Research Article

Hair Like an Alter Ego: "Tell Me Your Hair Color, and I Will Tell You Who You Are"

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Abstract
Starting from the idea that we live in a "somatic society" (Turner, 2009) where the body becomes very important for social identity, we conducted a research study in which we tested the predictive quality of hair for social perception. Therefore, the study examines the influence of hair color and length on various aspects of social perception (professional competence, attitudes, perception of promiscuity, physical attractiveness). In this regard, I conducted an experiment on 171 subjects, all of whom were students. The subjects rated a series of nine photographs of a female person assigned the status of a surgeon. The main results are: brunettes are believed to be married, while subjects believe that blondes engage in casual and occasional intimate relationships and are also inclined to have multiple partners at the same time. On the other hand, redheads are seen as having an active social life in terms of parties.
Keywords: Social Perception, Stereotype, Physical Features, Social Identity.

Social Perception, Social Interaction, Hair Adornment: Theories and Empirical Research
Hair is an individual element that is connected to certain social aspects that lead to interpretations about a person. Hair, with all its determining elements, is not just about self-image or self-identity, about change, but also about what we see, what we feel. It is about colors, about what we want to convey in our interaction with others and how we are perceived in society. Hair is probably one of the most powerful symbols of individual identity, symbolizing both the differences between individuals and the changes within them. The image we have of a person is often created within the first few seconds, without the need for verbal interaction. Gladwell (2012, 113) suggests that in constructing ourselves, we "borrow fragments, ideas and expressions, rituals and products from the surrounding world-commercial ethnicities that, to a modest but significant extent, shape our identities." Therefore, we can make a comparison with a puzzle where each piece represents an experience or internalized stereotype that we have borrowed or acquired through socialization.

Drozda-Senkowska (2000, 108) talks about the meaning that social psychologists give to the expression "perceiving a person," which is closely related to the expression "forming an impression of someone" and issuing a "judgment or opinion about them." It is precisely these perceptions that we form about an unknown person that indicate the complexity and subtlety of the symbolism of hair. Starting from the premise put forward by Synnott (1987) in the article "Shame and Glory: A Sociology of Hair," that "opposite sexes have opposite hair," I want to analyze the opposite assumption, namely what happens if the opposite sexes do not have opposite hair, and also the well-known stereotypes of our society in terms of hair color. Since stereotypes can be considered to be popular beliefs and hypotheses, we can consider culture and everyday experiences as the source of stereotypical expressions. Stereotypes are seen as generalizations about social groups that are inherently biased, illogical, or less accurate than other types of cognitive generalizations (Klassen *et al.,* 1993).

Not only in sociology is this issue of hair debated, but through a comparative analysis, we can also consider studies from anthropology and psychology (such as Leach's in 1958) that have reached conclusions demonstrating that long hair signifies unrestricted sexuality, short hair signifies restricted sexuality, and a shaved head signifies celibacy (Leach, 1958). Another relevant author, Hallpike in 1969, used the Bible and contemporary societies as examples to suggest the importance and social impact, stating that cutting hair

could signify social control, while long hair could be considered an element outside the sphere of society (Hallpike, 1969).

George Herbert Mead, in the pragmatic theory of the self, sees the "self" as having two phases. In the first, the self is internal and subjective, and in the second, the self is external and social (Marshall, 2003). Relating this to the studied theme, it could mean that there is a relationship between the inner self and the outer self, in which the inner self decides what it wants to convey, and the outer self does so. However, I believe that the relationship is interdependent, with the inner self setting its level of expectations and being reactualized through the outer self and society. In the same vein, Erving Goffman and Peter Berger state that identity is "conferred, sustained, and transformed socially" (Berger, 1963). However, Goffman examines the ways in which individuals present themselves "on the social stage," which raises a question and, in my opinion, argues for the previously mentioned idea that there is a relationship between the individual and the masks they wear throughout life, between the inner self and the social self (Goffman, 1959).

In the same vein, Berger and Luckmann draw an analogy between human activity as the "human animal" and the organism influenced by human activity through socialization. Thus, they argue for the existence of a dialectic that arises through socialization, which continues throughout an individual's life. "Viewed from the outside, it is a dialectic between the individual animal and the social world. Viewed from the inside, it is a dialectic between the biological substrate of the individual and its socially produced identity" (Berger and Luckmann, 2008, 241). Therefore, the "outer self" is the one that takes in information from the external environment and sends it to the "inner self," which, in turn, translates it into ideas and beliefs.

Forming impressions and ideas based on the information we have accumulated throughout our lives, both directly and indirectly, without being aware of it. Thus, the external stimuli to which we are subjected play an important role in shaping impressions. Similarly, Merleau-Ponty (1999, 99) argues that human perception of various aspects, things, and phenomena arises from the experiences that an individual has had or will have.

Most research on decision making focuses on how people perceive certain aspects of life. Perception is a complex cognitive process that provides a unique picture of the world, a picture that can be very different from reality. A whole series of factors operate and constantly work to shape it (Dhingra and Dhingra, 2011, 1). Understanding such a phenomenon is important in studying the decision-making process, understanding how a society functions, and understanding human behavior. Perception, as defined by Robbins (2000, 121), is a process by which individuals organize and interpret sensory impressions to make sense of their environment.

Fashion changes over time and space, and hair trends are different from one society to another and from one era to another. Therefore, individuals must always be connected to the public life to find out if they conform to the imposed standards. The appearance of hair gives it a special, even unique, richness and power as a public and physical symbol of the self. In all three areas and four modes presented in Synnott's article, the norms for men and women are opposed. In terms of hair symbolism, the three mentioned areas are: scalp hair, facial hair, and body hair, and the four modes are: length, color, style, and quantity (Synnott, 1987, 384). As a public and physical symbol of the self, hair confers certain predefined qualities and flaws to the individual. In the mass media, for example, blondes are often described as having reduced intelligence and abilities, while brunettes are seen as more intelligent and moral.

A secondary analysis of what is presented online (jokes, articles) reveals numerous stereotypes related to hair color. However, in jokes, women are more present and men are less present when it comes to hair color. Moreover, with a simple Google search, we come across numerous articles that present your personality based on hair length and color. Therefore, with a simple click, it is assumed that you can find out what kind of person you are and, at the same time, unconsciously form a multitude of stereotypes-what Drozda-Senkowska (2000) calls the "place of personality traits"-the frequency with which certain personality traits appear in people's vocabulary.

"Beauty" is a social construct, and the perception of certain things is different and difficult to measure because the line between "beautiful" and "ugly" is both thin and vague. What is considered beautiful varies not only based on cultural, historical, or economic context, but also on other factors such as age and gender. Although we are generally inclined to fear and fight against an aging body and all its implications, it can be argued that there is probably greater acceptance of the shortcomings of an older body compared to a

younger one. Taking the mediatized necessity of obtaining and maintaining a thin body as an example, it can be argued that a overweight man is still, to some extent, more tolerated than a overweight woman, who faces more social, cultural, and historical norms. The same applies to hair. It may be considered acceptable for a man to have longer hair than the average men around him, but still unacceptable for a woman to be bald, for example. From a historical perspective, we have examples such as "Samson's untamed locks" or the punk hairstyle seen in modern cities, and to the "romantic hero with long hair rebelling against moral rigor" (Turchet, 2005, 100). Likewise, regarding women, until recently, as punishment, unfaithful women and prostitutes were forcibly given short haircuts (Turchet, 2005, 100).

Stereotypes have always existed about women who dye their hair blonde, with the belief that only "cabaret dancers and prostitutes" would do such a thing (Gladwell, 2012, 96). Over time, these stereotypes have become more attenuated, or women, probably due to feminist movements, have tried to challenge the preconceived roles established by the patriarchal society in which they live. "She was an exuberant, brilliant, and vain personality, but in an irresistible way, and she strongly believed that none of these qualities matched her brunette hair" (Gladwell, 2012, 96). Therefore, what they believed should be their qualities did not align with the hair color they had. I could add, at a general level, that they tried to overcome the condition imposed by social norms. For Shirley Polykoff, "hair color was a kind of useful fiction, a way to reconcile the contradiction between her nature and the nature she believed she should have" (Gladwell, 2012, 98). In other words, appearances and what she wanted to convey were considered to be in opposition to what the hair color conveyed.

Overall, the perception of beauty is influenced by various factors, including cultural norms, historical context, and social expectations. These factors shape our understanding of what is considered beautiful or acceptable in different contexts and for different individuals.

I consider that the entire theory of the body and implicit hair can be viewed from both a constructivist and a phenomenological perspective. The constructivist approach is interested in how the body is mediated by social, cultural, and historical processes, while the phenomenological approach focuses on individual experiences. In my work, I try to combine these two approaches, considering that the result would be an approach that relates both personally and socially to one's own body and an approach that relates to socialization.

Thus, the body is seen as an entity that constantly changes throughout life and is affected by an individual's participation in society. Hair is also part of an individual's identity; it displays who we are, how we want to appear, and ultimately how we are perceived. In the same vein, Shilling's approach (1993, 1997) develops the notion of the body as a project. Regarding the studied theme, we can argue that hair, implicitly, can be seen as a project in which both the individual and society take part. Society imposes certain standards of beauty and behavior, and the individual is the one who conforms to and adapts to them. Daily life plays an important and defining role in the image we construct throughout our lives. Erving Goffman's studies focused on "closed systems," on the everyday problems we have encountered and continue to encounter. Goffman presented these systems in theatrical form, with individuals playing a simple role on the stage of life. "They take a form similar to a theatrical performance." Ultimately, "social life does not exist as such," each of us is both director and actor every day. However, Goffman's intention was to reveal "the structure of social encounters in which the self engages, interacts, and wants to maintain that definition of the social situation that is favorable to it." In their opinion, individuals are forced to play these roles out of a desire to be accepted (Goffman, 1959).

I believe that this is not enough, and I also look at it from a different perspective, considering whether the individual tries to convey different signals not only through their performance but also through their appearance, in a way that may seem trivial at first glance, namely hair. Both men and women transmit signals to the same extent through their appearance. Masculinities and femininities are highlighted through aspects of appearance. In recent decades, gender has been seen as a social construct that has gained a prominent place in sociological research. Although it acquires a whole range of meanings depending on the context in which it is used, in this paper, I have chosen to use the concept of gender as "social expectations regarding behavior considered appropriate for members of each sex. Gender does not refer to the physical attributes by which men differ from women, but to socially formed traits of masculinity and femininity" (Giddens, 2010, 957) or "those meanings, social and cultural norms prescribed to sexes in certain social systems, through which people are classified as feminine, masculine, or androgynous" (Grunberg, 2010, 209).

Empirical Research on Hair and Social Perception

The hair color, is certainly an important aspect of body image but has not been extensively studied. However, society has constructed a series of images that refer to hair color. Some of these refer to the attributes of blond women, others to redheads or brunettes. Paterson (1930) developed in his book the differences between the characteristics of blondes and brunettes. He quoted from a previous study by Blackford, in which blondes were described as more positive, dynamic, impatient, loving, etc., while brunettes were described as negative, static, conservative, cautious, caring, serious, etc. Popular images associated with hair color present blondes as the ideal of beautiful, pure, but also dangerous women, while other popular images describe brunettes as constant and secure (Lawson, 1971).

Swami and Furnham (2007) analyzed individuals' perception of blondes and brunettes with varying degrees of tattooing. Their research focused on promiscuity and physical attractiveness. The main result showed that there was an insignificant link between hair color and tattooing, with significant differences existing between women with blonde hair and those with brunette hair, with blondes being more often attributed negative characteristics. Therefore, the study's result can be discussed in terms of stereotypes related to hair color and the degree of tattooing. Another example of an experiment is the one conducted by Kyle (1996), who wanted to demonstrate if there is a connection between hair color, use of makeup, and perception of ability in a profession.

The result of her research demonstrated that brunettes in both cases (with and without makeup) were considered more competent and were attributed a higher salary. Thus, she concluded that prejudices about appearance can affect assessments of women's abilities in this case. In a different manner, a study related to perception of men was conducted by Mannes (2012), who wanted to observe if a man's choice to shave his head influences perception of him. In this study, he started with the assumption that those men would be considered much more dominant compared to those with hair. The main result he reached from this study is that bald men are more often associated with dominance, talent, and power than others. Mannes highlights that these results are based on stereotypes and nonverbal communication.

It can be believed that everyone has an ideal image of a human form in mind and uses it as a standard to judge other people. Life experiences and stereotypical images acquired through socialization seem to determine our perceptions. Blondes are seen as beautiful, pleasant, and feminine, while redheads are considered to be more competent professionally but less attractive physically (Clayson and Maughan, 1986). Guthrie (1976) suggested that women with dyed blonde hair give them a childlike appearance, conveying submissiveness and thus being considered more attractive. Clayson and Maughan (1986) argue that these stereotypes can be considered correct because society associates lighter colors with femininity and darker colors with masculinity. In the same vein, the study by Fernman and Gill (1978) reported a specific set of popular stereotypical images about men's and women's preferences for the opposite sex. It seems that there is a common ideal among the American population that suggests that men find females with lighter hair colors more attractive. The same study demonstrated that blondes are considered to be more fun-loving.

Hair and Social Perception: An Experimental Approach
The Purpose, Objectives, and Hypotheses of the Research

The exploration of various approaches to social perception and self-identity is not accidental. Treating self-identity as a tool possessed by individuals, I wanted to observe whether society groups individuals into certain categories based on the impression they form about individuals with a certain hair color or length. More specifically, if society constructs a standard model based on these criteria.

This study examined whether hair length and color could affect perceptions of an individual in terms of their abilities, attitudes, physical attractiveness, and promiscuity. In other words, it identifies the influence of outward appearance on how others evaluate a person's competence and attractiveness as described in a paragraph.

The premise of this analysis is that prejudices regarding personal appearance can affect judgments about various aspects of an individual's life. The focus has been on existing prejudices related to outward appearance rather than preferences regarding hair color or length. Additionally, based on exploratory content analysis (jokes and personality descriptions based on hair color found online) and literature review, I expect that blondes and redheads will generally be evaluated more negatively. Thus, this research is based on six hypotheses: "The photograph will influence the perception of the person described.", "The person will be perceived as more competent professionally by those who do not receive their photograph.", "Brunettes

will be perceived as more competent professionally than redheads or blondes.", "Blondes will be perceived as having a greater tendency towards promiscuity compared to redheads or brunettes.", "Redheads will be perceived as consuming more glasses of alcohol per night on average compared to blondes or brunettes.", "The longer the hair, the more attractive the person will be evaluated.". These hypotheses are based on both studies, on one hand, and secondary analysis highlighting stereotypes related to hair colors, on the other hand. Blondes and redheads are perceived differently from brunettes because they deviate from a perceived normal body type. These stereotypes exist in society, probably because brunettes and chestnuts are more numerously spread.

Operationalization of Variables and Designing the Experiment
Participants in this study were 171 students (156 females and 15 males) from the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest, enrolled in the undergraduate program, in their second year, specializing in Social Work. The average age of the sample was 21 years (range 19-41 years), with a standard deviation of 2.62. The experiment aims to test the perception of students (respondents) regarding hair color and length. The independent variable is the photograph of the person with nine dimensions: short blonde, medium blonde, long blonde, short redhead, medium redhead, long redhead, short brunette, medium brunette, long brunette. The dependent variables measure perception of personality traits, attitudes, promiscuity, and physical attractiveness. The external variables that were controlled for were the study program-undergraduate, second year, and first year, field of study-social work, and the setting of the experiment-the rooms of the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work.

The stimuli were modified versions of an online photograph from the website we used to create them, TAAZ-Virtual Makeover & Hairstyles. For this study, we initially selected a single photograph of a woman in her thirties, from which all the stimuli were later created. Due to the program's default settings, we chose a hairstyle for each hair length (short, medium, and long), with three hair colors (blonde, redhead, and brunette), thus creating nine photographs. Therefore, the final set of stimuli consisted of nine photographs used as the basic stimuli.

The participants were recruited based on availability and constituted ad libitum samples to take part in a study that examines how students evaluate certain aspects related to their lives and interactions with others. All subjects participated voluntarily and were not rewarded for their time. The testing was conducted with 10 groups (one control group with 19 participants and nine experimental groups with approximately 15-20 participants each). Each image was followed by a series of introductory questions and an experimental story.

Participants were instructed to answer the questions honestly and not share their responses with each other. The questionnaire included the stimulus image placed after the five introductory questions, and participants were asked to evaluate the person based on a series of indicators. Participants were presented with a short three-page questionnaire with 17 questions, the first five of which (Q1-Q5) were self-assessment and self-perception questions.

The purpose of these questions was introductory. They were then presented with a description of the person to whom we assigned the status of a surgeon (identical in all 10 groups), followed by the stimulus-the photograph (in the case of the experimental groups) and a set of questions. They were asked to provide scores for the person presented based on the impression they formed, and, finally, to provide their demographic details. Traditionally, studies on physical attractiveness focus on health and reproduction. Additionally, we asked participants to analyze variables related to: 1. Personality traits (Q6, Q11); 2. Attitudes (Q9, Q10); 3. Promiscuity (Q8); 4. Physical attractiveness (Q7). The dimensions of this study are based on the research by Swami and Furnham (2007), which assessed the perception of physical attractiveness, promiscuity, and the number of units of alcohol consumed on a typical evening, based on the degree of tattooing among blondes. Each dimension was assigned a series of questions based on this research, as well as the secondary analysis conducted (analysis of jokes and descriptions found on the internet).

The entire procedure lasted approximately 15 minutes, and all participants were debriefed after the experiment. The experiment took place in the rooms of the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work located on Schitu Măgureanu Boulevard, specifically in the seminars on Coaching and Mentoring in Social Work, for the first and second year. We assigned nine out of ten groups to an experimental condition (short redhead, medium redhead, long redhead, short blonde, medium blonde, long blonde), while the tenth group represented the control group (lack of stimulus-photograph). Initially, participants were presented with a

cover story and then asked to answer the questions honestly. At the end of the experiment, they were informed about their participation in it.

Figure 1. The images used in the experiment: image 1-blond hair, short length; image 2-blond hair, medium length; image 3-blond hair, long length; image 4-brunette hair, short length; image 5-brunette hair, medium length; image 6-brunette hair, long length; image 7-red hair, short length; image 8-red hair, medium length; image 9-red hair, long length.

Data Analysis
The data was processed and analyzed using the IBM SPSS statistical program, through which we performed the following operations: frequency analyses (f), calculation of means (M), and comparison of means. To test the variance between the experimental groups, I used the One-Way ANOVA analysis.

In general, across all groups, independent variables determine differences. On average, respondents in the control group tend to evaluate the idea of managerial capacity more positively than those in one of the experimental groups where they receive both the description and the picture ($M_C = 6,05$; $M_{BrS} = 4,50$; $M_{BlL} = 4,40$; $F = 2,59$; $p \leq 0,05$).

Regarding the prosocial behavior of doctors, on average, those in the control group tend to evaluate the doctor's attitude towards patients more positively, both in terms of patient support ($M_C = 6,47$; $M_{BrS} = 4,94$; $F = 2,62$; $p \leq 0,05$), attention to patient needs ($M_C = 6,26$; $M_{BrS} = 4,63$; $F = 2,67$; $p \leq 0,05$), and communication efficiency with patients ($M_C = 6,32$; $M_{BrS} = 4,56$; $F = 2,73$; $p \leq 0,05$,).. Therefore, it can be considered that the photograph influences the professional abilities and competencies of an individual, and implicitly, hair color or length can be considered factors that can determine such behavior.

Table 1. Personality traits: the doctor's attitude towards patients.

	Groups	Mean	F	p
This doctor supports patients.	Control group	6,47	2,62	0,05
	Short and brown hair (BrS)	4,94		
This doctor communicates effectively with patients.	Control group	6,26	2,67	0,05
	Short and brown hair (BrS)	4,63		
This doctor is attentive to the needs of patients.	Control group	6,32	2,73	0,05
	Short and brown hair (BrS)	4,56		

The analysis from an organizational and professional competence perspective shows that people do not frequently make assumptions about a person based on the color and length of their hair. In other words, it doesn't matter what color or length the hair is, as they are not important for assessing competence. This can be explained by the fact that doctors are perceived to have strong technical competence, rather than relational competence, like a hotel receptionist, for example. Considering that the medical profession relies more on professional skills and less on direct interaction, hair is not a factor that influences the perception of

knowledge in the field. On average, those in the control group tend to consider the relationship between the doctor and the ward staff to be more positive than those in the experimental group who have both the description and the stimulus-photograph of the person in question ($M_C = 6,21$; $M_{BrS} = 4,63$; $M_{BrL} = 6,25$; $M_{BlM} = 6,18$; $F = 3,57$; $p \leq 0,05$). Those in the experimental condition with short brown hair rated, on average, the doctor more positively in terms of the relationship they have with the ward staff than those in the experimental group with medium brown or long blonde hair. Therefore, hair color and hair length can be considered as possible predictors of relationships between people and, implicitly, their personalities. This can be explained by the fact that individuals tend to form a certain image of a person before truly getting to know them, which can also explain the result showing that brunettes with short hair are perceived to have good relationships with their colleagues.

If up until now the perception regarding a person's ability was distributed differently, when the issue of recommending this person and others is brought into discussion, things change. Therefore, those in the control group evaluated the person more positively on average and, consequently, had a greater desire to recommend this person compared to those in the experimental condition ($M_C = 6,32$; $M_{RM} = 4,22$; $M_{BrS} = 4,44$; $M_{BlL} = 4,27$; $F = 2,89$; $p \leq 0,05$). This result may indicate that individuals are more skeptical about recommending a person when they also have visual images of that person, meaning they know what they look like. Thus, it can be stated that, in this case, hair color influences the decision to recommend the person to others. In other words, individuals tend to indirectly assume responsibility when recommending someone, and therefore, even if they don't know or haven't seen the person, the impression they have formed is what determines their subsequent actions. In the case of the control group, they only had positive information about this doctor (the description), and automatically, the perception was a positive one. They were, on average, more willing to recommend this doctor to acquaintances.

Regarding the physical attractiveness of the doctor, those in the control group tend to evaluate the person more positively from a physical point of view, on average, compared to those in the experimental conditions ($M_C = 6,32$; $M_{RS} = 4,71$; $M_{RM} = 4,67$; $M_{BrL} = 4,81$; $M_{BlS} = 4,83$; $F = 2,41$; $p \leq 0,05$). Therefore, this can be interpreted in terms of attractiveness. It can also be considered that the doctor was automatically perceived as attractive in the control condition where the stimulus did not exist. In other words, the positive description was what led the experiment subjects to consider the doctor physically attractive as well.

Following the interpretation of these results, we observed a possible influence of stereotypes, primarily based on color rather than length. Therefore, we decided to consider three groups: one for red hair, one for brunettes, and one for blondes.

Regarding management skills and prosocial behaviors, those in the control group tend to evaluate these characteristics more positively, on average, compared to those in the experimental group. Specifically, managing the surgery department ($M_C = 6,37$; $M_R = 5,15$; $M_{Br} = 5,13$; $F = 4,49$; $p \leq 0,05$), effective communication with patients ($M_C = 6,32$; $M_{Br} = 5,28$; $F = 2,76$; $p \leq 0,05$), and supporting patients ($M_C = 6,47$; $M_{Br} = 5,51$; $F = 2,51$; $p \leq 0,05$). These results may indicate stereotypes at the personality level rather than at the level of competencies.

Therefore, in the case of variables that include professional competencies, stereotypes related to hair color are activated. On average, brunettes are considered more competent in terms of professional skills, but less prepared in terms of affective communication in interpersonal communication. As for the potential recommendation that these doctors could receive, on average, those in the control group would be more likely to recommend this doctor than those who receive both the description and the photograph stimulus. This difference can be explained by the influence of activated stereotypes developed through other independent variables related to blond and red hair, with these stereotypes not being activated in the control group. In other words, hair color and length cannot be considered predictors of perception regarding professional competencies. Those in the control group rated the doctor's physical attractiveness more positively on average compared to those in the experimental groups ($M_C = 6,32$; $M_R = 4,87$; $M_{Br} = 5,04$; $M_{Bl} = 4,88$; $p \leq 0,05$). Therefore, the positive description of the doctor also led to positive perceptions of the person's physical attractiveness. The qualities presented in the description also attracted an external beauty of the doctor, and in the case of the experimental groups where they also received the doctor's photograph, the description no longer mattered to the same extent.

In terms of personality traits based on the hair color of the doctor in each experimental group, we can discuss antitheses such as: sincere-arrogant, friendly-unfriendly, calm-party-goer, communicative-

unsociable, warm-cold. In most cases, in all experimental groups, participants tend to evaluate personality traits positively, with a few exceptions. In the case of the calm-party-goer antithesis, participants in the experimental groups, who were presented with a stimulus of a doctor with red hair, tend to associate it more with a party-goer compared to other cases where they associate it more with a calm person. In terms of temperament, when the person had brunette hair, they were perceived as rather cold compared to warm, as is the case in other experimental situations ($f_{Br}cold=26$), and in terms of social/active life, the person with red hair is perceived as being more of a party-goer compared to the brunette or blonde ($f_R=26$, $f_{Br}=16$, $f_{Bl}=17$). Therefore, the stereotype regarding the personality of redheads is demonstrated, as they are considered to have a more active social life in terms of parties.

From the perspective of promiscuity, there are differences in perceptions based on the three hair colors. In the case of a person with blonde hair, it is considered that they engage in occasional intimate relationships ($f_{Bl}=33$), but also that they have multiple partners at the same time ($f_{Bl}=31$), while the brunette is perceived as being married ($f_{Br}=27$). As for health status, it is not part of the series of stereotypes associated with hair color. Therefore, the fact that they are a doctor also draws the preconception that the person is healthy and does not have medical issues.

Table 2. Tendency towards promiscuity.

	Experimental condition	Frequency	N (color)
Maintain casual intimate relationships.	Blonde (Bl)	33	50
She has several partners at the same time.	Blonde (Bl)	31	50
She is married.	Brunette (Br)	32	47
	Control group	11	19

In any experimental variation, the drink that subjects consider to be among the favorites of the person in the photo is wine. Thus, at this level, there are other stereotypes that come into play in forming impressions. On the other hand, the number of glasses seems to be influenced by hair color; redheads being the ones who drink more (M glasses/night=2.51), followed by blondes (M glasses/night=1.53) and brunettes (M glasses/night=1.22).

Table 3. Attitudes: alcohol consumption.

Experimental group	Average of glasses/night
Redhead (R)	2,51
Blonde (Bl)	1,53
Brunette (Br)	1,22

There is an association observed between hair color, being a party-goer (as previously mentioned), and being a person who consumes a higher quantity of alcohol than others. It is also a perception formed based on external appearance because, on average, subjects in the control group believe that the doctor does not consume alcohol. Hair activates stereotypes and influences social perception in that there are differences between the evaluations of the control group and the other experimental groups, across various dimensions (personality traits, attitudes, promiscuity, physical attractiveness) depending on a series of hair traits (red, brunette, blonde, short, medium, long). Due to the fact that the description influences how people perceive a person, particularly in cases where it is not accompanied by a photograph, this denotes the idea that a positive trait attracts other positive traits, a phenomenon known as the "halo effect" in psychosociology. The comparison between the three hair colors used in the analysis shows that in most cases, brunettes are believed to be married, blondes are seen as engaging in casual and occasional intimate relationships, as well as having multiple partners at the same time, while redheads are the ones who drink more, followed by blondes, and brunettes are last in this aspect.

Conclusions
Results of this study show that women, regardless of hair color, tend to be perceived more negatively than women who were described only through text. Specifically, the results indicate that hair influences perception, distorts opinions, and reinforces existing stereotypes regarding a person's traits. Thus, in cases where the person's description was accompanied by a photograph, the "doctor" was seen as less physically attractive, more prone to promiscuity, or having a more negative personality. Furthermore, the associations changed depending on the length and color of the hair.

The findings of this study support existing literature on perception based on hair color (Paterson, 1930; Lawson, 1971; Guthrie 1976; Fernman and Gill, 1978; Clayson and Maughan, 1986; Kyle, 1996; Swami and Furnham, 2007; Mannes, 2012). These findings suggest that, to the extent that the results are statistically significant, young people are influenced by existing stereotypes that can be found in jokes or on the internet. Therefore, they form opinions on various aspects of an individual based on what they see.

I aimed to observe how the perception of a person with a professional component is evaluated under the influence of a description or activated by stereotypes. The results showed that even in the case of a profession with strong technical competence-the surgeon, these stereotypes are activated. This result is particularly interesting considering that a single quality of the doctor presented in the description was enough to make associations between the person and attractiveness, attitudes, or promiscuity, a phenomenon known as the "halo effect" in psychosociology.

Regarding the professional competencies of the doctor, they were not influenced by hair color or length. Therefore, hair activates stereotypes regarding other dimensions of the individual and less so regarding their competencies. Although this aspect of the individual, the professional one, was not influenced by hair, the possible recommendation of the individual was affected. Individuals had reservations and felt responsible when it came to recommending a person.

Unlike hair color, the length of the hair did not significantly influence the perception of the presented person. Thus, contrary to the expectations stipulated in the hypotheses of this study, hair length was not a predictor of perception regarding personality traits, attitudes, promiscuity, or physical attractiveness.

Looking at the body from a constructivist and phenomenological perspective, according to Shilling (1993), the body is a phenomenon that is both biological and social. Thus, through continuous socialization, certain behaviors and beliefs are adopted that influence individuals' perceptions. In other words, hair color and length are dimensions of the body that create differences and stereotypes at both an individual and social level. Perceptions of individuals based on hair color and length are the product of who we are, how we want to appear, and how we are perceived.

Declarations

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Appendix 1. One-Way ANOVA analysis table: Personality traits.

		Bonferroni			ANOVA		Test of homogeneity	
		Groups of the experiment	M	p	F's test	p	Levene's test	p
This person is probably a well-organized person	Control group	Short & reddish (RS)	0,70	1,00	2,01	0,40	0,72	0,68
		Medium & reddish (RM)	0,88	1,00				
		Long & reddish (RL)	0,50	1,00				
		Short & brown (BrS)	1,55	0,10				
		Medium & brown (BrM)	0,78	1,00				
		Long & brown (BrL)	0,42	1,00				
		Short & blonde (BlS)	0,94	1,00				
		Medium & blonde (BlM)	0,34	1,00				
		Long & blonde (BlL)	1,65	0,06				
This doctor manages the surgery ward well	Control group	Short & reddish (RS)	1,19	0,37	2,59	0,00	2,55	0,00
		Medium & reddish (RM)	1,42	0,06				
		Long & reddish (RL) (RL)	1,06	0,61				
		Short & brown (BrS)	1,61	0,21				
		Medium & brown (BrM)	1,10	0,81				
		Long & brown (BrL)	0,86	1,00				
		Short & blonde (BlS)	0,53	1,00				
		Medium & blonde (BlM)	0,54	1,00				
		Long & blonde (BlL)	1,56	0,03				
This doctor supports patients	Control group	Short & reddish (RS)	0,70	1,00	2,62	0,00	4,30	0,00
		Medium & reddish (RM)	1,14	0,42				
		Long & reddish (RL)	0,52	1,00				
		Short & brown (BrS)	1,53	0,03				
		Medium & brown (BrM)	0,94	1,00				
		Long & brown (BrL)	0,41	1,00				
		Short & blonde (BlS)	0,25	1,00				
		Medium & blonde (BlM)	0,18	1,00				
		Long & blonde (BlL)	1,34	0,17				
This doctor has good relations with the ward staff	Control group	Short & reddish (RS)	0,21	1,00	3,57	0,00	4,01	0,00
		Medium & reddish (RM)	1,21	0,32				
		Long & reddish (RL)	0,11	1,00				
		Short & brown (BrS)	1,58	0,03				
		Medium & brown (BrM)	1,07	1,00				
		Long & brown (BrL)	-0,03	1,00				
		Short & blonde (BlS)	0,15	1,00				
		Medium & blonde (BlM)	0,03	1,00				
		Long & blonde (BlL)	1,14	0,68				
This doctor communicates effectively with patients	Control group	Short & reddish (RS)	0,66	1,00	2,73	0,00	3,74	0,00
		Medium & reddish (RM)	0,92	1,00				
		Long & reddish (RL)	0,16	1,00				
		Short & brown (BrS)	1,75	0,00				
		Medium & brown (BrM)	0,84	1,00				
		Long & brown (BrL)	0,50	1,00				
		Short & blonde (BlS)	0,64	1,00				
		Medium & blonde (BlM)	0,25	1,00				
		Long & blonde (BlL)	1,31	0,21				
This doctor is attentive to the needs of patients	Control group	Short & reddish (RS)	0,73	1,00	2,67	0,00	2,91	0,00
		Medium & reddish (RM)	1,15	0,38				
		Long & reddish (RL)	0,26	1,00				
		Short & brown (BrS)	1,63	0,01				
		Medium & brown (BrM)	0,66	1,00				
		Long & brown (BrL)	0,51	1,00				
		Short & blonde (BlS)	0,59	1,00				
		Medium & blonde (BlM)	0,02	1,00				
		Long & blonde (BlL)	1,13	0,62				
This person is a good doctor	Control group	Short & reddish (RS)	0,57	1,00	2,06	0,03	1,70	0,09
		Medium & reddish (RM)	1,27	0,21				
		Long & reddish (RL)	0,30	1,00				
		Short & brown (BrS)	1,35	0,16				

		Medium & brown (BrM)	0,43	1,00				
		Long & brown (BrL)	0,41	1,00				
		Short & blonde (BlS)	0,49	1,00				
		Medium & blonde (BlM)	0,10	1,00				
		Long & blonde (BlL)	1,03	1,00				
I would recommend this doctor to others	Control group	Short & reddish (RS)	1,02	1,00	2,89	0,00	2,08	0,03
		Medium & reddish (RM)	2,09	0,01				
		Long & reddish (RL)	1,26	0,92				
		Short & brown (BrS)	1,87	0,05				
		Medium & brown (BrM)	0,31	1,00				
		Long & brown (BrL)	0,87	1,00				
		Short & blonde (BlS)	1,03	1,00				
		Medium & blonde (BlM)	1,02	1,00				
		Long & blonde (BlL)	2,04	0,02				

Appendix 2. Descriptive statistics One-Way ANOVA: Personality traits.

	Groups of the experiment		N	Mean	SD	Confidence interval	
						Low	High
This person is probably a well-organized person	Control group		19	6,05	1,68	5,24	6,86
	Experimental group 1	Short & reddish (RS)	17	5,35	1,80	4,43	6,28
	Experimental group 2	Medium & reddish (RM)	18	5,17	1,15	4,59	5,74
	Experimental group 3	Long & reddish (RL)	20	5,55	1,43	4,88	6,22
	Experimental group 4	Short & brown (BrS)	18	5,11	1,45	4,39	5,83
	Experimental group 5	Medium & brown (BrM)	17	5,71	1,21	5,08	6,33
	Experimental group 6	Long & brown (BrL)	15	4,40	1,59	3,52	5,28
	Experimental group 7	Short & blonde (BlS)	16	4,50	1,71	3,59	5,41
	Experimental group 8	Medium & blonde (BlM)	15	5,27	1,28	4,56	5,98
	Experimental group 9	Long & blonde (BlL)	16	5,63	1,36	4,90	6,35
This doctor manages the surgery ward well	Control group		19	6,37	0,95	5,91	6,83
	Experimental group 1	Short & reddish (RS)	17	5,18	1,62	4,34	6,01
	Experimental group 2	Medium & reddish (RM)	18	4,94	1,30	4,30	5,59
	Experimental group 3	Long & reddish (RL)	20	5,30	1,38	4,65	5,95
	Experimental group 4	Short & brown (BrS)	18	5,83	1,04	5,31	6,35
	Experimental group 5	Medium & brown (BrM)	17	5,82	1,12	5,24	6,41
	Experimental group 6	Long & brown (BrL)	15	4,80	1,61	3,91	5,69
	Experimental group 7	Short & blonde (BlS)	16	4,75	1,48	3,96	5,54
	Experimental group 8	Medium & blonde (BlM)	15	5,27	1,53	4,42	6,12
	Experimental group 9	Long & blonde (BlL)	16	5,50	1,21	4,85	6,15
This doctor supports patients	Control group		19	6,47	1,12	5,93	7,02
	Experimental group 1	Short & reddish (RS)	17	5,76	1,52	4,98	6,55
	Experimental group 2	Medium & reddish (RM)	18	5,33	1,91	4,38	6,28
	Experimental	Long & reddish (RL)	20	5,95	0,99	5,48	6,42

	group 3					
	Experimental group 4	Short & brown (BrS)	18	6,22	0,87	5,79	6,66
	Experimental group 5	Medium & brown (BrM)	17	6,29	0,92	5,82	6,77
	Experimental group 6	Long & brown (BrL)	15	5,13	1,55	4,27	5,99
	Experimental group 7	Short & blonde (BlS)	16	4,94	1,61	4,08	5,80
	Experimental group 8	Medium & blonde (BlM)	15	5,53	1,35	4,78	6,28
	Experimental group 9	Long & blonde (BlL)	16	6,06	0,99	5,53	6,59
This doctor has good relations with the ward staff	Control group		19	6,21	1,18	5,64	6,78
	Experimental group 1	Short & reddish (RS)	17	6,00	1,27	5,34	6,66
	Experimental group 2	Medium & reddish (RM)	18	5,00	1,84	4,08	5,92
	Experimental group 3	Long & reddish (RL)	20	6,10	1,25	5,51	6,69
	Experimental group 4	Short & brown (BrS)	18	6,06	0,93	5,59	6,52
	Experimental group 5	Medium & brown (BrM)	17	6,18	0,88	5,72	6,63
	Experimental group 6	Long & brown (BrL)	15	5,07	1,71	4,12	6,01
	Experimental group 7	Short & blonde (BlS)	16	4,63	1,50	3,83	5,42
	Experimental group 8	Medium & blonde (BlM)	15	5,13	1,68	4,20	6,07
	Experimental group 9	Long & blonde (BlL)	16	6,25	0,93	5,75	6,75
This doctor communicates effectively with patients	Control group		19	6,32	1,29	5,69	6,94
	Experimental group 1	Short & reddish (RS)	17	5,65	1,36	4,94	6,35
	Experimental group 2	Medium & reddish (RM)	18	5,39	1,50	4,64	6,14
	Experimental group 3	Long & reddish (RL)	20	6,15	1,04	5,66	6,64
	Experimental group 4	Short & brown (BrS)	18	5,67	1,02	5,15	6,18
	Experimental group 5	Medium & brown (BrM)	17	6,06	0,82	5,63	6,48
	Experimental group 6	Long & brown (BrL)	15	5,00	1,81	4,00	6,00
	Experimental group 7	Short & blonde (BlS)	16	4,56	1,67	3,67	5,45
	Experimental group 8	Medium & blonde (BlM)	15	5,47	1,35	4,72	6,22
	Experimental group 9	Long & blonde (BlL)	16	5,81	1,27	5,13	6,49
This doctor is attentive to the needs of patients	Control group		19	6,26	1,14	5,71	6,82
	Experimental group 1	Short & reddish (RS)	17	5,53	1,54	4,73	6,32
	Experimental group 2	Medium & reddish (RM)	18	5,11	1,56	4,33	5,89
	Experimental group 3	Long & reddish (RL)	20	6,00	1,07	5,50	6,50
	Experimental group 4	Short & brown (BrS)	18	5,67	0,90	5,22	6,12
	Experimental group 5	Medium & brown (BrM)	17	6,24	0,90	5,77	6,70
	Experimental group 6	Long & brown (BrL)	15	5,13	1,55	4,27	5,99

	Experimental group 7	Short & blonde (BlS)	16	4,63	1,66	3,74	5,51
	Experimental group 8	Medium & blonde (BlM)	15	5,60	1,45	4,79	6,41
	Experimental group 9	Long & blonde (BlL)	16	5,75	1,18	5,12	6,38
This person is a good doctor	Control group		19	6,11	1,66	5,30	6,91
	Experimental group 1	Short & reddish (RS)	17	5,53	1,37	4,82	6,24
	Experimental group 2	Medium & reddish (RM)	18	4,83	1,09	4,29	5,38
	Experimental group 3	Long & reddish (RL)	20	5,80	1,19	5,24	6,36
	Experimental group 4	Short & brown (BrS)	18	5,61	0,97	5,12	6,10
	Experimental group 5	Medium & brown (BrM)	17	6,00	1,11	5,43	6,57
	Experimental group 6	Long & brown (BrL)	15	5,07	1,62	4,17	5,97
	Experimental group 7	Short & blonde (BlS)	16	4,75	1,69	3,85	5,65
	Experimental group 8	Medium & blonde (BlM)	15	5,67	1,49	4,84	6,50
	Experimental group 9	Long & blonde (BlL)	16	5,69	1,13	5,08	6,29
I would recommend this doctor to others	Control group		19	6,32	0,94	5,86	6,77
	Experimental group 1	Short & reddish (RS)	17	5,29	1,64	4,45	6,14
	Experimental group 2	Medium & reddish (RM)	18	4,22	1,86	3,29	5,15
	Experimental group 3	Long & reddish (RL)	20	5,05	1,79	4,21	5,89
	Experimental group 4	Short & brown (BrS)	18	5,28	1,56	4,50	6,06
	Experimental group 5	Medium & brown (BrM)	17	5,29	1,64	4,45	6,14
	Experimental group 6	Long & brown (BrL)	15	4,27	2,21	3,04	5,50
	Experimental group 7	Short & blonde (BlS)	16	4,44	2,03	3,35	5,52
	Experimental group 8	Medium & blonde (BlM)	15	6,00	1,36	5,25	6,75
	Experimental group 9	Long & blonde (BlL)	16	5,44	1,59	4,59	6,28

Appendix 3. Descriptive statistics table: Personality traits.

Experimental condition		Frequency (f)				N
		Control group	Reddish	Brown	Blonde	
Attitude	Honest	19	41	38	36	134
	Haughty	0	6	6	13	25
	Cute	15	48	39	39	141
	Antipathetic	1	4	6	10	21
	Polite	19	42	37	35	133
	Insensitive	0	7	5	11	23
	Calm	16	17	26	31	90
	Partier	1	26	16	17	51
	Communicative	19	53	43	48	163
	Unsociable	0	1	1	1	3
	Warm	18	39	20	37	114
	Cold	1	10	26	13	50

Appendix 4. Descriptive statistics table: Attitude.

Experimental condition	Frequency				Total	N glasses	Mean glasses/night
	Beer	Wine	Strong drinks	No alcohol			
Control group	0	3	0	16	19	9	0,47
Reddish	2	31	9	12	54	138	2,51
Brown	3	22	2	20	47	59	1,26
Blonde	1	27	4	18	50	77	1,53

Appendix 5. Descriptive statistic table: Promiscuity.

	Experimental condition	Frequency	N (color)
Have casual intimate relationships	Control group	4	19
	Reddish	20	55
	Brown	15	47
	Blonde	33	50
He has several partners at the same time	Control group	0	19
	Reddish	12	55
	Brown	7	47
	Blonde	31	50
She is married	Control group	11	19
	Reddish	27	55
	Brown	32	47
	Blonde	16	50

Appendix 6. One-Way ANOVA analysis table. Physical attractiveness.

	Bonferroni				ANOVA		Test of homogeneity	
		Groups of the experiment	M	p	F's test	p	Levene's test	p
Physical attractiveness rating on a scale from 1 to 7	Control group	Short & reddish (RS)	1,61	0,02	2,41	0,01	2,30	0,01
		Medium & reddish (RM)	1,64	0,01				
		Long & reddish (RL)	1,11	0,47				
		Short & brown (BrS)	1,31	0,20				
		Medium & brown (BrM)	0,98	1,00				
		Long & brown (BrL)	1,50	0,05				
		Short & blonde (BlS)	1,48	0,04				
		Medium & blonde (BlM)	1,31	0,17				
		Long & blonde (BlL)	1,51	0,06				

Appendix 7. Descriptive statistic One-Way ANOVA: Physical attractiveness.

Groups of the experiment	Experimental condition	N	Mean	SD	Confidence interval	
					Low	High
Control group		19	6,32	0,82	5,92	6,71
Experimental group 1	Short & reddish (RS)	17	4,71	1,44	3,96	5,45
Experimental group 2	Medium & reddish (RM)	18	4,67	1,68	3,83	5,50
Experimental group 3	Long & reddish (RL)	20	5,20	1,32	4,58	5,82
Experimental group 4	Short & brown (BrS)	18	4,83	1,15	4,26	5,41
Experimental group 5	Medium & brown (BrM)	17	5,00	1,06	4,45	5,55
Experimental group 6	Long & brown (BrL)	15	4,80	1,82	3,79	5,81
Experimental group 7	Short & blonde (BlS)	16	5,00	1,21	4,35	5,65
Experimental group 8	Medium & blonde (BlM)	15	5,33	1,17	4,68	5,98
Experimental group 9	Long & blonde (BlL)	16	4,81	1,55	3,98	5,64