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# Grooming Habits and Self-Perceptions Among Emerging Adults

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***Grooming Habits and Self Perceptions Among Emerging Adults***

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Graduating December 2015

Psychology & Women's and Gender Studies

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### **Abstract**

The recent increase of use of the dating websites and applications has called to question whether the use of these dating websites and applications causes emerging adults to place greater emphasis on their grooming habits, and if this emphasis is driven by a desire for sexual partners. The purpose of this study was to see whether an emerging adult's daily grooming habits are influenced or affected by self-perceptions, and if there was a relationship between emerging adults' sexual activity and grooming habits. The distribution of a self-report survey to 267 college-aged students regarding the use of grooming products and ratings of positive and negative self-perceptions allowed this study to contribute to the growing area of research regarding appearance and self-perceptions.

The results of this study help to better understand the role that grooming habits play in the construction of self-perceptions. This study displayed the gender differences that exist in within the views of grooming products and resulting self-perceptions including the effects of the Objectification Theory on both males and females in our society. This study also used various theories such as the Spotlight Effect, the Life History Theory, the Lipstick Effect, and developmental theories about emerging adults.

The responses obtained in this study also contribute to further analysis of developmental theories regarding emerging adults and their behaviors. The results of this study reveal that grooming products do not evoke significantly different self-perceptions in emerging adults who actively seek sexual partners compared to those who do not. Therefore, while emerging adults may more hormonally drawn to certain sexual

behaviors, these behaviors do not necessarily have an effect on an emerging adult's grooming habits and self-perceptions.

However, this study does suggest that the grooming habits of the emerging adults who use dating websites and applications have a greater effect on this group's self-perceptions than emerging adults who do not use dating websites or applications. As certain dating applications like Tinder and OkCupid gain new users everyday, this study aimed to reveal the growing influence of dating websites and applications on an increasing number of emerging adult's everyday lives. The consistent difference among the mean scores does call for further research regarding the topic. Since the usage of dating applications and websites continues to grow, this research will stand as one of the first studies that sought to understand how the usage of dating websites and applications may play a role in forming self-perceptions. The overwhelming receptiveness of this survey among emerging adults shows that there is interest in this topic both among researchers and emerging adults.

This study demonstrated how certain societal pressures may have effects on the grooming habits and self-perceptions of emerging adults, and also how the use of dating websites and applications may serve as an additional platform where emerging adults' bodies and appearances are put for critique. The results of this study call for further research as the mean scores of this study reveal that there is certainly a relationship between the use of grooming products and the development of self-perceptions. Additionally, with an increasing number of users on dating websites and applications, this study could be replicated time and time again to further measure the effects that dating websites and applications have on the lives of emerging adults.

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*Grooming Habits and Self Perceptions Among Emerging Adults***Introduction**

As modern lifestyles and resources allow for individuals to seek sexual and romantic partners through online dating applications and websites, appearance and attraction have begun to gain entirely new values. Users are now able to determine compatibility in a split second off of one's picture. Thus, when going to meet a potential partner for a date, appearance and attraction have already been evaluated. In addition men and women are then held accountable to the images portrayed online life. This recent phenomenon has called to question whether the use of these dating websites and applications causes emerging adults to place greater emphasis on their grooming habits, and if this emphasis is driven by a desire for sexual partners. While the research available has explained the physiological and emotional importance of appearance to an emerging adult, there has not yet been any research that discusses the impact that new cultural dating modes have on the importance of one's appearance, or how new ways of seeking sexual partners may encourage behavior that places greater emphasis on grooming habits. My research project is important in order to measure how dating sites and apps may have an effect on emerging adults' self-perceptions and whether these perceptions are influenced by grooming habits.

The purpose of this study was to see whether an emerging adult's daily grooming habits are influenced or affected by self-perceptions, and if there is a relationship between emerging adults' sexual activity and grooming habits. Through thoughtful research, I was able to examine how society may or may not influence emerging adults to cater to their appearance daily in order to have greater self-perceptions. Additionally, I



was also able to analyze whether emerging adults need to fulfill their daily grooming habits to perceive themselves more positively, or if emerging adults value grooming habits as a way to attract sexual partners. The theoretical basis of my research made use of theories regarding self-perceptions, the Objectification Theory, the Spotlight Effect, developmental theories, the Life History Theory, and the Lipstick Effect.

### **Literature Review**

When I began to conduct research I noticed gaps within the research leaving a need for further study. Much of the research I found did not focus on both grooming habits and how they are influenced by, or used to enhance one's self esteem. Some studies tried to measure potential spending habits on grooming and beauty products without actually measuring the actual daily grooming habits of participants. Other studies focused on self-esteem, self-perceptions, and appearance, but did not focus precisely on grooming habits. Additionally, some of this research was more focused on women rather than both genders. While some research did focus on students in college, this research did not answer my questions about how grooming habits play a role in one's self perceptions and how this relates to one's sexual activity, as well. In order to infer that grooming habits are important to emerging adults, I reviewed theories that analyzed in what ways an individual perceives himself or herself, and assessed how grooming habits may mean more to emerging adults than other age groups.

Furthermore, as the use of dating websites and applications, becomes more prevalent among the emerging adult population in the United States, it seems that more emphasis is placed on appearance in order to have a successful experience on the various sites. These sites require users to post photos of themselves in order to attract potential

partners. Some sites or applications, like Tinder, base compatibility from alone. A recent study of emerging adults even concluded that, “cell phones, including calls, text messaging, and mobile Internet, were the most common forms of communication technology used for partnering goals,” (Bergdall, Kraft, Andes, Carter, Hatfield-Timajchy, & Hock-Long 2012). Technology serves as a fundamental method of communicating with potential partners. However since some technology now places such focus on first appearances, emerging adults who are actively seeking sexual partners may put great emphasis on their grooming habits.

### **Self - Esteem, Self - Perceptions, and Appearance**

The research that relates self-esteem to appearance typically discussed this relationship in terms of body image. In literature reviewed, *self – esteem* is defined as the feelings about one’s self that “consist of a person’s positive and negative self evaluations,” (Kassin 2014). Though the term ‘self-esteem’ is used more commonly in the literature, what my study focused on was actually *self-perceptions*. An individual’s self-perceptions make up one’s self-esteem as perceptions are the way that an individual sees his or herself, and as a result, makes up their identity. Important aspects of one’s self-perceptions are the ways in which individuals think others perceive them. Therefore, “to possess a ‘self’ then necessarily implies an ability to take one’s actions, emotions and beliefs as a unified structure, viewed from the perspective of significant others, as others would view and interpret actions of the self,” (Elliott 2013). These theories regarding self-perceptions reveal that individuals assess themselves by the way they think that others view them. Because of this, it seems as though appearance is a way to attempt to manipulate others perceptions about the self, and in doing so, this alters one’s own self-

perceptions.

This is especially relevant when an individual must define himself or herself in a social context as, “Across the entire spectrum of social life, we learn to view ourselves as other people see us, adjusting and transforming our self-understanding in the light of ongoing social interaction and dialogue,” (Elliott 2013). Furthermore, sociological theories put forth by George Mead and Charles Cooley suggest that the self is constructed as a response to other people and who other people may perceive the self to be. Mead stressed notions that different selves are constructed for specific people, and thus, it is possible that subsequent appearances arise from these selves that are made for others (Mead 1929). Similarly, Cooley notes that selves are put into objects (or perhaps, grooming products) and thus take on social meaning and importance. Cooley explains, “A social self of this sort might be called the reflected or looking-glass self... so in imagination we perceive in another’s mind some thought of our appearance, manners, aims, deeds, character, friends, and so on, and are variously affected by it,” (Cooley 1902). For emerging adults seeking potential partners, self-perceptions in relation to others may dictate one’s romantic and sexual experiences. This study aimed to understand whether emerging adults’ self-perceptions are then dependent on grooming habits as a way to control one’s appearance and to influence other’s perceptions of themselves. However, in order to do this, a review of previous literature regarding appearance and self-esteem or self-perceptions was necessary.

Much of the research regarding appearance and the self has generally focused on women, rather than on men. Additionally, the discussion of appearance is almost always culturally subjective. Self-perception and its relevance to appearance is influenced by

societal beliefs. For example, researchers have found that, “In individualist societies people make downward comparisons for purposes of self-enhancement (i.e., to feel better about themselves on the dimension of comparison) and people make upward comparisons for purposes of self-improvement (i.e., to find out how they can become better along whatever dimension they are comparing). Both self-enhancement and self-improvement might be inappropriate in collectivist societies, in which harmonizing with others is highly desirable,” (Lennon, Rudd, Sloan, & Kim, 2005). Therefore, since my research focused on individuals living in an individualistic society, it’s also important to consider how society influences people when they compare themselves to a particular image.

Stephen Franzoi, a prominent researcher on body esteem and physical appearance, noted, “To females’ detriment, the cultural fixation on their bodies as objects results in a standard of the feminine ideal that is not only extremely salient, but also virtually impossible to attain,” and thus, “female body esteem is more dependent on gender role orientation,” (1995). When women are not able to achieve this ideal, then it’s likely to have an effect on their self-perceptions. Franzoi’s ideas influences theories which note that women who feel pressure to fulfill a certain image, may make certain behavioral choices in order to please others and to find a mate (Calogero 2004). Thus, grooming habits may be a way women make choices about their bodies and appearances in order to elevate their self-esteem even if they are not seeking sexual partners.

This desire to behave in a way that may please others or might improve other’s perceptions is supported by the *Objectification Theory*. The Objectification Theory suggests that a course of objectification and sexualization of women’s bodies in society and the media may cause negative effects to the everyday lives of women. The

consequences of the Objectification Theory include women developing “internalized observers perspectives,” which involve being more self-conscious of how others view them and cause them to alter their own choices in order to satisfy perceived ideals of what is presented as ‘ideal’ in society and the media (Calogero 2004). The Objectification Theory, however, does not discuss how societal influences may have similar effects on men. The gender gap in the research is a reason why I chose to assess the grooming habits of both men and women, to determine whether men feel pressure to spend time on their appearance as a way to enhance their self-esteem.

Newer research finds the effect of societal pressures to strive towards a particular appearance transcends gender. In more recent research, new findings note that men are falling more vulnerable to the Objectification Theory, as well, as the media develops new images of the ‘ideal’ male physique and appearance. Some research has found that, “As the objectification of male bodies has increased in the media and in interpersonal relationships, so has the number of ways in which men try to alter their appearance in response to such pressure,” (Schuster, Negy, & Tantleff-Dunn, 2013). Under these assumptions, it is quite possible that men, too, feel the need to focus on grooming habits in order to have greater self-esteem. This is supported by research that explains, “Although we acknowledge that women may be more vulnerable to appearance-related commentary and the effects of objectification due traditional social patterns, investigating the way that men experience and internalize appearance commentary may facilitate our understanding of this phenomenon and our ability to intervene in ways that are relevant to men,” (Schuster, Negy, & Tantleff-Dunn, 2013).

While the Objectification Theory describes the societal pressures resulting in certain behaviors, the *Spotlight Effect* explains how the individual perceives the effects of their behaviors. The Spotlight Effect explains that, “people tend to believe that they stand out in the eyes of others, both positively and negatively, more than they actually do,” (Gilovich, Medvec, & Savitsky). This theory implies that the way people think others perceive them has an effect on the way an individual will see their self. The Spotlight Effect may provide one reason for both males and females to focus on their grooming habits and appearance, as perhaps men and women feel if they do not ‘groom’ themselves to fit a desired image of themselves everyone around them will notice; or, in contrast, perhaps emerging adults feel that grooming oneself will make them more noticed by their peers, or potential sexual partners. This idea of self magnification may cause males and females to focus on their appearance and grooming habits as an aspect of developing and maintaining self-perceptions.

### **Emerging Adults and Appearance**

On a physiological level, the *Life History Theory* offers an analysis of how humans may make particular efforts to groom themselves in order to have the most successful reproduction experience. The Life History Theory notes that, “humans must make trade-offs between allocating resources either toward their own growth and development or toward more immediate reproduction,” even if these decisions are not the most beneficial at the time (Hill, Rodeheffer, Griskevicius, Durante, & White 2012).

*Emerging Adulthood* is a stage in which the Life History Theory may be most applicable. Emerging Adulthood consists of the period of one’s life between adolescence and adulthood, and sometimes characterized as the time “between the ages of 18 and 25,”

(Berger 2011). Developmental theories suggest emerging adults are generally healthy, and not yet feeling the effects of senescence, or biological aging. (Berger 2011). In addition to their bodily health, emerging adults reach their glowing adult appearance during this time as, “the oily hair, pimpled faces, and awkward limbs of adolescence are gone, and the wrinkles and hair loss of middle adulthood have not yet appeared,” (Berger 2011) Emerging adults are also at a biological point in their lives where “fertility is greater; miscarriage is less common; serious birth complications are unusual; orgasms are more frequent; and testosterone is higher for both sexes at age 20 than at age 40,” (Berger 2011). As a response to the physiological forces in an emerging adult’s body, “concern about appearance is connected to sexual drives, since appearance attracts sexual interest,” (Berger 2011). Thus, it is quite natural that emerging adults maybe use their appearance as a way to attract sexual partners as “the sexual reproductive system is at its strongest during emerging adulthood,” (Berger 2011). In fact, research states “Almost 80% of all emerging adults have had sexual intercourse at least once by the age of 20,” (Willoughby & Carroll 2009).

With the consideration of hormones and biological factors, I based assumptions about emerging adults’ grooming habits and any potential relationships with sexual activity on the Life History Theory. The flux of hormones and natural desire to seek sexual partners may cause emerging adults to focus more on their appearance as a way to attract partners. There is a variety of research that offers analysis of college aged students and their feelings about their appearance as well as physiological findings, but there is not as much research available about these students’ grooming habits. For this reason, I focused on emerging adults because they may pay more attention to their appearance

through grooming habits, and may be more susceptible to any societal pressures to fulfill a particular image.

### **Spending on Grooming Habits**

Finally, research about the Lip Stick Effect and Life History Theory explain how individuals may make choices to better their appearance even in times of economic turmoil. The *Lip Stick Effect* further notes that even in a time of economic recession, women will spend more money than usual on beauty products. The theory also explains that, “This effect is driven by women’s desire to attract mates with resources and depends on the perceived mate attraction function served by these products,” (Hill, Rodeheffer, Griskevicius, Durante, & White 2012). I find this theory to be relevant to the grooming habits of emerging adults because of the various stressors most emerging adults’ experience and because of the biological forces that cause emerging adults to seek sexual partners. If since both male and female emerging adults are filled with a drive towards finding sexual partners, this may cause them to focus more on their grooming habits as a way to ‘better’ their appearance in order to attract mates.

Life History Theory further explains that this increased spending may be to better prime oneself to find a mate who can support them in case of economic turmoil as a way to make choices that benefit reproduction. Some of this research is perhaps biased towards women and might be dated since many women are no longer financially dependent on their partners. My study examined how the Lip Stick Effect may also apply to male emerging adults as both sexes, at this stage of life, are biologically driven towards finding mates (or at least sexual partners). Thus both sexes could use grooming habits as a way to attempt to appear attractive to potential sexual partners, and their



ability to do so could affect their self-perceptions.

### **Research Questions**

For the purpose of this study, the following questions were addressed:

1. Is there a relationship between an emerging adult's grooming habits and self-perception?
2. If one is not able to partake in daily grooming habits, will it have a negative effect on the way emerging adults perceive themselves?
3. Is there a relationship between the grooming habits of emerging adults and their sexual activity? Are grooming habits more important to emerging adults who are seeking sexual partners?
4. Do emerging adults who use dating websites and applications place more emphasis on grooming habits?

### **Methodology and Procedures**

In order to understand the relationship between emerging adults' self perceptions, grooming habits, and sexual interests, participants filled out a self-report survey. The survey was issued both electronically, via Qualtrics and the Honors College List Serve, and on paper by going to various classes to distribute surveys. The classes that were surveyed were two Sociology courses, three Psychology courses, three Women's and Gender Studies courses, one Spanish 101 course, and one University 101 course. A total of 267 participants completed the survey (N=267), with ages between 18 to 28 and a mean age of 19.49. There were 73 males in the study, 192 females, and two individuals who indicated they did not identify with any particular gender.

Participants completed a survey asking about usage of various products and how

the use of, or lack of use of these products, makes them feel about themselves.

Participants were also asked about their relationship status, whether or not they seek sexual partners, and if they alter their grooming routine to prepare to meet with potential sexual or romantic partners. Participants also included whether or not they use online dating sites or applications and noted which sites or applications they used.

The participant indicated whether they used certain products and then rated their feelings about the products they use. To gain a better understanding of what the participants intend to use the various products for, the products were divided on the survey into three categories. The participants selected the products they use from each category and noted their feelings towards each particular category of products.

**Categorizing Products:** As part of assessing how grooming habits have a role in emerging adults' self esteem, the participants were surveyed about their actual usage of grooming products. To do this, a list was compiled of the different products that seem most commonly available in various drug stores and beauty/cosmetic departments. The products were then separated into three different categories. The categories are "Basic Necessities" – things that are generally considered essential in one's daily grooming routine and are the bare minimum (ex: shampoo, soaps, lotions, deodorant); "Supplemental" products – things that are used to contribute to the look of a 'natural' appearance, or make a natural look seem more polished and are anything more than the most basic necessity (ex: light makeup, facial cleansers, body scrubs, shaving cream, un-tinted moisturizer); and "Enhancing" products – products that are meant to enhance one's look, add to the appearance, or alter or 'correct' the appearance, including products intended to add scents (ex: whitening toothpaste, cologne/perfume, self-tanner, anti-aging

cream, blemish correctors). The list of products in their categories follows.

Table 1

***Basic Products***

Soap	Shampoo	Conditioner
Toothpaste	Mouthwash	Lotion
	Deodorant	

Table 2

***Supplemental Products***

Shaving Cream	Body Wash	Shower Gel	Facial Wash/Scrub
Facial Cleanser	Depilatory Cream	Un Tinted Moisturizer	Hairspray
Foundation	Mascara	Un Tinted Chapstick or Lip Balm	BB Cream (Blemish Balm)

Table 3

***Enhancing Products***

Facial Serum	Tinted Moisturizer	Toner	Self Tanner
Body Shimmer	Body Glitter	Body Mist	Whitening Toothpaste
Cologne	Perfume	Eye Balm	Dark Spot Corrector
Anti-Age Cream	Anti-Wrinkle Cream	Hydration Gel	Pre Shave Oil
After Shave Balm	After Shave Lotion	Beard Lube	Pore Eraser
Hair Mousse	Hair Gel	Hair Sculpting Clay	Hair Styling Cream
Volumizer Cream	Concealer	Blemish Pencil	Primer
Bronzer	Blush	Translucent Powder	Fake Eyelashes
Eye Liner	Eye Shadow	Brow Powder/Gel	Brow Pencil/Mousse
Lip Liner	Lip Plumper	Lipstick/Gloss	Lip Stain

The participants rated emotions regarding the products using a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. The following values were allotted to each number: 1 – Strongly

Disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Indifferent; 4 – Agree; 5 – Strongly Agree. Participants rated three positive emotions and three negative emotions regarding their perceptions of themselves. The positive emotions follow the statement, “Of these products that I use, when I use them they help me to feel...” The positive emotions are “confident”, “outgoing”, and “secure in myself”. The negative emotions are meant to be opposites of the positive emotions and measure their self-perceptions. The negative emotions followed the statement, “If I don’t have the time or resources to incorporate these products into my grooming routine I might feel...” The negative emotions are “stressed”, “socially inhibited”, and “socially anxious”. Participants’ values on grooming habits were based off of how meaningful they score the products in regards to their self-perceptions.

In analyzing the participants’ scores the ratings for the three positive emotions were added together to form one score. The participants’ ratings for the three negative emotions were also added together to form one score. Thus, participants could have the highest possible score of 15 for their rating of positive emotions, and 15 for their rating of negative emotions. Although participants indicated which products in each category they used, the number of products used is less important than their feelings about the products in each group. Thus, the amount of products participants use was not analyzed in the results section.

Participants also rated several statements regarding appearance and their identities, tendency to excuse their appearance to others if grooming routines are not fulfilled, and the urgency to replenish grooming products when they run out. The same Likert scale of the 1 – 5 scores was used to have participants rate their level of agreement.

The participants' responses were entered into SPSS to allow for further analysis and to seek any correlations or statistical significances. The tests used to look for significance and compare means were the General Linear Model of Within-Subjects Factors, Two-Way Repeated-Measures Analysis of Variance (ANOVA, and Independent T-Tests.

## Results & Discussion

### Demographics

Since the research questions of this survey are relevant to the participants' sexual interests, it is important to review the noted relationship statuses of the participants. The table below illustrates the distribution of relationship statuses for this population.

Table 4

*Distribution of Relationship Statuses within the Population*

Relationship Status	N	%
Single, Not Interested in Dating	40	15
Single, Interested in Dating	122	45.7
Dating One Person	47	17.6
Dating Multiple People	7	2.6
Dating One Person Seriously	48	18
Married	1	0.4
Other	2	0.7

Of those surveyed, 184 (69%) participants indicated that they desired sexual partners, 36 indicated that they did not desire partners, while 46 (17%) participants selected that they were indifferent to having sexual partners. 71 (27%) participants

selected that they were actively seeking sexual partners, while 193 (73%) participants selected that they were not actively seeking partners.

80 participants (30%) noted that they use dating applications or websites, and 187 (70%) did not. The number of applications or websites that were used by a single individual ranged from 1 to 8. The following chart depicts the various applications and websites participants noted they used and how many participants use each application or website.

Table 5

*Distribution of Various Dating Applications and Websites used by Participants*

Dating Application or	N	ManHunt	1
Website		Zoosk	1
Tinder	73	Lavendr	2
Grindr	14	Happn	3
OkCupid	10	eHarmony.com	1
Bumble	6	Tastebuds	1
Her	2	CoffeeMeetsBagel	3
JSwipe	1	Scruff	2
Match.com	1		

It is interesting to note that while 184 (69%) participants desire sexual partners, only 71 (27%) indicated that they acted upon these desires. When comparing the number of participants who notes that they were actively seeking sexual partners to the number of participants who use dating websites and applications, there were fewer respondents (27%) who were actively seeking sexual partners that those who were using dating

websites and applications (30%). This comparison suggests that perhaps there are additional motives to using dating websites and applications besides using the websites and applications solely to attempt to find potential sexual partners. Additionally I found that the question of whether the participant “Actively Seeks Sexual Partners” was interpreted in different ways. For example, some partners who were in a sexual relationship made note that because they already had a partner they were not “actively” seeking sexual partners.

### **Products and Self-Perceptions**

The results of the General Linear Model compared means between the three groups of products and the positive and negative self-perceptions rated for each category. The means computed on this test were a compilation of the scores for each participant of the survey. The table of means and standard deviations for the entire population follows.

Table 6

*Means and Standard Deviations for Ratings of Self-Perceptions by Products*

	Basic	Supplemental	Enhancing
Positive	11.44(2.03)	11.64(2.28)	11.41(2.66)
Negative	10.62(2.63)	10.11(2.91)	9.44(2.91)

The means produced from this statistical analysis answer the first and second research questions of this study. First, the means in Table 6 demonstrate that there is a clear relationship between grooming habits and self-perceptions. The mean scores also indicate that generally participants were in agreement that certain positive emotions were the result of the ability to fulfill their grooming habits and use specific grooming products. The means for the positive emotions show that participants generally agreed that their grooming habits and products might help them to feel confident, out-going, and

secure in themselves. Furthermore, there is little difference among the means of the three product groups in reference to the positive self-perceptions. Thus, basic products, supplemental products, and enhancing products seem to evoke about the same robust degree of positive self-perceptions within the population as a whole.

The respective mean scores for the negative self-perceptions in Table 6 and the grooming product categories answer the second research question of whether an inability to complete one's grooming routine might have a negative effect on one's self perceptions or cause the individual to feel more negative emotions. The findings show that these mean scores are consistent. While some participants may have felt strongly that the inability to complete their grooming routine could cause them to feel stressed, socially inhibited, or socially anxious, overall these scores were not rated as highly as the positive emotion scores. In fact, the higher scores are only associated with positive emotions. Although there is some agreement that without grooming products a participant may have negative self-perception, the mean scores show that grooming products play more of a role in helping the participant to feel more positive emotions and to have more positive self-perception.

### **Products and Self-Perceptions between Genders**

The Two-Way ANOVA Test compared the means of the positive and negative scores of the three categories of products but looked for differences between the responses of males and females. Since the group of people who did not identify with any particular gender was so small ( $n=2$ ), the scores of those two participants were not included in this test. The ANOVA test showed that there was a significant difference within the scores of both positive and negative emotions for men and women. However,



the Mauchy's test showed that the assumption of sphericity had been violated for the effects of products,  $\chi^2 = 29.83$ ,  $p < .001$ , and the interaction of products\*emotions,  $\chi^2 = 25.10$ ,  $p < .001$ . Thus the degrees of freedom were corrected for by using the Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphrecitivity ( $\epsilon = .90$  for the effect of products and  $.92$  for the interaction of products\*emotions).

Therefore, the significant difference between the men and women and their mean products scores was  $p = .017$ . There was also a significant difference between men and women's scores between the three product categories of  $p = .001$ . The table of means and standard deviations for the scores of both men and women follows.

Table 7

*Means and Standard Deviations for Ratings of Products by Gender*

	Basic		Supplemental		Enhancing	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Male ( $n = 73$ )	11.55(2.15)	10.38(2.79)	11.04(2.38)	9.82(2.82)	10.45(3.40)	9.18(3.09)
Female ( $n = 192$ )	11.41(1.99)	10.70(2.58)	11.87(2.22)	10.21(2.95)	11.78(2.24)	9.54(2.85)

The statistical significance in this test can be further explained by the relevance of the Objectification Theory. With increasing societal pressures to maintain a specific image, women may feel more inclined to cater to their appearance, and thus women may develop self-perceptions that are dependent on their ability to use certain grooming products (Calogero 2004). The Objectification Theory could explain why female scores are significantly different from male's in almost every category as perhaps female participants in this study feel more pressure within society to place value on their appearance. Additionally, it is also important to notice that the women's scores for negative self-perceptions are consistently higher than the men's scores. These scores could be again explained by the Objectification Theory, as the continued pressures to

strive towards certain images may cause women to feel negative emotions when they are unable to fulfill their grooming habits.

Although male scores are lower than females in almost all categories, the scores are still much closer to the highest possible score (15) than they are to the lowest possible score. These mean scores indicate that males are in agreement with certain self-perceptions being associated with grooming products, but just not as much as women.

The mean where the males score higher than females falls within the category of the positive self-perceptions associated with the basic products. Women have more options when selecting supplemental and enhancing products and so it is understandable that these two categories might play more of a role in women's self-perceptions, as opposed to males where the basic products evoke more positive self-perceptions. The differences between the ways in which male and female bodies are portrayed in the media could also explain this distinction between basic products causing the males to feel more positive emotions, compared to images of women in the media which may cause females to feel that supplemental or enhancing products are necessary in order to evoke positive self-perceptions. The male scores of their self-perceptions are important because some research suggests that the Objectification Theory can only be applied to women and ignores the increasing objectification of male bodies in the media. This study shows that male self-perceptions are certainly not unaffected by grooming products and their appearance at this time.

This difference between the male and female responses regarding their self-perceptions can also be compared to the two groups' responses about appearance and identity. When asked to rate their level of agreement from 1 to 5 with the statement "my

appearance is always the same, as it is part of my identity", the male mean score of 3.34 was higher than the mean score of females of 3.31. While the difference between the means is not significant, the slight difference does bring to question why male scores are higher. Again, when noting the differences between product availability for males and females, it is possible that because females have a greater range of supplemental and enhancing products to choose from, their appearance is more fluid and can change depending on which products they choose to use. This could further explain why the positive self-perception scores of basic products are higher for males than females, as the basic products may be more meaningful to males' identities than they are to the identities of females.

### **Products and Self-Perceptions among Participants who Desire Sex Partners**

An additional ANOVA test was run to look for differences between the scores of participants who indicated that they desired sexual partners versus those who marked that they were indifferent to having sexual partners, or did not desire partners. The ANOVA test revealed that there was no significant difference between the means of those who desired partners compared to those who were indifferent to having partners, or did not desire partners at all. To control for the assumption of sphericity that had been violated for the effects of products,  $\chi^2 = 31.17$ ,  $p < .001$ , and the interaction of products\*emotions,  $\chi^2 = 30.30$ ,  $p < .001$ , the degrees of freedom were corrected for by using the Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphericity ( $\epsilon = .90$  for the effect of products and  $.92$  for the interaction of products\*emotions). The interactions between emotions regarding products and whether participants desired sex partners produced a insignificant difference of

$p=.377$ . The table of means and standard deviations for the scores of the three groups of participants follows.

Table 8

*Means and Standard Deviations for Ratings of Products by interest in Sex Partners*

Desire Sex Partner(s)	Basic		Supplemental		Enhancing	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Yes ( $n = 184$ )	11.58(1.97)	10.52(2.68)	11.71(2.33)	9.95(2.97)	10.45(3.40)	9.18(3.09)
No ( $n = 36$ )	11.11(2.01)	10.72(3.00)	11.38(2.32)	9.89(3.06)	10.86(3.14)	9.36(3.35)
Indifferent ( $n = 46$ )	11.13(2.27)	10.98(2.11)	11.61(2.09)	10.96(2.43)	11.72(2.21)	9.98(2.63)

The lack of significance between the scores of the groups for this particular test answers the research question regarding whether sexual interests evoke differences in self-perceptions according to the participants' grooming habits. Additionally, the group that indicated they desired sexual partners does not maintain the highest means of the three groups across product categories. Rather the "indifferent" group possesses the highest means of the groups among several of the self-perception ratings across the three product categories. While this was certainly unexpected, some participants may desire sexual partners but the test shows that this does not mean desire alone is enough to make grooming habits more meaningful to the individual's self-perceptions. Furthermore, this particular test reveals the importance of the differentiation between the participant's desires for sexual partners, versus the participant's will to actively seek sexual partners.

### **Products and Self-Perceptions among Participants who Actively Seek Sex Partners**

The next test of ANOVA that was completed looked for differences in means between those who marked that they were "actively seeking sexual partners" compared to those who were "not actively seeking partners". The ANOVA revealed that there was not significant difference between the mean scores of emotions for each product category and

whether or not the participant was actively seeking partners. Additionally the Mauchly's test showed that the assumption of sphericity had been violated for the effects of products,  $\chi^2 = 33.32$ ,  $p < .001$ , and the interaction of products\*emotions,  $\chi^2 = 28.96$ ,  $p < .001$ . Thus the degrees of freedom were corrected for by using the Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphericity ( $\epsilon = .89$  for the effect of products and  $.91$  for the interaction of products\*emotions). While the means of the groups are different, the statistical value of difference of  $p = .557$  indicates that there is not statistical significance between the scores. The table of means and standard deviations for the scores of both the actively seeking and not actively seeking participants follows.

Table 9

*Means and Standard Deviations for Ratings of Products by whether Participant Actively Seeks Partners*

Actively Seeks Partner(s)	Basic		Supplemental		Enhancing	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Yes ( $n = 71$ )	11.76(1.98)	10.83(2.87)	11.49(2.70)	9.97(3.06)	11.44(2.30)	9.67(2.79)
No ( $n = 193$ )	11.33(2.05)	10.55(2.54)	11.71(2.10)	10.17(2.85)	11.38(2.79)	9.37(2.94)

While the means of the group who indicated they were actively seeking sexual partners are consistently higher for the basic and enhancing product categories, there is not statistical significance. This lack of significant difference does answer the research question about whether emerging adults who are actively seeking sexual partners place greater emphasis on their grooming habits when developing self-perceptions. There is not enough evidence within the data set to infer that actively seeking sexual partners would cause an emerging adult to have stronger emotions about their grooming products. However, because there are differences in the means that are not quite significant, further research could be conducted to see whether these same results would be reproduced in another study.

The means of the group of participants that indicated they are actively seeking partners are higher in both the basic and enhancing product categories, while the group who is not seeking partners has the higher means in the supplemental category. This inconsistency in who has the higher means can be explained by the understanding the various products within the group. Since the participants who are seeking sexual partners displayed higher scores in their self-perceptions for the enhancing product group, it can be assumed that perhaps they use more products from this group than from the supplemental group. Additionally, some of the products in the supplemental and enhancing group are very similar, and it could be likely that a participant would only use the product from one category (example: un-tinted moisturizer vs. tinted moisturizer). However, the slight differences in the means of the particular data set does not support ideas that emerging adults who are seeking sexual partners would have stronger emotions about enhancing products.

While the Life History Theory and Developmental theories about emerging adults' sexual drives and interests could be used to explain the slight differences between the means, there is not sufficient significance to assume that a heightened interest in seeking sexual partners might cause emerging adults to put more emphasis on their appearance when developing their own self-perceptions. However, it should again be noted that the scores for the positive self-perceptions are consistently higher than the negative self-perceptions for each grooming product category. While sexual drives may lead grooming products to have a positive effect of the self-perceptions of emerging adults, there is not enough evidence to say the lack of these grooming products evoke negative self-perceptions of the same strength. Thus, it seems as though grooming

products are used more to boost self-perceptions among emerging adults of whom both seek or do not seek sexual partners.

### **Products and Self-Perceptions among Participants who use Dating Websites and Applications**

An additional test of ANOVA was run to look for differences in the scores of those who use dating applications and websites compared to those who do not use the applications or websites. This test did not look at differences between the dating applications or websites, but just whether or not the participant used any dating applications or websites. While the scores of the participants who use dating applications or websites are consistently higher than the participants who do not use the applications or websites, there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups. For this ANOVA the Mauchly's test showed that the assumption of sphericity had been violated for the effects of products,  $\chi^2 = 31.00$ ,  $p < .001$ , and the interaction of products\*emotions,  $\chi^2 = 28.54$ ,  $p < .001$ . Thus the degrees of freedom were corrected for by using the Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphericity ( $\epsilon = .90$  for the effect of products and .91 for the interaction of products\*emotions). The table of means and standard deviations for the scores of two groups of participants follows.

Table 10

*Means and Standard Deviations for Ratings of Products by whether Participant Uses Sites/Apps*

Uses Sites/Apps	Basic		Supplemental		Enhancing	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Yes ( $n = 80$ )	11.68(1.75)	11.14(2.67)	11.69(2.21)	10.71(3.01)	11.48(2.48)	9.85(2.93)
No ( $n = 187$ )	11.34(2.14)	10.40(2.59)	11.63(2.32)	9.85(2.83)	11.39(2.74)	9.27(2.89)

Similar to the previous tests of ANOVA, the means of the groups are different, but they are not statistically different. However, these particular two groups differ from

the other comparisons because the participants who use dating websites and applications also have consistently higher means in the negative self-perception ratings among the three product categories.

While the means of the positive self-perceptions of the group who uses dating websites and applications are higher than the group who do not use the websites or applications, their negative means are much higher than the group who does not use the websites or applications. This is particularly interesting because the only other time this same pattern takes place is when looking at gender differences among the scores. The women's consistently higher means of the negative self-perceptions were explained by the Objectification Theory and the possible influence that the *media* may have on causing women to have negative self-perceptions if they can not fulfill their grooming routine. The higher mean scores of those who use dating websites and applications could imply that the Objectification Theory might be influencing the online dating experience.

Do these dating websites and applications create an additional platform where male and female bodies are objectified for the sake of matching with a potential partner? The higher negative means of the participants who use dating websites and applications do reveal a general consensus that if these participants are not able fulfill their grooming routines they have stronger negative self-perceptions compared to those who do not use dating websites and applications. While there is not enough evidence to say that using dating websites and applications may cause the individual to have these negative self-perceptions if they cannot fulfill their grooming routine, the means do initiate further questions about whether the user is affected by the dating websites and applications over time, and what effect the websites and applications have on their lives.



The higher means of the groups who do use dating websites and applications offer an invitation for more research regarding this topic in the years to come. Since the dating websites and applications are only recently gaining heightened popularity, a replication of this study several years from now could provide much different results, as this particular study has a majority of participants (aged 18) who only recently have gained access to dating applications and websites. Furthermore, a longitudinal study regarding this topic could display whether continued exposure to dating websites and applications would affect the self-perceptions of the individual over time.

### **Consistency of Appearance and Identity**

The survey administered also asked participants to rate their agreement according to how likely they are to add focus to their grooming routines prior to meeting with a potential sexual partner. With a highest possible score of 5 (Strongly Agree), the mean score for the entire population was 4.37. The following table compares the entire population's mean score with various groups within the population.

Table 11

*Means for Likelihood to add focus to Grooming Routine Prior to Meeting with a Partner*

Group	N	Mean
Whole Population	267	4.37
Male	73	4.33
Female	192	4.39
Use Dating Apps/Sites	80	4.50
Do Not Use Apps/Sites	187	4.32
Actively Seek Partners	71	4.49
Do Not Seek Partners	193	4.33

While the various mean scores of this question are about the same, it is interesting to note that the highest mean of the population belongs to the group who use dating websites and applications, followed closely by the group who actively seek sexual partners.

Participants also indicated whether they are more likely to excuse their appearance to the people they interact with if they are not able to fulfill their grooming routine. The mean score of the entire population for this question was 3.21. The following table compares the population's mean score for this question with the means of various groups within the population.

Table 12

*Means for Likelihood to excuse appearance if a Grooming Routine is not Fulfilled*

Group	N	Mean
Whole Population	267	3.21
Male	73	2.79
Female	192	3.35
Use Dating Apps/Sites	80	3.36
Do Not Use Apps/Sites	187	3.14
Actively Seek Partners	71	3.13
Do Not Seek Partners	193	3.24

While most of these means are fairly close to each other, the Independent Samples T-Test determined that there was significant difference between the means of those who indicated that they use dating websites and applications versus those who do not use the websites or applications. The level of significance for this difference between the two means is  $p=.041$ .

The participants also rated whether they feel their appearance is always the same because it is part of their identities. The mean score for the entire population was 3.32. The following table compares the population's mean score for this question with the means of various groups within the population.

Table 13

*Means for Agreement with Appearance as part of Identity*

Group	N	Mean
Whole Population	267	3.32
Male	73	3.34
Female	192	3.31
Use Dating Apps/Sites	80	3.35
Do Not Use Apps/Sites	187	3.28
Actively Seek Partners	71	3.41
Do Not Seek Partners	193	3.28

While there is no significance between the means of the various groups, it is interesting to note that the highest mean belonged to the participants who indicated that they actively seek sexual partners. While the mean scores of self-perceptions about the grooming products for this group were not significantly higher than those who do not seek sexual partners, those who actively seek sexual partners felt the strongest that their appearance was part of their identity.

### Conclusions

This study contributes to the growing area of research regarding appearance and self-perceptions. The focus on emerging adults' grooming habits and self-perceptions had not yet been addressed in current research. The results of this study help to better understand the role that grooming habits play in the construction of self-perceptions.

Furthermore, this study displayed the gender differences that exist in within the views of grooming products and resulting self-perceptions. This research helps to further discover the effects of the Objectification Theory in our society. This study extends beyond research about appearance that is centric to women's perspectives, and through the inclusion of males this study helps to gain a greater understanding about how the effects of the Objectification Theory may play a role in the everyday lives of both males and females. The gender differences outlined in this study indicate a need for additional research regarding how males and females may perceive their appearances differently, and how males and females may cater to their appearances in different ways. The results of this study are limited in they only display any efforts to enhance one's appearance in the terms of the grooming products that they use, and does not include other ways that males and females may attempt to enhance or alter their appearance in order to have more positive self-perceptions.

The responses obtained in this study also contribute to further analysis of developmental theories regarding emerging adults and their behaviors. The results of this study reveal that grooming products do not evoke significantly different self-perceptions in emerging adults who actively seek sexual partners compared to those who do not. Therefore, while emerging adults may more hormonally drawn to certain sexual behaviors, these behaviors do not necessarily have an effect on an emerging adult's grooming habits and self-perceptions.

However, this study does suggest that the grooming habits of the emerging adults who use dating websites and applications have a greater effect on this group's self-perceptions than emerging adults who do not use dating websites or applications. While

this interaction did not provide significant difference, the consistent difference among the mean scores does call for further research regarding the topic. Since the usage of dating applications and websites continues to grow, this research will stand as one of the first studies that seeks to understand how the usage of dating websites and applications may play a role in forming self-perceptions. The overwhelming receptiveness of this survey among emerging adults shows that there is interest in this topic both among researchers and emerging adults.

This research stands as one of the first studies to attempt to examine how the use of dating websites and applications may have certain effects on the lives of emerging adults, and specifically how the use of dating websites and applications may cause emerging adults to have stronger self-perceptions regarding their appearances. As certain dating applications like Tinder and OkCupid gain new users everyday, this study aimed to reveal the growing influence of dating websites and applications on an increasing number of emerging adult's everyday lives.

This study demonstrated how certain societal pressures may have effects on the grooming habits and self-perceptions of emerging adults, and also how the use of dating websites and applications may serve as an additional platform where emerging adults' bodies and appearances are put for critique. The results of this study call for further research as the mean scores of this study reveal that there is certainly a relationship between the use of grooming products and the development of self-perceptions. Additionally, with an increasing number of users on dating websites and applications, this study could be replicated time and time again to further measure the effects that dating websites and applications have on the lives of emerging adults.

**Limitations**

Throughout the completion of this study I began to realize some of the study's limitations that should be taken into consideration for any further research. The study is culturally specific to an individualistic society and also to the setting of New York City. It is possible that the results of the study would not necessarily be applicable to a similar group of emerging adults who live in a different type of area.

In analyzing the use of dating websites and applications I realized that the fact that the students of Pace University's New York City campus do not attend a traditional college campus is important in this study. This campus does not have a "Greek Row" or traditional space that is meant for student socialization and could be a place to meet potential sexual partners. This particular amount of usage of dating websites and applications is specific to this type of "vertical campus" that might drive students to use dating applications in order to meet potential partners.

Additionally, the survey administered to the participants only asked about their current emotions regarding their grooming habits. If the study were to be replicated the survey should also include questions about whether or not the same grooming habits are maintained during a relationship, or if attention to grooming habits is only important in the beginning stages of relationships.

Similarly, the wording of the survey about the dating applications and websites could have been more clear. The question about using dating applications and websites seemed to cause participants to only report their usage at that particular moment in time. It would have been beneficial to have this question also ask whether or not the participant used any dating websites or applications to meet their current partner.

Furthermore, while this study was intended to focus on the grooming habits and self-perceptions of emerging adults, a control age group could have been able to identify age differences and indicate whether the self-perceptions expressed in this study were unique to this particular phase of development.

## Appendix

**Age:**

**What sex were you assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate?**

[Male] [Female]

**How do you describe yourself?**

[Male] [Female] [Transgender] [Do not identify as female, male, or transgender]

**Are you currently attending a college or university?**

[Yes] [No]

**What is your current relationship status?** (Please select one)

- Single, not interested in dating
- Single, and interested in dating
- Dating one person
- Dating multiple people
- Dating one person seriously
- Married

**Do you desire to have sexual partner(s)?**

[Yes] [No] [Indifferent]

**Are you actively seeking sexual partners?**

[Yes] [No]

**Are you currently sexually active?**

[Yes] [No]

**Do you use any dating/hook up apps or sites?**

[Yes] [No]

**Select the sites or apps you use (if applicable)**

-None-	Tinder	Grindr	OkCupid
Match.com	Tastebuds	Score	Happn
Once	Align	At First Sight	eHarmony.com
Coffee Meets Bagel	Pure	Zoosk	Lavendr
Man Hunt	Gay.com	Scruff	Bumble

-Other\_\_\_\_\_ (please fill in)

**Please rate the following statement from 1 to 5 based on how much you agree**

“If I am going on a date or meeting a potential sexual partner I will add more focus to my grooming routine prior to meeting with them”



1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

**1. Please select any of the following products that you use in your grooming routine.**

(Though you may do different things as part of your routine on different days, please select the products that fit your average use.)

Soap	Shampoo	Conditioner
Toothpaste	Mouthwash	Lotion
Deodorant		

**Please rate following words to match your emotions on a scale from 1-5.**

-Of these products that I use, when I use them I feel they help me to feel...

*Confident*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Outgoing*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Secure in myself*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

-If I don't have the time or resources to incorporate these products into my grooming routine I might feel...

*Stressed*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Socially Inhibited*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Socially Anxious*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

**2. Please select any of the following products that you use in your grooming routine.**

(Though you may do different things as part of your routine on different days, please select the products that fit your average use)

Shaving Cream	Body Wash	Shower Gel	Facial Wash/Scrub
Facial Cleanser	Depilatory Cream	Un Tinted Moisturizer	Hairspray
Foundation	Mascara	Un Tinted Chapstick or Lip Balm	BB Cream (Blemish Balm)

**Please rate following words to match your emotions on a scale from 1-5.**

-Of these products that I use, when I use them I feel they help me to feel...

*Confident*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Outgoing*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Secure in myself*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

-If I don't have the time or resources to incorporate these products into my grooming routine I might feel...

*Stressed*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Socially Inhibited*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Socially Anxious*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

**3. Please select any of the following products that you use in your grooming routine.**

(Though you may do different things as part of your routine on different days, please select the products that fit your average use)

Facial Serum	Tinted Moisturizer	Toner	Self Tanner
Body Shimmer	Body Glitter	Body Mist	Whitening Toothpaste
Cologne	Perfume	Eye Balm	Dark Spot Corrector
Anti-Age Cream	Anti-Wrinkle Cream	Hydration Gel	Pre Shave Oil
After Shave Balm	After Shave Lotion	Beard Lube	Pore Eraser
Hair Mousse	Hair Gel	Hair Sculpting Clay	Hair Styling Cream
Volumizer Cream	Concealer	Blemish Pencil	Primer
Bronzer	Blush	Translucent Powder	Fake Eyelashes
Eye Liner	Eye Shadow	Brow Powder/Gel	Brow Pencil/Mousse
Lip Liner	Lip Plumper	Lipstick/Gloss	Lip Stain

**Please rate following words to match your emotions on a scale from 1-5.**

-Of these products that I use, when I use them I feel they help me to feel...

*Confident*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Outgoing*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Secure in myself*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

-If I don't have the time or resources to incorporate these products into my grooming routine I might feel...

*Stressed*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Socially Inhibited*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

*Socially Anxious*

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

Please list any additional products you use that were not mentioned on the lists.

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**Please rate following statements according to how much you agree from 1-5.**

1. If I don't have time to complete my grooming routine I might excuse my appearance to people I interact with. For example, "Sorry I look like such a mess today! I didn't have time to \_\_\_\_\_"

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

2. When I know I am running out of certain products I rely on, I find myself replenishing them as soon as possible.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

3. My grooming routine is always the same because it is a part of my identity.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

4. If I can't purchase the specific brand of a product I use in my grooming routine, I feel like part of my identity is compromised.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly Agree

Table 1

***Basic Products***

Soap	Shampoo	Conditioner
Toothpaste	Mouthwash	Lotion
	Deodorant	

Table 2

***Supplemental Products***

Shaving Cream	Body Wash	Shower Gel	Facial Wash/Scrub
Facial Cleanser	Depilatory Cream	Un Tinted Moisturizer	Hairspray
Foundation	Mascara	Un Tinted Chapstick or Lip Balm	BB Cream (Blemish Balm)

Table 3

***Enhancing Products***

Facial Serum	Tinted Moisturizer	Toner	Self Tanner
Body Shimmer	Body Glitter	Body Mist	Whitening Toothpaste
Cologne	Perfume	Eye Balm	Dark Spot Corrector
Anti-Age Cream	Anti-Wrinkle Cream	Hydration Gel	Pre Shave Oil
After Shave Balm	After Shave Lotion	Beard Lube	Pore Eraser
Hair Mousse	Hair Gel	Hair Sculpting Clay	Hair Styling Cream
Volumizer Cream	Concealer	Blemish Pencil	Primer
Bronzer	Blush	Translucent Powder	Fake Eyelashes
Eye Liner	Eye Shadow	Brow Powder/Gel	Brow Pencil/Mousse
Lip Liner	Lip Plumper	Lipstick/Gloss	Lip Stain

Table 4

*Distribution of Relationship Statuses within the Population*

Relationship Status	N	%
Single, Not Interested in Dating	40	15
Single, Interested in Dating	122	45.7
Dating One Person	47	17.6
Dating Multiple People	7	2.6
Dating One Person Seriously	48	18
Married	1	0.4
Other	2	0.7

Table 5

*Distribution of Various Dating Applications and Websites used by Participants*

Dating Application or Website	N
Tinder	73
Grindr	14
OkCupid	10
Bumble	6
Her	2
JSwipe	1
Match.com	1
ManHunt	1
Zoosk	1
Lavendr	2

Happn	3
eHarmony.com	1
Tastebuds	1
CoffeeMeetsBagel	3
Scruff	2

Table 6  
*Means and Standard Deviations for Ratings of Self-Perceptions by Products*

	Basic	Supplemental	Enhancing
Positive	11.44(2.03)	11.64(2.28)	11.41(2.66)
Negative	10.62(2.63)	10.11(2.91)	9.44(2.91)

Table 7  
*Means and Standard Deviations for Ratings of Products by Gender*

	Basic		Supplemental		Enhancing	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Male ( $n = 73$ )	11.55(2.15)	10.38(2.79)	11.04(2.38)	9.82(2.82)	10.45(3.40)	9.18(3.09)
Female ( $n = 192$ )	11.41(1.99)	10.70(2.58)	11.87(2.22)	10.21(2.95)	11.78(2.24)	9.54(2.85)

Table 8  
*Means and Standard Deviations for Ratings of Products by interest in Sex Partners*

	Basic		Supplemental		Enhancing	
Desire Sex Partner(s)	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Yes ( $n = 184$ )	11.58(1.97)	10.52(2.68)	11.71(2.33)	9.95(2.97)	10.45(3.40)	9.18(3.09)
No ( $n = 36$ )	11.11(2.01)	10.72(3.00)	11.38(2.32)	9.89(3.06)	10.86(3.14)	9.36(3.35)
Indifferent ( $n = 46$ )	11.13(2.27)	10.98(2.11)	11.61(2.09)	10.96(2.43)	11.72(2.21)	9.98(2.63)

Table 9  
*Means and Standard Deviations for Ratings of Products by whether Participant Actively Seeks Partners*

	Basic		Supplemental		Enhancing	
Actively Seeks Partner(s)	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Yes ( $n = 71$ )	11.76(1.98)	10.83(2.87)	11.49(2.70)	9.97(3.06)	11.44(2.30)	9.67(2.79)
No ( $n = 193$ )	11.33(2.05)	10.55(2.54)	11.71(2.10)	10.17(2.85)	11.38(2.79)	9.37(2.94)

Table 10

*Means and Standard Deviations for Ratings of Products by whether Participant Uses Sites/Apps*

Uses Sites/Apps	Basic		Supplemental		Enhancing	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Yes ( <i>n</i> = 80)	11.68(1.75)	11.14(2.67)	11.69(2.21)	10.71(3.01)	11.48(2.48)	9.85(2.93)
No ( <i>n</i> = 187)	11.34(2.14)	10.40(2.59)	11.63(2.32)	9.85(2.83)	11.39(2.74)	9.27(2.89)

Table 11

*Means for Likelihood to add focus to Grooming Routine Prior to Meeting with a Partner*

Group	N	Mean
Whole Population	267	4.37
Male	73	4.33
Female	192	4.39
Use Dating Apps/Sites	80	4.50
Do Not Use Apps/Sites	187	4.32
Actively Seek Partners	71	4.49
Do Not Seek Partners	193	4.33

Table 12

*Means for Likelihood to excuse appearance if a Grooming Routine is not Fulfilled*

Group	N	Mean
Whole Population	267	3.21
Male	73	2.79
Female	192	3.35
Use Dating Apps/Sites	80	3.36
Do Not Use Apps/Sites	187	3.14
Actively Seek Partners	71	3.13
Do Not Seek Partners	193	3.24

Table 13

*Means for Agreement with Appearance as part of Identity*

Group	N	Mean
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Whole Population	267	3.32
Male	73	3.34
Female	192	3.31
Use Dating Apps/Sites	80	3.35
Do Not Use Apps/Sites	187	3.28
Actively Seek Partners	71	3.41
Do Not Seek Partners	193	3.28

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