



MARKETING RESEARCH  
MKT 536

RESEARCH PROJECT PAPER

**TITLE:**  
**PURCHASING OBJECTIVE AND BEHAVIOUR OF FEMALE  
TELEKOM MALAYSIA'S STAFF IN KOTA KINABALU  
ON LIPSTICK**



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## Abstract

Lipstick has cast a spell over cultures throughout history. From the past to the present, the little tube of colour, oil and wax has been scorned, shunned and embraced. This paper explores why women wear lipstick, their reasons for purchase and some of the behaviours associated with its use. Results from a mall intercept survey of 117 female lipstick users in Telekom Malaysia are presented with particular emphasis on self-perceptions of lipstick and grooming habits using this product. Results indicate that women wear lipstick today more for reasons of self-esteem and confidence than as a sexual allurements as previous literature would suggest. Lipstick is a significant vehicle through which women can transform themselves through the image they present to the world and especially at the work place. Despite these feelings, society still maintains strict codes of conduct in applying and using the product.

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## Introduction

Lipstick has been donned by both genders for war and worship, used as an economic productivity tool, considered a possible health risk and even outlawed by governments, so why then do women wear lipstick? What is it about this product that can be so consumer captivating or even repelling that it has outlived cultures, fashion trends and even governments?



This study paper is prepared for the subject of **MARKETING RESEARCH** for this semester in my study at **UITM Sabah**. The completed study paper needs to be submitted by the 4<sup>th</sup> Seminar to my lecturer Prof. **Madya Matyasin Jamil**.

The purpose of this study was to identify the reasons why women wear lipstick and to gain insights into the attributes that influence the consumption behaviour surrounding it. The study yielded a very rich data set that covered a range of topics including grooming rituals, product attributes, brand equity, attitudes and perceptions and colour.

This paper will focus on the purchase behaviour of female staff of **Telekom Malaysia Sabah** who wear lipstick, the emotions the product generates and the customs of using lipstick as a grooming aid. Preliminary findings in these areas will be presented with the marketing implications.

## What is Lipstick?

I have some early memories of imitating my mother applying makeup. I would sit in front of the mirror and powder my face with loose powder using a big hamburger-like powder puff, smear my mother's ruby-red lipstick on my lips, and pucker up like the movie and television stars I'd seen. I also recall the days when I was about 11 or 12 and my friends and I--not having arrived at the age where we were allowed to wear lipstick--would sneak a tube of lipstick to school, put it on, and then wipe it off before we got home. Nowadays, I know women who say they feel naked without lipstick.

Lipstick in some shape or form has been around for a long time and has always been a part of the fashion statement. History tells us that ancient Egyptians used henna to paint their lips. According to Meg Cohen Ragas and Karen Kozlowski in their book, "Read My Lips: A Cultural History of Lipstick," a reddish purple mercuric plant dye called fucus--algin, 0.01% iodine, and some bromine mannite--was used for lip rouge. Little did the ancient Egyptians know that it was potentially poisonous--talk about the kiss of death!

Although no self-respecting Egyptian would leave home without it, makeup has not always held an accepted place in society. In fact, it has traveled a bumpy road to acceptance.

According to Ragas and Kozlowski, Thomas Hall, an English pastor and author of the "Loathsomeness of Long Haire" (1653), led a movement declaring that face painting was "the devil's work" and that women who put brush to mouth were trying to "ensnare others and to kindle a fire and flame of lust in the hearts of those who cast their eyes upon them." In 1770, the British Parliament passed a law condemning lipstick, stating that "women found guilty of seducing men into matrimony by a cosmetic means could be tried for witchcraft."

Jessica Pallington points out in her book, "Lipstick," that in the 1800s, Queen Victoria publicly declared makeup impolite. It was viewed as vulgar and something that was worn by actors and prostitutes. Makeup took a backseat, and paleness became vogue for almost a century.

Putting on a happy face during World War II, aided by the movie industry, gave lipstick and face powder respectability. It became the patriotic duty of female citizens to "put their face on." In the 1930s, leaders in the industry such as Helena Rubinstein and Elizabeth Arden