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Men's Cosmetics Industry: The latest Business boom driven by Influencer Marketing in India

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Abstract: *Cosmetics and grooming were once seen as belonging solely to women, while men's needs and preferences were largely overlooked. Caring about appearance was even dismissed as unmasculine, leaving a gap in the market for men's skincare and cosmetics. Today, however, this perception is rapidly changing. Men are not only more open to cosmetics but are also actively engaging with new product ranges shaped by evolving lifestyles and digital influence. As a result of this phenomenon, cosmetic brands are now launching new lines exclusively for men, offering products such as foundation, concealers, and grooming items that are designed for the skin tone and needs of the modern-day male. This paper looks at how influencer marketing has changed the way men in India buy cosmetics. Over the years, men's grooming has evolved from a small industry in to a booming part of the beauty industry, and influencer marketing played a big part in that. In this study we explore how ideas about masculinity, spending habits, and online influence are interconnected in today's digital world. The goal is to understand how these factors shape the growth of men's grooming in India's fast-moving cultural and economic scene. Thus, the rising trend in the use of cosmetics by men goes well beyond the products themselves. It represents a paradigm shift in self-identity, concepts of masculinity, and the role played by influential voices on digital platforms in shaping the modern male's self-concept.*

Keywords: *Indian Men's Cosmetics, Influencer Marketing, Grooming, Self-care, Skincare.*

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Introduction:

It starts with a quiet pause in front of the mirror, where a man once stared at a makeup product with hesitation, unsure whether to use it and even glancing toward the door to check if anyone was watching. That moment of uncertainty captured the earlier state of men's grooming in India. Today, the scene is entirely different. A man now confidently recommends a face serum or concealer to a friend for them to use before leaving for work, sharing not only advice in person but also demonstrating these routines digitally for the world to see. At the centre of this transformation are menfluencers, who not only shape public perceptions through relatable content on the internet and social media but also guide men through grooming routines

while accelerating the rapid business boom in the men's cosmetics industry. Even in places like Patna and other cities in Bihar, the digital personalities remove hesitation and make grooming feel approachable for men.

The research examines how digital creators have emerged as important drivers of the recent growth of the Indian men's cosmetics industry. As such, it extends an exploration of their impact on consumer behavior and shifting attitudes toward grooming and acceptance of skincare and makeup practices across major urban centers to emerging markets like India.

In many ways, this transformation brings us full circle back to that quiet moment in front of the mirror, once filled with hesitancy and uncertainty. Today, the responses of Indian men showcase how far this moment has come. Influencer marketing took over doubt with confidence and transformed private curiosity into shared knowledge. Men now speak more confidently about their grooming practices guided by digital creators who have made the practice of self-care normal and celebrated in everyday life. These changes not only fuel the rapid expansion of the men's cosmetics industry but also reflect a broader cultural shift in the ways men think about themselves.

Objectives:

- Examine the growth and transformation of the men's cosmetics market in India.
- Analyse the role of influencer marketing in shaping Indian men's grooming and cosmetics consumer behaviour.
- Explore how social media influencers impact men's perceptions of masculinity and self-image.

Hypothesis:

In order to comprehend the impact of influencer marketing on the development of men's cosmetics in the Indian market, this study also presents the following hypotheses. These hypotheses were prepared based on the results produced by previous studies carried out on consumer behaviors on social networking sites, which help comprehend their purchasing decisions. Through the testing of these hypotheses, it can be determined whether or not influencer marketing has an impact on men's awareness, attitudes, or interest in the usage of cosmetic products.

Here are some key hypotheses:

$H0_1$: Influencer marketing does not significantly impact men's awareness, attitudes, or purchase intentions for cosmetic products in India.

$H1_1$: Influencer marketing significantly improves men's awareness, attitudes, and purchase intentions for cosmetic products in India.

$H0_2$: Socio-cultural norms, digital access, and influencer credibility do not significantly moderate or mediate the effect of influencer exposure on men's cosmetic adoption in India.

$H1_2$: Sociocultural norms, digital access, and influencer credibility significantly moderate or mediate the effect of influencer exposure on men's cosmetic adoption in India.

Literature Review:

The men's cosmetics market in India has witnessed widespread development over the past decade with the help of changing social behaviors, increased net incomes, and rising awareness about male grooming within both traditional and social media. The role of influencer marketing, especially on online platforms like Instagram and YouTube, has not remained unnoticed in the development of the industry as it has helped in socializing the concept of using cosmetics. The current literature review will compile previously conducted research on industry developments, influencer marketing, consumer attitudes and behaviors, and industry trends. The conclusion of the research will highlight areas that require further development with the help of research.

1. ***Male Consumer Preferences and Satisfaction towards Cosmetics: A Comprehensive Study*** (15 May 2025): An interesting insight into what truly motivates men to purchase and use cosmetic products has been given by the study conducted by Turaga, Lankalapalli, and Kurra in 2025. The study has revealed the most significant factor influencing not just preference but also satisfaction levels is the quality of the product itself, which indicates that the ability of the product to perform well is the primary aspect men look for in any commodity. The significant role of brand image has also not escaped their notice, which points to the

fact that men do not ignore the image associated with the brand. Finally, the study indicates the importance of brands catering to the male market working on enhancing their quality and projecting a good brand image through their products. However, the authors have also suggested conducting larger-scale research in the context of the study. It has been revealed by recent market research that about 40% of the total male audience between the ages of 18-34 is using cosmetics, which is a significant increase from the preceding years (Pmarketresearch, 2024).

2. *The Effect of Personal Values on Male Attitudes towards Grooming Products* (22 May 2025): In this context, Sharma et al. (2025) analyze the influence of individual values on the attitudes of men toward grooming products, thus offering a more concrete explanation of why men choose specific grooming products. Their findings reveal that self-image and self-consciousness play a crucial role in the positive views men hold toward those products, as this positive attitude boosts the intention to purchase them. The authors also conclude that consumers who highly valued humour, creativity, and social connection were more likely to purchase products featured in internet memes.

3. *The Role of Influencer Marketing in Digital Campaigns for Men's Skincare Health Products* (30 May 2025): According to Maulana, Purwanto and Fadli (2025), consumers are more closely related to those (influencers) who use relevant and authentic masculinity. The results found that expertise must be consistent with brand characteristics to generate trust and affect the intention to buy. However, popularity was statistically significant for trust and generated intention to buy. (Tunpornchai et al., 2021). Aurora Global Brands (2024) stated that beauty influencers and content creators share tips, tutorials, and product reviews, creating a community of skincare and makeup enthusiasts. Online presence helps normalize the use of cosmetics among men and provides a platform for brands to engage directly with consumers. Social media thus plays a crucial role in shaping trends and encouraging more men to explore grooming products.

4. *Study of the Attitude & Motivations of Indian Males towards Consumption of Cosmetic Products* (23 February 2012):: Maheshwari's study gives a clear glimpse of how Indian men have started embracing grooming products by stating that the men's segment has become one of the most lucrative and is growing at a much faster pace. Her findings indicate that what sets men's attitudes are personal motivations, especially self-image, aging, physical attractiveness & purchase intention. She also remarks that men across major cities think surprisingly alike, concluding that men living in the Indian metros & Tier-1 cities are in the same stage of development. Overall, her study embodies how changing lifestyles and growing confidence in appearance are influencing how urban men relate to cosmetic products.

Research Gaps and Future directions: Despite the growing body of literature on the men's grooming and cosmetics industry, several research gaps remain unaddressed. First, there are a limited number of studies focusing on rural areas, particularly in North-eastern states or other regions of India, where cultural attitudes and economic conditions may shape consumer behavior differently from urban centers. Second, most existing research tends to generalize findings across India without adequately exploring regional variations, thereby overlooking the unique market dynamics in less-represented states. Moreover, the current body of work is largely quantitative and lacks qualitative insights into Indian men's personal grooming practices, perceptions, and motivations. This creates a significant gap in understanding the underlying values, attitudes, and socio-cultural factors influencing grooming behaviour among Indian men.

Methodology:

The research adopts a mixed-methods design that combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine how social-media influencers shape awareness, attitudes and purchase intentions for men's cosmetics in India. It combines numerical analysis with in-depth understanding gained from the experiences of the participants.

1. Primary Data: The primary data for this research was collected through two main methods. First, a Google Form survey was conducted with **310 male respondents**, which provided quantitative insights into men's awareness, attitudes, and purchasing behaviour related to grooming products. Second, **interviews** were carried out with individuals from different viewpoints, including marketing experts, a micro-influencer,

influencers, retailers, and consumers. The interviews brought real stories to the study and gave a clearer picture of how influencer marketing shapes men's grooming decisions.

2. Secondary Data: We gathered secondary data from press articles, published studies, and survey charts focused on men's cosmetics and influencer marketing trends. These sources backed our findings and made the analysis stronger.

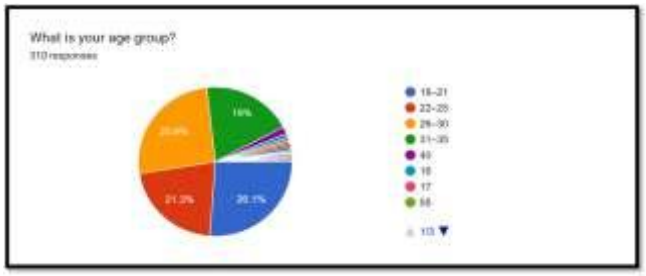
Data Collection:

The survey consisted of 12 questions. Covering everything from basic awareness and buying habits to personal opinions from experts and influencers.

To present the responses collected through the **Google Form** survey, the following charts visually represent how participants answered each question:

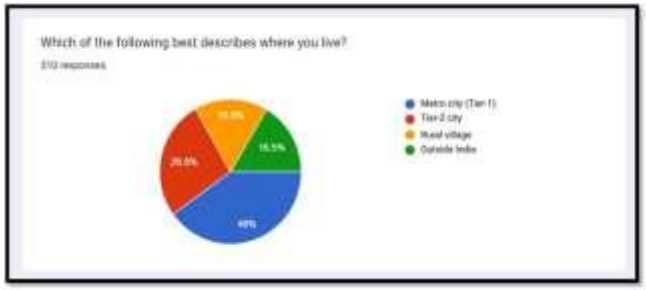
Primary Data

Question 1.



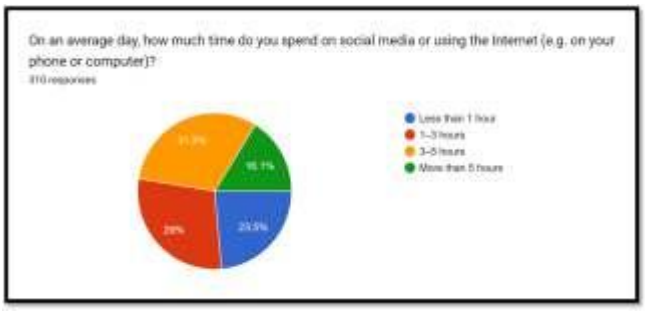
The majority of respondents fall within the 18–25 age range, indicating that the sample largely composed of young adults.

Question 2.



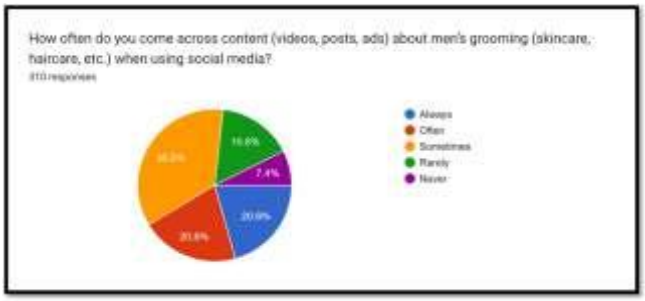
Metro city residents make up the highest proportion of respondents.

Question 3.



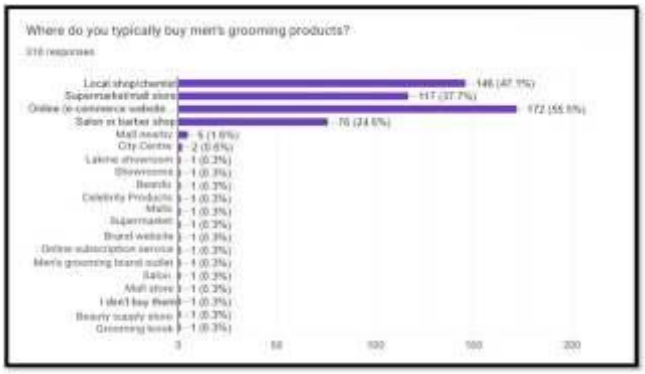
A majority of respondents use the internet for 3–5 hours a day.

Question 4.



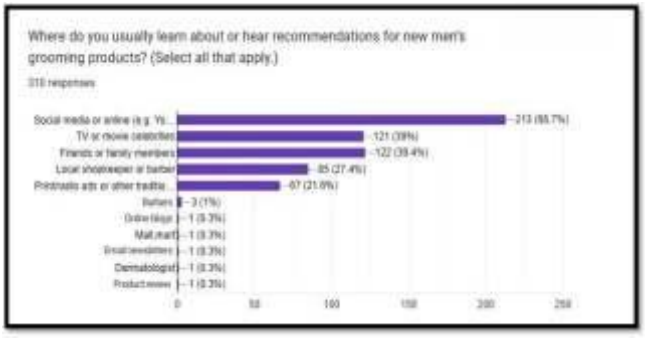
Most respondents frequently come across men's grooming content on social media.

Question 5.



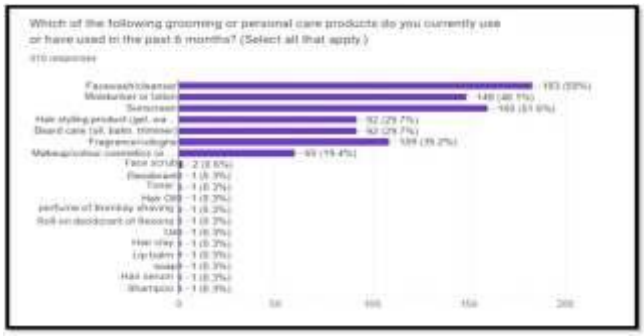
Grooming products are mostly bought from local shops and online stores.

Question 6.



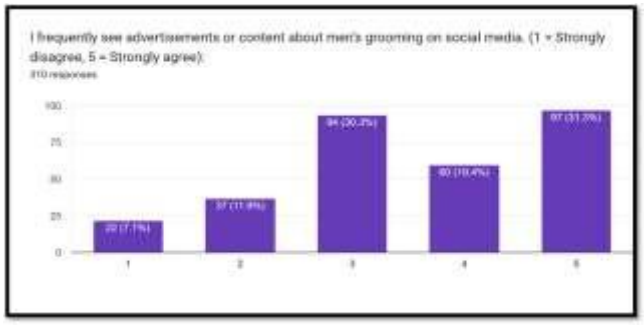
People mainly learn or hear about men's grooming products from social media.

Question 7.



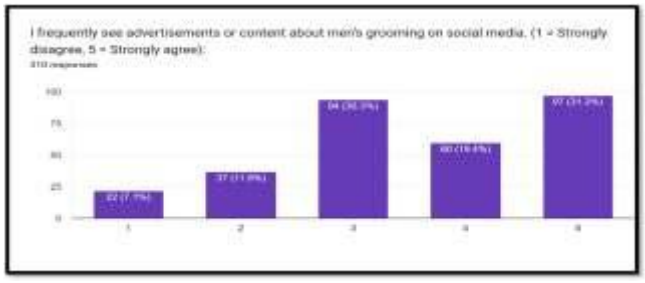
Most respondents regularly use basic grooming products like facewash, moisturiser, and sunscreen.

Question 8.



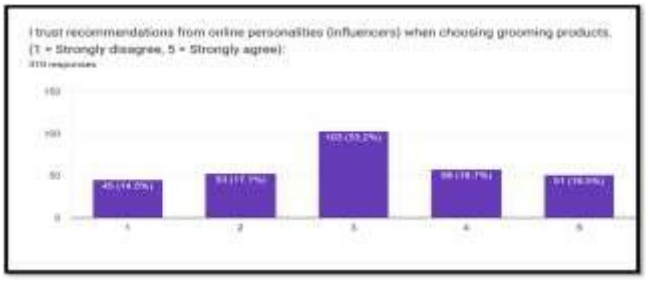
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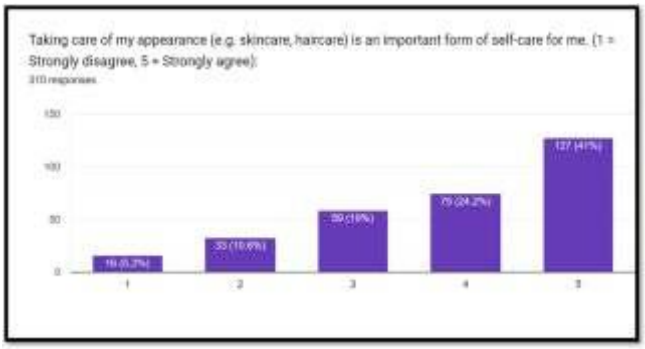
A majority strongly agree that they frequently see men's grooming advertisements on social media.

Question 9.



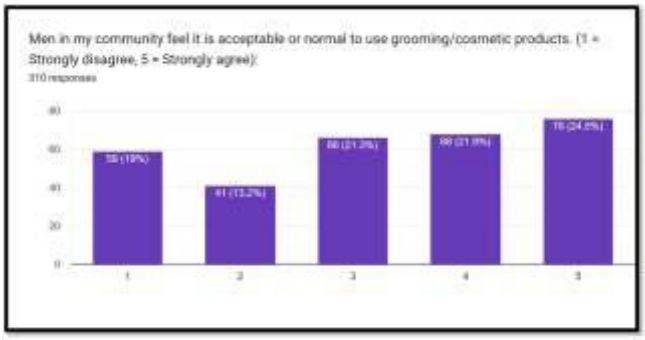
On a scale of 1 to 5, men don't entirely trust online personalities while choosing grooming products.

Question 10.



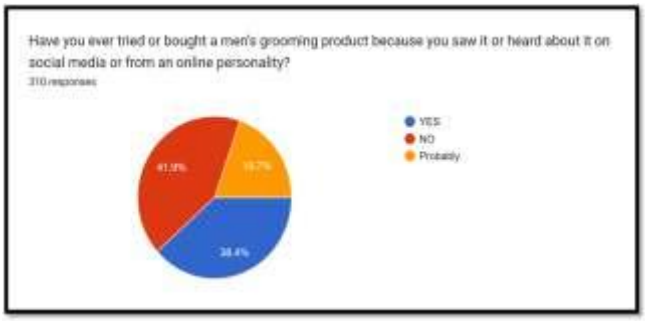
A majority agreed that maintaining their appearance is important in daily life.

Question 11.



Most people agreed that using grooming products is accepted for men in their community.

Question 12.



41.9% of participants said social media or online creators influenced their decision to buy grooming products.

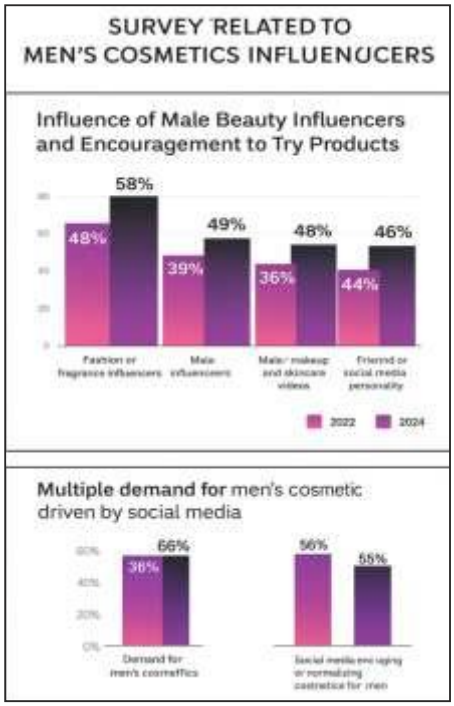
Secondary Data

To study the men's cosmetics market, secondary sources were used such as past surveys, press articles, websites, and YouTube videos that show current trends.

Surveys Related to Men's Cosmetics Industry:

By studying survey data, we can see how men choose cosmetic products and how much social media affects their decisions, helping us understand current industry trends.

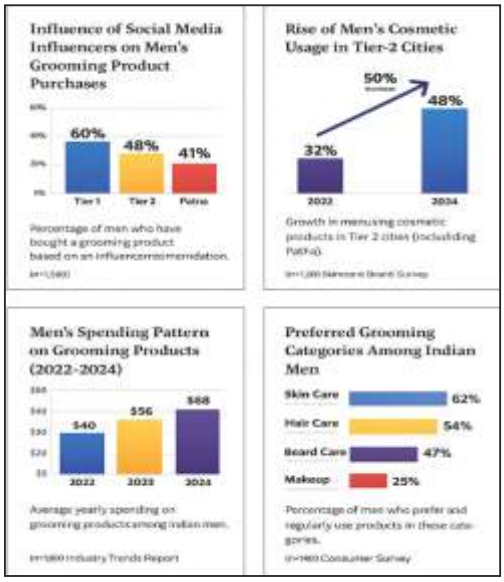
Survey 1.



Source: IMARC Group (2024)

According to the graph, the male grooming market in India is expanding fast, showing that men are investing more in personal care.

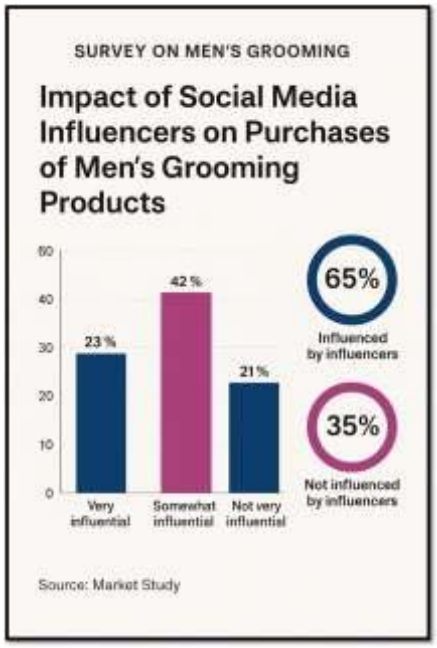
Survey 2.



Source: *MarkNtel Advisors. (2024)*

The chart shows that men are buying more cosmetic products, especially skincare and haircare items.

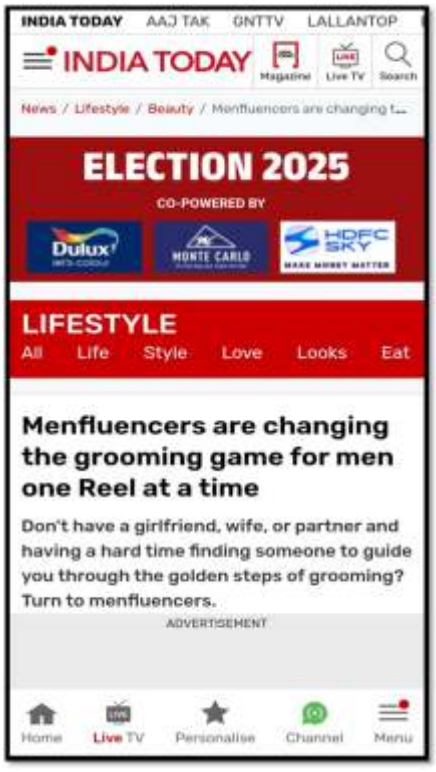
Survey 3.



This graph explains that the industry will grow strongly in the future because of lifestyle changes and higher awareness among men.

ARTICLES IN PRESS

Article 1: India Today



Author: Bhowal, T. (2024)

The article explains how online creators are helping make grooming feel normal for everyday Indian men.

Article 2. The Business of Fashion



Author: Kamath, A. (2025)

The article suggests that Indian men are confidently adopting skincare, changing old views about masculinity.

Article 3: Lefty.io (2024)



The article shows how influencers are encouraging men to break old traditions and use grooming products confidently.

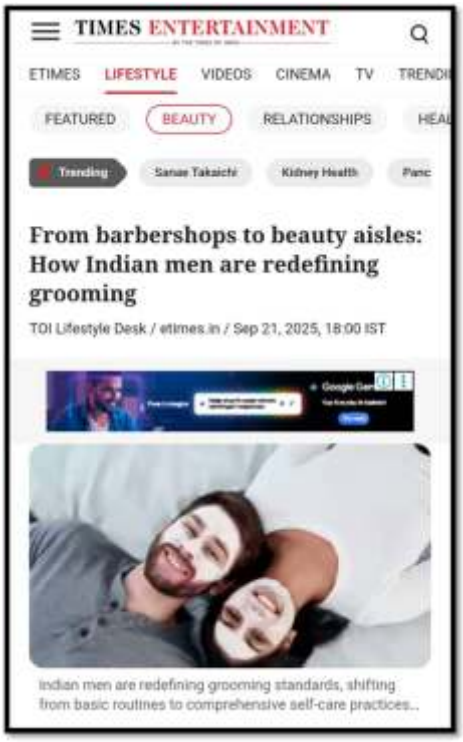
Article 4: Glossy Magazine



Author: Zwieglinska, Z. (2025)

The article suggests that men now see skincare as basic self-care instead of a luxury item.

Article 5: Times Entertainment by The Times of India



Author: Chowdhary, M. B. (2025)

The article reveals how Indian men are treated, moving from basic grooming to fuller self-care routines as beauty becomes more inclusive.

Visual Content from Digital Media Platforms

(YouTube Thumbnails)

YouTube thumbnails are used as secondary data for exploring how male cosmetic products are viewed, visually framed and promoted by creators.

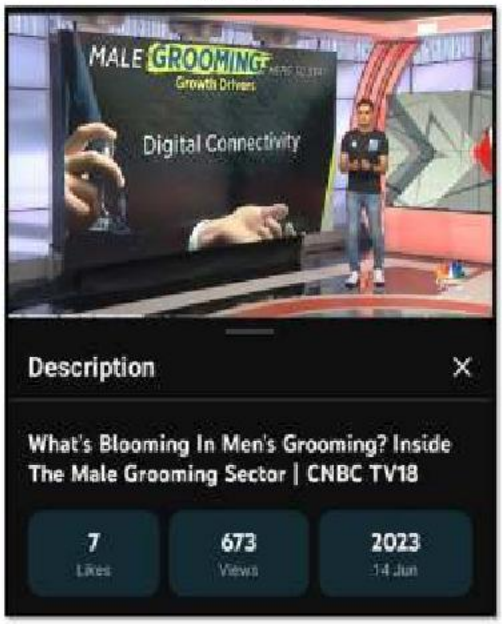
Thumbnail 1:



Source: YouTube (*Raj Shamani.* 2023)

This video is a reminder that modern men are no longer just buying products, they are redefining confidence and self-care.

Thumbnail 2:



Source: *CNBC-TV18. (2023)*

The booming market for men's grooming is an example of how masculinity is changing to look good and feeling good.

Analysis of Data:

Sample Size: 310 respondents

The data indicates that many men in India, especially the younger and more technologically savvy ones, are changing their views on grooming and cosmetics. They now view grooming as an integral part of presenting themselves confidently instead of something to feel shy about.

The pie charts and linear scales show that social media and male digital creators, often called menfluencers, play a major role in spreading awareness about grooming. Their tutorials, reviews and relatable content strongly influence how men choose products.

People who follow influencers' content are more open to trying new grooming products. They are also more likely to buy things online, which suggests that influencer marketing is helping the men's cosmetics market grow in India.

At the same time, factors like affordability, cultural expectations and trustworthiness of an influencer still affect how quickly people adopt these products. Supportive peer groups and creators who are seen as genuine make it easier for men to accept and explore grooming choices.

Overall, the data suggests that influencer marketing has a strong impact on awareness, attitudes and buying decisions.

Also, digital access, social context and the authenticity of influencers also play an important role in shaping consumer behaviour.

Conclusion:

The findings of the present study suggest that this influencer marketing is highly effective in the men's cosmetics industry in India. More men are willing to experiment with grooming products, and both product quality and the credibility of social media personality influence their choices. Younger metropolitan males are more involved, although the study notes the under-representation of males, who use social media less

frequently. Respondents indicated areas for further research, such as short supply of products, delayed delivery, and fraud related issues on online platforms. Overall, the study finds that digital influence and shifting attitudes toward male grooming are allowing the industry to grow and providing brands with ways to reach different customer segments.

Limitations:

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. Acknowledging these limitations helps the reader understand the study more realistically and shows where future research can improve. The limitations are as follows:

1. **Limited sample size:** India is a highly diverse country with major differences in culture, lifestyle, income, and digital access. A sample size of 310 respondents is too small to represent such a large and varied population. This restricts the ability to generalize the findings to all Indian men.

2. Skewed sample towards young and urban respondents: A large portion of the sample consists of young, urban men, especially from Patna. This limits the diversity of perspectives, as older men and those from rural or semi-urban areas may have different grooming habits, cultural expectations, and levels of digital exposure that are not fully captured in this study.

3. No long-term or observational data: The study is based only on self-reported responses collected at one point in time. Without observing real grooming behaviours or tracking them over a longer period, it becomes harder to understand actual behaviour patterns or how lasting the impact of influencer marketing truly is.

4. Overlooked risk of online scams: The study does not address the growing issue of online scams carried out through creators and influencers. Many social media users face misleading promotions, fake product endorsements, or unauthentic recommendations that can harm trust and influence purchasing decisions. Since this concern was not explored, the research may not fully capture the risks men face while engaging with influencer-driven content.

Recommendations:

Future studies should include participants of various age groups, those from rural areas, as well as those with varying socio-economic backgrounds. This will provide better insights into the extent to which attitudes towards men's grooming and social media influence vary across different regions. Including industry professionals, dermatologists, as well as women in this conversation can also make this conversation richer as they can provide valuable insights on grooming practices and factors that influence buying decisions among men.

The report also shows that, while influencer marketing can raise awareness, many consumers still need reliable and accurate information in order to try grooming products. Brands can address this by having honest content, working together with local influencers and grooming experts, by becoming available in more areas, like Bihar, by reducing delays in delivery, and by providing more accessible price points.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the men's grooming industry can be further developed throutgh digital communications in line with culture, awareness campaigns, and regular interaction with influencers. These are the key measures required to build trust, facilitate access, and include more voices in promoting informed mens' grooming decisions.

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