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Comprehension Test Questions for IBPS PO Pre, SBI PO Pre, SBI Clerk Mains and IBPS Clerk Mains Exams.

Passage No 138

Direction: Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow.

For generations, companies have been selling fair skin to young Indian women, promising better marriage and employment prospects. However, over the last few years, men have become a favoured target audience. This followed the realisation that the Indian alpha male, denied a choice in male-specific grooming products, had been using women's fairness creams all along. Until the mid-2000s, deodorants and shaving creams were the only grooming products advertised for men. But India's largest consumer goods companies sensed an opportunity, and launched a slew of fairness products for male consumers.

In India, as in other parts of the world, light skin is the culturally accepted and endorsed form of beauty, and children absorb this message at a young age. According to a 2015 research report by Nielsen, urban Indian men believe that fair skin can improve professional prospects. The cultural pressure to look fair, argues Kiran Khalap, branding expert and founder at communications consultancy Chlorophyll, is something inherent in our society, not manufactured by companies. "And it is certainly not restricted to India: China and Japan have had skin-whitening products for centuries, well before they met Western 'white' people," he said. However, there is a growing awareness among consumers that companies are exploiting their insecurities, and critics have taken some of the biggest fairness brands, and the celebrities who endorse them, to task for their casual discrimination.

Earlier this month, Bollywood actor Abhay Deol took to Facebook to trounce his fellow actors who earn millions from endorsing fairness creams. This comes a few years after actress Nandita Das launched the "Dark is Beautiful" campaign to encourage Indians to embrace a wider definition of beauty. These efforts are slowly making a difference, increasing awareness and encouraging consumers to take pride in their natural skin tones. That means Indian companies will eventually have to change their approach. "My sense is that brands will wake up to the new reality, and you will see propositions reworked around clearer skin (and) glow, rather than pure fairness," Leo Burnett's Sinha said.

Rajesh Krishnamurthy, business head for the consumer product division at The Himalaya Drug Company, believes that over time the men's grooming category will evolve to include a wider range of products, including those for normal skin, just like in the women's skin care category. "Companies are increasingly realising that you cannot continue to bullshit consumers anymore; these are educated young men who will question what you sell to them," said Shantanu Deshpande, co-founder and CEO of the male-grooming startup Bombay Shaving Company.

1. What is the central idea of the passage?

- A. Though people endorsed skin fairness products, they are now realising that they are being taken for a ride by such products.
- B. Only men ardently use whitening creams to boost their personality.
- C. The brand marketing of fairness product companies are evolving to appease the target audience of India.
- D. Brands are frivolous when it comes to campaigning of their beauty products.
- E. None of these

2. What were the findings of the 2015 research report by Nielsen?

- A. Indian urban men presumed that being fair enhanced their professional opportunities.
- B. Indian urban men believed that being fair would give them better marriage and employment contracts.
- C. Indian urban men would eventually question the logic behind male-grooming product advertisements.
- D. Indian urban men do not endorse the concept of fairness helping them in their personal and professional life.
- E. None of these

3. What is the tone of the passage?

- A. Didactic B. Sceptical C. Descriptive D. Satirical E. None of these

4. With reference to the passage, why exactly was “Dark is beautiful” campaign initiated?

- A. To motivate Indians to ditch their liking for the fair skin and accept their inherent beauty.
- B. To throw light on the sinister intentions of fairness brands.
- C. To make sure that Indians do not fall prey to misleading beauty product advertisements.
- D. To encourage Indians to be sympathetic towards people with other skin tones.
- E. None of these

5. Choose a similar word in meaning to the word “trounce”

- A. Vacillation B. Temerity C. Lambaste D. Nefarious E. None of these

6. Which of the following statements is not true with respect to the passage?

- A. Since the inception of beauty products, men have been its most targeted audience.
- B. Light skin is a culturally endorsed notion worldwide.
- C. Skin whitening products existed for centuries in China and Japan.
- D. Deodorants and shaving creams were the only grooming products advertised for men till mid-2000s.
- E. None of these

Correct Answers

1	2	3	4	5	6
A	A	C	A	C	A



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Explanations:

1. The passage essentially talks about how we Indians are drawn towards the fairness syndrome and how this stance is changing thanks to the awareness among people that beauty companies are a farce and that natural skin tone is better rather than becoming fair. This is evident in option A.

Option B can be eliminated as it points at men being overtly fond of fairness products leaving the fact that even women obsess over such products.

Option C can be ruled out as it talks only about brand marketing and does not take anything else into consideration.

Option D can be ruled out as there is no inkling towards the brands being frivolous.

Hence, option A is correct.

2. Option A is corroborated by the sentence "According to a 2015 research report by Nielsen, urban Indian men believe that fair skin can improve professional prospects."

As per the passage, all the other options are incorrect.

Hence, option A is correct.

3. A didactic tone implies that the author is trying to teach / introduce a new concept to the readers.

A sceptical tone implies that the author has a dismissive attitude towards the contents of the passage.

A descriptive tone is used when the author is examining and explaining a particular situation.

A satirical tone is used by the author when he wants to deliver a message in an indirect form or by using a prop.

The passage talks about the reign of fairness products prevalent mainly in India. The author points out how fairness companies have used the cultural notion of light skin being a scale to judge beauty. The author then describes the partiality of Indians towards fair skin which is gradually diminishing due to growing awareness among consumers who endorse beauty products.

Hence, option C is correct.



4. The passage mentions- “This comes a few years after actress Nandita Das launched the “Dark is Beautiful” campaign to encourage Indians to embrace a wider definition of beauty.” points at option A which mirrors the context of this statement.

Option B can be eliminated as it is extreme and not true with respect to the notion of the campaign.

Option C can be ruled out as it is not the reason behind the campaign.

Option D can be eliminated as it contradicts the fundamental idea of the campaign.

Hence, option A is correct.

5. The word “trounce” means ‘to express sharp disapproval or criticism of someone’.

Option A can be eliminated as “vacillation” means ‘indecision’, it is unrelated in meaning to the given word.

Option B can be eliminated as “temerity” means ‘excessive confidence or boldness’, it is unrelated in meaning to the given word.

Option C is apt as “lambaste” means ‘to criticize someone harshly’ and is synonymous with the given word.

Option D can be eliminated as “nefarious” means ‘wicked or criminal’ it is unrelated to the given word.

Hence, option C is correct.

6. Option A is incorrect as the passage mentions that first women were the targeted audience followed by the market gradually banking on men by making male-specific products apart from the shaving creams and deodorants.

The remaining options are implicitly mentioned in the passage.

Hence, option A is correct.



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