

Press Release

**FineToday Researcher Receives Outstanding Presentation Award at
the Japan Society of Kansei Engineering****—Study on the Impact of Stratum Corneum Hydration in Men’s Skin on
Interpersonal Impressions—**

FineToday Co., Ltd. researcher Ryoko Kawakami received an Outstanding Presentation Award at the 21st Spring Conference of the Japan Society of Kansei Engineering (held March 16–18, 2026, in Tochigi Prefecture) for her presentation titled “Moisturized Skin, Better Impressions?”

—An Analysis of Interpersonal Evaluations Based on Male Skin Condition Data —” This award honors young researchers whose work shows strong potential for future development and advancement. Her presentation was recognized for its excellence in areas such as the writing of the research abstract, the setting of research objectives, the quality of the presentation itself, and the answers provided during the Q&A session.

The study examined the relationship between men’s skin conditions and interpersonal impressions through both measured data and impression evaluations, and it demonstrated that stratum corneum hydration may play a role in impression evaluations, including perceptions of youthfulness.

■Research background

Improving the impression conveyed by one’s skin is considered one of the key roles of men’s skincare products. Previous studies have reported that skin conditions among men—such as uneven skin tone and skin texture irregularities—can affect interpersonal impressions, and that makeup can improve impressions. At the same time, however, improving these skin conditions requires ongoing care, making it difficult to achieve results that can be immediately perceived. Furthermore, the fact that the use of makeup has yet to become a widely established habit among men is also considered a major barrier to improving impressions through cosmetics. Accordingly, the study focused on stratum corneum hydration as an indicator with the potential to show relatively immediate changes through skincare, and investigated its relationship with interpersonal impressions.

■Research details

[Experiment (1)] Survey on men’s skin conditions

A skin condition survey was conducted involving 107 healthy Japanese men in their 20s to 50s, in which measurements were taken of facial skin color (brightness and tone), stratum corneum hydration, and the degree of stratum corneum layering.

Results showed that skin brightness decreased with age, suggesting that skin becomes darker as people grow older. In contrast, no age-related differences were observed in stratum corneum hydration, and individuals with both high and low moisture levels were present across all age groups. Furthermore, no age-related differences were observed in the degree of stratum corneum layering, which may reflect stratum corneum accumulation associated with impaired turnover and desquamation, and a negative correlation was found between stratum corneum hydration and the degree of stratum corneum layering. These findings show a relationship between stratum corneum hydration and the condition of the stratum corneum surface, and suggest that stratum corneum hydration may affect visible skin translucency and light scattering—factors that cannot be fully evaluated through skin brightness alone.

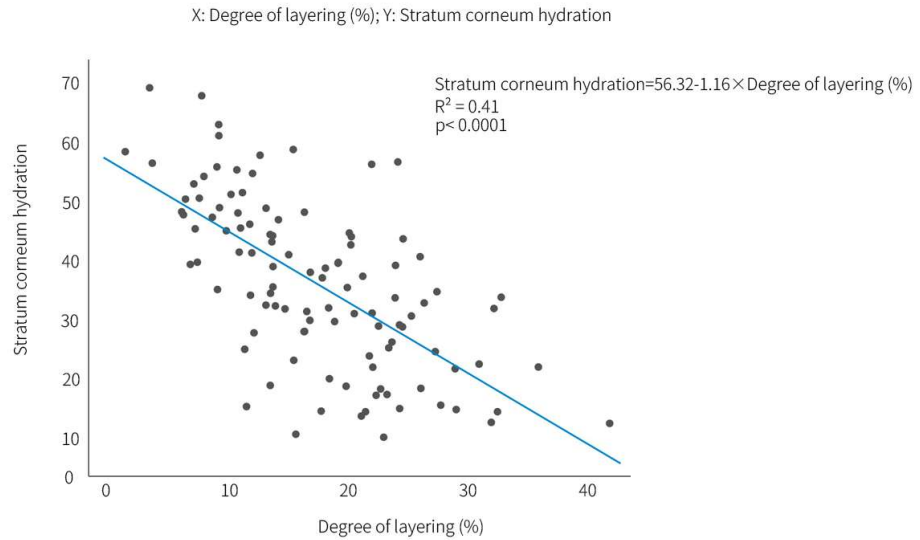


Figure 1: Relationship between the degree of stratum corneum layering and hydration

[Experiment (2)] Impression evaluation based on male facial skin images

Interpersonal impression evaluations were conducted using cheek skin images and skin condition data obtained from the skin condition survey. A total of eight images were selected for the impression evaluations, each showing pairs of subjects within each age group with similar skin color but different stratum corneum hydration levels. Each image was then evaluated in terms of four aspects: Competence, Warmth, Morality, and Perceived health.

Results showed that skin with higher stratum corneum hydration tended to give a more positive impression overall. In particular, the “youthfulness” of such subjects was rated significantly higher than that of the group with lower stratum corneum hydration. These findings suggest that stratum corneum hydration level may be an important factor in interpersonal impressions, alongside skin brightness and tone.

Skin with higher stratum corneum hydration appears healthier, more translucent, and more radiant, which may contribute to improved visual impressions.

		Average score among each stratum corneum hydration group				Average score among each stratum corneum hydration group			
		Low	High	P-value		Low	High	P-value	
Competence	Appears competent	71.19	73.81	0.679	Morality	Appears honest	69.93	75.07	0.406
	Appears smart	66.47	78.53	0.053		Appears responsible	69.04	75.96	0.253
	Appears capable at work	70.53	74.47	0.528		Appears earnest	70.19	74.81	0.463
	Appears unreliable	70.47	74.53	0.521		Appears healthy	66.65	78.35	0.077
Warmth	Appears kind	68.88	76.12	0.258	Perceived health	Appears energetic	68.69	76.31	0.252
	Appears approachable	70.19	74.81	0.478		Appears youthful	64.02	80.98	0.012*
	Appears considerate	68.11	76.89	0.160		Appears tired	66.22	78.78	0.061
	Appears trustworthy	69.73	75.27	0.377					

Wilcoxon two-sample test, $p < 0.05$

Table 1: Results of impression evaluations

Each item was rated on a five-point scale:

“1: Not applicable at all,” “2: Not very applicable,” “3: Neither applicable nor inapplicable,” “4: Somewhat applicable,” and “5: Strongly applicable.” The table shows the average values obtained by quantifying the evaluation scores for the low and high stratum corneum hydration groups on a five-point scale.

These results indicate that skin with higher stratum corneum hydration gives a more favorable impression. Enhancing skin hydration through skincare may help improve the impressions people convey, with effects that may be noticeable even shortly after use.

■Future prospects

Our Purpose (our reason for existence) is to “enrich the lives of everyone today and for generations to come, one fine day at a time.” In pursuit of this, we have continued to support men’s skincare habits by delivering innovative products through the men’s grooming brand “uno,” helping everyone achieve their ideal appearance. Building on these research findings, we will continue to investigate—in even greater detail—the relationship between changes in skin condition before and after skincare and the impressions they create, while also working to clearly present the immediate and tangible benefits that skincare can provide for men.

<Links>

Official Website: <https://www.finetoday.com/en/>

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■About FineToday Group

FineToday Group was founded as an independent entity in 2021 after separating from Shiseido's personal care business.

Our purpose is to enrich the lives of everyone today and for generations to come, one fine day at a time. We integrate environmental / social sustainability with profitable growth to achieve the purpose.

Aesthetics originating from our DNA are carried forward in our refined operations, unique value propositions, and a glocal mode of behavior.

We aim to become Asia's No.1 daily beauty product producing company, bringing well-being by unlocking the joy of beauty to people worldwide.
