The Influence of Unisex Labels on consumers' Purchase Intention

A study in the Cosmetic Industry controlling for Category Involvement and Familiarity

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Dissertation written under the supervision of Ishani Aggarwal

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ABSTRACT

Title: "The Influence of Unisex Labels on consumers' Purchase Intention – A study in the Cosmetic Industry with the control for Category Involvement and Familiarity"

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Labels can have a great impact on consumers' decisions and their willingness to try or to buy certain products. The focus of this study is in trying to understand how the presence of an unisex label on the packaging of an unisex product may affect consumers' perception about the product and change respectively their purchase intention. Depending on the positive, negative or neutral effect on unisex labels on the purchase intention, companies may gain or lose advantage with the usage of unisex labels on their products. Because many brands in the cosmetic industry are starting to launch unisex products in the market, it is of extreme relevance to understand how consumers feel and react to unisex products, understanding, for instance, how open they are to these products and which product categories they are more wiling to try or buy. As the consumer decision is made based on product aesthetics (e.g. packaging size, color, shape), familiarity with the product and category involvement, it is also important to take these variables in consideration and control for them. Therefore, the variables familiarity with unisex products and category involvement will be added to the model of study, moderating for the effect of the presence of unisex labels on consumers' purchase intention.

Keywords: Neutral Gender Products, Unisex Products, Unisex Labels, Purchase Intention, Category Involvement, Familiarity with the Product, Cosmetic Industry.

SUMÁRIO

Título: "A influência de Rótulos Unisexo na intenção de compra dos consumidores – Um estudo dentro da Industria Cosmética com o controlo de Envolvimento com a categoria do produto e familiaridade"

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Os rótulos podem ter um grande impacto na decisão dos consumidores e na sua vontade de experimentar ou de comprar um determinado produto. O foco deste estudo é em tentar perceber como a presença de um rótulo que diga " produto unisexo", na embalagem de um produto, possa influenciar a percepção dos consumidores sobre o produto e alterar a sua respectiva intenção de compra. Dependendo do efeito positivo, negativo ou neutro da presença do rótulo "produto unisexo" na intenção de compra dos consumidores, as empresas poderão vir a ganhar ou a perder vantagem com o uso desses rótulos nos seus produtos. Uma vez que muitas marcas dentro da industria cosmética estão a começar a lançar produtos unisexo no mercado, é de extrema relevancia perceber como os consumidores reagem e se sentem relativamente a estes produtos, percebendo por exemplo o quão abertos estão a estes produtos e que categorias estão mais dispostos a comprar ou experimentar. Como a decisão do consumidor é feita com base na estética do produto (tamanho, cor e formato da embalagem), na familiaridade com o mesmo e no envolvimento com a categoria, é imporante também ter estas variaveis em conta no estudo e controlar peloo seu efeito. Desta forma, as variáveis familiaridade com produtos unisexo e o envolvimento com a categoria também serão adicionadas ao modelo de estudo, moderando o efeito da presença do rótulo "produto unisexo" na intenção de compra dos consumidores.

Palavras-chave: Produtos Unisexo, Rótulo Unisexo, Intenção de Compra, Envolvimento com a Categoria do Produto, Familiaridade, Indústria Cosmética.

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"The landscape of how we shop has shifted in favor of the individual rather than gender”
Vogue

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Neutral Gender Products' Growth

It's no secret that Neutral Gender Products have been around from quite some time now. From cloths, to accessories and perfumes people have been trying products with no gender for years. As a concept, gender neutrality is a movement that urges society to stop distinguishing roles solely based on gender. The goal is then to promote gender equality, moving away from discrimination, and seeing individuals for what they really are and do (Verve, the Spirit of todays woman 2019). Moving this concept into the cosmetic industry, the idea would be to stop using traditional marketing, where products are split in two main groups: for men or women, and to focus only individual needs regardless of the gender.

More recently, conversations about gender neutrality have gained force due to gender equality issues and gender diversity. A recent study by Omnicom Media Group (2018) has also proved that fact, showing that 50 percent of the men and 59 percent of the women, of a total of 1000 participants, didn't identify as either "masculine" or "feminine". The same study also showed that 40 percent of the participants felt that advertising didn't represent all genders, and that 30 percent of those people thought that companies continue to misrepresent them and their gender (Digiday, 2018).

However, this is not a completely new topic entering the market just right now. In fact, already in 2015, Mintel, a market research company, has predicted the neutral-gender beauty to become a global trend in 2018. Consumers have started to move away from traditional gender stereotypes and expectations and to expect brands in the market to push a gender-neutral message into their product developments and marketing campaigns (The Independent, 2018). Therefore, a long overdue wave of gender-neutral beauty products has emerged, especially in 2018, claiming inclusivity.

Brands like Panacea, Jecca Makeup, ASOS Face + Body, Fluide, Illamasqua and Fenty Beauty, that dared to be different, became then the pioneers of this revolution in the beauty industry (Elle, 2019; Verve, 2018). The main idea behind the movement and the introduction of non-gender specific (NGS) products is to include everyone: men, women, gay, straight, transgender, non-binary, young or old people (Elle, 2019), and not a specific population, like Jessica Blacker, the founder of the unisex brand Jecca, as highlighted in the past (The Independent, 2018).

Dermatologists have also shown that despite females and males having different skins, those differences are not so significant overall. Therefore, it doesn't make sense to choose a product solely based on gender. The best way to approach skincare should be rather on individual skin type. Therefore, it is recommended for all consumers to have a skincare plan toileted to their individual needs with the respective best products and ingredients for their problems (The independent, 2018).

As we can see, the genderless market is booming and it has potential to keep growing in the future. With starts like Caitlyn Jenner and Jack Munroe raising global awareness around transgenderism and TV and movie hits like Transparent and The Danish Girl introducing the topic to mainstream audiences, the acceptance and the awareness of unisex products only has space to grow even more in the next years (Forbes, 2018). One the other hand, it was also time when beauty products were only made for girls. Recent studies have shown that the consumption of skincare products by men has been increasing over the years, with an annual average growth of 7.2 percent just in 2017 (Forbes, 2018). This means that men are becoming more demanding and a key player in the cosmetic industry. Snapchat, Covergirl and Maybelline, have also proved otherwise by including boys in their strategic decisions, having launched a channel exclusively for boys, called Boy Beauty, and choose male brands ambassadors, like James Charles and Manny Gutierrez, respectively (Forbes, 2018). In the same line of thought, the same happened in the fashion industry. It was also time when genderless fashion was restricted to high-fashion catwalk shows of Gucci, Louis Vuitton and Vivienne Westwood. Nowadays, huge European retailers, such as Zara, H&M and ASOS, launch genderless collections (Forbes, 2018).

1.2. A look into the Cosmetic Industry

The Cosmetic Industry is particularly interesting due to the numbers and the fact that has recently joining the non-gender trend.

Cosmetics are all the products which protect, cleanse, adorn and perfume the human body, and combat body odor and perspiration (Butler, 2013). It includes facial treatment and body care products (creams, emulsions, lotions, gels, oils, lipsticks, face masks and anti wrinkle products), personal hygiene products (toilet and deodorant soaps, bath and shower preparations, deodorants and antiperspirants, depilatories, shaving creams and gels, after-bath powders, hygienic powders, makeup cleansers, teeth and moth care products and hair cleansers) and also sunscreens and

related products (Salvador and Chisvert, 2011).

According to statistics, the global cosmetics market has been growing in more recent years. Consumers have been spending higher levels of disposable income on cosmetics than they used to in the past. In 2018, the estimated growth on sales was 5.5 percent compared to the previous year. A big driver to this change on sales and the cosmetics market overall was the entrance of the Generation Y on the job market, specially in the United States, the biggest cosmetic market in the world (Statista, 2019).

Another factor that has been influencing in a positive way the Cosmetic Industry is the increasing popularity of social media channels, such as the Instagram and the YouTube, around certain groups. These platforms bring consumers and brands together and create a demand for the beauty products being shown. As of 2015, nearly half of the beauty videos on YouTube were tutorials (Statista, 2019).

When it comes to the industry itself, six main categories are identified: skincare, hair care, makeup, perfumes, toiletries and deodorants and oral cosmetics. Skin care being the largest one out of them, accounting for 36.4 percent of the global market in 2016 (Statista, 2019).

In the coming years, the challenge for companies in the cosmetic industry, such as L'Óreal, Unilever, Procter & Gamble, Lancôme and Shiseido to name a few, will be keeping product innovation to satisfy loyal consumers and attract new ones (Statista, 2019).

1.3. Research opportunity

Having understood the dimension of the Cosmetic Industry and the relevance of the genderless trend, it is important to understand how consumers feel about Neutral Gender products and whether they are willing to adopt these products or not, in other words, to purchase them, and here is where information seems to be lacking.

There is prove that the trend is out there, that companies are joining the trend by launching unisex products or creating new unisex brands, but less is known about how people feel about those products in general and how they select them.

Here is where this study lies, in trying to understand people's general perception about unisex products and whether the presence of a unisex label on the package of a unisex product can affect the purchase intention. Not being able to study the effect of the label in all the different industries, the cosmetic industry was the industry chosen for this study, mainly due to the

attention that it has been getting in recent years and the apparent controversy that surrounds the usage of unisex products in this industry.

1.3.1. Relevance of topic

This study is particularly relevant because it allows companies in the cosmetic industry to understand if the time is the right one to invest in Neutral Gender products, this is, if consumers are ready for unisex products and if there is a gap in the market for them. Furthermore, it also helps companies to understand in which product categories they should invest more, depending on which product categories consumers are more willing to buy. The general idea would be then to test the market readiness and to help companies that are launching unisex products for the first time to know which consumers to target (e.g. young women, adults, old man) and whether or not to identify those products as unisex, using a unisex label. Confirmed the business opportunity, the number of potential customers to target becomes the double, since both man and women can be now targeted at the same time. In the same line of thought, the investment on packaging, design and marketing and publicity also decreases, since two packages are not required anymore to target both genders and the design tends to be more neutral in order to fit both personalities and needs. Summing up, being the market ready for Neutral Gender products, companies that join this trend can only benefit from it by having their costs reduced and their profits increased.

1.3.2. Problem statement and Research Questions

Problem Statement:

The aim of this thesis is to understand how the presence of a **Unisex Label** on a the packaging of a Neutral Gender cosmetic product affects consumer's **Purchase Intention,** moderating for consumers **Familiarity** with Unisex Products and their **Involvement** with the product category

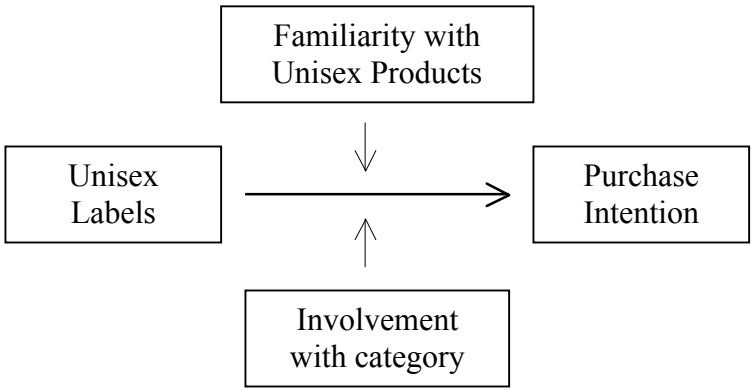


Figure 1 - The Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable: Unisex Label Presence

Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Moderator 1: Familiarity with Unisex Products

Moderator 2: Involvement with the product category

Answering the following **Research Questions**:

RQ1) Do Unisex Brands benefit from the usage of unisex labels on their packages?

RQ2) Is the level of Involvement with a product Category equally important for consumers when buying Unisex Products or Gender Products?

RQ3) Is the level of familiarity with Unisex Products a relevant factor for consumers to want to buy Unisex Products?

Therefore, the objectives of this study are:

General Objectives

- Understand people's perception about unisex products
- Understand if people are ready for unisex products, if there is demand for them
- Understand if mans' willingness to try unisex products differentiate from women
- Understand which product categories consumers are more wiling to try when purchasing unisex products

Specific Objectives

- Understand if the presence of an unisex label on the packaging of a unisex product influences consumers' purchase intention of that product
- Understand if familiarity with unisex products is a key factor in order for consumers to be interested in buying unisex products
- Understand if the level of involvement with the product category is equally important for consumers when buying gendered products or unisex products

Dissertation Outline

In order to give the reader a better understanding about the structure of this study, it will be presented a brief overlook of the paper. To start with, the report will be divided into eight main chapters: 1) the introduction/background; 2) the literature review; 3) the methodology and data collection; 4) the data analysis; 5) the results and discussion; 6) the conclusion; 7) the limitations; and finally 8) the further research. The purpose of each one of these chapters is to give readers insights about the different aspects of the study

The introduction, will give readers a better understanding about the cosmetics world and the neutral gender trend that is emerging nowadays. Moving forward, the literature review will let readers have a look into the main variables that explain the relationship between labels and purchase intention, as well as other variables that can also change that effect. Once understood the main variables, the methodology will explain the methods used to test the research questions. After that, the data will be collected, analyzed and the results will be discussed. The project finishes with an overall conclusion, limitations of the study and suggestions of further research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Decision Making Process

Consumers are exposed to a lot of information nowadays. In fact, long gone are the days when consumers used to struggle with the search for information. Nowadays, information is the one that chases consumers, more than the other way around (Nicholas and Herman, 2010). From the newspapers, to advertisements, packages, brochures, salespeople and friends, the number of sources where consumers can get information from is infinite (Payne, Bettman and Johnson, 1991). Due to the number of new technologies introduced and the competitive pressures consumers are often faced with another problem, a large number of alternatives (Payne, Bettman and Johnson, 1991). This is the reason why the process of choosing a product and being accurate about that decision is becoming even harder for the normal consumer (Jacoby, Speller, and Kohn, 1974).

A decision is composed by three main elements: alternatives, attributes of value, and uncertainties (Payne, Bettman and Johnson, 1991). Once a problem is recognized by the consumer, discrepancy between consumer's actual state and the ideal state of affairs (Burton, Gollins and Walls, 2019; Sorina-Raula, Liviu, and Georgeta-Madalina, 2012), the search for information and the evaluation of the alternatives begins (Burton, Gollins and Walls, 2019; Engel et all, 1968). The decision gets harder (1) as the number of alternatives and attributes increases, (2) as the attribute values become more difficult to process, (3) as the uncertainty about the value of the attributes increases, and (4) as the number of shared attributes between the alternatives becomes smaller (Payne, Bettman and Johnson, 1991).

However, consumers not only make decisions and process new information when they have identified a problem. They can also be influenced by the way information is provided to them in the environment, even when not searching for it on purpose (Payne, Bettman and Johnson; 1991). As Wilson and Brekke (1994) have demonstrated in the past, external and irrelevant factors can frequently intrude upon and contaminate consumers' judgments about the product. Yet, the process is usually unrecognized by consumers because they are unable to identify the basis for a judgment.

According to McGuire's information-processing model (1976), consumers' process information is based on 6 steps. The process begins with consumers' exposure to a certain stimulus and the

capture of their attention. Then, it moves on to the stages of message comprehension, message acceptance and message retention. These later stages are more cognitive in nature and involve the comprehension of the stimulus by the consumer and attribution of a meaning to the signs and symbols being shown to them. The message received can be, however, either stored or not stored in consumers' preexisting knowledge structures (Keller, 2003). The final stage would be consumers' purchase decision (Burton, Gollins and Walls, 2019).

2.1.1. Individual Differences

Consumers differentiate from each other in many different ways (Gruber, 2009). Depending on those individual differences, such as, the demographic characteristics, like age, gender, income, occupation, education, or the lifestyle factors, like the need for convenience or entertainment, they may perceive information differently and behave differently (Schoenbachler and Gordon, 2002). As McGuire (1976) as shown, both media exposure habits and consumption patterns depend on individuals' demographic characteristics, social situations and personal proclivities.

Consumers are influenced by their prior beliefs and expectations and their own experiences when making a decision (Argo and Main, 2004; Hawkins, Best and Coney, 2001). According to Bettman, Johnson and Payne (1991), there is evidence that prior knowledge and expertise can affect inferences (Ford and Smith, 1987), memory and how information is processed (Brucks, 1985). On the other hand, there is also prove that individual preferences and emotional status can also influence product judgments and evaluations and product adoption (Garbarino and Edell, 1997; Isen and Means, 1983; Isen and Simmnonds, 1978).

Looking at one particular demographic characteristic, gender, it can be seen that both men and women process information differently, have varied product consumption patterns (Coley and Burgess, 2003) and have different preferences when it comes to a product's packaging shape and size (Ritnamkam and Sahachaisaeree, 2012).

2.2. Visual Stimulus

Visual stimuli are a very important factor when it comes to decision-making. According to Schmitt and Simonson (1997), most consumers' decisions are made based on the aesthetic value and the distinctiveness of visual design. It all starts with the consumer perception, which is

influenced in several ways by the product's general visual aesthetics (Bloch, Brunel and Arnold, 2003).

The perception of a product consists of two dimensions: the interpretation of the product's attributes (attribute dimension) and the interpretation of its' action potential (performance dimension) (Kleine III and Kernan, 1991). Therefore, consumers exposed to a product will naturally react to the characteristics of this stimulus, such as the color, the counter or the shape, trying to give some meaning to the product (Janiszewski, Kuo and Tavassoli, 2012; Kleine III and Kernan, 1991; Miller, 1997).

That is why visual aesthetics are so important, because they play a big part on consumers' comprehension and evaluation of the product (Bloch, Brunel and Arnold, 2003). One the other hand, they also represent the central channel for the formation of the consumer/product relationship (Bloch, Brunel and Arnold, 2003; Hollins and Pugh, 1990).

Even if not aware of it, consumers feel tempted to compare across packages since comparative evaluations are naturally spontaneous (Mussweiler, 2003). Therefore, the superior the product design, the higher the probability of standing out from the competition and being recognized in a crowded marketplace (Bloch, Brunel and Arnold, 2003; Bloch, 1995). This is the main reason why images of elegance, durability, ease of use, youthfulness, durability and innovativeness are well thought out and taken into consideration by marketers before developing the appearance of new products for the market (Forty, 1986).

2.2.1. Labeling

Labels are part of the packaging, and as the packaging design, they can be a visual stimulus that influence consumers' behavior (Aydinoğlu and Krishna, 2010). Previous research has shown that bottom-up factors, such as the label format or its position on the package, influence the probability of attracting consumers' attention (Fenko et al., 2018; Pieters & Wedel, 2004; Van Herpen & Van Triip, 2011). Having the ability to attract consumers' visual attention, in a time where store visits are getting shorter, and consequently consumers' cognitive abilities become limited, gives companies, working in this filed, a great advantage (Fenko et al., 2018).

With limited cognitive abilities, consumers are not able them to pay attention to all the different characteristics of the product, such as the price, the brand or the convenience of the product (Bialkova, Sasse, & Fenko, 2016). Therefore, using a label on a product packaging, which gives

consumers more information about the product and helps them understand it better, might be of extreme help for companies (Aydinoğlu and Krishna, 2010; Allison and Uhl, 1964; Hoyer and Brown, 1990). It is also important to highlight that some consumers make their decisions based on the quality of information given to them on labels (Lunardo and Richard, 2007).
It is fair then to say that labels can affect consumers' decision and product evaluation (Aydinoğlu and Krishna, 2010).

2.3. Attention

Attention is defined as the amount of cognitive effort and/or capacity that a person directs to a particular stimulus (Argo and Main, 2004; Kahneman, 1973) and that helps selecting information that is necessary and/or influential in subsequent judgments (Janiszewski, Kuo and Tavassoli, 2012).
Attention processes are a possible source of preference formation (Janiszewski, Kuo and Tavassoli, 2012). Researches have distinguished between two types of attention in the past: Goal-directed attention and Stimulus-driven attention (Norman & Shallice, 2000; Yantis, 2000). The Goal-driven attention is mainly influenced by top-down factors, this is, individual preferences, goals, moods or task instructions, whereas Stimulus-driven attention is mostly determined by bottom-up factors, such as visual stimuli design factors like the color and shape of the product or the number or complexity of the images (Yantis, 2000; Corbetta & Shulman, 2002; Orquin & Loose, 2013).
Therefore, just by being exposed to the environment, exposure effect, consumers' senses can get activated and their attention can be captured (Argo and Main, 2004). This is the main reason why, there are so many marketing efforts trying to control for consumers' attention in shopping environments. Some of these techniques used to draw consumers' attention and to encourage the consideration of product offerings can be either the packaging, the end-of aisle displays, or even the shelf space allocation (Janiszewski, Kuo and Tavassoli, 2012; Argo and Main, 2004; Chevalier, 1975). The idea is that increased attention to a product encourages more consumers to consider it and to finally to buy it (Janiszewski, Kuo and Tavassoli, 2012; Argo and Main, 2004; Allenby and Ginter, 1995). Past studies have also proved that the higher the visual attention, the higher the probability of a product being chosen by the consumer (Duerrschmid and Danner, 2018; Armel, Beaumel and Rangel, 2008). However, it is important to highlight that not only

high levels of attention influence consumer's decisions. Compelling evidence shows that even limited attention can change consumers' attitudes (Janiszewski, 1993).

2.4. Purchase Decision

Even though consumers might be forced into a situation where they are exposed and pay attention to a given stimulus, that doesn't mean, as seen before, that they will perceive the information in the same way and consequently have the same purchase intention. Consumers' behavior and purchase decision, beyond other factors, will depend on product familiarity and on category involvement.

2.4.1. Product Familiarity

Product familiarity reflects the extent of consumers' direct or indirect experience with a certain product type (Campbell and Keller, 2003; Alba and Hutchinson, 1987; Kent and Allen, 1994), capturing all the product associations within their long-term memories (Campbell and Keller, 2003).

According to Lichtenstein and Fischhoff (1997), product familiarity is based on the person's self-report of how much he/she knows about the product. A subject with no information-search experience and no product-usage experience is considered to have low familiarity. In the same line of thought, a subject with some interaction with the product is considered to have medium familiarity, and finally, a subject with both search and usage experiences is consider to have high familiarity (Park and Lessig, 1981).

Consumers with high familiarity are expected to possess superior knowledge about the existing products, to decrease search for extant alternatives (Johnson and Russo, 1984) and to pay more attention to those products they know than unfamiliar ones (Christie and Klein; 1995). Furthermore, as the familiarity increases with the repurchase and the interaction with the product, the attention to detail decreases, becoming smaller than when buying the product for the first time (Argo and Main, 2004; Stewart and Martin, 1994). For this reason, the number of product attributes recalled by customers is expected to decrease with the product familiarity (Argo and Main, 20004; Lynch and Srull, 1982).

Decisions made based on product familiarity can be particularly interesting for some consumers because they involve less risk (Tian, Bearden and Hunter, 2001; Kron, 1983). This way, consumers that are risk averse or have limited time to make a controlled and deliberated decision (Kahneman & Frederick, 2002) may be more willing to opt for familiar products because these give them more confidence in their choice (Park and Lessig, 1981).

Finally, it is also important to highlight that it is expected for consumers with low product familiarity to be more influenced by external factors, such as the packaging aesthetics, when making a product perception, than consumers with high familiarity (Belch, 1982; Hoch and Ha, 1986).

2.4.2. Category Involvement

Involvement is a key variable in consumers' behavior, particularly because of its persuasion effect and influence on the decision process (Phelps & Thorson, 1991; Laczniak & Muehling, 1993; Korai, 2017). According to Mital (1989), product involvement can be defined as the level of interest consumers show for an object, depending on their values, needs and motivations. The higher the interest and the state of arousal consumers show for a product, the higher their involvement with it (Richins, 1986). Therefore, it is expected for products with higher risk, ego value or price, such as cosmetics, to show a higher involvement (Korai, 2017; Vaughn, 1980). The higher the involvement with a product, the more extensive is the search for information and the evaluation of the product attributes, since the product is important for the consumer and involves higher risk (Kotler et all, 1996; Chaudhuri, 2000). A consumer with higher involvement is expected to be more strongly brand loyal and to postpone its purchase decision, going to another store if the brand or the product is not available (Speece, 2003). On the other hand, a consumer with low involvement that shows no interest in the product or the category and does not consider it important, is expected to make the decision making much faster (Speece, 2003). It is then expected for consumers with low involvement to use more packaging elements in their decisions, since they do not require so much mental effort as informational elements, such as labels, and evoke more of an emotional response (Nancarrow et al, 1998).

Previous studies have also shown the division of product involvement into two distinct groups: Situational Involvement (SI) and Enduring involvement (EI). Situational Involvement corresponds to product involvement that occurs solely in specific situations, such as, a purchase.

Enduring Involvement, on the other hand, corresponds to a product involvement that results from an ongoing concern with a product that transcends situational influences (Richins, 1986; Laurent and Kapferer, 1985). Therefore, both SI and EI represent interest and excitement about the product but differ in terms of their motivations and temporal pattern of occurrence (Richins, 1986). While some consumers experience a continuous interest and arousal for a given product (high EI), because they truly identify with it and think of it as an extension of the self (Bloch and Richins, 1983; Laurent and Kapferer, 1985), others might feel more involved with the product only in certain situations (high SI), where for instance the risk associated with the purchase is higher (Korai, 2017). In situations like this, behaviors like the process of searching for information, extensive brand evaluations or active word of mouth, are not motivated by the enduring involvement but by the desire of maximizing the outcome of high-risk purchase (Richins, 1986).

2.5. Hypotheses Formation

Once reviewed the Literature that supports the main variables of the study and understood their relationship between them, it is then suggested the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1

H0 = the presence of a unisex label on a product's packaging does not affect consumers' purchase intention

Ha = the presence of a unisex label on a product's packaging affects consumers' purchase intention

Hypothesis 2

H0 = category involvement is not equally important in the purchase of a gendered product or a unisex product

Ha = category involvement is equally important in the purchase of a gendered product or a unisex product

Hypothesis 3

H0 = familiarity with unisex products is not a crucial factor in order for consumers to purchase a unisex product

Ha = familiarity with unisex products is a crucial factor in order for consumers to purchase a unisex product

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Strategy

The purpose of this study is to gather data and gain information from different consumers regarding the perception and the purchase intention of unisex products in the cosmetic industry. In more detail, the goal is to understand whether the identification of unisex products, through the presence of a unisex label on the packaging, can affect consumers' final purchase intention; and how that effect can be moderated by individuals' familiarity with unisex products and their involvement with the product category.

Therefore, it was important to start by looking into the different studies, run in the past, in order to understand which theories could explain each one of the variables, how they interact with each other and how they can influence the dependent variable, purchase intention. This way, a **secondary research** in the form of literature review was conducted, followed by a focus group and an online survey, **primary research**, where people's knowledge, perceptions and respective purchase intentions about unisex products were gathered and measured.

The **focus group** was particularly relevant for the survey construction because it allowed understanding which product characteristics (e.g. durability and packaging aesthetics) consumers would value more when choosing a cosmetic. On the other hand, it also helped understanding which product categories consumers would recall more or buy more often (e.g. skin care, makeup and hair care). All this information was extremely helpful in order to understand people's purchasing behaviors and to identify some of the possible reasons why people would be more or less willing to try or buy unisex products.

The **survey**, on the other hand, was the method selected because it allowed collecting data with a larger sample size. Being the idea of the study to test the influence of a unisex label on the purchase intention of a unisex cosmetic product, it only makes sense that everyone that uses, buys or interacts with cosmetics, whether it is a shampoo, a hand cream or a perfume, is included in this survey. People that are not interested at all in cosmetics should, therefore, not be considered to this study. This way, participants that demonstrate no interest at all in cosmetics are directly excluded from the survey.

An anonymous questionnaire in English with 38 questions was then created using Qualtrics, an online survey tool that helps creating and administrating surveys online, and launched online. The data collection only took place between May 2nd and May 4th 2019.

3.2. Survey Design

Staring with the survey structure it was important to split it into **four main parts**: understanding consumers' behavior when it comes to cosmetics, the experiment, understanding people's attitudes and purchasing behaviors when it comes to unisex products, and the demographic questions. The purpose of the first part was to understand the importance of cosmetics in consumers' lives, getting an overview of how participants choose among those products. The idea of the second part, on the other hand, was to test the research questions, measuring the effect of the presence of unisex labels on consumers' purchase intention and also the involvement consumers would have with the product category presented to them. Furthermore, the goal of the third part was to understand people's perceptions about unisex products, such as the expected quality, measuring also the familiarity with these products. Finally, the purpose of the fourth part, demographics questions, was to better understand consumers' background and to see if there are differences in results across the different subgroups.

The **experiment** is an extremely relevant part because it allows answering one of the main research questions of the study: the effect of unisex labels on the purchase intention. For that, a between-subjects design was used, where consumers were split into two different groups: the control group and the treatment group. In the control group, consumers were exposed to the product with **no unisex label**, whereas in the treatment condition, consumers were faced with a product with a **unisex label**. In both conditions, consumers were informed about the product category, facial cream (skincare). Skincare was the category chosen in this case because it is the most consumed category according to the literature review. Participants were then randomly assigned to each one of these conditions and their purchase intention was measured.

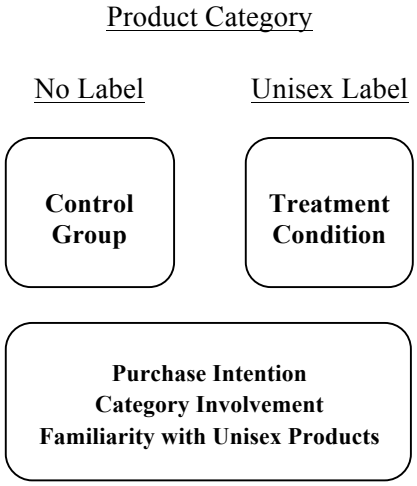


Figure 2 - Experiment Design

In order to control for other independent variables, like brand image or packaging aesthetics, that could be affecting the dependent variable and manipulating the results of the effect unisex labels on the purchase intention, a new brand (FIX) with a simple design was created. The intention of creating a new brand was to ensure that everyone seeing the product would be doing it for the very first time, without any previous interactions and/or preconceived ideas about the product or the brand. Furthermore, by using a simple packaging, consumers would only be influence by the independent variable, unisex labels presence, and not by other product attributes, such as the color of the packaging or its' shape.

Figure 3 - Experiment Conditions

3. 3. Research Method

Regarding the data analysis, SPSS (version 24) was the software used and the ANCOVA was the model chosen to test the effect of the two moderators on the dependent variable and to see the "real" effect of the unisex label presence on the purchase intention. Therefore, the interaction between Unisex Label and Familiarity and the interaction between Unisex Label and Category Involvement were both analyzed. It was extremely important to make sure, however, that both the covariates, familiarity with unisex products and category involvement, and the dependent variable, purchase intention, were all continuous variables in order to use this model. For this reason, both the dependent variable and the moderators were measured using 5 points Likert-scales (e.g. extremely unlikely…extremely likely), which according to the literature are less confusing for participants and increase the response rate (Babakus and Mangold, 1992; Hayes, 1992).

Moreover, to make sure the results would be as close as possible to reality, four questions were made for purchase intention (measuring product attractiveness, willingness to try, willingness to buy in the moment and willingness to buy in the future) and three questions were made for category involvement (measuring involvement, excitement level and interest) and for familiarity with unisex products (measuring familiarity, knowledge and interaction with the product). Once answered all the questions, questions measuring the same factor were grouped and an overall average was done, creating three final factors: purchase intention, category involvement and familiarly.

Furthermore, in order to measure other questions like the frequency of cosmetics purchase or which product categories consumers would be more willing to buy, other type of questions, other than Likert-scales, were also used, such as rating scales, multiple choice and dichotomous questions (yes/no). Finally, to make sure that there wouldn't be any misunderstanding and that the questionnaire would be as accurate as possible, easy questions for consumers to read were created and only a subject was mentioned per question.

For further information, a full transcript of the questionnaire can be found in the **Appendix 27**.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter it will be analyzed the results of the survey carried out by consumers online. At the first stage, participants' demographic characteristics will be observed, then consumers understanding about cosmetics and unisex products will be test out, followed by an analysis of the main research questions and final discussion of the results.
For all the analyses a significance level of 0.05 was considered.

Sample Size

Starting with the sample size, 396 participants initiated the survey but only 280 participants completed it.

Response rate = number of eligible units in sample/ total number of completed interviews

Response rate = 280/396 = 0.70 = 70%

However, from the 280 participants, just 255 participants demonstrated to have a minimum involvement and interest in cosmetics. Therefore 25 participants were excluded from the analysis.

Sample Characteristics

Focusing on the sample characteristics, it can be seen that there were 194 females and 64 males answering this survey. 76 percent of the participants were female.

Table 1 - Sample Distribution per Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	64	23.9
Female	194	76.1
Total	255	100

Regarding participants' nationality, from the 22 nationalities represented in the sample, it can be see that 86.7 percent of the sample is Portuguese, 3.1 percent Brazilian and 1.6 percent German. On the other hand, when it comes to the age, most of the sample, 79.6 percent, is comprehended

between 18 and 24 years old. The second biggest group, that represents 14.5% of the sample, is comprehended between the ages of 25 to 34 years old.

4.1. RESULTS

4.1.1. Consumers' perception about Cosmetics

Starting with the relevance of cosmetics in consumers' lives, it was possible to see that only 0.09 percent of participants rated cosmetics as something extremely irrelevant in their life, being therefore excluded from the analysis, while 53.6 percent of the participants showed to consider cosmetic as something very important/extremely important in their life. Comparing now the cosmetics' relevance between man and women, it was seen that women on average consider cosmetics more important in their life than men. In fact women, on average scored a mean of 3.89, while men scored a mean of 3.11 when it comes to cosmetics' relevance (see **Appendix 2**).
Moving to the cosmetics consumption, it can be seen that the three most used product categories are respectively toiletries and deodorants, with mean of 2.57, haircare products, with a mean of 2.90, and skincare products, with a mean of 2.93. Lower means equals the most used categories since participants were asked to rank the different product categories from 1 (most used) to 6 (least used). On the other hand, the category that shows to be less appealing for consumers is perfumes, with a mean of 4.50.
Further information, also confirms these results, showing that 30 percent of the respondents (69/227) considered toiletries and deodorants as their first choice and 38 percent (88/227) of these same respondents considered makeup products as their last option.

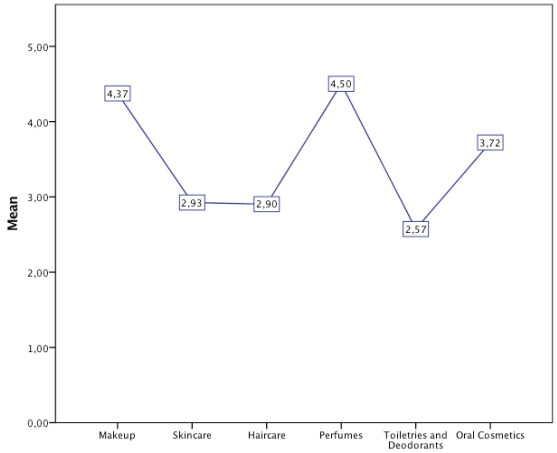


Figure 4 - Most used Cosmetic Categories

Moreover, when it comes to the **product characteristics**, it can be seen that consumers identified product quality as the most important characteristic of the product, followed by the product's durability and finally the packaging aesthetics (see **Appendix 3**). Looking now at the relevance of the product characteristics between men and women, it can be seen that there are no significant differences between men and women when it comes to the importance of the product's quality ($p=0.784>0.05$), the product's durability ($p=0.223>0.05$) and the packaging aesthetics ($p=0.354>0.05$). This means that the relevance of a product's quality, durability and packaging aesthetics is similar between men and women (for further information see **Appendix 4).**

When it comes to the decision making itself it can be seen that consumers decisions are mainly influenced by specialists' opinions, such as dermatologists and/or hairdressers, and by friends and family members opinions. Social media influencers, bloggers or youtubers seem, on the other hand, not to affect so much consumers' final decision making. Another interesting fact is that female consumers on average give more value to the opinion of youtubers, bloggers and dermatologists than men.

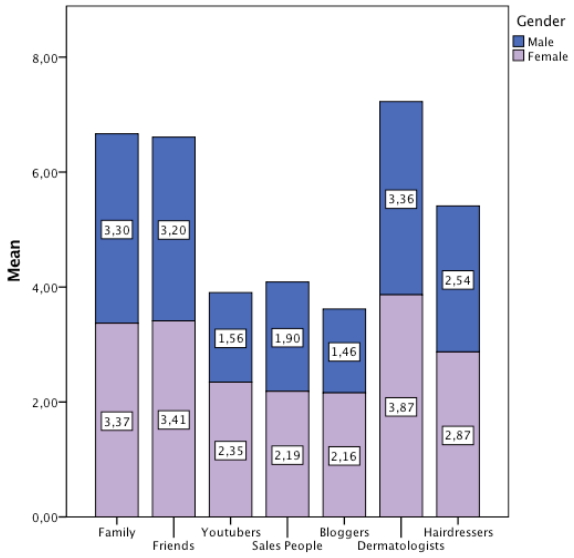


Figure 5 - Influence on consumer choice by gender

Table 2 - People's influence on consumers' choice

	Hairdressers	Dermatologists	Bloggers	Sales People	Youtubers	Friends	Family
Levene's Test	0.000	1.014	37.218	4.301	29.762	0.668	6.706
Sig.	0.995	**0.315**	0.000	0.039	0.000	0.414	0.010
Brown - Forsythe	0.081	0.010	**0.000**	0.054	**0.000**	0.147	0.617
ANOVA Sig.	0.087	**0.008**	**0.000**	0.069	**0.000**	0.154	0.654

Furthermore, the data also shows that 82.7 percent of the sample purchases cosmetic products at least once every six months, 55.3 percent of the sample purchasing every two months or once a month. However it is important to highlight that 11.0 percent demonstrate to not buy cosmetics very often, purchasing once a year or very rarely (for further information see **Appendix 5**).

When it comes to difficulty of finding the right product and making a decision, 47 percent of the respondents showed not to be sure about their choice and to feel confused with the number of product options available. Additionally, 32.9 percent of the participants also showed neutrality, which means that there might be a gap where for other brands to attract consumers' attention. Overall, just 26.3 percent of the sample seems to know exactly what they want and not to be confused or feel influenced by other brands or products.

In the same line of thought, 45 percent of the respondents showed to be likely and/or extremely likely to look for different and to try different products when shopping.

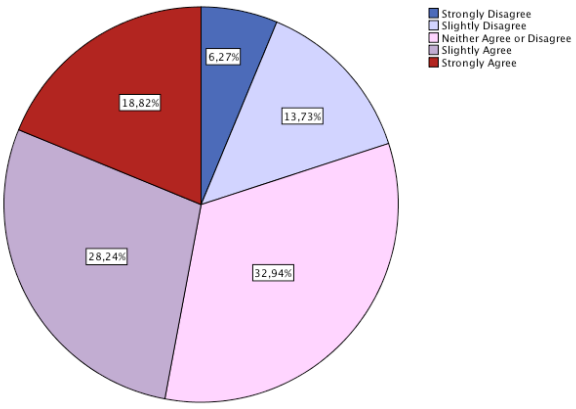


Figure 6 - Getting confused with the number of product alternatives

4.1.2. Consumers' perception about Unisex Products

When it comes to unisex products, it can be seen that consumers are not so familiar with these products. The average of consumers' overall familiarity, understanding and interaction with unisex products was just 2.33, 2.32 for females and 2.36 for male, which shows that both men and women have equal familiarity with these products, despite the familiarity being low (see **Appendix 6**). In fact, just 10 percent of the sample has shown to have medium/high interaction with unisex products and a good/deep knowledge about these products, which seems strange since 61.2 percent of sample have shown to have tried unisex products at least once before.
Furthermore, the idea that people are not aware of the existence of unisex products and don't have per habit using or trying these products, is proved also by the 49.4 percent of the people that showed to have bought a unisex product in the past and still show to rarely buy neutral gender products. Only 11.5 percent of the participants, from a total of 156 participants, that showed to have bought a unisex product before, are active buyers, purchasing unisex products at least once per month or even more frequently than that (e.g. once per week or every two weeks) (for further information see **Appendix 7 and Appendix 8**).

When it comes to the quality of Neutral Gender Products it can be seen that people how tried unisex products before classify the quality on average as medium/good (mean=3.49). However, it can bee seen that the perception of quality from the ones that never tried these products is lower than the ones that have tried it before (mean=3.28). The expected quality of a unisex product is on average 0.1467 lower than the actual quality of the product (see **Appendix 9**). This might indicate one of the reasons why people may feel less tempted to try or to buy unisex products in general, because they are unsure about the quality of the products.

It is important to understand then which product categories consumers would be more willing to try when buying a unisex product. Therefore, it was found that the unisex product categories that people are more willing to try are respectively: skincare products, toiletries and deodorants and haircare products. However, in each one of these cases the results of the means is medium/low, which shows that there is not so much interest in trying unisex products, independently of the product category. The product category which consumers' willingness to try is lower is, on the other hand, makeup products.

Table 3 - Category means (Unisex Product)

	Perfumes	Clothes	Makeup	Toiletries and Deodorants	Skincare Products	Haircare Products
Mean	2.4941	2.5059	2.1373	2.9412	2.9529	2.7961

Analyzing in more detail these means, it was concluded that there are some differences between men and women when it comes to their willingness to use or to try some specific unisex categories. More precisely men and women react differently to the idea of using unisex perfumes, clothes, makeup and haircare products. While females are more willing to try unisex perfumes, clothes and makeup, males are more willing to try unisex haircare products than females.

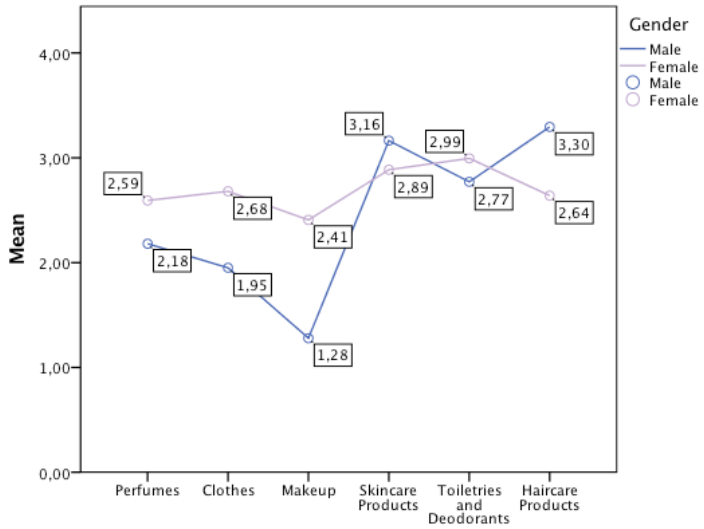


Figure 7 - Categories per gender (Unisex Product)

Table 4 - ANOVA unisex categories and gender

	Perfumes	Clothes	Makeup	Skincare Products	Toiletries and Deodorants	Haircare Products
Levene's Test	0.231	5.7227	51.345	3.093	0.855	2.364
Sig.	**0.631**	0.017	0.000	0.080	0.356	**0.125**
Brown-Forsythe	0.035	**0.000**	**0.000**	0.119	0.210	0.001
ANOVA Sig.	**0.032**	**0.000**	**0.000**	0.138	0.237	**0.001**

Furthermore, it is important to have a look on the people that demonstrated interest in neutral gender cosmetics or that demonstrated to have bought a unisex product at least once before, in order to identify if there is any pattern in terms of behavior between consumers and which consumers companies should target. Therefore, analyzing the data, it can be seen that 70.5 percent of the men said to have tried a neutral gender product, whereas just 58.2 percent of the women showed to have done it before (for further information see **Appendix 10**). However, when observing both men and women's purchase intention for the product presented to them in the experiment part, it can be seen that the variable gender is not statistically significant ($p=0.276>0.05$). Therefore, gender does not influence consumers' purchase intention **(see Appendix 11).**

Although the sample size might not be well distributed in terms of age, since there isn't the same number of participants per age interval, it might be possible to conclude that adults above 35 years old are more interested in unisex products than young consumers. Within the 10 participants, with more than 35 years old, 80 percent showed to have bought a unisex product at least once before (see **Appendix 12**).

When trying to understand some of the reasons why some consumers would be more willing to purchase this product than others, it was possible to see that, from the 255 participants, 8.2 percent were willing to do it because they indicated familiarity with the product, 19.6 percent because they wanted to try something new, 13.3 percent because they wanted to try something different, 8.2 percent because they were involved with the product category, and 23.5 percent due to the products' good quality. On the other hand, when looking at the reasons why people might not be willing to purchase this product it was possible to see that 29 percent of the participants showed not to want to buy the product because they were not familiar with it, 0.4 percent because they were afraid of social repression, 25.1 percent because they felt like they didn't need the product in the moment, 28.2 percent because they were unsure about the product's quality, and 16.5 percent because they felt their skin required special products.

4.1.3. Unisex Label Influence on Consumers' Purchase Intention

Table 5 - Test of Homogeneity of Variances (Unisex Label Presence)

Purchase Intention

Levene Statistic	df1	Df2	Sig.
4.187	1	253	**0.042**

Table 6 - ANOVA (Unisex Label Presence – Control vs. Treatment)

Purchase Intention

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.171	1	5.171	7.797	**0.006**
Within Groups	167.795	253	0.663		
Total	172.967	254			

Table 7 - Descriptives Purchase Intention (ANOVA)

Purchase Intention

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
No Label	134	**2.7687**	0.76435	0.06603	2.6381	2.8993	1.00	4.75
Unisex Label	121	**2.4835**	0.86647	0.07877	2.3275	2.6394	1.00	4.75
Total	255	2.6333	0.82521	0.05168	2.5316	2.7351	1.00	4.75

In order to test if there were apparent differences between the two groups' purchase intention (control group and treatment group), a one-way ANOVA was run. From the ANOVA results, it can be seen, despite the assumption of variances or Levene's test, being violated ($p=0.042<0.05$), that there are significant differences between the groups' purchase intention ($p=0.006<0.05$). Therefore, it might be possible to conclude, at first sight, that the presence of a unisex label on a cosmetic packaging affects consumers' purchase intention.

4.2. Hypothesis Testing

In order to test the 3 main hypothesis of the study, it was necessary first to aggregate the 3 different questions that measured each one of the main variables. Therefore, an average of participants' responses was done and 3 main factors were created: category involvement, familiarity with unisex products and purchase intention.
Having made this, the analysis could then begin.

Hypothesis 1

H0 = the presence of a unisex label on a product's packaging does not affect consumers' purchase intention

Ha = the presence of a unisex label on a product's packaging affects consumers' purchase intention

To test whether the presence of a unisex label, on a cosmetic packaging, could have an effect consumers' purchase intention, an ANCOVA analysis was conducted with the two covariates: category involvement and familiarity.
As seen in the previous ANOVA results, the unisex label presence seems to have an effect on consumers' purchase intention. However, in order to be certain that this difference in means is actually due to the presence a unisex label on the cosmetics' packaging and not due to consumers' differences in familiarity or category involvement, such variables will have to be also included in the study.
Before running the ANCOVA, with the two moderators, it is important, however, to make sure that the covariates are not correlated with each other.
Having a look into the results, it can be seen that familiarity and category involvement are not correlated ($p=0.128>0.05$), as wished, and that there is no multicollinearity. Moreover, to proceed with the analysis, it is also important that familiarity and category involvement are correlated with the dependent variable, purchase intention. Running a correlation test between familiarity and purchase intention and between category involvement and purchase intention, it is proved then that in fact there is a significant correlation between the variables, as seen before**.** One last and extremely relevant step before conducting the ANCOVA is to make sure that the independent

variable does not have an effect on each one of the covariates. For that an ANOVA was conducted for each one of the covariates and it as possible to conclude that in fact the unisex label presence as either no effect on familiarity ($p=0.370>0.05$) and on category involvement ($p=0.861>0.05$) (for further information see **Appendix 13 and Appendix 14).**

Moving now to the actual analysis, it is important to test the following assumptions in order to make sure that for the results will be completely reliable:

1) Independent Observations

2) Normally Distributed Error

3) Homogeneity of Variance

4) Linearity of Regression

5) Homogeneity of Regression Slopes

Starting with the **Normally Distributed Error assumption**, it is verified that there are no missing cases. When looking at the Shapiro-Wilk test, it seen that there is a non-statistically significant result for the control condition ($p=0.132>0.05$), which means that the purchase intention for the specified level of the dependent variable is normally distributed. However, for the unisex label condition the normality assumption is not met ($p=0.013<0.05$). In the **figure 7** it can be seen the histograms with the normality tests (for further information see **Appendix 15**).

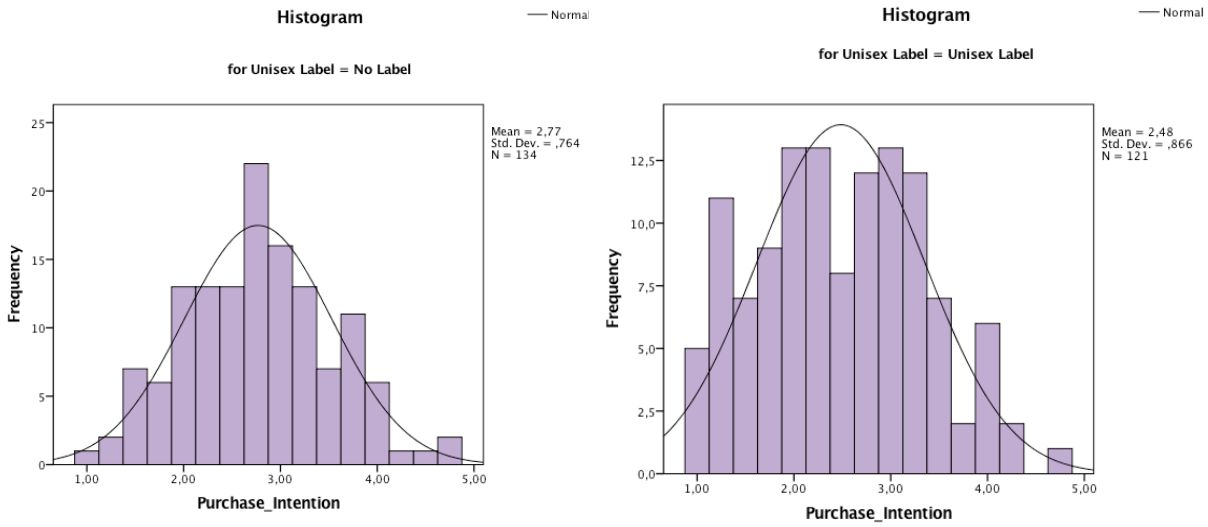


Figure 8 - Histograms Normality Test (no label vs. unisex label)

Moving to the **Linearity assumption,** it is supposed for the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable to be linear. Therefore, two scatterplots were used to test this assumption, one between unisex label presence, purchase intention and the moderator category involvement, and the other between the unisex label presence, purchase intention and the moderator familiarity.

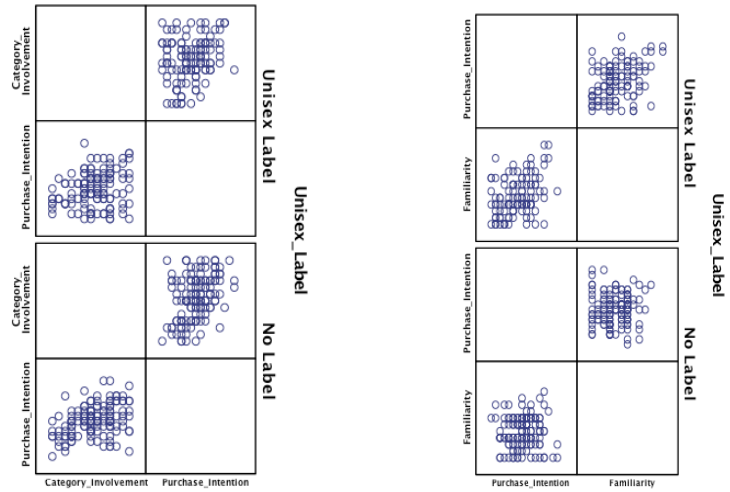


Figure 9 - Scatterplots: PI and Category Involvement vs. PI and Familiarity

Observing the scatterplots, it can be seen that the linearity assumption seems to be violated for purchase intention and category involvement in the unisex label condition and for purchase intention and familiarity in the no label condition. In order for the linearity assumptions to be met, the points should have an elliptical shape between them, which is not the case. This way, the analysis will proceed, however, it is important to highlight that the results might not be completely reliable, since the assumption is violated.

Finally, before conducting the ANCOVA, it is also important to verify the **Homogeneity of Regression Slopes assumption**. For that, the interaction between the dependent variable and the each one of the covariates was tested. Looking then at the results of the interactions, it can be seen that there is an interaction between the independent variable and familiarity ($p=0.006<0.05$), which means that the slopes are non-equivalent and that the assumption is then violated. On the other hand, results also show that the interaction between the independent variable and category

involvement is not statistically significant (p=0.182>0.05) (for further information see **Appendix 16**). Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected and the assumption is met.

In order to understand more precisely the relationship between each variable, it would be suggested to have a look on the following scatterplots.

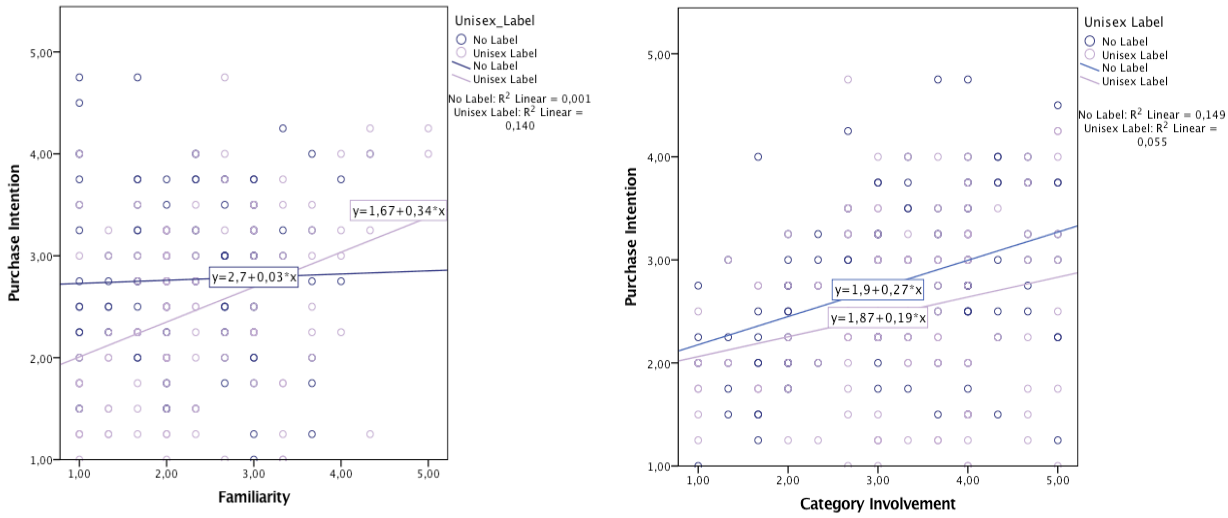


Figure 10 - Scatterplots: PI and Familiarity vs. PI and Category Involvement

Conducting now the ANCOVA with the two covariates, it can be seen, through the Levene's test, that the **Homogeneity of Variance assumption** is met (p=0.125>0.05), contrary to what have occurred in the ANOVA analysis. This way, it is assumed that the differences obtained in the sample variance are likely to have occurred based on random sampling from a population with equal means.

Looking further, it can also be seen that the adjusted independent variable, unisex label, when controlling for the differences in the two covariates, is significant (p=0.001<0.05). This means that the presence of a unisex label on a cosmetic packaging affects consumers' purchase intention [F(1,251) = 10.375; p<0.05]. Moreover, it can be also seen that the two covariates are statistically significant, (p=0.000<0.05). Therefore, it can be concluded that familiarity with unisex products has an effect on consumers' purchase intention [F(1,251)=10.676; p<0.05], as well as category involvement [F(1,251) = 24.308; p<0.05] (for further information see **Appendix 17**).

Comparing the results from the ANOVA with the ANCOVA, it can be seen that, with the two moderators in the model, the error sum of squares decreases from 167.795 to 145.533, the F Statistic increases from 7.797 to 15.772, the p-value of the model decreases from 0.006 to 0.000, and the R Squared increases from 0.03 to 0.159. Such results are expected since more variables that explain the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable were introduced in the model.

From a R Squared of 0.159, it can be concluded that almost 15.9 percent of the variance on the dependent variable is explained based on the unisex label presence, on the category involvement and on the familiarity with unisex products. Looking at the Eta Squares now, it can be seen that the Unisex Label presence in itself accounts for 4 percent of this variance in the purchase intention, while familiarity accounts for 4.1 percent, and category involvement accounts for the remaining 8.8 percent left.

Finally, when looking into the purchase intention means, it can be seen that the estimated means for each one of the conditions is now lower after the adjustment for category involvement and for familiarity with unisex products. The estimated means for the purchase intention are then 2.780 for the control condition, where there is no label, and 2.471 for the treatment condition, where a unisex label was shown to participants, for a category involvement of 3.17 and familiarity of 2.33.

Here it can be seen that despite the influence of the covariates on the purchase intention, there is a difference between the estimated means for each group. Consumers' purchase intention decrease 0.308 on average with the presence of a unisex label on the package (for further information see **Appendix 18**).

Therefore, the null hypothesis is then **rejected**.

Hypothesis 2

H0 = category involvement is not equally important in the purchase of a gendered product or a unisex product

Ha = category involvement is equally important in the purchase of a gendered product or a unisex product

Moving on to the **hypothesis 2,** the goal here is to understand in more detail the effect of the variable category involvement on consumers' purchase intention, testing whether category involvement is equally important for consumers when buying a gendered product or a unisex product.

Starting with the relationship between category involvement and purchase intention, it is confirmed that the two variables are, in fact, significantly correlated ($p=0.00<0.05$) and that category involvement has a positive affect on consumers' purchase intention.

To make sure that the purchase intention would be influence just by the category involvement and nothing else, the sample was split in two groups, and the effect of category involvement was observed in the control condition, were no label was shown to participants. The correlation between the two variables in the control condition was 0.386.

Looking, on the other hand, at the linear regression conducted to see the impact of category involvement on the dependent variable, it was concluded that from every 1 unit increase on category involvement, consumers' purchase intention increase also 0.273 on average (for further information see **Appendix 19 and Appendix 20**).

Purchase Intention = 1.904 + 0.273 Category Involvement

Trying to understand now if there would be significant differences in the purchase intention means between the control group (no label) and the treatment condition (unisex label), an ANCOVA was run with the independent variable, unisex label presence, as a factor, the purchase intention as the dependent variable, and the category involvement as the covariate.

The **figure 6** shows the purchase intention means for both groups as the category involvement increases. Here it can be seen that there are differences in the purchase intention between the control group and the treatment condition, for the same level of category involvement. Looking carefully, it seems that category involvement is more important and has a greater effect on the purchase intention in the control condition, where consumers are not exposed to unisex products.

Therefore it can be concluded that when introduced with a unisex product, consumers' involvement with the category becomes less important than when making the decision of buying

a gendered product. Category involvement is then more relevant for the decision of buying gendered products than neutral gender products.

Therefore the null hypothesis is **not rejected**.

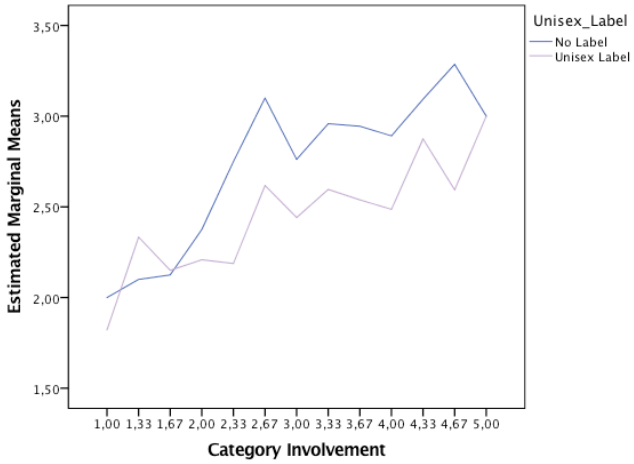


Figure 11 - Estimated Margin Means for Purchase Intention

Hypothesis 3

H0 = familiarity with unisex products is not a crucial factor in order for consumers to purchase a unisex product

Ha = familiarity with unisex products is a crucial factor in order for consumers to purchase a unisex product

Looking at the last research question, the purpose here is to understand, in more detail, how familiarity with unisex products affects consumers' purchase intention and to test whether this variable is a crucial factor in order for consumers to be interested in purchasing unisex products overall.

Starting with the effect of familiarity on purchase intention, it can be then seen that familiarity, as well as category involvement, is significantly correlated with the purchase intention ($p=0.01<0.05$) and it has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention. As seen in the previous hypothesis, the sample where was also split in two groups in order to make sure that the effect of familiarity on consumers' purchase intention would be correctly measured and would not be influenced by the purchase intention of the people who didn't see the unisex product. Once

split the groups, it can be seen that the correlation between familiarity and purchase intention for the treatment condition, with the presence of the unisex label, is 0.374.

Looking now at the linear regression conducted in order to measure the impact of familiarity on consumers' purchase intention, it is seen that from every 1-unit increase on familiarity the consumers' purchase intention increase 0.342 on average **(for further information see Appendix 21 and Appendix 22).**

Purchase Intention = 1.666 + 0.342 Familiarity

Moving on to the hypothesis itself, where is the goal is to test whether consumers with high familiarity with unisex products can be more willing to purchase unisex products than consumers with low familiarity but high category involvement, a two-way ANOVA was conducted.

For that, familiarity was recoded into a categorical variable and was split into 3 levels: low familiarity, medium familiarity and high familiarity. The assumption here is that individuals with a familiarity average comprehended between 1 and 2 (inclusive) will be considered to have low familiarity; individuals with a familiarity average comprehended between 2 and 4 will be considered to have medium familiarity; and individuals with a familiarity average comprehended between 4 and 5 (inclusive) will be considered to have high familiarity. Once recoded the variable familiarity, the same was done for category involvement, giving origin to 3 other levels: low category involvement, medium category involvement and high category involvement.

Following that, the sample was split once again in two groups (label and no label) and the differences on the purchase intention means for low, medium and high familiarity and for low, medium and high category involvement were observed in the treatment condition: unisex label presence.

Observing the results from the ANOVA, it can seen that there are significant differences in the purchase intention between low and high familiarity ($p=0.000<0.05$), between low and medium familiarity ($p=0.034<0.05$) and between medium and high familiarity ($p=0.022<0.05$). On the other hand, when observing the differences in the purchase intention means between the different levels of category involvement, it can be seen that there are significant differences between low and high category involvement ($p=0.028<0.05$). The differences in means are, however, much bigger between the levels of familiarity than between the levels of category involvement. On average, a consumer with high familiarity is expected to have a purchase intention higher in

1.1164 than a consumer with low familiarity. One the other hand, a consumer with high category involvement is expected to have a purchase intention higher in 0.5625 than a consumer with low category involvement (for further information see **Appendix 23**). Therefore, a consumer with high familiarity with unisex products is expected to have a higher purchase intention for that unisex product than a consumer with high category involvement.

Furthermore, as shown in **figure 5,** a consumer with low familiarity is expected to have a low purchase intention, independently of the its category involvement level (2.31-2.06=0.25), whereas a consumer with high familiarity shows a much higher purchase intention (3.25-2.06=1.19), that increases even more with consumers category involvement. A consumer with low familiarly and high category involvement in this sample showed a purchase intention on average of 2.31, whereas a consumer with high familiarity and low category involvement showed a purchase intention on average of 3.25.

It is important to highlight however that the Homogeneity of Variances assumption was reject, ($p=0.013<0.05$), showing that the error variance for the dependent variable is not equal across groups.

Therefore, the null hypothesis is **rejected**.

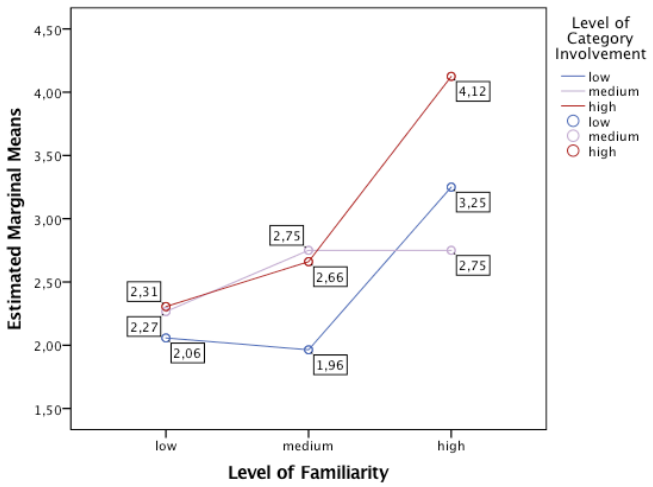


Figure 12 - Familiarity level vs. Category Involvement

4.3. Results Discussion

As seen in the previous chapter, it is clear that labels can be a strong source of information for consumers, influencing the product perception and affecting consumers' final decision. If this wasn't the case, consumers wouldn't be affected by the presence of the label on the cosmetic packaging and wouldn't demonstrate different levels of purchase intention based on that, as seen in the study. Therefore, findings seem to be quite consistent with Hoyer and Brown's predictions about the consumer evaluation of the product. The same can be said for the influence of familiarity with unisex products on consumers' purchase intention. As seen in the literature review, consumers with high familiarity with a certain product category or brand will feel more confortable with their choice than consumers that never bought or have seen the product before. The risk of buying an unknown product, that consumers never heard of, is then, much higher in a condition of no familiarity than in a condition of familiarity, which makes the willingness to try or buy a cosmetic product higher for familiar products than unfamiliar ones (Christie and Klein, 1995). This may explain why consumers with low familiarity with unisex products showed low purchase intentions for the product presented in the experiment part. It's important to highlight that most consumers in this study showed low familiarity with unisex products (familiarity is on average 2.33 and just 11.5% of the consumers should to be active buyers of unisex products).

In the same line of thought, the influence of category involvement on the purchase intention is also consistent with what was discussed in the literature review. As Phelps and Thorson (1991) have shown, consumers with high involvement are more easily influenced and persuaded by product categories they more feel involved with, than product categories they have no involvement at all. As much as the two variables have an effect on consumers' purchase intention, it is proved, however, that familiarity with unisex products is more important for consumers, when buying a unisex product, than their involvement with the product category (PI unisex product with label = 1.232 + 0.153 Category Involvement + 0.319 Familiarity) (for further information see **Appendix 24**).

Although the results go in accordance with some of the studies done in the past, it is important to highlight that, due to the violation of some of the ANCOVA assumptions, the results might not be completely reliable. To make sure that this is true and to understand the consequences of these violations, the violated assumptions were analyzed more carefully. When looking at the Homogeneity of Regression Slopes, it can be seen that the assumption is not met for familiarity

in the control condition, where no label is shown. A possible reason for this violation might be the fact that familiarity is not a relevant variable for the decision-making in each one of the conditions. While familiarity with unisex products might be an extremely relevant factor in order for consumers to want to buy a unisex product in the treatment condition, the same does not happen in the control condition, where consumers are not aware of the product as being unisex. Therefore, the variable familiarity cannot have the same effect on the purchase intention in both conditions, since it is not present in the two of them.

This might also explain why the Linearity Assumption might not have been met for familiarity in the control condition. The no linearity between category involvement and purchase intention, in the treatment condition, might be explained, on the other hand, by the fact that once the variable familiarity with unisex products is introduced, consumers' involvement with the product category becomes less important for the purchase decision. Therefore, if the assumption is still violated, the results must be close in order to linearity to be assumed.

When it comes to the Normality Assumption, there is prove that the analysis is accurate even thought the data is not normal for the treatment condition. Since the sample size is sufficiently large (n=255), the test is robust to normality and the analysis can be proceed.

Overall, considering the effect of all the variables, unisex label presence (no label, label), category involvement and familiarity with unisex products, on the purchase intention it can be considered the following regression: **Purchase intention** = 1.958 + 0.222 Category Involvement + 0.182 Familiarity - 0.308 Unisex Label Presence (for further information see **Appendix 25**). It is important to mention, however, that the effect of familiarity on the purchase intention is lower in this linear regression than in the linear regression previously shown (exclusively for the purchase of unisex products with a label) because, once again, familiarity is not a relevant variable for the purchase intention in the control condition. Therefore, when making an average of the effect of the familiarity on the two conditions, the coefficient of this variable decreases.

Looking at the results once again, it can be seen that despite unisex labels having a negative affect on consumers' purchase intention, their purchase intentions for the product in both conditions is still medium/low, on average, 2.780 for the control condition and 2.471 for the treatment condition. This shows, apparently, that even without the presence of the unisex label on the product packaging, control condition, consumers are not so interested in the product. It's then important to highlight that the packaging aesthetics of the product, presented to consumers, in the

experiment part, could have affected consumers' purchase intention. As Townsend and Sood (2012) have shown in their previous studies, the attractiveness of a product may influence consumers' judgments of the product and its' attributes. Therefore, a product with a superior design, that meets consumers' preferences, may get a more positive evaluation than a product with a simple design, even though the packaging aesthetics is not correlated, for instance, with the product's quality. Furthermore, as Ahmad et al. have shown, the color, shape and size of the packaging can also be extremely relevant variables for consumers' decision. Therefore, it is possible that some consumers might have been affected by the aesthetics of the product selected for the study, which respectively influenced their willingness to purchase the product. The probability of making this decision based on the product aesthetics is even higher for consumers with low familiarity with the product. As Belch (1982) has shown, consumers with low familiarity with the unisex products are expected to pay more attention to external factors, such as, the packaging. This way, consumers with no experience with unisex products or familiarity with the brand are expected to rely more on the product aesthetics when making their decision, since they have nothing else in which to rely on.

Another factor that could have potentially decreased consumers' purchase intention is the expected quality of the unisex products. As seen in results section, 28.2 percent of the people, who said they wouldn't purchase the unisex product, identified the uncertainty of the product's quality as one of the main reasons. Moreover, when observing the means for the expected quality of unisex products and their actual quality, it can be seen that consumers' expected quality (mean=3.28) is lower than the actual quality (mean=3.49), according to the ones who have tried unisex products before.

Moreover, when comparing the purchase intentions between men and women, it can be seen that the purchase intention for the product does not change with gender. This means, that the differences in the purchase intention between the control group and the treatment condition are, in fact, due to the presence of a unisex label and not due to men and women's different reaction to unisex products. Therefore, it can be concluded that gender is not a moderator of consumers' purchase intention. It can be seen, however, in this study, that more men have tried unisex products before than women. This can be possibly explained by Rook and Hoch's study (1985), that shows that men are usually more likely to shop for functional products, while women are more likely to shop for product aesthetics. This way, if the quality of the product is good, is likely

to see more men interested in unisex products than women. It important to highlight that, in this study, both men and women evaluated the product's quality, durability and packaging aesthetics, in an equal manner.

Last but not least, it is extremely important to highlight the fact that the results obtained in this study are only reliable for the purchase intention of facial creams (skincare products). To have a better understating about the overall effect of the presence of unisex labels on the cosmetics' packaging, other studies with different cosmetic products, such as perfumes, lipsticks or even shampoos, should be run. Otherwise, it is impossible to extrapolate the results to all the different product categories.

5. CONCLUSION

With this study it was possible to conclude that the presence of unisex labels on cosmetics' packages has, in fact, a negative effect on consumers' purchase intention. Companies that identify their products as unisex, using a unisex label, see therefore a decrease on their sales, since consumers' purchase intention tends to decrease. As a result, the usage of a unisex label creates a big disadvantage for companies working in the cosmetic industry. Moreover, as seen in the literature review, it was possible to conclude that consumers' familiarity with unisex products and category involvement has also an effect on consumers' purchase intention, a positive effect. This way, consumers with high familiarity with unisex products and high category involvement are expected to have a higher purchase intention for that product. Even though, both variables might increase consumers' purchase intention, it can be seen, in the results section, that consumers' purchase intention for the product presented to them, in the experiment part, is quite low, on average 2.780 for the control condition and 2.471 for the treatment condition. A possible reason for the low interest in the product might be, however, the uncertainty about the product's quality, with the idea that different skin types must required different products for different needs, or simply the packaging aesthetics, which might not be sufficiently attractive for some consumers that look for something more elaborated and with a "expensive" look. Furthermore, despite both familiarity with unisex products and category involvement being relevant factors in order for consumers to want to purchase unisex products, it can be seen that familiarity is even more important than consumers' category involvement. Therefore, consumers' high involvement with a certain category doesn't mean, per se, higher purchase intention. On the other hand, a consumer with high familiarity with unisex products, who knows close friends or famous people that also purchase these products, is expected to show higher purchase intention. This means then that category involvement is an additional variable in order to increase consumers' purchase intention for neutral gender products. The main variable is, however, familiarity with unisex products. Looking now, in particular, at participants' familiarity with neutral gender products, it can be seen that both men and women are equally familiar with these products, despite their familiarity, as seen before, being low.

Overall, consumers are more willing to try unisex skincare products, unisex toiletries and deodorants and unisex haircare products than unisex perfumes, clothes or makeup. It is important to highlight that when it comes to unisex product categories, men seem to be more willing to try

unisex haircare products than women, while women seem to be more willing to try unisex perfumes, clothes and makeup products than men. Moreover, although the purchase intention does not change with gender, it can be seen that more men have tried more unisex products in the past than women. This might show that male consumers could be more interested in these products than female consumers. On the other hand, when looking at consumers' age, it can be seen that consumers over 35 years old seem to show more interest in unisex products than young consumers.

Therefore, it can be concluded that neutral gender products have an opportunity in the cosmetic industry. The fact that consumers show interest in unisex products, being willing to try or buy them, is actually a positive aspect for companies working with unisex products. Moreover, the fact that consumers feel confused with the number of product alternatives in the market, only reinforces this idea that there is a gap in the market that could be potentially filled by unisex brands. It is necessary, however, to make sure that consumers are aware of these products, knowing people that used them, and to reinsure that these products' quality is as good as any other product, if not, even better. This message is a must if unisex companies want to get into the market.

5.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Its important that before launching a unisex product in the market, companies are aware of what consumers like, what they consider most important in cosmetic product in terms of quality, durability and packaging aesthetics, where they purchase cosmetics and who influences more their final decision. Therefore, after this research, it would be recommended for companies to focus more their attention on male consumers with more than 35 years old, since 70.5 percent of the men showed interest in unisex products, and people over 35 years old showed more interest in purchasing unisex products (roughly 80 percent of the participants older than 35 years old showed to have bought an unisex product at least once). When it comes to the category, it would be recommended for companies to focus more on categories which most men prefer, this would be then haircare products (mean= 3.30) followed by skincare products (mean=3.16). For the female consumers, it would be recommended for companies to focus more on launching first toiletries and deodorant (mean=2.99) and then skincare products (mean=2.89). Since both men and women are willing to try unisex skincare products, it would be recommended then for companies to focus their attention especially on this category since it can satisfy both genders.

Moreover, since both men and women consider dermatologists' opinion extremely important when choosing a cosmetic product, it would be recommended for companies to get dermatologists' support, making them explain to consumers the difference between man and woman skin and the advantages of using a unisex product made special for a person particular needs. The message should be then spread on social media and published in multiple journals and beauty care magazines, creating awareness for neutral gender products and reinsuring consumers about the high quality of unisex products, which will reduce the overall uncertainty around these products and the lack of familiarity consumers have with it. As concluded, familiarity with unisex products is an extremely relevant factor in order for consumers to be interested and to be willing to buy neutral gender products. Moreover, when it comes to the social media platforms, it might be a good idea to use youtubers or bloggers in order to get females' attention. On the other hand, when it comes to men, this approach might not be the best, since men seem to care less about youtubers or bloggers' opinions.

In order to know exactly how the packaging should look like, in terms of shape, color and size; which person should be selected for the marketing campaign (consumers' aspirations, idols, etc.); and where the product should be sold, more research would need to be done. It is suggested,

however, that independently of the product composition or the packaging characteristics, unisex products don't have a unisex label on the packaging. This way, they might attract also the attention of consumers that are not interest at all in unisex products.

5.2. LIMITATIONS

Looking now at the limitations, it can be seen, first, that the results and the conclusions obtained in this research can only be applied to this context in particular, with this product category and this packaging. In any other situation, where the product category or the packaging is different, results may also differ, influencing whether the presence of unisex labels affects or not consumers' purchase intention. Therefore, a more elaborated packaging, presented to consumers in the experiment part of the survey with more color and a pattern, such as followers, might attract more consumers' attention and increase their purchase intention, than a simple and white packaging. The idea that the packaging aesthetics can be a limitation, in this case, comes from consumers' lack of attractiveness to the product presented to them and the usage of the term "poor" by some in order to classify it.

Analyzing more carefully the experiment itself, it is also possible to see that some consumers might not even have paid attention to the unisex label present on the cosmetic, expressing therefore their purchase intention only based on the product aesthetics. In order to make sure that consumers have actually seen the label and made a decision based on that, it would be necessary to have a question at the end of the experiment part, after measuring consumers' purchase intention, where consumers would be asked about what they have seen before. Only this way, it would be possible to confirm that unisex labels actually affect consumers' purchase intention and that the difference in results actually comes from the presence of the unisex label on the cosmetic packaging. The same happens with the product category, since it was presented to consumers only in the product description, it is possible that some consumers might have seen it, while others didn't. This means that the consumers, who didn't see it, didn't feel more or less involved with the product category and didn't show their purchase intention with that in mind. It is possible then, that in another situation, where everyone knows the product category, the involvement with category might be lower or higher and the results obtained in the purchase intention might be more or less significant or not significant at all.

Finally, since the survey had to be launched online for the second time, mainly due to a Qualtrics' error, it is possible that some participants might have answered the survey twice. This makes the survey not 100 percent reliable since some of the answers could have been biased.

The first survey stayed online from April 28th to May 2nd and collected approximately 134 complete answers and 57 incomplete answers.

5.3. FURTHER RESEARCH

Looking at the further research, it would be suggested for companies to test how consumers react to different packaging designs, with different colors, sizes and shapes. Therefore, a similar study must be done, where the different packages are shown to consumers and their purchase intention for each package is measured. Only this way, it would be confirmed if the packaging aesthetics really influence consumers' purchase intention.

In the same line of thought, in order to understand exactly how consumers react to different unisex categories, it would be important to test consumers' purchase intention for different product categories, such as, shampoos, body lotions or even facial creams, measuring then consumers' involvement with each category and their respective purchase intentions. It is important that despite the product category, all the packages have a similar design in order to control for differences in product aesthetics, that might influence, once again, consumers' decisions. After that, the purchase intention means should be then compared.

Moreover, it would also be important to see how people's needs and interests change according to the country where they were born and their culture, this is, if they change at all. Portugal, for instance, is known for its traditional mindset. According to the Hofstede's theory, the country clearly shows a clear high preference for uncertainty avoidance. With such a high score on the Uncertainty Avoidance dimension (99 score), the country is then expected to be less open to new ideas and disruption, opting for something safe that involves less risk. Therefore, new products or concepts might not be so easily accepted by the Portuguese market as in other countries, requiring some more time in order for consumers to get used to them. Since the sample in this research was, in particular, mainly Portuguese, it is then important to reproduce this study in other countries in order to understand how people react to neutral gender products and if their willingness to use unisex products change with their culture.

Finally, in order to target the right consumers in the more efficient way, it would be recommended for companies to another research, where they analyze more carefully consumers' lifestyles and their purchasing habits, such as, the place where they buy unisex products (if in physical stores or online stores). A cluster analysis should be then made. In the same line of thought, it would be interesting to see how consumers expect unisex products to look like. People that are willing to buy a unisex product might expect the product to look in a certain way or to look differently.

6. APPENDIX

6.1. Results

6.1.1 Sample Characteristics

Appendix 1

Table 1 – Sample distribution per Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Male	64	23.9
Female	194	76.1
Total	255	100

6.1.2. Consumers' perception about Cosmetics

Appendix 2

Table 2– Descriptives

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Male	61	2.3607	0.87833	2.1357	2.1357	2.5856	1.00	5.00
Female	194	2.3299	0.06187	2.2079	2.2079	2.4519	1.00	5.00
Total	255	2.3373	0.05411	2.2307	2.2307	2.4438	1.00	5.00

Table 3- Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Levene Statistic	df1	Df2	Sig.
0.394	1	253	**0.531**

Table 4 - ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.044	1	0.044	0.059	**0.809**
Within Groups	189.619	253	0.749		
Total	189.663	254			

Appendix 3

Table 5 – Cosmetic Characteristics

	Product Quality	Product Durability	Packaging Aesthetics
Mean	4.4980	3.8745	2.6745

Appendix 4

Table 6 – Test of Homogeneity of Variances

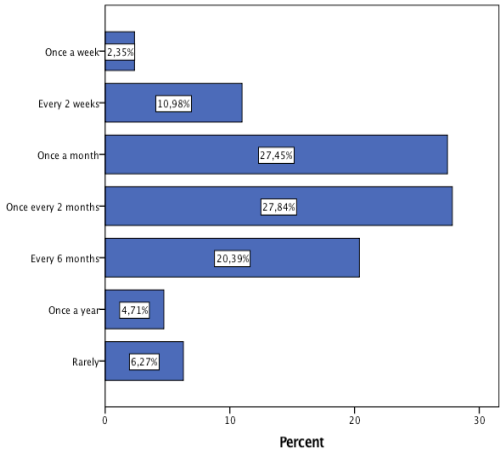
	Levene Statistc	df1	df2	Sig.
Importance Product's Quality	0.014	1	253	**0.906**
Importance Product's Durability	2.369	1	253	**0.125**
Importance Packaging Aesthetics	0.516	1	253	**0.473**

Table 7 – ANOVA (Gender on the relevance of the product characteristics)

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Importance Product's Quality	Between Groups	0.041	1	0.041	0.075	**0.784**
	Within Groups	137.708	253	0.544		
	Total	137.749	254			
Importance Product's Durability	Between Groups	1.163	1	1.163	1.494	**0.223**
	Within Groups	196.822	253	0.778		
	Total	197.984	254		0.816	
Importance Packaging Aesthetics	Between Groups	0.814	1	0.814		**0.354**
	Within Groups	239.171	253	0.945		
	Total	239.984	254			

Appendix 5

Figure 1 – Frequency of cosmetics purchase



6.1.3. Consumers perception about Unisex Products

Appendix 6

Table 8 – Descriptive Statistics

Dependent Variable: Familiarity

Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Male	2.3807	0.87833	61
Female	2.3299	0.86177	194
Total	2.3373	0.86412	255

Table 9 – Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

Dependent Variable: Familiarity

F	df1	df2	Sig.
0.394	1	253	**0.531**

Table 10 – Tests of Between – Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Familiarity

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power
Corrected Model	0.044[a]	1	0.044	0.059	0.809	0.000	0.059	0.057
Intercept	1021.032	1	1021.032	1362.318	0.000	0.843	1362.318	1.000
Gender	0.044	1	0.044	0.059	**0.809**	0.000	0.059	**0.057**
Error	189.619	253	0.749					
Total	1582.667	255						
Corrected Total	189.663	254						

a. R Squared = 0.000 (Adjusted R Squared=-0.004)

Appendix 7

Table 11 – Ever bought a Unisex Product

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	99	38.8	38.8	38.8
Yes	156	61.2	**61.2**	100.0
Total	255	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 8

Table 12 – Frequency of Purchase

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Rarely	77	30.2	**49.4**	49.4
Once a year	13	5.1	8.3	57.7
Every 6 months	26	10.2	16.7	74.4
Once every 2 months	22	8.6	14.1	88.5
Once a month	14	5.5	**9.0**	97.4
Every 2 weeks	3	1.2	**1.9**	99.4
Once a week	1	0.4	**0.6**	100.0
Total	156	61.2	100.0	

Appendix 9

Table 13 - Unisex Product Real vs. Expected Quality

		Unisex Product Quality	Unisex Product Expected Quality
N	Valid	156	99
	Missing	99	156
Mean		**3.4295**	**3.2828**

Appendix 10

Table 14 – Crosstabs Gender and the purchase of a Unisex Product

			Gender		
			Male	Female	Total
Have you ever bought a Unisex Product?	No	Count	18	81	99
		% Within Gender	29.5%	41.8%	38.8%
	Yes	Count	43	113	156
		% Within Gender	70.5%	58.2%	61.2%
	Total	Count	61	194	255
		% Within Gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Appendix 11

Table 15 – Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Purchase Intention

Levene Statistc	df1	df2	Sig.
1.643	1	253	**0.201**

Table 16 – ANOVA (Gender on Purchase Intention)

Purchase Intention

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.811	1	0.811	1.191	**0.276**
Within Groups	172.156	253	0.680		
Total	172.967	254			

Appendix 12

Table 17 – Crosstabs Age and purchase of a Unisex Product

			Under 18	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	Total
Have you ever bought a Unisex Product?	No	Count	2	83	12	1	1	99
		% Within Age	40%	40.9%	32.4%	20.0%	20.0%	38.8%
	Yes	Count	1	120	25	4	4	156
		% Within Age	60.0%	59.1%	67.6%	80%	80.0%	61.2%
	Total	Count	5	203	37	5	5	225
		% Within Age	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

6.1.4. Hypothesis Testing

a. Hypothesis 1

i. ANOVA test (without covariates)

Appendix 13

Table 18 – Tests of Between- Subjects (dependent variable: familiarity)

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power
Corrected Model	0.603[a]	1	0.603	0.807	0.370	0.003	0.807	0.146
Intercept	1392.336	1	1392.336	1863.227	0.000	0.880	1863.227	1.000
Unisex Label	0.603	1	0.603	0.807	**0.370**	0.003	0.807	0.146
Error	189.060	253	0.747					
Total	1582.2667	255						
Corrected Total	189.663	254						

a. R Squared = 0.003 (Adjusted R Squared = - 0.001)

Appendix 14

Table 19 – Tests of Between-Subjects (dependent variable: category involvement)

	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power
Corrected Model	0.035[a]	1	0.035	0.031	0.861	0.000	0.031	0.053
Intercept	2569.332	1	2569.332	2250.875	0.000	0.899	2250.875	1.000
Unisex Label	0.035	1	0.035	0.031	**0.861**	0.000	0.031	0.053
Error	288.795	253	1.141					
Total	2863.889	255						
Corrected Total	288.830	254						

a. R Squared = 0.000 (Adjusted R Squared = - 0.004)

ii. Assumptions:

Normality Assumption:

Appendix 15

Table 20 – Case Processing Summary

		Valid		Missing Cases		Total	
	Unisex Label	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Purchase Intention	No Label	134	100.0%	0	0.0%	134	100.0%
	Unisex Label	121	100.0%	0	0.0%	121	100.0%

Table 21 - Tests of Normality

		Kolmogorov - Smirmov			Shapiro - Wilk		
	Unisex Label	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Purchase Intention	No Label	0.084	134	0.021	0.984	134	**0.132**
	Unisex Label	0.086	121	0.030	0.972	121	**0.013**

Homogeneity of Regression Slopes Assumption:

Appendix 16

Table 22 – Tests of Between-Subjects effects (interactions)

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	32.444[a]	5	6.489	11.496	0.000
Intercept	38.365	1	38.365	67.980	0.000
Unisex Label	1.657	1	1.657	2.937	0.088
Category Involvement	12.888	1	12.888	22.838	0.000
Familiarity	5.014	1	5.014	8.885	0.003
Unsex Label*Familiarity	4.346	1	4.346	7.700	**0.006**
Unisex Label*Category Involvement	1.011	1	1.011	1.791	**0.182**
Error	140.552	249	0.564		
Total	1941.250	255			
Corrected Total	172.967	254			

a. R squared = 0.188 (Adjusted R Squared=0.171)

iii. ANCOVA Test Results

Appendix 17

Table 23 - Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

F	df1	df2	Sig.
2.372	1	253	**0.125**

Table 24 – ANCOVA Tests of Between-Subject Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Square
Corrected Model	27.434	3	9.145	15.772	0.000	0.159
Intercept	35.873	1	35.873	61.870	0.000	0.198
Category Involvement	14.094	1	14.094	24.308	**0.000**	0.088
Familiarity	6.190	1	6.190	10.676	**0.001**	0.041
Unisex Label	6.016	1	6.016	10.375	**0.001**	0.040
Error	145.533	251	0.580			
Total	1941.250	255				
Corrected Total	172.967	254				

a. R Squared = 0.159 (Adjusted R Squared = 0.149

Appendix 18

Table 25 – Purchase Intention Estimated Means

			95 % Confidence Interval	
	Mean	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
No Label	**2.780**[a]	0.066	2.650	2.909
Unisex Label	**2.471**[a]	0.069	2.335	2.608

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: CI = 3.1778; Familiarity = 2.3373

Table 26 – Pairwise Comparisons

					95 % Confidence Interval	
(I) Unisex Label	(J) Unisex Label	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
No Label	Unisex Label	**0.308**	0.096	0.001	0.120	0.496
Unisex Label	No Label	- 0.308	0.096	0.001	- 0.496	- 0.120

b. Hypothesis 2

Appendix 19

Table 27 - Correlation between Category Involvement and Purchase Intention (Control Condition)

		Purchase Intention	Category Involvement
Purchase Intention	Pearson Correlation	1	**0.386**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**0.000**
	N	134	134
Category Involvement	Pearson Correlation	**0.386**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**0.000**	
	N	134	134

Appendix 20

Table 28 – Coefficients Linear Regression (Category Involvement)

Coefficients [a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	Constant	**1.904**	0.190		10.021	0.000			
	Category Involvement	**0.273**	0.057	0.386	4.810	**0.000**	0.386	0.286	0.386

a. Unisex label =No label; Dependent variable = Purchase intention

Purchase Intention = 1.904 + 0.273 Category Involvement

c. Hypothesis 3

Appendix 21

Table 29 - Correlation between Familiarity and Purchase Intention (Treatment Condition)

		Purchase Intention	Familiarity
Purchase Intention	Pearson Correlation	1	**0.374**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**0.000**
	N	121	121
Familiarity	Pearson Correlation	**0.374**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**0.000**	
	N	121	121

Appendix 22

Table 30 – Coefficients Linear Regression (Familiarity)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	St. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	Constant	**1.666**	0.200		8.331	0.000
	Familiarity	**0.342**	0.078	0.374	4.397	**0.000**

a. Unisex Label Presence = Unisex Label
b. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Purchase Intention = 1.666 + 0.342 Familiarity

Appendix 23

Table 31 – Multiple Comparisons Category Involvement Level

(I) Category Involvement Level	(J) Category Involvement Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper bound
Low	Medium	- 0.4401	0.19831	0.072	- 0.9112	0.0309
	High	- 0.5625*	0.21653	**0.028**	- 1.0768	- 0.0482
Medium	Low	0.4401	0.19831	0.072	- 0.0309	0.9112
	High	- 0.1224	0.16429	0.737	- 0.5126	0.2678
High	Low	**0.5625***	0.21653	0.028	0.0482	1.0768
	Medium	0.1224	0.16429	0.737	- 0.2678	0.5126

Table 32 – Post Hoc Test (Familiarity Level)

(I) Level of Familiarity	(J) Level of Familiarity	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Low	Medium	- 0.3814	0.15044	**0.034**	- 0.7387	- 0.041
	High	- 1.1164	0.26903	**0.000**	- 1.7554	- 0.4774
Medium	Low	0.3814	0.15044	0.034	0.0241	0.7387
	High	- 0.7350	0.27317	**0.022**	- 1.3839	-0.0861
High	Low	**1.1164**	0.26903	0.00	0.4774	1.7554
	Medium	0.7350	0.27317	0.022	0.0861	1.3839

6.1.5. Regressions and Correlations

Appendix 24

Table 33 – Regression[a] (Unisex Product)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	Constant	1.666	0.200		8.331	0.000		
	Familiarity	0.342	0.078	0.374	4.394	0.000	1.000	1.000
2	Constant	**1.232**	0.278		4.437	0.000		
	Familiarity	**0.319**	0.077	0.348	4.124	**0.000**	0.981	1.019
	Category Involvement	**0.153**	0.069	0.187	2.211	**0.029**	0.981	1.019

a. Unisex Label = Unisex Label; Dependent Variable = Purchase Intention

Purchase Intention = 1.232 + 0.153 Category Involvement + 0.319 Familiarity

Appendix 25

Table 34- Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Collinearity Statistics		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	Constant	1.888	0.155		12.153	0.000		
	Category Involvement	0.234	0.046	0.303	5.056	0.000	1.000	1.000
2	Constant	1.529	0.193		7.910	0.000		
	Category Involvement	0.221	0.046	0.286	4.823	0.000	0.991	1.009
	Familiarity	0.172	0.057	0.180	3.037	0.003	0.991	1.009
3	Constant	**1.958**	0.232		8.446	0.000		
	Category Involvement	**0.222**	0.045	0.287	4.930	**0.000**	0.991	1.009
	Familiarity	**0.182**	0.056	0.190	3.267	**0.001**	0.988	1.012
	Unisex Label	**-0.308**	0.096	-0.187	-3.221	**0.001**	0.997	1.003

a. Dependent Variable = Purchase Intention

Purchase intention = 1.958 + 0.222 Category Involvement + 0.182 Familiarity - 0.308 Unisex Label Presence

Appendix 26

Table 35 - Correlation between Familiarity, Category Involvement and Purchase Intention (Sample)

		Purchase Intention	Familiarity	Category Involvement
Purchase Intention	Pearson Correlation	1	**0.207**	**0.303**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		**0.001**	**0.000**
	N	255	255	255
Familiarity	Pearson Correlation	**0.207**	1	0.096
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001		0.128
	N	255	255	255
Category Involvement	Pearson Correlation	**0.303**	0.096	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.128	
	N	255	255	255

6.2. Questionnaire

Appendix 27

Q2 "Cosmetics are all products which protect, cleanse, adorn and perfume the human body, and combat body odor and perspiration" Butler, H. (2013)
"Cosmetics include a) facial treatment and body care products, which is provided by creams, emulsions, lotions, gels, oils, lipsticks, face masks and anti wrinkle products;
b) personal hygiene products, toilet and deodorant soaps, bath and shower preparations, deodorants and antiperspirants, depilatories, shaving creams and gels, after-bath powders, hygienic powders, makeup cleansers, teeth and mouth care products and hair cleansers; and also c) sun screens and related products" Analysis of Cosmetic Products (2011)

Q3 How important are **cosmetics** in your life?

	Not at all Important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely Important
	1	2	3	4	5
Importance of Cosmetics					

Q4 How often do you **buy cosmetics**?

- ○ Rarely
- ○ Once a year
- ○ Every 6 months
- ○ Once every 2 months
- ○ Once a month
- ○ Every 2 weeks
- ○ Once a week

Q5 Which **product categories** would you say that you ***buy the most***?

Rank the following options
_____ Makeup
_____ Skincare
_____ Haircare
_____ Perfumes
_____ Toiletries and Deodorants
_____ Oral Cosmetics

Q6 How would you measure the following **product characteristics** according to their **importance** for you when buying a cosmetic product?

	Not at all Important 1	2	3	4	Extremely Important 5
Product Quality					
Product Durability					
Packaging Aesthetics					

Q7 How influential are the following people in your decision-making?

	Not at all Influential 1	2	3	4	Extremely Influential 5
Family					
Friends					
Youtubers					
Sales People					
Bloggers					
Dermatologists					
Hairdressers					

Q8 How likely are you to **look for different products** when you go shopping?

	Extremely Unlikely 1	2	3	4	Extremely Likely 5
Look for different products					

Q9 How likely are you to try different products?

	Extremely Unlikely 1	2	3	4	Extremely Likely 5
Try different products					

Q10 How do you feel about the following statement?

"I often **get confused** with the number of product alternatives when I'm shopping"

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	Strongly Agree 5
Feeling Confused					

Q11 Please pay attention to the information that will be shown next.

Q12 – Control Condition

FIX has been gaining fans everywhere in the world since it first was launched in 1932. More recently, its market share has increased by 7.2%.

The following product is a daily Facial Cream. It hydrates skin, giving it a firmer structure and youthful glow. It also improves skin elasticity and inhibits damaging free radicals.

The product is suitable for all skin types.

Q13 – Treatment Condition

FIX has been gaining fans everywhere in the world since it first was launched in 1932. More recently, its market share has increased by 7.2%.

The following product is a daily Facial Cream. It hydrates skin, giving it a firmer structure and youthful glow. It also improves skin elasticity and inhibits damaging free radicals.

The product is suitable for all skin types.

Q14 Given the previous product description answer the following questions

---

Q15 How attracted are you to this product?

	Not at all Attracted			Extremely Attracted
	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Attraction					

Q16 How likely are you to try this product?

	Extremely Unlikely			Extremely Likely
	1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood of trying					

Q17 Would you **purchase** this product?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

Q18 How likely are you to purchase this product now?

	Extremely Unlikely				Extremely Likely
	1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood of Purchasing					

Q19 How likely are you to purchase this product **in the future**?

	Extremely Unlikely				Extremely Likely
	1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood of Purchasing					

Q20 How excited do you feel about the possibility of using a **Facial Cream**?

	Not at all Excited				Extremely Excited
	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Excitement					

Q21 How would you measure your level of interest in Facial Creams?

	Not at all Interested				Extremely Interested
	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Interest					

Q22 How would you measure your level of involvement with Facial Creams?

	Not at all Involved			Extremely Involved
	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Involvement					

Display This Question:

If Would you purchase this product? = Yes

Q23 For which **reasons** would you ***buy*** this product?

- ☐ "Familiar with the product"
- ☐ "Want to try something new"
- ☐ "Want to try something different"
- ☐ "Involved with the product category"
- ☐ "Product's good quality"
- ☐ None of the previous reasons
- ☐ Other _____

Display This Question:

If Would you purchase this product? = No

Q24 For which reasons would you ***not buy*** this product?

- ☐ "Not familiar with the product"
- ☐ "Afraid about what others can say" (e.g. family and friends' opinion)
- ☐ "Unsure about the product's quality"
- ☐ "Don't need this product now"
- ☐ "My skin type requires special products"
- ☐ None of the previous reasons
- ☐ Other _____

Q25 How **familiar** are you with **Unisex Products**?

	Extremely Unfamiliar 1	2	3	4	Extremely Familiar 5
Familiarity					

Q26 How much do you know about Unisex Products?

	Know nothing about 1	2	3	4	Know extremely well 5
Knowledge					

Q27 How would you measure your level of interaction with Unisex Products?

	Very Week Interaction 1	2	3	4	Very Strong Interaction 5
Level of Interaction					

Q28 Have you ever **bought** a *Unisex Product*?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

Q29 How likely are you to try the following Unisex Products?

	Extremely Unlikely 1	2	3	4	Extremely Likely 5
Perfumes					
Clothes					
Makeup					
Skincare products					
Toiletries and Deodorants					
Haircare products					

Display This Question:

If Have you ever bought a Unisex Product? = Yes

Q30 How often do you **buy** *Unisex Products?*

- ○ Rarely (1)
- ○ Once a year (2)
- ○ Every 6 moths (3)
- ○ Once every 2 months (4)
- ○ Once a month (5)
- ○ Every 2 weeks (6)
- ○ Once a week (7)

Display This Question:

If Have you ever bought a Unisex Product? = Yes

Q31 How would you classify the **quality** of the *Unisex Product(s)* that you bought?

	Extreme Low Quality				Extreme High Quality
	1	2	3	4	5
Unisex Product Quality					

Display This Question:

If Have you ever bought a Unisex Product? = No

Q32 How do you expect a Unisex Product's quality to be?

	Extreme Low Quality 1	2	3	4	Extreme High Quality 5
Expected Quality of a Unisex Product					

Q33 Do you think Unisex Products should be identified (e.g. Unisex Label, displayed in different shelves)?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

Q34 Gender

- ○ Male
- ○ Female

Q35 Age

- ○ Under 18
- ○ 18 - 24
- ○ 25 - 34
- ○ 35 - 44
- ○ 45 - 54
- ○ 55 - 64
- ○ 65 - 74
- ○ 75 - 84
- ○ 85 or older

Q36 Which **country** are you from?

▼ Afghanistan (1) ... Zimbabwe (205)

Q37 What best describes your Marital Status?

- ○ Single
- ○ Married
- ○ Other
- ○ Prefer not to say

Q38 Thank you for your participation!

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