

# Males, Media and Metrosexuality: An Exploratory Study of Persuasion

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**Abstract:** - The level of metrosexuality among males has increased significantly over the last number of years as males are now showing more of an interest in fashion, appearance and beauty enhancement products. They are increasingly becoming passionate consumers of once taboo goods and services such as grooming products, cosmetics, salon services and fashion goods. This consumer, labeled as the metrosexual, is alleged to indicate a departure from conventional notions of masculinity. Advertisers are taking notice by increasingly promoting goods and services to target this lucrative consumer segment. This paper aims to explore and analyze the impact of media (advertisements basically) on the identity of metrosexual men whose certain characteristics are different from conservative males. It is an exploration of the relationship between ads of transforming conservative, old-fashioned males into appealing and more confident ones and the resulting anxiety levels. All the statistical analysis is carried out with the help of SPSS and to find out significant difference between the opinions of different demographic groups, Frequency distribution with tables and charts, Cross-tables and One-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) is used. This contrastive study will provide understanding and insight not only on the influence of advertising but also on the new gender of modern men who are different from the conventional ones. The present study conducted during the year 2015, will also provide marketers and advertisers with the tools to effectively target this important segment i.e. men.

**Key words:** Males, Metrosexuality, Advertisements, Grooming, Self-Image.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Marketers often appeal to male consumers through the use of masculine themes and thus, understanding consumers' notions of masculinity is important in order to appeal to these consumers effectively. The term "metrosexual" was first coined by theorist Mark Simpson in his 1994 book, *Male Impersonators: Men Performing Masculinity*. The term "metrosexual," first defined in 1994 by Mark Simpson, has become the buzzword of the year. Defined as, "a narcissist in love with not only himself but his urban lifestyle; a straight man who is in touch with his feminine side", metrosexuals have been identified as men who enjoy

shopping, fashion and beauty products. This is a new subculture of men that are going mainstream with their lifestyle which includes excessive grooming and interest in fashion, which have typically been regarded as feminine behaviors. Today, as men play an important and very active role in modern consumerism, they look for an identity build-up which can be achieved through a particular style of dress, body care, image and look. This behavior is driven by the need for the creation and attainment of a desired self-image, identity and self-concept. The present topic has been the focus of extensive media attention, researchers and social philanthropists.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In regard to the above study, a brief review of some of the relevant literature is as under:

Conseur (2004) investigated male college students in terms of their metrosexual behavior and identify factors contributing to this current trend in society. The variables of self-esteem, the role of the media and shift to egalitarianism were tested as possible predictors of metrosexual behavior. Janowska (2008) studied and identified metrosexual men and their shopping habits regarding selection of clothing. The research evaluated metrosexual men's brand loyalty, need for purchase and if group belong to early adopters of new clothing collection. Lertwannawit et al (2010) opined that the term metrosexual includes the sex role inventory and appearance-related variables, i.e. self monitoring, status consumption, fashion consciousness, cloth concern, and body self-relation. Hall and Gough (2011) stated that masculinity concerns are central in debates about 'metrosexuality', with self-identified 'metrosexuals' invoking heterosexual prowess and self-respect on the one hand, and critics (e.g. self-identified 'real men') lamenting 'metrosexuality' for its perceived effeminacy and lack of authenticity on the other. Piayura (2013) illustrated that male bodies and beauty have been related since the olden days. In Thai classical literature, the warrior heroes behave like metrosexual men, as they are concerned about their bodies and beauty whilst being the role models of

masculinity. Therefore, a metrosexual man is not a 'new type' of men, as he existed many centuries ago in Thai classical literature. Harris (2013) discussed that the level of acceptance towards metrosexuality has increased significantly over the last number of years because males are now showing more of an interest in fashion and beauty as documented in industry reports and academia. The study determined Irish male's consumption behaviours, in terms of motivations and influences.

### III. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to gain an understanding of notions of masculinity held by men, especially men who are identified as metrosexuals, or men who are proposed to have a "new" sense of masculinity. An expression of this masculinity is in part related to keen consumption in the marketplace.

### IV. OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The present study has a broader framework of analyzing the impact of advertisements/media on males resulting into metrosexual behaviour and consumption of male grooming products. For this purpose, the specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the influence of advertising media on self image and social expectation of the metrosexual males.
2. To study the moderating effects of consumption of grooming/beautifying products on males in terms of metrosexuality.

For this purpose, a null hypothesis and an alternate hypothesis are formulated as under:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents of various age and occupational groups.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant difference in the opinions of respondents of various age and occupational groups.

### V. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is Punjab. The study was conducted on 680 male respondents whose age group is from 18 years to 50 years and above. The respondents include businessmen, servicemen, professionals, self-employed and students.

### VI. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

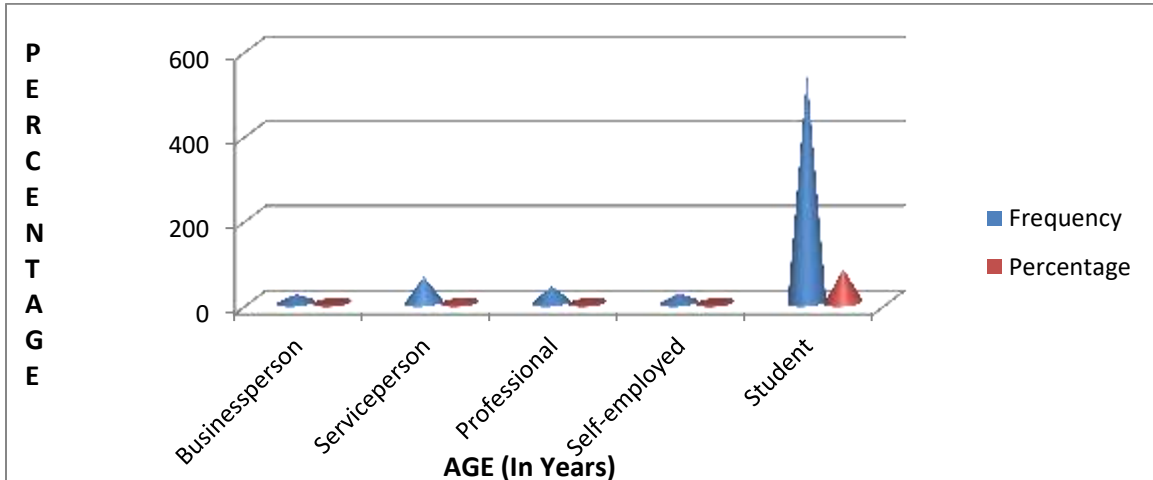
Researcher has used primary as well as secondary data collection methods in the study. The primary data are collected through a structured questionnaire and secondary data are collected through internet, journals and business magazines. A sample of 680 respondents is taken for the study. The sample includes respondents of different age groups such as 18-24 yrs (545 respondents), 25-34 yrs (87 respondents), 35-49 (41 respondents) and 50 and above (7 respondents) as well as occupational groups such as Businessmen (19 respondents), Servicemen (61 respondents), Professionals (39 respondents), Self-employed (22 respondents) and Students (539 respondents). Total six variables are selected for analysis and are named as impact of media on metrosexuality among respondents (males). To achieve the objectives of study, a five-point type likert scale is used. All the statistical analysis is carried out with the help of SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solution). In order to find out significant difference between the opinions of different demographic groups, Frequency distribution with tables and charts, Cross-tables and One way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) is used.

Table 1: Sample distribution on Age

AGE (In Years)	Frequency	Percentage
18-24	545	80.1
25-34	87	12.8
35-49	41	6.0
50 and above	7	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey

Chart 1: Sample Distribution on Age



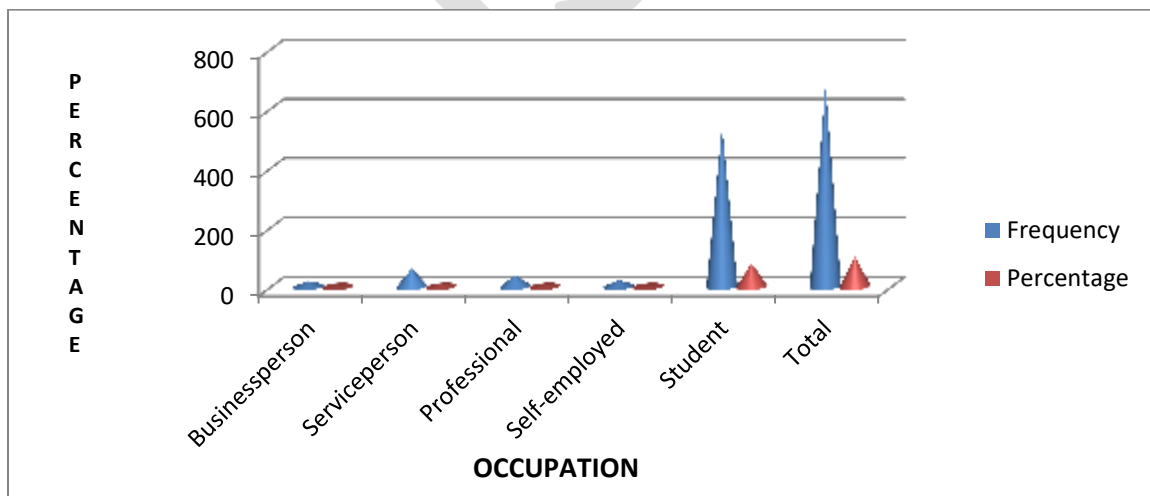
Source: Field Survey

Table 2: Sample Distribution on Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Businessperson	19	2.8
Serviceperson	61	9.0
Professional	39	5.7
Self-employed	22	3.2
Student	539	79.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey

Chart 2: Sample Distribution on Occupation



Source: Field Survey

*Age-wise Analysis of Impact of Media on Metrosexuality among Respondents:*

Table 3 illustrates that out of total 680 respondents, 545 are in the age group of 18-24 years, 87 respondents are between 25 to 34 years of age, 41 respondents are in between the age group of 35 to 49 years and the rest 7 respondents are at the age of 50 years and above. Out of the first age group (18-24

years), 45.1 per cent being the major part in this segment agreed that they are conscious about their appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements, 39.4 per cent agreed that they frequently check their appearance in the mirror as a self image comparison with the celebrity endorsers, 36 percent has a neutral opinion regarding spending more money on themselves, while 38 to 40 per cent agreed with the fact that they feel confident when they look good and they also like complements for looking stylish. 31.7 per cent respondents agree on the point that they regularly watch advertisements to stay updated regarding fashion, clothing etc. Out of the second age group (25-34 years), 37.9 per cent strongly agreed that they are conscious about their appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements, 37.9 per cent are neutral in their opinion regarding frequently checking their appearance in the mirror as a self image comparison with the celebrity endorsers, 42.5 per cent has a neutral opinion regarding spending more money on themselves, while the major part (33 percent to 45 per cent) strongly agree upon the fact that they feel confident when they look good and they also like complements for looking stylish and 35.6 per cent respondents agree that they regularly watch advertisements to stay updated regarding fashion, clothing etc. Out of the age group of 35 to 49 years, 36.6 per cent respondents agree with this point that they are conscious about their appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements, the major part i.e. 51 to 57 per cent has a neutral opinion regarding frequently checking their appearance in the mirror as a self image comparison with the celebrity endorsers and spending more money on themselves. 53.7 per cent agreed that they feel confident when they look good, 68.3 per cent respondents are neutral in saying that they like complements for looking stylish. But 43.9 per cent disagreed that they regularly watch advertisements to stay updated regarding fashion, clothing etc. Out of the age group of 50 years and above, 57.1 per cent strongly agreed that they are conscious about their appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements, 71.4 per cent are neutral in their opinion regarding frequently checking their appearance in the mirror as a self image comparison with the celebrity endorsers and spending more money on themselves, 42.9 per cent disagreed that they feel confident when they look good and they don't watch advertisements to stay updated. 42.9 per cent respondents have a neutral opinion regarding liking complements for looking stylish. In an upshot, it can be said that the respondents of all age groups have common perceptions regarding the impact of media on metrosexuality among respondents. Only the most aged group's (50 years and above) opinion differ from others.

*Occupation-wise Analysis of Impact of Media on Metrosexuality among Respondents:*

Table 4 illustrates that out of total 680 respondents, 19 are businesspersons, 61 respondents are servicepersons, 39

respondents are professionals, 22 respondents are self-employed and 539 respondents are students. Out of businesspersons, 36.8 per cent strongly agreed that they are conscious about their appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements, 52.6 per cent agreed that they frequently check their appearance in the mirror as a self image comparison with the celebrity endorsers, 47.4 percent have a neutral opinion regarding spending more money on themselves, 36.8 per cent agreed that they feel confident when they look good, while 36 to 42 per cent are neutral that they like complements for looking stylish and regularly watch advertisements to stay updated. Out of the servicepersons, 32.8 per cent strongly agreed that they are conscious about their appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements, 44 per cent to 48 per cent are neutral in their opinion regarding frequently checking their appearance in the mirror as a self image comparison with the celebrity endorsers and spending more money on themselves, while 45.9 per cent being the major part agree upon the fact that they feel confident when they look good and 44.3 per cent said that they are neutral in liking complements for looking stylish. Only 29.5 per cent respondents disagree on the point of regularly watching advertisements to stay updated. Out of the group of professionals, 35.9 per cent respondents strongly agree with this point that they are conscious about their appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements, 38.5 per cent has a neutral opinion regarding frequently checking their appearance in the mirror as a self image comparison with the celebrity endorsers and spending more money on themselves. 35.9 per cent agreed that they feel confident when they look good, 35.9 per cent respondents are neutral in saying that they like complements for looking stylish. But 33.3 per cent disagreed that they regularly watch advertisements to stay updated. Out of the self-employed respondents, 45.5 per cent strongly agreed that they are conscious about their appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements and they frequently check their appearance in the mirror as a self image comparison with the celebrity endorsers. 72.7 per cent are neutral in spending more money on themselves, 40.9 per cent strongly agreed upon the point of feeling confident when they look good and liking complements for looking stylish. 50 per cent of the respondents agreed that they like watching advertisements to stay updated regarding fashion, clothing etc. Out of the students, 37.5 per cent to 45.6 per cent respondents agreed that they are conscious about their appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements and they frequently check their appearance in the mirror. 35.6 per cent are neutral in spending more money on themselves, 39.1 per cent agreed upon the point of feeling confident when they look good and liking complements for looking stylish. 30.8 per cent of the respondents agreed that they like watching advertisements to stay updated regarding fashion, clothing etc.

Table 3- Age-Wise Analysis of Impact of Media on Metrosexuality among Respondents

Impact of Metrosexuality among M ales	Businessperson						Serviceperson						Professional						Self-employed					
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGRRE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGRRE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGRRE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGRRE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
You are conscious about your appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements	7	5	6	0	1	19	16	20	13	3	9	61	14	13	8	3	1	39	10	8	4	0	0	22
<b>(Percentage)</b>	36.8	26.3	31.6	.0	5.3	100	26.2	32.8	21.3	4.9	14.8	100	35.9	33.3	20.5	7.7	2.6	100	45.5	36.4	18.2	.0	.0	100
You frequently check your appearance in the mirror.	3	10	5	0	1	19	4	23	27	5	2	61	4	15	15	4	1	39	0	10	11	1	0	22
<b>(Percentage)</b>	15.8	52.6	26.3	.0	5.3	100	6.6	37.7	44.3	8.2	3.3	100	10.3	38.5	38.5	10.3	2.6	100	.0	45.5	50	4.5	.0	100
You like to Spend more on yourself	4	1	9	3	2	19	4	20	29	5	3	61	4	12	15	6	2	39	0	5	16	1	0	22
<b>(Percentage)</b>	21.1	5.3	47.4	15.8	10.5	100	6.6	32.8	47.5	8.2	4.9	100	10.3	30.8	38.5	15.4	5.1	100	.0%	22.7	72.7	4.5	.0	100
You feel confident when you look good.	4	7	4	2	2	19	20	28	10	3	0	61	13	14	10	1	1	39	9	8	3	2	0	22
<b>(Percentage)</b>	21.1	36.8	21.1	10.5	10.5	100	32.8	45.9	16.4	4.9	.0	100	33.3	35.9	25.6	2.6	2.6	100	40.9	36.4	13.6	9.1	.0	100
You like complements for looking stylish.	5	2	8	3	1	19	9	24	27	1	0	61	7	13	14	4	1	39	9	5	8	0	0	22
<b>(Percentage)</b>	26.3	10.5	42.1	15.8	5.3	100	14.8	39.3	44.3	1.6	.0	100	17.9	33.3	35.9	10.3	2.6	100	40.9	22.7	36.4	.0	.0	100
You regularly watch ads to stay updated.	4	2	7	5	1	19	3	18	17	18	5	61	1	10	8	13	7	39	0	11	7	4	0	22
<b>(Percentage)</b>	21.1	10.5	36.8	26.3	5.3	100	4.9	29.5	27.9	29.5	8.2	100	2.6	25.6	20.5	33.3	17.9	100	.0	50	31.8	18.2	.0	100

Source: Compilation of data collected from respondents during survey

Table 4- Occupation-Wise Analysis of Impact of Media on Metrosexuality among Respondents

Impact of Metrosexuality among M ales	18-24 yrs						25-34 yrs.						35-49 yrs.						50 and above					
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGRE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGRE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGRE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGRE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
You are conscious about your appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements	180	246	96	16	7	545	33	30	23	0	1	87	8	15	4	4	10	41	4	1	2	0	0	7
<b>(Percentage)</b>	33.0	45.1	17.6	2.9	1.3	100	37.9	34.5	26.4	0	1.1	100	19.5	36.6	9.8	9.8	24.4	100	57.1	14.3	28.6	0	0	100
You frequently check your appearance in the mirror.	132	215	143	52	3	545	16	30	33	6	2	87	3	10	21	5	2	41	0	5	0	2	0	7
<b>(Percentage)</b>	24.2	39.4	26.2	9.5	0.6	100	18.4	34.5	37.9	6.9	2.3	100	7.3	24.4	51.2	12.2	4.9	100	.0	71.4	.0	28.6	.0	100
You like to Spend more on yourself.	118	158	196	60	13	545	13	30	37	6	1	87	5	4	23	5	4	41	1	0	5	1	0	7
<b>(Percentage)</b>	21.7	29.0	36.0	11	2.4	100	14.9	34.5	42.5	6.9	1.1	100	12.2	9.8	56.1	12.2	9.8	100	14.3	.0	71.4	14.3	.0	100
You feel confident when you look good.	202	208	91	36	8	545	39	36	11	0	1	87	5	22	9	4	1	41	0	2	2	3	0	7
<b>(Percentage)</b>	37.1	38.2	16.7	6.6	1.5	100	44.8	41.4	12.6	.0	1.1	100	12.2	53.7	22.0	9.8	2.4	100	.0	28.6	28.6	42.9	.0	100
You like compliments for looking stylish.	104	218	164	32	27	545	28	29	22	7	1	87	4	7	28	1	1	41	1	1	3	2	0	7
<b>(Percentage)</b>	19.1	40	30.1	5.9	5	100	32.2	33.3	25.3	8	1.1	100	9.8	17.1	68.3	2.4	2.4	100	14.3	14.3	42.9	28.6	.0	100
You regularly watch ads to stay updated.	81	169	173	89	33	545	11	31	17	22	6	87	1	6	8	18	8	41	1	1	1	3	1	7
<b>(Percentage)</b>	14.9	31	31.7	16.3	6.1	100	12.6	35.6	19.5	25.3	6.9	100	2.4	14.6	19.5	43.9	19.5	100	14.3	14.3	14.3	42.9	14.3	100

Source: Compilation of data collected from respondents during survey

Table 4- Occupation-Wise Analysis of Impact of Media on Metrosexuality among Respondents (cntd...)

Impact of Metrosexuality among Males	Students					
	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGRE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	TOTAL
You are conscious about your appearance due to attractive grooming products' advertisements	178	246	94	14	7	539
<b>(Percentage)</b>	33	45.6	17.4	2.6	1.3	100
You frequently check your appearance in the mirror.	140	202	139	55	3	539
<b>(Percentage)</b>	26	37.5	25.8	10.2	.6	100
You like to Spend more on yourself	125	154	192	57	11	539
<b>(Percentage)</b>	23.2	28.6	35.6	10.6	2.0	100
You feel confident when you look good.	200	211	86	35	7	539
<b>(Percentage)</b>	37.1	39.1	16.0	6.5	1.3	100
You like compliments for looking stylish.	107	211	160	34	27	539
<b>(Percentage)</b>	19.9	39.1	29.7	6.3	5.0	100
You regularly watch ads to stay updated.	86	166	160	92	35	539
<b>(Percentage)</b>	16.0	30.8	29.7	17.1	6.5	100

Source: Compilation of data collected from respondents during survey

*Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) on Age Factor*

Table 5 shows that significance level in the last column is greater than 0.05 in all the aspects of impact of media on metrosexuality in males except four aspects namely you are conscious about your appearance, you frequently check your appearance in the mirror, you feel confident when you look good and you regularly watch ads to stay updated. Thus, null hypothesis is rejected at 5 per cent level of significance and there is a significant difference in the opinions of various age groups. On the other hand, significance level is greater than 0.05 in the aspects namely spending more money on themselves and like compliments for looking stylish. Here,

null hypothesis is accepted at 5 per cent level of significance. Therefore, it is clear that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of respondents of various age groups.

*Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) on Occupation Factor*

Table 6 shows that significance level in the last column is greater than 0.05 in all the aspects of impact of media on metrosexuality in males except four aspects namely you are conscious about your appearance, you frequently check your appearance in the mirror, you like spending more money on yourself and you regularly watch ads to stay updated. Thus, null hypothesis is rejected at 5 per cent level of significance

and there is a significant difference in the opinions of various occupational groups. On the other hand, significance level is greater than 0.05 in the aspects namely you feel confident when you look good and you like complements for looking

stylish. Here, null hypothesis is accepted at 5 per cent level of significance. Therefore, it is clear that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of respondents of various occupational groups.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) on Age Factor

Impact of Media on Males	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
You are conscious about your appearance.	31.040	3	10.347	12.470	.000
You frequently check your appearance in the mirror.	15.702	3	5.234	5.914	.001
You like to spend more on yourself	12.236	3	4.079	4.035	.007
You feel confident when you look good.	21.802	3	7.267	8.205	.000
You like complements for looking stylish.	11.507	3	3.836	3.820	.010
You regularly watch ads to stay updated.	37.032	3	12.344	10.066	.000

Table 6: Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) on Occupation Factor

Impact of Media on Males	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
You are conscious about your appearance.	19.052	4	4.763	5.612	.000
You frequently check your appearance in the mirror.	15.103	4	3.776	4.256	.002
You like to spend more on yourself	15.728	4	3.932	3.904	.004
You feel confident when you look good.	6.366	4	1.592	1.749	.137
You like complements for looking stylish.	5.544	4	1.386	1.366	.244
You regularly watch ads to stay updated.	25.189	4	6.297	5.055	.001

## VII. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study investigated and clarified the impact of self-image and social expectation on the consumption of metrosexuals toward male grooming products. The findings of the research show that there is a significant and positive relationship between metrosexuals' concern toward self-image and their consumption of male grooming products at  $p < 0.05$  level. The present study deals with understanding the how male consumers currently conceptualize masculinity in order to build researchers' knowledge in the neglected area of male consumers. Naturally, ideals of masculinity could vary

depending upon the age, class, generational status, and cultural background of the men being investigated. The marketers should deliver the values that are important to the consumers in their product attributes to encourage the consumption of metrosexuals toward male grooming products. Therefore, a more comprehensive research approach should be undertaken to better understand the consumption behaviour of the metrosexuals toward the different categories of male grooming products that are available in the marketplace. In general, more research should be conducted to gain more insightful information that would be useful for the marketers during the formulation of marketing strategies.



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