

A Review of Makeup Products, Trends, and Consumer Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

The cosmetics industry, particularly the makeup segment, is a dynamic and fast-evolving sector contributing significantly to global markets. Makeup products, classified as colour cosmetics, include lipstick, foundation, and eyeliner, and are integral to modern beauty routines. The growth of this segment is driven by innovations in long-lasting formulations, natural and organic ingredients, and culturally aligned products like Muslim-friendly cosmetics. The Malaysian makeup market showcases unique characteristics, with local brands such as Nurraysa addressing cultural and religious needs, while international players dominate in market share. Younger demographics, heavily influenced by societal beauty standards and social media, represent the largest consumer base, further fuelling industry expansion. Despite its rapid growth, the industry faces challenges in understanding localized consumer behaviour and adapting to evolving trends. This study reviews the makeup industry, examining trends, consumer behaviour, and market dynamics, while offering insights into opportunities for innovation and differentiation in a competitive landscape. The findings aim to benefit both practitioners and researchers seeking to navigate and contribute to the future of the cosmetics industry.

Keywords: Cosmetics Industry, Makeup Trends, Consumer Behaviour, Malaysian Market, Halal Cosmetics

INTRODUCTION

The cosmetics industry is a dynamic and rapidly evolving sector, contributing significantly to global markets through its diverse range of products and customer-centric innovations. A cosmetic product is broadly defined as any substance applied to external parts of the body or oral cavity to clean, enhance appearance, correct odours, or maintain hygiene (National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency, 2009). Among its categories, skincare, haircare, fragrances, and makeup—makeup has emerged as one of the fastest-growing and most resilient segments, spanning luxury, mass-market, and professional offerings (Yano Research Institute, 2014; Gerstell et al., 2020). This growth is driven by consumers' increasing preference for personal expression and aesthetic enhancement.

Makeup products, which include items like lipstick, foundation, and eyeliner, are classified as "colour cosmetics" and are integral to modern beauty routines (Fabricant & Gould, 1993). The segment's growth is further fuelled by socioeconomic and cultural influences that encourage new trends and repeat patterns (Sakamoto et al., 2017). Innovations such as long-lasting formulations, natural and organic ingredients, and Muslim-friendly products have addressed evolving customer needs and fostered market expansion (Rajput, 2016). For instance, Malaysian brand Nurraysa has positioned its products as wudu' (ablution) friendly, catering to the needs of Muslim consumers seeking ethical and practical solutions in their beauty routines (Driver, 2018).

The importance of makeup extends beyond aesthetics; it influences self-esteem, confidence, and social interaction, particularly among younger demographics who actively participate in beauty culture (Cash et al., 1989; Mintel, 2018). As the beauty industry adapts to the "Korean Wave" and the rising impact of social media influencers, consumer preferences and behaviours are becoming increasingly complex (Abd Hafiz & Mohd Ali, 2018; Schwemmer & Ziewiecki, 2018). Despite these trends, the Malaysian context remains under-researched,

highlighting the need for studies that explore local consumer behaviour, market dynamics, and industry-specific challenges (Rusmadi et al., 2015).

This paper aims to review the cosmetic industry, focusing on the makeup segment, to provide insights into its current trends, challenges, and opportunities. By analysing consumer behaviour, product innovations, and industry developments, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the factors shaping the makeup market and offers valuable perspectives for academics and practitioners alike.

Makeups and Cosmetic Industry

Types of Makeup Products and Industry Players

The illustration in Figure 1 highlights the sixteen essential types of makeup products commonly used in the beauty market, as identified by Makeupartistessentials.com. These products encompass a broad range of functions, catering to various consumer needs. For instance, moisturizers, primers, and foundations serve as base products, ensuring a smooth and hydrated canvas for makeup application. Products like BB creams and concealers focus on evening out skin tone and covering blemishes, while setting powders and setting sprays are integral for enhancing the longevity of makeup application (Truong et al., 2021).

In addition to these base and maintenance products, colour cosmetics such as eyeshadows, blushes, and lipsticks allow users to express individuality and creativity (Fabricant & Gould, 1993). Specialized items like contour, highlight, and bronzer emphasize facial structure and dimensions, creating a polished and sculpted appearance. Eyebrow-specific products, including eyebrow pencils, further cater to precision and definition, while mascara and eyeliner enhance the eyes by adding depth and framing facial features effectively (Pennelli Faro Team, 2017).

These makeup essentials not only meet functional needs but also reflect the evolving trends in the beauty industry, such as the increasing demand for multifunctional products and those tailored to diverse skin tones and preferences (Driver, 2018). The widespread use of these items underscores their significance in modern beauty routines, addressing both aesthetic and self-expressive needs.

Figure 1. Type of makeup products

Moisturiser	Primer	Foundation	BB Cream	Setting powder	Concealer
Contour	Highlight	Bronzer	Blush	Eyebrow pencil	Eyeshadow
	Eyeliner	Mascara	Setting spray	Lipstick	

Source: Makeupartistessentials.com

Makeup experts commonly categorize the face into three main regions: lips, eyes, and face, each with distinct features and specific products designed to enhance their appearance (Truong et al., 2021). The lips encompass the lip line and the lips themselves, often accentuated using lip liners, glosses, and lipsticks to define and add colour. The eye area, one of the most expressive parts of the face, includes multiple sub-features such as eyebrows, lashes, eyelids, crease, inner and outer corners, waterlines, and lash lines. These areas are enhanced using products like eyebrow pencils, eyeliners, mascaras, and eyeshadows, creating depth and focus (Pennelli Faro Team, 2017).

The broader facial region includes the skin, cheeks, nose, chin, and forehead. Products such as foundation, blush, contour, highlighter, and bronzer are used to refine and sculpt these areas, providing balance and symmetry (Fabricant & Gould, 1993). This systematic categorization helps makeup artists and consumers understand the

specific needs of each facial zone, allowing for targeted application techniques that maximize aesthetic impact. This framework is essential for understanding how different products interact to achieve cohesive looks while reflecting individual preferences and cultural influences. For example, in regions like Malaysia, where cultural and religious norms play a role, specific techniques and products align with modest yet expressive styles (Driver, 2018).

Figure 2. Components of the face on which makeup is typically applied



Source: Truong et al. (2021)

The Malaysian cosmetics market is highly competitive, with both international and local brands vying for consumer attention. According to data from Euromonitor (2020), Maybelline leads the market with a significant share of 13.7%, followed by MAC at 8.4% and Estee Lauder at 8.3%. Other notable players include Mary Kay and Artistry, holding 8.1% and 6.2% of the market, respectively. These brands collectively dominate the landscape, offering a mix of affordability, luxury, and professional-grade products to cater to a diverse consumer base.

The prominence of Maybelline as the market leader can be attributed to its extensive product range, affordability, and strong marketing strategies that resonate with a wide audience. Similarly, MAC and Estee Lauder appeal to more premium segments, emphasizing quality, innovation, and exclusivity (Euromonitor, 2020). Mary Kay, with its focus on direct selling, has built a loyal customer base, while Artistry leverages its reputation for high-quality skincare and cosmetics to maintain a competitive edge.

These market dynamics highlight the diverse preferences of Malaysian consumers, who seek products that align with their values, lifestyles, and aspirations. As competition intensifies, brands must continue to innovate and adapt to evolving trends to sustain their market positions and meet the demands of an increasingly informed and discerning customer base.

Table 1: Top 5 Cosmetic brands in Malaysian cosmetic market 2020

No	Brand	Market share
1	Maybelline	13.7%
2	MAC	8.4%
3	Estee Lauder	8.3%
4	Mary Kay	8.1%
5	Artistry	6.2%

Source: Euromonitor (2020)

Trends of Makeup Products

The makeup market is shaped by dynamic socioeconomic and cultural environments where trends frequently emerge, evolve, and re-emerge over time (Sakamoto et al., 2017). The development of new makeup products is often driven by advancements in scientific research, shifts in consumer preferences, and rising expectations for innovation. Before entering the market, makeup products undergo rigorous testing processes, including safety assessments, efficacy evaluations, stability studies, and production development (Cosmetics Europe, 2017).

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in consumer demand for natural and organic products due to heightened awareness of potential side effects associated with synthetic ingredients. This has driven the popularity of herbal and eco-friendly cosmetics (Rajput, 2016). Furthermore, specific trends in colour and texture dominate the industry, such as the 2018 emphasis on vibrant, intense hues alongside natural, healthy tones. Consumers now prefer makeup products that offer a radiant, flawless, yet bare appearance (Driver, 2018; Pennelli Faro Team, 2017). Additionally, the industry has seen innovations catering to time-saving and long-lasting needs, such as Muslim-friendly makeup. For instance, Nurraysa Beauty has positioned its brand with ablution-friendly products, targeting Muslim consumers seeking ethical and practical solutions (Driver, 2018). These trends continuously evolve, with some older styles cyclically making a comeback in contemporary forms.

Importance of Makeup Brands

The study of makeup is essential due to its complex interplay with consumer behaviour, which varies widely based on individual tastes, beliefs, and cultural influences. Research into makeup usage in Malaysia is particularly limited, necessitating further exploration to enrich existing literature and provide actionable insights for practitioners (Rusmadi et al., 2015). For businesses, understanding evolving consumer preferences is critical to market survival and growth.

The advent of social media has transformed how consumers engage with makeup products. Platforms like YouTube have increased access to tutorials and reviews, with influencers playing a significant role in shaping trends and driving consumer interest (Schwemmer & Ziewiecki, 2018). In 2018, Mintel reported, as shown in Figure 3, that younger age groups, particularly individuals aged 16–24, were the highest-spending demographic on face makeup in countries like the U.K. (85%), Germany (86%), and Italy (95%). This younger audience is heavily influenced by societal pressures to adhere to specific beauty standards, making them more likely to invest in makeup to boost self-esteem and confidence (Cash et al., 1989).

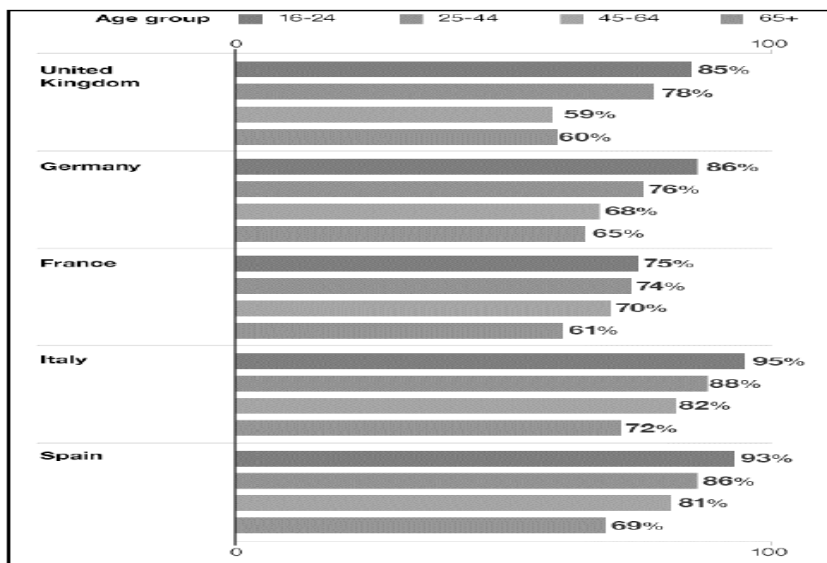
This age group is crucial for marketers due to its high adoption rate and responsiveness to trends. Moreover, makeup products are universally popular across different societal segments, including men and women (Ayob et al., 2016). Global trends such as the Korean Wave have further amplified interest in beauty and makeup, particularly among young consumers who are more likely to adopt emerging styles (Abd Hafiz & Mohd Ali, 2018). Beyond being a trend, makeup provides consumers with a cost-effective and efficient way to address beauty concerns, making it an indispensable part of modern lifestyles (Beausoleil, 1992; Nash et al., 2006).

Makeup products have transcended gender barriers, being widely used by individuals across all levels of society, including both men and women. This inclusivity highlights the expanding appeal of cosmetics as an essential aspect of modern lifestyles (Ayob et al., 2016). In Malaysia and globally, makeup is regarded as a thriving and fashionable market. The recent rise of beauty trends such as the Korean Wave (K-Wave) has amplified this phenomenon, captivating consumers who aspire to emulate Korean beauty standards characterized by flawless skin and radiant appearances (Abd Hafiz & Mohd Ali, 2018). Younger consumers, in particular, are more inclined to adopt and follow such trends, making them a key demographic driving the market's growth (Makgosa, 2010).

Beyond trends, makeup brands contribute significantly to individuals' self-perception and social dynamics. Makeup has a meaningful psychological impact, temporarily boosting self-esteem, self-confidence, and personal identity (Cash et al., 1989). It provides a cost-effective, convenient, and non-invasive solution to addressing beauty concerns, making it more accessible and appealing compared to alternatives like dieting, exercise, or cosmetic surgery (Beausoleil, 1992; Nash et al., 2006). Consequently, makeup products play a major role in

society, not only as tools of aesthetic enhancement but also as instruments of empowerment and personal expression, underscoring their broad social and economic significance.

Figure 3: Spending on makeups by age group (in percentage)



Source: Mintel (2018)

Customer Behaviour Studies on Makeup and Cosmetics

Research on customer behaviour in the makeup and cosmetics industry has been extensively conducted across various dimensions. Many studies focus on gender-specific usage, highlighting the distinct patterns and preferences between men and women. For instance, gender-based research has revealed insights into the motivations and attitudes of male and female consumers toward cosmetic products (Ali et al., 2015; Britton, 2012; Cash & Cash, 1982; Coulter et al., 2002; Davis, 2013; Hjort & Komulainen, 2017; Khan et al., 2017). These studies have established a foundation for understanding how gender influences product choice, frequency of use, and overall perceptions.

Psychological studies delve deeper into aspects such as perception, judgment, and emotional impact associated with cosmetic use. Scholars like Guthrie et al. (2008) and Osborn (1996) have explored the psychological factors shaping consumer decisions, including how makeup affects self-image and confidence. Priyanga and Krishnaveni (2016) and Thanisorn et al. (2012) also examine how external appearances influence social interactions and perceptions of attractiveness. Furthermore, cross-cultural research (e.g., Weber & Villebonne, 2002) compares consumer behaviour in different countries, shedding light on how cultural norms and values shape makeup usage.

Studies on consumer behaviour have also analysed broader behavioural trends, such as purchase intentions, consumption habits, brand sensitivity, and attitude formation. For example, Langmeyer and Shank (2013) and Sankaranarayanan (2014) focus on behaviour linked to marketing strategies, while Cash et al. (1989) and Guéguen and Lamy (2013) investigate the psychological effects of cosmetics use on confidence and perceived attractiveness. Recent works, such as Kusumawati and Rahmawan (2021), address purchase intentions and how marketing techniques influence consumer decisions.

CONCLUSION

The cosmetics industry, particularly the makeup segment, plays a pivotal role in global markets, characterized by its rapid evolution, diverse product offerings, and adaptability to consumer demands. This review highlights that makeup products are not merely tools for aesthetic enhancement but also contribute significantly to personal confidence, self-esteem, and social interactions. The industry is shaped by dynamic trends influenced by

socioeconomic factors, cultural shifts, and technological advancements, such as the rise of social media influencers and the growing preference for natural, organic, and Muslim-friendly products.

The Malaysian makeup market demonstrates unique characteristics, with local players like Nurraysa effectively catering to cultural and religious needs. While international brands dominate, the increasing demand for personalized and ethical products opens opportunities for innovation and market differentiation. Younger demographics, driven by societal pressures and beauty standards, represent the largest consumer segment, showcasing the makeup industry's importance in addressing their preferences and behaviour.

Despite its growth and influence, the makeup segment faces challenges that require deeper exploration, particularly in understanding local consumer behaviour and the long-term impact of trends. By providing a comprehensive analysis of industry players, consumer dynamics, and product innovations, this study contributes valuable insights for practitioners and researchers aiming to navigate and shape the future of the cosmetics industry.

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