

**A STUDY ON CONSUMER AWARENESS AND PURCHASE DECISIONS
OF FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS**

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by

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INTRODUCTION

The term “female hygiene products” frequently refers to personal care products used in the course of menstruation, vaginal discharge, and other bodily functions associated with the vulva and vagina. Sanitary napkins, sanitary towels, tampons, pantyliners, menstrual cups, and period panties are examples of such goods. Douches, feminine wipes, and soap are examples of feminine hygiene items that are used to clean the vulva or vagina.

Disposable and reusable feminine hygiene products are available in the market. Menstruation cups, cloth menstrual pads, period panties, and sponges are reusable feminine hygiene items, whereas sanitary napkins, tampons, and pantyliners are disposable feminine hygiene products. These products are essential for maintaining general health and should be included in one's normal hygiene routine.

During the forecast period of 2021-2026, the worldwide feminine hygiene market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 6.7 percent. The global feminine hygiene market is a very competitive one, with a slew of international and regional players. Procter & Gamble, Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Unicharm Corporation, and Johnson & Johnson are some of the leading global players in the market.

During the projected period of 2020-2025, the Indian feminine hygiene market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 16.18 percent. Every year, almost 60% of women in India are diagnosed with vaginal and urinary tract disorders and infections as a result of inadequate menstrual hygiene. The demand for feminine hygiene products has risen as a result of increased awareness about intimate cleanliness and a preference for menstruation products.

Literature Review

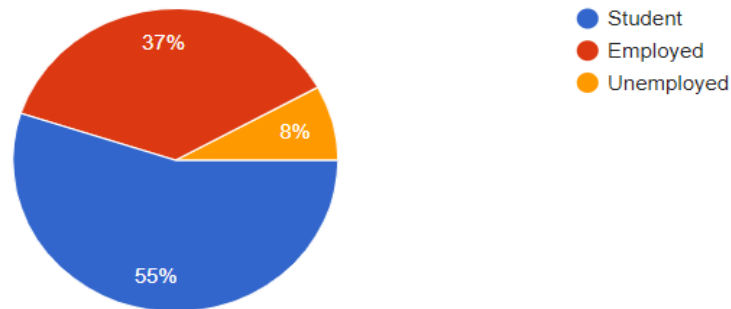
- According to “**Well & Prensky, 1996**” - Consumer behavior is the study of how customers behave when they exchange something of value for a service or product that meets their requirements. The study of consumer behavior focuses on how people decide how to spend their available resources (time, money, and effort) on intake-related products. As a result, customer behavior encompasses not only purchasing but also the mind and emotions that people experience and the actions that they take. It also encompasses environmental influences such as feedback from other customers, advertising, product appearances and programs, and the purchasers' bodily movements.
- According to “**Ger et al., 1993**” - Customers associate brands with familiarity and credibility as a result of their daily interactions with them; as a result, they utilize brands as a criterion for attempting or deciding to purchase new products. Every thing available on the market now has a brand name attached to it. Marketers recognize the importance of great brands and make every attempt to establish one.
- According to “**Aaker, 1991**” - The physical features of the product, such as size, color, flavor, look, or aroma, are known as intrinsic cues. These physical qualities can be used by customers to assess the brand's quality. Price, brand image, manufacturer's image, certificates, guarantee, advertising, and market share are all examples of extrinsic signals.
- According to “**Hoyer and Mac Innis (2007)**” - A purchase decision is a step in the decision-making process for a consumer. It's vital to remember that there are two earlier stages: information gathering and alternative evaluation, which consumers go through in order to get to the stage of purchase choice, and brands have an impact on consumers during both stages. Consumers continue to the stage of information search after recognizing the problem, where they seek information regarding pricing, quality, country of origin, brand, and any other connected issue based on their motive.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE & METHODOLOGY

- **The research aims to gather information outlining consumer preferences and consumer awareness on female hygiene products.**
- The key tool for the assessment is a questionnaire. The draft of the questionnaire is based on readings, previous studies and professional literature.
- In the preparation of the tool, females (age group 16-40 years) have been consulted and data is gathered. The google form questionnaire was shared via email and WhatsApp with female respondents.
- Sample size – 100 females.

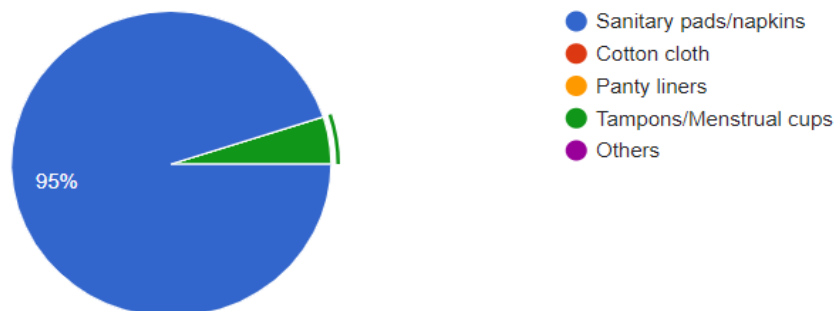
DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

1. Classification of respondents based on their Occupation:-



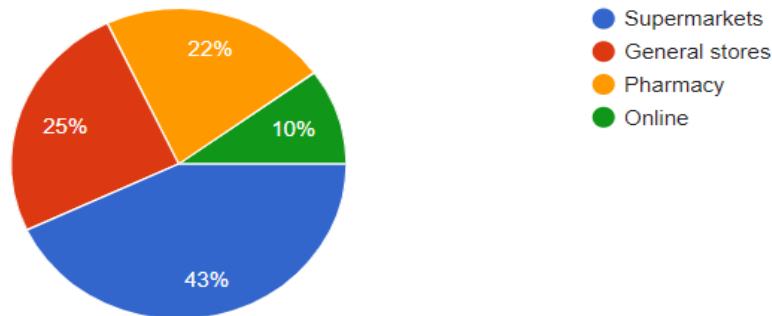
Interpretation – From the above pie chart it can be derived that, the half of female respondents are **students** i.e. **55%**, whereas, **37%** are **working class** and **8%** are **unemployed**.

2. Classification of respondents based on the usage of feminine product during menstruation: -



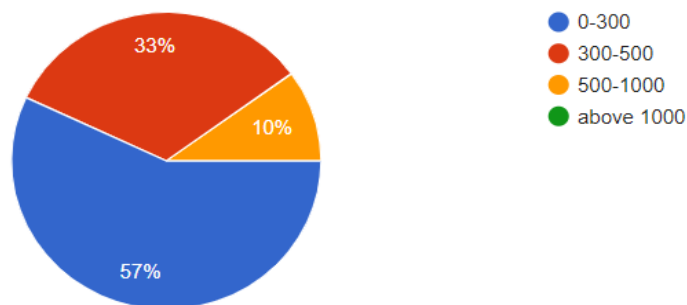
Interpretation – From the above pie chart it can be concluded that, the majority of respondents, i.e. **95%** uses **Sanitary pads/napkins**, whereas, **5%** of the female respondents, uses **Tampons/Menstrual cups**. There is no such result found for the usage of **cotton cloths**, **Pantyliners**, etc.

3. Classification of respondents based on the site of purchase:-



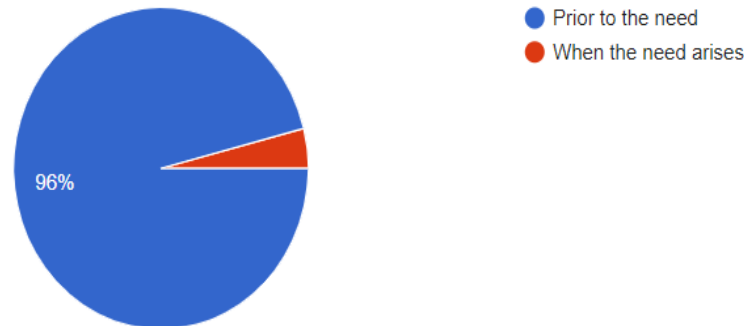
Interpretation – 43% female respondents purchases feminine hygiene products from **Supermarkets**, whereas, 25% purchases it from **General stores**. About 22% acquires these products from **Pharmacy shops** and only 10% of the populations acquires it **online**.

4. Classification of respondents based on the average monthly expenditure on buying these products:-



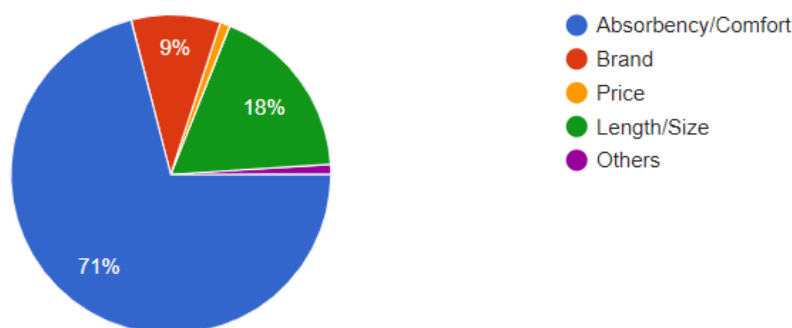
Interpretation – From the above pie chart, it can be derived that the average monthly expenditure of more than half of the respondents i.e. 57% is 0-300Rs. 33% females purchase these products in the range of 300-500Rs. Whereas, 10% of females purchase these products in the range of 500-1000Rs. and there is no female respondent who purchases these products for more than 1000Rs. a month.

5. Classification of respondents based on the preference of purchase of these products:-



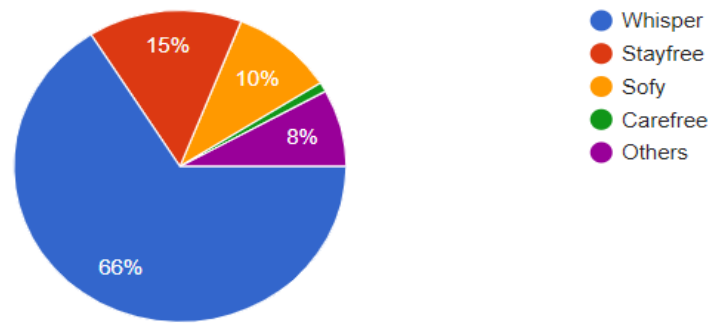
Interpretation – The above pie chart states that, **96%** of female respondents purchases these products **prior to the need**, whereas, **4%** of the female respondents purchases, **when the need arises**.

6. Classification of respondents based on the major attributes of purchase:-



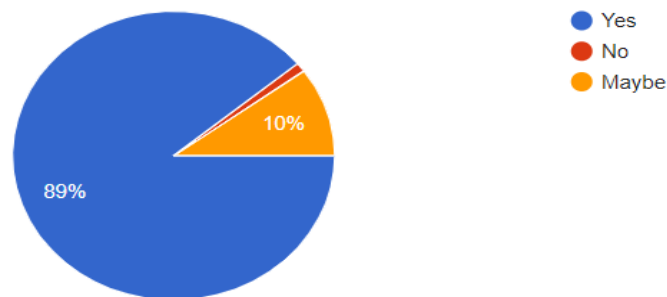
Interpretation – From the above pie chart it can be concluded that almost **71%** female respondents prefer **Absorbency/Comfort** over any other attributes. Whereas, **18%** respondents had gone for **Length/size**. **9%** female respondents chose **Brand** and **2%** respondents opted for **other** possible attributes.

7. Classification of respondents based on Brand preferences:-



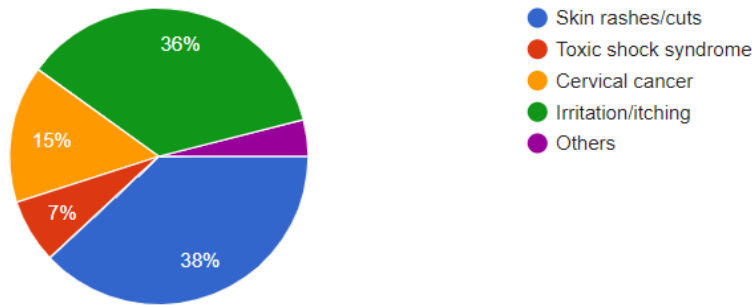
Interpretation - 66% of the female respondents prefer **Whisper** over any brand, whereas, 15% respondents prefer **Stayfree**. 10% respondents prefer **Sofy**, 8% prefers some **other** brands and a low as 1% of the remaining females have opted for Carefree.

8. Classification of respondents based on the awareness of diseases on the usage and non-usage of these products:-



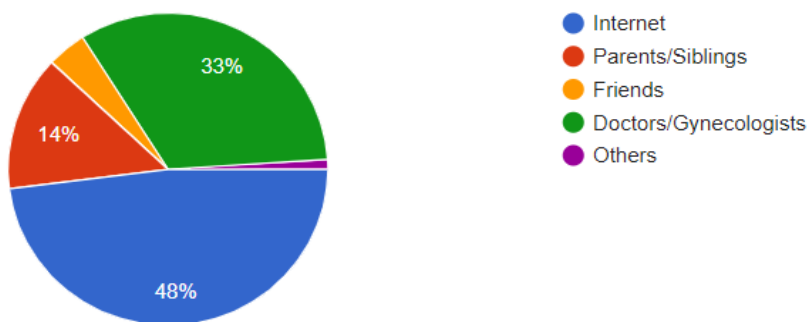
Interpretation – From the above pie chart, it can be concluded that 89% respondent are **aware** of the diseases caused by the usage and non-usage of these products. Whereas, 10% of the respondents **may or may not** be aware of the diseases caused, while, 1% is **unaware**.

9. Classification of respondents based on the awareness of diseases which are associated with these products:-



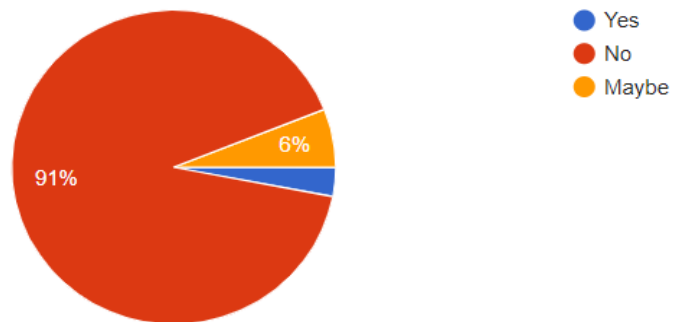
Interpretation – From the above pie chart, it can be concluded that, over **38%** of the respondents are aware of disease like **skin rashes/cuts**, whereas, **36%** of the respondents are aware of **irritation/itching**. **15%** of the respondents are aware of **cervical cancer**, **7%** are aware of **toxic shock syndrome**. **4%** of the respondents are aware of **other** diseases.

10. Classification of respondents based on reference of source of information and queries assessed regarding these products:-



Interpretation – **48%** female respondents gather information from **internet**, whereas, **33%** respondents gather information from **doctors/gynecologists**. The source of information for **14%** of female respondents is **parents/siblings**. **4%** respondents gather information from **friends**. **1%** falls in the category of **others**.

11. Classification of respondents based on whether their purchase decision is influenced by any celebrity endorsements:-



Interpretation - From the above pie chart, it can be derived that **91%** of female respondents are **not influenced** by any celebrity endorsements, whereas **6% may or may not** be influenced by it and only **3%** respondents **are influenced** by celebrity endorsements.

CONCLUSION

Below are the highlights of data collected from 100 females on “ CONSUMER AWARENESS AND PURCHASE DECISIONS OF FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS”

- Whisper’s sanitary pads/napkins is the choice of majority of female respondents.
- A high fraction of females prefer buying these products from supermarkets, in the range of 0-300Rs. and prior to the need.
- The most important factor of buying Sanitary pads/napkins is absorbency/comfort level.
- Most of the female respondents are aware of the diseases caused by the usage and non-usage of these products.
- A staggering 89% of the total female respondents confirmed on awareness of diseases caused by the usage and non-usage of sanitary pads/napkins includes skin rashes/cuts.
- The source of information to the majority of females is through internet, and their purchasing decisions are not influenced by any kind of celebrity endorsements.

RESULTS

- The research proves that the key purchase decisions/preference while purchasing female hygiene products of most females are based on following points:
 - Place of Purchase- Supermarket.
 - Range of Purchase- 0 to Rs 300.
 - Preferred product- Sanitary pads/napkins.
 - Brand: Whisper.
 - Preference based on- absorbency/Comfort level.
- The research also exemplify that large number of female respondents are aware of the diseases caused by the usage and non-usage of Sanitary pads. The source of information and reference for most of the females is Internet and Celebrity endorsements plays no role during decision making.

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