# RISE Of Korean beauty













## About This Report:

The Korean beauty market in India is experiencing rapid growth, driven by the influence of Korean culture and rising consumer interest in high-efficacy, cutting-edge ingredients, innovative products, and unique form factors.

This report by kindlife x Datum offers a comprehensive analysis of the market dynamics, consumer expectations, and key trends shaping the K-beauty landscape in India in 2025.

The survey captures data on consumer preferences, purchasing habits, familiarity with K-beauty products, the cultural impact of K-pop and K-dramas, and the growth potential driven by next-gen consumers.

# Research Methodology:







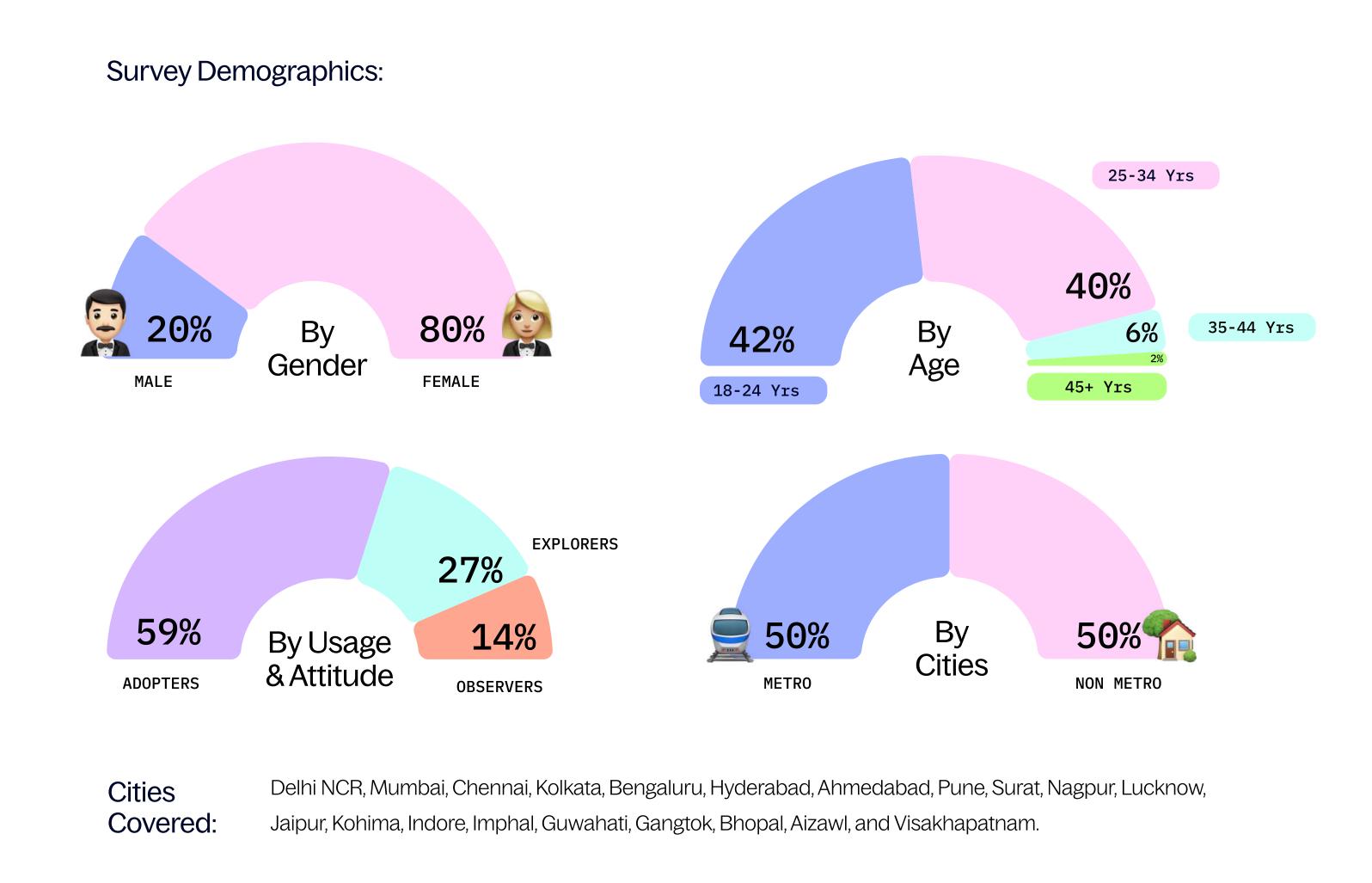






Between 24 Feb - 15 March 2025 we reached out to 2,018 beauty consumers across India to understand how Korean beauty is resonating with them - not just what they buy, but what they believe, trust, and aspire to.





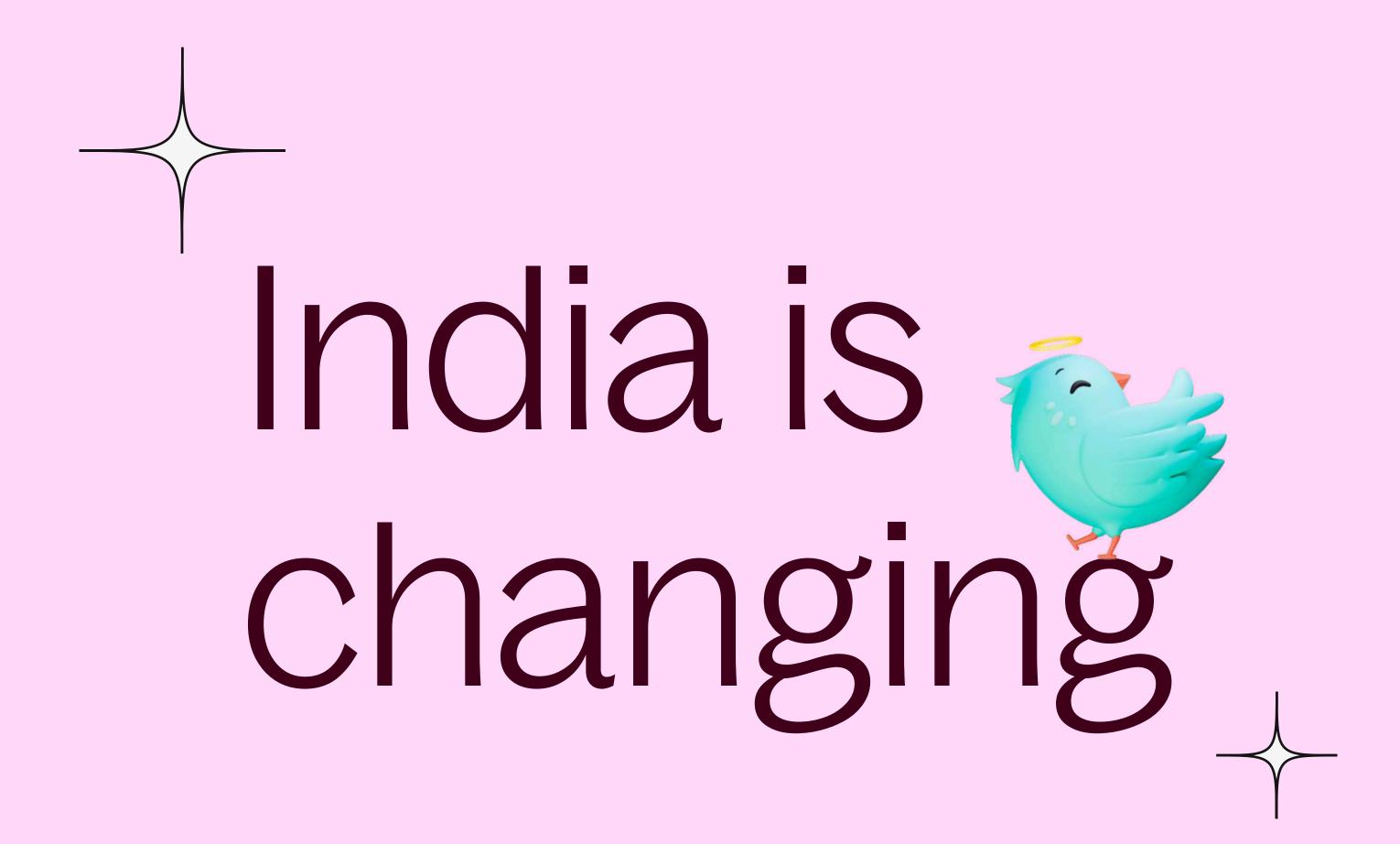
Section 01:

# Beauty & Personal Care









### Gen Z Is India's Next Big Buyer - Digitally Native, Value-Driven.



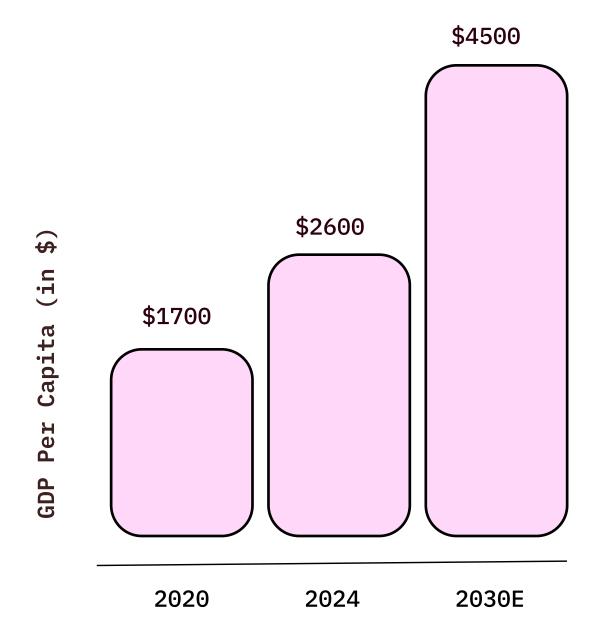
Came of age during the internet boom; value experiences, digital convenience, & purpose.

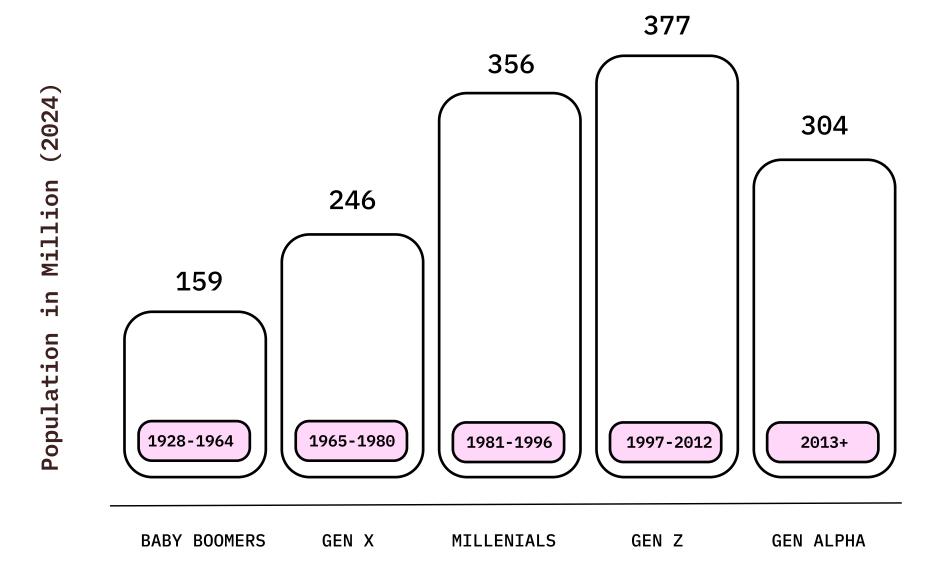
#### **Buying With Belief:** The Gen Z

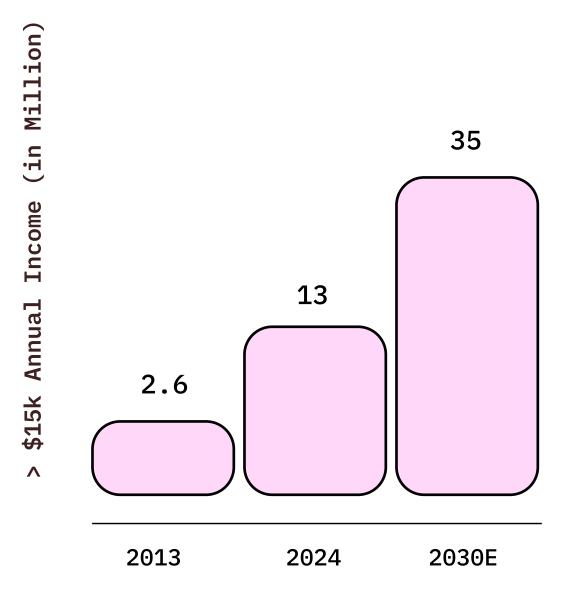
They want innovation, personalization, and purpose - and they're not afraid to switch.

#### The Next Emerging Buyer: The Gen Alpha

Born into screens, creators, & AI they're not just digital-first, they're Al-native







GDP Per Capita to Cross \$4,000 by 2030.

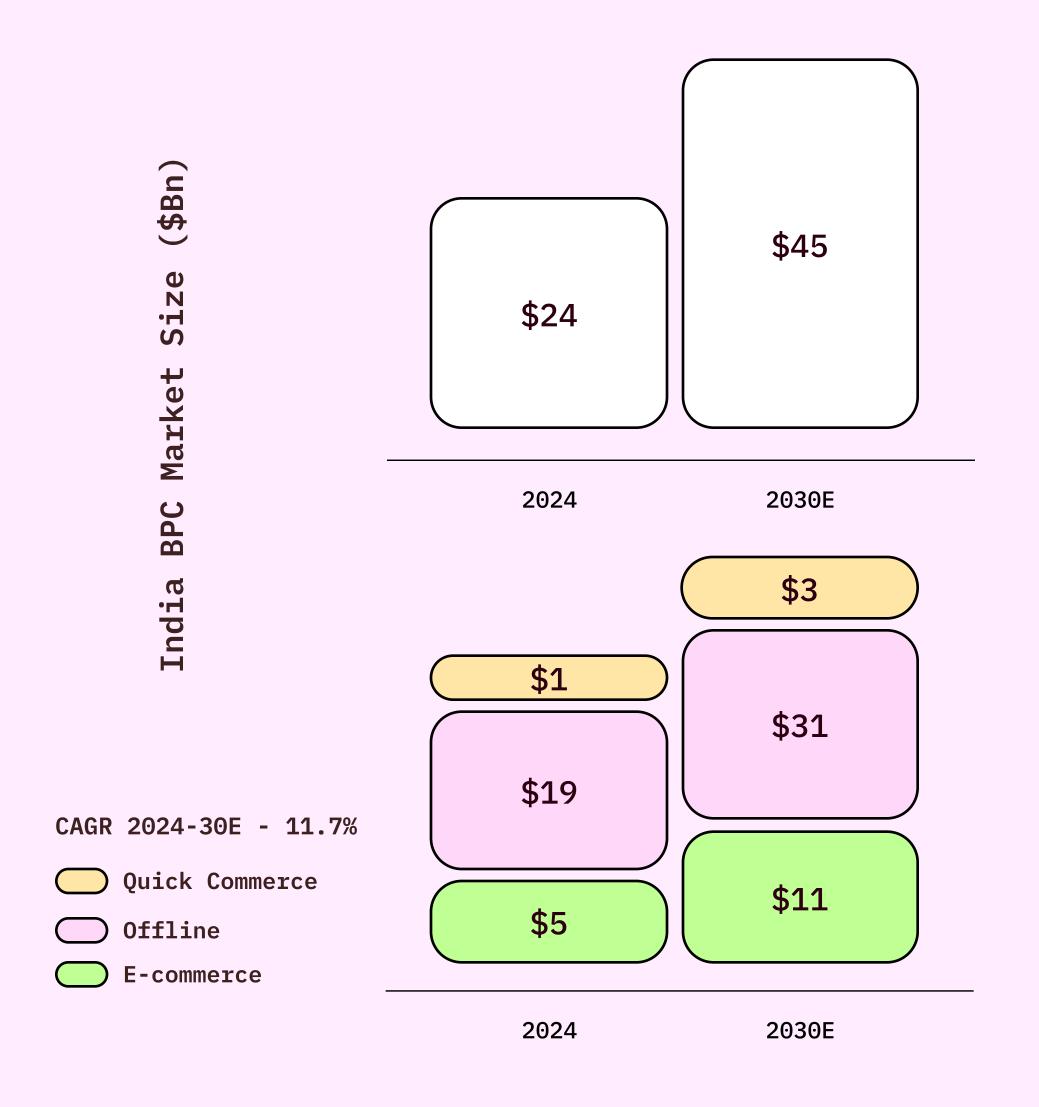
~47% of Population Gen Z and Gen Alpha.



\$15k annual income to cross 30M by 2030.



# Beauty And Personal Care Market To Reach \$45 Billion By 2030

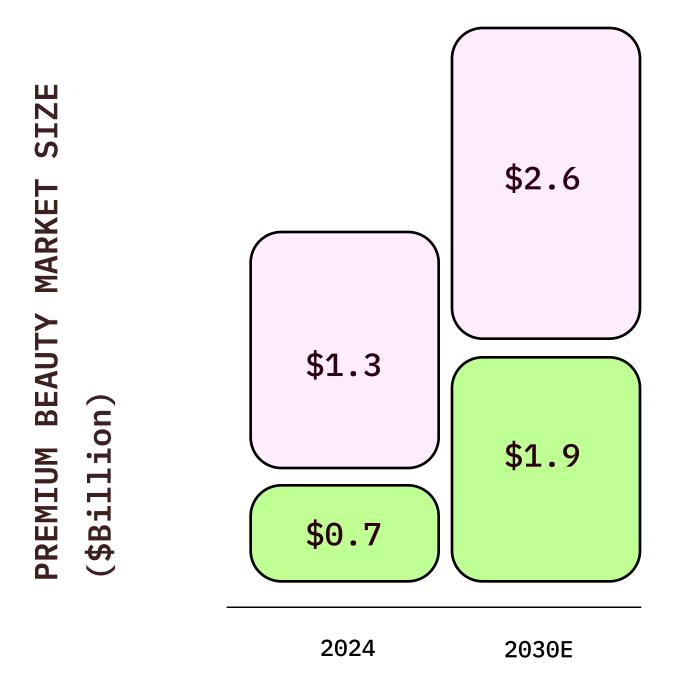




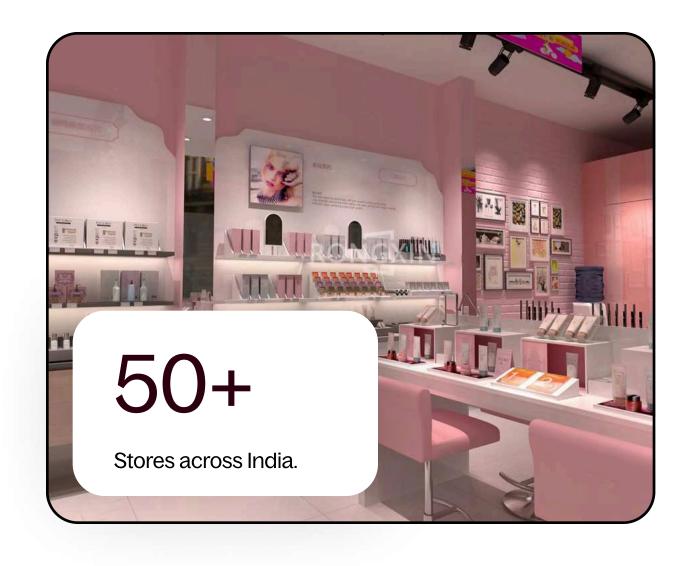
# Premium Beauty Market To Reach \$4.5 Billion By 2030

Offline Online

CAGR 2024-30E - 15.3%



Note: The premium beauty segment refers to products that are priced over ₹1,000.











19 Million

Premium Beauty Buyers in 2024

\$106

Per Capita Spend on premium BPC in 2024

35 Million

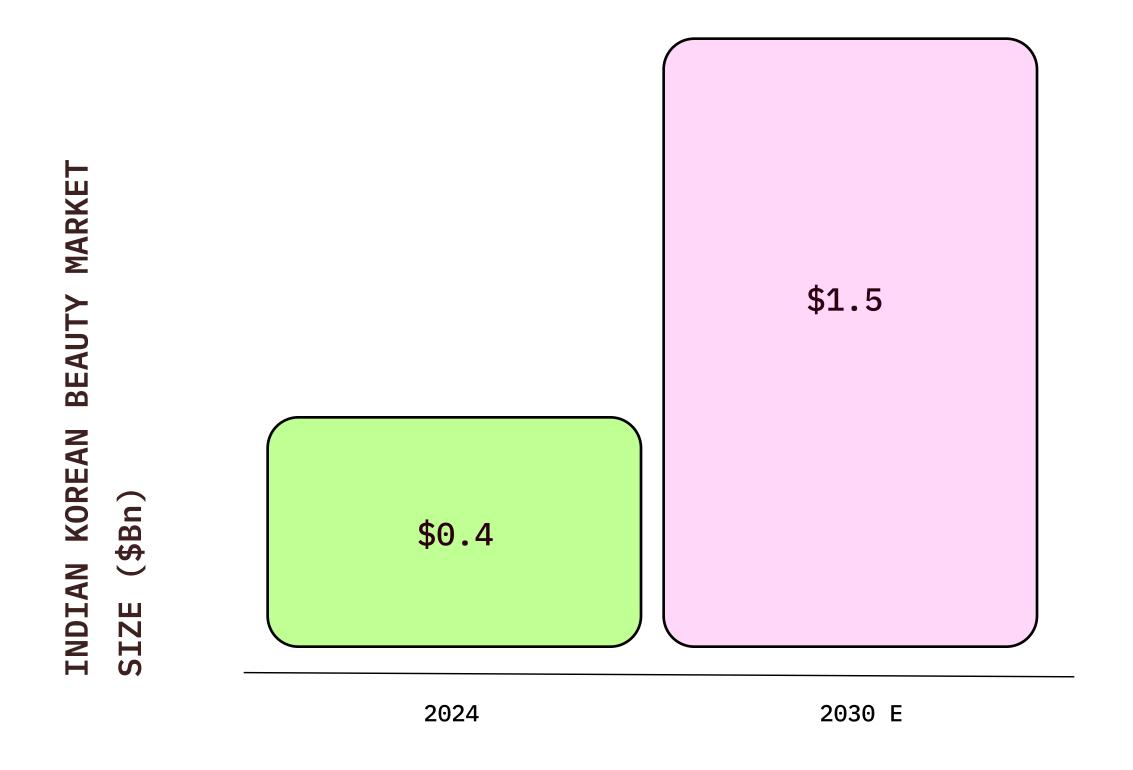
Premium Beauty Buyers in 2030E

\$128

Per Capital Spend on Premium BPC in 2030E



# Korean Beauty Market In India To Cross \$1.5 Billion By 2030



CAGR 2024-30E - 25.9%

11.9 Million

Korean Beauty Buyers in 2024

\$33.3

Per Capita Spend on K-Beauty in 2024

27.2 Million

Korean Beauty Buyers in 2030

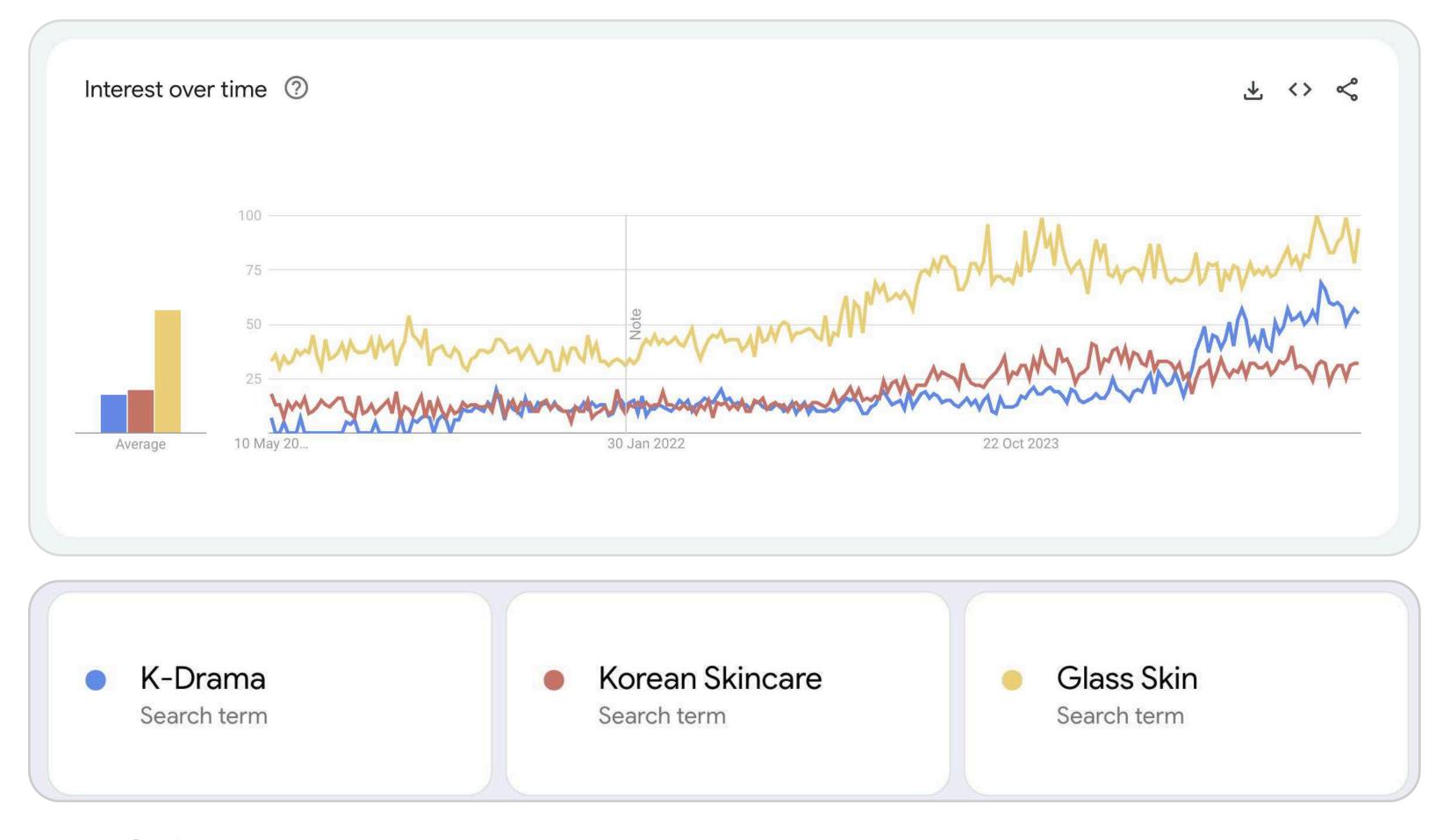
\$56.3

Per Capita Spend K-Beauty in 2030E

CAGR of 25.9% makes K-Beauty India's fastest-growing beauty segment - a high-conversion opportunity for focused brands.



# India's Obsession Is Peaking: Glass Skin, K-Drama, & More









Source: Google Trends

# K-Beauty: A Fast-Growing Category In India

First Mover Advantage

**innisfree** 

Innisfree was the first Korean beauty brand to enter India with 100% FDI in 2013, paving the way for the K-beauty segment.



Proven Growth Momentum

Myntra's K-Beauty charter grew 80% YoY

Now home to 25+ K-beauty brands, signaling rising demand and mainstream traction.



High-Efficacy at Youth-Friendly Price Points

With an **ASP of \$7**, K-beauty balances performance with accessibility - especially for India's pre-glamorous Gen Alpha and intention-led Gen Z.



Hallyu Nation:
How Korean culture is influencing Indian consumers

# Korean Culture Is No Longer A Trend - It's A Movement In India



NETFLIX 2020

370% YOY

staggering increase in viewership of Korean dramas in India was reported by Netflix.



🗿 Instagram

# #KBeauty

ranks among IG's top 5 beauty hashtags, with consistent YoY growth in engagement and post volume.

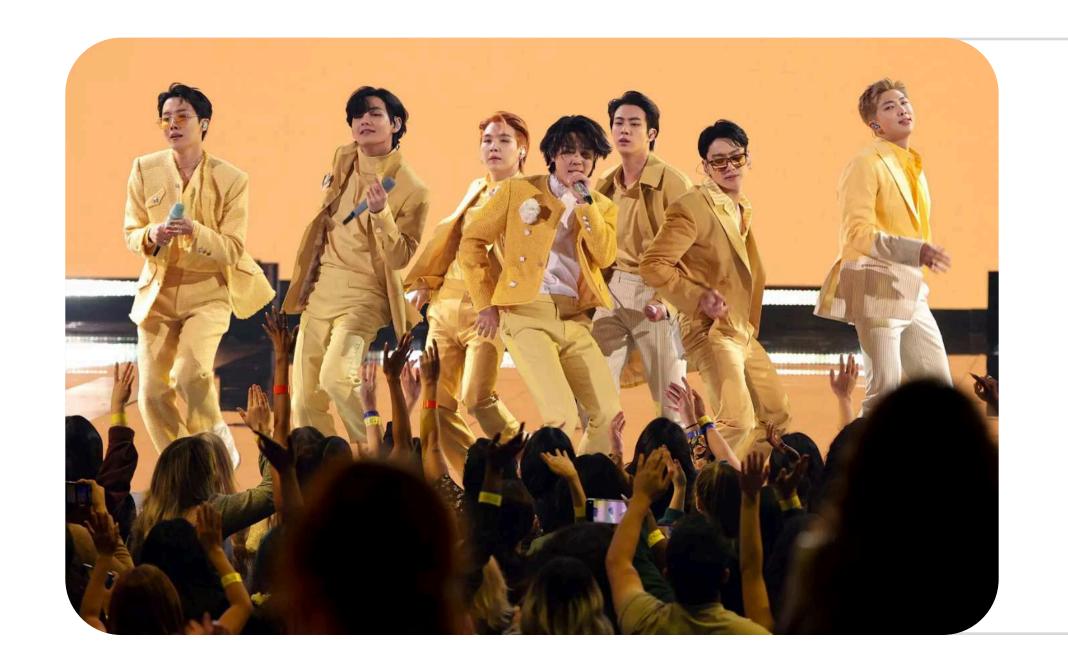
(SOCIALBAKERS, HOOTSUITE)





BTS - the only non-Indian act alongside Justin Bieber in Spotify India's 2020 Top 10.

## K-Obsessions Online: What India Streams, Shares & Celebrates



## LUMINATE

6.2 Billion

K-pop streams in 2023 placed India among the top 5 countries globally, marking a 35% increase from 2022.



1.5 Million+

Indians are learning Korean on Duolingo.

The All-India K-pop contest drew over



participants from multiple cities in 2023.

In India, Korean language learners grew

YoY in 2023.

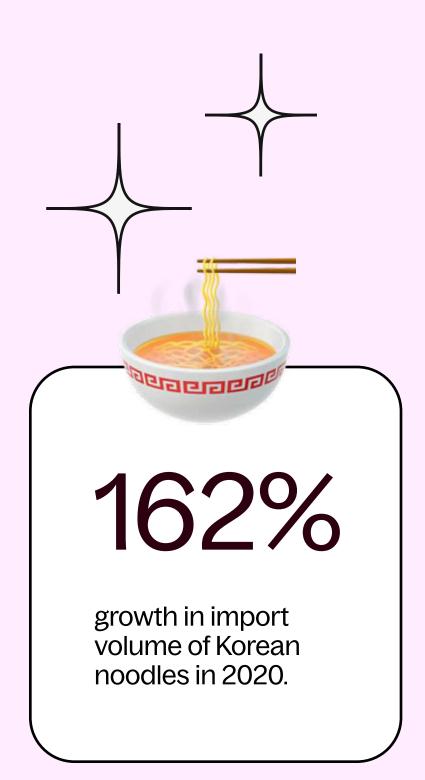


Language learning reflects deep cultural curiosity.

India is one of the top 5 countries globally for Korean learners on the app (Duolingo 2023).



# How Korean Food Is Becoming Mainstream In Our Plates

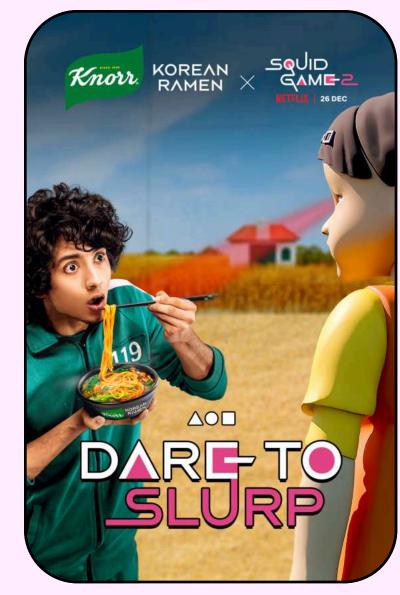














Nestlé India launched Korean noodles in November 2023.



Burger King India launched an "All-New Korean Spicy Fest" in April 2025.



Lotte announced a \$300M investment in India's snacks segment (ET, 2024).



ITC Bingo! rides the Hallyu wave with new Korean chips & a song collab with singer Aoora.



Knorr's Korean Ramen teams up with Netflix's Squid Game S2 to bring the thrill of K-Culture.

# What Beauty Means to Gen Z & Alpha

## Who They Are:

#### GLOBALLY SHAPED, LOCALLY EXPRESSED

They blend global culture with local identity - not just following trends, but personalizing them.

#### **MULTI-IDENTITY & HYPER-PERSONAL**

They shift between personas - from skincare minimalists to full-routine loyalists - driven by self-expression.

#### **AUTHENTICITY IS NON-NEGOTIABLE**

They seek brands that align with their values, lived experiences, and social realities.



#### TRUST FLOWS THROUGH COMMUNITY

Nano-influencers, peers, and creators build belonging - more than celebrities ever could.

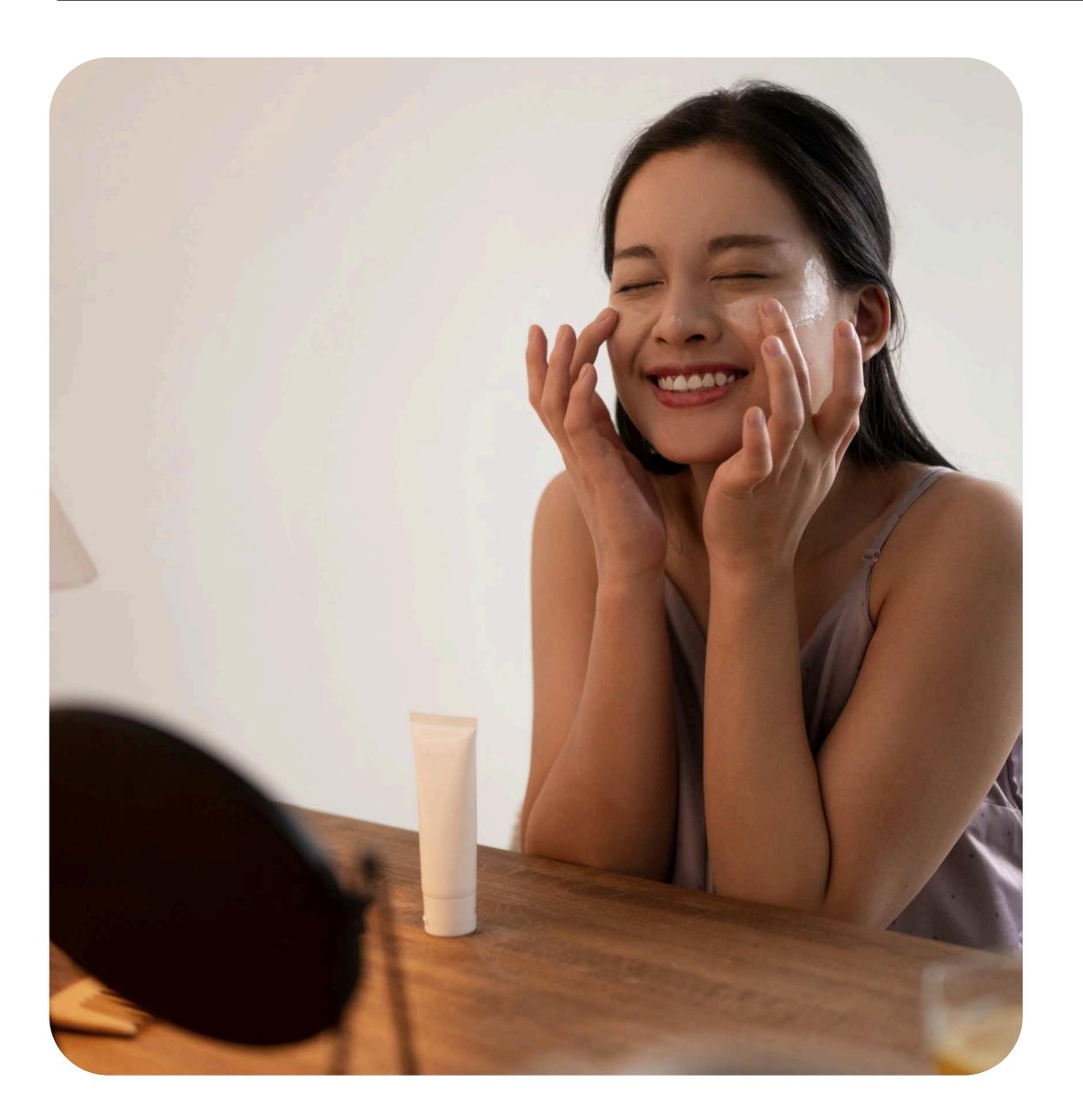
#### TECH NATIVE AND INTENT LED

They rely on search, Al, and peer content to validate - not ads. Discovery is curiosity-fueled, not passive.

#### VALUES > VOLUME

Brands win when they reflect purpose - not noise. Relevance beats reach.





# What Beauty Means to Them:

SKINCARE = SELF-CARE

SHELF = GATEWAY TO DISCOVERY

They're label-literate, ingredient-conscious, and ritual-driven.

Multistep routines reflect their desire for performance and personalization.

Gen Alpha is already influencing these shifts - redefining beauty through gamified, interactive, and intention-led engagement.

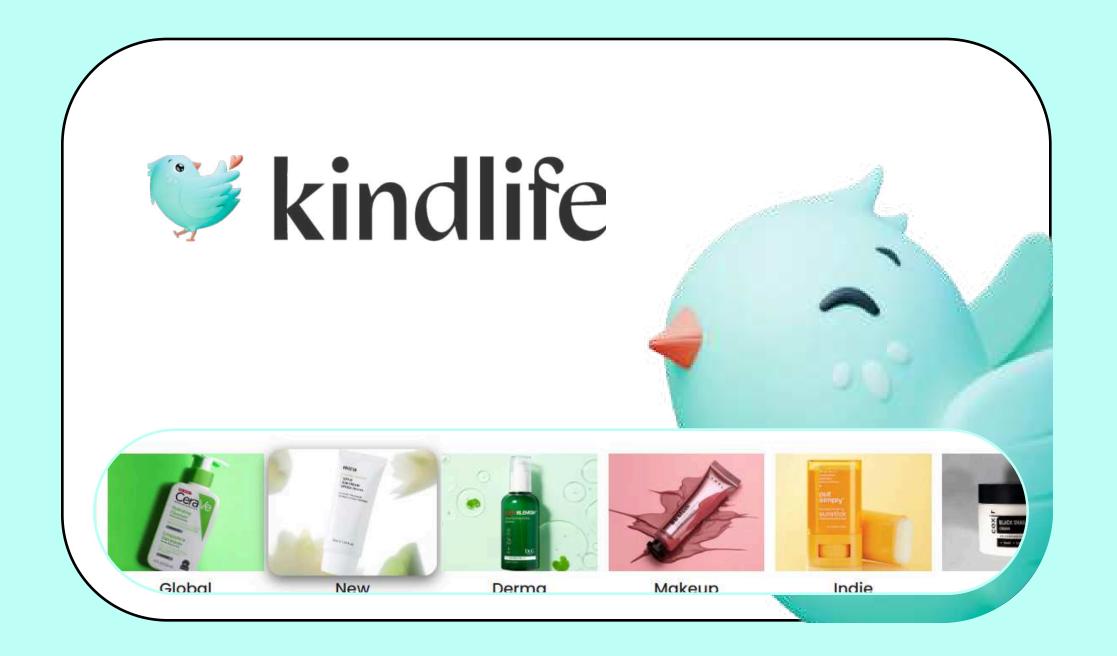
Hero products earn their place on the Gen Z shelf.

It's a product-first discovery mindset - if it works, it stays.



# Building India's Beauty Powerhouse:

kindlife is young India's favorite global beauty platform - bringing the best of Korean and Japanese skincare to the Indian shelf, backed by a vibrant community of conscious consumers.



Brands

Orders from Global Brands

Orders from Live Commerce

Average Order Value

**Creator Champions** 

**Audience Under** 34 Years





FRUDIA

neafneaf















Section 02:

Comprehensive Consumer Insights

Sec 02.a:)

How India Shops - Beauty & cosmetics

(Sec 02.c:)

**K-Beauty Explorers** 

Sec 02.b:)

K-Beauty Adopters

(Sec 02.d:)

K-Beauty Observers







Section 02.a:

# How India Shops - Beauty & Cosmetics

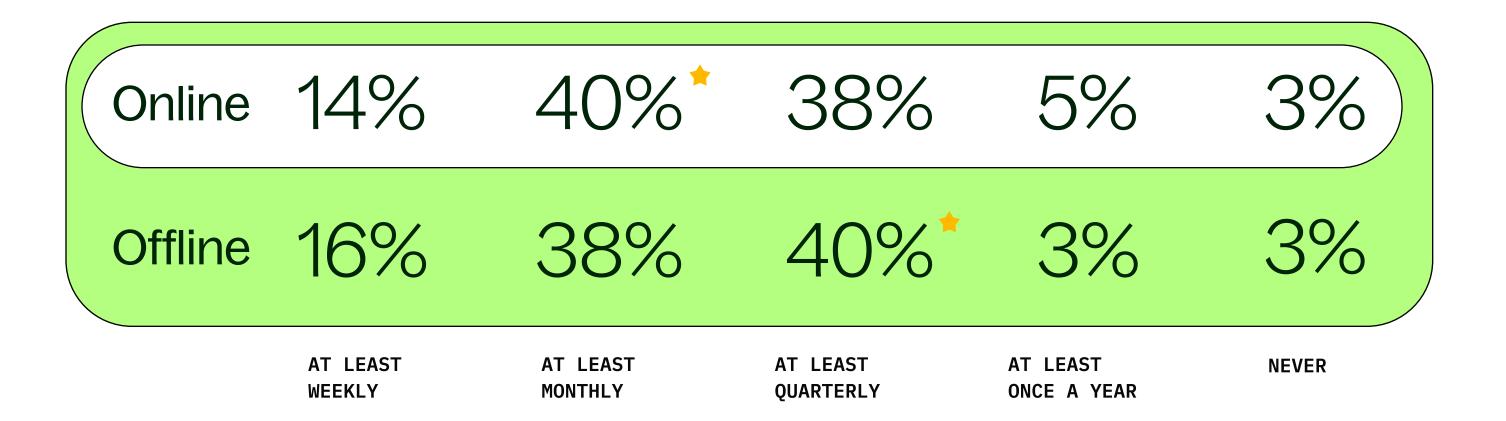




# India's New Beauty Buying Habits

# Where, How, and How Much: Decoding India's Beauty Shopping Behavior

Most consumers shop monthly or quarterly - split almost evenly between online and offline channels.

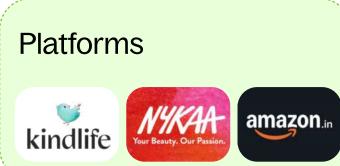


An online presence is critical to brand discovery - but omni-channel availability drives trust and conversion.



→ Top Purchase Channels





16%



11%



9%





tira

SEPHORA



8%

Local beauty stores

In-store

# Inside India's Beauty Shelf: Multistep Routines, Consistency & Choice

60-70%

51%

22-23%



use 3-6 products daily

use 3-4 products/day - the average routine for most young users

use 5+ products in both routines, reflecting deeper skincare commitment

Routines are consistent across morning and evening



▼ From Ritual to Discovery:

5-7

step routines are followed by young consumers, blending K-beauty inspiration with local lifestyle twists.

They mix and match across brands, favoring high-efficacy products over brand loyalty - giving rise to cult favorites.

Routine-loyal, brand-fluid consumers reward efficacy - curated bundles can drive adoption.



## K-Beauty in India: From Awareness to Action, Fuelled by Culture & Content

51% actively use or follow K-beauty

33% have tried a few products

Content is the Connector

40% TV & Pop Culture (K-pop/K-dramas)

42% Influencer Content

36% Word-of-Mouth (Family/Friends)

34% In-store Promos

81%



78%







Discovery is Visual-First

Awareness is no longer a barrier - a strong base exists for deeper engagement.

Platforms that combine visual storytelling with cultural context drive product curiosity and adoption.



# K-Pop Endorsements Are a Conversion Engine

77%

are likely to purchase K-beauty products endorsed by idols.

51%

are very likely, proving the power of K-pop in decision-making.



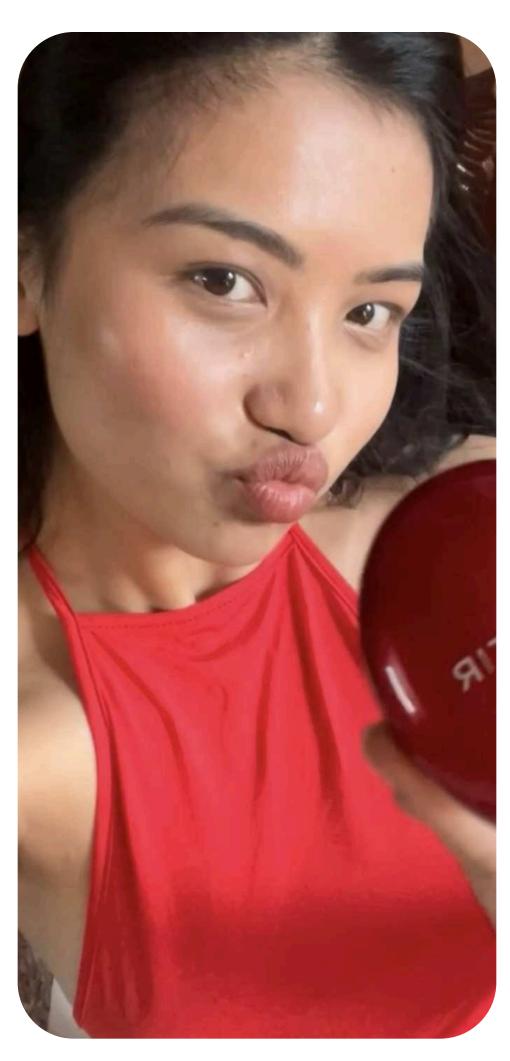
Strategic K-pop idol partnerships aren't just hype - they're high-conversion levers.





# Influencers Drive Discovery - But Trust Builds Conversion





49%

discovered K-Beauty through influencers

Creators are the new front door to the categorymaking K-beauty more relatable, accessible & aspirational.



Authenticity Wins

From nano to K-pop megainfluencers, it's not just about promotion - it's about trust, community, and storytelling.

Double down on creator-led strategies. Choose those who build belonging, not just buzz.





# From Discovery to Decision: Content, Social Media & Reviews Drive the K-Beauty Funnel

Content Fuels Curiosity

A Reviews Seal the Purchase

49%

say blogs, videos & reviews were very influential in discovering K-Beauty-educating & reducing hesitation.

76%

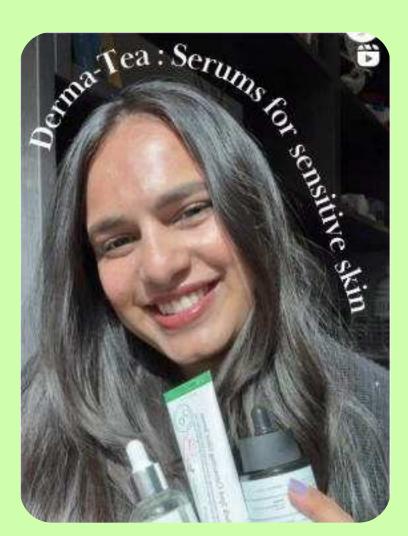
of respondents are influenced by social platforms. Trends, influencers, and short-form content turn scrolls into searches.

86%

say ratings influence buying decisions. For 1 in 5, reviews are non-negotiable. No reviews, no buy.









Authentic content and honest reviews build trust.



# K-Beauty Innovation: From Product to Experience

Consumers see K-beauty as a pioneer in product design - with unique textures, packaging, and ingredient blends that signal efficacy and drive trial.

Innovative formulations from ampoules to hybrid serums, application experiences in K-beauty heighten sensory appeal and embed rituals into routines.

Innovation isn't just in what the product is but how it feels, works, and fits into everyday rituals.



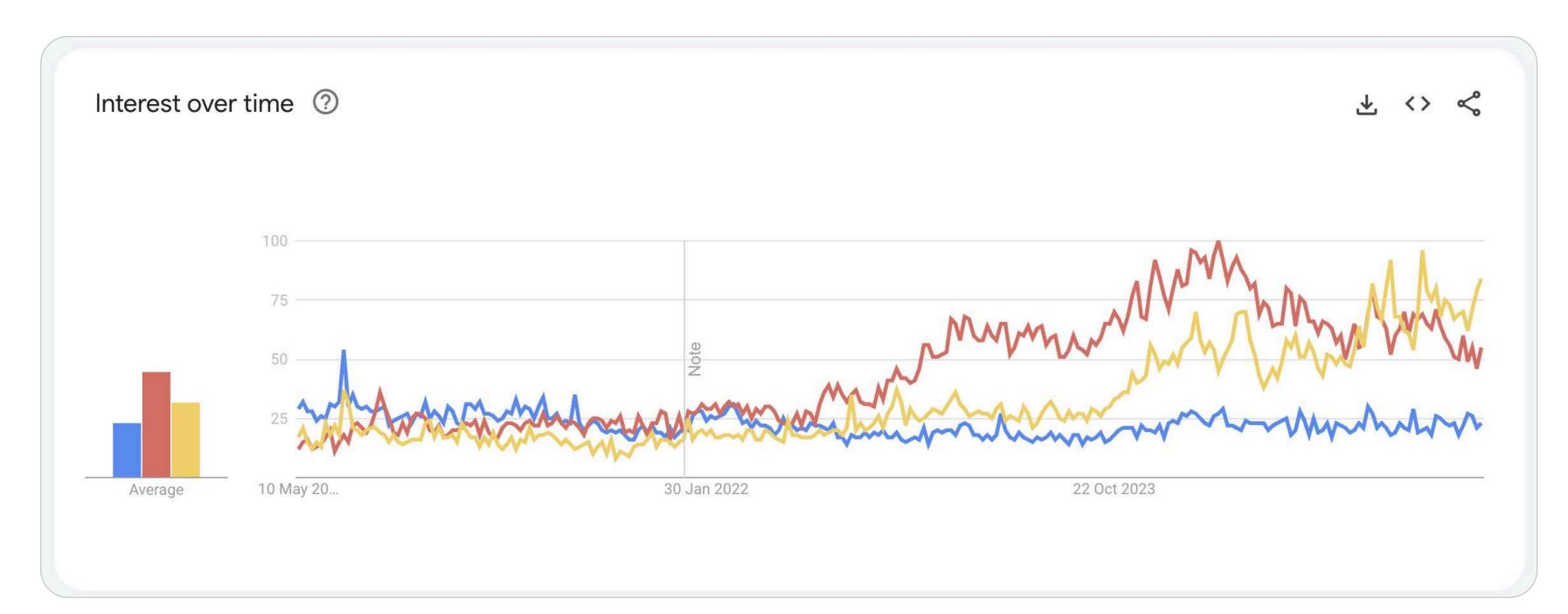






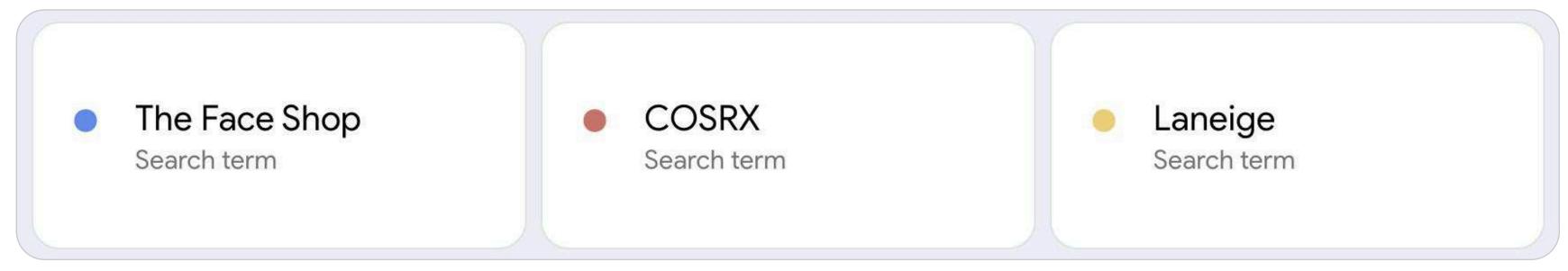


# India's Glow-Up: Rising K-Beauty Brand Awareness











Source: Google Trends



## Consumers Switch Brands - But Remember the Best

▼ Top-of-Mind Brand Recall

42%

39%

36%

LANEIGE

**innisfree** 

BEAUTY OF JOSEON

These brands enjoy high recall - but awareness sharply drops outside the top three.

Brand Switching Behavior

52%

20%

of consumers switch skincare brands often - challenger brands have a real shot at standing out with great storytelling, results, and routine relevance. stick to one brand, showing clear opportunity for innovation and personalization.

52% of consumers switch skincare brands often - challenger brands have a real shot at standing out with great storytelling, results, and routine relevance.



# K-Beauty Isn't Bought - It's Experienced

78% are interested in workshops.

Content Fuels Curiosity

50%

would definitely attend a K-beauty workshop

Ideal formats:

**WORKSHOPS** 

POP-UPS

28%

might attend if convenient

INFLUENCER-LED DEMOS









Consumers want hands-on, community-led beauty experiences

Events are catalysts for brand awareness, trial, and loyalty







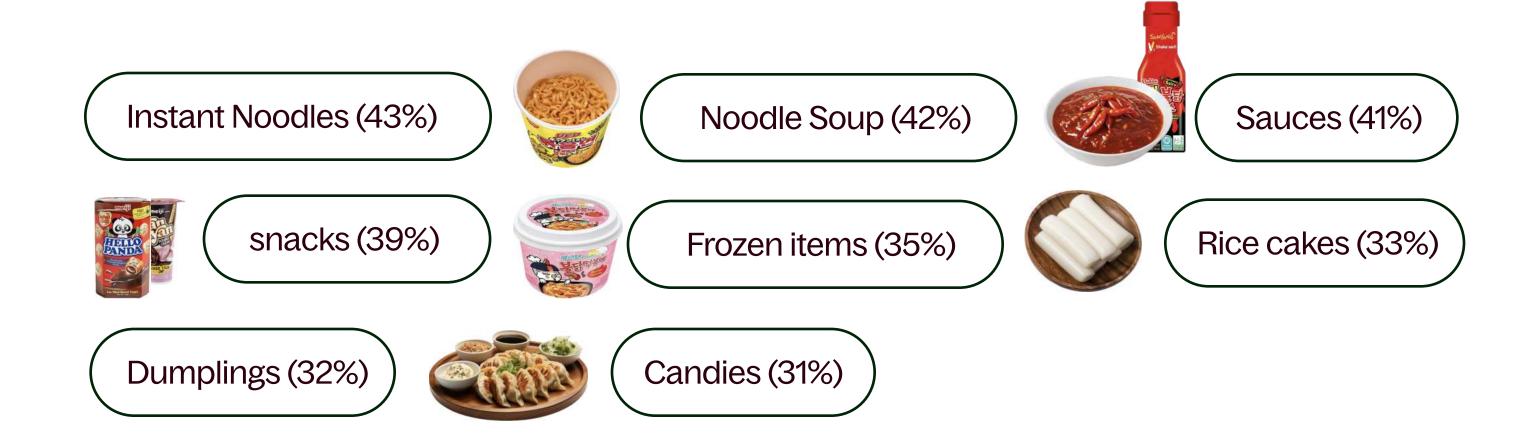
# How Korean Culture Moves From Trend to Lifestyle

67%

of consumers say Korean fashion and beauty trends influence their preferences. From skincare to ramen - K-culture is no longer niche. It's shaping mainstream lifestyle choices.

Korean Categories Gaining Ground

K-culture's influence spans beauty, food, and entertainment - forming lifestyle habits, not just trends.



From skincare to ramen - K-culture is no longer niche. It's shaping mainstream lifestyle choices.

Brands can tap into cultural crossovers by bundling beauty with K-food, fashion, and fandom - reaching lifestyle-driven audiences.



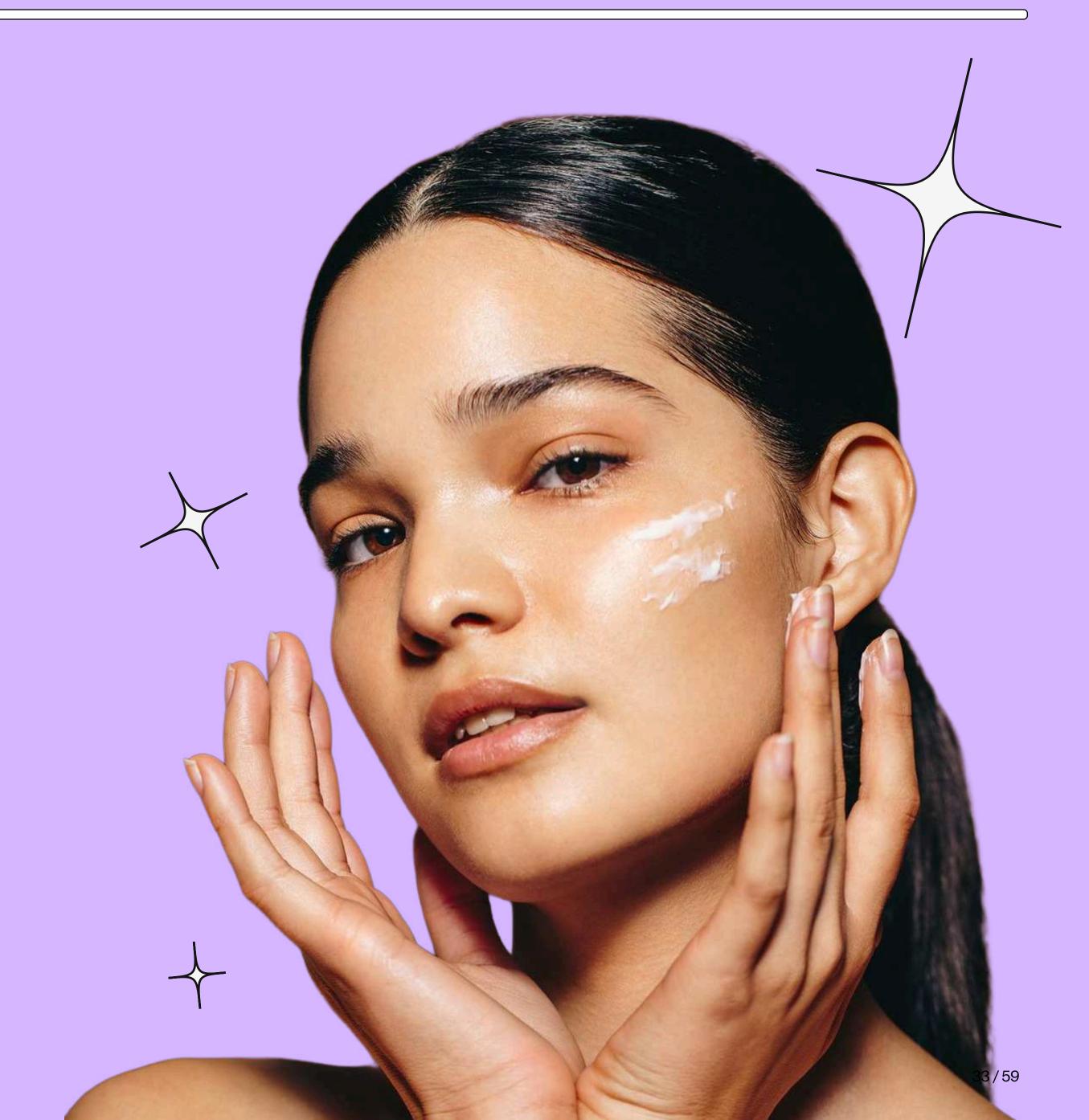
Section 02.b:

# K-Beauty Adopters

Source: Datum State Of K-Beauty In India Study 2025, (N=1191 Online Beauty And Cosmetics Buyers Are Aware & Already Using K-Beauty In Their Routines)



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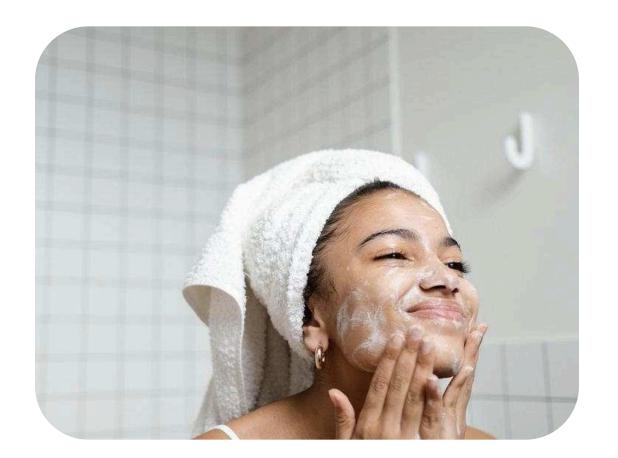
# A Wide Range Of K-Beauty Products, Tried By Customers











Moisturiser - 47%

Skincare Device - 47%

Face Mask - 46%

Serum - 45%

Sunscreen (Face) - 42%

Cleanser - 42%

Lipstick/tint - 41%

Eye Cream - 41%

**Toner - 41%** 

Haircare - 40%

Makeup - 40%

Cleansing Oil - 40%

Beauty Supplement - 37%

Exfoliator - 33%





Morning Skincare Routine 1.Cleanser



2.Toner

3.Exfoliation

3.Essence



4.Serum

5.Moisturizer





6.Sunscreen



Evening Skincare Routine



1.Cleansing oil

2.Cleanser



4.Toner

5.Essence







# Strong K-Beauty Purchase Habits & Routine-Centric Usage

Core Skincare Focus:

Moisturizers

Sheet masks 46%

Serums

46%

dominate consumer trials, reflecting deep engagement with essential skincare routines.

Frequent Repurchasing:

70%

of consumers purchase K-beauty products at least once every 2-3 months.

46%

following a quarterly buying cycle.

This shows strong brand loyalty and consistent product replenishment.

Growing Interest in Beauty Tech:

Skincare devices & tools (46%) are nearly as popular as traditional products, signaling a shift toward high-tech beauty solutions.

ExpansionOpportunity:

Categories like haircare (40%) and beauty supplements (37%) have lower, but growing, trial rates, highlighting potential areas for growth.













#### K-Beauty Buyers Are Cautious, Curious, & Culture-Driven



\* Research-Driven Purchase Behavior:

#### 80% Research Before Buying

Consumers rely on reviews and videos for validation, with just 3% buying on impulse - showing a cautious, informed mindset.

\* Evolving Beauty Habits:

#### 28% Prioritize Skincare, 22% Blend K-Beauty with Local Products

Skincare dominates, but beauty routines are flexible - with many consumers mixing K-beauty with Indian or familiar local brands.

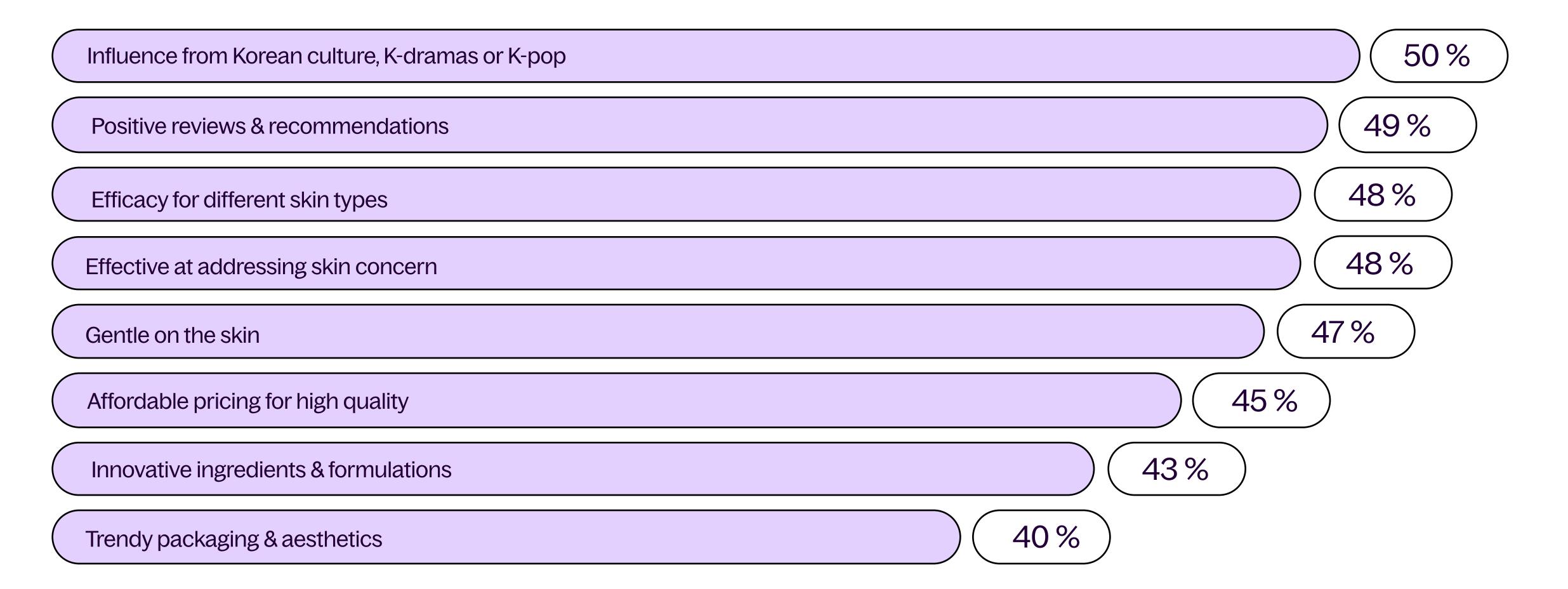
\* Cultural Influence:

#### 48% Buy for Efficacy, Influenced by K-Culture

K-pop & K-dramas blend functional benefits with cultural identity, making K-beauty both aspirational & effective.

K-Beauty buyers research deeply, value efficacy, and are shaped by culture.

#### K-Beauty Wins on Culture, Credibility, and Efficacy



Survey Question: What Is The Primary Reason For Buying K-Beauty Products?



# Digital-First Buyers Are Shaping the K-Beauty Purchase Journey

#### Digital Is Dominant - But Omnichannel Matters

Vertical & Horizontal Commerce

Brand Websites (D2C)

**Quick Commerce** 







Leading platforms offering wide assortments, convenience, and discovery-first experiences.

23%

THE FACE SHOP

innisfree

COSRX

Gaining traction due to exclusives, loyalty programs, and brand storytelling.





Fulfills instant beauty needs & impulse trial moments.

#### Offline Stores







Trail behind digital - useful for sampling & in-store experience, but no longer the default for discovery.

K-Beauty buyers are digitally fluent and channel-fluid - vertical/horizontal platforms drive discovery, but presence across channels builds trust and repeat.





# From First Try to Long-Term Loyalty: Navigating K-Beauty's Brand Journey

Top Entry Brands

BEAUTY OF JOSEON



THE FACE SHOP



Loyalty Brands

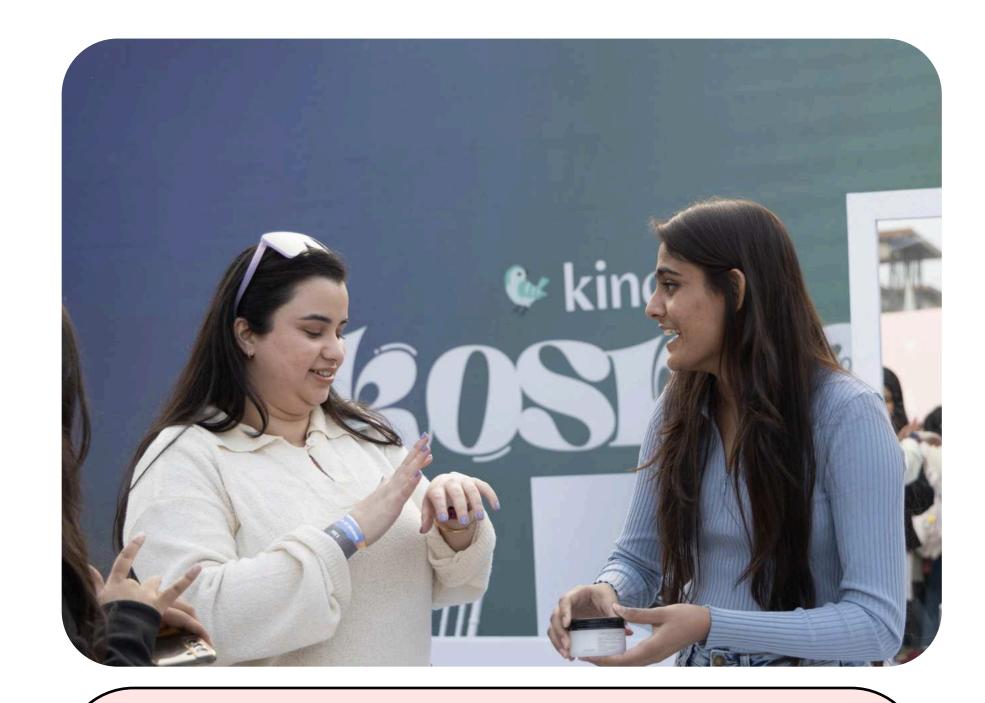
Yet, consumers engage with 10+ brands across their routines - loyalty exists, but it's product-led, not brand-bound.

\* No single brand dominates first purchase, reflecting a highly fragmented trial phase. Trial is broad, but loyalty must be earned.

Focus on standout efficacy, strong first impressions, and frictionless re-engagement to move from discovery to repeat use.



#### K-Beauty Consumer Trends: Spending, Retention & Growth Potential



51%

spend ₹1,001-3,000 per month, while 17% spend over ₹3,000, pointing to strong mid-market traction & an emerging premium segment.

RISING SPEND

43%

have increased spend in the last 3 months, signaling growing commitment and deeper routine integration.

GROWING COMMITMENT

72%

intend to continue or expand their K-beauty use - showing high satisfaction and long-term growth potential.

STRONG RETENTION

Momentum is strong, now's the time to scale.



are open to increasing usage, with the right push on accessibility, pricing, and offers.

**RESPONSIVE MARKET** 

#### K-Beauty Earns Shelf Space & Strong Organic Advocacy

**BLENDED SKINCARE ADOPTION** 

34%

of users supplement their main routine with K-beauty products.

24%

mix K-beauty with global and local brands showing it plays a valued, flexible role in everyday routines.

SMALL BUT STRONG LOYALIST BASE

18%

use only Korean brands - reflecting deep trust & room to build brand-led ecosystems.

ADVOCACY-LED GROWTH

54% are **very likely** to recommend K-beauty.

23% are somewhat likely.

MINIMAL PUSHBACK

3%

are unlikely to recommend.

K-beauty is shelf-worthy, trust-driven, and organically amplified.

Brands should invest in building routine relevance and community-led storytelling to deepen engagement.



#### Gen Z = Trend-Led, Ingredient-Conscious, and Purpose-Driven

X

Top Purchase Drivers

51%

Social media trends (influencers, viral content)

47%

Friend & peer recommendations

46%

Online reviews



What Matters to Them

38%

Ingredients & formulations

37%

Affordability & price





Gen Z wants culturally relevant beauty. They follow trends, but buy with intention.



#### Barriers to Entry Exist, But Trust and Willingness to Pay Are High

Clarity, trust, and perceived value drive K-beauty adoption - especially among informed, premium-minded buyers.



Discovery Gaps Slow Adoption:

42%

of first-time users are unsure where to start; unclear product info, language barriers, and lack of localized guidance hinder onboarding.

cite high prices and limited availability as obstacles.



Trust Hinges on Authenticity & Transparency:

33%

actively buy from trusted sellers.

27%

worry about counterfeits even without prior exposure - indicating perception of authenticity deeply impacts trust and purchase decisions.



Premium Perception **Drives Spend:** 

~80%

are willing to pay more for quality.

51%

open to paying over 10% extra. This premium mindset underscores strong perceived value and supports a tiered pricing strategy.



Section 02.c:

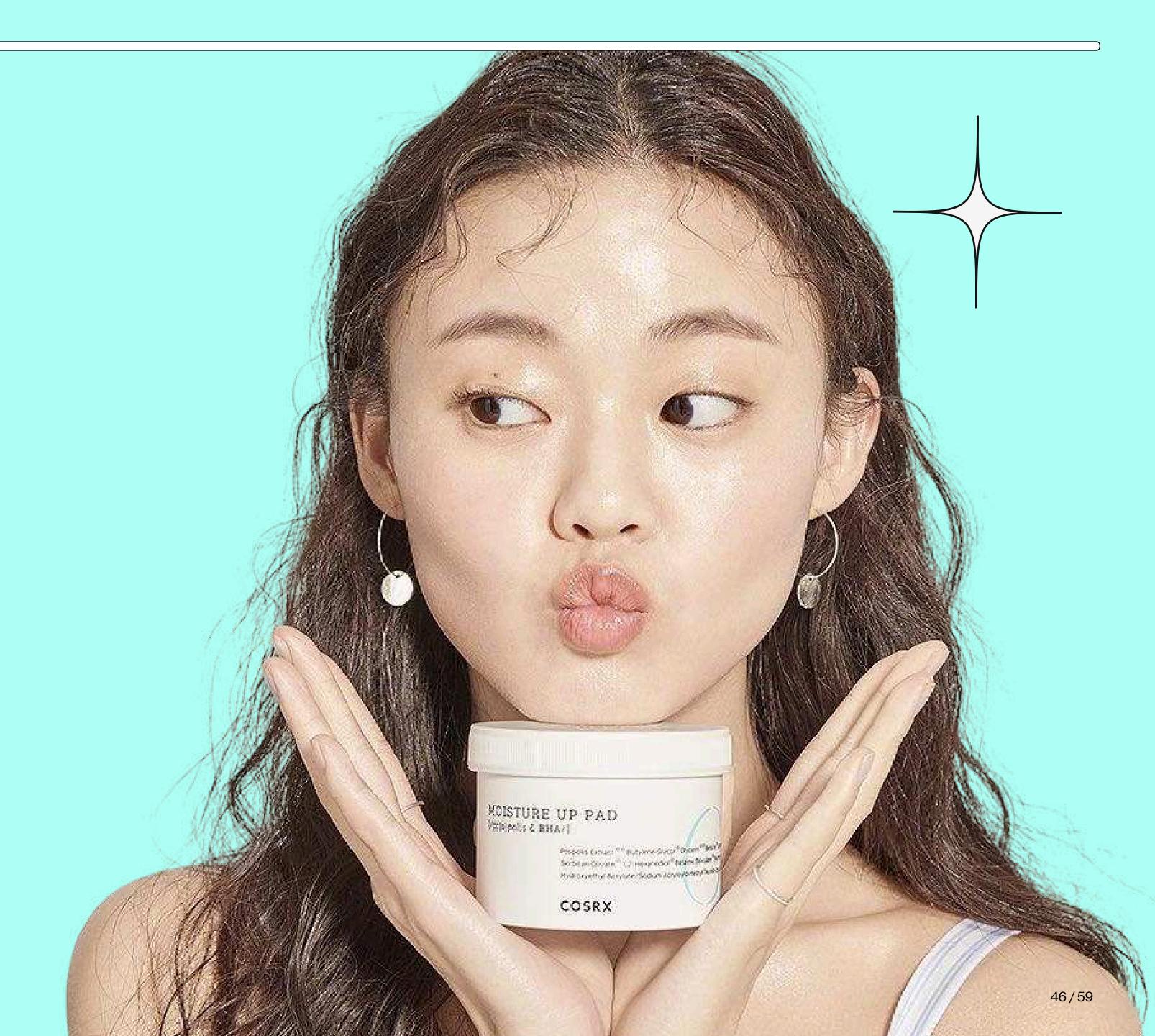
# K-Beauty Explorers

Source: Datum State Of K-Beauty In India Study 2025, (N=545 Online Beauty And Cosmetics Explorers Who Are Aware And Eager To Try K-Beauty Products Soon)





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#### Korean Culture Touchpoints That Drive Beauty Interest

K-Fashion & Beauty Trends 67% K-Culture 63% (Lifestyle, Tradition, Language) 62% K-drama & Web Series 52% K-Pop Music & Idols 52%

SURVEY QUESTION: Which of the following categories influences you the most in terms of your preferences for Korean beauty & cosmetic products?



K-Food & Cuisine

#### From Fashion to Food: The Ecosystem Powering K-Beauty's Allure for Curious Explorers

The top influencers of consumer preference.

67%

63%

62%

Korean fashion & beauty trends

Korean culture (lifestyle, traditions, & language)

K-dramas/web series

52%

52%

The broader ecosystem of influence where beauty is experienced through lifestyle immersion.

K-pop music/idols

Korean food/cuisine

Brands must integrate cultural storytelling into marketing, using K-dramas, web series, fashion trends, & K-pop icons as creative vehicles.







#### Explorers Begin K-Beauty Journey with Gentle Skincare Staples

Step 1: Entry via Everyday Essentials



**First Points of Contact** 

Sunscreen (48%) and Moisturizer (43%) are familiar, non-intimidating, and easy to integrate into daily routines.

Step 2: Expanding to Core Skincare

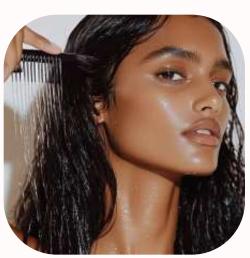




**Confidence Builds, Routines Form** 

Users explore serums, cleansers, and face masks - products that show visible results and support habit-building.

Step 3: Experimenting with Hair & Body Care

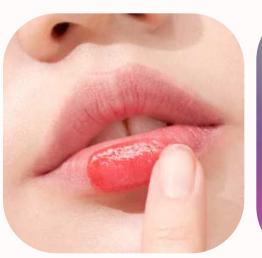




**Beyond the Face** 

Curiosity expands to haircare and body products, signaling deeper brand engagement.







**Trust Comes First** 

Lip tints and beauty supplements see late-stage adoption, once trust and skincare routines are established.

#### Uncertainty, Price, & Product Access Are Key Barriers for K-Beauty Explorers

38% I'm unsure which korean skincare product to start with for visible results 37% Too expensive 36 % Products are hard to find 33% Difficult to understand language on packing 30% Can't easily find product claims, reviews, benefits 25% Prefer Indian or Ayurvedic products 24 % Allergic reactions 23 % Product efficacy not as promised 16 % Didn't achieve any results

SURVEY QUESTION: What factors are preventing you from purchasing Korean beauty products?



Section 02.d:

# K-Beauty Observers

Source: Datum State Of K-Beauty In India Study 2025, (N=282 Online Beauty And Cosmetics Observers Who Are Curious, But Still On The Sidelines)

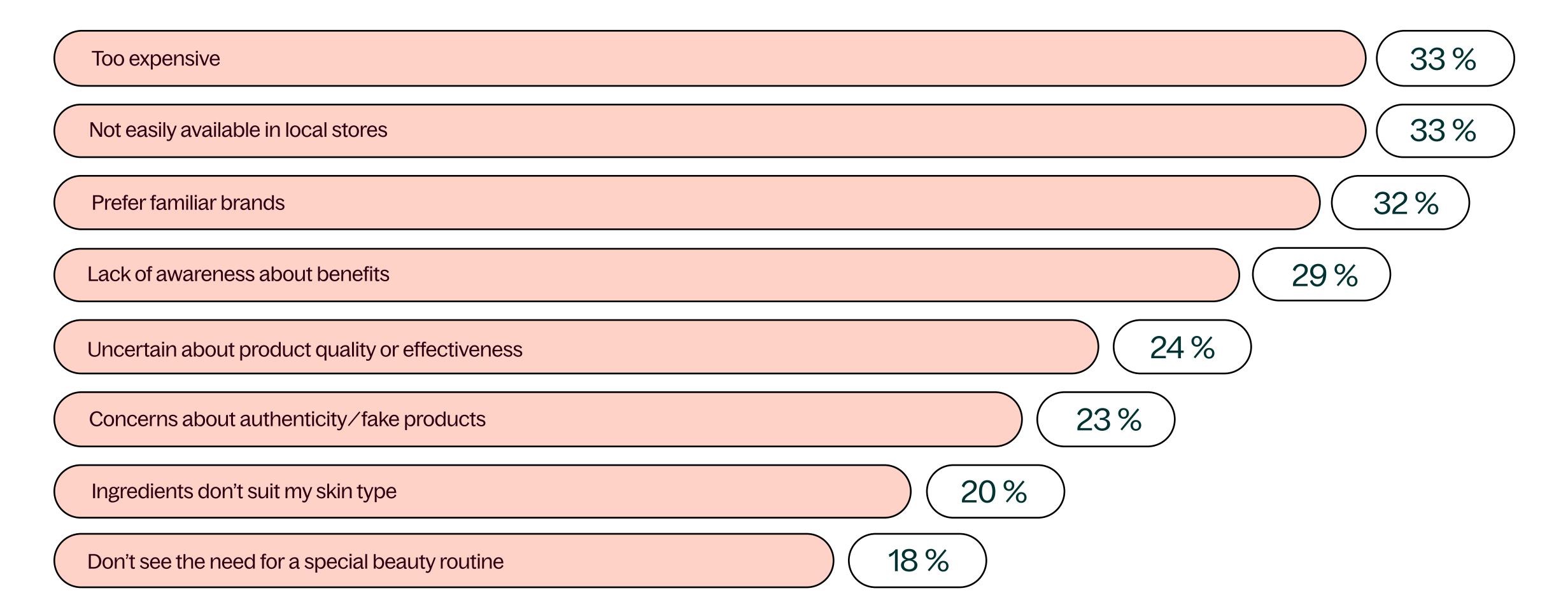




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#### Price, Unknown Brands & Availability Limit Trial



SURVEY QUESTION: What is the primary reason for holding back from purchasing K-Beauty products?



#### Lack of Affordability, Trust & Awareness Limit Purchases

33% Cite price & Access as barriers

32% Prefer Familiar Brands

30% Lack Awareness of Benefits

18% Don't Prioritize Skincare

Affordability and limited availability are major blockers highlighting the need for localized pricing and stronger distribution strategies.

Trust is a key hurdle for K-beauty adoption. **Brand-switch reluctance** underscores the importance of credibility and consistency.

A significant knowledge gap exists, signaling missed opportunities in education, product storytelling, and advocacy.

Lifestyle inertia limits category engagement - pointing to a segment with minimal skincare involvement & low perceived need.

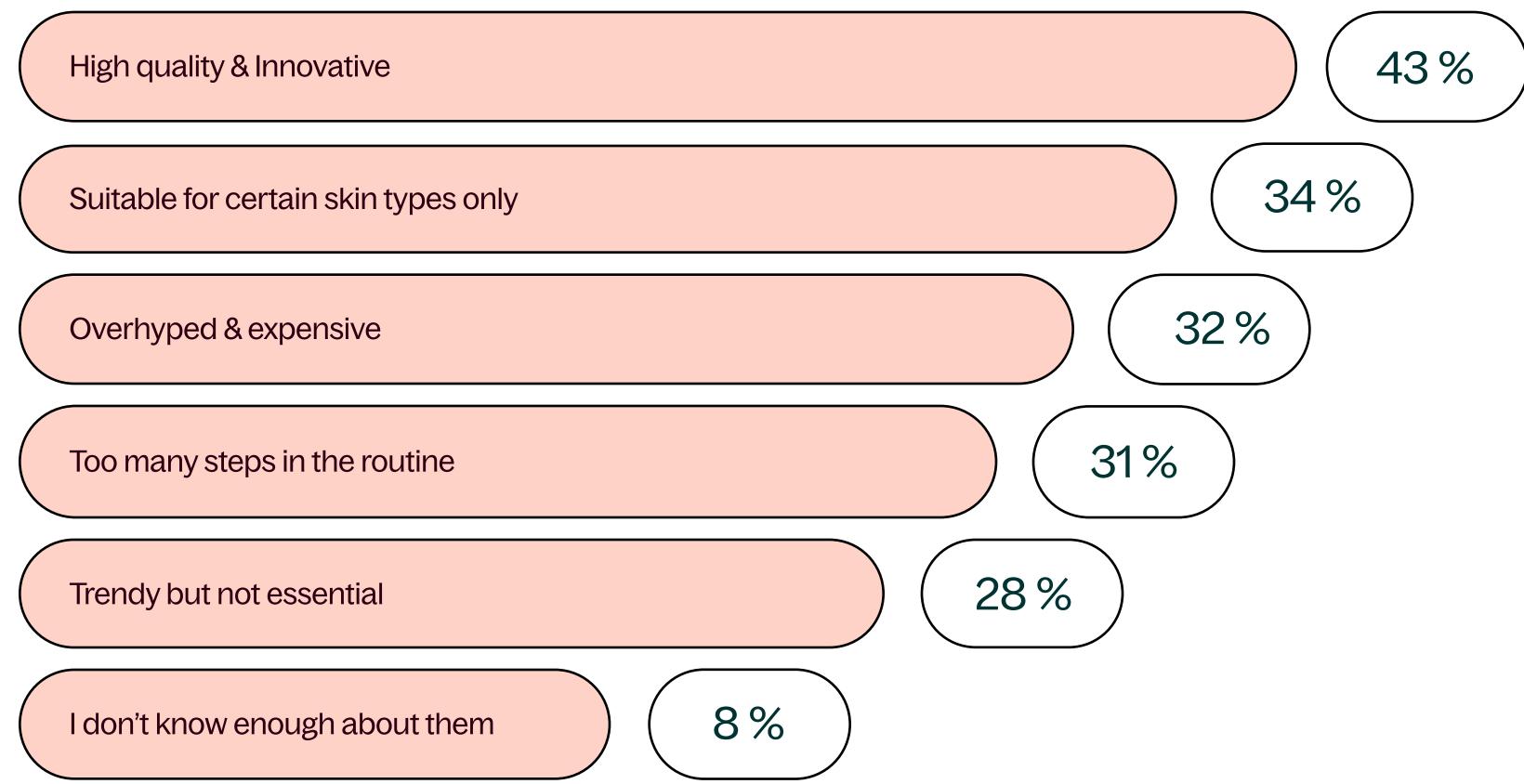
Source: Datum State Of K-Beauty In India Study 2025, (N=553 Online Beauty And Cosmetics Buyers Are Aware But Not Considering To Purchase Korean Beauty Products)





### Perceptions Are Mixed - Innovation Impresses, But Complexity & Cost Create Hesitation





SURVEY QUESTION: What is your perception of Korean beauty products?



# High-Quality & Innovation are key strengths, But Price & hype are barriers.

439

see K-beauty as **high-quality and innovative**, reinforcing its edge in advanced formulations.

34%

doubt its suitability for all skin types, highlighting the need for inclusive messaging and localised R&D.

But

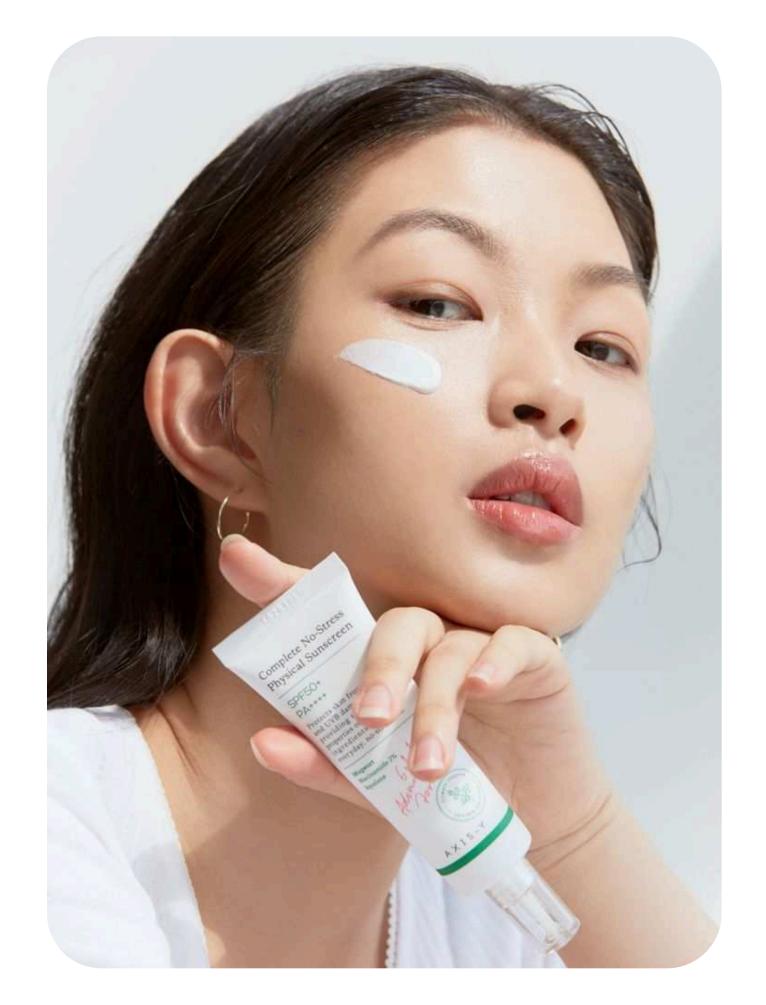
32%

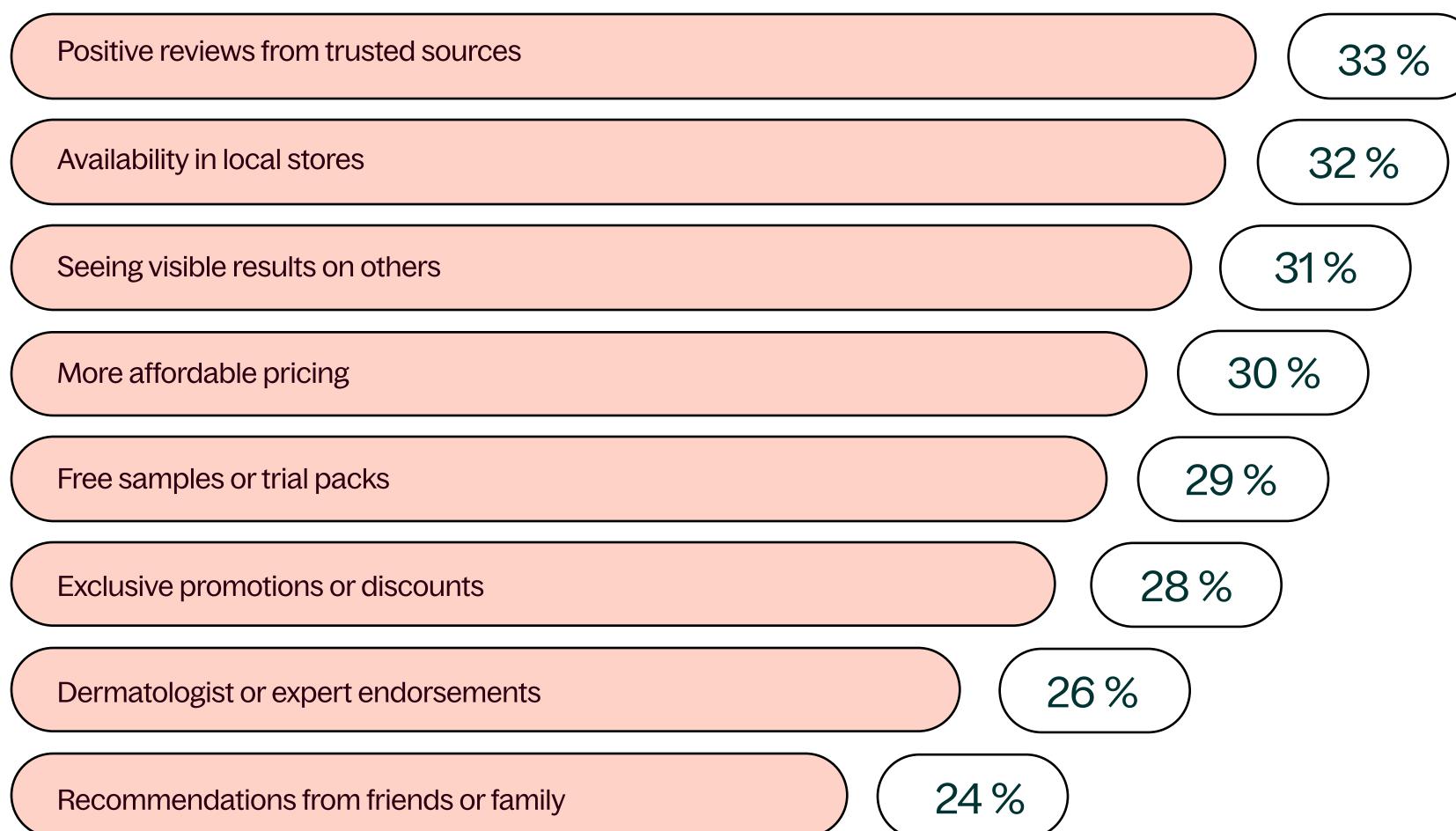
find it overhyped and pricey, signalling concerns around value for money.

31%

are deterred by routine complexity, suggesting a push for simpler, streamlined regimes.

#### Trust, Visibility, and Access Can Convert the K-Beauty Hesitant





SURVEY QUESTION: What might make you consider trying Korean beauty products in the future?



# Visible Results & Trial Packs are Key in Converting Non-Users into Buyers

33%
Trust Drives
Trial

32%
Say Offline Access
Boosts Trial

31% Need to See Results First

30% Seek Affordable Entry Points

28%
Respond to
Discounts

26%
Reacts to Expert
Endorsements

Consumers are more likely to consider K-beauty after seeing positive reviews from trusted sources - making credibility key to conversion.

Availability in local stores increases likelihood of purchase, showing that presence matters alongside promotion.

Visible results on others serve as strong validation - social proof is a powerful motivator.

Lower pricing drives trial for many, highlighting the need for accessible, value-driven SKUs. Exclusive promotions & dermatologist or influencer backing act as effective conversion levers.



#### About Us:



Datum Intelligence is your go-to resource for insightful data, analysis, trends, and predictions related to consumer behavior globally. Our comprehensive data offerings cover a range of topics, including market size, market share, category analysis, consumer sentiment, digital advertising trends, holiday sales performance, and brand and category-specific data. Our goal is to empower businesses with actionable insights that drive informed decision-making and strategic growth in the global markets.

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Authored by: Satish Meena, Founder, Datum Intelligence



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