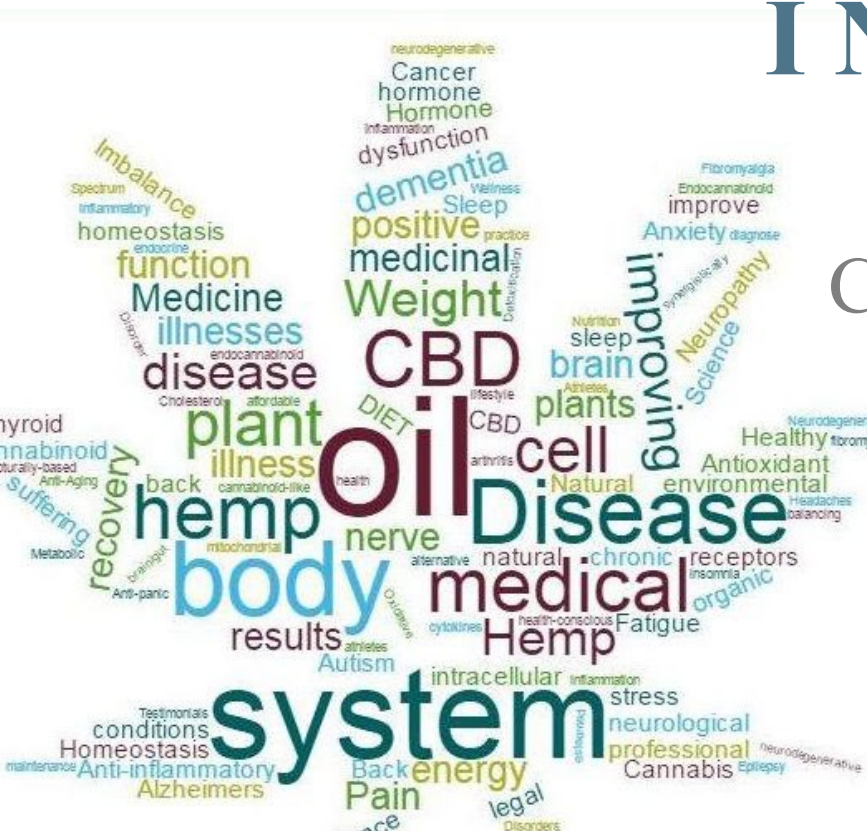


# Cannabidiol (CBD) Skincare on Instagram

Julie Williams Merten, Ph.D. | McKenzie Rooney | Meriam Elbahri  
 | Kaitlin Shivers | Cristina Watson  
 University of North Florida | Brooks College of Health  
 Department of Public Health | Jacksonville, Florida



## INTRODUCTION



CBD (Cannabidiol) is a non-psychoactive component of cannabis that has become widely available as a natural skincare treatment for issues such as erythema, dermatitis, acne, and other appearance related skin concerns. *CBD products have become a multi-billion dollar industry in the past few years.*

Despite the growing market, many of the skincare claims have not had sufficient scientific testing and the legality of hemp-derived CBD is confusing given its close relationship with marijuana. Even with unsubstantiated skincare claims, murky legality, and lack of federal oversight, *CBD use is increasing in skincare products and social media sites such as Instagram are playing an active role in the conversation about CBD skincare products.*



*Instagram has roughly one billion active users and is a powerful consumer influence platform particularly by the use of social media*

*social media influencers are public figures, not necessarily celebrities, that have gained credibility, have large audiences, and promote products and services on their account. Through the highly visual and engaging platform and subtle marketing by influencers, Instagram has the ability to create and shape societal trends in skincare.*

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

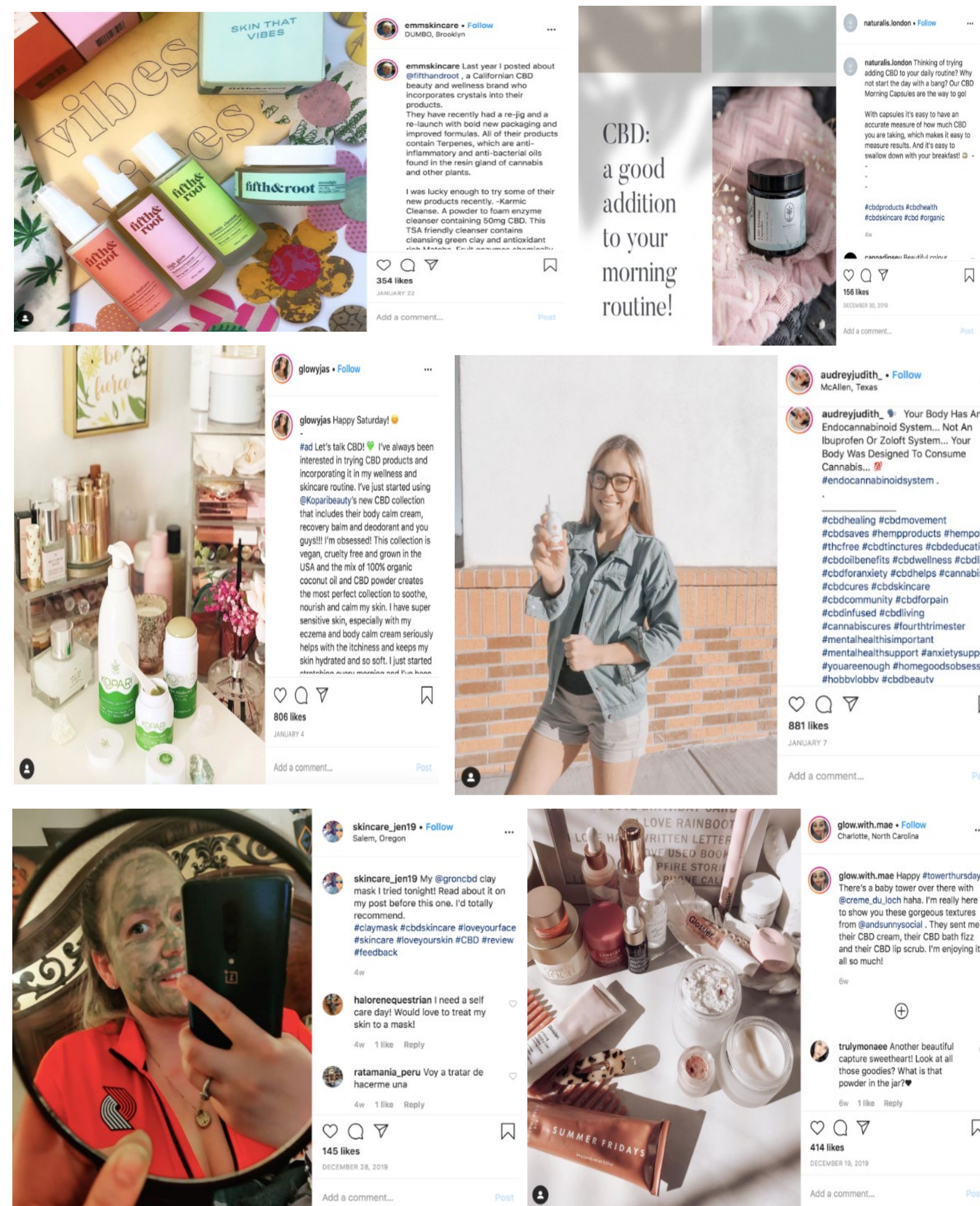
Given the rise of CBD skincare product use and the popularity of Instagram, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1 How are CBD skincare products depicted on Instagram?
- 2 What skincare claims are made?
- 3 How do Instagram users engage with CBD skincare posts?

## METHODS

Using a new Instagram account, researchers entered the keywords “CBD skincare” and “CBD skin” in the Instagram search bar. Using methodology from other similar studies, every third post from the top 1000 posts from February 1<sup>st</sup> to February 10<sup>th</sup> of 2020 were sampled for a total of 250 posts. The number of comments and likes were recorded and screenshots were taken of the entire post including all tags, descriptions, and other tagged accounts. Duplicate, irrelevant, and advertisement posts were removed ( $n=40$ ) for a final sample of 210 posts.

A codebook for CBD skincare products was developed, tested, and used for this study using coding categories from previous health-related social media studies. After pilot-testing modifications, intercoder agreement was tested using ReCal, which showed Scott’s Pi at 0.92. Individual variable coefficients were all above 0.70.

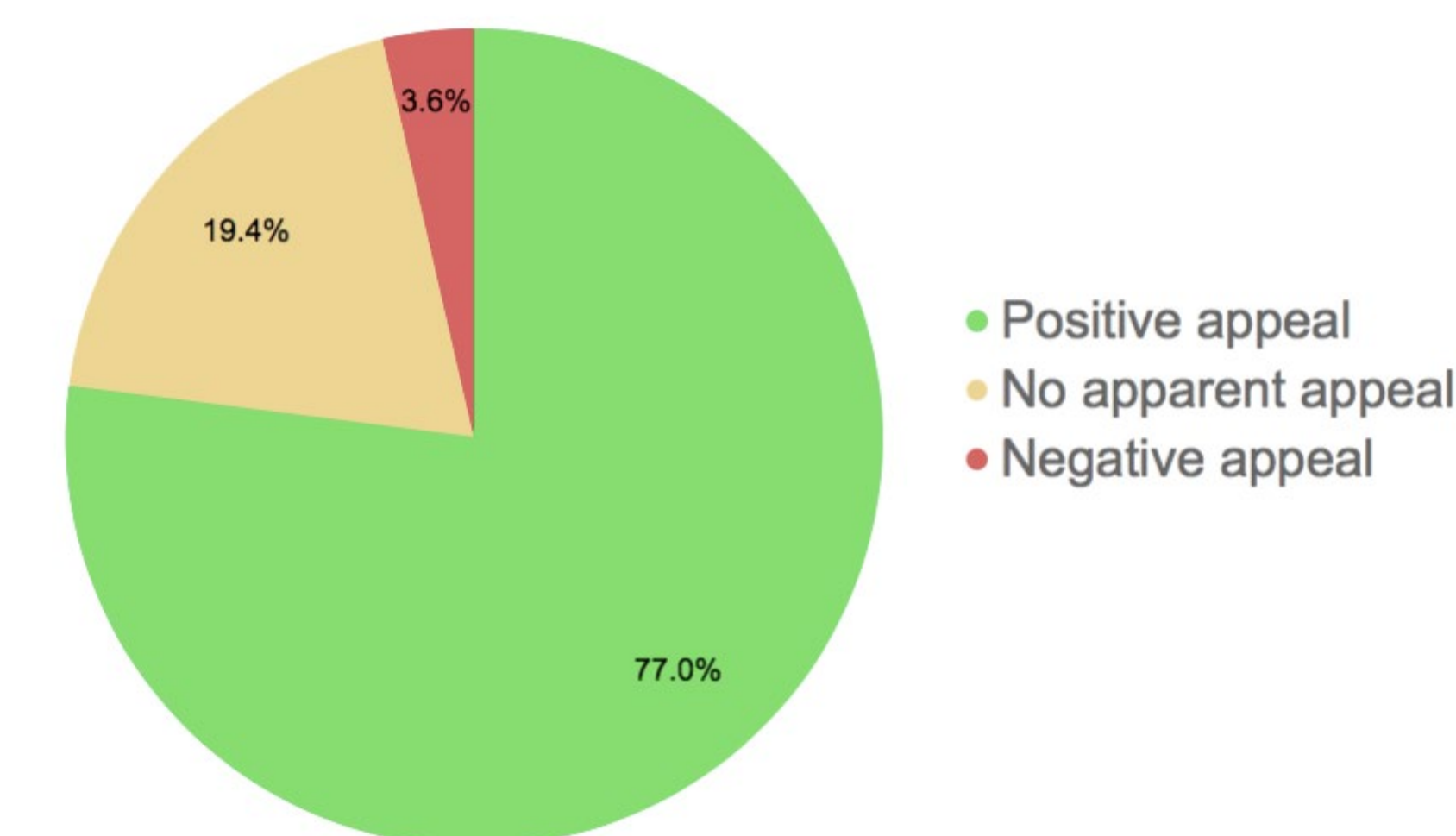


## RESULTS

### SKINCARE PRODUCT DEPICTION

- The majority of posts positively portrayed CBD skincare products and posts were primarily images of skin care products with an appearance-based appeal (40.4%).

Depiction of CBD Products



### SKINCARE PRODUCT CLAIMS

- The most common skin care benefit claim in the sample posts was the ability to moisturize skin and 21.4% of posts also claimed health benefits beyond skincare including joint improvement and digestive relief (11.7%) and stress reduction (8.2%)
- Nearly half (49%) of the sample posts depicted multiple products including lotions, creams, scrubs, exfoliants, soaps, cleansers, bath bubbles, or oils

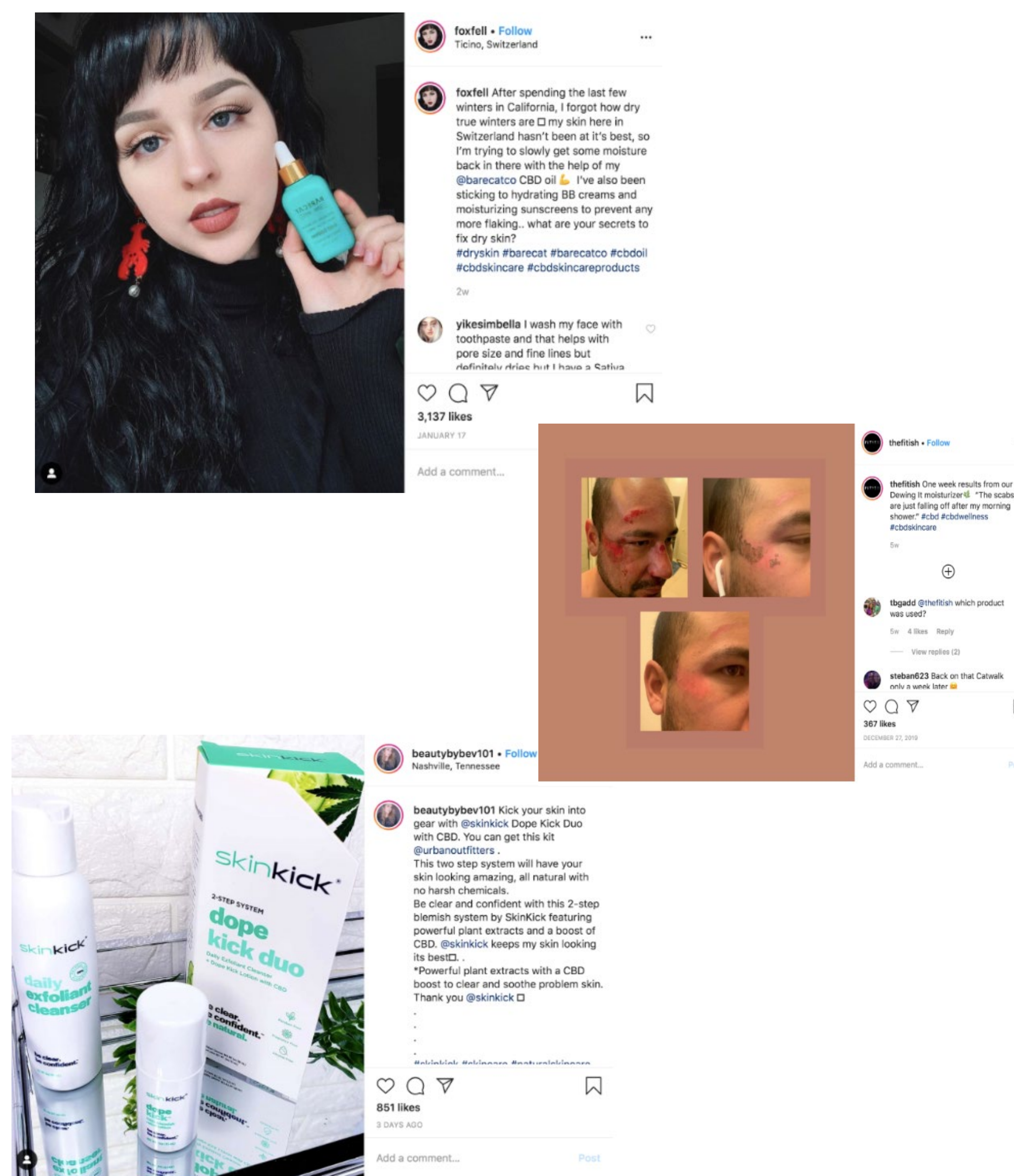


### INSTAGRAM USER ENGAGEMENT

- Posts were primarily geared toward women (72.4%) with 98% of posts including comments with an average of 1592.31 likes
- More than half (57.7%) of the posts were commercial posts rather than personal posts, and 61% tagged another person’s account
- 51.5% of the posts were gifted posts, meaning the person posting was paid or received free products for promoting it

## CONCLUSION

Social media has become a powerful source of health information. Instagram posts portray CBD in skincare as a positive and safe alternative to other skincare products through claims of reduced anxiety and improved moisturization and complexion of skin. However, there is evidence of unsupported and incomplete information claims being shared. This study revealed widespread acceptance of the use of CBD skincare products.



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