SKIMS A/B Campaign Test
MGT 6462: Consumer Behavior
Section 2 9:45-11:15pm M/W

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Executive Summary

SKIMS is a rapidly growing name in the fashion industry. Created by media personality Kim Kardashian in 2019, SKIMS is known for their shapewear and loungewear. The clothing line is widely known across social media platforms and resonates most with Generation Z. SKIMS prides itself on being an inclusive clothing brand that is made for all body types. Since the initial creation of SKIMS, the company utilizes celebrity endorsers to advertise their collections. The purpose of our research project is centered around SKIMS celebrity endorsers.

Our group conducted an A/B test to determine consumer's willingness to buy the new Men's SKIMS collection based on the level of masculinity of the endorser. Our plan was to use Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the Perceptual Process, and System 1 and 2 thinking, to determine which attributes of the celebrity endorser have the heaviest effect on purchasing behavior, specifically for men and women. SKIMS can then use this information to determine how to proceed when choosing their celebrities.

We created a survey through Qualtrics that was centered around our hypothesis and independent/dependent variables. Test A included photos of Jacob Elordi posing for SKIMS while Test B included photos of Odell Beckham wearing the SKIMS line. Half of our survey participants were shown Test A while the other half was shown Test B. There were many key results we found through our survey that helped support our hypothesis. It was very clear through our open ended questions that Jacob Elordi was perceived more for the "female-gaze" through his physical looks while Odell Beckham was perceived more of the "male-gaze" through his athletic abilities and personality traits. We were able to conclude that men were more likely to purchase from the Men's line when shown Odell Beckham, not Jacob Elordi. We also found that

females were likely to purchase from the Men's line as a gift for someone else, no matter what celebrity they were shown.

Because of the results we received, our group created multiple recommendations for SKIMS to consider further down the line. These recommendations include continuing the use of athletic celebrity endorsers, partnering with social media influencers to encourage the idea of purchasing SKIMS for someone else, creating SKIMS pop-ups at March Madness games, and partnering with the NFL to create SKIMS practice clothing. Although we believe our A/B test was successful, we are also aware that there were limitations. For example, our participant pool was mainly female. In order for this test to be more accurate, we would need a larger number of male participants taking our survey. Despite the multiple limitations we encountered, our survey results were able to support our hypothesis and allow us to determine clear managerial insights that we will discuss further.

Problem Description

In 2020, SKIMS released their Boyfriend Collection that included undergarments and sets intended for females to purchase and wear. The idea for this campaign originated from females stealing their boyfriends clothing. Kim Kardasian capitalized on this idea by creating loungewear that claims to be more trendy and comfortable than the clothing one would steal from their boyfriend. To a great surprise, the majority of the consumers of the Boyfriend Collection were actually men. The females who initially purchased from this collection noticed that their boyfriends were stealing the items for themselves as well. The abundance in support from men led SKIMS to understand that there is an unexpected market of males that would be SKIMS customers. The success of the SKIMS Boyfriend Collection was an indicator of the internal market gap that they can now capitalize on with a designated Mens Collection. The male

customers that were already purchasing the singular shirt or boxers from the Boyfriend Collection were the intended target market for the SKIMS Mens Collection. This solved the problem of males not having a direct line that catered to their clothing desires. Comfort, Stretch, and Sport are the three fabrics included in the collection. By providing these product offerings, SKIMS was able to capture a bigger market in the clothing industry.

We were able to identify the positive response for the Men's Collection based on the success seen on the SKIMS Instagram posts announcing the Men's Collection. The press release article was another huge indicator on the predicted success of the campaign, which helped identify our focal consumer topic of the likelihood of SKIMS consumers to purchase from the Men's Collection. The hype built around the launch resulted in a lot of traffic on the SKIMS website. According to Marca, over 25,000 orders were placed within the first 5 minutes of the Men's Collection launch. From the success of the social media campaigns, PR, and consumer testimonials leading up to the launch, we were inclined to do further research on men's likelihood of purchasing the Men's Collection.

Research Approach

Our team conducted an A/B test utilizing a Qualtrics survey to gauge consumer reactions to the level of masculinity portrayed by the chosen endorser for the new SKIMS Men's Collection. Given the current trend of celebrities serving as the "face" of brands, we selected Jacob Elordi (Actor) and Odell Beckham Jr. (NFL Wide Receiver), who are both widely recognized and respected figures in their fields. Jacob Elordi is frequently perceived as a subject of the "female gaze" in the media, leading us to anticipate that his campaign would primarily appeal to female customers purchasing the new men's line. Conversely, Odell Beckham Jr., a

prominent NFL figure, is regarded more as an aspirational figure for men rather than a "sex symbol," suggesting that his campaign would primarily attract male customers.

To begin our research, we looked at the previous campaigns SKIMS has done for both their womens and mens collections. During this point we also looked at the types of celebrities that were used to promote campaigns across their different channels. Using this information, we conducted secondary research to explore SKIMS' success and revenue streams. However, as SKIMS operates as a private company, detailed figures regarding its growth and sales since its inception are not publicly available. Nonetheless, leveraging Kim Kardashian's substantial public presence, we were able to estimate the business's performance since its founding, through articles written by CNN, Business of Fashion and The New York Times. From an article in The New York Times, it was revealed that as of 2023, SKIMS had achieved profitability and was projected to generate approximately $750 million in net sales, marking a substantial increase of $500 million from 2022 (de la Merced, 2023). Further investigation also revealed that men constituted 10% of SKIMS' existing customer base, which prompted the brand to officially establish themselves into the lucrative $5.7 billion men's underwear market. Kardashian herself emphasized the significance of this expansion in a press release, stating, "The expansion into the menswear space is a major milestone for the brand, and a testament to Skims' commitment to providing solutions for everybody" (Valinsky, 2023).

This research led us to define our research objectives, as they involved several key aspects aimed at understanding consumer behavior and optimizing brand strategy:

1. First, we were seeking to determine the potential success of the new male SKIMS line by assessing consumers' willingness to purchase, particularly in relation to the masculinity of the chosen endorser. This analysis will provide valuable

insights into the effectiveness of the brand's marketing approach and inform future campaign decisions.

2. Secondly, we aimed to conduct a comprehensive study utilizing motivational assumptions and Maslow's hierarchy of needs to dissect the factors influencing purchase behavior among both men and women when exposed to advertisements featuring celebrities of varying perceived masculinity. By understanding these underlying motivations, we can drive sales by tailoring marketing strategies to resonate more effectively with target audiences.

3. Finally, our research hopes to identify the specific attributes that should be prioritized when selecting celebrity endorsers to support the SKIMS brand. By gathering data on consumer perceptions and preferences, we aim to uncover the key qualities that resonate most strongly with the target demographic, ultimately informing strategic decisions to maximize revenue and brand success.

After defining these objectives, we were able to formulate our hypothesis as follows: *If the celebrity featured in the advertisement varies based on perceived masculinity, then purchasing behavior will exhibit corresponding changes*. Our primary independent variable was the level of masculinity of the spokesperson in the advertisements. Our dependent variable was the participants willingness to purchase on a 1-7 Likert scale. Other variables that were tested were the level of attractiveness of the spokesperson in the ad, willingness to purchase for yourself, and willingness to purchase for someone else. Another dependent variable we tested was the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements, and how these campaigns could potentially increase revenue for a brand and strengthen their position in a market.

In the Qualtrics survey that was sent out, 98 participants were randomly assigned to view one of two mock campaigns labeled "Test A: Jacob Elordi" and "Test B: Odell Beckham Jr." *(Appendix 11 & Appendix 12)*. Prior to seeing the ads, participants were given a brief description of the celebrity. After the campaigns were shown, participants were instructed to rate their willingness to purchase for themselves and for someone else, on a 1-7 Likert scale. They were then asked to rate on a scale of 1-7 how much the *masculinity* and *attractiveness* of the celebrity endorser affected their purchasing decisions. From there, all participants were asked general questions on their preferences when viewing brand advertisements with celebrities. Our team asked these questions to gauge participant's familiarity with the brand, while also seeking to identify SKIMS consumers by knowing their past purchasing behavior. Additionally, asking if they would recommend SKIMS to someone else provides us with insight into their brand perceptions and attitudes towards the company as a whole. Among the participants, 67% identified as female, while 33% identified as male. The average age of the participants was 36 years old, with the youngest participant aged 21 and the oldest aged 78.

Main Findings

When looking at the data gathered from Qualtrics, there were many valuable insights that could be gathered, both quantitatively and qualitatively. We are hoping to aid SKIMS in applying the data to their brand and campaigns moving forward. When looking at *Appendix 1: Male results for how likely you are to purchase for yourself*, there is a clear favoring towards Odell Beckham Jr. (OBJ) The highest values for Jacob Elordi are extremely unlikely, and neutral, both ranked by the highest number of participants, while the majority ranked OBJ as slightly likely. The reactions from men buying for themselves are skewed either neutral or negatively for Jacob

Elordi, while they are showing more interest in OBJ overall. The male results for purchasing for someone else *(Appendix 2)*, reveal that men are extremely unlikely to purchase for someone else when Eloridi is used, while they seem more open minded when it comes to OBJ, as the majority are showing neutral feelings. For *Appendices 7 and 8*, respondents were asked to rank their answers on a scale of 1-7. When looking at *Appendix 7*, we are able to see the results for when males were asked, "how much did the masculinity of the celebrity affect your decision to purchase" where Elordi ranked at a 3.7, and OBJ was ranked at a 3.85. *Appendix 7* also reveals that men rank attractiveness as a buying determinate for Elordi at 3.6 and OBJ was ranked at 5. In both the cases of masculinity and attractiveness *(Appendix 7)*, Odell Beckham Jr. had a higher influence on purchase persuasion. When males were asked, "Which type of male celebrity endorser would influence you to purchase from the brand the most?**"** *(Appendix 9)*, it was revealed that 87.1% preferred an athlete endorser.

Unsurprisingly, the women surveyed displayed differing opinions from the men. When viewing the results from *Appendix 3*, female likelihood to purchase for yourself, the highest ranked result for both Jacob Elordi and OBJ was extremely unlikely. We are able to assume that women reacted this way, as they do not feel that the men's line is something that resonates with them, and they are extremely unlikely to make this purchase for themselves. When females were asked how likely they were to purchase for someone else *(Appendix 4)*, the results differed as they were showing moderately likely results for OBJ as the majority opinion, and moderately and slightly likely tied as the majority opinion for Elordi. When viewing the overall descriptives *(Appendix 5)* for both male and female, for both buying for someone else and yourself, the entire sample size revealed high standard deviations. The high standard deviations are representative of skewed opinions, but we are able to gather more valuable information when we are able to see

the juxtaposition when the standard deviation is lower. Overall there is a high mean and lower standard deviation for likelihood to purchase for someone else with Odell Beckham Jr., which allows us to believe this is the most widely accepted option overall. For *Appendices 7 and 8*, respondents were asked to use a 1-7 scale to rank their answers. Females were asked to answer, "how much did the masculinity of the celebrity affect your decision to purchase" in *Appendix 8*, and they ranked Elordi at 4.18 and OBJ at 4.82. They were also asked in *Appendix 8* to rank "how much did the attractiveness of the celebrity affect your decision to purchase", where they placed Elordi at a 4.18 and OBJ at a 4.79. In the cases of both masculinity and attractiveness in *Appendix 8*, Odell Beckham Jr. had a higher influence on purchase persuasion for both perceived masculinity and attractiveness. When females were asked, "Which type of male celebrity endorser would influence you to purchase from the brand the most?**"** (*Appendix 10*), it was revealed that 56.9% preferred an athlete as the celebrity endorser.

Data Application

There is a strong theme of gender loyalty as it pertains to the SKIMS brand within the data. We are able to see in the appendices that females feel a much stronger connection to the brand and, regardless of the endorser chosen, they will purchase the Men's collection for someone else. On the other hand, the purchasing behavior of the male demographic is contingent on the ad and the endorser, not just the brand itself. It is crucial for SKIMS managers to remember that men are solely advertisement driven. This is able to further explain the idea of consumer welfare. By using the data, SKIMS can select endorsers that are not only able to acquire new customers, but retain them in the long term.

SKIMS is not only able to gather insights from their quantitative data, but their qualitative data as well. When taking a look at the word clouds *(Appendices 18 and 19)*, we are able to gather that consumers view Jacob Elordi as a celebrity that is better known for his looks and physical attributes, while Odell Beckham Jr. is better known for his athletic abilities, and character. SKIMS can assume that there is a linkage for the male demographic between their liking of the endorser, and their jealousy or aspirational feelings towards them. Males are likely utilizing System 1 thinking when viewing the ad featuring OBJ, because he is a celebrity that they are more familiar with or exposed to most often, and they are able to recall their opinion quickly. Assuming that males are less frequently exposed to Jacob Elordi in their daily media consumption, they are utilizing their System 2 thinking, which could force them to recall him through the lens of the women around them. There is an element of jealousy that surrounds Jacob Elordi for men, as he is often called to their memory through the channel of various women in their circle gushing about him and his looks, which paints him as a threat. As for Odell Beckham Jr., a larger number of males are personally familiar with him and, judging by the word clouds *(Appendices 18 and 19)*, associate him with success and talent. This psychological reasoning allows us to understand why men favor Odell Beckham Jr. over Jacob Elordi, whether it be a conscious bias or not.

SKIMS could also potentially gather from the data that in order for their Men's Line to be successful, they may be confined to a certain type of celebrity endorser. In *Appendices 9 and 10,* it is shown that athletic endorsers are the major leader with both the male and female demographics. Whether SKIMS is hoping to increase sales of their Men's line through the men or women, it is in their best interest to focus heavily on athletes. This is a vital insight to

remember moving forward as a managerial team who are hoping to make the best choices for the brand and state of their revenue.

Class Application

Aside from System 1 and System 2 thinking that were mentioned above, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the Perceptual Process were two class concepts that are able to be applied to the A/B test as well. The consumer's buying behavior towards the Men's Line, not only is impacted by their feelings towards the endorser, but also if they feel the product will fulfill their need of esteem. The consumer is more likely to be influenced by an endorser and product that they believe will increase their confidence internally, or gain the respect of others. Gaining the respect of others through a brand or celebrity endorser, is a form of social signaling and a reason to buy into SKIMS. The Perceptual Process also plays a role as consumers are making decisions about their sentiment towards a celebrity and are forced to use prior knowledge and context to pass judgment on them. The Perceptual Process is constructive and is comprised of many past personal experiences and expectations, which is why each individual respondent reacted differently to the ads.

Limitations

There were a few limitations that arose while creating and executing our A/B test. Firstly, we were limited with the size of our sample. We would've liked to see an increased sample size to diversify the participant pool, specifically to gather more male responses. 67% of our responses were females thus, gathering more data from males would have been helpful in analyzing some of the data from males more efficiently. In addition to the diversification of our

sample size, we noticed that there could've been a sample bias due to how we recruited participants. The Qualtrics survey we created was sent to friends and family members, which might have led to disproportionately higher representation of individuals with certain demographics. This bias could have skewed the results. Additionally, a few other factors that were crucial to fully analyzing and understanding consumer behavior was the awareness of SKIMS' price point. Consumers who have not made previous purchases from SKIMS, may not have the knowledge of the price point. This could have affected their willingness to purchase which in turn, would have altered their response. We also do not have insight or detail into data from the previous SKIMS Men's Line campaigns. Knowing the KPIs would have helped us navigate some of the information better and allowed us to fine-tune our experiment. Another big limitation we noticed was the inability to seamlessly integrate our advertisements in the lives of our participants. We were unable to organically introduce campaigns to participants through omni-channel marketing initiatives, like social media campaigns, email campaigns, billboards, etc. Including organic channel marketing would allow us to reach a broader audience, in addition to engaging with our participants in diverse ways. Integrating cross-channel marketing would allow us to enhance the data and fully understand audience behavior and preferences across the multiple channels. Lastly, without more advanced technology, we were limited with the strength of our advertisement shown to participants. With improved technology and resources at our disposal, we would have the potential to curate a strong advertisement with the endorser.

Recommendations for Future Experiments

With more time and resources, we would like to make some changes to the SKIMS A/B test. With these 3 proposed survey designs derived from our survey limitations, we would be able

to gather quality data, expose users to a more realistic test environment, and provide quality actionable insights (*Appendix 20*).

Conclusion

In conclusion, our SKIMS research project has provided valuable insights on customer behaviors and preferences in regards to the SKIMS Men's Line. With our A/B test, we were able to examine the impact of celebrity endorsers and their level of masculinity on likelihood to purchase. Our insights and data concludes that the different chosen endorsers have a direct impact on willingness to purchase. With men preferring athletic endorsers, and women's high likelihood to purchase from the men's line as a gift regardless of the endorser, actionable insights and implementation of marketing strategies can be refined and perfected. Overall, our findings allow a deep comprehension of how celebrity endorsers influence consumers, especially in the world of fashion.

Appendices and Exhibits

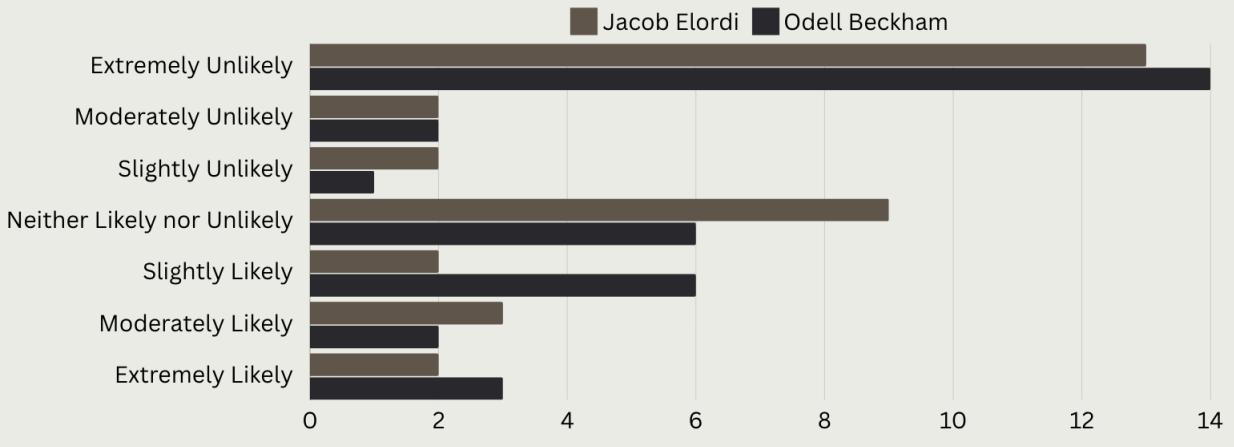**Appendix 1: How likely are you to purchase the product for yourself? - Male Results**

MALE RESULTS

How likely are you to purchase this product for *yourself*?

Jacob Elordi   Odell Beckham

Appendix 2: How likely are you to purchase the product for someone else? - Male Results

MALE RESULTS

How likely are you to purchase this product for *someone else*?

Jacob Elordi   Odell Beckham
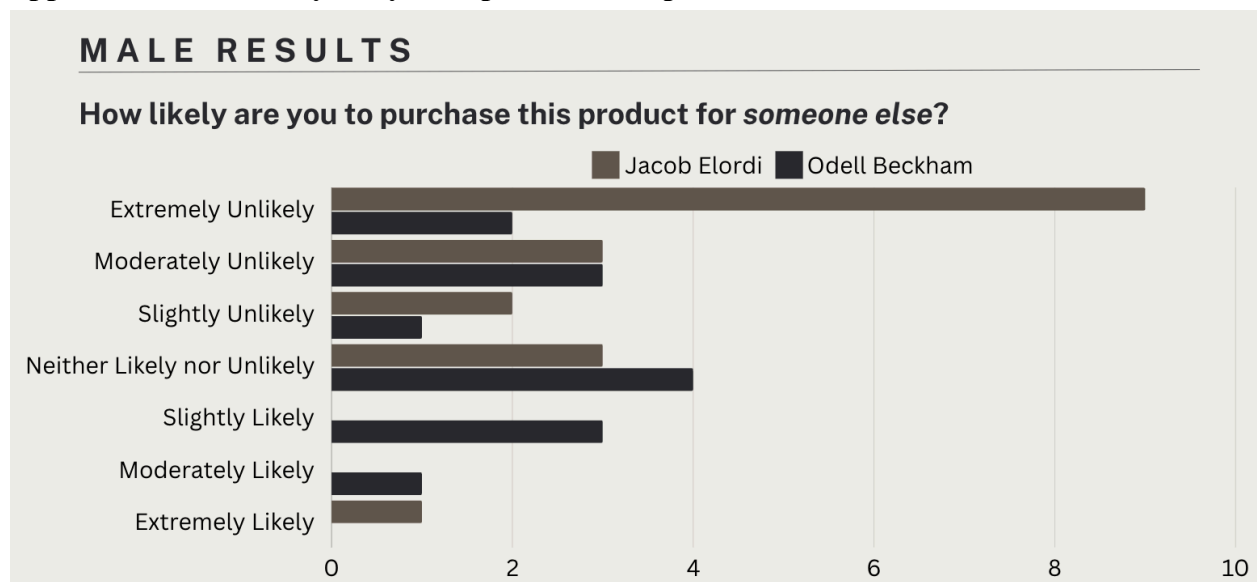
Appendix 3: How likely are you to purchase the product for yourself? - Female Results

FEMALE RESULTS

How likely are you to purchase this product for _yourself_?

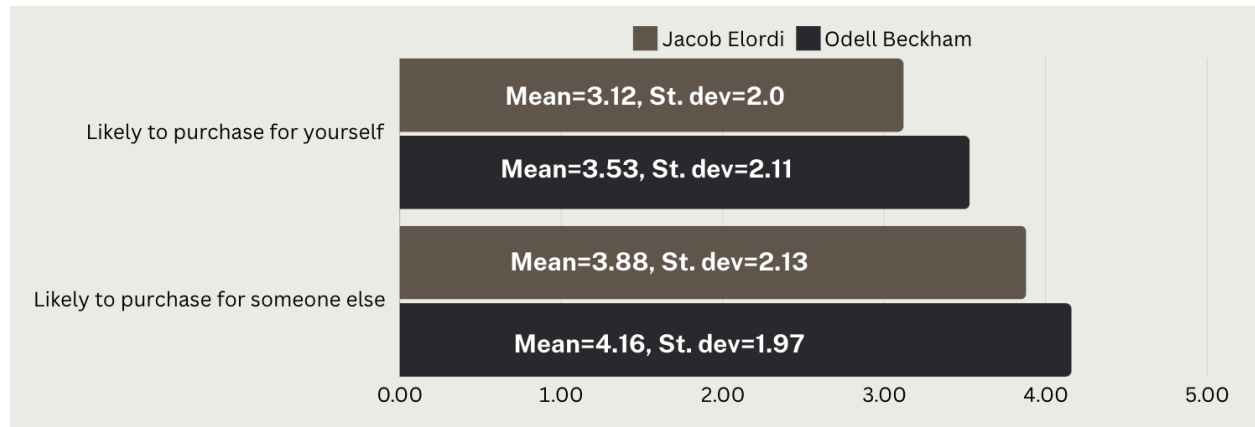Jacob Elordi ■ Odell Beckham

Appendix 4: How likely are you to purchase the product for someone else? - Female Results

FEMALE RESULTS

How likely are you to purchase this product for _someone else_?

Jacob Elordi ■ Odell Beckham
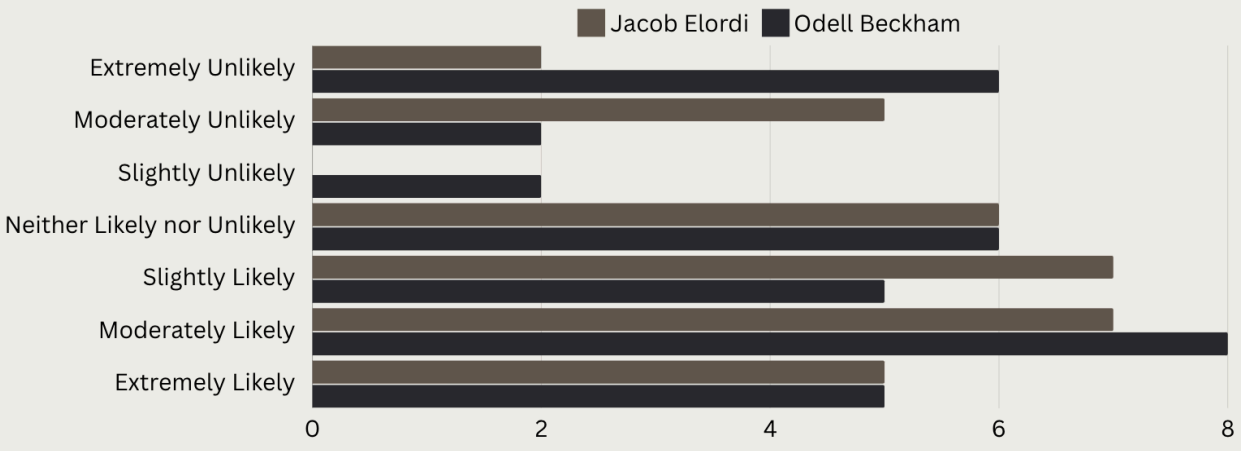
Appendix 5: How likely are you to purchase yourself + likelihood to purchase for someone else? - Both male and female with standard deviations and means.

Legend: Jacob Elordi, Odell Beckham

Likely to purchase for yourself:
- Mean=3.12, St. dev=2.0 (Jacob Elordi)
- Mean=3.53, St. dev=2.11 (Odell Beckham)

Likely to purchase for someone else:
- Mean=3.88, St. dev=2.13 (Jacob Elordi)
- Mean=4.16, St. dev=1.97 (Odell Beckham)

Appendix 6: How effective do you believe the celebrity endorsement you saw was in terms of maximizing purchases? - Both male and female

OVERALL DESCRIPTIVES-REGRESSION

How effective do you believe the celebrity endorsement you saw was in terms of maximizing purchases?

|			
Jacob, purchase for yourself	B= -.151	p=.284	Adjusted R^2= .252
Jacob, purchase for others	B= .170	p=.201	
OBJ, purchase for yourself	B=.281	p=.017 ✓	
OBJ, purchase for yourself	B=.358	p=.005 ✓	

SKIMS

Appendix 7: How much did the following attributes of the celebrity affect your decision to purchase? - Male Results
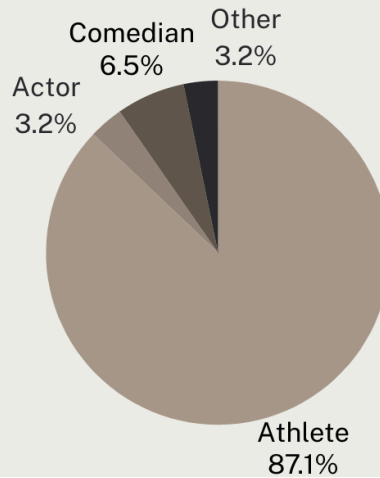
MALE RESULTS - MEANS

How much did the following attributes of the celebrity affect your decision to purchase?

Jacob Elordi   Odell Beckham
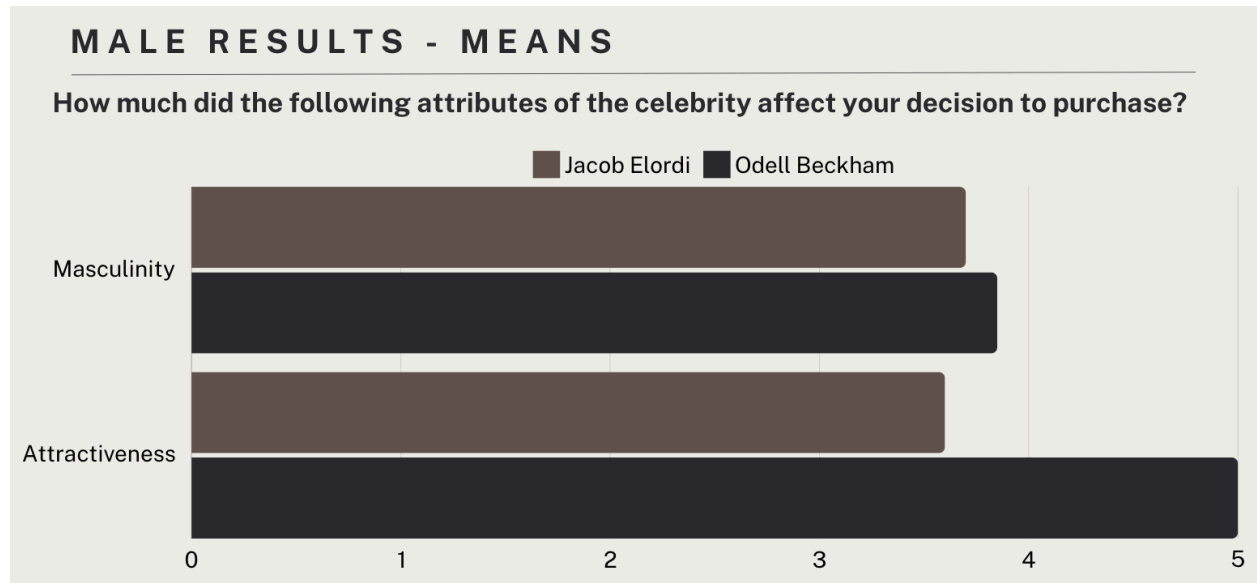
Appendix 8: How much did the following attributes of the celebrity affect your decision to purchase? - Female results

FEMALE RESULTS - MEAN

How much did the following attributes of the celebrity affect your decision to purchase?

Jacob Elordi   Odell Beckham
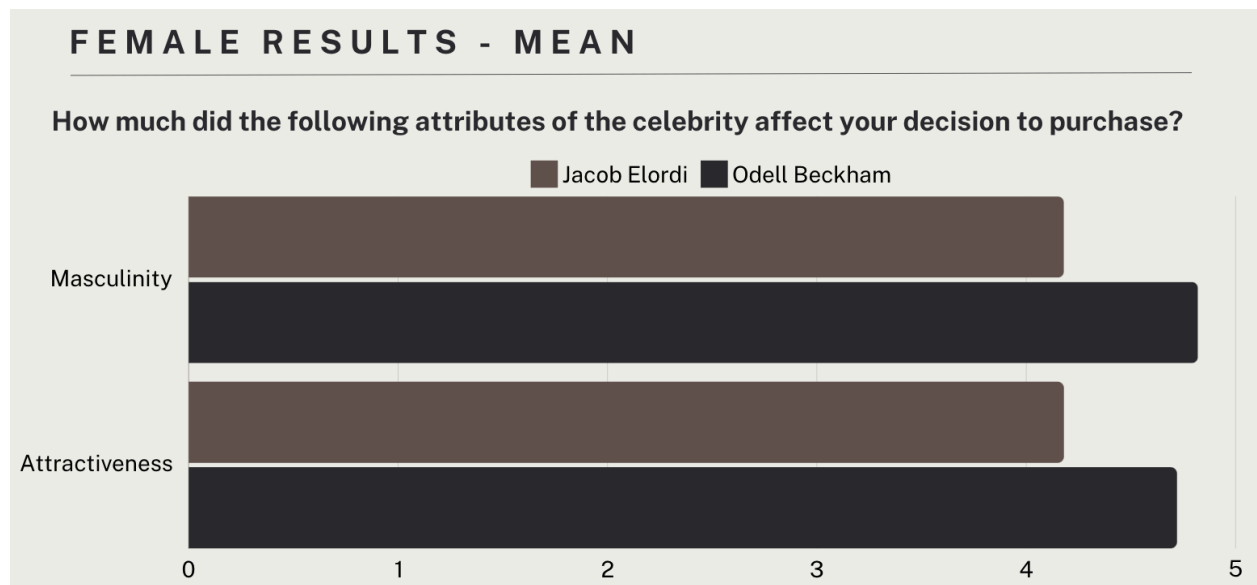
Appendix 9: Which type of male celebrity endorser would influence you to purchase from the brand the most? - Male Results

MALE RESULTS

Which type of male celebrity endorser would influence you to purchase from the brand the most?

Comedian 6.5%
Other 3.2%
Actor 3.2%
Athlete 87.1%

SKIMS

Appendix 10: Which type of male celebrity endorser would influence you to purchase from the brand the most?

FEMALE RESULTS

**Which type of male celebrity endorser would influence you to purchase from the brand the most?**

Comedian 1.6%
Influencer 4.6%
Other 7.7%
Actor 29.2%
Athlete 56.9%
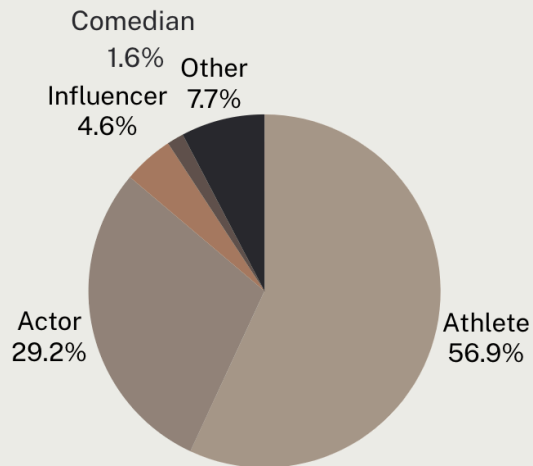
SKIMS

Appendix 11: Test A - Jacob Elordi Campaign

Appendix 12: Test B - Odell Beckham Jr. Campaign

Off the Field

with Odell Beckham Jr.

SKIMS

Off the Field

with Odell Beckham Jr.

SKIMS

Appendix 13: Examples of Social Media Influencer Endorsers - Abbie and Josh Herbert
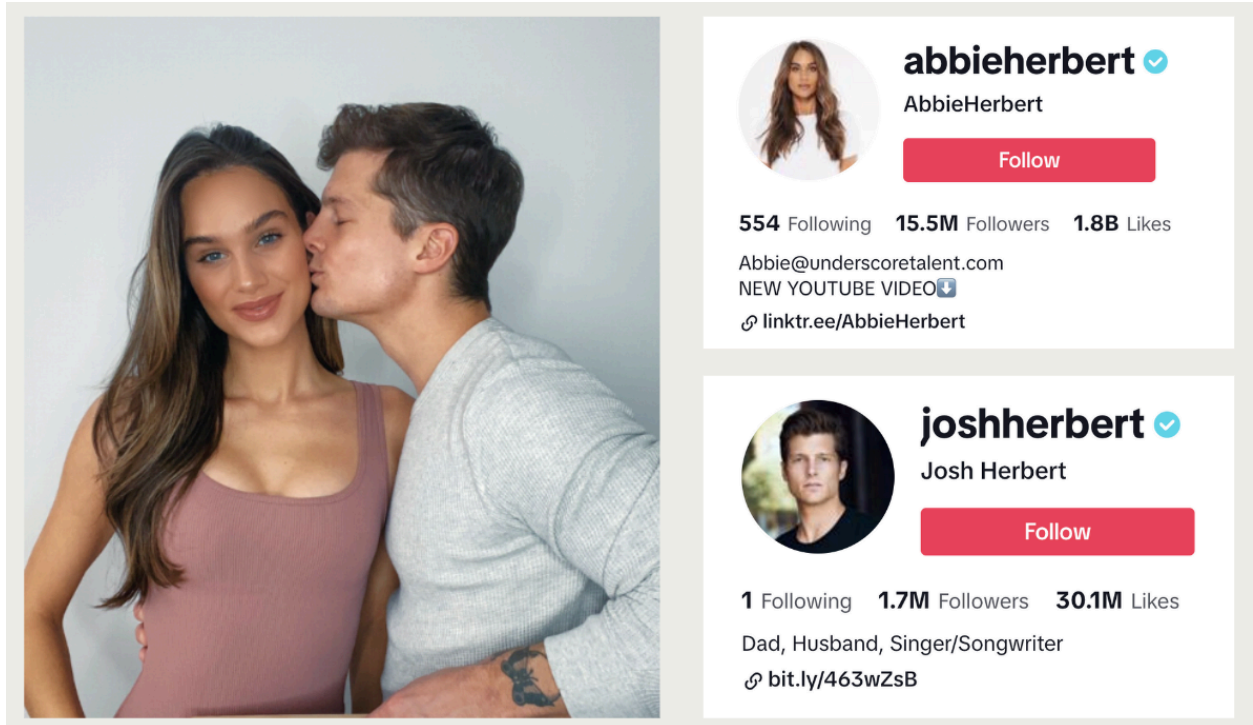
Appendix 14: Example of SKIMS wrapping paper for recommendation

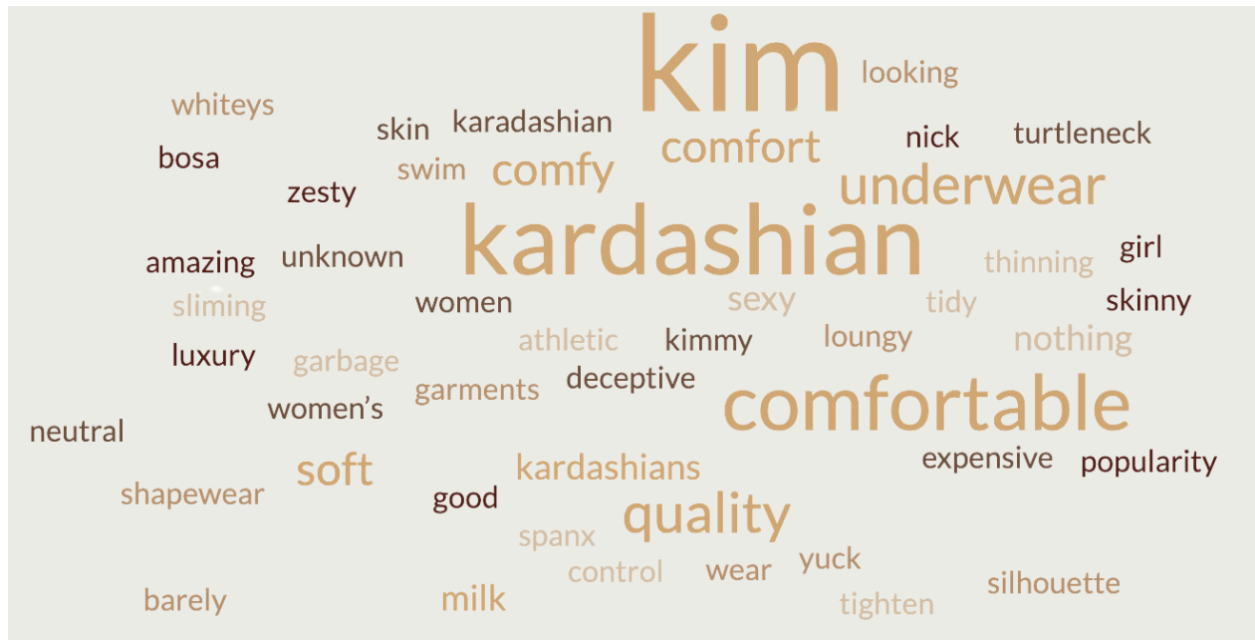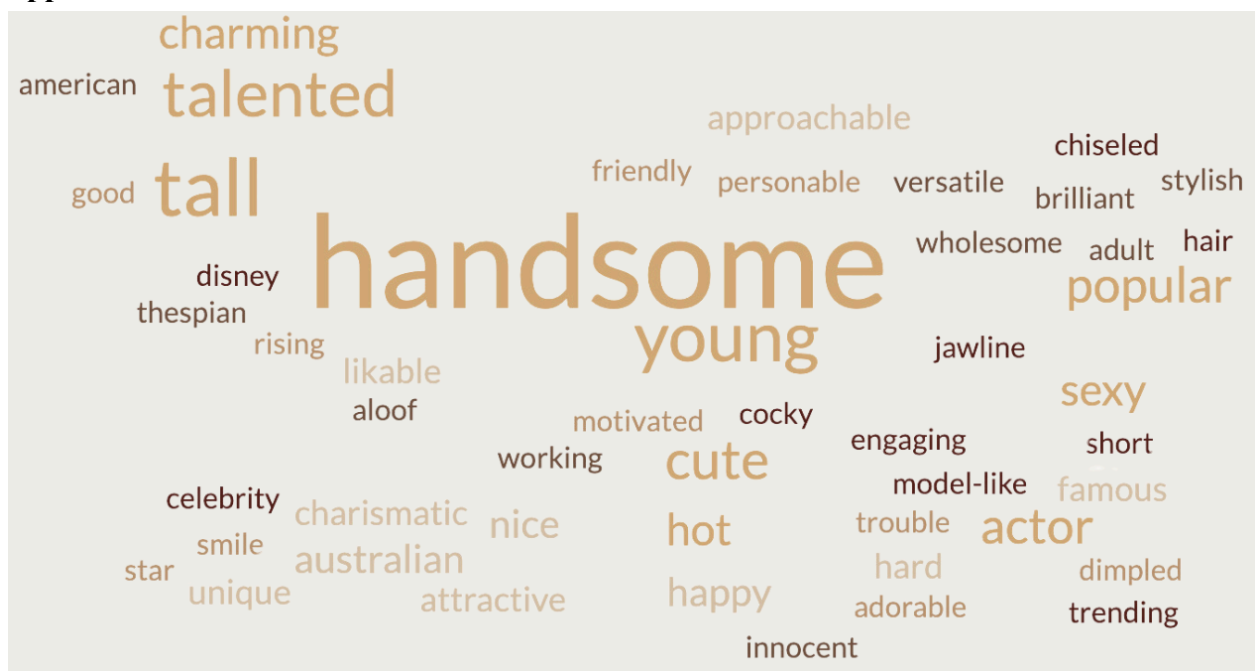**Appendix 15: Example of SKIMS collaboration with NFL**

Appendix 16: Example of SKIMS pop-up collaborations with March Madness

Appendix 17: SKIMS Word Cloud

Appendix 18: Jacob Elordi Word Cloud

Appendix 19: Odell Beckham Word Cloud

Appendix 20: Survey design proposal chart

Survey	Key Concept	Summary of Research Design	Key Variables	Hypothesis	Data Collection Procedures
A/B test 1	Larger sample size with emphasis on equal male and female participants to get more reliable results	Test group A: **500 females and 500 males** see an ad with Jacob Elordi Test group B: **500 females and 500 males** see an ad with Odell Beckham	IV: Level of masculinity of the spokesperson in the ad DV: Willingness to purchase the men's clothing line item in the ad	If the perceived masculinity of the celebrity in the ad increases then purchasing behavior will increase	-Run a descriptives test in SPSS to analyze the means of perceived masculinity of the celebrities -Collect data on purchasing intentions, shopping habits, and perceived celebrity attributes
A/B test 2	Selectively exposing customers to product prices	Test group A: Customers would see an ad with Odell where the 3	IV: The presence of a price in an ad	If customers are shown the price, then their	-Run a descriptive test in SPSS to compare the

	to better analyze purchase habits based on price.	pack of cotton men's underwear is priced at **$46**. Test group B: Customers would see an ad with Odell where the 3 pack of cotton men's underwear is shown with **no price**.	DV: Willingness to purchase the men's line on a scale of 1-7	willingness to purchase would go down	means of the willingness to purchase for the ad with price and the ad without price. -Collect data on how price sensitive customers are, what they spend money on, how often they purchase clothing and what they look for in clothing when purchasing
A/B test 3	Testing the ad organically on various media platforms to get genuine reactions	Test group A: would see an **instagram ad** of Jacob Elordi. Test group B: would see an **instagram ad** of Odell beckham Test group C: would see an **email ad** of Jacob Elordi. Test group D: would see an **email ad** of Odell Beckham	IV: The ad seen by consumers DV: The willingness to purchase on a 1-7 scale	If the media platform that the ad is shown to participants on changes, then their purchasing willingness will also change Prediction: Odell Beckham on instagram will be the most popular option	-Run a descriptives test in SPSS to compare the means of the 4 test groups in their effectiveness in influencing purchasing behavior -Gather data on participant's favorite media platforms, the average usage on each, their willingness to purchase on these platforms, and their attitudes towards the two celebrities

Appendix 21: Qualtrics Survey Questions
[SKIMS A/B Test - Qualtrics Survey Questions](#)

7. List of key references <mark>(WE NEED TO MAKE UP BULLSHIT LINKS/ USE THE ONES FROM PROPOSAL)</mark>

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