

# How Advertising Affects Women's Choices in the Cosmetics Sector

Lebogang Saule<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Marketing and Retail Management, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa, Orcid: 0000-0001-6421-0558

## Keywords

Cosmetics advertising

Purchasing behaviour

Self-Esteem

Beauty industry

---

## Abstract

The cosmetic and beauty industry is a significant sector across the globe even in a context of a developing country. Like most sectors, which do not sell essential goods or services, it was impacted by Covid-19. Literature suggests and confirms that advertising plays a critical role in the growth of the beauty and cosmetics industry, but limited research has been conducted since the era of the pandemic. The purpose of this research is to understand the relationship between the forms of advertising (print, digital and broadcasting media) on consumer purchasing behaviour. This study intends to contribute to the gap in consumer behaviour literature in relation to the cosmetic and beauty industry by determining the influence of the forms of media within a developing economy setting.

A descriptive, cross-sectional and qualitative research approach was employed, utilizing a semi-structured interview guide as the chosen research instrument. Data were gathered through face-to-face interviews, specifically targeting women residing in Pretoria. Screening questions pertaining to their involvement, such as frequency of makeup usage, were utilized during the interviews.

The results suggest that different forms of advertising influence the consumers' behaviour at different points. A key finding is that digital media contributes significantly and was seen to be the most influential in causing consumers to make a final purchase. Recommendations for future research and managerial implications are provided.

---

---

\*Corresponding author

<sup>1</sup>\* esewelpl@unisa.ac.za

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1. Background**

The South African cosmetic and beauty industry has experienced remarkable growth, with an estimated growth rate of 53% between 2020 and 2025 (Maida, 2022). This growth is noteworthy, considering the challenging economic conditions in South Africa, including increases in value-added tax, repo rates and food prices. Within the formal sector, the cosmetics industry encompasses approximately 250 companies, fostering employment opportunities for more than 60,000 individuals, as highlighted by Medupe (2019). Consequently, this sector plays a pivotal role in combating unemployment, contributing to the country's economic stability. Notably, the South African market is predominantly dominated by major industry players such as Unilever, Procter & Gamble, Avon, L'Oréal SA, among others. Unilever maintains a prominent position by continuously leading the market through innovative product launches and aggressive expansion strategies, as noted by Conradie (2021).

The cosmetics industry is one of the most lucrative and competitive markets in the world, with global sales reaching \$532 billion in 2021 (Research and Markets, 2021). The industry is said to rely heavily on advertising to attract and retain customers, especially female consumers who account for most cosmetic purchases (Conradie, 2021). According to Euromonitor (2021), the total value of beauty and personal care products in South Africa was R46.4 billion in 2019, while Research and Markets (2021) estimated it to be R47.4 billion in 2020. Despite South Africa (SA) being classified as a developing country and with nearly half of its population living in poverty, this notable growth in the cosmetic and beauty industry continues to unfold (StatsSA, 2023).

Growth in the cosmetics and beauty industry has been suggested to be influenced by advertising according to studies done by Haider (2018), Kittikowit, Suwanabubpa and Sithisomwong (2018), Srivastava (2020) and Singh and Baruah (2022). These authors propose that, overall, advertising exerts a favourable impact on consumer purchasing behaviour. However, it is essential to highlight that none of these studies explicitly delineate the specific advertising medium that is responsible for fostering the suggested growth. Consequently, a knowledge gap remains in the identification of the most influential advertising medium in shaping the industry's growth and consumer purchasing behaviour.

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

Koekemoer (2020) states that advertising can be done through media such as print (newspaper and magazines), broadcast (radio and television), out-of-home (outdoor and cinema) and or digital media. Although, for the purpose of this research only digital, print and broadcast media were considered. This is because according to Ulrich (2019), these media are amongst the most credible in South Africa. The problem lies in the lack of sufficient data in South Africa to determine which of these three

advertising methods has the most significant impact on consumers' purchase decisions. Therefore, the study aims to explore these three advertising methods to find out which one is the most influential in influencing consumers when they decide to buy something.

### **1.3. Research objectives**

The objective of this research is to investigate the impact of advertising across different media platforms; print, broadcast and digital, on consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetic and beauty industry. The study also aims to explore the most influential advertising medium among these three channels in shaping consumer decisions related to cosmetic products.

Objective 1: To determine the role of advertising; digital, print and broadcast media and which media has an impact on consumers to reach a purchase decision in the cosmetics and beauty industry.

Objective 2: To identify the role advertising; digital, print and broadcast media play on consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetic and beauty industry and which media had the most influence.

Objective 3: To explore the role of advertising; print, broadcast and digital media play on consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetic and beauty industry and determine the most influential media.

The first section of this paper provides an introductory overview, elucidating the identified problem at hand. Subsequent sections undertake a comprehensive literature review, followed by a meticulous exposition of the research methodology adopted for this study. Finally, the paper culminates by presenting the findings, addressing inherent limitations and offering potential avenues for future research in a methodical and coherent sequence.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Advertising**

According to Koekemoer (2020), advertising aims to raise awareness, remind, influence and persuade the intended audience to make a purchase or develop a favourable disposition towards a product or service. Haider (2018) agrees, emphasizing that advertising's main objective is to influence consumer buying behaviour and prompt consumers to make a purchase.

Success in the beauty and cosmetics industry is often attributed to the use of advertising media such as broadcasting, print media, digital media, or out-of-home media. Some researchers, such as Srivastava (2020), highlight the use of physically attractive people in cosmetics adverts to appeal to consumers' self-esteem. Conversely, Singh and Baruah (2021) emphasise the focus on psychological emotions to persuade customers that using their products will lead to personal improvement. However, none of these studies specifies which advertising medium is most influential in contributing to the industry's growth.

Koekemoer (2020) explains that integrated marketing communication (IMC) is essential for successful marketing. IMC involves the integration of various marketing communication tools to add value to customers and strengthen positive relationships (Percy, 2018). This study specifically concentrates on advertising conducted through media such as print, broadcast and digital and its role in influencing consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetic and beauty industry.

Advertising's role includes attracting attention to new products, informing customers about product attributes and benefits, persuading them to make a purchase and reminding them about the brand's advantages (Percy, 2018; Fay, Keller and Larkin, 2019). The AIDA model (Awareness, Interest, Desire, Action) is often used to explain how advertising can influence consumer behaviour and lead to product purchases (Koekemoer, 2020).

## **2.2. Consumer buying behaviour**

Consumer buying behaviour starts in the consumer's mind, leading to the exploration of potential products or services that meet their needs (Ajayi, 2022). The process involves research, evaluation of advantages and disadvantages, purchase and post-purchase behaviour, which provides valuable insights for marketers. Buying decisions can be categorised into four types based on consumer involvement and brand differences:

- 1) Complex buying behaviour: Involves expensive and infrequent purchases with a high level of consumer involvement (e.g., cars and houses).
- 2) Dissonance-reducing buying behaviour: Requires significant involvement but with little brand differences (e.g., cell phones and insurance).
- 3) Habitual buying behaviour: Involves low involvement and inexpensive products, with consumers not being loyal to a particular brand (e.g., salt and bread).
- 4) Variety-seeking buying behaviour: Shows significant brand differences, and consumers frequently switch brands for the sake of variation (e.g., chocolates and fast food).

The primary objective of advertising is to impact consumer buying behaviour (Koekemoer, 2020). In most cases, for a consumer to reach a purchase decision it is influenced by whether they like or dislike the advert they saw about a product or service, not taking into consideration the features of the product or service (Haider, 2018). To corroborate this, Lavidge and Steiner created a Hierarchy of Effects Theory in 1961.

The Hierarchy of Effect theory suggests there are six steps a consumer goes through from when the product or service is advertised to when a consumer makes a purchase (Desiree & Jiyun, 2018). The theory also suggests that advertising carries the responsibility of encouraging consumers to go through

all the six steps that should end in a purchase. It is not necessary that consumers always go through all the six steps but the aim is to land a purchase (Desiree & Jiyun, 2018).

### **3. Research Methodology**

For this research, a qualitative research approach was adopted to understand the fundamental aims, opinions and motivations behind human buying behaviour in the cosmetics and beauty industry. Qualitative research allows for in-depth exploration of research objectives and can reveal trends in thinking processes and opinions (Maree, 2016). It provides an opportunity to engage participants using projective techniques and gain insights into how advertising influences their lives (Hammarberg, Kirkman & de Lacey, 2016).

The study is exploratory in nature, aiming to explore the role of advertising in consumer buying behaviour within the cosmetics and beauty industry, with a focus on identifying the most influential advertising medium. As there is limited existing research on this topic in the South African context, exploratory research was deemed appropriate (Singh, 2019).

The research paradigm adopted is interpretivist, allowing for an in-depth exploration of consumers' perceptions and experiences related to advertising and cosmetic purchases. Qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups were used to gain rich insights into how consumers interpret and respond to advertising messages across different media platforms (print, broadcast, and digital). The research design is descriptive, enabling the gathering of data on consumer responses to different advertising media and identifying patterns and trends in their purchasing behaviour. A formal, cross-sectional qualitative approach was employed to achieve the research objective.

#### Population and sample

##### **Population**

Women from different cultures and races who wear makeup are the target population that the researcher aims to understand. The women must reside in Pretoria and wear makeup often, from four times a week or more. The characteristics of the women who were interviewed are; firstly, employed because it means they can afford to buy makeup themselves, secondly, they wear makeup four to seven times a week as those are the regular users of makeup and lastly, they should be aged 21 and above because according to L'Oréal Finance.com (2020) women from that age use makeup more regularly in comparison to the younger generation. Engaging these women assisted in terms of gaining insights into the role that advertising played in leading them to a purchase decision and which medium had the most influence.

## **Sampling**

The research used a non-probability sampling approach, specifically convenience sampling. This approach allowed the researcher to control the selection of participants and was suitable for exploratory research, focusing on gathering initial insights rather than generalising findings to a larger population. Colleagues, neighbours and other women in Pretoria were selected as participants using subjective judgment rather than random selection.

Fifteen participants were reached out to but only ten participants participated. Data saturation was reached from the seventh participant as new responses were not providing new insight but rather repeating information and confirming existing themes. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier the aim of this study is not to provide any final and conclusive solutions, but to merely explore the research topic on the role of advertising in consumer buying behaviour within the cosmetics and beauty industry and to help understand which media is the most influential.

### **3.1. Data collection method**

For this study, interviews were employed as the data collection method to gather qualitative data. Interviews offer the advantage of asking detailed questions and obtaining in-depth information about personal feelings, perceptions and opinions, which is crucial for understanding the role of advertising in consumer buying behaviour within the cosmetics and beauty industry and determining the most influential medium (Smith, 2019).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to allow flexibility and the opportunity to explore unexpected directions based on respondents' answers. This format involved asking open-ended questions and probing for further clarification when needed (Atkinson, 2017).

The interviews were conducted face-to-face, providing an opportunity for detailed and in-depth discussions on the role of digital, print, and broadcast advertising media in shaping consumer purchasing behaviour. Face-to-face interviews have the advantage of accommodating participants who may not be literate and tend to have a higher response rate (Maree, 2016). However, it is acknowledged that this method can be costly and carries a risk of interviewer bias. To mitigate potential biases, feedback from field experts was sought to identify and address any overlooked biases.

The duration of the interviews ranged from 30 minutes to a maximum of 45 minutes, depending on each situation. Interview questions were designed to explore participants' reasons for wearing makeup and their experiences with makeup usage.

Data collection took place during participants' lunch hours, depending on their availability. The interviews were conducted in comfortable spaces such as office settings or cafes to ensure participants felt at ease. Audio recording and note-taking during the interviews were used to capture the information comprehensively. Sufficient time was allocated between interviews to digest the gathered information, as data analysis can be conducted concurrently with data collection in qualitative studies

to enhance data depth and quality (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2013).

To ensure data quality, a pre-test was conducted before data collection to identify and address any issues with the interview questions. Three participants not involved in the study were asked to review the questions to ensure clarity and relevancy (Maree, 2016). Adjustments were made accordingly based on the pre-test feedback before commencing the research.

### **3.2. Data analysis methods**

Thematic analysis was chosen as the method to analyse the qualitative data collected in this study. Thematic analysis is a systematic approach to identifying, analysing, organising, describing and reporting themes found within a set of data (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). It involves searching for and identifying common threads or patterns that emerge across the interviews, allowing researchers to gain insights into participants' perspectives and experiences (Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

The flexibility and accessibility of thematic analysis make it a suitable choice, especially for researchers who may be relatively new to qualitative research (Nowell et al., 2017). It is easy to grasp and relatively quick to learn, making it accessible for researchers at any level of experience (Miller, 2020). Thematic analysis is particularly useful for examining different opinions from various participants, highlighting both similarities and differences in their responses.

One of the advantages of thematic analysis is that it provides researchers with a rich understanding of participants' views without necessarily making claims about language use or body language (Nowell et al., 2017). As this research did not seek to make claims about language use or non-verbal cues, thematic analysis aligns well with the study's objectives.

Overall, thematic analysis was deemed appropriate for this research as it allows for a comprehensive exploration of participants' perspectives and experiences related to advertising and cosmetic purchases, providing valuable insights into the role of advertising media in shaping consumer buying behaviour.

### **3.3. Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness refers to the degree of confidence readers can have in the findings and interpretations of a research study. In this study, several techniques were employed to enhance trustworthiness:

*Credibility:* To ensure credibility, the researcher engaged in prolonged engagement and persistent observation during the data collection process. This allowed the researcher to build a deeper understanding of participants' perspectives and experiences. Additionally, data collection triangulation and researcher triangulation were used, involving multiple data sources and the involvement of the supervisor in debriefing sessions to validate the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maree, 2016).

*Transferability:* While the study does not make generalised claims, transferability is achieved by

inviting readers to make connections between the study's elements and their own experiences with print, broadcast, and digital media (Amankwaa, 2016; Maree, 2016).

*Dependability:* The research process was made logical, traceable and well-documented to ensure dependability. This was achieved through recording and transcribing the interviews, ensuring a clear and transparent research process (Amankwaa, 2016).

*Confirmability:* Confirmability is achieved by demonstrating that the findings and interpretations are derived from the data rather than influenced by the researcher's motivation or interest. The regular meetings with the research supervisor helped to correct any deviations from accurate findings and interpretations, ensuring confirmability (Maree, 2016; Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

*Authenticity:* To ensure authenticity, the study will keep a record of the transcripts and audio recordings of the interviews for a minimum of five years, following UNISA SBL research ethics standards. This allows other researchers to audit and verify the decisions and choices made by the researcher concerning the theoretical and methodological aspects of the study (Nowell et al., 2017).

### **3.4. Ethical considerations**

Ethics is a branch of moral philosophy that governs human conduct and it is essential to take ethical considerations into account when conducting research (Beer, 2016). In this study, the following ethical considerations were considered:

- *Compliance with Ethical Regulations:* The study complied with the ethical regulations and guidelines outlined by the University of South Africa (UNISA). An ethical clearance certificate from UNISA School of Business Leadership was obtained before data collection, ensuring that the research adhered to the university's ethical standards.
- *Participant Consent and Confidentiality:* Participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, and their consent was obtained before their participation. The primary research data collected for the study was used solely for research purposes, and participants' quotes and references were used accurately to ensure their anonymity and confidentiality.
- *Objective and Unbiased Approach:* To maintain objectivity and avoid bias, the researcher had regular meetings with the research supervisor. This allowed for critical reflection on the research process and findings, ensuring that the study remained impartial.
- *Respect for Participants:* The study needed to remain ethical to foster trust between the participants and the researcher. Demonstrating respect for the participant's privacy and confidentiality helped build trust and willingness to participate (Resnick, 2015).



### **3.5. Informed consent**

Informed consent is a crucial ethical requirement when conducting research involving human participants. It ensures that participants, or their legal guardians in the case of children or vulnerable populations, are fully aware of the nature of the study and voluntarily grant permission to participate (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015).

To comply with ethical standards, this study provided informed consent forms to all participants before collecting any data. These forms were provided by UNISA and outlined the purpose of the research, the nature of the study, and the reasons for conducting it. Participants were asked to sign the consent forms, indicating their voluntary agreement to participate.

The informed consent forms also informed participants that the interviews would be recorded for reference purposes. They were assured that their participation was entirely voluntary, and they were free to withdraw from the study at any stage if they were unwilling to continue. No payments were offered to participants to avoid any potential coercion or inducement.

Moreover, participants were explicitly asked for permission to record the interviews, with the assurance that the recordings would be used solely for reference purposes and would be destroyed after the research was concluded. This further ensured confidentiality and respect for the participants' privacy.

By obtaining informed consent, the study demonstrated a commitment to respecting the autonomy and rights of the participants and upheld ethical principles of transparency and voluntary participation.

### **3.6. Protection from harm and right to privacy**

Ensuring the protection of participants from any physical or mental discomfort was a paramount concern in this research. Before commencing the study, ethical clearance was diligently obtained, certifying that all participants would be safeguarded from harm throughout their involvement. Furthermore, the research questions underwent pre-testing, with the researcher's supervisor conducting a thorough review to ensure the absence of any potentially harmful content.

The interview questions were thoughtfully designed to elicit honest responses while simultaneously preserving participant anonymity. To maintain strict confidentiality, no real names were used in the research; instead, participants were identified as respondents A to F according to the interview schedule. All data collected and findings derived from the research were exclusively employed for this study and would not be used to identify participants or used against them in any manner.

The right to privacy was conscientiously upheld throughout the study, guaranteeing that participants' personal information and identities remained strictly confidential. The research team's unwavering commitment to protecting participants from harm and preserving their privacy underscored the study's ethical rigour and dedication to maintaining the highest ethical standards.

## 4. Results and Findings

The results were presented in the form of themes. Below is a table that outlines the themes that were identified from the literature review and the questions that go together with each theme.

**Table 1: Themes**

Themes	Interview question
Theme 1: Creation/building of Awareness and Knowledge through Print, Digital and Broadcast media advertising	Question 1&2 under Print, Digital and Broadcast media
Theme 2: Creation/ building of Liking and preference through Print, Digital and Broadcast media advertising	Question 3 under Print, Digital and Broadcast media
Theme 3: Creation/Building of Conviction and purchase through Print, Digital and Broadcast media advertising	Question 4 under Print, Digital and Broadcast media

**Theme 1:** Creation/building of Awareness and Knowledge through Print, Digital and Broadcast media advertising. This theme covers the cognitive stage in the hierarchy of effects theory, it deals with information processing by a customer (Desiree & Jiyun, 2018). The cognitive phase entails the mental process of perception, judgment, memory and reasoning, as contrasted with emotional and volitional processes (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017).

This theme explored if print, digital and broadcast media have assisted in creating or building awareness and knowledge within the cosmetics and beauty industry by checking if the participants could remember any advert they have recently seen on the mentioned platforms.

**Theme 2:** Creation/ building of Liking and preference through Print, Digital and Broadcast media advertising. This theme investigates the affective stage in the hierarchy of effects and it concentrates on attitude formation, the way customers feel about a brand (Desiree & Jiyun, 2018). Liking in this stage refers to if the target audience is aware of the product and their general feel about it (Nowell *et al.*, 2017). Preference considers the possibility that the target audience might like the product but not prefer it to others (Nowell *et al.*, 2017).

This theme explored if print, digital and broadcast media have assisted in creating or building any preference or liking of cosmetics and beauty products by checking how the participants reacted or felt about the adverts they saw if any follow-up research was done or if anything happened and what were the reasons.

**Theme 3:** Creation/Building of Conviction and purchase through Print, Digital and Broadcast media advertising. This theme considers the conative stage from the hierarchy of effects theory, it deals with how a person acts in response to intellect and emotions (Desiree & Jiyun, 2018). Conviction refers to creating a desire in a consumer's mind to purchase a product (Nowell *et al.*, 2017). Purchasing refers

to the actual purchasing of the product (Nowell *et al.*, 2017).

This theme aimed at exploring if print, digital and broadcast media has assisted in creating or building any conviction or purchases within the cosmetics and beauty industry. This was done by checking if the participants made a purchase after follow-up research or if it created a conviction for the participants to try out the products the next time they buy makeup or cosmetics and which medium had the most influence to lead them to purchase or conviction.

#### **4.1. Discussion**

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data as stated in the previous section, this entails the identification of patterns and themes within qualitative data (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). It is a method for identifying, analysing, organising, describing and reporting themes found within a data set (Nowell *et al.*, 2017).

The first three questions that were asked were introductory questions and opened the interview and making the participant comfortable while trying to understand the reasons behind their usage of makeup. The rest of the questions were constructed based on the literature review. Maguire and Delahunt (2017) mention that before identifying themes, codes are to be generated first.

##### **4.1.1. Code 1:**

To determine the role of advertising; digital, print and broadcast media and which media has an impact on consumers to reach a purchase decision in the cosmetics and beauty industry. Under this code, the purpose is to define the role of advertising which media has the most impact on influencing consumers in reaching a decision in the cosmetics and beauty industry. Quotes from the interviews that address this code are as follows:

*“YouTube tutorials helped me find more natural-looking ways to apply makeup”*

*“I remember seeing Bonang Mathebe in a beautiful red dress advertising a Revlon lipstick”*

*“I use make-up for personal reasons, it has very little to do with my job”*

*“I go through Avon brochures all the time to see what I can buy”*

*“I saw other people using it and I liked how they looked and that’s how I started using makeup”*

*“I follow the latest trends on social media and it helps me keep relevant” “I started using the Maybelline mascara after I read the reviews online”*

*“The Ponds colours advert on TV created a desire in me to want to try it one day”*

*“I used to have a lot of facial spots. So a consultant applied it on me and I saw that it covered the problematic areas”*

*“I go through YouTube to find the latest trends” “I se makeup mainly to hide my facial spots”*

*“An ad I remember seeing very well on a magazine was the Maybelline African shades when it*

*was first introduced in Africa”*

*“I remember seeing the Clinique spot reduction ad, whereby they were making an example with an egg on television”*

#### **4.1.2. Code 2:**

To identify the role advertising; digital, print and broadcast media play on consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetic and beauty industry and which media had the most influence. The purpose of this code is to classify the role of advertising on consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetic and beauty industry and identify the most influential medium. Quotes from the interviews that addresses this code are as follows:

*“After I saw the Estee Lauder advert on Instagram I knew I had to buy it”*

*“I once heard a radio advert on Garnier about spot reduction, since that day I have never looked back”*

*“I like trying new makeup trends, it is fun for me” “I use makeup because I love how it makes me look” “It enhances my beauty”*

*“Makeup enhances my beauty and boosts my confidence levels”*

*“I love makeup, it makes me feel good about myself and boosts my confidence”*

*“I am a loyal Clinique user, but I did do a follow-up research and that is only because I was intrigued by the fact that Sorbet has expanded their services to make-up too, so it was more of a curiosity thing. I used googled to check their new offering”*

*“Social media is the reason why I started doing ‘brows on fleek’ and I never looked back since that day”*

*“It is not compulsory for me to wear makeup at my place of work but because I interact with customers a lot. It’s important for me because it makes me look good and enhance my beauty.”*

*“I like Bobbi Brown, although it is an expensive brand, I prefer it but every now and then I do check YouTube videos on product offerings though from brands such as Mac”*

*“I used to work at the airport, which was my first job, it was almost a must to have makeup on every time you came to work”*

#### **4.1.3. Code 3:**

To explore the role of advertising; print, broadcast and digital media play on consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetic and beauty industry and determine the most influential media. This code aims to discover the role of advertising on consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetic and beauty industry and determine the most influential media. Quotes from the interviews that address this code are as follows:

*“I actually bought immediately after having spoken to the brand ambassador from Revlon, so I can*

*actually say that if I had not seen it on television I would not have bought”*

*“I would really like to try the Elizabeth Arden serum one day when the funds allow”*

*“I have been using Estée Lauder for many years now, it is a premium brand and it has been treating my skin so well that I hardly ever research other brands.*

*“The first time I used makeup I was going to a party with friends, they all had it on, I didn't want to miss out so I had to do it too”*

*“I did my follow-up research by going to the Edgars make-up section and spoke to the Revlon ambassador and she gave me a sample”*

*“After having seen the YouTube tutorials, I had to go in store buy and try it for myself because I liked how the lady applied makeup”*

From the above-mentioned codes, the following themes were identified, namely:

- Reasons behind the usage of makeup – According to the feedback, advertising is not necessarily the main reason for the initial usage but it does encourage continued usage. The feedback also suggests that other factors caused the participants to use makeup other than advertising; personal reasons, friends, family, colleagues and work environment formed part of the reasons also.

*“I use make-up for personal reasons, it has very little to do with my job”*

*“I saw other people using it and I liked how they looked and that’s how I started using makeup”*

*“Social media is the reason why I started doing ‘brows on fleek’ and I never looked back since that day”*

*“It enhances my beauty”*

*“I was influenced by someone and I got stuck with the habit”*

*“I work as a receptionist, although it’s not part of my job description to wear makeup all the time but I feel an obligation to always wear it because I am the face of the company”*

*“I go through YouTube to find the latest trends”*

- Awareness and Knowledge - Participants were able to remember seeing one advert in more than one place. This corroborates what integrated marketing communication suggests; that all forms of communication messages when carefully linked together and integrated, work well (Koekemoer, 2020).

*“An ad I remember seeing very well on a magazine was the Maybelline African shades when it was first introduced in Africa”*

*“I saw an advert by Maybelline on TV, introducing their different types of African shades”*

*“I remember seeing the Clinique spot reduction ad, whereby they were making an example with an egg on television”*

*“I remember an advert from a magazine by Clinique whereby they made an example with an egg”*

*“The Revlon Bonang Mathebe advert was on TV and Social media, that ad stood out for me”*

- Liking and preference – the participants liked and preferred certain brands over others despite remembering different types of brands. The feedback suggested that to a certain extent, this has affected their willingness to do follow-up research on other brands. Furthermore, if the participants did a follow-up research it was predominately through the digital media.

*“I am a loyal Clinique user, but I did do a follow-up research on Sorbet and that is only because I was intrigued by the fact that they have expanded their services to make-up too, so it was more of a curiosity thing. I used googled to check their new offering”*

*“I like Bobbi Brown, although it is an expensive brand, I prefer it but every now and then I do check YouTube videos on product offerings from brands such as Mac”*

*“I have been using Estée Lauder for many years now, it is a premium brand and it has been treating my skin so well that I hardly ever research other brands.”*

*“I do use different brands when it comes to lipsticks but when it comes to makeup, I only use Maybelline”*

- Conviction and purchase – this theme covers the actual purchase or the desire to make the purchase. Lavage & Steiner (1961) suggest that the goal of advertising is to influence consumers to make a purchase or to be favourably inclined toward that.

*“It did create a desire in me to find out more about Clinique and consider it next time but I really like Estee Lauder and I have been using it for years. Maybe next time I might buy the Clinique spot reduction range”*

*“Well the Avon catalogue that my friend showed me, I immediately bought the lipstick to support my friend and I also liked what I saw”*

*“I bought it immediately after having spoken to the brand ambassador from Revlon, so I can say that if I had not seen it on television I would not have bought”*

*“I would like to try the Elizabeth Arden serum one day, when the funds allow” “The Ponds colours advert on TV created a desire in me to want to try it one day”*

- Preferred media – According to the feedback, the participants saw or heard the adverts from different advertising platforms although, with regards to doing follow-up research, digital media came out more dominant and played a major role in the final purchase decision.

*“I go through YouTube to find the latest trends”*

*“I like Bobbi Brown, although it is an expensive brand, I prefer it but every now and then I do check YouTube videos on product offerings though from brands such as Mac”*

*“Social media is the reason why I started doing ‘brows on fleek’ and I never looked back since that*

day”

*“After I saw the Estee Lauder advert on Instagram I knew I had to buy it” “YouTube tutorials helped me find more natural-looking ways to apply makeup”.*

## **5. Conclusions and Contribution, Limitations and Future Research**

### **5.1. Conclusion and contribution**

**Objective 1:** To determine the role of advertising; digital, print and broadcast media and which media has an impact on consumers to reach a purchase decision in the cosmetics and beauty industry. The study findings revealed that advertising plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' perceptions and attitudes towards products. Additionally, it was observed that advertising aids in creating awareness about products and their unique features, while also educating consumers on product usage. This finding is consistent with Percy's research (2018), which emphasises the role of advertising in informing, persuading and reminding consumers about products and services. Furthermore, DeBelen (2016) supports this conclusion by highlighting advertising as a means of communicating the brand's offerings and instructions on usage, as also indicated in the literature review by Lavidge and Steiner (1961) during the cognitive phase of the consumer decision-making process. Thus, it was established that advertising contributes to awareness creation and knowledge provision, in line with the hierarchy of effects model.

Moreover, the study highlighted the significant role of digital media in creating awareness and educating consumers about product features. Digital media emerged as the most mentioned platform among participants. This finding aligns with the work of Desiree and Jiyun (2018), who emphasize that creating awareness is a crucial starting point in the purchase process. Furthermore, Studholme (2018) asserts that digital media enables brands to achieve awareness at a lower cost compared to other advertising forms.

Based on the study's conclusions, it is recommended that advertisers prioritise creating awareness by emphasising the brand's unique features. Moreover, readily available product information should be provided to potential customers to satisfy their need for product knowledge (Chand, 2020).

**Objective 2:** To identify the role advertising; digital, print and broadcast media play on consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetic and beauty industry and which media had the most influence. The study revealed that advertising's role in influencing consumer purchasing behaviour is evident through participants' ability to recall various advertisements from different platforms and express their sentiments about them. Lavidge and Steiner (1961) confirm this as part of the affective stage of the purchase process, wherein consumers develop preferences and liking towards a product. Likewise, Desiree and Jiyun (2018) emphasize the significance of this stage, as highlighting the unique selling points effectively can lead to customer preference over other brands. Consequently, the study supports the conclusion that advertising influences consumers' attitude formation about a brand, particularly during the affective stage according to the hierarchy of effects model.

Furthermore, the study found that digital media prominently influenced consumer attitudes and behaviours. Notably, platforms like YouTube enabled beauty and cosmetics brands to showcase their products engagingly and make them accessible to customers at any time of the day. Martin (2016) supports this, stating that YouTube is a potent form of social media and a critical source of consumer influence, often used for research before making purchase decisions.

To leverage the influence of advertising on consumer attitudes, it is recommended that brands prioritise advertising on media platforms with the most significant impact. Dean (2020) reports that social media users reached 3.81 billion globally in 2020, almost doubling from 2.07 billion in 2015, with an average person having 8.6 social media accounts in 2020, up from 4.8 in 2014, demonstrating significant social media growth rates year-on-year since 2015.

**Objective 3:** To explore the role of advertising; print, broadcast and digital media play on consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetic and beauty industry and determine the most influential media. The study concludes that advertising plays a pivotal role in influencing consumers to make purchase decisions or develop inclinations toward products. Many participants reported making actual purchases or expressing the willingness to try the advertised products after exposure to the advertisements. This aligns with Lavidge and Steiner's model (1961) of the conative stage, wherein a consumer either makes a purchase or develops a conviction. Desiree and Jiyun (2018) further note that consumers may experience doubts during this stage, and it is the advertiser's responsibility to create the desire for the product.

Digital media emerged as a dominant factor in encouraging consumers to make purchase decisions. Participants emphasised the significance of reading reviews, watching tutorials, and engaging with videos in influencing their actual purchase choices.

To maximise the impact of advertising, it is recommended that advertisers increase their investment in digital media, considering its substantial influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Dean (2020) reports that 83.36% of internet users are active on social media, underscoring the importance of advertising on these platforms, alongside a company website. Additionally, with an average of 2 hours and 24 minutes spent on social media daily by users globally, advertisers can effectively reach and engage with potential customers.

Overall, this study sought to explore the impact of advertising across print, broadcast, and digital media on consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetics and beauty industry. Despite challenging economic conditions in South Africa, the beauty and cosmetics industry has shown resilience, and advertising has been identified as a significant factor contributing to its growth.

By focusing on the specific influence of advertising in the cosmetics and beauty industry in South Africa, this research addresses a critical gap in the existing literature. The study employed a qualitative research approach, engaging women from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds residing in Pretoria.



The findings and analysis reveal that advertising plays a crucial role in shaping consumers' purchasing behaviour through various stages: cognitive, affective, and conative, aligning with previous studies conducted by Haider (2018), Kittikowit, Suwanabubpa and Sithisomwong (2018), Srivastava (2020), and Singh and Baruah (2022). Notably, digital media emerged as the most influential platform, indicating its significant impact in driving consumer decisions within the beauty and cosmetics industry.

This research contributes valuable insights for marketers and industry professionals, providing a deeper understanding of how advertising influences consumer behaviour in the cosmetics and beauty market. Recognising the power of digital media, businesses can strategically leverage this platform to enhance brand visibility and engage with their target audience effectively. As the beauty industry continues to evolve, understanding the role of advertising will remain crucial for businesses to stay competitive and thrive in the dynamic market landscape.

## **5.2. Limitations**

This study encountered several limitations that warrant acknowledgement. Firstly, the research focused on three advertising tools, namely print, broadcast, and digital media, omitting out-of-home advertising. This exclusion restricts the comprehensiveness of the study's approach to advertising in the cosmetics and beauty industry.

Secondly, it is important to note that the findings are specific to women who wear makeup for personal reasons and may not be generalised to women who wear makeup for work-related purposes, such as flight attendants, models, or casino hostesses. These specific occupational groups might have distinct advertising influences on their purchasing behaviour, necessitating further research to explore their unique perspectives.

Thirdly, as this study adopted a qualitative research design, the findings are primarily exploratory and not meant for comparison, prediction, or verification. While qualitative research allows for in-depth understanding, it may not provide statistically significant generalisations that quantitative studies can achieve.

Lastly, the participant pool was limited to working women in Pretoria, potentially overlooking valuable insights from other demographics, such as men and unemployed women who also use cosmetics. Expanding the sample to include these groups could offer a more comprehensive understanding of advertising's influence on a broader population.

Acknowledging these limitations is essential for interpreting the findings accurately and recognizing the scope and context in which the study's conclusions can be applied. Future research endeavours should strive to address these limitations to enrich the understanding of advertising's role in shaping consumer behaviour within the cosmetics and beauty industry.

### 5.3. Future Research

To further enhance the understanding of the role of advertising in consumer purchasing behaviour within the cosmetic and beauty industry and determine the most influential media, future studies should take the following recommendations into account:

- **Increase Sample Size and Diversity:** Expanding the sample size to include a larger and more diverse group of women beyond those in Pretoria would provide broader insights into how different demographics perceive and respond to advertising in the cosmetics and beauty industry. Additionally, including unemployed women and men who use cosmetics could offer a comprehensive understanding of advertising's impact on a wider range of consumers.
- **Incorporate Other Advertising Tools and IMC Strategies:** Future studies should consider including other advertising tools, such as out-of-home media, to provide a more comprehensive view of the role of different advertising channels in influencing consumer behaviour. Moreover, exploring the impact of integrated marketing communication (IMC) strategies, such as public relations, direct marketing and sales promotions, in conjunction with advertising, would offer a holistic understanding of the industry's promotional practices.
- **Consider Quantitative Research:** While the current study utilized a qualitative research approach to gain in-depth insights, future research could benefit from complementing it with a quantitative study. Conducting quantitative research would enable researchers to assess relationships, make comparisons, and draw more statistically significant conclusions, providing a more robust foundation for understanding the dynamics between advertising and consumer behaviour.

By incorporating these recommendations into future studies, researchers can build upon the existing knowledge and deepen the understanding of advertising's role in shaping consumer decisions within the cosmetics and beauty industry. This will lead to more comprehensive and valuable insights for marketers, businesses and the industry.

### REFERENCES

- Acevedo, C. (2018). *Consumer Behaviour and Advertising Management*. [Online] Available at: <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/unisa1ebooks/detail.action?docID=5390481>. [Accessed 21 March 2020]
- Ajayi, A. (2022). *A study on the factors affecting consumer buying behaviour*. University of Ibadan Nigeria
- Atkinson, J. (2017). *Journey into Social Activism: Qualitative Approaches*. Fordham University Press.
- Baruah, M. and Singh, P. (2021). A study on frequency and purpose of using cosmetic products by the female consumer in Jorhat city of Assam. *The Pharma Innovation Journal*, 11(2): 732- 737.
- Blythe, J. (2013). *Consumer behaviour*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Conradie, A. (2023). *Cosmetics Industry South Africa | Who Owns Whom (2023)*. Available at:

- <https://www.whoownswhom.co.za/store/cosmetics-industry-south-africa/>. [Accessed 17 May 2023]
- Desiree, H. and Jiyun, K. 2018. The contributions of perceived CSR information substantiality toward consumers' cognitive, affective, and conative responses: The hierarchy of effects model approach. *Clothing & Textiles Research Journal*, 36(2): 62-77.
- Eagle, L. (2015). *Marketing communications*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge.
- Enslin, C., (2019). *Brands & Branding: Transformations & Emergence of Brand Ecosystems*. [online] MarkLives.com. Available at: <http://www.marklives.com/2019/11/brands-branding-transformations-emergence-of-brand-ecosystems/> [Accessed 22 October 2020].
- Euromonitor. (2021). *Beauty and Personal Care in South Africa (2023)*. Available at: <https://www.euromonitor.com/beauty-and-personal-care-in-south-africa/report>. [Accessed 17 May 2023].
- Fay, B., Keller, E. and Larkin, R. (2019). How Measuring Consumer Conversations Can Reveal Advertising Performance?. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 59(4), 433-439. <https://doi.org/10.2501/jar-2019-043>.
- Fusch, P. I. and Ness, L. R. (2015). 'Are We There Yet? Data Saturation in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(9): 1408–1416.
- Haider, T. (2018). *A study on the influence of advertisements on consumer buying behaviour*. Independent University Dhaka: Bangladesh.
- Hanlon, A. (2023). *The AIDA Model and How to Apply It in The Real World - Examples and Tips*. [online] Smart Insights. Available at: <https://www.smartinsights.com/traffic-building-strategy/offer-and-message-development/aida-model/> [Accessed 30 May 2023].
- Hammarberg, K., Kirkman, M. and de Lacey, S. 2016. Qualitative research methods: when to use them and how to judge them. *Human Reproduction Journal*, 31(3): 498–501
- Kaur, R. (2022) *History of Advertising*, Feedough. Available at: <https://www.feedough.com/history-of-advertising/>. [Accessed 30 May 2023].
- Kittikowit, S., Suwanabubpa, K. and Sithisomwong, S. (2018). Factors influencing purchase intention on cosmetic products of female consumers in Yangon, Myanmar. *Business Excellence*, 1(2), 77–90.
- Koekemoer, L. (2020). *Marketing communication: An integrated approach*. Juta and Company Ltd: Sandton.
- Lavidge, R.J. and Steiner, G.A. (1961) *A Model for Predictive Measurements of Advertising Effectiveness*.
- Leedy, P.D. and Ormrod, J.E. (2015). *Practical research: planning and design*. 11th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Loreal Finance.com. (2020). *Sales at 30 September 2019*. [online] Available at: <https://www.loreal-finance.com/eng/news-release/sales-30-september-2019> [Accessed 7 Mar. 2020].
- Maguire, M. and Delahunt, B. (2017). Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars. *AISHE-J: The All Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 9(3).
- Maida, J. (2022). *53% of Growth to Originate from South Africa for Beauty and Personal Care Market from 2020 to 2025*. PR Newswire: press release distribution, targeting, monitoring and marketing. [online] Available at: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/53-of-growth-to-originate-from-south-africa-for-beauty-and-personal-care-market-from-2020-to-2025-301467716.html>. [Accessed: 17 May 2023].
- Maree, K. (2016). *First Steps in Research*. 2nd Edition. Van Schaik: Pretoria.

- Mukherjee, S. (2019). *A Guide to Research Methodology: An Overview of Research Problems, Tasks and Methods*. 1st ed. CRC Press
- Medupe, S. 2019. Made in SA cosmetics products to be showcased in Italy – The Department of Trade Industry and Competition (2023). Available at: <http://www.thedtic.gov.za/made-in-sa-cosmetics-products-to-be-showcased-in-italy/>. [Accessed 17 May 2023].
- Nowell, L., Norris, J., White, D. and Moules, N. (2017). Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16: 1–13
- Percy, L. (2018). *Strategic integrated marketing communications*. New York: Routledge.
- Radu, V. (2023) Consumer behaviour in marketing - patterns, types, segmentation - Omniconvert Blog, Omniconvert Ecommerce Growth Blog. Available at: <https://www.omniconvert.com/blog/consumer-behavior-in-marketing-patterns-types-segmentation/>. [Accessed 30 May 2023].
- Research and Markets. (2021). South Africa Cosmetics Industry Report 2021 Featuring Unilever, Johnson & Johnson, Reckitt Benckiser, Clicks, Dis-Chem Pick n Pay, Shoprite, Woolworths, and Imbalie Beauty. GlobeNewswire News Room. Available at: <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2021/03/11/2191143/0/en/South-Africa-Cosmetics-Industry-Report-2021-Featuring-nilever-Johnson-Johnson-Reckitt-Benckiser-Clicks-Dis-Chem-Pick-n-Pay-Shoprite-Woolworths-and-Imbalie-Beauty.html>. [Accessed 30 May 2023].
- Roberts-Lombard, M. and Brijball, S. (2017). *Consumer behaviour*. 4th ed. Cape Town: Juta and Company [Pty] Ltd.
- Singh, K. (2019). What Is Consumer Behavior in Marketing? - Factors, Model & Definition - Video & Lesson Transcript | Study.com. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-consumer-behavior-in-marketing-factors-model-definition.html>. [Accessed 19 April 2020].
- Smith, T. (2019). *Qualitative and quantitative research*. Salem Press Encyclopaedia.
- Srivastava, M. (2020). Factors Influencing the Buying Behavior of Female Consumers with Reference to Top Three Brands of Make-Up Cosmetics in Pune City. *Global Branding*, 428–464. doi: <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-9282-2.ch021>.
- Statssa.gov.za. (2023). Five facts about poverty in South Africa. Available at: <https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=12075>. [Accessed 24 July 2023].
- Ulrich, C. (2020). Traditional advertising still most trusted by South Africans - Nielsen. [online] Bizcommunity.com. Available at: <https://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/19/138413.html>. [Accessed 7 Mar. 2020].
- Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H. and Bondas, T. (2013) ‘Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study’, *Nursing and Health Sciences*, 15(3): 398–405
- Vehovar, V., Steinmetz S. and Toepoel, V. (2016). Chapter 22: Non-probability Sampling. [online] Available at: <http://sk.sagepub.com/reference/the-sage-handbook-of-survey-methodology/i2461.xml>. [Accessed 20 April 2020]
- Zikmund, W., Babin, B., Carr J. and Griffin, M. (2017). *Business Research Methods*. 9th ed. Southern-Western Cengage learning