

EFFECT OF KOREAN BEAUTY INFLUENCERS ON BUYING BEHAVIOR OF BEAUTY PRODUCTS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS IN TIRUNELVELI

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Abstract. *This study looks into how Korean beauty influencers affect college students' decisions to buy beauty products in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu. The study focusses on the rising popularity of Korean beauty standards and products and examines how factors like brand loyalty, product awareness, and perceived effectiveness affect students' purchasing decisions. The study used a quantitative methodology to interview 120 college students in order to determine how much Korean beauty influences their attitudes, preferences, and purchase intentions. The results show that Korean beauty influencers have a big impact on buying patterns, and students show a preference for Korean beauty products because of their distinctive aesthetic appeals, effectiveness, and social media support. These findings highlight how important social media and global beauty trends are in influencing local consumer behaviour and offer insightful information to marketers and brand strategists looking to break into comparable markets.*

Keywords *IKorean Beauty Influencers, Buying Behaviour, Beauty Products*

INTRODUCTION

One of the few, if not the only, nations in the world with a clear objective to become the world's top exporter of popular culture is South Korea. Korea is using it to hone its "soft power. The Hallyu effect has been tremendous, contributing to 0.2% of Korea's GDP in 2004, amounting to approximately USD 1.87 billion. With South Korean firms expanding into a variety of markets, Korean beauty, or K-beauty, has become increasingly popular globally in recent years. Influencers on social media, particularly those from Korea, have been crucial in spreading K-beauty concepts and goods. South Indian women's growing interest in K-beauty is a reflection of shifting consumer preferences and beauty standards. This study looks at aspects such as perceived product efficacy, brand perception, and cultural appeal to determine how Korean beauty influencers impact college student's purchasing decisions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- *The Impact of Black Female Influencers on Transnational Korean beauty*

A case study of two black beauty vloggers: From this paper it is understood that black beauty vloggers managed to influence the Korean beauty industry to be more inclusive.

- *The impact of K-Beauty Social Media Influencers, Sponsorship, and Product Exposure on Consumer Acceptance of New Products*

(Lei Wang & Jin Hwa Lee, 2021) A consumer was most likely to accept and buy a new product when three factors (general public influencer, sponsorship displayed, and product exposed) were combined. The results show that the social media posts that made consumers most likely to accept a new product were made by a general public influencer and did not display any sponsorship affiliation with the product. Additionally, there was a significant interaction between the influencer type, sponsorship display status, and product exposure method regarding consumers' acceptance intention towards a new product.

- *Influence of Korean Beauty Standards on Global Markets*

The global beauty industry has experienced a cultural shift due to the influence of K-beauty, which emphasizes natural, flawless skin and a minimalistic yet effective approach to skincare (Chung & Lee, 2020). The concept of "glass skin," which advocates for a smooth, clear, and luminous complexion, has become a desirable standard across various countries, including India (Kim & Oh, 2021). Studies have shown that K-beauty has transformed consumer expectations

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of beauty products, promoting skincare over makeup and creating demand for multi-step skincare routines (Lee et al., 2019).

- *Role of Social Media Influencers in Beauty Marketing*
Social media influencers have become powerful marketing agents, particularly in the beauty industry (Abidin, 2016). Influencers create trust and loyalty among followers by providing product reviews, tutorials, and skincare advice. Korean beauty influencers, in particular, use platforms such as Instagram and YouTube to reach a global audience, effectively turning their local beauty practices into worldwide trends (Park & Cho, 2019). According to Hwang and Zhang (2020), influencers' endorsements shape consumer perceptions of foreign brands and contribute to their adoption in new markets.
- *Cultural Adaptation of Korean Beauty Products in South India*
Korean beauty products have been adapted to suit the Indian market, especially in regions like South India, where the hot and humid climate requires products that address specific skincare needs (Rao et al., 2022). Studies suggest that the natural ingredients and gentle formulations of K-beauty products appeal to Indian consumers, who prefer products that do not irritate sensitive skin (Iyer & Shah, 2021). The uniqueness of K-beauty packaging, often aesthetically pleasing and innovative, further enhances its appeal (Mohan, 2020).
- *Consumer Behavior and Purchase Decision Factors*
Consumer behavior is heavily influenced by perceived quality, cultural relevance, and social influence (Siddiqui, 2019). In the context of South Indian women, exposure to Korean beauty influencers has been shown to impact their preferences and purchasing decisions. The perceived effectiveness of K-beauty products, often demonstrated through influencers' content, builds a positive image of these products in consumers' minds (Venkat, 2022). Furthermore, social proof generated by influencer endorsements reinforces consumers' trust in K-beauty products.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection. A survey was conducted among college Students aged 17-23 to understand their awareness, perceptions, and purchasing behaviors related to Korean beauty products. Additionally, in-depth interviews with 10 respondents provided insights into personal motivations and experiences influenced by

Korean beauty influencers. Data were analyzed using SPSS to identify correlations and thematic analysis for qualitative data.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

- *Awareness and Adoption of Korean Beauty Products*
According to the study results, 52% of participants had bought at least one K-beauty product in the previous 12 months, and 78% of participants were aware of Korean beauty goods. According to interviewees, exposure on social media—specifically, YouTube and Instagram—was the main driver of awareness.
- *Influence of Korean Beauty Influencers on Buying Decisions*
About 65 percent of those surveyed admitted that Korean beauty influencers had an effect on their purchasing choices. Trust in influencer reviews was mentioned by many respondents, who also mentioned that they were inspired to try new items by the influencers' candid product reviews and hands-on product demos. Additionally, respondents reported identifying with the aesthetic that these influencers advocate.
- *Cultural Appeal and Brand Perception*
According to the study, college girls, who frequently have sensitive skin, responded favourably to the mild and natural components marketed in K-beauty products. Additionally, the aspirational nature of Korean beauty techniques, which are culturally unique, promoted product trial and purchase.
- *Purchase Behavior and Product Loyalty*
Participants reported higher brand loyalty when they experienced positive results from K-beauty products. Products such as sheet masks, essences, and lightweight moisturizers were highly favored, reflecting a preference for hydration and skin-soothing properties suited to the climate.

DISCUSSION

The results show that Korean beauty influencers have a big cultural impact on South Indian women's purchasing habits. The expansion of the Korean beauty sector in South India has been made possible by influencers' ability to introduce new goods and shape beauty standards across geographical boundaries. Local markets are rapidly incorporating foreign goods and customs into their own cultural contexts, which is an example of cultural globalisation.

CONCLUSION

Korean beauty influencers have a substantial impact on the beauty product purchase behaviors of college students. Social media plays a critical role in bridging cultural gaps, enabling South Indian consumers to adopt global beauty standards and products. This study highlights the importance of understanding cultural nuances in consumer behavior, suggesting that brands leverage local influencers to further deepen their engagement with regional audiences.

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