

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ARTISTIC HAIR COLORING TECHNIQUES: EVALUATING THE EFFICACY OF THE AIRTOUCH AND SASAK METHODS IN MODERN HAIR AESTHETICS

ANÁLISE COMPARATIVA DE TÉCNICAS ARTÍSTICAS DE COLORAÇÃO CAPILAR: AVALIAÇÃO DA EFICÁCIA DOS MÉTODOS AIRTOUCH E SASAK NA ESTÉTICA CAPILAR MODERNA

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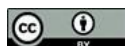
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Abstract

Purpose: In the burgeoning domain of hair aesthetics, the advent of artistic hair coloring techniques has attracted significant attention among beauty professionals and clients. The study compares two prominent techniques: AirTouch and Sasak (Weaving), which aim to evaluate efficacy, aesthetic results, and consumer acceptance. **Design/Methodology/Approach:** Using an experimental-comparative design, 78 trained observers assessed the final results of hair coloring using standard instruments. Quantitative data analysis includes descriptive statistics, normality test, homogeneity variance, and independent sample t-test. **Findings:** The results showed no statistically significant difference in the mean aesthetic score of the two techniques ($p > 0.05$), although AirTouch showed results more consistent with the normally distributed scores. The findings suggest that both techniques are equally effective in achieving hair color targets (ash brown), with AirTouch offering smoother color transitions and Sasak providing bolder contrasts. These results are crucial for stylists in choosing the appropriate technique based on the client's preferences and desired results. **Research limitations/implications:** The findings contribute to the growing body of knowledge in hair

Resumo

Objetivo: No crescente domínio da estética capilar, o advento das técnicas artísticas de coloração do cabelo tem atraído bastante atenção entre os profissionais de beleza e os clientes. O estudo compara duas técnicas proeminentes: AirTouch e Sasak (Weaving), com o objetivo de avaliar a eficácia, os resultados estéticos e a aceitação dos consumidores. **Design/Methodologia/Abordagem:** Utilizando um design experimental-comparativo, 78 observadores treinados avaliaram os resultados finais da coloração do cabelo utilizando instrumentos padrão. A análise quantitativa dos dados inclui estatísticas descritivas, teste de normalidade, variância de homogeneidade e teste t para amostras independentes. **Resultados:** Os resultados não mostraram diferença estatisticamente significativa na pontuação estética média das duas técnicas ($p > 0,05$), embora o AirTouch tenha apresentado resultados mais consistentes com as pontuações normalmente distribuídas. Os resultados sugerem que ambas as técnicas são igualmente eficazes para atingir os objetivos de coloração capilar (castanho acinzentado), com o AirTouch oferecendo transições de cor mais suaves e o Sasak proporcionando contrastes mais ousados. Esses resultados são cruciais para os estilistas



aesthetics and cosmetic science by providing empirical evidence that different artistic hair coloring techniques can yield statistically comparable aesthetic outcomes. This supports the notion that aesthetic effectiveness is not solely determined by technique selection but also by execution quality and stylist expertise. The results enrich theoretical discussions on aesthetic evaluation in beauty practices by highlighting the role of visual transition smoothness and contrast intensity as distinct yet equally valued aesthetic dimensions. Practical implications: From a practical perspective, the study offers valuable guidance for hairstylists and beauty professionals in selecting coloring techniques based on client preferences rather than perceived technical superiority. The AirTouch technique may be recommended for clients seeking subtle gradients and softer visual transitions, while the Sasak (Weaving) technique may be more suitable for clients desiring bold, high-contrast effects. These insights can inform professional training curricula, salon consultation practices, and technique selection frameworks in the beauty industry. Social implications: The findings of this study underscore the social significance of artistic hair coloring as a form of personal expression and identity construction in contemporary society. By demonstrating that both AirTouch and Sasak (Weaving) techniques yield comparable aesthetic outcomes, the study supports greater inclusivity and autonomy in appearance-related decision-making, enabling individuals to choose styles based on personal preferences, cultural values, and social identity rather than perceived technical superiority. The results also suggest that high quality aesthetic outcomes are attainable across salons with different resource levels, contributing to more equitable access to professional beauty services. Moreover, evidence based comparisons of widely practiced techniques can strengthen transparency and trust in stylist client interactions, fostering ethical practices and informed consumer choices within the beauty industry. Originality/value: This study offers original empirical value by providing a controlled experimental comparison of AirTouch and Sasak (Weaving) hair coloring techniques using standardized aesthetic assessment and statistical testing, an area that remains underexplored in existing hair aesthetics research. Unlike prior studies that primarily rely on practitioner narratives or stylist preferences, this research applies quantitative evaluation to objectively assess aesthetic outcomes. By demonstrating statistically comparable effectiveness while identifying distinct visual characteristics associated with each technique,

na escolha da técnica apropriada com base nas preferências do cliente e nos resultados desejados. Limitações/implicações da pesquisa: Os resultados contribuem para o crescente corpo de conhecimento em estética capilar e ciência cosmética, fornecendo evidências empíricas de que diferentes técnicas artísticas de coloração capilar podem produzir resultados estéticos estatisticamente comparáveis. Isso reforça a noção de que a eficácia estética não é determinada apenas pela seleção da técnica, mas também pela qualidade da execução e pela experiência do cabeleireiro. Os resultados enriquecem as discussões teóricas sobre a avaliação estética nas práticas de beleza, destacando o papel da suavidade da transição visual e da intensidade do contraste como dimensões estéticas distintas, mas igualmente valorizadas. Implicações práticas: De uma perspectiva prática, o estudo oferece orientações valiosas para cabeleireiros e profissionais de beleza na seleção de técnicas de coloração com base nas preferências do cliente, em vez da superioridade técnica percebida. A técnica AirTouch pode ser recomendada para clientes que buscam gradientes sutis e transições visuais mais suaves, enquanto a técnica Sasak (Weaving) pode ser mais adequada para clientes que desejam efeitos ousados e de alto contraste. Essas percepções podem informar os currículos de treinamento profissional, as práticas de consultoria em salões de beleza e as estruturas de seleção de técnicas na indústria da beleza. Implicações sociais: As conclusões deste estudo ressaltam a importância social da coloração artística do cabelo como uma forma de expressão pessoal e construção de identidade na sociedade contemporânea. Ao demonstrar que as técnicas AirTouch e Sasak (Tecelagem) produzem resultados estéticos comparáveis, o estudo apoia uma maior inclusão e autonomia na tomada de decisões relacionadas à aparência, permitindo que os indivíduos escolham estilos com base em preferências pessoais, valores culturais e identidade social, em vez da superioridade técnica percebida. Os resultados também sugerem que resultados estéticos de alta qualidade são alcançáveis em salões com diferentes níveis de recursos, contribuindo para um acesso mais equitativo a serviços de beleza profissionais. Além disso, comparações baseadas em evidências de técnicas amplamente praticadas podem fortalecer a transparência e a confiança nas interações entre estilistas e clientes, promovendo práticas éticas e escolhas informadas dos consumidores dentro da indústria da beleza. Originalidade/valor: Este estudo oferece valor empírico original ao

the study contributes novel insights that bridge cosmetic practice, aesthetic theory, and evidence-based decision-making, thereby supporting more informed professional training and client-centered styling strategies.

Keywords: Airtouch, Sasak, Hair Coloring, Artistic Hair Techniques, Makeup, Hair Aesthetics.

fornecer uma comparação experimental controlada das técnicas de coloração de cabelo AirTouch e Sasak (Teceragem) usando avaliação estética padronizada e testes estatísticos, uma área que permanece pouco explorada nas pesquisas existentes sobre estética capilar. Ao contrário de estudos anteriores que se baseiam principalmente em narrativas de profissionais ou preferências de estilistas, esta pesquisa aplica uma avaliação quantitativa para avaliar objetivamente os resultados estéticos. Ao demonstrar eficácia estatisticamente comparável e identificar características visuais distintas associadas a cada técnica, o estudo contribui com insights inovadores que unem a prática cosmética, a teoria estética e a tomada de decisões baseadas em evidências, apoiando assim uma formação profissional mais informada e estratégias de estilo centradas no cliente.

Palavras-chave: Airtouch. Sasak. Coloração capilar. Técnicas artísticas para cabelos. Maquiagem. Estética capilar.

1 INTRODUCTION

Hair coloring has undergone a significant transformation from just basic coloring to a complex form of artistic expression in the modern beauty industry [1,2]. This trend reflects a cultural shift towards more refined personalization and aesthetics, where clients are not only looking for a color change, but also a visual experience that reflects their personal identity and style. Artistic coloring techniques such as balayage, ombre, and babylights have become popular due to their ability to create soft, natural color transitions [3]

Among these contemporary techniques, AirTouch and Sasak stand out for their unique application approach and different visual results. AirTouch, developed by Russian hairstylist Vladimir Sarbashev, uses airflow from a hair dryer to separate fine strands of hair before coloring, resulting in more natural color gradations and smooth transitions. This technique not only provides aesthetic results but also minimizes damage to the hair as it avoids aggressive reverse combing [4].

In contrast, the Sasak technique or teasing/backcombing creates a more dramatic color effect by mechanically separating parts of the hair before the application of the dye. This method, also known as *teasy-lights*, is done by gently combing the hair towards the

roots using a fine serrated comb, so that certain parts of the hair are lifted and form a layer. This process results in contrasting color blocks and provides a striking and attractive look for clients who want a more expressive and bold hair transformation [5].

Given the subjective and aesthetic nature of hair coloring, an empirical evaluation of these techniques becomes essential to understand the client's preferences and the effectiveness of the methods used. Previous studies have tended to focus on the technical aspects and preferences of hairdressers, but studies highlighting clients' perceptions of coloring results are still limited. Understanding how clients assess the quality, emotional value, and risk of coloring services can provide valuable insights for salon professionals in improving their services.

This study aims to fill this gap by systematically comparing AirTouch and Sasak techniques through quantitative and qualitative approaches. By analyzing clients' perceptions of visual outcomes, comfort during the process, and overall satisfaction, the study is expected to make significant contributions in the field of hair aesthetics and personalized beauty services.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

This experimental research used a comparative design to evaluate two hair coloring techniques, namely AirTouch and Sasak. The research population consists of individuals who have completed a professional course in the field of hair coloring. A total of 74 independent observers, consisting of beauty practitioners and advanced cosmetology students, were involved to assess the coloring results that included 12 evaluation criteria.

2.1 Standardization of hair samples

To maintain consistency, straight virgin hair of medium density and uniform length (± 30 cm) is used. All samples were taken from the same source and stored in dry, room temperature conditions. The desired target color is level 8 ash brown, which is applied using an identical commercial permanent dye product for both techniques. Dye products are selected based on the equivalence of the content of the active ingredients, reaction time, and oxidation rate.

2.2 Coloring procedure

The coloring process is carried out in a practice room with standard lighting (5,500 K) by two professional hairdressers who have a minimum of 5 years of certification and experience, and have been specially trained in AirTouch and Sasak techniques. Each technique was applied to 10 hair samples repeatedly to ensure replication. The observed parameters include: The overall duration of the staining process (in minutes); The type and number of tools and products used; Visual evaluation of the coloring results (including color distribution, gloss, and color transition); The entire process was documented using a high-resolution DSLR camera and fixed-light video, which was then displayed to the observer at random for objective judgment and to avoid bias.

2.3 Research instruments

The instrument used was in the form of a structured assessment sheet based on a 5-point Likert scale, which included 12 evaluation criteria, including: Accuracy in the application of coloring techniques; Processing timeliness; Cleanliness and tidiness of the work area; Engineering safety against hair conditions; Conformity of color results with ash brown targets; Subtlety of color gradation; Flatness of bleaching results; Flatness of staining results; Color fastness (within a few days); The degree of hair damage; Changes in hair elasticity; Hair softness. Each technique is assessed independently by each observer. Scores are given in the range of 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good). The maximum score per technique is 60 points (12 criteria \times 5 points), and the percentage of technique achievement is calculated using the formula:

$$\text{Achievement percentage (\%)} = (\text{Actual score} / \text{Maximum score}) \times 100 \quad (1)$$

2.4 Validity and reliability

The assessment instrument was validated by three experts in the field of hair care and has been tested for reliability using the Alpha Cronbach test. The value of the reliability coefficient obtained was >0.80 , which indicates that the instrument has excellent internal consistency.

2.5 Data analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS software version 25.0. The stages of analysis include: Descriptive statistics to calculate the average value and standard deviation of the evaluation score of each technique

1. Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests to test the normality distribution of data
2. Levene test to test the homogeneity of variance between groups
3. T-test for independent samples to identify significant differences between AirTouch and Sasak techniques

The significance level was set at $p < 0.05$. In addition, additional analysis was carried out using the effect size test to measure the strength of the differences between techniques.

3 RESULTS

This study evaluated the effectiveness of two hair coloring techniques AirTouch and Weaving (Sasak) in achieving the target color ash brown. The observations made by 74 observers were carried out using a likert scale and then processed according to the formula that had been written in the research method so that points were obtained as listed in table 1. As for the results of descriptive statistics, the results are known that the average value for the airtouch technique is 79.2568 while for the Weaving technique (Sasak) the average score is 80.9231. The results of the complete descriptive statistics can be seen in table 2.

3.1 Normality and homogeneity test

The normality and homogeneity test can be seen in table 3. The Normality test using Kolmogorov-Smirnova showed that the data for the AirTouch technique and the Weaving Technique (Sasak) were normally distributed ($p > 0.05$). While the Homogeneity test, the Levene test showed that the variance of the two homogeneous groups ($p = 0.556$), allowed the use of the t-test for further analysis.

3.1.1 T-test and interpretation

The results of the t-test for the independent sample can be seen in table 4. Based on the results of the statistical test, it was shown that there was no significant difference between the two techniques in achieving ash brown color ($t = -0.847$, $p = 0.398$). Nonetheless, a qualitative analysis of observer feedback indicates a preference that varies based on the characteristics of the staining results, such as gradation intensity and color contrast.

4 DISCUSSION

The results of the coloring of the AirTouch technique and the Sasak technique can be observed in figure 1. Although there is no statistically significant difference between the AirTouch and Sasak (weaving) techniques in achieving ash brown colors, each technique has its own advantages that can affect the client's preferences. The AirTouch technique is known for producing smooth, natural coloring without sharp transition lines. This method uses airflow from the hair dryer to separate short and fine hair before coloring application, so that only long, strong hair is exposed to the dye [6]. The result is a soft color gradation and a more natural look, with almost imperceptible color transitions. In addition, AirTouch is considered to be more friendly to the hair because it minimizes the need for backcombing, which is known to damage the structure of the hair. Studies and practice reports show that this technique also offers long-lasting results, with more natural root growth and less frequent retreatment needs than traditional techniques, which is about 8–12 weeks between touch-ups [4,7].

On the other hand, the Sasak (weaving) technique provides results with clearer contrast and sharper definition of highlights. This technique involves combing back the hair to create a more structured coloring pattern, resulting in a more dramatic and prominent highlight look. However, due to the more assertive highlight patterns, this technique typically requires more frequent retreatments to keep the colors looking fresh and the contrast maintained. The results of the Sasak technique are often more suitable for clients who want a striking color change and a more defined highlight pattern.

Overall, the choice between AirTouch and Sasak is highly dependent on the client's preferences regarding the desired finish and the frequency of retreatments.

However, industry sources state that AirTouch is preferred for natural results and minimal hair damage, while Sasak remains the top choice for more contrasting and dramatic highlight effects [3,6,8].

Clients' preferences towards certain hair coloring techniques are often influenced by fashion trends, cultural values, and personal aesthetics. A study by Lee and Song (2021) shows that the perception of trending hair color affects consumption values through economic, social, and personal factors, as well as influenced by consumer innovation in social and hedonic aspects. This confirms that an individual's preference for hair coloring techniques is closely related to these factors [9,10].

Clients' aesthetic satisfaction in hair coloring is greatly influenced by individual expectations, style preferences, as well as perceptions of the desired finish. Therefore, the selection of coloring techniques should be tailored to each client's specific needs and desires, including hair conditions, lifestyle, and tendency to follow trends [11,12].

The results of this study emphasize the importance of hairdressers' in-depth understanding of various coloring techniques and the ability to adapt them to the client's preferences and hair characteristics. Although both techniques, *AirTouch* and *Sasak*, show comparable effectiveness in achieving *ash brown color*, the selection of techniques should be based on the desired aesthetic results, hair structure and condition, as well as considerations of post-coloring long-term care.

For further research, it is recommended to explore additional aspects such as long-term color fastness, the impact of coloring on the integrity of the hair shaft, and the client's level of satisfaction with different coloring methods. In addition, an analysis of the cost and time required for each coloring technique can provide practical insights that are beneficial to professionals in the field of hairdressing in choosing the most efficient and effective method.

5 CONCLUSION

This study shows that both the AirTouch and Weaving (Sasak) techniques are able to produce ash brown hair coloring with high aesthetic quality. Quantitative analysis through independent t-tests showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the two techniques in terms of achieving target colors ($p = 0.398$), which means that both are effectively used in professional practice. Nevertheless, a qualitative

evaluation of the observer's assessment indicates a segmentation of preferences based on the characteristics of the staining results: AirTouch excels at creating subtle gradations and natural looks, while Sasak's technique tends to produce more emphatic and dynamic contrasts. From a practical perspective, the results of this study reinforce the importance of choosing a client-centric hair coloring technique, considering aspects such as hair condition, lifestyle, and visual preferences. Professional hairdressers should master a variety of coloring techniques and be able to recommend the most appropriate method based on the results of consultation with clients.

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APPENDIX

Figure 1

(a) *Finish of WaterTouch Technique Coloring*; (B) *Final Result of Coloring and Weaving Technique (sasak)*



Figure 1:(A)

Figure 1:(B)

Table 1

Results of Processing of Kllien Observation Data Points on Sasak and Air Touch Techniques

Respond	Total Points BRIDGE TECHNIQUE	Total Points TECHNOLOGY AIR TOUCH
1.	76,67	75,00
2.	93,33	73,33
3.	70,00	75,00
4.	75,00	90,00
5.	90,00	70,00
6.	73,33	81,67
7.	85,00	80,00
8.	80,00	70,00
9.	96,67	95,00
10.	73,33	75,00
11.	88,33	88,33
12.	80,00	80,00
13.	100,00	66,67
14.	83,33	75,00
15.	78,33	76,67
16.	95,00	93,33
17.	86,67	83,33
18.	83,33	60,00
19.	91,67	100,00
20.	86,67	96,67
21.	71,67	51,67
22.	58,33	60,00
23.	91,67	93,33
24.	71,67	56,67
25.	88,33	86,67
26.	96,67	90,00
27.	83,33	80,00
28.	80,00	80,00
29.	68,33	65,00
30.	90,00	76,67
31.	70,00	65,00
32.	78,33	76,67
33.	75,00	76,67
34.	65,00	70,00
35.	73,33	68,33
36.	78,33	78,33
37.	70,00	68,33
38.	90,00	91,67
39.	68,33	70,00
40.	60,00	60,00
41.	81,67	86,67
42.	80,00	81,67
43.	91,67	93,33
44.	75,00	91,67
45.	73,33	85,00
46.	98,33	95,00
47.	80,00	75,00
48.	100,00	100,00
49.	100,00	100,00

50.	100,00	100,00
51.	83,33	78,33
52.	93,33	95,00
53.	80,00	78,33
54.	95,00	90,00
55.	75,00	76,67
56.	73,33	76,67
57.	81,67	76,67
58.	66,67	65,00
59.	100,00	100,00
60.	78,33	73,33
61.	80,00	90,00
62.	41,67	58,33
63.	91,67	78,33
64.	80,00	100,00
65.	98,33	98,33
66.	91,67	80,00
67.	88,33	88,33
68.	60,00	76,67
69.	68,33	73,33
70.	70,00	65,00
71.	71,67	65,00
72.	73,33	63,33
73.	71,67	70,00
74.	80,00	70,00

Table 2*Descriptive Statistical Results*

Technical		Statistic	Std. Error
Technology Air Touch	Mean	79,2568	1,42378
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	76,4192
		Upper Bound	82,0943
	5% Trimmed Mean	79,3743	
	Median	77,5000	
	Variance	150,009	
	Hours of deviation	12,24780	
Technical Weaving	Mean	80,9231	1,35648
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	78,2197
		Upper Bound	83,6266
	5% Trimmed Mean	81,3260	
	Median	80,0000	
	Variance	136,163	
	Hours of deviation	11,66887	

Table 3*Normality and Homogeneity Test Results*

Technical	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Levene Statistic		
	Statistic	df	Itself.	Statistic	df	Itself.
Technology Air Touch	,097	74	,079	Base On Mean	146	0,556
Technical Weaving	,086	74	,200*			

Table 4

Independent t-test results

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Itsel f.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Respon_Po in	Equal variances assumed	,347	,556	-,847	146	,398	-1,66635	1,96651	-5,55286	2,22016
	Equal variances not assumed			-,847	145,659	,398	-1,66635	1,96651	-5,55294	2,22024

Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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