

SURVEY ON ACCESSIBILITY OF PACKAGING IN THE COSMETIC INDUSTRY

LEVANTAMENTO SOBRE ACESSIBILIDADE DE EMBALAGENS NA INDÚSTRIA COSMÉTICA

ENCUESTA SOBRE LA ACCESIBILIDAD DE LOS ENVASES EN LA INDUSTRIA COSMÉTICA



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ABSTRACT

Brazilian Law No. 13.146/2015 defines a disabled person as someone with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment which, when interacting with certain barriers, restricts their full and equal participation in society. In Article 3, paragraph IX, a person with reduced mobility is characterised as someone who, presents a permanent or temporary difficulty in movement, flexibility, motor coordination, or perception, thus including elderly, pregnant and obese people, as well as people suffering from fibromyalgia, lupus, or Parkinson's disease. The project aimed to reveal the difficulties people with disabilities or with reduced mobility face when using existing cosmetic packaging. The Scielo, PubMed, Google Scholar, and LILACS platforms were used as the basis for an integrative review, as well as searches on news websites focusing on the project's key themes (Accessibility; Cosmetics; Packaging), with publications limited to 2000–2024. After the reviews, the data were gathered to create the questionnaire, which then served as the analysis tool. Social media platforms were used for disseminating the project. The results showed that 14% of the subjects required assistance when handling the products, and 44% did not know where to obtain more accessible packaging. This demonstrates a lack of interest that cosmetic brands show in including this group in packaging development, even though these users have a right to such

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accommodations. The need for the implementation of accessible packaging was observed, as a means of promoting autonomy for its users and thus fostering social inclusion.

Keywords: Accessibility. Cosmetic Industry. Packing.

RESUMO

A Lei Nº 13.146/2015 define como pessoa com deficiência aquela que possui impedimentos físicos, mentais, intelectuais ou sensoriais de longo prazo que, ao interagir com barreiras, limitam sua participação plena e igualitária na sociedade. Quanto ao Art. 3º, parágrafo IX, caracteriza a pessoa com mobilidade reduzida como alguém que, por qualquer motivo, apresenta dificuldade permanente ou temporária de movimentação, flexibilidade, coordenação motora ou percepção, assim considerando as pessoas idosas, gestantes, pessoas com obesidade, fibromialgia, Lúpus ou Parkinson. O projeto teve a intenção de revelar as dificuldades de pessoas com deficiência ou com mobilidade reduzida ao manusear embalagens cosméticas já presentes no mercado. As plataformas Scielo, PubMed, Google Scholar e LILACS, foram utilizadas como base à revisão integrativa, assim como pesquisas em sites de notícias com direcionamento aos postos-chave do projeto (Acessibilidade; Cosméticos; Embalagens;) com limitação das publicações de 2000-2024. Após as revisões, foram coletados os dados necessários para formulação do questionário onde foi utilizado como instrumento para análise. Para a divulgação do projeto, utilizou-se a plataformas sociais. Por meio dos resultados, observou-se que 14% necessitavam de ajuda ao manusear os produtos e 44% não sabiam onde adquirir embalagens mais acessíveis para manejo. Isso demonstra o desinteresse por parte das marcas em incluir esse tipo de público durante a produção de suas embalagens mesmo sendo um direito destes. Observou a necessidade de implementação de embalagens acessíveis como forma de autonomia para os seus usuários, promovendo assim a inclusão social.

Palavras-chave: Acessibilidade. Indústria Cosmética. Embalagem.

RESUMEN

La Ley n.º 13.146/2015 define como persona con discapacidad aquella que tiene impedimentos físicos, mentales, intelectuales o sensoriales de larga duración que, al interactuar con barreras, limitan su participación plena e igualitaria en la sociedad. En cuanto al artículo 3, párrafo IX, caracteriza persona con movilidad reducida como alguien que, por cualquier motivo, presenta dificultades permanentes o temporales de movimiento, flexibilidad, coordinación motora o percepción, incluyendo así a las personas mayores, embarazadas, personas con obesidad, fibromialgia, lupus o Parkinson. El proyecto tenía la intención de revelar las dificultades de personas con discapacidad o movilidad reducida para manipular los envases de cosméticos ya presentes en el mercado. Las plataformas Scielo, PubMed, Google Scholar y LILACS se utilizaron como base para la revisión integradora, así como búsquedas en sitios web de noticias orientadas a los puntos clave del proyecto (accesibilidad, cosméticos, envases), con limitación de publicaciones entre 2000-2024. Tras las revisiones, se recopilaron los datos necesarios para la elaboración del cuestionario, que se utilizó como instrumento de análisis. Para divulgación del proyecto se utilizaron las plataformas sociales. A partir de los resultados, se observó que 14 % necesitaba ayuda para manipular los productos y 44 % no sabía dónde adquirir envases más accesibles para su manipulación. Esto demuestra la falta de interés por parte de las marcas en incluir a este tipo de público durante la producción de sus envases. Se observó la necesidad de implementar envases accesibles como forma de autonomía para sus usuarios, promoviendo así la inclusión social.



Palabras clave: Accesibilidad. Industria Cosmética. Envase.

1 INTRODUCTION

According to Law No. 13,146/2015, we define Art. 2 - a person with a disability is one who has a long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment, which, in interaction with one or more barriers, may obstruct his or her full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with other people. Article 3, paragraph IX – person with reduced mobility: one who has, for any reason, difficulty in movement, permanent or temporary, generating an effective reduction in mobility, flexibility, motor coordination or perception, including the elderly, pregnant women, breastfeeding women, people with infants and obese people. We also observed reduced mobility in people with some morbidities such as: Fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, Lupus, Parkinson's, among others.

In article 53 of the same Law mentioned above, all Brazilians with a disability or motor impediment have the right to accessibility in order to have their dignity and individual integrity ensured, so that they can live together as independent and active citizens. Despite this, it is noted that even with such a right, accessibility does not always reach this part of the population due to the little interest of large industries because they do not consider such adaptations to be profitable.

The Brazilian cosmetics market has been growing significantly over the decade, ranking 4th in the world (Forbes, 2020). This is due to the search for products that help improve their appearance, since in today's society, an individual's physiognomy has a direct impact on their physical-mental health (BORBA; THIVES, 2011). In addition, the influence of the new digital era can be evaluated, with the emergence of "influencers" with motor disabilities or reduced mobility, presenting their difficulties in handling cosmetic packaging. To what extent is the beauty and personal care market willing to grow following the inclusion of these individuals?

The struggle for the inclusion of groups considered minorities within Brazilian society has been growing continuously over the years, this is observed in the achievement of the creation of the Statute of Persons with Disabilities, where their rights to accessibility are assured. However, it is noted that in their daily lives, there is a lack of implementation of these adaptations that offer them autonomy in their daily lives. Such neglect can be seen, for example, in the scarcity of accessible packaging in cosmetic products, thus resulting in a difficulty in their use due to certain movements that they are unable to perform due to their deficiencies (FOLGADO; CRUZ; SAMPAIO, 2023).

In view of this, the repercussion caused by the research on the survey of accessible packaging in the middle of the cosmetic industry for individuals with disabilities would be able

to positively influence several aspects of the Brazilian community. This impact can be analyzed both in the cosmetic industries and within Brazilian society through:

- Reduction of social exclusion: The research can help reduce the social exclusion of people with disabilities or motor difficulties due to some comorbidity in relation to cosmetic products. This accessibility is guaranteed to them in Law No. 13,146/2015, art. 53 from adaptations of packaging already on the market.
- Awareness of Non-PWDs: Based on the results obtained from the survey, it may be possible to open the debate on the difficulties of PWDs or people with reduced mobility to enjoy beauty and self-care products. This can result in the awareness of people who do not have any disability to help demand that large cosmetic industries adapt and look at this minority in order to guarantee their equality rights that are guaranteed in the Brazilian Constitution.
- Inclusive companies: Through the project, the results can evaluate which companies have in their policy the inclusion of their products for people with disabilities or some type of motor limitation.

With these results, positive marketing can be generated on behalf of these institutions and have an increase in their demands. In this way, other companies may seek to change the packaging of their products in order to compete with institutions that had favorable results in the survey.

The need to implement accessible packaging helps to develop autonomy for its users, thus promoting social inclusion. This type of object is not only of great use to its target audience, but it also contributes to the education of people who do not have any type of need, as they learn the importance of collective integration through the adaptation of packaging. In addition, Law No. 10,098/2000 establishes general standards and basic criteria for the promotion of accessibility for people with disabilities or reduced mobility (LIMA, 2022).

The project aims to reveal and present the difficulties of people with disabilities or reduced mobility when handling cosmetic packaging already on the market. To evaluate how much the industry is willing to adapt to serve an audience that is not considered the majority in society in order to obtain the inclusion of these in activities that Non-PWDs consider basic and that, supposedly, they have no difficulty in performing routinely, such as the act of screwing and opening a lid that for many with muscle weakness is a difficult action.

2 METHODOLOGY

To carry out the project, initially readings were carried out on the Scielo, PubMed, Google Scholar and LILACS platforms, as well as searches on news sites with direction to the key positions of the project (Accessibility; Cosmetics; Packaging) and limiting the literatures to publications from 2000-2024. This selection was carried out during the period from August 2024 to December 2024. The selected literatures fit the theme of the research and its social impacts addressed.

After the integrative reviews, the necessary data were collected for the formulation of the questionnaire that will be used as an instrument for analysis, after its approval by the Ethics Committee due to the project involving responses from human beings. The approval is under opinion 7,311,984. To publicize the project, social platforms were used in order to reach greater responses (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Final design for publishing the post on Instagram and Tiktok platforms



Source: The authors. Manaus, 2025.

3 RESULTS

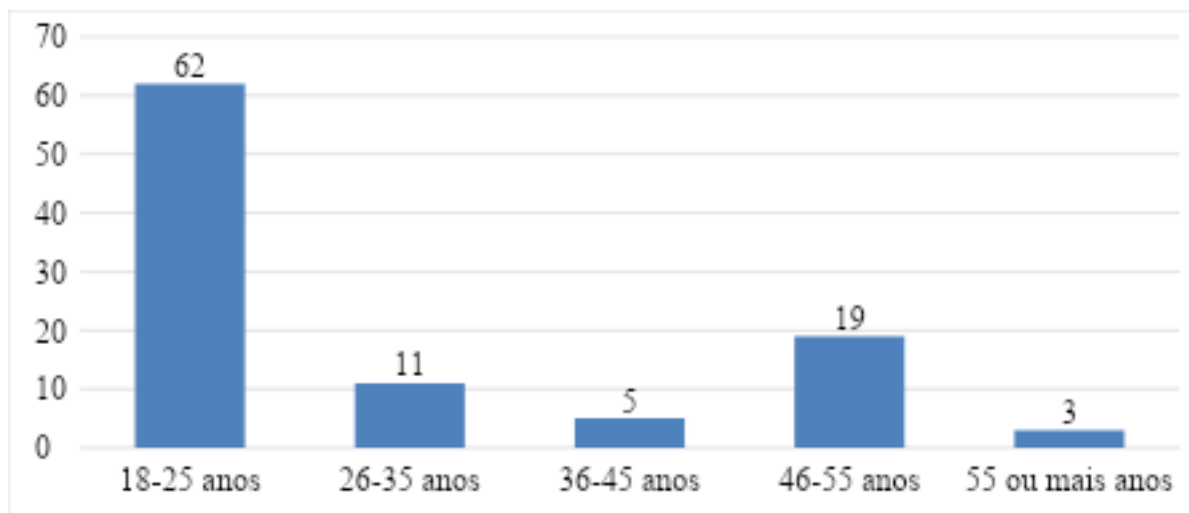
At the beginning of the questionnaire, the participants were presented with the Informed Consent Form (ICF), approved by the Ethics Committee. After reading, those who agreed to fill out the questionnaire checked the option "I have read and agree to participate in the research on the theme: "Survey on packaging accessibility in the cosmetic industry". The questionnaire obtained 100 responses, of which 100% consented to participate in the research after reading the terms presented in the ICF.

The 100 participants stated that they were aged between 18 and 80 years, met the other inclusion criteria of this project, and their answers did not fit the exclusion criteria, so no questionnaire was discarded for data analysis. It is observed that the main audience

reached by the survey is aged between 18 and 25 years, totaling 62 participants, and the smallest audience reached is 55 years old or older, totaling 3 participants (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Age of the participants



Source: Prepared by the authors. Manaus, 2025.

It was found that 90% of the participants stated that they were female, 8.9% of the participants stated that they were male and 1.1% of the participants stated that they preferred not to say.

The question "If not, which country?" was discarded because 100% of the participants had stated in the question "Resident of Brazil?" to live in Brazil. Of which, 95 are residents of Manaus-AM and each of the other participants resides in: Praia Grande-SP (1) ; Brasília-DF (1) ; Lavras-MG (1); Olinda- PE (1); Barueri - SP(1).

After the end of the sociodemographic survey of the participants, the questionnaire was started asking if they had any disability or reduced mobility, in which 98% denied and 2% confirmed. When asked if they had any health condition that had difficulty handling, whether opening or closing packages, 92% reported that they did not and 8% said they did, with rheumatoid arthritis being the first (5 answers) followed by diabetes and fibromyalgia (both with 2 answers).

Table 1

Question 2: "Do you have any difficulty opening cosmetic packaging?"

Participant	Reply
4	"Some have a very closed lid"
16	"Shampoos and sunscreens have a lid that is difficult to open."

48	"Enamel"
83	"I feel pain in the joints of my fingers, so I have difficulty opening certain packages"
93	"Some that are threaded are very firm"

Source: Prepared by the authors. Manaus, 2025.

When asked about the use of cosmetic products, 91% said they were users, while 9% denied it, with emphasis on: Makeup with 23 mentions; Skincare with 19 mentions and Perfume with 11 mentions.

Of the participants, 13% reported having some difficulty opening cosmetic packages while 87% denied it. Also, 19% stated that they use some instrument to open or close the containers, with scissors and knives being the most cited (10 answers of each).

When asked about knowing a company that produces cosmetics with adapted packaging or easy access for people with disabilities or reduced mobility, 82% denied knowing. Of the 18% who knew, the company Rare Beauty is in first place with 5 mentions, followed by the company O Boticário with 5 mentions.

Table 2 shows the comments of some participants about products that may have some adaptation in their packaging.

Table 2

Question 10: "What type of cosmetic product do you suggest a packaging adaptation?"

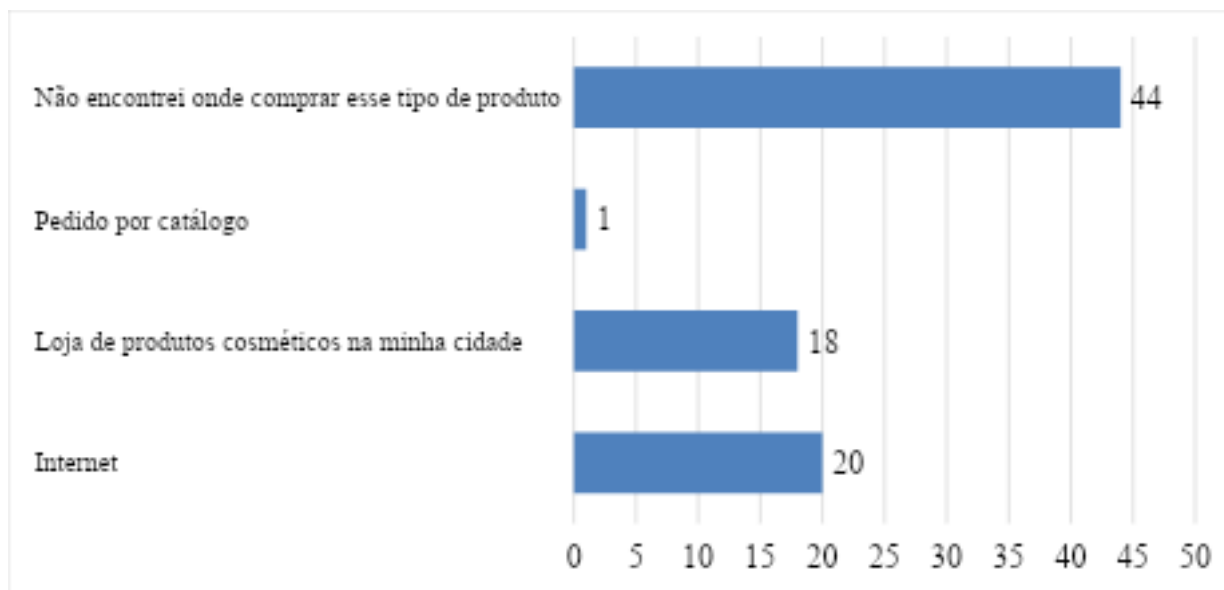
Participant	Reply
9	"Cosmetic caps that make it easy to open, braille texts on the packaging."
37	"Moisturizer packaging, some difficulties for the product to come off easily."
30	"My Lola Cosmetics styling cream is horrible to tighten, even without any mobility issues, I already have a lot of difficulty using it."
83	"All of the suggestions, but especially cosmetic products in which the caps are "screw-on"."

Source: Prepared by the authors. Manaus, 2025.

When asked about using some type of product with adapted packaging, 100 negative answers were obtained, without any affirmative experience. Figure 3 corresponds to the question about where they buy such products, where 44% claimed not to know where to buy them.

Figure 3

Question 13: "Where do you usually buy cosmetic products with adapted packaging or easy handling?"



Source: Prepared by the authors. Manaus, 2025.

4 DISCUSSION

It was observed that the popular understanding of cosmetics is often limited to the idea of products aimed exclusively at aesthetics and vanity, as noted in the mentions of makeup and perfumes. However, according to the definition of the National Health Surveillance Agency (ANVISA), cosmetics are products intended for external application with the purpose of cleaning, perfuming, protecting, altering the appearance or keeping parts of the body such as skin, hair, teeth and mucous membranes in good condition. This includes everyday items such as soaps, toothpastes, deodorants, and sunscreens. Despite this, many people deny the use of cosmetics because they associate the term with superficial practices, without realizing that they use these products daily. Such a perception reveals the erroneous precept of the word beyond the sociocultural stigma, especially related to gender.

It was also noted the difficulty on the part of the participants to handle certain cosmetic packaging, not limited only to individuals with reduced mobility or disabilities. This shows that this obstacle can be present in the lives of the population without disabilities.

In addition, the results demonstrate the lack of inclusion of the public with reduced mobility or with disabilities by the cosmetic industry during the manufacture of its products, such exclusion violates the rights guaranteed to them by law.

5 CONCLUSION

Despite technological advances, including access to information and the ease of obtaining goods over the internet, there is still a noticeable lack of brands that effectively implement accessibility principles in their products. Based on the data obtained by the project, it was noted that both populations (without or with some type of disability and/or reduced mobility) have certain barriers that prevent them from enjoying the cosmetics used in their daily lives in a practical and easy way. Accessibility, in this context, is not limited only to the presence of physical ramps or the use of simple language, but also involves the offer of adapted packaging (such as with braille writing or easy to open). This difficulty shows that the cosmetic market sees accessibility as a brand differential and not a right that is granted to PWDs or those with reduced mobility. It is therefore essential that the cosmetics industry moves beyond the minimum requirements and commits to inclusive practices, ensuring that everyone can fully exercise their right to personal care, hygiene and well-being.

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