Summary & Conclusions
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Human beings are a bundle of wants. Every human being assumes the role of a consumer in day-to-day life. The act of choice making becomes more complex today because of the variety of goods and services that are available in the modern market to satisfy individual and family needs and wants with the limited resources at its disposal-producers, service providers and traders are constantly involved in promotional activities to reach the consumers with the products they are dealing with and woo them to buy their products. Among the various promotional strategies, advertising is a significant one.

Advertising is virtually everywhere in daily life. Advertising is commonly understood as a means to communicate about a product or a service. However, it includes all the activities performed by an enterprise to present the goods and services to the consumers and to motivate them to buy these goods and services. According to Gregar (1971) “advertising is a service and is largely recognized as such in providing information which would otherwise be difficult to acquire about the availability of goods and services over a wide area”.

A review of literature revealed that not many studies have been undertaken to measure the impact of advertisement on consumer choice with reference to specific products, though, a number of studies have been undertaken in relation to advertisement in general. Certain questions like what attributes do consumers perceive as appealing in the advertisement of fairness cream? What are the opinion of consumers’ towards advertisement of fairness cream in different media? To what extent the consumers choice is influenced by the advertisement? What are the
variables that affect the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumer choice? And so on inspired the investigator to identify the present topic entitled, "A study of the factors that affect the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumer choice for research".

In a quest to seek answers empirically, objectives of the present study were drawn.

**Objectives**

1. To assess buying practices of sampled young female students in relation to the selected cosmetic items.

2. To study the exposure and frequency of use of selected media, namely, audiovisual and print media by the respondents.

3. To determine the opinion and practices of respondents towards advertisement of selected cosmetics and perceived attributes of advertisement in different media, namely, audiovisual, audio and print.

4. To measure the impact of advertisement on consumers’ choice with reference to cosmetics.

5. To assess the interrelationship between impact of advertisement of different cosmetic on consumer's choice and selected personal, familial and situational variables.

**Hypotheses**

$H_1$: There exists no relationship between the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers' choice and the selected personal (age) familial (family size and monthly family income) and situational
variables (perceived appealing features of advertisement of fairness cream in audiovisual, audio and print media.

$H_2$: There exists no difference in the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumer's choice by their education level.

**Method of procedure**

Descriptive research design was selected for the study. Survey method was thought to be the best. Questionnaire schedule was the tool used to gather data pertaining to the present study. Section-I of the questionnaire schedule was framed to elicit information regarding the background information about the consumer. Section –II comprised of questions regarding respondents’ monthly allowance, expenditure and related aspects. It also comprised of exposure to mass media, their practices regarding these media and buying practices of consumers in relation to the selected cosmetic items. Section –III comprised of questions regarding cosmetic item used by the sample, with special reference to the fairness cream used and the factors considered in its choice. Section –IV contained scales to assess respondents’ opinion towards advertisement, perceived appealing features of advertisement of fairness cream and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice.

Standardized Advertisement Impact Scale (AIS) to measure the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers choice was developed. The other scales namely, perceived appealing features of advertisement in (i) Audiovisual media (AVM), (ii) Audio media (AM), and (iii) Print media, opinion scale (OS) and consumer practice scale (CPA) were either adapted after earlier studies or were developed arbitrarily for the present study. Through the pilot study pre-testing of
the questionnaire was done on a sample of 40 students similar to the final sample of the study. The five point (strongly agree to strongly disagree) AIS used in the final data collection had 30 items with a range of minimum score of 30 and maximum score of 150 that can be earned by respondent. The scores were interpreted such that the higher the score the higher the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice and vice-versa. The OS had 17 items against each of which was a five point continuum, namely, ‘always’, ‘often’, sometimes’, ‘rarely’, and ‘never’. The range of scores possible on OS was 17 to 85 wherein a respondent could earn 1 to 5 scores on each item. The OS scores were interpreted such that the higher the score, the more favourable or positive were the opinion of respondents towards advertisement and vice-versa. On the other hand, PAFS for AAVM, AAM and APM had nine, seven and six items, respectively with ‘always’, ‘often’, ‘sometimes’, ‘rarely’ and never response categories. The range of scores possible on each of PAFS for AAVM, AAM and APM were 9 to 45, 7 to 35 and 6 to 30 respectively. The scores were interpreted in these cases such that the higher the score, the higher the perceived appealing features of advertisement of fairness cream in audiovisual, audio and print media respectively and vice-versa. The CPS had respectively.

11 items that the respondents were required to give responses in one of the categories on the five point continuum, namely ‘always’, ‘often’, ‘sometimes’, rarely’ and ‘never’. A respondent could earn a score from 1 to 5 on each item and 11 to 55 on the entire scale. The scores were interpreted such that the higher the score, the more favourable were the practices of consumers in relation to advertisement of fairness cream. The reliability coefficients of advertisement impact scale (AIS), Opinion Scale (OS), Perceived Appealing Feature Scale (PAFS) for advertisement in (i) Audiovisual media (AVM), (ii) Audio media (AM) and (iii)
Print media (PM) and consumer practices scale (CPS) were 0.878, 0.864, 0.628, 0.916, 0.829, 0.591 respectively. The data were collected through questionnaire from a purposive sample of 150 female student consumers of fairness cream.

All the responses received on the data sheets were coded and categorized. Descriptive and inferential statistics employed in the analysis were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, coefficient of correlations, analysis of variance and 't' test.

**MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

**Description of the sample**

**Personal characteristics**

Majority of the respondents belonged to age-group of 17-20 years. Their mean age was 18 years. About 53.3 per cent of them were under graduate students while the rest were post-graduate students. A large proportion of respondents were last born, i.e., the youngest in ordinal position. An almost equal per cent of the respondents were eldest and middle born in their families, i.e. 33.33 per cent and 25.33 per cent respectively.

**Family background characteristics**

Very few respondents belonged to families with multiple earners while all the respondents' fathers were employed and majority of them were in government service (90 %). Most of the mothers were housewives (80.0 %) and a negligible proportion of brothers and sisters were employed (6.67 and 1.33 per cent respectively).

Majority of the respondents hailed from families with 4 to 6 members and the mean size of family was 5.28, which is in agreement with national average.
Majority of the respondents were having monthly family income of Rs. 3000 – 12000/- their mean monthly income was Rs. 9868.6.

**Information related to allowance/pocket money**

About 80 per cent of the respondents used to get pocket money once in a month. Nearly 45 per cent of the respondents revealed the habit of planning before spending. The most common heads of expenditure were found to be personal grooming, tuition items, transportation, food and snacks, and medicine in majority of the respondents. Out of the 55 per cent of the respondents who did not make any plan for the use of their monthly allowance, 59 per cent found themselves without any cash before the next allowance was received. ‘Borrow from friends’, ‘sacrifice need’ and ‘credit buying’ were the means adopted by the respondents when they found themselves without any cash balance.

**Factors considered to enhance personality**

It was found that the majority of the respondents gave top most ranking to ‘self-confidence’ amongst the seven factors considered to enhance personality. The mean score on ‘self-confidence’ was 5.25 on the other hand, the least scoring factor was ‘complexion’ and its mean score was 1.65.

**Information related to cosmetic items and fairness cream used**

**Frequency of use of different cosmetic items**

Amongst the various cosmetic items used by the respondents, daily used item was toilet soap as expected with fairness cream being used daily by 88.0 per cent and skin cream by 66 per cent, the mean scores being 4, 3.9 and 3.5 respectively with the potential range of scores being 1 to 4 respectively.
Sources of Information on fairness cream and frequency of exposure

Amongst the different sources of information, audiovisual medium like television was found to be the most common source of information as evidenced through its mean score of 4.92 in a scale with a continuum of 1 to 6. This was followed by print medium like dailies, and word-of-mouth from friends with a mean score of 4.29 to 4.17 respectively.

It was found that audiovisual medium like television and print medium like dailies were almost competing with each other for the most frequently exposed source with total scores of 414 and 417 respectively followed by friends with total score of 373.

Buying practices related to fairness cream

Factors considered in the purchase of fairness cream

Amongst the different factors, overall effect on facial skin was observed to be the prime factor considered in the purchase of fairness cream followed by overall effect on complexion, with total score of 691 and 643 respectively. Other attributes and ‘availability’ were less important ones considered in the purchase of fairness cream with total scores of 534 and 480 respectively.

Ranking of specific attributes of fairness cream

Amongst the specific attributes of the fairness cream considered in its choice by respondents ‘moisturizing’ and nourishing effect’, the fairness cream has on the skin were the most rated attributes that lured the respondents to go for the brand of their choice, mean score on these being 6.03 and 6.13 respectively. Whereas the claim to ‘remove blemishes’ was the least rated attributes (mean score 3.99).
Decision maker regarding the brand of fairness cream

The majority of the respondents (95%) themselves were the decision makers in regard to the brand of fairness cream to buy while a few depended on others to help them make decision in this regard.

Features shopped around for

It was found that a remarkable proportion of the respondents shopped around to check the ‘price’ of the products (76%) while a little less than that (72.0%) shopped around for the ‘brand’. A few of them did not shop around before they bought the fairness cream of their choice.

Type of store and frequency of purchase of fairness cream

It was found that more or less the same proportion of respondents purchased fairness cream from general store or specialty store (44.0% and 42.7%, respectively) while only a few purchased it from medical store.

A majority of the respondents purchased fairness cream as per need (54.0%) whereas a little over one-third of them purchased it once in a month.

Information checked on the package

Equal proportion of the respondents (85.3% each) checked for the date of manufacture and expiry. Composition was checked by 58.0 per cent of the respondents only.

Utility of advertisement in the choice of fairness cream

Nearly 38 per cent reported that they found advertisement of the product useful in making decision about the fairness cream to buy. However 15 per cent reported that advertisement was as ho use to them in their choice of fairness cream.
Perceived appealing features (PAF) of advertisement in different media

PAF of advertisement in audiovisual media (AAVM) like television

A scrutiny of responses on the item in the scale showed that amongst the different appealing features of advertisement in audiovisual media perceived by respondents, quality of audiovisuals obtained the highest mean score of 3.8 followed by presence of celebrities/models in the advertisement with a mean score of 3.5 whereas the attributes of the product scored the least.

PAF of advertisement in audio media (AAM) like radio

A large proportion of the respondent (28.7 %) were seen to perceive the features of advertisement in audio media as appealing more often as evidenced by their scores falling in the range of 24.5 to 31.5 on PAFS for AAM with a maximum score of 35. A little than that i.e., 32.0 per cent of the respondents found some features as appealing more often and some less often whereas very few respondents (4.7 %) earned a maximum score of ≥ 31.5.

In the audio media, mode of presentation of the attributes was the most perceived appealing future (mean score = 3.09) among the different feature whereas ‘free/special offers’ and ‘song’ were found to be the second (mean score = 3.40) and third (mean score = 3.09) most appealing features respectively.

PAF of advertisement in print media (APM) like dailies/periodicals

About 43.3 per cent of the respondents earned a maximum score ranging from 21 to 26.9 in PAFS for APM while only a few (8.7 %) seemed to perceive some features as appealing ‘always’ by their score falling between 27 to 30.

In the print media, ‘special offers’ in the advertisement was the most perceived appealing feature (mean score = 3.17) followed by ‘model’ and ‘slogan’, mean score being 2.8 and 2.81 respectively.
Practices of respondents in relation to advertisement of fairness cream

A majority of the respondents (47.3 %) showed on inclination towards more favourable practices in response to advertisement of fairness cream more often as evidenced through their total score on CPS in the range of 38.5 to 49.4 wherein the maximum score possible was 55 whereas a small percentage of the respondents (4.7 %) revealed favourable practices related to advertisement ‘always’.

Most of the respondents showed a trend or an inclination towards favourable practices in response to advertisement of fairness cream through media. A large number of the respondents (44 %) disagreed with the statement “I hate to see/hear/read advertisements on TV/print media thereby revealing their favourable practice (mean score = 2.23) A little over one-third of the respondents ‘assessed the advertisement of fairness cream in radio’, preferred to be undisturbed while they viewed/read/heard the advertisement of fairness cream and ‘enjoyed watching the advertisement of the same cream again and again with mean score 3.55, 3.43 and 3.30 respectively. The overall aggregate mean score of 2.98 showed that the respondents on an average indulged in favourable behaviour acts or practices in response to advertisement of fairness cream through the media dealt within the study.

Opinion towards advertisement

A majority of the respondents (70.0 %) earned were opinion scores ranging from 42.5 to 59.4, thereby revealing neither a distinctively favourable nor unfavourable opinion towards advertisement of fairness cream. The score on each item was interpreted such that the higher the score the more favourable the opinion.

The most prominent item in the opinion scale on which of the respondents earned the highest total score of 403 was deserved to be ‘advertisement lead
consumers make unwise choice’. ‘Advertisement makes false claims’ and ‘advertisements are hallow’ were the next most commonly shared opinion of the respondents with total score on these being 423 and 435 respectively. The statement ‘advertisements represents the benefits/merits of the product’ earned the lowest total score of 350. In brief, it can be said that though the respondents by and large held a favourable opinion, were aware of the deceptive characteristics of advertisement as well.

Impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers choice

Majority of the respondents (73.3 %) earned scores in the range of 75 to 104.9 thereby revealing themselves to be ‘uncertain’ about the impact of advertisement on their choice of fairness cream. On the other hand, a negligible percentage of respondents (8.0 %) earned scores falling between the 105 to 134.9 implying that they were definitely influenced by advertisement of fairness cream.

Majority of the respondents ‘strongly agreed’ or agreed to items like advertisement drifts me into fairyland (65 %), tempts me to buy the brand advertised (69 %) and ‘makes me dream to be like the model in it (65 %) and the mean score on these were 3.63, 3.52 and 3.46 respectively. On the other hand only a few disagreed that advertisement would not make one take risk with allowance’ (mean score 1.8).

RESULTS RELATED TO TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

Age and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers (respondents) choice

No significant correlation was observed between age and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on respondents’ choice. The computed ‘F’ value was not significant. The null hypothesis that there exists no relationship between
age of the respondents and the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on their choice was accepted.

**Family size and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice**

The ‘r’ value for family size and impact advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice was not significant. The ‘t’ value computed in the case of family size of the respondent and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on the choice was significant at 0.05 level between respondent of small and large families at 0.01 level between those of medium and large families. Thus, the null hypothesis that there exists no relationship between the family size of the respondents and impact of advertisement on consumers’ choice was partially rejected.

**Family income and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice**

The monthly family income did not seem to have any relationship with the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on choice of respondents as evidenced through the ‘r’ value computed. The ‘t’ value calculated in the case of monthly family income of the respondents and impact advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice was not significant. Thus, the null hypothesis that there exists no relationship between monthly family income of respondents and the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice was accepted.

**Perceived appealing features of advertisement in audiovisual media (PAFAAVM) and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice**

Significant positive correlation (0.271*) at 0.05 level existed between PAFAAVM and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on respondents’ choice. However, the computed ‘F’ value was not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis
that there exists no relationship between PAFAAVM and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice was partially rejected.

**Perceived appealing features of advertisement in audio media (PAFAAM) and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice**

Significant positive correlation (0.288**) at 0.01 level was observed between PLAFAAM and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on respondents choice. The ‘F’ value was not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there exists no relationship between PAFAAM and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice was partially rejected.

**Perceived appealing features of advertisement in print media (PAFAPM) and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice**

There was no significant correlation (-0.081) between PAFAPM and impact of advertisement of fairness cream of respondents’ choice. The computed ‘F’ value was not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there exists no relationship between PAFAPM and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice was accepted.

**Opinion towards advertisement and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers’ choice**

The correlation coefficient (0.198*) computed between opinion towards advertisement and impact of advertisement on consumers’ choice was significant at 0.05 level. The ‘t’ value computed in the case of opinion towards advertisement and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on the choice was significant at 0.05 level between low and moderate and low and high scores. Thus, the null hypothesis that there exists no relationship between the opinion towards advertisements and
impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers' choice was partially rejected.

**Consumer practices related to advertisement and impact of advertisement of fairness cream of consumers' choice**

The calculated correlation coefficient of $0.311^{**}$ between practices of respondents to advertisement of fairness cream and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers' choice was significant at 0.01 level.

The computed 't' values in the case of practices related to advertisements and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers' choice was significant at 0.05 level between the low scorers and the high scorers on consumer practice scale. Thus, the null hypothesis that there exists no relationship between the practices related to advertisement and influence of advertisement of fairness cream on the choice was partially rejected.

**Education and impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers' choice**

The influence of education level on impact of advertisement of fairness cream on their choice was statistically tested using 't' test. The 't' value computed was not significant thereby revealing that the mean difference of the two groups of respondents by education was not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis that education level of respondent does not influence the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on consumers' choice was accepted.

**CONCLUSION**

Female students in higher education consumed one fairness cream or the other. They assumed the role of consumers in the selection of fairness cream for personal grooming with control on the financial allowances at their disposal. They held very clear concept about factors that contribute to their personality. Enduring
attributes like, 'self-confidence' and 'education' were valued as prime factors for enhancing personality, cosmetic item, especially, fairness cream was an important component of their expenditure. Television, print media and friends and relatives played a crucial role as sources of information on consumer products like fairness cream, 'overall effect on skin', 'complexion and cost were the main factors considered in the purchase of fairness cream by young female students. Shopping around for the product like fairness cream was not a habit of all young female consumers. However, they checked for the information on price, quantity, date of expiry and manufacture when the purchases were made. Decision for the purchase of fairness cream was generally made by themselves. The young female students purchased fairness cream from specialty stores, dealing with cosmetic and toiletry items and general stores. They purchased fairness cream as per need. Advertisements were found to be useful in making decision about the fairness cream. Perceived appealing features of advertisement in print media proved to be less popular than audiovisual and audio media. Opinion towards advertisements is mostly neutral, favourable behaviour acts or practices in response to advertisement of fairness cream through the media were found among the students.

The young female students, by and large, were under the impact of advertisement of fairness cream in their choice to some extent.

The family size of the respondents was a significant variable affecting 'impact of advertisement of fairness cream on their choice.

The respondents young female students' opinion and practices related to advertisement of fairness cream emerged as significant variables affecting the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on their choice. As respondents' scores on perceived appealing features of the advertisement in audiovisual media and
audio media increased, impact of advertisement on their choice too increased and vice-versa.

Personal variables like age and education and family variables like family income and situational variables like perceived appealing features of advertisement of fairness cream in print media did not appear to have any influence on the impact of advertisement of fairness cream on their choice.

**Recommendations**

(i) The study revealed that most of the respondents had divided opinion, i.e. neither too favourable, nor too unfavourable towards advertisement. To win over the confidence of consumer, it is necessary that the manufactures and/or the sponsor should present more realistic and factual information about the product in question. Hence, there is a need to improve the quality and content or message of advertisement to make a deep impression on consumer. The manufacturers and/or sponsors have a role to play in this and should ensure that informative advertisements that highlight the merits and demerits, price of the products and so on of good quality are made for promoting their products.

(ii) There is a need to educate consumers to make value judgment with regard to advertisement of consumer goods or services. Family Resource Management/Home Management Department assumes significance in providing formal and informal education. Education modules need to be prepared and training
need to be imparted to different segments of consumer population.

Further research

(i) A similar study could be undertaken by taking other categories of products like large household equipment, automobiles, housing schemes and the like, to know factors that affect the impact of its advertisement on consumers' choice.

(ii) A comparative study on the impact of advertisement of selected brands of fairness cream on consumers can be undertaken.

(iii) A comparative study of the opinion of students of Home Science with consumer education components and non Home Science without any consumer education component in the curriculum can be undertaken.