



Gendered Marketing Strategy in Personal Care

Sharon Michelsson

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences

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Author(s)

Sharon Michelsson

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Gendered marketing is a strategy directed towards a specific target group of consumers defined by their gender. It's a way of segregating a variety of individuals to a single category of people based on being male or female. Throughout the years, personal care products like shampoos and razors have been distinctly marketed for a certain sex. In personal care industry, female directed products tend to be more expensive and have more diversity in selection compared to men which indicates that businesses find women to be a more profitable source of income.

The purpose of this study is to understand how gendered marketing strategy works in the personal care industry and to what extent its approaches are relevant to this day by inspecting existing marketing methods, theories and previously made studies related to the subject on differences between personal care consumer attitudes and purchase behaviour in men and women.

The theoretical framework is followed by a personal care survey that was conducted online between October 12 and November 2 of 2021. The survey provides an appropriate method to support a generalized outcome through numerical data of the current state of which men and women as consumers stand on in the personal care industry. It is a quantitative research comprised of 12 questions answered by 51 male and female participants over the age of 18. For generalization purposes, the survey was not limited to a geographical location nor a sociocultural sorting.

The research concludes that there are similarities between the male and female gender on certain preferences related to personal care products, but not enough to form a union. As supported by the theoretical framework, men and women have primarily different purchasing behaviours and details which they pay attention to when contemplating on buying a product.

The findings of the research emphasizes the importance of extensive market research on a target group for a personalized customer experience to ultimately gain customer loyalty and increase sales. The study is beneficial for businesses which use gendered marketing in the personal care industry to reflect on the latest developments such as the growing market of male consumers and a shifted mentality of the female generation which might find marketing with stereotypical assumptions of gender unappealing.

Keywords

Gendered marketing; Marketing strategy; Market research; Gender segmentation; Pink tax; Product packaging

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1 Introduction

Gender segmentation in marketing can be dated back to the 20th century. During this time gender-specific colors were introduced to the public by businesses. Colors were associated with attributes that were considered either feminine or masculine as a marketing tactic to increase sales. This led people in believing that there was significance in differentiating colors according to attributes which are conventional to a certain gender. Today, colors are considered to be a strong figure of expression. (Bhattacharjee January 2018.)

As we are encouraged more than ever to celebrate individuality and freedom to breakout from traditional mindset on gender roles, social concepts, in spite of that, integrate slower in the market and with additional caution. Instead of businesses introducing direct assumptions to customers like before, the public is more prone to critical thinking and setting boundaries to companies for what is acceptable. A faulty stance, as a consequence, could destroy completely a brand's image. If a brand severely misunderstands its audience, there is only a slight chance for revival. What does this mean in gendered marketing?

1.1 Objectives and aim

The purpose of the thesis is to conduct a research on gendered marketing in personal care industry by comparing and analysing consumer behaviour between the male and female gender. The aim is to challenge whether today's strategy in gendered marketing is comprehensive and relevant to this day in personal care industry by answering the following questions: Why is gender-based marketing implemented and how is it profitable? What strategic possibilities are there in the personal care industry for gendered marketing? Which factors should be focused on to increase sales and what influences the purchasing decision of females and males in terms of personal care products?

This thesis is a study which can be utilized for educative purposes by business students, graduates and professionals of leading positions in the marketing field through inspecting, for example, how market research is conducted and to encourage innovative thinking and solutions when planning a marketing strategy. The goal is for professionals from all fields from any business industry which use gendered marketing to gain insight on new perspectives concerning the topic and challenge their biases to comprehend customers in a more dimensional manner.

The thesis includes a brief summary of basic marketing strategy principles and models of theories which can be applied in marketing to understand consumer behaviour better. The learning outcomes of this thesis includes basic knowledge of the following: marketing

strategy, gendered marketing, challenging traditional marketing methods and models, conducting market research via survey and analysing data and outcomes by inspecting information from different sources.

1.2 Structure and approach

The thesis is research-oriented and begins with an introduction of the topic and why it should be additionally researched on. The introduction includes objectives and aims in which the purpose of the thesis will be further explored with the help of research questions, and to whom it will benefit. Followed by structure and approach, the arrangement of the thesis is presented briefly and explained more detailed on what type of approach is used to justify and solve the research questions, as well as delimitations.

The framework introduces concepts and previous studies on the thesis topic which are gathered from external outlets such as an article, video, book, and statistic to review previously made research and data for the basis of the current research and comparison between the old and the new information.

Moving onto the data, the survey is explored through visual graphs. The results are summarized and analysed on reflections which consists of a brief outline on the reliability and validity of the outcome, conclusions, possibilities for improvements of gendered marketing in the personal care industry, and overall evaluation of the thesis.

1.3 Methodology

The method of quantitative research for this report is implemented through a survey in order to get a rough insight of the consumer behaviour for the personal care industry market. A survey provides the surveyor space for creativity to personalize questions with desired objectives for a detailed research. It is an effortless method to filter answers of respondents by their respective categories, such as their gender, and compare the results between each other.

For example, to get an accurate depiction of the general standpoint of each gender, specific questions about the respondents such as country of origin was not asked for this thesis, and all answers remained anonymous for a fair analyzation of results without the need for unnecessary reflection of cultural differences. Additionally, a survey is an inexpensive and convenient method to gather data from an intended target group in a way which protects the respondents' identities for better engagement.

In this thesis, conducting a survey through Webropol permits easy access for respondents to fill the survey by clicking on the shared link which immediately directs the respondent to the survey site. The simplistic design of Webropol helps both the surveyor and the respondent to navigate and operate the tool. Moreover, a surveyor is able to use advanced settings for a more intricate survey depending on their technological experience and knowledge.

1.4 Delimitations

The study is limited to genders identified by their biological characteristics as male or female. It will not separately distinguish gender fluidity as the research is based on the psychology of two opposite genetical compounds. As mentioned earlier, the survey is based on a universal observation of consumer behaviour rather than geographical location or cultural identity to form a general picture. The participants of the survey are derived from various social media platforms in which it has been shared further. The survey depends on the participants' honest answer and has not been individually supervised.

In terms of personal care products, household items like dental care and sunscreen are not focused on in the general study as dental hygiene and UV-protection are marketed less gender-specific as opposed to, for example, a shampoo which is specifically targeted to either the male or female gender. It is, however, considered as an opportunity to expand the market. The study will also not focus on juxtaposing brands for competition but exploring different combinations of methods for improved solutions in gendered marketing.

2 What is marketing strategy?

In order for any business to flourish, marketing strategy is an essential stage for success. If done accordingly, a business is able to build a solid foundation of tactical building blocks which unravel key actions needed to achieve in order to support the goals and visions of a business. By completing the process, a business should be able to assess their value, find out their positioning in the market and appeal to their targeted audience.

Marketing strategy is a long-term plan of action with the intent of gaining customers for a business's products or services. It's an advantage which purpose is to claim dominance over competitors by offering a value proposition through effective communication. A profound strategy comprises of product, price, place, and promotion. (Barone August 2021.) The previously mentioned elements are best familiarized with the term marketing mix by E. Jerome McCarthy (Cohen July 2021). Below is a simplified figure briefly defining the fundamentals of the following four factors:

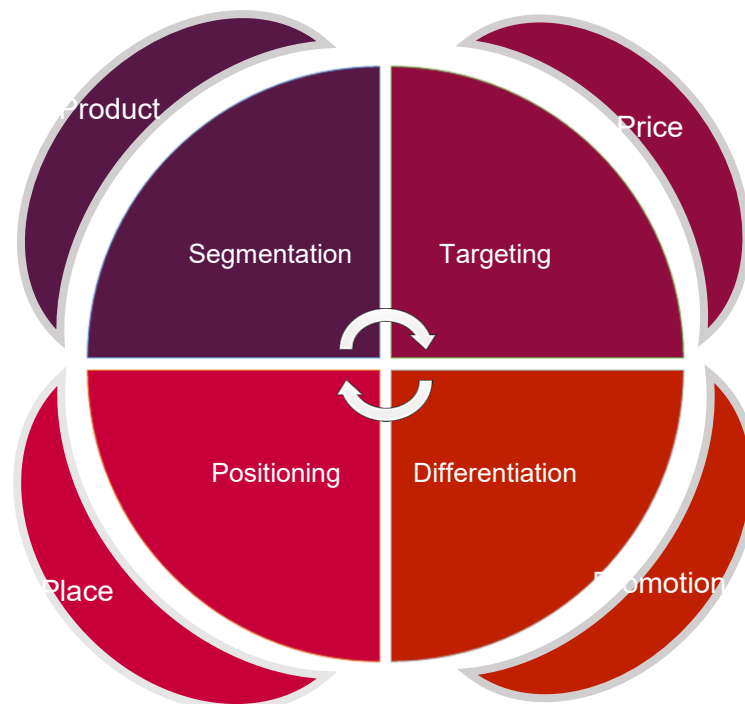


Figure 1. The Marketing Mix (adapted from Kotler & Armstrong 2018, 74)

With multiple competitors, and different strategic models to use in the market, the 4 Ps offer a traditional reflection for businesses to exploit. Especially in gendered marketing, businesses have to consider every aspect with both genders in mind with following questions: How is the brand perceived? What kind of packaging do products use? What kind of products are available, and how much variety is there?

Other things to consider are whether the pricing is fit (see more on chapters 2.3 “Price determination” and 3.1 “Pink tax”) and through what mediums consumers are reached and promoted to. In summary, to determine profitable marketing strategies in the personal care industry, the principles of marketing strategy need to be broken down to the four main concepts of marketing mix and analysed.

2.1 Brand image and identity

Brand image is an interpretation of a customer to what they associate the brand with (Pahwa August 2021). Brand identity refers to the visual elements used to distinguish the brand by aspects such as colour, design, and logo (Tarver July 2020). These are two separate terms which can easily be confused with each other.

As an example, Lumene, a Finnish skincare and cosmetics brand is considered to be a local, high-quality beauty brand with natural ingredients. As for identity, they use light colours in packaging, mainly white and blue which can be associated with the Finnish flag or the Finnish winter represented by white snow and clear, blue sky.

The brand name Lumene has received meaning from the Latin word “lumen” which means light (Helsinki This Week 2018). Symbolically, the colour white is often coupled with purity (Wolchover September 2011). Since Lumene strongly portrays itself with clear imagery of purity, light and nature, customers are more susceptible to link the concepts to the brand and its products. Through brand identity, a brand is able to influence the direction of their brand image.

2.2 Brand marketing

Brand marketing is a form of strategy with the aim of engaging with customers to gain a loyal-based relationship. The goal is to develop a recognizable and a memorable brand identity and image through brand awareness. (Bynder 2020). Brand awareness can be achieved by marketing. This way, the brand has an opportunity to increase exposure and stability in the market.

For instance, NIVEA is a German owned personal care company manufactured by Beiersdorf (Thomasson October 2021). They produce toiletry products such as lotions, deodorants, shower gels and lip balms. In Finland, these products are seen on a daily basis in the local supermarket shelves with specialized selection for both men and women. It's a prominent brand which can be detected from not only the presence on physical stores, but also from statistics. Globally, NIVEA ranks 28th in brand popularity (Kantar Worldpanel

2021). In 2021 the value of the brand was estimated to be a little over 6 billion U.S. dollars (Ridder 2021). This converts to roughly around 5.1 billion euros.

In 2002 NIVEA for MEN launched a campaign to appeal the male target group ages 18-35 by giving the opportunity for treatments such as facials using their products from the men's line on campaign trailers. The trailers were planted to stadiums during sports events and malls in which men were provided small entertainment through games, television and magazines. The campaign was so successful, it ran the following year. (Campaign 2003.)

NIVEA was able to successfully reach their target group by tracking their location based on interest and offering them a unique and memorable opportunity by tackling pain points such as stress and product education at a fitting environment with practical service. This genius marketing tactic gives the impression of made effort to build an intimate relationship between the brand and customer. Studies have shown that brands which invest their time to bond with their customers have an increased annual return rate compared to others which don't put as much effort (Moodie May 2015).

By this experiment, the following can be observed:

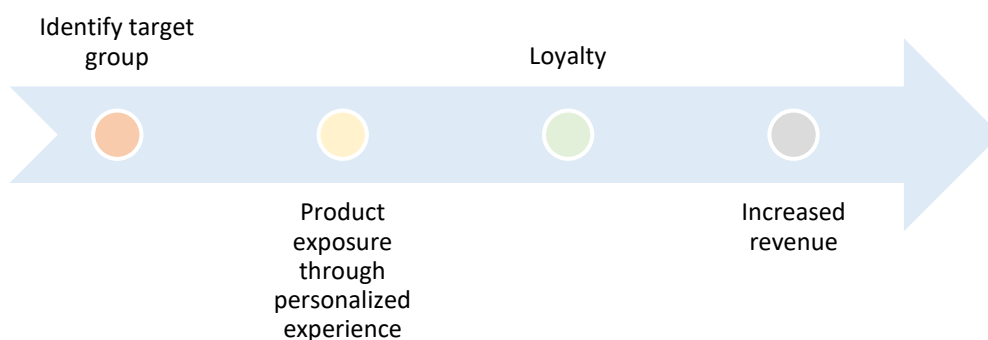


Figure 2. An analysis based on the NIVEA for MEN campaign in 2002

Through extensive market research, the brand was able to provide a pleasant encounter accustomed to the assumptive preferences of their target group. For consumers, personalized experience has become the standard (Bump March 2021). In other words, consumers expect brands to adjust marketing according to their interests. Studies have proven that a brand's personalized experience for a customer can influence to a higher rate of revenue (Epsilon 2018). If the experience received is satisfying, consumers are inclined to being loyal to the brand (Campos February 2021).

2.3 Price determination

A market price is the amount of money which is transacted between a buyer and the seller (The Money Hans 24 October 2018, min. 0:22–0:27). There are two different approaches to determine price. Price can be set by either a constructed or perceived value of a party.

In cost-based pricing, price is weighed according to the manufacturing cost. Companies then establish the value of a product or service which they persuade to the customer. This occurrence is familiarly known as value proposition. As an alternative, in value-based pricing a service or product is driven by an existing value of the customer and heavily comprises of consumer demand. (Wolters March 2020, min. 0:06-3:03.)

Furthermore, a customer's perception on a product's value can be influenced by its price. For example, a slight shift in selling price can indicate in contrary courses the exclusivity of a product. In other words, dependent on how a customer regards exclusivity, a selling price can either increase or decrease a customer's desire to buy something. (Pathak February 2021). In this regard, price is relatively subjective.

2.4 Importance of product packaging

Packaging is the visual casing of a product that usually incorporates informative text such as ingredients and the purpose and benefits of the product. Having said that, there is a limited time window for a packaging to entice the customer. As claimed by Stephenson (November 2016), "A typical television ad has 15-30 seconds to capture attention. A print ad has 3-5 seconds, however your packaging has less than 2 seconds to capture your shopper's attention".

According to research, a little over half of the participants were willing to invest slightly more on a product if the packaging is pleasing to them. A good packaging has the potential to capture the essence of a product and persuade the consumer to buy it. It preserves the quality and appearance of the product as well as distinguishes it from other goods. (Iermolaieva July 2017.)

With many alternatives to choose from, packages are customized to attract a shopper and intensify their need to buy a product. It has the potential to represent the brand in a positive light and support its values such as being environmentally friendly by being made out of reusable material. Its functionality also includes keeping the product safe and secured from different circumstances such as transportation and heat (Tiuttu January 2020). In personal care items, products usually contain a safety seal or similar measurements to prevent bacteria from contaminating the content itself.

3 Gendered marketing in retrospect

Based on years of scientific investigation, intrinsic variances in the male and female brain have been brought to light. In one of the studies concerning monkeys and infants, both male and female chose to play with toys that were more conventional to their gender. Additionally, consistent studies of similar behavioural differences between the male and female brain have been detected. (Goldman May 2017.) In gendered marketing, this could implement some basis for men and women falling into a certain stereotype.

According to Zbooker (November 2019), gendered marketing is relevant to products which revolve around the notion of masculinity and femininity. In his article, Zbooker suggests that companies which overlook this aspect, are going to eventually wither away. As an example, he compared Gillette, a successful personal care company, which centres its strategy around making profit from the differences between men and women.

In spite of this, recent studies have shown that assuming gender stereotypes, especially for women, can have an adverse marketing effect even if it is associated with positive attributes. The reason lies behind women often being conceptualized unfavourably. (Gerde-man April 2020.) Men, in the other hand, are more troubled about products which are perceived as feminine (Morgan July 2011).

3.1 Pink Tax

By definition, Pink Tax is a term used for gender-centric products in which the female alternative is strategically priced slightly higher than the male counterpart despite of the functionality remaining the same. Female products are often marketed with conventionally feminine exterior such as a stereotypical pink packaging or a corresponding style. Although the cost of production might not necessarily nor significantly differ from the male counterpart, businesses are ultimately selling an abstract vision of segregated superiority.



Figure 3. A depiction of Pink Tax in the form of toothpaste

According to Consumer Reports (January 2010) female products can rate up to half as much additional cost than products directed to men. Unlike in the U.S., personal care items in Finland tend to be in the same price range for both men and women. However, 3-in-1 products are more commonly marketed for the male counterpart. In this case, men are able to walk away from the local grocery store with a single bottle of cleansing multi-purpose formula meant for hair, body and face. Women, on the other hand, are often required to purchase a separate container for shampoo, conditioner, face wash and body soap in order to gain an equivalent benefit.

How is Pink Tax viable? Meagher (March 2019) suggests that brands consider women to be more price-conscious in terms of prices. In other words, they are less likely to solely base their decision on the cost of a product whereas men are the opposite. Horwitz (May 2015) claims, "Things are valuable to us because we believe, for whatever reason, that they will contribute to the satisfaction of our various ends". He adds that the reason behind price variation may be due to women placing more value on different elements in a product in comparison to men who might be more indifferent towards a certain scent or feature.

In conclusion, women are led to believe that they require additional necessities to maintain a good physical appearance and hygiene whether that would be in the shape of a pink razor with a moisturizing strip or separate bottles for shampoo and conditioner. Men aren't as selective in contrast to women who are more precise about what they want from a product (see more detailed explanation on chapter 3.2 "Consumer behaviour in purchasing process and its significance").

3.2 Consumer behaviour in purchasing process and its significance

According to University of Sydney (June 2021), men tend to weigh on a solution between two extremities of a spectrum rather than from the middle as opposed to women in terms of decision-making. This indicates that men consciously obliterate other alternatives when finding an outcome. In this case, women have more options to choose from.

While shopping, men prefer an effortless, quick experience and perceive the process of purchasing a product as an assignment rather than an opportunity to being persuaded from their initiative objective. Women, instead, require a more hedonic approach from products which trigger their emotions and challenge their expertise in comparing different choices and possibilities for the most satisfying outcome. (Zoovu October 2015.)

Consumer behaviour is not only influenced by biological tendencies, but environmental and social factors as well. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, people have become more

aware about the significance of maintaining good hygiene in order to fight against the virus which, in return, has increased the demand for personal care products (Dhingra June 2021). Not only do personal care products offer safety from germs, but they also hold another purpose of making consumers feel and look good.

In order to ensure the success of a product, companies should pay attention to consumer's buyer behaviour. By understanding the purchasing process of a consumer, businesses are able to market their product in an efficient and favourable way that benefits both the business and the consumer.

3.3 Market size in personal care industry

The market for men's personal care is estimated to grow to 75.8 billion U.S. dollars by the year 2027 (Research and Markets May 2021). That is equivalent to 66.2 billion euros. While there isn't a separate global statistic for women, the overall personal care industry in 2021 is valued at 229 billion U.S. dollars, which is approximately 200 billion euros, according to Statista (2021). This indicates that women currently dominate the personal care industry market as customers.

One of the contributing factors to the growth of men's personal care industry is changed priorities in the past generations. For instance, in modern day, having a disease has no longer the same amount of concern for men as it had before. The main predicament lies within mental health, specifically stress, which companies are able to take advantage as a pain point in terms of health-conscious marketing. (Reviere July 2020.) For example, grooming can be seen as a form of self-pampering to relieve stress.

Grooming, in itself, has been relevant to humans since early civilization (Braun May 2019). It is a familiar concept to the society. So, what other explanations are there for the growth of the personal care industry market in the 21st century?

Firstly, economic growth is a large aspect of any current market. People are able to spend more money due to higher income and standard of living. Furthermore, modern technology has given the access to connect with brands and influencers on an intimate level through social media. Grooming with different products from the market has become a more informative practice and with beauty operations becoming mainstream and less of a taboo, personal care products seem to be a less drastic option in terms of payment and overall commitment to improve and maintain appearance.

4 Survey on personal care

The purpose of the quantitative research is to compare results of the personal care survey between the male and female gender and to investigate the following:

- What is the spending relation for personal care products?
- Where do respondents purchase their products from?
- Which personal care product holds the most value for respondents?
- Which factors makes a consumer purchase a product?
- How important is physical appearance and what factors influence it?
- What is the significance of packaging?

The survey is a brief questionnaire designed to get a general picture of current gendered consumer behaviour in the personal care industry. Its aim is also to challenge the possibility of conflicting results with reference to the theoretical part of the thesis which consists of previous made research and theories about the theme. The end of the chapter includes a summary of the data and the next chapter 5 "Reflection" addresses an overall evaluation of gendered marketing both in general and specified to the personal care industry based on the findings of the survey.

4.1 Implementation and data

The survey was conducted online through Webropol. All of the answers are anonymous. Respondents were required to be 18 years or older and were demanded to identify themselves in the beginning of the survey as either male or female. The physical location of respondents was not tracked as mentioned earlier on the subchapter 1.3 "Delimitation".

Overall respondents were 51 altogether over the course of few weeks. Respondents had to answer 12 questions related to personal care. The survey takes on average a few minutes to respond and it was forwarded by friends, family and acquaintances through personal LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp.

After closing the survey, the answers of the survey were filtered by gender on Webropol and exported as two separate pdf-files for both male and female respondents. The data was then transformed to graphs by their respective category on Excel. The graphs in this survey, formed by the respondents, are by statistically in relation to their own gender.

4.2 Background and spending habit

The number of respondents of the survey was 33 for women and 18 for men. The median age for male respondents was 29.5 years of age and for female 26.8 years of age.

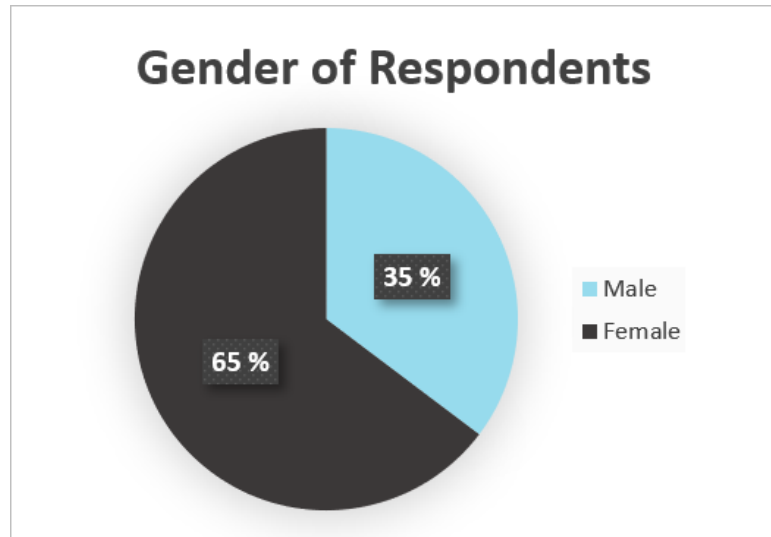


Figure 4. A pie chart representing the respondent division for gender

All females were either students or employed. To be exact, 57.6% of the female respondents were students whereas 42.4% were employed. For male respondents 38.9% were students and 44.4% were employed. In male respondents 5.6% was unemployed and 11.1% retired. This occurrence wasn't relevant in the female respondents.

In terms of income, the top three sources that were common for both men and women were (in order): job, government aid and savings. Because the source of income for job was a significantly higher percentage than the overall employed respondents, it meant that despite most of the respondents being full-time students, they had to work part-time as well. The survey did not allow respondents to choose more than one full-time occupation and it did not include multiple choices such as being a full-time student and working part-time.

On the last portion of the survey, respondents were asked how many euros they spend monthly on personal care products. Respondents had to choose a value between 0 to 1000 euros. The interval between the next value of choice was by 5 units. On the synopsis of the portion, Webropol automatically calculated the median value for money spent and listed the minimum and maximum values for both male and female respondents. Men, on average, spent 63.9€. The minimum value spent was 5€ and maximum was 250€. Women, on the other hand, spent on average 98.1€ in which 10€ was the minimum value and 655€ was the maximum value.

The products for personal care were purchased by men 94% through grocery store, 33% cosmetics store and 22% from online store. By women, on the other hand, products were mainly purchased from cosmetics store (61%), followed by the grocery store (55%) and lastly from online store (39%). This was a multiple-choice option.

4.3 Personal care relevance for men and women

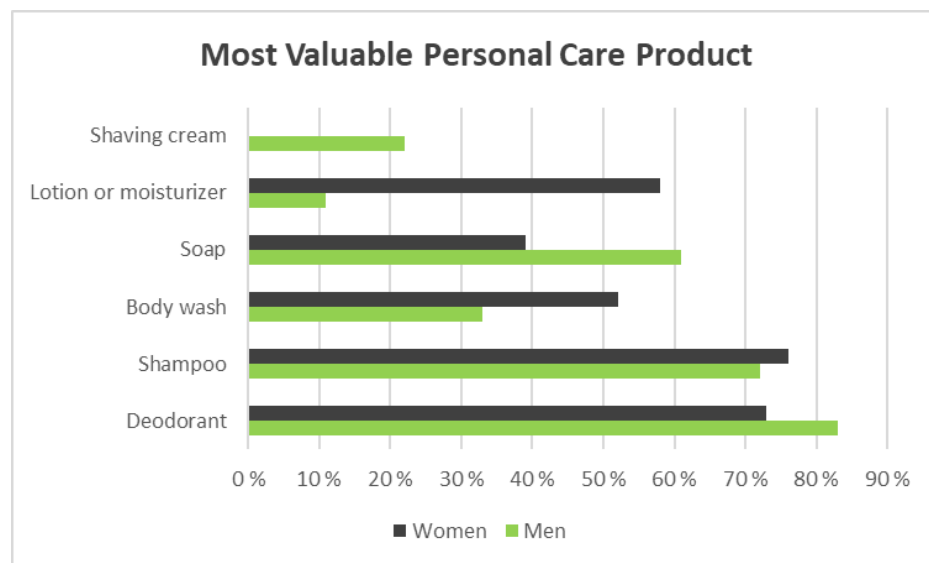


Figure 5. A bar comparison of most valuable personal care products

The decimals of this portion were rounded to the nearest 10 from the Webropol analytical data of “Most valuable personal care products”. The above graph includes the top five most valuable personal care products for each gender. Shaving cream was included in men’s top five, but there were no statistics found from women. Lotion, in the other hand was in the top five for women, but only a little over 10% men chose it as valuable. Respondents were able to choose maximum four answers. Other options available were cologne, perfume, lip balm, facial cleansers, exfoliators and face masks.

In terms of purchasing a product, respondents had to choose one answer which affects their purchase decision the most. For both men and women, overall value was most important. For packaging, values were found solely from men and none from women.

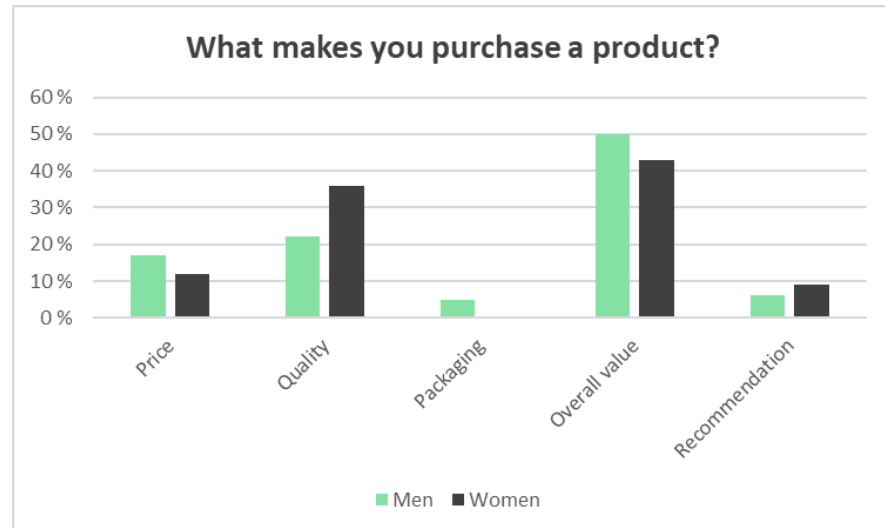


Figure 6. A chart on factors which makes respondent choose a product

Next, respondents were asked to rate on the scale of 1-10 on how important their physical appearance is to them. The decimals were rounded to the nearest 10 from the Webropol analytical data of "How important is your physical appearance?". Not important signified rates from 0-6, important 7-8 and very important 9-10.

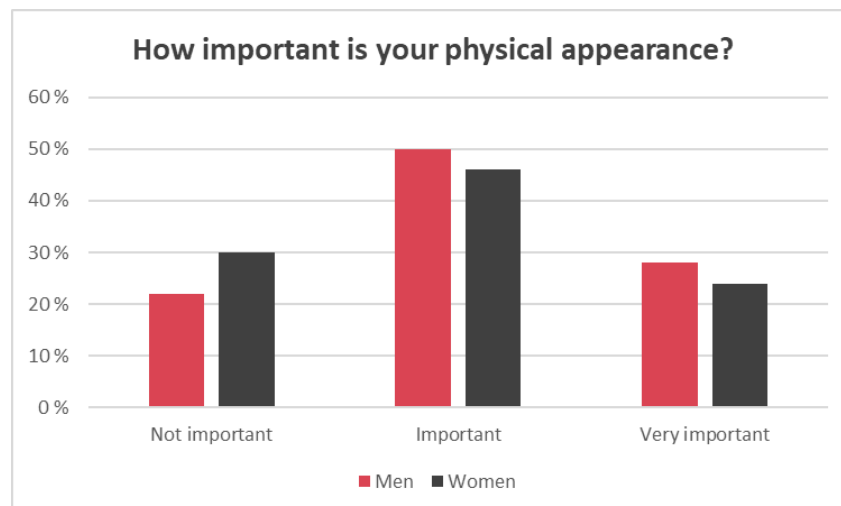


Figure 5. A bar comparison of the importance of physical appearance

Respondents were then required to rank how much influence the following factors have on their appearance: friends, family, social media influencers, celebrities, movies and tv shows, commercials and ads, magazines, news outlets, blogs or no influence. The overall choices to choose in this category were 9 and respondents had to rank them from first to last (1-9). Respondents were able to use a number once. If the choice wasn't relevant to respondents, they were permitted to leave it out from the rank. Respondents had to rank at least once.

In terms of quantity the three most chosen answers for men were friends (13). The next was a tie between family, celebrities, and movies and tv shows (12). The highest influence, depicted by rank number 1, was marked equally between friends, family and movies and tv shows (3). The second highest influence, depicted by rank number 2, was celebrities (4).

In terms of quantity the three most chosen answers for women were friends (26), family (25) and blogs (24) of which 13 people chose an influence of more than 5, meaning not so important but still considered to influence on some level. The highest influence, depicted by rank number 1, was noted on friends (6) and no influence (6). The second highest influence, depicted by rank number 2, was blogs (5) and family (4).

4.4 Packaging

With the previously familiar method in physical appearance, respondents had to rate on the scale of 1-10 on how important packaging was for them. The decimals of percentage were rounded to the nearest 10. Not important included rates from 0-6, important 7-8 and very important 9-10. Very important indicated that an unpleasant packaging would be the main reason whether a respondent would or wouldn't purchase a certain product. The graph indicates that women found packaging to be less significant as opposed to men.

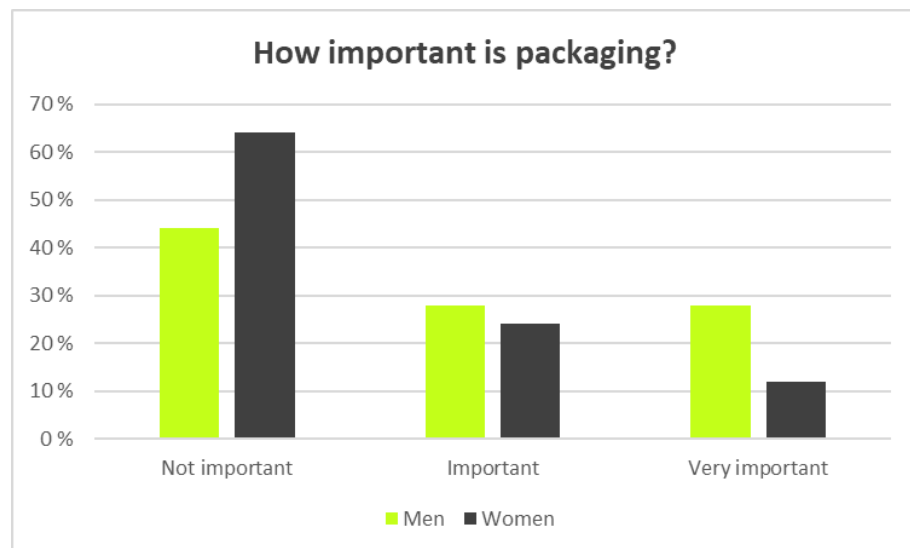


Figure 6. A bar comparison on the significance of packaging

On the next question, respondents were able to choose one colour that was least attractive to them for packaging. The least attractive colours for men were brown, purple and black. For women the two most least attractive colours were pink and brown, followed by a tie between red, purple orange and grey. For women, blue and black received no votes in terms of being least attractive and for men it was orange.

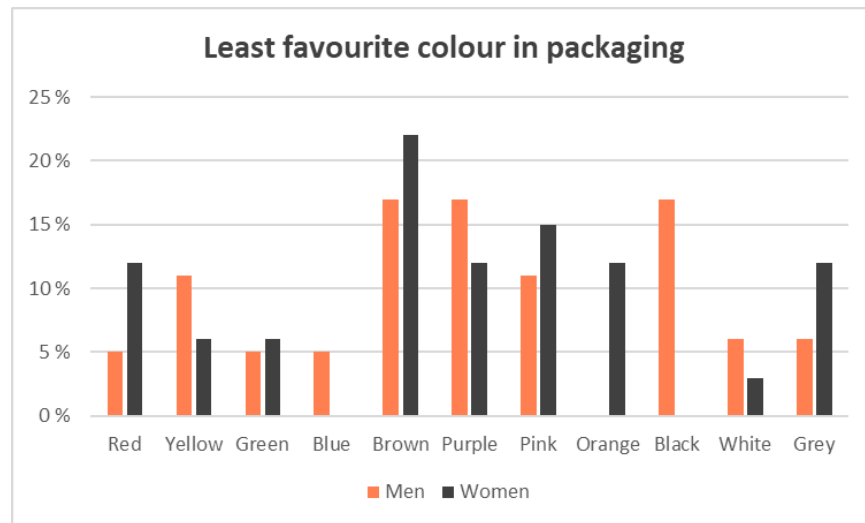


Figure 7. A clustered chart on least favourite colour in packaging

4.5 Summary of results

In summary, the respondents of the survey were mainly women. Male respondents, in comparison, were almost half less in quantity and on average nearly three years older. The median age of participants was mid-to-late twenties. In addition, most men and women of the survey were either students or employed with a stable source of income from either a job or the government aid.

In terms of purchasing, men chose grocery store as the main site to buy their personal care products from. For women, cosmetics store was most popular but only had a 6% disparity from the second favourable option, the grocery store. Both men and women found online store to be the least common choice for purchasing personal care products.

Regarding spending habits on personal care products, women spent on average a little over a third higher than men. The minimum monetary value was also slightly higher, in contrast to men, by 5€. Furthermore, the maximum value for women was almost three times more.

For most valuable product, women considered shampoo to be the highest rank after deodorant. This was the opposite for men. Men also found shaving cream to be valuable whereas no women chose it as one of their fourth options. Women had a higher importance for lotion and moisturizer than men, and men preferred soap better than body wash (which was the opposite for women).

When purchasing a product, the overall value was important for both genders. Women appreciated quality and recommendation more than men. For men, price held a bigger influence and packaging was somewhat important. The latter choice, not being considered by any female participant of the survey.

Generally based on the survey, men found packaging to be more important than women. Both men and women found brown to be the least attractive colour on a packaging followed by pink for women and black and purple for men. This could imply that a neutral colour like brown doesn't stand out enough for men, who are visually motivated when purchasing a product, and the colour purple might be too feminine in a packaging for them.

More women considered physical appearance to not be important at all than very important whereas for men it was the opposite. Yet, both genders considered physical appearance to be fairly important. Concerning influence on their appearance, most men and women agreed on friends as the biggest factor followed closely by family and other media outlets and influencers or no influence at all.

5 Reflection

On chapter 5 “Reflection”, the results and trustworthiness of the survey are analysed in the following two subchapters. In the next subchapter, the survey will be analysed from chosen parts to support the cohesiveness of the research instead of focusing on each outcome separately. The relevant outcomes of the survey will also be mentioned and complemented on the last subchapter before evaluation to avoid repetitiveness and form a thorough conclusion.

The research questions from subchapter 1.1 “Objectives and aims” are answered on subchapters 5.1 “Consideration of results” as well as 5.3 “Development possibilities in gendered marketing”. The latter subchapter in question is an overall conclusion based on the survey and theories combined. Additionally, it suggests different insights for gendered marketing. Finally, subchapter 5.4 “Evaluation” concludes the thesis by a comprehensive evaluation of the entire research.

5.1 Consideration of results

The personal care survey consists of data from male and female individuals mainly between the ages of 25 and 30 who receive annual income from either the government, their job or both. Although statistically, men were in relation to their gender slightly more employed than women, they spent on average a little less than the opposite gender.

Not only does the survey indicate that women are less price conscious, but they also tend to shop explicitly at a cosmetic store rather than the local supermarket which supports the concept of females being more specific about their products and expecting a variety of options before committing to a purchase. Despite men placing appearance as a higher priority to them than women in general, they invest less in monetary value on personal care products and are most comfortable deciding on them at the grocery store which offer more affordable prices and less exclusive choices in comparison to a cosmetic store.

Men are influenced considerably more by packaging and price than women in terms of purchasing a product whereas women focus on quality instead of the cost or appearance. However, despite packaging not being a priority to the female gender, no woman voted for black as being the least attractive colour on a packaging in contrary to brown even though both colours are similarly dark and unnoticeable. This could suggest that women are very meticulous with what they like and a solid colour like black could exceptionally be more aesthetically pleasing to women.

Moreover, the survey shows that most women found pink to be the second least appealing colour on a package. This contradicts the prefatory of “Pink tax” which is vaguely based on having women pay more, for instance, for their personal care products as a result of featuring a gender-specific colour like pink on the packaging. It could insinuate that pink may stand out too much in a packaging for females or be considered as tacky.

Another dissimilarity in men and women can be detected from how differently they value personal care products. In spite of women and men having similar biological obstacles in the hygienic category such as hair and skin, women designated shampoo as a more meaningful product than deodorant, which was the opposite for men. This could be due to men having typically less hair on their head than women. Similarly, with shaving cream facial hair is more common in men rather than women who, additionally, are familiar with other hair removal options such as waxing which is more convenient on the face for the smaller areas.

Because friends seem to have a high impact on the appearances of both men and women, the result indicates that brands should develop a friendship-based consumer-brand relationship. This could improve brand loyalty. By forming a preferable, intimate relationship with a consumer, a brand has the potential to influence how consumers value a brand and its products.

5.2 Trustworthiness of the research

The survey does not represent younger nor older generation of the female and male gender. The age range is quite specific which might alter the overall conclusions for gendered marketing in the personal care industry as a considerable group of end consumers are not considered in the analysis at all. For example, women in their mid-to-late twenties may consider a gender-specific colour such as pink to be a less mature and thus unattractive on a packaging as opposed to teenagers and women in their early twenties.

Furthermore, the comprehension of questions in the survey might have presented confusion as English is not the first language for most of the participants. Another inconvenience could be due to complex instructions and method which participants had to complete in order to finish the survey. These factors could affect the accuracy of answers from the participants. Namely in question seven, few participants reached out to the surveyor for clarification indicating that it was additionally challenging compared to the other questions. Some participants may have decided to struggle on the question by themselves.

Concerning the framework, sources of references might vary in their reliability as some are more credible websites and established than others. The validity of data can be flawed due to the possibility of a biased journalistic approach to the topic and limited in the sense of restricted statistics which require a subscription. The purpose was to find as recent data as possible, but the latest information may vary by years as it seems the topic might be outdated. However, the key points of both old and new information remain aligned with each other and, as a consequence, form a logical outcome.

5.3 Development possibilities of gendered marketing in the personal care industry

Gender-based marketing in the personal care industry is implemented because of how differently men and women essentially perceive value on personal care products. They think and act in a distinctive, separate manner in terms of purchasing. For instance, men are more rational in comparison to women. They are motivated by the price as well as the visual and logical aspects of a product (e.g. focusing on the concrete purpose of a shower gel for certain body parts instead of an abstract concept which trigger emotions like having a holiday theme on the product such as Christmas).

Women are seen as more profitable source of income than men as they have a solid consumer base in the personal care industry by numbers. According to the survey in terms of appearance, they are remarkably influenced by blogs which indicates that women are more familiar with the concept of beauty, health and hygiene as these days blogs have become a platform for influencers to share their lifestyle and knowledge on different expertise such as the previously mentioned concepts.

In addition, women voluntarily choose to spend more money on a product that is aligned with their preferences. For example, although male and female products might be fundamentally the same as demonstrated on subchapter 3.1 "Pink Tax", most women decide on their respective products marketed for them because of a small dissimilarity such as a beneficial oil in a shampoo. They are conditioned to believe by companies and the media that they require specialties, and it seems to work to an extent.

Gendered marketing is a profitable strategy which ultimately sells value differently for men and women. However, there are flaws to traditional stereotypes it utilizes from. For example, based on the survey women are strongly unattracted to a conventionally feminine colour, pink, on a packaging. Furthermore, they dislike the implication of being labelled to a single category, as mentioned earlier in the framework of the thesis, which is why they may regard gender stereotyped marketing unpleasant.

A counteractive solution for women in gendered marketing would be enforcing female empowerment to improve sales as women appear to appreciate being recognized as independent individuals that are capable of choosing for themselves. In personal care industry, this could mean campaigns which promote strength and inner beauty of women with products that also reflect the same values on the outside.

Another strategic possibility to consider in gendered marketing of the personal care industry is marketing products in a neutral way. As men are repulsed by conventionally feminine packaging and for women it may be as much unappealing, a subtle way of gendered marketing could include marketing a product through a psychological preference of a gender. In other words, by marketing indirectly to men and women at a low threshold through different shapes and preferable colours in a package that attract each gender at a subconscious level.

To increase sales, companies in the personal care industry should work on selling value to men. Presently, purchasing products seem to be more of a necessity and a task to men instead of desire. The market for men is constantly growing with extensive potential to be sped up by the appropriate method of marketing. This could be enforced by investigating the interests of men and what they find valuable in personal care products. For example, based on the survey men found shaving cream to be significantly more important than women in general.

Moreover, on the 2002 NIVEA campaign directed to men, the personal care products were directly demonstrated to the target group and given as samples. The products gained a lot of exposure and success. By increasing beauty and health knowledge to men, they might monetarily invest more once they're educated about the practicality and applicative aspects of the product.

Based on the findings of the thesis, gender-based marketing seem to be relevant in the sense that there are fundamental, cognitive differences present between the male and female gender. Companies have used gendered marketing to justify the increasement of price by offering specialized value to women. As the market for men is growing, applying the same concept to men could be a lucrative possibility.

Marketing for a specific gender may trigger an increased response as customers value personalization, but companies have to be cautious of how they approach the matter as a wrong assumption can offend the customer and distance themselves from the brand completely.

5.4 Evaluation

Writing a thesis is a process which helps to mature one's thoughts and knowledge about the topic in question and improve time management. It requires the author to gather information from secondary sources, implement, for instance, a quantitative research through a survey, and form an overall cohesive study with justified arguments to each point presented.

The thesis challenged the author to find credible sources based on the following requirements: a valid date, a possible author, and a clean website. By navigating the webpage, the author was able to evaluate whether it was professional enough. A grammar is a good indication of how reliable a source is as well as researching about the author and inspecting how relevant their background is on the topic they have written. If there were contradictory information on numbers in an article which didn't correspond to credible statistics, the author would exclude the portion out of the research.

For the survey, the author used Webropol for the first time and found it simple to use and extract answers from. After reflecting on the results, the author gained insight on how to conduct a more useful survey for future references (e.g. adding clarifications to answers). The thesis permitted the author to learn new things and make use of knowledge received from her studies. Overall, the research is a spectacular learning experience for the author of a thesis.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Survey Questions on Personal Care

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Specific instructions</i>
1. Which gender are you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male • Female 	
2. How old are you?		
3. What is your occupation status?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Employed • Unemployed • Retired 	
4. Where do you get your income from?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job • Government aid • Savings • Financial aid from family or friends • Retirement 	
5. Which personal care product is most valuable to you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cologne • Deodorant • Lip balm • Lotion or moisturizer • Perfume • Shampoo • Soap • Body wash • Shaving cream • Facial cleansers • Exfoliators • Face masks 	Pick max. 4
6. On the scale 1-10 how important is your physical appearance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 – Not at all important • 10 – Extremely important 	
7. How much influence does the following factors have on your appearance?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friends • Family • Social media influencers • Celebrities • Movies and tv shows • Commercials and ads • Magazines • News outlets • Blogs • No influence 	Rank from first to last in order (1-9). You can only choose 1 number per answer. You can also choose minimum 1 answer to rank or few answers or choose to rank all of them.
8. What makes you purchase a product?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price • Quality • Packaging • Overall value • Recommendation 	

<p>9. On the scale 1-10 how important is the packaging when purchasing a product?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 – Not at all important • 10 – Extremely important 	<p>Extremely important means that an unpleasant packaging would be the main reason whether you purchase or wouldn't purchase a certain product.</p>
<p>10. In terms of packaging which attracts you the least?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red • Yellow • Green • Blue • Brown • Purple • Pink • Orange • Black • White • Grey 	
<p>11. Where do you usually buy your products from?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grocery store • Cosmetics store • Online store 	<p>This is a multiple choice question.</p>
<p>12. How many euros do you spend monthly on personal care products?</p>	<p>13. 0-1000€</p>	