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A Study on Consumer Behaviour with Reference to Male Skincare Products

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Abstract: ***This study examined the changing purchasing behavior of male consumers in the cosmetics sector, which has been traditionally female-led. The men's use of skincare was a factor of increasing awareness, health/lifestyle change, and digital marketing. This paper discerned the influences of male consumer purchasing behavior of skincare, including other areas of online marketing, influencers, product formulation and demographic factors. The data generated by the 170 (male) survey respondents and analyzed using SPSS in the analysis of the data indicated that there was a strong effect on the purchasing behavior of males with regards to natural, chemical free product formulation and from the role of influencers. Males are also inclined toward e-commerce websites due to the convenience and transparency. The findings suggest to brands, invest the time and energy into branding based on clean ingredients, consider being more personal digitally, skin type specific products appeal, and put more weight on relationship with the consumer, as this will be paramount in the future.***
Keywords: Men's skincare, Male consumers, Digital marketing, Product formulation performance, E-commerce, Influencer marketing.

I. INTRODUCTION

The men's skincare market is growing rapidly as self-care, including grooming, has become a means of personal well-being embraced by everyone. Skin care has traditionally been seen as purely for women, but has encroached on the male territory as influencers on social media, changes in generational life stages, and changing perspectives of masculinity and elevated grooming, are helping men to see that peeling, waxing, and getting a facial is acceptable. Certainly over the last 2 years, India's any delay with cosmopolitan influencers has increased the exposure of self-care routines for men.

Urbanization with the speed of learning about occurring global norms of grooming is happening at previously unseen speeds, as most Indian men spend time on social media and "follow" influencers and bloggers online. Digital media channels new to these new customers allow them to better appreciate foreign standards of grooming. Today, male buyers are at their most aware and most educated, as they critically consider a myriad of factors like: brand reputation, cost, packaging, and, most importantly, ingredients.

The last few years saw an increase in discontent for skin health and ingredients have shown to become the most important factor in their purchasing decision. Unfortunately, almost no academic literature exists highlighting how Indian men think about the ingredients in their skin care and how their priorities have impact on their understanding and decisions for buying.

Results indicate that ingredient-consciousness is more prevalent amongst consumers with sensitive or problematic skin. Younger consumers, who are often influenced by digital content and on-line information resources, tend to be more ingredient-conscious, while older users typically revert to familiar and trusted brands. This research highlights important considerations for marketers and product developers to craft ingredient-focused campaigns and strategies in the male skincare market, which continues to grow and evolve.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Personal grooming behavior has undergone substantial shift in recent years as they began to care about themselves in more traditionally feminine ways (Souiden & Diagne, 2009). Researchers attribute this shift in behavior to the emergence of new cultural values, rising disposable income, and evermore exposure to global product "effects" via social media influencers and marketing (Bakshi, 2012; Vaidya, 2020).

Studies have shown that male consumers as a group, on the whole, seem more educated and selective about which cosmetics they purchase, which seems to encompass the brands image, ingredient transparency, and product efficacy (Mukherjee, 2019). The emergence of other digital shopping countries (creatively as Nykaa and Amazon) have make it ease for men to more accurately and quickly navigate product offerings, see reviews ,and compare ingredients (Kumar & Goswami, 2021).

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With regards to individual differences on psychographic dispositions, the role of lifestyle, self-image and the perceptions of social norms, can influence attitudes toward a skincare product (Rook & Fisher, 1995). Furthermore, in studies where men expressed psychographic dispositions such as higher sensitivity of the skin, assessed higher levels of product importance (for ingredients such as niacinamide, salicylic acid, or hyaluronic acid) among those consumers who expressed skin dryness, or concerns with acne (Gupta & Jain, 2022). Although there is growing opportunity for examining male skincare product interests, research targeting the Indian citizenship male skincare segment is limited.

III. STUDY OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study is to identify and learn about the behaviour of consumers in the case of male skincare products. The particular objectives are:

1) To identify the role of social media and influencers on men's purchasing behaviour of skincare.
2) To learn demographic profiles of men purchasing skincare.
3) To assess the role of product ingredient, brand credibility on male buying in the case of skincare.
4) To determine the role of e-commerce websites and campaign promotions on the internet towards male purchase of skincare products.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The study itself is a quantitative research method to explore the male consumer behaviour in the skincare market. The research method is exploratory and descriptive that highlighted common attributes that influenced decision-making when purchasing skincare, product formulations, influencer impact, and demographic factors. The research included a structured survey and captured primary data from a defined sample of male skincare customers.

B. Data Source

Primary data was collected using a semi-structured self-administered questionnaire online. The population of interest were male consumers with different demographics in age, income, and skin types. Overall, 170 responses were collected that resulted in a good sample size, variation, and sample. Secondary data was also collected that included anecdotal evidence from academic articles, industry reports, and market surveys to support the research framework.

C. Data Preparation

EMC to pre-screened the samples for completeness and accuracy. Then the responses were reviewed to screen for duplication and incomplete responses. Skin type responses and responses related to attitudinal questions were coded from a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire (the responses to the attitudinal were Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) and were laid out to create a dataset for analyse convenience. The data was coded and laid out operationally for the final use in analysis using special analysis software OCR.

D. Tools and Techniques

The analyzed data set was statistically analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The following Statistical Techniques were employed:

Descriptive Statistics to summarize demographic and general patterns for respondents, Frequency Analysis to assess variables' distributions on preferences and behaviour, One-Way ANOVA for differences among demographic groups, Chi-Square Test for associations between categorical variables, Multiple Linear Regression to develop insights about role of age, income and skin issues on awareness of ingredients and purchase behaviour.

The multiple statistical techniques provide the tools for interpretation of consumer behaviour patterns and continue to provide implications to marketers and product designers.

E. Scope of the Study

This study examined buying behaviour of male skincare consumers in India. It identified and described the influence of age, income, skin concerns, and knowledge of ingredients of products on their buying behaviour. The study specifically looked to identify not only factors that influenced buying behaviour, but also the effect of digital media and e-commerce, combined with social influencer consumer choices.

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F. Limitations of the Study

There were two major limitations to the study. First, the study captured a relatively small sample of 170 participants, all but a few being from urban spaces, and did not reflect the general male population. Secondly, the data is self-report, and therefore subject to bias. Thirdly, the study was time-limited on skincare products only. Consequently, the sample of respondents may limit the extent to which the researcher could generalize their findings.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A. Demographics and Lifestyle

The majority of respondents are young (18-34 years), and the fact that most are students indicates a youth-driven market.

Aspect	Details	Percentage / Notes
Age Group	Majority 18-34 years	Majority
Occupation	Mostly students	Majority
Lifestyle	Casual lifestyle	Majority
Interest in Skincare	Growing as part of wellness routine	Not quantified
Hobbies	Travelling, fitness (multifunctional product demand)	Not quantified

The vast majority lead casual lifestyles, but some are beginning to care about skincare and see it as a part of their wellness routine. Their hobbies (for example, travelling, fitness) indicate that they want multifunctional, on-the-go skincare products.

B. Digital Influence

Metric	Details	Percentage
Social Media Usage	Use social media multiple times daily (Instagram, YouTube)	>68%
Purchased due to Influencer	Bought skincare influenced by influencer	55.3%
Influenced by Reviews	Influenced by others' reviews	60.4%
Importance of Influencer Followers	Consider follower count important for trust	53.5%

More than 68% of respondents use social media on multiple occasions multiple times cues per day (specifically on Instagram and Youtube).
55.3% of respondents stated they purchased skincare products because of an influencer, and 60.4% of respondents were influenced by reviews from others.
53.5% of respondents stated it was important to them to know how many followers the influencer had because of a trust factor.

C. Purchase Behaviour

Metric	Details	Percentage
Online Purchases	Purchase skincare products online	83.5%
Popular Platforms	Amazon, Nykaa	Not quantified
Purchase Drivers	Reviews, price, convenience over brand	Not quantified
Influence of Digital Campaigns	Directly influenced by digital campaigns	~50%

83.5% of respondents purchase skincare products online, with many purchasing products from Amazon and Nykaa. They primarily consider product reviews, product price, and product convenience or ease-of-use over brand.
Digital marketing campaigns were directly influencing purchases for nearly 50% of respondents.

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D. Ingredient Knowledge

Metric	Details	Percentage
Importance of Ingredients	Ingredients key in product choice	78.8%
Check for Harmful Chemicals	Check labels for harmful chemicals	74.1%
Preference for Natural/Organic	Prefer mostly or always natural products	86%

There is a strong interest in ingredients, with 78.8 percent of respondents stating that ingredients are a key part of selecting skincare products.
74.1% of respondents check labels for harmful chemicals.
There is a strong interest in natural/organic products (86% of respondents stated that they prefer mostly or always natural).

E. Skin Concerns

Skin Concern	Details	Percentage / Notes
Dry Skin	Among top three concerns	Not quantified
Oily Skin	Among top three concerns	Not quantified
Acne	Among top three concerns	Not quantified
Sensitivity	Close fourth concern	Not quantified
Ingredient Checking due to Reactions	Influenced by prior skin reactions	33.5%

The top three skin concerns among respondents were dry skin, oily skin, and acne, with sensitivity following closely as a concern.
Skin concerns directly influence ingredient checking behaviors among respondents with previous skin reactions (33.5%).

F. Brand Loyalty

A majority of respondents have a moderate preference to their current skincare brand, which suggests they are open to trying new brands that better fit their skin needs.

Metric	Details	Percentage / Notes
Brand Loyalty Level	Moderate preference towards current brands	Majority
Openness to New Brands	Willing to try brands better fitting skin needs	High

G. Frequency of Social Media Platforms

Metric	Detail	Percentage
Multiple times daily social media use	Respondents active on social media several times a day	>68%

H. Preference of Social Media Platforms

Platform	Popularity Ranking	Percentage / Notes
Instagram	Most popular	Not quantified
YouTube	Second most popular	Not quantified
Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter (X)	Follow in popularity	Not quantified

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I. Purchase of Skincare Based on Influencer Recommendations

Response	Percentage
Purchased based on influencer	55.3%
Not purchased	29.4%
Unsure	15.3%

J. Most Convincing Social Media Content for Skincare Purchases

Content Type	Percentage
Product reviews & testimonials	60.4%
Tutorials	25.6%
Celebrity endorsements	9.7%
Sponsored posts	4.3%

K. Summary of interpretation

Based on the results, it is clear that male skincare is largely driven by younger consumers, primarily 18–34-year-old students, with more relaxed lifestyles. Their interest in travel, fitness, and adventure shows a growing cohort of consumers that are vying for simple, practical skincare solutions that are easily portable.

- The influence of social media is very evident, most participants mentioned that they were using Instagram and YouTube regularly, if not daily.[6] More than half of participants had purchased skin care products based on inspiration from the influencer or influencer in general. It is important to note how many participants trust product reviews (rather than paid advertisements or endorsements) and user testimonials over other marketing promotional tactics.
- Participants clearly preferred online purchasing with ecommerce providers like Amazon and Nykaa when directly buying their skincare products specifically. Participants also said they valued reviews, price, and ease of use more than they valued name brands.
- Participants had a clear preference for natural, chemical-free products, as most participants stated they check for ingredient content on product labels. While trust for those w/ online following may be a little more rooted in follower counts, many respondents did, however, have clear values.

VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Increased interest in skin care among young males aged 18-34 can be attributed to their laid-back lifestyles and health-oriented behavior. Many were students or gym-goers, which suggests that they may represent a consumer group who prioritize ease of use over skincare routines and are drawn to multi-functional, travel-friendly products. It is important to note that most of the media influences young male consumers are exposed to are through social media. For this study, Instagram and YouTube appeared to have a sizeable impact in terms of the buying decision journey (especially from influencers and product review content). Over half of the respondents in the study indicated that they purchased skincare products from an influencer recommendation, and said from their experiences, that products from influencers who have a large amount of followers should be trusted.

There will be a considerable amount of market movement to online platforms, and males surveyed in the age grouping preferred online shopping over other types of shopping with Amazon and Nykaa as the preferred retailers. This implies that product reviews, product price, and product ease of use are more important than product loyalty. Additionally, the respondents were aware of ingredients, and the vast majority preferred natural, organic skincare products and stated that they actively check for harmful chemicals in products. Again, while some participants seemed strongly brand loyal, the majority are flexible or willing to switch brands when introduced to new options that align with their preferences. Overall, the findings of this research study reveal that digital influence, the lifestyle nature of skincare, and key values (ingredient transparency) are important factors in the male skincare market.

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VII. CONCLUSION

This research indicates a clear shift in the behaviors, specifically consumption habits, of male consumers of skincare products across three domains: lifestyle, digital engagement, and ingredient knowledge. Young men, particularly students and young professionals are engaging with skincare products by shopping for them online, and this demographic's behaviors are heavily influenced by social media. The preferences for natural content, ease of application, and reliability provided exclusively in the online formats collectively represent powerful themes that highlight perceived authenticity and convenience to the consumer. Overall, the study results affirm a fluid and evolving marketplace where brands will have the opportunity to engage the consumer through personalized strategies within the context of a digital-first, consumer-centered landscape.

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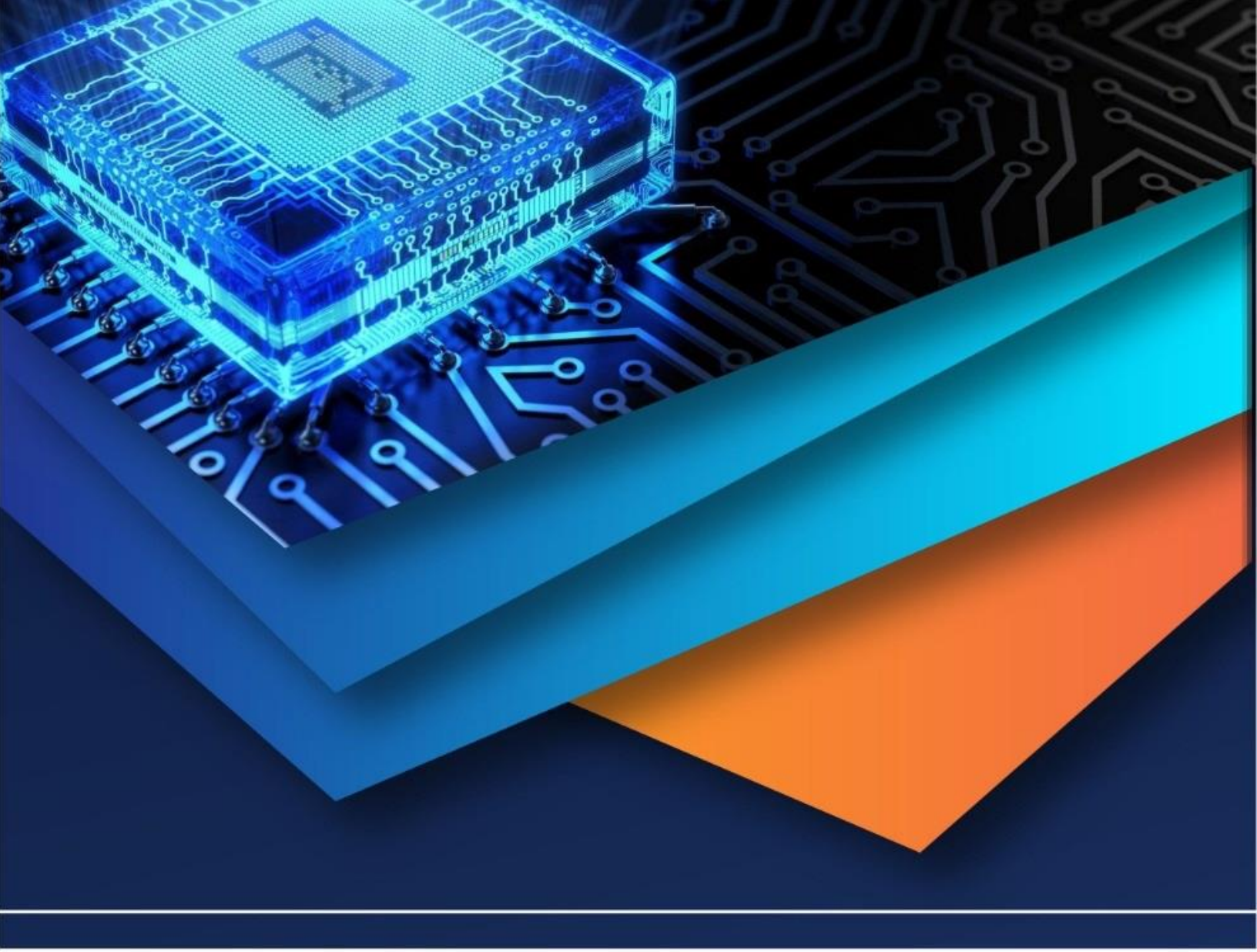

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