

Pour Homme: Men's Grooming Attitudes and Motivations. What is Driving the Male Grooming Consumption Habits in Malta?

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Abstract: Grooming, a process in which one gets clean, tidy and good-looking. As in any other area, postmodernism has brought a radical dynamic change in the grooming products market. Traditionally, the grooming industry has always been associated with the female gender but it is no longer recognised as exclusive to women. Men have become more concerned about their image. Indeed, recent figures show that the male grooming products market is developing so fast that it is representing a potential goldmine for the industry (iMARC Group 2018). Such a boom led several researchers to study the male grooming products, but finding information about the local male grooming market was challenging. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate the male consumer behaviour regarding grooming products while focussing on men's drives and attitudes generating their local consumption. To address this gap, an online questionnaire was developed with the purpose of evaluating the current situation in Malta, using the present literature. The sample for the administered research tool consists of 58 male participants residing in Malta, randomly selected; irrespective of their nationality. Meanwhile, an exploratory factor analysis approach was applied on the data collected, whereby the results obtained provided a fundamental structure among the independent variables being analysed; revealing the main factors which are currently influencing the male consumer behaviour towards grooming products in Malta.

Keywords: Gender, men, grooming products, consumer behaviour, motivations, life-styles, marketing

Origin of the Study

The concept of postmodernism has revolutionized the late 20th century as well as the early 21st century. Improvement in technology, science, education, economy and society provided individuals with a better standard of living. As in any other aspect, this concept has changed and is still shaping the landscape of the grooming products market. Grooming can be depicted as the process of making yourself clean, tidy and good-looking; dressing well, taking proper care of your skin, styling facial and body hair and engaging in activities that may help you look more attractive. There are several factors which affect the grooming products' market and one of these factors is gender. Traditionally, grooming products have always been depicted as feminine sex-typed products (Leng 2016) but unlike before, they are no longer perceived as exclusive only to women. In the post-modern world, men have become more conscious about their image; to create, develop and uphold their social identity. They are becoming more actively involved in choosing, purchasing and consuming grooming products, "their self-perception has changed, and they no longer consider it effeminate to invest time and money on improving their looks

and appearances.” (Souiden and Diagne 2009: 108). This fact has also emerged from a survey carried out by Datamonitor (2005), where a difference of 1% in favour of European and US men (73%), over women (72%), recognized the need to spend time on personal appearance as either ‘important’ or ‘very important’.

On average, one in every three men spend more than half an hour on their daily grooming routine (Euromonitor 2014). Recent figures show that the male grooming products market is developing at a fast rate and is gradually representing a potential goldmine for this industry. Indeed, the “global male grooming products market reached a value of US\$ 57.7 billion in 2017” and it “is further expected to reach US\$ 78.6 billion by 2023, exhibiting a CAGR of 5.3% during 2018 – 2023,” (iMARC Group 2018). This gain in momentum is leading companies to research, invest and expand their production not only on the stereotypical male grooming products, eg. razors and toiletries such as: shampoos, shaving foams, aftershave colognes and deodorants, but also on innovative male grooming products; cosmetics designed specifically for men such as hair care and skin care products, toning gels and lotions, serum and facial creams among others.

The boom of the global male grooming market led several researchers to study male grooming products but less provide information about the market in the Maltese Islands. Despite this, “little attention is given to research on the attitude of males towards the consumption of grooming products,” (Souiden and Diagne 2009: 97). Previous studies have largely marginalised male consumers and focussed on female consumers (Leng 2016). A study carried out by Coley and Burgess (2003) shows that a significant difference between men’s and women’s perception towards the consumption of grooming products exists. Thus, the combination of these factors and the lack of studies in this area has triggered an investigation into male consumer behaviour towards grooming products while focussing on men’s drives and attitudes that generate the consumption of such products in Malta. In addition, this research aims to examine both internal and external factors which affect men’s grooming perception and what contributes to men’s purchasing decision for grooming products, here. Thus, this research aims to get a better insight of the factors (i.e. personal variables, socio-cultural variables and marketing variables) which are currently influencing men’s purchasing behaviour of grooming products. By examining this objective, men in Malta will have a clearer view of their purchasing behaviour, attitudes and motivations in relation to grooming products. Additionally, this research will also contribute to shape the men’s grooming product market in Malta where researchers, investors, entrepreneurs and marketers, among others interested to invest in this industry, can gain a better perception about men’s purchasing activity in the future to address the latest male grooming needs.

Literature Review

The Purchasing Decision

Purchasing decisions are important as they lead consumers to select the right products for their own needs. Mohammad and Davoud (2010) describe the purchasing decision as a process that is experienced by consumers, each time they make a purchase, requiring consumers to choose from two or more available choices. This process is affected by push and pull factors. Push factors are those internal factors which aim to satisfy the psychological needs while, pull factors are those external factors that focus on and influence the purchasing action itself (Mohammad and Davoud 2010).

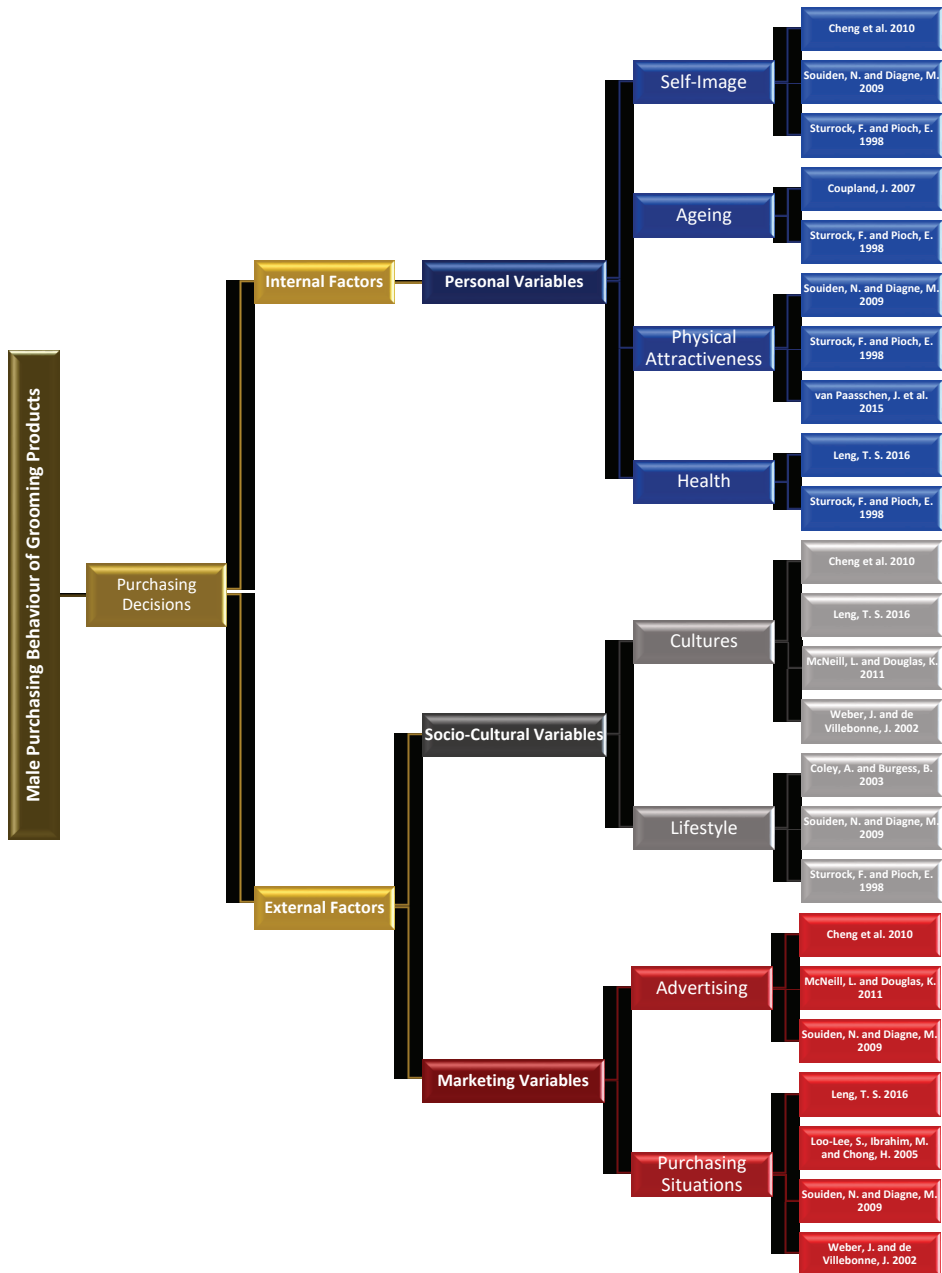


Figure 1: Literature Map

Male Purchasing Behaviour of Grooming Products

Postmodernism has brought a change in attitude towards the traditional male stereotype consumption of grooming products. Men have become key consumers for the grooming industry. Various studies developed a number of strategies to answer men's needs (Weber and de Villebonne 2002). Men approach their shopping task differently to women (Chiger 2001). Their perception towards the consumption of grooming products is different to that of women (Coley and Burgess 2003). They are dedicating more time on enhancing their looks by choosing and purchasing the right grooming products for themselves (Souiden and Diagne 2009; Weber and de Villebonne 2002). Thus, it is no longer a surprise to see men in stores shopping for their own grooming products as they are becoming more and more comfortable buying their own toiletries and cosmetics (Sturrock and Pioch 1998), while maintaining their masculine identity (Loo-Lee et al. 2005). A study carried out by Coley and Burgess (2003) shows that the increase in participation of males in the shopping activity of grooming products is mainly emerging from young men. Moreover, Souiden and Diagne (2009) highlight that men living in urban areas, labelled as *metrosexuals*, are more likely to spend their money on grooming products rather than those living in rural areas, since they give more importance to their self-image and lifestyle. Although, metrosexual men are more conscious about their looks, they are neither homosexual nor androgynous. "They consider themselves as virile people who challenge conventional masculine values (eg. *machismo*) by having a new and trendy lifestyle (eg. they pay a lot of attention to their look and spend their time and money on products such as fitness clubs, healthy food, fashion, etc...)" (Souiden and Diagne 2009: 98). Consequently, the grooming industry launched lines of grooming products designed specifically for men so as to avoid undesirable social labelling. Although limited research has been conducted in this area, the present studies reveal that the male purchasing behaviour of grooming products is also affected by an array of variables (Leng 2016; Souiden and Diagne, 2009; Sturrock and Pioch 1998; Weber and de Villebonne 2002). These variables are grouped into three major categories including personal variables (men's self-image, ageing, physical attractiveness and health); sociocultural variables (cultures and lifestyles); and marketing variables (advertising and purchasing situations) (Souiden and Diagne 2009). Therefore, the following subsections will focus on these variables to obtain a better picture of their corresponding effects on men's consumption of grooming products.

Self-image

Emphasis on self-image and appearance has become a synonym for modern society and this is not an exception for the postmodern men. Cheng et al. (2010) have found that the concept of self-image plays a significant contribution in men's purchasing decision of grooming products. Indeed, one of the main stimuli that drives the consumption of male grooming products is the creation, development and upkeep of self-image which encourages male grooming to achieve the desired identity (Sturrock and Pioch 1998). Thus, the consumption of grooming products defines the identity of the individual (Firat et al. 1995) as it is dependent on the self-image that the individual wishes to present. Featherstone (1993) also suggests that the body is a vehicle of pleasure and self-expression. Self-preservation of the body drives individuals to adopt instrumental approaches and combat its deterioration.

The consumption of grooming products not only helps men to improve their physical image, but it also contributes towards enhancing their psychological wellbeing (Souiden and Diagne 2009) as they become more confident in themselves. For example, acne scars

can lead to anxiety, which in turn can negatively affect one's self-esteem. Thus, the use of the right grooming products such as a face cleanser, an anti-acne face cream and a concealer may be the ideal solution not only to improve physical image, but also to boost their self-confidence level. However, Souiden and Diagne (2009) have also showed that while, the behaviour of the Canadian male grooming market favours the concept of self-image, the French one contradicts it. Thus, this discussion intends to form and test the statement: Self-image has a positive impact on men's consumption of grooming products in Malta.

Ageing

In contrast to women, men used to perceive the ageing factor as less threatening to their self-confidence. However, this perception is changing drastically across the entire globe. The body has become an important gauge of the self. A report published by ACNielsen in 2006 showed that 56% of Asia-Pacific men, 51% of North American men and 49% of European men deem that their thirties are their new twenties (as cited in Souiden and Diagne, 2009).

Men's awareness about the effects of ageing and the idea of holding on to time is driving men to change their behaviour towards the use of grooming products (Coupland 2007; Sturrock and Pioch 1998). Visible, physical ageing such as greying hair and wrinkles are a challenge which can be tackled using grooming products including hair dye and anti-wrinkle creams. According to Coupland (2007), consumers of western cultures deem that keeping the body youthful would help to challenge the ageing factor. This idealisation can be achieved by following a strict set of demands which preserves the youthful appearance of the body (Coupland 2007). Sturrock and Pioch (1998) add that men desire to stay young to experience certain situations and suit their partners. Thus, men's concern about the effects of ageing and the upkeep of a youthful look are dominant purposes for the consumption of male grooming products. Souiden and Diagne's study (2009) supports and contradicts this statement at the same time. While, the behaviour of the Canadian male grooming product market is affected positively by the awareness of men about the effects of ageing, the French one is not. Thus, this discussion seeks to form and test the statement: Ageing awareness has a positive impact on men's consumption of grooming products in Malta.

Physical Attractiveness

Another factor which is fuelling men's consumption of grooming products is the desire to become more physically attractive (Sturrock and Pioch 1998). Men are continuously attempting to improve their attractiveness by consuming grooming products (Wienke, 1998). Souiden and Diagne's work (2009) also backs this up. Their research yields positive results for both French and Canadian male grooming markets as to whether physical attractiveness affects the consumption of grooming products or not.

The promotion of grooming products and services to achieve the ideal and beautiful body is stressing the consumer culture to esteem the importance of appearance and style (Wienke 1998). Physical attractiveness is dominated by physical beauty and external appearance of the self. The use of grooming products contributes to the individuality of the person since physical attractiveness is related to self-image (Sturrock and Pioch 1998). Paasschen et al. (2015) also confirm that the use of fragrant grooming products such as colognes and deodorants could improve self-image; both the physical image and

self-confidence. Besides this, women tend to be more attracted and give more attention to men who smell nice (van Paasschen et al. 2015; Sturrock and Pioch 1998). Thus, this discussion intends to form and test the statement: Physical attractiveness has a positive effect on men's consumption of grooming products in Malta.

Health

Health awareness has become an important element in our daily lives. Despite this, more work needs to be done amongst men to become more conscious about their health (Richardson 2004). Today, several magazines such as *Men's Fitness* and *Men's Health* are being published to address this gap and raise awareness about men's health. Additionally, such magazines also suggest various products to men, including grooming ones to improve their health.

Having radiant skin is a sign of good health. As men start to age, they tend to become more aware of the changes their skin goes through (Leng 2016). Changes can lead to poor skin conditions such as dark spots, dryness and paleness. Consequently, this encourages men to start using grooming products (Sturrock and Pioch 1998) that may help them to restore their skin's vitality. However, Souiden and Diagne's findings (2009) contradict Sturrock and Pioch's (1998) findings. The latter study shows that a positive relationship exists between health concerns and the behavioural attitude of men towards grooming products. The former study shows that neither the French nor the Canadian males' behavioural attitude towards grooming products, is affected by health concerns. Thus, one of the objectives of this discussion is to form and test the statement: Health awareness has a positive effect on men's consumption of grooming products in Malta.

Cultures

Different cultures have different principles, customs and beliefs which influence the choices and actions individuals do in their daily lives. As a result, cultures have a significant influence on the consumer behaviour as they command the behaviour of the individual (Weber and de Villebonne 2002). This aspect is also reflected in men's consumption behaviour of male grooming products (Cheng et al. 2010). Since grooming products have always been labelled as female sex-typed products (Leng 2016), some cultures find it difficult to accept the consumption of male grooming products as they perceive it as a threat for masculinity (Souiden and Diagne 2009). For instance, McNeill and Douglas (2011) found that although the male grooming market in New Zealand was expanding, most of the men still feared that consuming male grooming products would weaken their masculinity. Nevertheless, this factor seems to not influence their related consumption of products, at all, both in Canada and in France (Souiden and Diagne 2009).

To counteract the ideology that grooming products are not for men, the grooming industry is trying to educate societies through ads and marketing messages which present men's grooming products as "designed to treat and enhance the face and body while maintaining their masculinity" (Souiden and Diagne 2009: 100). Additionally, societies are expected to gradually accept the consumption of male grooming products. Thus, this discussion aims to form and test the statement: Culture strongly influences men's consumption of grooming products in Malta.

Lifestyle

One of the major factors which influences the purchasing and consumption behaviour of consumers, is lifestyle (Coley and Burgess 2003). In the postmodern world, consumers "make lifestyle a life project and display their individuality and sense of style in the assemblage of goods, clothes, practices, experiences and bodily dispositions" (Featherstone 1991, as cited in Souiden and Diagne 2009: 100).

Career-oriented men tend to be more conscious about their looks. Their adopted lifestyle compels them to use grooming products to refine their appearances (Souiden and Diagne 2009) so as to always look good. Likewise, men with professional-managerial jobs have the tendency to take on grooming more than others, since they have the necessary resources (i.e. time and money) to invest in their social identity (Sturrock and Pioch 1998). Souiden and Diagne (2009) also outline that the area where one lives also affects the perception of consuming male grooming products. Men living in urban areas tend to consume more grooming products than those living in rural areas because their lifestyle requires them to give more attention to their looks. Thus, this discussion plans to form and test the statement: Lifestyle strongly influences men's consumption of grooming products in Malta.

Advertising

Marketing strategies adopted by the grooming industry such as celebrity endorsements could also be a trigger for the increase in sales of male grooming products. Studies show that men's consumption behaviour of grooming products is positively influenced by advertisements targeted for this purpose (Cheng et al. 2010; Souiden and Diagne, 2009). As a result, this positive relationship is leading the grooming product industry not only to invest on advertising and promotions targeted towards both men and women. Such advertisements and promotions challenge the traditional ideology of men's masculinity regarding the consumption of grooming products (Souiden and Diagne 2009). Advertisements help men to become more comfortable to purchase and use such products since more awareness is being created about the importance of their appearances (McNeill and Douglas 2011). Nowadays, celebrity endorsements have become a popular trend to target the male grooming market. Companies are endorsing celebrities such as Adam Levine, David Beckham and David Gandy amongst others to retail their grooming products through constructive imagery that offsets negative attributions. Celebrity endorsements help men to modify their perception towards the consumption of grooming products with the purpose to foster a uniform thought in people's minds and think about grooming products, "not as a girly routine, [but] as an enhancement product that even a macho man can use" (Souiden and Diagne 2009: 101). Thus, this discussion aims to form and test the statement: Men's grooming product advertisements strongly influence men's consumption of grooming products in Malta.

Purchasing Situations

Purchasing situations such as the store's location and environment, the type of distribution and knowledgeable shop assistants are also found to significantly influence the purchasing behaviour of men towards grooming products (Weber and de Villebonne 2002). However, Souiden and Diagne (2009) concluded that while the French male consumers are affected by this attitude, the Canadians are not. This distinction may have resulted due to the distribution channel of male grooming products as it varies

from country to country. For instance, in France, male grooming products could only be bought from perfumeries, pharmacies, department stores and outlets (Weber and de Villebonne 2002). Meanwhile, in Canada, male grooming products are distributed in convenient stores, supermarkets and on the internet (Souiden and Diagne 2009). This distinction in distribution conveys different messages. Male grooming products found in perfumeries and department stores are often labelled as luxurious and quality products whereas, those found in supermarkets are aimed towards men, “who seek discretion, anonymity (at the purchase time) and reasonably priced products” (Souiden and Diagne 2009: 101).

When compared to females, males perceive their shopping experience of grooming products as a mission which is best achieved through convenience (Leng 2016). Loo-Lee et al. (2005), remark that the store's environment such as aesthetics and interior design also play a crucial role in the development of men's purchasing decision of grooming products. Keeping this in mind, the male grooming industry is now dedicating special sections in stores, and opening grooming shops, exclusively for men to help them feel comfortable during their shopping experience of grooming products. Thus, this discussion wants to form and test the statement: Purchasing situations have a significant influence on men's purchasing behaviour of grooming products in Malta.

Final Thoughts on Empirical Research

As men's perception towards the traditional male consumption stereotype of grooming products has changed, men have become key consumers for the grooming industry. It is no longer a surprise to see men in stores, shopping for their own grooming products (Sturrock and Pioch 1998) while maintaining their masculinity (Loo-Lee et al. 2005). In addition to this, the presented literature shows that the male purchasing behaviour of grooming products is mainly affected by three main categories of variables: personal variables, socio-economic variables and marketing variables (Leng 2016; Souiden and Diagne 2009; Sturrock and Pioch 1998; Weber and de Villebonne 2002). Not all studies show that positive correlations exist between the male grooming consumption habits and the highlighted categories of variables. The level of these relationships varies from one country to another respectively as different countries have different values (Cheng et al. 2010; Leng 2016; McNeill and Douglas 2011; Souiden and Diagne 2009; Weber and de Villebonne 2002). Thus, without bias, the researcher presumes that the acquired findings of the proposed study will form a pattern of both positive and negative correlations. Different levels of correlations will be investigated between the male purchasing behaviour of grooming products in Malta and the mentioned variables.

Research Methodology

The Research Tool

This study takes a postpositive approach as the gap in research reflects the need to evaluate the factors which are influencing the proposed research question. Such approach helps to, “reduce the ideas into a small, discrete set to test, such as the variables that comprise hypotheses and research questions” (Creswell 2014: 7).

The survey research provides structured numerical data which gives a clear indication of the behavioural “trends, attitudes or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population” (Creswell 2014: 13). Although, at the beginning, qualitative research was being considered since it offers an opportunity for discovering and understanding the behaviour of individuals (Creswell 2014), the sensitivity of the research questions and respondents’ replies could have been restricted using this method. Indeed, as perceived from the literature review, grooming products have the tendency of being labelled by society as female oriented products (Leng 2016) and therefore, participants may feel uncomfortable to express their grooming attitudes in front of others while being interviewed. This fact has also been highlighted by McNeill and Douglas (2011). Results showed that despite the fact that the male grooming market in New Zealand was expanding, most of the men still feared that consuming male grooming products would weaken their masculinity. Thus, the researcher deemed that shifting to a quantitative research tool would compensate for such a characteristic since by using a quantitative approach, participants are given the benefit of privacy. As a result, an online questionnaire was developed through *Google Forms* with the aim of evaluating the mentioned variables in the literature review (i.e. personal, sociocultural and marketing variables respectively).

The questionnaire was divided into three sections. The first section focussed on the participants’ profile such as age, country of residence, marital status, occupation, income and average amount of money spent on grooming products. Meanwhile, the second section focussed on the type of grooming products that participants use (i.e. toiletries and cosmetics). The third and last section comprised a set of multi-item scale questions which tested the proposed variables so as to shed light on men’s consumption behaviour of grooming products. *Table 1* illustrates the underlying hypothesis which was considered while developing the questions of the concerned section. These questions were measured on a Likert scale, ‘1’ being ‘Strongly disagree’ to ‘5’ being ‘Strongly agree’. Keeping in mind that participants could have different educational and cultural backgrounds, Likert scale questions are a universal technique of gathering data and thus, they are easy to understand. Additionally, the use of a scale also means that the responses may be more honest, since participants are not required to express their opinion in their own words.

Category	Hypothesis
Personal	H1: Self-image has a positive impact on men's consumption of grooming products in Malta
	H2: Ageing awareness has a positive impact on men's consumption of grooming products in Malta
	H3: Physical attractiveness has a positive effect on men's consumption of grooming products in Malta
	H4: Health awareness has a positive effect on men's consumption of grooming products in Malta
Socio-Cultural	H5: Culture strongly influences men's consumption of grooming products in Malta
	H6: Lifestyle strongly influences men's consumption of grooming products in Malta
Marketing	H7: Men's grooming product advertisements strongly influence men's consumption of grooming products in Malta
	H8: Purchasing situations have a significant influence on men's purchasing behaviour of grooming products in Malta

Table 1: Underlying Hypothesis on which the Third Section of the Questionnaire is formed

Online questionnaires are one of the most widely used mediums for collecting data given that they reach a greater sample. The researcher was aware that, "same questions [could] have different meanings for different people" (Cohen et al. 2011: 411). Thus, while creating the questionnaire, special attention was given to the content and clarity of the questions so as to acquire less rigid and more valid answers, "complicated instructions and complex procedures intimidate respondents" (Cohen et al. 2011: 399).

Research Findings and Analysis

The Sample

Sampling was carried through two sampling techniques: Convenience sampling followed by Simple random sampling. Since the main purpose of the proposed research question aimed to target the male consumer behaviour towards grooming products in Malta, only men who live in Malta had the opportunity to take part in this study as this research focussed on their behaviour, irrespective of their nationality. Due to time limitations, convenience sampling was chosen as the underlying sampling technique to generate a pool of participants by sharing the designed online questionnaire via different social media platforms including *Instagram*, *Facebook* and *Google+*, amongst others to reach a wider audience. It is important to remark that the researcher was aware that adopting such an approach – a non-probability sampling – might be prone to bias; the sample is dependent on the proximity of the researcher to participate in the sample (Creswell, 2014). Thus, to avoid such a phenomenon, simple random sampling was applied on the sample, initially collected sample: Each questionnaire was assigned a sequential number and then selected randomly to be analysed with the help of the random number

generated software using *Microsoft Excel*. In this way, each participant had an equal probability of being chosen from the initially formed pool of participants so as to achieve a reliable sample to be analysed (Creswell 2014). After carrying out this process, a total sample of 60 participants out of 94 were chosen; reaching a 99% confidence level with a confidence interval of 10.

The first and second sections of the questionnaire, were more focussed on the participants' demographic and grooming consumption profile while, the third section consisted of 42 statements for which each participant had to rate how strongly he agreed or disagreed with each statement. Additionally, these statements included both a repeated statement as well as a negatively worded one so as to check the validity of the responses. Such a procedure ensures that the responses given by the participants are free from any systematic errors (Hair Jr. et al. 2018). Before compiling any results, the responses of the two referred statements were checked against their respective counterpart statement and thus, the randomly chosen participants from the conveniently generated sample who were not consistent in their replies were eliminated from the study. In this process, a mere total of two participants were removed, leaving a final sample of 58 questionnaires to be analysed.

The profile of the gathered sample (see *Table 2*) shows that most of the participants were aged between 20 and 39 years old (91.4%). This supports the findings of Coley and Burgess (2003), that the increase in participation of males in the shopping activity of grooming products is mainly surfacing among young men. Also, more than half of the participants were single (63.8%) and 72.4% of them were employed as professionals, while 17.2% were still students. Career-oriented men tend to be more conscious about their looks. They also have the necessary resources to invest in their social identity (Sturrock and Pioch, 1998). In relation to this, almost three quarters of the participants earned an average net monthly income ranging between €1,000 and €3,000 (i.e. 51.7% had more than or equal to, a monthly income between €1,000 and €2,000; while, 22.4% had between €2,000 and €3,000 in monthly income). Additionally, only 10.3% earned an average monthly income of more than €3,000 while, 15.5% earned less than €1,000 monthly. An interesting revelation in the replies was that nine out of every ten participants remarked that they had been using grooming products for either more than a year (36.2%) or since they were very young (55.2%). Meanwhile, on a monthly basis 70.7% of the sample spent an average budget of less than €50 on grooming products while, 25.9% spent an average budget ranging between €50 and €150 (i.e. 20.7% spent between €50 and €100; 5.2% between €100 and €150). In contrast to this, only 3.4% spent more than €200. As regards to time, on a daily basis most of the participants spent an average of less than half an hour on their grooming routine (i.e. 60.3% less than 15 minutes; 37.9% between 15 and 30 minutes) while, only 1.7% spent between 45 and 60 minutes on grooming. This contradicts Euromonitor's (2014) findings where on average, 33% of the men spent more than half an hour on their grooming daily routine.

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Demographics			
Gender	Male	58	100.0%
	Female	0	0.0%
Age	Under 20	1	1.7%
	20 – 39	53	91.4%
	40 – 59	2	3.4%
	60 and above	2	3.4%
Country of Residence	Malta	58	100.0%
	Other	0	0.0%
Status and Employment			
Marital Status	Single	37	63.8%
	Married / Cohabiting	20	34.5%
	Separated / Divorced	1	1.7%
Occupation	Student	10	17.2%
	Manager	1	1.7%
	Professional	42	72.4%
	Technician / Associate Professional	2	3.4%
	Clerical Support Worker	1	1.7%
	Service / Sales Worker	1	1.7%
	Skilled Agricultural / Forestry / Fishery Worker	0	0.0%
	Craft and related Trades Worker	0	0.0%
	Plant and Machine Operator / Assembler	1	1.7%
	Elementary Occupation	0	0.0%
	Unemployed / Retired	0	0.0%
Average Net Monthly Income	Less than €1000	9	15.5%
	€1000 or more but less than €2000	30	51.7%
	€2000 or more but less than €3000	13	22.4%
	€3000 or more	6	10.3%
Grooming Habits			
How long have you been using grooming products?	Recently	5	8.6%
	Less than a year	0	0.0%
	More than a year	21	36.2%
	Since a very young age	32	55.2%

On a monthly average, how much do you spend on grooming products?	Less than €50	41	70.7%
	€50 or more but less than €100	12	20.7%
	€100 or more but less than €150	3	5.2%
	€150 or more but less than €200	0	0.0%
	€200 or more	2	3.4%
On a daily average, how many minutes do you spend on your grooming routine?	Less than 15 minutes	35	60.3%
	15 minutes or more but less than 30 minutes	22	37.9%
	30 minutes or more but less than 45 minutes	0	0.0%
	45 minutes or more but less than 60 minutes	1	1.7%
	60 minutes or more	0	0.0%

Table 2: Profile of Sample

Which of these grooming products do you use on a regular basis?					
	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage
Hair Care			Shave Care		
Shampoo	57	98.3%	Razors / Blades	45	77.6%
Conditioner	42	72.4%	Shaving Cream / Foam / Gel	37	63.8%
Hair Styling Products	39	67.2%	Aftershave Lotion	30	51.7%
Body Hair Removal Products	24	41.4%	Beard Oil	10	17.2%
Body Care			Face Care		
Body Wash	57	98.3%	Face Wash	44	75.9%
Body Exfoliator	19	32.8%	Face Exfoliator	22	37.9%
Moisturizer	25	43.1%	Face Serum	11	19.0%
Sunscreen	31	53.4%	Face Moisturizer	25	43.1%
Tanning Lotion	7	12.1%	Face Masks	10	17.2%
Deodorant / Antiperspirant	56	96.6%	Eye Cream / Gel	8	13.8%
Eau de Parfum / Eau de Toilette / Eau de Cologne	53	91.4%	Toning Lotion	8	13.8%
Oral Care			Make-Up		

Toothpaste	58	100.0%	Foundation / Concealer	5	8.6%
Mouthwash	39	67.2%	Eyebrow Filler	1	1.7%
Tooth Whitening Products	19	32.8%	Bronzer	0	0.0%
Dental Floss	18	31.0%	Lip Balm	5	8.6%

Table 3: *Segmentation of Male Grooming Products*

Men have become more aware of their image and more actively involved in choosing, buying and consuming grooming products (Souiden and Diagne 2009). The above table (Table 3) focuses on the data gathered from the sample related to the segmentation of the male grooming products used on a regular basis. Stereotypical male grooming products such as shampoo (98.3%), razors / blades (77.6%), body wash (98.3%), deodorant / antiperspirant (96.6%), face wash (75.9%) and toothpaste (100%) exhibited higher frequencies of regular use over other innovative male grooming products such as body hair removal products (41.4%), body exfoliator (32.8%), face masks (17.2%), eye cream / gel (13.8%), face toning lotion (13.8%) and tooth whitening products (32.8%) amongst others. Make-up products were characterised with low percentages of regular use among all the listed grooming products. None of the products in the make-up category exceeded 10% usage within the sample (i.e. foundation / concealer 8.6%; eyebrow filler 1.7%; bronzer 0%; and lip balm 8.6%). This inclination may be the result of the fostered ideology that certain grooming products are attributed to the domain of female consumption (Leng 2016). Even though the grooming industry launched lines of grooming products designed specifically for men, some cultures still find it difficult to accept the consumption of male grooming products, with men registering personal societal perceptions as determining that this weakens one's masculinity (McNeill and Douglas 2011; Souiden and Diagne 2009), and thus being undesirably labelled in one's social circles.

Reliability Test and Factor Analysis

To analyse the data collected SPSS 24.0 was used. Before carrying out any statistical tests, the Cronbach's alpha was computed for the presented Likert Scale statements. This coefficient of reliability is a measure of internal consistency which determines how closely related a set of variables are as a group (Hair Jr. et al. 2018). The alpha value for the forty tested statements was found to be 0.907, indicating that the variables have relatively strong internal consistency. Although, alpha values near or equal to '0.9' are considered as ideal to obtain, this does not imply that the research tool is unidimensional. Thus, an exploratory factor analysis approach was applied on the tested variables. The basic concept of applying this statistical tool is that for a group of observed variables there is a set of underlying factors (i.e. smaller than the observed group) that can justify the interrelationships amongst these variables; different variables have similar patterns of responses as they are all correlated with a latent variable. In other words, this multivariate technique enhances the validity of the research tool by defining the fundamental structure amongst the variables being analysed. And, it examines the patterns of multidimensional relationships for a number of variables and determines how the data gathered can be grouped into a smaller set of factors with a nominal loss of information (Hair Jr. et al. 2018).

The factor reduction technique was applied on the forty factors presented to indicate whether they influence men's consumer behaviour towards grooming products in Malta, illustrated in *Table 4*. The value of the initial eigenvalues (referring to the 'Total' column) was considered. It specifies the variability in the original variables accounted for by each factor. A component with an eigenvalue of '1' represents the variance of a single variable. Factors which fail to account for less variance than a single variable are considered insignificant and thus, they should be disregarded (Hair Jr. et al. 2018). For the tested dataset, eleven components with an eigenvalue greater than '1' were established and showed 76.109% of the total variance. Meanwhile, though the column of 'Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings', retained the cumulative percentage of variance, the variance was distributed more evenly over the eleven extracted components.

Total Variance Explained									
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9.925	24.812	24.812	9.925	24.812	24.812	4.964	12.411	12.411
2	4.658	11.645	36.457	4.658	11.645	36.457	4.137	10.343	22.754
3	3.044	7.610	44.067	3.044	7.610	44.067	3.171	7.927	30.681
4	2.240	5.601	49.668	2.240	5.601	49.668	2.755	6.888	37.569
5	1.947	4.868	54.536	1.947	4.868	54.536	2.652	6.630	44.199
6	1.827	4.567	59.104	1.827	4.567	59.104	2.595	6.488	50.687
7	1.763	4.408	63.511	1.763	4.408	63.511	2.387	5.967	56.653
8	1.576	3.940	67.451	1.576	3.940	67.451	2.183	5.459	62.112
9	1.269	3.174	70.625	1.269	3.174	70.625	2.064	5.161	67.273
10	1.158	2.894	73.519	1.158	2.894	73.519	1.834	4.584	71.857
11	1.036	2.589	76.109	1.036	2.589	76.109	1.701	4.252	76.109
12	0.970	2.425	78.534						
13	0.883	2.207	80.740						
14	0.767	1.918	82.658						
15	0.745	1.862	84.520						
16	0.638	1.594	86.115						
17	0.588	1.470	87.585						
18	0.530	1.324	88.909						
19	0.466	1.166	90.075						
20	0.443	1.107	91.182						
21	0.435	1.088	92.270						
22	0.371	0.928	93.198						
23	0.357	0.893	94.092						
24	0.340	0.850	94.942						
25	0.301	0.753	95.695						
26	0.252	0.631	96.325						

27	0.231	0.578	96.903		
28	0.210	0.526	97.429		
29	0.197	0.492	97.921		
30	0.147	0.366	98.287		
31	0.124	0.310	98.598		
32	0.118	0.294	98.892		
33	0.106	0.266	99.158		
34	0.095	0.237	99.395		
35	0.074	0.184	99.579		
36	0.058	0.144	99.723		
37	0.056	0.141	99.864		
38	0.027	0.069	99.933		
39	0.020	0.050	99.983		
40	0.007	0.017	100.000		

Table 4: Initial Extraction Method – Principal Component Analysis

To establish the optimal number of components which contribute significantly to the solution, a scree plot is generated. Scree plots help researchers to determine this by plotting such factors on the steep slope of the generated plot before an inflection point is formed, and thus the curve begins to straighten out horizontally. This point is “considered to represent those factors containing more unique rather than common variance and thus are less suitable for retention” (Hair Jr. et al. 2018: 142). The scree plot shown below (see Figure 2) corresponds to the studied research question, and one could observe that eight factors which represent 67.451% of the meaning of the data should be retained.

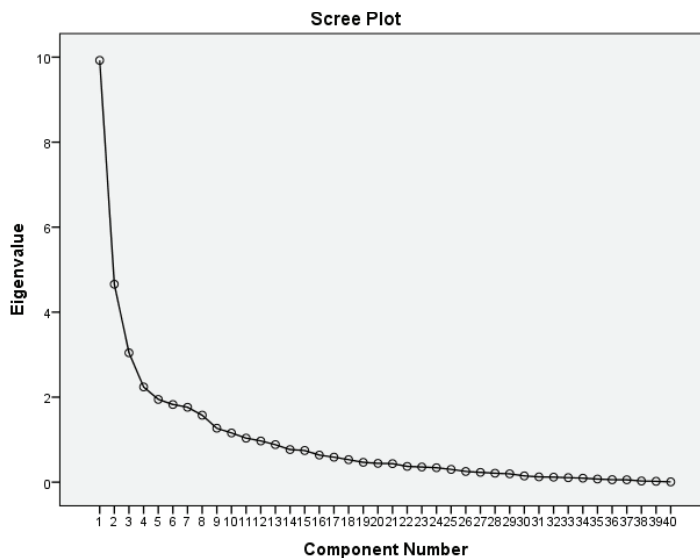


Figure 2: Scree Plot

After analysing the Rotated Component Matrix presented in Table 5, the highlighted cells illustrate how the initial forty variables being studied were mapped to the eight newly formed factors focussing on which drives and attitudes generate men's consumption of grooming products in the Maltese islands. As a result, the conceptual framework for this study is updated to the one shown in Figure 3 in which personal image, nurturing a healthy youthful look, social influences, personal lifestyle, product choice, product knowledge, personal hygiene and masculinity are affecting men's current purchasing behaviour of grooming products in Malta.

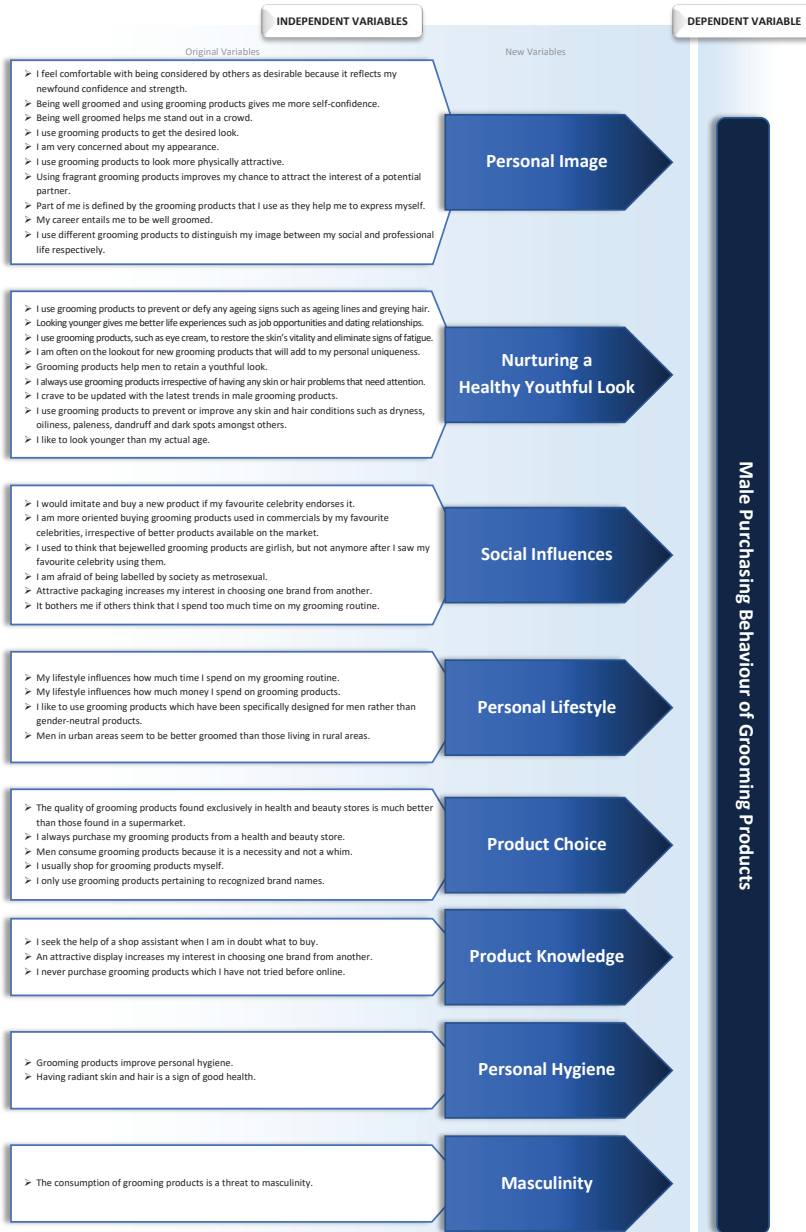


Figure 3: Dimension Reduction – Revised Conceptual Framework

Rotated Component Matrix ^a								
	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
SI_Newfound_Confidence_Strength	0.811	0.158	0.052	0.014	0.058	0.089	0.208	0.035
PA_More_SelfConfidence	0.772	0.381	0.023	0.113	-0.022	0.210	0.139	-0.119
SI_WellGroomed_StandOut	0.727	0.114	0.157	0.149	0.120	-0.014	0.013	0.109
SI_Desired_Look	0.679	0.119	-0.126	0.104	0.090	0.296	-0.067	-0.033
SI_Concerned_Appearance	0.609	0.291	-0.015	-0.009	0.139	-0.305	0.264	-0.198
PA_More_Physically_Attractive	0.584	0.360	-0.072	0.024	0.067	0.389	0.179	-0.108
PA_Interest_Potential_Partner	0.581	0.156	0.124	0.125	-0.035	0.406	-0.262	-0.095
SI_Help_Express_Myself	0.576	0.316	0.116	0.193	0.393	-0.166	-0.017	0.004
L_Career_Well_Groomed	0.454	0.208	0.112	0.329	-0.209	-0.213	0.290	0.380
Ag_Prevent_Defy_Ageing_Signs	0.137	0.788	-0.031	0.293	0.126	-0.009	0.219	-0.049
Ag_Better_Life_Experiences	0.217	0.710	0.065	0.353	0.041	0.198	-0.158	0.080
H_Restore_SkinVitality_EliminateSigns of Fatigue	0.210	0.686	0.076	-0.172	0.059	0.103	0.095	0.150
PA_Add_Personal_Uniqueness	0.458	0.680	0.124	-0.148	0.121	-0.069	-0.243	0.163
Ag_Retain_Youthful_Look	0.196	0.606	0.032	0.286	-0.017	0.027	0.011	-0.044
H_Always_Use_Products_No Matter What	0.317	0.579	-0.066	-0.149	0.211	0.269	0.318	-0.153
L_Updated_Latest_Trends	0.424	0.540	0.233	0.111	0.207	-0.161	-0.358	0.049
H_Prevent_Improve_Skin_Hair_Conditions	0.441	0.448	0.239	-0.080	-0.168	0.382	-0.002	-0.067
Ag_Like_Look_Younger	0.033	0.429	-0.266	0.011	0.065	0.260	0.085	-0.069
Ad_Imitate_Celebrity	0.096	0.173	0.823	-0.122	-0.073	0.056	0.015	0.020
Ad_Commercials_Celebrity	0.160	0.000	0.793	-0.174	0.021	0.279	-0.077	-0.044
Ad_Perception_Use_Celebrity	-0.071	0.027	0.789	0.067	0.071	-0.034	-0.088	-0.112
C_Afraid_Labelled_Metrosexual	-0.064	-0.110	0.554	0.324	0.026	0.029	-0.166	0.197
Ad_Attractive_Packaging	0.409	0.087	0.546	0.277	-0.032	0.260	-0.227	-0.002
C_OthersThoughts_Time_GroomingRoutine	-0.050	-0.350	0.509	0.436	0.168	0.077	0.036	0.149
L_Time_Spent	0.156	0.306	-0.062	0.776	0.050	0.104	0.072	-0.009
L_Money_Spent	0.198	0.151	0.041	0.765	0.197	0.014	0.082	-0.165
C_Products_ForMen	0.084	-0.189	0.254	0.541	0.287	0.314	0.198	0.281
PS_Quality_HealthBeauty_Stores_better_Supermarket	-0.007	0.038	0.138	0.042	0.848	0.121	0.006	-0.009
PS_Always_Purchase_HealthBeauty_Store	0.157	0.060	-0.186	0.116	0.844	-0.064	0.053	0.154
L_Necessity_Not_Whim	0.111	0.299	0.350	0.261	0.509	0.027	0.196	-0.095
PS_Shop_Myself	0.149	0.322	-0.401	0.085	0.462	0.211	-0.050	-0.229
Ad_Recognized_Brand_Names	0.300	0.037	0.360	0.248	0.371	0.024	0.012	0.304
PS_Help_ShopAssistant	0.145	0.107	0.144	0.162	0.022	0.780	0.085	0.019

PS_Attractive_Display	0.254	0.117	0.570	0.183	0.046	0.576	-0.140	-0.007
PS_Never_Purchase_Online	0.019	0.206	0.211	-0.066	0.195	0.530	0.067	0.401
H_Improves_Personal_Hygiene	0.207	0.164	-0.035	-0.022	0.124	0.174	0.766	-0.100
H_Radiant_Skin_Hair_GoodHealth	0.337	0.052	-0.215	0.231	0.112	-0.005	0.732	0.052
L_Distinguish_Different_Images	0.352	0.090	0.128	-0.108	0.113	0.142	-0.592	0.150
L_Urban_Men_Better_Groomed	-0.106	0.004	0.205	0.276	0.013	-0.011	0.098	-0.758
C_Threat_Masculinity	-0.291	0.004	0.151	0.233	0.076	0.065	-0.146	0.735
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. ^a								
a. Rotation converged in 9 iterations.								

Table 5: Rotation Component Matrix

Limitations and Research for Further Studies

Some limitations of this study should be considered when interpreting the obtained results. From a statistical point of view, the sample may lack the potential to generalise the representation of the entire local male population. To overcome such a shortcoming, it would be interesting to expand this research by encouraging more men from different spectrums to take part in the study. As a result, besides online questionnaires, future research should consider other survey data collection techniques: Face-to-face or phone survey techniques which can be implemented so as to reach respondents who are either computer illiterate or do not have full access to the internet. This will gather a more comprehensive insight of respondents' consumption behaviour patterns which will better represent the population of the country. Meanwhile, there are other unexamined matters that future research can focus on to enhance the understanding of the male consumer behaviour towards grooming products while, focusing on men's drives and attitudes that generate the consumption of such products in Malta. Indeed, this study finds that such behaviour is influenced by several factors attributed to personal, socio-cultural and marketing variables. This implies that more elaborative statistical tests, such as the application of correlation tests should be carried out to determine which factors manifest prime significance and cast magnifying effects on the targeted consumers. It may also be intriguing to extend this study by generating a comparative study between males and females. The literature shows that males process their grooming activities differently from females, both genders have different drives and motives towards the purchasing behaviour and consumption of grooming products.

Conclusion

This study examines Malta's male grooming market. It provides insights into the male consumer behaviour towards grooming products while focussing on men's drives and attitudes that generate the consumption of such products, locally. After the research tool had been administered randomly, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on the data gathered to reduce the number of variables to a smaller set. The model obtained provides a fundamental structure among the independent variables being analysed, revealing a set of factors which are currently affecting male consumer behaviour

towards grooming products in Malta. These are namely: Personal image, the nurturing of a healthy youthful look, social influences, personal lifestyle, product choice, product knowledge, personal hygiene and masculinity. Additionally, this research is already giving an indication on what the stakeholders in the male grooming industry should focus on while tackling the Maltese market and thusly address the latest male grooming needs. The next stage of this study encourages other related research initiatives to test whether the factors which were previously found through literature, significantly affect the consumption and purchasing behaviour of male grooming products. The results obtained will then be compared to the literature and generalised to the whole population of interest to the study.

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