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Shaping customer engagement, repurchase intention and positive word-of-month in omnichannel retailing context

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Master in Marketing

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BUSINESS SCHOOL

Department of Marketing, Operations and Management

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Abstract

A seamless experience across different channels is a present challenge for all brands. Omnichannel is shaping customers' needs and expectations, brands must evolve their efforts to engage and empower their customers across several channels. The aim of this dissertation is to provide insights on how customer engagement and its outcomes, repurchase intention and positive word-of-mouth, change in an omnichannel environment. Thus, a research model was drawn and tested based on social exchange theory to explain customer engagement in an omnichannel environment. Two studies were conducted to better understand the proposed model: the first study with a secondary data approach provided insights on the market the study was conducted in: the skin care market in Portugal. Study number two used primary data to test the proposed model and its hypotheses through partial least square analysis. The findings of the study show that customer channel familiarity and channel integration quality are, indeed, related to customer engagement and its outcomes. However, customer empowerment was not found significant as a mediating effect between customer channel familiarity and customer engagement. This is mainly related to offline channels not being fully owned by skin care brands, which difficult their empowering effect towards customers. Nevertheless, customer empowerment is a mediating effect of channel integration quality and customer engagement. A consistent integration of channels makes customers feel more empowered, and, consequently, more engaged leading customers to repurchase brands' products and sharing positive comments about the brand with others.

Keywords: Omnichannel, customer engagement, positive word of mouth, repurchase intention, customer empowerment, customer channel familiarity, channel integration quality.

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Resumo

O omnicanal está a moldar os consumidores e as marcas têm de atuar no sentido de capacitar e envolver os consumidores através de vários canais. O objetivo desta dissertação é fornecer informação sobre como o *engagement* do cliente, a intenção de recompra e o passa-palavra positivo, mudam num ambiente de omnicanal. Assim, foi desenhado e testado um modelo baseado na teoria de troca social para explicar o envolvimento do consumidor num ambiente de omnicanal. Foram realizados dois estudos para compreender o modelo proposto: o primeiro estudo proporcionou uma visão do mercado no qual o estudo foi realizado: o mercado de cuidados da pele em Portugal. O segundo estudo testou o modelo e hipóteses propostas pela análise de parciais dos mínimos quadrados. Os resultados do estudo demonstram que a familiaridade com o canal do cliente e a qualidade da integração de canal estão correlacionados com o *engagement* do cliente e os seus resultados. No entanto, a capacitação do consumidor não se revelou significativo como um efeito mediador entre a familiaridade e o *engagement* do cliente. Tal sucede, nomeadamente, devido às lojas físicas não serem totalmente propriedade de nenhuma marca de cuidados de pele, o que dificulta o seu envolvimento no capacitação do cliente. No entanto, a capacitação do consumidor é um efeito mediador da qualidade da integração dos canais e do *engagement* do cliente. Uma integração consistente faz com que os clientes se sintam mais capacitados o que se revela intenção de recompra e passa-palavra positivo.

Palavras chave: Omnicanal, *engagement* do cliente, passa-palavra positivo, intenção de recompra, capacitação do cliente, familiaridade com o canal do cliente, qualidade de integração de canal.

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1. Introduction

Retail is a constant changing industry due to the technological innovations that emerge on a daily base. Omnichannel is one of the most present realities and recent topics in retailing. This concept evolves from the multichannel retailing, where there is a clear separation between digital and physical stores. In the omnichannel environment channels are managed as one, allowing customers to travel through all the available channels while interacting with the brand (Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016). Furthermore, omnichannel is defined as the integration of channels, combined to provide the customer a seamless customer journey through a strategic management of all channels as customer touchpoints (Picot-Coupey et al., 2016). This holistic approach impacts businesses since it changes the organisation, culture, management, marketing, and resource utilisation; followed by a deeper transformation in the customer relationship management, marketing mix, and information systems (Picot-Coupey et al., 2016).

Several industries, such as banking and telecommunications, already started to embrace these changes by using chatbots and other artificial intelligence assistants to help customers during their journey. However, many customers still use traditional channels to communicate with companies because of various reasons, e.g. not finding the information they need online. Sometimes, this change of channels brings frustrations to the customer since she/he will have to start the process all over again (Hewdig et al., 2019). To avoid these frustrations, it is essential to work towards a complete channel integration. Hence, with a combination of several channels, an omnichannel customer makes a single purchase (Li et al., 2015). Channel integration is driven by changes: on the retail sector dynamic, on shopping habits, and on the high productivity demand in logistics and supply chain procedures (Hüseyinoğlu, 2019).

Familiarity is also a concept that plays an important role in an omnichannel retailing (Hickman et al., 2019). According to several studies concerning a multichannel environment, customers' familiarity towards the channel makes them more aware (Bezes, 2016). Also, when choosing an online channel familiarity is a stimulus (Melis et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the digital disruption and the several available channels during the customer journey has empowered customers to switch channels and retailers during purchase (Heitz-Spahn, 2013); moreover customers are claiming to retailers more consistency, efficiency and speed across channels (Blázquez, 2014), while combining it with prior purchase research across social media platforms (Aubrey and Judge, 2012). Therefore, retailers and brands are facing a challenge that is extended towards the aim of turning customers into fans. Customer engagement is the way to make it since it is focused on customers, their needs and establishing relationships based on trust and commitment (Sashi, 2012). Customers that are engaged with the brand create value above purchasing (Van Doorn, 2010). Several examples of this value are posts on the brand social media, being present and cooperate in brand community and advocate the brands products and/or services to family and friends (Beckers et al., 2017). Retailers' "capability to map the consumer journey and to incorporate data into business operations enabled them to engage well with their consumers, (…) to create cross-selling opportunities, by providing tailored products and services" (Cao, 2019 p.61). So, to remain engaged with customers and provide the ability to choose when, where, and how to purchase companies are adopting omnichannel (Banerjee, 2019). Therefore, customer engagement is crucial in an omnichannel environment (Kassim & Hussim, 2019).

Literature focused on customer engagement in an omnichannel retailing is scarce. Being omnichannel such a recent but, yet present topic it is crucial to understand how retailers will operate in the future. Since "once customers have become used to interacting with retailers using multiple touch points online and offline during their customer journey, there is no going back. The challenges associated with providing a seamless experience to customers who want to engage with brands in a flexible way are here to stay." (Gallino & Moreno, 2019, p.10). However, omnichannel development is not identical worldwide, it depends on the markets and the way they are either ahead of others or trying to reproduce the model. Differences are also registered according to the type of consumer groups you target because each group has diverse behaviours, needs and expectations (Gallino & Moreno, 2019). In this context research questions arise: what could be drivers and outcomes of customer empowerment and customer engagement in the omnichannel context? Can familiarity and integrated interactions act as antecedents of both customer empowerment and customer engagement? Do word of mouth and repurchase intention act as outcomes of customer engagement in an omnichannel environment?

This dissertation aims to provide insights on how customer engagement and its outcomes, repurchase intention and positive word-of-month, change in an omnichannel environment.The research will be conducted in the skin care market, which has become the mainstream in the global cosmetic industry (Lee et al., 2019), has a growth potential (Informa DB, 2018) and there is a lack of studies in this field. In order to do it, two studies were conducted. For the study one secondary data was used from Informa DB (2018) report. For the study two primary data was collected to verify the proposed model. The objectives of this study are to enlarge and increase the theoretical knowledge on omnichannel; provide evidence that familiarity affects success of omnichannel; have a better understanding of customer engagement outcomes, positive WOM and repurchase intention, on omnichannel retailing; provide a study of the skin care market with an omnichannel perspective; analyse the customer empowerment effect on customer engagement.

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. The first one introduces the topic revealing its importance. The objectives of the study are also presented in this chapter. Furthermore, a literature review is presented on the second chapter, as the framework and hypotheses development. The third chapter consists of methodology presentation. Two studies will be conducted using primary and secondary data. On the fourth chapter, the data will be analysed. The conclusions, theoretical and managerial contributions, study limitations and further research recommendations are presented on the last chapter.

2. Literature Review

The presented literature review will provide theoretical proof for all the constructs used to design the model. The following concepts will be discussed and presented: omnichannel; customer engagement and its outcomes; channel integration quality; channel customer familiarity; and customer empowerment. Finally, the proposed framework and hypotheses will be developed.

2.1. Omnichannel

Omnichannel Marketing

Omnichannel marketing origins come from two conceptual subjects: multichannel marketing and Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC). Focusing on Multichannel Marketing it is adopted by firms that start providing to their customers, through two or more channels, knowledge, advice, products, and services. The aim is to improve and strengthen the relationship with the customer (Rangaswamy & Van Bruggen, 2005; Cummins et al., 2016). The challenge is to combine not only different sales channels but also customers' desires, distribution channels, communication. All this new system that appears consists of a challenge for companies. They will have to optimize a new way of combining different activities from different channels into one (Weinberg et al., 2007).

IMC, on the other hand, is the combination and connection of all marketing communication tools, channels, and expertise into one program created to expand the firm's impact to all its stakeholders, meaning consumers, customers, and retailers. This program will help the firm manage all its marketing activities, such as Advertising, Sale Promotion, Online Marketing, Packaging & Designing, Public Relations, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) (Clow & Baack, 2010).

IMC, Multichannel Marketing and Omnichannel marketing have similarities especially regarding the consistency of the message throughout the customer journey. However, the way companies deal with digital channels distinguishes the three concepts (Payne et al., 2017).

Omnichannel Management

According to Neslin et al. (2006, p. 96), multichannel management is described as "the design, deployment, coordination, and evaluation of channels to enhance customer value through effective customer acquisition, retention, and development". Since the disruptive increase of the use of online channels, companies managed them and the traditional channels, such as stores, apart from defined integration (Verhoef, 2012). Therefore, the channel focus regarding multichannel management is exclusively for interactive channels. The channels are separated, and their scope only complies with retail channels, such as online websites, stores, and direct marketing. The management of the channels is done individually per channel, as well as the measurement of goals (Verhoef, et. al, 2015).

Analysing the omnichannel management side, Verhoef et al. (2015) described several differences in their theoretical article. Regarding the channel focus, omnichannel management works not only in interactive channels but also in mass-communication channels. As an example, in the Fast-moving consumer goods retailing, Dove's "Campaign for Real Beauty" (Deighton, 2007) moved the brand to women's self-esteem scope. For this campaign, Unilever decided to change its brand message for consumers to empower debate around the self-esteem theme, using not only traditional channels but also new media channels. Unilever combined billboards in the Grand Central Train Station, Super Bowl ads with extended YouTube Videos as a new media channel (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010). With this strategy, Unilever got the consumers' attention not only on the theme discussion but mainly on the brand providing it. Within the omnichannel environment, the channels are integrated contributing for a consistent retail experience; the focus is not only the customer but also the retail channel and the brand; the objectives are common to all channels; and the scope is given to retail channels, such as online website, stores, direct marketing, mobile channels, and social media; customer and touchpoints, including mass communication channels.

After analysing previous literature on multichannel management and omnichannel management, Verhoef et al. (2015, p.176) define "omnichannel management as the synergetic management of the numerous available channels and customer touchpoints, in such a way that the customer experience across channels and the performance over channels are optimized".

Omnichannel Retailing

According to Brynjolfsson, Hu, and Rahman (2013, p.23) in the past, brick-and-mortar retail stores were unique in allowing consumers to touch and feel the merchandise and provide instant gratification; Internet retailers, meanwhile, tried to woo shoppers with wide product selection, low prices and content such as product reviews and ratings. As the retailing industry evolves toward a seamless "omnichannel retailing experience", the distinctions between physical and online will vanish, turning the world into a showroom without walls. However, although omnichannel retailing is for companies an increasingly "hot" topic, theoretical studies are still missing (Verhoef, et al., 2015).

Omnichannel retailing is a combined relation with numerous interactions between traditional and online channels. It is characterized as a process of conjoint operation, logistics, information exchange, and inventories across channels providing a merge of activities (Hübner et al., 2016). In his article, Chopra (2016) provides a very clear explanation of omnichannel retailing: it is the adoption of a range of channels designed to interact with customers and accomplish their requests. In the following figure it is possible to observe the alternatives in an omnichannel retailing of the customer and the retailer to exchange information and product.

Figure 2. 1 Alternatives in omnichannel retail

Source: Chopra, 2016

The impacts of omnichannel retailing will appear for both suppliers and retailers. Suppliers will have to be quicker to respond to all the different requests that having a wider range of channels will arise. Manufactures will have to narrow the number of retailers they produce because these same retailers will be searching for exclusive products, adapting all of them to customers' needs. Following this trend, the line that separates suppliers and retailers will disappear since the seller will look for particular merchandise. Looking at the consumers' point of view, the increased use of smartphones will give them the chance to choose the course of decision-making while buying, as the information is available every time and everywhere (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013).

Observing the previous studies on omnichannel retailing it is possible to identify two types: organizational-level studies and individual-level studies. There are two major ways in organizational-level studies. On one side, several researchers focused their work on order fulfilments or on investigating product (e.g., Bell et al., 2014; Bell et al., 2015; Chopra, 2016; Hübner et al., 2016). As an example, Chopra (2016) argues the importance of developing a structured supply chain that is cost-effective and manages customer needs in omnichannel retailing. The focus should be given both to physical and online channels. This "hybrid structure" can help new players partnering with already existing ones and leverage the advantages for both retailers and consumers. On the other side, a few studies were centred on marketing concerns of omnichannel retailing (e.g., Melero et al., 2016; Cummins et al., 2016). Giving an example, Cummins et al. (2016) provide an omnichannel framework in the environment of sales and sales management linked to six areas: impact on firm performance and relationships, sales contexts, the impact of technology, steps in the sales process and the role of diverse communication tools and platforms.

Considering the individual-level studies on omnichannel retailing this is still insufficient. The studies about this subject are focused on understanding previous factors that may influence customers' purchases alongside omnichannel retailers (e.g., Cook, 2014; Juaneda-Ayensa et al., 2016). As an example, Cook (2014) explains the importance of providing the use of smart technology not only to customers but also to the employees that work directly with them. Therefore, the information and data will flow to both participants in the purchase phase. It is important to

create a smooth experience because omnichannel customers arrive prepared at the store and if the process of buying is pleasant, they become very loyal and profitable.

Within Omnichannel Retailing it is crucial to understand the importance of channel integration quality, which consists of the company's capacity to provide to customers a good purchasing experience with a diverse range of channels (Sousa & Voss, 2006). According to several researchers (Melsted, 2015; Bianchi et al., 2016), channel integration quality will enhance the development of consistent purchasing experiences in an omnichannel retailing environment. As mentioned above, several authors (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013; Verhoef et al., 2015; Chopra, 2016) defend that omnichannel retailing highlights the disappearance of borders between channels.

2.2. Customer Engagement

Several authors defend different roots of CE that directly influence its conceptualisation (Connell et al., 2018).

Table 2. 1 Main perspectives defended

Perspectives of CE	Authors
Consumer Behaviour perspective	Calder et al., 2009; Mollen and Wilson, 2010; Van Doorn et al., 2010; Pansari & Kumar, 2017; Kumar et al., 2010
Relationship Marketing (RM) influence	Bowden, 2009; Vivek et al., 2012; Dessart, 2017
Service-Dominant (S-D) Logic	Hollebeek, 2016; Bowden et al., 2017
Both RM and S-D logic perspective	Brodie et al., 2013; Brodie et al., 2011; Hollebeek, 2011[a]; Vivek et al., 2014

Source: Author's own creation based on several authors.

In a Consumer Behaviour perspective, Van Doorn et al. (2010, p. 254) emphasized specific CE acts by first explaining the concept referencing it to specific types of main engagement activities. According to Pansari & Kumar (2017, p. 295), CE is "the mechanics of a customer's value addition to the firm, either through direct or/and indirect contribution". Coherently with the definition of Kumar et al. (2010), it is stated that direct contributions generate customer purchases, while indirect

contributions encourage referrals. For example, the customer contributes with social media comments and feedback on the brand.

Regarding Relationship Marketing, Bowden (2009, p.65) created a model to explain the psychological process of customer engagement based on cognitive psychology and relationship marketing literature. Within this article, engagement is conceptualized as "psychological process that models the underlying mechanisms by which customer loyalty forms for new customers of a service brand as well as the mechanisms by which loyalty may be maintained for repeat purchase customers of a service brand."

Hollebeek et al. (2016, p. 162) developed a S-D logic-informed of CE stating that "CE and S-D logic share a theoretical focus on interactivity with or between stakeholders (e.g., customers, employees), thus reflecting a significant conceptual fit of these perspectives, warranting their joint investigation".

CE is a multidimensional concept that according to its roots is defined comprising several perspectives. Due to previous research, Hollebeek (2011a) considered Customer Brand Engagement (CBE) from a RM and S-D logic perspective, although connected with Social Exchange Theory (SET). CBE is defined as "the level of a customer's motivational, brand-related and context-dependent state of mind characterized by specific levels of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural activity in brand interactions. It includes the themes of immersion, passion, and activation" (Hollebeek, 2011b, p. 790). Brodie et al. (2011, p. 260) described CE as a "psychological state that occurs by virtue of interactive, cocreative customer experiences with a focal agent/object (e.g., a brand) in focal service relationships". According to Vivek et al. (2012, p.133), CE refers to "the intensity of an individual's participation in and connection with an organization's offerings and/or organizational activities, which either the customer or the organization initiate". For Mollen & Wilson (2010, p. 923) "Online engagement is a cognitive and affective commitment to an active relationship with the brand as personified by the website or other computer-mediated entities designed to communicate brand value. It is characterized by the dimensions of dynamic and sustained cognitive processing and the satisfying of instrumental value

(utility and relevance) and experiential value (emotional congruence with the narrative schema encountered in computer-mediated entities)".

CE has been studied in diverse research contexts. Mainly regarding online brand communities (Brodie et al., 2011; Dessart et al., 2016; Dessart, 2017) ; Social Media (Bitter et al., 2014; Dolan et al., 2016); Brand (Brodie et al., 2013; Hollebeek, 2011a; Maslowska et al., 2016); Websites (Calder et al., 2009; Hyder and Bigné, 2016); Online gaming communities (Cheung et al., 2015). As an example, the study conducted by Dessart (2017) provides insights about the effect of approach into the community, product involvement and online interaction propensity in social media engagement. It is, also, exposed that high social media engagement rises brand relationships especially in brand trust, commitment, and loyalty.

In an omnichannel environment, customers have more opportunities to interact with the retailer and, therefore they are engaged both in online and offline channels through consistent shopping experiences. When comparing the younger generation with the older generation, youngers are more likely to engage with omnichannel retailers due to the ability to access to several channels (Lee et al., 2019).

2.3. Outcomes of CE

Repurchase Intention

Repurchase intention consists of verifying if a customer will repeat his/her purchase of goods from a company (Chiu et al., 2013). Diverse factors can initiate this behaviour in customers. As an example, satisfaction increases the repurchase intention of customers that will make a high-risk choice (Wu & Chang, 2007). Omnichannel customers will repeat their purchases as a consequence of the engagement during shopping experience and the decrease barriers among channels that foments willingness of buying (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013; Verhoef et al., 2015; Chopra, 2016; Lee et al., 2019).

Positive word of mouth (WOM)

WOM is interpreted as a positive or negative comment that a possible, actual, or prior customer makes related to a firm or good, through online or offline channels. This comment usually is available to other customers in diverse channels (Henning-Thurau et al., 2004). Positive WOM occurs when a customer communicates, in a positive way, with others about a product or service from a company (Anderson, 1998). In an omnichannel environment where channels are interconnected (Bendoly et al., 2005), positive WOM is crucial to engage more customers. Therefore, it is important to understand how a firm in an omnichannel environment can engage customers to generate positive WOM (Lee et al., 2019).

2.4. Channel Integration Quality

Bendoly et al. (2005) described channel integration as the extent that diverse channels are relate to one another. Channel integration is also defined as "the degree to which a firm coordinates the objectives, design, and deployment of its channels to create synergies for the firm and offer particular benefits to its consumers" (Cao & Li, 2015, p. 200).

The dynamics of the retailing sector arise the need for integrating channels, being the key concern on how customer access products. There is a complete change in shopping habits of the several target customers. Therefore, the existing demand on data integration, business process, IT embracement and productivity in Logistics and Supply Chain arise. The drivers mentioned are aspects of channel integration (Hüseyinoğlu, 2019). The importance of channel integration is related with a possible growth in customers experiences, since connecting different channels promotes the number of interactions with customers (Binder, 2014).

The benefits of integrating channels have been discussed in previous studies (Seck & Philippe, 2013; Binder, 2014; Cao & Li, 2015; Herhausen et al., 2015; Frasquet & Miquel, 2017). As an example, Binder (2014) stated that channel integration brings a strategic advantage too when compared with single-channel competitors, since they cannot compensate several channel possibilities, such as interacting with employees but also social interaction with other customers. Cao & Li (2015) stated that channel integration positively influences sales growth. Firms that better harmonize their channels shall increase customer's loyalty and trust, increase conversion rate, and

develop more opportunities to cross-sell. In the banking sector, an omnichannel integration increments the omnichannel perceived value. The study concluded that omnichannel integration and customer satisfaction have a positive relationship (Hamouda, 2019).

Focusing on the integration of channels, Herhausen et al. (2015) provide two approaches for the integration: offline-online integration, presenting knowledge about the online store in a physical one - in its physical stores Louis Vuitton provides self-service; online-offline integration, when the brand presents knowledge about the physical store through its online channel - IKEA presents physical store local and hours information in its website.

According to a study conducted by Deloitte (2014), to accomplish the omnichannel opportunity companies must integrate their channels. Retailers must provide a consistent information of products in all available channels, however never forgetting to enhance the particular benefits of each channel to engage customers. Since when purchasing, an omnichannel customer adopts several channels, as an example physical stores, mobile apps, and websites (Li et al., 2015). Therefore, to boost customer value, a pre-requisite of channel integration is that mostly every customer uses multiple channels for shopping at the same time (Binder, 2014).

Observing omnichannel retailing, channel integration is crucial because connected customers will be able to shop anywhere, anytime creating a seamless experience independently of the channel he/she chooses (Brynjolfsson et al., 2013; Deloitte, 2014; Verhoef et al., 2015; Chopra, 2016). Hence, with the aim to get a better understanding of CE in an omnichannel environment it is crucial to give a focus on channel integration quality (Lee et al., 2019)

2.5. Channel Customer Familiarity

In an overall perspective, familiarity consists on "the number of product related experiences that have been accumulated by the consumer" (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987, p.411). For Ha & Perks (2005, p. 442), the concept of familiarity seems "to serve as an umbrella term and is related, although not perfectly, to other important constructs including consumer expertise, prior knowledge and strength of belief. Familiarity also appears as a necessary, although not sufficient,

condition for the development of expertise and the ability to perform product-related tasks successfully".

Focusing on a brand perspective, the magnitude of the experience with a brand, directly or indirectly, consists of familiarity (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987; Kent and Allen, 1994). The familiarity the customers have with a brand refers to the previous knowledge and association in customers' memory regarding a brand (Stewart, 1992). The difference between familiar and unfamiliar brands is explained by the knowledge customer holds on his/her memory. The different associations for familiar brands, can emerge from friends, family members, prior advertisings, or marketing comm, know how the brand is positioned, packaged from press (Campbell & Keller, 2003).

Previous studies indicate that high familiarity with a brand diminishes the demand for information research (Ha & Perks, 2005). For instance, Biswas's (1992) research provided evidence that consumers invest fewer time shopping for a familiar brand unlike while shopping for an unfamiliar one.

Familiarity can be seen as a customers' perception of a brand actions and position. Also, due to past experiences, such as the usage of personal interface to conduct purchases, explore the site, seek and /or return goods, provide comments, familiarity is knowledge created (Gefen, 2000). It can be perceived as the "consumer's degree of acquaintance with the selling entity, which includes knowledge of the vendor and understanding its relevant procedures such as searching for products and information and ordering through the Website's purchasing interface" (Kim et al., 2008, p. 551).

According to Calantone et al. (2006), customer familiarity is seen as a decisive factor of the success of a product innovation, meaning what features and capabilities are comprehended by the customers. Actually, "when a customer is familiar with a new product, the customer concludes that the new product requires minor effort to learn to use it and perceives the full advantages of the new product to easily meet customer criteria for its usefulness. Therefore, a new product with high customer familiarity may be extensively accepted by targeted customers in the market and is likely to be adopted to create high market sales for a trading importer" (Li & Lin, 2015, p.100). The

familiarity (knowledge) customers have regarding quality, cost and sustainability of a remanufactured product affects the perceived risk (Wang & Hazen, 2016).

Customers' channel familiarity may be relieved in terms of performance and physical risks. Since the capability to evaluate the performance of a return channel (meaning, as an example, the return of a product to retail store and the ship-to-retail store) increases with higher familiarity (Forsythe and Shi, 2003). Xu & Jackson (2019, p. 129) proved that "customers with higher familiarity toward the return channel feel less perceived risk when using that channel". Kim et al. (2008) also noticed that customers' higher familiarity influences the relationship with the channel, which boosts trust by, consequently, decreasing risk. Customers that are more familiar and had several previous interactive and positive experiences with a specific channel, have less perceived risk when using that channel.

Channel familiarity is the factor that more impacts perceived risk. This is an important insight for retailers since internal factors, such as familiarity and patience, are proved to influence more customers' channel loyalty than external factors, as an example channel's return policy. Therefore, to work for this situation retailers may provide discounts (e.g., coupons) for a new channel to motivate customers' choice or explain usage through advertisements and online display videos. These types of techniques will leverage customers' channel familiarity and decrease their perceived risk (Xu & Jackson, 2019).

Observing an omnichannel customer, it has proved that the perceived risk regarding the concern on product value and availability are reduced with more information (familiarity) (Gao & Su, 2016).

2.6. Customer Empowerment

Empowerment is comprehended as "one of the most important themes in the economic history of the next century" (Malone,1999, p. 142) according to the information systems literature. However, empowerment has also been studied in several matters such as management research (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995; Spreitzer et al., 1997; Conger, 1998; Rapp et al., 2006), e.g. how empowerment takes action in organizations; political research (Sorensen, 1997; Bucy & Gregson,

2001), e.g. forms of empowerment may influence active and passive way of political participation; information system studies (Grover & Kettinger, 1997; Seidmann & Sundararajan, 1997), for instance, how decentralized organizations will affect employees' empowerment; and consumer research (Malone, 1999; Davies & Elliot, 2006; Henry & Caldwell, 2006; Tiu Wright et al., 2006), for example, the way to improve consumer empowerment is by implementing an amusing marketing atmosphere and provide appropriate information.

Empowerment can be explained as the "increased intrinsic task motivation, and our subsequent model identifies four cognitions (task assessments) as the basis for worker empowerment: sense of impact, competence, meaningfulness, and choice" (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990, p. 677). Or as "the act of strengthening an individual's beliefs in his or her sense of effectiveness" (Conger, 1989, p.18). A more recent study that provided insights on consumers being empowered through the internet clarified that "empowerment is about information, if a site doesn't provide you with the information, to empower you to make informed choice, then it is not, there isn't any empowerment ... it doesn't give you any sort of informed knowledge about what is happening with your pension" (Harrison et al., 2006, p. 28).

The two ways to analyse consumer empowerment are: from an organization perspective, that is "crowds articulating beliefs about them and/or pressuring with demands for changes in actions"; or from a consumer perspective, "consumers deciding to openly voice and share opinions and emotions about particular behaviours in the market – alone or with others" (Rydén et al., 2019, p.110).

According to Pires et al. (2006, p. 938), consumer empowerment is "examined from the perspective of a process requiring the giving of power or authority to make decisions". Several examples of consumer empowerment can be observed beneath "customerization", which consists in "offering customers more control in the exchange but still decisively influencing customer decision making and choice processes by framing the choice options".

Consumer empowerment is mainly acquired during information research on internet and diverse sources. "The extent of empowerment will depend on their ability to discern potentially

useful information for evaluating competing service-products on offer, and to satisfy their needs with the least waste of time and effort" (Pires et al., 2006, p. 939). In the exchange process, consumer empowerment relies on: "the number and quality of the value propositions that are available in the market (i.e. the extent of choice on offer); consumer market knowledge (i.e. the value propositions that the consumer knows of); a consumer's ability to search for and gather new market information; and a consumer's ability to take advantage of alternative value propositions (for example, the ability to assess what is on offer, economic, time and logistic constraints)" (Pires et al., 2006, p. 939).

However, the environment created to empower consumers can also cause dilemmas when choosing, since all the knowledge available to consumers through internet and other sources can turn the process of choosing more difficult (Broniarczyk & Griffin, 2014); or it can cause social media storms (SMSs) (i.e. when customers show their unsatisfaction towards organisations). These types of events are a result of a negative consumer empowerment which carries challenges and opportunities, since they can influence the creation of value for organisations, consumers, and society (Rydén et al., 2019). Therefore, "empowering consumers does not necessarily reduce decision difficulty due to increased information that needs to be processed" (Hu & Krishen, 2019, p.28), since customers feel happier when they are empowered to choose the amount of information they wish (Hu & Krishen, 2019).

Consumers obtain "consistent and complementary information from various channels", which improves reducing "the uncertainty in consumer shopping processes and help them make better decisions" (Zhang et al., 2018, p.184). Therefore, with an omnichannel retailer consumers empowerment is influenced since they acquire more alternatives and extended information (Broniarczyk and Griffin, 2014).

2.7. Framework and Hypothesis development

Omnichannel is a recent topic and there is still a lack of research on how it will affect retailing and marketing. Customers are changing their habits due to an increase of access to information. If one channel was enough, nowadays a combination of channels that must be integrated among each other is essential for retailers to thrive. Retailing is becoming an open world where companies will

provide a variety of channels to interact with customers and attend all their requests. However, omnichannel does not consist only on integrating channels and a recent study approaches the evolving problem of engaging customers across different channels.

Customer engagement in omnichannel retailing was studied by Lee et al. (2019) and presented the following research model. In this study, Lee et al. (2019) observed how channel integration quality affects customer engagement, that will lead furthermore to positive outcomes, such as, Repurchase Intention and Positive WOM.

Figure 2. 2 Research model from Lee et al. (2019) study
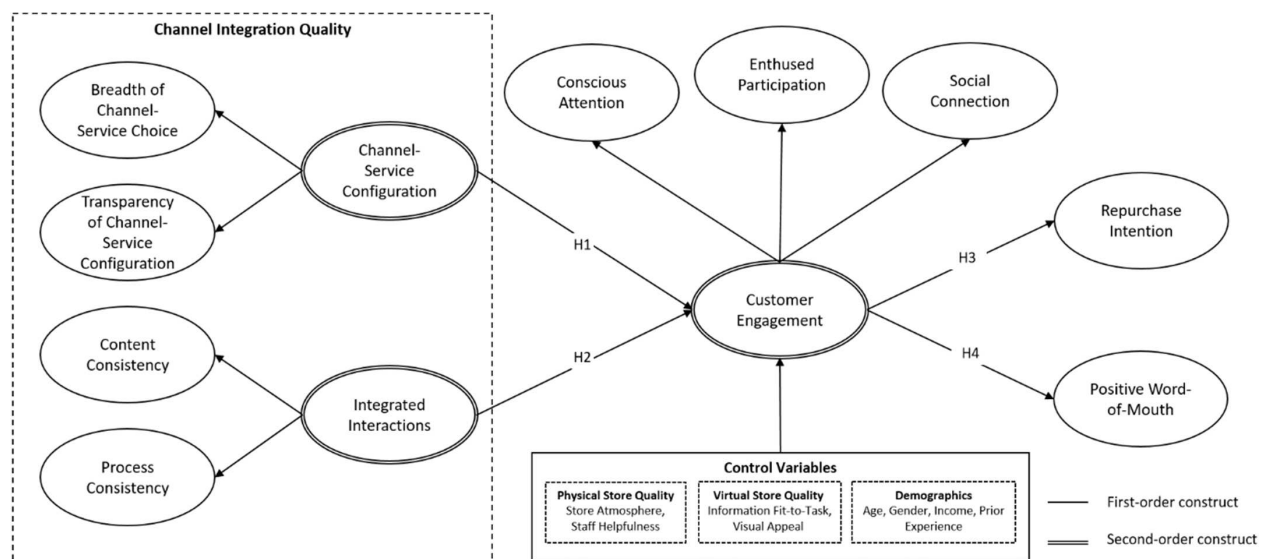
Source: Lee et al., 2019.

Through literature review and having the previous model in consideration, the following framework is proposed (Figure 2.4). This framework reflects the objectives of the study and it was drawn based on the Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Blau, 1964), a method which aimed to implement economic principles in social relationships (Miller, 2019). According to Blau (1964, p. 91): "Social exchange ... refers to voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others."

SET has been studied in several fields such as anthropology (Befu, 1977; Lévi-Strauss, 1969), psychology (Homans, 1961; Lawler & Thype, 1999), business (Lamb, Wittman & Spekman, 2001; Saks, 2006), and political science ((Ellen III, Ferris & Buckley, 2013; Nunkoo & Smith, 2013). The main idea of SET consists of the social behaviour that occurs as a result of a

process of exchange focused on enlarging personal advantages and diminishing personal disadvantages. According to this theory, individuals leverage the benefit in opposition to the cost, with the aim of choosing and engaging with the most valuable social relationship (Miller, 2019). Several theorists diverge on specific aspects of the theory however converge in the central "essence" of SET: "Social Exchange comprises actions contingent on the rewarding reactions of others, which over time provide for mutually and rewarding transactions and relationships" (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005, p. 890). Theorists acknowledge that social exchange comprises a series of interactions which create responsibilities (Emerson, 1976), these interactions are seen as interdependent and based on the behaviour of other individual (Blau, 1964). SET also "emphasizes that these interdependent transactions have the potential to generate high-quality relationships" (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005, p.875). With time relationships grow towards trusting, loyal, and mutual commitment (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). To make it happen there are three foundation ideas of SET that can be considered: rules and norms of exchange, resources exchange, and relationships that emerge.

Based on an organisational perspective, meaning a firm-customer relationship (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), social exchange process, like the one shown on the figure 2.3, starts when an organisational individual, normally a supervisor or co-worker, acts towards a target individual in a positive or negative manner (Eisenberger et al., 2004; Farrell & Rusbult, 1981; Rusbult et al., 1988; McLean Parks, 1997). The answer to initial behaviour, also referred as initial actions (Cropanzano et al., 2017), may happen when the target decides to reciprocate this approach with a good or bad action (Eisenberger, Cotterell, & Marvel, 1987; Gergen, 1969; Gouldner, 1960). SET anticipates that positive initiating actions are likely to be answered in a beneficial way through engaging in positive reciprocate action, and/or less negative reciprocate actions (Cropanzano et al., 2017).

Figure 2. 3 Generic Model of Social Exchange
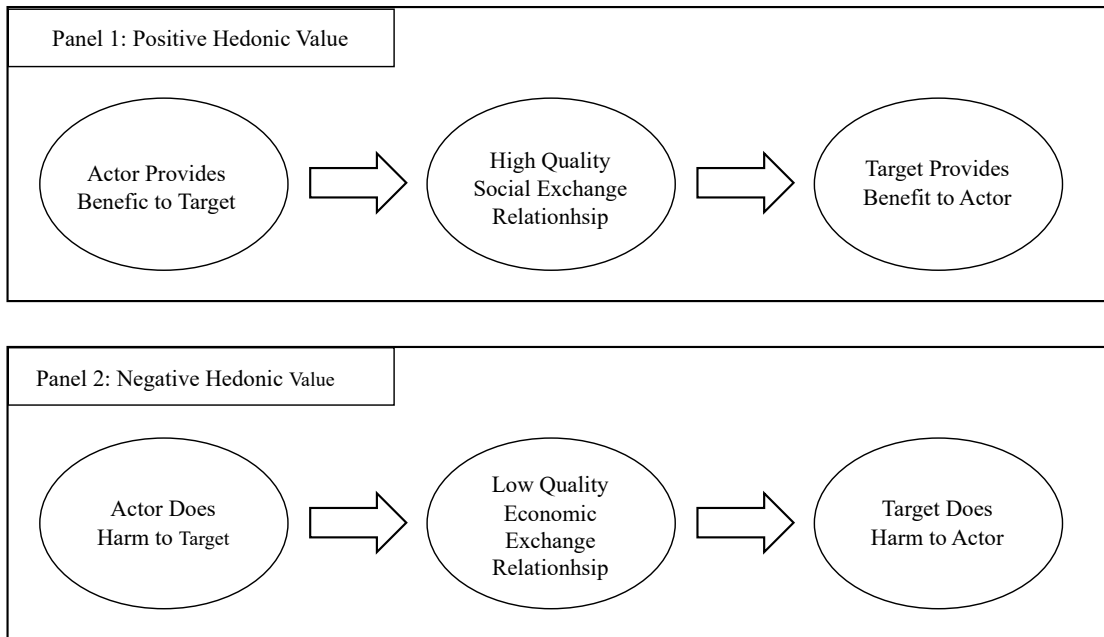
Source: Cropanzano et al., 2017.

SET has been used to study CE in several researches (Hollebeek et al. 2016; Alvarez-Milán et al., 2018). Therefore, in this study SET is used because it shares with CE the principles of trust, loyalty, and mutual commitment (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). In the model proposed, due to literature review, customer empowerment is a concept that has been explored. According to Blau (1964), power is a result of ongoing relations which gives a stronger connection of customer empowerment, CE and SET.

Adopting SET, it is proposed that in an omnichannel environment channel customer familiarity and integrated interaction impacts customer empowerment which, furthermore, will have results on the positive outcomes of CE. In figure 2.4 illustrates the research model.

Figure 2. 4 Proposed Framework
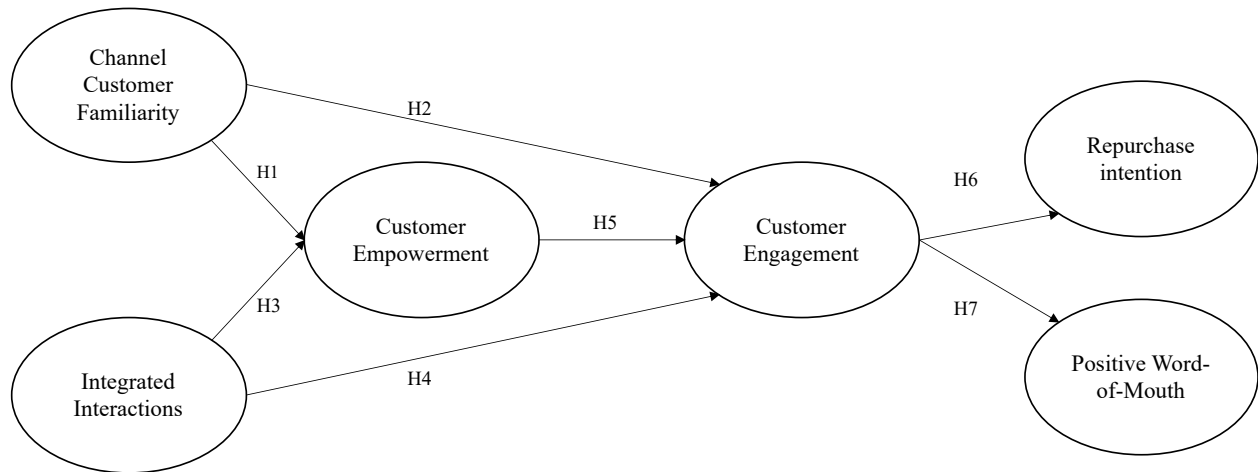
Source: Author's own creation.

From the presented framework (see figure 2.4), seven hypotheses were developed that will be presented on the next pages.

In the literature review, it was mentioned that an increase on familiarity would diminish the need for information (Ha & Perks, 2005) and decrease the perceived risk (Xu & Jackson, 2019). With the aim to diminish perceived risk, companies can also provide more information about their business (Gao & Su, 2016). Harrison et al. (2006, p.28) stated that "empowerment is about information". Therefore, consumer market knowledge occurs when an empowered consumer acquires information during research (Pires et al., 2006). Thus, extended information from various channels will empower consumers in their shopping process (Zhang et al., 2018; Broniarczyk & Griffin, 2014). Hence, when customers are more familiar with channels, they will feel more empowered in their shopping experience, hence the first hypothesis:

H1: Channel Customer Familiarity positively influences Customer Empowerment.

Nevertheless, being CE described as the level of participation and connection a customer establishes with a brand (Vivek et al., 2012), a customer that is familiarized with channels may, indirectly, become more connected and involved with a brand, meaning he/she is engaged.

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Therefore, the next hypothesis aims to study the indirect influence of channel customer familiarity on customer engagement:

H2: Channel Customer Familiarity positively influences Customer Engagement.

Channel integration consists in connecting several channels with each other (Bendoly et al., 2005) that promotes the number of interactions with customers (Binder, 2014). In order to achieve the omnichannel opportunity, companies shall integrate their channels (Deloitte, 2014). Sousa and Voss (2006) explain channel integration quality with 2 dimensions channel-service configuration (with the "breadth of channel-service choice" and "transparency of channel-service choice") and integrated interactions ("content consistency" and "process consistency"). However, the findings of the study by Lee et al. (2019) provide a perspective of the vital importance of integrated interactions. Therefore, in this study channel integration quality will be explained by integration interaction (Sousa and Voss, 2006; Lee et al., 2019). In all channels it is important to provide consistent information about products (Li et al., 2015). As it was mentioned in the literature review, "empowerment is about information" (Harrison et al., 2006, p.28), so information empowers customers in shopping experience (Zhang et al., 2018; Broniarczyk & Griffin, 2014). Therefore, channel integration, namely integrated interactions (content and process consistency), might increase the level of empowerment in customers, translated by the following hypothesis:

H3: Integrated interactions positively influence Customer Empowerment.

Lee et al. (2019) stated the direct effect and positive influence of integrated interaction in CE. The level of consistency in both, content, and process, among the several channels that a brand uses influences an engaged consumer, the one that wants to leverage a brand value (Pansari & Kumar, 2017). Therefore, the indirect effect of integrated interactions on CE must be also studied, which is explained in this next hypothesis:

H4: Integrated interactions positively influence Customer Engagement.

Consumer empowerment is explained by providing consumers power as a consequence of considerable information (Wolf, Albinsson & Becker, 2015). Hence, empowered consumers are

the ones that have the power to make their own decisions and share their beliefs in the market (Pires et al., 2006; Rydén et al., 2019).

CE consist of the customers' action of increasing value to the company (Pansari & Kumar, 2017). According to the conceptualization of CE designed by Vivek et al. (2014, p. 407), that combines the perspectives of RM and S-D logic, there are three explanatory factors of CE:

- **conscious attention** refers to "the degree of interest the person has or wishes to have in interacting with the focus of their engagement";

- **enthused participation** is "the zealous reactions and feelings of a person related to using or interacting with the focus of their engagement";

- and **social connection** consist of "enhancement of the interaction based on the inclusion of others with the focus of engagement, indicating mutual or reciprocal action in the presence of other".

Therefore, the power companies provide to customers will translate in the shopping process. So, after purchasing customers may be engaged with the brand. The more empowered customers feel during their buying experience, the more engaged they will be with the brand. In an omnichannel environment, where information must be consistent in all channels since it empowers customers, it will, consequently, influence their engagement. Regarding all the above mentioned the following hypothesis arises:

H5: Customer Empowerment positively influences Customer Engagement.

CE produces both transactional and non-transactional outcomes that have been thoroughly studied (Bitter & Grabner-kräuter, 2016; Chan et al., 2014; Cheung et al., 2015; Chu & Kim, 2011). Repurchase intention consists of a transactional outcome (Lee et al., 2019) explained by a repeated acquisition of goods and/or services (Chiu et al., 2013). Positive WOM comprehends the positive opinion related with a good and/or service that may occur in any available channel to other customers or potential customers (Henning-Thurau et al., 2004). These two outcomes have been widely studied therefore they were selected for the study (Chang et al., 2014; Islam & Rahman, 2016). For omnichannel retailers it is essential that customers feel engage with the brand since that

may reflect their repurchase intention and influence the positive WOM they share. Therefore, the following hypotheses were developed:

H6: Customer Engagement positively influences Repurchase Intention.
H7: Customer Engagement positively influences Positive Word-of-Mouth.

3. Methodology

The aim of the study is to understand which factors, in an omnichannel environment, affect customer engagement and its outcomes. Omnichannel has been studied in several parts of retailing, giving an example, by studying the differences between brands (in this particular case Apple and Kroger) (Lee et al., 2019); or service platforms (Shen et al., 2018); or focused in customers experience with omnichannel retailer (Li et al., 2018). However, there is a lack of studies in the skin care market. Therefore, this study is conducted in this market. To better understand this market, the author firstly selected secondary data from Informa DB study (2018).

Secondary data consists in data that was "originally collected for a different purpose and reused for another research question" (Hox & Boeije, 2005, p.593). According to Heatonx (2004, p.16) "secondary analysis is a research strategy which makes use of pre-existing quantitative data or pre-existing qualitative data for the purposes of investigating new questions or verifying previous studies". In this study, secondary data represents the "starting point" for the primary analysis (Goodwin, 2012). Using secondary data, several advantages are relevant, such as, the availability since it was only available as a secondary form; the speed because unlike the primary data collection it can be conducted in a short period of time; and, flexibility since it gives a big range of information (Wrenn, Stevens & Loudon, 2007).

Primary data consist of data that is not available through a secondary format so it must be gathered to answer specific requirements of the research (Wrenn, Stevens & Loudon, 2007). Therefore, it uses methods that are more suitable for the research (Hox & Boeije, 2005). According to Kotler & Armstrong (2010, p.131) primary data is "information collected for the specific purpose at hand". In this study a survey research will be carried out that consists in "gathering primary data by asking people questions about their knowledge, attitudes, preferences and buying behaviour" (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010, p.134).

3.1. Study 1: Secondary Data

The report provided by Informa DB (2018) is focused in several activity areas inside the Perfumery and Cosmetic market, such as, hair care, perfumes and fragrances and skin care.

To better understand this market, it is crucial to study the international context, and furthermore, the European Union (EU) and especially Portugal. On an international context, the EU is the main market of perfumery and cosmetic at a worldwide scale overcoming the United States of America (USA) and China. The main market of EU is Germany followed by France and Italy. The products segment that represents the higher business volume is the cleaning market (26,1%) followed by the skin care market (25,7%), as it is possible to observe in figure 3.1.

Figure 3. 1 Distribution of EU market for activity segments (% on value at factory prices), 2017
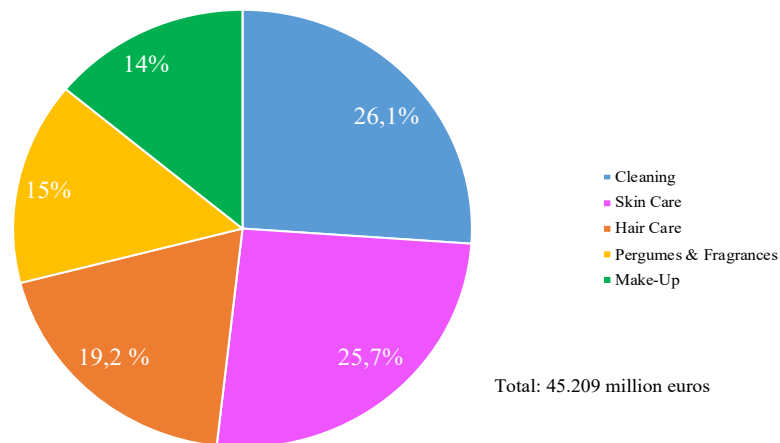
Note: Market valued at factory gate prices. Excluded Malta and Cyprus.

Source: Cosmetic Europe in Informa DB, 2018.

Concerning the per capita expenditure in products of perfumery and cosmetic in Portugal it reaches 132 euros, which is above the European average of 125 euros, as shown in figure 3.2.

Figure 3. 2 Per capita expenditure on perfumery and cosmetic products in the countries of the European Union, 2017

Note: Market value at retail prices, excluding VAT. Excludes Cyprus and Malta.
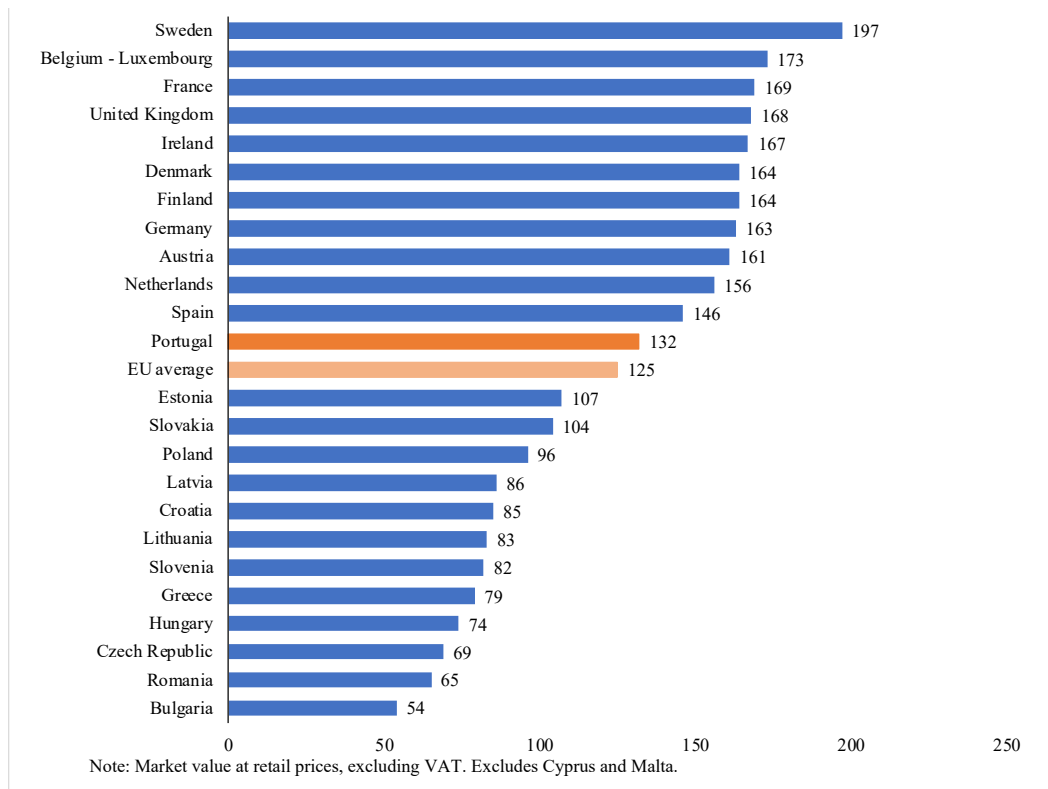
Source: DBK from Cosmetic Europe data.

The main focus of study one is the segment of skin care, which is the most important one with 28,1% of the global sales of the Iberian market (Portugal and Spain) in 2017. However, in Portugal the main segment is the cleaning (257 million euros) that comprises several products, such as soaps, after shaves, deodorants. The skin care market represents 239 million euros.

Observing the overall perfumery and cosmetic market, the market share of the five most important companies in Portugal is 37% in 2017, and the business volume registered a growth rate of 2.3% in 2017, which corresponds to 841 million euros. The market is expected to continue growing until 2020. According to the data available on DB Informa study (2018), the principal firms operating in the Portuguese market are Unilever Firma, L'Oréal and Beiersdorf.

The main companies are using several strategies, such as, the increasing investment on R&D; the new product releases focused on undeveloped market niche, as an example, male cosmetic; "all-in-one" products; and range of products for specific skin concerns. The organic and

natural products is the segment which registered an increase in demand and has a growth potential, since customers are, nowadays, more concerned about environment issues.

Other strategies used are the publicity and marketing actions to reinforce brand image, and reach bigger differentiation compared with competitors. In this field, there is an incremented development of new internet communication channels, a penetration growth of electronic commerce and an enlargement of the line of products and services provided.

The business concentration on the skin care market is a tendency that will be extended, and it will be increased by new operations of acquisition of smaller companies by the market leaders. Therefore, there are several corporate operations that must be taken into account. As an example, in august 2018, L'Oréal purchased Logocos Naturkosmetic AG, a German company, focused in vegan and bio cosmetic.

A tendency of supply polarisation has been registered in two segments: the luxury products segment, and the mass market product at competitive prices. The enterprises that supply selective products use strategies of products differentiation with high investment in R&D and intense advertising activity, to reinforce brand image. The main companies with the stronger brands develop agreements with luxury brands and celebrities to expand their supply. In this segment, it is important to highlight the deal between L'Oréal and David Beckham with the establishment of House 99, a new brand in the sector of male products. In the following table 3.1, the author presents all the opportunities, threats and tendencies of the Perfumery and Cosmetic market for 2018.

Table 3. 1 - Opportunities, Threats and Tendencies

Opportunities	Threats
Positive evolution of the private consumption, even though its growth rhythm is calm; Increased customer concerned for image and personal care; Promising development of immature market niches: specific needs scope, male cosmetic, ecological features; Usage of several commercialization channels: online sales, apps in mobile devices; Improved knowledge of customers and their preferences due to social media usage.	High price competition on the mass market field: increased pressure on commercial margins; Enhancing of the positioning on the food distribution sector. High market share of distribution companies; Entrance of new brands targeting natural cosmetic and low-cost ranges, with enlargement approach based on franchises opening.
Tendencies	
Aggregation of supply: growth of market leaders, vanishing of small and medium size companies; Consolidation of mass market distribution brands, increase supply of selected products; Strategies of differentiation, such as, investment in R&D and advertising, adopted by the companies positioned in the selective products line; Relevant innovation work from the producers of distribution brands; Growth of the electronic commerce; Usage of online shops and social media to develop loyalty programs for customers.	

Source: DBK in Informa DB (2018).

Analysing the market growth, for a short and medium period, a small rise of the perfumery and cosmetic sale can be predicted a small rise of the perfumery and cosmetic sales in the Iberian market. The deceleration of the private consumption, and the pressure over the prices will reduce the growth rate in the business volume. Furthermore, the commercial margins will improve.

Thus, in 2018, for the Iberian market a growth of sales of more 2% compared with 2017 is expected, reaching 5.215 million euros. In Portugal, this increase in sales corresponds to 860 million euros, an increment of 2,3% compared with the previous year. In 2019 and 2020, it is expected the same moderate growth rate that coincides with an annual average variation rate of 1-2%. Observing the Iberian market, it corresponds to 5.380 million euros in the previous year. The

main companies on the sector have a similar forecast regarding its growth, which is consistent with the market tendency.

Through this study it was possible to have a better overview at the perfumery and cosmetics market, which is the main market where the skin care market exists. Inside the skin care market there are several types of brands: luxury brand (Clinique; La Mer), brands using resellers to sell their products (Oriflame) and medical oriented brands (Vichy, Eucerin). However, the study represents several limitations:

- The study observes the Iberian market and not only Portugal.
- For the main competitors of the market there are no results regarding the segments of activity. This is important since, in this study, the brands taken into consideration are the ones that are sold both in pharmacies and parapharmacies, as well as, through online channels. Therefore, it is essential to gather this information to specifically understand the skin care market.
- The distribution channels are not shared in this study. Being the subject of the study about the skin care market in an omnichannel environment this information is crucial to comprehend the channels used to sell and communicate brands' products.

3.2. Study 2: Primary Data

As mentioned before, the study two was conducted by gathering primary data. To select the brands that better represent the skin care market in Portugal, a prequestionnaire was conducted with 115 answers. This prequestionnaire consisted in two questions: "Which of the following brands do you know?" and "What is your level of knowledge regarding these brands?". In the prequestionnaire sixteen brands were displayed and five were finally chosen. Vichy was considered the most well-known brand (114 affirmative answers); followed by Eucerin (107 affirmative answers); then Eau Thermale Avène and Neutrogena (both with 102 affirmative answers); finally, Bioderma (98 affirmative answers).

Questionnaire

Following the answers provided on the prequestionnaire, an online survey was conducted in two languages (Portuguese and English) through the platform SurveyHero. The questionnaire consisted

in 12 questions for each of the five chosen brands. In order to select the respondents, a sampling criterion was applied: (1) he/she knows the brand under study; (2) he/she has ever bought products from the brand under study. The respondents that provided positive answers would be presented with the questionnaire for the brand under study. The first set of questions was concerning the familiarity with the brand. It was evaluated with two adjective pairs: known to me/not known to me and familiar/ not familiar, using a seven-point rating scale being "7" the positive end of each adjective pair, and "1" the positive end the pair (adapted from Hirschman, 1986). Furthermore, the following constructs were assessed: content consistency and product consistency (adapted from Sousa and Voss, 2006; Oh and Teo, 2010; Lee et al., 2019); customer empowerment (adapted from Hunter and Garnefeld, 2008; and Prentice et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2018); customer engagement (Vivek et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2019); repurchase intention (adapted from Khalifa and Liu, 2007; Zhou et al., 2009; Lee et al., 2019); and, positive word-of-mouth (adapted from Srinivasan et al., 2002; Lee et al., 2019). The constructs were measured through a 7-point Likert scale with a range from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). Additionally, sociodemographic characteristics, such as, gender, nationality, age, education level, professional occupation, and personal income were asked.

Data collection and Procedures

The data was collected through an online survey where respondents were invited to participate anonymously and voluntarily. After collecting the data, the two surveys were combined. In the Portuguese survey, 368 respondents attempt the survey, however only 184 submitted it, being the answer rate of 50%. In the English survey, 110 respondents attempted the survey, and 89 completed it, holding an answer rate of 81%. After combining both surveys, 58 answers were excluded due to not meeting the objectives of the study, meaning the respondents did not ever bought a product from any of the five asked brands. In the end, the sample size was 477 respondents since several respondents had purchased products from more than one brand.

Sampling Profile

Sociodemographic data was collected in the end of the questionnaire to better understand the sample. All participants in the study had already purchased at least one product from one of the five chosen brands. In a sample amounting to 477 participants, 392 (82.2%) are women, and 84 (17.6%) are men. Regarding their age, almost half of the sample is composed by young adults with

a range between 18 to 24 years old (38,2%). By analysing the education level, the majority is highly educated (71.3% of the sample has a degree or higher). The professional occupation of the respondents shows two main segments: student (36.7%). and employee on behalf of other (37.5%). Finally, half of the sample has a personal income per month that does not overcome 1000€.

Table 3. 2 - Sociodemographic Data

	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Feminine	392	82.2
Masculine	84	17.6
Prefer not to say	1	0.2
Age		
18-24	182	38.2
25-34	65	13.6
35-44	82	17.2
45-54	88	18.4
55-64	57	11.9
≥ 65	3	0.6
Education level		
High school or lower	72	15.1
Bachelor's degree	65	13.6
Degree	174	36.5
Postgraduation	66	13.8
Master's degree or higher	100	21.0
Professional occupation		
Student	175	36.7
Employee on behalf of other	179	37.5
Public employee	76	15.9
Entrepreneur	34	7.1
Retired	3	0.6
Unemployed	3	0.6
Other	7	1.5
Personal income (monthly)		
Less than 635€	143	30.0
636€ - 1000€	119	24.9
1001€ - 1500€	127	26.6
1501€ - 2000€	59	12.4
2001€ - 2500€	15	3.1
2501€ - 3000€	6	1.3
More than 3000€	8	1.7

Source: Author's own creation based on SPSS output.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Descriptive Analysis

To conduct an analysis the primary stage is to perform a descriptive statistical analysis for all the variables that characterize the model presented on chapter 2.7. Therefore, to present a concise description of the sample and measures, mean and standard deviation will be applied. The initial step aims to endure further analysis.

To all the questions presented in the survey it was required to generate a new variable, through calculating the mean of each mean related to the specific variable.

Furthermore, the author will present an analysis of each variable with a table that provides the values obtained by the analyse with PLS software. The analyse was conducted for the five brands that incorporate this study.

Channel Customer Familiarity

The first variable studied is channel customer familiarity (CCF). The variable comprises two questions presented in the table 4.1. Both items present the same average values of 4.88. Observing the standard deviation, the lowest value is **CCF01** (α= 1.07). The new construct CCF presents an average value of 4.88 and a standard deviation of 1.02.

Table 4. 1 - Descriptive Analysis - Channel Customer Familiarity

	Mean	Std deviation
CCF01	4.88	1.07
CCF02	4.88	1.08
Construct CCF	4.88	1.02

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Integrated Interactions

The following variable consists on Integrated Interactions (II). This variable, as referred in chapter 2.7., is explained by two dimensions: content consistency and product consistency. Each dimension

comprises 4 items that can be found in the appendix B. The new construct, integrated interaction, will be presented in table 4.2.

The item with higher average value is **CC** (mean=4.81). Analysing the standard deviation, both items present similar values, **CC** standard deviation of 0.86, and **PC** standard deviation of 0.87. The new construct **II** presents an average value of 4.77 and a standard deviation of 0.80.

Table 4. 2 - Descriptive Analysis - Integrated Interactions

	Mean	**Std deviation**
CC: Content Consistency	4.81	0.86
PC: Product Consistency	4.73	0.87
Construct II	4.77	0.80

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Customer Empowerment

The variable customer empowerment (CEmp) comprises five items presented in table 4.3. The item with higher average value is **CEmp04** (mean= 5.58). As an opposite, **CEmp05** presents the lowest average value of 4.48. Observing the standard deviation, the lowest value is common to 2 items **CEmp02** and **CEmp04** (α= 1.06). The new construct **CEmp** presents an average value of 4.85 and a standard deviation of 0.80.

Table 4. 3 - Descriptive Analysis - Customer Empowerment

	Mean	**Std deviation**
CEmp01	4.69	1.13
CEmp02	4.65	1.06
CEmp03	4.87	1.10
CEmp04	5.58	1.06
CEmp05	4.48	1.25
Construct CEmp	4.85	0.80

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Customer Engagement

The variable customer engagement (CE), as referred in chapter 2.7., is explained by three dimensions: conscious attention, enthused participation, social connection. The dimensions will be

presented in appendix B. The new construct, customer engagement, it will be presented in table 4.4.

The item with higher average value is **CA** (mean=4.06). As an opposite, **SC** presents the lowest average value of 2.21. Analysing the standard deviation, item **CA** presents the lowest value of 120. The new construct **BCE** presents an average value of 3.18 and a standard deviation of 1.13.

Table 4. 4 - Descriptive Analysis - Customer Engagement

	Mean	Std deviation
CA: Conscious Attention.	4.06	1.20
EP: Enthused Participation.	2.96	1.30
SC: Visiting Social Connection.	2.21	1.34
Construct CE	3.18	1.13

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Repurchase Intention

The variable repurchase intention (RI) comprises four items presented in the table 4.5. The item with higher average value is **RI01** (mean= 5.00). As an opposite, **RI03** presents the lowest average value of 3.88. Observing the standard deviation, the lowest value is common of 2 items **RI01** and **RI02** (α= 1.36). The new construct **RI** presents an average value of 4.60 and a standard deviation of 1.27.

Table 4. 5 - Descriptive Analysis - Repurchase Intention

	Mean	Std deviation
RI01	5.00	1.36
RI02	4.88	1.36
RI03	3.88	1.55
RI04	4.68	1.55
Construct RI	4.60	1.27

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Positive WOM

The variable positive WOM (PW) comprises four items presented in the table 4.6. The item with higher average value is **PW01** (mean= 4.53). As an opposite, **PW04** presents the lowest average

value of 3.85. Observing the standard deviation, item **PW03** presents the lowest value of 1.44. The new construct **PW** presents an average value of 4.20 and a standard deviation of 1.35.

Table 4. 6 - Descriptive Analysis - Positive WOM

	Mean	Std deviation
PW01	4.53	1.50
PW02	4.41	1.50
PW03	4.01	1.44
PW04	3.85	1.55
Construct PW	4.20	1.35

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

4.2. Assessment of measurement model

Partial least square (PLS) analysis was conducted to accept the measurement and structural model. The PLS analysis was performed since it provides an estimation with a component-based approach that suggests minimum limits for sample size. According to the objective of the research, the use of the PLS is adequate (Hair et al., 2014).

The measurement model is assessed through the observation of "individual item reliability, internal consistency or construct reliability, average variance extracted analysis, and discriminant analysis" (Barroso et al., 2010, p. 432). The psychometric properties of the measurement items can be found in table 9. The measurement of the internal consistency was conducted through the Cronbach's Alpha (α) and rho_A. Through the collected data it was verified that all constructs are highly reliable since they overcome the minimum of 0.70. Three other criteria were used to determine the convergent validity: (1) composite reliability may be at least 0.70; (2) average variance extracted should be at least 0.50; (3) all the items loading may be superior than 0.70 (Chin, 1998; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2009) were used to determine the convergent validity. It is possible to verify, according to the table 4.7, that the data collected overcomes the recommended criteria.

The assessment of the discriminant validity was conducted through the analysis of the correlations between latent variables which is suggested by Fornell-Lacker (1981) and heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) criterion that can be found in the tables 4.8 and 4.9, respectively. Both outputs prove that the data collected is valid, since all values of the HTMT must be lower than 0.90 (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 4. 7 - Psychometric properties of the measurement items

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted	Item	Loading
Customer Channel Familiarity	0.886	0.888	0.946	0.898	CCF01	0.951
					CCF02	0.944
Content Consistency	0.859	0.861	0.905	0.704	CC01	0.867
					CC02	0.846
					CC03	0.870
					CC04	0.770
Product Consistency	0.861	0.866	0.907	0.709	PC01	0.767
					PC02	0.900
					PC03	0.894
					PC04	0.800
Integrated Interactions	0.908	0.909	0.926	0.609		
Customer Empowerment	0.764	0.777	0.843	0.523	CE01	0.765
					CE02	0.743
					CE03	0.858
					CE04	0.568
					CE05	0.645
Conscious Attention	0.912	0.921	0.931	0.694	CA01	0.807
					CA02	0.779
					CA03	0.810
					CA04	0.886
					CA05	0.853
					CA06	0.860
Enthused Participation	0.895	0.896	0.927	0.761	EP01	0.855
					EP02	
					EP03	0.881
					EP04	0.860
					EP05	0.893
Social Connection	0.883	0.886	0.927	0.810	SC01	0.861
					SC02	0.935
					SC03	0.903
Customer Engagement	0.937	0.941	0.945	0.573		
Repurchase Intention	0.897	0.906	0.928	0.763	RI01	0.910
					RI02	0.910
					RI03	0.815
					RI04	0.855
Positive WOM	0.921	0.924	0.944	0.808	PW01	0.884
					PW02	0.905
					PW03	0.922
					PW04	0.885

Table 4. 8 - Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	CA	CC	CEmp	EP	PW	PC	RI	SC	CCF
CA	0.833								
CC	0.346	0.839							
CEmp	0.278	0.364	0.723						
EP	0.648	0.257	0.157	0.872					
PW	0.668	0.415	0.304	0.543	0.899				
PC	0.332	0.726	0.354	0.304	0.387	0.842			
RI	0.667	0.442	0.300	0.483	0.754	0.400	0.873		
SC	0.587	0.224	0.106	0.767	0.506	0.277	0.377	0.900	
CCF	0.315	0.463	0.205	0.268	0.351	0.394	0.389	0.127	0.947

Table 4. 9 - Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) Criterion

	CA	CC	CEmp	EP	PW	PC	RI	SC	CCF
CA									
CC	0.394								
CEmp	0.330	0.453							
EP	0.697	0.290	0.213						
PW	0.725	0.469	0.362	0.589					
PC	0.376	0.845	0.439	0.346	0.438				
RI	0.728	0.496	0.371	0.519	0.825	0.453			
SC	0.631	0.253	0.214	0.857	0.550	0.316	0.400		
CCF	0.349	0.530	0.255	0.299	0.392	0.452	0.441	0.137	

4.3. Assessment of structural model

The structural model, also described as the inner model, consists on the relationships (paths) between the latent constructs (Hair et al., 2011). The structural model is the result of the PLS analysis on relationship coefficients, variance explained, and statistical significance levels exhibit on figure 4.1. In this model there are two types of variables: the exogenous variables, which are the latent constructs with no structural path relationship, such as, channel customer familiarity and integrated interactions; and the endogenous variables, the ones that are analysed through structural model relationships by other constructs (Hair et al., 2011). In this model, the endogenous constructs are customer empowerment, customer engagement, repurchase intention and positive WOM.

The exogenous variable, channel customer familiarity, was not found significant in the relationship established with customer empowerment ($\beta = 0.034$). Therefore, the H1 is not supported. However, the same variable was found significant to explain customer engagement ($\beta = 0.144$, $p<0.001$), so H2 is supported. The other exogenous variable, integrated interactions, was found significant for both target constructs: customer empowerment ($\beta = 0.370$, $p<0.001$) and customer engagement ($\beta = 0.263$, $p<0.001$). Hence, H3 and H4 were supported. Customer empowerment presented a positive effect on customer engagement ($\beta = 0.088$, $p<0.1$) confirming the H5. Customer engagement showed a positive effect on both repurchase intention ($\beta = 0.602$, $p<0.001$) and positive word-of-mouth ($\beta = 0.663$, $p<0.001$), supporting both H6 and H7, respectively. These direct effects mentioned above can also be found on the table 4.10. In appendix, it is possible to verify the total effects and specific indirect effects among the structural model relationships (tables 4.17 and 4.18).

Figure 4. 1 PLS Results
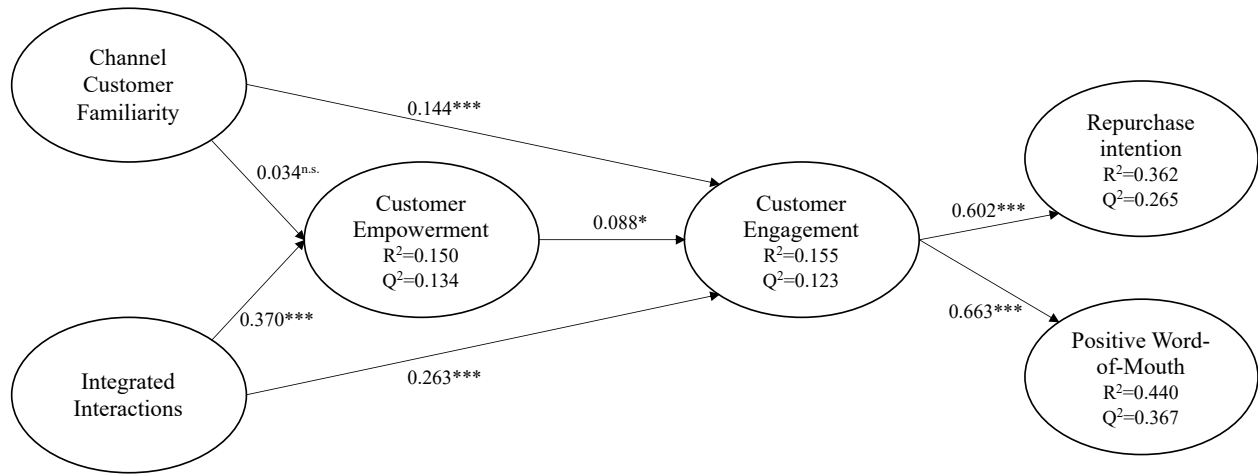
Note: *p<0.10, ***p<0.001, ^{n.s.}non-significant.

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Table 4. 10 Direct effect

Direct Effect	Beta	Std Deviation	T-Statistics	P Values
CE -> PWOM	0.663	0.026	25.910	0.000
CE -> RI	0.602	0.025	23.754	0.000
CEmp -> CE	0.088	0.046	1.913	0.056
CCF-> CE	0.144	0.049	2.918	0.004
CCF -> CEmp	0.034	0.048	0.723	0.470*
II -> CE	0.263	0.050	5.248	0.000
II -> CEmp	0.370	0.052	7.602	0.000

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

The following table 4.11 displays the measures: R^2, Q^2, and model fit. R square provides the predictive accuracy of the model, it ranges between 0 and 1, and higher values translate higher predictive accuracy. Q square provides predictive relevance for the dependent variable under study, and values above 0 provide proof of its relevance (Hair et al., 2011). Therefore, customer channel familiarity and integrated interactions explain 15% of the variance in customer empowerment and are relevant for this variable (Q^2 = 0,134). Customer empowerment explains 15,5% of the customer engagement's variance and it was also found relevant (Q^2 = 0,123). The relationships established between CE, repurchase intention and positive word-of-mouth were found significant and relevant (RI - R^2 = 0,362; Q^2 = 0,265 & PW - R^2 = 0,440; Q^2 = 0,367).

The model fit measured by standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) consists of the difference between the observed correlation and the model implied correlation matrix and grants the average discrepancies among observed and expected correlations as a fit criterion. Henseler et al. (2014) initiate SRMR as a goodness of fit measure for PLS that shall be applied to prevent model misspecification. A good fit is considered if the value is lower than 0.08, that is verified (SRMR=0.062).

Table 4. 11 R^2, Q^2 and Model fit

	R Square	Q squared
CE	0.155	0.123
CEmp	0.150	0.134
PW	0.440	0.367
RI	0.362	0.265
Model fit		
SRMR	0.062	

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

5. Conclusions

This chapter will present the conclusions, theoretical and managerial contributions, limitations of this study. The goal is to provide a better understanding of the skin care market in Portugal and how it is shifting to an omnichannel environment. With the conclusions, we intend to combine the theoretical knowledge with the final results of the study and provide explanations for the research questions proposed, that are: what could be drivers and outcomes of customer empowerment and customer engagement in the omnichannel context? Can familiarity and integrated interactions act as antecedents of both customer empowerment and customer engagement? Do word of mouth and repurchase intention act as outcomes of customer engagement in an omnichannel environment?

5.1. Discussion

Omnichannel retailing is a reality in customers' daily life. Nevertheless, the omnichannel approach adopted by each market, retailer, brand differs according to the product characteristics, its range, price and composition. Thus, brands adopt diverse channels to interact with customers from communication, using social media, to product pick-up or delivery service (Piotrowicz & Cuthbertson, 2019).

In this study the main focus was the skin care market in Portugal, and several conclusions are taken from study one. Brands operating in the skin care market are leveraging their investment in R&D because it affects their financial performance and marketing activities. A higher investment on R&D translates into an increase of revenue and brand value (Kurt, 2019). Aside with R&D investment, to reinforce brand image firms are investing in publicity and marketing actions to differentiate themselves from other market players. Omnichannel is one of the techniques used thanks to an increment of online channels for both communication and commerce (Informa DB, 2018). Customers are increasingly demanding greater transparency in the products they purchase, and according to a research by Kline & Company (2018), the most important trend in the personal care industry is "natural" (Delventhal, 2019). Hence, customers' environmental consciousness affects the frequency of natural skin care products purchase (Kim & Seock, 2009). Consequently, brands are expanding their line of organic and natural products.

Study two analysed the proposed framework and hypotheses drawn by the literature review. From the seven hypotheses, one was not supported: the hypothesis which referred to the positive relationship between channel customer familiarity and customer empowerment was not supported. On the one hand, two main components need to be taken into consideration about customer channel familiarity: customers demand less information (Ha & Perks, 2005), and a decreased perceived risk (Xu & Jackson, 2018) correlated with an increase need for information (Gao & Su, 2016). On the other hand, customer empowerment is all about information (Harrison et al., 2006). However, customers still lack access to information they need and want, in a way that affects their empowerment towards the brands under study. According to Ha & Perks (2005), customers demand less information when they are familiarized with the channel. However, in this scenario it is not consistent with the study results.

Customer empowerment was studied into a retailer perspective. Since these brands do not establish a direct offline channel with customers their relationship lacks empowerment. Hence customers do not feel in control or even with the capacity to influence the retailer (Zhang et al., 2018). Since empowerment consist of information that, in this market, is achieved mainly through online channels, there is an increasing need to improve online communication. This is the solution to empower consumers when purchasing the brands' products.

A research focused on skin care products found a positive link between perceived quality and buying intention. According to Lee et al. (2019), the most significant element that affects customers' purchase intention for skincare products is perceived quality. This is accurate with this study, since customers which are familiar with a channel, perceive less risk when purchasing (Xu & Jackson, 2019) leading to customer engagement, so customers are more willing to repurchase a product. Therefore, there is a positive relationship (ß= 0.144) between customer channel familiarity and customer engagement. Which means that when customers are familiarized and know the channels used, they will be more engaged with the brand, supporting hypothesis two.

This study also proved a positive effect between channel integration quality, specifically integrated interactions, and customer empowerment, supporting hypothesis three. These findings are consistent with Zhang et al. (2018) and Cao & Li (2015) studies. Both studies give a positive

perspective on customer empowerment mediating effect and customers' positive feeling towards channel integration. Brands that make an effort to integrate their channels, by providing consistent information on, as an example, product, price, promotion, and consistent customer service, product images, performance; empower their customers so they feel the ability to influence retailer choices, and to freely select the product they want.

Based on SET, when brands provide content and product consistency across channels customers feel more engaged. Although skin care brands are not fully owners of all channels that customers have contact with, this study gives prove that customers feel that the integration of online and offline channels is positive and influences their engagement ($ß= 0.263$). Therefore, hypothesis four is supported and consistent with Lee et al. (2019) study results.

According to Brodie et al. (2013), engaged customers increasingly show empowerment towards the brand, and customer empowerment is analysed as an outcome of customer engagement, such as, satisfaction and loyalty. In this study, customer empowerment was analysed as a mediating effect between channel integration quality, customer channel familiarity and customer engagement. The positive effect of customer empowerment in customer engagement is evident ($ß= 0.088$) supporting hypothesis five.

The existing link between CE and its outcomes: repurchase intention and positive word of mouth is confirmed by several authors (e.g., Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010; Chan et al., 2014; Islam & Rahman, 2016). When customers feel engaged, they will purchase more and more often (Chiu et al., 2013). At the same time, customers will share with family and friends their positive feelings and thoughts about a brand becoming real brand advocates (Mollen & Wilson, 2010). These two variables present the highest beta effects ($ß_{RI}= 0.602$; $ß_{PW}= 0.663$) supporting hypotheses six and seven.

All the drawn findings are accurate with Lee et al. (2019) study confirming that channel integration quality leads to customer engagement which translates into repurchase intention and positive word-of-mouth. The proposed model is relevant. Although, customer empowerment consists of a challenge to skin care brands it is relevant for channel integration and customer

engagement. Previous referred challenges consist of the available offline channels where customers can purchase skin care products, since they do not belong to any specific brand. These channels, pharmacies and parapharmacies offer products from several competitors and their employees are not committed to any specific brand. Customers may choose a different brand every time they purchase depending on previous purchase, family and friends' recommendations, or even medical or pharmaceutical staff advice. Therefore, brands can positively influence medical or pharmaceutical staff advice by offering them a great experience. By engaging the retailer, brands may achieve their main goal: provide a seamless experience to its customers, empower and engage them so they repurchase their brands and become true brand fans.

Both studies are relevant to better understand how omnichannel is shaping the skin care market in Portugal and its customers. According to Gallino & Moreno (2019, p.2) "omnichannel customers increasingly expect to be able to use a combination of channels in their interactions with retailers, and retailers are trying to provide customers with a seamless shopping experience across multiple touch points". Thus, brands have an important role to play if they aim to have engaged customers that repurchase their products and share positive recommendations to others. The seamless experience across several channels that customers aim for depends on the knowledge and familiarity a customer has; on the consistent information and product provided by the brand and the empowerment and engagement the brand cultivates with its customers.

5.2. Theoretical Contribution

From a theoretical perspective, this study gives an important contribution to omnichannel retailing and customer engagement literature. Although, customer engagement has been widely studied, there is still a lack of theoretical studies focused on how companies engaged customers in an omnichannel environment.

Firstly, it introduces and analyses customer empowerment as a mediator variable between channel integration quality and customer engagement and its outcomes. There is an intrinsic relationship between the power customers feel and the way they engage with a brand. In an omnichannel environment, where empowerment takes a completely different format due to all the

available channels and seamless possibilities that come with it, brands must empower their customers to make their own decisions freely. Furthermore, this will lead to more engaged customers sharing their positive experience with others and repeating it.

Secondly, customer channel familiarity is included in a model as a new variable that explains omnichannel retailing. This variable translates the knowledge and familiarity a customer establishes with a channel. In an omnichannel environment, the customer will look for a familiar channel because there is a decreased need to look for information and there is less perceived risk. This study showed the existing positive effect of customer channel familiarity with customer engagement, positive word-of-mouth and repurchase intention.

Finally, this study on omnichannel retailing was conducted in a new market, the Portuguese skin care market. There is a lack of studies on this market, especially focusing on omnichannel. There is an increasing importance of omnichannel environment in all markets and for the skin care market there is no difference. The seamless experience that customer crave must be managed in all online and offline channels whether the brand completely owns the channel or not. Therefore, five brands were considered to develop this study as the ones that better represent the skin care market in Portugal.

5.3. Managerial Implications

This study presents significant implications that should be taken into consideration by skin care brands. Customers are increasing demanding for increasingly transparency in their purchases. The environmental consciousness is a present reality in the skin care market. Therefore, brands should increase their investment in organic and natural products line. Also, the demand growth for male cosmetic, "all-in-one" products, and products for specific skin concerns must be translated into an increment on R&D. Skin care brands have to increase their research and development of products and their lines to keep being competitive in the market.

For marketers it is essential to communicate the right message to customers since an increment of online channels has been registered for both communication and commerce. The

seamless experience across channels is a reality in all markets, so marketers have to invest in marketing strategy and publicity to stay connected with customers.

Brands need to empower and engage with their customers in all touchpoints they established during their journey. The importance of being familiar with a channel and integrating all channels by providing the same content and product consistency is enormous and has brought a new reality for both brands and customers. If brands want their customers to share positive opinions with others and continuously buy their products, the experience provided mainly depends on their channel integration quality. Although, the available offline channels do not belong to any brand, the contact established with the pharmacy staff is crucial since they will be the first promoters or detractors of the brand. They have the ability to influence the customer during her/his shopping journey. Also, it is important to equally manage and distribute campaigns and other communication material to all pharmacies and para-pharmacies. Actually, a poor channel integration quality is shown every time a customer faces different brand images depending on the chosen channel for each purchase.

5.4. Limitations and Further Research

Although this study presents relevant theoretical and empirical contributions, the interpretation of the conclusions and results must take into consideration the following limitations.

Firstly, regarding the data collection, the number of participants is small to study the proposed model. The 477 people still have a low representativity to fully understand how customer engagement and its outcomes are influenced by channel integration quality in an omnichannel environment. Future research should gather an increased sample size.

Secondly, the length of time the study was carried out in was short. Although, the survey was distributed during a month future research must consider a larger period of time to gather answers and analyse the data.

Thirdly, this study was focused in one country: Portugal. Omnichannel retailing is growing worldwide, however different countries, customer demographics and cultural expectations may bring new insights (Piotrowicz & Cuthbertson, 2019). Therefore, future research should consider expanding the research to different countries and realities.

Finally, to understand the skin care market five brands were taken into consideration as the ones that better express the market. Nevertheless, this is a low representativity considering the number of brands the market offers. Hence, for further research it is advisable to expand the number of brands used in the study to have a complete view of the market. Moreover, further research could integrate new variables to complement the model, as an example brand identity or brand loyalty.

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7. Appendix

Appendix A

Measurement items

Constructs	Items
Customer Channel Familiarity	CCF1: What is your level of knowledge regarding the brand?
	CCF2: What is your level of familiarity with the brand?
Content Consistency	CC01: The brand provides consistent product information across the online and physical stores.
	CC02: The product prices are consistent across the online and physical stores.
	CC03: The brand provides consistent promotion information across the online and physical stores.
	CC04: The brand provides consistent stock availability across the online and physical stores.
Product Consistency	PC01: The service images of the brand are consistent across the online and physical stores.
	PC02: The levels of customer service are consistent across the online and physical stores.
	PC03: The feelings of service are consistent across the online and physical stores.
	PC04: All the online and physical stores have consistent performance in the speed of service delivery.
Customer Empowerment	CE1. In my dealings with the retailer, I feel I am in control.
	CE2. The ability to influence the goods and services of the retailer is beneficial to me.
	CE3. I feel good because of my ability to influence the choice set offered to me by the retailer.
	CE4. During the shopping process, I can select product and service freely.
	CE5. My influence over the retailer has increased relative to the past.

Source: Author's own creation

Constructs	Items
Conscious Attention	CA01: I like to know more about the brand.
	CA02: I like events that are related to the brand.
	CA03: I like to learn more about the brand.
	CA04: I pay a lot of attention to anything about the brand.
	CA05: I keep up with things related to the brand.
	CA06: Anything related to the brand grabs my attention.
Enthused Participation	EP01: I spend a lot of my discretionary time visiting stores selling products of the brand.
	EP02: I am heavily into the brand.
	EP03: Visiting stores selling products of the brand is part of my schedule.
	EP04: I am passionate about the brand.
	EP05: My days would not be the same without the brand.
Social Connection	SC01: I love talking about the brand with my friends.
	SC02: I enjoy visiting stores selling products of the brand more when I am with my friends.
	SC03: Visiting stores selling products of the brand with my friend is more fun
Repurchase Intention	RI01: I intend to continue to purchase from the brand.
	RI02: I intend to acquire products and services from the brand.
	RI03: I intend to choose the brand as the preferred brand for my future purchases.
	RI04: Except for any unanticipated reasons, I intend to continue to purchase from the brand as usual.
Positive Word-of-Month	PW01: I say positive things about the brand to other people.
	PW02: I recommend the brand to anyone who seeks my advice.
	PW03: I encourage friends to purchase from the brand
	PW04: I refer my acquaintances to the brand.

Source: Author's own creation

Appendix B

Regarding the construct content consistency, it is composed by 4 items. The item with highest average value is **CC01** (mean= 4.89). However, the mean values are similar to all items. Analysing the standard deviation, items **CC01** and **CC03** present the lowest value of 1.01.

The new construct **CC** presents an average value of 4.81 and a standard deviation of 0.86.

Table 4. 12 Descriptive Analysis - Content Consistency

	Mean	Std deviation
CC01	4.88	1.01
CC02	4.79	1.05
CC03	4.75	1.01
CC04	4.80	1.02
Construct CC	4.81	0.86

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Regarding the construct product consistency, it is composed by 4 items. The item with highest average value is **PC01** (mean= 5.08). As an opposite, **PC04** presents the lowest average value of 4.51. Analysing the standard deviation, item **PC04** presents the lowest value of 1.00.

The new construct **PC** presents an average value of 4.73 and a standard deviation of 0.87.

Table 4. 13 Descriptive Analysis - Product Consistency

	Mean	Std deviation
PC01	5.08	1.04
PC02	4.74	1.06
PC03	4.62	1.03
PC04	4.51	1.00
Construct PC	4.73	0.87

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Regarding the construct conscious attention, it is composed by 6 items. The item with highest average value is **CA01** (mean= 4.73). As an opposite, **CA05** presents the lowest average value of 3.58. Analysing the standard deviation, item **CA02** presents the lowest value of 1.32

The new construct **CA** presents an average value of 4.06 and a standard deviation of 1.20.

Table 4. 14 Descriptive Analysis - Conscious Attention

	Mean	Std deviation
CA01	4.73	1.35
CA02	4.14	1.32
CA03	4.62	1.39
CA04	3.69	1.50
CA05	3.58	1.55
CA06	3.62	1.56
Construct CA	4.06	1.20

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Regarding the construct enthused participation, it is composed by 5 items. The item with highest average value is **EP02** (mean= 4.25). As an opposite, **EP03** presents the lowest average value of 2.38. Analysing the standard deviation, the lowest value is common of 2 items **EP01** and **EP03** (α= 1.52).

The new construct **EP** presents an average value of 2.96 and a standard deviation of 1.30.

Table 4. 15 Descriptive Analysis - Enthused Participation

	Mean	Std deviation
EP01	2.64	1.52
EP02	4.25	1.64
EP03	2.38	1.52
EP04	2.97	1.62
EP05	2.56	1.64
Construct EP	2.96	1.30

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Regarding the construct social connection, it is composed by 3 items. The item with highest average value is **SC01** (mean= 2.58). As an opposite, **SC02** presents the lowest average value of 2.43. Analysing the standard deviation, the lowest value is common of 2 items **SC01** and **SC02** (α= 1.48).

The new construct **SC** presents an average value of 2.51 and a standard deviation of 1.34.

Table 4. 16 Descriptive Analysis - Social Connection

	Mean	**Std deviation**
SC01	2.58	1.48
SC02	2.43	1.48
SC03	2.54	1.50
Construct SC	2.51	1.34

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Table 4. 17 Total Effect

Total Effect	Beta	Std Deviation	T-Statistics	P Values
CE -> PW	0.663	0.026	25.910	0.000
CE -> RI	0.602	0.025	23.754	0.000
CEmp -> CE	0.088	0.046	1.913	0.056
CEmp -> PW	0.058	0.031	1.909	0.057
CEmp -> RI	0.053	0.028	1.890	0.059
CCF-> CE	0.147	0.049	2.980	0.003
CCF -> CEmp	0.034	0.048	0.723	0.470*
CCF -> PW	0.098	0.034	2.901	0.004
CCF -> RI	0.089	0.031	2.869	0.004
II -> CE	0.295	0.047	6.253	0.000
II -> CEmp	0.370	0.052	7.062	0.000
II -> PW	0.196	0.033	5.894	0.000
II -> RI	0.178	0.031	5.795	0.000

Source: Author's own creation based on PLS output.

Table 4. 18 Specific indirect effect

Specific indirect effect	Beta	Std Deviation	T-Statistics	P Values
CCF -> CEmp -> CE	0.003	0.005	0.641	0.522[*]
II -> CEmp -> CE	0.033	0.018	1.821	0.069[**]
CCF -> CEmp-> CE-> PW	0.002	0.003	0.644	0.520[*]
CEmp -> CE -> PW	0.058	0.031	1.909	0.057[**]
II -> CEmp -> CE -> PW	0.022	0.012	1.813	0.071[**]
CCF-> CE -> PW	0.096	0.034	2.843	0.005
II -> CE -> PW	0.174	0.035	5.036	0.000
CCF -> CEmp -> CE -> RI	0.002	0.003	0.639	0.523[*]
CEmp -> CE -> RI	0.053	0.028	1.890	0.059[**]
II -> CEmp -> CE -> RI	0.020	0.011	1.792	0.074[**]
CCF -> CE -> RI	0.087	0.031	2.812	0.005
II -> CE -> RI	0.158	0.032	4.997	0.000