



How are the behavioural attitudes of consumers influenced by feminist messages associated with consumption options?

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Abstract

“How are the behavioural attitudes of consumers influenced by feminist messages associated with consumption options?”

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This Master thesis explores the phenomenon around feminism-related marketing and its effectiveness in influencing the purchasing behaviour of consumers.

In recent years, there has been an increase in cause-related marketing efforts as well as in the importance given to feminist ideals, especially focusing on gender equality. Additionally, it is known that the effectiveness of cause-related campaigns is different for hedonic and utilitarian products. While cause-related marketing is commonly discussed in research papers, there is little research evaluating feminism-related marketing and its effectiveness in women's, and men's purchasing behaviour, especially in regard to differences in hedonic versus utilitarian, and empowering versus threatening products. In two online surveys using a within-subjects experimental design, people evaluated different products and messages that were then used to conduct a third online study. The main study of this research paper used a between-subjects experimental design, where participants were randomly exposed to either products associated with feminist messages, environmental messages or neutral messages, and then completed a questionnaire. Results indicate that purchase attitudes did not increase for products associated with feminist messages compared to the control groups, and purchase attitudes were higher for utilitarian (vs hedonic) products and for positive (vs negative) stereotyped products.

Keywords - feminism; cause-related marketing; gender stereotype; gender empowerment; hedonic and utilitarian products; purchasing behaviour.

Abstrato

“De que forma é o comportamento de compra dos consumidores influenciado pelas mensagens feministas associadas a diferentes opções de consumo?”

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Esta tese de Mestrado explora os fenómenos em torno de estratégias de marketing relacionadas com feminismo e a sua eficácia na influência do comportamento de compra dos consumidores. Recentemente, tem existido um aumento do número e da qualidade das estratégias de marketing relacionadas com causas, assim como um aumento da importância dos ideais feministas na sociedade, em particular os que estão centrados na igualdade de género. Além disso, sabe-se que a eficácia das campanhas relacionadas com causas é diferente para produtos hedónicos, comparada com utilitários. Embora as estratégias de marketing relacionadas com causas sejam geralmente discutidas em artigos de investigação, existem poucos exemplos que avaliam o marketing relacionado com o feminismo em particular e a sua eficácia na alteração do comportamento de compra dos consumidores. Além disso, diferenças entre produtos hedónicos versus utilitários e empoderadores versus ameaçadores de género são tópicos que restam explorar. Em dois questionários realizados em *within-subjects design*, os participantes avaliaram diferentes produtos e mensagens que foram depois utilizados para construir um terceiro estudo. O estudo principal desta tese de Mestrado utilizou um *between-subjects design*, onde os participantes foram expostos aleatoriamente a produtos associados a mensagens feministas, mensagens ambientais ou mensagens neutras, e de seguida responderam a um questionário. Os resultados indicam que as atitudes de compra não aumentaram para produtos associados a mensagens feministas em comparação com os grupos de controlo, e que as atitudes de compra foram mais elevadas para produtos utilitários (vs hedónicos) e para produtos positivos (vs negativos) em termos de estereótipos de género.

Palavras-chave - feminismo; marketing relacionado com causas; estereótipo de género; empoderamento de género; produtos hedónicos e utilitários; comportamento de compra.

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
CRM	Cause-Related Marketing
BJW	Belief in a Just World
SJT	System Justification Theory
HP	Hedonic Positive
HN	Hedonic Negative
UP	Utilitarian Positive
UN	Utilitarian Negative
M	Mean
SD	Standard Deviation
SE	Standard Error
CI	Confidence Interval

Introduction

This Master Thesis aims to understand how, for which products, and when, feminist statements are effective in driving purchasing attitudes. In specific, its goal is to assess whether feminist statements influence consumer purchasing behaviour in different product categories: utilitarian, hedonic, with positive and negative gender stereotypes associated, how that is different for men and women, and what other factors influence the effectiveness of such marketing strategies.

Feminism has become an increasingly popular cause to be used in cause-related marketing campaigns, being it in the form of the mission and values of a company or in the form of *femvertising*- the use of feminine empowered themes that threaten established social roles in advertising. The present work proposes that the effects of such marketing efforts might have different outcomes for particular product categories, for example utilitarian versus hedonic products and products that elicit positive (gender empowering) versus negative (gender threatening) stereotypes. This dissertation further explores whether the effects of feminist messages on consumer behaviour might also be moderated by an individuals' gender identity, feminist self-identification or social beliefs, like system justification beliefs or beliefs in a just world. *Femvertising* has been widely studied and discussed, and it was suggested before that, as long as there is a fit between the brand/product and the cause, it is effective in driving sales. Cause-related marketing on hedonic products has also shown to be effective, however there has been little research regarding the conditions (when, how, for whom) in which feminist slogans are effective in increasing desirability towards a product.

This is an increasing relevant topic due to the importance gained by the feminist social movement in recent years and the also increasing criticism around this type of marketing – the idea that some brands use feminist statements to drive sales but then do not fight to combat gender inequality. In this paper, three different studies are presented, with the last and more comprehensive study contrasts the effects of feminist messages against two control conditions: neutral and environmental, to ensure that the results encountered are specific for feminism and not general for all types of cause-related marketing.

More specifically, the research questions are:

- *How is consumer's attitude moderated by the fact that they identify as feminists or if they believe in feminist ideals?*
- *How are women's purchase attitudes towards products endorsing feminist messages moderated by how these products are associated to undesirable gender stereotypes?*

- *How is consumer's attitude and purchase intention towards products endorsing feminist messages impacted by the hedonic or utilitarian nature of these?*

Literature Review

Cause-Related Marketing

Throughout time, different definitions have been given to Cause-Related Marketing (CRM). Initially, CRM was a correction tool for companies that wanted to enhance their reputation (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988). Now, CRM is defined as a marketing tool that connects a company or a brand to a relevant social issue in society, for mutual benefit (Dupree, 2000), while helping a brand to be seen as an altruistic entity which is concerned with issues in society (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988). CRM can happen in several forms with different objectives (usually to drive sales of a company or create loyalty). Some companies directly link the sales to the support of the cause and other times the support for the cause is less evident and can take the form of creating awareness and bringing attention to that specific issue (Barone et al., 2000).

Past studies have found that CRM is an important differentiation tool, increasing the probability than a product will be purchased (Murphy, 1997; Tate, 1995), and improves the perceived brand image from the lens of customers (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988), making them ready to switch brands for supporting causes (Demetriou et al., 2009). In contrast, some consumers remain sceptical of these practices, doubting whether the support for the cause is to benefit the company or the cause itself (Webb & Mohr, 1998).

In the current competitive business environment, CRM can help to increase market share, as, according to some studies, consumers are willing to pay an extra for products that support social causes, being mindful in choosing the brands that they purchase from, making sure that those contribute to society (Demetriou et al., 2009). However, there are studies reporting that people are indeed intended to switch brands associated with CRM efforts, but only if quality and price are equal to competitors' products, and some consumers report performance and price to be important factors, but CRM with relatively less importance on decision making (Barone et al., 2000).

When predicting the success of CRM, one of the most important factors is a high brand-cause fit, which, when is at the same time a cause that matches consumers' identity, can enhance the positive response towards cause-related products (Pracejus & Olsen, 2004). Customers want congruence between the brand and the cause it supports to consider that CRM initiative as valid

(Natarajan et al., 2016). Moreover, product-cause fit is another important factor in determining the creditability of both the brand and the product, and the integrity of the support for the cause (Kim, Kim, & Han, 2005).

The probability of cause-related strategies increasing the choice of the cause-related brand is dependent on whether the consumer perceives the primary reason for the support to be positive (supporting an important cause) or negative (to drive sales and loyalty only). Additionally, brand choice is dependent on if consumers would have to trade off the support for the social cause with lower quality or a higher price (Barone et al., 2000), as studies show that most customers would choose a brand that engages in CRM if price and performance are equal (Brønn & Vrioni, 2001).

Hence, the selection of the cause to support is crucial because the marketing strategy behind it should be built upon the principles that serve as its foundation, persuading consumers to feel empathetic. The cause should also be familiar and relevant for the target audience, to influence their behaviour towards the brand (Lafferty, 2007), and it should be known by the society, so that consumers can feel represented by it (Natarajan et al., 2016).

Furthermore, firms and business are agents in the society and have the moral duty to adopt practices of gender equity and equality to help eradicate practices and structures that marginalize or undervalue women (Thompson, 2007), and by promoting women's empowerment, corporate social responsibility (CSR) can be an approach used to address gender inequality (McCarthy, 2017).

Companies might not see their business as a social agent, however, since they have the primary goal of creating wealth, they can act like a perpetuator or diminisher of gender inequalities (Thompson, 2007). In fact, when companies are better performers of CSR, female CEOs earn a higher salary, which shows that socially responsible firms avoid discrimination in payments as a practice of gender equality. Moreover, when there is a need to replace the executives in a company, companies with better CSR performance are more likely to choose a female CEO (Cooper, 2017).

Likewise, as a CSR priority, corporations should actively work to reduce gender inequalities as an acknowledgement that this issue is as central for the society as climate change or poverty (Thompson, 2007). Firms should also acknowledge the importance of marginalized female stakeholders and the need for practices that increase gender equity (McCarthy, 2017).

Feminism

Definition of feminism

Feminism is the cause that defends egalitarianism in all spheres of society: social, political, and economic, for women and men, as such, the feminist movement wants to eliminate gender differences in power, privilege, and beyond (White et al., 2001; Duncan, 2010), by also improving the quality of life and inclusiveness of all genders. Feminism aims to perpetuate change through the empowerment of women, by also examining the relationships between men and women (Crawford & Kimmel, 1999).

There are three main pillars that support the feminist ideology: the exposure of the devaluation and exploitation of women's rights and inequalities between genders; the objective of enhancing women's status in the society while providing equity for all genders and groups and the fight against traditional and obsolete stereotypes and ideologies (Acker et al., 1983). Products associated with obsolete gender stereotypes that reinforce unequal and discriminatory gender roles will be explored in this paper. Overall, most people in society believe that feminism is about ending discrimination, while more empowered and feminist women report that they get stronger from feminism to make the best choices for themselves and live a life more freely, combating gender stereotypes (Swirsky & Angelone, 2015)

Feminist identity

Women can be categorized in three groups when it comes to feminist identity: feminists (individuals who identify themselves as feminists and hold feminist values); nonlabelers (who hold some of the feminist ideals but do not identify as feminists); no feminists (who consider themselves as no feminists and do not identify with its values) (Ramsey et al., 2007; Abowitz, 2008; Zucker & Bay-Cheng, 2010).

Over the years, researchers have found that although the majority of young women identify with the egalitarian values of feminism, they do not identify as feminists (Buschman & Lenart, 1996; Renzetti, 1987; Williams & Wittig, 1997; McCabe, 2005), so they belong to the group named as nonlabelers, as some researchers (Zucker & Bay-Cheng, 2010; Ramsey et al., 2007) have referred to them. Other researchers name this phenomenon as a 'feminist paradox', where women support the general ideas of the ideology but dissociate from the name "feminist" (Leaper & Arias, 2011).

The difference between feminist and nonlabelers is that feminists acknowledge that they belong to a marginalized group in society and are more likely to openly fight and challenge machismo (Fitz et al., 2012), whereas nonlabelers are less likely to be concerned with sex-based inequalities and are also less likely to advocate for women's rights in the form of activism (Eisele & Stake, 2008; Yoder et al., 2010; Fitz et al., 2012). This means that having a feminist identity and adopting feminist attitudes are two separate concepts and with different outcomes (Zucker & Bay-Cheng, 2010).

In a study conducted by Fitz, Zucker and Bay-Cheng (2012), it was found that nonlabelers can be further divided into two groups: quasi-feminists and neoliberals. Although the two groups share the belief in the equality of genders, quasi-feminists had a lower level of meritocracy, just world and modern sexism ideologies, which were close to the ones reported by their feminist peers. Neoliberals, on the other hand, showed higher meritocratic, just world, and modern sexist beliefs, which illustrates why they may support a sexual double standard (Fitz et al., 2012), which is different from the non-feminists, that report a lower gender equality belief because they simply do not believe in the non-discrimination between the two genders.

Accordingly, positive evaluation of feminists, belief in collective action, and exposure to feminism predict feminist self-identification (Williams & Wittig, 1997). Swirsky and Angelone (2015) found that exposure to feminist beliefs through education, personal influences, and awareness of gender discrimination all influenced the probability of women to identify as feminists.

It was hypothesised by Swirsky and Angelone (2015) whether feminism is more important for women that are more aware of patriarchy and sexism, which empowers them to take action. At the same time, there is a higher probability that feminist women will notice and respond to machismo than women with a weaker feminist identity (Holland, 2013).

Nonlabelers reject to self-identify as feminists due to the negative connotation given to this term and perceptions of feminists as well (Cowan et al., 1992; Dottolo, 2011; Swirsky & Angelone, 2014). These negative perceptions may not be endorsed by each Nonlabeler but illustrate preconceptions about how society judges feminists (Alexander & Ryan, 1997; Rosell & Hartman, 2001; Dottolo, 2011). Negative connotations include a range of adjectives such as: the perception that feminists are radical and/or lesbian (Williams & Wittig, 1997), that they are unattractive (Clingman & Lushene, 1982), or, even, that they are more competent but colder than other groups of women (Fiske et al., 1999).

Moreover, nonlabelers are more likely to self-identify as feminists if they perceive feminists to be heterosexual and liberal, rather than homosexual and radical (Cowan et al., 1992), and other nonlabelers perceive the term “feminism” as activism and therefore decline that label, despite agreeing with the feminist ideals (Swirsky & Angelone, 2014).

Regarding the group of feminist women, in a study conducted by Bullock and Fernald (2003), they showed fewer feminist attitudes after viewing a "masculine"-appearing feminist speaker and responded more favourably to a feminist message when it was delivered by a "feminine" speaker as opposed to a "masculine" one (Bullock & Fernald, 2003). This study supported the idea of feminism lite: a concept that indicates that feminism is more appealing when communicated by a feminist whose physical appearance does not challenge stereotypical standards of femininity at least for young, white, heterosexual, college students (Bullock & Fernald, 2003). This implies that there might be parts of these gender stereotypes that are desirable, because they are traditional, in order for women to accept a feminist message, despite perpetuating inequality between the genders.

Femvertising

Femvertising is a combination of “feminism” and “advertising”, which definition is “advertising that employs pro-female talent, messages and imagery to empower women and girls”, or only “female empowerment advertising” (Åkestam et al., 2017). This type of advertising puts women in the centre and enhances their talents using pro-women messages and fighting stereotypes and is often referred to as brand activism (Varghese & Kumar, 2020). It is an example of brand activism and a component of strategic practices like CSR, conscious capitalism, CRM, and cultural marketing, since it is focused on giving back to society (Jaglois, 2018).

Women are critical of the way gender roles are represented in advertising. Both young and feminist-educated women are particularly sensitive to how companies present their gender and tend to place more emphasis on contemporary role portrayals. (Ford et al., 1991).

Over the past few years, the importance of *femvertising* has been growing due to factors such as: increasing activism around a more favourable representation of women in advertising; brand activism and conscious capitalism; the criticism of corporate and commodity feminism; growing acknowledgement of gender stereotyping; and growing regulations on gender role representations in advertising (Varghese & Kumar, 2020).

Furthermore, from a company's point of view, *femvertising* is a strategic move that has a positive impact on ad and brand opinions (Varghese & Kumar, 2020), purchase intentions, and emotional connection to brands (Drake, 2017). It has been shown that less stereotypical ads of females (ads showing women of different body types and sizes versus ads with women of a very thin body type) lead to more positive attitudes towards ads and brands (Akestam et al. 2017) and that advertising that portrays women in a positive light and captures social trends emphasizing women's empowerment (female athletes, females working in science) can drive sales due to matching the consumer's expectations around women's role and empowerment (Abitbol & Sternadori, 2018).

On the other hand, some companies have been criticized for engaging in *femvertising* without having a real commitment to feminist core values (McCleary, 2014), a phenomenon called "pink-washing". Thus, it is essential that there is a strong company-customer relationship and CSR (Sternadori & Abitbol, 2019), and that brands are authentic and genuine when using feminist ideologies in advertising (McCleary, 2014), most often requiring that the brand has a pre-existent relationship with women to be effective (Sternadori & Abitbol, 2019). These findings might imply that even a product that is theoretically neutral and fulfils a function that everyone may need (at least on a utilitarian level of product category), seems to also bring this issue of congruency between brand and values.

Ultimately, when women perceive *femvertising* to be honest and authentic, they are eager to use their purchasing power to support businesses that are consistent with their values, and they are more conscious of this role in the digital age, choosing *femvertising* ads versus traditional ads for the same brand (Drake, 2017). Lastly, Drake (2017) inferred that stereotypical and offensive social roles (for example in ads that depict women as subordinates or make sexist claims) can have a negative impact on brand profitability.

H1: People that identify as feminists and hold feminist values will be more likely to purchase products that have a feminist message associated than other message-related products.

Gender stereotypes and stereotype threat

In this paper, the term "gender" will be used to refer to one's self-identified group membership, which can, or not, overlap with individual's biological sex (Kunst et al., 2018).

Cultural stereotypes are thoughts and pre-concepts about attitudes of certain groups, that are visible in society through messages and images, like advertising (Ashmore et al., 1986). Behaviours may, or may not, be gendered (e.g., considered “masculine” or “feminine”), depending on time, place, and the experiences of individuals. This means that gender roles and socially constructed and depend on context (White et al., 2000; White et al., 2001).

Interestingly, in a study done by Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, and Signorielli (1993), it was discovered that people who watched more television, relatively to people that watched less, thought that women had limited abilities and interests compared to men. Heavy viewers of TV also think that women should have more stereotypical jobs (Gerbner et al., 1993).

Cultural stereotypes, as mentioned before, doubt women’s capabilities of success in every traditionally masculine domain (Aronson, et.al., 1998; Davies et al., 2002; Steele, 1997), and that is why they have the burden of that gender stereotype in all fields considered, in principle, as masculine (Ashmore et al., 1986; Davies et al., 2002).

There is a cultural assumption that power is balanced between the genders, where women display more power at home and men at work. Nevertheless, this inhibits women’s influence outside the house, which means that, despite the division of labour between genders might be seen as fair and “positive” in the society (Jost & Kay, 2005), it may contribute to women’s acceptance of social and economic arrangements in which they are able to have less power in the decision making overall (Williams & Chen, 2013).

For example, there is a negative stereotype associated with women’s math abilities that can hurt their performance and goals in quantitative domains. In a three-step study (Davies et al., 2002), it was found that, when exposed to gender-stereotypical advertisement (to evoke the female stereotype), women for whom the activated stereotype was self-relevant, performed poorer on a following math test. Additionally, women that viewed those gender-stereotypic ads avoided math exercises in favour of verbal items ones on a subsequent aptitude test. Lastly, their exposure to these ads also made them show less interest in profession options in which they could suffer from negative stereotypes (i.e., quantitative domains), and more interest in fields that there is no stereotype that they might be inferior to men (i.e., verbal domains) (Davies et al., 2002).

Regarding women’s role in media, there is a growing negative feeling towards sexualized portrayals and stereotyped roles (Dwivedi, 2014). In fact, multiple studies over the years found

that ads with domestic roles of women have positive evaluations from women with traditional attitudes but not from women with progressive attitudes (Morrison & Shaffer, 2003).

An fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) study conducted by Vezich, Gunter and Lieberman (2017), found that, when exposed to domestic images relative to control and sexualized ones, women showed more positive attitudes toward domestic images. However, they had higher activity in the ventral striatum—a brain area associated with reward—and in the amygdala—a region associated with arousal—by watching sexualized images relative to both control and domestic images. Moreover, the more traditional women were, the greater activity in the ventral striatum there was compared to domestic and control images (Vezich et al., 2017). The authors hypothesised on the reasons for these results and stated that participants that were more traditional might consider the sexualized images to be traditional, or these women might have less exposure to sexualized images and find them more novel and interesting. Another explanation can be that traditional women are highly feminine and identify with those on the ads or might think that the product being advertised would increase their own attractiveness (Vezich et al., 2017).

Another pillar of feminism is the encouragement for a reevaluation of social stereotypes and norms, playing a role in making women rethink rules regarding their appearance, like the need to have a light weight and a thin shape (Rubin et al., 2004). Endorsement of feminist beliefs can in fact influence positively women's perceptions of their own body (Kinsaul et al., 2014). By having knowledge about and believing in feminist values, women can have a higher perceived physical attractiveness, lower body dissatisfaction (Dionne et al., 1995), and can be more capable in dealing with pressures from society to be thin (Rubin et al., 2004).

There are gender stereotypes that are easily activated, and some are perceived positively and others negatively for women's gender identity. In this sense, different products associated with different attributes of the gender stereotype can be perceived more or less positively depending on the attribute.

H2: Women do not react positively to products that are associated with feminist messages when these products are not empowering for their gender.

Hedonic and Utilitarian products in Cause-Related Marketing

Individuals engage in the consumption of goods and services for two main reasons: affective gratification derived from the sensations that the experience of using the product provides, and

instrumental reasons that derive from the functions performed by products (Voss et al., 2003). It is known that hedonic products provoke more positive emotions than utilitarian products (Shiv & Fedorikhin, 1999) and that positive emotions create favourable responses to cause-related marketing initiatives (Kim & Johnson, 2012).

Another reason for the fact that hedonic products increase positivity towards cause-related marketing is that when engaging in the consumption of hedonic products, individuals might feel guilty because they cannot justify their purchasing decision (Winterich & Barone, 2011). These emotions like shame and guilt are considered negative and might act as a catalyst for altruistic choices as a compensation mechanism (Guerreiro et al., 2015). Some authors (Winterich & Barone, 2011; Yeung & Wyer, 2004) called this phenomenon the “warm glow”, where individuals that purchase hedonic products want to be more generous because it decreases the guilt, they feel from individualistic pleasure related with indulgent goods or services. When investing in utilitarian products, consumers need to fulfil a functional or practical need and have that task ahead (Strahilevitz & Myers, 1998).

When promoting hedonic products among homogenous players in the market, firms that want to enhance the image of their brands should engage in cause-related marketing partnerships that have a good fit with the brand itself and with consumers’ social identity, as discussed before (Guerreiro et al., 2015).

H3: Women find hedonic products empowering (and not utilitarian products) and consequently there is only a significant change in behaviour when the feminist message is associated to a hedonic product.

Beliefs in a Just World

Belief in a just world (BJW) is an attitude orientation that makes individuals buffer negative emotions when having contact with injustices and victimization (Montada, 1998). Therefore, injustices are minimized through cognitive associations where people get only what they deserve and what they choose (Bastounis & Minibas-Poussard 2012). Individuals that have a high BJW usually think that bad things happen to bad people and good things happen to good people (Dalbert, 1999).

BJW can be subdivided in two categorizations of two groups each. First, BJW for self or for others. Research shows that BJW for oneself predicts psychological adjustment and wellbeing, and BJW for others is connected to harsh social attitudes like negative opinions of immigrant

(Montada, 1998), ill people (Connors & Heaven, 1990), and socioeconomically deprived people (Furnham & Gunter, 1984; Reichle et al., 1998).

Second, BJW can be subdivided in distributive and procedural justice. Procedural justice is about the evaluation of the fairness in decision making, rules and interpersonal relationships (Lind & Tyler, 1988), whereas distributive justice is about fairness in outcomes, allocations, and distribution of resources (Adams, 1965).

The gender differences that were found in the reactions to the *#metoo* movement (where women were more supportive than men and view the movement as relevant and necessary), might thus be explained as well by differences in BJW (Kunst et al., 2018).

In fact, Bastounis and Minibas-Poussard (2012) found that, for individuals high in BJW for self and for others, there was a negative relationship between perceived gender equality and internal causal attributions (that is, women's choices). Furthermore, it was found that BJW for others (and not BJW for self) was a moderator of the negative relationship between perceived gender equality and external attributions (for example social stigma that prevented women from achieving higher career paths) (Wagstaff, 1983). Hence, high BJW is related to an increase of perceived gender equality by both genders (Bastounis & Minibas-Poussard 2012). Consequently, it is important to study and control for this variable, ensuring that there are similar levels of BJW reported, thus, ruling out that the effects one might encounter in a study are not due to differences in these variables.

System Justification Beliefs

System Justification Theory (SJT) proposes that individuals defend and reinforce existing social arrangements and the *status quo* even if they need to deny or rationalize injustices and societal problems, often by prejudicing their personal or group interests (Jost & van der Toorn, 2012). Individuals in this motive believe that the social norms are fair, desirable, and things are how they should be.

One of the most important predictors of this theory is the idea that members of oppressed groups occasionally assist in maintaining the *status quo*, making them somewhat guilty in their own subordination (Jost et al., 2004). Additionally, when people feel particularly dependent on the system for their outcomes or see a threat to the legitimacy or stability of the system, the motive tends to be activated or reinforced (Jost et al., 2005), and people become more likely to legitimize inequality (Laurin et al., 2013).

SJT has consequences in cases of gender-based stereotyping, where views toward underrepresented groups of women are frequently positive in substance but unfavourable in their outcomes. Even though most people have positive views of women as being helpful, kind, gentle, warm, and empathic, these ideas may actually undermine people's perceptions of their professionalism (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989) (Langford & Mackinnon, 2000).

Jost & Kay (2005) found that women are more likely to support the existing status of gender relations when they are exposed to complementary gender stereotypes. This study indicated that stereotype activation (and not the degree of stereotype endorsement) predicted the effect of stereotype exposure on the attitude of women toward the system (Jost & Kay, 2005).

Opposition to feminism might be caused by the fact that it is a threat to the legitimacy of social rules (Yeung et al., 2013). Hence, there is the possibility that antifeminist backlash is motivated by system justification theory. Yeung, Kay, and Peach measured the agreeableness with sentences made by a feminist and a non-feminist. When SJ was high, respondents agreed more with the non-feminist than with the feminist, and this difference did not show when SJ was low (Yeung et al., 2013). Additionally, when there are explicit intentions to change the *status quo*, System Justification motives increase to defend the system, and that may be why there is such opposition to feminists and feminism (Yeung et al., 2013).

This opposition to feminists has consequences in feminist self-labelling and make women say things like “I’m not a feminist, but...” when they want to express a pro equalitarian thought (Aronson, 2003; Liss et al., 2001; Percy & Kremer, 1995; Zucker, 2004).

All feminist principles converge to the ideal that changing social norms and the system is necessary to improve gender equality, which activates system justification motives. Nevertheless, it was shown that when there was no feminist labelling, egalitarian sentences were not rejected with a high SJ (Yeung et al., 2013), proving that opposition to feminism influences whether people say that they are feminists or not. It is important to include this variable as a moderator of attitudes towards feminism, as it might influence reactions to feminist sentences that threaten the *status quo*.

Study 1

This Master Thesis uses Quantitative methods to develop a deeper understanding of the topic and to provide an answer to its research questions. Three online surveys were conducted as form of a quantitative data collection method. Online surveys have multiple advantages such as

the standardization of questions, the possibility to evaluate a large number of responses, cost-effectiveness, time efficiency and reduced interviewer effect (Queirós et al., 2017). The results of study 1 were used to build study 2 and the results of study 2 were used to build study 3.

Study 1 had an exploratory goal to understand respondents' perceptions about some product categories. In this study, all participants were exposed to all products.

Methodology

Participants

Study 1 was responded by 28 individuals (M age = 25.93, SD age = 10.18; 60.7% female, 35.7% are male, 3.6% preferred not to disclose). The survey was distributed to potential respondents via social media channels (WhatsApp, Instagram, Messenger, etc.), in group chats or one-on-one. and individuals responded voluntarily. Respondents' age and location were asked using an open response question and their gender using a multiple-choice question (female, male, non-binary, transgender female, transgender male, I prefer not to say).

Materials

There were two conditions of product category: utilitarian and hedonic. The study presented 4 utilitarian products (laundry detergent, hand soap, steam iron and anti-dandruff shampoo) and 4 hedonic products (perfume, makeup palette, curl and shine shampoo and laundry scent beads).

To measure gender stereotype, participants were asked to what extent they considered each product to represent stereotypical masculine gender norms or stereotypical feminine gender norms, on a scale from 1 (definitely masculine) to 7 (definitely feminine).

To measure stereotype threat, participants were asked how offensive for women they thought each product was, when associated with gender roles, on a scale from 1 (not offensive for women at all) to 7 (extremely offensive for women).

Finally, participants were asked to what extent they considered each product to be utilitarian or hedonic, on a scale from 1 (definitely utilitarian), to 7 (definitely hedonic).

Procedure

Participants were provided some information of the study they would participate in explaining that the aim of the survey was to gain a deeper understanding about some product categories with the goal of supporting a Master Thesis. They were informed of anonymity and the time it would take to fill in the questionnaire. They were asked to rate each product on gender

stereotyping, gender threat and utilitarian/hedonic category. Afterwards demographics were collected and a thank you message appeared on their screen at the end.

Design

The study had a within-subjects design and all products were repeated measures factors, in order to enable the participants to be exposed to several product categories and perceptions, since the goal was to prioritize them in some way for the following studies.

Results

The 28 respondents of study 1 are currently living in Portugal.

Descriptive statistics (Appendix 1) of gender stereotyping for each product revealed that Hand-soap ($M = 4.04, SD = .33$) and Anti-dandruff shampoo ($M = 3.25, SD = .97$) were the least stereotypically feminine of all products. Following one-sample t-tests revealed that Hand-soap was not considered significantly more stereotypical of women than of men (did not differ from the midpoint of the scale) ($t(27) = .570, p = .573, d' = .108$), and that Anti-dandruff shampoo was considered stereotypical of men ($t(27) = -4.104, p < .001, d' = -.776$). This led to the exclusion of the anti-dandruff shampoo and the hand-soap, to keep the stereotypical feminine products.

In what concerns stereotype threat, descriptive analysis (Appendix 2) revealed that the steam iron ($M = 4.36, SE = .42$), the laundry detergent ($M = 3.46, SE = .36$) and the laundry scent beads ($M = 3.46, SE = .42$) were the most offensive products for women, however, one-sample t-tests revealed that none of the products was significantly different from the midpoint of the scale.

Regarding the difference between utilitarian and hedonic products, Appendix 3 shows descriptive statistics revealing that the three most utilitarian products were the laundry detergent ($M = 1.68, SE = .17$), the steam iron ($M = 1.71, SE = .21$) and the anti-dandruff shampoo ($M = 1.75, SE = .19$). The three most hedonic products were the makeup palette ($M = 5.54, SE = .24$), the perfume ($M = 5.11, SE = .30$) and the curl & shine shampoo ($M = 3.68, SE = .31$). However, one-sample t-tests revealed that the curl & shine shampoo was not statistically significant hedonic (did not differ from the midpoint of the scale) ($t(27) = -1.056, p = .301, d' = -.572$).

Consequently, for the following analysis stereotype threat judgments to the 2 most hedonic products ($M = 2.07, SE = .23$) and the 2 most utilitarian products ($M = 3.91, SE = .32$) were averaged. Paired-sample t-test (Appendix 4) revealed that the hedonic products are perceived

as less threatening to the gender stereotype than utilitarian products ($t(27) = 5.67, p < .001, d' = 1.07$). This finding suggests that stereotypically feminine utilitarian products may be associated with negative aspects of the female gender stereotype and threaten women's gender identity. This may happen because these feminine utilitarian products (laundry detergent and steam iron) underly tasks and social roles that reflect gender inequality. Hedonic products (makeup palette and perfume) do not posit the same threat because their own nature focuses on emotionally positive experiences.

Study 2

This study had an exploratory goal to understand how respondents perceive some sentences in what regards its relationship to the feminist and environmental causes, and to assess their perceptions regarding some product categories. All participants were exposed to all sentences and products.

Methodology

Participants

Study 2 was responded by 22 individuals ($M_{age} = 26.36, SD_{age} = 11.27$; 63.6% female, 36.4% male). The survey was distributed to potential respondents via social media channels (WhatsApp, Instagram, Messenger), in group chats or one-on-one, and individuals responded to it voluntarily. Respondents' age and location were asked using an open response question and their gender using a multiple-choice question (female, male, non-binary, transgender female, transgender male, I prefer not to say).

Materials

With the aim of pre-testing slogans that would be perceived as conveying a feminist message; an environmental message (cause-related control) and a non-informative or neutral message, 18 different sentences (slogans) were shown to participants: 10 feminist sentences, 4 neutral (about quality) and 4 environmental. To measure the feminist level of each of them, participants were asked how feminist each sentence was and how representative of a social cause each sentence was, on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (extremely).

After rating the 18 sentences in those two dimensions, and based on the results from study 1, 8 products categorized in terms of their hedonic/utilitarian nature were presented, and in terms of their positiveness/negativeness for female gender identity, resulting in 2 products for each of the four possible pairings: utilitarian negative (UN), utilitarian positive (UP), hedonic negative

(HN) and hedonic positive (HP). With negative and positive it is meant that the product represents or does not represent a threat for women. The utilitarian negative products considered were: perfume-free laundry detergent and steam iron; utilitarian positive: moisturizing lip balm and hair dryer; hedonic negative: anti cellulite body balm and decorative plates; hedonic positive: red lipstick and a handbag.

To measure the effect that a feminist message would have if associated with each product category, participants were asked to think about the sentence that they considered the most feminist (from the list they previously evaluated), and how would they react if that sentence was used to promote each product, on a scale from 1 (I would not like it at all) to 7 (I would definitely like it). To confirm our expectations about the level of utilitarian and hedonic of each product, the second question asked them how hedonic and utilitarian they thought each product was on a scale from 1 (definitely utilitarian) to 7 (definitely hedonic).

Procedure

Participants were provided information about the aim of the study, that its goal was to gain a deeper understanding about some sentences to support a Master Thesis. They were informed of the anonymity of the study and that their participation would take approximately 3 minutes. Participants were asked to rate each sentence on feminism and environmental causes and to rate each product on its connection to a feminist sentence and utilitarian/hedonic category. Afterwards, demographics were collected and a thank you message was displayed at the end.

Design

The study had a 2 product type (H/U) x 2 product stereotype (P/N) within-subjects design as all sentences and products were repeated measures factors.

Results

The 22 respondents of study 2 are currently living in Portugal.

Descriptive statistics (Appendix 5) revealed that, as expected, all feminist sentences had a high score on feminism ($M > 4$) and on representativeness of a social cause ($M > 4$), and environmental sentences had a low score on feminism ($M < 3$) and a high score on representativeness of a social cause ($M > 4$). Product-related sentences (neutral), had, as expected, a low score on feminism ($M < 2$) and representativeness of a social cause ($M < 2$).

According to descriptive statistics, there were 5 sentences that were rated the highest on the feminism score: *“No woman should be told she can’t make decisions about her own body”*

($M = 6.18, SE = .20$); *“Feminism is not a wish for women to have power over men, but over themselves”* ($M = 6.05, SE = .33$); *“Feminism isn’t about making women stronger, women are already strong. It’s about how the world perceives that strength”* ($M = 6.00, SE = .22$); *“The rights of women and girls are the unfinished business of the 21st Century”* ($M = 5.95, SE = .17$) and *“There is no limit to what women can accomplish”* ($M = 5.91, SE = .24$). Paired-sample t-test revealed that the average score of the sentence with the highest score was significantly different from the one of the sentences with the second highest score ($t(21) = 0.45, p = .658, d' = 0.1$). Then, for the other 4 highest scored sentences, Repeated Measures ANOVA was used to study if there were significant differences between the means (sphericity assumed). Tests of Within-subjects effects revealed that the null hypothesis that all the means are equal ($F(3,63) = .1, p = .960$) cannot be rejected. This finding suggests that the four sentences are perceived as equally feminists and are adequate to use in the following study to compare different products.

Regarding the difference between utilitarian and hedonic products, descriptive statistics (Appendix 6) revealed that the three most utilitarian products were the perfume-free laundry detergent ($M = 1.32, SE = .15$), the steam iron ($M = 1.36, SE = .17$) and the hairdryer ($M = 2.86, SE = .31$). The three most hedonic products were the red lipstick ($M = 6.00, SE = .29$), the handbag ($M = 5.27, SE = .33$) and the decorative plates ($M = 5.09, SE = .43$). Additionally, although the moisturizing lip balm ($M = 3.5, SE = .38$) and the anticellulite body balm ($M = 4.5, SE = .46$) were considered, respectively, relatively more utilitarian and hedonic, one-sample t-tests revealed that they were not significantly more utilitarian ($t(21) = -1.33, p = .198, d' = 1.77$) and hedonic ($t(21) = 1.10, p = .284, d' = 2.13$), respectively, compared to the midpoint of the scale.

Interestingly, UN products ($M = 1.34, SE = .15$) were considered significantly more utilitarian than the UP products ($M = 3.18, SE = .30; t(21) = -6.165, p < .001, d' = -1.314$). This finding suggests that product features that posit a threat or have a negative impact on female gender identity are associated to more functional and practical aspects. Presumably this happens because these features signal gender inequality.

On the contrary, HN products ($M = 4.80, SE = .41$) and HP products ($M = 5.64, SE = .27$) were perceived as equally hedonic ($t(21) = -1.619, p = .120, d' = -.345$). This finding suggests that when it comes to hedonic products, its positive or negative stereotype associated does not influence the perceived level of hedonism.

This may happen because utilitarian products have tasks and social roles associated that might be depreciative for women, with products like a steam iron or detergent (negative utilitarian) being perceived as more utilitarian than those that are not threatening for women (moisturizing lip balm and hair dryer). Hedonic products (either negative or positive) do not posit the same threat because their own nature focuses on emotionally positive experiences, even if they can be associated with at-home chores like the decorative plates.

In order to test the mean differences in associating a feminist message to the different product categories, four new variables were created: utilitarian negative (which is the average the score between the laundry detergent and the steam iron in this dimension); utilitarian positive (which is the average the score between the moisturizing lip balm and the hair dryer in this dimension); hedonic negative (which is the average the score between the decorative plates and the anticellulite body balm in this dimension) and hedonic positive (which is the average the score between the handbag and the red lipstick in this dimension). Then, a Repeated Measures ANOVA was used to understand if product type (hedonic, utilitarian) and product stereotype (positive, negative) impact consumer behaviour in response to products associated to a feminist message.

Descriptive statistics indicate that there might be a more positive reaction (on a scale from 1 - I would not like it at all to 7- I would definitely like it) to feminist messages associated with HP ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 1.98$) and UP products ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 1.66$) than with HN ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 1.66$) and UN products ($M = 1.80$, $SD = .93$).

Tests of Within-subjects effects (Appendix 7) revealed that likeability for the feminist sentence was significantly different when associated with hedonic vs utilitarian products ($F(1, 21) = 9.954$, $p = .005$), being higher for hedonic products ($M_{hedonic} = 3.34$, $SE_{hedonic} = .352$; $M_{utilitarian} = 2.46$, $SE_{utilitarian} = .255$) and also revealed that likeability for the products when associated with a feminist sentence was significantly different in positive vs negative products ($F(1, 21) = 40.826$, $p < .001$), being higher for positive products ($M_{positive} = 3.71$, $SE_{positive} = .36$; $M_{negative} = 2.09$, $SE_{negative} = .234$). However, the results of the interaction effect revealed that there is no statistically significant interaction between the effects of utilitarian versus hedonic and positive versus negative ($F(1, 21) = .091$, $p = .766$). This finding suggests that the change in the true average response for a level of hedonic vs utilitarian does not depend on the product being positive or negative, indicating that there are two simultaneous effects, but that the level of hedonic/utilitarian does not affect the desirability of the stereotype associated. This non-

significant interaction was further explored, and it was found that the feminist message in hedonic negative products is significantly more likeable than the feminist message in utilitarian negative products ($t(21) = -2.436, p = .024, d' = -.52$). Moreover, it was possible to assess that the feminist message in HP products is significantly more likeable than the feminist message in UP products ($t(21) = -2.433, p = .022, d' = -.54$). This finding suggests that, once again, feminist messages are perceived as more likable when associated with hedonic products rather than utilitarian products, that cause a “backlash” reaction due to their inherent nature of being associated with threatening gender roles for women.

Study 3

Study 3 was built having both studies 1 and 2 as a basis, being a consequence of those. The goal of study 3 was to compare the effects of the feminist messages with the effects of neutral messages and environmental ones, and to assess whether the differences (if any) were connected to the type of product and product stereotype in question.

Methodology

Participants

Study 3 was responded by 163 individuals ($M_{age} = 32.33, SD_{age} = 14.00$; 68.5% female, 31.5% male) and have an average age of 32.33 years ($SD = 14.00$).

The survey was distributed to potential respondents via social media channels (WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, etc.), in group chats or one-on-one, and via email. Individuals responded to it voluntarily. Respondents' age and location were asked using an open response question and their gender using a multiple-choice question (female, male, non-binary, transgender female, transgender male, I prefer not to say).

Materials

Independent Variables

Two conditions of product type were created: the handbag and the decorative plates were representative of the hedonic category, and the hairdryer and the steam iron were representative of the utilitarian one.

Additionally, the product stereotype of the products was manipulated - the handbag and the hairdryer as positive for women's gender identity and the decorative plates and the steam iron as negative to women's gender identity.

There were three conditions of the Type of Message: Condition Feminism presented participants with a different feminist message associated with each type of product (handbag for HP, decorative plates for HN, hairdryer for UP and steam iron for UN). Condition Neutral presented participants with a different product-quality message associated with each type of product. Condition Environment presented participants with a different environmental message associated with each type of product. Products were chosen according to the results of prior testing, explained in the Results section of this report, and were the exact same in each of the three conditions.

Dependent Variables

For each product, in each condition, likelihood of purchase was tested, asking participants how likely they were to purchase the product on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (definitely). To measure likelihood of usage participants were asked how likely they were to use the product on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (definitely). To measure overall opinion about the product participants were asked how much they thought the product was good on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (definitely). To measure willingness to pay (WTP) participants were asked how likely they were to pay more for the product by being associated with that slogan on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (definitely).

To measure the product-cause fit, participants were asked how fitting was the message to the on a scale from 1 (not fitting at all) to 7 (definitely fitting), for each product included in each condition.

Manipulation checks

As a manipulation check for the desirability manipulation, participants were asked how empowering of their gender was the product on a scale from 1 (not empowering at all) to 7 (extremely empowering).

For the hedonic/utilitarian manipulation, participants were asked to what extent they considered the product to be utilitarian or hedonic on a scale from 1 (definitely utilitarian) to 7 (definitely hedonic).

Finally, and to check the message manipulation, participants were asked to rate each sentence that was associated with the four products, on how feminist they considered each sentence to be on a scale from 1 (not feminist at all) to 7 (definitely feminist).

Control variables

Stereotypicality of each product was controlled by asking participants how stereotypical of their gender was the product on a scale from 1 (not stereotypical at all) to 7 (extremely stereotypical).

Beliefs in a Just World was measured using three items in distributive justice for others (DJ-others) developed by Lucas, Zhdanova, and Alexander (2011). Participants rated the three items (that were pointing in the same direction) on a scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree) ($\alpha = .84$). For example, “I feel that other people generally earn the rewards and punishments they get in this world.”, see all items on Appendix 8.

Then, System Justification Beliefs were measured using three items developed by Kay and Jost (2003), the three of them pointing in the same direction. Participants rated the three items on a scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree) ($\alpha = .77$). For example, “In general, relations between men and women are fair.”, see all items on Appendix 9.

In order to measure cause relevance and self-feminist identity, participants rated how relevant they thought the feminist cause was on a scale from 1 (not relevant at all) to 7 (definitely relevant) and to indicate whether they considered themselves to be a feminist or not, on a scale from 1 (I am not feminist at all) to 7 (I am definitely feminist).

Lastly, people’s identification with feminist values were measured, and hence, four items from a scale developed by Smith, Ferree, and Miller (1975) were used: two in which the pro-feminist direction was “Disagree” (reversed scoring) and two where it was “agree”. Participants rated the four items on a scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree) ($\alpha = .50$). For example, “Women should have the right to compete with men in every sphere of activity.” or “As head of the household, the father should have final authority over his children.”, see all items on Appendix 10.

Procedure

Participants were provided a consent form and an explanation of the study they would participate in: it was highlighted that the aim of the survey was to gain a deeper understanding about the relationship between some slogans and products with the goal of supporting a Master Thesis. There were informed of anonymity and the time it would take for them to fill in the questionnaire. Participants were then randomly assigned to conditions Message Feminism, Message Neutral or Message Environmental. They were first asked to imagine they were in a store, considering purchasing different products, and that they found them being associated with

different slogans. Participants were informed that the products had similar prices and were merely illustrative of the categories they represented. They were first asked to rate the product in the dimensions of likelihood or purchase, usage, likeability, and WTP. Then, stereotypicality and empowerment of the product to their gender were measured, and the categorization on utilitarian versus hedonic, for each of the four products that were shown to each participant. Product-cause fit and the level of feminism of each of the 12 sentences (each participant rated only 4 of them, from one of the three conditions) were measured. Afterwards, System Justification Beliefs were measured, Beliefs in a Just World, Cause Relevance and Feminism. Lastly, demographics were collected and a thank you message was shown to them at the end.

Design

The experiment had a 3 message (feminist message, environmental message, neutral message) x 2 product type (utilitarian, hedonic) x 2 product stereotype (positive, negative) mixed subjects design, with a between-subjects design for the type of message, and a within subjects design for the product type (H/U) and for the product stereotype (P/N).

Results

From the 162 respondents of study 3, 84% are currently living in Portugal (followed by 3,7% living in Germany). There were 55 participants randomly assigned to the Neutral condition, 56 ended up being randomly assigned to the Environmental condition and 51 participants were randomly assigned to the Feminist condition.

Manipulation checks

As expected, significant differences were found between the experimental “Feminism group” ($M = 4.90, SD = 1.72$) our control groups: “Environmental group” ($M = 2.14, SD = 1.35$) and “Neutral group” ($M = 2.84, SD = 1.54$) in the average rating for feminism of the messages ($F(2, 159) = 45.96, p < .001$). Independent sample t-tests were performed to further understand the significant differences in the means of each group, revealing that there was a significant difference between the “Feminism group” and the “Neutral Group” ($t(104) = -6.512, p < .001$) and also between the “Feminism group” and the “Environmental Group” ($t(105) = -9.295, p < .001$) indicating that the manipulation of the type of message was effective in all groups.

Regarding the average rating of utilitarian and hedonic products, descriptive statistics revealed that the handbag ($M = 4.18, SE = .13$) and the decorative plates ($M = 3.43, SE=.14$) were

relatively more hedonic than the hairdryer ($M = 2.38, SE = .12$) and the steam iron ($M = 1.52, SE = .08$), as expected, and that our manipulation of the product type (H/U) was effective.

To understand if respondents across groups evaluated overall hedonic products as more hedonic than utilitarian products, the two products of each category were averaged: Utilitarian ($M = 1.95, SE = .09$) and Hedonic ($M = 3.81, SE = .11$). Repeated measures ANOVA revealed that the hedonic products are perceived as more hedonic than utilitarian products ($F(2, 159) = 250.51, p < .001$), and that there are no significant differences in utilitarian and hedonic perceptions across groups ($F(2, 159) = .226, p = .798$). This finding suggests that our control variable (level of hedonism/utilitarianism) plays a role on the effect of the independent variable on the main dependent variables, as expected, and that this effect did not vary across groups.

Additionally, this study intended to present two “positive” products for women, that is, empowering for females, and two “negative” products, that are not empowering or may be threatening for their gender. Descriptive statistics revealed that the handbag ($M = 4.19, SE = .19$) and the hairdryer ($M = 3.14, SE = .17$) were relatively more empowering for women than the decorative plates ($M = 2.24, SE = .13$) and the steam iron ($M = 2.14, SE = .14$). Moreover, two pairs of paired-samples t-tests revealed that our HP product was significantly more empowering for women than our HN product ($t(110) = 9.239, p < .001, d' = .88$), and that our UP product was significantly more empowering for women than our UN product ($t(110) = 5.820, p < .001, d' = .55$) revealing that our manipulations of product stereotype (P/N) was effective.

Control variables

Descriptive statistics revealed that the handbag ($M = 4.95, SE = .18$) and the steam iron ($M = 4.32, SE = .21$) were the two products considered as the most stereotypically feminine, followed by the hairdryer ($M = 4.05, SE = .19$) and the decorative plates ($M = 3.71, SE = .18$). One sample t-tests confirmed that all products were indeed perceived as stereotypical of females, since they were either significantly higher than the mid-point of the scale like the handbag ($t(110) = 5.322, p < .001, d' = .51$), or not significantly different from the mid-point of the scale, being thus considered feminine indicating that our control for all products being considered “for women” was effective.

Lastly, independent samples t-test were used to understand if the scores of agreeableness with feminist goals, system justification beliefs, beliefs in a just world and feminist self-identification, differed across our three conditions. Firstly, these variables were tested in the neutral condition vs the feminist condition, which revealed that only system justification beliefs

were significantly higher in the “Feminism group” ($M = 3.46, SD = 1.36; t(104) = -2.024, p = .046$) than in the “Neutral group” ($M = 2.98, SD = 1.08$). The same happened when the “Feminism group” and the “Environmental Group” ($t(105) = -2.30, p = .023$) were tested, being higher in the “Feminism group” ($M = 3.46, SD = 1.36$) than in the “Environmental group” ($M = 2.86, SD = 1.31$). No significant differences were found between the “Neutral group” and the “Environmental Group”. This finding is predicted to influence the purchase intentions towards the feminist condition, as a higher score of system justification beliefs would decrease intentions of purchase towards products with messages that threaten the *status quo*. It can be hypothesized whether these differences in system justification beliefs were an event of the distribution of the sample or if being exposed to the feminist message increased the need for system justification, in an attempt to contradict something that that felt like threatening the *status quo*. In this case, instead of becoming “more” feminist, respondents might have wanted to justify the system, which is not feminist, generally.

BJW, feminism and feminist self-identification act as control variables across the three groups, as one can rule out that differences in results are due to differences in these variables.

Main dependent variables

In order to understand how the sample should be treated for the following analyses, a Multivariate ANOVA (Appendix 11) compared the values of the agreeableness with feminist goals and the self-identification as feminist between men and women. Results show a significant difference in self-identification as feminist between women ($M = 4.87, SD = 1.72, F(1, 160) = 7.50; p = .007$) and men ($M = 3.98, SD = 2.33$), but no significant difference in agreeableness with the feminist goals: women ($M = 6.45, SD = .83, F(1, 160) = 2.51; p = .115$) vs men ($M = 6.23, SD = .86$). These results indicate that men are eligible to be kept in the analyses because they agree with the feminist agenda, although they do not identify as feminists, and thus, all the analyses in this paper will be conducted including both genders.

Moreover, descriptive statistics indicated that although respondents show high identification with the feminist values ($M = 6.38, SD = .84$), not all of them identify as feminists to the same extent ($M = 4.59, SD = 1.97$).

In order to study the effect of the independent variables (types of sentences, product type and product stereotype) on the four dependent variables (purchase intention, usage, likeability and WTP), these were averaged since they all represented attitudes towards the product in the same

direction and created the variable Purchase Attitude, which will be used further in all of our analysis.

One 3(message) x 2(product type) x 2(product stereotype) ANOVA was computed (Appendix 12), with repeated measures in the two last factors and revealed that there was a significant main effect of product type ($F(1, 159) = 38.180, p < .001$), indicating that utilitarian products lead to higher levels of purchase attitudes ($M = 3.66, SE = .1$), than hedonic products ($M = 3.03, SE = .09$). There was also a significant main effect of product stereotype ($F(1, 159) = 15.40, p < .001$), indicating that positive products lead to higher levels of purchase attitudes ($M = 3.51, SE = .9$), than negative products ($M = 3.17, SE = .09$). A significant interaction was found between product type and product stereotype ($F(1, 159) = 4.615, p = .033$).

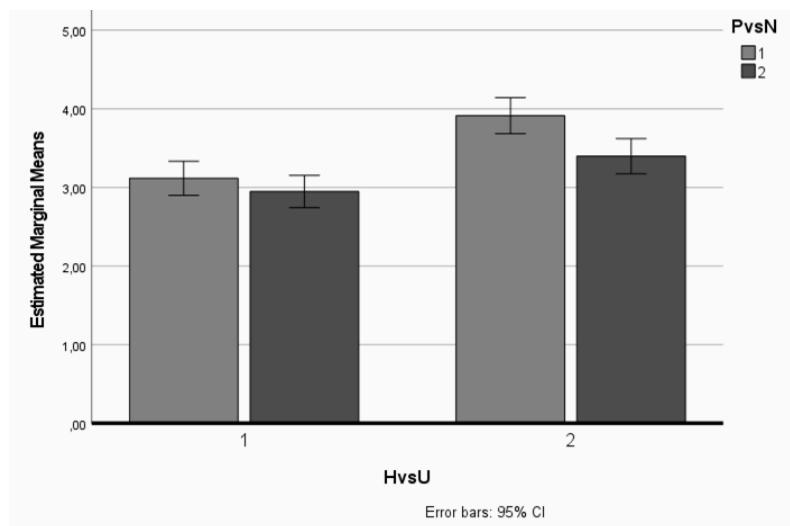


Figure 1. Purchase intention for hedonic and utilitarian products as a function of the stereotype associated (positive and negative).

The interaction (Figure 1) suggests that:

a) the difference between the purchase attitudes for positive and negative products is larger for the utilitarian products than for hedonic products.

b) The difference between the positive and the negative stereotype is significant for the utilitarian products ($M_{positive} = 3.91, SD_{positive} = 1.47; M_{negative} = 3.40, SD_{negative} = 1.43; t(161) = 4.13, p < .001$), but it is non-significant for the hedonic products ($M_{positive} = 3.12, SD_{positive} = 1.39; M_{negative} = 2.94, SD_{negative} = 1.31; t(161) = 1.556, p = .122$).

c) While for the hedonic products, there is no significant difference in purchase attitudes between positive and negative products when those are associated with the messages; for the

utilitarian products, the positive products had significantly higher purchase attitudes than the negative products.

d) To clarify if there are differences in the type of message that utilitarian products benefit from, a 3 (message) x 2 (product stereotype) (only considering our two utilitarian products) revealed that there is no significant interaction between product stereotype and type of message, indicating that regardless of the message associated, UP products elicit higher purchase attitudes than UN ($F(2, 159) = .900, p = .409$).

e) These results indicate that every type of message increases purchase attitudes for utilitarian products, but only if those are non-threatening to women gender identity.

However, there was no significant interaction effect between type of message and product type or type of message and product stereotype, indicating that there were no significant differences in purchase attitudes between the groups, contrary of what was expected.

To further understand gender differences in the reaction to the type of messages, a 3(message) x 2(product type) x 2(product stereotype) x 2(gender) ANOVA, against the dependent variable (Purchase Attitudes) was computed (Appendix 13). Results revealed that adding to the significant interactions presented in the ANOVA before, there was also a significant interaction between product stereotype and gender ($F(1, 156) = 23.922, p < .001$), yet again, no significant differences between the three types of messages.

The interaction (Figure 2) suggests that:

a) the difference between the purchase attitudes for positive and negative products is larger for the women than for men.

b) The difference between the positive and the negative conditions is significant for women ($M_{positive} = 3.77, SD_{positive} = 1.11; M_{negative} = 3.13, SD_{negative} = 1.09; t(110) = 6.366, p < .001$), and for men ($M_{positive} = 2.97, SD_{positive} = 1.08; M_{negative} = 3.25, SD_{negative} = 1.19; t(50) = -2.110, p = .040$), however in opposite directions.

c) While for men, purchase attitudes are higher for negative products, for women purchase attitudes are higher for positive products.

d) These results indicate that women are sensitive to gender stereotypes associated with negative products, and thus have a lower level of purchase attitudes, while men do not show

the same concerns since negative products are not threatening for their gender identity, and do not have negative social roles associated for them.

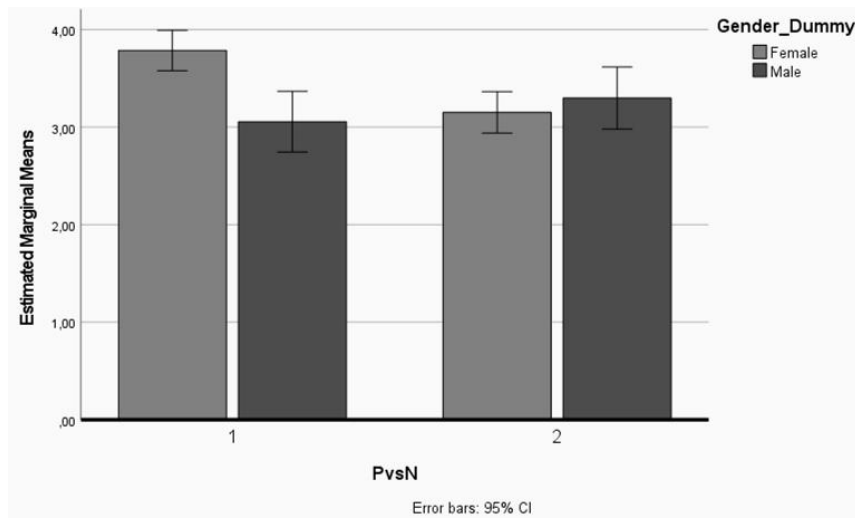


Figure 2. Purchase attitudes for positive and negative products as a function of the gender identity of the participant (male and female).

In order to explore further differences in consumer behaviour when the products are associated with feminist messages, two paired sample t tests were performed. In the first one (Appendix 14), there was a comparison between the purchase attitudes of HP vs HN products, which revealed that there are no significant differences in purchase attitudes between these two types of products ($t(50) = -.671, p = .505$) when exposed to feminist messages. In the second one (Appendix 15), purchase attitudes between utilitarian positive vs utilitarian negative products were compared, and results showed that there are marginal differences in purchase attitudes between these two types of products ($t(50) = .029, p = .059$). These results suggest that, when it comes to utilitarian products, the stereotype associated with the product dictates whether the feminist message will result in an increase in the purchase attitudes, while for hedonic products, the stereotype associated does not play a role.

Lastly, it is important to understand if people perceived the products as having a fit with the cause mentioned in the messages-as it might dictate people acting on it.

Independent samples t-test was performed with the Neutral and Feminist groups (Appendix 16), revealing that for the HP product there were no perceived differences between the fitting of the neutral message and the feminist one. For the other three categories, the neutral message was perceived as more fitting to the product than the feminist cause. The HN product had a higher fit with the neutral message ($M = 2.62, SD = 1.39$) than with the feminist message ($M = 2.02,$

$SD = 1.29$; $t(104) = 2.29$, $p = .024$). Moreover, results indicate a higher product-cause fit for the UP product ($t(104) = 4.36$, $p < .001$) in the neutral ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.69$) compared to the feminist group ($M = 2.24$, $SD = 1.70$), and lastly, for the UN product as well ($t(104) = 4.15$, $p < .001$), with a higher fit with the neutral ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 1.63$) than the feminist groups ($M = 1.82$, $SD = 1.56$).

Then, independent samples t test (Appendix 17) was performed with the Neutral and Environmental groups, revealing that for the HP there were significant differences between the neutral ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 1.68$) and the environmental groups ($M = 2.63$, $SD = 1.60$) in the measures of the product-cause fit ($t(109) = 3.13$, $p = .002$). There were no perceived differences between the fitting of the “neutral” sentences and the environmental ones for the HN. There were significant differences between the neutral ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.69$) and the environmental groups ($M = 1.93$, $SD = 1.37$) in the measures of the product-cause fit for the UP ($t(109) = 5.97$, $p < .001$). Moreover, results indicate a significant difference in product-cause fit for the UN ($t(109) = 5.02$, $p < .001$) between the neutral ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 1.63$) and the environmental groups ($M = 1.75$, $SD = 1.19$).

One last independent samples t-test (Appendix 18) was computed with the Environmental and Feminism groups, revealing that only for the HP there were significant differences between the environmental ($M = 2.63$, $SD = 1.60$) and the feminism groups ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 1.94$) in the measures of the product-cause fit ($t(105) = -2.18$, $p = .031$), being the product-cause fit higher for feminism.

These findings suggest that product-cause fit was low for the feminism cause in every product category, what might have influenced the lack of differences in purchase attitudes between the groups.

In order to test if self-identification as feminist, agreeableness with feminist goals, BJW, SJB and gender of the respondent predicted purchase attitudes of any of the products, four multiple linear regressions were used.

For the HN ($R^2 = .027$, $F(6, 155) = .707$, $p = .645$) and the UN ($R^2 = .034$, $F(6, 155) = .922$, $p = .481$) products, the multiple regression model was not statistically significant.

For the HP (Appendix 19), the overall regression was statistically significant ($R^2 = .077$, $F(6, 155) = 2.17$, $p = .049$) and it was found that only gender significantly predicted average purchase attitudes for that category ($\beta = -.642$, $p = .009$).

For the UP (Appendix 20), the overall regression was statistically significant ($R^2=.140$, $F(6, 155)= 4.19$, $p < .001$) and it was found that only gender ($\beta = -.882$, $p < .001$) and beliefs in a just world ($\beta = .298$, $p = .005$) significantly predicted purchase attitudes for this product.

As such, identifying as a man decreased purchasing attitudes towards positive products in $-.642$ (HP) and in $.882$ (UP) point compared to being a woman. These findings indicate that, on the contrary of what was predicted, system justification beliefs did not moderate or predict purchase attitudes towards any of the products, regardless of the condition respondents were assigned to. Moreover, gender only significantly predicted the purchasing attitudes towards positive stereotyped products.

Discussion

Study 1 and study 2 had an exploratory goal in order to build study 3. Since study 3 includes variables and products used on the previous, and uses them to study different dependent variables, it is the main study of this Master Thesis, and this section will be focused on the third study.

This paper aims to study the behavioural attitudes of consumers when facing feminist messages. However, in the sample, no significant differences were found in purchase attitudes between the feminist message and the two control groups. Moreover, it was also found that self-identification as feminists and agreeableness with feminist values did not predict reactions to the feminist message, thus, we reject H1. It is important to understand the reason why, in this sample, although women (and men) believe in feminist values, that did not enhance their purchase attitudes towards the products associated with feminist messages.

First, although respondents show to identify with the feminist agenda, they did not identify as feminists to the same extent, being the so-called nonlabelers. Even though the survey was anonymous, respondents might have been afraid of reporting that they identify as feminists due to the negative connotations associated with this label in the society, that all feminists are lesbian, radical (Williams & Wittig, 1997), unattractive (Clingman & Lushene, 1982), and colder than other groups of women (Fiske et al., 1999). Moreover, people sometimes understand that “feminism” implies activism, and thus decline that label although they believe in the feminist ideals (Swirsky & Angelone, 2014). Nonlabelers are thus less likely to fight to reduce machismo (Fitz et al., 2012), to be concerned with gender inequality and to engage in activism for women’s rights (Eisele & Stake, 2008; Yoder et al., 2010; Fitz et al., 2012). Overall, it is

possible that our respondents did not react to the feminist messages due to low activism and lack of willingness to take action in this topic (Swirsky & Angelone, 2015), as they have a lower level of self-identification as feminists than feminist beliefs per se.

Second, there is a chance that the weak intentions towards cause-related marketing in this sample are due to a low perceived product-cause fit. When comparing the conditions neutral and feminism, the HP product did not report differences in fit but the other three products reported a higher fit with the neutral condition. When comparing the conditions neutral and environmental, three of the four categories showed a better fit with the neutral condition while the HP reported a higher fit with the environmental one. It was discussed before that one of the factors that determines the credibility of the brand and the product in cause-related marketing is product-cause fit (Kim, Kim, & Han, 2005), and in this case, since it was low for the feminist cause, respondents might have perceived the association with the messages as “fake” or “dishonest”.

There is also a chance that respondents were sceptical about the underlying reason to associate these products with the messages, as they might think that the goal of these messages was to benefit the company selling the products and not the cause itself (Webb & Mohr, 1998). In specific, respondents might have seen the association to feminist messages as “pink-washing”, since they could not know if the company had a real commitment to feminism and a strong company-customer relationship and CSR, which are very important factors in *femvertising* (McCleary, 2014; Sternadori & Abitbol, 2019), not being certain that these brands were authentic and genuine when using feminist ideologies in the messages (McCleary, 2014). This issue of congruency between brand and values is crucial even for utilitarian products. Additionally, in previous studies some consumers reported to give CRM less importance on decision making than other features (Barone et al., 2000), which might also be an explanation for the lack of differences between our experimental and control groups.

Third, it is also possible that lack of positive reactions towards the feminist-associated products are due to system justification beliefs being significantly higher for the experimental group rather than for the other two, or even that being exposed to the feminist message increased the need for system justification. In fact, opposition to feminism might be caused by the fact that feminism threatens the system and the existent social rules (Yeung et al., 2013). Hence, instead of members of the experimental group becoming more feminist, they might have wanted to justify the existing system. In this case, high system justification beliefs would decrease

intentions of purchase towards products associated with “threatening” (=feminist) messages. It is also known that when intentions to change the system increase, SJ is activated and increases as well, in a way to contradict those efforts, named antifeminist backlash (Yeung et al., 2013)

Looking closer to the results for the product type, it was found that, contrary of what was expected, utilitarian products lead to enhanced purchase attitudes than hedonic products, even when there were feminist messages associated. We reject H3, because, although we proved in the control variables of study 3 that hedonic products were indeed more empowering for women than utilitarian products, that did not lead them to a positive change in behaviour when the feminist message is associated with hedonic products, but rather to an increase in purchase attitudes for utilitarian products.

This finding might be explained by exogenous factors present in society (recession, unstable markets and high levels of inflation), that, at the moment, might be stronger influences for respondents’ decision-making process. Considering what happened during the Great Recession (2008-2011), it is plausible to state that consumers became more likely to purchase products that were essential, in order to fulfil a functional need (utilitarian products), rather than purchasing for their own pleasure (as with hedonic products). Moreover, consumers felt guilty for engaging in indulgent or “luxurious” purchases when the economy was in recession, and thus they decreased their purchases of this product type (Kivetz & Simonson, 2002). Researchers theorize that during recession the pleasure from spending money decreases, and people were more careful in their purchasing decisions, disregarding superfluous goods (Ionas & Aldea, 2012). At this moment in time, with all the uncertainty that comes with a higher inflation and unstable markets, our respondents might be more concerned in fulfilling a specific need rather than being influenced by stereotypes of social roles associated with hedonic products (since these products are not a necessity) when making their purchasing decisions.

Additionally, and as expected, positive product stereotype led to a better purchasing attitudes than negative products across the three conditions. However, when examining gender differences, it was found that for men, purchase attitudes were higher for negative products, while for women purchase attitudes were higher for positive products. This difference might be explained by the fact that women are sensitive to gender stereotypes associated with negative products (that activate stereotype threat), and thus have a lower level of purchase attitudes. and We accept H2, as women did not react positively to products that were associated with feminist messages (or with any messages at all) when these products were not empowering for their

gender. Accordingly, it was discussed that women hold more power inside the home and men have more power outside of the home (Jost & Kay, 2005), what can explain why products like a steam iron, or a plate would represent negative connotations for women (indicating that their “place to be” is at home, where those products represent their “duties” as women). This separation between gender roles inhibits women from having the power that they want outside the house and makes them “accept” societal norms as they are, although not being beneficial for most of them (Williams & Chen, 2013). Some people, however, see this division as “fair” and “positive” for the society as a whole (Jost & Kay, 2005), which is patriarchal, explaining why women have higher intentions for positive products (that are not threatening for their gender) and men for the negative ones. Moreover, there is a growing negative feeling towards stereotyped roles in advertising (Dwivedi, 2014), especially from women with progressive attitudes (Morrison & Shaffer, 2003), which explains the negative reactions towards products that represent “oppression” for them.

Lastly, looking specifically into the feminist condition, it was found that for the hedonic products, there was no significant difference in purchase attitudes between positive and negative products, but UP products had significantly higher purchase attitudes than the UN ones in the experimental group. This means that UN products associated with a feminist message cause a “backlash” reaction due to their inherent nature of being associated with threatening gender roles for women. The same does not happen with HN products, as hedonic products primarily represent pleasure and satisfaction, and provoke positive emotions (Shiv & Fedorikhin, 1999) that create favourable responses to cause-related marketing initiatives (Kim & Johnson, 2012), even if the product could represent established social roles (such as the decorative plates).

Conclusion

The present study sought to investigate the influence that feminist messages would have in consumers’ purchase attitudes towards different product categories. However, contrary to expectations, there were no significant differences between the experimental and the control groups. It was discussed how some characteristics of the sample (the fact that most of the respondents were nonlabelers, for example) and of the products (a perceived low product-cause fit) might have influenced this lack of engagement. Moreover, purchase attitudes were higher for utilitarian than for hedonic products, contrary to what was expected, which might be related to current exogenous factors like high inflation and economic recession that increase guilt

towards the purchase of hedonic products, considered superfluous. Lastly, products that elicit a positive product stereotype (vs negative) had a significantly higher purchase attitude from women, as expected, due to the stereotyped social roles associated with these products. Women showed to be sensitive to how feminist messages were associated with products that they considered “oppressive” of their gender, engaging in significantly lower intentions towards this category.

In conclusion, it is crucial that marketers choose the right products to associate with feminist messages in order to prevent a backlash in consumer responses, if they, as a company, want to engage in CRM. Products should have a high perceived fit with the cause, to seem honest and authentic from consumers’ lens, and messages should be associated with products that elicit a positive stereotype for women, rather than threatening products for their role in society.

Limitations

As with all studies, the current study presents some limitations. First, the three surveys were conducted in English and distributed online, with limited time and resources, and thus some participants might not have been able to fill in the questionnaires or understand what it was about. Additionally, considering that most respondents were Portuguese, results might be biased by culture and traditions, so one should be careful in extrapolating the results to other countries or regions. Lastly, for the three studies, images of real products were used due to lack of resources to design products from scratch, and although the chosen products had low awareness in the Portuguese market, it would have been more effective for the present analysis to show entirely new materials, ensuring that the results are not related or influenced by previous perceptions, thoughts and opinions about the brands and products chosen.

Future research

Future researchers might want to conduct this research again with a larger sample size for a greater effect or to examine differences between demographic segments such as age or nationality. Additionally, there is an opportunity to further explore some of the topics presented in the paper. It could be studied whether feminist messages that differ in gender equality versus gender justice beliefs influence the results differently: Do people display more positive attitudes towards gender equality sentences? Do gender justice sentences backlash in men’s purchasing behaviour? Lastly, a wider range of products should be studied in order to derive more general conclusions, as in this case only 14 products in total were evaluated due to lack of resources and time.

Appendixes

Appendix 1 – Study 1: Means and Standard Deviations for stereotypicality for women of each product presented

Products	Stereotypical for women <i>M (SD)</i>
Laundry detergent	4.32 (.77)
Laundry scent beads	4.61 (.96)
Perfume	4.29 (.94)
Anti-dandruff shampoo	3.25 (.97)
Makeup Palette	5.86 (1.01)
Curl & Shine Shampoo	5.18 (1.02)
Steam Iron	4.89 (1.03)
Hand soap	4.04 (.33)

Appendix 2 - Study 1: Means and Standard Deviations for threat for women of each product presented

Products	Threat for women <i>M (SE)</i>
Laundry detergent	3.46 (.36)
Laundry scent beads	3.46 (.42)
Perfume	2.00 (.25)
Anti-dandruff shampoo	2.36 (.34)
Makeup Palette	2.14 (.26)
Curl & Shine Shampoo	2.43 (.26)
Steam Iron	4.36 (.42)
Hand soap	1.86 (.23)

Appendix 3 - Study 1: Means and Standard Deviations for categorization as utilitarian or hedonic of each product presented

Products	Utilitarian vs Hedonic <i>M (SE)</i>
Laundry detergent	1.68 (.17)
Laundry scent beads	2.89 (.27)
Perfume	5.11 (.30)
Anti-dandruff shampoo	1.75 (.19)
Makeup Palette	5.54 (.24)
Curl & Shine Shampoo	3.68 (.31)
Steam Iron	1.71 (.21)
Hand soap	2.04 (.21)

Appendix 4 – Study 1: Comparison of stereotype threat between hedonic and utilitarian products

Paired Sample Statistics

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
Stereotype Threat Utilitarian	3,91	28	1,678	0,317
Stereotype Threat Hedonic	2,07	28	1,192	0,225

Paired Sample T-test

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>	
				<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>			<i>One-Sided p</i>	<i>Two-Sided p</i>
Stereotype Threat Utilitarian - Stereotype Threat Hedonic	1,84	1,716	0,324	1,174	2,505	5,671	27	<0,001	<0,001

Appendix 5 – Study 2: Means and Standard Deviations for feminism categorization and representativeness of a social cause of each of the slogans presented

Sentences	Feminism	Representativeness of a social cause
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
A woman should be two things: who and what she wants.	5.59 (1.26)	5.55 (1.26)
Women belong in all places where decisions are being made.	5.82 (1.01)	5.68 (1.17)
The Earth does not belong to us: we belong to the Earth.	1.95 (1.46)	4.91 (1.97)
Feminism isn't about making women stronger. Women are already strong; it's about changing the way the world perceives that strength.	6.00 (1.02)	5.55 (1.26)
The best product for you.	1.64 (.95)	1.91 (1.27)
You don't have to be pretty. You don't owe prettiness to anyone. Prettiness is not a rent you pay for occupying a space marked female.	4.64 (1.84)	4.05 (1.56)
Make the world a better place.	2.64 (1.89)	4.64 (2.06)
There is no limit to what women can accomplish.	5.91 (1.11)	5.32 (1.56)
Get the highest benefit with our product.	1.59 (1.37)	1.91 (1.57)
Take care of the earth and she will take care of you.	1.77 (1.51)	4.73 (1.78)
A product that is exactly what you need.	1.86 (1.64)	1.91 (1.66)
Women's freedom is the sign of social freedom.	5.23 (1.72)	5.73 (1.35)
Environment is everyone's responsibility to protect.	2.00 (1.66)	5.23 (2.22)
The rights of women and girls are the unfinished business of the 21st Century.	5.95 (.79)	5.73 (1.08)
Feminism is not a wish for women to have power over men; but over themselves.	6.05 (1.53)	5.59 (1.26)
A product that is everything you need.	1.41 (.80)	1.59 (.91)
The best protection any woman can have is courage.	4.45 (1.71)	4.09 (1.66)

Appendix 6 Study 2: Means and Standard Deviations for categorization as utilitarian or hedonic of each product presented

Utilitarian vs Hedonic	
Products	<i>M (SD)</i>
Perfume-free laundry detergent	1.32 (.72)
Steam iron	1.36 (.79)
Moisturizing lip balm	3.50 (1.77)
Hair dryer	2.86 (1.46)
Anti-cellulite body balm	4.50 (2.13)
Decorative plates	5.09 (2.02)
Red lipstick	6.00 (1.38)
Handbag	5.27 (1.55)

Appendix 7 Study 2: 2(product type) x 2(product stereotype) ANOVA against DV likeability for feminist message associated

Tests of Within Subjects Effects

		<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
HvsU	Sphericity Assumed	1	9,954	0,005
Error (HvsU)	Sphericity Assumed	21		
PvsN	Sphericity Assumed	1	40,826	<0,001
Error (PvsN)	Sphericity Assumed	21		
HvsU * PvsN	Sphericity Assumed	1	0,091	0,766
Error (HvsU*PvsN)	Sphericity Assumed	21		

Estimated Marginal Means

HvsU	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>
Hedonic	3,34	0,352
Utilitarian	2,46	0,255

PvsN	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>
Positive	3,71	0,355
Negative	2,09	0,234

HvsU*PvsN

HvsU	PvsN	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>
Hedonic	Positive	4,18	0,419
Hedonic	Negative	2,50	0,371
Utilitarian	Positive	3,23	0,372
Utilitarian	Negative	1,68	0,202

Appendix 8 - Study 3: Items measuring Beliefs in a Just World (Lucas et.al., 2011) presented in the online survey

Beliefs in a Just World

1. I feel that other people generally earn the rewards and punishments they get in this world.

2. Other people usually receive the outcomes that they deserve.

3. Other people generally deserve the things that they are accorded.

Appendix 9 - Study 3: Items measuring System Justification Beliefs (Kay & Jost, 2003) presented in the online survey

System Justification Beliefs

1. In general, relations between men and women are fair.

2. Society is set up so that men and women usually get what they deserve.

3. Everyone (male or female) has a fair shot at wealth and happiness.

Appendix 10 - Study 3: Items measuring Feminist values (Smith, et.al, 1975) presented in the online survey

Feminist Values

1. Women should have the right to compete with men in every sphere of activity.

2. As head of the household, the father should have final authority over his children.

3. Women should not be permitted to hold political offices that involve great responsibility.

4. At-home work (cleaning, cooking, taking care of children, ...) should be split up as evenly as possible between men and women in the household

Appendix 11 - Study 3: Comparison of Feminism Goals and Feminist Identity between Men and Women

Tests of Between Subjects Effects

	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Intercept Feminism Goals	1	7958,383	<0,001
Intercept Feminist Identity	1	736,427	<0,001
Gender_Dummy Feminism Goals	1	2,507	0,115
Gender_Dummy Feminist Identity	1	7,499	0,007
Error Feminism Goals	160		
Error Feminist Identity	160		

Estimated Marginal Means

DV	Mean	Std. Error
Feminism Goals	6,34	0,071
Feminist Identity	4,43	0,163

Estimated Marginal Means**DV*Gender**

DV	Gender	Mean	Std. Error
Feminism Goals	Female	6,45	0,080
Feminism Goals	Male	6,23	0,118
Feminist Identity	Female	4,87	0,183
Feminist Identity	Male	3,98	0,270

Appendix 12 - Study 3: 3(message) x 2(product type) x 2(product stereotype) ANOVA against DV purchase attitudes

Tests of Within Subjects Effects

		df	F	Sig.
HvsU	Sphericity Assumed	1	38,180	<0,001
HvsU * Condition	Sphericity Assumed	2	0,256	0,775
Error (HvsU)	Sphericity Assumed	159		
PvsN	Sphericity Assumed	1	15,399	<0,001
PvsN * Condition	Sphericity Assumed	2	2,129	0,122
Error (PvsN)	Sphericity Assumed	159		
HvsU * PvsN	Sphericity Assumed	1	4,615	0,033
HvsU * PvsN * Condition	Sphericity Assumed	2	0,802	0,450
Error (HvsU*PvsN)	Sphericity Assumed	159		

Tests of Between Subjects Effects

	df	F	Sig.
Intercept	1	1794,935	<0,001
Condition	2	0,013	0,987
Error	159		

Estimated Marginal Means

HvsU	Mean	Std. Error
Hedonic	3,03	0,091
Utilitarian	3,65	0,096

PvsN	Mean	Std. Error
Positive	3,51	0,092
Negative	3,17	0,089

HvsU*PvsN			
HvsU	PvsN	Mean	Std. Error
Hedonic	Positive	3,12	0,110
Hedonic	Negative	2,95	0,103
Utilitarian	Positive	3,91	0,116
Utilitarian	Negative	3,40	0,113

Appendix 13 - Study 3: 3(message) x 2(product type) x 2(product stereotype) x 2(gender)
ANOVA against DV purchase attitudes

Tests of Within Subjects Effects

	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
HvsU	1	27,491	<0,001
HvsU * Condition	2	0,221	0,802
HvsU * Gender	1	1,366	0,244
HvsU * Condition * Gender	2	0,133	0,876
Error (HvsU)	156		
PvsN	1	4,78	0,030
PvsN * Condition	2	0,985	0,376
PvsN * Gender	1	23,922	<0,001
PvsN * Condition * Gender	2	0,527	0,592
Error (PvsN)	156		0,067
HvsU * PvsN	1	3,407	0,423
HvsU * PvsN * Condition	2	0,865	0,926
HvsU * PvsN * Gender	1	0,009	0,794
HvsU * PvsN * Condition * Gender	2	0,231	
Error (HvsU*PvsN)	156		

Tests of Between Subjects Effects

	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Intercept	1	1541,352	<0,001
Condition	2	0,880	0,417
Gender	1	2,980	0,086
Condition * Gender	2	3,973	0,021
Error	156		

Estimated Marginal Means

Gender*PvsN

Gender	PvsN	Mean	Std. Error
Female	Positive	3,79	0,105
Male	Negative	3,15	0,108
Female	Positive	3,06	0,157
Male	Negative	3,30	0,161

Appendix 14 – Study 3: Comparison of purchase attitudes between HP and HN products in the condition of Feminist Messages

Paired Sample Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Purchase Attitude HP	2,98	1,453	0,204
Purchase Attitude HN	3,12	1,482	0,208

Paired Sample T-test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Significance	
				Lower	Upper			One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
Purchase Attitude HP - Purchase Attitude HN	-0,14	1,461	0,205	-0,548	0,274	-0,671	50	0,253	0,505

Appendix 15 – Study 3: Comparison of purchase attitudes between UP and UN products in the condition of Feminist Messages

Paired Sample Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Purchase Attitude UP	3,87	1,478	0,207
Purchase Attitude UN	3,38	1,611	0,226

Paired Sample T-test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Significance	
				Lower	Upper			One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
Purchase Attitude UP - Purchase Attitude UN	0,49	1,810	0,253	-0,019	0,999	1,934	50	0,029	0,059

Appendix 16 – Study 3: Comparison of Product-cause fit between the Neutral and Feminist groups for all product categories

Group Statistics

Product-Cause Fit	Condition	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
HP	Neutral	3,60	1,684	0,227
HP	Feminism	3,37	1,939	0,271
HN	Neutral	2,62	1,394	0,188
HN	Feminism	2,02	1,288	0,180
UP	Neutral	3,67	1,689	0,228
UP	Feminism	2,24	1,704	0,239
UN	Neutral	3,11	1,629	0,220
UN	Feminism	1,82	1,558	0,218

Independent Samples T-test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>		<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>	
			<i>One-Sided p</i>	<i>Two-Sided p</i>	<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
Purchase-Cause Fit HP	0,646	104	0,260	0,520	-0,471	0,926
Purchase-Cause Fit HN	2,290	104	0,012	0,024	0,080	1,117
Purchase-Cause Fit UP	4,359	104	0,000	<,001	0,783	2,091
Purchase-Cause Fit UN	4,145	104	0,000	<,001	0,670	1,901

Appendix 17 – Study 3: Comparison of Product-cause fit between the Neutral and Environmental groups for all product categories

Group Statistics

Product-Cause Fit	Condition	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
HP	Neutral	3,60	1,684	0,227
HP	Feminism	2,63	1,602	0,214
HN	Neutral	2,62	1,394	0,188
HN	Feminism	2,36	1,458	0,195
UP	Neutral	3,67	1,689	0,228
UP	Feminism	1,93	1,373	0,184
UN	Neutral	3,11	1,629	0,220
UN	Feminism	1,75	1,195	0,160

Independent Samples T-test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>		<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>	
			<i>One-Sided p</i>	<i>Two-Sided p</i>	<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
Purchase-Cause Fit HP	3,125	109	0,001	0,002	0,357	1,593
Purchase-Cause Fit HN	0,964	109	0,169	0,337	-0,276	0,798
Purchase-Cause Fit UP	5,974	109	0,000	0,000	1,165	2,323
Purchase-Cause Fit UN	5,018	109	0,000	0,000	0,822	1,896

Appendix 18 – Study 3: Comparison of Product-cause fit between the Environmental and Feminism groups for all product categories

Group Statistics

Product-Cause Fit	Condition	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
HP	Neutral	2,63	1,602	0,214
HP	Feminism	3,37	1,939	0,271
HN	Neutral	2,36	1,458	0,195
HN	Feminism	2,02	1,288	0,180
UP	Neutral	1,93	1,373	0,184
UP	Feminism	2,24	1,704	0,239
UN	Neutral	1,75	1,195	0,160
UN	Feminism	1,82	1,558	0,218

Independent Samples T-test

	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Significance</i>		<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>	
			<i>One-Sided p</i>	<i>Two-Sided p</i>	<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
Purchase-Cause Fit HP	-2,182	105	0,016	0,031	-1,427	-0,068
Purchase-Cause Fit HN	1,264	105	0,105	0,209	-0,192	0,867
Purchase-Cause Fit UP	-1,029	105	0,153	0,306	-0,898	0,284
Purchase-Cause Fit UN	-0,275	105	0,392	0,784	-0,603	0,456

Appendix 19 – Study 3: Multiple linear regression of HP product with purchase attitude as main dependent variable

Model Summary

<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>
0,08	0,042	1,366

ANOVA

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Regression	24,253	6	4,042	2,168	,049 ^b
Residual	289,025	155	1,865		
Total	313,278	161			

Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	4,467	1,015		4,399	<,001	2,461	6,472
Feminism Goals	-0,205	0,142	-0,124	1,448	0,150	-0,485	0,075
SJT	-0,112	0,107	-0,102	1,052	0,294	-0,323	0,099
BJW	0,129	0,102	0,111	1,262	0,209	-0,073	0,331
Feminist Identity	0,026	0,062	0,037	0,419	0,676	-0,097	0,149
Gender	-0,642	0,244	-0,215	2,632	0,009	-1,125	-0,160
Type of Message	-0,039	0,136	-0,022	0,285	0,776	-0,307	0,230

Appendix 20 – Study 3: Multiple linear regression of UP product with purchase attitude as main dependent variable

Model Summary

<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>
0,14	0,106	1,390

ANOVA

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Regression	48,646	6	8,108	4,194	<,001
Residual	299,663	155	1,933		
Total	348,309	161			

Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardize d Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	2,716	1,034		2,627	0,009	0,674	4,758
Feminism Goals	0,074	0,144	0,042	0,510	0,611	-0,212	0,359
SJT	-0,040	0,109	-0,035	-0,372	0,710	-0,255	0,174
BJW	0,298	0,104	0,244	2,867	0,005	0,093	0,504
Feminist Identity	0,032	0,063	0,043	0,506	0,614	-0,093	0,158
Gender	-0,882	0,249	-0,279	-3,549	0,001	-1,373	-0,391
Type of Message	-0,014	0,138	-0,008	-0,100	0,921	-0,287	0,260

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