






CO-CREATION VALUE IN BEAUTY SERVICES: THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED SIMILARITY

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Objective: To analyze the role of perceived similarity in social interaction and co-creation of value and its relationship with the experience of consumption in service environments for specific audiences.

Method: The research was a survey type, contemplated a final sample of 270 individuals, whose data were analyzed through the Structural Equation Modeling from the analysis of invariance.

Originality / Relevance: The research presents a crucial contribution to the field of studies that involve the retail environment by examining the social aspect associated with individual consumption experiences concerning the relationships that occur between customers during the provision of the service in specific audiences' environments.

Results: It was shown a direct and positive relationship between perceived similarity and social interaction. The findings also suggest that social interaction, introducing direct influence on the value co-creation assumes the role of a mediator variable in the relationship between similarity and co-creation of value. Besides, it was observed that the co-creation of valuation has a direct influence on the consumption experience.

Theoretical-methodological contributions: This paper contributes to the Marketing literature by highlighting the impact of segmented service environments on the perception of similarity among consumers, which can generate social interaction and co-creation of value, resulting in a satisfactory consumption experience.
of scale.

Keywords: Perceived similarity. Value co-creation. Social interaction.

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1 Introduction

When observing the retail environment as a dynamic space in which products and services are offered and consumed, the apprehension of the elements that impact individual consumption experiences is increasingly relevant. Therefore, the relevance of the social dimension in individual purchasing behavior has been recognized (Hamilton, Ferraro, Haws, & Mukhopadhyay, 2021; Sengupta & Sreejesh, 2017; Miao, 2014; Zhang, Li, Burke, & Leykin, 2014).

Baker (1986) points out that the social factor within a service setting encompasses customers and employees and that the customer experience is influenced by contact not only with the service provider but also with other customers. The social impact theory (Latané, 1981) describes how individuals influence and are influenced by one another in relation to their individual feelings, thoughts or behaviors exerted by the real, implied or imagined presence or action of others.

Previous researches has demonstrated the importance of similarity perceived as part of the social services landscape in several different domains, including restaurants (Hanks, Zhang, & Line, 2020), hotels (Line & Hanks, 2019), breweries (Taylor Jr, DiPietro, So, Taylor, & Hudson, 2020), among others. However, although it has been well documented that perceptions of similarity generally matter when it comes to evaluating the consumption experience (for example: Hanks & Line, 2018; Kwon, Ha, & Im, 2016), there is little research that identifies the role of mediating variables in the relationship between the similarity perceived in the service environment and the consumption experience.

In their work, Trigueiro, Aguiar, and Policarpo (2019), when carrying out a study in barbershops concept, showed that the perceived similarity is significantly related to the individual attitudes of the consumer to other customers and their consumption experience. Also, the study demonstrated positive effects of similarity with the participants' willingness to interact with the customers that are present, and their impact on the evaluation of the service provided. In this sense, it is discussed that the perceived similarity can encourage social interaction between customers that share the same service environment, and consequently, this interaction can lead to a process of exchange between customers in which the perceived benefits of service offerings increase due to collaboration between the parties.

Pantano and Gandini (2018) discussed that the consumer experience is co-created in service environments through the consumers' interactions with the physical elements of the store, as well as through the social interaction that occurs between customers. Thus, although it

is clear that there is a significant relationship between the dimensions in question, the exact nature of these interactions justifies further investigation.

In recent years, efforts to better understand the social aspects of shared consumption environments have identified the importance of the similarity perceived in the attitudes and actions of customers in service environments (Grewal, & Roggeveen, 2020; Dabbous & Tarhini, 2019). The similarity is defined as the degree to which other consumers are perceived as similar to the consumer that is observing the social presence (Brocato, Voorhees, & Baker, 2012). According to Aguiar and Farias (2017), this variable can explain how interactions between consumers work when investigating the relationship between retail environments and individual behaviors.

Even with recent research on the social dimension of the retail environment, studies relating perceived similarity to value co-creation are still incipient. Furthermore, it is believed that understanding the role of perceived similarity in the study of social interaction and co-creation of value can enrich the theoretical body of knowledge in the area and help to better explain the influence of social factors in the consumption experience, in order to enable managerial applications in service environments.

Therefore, this research aims to analyze the role of perceived similarity in social interaction and the co-creation of value, and its relationship with the consumption experience in environments service for specific audiences (barbershops aimed at the male audience and exclusive fitness centers for the female audience). This objective is justified whereas these types of services have more conducive to customer-client relationship development environment due to customer homogeneity using these services.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Social dimension

In the literature, the consumer behavior in the presence of other users in service environments has long been recognized (for example, Grove & Fisk, 1997; Martin & Pranter, 1989; Langeard, Bateson, Lovelock, & Eigler, 1981). In a retail environment, customers will inevitably be exposed to other customers and, this exposure to other people is likely to lead to affective responses (Helm, Kim, & Van Riper, 2020; Triantafillidou, Siomkos, & Papafilippaki, 2017; Bornstein, 1989). Brocato et al. (2012) define “other customers” as people that are simultaneously in a service environment and who are not familiar with a focal customer.

Several studies have documented ample evidence supporting the centrality of social presence in determining consumer attitudes and behaviors (Aguiar, Farias, & Policarpo, 2018; Brocato et al., 2012; Puntoni & Tavassoli, 2007; Argo, Dahl & Manchanda, 2005). This mere exposure influencing the consumer concerning others in a commercial space can be explained by the Theory of Social Impact (Latané, 1981).

The Social Impact Theory, or SIT (Social Impact Theory), was developed by Latané (1981) to explain the impact of social influence on the behavior of an individual. Latané (1981) defines social impact as any influence on individual feelings, thoughts, or behaviors exerted by the real, implicit, or imagined presence or action of others. The author argues that the impact of other people on a social environment is determined by three “social forces”: (1) the number of individuals, (2) physical proximity, and (3) the importance (relevance) of other individuals.

Previous researches have applied principles of social impact theory in retail contexts to explain how individuals are affected by their social environment and have documented ample evidence supporting the centrality of social presence in determining consumer emotions, attitudes, and behaviors (Aguiar & Farias, 2020; Han & Shah, 2020; Rawhouser, Cummings, & Newbert, 2019; Puntoni & Tavassoli, 2007; Argo et al., 2005).

For example, the work of Argo et al. (2005) used SIT to investigate the effects of non-interactive social strength (size of social presence) and social immediacy (how close the subject is to social presence) on consumers' self-presentation behaviors. The results of the study concluded that the mere presence of other people had a profound impact on an individual's behavior.

In response to the study by Argo et al. (2005), which focused on only two factors of the Social Impact Theory, Kwon et al. (2016) examined the relevance/importance factor in the context of the retail environment. The study found that the mere presence of other customers in a shopping center positively influenced the shopping experience of customers when they perceive other buyers as similar to themselves.

In this sense, this research will use SIT based on the understanding that the shopping experience is influenced by the perception of similarity that customers see in other buyers and how this identification results in social interaction, and consequently in the co-creation of value in environments of segmented services (barbershops aimed at the male audience and exclusive fitness centers for the female audience), mainly because it is a public that has been little studied in other studies.

2.2. Perceived Similarity

The similarity effect is one of the most robust and best-documented relationships in social psychology (Montoya, Horton, & Kirchner, 2008). Byrne (1971) was able to show in many different contexts and samples that there is a positive linear relationship between the proportion of similarity and attraction, which he calls the Similarity-Attraction Paradigm. According to this paradigm, people are more inclined to be attracted to people who have similar characteristics (Byrne, 1971). The literature in the area identifies clues to the similarity, suggesting that similar physical appearance, attitudes, personality, and demographic information can activate the perception of similarity (Grigoryan, 2020; Luther & Benkenstein, 2017; Kwon et al., 2016; Tidwell, Eastwick, & Finkel, 2013).

In the context of consumer behavior, the perceived similarity is defined as the degree to which buyers are seen as similar to others in a service environment (Margetts & Kashima, 2017, Brocato et al., 2012; Montoya et al., 2008). Based on this understanding, studies indicate that consumers tend to prefer environments with which they are more compatible (Hanks et al., 2020; Hanks, Line, & Yang, 2017; Martin & Pranter, 1989). In simpler terms, customers are most comfortable in environments when they are surrounded by people who are similar to themselves.

When identifying the absence of a global scale to measure the perceptions of individuals to other consumers during consumption experiences, Brocato et al. (2012) developed a scale for this purpose and established three dimensions of the concept that the authors themselves called OCP (Other Customers Perception): Perceived Similarity; Physical appearance; Proper Behavior. In the Brazilian context, Aguiar and Farias (2020) when applying this scale, found a significant impact of the similarity perceived in the individual responses of the consumer in the purchase process. This study suggested that perceived similarity is related to the consumer's attitude towards the retailer, to the products, and to the shopping experience itself.

It is understood that the notion of similarity is well established in the context of personal networks, such as friendships and other interpersonal relationships, and it extends to the area of services. For example, Hyun and Han (2015) demonstrated that, during a trip, passengers feel safe and comfortable when they meet similar passengers and spend time interacting with them. Specifically, during a long journey, passengers tend to associate with people that they notice a similarity to them, based on visible characteristics, such as ethnicity, age, gender, clothing, and behavior (Hyun & Han, 2015)

Likewise, Zgolli and Zaiem (2017) carried out a study with tourists of different nationalities residing in hotels in Tunisia and found that the perceived similarity contributed to the development of interactions between customers. However, several studies have revealed the positive effects of similarity with the participants' willingness to interact (Lee, Joo, Lee, & Woosnam, 2020; Luther, Benkenstein, & Rummelhagen, 2016; Brack & Benkenstein, 2014; Tidwell et al., 2012; Montoya et. Al, 2008). In this sense, it is understood that the perceived similarity will have a positive effect on people's willingness to interact with other customers present.

On the other hand, the effects of the perceived similarity in the co-creation of value remain unexplored. The work of Cambra-Fierro, Pérez, and Grott (2017), carried out in the retail banking sector, can be considered a pioneer in the area of co-creation, as it represents one of the first attempts to empirically assess the impact of demographic factors (gender and age) on co-creation of value. The results showed that the demographic characteristics of the clients affect co-creative processes and findings.

Thus, based on the exploratory work of Cambra-Fierro, Pérez, and Grott (2017) who present the influence of demographic characteristics on value co-creation, it is argued that perceived similarity is also positively related to value co-creation, considering the influence of demographic factors on the perception of similarity. In this context, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H1a. The perceived similarity is positively related to social interaction in the service sector.

H1b. The perceived similarity is positively related to value co-creation in the service sector.

2.2 Social interaction and value co-creation

Since Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) first recognized the experiential dimension of customer behavior, several studies have emphasized the need for an in-depth study of the role of customer experience in marketing, particularly in services (Gilboa, Seger-Guttman, & Mimran, 2019; Jain, Aagja, & Bagdare, 2017; Jaakkola et al., 2015; Edvardsson, Tronvoll, & Gruber, 2011).

One of the determinants of the customer experience, as suggested by Bustamante and Rubio (2017), is the social environment, which includes direct interactions between customers and other actors in the service encounter, such as employees and other customers. Therefore,

customers can influence not only their own service experiences but also those of other customers who may be present in the service environment.

The literature recognizes the importance of customer-to-customer interactions (ICC) in determining service quality and customer satisfaction (Kim, Choi, & Martin, 2020; Jung & Yoo, 2017; Lemke, Clark, & Wilson, 2011; Moore, Moore & Capella, 2005). Mills and Morris (1986) were probably among the first researchers to recognize the role of clients as 'partial employees' and to draw attention to the costs and benefits associated with them. Lemke et al. (2011) highlight that customers see the quality of the meeting with other customers as part of their overall assessment of the experience.

The role of customers as sources of exchange of information and knowledge was also recognized. This information adds new knowledge to consumers' beliefs about products and services, increases or decreases the credibility of a company, and creates awareness and interest in a particular product or brand (Leung, Shi, & Chow, 2019; Zhang, Lu, Gupta, & Zhao, 2014; Choi & Kim, 2013; Choi, Lee & Kim, 2011). For this reason, it is understood that the social interaction between customers in a service environment influences the consumption experience.

The themes of the client-to-client relationship (Grove & Fisk, 1997; Martin & Pranter, 1989), the client-to-client interactions (Becker & Pizzutti, 2017; Moore et al., 2005), and the concept of co-creation as collaborative and specific creation of value for the customer (Mohammadi, Yazdani, Pour, & Soltani, 2020; Pandey & Kumar, 2020; Vargo & Lusch, 2008) have been given good attention in marketing research. As a result of the seminal contributions of Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) and Vargo and Lusch (2008), co-creation attracted more attention and generated several subsequent publications by other authors (for example, Reichenberger, 2017; Grönroos & Voima, 2013; Heinonen, Strandvik, & Voima, 2013; Edvardsson et al., 2011).

The logic of the Dominant Client (CD) (Heinonen. et al., 2013, Voima, Heinonen, & Strandvik, 2010) considers the importance of the value formed in the experiences and practices located and influenced by the social contexts of the clients themselves, differently from the emphasis of the Dominant Service Logic (DS-L) that places the focus on the co-creation of value only in the provision of services (Heinonen & Strandvik, 2015). By planting customer value creation at the center of the investigation, C-D logic provides a useful basis for understanding the co-creation that occurs when customers interact with each other.

In certain socially dense consumer contexts, customer-to-customer co-creation (C2C) processes can have essential implications. Consumption in these settings occurs in the company

of other customers, then experiences are often shared and not purely personal and subjective (Le, Bui, Duong, & Chang, 2021; Edvardsson et al., 2011; Voima et al., 2010).

In this sense, Finsterwalder and Kuppelwieser (2011) conceptualize co-creation as group formation processes within groups of co-consumers. However, there are a small number of studies that explicitly explore C2C co-creation processes within the domains of collective consumption (Rihova, Buhalis, Gouthro, & Moital, 2018; Reichenberger, 2017; Loane & Webster, 2014). The work of Rihova et.al (2018) explored the implications of the social value of C2C co-creation for tourism management in the context of festivals. The results presented highlight the importance of C2C co-creation practices in tourist environments. Thus, based on the findings of previous studies on the influence of social interaction on the co-creation of value, it is consistent to assume that:

H2a. Social interaction is positively related to the co-creation of value in the service sector.

H2b. Social interaction is positively related to the consumption experience in the service sector.

The customers' consumption experience is associated with their perception of an experimental value obtained after interaction with products or services (Chaney, Lunardo, & Mencarelli, 2018; Holbrook, 2018; Buonincontri, Morvillo, Okumus, & van Niekerk, 2017). The creation of experiences is a successful process for organizations because it is considered the most evolved way of offering to create value (Choe & Kim, 2018; Pine & Gilmore, 1998). According to Pine and Gilmore (1998), while the previous economic offers were external to the customer, the experiences are personal and vary according to the individual perceptions about the service. For this reason, organizations began to encourage the collaboration of customers in creating their own experiences to ensure experiences more related to the needs of their customers.

As co-creation considers the customer as an active resource that must be involved in the value creation process, it can influence and improve the organization's available resources. For example, the work of Vega-Vazquez, Revilla-Camacho, and Cossío-Silva (2013) identified that the co-creation of value is positively related to consumer satisfaction in companies in the beauty salon and personal care sector. Likewise, the findings of Woratschek, Horbel, and Popp (2019), based on two studies carried out in the professional German football leagues, indicated the co-creation of value as one of the antecedents of satisfaction.

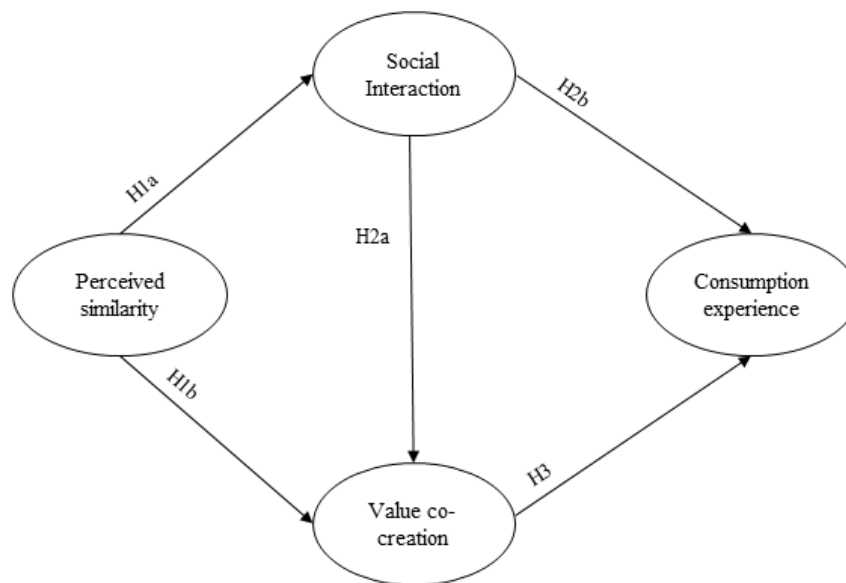
Equivalently, this work understands that the co-creation of value is associated with the consumption experience. Thus, the customer can contribute to the realization of innovative services that can help create more positive consumer experiences (Antón, Camarero, & Garrido, 2018; Buonincontri et al., 2017; Torres, 2016; Matthing, Sandén, & Edvardsson, 2004). Thereby the following hypothesis was elaborated:

H3. Value co-creation is positively related to the consumption experience in the service sector.

Based on these hypotheses and the literature review, a conceptual model was developed, as can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Proposed Conceptual Model



3 Methodological procedures

This research assumes a quantitative nature of a descriptive character and corresponds to a correlational study, using the survey method (Babbie, 2003; Martins & Theóphilo, 2009). The data were collected through questionnaires in person with clients of specialized services in a city in northeastern Brazil. This data collection instrument was structured in two parts: the first presented the scales for measuring the constructs, second, the sociodemographic variables to characterize the target audience.

3.1. Target audience and data collection

The service environments corresponded to gyms, exclusive for the female audience, and concept barbershops aimed at the male audience, all located in a town in northeastern Brazil. Such environments were chosen due to accessibility and the fact that they are segmented for a specific audience, they present a more homogeneous audience compared to traditional environments of the same sector. Therefore, it is discussed that in settings such as these, customers will be more likely to perceive themselves as similar to other consumers, thus justifying the choice of the target audience for research on perceived similarity and social interaction.

The Data collection was carried out at the place after authorization from the managers of the establishments. The customers were approached individually after leaving the establishments and informed about the purpose of the study and the structure of the questionnaire so that they could answer them. It is worth mentioning that the questionnaires were distributed to those who agreed to collaborate with the research could not share their answers with the other customers.

The sample was characterized as non-probabilistic and to accessibility. This type of approach is commonly selected in marketing surveys in which the population is not known, and for that purpose, the collection can be carried out more quickly and with a good reach power (Kotler & Armstrong, 2015; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The definition of the sample size was based on the practice standards recommended by Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2009). For data analysis, a sample size of at least 150 respondents is considered adequate. In the end, 270 observations were considered valid and suitable for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

The sample consisted of two sets of data, the first collected from clients of exclusive gyms for the female audience ($n = 151$) and the second in concept barbershops ($n = 119$) totalizing 270 respondents. The average age is 29 years old and the average time as a client is 22.2 months for the complete sample. All the information regarding the characterization of the sample can be found below (table 1):

Table 1

Sample Characterization

Variable	Category	Descriptive Statistics		
	Data Set	Complete (n = 270)	Gyms (n=151)	Barbershops (n=119)
Gender	Female	55,93%	100%	0%
	Male	44,07%	0%	100%
Age	Average	29	32	26
	Medium	28	32	24
	Standard Deviation	9,88	10	8
Time as a customer (months)	Average	22,2	19	25
	Medium	12	12	24
	Standard Deviation	21,9	22	21
Education level	High school	37,41%	59,60%	9,24%
	Graduation	51,85%	32,45%	76,47%
	Postgraduate	10,74%	7,95%	14,29%
Monthly family income (R\$)	Until 2.090,00	53,34%	70,86%	31,09%
	2.090,01 – 4.180,00	24,44%	21,19%	28,57%
	More than 4.180,01	22,22%	7,95%	40,34%

3.2. Measurement of constructs

The collection instrument comprised measurement scales already validated in previous studies on consumption behavior. All variables corresponded to multiple-item scales. The scales chosen were those that most suited the purpose of the research. To measure the perceived similarity, four items were based on Byrne (1971), Sirgy et al. (1997), and Brocato et al. (2012). The three items of social interaction were adopted from Martin and Pranter (1989) and Moore et al., (2005). The value co-creation scale was extracted from Verleye (2015) with three items. Finally, four items of consumption experience were based on Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) and Addis and Holbrook (2001). The scales were of the 5-point Likert type, ranging from (1) disagree to (5) agree, regarding the indicators of the constructs.

Table 2

Construct Indicators

Construct	Indicators	References
Perceived Similarity	SIM1: I identify with the customers of this barbershop SIM2: The customers of this barbershop are similar to me SIM3: I look like the customers of this barbershop SIM4: The customers of this barbershop are like me	Byrne (1971); Sirgy et al. (1997); Brocato et al. (2012)
Social Interaction	INT1: The interaction with the other customers at the barbershop is pleasant INT2: The other customers at this barbershop are nice to me INT3: The behavior of the customers at this barbershop is appropriate	Martin and Pranter (1989); Moore et al., (2005)
Co-creation of value	COC1: Being customer of this barbershop has been a pleasant experience COC2: I feel satisfied when I go to this barbershop COC3: In this barbershop I give a good impression to other customers	Verleye (2015)
Experience Consumption	EXP_CONS1: It has been a satisfying experience EXP_CONS2: It has been a positive experience EXP_CONS3: It has been a rewarding experience EXP_CONS4: It has been an excellent experience	Holbrook e Hirschman (1982); Addis e Holbrook (2001).

3.3. Data analysis procedures

The data analysis consisted of structural equation modeling based on covariance, as recommended by Anderson & Gerbing (1988) and Sethi & King (1994). To this end, a two-step data analysis process was adopted. First, the measurement model was developed, based on confirmatory factor analysis - AFC (Multigroup), Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach's Alpha), composite reliability (Composite Reliability - CR), extracted average variance (Average Variance Extracted - AVE), to remove items that did not contribute sufficiently to the reliability of the proposed scales.

Furthermore, to test the validity of the type we have been accessed and converged discriminant validity from the complete data set and each base (barbershops and gyms) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This technique, called invariance, was performed to identify whether the psychometric properties were still valid even in different groups.

Subsequently, the structural model was developed using the invariance analysis method (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000), to proceed with the test of the study hypotheses. These analyzes were performed using the statistical software The R Project for Statistical Computing - R, Version 3.6.1 for Windows.

4 Results

4.1. Validation of the measurement model

The validation for the measurement model was accessed from the analysis of factor loads, reliability indexes (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability), and the extracted average variance (Average Variance Extracted) (Hair et al., 2009; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Cronbach, 1951). Considering that the data were collected from two types of services (gyms and barbershops) and corresponded to two different groups of customers, the analysis of these indexes was made for the general model and each group individually.

Initially, the AFC was applied to verify the reliability of the scales based on the factor load of each item (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). In order not to compromise the analyzes, two items that presented a low load factor (<0.4) were removed (one from the perceived similarity (SIM4) and the other from the consumption experience (EXP_CONS4)). Again, the AFC was applied, and the values of the factorial loads exceeded the recommended value.

About the Cronbach's Alpha used to measure internal consistency between items, all constructs showed values greater than 0.7, both in the complete model and in each specific base (Hair et al., 2009). Also, the CR values for each construct exceeded the minimum recommended value of 0.7, just as those for AVE exceeded the minimum value of 0.5 (Byrne, 2013), both in the complete and in the specific set. Therefore, the convergent validity of the model was achieved in all data sets, as shown in Chart 2.

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Table 3

Convergent Validity Assessment

Constructs / Dataset	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
Complete			
Perceived Similarity	0,808	0,842	0,655
Social interaction	0,846	0,846	0,734
Value Co-Creation	0,840	0,849	0,646
Consumption Experience	0,921	0,923	0,751
BarberShop			
Perceived Similarity	0,865	0,793	0,684
Social interaction	0,883	0,883	0,791
Value Co-Creation	0,804	0,803	0,580
Consumption Experience	0,908	0,910	0,720
Gyms			
Perceived Similarity	0,779	0,910	0,651
Social interaction	0,762	0,759	0,614
Value Co-Creation	0,860	0,870	0,685
Consumption Experience	0,930	0,928	0,772

After establishing the convergent validity, the next step corresponded to evaluate the discriminant validity. Therefore, it was used the technique of Chin, Gopal, and Salisbury (1997) in the complete and divided databases. As shown in table 4, the diagonal values, which correspond to the square root of the AVE of each construct, are better than the values of the correlations with other constructs. Consequently, the discriminant validity of this measurement model was accessed.

Table 4

Discriminant Validity of the Measurement Model

Group	Barbershops				Gyms			
	SIM	INT	COV	EXP	SIM	INT	COV	EXP
<i>Construtos</i>								
<i>SIM</i>	0,82				0,80			
<i>INT</i>	0,21	0,88			0,04	0,78		
<i>COV</i>	0,09	0,17	0,76		0,04	0,42	0,82	
<i>EXP</i>	0,03	0,09	0,34	0,84	0,02	0,29	0,65	0,87

Moreover, it can be seen in table 4 that there is no problem of multicollinearity between the items of the constructs, as the correlation values are below 0.8 (Kline, 2011; Brown, 2006). Thus, reliability and validity (convergent and discriminant) were accessed. Further, it was found the usefulness of the proposed conceptual model.

4.2. Invariance analysis

The analysis of the model from this research was carried out from analyzing the invariance. This type of test evaluates the number of factors and, the observed variables associated with each factor are the same between groups (Horn & McArdle, 1992). For that, the configural invariance and the metric are evaluated. Configural invariance is a necessary condition to establish equivalence, but it is not enough. Therefore, the metric invariance assesses whether the strength of the relationship between the observed variables and their underlying constructs is equivalent between groups (if the construct has the same meaning between groups) (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000).

As shown in table 5, the adjustment of the model did not decrease significantly with the resulting changes in the adjustment of the model of the configural invariance. Therefore, these results indicate measurement equivalence between the samples. So, the next step is to test the hypotheses.

Table 5

Results of the Invariance Analysis

<i>Simultaneous equivalence</i>	<i>CFI</i>	<i>RMSEA</i>	<i>ΔCFI</i>	<i>ΔRMSEA</i>
<i>Configural Invariance</i>	0,957	0,091	---	---
<i>Metric invariance</i>	0,954	0,089	0,003	0,001
<i>Scalar Invariance</i>	0,942	0,096	0,012	0,007
<i>Strict invariance</i>	0,934	0,097	0,009	0,001

4.3. Analysis of the model and verification of hypotheses

The quality of fit of the proposed conceptual model was assessed using the following indicators: χ^2 (chi-square), χ^2 / Gf (chi-square by degrees of freedom), NFI (normalized adjustment index), IFI (Corrected Adjustment Index), TLI (Tucker-Lewis index), CFI (comparative adjustment index), RMSEA (the root of the mean square error of approximation) and SRMR (standardized residual square root). In general, the indexes showed a good fit of the model, as shown in the following table:

Table 6

Adjustment Indicators of the Conceptual Model

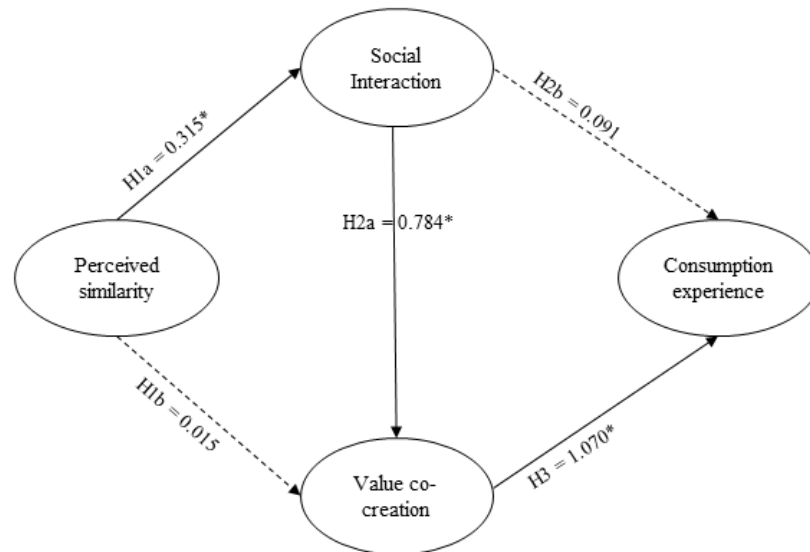
<i>Indexes</i>	<i>Criterion</i>	<i>Structural model</i>
χ^2	--	98.224
<i>Gl</i>	--	39
<i>p-value</i>	> 0,05	0,001
χ^2/Gl	< 3	2,52
<i>NFI</i>	> 0,900	0,969
<i>IFI</i>	> 0,900	0,956
<i>TLI</i>	> 0,900	0,950
<i>CFI</i>	> 0,900	0,938
<i>RMSEA</i>	< 0,08	0,075
<i>SRMR</i>	< 0,08	0,072

The χ^2 / Gl presents an acceptable adjustment since values between 2 and 5 indicate a good adjustment. The adjustment indices (NFI, IFI, TLI, CFI, and RFI) are close to the 1.0 perfect fit criterion (KLINE, 2011). Finally, the RMSEA and the SRMR present an acceptable adjustment, as they are below 0.8 (ARBUCKLE, 2012). From these results, the adequacy of the proposed model is verified, and thus, the hypothesis testing stage could be started.

In Figure 2, it is possible to view the results related to the postulated hypotheses. The perceived similarity had a positive influence on social interaction ($\beta = 0.315$, $t = 4.305$, $p < 0.01$), which supported hypothesis H1a. However, there was no significant positive influence on the co-creation of value ($\beta = 0.015$, $t = 0.187$, $p > 0.01$), rejecting the H1b hypothesis. Social interaction had a direct influence on the co-creation of value ($\beta = 0.784$, $t = 7.592$, $p < 0.01$), but there was no significant relationship with the consumption experience ($\beta = 0.091$, $t = 0.800$, $p > 0.01$), so hypothesis H2a was supported and H2b was not. Finally, the co-creation of value was shown to be significantly related to consumption experience, supporting the H3 hypothesis ($\beta = 1.070$, $t = 8.072$, $p < 0.01$).

Figure 2

Verification of Hypotheses in the Proposed Conceptual Model



5 Discussions and implications

The present study seeks to understand the relationship of the social dimension in individual consumption experiences in two retail service environments. The results showed that the mere social presence of other consumers influences the consumption experience in service environments. Thus, the importance of the social dimension in consumer behavior in retail is verified.

Initially, this research identified that there is a direct and positive relationship between perceived similarity and social interaction in retail environments aimed at specific audiences. That means customers perceive to be similar to other consumers present in the same environment are more likely to interact with each other. Thus, this finding corroborates the results of Brack & Benkenstein (2014), while it identifies the positive influence of similarity on consumers' willingness to interact with current customers.

However, the H1b hypothesis that considers the direct relationship between similarity and co-creation of value was not supported. It may reveal that the relationship between perceived similarity and the process of co-creating value can be indirect. In this sense, as the H2a hypothesis was supported, it is learned that social interaction, which has a direct influence on the co-creation of value, assumes the role of mediating variable in the relationship between similarity and co-creation of value. This implies when perceiving similarities with other consumers, customers are more likely to add value innovation to the environment when they

interact with each other. Therefore, to support previous researches that examined the effects of social interaction in service environments, this study highlights the relevance of the contribution of other customers in co-creating a service experience.

Furthermore, hypothesis H2b, which considers the relationship between social interaction and consumption experience, was not supported. It is revealed that social interaction does not have a direct effect on the consumption experience in this research. In contrast, social interaction, by directly influencing the co-creation of value, has an indirect influence on the consumption experience, as it is identified that co-creation is positively related to the consumption experience, as supported by hypothesis H3. Thus, support for hypothesis H3 substantiates the argument of the strong association between these two variables (Woratschek et al., 2019; Cambra-Fierro et al., 2017; Vega-Vazquez et al., 2013).

Overall, it is learned that the co-creation of value presents paper variable mediating between social interaction and consumer experience. In other words, the interaction between customers tends to generate a positive consumer experience when there is a co-creation process of the amount involved. Therefore, customers will add value to the consumer experience by exchanging benefits with the service provided when interacting with other customers.

Regarding the theoretical implications, this article contributes conceptually to the literature for different reasons. First, this study substantiates theoretical assumptions and previous empirical studies that highlight the importance of analyzing the relationship of the social dimension in service retail (perceived similarity and social interaction), especially its relationship with consumer behavior. Moreover, this paper allows a better understanding of the consequence of the value creation process in the customer consumption experience. Furthermore, the research expands the theoretical framework of studies in targeted environments to specific audiences, not too explored by the marketing in the Brazilian context, because even though the research is focused on the health and beauty segment, it makes it possible to understand that there is a greater ease of involvement between customers who have some similarity.

About the managerial implications, it is believed that the study brings contributions to retail service managers, mainly from service companies dedicated to personal care, by revealing the relevance of social aspects in obtaining pleasant consumption experiences. Therefore, this research suggests that companies conduct audience analysis because beyond the perception of similarity due to the homogeneity of genres in these environments, aspects related to personality and customer lifestyle should also be considered to attract customers compatible.

Additionally, the grouping of customers at the service location should also be considered and mechanisms should be developed to encourage social interaction between customers both in the organization of the physical aspect of the environment and through service providers when seeking to integrate customers during and after the service is offered. Likewise, due to the relevance of co-creating value in customer satisfaction, it is suggested that customers participate actively in the service production process. This can be done through appropriate communication channels that allow other customers to influence each other's service experiences to add value.

6 Final remarks

This article aims to analyze the role of perceived similarity in social interaction and the co-creation of value and its relationship with the experience of consumption in service environments for specific audiences. From this, there is a relevant contribution to the field of studies of the retail environment when examining the social aspect associated with individual consumption experiences.

Although much research has documented the effectiveness of social factors tied to the retail environment, most of the service literature is focused on analyzing the association between customers and service personnel. In this sense, the relationships that occur between clients while providing the service receive considerably less attention.

The present paper reveals that similarity is a crucial dimension in the client-client relationship. Understanding this arose from the similarity check positive effects about the participants interacting with present customers. This is consistent with previous researches on retail which states that people tend to prefer to interact with others like them (Mentser & Nussinson, 2020; Luther et al, 2016; & Benkenstein Brack, 2014), and innovates by demonstrating such effects in segmented environments.

Furthermore, this research also identified the influence of the similarity perceived among customers in the co-creation process. The results demonstrated a mediating effect of social interaction in the relationship between similarity and co-creation. While under an exploratory approach, this study can be considered pioneering in the literature co-creation value, since it represents one of the earliest attempts to empirically evaluate the impact on the perceived similarity co-creative processes.

Also, when verifying a positive association between the co-creation of value and the consumption experience, it is evident that co-created service providers are more likely to

achieve greater consumer satisfaction due to improved value generation (that is, performance) for customers. Previous research offers empirical evidence for the relationship between successful co-creation and increased customer satisfaction (Campos, Mendes, Valle, & Scott, 2015; Chan, Yim, & Lam, 2010).

Nevertheless, the study has its limitations and it is necessary to mention them. It is not possible to generalize the results found here, given the sampling method (non-probabilistic and due to accessibility). Thus, caution is needed when attempting to extrapolate the results to other contexts.

Concerning the potential lines for future researches, in addition to the dimensions pointed out in this study as relevant in the client-client relationship, other aspects may play a crucial role in this relationship. Therefore, as “other customers” is a multidimensional construct (Kim & Lee, 2012), it is suggested that aspects such as quantity, age, clothing, appearance, and behavior should also be researched in the future. Finally, it is suggested that future studies apply these constructs in online retail environments.

Authors’ contributions

Contribution	Santos, N. S. G.	Aguiar, E. C.	Farias, D. S.	Policarpo, M. C.
Conceptualization	X	X	X	-----
Methodology	X	X	-----	-----
Software	X	X	X	-----
Validation	X	X	-----	-----
Formal analysis	X	-----	X	X
Investigation	X	-----	X	-----
Resources	X	-----	X	-----
Data Curation	-----	X	-----	X
Writing - Original Draft	X	X	-----	-----
Writing - Review & Editing	X	X	X	X
Visualization	X	X	X	X
Supervision	-----	-----	-----	X
Project administration	-----	X	-----	X
Funding acquisition	-----	-----	-----	-----

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COCRIAÇÃO DE VALOR EM SERVIÇOS DE BELEZA: O PAPEL DA SIMILARIDADE PERCEBIDA

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Objetivo: Analisar o papel da similaridade percebida na interação social e na cocriação de valor, e sua relação com a experiência de consumo em ambientes de serviços para públicos específicos.

Método: A pesquisa, do tipo survey, contemplou uma amostra final de 270 indivíduos, cujos dados foram analisados por meio da Modelagem de Equações Estruturais a partir da análise de invariância.

Originalidade/Relevância: A pesquisa apresenta uma contribuição relevante para o campo de estudos do ambiente de varejo ao examinar o aspecto social associado às experiências individuais de consumo no que tange os relacionamentos que ocorrem entre os clientes durante a prestação do serviço em ambientes para públicos específicos.

Resultados: Os resultados evidenciaram uma relação causal direta e positiva entre similaridade percebida e interação social. Os achados também sugerem que a interação social, ao apresentar influência direta na cocriação de valor, assume papel de variável mediadora na relação entre similaridade e cocriação de valor. Além disso, observou-se que a cocriação de valor exerce influência direta na experiência de consumo.

Contribuições teórico-metodológicas: Este trabalho contribui para a literatura de Marketing ao destacar o impacto dos ambientes de serviços segmentados na percepção de similaridade entre os consumidores, o que pode gerar interação social e cocriação de valor, resultando em uma experiência de consumo satisfatória.

Palavras-chave: Similaridade percebida. Cocriação de valor. Interação social.

Como citar

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1 Introdução

Ao observar o ambiente varejista enquanto espaço dinâmico em que produtos e serviços são ofertados e consumidos, a apreensão dos elementos que impactam as experiências individuais de consumo mostra-se cada vez mais relevante. Neste sentido, tem-se reconhecido a relevância da dimensão social no comportamento individual de compra (Sengupta & Sreejesh, 2017; Miao, 2014; Zhang, Li, Burke, & Leykin, 2014).

Baker (1986) aponta que o fator social dentro de uma configuração de serviço abrange clientes e funcionários, e que a experiência do cliente é influenciada pelo contato não apenas com o provedor de serviços, mas também com os outros clientes. A Teoria do Impacto Social – SIT (*Social Impact Theory*), (Latané, 1981) descreve como os indivíduos influenciam e são influenciados uns pelos outros em relação aos seus sentimentos, pensamentos ou comportamentos individuais exercidos pela presença ou ação real, implícita ou imaginada de outras pessoas.

Nos últimos anos, os esforços para entender melhor os aspectos sociais dos ambientes de consumo compartilhado identificaram a importância da similaridade percebida nas atitudes e ações dos clientes em ambientes de serviços. A similaridade é definida como o grau em que os outros consumidores são percebidos como semelhantes ao consumidor que está observando a presença social (Brocato, Voorhees, & Baker, 2012). Segundo Aguiar e Farias (2017), esta variável é capaz de explicar o papel das interações entre os consumidores ao investigar a relação entre ambientes varejistas e comportamentos individuais.

Pesquisas anteriores demonstraram a importância da similaridade percebida como parte do cenário dos serviços sociais em vários domínios diferentes, incluindo restaurantes (Hanks, Zhang, & Line, 2020), hotéis (Line & Hanks, 2019), cervejarias (Taylor Jr, DiPietro, So, Taylor, & Hudson, 2020), entre outros. No entanto, embora tenha sido bem documentado que as percepções de similaridade geralmente importam quando se trata da avaliação da experiência de consumo (por exemplo: Hanks & Line, 2018; Kwon, Ha, & Im, 2016), são poucas as pesquisas que identificam o papel das variáveis mediadoras na relação entre a similaridade percebida no ambiente de serviços e a experiência de consumo.

Em seu trabalho, Trigueiro, Aguiar e Policarpo (2019), ao realizarem um estudo em barbearias conceito, evidenciaram que a similaridade percebida relaciona-se significativamente com as atitudes individuais do consumidor em relação a outros clientes e sua experiência de consumo. Além disso, o estudo demonstrou efeitos positivos da similaridade em relação à disposição dos participantes em interagir com os clientes presentes, e seu impacto na avaliação

do serviço prestado. Neste sentido, argumenta-se que a similaridade percebida pode incentivar a interação social entre clientes que compartilham um mesmo ambiente de serviços e, por consequência, esta interação pode levar a um processo de troca entre os clientes no qual os benefícios percebidos das ofertas de serviços aumentam devido a colaboração entre as partes.

Pantano e Gandini (2018) argumentaram que a experiência de consumo é cocriada nos ambientes de serviços por meio das interações dos consumidores com os elementos físicos da loja, bem como pela interação social que ocorre entre os clientes. Assim, embora fique claro que existe uma relação significativa entre as dimensões em questão, a natureza exata dessas interações justifica uma investigação mais aprofundada.

Mesmo com as pesquisas recentes acerca da dimensão social do ambiente varejista, ainda são incipientes os estudos que relacionam a similaridade percebida com a cocriação de valor. Além disso, acredita-se que o entendimento do papel da similaridade percebida no estudo da interação social e da cocriação de valor pode enriquecer o corpo teórico de conhecimento na área e ajudar a melhor explicar a influência de fatores sociais na experiência de consumo, a fim de possibilitar aplicações gerenciais em ambientes de serviços.

Nos últimos anos, esforços para entender melhor os aspectos sociais dos ambientes de consumo compartilhado identificaram a importância da similaridade percebida nas atitudes e ações dos clientes em ambientes de atendimento (Grewal, & Roggeveen, 2020; Dabbous & Tarhini, 2019). A similaridade é definida como o grau em que outros consumidores são percebidos como semelhantes ao consumidor que está observando a presença social (Brocato, Voorhees, & Baker, 2012). Segundo Aguiar e Farias (2017), essa variável pode explicar como funcionam as interações entre os consumidores ao investigar a relação entre ambientes de varejo e comportamentos individuais.

Mesmo com pesquisas recentes sobre a dimensão social do ambiente de varejo, ainda são incipientes os estudos que relacionam a semelhança percebida com a cocriação de valor. Acredita-se que compreender o papel da similaridade percebida no estudo da interação social e cocriação de valor pode enriquecer o corpo teórico do conhecimento na área e ajudar a explicar melhor a influência dos fatores sociais na experiência de consumo, a fim de habilitar aplicativos gerenciais em ambientes de serviço.

Portanto, o objetivo desta pesquisa é analisar o papel da similaridade percebida na interação social e na cocriação de valor, e sua relação com a experiência de consumo em ambientes de serviços para públicos específicos (barbearias voltadas para o público masculino e academias de ginástica exclusivas para o público feminino). Este objetivo se justifica ao passo

que estes tipos de serviço dispõem de um ambiente mais propício para o desenvolvimento do relacionamento cliente-cliente devido a homogeneidade dos clientes que utilizam estes serviços.

2 Referencial teórico

2.1. Dimensão social

Na literatura de comportamento do consumidor, a presença de outros consumidores em ambientes de serviços há muito tempo é reconhecida (por exemplo, Grove & Fisk, 1997; Martin & Pranter, 1989; Langeard, Bateson, Lovelock, & Eigler, 1981). Em um ambiente de varejo, os clientes inevitavelmente serão expostos a outros clientes e essa exposição a outras pessoas provavelmente conduzirá a respostas afetivas (Bornstein, 1989). Brocato et al. (2012) definem “outros clientes” como clientes que estão, simultaneamente, em um ambiente de serviços e que não estão familiarizados com um cliente focal.

Vários estudos documentaram amplas evidências apoiando a centralidade da presença social na determinação de atitudes e comportamentos do consumidor (Aguiar, Farias, & Policarpo, 2018; Brocato et al., 2012; Puntoni & Tavassoli, 2007; Argo, Dahl & Manchanda, 2005). Esta influência da mera exposição de um consumidor em relação a outros em um espaço comercial pode ser explicada pela Teoria do Impacto Social (Latané, 1981).

A SIT foi desenvolvida por Latané (1981) para explicar o impacto da influência social no comportamento de um indivíduo. Latané (1981) definiu impacto social como qualquer influência sobre sentimentos, pensamentos ou comportamentos individuais exercidos pela presença ou ação real, implícita ou imaginada de outros. O autor argumenta que o impacto de outras pessoas em um ambiente social é determinado por três “forças sociais”: (1) quantidade de indivíduos, (2) proximidade física e (3) a importância (relevância) dos outros indivíduos.

Pesquisas anteriores têm aplicado princípios da teoria do impacto social em contextos varejistas para explicar como os indivíduos são afetados por seu ambiente social e documentaram amplas evidências apoiando a centralidade da presença social na determinação de emoções, atitudes e comportamentos do consumidor (Aguiar & Farias, 2020; Puntoni & Tavassoli, 2007; Argo et al., 2005; Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004).

Por exemplo, o trabalho de Argo et al. (2005) utilizou o SIT para investigar os efeitos da força social não interativa (tamanho da presença social) e do imediatismo social (quão perto o sujeito está da presença social) sobre os comportamentos de auto apresentação dos

consumidores. Os resultados do estudo concluíram que a mera presença de outras pessoas teve um impacto profundo no comportamento de um indivíduo.

Em resposta ao estudo de Argo et al. (2005), que focou em apenas dois fatores da SIT, Kwon et al. (2016) examinaram o fator de relevância/importância no contexto do ambiente de varejo. O estudo identificou que a mera presença de outros clientes em um shopping center influenciou positivamente a experiência de compra dos clientes quando estes percebem os outros compradores como semelhantes a si mesmos.

Neste sentido, esta pesquisa utilizará a SIT a partir do entendimento que a experiência de compra é influenciada pela percepção de similaridade que os clientes visualizam nos outros compradores, e como essa identificação resulta em uma interação social, e consequentemente na cocriação de valor em ambientes de serviços segmentados (barbearias voltadas para o público masculino e academias de ginástica exclusivas para o público feminino), principalmente por se tratar de um público pouco estudado em outras pesquisas.

2.2. *Similaridade percebida*

O efeito de similaridade é uma das relações mais robustas e melhor documentadas em psicologia social (Montoya, Horton, & Kirchner, 2008). Byrne (1971) foi capaz de mostrar em muitos contextos e amostras diferentes que existe uma relação linear positiva entre a proporção de similaridade e atração, que ele chama de Paradigma Similaridade-Atração. De acordo com este paradigma, as pessoas estão mais inclinadas a serem atraídas por pessoas que possuem características semelhantes (Byrne, 1971). A literatura da área identifica pistas da similaridade, sugerindo que aparência física, atitudes, personalidade e informações demográficas semelhantes podem ativar a percepção de similaridade (Luther & Benkenstein, 2017; Kwon et al., 2016; Tidwell, Eastwick, & Finkel, 2013).

No contexto do comportamento do consumidor, similaridade percebida é definida como o grau em que os compradores são vistos como semelhantes aos outros em um ambiente de serviço (Brocato et al., 2012; Montoya et al., 2008). A partir deste entendimento, estudos indicam que os consumidores tendem a preferir ambientes com os quais são mais compatíveis (Hanks et al., 2020; Hanks, Line, & Yang, 2017; Martin & Pranter, 1989). Em termos mais simples, os clientes se sentem mais confortáveis em um ambiente quando estão cercados por pessoas semelhantes a si mesmas.

Ao identificarem a ausência de uma escala global para mensurar as percepções que o indivíduo tem dos outros consumidores durante experiências de consumo, Brocato et al. (2012)

desenvolveram uma escala com este intuito e estabeleceram três dimensões do conceito que os próprios autores denominaram OCP (*Other Customers Perception*): Similaridade Percebida; Aparência Física; Comportamento Adequado. No contexto brasileiro, Aguiar e Farias (2020) ao aplicarem esta escala, constataram um impacto significativo da similaridade percebida nas respostas individuais do consumidor no processo de compra. Este estudo sugeriu que similaridade percebida se relaciona com a atitude do consumidor com o varejista, com os produtos e com a própria experiência de compra.

Entende-se que a noção de similaridade está bem estabelecida no contexto de redes pessoais, como amizades e outras relações interpessoais, e se estende a área de serviços. Por exemplo, Hyun e Han (2015) demonstraram que, durante uma viagem, os passageiros se sentem seguros e confortáveis quando encontram passageiros semelhantes e passam algum tempo interagindo com eles. Especificamente, durante uma longa viagem, os passageiros tendem a se associar com pessoas que eles percebem como semelhantes a eles, com base em características visíveis, como etnia, idade, gênero, vestuário, e comportamento (Hyun & Han, 2015).

Do mesmo modo, Zgolli e Zaiem (2017) realizaram um estudo com turistas de diferentes nacionalidades residentes em hotéis na Tunísia e constataram que a similaridade percebida contribuiu para o desenvolvimento das interações entre os clientes. Além disso, vários estudos revelaram os efeitos positivos da similaridade em relação à disposição dos participantes em interagir (Luther, Benkenstein, & Rummelhagen, 2016; Brack & Benkenstein, 2014; Tidwell et al., 2012; Montoya et. al, 2008). Neste sentido, entende-se que a similaridade percebida terá um efeito positivo na disposição das pessoas em interagir com outros clientes presentes.

Por outro lado, os efeitos da similaridade percebida na cocriação de valor permanecem inexplorados. O trabalho de Cambra-Fierro, Pérez e Grott (2017), realizado no setor bancário de varejo, pode ser considerado pioneiro na área da cocriação, pois representa uma das primeiras tentativas de avaliar empiricamente o impacto de fatores demográficos (sexo e idade) na cocriação de valor. Os resultados mostraram que as características demográficas dos clientes afetam processos e resultados cocriativos.

Assim, a partir do trabalho exploratório de Cambra-Fierro et al. (2017) que apresenta a influência de características demográficas na cocriação de valor, argumenta-se que a similaridade percebida também se relaciona positivamente com a cocriação de valor por considerar a influência de fatores demográficos na percepção de similaridade. Nesse contexto, foi formulada a seguinte hipótese:

H1a. A similaridade percebida se relaciona positivamente com a interação social no setor de serviços.

H1b. A similaridade percebida se relaciona positivamente com a cocriação de valor no setor de serviços.

2.3. Interação social e cocriação de valor

Desde que Holbrook e Hirschman (1982) reconheceram pela primeira vez a dimensão experiencial do comportamento do cliente, vários estudos enfatizaram a necessidade de um estudo aprofundado do papel da experiência do cliente no marketing, particularmente em serviços (Jaakkola et al., 2015; Edvardsson, Tronvoll, & Gruber, 2011).

Um dos determinantes da experiência do cliente, conforme sugerido por Bustamante e Rubio (2017), é o ambiente social, que inclui as interações diretas entre clientes e outros atores no encontro de serviço, como funcionários e outros clientes. Portanto, os clientes podem influenciar não apenas suas próprias experiências de serviço, mas também as de outros clientes que possam estar presentes no ambiente de serviços.

A literatura reconhece a importância das interações cliente-a-cliente (ICC) na determinação da qualidade do serviço e da satisfação do cliente (Jung & Yoo, 2017; Lemke, Clark, & Wilson, 2011; Moore, Moore & Capella, 2005). Mills e Morris (1986) provavelmente estavam entre os primeiros pesquisadores a reconhecer o papel dos clientes como 'funcionários parciais' e a chamar atenção para os custos e benefícios associados a eles. Lemke et al. (2011) destacam que os clientes veem a qualidade do encontro com os outros clientes como parte de sua avaliação geral da experiência.

O papel dos clientes como fontes de troca de informações e conhecimentos também foi reconhecido. Essas informações adicionam novos conhecimentos às crenças dos consumidores sobre produtos e serviços, aumentam ou diminuem a credibilidade de uma empresa e criam consciência e interesse em relação a um determinado produto ou marca (Zhang, Lu, Gupta, & Zhao, 2014; Choi & Kim, 2013; Choi, Lee & Kim, 2011). Por esta razão, entende-se que a interação social entre clientes em ambiente de serviços influencia a experiência de consumo.

Os temas do relacionamento cliente a cliente (Grove & Fisk, 1997; Martin & Pranter, 1989), as interações cliente-a-cliente (Moore et al., 2005) e o conceito de cocriação como criação colaborativa e específica de valor para o cliente (Vargo & Lusch, 2008) têm tido grande atenção na pesquisa de marketing. Como resultado das contribuições seminais de Prahalad e Ramaswamy (2004) e Vargo e Lusch (2008), a cocriação atraiu muita atenção e gerou várias

publicações subsequentes de outros autores (por exemplo, Reichenberger, 2017; Grönroos & Voima, 2013; Heinonen, Strandvik, & Voima, 2013; Edvardsson et al., 2011).

A lógica do Cliente Dominante (C-D) (Heinonen. et al., 2013, Voima, Heinonen, & Strandvik, 2010) considera a importância do valor formado nas experiências e práticas situadas e influenciadas pelos contextos sociais dos próprios clientes, diferentemente da ênfase da lógica do Serviço Dominante (S-D) que coloca o foco da cocriação de valor apenas na prestação de serviços (Heinonen & Strandvik, 2015). Ao colocar a criação de valor dos clientes no centro da investigação, a lógica C-D oferece uma base útil para entender a cocriação que ocorre quando os clientes interagem entre si.

Em certos contextos de consumo socialmente densos, os processos de cocriação de cliente para cliente (C2C) podem ter implicações muito importantes. O consumo nessas configurações ocorre na companhia de outros clientes, logo as experiências são frequentemente compartilhadas, e não puramente pessoais e subjetivas (Edvardsson et al., 2011; Voima et al., 2010).

Neste sentido, Finsterwalder e Kuppelwieser (2011) conceituam a cocriação como processos de formação de grupos dentro de grupos de co-consumidores. Entretanto, há um pequeno número de estudos que exploram explicitamente os processos de cocriação de C2C dentro dos domínios do consumo coletivo (Rihova, Buhalis, Gouthro, & Moital, 2018; Reichenberger, 2017; Loane & Webster, 2014). O trabalho de Rihova et. al (2018) explorou as implicações do valor social da cocriação de C2C para a gestão do turismo no contexto de festivais. Os resultados apresentados destacaram a importância das práticas de cocriação C2C em ambientes turísticos. Assim, baseando-se nos achados de estudos anteriores sobre a influência da interação social na cocriação de valor, é coerente assumir que:

H2a. A interação social se relaciona positivamente com a cocriação de valor no setor de serviços.

H2b. A interação social se relaciona positivamente com a experiência de consumo no setor de serviços.

A experiência de consumo dos clientes está associada à sua percepção de valor experimental obtido após a interação com produtos ou serviços (Buonincontri, Morvillo, Okumus, & van Niekerk, 2017). A criação de experiências é um processo bem-sucedido para as organizações, porque é considerada a forma mais evoluída de oferta para criar valor (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Segundo Pine e Gilmore (1998), enquanto as ofertas econômicas anteriores eram externas ao cliente, as experiências são pessoais e variam de acordo com as percepções

individuais sobre o serviço. Por isso, as organizações começaram a incentivar a colaboração de clientes na criação de suas próprias experiências para garantir experiências mais relacionadas às necessidades de seus clientes.

Como a cocriação considera o cliente como um recurso ativo que deve estar envolvido no processo de criação de valor, ele pode influenciar e melhorar os recursos disponíveis da organização. Por exemplo, o trabalho de Vega-Vazquez, Revilla-Camacho e Cossío-Silva (2013) identificou que a cocriação de valor se relaciona positivamente com a satisfação dos consumidores em empresas no setor de salão de beleza e cuidados pessoais. Do mesmo modo, os achados de Woratschek, Horbel e Popp (2019), a partir de dois estudos realizados nas ligas profissionais de futebol alemãs, indicou a cocriação de valor como um dos antecedentes da satisfação.

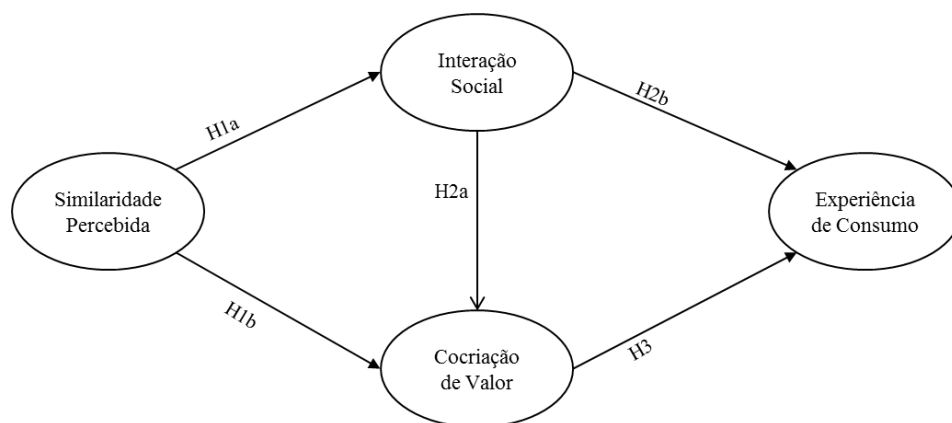
Analogamente, este trabalho entende que a cocriação de valor se associa com a experiência de consumo. Assim, o cliente pode contribuir para a realização de serviços inovadores que podem ajudar a criar experiências de consumo mais positivas (Buonincontri et al., 2017; Torres, 2016; Matthing, Sandén, & Edvardsson, 2004). Em face disto, foi elaborada a seguinte hipótese:

H3. A cocriação de valor se relaciona positivamente com a experiência de consumo no setor de serviços.

A partir destas hipóteses e da revisão da literatura, foi desenvolvido um modelo conceitual conforme pode ser observado na Figura 1.

Figura 1

Modelo Conceitual Proposto



3 Procedimentos metodológicos

A pesquisa assume natureza quantitativa de caráter descritivo e corresponde a um estudo correlacional, em que fez uso do método *survey* (Babbie, 2003; Martins & Theóphilo, 2009). Os dados foram coletados por meio de questionários de forma presencial junto a clientes de serviços especializados de uma cidade do nordeste brasileiro. Este instrumento de coleta de dados foi estruturado em duas partes, a primeira apresentou as escalas de mensuração dos construtos, e a segunda variáveis sociodemográficas para fins de caracterização do público alvo.

3.1. Público-alvo e coleta de dados

Os ambientes de serviço corresponderam a academias de ginástica, exclusivas para o público feminino, e a barbearias conceito voltadas para o público masculino, todos localizados em uma cidade do nordeste brasileiro. Tais ambientes foram escolhidos devido à acessibilidade e ao fato de serem segmentados para um público específico, apresentam um público mais homogêneo em comparação com ambientes tradicionais do mesmo setor. Por isso, argumenta-se que em ambientes como estes os clientes terão maior propensão a perceberem-se como similares com os outros consumidores, justificando, portanto, a escolha do público alvo para uma pesquisa sobre similaridade percebida e interação social.

A coleta de dados foi realizada *in loco*, após a autorização dos gestores dos estabelecimentos. Os clientes foram abordados individualmente após saírem dos estabelecimentos e informados sobre o objetivo do estudo e a estrutura do questionário, para que pudessem respondê-los. Vale salientar que os questionários foram distribuídos para aqueles que concordaram em colaborar com a pesquisa e os respondentes não compartilhavam as suas respostas com os demais clientes.

A amostra se caracteriza como não probabilística e por acessibilidade. Este tipo de abordagem é comumente selecionado em pesquisas de marketing nas quais a população não é conhecida, e para tanto a coleta pode ser realizada de forma mais rápida e com grande poder de alcance (Kotler & Armstrong, 2015; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). A definição do tamanho da amostra foi baseada nas normas práticas recomendadas por Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, e Tatham (2009). Para a análise dos dados, considera-se adequado um tamanho de amostra de pelo menos 150 respondentes. Ao final, 270 observações foram consideradas válidas e aptas para Modelagem de Equações Estruturais (MEE).

A amostra foi composta por dois conjuntos de dados, o primeiro coletado com clientes de academias exclusivas para o público feminino (n=151) e o segundo em barbearias conceito (n=119), totalizando um total de 270 respondentes. A média da idade é de 29 anos e o tempo médio como cliente é de 22,2 meses para a amostra completa. Todas as informações referentes à caracterização da amostra podem ser encontradas abaixo (tabela 1):

Tabela 1

Caracterização da Amostra

Variável	Categoria	Estatística Descritiva		
	Conjunto de dados	Completo (n = 270)	Academias (n=151)	Barbearias (n=119)
Gênero	Feminino	55,93%	100%	0%
	Masculino	44,07%	0%	100%
Idade	Média	29	32	26
	Mediana	28	32	24
	Desvio padrão	9,88	10	8
Tempo como cliente (meses)	Média	22,2	19	25
	Mediana	12	12	24
	Desvio padrão	21,9	22	21
Nível de escolaridade	Ensino Médio	37,41%	59,60%	9,24%
	Graduação	51,85%	32,45%	76,47%
	Pós-Graduação	10,74%	7,95%	14,29%
Renda familiar mensal (R\$)	Até 2.090,00	53,34%	70,86%	31,09%
	2.090,01 – 4.180,00	24,44%	21,19%	28,57%
	Mais que 4.180,01	22,22%	7,95%	40,34%

3.2. Mensuração dos construtos

O instrumento de coleta compreendeu escalas de mensuração já validadas em estudos anteriores sobre comportamento de consumo. Todas as variáveis corresponderam a escalas de itens múltiplos. As escalas escolhidas foram as que mais se adequavam com o propósito da pesquisa. Para medir a similaridade percebida foram utilizados quatro itens baseados em Byrne (1971), Sirgy et al. (1997) e Brocato et al. (2012). Os três itens de interação social foram adotados a partir de Martin e Pranter (1989) e Moore et al., (2005). A escala de cocriação de valor foi extraída de Verleye (2015) com 3 itens. Por fim, quatro itens de experiência de consumo foram baseados em Holbrook e Hirschman (1982), e em Addis e Holbrook (2001). As escalas foram do tipo likert de 5 pontos, variando de (1) discordo a (5) concordo, relativas aos indicadores dos construtos.

Quadro 1

Indicadores dos Construtos

Construto	Indicadores	Referências
Similaridade Percebida	SIM1: Eu me identifico com os clientes desta barbearia SIM2: Os clientes desta barbearia são parecidos comigo SIM3: Eu me pareço com os clientes desta barbearia SIM4: Os clientes desta barbearia são como eu	Byrne (1971); Sirgy et al. (1997); Brocato et al. (2012)
Interação Social	INT1: A interação com os outros clientes desta barbearia é agradável INT2: Os outros clientes desta barbearia são simpáticos comigo INT3: O comportamento dos clientes desta barbearia é adequado	Martin e Pranter (1989); Moore et al., (2005)
Cocriação de Valor	COC1: Ser cliente desta barbearia tem sido uma experiência agradável COC2: Eu me sinto satisfeito quando frequento esta barbearia COC3: Nesta barbearia eu transmito uma boa impressão para os outros clientes	Verleye (2015)
Experiência de Consumo	EXP_CONS1: Tem sido uma experiência satisfatória EXP_CONS2: Tem sido uma experiência positiva EXP_CONS3: Tem sido uma experiência compensatória EXP_CONS4: Tem sido uma experiência excelente	Holbrook e Hirschman (1982); Addis e Holbrook (2001).

3.3. Procedimentos de análise dos dados

A análise dos dados consistiu em uma modelagem de equações estruturais baseada em covariâncias, conforme recomendado por Anderson & Gerbing (1988) e Sethi & King (1994). Para tanto, foi adotado um processo de análise de dados em duas etapas. Primeiro, foi desenvolvido o modelo de mensuração, a partir da análise fatorial confirmatória – AFC (Multigrupo), alpha de Cronbach (*Cronbach's Alpha*), confiabilidade composta (*Composite Reliability – CR*), variância média extraída (*Average Variance Extracted - AVE*), para remover itens que não contribuam suficientemente para a confiabilidade das escalas propostas.

Além disso, para testar a validade do modelo, foram acessadas a validade convergente e a discriminante a partir do conjunto de dados completo, e de cada base (barbearias e academias) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Esta técnica, denominada invariância, foi realizada a fim de identificar se as propriedades psicométricas continuavam válidas mesmo em grupos distintos.

Posteriormente, o modelo estrutural foi desenvolvido utilizando o método da análise de invariância (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000), para dar procedimento ao teste das hipóteses do estudo. Estas análises foram realizadas no software estatístico *The R Project for Statistical Computing – R, Version 3.6.1* para *Windows*.

4 Resultados

4.1. Validação do modelo de mensuração

A validação do modelo de mensuração foi acessada a partir da análise das cargas fatoriais, dos índices de confiabilidade (*Cronbach's Alpha* e *Composite Reliability*) e da variância média extraída (*Average Variance Extracted*). (Hair et al., 2009; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Cronbach, 1951). Considerando que os dados foram coletados junto a dois tipos de serviços (academias e barbearias), e correspondeu a dois grupos de clientes distintos, a análise destes índices foi feita para o modelo geral e para cada grupo individualmente.

Inicialmente, a AFC foi aplicada para verificar a confiabilidade das escalas a partir da carga fatorial de cada item (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). A fim de não comprometer as análises, dois itens que apresentaram baixo fator de carga ($< 0,4$) foram retirados (um da similaridade percebida (SIM4) e o outro da experiência de consumo (EXP_CONS4)). Outra vez a AFC foi aplicada, e os valores das cargas fatoriais excederam o valor recomendado.

Em relação ao *Cronbach's Alpha*, utilizado para medir a consistência interna entre os itens, todos os construtos apresentaram valores maiores que 0,7, tanto no modelo completo quanto em cada base específica (Hair et al., 2005). Além disso, os valores da CR de cada construto excederam o valor mínimo recomendado de 0,7, assim como os da AVE excederam o mínimo de 0,5 (Byrne, 2013), tanto no conjunto completo quanto no específico. Portanto, a validade convergente do modelo foi alcançada em todos os conjuntos de dados, assim como exposto na Tabela 3.

Tabela 3

Avaliação da Validade Convergente

Construtos/Conjunto de dados	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
Completo			
Similaridade Percebida	0,808	0,842	0,655
Interação Social	0,846	0,846	0,734
Cocriação de Valor	0,840	0,849	0,646
Experiência de Consumo	0,921	0,923	0,751
Barbearias			
Similaridade Percebida	0,865	0,793	0,684
Interação Social	0,883	0,883	0,791
Cocriação de Valor	0,804	0,803	0,580
Experiência de Consumo	0,908	0,910	0,720
Academias			
Similaridade Percebida	0,779	0,910	0,651
Interação Social	0,762	0,759	0,614
Cocriação de Valor	0,860	0,870	0,685
Experiência de Consumo	0,930	0,928	0,772

Estabelecida a validade convergente, o próximo passo correspondeu à avaliação da validade discriminante. Para tanto, foi utilizada a técnica de Chin, Gopal e Salisbury (1997) nas bases de dados completas e divididas. Conforme mostrado na Tabela 3, os valores na diagonal, que correspondem à raiz quadrada da AVE de cada construto, são maiores que os valores das correlações com outros construtos. Assim sendo, a validade discriminante deste modelo de mensuração foi acessada.

Tabela 3

Validade Discriminante da Mensuração do Modelo

Grupo Construtos	Barbearias				Academias			
	SIM	INT	COV	EXP	SIM	INT	COV	EXP
SIM	0,82				0,80			
INT	0,21	0,88			0,04	0,78		
COV	0,09	0,17	0,76		0,04	0,42	0,82	
EXP	0,03	0,09	0,34	0,84	0,02	0,29	0,65	0,87

Além disso, visualiza-se na tabela 3 que não há problema de multicolinearidade entre os itens dos construtos, pois os valores das correções estão abaixo de 0,8 (Kline, 2011; Brown, 2006). Desse modo, a confiabilidade e a validade (convergente e discriminante) foram acessadas. Na sequência, verificou-se o a utilidade do modelo conceitual proposto.

4.2. Análise de Invariância

A análise do modelo desta pesquisa foi realizada a partir da análise de invariância. Este tipo de análise avalia se o número de fatores e as variáveis observadas associadas a cada fator são os mesmos entre os grupos (Horn & McArdle, 1992). Para tanto, são avaliadas a invariância configural e a métrica. A invariância configural é uma condição necessária para estabelecer equivalência, porém não é suficiente. Por isso, a invariância métrica avalia se a força do relacionamento entre as variáveis observadas e seus construtos subjacentes é equivalente entre os grupos (isto é, se o construto tem o mesmo significado entre os grupos) (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000).

Como mostra a Tabela 4, o ajuste do modelo não diminuiu significativamente com as alterações resultantes no ajuste do modelo da invariância configural. Por isto, estes resultados indicam equivalência de medição entre as amostras. Assim, o próximo passo corresponde ao teste das hipóteses.

Tabela 4

Resultados da Análise de Invariância

Equivalência simultânea	CFI	RMSEA	ΔCFI	ΔRMSEA
Invariância Configural	0,957	0,091	---	---
Invariância métrica	0,954	0,089	0,003	0,001
Invariância Escalar	0,942	0,096	0,012	0,007
Invariância estrita	0,934	0,097	0,009	0,001

4.3. Análise do modelo e verificação das hipóteses

A qualidade do ajuste do modelo conceitual proposto foi avaliada por meio dos seguintes indicadores: χ^2 (qui-quadrado), χ^2/Gl (qui-quadrado por graus de liberdade), NFI (índice de ajuste normalizado), IFI (Índice de Ajuste Corrigido), TLI (índice de Tucker-Lewis), CFI (índice de ajuste comparativo), RMSEA (raiz do erro quadrático médio de aproximação) e SRMR (raiz quadrada média residual padronizado). No geral, os índices mostraram um bom ajuste do modelo, conforme apresentado na tabela a seguir:

Tabela 5

Indicadores de Ajuste do Modelo Conceitual

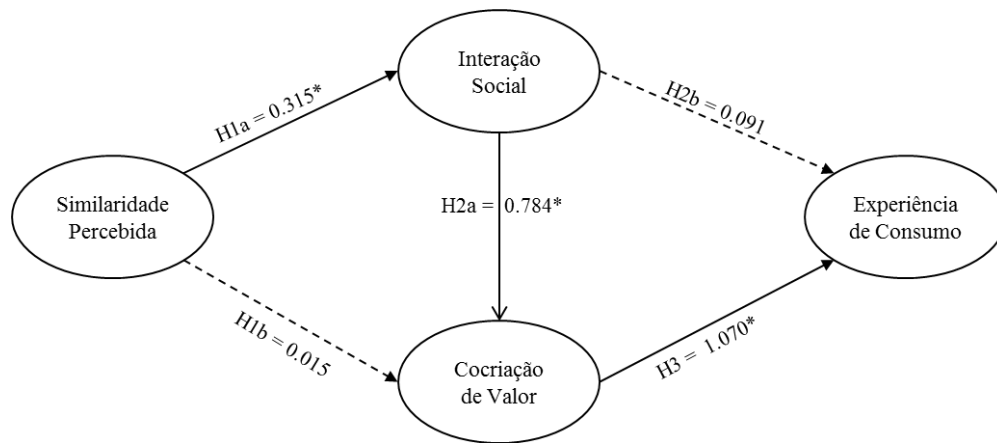
Índices	Critério	Modelo estrutural
χ^2	--	98.224
G1	--	39
p-value	> 0,05	0,001
$\chi^2/G1$	< 2 e > 5	2,52
NFI	> 0,900	0,969
IFI	> 0,900	0,956
TLI	> 0,900	0,950
CFI	> 0,900	0,938
RMSEA	< 0,08	0,075
SRMR	< 0,08	0,072

O $\chi^2/G1$ apresenta ajustamento aceitável, pois valores entre 2 e 5 indicam um bom ajustamento. Os índices de ajustamento (NFI, IFI, TLI, CFI e RFI) estão próximos do critério 1.0 de ajuste perfeito (KLINE, 2011). Por fim, o RMSEA e o SRMR apresentam ajustamento aceitável, por estarem abaixo de 0.8 (ARBUCKLE, 2012). A partir destes resultados, verifica-se adequação do modelo proposto, e assim, pôde ser iniciada a etapa do teste das hipóteses.

Na figura 2 é possível visualizar os resultados referentes às hipóteses postuladas. A similaridade percebida apresentou influência positiva na interação social ($\beta = 0,315$, $t = 4,305$, $p < 0,01$), o que sustentou a hipótese H1a. No entanto, não apresentou influência positiva significativa na cocriação de valor ($\beta = 0,015$, $t = 0,187$, $p > 0,01$), rejeitando a hipótese H1b. A interação social apresentou influência direta na cocriação de valor ($\beta = 0,784$, $t = 7,592$, $p < 0,01$), porém não apresentou relação significativa com a experiência de consumo ($\beta = 0,091$, $t = 0,800$, $p > 0,01$), assim a hipótese H2a foi suportada e a H2b não. Por fim, a cocriação de valor se mostrou significativamente relacionada com experiência de consumo, suportando a hipótese H3 ($\beta = 1,070$, $t = 8,072$, $p < 0,01$).

Figura 2

Verificação das Hipóteses no Modelo Conceitual Proposto



5 Discussões e implicações

O presente estudo busca compreender a relação da dimensão social nas experiências individuais de consumo em dois ambientes varejistas de serviços. Os resultados evidenciaram que a mera presença social de outros consumidores exerce influências na experiência de consumo em ambientes de serviços. Assim, verifica-se a importância da dimensão social no comportamento do consumidor no varejo.

Inicialmente, esta pesquisa identificou que há uma relação direta e positiva entre similaridade percebida e interação social em ambientes varejistas voltados a públicos específicos. Isto significa dizer que, os clientes ao se perceberem similares com os outros consumidores presentes no mesmo ambiente estão mais propensos a interagir entre si. Desse modo, este achado corrobora os resultados de Brack & Benkenstein (2014), ao passo que identifica a influência positiva da similaridade na disposição dos consumidores em interagir com os clientes atuais.

No entanto, a hipótese H1b que considera a relação direta entre a similaridade e a cocriação de valor não foi suportada. Isto pode revelar que a relação entre similaridade percebida e o processo de cocriação de valor pode ser indireta. Neste sentido, como a hipótese H2a foi suportada, apreende-se que a interação social, ao apresentar influência direta na cocriação de valor, assume papel de variável mediadora na relação entre similaridade e cocriação de valor. Isto implica que, ao se perceberem similares com os outros consumidores, os clientes estão mais propensos a agregar inovação de valor ao ambiente quando eles interagem

entre si. Portanto, além de apoiar pesquisas anteriores que examinaram os efeitos da interação social em ambientes de serviços, este estudo destaca a relevância da contribuição dos outros clientes na cocriação de uma experiência de serviço.

Além disso, a hipótese H2b, que considera a relação entre a interação social e a experiência de consumo, não foi suportada. Isto revela que a interação social não apresenta um efeito direto sobre a experiência de consumo nesta pesquisa. Em contrapartida, a interação social ao influenciar diretamente a cocriação de valor, exerce influência indireta na experiência de consumo, pois identifica-se que a cocriação se relaciona positivamente com a experiência de consumo, como suporta a hipótese H3. Desta forma, o suporte à hipótese H3 consubstancia o argumento da forte associação entre estas duas variáveis (Woratschek et al., 2019; Cambra-Fierro et al., 2017; Vega-Vazquez et al., 2013).

De maneira geral, apreende-se que a cocriação de valor apresenta papel de variável mediadora entre interação social e experiência de consumo. Em outras palavras, a interação entre os clientes tende a gerar uma experiência de consumo favorável no momento que há um processo de cocriação de valor envolvido. Assim sendo, os clientes ao agregarem valor na experiência de consumo, a partir da sua interação com outros clientes, podem obter em troca benefícios com o serviço prestado.

Em relação às implicações teóricas, este artigo contribui conceitualmente para a literatura por diferentes questões. Primeiramente, este estudo consubstancia pressupostos teóricos e trabalhos empíricos anteriores que ressaltam a importância de analisar a relação da dimensão social no varejo de serviços (similaridade percebida e interação social), especialmente sua relação com o comportamento do consumidor. Além disso, este trabalho permite uma maior compreensão da consequência do processo de criação de valor na experiência de consumo dos clientes. Ademais, a pesquisa amplia o arcabouço teórico de estudos em ambientes segmentados para públicos específicos, pouco explorados pela literatura de marketing no contexto brasileiro, pois mesmo que a pesquisa esteja focada no segmento de saúde e beleza, possibilita o entendimento de há uma maior facilidade de envolvimento entre clientes que possuem alguma similaridade.

Quanto às implicações gerenciais, acredita-se que o estudo traz contribuições aos gestores de serviços varejistas, principalmente de empresas de serviço dedicadas ao cuidado pessoal, ao revelar a pertinência dos aspectos sociais na obtenção de experiências de consumo agradáveis. Por isso, esta pesquisa sugere que as empresas realizem análises de público-alvo, pois além da percepção de similaridade devido a homogeneidade de gêneros nestes ambientes,

aspectos voltados à personalidade e ao estilo de vida dos clientes também devem ser considerados a fim de atrair clientes compatíveis.

Além disso, deve-se considerar também o agrupamento dos clientes no local de serviço e dispor de mecanismos que impulsionem a interação social entre os clientes, tanto na organização do aspecto físico do ambiente, como por meio dos provedores de serviço ao procurarem integrar os clientes durante e após a oferta do serviço. Da mesma forma, devido a relevância da cocriação de valor na satisfação do cliente, sugere-se uma participação ativa dos clientes no processo de produção do serviço. Isto pode ser feito por meio de canais de comunicação apropriados que permitam que os outros clientes influenciem nas experiências de serviço uns dos outros, a fim de agregar valor.

6 Considerações finais

Este artigo se propôs a analisar o papel da similaridade percebida na interação social e na cocriação de valor, e sua relação com a experiência de consumo em ambientes de serviços para públicos específicos. A partir dele, tem-se uma contribuição relevante para o campo de estudos do ambiente de varejo ao examinar o aspecto social associado às experiências individuais de consumo.

Embora muitas pesquisas tenham documentado a eficácia dos fatores sociais atrelados ao ambiente de varejo, a maior parte da literatura de serviços está focada na análise da associação entre os clientes e o pessoal de serviço. Neste sentido, os relacionamentos que ocorrem entre os clientes durante a prestação do serviço recebem consideravelmente uma menor atenção.

O presente trabalho revela que a similaridade é uma dimensão importante no relacionamento cliente-cliente. A compreensão disto surgiu a partir da verificação de efeitos de similaridade positivos em relação à disposição dos participantes em interagir com os clientes presentes. Tal achado é consistente com pesquisas anteriores de varejo que afirma que as pessoas tendem a preferir interagir com outras pessoas semelhantes a elas (Mentser & Nussinson, 2020; Luther et al., 2016; Brack & Benkenstein, 2014), e inova ao demonstrar tais efeitos em ambientes segmentados.

Além disso, esta pesquisa também identificou a influência da similaridade percebida entre os clientes no processo de cocriação. Os resultados demonstraram um efeito mediador da interação social na relação entre similaridade e cocriação. Embora sob uma abordagem exploratória, este estudo pode ser considerado pioneiro na literatura de cocriação de valor, pois

representa uma das primeiras tentativas de avaliar empiricamente o impacto da similaridade percebida em processos cocriativos.

Complementarmente, ao verificar uma associação positiva entre a cocriação de valor e a experiência de consumo, fica evidente que os provedores de serviços cocriados têm maior propensão de alcançar maior satisfação dos consumidores devido à melhoria da geração de valor (ou seja, desempenho) para os clientes. Pesquisas anteriores oferecem evidências empíricas para a relação entre cocriação bem sucedida e aumento da satisfação do cliente (Campos, Mendes, Valle, & Scott, 2015; Chan, Yim, & Lam, 2010).

Não obstante, o estudo tem suas limitações e faz-se necessário mencioná-las. Não é possível generalizar os achados aqui encontrados, tendo em vista o método de amostragem (não probabilística e por acessibilidade). Desse modo, é preciso cautela na tentativa de extrapolação dos resultados para outros contextos.

No que diz respeito às linhas potenciais para pesquisas futuras, além das dimensões apontadas neste estudo como relevantes no relacionamento cliente-cliente, outros aspectos podem desempenhar um papel importante neste relacionamento. Sendo assim, como “outros clientes” é um construto multidimensional (Kim & Lee, 2012), sugere-se que aspectos como quantidade, idade, vestuário, aparência e comportamento também sejam pesquisados futuramente. Por fim, sugere-se que estudos futuros apliquem esses construtos em ambientes de varejo online.

Contribuição dos autores

Contribuição	Santos, N. S. G.	Aguiar, E. C.	Farias, D. S.	Policarpo, M. C.
Contextualização	X	X	X	-----
Metodologia	X	X	-----	-----
Software	X	X	X	-----
Validação	X	X	-----	-----
Análise formal	X	-----	X	X
Investigação	X	-----	X	-----
Recursos	X	-----	X	-----
Curadoria de dados	-----	X	-----	X
Original	X	X	-----	-----
Revisão e edição	X	X	X	X
Visualização	X	X	X	X
Supervisão	-----	-----	-----	X
Administração do projeto	-----	X	-----	X
Aquisição de financiamento	-----	-----	-----	-----

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