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Analysis of the Internal Factors that affect the consumer buyer behaviour of gendered fashion items within the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland

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Analysis of the internal factors that affect the consumer buyer behavior of gendered fashion items within the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland

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Abstract

Studying consumer behavior is key to understanding what influences consumers' buying decisions, as a result this understanding can help producers to decide on a product they can fill in the gap in the market and identify the products that are needed and the products that are obsolete. As a result the purpose of this research is to critically analyze the internal factors that affect the consumer buyer behavior of gendered fashion items within the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland. The focus of this research is the analysis of internal factors: motivation and perception. The results indicate that the individual's consumer buyer behavior is impacted by biogenic needs, firstly by the need for clothing and secondly the need for shelter. Also is impacted by psychogenic needs, to fulfill their sense of achievement and to fulfill their sense of empowerment. Lastly, the individual's perception that affects their consumer buyer behavior, is impacted by subjectivity, categorization and the individual's expectations.

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This research project got to conclusion thanks to the help and cooperation of:

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The academic sources consulted provided an interesting basis to understand and discuss the premises on the concepts of gender and its relationship with the fashion industry. The initial motivation to carry out this research was based on the growing trend in the fashion industry to break the associated stereotypes between gender and dressing styles.

Studying consumer behavior is key to understanding what influences consumers' buying decisions, as a result this understanding can help producers to decide on a product they can fill in the gap in the market and identify the products that are needed and the products that are obsolete. Studying consumer behavior also helps companies to decide how to present their products in a way that generates maximum impact on consumers. (Radu, 2019)

Consumer buyer behavior

In order to understand why consumers think and feel about brands, products, services, and retailers it is key to analyze and understand the reasoning process and the selection between different alternatives and the research that individuals do before making a purchase. These can be identified as internal factors that affect the consumer buyer behavior. On the other hand, the consumers' behavior is also affected by their culture, the media and their peers, even if they are not aware of this influence. The study of consumer buyer behavior can be defined as the understanding of how individuals select and use products and services and how their internal motivations and unique behavior affect their decision making process. (Smith, 2016)

Broadly speaking, 3 factors can be identified when considering those that affect consumer buyer behavior. Firstly, interests and opinions that are believed to be impacted by demographics such as age, gender, culture, profession and background.

Secondly, perceptions and attitudes, also known as psychological factors. Lastly, consumers' behavior can be determined by social factors which include: peer groups, family, friends and external media like social media platforms. (Smith, 2016)

Based on the grasp of academic theories and from an organization's point of view, it is critical that the focus of the marketing strategy is to understand their customers' motivations, since these are considered to be the primary drivers when it comes to making decisions to purchase products or services. This decision making process has four distinct stages, that begins with recognizing a latent need, either physiological or psychological. Next step is to evaluate the options available to satisfy this need, which results in motivation to satisfy that need. Then the motivation turns the need into a want, which can be translated as focusing on a specific product or service. Finally the goal is achieved once the purchase has been made and need has been satisfied. (Duggal, 2018)

Gender identity and Fashion industry

Even though that in today's society, the binary gender perspective has changed and evolved, individuals have found the space and opportunity to decide their gender identity and not necessarily fit into the traditional gender idea and still be tremendously influenced when it comes to the decision making process in the marketplace. (Lantz, 2018)

At the same time, it is very common to find labels in all product lines that divide them into two categories: women or men, even when the items are virtually the same. Past studies have determined that the reaction and perception of products differs between men and women, however these studies have not included other genders that are as common today as the binary genders. Some research suggests that men are more interested in function, linear shapes, more technical and three-dimensional aspects of products, while women are interested in aesthetic, rounded and colored

shapes. It can be said then that the classification and labeling of some products does not include a consumer section that does not identify with the binary genres as it is traditionally defined. (Cakiroglu, 2017)

When it comes to the fashion industry, it can be said that there is an undergoing change due to the popularization of one of the rapidly growing trends in this industry, genderlessness and androgyny, as a response to the many changes in fashion demanded by consumers, based on their views on how dress codes are influenced by social, cultural, political and gender issues and equality. Genderless fashion items do not express male or female traits, but are open to individual interpretation, empowering the consumers to build and communicate their own unique identity through their clothing. (Oetojo, 2016)

It is believed that genderless clothes appeal to the younger generation to seek new approaches and self-expression, since the younger generation is more open-minded and do not care so much about gender differences. Today, customers would buy things they like, regardless of whether they are categorized as a specific gender, therefore it can be inferred that one of the goals of customers when purchasing items from genderless collections is to represent their identity through what they wear. (Oetojo, 2016)

As a result of the detailed review of literature it is clear then that the purpose of this research is to critically analyze the internal factors that affect the consumer buyer behavior of gendered fashion items within the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland. The main interest of this research is to focus the critical analysis on internal factors, such as motivation and perception that can be said to be unique to each individual.

Chapter 2: Objective and Research Question

Objective

Critically analyze the internal factors that affect the consumer buyer behavior of gendered fashion items within the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland

Research Question

Which are the internal factors that mostly affect the consumer buyer behavior of gendered fashion items within the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland?

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Research Methodology

Research is a careful investigation in a discipline or branch of knowledge, conducted in many fields of study, including the natural sciences, the social sciences, the behavioral sciences, education, and many others. This research has been conducted for the pursuit of knowledge and academic purposes and it is defined as basic or fundamental research. (Keenan, 2020)

Qualitative Research Method

Qualitative research is based on a constructivist approach, to the researcher, reality is subjective and seen through the eyes of the subjects in the study. There is interectaction between the researcher and the subjects through the emerging design of the project. (Smith, 2019)

This type of research involves collecting qualitative data rather than collecting data that can be numerically measured. Through the use of this research method the purpose is to gain understanding of a certain population, organization or event among others. The purpose is to learn more about how the subjects of this research operate in particular settings. (Keenan, 2020)

There are some aspects to be taken into consideration when applying a qualitative research method:

● The researcher could be known to the subjects of their research or involved with them to some degree (Keenan, 2020). For the purpose of this investigation, even though the researcher is not known to all subjects that will be participating in the investigation, they are all part of the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland.

- The data collected for the research could reflect some subjectivity, or judgments shaped by personal opinions and feelings, because the research is conducted by and on people, who are believed to be subjective by nature (Keenan, 2020). For the purpose of this research, the factors to be analyzed are internal factors that affect the consumer buyer behavior, that vary from subject to subject.

There are two categories to be considered when selecting the data collection method to complete a research and according to writers and academics these are: primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources are direct sources of information or data. Secondary sources discuss, interpret, analyze, consolidate or rework information from primary sources, considering that they are one-step away from the primary source of information. (University of Minnesota, 2015)

Based on the information above the method selected for the data collection of this project consulting primary, through a questionnaire sent digitally and to be answered anonymously.

Ethical Considerations

As the research method chosen for this project will require the collaboration of members of the LGBTQ+ community, it needs to be stated that all data collected will be used only for academic purposes and personal data will not be used following the General Data Protection Regulations 2018

Chapter 4: Literature Review

Around the world it can be inferred that the goal of organizations and marketers is to study and understand why individuals make the decisions they make and choose the products and services of their preferences and simultaneously develop personalized products and services for their target audience. This key information can be known as consumer buyer behavior.

It is believed that one of the most frequent techniques of personalization and differentiation of products and services, made by companies and marketers around the world is the gender of the audience to whom these are targeted. However, in this day and age, to discuss topics around or about gender can be considered intricate and sensitive, since it can be said that there are as many genders individuals can identify. (Gender Revolution, 2017).

It is known that the fashion industry is one of the industries that worldwide and throughout history, to have significantly influenced the characteristics and social constructs of gender. As a result, it is believed that there is a close relationship between fashion and gender, since continuous changes have been seen through decades that are associated with traditional social stereotypes of gender and their expression through clothing, thus resulting in gender-neutral fashion trends.

Along this chapter it will review the academic theories and definitions that help understanding the relationship between consumer buyer behavior, gender and fashion in order to establish a solid theoretical and academic base for this research.

Consumer Buyer Behavior

Consumer buying behavior refers to the selection, purchase and consumption of goods and services for the satisfaction of an individual's wants. It is influenced by many factors, specificities and characteristics that determine the decision making process, shopping habits, purchasing behavior and preferred brands of each individual. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

In order to understand consumer's behavior it is necessary to know what are the main factors that influence it. These can be classified on the one hand as internal factors that can be influenced by demographics, product knowledge, perception, learning, motivation, personality, beliefs, attitudes and lifestyles. On the other hand, as external factors that can be influenced by culture, social class, reference group, family and household (IResearch, 2019).

1. Overall factors that affect consumer behavior

Based on the research made many factors, both internal and external, can affect consumer behavior and among the most commonly found are: (Radu, 2019)

1.1 Marketing campaigns

Influence purchasing decisions and persuade consumers to change brands or favor a specific alternative. In addition to influencing consumers, marketing campaigns are often used by companies as reminders for products or services that need to be bought regularly but are not necessarily on customers' top of mind, an example of this could be insurance policies. (Radu, 2019)

1.2 Economic conditions

A positive economic environment is known to make consumers more confident and willing to indulge in purchases irrespective of their personal financial liabilities.

Consumers make decisions in a longer time period for expensive purchases and the buying process can be influenced by more personal factors at the same time. (Radu, 2019)

1.3. Personal preferences

Also known as personal factors that refers to an individual's likes, dislikes, priorities, morals, and values. When it comes to purchasing fashion items or food items personal opinions are especially significant. Even when consumers are influenced by advertisement their individual choices are greatly influenced by their preferences. (Radu, 2019)

1.4. Group influence

The opinions and actions of family members, classmates, immediate relatives, neighbors, and acquaintances, can play a significant role in the consumer's decision making process. our decisions, this also can be referred to as social psychology and is an external factor that impacts consumer behavior. (Radu, 2019)

1.5. Purchasing power

Also known as disposable income, this factor plays a significant role in influencing the consumers' buyer behavior, since in the decision making process the available budget is a key aspect to take into consideration before making a purchase. Understanding the buying capacity of target consumers, can help companies to determine their target audience and therefore their marketing strategies. (Radu, 2019)

For the purpose of this investigation the focus of it will be centered on the analysis of the internal or psychological factors that affect the buyer behavior of the subject of interest.

2.   Internal or psychological factors

The buying behavior of individuals is influenced by a number of internal or psychological factors. However, it can be said that the most relevant ones are motivation and perception. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

2.1 Motivation

It can be defined as a drive or an urge for which an individual seeks satisfaction and it becomes an influence of the buyer behavior when the individual seeks satisfaction through the purchase of something. Motivation acts as a driving force that foments an individual to make a decision in order to satisfy their needs. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

Needs can be classified under multiple categories according the different theorists, however for the purpose of this research the classification for needs that will be used is the following:

2.1.1 Biogenic needs: These arise from physiological states such as food, water, air, sleep, clothing, sex and shelter. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

2.1.2. Psychogenic needs: These arise from psychological states such as sense of achievement, affiliation, power and uniqueness. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

2.2 Perception

Due to the large amount of information that the individual's senses process, the brain is overloaded with information, so the individual's brain selects crucial information

from the environment around the individual and eliminates excess. Therefore, this information does not provide a complete vision of the world that surrounds the individual and the existing gaps between reality and the processed information will be filled with the use of imagination and previous experience. The result of this process can be identified as perception and is directly affected by the following factors. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

2.2.1. Subjectivity: It could be defined as the existing world-view within each individual which makes it unique. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

2.2.2. Categorization: It is also understood as the typecasting of information and the prejudice of events and products, through a process known as fragmentation, through which the individual organizes the information into fragments of related elements. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

2.2.3. Selectivity: it is understood as the process of choosing information from the environment in a subjective way. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

2.2.4. Expectation: this refers to the lead individuals have to interpret later information in a specific way.   (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

2.2.5. Past experience: this could be defined as the process to interpret later experience in the light of previous information collected in previous experiences. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

When it comes to making decisions regarding fashion and clothing, both for purchasing purposes and wearability, individuals are influenced by social factors and simultaneously they are influenced by their personalities and how they want to be seen. (Arvanitidou and Gasouka, 2013)

3. Types of consumer behavior

    3.1 Complex buying behavior

    It is encountered when consumers are buying an expensive, infrequently bought product. They are highly involved in the purchase process and consumers' research before committing to invest. (Radu, 2019)

    3.2 Dissonance-reducing buying behavior

    The consumer is highly involved in the purchase process but has difficulties determining the differences between brands and it can occur when the consumer worries that they will regret their choice. (Radu, 2019)

    3.3 Habitual buying behavior

    Habitual purchases are those when the consumer has very little involvement in the product. (Radu, 2019)

    3.4 Variety seeking behavior

    In this situation, a consumer purchases a different product not because they weren't satisfied with the previous one, but because they seek variety. Like when you are trying out new shower gel scents. (Radu, 2019)

Gender identity

    In 2017, National Geographic's magazine and channel worked together to produce a piece called "Gender Revolution", a print special edition and a documentary, with the purpose helping to understand the meaning of gender, since it can be

considered that gender has become an increasingly frequent topic, in both daily life and political discourse (Gender Revolution, 2017).

According to the World Health Organization, gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of female and male. These characteristics can vary from different societies and cultures and most of these are associated to taught appropriate norms and behaviors, including the expected way of how individuals should interact with others of the same or opposite sex within households, communities and work places. It can be said that it is historically common that when individuals or communities do not follow the socially expected norms individuals can see themselves facing stigma, discrimination or social exclusion (Gender Revolution, 2017).

As a complement of the above, it is relevant to define gender identity. By age four, most children have a stable sense of their gender identity, since they are capable of identifying external physical differences between females and males (Gender Revolution, 2017). Therefore, the term gender identity refers to the construction of this identity due to the interaction with the social environment but also due to the realization of a person that it exists as a specific gender (Cox & Dittmar, 1995). At the same time, children are taught gender role behavior, which translates on doing as expected and following stereotypical behaviors that males or females do (Gender Revolution, 2017).

As their development process, children's interests and abilities expand into different patterns and often these are different from what society expects, resulting in subjecting individuals to discrimination and bullying. In other words, the strengths of children do not always adapt to social expectations, so it is important to help them find their greatest potential instead of forcing current or more traditional ideas in relation to gender behavior. Some children are noncompliant with their gender, in early childhood, in adulthood they identify as Transgender. It is defined as persistently identifying with a gender different from their assigned sex at birth. On the other hand, there are also other children that do not (Gender Revolution, 2017).

As stated by Condor (1987) and later by Lloyd & Duveen (1993), the stereotypical masculine or feminine traits are not personality characteristics of individual men and women but socially constructed representations of gender, on the basis of what society's expectations of each. (Crepax, 2016). These stereotypes extend but not only restraint to: toys, clothes, activities and groups of friends (Gender Revolution, 2017).

Genderless fashion is becoming more relevant and present on the mainstream of the fashion industry and it has been very interesting to see how this trend goes hand to hand with an overall shifting social attitude toward the traditional binary gender system, and the expected behaviors that are associated with it. As a benefit from this trend, it can be said that releasing clothing from the confines of men's and women's labels allows individuals to freely use fashion as a form of self - expression. (Chapek, 2017)

<u>Fashion and gender</u>

Fashion is a social product that can be functional in two different levels, as a source of safety and uniformity and also as a form of personalization and differentiation, in other words it can be said that individuals wish to be recognized as part of a team and as a personality. (Arvanitidou and Gasouka, 2013). Moreover, consistently fashion has been used to indicate social class and gender, whilst accommodating to social norms and cultural boundaries. As a result, fashion could be seen as a mould for gender identities. (Ranathunga and Uralagamage, 2019).

Garments that are made with the clear distinction in male and female show the socially constructed nature of gender differences. It can be said that, even though they have functional character, at the same time they make statements about social class, economic status and attitudes. In addition it could be inferred that clothing could be

seen as a reflection of the desire to comply with traditional established social norms. (Arvanitidou and Gasouka, 2013)

In different sources of literature, multiple terms to define gender neutrality can be found. Among the most used terms are: genderless, gender-free, ungendered, gender-friendly, gender-neutral and androgynous (Jimenez and Guzman Alonso, 2019).

Currently we live in an age when gender neutrality has become the more appealing and even an important portion of the fashion industry. Fashion has changed the ideal gender characteristics by simply converting feminine into masculine, viceversa or a fusion of both (Ranathunga and Uralagamage, 2019).

The genderless trend is on the rise because it is perceived that as consumers, individuals are more consious now of not being labeled or fall into generalizations. It also can be stated that consumers are not comfortable to be defined by age, body appearance, sex or gender. As a result, the lines between the female and male stereotypes are starting to blur more and more when it comes to producing fashion lines, cosmetics and accessories (Jimenez and Guzman Alonso, 2019).

When it comes to the fashion industry, it can be said that multiple designers and artists had played for long into bending and sometimes breaking gender stereotypes (Ferrier, 2014). The fashion industry has been frequently challenged by gender norms and at the same time it has found the acceptance of more neutral gender expressions (Ranathunga and Uralagamage, 2019).

The fashion industry appears to have contributed the most to the development of the gender neutral trend, as it is believed that consumers seek to eradicate prejudices by wearing gender neutral clothing.(Jimenez and Guzman Alonso, 2019).

An example of this can be the recent popularisation of a new approach to the trend of gender neutral fashion at the end of 2013. A style which almost completely disregards the gender of its wearer. The trend not only includes a female customer interested in a more masculine aesthetic and seeking out a true menswear fit, but also, an emerging male customer interested in womenswear and women's accessories (Ferrier, 2014).

Even though the gender neutral trend has resurfaced to popularity in recent years, it can be traced back to the 18th century. Then the evolution of fashion was not suited to a specific gender since there were no significant differences in clothing between female and male. Fashion trends are also impacted by the social trends of a generacion. An example of this is the 1920's and the popularisation of styles with masculine looks becoming a prominent feature in women's fashion. This was highly influenced by the rise of women's independence (Ranathunga and Uralagamage, 2019).

Later on in the 1980's it could be seen as another good example of the evolution of fashion and its relationship with gender. Famous artists such as Prince and Grace Jones, adopted styles that were a feminine style with slender pants and glittery outfits and a more neutral style by wearing flat shoes and baggy pants, respectively. By the 1990's there was a mainstream presence of a more neutral style for females which resulted in attracting great attention to the assimilation of non-normative sexualities (Ranathunga and Uralagamage, 2019).

In recent years gender neutral fashion has gained a significant prominence in Western women's fashion that can be compared to the popularity of the masculine female looks of the 1920s, the ambiguity of the 1970s and the unisex style of the 1990s. This trend goes beyond clothing and has penetrated multiple layers of the fashion industry with the popularization of designer brand perfumes that encourage women to experiment with fragrance that mix masculine and feminine traits together (Crepax,

2016). Even though these trends of gender neutral fashion could be perceived as recent it can be stated that these kinds of trends have been in practice since the 18th century (Ranathunga and Uralagamage, 2019).

As mentioned before, the gender neutral trend has gained popularity among the fashion industry globally by bringing together traditional norms. In regards to the the acceptance of this fashion trend by consumers it depends on their attitudes and the way they perceive the options offered. It is believed that communities that have limited exposure to gender expressions and have strict cultural constructs, tend to avoid accepting gender neutral trends and options. Therefore, gender neutral fashion has been associated more in the past with the LGBTQ+ community, yet nowadays it has become something beyond LGBTQ+ community (Ranathunga and Uralagamage, 2019).

Chapter 5: Empirical Research

So as to collect the relevant data for this research, a questionnaire was shared among social media private groups created to gather the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland online. Therefore, below the questionnaire can be found in further detail with the purpose of presenting the operationalization of the measuring instrument. In other words, this is a pairing between the questions used to collect the data and the theoretical definition of each factor that influences consumer buyer behavior, in order to understand the purpose of each question and facilitate the analysis presented in the next chapter.

<u>Internal factors that affect consumer buyer behavior</u>

Motivation

Consumer Buyer Behavior factor	Definitions	Question	Multiple Choice Options
Motivation	Is the drive or an urge for which an individual seeks satisfaction and it becomes an influence of the buyer's behavior when the individual seeks satisfaction through the purchase of something.	1) When purchasing clothes I look for items that	Exclusively suit my style and **are** assorted for the gender I identify with
			Exclusively suit my style regardless if the items **are not** assorted for the gender I identify with

Motivation Indicators	Definitions	Question	Multiple Choice Options
Biogenic Needs	These arise from physiological states such as food, water, air, sleep, clothing, sex and shelter	4) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for the gender **I identify with**, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply)	This item is season specific (Spring - Summer / Fall - Winter)
		5) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for a gender **I DO NOT** identify with, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply)	I need to replace a similar item that is not longer in good condition

Motivation Indicators	Definitions	Question	Multiple Choice Options
Psychogenic needs	These arise from psychological states such as sense of achievement, affiliation, power and uniqueness.	4) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for the gender **I identify with**, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply)	I need this item for a special occasion, social event or work related event I was inspired by someone wearing something similar
		5) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for a gender **I DO NOT identify with**, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply)	This item makes me feel empowered This is a one of kind item

Perception

Consumer Buyer Behavior factor	Definitions	Question	Multiple Choice Options
Perception	Is the process when an individual's brain selects crucial information from the environment around them and eliminates excess. This selected information does not provide a complete vision of the world that surrounds the individual and the existing gaps between reality and the processed information will be filled with the use of imagination and previous experience.	2) How often do you buy clothes assorted for the gender **you identify** with? 3) How often do you buy clothes assorted for a gender you **do not identify** with?	Never Sometimes Always

Perception Indicators	Definitions	Question	Multiple Choice Options
Subjectivity	It could be defined as the existing world-view within each individual which makes it unique	4) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for the gender **I identify with**, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply) & 5) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for a gender **I DO NOT identify with**, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply)	This item reflects my personal identity
Categorization	It is also understood as the typecasting of information and the prejudice of events and products, through a process known as fragmentation, through which the individual organizes the information into fragments of related elements.		I like how the item looks on me
Selectivity	It is understood as the process of choosing information from the environment in a subjective way.		I am fond of this item's brand
Expectation	This refers to the lead individuals have to interpret later information in a specific way.		I have always wanted to have an item like this
Past experience	This could be defined as the process to interpret later experience in the light of previous information collected in previous experiences.		I always buy clothes at the store where I got this item

Table 2

Chapter 6: Research Findings

In order to collect the relevant data for this research, a questionnaire was created and after the required approval it was shared digitally with LGBTQ+ groups such as Bi+ Ireland Facebook Page, Dublin Pride Volunteer group and Outhouse LGBTQ+ Womxn wellness group. Largely, these groups reach out to approximately 1200+ people across Ireland.

The questionnaire was open to receive responses for 14 days and at the moment of closing the survey 24 responses were submitted and the results are analyzed below based on the internal factors and their indicators described on Tables 1 and 2 in Chapter 5 of this research.

Motivation

Considering that for the purpose of this research Motivation is understood as the drive or urge for which an individual seeks satisfaction and it is an influence on the buyer's behavior when the individual seeks satisfaction through the purchase of something (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020). Based on the data collected that is displayed and detailed on table 3 and Graph 1 the following interpretation can be made.

62.5% of the subjects prioritize their individual style when it comes to determining the motivation to complete a purchase of fashion items, regardless of the gender classification of the items.

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When analyzing and comparing the motivation of purchase among the genders of the subjects, it can be interpreted that only 0.05% subjects that identified as male indicated that their motivation for purchase is personal style regardless of the gender associated with the items. In contrast around 78% of subjects identified as female their main motivation is to fit their personal style.

Interestingly, two people that identify as non binary provided answers that could be considered as opposite. One subject indicated that in Ireland, from their perspective, there is a gap in the clothing offerings specifically for non binary people. Due to high tendency for a binary classification of fashion items across the country. On the contrary, the second person indicated that their motivation to buy clothes is to suit their personal style by purchasing clothes classified for the gender they identify, in this case non binary. It could be inferred that other external factors might affect the buyer behavior since factors like source of purchase could represent a difference between these opposite answers.

Question	Gender	Exclusively suit my style and are assorted for the gender I identify with	Exclusively suit my style regardless if the items are not assorted for the gender I identify with	Other: Non Able to find clothing specific for Non Binary People.
1) When purchasing clothes I look for items that	Female 14 (58.3%)	3	11	0
	Male 5 (28.8%)	4	1	0
	Cisgender Woman 3 (12.5%)	0	3	0
	Non Binary 2 (8.3%)	1	0	1
	Total	8	15	1

Table 3

- Exclusively suit my style and are assorted for the gender I identify with
- Exclusively suit my style regardless if the items are not assorted for the gender I identify with
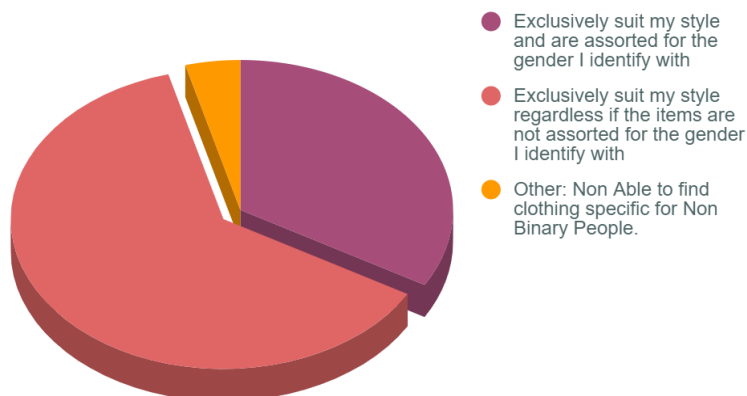- Other: Non Able to find clothing specific for Non Binary People.

Chart 1

Motivation Indicators

Based on the literature review it is understood that the motivation originates from the satisfaction of needs and the translation of those needs into wants. These needs can be divided into biogenic and psychogenic needs. Biogenic needs are those that arise from physiological states such as food, water, air, sleep, clothing, sex and shelter (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020).

As for the purpose of this research, two choices were included in questions 4 and 5 of the questionnaire, to assess the source of the biogenic needs that motivates the subject of this research to purchase fashion items.

These questions look to identify the factors that affect the consumer buyer behavior of items that are classified for a specific gender that the subject identifies with and at the same time pinpoint the motivation that individuals might have when purchasing items that are classified for a gender they do not identify with. The data obtained will be analyzed and presented separately in table 4 and chart 2 to analyze the answers obtained in question 4 and table 5 and chart 3 for those of question 5.

Biogenic Needs

When it refers to purchasing items that are classified for the gender the subjects identify with, the data collected suggests that 66.7% of the subjects indicated that their motivation for making said purchase is to replace items that are no longer in good condition, this can be interpreted as the motivation to fulfill their need for clothing. On the other hand 33.3% of the subjects indicated that an additional motive to purchase an item associated with the gender they identify with is to acquire an item that is season specific which can be interpreted as an intention to fulfill their need for shelter. These results reflect what the literature review suggests, that biogenic needs are the ones to be fulfilled first when making a purchase or paying for a service.

As for the interpretation of the results obtained by gender, the same trend seen on the first set of data is followed, 64.2% of the subjects identified as female would be motivated by their need for clothing when buying fashion items that are classified as female clothes.

Seeing that only 1 subject out of 3 subjects that identify as Cisgender Woman, selected their motivation for making a purchase is to replace items that are no longer in good condition, which as stated before could be interpreted as the motivation to fulfill their need for clothing, it is interpreted then, that there might be other factors affecting these subjects' consumer buyer behavior of fashion items classified for the gender they identify with which is Cisgender Women. These factors could be external or internal and moreover could suggest an existing gap in the fashion industry in Ireland. However, the data collected does not provide further information in this regard.

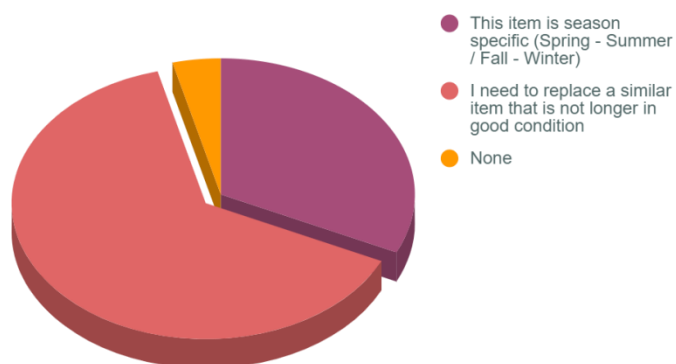| Question	Gender	Biogenic Needs		
		This item is season specific (Spring - Summer / Fall - Winter)	I need to replace a similar item that is not longer in good condition	None
4) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for the gender I identify with, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply)	Female 14 (58.3%)	6	9	
	Male 5 (8.3.67%)	1	5	
	Cisgender Woman 3 (12.5%)		1	
	Non Binary 2 (8.3%)	1	1	1
		8	16	1

Table 4

Chart 2

When it refers to purchasing items that are classified for the gender the subjects do not identify with, the data collected suggests that only 16.7% of the subjects

indicated that their motivation to purchase a fashion item that is not classified for the gender they identify with is to fulfill their need for clothing. Interestingly, 60% of the subjects that identify as male indicated that there is no motivation on their part to purchase fashion items classified for a gender they do not identify with.

Based on the data collected it can be interpreted that the basic biogenic needs are not the factor that affect the buyer behavior of the subjects when purchasing fashion items that are not classified for the gender they identify with. This seems to suggest that there might be other factors, not related to fulfilling basic needs, that are affecting these subjects' consumer buyer behavior. However, the data collected does not provide further information in this regard.

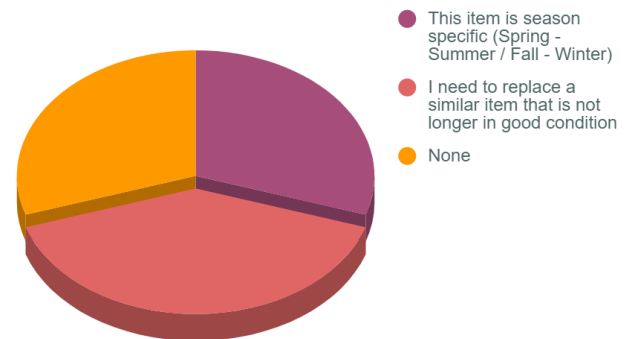| Question	Gender	Biogenic Needs		
		This item is season specific (Spring - Summer / Fall - Winter)	I need to replace a similar item that is not longer in good condition	None
5) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for a gender I DO NOT identify with, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply)	Female 14 (58.3%)	2	3	
	Male 5 (8.3.67%)	0		3
	Cisgender Woman 3 (12.5%)	0		
	Non Binary 2 (8.3%)	1	1	
		3	4	3

Table 5

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Chart 3

In summary it can be said that biogenic needs impact similarly the consumer buyer behavior of the subjects of this investigation regardless of the gender classification of the items that they are purchasing. The results suggest that the motivation, as an internal factor that affects consumer buyer behavior, is impacted by firstly, the need for clothing and secondly the need for shelter, as biogenic needs.

Psychogenic Needs

In the interest of assessing the psychogenic needs that motivate the consumer buyer behavior it is important to revisit the relevant definition for this research. Psychogenic needs are understood as for those that arise from psychological states such as sense of achievement, affiliation, power and uniqueness (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020).

As for the purpose of this research, four choices were included in questions 4 and 5 of the questionnaire to assess the source of the psychogenic needs that motivates the subject of this research to purchase fashion items as detailed on Table 2, Chapter 5.

As shown on Table 6 and Chart 4, the data collected suggests that the 62.5% of the subjects indicated that their motivation to purchase a fashion item that is classified

for the gender they identify with is to fulfil their sense of achievement, since they indicated that one of the main reasons to purchase these items is for a special occasion, social event or work related event.

Secondly, 44.6% of the subjects indicated that the fulfillment of a sense of empowerment was the motivation to purchase fashion items classified for the gender they identify with. Lastly, affiliation reflected by taking inspiration from other people was selected by 37.5% of the subjects as the main motivation to complete a purchase.

As the data collected is divided by gender, it suggests that 71.4% of subjects that identify as female would be motivated by fulfilling their need of empowerment, whereas 60% of subjects identify as male selected this option. Lastly, 66.7% of Cisgender women indicated empowerment as their main factor that affects motivation when purchasing fashion items classified for the gender they identify with. In addition to the stated before, 1 person that identifies as non binary, selected uniqueness as the main psychogenic need to fulfill when purchasing fashion items that are classified for the gender they identify with.

Question	Gender	Psychogenic needs

		I need this item for a special occasion, social event or work related event	I was inspired by someone wearing something similar	This item makes me feel empowered	This is a one of kind item
4) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for the gender I identify with, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply)	Female 14 (58.3%)	10	7	7	1
	Male 5 (8.3.67%)	3	1		
	Cisgender Woman 3 (12.5%)	2	1	2	2
	Non Binary 2 (8.3%)			1	
		15	9	10	3

Table 6
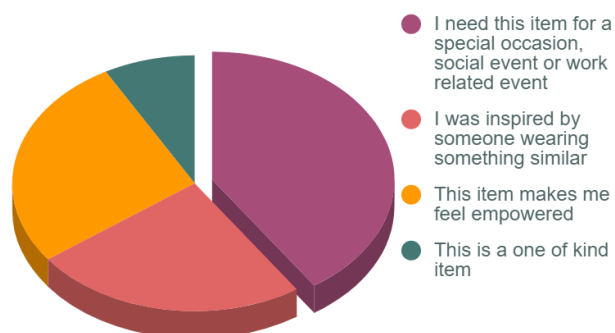
Chart 4

As shown on Table 7 and Chart 5, the data collected suggests that empowerment and affiliation are the main factors that affect the subjects motivation when purchasing a fashion item that is classified for a gender that they do not identify with by 45.8% and 37.5% respectively. Furthermore, 20.8% of the subjects indicated that their motivation to purchase a fashion item that is not classified for the gender they identify with is to fulfil their sense of achievement and lastly an 8% of the subjects highlighted also uniqueness as a factor that affects their motivation at the time of purchase.

When analysing the data collected divided by gender, the information that stands out is that 40% of the subjects that identify as male are motivated to fulfill their sense of achievement when purchasing a fashion item that is not classified for the gender they identify with. Out of the 3 subjects that identified as Cisgender women, none of them selected a psychogenic need to fulfill, therefore it can be inferred that among the subjects relevant for this research, the factors that affect the motivation of Cisgender Women when purchasing fashion items is their biogenic needs and not their psychogenic ones. Lastly, the data collected suggests that for the 2 subjects that identify as non binary the main factor that affects their motivation is to fulfill their need of empowerment when purchasing fashion items that are not classified for non binary people.

Question	Gender	Psychogenic needs			
		I need this item for a special occasion, social event or work related event	I was inspired by someone wearing something similar	This item makes me feel empowered	This is a one of kind item
5) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for a gender I DO NOT identify with, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply)	Female 14 (58.3%)	2	8	9	2
	Male 5 (8.3.67%)	2			
	Cisgender Woman 3 (12.5%)				
	Non Binary 2 (8.3%)	1	1	2	
		5	9	11	2

Table 7

Legend:
- I need this item for a special occasion, social event or work related event
- I was inspired by someone wearing something similar
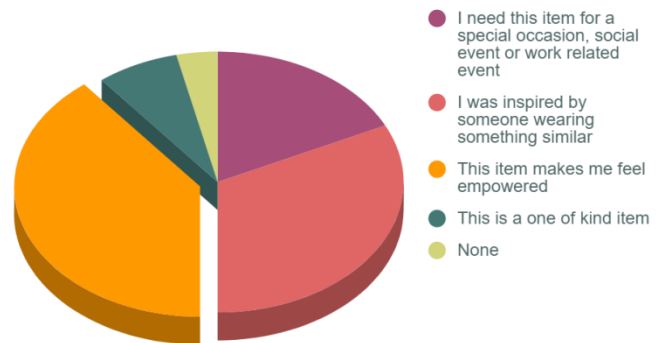- This item makes me feel empowered
- This is a one of kind item
- None

In summary it can be said that psychogenic needs somewhat affect differently the consumer buyer behavior of the subjects of this investigation in regards to the gender the items are classified for. In other words, when it comes to purchasing items that are classified for the gender the subject identifies with their motivation is mostly affected by the need to fulfill their sense of achievement. However when it comes to purchasing items that are classified for a gender the subjects do not identify with, the factor that mostly affects their motivation is fulfilling their sense of empowerment, based on the data collected.

Perception

Considering that for the purpose of this research Perception is understood as the process when an individual's brain selects crucial information from the environment around them and eliminates excess. At the same time the individual will be filling the existing gaps between reality and the processed information with the use of imagination and previous experience. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020).

For the purpose of this analysis of the perception factor will be divided by question in order to identify the main differences between the effect that perception has on consumer buyer behavior when purchasing fashion items that are classified for the

gender the subjects identify with and for those items that are classified for a gender the subject does not identify with. Based on the data collected that is displayed and detailed on tables 8 and 9 and Graphs 6 and 7 the following interpretation can be made, respectively.

54.1% of the subjects indicated that they sometimes, as to indicate frequency, purchase fashion items that are classified for the gender they identify with. 41.6% of the subjects indicated that they always, as to indicate frequency, purchase fashion items that are classified for the gender they identify with. Lastly, only 4.16% of the subjects indicated that they never purchase fashion items that are classified for the gender they identify with.

When analyzing and comparing the perception and its effect on consumer buyer behavior of fashion items among the genders of the subjects, for one of the individuals the internal factors, motivation and perception can be linked, since one subjects that identifies as non binary indicated they never purchase fashion items that are classified for the gender they identify with. Emphasizing then that from their perspective, there is a gap in the clothing offerings specifically for non binary people, due to the high tendency of a binary classification of fashion items across the country.

Perception				
Question	Gender	Never	Sometimes	Always
2) How often do you buy clothes	Female 14 (58.3%)		8	6

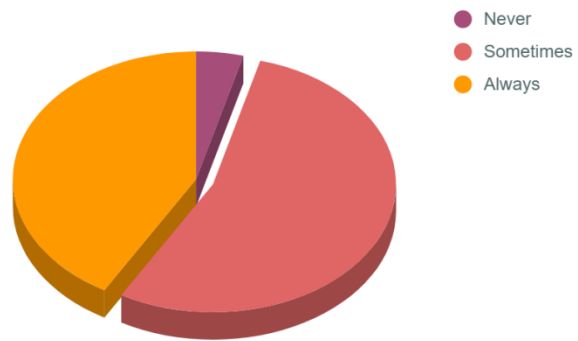| assorted for the gender you identify with?				
	Male 5 (8.3.67%)		2	3
	Cisgender Woman 3 (12.5%)		3	
	Non Binary 2 (8.3%)	1		1
		1	13	10

Table 8

Chart 6

When determining the frequency of purchase, 70.8% of the subjects indicated that they sometimes acquire fashion items that are classified for the gender they do not identify with. 20.8% of the subjects indicated that they never, as to indicate frequency, purchase fashion items that are not classified for the gender they identify with. Lastly, only 12.5% of the subjects indicated that they always purchase fashion items that are not classified for the gender they identify with.

When analyzing and comparing the perception of frequency of purchase of fashion items that are not classified for the gender the subjects identify with, the majority of subjects identified as females, 92.8%, indicated that they purchase fashion items not classified for females. In contrast, 60% of the subjects identified as males indicated that they never purchase fashion items that are not classified for males.

These results seem to support the statements discussed along the literature review of this research project, as said by Ferrier (2014) nowadays there is popularisation of the trend of gender neutral fashion that not only includes a female customer interested in a more masculine aesthetic, but also, an emerging male customer interested in womenswear and women's accessories.

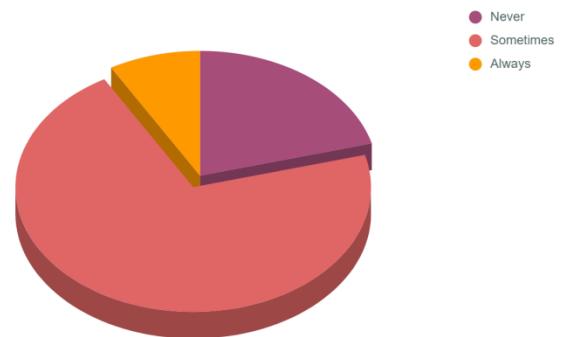| Perception				
Question	**Gender**	**Never**	**Sometimes**	**Always**
3) How often do you buy clothes assorted for a gender you do not identify with?	Female 14 (58.3%)	1	13	
	Male 5 (8.3.67%)	3	2	
	Cisgender Woman 3 (12.5%)		2	1
	Non Binary 2 (8.3%)	1	0	1
		5	17	2

Table 9

Chart 7

Perception Indicators

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Based on the literature review it is understood that the perception is unique to each individual and can be influenced by the following factors: Subjectivity, Categorization, Selectivity, Expectations and Past Experiences. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

As for the purpose of this research, one multiple choice per factor was included in questions 4 and 5 to assess the perception of the subjects of this research to purchase fashion items. These questions look to identify the factors that affect the consumer buyer behavior of items that are classified for a specific gender that the subject identifies with and at the same time identify the perception that individuals might have when purchasing items that are classified for a gender they do not identify with.

The data obtained will be analyzed and presented separately in table 10 and chart 8 to analyze the answers obtained in question 4 and table 11 and chart 9 for those of question 5.

The data collected suggests that when it comes to purchasing fashion items that are classified for the gender the subjects identify with the main factor that affects their consumer buyer behavior is subjectivity, understood as the existing world-view within each individual which makes it unique. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020).

83.3% of the subjects selected "This item reflects my personal identity" as one of the reasons to purchase fashion items that are classified for the gender they identify with. As for the interpretation of the results obtained by gender, it can be inferred that 85.71% of the subjects that identify as female prioritize their subjectivity in the purchase process. Equivalently 80% of the subjects identified as male suggest that their purchase process is influenced by their own subjectivity. Interestingly, 100% of the Cisgender Women that completed the survey indicated that one of the criteria to purchase fashion

items that are classified for the gender they identify with reflects their subjectivity. Lastly, 50% of the non binary people subjects of this research indicated the same.

What is more, 75% of the subjects, selected as well categorisation as the factor that affects their perception when purchasing fashion items classified for the gender they identify with. This factor is defined in the literature review of this research as the typecasting of information as a process through which the individual organizes the information into fragments of related elements. (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020)

Thirdly, 25% of the subjects indicated that their expectations, defined in the literature review as the lead individuals have to interpret later information in a specific way (Ramya and Mohamed Ali, 2020), affect their consumer buyer behavior in the purchase process of fashion items that are classified for the gender they identify with.

In summary, when referring to the consumers' perception and its influence on their buyer behavior, the factors that mostly affect the decision making process of the subjects of this research are: subjectivity, categorization and expectations.

Question	Gender	Subjectivity	Categorization	Selectivity	Expectation	Past experience
		This item reflects my personal identity	I like how the item looks on me	I am fond of this item's brand	I have always wanted to have an item like this	I always buy clothes at the store where I got this item
4) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for the gender I identify with, I choose the item because:	Female 14 (58.3%)	12	11	3	4	2
	Male 5 (8.3.67%)	4	3		1	
	Cisgender Woman 3 (12.5%)	3	3	1	1	1

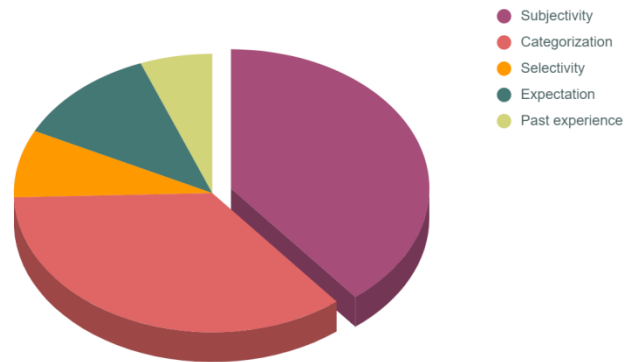| (Select all that apply)	Non Binary 2 (8.3%)	1	1			
		20	18	4	6	3

Table 10

Chart 8

The data collected suggests that when it comes to purchasing fashion items that are not classified for the gender the subjects identify with the main factor that affects their consumer buyer behavior is subjectivity, since 41.6% of the subjects selected "This item reflects my personal identity" as one of the reasons to purchase fashion items that are not classified for the gender they identify with.

The second factor selected as an influence on the perception of the consumers' buyer behavior was categorisation, since 37.5% indicated this a factor they consider when purchasing fashion items classified for the gender they do not identify with.

Thirdly, 16.7% of the subjects indicated that their expectations affect their consumer buyer behavior in the purchase process of fashion items that are classified for the gender they do not identify with.

In comparison to the results analyzed in the prior section, it can be said that even though the main three factors that affect the perception of the subjects are subjectivity, categorization and expectations, there is a palpable difference in the consumer buyer behavior of the subjects of this research, that could potentially be attributed to the gender classification of the items they are interested in purchasing and the gender they identify with.

| Question | Gender | Subjectivity | Categorization | Selectivity | Expectation. | Past experience |
		This item reflects my personal identity	I like how the item looks on me	I am fond of this item's brand	I have always wanted to have an item like this	I always buy clothes at the store where I got this item
5) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for a gender I DO NOT identify with, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply)	Female 14 (58.3%)	8	8	1	3	
	Male 5 (8.3.67%)					
	Cisgender Woman 3 (12.5%)					
	Non Binary 2 (8.3%)	2	1	1	1	1
		10	9	2	4	1

Table 11

Legend:
- Subjectivity
- Categorization
- Selectivity
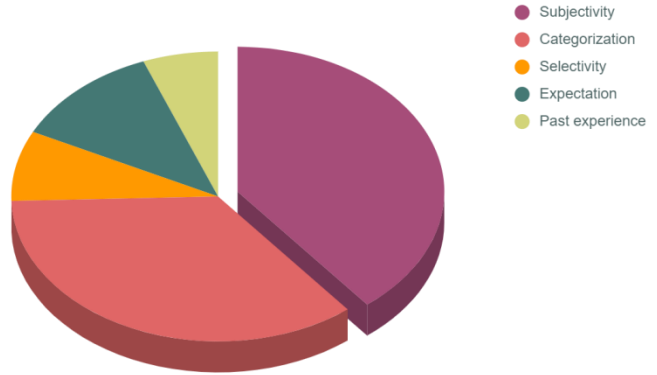- Expectation
- Past experience

Chart 9

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

As a result of the detailed review of literature and the analysis of the data collected for this research, the findings provided sufficient information to fulfill the objective of the research, which was to critically analyze the internal factors that affect the consumer buyer behavior of gendered fashion items within the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland.

In order to provide an answer to the research question relevant for this investigation, presented below are the conclusions that intend to explain which are the internal factors that mostly affect the consumer buyer behavior of gendered fashion items within the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland. It is important to highlight that the focus of this research was on the analysis of the internal factors, such as motivation and perception.

In regards to the individual's motivation that affects their consumer buyer behavior, the data collected allows to conclude that referring to biogenic needs, which is the primary needs that individuals look to fulfill, these impact similarly the consumer buyer behavior of the subjects of this investigation regardless of the gender classification of the items that they are purchasing. The results suggest that the main biogenic need that impacts motivation is the need for clothing and secondly the need for shelter.

In more detail, the results also allows to conclude that, for people that identify their gender as Non binary, based on their perspective and personal experience, there could be a gap in the clothing offerings specifically for non binary people, as a result of the high tendency for a binary classification of fashion items across Ireland. Additionally, it could be inferred that external factors that affect the buyer behavior of people that

identify as non binary, such as source of purchase, could represent a difference between the opposite answers provided by the subjects of this investigation. However, the data collected does not provide further information in this regard.

As well as the biogenic needs, the motivation that impacts the consumer buyer behavior, is influenced by psychogenic needs, as discussed in the literature review. Based on the data collected and the analysis completed it can be concluded that psychogenic needs affect differently the consumer buyer behavior of the subjects of this investigation, when referring to the gender classification of the fashion items purchased. On the one hand, the data collected suggested that when it comes to purchasing items that are classified for the gender the subject identifies with, the psychogenic need that impacts their motivation is the need to fulfill their sense of achievement. On the other hand, based on the data collected, when it comes to purchasing items that are classified for a gender the subjects do not identify with, the psychogenic need that mostly affects their motivation is fulfilling their sense of empowerment.

In order to understand the consumers' perception and its influence on their buyer behavior, the data collected allows to conclude that the factors that mostly affect the decision making process of the subjects of this research are: subjectivity, categorization and expectations when it comes to purchasing fashion items, regardless the gender these items are classified for.

Essentially, when comparing the results analyzed it can be concluded that the main three factors that affect the perception of the subjects are subjectivity, categorization and expectations. Nonetheless, the results show a variation in the consumer buyer behavior of the subjects of this research, that could potentially be attributed to the gender classification of the items they are interested in purchasing and the gender they identify with.

In more details, the data collected provides information that it is interpreted as a link between the motivation and perception's impact on consumer buyer behavior of

fashion items for one of the individuals that identifies as non binary. Since they had indicated they never purchase fashion items that are classified for the gender they identify with, which emphasizes that from their perspective, there is a gap in the clothing offerings specifically for non binary people, as a result of high tendency for a binary classification of fashion items Ireland.

Moreover when comparing the perception of frequency of purchase of fashion items that are not classified for the gender the subjects identify with, the results support what the literature suggests, that nowadays there is popularisation of the fashion trend that includes female customers interested in a more masculine aesthetic. Since the majority of subjects identified as females, indicated that they purchase fashion items not classified for females.

In conclusion, in order to answer the research question: Which are the internal factors that mostly affect the consumer buyer behavior of gendered fashion items within the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland? The results of this research indicate that the individual's motivation that affects their consumer buyer behavior is impacted by biogenic needs, firstly by the need for clothing and secondly the need for shelter regardless of the gender classification of the items that they are purchasing.

Also, the motivation is impacted by psychogenic needs when it comes to purchasing items that are classified for the gender the subject identifies with, is the need to fulfill their sense of achievement. However, when it comes to purchasing items that are classified for a gender the subjects do not identify with, the psychogenic need that mostly affects their motivation is to fulfill their sense of empowerment. Lastly, the individual's perception that affects their consumer buyer behavior, is impacted by subjectivity, categorization and the individual's expectations with a variation that can be associated to the gender classification of the items that they are purchasing.

Recommendations

- It is recommended to extend this research to establish a correlation between internal and external factors that affect the consumer buyer behavior within the LGBTQ+ community of gendered fashion.
- It is recommended to use this research as a starting point to identify existing gaps in the offer of fashion items that are not binary classified in the fashion industry in Ireland.

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Appendices

Research Approval Letter

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22rd March 2020

RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

To Whom It May Concern

This letter is to confirm that the Bachelor of Business (Honours) student below has received ethical approval to conduct the following academic research with permission from CCT College Dublin (CCT), Dublin 2, Ireland. This research is undertaken as part of an Applied Business Research Project within the programme.

Candidate: Daniela Lovera Teixeira – Student No. 2019439

Faculty: Business

Research Title: Analysis of the internal factors that affect consumer buying behaviour of gendered fashion items within the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland

Research Description: The purpose of this research is to critically analyse the internal factors that affect consumer buying behaviour of gendered fashion items within the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland. The main interest of this research is to focus the critical analysis on internal factors that affect consumer buying, such as motivation and perception that can be said, are unique to each individual.

Data Collection: March and April 2020 (Anonymous Questionnaire)

If you require any further information regarding the research approval process, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you would like to follow up directly with Daniela Lovera Teixeira regarding the conclusions of this research, please email: dloverateixeira@gmail.com

Graham Glanville
Dean of School and Ethics Board Director

Email: graham.glanville@cct.ie

Questionnaire

Dissertation Questionnaire

The following questionnaire has 5 questions with multiple choice answers and should take under 5 min to complete. It is part of an academic research done for CCT College Dublin as a Dissertation to obtain a Bachelor Honours Degree in Business.

This questionnaire is to be filled only once and cannot be edited since this might affect the results of the research.

Note: This questionnaire is for academic purposes only and all information is anonymous. Should you have any queries regarding this questionnaire, the research, or interested in viewing the findings upon completion, please email: dloverateixeira@gmail.com

* Required

Please indicate the gender you identify with. *

Your answer

1) When purchasing clothes I look for items that *

○ Exclusively suit my style and are assorted for the gender I identify with

○ Exclusively suit my style regardless if the items are not assorted for the gender I identify with

○ Other:

2) How often do you buy clothes assorted for the gender you identify with? *

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Always

3) How often do you buy clothes assorted for a gender you do not identify with?
*

○ Never

○ Sometimes

○ Always

4) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for the gender I identify with, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply) *

☐ I need to replace a similar item that is not longer in good condition

☐ This item is season specific (Spring - Summer / Fall - Winter)

☐ I need this item for a special occasion, social event or work related event

☐ I was inspired by someone wearing something similar

☐ This item makes me feel empowered

☐ This is a one of kind item

☐ This item reflects my personal identity

☐ I like how the item looks on me

☐ I always buy clothes at the store where I got this item

☐ I am fond of this item's brand

☐ I have always wanted to have an item like this

☐ Other:

5) When I purchase clothes that are assorted for a gender I DO NOT identify with, I choose the item because: (Select all that apply) *

- [ ] I need to replace a similar item that is not longer in good condition
- [ ] This item is season specific (Spring - Summer / Fall - Winter)
- [ ] I need this item for a special occasion, social event or work related event
- [ ] I was inspired by someone wearing something similar
- [ ] This item makes me feel empowered
- [ ] This is a one of kind item
- [ ] This item reflects my personal identity
- [ ] I like how this item looks on me
- [ ] I always buy clothes at the store where I got this item
- [ ] I am fond of this item's brand
- [ ] I have always wanted to have an item like this
- [ ] Other: _____