Face Values: Global Perceptions Survey

Media Backgrounder

Updated June 2014. Act on Red is an awareness programme developed and funded by Galderma S.A.
Overview

People’s first impressions of one another are powerful and affect many aspects of our lives. From job interviews to first dates and social interactions, how we form our opinions of others is often based on our initial subconscious perceptions that we are mostly unaware of. Decades of research confirm that first impressions really do count and our beliefs about a person’s character are frequently based on their physical appearance.¹

For most people, reddening of the face, sometimes referred to as facial redness, is a normal occurrence usually lasting only a short time, particularly when triggered by emotional factors such as embarrassment, stress or anger. However, for the 10-12% of the population estimated to suffer from rosacea, a common inflammatory skin condition, facial redness is persistent and often permanent.²,³,⁴

As redness associated with rosacea appears predominantly in the facial region, and impacts the observable appearance of a sufferer, it can be a worrying and distressing condition. Those diagnosed with rosacea are often affected emotionally and by social stigma with many experiencing depression, anxiety, embarrassment and lowered self-esteem.⁵,⁶

The Face Values: Global Perceptions Survey was commissioned by Galderma S.A. to further existing research in this field and:

- Assess how we evaluate people based on our immediate, subconscious perceptions
- Confirm whether the presence of facial redness associated with rosacea impacts people’s perceptions of sufferers
- Establish how sufferers themselves feel about their condition, and how facial redness impacts their emotional and psychological wellbeing and day to day lives

Methodology

A total of 6,831 adults aged 25 to 64 years across eight countries were surveyed online:

- **Denmark** = 501 respondents
- **France** = 1,013 respondents
- **Germany** = 1,003 respondents
- **Great Britain** = 1,006 respondents
- **Ireland** = 550 respondents
- **Italy** = 1,006 respondents
- **Mexico** = 1,002 respondents
- **Sweden** = 750 respondents
Quotas were set by age, gender and geographic region to ensure a reliable and accurate representation of each country’s population. The survey included a bespoke psychological assessment, Emotix®, to measure respondents’ immediate and unconscious reactions to facial imagery and a traditional questionnaire*.

**Emotix® Assessment**
The Emotix® assessment was developed by *Innovation Bubble* and is based on the well-established psychological test known as the Implicit Association Test. Assessments based on implicit attitudes seek to isolate and identify the initial, subconscious response. The Emotix® assessment is built upon statistical modelling and the latest understanding of neuroscience and decision making processes. It highlights the difference between system 1 decision making (fast, intuitive, subconscious and emotional) and system 2 decision making (slow, considered, vetted, socially acceptable and rational).7

During the Emotix® assessment, respondents were asked to associate or discard words shown next to a face image either of someone with facial redness or of someone without the condition. The speed of their response directly linked to their initial, subconscious perception to the face appearing on screen.

*The models used within the Emotix® assessment and questionnaire did not suffer from facial redness - the images were digitally retouched to accurately represent the typical facial redness pattern associated with rosacea and verified by a dermatologist*.

*Example images shown to respondents*
*Northern European male and female images, with facial redness (left) and without facial redness (right)*
Questionnaire

Following the Emotix© assessment, respondents completed a traditional questionnaire answering a series of questions related to an image of a person either with or without facial redness, one image being male and the other female.

Respondents identified with rosacea via screening questions were also asked their views on what it is like to live with facial redness and how the condition impacts on various aspects of their daily lives.

What did the survey show?

Overall, results from the *Face Values: Global Perceptions Survey* showed that people with facial redness associated with rosacea may be disadvantaged when it comes to other’s first impressions. Images of faces with redness received less positive assessments across a number of physical and personality characteristics.

Results from the Emotix© assessment showed that words and phrases related to *poor health* (e.g. sick, stressed, tired) were immediately associated more strongly with facial redness images (Figure 1). However, words and phrases relating to *positive* personality characteristics (e.g. trustworthy, successful, confident) were more strongly associated with clear faces (Figure 2).

**Figure 1: Strength of intuitive responses of health related words associated with clear and red facial images.**

**Figure 2: Strength of intuitive responses of personality related words associated with clear and red facial images.**

In Figures 1 and 2, a score nearer to 100 indicates a very strong intuitive association between the word and the face – while a score of 0 indicates no association. The difference in the strength of these associations between the faces are all statistically significant (p<0.05).
The survey found that up to 12% of the population is affected by facial redness associated with rosacea, yet approximately only one in ten of these individuals have received a formal diagnosis. It also highlighted that eight in ten (78%) of those with facial redness associated with rosacea find the condition unpredictable and difficult to control.

However, those with diagnosed rosacea were significantly more likely to have their symptoms under control indicating that with diagnosis and appropriate treatment people can take control of their condition and positively influence first impressions.

Self-reports from sufferers also highlighted concerns about their condition and its negative impact on daily life. The survey showed that people who suffer from facial redness associated with rosacea are affected socially, emotionally and at work, and that their condition has a negative impact on their relationships:

**Socially:**
- Based on first impressions alone, people are less likely to consider being friends with those with facial redness, compared to those without (58% vs. 71%)
- In addition, 67% of people with facial redness associated with rosacea are affected socially:
  - 36% felt uncomfortable meeting new people
  - 23% felt embarrassed by what family/friends thought of them
  - 32% had been stared at by people/have been the subject of rude comments or jokes

**Emotionally:**
- 77% of people with facial redness associated with rosacea are affected emotionally:
  - 37% had lowered self-confidence and self-esteem
  - 46% felt embarrassed by what people think
  - 22% felt sad/depressed
  - 69% would be willing to give up something to get rid of their facial redness (44% chocolate, 20% television, 18% exercise)

**Relationships:**
- Based on first impressions alone, people are less likely to believe those with facial redness are in a relationship, compared to those without (77% vs. 87%)
- In addition, 53% of people with facial redness associated with rosacea are affected in their relationships/dating behaviour:
  - 19% felt less confident about forming a relationship
  - 29% felt uncomfortable dating
  - 21% were embarrassed about what their partners think
At work:

- Based on first impressions alone:
  - People are less likely to hire those with facial redness for a job, compared to those without (70% vs. 85%)
  - People are less likely to think that those with facial redness are in professional/managerial jobs, compared to those without (43% vs. 61%)
- In addition, 63% of people with facial redness associated with rosacea were affected at work:
  - 32% said that their condition affected their confidence with presenting/public speaking
  - 29% were embarrassed by what their colleagues thought of them
  - 27% had reduced confidence in interviews

The global research was conducted by Bryter, an independent market research consultancy, between 31 October and 18 November 2013.

References