

# THE INFLUENCE OF EWOM AND CELEBRITY APPEAL ON BRAND PREFERENCE OF FEMALE CONSUMERS: A CRITICAL STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COSMETIC PRODUCTS

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## ABSTRACT

*If we talk about the society, in which we are living, here peoples create their own perception mainly depend on the appearance of the person, hence for making them attractive, good looking and hygienic, cosmetic industry plays an influential role in everybody life weather directly or indirectly.*

*Therefore, the demand for the cosmetic products is enhancing very fast and various brand are available in the market keeping in views the not only the basic needs but to fulfill the desire and demand of the customers. Infact in a single brand variety of products are available under different segments like hair oil, shampoo, cream, face wash, facial kit, nail pain, lipstick and many more.*

*For the purpose of promotion, companies are using different modes like celebrity appeal, electronic word of mouth publicity. Companies are keeping in mind of their female customers changing purchase behavior rapidly, changing life style, higher disposable income, improvement in status symbol, demand for best quality of product and increase competition day by day, because they know that celebrity appeal and EWOM publicity influence more on the brand preference of the female consumers rather than any other mode. Consumer can easily view the reviews of the other customers on the website of the particular company and making the decision effectively and efficiently without wasting his or her time to go here and there. Consumers trust on the credibility of celebrities and attracted towards the appearance and personality of them, henceforth it creates positive impact on their brand preference.*

*The growth in the number of women who are working, improved the purchasing power of women community. Women, who are working somewhere, are more conscious about their look, personality and appearance henceforth, their purchasing power is more as far as beauty products are concerned.*

*The aims of this research paper is to investigate the influence of celebrity appeal, electronic word of mouth publicity and customer satisfaction on consumer brand preference of female customers of cosmetic products. The population in this study was Dehradun city, the number of samples used in the questionnaire was 150 respondents. Data collection done by both the sources like primary data and secondary data. Survey conducted by the means of circulating questionnaire to the respondents.*

*Researcher conducted a survey for collecting primary data. A well-designed questionnaire was circulated as a Research instrument. Researcher applied Partial Least Square as Statistical tools for data analysis and interpretation. This research concluded that there is a significant effect of celebrity appeals on brand preference, there is no influence of the electronic word of mouth with brand preference and there is a significant impact of customer satisfactions with brand preference.*

**Keywords:** Beauty Products, Celebrity Appeal, Electronic Word Of Mouth, Customer Satisfaction, Brand Preference.

## INTRODUCTION

Researcher observed that cosmetic products are in demand, the graph of sale of cosmetic products is increased rapidly, consumers consider it very essential, and are attracted towards them.

Amberg & Fogarassy (2019) therefore, companies are focusing to create the awareness of cosmetic products among customers and influence them by the means of various modes like celebrity appeal and electronic word of mouth Byrne et al. (2003).

Moreover, the favorite celebrities of the consumers, which also influence brand preference, which in turns to helpful in brand promotion of the products. There are many other factors too, which affect consumer brand preference like EWOM in a cosmetic product, so this study focuses on these variables, which are; celebrity appeal, EWOM and customer satisfaction and its relationship on women's brand preference and to be affected to purchase the cosmetic products.

Now days, competition in market of cosmetic products is very high and companies are focusing to retain their brand loyal customers as well as to attract new clients also and try to seek various attractive strategies to keep all their customers under one umbrella of their brand only. For achieving their objective, they focus on various parameters and in this study, we discuss about celebrity appeal and EWOM, which influence customer satisfaction, and brand preference of the customer's resultant of which, the sale and profit of the company enhance simultaneously Conscience & Haryanto (2010).

Moreover, it happens that the name, fame and reputation of celebrity establish a separate and positive image in the mind of the customer and they prefer the brand, also purchase the product, while the celebrity appeal to purchase any product Aaker (2014).

According to Adam & Hussain (2017), celebrity appeal creates the positive impact on the buying behavior of the customers and they are ready to accept the endorsed products which make them feel happy, satisfied and classy and consider the products as status symbol. This is applicable mainly on the luxury items, brand and fashionable products Agussalim & Ali (2017).

As per the views of Shallu & Gupta (2013), Promotional activities refers to that activities by the means of which, products or services or brand can be reached or communicated to the end users Anggraeni (2018).

The objective is to create the awareness among the costumers to buy the products with great emphasis and preference over the other products McCracken (1989). More importantly by promotional activities companies besides advertisement, they mainly focus on to attract customers to purchase and try the products Mullin (2018). By taking advantage of promotional activities, customer brand preference is changed to the maximum extent Riorini & Widayati (2019). Also it is playing very vital role to attract and invite to buy the products and maintain the loyalty and switch from the other brand. Khare (2015)

According to Kotler & Keller (2016), Word of mouth is one of the most effective mode of marketing by the means of which, a user or buyer can share his or her experience in both the ways positive and negative as per their experience and expertise and it is to be done either by oral, written or electronic communication Kahle & Homer (1985). Technological advancement is increasing day by day and it is entered in the community at very fast rate. Therefore it has been very simple and to give and take Word of mouth review electronically through send or receive message on social media like , on company website on internet, YouTube, what's app, Facebook twitter, Instagram, telegram and many more.

If we talk about 10 years back, mostly people were not aware about the word Internet and the process of marketing is very different and time taken Alma (2004). Now with the changing environment in technological advancement rapidly, companies are taking the benefits of these technologies and internet facilities to Bolifar et al. (2017) communicate the message by celebrity appeal and EWOM to the customers and they prefer brand with more confidence and trust (Pradhan, et al, 2014); (Fleck, et al, 2012).

Now as per the current scenario, customers are more conscious, educated and interest to take information from internet, company website and other social media channels for making his or her decision effectively and effectively without wasting the time and feel more satisfaction and unnecessary gossiping and negativity Alrwashdeha et al. (2019). Customers take the reviews from many options on internet by electronic word of mouth and it very helpful for making the brand preference of the customers for any products or service Torlak et al. (2014). When customers having the positive image of any brand in the mind of customers, it is having the nice feeling and positive thoughts about that products. Indra (2018).

Previous study conducted by Ivana (2018) observed that e-WOM positively influences brand preference of the customers. Torlak et al. (2014) found contradictory results and Kala and Chaubey (2018) which states that e-WOM has no positive impact on the brand preference of customers. Research Prabowo et al. (2014) and Iwan & Nainggolan (2017) determined that celebrity appeal had a significant effect on brand preference and increase the purchasing power of customers. Conflicting results were found by Nurani and Haryanto (2010) and Stephanie et al. (2013) observed that the celebrity appeal factor does not significantly influence the brand preference. Conflicting results were found by the research of Alrwashdeha et al. (2019) observed that brand image does not have a positive impact on brand preference.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Globally, celebrity appeal in Asian countries is greater than the United States and European countries. In China and South Korea, it ranged from 27 to 64 percentages, while just 18 percent in European countries Chekima et al. (2018). In the modern era of technology advancement, celebrity appeals the products by social media channels, internet to communicate and reach the customers, shifted from traditional approach to digitally platform.

By taking the benefits of technology and internet, this process is very useful and effective and of course to reduce the adverse effect and to boost up the speed to achieve the sustainable consumption Iswara & Jatra (2017). The researched observed that celebrity appeal influence more on brand preference of the customers Kumar & Tripathi (2022). It has been observed by the study that customers prefer brand of those products more, which is advertised by celebrity and attractive toward them Rabia et al. (2019) on Lebanese jewellery industry, feeling and mindset of the consumers are found to be negatively influenced by celebrity appeal Safi et al. (2018).

It has been studies that there is a positive impact of celebrity appeal in the brand preference and buying behavior of the customers and they are attracted to purchase more Nugroho (2017). Henceforth, customers of products endorsed by celebrity are brand loyal and want to be like them. Sri Lanka, Madhusanka (2017).

In case of cosmetic products, however there is a trend of celebrity appeal and endorsement but it has low impact on the brand preference and buying intension of the customers. (Bafna et.al., 2016).

Based on the past research, percentage of customers are high (76%) who are not willing to purchase that product which are endorsed by celebrity.

Only few customers are those who are influenced by the celebrity appeal and prefer that brand to purchase and loyal (Chaudhary and Asthana, 2015).

Which products are advertised by celebrities, create the positive image in the mind of customers and they have the confidence to purchase that Maria et al. (2016) products or brand and prefer more as compared to others Lupiyoadi (2018). It works positively when products are used physically and demonstration given by celebrity in advertisement possess the powerful impact and positive Sista (2017) image in the consumer's mind and it works a lot and long lasting (Mc Cracken, 1989).

Companies create the positive image in the mind of the customers of the branded products by showing the values and culture adopted by the celebrity and it has the strong influence on brand preference of the customer and they feel more satisfaction.

Customer's purchase behavior and brand preference can be change to demonstrate advertisement having the great influence by marketer in which to show the characteristics of the celebrity marketer also identify the need of customer than try to fulfill in their desired manner (Moti Z Willing, Gila E. Fruchter, 2013). Customers are willing to shift their brand preference and purchase decision by the influence of celebrity appeal in advertisement (Naganuri Srinivas, 2013).

Previous research conducted by Ivana (2018) states that electronic word of mouth having the strong positive impact on the brand preference and they customers willing to purchase that products only. Torlak et al. (2014) found contradictory results, Kala, and Chaubey (2018) which told that e-WOM has no positive influence on the brand preference and customers are not satisfied by the reviews of other users Astini & Tafiprios (2017).

## Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research paper is to investigate the influence of celebrity appeal, EWOM and customer satisfaction on the brand preference of cosmetic products considering the target population of female consumers in Dehradun City Sunyoto (2013). For supporting the main objective, following specific aim of this study are Sari et al. (2017a):

1. To investigate the effect of celebrity Appeal on the brand preference of the female consumers of cosmetic Products Sari (2017).
2. To assess the influence of EWOM on the brand preference of the female consumers of cosmetic products.
3. To examine the impact of customer satisfaction on the brand preference of the female consumers of cosmetic products Sangadji (2013).

## Research Questions

1. How significant is the effect of celebrity Appeal on the brand preference of the female consumers of cosmetic products?
2. How significant is the influence of EWOM on the brand preference of the female consumers of cosmetic products?
3. How significant is the impact of customer satisfaction on the brand preference of the female consumers of cosmetic products Table 1 and Table 2?

## Research Hypotheses

*H<sub>1</sub>: Celebrity appeal has a positive and significant effect on the brand preference of the female consumers of cosmetic products.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: EWOM has a positive and significant influence on the brand preference of the female consumers of cosmetic products.*

*H<sub>3</sub>: Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on the brand preference of the female consumers of cosmetic products.*

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

<b>Table 1</b>	
<b>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	
Type of Research	Descriptive Research
Target Population	Female customers in Dehradun city
Sample Size	150 Female customers who are using cosmetic products
Sampling Technique	Purposive and random Sampling Technique
Statistical technique	Partial Least Square
Tools for Data Collection	Questionnaire
Primary & Secondary Data	Primary data collected through questionnaire & Secondary data from research papers, website, Internet etc.
Profile of Respondents	As per Age, Income Level, Internet Experience and Employment

### Partial Least Square (PLS) Model

<b>Table 2</b>							
<b>LOADING FACTOR</b>							
Items	Celebrity Appeal (X1)	Items	EWOM (X2)	Items	Customer Satisfaction (X3)	Items	Brand Preference (Y)
CA1	0.815	EW1	0.934	CS1	0.811	BP1	0.854
CA10	0.825	EW2	0.935	CS2	0.894	BP2	0.946
CA11	0.812	EW3	0.945	CS3	0.925	BP3	0.821
CA12	0.845			CS4	0.841	BP4	0.874
CA2	0.765			CS5	0.862	BP5	0.836
CA3	0.829			CS6	0.872		
CA4	0.854			CS7	0.865		
CA5	0.31			CS8	0.847		
CA6	0.846						
CA7	0.865						
CA8	0.874						
CA9	0.879						

According to Ghazali (2014), the dimensions of variables will be valid if the value of loading factors is more than 0.5 Utami & Saputri (2016). Therefore if the value of variable is less than 0.50, it will be removed Sari et al. (2017b) from the database Dasuni (2018). On the basis on above mention table, it is cleared that all the values of dimensions of variables are more than 0.50, it is proved that all dimensions of variables are valid Rangkuti (2007).

Besides the values of loading factors, the validity of research data would be analyzed by Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. The results are mentioned below by applying validity test using the AVE value Abdullah (2015) Table 3.

<b>Table 3</b>		
<b>AVERAGE VARIANCE EXTRACTED (AVE)</b>		
Variables	AVE	Description
Celebrity Appeal	0.675	Valid
EWOM	0.842	Valid
Customer	0.782	Valid

Satisfaction		
Brand Preference	0.725	Valid

As per the views of Ghozali (2014), the AVE value will be valid if it is more than 0.5. Therefore, if the value will be less than 0.50, it will be removed from the database. Based on above-mentioned table, it is cleared that all the values AVE are more than 0.50; it is proved that the value is valid Tjiptono (2014).

Based on the table above, it is known that all research variables are valid. That is because the AVE value is above the provisions of 0.50 (Ghozali, 2014).

## Validity 2 Discriminant Validity

As per the recommendation of Ghozali (2015) for application of discriminant validity, if the value of cross loading using reflexive indicators for each variable will be greater than 0.50 than variables declare valid otherwise not Wang & Usly (2018). Therefore in the table mentioned below, all the values for each variable are greater than 0.50, therefore it is valid and reliable Tjondrokoesoemo (2017) Table 4 and Table 5.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Celebrity Appeal (X1)</b>	<b>EWOM (X2)</b>	<b>Customer Satisfaction (X3)</b>	<b>Brand Preference (Y)</b>
CS8	0.521	0.356	0.567	7 0.54
CS7	0.526	0.345	0.546	6 0.52
CS6	0.542	0.428	0.654	7 0.52
CS5	0.528	0.345	0.629	9 0.45
CS4	0.536	0.429	0.558	8 0.54
CS3	0.595	0.456	0.689	8 0.56
CS2	0.524	0.428	0.645	7 0.48
CS1	0.562	0.356	0.587	7 0.54
BP5	0.524	0.419	0.487	9 0.56
BP4	0.542	0.349	0.562	8 0.62
BP3	0.461	0.321	0.478	8 0.54
BP2	0.509	0.385	0.469	8 0.63
BP1	0.556	0.456	0.529	7 0.65
EW3	0.485	0.624	0.458	7 0.48
EW2	0.356	0.685	0.412	9 0.35

EW1	0.451	0.659	0.468	7	0.42
CE9	0.621	0.375	0.529	4	0.51
CE8	0.528	0.327	0.527	8	0.47
CE7	0.585	0.412	0.529	2	0.51
CE6	0.594	0.358	0.428	8	0.57
CE5	0.572	0.369	0.487	8	0.42
CE4	0.564	0.426	0.542	9	0.48
CE3	0.544	0.329	0.487	6	0.45
CE2	0.534	0.348	0.524	8	0.47
CE12	0.547	0.452	0.525	8	0.52
CE11	0.568	0.326	0.529	2	0.47
CE10	0.524	0.384	0.514	2	0.49
CE1	0.568	0.344	0.458	8	0.52

## RELIABILITY TEST

### Composite Reliability Test

Variables	CR	Description
Celebrity Appeal	0.957	Reliable
EWOM	0.978	Reliable
Customer Satisfaction	0.952	Reliable
Brand Preference	0.984	Reliable

On the basis of table mentioned above, It is cleared from the observation and results, after the application of composite Suki (2014) reliability test, the value of composite reliability for all the variables like celebrity appeal, EWOM, customer satisfaction and brand preference is more than 0.70, therefore all these variables are considered as reliable Hidayat (2015) Table 6.

### Cronbach's Alpha Test

Variables	CA	Description
Celebrity Appeal	0.958	Reliable
EWOM	0.942	Reliable
Customer Satisfaction	0.967	Reliable

Brand Preference	0.925	Reliable
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On the basis of table mentioned above, It is cleared from the conclusion after the execution of Cronbach’s Alpha Test, Cronbach’s Alpha value for all the variables like celebrity appeal, EWOM, customer satisfaction and brand preference is more than 0.70, therefore all these variables are considered as reliable.

**Determination Coefficient Test Results (R2)**

After the predictable model fulfill the Outer Model criteria, researcher applied the tests, the Structural Model (Inner Model), here the value of R-Square (R2) in the research construct is given below in Figure 1.

	<b>R Square</b>
<b>Brand Preference (Y)</b>	<b>0.795</b>

**FIGURE 1  
COEFFICIENT OF DETERMINATION (R2)**

Therefore, It is observed that the dependent variable of brand preference can be explained by the three independent variables like celebrity appeal, EWOM and customer satisfaction in the Table 7, namely by 79.5%,

**Test Results for Path Coefficients**

<b>Table 7 TEST RESULTS FOR PATH COEFFICIENTS</b>	
	Brand Preference (Y)
Celebrity Appeal (X1)	0.375
EWOM (X2)	0.029
Customer Satisfaction (X3)	0.287
Brand Preference (Y)	

Based on the information provided by the table mentioned above, it declares the result of the test of the path coefficient (path coefficients) which is having the values from minimum of 0.029 to maximum of 0.375. Therefore, it may be concluded that independent variables like Celebrity appeal, Electronic Word of Mouth and customer satisfaction with dependent brand preference have a positive relationship because all it’s value close to +1.

**T-Statistic Value Test Results**

T-Statistic (bootstrapping) is applied to check the significant value between the variables. In this statistical tool, to accept or reject the proposed hypothesis, we consider the values ranging between -1.96 to +1.96. If the t- statistic value is  $|t| \geq 1.96$ . On the other hand,  $|t| \leq - 1.96$ , the



hypothesis will be accepted otherwise it is rejected.

Therefore, in the given table, the effect of independent variables likes celebrity appeal and customer satisfaction on dependent variable like brand preference is significant. Whereas the effect of EWOM on brand preference are not significant Table 8.

	T Statistics	Result
Celebrity Appeal (X1) -> Brand Preference (Y)	5.875	Significant
EWOM (X2) -> Brand Preference (Y)	0.628	Insignificant
Customer Satisfaction (X3) -> Brand Preference (Y)	4.857	Significant

**Model Fit Evaluation**

Goodness of Fit (GoF) GoF Small = 0.1  
 Goodness of Fit (GoF) Moderating = 0.25  
 Goodness of Fit (GoF) Big = 0.38  
 Goodness of Fit (GoF) Formula:  
 $GoF = \sqrt{(AVE \times Rsquare)}$   
 $= \sqrt{(0.756 \times 0.795)}$   
 $= 0.77525$

**Hypothesis Test**

As per the observation of Ghozali (2015), result can be checked and analyzed that weather it is significant or not, based on the calculation of coefficients from the various dimensions of variables.

In this study, researcher wants to investigate the effect of independent variables like celebrity appeal and EWOM and customer satisfaction on brand preference of female customers wheatear is it significant or insignificant, based on p value. If the p value is less than 0.05 and t static value is greater than 1.96 than the effect is significant otherwise, effect would be non-significant Table 9.

Research Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	Conclusion
H1	CA > BP	0.375	5.875	Positive and significant
H2	EW > BP	0.029	0.628	Positive and insignificant
H3	KS > BP	0.287	4.857	Positive and significant

**RESULTS**

Based on above-mentioned table, the result of hypothesis is given below:

**Celebrity Appeal on Brand Preference**

Base on the result in table, it is cleared that path coefficient value of independent variable like celebrity appeal for dependent variable like brand preference of female customers is positive that is 0.375. Also it is also concluded that t static value is greater than 1.96 that is 5.875. Therefore, it is strongly evident that there is positive and significant effect between the independent variable like celebrity appeal and brand preference, henceforth, the null hypothesis

H1 was accepted.

**Electronic Word of Mouth on Brand Preference**

Base on the result in table, it is cleared that path coefficient value of independent variable like EWOM for dependent variable like brand preference of female customers is positive that is 0.029. Also it is also concluded that t static value is less than 1.96 that is 0.628. Therefore, it is strongly evident that there is positive and insignificant effect between the independent variable like EWOM and brand preference, henceforth, the null hypothesis H1 was rejected.

**Customer Satisfaction on Brand Preference**

Base on the result in table, it is cleared that path coefficient value of independent variable like customer satisfaction for dependent variable like brand preference of female customers is positive that is 0.287. Also it is also concluded that t static value is greater than 1.96 that is 4.857. Therefore, it is strongly evident that there is positive and significant effect between the independent variable like customer satisfaction and brand preference, henceforth, the null hypothesis H1 was accepted Table 10.

Table 10 HYPOTHESIS		
Null Hypothesis	Statement	Conclusion
H1	Celebrity appeal has a positive and significant effect on the brand preference of the female consumers of cosmetic products.	Accepted
H2	EWOM has a positive and significant influence on the brand preference of the female consumers	Rejected
H3	Customer satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on the brand preference of the female consumers of cosmetic products.	Accepted

**CONCLUSION**

**Researchers Concluded Following Points of this Study Based on the Results**

1. Celebrity Appeal has a positive and significant effect on brand preference of cosmetic products by female customers.
2. Electronic Word of Mouth has no effect on brand preference of cosmetic products by female customers.
3. Customer Satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on brand preference of cosmetic products by female customers.

Based on the conclusion, it is cleared that it is the influence of Celebrity Appeal that attracts female customers to maintain the brand preference and loyalty also to enhance the purchasing power of cosmetic products.

Based on the conclusions, it is observed that Electronic Word of Mouth is less influential and effective to maintain the brand preference of cosmetic products, even negative reviews are more than positive reviews in many cases, so it does not have any significant effect on brand preference of female customers of cosmetic products.

Based on the conclusion, it is cleared that it is the customer satisfaction is more important and play vital role for female customers to maintain the brand preference and loyalty also to enhance the purchasing power of cosmetic products. Therefore they are ready to purchase branded

cosmetic products and trust on them, agree to purchase expensive products.

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