



# Can We Seduce Customers to Buy Private Label Products by Using Irrelevant Attributes?

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# CAN WE SEDUCE CUSTOMERS TO BUY PRIVATE LABEL PRODUCTS BY USING IRRELEVANT ATTRIBUTES?

## ABSTRACT

Dissertation Title: How can we seduce customers to buy Private Label products by using Irrelevant Attributes?

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Abstract:

Private Label brands (often referred to as low-cost options) are the strategy retailers found to offer quality products at affordable prices, allowing families to fulfil their needs and better manage their monthly disposable income. However, these brands tend to suffer from lack of identity, poor perception of quality and scepticism, which often disappear after people start consuming the products.

This dissertation aims to test to which extent the presence of Irrelevant Attributes effectively contributes to reducing perceived quality deficits through the creation or enhancement of brands' personality traits. By strengthening their identities, brands can turn consumers' identification with the brand easier, which positively impacts their perceived value, expected hedonic experience, purchase intentions and willingness-to-pay.

Although some authors claim that the presence of Irrelevant Attributes is understood by consumers as a mechanism that brands use to compensate for the underperforming attributes (as found in National brands), Private Labels may benefit from using this tool to outperform in competitive markets like Food Retail or FMCG, where players are fierce and fight incessantly.

This research's results reveal that the presence of Irrelevant Attributes allows brands to enhance their personality and differentiate themselves from its competitors. Nevertheless, they also show that perceived value and purchase intentions do not increase significantly, unlike the willingness to pay, which increases when Irrelevant Attributes are present. The presence of Irrelevant Attributes in National brands tends to weaken them, which reinforces their importance to Private Label brands as a point of differentiation.

Keywords: Private Label Brands, National Brands, Irrelevant Attributes, Brand Personality, Perceived Value, Expected Hedonic Experience, Purchase Intentions, Willingness-to-Pay.

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## RESUMO

Título da Dissertação: Conseguimos seduzir os consumidores a comprar Marcas Próprias utilizando Atributos Irrelevantes?

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### Resumo:

As marcas próprias têm permitido aos retalhistas oferecer produtos de qualidade a preços acessíveis, que permitem uma melhor gestão do rendimento mensal disponível e a satisfação das necessidades das famílias. Contudo, estas marcas sofrem de falta de identidade, baixa perceção de qualidade e de ceticismo criado pelos consumidores, tendencialmente suprimido após consumir o produto. As marcas próprias tendem, por isso, a ser vistas como uma opção *low-cost*.

Esta dissertação pretende testar se a presença de Atributos Irrelevantes contribui de forma eficaz para a redução do défice de qualidade percebido através da criação de uma personalidade, o que, facilitando a identificação do consumidor com a marca, impactaria positivamente o valor percebido, as expectativas, as intenções de compra e o valor que o consumidor está disposto a despendar. Apesar de alguns autores afirmarem que a presença de Atributos Irrelevantes é vista pelos consumidores como um mecanismo a que as marcas recorrem para compensar pela performance deficitária de outros atributos (o que se verificou para as marcas de fabricante), as marcas próprias podem recorrer à utilização desta ferramenta para se diferenciarem em mercados competitivos.

Este estudo revela que a presença de Atributos Irrelevantes permite às marcas enaltecer a sua personalidade e diferenciar-se da concorrência. Contudo, os resultados mostram que o valor percebido e as intenções de compra não aumentam significativamente, ao contrário do preço a pagar. A presença de Atributos Irrelevantes em marcas de fabricante tende a prejudicá-las, reforçando a importância dos mesmos para as marcas próprias enquanto ponto de diferenciação.

Palavras-chave: Marcas Próprias, Marcas de Fabricante, Atributos Irrelevantes, Personalidade da Marca, Valor Percebido, Experiência Hedónica, Intenção de Compra, Predisposição para Pagar.

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Finally, I hope this academic thesis helps managers and marketers to consider using Irrelevant Attributes as an efficient strategic tool to differentiate their brands, not forgetting about fulfilling customers' needs and providing them with the best experience when buying and consuming the products – the ultimate goal for manufacturers and retailers.

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**GLOSSARY**

PLB – Private Label Brand

NB – National Brand

FMGC – Fast Moving Consumer Goods

IA – Irrelevant Attribute

EHE – Expected Hedonic Experience

BP – Brand Personality

WTP – Willingness-to-Pay

## 1. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1.1. Background

Every day, managers try to find customers' pains and problems, as well as a way to solve them and increase consumers' satisfaction. In this war, retailers' brands, from now on referred to as Private Label brands (PLB), invest in research and development to find the perfect balance between quality products and families' budget constraints. For retailers, who control the production, these products have a critical and distinctive role since they are exclusively sold in their stores and cannot be purchased elsewhere (Collins & Burt, 2003), except from internationalization strategies where PLBs are sold in other countries by a different retailer (e.g., El Corte Inglés sells Tesco products (Butler, 2016)).

Unlike common strategies such as dropping prices, investing in advertising or in improving service levels, creating PLBs' products is a more difficult strategy for competitors to replicate. Thus, it can provide a source of sustainable competitive advantage for retailers (Akcura, Sinapuelas, & Wang, 2019) given that PLBs help them to differentiate from competitors, thereby increasing store loyalty (Corstjens & Lal, 2000). Having this in mind, "retailers need to find a way to establish market-oriented prices and high quality for their PLBs, offering products that are capable of satisfying customers' needs" (Olbrich, Jansen, & Hundt, 2017). At the end of the day, one of retailers' major goals is to seduce customers to buy PLBs.

As Porter (1985) mentioned, a "competitive strategy aims to establish a profitable and sustainable position against the forces that determine industry competition". Herewith, establishing good value perceptions is crucial to influence consumers' decision-making (Beneke, Flynn, Greig, & Mukaiwa, 2013). In Food Retail and Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) markets, consumers' preferences (defined by Blackwell, et al. (2001) as "attitudes toward one object in relation to another") can be matched both by PLBs and National Brands (NBs - brands that are produced and sold under the manufacturers' name).

In an introductory phase, PLBs penetrated the market to provide consumers with the best price-quality ratio. Although these used to be seen as low-cost alternatives, this paradigm has been changing (Olbrich, Hundt, & Jansen, 2016; Matos, 2015). Price consciousness trends and consequent resistance to NB prices emerged, leading to the growing popularity of PLBs (Sinha & Batra, 1999), which are becoming more important for consumers on a daily basis (Sethuramana & Gielens, 2014; Nenycz-Thiel & Romaniuk, 2014), with increasing purchase

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intentions, especially among categories where perceived risk is lower and perceived price unfairness is higher (Sinha & Batra, 1999).

In Europe, people are less sceptical about PLBs (Nielsen, 2014), which are conquering market share (González-Benito & Martos-Partal, 2012). In Portugal, 60% of consumers state that PLBs are as good as NBs and 75% claim that “PLBs are usually extremely good value for money” and have very good quality (Nielsen, 2014). Consequently, it is estimated that around 33% of people’s purchases are PLBs, against the 16,5% European market’s average.

Retailers are then gathering efforts to innovate on PLBs and moving away from a standard portfolio to a multitier one (Geyskens, Keller, Dekimpe, & de Jong, 2018): Lidl’s assortment is 80% composed by PLB products that are sold under different brands (e.g., Cien for beauty or Chef Select in pre-cooked meals); Intermarché follows a uniformization strategy, where all the PLB products are sold under the same brand; for Minipreço, PLBs represent 44% of the total sales in Euros (€), signifying 62% of the units sold; Continente and Pingo Doce, the biggest players, argue that prices can be up to 30% lower than NBs and state that PLBs are already points of differentiation for consumers when choosing a supermarket (Cardoso & Lima, 2019). Hereupon, in such competitive and dynamic market, the question is whether retailers can convince customers to buy their PLBs and turn them loyal to these (Ailawadi, Pauwels, & Steenkamp, 2008).

Inter-category differences (i.e., differences between products that do not fulfil the same need (Shocker, Bayus, & Kim, 2004)) have been cited as an important barrier for PLBs’ variation across markets, retailers and categories (Dhar & Hoch, 1997; Batra & Sinha, 2000). However, even though each market specificities demand a tailored approach strategy, literature shows that when retailers have a large and deep products’ assortment, consumers are likely to transfer the knowledge and quality perception from one category they have already tried, to another they have not (Erdem & Chang, 2012). Consumers are more likely to buy PLBs when the perceived variability in quality levels across products is lower (Batra & Sinha, 2000). Also, when comparing PLBs and NBs, research shows that consumers with high knowledge of a category tend to have a greater choice ease, which leads to bigger satisfaction both when buying the product and when experiencing it (Kelting, Duhachek, & Whitler, 2017). This happens because consumers believe they are less likely to make a judgment mistake about the quality of the product.

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Most retailers use PLBs as a value-led alternative for consumers (Liu & Wang, 2008), who perceive these brands as credible alternatives that provide them a similar value as NB at a lower price (up to 40% cheaper (Ashley, 1998)). However, the success of a PLB introduction in a market depends on several variables. Firstly, PLBs' success is strongest in commodity driven and high-purchase frequency categories, as well as in categories where consumers perceive little difference between brands (Nielsen, 2014). Secondly, PLBs perform better in categories where there is minimal differentiation, low brand equity, where consumers are price sensitive and purchase frequently and where innovation rate is low (e.g., Eggs or Milk) (Morris, 2002), where the perceived risk is lower (Batra & Sinha, 2000). Contrariwise, NBs tend to be more effective in categories with high differentiation and innovation rate, strong marketing investments that reinforce brands' presence in consumers' evoked set and frequently promotional campaigns (e.g., Hair Care) (Nielsen, 2014).

To sum up, PLBs are a source of differentiation and an effective way for retailers to turn customers loyal. In consumers' eyes, PLBs' perceived quality and price-quality ratio have been increasing, mostly due to investments in expanding PLBs' products portfolio to create several product's tiers (i.e., premium). Nevertheless, customers who have not tried PLBs continue perceiving them as low-cost alternatives with little quality. Additionally, those who have already tried them perceive differences between categories, which leads to consumption levels' increase only in categories where perceived risk is low and NBs' price unfairness is high.

These problems retailers need to face lead to the current investigation's main research question: can we seduce customers to buy PLB products by using Irrelevant Attributes (IA)? This dissertation aims to provide managers and marketers with meaningful insights that will allow PLB to be more effectively present in consumers' evoked set, as well as to reduce barriers limiting PLBs' affirmation as a valuable and competent alternative. Over the next two sections PLBs and IA will be explored to allow a better understanding of the contemporary context.

### **1.2. Private Label Brands**

According to Burton, et al., (1998) consumers' attitudes towards PLBs can be defined as "a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner to PLB grocery products". Although most consumers are already aware of the advantages and disadvantages of buying

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PLBs and recognize how good these are at delivering a good value for money proposition, which allows them to save money without any quality loss (Olbrich, Jansen, & Hundt, 2017), the authors also claim that people's associations about PLBs still reveal mixed feelings. Hereupon, while on the one hand PLBs are seen as valuable and consciousness options that provide smart-shopper feelings, on the other, they are also associated with low brand loyalty and low price-quality.

Since perceptions influence consumers' attitudes, consumers who have not tried PLB's products tend to discriminate between brand type and are more likely to use negative attributes when making extrapolations to describe PLBs (Nenycz-Thiel & Romaniuk, 2009). Additionally, González-Benito & Martos-Partal (2012); Pepe, et al. (2011) argue that consumers value the existence of PLBs in the supermarket shelves but it is also important that they can find NBs because when retailers do not offer a complete assortment, consumers become unhappy and category profitability shrinks (Pepe, Abratt, & Dion, 2011). In any case, for price sensitive consumers, PLBs will be desired in the long term (when there are no promotional campaigns), while NBs will be preferable in a promotional scenario (Burton, Lichtenstein, Netemeyer, & Garretson, 1998).

Consequently, to overcome this scepticism, a strategy shifting has emerged. The best retailers structure their strategy to have strong PLBs, broader assortments and adequate low prices (Dhara, Hochb, & Kumar, 2001). Moreover, they started developing new product tiers and are now offering PLBs to target specific market segments (Liu & Wang, 2008). These PLBs' tier include economy, standard and premium goods (Geyskens, Keller, Dekimpe, & de Jong, 2018). Depending on the target needs, retailers can decide on whether they will charge a higher price for a high-quality hedonic product with premium attributes (e.g., aromatic coffee from Colombia) or a lower price for efficient utilitarian product (e.g., dishwasher detergent). Ultimately, retailers use regular PLBs as a powerful tool to show competence when offering good quality at affordable prices, attracting customers to their stores (Olbrich, Jansen, & Hundt, 2017), and premium PLBs have become an instrument to create differentiation (Corstjens & Lal, 2000).

The idea that consumers are more likely to buy PLBs from categories where they perceive lower variability in quality levels (Batra & Sinha, 2000) has already been evidenced. Within each category, if there is a high level of differentiation, a high quality/premium PLBs should position (in terms of quality and product features) closer to a stronger NB; if not differentiated,

PLBs should try to differentiate themselves from NBs (Choi & Coughlan, 2006), reinforcing the role IA might play in this matter.

When positioning PLBs, retailers try to influence consumers in their buying process (Miquel, Caplliure, Pérez, & Bigné, 2016) with the main goal of increasing share of wallet, number of items purchased and frequency of shopping (Ailawadi, Pauwels, & Steenkamp, 2008). If consumers are looking for brands they can only find in one supermarket, they will only go to that specific insignia.

For customers to have positive attitudes towards PLBs, goods need to offer good value for money and assure low perceived risk, variables that lead to the smart-shopper feelings as aforementioned (Kanji & Ganesan, 2017). Store environment, familiarity with the brand and with the retailer or the shelf space allotment may attract consumers (Kanji & Ganesan, 2017).

To sum up, PLBs are performing well and growing in the market. Nevertheless, it is possible to notice that some consumers are not fully convinced about PLB's products. As described previously, in some product categories, adoption levels in an introductory stage are lower because the perceived risk among that category is higher.

Another reason motivating scepticism is the negative association between lower prices and PLB products' quality. Regardless of consumer's experience with PLBs, it has been proved that people "form a subgroup in consumers' memory, with low price and low quality as the main drivers" (Nenycz-Thiel & Romaniuk, 2009). Furthermore, although some retailers have a larger shelf space assigned to PLBs (Nogales & Suárez, 2005), they do not have strong PLBs that would allow inter-category quality associations. Besides, one of the advantages NBs have is the higher knowledge non-users have about NBs and not about PLBs (Nenycz-Thiel & Romaniuk, 2014), which highlights the lack of knowledge about PLB despite all the efforts in communication, research and development or the space shelf allocated to these. Given than, this dissertation will study to which extent IA can be helpful for retailers to overcome consumers' scepticism.

### **1.3. Irrelevant Attributes**

IA can be defined as attributes that "appear valuable but, on closer examination, are irrelevant to creating the implied benefit" (Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994; Broniarczyk & Gershoff, 2003). Although IAs "provide no performance benefit that consumers may perceive as dubiously positive" (Brown & Carpenter, 2000), they have proved to make an impact on

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consumers' decisions, influencing behaviour and perceptions people hold about brands (Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994). Consumers tend to "rely on the labels of trivial attributes to make inferences about the value of the attribute" (Broniarczyk & Gershoff, 1997) even if the only feature that changes between products is the label copy (Broniarczyk & Gershoff, 2003) or a given characteristic that is so insignificant that must be considered as an IA (Albrecht, Neumann, Haber, & Bauer, 2011). Alba & Hutchinson (1987) state that people tend to pay less attention to the most important attributes, reinforcing the idea that IA can help brands positioning themselves successfully in consumers' evoked set.

Carpenter et. al. (1994) were the first researchers who tried to understand how useful and impactful IA can be as a point of differentiation. IA tend to have a positive impact on people's perceptions and, consequently, succeed to favour brands in a decision-making process (Brown & Carpenter, 2000), even if irrelevance has been revealed beforehand (Dalman & Min, 2014; Broniarczyk & Gershoff, 1997; Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994). When there is no revelation, the price people are willing to pay for a product with IA is superior to the one for the same product without IA. The same situation is verified when people are informed about the IA (Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994). However, when considering the upper-quality tier – premium products – IA is only valued if not revealed (Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994). Furthermore, a relationship has been proved between price and the impact of IA on people's perceptions about product quality: when price is higher (lower), consumers tend to value more (less) the attribute (Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994).

Despite that people prefer to decide based on what is easily justified (instrumental reasoning process (Burton, Lichtenstein, Netemeyer, & Garretson, 1998)), consumers "often pursue non-instrumental information" (information that seems to be relevant but would not positively impact the final decision (Bastardi & Shafir, 1998)). Some authors argue that IA's success in influencing people depends on the choice set (Dragan Miljkovic, Gong, & Lehrke, 2009; Brown & Carpenter, 2000) because when deciding, consumers do not consider products in isolation (Plous, 1939). According to Brown & Carpenter (2000), if three or more brands are considered but only one includes an IA, the uniqueness of the IA values the product and increases the likelihood of people choosing it (Dalman & Min, 2014). If in the same scenario two brands perform an IA, consumers IA's perceptions become negative (Brown & Carpenter, 2000). There is evidence of a stronger effect of IA on influencing consumers when there is no other differentiation between alternative brands (Broniarczyk & Gershoff, 1997), highlighting the need for retailers to be innovative and disruptive when launching new products. It is less

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exhaustive comparing two brands rather than comparing all the options placed in a supermarket shelf, which is why IA's presence is empowered as a point of differentiation as the number of brands in the evoked set increases (Brown & Carpenter, 2000).

While some authors argue that regardless of revelation, "a low price brand with an IA is not valued by consumers" due to low price-quality associations (Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994); that IA weakens consumers' beliefs in products' ability to deliver its functional promises (Meyvis & Janiszewski, 2002), or that consumers believe that brands include IA to compensate for underperforming attributes (Broniarczyk & Gershoff, 1997), others claim that "low equity brands benefit by sharing an IA with the high equity brands" (Broniarczyk & Gershoff, 2003). On the scenario studied by Broniarczyk & Gershoff (2003), revelation of an IA harms low equity but not high equity brands when a product is launched in the market. The differences emerging from the nature of PLBs and NBs suggest that using IA as a differentiation strategy will be successful for brands (Broniarczyk & Gershoff, 2003) depending on whether the target group's needs are matched and to which extent does the differentiation induced by the IA is valued.

This investigation has the main goal of studying whether IA have an impact on creating a Brand Personality (BP) and, consequently, help PLBs to position in consumers' evoked set as a competent and smart alternative, being perceived as brands with quality, lower prices than NBs and with personality traits that people can relate with.



## 2. CHAPTER 2: HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

### 2.1. Brand Personality

*“A brand is the set of expectations, memories, stories and relationships that, taken together, account for a consumer's decision to choose one product or service over another.” - Seth Godin (2012)*

Personality can be defined as “the intrinsic organisation of an individual’s mental world that is stable and consistent over time” and can be transposed to a managerial context, affecting the way managers promote brands to target customers effectively (Casidy, Tsarenko, & Anderson, 2009). According to Aaker (1997), BP is about providing information to make it possible for consumers to represent the brand “as having a set of humanlike characteristics”.

By giving brands a personality, it becomes easier for people to identify themselves with them, which ultimately increases purchase likelihood. Consumers’ perceptions are driven by the purchase complexity, price and perceived quality (DelVecchio, 2001). Nonetheless, forming these perceptions also involves external and social attributes (e.g., people who buy based on the effect that a specific product will have on signalling status are likely to choose NBs over PLBs) (Kim & Drolet, 2009; Bushman, 1993).

People often make inferences that go beyond the information provided and tend to make judgements and decisions based on information and knowledge they have on past experiences. This process can be defined as induction and deduction (Kardes, Posavac, & Cronley, 2004) and suggests that people will receive some information about products (e.g., from advertising or word-of-mouth) but will still make inferences by resorting to information present on their evoked set. Other authors claim consumers might change their beliefs about a brand if they find self-brand connection (Hammerl, Dorner, Foscht, & Brandstätter, 2016) and, however research shows that the impact of IA can be affected by the external decision context, some authors state consumers update their initial inferences about personality if they are presented with new information (Aaker, Johar, & Sengupta, 2005).

People tend to unintentionally convert behaviours into personality traits (Gaunt, 2003) and the representations created in consumers’ minds, together with past experiences’ information, will influence decision making. In person perception literature, people make personality inferences about others even when they are aware of a contextual explanation for the behaviour that is

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not related with personality (Martijn, Spears, Pligt, & Jakobs, 1992) – negative information is more impactful than positive when people make a personality judgement. Lastly, Asch (1946) suggests that people judgments are more positive if the first term used to define them was positive than if it was negative. This theory implies that impression formation about a person can be more pleasant just by changing a word.

This research aims to understand if IA can have a similar and positive effect, helping PLBs creating a BP (i.e., a brand being perceived as sophisticated for using gold in a body lotion) and helping consumers to easily infer personality from it. This way, consumers are more likely to relate with the PLB, increasing perceived value (Levy, 1985). For this purpose, the study is based on the Five Dimensions of BP (Sung & Kim, 2010; Aaker, Dimensions of Brand Personality, 1997): Sincerity (Down-to-Earth and Honest as sub-dimensions), Excitement (Creative and Up-to-Date), Competence (Intelligent and Successful), Sophistication (Charming and Upper-Class) and Ruggedness (Outdoorsy and Tough). Furthermore, the analyses were conducted to target two specific dimensions in which brands can be perceived by customers: Competence and Sociability. Competence was analysed based on “Rationality” and “Competence” sub-dimensions, while Sociability comprised “Trustworthy” and “Warmness”.

***H<sub>1.1</sub>: Irrelevant Attributes facilitate the creation of a Brand Personality.***

***H<sub>1.2</sub>: Irrelevant Attributes have higher impact on the personality of Private Label Brands.***

### **2.2. Perceived Value**

*"Quality is neither mind nor matter, but a third entity independent of the two... Even though Quality cannot be defined, you know what it is" - Robert Pirsig (1974)*

Perceived value has been studied by several authors in different contexts. Zeithaml (1998) argues that it is a “judgment created within a consumer's evoked set” involving factors that together create the customers’ experience and highlighted that “perceived quality is different from actual quality”. Holbrook & Hirschman (1982) stated each customer experience involves symbolic, hedonic and aesthetic properties.

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Others claim that the assessment of quality can only be done comparing what a consumer has received and what he/she has given in exchange (Ulaga & Chacour, 2001; Sinha & Desarbo, 1998). If the difference is positive (negative), consumers will be satisfied (dissatisfied). Customer satisfaction is influenced by perceived value (Sánchez-García, Callarisa Fiol, Rodríguez-Artola, & Moliner, 2006).

Research has been conducted to know how consumers make their judgements on whether a product underperforms, accomplishes or overcomes what it promises previously to its purchase. Some authors argue that consumers might interpret IA's presence as a tool brands use to compensate for underperforming attributes (Broniarczyk & Gershoff, 1997), which would lead to the conclusion that when IAs are present, perceived value decreases.

This research aims to assess how consumers feel about PLBs and the effect IA have on products' perceived value, influencing consumers' perceptions and purchase decisions.

***H<sub>2</sub>: IA help Private Label brands to increase their perceived value by consumers.***

### **2.3. Expected Hedonic Experience**

*“The only thing that matters in the new world of quality is delivering customer value.” Karl Albrecht (1992)*

When consumers choose one product over its best alternative, they expect it to perform at a certain level. Customers' expectations when going to a restaurant or when buying a new phone differ – some people are more demanding than others and brands need to fulfil the expectations consumers have about their products. If they manage to do it or if they overcome expectations, it leads to satisfaction; otherwise, consumers will be disappointed and are less likely to become loyal or to repeat the purchase. It has been proved that choices affect the way that people will choose the next time they need to decide. People are more likely to choose an option similar to the one they have preferred in recent past experiences (Sharot, Martino, & Dolan, 2009). Delivering value to satisfied customers is the key to long-term success (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001).

Managers know it is possible to influence consumer reactions (Kähkönen & Tuorila, 1998) and will try to stimulate them to assure that the difference between the actual hedonic

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experience and the Expected Hedonic Experience (EHE) is positive (Piqueras-Fiszman & Spence, 2015). If PLBs manage to do this, consumers tend to repeat the purchase and to become loyal to a specific brand or product in a specific category. Furthermore, given that people tend to rate better the option they chose and consider the alternative worse (Sharot, Martino, & Dolan, 2009), IA can become an important tool to differentiate a brand from its competitors. Nonetheless, as mentioned before, some authors defend that consumers interpret IA's presence as a tool brands use to compensate for underperforming attributes (Broniarczyk & Gershoff, 1997).

Within this study it is relevant to understand whether the presence of IA impacts positively consumers' EHE. To do so, it is important to understand the differences on perceptions and inferences people make about a product with or without IA and compare the disparities between PLBs and NBs. Respondents will be asked to rate both Emotional (characteristics that relate to how does the product makes consumers feel) and Functional (characteristics that relate to what consumers get with the product) properties that products can feature.

***H<sub>3</sub>: IA have a bigger impact on increasing the expected hedonic experience on National Brand's products when compared to Private Labels' products.***

### **2.4. Willingness-to-Pay and Purchase Intentions**

*“Price is what you pay. Value is what you get” - Warren Buffet*

Price is one of the variables managers need to decide on to influence consumers' purchase behaviours and product evaluations (Chang & Wildt, 1994). Price consumers are willing to pay - Perceived Price - was defined as “the perceptual representation of the objective price of a product” (Jacoby & Olson, 1977). Willingness-to-Pay (WTP) is a quality indicator which tends to be correlated with perceived quality. NBs (PLBs) are associated with higher (lower) quality, leading to higher (lower) availability to buy the products (Steenkamp, Van Heerde, & Geyskens, 2010). Consumers who feel NBs are better than PLBs are highly prone to assign greater value to NBs (Kadirov, 2015). Concerning PLBs, it is often mentioned that people who buy them are either people with less budget to spend or people referred to as “smart-shoppers” (Kadirov, 2015). Some authors claim that IA's presence only plays a role in positively

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influencing consumers WTP at a high price (Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994) something that would damage IA's utilization by PLBs.

Furthermore, it is important to mention a correlation between category involvement and WTP. In categories in which consumers tend to be more emotionally involved (high-involvement products), people tend to be willing to pay higher prices because they recognize value in the product (Steenkamp, Van Heerde, & Geyskens, 2010). The main purpose of this research is to understand if consumers' WTP increases as the perceived quality gap decreases by resorting to IAs. Simultaneously, it is relevant to study whether and to which extent purchase intentions are influenced IAs' presence. Perceived value, which is induced by price, influences the likelihood of a consumer purchasing a product (Chang & Wildt, 1994).

***H<sub>4</sub>: IA impacts more positively consumers' purchase intentions for Private Label than National Brand's products.***

***H<sub>5</sub>: IA impacts more positively consumers' willingness to pay for Private Label than for National Brand's products.***

### 3. CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter will present in detail the methodology used to study the framed hypothesis. The two first studies were conducted simultaneously to avoid biases with the product categories (Shower Gel in study 1 and Chocolate in study 2) or with the nature of IAs used (Oil Pearls and Caffeine in study 1 and Gold Flakes and Fluorine in study 2). The third study was conducted to investigate whether differences would arise when respondents were exposed to the same IA (Gold Flakes or Vitamin C) applied both to PLBs and NBs. While studies 1 and 2 were more complex since they involved evaluating 4 out of 6 randomized products (2 Brand type x 2 Attributes Presence or Absence), study 3 only involved evaluating 2 products which either featured the same stimuli or did not feature any stimuli (2x2), allowing to understand if consumers perceive differences when Attribute is a Between-subjects variable.

#### **3.1. Research Approach**

BP and EHE are variables that can be affected by the presence of IA by changing the inferences customers make about products. Moreover, EHE and BP affect Perceived Value with the latter impacting consumers' purchase intentions and WTP. The main goal of this thesis is to understand to which extent IA can be used by PLBs as an efficient and effective tool to seduce customers to prefer them over NBs, changing the perceptions they have about brands when they consider them in their evoked set.

A quantitative research method was used within all the surveys were available in Portuguese and in English. The survey allowed collecting data for further analysis using statistical procedures. Data was collected online using Qualtrics and analysed using SPSS software.

#### **3.2. Primary & Secondary Data**

Secondary was the source of the framed hypotheses and is presented in the literature review section. Articles, journals, books and newspapers were consulted to get reliable information on the topics studied.

Primary data allowed answering all research questions and the hypotheses formulated. Data was analysed based on ANOVAs, paired sample T-tests and independent sample T-tests.

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**3.2.1. Materials**

For this research, 3 different studies were conducted. The first two were a within-subjects design 2 (brand: PLB, NB) x 2 (Attribute: IA, no IA/Regular) and each of them featured a different product category (Shower Gel representing FMCG industry and Chocolate representing Food Retail). Per category, two different IA were showed (Oil Pearls and Caffeine for Shower Gel; Gold and Fluorine for Chocolate).

The third study featured only one product category (Shower Gel) and included different IAs (Gold and Vitamin C). It comprised the same variables and was conducted to avoid biases and allowed to confirm conclusions drawn from first two studies.

All product descriptions can be found in Figure 1. The representative illustrations of each product are in Appendix A.

Study	Brand Type	Product	Common Features Description	Specific Features
1	Private Label	Regular Shower Gel	Can be found in the shelves with different scents; Includes Perfume, Glycerine and Water; Has been developed to offer a soft texture foam that pampers your skin, leaving it silky and smooth.	From Pingo Doce, a supermarket brand.
1	Private Label	Shower Gel Oil Pearls		Contains Oil Pearls. From Pingo Doce, a supermarket brand.
1	Private Label	Shower Gel Caffeine		Contains caffeine, which is known for its energetic properties in other products, such as coffee; From Pingo Doce, a supermarket brand.
1	National Brand	Regular Shower Gel		From NIVEA.
1	National Brand	Shower Gel Oil Pearls		Contains Oil Pearls. From NIVEA.
1	National Brand	Shower Gel Caffeine		Contains caffeine, which is known for its energetic properties in other products, such as coffee; From NIVEA.
2	Private Label	Regular Chocolate	This chocolate is composed by diluted cocoa solids (30%) and includes milk, sugar, cream and hazelnut paste.	From Pingo Doce, a supermarket brand.
2	Private Label	Chocolate with Gold		Contains Gold Flakes that can be eaten. From Pingo Doce, a supermarket brand.
2	Private Label	Chocolate with Fluorine		Contains Fluorine that helps to protect your teeth and does not have an effect on the chocolate's taste. From Pingo Doce, a supermarket brand.
2	National Brand	Regular Chocolate		From Milka.
2	National Brand	Chocolate with Gold		Contains Gold Flakes that can be eaten. From Milka.
2	National Brand	Chocolate with Fluorine		Contains Fluorine that helps to protect your teeth and does not have an effect on the chocolate's taste. From Milka.
3	Private Label	Regular Shower Gel	Can be found in the shelves with different scents; Includes Perfume, Glycerine and Water; Has been developed to offer a soft texture foam that pampers your skin, leaving it silky and smooth.	From Pingo Doce, a supermarket brand.
3	Private Label	Shower Gel with Gold		Contains Gold Flakes. From Pingo Doce, a supermarket brand.
3	Private Label	Shower Gel with Vitamin C		Includes Vitamin C. From Pingo Doce, a supermarket brand.
3	National Brand	Regular Shower Gel		From NIVEA.
3	National Brand	Shower Gel with Gold		Contains Gold Flakes. From NIVEA.
3	National Brand	Shower Gel with Vitamin C		Includes Vitamin C. From NIVEA.

*Figure 1 – Composition of the Products Used in Studies 1, 2 and 3.*

As it is possible to find in Appendix B, EHE was measured using a 7-point Likert Scale (“1 – Do not expect at all”; “7 – Definitely expect”) (Ajzen, 2002). Each BP item, was measured based on a 7-point Likert Scale (“1 - Does not describe at all”; “7 - Totally describes”) (Mulyanegara, Tsarenko, & Anderson, 2007). However, Competence and Sociality were

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measured with two antonymous adjectives presented in each of the scales' extremes, allowing respondents to choose the word that would describe better the brand, from positions 1 (i.e., "Irrational") to 7 (i.e., "Rational"). Perceived Value was measured based on 7-point ratings of agreement (1- "Do not agree at all"; 7- "Strongly Agree") (Ajzen, 2002).

Also through a 7-point Likert Scale, consumers could point out the likelihood of that purchase happening and indicate the exact price they would pay for a product (from 0 to 10€) (Breidert, Hahsler, & Reutterer, 2006; Paul & Rana, 2012; Xu, Zeng, Fong, Lone, & Liu, 2012; Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994).

### 3.2.2. Procedure

A small introduction in which participants were told they were contributing to an academic research, aiming to expand general knowledge of consumers' behaviours and general preferences was presented in all surveys.

In the first study (Appendix C), surveys were composed by seven sections per product. The first section included a brief description of the product shown and a representative picture of how the product could look like.

Following the introductory section, respondents were questioned about both emotional and functional features of the products. Shower Gel participants were asked about Scent, Smoothness and Perfumed (emotional attributes) and Nourishment, Cleanness and Healthiness (functional attributes). Collecting data about these characteristics allowed drawing conclusions about consumers' expectations and desired EHE (Spinelli, Masi, Zoboli, Prescott, & Monteleone, 2015; Kähkönen & Tuorila, 1998).

In the third section, respondents were asked to evaluate the product concerning its personality traits. 5 BP traits' dimensions (Aaker, 1997) were used to measure personality traits of the products in study. These five dimensions are Sincerity ("Down-to-Earth" and "Honest"), Excitement ("Creative" and "Up-to-Date"), Competence ("Intelligent" and "Successful"), Sophistication ("Upper Class" and "Charming") and Ruggedness ("Outdoorsy" and "Tough"). Furthermore, to assess two complementary dimensions, Sociability and Competence (Geuens, Weijters, & Wulf, 2009; Barber, Kuo, Bishop, & Goodman, 2012; Aaker, 1997), respondents were asked to fill in an attitude's scale. Sociability was measured through "Cold vs. Warmth" and "Untrustworthy vs. Trustworthy" and Competence using "Incompetent vs. Competent" and "Irrational vs. Rational" comparisons.



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To measure Perceive Value, the study was conducted on 3 main dimensions: Likeability (“I like this product very much”) (Netemeyer, et al., 2004), Quality (“I feel that this product is better than the market average.”) (Sujan & Bettman, 1989) and Uniqueness (“The product shown is unique from other brands.”) (Netemeyer, et al., 2004).

In the last section of the survey, respondents were requested to reveal their purchase intentions and WTP if a product like the one studied was found in the shelves. Consumers could point out the likelihood of that purchase happening and indicate the exact price they would pay for the product (Braidert, Hahsler, & Reutterer, 2006; Paul & Rana, 2012; Xu, Zeng, Fong, Lone, & Liu, 2012; Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994).

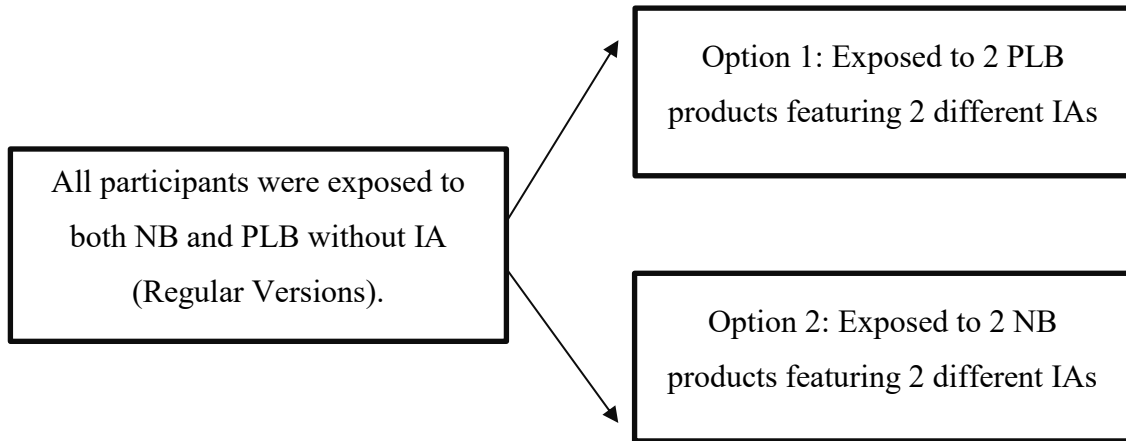
The second survey (Appendix D) follows the same structure as the first one with a different product category: Chocolate. As a result, EHE’s questions changed and participants were asked about Scent, Taste and Aspect as emotional characteristics and Sweet, Creamy and Crunchy as functional characteristics.

In the third study (Appendix E), there were only five sections involved: BP’s 5 dimensions, Perceived Value and WTP (measured using the scales described for the first two studies) and EHE (measured differently from studies in studies one and two, resorting instead to statements in which customers needed to state their level of agreement). Emotional EHE was represented by “I feel that consuming this product will give me pleasure.” and Functional EHE by “I feel that this product performs as it promises.” (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994).

### **3.2.3. Design**

For the first two experimental studies, a within-subjects design 2 (Brand: PLB, NB) x 2 (Attribute: No Attribute, Attribute) was used. Each participant was exposed to Regular versions (No Attribute) of both products and to two different IA product versions from the same Brand Type (either Oil Pearls and Caffeine of a PLB’s or NB’s Shower Gel, or Gold and Fluorine of a PLB’s or NB’s Chocolate - Figure 2).

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*Figure 2 – Design from Studies 1 and 2.*

Similarly, for the third experimental study, a within-subjects design 2 (Brand: PLB, NB) x 2 (Attribute: No Attribute, Attribute) was used. Each participant only saw one IA condition (No IA or IA), while all of them were exposed to both brand types (PLB or NB). IAs' presence or absence was the between-subjects variable, while Brand Type was the within-subjects variable (Figure 3).

There were 3 different survey versions: 1) 2 regular products; 2) Vitamin C (a functional IA) performing as IA for the two brand types and 3) Gold (an emotional IA), also for the two different brands. Among 145 responses, only 106 were valid.

		Attribute	
		No IA	IA
Brand Type	PLB		
	NB		

*Figure 3 – Design from Study 3.*

### 3.2.4. Respondents' Sample

Respondents were requested to read the stimulus materials and to answer questions in the form of an online questionnaire. A total of 372 people participated voluntarily in the studies (Appendix F). To incentivize participation, 2 vouchers were drawn. The percentage of people who completed the survey and were not excluded was 55,7% (207 people). From the total number of participants, 28,99% were assigned to study 1 with Shower Gel, 19,81% to study 2 with Chocolate and 51,21% to the last study with Shower Gel.

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Most participants were Female (56,04%) and the percentage of Portuguese participants was 97,58%. Concerning ages, the range with more respondents was “Between 18 and 30 years old (69,57%), followed by “Between 41 and 50 years old” (9,66%) and by “Between 51 and 60 years old” (9,66%).

#### 4. RESULTS - STUDY 1 – SHOWER GEL

Across results sections, a figure illustrating all the variables involved in each dimension is provided to easier understand variables behavior and significant differences in paired comparisons are highlighted with “\*”. In Appendix G, tables with ANOVA results in detail are provided.

##### 4.1. H<sub>1</sub> – Brand Personality

H<sub>1</sub> was divided into two different hypotheses to understand firstly when do IA impact the creation of a BP, and secondly to which extent does IA work as a point of differentiation between PLBs and NBs. Analyses are conducted per dimension and include an approach to both hypotheses.

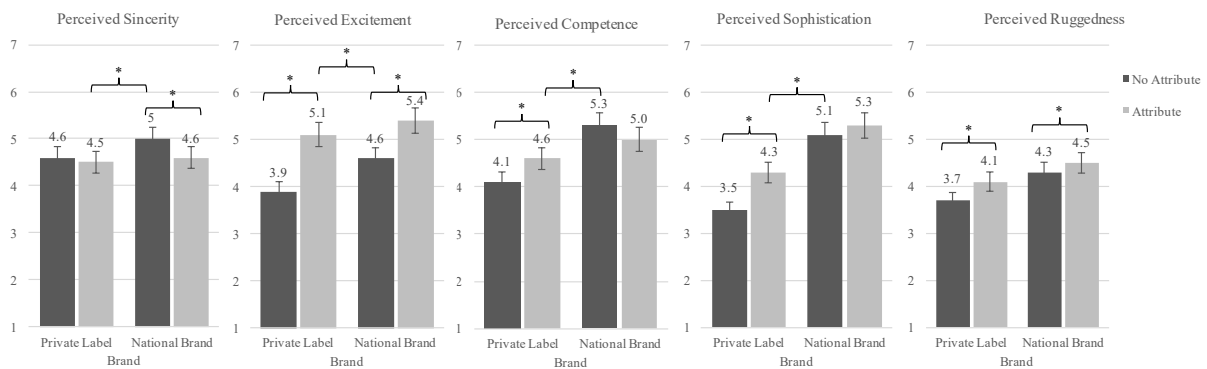


Figure 4 – Brand Personality Dimensions.

##### 4.1.1. Sincerity

When analysing the ANOVA, it is possible to observe that the only factor in which a significant impact was observed is Brand ( $F(1,60)=6.023, p=0.017, \eta_p^2=0.091$ ), meaning that Brand type affects consumers’ perceptions on a brand being more sincere. The main effect for Attribute and the interaction did not reach statistical significance meaning that the effect of brand type in Sincerity does not depend on the presence of IA. When analysing Brands’ effect, it is possible to observe that consumers tend to infer more sincerity to NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.81, SE_{NB}=0.13, M_{NB\_Regular}=4.99, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.11, M_{NB\_IA}=4.63, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.33$ ) over PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.50, SE_{PL}=0.15, M_{PL\_Regular}=4.55, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.34, M_{PL\_IA}=4.45, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.35$ ).

#### 4.1.2. Excitement

Excitement is the variable in which all the factors have an impact on the BP's dimension. Brand type ( $F(1,60)=17.972, p<0.001, \eta_p^2=0.230$ ) and Attribute ( $F(1,60)=42.009, p<0.001, \eta_p^2=0.412$ ) is are main effects on excitement's perception among consumers and the interaction between brand type and attribute ( $F(1,60)=5.791, p=0.019, \eta_p^2=0.088$ ) is significant.

After analysing both main effects, it is possible to observe that NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.01, SE_{NB}=0.13, M_{NB\_Regular}=4.61, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.24, M_{NB\_IA}=5.42, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.20$ ) are more exciting than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.48, SE_{PL}=0.16, M_{PL\_Regular}=3.89, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.44, M_{PL\_IA}=5.07, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.38$ ) and that products which feature an IA ( $M_{IA}=5.25, SE_{IA}=0.15, M_{NB\_IA}=5.42, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.20, M_{PL\_IA}=5.07, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.38$ ) are also perceived as more exciting than the ones which do not ( $M_{Regular}=4.25, SE_{Regular}=0.15, M_{NB\_Regular}=4.61, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.24, M_{PL\_Regular}=3.89, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.44$ ).

Finally, the most important differences are noticed when PLBs featuring IA are compared with both regular NBs and regular PLBs, the ones which include IA tend to be associated with more excitement ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.61, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.24, M_{PL\_IA}=5.07, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.38, t(60)=-2.232, p=0.029; M_{PL\_Regular}=3.89, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.44, M_{PL\_IA}=5.07, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.381, t(60)=-6.791, p<0.001$ ).

#### 4.1.3. Competence

Brand type ( $F(1,60)=40.711, p<0.001, \eta_p^2=0.404$ ) is the only main effect. Attribute did not reach statistical significance meaning that the effect of brand type in Competence does not depend on the presence of IA. The interaction between Brand and Attribute ( $F(1,60)=13.401, p=0.001, \eta_p^2=0.183$ ) is significant. ANOVA results suggest that NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.14, SE_{NB}=0.12, M_{NB\_Regular}=5.28, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.07, M_{NB\_IA}=5.00, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.17$ ) are always perceived as more competent than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.36, SE_{PL}=0.16, M_{PL\_Regular}=4.12, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.37, M_{PL\_IA}=4.60, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.44$ ).

However, the differences noticed reduce when PLBs feature IA against NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.28, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.07, M_{PL\_IA}=4.60, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.44, t(60)=4.314, p<0.001$ ). If considering the comparison between a PLB without and with IA, consumers infer more competence to the latter ( $M_{Regular}=4.70, SE_{Regular}=0.14, M_{IA}=4.80, SD_{IA}=0.15; M_{PL\_Regular}=4.12, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.37, M_{PL\_IA}=4.60, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.44, t(60)=-2.995, p=0.004$ ), something that proves that the presence of

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IA enhances BP regarding Competence. Moreover, this positive difference is only verified among PLBs since when considering NBs, perceived competence decreases ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.29$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.07$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.01$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.15$ ,  $t(61)=1.902$ ,  $p=0.062$ ).

### 4.1.4. Sophistication

All the variables are main effect on the consumers' perceived Sophistication. This means that Brand type ( $F(1,60)=63.594$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.515$ ) and IA's presence ( $F(1,60)=10.539$ ,  $p=0.002$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.149$ ) are both main effects and that the change on the effect of brand type when IA is present or not ( $F(1,60)=7.781$ ,  $p=0.007$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.115$ ) is significant.

NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.21$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.13$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.14$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.13$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.28$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.27$ ) tend to be preferred over PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.87$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.17$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.48$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.52$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.27$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.53$ ), independently of the IAs' presence ( $M_{Regular}=4.31$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.14$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.78$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.15$ ). Nonetheless, IAs only increase Sophistication significantly for PLBs ( $M_{PL\_IA}=4.27$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.53$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.48$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.52$ ,  $t(60)=3.818$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Another relevant input for PLBs it that the difference between a PLB featuring an IA and a regular NB is not significant, meaning PLBs do get closer to NBs in Sophistication perceptions ( $M_{PL\_IA}=5.07$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.38$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.19$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.13$ ,  $t(60)=-0.354$ ,  $p=0.725$ ).

### 4.1.5. Ruggedness

The factors Brand ( $F(1,60)=17.206$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.223$ ) and Attribute ( $F(1,60)=5.908$ ,  $p=0.018$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.090$ ) are main effects impacting the consumers' perceptions about Ruggedness. The interaction is also significant meaning that depending on whether the brand is a PLB or a NB and whether the products feature an IA or do not, perceptions change.

When analysing Brand's main effect, it is possible to conclude that consumers consider NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.38$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.16$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.30$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.42$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=4.46$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.42$ ) as more rugged than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.91$ ,  $SD_{PL}=0.16$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.69$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.41$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.13$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.43$ ). It is relevant to mention that when comparing regular NBs with PLBs featuring an IA, consumers do not perceive any significant differences ( $M_{Regular}=4.00$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.17$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.29$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.16$ ;  $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.30$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.42$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.13$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.43$ ,  $t(60)=1.502$ ,  $p=0.297$ ) suggesting that PLBs can use IA to be perceived as rugged as regular NBs.

#### 4.1.6. Competence and Sociability

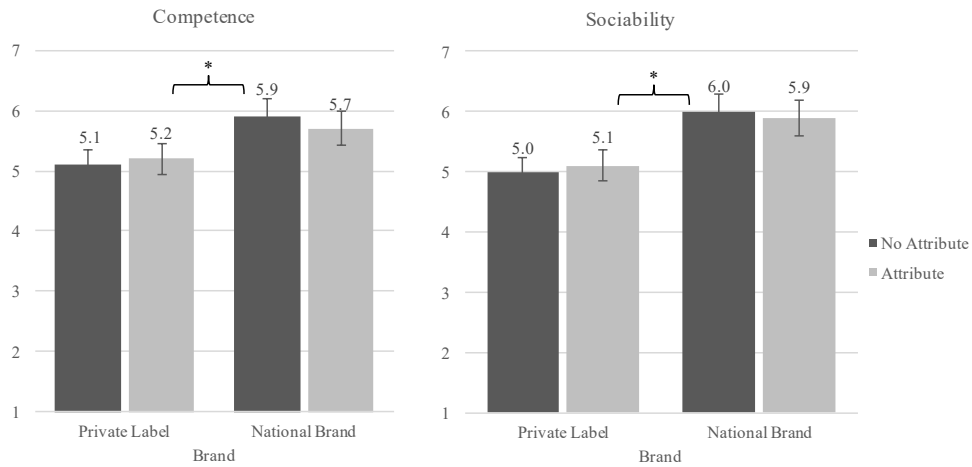


Figure 5 – Competence and Sociability Dimensions.

Concerning Competence, Brand ( $F(1,60)=29.780, p<0.001, \eta_p^2=0.332$ ) is a main effect and the interaction between Brand and Attribute ( $F(1,60)=4.226, p=0.044, \eta_p^2=0.066$ ) is significant. These findings suggest that Brand has an effect and that effect changes depending on if an IA is featured. When analysing Brand's main effect, it is possible to conclude that consumers consider NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.78, SE_{NB}=0.15, M_{NB\_Regular}=5.85, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.24, M_{NB\_IA}=5.71, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.34$ ) as more competent than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=5.17, SE_{PL}=0.15, M_{PL\_Regular}=5.09, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.34, M_{PL\_IA}=5.24, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.29$ )

Regarding Sociability, the only factor which constitutes a main effect is Brand ( $F(1,60)=43.493, p<0.001, \eta_p^2=0.420$ ), suggesting that consumers only perceive differences when Brand type varies. Consumers consider NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.52, SE_{NB}=0.16, M_{NB\_Regular}=5.96, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.29, M_{NB\_IA}=5.90, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.33$ ) as more sociable than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=5.46, SE_{PL}=0.15, M_{PL\_Regular}=4.95, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.42, M_{PL\_IA}=5.14, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.39$ ). Within Brand type, with and without IA, as observed regarding Competence, there are no significant differences.

## 4.2. H<sub>2</sub> – Perceived Value

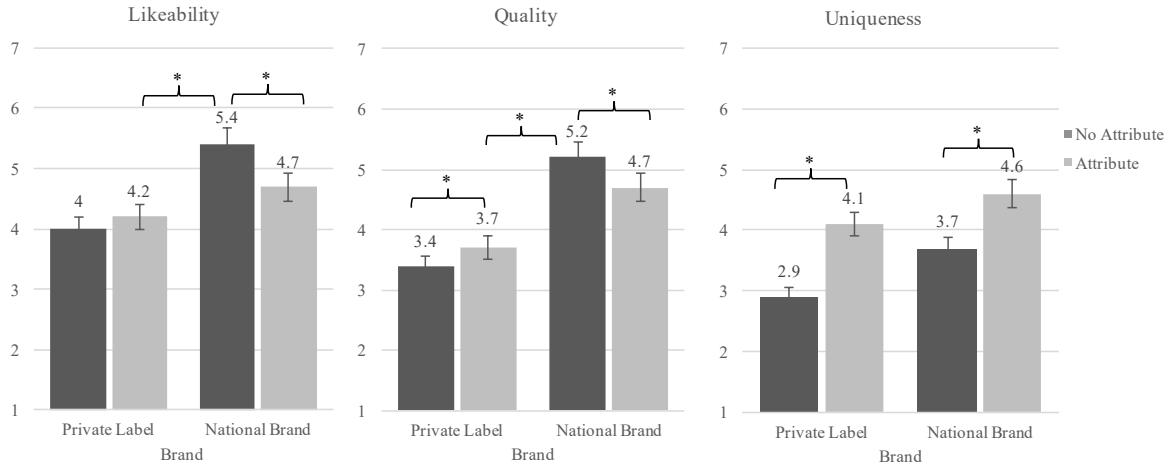


Figure 6 – Perceived Value.

### 4.2.1. Likeability

After analysing the ANOVA, it is possible to observe that there are two main factors affecting consumers' Likeability towards the different products in study. Brand ( $F(1,60)=28.668$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.323$ ) is a main effect and the interaction between Brand and Attribute ( $F(1,60)=14.185$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.033$ ) is significant. The interaction suggests that the effect brand type has on likeability is affected depending on if an IA is used.

When analysing the paired comparisons, it is possible to conclude that consumers tend to like more frequently NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.07$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.15$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.41$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.23$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=4.74$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.57$ ) than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.11$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.18$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=4.00$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.55$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.21$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.61$ ), independently of the presence of IA in either the products involved in the contrasts ( $M_{Regular}=4.71$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.15$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.48$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.17$ ). Nevertheless, there is a relevant phenomenon occurring when a regular NB is compared with one featuring an IA, where the IA has a negative impact on product likeability ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.37$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.26$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=4.71$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.57$ ,  $t(61)=3.139$ ,  $p=0.003$ ). The same did not happen concerning PLBs, where IAs' presence does not impact the likeability perception ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=4.00$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.55$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.21$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.61$ ,  $t(61)=1.166$ ,  $p=0.248$ ).



#### 4.2.2. Quality

Quality perceptions behave similarly to Likeability. Brand type ( $F(, 60)=44.682, p<0.001, \eta_p^2=0.427$ ) is a main effect and the interaction between Brand and Attribute ( $F(1, 60)=12.807, p=0.001, \eta_p^2=0.176$ ) is significant.

ANOVA reveals that NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.93, SE_{NB}=0.17, M_{NB\_Regular}=5.16, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.46, M_{NB\_IA}=4.69, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.59$ ) tend to be perceived as better than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.55, SE_{PL}=0.21, M_{PL\_Regular}=3.36, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.72, M_{PL\_IA}=3.74, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.70$ ), independently of the presence of IA in either one of the brand types involved in the comparison ( $M_{Regular}=4.26, SE_{Regular}=0.17, M_{IA}=4.21, SE_{IA}=0.17$ ). Moreover, a conclusion that is important to highlight is the difference in perceived quality between a regular PLB and one featuring an IA, where the latter is perceived as better ( $M_{PL\_IA}=3.74, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.70, M_{PL\_Regular}=3.36, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.72, t(60)=2.545, p=0.014$ ).

#### 4.2.3. Uniqueness

Uniqueness is affected by Brand ( $F(1,60)=16.756, p<0.001, \eta_p^2=0.208$ ) and Attribute ( $F(1,60)=24.689, p<0.001, \eta_p^2=0.292$ ), which are main effects. The interaction is not significant, which suggests that when either Brand type or Attribute change, uniqueness perceptions tends to remain equal.

ANOVA results show that NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.19, SE_{NB}=0.19, M_{NB\_Regular}=3.74, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.87, M_{NB\_IA}=4.64, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.79$ ) are perceived as more unique than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.51, SE_{PL}=0.20, M_{PL\_Regular}=2.92, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.80, M_{PL\_IA}=4.10, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.95$ ). Also, products that feature an IA ( $M_{IA}=4.37, SE_{IA}=0.21$ ) are perceived as more unique than its regular versions ( $M_{Regular}=3.33, SE_{Regular}=0.21$ ), which highlights IAs' positive impact.

There is only one last relevant contrast to mention when comparing a PLB with IA against a regular NB, where consumers do not perceive any significant differences meaning PLBs are perceived as unique as NBs when feature an IA ( $M_{PL\_IA}=4.10, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.95, M_{NB\_Regular}=3.74, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.87, t(60)=1.223, p<0.226$ ).

### 4.3. H<sub>3</sub> - Expected Hedonic Experience

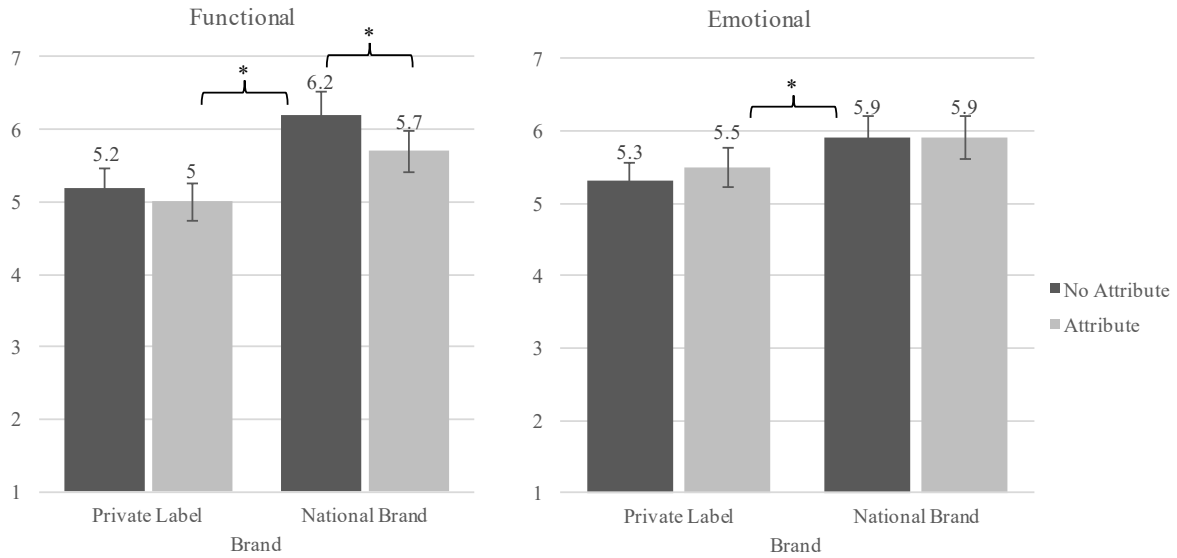


Figure 7 – Expected Hedonic Experience.

#### 4.3.1. Functional Attributes

Both Brand type ( $F(1,60)=41.881$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.411$ ) and Attribute ( $F(1,60)=11.130$ ,  $p=0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.156$ ) constitute main effects when assessing the functional EHE. The interaction between Brand and Attribute is also significant ( $F(1,60)=5.880$ ,  $p=0.018$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.089$ ) influence consumers' hedonic experience.

Consumers tend to expect more functionally from both regular PLBs ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=5.17$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.39$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=5.05$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.42$ ) and regular NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=6.25$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=0.79$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.70$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.09$ ) than from its versions that feature an IA ( $M_{Regular}=5.71$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.13$ ,  $M_{IA}=5.37$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.14$ ). Moreover, consumers still expect a more satisfying experience from NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.97$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.10$ ) than from PLBs ( $M_{PL}=5.11$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.17$ ). Nonetheless, an important conclusion is that while NBs with IA are penalized against regular NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=6.24$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=0.79$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.69$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.08$ ,  $t(61)=4.298$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), when considering PLBs the damage is null due to is not significant differences ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=5.20$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.40$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=5.02$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.43$ ,  $t(61)=-1.273$ ,  $p=0.208$ ).

#### 4.3.2. Emotional Attributes

The only main effect affecting the EHE concerning emotional attributes of the shower gel is Brand type ( $F(1,60)=22.134, p<0.001, \eta_p^2=0.269$ ). After analysing Brand factor, it is possible to observe that consumers do expect a more satisfying experience regarding emotional features when considering NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.92, SE_{NB}=0.10, M_{NB\_Regular}=5.94, SD_{NB\_Regular}=0.82, M_{NB\_IA}=5.92, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.12$ ) rather than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=5.39, SE_{PL}=0.11, M_{PL\_Regular}=5.27, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.19, M_{PL\_IA}=5.50, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.24$ ).

#### 4.4. H4 – Purchase Intentions

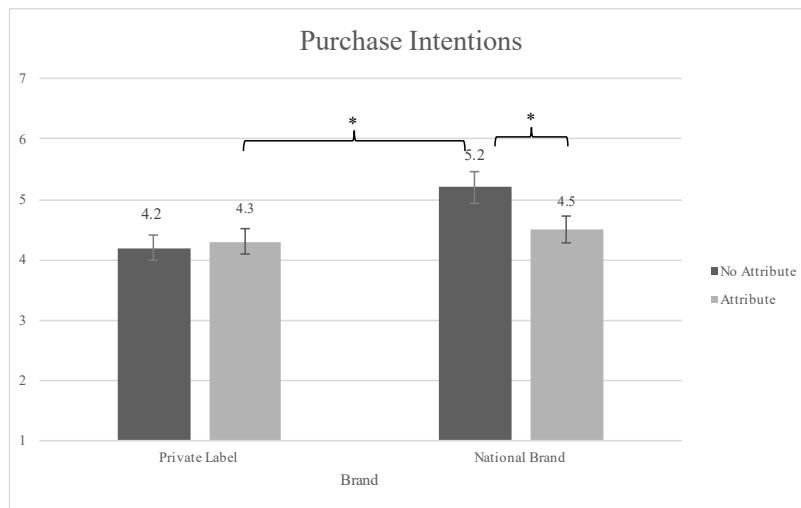


Figure 8 – Purchase Intentions.

Concerning Purchase Intentions, Brand ( $F(1,60)=8.853, p=0.004, \eta_p^2=0.129$ ) and Attribute ( $F(1,60)=3.908, p=0.053, \eta_p^2=0.269$ ) are considered main effects. The interaction between the two ( $F(1,60)=11.389, p<0.001, \eta_p^2=0.160$ ) is significant, which demands a deeper analysis.

As in other dimensions studied, Consumers tend to prefer NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.86, SE_{NB}=0.16, M_{NB\_Regular}=5.20, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.24, M_{NB\_IA}=4.51, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.63$ ) over PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.29, SE_{PL}=0.20, M_{PL\_Regular}=4.25, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.77, M_{PL\_IA}=4.33, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.70$ ). However, regarding purchase intentions, there is a major difference when IAs are used ( $M_{Regular}=4.72, SE_{Regular}=0.17, M_{IA}=4.42, SE_{IA}=0.17$ ) – while within PLBs IAs' impact is null, meaning consumers are equally likely to buy a PLB with or without IA ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=4.25, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.77, M_{PL\_IA}=4.33, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.70, t(60)=0.452, p=0.653$ ), when IA feature in NBs products, consumers are less willing to buy it ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.18, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.24, M_{NB\_IA}=4.50,$

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$SD_{NB\_IA}=1.62, t(60)=3.430, p=0.001$ ).

Additionally, when comparing a regular NB product and an IA of a PLB, differences are significant and consumers will always be more willing to buy the NB ( $M_{PL\_IA}=4.33, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.70, M_{NB\_Regular}=5.20, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.24, t(60)=-4.068, p<0.001$ ).

#### 4.5. H<sub>5</sub> – Willingness-to-Pay

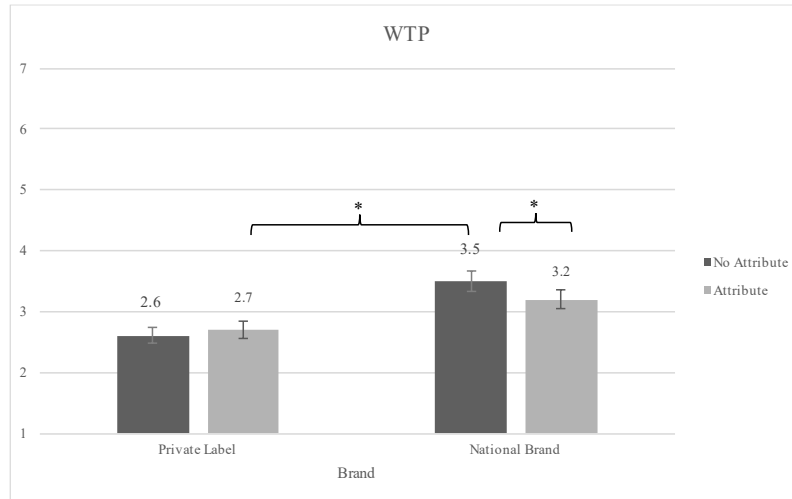


Figure 9 – WTP.

After conducting the analyses to understand to which extent the presence of IA increases consumers' WTP, it is possible to state that the main effect influencing consumers' WTP is Brand type ( $F(1, 60) = 50.578, p < 0.001, \eta_p^2 = 0.457$ ). The interaction between Brand type and the presence of an Attribute ( $F(1, 60) = 8.520, p = 0.005, \eta_p^2 = 0.124$ ) is significant, suggesting that the brand effect varies according to the presence or absence of IA.

A deeper analysis allows understanding that the brand type's effect favours NBs ( $M_{NB}=3.33, SE_{NB}=0.19$ ) against PLBs ( $M_{PL}=2.66, SE_{PL}=0.20$ ), meaning consumers are always willing to pay more for NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=3.45, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.55, M_{NB\_IA}=3.21, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.57, M_{PL\_Regular}=2.60, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.58, M_{PL\_IA}=2.72, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.58$ ), independently of IAs' presence. The difference between products with or without IA ( $M_{IA}=2.96, SE_{IA}=0.19, M_{Regular}=3.03, SE_{Regular}=0.20$ ) is only significant among NBs, where consumers tend to be willing to pay more for the regular version of the product ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=3.45, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.53, M_{NB\_IA}=3.22, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.55, t(61)=2.261, p=0.027$ ). Regarding PLBs, despite the positive difference favouring products featuring IA, this difference is not significant ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=2.61, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.58, M_{PL\_IA}=2.72, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.58, t(60)=1.102, p=0.275$ ).

#### 4.6. Conclusions

Concerning BP, Sincerity feelings about a brand are not boosted by IAs' presence. Moreover, if PLBs want to be sincerer than NBs, using IA is not efficient. Sincerity is the only variable that is not affected by IA. Competence and Sophistication feelings tend to be enhanced by PLBs when IAs are used. IAs' presence helps creating a personality and, consequently, increasing the identification with the brand. Despite this, IAs are not enough for customers to prefer PLBs over NBs, meaning that people still consider NBs more competent and sophisticated independently of IAs' presence and despite their positive impact on BP creation. Also, using IAs to enhance Competence is efficient for PLBs since NBs will damage their competence perceptions if using IA.

Concerning Ruggedness, besides helping PLBs' BP enhancement, results show that the presence of IA helps customers to perceive PLBs as more rugged.

Lastly, Excitement is the dimension where the presence of IA impacts both the creation of BP and constitutes a point of differentiation that favours PLBs over NBs. Furthermore, as shown in other variables, IA have a bigger impact in the way brands are perceived by their customers. Excitement is the variable that helps PLBs the most in overcoming NBs.

It is possible to conclude that  $H_{1.1}$  and  $H_{1.2}$  are verified, meaning PLBs can use IA both to enhance and to create a BP that fits their strategy (using Competence, Ruggedness, Sophistication and Excitement stimuli) and to differentiate themselves from NBs (using Excitement to overcome NBs perceptions and Ruggedness to match them).

Regarding Competence and Sociability, there are two main outputs to highlight. Firstly, there are no perceived differences when comparing products with or without IA within Brand type. Secondly, NBs are always perceived as more competent and more sociable than PLBs. Nonetheless, it is possible to observe a slight increase for PLBs when IA is used, despite not being significant. Inversely, when NBs feature IA, they become slightly less competent and sociable.

When assessing Perceive Value, Likeability and Quality behave similarly. IAs' presence does not allow PLBs to increase consumers' perceptions and differences between products with and without IA are not significant. However, when considering NBs, it was possible to observe that consumers perceive products featuring IA as worse and like them less than regular NBs'. Uniqueness is the only dimension in which there is a perceived positive

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difference within Brand type when an IA is used. Furthermore, if PLBs use IA, they manage to match regular NBs' perceived uniqueness. Hence, H<sub>2</sub> is only verified regarding Uniqueness.

IAs' presence tends to affect more NBs than PLBs concerning Functional attributes. Consumers expect a less satisfying experience when are shown a NBs with an IA compared with a regular one. PLBs are not affected, meaning consumers EHE is similar with or without IA and that they are not more demanding when facing an IA. Regarding Emotional attributes, consumers do not perceive any differences within Brand type. The only criteria that affects EHE is brand itself, with consumers expecting more from NBs. Hence, H<sub>3</sub> is verified.

Purchase Intentions and WTP, the last variables to be studied, show that within Brand type, there are only significant differences among NBs, meaning consumers intentions and WTP do not vary when IAs are used by PLBs but, when NBs resort to them, both intentions and WTP decrease, harming the brand. Therefore, H<sub>4</sub> is not verified and H<sub>5</sub> is verified.

## 5. RESULTS - STUDY 2 – CHOCOLATE

In Appendix H, tables with ANOVA results in detail are provided.

### 5.1. H<sub>1</sub> – Brand Personality

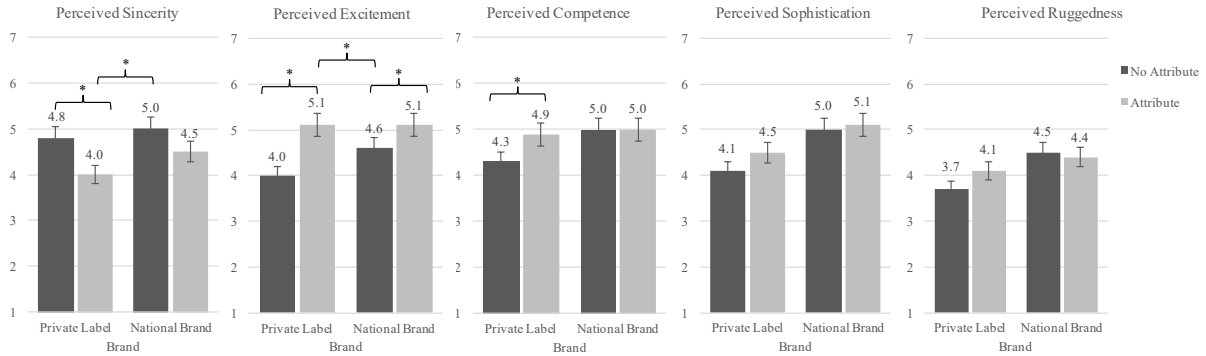


Figure 10 – Brand Personality Dimensions.

#### 5.1.1. Sincerity

When analysing the two factors in study, it is possible to observe that both Brand ( $F(1,35)=4.629, p=0.038, \eta_p^2=0.117$ ) and Attribute ( $F(1,35)=8.996, p=0.005, \eta_p^2=0.204$ ) are main effects. The interaction Brand and Attribute is not significant.

Findings suggest that the presence of IA damages consumers' perception ( $M_{Regular}=4.91, SE_{Regular}=0.21, M_{IA}=4.57, SE_{IA}=0.21$ ) on both PLBs' ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=4.83, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.49, M_{PL\_IA}=4.00, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.43$ ) and NBs' ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.99, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.33, M_{NB\_IA}=4.53, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.56$ ) sincerity. Moreover, NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.06, SE_{NB}=0.19$ ) are perceived as sincerer than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.42, SE_{PL}=0.21$ ). However, paired sample T-tests allow understanding that consumers infer less sincerity when IAs are used among PLBs ( $M_{PL\_IA}=4.00, SD_{PL\_IA}=1.43, M_{PL\_Regular}=4.83, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.49, t(35)=-3.360, p=0.002$ ) but not within NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.91, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.31, M_{NB\_IA}=4.50, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.51, t(42)=1.773, p=0.083$ ).

#### 5.1.2. Excitement

Excitement is a dimension which is only influenced by one main effect: Attribute presence ( $F(1,35)=13.884, p=0.001, \eta_p^2=0.284$ ). Both Brand type and the interaction between it and attribute are not significant.

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When exploring the impact that attribute presence has on Excitement perceptions, it is possible to conclude that when IAs are used, both PLBs ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.99$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.76$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=5.08$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.49$ ) and NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.58$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.71$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.14$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.38$ ) are perceived as more exciting than its regular versions ( $M_{Regular}=4.29$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.26$ ,  $M_{IA}=5.11$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.21$ ).

Since Brand factor's effect was so close to 0.005, a paired sample T-test was conducted to better understand this phenomenon. Results showed that when no IA is featuring, consumers do infer more excitement to NBs ( $M_{PL}=4.54$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.24$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.93$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.78$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.69$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.69$ ,  $t(39)=-3.208$ ,  $p=0.003$ ). However, when comparing a regular NB with a PLB featuring an IA, attribute's presence allows PLBs to overcome NBs on Excitement ( $M_{NB}=4.86$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.22$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.50$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.71$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=5.07$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.46$ ,  $t(39)=-1.961$ ,  $p=0.005$ ).

### 5.1.3. Competence

Considering Competence, Brand type ( $F(1,35)=6.035$ ,  $p=0.019$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.147$ ) is a main effect influencing consumers inferences about brand's Competence. The interaction between Brand type and the presence of IA ( $F(1, 35)=4.106$ ,  $p=0.050$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.105$ ) is significant.

When investigating deeper the main effects, it is possible to conclude that NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.97$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.39$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.01$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.43$ ) tend to be perceived as more competent than PLBs ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=4.28$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.45$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.85$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.61$ ).

The interaction being significant suggests that IA's impact depends on brand type. Generally, consumers believe that PLBs are less competent ( $M_{PL}=4.56$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.23$ ,  $M_{NB}=4.99$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.21$ ), as well as products which feature IAs ( $M_{Regular}=4.63$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.21$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.93$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.23$ ). Paired comparisons reveal that within PLBs, consumers tend to infer more competence to the product that incorporates an IA ( $M_{PL\_IA}=4.85$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.61$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=4.28$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.45$ ,  $t(35)=2.762$ ,  $p=0.009$ ). The same phenomenon is not verified regarding NBs, where using an IA is not useless due no not significant differences ( $M_{NB}=4.99$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.21$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.81$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.48$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=4.93$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.43$ ,  $t(42)=-0.587$ ,  $p=0.560$ ).

Moreover, when a regular NB is compared with a PLB that features an IA, differences become not significant ( $M_{PL\_IA}=4.79$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.61$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=1.89$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.42$ ,  $t(37)=-0.408$ ,



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$p=0.686$ ), highlighting the impact that the presence of IA has on allowing PLBs to be perceived as much competent as NBs.

### 5.1.4. Sophistication

Concerning BP's dimension Sophistication, only Brand proved to have a main effect on consumers' perceptions ( $F(1,35)=12.899$ ,  $p=0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.269$ ). Both Attribute and the interaction between brand and attribute are not significant, suggesting that the presence of IA does not have a significant impact on perceptions ( $M_{Regular}=4.54$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.22$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.79$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.25$ ) and that Brand factor's effect will not change as Attribute factor changes.

After conducting a paired comparison to explore the brand effect, it is possible to state that NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.06$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.22$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.01$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.44$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.11$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.64$ ) tend to be associated with more sophistication than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.26$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.27$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=4.06$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.57$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.46$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.98$ ).

### 5.1.5. Ruggedness

Ruggedness is a dimension that behaves similarly to Sophistication. The only main effect is related with the Brand Type ( $F(1,35)=12.899$ ,  $p=0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.269$ ), leading to the conclusion that brands will not be able to use IA to differentiate ( $M_{Regular}=4.10$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.24$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.25$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.22$ ). However, analysing the interaction allows understanding that NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.44$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.22$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.49$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.62$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=4.40$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.32$ ) tend to be considered as more rugged than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.91$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.23$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.72$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.42$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.10$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.64$ ).

Nonetheless, when regular NBs are compared with PLBs featuring IAs, differences proved to be not significant, suggesting that by using IA, PLBs can be perceived as rugged as NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.39$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.63$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.05$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.62$ ,  $t(37)=1.713$ ,  $p=0.095$ ).

### 5.1.6. Competence and Sociability

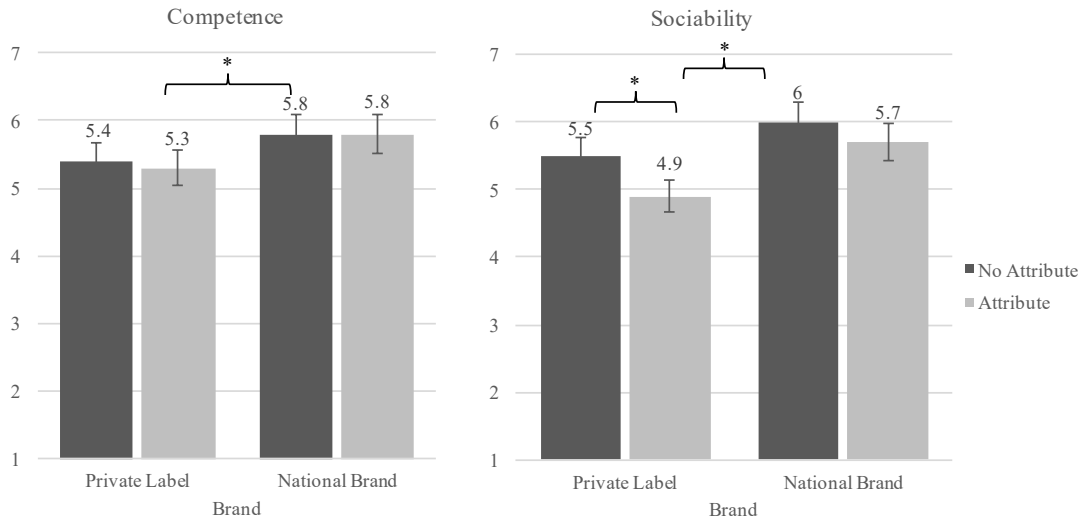


Figure 11 – Competence and Sociability.

When assessing Competence dimension, it is possible to verify that Brand is the only main effect influencing consumers' perceptions ( $F(1,35)=6.073$ ,  $p=0.019$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.148$ ). This suggests that consumers do not perceive differences related with IA ( $M_{Regular}=5.63$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.18$ ,  $M_{IA}=5.54$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.18$ ). ANOVA results reveal that consumers believe NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.79$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.20$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.82$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.29$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.75$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.29$ ) are more competent than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=5.38$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.17$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=5.43$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.15$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=5.33$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.13$ ).

Concerning Sociability, consumers' perceptions are influenced by two main effects: Brand ( $F(1,35) = 13.325$ ,  $p=0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = 0.276$ ) and Attributes' presence ( $F(1,35) = 11.781$ ,  $p=0.002$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.252$ ). The interaction between the latter is not significant.

Paired comparison reveal that, once again, consumers tend to consider NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.83$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.21$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.96$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.20$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.69$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.43$ ) as more social than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=5.20$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.21$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=5.50$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.19$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.90$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.49$ ). Furthermore, IAs' presence tends to have a negative effect since consumers' perceptions on sociability decrease when compared to products regular versions of both brand types ( $M_{Regular}=5.73$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.18$ ,  $M_{IA}=5.30$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.21$ ).

## 5.2.H2 – Perceived Value

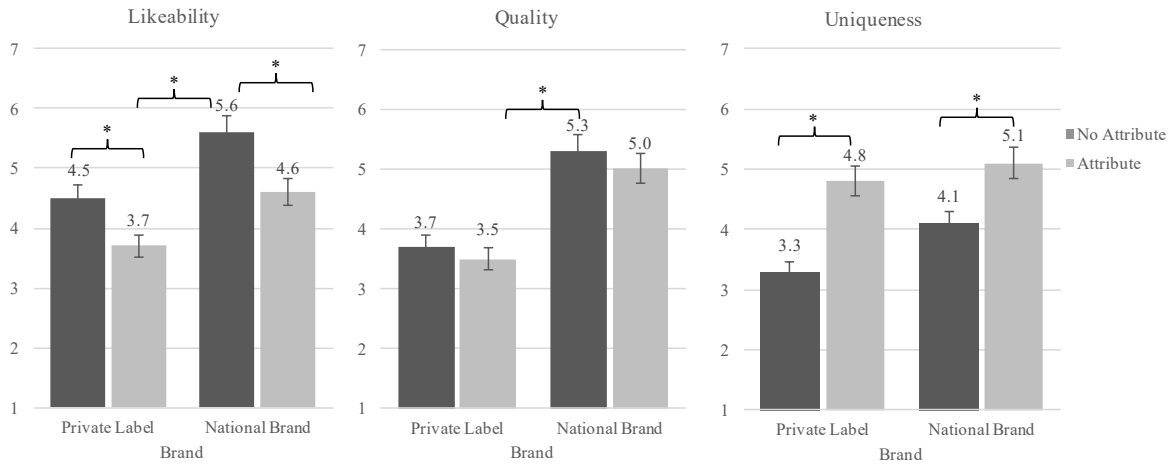


Figure 12 – Perceived Value.

### 5.2.1. Likeability

When assessing the impact of the presence of IA on the Perceived Value regarding Likeability, it is possible to conclude both Brand type ( $F(1,35)=25.780$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.424$ ) and Attribute's presence ( $F(1,35) =11.001$ ,  $p=0.003$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.239$ ) are main effects. However, the interaction between them is not significant suggesting that when brand type changes, results are stable and are not affected by IAs' presence ( $M_{Regular}=5.04$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.26$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.17$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.23$ ).

When exploring these main effects deeper, it is possible to observe that NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.11$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.21$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.58$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.63$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=4.64$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.74$ ) tend to preferred over PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.10$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.24$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=4.50$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.77$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=3.69$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.65$ ), independently of the presence of IAs.

### 5.2.2. Quality

Regarding what people expect in terms of Quality, the only main effect verified is Brand type ( $F(1,35)=50.909$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.593$ ). When exploring this effect more intensely, it becomes clear that the only variable that has impact in quality perceptions indicates NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.14$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.23$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.31$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.49$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=4.97$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.61$ ) tend to be preferred over PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.58$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.25$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.69$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.82$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=3.47$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.65$ ). The presence of IA does not impact Quality perceptions ( $M_{Regular}=4.50$ ,

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$SE_{Regular}=0.25$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.33$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.22$ ), damaging PLBs if they decide include IAs to fight regular NBs in the market ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.29$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.45$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=3.42$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.62$ ,  $t(37)=6.552$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

### 5.2.3. Uniqueness

Concerning Uniqueness, both Brand type ( $F(1,35)=6.943$ ,  $p=0.012$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.166$ ) and Attribute's presence ( $F(1,35)=10.484$ ,  $p=0.003$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.057$ ) are main effects.

ANOVA results show that NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.64$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.24$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.14$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.97$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.14$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.73$ ) tend to be perceived as more unique than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.06$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.25$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.28$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=2.07$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.83$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=2.06$ ). Additionally, it is also possible to conclude that when a brand features an IA, it tends to be perceived as more unique ( $M_{Regular}=3.71$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.31$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.99$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.27$ ). A relevant conclusion to highlight is that when both brands feature an IA, the differences are not significant, meaning that PLBs are able to match NBs' in perceived Uniqueness ( $M_{PL\_IA}=4.80$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=2.07$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.03$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.80$ ,  $t(41)=-.650$ ,  $p=0.520$ ).

### 5.3. H<sub>3</sub> – Expected Hedonic Experience

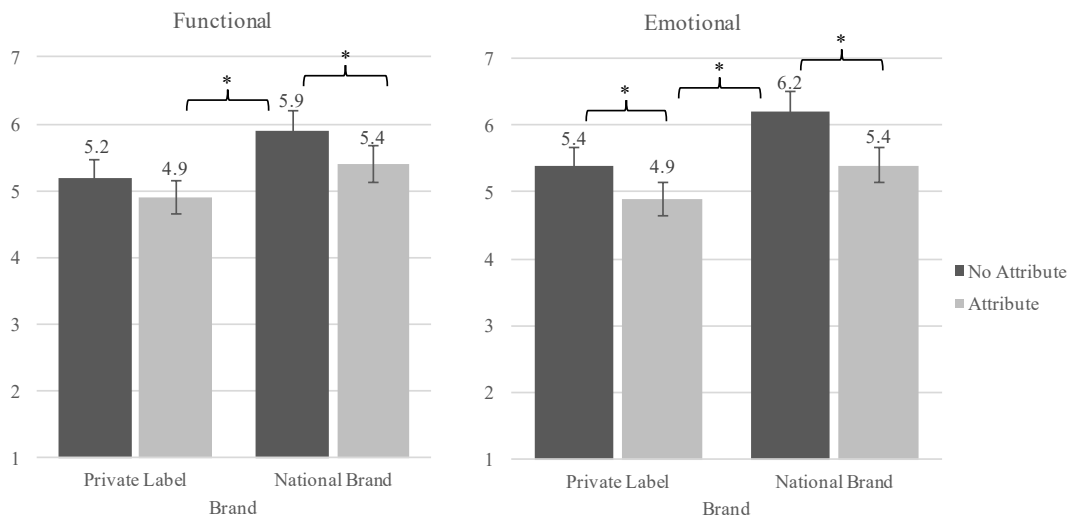


Figure 13 – Expected Hedonic Experience.

#### 5.3.1. Functional Attributes

When assessing the impact that IA have on the EHE concerning functional characteristics, it is possible to observe a similar phenomenon to the one verified regarding emotional attributes.

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Both Brand type ( $F(1,35)=17.958$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.339$ ) and Attribute ( $F(1,35)=5.795$ ,  $p=0.021$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.142$ ) are main effects affecting the EHE.

After exploring the differences deeper through a paired sample t-Test, it is possible to conclude something similar to what is verified for Emotional product characteristics: consumers tend to expect a more satisfying experience from NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.63$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.16$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.89$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.05$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.38$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.12$ ) than from PLBs ( $M_{PL}=5.02$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.19$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=5.18$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.19$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.86$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.39$ ), independently of the incorporation of IAs.

Within Brand type ( $M_{Regular}=5.53$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.17$ ,  $M_{IA}=5.12$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.19$ ), differences are only significant among NBs, where the experience when IA is present decreases its levels ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.79$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.19$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.36$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.10$ ,  $t(42)=2.490$ ,  $p=0.017$ ). Consumers' expectations about PLBs do not vary when IA are present ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=5.18$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.20$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.86$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.40$ ,  $t(35)=1.560$ ,  $p=0.128$ ).

### 5.3.2. Emotional Attributes

When assessing to which extent do IA impact the EHE concerning emotional attributes, the two main effects affecting customers' experience are Brand type ( $F(1,35)=14.533$ ,  $p=0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.294$ ) and Attribute ( $F(1,35)=11.565$ ,  $p=0.002$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.248$ ). As verified with functional attributes, the interaction is not significant.

When investigation the differences by conducting a paired sample t-Test, it is possible to conclude that consumers do expect more from NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.99$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.14$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=6.22$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=0.91$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.38$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.12$ ) than from PLBs ( $M_{PL}=5.16$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.20$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=5.38$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.33$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.94$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.38$ ), independently of the usage of IA.

Nonetheless, Attribute's main effect suggests that using an IA turns consumers less demanding ( $M_{Regular}=5.80$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.17$ ,  $M_{IA}=5.36$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.18$ ), meaning that using IA leads to a EHE - differences are significant for both PLBs ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=5.38$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.33$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.94$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.28$ ,  $t(35)=1.995$ ,  $p=0.054$ ) and NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=6.18$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=0.96$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=5.36$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.10$ ,  $t(42)=4.068$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

#### 5.4. H4 - Purchase Intentions

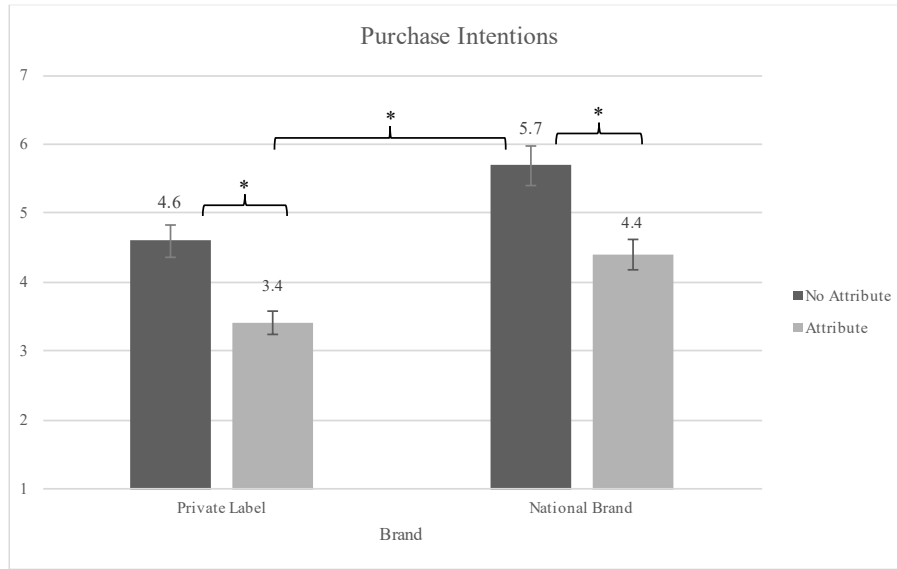


Figure 14 – Purchase Intentions.

When analysing Likelihood to Buy, it is noticeable that both that both Brand type ( $F(1,35)=22.010$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.386$ ) and Attribute ( $F(1,35)=28.929$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.453$ ) affect the amount consumers are available to pay for a chocolate. The interaction between both is not significant.

When exploring this main effect, data shows that both differences between brand and attribute's presence are significant but favour NBs, meaning consumers' purchase intentions are higher for NBs ( $M_{NB}=5.03$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.22$ ,  $M_{NB\_Regular}=5.67$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.39$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=4.39$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.84$ ) than for PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.00$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.25$ ,  $M_{PL\_Regular}=4.56$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.72$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=3.44$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.72$ ). Furthermore, IA's presence does not help PLBs to match or overcome NBs. In fact, Attributes' main effect indicates that consumers are less likely to buy products that feature IA ( $M_{Regular}=5.11$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.24$ ,  $M_{IA}=3.92$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.23$ ).

**5.5. H<sub>5</sub> – Willingness-to-Pay**

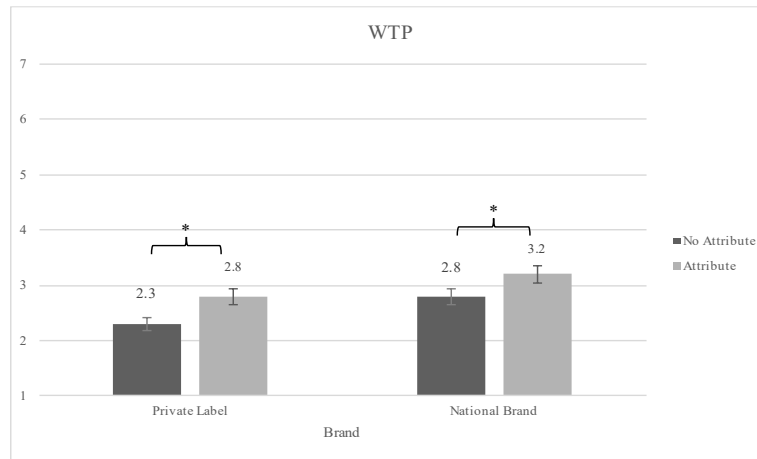


Figure 15 – Willingness-to-Pay.

When analysing WTP, it is noticeable that the only factor that affects the amount consumers are available to pay for a product is Attribute’s presence ( $F(1,35)=8.712, p=0.006, \eta_p^2=0.199$ ). Brand type does not impact WTP ( $M_{PL}=2.54, SE_{PL}=0.34, M_{NB}=2.09, SE_{NB}=0.26$ ).

When exploring this main effect ( $M_{Regular}=2.54, SE_{Regular}=0.26, M_{IA}=2.80, SE_{IA}=0.30$ ), data shows that consumers’ WTP increases when IA are used for both NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=2.79, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.55, M_{NB\_IA}=3.17, SD_{NB\_IA}=1.80$ ) and PLBs ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=2.28, SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.83, M_{PL\_IA}=2.80, SD_{PL\_IA}=2.38$ ). Moreover, the difference between regular NBs and PLBs featuring an IA is not significant, suggesting that by including an IA, PLBs match consumers’ WTP for regular NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=2.71, SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.55, M_{PL\_IA}=2.70, SD_{PL\_IA}=2.36, t(37)=0.043, p=0.966$ ).

**5.6. Conclusions**

As verified previously when conducting the same study with a different product category, Sincerity is a dimension that is not impacted by the presence of IA neither concerning the creation or improvement of BP, nor constituting a point of differentiation – NBs tend to be perceived as sincerer. Moreover, in study 2 was possible to observe that PLBs sincerity perceptions are damaged by the presence of IA, decreasing when compared to products without IA.

Competence is a dimension that affects positively BP but do not allow PLBs to differentiate themselves from NBs. Nevertheless, despite not allowing differentiation, IA’s presence helps PLBs to be perceived as competent as NBs. Sophistication, a dimension that previously had

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impact in BP creation, did not allow neither BP enhancement, nor differentiation by featuring IAs.

Excitement, as it has happened in Study 1, is a dimension where IAs' presence positively affects BP's creation and allows to differentiate PLBs from NBs. Finally, Ruggedness did not allow the creation or enhancement of BP, contrarily to the first study, where consumers inferred differences in ruggedness when IAs were used.

It is possible to conclude that  $H_{1.1}$  and  $H_{1.2}$  are verified, meaning PLBs can use IA both to enhance and to create a BP that fits their strategy (using Competence and Excitement stimuli) and to differentiate themselves from NBs (using Excitement stimuli).

Regarding Competence and Sociability, there is only one main difference to point out. In the first study, both dimensions were not impacted by IAs' presence. Nonetheless, in study 2, it was possible to observe that the same is verified concerning Competence but when considering Sociability, there was a significant difference impacting PLBs negatively, meaning that IAs' presence tends to damage sociability perceptions.

Likeability and Quality behave similarly to study 1. There is only one main difference regarding Chocolate suggesting that among PLBs and NBs, IAs' presence tends to damage Likeability. The differences are significant in Likeability for both brands, suggesting that consumers tend to prefer regular product versions. Regarding Quality, differences are not significant, meaning consumers do not perceive differences when comparing a regular product and one with IA. Hence, Uniqueness is, as in study 1, the only variable which is positively impacted by the presence of IA.  $H_2$  is only verified for Uniqueness.

IA's impact on consumers EHE regarding Functional attributes behaves similarly to what was verified in the first study- consumers expect less from brands that feature IAs. Considering Emotional characteristics, where there were no perceived differences among consumers, the differences between using or not using an IA become significant with consumers expecting less from brands that feature IAs. Moreover, independently of IAs' presence, consumers always expect more from NBs. Hence,  $H_3$  is verified.

Purchase Intentions and WTP, reveal that within brand type, differences are significant for both brand types, something that was not verified in the first study, where differences were only perceived among NBs. Consumers are willing to pay more for products that feature IA, even though purchase intentions show the opposite – when IA are present, intentions decrease. Therefore,  $H_4$  is not verified and  $H_5$  is verified.



## 6. RESULTS - STUDY 3 – SHOWER GEL

In Appendix I, tables with ANOVA results in detail are provided.

### 6.1. H1- Brand Personality

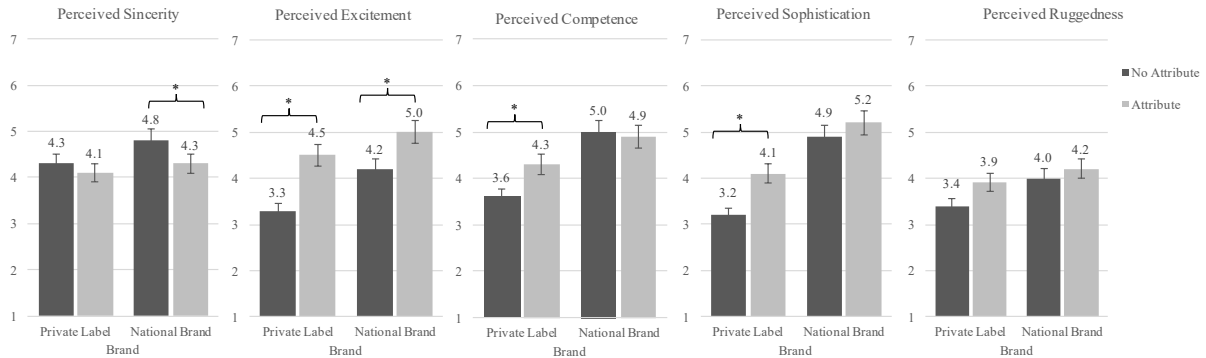


Figure 16 - Brand Personality Dimensions.

#### 6.1.1. Sincerity

Brand type is presented as a main effect in Sincerity perception about a product ( $F(1,104)=6.187$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.386$ ). Contrarily, the interaction between Brand and Attribute is not significant, suggesting that Brand effect is not impacted by the presence or absence of IA. Additionally, attribute's presence is not significant meaning it has no impact on consumers' perceptions about Sincerity ( $M_{Regular}=4.20$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.13$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.58$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.18$ ). Consumers tend to prefer NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.57$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.13$ ) over PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.21$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.14$ ).

#### 6.1.2. Excitement

As showed in Sincerity, Brand factor is presented as a main effect in Excitement perception about a brand ( $F(1,104)=22.558$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.224$ ). Contrarily, the interaction between Brand and Attribute is not significant, suggesting that Brand effect is not impacted by the presence or absence of IA – NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.60$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.11$ ) are perceived as more exciting than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.91$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.12$ ). Nevertheless, the major difference emerges when analysing the tests of Between Subjects - Attribute's presence is significant ( $F(1,104)=20.872$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.167$ ) and allows to conclude that the differences ( $M_{Regular}=3.77$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.17$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.74$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.12$ ) are significant both within PLBs ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.32$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.22$ ,

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$M_{PL\_IA}=4.50$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.31$ ,  $t(104)=-4.501$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.22$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.05$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=4.97$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.14$ ,  $t(104)=-3.291$ ,  $p=0.001$ ). IA's presence allows brands to be perceived as more exciting and allows PLB to increase excitement perceptions to similar levels as NBs.

### 6.1.3. Competence

Competence is a dimension in which Brand ( $F(1,104)=22.558$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.224$ ) and the interaction of Brand with Attribute ( $F(1,104)=2.961$ ,  $p=0.003$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.224$ ) are both significant. Attribute, tends to have no effect on consumers' perceptions about Competence ( $M_{Regular}=4.31$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.19$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.61$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.14$ ). Generally, NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.96$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.13$ ) tend to be perceived as more competent than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.96$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.14$ ). IA's presence is only efficient among PLBs, where Competence perceptions increase when an IA is featuring ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.64$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.34$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.29$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.33$ ,  $t(104)=-2.364$ ,  $p=0.020$ ).

### 6.1.4. Sophistication

Regarding Sophistication perceptions, the ANOVA test allowed to observe that Brand ( $F(1,104)=101.186$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.493$ ) is a main effect and the interaction between Brand and Attribute's presence ( $F(1,104)=4.849$ ,  $p=0.030$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.045$ ) is significant. Moreover, Sophistication is the second dimension in which attributes' presence is significant to consumers' perceptions ( $F(1,104)=8.368$ ,  $p=0.005$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.074$ ). NBs are perceived as more sophisticated ( $M_{NB}=5.07$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.12$ ) than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.63$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.14$ ), so as brands that feature an IA ( $M_{IA}=4.68$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.13$ ,  $M_{Regular}=4.03$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.18$ ). Independent sample T-tests allow understanding that IA's presence is only efficient among PLBs, where Sophistication perceptions increase when an IA is featuring ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.15$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.21$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.11$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.44$ ,  $t(104)=-3.424$ ,  $p=0.001$ ).

### 6.1.5. Ruggedness

Brand factor is outlined as a main effect in Ruggedness perception about a brand ( $F(1,104)=15.207$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.128$ ) and reveals that consumers tend to consider NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.08$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.12$ ) more rugged than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.64$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.12$ ). Contrarily, the interaction between Brand and Attribute is not significant, suggesting that Brand effect is not impacted by the presence or absence of IA. When analysing the tests of Between Subjects,

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Attribute's presence is not significant meaning it has no impact on consumers' perceptions about Sincerity ( $M_{Regular}=3.69$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.17$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.03$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.12$ ).

### 6.2. H<sub>2</sub>/H<sub>3</sub> - Perceived Value and EHE

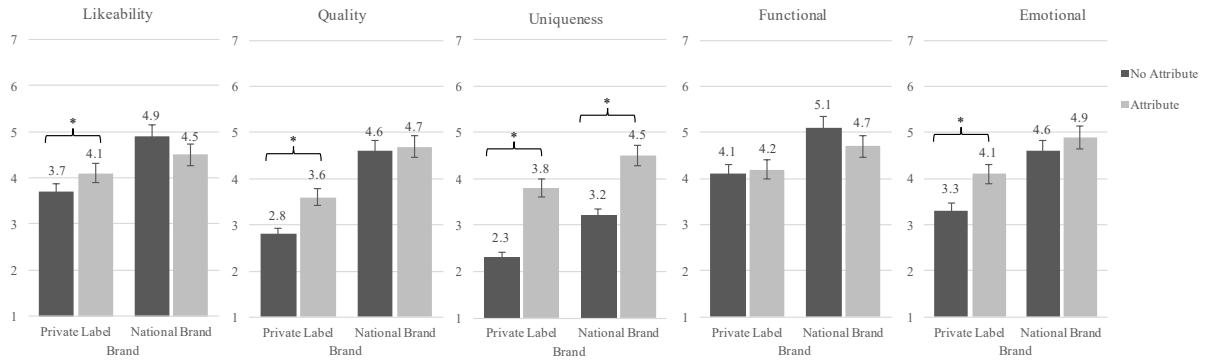


Figure 17 – Perceived Value and EHE.

#### 6.2.1. Likeability

Consumers perceived value concerning Likeability, Brand ( $F(1,104)=37.037$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.206$ ) is a main effect and the interaction between Brand and Attribute ( $F(1,104)=8.536$ ,  $p=0.004$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.076$ ) is significant. IAs' presence is not significant, suggesting that only brand type is influencing customers' preferences. Globally, consumers tend to like more NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.68$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.15$ ) than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.90$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.14$ ). However, there are differences when an IA is used regarding Likeability ( $M_{Regular}=4.28$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.20$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.30$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.14$ ). There is positive difference among PLBs ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=2.75$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.32$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=3.60$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.37$ ,  $t(104)=-3.070$ ,  $p=0.003$ ) and a not significant but negative among NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=4.64$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.59$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=4.74$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.41$ ,  $t(104)=-0.344$ ,  $p=0.731$ ).

#### 6.2.2. Quality

Quality perceptions behave similarly to Likeability. Nevertheless, despite Brand ( $F(1,104)=97.065$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.483$ ) being a main effect and the interaction ( $F(1,104)=6.616$ ,  $p=0.017$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.053$ ) significant, regarding Quality, attributes' presence ( $M_{Regular}=3.69$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.20$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.17$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.14$ ) is also affecting consumers' inferences ( $F(1,104)=3.773$ ,  $p=0.055$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.035$ ). Despite that consumers tend to associate NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.69$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.15$ ) with more quality than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.18$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.14$ ), an independent sample T-test allows to better understand how quality perceptions behave: among PLBs, using

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IA increases significantly consumers inferences ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=2.75$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.32$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=3.60$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.37$ ,  $t(104)=-3.070$ ,  $p=0.003$ ). The same is not verified among NBs, in which the presence of an IA does not impact customer's preferences.

### 6.2.3. Uniqueness

Uniqueness perceptions are influenced by Brand type ( $F(1,104)=32.751$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.239$ ) and by the presence of an IA ( $F(1,104)=22.584$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.178$ ). Consumers tend to consider NBs ( $M_{NB}=3.86$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.17$ ) as more unique than PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.06$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.16$ ). Generally, IAs' presence increases uniqueness ( $M_{Regular}=2.76$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.24$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.16$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.17$ ). Comparing means allows confirming that using an IA allows both PLBs ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=2.31$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.06$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=3.81$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.76$ ,  $t(104)=-2.145$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=3.22$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.33$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=4.50$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.73$ ,  $t(104)=-1.278$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) to increase Uniqueness perceptions.

### 6.2.4. Functional EHE

Results show that Brand is the only main effect ( $F(1,104)=22.733$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.179$ ). Consumers tend to expect more from NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.87$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.15$ ) than from PLBs ( $M_{PL}=4.18$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.15$ ), independently of IAs usage. Within Brands, no differences are significant meaning consumers do not perceive differences when IA are used ( $M_{Regular}=4.61$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.22$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.44$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.16$ ).

### 6.2.5. Emotional EHE

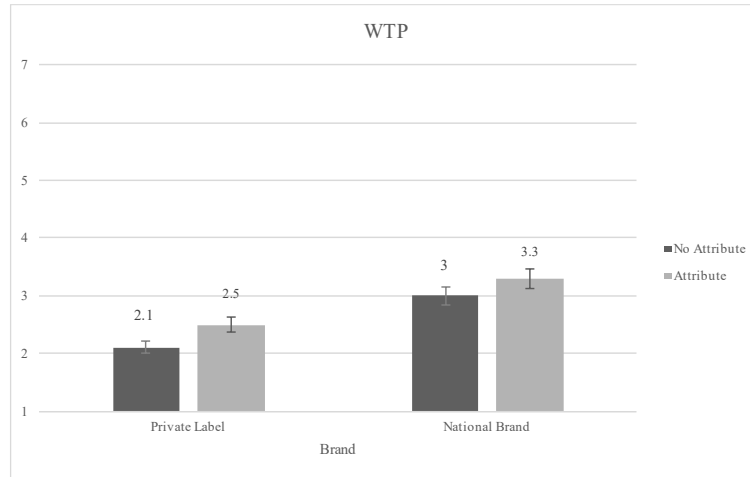
Results reveal that Brand ( $F(1,104)=41.941$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.287$ ) and Attribute ( $F(1,104)=5.235$ ,  $p=0.024$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.048$ ) are main effects, while the interaction between both is not significant, suggesting that Brand or Attribute effects do not change when the other variable changes.

The difference in perceived EHE between a brand with and without IA is only significant among PLBs, suggesting an increase when IA is present ( $M_{Regular}=3.93$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.20$ ,  $M_{IA}=4.49$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.14$ ) and meaning consumers do expect a more satisfying experience when IAs feature ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=3.31$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=1.28$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=4.11$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.48$ ,  $t(104)=-2.783$ ,  $p=0.006$ ). Differences between NBs are not significant meaning that customers' expectations about their products do not change when an IA is used. Nonetheless, generally, consumers

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tend to expect a more satisfying experience from NBs ( $M_{NB}=4.71$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.14$ ) than they do from PLBs ( $M_{PL}=3.71$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.15$ ).

**6.3.H5 - Willingness-to-Pay**



*Figure 18 – Willingness-to-Pay.*

Concerning WTP, Brand is the only main effect influencing how much consumers are willing to pay for products  $F(1,104)=145.549$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $\eta_p^2=0.583$ ). Differences within Brand are not significant ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=2.08$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=0.85$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=2.53$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.39$ ,  $t(104)=-1.776$ ,  $p=0.202$ ;  $M_{NB\_Regular}=2.98$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.04$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=3.32$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.46$ ,  $t(104)=-1.209$ ,  $p=0.189$ ). Attributes' main effect reveals that despite availability to pay more for NBs ( $M_{NB}=3.15$ ,  $SE_{NB}=0.14$ ) than for PLBs ( $M_{PL}=2.31$ ,  $SE_{PL}=0.13$ ), once IAs feature, consumers' WTP increases ( $M_{Regular}=2.54$ ,  $SE_{Regular}=0.21$ ,  $M_{IA}=2.93$ ,  $SE_{IA}=0.15$ ) for both NBs ( $M_{NB\_Regular}=2.99$ ,  $SD_{NB\_Regular}=1.04$ ,  $M_{NB\_IA}=3.32$ ,  $SD_{NB\_IA}=1.46$ ) and PLBs ( $M_{PL\_Regular}=2.08$ ,  $SD_{PL\_Regular}=0.85$ ,  $M_{PL\_IA}=2.53$ ,  $SD_{PL\_IA}=1.39$ ).

**6.4. Conclusions**

The conclusions that can be withdrawn from study 3 regarding BP are very similar to the ones verified in study 1. IAs' presence allows PLBs to increase perceived Excitement, Competence and Sophistication (where IA are not significant among NBs), even though Excitement is the only dimension in which using IA allows PLBs to be perceived similarly to NBs. In Ruggedness, there are no significant differences meaning that using IA does not impact consumers' perceptions. Sincerity, which did not have any impact in the first study and

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damaged only PLBs in study 2, harms only NBs in the last study, where the only significant difference is between a regular NB and another featuring IA.

It is possible to conclude that  $H_{1.1}$  and  $H_{1.2}$  are verified, meaning PLBs can use IA both to enhance and to create a BP that fits their strategy (using Competence, Excitement and Sophistication stimuli) and to differentiate themselves from NBs (using Excitement stimuli).

Likeability, Quality and Uniqueness also behave similarly to what was previously observed. Despite not significant, differences were noticed in Likeability concerning PLBs, who look to benefit from IAs usage, while NBs would be harmed if the difference was significant. Quality is impacted only among PLBs, where using IAs tend to increase quality perceptions. About Uniqueness, as previously witnessed, IAs allow both brands to increase their perceptions. Therefore,  $H_2$  is verified concerning Quality and Uniqueness.

Results prove that regarding Functional EHE, consumers tend to expect more from NBs and are more demanding but do not perceive any differences when IA are used. Emotional EHE is impacted by IAs presence among PLBs, where consumers EHE increases when IA is used. Among NBs, there are no significant differences. Hence,  $H_3$  is not verified in study 3 since customers tend to expect more from PLBs when IAs are present and do not perceive differences among NBs with or without IA.

WTP confirms the trend verified in the two first studies – IA's presence tends to increase consumers' WTP, despite that no significant differences were found, meaning consumers did not perceive any disparities. Therefore,  $H_5$  is not verified.

## 7. CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS & MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Previous research shows that consumers are always affected by the IA's presence independently of its revelation. However, when considering products that consumers perceive as premium, IA are only valued if not revealed (Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994). Having this into consideration, the revelation of IA's presence was not revealed during the present studies, meaning that consumers were not told that about IA's presence. Results revealed that the inferences drawn are independent from the consciousness of IAs' presence, meaning that even attributes consumers consciously know to be irrelevant affect inferences about it.

As Levy (1985) noted, differentiating brands can be facilitated when consumers relate them to human characteristics, which suggests that communicating a clearly defined brand image enables consumers to easily identify the brand that will satisfy their needs. Findings suggest that creating a BP may be a significant consideration for retailers to increase consumers' preferences for PLB products. Contrariwise, when IAs are used among PLBs, Competence and Sociability (extra dimensions in study) are not impacted. However, regarding NBs, Sociability perception tends to decrease, while Competence perceptions keep unchanged. Concerning the Big Five of BP, Excitement, Sophistication and Competence proved to be traits that can be enhanced by the presence of IA. Nonetheless, for PLBs to differentiate from NBs, only Excitement proved to be efficient. When no IAs are used, NBs are always preferred.

Results concerning Perceived Value, EHE and Purchase Intentions go in a different direction. Despite that NBs are usually perform better on these indicators, differences show that using IA can either benefit or harm both PLBs and NBs. Using IA tends to benefit PLBs in Quality perceptions; harm NBs and benefit PLBs in Likeability; and benefit both brands when considering Uniqueness, leading to the conclusion that IAs' presence is beneficial for PLBs when assessing Perceived Value.

EHE allowed understanding that consumers are more demanding with NBs than they are concerning PLBs. When IA are used, Functional and Emotional EHE decrease among NBs, suggesting that consumers tend to distrust NBs that feature IAs, as foreseen in some authors' theories which argue that IA might be interpreted as a way for brands to compensate for underperforming attributes. PLBs, on the other hand, are benefited concerning Emotional characteristics when products feature IA. These findings suggest that investing in products featuring IAs is less risky for PLBs

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IAs presence tends to harm Purchase Intentions for both brands. Contrarily, WTP is positively impacted for both NBs and PLBs, suggesting that despite customers' recognition of a (irrelevant) feature that values the product and is likely to increase the satisfaction when experiencing it, while purchase intentions decrease due to some distrust, WTP increases.

This research provides valuable insights for retailers and manufacturers by suggesting an alternative tool for brands to fight and differentiate from each other. IA can be, indeed, a way for retailers to convince consumers to buy PLBs, given that its presence tends to benefit PLBs while damaging NBs. This means that if retailers launch a new product featuring an IA and a NB does matches it, PLBs tend to be more welcome in consumers' eyes. Thus, investing in creating stronger brands (e.g., through BP) for their products can be a good strategy. Consumers are sceptic about PLBs and do not easily link a products' personality with their own, reducing the likelihood of a purchase happening. Discounts or tastings for customers to try out new products that feature an IA can reduce this scepticism, improve quality perceptions and turn them loyal.



## 8. CHAPTER 8: LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

Due to time and resources constraints, there are some limitations that must be outlined.

Firstly, the product categories are not representative of both industries in study (FMCG and Food Retail). The purpose of this investigation was to understand whether PLBs can use IA to differentiate themselves from NBs, but it is difficult to study consumers as equal individuals in the way they decide. People's perceptions vary based on their past experiences and the product/brand they use as a reference. Thus, the chosen brands are top-of-mind brands, i.e., the ones that come first in consumers' evoked set (Milka for Chocolate and Nivea for Shower Gel). For the same reason mentioned, the prices people are willing to pay for each product studied depends on the consumers' reference points.

Furthermore, when deciding between PLBs and NBs, most consumers are influenced by communication or by promotions and discounts that take place in-store, variables that are not considered in this study. Evaluating a product based on a simple description and an illustration is not sufficient or realistic. To better understand decision making patterns, the ideal scenario would be in-store. Due to budget and time limitations, the study was conducted with an online survey.

For this study, only IA with positive impact were considered. IA with negative valence might have a damaging effect on product evaluation and were disregarded. As mentioned previously, consumers are always affected by IAs' presence, independently of its revelation. However, some authors argue that when considering products that consumers perceive as premium (Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994), IA are only valued if not revealed. Having this into consideration, during the study, revelation of IA was not considered, meaning that consumers were not explicitly told that some attribute were irrelevant. Despite results show that inferences drawn from IA are independent from the consciousness of IAs presence, it would be relevant to understand if IAs have an impact because they are being shown to consumers (Grice, 1975) or if consumers do make judgements on their own.

Future research should be conducted to understand whether the conclusions can be generalized to several product categories. Also, for studying hedonic levels, consumers' perceived differences concerning feelings and sensations for PLB and NBs, with or without IA, should be analyzed. Category involvement plays an important role since one of the main barriers to increase perceived quality are Inter-category differences (Shocker, Bayus, & Kim, 2004). In categories where consumers are highly involved (i.e., television or fridge), PLBs tend to be

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linked with low quality, while in low-involvement categories (i.e., food or personal hygiene), due to lower perceived risk, consumers are more willing to try PLBs. Hereupon, future research could be conducted on whether IA's presence help high involvement PLBs' products to be perceived as less risky, increasing quality perception and consumption levels.

In person perception's literature, the role of past experiences is bigger when considering impressions of people that one knows for a long period (Asch, 1946). Hence, it might be relevant to understand if IAs play a major role in product categories consumers know well or if they are more efficient in products recently launched in the market, which people are not familiar with. On a communication level, understanding if IAs should be communicated firstly (Primacy effect) or lastly (Recency effect), as well as if they should be communicated in different channels besides the packaging, might be relevant for more effective investments. According to research, the Primacy effect tends to be frequent when consumers do not expect a choice task (Kardes & Herr, 1990). Moreover, associated with ads on TV, frequent for Food and FMCG products, Primacy effect is more common (Li, 2010), suggesting that IAs should be communicated firstly. To conclude, following Asch (1946), who claims that a perception about a person "grows quickly and easily" and "the total impression is the sum of several independent observations", it would be interesting to study how IA with different valences (e.g., positive, negative, green) and communicated firstly or lastly are efficient in brands' personality enhancement.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A – Products from Studies 1, 2 and 3.



Private Label Brand Shower Gels (With Emotional IA – Oil Pearls - and With Functional IA – Caffeine) from Study 1.



National Brand Shower Gels (Regular, With Emotional IA – Oil Pearls - and With Functional IA – Caffeine-) from Study 1.



Private Label Brand Chocolate (Regular, With Emotional IA – Gold - and With Functional IA – Fluorine) from Study 2.



National Brand Chocolate (Regular, With Emotional IA – Gold - and With Functional IA – Fluorine) from Study 2.

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Private Label Brand Shower Gel (Regular, With Emotional IA – Gold - and With Functional IA – Vitamin C).

National Brand Shower Gel (Regular, With Emotional IA – Gold - and With Functional IA – Vitamin C).

**APPENDIX B – Methodology Sum-Up: Dimensions Studied, References and Scales.**

Topic of Interest	Dimensions Studied	References	Scale and Reference
Brand Personality (Studies 1, 2 and 3)	Sincerity, Excitement, Sophistication, Competence and Ruggedness	Aaker, Dimensions of Brand Personality (1997); Mulyanegara, Tsarenko, & Anderson (2007)	7-Point Likert Scale – Adapted from Ajzen (2002)
Brand Personality (Studies 1 and 2)	Sociability and Competence	Adapted from Geuens, Weijters, & Wulf (2009); Aaker, Dimensions of Brand Personality (1997)	7-Point Likert Scale – Adapted from Ajzen (2002)
EHE (Studies 1 and 2)	Emotional and Functional characteristics of each product	Adapted from Spinelli, Masi, Zoboli, Prescott, & Monteleone (2015); Kähkönen & Tuorila (1998); Barber, Kuo, Bishop, & Goodman, (2012)	7-Point Likert Scale – Adapted from Ajzen (2002)
EHE (Study 3)	Emotional and Functional Expectations	Adapted from Babin, Darden, & Griffin (1994)	7-Point Likert Scale – Adapted from Ajzen (2002)
Perceived Value (Studies 1, 2 and 3)	Likeability, Quality and Uniqueness	Adapted from Sujan & Bettman (1989); Netemeyer, et al., (2004)	7-Point Likert Scale – Adapted from Ajzen (2002)
Purchase Intentions (Studies 1 and 2)	Purchase Intentions	Adapted from Yeon Kim & Chung (2011); Adapted from Paul & Rana (2012)	7-Point Likert Scale – Adapted from Ajzen (2002)
WTP (Studies 1, 2 and 3)	WTP (in €)	Adapted from Breidert, Hahsler, & Reutterer (2006); Chang & Wildt, (1994)	

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**APPENDIX C - Study 1 - Shower Gel**

1. Please imagine you are about to buy a **Shower Gel**.

This shower gel:

- is from **Pingo Doce, a supermarket brand**;
- NOTE: If there is an IA, it is described here.
- can be found in the shelves with **different scents**;
- includes **Perfume**;
- includes **Glycerine**;
- includes **Water**;
- has been developed to offer a **soft texture foam that pampers your skin, leaving it silky and smooth**.

2. To which extent to you expect, when buying this shower gel, that it **owns the following properties**?

	Do not expect at all 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	Definitely expect 7 (7)
Nice Scent (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Smooth (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Perfumed (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nourishing (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cleanse (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Healthy for Skin (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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3. **If this product was a person**, which of the following **personality traits** do you think would describe it better?

	Does not describe at all 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	Totally describes 7 (7)
Down-to-Earth (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Honest (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creative (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Up-to-Date (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intelligent (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Successful (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Upper Class (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Charming (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoorsy/Adventurous (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tough/Resilient (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Please indicate which word describes better the brand by completing the following sentence.

<b>I feel that this brand is...</b>	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Cold	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Warmth
Incompetent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Competent
Irrational	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Rational
Untrustworthy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Trustworthy

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5. Please indicate to what extent do you **agree with the following statements** about the Shower Gel.

	1 Do not agree at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 Strongly agree (7)
I like this product very much. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that this product is better than the market average. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The product shown is unique from other brands. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. How likely are you to **buy this product**?

- Not likely at all 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- Extremely likely 7 (7)

7. How much would you be **willing to pay** for this product?

	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
in Euros (€) ()	

**APPENDIX D** - Study 2 – Chocolate

1. Please imagine you are about to buy a **Chocolate**.

This chocolate:

- is from a **Private Label Brand** (e.g., local supermarket brand such as Pingo Doce or Continente);
- NOTE: If there is an IA, it is described here.
- is composed by **diluted cocoa solids (30%)**;
- includes **milk, sugar and cream and hazelnut paste**.

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2. To which extent to you expect, when buying this chocolate, that it **owns the following properties?**

	Do not expect at all 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	Definitely expect 7 (7)
Nice Scent (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good Taste (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good looking (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sweet (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creamy (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Crunchy (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. **If this product was a person**, which of the following **personality traits** do you think would describe it better?

	Does not describe at all 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	Totally describes 7 (7)
Down-to-Earth (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Honest (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creative (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Up-to-Date (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intelligent (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Successful (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Upper Class (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Charming (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoorsy/Adventurous (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tough/Resilient (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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4. Please indicate which word describes better the brand by completing the following sentence.

I feel that this brand is...	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Cold	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Warmth
Incompetent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Competent
Irrational	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Rational
Untrustworthy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Trustworthy

5. Please indicate to what extent do you **agree with the following statements** about the Chocolate.

	1 Do not agree at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 Strongly agree (7)
I like this product very much. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that this product is better than the market average. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The product shown is unique from other brands. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. How likely are you to **buy this product**?

- Not likely at all 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- Extremely likely 7 (7)

7. How much would you be **willing to pay** for this product?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
in Euros (€) ()										

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**APPENDIX E - Study 3 - Shower Gel**

1. Please imagine you are about to buy a **Shower Gel**. This shower gel:
  - is from **Pingo Doce, a supermarket brand**;
  - NOTE: If there is an IA, it is described here.
  - can be found in the shelves with **different scents**;
  - includes **Perfume, Glycerine and Water**;
  - has been developed to offer a **soft texture foam that pampers your skin, leaving it silky and smooth.**
  
2. **If this product was a person**, which of the following **personality traits** do you think would describe it better?

	Does not describe at all 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	Totally describes 7 (7)
Down-to-Earth (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Honest (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creative (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Up-to-Date (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intelligent (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Successful (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Upper Class (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Charming (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Outdoorsy/Adventurous (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tough/Resilient (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



CAN WE SEDUCE CUSTOMERS TO BUY PRIVATE LABEL  
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3. Please indicate to what extent do you **agree with the following statements** about the Shower Gel.

	1 Do not agree at all (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 Strongly agree (7)
I like this product very much. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that this product is better than the market average. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The product shown is unique from other brands. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that consuming this product will give me pleasure. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that this product performs as it promises. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. How much would you be **willing to pay** for this product?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

in Euros (€) ()	
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**APPENDIX F** - Demographic characterization of the valid sample.

	Study 1		Study 2		Study 3		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
<b>Gender</b>							
Male	37	61,7%	12	29,3%	42	39,6%	91
Female	23	38,3%	29	70,7%	64	60,4%	116
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>207</b>
% of Total Sample		28,99%		19,81%		51,21%	100,00%

	Study 1		Study 2		Study 3		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
<b>Age</b>							
< 18 years old	0	0,0%	0	0,0%	1	0,9%	1
18-30 years old	45	75,0%	25	61,0%	74	69,8%	144
31-40 years old	2	3,3%	4	9,8%	10	9,4%	16
41-50 years old	7	11,7%	3	7,3%	10	9,4%	20
51-60 years old	5	8,3%	7	17,1%	8	7,5%	20
> 60 years old	1	1,7%	2	4,9%	3	2,8%	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>207</b>
% of Total Sample		28,99%		19,81%		51,21%	100,00%

	Study 1		Study 2		Study 3		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
<b>Country</b>							
Portugal	58	96,7%	40	97,6%	104	98,1%	202
Other	2	3,3%	1	2,4%	2	1,9%	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100,0%</b>	<b>207</b>
% of Total Sample		28,99%		19,81%		51,21%	100,00%

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**APPENDIX G**– Results from Study 1.

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Sincerity Dimension</i>					
Brand	6.023	1	60	0.017*	0.091
Attribute	2.435	1	60	0.124	0.039
Brand*Attribute	1.745	1	60	0.192	0.028
<i>Excitement Dimension</i>					
Brand	17.972	1	60	0.000*	0.230
Attribute	42.009	1	60	0.000*	0.412
Brand*Attribute	5.792	1	60	0.019*	0.088
<i>Competence Dimension</i>					
Brand	40.711	1	60	0.000*	0.404
Attribute	0.724	1	60	0.398	0.012
Brand*Attribute	13.401	1	60	0.001*	0.183
<i>Sophistication Dimension</i>					
Brand	63.594	1	60	0.000*	0.515
Attribute	10.539	1	60	0.002*	0.149
Brand*Attribute	7.781	1	60	0.007*	0.115
<i>Ruggedness Dimension</i>					
Brand	17.206	1	60	0.000*	0.223
Attribute	5.908	1	60	0.018*	0.090
Brand*Attribute	1.689	1	60	0.199	0.027

Study 1 – Brand Personality - Big Five’s Dimensions

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Competence Dimension</i>					
Brand	29.780	1	60	0.000*	0.332
Attribute	0.000	1	60	1.000	0.000
Brand*Attribute	4.226	1	60	0.044*	0.066
<i>Sociability Dimension</i>					
Brand	43.493	1	60	0.000*	0.420
Attribute	0.206	1	60	0.651	0.003
Brand*Attribute	2.274	1	60	0.137	0.037

Study 1 – Brand Personality - Competence and Sociability

CAN WE SEDUCE CUSTOMERS TO BUY PRIVATE LABEL  
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<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Likeability</i>					
Brand	28.668	1	60	0.000*	0.323
Attribute	2.045	1	60	0.158	0.033
Brand*Attribute	14.185	1	60	0.000*	0.191
<i>Quality</i>					
Brand	44.682	1	60	0.000*	0.427
Attribute	0.134	1	60	0.715	0.002
Brand*Attribute	12.807	1	60	0.001*	0.176
<i>Uniqueness</i>					
Brand	15.756	1	60	0.000*	0.208
Attribute	24.689	1	60	0.000*	0.292
Brand*Attribute	0.940	1	60	0.336	0.015

Study 1 - Perceived Value.

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Functional Attributes</i>					
Brand	41.881	1	60	0.000*	0.411
Attribute	11.130	1	60	0.001*	0.156
Brand*Attribute	5.880	1	60	0.018*	0.089
<i>Emotional Attributes</i>					
Brand	22.134	1	60	0.000*	0.269
Attribute	0.470	1	60	0.495	0.008
Brand*Attribute	0.901	1	60	0.346	0.015

Study 1 – Expected Hedonic Experience.

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Purchase Intentions</i>					
Brand	8.853	1	60	0.004*	0.129
Attribute	3.908	1	60	0.053*	0.061
Brand*Attribute	11.389	1	60	0.001*	0.160

Study 1 - Purchase Intentions.

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Willingness to Pay</i>					
Brand	50.578	1	60	0.000*	0.457
Attribute	0.671	1	60	0.416	0.011
Brand*Attribute	8.520	1	60	0.005*	0.124

Study 1 – Willingness-to-Pay.

CAN WE SEDUCE CUSTOMERS TO BUY PRIVATE LABEL  
PRODUCTS BY USING IRRELEVANT ATTRIBUTES?

**APPENDIX H** – Results from Study 2.

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Sincerity Dimension</i>					
Brand	4.629	1	35	0.038*	0.117
Attribute	8.996	1	35	0.005*	0.204
Brand*Attribute	1.726	1	35	0.198	0.047
<i>Excitement Dimension</i>					
Brand	3.534	1	35	0.068	0.092
Attribute	13.884	1	35	0.001*	0.284
Brand*Attribute	2.705	1	35	0.109	0.072
<i>Competence Dimension</i>					
Brand	6.035	1	35	0.019*	0.147
Attribute	3.312	1	35	0.077	0.086
Brand*Attribute	4.106	1	35	0.050*	0.105
<i>Sophistication Dimension</i>					
Brand	12.899	1	35	0.001*	0.269
Attribute	1.537	1	35	0.223	0.042
Brand*Attribute	0.737	1	35	0.396	0.021
<i>Ruggedness Dimension</i>					
Brand	14.257	1	35	0.001*	0.289
Attribute	1.019	1	35	0.320	0.028
Brand*Attribute	2.010	1	35	0.165	0.054

Study 2 - Brand Personality - Big Five's Dimensions

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Competence Dimension</i>					
Brand	6.073	1	35	0.019*	0.148
Attribute	0.479	1	35	0.493	0.014
Brand*Attribute	0.017	1	35	0.898	0.000
<i>Sociability Dimension</i>					
Brand	13.325	1	35	0.001*	0.276
Attribute	11.781	1	35	0.002*	0.252
Brand*Attribute	2.121	1	35	0.154	0.057

Study 2 - Brand Personality – Competence and Sociability.

CAN WE SEDUCE CUSTOMERS TO BUY PRIVATE LABEL  
PRODUCTS BY USING IRRELEVANT ATTRIBUTES?

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Likeability</i>					
Brand	25.780	1	35	0.000*	0.424
Attribute	11.001	1	35	0.002*	0.239
Brand*Attribute	0.106	1	35	0.746	0.003
<i>Quality</i>					
Brand	50.909	1	35	0.000*	0.593
Attribute	2.198	1	35	0.147	0.059
Brand*Attribute	0.097	1	35	0.757	0.003
<i>Uniqueness</i>					
Brand	6.943	1	35	0.012*	0.166
Attribute	10.484	1	35	0.003*	0.231
Brand*Attribute	2.103	1	35	0.156	0.057

Study 2 – Perceived Value.

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Functional Attributes</i>					
Brand	17.958	1	35	0.000*	0.339
Attribute	5.795	1	35	0.021*	0.142
Brand*Attribute	1.150	1	35	0.291	0.032
<i>Emotional Attributes</i>					
Brand	14.544	1	35	0.001*	0.294
Attribute	11.565	1	35	0.002*	0.248
Brand*Attribute	3.360	1	35	0.075	0.088

Study 2 – Expected Hedonic Experience.

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Purchase Intentions</i>					
Brand	22.010	1	35	0.000*	0.386
Attribute	28.929	1	35	0.000*	0.453
Brand*Attribute	0.153	1	35	0.698	0.004

Study 2 – Purchase Intentions.

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Willingness to Pay</i>					
Brand	2.727	1	35	0.108	0.072
Attribute	8.712	1	35	0.006*	0.199
Brand*Attribute	0.319	1	35	0.576	0.009

Study 2 – Willingness-to-Pay.

CAN WE SEDUCE CUSTOMERS TO BUY PRIVATE LABEL  
PRODUCTS BY USING IRRELEVANT ATTRIBUTES?

**APPENDIX I – Results from Study 3.**

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Sincerity Dimension</i>					
Brand	6.187	1	104	0.000*	0.386
Attribute	2.935	1	104	0.090	0.027
Brand*Attribute	0.153	1	104	0.698	0.004
<i>Excitement Dimension</i>					
Brand	73.358	1	104	0.000*	0.414
Attribute	20.872	1	104	0.000*	0.167
Brand*Attribute	5.897	1	104	0.003*	0.081
<i>Competence Dimension</i>					
Brand	22.558	1	104	0.000*	0.224
Attribute	1.526	1	104	0.219	0.014
Brand*Attribute	2.961	1	104	0.003*	0.028
<i>Sophistication Dimension</i>					
Brand	101.186	1	104	0.000*	0.493
Attribute	8.368	1	104	0.005*	0.074
Brand*Attribute	4.849	1	104	0.030*	0.045
<i>Ruggedness Dimension</i>					
Brand	15.207	1	104	0.000*	0.128
Attribute	2.597	1	104	0.110	0.024
Brand*Attribute	0.912	1	104	0.342	0.009

Study 3 – Brand Personality - Big Five's Dimensions.

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Likeability</i>					
Brand	27.037	1	104	0.000*	0.206
Attribute	0.008	1	104	0.927	0.000
Brand*Attribute	8.536	1	104	0.004*	0.076
<i>Quality</i>					
Brand	97.065	1	104	0.000*	0.483
Attribute	3.773	1	104	0.055	0.035
Brand*Attribute	5.877	1	104	0.017*	0.053
<i>Uniqueness</i>					
Brand	32.751	1	104	0.000*	0.239
Attribute	22.584	1	104	0.000*	0.178
Brand*Attribute	0.680	1	104	0.411	0.006

Study 3 – Perceived Value.

CAN WE SEDUCE CUSTOMERS TO BUY PRIVATE LABEL  
PRODUCTS BY USING IRRELEVANT ATTRIBUTES?

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Emotional EHE</i>					
Brand	41.941	1	104	0.000	0.287
Attribute	5.235	1	104	0.024	0.048
Brand*Attribute	2.716	1	104	0.102	0.025
<i>Functional EHE</i>					
Brand	22.733	1	104	0.000	0.179
Attribute	0.395	1	104	0.531	0.004
Brand*Attribute	3.209	1	104	0.076	0.030

Study 3 – Expected Hedonic Experience.

<i>Factor</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Hypotheses df</i>	<i>Error df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
<i>Willingness to Pay</i>					
Brand	145.549	1	104	0.000	0.583
Attribute	2.357	1	104	0.128	0.022
Brand*Attribute	0.715	1	104	0.400	0.007

Study 3 – Willingness-to-Pay.