pathak (2017) also discovered that price perception mediates the relationship between purchase intention and actual purchasing behaviour. Although the consumers are more inclined towards purchasing high-end items, they often opt to buy cheaper products due to a lack of financial means.

2.5 Advertising, Social Media, and Influencer Marketing

Consumer behaviour is greatly influenced by social media and advertising. Hajli (2020) discovered that consumer trust and buying intention are greatly impacted by social commerce. Influencer marketing has a greater impact than traditional advertising, according to Kumar et al. (2022).

Social media influencers have an impact on consumer sentiments, particularly among younger customers, according to recent research by Djafarova and Rushworth (2017). Moreover, Verma et al. (2023) have found that Internet reviews and digital information significantly affect the purchase of shampoo.

2.6 Word of Mouth and Social Influence

Consumer behaviour is still significantly influenced by word-of-mouth marketing. According to Zollo et al. (2021), peer recommendations and social reassurance have a big impact on consumers' intentions to buy personal care goods.

In a similar vein, consumer trust and information uptake are impacted by electronic word of mouth (eWOM), according to Erkan and Evans (2016). Consumers often use the internet, groups, friends, and family to consult before trying new brands of shampoo.

2.7 Ethical and Sustainability Factors

Sustainability is much considered in consumer decision-making now. Amberg and Fogarassy (2019) state that environmental consciousness affects customer behaviour in the cosmetics business. Research by Kumar et al. (2021) indicates that the increasing health concern among consumers has made them prefer natural and herbal shampoo products that are environmentally friendly. Moreover, according to Confente et al. (2020), ethical branding has a profound influence on purchase intention.

2.8 Influence of Demographic Factors

Consumer behaviour is greatly influenced by demographic factors. The gender differences in buying personal care products indicate that women tend to do it more than men (Dutta and Singh, 2021). Another factor is age, since trends and social media influence younger consumers more (Kumar et al., 2022). Income level changes the purchasing power and brand preference; the higher the income, the higher the preference towards premium goods (Gupta et al., 2022). Education increases knowledge of the components of products and their effects on health (Sharma & Verma, 2023).

The residence also plays a role, with rural consumers being more price-sensitive and sensitive to the availability, whereas urban consumers are more branding- and digital-information-oriented (Khan et al., 2021).

2.9 Indian and Regional Context (Himachal Pradesh)

In India, brand availability, cost, and cultural diversity all have an impact on shampoo product purchasing behaviour. It has been found that Indian customers attach the same value to price and quality (Gupta et al., 2022). However, there have been scanty studies in Himachal Pradesh, where accessibility, income disparities, and rural predominance influence consumer behaviour. Sharma et al. (2024) underscore the fact that region-specific research is crucial in order to understand consumer behaviour in hilly locations.

2.10 Research Gap

Although a lot of research has been conducted on consumer behaviour on personal care products, little has been done on shampoo products. Current studies

primarily cover the topics of cosmetics and skincare, but do not consider shampoo as a separate category. Moreover, the majority of the research lacks a unified framework of product attributes, marketing considerations, and demographic variables. There is also a lack of region-specific research in Himachal Pradesh.

Thus, the current research will address this gap by examining determinants of consumer behaviour with regard to the purchase of shampoo products with demographic factors in Himachal Pradesh.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

In order to investigate consumer behaviour about shampoo products in Himachal Pradesh, this study uses a quantitative research approach. Consumer behaviour is analysed by several criteria, including demographics, marketing factors, and product-related factors.

Quantitative approach has been chosen as it will enable the researcher to make use of statistical methods in order to measure customer perceptions, find correlations among variables and determine differences in consumer behaviour among demographic groups. This approach is effective in identifying trends and generalising to apply to the shampoo purchase behaviour.

3.2 Data Collection Method

Primary data was collected through a systematic questionnaire designed to assess factors influencing consumer behaviour regarding shampoo products. The first section focused on functional and usage-related characteristics, such as hair cleanliness, texture improvement, dandruff management, hair health, and style preservation, to gather user opinions on shampoo efficacy. The second section collected demographic information from respondents, including gender, age, marital status, occupation, education, income level, and residential location.

A five-point Likert scale was used to gauge consumer opinions of shampoo-related factors, where:

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

Strongly agree with the factors that affect consumer behaviour with shampoo products, which is reflected in the higher mean scores.

3.3 Reliability of the Scale

The Alpha of Cronbach was calculated on the eight items assessing the attributes that determine consumer behaviour to be applied to shampoo products to ensure internal consistency and reliability of the scale of measure used in this study. The results of the reliability analysis are presented in Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3.

Table 3.1: Reliability Statistics

Measure	Value
Cronbach's Alpha	0.827
Number of Items	8

Source: Author's compilation from primary data

Interpretation

Table 3.1 shows that the Cronbach Alpha of the eight scale items is 0.827. This finding indicates that the items have high levels of internal consistency and reliability, which exceeds the recommended value of 0.70. Consequently, the measuring scale utilised in this study can be considered credible and can be further subjected to statistical analysis.

Table 3.2: Item Statistics

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Keep the hair clean	4.27	0.859	450
Softens the hair	4.15	0.801	450
Prevents dandruff	4.14	0.975	450
Removes the stickiness of the hair	4.03	0.911	450
Gives healthy hair roots	3.94	1.011	450
To maintain stylish hair	3.83	0.972	450
Prevents hair fall	3.80	1.053	450
Prevents grey hair	3.44	1.178	450

Source: Author's compilation from primary data

Interpretation

The reliability analysis's items' descriptive statistics are shown in Table 3.2. As shown by the mean values, respondents have a strong preference towards the properties of shampoo that are related to reducing dandruff, smoothing hair, and keeping hair clean. The average scores in preventing grey hair, on the other hand, were significantly lower, which shows that it is less important to the respondents. The level of respectable agreement among respondents is depicted by the number of standard deviations, which indicates slight heterogeneity in responses.

Table 3.3: Item Total Statistics

Item	Corrected Item Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Prevents dandruff	0.517	0.811
Softens the hair	0.628	0.799
Keep the hair clean	0.502	0.813

Gives healthy hair roots	0.595	0.800
Prevents grey hair	0.591	0.802
Prevents hair fall	0.574	0.803
Removes the stickiness of the hair	0.561	0.805
To maintain stylish hair	0.460	0.818

Source: Author's compilation from primary data

Interpretation: -Table 3.3 indicates the item total statistics, item total corrected correlation and the alpha of Cronbach in the event of an item being dropped. All the items score above 0.40 on the scale, which means that they are highly consistent with the entire scale. Also, when any item is dropped, the Alpha values of the Cronbach remain less than the overall alpha value of 0.827, so that no item needs to be dropped. Consequently, the eight items are retained in the final scale, proving the measurement tool to be stable and reliable.

3.4 Sample and Participants

450 respondents were chosen from three districts in Himachal Pradesh, Kangra, Mandi, and Shimla to make up the study's sample. A stratified sampling process was employed to ensure that all the districts were sufficiently represented. To maintain the representation in different geographical areas, the population was divided into strata in accordance with the districts and respondents were selected according to these divisions. The sample of respondents is very diverse in terms of their demographic factors, such as gender, age, marital status, occupation, income, level of education, and place of residence. The dependability and generalizability of the findings within the local context are improved by this diversity.

4. Data Analysis Techniques

The data obtained was analysed using the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS). Various statistical methods were used to meet the goals of the study.

Descriptive statistics, like standard deviation and mean, were used to analyse consumer perceptions of determinants affecting shampoo usage and preference.

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and independent samples t-tests were used to look at variations in customer behaviour across demographic characteristics.

To make comparisons of the consumer behaviour between two groups, e.g. gender and place of residence, independent samples t-tests were utilised. The difference in consumer behaviour among various demographic groups, like age groups, marital status, employment, educational level,

income level, and district of residence, was analysed through the use of one-way ANOVA.

The p-value of five per cent ($p < 0.05$) was used as the significance limit of all statistical tests.

4.1 Hypotheses of the Study

Independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA were used to test a set of hypotheses to determine whether the behaviour of customers towards shampoo products is different between certain demographic characteristics. Table 1 summarises the hypotheses of the study, the statistical methods, p-values, and conclusions to each hypothesis.

Table 1: Hypotheses of the Study

Hypothesis	Description	Statistical Test	p value	Decision
H1	Consumer behaviour towards shampoo products differs significantly between male and female consumers	Independent t-test	0.246	Rejected
H2	Consumer behaviour towards shampoo products differs significantly between rural and urban consumers	Independent t-test	0.931	Rejected
H3	Consumer behaviour towards shampoo products differs significantly across different age groups	ANOVA	0.473	Rejected
H4	Consumer	ANOVA	0.607	Rejected

	behaviour towards shampoo products differs significantly across marital status categories			
H5	Consumer behaviour towards shampoo products differs significantly across different occupation groups	ANOVA	0.354	Rejected
H6	Consumer behaviour towards shampoo products differs significantly across different districts	ANOVA	0.038	Accepted
H7	Consumer behaviour towards shampoo products differs significantly across educational levels	ANOVA	0.101	Rejected
H8	Consumer behaviour towards shampoo products differs significantly	ANOVA	0.654	Rejected

	ntly across income groups			
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Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: -Table 1 presents the hypotheses of the study, tests, p-values and findings. The results show that the only variable that seems to have a great influence on customer behaviour insofar as shampoo products are concerned is the district variable. No differences are noticeable in all the other demographic factors, including gender, place of residence, age, marital status, occupation, level of education and income. This means that although consumer preference and behaviour are largely affected by the physical location (district), the consumer behaviour on shampoo products is usually comparable among most of the demographic groups.

4.2 Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products

Consumer behaviour was measured using several claims regarding the effectiveness and benefits of using shampoo products. The respondents were given a five-point Likert scale, which was on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree. The mean and standard deviation for every statement are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products

Statement	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Keep the hair clean	450	4.27	0.859
Softens the hair	450	4.15	0.801
Prevents dandruff	450	4.14	0.975
Removes the stickiness of the hair	450	4.03	0.911
Gives healthy hair roots	450	3.94	1.011
To maintain stylish hair	450	3.83	0.972
Prevents hair fall	450	3.80	1.053
Prevents grey hair	450	3.44	1.178

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: - As it is proven in Table 2, customers attach greater importance to the practical benefits of shampoo products. The highest mean score was for hair cleanliness, secondly softening hair and avoiding dandruff. This indicates that the customers mostly favour shampoo products as essentials in hair care and cleanliness. The avoidance of grey hair, in turn, was least important, which means that immediate and obvious product

outcomes are more important than long-term or age-related advantages.

4.3 Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Gender: - An independent samples comparison was done to see if respondents who were male and female had different shampoo product purchasing habits. Table 3 indicates the number of responders, mean scores and standard deviations that each group had.

Table 3: Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male	162	3.9992	0.63486
Female	288	3.9245	0.66729

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: Table 3 shows that male respondents had a somewhat higher mean score compared to female respondents. The fact that the two groups differ by very little, however, shows that male and female customers are almost the same when it comes to shampoo products.

Table 4: Independent Samples t Test for Gender

Variable	Levene's Test F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Mean of Shampoo	0.208	0.649	1.161	448	0.246	0.07475

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: - Table 4 shows that the level of significance is less than the gender p-value. Consequently, the difference between the use of shampoo products by male and female respondents does not differ significantly.

4.4 Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Place of Residence

In order to examine how the place of residence affects consumer behaviour, the respondents were categorised into rural and urban. Table 5 shows the averages and standard deviations of the groups.

Table 5: Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Place of Residence

Place of Residence	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Rural	406	3.9523	0.65997
Urban	44	3.9432	0.62614

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: - The mean scores of respondents from rural and urban areas are almost the same, as Table 5 demonstrates. This implies that consumers' attitudes toward shampoo products are not much affected by where they live.

Table 6: Independent Samples t Test for Place of Residence

Variable	Levene's Test F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Mean of Shampoo	0.050	0.823	0.087	448	0.931	0.00910

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: Table 6 shows that the p-value of place of residence is greater than the level of significance. Thus, the difference between the use of shampoo products by the rural and urban respondents is statistically insignificant.

4.5 Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Age Group

The respondents were separated into age groups to examine whether there is a difference in consumer behaviour between the different age groups. The number of responders, mean scores, and standard deviations for each age group are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Age Group

Age Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
18 to 25	222	3.9882	0.62545
25 to 35	171	3.9306	0.66450
35 to 50	42	3.9167	0.72345
50 and above	15	3.7417	0.81074
Total	450	3.9514	0.65607

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: Table 7 shows that the mean score was highest among respondents aged 18 to 25, with the lowest mean score being recorded among the respondents aged above 50. Differences within the age groups are quite considerable, but on the whole, the differences are very low.

Table 8: ANOVA for Consumer Behaviour by Age Group

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.085	3	0.362	0.839	0.473

Within Groups	192.18 0	44 6	0.431		
Total	193.26 5	44 9			

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: - Table 8 indicates that the p-value of the age group is greater than the significance level. Consequently, customer behaviour towards shampoo products does not exhibit much age difference.

4.6 Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Marital Status

Respondents were categorised into different marital statuses to investigate whether consumer behaviour varies depending on marital status. The pertinent results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Marital Status

Marital Status	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Married	111	3.9234	0.70533
Unmarried	329	3.9650	0.62926
Divorce	5	4.0250	0.40889
Widow	5	3.6000	1.34164
Total	450	3.9514	0.65607

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: The average scores of both categories of marital statuses differ slightly, as was seen in Table 9. Single and divorced respondents had slightly higher mean scores than married and widowed respondents. The variations are not significant, though.

Table 10: ANOVA for Consumer Behaviour by Marital Status

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.793	3	0.264	0.612	0.607
Within Groups	192.472	446	0.432		
Total	193.265	449			

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: -Table 10 shows the p-value is greater than the significance level. Hence, no noticeable variation in customer behaviour in

relation to marital status with respect to shampoo products is observed.

4.7 Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Occupation

The respondents were grouped according to their occupation in order to analyse whether consumer behaviour is different when there are occupational groupings. The mean scores and standard deviations are shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Occupation

Occupation	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Government Employee	42	3.9762	0.65171
Private Employee	112	3.9498	0.67876
Businessman	47	3.7846	0.72312
Others	247	3.9767	0.63205
Total	450	3.9514	0.65607

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: As shown in Table 11, respondents who dropped into the category of government employees and others had a slightly higher mean score as compared to businessmen. However, there is still little difference between occupational groupings.

Table 12: ANOVA for Consumer Behaviour by Occupation

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.386	5	0.477	1.110	0.354
Within Groups	190.879	444	0.430		
Total	193.265	449			

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: - The significance level is lower than the p-value as in Table 12. Consequently, customer behaviour with respect to the shampoo products within the various occupational groups is not varied.

4.8 Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by District

The respondents were classified based on the district where they lived to explore regional differences. The number of respondents, mean scores, and standard deviations for each district are shown in Table 13.

Table 13: Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by District

District	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
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Kangra	203	3.9957	0.63851
Mandi	135	3.8315	0.70286
Shimla	112	4.0156	0.61447
Total	450	3.9514	0.65607

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: -Table 13 shows that Mandi respondents' mean score was the lowest, followed by Shimla and Kangra, who had the highest mean scores. This means that the customer behaviour in terms of shampoo products will differ significantly across regions.

Table 14: ANOVA for Consumer Behaviour by District

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.802	2	1.401	3.287	0.038
Within Groups	190.463	447	0.426		
Total	193.265	449			

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: - Table 14 indicates that the value of p is smaller than the level of significance. As a result, shampoo product purchasing habits vary greatly amongst districts. This indicates that geographic location is a major factor that determines customer preferences and their behaviour.

4.9 Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Educational Level: -The respondents were divided into groups according to their educational level so that it could be researched whether the level of education influences consumer behaviour. The results are shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Educational Level

Educational Level	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Under Graduate	31	4.1250	0.73030
Graduate	125	3.8460	0.69054
Post Graduate	216	3.9913	0.61651
Professional	78	3.9407	0.66197
Total	450	3.9514	0.65607

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: - The averages of the scores of the education level differ slightly, as shown in Table 15.

The mean score of graduate respondents was significantly lower compared to the mean score of undergraduate respondents, who had the highest mean score. The variations are not that high, however.

Table 16: ANOVA for Consumer Behaviour by Educational Level

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.676	3	0.892	2.087	0.101
Within Groups	190.589	446	0.427		
Total	193.265	449			

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: The p-value exceeds the level of significance, as in Table 16. This means that there are no significant differences in the behaviour of customers in terms of shampoo product between educational levels.

4.10 Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Income per Month:

-The concern to check the relationship between monthly income and consumer behaviour categorised the respondents by the level of income. The mean scores and standard deviations are shown in Table 17.

Table 17: Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products by Income per Month

Income per Month	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Below 25,000	176	3.9538	0.66621
25,000 to 50,000	196	3.9745	0.66046
50,000 to 1,00,000	52	3.9303	0.59224
1,00,000 and above	26	3.8029	0.69117
Total	450	3.9514	0.65607

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: Table 17 shows a slight variation across income groups. Though the mean score of respondents in the highest income category was relatively lower, there was a slight increase in the mean score of respondents in the intermediate income category. Nonetheless, these differences remain rather minor.

Table 18: ANOVA for Consumer Behaviour by Income per Month

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

Between Groups	0.702	3	0.234	0.542	0.654
Within Groups	192.563	446	0.432		
Total	193.265	449			

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: - Table 18 shows that the p-value is greater than the level of significance. Thus, the differences in consumer behaviour in terms of shampoo products are not appreciable when it comes to the income levels.

4.11 Summary of t Test and ANOVA Results: To display the inferential outcome in a summarised way, Table 19 will summarise the demographic variables, statistical tests applied, the p-values and the final decision.

Table 19: Summary of t Test and ANOVA Results

Variable	Statistical Test	p value	Decision
Gender	Independent t-test	0.246	Not Significant
Place of Residence	Independent t-test	0.931	Not Significant
Age Group	ANOVA	0.473	Not Significant
Marital Status	ANOVA	0.607	Not Significant
Occupation	ANOVA	0.354	Not Significant
District	ANOVA	0.038	Significant
Educational Level	ANOVA	0.101	Not Significant
Income per Month	ANOVA	0.654	Not Significant

Source: Author's Compilation from Primary Data

Interpretation: - The analysis of customer behaviour towards shampoo products, summarised in Table 19, shows that only one district had a statistically significant impact. No significant differences were observed for other demographic factors such as gender, residence, age, marital status, occupation, education, or income. Thus, while district-related differences exist, consumer behaviour remains largely consistent across most demographic groups.

5. Discussion

This study sought to explore the variables that impact the consumer behaviour of shampoo products in Himachal Pradesh. Additionally, the study investigated whether customer behaviour varies depending on certain demographic factors. The results emphasise the significance of functional characteristics and demographic impacts and offer helpful insights into customer preferences and

purchase behaviour in the shampoo product category.

5.1 Overall Consumer Behaviour towards Shampoo Products

The results show that customers have a strong preference for shampoo products due to their practical benefits, prioritising qualities like keeping hair clean, improving texture, and avoiding dandruff. This suggests that consumers focus more on immediate product performance rather than long-term or aesthetic benefits. Historical studies in the personal care sector support this, indicating that shampoo is viewed primarily as a hygiene product rather than a styling or cosmetic one, as evidenced by the lower importance placed on factors like preventing grey hair and style maintenance. Thus, the use of shampoo appears to be largely utilitarian.

5.2 Consumer Behaviour across Gender

The independent samples test results indicate that customer behaviour toward shampoo products is not significantly affected by gender. While there were minor differences in mean scores between male and female respondents, these were not significant. This suggests that both genders have similar expectations and choices in shampoo products, likely due to the rise of unisex personal care items and easier access to product information.

5.3 Consumer Behaviour across Place of Residence

The analysis shows that there is no discernible difference between the rural and urban respondents' consumer behaviour. In rural and urban regions, consumer preferences towards shampoo products are similar. This finding indicates that the marketing messages and personal care products have been diffused in the rural and urban areas and have created a uniform customer behaviour. It also means that the awareness of shampoo products and their availability is not limited to the city.

5.4 Consumer Behaviour across Age Groups

The results indicate that no significant age-based distinctions in customer behaviour in relation to shampoo products. The disparity among age groups is not significant, although the younger consumers display a slightly higher preference rate.

This means that shampoo products are sold to consumers of both old and young, and that age does not play a very significant role in influencing the preferences of consumers. This uniformity is an outcome of the fact that shampoo products are used by everybody, irrespective of age.

5.5 Consumer Behaviour across Marital Status

Marital status does not significantly influence customer behaviour regarding shampoo products. Although there were minor differences among married groups, they were not statistically significant, indicating that all consumers purchase shampoo regardless of marital status.

5.6 Consumer Behaviour across Occupation

Based on the occupation analysis, there is no significant difference in consumer behaviour of shampoo products among professional groups. The overall trend remains the same, although there are a few minor variations. This implies that consumer choices in the shampoo category are not greatly impacted by occupation. The fact that the difference between the occupational groups is low might be contributed by the fact that the products of shampoo are routine and necessity-based.

5.7 Consumer Behaviour across Districts

The results indicate that there is a wide difference in the use of shampoo products across regions. This means that geographic location plays a crucial role in influencing customer choices and behaviour. Lifestyle, product distribution and availability, cultural inclination and exposure to marketing campaigns can all contribute to the differences between districts. This result emphasises how crucial regional variables are to comprehending Himachal Pradesh's consumer behaviour.

5.8 Consumer Behaviour across Educational Level

The data shows that educational attainment does not significantly affect customer behaviour as far as shampoo products are concerned. Although some slight differences existed between the educational categories, they could not be statistically significant. This implies that shampoo purchasing behaviour is not much influenced by education. This finding may be attributed to the wide usage and understanding of shampoo products of all levels of education.

5.9 Consumer Behaviour across Income Groups

The results indicate that the income does not significantly affect the customer behaviour towards shampoo products. Though there existed minor differences across the income groups, they did not significantly differ. This means that shampoo products are mostly used irrespective of whether one is rich or poor because they are readily available and affordable.

5.10 Overall Implications of Findings

The study concludes that functional product attributes have a greater influence on customer behaviour regarding shampoos than demographic factors, which show little statistical significance. However, regional differences in consumer behaviour highlight the importance of considering spatial factors in marketing strategies. Customers prioritise product efficacy and performance, indicating that businesses should focus on quality and functionality when developing and promoting new shampoo products.

6. Conclusion

This paper examined consumer behaviour in Himachal Pradesh regarding shampoo products, focusing on key factors influencing purchases and demographic differences. The study aimed to understand how demographic and product attributes shape consumer preferences within the shampoo category. Findings show that consumers prioritise

functional features, such as keeping hair clean, improving hair structure, and addressing dandruff. Consequently, shampoo is viewed more as a necessity for hygiene rather than merely a cosmetic product. The findings indicate that customers generally have similar preferences for shampoo products, regardless of demographic factors like gender, age, or income. This suggests that shampoo is a universal product category widely accepted across various consumer groups. However, the study highlights that geographical differences significantly influence customer behaviour, likely due to variations in lifestyle and product availability. Ultimately, the key factors impacting purchasing decisions are product performance and functional benefits rather than demographic characteristics. Marketers should consider these regional differences when developing strategies to effectively position their products in the market.

7. Managerial Implications

The study highlights key implications for the shampoo and personal care industry. Companies should prioritise product performance, focusing on attributes like cleanliness and dandruff control, and consider a mass marketing approach, as demographics have limited impact on consumer behaviour. Nevertheless, regional customisation in promotional strategies is essential. Pricing should emphasise value and affordability, especially since shampoos are viewed as hygiene necessities. Improving distribution channels in rural areas can boost market penetration. Finally, consistent advertising and promotions are vital for building brand awareness and trust, as brand perception significantly influences consumer choices.

8. Limitations and Future Research

8.1 Limitations of the Study

The present research has certain shortcomings which must be mentioned regardless of its contribution. To begin with, the lack of representation of a wide variety of districts within Himachal Pradesh might restrict the extent to which the results can be generalised. Consumer behaviour can be affected by different geographic and cultural situations.

Second, the research is based on the self-reported data collected through surveys, which may be biased by the self-reported data provided by the respondents. Possibly, the respondents do not necessarily capture their actual buying patterns.

Thirdly, other important factors such as psychological factors, brand perception and emotional attachment were not well studied; rather, the research was primarily done on functional product features and demographic information.

Fourth, the research employs the cross-sectional research design to document consumer behaviour at a specific time among consumers. Consumer preferences may change over time due to market trends, advancements in technology, and changing lifestyles.

8.2 Future Research Directions

Several potential study directions are proposed in light of the restrictions. First, to enhance generalizability, future research could expand geographically by including data from other states or nationally. Second, to gain deeper insights into customer behaviour, researchers might consider additional variables like brand loyalty, consumer perception, and social media influence. Third, longitudinal approaches could be employed to examine how customer behaviour evolves. Fourth, comparison studies across various personal care categories, such as shampoo, skincare, and cosmetics, can reveal differences in consumer behaviour. Finally, future research may focus on emerging trends in personal care, including herbal products, organic shampoo, and sustainable consumerism.

9. Recommendations

9.1 Focus on Product Quality and Functional Benefits

Customers prefer shampoos primarily for their ability to keep hair clean, improve hair structure, and reduce dandruff. Product performance significantly influences consumer behavior. Companies should prioritize enhancing quality, effectiveness, and reliability, while continuously improving formulations with better ingredients to meet expectations and strengthen brand preference.

9.2 Strengthening Brand Positioning and Communication

Brand perception significantly influences customer purchasing decisions, despite minimal demographic impact on behaviour. Businesses should invest in branding strategies that highlight product efficacy, quality, and trust. Marketing communications should focus on the key benefits of shampoo products to foster a positive brand attitude, while regular advertising can help build long-term customer loyalty.

9.3 Regional Marketing Strategies

Customer behavior varies significantly across districts, highlighting the importance of spatial factors. Companies should adopt area-specific marketing strategies, taking into account consumer habits, weather, and geographical preferences. Localized product sales and targeted advertising can improve market effectiveness throughout Himachal Pradesh.

9.4 Pricing Strategies and Affordability

Affordability is a major determinant of the consumer decision-making process since shampoo products are used by both people with low incomes and high ones. Cost-effective and competitive pricing strategies should be applied by businesses. Particularly in rural and semi-urban locations, offering items in a variety of pricing ranges and tiny, reasonably priced packaging alternatives might assist draw in a larger customer base.

9.5 Expansion of Distribution Channels

The findings suggest that consumer behaviour is consistent across rural and urban areas, indicating strong demand across regions. Therefore, companies should focus on expanding their distribution networks to ensure product availability in all areas. Improving supply chain efficiency and increasing retail presence in remote locations can enhance accessibility and boost sales.

9.6 Utilisation of Digital Marketing and Consumer Engagement

To deal with customers in the light of the increased influence of digital platforms, businesses should use social media and online marketing channels to interact with customers. Applying online reviews, influencer marketing, and the digital campaign can all be helpful to influence the choice and increase product awareness. Businesses should also focus on interaction to enhance their relationships with clients.

9.7 Directions for Future Research

To enhance generalizability, future studies should include a more diverse sample across various locations. Research could also explore factors like brand loyalty, consumer perception, psychological influences, and social media effects on consumer behaviour. Additionally, comparisons of personal care products such as shampoo, skincare, and cosmetics may reveal differences in customer preferences. Emerging trends like herbal, organic, and sustainable shampoos should also be a focus for future research.

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