

Effect of Cultural Factors on Marketing Strategies: A Study of Cosmetic Brands in Lumbini Province

Dr. Om Prakash Aryal¹

Butwal Multiple Campus

<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-8013-0248>

Sampada Paudyal²

paudyalsampada@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-0741-0094>

*Corresponding Author: Om Prakash Aryal; Email: aryalomshiva4@gmail.com

Abstract

Nepal's cosmetics business has grown rapidly in recent years. In addition to a broader number of companies, social media has changed how people find and discuss items, and personal grooming is becoming more popular. It is commonly recognized that changes have made conventional marketing harder for cosmetic firms. Items popular in one market may not appeal to buyers in another market in terms of beauty, trust, familial influences, social status, tradition, and quality. This is particularly true for appearance-conscious people. This study examines how five cultural dimensions individualism versus collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity versus femininity, and long-term orientation affect Lumbini Province's cosmetics industry's marketing strategies.

This quantitative study examined 150 marketing experts' replies. These comprised managers, brand executives, and advertising experts. Analyzes included descriptive statistics, reliability testing, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression after a standardized questionnaire collected the data. The regression model explained 45% of the variation and was statistically significant for marketing strategy preferences ($R^2 = .450$; adjusted $R^2 = .431$). Power Distance ($\beta = .274$, $p < .001$), Uncertainty Avoidance ($\beta = .261$, $p < .001$), Masculinity vs. Femininity ($\beta = .209$, $p = .003$), and Long-Term Orientation ($\beta = .201$, $p = .009$) had several environmental benefits. A study discovered a positive correlation between Individualism and Collectivism; however, it was not statistically significant ($\beta = .089$, $p = .190$). Even after considering other factors, this remained true. The discovery suggests that cosmetic companies can improve their marketing strategies by building trust and credibility, removing consumer confusion, providing societal value and benefits, and focusing on long-term effects.

Keywords: consumer behavior, cultural characteristics, cosmetics business, marketing, Hofstede's Cultural.

Introduction

Today, browsing a cosmetics store in Nepal is quite different from 10 years ago. Television channels, retail outlets, influencers, and social media platforms advertize local items, Nepalese brands, and foreign brands to consumers. Consumers are learning more about the problem. They look at product components, read reviews, follow beauty

companies, and discuss their experiences online. Price and product quality are important, but not the only ones. Cosmetics have various meanings beyond functioning. A client may buy a product because it serves a purpose, signifies a way of life, identity, social group, or value, etc. This thesis supports the Consumer Culture Theory, which states that consuming is a social and cultural construct (Arnould & Thompson, 2005). However, Lumbini Province is fascinating in this regard. This province's large metropolitan marketplaces and rich cultural and religious history are benefits. While following global beauty trends, they preserve the integrity of their local social networks and beauty standards. A marketing message without this context may be technically attractive, but it will not develop trust or emotional connection with the audience. This article is based on the original research that examines culture as a secondary characteristic and a major marketing issue. This essay is based on this study. It examines five characteristics of Hofstede's cultural framework to see whether they better explain Lumbini cosmetic companies' marketing strategy choices. This research will determine whether these traits provide a better explanation.

Problem Statement

Campaign messaging may reach thousands of individuals yet not match their ideals. According to Kandel et al. (2025), social media influencers affect customer purchases in Nepal's beauty business. This applies especially to digital communication, where cultural congruence is crucial. There has been empirical research on consumer attitudes toward cosmetics, consumer ethnocentrism, online reviews, and influencer marketing in Nepal, but less on Lumbini's cosmetics sector from a cultural perspective. This despite research on these issues. The study's literature investigation found this. To fill the knowledge vacuum, this research evaluates the five cultural traits and their relationship to marketing strategy choices.

Objectives

This study examines how cultural influences affect Lumbini cosmetic companies' marketing strategies that influence consumer preferences. This research examines individuality against collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity versus femininity, and long-term orientation.

Hypotheses

- H1: Individualism vs. Collectivism significantly affects marketing strategy preferences.
- H2: Power Distance significantly influences marketing strategy formulation.
- H3: Uncertainty Avoidance is positively related to marketing strategy decision-making.
- H4: Masculinity vs. Femininity affects promotional and branding preferences.
- H5: Long-Term Orientation significantly affects marketing strategy choices.

Literature Review

Culture and Consumer Behavior

Culture consists of meanings customers employ to construct brand and product impressions. Marketers must consider how social context affects how they see advertisements. Thus, this must be considered. A message about family, community,

trust, or tradition may resonate better in one culture than another. However, a message that emphasizes individual achievement may resonate better in one culture than another. Since cosmetics are symbolic and practical, this is especially true. Some clients buy products for their effectiveness, while others buy them for their lifestyle, identity, social group, or personal worth. Some buyers purchase a product because it works. Each of these factors is excellent for buying a product. Previous research for the source study found a strong correlation between Nepalese consumer behavior and culture, local ingredients, festival marketing, and societal acceptability.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

The research uses Hofstede's framework because it organizes cultural differences more efficiently. International marketing research has used the framework to examine how cultural values affect communication, branding, and marketing adaption (Hofstede et al., 2010; Soares, 2007). This is a key framework use.

The debate between individualism and collectivism centers on whether individuals value their independence or their ties. Hofstede et al. (2010) say families and communities impact collective buying choices. In certain cases, societal approbation may add value to a product.

The term "power distance" relates to how comfortable individuals are with hierarchical structures and uneven authority. According to Hofstede et al. (2010) and Soares et al. (2007), this dimension might affect consumers' perceptions of marketing authority figures, experts, senior personalities, and status signals. Also, this dimension may affect how consumers respond to status signals.

In reaction to ambiguity and danger, humans use "uncertainty avoidance". Cosmetics customers may worry about authenticity, skin sensitivities, efficacy, and promises. This is especially pertinent to cosmetics, where customers may be apprehensive. A research of Nepalese cosmetics customers found that product quality influences buying decisions (Chhetri, 2021).

The contrast between masculinity and femininity reflects the relative importance of success and competitiveness vs caring, relationships, quality of life, and societal harmony. This separates masculinity from femininity. According to Hofstede et al. (2010) and de Mooij and Hofstede (2010), these values might affect advertising's emotional tone and themes.

Long-term perspective stresses future rewards, unwavering devotion, consistency, and profitability. The dimension may be linked to continuity, loyalty, adapting traditions, and future-focused marketing value propositions.

Research Gap

The source assessment reveals a gaping hole in Nepalese literature. Although there are studies on cultural effects and consumer behavior in broader contexts, there is a lack of empirical study that integrates the five cultural dimensions to explain the marketing strategy decisions in the cosmetics industry in Lumbini Province. This difficulty is aggravated by the quick growth of social media because marketers increasingly communicate to consumers directly in highly visible and culturally sensitive digital contexts.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The research design of this study is quantitative. It is descriptive as it summaries the features and views of respondents and explanatory as it evaluates whether the specified cultural factors may statistically explain marketing strategy preferences.

Population and Sample

Population The population is cosmetic brands operating in Lumbini Province. The respondents were marketing managers, brand executives and other professionals engaged in marketing operations and advertising experts. The study was based on a total of 150 valid replies.

Data Collection

The data was collected by using structured questionnaire as main data. Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire was delivered using online methods including Google forms and email and thru physical distribution when suitable. With these methods the researcher managed to contact respondents who were employed in diverse marketing environments.

Variables

Variable	Role in the model	Main idea
Individualism vs. Collectivism	Independent	Personal choice versus group influence
Power Distance	Independent	Hierarchy, authority and status
Uncertainty Avoidance	Independent	Risk reduction, clarity and trust
Masculinity vs. Femininity	Independent	Achievement versus care and harmony
Long-Term Orientation	Independent	Future value, continuity and sustainability
Marketing Strategy Preferences	Dependent	Culturally aligned marketing choices

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha, Pearson correlation and multiple regression were used to evaluate the data. Reliability analysis was used to evaluate internal consistency. Correlation analysis was used to find the direction and intensity of correlations. Regression analysis was performed to find the unique contribution of each cultural dimension when the effects of the other variables were controlled.

Regression Model

The model used in the study can be expressed as:

$$MSP = \beta_0 + \beta_1(IC) + \beta_2(PD) + \beta_3(UA) + \beta_4(MF) + \beta_5(LTO) + e$$

Limitations

The research is based on self-reported replies of 150 marketing experts and so represents impressions rather than firsthand observation of customer purchases. The cross-sectional design also depicts connections at a single moment in time. In addition, the study is

concentrated on Lumbini Province, so the findings should not be applied to other parts of Nepal

Results

Profile of Respondents

Of the sample, 97 respondents were female (64.7 percent) and 53 respondents were male (35.3 percent). In terms of age, the majority of the sample was between 30 and 39 years old, representing 41.3 percent. 28.7 percent of the respondents aged 20–29 years, 18.7 percent of the respondents aged 40–49 years and 11.3 percent of the respondents of 50 years and beyond were covered.

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	97	64.7
Gender	Male	53	35.3
Age	20–29	43	28.7
Age	30–39	62	41.3
Age	40–49	28	18.7
Age	50+	17	11.3

This profile gives a helpful picture of the persons represented in the research. The majority of respondents were of working age and professionally active, with the most common age group being 30–39. The larger share of female respondents is not surprising even when the cosmetics industry but should not be interpreted as the relevance of cosmetic marketing for women solely.

Correlation Results

Results of correlation analysis indicated favorable correlations between all five cultural factors and Marketing Strategy Preferences. These associations are in line with the larger cross-cultural marketing research that suggests that cultural factors may have an influence on marketing adaption and customer reactions across markets (Soares et al., 2007).

Cultural dimension	r with MSP	Significance
Individualism vs. Collectivism	.305	$p < .01$
Power Distance	.494	$p < .01$
Uncertainty Avoidance	.375	$p < .01$
Masculinity vs. Femininity	.425	$p < .01$
Long-Term Orientation	.500	$p < .01$

The findings at this stage show that increased cultural orientation is related to stronger preferences for marketing that is culturally suitable. However, the regression analysis is more helpful since it illustrates what occurs when all five dimensions are analyzed together.

Regression Results

The multiple regression model produced $R = .671$, $R^2 = .450$, and adjusted $R^2 = .431$. In practical terms, the five cultural variables together account for about 45 percent of the variation in Marketing Strategy Preferences. This provides a lot of explanatory power for study on company perceptions and decision-making.

Model statistic	Result
R	.671
R ²	.450
Adjusted R ²	.431
Standard error of estimate	.596

The total model was statistically significant. Regression sum of squares was 41.817 and residual sum of squares was 51.148. The obtained F-statistic was 23.546, $p < .001$. This means that the predictors, as a group, contribute considerably to Marketing Strategy Preferences.

Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	41.817	5	8.363	23.546	< .001
Residual	51.148	144	.355		
Total	92.965	149			

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	β	p	Decision
H1: Individualism vs. Collectivism	.089	.190	Rejected
H2: Power Distance	.274	< .001	Accepted
H3: Uncertainty Avoidance	.261	< .001	Accepted
H4: Masculinity vs. Femininity	.209	.003	Accepted
H5: Long-Term Orientation	.201	.009	Accepted

The statistics show an obvious trend. Four options may be supported. Power distance is most significant, followed by uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, and long-term orientation. These elements have the next largest standardized effects. After include all other cultural aspects, the conflict between individuality and collectivism does not make a statistically significant and distinctive contribution.

Discussion

Power Distance: Trusting the Right Voice

Power Distance is the model's best predictor. Cross-cultural marketing study indicates that culturally appropriate hierarchy and authority signals are important in marketing communication (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2010; Soares et al., 2007). This conclusion matches the study's results. However, this does not mean every effort must rely on celebrity recruitment. Power Distance is the model's best predictor. Cross-cultural marketing study indicates that culturally appropriate hierarchy and authority signals are important in marketing communication (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2010; Soares et al., 2007). This conclusion matches the study's results. However, this does not mean every effort must rely on celebrity recruitment. Credibility is what counts. An influencer with millions of followers may draw interest, a trusted expert may build confidence. Cosmetic businesses should thus match the spokesperson to the nature of the claim being made.

Uncertainty Avoidance: Making the Purchase Feel Safer

The second-best predictor is Uncertainty Avoidance. This conclusion is also consistent with studies demonstrating that cultural variations in uncertainty avoidance might shape consumers' reactions to innovations and new products (van Everdingen & Waarts, 2003). Brands may do this by describing ingredients, illustrating how the product works, answering common concerns, offering genuine customer testimonials and avoiding over-the-top claims. Packaging and digital information should make it simple for customers to comprehend what the product does and who it is for. In this way, uncertainty reduction is not only a customer care function; it is part of marketing strategy.

Masculinity vs. Femininity: Moving Beyond Appearance

The positive link with Masculinity vs. Femininity implies that marketing choices might be influenced by values such as caring, harmony, quality of life and social well-being. Cultural values are important for advertising since cultural orientation may impact the themes used to position and interpret items (de Mooij & Hofstede, 2010). This is also an area where companies need to be cautious. Cultural sensitivity is not to be confused with stereotyping. The customers in Lumbini are not a homogeneous bunch and contemporary consumers may blend ancient values with extremely individual goals. Effective marketing would acknowledge this complexity rather than attempt to reduce people to a cultural identity.

Long-Term Orientation: Selling a Relationship, Not Just a Product

Long-Term Orientation predicts Marketing Strategy Preferences in the regression model and still does. Most directly related to Marketing Strategy Preferences. Hofstede et al. (2010) and Soares et al. (2007) agree that cultural values affect marketing adaption and long-term customer relationships. This conclusion matches the study's results. Long-term skin health, product consistency, ethical sourcing, sustainability, and consumer loyalty are likely to be cosmetics sector priorities. Consider all these choices. Nepali companies may also integrate traditional and contemporary product development methods, which is a benefit. If there is clear and consistent evidence, herbal or Ayurvedic methods may be more compelling than conventional ones.

Understanding the Non-Significant Result

Interpreting the individuality vs. collectivism conclusion requires care. The research contradicts the idea that a collectivist viewpoint should directly impact business decisions, but it does not mean social relationships are ineffective. Actually, the reverse is true. Instead, the model's other cultural qualities may be more accountable for this strategic environment's unique unpredictability. Take this into account.

This distinction helps prevent oversimplifying "collectivism does not matter." Drawing this difference is crucial. The current paradigm suggests that social authority, trust, risk avoidance, and long-term ties directly influence group orientation. This contradicts the previous model. The traits show that various circumstances may change group orientation.

Practical Implications for Cosmetic Brands

Localize Without Losing Professionalism

Lumbini marketing works best without using "traditional" or "contemporary." The connection potential is very crucial. Brands may use local stories, foods, festivals, and cultural links, but they may also use efficient packaging, clear claims, and current digital communication.

Choose Influencers for Credibility

Influencer marketing should prioritize trust and compatibility above following. Recent research by Kandel et al. (2025) in Nepal's cosmetics sector shown that influencer interaction strongly influences customer purchases. Research was done in Nepal.

Treat Product Information as Marketing

When a firm seems transparent about its items, consumers have less doubts. In the cosmetics industry, product quality and information may influence client perceptions (Chhetri, 2021). This is crucial to the industry. Festival and community projects should be built carefully. Instead of merely adding the festival name to an ad, advertisements must really understand the event. Cultural events may provide advertising opportunities, but campaigns must be designed with this in mind. Community-based activities, regional tales, and serious visual messages may boost engagement.

Make Sustainability Concrete

When companies think long-term, they may discuss sustainability. If they make vague environmental claims, they may not build trust. Businesses should report specific activities wherever possible. These include responsible packaging, waste reduction, product creation, ethical sourcing, and community betterment.

Implications for Domestic and International Brands

Domestic companies must maintain quality and professional branding to compete internationally, even when they have local experience and cultural familiarity. Multinational companies have a lot of resources and awareness, but marketing, spokesperson selection, product positioning, and promotion timing may need to be localized. Each of these should teach you that cultural adaptation should be part of strategy, not an afterthought.

Conclusion and Suggestions for Future Research

This study sought to discover if cultural factors impact Lumbini cosmetics companies' marketing strategies. One clear response can be drawn from the data. Despite its importance, not all aspects of culture are important. Many factors positively affect marketing strategy selections. This category includes the power gap, ambiguity avoidance, masculine vs. feminine acts, and long-term orientation. The power distance field is most standardized. Since the total model accounts for 45% of the variation in the dependent variable, cultural characteristics may give key answers. Understanding the message is never difficult. Lumbini cosmetic firms must examine more than just product quality and market presence. A brand must provide compelling reasons to gain trust. They seek knowledge to dispel doubts. Messages of social responsibility, quality of life, and

care are likely to be welcomed. They might also select reliable, long-term firms. In cultural marketing, it's important to resist misconceptions such that individuality vs. collectivism is boring. because the finding had no meaningful impact. Generalizations cannot replace market research since Nepalese buyers come from varied cultural backgrounds. A great design requires cultural awareness, consumer feedback, local research, and a comprehension of real market behavior.

Suggestions for Future Research

Comparing Lumbini to other provinces, urban and rural clients, and cosmetic buyers might be done in future research. Both are possible. Researchers may also examine whether age, income, digital literacy, product category, brand origin, influencer credibility, electronic word-of-mouth, perceived quality, and authenticity affect cultural effects. Qualitative interviews are beneficial for learning how customers see beauty and trust.

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