

A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Master Degree in Management from the NOVA – School of Business and Economics.

**Young Adult Brazilian Beauty Consumers' Perception of Lancôme and the Effectiveness of Social Media Relationships with Local Celebrities on their Purchase Intention**

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## **Abstract**

The aim of this research is to evaluate if a premium beauty brand, in this case, Lancôme, can influence positively the purchase intention from Brazilian young adults, between 18 and 29 years old, consumers of beauty products, by initiating a relationship with a local celebrity or “it” girl on social media. This hypothesis has not been tested, and this research is a first attempt of evaluating it. Additionally, the consumer behavior, brand preferences and social media activeness of this age segment in Brazil are further studied as important insights for beauty brands to conquer these consumers. Results did not confirm the positive influence of local celebrities on this age segment’s purchase intention but several suggestions are made for future research to revisit this topic. Furthermore, there is a significant brand love for M.A.C., an international Lancôme competitor, amongst this target, as well as a probable price sensitivity facing premium beauty brands.

**Keywords:** Premium Beauty, Purchase Intention, Brazilian Female Young Adults, Social Media, Local Celebrities, It Girl

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## 1. Introduction

According to Lancôme's CEO (OhMy Luxury, 2014), Lancôme has the goal of expanding the brand's target to a wider population of women, especially younger women. For this purpose, Lancôme has been developing products and recruiting brand ambassadors more adapted to a younger consumer.

Brazil has been a giant in the beauty market, being considered in 2013 as the third biggest beauty market in the world, surpassing China (Vieira, 2013), and has been denominated the 4<sup>th</sup> biggest beauty spender in travel retail by Barbara Lavernos, L'Oréal Luxe Worldwide Travel Retail Director, in 2013 (Davitt, 2013). Therefore, Lancôme and other premium beauty brands should engage younger generations of this country, in order to create a sustainable presence in a market of such importance (Brasil Económico, 2012).

Considered the world's most active social media users (UNWTO, 2013), engaging heavily Brazilian consumers through digital is increasingly more important. Around 54,1% of online users in Brazil are aged between 15 and 34 years old (Comscore, 2013), and thus, a digital-related strategy could be the key for attracting younger consumers.

In the digital world, "it" girls and boys are emerging in social media and in the Internet, who are from actors to models, or maybe purely celebrities, that talk to hundreds of millions of people, from all around the world, instantaneously (Wilson, 2010). Brands can take advantage of their instant influence and inspiration, to introduce themselves in a different way to potential consumers, and maybe influence positively consumers' purchase intention. As there is no previous research about this issue, this study has the purpose to evaluate this strategy. Additionally, it aims to understand better this age segment in Brazil, its relationships with and perceptions of Lancôme and competitors, in order to find a possible way of attracting and turning them into loyal customers.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Lancôme and Target Expansion

Lancôme is a French premium brand of perfumes and cosmetics, acquired by the L'Oréal group in 1964 and present in more than 130 countries. Originally a fragrance house created by Armand Petitjean in 1935, the brand has grown into one of the largest luxury fragrance, skincare and make up companies in the world (Chesters, 2012). As part of L'Oréal Luxe Division, the brand is aspirational and competes in the premium beauty market. Its products are available at department stores, cosmetics stores, travel retail, but also own-brand boutiques and dedicated e-commerce websites. Lancôme states itself as a brand for women, with an optimistic mission - that every woman who comes to Lancôme to be more beautiful, always leaves happier.

The renowned brand has been showing interest in rejuvenating its customer base, without forgetting its main target – women in their 40s. As Françoise Lehmann, Lancôme's CEO, further explained in 2014, “the goal is not to rejuvenate the brand, only to target a wider population of women” (OhMy Luxury, 2014). Through the development of new ranges of products for young people – e.g. Rouge in Love (Weil, 2011) and, more recently, Shine Lover - and by strategically choosing new brand ambassadors that incarnate Lancôme's vision of young women – e.g. Emma Watson (20 years old at the time she was chosen) and Lily Collins (24) – Lancôme has been demonstrating clearly its strategy to expand the target to younger women.

Furthermore, Lancôme has recruited three young female celebrities from Indonesia as its new ambassadors in 2014, in order to boost sales among the country's younger consumers (The Jakarta Post, 2014). Entitled as Lancôme's Mesdemoiselles, these celebrities were picked for their impressive achievements in their respective careers and were introduced in product promotion events and in the brand's Indonesian social media channels. It was clarified by Cláudia Martins, Marketing Manager at L'Oréal Luxe

Division Portugal (2015), that Lancôme, as a premium and aspirational brand, should only represent itself in advertising through internationally renowned celebrities, such as Julia Roberts and Lupita Nyong'o. Therefore, local celebrities can only be introduced in social media and public relations and events, as we can understand by the Indonesian case, in order to reach this younger target.

Roberta Rocha, Lancôme Brazil Marketing Director in 2012, highlighted that sustainability in the medium long run for Lancôme should come from conquering these younger consumers so that they keep using the brand on their 20's, 30's and 40's. The Marketing Director confirmed the success of Emma Watson, one of the recently chosen young ambassadors, in the campaign for Trésor Midnight Rose, in Brazil. It proved how strong an icon for the younger audience can be when presented as a brand ambassador of an aspirational brand as Lancôme (Brasil Económico, 2012).

## **2.2. Brazil's Beauty Market**

Brazil is the world's third largest beauty market, being beaten only by the US and Japan markets and surpassing giants like China. This sector has experienced an 87% growth since 2007 until 2013 (Vieira, 2013) and is expected to grow 23,3% from 2014 to 2019 (**Appendix 2**). Regarding the Premium segment of the beauty market, it is also forecasted to grow by 27,4% until 2019. Thus, Brazil is a decisive market for the world's biggest beauty companies that are facing an economic retraction period in Europe and US markets.

A recognized trend in this market is the advancement of technology. Today's consumers are more aware, always connected, looking for feedback on social media, comparing prices at online stores and purchasing online. Therefore, in Brazil, it is crucial to expand a brand's presence in the digital world, to engage consumers and to emphasize a premium status with over-the-top shopping experience (Euromonitor, 2014).

Brazilian consumers are particularly important for the premium beauty industry in the travel retail channel, being denominated the 4<sup>th</sup> biggest beauty spenders in travel retail by Barbara Lavernos, L'Oréal Luxe Worldwide Travel Retail Director, in 2013 (Davitt, 2013). Duty free stores are the main gate to reach the Brazilian consumer (Fagundes, 2014), because of the current high taxation – Brazil has the second highest tax burden of all the Latin America countries (MercoPress, 2014). Thus, buying duty free beauty products represents an opportunity for Brazilian consumers to acquire international brands without paying the excessive prices that would be charged internally.

Moreover, beauty is a national obsession in Brazil - glorifying the body is an essential value in the Brazilian culture. Therefore, Brazilian women take special care to look beautiful everyday (L'Oréal, 2014). Perfumes and make up are driving the beauty sector, representing 90% of consumer interest (Digital Luxury Group, 2012). Brazilian models are beauty references, but a major influence on women's beauty standards is the celebrities that appear on Brazilian soap operas (or *telenovela*, Emma Hill, 2012).

### **2.3. Beauty Consumers in Brazil**

Canadean (2014) states that the average Brazilian consumer of beauty products is female and young – Brazilian women applied a make up product 24 billion times in 2013, accounting for 85% of all make up applications (against men) and women aged between 16 and 34 carry out 40% of those make up applications.

The major manufacturers are exploring more and more the young segment as its purchasing power is increasing, either because their parents' income increased, or because they enter the job market earlier (Natura, 2007). According to Mintel (2013), consumers aged between 16 and 25 years old were the ones who purchased more beauty products in 2013 (52%). To cater them is more than earning from the moment, it is also a way of building customer loyalty to the brand from an anticipated consumption.

#### **2.4. Lancôme in Brazil and Competitors**

In 2014, Lancôme competed in the Premium Beauty Market in Brazil with a brand share of 3,5%, which has been approximately maintained for the past 3 years (Euromonitor, 2014) (**Appendix 3**). The leaders in the category, with a higher market share than the brand are La Roche-Posay, L'Occitane, Vichy and Carolina Herrera, respectively.

La Roche-Posay and Vichy are brands from the Active Cosmetics Division of the L'Oréal Group, being sold in healthcare outlets worldwide, including pharmacies, drugstores, and medi-spas. L'Occitane is a French brand, focused on natural ingredients, with a main focus on skincare and fragrances. Carolina Herrera is an American brand, focused primarily on fragrances. Christian Dior and M.A.C. premium brands are close to Lancôme in the market, both with a brand share of 3,3% in 2014. Dior, a French luxury brand, and M.A.C., a Canadian brand from the Estée Lauder Group, are renowned international competitors of Lancôme.

Regarding Brazilian previous Lancôme partners, in 2012, Christina Pintanguy, an influential journalist on her 40's, was invited to represent Lancôme's beauty ideal, making appearances in events and social media. Greatly involved in the fashion business, Christina was appointed by L'Officiel French magazine (2015) as one of the 30 world's biggest fashion influencers.

#### **2.5. Young Adults Target and Social Media**

Through the consumer segmentation of the beauty market done by Euromonitor in 2014, we can understand that the young adult age group is set between the ages of 18 and 29. There were around 40 million young adults in Brazil in 2012 (Euromonitor, 2014), and this is one of the largest population groups in the country.

Young consumers are always connected. According to Comscore (2013), around 54,1% of online users in Brazil are aged between 15 and 34 years old. Considered the world's



most active social media users (UNWTO, 2013), engaging heavily Brazilian consumers through digital is increasingly more important.

With the dissemination of the internet, there are characters that arise, who directly influence consumption and fashion trends. These are women and men that attract followers all around the world through social media, by creating styles and references. These called “it” people – mainly “it” girls or their less used counterpart, the “it” boys - also call the attention of companies, as a leverage for the commercial part of the business. The concept of “it” is not recent, as in 1904 Rudyard Kipling had already used it in literature: "It isn't beauty, so to speak, nor good talk necessarily. It's just 'It'" (Wilson, 2010). Nowadays, through blogs and social media, the new “it” girls talk to hundreds of millions of people, from all around the world, instantaneously. Brands can take advantage of their instant influence and inspiration, to introduce themselves in a different way to potential consumers. They can be actresses, models, musicians or any other creative profession or even solely celebrities, with millions of followers online. Literature has defined a celebrity as any individual who enjoys public recognition (McCracken, 1989).

Kapferer (2008) already had affirmed that, for revitalizing a brand, it should be through contacting with opinion leaders and trendsetters in their category, being advertising and innovation not enough – an emotional relationship has to be built. To stay young, a brand must seek trends and behaviors that currently dominate the younger consumer segments, as they are the ones generating customer loyalty in the future.

Taking this into account, and remembering that Lancôme, as an aspirational brand, cannot use local celebrities for advertising endorsement purposes, it could be relevant to partner with local celebrities, or “it” girls”, to promote its products amongst a younger target through social media, another way of endorsement. There were not found

previous studies regarding the influence of these social media connections on purchase intention of a brand's products. Therefore, the main purpose of this research should be to understand if there is indeed a positive influence amongst a Brazilian younger target and, consequently, if a premium brand, in this case, Lancôme, should pick a local "it" girl to endorse the brand through her own social media accounts.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Qualitative Research**

To better understand Brazilian young adult consumers of premium beauty products, the first step was to develop qualitative research. Through this approach, it would be possible to discover more insights about this specific target consumer and its relationship with brands – e.g. Lancôme's competitors specifically for this target - within the industry. The used method were in-depth interviews through Skype calls with female Brazilian premium beauty consumers between the ages of 18 and 29 years old. The in-depth interviews were semi-structured, organized by three major topics: Consumer Behavior, Lancôme's Brand Image and References and Associations with Local Celebrities. Respondents were first asked a broad question, about their consumption of beauty products, after which they would be asked a few more questions according to the main topics, adapted to their own answers. Additionally, there were made some questions with projective techniques towards the brands each respondent mentioned during the interview, to better understand Lancôme's and some of its competitors' brand images. At the end, following the third topic, the respondents were shown a table with several local celebrities, in order to express their opinion about each one, and to give them inspiration to suggest or talk about other local celebrities they remembered and had in mind (please consult the Interview Guide in **Appendix 4**).

The qualitative interviews were made to 7 Brazilian females that matched the required profile: from 18 to 29 years old, premium beauty consumers. The connection to these interviewees was made through acquaintances and relatives online.

### **3.2. Quantitative Research**

Following the qualitative research, it was necessary a quantitative research to confirm some hypothesis resultant from the first and to test the main hypothesis of this paper – if local celebrities are linked with Lancôme on their own social media channels, does it influence consumers' purchase intention towards Lancôme's products?

The method was an online questionnaire that used several insights from the qualitative, mainly the most mentioned brands, besides Lancôme, – Chanel and M.A.C. – and the most well-received local celebrities and considered the better fit with Lancôme – Marina Ruy Barbosa and Sophie Charlotte, both Brazilian actresses.

The questionnaire was developed in the Qualtrics platform and distributed online through facebook. It had 105 valid responses from Brazilian woman between 18 and 29 years old, premium or non-premium beauty consumers. In this case, non-premium consumers were also considered in order to understand some differences between the two types of consumers. However, the main focus would still be premium beauty consumers, as in the qualitative research. These respondents were reached also through acquaintances and social networks. It is divided in 4 phases, besides the filtering and profiling: Social Media Activity, Consumption Patterns, Brand Relationship and Perceptions and the Post Simulation to test the Purchase Intention.

First, respondents have to answer a set of questions that aim to filter the ones that fit the required profile for this study: gender, age, nationality, and, not an actual filter, if they were premium beauty consumers (examples of premium brands were also given). Afterwards, it was developed a 5-point scale to measure the frequency of visit related to 4 popular social networks: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. Additionally, a

4-point scale was developed to measure the amount of beauty brands and celebrities respondents followed in each one of the previous social networks.

Secondly, category preferences and frequency of purchase were measured with a 7-point scale developed with two Marketing experts, lecturers at Nova Schools of Business and Economics, Catherine da Silveira and Luisa Agante. This scale measured the frequency of purchasing, or asking someone to purchase, products from each one of the three categories at study – make up, perfume and skincare – inside Brazil, outside Brazil and airports, and online. These three locations of purchase were considered since Brazilian consumers are important international and online buyers in the premium beauty industry. Adding to this, for each category, it was presented a set of brands asking respondents which ones have they bought in the previous year. The brands presented were chosen based on the qualitative interview insights and included premium and mass brands. Finally, to further analyze price sensitivity amongst respondents, it was also developed with both experts a set of questions where respondents were asked to rank Lancôme, Chanel and M.A.C in terms of choice of purchase, if the three had the exact same price. This ranking was repeated for three types of make up products, for perfume and for skincare.

In the third phase of the questionnaire, in order to evaluate the respondents' relationship and perception of the three brands in study, Brand Popularity was measured with Mishra, Umesh and Stem's Brand Popularity Scale (1993), a 7-point Semantic Differential Scale with 4 parameters. The mean of the scores for each parameter gives the Brand Popularity results for each respondent. Furthermore, the brand image was measured through Aaker's Brand Personality Dimensions (1997), which were complemented with insights resultant from the qualitative. In order to adapt this part of the questionnaire to the study's purpose and previous research, besides merging

qualitative insights, some adjectives used by Aaker's scale were ignored, and it was used a 7-point Likert scale, instead of Aaker's 5-point, as Geuens et al.'s (2009) employed, in order to benefit from higher sensitivity and to offer better discrimination between respondents (Kent, 2007). According to Dawes (2008), with a 7-point Likert scale, respondents are less inclined to tick the middle score as they are given a better variety of answers. This adaptation resulted in 15 parameters available for respondents to evaluate for each brand. The mean of the scores for each parameter gives an evaluation of the brand's image and the consumers' attitude towards the brands, i.e. the greater the mean, the more positive attitude.

At last, Brand Equity was measured through Aaker's scale (1991), which includes 6 parameters to be evaluated with a 7-point Likert scale. Through the mean of these parameters it is possible to evaluate the brand's equity (or value) amongst the target.

Further on, the questionnaire was split into three different stimuli, where respondents were randomly allocated: one featuring Marina Ruy Barbosa's Facebook page, with a post exposing a Lancôme's make up product; another with the exact same situation but with Sophie Charlotte instead; and a third with no celebrity, only Lancôme's Facebook page and a post exposing the same make up product. The make up product chosen was Lancôme's recent Miracle Cushion, a foundation that has potential to attract consumers from the target in study. The three stimuli were developed again with both Marketing experts. Respondents were asked if they recognized the celebrity and, if this was the case, in which social networks they followed them, what product were they exposing in their page, and a general question about their purchase intention after seeing the post: if they felt their will to buy Lancôme's products was lower, the same or higher. Afterwards, in order to get a good measure of respondents' attitude towards the two celebrities, a 7-point Semantic Differential Scale with 9 parameters was developed. The

parameters used resulted from a merge of several items used in literature: 2 general items from Misra and Beatty's (1990) Attitude Towards the Celebrity scale, 2 attractiveness-focused items from Tripp, Jensen and Carlson (1994) and another from Ohanian (1990), 2 trustworthiness-focused items from Till and Shimp (1998) and 2 expertise-focused items from Ohanian (1990). Additionally, the perception of fit between the celebrity and the brand was also measured through Simmons and Becker-Olsen (2006) Evaluation of Fit Between Two Companies, adapted to a brand and celebrity fit. Also a 7-point Semantic Differential Scale, and with 5 parameters, the mean of this scale and of the previous one give the attitude towards the celebrity and the perception of its fit with Lancôme, respectively. To close this phase, the purchase intention after seeing the post was measured through Bone and Ellen's (1992) Purchase Intention Scale, an 11 and 9-point Likert scale with 3 parameters. This scale was adapted to 7-points in order to maintain consistency of choice for the respondents across the questionnaire.

Finishing the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to fill in a profiling set of questions – Brazilian State, Education, Professional Situation and Household (please consult the Quantitative Research Questionnaire in **Appendix 6**).

The data collected from responses was then transferred from Qualtrics to SPSS IBM software, with the aim of further analyzing the results.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1. Qualitative Research**

Starting with the qualitative research, the results were analyzed through topics and insights mentioned more than once, by reviewing each interviewees' answers. The 7 interviewees had between 20 and 24 years old; all with higher education; 6 were students and 1 was an employee; 3 were from Rio de Janeiro (Rio de Janeiro State) and 4 from Belo Horizonte (Minas Gerais State); 3 live with their parents and 4 live

independently. Summarizing the qualitative insights, there is a clear brand love for M.A.C., as it was mentioned by all interviewees more than once, when talking about personal preference and others', as well. Make up is a very valued category amongst the target age, as there is a great investment in different new functions and colors, for example. Additionally, buying premium products abroad or in the travel retail channel is a very important part of Brazilian's consumption, because of high taxation and, therefore, of prices inside Brazil for these type of products. Natura and Boticário were two national mass brands that were mentioned as "rebound" for the times when interviewees did not have the chance to buy their favorite premium products internationally. M.A.C and Chanel were the most-mentioned aspirational brands, being top-of-mind for interviewees. M.A.C is associated to young woman, from teenagers to young adults, mostly students, and is considered a laid-back and cool brand. Chanel was connected to a more iconic image (e.g. Audrey Hepburn and Coco Chanel), mostly sophisticated and classy, and a very aspirational brand that interviewees hope to be able to buy more or at least buy, if they do not do it already. Lancôme was also the third most-mentioned brand spontaneously, but was inducted during the interview if interviewees did not mention it (3 mentioned it spontaneously). Lancôme was more associated to middle-aged women indirectly and directly, as some interviewees compared the brand to celebrities of that age or referred that the brand remembered them their mothers, for instance. Moreover, it was considered a very sophisticated and elegant brand. Regarding local celebrities, Gisele Bündchen was the spontaneously most-mentioned one, that interviewees relate best to the beauty industry, which may be related to the top-model's success and contracts with premium beauty brands (e.g. Chanel and DKNY). When induced to Lancôme's brand DNA and asked for local celebrities they would relate to the brand, answers turned for Marina Ruy Barbosa and

Sophie Charlotte, spontaneously. If nothing came to mind, interviewees would choose the same two celebrities from a list available and built from references of Brazilian magazines. Curiously, Marina Ruy Barbosa (20 years old) was mentioned more than once as a Brazilian “it” girl, moving thousands of followers on social media, more specifically, on Instagram social network. Interviewees mentioned they followed her and enjoyed checking what she was wearing and using, considering her a reference.

From all these insights, it was possible to construct a more directed and adapted quantitative questionnaire.

#### **4.2. Quantitative Research**

The data from the questionnaire was analyzed with SPSS using Frequencies, Cross Tabulations and Independent-Samples T Tests. Regarding the sample, it is composed by 105 respondents, which were all Brazilian women aged between 18 and 29 years old. For the post simulation, the sample was split for the Marina Ruy Barbosa (N=32), Sophie Charlotte (N=36) and No Celebrity (N=37) scenarios. From the whole sample (N=105), 83,8% respondents were Premium Beauty consumers, while only 16,2% said they do not consume Premium Beauty products (M.A.C, Chanel and Dior were examples of Premium Beauty brands given to respondents). Concerning respondents' dispersion within Brazil, the most popular locations were Rio de Janeiro (25,7%), followed by Minas Gerais (21%) and São Paulo and Ceará (both 18,1%). Later on, for the purpose of analyzing the results, the Location variable was transformed into dichotomous, being split into Wealthier and Less Wealthy States. This evaluation was made through the GDP per capita, being the Wealthier States (64,8%) represented by Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Minas Gerais, with all the remaining states included in the Less Wealthy States group (35,2%). Further on, the sample was poorly diversified in terms of education, as the majority has higher education (94,3%) and only 5,7% respondents have middle school education. Therefore, this variable was not considered



for further analysis. The respondents were 43,8% students, 35,3% employees and 21% students and employees full or part-time. This variable was also transformed into dichotomous, splitting students-only (43,8%) and employees that may or may not study (56,2%). Finally, regarding the respondents' household, 68,6% live with their parents or relatives and 31,4% live independently, i.e. alone or with friends (**Appendix 7**).

Concerning the strategy in study, the differences between the purchase intention results (i.e. the means) were compared between the scenarios with celebrities involved (Marina or Sophie, N=68) and without any celebrities (Lancôme only, N=37). According to the T-Test for Equality of Means, the difference between these two scenarios was not significant (p-value=0,736, **Appendix 8.1**) in terms of influence on purchase intention (**Figure 1**).

<i>Stimuli</i>	<i>Number of Respondents</i>	<i>Purchase Intention</i>
<i>No Celebrity</i>	37	3,66
<i>Celebrity</i>	68	3,76

**Figure 1:** Comparison of Purchase Intention Means (7-point scale) between No Celebrity and Celebrity Stimuli

By splitting the Celebrity scenario into Marina's and Sophie's scenarios, the difference in purchase intention (**Figure 2**) is also non-significant (p-value=0,494, **Appendix 8.2**).

<i>Stimuli</i>	<i>Number of Respondents</i>	<i>Purchase Intention</i>
<i>Marina Ruy Barbosa</i>	32	3,64
<i>Sophie Charlotte</i>	36	3,88

**Figure 2:** Comparison of Purchase Intention Means (7-point scale) between Marina and Sophie Stimuli

When comparing these results to the ones from a more direct question made after respondents observed the post, asking how they would evaluate their will to buy

Lancôme's products after seeing the post (1 for less will, 2 for same, and 3 for more will), the conclusions are the same (**Figure 3**).

<i>Stimuli</i>	<i>Number of Respondents</i>	<i>Purchase Intention Mean</i>
<i>Marina Ruy Barbosa</i>	32	1,81
<i>Sophie Charlotte</i>	36	1,97
<b><i>Celebrity</i></b>	68	1,90
<b><i>No Celebrity</i></b>	37	1,95

**Figure 3:** Purchase Intention Mean (7-point scale) Results from after-stimuli question

Once again, there are no significant differences between these means, according to T-Tests. However, in the more direct question, respondents presented with no celebrity showed a higher purchase intention mean, when comparing to the group of celebrities. Both ways, there is a slight improvement in the Sophie's scenario, comparing to Marina's and without any celebrity. In a final attempt, it was run a T-Test between the No Celebrity and Sophie scenarios Purchase Intention Scale means, which was also not significant ( $p\text{-value}=0,548$ , **Appendix 8.3.**), although there was a bigger difference [ $\bar{x}(\text{Sophie})=3,88 > \bar{x}(\text{NoCeleb})=3,66$ ]. In sum, we have to reject the hypothesis of a positive influence by having a celebrity exposing Lancôme's products on social media. Further on, when analyzing the remaining results, it was observed a possible price sensitivity amongst this target consumer. Firstly, respondents that did not consume Chanel's make up products, ranked the brand's lipstick (a make up product) in high positions (**Figure 4**) when choosing their purchase choices, if Lancôme's, M.A.C.'s and Chanel products' prices were exactly the same.

<i>Ranking Chanel's Lipstick</i>	Percentage of respondents (%)
<i>1st place</i>	<b>40,9</b>
<i>2nd place</i>	32,3
<i>3rd place</i>	26,9
<i>Total</i>	100

**Figure 4:** Ranking of Chanel's Lipstick by **Non-consumers of Chanel's** make up products

Additionally, non-consumers of Chanel's perfumes ranked the brand their first choice of purchase in this category (77,6%, **Appendix 9.1.**), in the situation of equal prices. The same happens with respondents that are not consumers of Lancôme's skincare products, that rank the brand first in purchasing choice for the same category (71,1%, **Appendix 9.2.**) This situation happens only for Chanel and Lancôme and for the mentioned categories, not happening with M.A.C., the brand with cheaper products from the three. It can represent the aspirational side of the two brands, connected to a probable price sensitivity of the target consumers at study (18 to 29 years old Brazilian females). Another results highlight indirectly this fact: consumers of Nivea (p-value=0,036), Natura (p-value=0,019) and Avon (p-value=0,002) skincare products are students-only. As mass brands, they are more accessible to students that may not have sufficient earnings to invest in a premium brand (for table results, please consult **Appendix 9**).

When focusing on the Premium Beauty Consumer, comparing to Non-Premium Consumers, it was understandable that they have revealed a higher Brand Equity for the three brands: M.A.C (p-value=0,000), Chanel (p-value=0,002) and Lancôme (p-value=0,012). Furthermore, this type of consumer purchases perfume (p-value=0,006) and make up (p-value=0,000) products frequently outside Brazil and in international airports, while they are not frequent buyers of perfume inside Brazil (p-value=0,103),

when comparing to Non-Premium Beauty Consumers. The last assumption should be accepted with caution and taking into consideration that 56,8% of Premium Beauty Consumers answering the questionnaire revealed a lower average frequency (less than 1 time a year) of purchase in this matter, while 64,7% of Non-Premium Beauty Consumers have a higher average frequency (more than once a year) of purchase. Concerning social media, Premium Beauty Consumers are more frequent visitors of Instagram, than Non-Premium Beauty Consumers (p-value=0,036). This fact highlights a trend of usage of this specific social network that has been increasing its popularity in the past years amongst the target consumer, opening new opportunities for brand promotion and contact with customers. Finally, Premium Beauty Consumers are less consumers of Boticário's make up (p-value=0,015), which confirms the previous mentions in the qualitative interviews of Boticário as a "rebound" brand, and not a possible national threat for premium beauty brands (for Premium Beauty Consumer tests, please consult **Appendix 10**).



Moreover, the Brazilian female beauty consumer between 18 and 29 years old is social media active (**Figure 5**).

<i>Social Network</i>	Facebook	Instagram	YouTube	Twitter
<b>Mean</b>	<b>4,72</b>	<b>4,33</b>	<b>3,26</b>	<b>1,57</b>

**Figure 5:** Comparison of Means of Visit Frequency between Social Networks (5-point scale)

81,9% visits Facebook social network several times a day and 71,4% do the same on Instagram. However, YouTube and Twitter are less popular amongst these consumers. Regarding following beauty brands and celebrities on social media, these consumers tend to follow more on Instagram ( $\bar{x}$ =1,81 for brands and  $\bar{x}$ =2,59 for celebrities, in a scale from 1 to 4). For Social Media results, please consult **Appendix 11**. Furthermore, 78% of respondents were M.A.C.'s make up consumers (**Figure 6**), and they buy make

up more frequently in Brazil. Lancôme was bought by 26% of respondents. Regarding perfumes, answers were more dispersed but Calvin Klein was the most chosen brand, with Lancôme chosen by 12%. In this case, consumers buy more outside Brazil and in international airports. In skincare, consumers prefer La Roche-Posay, comparing to a 14% choice for Lancôme. They also buy more frequently in Brazil. Finally, Make up was the category product that consumers buy more frequently online (for Category and Brand Preferences, please consult **Appendix 12**).

<i>Category</i>	<b>Make Up</b>	<b>Perfume</b>	<b>Skincare</b>
<i>Preferred Brand</i>		Calvin Klein	
<i>Percentage of Consumers (%)</i>	78	30	57

**Figure 6:** Most Chosen Brands by Product Category

Moving on to brand purchase choices, respondents ranked Lancôme first in mascara and skincare more times on average. M.A.C. was better ranked for lipstick and foundation, and Chanel for perfume (please consult **Appendix 13**). Regarding Brand Popularity, Brand Personality and Brand Equity, M.A.C. was always ahead of Lancôme and Chanel, and Lancôme had always lower mean scores than the other two brands, confirming the insights from the qualitative that mentioned the brand love for M.A.C. and maybe the misfit of Lancôme amongst this target consumer (**Figure 7**).

<b>Brand</b>	<b>Brand Popularity</b>	<b>Brand Personality</b>	<b>Brand Equity</b>
<i>M.A.C.</i>	6,20	5,77	4,54
<i>Chanel</i>	6,12	5,49	3,92
<i>Lancôme</i>	5,30	4,87	3,42

**Figure 7:** Comparison of Means (7-point scale) between M.A.C., Chanel and Lancôme

Finally, the brand respondents considered that the most expensive brand was Chanel, but also the one with better quality from the three. M.A.C. was considered the better fit for a consumer between 18 and 29 years old, while Lancôme was considered the worse fit. For a target between 30 and 39 years old, Lancôme was the better fit, but for the target between 40 and 60 years old, it shared the better fit position with Chanel (for Price, Quality and Target results, please consult **Appendix 14**).

To conclude the results, there is another interesting fact to highlight. M.A.C. has been building brand love across this country and this specific target consumer, but results show there may be some product “holes” where Lancôme can catch this target’s attention (**Appendix 15**). If consumers of M.A.C.’s make up had the chance to buy a mascara from the brand or from Lancôme and Chanel, assuming the three were at the exact same price, they would prefer Lancôme to M.A.C., ranking M.A.C. in a lower position ( $p\text{-value}=0,062$ ) and Lancôme in a higher position ( $p\text{-value}=0,075$ ). Although statistically we should assume this cautiously, by looking through the results it is understandable that 40,2% of M.A.C.’s make up consumers ranked the brand third in mascara and 45,1% ranked Lancôme first. When crossing respondents that consume M.A.C.’s and Lancôme’s make up products, it is revealed that 40% of non-consumers of Lancôme’s make up, but consumers of M.A.C.’s, rank Lancôme’s mascara first. Additionally, 55,6% of respondents that also consume Lancôme’s make up products rank the brand first, implying there may be a preference for Lancôme’s mascaras or a dissatisfaction with M.A.C.’s mascaras. Furthermore, respondents with a lower quality perception of M.A.C.’s products are not make up consumers of the brand ( $p\text{-value}=0,000$ ), what may imply there is a quality “hole” in this loved brand amongst the target consumers. Finally, Premium Beauty Consumers prefer Lancôme’s mascara ( $p\text{-value}=0,037$ ), ranking it mainly first or second on choice of purchase, highlighting this

important make up product as an opportunity for the brand to attract and loyalize this age segment.

## **5. Limitations and Further Research**

The inconclusive main results for this research may be resultant of several factors involving the sample and the used approach.

Firstly, the sample size for the qualitative (7 interviewees) and quantitative researches (N=105) may have been too small to evaluate clearly the results, or to make them significant, being far from describing the total population. Secondly, the gathered sample came from online and social media collection, mainly through acquaintances or universities connections, what could have been limiting the diversity of the sample itself. Thirdly, regarding the presented research approach, it was also done through Skype calls (qualitative) and online questionnaires (quantitative), due to the difficulty of reaching personally the sample, as the study was made in Portugal about Brazil. However, the first part of the research could have been more enriching if made in the field, i.e. with focus groups, face-to-face in-depth interviews, among other possible approaches. This way, it would be possible to collect more significant insights about the target consumer in study and, consequently, build a more directed and efficient quantitative research afterwards (e.g. better celebrities for the posts simulation). Fourthly, and lastly, other ways of measuring purchase intention could be further explored, as it is a critical research task and difficult to measure. For instance, trying different approaches with focus groups or in-depth interviews and/or different scales or simulations for the quantitative research. Moreover, we asked for conscious selection or choice of the brand, and the celebrities' influence might be a non-conscious process that would need different measures to capture its effects.

Despite the fact that the main research purpose of this study was not clearly confirmed, there were other conclusions that may clarify some aspects about this target, so important for Lancôme and other premium beauty brands, in Brazil.

It was understood that M.A.C., a Lancôme's though competitor, has been building a significant brand love amongst this age segment in Brazil, being crucial for Lancôme to understand how can they attract these consumers, maybe by alienating consumers from M.A.C., how to deal with their possible price sensitivity and how to increase Brand Popularity and Brand Equity amongst them. Although it was not confirmed that a relationship on social media with a local celebrity can enhance these consumers' purchase intention of Lancôme's products, there can be other ways to approach this expansion of target.

In conclusion, this study can be seen as a pilot study. Therefore, assuming its results may be premature. Despite of the limitations mentioned above, the findings should be considered as an initial effort to illustrate the positive influence local celebrities or "it" people can have on Lancôme's and other premium beauty brands' purchase intention, through their social media channels.



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