



Metrosexual: Emerging and Lucrative Segment for Marketers

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ABSTRACT

Metrosexual is a phenomenon of 21st century, which has challenged the traditional masculinity. Metrosexual is an affluent urban male, who spends a lot of their income on personal grooming. They are concerned about their appearance and are aware of all latest trends and fashion. The footprints of this sub-culture are evident around the globe. The growing sales of male grooming products are the indicators that how the traditional notion of men's identity is changing. This is a time where companies are spending money to cater the needs of the growing demand of male. This paper is a little endeavor to discuss the changing values of the society and the growing phenomena of metrosexual. The paper will discuss roots of masculinity and femininity, its development and the blurring of gender roles. Based on literature and published reports paper will discuss the various statistics related to sales and the increase of male grooming consumption around the globe. At the end paper will discuss that how metrosexual is a lucrative segment as the market of male grooming products is showing positive trend and as man has more disposable income.

Keywords: Metrosexual, Gender, Male Grooming, Cosmetics

JEL Classifications: M16, M30, M31, M37

1. INTRODUCTION

The man in the metropolitan society is transforming to metrosexual. Metrosexual is used to describe the narcissistic and aesthetic oriented who love shopping and like to spend money and time on their appearance (Pan and Jamnia, 2015). Metrosexual men lives in big cities and consider themselves as a virile people who challenge the traditional view of masculinity by demonstrating the new and trendy lifestyle. They spend a lot of money on their appearance in order to enrich their self-image (Souiden and Diagne, 2009). Simpson has portrayed metrosexual as a young and handsome man, who lives or works in a metropolis as best shops are located near (Oliveira and Leão, 2012). Metrosexual is any affluent man, living in a society, who lives a consumer life and is obsessed with spending money on grooming (Parobková, 2009).

The phenomena of metrosexual has become very evident in urban area and now the foot prints can also be seen in the rural areas (Roedel and Lawson, 2006). Currently metrosexual has become the part of many newspaper, magazines and journals. In fact,

the Google search yields more than two million results. Various books are being dedicated for this phenomenon like "Reluctant Metrosexual and Metrosexual Guide to Style." Many TV shows and movies are depicting metrosexuals (Roedel and Lawson, 2006).

Several researchers concluded that this new phenomena has impacted the purchase and consumption pattern of consumers (Souiden and Diagne, 2009). The markets for male is unsaturated and hence lucrative (Bakewell and Mitchell, 2004) and promising segment (Parobková, 2009). From managerial perspective, fashion, apparel and grooming were conventionally associated with women but now men are equally important segment of these markets (Duffy, 2012). Beauty industry for women is always growing but the men's market have recently got the bloom (Skålén, 2010). Since the inception of cosmetics the market is headed by females and it is often associate with women but there is an increasing demand of cosmetic products for men as well (Souiden and Diagne, 2009). As the market is showing an upward trend in the usage of male grooming

products manufactures have also stated to focus on this emerging segments (Kacen, 2000). Companies are promoting the metrosexual as they know that this segment is a billion dollar and it is vital for the growth of economy (Roedel and Lawson, 2006). Media has started to use this terminology and for that metrosexual has become an icon of young rich and successful man (Pan and Jamnia, 2015).

Instead of promising and growing profits of this emerging segment very few researchers have worked on the male attitude towards the consumption of grooming products (Souiden and Diagne, 2009). It is very evident that male are responding to these shifts through their consumption patterns but little attention has been paid to this phenomena (McNeill and Douglas, 2011). Male segment is underrepresented and ignored by many researchers (Bakewell and Mitchell, 2004). This paper is a little endeavor to shed light from the roots to the blurring role of gender and to discuss the worldwide rising phenomena of male using cosmetic and grooming products and to conclude it on a point that metrosexual is a lucrative segment for marketers.

2. FROM THE ROOTS TO THE BLURRING OF GENDER ROLES

2.1. The Roots of Femininity and Masculinity

Gender role affects every area of life (Abrams, 2012). Gender is a multi-dimensional construct that indicates different roles, responsibilities and limitations imposed on their personality. Gender built on biological sex, categorize into men and women. Gender is context specific and is subject to change. Femininity and masculinity are the social constructs; it has nothing to do with biological sex. Sex is a biological category, while gender is the social construct of what male and female characteristics are prevailing in a specific society (Poels et al., 2005). Differentiation in the sex role is a universal phenomenon among human societies. Male and female have assigned different roles, tasks and different privileges. Men and women are expected to have different temperaments and abilities that is defined by the society (Spence and Helmreich, 2014). Before 1970, behaviorist scientist sees masculinity and femininity as the two opposite end of one-dimensional gender scale (Figure 1). They categorize people as masculine or feminine. Based on the biological sex they need to fit in one category. In nutshell, in order to be psychologically fit men needs to have more masculine characteristics and women needs to have more feminine characteristics (Bem, 1974). Some of the characteristics that defines masculinity includes aggressive, ambitious, analytical, assertive, athlete, dominant, self-sufficient, independent, risk taker and competent. Some of the feminist characteristics include affectionate, cheerful, loyal, tender, warm, understanding, gentle and yielding (Bem, 1974).

The psychology and society has created a mental map in which they see masculinity and femininity as the two opposite ends of one dimension and a person can be either masculine or feminine (Bem, 1974). The media, religion, norms, values and education and other social systems presents in a society construct gender

(Johnson and Repta, 2012). Society norms decide what is to be like male and female. The values of the society determine the role of men and women. Gender roles are the expectations set by the society from individual. People learn the behavior and confine their behaviors according to ascribed behaviors associated with gender identity (Johnson and Repta, 2012). It is very evident that gender is not an innate but social construct based on norms, values and culture (Stets and Burke, 2000). Gender roles are ascribing by the society. Society put pressure on people to behave in a way ascribed to that gender (Abrams, 2012). In social sciences, dominant theory says that women are expect to fulfill their communal role that is nurturing and yielding while men need to fulfill their argentic role that is assertive and instrumental. Because society expects different thing from them they act differently (Poels et al., 2005).

2.2. The Development of Masculinity and Femininity

The term identity is derived from the Latin noun "Identitas" which means same or similar. The term is used to define the image person develops about themselves is similar to others in some way (Steensma et al., 2013). The fundamental identity is the identity based on gender. It depends upon an individual that to which extent they relate them to one gender. The sense of being male or female is determined actions and behaviors (Steensma et al., 2013).

Socialization is a constant process through which human beings acquires and become accustomed and this ultimately develops their personality, which is manifest in their attitude (Figure 2). Children learn the behavior from observation and social interaction (Leaper and Friedman, 2007). Mead (2009) has developed a theory in order to explain that how individual form their self-image through social interaction. Mead argument is based on the point that self is not present at the time of birth and all human develop it through their interaction with the world around them and then get to know about their self.

Figure 1: Gender identity

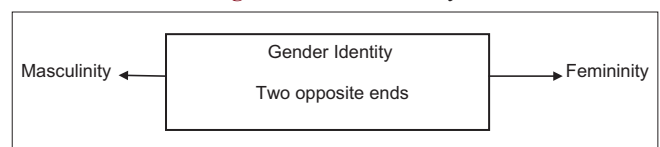
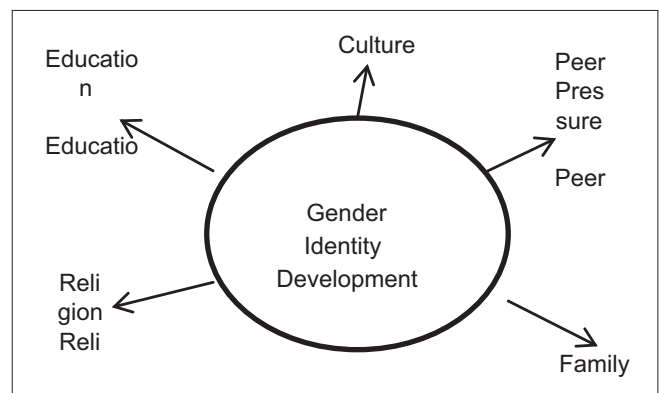


Figure 2: Gender identity development



Due to the socialization, men adopt the masculine behavior and female adopts the feminine behavior as imposed by the society (Stets and Burke, 2000). Men learn masculinity through socialization. Men are actors who are playing the scripted role of what men is to be (Tuncay, 2006). From the sociological perspective, the identity based on gender includes all the elements that are imposed by society in order to get the gender identification (Stets and Burke, 2000). Gender roles are inescapable (Abrams, 2012). The child since the time of birth learns to different roles attributed to different gender. Because of the continuous interaction of child with parents, peers and society, they learn to define themselves in term of feminist or masculine (Stets and Burke, 2000). Boys brought up independent and active while the brought up for girls is to be passive and independent (Diniejkko-Wąs, 2014).

From the time of birth, child is surrounded with the norms and values that communicates them the appropriate behavior for each gender (Miller et al., 2009). Study revealed that almost all children except the one who are in kindergarten associate jewelry, makeup, and long hairs to women. While the traits like sports and fighting is associated with boys (Miller et al., 2009). Play activities are crucial part of socialization as children get a chance to practice behavior. Social cognitive and socio-cultural theory argues that children day-to-day activities play a vital source of learning a culture (Leaper and Friedman, 2007). During the preschool years, children connect themselves to gender specific attitudes and interests like girls play with dolls and fascinate princess while boys play with cars and trucks and idealize super heroes (Halim et al., 2011). The stereotype toys emerged in the life of children at age one to two. Girls prefer dolls, sewing and clothing sets while girls prefer car and trucks. The repeated gender related activities in the childhood plays an important role in the development of gender, different representation, preferences, values and skills (Leaper and Friedman, 2007).

In the later stage, that is middle childhood. Children develop more gender related specific activities and they understand it in terms of interpersonal relationship, intergroup evaluation and their position and reputation in society (Halim et al., 2011). Masculinity stereotype activities relates to self-assertive behaviors like competition while feminine stereotype play allows the practice of assertive behavior like collaboration and nurturance (Leaper and Friedman, 2007).

2.3. Blurring Roles of Gender

In many societies, it is expected from men to play dominant role over their partner (Spence and Helmreich, 2014). There were a very few women who enter the professional world. There were a shortage of nurses, social worker and teachers in almost all parts of America (Friedan, 2010). Scientist have analyzed it that the greatest resource that is the women mind is unused in many areas as women only wanted to go into the professions that are associated with feminist (Friedan, 2010). Whether it is a preliterate or postindustrial time women basic role, responsibility is to take care for their children, and men primary responsibility is to support financially (Spence and Helmreich, 2014).

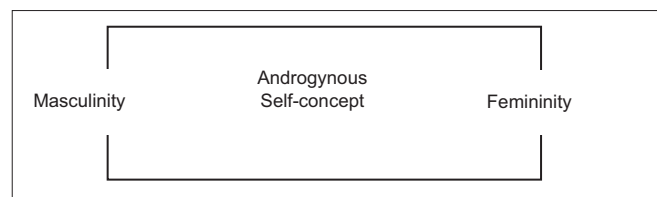
With the passage of time, strange sense of dissatisfaction among women has aroused. Every column, book article on women defines women role as a wife and mother. They heard in their everyday life that their desire is limited in their own femininity. Experts give them advice that how they can become a good wife by keeping their husband happy and how they can become good mothers by properly grooming and looking after their children (Friedan, 2010). After 15 years of World War II, the concept of suburban housewife was in dreams only as now women has to step out of the home to support her family (Friedan, 2010). Lack of extended family system and the high divorce rates in society has put a pressure on females to join the professional forum for their survival (Spence and Helmreich, 2014).

At the same time, industrial and technological revolution has changed the way people do the work and now the technological knowledge is required for job than the physical. In bureaucracies, successful job candidates are not with the strong muscle and aggressive behavior but the one who has an excellent interpersonal skills that promotes group and team corporation which is traditionally regarded as feminine. Thus, today men require expressive feminine characteristics and instrumental masculine traits as recipe of success (Spence and Helmreich, 2014).

Gender identity is subject to change over time as it is an amorphous concept (Johnson and Repta, 2012). For more than 150 years women advocates are figuring for emancipation and gender equality (Poels et al., 2005). Feminist movement has engaged women in political and educational fields and for which women has started to spend, more time outside the house (Abrams, 2012). This has not affected women on a political and educational arena but it has changed the role of women in family. The traditional boundaries that one set that women needs to stay at home gets and men as a provider got blurred (Poels et al., 2005). Women have joined the men in many arenas of professional world, which has blurred the distinction between the two (Abrams, 2012). The traditional role of men as a provider is diminishing and for this, men have much insecurity in relation to gender (Bryson and Bunker, 2015). The research has coined the term androgynous (Figure 3), which means that individual can show a range of behaviors on both ends depending upon the situation they are going through. They can be instrument and expressive, both assertive and yielding.

Normally masculine and feminine self-concept inhibits the behaviors that are stereotype with it. The androgynous self-concept allows individual to express themselves freely on both ends (Bem, 1974).

Figure 3: Androgynous self-concept



3. GROOMING PRODUCTS TREND AND METROSEXUAL AS A LUCRATIVE SEGMENT FOR MARKETERS

3.1. Male Grooming Products Worldwide

In 1990, the cosmetic industry growth was exponentially and it has affected the traditional masculinity. The consumption of cosmetic is not a new phenomenon. Its origin found in the fourth B.C when people used household products for the reservation of beauty like turmeric powder. The word cosmetic is the modern name given to the ways previously used to enhance beauty (Sankaranarayanan and Mekoth, 2014).

Men in the modern world are fascinating by their own appearance and looks. They are investing their time and money through changing lifestyle and diets. They are satisfying their urge to look good by the purchase of consumer goods like cosmetics, clothes and accessories (Sankaranarayanan and Mekoth, 2014). There is a dramatic shift in the male grooming market. Previously shampoo, shaving cream and deodorant were the only things available for the men but now the entire range of products are available which includes moisturizer, anti-aging creams and even the mud masks (Walker, 2014). Dr. Andrew Khoo the consultant plastic surgeon at Singapore shared his experience and reported that men are spending a lot of money on cosmetics surgeries and according to her view, it is because men are now more aware of the fact that appearance and presentation plays a very important role. Another Dr. Jan Ying Clieng consultant plastic surgeon shared his view that in order to reverse their tired look men as lawyers go for the removal of eye bags, businessperson goes for the liposuction. In nutshell, due to the busy schedule and demanding life men prefer treatment that are quick and shows instant results (Jitab, 2011).

According to the Datamonitor consumers, out of 52% of global male who consider their appearance very important 27% almost touch up their looks throughout the day (Matthews, 2015). According to the research, one third of the men spend almost 30 min in a day on grooming (Holmes, 2014). In 2013, men have spent more cash on male toiletries than shaving products (Walker, 2014). The Datamonitor revealed that the global market for male toiletries has shown an increase of 3.6 and reached at \$22.2 billion in 2014 (Matthews, 2015).

There is a drastic upsurge in the launched of the male grooming products. In 2008, Mintel has found 500 new products for men, which shows substantial increase from 375 products launched in 2007 (Mintel, 2008). Globally there are more than 3600 new personal care products for men (Mintel, 2008). According to the Datamonitor Consumer's Product Launch Analytics Tool, U.S alone has contributed to 21% of global new men grooming product followed by U.K, which is representing 17% of new product launches for the male grooming segment (Matthews, 2015). The global beauty market during last 20 years has shown an increase of 4.5% a year. The market has remained stable and profitable despite the unfavorable economic conditions (Łopaciuk and Łoboda, 2013). There is an increasing trend observed in India and china among men who are using cosmetic products. This

segment for men will show more positive trend in coming years (Sale, 2015). Brazil and china has also shown a dramatic growth (Łopaciuk and Łoboda, 2013).

U.S is the largest single market for male grooming products with a sale of \$4.7 billion. The market has almost doubled the size in the last decade rising from \$2.7 billion (Lennard, 2009). Japan is one of the largest markets for personal care and cosmetics products (U.S. Commercial Service, 2014). The Japanese market for male grooming products is the largest in Asia (Lennard, 2009).

In 2013, the cosmetic and toiletries market valued approximately US \$1.8 billion in Hong Kong. Shiseido men's club in 2005 was inaugurated to meet the increasing demand of men's cosmetics and skin care products and since the trainer is organizing various workshop for men. Skin care market is growing rapidly and that has given an upsurge to the more and more openings of saloons for men only (U.S. Commercial Service, 2014).

Male grooming segment is one of the fastest growing industries in India. Nielsen reports that the segment is still growing at a rate of 41%, which is more than the entire skin industry that is 27%. Surprisingly male in India usually who aged 18-25 years spends more money on grooming and personal products than females (Sankaranarayanan and Mekoth, 2014). In 2008, male grooming products have seen a rise of 14% in china. There is a shift in buying behavior of men as previously they buy cosmetics for their women but now they do it for themselves (Lennard, 2009). In china, the categories of male grooming products have increased by 20% (Walker, 2014). Skin care market for men in china has shown an increase of 34%. Facial cleansers are very important for men in china followed by sunblock and mask (U.S. Commercial Service, 2014).

The reason for the Asian male market popularity is different from country to country as anti-aging and hair care lines drive Japanese market, while Korean market is about the competition of beauty and ideal image promoted through the media while the Chinese market is driven by social image (Anderson, 2014). UAE cosmetic market has grown due to various reasons like the awareness of beauty and grooming products, purchasing power, and the availability of wide range of products. The sales of anti-aging cream, eye contouring, sun protection, hair loss, anti-cellulite has shown a rise in both segments of male and female (U.S. Commercial Service, 2014). The products that are more famous in Asia include face wash, cleanser, moisturizing products, BB cream and all in one product (Anderson, 2014). The cosmetic market in Indonesia is growing due to the awareness of skin care products and treatments for both male and female. There is an increasing demand for men oriented products. Marketers in Philippines has persuaded men to become more conscious about their appearance and grooming. Taiwan male is aware of wellness issue and uses a range of cosmetics and toiletries products, which includes shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, cleanser, facial cream, moisturizer, scrub, fragrances and other shaving products. In 2009, male segment has increased by 9%. In Russia, cosmetic market has grown by 20% in 2011. Australia with a population of 23 million has a demand of cosmetics and toiletries approximately US \$2.8

billion. The industry in Australia drives by the importance of looks for both men and women (U.S. Commercial Service, 2014).

3.2. Metrosexual as a Lucrative Segment for Marketers

New doors of creation have opened up in the male consumerism due to the spread and fame of metrosexual culture (TAN, 2008). Metrosexual has become a worldwide phenomenon (Sukato, 2010) and this changing landscape has opened up a new door for companies as it is one of the lucrative segment (Tuncay, 2006). The market for male skin care products is evolving to meet the needs of men, which are entirely different from women. As men has different skin type and problems than women (Zoe Draelos, 2008). The segment has grown in a very short span of time and now it has become one of the most opportunity rich segments in the category of beauty and personal care (Walker, 2014).

History has shown that whenever it comes to beauty female are the ones who seems to investing on their time and money to enhance it but in the recent times society has seen men doing the same and getting conscious about their look, appearance and personal hygiene (Holmes, 2014). The industry has witnessed a shift in male consumer markets as they are opting for all those products which were previously considered a taboo for men to use and its only associated with females (Tuncay, 2006). Previously sports, cars and gadgets has been on men's skewed list, but the modern era has added fashion and cosmetics in the list as well (TAN, 2008).

The changes in the life style and consumption pattern have given an escalation to the sector of personal grooming. The societal pressure and the changing norms have resulted in the rise sales of male grooming products (Tan, 2008). The consumers are willing to pay extra amount to look good. Historically, to look good and to care for the appearance are the traits attributed with women but the now masculinity has also embedded the norm to look good (Sankaranarayanan and Mekoth, 2014).

Due to the change in lifestyle and consumption pattern there is an increase demand of men's personal care products (U.S. Commercial Service, 2014). Time saving and long lasting products are much in demand (Łopaciuk and Łoboda, 2013). Men have greater disposable income than women (Walker, 2014) and for that greater purchasing power. This element has made the segment more attractive for marketers. Men magazine like GQ, Maxin and men's health inform consumer about products which educate them in order to make an appropriate purchase decision (Sukato, 2010).

4. CONCLUSION

Mark Simpson has given a birth to this terminology and the media has confirmed its existence by portraying it in their commercials (Pruekchaikul and Kangkun, 2010). Metrosexual has become one of the growing segments and for that companies are targeting this lucrative market (Pan and Jamnia, 2015). Metrosexual men lives in big cities and consider themselves as a virile people who challenge the traditional view of masculinity by demonstrating the new and trendy lifestyle. They spend a lot of money on their appearance in order to enrich their self-image (Souiden and Diagne, 2009).

The literature has shown that the society has created the gender roles it has nothing to do with biological sex. It is a pressure of the outside forces that kept the individual in their shell. Traditionally men and women need to possess different attributes, attitudes, skills and behavior in order to fall in one of the either category of gender. But later when the women has realized its potential she step out of house to walk with men in all arenas side by side. This movement of women has given some relaxation to men in terms of financial burden and hence men got a chance to thing about themselves as well. Then the women demand for their partner has also changed. The blurring role of gender has given an upsurge to the male grooming market. The literature and published reports clearly exhibits that how the demand for male grooming and cosmetics products are increasing. This market is still unsaturated and hence an emerging and lucrative segments for markets. The marketers need to work hard in order to capture this promising segment. By using the correct blend of their strategy, marketers can easily enhance the belly of this segment.

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