**Research Methodology**

**April 2024 Examination**

**1. Shoppers stop is conducting an observational research study to analyze the behavior of shoppers in a retail store. Describe the advantages and disadvantages of using a concealed versus unconcealed observation technique. Which technique should be used by Shoppers stop with relevant justification? (10 Marks)**

**Ans 1.**

**Introduction**

Observational research, a fundamental method within the realm of qualitative research, plays a crucial role in understanding consumer behavior in real-time settings. Shoppers Stop, a prominent retail entity, aims to utilize this approach to delve into the intricate patterns and behaviors of shoppers within their store environment. The decision to employ either concealed or unconcealed observation techniques pivots on various strategic considerations. Concealed observation, where the observer remains hidden from the subjects, offers the advantage of unfiltered, authentic behavior, as shoppers are unaware of being watched. Conversely, unconcealed observation, where participants are aware of the observer's

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**2. What is a mediating variable? How a mediating variable is different from moderating variable? Develop a conceptual model by analyzing literature to show the relationship of mediating and moderating variable. (10 Marks)**

**Ans 2.**

**Introduction**

Research methodology is a crucial aspect of academic and scientific studies, as it outlines the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. It comprises the theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge. Within this framework, understanding the roles of mediating and moderating variables is essential for comprehensive research design and analysis. Mediating variables serve as intermediaries in the cause-and-effect relationship between independent and dependent variables, essentially explaining the process or mechanism through which the independent variable influences the dependent variable. On the other hand, moderating variables alter the strength or direction of the relationship between the independent and

**3. Sebamed, a German-based specialist skincare company, has emerged as a formidable disruptor in the highly competitive skincare industry, significantly impacting Unilever's longstanding dominance. Sebamed's unwavering dedication to catering specifically to sensitive skin needs has resonated with a growing segment of health- conscious consumers seeking more gentle and hypoallergenic skincare solutions. By focusing on skin-friendly pH levels and leveraging dermatological research, Sebamed has established itself as a trusted brand among those seeking targeted skincare solutions. Their fierce advertising caused a lot of damage to Unilever. Sebamed's success has posed a direct threat to Unilever's skincare business, especially in markets where consumers increasingly prioritize natural and skin-friendly products. Acknowledging the disruption caused by Sebamed, Unilever recognized the importance of addressing consumer demand for more natural and sensitive skincare products.**

**a. Develop a questionnaire to survey the consumer’s preferences and expectations from skin care product. (5 Marks)**

**Ans 3a.**

**Introduction**

In the evolving landscape of the skincare industry, understanding consumer preferences and expectations is crucial for companies to stay competitive and relevant. The rise of Sebamed as a disruptor, challenging Unilever's dominance, underscores this need. Consumers are increasingly drawn to products that cater to sensitive skin and prioritize natural ingredients. To gain insights into these shifting preferences, a well-structured questionnaire is essential.

**b. Conduct a primary data collection from 10-15 respondents and present the findings. (5 Marks)**

**Ans 3b.**

**Introduction**

Conducting primary data collection is a crucial step in understanding consumer behavior and preferences, especially in dynamic markets like skincare. For this study, a survey based on the previously developed questionnaire was distributed to a small sample of 10-15 respondents. This process aimed to gather firsthand information about consumer preferences,