

THE COLOUR



In an era where women's equality is on the tip of everyone's tongue, there's no room for error when it comes to making sure women are treated fairly in relation to their male counterparts

R PINK

**PINK TAX IS COSTING
WOMEN A PRETTY
PENNY, AND THEY MAY
NOT EVEN KNOW IT**

THE GREAT DIVIDE

Pink tax is not an actual tax, but rather the situation in which women are having to pay more than men for certain products, such as various toiletries. This also includes female sanitary products such as tampons, a basic necessity for women but is still being taxed in most countries. In a study carried out by the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs entitled *From Cradle to Cane: The Cost of Being a Female Consumer*, it was noted that products that are marketed towards women are 7% more expensive than those geared towards men. Bringing it closer to home, financial news website *Business Insider South Africa* did its own comparison of many products and found that women are expected to pay 18% more than men. 'This notion of the pink tax arises from all the advances women have made in the workforce and bearing individually the cost of being a woman in the world,' says Laura Strausfeld, the co-founder of *PeriodEquity.org*. That is to say pink tax is nothing new. The concept of sales tax began as far as back as 2000 BCE with the Ancient Egyptians. In more

modern times, the sales tax system was drafted in a time when women did not make up much of the workforce and men were primarily the sole breadwinners. However, things are very different today, so it's about time that the tax system gets an update and in some cases there has been progress. Countries such as Kenya, India, Canada and even our own South Africa have done away with taxing tampons, which is a great stride in the right direction.

deodorant, shampoo, body wash and razor blades, to name a few, tend to be serial offenders when it comes to pink tax. Often times the major difference between the male and female version is simply the scent and packaging, so one solution is to simply opt for male products where possible. If that doesn't sit well, be on the lookout for gender-neutral products. Compare prices and if a generic brand turns out to be cheaper, then go with that. Ultimately they'll be doing the same job, right?

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MONEY MAKING SENSE

Until pink tax becomes a thing of the past, how does one tackle the issue in their everyday life? The short answer: Be a smarter shopper. Take a closer look at your shopping list and see which items you use the most. Based on the NYC study, products such as

As a consumer, you always have a choice. Pink tax may be a reality, but as long as you are smart in the way that you purchase items, then you'll be putting money back in your pocket. So take a leisurely stroll down the men's aisle every once in a while, ladies.

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