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Fragrances and Personality Types: Are they Related?

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to find out the relationship between personality and perfume/fragrance preferred by an individual. Various questions were asked in the questionnaire about the personality and perfume related questions. This helped in the conclusion and final analysis of the data so collected. Data was collected either manually or online through google forms. It is essential today in the age of marketing and branding to acknowledge the presence of the phenomenon that is perfume, its brand personality and contents, and the effect it has on its customers. This study aims to correlate the various attributes of perfumes to the spending capacity and information perception of people, keeping in mind the diverse personality trends that occur in our modern world.

Keywords: Data, Attributes, questionnaire

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According² to "India Perfume Market Overview, 2016-2022", the demand for perfume products has been driven by rising personal grooming, brand awareness, increasing disposable income, growing demand from the middle-class population, and an affordable range of perfumes. Perfumes see a hike in sales in the festive season, as it is considered a perfect gifting option to friends, family, and relatives.

Companies that are already established in other fragrance related segments are now foraying into the perfume market by expanding their product portfolios. Women are also emerging as the desirers for different perfumes suiting their personality and making them feel confident about themselves.

The perfume market is driven by various consumer demands from differing consumer segments. The Indian market is complex and has developed over the millennia. The

¹ Author is a student at HR College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai, India.

² to Research and Markets Ltd, *India Perfume Market Overview, 2016-2022*, RESEARCH AND MARKETS, <https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/4315376/india-perfume-market-overview-2016-2022> (last visited Nov 23, 2020).

consumers of perfumes are presented with a vast array of offerings from multinationals, from prestigious brands to independent manufacturers, with some perfumes produced according to traditional formulae laid out in the ancient Hindu Ayurvedic texts. Due to the historic abundance of natural aromatic resources present in the Indian geographic region, there is a glut of natural raw materials from which perfumes and scents are extracted. All these products are exported from India to the international perfume houses of the world and are also being used by a broad segment of local unorganized manufacturers.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objective: To establish a relationship between personality and perfume fragrances.

Research objective 1: To understand the importance of perfumes in the respective consumer's life and how much they are willing to spend on it.

Research objective 2: To understand what the consumer feels when he/she wears a certain perfume brand.

Research objective 3: To understand whether other people's opinion matters to perfume users or not.

Research objective 4: To understand the association of particular perfume fragrances with the likings of the consumers.

3. Sample plan

Unit of analysis: Residents of Mumbai and outside (through google forms)

Sample unit: Neighbors, Students from colleges in Bombay, Relatives, etc.

Extent: Western and Suburban Mumbai and outside (through google forms)

Time: January – February 2019

Sample size: 160 respondents

III. RESEARCH METHOD

Considering the nature of our study we have decided to use stratified random sampling as we have divided a larger population into smaller groups known as strata.

IV. SAMPLING FRAME

AGE GROUP	MALE	FEMALE
18-25	25	25
26-35	25	25
36-50	25	25
50+	5	5

(A) Sources of Data:

Primary Sources: Questionnaire survey-based data collection.

For the questionnaire for data collection, we used 20 questionnaires for pre-testing purposes - to check accuracy. Errors found during this stage were rectified and well-weighted recommendations made by the pre-testers shall be incorporated.

Secondary Sources:

1. Research Papers
2. Newspaper and magazine articles
3. Findings of internet-based websites
4. Research psychology journals
5. Advertisement coverage in journals, magazines, other publications.

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

In his paper "Adolescent's Preference and Attitude towards Perfumes in India ", Mr. SachinBorgave emphasizes the various attributes of the perfume product and its influence on the purchase decisions. The literature indicates that young adults give most attention to odor, focusing on price and then brand with bottle shape and packaging ranking last. Another interesting factor is the "pleasure factor" derived from the purchase of a fragrance forming the key psychological motive for purchase. Further literature in the paper also shows information trends mostly leaning towards core social groups comprising of friends and family followed by free samples and television. Similar international studies for older age groups including Hamid Ali Raza's Factor Consideration for perfumes in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi as well as Noor Azeema's Empirical study conducted in the Malaysian Coastal region all indicate similar trends of odor and price as deal makers/breakers

of purchase decisions.

However, despite being relegated to the last rank in attributes studies seem to indicate that shape and packaging contain implicit subconscious messages that do lead to purchase payoffs in the long run. In her paper, "How packaging design of cosmetics affect female consumer's purchasing behavior, 'YouLiu showed that 92% of all women felt attracted to fragrance and cosmetics with 'Simple and Classic' designs and were more likely to become potential purchases. Similarly in the paper '*Fragrance perception through packaging; A visual link with customer*'³ by PreetiGiri and Pavan Kumar (National Institute of Technology, Orissa) indicate that potential buying decisions based on the packaging of fragrances differ for different age groups differ in design with higher potential to buy with younger people for abstract, trendy or artistic designs and regular, geometric designs with a balanced color palette for older working-age groups with men voting for cooler colors while women preferring warmer colors. Similarly, as about the shape of the bottle and a subtle advertisement. This is reflected in the study by Sarah Willisin the study "A comparative study on influences in fragrance buying decisions"⁴ which indicates that shape is reflective of brand personality as curved shapes often refer to grace and sexuality while straight shapes reflect power/seriousness as well as bumps to reflect pectoral and abdominal muscles catering to the male and female demographic respectively.

When it comes to personality and fragrance the research indicates a possible relation between only partial personality attributes and fragrance and not whole. This is highly possible because marketing teams assert a "brand personality" for each fragrance they sell which people adopt in the process of purchasing it. For example, marketing studies indicate that as per consumer purchases, woody and spice scents are generally purchased by those projecting an earthy, sensual personality, similarly floral for more feminine and social people. Similarly, research by Alan R. Hirsch, founder of Smell and Taste Treatment Foundation shows citrus fragrances linked to leaders, sandalwood wearers as high achievers, and fruity fragrances as moody/neurotic.

Thus, to conclude, various attributes make up the final purchase decision regarding a fragrance influenced by various internal and external factors. Our research study aims to analyze and correlate the trends between the most important ones.

³PreetiGiri&Palarapu Pavan Kumar, *Fragrance Perception Through Perfume Packaging: a Visual Link with Customers*, ETHESIS (May 2015), <http://ethesis.nitrkl.ac.in/7763/> (last visited Nov 23, 2020).

⁴DigitalCommonsCalPoly, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo Research, Digital Commons Cal Poly, <https://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/> (last visited Nov 23, 2020).

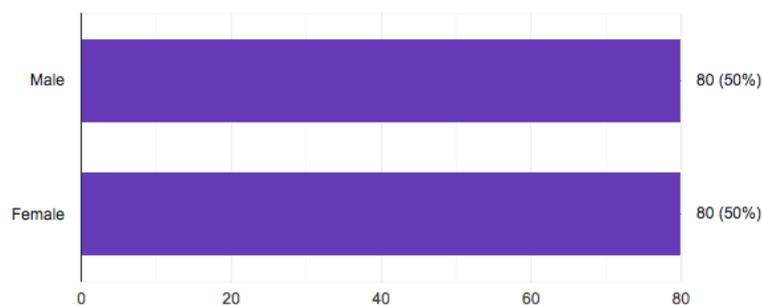
In a paper by Kerstin Poldtz titled, “*Gender differences in consumer decision making for perfume*” it becomes evident that despite the traditional belief that men are more product-oriented while women are more aesthetic oriented, gender has no influence on purchase intention on perfume in general. Both men and women were found to place equal primary emphasis on a pleasant fragrance. However, it is worth noting that secondary influencers for women are visual stimulants but for men, it is product content. Interestingly enough despite fragrance being the primary driving factor for purchase, studies have also indicated that perception of the fragrance of perfumes differs from gender to gender which would also perhaps affect the rise of the latest marketing trend in products; gender-neutral fragrance perfumes with brands such as Sara Jessica Parker's stash, Goop's "Edition 02" making waves in the market.

VI. UNIVARIATE DATA ANALYSIS

Total number of respondents- 160

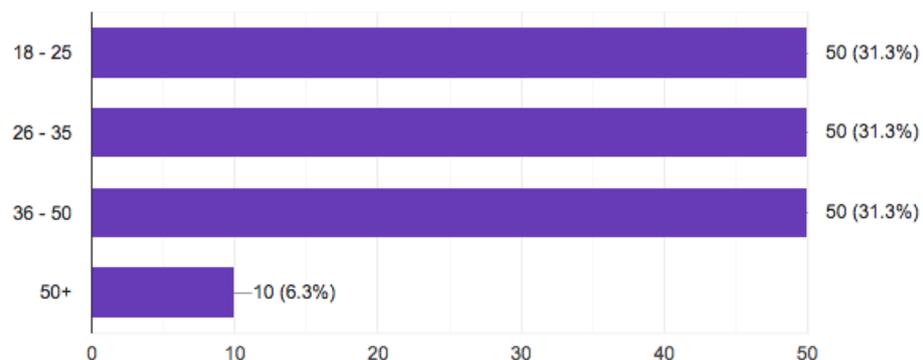
Gender

160 responses



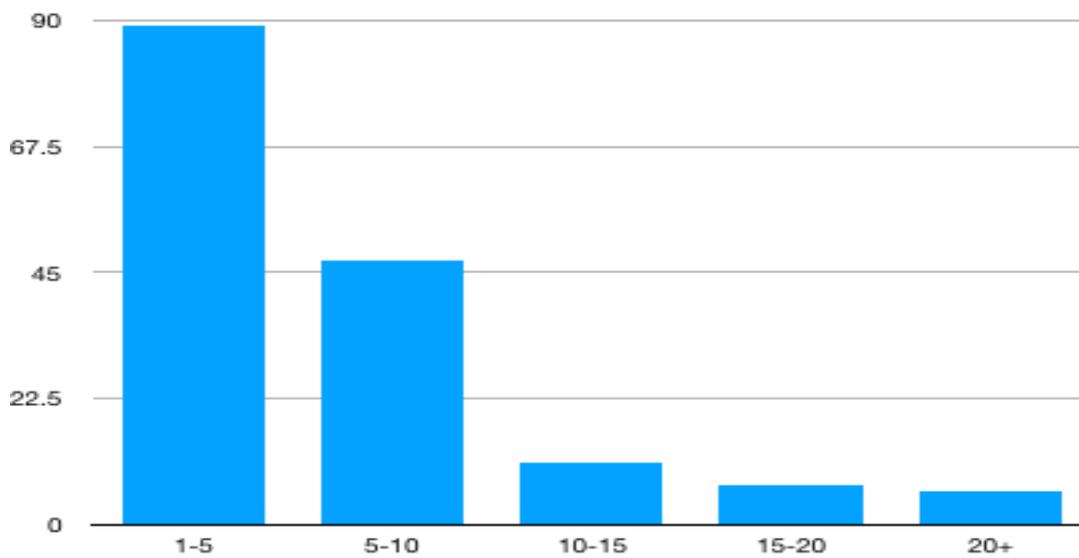
Age

160 responses



x-axis- Number of perfumes owned

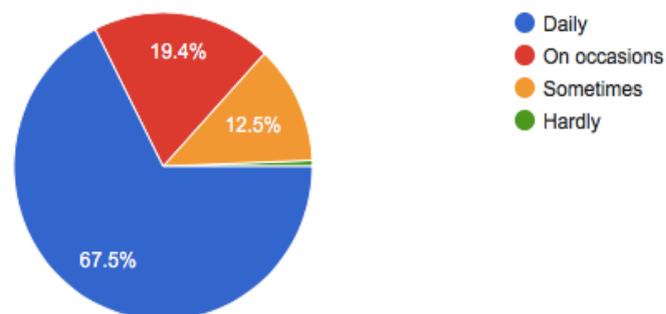
y-axis- Number of people



This table depicts the number of perfumes owned by the respondents.

2. How often do you wear a perfume?

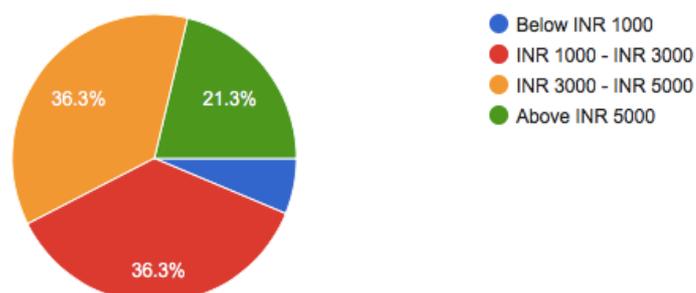
160 responses



As depicted in the pie chart, the majority (67.5%) of our respondents wear perfume daily.

3. How much do you spend on perfumes?

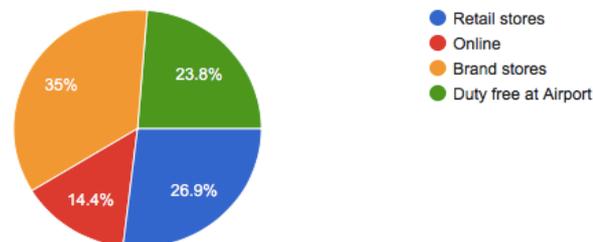
160 responses



Out of the 160 respondents, the majority of the people spend between INR 1000 - INR 5000 on perfumes.

4. Where do you buy your perfume from?

160 responses

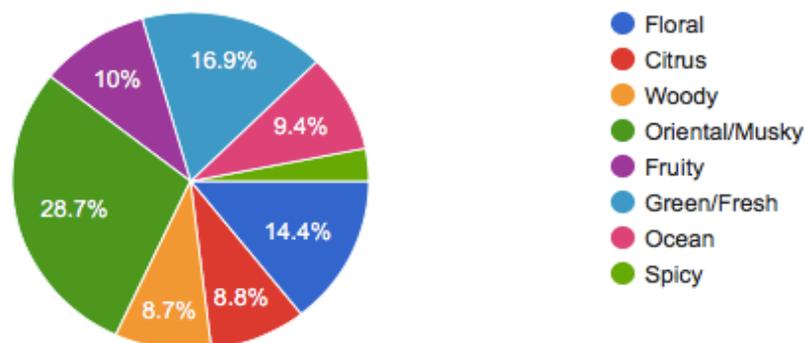


Out of all the respondents, 56 of them prefer buying perfumes from brand stores as they are easily available at the shopping mall.

The pie chart above depicts the break up of fragrance scent preferred and a good number of respondents prefer oriental/musky (mostly male) and floral (mostly female).

5. What type of perfume fragrance do you prefer?

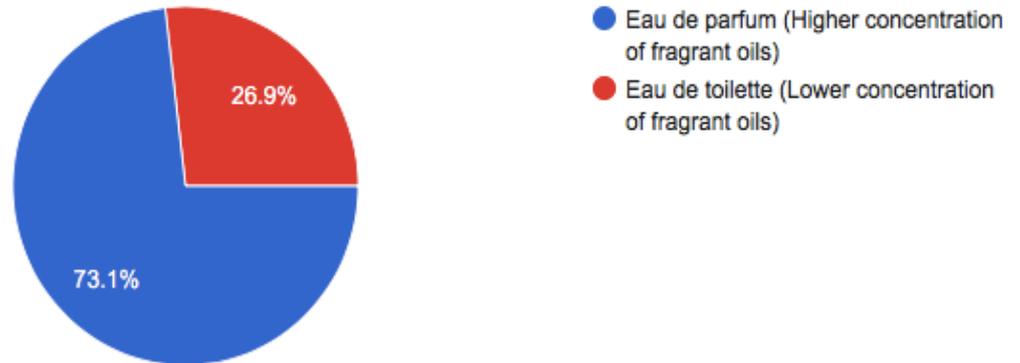
160 responses



The pie chart depicts the level of concentration people prefer in perfumes and 117 people prefer perfumes with higher concentration levels (Eau de parfum).

6. What composition of perfume do you prefer?

160 responses

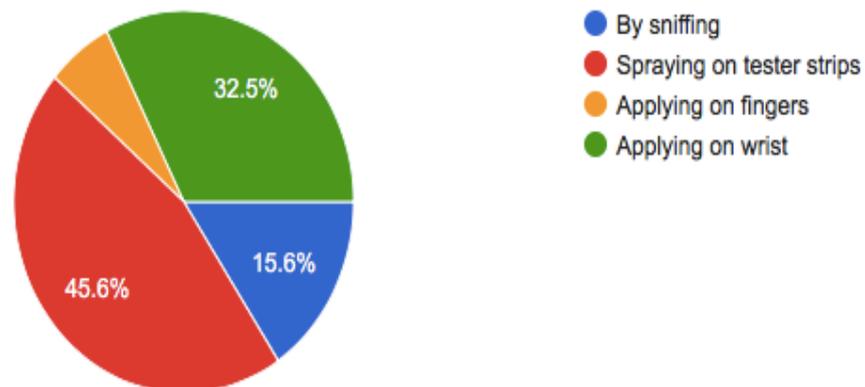


7. What made you start wearing perfume?

The most common answer amongst the survey of 160 respondents is friends and family, parties, meetings, to smell good, etc.

8. How do you try new fragrances before buying it?

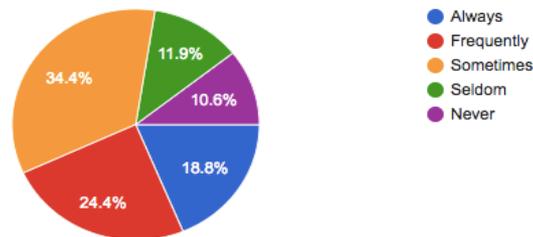
160 responses



45.6% of the respondents try new fragrances by spraying it on the tester strips.

9. Does the packaging and fancy appearance of perfume bottles attract you?

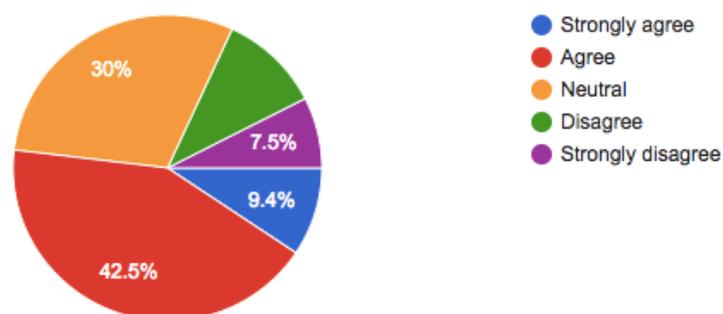
160 responses



Out of the pie chart above, we can say that the packaging does play a crucial role in the buying behavior of the customer as the majority of the respondents are affected by the packaging either sometimes, frequently, or somehow.

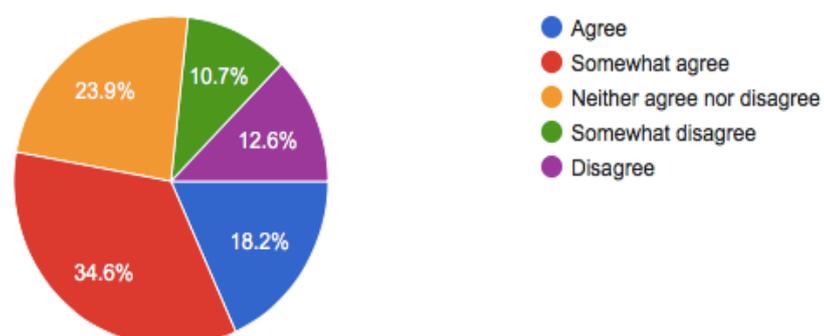
10. Do you associate the scent of your perfume with something you really like? (for example fruit, flower, an experience etc.)

160 responses



11. Do you think other people's opinion matters about the quality of your perfume?

159 responses

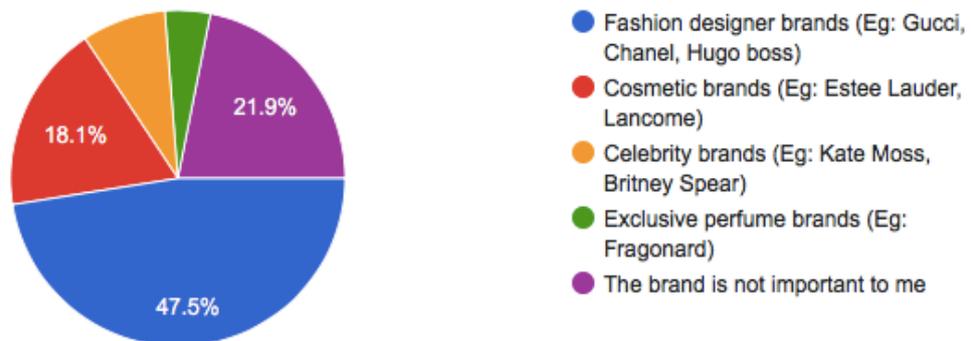


As depicted in the pie chart, the majority of the people are in favor of the motion that they do associate the scent of the perfume with something they like.

The above pie chart depicts the analysis of whether people think that other people's opinions matter about the quality of your perfume.

12. What category of branded perfumes do you most prefer?

160 responses

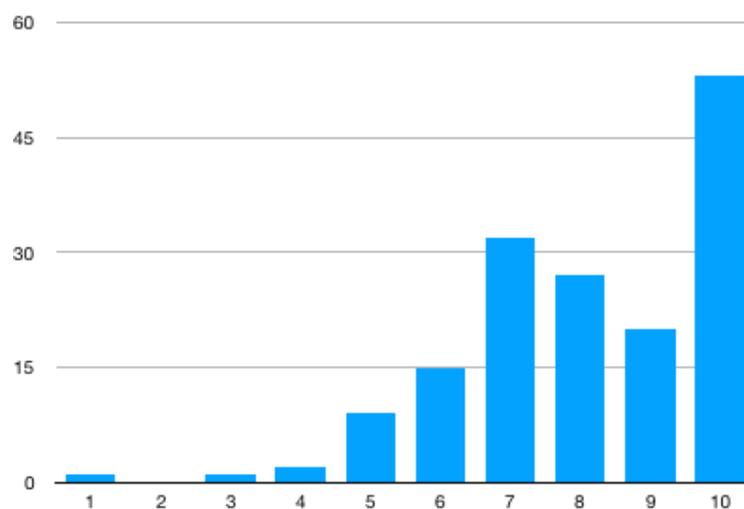


Nearly, half of the respondents prefer fashion designer brands.

13. Does wearing a perfume change your outlook about yourself in a way? If yes, how?

- The most common answer given to this question by the respondents is that they feel good, confident, fresh, attractive, etc after wearing perfume.

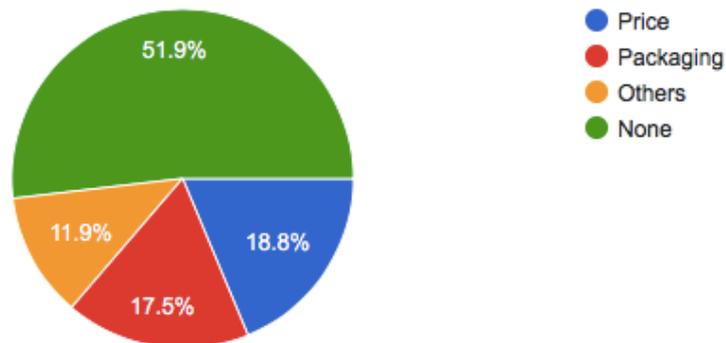
RATING SCALE



x-axis- ratings, y-axis- number of people

15. Would you like to change anything with the perfumes you're currently using?

160 responses

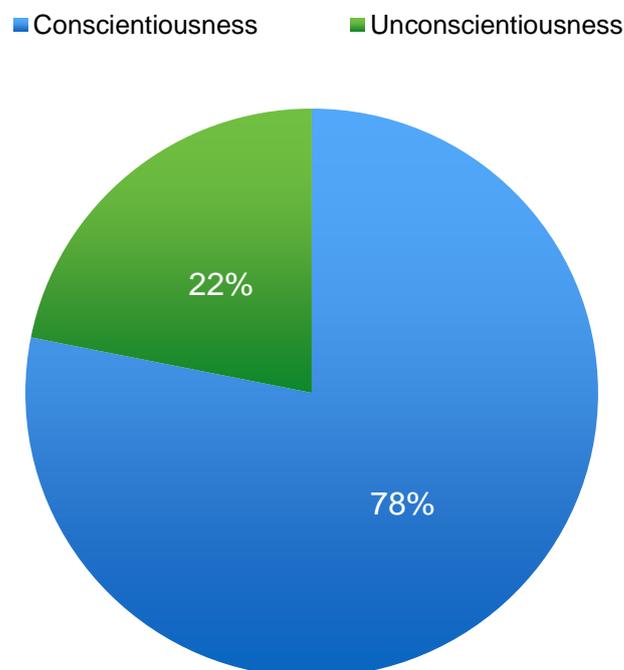


The above pie chart depicts whether respondents would like to change anything with the perfumes that they are currently using.

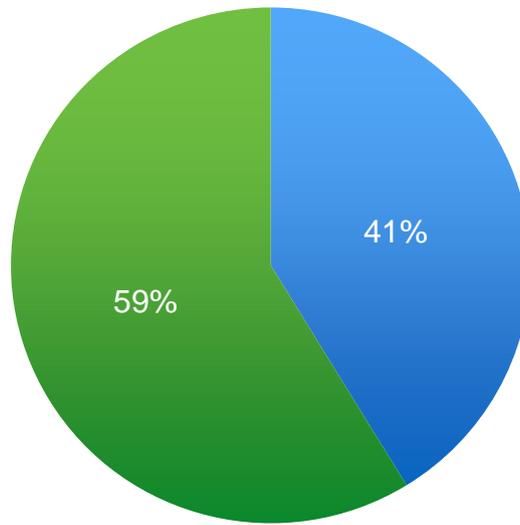
VII. PERSONALITY ANALYSIS

(The Big Five Personality Test)

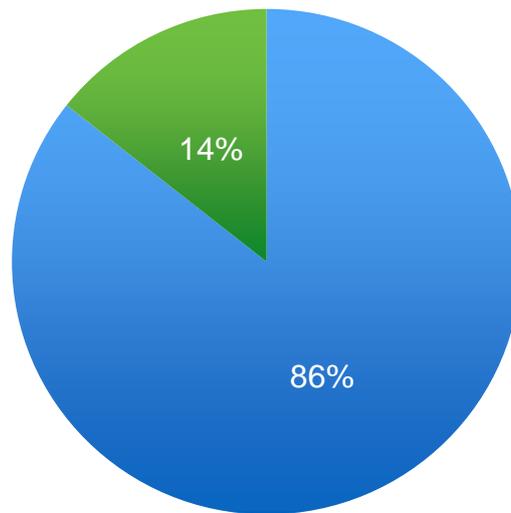
(THE BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TEST)



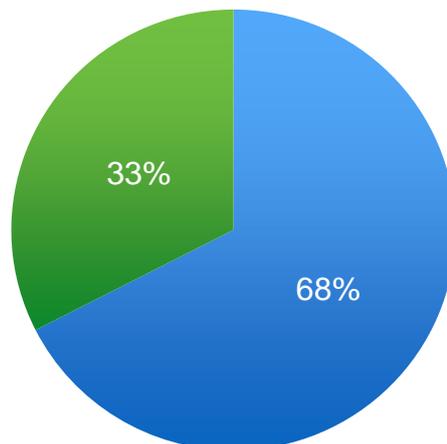
■ High openness to experience ■ Low openness to experience

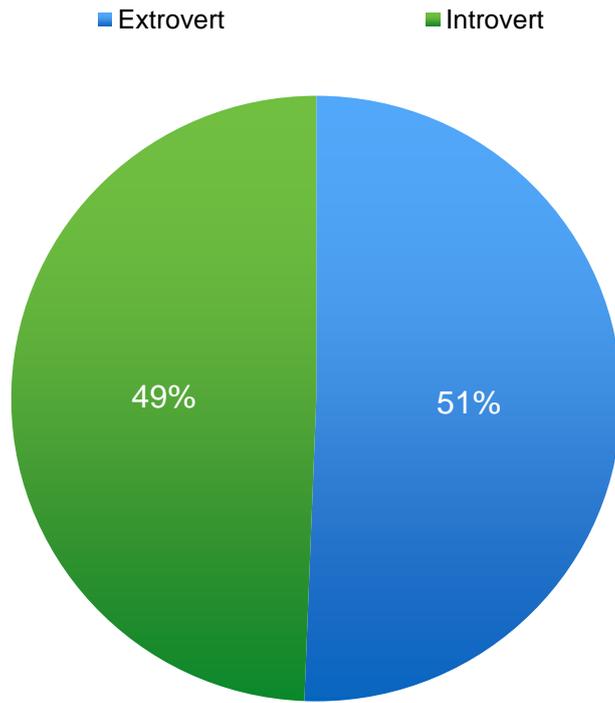


■ Emotional Stability ■ Neuroticism

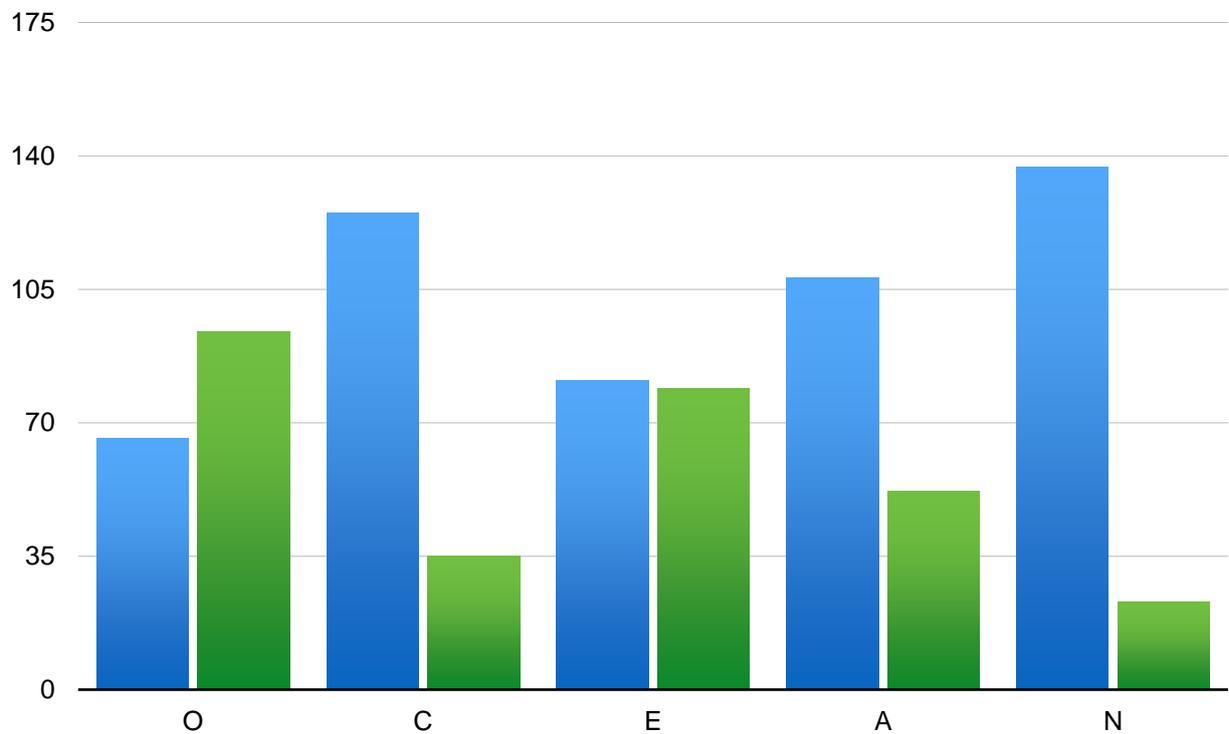


■ Agreeableness ■ Disagreeable





Cumulative respondent personality split



VIII. MAJOR FINDINGS

1. No relationship exists between age groups and the price of perfume purchased.
2. There is no relationship between gender and sources of perfumes.
3. No relation exists between sources of purchase of the perfume and age.
4. No relationship exists between age and preference of the composition of perfumes.
5. There is a relationship between gender and perfume fragrance preferred.
6. There is no relationship between gender and preference of the branded perfumes.
7. No relationship exists between gender and preference of the composition of the perfume.
8. There is a relationship between Extroversion/Introversion and perfume fragrance preferred” in females.

IX. PERSONALITY BASED FINDINGS

1. No relationship between Extroversion/Introversion and perfume fragrance preferred (female).
2. No relationship between Extroversion/Introversion and perfume fragrance preferred (male).
3. No relationship exists between Openness to experience and perfume fragrance preferred. (female)
4. No relationship exists between Openness to experience and perfume fragrance preferred. (male)
5. No relationship between Conscientiousness/Unconscientiousness and perfume fragrance preferred. (female)
6. No relationship between Conscientiousness/Unconscientiousness and perfume fragrance preferred. (male)
7. There is no relationship between Agreeableness/Disagreeableness and perfume fragrance preferred in females.
8. There is no relationship between Agreeableness/Disagreeableness and perfume fragrance preferred in males
9. No relationship exists between Neuroticism/Emotional stability and perfume fragrance preferred in females.

10. A relationship exists between Neuroticism/Emotional stability and perfume fragrance preferred males.
11. No relationship exists between Extroversion/Introversion and the source of purchase of perfumes.
12. A relationship exists between Openness to experience and the source of purchase of perfumes.
