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**CONTRASTING ARTISANS AND DESIGNERS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRODUCT  
DESIGN:**

CASE STUDY OF TASA



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DESIGN:**

CASE STUDY OF TASA

Master's Degree in Marketing Management

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UNIVERSITY OF ALGARVE

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## Declaração de autoria de trabalho

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## **AGRADECIMENTOS**

À minha família,

Ao Carlos,

Às minhas orientadoras,

A toda a gente que me apoiou,

E em especial, à equipa do Projecto TASA.

## RESUMO

Estudos recentes na área do marketing e design realçam a percepção do consumidor relativamente à importância das dimensões de design de produto. Alguns estudos identificados neste âmbito focam no estudo e posterior desenvolvimento de escalas de medição para avaliar o design de produto através das dimensões da estética, funcionalidade e simbolismo e como as mesmas influenciam o comportamento do consumidor (Homburg, Schwemmler, & Kuehnl, 2015; Jindal, Sarangee, Echambadi, & Lee, 2016). Outros avaliaram o impacto de dimensões específicas, como a funcionalidade (Kumar & Noble, 2016); estética (Tosi, 2012; Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2014; Kumar & Noble, 2016; Ying-Ching & Chiu-chi, 2021) ou simbolismo (Brunner, Ullrich, Jungen, & Esch, 2016; Rui-Bo, Xiao-Song, Xin-Yu, & Yuan, 2014) para a percepção do consumidor em relação ao produto. No entanto, surgiu a necessidade de explorar a percepção do produtor, após se verificar falta de literatura focada nesta perspetiva. Como afirmado por Homburg et al. (2015), a escala utilizada no estudo pode ser adaptada para vários cenários ou setores, pelo que o estudo utiliza as dimensões mencionadas como base para a exploração da percepção dos produtores.

De forma a contribuir com respostas às lacunas identificadas na revisão de literatura, esta investigação procura analisar as percepções e perspetivas de membros de uma equipa multidisciplinar em relação às diversas dimensões do design de produto, dentro do contexto de processo de desenvolvimento de novos produtos.

De maneira a atingir o objetivo proposto, foi efetuado um estudo de caso com foco na análise das opiniões dos vários membros da equipa de desenvolvimento de novos produtos do Projeto TASA (Técnicas Ancestrais Soluções Atuais). Esta empresa tem como diferenciador a sua abordagem multidisciplinar na criação de produtos artesanais. Estes produtos são realizados de forma manual, e com recurso a métodos tradicionais, mas adaptados à vida e realidade atual. Esta investigação visa, especificamente, responder às seguintes questões: (1) Qual é a percepção dos produtores relativamente às dimensões de design de produto?; (2) Que diferenças (se algumas) podem ser identificadas nas percepções dos artesãos e designers envolvidos numa equipa multidisciplinar?; (3) Qual é o principal valor que este processo de desenvolvimento de novos produtos traz efetivamente ao mercado?

Na conjuntura atual do processo de desenvolvimento de novos produtos, surgiu uma necessidade urgente de adaptação do método de trabalho das equipas, para garantir o seu

destaque entre os concorrentes (Ulrich & Eppinger, 2016). Através da utilização de processos mais dinâmicos e colaborativos, as empresas conseguem criar e memoráveis experiências para o consumidor (Henseler, Guerreiro, & Matos, 2021).

Com o passar do tempo, tem se verificado um desaparecimento gradual das técnicas tradicionais, o que gerou a necessidade de inovação para preservar a essência dessa indústria na região do Algarve. Nesse contexto, o Projeto TASA une forças e conhecimentos com artesãos e designers para a criação de novos produtos (TASA, 2023). Esta abordagem procura garantir que a cultura e tradição continue viva, sem descuidar a necessidade incorporar elementos atuais e ideias inovadoras na produção artesanal (TASA, 2023).

Neste contexto, a cocriação é um elemento crucial para o sucesso da criação de novos produtos. Além de envolver os vários participantes num processo de criação de valor, esta funciona como catalisador para a participação (Assiouras, Skourtis, Giannopoulos, Buhalis, & Konjordanos, 2019). Este método permite ter acesso a visões diferentes para a realização de um produto inovador. Não obstante, a inovação não se restringe apenas os aspetos físicos de um produto, sendo essencial avaliar as necessidades atuais dos consumidores a diferentes níveis (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004).

De forma a compreender as perceções dos envolvidos no processo, relevou-se importante para esta pesquisa a exploração das dimensões de design de produto, nomeadamente a funcionalidade, estética e simbolismo. No que toca à funcionalidade, definida como a capacidade de considerar todos os aspetos necessários para a satisfação do consumidor, os participantes consideram ser uma das dimensões mais importantes neste processo pois é necessário que o produto seja prático e promova eficiência (Kumar & Noble, 2016). A estética é uma dimensão associada maioritariamente ao aspeto visual e atrativo dos produtos, que pode influenciar a primeira impressão do consumidor e até alterar a experiência de uso (Ying-Ching & Chiu-chi, 2021). A perceção da dimensão estética alterará consoante a cultura e vivência de cada um. O simbolismo trata-se de uma dimensão que se traduz no significado que é comunicado através de um produto. O entendimento do significado ou história do mesmo é essencial para garantir a criação de um produto bem sucedido (Rui-Bo et al., 2014).

A metodologia adotada nesta pesquisa é predominantemente qualitativa (Wolff, Mahoney, Lohiniva, & Corkum, 2019), com a realização de entrevistas semiestruturadas (Bryman, 2016) junto a uma amostra intencionada (Bryman, 2016) composta por seis profissionais das áreas do artesanato e do design, que colaboram diretamente com o TASA. Através das entrevistas

efetuadas, foi possível criar uma visão mais aprofundada das suas perspetivas e perceções em relação aos processos de criação e design de produtos artesanais e identificar as suas necessidades e motivações.

Os resultados deste estudo revelaram que os profissionais envolvidos no desenvolvimento de novos produtos valorizam profundamente os métodos e técnicas utilizados na criação desses produtos. Além disso, a conexão emocional que desenvolvem com cada produto é considerada uma parte crucial para o processo, devido à longevidade do mesmo e à atenção ao detalhe que é conseguida em cada etapa da criação de produto.

Uma das conclusões mais notáveis deste estudo, com implicações práticas, é o reconhecimento da necessidade de promover uma maior partilha de conhecimento entre os membros de equipa multidisciplinar, ou mesmo considerar formação multidisciplinar para todos os envolvidos, sendo que a compreensão das técnicas específicas utilizadas por cada disciplina é essencial para uma colaboração eficaz. A pesquisa também revelou que, embora a equipa possua diferentes áreas de foco e formação, estas complementam-se de com harmonia na criação do produto final. Este processo, mais colaborativo, contribui significativamente para a singularidade e qualidade dos produtos desenvolvidos no âmbito do TASA.

Em resumo, a análise das perceções e perspetivas de artesãos e designers no contexto do desenvolvimento de produtos artesanais com uma equipa multidisciplinar demonstrou a importância da preservação da tradição artesanal, ao mesmo tempo em que se promove a inovação e a colaboração. A pesquisa ressaltou a necessidade de partilhar conhecimento entre disciplinas e salienta a complementaridade das disciplinas envolvidas neste tipo de processos, destacando a riqueza da mesma para a criação de produtos únicos e autênticos. Este estudo oferece uma visão mais aprofundada das dinâmicas e desafios enfrentados nesse cenário, contribuindo para uma compreensão mais abrangente do que é levado em consideração pelos produtores, na criação de novos produtos em contexto multidisciplinar.

Sugestões para futuras investigações incluem aprofundar a perspetiva dos produtores não só neste setor, na criação de produtos num contexto multidisciplinar.

**Palavras-Chave:** Artesanato; Design de Produto; Processo de Desenvolvimento de Novos Produtos; Dimensões do Design do Produto.

## ABSTRACT

Recent studies in marketing and design highlight consumer perceptions of the importance of product design dimensions. Some studies focused on the study and subsequent development of measurement scales to evaluate product design through the dimensions of aesthetics, functionality, and symbolism and how they influence consumer behavior (Homburg et al., 2015; Jindal et al., 2016). Others have assessed the impact of specific dimensions, such as functionality (Kumar & Noble, 2016); aesthetics (Tosi, 2012; Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2014; Kumar & Noble, 2016; Ying-Ching & Chiu-chi, 2021), or symbolism (Brunner et al., 2016; Rui-Bo et al., 2014) on consumer perception of the product. However, the need to explore the producer's perception arose after finding a lack of literature focused on this perspective. As stated by Homburg et al. (2015), the scale purposed in the study can be adapted to various scenarios or sectors, therefore the study uses the mentioned dimensions as a basis for exploring producers' perceptions.

In order to provide answers to the gaps identified in the literature review, this research seeks to analyze the perceptions and perspectives of members of a multidisciplinary team in relation to the different dimensions of product design, within the context of the new product development process.

In order to achieve the proposed goal, a case study was carried out focusing on analyzing the opinions of the various members of the new product development team of Projecto TASA (TASA). This company's differentiator is its multidisciplinary approach to creating artisanal products. These products are made manually, using traditional methods, but adapted to current life and reality. This research specifically aims to answer the following questions: (1) What is the perception of producers regarding the dimensions of product design?; (2) What differences (if any) can be identified in the perceptions of artisans and designers involved in a multidisciplinary team?; (3) What is the main value that this new product development process effectively brings to the market?

In the current situation of the new product development process, an urgent need has arisen to adapt the teams' working method, to guarantee their prominence among competitors (Ulrich & Eppinger, 2016). Through the use of more dynamic and collaborative processes, companies are able to create memorable experiences for the consumer (Henseler et al., 2021). Over time, traditional techniques have gradually moved away, which has generated the need for innovation

to preserve the essence of this industry in the Algarve region. In this context, TASA joins forces and knowledge with artisans and designers to create new products (TASA, 2023). This approach seeks to ensure that culture and tradition continue to live on, without neglecting the need to incorporate current elements and innovative ideas into artisanal production (TASA, 2023).

In this context, co-creation is a crucial element for the success of creating new products. In addition to involving the various participants in a value-creation process, this works as a catalyst for participation (Assiouras et al., 2019). This method allows access to different visions for creating an innovative product. However, innovation is not restricted to just the physical aspects of a product, it is essential to assess the current needs of consumers at different levels (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004).

In order to understand the perceptions of those involved in this process, this research explored the dimensions of product design, namely functionality, aesthetics, and symbolism. Regarding functionality, defined as the ability to consider all aspects necessary for consumer satisfaction, participants consider it to be one of the most important dimensions in this process as the product needs to be practical and promote efficiency (Kumar & Noble, 2016). Aesthetics is a dimension mainly associated with the visual and attractive appearance of products, which can influence the consumer's first impression and even change the user experience (Ying-Ching & Chiu-chi, 2021). The perception of the aesthetic dimension will change depending on each person's culture and experience. Symbolism is a dimension that translates into the meaning that is communicated through a product. Understanding its meaning or history is essential to ensure the creation of a successful product (Rui-Bo et al., 2014).

The methodology adopted in this research is predominantly qualitative (Wolff et al., 2019), using semi-structured interviews (Bryman, 2016) together with an intentional sample (Bryman, 2016) composed of six professionals from the crafts areas and design, which collaborate directly with TASA. Through the interviews carried out, it was possible to create a more in-depth view of their perspectives and perceptions in relation to the processes of creation and design of artisanal products and identify their needs and motivations.

The results of this study revealed that professionals involved in the development of new products deeply value the methods and techniques used in creating these products. Furthermore, the emotional connection they develop with each product is considered a crucial

part of the process, due to its longevity and the attention to detail that is achieved at each stage of product creation.

One of the most notable conclusions of this study, with practical implications, is the recognition of the need to promote greater knowledge sharing among multidisciplinary team members, or even consider multidisciplinary training for everyone involved, with understanding the specific techniques used by each discipline is essential for effective collaboration. The research also revealed that, although the team has different areas of focus and training, these complement each other harmoniously in creating the final product. This more collaborative process contributes significantly to the uniqueness and quality of the products developed within the scope of TASA.

In summary, the analysis of the perceptions and perspectives of artisans and designers in the context of developing artisanal products with a multidisciplinary team demonstrated the importance of preserving artisanal tradition, while promoting innovation and collaboration. The research highlighted the need to share knowledge between disciplines and highlights the complementarity of the disciplines involved in this type of process, highlighting its richness in creating unique and authentic products. This study offers a more in-depth view of the dynamics and challenges faced in this scenario, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of what is taken into consideration by producers when creating new products in a multidisciplinary context. Suggestions for future research include deepening the perspective of producers not only in this sector but in the creation of products in a multidisciplinary context.

**Keywords:** Craftmanship; Product design; New Product Development Process; Product Design Dimensions.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The dynamics observed in companies have undergone substantial changes over the years, which includes the process of developing new products, that have also gone through changes to consider the current reality (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Design involved in new product development comprises not only a form of contribution by external agents in the process but also an increase in the chances of success in the market, due to the greater proximity between the various stakeholders and the product development team (Veryzer & Borja de Mozota, 2005).

Homburg et al. (2015) present a product design concept that includes three main dimensions: functionality, aesthetics, and symbolism, based on empirical research conducted with consumers. However, no similar study was found that based the research on the producers, which this paper aims to explore at a greater level.

With the technologies available today, firms can create a deeper understanding of the consumer which is favourable to the creation of a sense of community (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Now consumers have much more information available and are demanding with their choices due to the high level of options on the market – they question their options, and dialogue with members of the community to evaluate all the important variants (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Co-created experiences have proven to generate positive feedback from consumers, leading to recommendations and positive word-of-mouth, and even creating consumer loyalty – if satisfied, consumers will act as defenders of the brand (Assiouras et al., 2019).

It is an opportunity to develop marketing communications and contribute to the development process with innovative ideas (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). The harmony in the relation of Marketing and Design can lead to the creation of unique and different products that will resonate with the needs and aspirations of the target audience at a greater level (Henseler & Guerreiro, 2020). Successful co-creation requires a shift in a firm's mindset (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004), as such, new platforms and tools must be developed to facilitate meaningful interactions and engagement. (Franke & Piller, 2004). By constructing a co-creative ecosystem, organizations can gather the collective intelligence, experience, and creativity of various parties involved, leading to breakthrough innovations, enhanced customer experiences, and competitiveness (Franke & Piller, 2004; Ericson & Larsson, 2009).

To explore this subject, this study inquiries into the firm TASA as a case study. TASA promotes the collaboration between artisans and designers and has been used as a means of developing

unique and innovative products, joining product development and product design in one single process (TASA, 2023). The collaboration between these two disciplines can lead to the development of innovative products that meet the needs of customers, but also exceeds the expectations of producers themselves and motivates them to be part of the production process. In addition, this research explored how artisans and designers collaborate to identify needs, create design solutions, and manufacture and market products.

This dissertation is organized in the following way: in Chapter 1, an introduction to the topic of research, in Chapter 2, a literature review was conducted to develop the main keywords that are linked to the topic of research, in Chapter 3, the methodology is presented: such as empirical context, research goals, research method and data collection method and, Chapter 4 to discuss the results and further implications.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Co-Creation**

Co-creation is a complex concept that is key to an organization's marketing and innovation efforts. Though there can be different perspectives surrounding co-creation, it is often defined as a process of collaboration that brings together numerous parties (customers, employees, suppliers, and even the local community are examples of these stakeholders) in the setting of value creation (Sanders & Stappers, 2008; Payne, Storbacka, & Frow, 2008; Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019).

Value creation through the product development process and the entire marketing journey of an organization, involves various stakeholders. The feeling of belonging may serve as a catalyst for participation and cooperation in value co-creation (Assiouras et al., 2019). It is possible to gain various insights into each stage of the process by using this approach (Veryzer & Borja de Mozota, 2005).

Co-creation requires continuous and engaged involvement of all parties (Campos, Mendes, Valle, & Scott, 2017), promoting successful collaboration between them. This suggests that integrating concepts and feedback into the process of making choices is just as important as merely listening to opinions (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). To ensure all those participating

have access to relevant information and are mindful of how their contributions influence the process, transparency is vital (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004).

Co-creation also seeks to produce shared value, ensuring equal and sustained benefit distribution (Assiouras et al., 2019). Co-creation is an iterative process that can change over time and demands careful management to accomplish its goals, therefore flexibility is crucial (Payne et al., 2008).

Co-creation encourages innovation. Consequently, customers might feel more content with the products and services they're given and might establish stronger ties with the brand (Assiouras et al., 2019). Furthermore, it helps organizations understand more about what customers want, which enables organizations to modify their product and marketing strategy in reaction to consumer needs (Patil, Sirsikar, & Gholap, 2017).

Co-creation can be used to address challenges regarding social responsibility for corporations. Organizations can promote inclusion and equity by working in collaboration to develop sustainable projects and solutions (Adbou, Hasssan, Salem, Albakhit, Almakhayitah, & Salama, 2022).

## **2.2. Innovation**

Innovation has a key role in the success of products and firms in today's reality. It is a synonym for engagement, growth, and competitiveness (Ulrich & Eppinger, 2016), which when successful, ultimately leads to loyalty and satisfaction (Bloch, 1995). It is a way of problem-solving and pushing boundaries for creativity (Sanders & Stappers, 2008).

Innovation in design goes beyond its' physical aspects and ergonomic functionalities: it is the main current way to understand the needs and desires of consumers. Innovative design can engage the customer and to create value (Veryzer & Borja de Mozota, 2015; Sanders & Stappers, 2008; Homburg et al., 2015). Through various processes of research and analysis, it is possible to identify trends and preferences. This information is valuable for important decisions regarding products, opportunities, and viability of breakthrough innovations, (Henseler et al., 2021; Kotler & Keller, 2016; Ericson & Larsson, 2009).

Firms that can correlate various disciplines integrated in a single process are also able to create unique and differentiated proposals for their customer, making sure to create memorable

consumption experiences and emotional connections (Henseler & Guerreiro, 2020; Ulrich & Eppinger, 2016). Brands are associated with a certain meaning, so users tend to identify and prefer brands and experiences with which they share characteristics (Baker, Fehrer, & Brodie, 2022). In this sense, authenticity is important, due to sources of value (non-product related and non-functionality related): supporting the development of personal identity, community, and a sense of belonging (Füller, Schroll, & Von Hippel, 2013).

Different kinds of innovation were identified in the researched literature – incremental innovation, which enhances an already existing product; me-too innovation, which refers to the adoption of innovations that have been successful to competitors; and radical (or breakthrough) innovation which involves a creation of a new product (Adegoke, 2007). When the innovation is incremental, there is less need for the promotion of integrating moments in the development process. However, when the innovation is radical, different and more insights are needed to make sure the product is successful (Griffin & Hauser, 1996).

### **2.3. New Product Development Process**

Successful product development takes into consideration: the customer, the market needs, and the integration of innovative ideas (Griffin & Hauser, 1996). An interdisciplinary relationship with everyone involved in the process can promote discussion or debate of the most diverse visions (Ericson & Larsson, 2009).

The various stages in the product development process can be altered according to the needs of the company. Earlier stages are usually dedicated to the study of the market, consumer needs, and all the remaining aspects regarding business and technical aspects to proceed to the later stages, such as the design and development of concepts and finally, the product launch (Veryzer & Borja de Mozota, 2005; Ulrich & Eppinger, 2016; Patil et al., 2017).

In the context of this study, Ulrich and Eppinger's (2004) phases of new product development process were taken into consideration:

1. Opportunity Identification and Selection stage: where potential new product development prospects are identified, based on market demands and business strategies.
2. Concept Generation: the creation of several design concepts and ideas for the product and examination of various strategies and solutions.

3. Concept Evaluation: concepts are carefully assessed based on variables such as technical specifications, cost, and benefits, selecting the most promising idea.
4. Development: development of the preferred concept in extensive detail, including technical drawings and specifications.
5. Testing: developing prototypes and testing them to ensure their quality and functionality.
6. Launch and Post-Launch Review: commercial production of the product and its launch to the market. Marketing and sales strategies get into motion. Consumer feedback and performance assessments are made post-launch.

It is crucial that the various disciplines in the phases of the process can communicate with one another as it increases the chances of product success. An informal approach can help with the process's success as more information is communicated (Griffin & Hauser, 1996).

The new product development process should incorporate product design in its various stages as it is essential for the broadening of this sector. It is an iterative cycle based on inputs from the various function members, to upgrade existing products or create totally new ones with success (Patil et al., 2017).

#### **2.4. New Product Design**

Homburg et al. (2015, p.44) define product design as “a set of constructive elements of a product that consumers perceive and organize as a multidimensional construct”. A unique design can make all the difference between a product and its competitors, as it can be a key aspect for a differentiative performance, as “with new product offerings, a distinctive design can render older competitors immediately obsolete” (Bloch, 1995, p. 16).

Luchs & Swan (2011, p. 338) define the product design process as “the set of strategic and tactical activities, from idea generation to commercialization, used to create a product design”. It is a crucial aspect of the process of co-creation, which involves collaboration between producers and co-creators to develop innovative and compelling products (Assiouras et al., 2019 ; Patil et al., 2017).

The new product design is the discipline responsible for creating the appearance, functionality, and usability of the product. Nowadays it is the main way of making a difference in the market (Ulrich & Eppinger, 2016; Homburg et al., 2015).

New product design can be divided into several steps, including:

1. Market research: To understand the needs and desires of consumers, as well as current market trends.
2. Concept development: The product concept is developed, including its appearance, functionality, and usability.
3. Design development: The product design is developed in more detail, including its shape, materials, and finishes.
4. Prototype testing: Product prototypes are created for testing and evaluation by consumers.

Design is referred to as cross-disciplinary, as each dimension can benefit from a different discipline contribution. The perception of each person, however, will always change as people “value the various design dimensions differently because of their inherent preferences” (Jindal, Sarangee, Echambadi, & Lee, 2016, p. 73)

Bloch (1995) identified four kinds of psychological responses to product form – separate elements that, are chosen and blended into a whole by the design team: Cognitive Beliefs (holistic perceptions or the linear processing of each separate element); Categorization (consumers like difference but only at a point where the created product can be categorized); Affective (positive and negative responses); Behavioural (consumers will approach or avoid the product).

#### **2.4.1. Product Design: Consumers’ and Producers Perspectives**

On the consumers perspective, the consumption experience is multidimensional (Rakhmanita, Hurriyati, Disman, Hendrayati, & Susilawati, 2023) - when searching for a product, consumers are exposed to utilitarian and hedonic attributes - typically associated with the product itself, its performance and ease of use but also to brand-related stimuli such as (colours, logos, shapes, background design elements) brands’ design, and identity identifiers that will be crucial for purchasing decisions. (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009; Noble & Kumar, 2010).

The consumer’s perspective plays an important role in the process, as consumers are the target audience, and their opinions and feedback are essential to determine if the product will be successful in the market (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Consumers seem to care about the processes behind what makes a product/service, and the judgments they create regarding it are affected by the amount of information they acquire about their creation process. Beliefs about a product can be created using product cues, such as a designer cue – this can indicate uniqueness to the consumers and will, therefore, raise awareness and engagement between the consumers and designers (Idemen, Elmadag, & Okan, 2021).

The consumer will ultimately decide if the product will be successful or not – after analyzing the product itself, the consumer will categorize it, create a perception of it, and proceed to compare it with its' own personality (Tan & Ming, 2003). This will provoke a response such as a positive or negative recommendation, willingness to pay, repurchase intention, or word of mouth. There will be two paths regarding the relationship of the consumer with the product – either avoid or approach it (Chiturri, Raghunathan, & Mahajan, 2008; Brakus et al., 2009).

On the firm's perspective, firms can either design for satisfaction (utilitarian needs) or delight (hedonic needs). The utilitarian beliefs in design are functional, instrumental, and practical, typically associated with satisfaction and loyalty. Hedonic beliefs, however, are related to delight and loyalty and are based on the aesthetics, experimental, and enjoyment-related aspects of a product. While consumers attach great importance to hedonic beliefs, they often need a certain amount of the functionality aspect to be met to feel satisfied (Chiturri et al., 2008). Ultimately, together these aspects reflect the product's personality and can influence the perceptions of the consumer.

Producers need to be involved from the beginning of the design process to ensure that the product can be created without any obstacles regarding manufacturing and marketing. The production team has the responsibility for turning the idea into a tangible, viable product, working collaboratively with the design team to ensure the product is manufactured efficiently and meets specifications for quality and cost (Ulrich & Eppinger, 2016). Although the producer has a crucial role in new product development, it is a perspective that has not yet been explored in great depth. Existing studies have focused almost entirely on the benefits of the process from the consumer perspective, not exploring the producer's role beyond the efficiency of production itself. Considering this, it becomes essential to consider the experience of the producer's involvement in greater detail.

## 2.5. Product Design Dimensions

Different elements and methods of development need to be considered, so the product is sure to add value to the market such as: quality, features, style, and design, and even other processes like packing (Hariandja & Laura, 2021).

There are three dimensions of product design that can help obtain this goal: aesthetic, functional, and symbolic. The aesthetic dimension refers to the sensory and emotional aspects of a product's appearance, such as colour, shape, texture, and style (Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2014). The functional dimension refers to the technical and performance aspects of a product's design, such as durability, reliability, and ease of use (Kumar & Noble, 2016). The symbolic dimension refers to the cultural or social meanings associated with a product's design elements (Rui-Bo et al., 2014).

The design elements of the product are vital for creating an enjoyable experience. The functionality, ergonomics, aesthetics, and how users interact with the product, all constitute aspects that product design needs to take into thought to enhance efficiency and satisfaction with the product (Brunner et al., 2016; Gilal , Zhang , & Gilal, 2018; Tosi, 2012).

Products that can be considered appealing to the eye, innovative, and carefully designed have an increased likelihood of sticking out and capturing customers' attention (Idemen, Elmadag, & Okan, 2021). Efficient product design may help in establishing a distinctive brand identity that reflects the company's beliefs and character (Cardozo, Crilly, & Hekkert, 2015).

The aesthetic performance of a product greatly influences the design process. However, there are Ergonomic aspects of the design to take into consideration as they may affect the ease of usability and comfort of the user – these topics are quite important as inadequate ergonomic choices can lead to consumer dissatisfaction and complex usability, despite a great aesthetic component (Bloch, 1995).

Homburg et al. (2015) created a scale to measure product design regarding these three different dimensions within the utilitarian and hedonic values: aesthetics, functionality, and symbolism. The presented scale “does not require product experience and is therefore also valuable in the early stages of product development (...)” (Homburg et al., 2015, p. 42) which means that it is possible to identify these dimensions during the whole product development process.

### **2.5.1. Functionality**

According to Ulrich and Eppinger (2004), functionality is the capacity of a product to satisfy the needs and goals of the consumer in the most efficient way. Veryzer & Borja de Mozota, (2005) highlight the importance of considering the functionalities wanted by the user to orient the development of new products correctly. Bloch (1995) suggested that functionality is a crucial factor that influences the consumer response to the product. Jindal et al., (2016) defended that a superior design choice is a critical determinant for the good performance of a product. Although the authors considered functionality and ergonomics as two different categories, ergonomics can also be included in this dimension (Campos, Lanutti, & Paschoarelli, 2012; Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2014).

The functional component of the design of products is necessary for creating products that can function and assist individuals in manners that satisfy and exceed their needs (Haase, Wiedmann, Bettels, & Labens, 2018). Functionality matters as it boosts a product's usability and helps users do what they want with less effort. A well-designed product makes life simpler by automating and streamlining procedures. A functioning product needs to be simple to use, featuring a clear user interface and widely accessible controls (Kumar & Noble, 2016).

Considering their physical and mental features, ergonomics plays a role in ensuring consumers' comfort and safety while utilizing products. Developing practical and efficient items demands in-depth knowledge of consumer needs and usage conditions (Jindal et al., 2016; Henseler et al., 2021). To comprehend the demands of users, designers ought to conduct product research, tests, early versions, and revisions. For products to meet the requirements and desires that customers have in terms of efficiency and usefulness, it is important for product design to consider functionality (Noble & Kumar, 2010).

### **2.5.2. Aesthetics**

Aesthetics refers to the visual appearance and perceived attractiveness of a product (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). Consumers often proceed with their purchasing decisions based on a product's aesthetic (Noble & Kumar, 2010). The aesthetics are essential for creating a good first impression and differentiating it from the competition (Homburg et al., 2015). The experience of using the product can be strengthened through a purposeful and solid design,

which in turn enhances the product's appeal and consumer-friendliness. The ease of use, ergonomics, and the feeling of touch are all important aspects of aesthetics along with its external appearance, which can be a differentiating factor, especially in saturated markets - as it affects perception of value, and consumer preference (Griffin & Hauser, 1996; Ying-Ching & Chiu-chi, 2021). The combination of these components results in a unified and alluring design that enthrals users and improves the emotional bond between the product and the user, and the user's perception of product quality (Bloch, 1995).

It is now recognized that the aesthetic component is arbitrary and subject to the cultural and private context. Different cultures and people have diverse aesthetic preferences, thus what one group finds attractive may not be so for another (Rui-Bo et al., 2014). The aesthetic component has become vital for sustainability as consumers lay a growing value on environmentally conscious products and processes for manufacturing (Tosi, 2012; Kumar & Noble, 2016). This component focuses on aesthetic perception, balance, and attractiveness with the goal to evoke interest in customers, expressing brand values, improving user experience, and raising the perceived value of items (Kumar & Noble, 2016; Hagtvedt & Patrick, 2014).

### **2.5.3 Symbolism**

Symbolism is a product design dimension that reflects the meaning or sign value communicated by the product. It can create associations beyond functional attributes, based on cultural or social meanings associated with symbols, colours, or shapes – playing a key role in consumer identity, expression and generating value for products (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Franke & Piller, 2004; Gilal et al., 2018); (Rui-Bo et al., 2014). By leveraging symbolic design elements, companies can create a unique image and differentiate themselves from competitors, as uniqueness can be the key point for differentiation (Tan & Ming, 2003; Brunner et al., 2016; Rui-Bo et al., 2014).

In new product development, designers must consider the symbols they incorporate into their products, as they can directly impact consumers' perceptions and purchasing decisions (Tan & Ming, 2003). Modern design considers the meaning of symbols and how they serve society. Consumers interpret symbols in different ways, depending on their experiences, cultural context, and personal values (Brunner et al., 2016; Rui-Bo et al., 2014). In this process,

designers must consider the different meanings that symbols can have for different target audiences.

Understanding how symbols are interpreted and how they affect perceptions is essential for creating successful and attractive products (Brunner et al., 2016). The symbolism dimension of product design focuses on the analysis of symbols in products and their effect on people, as they need to be aware of the meaning of the symbols for a product to be successful. However, this scenario will only happen if the customer or designer has a related background that allows them to understand the symbol: such as knowledge, life experience, social setting, etc (Rui-Bo et al., 2014).

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1. Empirical Context**

*Projecto TASA* (TASA) was created in 2010, with headquarters in Loulé, Algarve, aiming to create a strong relationship with local artisans and designers to ensure Traditional Techniques are not lost. The team looks for inspiration from the local culture and creates daily-use products to commercialize and diffuse this culture, based on the collaboration between artisans and designers. This co-creation approach helps in the survival of traditional techniques and the diffusion of new design visions. The main mission of this firm is to promote a social-economic environment, the passing of knowledge, and to carry on the techniques of Portuguese craftsmanship (TASA, 2023).

TASA values sustainability, ethics, and cultural preservation. By using natural materials, through fair payment to professionals, and preservation of traditional techniques, this project seeks to promote sustainable practices and support local culture – ensuring all the used materials are natural, local, and energy-friendly and that all the participants have a fair conditions and payment for their work.

Furthermore, these values align with the goals of the United Nations, particularly the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN, 2012):

- “SDG 12, Sustainable Consumption and Production” seeks to ensure that consumption and production patterns are sustainable, reducing waste and promoting energy efficiency.

- “SDG 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth” aims to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth and ensure decent work for all.
- Finally, “SDG 11, Sustainable Cities and Communities” seeks to make cities and communities more inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

The SDGs are a global UN initiative that seeks to promote sustainable development and eradicate poverty. They include 17 goals and 169 targets covering areas such as poverty, health, education, gender equality, clean energy, and climate action.

TASA development phases, provide a structured approach to new product development (TASA, 2023):

1. Inspiration (Investigation): In this phase, the goal is to learn about the culture, techniques, materials, uses, and knowledge relevant to the project. Corresponding to identifying potential opportunities and understanding the market and customer needs.
2. Design (Conception): The goal is to develop ideas and create a new concept, focusing on refining and expanding ideas, developing details and languages, and evaluating concepts based on feasibility, market potential, and strategic fit.
3. Product (Creation): A transition from concept to actual product creation occurs. Direct and multidisciplinary dialogue takes place to bring the product to life, involving engineering, prototyping, testing, and refining the design until a functional prototype is achieved.
4. Future (Sustainability): here, the product is launched, aiming to create a social economy that promotes culture, knowledge, and craftsmanship. This involves planning and executing the product launch, monitoring its performance, gathering customer feedback, and incorporating improvements to ensure its long-term sustainability.

### **3.2. Research Goals**

To better understand the perspectives of different parties involved in the new product development, a case study was conducted on TASA. This study aims to answer several key questions:

- What is the perspective of the producers on the product design dimensions?
- Which differences (if any) can be identified in the perceptions of the artisans and designers involved in a multidiscipline team?
- What is the main value that this new product development process effectively brings to the market?

### **3.3. Research Design**

This study employs a qualitative research design (Wolf et al., 2019) utilizing a semi-interview method (Bryman, 2016) to investigate perceptions of participants regarding their experiences with the development of new products within TASA. The sample was selected through purposeful sampling (Bryman, 2016), and the research consisted of six interviews, with six individuals – three artisans and three designers. A semi-structured interview guide was used to facilitate the discussion and ensure consistency across all sessions:

Table 1. Semi-Interview Guide

Dimension	Goals	Category	Question	Author
<p><b>Functionality:</b> To ensure effectiveness and usefulness, functional design is crucial when creating new products.</p>	<p>To understand how production methods and resources are optimized to make sure the products and their features succeed, the best way possible.</p>	<p><b>Efficiency of Production:</b> Product functionality is enhanced by an effective development process, resulting in innovative and competitive products. (Sameti, 2022); (Jindal et al., 2016).</p>	<p>“Do you consider the production is efficient?”</p>	<p>(Bloch, 1995); (Ulrich &amp; Eppinger, 2016); (Veryzer &amp; Borja de Mozota, 2005); (Chiturri et al., 2008); (Homburg et al., 2015); (Jindal et al., 2016); (Buhalis &amp; Sinarta, 2019); (Sameti, 2022).</p>
		<p><b>Ease of production:</b> Ease of production increases as manufacturing is simplified, which decreases costs and improves effectiveness, resulting in more competitive and affordable products (Homburg et al., 2015).</p>	<p>“Is the product easy to produce?”</p>	
		<p><b>Ease of Use:</b> The user experience is enhanced through ease of use, resulting in more appealing and practical products, and increases acceptance and satisfaction. (Chiturri et al., 2008).</p>	<p>“Do you consider the products easy to use?”</p>	
		<p><b>Environmental Responsibility / Sustainability:</b> In order to guarantee sustainability and minimize harmful impacts on the ecosystem, environmental responsibility is crucial in the development of products (Buhalis &amp; Sinarta, 2019).</p>	<p>“Can you describe the importance of the environment in the Product Development Process?”</p>	

Table 1. Semi-Interview Guide

Dimension	Goals	Category	Question	Author
<p><b><u>Aesthetics:</u></b> An aesthetics-focused approach in new product development offers an opportunity to stand out from the competition and build brand recognition.</p>	<p>To understand brand identity and material choices that contribute to product quality</p>	<p><b>Compatibility with the brand:</b> There must be a supportive and positive relationship between the brand and the Product Development team, in order to be successful (Sameti, 2022).</p>	<p>“Do you consider the products you produce are compatible with Project TASA’s identity?”</p>	<p>(Bloch, 1995); (Ulrich &amp; Eppinger, 2016); (Sanders &amp; Stappers, 2008); (Noble &amp; Kumar, 2010); (Rui-Bo et al., 2014); (Homburg et al., 2015) (Luchs, Swan, &amp; Creusen, 2016); (Assioura et al., 2019); (Ying-Ching &amp; Chiu-chi, 2021); (Sameti, 2022).</p>
		<p><b>Quality of materials:</b> Materials reflect the product's personality and influences responses regarding it (Rui-Bo et al., 2014).</p>	<p>“Do you think that the materials used are of great quality? If so, what makes them a great choice?”</p>	
		<p><b>Ease of personalization:</b> The simplicity of customization in production enables firms to respond to unique preferences, improving aesthetic appeal for various consumers (Assiouras et al., 2019).</p>	<p>“Do you consider the products easy to use?”</p>	
		<p><b>Aesthetic:</b> Aesthetics play a major part in the process of developing new products, affecting the perceived attractiveness and appeal (Ying-Ching &amp; Chiu-chi, 2021).</p>	<p>“What do you think about the aesthetic identity of the products?”</p>	

Table 1. Semi-Interview Guide

Dimension	Goals	Category	Question	Author
<p><b>Symbolism:</b> Using symbols when developing new products is a successful technique to tell a story, establish a brand identity, and gain client loyalty.</p>	<p>Gather insights into the project's design approach, philosophy, and execution, its intended purpose, benefits, value proposition, emotional needs, and cultural context.</p>	<p><b>Brand Identity:</b> The introduction of features that stand for the company's beliefs, values and purpose during the new product development process deepens the emotional bond with customers (Wang, Liao, Zheng, &amp; Li, 2019).</p>	<p>“Do you consider the production is “Do you consider that the message of the product is clear?” efficient?”</p>	<p>(Schmitt, 1999); (Prahalad &amp; Ramaswamy, 2004); (Franke &amp; Piller, 2004); (Ericson &amp; Larsson, 2009); (Noble &amp; Kumar, 2010); (Brunner et al., 2016); (Campos, et al. 2017); (Gilal et al., 2018); (Wang et al., 2019); (Baker et al., 2022).</p>
		<p><b>Message Clarity:</b> Within the context of symbolism, the message that products convey must be clear so as to successfully transmit values and meanings (Baker, Fehrer, &amp; Brodie, 2022).</p>	<p>“Do you consider that the message of the product is clear?”</p>	
		<p><b>Connection with the Product:</b> Since imbedded symbolism forges deep connections between the product and the consumer, emotional connection with items is essential in product creation (Campos et al., 2017).</p>	<p>“Do you think that it is possible to create an emotional connection with the product?”</p>	
		<p><b>Cultural Influences:</b> For a symbolic meaning to be well perceived, it is crucial for all the participants to understand said meaning (Brunner et al., 2016).</p>	<p>“Can you discuss an instance where you incorporated cultural design influences into a product?”</p>	

Table 1. Semi-Interview Guide

Dimension	Goals	Category	Question	Author
<b><u>General Discussion Question</u></b>	To understand what the main differentiating element in the Project TASA process is.	<b>Value Creation:</b> The opportunity to make a sustainable profit and establish market competitive advantages is represented by adding value during the new product development process (Payne et al., 2008).	“What is the main differentiating element (added value) that this new product development process effectively brings to the market?”	(Ulrich & Eppinger, 2016); (Payne et al., 2008); (Noble & Kumar, 2010); (Homburg et al., 2015).

Source: Own Elaboration.

Data were collected through recordings and notes and analysed thematically to identify recurring patterns and themes. The interview method was chosen as it allows for a richer collection of data and greater insights into the individual’s perspective of the process (Wolff et al., 2019; Bryman, 2016).

Interviews were conducted online, using *Zoom* platform, recorded, transcribed, translated from the Portuguese language to the English language, and analyzed by category. By the end of each interview, participants were asked to contact the researcher if any aspects of the experience were left unsaid. The data collected from the interviews provides a nuanced and detailed understanding of the participants' perspectives, experiences, and attitudes toward the experience with *TASA*, which is important for the validity and reliability of the findings (Wolff et al., 2019). The data collection procedures used in this study were carefully chosen to ensure the most comprehensive and accurate data possible.

### 3.4. Sampling Techniques and Data Collection Procedures

This study used appropriate sampling techniques and data collection procedures to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. The participants for the study were purposefully selected for their involvement with *TASA* and were all intervenient in the creation of new products in this context (Bryman, 2016).

Interviews were conducted, among 6 sessions, with 6 individuals in total, to gather qualitative data (Creswell, 2002). The semi-structured interviews allowed for in-depth discussions to take place with participants and for the researcher to gain a better understanding of the participants' perspectives and experiences (Bryman, 2016). Additionally, this method promoted a collaborative atmosphere, leading to nuanced and accurate data. Overall, the sampling and data collection techniques employed in this study were carefully chosen to ensure the most robust and valid results possible.

### **3.5. Data Analysis**

The data obtained was analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. The analysis process involved multiple phases, including familiarization, coding, theme development, and interpretation. Familiarization involved readings and immersion in the transcripts, coding involved the identification and labelling of relevant data (Glaser, 1992), theme development involved multiple rounds of refinement and revision, and interpretation involved synthesizing the themes to generate insights and conclusions about the research questions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The data analysis process was guided by the research objectives and ensured the rigor and credibility of the findings.

The deductively created categories and new subcategories, that emerged through an inductive approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018) were validated by two experts in Marketing. To organize and identify the participants in this study, a coding system was created, that associates the initials of the disciplines to which they belong: “A” for Artisans and “D” for Designers. This coding system allowed a more efficient and structured analysis of the collected data. The use of this coding system not only preserves the privacy and anonymity of the participants, but also facilitates the organization of the data during the analysis, allowing the identification of trends and specific patterns in each group.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1. Sample Characterization**

The selected sample consisted of 6 adult individuals, between the ages of 29 and 55. The breakdown by gender was 16.66% male participants and 83.33% female participants, all with

direct involvement with *TASA*. The sample was composed by three designers and three artisans. The sample presents a discipline diversity, with participant distributed in various locations.

*Table 2. Participants' characteristics.*

<b>Total of Participants</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Characteristics</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	
<b>Female</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Age</b>	
<b>18 – 35</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>36 – 55</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Professional area</b>	
<b>Artisan</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Designer</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: Own Elaboration.

#### **4.2. Functionality**

As D1 refers, the product development process "is more complex if you have a connection with the production". This production process involves multidisciplinary communication which, according to D2, can generate "lapses because it involves people and people sometimes don't have the availability to be producing". It can also be difficult to replace specialized artisans as, "some have already died, and it was difficult to find new artisans to cover these products that already existed", as D3 stated. Designers acknowledge the importance of knowing "the technique, and the people who are doing it", D3 highlights. D2 explains how the production and creative process occurs: "Initially, we are introduced to the artisans, we know what it is that they do, how they do it. And we experiment, sometimes we try to do too (...) Because I think it's an asset, we can go to their space with them, and be able to experience for ourselves to have a sense of what it's like."

From the artisans' point of view, A1 stresses that "(...) the designers, not knowing the techniques, the limitations of the potentials of the techniques (...) sometimes it is difficult to

conceive (...)” these limitations can “demotivate the artisans and also the designer (who) does not get what he wants”. A2 supports this view by stating that “there are certain things that the designer may not have that notion”. A3 considers that in their experience “the functional process (...) worked.” However, some concerns were raised regarding the lack of communication by A2: “The designer already had an idea, came to know my work (...) then they presented us with the technical sheet, the result of what he had developed, but we didn’t have any more contact”. A1 confirms that “there is also the issue of communication” specially as “many artisans live in remote areas (...) often with no network.”

Time can be a problem as artisans often can’t precisely establish a date to deliver the pieces as A3 says “then comes the deadline (...) which we gave an idea, we said “but we don’t guarantee because we can’t”.

Production, from the designers' perspective, turns out to be not very easy. D1 explains that “it's hard work because to get the material to create the product and then finally you have the product on your table so. It's so many things before you get the ways.” Changes to the prototype can also occur throughout the process, as D2 states “at the beginning you have one idea and then at the end it will be something completely different, because it will change over time”.

The product creation process can then undergo several changes, but D3 argues that innovation “arises if you make several attempts, several products, one of them will be really innovative and simple to produce. And that will meet all the requirements.” However, wanting to innovate can also be an obstacle to creating a successful product. A1 wonders about functionality, stating that “often the designer is ambitious and wants to do innovative things (...) ends up thinking in very original ways. Really this is an innovation, but then what is the usefulness of this?”

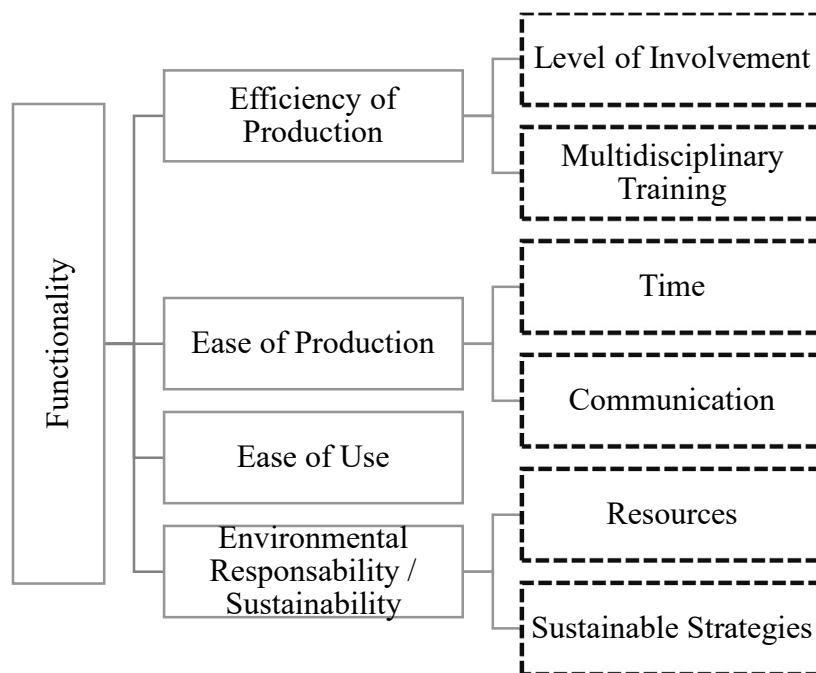
In addition to all the aesthetic issues inherent to the design, D3 explains that one must also “take into account all the issues of the usefulness of the product afterward”. The artisans consider important the observation of the techniques by the designers. A2 considers that the product he created “was very easy to produce (...) maybe it was also easier because the designer who created the piece, also had the care, or it was through what he saw that I made of products that I had already made”. However, he considers the production “a challenge because we're given a technical sheet, we're given a drawing and we have to follow that.” A3 also considers the production “super easy” as the artisans “have been doing this for years” and have developed their own “methodology”. All the participants consider the created products of utilitarian nature, being easy to use and for decoration purposes.

The project is seen by D1 as "sustainable because you have the materials in the territory where the products are created", also reducing the costs associated with the importation of foreign materials. D1 also states that the measures taken have "a green impact on the territory."

The materials are used, avoiding waste, as explained by D2, "the natural materials are all used to the fullest, so there is nothing plastic", and TASA tries to use regional products from the Algarve so "we take advantage of what is ours."

D3 informs that "TASA has tried to do a lot of repurposing" to position itself at an environmental level, and "they have chosen not to use toxic anilines or commercial anilines because they are toxic to the environment". Care for nature is felt by the team members, in this sense A2 confirms "they have a lot of that care", in various aspects of the project such as "in their labels, in the materials, they always try the most natural and most sustainable" says A3.

Figure 1 – Functionality



Source: Own Elaboration

Four categories were identified when analysing the answers regarding the perceptions of the dimension “Functionality” on the product development process: Efficiency of Production, Ease of Production; Ease of Use; Environmental Responsibility / Sustainability.

Following an analysis of the content, new subcategories within the previously established categories emerged. In this manner, the subcategories "Level of Involvement" and

"Multidisciplinary Training" were assigned to the category "Efficiency of Production", while the subcategories "Time" and "Communication" were assigned to the category "Ease of Production." Finally, the subcategories "Resources" and "Sustainable Strategies" were assigned to the category "Environmental Responsibility / Sustainability."

### **4.3. Aesthetics**

In general, participants consider their work compatible with the brand. In this respect, D2 stresses that "the identity of the products can show both sustainability and the traditional, the going to get the origins of things." A2 considers their work compatible with the project because it uses "two elements of earth" that "anyone take out of nature and transform it". Regarding the origin of the products, A1 confirms that the team tries "to make them local and that they are of our traditions", however, maintaining an image "a little bit institutional". Following the traditional, A3 explains that it values the importance that the process attributed "to explain the history, to explain the work that is behind, to explain the inheritance".

The materials "have history there in the territory and also most of them can be obtained or harvested in Algarve" D1 informs. D2 reinforces this position by stating that there is "nothing artificial (...) so that's a plus value to use" and underlines that "nothing goes to the garbage and what goes (...) it can be used, for example, in the field , if we don't have here on the land, that is biodegradable", D2 also gives some examples of materials taken from nature that are implemented in the creation of products, such as "oils for wood treatment are all-natural (...) the chair took the wax from bees and others that olive oil".

However, not all materials are suitable for the idealized work, as D3 explains "there are materials that are more or less resistant. Therefore, I am thinking of Pottery, for example, in which, as a decorative object or at home, which works very well, but then when we go to restoration it no longer works (...) they also don't apply to all functions." A3 warns that when using "materials that come from earth, there is an unpredictability here. To some extent it is no longer called clay as before, it is called "pasta". Why? Because there are mixtures of things". D1 states that it is important "to consider who created, from where the material is sourced" and "if the object has some specific function which is linked to the culture of people".

Origin is important in this process, A1 states that “our products, we try to make them local, and that they are of our traditions”, a view shared by A2 “for starters, they are natural products. And then are products that have something of our identity, many are thought of in the region where we are”.

In terms of personalization, the material also plays a role. D3 declares “often the material is what is most important in this process (...) sometimes you cannot do what a person thinks, always has to adapt it. And then there’s always a conversation with the artisans to see if it’s feasible”. The material can also influence the responsiveness to an order, due to its nature, D2 gives an example “if we get large quantities, for example, in ceramics because it is made on a wheel, it is faster than being a Palma basket that takes longer.” A2 works with ceramics and confirms “I have a lot of ease in doing yes, I work a lot on demand and most jobs are customized”.

The process can, however, be time-consuming just to start, A3 shares their personalization experience: “a Spanish gentleman who is a very famous photographer in Spain (...) wanted to make a table with TASA, (...) he wanted different shades of blue. It took me months to make samples.”. A2 states that “done on paper, everything works very well. But then the materials do not always correspond to the idea that the designer has when he thinks about the pieces”.

Following, A1 explains “we’re actually running away more and more of the customized product because we waste a lot of time to study the parts, to calculate prices, to see the feasibility, and then 80% of the cases the people either don’t respond, or don’t move forward with prototyping”. D3 explains that customizations should be well analyzed since “(...) there have already been customers who go already with ideas, but then (...) there has to be a reasonable minimum amount, it has to be a project that is interesting for TASA to get involved in, because it has costs, and the whole product development part has costs”. For a customized production to be attractive to these producers, they need a minimum quantity of parts to guarantee a financial return, as well as a guarantee of production progress. As A1 states “(personalization) was something that we bet a lot on in the past because it is differentiating (...) but it really is working to warm up and does not bring us any financial return.”

D1 explains that for a successful customization, customers need to “choose something similar (to) what we do. It cannot be (...) something completely different or crazy because then (...) that also has some limits”. If it is something within the normal style of the Project, A1 explains

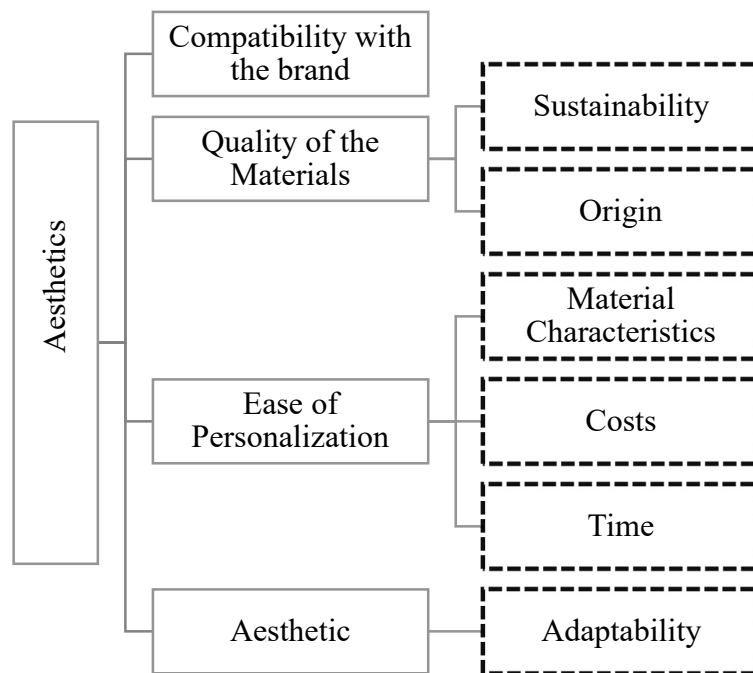
“there are cases where, for example, we already have a custom standard (...) in which customization is easier (...) because we already have a base product.”

In aesthetic terms, D1 considers that “you will never have the same ways if it’s handmade by one artisan. It’s very unique”. A1 adds “(craftsmanship) has its characteristics. And we have 10% of customers who look for imperfections because they know that because it is imperfect, it shows that it is handmade, while very perfect pieces, even if made by hand, could be very well made by a mold or by an industrial process.”

A3 reveals that some “products were discontinued, and others continue. The most traditional were the ones that remained (...) the ones that have been around for centuries.” A1, however, argues that “you have to reach a meeting in which it is possible to do with innovation, but also with simplicity” and adds that “we (in TASA) believe that it is through innovative design that traditional arts and crafts have a future”.

“In general, they are all simple objects”, says D2, “they adapt to any style in terms of interior design (...), it adapts all very well to today’s lifestyle”. D3 highlights that “they are products that have a simple language (...) I think it’s that timelessness factor”. A1 even suggests that “the simplest things, the most normal shapes, are always the most beautiful and the ones that pull the eye the most.”. A2 considers that “they (TASA) have a cleaner line” and recalls that “some products that were created in which were based on the Algarve plat bands. That I think makes a difference. Show the bit of what characterizes us.”. A2 adds that the project “represents well what traditional craftsmanship is” and that it has “a lot of care and good taste”. A3 acknowledges that “I like the products, I wish I had the money to buy them, because there they have a fair price.”

Figure 2 – Aesthetics



Source: Own Elaboration

Four categories were identified when analysing the answers regarding the perceptions of the dimension “Aesthetics” on the product development process: Compatibility with the brand; Quality of materials; Ease of personalization; Aesthetic.

Following an analysis of the content, new subcategories within the previously established categories emerged. In this manner, the subcategories "Sustainability" and "Origin" were assigned to the category "Quality of the Materials”, while the subcategories "Material Characteristics", "Costs" were assigned to the category "Ease of Personalization." Finally, the subcategories "Resources" and "Sustainable Strategies" were assigned to the category "Environmental Responsibility / Sustainability."

#### 4.4. Symbolism

Regarding brand identity, D1 states that TASA “it’s more about values. It’s about people and it’s about the culture and the traditions, the material, the function.”, underlining that they consider that “it’s difficult to have something like that and keep it alive. So really, it’s a matter of heart to me.”

A3 also considers it “really personal” and that it “doesn’t come from the project itself, but from the people who are behind it”. For D2 what really differentiates in TASA identity is “the support of artisans and to develop the products with them” and suggests that “to differentiate now I would say that betting on new materials and new forms of objects”. A2 considers that it is “giving visibility to the artisan’s work, because they value it (...) this is due to projects like this, such as TASA, in which people are already seeing the pieces created by the artisan in another way.”

The choice and work with the materials is also considered a crucial part of the brand's identity. As D3 mentions, “the joining of the materials is something that I think is very important (...), because it is very difficult to find in the market, because who makes palm, only does that.” A1 also highlights the methods defending that “what distinguishes more is that 99% of the processes are manual and there is no brand that does this, even brands that say they are handicrafts use many molds and we do not (...) Therefore, they are made in the traditional way”.

The message of the products is considered clear by D1 but reiterates that “it depends on whether the customers are able to see it if they are able to appreciate it”. D3 says: “there are some products (...) we put (...) on the side also because of the difficulty, sometimes that they had, of people to understand them” for this reason he also states “when I work for TASA I try to think in a timeless language. Let everyone understand at any time. And that it does not follow the fashion, but it follows some simple language and that it remains in time without needing major changes.”

A3 confirms that the products “have a language” and states “I think when I look at the product, I see (...) a care for the craftsman, there is here a care for the land and there is a care for tradition. (...) And the language is always the same, very simple, sometimes combines different materials (...) I identify right there, respect for the culture and identify authenticity.” A2 also has a similar opinion stating “I think there’s always a respect. And that’s what I like about their products (...) there is respect and appreciation”. D2 explains that the “message is also conveyed through description of the products they make. They will seek so much to origin of the idea”, which is in line with the view of A1 who states that customers “don’t just want to buy because it’s a whim of the moment (...) they also want to be involved in the process. They want to understand why that object is like this and where it comes from and who made it “, which makes the description of the products very important to fill this need.

The connection with the product is important for the team. D1 states “if the object or the product is not linked with the belief of the artisan, there is no connection, and the artisan doesn't have any motivation to create something”. A3 considers the feeling of creating a product “a bit of childlike joy, not so much pride, but it's a bit of a childish thing, it goes to get that part of us when we're little and we do a really cool drawing.” A2 confesses “I do things out of passion, out of surrender, I really give myself to doing them (...) any job you do, it's a delivery job and an emotional connection is always created there.” Participants even consider it possible to create feelings for their creations, as D2 states “I think over time, from the beginning, we're satisfied with a drawing or some experience that we've done. That is already like ours” also comments “I have affection for those products that I developed (...) And then when I see photographs and the catalogue, I'm also happy.” D2 considers that TASA is differentiating for “training and making people know, how to make the traditional arts not die.”

The emotional charge involved makes a difference for D1 who declares “It's true that if you work in this environment, you've worked better because you are much more. The values just affect you; you feel just yourself” and adds “It's fulfilling to me.” D3 considers that “It's a product that has a different longevity than it has tact, there's an emotional side. That it is quite human and that it is very interesting to preserve and use.”

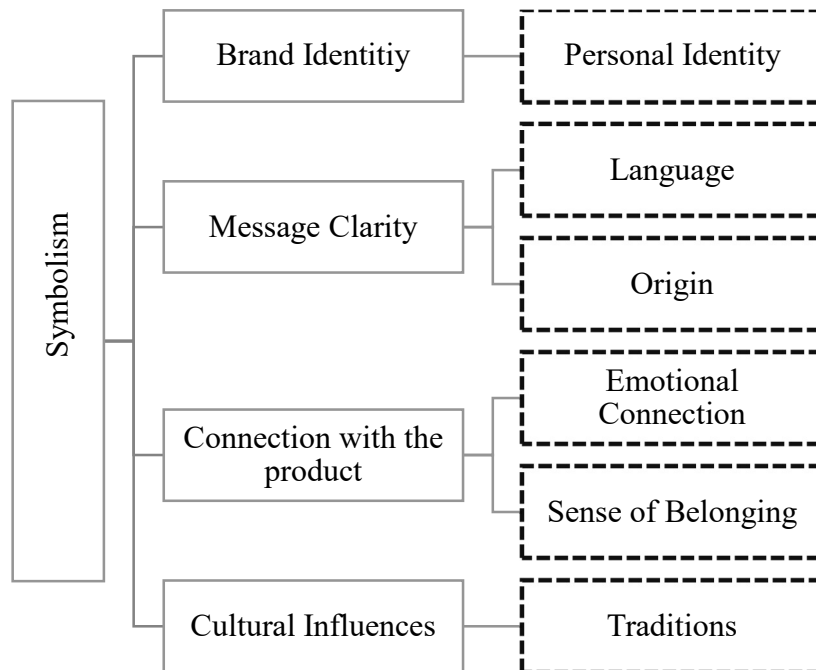
Artisans, on the other hand, seem to find it more difficult to separate themselves from their creations. A1 states that it brings “a sense of belonging, of this is mine, I know I was wrong here, nobody knows, but I know I was wrong here has this detail and I managed to make this finish” and adds that “It costs me a lot to sell the things I do. (...) But this has to do with letting go. In fact, when we're doing it, we know we're going to be doing it to sell and for someone it's not, and it's not for us. But it is natural with time and with the dedication that we give that object, that then this emotional issue is created.”. This connection remains in time, including after the product is sold, as A3 states “In the process we clung to each other a bit and in the end. It costs and that's not all. Then we want to see the photograph. We want to go to the site after it is assembled. We want to go there and see.” A1 also states that the reason for this connection with the product happens because it is an “object he (the artisan) only made once and will never do it again, and often he wants to keep it as an example, but then there is the customer very much wants to buy and he does not resist selling.” D3 considers that the emotional element is something personal “that involves the product either by the materials or by the forms, that attracts or reminds you of some tradition or some element that people remember, in childhood.”

The cultural influence is very strong. D1 states that “the design comes from the region. (...) the design has to follow the function and the signature of the territory. (...) This is what I’m trying to keep.”. Extensive research work is carried out to be as faithful as possible to traditions, A1 informs “when I make a product, when we’re developing a product, it’s always the designer who does this research, who does this prior research work and then together we’ll try to find a middle way.” D2 states “they will seek so much to origin of the idea, for example, the purse. We went to get the traditional one. A little bit of the history of the traditional purse and then has a history of the materials that are sometimes used. So, I think the message is passed”. D3 also shared the experience with cultural influences saying, “with the bench of Beja, the goal was even to catch in the materials and techniques of the Alentejo chairs, but we wanted to make a bench and in a way that brought some more modern dynamics (...) it started from observing the traditional chairs of the Alentejo.”

A1 declares “(...) we’re presenting is also a little bit of culture, in addition to the object, it’s everything that’s behind, everything that led that object to... All the years of history, all the dedication of all these people that led to later, in the end, we were able to make this ancestral technique, but with a current solution” A1 also considers that the products “are very connected to the territory and the stories of the people”.

In the product A2 produced, A2 knows that there are influences from Silves “I know that the colours that were chosen, they took that into account. (...) it had to do here with the Moorish influence, and all this here in this area here in the county”. A3 also works with cultural influences daily. A3 shares that works with “(...) Hispano-Moorish. It began by coming from the Moorish influence, then with the Hispanic influence of optimizing the product, of making it easier for production and also the floral motifs of animals also that the Moors did not use, and we began to introduce in Portugal to there in the 13th or 14th century.” Even though these techniques are still used, A3 sadly shares that there is not much interest from the new generations: “there are things that will disappear even because there are artisans already very old, when we go to the TASA conviviality’s, there are old people there. They have no apprentices. They say “I want to have apprentices, but who? They don’t show up.”

Figure 3 – Symbolism



Source: Own Elaboration.

Four categories were identified when analysing the answers regarding the perceptions of the dimension “Symbolism” on the product development process: Brand Identity; Message Clarity; Connection with the product; Cultural Influences.

Following an analysis of the content of the results, new subcategories within the previously established categories emerged. In this manner, the subcategory "Personal Identity" was assigned to the category "Brand Identity", while the subcategories "Language" and "Origin" were assigned to the category "Message Clarity". The subcategories "Emotional Connection" and "Sense of Belonging" were assigned to the category "Connection with the product" and, finally, the subcategory “Traditions” was assigned to the category “Cultural Influences”.

#### 4.5. Creation of Value

In general question, participants were asked about the value that TASA brings to the market. A1 states that they are differentiated because “they are involving local communities, they are favouring the local economy, (...) local sustainable development.” However, in A1’s point of view what makes them special “is this question of products are actually almost 100 % manual.”

D2 thinks that “the final product, that comes out to market, behind it takes the history and maybe, in the label will convey what was felt in the process (...) then they (...) can transmit more of this teamwork.”

D3 finds differentiating “the combination of materials, with a more modern, more current, more timeless language, but brings some different elements from what was done in the past.” A2 also finds special this junction of materials and adds “the fact of joining materials, using ancestral techniques, that all this uses techniques already old, and joining with current designs. So, I think that makes a difference. That is, not everything that is traditional can be current.”

A3 declares “TASA is a great help, a great addition to the artisans, because they do, they expose the concept (...) they even explain the product. They know how to expose it better than we do.” The participant considers that the main work carried out by TASA was “marketing and introducing it into people’s heads, and into the market, and into the national consciousness – our products, our artisans have value”. D3 shares the same view by stating “it also values their work (artisan), the phase, a side of promotion, the general appreciation of handicrafts in the Algarve.”

#### **4.6. Discussion**

Both Franke & Piller (2004) and Ericson & Larsson (2009) emphasize the notion of encouraging collaboration across a variety of stakeholders as an opportunity to make significant improvements while improving the customer experience. As each dimension may benefit from input from multiple disciplines (Choi & Pak, 2006), design is considered multidisciplinary (Nguyen & Mougenot, 2022). The way how each of us sees things, however, is never going to stay constant. (Jindal et al., 2016). This helps promote the notion that the success of the design process depends on collaboration and considering different points of view of active stakeholders.

There are some differences in the perception of important aspects of functionality among artisans and designers. Artisans consider the usefulness and adaptability of products while designers seek to innovate in the product and its style - in this way they promote innovation and experimentation in new products. (Veryzer & Borja de Mozota, 2005; Rui-Bo et al., 2014). Artisans seek to answer to the practical needs of the consumer, related to issues of functionality. Designers, on the other hand, exploit this dimension for practicality, considering aesthetics and the customer experience as a crucial part of product creation (Ericson & Larsson, 2009).

Designers are conscious of the advantages of understanding the traditional techniques. They treasure the opportunity to appreciate the artists' work closely and adopt the methods themselves. The complex nature of the procedure or a shortage of sufficient supplies could lead to delays on production. (Veryzer & Borja de Mozota, 2005). Designers recognize that creating a link to production raise value to the final product. The final product gains meaning and appreciation because of the production procedure's experience and producers' skills (Franke & Piller, 2004). Natural materials are used because of their compatibility with regional traditions and customs and for their beneficial impact on the environment. Sustainability is emphasized including a focus on decreasing the use of plastic and choosing regional and natural items instead (Assiouras et al., 2019). Given the resources and procedures employed, handmade manufacturing can be arduous and complex. Certain materials are suitable for every project, and some elements require more time and expertise.

The symbolism differs between the two disciplines as artisans attribute deep cultural and historical meanings to their products, attributing a lot of value to them. Designers can assign the same level of symbolism to the product's image and message (Tan & Ming, 2003) As far as the emotional connection with the product is concerned, both disciplines state that it is a very emotional process due to the long involvement in the production. (Kumar & Noble, 2016). Designers seek to create timeless items with simple and everlasting language that have emotional significance. They esteem the product's emotional appeal as it rises memories and provides an intimate appeal which resonates with consumers (Sameti, 2022).

In final analysis, the collaboration between artisans and designers offers a fertile ground for innovative thinking and research. When analysing the desired functions, aesthetics, and symbolism, both groups' approaches could enhance one another and create goods that are highly valuable and meaningful to consumers and producers alike. These approaches may also be reinforced by the development of co-creative environments which promote participation and cooperation and lead to breakthroughs that go beyond the scope of individual boundaries of disciplines.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1. Conclusion

An in-depth understanding of product design within the context of new product development is offered by the findings of the study. All participants agreed that the process is extremely complicated because of the degree of involvement and expertise needed.

Three additional subcategories were found within the "Efficiency of Production" category (Sameti, 2022; Jindal et al., 2016) on the Functionality dimension including "Level of Involvement", "Multidisciplinary Training" and "Adaptability". These factors were crucial building blocks in the creation of new products since they had a direct impact on the extent of production efficiency according to the participants.

"Ease of Production" (Homburg, et al. 2015) was broken down into the subcategories "Time" and "Communication". This outcome is notable since these two factors can significantly affect this phase of the procedure and its results.

In the category "Responsibility for the Environment/Sustainability" (Adbou, et al., 2022); (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019) were identified the subcategories "Resources" and "Sustainable Strategies" underlining the growing significance of sustainability in the development of new products.

On the Aesthetic dimension, the results for the category "Quality of Materials" (Rui-Bo et al., 2014) showed that the subcategories "Sustainability" and "Origin" are heavily considered when developing new products. These factors have a crucial role in decisions relating to the materials used. The subcategories "Material Characteristics," "Costs," and "Time" under the category "Ease of Personalization" (Assiouras et al., 2019) emerge as factors that directly affect the product's capacity for personalization. Finally, the subcategory "Adaptability" in the category "Aesthetic" (Ying-Ching & Chiu-chi, 2021) deserves special attention as it was considered an important factor by the participants when developing new product aesthetics.

The outcomes in the context of symbolism reveal important insights. In the category "Brand Identity" (Wang et al., 2019), the subcategory "Personal Identity" is highlighted, highlighting the significance of the individual's identity when contributing developing the brand's identity. The subcategories "Language" and "Origins" in the category "Message Clarity" (Baker et al.,

2022) stands out as crucial factors in ensuring effective communication and understanding of the product.

The subcategories "Emotional Connection" and "Sense of Belonging" under the category "Connection with the product" (Campos et al., 2017) illustrate the importance of these connections in relation to the products. Finally, in the category "Cultural Influences" (Brunner et al., 2016) the subcategory "Traditions" emerges as having a significant influence on product design, highlighting the intricate relationship between culture and design.

Regardless of the participants' initial disciplinary backgrounds, the findings generally point to a significant consensus among them. This shows that, despite team members' unique differences, there is a common knowledge of product design dimensions within the context of the development of new goods. The results also show how valuable this process is within the TASA because it encourages local development that is sustainable (Adbou, et al., 2022), incorporates a variety of methods and industries that encourage innovation (Ulrich & Eppinger, 2016) and advances workers' understanding of fair working conditions and appreciation.

## **5.2. Theoretical and Practical Implications**

Previous studies have approached the Product Design topic focused on the consumer behaviour and perspective (Noble & Kumar, 2010; Sanders & Stappers, 2008; Jindal et al., 2016), on design created for the user (Veryzer & Borja de Mozota, 2005) and the Product Design Dimensions (Homburg et al., 2015). This investigation, however, theoretically contributes to the topic as it presents the perceptions and perspectives of the ones involved in the Product Development Process and production, providing a clearer view of the motivations and needs of those who design and produce the product itself, which is an essential aspect for the success of the products.

## **5.3. Limitations and Future Research**

There were a few limitations regarding the qualitative investigation conducted. Given the nature of the study, further research could benefit from interviews with a broader sample of professionals, including those that are based on remote locations. The present study was conducted via online, given limitations on that aspect. It is suggested for future research to investigate with deep involvement with the product development process, maybe with resource to in field investigation. The lack of existing literature on the producer's perspective on the

product design dimensions was also a limitation. Accordingly, based on co-creation theory, customer co-creation could be explored using the perspective of customers on designing for product innovation as deeply embedded in the local culture, traditions, and heritage.

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## APPENDIX

### Interview Guide

#### Guião para Entrevista Semi-Estruturada

**Tema:** Contraste de Percepções de artesãos e designers sobre o Design de Produto: Estudo de Caso do Projeto TASA.

**Objetivo:** Compreender como as dimensões de design de produto são percebidas pelos artesãos e designers do Projeto TASA.

**Questões Introdutórias:** Qual o nome do participante? Qual a principal função no projeto TASA? O que o participante acha da experiência de colaboração até então?

#### Questões Específicas:

Dimensão	Pergunta	Autor	Objetivos
<b><u>Funcionalidade</u></b>	“Na sua experiência, a produção no projeto TASA é eficiente? Os produtos são produzidos de maneira eficiente e dinâmica?” = Eficiência da Produção.  “Consegue dar-me um exemplo de um produto que tenha sido mais fácil ou mais difícil de produzir?” = Facilidade de Produção.	Ulrich & Eppinger (2004). Veryzer, R. W., & Borja de Mozota, B. (2005). Bloch (1995). Jindal, P. Rupinder, et al. (2016) (Sameti, 2022)	Compreender como os métodos e recursos de produção são otimizados para garantir o sucesso dos produtos e das suas características, da melhor maneira possível.

	<p>“Considera que os produtos são fáceis de utilizar?” = Facilidade de Uso.</p> <p>“Têm em conta o meio ambiente na sua função? (Se sim, como?)” “Considera que projeto TASA leva em conta questões ambientais?” = Responsabilidade Ambiental / Sustentabilidade.</p>		
<b>Estética</b>	<p>“Acha que os produtos que produz se encaixam bem com o Projeto TASA?”</p> <p>“Pode dar um exemplo de um produto que considere compatível com a identidade do Projeto TASA?” = Compatibilidade com a marca.</p> <p>“Como avalia a qualidade dos materiais utilizados? O que acha que os torna uma boa escolha?” = Qualidade dos materiais.</p> <p>“É possível personalizar os produtos com facilidade?”</p> <p>“Já necessitou de personalizar um produto específico? (Se sim, conte-me mais sobre a</p>	<p>Ulrich &amp; Eppinger (2004).</p> <p>Bloch (1995).</p> <p>Sanders, E. B. N., &amp; Stappers, P. J. (2008).</p> <p>Noble and Kumar (2010).</p> <p>Homburg et al. (2015)</p> <p>Luchs, M. G., Swan, K. S., &amp; Creusen, M. E. (2016).</p> <p>(Sameti, 2022)</p>	<p>Compreender a identidade da marca e as escolhas de materiais que contribuem para a qualidade do produto.</p>

	<p>sua experiência)” = Facilidade de Personalização.</p> <p>“O que acha da aparência dos produtos? Gosta do estilo e do design deles? (Se sim, dê-me um exemplo de um produto que goste)” = Estética</p>		
<b><u>Simbolismo</u></b>	<p>“Para si, o que torna o projeto TASA diferente na criação de novos produtos?” = Identidade da Marca.</p> <p>“A mensagem dos produtos é clara para si? O que interpreta quando vê os produtos?” = Clareza da Mensagem</p> <p>“Acha possível criar uma conexão emocional com os produtos? Já sentiu algum tipo de emoção ao fazer, usar ou ver o produto? (Se sim, como foi?)” = Conexão com o produto.</p> <p>“Já utilizou influências culturais num produto? Se sim, pode partilhar a sua experiência?” = Influências Culturais.</p>	<p>Prahalad, C. K. &amp; Ramaswamy, V. (2004).</p> <p>Franke, N. &amp; Piller, F. (2004).</p> <p>Ericson, Å., Larsson, T. (2009).</p> <p>Schmitt, B. (1999).</p> <p>Noble and Kumar (2010).</p> <p>Gilal, N. G., Zhang, J., &amp; Gilal, F. G. (2018).</p>	<p>Reunir percepções sobre:</p> <p>a abordagem do projeto em relação ao design, filosofia e execução;</p> <p>a sua finalidade e benefícios assim como a proposta de valor;</p> <p>necessidades emocionais e contexto cultural.</p>

<p><b><u>Pergunta para discussão geral</u></b></p>	<p>“Na sua opinião, qual é o principal valor que este processo de desenvolvimento de novos produtos traz para o mercado? O que faz estes produtos serem especiais?” = Criação de valor.</p>	<p>Noble and Kumar (2008); Homburg et al., (2015); Ulrich, Karl and Eppinger, Steven (2004)</p>	<p>Compreender qual é o principal elemento diferenciador no processo do Projeto TASA.</p>
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## CONSENT FORM

### Formulário de Consentimento

Eu, Raquel Branco, estudante do Mestrado Gestão de Marketing da Faculdade de Economia da Universidade do Algarve, no âmbito do desenvolvimento da tese que pretende estudar as dimensões de design de produto e como estas são percebidas pelos artesãos e designers do Projeto TASA, gostaria de convidá-lo a participar numa entrevista a realizar no dia \_\_\_\_ às \_\_\_\_ , a decorrer em formato \_\_\_\_ , através de /em \_\_\_\_ . Estarei disponível para esclarecer quaisquer dúvidas ou preocupações que o participante possa ter antes, durante ou após o estudo, através do e-mail [a61413@ualg.pt](mailto:a61413@ualg.pt) ou contacto +351 969 535 925.

Eu, \_\_\_\_\_ , aceito participar no estudo descrito nas linhas acima. Li e compreendi o propósito do estudo. Compreendo que ao consentir participar neste estudo:

1. Aceito participar na entrevista;
2. Aceito a gravação áudio e vídeo da entrevista;
3. Concordo com que a informação disponibilizada na entrevista possa ser utilizada em publicações e apresentações no âmbito de objetivos educacionais da Universidade do Algarve.

Entendo que a minha participação é voluntária e que posso desistir a qualquer momento do projeto sem ser prejudicado de alguma forma. Entendo que quaisquer dados que o pesquisador extraia da entrevista, para uso em relatórios ou descobertas publicadas, não irão conter, em hipótese alguma, nomes ou características que identifiquem os participantes. Apenas pessoal autorizado da Universidade do Algarve têm o direito de rever os registos das entrevistas, garantindo a confidencialidade dos mesmos na medida permitida por lei.

Participo no estudo tal como descrito acima "

Não participo no estudo tal como descrito acima "

Assinatura: \_\_\_\_\_

Data: \_\_\_\_\_

## CATEGORIZATION GRID

Categories	Subcategories	Registration Unit	Interview
<b>Functionality</b>	<b>Efficiency of Production</b>	"I just wanted to learn this technique because if I have to design something I need to get to know this technique."	<b>D1</b>
		"it's more complex if you have a connection with the production. If you know how the product was created. (...) If you experience the production, The product for you has different value."	<b>D1</b>
		"It's much longer because you deal with the person and if the person is. Working on the object or on the product from very beginning until the end and something can go wrong"	<b>D1</b>
		"The production has lapses because it involves people and people sometimes don't have the availability to be always producing"	<b>D2</b>
		"Initially, we are introduced to the artisans, we know what it is that they do, how they do it. And we experiment, sometimes we try to do too (...) Because I think it's an asset, we can go to their space with them, and be able to experience for ourselves to have a sense of what it's like."	<b>D2</b>
		"They involved several artisans, some already disappeared, and it was difficult to find new artisans to cover these products that already existed"	<b>D3</b>
		"There's always a side of knowing the technique, and the people who are doing it and then it, so TASA has worked like that. Then the Designers start drawing. And expose ideas and work with the artisans"	<b>D3</b>
		"We begin to talk about the problems of - what would be better, and what would not be and then we can change the design and we can make the changes. According to the artisan also, to be more viable so that it also meets the way of working of the artisan"	<b>D3</b>
		"Sometimes it is not possible or by material even that also it doesn't fit everything, or the artisan who doesn't have the time or who is a piece that requires a lot of time and isn't available for that kind of pieces, or (...) it depends on the artisan too, each artisan has his personality, has his way of working, has his direction."	<b>D3</b>

	" (...) the designers, not knowing the techniques, the limitations of the potentials of the techniques (...) sometimes it is difficult to conceive (...) It demotivates the artisans and also the designer does not get what he wants.	<b>A1</b>
	"Because the artisan, he is also a creative being, he does not perform alone. Of course, training is very important, because then we see (...) people who try to innovate and do things with little taste, (...) they are not sensitized to the question of the harmonious and the beautiful, sometimes they fall into excesses."	<b>A1</b>
	"There is also the issue of communication, many artisans live in remote areas of highland, often have no network, it is very difficult to count them"	<b>A1</b>
	"It is this ability to organize that sometimes makes it very complicated to work with artisans."	<b>A1</b>
	"I think for things to work better, maybe there needs to be more communication between everyone (...) maybe, if we were collaborating together, it would be better to adjust more from here, adjust more from there so that the thing would be better. A better link. "	<b>A2</b>
	"There are certain things that the designer may not have that notion (...) sometimes it's a problem."	<b>A2</b>
	"The designer already had an idea, came to know my work and depending on what she saw the way I worked it, created that piece. (...) Then they presented us with the technical sheet, the result of what he had developed, but we didn't have any more contact. "	<b>A2</b>
	"We can't open much because of the technical characteristics and then it malfunctions, but at least we already have, we are open to communication and trying to work with the designer."	<b>A3</b>
	"Then comes the deadline, the end of that deadline, which we gave an idea we said, "But we don't guarantee it because we can't", because the phase of the samples is indeterminate."	<b>A3</b>
	"But everything more or less worked, in the functional process it worked. There were things that customers didn't adhere to. How the Designers had created on their heads. (...) We did it that way, but then people didn't understand it or didn't think it was a joke. In our head it made sense."	<b>A3</b>
<b>Ease of Production</b>	"It takes so much time (...) it's hard work because. To get the material to create the product and then finally you have the product on your table so. It's so much things before you get the ways. It's the harvest, then the work, then talking with the artisan. It's then designing it, creating it. It's so long and then you have the product."	<b>D1</b>

	<p>"They are not easy, because at the beginning you have one idea and then at the end, it will be something completely different because it will change over time"</p>	<b>D2</b>
	<p>The most difficult, maybe the chair of the TASA Project, OSIA (...) In terms of design. But in terms of the material and the time it takes to make, the drawing was coming out, it was not the first one."</p>	<b>D2</b>
	<p>"As the course (of vegetable fibers) was ongoing, and we had apprentices there and we had the masters, and I at the same time was learning to do the woven palm leaf. And I was doing it and then when I saw the technique, I thought about it. The suitcase consists of a part of leather and another of woven palm leaf."</p>	<b>D2</b>
	<p>"Innovation here does not arise from making a product, it arises if you make several attempts, several products, one of them will be really innovative and simple to produce. And that will meet all the requirements. "</p>	<b>D3</b>
	<p>"You have to take into account all the issues of the usefulness of the product afterward."</p>	<b>D3</b>
	<p>"I think sometimes Designers have difficulty (...). often the designer is ambitious and wants to do innovative things and different things and wants to innovate with basketry, which is also complicated and ends up thinking in very original ways. Really this is an innovation, but then what is it the usefulness of this?"</p>	<b>A1</b>
	<p>"It ends up having the aesthetics, but then the functionality doesn't... It doesn't hit right anymore. Processes are experiences."</p>	<b>A1</b>
	<p>"This product that was presented to me was very easy to produce, because it was also not like that, nothing complex. Then maybe it was also easier because the designer who created the piece, also had the care, or it was through what he saw that I made of products that I had already made"</p>	<b>A2</b>
	<p>"It's a challenge because we're given a technical sheet, we're given a drawing and we have to follow that. That's a challenge, because when we're the ones creating."</p>	<b>A2</b>
	<p>"Then it's super easy. Because there you have it, the methodology, we've been doing this for years it's super easy. If it's a piece different, because there already... There's a little more study."</p>	<b>A3</b>
	<p>"There were things easier than others, there were some that(...) people didn't join. The idea behind it was cute, the concepts of the Designers, but then it didn't come out."</p>	<b>A3</b>

	"But everything more or less worked, in the functional process it worked. There were things that customers didn't adhere to. How the Designers had created on their heads. (..) We did it that way, but then people didn't understand it or didn't think it was a joke. In our head it made sense. "	<b>A3</b>
<b>Ease of Use</b>	"Yes (products are of daily use)"	<b>D1</b>
	"Yes (it's easy). For example, I developed some objects directed to a hotel in Vilamoura (...) they were little jars, they were accessible."	<b>D2</b>
	"Yes, but more than are home utilities, but also decorative."	<b>D3</b>
	"This was thought for the person to have at home and treat with care."	<b>A1</b>
	"Yes, it is a decorative and utilitarian piece."	<b>A2</b>
	"They are basically all utilitarian, even the tabletop, despite being decorative."	<b>A3</b>
<b>Environmental Responsibility / Sustainability</b>	"it's sustainable because you have the materials in the territory where the products are created. (...) The artisans can harvest it by their own hands. Or they can buy it from another artisan in the same territory, so it's it has a green impact on the territory or sustainable."	<b>D1</b>
	"The natural materials are all used to the fullest, so there is nothing plastic there and we take advantage of what is ours."	<b>D2</b>
	"There are factors, for example, the palm for many years they have chosen not to use toxic anilines or commercial anilines because they are toxic to the environment"	<b>D3</b>
	"TASA has tried to do a lot of repurposing (...) sometimes what they also do is that, depending on the packaging system and where it goes and the quantity, are recovered boxes of other orders."	<b>D3</b>
	"The public with which we work mostly abroad and people very sensitized to these sustainability issues"	<b>A1</b>
	"We actually sell these brand flags, but we comply to the fullest. While 90% of the companies in the market sell these flags, but then they do not comply, they say it is artisanal isn't, they say it's sustainable, it's not. They say it's processed with local resources and not. Yes, we try to make it always."	<b>A1</b>
	"They use the products a lot of the environment where they are, as they use natural fibers a lot. (...) They have a lot of that care, no doubt about it."	<b>A2</b>
	"(...)in their labels, in the materials, they always try the most natural and most sustainable. Because they like to keep the natural, simple things. Therefore, the product itself is more sustainable. It is ourselves who need to have this awareness."	<b>A3</b>

Aesthetics	Compatibility with the brand	“Think that, yes (it is compatible). But it depends if the clients are able to see it, if they are able to appreciate it because people usually, they are not used to search more behind the product history or production history.”	<b>D1</b>
		"I think so that the identity of the products can show both sustainability and the traditional, the going to get the origins of things."	<b>D2</b>
		“(…) our brand is a little bit institutional. And one wants to be sober and with some distinction, without much daring. I think yes that it fulfills, that is within what which is what the brand wants."	<b>A1</b>
		“For example, the product I make uses 2 elements of the earth, clay, and sugarcane. Anyone can take it out of nature and transform it. I think so and even of the products I've seen from TASA I think they fit very well into what the project is, without a doubt.”	<b>A2</b>
		“What they did was that, was saying, it has value and why. And to explain the history, to explain the work that is behind, to explain the inheritance that goes from parents to children and that goes on the know-how."	<b>A3</b>
	Quality of the Materials	“They use the material that are native and have history there in the territory and also most of them can be obtained or harvested in Algarve”	<b>D1</b>
		“it's not just that you have to design some product. Which looks nice from some cool material you have to consider who created from where the material is sourced. If the object has some specific function which is linked to the culture to the people"	<b>D1</b>
		"Because they are natural materials, and we can go to the field and... It's natural, it's not there, nothing artificial, plastics, let's say, no. So that's a plus value to use."	<b>D2</b>
		"Nothing goes to the garbage and what goes (...) it can be used, for example, in the field, if we don't have here on the land, that is biodegradable"	<b>D2</b>
		"Oils for wood treatment are all-natural, for example, the chair took the wax from Bees and others take olive oil. So, it's not chemical at all. We always try to use as natural as possible. (...) it's regional."	<b>D2</b>
		“First because they are natural materials (...) depending on the materials, there are materials that are more or less resistant. Therefore, I am thinking of Pottery, for example, in which, as a decorative object or at home, which works very well, but then when we go to restoration	<b>D3</b>

	it no longer works because it has many chips and then we have to see exactly the use of natural and traditional products and materials in the Algarve, yes, but then they also don't apply to all functions."	
	"Our products, we try to make them local. And that they are of our traditions."	<b>A1</b>
	"For starters, they are natural products. And then are products that have something of our identity. Many are thought of in the region where we are."	<b>A2</b>
	"These are materials that come from Earth, there is an unpredictability here. To some extent It is no longer called clay as before, it is called Pasta. Why? Because there are mixtures of things, they already"	<b>A3</b>
<b>Ease of Personalization</b>	"I think it will be difficult (...) if somebody wants to have their own customized. They have to choose something similar (to) what we do. It cannot be (...) something completely different or crazy because then (...) that also has some limits so."	<b>D1</b>
	"Depends on the material.... if we get large quantities, for example, in ceramics, because it is made on a wheel, it is faster than being a Palma basket that takes longer, or the stuffing of chairs."	<b>D2</b>
	"(...) often the material is what has more importance in this process, that the material, sometimes you cannot do what a person thinks, always has to adapt it. And then there's always a conversation with the artisans to see if it's feasible."	<b>D3</b>
	"(...) there have already been customers who go already with ideas, but then - for now there has to be a reasonable minimum amount, it has to be a project that is interesting for TASA to get involved in, because it has costs, and the whole product development part has costs."	<b>D3</b>
	"we're actually running away more and more of the customized product because we waste a lot of time to study the parts, to calculate prices, to see the feasibility, and then 80% of the cases the people either don't respond, or don't move forward with prototyping, so we end up wasting too much time on that "	<b>A1</b>
	"It was something that we bet a lot on in the past because it is differentiating compared to other stores, but it really is working to warm up and does not bring us any financial return."	<b>A1</b>
	"Done on paper, everything works very well. But then the materials do not always correspond to the idea that the designer has when he thinks about the pieces"	<b>A2</b>

	"(...) I have a lot of ease in doing yes, I work a lot on demand and most jobs are customized. Because I work so much on ceramics."	<b>A2</b>
	"a Spanish gentleman who is a very famous photographer in Spain (...) wanted to make a table with TASA, (...) he wanted different shades of blue. It took me months to make samples. "	<b>A3</b>
	"There are cases where, for example, we have already we have a custom standard (...) in which customization is easier. Why? Because we already have a base product. Then it's easier to customize. Because we take something where the customizable part is more or less controlled."	<b>A3</b>
<b>Aesthetic</b>	"You will never have the same ways if it's handmade by one artisan. It's very unique."	<b>D1</b>
	" In general, they are all simple objects, they are not very complex. And they adapt to any style in terms of interior design, to any style of home. Therefore, the ones that are more for the whites, others more for the vegetable fibers, but it adapts all very well to today's lifestyle and the style of home."	<b>D2</b>
	"They are products that have a simple language (...) They're timeless (...), I think it's that timelessness factor."	<b>D3</b>
	"We believe that it is through an innovative design that traditional arts and crafts have a future."	<b>A1</b>
	" (...)the general public also has to realize that handicraft work and has imperfections, is not an industrial product, which enters a machine and leaves the other perfection. It has its characteristics. And we have 10% of customers who look for imperfections because they know that because it is imperfect, it shows that it is handmade, while very perfect pieces, even if made by hand, could be very well made by a mold or by an industrial process."	<b>A1</b>
	"You have to reach a meeting in which it is possible to do with innovation, but also with simplicity."	<b>A1</b>
	"The simplest things, the most normal shapes, are always the most beautiful and the ones that pull the eye the most."	<b>A1</b>
	"(...) they have a cleaner line."	<b>A2</b>
	"I think it represents well what traditional craftsmanship is and some of the products that TASA uses a lot, for example, natural fibers. It's all those shades Earth, those lighter shades. But I like the presentation and I think they've been careful in the presentation, in the disclosure. Yes, I think they have a lot of care and good taste".	<b>A2</b>

		"(...) products were discontinued and others continued. The most traditional were the ones that remained, the ones that have been around for centuries."	<b>A3</b>
<b>Symbolism</b>	<b>Brand Identity</b>	"It's more about values. It's about people and it's about the culture and the traditions. The material, the function."	<b>D1</b>
		"Everything is a really special project and I wish that there is more like that because then there is more companies or more brands. Working in that way, but I think it's really difficult. So, I don't know how they did it because it's so difficult to have something like that and keep it alive. So really, it's a matter of heart for me."	<b>D1</b>
		"The differentiation of TASA lies in the support of artisans and develop the products with them, to differentiate now I would say that betting in new materials and new forms of objects"	<b>D2</b>
		"The joining of the materials is something that I think is very important also in the differentiation of TASA, because it is very difficult to find in the market, because who makes palm, only does that."	<b>D3</b>
		"The balance between the use of materials in the whole collection that makes TASA work and that new products bring something new to the market."	<b>D3</b>
		"What distinguishes more is that 99% of the processes are manual and there is no brand that does this, even brands that say they are handicrafts use many molds and we do not (...) Therefore, they are made in the traditional way."	<b>A1</b>
		"It's good in the sense of giving visibility to the artisan's work, because they value it (...) this is due to projects like this, such as TASA, in which people are already seeing the pieces created by the craftsman in another way."	<b>A2</b>
		"I think maybe to the people behind it. (...) I think that's it, it's really personal. This doesn't come from the project itself, but from the people who are behind it, I think."	<b>A3</b>
	<b>Message Clarity</b>	"Think that, yes (it is clear). But it depends if the clients are able to see it if they are able to appreciate it because people usually, they are not used to search more behind the product history or production history."	<b>D1</b>
		"When we enter the store, we immediately have a different atmosphere from other stores, because we saw everything natural, everything more for the natural."	<b>D2</b>
"(...) Message is also conveyed through description of the products they make. They will seek so much to origin of the idea"		<b>D2</b>	

	"When I work for TASA I try to think in a timeless language. Let everyone understand at any time. And that it does not follow the fashion, but it follows some simple language and that it remains in time without needing major changes."	<b>D3</b>
	"It's a product that has a different longevity than it has tact, there's an emotional side. That it is quite human and that it is very interesting to preserve and use."	<b>D3</b>
	"They don't just want to buy because it's a whim of the moment (...) they also want to be involved in the process. They want to understand why that object is like this and where it comes from and who made it (...) And it's really cool because I think (...) the Portuguese of the future will be a little bit more so sensitized to these issues and also to value what is ours, because we have very good and beautiful craftsmanship, with quality with durability."	<b>A1</b>
	"I think there's always respect. And that's what I like about their products, there's respect by nature. There is a respect for the area where they are inserted. There is respect and appreciation."	<b>A2</b>
	"I think they have a language. That shows, it immediately makes that direct link. I think when I look at the product, I see (...) a care for the craftsman, there is here a care for the land and there is a care for tradition. (...) And the language is always the same, very simple, sometimes combines different materials, quite natural, and the care of the packaging and to have the concept there on the labels for me, I identify right there, respect for the culture and identify authenticity."	<b>A3</b>
<b>Connection with the products</b>	"If the object or the product is not linked with the belief of the artisan, there is no connection, and the artisan doesn't have any motivation to create something"	<b>D1</b>
	"It's like a matter of a heart. So I think that yes, during the process you can create the emotional connection with the process and with the final product."	<b>D1</b>
	"It's true that if you work in this environment, you've worked better because you are much more. The values just affect you; you feel just yourself. Of course, you have to deal with every day's troubles, but (...) it's fulfilling me."	<b>D1</b>
	"That's the differentiating element of TASA, which is training and making people know, how to make the traditional arts not die."	<b>D2</b>
	"I think over time, from the beginning, we're satisfied with a drawing or some experience that we've done. That is already like ours."	<b>D2</b>
	"I think over time, from the beginning, we're satisfied with a drawing or some experience that we've done. That is already like ours."	<b>D2</b>

	"It's a product that has a different longevity than it has tact, there's an emotional side. That it is quite human and that it is very interesting to preserve and use."	<b>D3</b>
	"There is an emotional charge that involves the product either by the materials or by the forms, that attracts or reminds you of some tradition or some element that people remember, in childhood, something that makes people be interested in the products."	<b>D3</b>
	"It costs me a lot to sell the things I do. (...) But this has to do with letting go. In fact, when we're doing it, we know we're going to be doing it to sell and for someone it's not, and it's not for us. But it is natural with time and with the dedication that we give that object, that then this emotional issue is created."	<b>A1</b>
	"That it's a sense of belonging, of this is mine, I know I was wrong here, nobody knows, but I know I was wrong here has this detail and I managed to make this finish."	<b>A1</b>
	"The traditional artisan ends up having more of this emotional connection. Why? That object he only made once and will never do it again, and often he wants to keep it as an example, but then there is the customer very much wants to buy and he does not resist selling."	<b>A1</b>
	"I do things out of passion, out of surrender, I really give myself to doing them. And, yes, any job you do, it's a delivery job and yes, an emotional connection is always created there. I always create an emotional connection with the product, which I do."	<b>A2</b>
	"In the process we clung to each other a bit and in the end. It costs and that's not all. Then we want to see the photograph. We want to go to the site after it is assembled. We want to go there and see."	<b>A3</b>
	"It's a bit of childlike joy, not so much pride, but it's a bit of a childish thing, but it's, it goes to get that part of us when we're little and we do a really cool drawing, better than the others we had done"	<b>A3</b>
<b>Cultural influences</b>	"I really like OSIA, is a big chair. And I think that the design comes from the region. (...) The design has to follow the function and the signature of the territory. (...) This is what I'm trying to keep. I don't want to put some design on the material and traditional techniques which is not linked with it so much."	<b>D1</b>
	"They will seek so much to origin of the idea, for example, the purse. We went to get the traditional one. A little bit of the history of the traditional purse and then has a history of the materials that are sometimes used. So, I think the message is passed."	<b>D2</b>

	"For example, with the bench of Beja, the goal was even to catch in the materials and techniques of the Alentejo chairs, but we wanted to make a bench and in a way that brought some more modern dynamics (...) it started from observing the traditional chairs of the Alentejo."	<b>D3</b>
	"They are very connected to the territory and the stories of the people, of certain regions that we also present in our Story Telling, when we are selling the piece, we also explain why it was like this or why it wasn't like that."	<b>A1</b>
	"When I make a product, when we're developing a product, it's always the designer who does this research, who does this prior research work and then together we'll try to find a middle way, "	<b>A1</b>
	"(...) we're presenting is also a little bit of culture, in addition to the object, it's everything that's behind, everything that led that object to... All the years of history, all the dedication of all these people that led to later, in the end, we were able to make this ancestral technique, but with a current solution."	<b>A1</b>
	" I know that that piece represents a little bit here this county, the county of Silves. I know that the colours that were chosen, they took that into account. (...) I know it had to do here with the Moorish influence, and all this here in this area here in the county. And the fact that we put the cane together and all that, also had to do here with this area and the county where it was inserted."	<b>A2</b>
	"There are things that will disappear even because there are artisans already very old, when we go to the TASA convivialities, there are old people there. They have no apprentices. They say "I want to have apprentices, but who? They don't show up."	<b>A3</b>
	"(...) Hispano-Moorish, it began by coming from the Moorish influence, then with the Hispanic influence of optimizing the product, of making it easier for production, and also the floral motifs of animals also that the Moors did not use, and we began to introduce in Portugal to there in the 13th or 14th century."	<b>A3</b>
<b>Creation of Value</b>	"They are sustainable, they have, they keep some ethic rules. They are involving local communities. They are favoring the local economy, local development, local sustainable development."	<b>D1</b>
	"I think the final product that comes out to market. Behind it takes history and maybe, in the etiquette will convey what was felt in the process."	<b>D2</b>
	"(...) through the communication of those who make the communication of the product, then they can understand and can transmit more of this teamwork."	<b>D2</b>

" I think it also values their work (artisan), the phase, a side of promotion, the general appreciation of handicrafts in the Algarve."	<b>D3</b>
"With the combination of materials, with a more modern, more current, more timeless language, but brings some different elements from what was done in the past."	<b>D3</b>
"I think what distinguishes us the most is this question of products are actually almost 100% manual."	<b>A1</b>
"We want to do more quantity, we want to be more competitive in the market, but we don't want to lose our best flag, which is the fact that things are 100% handmade."	<b>A1</b>
"Also, to present to the people, the territory, the techniques, where it was done, why it was made, what the needs were, for example, the basketry in cane was widely used in fishing. "	<b>A1</b>
"What I like about them too is this junction of materials. The fact of joining materials, using ancestral techniques, that all this uses techniques already old, and joining with current designs. So, I think that makes a difference. That is, not everything that is traditional can be current."	<b>A2</b>
"TASA even explains it and TASA has this that we didn't have. TASA is a great help, a great addition to the artisans because they do, they expose the concept, they have the subtitles, they have those little books. They even explain the product. They know how to expose it better than we do."	<b>A3</b>
"And then what TASA and other projects of the genre did was marketing and introducing it into people's heads, and into the market, and into the national consciousness – "not our products, our artisans have value, they have that value." And they explained what the value was, they explained why."	<b>A3</b>