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The relationship between the quality of shampoo product and consumer's purchase

intention - case about Clear shampoo product

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by

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ABSTRACT

Different consumers have different preferences when they are choosing the product. This research would focus on how Shampoo's different quality dimensions will affect consumer's buying behavior.

The primary purpose of this study is to figure out what dimensions of product quality affect consumers when they are choosing the Shampoo, which could provide practical advice during the brand development or product design process. Moreover, the study would figure out what is the essential product quality dimension for consumers. Based on the conclusion, the product developer could make the most attractive product attributes during their development process (Korshunov et al., 1996). This study also assists market managers in being aware of what consumer needs, which is beneficial to them to make the most accurate market strategy for different products. When comparing with the previous study, we found that earlier research mainly focusses on how the quality would affect consumer's purchasing behavior. However, this study focuses on a specific product category; the conclusion would be more accurate and practical for making a business strategy for shampoo products. The results of this study are indicative of the consumer's purchase intention for different shampoo products.

The final result of regression analysis indicates that the package of Clear shampoo has s significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention. The package design played an important role when the consumer made their final purchase decision. (Schifferstein et al., 2013). The shampoo with the special feature will increase the consumer's purchase intention. However, reliability and perceived quality do not a significant positive influence. This is because consumers are not always rational when they are making the purchase decision; some attractive features of the product have a more significant influence on consumers (Gupta and Walter, 2004). Moreover, performance is not significantly related to consumer's purchase intention, which indicates that consumer pays less attention to how shampoo performs during the purchasing process.

The result also provides useful business implications for Unilever; the company owned the Clear brand. The company could highlight the special features of Clear Shampoo, like rich of foam, easy to wash. To know the customer better, the company could launch several types of research about what package style is favored by customers. In conclusion, the company could spend more budget on the package design, develop more special features of their shampoo products.

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CHAPTER I
THE PROBLEM RATIONALE

1.1 Introduction

Different consumers have different preferences when they are choosing the product. This research would focus on how Shampoo's different quality dimensions will affect consumer's buying behavior. The brand image plays an important role in brand building. Only after knowing what consumers really care about, the market manager could make a more accurate decision based on their preference (Rizaimy et al., 1989).

This research building on the understanding of different shampoo's brand "Clear." In this study, the researcher would collect the consumer's purchase intention of Clear as well as measuring the product quality of Clear. Then the researcher would analyze the relationship between the quality of Clear shampoo product and consumer's purchase intention.

The previous study mainly focusses on how the quality would affect consumer's purchasing behavior (Zhou and Wong, 2008; Jiang and Kim, 2015; Norman, 2017). However, this study focuses on a specific product category; the conclusion would be more accurate and practical for making a business strategy for shampoo products. The results of this study are indicative of a consumer's purchase intention for different shampoo products.

1.2 Research purpose

The main purpose of this study is to figure out what dimensions of product quality really affect consumers when they are choosing the Shampoo, which could provide practical advice during the brand development or product design process. Moreover, the study would figure out what is the most important product quality dimension for consumers. Based on the conclusion, the product developer could make the most attractive product attributes during their development process (Korshunov et al., 1996). This study also assists market managers in being aware of what consumer really needs, which is beneficial to them to make the most accurate market strategy for different products.

1.3 Research Objectives

To get a deeper insight and locate a more accurate answer to this problem, the following questions must be addressed:

1) To examine the product quality of Clear shampoo product by collecting the data from consumers;
2) To examine the consumer's purchase intention of Clear shampoo product by collecting the data from consumers;
3) To find out the relationship between the consumers' perception of shampoo's product quality and consumer's purchase intention.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Shampoo (Clear) in China

Clear is one of the most famous Shampoo brands of Unilever. In 1986, Unilever entered the fast-moving consumer goods market of China, and Unilever launches the Clear brand in 2007 (Unilever official website, 2018). During 2007 and 2019, Clear made a big success in China and became one of the leading shampoo brands, which owns a 15% market share of the Chinese Shampoo market. In 2018, the total sales of Shampoo in 2018 reached 20 billion in China (Unilever official website, 2018). Clear attach great importance to the Chinese market. It develops lots of activities such as invite Cristiano Ronaldo as its spokesperson to build its brand image. However, to compete with its biggest competitor Head-Shoulders, Clear need to know its customer better. Clear could gain more market share by improving its product quality (Yang et al, 2012).

2.2 Product quality theory

Product quality is defined as the extent that a product is designed and produced to meet consumer's needs (Juran et al., 1974). Product quality cannot be measured with a single characteristic; rather, it needs to be assessed through different dimensions (Méndez, 2008). Quality theory can separate the product quality into eight dimensions to measure. According to David Garvin (1984), the assistant professor of business administration at the Harvard Business school, there are eight dimensions that could be used to measure the product quality. The eight dimensions are Performance, Features, Reliability, Serviceability, Conformance, Durability, Aesthetics, Perceived quality (Garvin, 1984). In this study, only Performance, Reliability, Package, Special Features, Perceived quality could be used to describe Shampoo product, and we select these five variables as the independent variables.

2.3 Consumer's purchase intention

Consumer's purchase intention is defined as the desire of the consumer to make the purchase decision (Yeon and Chung, 2011). The perceived quality value could have a positive influence on consumer's purchase intention (Wells and Hess, 2011). On the other side, the consumer's purchase intention might negative influenced by perceived risk (Wang and Hazen, 2016).

2.3. Antecedents

Based on the previous research of Tsiotsou (2006), Selnes (1993), Huang et al. (2014), Kim and Koh (2011), and Schlosser (2003). There are several factors related to product quality that will impact consumer's purchase intention. Performance has a positive effect on satisfaction (Selnes, 1993). Tsiotsou (2006) proved overall satisfaction has a positive relationship with consumer's purchase intention. Huang et al. (2014) pointed out product reliability can enhance consumer purchase intention. The study by Kim and Koh (2011) showed that package has a significant positive effect on purchase intention. Schlosser (2003) found that some special features like self-congruity can improve consumer's purchase intention.

Tsiotsou (2006) reported a positive relationship between perceived value and consumer purchase intention.

2.4. Product quality variables
2.4.1. Performance.
Performance is referring to the primary operating characteristic of a product (Garvin, 1984). For a Shampoo product, it might have traits like stopping dandruff, preventing the split, breakage, anti-virus, and itching (Vijayalakshmi and Gurumoorthy, 2019). For example, Clear, one of the most famous shampoo brand, it advertises about its stop dandruff performance to attract their customers. Product performance is highly related to customer satisfaction and brand reputation (Selnes, 1993). Customer satisfaction plays an important role in consumer's purchase intention of Shampoo products (Tsiotsou, 2006). Therefore, the following hypothesis is posited:

H1: The performance of the Clear Shampoo product has a significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention.

2.4.2. Reliability of product description.
The reliability is referring to safety and efficiency (Garvin, 1984). One useful method about measuring reliability is to measure the consistency: How well a product matches with its pre-established specifications (Garvin, 1984). The literature strongly supports that the reliability of Shampoo will influence consumer's buying intention as it is highly related to the brand image (Huang et al., 2014). Therefore, we hypothesize:

H2: The reliability of the Clear Shampoo product has a significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention.

2.4.3. Package.
The package of Shampoo products includes many factors, such as design, color, and patterns on its package (Garvin, 1984). How the product works, smells feels they would make an impact on consumer's personal judgment (Garvin, 1984). When Shampoo is placed in the shopping mall, a better design and color is beneficial to attract more customers (Gofman *et al*., 2010). Kim and Koh study on the relationship between package and Consumer's purchase intention on a digital product. They found the product with a well-designed could let consumers feel delighted and increase their purchase intention (Kim and Koh, 2011).

H3: The Package of the Clear Shampoo product has a significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention.

2.4.4. Special features.
The special feature can be described as special product attributes that spice them up (Garvin, 1984). One useful method to measure the special feature of shampoo products is to evaluate whether it has some unique characteristics, such as fragrance, color, design (Zbib *et al.,* 2010). The literature strongly supports that Shampoo has special features that will highly

increase consumer's buying intention (Schlosser, 2003). Therefore, we posited the following hypothesis:

H4: The special features of the Clear Shampoo product have a significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention.

2.4.5. Perceived product quality.

The perceived quality has been considered as one of the most important factors for the product, which indicates the brand image and consumer's past using experience (Morgan et al., 1996). There are numerous researches about the relationship between perceived quality and consumer's purchase intention. For instance, Tsiotsous (2006) found that perceived quality is significantly related to consumer satisfaction and purchase intention. Therefore, we hypothesize:

H5: The perceived quality of the Clear Shampoo product has a significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention.
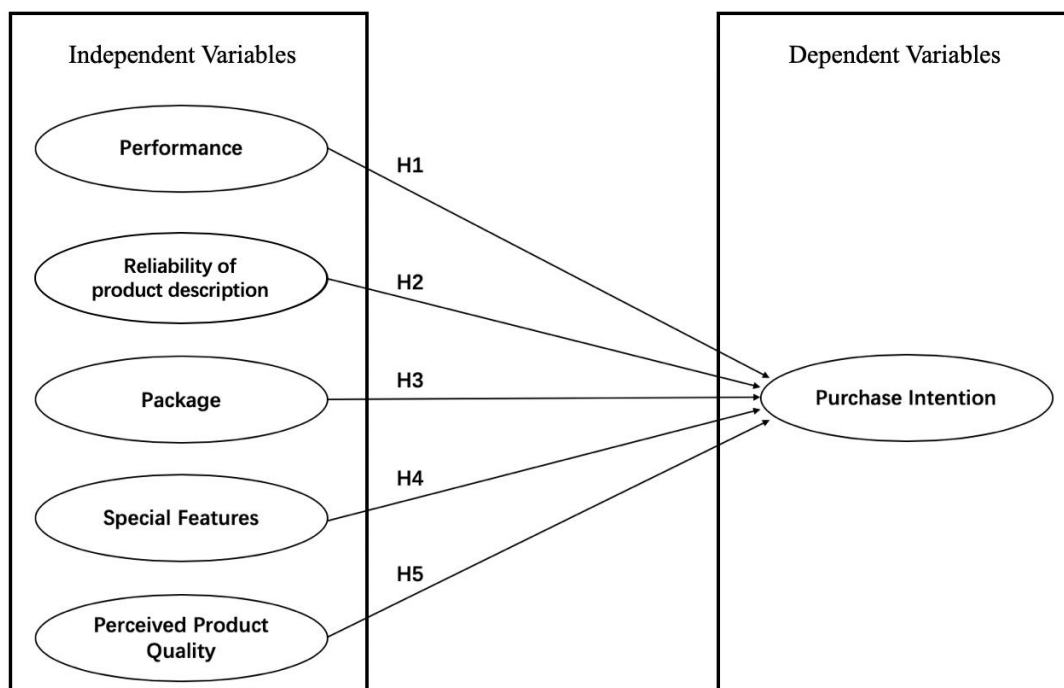
Figure 1. The conceptual model of quality attributes of Clear shampoo product and purchase intention

3. Methodology
3.1 Data Collection and Sample Characteristics

This study examines the relationship between consumers' perception of shampoo's product quality and consumer purchase intention. The study used the questionnaire as the data collection method. In the questionnaire, respondents are asked their perception about the quality of Clear product and their purchase intention. The questionnaire mainly used a Likert scale, which ranges from strongly disagree (represented by 1 point) to strongly agree

(represented by 7 points). To improve the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, the question items setting is based on previous research, which has proven the reliability of the question items. (Selnes, 1993; Huang *et al*., 1974; Garvin, 1984; Garvin, 1984; Wang and Hazen, 2016; Kim and Koh, 2011; Morgan et al., 1996; Tsiotsou, 2006; Kalwani and Silk, 1982; Park et al., 2005).

There are mainly two parts of the questionnaire. In the first part, the questionnaire collect respondent's demographic background information such as gender, age, monthly allowance (RMB), and frequency of purchase shampoo. In the second part, it collects customer's perceptions about the quality of Clear shampoo product and their purchase intention of Clear Shampoo.

There are 61 respondents participate in this research, and 70.5 percent of the respondents are male, which is the main target customer of Clear shampoo. 83.6 percent of respondents are between 21 to 25 years old. About 70 percent of participants' monthly allowance is more than 2000 RMB. Moreover, more than 50 percent of respondents purchase shampoo more than once every two months. These demographics of respondents are in accord with the customer image of the Clear brand. Therefore, this study could provide valuable insight into the Clear shampoo product.

Table 1. Demographics of respondents

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
1. Male	43	70.49
2. Female	18	29.51
Age (years old)		
1. Less than or equal to 20	4	6.6
2. 21-25	51	83.6
3. 26-30	3	4.9
4. More than or equal to 31	3	4.9
Monthly allowance (RMB)		
1. ¥0-¥2000	20	32.8
2. ¥2001-¥3000	24	39.3
3. ¥3001-¥4000	8	13.1
4. ¥4001-¥5000	0	0
5. ¥Over 5001	9	14.75
Frequency of purchase shampoo		
1. More than twice a month	3	4.9
2. Once a month	11	18.0
3. Once every two months	17	27.9
4. Less than once every two months	30	49.1

This study collects the consumer's most commonly purchasing scenario of shampoo products, either. According to Figure2, online shopping is the most popular market channel for young customers to purchase shampoo. The second most popular market channel is a supermarket, in which 36% of customers purchase shampoo products. Consequently, the company should pay more attention to the online market and supermarket channel as they are popular among young customers.
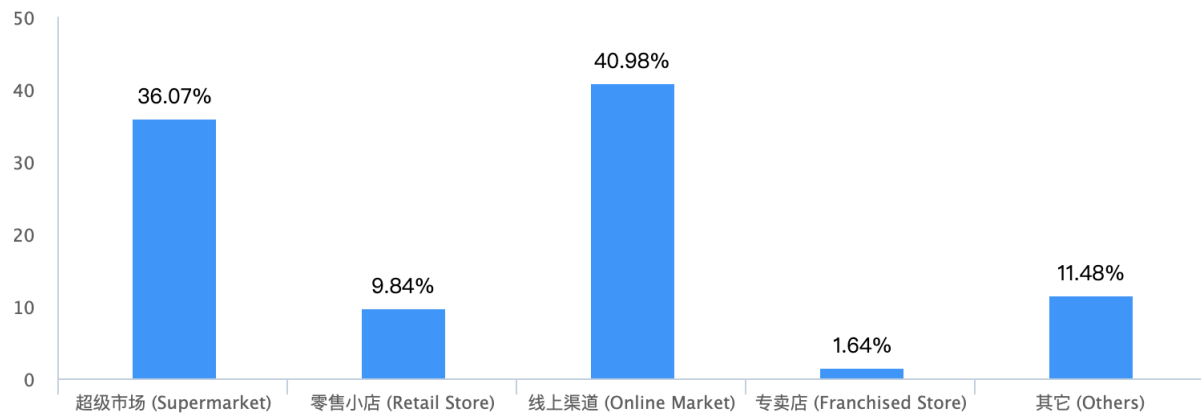

Figure 2. The most commonly purchasing scenario of purchase shampoo

3.2 Reliability Test

To assess the reliability of the question items, a reliability analysis was conducted by Cronbach's Alpha (CA) through SPSS. Cronbach's Alpha is used to assess the levels of internal consistency or reliability and range from 0 to 1. (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The result of each variable is shown in Table 2. According to Goforth (2015), if the test result of Cronbach's Alpha is higher or equal to 0.8, the result is acceptable; if the test result of Cronbach's Alpha is higher or equal to 0.9, the result is highly acceptable. In this study, The Alpha of performance is 0.889, the Alpha of reliability is 0.950, the Alpha of package is 0.946, the Alpha of special feature is 0.906, the Alpha of perceived quality is 0.939, and the Alpha of purchase intention is 0.963. Therefore, the internal consistency of the questionnaire is excellent.

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Performance	0.889
Reliability	0.950
Package	0.946
Special features	0.906
Perceived quality	0.939
Purchase intention	0.963

Table 2. Reliability of constructive measurements

3.3 Correlation Test

The results of the correlation test are shown in Table3. Pearson's correlation and significant (2-tailed) are applied to measure the correlation between variables in this study. The correlation between independent variables and dependent variables is significant as their p-value is less than 0.01, which indicates there is a positive relationship between each variable.

According to Evans (1996), the measurement of correlation can be suggested as followed: 1) 0.00-0.19 "very weak", 2) 0.20-0.39 "weak", 3) 0.40-0.59 "moderate", 4) 0.60-0.79 "strong", and 5) 0.80-1.0 "very strong." Regarding the magnitude of the association between the variables, the association of consumer's purchase intention of Shampoo product and Package and Special feature is very strong, as their r-value fall between 0.80-1.0. The r-value between purchase intention and performance, perceived quality, product reliability are fallen between 0.60-0.79, which claims that the correlation between purchase intention and these three variables is strong.

Table 3. Correlation Matrix

CORRELATION MATRIX

Construct Variables		Mean	Standard Deviation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Quality attributes									
Performance	(1)	4.5148	1.037	1.00					
	Sig.								
Perceived quality	(2)	4.6951	1.232	.792**	1.00				
	Sig.			.000					
Package	(3)	4.5902	1.390	.696**	.775**	1.00			
	Sig.			.000	.000				
Special feature	(4)	4.6066	1.309	.685**	.785**	.718**			
	Sig.			.000	.000	.000			
Product reliability	(5)	4.7803	1.258	.641**	.726**	.590**	.909**	1.00	
	Sig.			.000	.000	.000	.000		
Purchase Intention	(6)	4.4721	1.448	.705**	.791**	.803**	.835**	.766**	1.00
	Sig.			.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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3.4 Statistical Method

In this study, the quantitative research method is used to test the result. By using a quantitative research method, researchers could develop a mathematical hypothesis as well as measuring quantitative relationships among variables. (McCusker and Gunaydin, 2014). All the measurements are based on previous studies about attributes of quality attributes (Tsiotsou, 2006; Selnes, 1993; Irshad, 2012; Kuo and Wu, 2009), and purchase intention (Chiang, 2007; Schlosser, 2003). The study used a questionnaire to collect data from respondents. In the questionnaire, the seven-point Likert scale method is adopted, which could assist the respondent in giving accurate feedback based on their true perception or attitude to product (Dawer, 2008). Reliability analysis is processed to assure the internal consistency of the question item. Correlation analysis and regression analysis are used to figure out the association between independent variables and dependent variables.

4. Result and Discussion
4.1 Hypothesis Testing

This study adopts regression to assess how product quality will affect the consumer's purchase intention. Before conducting the regression, data were tested through a scatter plot. In the scatter plot, independent variables have a mainly positive correlation with dependent variables. Consequently, this study adopts a single regression as a hypothesis testing method.

Linear regression with performance (PE), perceived quality (PQ), package (PA), special feature (SF), and product reliability (PR) as independent variables, and purchase intention (PI) as the dependent variable. According to the regression result of PI shown by Table 4, the regression equation is shown below:

$$PI = 0.012*PE + 0.127*PQ + 0.332*PA + 0.612*SF + 0.012PR - 0.636$$

The value of R-squared is 0.806, which indicates that if purchase intention changes, 80.6% could be explained by PE, PQ, PA, SF, and PR. According to the value of the F-test (F = 36.532, P = 0.000 <0.05), there are at least one of these five independent variables will affect the purchase intention.

The coefficient of PE is 0.008 (t = 0.072, P = 0.943>0.05), which means performance will not affect consumer's purchase intention.

The coefficient of PQ is 0.107 (t = 0.777, P = 0.441>0.05), which means product reliability will not affect consumer's purchase intention.

The coefficient of PA is 0.312 (t = 2.380, P = 0.022<0.05), which means that credit will have a positive impact on the PI.

The coefficient of SF is 0.518 (t = 2.259, P = 0.029<0.05), which means the special feature will have a positive impact on the PI.

The coefficient of PR is 0.010 (t = 0.058, P = 0.954>0.05), which means product reliability will not affect consumer's purchase intention.

Table 4. Regression Result

	Unstandardized B		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	p	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F
(Constant)	-0.636	0.464	-	-1.371	0.177			
Performance	0.012	0.164	0.008	0.072	0.943			F (5,44) =36.532 P=0.000**
Perceived Quality	0.127	0.164	0.107	0.777	0.441	0.806	0.784	
Package	0.332	0.139	0.312	2.380	0.022*			
Special Feature	0.612	0.271	0.518	2.259	0.029*			
Product Reliability	0.012	0.207	0.010	0.058	0.954			

Note: Dependent: Purchase Intention; D-W: 1.975; *P<0.05

After doing the regression analysis, the hypothesis testing result is shown in Table. Both the Package and special feature of Clear shampoo has a significant effect on consumer's purchase intention. However, there is no significant relationship between performance, perceived quality, and product reliability of Clear shampoo and consumer's purchase intention.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

No.	Hypothesis	Result
1	The performance of the Clear Shampoo product has a significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention.	R
2	The reliability of the Clear Shampoo product has a significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention.	R
3	The Package of the Clear Shampoo product has a significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention.	A
4	The special features of the Clear Shampoo product have a significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention.	A
5	The perceived quality of the Clear Shampoo product has a significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention.	R

Note: A: accepted; R: rejected

5. Discussion and Implications
5.1 Discussions

The main purpose of this study is to figure out what dimensions of product quality really affect consumers when they are choosing the Shampoo. According to the regression analysis, the package of Clear shampoo has s significant positive influence on consumer's buying intention. The package design played an important role when the consumer made their final purchase decision. (Schifferstein et al., 2013). The shampoo with the special feature will increase the consumer's purchase intention. However, reliability and perceived quality do not a significant positive influence. This is because consumers are not always rational when they are making the purchase decision; some attractive features of the product have a more significant influence on consumers (Gupta and Walter, 2004). Moreover, performance is not

significantly related to consumer's purchase intention, which indicates that consumer pays less attention to how shampoo performs during the purchasing process.

5.2 Managerial Implications

This study indicates that the attributes that special features and packages can have a positive influence on consumer purchase intention. It indicates that a well-designed package and product with the special feature can increase consumer's purchase intention. The marketing manager of Clear brand could highlight the special features of Clear Shampoo, like rich of foam, easy to wash. To know the customer better, the company could launch several types of research about what package style is favored by customers (Atkinson, 1988). In conclusion, the company could spend more budget on the package design, develop more special features of their shampoo products.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

There are several aspects that could be improved in further research. The first limitation is the objective brand in this study is only Clear, which cannot be sure that all participants know this brand, thus leading results in deviations. Therefore, the result may not be significant since the target respondents are mainly young people, for those people in different age groups, it is not clear that whether they have a similar preference with young people. The second limitation of this study is the sample size. More than 80 percent of respondents in this study are mainly 21 to 25 years old and from Zhejiang province. However, further research should apply a larger sample size to measure the geographical difference, such as different age groups and gender, to test their different preferences. Third, this study only measures a few factors that influence the consumer to purchase shampoos. Future researches are recommended to include more variables.

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Appendix
Part 1: Profile

1. Gender
   - Male
   - Female

2. Age
   - Less than 20
   - 20-25
   - 26-30
   - More than 30

3. Monthly income/ expense in RMB
   - Less than 5000
   - 5001-7000
   - 7001-9000
   - 9001-11000
   - More than 11000

4. How often will you purchase Shampoo in a month?
   - More than twice a month
   - Once a month
   - Once every two months
   - Less than once every two months

5. What is your most commonly purchasing scenario?
   - Supermarket
   - Retail Store
   - Online Market
   - Franchised Store
   - Others

Part 2: Quality attributes and Purchase intention

A. Performance	Rating from lowest (1) to highest (7)						
1. I think the performance of Clear shampoo to prevent split is excellent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I think the performance of Clear shampoo to detangle and soften hair is excellent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I think the performance of Clear shampoo to stop dandruff is excellent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I think the performance of Clear shampoo to prevent itching is excellent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I think the performance of Clear shampoo to repair is excellent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
B. Perceived quality	**Rating from lowest (1) to highest (7)**						
1. I think Clear fulfill my basic needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I think Clear have unique function.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I think Clear give me confidence to use.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I think Clear received positive comments from customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I think the product quality of Clear is stable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
C. Package	**Rating from lowest (1) to highest (7)**						
1. I think Clear is unique in design and identity.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I think Clear is prominent to be recognized.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I think Clear is color suitable with the package design.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I think Clear put attractive patterns on its package.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I think Clear have attractive energize color of stick.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
D. Special feature	**Rating from lowest (1) to highest (7)**						
1. I think Clear have a beautiful designed package.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I think Clear have superior price performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I think Clear shampoo have a perfect fragrance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I think Clear shampoo have a wonderful color.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I think Clear shampoo has special performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E. Product reliability	**Rating from lowest (1) to highest (7)**						
1. I think the quantity of Clear is consistent with its label.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I think the performance meets its advertising.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I think Clear use good quality ingredients.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I think Clear is non-irritating to my hair.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I think Clear is serviceable within its expiration date.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

F. Purchasing Intention	Rating from lowest (1) to highest (7)						
1. I am very interested to buy Clear Shampoo.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I am willing to buy Clear Shampoo.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. The probability to buying Clear Shampoo is high.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I plan to purchase Clear in the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I am seriously considering to purchase Clear.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7