



# AESTHETIC CONSUMPTION OF FACIAL HARMONISATION AND THE RELATIONSHIP WITH AGE GROUP AND GENDER

## CONSUMO ESTÉTICO DE ARMONIZAÇÃO FACIAL Y LA RELACIÓN CON GRUPO ETARIO Y GÉNERO

## CONSUMO ESTÉTICO DE HARMONIZAÇÃO FACIAL E A RELAÇÃO COM FAIXA ETÁRIA E GÊNERO

### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** to examine the relationship between materialism and physical attractiveness with the aesthetic consumption of facial harmonization, influenced by age and gender.

**Methodology:** Using a quantitative approach, the study collected data from 735 participants through an online questionnaire, applying descriptive statistics, t-tests to compare groups and analyses of variance and correlation.

**Results:** The results indicate that individuals who have undergone cosmetic procedures perceive themselves as more attractive and have a greater inclination towards facial harmonization, while materialism did not show significant differences related to these behaviors. Women demonstrated a greater desire for facial harmonization, whereas men scored higher in materialism. Materialism was more pronounced among young adults, while attractiveness varied less with age.

**Originality/Value:** The research gap lies in understanding how these dimensions are influenced by these factors. These findings suggest that aesthetic consumption is driven by complex psychological and social motivations that transcend materialistic values, highlighting the need for further research on the socioeconomic and cultural influences on these decisions.

**Keywords:** Consumer behavior. Aesthetic consumption. Facial harmonization. Materialism. Physical attractiveness.

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## RESUMO

**Objetivo:** examinar a relação entre materialismo e atratividade física com o consumo estético de harmonização facial, influenciada por idade e gênero.

**Metodologia:** Utilizando uma abordagem quantitativa, o estudo coletou dados de 735 participantes por meio de um questionário online, aplicando estatísticas descritivas, testes t para comparação de grupos e análises de variância e correlação.

**Resultados:** Os resultados indicam que indivíduos que se submeteram a procedimentos cosméticos se percebem como mais atraentes e têm maior inclinação para harmonização facial, enquanto o materialismo não mostrou diferenças significativas relacionadas a esses comportamentos. As mulheres demonstraram maior desejo de harmonização facial, enquanto os homens tiveram pontuações mais altas em materialismo. O materialismo foi mais pronunciado entre os adultos jovens, enquanto a atratividade variou menos com a idade.

**Originalidade/Valor:** A lacuna da pesquisa está na compreensão de como essas dimensões são influenciadas por esses fatores. Essas descobertas sugerem que o consumo estético é impulsionado por motivações psicológicas e sociais complexas que transcendem os valores materialistas, destacando a necessidade de mais pesquisas sobre as influências socioeconômicas e culturais nessas decisões.

**Palavras-chave:** Comportamento do consumidor. Consumo estético. Harmonização facial. Materialismo. Atratividade física.

## RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** examinar la relación entre materialismo y atractivo físico con el consumo estético de armonización facial, influenciado por la edad y el género.

**Metodología:** Utilizando un enfoque cuantitativo, el estudio recopiló datos de 735 participantes a través de un cuestionario en línea, aplicando estadísticas descriptivas, pruebas t para comparar grupos y análisis de varianza y correlación.

**Resultados:** Los resultados indican que los individuos que se han sometido a procedimientos cosméticos se perciben a sí mismos como más atractivos y tienen una mayor inclinación hacia la armonización facial, mientras que el materialismo no mostró diferencias significativas relacionadas con estos comportamientos. Las mujeres demostraron un mayor deseo de armonización facial, mientras que los hombres obtuvieron puntuaciones más altas en materialismo. El materialismo fue más pronunciado entre los adultos jóvenes, mientras que el atractivo varió menos con la edad.

**Originalidad/Valor:** La brecha de investigación radica en comprender cómo estas dimensiones son influenciadas por estos factores. Estos hallazgos sugieren que el consumo estético es impulsado por complejas motivaciones psicológicas y sociales que trascienden los valores materialistas, destacando la necesidad de más investigación sobre las influencias socioeconómicas y culturales en estas decisiones.

**Palabras clave:** Comportamiento del consumidor. Consumo estético. Armonización facial. Materialismo. Atractivo físico.

## INTRODUCTION

In contemporary society, aesthetic practices such as facial harmonisation have gained increasing visibility and adherence, driven by sociocultural and technological transformations that deeply impact consumer behavior. The value attributed to physical appearance has shifted from superficial concern to a form of symbolic consumption, where the body becomes a means of identity expression, social status, and alignment with beauty standards reinforced by social media. In this context, the present study investigates how materialism and perceived physical attractiveness relate to aesthetic consumption, particularly facial harmonisation procedures, and how these relationships are influenced by demographic variables such as age and gender.

Materialism, understood as the centrality of material possessions in constructing well-being and identity (Belk, 1985; Richins & Dawson, 1992), is a key element in understanding aesthetic consumer behavior. While classical studies have linked materialism to conspicuous consumption



and the pursuit of status, recent research shows that in the age of social media, this relationship extends to the use of aesthetic procedures as a strategy for managing one's digital image (Morales, Chen & Patel, 2024). Social media plays a crucial role in this process by fostering upward social comparisons and promoting continuous aesthetic self-monitoring (Bell et al., 2025).

Physical attractiveness also stands out as a relevant construct in understanding current consumption patterns. Literature suggests that individuals perceived as attractive tend to receive more social approval, professional opportunities, and symbolic value (Buss, 2016; Russell, 2009). In this environment, platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have intensified the pressure for idealized appearances, portraying aesthetic procedures as socially normative responses to beauty expectations (Assis, 2025).

Despite the growing relevance of this topic, there remains a notable gap in the fields of Administration and Marketing, especially in understanding the psychosocial factors that drive the adoption of aesthetic procedures. Most research focuses on clinical, psychological, or sociological aspects, often overlooking managerial and consumer behavior perspectives. This article contributes to the academic debate by integrating concepts of materialism, physical attractiveness, and symbolic consumption with marketing approaches, considering how age and gender act as moderating variables in this dynamic.

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate, through a quantitative approach, whether materialism and perceived physical attractiveness differ across gender and age groups and how these factors influence interest in or engagement with facial harmonisation procedures. To this end, statistical techniques such as t-tests, ANOVA, and non-parametric tests were applied according to data distribution.

Methodologically, this is a cross-sectional study using convenience sampling (snowball technique), with data collected through an online questionnaire. The article is structured as follows: the next section presents the theoretical framework, followed by the methodological procedures; then the results are analyzed and

discussed; and finally, the study's limitations and future research directions are presented.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Facial Harmonisation Aesthetic Consumption

Facial aesthetic procedures account for approximately 60% of the most popular beauty treatments, primarily driven by the pursuit of personal satisfaction and enhanced self-esteem through improved appearance (Becker & Kim, 2025). A major motivation behind these procedures is the pursuit of facial symmetry, a foundational element of physical attractiveness, which underpins the increasing demand for facial harmonisation (Fink & Penton-Voak, 2002; Kaipainen et al., 2016; Cao, 2020).

The desire for a youthful appearance also plays a central role, as youth is socially associated with productivity, vitality, and beauty. This association influences individuals' decisions to undergo aesthetic facial procedures in pursuit of improved self-confidence and social acceptance (Assawavichairoj & Taghian, 2017; Morales et al., 2024; Lins, Brandão & Rocha, 2021). This dynamic is further intensified by digital environments, where influencers and social media filters on platforms such as Instagram and TikTok reinforce unattainable beauty standards (Garcia & Mendes, 2023).

Facial harmonisation involves a combination of interventions aimed at achieving balance and symmetry in the face and often requires collaboration among professionals from different fields such as plastic surgery, dermatology, and dentistry (Custódio et al., 2020; Roviada & Garbin, 2013). According to Papazian et al. (2018), it represents an intersection of health, identity, and aesthetic trends, often guided by virtual beauty standards.

### Physical attractiveness and aesthetic consumption

Modifying one's appearance for aesthetic purposes is an ancient practice, as evidenced by archaeological records showing the use of pigmented shells and body painting with social functions dating back over 70,000 years (D'Errico et al., 2009; Zilhão et al., 2010). In contemporary society, physical attractiveness remains a



powerful influence on social perception, deeply embedded in human interactions and decision-making processes (Russell, 2009; Buss, 2016).

Classic studies, such as those by Berscheid and Walster (1974), demonstrate that attractive individuals often enjoy more social opportunities. Recent research continues to validate this pattern, showing that attractiveness influences perceptions in hiring, relationships, and credibility (Bell et al., 2025; Nair & Simmons, 2024).

Facial attractiveness is one of the most prominent indicators of beauty perception (Riggio et al., 1991). Sarwer et al. (2005) and Henderson-King & Henderson-King (2005) have shown a clear relationship between concern with body image and engagement in aesthetic procedures. Practices such as makeup application are widely used to enhance attractiveness, with studies confirming that women who wear makeup are often perceived as more attractive (Nash et al., 2006; Cash, 2012).

Moreover, aesthetic procedures are viewed as legitimate forms of body modification that yield social and economic advantages, such as greater confidence and perceived competence (Henderson-King & Brooks, 2009; Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). While women remain the dominant demographic in aesthetic consumption, there has been a notable increase among men and individuals over 50 (Swami et al., 2008; Kalaaji et al., 2018), signaling a more inclusive and diversified market.

Contemporary studies highlight that constant exposure to idealised standards on social media fosters "comparative self-image," particularly among youth and young adults. This phenomenon fuels body dissatisfaction and increases the likelihood of seeking aesthetic interventions for social validation (Garcia & Mendes, 2023; Morales et al., 2024). Becker & Kim (2025) emphasise that the face has become a digital identity platform shaped by filters and algorithms, promoting beauty standardisation and the medicalisation of appearance.

## Materialism and aesthetic consumption

Materialism is broadly defined in the literature as the value individuals place on material possessions. Belk (1985) and Richins &

Dawson (1992) conceptualised materialism as a set of beliefs where possessions are central to life, success, and happiness. Kasser & Ryan (1996) further highlighted its dimensions, money, fame, and image, later operationalised in the Richins and Dawson (1992) scale.

In a consumer-driven society, materialism motivates the pursuit of an "ideal body" and a lifestyle defined by symbolic goods (Dittmar, 2007). Bartky (1982) argued that fashion and beauty standards under capitalism construct the body as a consumer project. Henderson-King & Henderson-King (2005) and Henderson-King & Brooks (2009) found a positive correlation between materialism and the likelihood of undergoing aesthetic procedures, framing the body as a reflection of material success. Ching & Xu (2019) affirm that this link is especially strong among those who equate attractiveness with career advancement and social conformity.

With the rise of digital culture, physical appearance has become visual capital on social platforms. This transition expands the scope of aesthetic consumption, where visibility, likes, and algorithmic approval guide self-modification decisions (Assis, 2025; Khan et al., 2024; Peterson & Lee, 2024).

Demographics also influence the materialism–aesthetic consumption relationship. Wiedmann & Hennigs (2013) showed that women tend to express materialism through aesthetic practices, while men do so through external acquisitions. Younger adults show higher engagement with aesthetic consumption, whereas older individuals prioritise emotional and psychological needs (Kasser, 2002; Morales et al., 2024).

Finally, Belk (1984) underscores the complex, multifaceted nature of this relationship, shaped by individual beliefs, gender, age, and socio-cultural context. In today's digital world, the body becomes a platform for identity performance, increasingly shaped by visual algorithms and collective expectations.

## METHOD

In this study, we opted for a quantitative methodological approach, characterised by the use of questionnaires as the main data collection



tool, with the aim of capturing information on certain characteristics, attitudes or perspectives that are representative of the population in focus, as described by Freitas et al. (2000). To collect primary data, the sampling technique known as “snowballing” was used, in which initially selected participants help to identify new subjects for the study by being encouraged to disseminate the questionnaire link within their contact networks, according to the methodology described by Freitas et al. (2000).

## RESEARCH DESIGN: GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH

This study falls into the category of descriptive research, as categorised by Malhotra (2006), focusing on describing the characteristics of consumers of aesthetic facial harmonisation procedures belonging to the group studied. A quantitative approach was adopted, following Creswell (2007), to quantify and analyse the results obtained from a specific sample of individuals, allowing us to assess how materialism and physical attractiveness influence the aesthetic consumption of facial harmonisation.

## OPERATIONALISATION OF THE CONSTRUCTS

In the current investigation, the physical attractiveness construct was measured using the scale developed by Schaefer et al. (2017), which assesses an individual’s concern with their appearance or body image. This scale, which involves the development and validation of the revised SATAQ-4, the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire, was used on a diverse sample, including university students and adolescents of both sexes. The SATAQ-4 was adapted into Portuguese by Barra et al. (2019), eliminating the need for a reverse translation for this study, and only items with a significant value greater than 0.50 were selected.

To operationalise the materialism construct, the scale based on Richins and Dawson’s (1992) three components of values was used, covering centrality of acquisition, acquisition as the pursuit of happiness, and success defined by possession. The instrument, already validated in previous studies in Brazil by Ponchio, Aranha and Todd (2007), De Lourdes Bacha, Figueiredo and Santos

(2012), and Alfenas et al. (2019), did not require reverse translation, given its previous application in the Brazilian context.

The participants’ aesthetic behaviour was assessed using the Henderson-King and Henderson-King scale (2005), designed to explore the acceptance of cosmetic surgery. This scale assesses individuals’ disposition towards such procedures, taking into account experiences, individual differences and social and cultural influences. Initially with 26 items, the scale was refined to 15, excluding those with factor loadings below 0.50, and the remaining items were assessed on a 5-point Likert scale.

The scale designed to measure “aesthetic consumption” still lacked validation in Portuguese, leading to the application of the reverse translation method to ensure the accuracy of the translation. A subsequent pilot test with marketing and consumer behaviour experts allowed the survey instrument to be refined, adjusting items to eliminate ambiguities and improve the clarity of the proposed questions.

Continuing the process of refining the survey instrument, the pre-test stage followed to validate the final version of the questionnaire. At this stage, 25 participants representing different regions of Brazil were chosen at random, all aged 18 or over and of both sexes. The pre-test was applied using the Google Forms™ platform, where a random selection of the questions from the preliminary questionnaire was used. Analysing the results obtained at this stage revealed that there was no need to make any changes to the survey instrument, indicating that it was suitable for use in the actual data collection.

## FIELD PROCEDURES AND DATA PROCESSING

After checking the suitability of the research instrument without the need for any changes, we moved on to the field procedures and data processing. The survey targeted men and women equally, reflecting the contemporary trend where both genders seek aesthetic procedures to preserve a youthful and healthy appearance, an observation corroborated by Kain and Amar (2020). Participants from all social classes were considered, challenging the notion that low-



income individuals show a lack of interest or face financial barriers to accessing such procedures, as indicated by Ligh et al. (2020).

Using the Google Forms™ platform for data collection, and to establish the appropriate sample size for analysis using structural equation modelling, G\*Power software was employed to calculate statistical power (Faul et al., 2007). The criteria included a test power of 0.80, an effect size of 0.15 and a significance level of 0.05 for two predictors (Hair et al., 2014), resulting in a minimum required sample of 68 cases. However, following Bido and Silva (2019) recommendation to triple this amount in order to ensure the robustness of the estimated model, a minimum sample of 204 cases was established.

Data was collected from 17 May to 10 June 2022, with the participation of 735 respondents, using a Type-Likert scale considered to be interval, according to Hair et al. (2014). For preliminary data processing and analysis, Microsoft Excel© software was used, while more complex analyses were conducted in SPSS®, including a t-test to examine differences between participants who had undergone aesthetic procedures and those who had not, focusing on materialism, physical attractiveness and facial harmonisation.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSES

The distribution of respondents, along with the means, standard deviations and standard errors of the means are shown in the following table:

**Table 1**

*Descriptive data between the groups that had and had not undergone an aesthetic procedure.*

|                         | Have you ever had a cosmetic procedure | N   | Average | Standard Deviation | Standard error of the mean |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----|---------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Materialism             | No                                     | 414 | 2,5341  | ,87295             | ,04290                     |
|                         | Yes                                    | 320 | 2,6507  | ,88534             | ,04949                     |
| Physical Attractiveness | No                                     | 414 | 2,4313  | ,89754             | ,04411                     |
|                         | Yes                                    | 320 | 2,5767  | ,88921             | ,04971                     |
| Facial Harmonisation    | No                                     | 414 | 3,0116  | 1,06512            | ,05235                     |
|                         | Yes                                    | 320 | 3,6298  | ,94184             | ,05265                     |

Source: Research data, 2023.

The application of the t-test for independent samples revealed that, on average, individuals who underwent aesthetic procedures had a significantly higher evaluation of the physical attractiveness dimension compared to those who did not undergo such procedures ( $t(732) = -2.186$ ;  $p < 0.03$ ). In addition, those who underwent aesthetic

procedures showed a significantly greater desire for facial harmonisation compared to those who did not undergo aesthetic procedures ( $t(718.840) = -8.326$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). The materialism variable did not show statistically significant differences according to the t-test. These results are detailed in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Descriptive data between the groups that had and had not undergone an aesthetic procedure.*

|                         |                             | Levene's test for equality of variances |      | t-test for Equality of Means |         |               |                    |                              |                                    |         |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|
|                         |                             | Z                                       | Sig. | t                            | df      | Sig. (2 ends) | Average difference | Standard error of difference | 95% Difference Confidence Interval |         |
| Materialism             | Equal variances assumed     | ,321                                    | ,571 | -1,784                       | 732     | ,075          | -,11661            | ,06538                       | -,24497                            | ,01175  |
|                         | Equal variances not assumed |                                         |      | -1,780                       | 681,375 | ,075          | -,11661            | ,06550                       | -,24521                            | ,01199  |
| Physical attractiveness | Equal variances assumed     | ,137                                    | ,712 | -2,186                       | 732     | ,029          | -,14544            | ,06654                       | -,27606                            | -,01481 |
|                         | Equal variances not assumed |                                         |      | -2,188                       | 689,150 | ,029          | -,14544            | ,06646                       | -,27592                            | -,01495 |
| Facial Harmonisation    | Equal variances assumed     | 7,617                                   | ,006 | -8,197                       | 732     | ,000          | -,61820            | ,07542                       | -,76626                            | -,47013 |
|                         | Equal variances not assumed |                                         |      | -8,326                       | 718,840 | ,000          | -,61820            | ,07425                       | -,76396                            | -,47243 |

Source: Research data, 2023.



A t-test was conducted to compare sexuality (male and female) with the dimensions of materialism, physical attractiveness and facial harmonisation. Descriptive data on the number

of respondents, means, standard deviation and standard error of the mean can be seen in the table below.

**Table 3**  
*Descriptive data between the male and female groups.*

|                         | Sex    | N   | Average | Standard Deviation | Standard error of the mean |
|-------------------------|--------|-----|---------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Materialism             | Male   | 168 | 2,7103  | ,88129             | ,06799                     |
|                         | Female | 558 | 2,5500  | ,87053             | ,03685                     |
| Physical attractiveness | Male   | 168 | 2,4784  | ,84590             | ,06526                     |
|                         | Female | 558 | 2,4989  | ,91377             | ,03868                     |
| Facial Harmonisation    | Male   | 168 | 3,1417  | 1,09290            | ,08432                     |
|                         | Female | 558 | 3,3395  | 1,03866            | ,04397                     |

Source: Research data, 2023.

The independent t-test showed that, on average, male respondents rated the materialism dimension higher than female respondents ( $t(724) = -2.087$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Female respondents have a higher desire for facial harmonisation than male respondents ( $t(724) = -2.139$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). The physical attractiveness dimension did not show a significant result in the t-test. The results can be seen in Table 05.

The results showed that, on average, male respondents scored higher on the materialism dimension than female respondents. In addition, respondents from the female group showed a greater desire to have facial harmonisation procedures compared to those from the male group. These results suggest significant gender differences in relation to these specific dimensions of personality and aesthetic preferences.

**Table 4**  
*Independent T-test between the male and female groups.*

|                         |                             | Levene's test for equality of variances |      | t-test for Equality of Means |         |               |                    |                              |                                    |          |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------|------------------------------|---------|---------------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------|
|                         |                             | Z                                       | Sig. | t                            | df      | Sig. (2 ends) | Average difference | Standard error of difference | 95% Difference Confidence Interval |          |
|                         |                             |                                         |      |                              |         |               |                    |                              | Bottom                             | Superior |
| Materialism             | Equal variances assumed     | ,239                                    | ,625 | 2,087                        | 724     | ,037          | ,16034             | ,07683                       | ,00950                             | ,31117   |
|                         | Equal variances not assumed |                                         |      | 2,073                        | 272,480 | ,039          | ,16034             | ,07734                       | ,00808                             | ,31259   |
| Physical attractiveness | Equal variances assumed     | 1,440                                   | ,230 | -,259                        | 724     | ,795          | -,02050            | ,07908                       | -,17575                            | ,13474   |
|                         | Equal variances not assumed |                                         |      | -,270                        | 294,073 | ,787          | -,02050            | ,07587                       | -,16981                            | ,12880   |
| Facial Harmonisation    | Equal variances assumed     | 1,490                                   | ,223 | -2,139                       | 724     | ,033          | -,19788            | ,09253                       | -,37953                            | -,01623  |
|                         | Equal variances not assumed |                                         |      | -2,081                       | 264,314 | ,038          | -,19788            | ,09509                       | -,38512                            | -,01064  |

Source: Research data, 2023.



To better understand the relationship between the dimensions (materialism, physical attractiveness and facial harmonisation), the Kruskal Wallis test was used to compare means. The test showed that there was an effect of age group on materialism [ $X^2(4) = 46.854$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ] and on physical attractiveness [ $\chi^2(4) = 17.294$ ;  $p < 0.03$ ]. As the non-parametric test had a similar result to ANOVA, it was decided to carry out the Tukey HSD post-hoc test to further analyse the results. The PostHoc table can be seen below.

For materialism, the 18 to 22-year-old category had a higher average than the other categories, and the difference increased with age. The 23 to 30-year-old category had a higher average than the other categories, except for the

18 to 22-year-old category, and the difference also increased with age. The age groups over 31 showed no significant differences between them, except for the 18 to 22 and 23 to 30 categories.

In terms of physical attractiveness, the 18 to 22-year-old category did not show any significant differences between the 23 to 30-year-old and over 50-year-old groups, but did show significant differences in relation to the 31 to 40-year-old and 41 to 50-year-old categories, with the 18-year-old category showing a higher average. The 23 to 30-year-old category had a higher average than the 31 to 40-year-old category, and there were no significant differences in the other categories. There were no significant differences in the age group over 50.

**Table 5**  
*Multiple comparison test. Tukey HSD*

| Dependent variable      | (I) Age | (J) Age | Average difference (I-J) | Standard Error | Sig.  | 95% Confidence Interval |             |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|--------------------------|----------------|-------|-------------------------|-------------|
|                         |         |         |                          |                |       | Lower limit             | Upper limit |
| Materialism             | 18 - 22 | 23 - 30 | ,46085*                  | ,12538         | ,002  | ,1180                   | ,8037       |
|                         |         | 31 - 40 | ,71676*                  | ,12070         | ,000  | ,3867                   | 1,0468      |
|                         |         | 41 - 50 | ,79595*                  | ,12642         | ,000  | ,4503                   | 1,1417      |
|                         |         | Over 50 | ,84882*                  | ,14751         | ,000  | ,4454                   | 1,2522      |
|                         | 23 - 30 | 18 - 22 | -,46085*                 | ,12538         | ,002  | -,8037                  | -,1180      |
|                         |         | 31 - 40 | ,25591*                  | ,08309         | ,018  | ,0287                   | ,4831       |
|                         |         | 41 - 50 | ,33510*                  | ,09120         | ,002  | ,0857                   | ,5845       |
|                         |         | Over 50 | ,38796*                  | ,11872         | ,010  | ,0633                   | ,7126       |
|                         | 31 - 40 | 18 - 22 | -,71676*                 | ,12070         | ,000  | -1,0468                 | -,3867      |
|                         |         | 23 - 30 | -,25591*                 | ,08309         | ,018  | -,4831                  | -,0287      |
|                         |         | 41 - 50 | ,07919                   | ,08465         | ,883  | -,1523                  | ,3107       |
|                         |         | Over 50 | ,13205                   | ,11377         | ,774  | -,1791                  | ,4432       |
|                         | 41 - 50 | 18 - 22 | -,79595*                 | ,12642         | ,000  | -1,1417                 | -,4503      |
|                         |         | 23 - 30 | -,33510*                 | ,09120         | ,002  | -,5845                  | -,0857      |
|                         |         | 31 - 40 | -,07919                  | ,08465         | ,883  | -,3107                  | ,1523       |
|                         |         | Over 50 | ,05286                   | ,11982         | ,992  | -,2748                  | ,3805       |
|                         | Over 50 | 18 - 22 | -,84882*                 | ,14751         | ,000  | -1,2522                 | -,4454      |
|                         |         | 23 - 30 | -,38796*                 | ,11872         | ,010  | -,7126                  | -,0633      |
|                         |         | 31 - 40 | -,13205                  | ,11377         | ,774  | -,4432                  | ,1791       |
|                         |         | 41 - 50 | -,05286                  | ,11982         | ,992  | -,3805                  | ,2748       |
| Physical attractiveness | 18 - 22 | 23 - 30 | ,19704                   | ,13074         | ,558  | -,1605                  | ,5546       |
|                         |         | 31 - 40 | ,44712*                  | ,12586         | ,004  | ,1029                   | ,7913       |
|                         |         | 41 - 50 | ,36601*                  | ,13182         | ,045  | ,0055                   | ,7265       |
|                         |         | Over 50 | ,37154                   | ,15382         | ,112  | -,0491                  | ,7922       |
|                         | 23 - 30 | 18 - 22 | -,19704                  | ,13074         | ,558  | -,5546                  | ,1605       |
|                         |         | 31 - 40 | ,25007*                  | ,08664         | ,033  | ,0131                   | ,4870       |
|                         |         | 41 - 50 | ,16897                   | ,09510         | ,388  | -,0911                  | ,4290       |
|                         |         | Over 50 | ,17449                   | ,12380         | ,622  | -,1641                  | ,5130       |
|                         | 31 - 40 | 18 - 22 | -,44712*                 | ,12586         | ,004  | -,7913                  | -,1029      |
|                         |         | 23 - 30 | -,25007*                 | ,08664         | ,033  | -,4870                  | -,0131      |
|                         |         | 41 - 50 | -,08111                  | ,08827         | ,890  | -,3225                  | ,1603       |
|                         |         | Over 50 | -,07558                  | ,11864         | ,969  | -,4000                  | ,2489       |
|                         | 41 - 50 | 18 - 22 | -,36601*                 | ,13182         | ,045  | -,7265                  | -,0055      |
|                         |         | 23 - 30 | -,16897                  | ,09510         | ,388  | -,4290                  | ,0911       |
|                         |         | 31 - 40 | ,08111                   | ,08827         | ,890  | -,1603                  | ,3225       |
|                         |         | Over 50 | ,00553                   | ,12495         | 1,000 | -,3362                  | ,3472       |
|                         | Over 50 | 18 - 22 | -,37154                  | ,15382         | ,112  | -,7922                  | ,0491       |
|                         |         | 23 - 30 | -,17449                  | ,12380         | ,622  | -,5130                  | ,1641       |
|                         |         | 31 - 40 | ,07558                   | ,11864         | ,969  | -,2489                  | ,4000       |
|                         |         | 41 - 50 | -,00553                  | ,12495         | 1,000 | -,3472                  | ,3362       |

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Source: Research data, 2023.



## DISCUSSION

The results showed a significant correlation between having cosmetic procedures and the perception of physical attractiveness, as well as the desire for facial harmonisation, corroborating previous studies (Henderson-King, Henderson-King, 2005; Brown et al., 2007). This relationship highlights physical attractiveness as a driving force for aesthetic consumption, suggesting that the quest for improved appearance is not merely a matter of vanity, but is rooted in a complex network of psychological and social motivations (Ching & Xu, 2019; Cao, 2020). These findings are reinforced by research demonstrating how cultural and social standards influence individual perceptions of beauty and body-related decisions (Taylor & Hansen, 2005; Ashikali & Dittmar, 2012).

The gender differentiation in attitudes towards materialism and facial harmonisation suggests the existence of distinct cultural and biological factors that shape the expectations and behaviours of men and women (Henderson-King & Henderson-King, 2005; Henderson-King & Brooks, 2009). Additional studies, such as those by Swami et al. (2008) and Kalaaji et al. (2018), highlight this divergence, suggesting that women may be more influenced by beauty ideals promoted by the media and society, while men may emphasise materialistic values and the status that possessions can confer.

The importance of age in the relationships between materialism, physical attractiveness and aesthetic consumption points to the need for targeted approaches in marketing strategies and clinical interventions (Sarwer et al., 2005; Guthrie et al., 2017). The variation in motivations for aesthetic consumption between different age groups may reflect changes in priorities and concerns throughout life, necessitating a deeper understanding of how these differences influence the search for aesthetic procedures (Kaipainen et al., 2016; Cao, 2020).

Furthermore, the lack of significant differences in the materialism dimension between participants who have and have not had aesthetic procedures challenges the idea that the search for such interventions is exclusively motivated by materialistic values. This suggests that other factors, such as the search for social acceptance,

self-confidence and satisfaction with body image, may play crucial roles (Babadi et al., 2018; Ching & Xu, 2019).

These findings reinforce the complexity of the motivations behind aesthetic consumption, indicating that the decision to seek facial harmonisation procedures is influenced by a multifaceted interaction between physical attractiveness, cultural norms, social expectations, and psychological factors. It is therefore crucial that future research explores these dynamics in detail, considering the influence of sociocultural, psychological and individual factors, in order to fully understand the reasons that drive people to modify their appearance (Markley Rountree & Davis, 2011; Sarwer et al., 2005).

To summarise, this study highlights the need for a holistic approach to understanding the phenomenon of aesthetic consumption, considering not only individual factors but also the impact of socio-cultural forces. The complexity of the motivations for aesthetic consumption requires a careful look at how physical attractiveness, materialism and demographic factors interact and influence individual decisions.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND LIMITATIONS

To expand knowledge in the field of aesthetics and consumer behaviour, it is suggested that this study be replicated in other emerging countries besides Brazil to compare the cultural impacts on aesthetic consumption. Investigating aesthetic consumption beyond the face, including body procedures, could offer insights into how age and gender interact with materialism and physical attractiveness in different contexts of aesthetic consumption.

The relationship between aesthetic consumption, attractiveness, materialism, age and gender is complex and multifaceted, and can be affected by a wide range of cultural, social and individual factors. There is a need for more in-depth research to unravel the nuances of this relationship, especially considering that the understanding of attractiveness varies between individuals and cultures. The literature on the subject is still incipient, and there are



contradictions in the existing findings, particularly with regard to the influence of materialism on aesthetic consumption, which seems to vary according to the age and gender of the consumer.

Furthermore, understanding aesthetic consumption must go beyond the individual sphere, encompassing cultural and social factors such as prevailing beauty standards, social pressures and gender expectations, which shape attitudes and behaviours related to aesthetics. Addressing this issue requires a holistic perspective, considering the various elements that can affect the decision to consume facial harmonisation procedures.

Another suggestion for future research is to explore the influence of the media and social networks on aesthetic consumption. The representation of beauty standards on these platforms can exert significant pressure on individuals, potentially affecting their decisions to seek aesthetic procedures. Investigating this aspect could reveal the extent to which media representations of beauty contribute to the promotion of aesthetic consumption and how these influences manifest themselves among different demographics.

Additionally, exploring self-esteem and body satisfaction as mediators in the relationship between physical attractiveness and aesthetic consumption could provide a deeper understanding of the psychological motivators behind the search for facial harmonisation procedures. Understanding how self-image perception and self-evaluation influence the decision to alter one's appearance could offer valuable implications for health and marketing professionals.

Finally, the limitation of this study, by focusing only on Brazilian consumers, highlights the need for a more globalised approach in future research, which considers cultural diversity and local specificities in aesthetic consumption. Expanding the sample to include consumers from different cultural and social backgrounds would enrich the understanding of how global and local variables interact in the context of aesthetic consumption.

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