



PUBLIC DISPLAY OF PERFECTION IN METROSEXUAL MEN: AN APPROACH TO REDEFINING MASCULINITY

Jaiman Preet Kaur¹ & Dr. Jagmeet Bawa²

¹Research Scholar, Department of IRC-UHVE, IKG-Punjab Technical University, Kapurthala, Punjab

²Joint-Director, Department of IRC-UHVE, IKG-Punjab Technical University, Kapurthala, Punjab

Abstract

Today, young males have shown huge interests in fashion and grooming products. They spend ample amount of money on personal care, hygiene and appearance in recent years. This paper intends to know the metrosexual customer's traits and to explore their consumption patterns. It identifies the term metrosexual using the masculinity and appearance-related variables, i.e. self monitoring, status as well as fashion consciousness, cloth concern and body self-relation. A quantitative study was performed using 680 men from Punjab. Frequency distribution and One-Way ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses with the help of SPSS. The results indicate that metrosexual men are very much conscious about their public image. They relate shopping and showoff with individualism. Desirable image is expressed through clothing, brand selection and personal attachments.

Keywords: *Metrosexual, Masculine, Desire, Fashion, Brand, Loyalty.*

Introduction

There are many definitions of the term 'metrosexual' depending on different perceptions. The meanings can not be found in standard dictionaries such as the Oxford or Cambridge Dictionary, but in the cyber spaces, it can be collected from some online dictionaries and encyclopedias web sites. A metrosexual can be defined as: 'An urban male with a strong aesthetic sense who spends a great deal of time and money on his appearance and lifestyle'.-(<http://www.wordspy.com/words/metrosexual.asp>). The Term "metrosexual" refers to the sense of style or fashion of the individual and not to his sexual orientation' - (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metrosexual>).

The renowned English author and journalist Mark Simpson is credited for coining the term 'metrosexual' in a 1994 essay in the UK's *Independent* newspaper in which he predicted, with terrifying accuracy, that the future belonged to the male desire to be desired. According to him- "Contrary to what you have been told, metrosexuality is not about flip-flops and facials, 'man-bags' or 'manscara' Or about men becoming 'girlie' or 'gay'. It's about men becoming everything to themselves. In much the way that women have been for some time. In 2014, twenty years after giving birth to the metrosexual, Simpson introduced the world to 'spornosexuals' – hardcore, sexed-up, body-centered, second generation metrosexuals: 'Young men who fashion their own bodies into the ultimate accessory and totally hot commodity down at the factory of the 21st century – the gym'. Studies depict that physical appearance is the way to show individuality, independence, value and confidence in this modern life. Each culture has determined how gender should be. For example, we have the tendency to assimilate women with beauty, body, softness representing femininity and men with tough, masculine and drinking habits as masculine (Lee, 2006). Men acted like what the society required their sexual identity. The society image of men is macho, heavy body, tough, drinking beer or vodka, strong, powerful, and aggressive; enjoy sports, rebellion, and adventurer. The lifestyle is changing and so does the male style and taste of life. Consumerism is changing our society and our values. Advertisements are the main reason for such a change. The advertisement targeted the 'male market'. The idea of masculinity was influenced by advertisement such as Savage and OldSpice as the aftershave lotions whose famous icons were Jackie Shroff and Milind Soman respectively. Another ad can be recalled of Cinthol soap in which the masculine icon Vinod Khanna is riding a horse with a cowboy hat which represent ragged and harsh man. Therefore, today's era of Indian consumerism has been changed, specifically with regards to "Male Grooming", men too are trying new grooming/beauty products. Now, the obstacles are disappearing and paradigms are transforming. Beauty consciousness and public display of perfection is no longer a female-only arena. Urban as well as rural metrosexuals are disinterring the utmost need for beauty and personal care. Therefore, they are taking care of their skin, body, hair, hygiene just like their female counterparts. They have a strong urge to exhibit youthfulness, healthiness and thinness. The endeavour of this paper is to determine that how the consumerism has affected the men's show-off / public display of perfection urges and the rationales behind the same.

1. Review of Literature

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. Gurbaxani and Tiwari (2012) stated that studies on Indian men are scarce and those that exist have been done through syndicated surveys and thus fail to capture the richness of detail in consumer profiling that is offered by the archetype method. The focus is on understanding the modern Indian Man in terms of his attitude and behaviour towards various aspects. Kraft and Weber (2012) articulated that there are a variety of factors that continue to influence the changing marketplace in regards to gender differences. Some of these factors include education, income, generational differences, and family dynamics as they evolve and redefine traditional gender roles and spending patterns. Ochkovskaya (2013) investigated the peculiarities of luxury brands consumption among Russian men. The author analysed the trends in consumption, determines the specific luxury brands in fashion industry and shows the portrait of average luxury brands for male consumer in Moscow. Junaid et al. (2014) stated that today, more of the young males were becoming aware of the cosmetic products. The result also depicted that the brand, quality, price and availability are certain factors that influence consumer behaviour. Sheikh and Deshmukh (2014) discussed that changing income patterns, accelerating disposable income in urban area, increasing discretionary spending, adoption of developed world culture and awareness about the need to "look good & feel better" are the main rationales behind the consumerism with respect to Indian men for skin care products. Pan and Jamnia (2015) opined that metropolitan young males have shown great interests on fashion, cosmetic products, personal care and spent good money on appearance in recent years. The metro city based people could be regarded as more authentic consumption driven than superficially-valued.

2. Objectives and Hypothesis of the Study

2.1 Objectives of the Study

The present study includes analyzing the public display of perfection and redefined masculinity among metrosexual men. For this purpose, the specific objectives of the study are:

1. To evaluate the perception of men in terms of showoff and masculinity.
2. To study the influencing factors behind consumption of grooming products by males.

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

H₀: There is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents of various age and educational groups.

H₁: There is a significant difference in the opinions of respondents of various age and educational groups.

2.2 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 are categorized into education levels of high school to postgraduate level and above.

2.3 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 educational groups such as high school (26 respondents), Under-graduates (423 respondents), Graduates (124 respondents) and Post-graduates and above (107 respondents). Total five variables are selected for analysis and are named as perception of 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 and One way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) is used.

Table 1: Sample distribution on Age			Table 2: Sample Distribution on Education		
AGE (In Years)	Frequency	Percentage	Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
18-24	545	80.2	High School	26	3.8
25-34	87	12.8	Under-graduate	423	62.2
35-49	41	6.0	Graduate	124	18.2
50 and above	7	1.0	Post-Grad. and above	107	15.8
Total	680	100.0	Total	680	100.0

Chart 1: Sample Distribution on Age

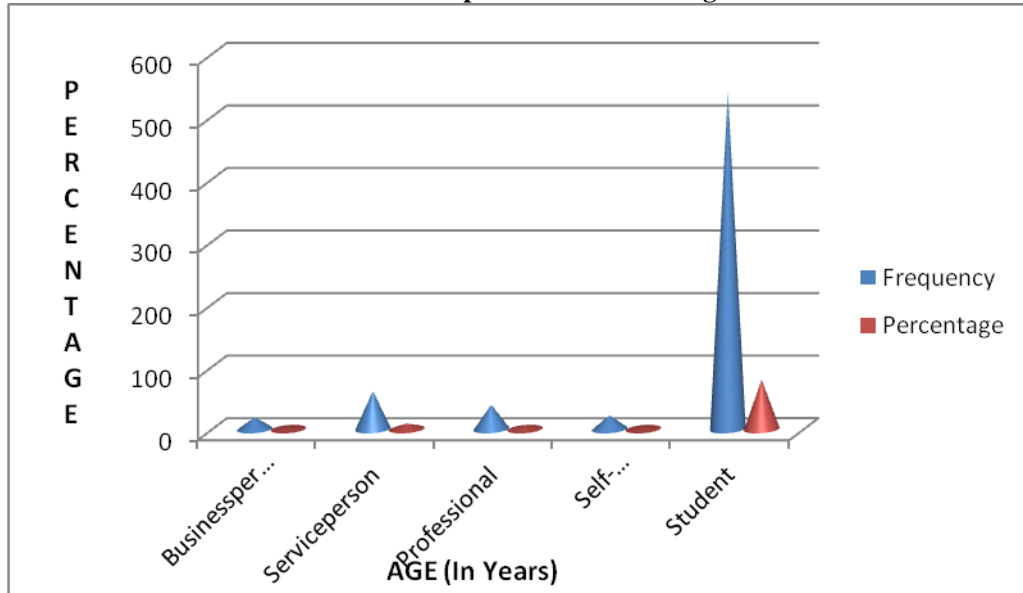
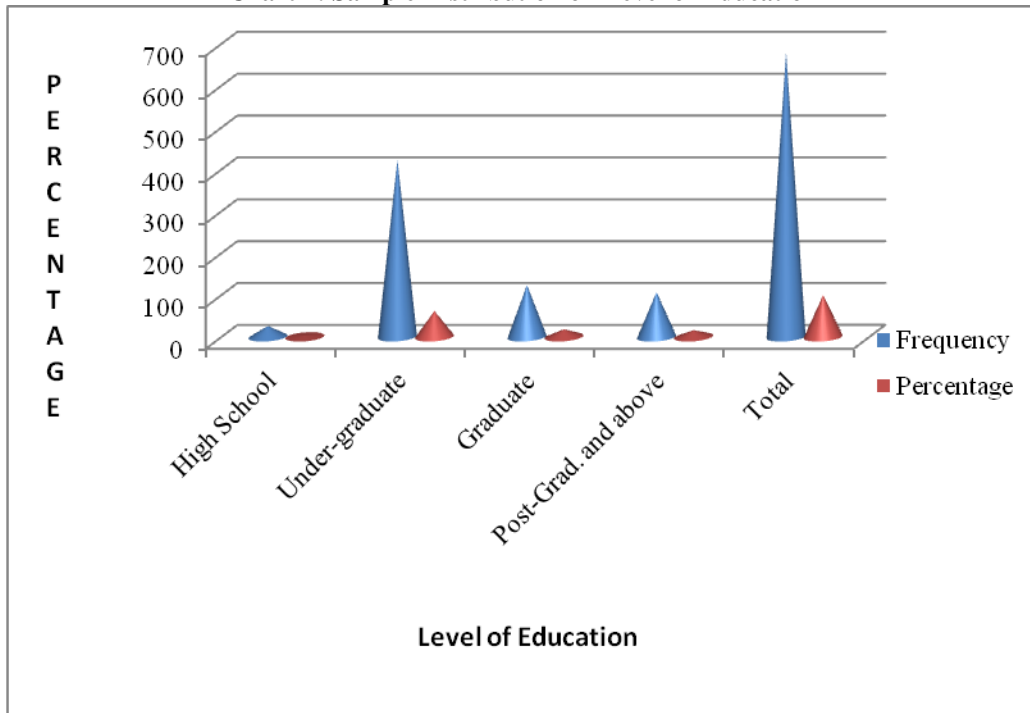


Chart 2: Sample Distribution on Level of Education



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

Table 3 shows that significance level in the last column is greater than 0.05 in all the aspects of perception of metrosexuality in males except one aspect namely you feel confident when in gyms. 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 you appreciate complements for being fashionable and groomed, you compare your appearance with celebrities, you are very much brand sensitive for grooming products and you enjoy apparel and cosmetics shopping. 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.

Table 3: Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) on Age Factor

Perception of Metrosexuality in Males	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
You appreciate complements for being fashionable and groomed.	1.265	3	.422	.414	.743
You compare your appearance with celebrities.	22.277	3	7.426	5.565	.001
You are very much brand sensitive for grooming products.	25.552	3	8.517	6.393	.000
You feel confident when in gyms.	13.935	3	4.645	4.179	.006
You enjoy apparel and cosmetics shopping.	4.253	3	1.418	1.203	.308

Source: Field Survey

Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) on Education Factor

Table 4 shows that significance level in the last column is greater than 0.05 in all the aspects of perception of metrosexuality in males except the aspects namely you appreciate complements for being fashionable and groomed, you feel confident when in gyms and you enjoy apparel and cosmetics shopping. Thus, null hypothesis is rejected at 5 per cent level of significance and there is a significant difference in the opinions of various educational groups. On the other hand, significance level is greater than 0.05 in the aspects namely you compare your appearance with celebrities and you are very much brand sensitive for grooming products. 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 educational groups.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) on Education Factor

Perception of Metrosexuality in Males	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
You appreciate complements for being fashionable and groomed.	11.507	3	3.836	3.820	.010
You compare your appearance with celebrities.	17.199	3	5.733	4.272	.005
You are very much brand sensitive for grooming products.	15.302	3	5.101	3.785	.010
You feel confident when in gyms.	18.532	3	6.177	5.591	.001
You enjoy apparel and cosmetics shopping.	1.221	3	.407	.344	.793

Source: Field Survey

3. Conclusion and Suggestions

In responding to the objectives of the study, this paper describes the metrosexual characteristics, their leisure symbolic consumption and the reasons behind the urge to show off as perfect. The results depicted that metrosexual men are mostly concerned about choosing products if those are stylish/fashionable and they are also concerned about the brand and quality. Also, metrosexual men are favourable brand switchers when it comes to latest fashion. It can be concluded from the study that metrosexual men are also conscious about their public image. Desirable image is expressed through clothing, brand selection and personal attachments. They relate shopping and showoff with individualism. Matching different garment, attaching details of grooming and other small things are important for public display of perfection. They are concerned about what kind of first impression they should make and choose product after that. Metrosexual men put many efforts in their appearance and value how they look, because this will affect their mood. This is how metrosexuality is redefined in actual. Males have their own unique set of choices that make them who they are as customers. Therefore, like any relationship, advertisers and marketers must put in the effort if they wish to get an effort from them.

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