

The effect of masculine or feminine product benefits and anthropomorphic packaging shapes  
on purchase intention and product attitudes

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## **Abstract**

We investigate whether products generate better product attitudes, purchase intentions, and willingness to pay when there is a congruence (vs. incongruence) between masculine (or feminine) product benefits and masculine (or feminine) anthropomorphic product shapes. We find evidence that a fit between masculine product benefits such as “strong” (or feminine product benefits such as “soft”) and a masculine anthropomorphic V-shape (or a feminine anthropomorphic hourglass shape) generates better product attitudes, purchase intentions and willingness to pay compared to when there is a misfit. We find that respondents’ perceived fit of the different elements of the product mediates the effect when the product shape has a pronounced masculine or feminine shape. When the shapes are more subtle, similar main effects are found, but perceived fit does not differ between conditions and does not mediate the effect. We test this in two online studies involving shampoo and hand soap.

**Keywords:** *anthropomorphism; shape; design*

**Track:** Consumer Behaviour