

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF *MASSCLUSIVITY*
CAMPAIGNS ON BRAND LOVE THROUGH
ONLINE BRAND COMMUNITIES

Joana Fonseca dos Santos

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Supervisor:

Prof. Doutor Ricardo Godinho Bilro
Invited Assistant Professor
Departamento de Marketing, Operações e Gestão Geral
ISCTE Business School

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A ANÁLISE DO EFEITO DA EMISSÃO DE TÍTULOS NO VALOR DA EMPRESA

Joana Fonseca dos Santos

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Resumo

Esta dissertação visa compreender o impacto do desenvolvimento de campanhas de luxo para massas no sentimento e na relação que os membros das comunidades *online* têm para com as respetivas marcas. Esta investigação compreende a análise do conceito e da perceção de luxo; do mercado associado ao mesmo – com foco no segmento de moda; e do impacto de tendências atuais como a digitalização e a criação de luxo para massas. Com o intuito de compreender a dinâmica do mercado selecionado, esta dissertação concentra-se em bases de marketing relacional, como a relação entre os consumidores e a marca – bem como os sentimentos associados – e ao desenvolvimento de comunidades de marca.

Foi realizada uma análise netnográfica à Gucci – uma marca de moda de luxo –, e à H&M – uma marca de massas –, bem como às respetivas comunidades on-line, Facebook e Instagram, durante um período que considera o lançamento de campanhas de exclusividade para massas por parte destas marcas. A recolha de informação para esta investigação ocorreu nas comunidades online selecionadas, e permitiu a compilação de um total de 336.509 interações entre os consumidores e as marcas, sendo que as interações dos membros das comunidades online foram analisadas considerando as publicações das marcas entre os seguintes períodos: (1) Gucci – Março de 2017 a Março de 2018; (2) H&M – Julho de 2017 a Março de 2018.

Este estudo identifica impactos não apenas para a aplicação na gestão de marcas de luxo, mas também para o mercado de moda em geral. Apesar dos sentimentos dos consumidores relativamente à marca não sofrerem alterações significativas, o desenvolvimento de campanhas de exclusividade para massas tem várias consequências identificadas neste estudo: gera envolvimento dos consumidores nas comunidades e promove a expansão das mesmas, especialmente devido à novidade que estas campanhas representam no mercado e à curiosidade que geram. As marcas de luxo que pretendem diversificar as suas audiências e tornarem-se competitivas num setor tradicional podem considerar estas campanhas uma hipótese com retornos positivos.

Palavras-Chave – Exclusividade para massas; Brand love; Comunidades de marca online; Marketing Relacional; Moda.

Sistema de Classificação JEL: M31; M37.

Abstract

The current dissertation aims to understand the impact of the development of Massclusivity (massive and exclusive) campaigns or product ranges on the brand love of online brand communities. Having in mind the topic defined, this research comprises the analysis of the meaning and perception of luxury; the marketplace associated to it – with a focus on the fashion consumption segment -; and the impact of the trends such as digital luxury and Massclusivity. In order to understand the dynamics of the selected market, this investigation is based on core of relationship marketing concepts, brand love, brand communities and consumer-brand relationship.

A netnography analysis was conducted concerning the interactions between the selected brands - a luxury fashion brand, Gucci, and a mass market fashion brand, H&M – and the respective online brand communities on the Social Networking Sites Facebook and Instagram, during a specific period of time defined according to the launch of Massclusivity campaigns by each of one these brands. The content gathering from this netnography methodology took place on the online brand communities defined, and it allowed the compilation of a total of 336,509 interactions. Gucci community members' interactions were analyzed considering these brand's publications from March 2017 to March 2018; while H&M community members' interactions considered these brand's posts from July 2017 to March 2018.

This research provides valuable insights not only for luxury brands but also for the fashion market in general, by perceiving that despite the low impact on the brand love of OBCs, the development of massclusivity campaigns have several impacts identified: generate awareness towards the brand, increases consumers' engagement on SNS and promotes communities' expansion. These consequences are directly related to the curiosity that these marketing strategies generate towards the brands, which may be considered powerful to luxury brands who intend to diversify their audience and become competitive among a traditional sector.

Keywords – Massclusivity; Brand love; Online Brand Communities; Relationship Marketing; Fashion.

JEL Classification System: M31; M37.

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Abbreviations and Glossary Index

Abbreviation	Meaning
#TFW	#ThatFeelingWhen
BRQ	Brand Relationship Quality
CBR	Customer Brand Relationship
E.g.	Exempli Gratia
Et al.	Et alteri / and others
H&M	Hennes & Mauritz
I.e.	id est
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
LBC	Luxury Brand Communities
LFB	Luxury Fashion Brands
LVMH	Moët Hennessy - Louis Vuitton
OBC	Online Brand Communities
SNS	Social Network Sites
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
USA	United States of America

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Goals

Nowadays, there is a “rising global appetite for luxury” (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016:120) and fashion market plays a major role on the luxury segment. As so, this topic has been studied by many literature personalities, who have also analyzed a recent trend named: democratization of luxury. This topic is associated to the fact that luxury brands are closer to the masses as never before, either it is with fast fashion collections, digital communication, among others. Pop culture has been craving for luxury products for a long time and now the opportunity has arrived. As a virtue of that, there is an emerging issue to be solved: if luxury brands are meant to satisfy the need for exclusivity and status, how are the true luxury consumers going to react when their favorite brands produce items accessible to everyone? Will it cause any turbulence on the brand image of luxury fashion brands? Even though it may be seen as a business opportunity for these brands, will it be worth it on the long run? The relevance of this topic is to understand if massive luxury has an impact on the perceptions and brand love of online luxury fashion brand’s communities.

Currently, the world is facing a democratization of luxury, and it becomes crucial to understand how it impacts the traditional luxury consumers. Formerly, luxury was all about ostentation, status seeking and social approval and, as a virtue of that, its customers demanded exclusivity and an exceptional quality. Globalization has allowed many luxury fashion magazines to be available worldwide which made information exchange possible. Also, living on a digital era has many benefits and one of them is to have all the content needed available on many platforms and screens. By observing this environment, masses started do envy those lifestyles and start craving accessible luxury products.

Many luxury fashion brands understood this atmosphere as a business opportunity to enter on the mass market and to develop fast-fashion collections able to attract masses and regular luxury consumers. However, it comes with a colossal challenge. If regular luxury consumers enjoy uniqueness and scarcity, will they approve their products’ accessibility to masses? Will they appreciate to see, for instance, their beloved Prada bag available with a lower price and quality to persons who usually only buy

accessories in fast-fashion brands such as Zara? This dissertation proposal topic has a general objective of analyzing these customers' perceptions on brands online brand communities, like website platforms, and understanding how these perceptions influence customer brand relationship and contribute to brand love. Several studies have been conducted to understand the motivations behind luxury fashion consumption, and the results achieved will probably be challenged by this new "luxury democratization" paradigm.

It is discussed whether traditional luxury brands should find innovative ways to develop mass strategies that suits their premium image without damaging it and without disappointing their typical consumers, usually perceived as sensitives and without cause a brand dilution. If these new strategies are not handled carefully, luxury brands may damage their brand equity and image.

With the aim of understanding the impact of these strategies on the brand love of online brands communities, a dissertation will be conducted along with an empirical research. This was the selected model to sustain the research problem under analysis, having the purpose to answer to the following research questions: (1) Does a *Massclusivity* campaign impacts consumers' brand love towards the brand?; (2) how does massive luxury affects the love or hate of the luxury fashion brands' online communities?; (3) How does consumers' perception towards luxury brands change after developing a *Massclusivity* campaign?

With the aim of providing valuable insights for the research questions established, this investigation allowed the author to draw some conclusions. It was understood that, notwithstanding the low significant effects on the brand love of the selected online communities' members from the development of massive luxury campaigns, it is vital to consider the individual interactions that both brands have received. The main purpose of doing so is because some negative rates were identified, and they usually have a propensity to disperse easily through consumers' word of mouth, when compared to the neutral interactions. This represents a challenge for Luxury Fashion Brands that need to find the balance between sustaining their prestigious image and diversifying their portfolio and communication to impact a new audience of possible customers.

When comparing the results achieved for both brands, Gucci revealed the highest polarity average associated to its members' interactions, i.e., when compared to the interactions analyzed from H&M consumers, Gucci's interactions had more positive feelings linked to it. Consequently, it is induced that the massive luxury campaigns investigated had more positive results for the luxury brand that promote a massclusivity collection (Gucci) than for H&M who developed a co-branding massclusivity campaign with Erdem. It was noted that consumers appreciated the luxury brand's attempt of being closer to the masses despite the disruptive communication approach that is not aligned with a traditional luxury brands' image. H&M polarity average was lower than Gucci's indicating that, although consumers were anxious about purchasing items from luxury collection for accessible prices, the outcomes of this campaign did not meet their expectations regarding the service and the logistics associated with the purchase process. It generated a lower polarity average on their interactions with the brand. Likewise, it was not found any impact, either positive or negative, on Erdem, the luxury brand associated with H&M massclusivity communication. The main difference lays on the fact that Gucci is still able to sustain their image by providing quality products on their exclusive distribution channels, despite their communication for the masses. This luxury brand does not modify its processes with these types of campaigns besides the communication itself. In regard to H&M, the development of luxury collections for the masses implies the creation of exclusive and limited products for an immense demand that, due to the association with a luxury brand that has stock and distribution restrictions, are not able to meet consumers expectations.

1.2. Methodology

This dissertation is meant to explore how luxury fashion brands deal with massive luxury and how does it influence their customers' perceptions and, consequently, customer-brand relationship throughout love or hate on brand communities.

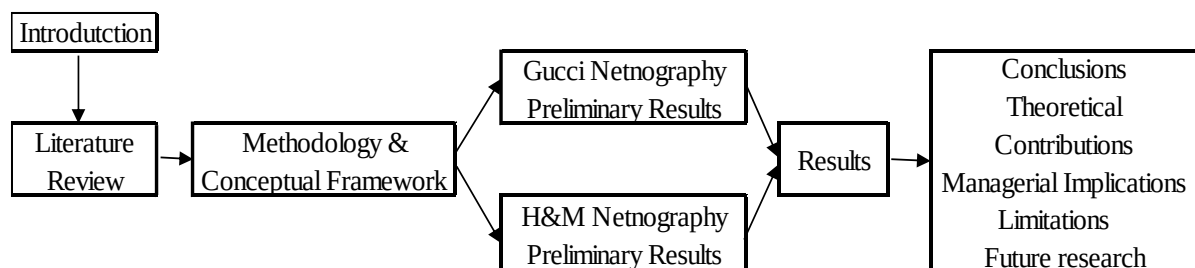
With the aim of pursuing the previously mentioned goals, the selected methodology was Netnography, a process presented by Kozinets (2002: 61) "as an online marketing research technique for providing consumer insight" and which is a confirmed approach, already authenticated and verified by several authors such as Bilro *et al.* (2018). To do it, it was required to define specific research questions (Kozinets, 2002) as formerly

identified, followed by the selection of the online fashion luxury platforms to gather relevant information. Afterwards, it was required to perform a text mining analysis at the selected Online Brand Communities, to extract the data and to proceed with a sentiment analysis report of the consumer interactions with the brands.

1.3. Dissertation Structure

In order to achieve these goals, this thesis will start by developing a literature review that seek to investigate the luxury market and consumption, the luxury democratization through trends such as *Massclusivity* and E-Luxury. Those concepts will be analyzed simultaneously with the main relationship marketing notions related with the selected topic: consumer-brand relationship, brand communities and brand love. The subsequent section is the Methodology and Conceptual Framework which considers a netnography process to identify consumers' interactions on the OBCs (online brand communities) of the selected brands: Gucci (a luxury fashion brand) and H&M (a mass market fashion brand), through a text mining and data collection from those OBCs and (1) a consequent sentiment analysis to identify the polarity of consumers' interactions and (2) a topic sentiment analysis to understand the main concepts addressed by these communities' members. The following parts of this thesis consist on the netnography preliminary findings for each brand and OBC. Finally, the main results and conclusions are presented, along with the definition of the main theoretical contributions, managerial implications, limitations and suggestions for future research.

Figure 1 - Dissertation Structure Diagram.



Source: Own Elaboration.

2. Literature review

This dissertation aims to understand how massive luxury influences luxury fashion customers' perceptions, by analyzing online brand communities and evaluate the love or hate addressed by them. Hence, there are some concepts that are necessary to undertake in order to develop a literature review based on the previously explanation: luxury concept, luxury fashion market, luxury consumers' profile, massive luxury, brand communities, customer-brand relationship, brand love and hate.

2.1. Luxury Fashion Consumption

2.1.1. Luxury Concept

Defining Luxury has been attempted by many literature personalities worldwide (Brun and Castelli, 2013) and, so far, consensus has not been achieved due to an ever-changing environment and to the lack of conceptualization of this topic (Dubois *et al.*, 2001; Heine, 2012; Miller and Mills, 2012), since it depends on each user's point of view (Heine, 2012; Brun and Castelli, 2013). As a consequence, Husic and Cicic (2009: 231) refer that "luxury products have been the subject of intensive discussion and debate". This term has evolved throughout the time and has adapted itself to every situation and environment, however, it was always associated with prestige and superiority (Cheah *et al.*, 2015), guilt (Chandon *et al.*, 2017), craftsmanship and emotional appeal (Okonkwo, 2009b). Considering the previous statements, it is important to dispose the existent approaches because while some authors label luxury as unnecessary and negative, often related with goods made of precious resources and high prices, others think it is associated with time and with life's valuable moments, or even that is a channel for self-expression (Brun and Castelli 2013), so the struggle to find a definition remains (Chandon *et al.*, 2016).

Luxury is usually understood as sumptuous lifestyle provided by products (or services) that display a premium quality represented by products' superiority (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016) with high standard and noble materials (Mootee, 2004) and aesthetics, efficient logistics and production, and strong communications able to expose properly both product features and emotional attributes (Heine 2012), linked with pleasure and exclusiveness (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). In consonance with Bain and Co (2015), this notion is related with tangible goods that are sold at an upscale level due

to its quality and design. Those products must be recognizable, arouse an emotional consumer response, and become merged into the customer's lifestyle (Brun and Castelli, 2013), by representing both tangible and intangible benefits (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016).

To ensure and sustain the exceptional quality mentioned before, an expensive price tag (Dubois *et al.*, 2002; Okonkwo, 2009a) is also assumed for those product/services (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999) along with a noble brand or enterprise name, capable to keep luxury brands profitable and fast-growing. The high value charged by these goods also displays, in line with Heine (2012) the resources scarcity and constraints, combined with limited production and distribution, contribute to define luxury as something unique, rare and selective. To Kapferer and Valette-Florence (2018: 39) "luxury value is based on perceived rarity and the feeling that not everyone can or should possess a specific luxury product or brand". It is usually referred to as opulence and as a wealthiest lifestyle (Brun and Castelli, 2013). As Kapferer and Valette-Florence (2016: 125) mentioned: "Luxury brands must be selective in everything they do", and this is the foundation of these brands distinctiveness and singularity.

Elegance, desirability and charisma are linked with this concept by authors like Heine (2012) and Wetlaufer (2001), which considers that, to be into the luxury segment, a brand needs to showcase four main traits: the first one is being timeless, solid and desired throughout the time, instead of being considered just as a temporary fashion or trend, "...by generating excitement, by remaining alive and active, original through time" (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016: 125). The second trait is to be modern, "driven by innovation" (Jung *et al.*, 2014: 189), flexible and easy to adapt to trends and to what customers aspire to have, while maintaining its image, tradition and heritage (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016), relying "on a long history involving tradition and accumulated expertise" (Chandon *et al.*, 2017); the third is to be fast growing by being capable of attracting new audiences, maintaining the current customers and charging a premium price; finally, the fourth is to be highly profitable. If a brand is skilled enough to meet these requirements, then it is on the right path to mature its uniqueness within the industry. Regarding luxury fashion brands, the situation is similar.

This approach believes that luxury brands are all "... about having a great history, being much known and having some extremely expensive products within their range,

unaffordable” (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016: 125). As so, they can be labelled as “the extreme-end of the prestige-brand category” (Vigneron and Johnson, 1999: 2).

Keller (2009) also developed a model to empower the progress of luxury’s definition that includes ten fundamental characteristics/foundations to identify a luxury brand on its core: (1) luxury brands must strive to maintain a premium image to sustain its quality and price, otherwise customers may link it with a bad price-quality relationship. The image mentioned before needs to be emotional and aspirational (2) as well towards demonstrating meaning, value and status. Likewise, having a marketing plan completely aligned to all brand’s variables is crucial (3) to maintain impressions and expectations, which are also influenced by brand identity elements (4). Both previous points are necessary to create a strong brand value proposition. Also, luxury brands can be even more valuable by associating themselves to strong partners/entities (5) such as other brands, celebrities, countries, among others.

Those characteristics can be reinforced throughout a controlled and selective distribution (6) channel to reinforce exclusivity that can be perceived, as well, by the value it displays and by its premium pricing strategy (7). The brand elements mentioned before are essential to the construction of a solid brand architecture (8) that must allow brands’ development, profitability and growth, even though it is meant to stay unique and limited. Regarding luxury brands’ competition, it is important to understand that, as long as they are considered non-essential products, they will compete with products from a wide range of categories (9) within the luxury market (for instance, for a superfluous good, one may decide either to buy a cruise ticket or a private jet trip, both of them belong to the luxury market but in different segments; when buying essential products, those will compete within the same category since they are meant to satisfy specific purposes). Finally, (10) in order to demonstrate their value, luxury brands must strive to uninterruptedly defend their heritage, status and properties (such as trademarks) on legal institutions against any kind of infractions (e.g.: copyrights, illegal activities, among others). Keller’s (2009) perspective is aligned with the majority of the authors but with more specifications.

All these particularities enable luxury brands to be attractive, aspired and recognized by the masses while selling a certain kind of magic and dream, that usually, only the “happy few” (Dubois *et al.*, 2001; Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016; Chandon *et al.*, 2016) can acquire. Consequently, it empowers the right environment to leverage a

certain social status, power and perceived wealth that is often mentioned as abundance or opulence (Brun and Castelli, 2013). Having in consideration all the luxury brands' characteristics described before, in consonance with Kapferer (2010), what mostly attracts people is that luxury brands lift them up by giving them prestige, pleasure, style and meaning.

The positive perspectives have been presented, however, some other literature personalities described on their studies that luxury may be perceived as a dark side of a dispensable and useless consumption since. For instance, Heine (2012) mentioned that the concept under analysis – luxury - comprehends everything beyond the necessary, as a result of being developed under resources' constraints which means that they are only available on small quantities, on a specific time period and location. Having that in consideration, some authors such as Dubois *et al.* (2001) defined this concept as a “non-necessity” and as superfluous since we do not need them to survive, “Luxury is anything that is desirable and more than necessary and ordinary” (Heine, 2012: 42). It is also important to state that, to get peers' positive opinions, acquiring luxury goods has become a need for some customers. Clothing can be considered a basic need as one needs clothes daily, however, a Prada coat, for instance, does not satisfy a utilitarian need but a hedonic one instead. For that reason, this concept can be linked with materialism and self-indulgence (Brun and Castelli, 2013). Those critics are usually refuted by arguments that sustain luxury's magic, like, Seringhaus (2002: 5) who mentioned that luxury “must remain elitist, distinctive, exclusive and rare. In other words, luxury evokes an aura of the extraordinary, the unattainable or dream for most who remain outside the target market segment”, what strongly contributes to delight them and evoke aspirational feelings.

Recently, another approach has gained importance, which is related to luxury experiences. What is considered luxury for one, may not be the same for other. For instance, there are individuals who consider positive associations, “life's little luxuries” (Seringhaus, 2002:4), such as family time, leisure and entertainment time, among others, as luxury. However, other people do not consider it valuable enough since it has no accountable price and it is not similar to a diamond ring that displays wealth.

Since there are quite a few dissimilarities regarding this topic due to its subjectivity, Heine (2012) stated that luxury's definition may depend on the following factors: (1)

Region – this point is strictly related with resources and their location, which influences exclusivity and availability. On a globalized world, luxury may assume different perspectives according to each user's location. Also, there is a discrepancy since what is attractive for masses and regular brand for developed countries may be considered a luxury brand for less developed places; (2) Temporal – luxury meaning has evolved throughout the time and for each period there is a different approach. (e.g.: “At the turn of the past century, few people had an automobile, just as very few consumers today fly in private jets or own a yacht or maintain a Caribbean island” - Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016: 120); (3) Economic – different levels of income influence different attitudes towards luxury; (4) Cultural – each culture as a different way of seeing the world around it and, as so, luxury concept varies as well on each community. For a certain culture, entertainment and leisure may be considered luxury due to the positive environment all over it, but for others it may be a common and ordinary item; (5) Individual – distinct personalities grant different opinions and feelings towards the concept under analysis; (6) Situational - pursuant to the current situation, individuals have different perceptions. For instance, a certain item can be regular and common on a daily basis but as long as someone cannot find it anymore, it can start to be considered as luxury due to its scarcity.

The struggle around the concept under analysis has not achieved any solution so far and, as Mootee (2007) reported, “brand marketing in the luxury business is tricky”. Luxury can either be associated on products' quality and precision or with dreams and passion. There are many dichotomies, for some authors it may be linked with materialism and possessions, and for others it can be related with aspirations and symbols. It has to be clarified whether luxury meant to enhance self-esteem and expression or is it crucial for social acceptance and group integration; Is it a desire or a satisfaction; Luxury consumption requires a high level of involvement and weighted consideration or it demands irrational and impulsive decisions. These are just some of the questions that arouse when trying to understand all the different literature approaches regarding this topic.

As stated by Kapferer and Valette-Florence (2018: 38), “luxury, once the ordinary of extraordinary people, has become the extraordinary of ordinary people too”.

2.1.2. Luxury Fashion Market

Luxury fashion brands include the motivations and characteristics of luxury brands in general but with a focus on the fashion market. As reported by Ma *et al.* (2012), fashion comprises something new and original, often symbolizes the path to beauty, changes frequently from time to time, is either related to individual self-expression or to group belongings, is perceived as the result of imitation, differentiates social classes but also allows people to move between them according to their consumption. The same authors have analyzed luxury fashion consumption theories, and one of their statements is: “As the purposes of fashion consumption are showing-off and identity distinction, the consumption adoption flows from upper social classes to lower ones. Once it is adopted by the lower grades, the upper classes initiate a new fashion and cast away the old” (Ma *et al.*, 2012: 87).

Luxury market is “... an actively growing sector, targeting an expanded clientele” (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016:120), currently leveraging its presence worldwide either in developed countries and on the emerging ones (Truong *et al.*, 2009; Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2018). Bain & Company (2017) reported that this market grew by 5% in 2017 and that 32% of the share of personal luxury goods belongs to Chinese natives. It also stated that this market growth has been driven by a “generational shift, with 85% of luxury growth in 2017 fueled by Generations Y and Z” Bain & Company (2017: 2).

As stated by Ko and Megehee (2012: 1395), “the luxury industry is relatively small in terms of the number of companies but punches far above its weight both in terms of sales and more importantly, influence”. This market is responsible to trade products and services that comprise all the characteristics mentioned on the previous chapter, which belong to exclusive brands often placed on a niche able to provide status, self-fulfillment and symbolic meaning for its customers. According to Chandon *et al.* (2016), this sector includes products characterized by craftsmanship, creativity and innovation, artistic sensibility and high exposure. Luxury fashion brands are committed to provide “The best design, the best materials, the best merchandising, and the best packaging ... frequently lead the way for the rest of the marketing world” (Ko and Megehee, 2012: 1395).

In consonance to what Bain & Company (2015) stated on its “Bain Luxury Goods Worldwide Market Study”, luxury market is composed by an extensive range of segments: cars, luxury hospitality, cruises, designer furniture, wines and spirits, yachts, private jets, art and personal luxury goods. 80% of the total luxury market is represented by luxury cars, hospitality and personal luxury goods. Considering the same source, personal luxury goods represent luxury’s market core and its value has even tripled on the past 20 years. Within this segment, the main category is composed by accessories – shoes and leather goods - (approximately 30%), followed by apparel (24%) and hard luxury – jewelry and watches - (22%). The remaining is related to beauty products – fragrances and cosmetics – and others. Fashion luxury brands are frequently divided as haute couture, accessories and ready to wear (Miller and Mills, 2012). Also, “despite the complexities and costs, in the fashion industry, luxury brands are the most profitable and fastest growing brand segment” (Miller and Mills, 2012: 1471).

As evidenced by Deloitte (2015), the top five luxury brands, based on sales, are LVMH Moët Hennessy-Louis Vuitton SA (France); Compagnie Financiere Richemont SA (Switzerland); The Estée Lauder Companies Inc. (United States); Chow Tai Fook Jewellery Group Limited 周大福珠宝集团有限公司 (Hong Kong) and Luxottica Group SpA (Italy). The countries of origin of those brands belong to the most powerful countries within this sector: Italy (owns 29 luxury brands of the 100 selected ones), USA (15 of 100), France (11 of 100), Switzerland (11 of 100), China/Hong Kong (7 of 100). According to the same source, the top 10 brands account for 48.9% of economic concentration and the top “seven countries represented 84 percent of the Top 100 luxury goods companies and accounted for 90.5 percent of global luxury goods sales in 2013” (Deloitte, 2015: 26). As it was detailed before, emerging markets are every day more attracted to luxury products, even though mature countries still lead the market due to the superior acquisition power (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016).

“The luxury market has shown incredible global expansion over the past two decades” (Parrott *et al.*, 2015: 360) and, due to globalization and its inherent consequences along with markets development, there is a rising customer demand for this type of products (Chandon *et al.*, 2016) which makes them “...buy more luxury goods today than before” (Truong *et al.*, 2009: 376).

Simultaneously, there are additional factors that influence market growth, such as the rise of new segments of customers and behaviors, the increase of wealthy groups on emerging economies (Mundel *et al.*, 2017), the work rate increase on the feminine sector (Truong *et al.*, 2009), the implementation of innovative business models, new payment methods, lower production costs the dissipation of new technologies and ways of spreading messages and also, the rise of second hand digital markets (Chandon *et al.*, 2017: 140) . Digital era is here for good and, having that in mind, it is time for this market to jump into e-commerce, to invest in useful content and social media platforms to leverage brand awareness among different customers' segments, and to redefine its channels (Abtan *et al.*, 2014).

This market is getting more appealing every day and there is a “rising global appetite for luxury” (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016:120), especially due to the change that this concept has been suffering: “Rather than a source of depravation or reserved only for the elite, modern luxury is positioned to capture the dreams of each consumer, as a medium of self-expression” (Chandon *et al.*, 2016: 299). According to the same author, nowadays customers value experiences more than they value the traditional luxury goods, and that is why this market is facing new challenges every day, and its players "...must do more to adapt to new levels of complexity, (...) face new types of consumers who engage in new kinds of purchasing behaviors, (...) extend their reach in new geographies and cities" (Abtan *et al.*, 2014).

Luxury Fashion Brands market has lots of touchpoints to improve and to develop and “the relationship between digital and luxury can no longer be ignored. Technology will continue to influence the entire value chain within the sector” (Deloitte, 2015: 8). Currently, luxury customers want to find information on their screens and on diverse platforms offline and mostly online, as so, they demand a consistent cross channel experience. This tendency is expected to be even stronger since the next generations, and future luxury consumers, were born on a digital era. According to the same source, this online luxury market has a growth opportunity once it is capable to attract millennials' investment. In line with that, luxury fashion brands need to capitalize and to develop their digital touchpoints, since those will be an influence to sustain a strong customer brand relationship: “Luxury brands that use technology to make their consumers' lives easier and make interactions more engaging will rapidly build stronger brand value and broaden their market footprint” (Deloitte, 2015: 8).

In consonance with Shen *et al.* (2017b) and considering the need of transposing luxury fashion to the online market, several retail platforms and websites have been created for these brands to sell their products online, for instance Net-a-Porter.com. It has also allowed some LFB, such as Balenciaga and Yves Saint Laurent, to create their own stores inside those online retailer platforms (shop-in-shop) instead of just selling their products along with their competitors. This trend is also reflected on Bain & Company (2017) report, in which it is expected that by the year 2025, 25% of the market of personal luxury goods becomes from online channels.

Despite the fact that “for centuries, luxury goods have been associated with a small group of high status, powerful consumers: royalty, nobility, and individuals with exceptional income or wealth” (Chandon *et al.*, 2017: 141), this market is facing multiple challenges and trends that may be capable to change this perception.

2.1.3. Consumer profile

With higher income levels compared to the previous decades, luxury consumers have a higher predisposition to acquire luxury products (Husic and Cicic, 2009). The aim of those purchases is to provide more than a simple functionality, it is meant to satisfy status, wealth and power needs (Brun and Castelli, 2013). These customers are especially interested on “...the impression they make on others” (Husic and Cicic, 2009: 234) thus reinforcing that currently “ego society” (Dubois and Duquesne, 1993: 38) is taking place as there is the need to get gratification from our external environment. In consonance to Achille (2014) to BCG and Fondazione Altagamma report, the major part of the core luxury consumers is from France, Italy, United States or Japan.

The Internet development has been important to contribute to luxury consumers profile change. According to Truong *et al.* (2009: 375), “these new customers for luxury are younger than clients of the old luxe used to be, they are far more numerous, they make their money far sooner, and they are far more flexible in financing and fickle in choice”.

Although there are many common touchpoints between luxury fashion consumers’ characterization, there are different approaches addressed by different scholars. Luxury fashion consumers typically have as major concerns physical appearance, trends and

never getting out of style (Husic and Cicic, 2009), thereby looking for others' approval throughout their acquisitions such as fashion clothing, design furniture, among others and by their economic value. According to the same authors, to maintain that status, the factors that revolve around luxury fashion consumption are also considered by the customers under analysis. For instance, the location where the purchase takes place plays a major role (i.e. for these customers it is better to show that they frequent the most premium locations in town than on a regular store frequented by masses), just like the products' brand recognition. Ma *et al.* (2012: 89) stated the following: "Customers of the fashion luxuries are mostly from the wealthy class, and the luxurious products they target on share a characteristic of fame, rareness, extravagance, high cost and top quality. The high-end brands appeal to them embody the symbolic meaning of products" and "The behavior of fashion consumption in its essence is to satisfy a consumer's need to display his social status and uniqueness" which summarizes what was described before.

Besides the need of displaying affluence, contemporary luxury consumers are "...younger, healthier, driven, sophisticated, exacting, digitally-savvy, experience-driven, service-focused, time-pressed, prudent, and environmentally aware" (Deloitte, 2015). Workman and Caldwell (2007), divided fashion consumers into the following types: (1) Fashion Innovators – which consists on the consumers that are on the first row to acquire the latest trends and fashions; (2) Fashion Opinion Leaders – these are the customers with the ability to convince others to purchase the most recent trends and fashion; (3) Innovative Communicators – represent consumers that are the firsts ones to adopt new trends and that have the capacity to convince other customers as well; (4) Fashion Followers – persons that only purchase and use new trends and fashions when those are accepted by everyone.

According to Shen *et al.* (2017b), Luxury Fashion consumers may be simply defined as fashion leaders or fashion followers that, as reported by these authors, impact each other and leverage attitudes towards this market, specially, because followers usually purchase the products that are firstly acquired by the leaders.

The previous definitions considered the differences between each type of fashion consumers and it influences directly luxury consumption, since those costumers can be distinguished, as well, based on each culture, personality, lifestyle, generational cohorts, social economic background and attachment to the brands (Chandon *et al.*, 2016;

Vigneron and Johnson, 1999). Luxury consumers can be also divided into categories, as reported by Achille (2014): Absolute Luxuriers (also known as the “happy few” by their refinement), Mega citers (consumers with high incomes and living on worlds’ top cities), Socialwearers (devoted customers once they are emotional attached with the brand), Experiencers (the most low profile luxury and erudite consumers), Little Princes (consumers that belong to the youngest generations and have parents with high incomes, which allows them to purchase luxury goods, usually attracted by the brands); Fashionistas (usually female luxury costumers that pay attention to worlds’ trends, especially on the fashion field) and Status Seekers (they love based on “show off”, follow trends just to display their power and income). Those are the major segments concerning this type of customers, although there are others just like: “classpirational”, “timeless proper”, “omni gifter”, “luxe immune” and “rich upstarter” (Achille, 2014: 37).

Prestige or luxury consumers were also analyzed by Vigneron and Johnson (1999), who have defined five groups of consumers according to their luxury consumption behavior and to the effect and emphasis they put on ‘price’ as a prestige factor: (1) The Hedonic effect: it is related with hedonic consumers, the ones who care about feelings, pleasure and emotional attachments thus assuming that price is not a significant factor for luxury consumption, neither interpersonal opinion (perceived emotional value); (2) The Perfectionist effect: product and service’s quality, performance, brand heritage and features are the most important factor for these consumers and, as so, price does not play an important role for goods to be considered as luxury (perceived quality value); (3) The Veblen effect: for this type of consumers, prestige is the most important feature to consider something as prestige, in order to display wealth and impress other people as a signal of power (perceived conspicuous value); (4) The Snob effect: just like the previous effect, price stands on the front line as a fundamental indicator of luxury, uniqueness and status. These consumers enjoy the feeling of exclusivity since masses do not have the capacity to acquire the same products (perceived unique value); (5) The Brandwagon effect: for these consumers, price is not considered the most important factor for something to be seen as luxury, however, they usually highlight the effect price has on others regarding luxury consumption. As so, they act in consonance to what others may think about it, in order to belong to a group and be accepted like that (perceived social value).

Understanding each customer and their own profile is a major step for a luxury fashion brand to maintain its prestige, to establish bonds with them, to satisfy their needs on the best possible way and to improve the luxury consumption experience and service, as well. Customized experiences are key on an era where societies are even more concerned about image, body, fashion and mind. As luxury fashion consumption and consumer behavior are continuously changing, new trends emerge every day. Luxury consumers cannot be defined as a stereotype due to the diversity of opinions that each one has regarding luxury.

According to Chandon *et al.* (2017: 143), “luxury consumers have become ever more connected, so luxury brands can better target their end-consumers and conduct their business differently”, which is an opportunity for this market to keep growing by accepting the importance of their online presence.

2.2. Fashion-Luxury Consumer-brand relationship

While looking forward to being closer to their customers, brands must invest on the improvement of their relationships with them, by reinforcing trust, cooperation and affective commitment. To do it, urges the need of enhancing their personalities to demonstrate brands as human beings, with feelings, cultural values, thoughts and attitudes (Fournier, 1998), able to generate among customers, a sense of identification (Albert and Merunka, 2013), safety and credibility (Grönroos, 1996).

As stated by Fournier (1998), Brand Relationship Quality (BRQ) may be sustained by one of the following facets: love and passion (based on a deep emotional interaction), self-connection (related to expression and identity concerns), interdependence (represented by a high number of intense interactions), commitment (grounded on loyalty, support and reliability), intimacy (relations with strong roots and layers) and brand partner quality (based on the satisfaction that exists between the two parties of a relationship). Strengthen one of the previous factors may lead to solid and long run relationships. As it was described previously, luxury consumption has different backgrounds according to each user's perspective and, due to that, customers' relationship with fashion luxury brands may be built under the need of status or

prestige, or even just for pleasure or experience. Customers seek dissimilar relationships with brands based on their desires.

A treasured and strong relationship between a customer and a brand is now adding more value to products than their materials itself. For that reason, it is possible to state that the perceived value of a brand is a crucial matter to customers and that strong relationships' establishment must be brands' number one priority (Grönroos, 1996).

“The dynamics of customer–brand relationships (CBR) has becoming a topic of interest since late nineties of 20th Century” (Loureiro, 2015: 1) and, consequently, Fashion luxury brands are increasingly following the relationship marketing path considering that “When a consumer believes that he or she can rely on the brand, it facilitates the development of a love feeling” (Albert and Merunka, 2013: 262), which also demonstrates the importance of corresponding or even exceeding customers' expectations. Having that in mind, it is perceived that this attitude is meant to guarantee that customers will remain faithful to the brands they love even on their hardest times.

Since the paradigm of luxury is changing towards less consensual approaches, such as massive luxury, it is important for brands to generate acceptance among their communities to intensify and reinforcing relationship marketing strategies focused on experiences and details. That effort is meant to strengthen brand love which is a surplus considering that “love and passion are in the core of a strong brand relationship, meaning infatuation, selfish, and even obsessive dependency” (Loureiro, 2015: 2).

Brand Love has been studied for years by several authors who state that consumers may develop certain feelings for brands, such as love, as they can do for persons or objects (Albert *et al.*, 2008; Batra *et al.*, 2012), it has also emerged as an important consumer–brand relationship construct, especially on the fashion market (Ismail and Spinelli, 2012).

According to Carroll and Ahuvia (2006: 81), it “is defined as the degree of passionate emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has for a particular trade name”. Consequently, it is mandatory for brands to reinforce the bonds between them and their customers to guarantee loyalty and competitive advantage, since the brand love generated may shape consumers' identity to be aligned with the brand itself (Albert and Merunka, 2013). Considering the market under analysis, Ismail and Spinelli (2012:

388) mentioned that “Consumers love their fashion brand because of the passion it inspires in them. They want to be well dressed and well-groomed also they want to be informed with the latest styles. Basically, fashion brands are looking to capture and appeal young consumers markets who desire to express themselves using fashion”, demonstrating the willingness of this brands to become lovable and to retrieve their target audience for long periods of time through solid relationships that lead to positive reactions and feedback.

This concept has been evolving during the time and has different approaches according to each researcher: (1) according to Sternberg’s (1986) interpersonal love theory, this concept is based on three dimensions: passion, intimacy and commitment; (2) Shimp and Madden (1988) were focused on consumers' relations with objects, mainly due to three processes—motivation, emotion, and cognition; (3) Ahuvia (2005) studied the emotional connections that consumers have with objects they love as a way to establish relationships with brands, it is focused on possessions; (4) Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) developed a model focused on the attachment and passion that consumers feel towards a brand. According to this authors’, Brand Love is directly influenced by loyalty and positive WOM; (5) Albert *et al.* (2008) studied the elements that make customers feel love towards a brand and eleven dimensions were identified: Passion, Duration of the relationship, Self-congruity, Dreams, Memories, Pleasure, Attraction, Uniqueness, Beauty, Trust, Declaration of affect; (6) Batra, *et al.* (2012) developed a model to study this concept which was composed by passion-driven behaviors, self-brand integration, positive emotional connection, long-term relationship, anticipated separation distress, overall attitude valence, attitude strength.

2.3. Online Luxury Fashion Brands

2.3.1. E-Luxury

A certain irony lays on the inconsistency and lack of similarity between uniqueness and exclusiveness of luxury goods when compared to the accessibility and reach of the internet to the masses because “as an industry that is known for innovation, avant-gardism and creativity, it may not be apparent why luxury brands and digital technology have been perceived as incompatible since the advent of the Internet and digital

communications technology” (Okonkwo, 2009b: 303). Thus, understanding how LFB can make the most of their virtual presence and of their strategic paths is key. There has been an incessant struggle among this market to reach “the right balance between satisfying the requirements of luxury in a changing market context and consumer orientation, driven by the Internet revolution” (Okonkwo, 2009b: 305).

Everyone is only a click ahead of exploring what the internet has to give, and for that reason, luxury brands considered whether or not they should go online and “...many high-end brands are still hesitant about adopting these platforms due to concerns regarding ubiquity” (Quach and Taichon, 2017: 163). This LFB uncertainty about exploring the online environment was characterized by Baker *et al.* (2018: 37) as the “«Internet Dilemma » of how to maintain the image of their brand, sustain a personal link with customers, and retain an aura of exclusivity as they seek to provide their products and services to an increasingly technologically-astute customer base”. Comprehending that internet is characterized as an “extremely efficient medium for accessing, organizing, and communicating information” (Peterson *et al.*, 1997: 331) is fundamental for a sustainable business on the 21st century in which paying attention to consumers’ communities and opinions is mandatory.

E-commerce does not allow a physical contact with the products people intend to purchase; instead, it offers convenience and a wide variety of possibilities. At a first sight, it seems very intolerable to link these concepts, but luxury and online retail are giving the first steps together and several online platforms have been created along with brands e-commerce stores as well (Shen *et al.*, 2017b). Despite that, it is imperative to mention that Internet did not only caused troubles among this market, its improved customer experience in some ways as well, for instance “the ability to provide perceptual experiences that are far superior to a printed catalogue, although not as rich as personal inspection” (Peterson *et al.*, 1997: 333). Baker *et al.* (2018) acknowledges that luxury brands are no longer considering whether to invest on e-commerce, they are considering the best ways to do it since it has becoming a critical success factor on the market.

Furthermore, the digital revolution for these LFB need to consider Social Network Sites (SNS) as a communication touchpoint with their consumers, especially since it is on this environment that nowadays fashion leaders and fashion followers have more

interactions (Shen *et al.*, 2017b). Besides that, as reported by Bain & Company (2017: 2), “The main growth engine of the luxury market is a generational shift, with 85% of luxury growth in 2017 fueled by Generations Y and Z” which happen to be the audience on SNS. Also, as stated by Godey *et al.* (2016), SNS are becoming a valuable source of information for consumers, who already assume that brands must be present on these platforms, since it transmits a closer communication and has a more relevant content that boosts engagement and interactions. Additionally, SNS can be considered “as an important and cost-effective image building tool” Godey *et al.* (2016: 5840). “Given the ultimate goal of building brand equity, luxury firms have considered ways in which IT can be used” (Baker *et al.*, 2018: 38) so SNS need to be managed carefully on Luxury Fashion Market. This tool combined with more conventional strategies may allow these brands to establish and sustain a relationship with their customers Godey *et al.* (2016).

“The transition to a knowledge-based economy and the enormous development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are driving companies to find innovative approaches to marketing and to business in general” (Brogi *et al.*, 2013: 1), so, as the expansion of technologies and the internet itself keeps on growing, many luxury brands understood this market evolution as an opportunity to stand out and to positioning themselves on the first row and vanguard to get the attention of the trendsetters that not only follow fashion but also technology.

Despite all the benefits that internet can bring into luxury brands’ world, many companies among this sector have been hesitant (Quach and Taichon, 2017; Baker *et al.*, 2018) and unwilling regarding the adoption of technologies that may lead to the overexposure of these brands, usually perceived as traditional and exclusive, displaying an unattainable aura. In consonance to Baker *et al.* (2018: 38), “questions remain about the ways in which luxury firms can use the Internet to provide consumers with information about their brand, products, and experiences while maintaining a luxurious and rarified customer experience”, because being available for the masses was something to avoid at the maximum cost to fulfil traditional luxury consumers’ requirements. However, as stated previously, the countless advantages that internet can bring to these brands have originated a revolution on every consumer-brand touchpoint, “taking place in all manners of use-to-user communities such as blogs, vlogs, plogs, mlogs, chat groups, social networks, virtual worlds and other 2D and 3D platforms that

congregate consumers” (Okonkwo, 2009b: 309). This insurgency is also justified by the fact that these brands have understood the consumer profile shift since “wealthy segment of the consumer population had embraced the Internet and was using it not only beyond information search but also for shopping, converging, sharing and influencing others” (Okonkwo, 2009b: 308). Thus, several high-end luxury brands started to reinforce their online communications and strategies to be closer to their consumers (Quach and Taichon, 2017).

If some brands only viewed internet as a way of disseminating information and overall publicity, others understood it as a business opportunity on several areas “including communications, branding, customer services, design, retailing, consumer analysis, client networks or congregation, marketing, customization and product development, as well as managing logistics, supply chain and operations” (Okonkwo, 2009b: 307). Despite the importance of online communications, “luxury brands are still cautiously taking their very first steps on the Internet” (Quach and Taichon, 2017: 163) due to the several risks associated with it as it is considered “to be a mass medium of communication, one that is neither selective nor exclusive” (Baker *et al.*, 2018: 39).

Chandon *et al.*, (2017: 143) mentioned that “the real power of digital is its ability to fully engage the consumer in a brand experience on the path to purchase” so, in order to boost the potential of the new technologies, there must be a 360° plan able to integrate all those areas and strategies within luxury brands aiming the development of a position among the whole web which must be consistent to each brand image.

Since luxury is all about the experience and sensory stimulations, is it crucial to understand if it is possible to transpose those mechanisms to a virtual world able to create a luxurious experience (Baker *et al.*, 2018). Bearing in mind that “Luxury itself has always had innate characteristics that are intricate to its very being and comprise of elements that speak more to passion than reason” (Okonkwo, 2009b: 304), it is vital for a brand to be able of inspiring its customers online with the same essence and identity that it transmits and comprises on an offline way. To succeed on those online platforms, a brand must be able to translate its effective luxury experience (including design, sensations, tone of voice, presentation, limited distribution) into online means to show a consistency among all of its elements (Okonkwo, 2009b; Baker *et al.*, 2018).

Whether it is an online or offline communication, LFB must understand that “successful luxury goods marketing requires the customer to perceive sufficient value in the luxury good to compensate for the high price charged” (Tynan *et al.*, 2016: 1156). As there is a shift towards online commerce, according to Bain & Company (2017), physical stores must be ready to be adapted accordingly and to provide meaningful and inspiring experiences to its customers, even though they still account for 75% of the purchases within this market. As so, Luxury Fashion Brands physical stores “will have to pivot from a transactional role to become venues for a broader range of customer interactions. Luxury brands have grown accustomed to presenting a monologue about themselves in stores that feel like temples. Increasingly, they will need to transform stores into places that feel like home, delivering distinctive, immersive experiences and engaging in a genuine dialogue with customers” (Bain & Company, 2017: 2).

Considering what was mentioned on this chapter, it is essential to understand how these changes can influence the current luxury paradigm and how will it influence the perception of that luxury customers have towards the brands they usually purchase from. Internet has allowed the dissemination of new payment methods and new trails to get exclusive products such as different types of stores, “created new pre-purchase activities, and made new services available, such as on-site customized production” (Chandon *et al.*, 2017: 143), it was responsible by the creation of a second-hand market since “it allows a consumer to sell a luxury good directly to another consumer, without a professional intermediary” (Chandon *et al.*, 2017: 140) and for the reduction of several production costs (Mundel *et al.*, 2017). These changes originated an increase of luxury market sales and provoked the rise of new types of luxury, however, “questions remain about the ways in which luxury firms can use the Internet to provide consumers with information about their brand, products, and experiences while maintaining a luxurious and rarified customer experience” (Baker *et al.*, 2018: 38).

2.3.2. Online Luxury Fashion Brand Communities and Tribes

Communities and tribes have been studied for centuries and they are usually described as a group of people who share common interests, behaviors and traditions, who display a sense of belonging, responsibility, importance and membership throughout a social bond able to fulfil needs and reinforce emotional connections, despite geographical and

time differences (McMillan and Chavis, 1986; Jang *et al.*, 2008; Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001). A Brand community comprises all of those characteristics and it is usually characterized as “a set of social relationships among admirers of a brand” (Muniz and O'Guinn, 2001: 412) that may also be devoted to it (Kim and Lee, 2017).

As a consequence of an ever-changing environment, this concept has evolved even though its roots remain the same. Nowadays, communities play a major role on the customer – brand relationship, since they can be perceived as a communication channel between both parts. Some authors such as Jang *et al.* (2008: 1) even mentioned that “The success of a brand is realized when a brand community enables the consumers' own expression of their characteristics through the brand itself”.

The development of the internet and technology itself has allowed the dissemination of new ways of communication, information gathering and interaction between consumers (Brodie *et al.*, 2013; Brogi, 2014), which contributed to an enormous social change (Kozinets, 1999). As stated by Kim and Lee (2017: 2), “a luxury brand can take full advantage of brand communities to create distinctive brand relationships. Existing research convincingly implies that luxury brand communities are critical and the multi-faceted experiences they create can enhance relationships with customers”.

According to Okonkwo (2009b), at the beginning of online communities' hype, fashion luxury brands were unwilling of investing on social networks since it would put them close to masses and, consequently, it would blur the uniqueness and luxury magic itself, along with the exclusive distribution. Effectively, the new technologies “have made luxury fashion more accessible to everyone. Nowadays, consumers can instantly access a wide variety of fashion goods on the Internet and share brand experiences with other consumers” (Brogi *et al.*, 2013: 1). This concept could not fight against the online trend and, as so, luxury brands are currently able to move crowds within the mentioned environment. Due to that, this is one of the most relevant topics to analyze on the luxury market.

Online Brand Communities (OBC) and tribes appear as an illustration of it and “refer to either groups or individuals engaging in online interaction on virtual spaces created through the integration of communication with contents developed by community members” (Jang *et al.*, 2008:2) with no geographical and time boundaries (Brogi, 2014;

Brogi *et al.*, 2013). Throughout social media networks, blogs, video platforms and online forums, the members of these communities create contents and share them with the other members and with the brands itself (Brogi *et al.*, 2013). According to Vernuccio *et al.* (2015), these communities allow and encourage customers to express easily their feedback towards the brands through means such as the “like” button on SNS.

Customers are more aware of what happens around them and have all the information they need on the palm of their hands throughout many devices and screens available on the market. Having that in mind, keeping up on the top of consumers’ preferences, led many companies to create OBC either on social networks, chat rooms, brand’s website or other platforms, because “these platforms facilitate communications between brands and consumers, and also among consumers” (Quach and Taichon, 2017: 164). Also, those interfaces help brands tracking consumers’ needs or suggestions since they can share common interests related to the brand (Jang *et al.*, 2008; Brogi, 2014) or even to reinforce their engagement and commitment (Brodie *et al.*, 2013), throughout reliable interactions (Kim and Lee, 2017).

Nowadays, word of mouth on digital platforms plays a major role (Parrott *et al.*, 2015) to disseminate information, whether it expresses anger, passion, knowledge or disrespect about a brand, because it is understood as the most trustworthy source and, due to the amplification it can get among a community as well (Brogi *et al.*, 2013). Likewise, OBC “are viewed by fashion marketers as powerful instruments to influence customers’ purchasing behavior” (Brogi *et al.*, 2013: 1).

2.4. Massclusivity

Luxury’s concept has never reached a consensus and it keeps on changing as the time passes by. Traditional luxury “started as a niche, limited to the happy few, the only ones who could afford it” (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016: 120) with a restricted association amongst quality, exclusivity and expensive prices (Truong *et al.*, 2009). However, this market is currently facing a major shift (Brun and Castelli, 2013) towards a luxury democratization in which is targeting an “expanded clientele” (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016: 120) and “widening range of offers from firms” (Truong *et al.*, 2009: 376).

Internet had a solid influence on Luxury Fashion Brands (LFB) reinvention since it “made luxury fashion more accessible to everyone” (Brogi *et al.*, 2013: 1) and because it is considered a “mass medium of communication” (Baker *et al.*, 2018: 39). This is how several new types of luxury were born, including *Massclusivity*, which stands for Masses and Exclusivity, aims of selling exclusive products for the masses by combining “a high perceived prestige with reasonable price premiums to attract middle-class consumers” (Truong *et al.*, 2009: 375), “who desire to follow the lifestyles of richer classes” (Mundel *et al.*, 2017: 68).

Silverstein and Fiske (2003) stated different types of luxury within this ‘*Massclusivity*’ environment: (1) Accessible Super-Premium Goods: products with higher prices that can be, however, purchased by middle class consumers. These products are perceived as premium within the range they are included in; (2) Old Luxury Brand Extensions: consist on traditional luxury products usually afforded by the wealthiest users in lower costs versions; (3) *Masstige*: which is the combination of Masses and Prestige, it considers the products that are balanced between the mass market and the upper-class market. It usually refers to mass market products that are the most expensive within their category. Some authors like Truong *et al.* (2009: 375) characterize this type of luxury by “being very innovative and effective because it combines a successful prestige positioning with a broad appeal but with little or no brand dilution”.

There are some reasons behind luxury brands’ needs for this modification but the most considerable one is that those brands are required to grow and that cannot happen if they do not diversify their options outside of the privileged wealthy and powerful (Hanslin and Rindell, 2014; Chandon *et al.*, 2016) and “happy few” (Dubois *et al.*, 2001:12; Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016: 120; Chandon *et al.*, 2016: 301) circle. For some brands, rarity is not the key anymore, therefore the solution was to embark on a more diversified strategy where exclusivity is still recalled, however, on a more abundant way by “...artificial rarity tactics (limited editions, capsule collections)” (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2016: 121) or even “mass premium brands, second lines and designer collaboration” (Hanslin and Rindell, 2014:145). Luxury fashion brands are trying to attract different segments and “to make their products available for a wider array of consumers” (Mundel *et al.*, 2017: 68) with step-down line extensions that consist on launching products within the same category, however those examples of

diversifications are often based on a lower price (Mundel *et al.*, 2017; Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2018), lower quality statement. Relatively to the fashion market, this can be represented, for instance, by a designer collection developed to a younger target. “The accessible luxury category includes relatively low-priced versions of exclusive and expensive goods, which can be regarded as envy leader products” (Brun and Castelli, 2013: 832). Despite these products are cheaper than the traditional luxury products’, they still reveal a certain “level of perceived prestige, which differentiates them from middle-range products, but at the same time, they are sold at prices that are only slightly above those of comparable middle-range products” (Truong *et al.*, 2009: 376).

In fact, democratization of luxury has been mentioned as the process of transforming luxury goods available and reachable to a larger range of customers, “this metamorphosis illustrates the conversion from extremely exclusive products to less expensive and non-rare ones” (Brun and Castelli, 2013: 831). According to Mundel *et al.* (2017: 68), “this has enabled high-end brands to capitalize on the trading-up phenomenon that has become familiar within the middle class”.

A common *Massclusivity* strategy consists on providing luxury for masses through the collaborations between a high-end luxury brands and fast fashion brands. For instance, the fashion collections that the fashion mass market brand H&M – Hennes & Mauritz – develops (Willems *et al.*, 2012) in collaboration with high-end fashion designers (e.g. Balmain, Stella McCartney, Karl Lagerfeld, among others). These co-branding projects are a true success either on buzz and on sales since these collaborations are usually sold out on a short period of time after its launch due to the limited supply, showing that “H&M has shown a unique formula of selecting an appropriate luxury fashion partner and co-branding cooperation” (Shen *et al.*, 2017a: 173). The luxury limited edition for this mass market brand has higher prices than H&M regular collections due to its rarity, its selective distribution at only the most important stores (including e-commerce) and the recognized quality and prestige of its luxury partner. Despite its success in terms of communication, according to Shen *et al.* (2017a), the impact they have on customers’ loyalty is still unknown. Each brand involved on these partnerships must consider the pros and cons of this connection since these collaborations grant the transfer of meanings and perceptions between both parties.

Besides the benefits LFB can get by adopting a *Massclusivity* strategy, there are several risks that must be considered, such as the brand dilution which may happen when a brand is not considered exclusive anymore and loses part of its value (Shin *et al.*, 2017) by having an excessive exposure and intensive distribution strategy. These brands must avoid the tendency of becoming common in order to maintain the image of prestige and status and sustaining their desirability among the audiences (Kapferer and Valette-Florence, 2018). According to Willems *et al.* (2012: 1488) this modification on “...fashion retailing is the blurring of barriers between fast and fine fashion”.

As it was stated beforehand, this market keeps on growing and the number of alternatives to choose from is increasing progressively. Brands must adapt themselves to a tougher competition. The diffusion of the internet along with the customers' access to loads of information about the brands has contributed to the fade of luxury barriers (Chandon *et al.*, 2016), and to increase “...sales and the risk of overexposure while maintaining a fragile perception of limited supply” (Okonkwo, 2009b: 304), which can lead to a weak brand image. Kapferer and Valette-Florence (2016) also defined another responsibility that sustains the democratization of luxury: the market under analysis has a new focus on consumers' experience. These brands are aware that, nowadays, customers seek more than just a product; they seek for a complete process of engagement which has to comprise customized services, customer relationship management strategies, strong brand associations, additional services, among others. *Massclusivity* can be perceived as an experience when lower-end brands define strategies to differentiate themselves from the competitors while conceding its mass market customers the access to the luxury dream.

This new paradigm was the epicenter of several objections, especially, because it is unknown whether the traditional luxury consumer, who seeks for status and prestige (Ma *et al.*, 2012), would be interested on a product that is available to everyone. Accordingly, it is also unexplored the impact of massive luxury and mass market penetration on LFB image and brand value. Many researchers such Kapferer and Valette-Florence (2016: 128) mentioned that “Luxury is not mass. It is just the opposite” or even “Luxury fashion is not what it used to be” (Hanslin and Rindell, 2014:145). This wave of authors stated other factors to mark their position against massive luxury. For instance, Kapferer and Valette-Florence (2016) stressed out that luxury cannot be included on the mass market paradigm since it craves an exclusive

distribution and, as so, luxury brands may fail on meeting the mass market distribution standards and requirements, especially related to timely supply. Likewise, the same authors mentioned that products with lower quality levels cannot be perceived as superior which is one of the main characteristics of luxury's concept.

Kastanakis and Balabanis (2012) explained that this mutation establishes a challenge for fashion luxury brands in which it is required to find equilibrium between (1) sustaining brand image and its associated prestige and (2) growing with an expanded target to generate higher levels of awareness. As soon as brand finds its balance, it will be able to guarantee a strong customer-brand relationship that can lead to brand love.

3. Methodology and Conceptual Framework

In order to retrieve conclusions for the investigation problem, the selected methodology will be developed based on a Netnography analysis which was presented by Kozinets (2002: 61) “as an online marketing research technique for providing consumer insight”. Othis dissertation, Netnography will be applied to Luxury Fashion Brands Communities, considering that “on the Internet, electronic tribes structured around consumer interests have been growing rapidly. To be effective in this new environment, managers must consider the strategic implications of the existence of different types of both virtual community and community participation” Kozinets (1999: 252).

Netnography is compared to ethnography (the study of cultures and societies) since it provides data about consumers’ habits and lifestyle. However, it is transplanted and adapted to online communities (Kozinets, 2002; Brown *et al.*, 2003), which are defined as groups of people with similar interests, that interact, discuss and influence each other (Kozinets, 1999) at online platforms. In order to apply this netnography, it will be required to define specific research questions (Kozinets, 2002), identify and select the online fashion luxury platforms to gather relevant information and then performing a text mining at the selected OBCs, to extract the data and to proceed with a sentiment analysis report of the consumer interactions with the brands.

This investigation is built under a solid and confirmed approach, already validated and tested by several authors such as Bilro *et al.* (2018), with the purpose of understanding the behavior of luxury consumers and fashion mass market consumers on online brand communities towards massive luxury, throughout their reviews and interactions on the selected platforms. As so, to guarantee that luxury and mass market perspectives are represented on this netnography analysis, two fashion brands were selected to represent each side: (i) Gucci – luxury brand -, and (ii) H&M – fashion mass market brand.

The most representative online communities for each one of these brands are the social networks Facebook and Instagram, from which the data from consumer’s interactions was retrieved. Considering that these two platforms have different audiences and different communication types, it is important to analyze both of them individually to allow a convergence of information to complement this study.

Founded in 2004 at USA, Facebook is an online community created to bring people together, allowing an easier and faster communication between the users and its friends and families. It started as web page developed by three college friends from Harvard University, including Mark Zuckerberg, and it is currently a successful Social Networking Site which had, on average, 1.47 billion daily active users during June 2018. Brands noticed the potential of this SNS to build and stablish relationships with their customers who share similar interests and that can provide immediate feedback to brands' activities.

Instagram was launched in 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger to enable its users to share their moments instantaneously with their friends and families, through photos and videos. Despite the several improvements, added features and the fact that Instagram was acquired by Facebook in 2012, the primary goal of this SNS remains the same. This platform experienced an exponential goal since its foundation and it currently counts with an average of more than 500 million active daily users. For fashion brands, Instagram play a major role on their communication and it influences consumers' style and shopping behavior (Anastasiou, 2018).

Table 1 - Gucci and H&M OBC's Members.

Brand	Facebook	Instagram
Gucci	17 Million	26.4 Million
H&M	35 Million	23.6 Million

Source: Own Elaboration.

Envisioning the data collection from these platforms with massive communities, it was necessary to proceed with a text mining technique capable to extract, examine, and transpose the vast amount of users' interactions on these OBCs into valuable insights (Fan *et al.*, 2006). The first step of the process - data extraction – was conducted with the assistance of a tool entitled *Scraper* (extension for the Web Browser *Google Chrome*), that was used on this online research to gather all the data from consumers' interactions on the communities selected (Table 1) into spreadsheets. Essentially, it transposes the comments of these communities' users on brands' publications to a file that collects the following data: (i) Platform (Instagram or Facebook); (ii) Brand

Post/Publication Link; (iii) Post publication date; (iv) Username to identify the customer that interacted with the brand post; (v) User Page link; (vi) the comment wrote by the user on the brand's post. This content collection was performed from March to April 2018 considering the following order: Gucci Facebook and Instagram (contents from March 2017 to March 2018 and H&M Facebook and Instagram Page (contents from July 2017 to March 2018).

The following stages are required supposing that the triangulation and convergence of information may be beneficial since it will permit a careful generalization of the study along with the achievement of more concrete and complementary results tested by dissimilar ways (Kozinets, 2002).

After collecting four different files of data, one for each brand community, the next stage of this netnography process was to develop a Sentiment Analysis to understand the users' feedback and feelings towards these brands and their own communications on social media. To proceed with a sentiment analysis, it was required to use a text mining tool capable of examining a vast amount of data efficiently: Meaning Cloud (<https://www.meaningcloud.com>), which is performed through an add-in at Microsoft Excel. Supported by Meaning Cloud, this analysis provided two investigations: Global Sentiment Analysis and Topic Sentiment Analysis. Both of them were essential to determine, through users' interactions, the impact of *Massclusivity* strategies towards the brand love of the selected OBCs. This process was conducted during May and June 2018.

The first investigation, Global Sentiment Analysis, categorized customer's comments at each brand community as positive, negative or neutral sentiment, i.e., it identified the polarity of each interaction by detecting a certain sentiment of each sentence. Besides this evaluation, the sentiment analysis performed was helpful to identify the (i) irony (when customers intend to say the opposite of what they have stated on the comment), (ii) agreement (identification of contradictory or ambiguous opinions) and (iii) subjectivity (whether the comment is a fact or an opinion) of each interaction. Each user comment analyzed on this research was classified according to its sentiment polarity scale by the Meaning Cloud tool. However, since the scale defined by this system does not allow a numerical analysis, a conversion was performed in order to allow a further

investigation. As it is stated on Table 2, there are five levels on this scale that, according to Meaning Cloud, vary from N+ (strong negative) to P+ (strong positive). These values were replaced by a number from 1 to 5 respectively.

Table 2 - Polarity Scale Numerical Conversion.

Polarity Tag	Sentiment	Conversion
P+	Strong positive	5
P	Positive	4
NEU/NONE	Neutral	3
N	Negative	2
N+	Strong negative	1

Source: Own Elaboration.

After the definition of a numeric Polarity Scale, this first investigation enabled the determination of the exact number of user's comments that are ironic/non-ironic, objective/subjective, agreement/disagreement (Table 3).

Table 3 – Examined metrics at Global Sentiment Analysis.

Metrics		
Irony	Subjectivity	Agreement
Ironic	Objective	Agreement
Nonironic	Subjective	Disagreement

Source: Own Elaboration.

Regarding the second investigation, Topic Sentiment Analysis, it allowed the creation of conversation clusters, i.e., the main topics addressed by the customers at the online brand communities. It also enables the identification of the frequency at which each topic is mentioned. The tool selected to perform this investigation (Meaning Cloud) is capable of identifying, for instance, organization names, products, people names, dates, contacts (e-mails, phone numbers), hashtags, among the comments of Gucci and H&M brand communities' users. While scrutinizing all of the comments from Gucci and H&M's Instagram and Facebook pages through Meaning Cloud Output spreadsheet, there were a maximum of 250 different topics identified – each OBC's interactions

generated a different number of topics, so this number considers the sum of the individual themes mentioned on the four investigations, which represent a high volume of information to be analyzed. In order to allow further comparisons and conclusions, these contents were aggregated into similar topics and text directions (Fan *et al.*, 2006). Among the 250 different conversation topics discovered on the analysis, there were 12 major groups and 26 clusters identified, while reviewing the spreadsheet, which were named considering the sensibility of the investigator and reviewed by a specialist (Table 4). This procedure was applied to both brand analysis, taking into consideration the number of interactions studied for each one of them and the topics they generated, as explained on the respective chapters.

The definition of the Cluster titles represented on Table 4 implied the replacement of the 250 topics identified by the respective Cluster to simplify the analysis. On this Topic Sentiment Analysis, each concept was evaluated by the Meaning Cloud tool according to its Polarity. As so, after the allocation of a Cluster to each topic, it was also mandatory to replace the Polarity Scale that evaluates the sentiments addressed by each Cluster according to the same approach and conversion that were taken into account on the Global Sentiment Analysis (Table 2). Subsequently, this conversion into a numerical scale allowed the determination of the Sentiment Polarity of each cluster.

The following report consists on the identification of the brands and online brand communities under analysis, and it is meant to deliver a deep and sustained overview of all Netnography (Data Mining from OBCs and Sentiment Analysis) outputs. This data is decisive to draw the main conclusions of the outcomes of creating massive luxury strategies on the Brand Love/Hate of Gucci and H&M Online Brand Communities (Facebook and Instagram). This study also aims to comprehend what customers' value the most on luxury consumption and how can those factors influence customer-brand relationship, once luxury brands decide to attribute new meanings to luxury (e.g. massive). It is envisioned to test if fashion luxury brands' online communities are influenced by a conceptualization change on what they previously considered about luxury, and how does it impact consumption.

Table 4 - Topics defined by Clusters.

Topic Identified	Clusters - Titles Definition
Person	Person
Product	Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)
	Cultural Product (music, picture, show or others)
	Other Products (food & beverages, electronic appliances, vehicles or others)
	Services
Location	Store
	Nature (outdoor spaces or others)
	Place (city, town, street or others)
Other Entity	Entities (language, doctrine, religion, meanings or others)
	Vocation & Titles
Organization	Companies
	Public Organizations (Government, Military, Education or others)
	Artistic & Sports Organizations
	Group of People
Living Thing	Animals (design, texture or others)
	Nature (design, texture or others)
	Body (or body parts)
Id	Contacts
	Hashtags
Unit	Currency
	Other units (time, weight or others)
Event	Social Events
	Natural Phenomena
Process	Process
Timex	Time (period, date)

Source: Own Elaboration.

4. Gucci Netnography Preliminary Results

The current dissertation aims to understand the impact of massive luxury strategies on the brand love of OBCs. In pursuance of a complete and representative analysis two brands were selected, a luxury fashion brand and a mass market fashion brand. Hence, this investigation will be able to identify different perspectives regarding the topic under study. The Luxury Brand selected to be under this netnography process was Gucci (Figure 2) . Gucci was founded by Guccio Gucci in 1921 and it started as a small leather goods store based in Florence, Italy. Nowadays, it is part of the fashion group Kering (Figure 3)- which includes other brands such as Saint Laurent, Balenciaga and Stella McCartney - and it is one of the most powerful and desired luxury brands, associated with exclusivity, detail and high-end Italian craftsmanship. Forbes (2018) considered Gucci as the 36th most valuable brand worldwide in 2018 due to its value of \$14.9 Billion, which positions Gucci as a reference on Luxury Fashion Market, only after Louis Vuitton (ranked #15) and Hermès (ranked #35).

Figure 2 – Gucci Logo.



Source: Gucci (2018).

Figure 3 – Kering Group Logo.



Source: Kering (2018).

This brand started as a family business with deep traditional roots, mainly focused on leather products produced with high quality resources and an impressive craftsmanship. Despite its enormous and remarkable heritage as a traditional luxury fashion brand, Gucci is trying to break with the classic and conventional concept of luxury. It aims to redefining luxury for the 21st century, while striving for the maintenance of its legacy

(Gucci, 2018). This new paradigm started in 2015, when Alessandro Michele was hired as a creative director.

One of the strategies adopted was the reinforcement of this brand's social media presence, against the tendency among the traditional luxury brands on that period (Ong, 2017). Until 2015, Gucci was avoiding this adaptation to the online domain, was considered old and was, simultaneously, facing several financial problems. As so, by noticing that the market was requesting this shift, Gucci was one of the luxury brands taking the lead by investing on SNS communications and e-commerce, captivating new millennial consumers, known by being digital natives. This new approach led to a turnaround of Gucci's image on the market, which was reflected on sales and profit growth (Ong, 2017; Danzinger, 2017).

Considering the investment on digital communications made since Alessandro Michele took place as a creative director, Gucci was ranked first on the January 2018 Top 10 Luxury Brands, Year-Over-Year Growth, Earned Media Value, according to Tribe Dynamics (2018), achieving the best results at the social media platform Instagram. This brand's current success is strictly directed with this new attitude and strategy that are meant to transpose its luxury image to a new environment, especially for customers who are seeking for authenticity among these high-end brands (Danzinger, 2017).

Luxury used to be described as exclusivity, however, in order to follow the new mindset established, the introduction on the digital world made Gucci's communication accessible to a larger audience, especially due to the higher number of consumer touch points. This brand is continuously investing on content creation and diversification to communicate on its several digital platforms, such as Facebook Lives and Instagram Stories, to display their fashion shows to a broader audience, campaigns' making-of, and other contents that usually are not shared from traditional luxury brands who maintain these moments in private and exclusive (Ong, 2017). These new communication channels associated with an influencer strategy focused on celebrities with an enormous reach - such as Rihanna, Elton John, Harry Styles – makes Gucci closer to the masses, attaining followers from the most diverse social classes and status. The barriers between luxury and the masses are even more faded and Gucci reinforces that it wants to redefine luxury for the 21st century. For that reason, this was the selected

brand to be part of this research. The following analysis is meant to understand if Gucci is able to maintain its own identity as a luxury brand and if this strategy impacts the brand love of its customers.

The Gucci platforms analyzed during this research were Instagram and Facebook, on which this brand has a strong presence - due to its intense activity and regular posts - and vast communities. Gucci's Facebook OBC has 17 Million members and its Instagram OBC accounts for 26,7 Million. As a luxury company, Gucci did not embrace the digital world and these online platforms from their beginning; however, it has become one of the most active brands on Facebook, with a community of 17 million users. Besides that, its investment on social media campaigns and lifestyle content positioned Gucci on the third position on the ranking of luxury fashion brands with more followers on this online community, following Chanel and Louis Vuitton respectively.

The Netnography Analysis on these Gucci Online Brand Communities was performed during May and June 2018 and it considered the investigation of users' comments on both SNS from March 2017 to March 2018. The data from both OBC was retrieved by the Scraper Plug In and analyzed by Meaning Cloud Tool, as previously explained on the chapter number three, Methodology and Conceptual Framework. On Table 5, there is a resume of the consumers' interactions (comments to brand's posts) on each one of them during the research period defined. Gucci's Instagram page has the highest number of interactions compared to Facebook which, at a primary level, states a higher engagement rate on Gucci's Instagram OBC.

Table 5 - Gucci OBC Analyzed Comments.

Gucci OBC	# Comments Analyzed	Period
Gucci Facebook	10,691	March 2017 to March 2018
Gucci Instagram	219,927	March 2017 to March 2018

Source: Own Elaboration.

Once the members of the selected OBCs and the respective interactions with Gucci were accounted, it was possible to characterize the sample contemplated on this netnography process (see Table 6). However, this characterization is superficial

considering that while extracting the data on the text mining process; it was only possible to retrieve particular information about the users of these communities such as the name, profile page and date of interaction.

Table 6 - Gucci Netnography Sample Characteristics.

Sample Size and Characteristics
N = 230,618 Comments
Brand
Gucci
Activity Sector
Luxury Fashion Brand
Online Brand Communities
Instagram, Facebook
Communities users
Brand Followers on Gucci's selected OBCs that have interacted with the brand during the Sample Research Period
Sample Research Period
From March 2017 to March 2018

Source: Own Elaboration.

4.1. Campaigns

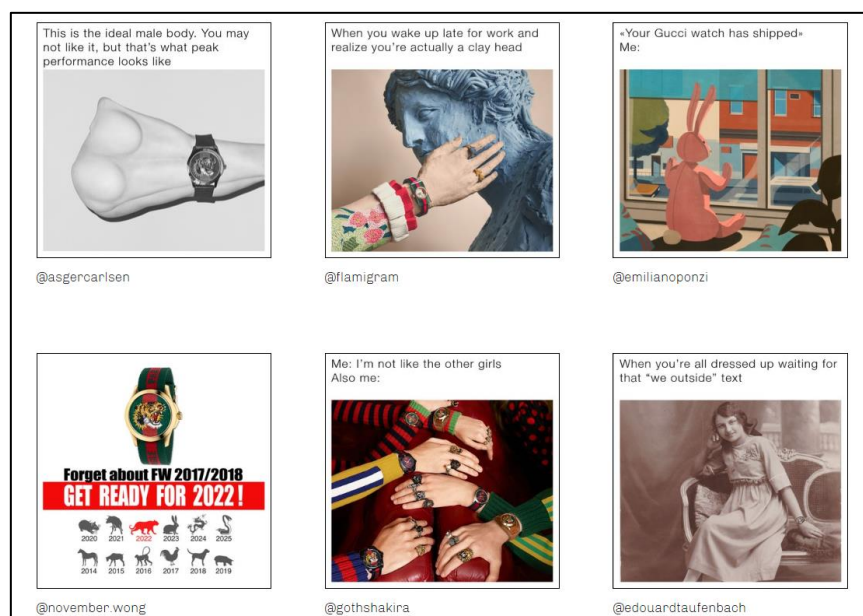
As previously stated, Gucci aims to redefine luxury concept. This new mindset led to a revolution on these brands' campaigns which are more focused on digital strategies and that target a vast audience when compared to traditional luxury campaigns. This brand has developed several social media campaigns with media repercussions, since they are usually responsible by generating high levels word of mouth contents due to their innovative and revolutionary contents, leading to a robust brand presence on SNS (Ong, 2017). The research period for Gucci's netnography analysis was carefully chosen based on the launch of a specific campaign that generate controversies among the public.

On March 17th, 2017, Gucci launched a campaign named #TFWGucci (Gucci, 2017b), which per se, reveals the focus on digital communication based on the utilization of the hashtag (#) that is also part of an internet trend and phenomenon - #TFW stands for "That Feeling When" – responsible for several user generated content. This exclusively

digital campaign was developed considering the need to generate awareness towards the launch of Le Marché des Merveilles collection of watches. The main characteristic of this campaign was the communication through Memes (Gucci, 2017a) which are defined by McCrae (2017) as “any fad, joke or memorable piece of content that spreads virally across the web, usually in the form of short videos or photography accompanied by a clever caption”. Considering this definition, the primary observation is that it is incompatible with luxury brands that have an exclusive and premium image to maintain. This was a risky strategy adopted by Gucci that selected several Meme artists (Gucci, 2017a) to develop this communication based on memes (Figure 4) usually associated with the masses and with a younger audience, and not with the regular Gucci – or other luxury brand – buyers. Having this in consideration, this campaign was selected to be part of this netnography analysis with the aim of understanding if this mass-driven communication has any impact on the brand love of usual Gucci luxury consumers.

The online brand communities selected were examined from the launch of this campaign March 17th, 2017, to March 17th, 2018, in order to comprise the maximum information from Gucci consumers’ interaction with the brand for one year. During this period, this brand revealed a tendency to adopt this type of communications, having promoted several massclusivity campaigns.

Figure 4- #TFWGucci Campaign Memes.



Source: Gucci (2017b).

4.2. Facebook

Gucci's Facebook Online Brand Community was investigated under the netnography research method defined, bearing in mind the users' interactions after #TFWGucci campaign launch in March 2017 until March 2018. During this period, there were accounted 10,689 users' interactions published by 7,034 different users (Table 7).

Table 7- Number of Interactions at Gucci's Facebook Page by users.

Number of Interactions	Users
Between 1 and 10	6,984
Between 11 and 20	37
Between 21 and 30	6
Between 31 and 40	3
Between 41 and 50	1
Between 51 and 60	3
Total	7,034

Source: Own Elaboration.

While exploring the data retrieved with the support of Scraper Plug in to a worksheet, it was stated that consumers' interactions were not timely stable, i.e., they did not present a regular evolution during the research period. However, it was possible to understand that March 2017 was one of the months of 2017 with a higher number of consumers' interactions on this Gucci OBC during 2017, which happens to be the month of #TFWGucci launch. It is also important to state that March 2017 analysis started on the 17th, so this data considers only half of the month and still, presented significant results (Table 8). Moreover, the findings of this timely analysis demonstrate that during the three months analyzed on 2018, Gucci had an exponential growth on the number of consumers' interactions towards brands' Facebook posts – January 2018 interaction' number grew 127% from December 2017. Thus, Gucci social media strategy and investment may have been internally improved for 2018 in order to achieve better engagement results. The period between January 2018 and March 17th 2018 corresponds to 56% of all interactions during the research period established - a 12-month analysis – as so, it is possible to note that Gucci's engagement on this brand community in 2018 was very preeminent on this analysis.

Table 8 - Timely Distribution of Interactions on Gucci's Facebook OBC.

Year	Month	Interactions	%	Year Distribution %
2017	March	554	5%	44%
2017	April	64	1%	
2017	May	168	2%	
2017	June	68	1%	
2017	July	416	4%	
2017	August	459	4%	
2017	September	1106	10%	
2017	October	972	9%	
2017	November	377	4%	
2017	December	551	5%	
2018	January	1,252	12%	56%
2018	February	2,548	24%	
2018	March	2,154	20%	
Total		10,689	100%	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

Once these 10,689 comments of Gucci brand followers on its Facebook OBC were gathered, the next stage on this netnography method was the development of a Sentiment Analysis, with the support of the Meaning Cloud tool, to comprehend the feelings associated with one of these interactions between the community and the brand. As previously explained on this process description, the sentiment analysis performed identified the polarity of each interaction, i.e., if the user's comment is positive, negative or neutral.

Table 9 - Gucci Facebook OBC's Interactions Polarity Scale.

Interactions' Polarity scale				
	Scale	Sum	%	P-N%
P+	5	1,121	10%	31%
P	4	2,181	20%	
NEU/NONE	3	5,219	49%	49%
N	2	1,625	15%	20%
N+	1	543	5%	
Total		10,689	100%	100%

Note: P-N % aims to divide positive and negative interactions into groups.

Source: Own Elaboration.

On this specific case, it is visible that most of Gucci Facebook OBC Interactions' have a neutral sentiment (Table 9) towards this brand's content during the research period established. Among the interactions analyzed, 31% disclose a positive sentiment, 15% are negative and only 5% of the data reveals a strong negative sentiment (Table 9). Despite the majority of the interactions were classified as neutral, it is visible that there are more positive evaluations than the negative ones.

This analysis also comprises the test to the degree of confidence linked to the polarity of user's interactions by attributing a value from 0 to 100 to each one of the 10,689 interactions. As it is visible on Table 10, the confidence associated to the polarity results of this investigation is substantial, 99.13, having a standard deviation of 2.88 which demonstrates a low dispersion of these confidence evaluations.

Table 10 – Confidence Analysis of Gucci's Facebook OBC Polarity Interactions.

Confidence Mean	Confidence Standard Deviation {SD}	Confidence Variance {Var [x]}
99.13	2.88	8.27

Source: Own Elaboration.

Once the Polarity of the interactions was identified among this investigation's sample, this Sentiment Analysis permitted the determination of the irony, subjectivity and agreement of each Gucci Facebook OBC members' comments. On this specific community, users barely adopt ironic comments; their interactions are 99% Nonironic (Table 11), and they are mostly objective on their opinions (61%). Regarding the level of agreement demonstrated, these users tend to agree (94%) on their interactions towards Gucci's content posts at its Facebook Online Brand Community.

Table 11- General Sentiment Analysis at Gucci's OBC Interactions

Sentiment analysis								
Metric	Value	%	Metric	Value	%	Metric	Value	%
Ironic	125	1%	Agreement	10,064	94%	Objective	6,547	61%
Nonironic	10,564	99%	Disagreement	625	6%	Subjective	4,142	39%
Total	10,689	100%	Total	10,689	100%	Total	10,689	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

The second stage of this research was the Topic Sentiment Analysis aiming to define the main topics addressed by the users at Gucci's Facebook OBC and the frequency that they are mentioned. It also enabled the polarity classification of each topic. While scrutinizing all of the 10,689 comments from Gucci's Facebook page, there were 14,537 sentiment topics identified from 204 different categories. As explained on this research's Methodology, these topics were aggregated by 26 clusters.

Table 12 – Clusters' Frequency of Gucci's Facebook OBC.

Topic Sentiment Analysis - Clusters Frequency		
Clusters Defined	SUM	%
Person	5,668	39%
Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)	1,189	8%
Vocation & Titles	684	5%
Other Products (food & beverages, electronic appliances, vehicles or others)	539	4%
Place (city, town, street or others)	529	4%
Store	420	3%
Entities (language, doctrine, religion, meanings or others)	372	3%
Group of People	312	2%
Nature (outdoor spaces or others)	269	2%
Animals (design, texture or others)	234	2%
Cultural Product (music, picture, show or others)	211	1%
Companies	201	1%
Body (or body parts)	180	1%
Public Organizations (Government, Military, Education or others)	168	1%
Contacts	139	1%
Currency	136	1%
Hashtags	105	1%
Services	91	1%
Social Events	85	1%
Process	78	1%
Time (period, date)	77	1%
Nature (design, texture or others)	68	0%
Other Units (time, weight or others)	50	0%
Natural Phenomena	38	0%
Artistic & Sports Organizations	30	0%
Other	2,663	18%
Total	14,536	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

The frequency of these clusters on this concrete analysis is detailed on Table 12, and according to this data, the most mentioned topic is "Person" (39%) among 26 different entries. This cluster includes the references to a Person's first, last or full name. On the

SNS Facebook, the consumers who want to identify other individuals to a certain brand publication have to do it by writing the person's name on the comment section. This information may induce that the contents shared by Gucci at Facebook promote a high engagement level, because its users identify other users and friends, which may lead to the conclusion that Gucci is investing on this community's culture by posting contents able to provoke interactions among consumers that bring other persons into this Facebook page, enabling a community expansion. The following cluster with a higher frequency is "Other", however, it includes the topics that were not classified or that were not able to be analyzed properly by the Meaning Cloud tool and, therefore cannot be considered on this study. As so, the next cluster will be considered as the second with a higher frequency – "Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others). Since Gucci is a Luxury Fashion Brand, the frequency of 8% (Table 12) of this cluster indicates that the users from this OBC are effectively commenting the fashion products represented on Gucci's communication at Facebook, which is the main core of this brand. Thus, these interactions are aligned with the brands' main focus: fashion. The third main cluster is "Vocation & Titles" that aims to aggregate the interactions that mention a vocation of a person or even a job title (e.g. creative director, designer, model, monarch). It has an expression of 5% (Table 12), demonstrating that these interactions with Gucci are aspirational and associated with the essence of a luxury brand that wants to embrace and communicate their professionalism, heritage, quality and usually reinforce the position of its main designer. As previously stated, Gucci is focused on changing its traditional luxury brand strategy to a more disruptive approach, and it is essentially depending on its creative director - Alessandro Michelle. Having this specific cluster on the podium may induce consumers' recognition of this fact.

Table 13 – Gucci Facebook OBC's Clusters Polarity Scale.

Clusters' Polarity scale				
	Scale	Sum	%	P-N%
P+	5	784	5%	21%
P	4	2,341	16%	
NEU/NONE	3	9,518	65%	65%
N	2	1,498	10%	13%
N+	1	395	3%	
TOTAL		14,536	100%	100%

Note: P-N % aims to divide positive and negative interactions into groups.

Source: Own Elaboration.

The Topic Sentiment Analysis performed with the support of the Meaning Cloud tool also enables the evaluation of the polarity of the topics and clusters defined. On the Table 13, it is possible to verify that 65% of the topics are neutral, while 21% are positive and 13% negative.

In order to provide a deeper understanding of the Clusters' polarity, this analysis was performed individually for each cluster (Table 14). The cluster with the highest polarity average score and with the strongest positive feeling associated - with a score of 3.38 – is the cluster “Store”, with a low standard deviation of 0.74. Hence, it is possible to mention that Gucci Facebook OBC's users associate positive feelings towards the cluster “Store” which denotes that the way this brand is positioned on the marketplace is positively evaluated by its consumers.

Being a luxury brand, gives Gucci the obligation of transposing and aspirational image to its customers and to provide a meaningful experience during the purchase process, so the polarity related to this cluster has to be perceived as a considerable evaluation for Gucci. The second cluster with a highest polarity average (3.22) is Time (period, date), which is associated with the seasonality of the of the communications and products' launch (e.g.: Summer, winter, Halloween). With a polarity mean of 3.21, the cluster “Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)” is the third with the strong positive feelings associated (Table 14), which denotes the affection that Gucci's users have towards the products that are produced and sold by this luxury brand. On the other hand, the clusters with the lowest polarity average (Table 14), value were Natural Phenomena (mean = 2.08) and Services (2.53).

Natural Phenomena is associated to the interactions of users that express words such as disaster or catastrophe towards Gucci's communication or products on this OBC.

Regarding Services, during this analysis it was possible to perceive that the Gucci Facebook OBC users criticize substantially this brands' customer service, and for that reason, is one of the clusters with a lower polarity mean, which goes against the quality standards that luxury brands strive for. On March 5th, 2018, the user Cristina Zelezneac made the following intervention at Gucci's Facebook OBC: “for a company that sells very expensive items you would think you'd have very good customer service. i placed

an order 3 weeks ago, didn't arrive, no updates on the order, i wrote customer service 2 times, no reply, tried calling no answer. HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE? how can have such poor customer service when you're clients are literally paying thousands on your products????". There are innumerable similar interactions that justify this sentiment evaluation towards this cluster. However, these clusters represent a low frequency (Table 12), thus inducing that these negative feelings have a reduced expression among the other clusters.

Table 14 - Topic Sentiment Analysis Polarity for the Clusters defined.

Clusters Defined	Polarity Mean	Polarity Standard Deviation {SD}	Polarity Variance {Var [x]}
Store	3.28	0.74	0.55
Time (period, date)	3.22	0.77	0.60
Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)	3.21	0.90	0.80
Nature (design, texture or others)	3.19	0.83	0.69
Person	3.17	0.75	0.56
Hashtags	3.16	0.61	0.37
Other Units (time, weight or others)	3.12	0.69	0.48
Artistic & Sports Organizations	3.10	0.48	0.23
Vocation & Titles	3.08	0.75	0.56
Cultural Product (music, picture, show or others)	3.08	0.74	0.55
Other Products (food & beverages, electronic appliances, vehicles or others)	3.08	0.78	0.60
Process	3.08	0.82	0.67
Place (city, town, street or others)	3.07	0.63	0.39
Companies	3.07	0.70	0.50
Nature (outdoor spaces or others)	3.04	0.74	0.54
Public Organizations (Government, Military, Education or others)	3.02	0.64	0.41
Animals (design, texture or others)	3.00	0.73	0.54
Social Events	2.99	0.73	0.54
Body (or body parts)	2.96	0.61	0.38
Entities (language, doctrine, religion, meanings or others)	2.95	0.81	0.66
Contacts	2.91	0.51	0.26
Currency	2.90	0.71	0.51
Group of People	2.87	0.79	0.62
Services	2.53	0.83	0.70
Natural Phenomena	2.08	0.59	0.34
Other	3.09	0.74	0.54
Total	3.11	0.76	0.58

Source: Own Elaboration.

4.3. Instagram

Gucci's Instagram Online Brand Community was investigated under the netnography research process defined, taking into consideration the users' interactions after #TFWGucci campaign launch in March 2017 until March 2018. During this period, there were detected 219,925 users' interactions published by 124,962 different users (Table 15).

Table 15 - Number of Interactions at Gucci's Instagram Page by user.

Number of Interactions	Users
Between 1 and 20	124,360
Between 21 and 40	349
Between 41 and 60	109
Between 61 and 80	53
Between 81 and 100	30
Between 101 and 120	15
Between 121 and 140	9
Between 141 and 160	5
Between 161 and 180	6
Between 181 and 200	5
> 200	21
TOTAL	124,962

Source: Own Elaboration.

While inspecting the data collected with the support of Scraper Plug in, it was visible that consumers' interactions were not regular during the research period (Table 16). However, it was understood that the number of comments on Gucci Instagram's Posts is considerably high every month. May and September 2017, and February 2018 achieved especially high engagement results on this OBC. The campaign #TFWGucci under analysis was launched in March 2017, and despite its disruptiveness and controversy, the number of users' interactions towards Gucci's communication at its Instagram page is just slightly below the average number of interactions per month (March 2017 = 16,662 interactions; Average number of interactions per month = 16,917). Despite this campaign launch was in March 2017, its communication results may have lasted until April 2017.

Table 16 - Timely Distribution of Interactions on Gucci's Instagram OBC.

Year	Month	Interactions	%	Year Distribution %
2017	March	16,662	8%	79%
2017	April	18,469	8%	
2017	May	20,238	9%	
2017	June	17,495	8%	
2017	July	17,363	8%	
2017	August	11,203	5%	
2017	September	22,476	10%	
2017	October	18,917	9%	
2017	November	17,871	8%	
2017	December	13,514	6%	
2018	January	19,071	9%	21%
2018	February	20,259	9%	
2018	March	6,387	3%	
Total		219,925	100%	100%
Average number of interactions per month		16,917		

Source: Own Elaboration.

With the support of the Meaning Cloud tool, the next step of this netnography analysis is to understand the feelings and the polarity associated to each one of these 219,925 comments by leveraging a Global Sentiment Analysis. On this specific OBC, it is visible that most of Gucci Instagram Interactions' (70%) have a neutral sentiment (Table 17) towards this brand's publications. Among the interactions analyzed, 26% reveal a positive sentiment and only 4% are negative (Table 17). Despite the majority of the interactions were classified as neutral, it is visible that there are more positive evaluations than the negative ones.

Table 17 - Gucci Instagram OBC's Interactions Polarity Scale.

Interactions' Polarity scale				
	Scale	Sum	%	P-N%
P+	5	23,778	11%	26%
P	4	34,353	16%	
NEU/NONE	3	153,638	70%	70%
N	2	6,514	3%	4%
N+	1	1,642	1%	
TOTAL		219,925	100%	100%

Note: P-N % aims to divide positive and negative interactions into groups.

Source: Own Elaboration.

These results were tested regarding the degree of confidence associated to the polarity of consumers' interactions, with a value ranging from 0 to 100 to all of the 219,925 interactions. As it is visible on Table 18, the confidence associated to the polarity results of this investigation is significantly high, 99.87, having a standard deviation of 1.06 which demonstrates a low dispersion of these confidence evaluations.

Table 18 – Confidence Analysis of Gucci's Instagram OBC Polarity Interactions.

Confidence Analysis			
Polarity	Confidence Mean	Confidence Standard Deviation {SD}	Confidence Variance {Var [x]}
Total	99.87	1.06	1.11

Source: Own Elaboration.

The Global Sentiment Analysis performed was also essential to identify if the interactions at Gucci's Instagram OBC are considered ironic, subjective and if they express agreement or disagreement. The users of this specific community do not reveal irony on their interactions, only 373 of 219,925 are ironic (Table 19). The great majority of these users are objective on their opinions (82%) and also tend to agree (99%) on their interactions towards Gucci's content posts at its Instagram OBC.

Table 19 - General Sentiment Analysis at Gucci Instagram OBC's Interactions.

Sentiment analysis								
Metric	Value	%	Metric	Value	%	Metric	Value	%
Ironic	373	0%	Agreement	218,145	99%	Objective	180,228	82%
Nonironic	219,552	100%	Disagreement	1,780	1%	Subjective	39,697	18%
Total	219,925	100%	Total	219925	100%	Total	219,925	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

On the Topic Sentiment Analysis, the main topics addressed by the users at Gucci's Instagram OBC were identified just like their frequency and the polarity classification of each topic. While inspecting the 219,925 interactions gathered from Gucci's Instagram page, there were 181,066 sentiment topics identified from 250 different categories. As explained on this research's Methodology, these topics were aggregated by 26 clusters. According to the Clusters' Frequency Analysis detailed on Table 20, "Contacts" is the cluster with the highest frequency percentage (38%) among 26 different clusters.

Table 20 – Clusters' Frequency of Gucci's Instagram OBC.

Topic Sentiment Analysis - Clusters Frequency		
Clusters Defined	SUM	%
Contacts	69,313	38%
Person	38,302	21%
Hashtags	8,678	5%
Place (city, town, street or others)	5,114	3%
Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)	4,546	3%
Vocation & Titles	3,972	2%
Group of People	3,603	2%
Other Products (food & beverages, electronic appliances, vehicles or others)	3,063	2%
Public Organizations (Government, Military, Education or others)	2,153	1%
Cultural Product (music, picture, show or others)	2,148	1%
Nature (outdoor spaces or others)	1,984	1%
Entities (language, doctrine, religion, meanings or others)	1,969	1%
Companies	1,591	1%
Animals (design, texture or others)	1,413	1%
Store	1,153	1%
Currency	985	1%
Body (or body parts)	722	0%
Social Events	464	0%
Nature (design, texture or others)	429	0%
Process	381	0%
Other Units (time, weight or others)	341	0%
Artistic & Sports Organizations	216	0%
Natural Phenomena	191	0%
Services	184	0%
Time (period, date)	159	0%
Other	27,992	15%
Total	181,066	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

The cluster “Contacts” comprises references to the elements present on the Table 22: E-mail, Id number, nickname, phone number, postal code, URL and blank insertions. Considering that 97% of the interactions among “Contacts” cluster (Table 21) refer to “Nicknames”, this information may induce that the contents shared by Gucci at Instagram promote a high engagement level, because its users identify other users and friends. On Instagram SNS, the users may identify other users on every content by

writing a comment started with a “@” followed by the nickname of the person that the user wants to identify. This is the case presented at this netnography analysis and, as so, it reveals a Gucci investment on this community’s culture by posting contents able to provoke interactions among consumers that bring other persons into this Instagram page, enabling a community expansion.

Table 21- Elements of Contacts’ Cluster.

Elements	Frequency	%
E-mail	69	0%
ID Number	28	0%
Nickname	67,439	97%
Phone Number	62	0%
Postal Code	2	0%
URL	1,699	2%
(blank)	14	0%
TOTAL	69,313	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

The second cluster with a higher frequency (21%) was “Person” (Table 20), which includes the references to a Person’s first, last or full name. These elements are, according to the present analysis, related to Gucci’s founder name, designers’ names and celebrities’ references (especially due to the extensive amount of contents related to celebrities and influencers that are part of Gucci’s current communication). The third one with a higher frequency (5%) was “Hashtags” (Table 201), referring to internet trend topics using the symbol “#” followed by a specific trend, e.g. the title of the campaign that initiate this analysis (#TFWGucci). Since Gucci is a Luxury Fashion Brand, it is also important to refer that the following clusters with more references were (1) Place (city, town, street or others), (2) Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others) and (3) Vocation & Titles (Table 20). Thus, it demonstrates that the members of this community are focused on remarking the fashion products; on mentioning vocation of a person or even a job title; and finally, to mention locations (e.g. the origin of the products, to request stock information on a certain store, to transmit support to the brand from a certain place, among others). These considerations are linked to the core of a luxury fashion brand that is meant to be aspirational, focused on its products quality, heritage and origin.

During the research process, the clusters defined were also evaluated based on their polarity. On the Table 22, it is possible to verify that 80% of the topics are neutral, while 16% are positive and only 4% reveal negative sentiments.

Table 22 – Gucci Instagram OBC’s Clusters Polarity Scale.

Clusters’ Polarity scale				
	Scale	Sum	%	P-N%
P+	5	8,621	5%	16%
P	4	20,662	11%	
NEU/NONE	3	144,747	80%	80%
N	2	5,577	3%	4%
N+	1	1,459	1%	
TOTAL		181,066	100%	100%

Note: P-N % aims to divide positive and negative interactions into groups.

Source: Own Elaboration.

Besides providing this general data about clusters’ polarity, the current analysis allowed this evaluation for each one of the clusters defined (Table 23). As also perceived through Table 23, 24 out of the 26 clusters of the topics among the interactions studied were evaluated with a neutral average polarity. When analyzing the information, the cluster with the highest Polarity Mean associated was “Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)” with a polarity mean of 3.39. Considering the fashion nature of this brand, it is important to have this cluster with positive feelings associated. The second cluster with the highest polarity mean was “Cultural Product (music, picture, show or others)” with a value of 3.36. In light of Gucci’s Instagram content, usually considered artistic, including paintings, movies and several different and innovative scenarios, this evaluation demonstrates the good reception on consumers interactions’ feelings.

On the other hand, only 2 of the 26 clusters were rated with a negative average polarity. The clusters with the lowest polarity average value (Table 23), were Services (2.99) and Natural Phenomena (mean = 2.31). Concerning Services, the present study showed that the customer service of this brand is poorly recognized, and the consumers’ interactions reveal the negative sentiments associated to it. When observing the result of “Natural Phenomena” and the references that led to this evaluation, it is seen that it contains the interactions of consumers that refer words such as “disaster” or “catastrophe” as a

negative characterization and description of Gucci's Instagram content or products promoted. For instance, the user “@somayehkianpour” mentioned on December 17th, 2017, the following: “You are going to disappear from the fashion world! Do a real job! Your recent works are disaster!”. These clusters represent a low frequency (Table 20), thus inducing that these negative feelings have a reduced expression among the other clusters.

Table 23 - Topic Sentiment Analysis Polarity for the Clusters defined.

Clusters Defined	Polarity Mean	Polarity Standard Deviation {SD}	Polarity Variance {Var [x]}
Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)	3.39	0.86	0.74
Cultural Product (music, picture, show or others)	3.36	0.80	0.64
Other Products (food & beverages, electronic appliances, vehicles or others)	3.31	0.75	0.56
Vocation & Titles	3.29	0.76	0.58
Time (period, date)	3.27	0.74	0.54
Person	3.26	0.66	0.43
Artistic & Sports Organizations	3.20	0.66	0.44
Store	3.20	0.72	0.52
Nature (design, texture or others)	3.18	0.69	0.48
Social Events	3.18	0.72	0.52
Process	3.18	0.82	0.67
Animals (design, texture or others)	3.17	0.73	0.53
Nature (outdoor spaces or others)	3.15	0.61	0.37
Entities (language, doctrine, religion, meanings or others)	3.14	0.77	0.59
Body (or body parts)	3.12	0.69	0.47
Other Units (time, weight or others)	3.12	0.60	0.36
Hashtags	3.12	0.48	0.23
Place (city, town, street or others)	3.11	0.54	0.29
Companies	3.10	0.58	0.33
Contacts	3.09	0.46	0.21
Public Organizations (Government, Military, Education or others)	3.08	0.59	0.35
Group of People	3.07	0.43	0.19
Currency	3.05	0.50	0.25
Services	2.99	0.71	0.51
Natural Phenomena	2.31	0.62	0.38
Other	3.17	0.60	0.36
Total	3.16	0.58	0.34

Source: Own Elaboration.

During the research period, there were several consumers' interactions displaying opposite feelings towards Gucci's new disruptive communication strategy. Some users consider this new strategy a mistake for the brand having a direct impact on their considerations about luxury. For example, (1) "@vluc8279" mentioned, on January 10th, 2018, "If I saw someone wearing that I would think they are homeless", (2) "@depechefav" said, on November 13th, 2017, "I love Gucci but this trend reminds me of the way homeless people dress" and (3) "@joeunitedkingdom" mentioned "When you think Gucci is a luxury brand but actually it's just rubbish now" on March 17th, 2017, during #TFWGucci campaign launch. Hence, it is possible to verify that, despite their love, affection and recognition towards the brand Gucci, these consumers also recognize that this type of communication and products is similar to a traditional luxury brand. On the other hand, there are some consumers capable of recognizing Gucci's efforts to become a digital trend and a pioneer within the sector. For example, during #TFWGucci campaign's launch, members such as "@lu_vecchioni" were thrilled with this new paradigm, generating interactions such as "Seriously, this is THE best marketing/social media EVER! Specially for a luxury brand!! Im crazy about it!! I wish i had the money to buy lots of @gucci watches cause you and i both deserve it!", on March 19th, 2018, only two days after this campaign's official launch.

5. H&M Netnography Preliminary Results

Besides understanding the impact of Luxury brands' communications to masses, it is fundamental to comprehend the opposite perspective from fashion mass market brands, in order to provide a robust and more complete analysis. The selected mass market fashion label was H&M (Hennes & Mauritz). H&M (Figure 5) was founded in Sweden, in 1947, by Erling Persson. At this moment, this brand name was only Hennes – stands for “hers” in English” – due to its mission of selling fashion items to women (H&M, 2018a). The name H&M was only defined on 1968 when Hennes purchased a retailer named Mauritz Widforss. From this moment on, H&M expanded its business worldwide and diversified its portfolio in order to start selling fashion products to all segments: women, men and children. This brand's main goal was to provide quality fashion products to the best price (H&M, 2018a). H&M is currently one of the most successful fashion mass market brands and was considered by Forbes the 47th most valuable brand worldwide in 2018 with a value of \$13 Billion. Among this ranking, H&M stands on 6th place on retail category, following Walmart, Home Depot, IKEA, CVS and Zara (Forbes, 2018).

Figure 5 - H&M Logo.



Source: H&M (2018a).

After achieving this global status, H&M started discovering new alternatives to amaze its customers and to maintain its position as a top of mind fashion brand. On 2004, H&M started its new co-branding strategy by developing a fashion collection with the high-end fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld – the creative director of Chanel (H&M, 2018c). This collections' success was guaranteed since it sold out on its launch day (The Fashion Law, 2018). From that moment on, H&M launched new collaborations (Figure 6) with luxury brands every year (e.g.: Stella McCartney, Moschino, Versace and Jimmy Choo), blurring the barriers between luxury and mass market brands, with the aim of providing quality designs with a reasonable and affordable price for the masses.

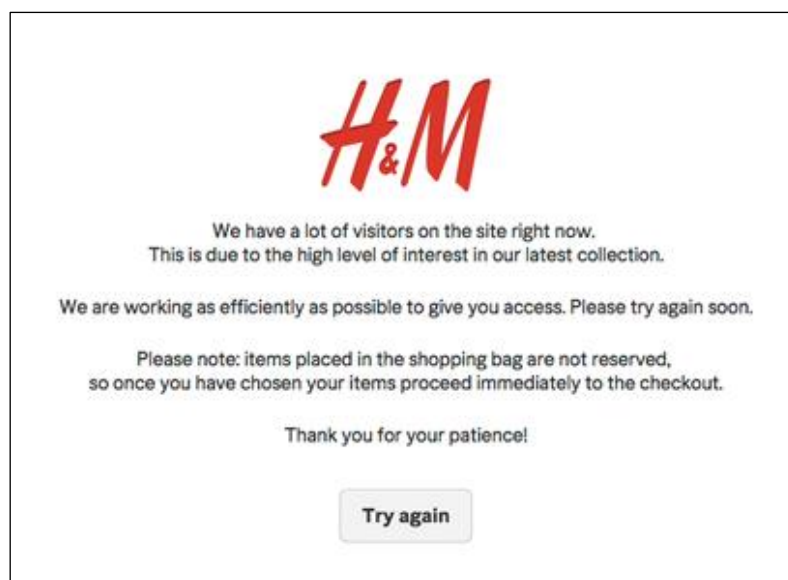
Figure 6 - H&M Limited-Edition Collaborations.



Source: Richard, K. (2014).

These collections have been successful through the years; they are usually sold out within hours, after long queues at the offline and online stores. Due to the high demand experienced, H&M website is not able to respond to this number of requests and it usually crashes (Graafland, 2015), as it is seen on Figure 7.

Figure 7 - H&M Webpage during H&M x Balmain Collaboration Launch.



Source: Graafland, A. (2015).

Also, H&M collaborations are considered capsule-collections, i.e., limited edition collections, that have a small supply when compared to the traditional mass market fashion brands, which leads to a higher demand (Figure 8) when compared to the offer

available (Zarrella, 2016). The association between high-end labels and H&M attracts media and the word of mouth generated is very powerful, since it “allows shoppers to grab a taste of the fantasy that is associated with luxury fashion without paying luxury prices” (Zarrella, 2016). With this type of collaborations, both brands involved have an exponential awareness increase, but also several risks associated, as previously stated on *Massclusivity* chapter on the present Dissertation.

Figure 8 - H&M x Balmain Collaboration Queues in London, 2015.



Source: Graafland, A. (2015).

This is a tangible example of *Massclusivity*, endeavoring to be part of luxury’s democratization, which can lead to positive impacts on brand equity and credibility for H&M by being linked with a luxury brand. However, the opposite is not completely linear and, according to Shen *et al.* (2017a), the impact these collaborations have on consumers’ fidelity is still unknown. It is fundamental for luxury brands to analyze the impact of being associated with a low-end brand, especially, if it has a direct impact on the consumption of their faithful customers and on the brand identity that may suffer some dilution by gaining some meanings and characteristics that previously were associated with H&M. Despite the inherent risks, these co-branding strategies may also leverage luxury brands’ perception on masses’ minds, reaching new audiences and maintaining the dream usually linked with luxury.

The fashion mass market selected to be part of this research was H&M, with the main goal of understanding if this *Massclusivity* collections and approaches impact the brand love of mass market consumers. The H&M platforms analyzed during this research were Instagram and Facebook, on which this brand has a strong presence - due to its intense

activity and regular posts - and vast communities: (1) Instagram: 26.3 Million users; (2) Facebook: 35 Million users.

H&M has a strong Facebook community and it is ranked on the 29th position on the ranking “Top Brands on Facebook” continuously monitored by Fan Page List, which measures the number of fans of this OBC (Fan Page List, 2018). This brand’s Instagram page as a smaller community when compared to its Facebook OBC, however, it still remains one of the biggest brand communities at Instagram with 26.3 million followers. The Netnography Analysis on these H&M Online Brand Communities was performed during May and June 2018 and it considered the investigation of users’ comments on both SNS from July 2017 to March 2018. The data from both OBC was retrieved by the Scraper Plug In and analyzed by Meaning Cloud Tool, as previously explained on the chapter number three, Methodology and Conceptual Framework.

On Table 24, there is a resume of the consumers’ interactions (comments to brand’s posts) on each one of them during the research period defined. H&M’s Facebook page has a bigger audience when compared to Instagram; however, the engagement is significantly lower due to the lower number of interactions (users’ comments). These results may be due to the lower investment on H&M on this platform in which is more product-focused, while its Instagram page has more lifestyle and aspirational contents, that considering this numbers, are more interesting and appealing to the customers.

Table 24 - H&M OBC Analyzed Comments.

Gucci OBC	# Comments Analyzed	Period
H&M Facebook	2,151	July 2017 to March 2018
H&M Instagram	103,740	July 2017 to March 2018

Source: Own Elaboration.

Following the same process taken on Gucci’s netnography, after defining the object of this research – the interactions of H&M consumers with the brand on these OBCs -, it was possible to characterize the sample considered on this netnography process (see Table 25). Nevertheless, this characterization does not include deeper information about the users, since the text mining procedure only allows the extraction of particular

information about the users of these communities such as the name, profile page and date of interaction.

Table 25 - H&M Netnography Sample Characteristics.

Sample Size and Characteristics
N = 105,897 Comments
Brand
H&M
Activity Sector
Mass Market Fashion Brand
Online Brand Communities
Instagram, Facebook
communities' users
Brand Followers on H&M's selected OBCs that have interacted with the brand during the Sample Research Period
Sample Research Period
July 2017 to March 2018

Source: Own Elaboration.

5.1. Campaigns

H&M is part of the process of luxury democratization by developing affordable limited-edition collections in collaboration with high-end fashion designers, highly recognized and praised on this sector. These *Massclusivity* campaigns have been fruitful since 2004, so H&M regularly invests on this type of co-branding partnerships.

The research period for H&M's netnography analysis was carefully chosen based on the launch of 2017 collaboration with Erdem – a fashion luxury brand – recognized by developing luxury fashion collections based on historical references (H&M, 2017). The partnership between H&M and Erdem (Figure 9) was announced on July 13th, 2017, and from this moment on, the teaser communication began. The official launch occurred on November 2nd, 2017 (H&M, 2017). For that reason, this netnography analysis considers the period between the partnership announcement (July 2017) and March 2018 – comprising a nine-month period – until the announcement of the 2018 partnership.

Figure 9 - ERDEM x H&M Collaboration.



Source: H&M (2017).

As so, this investigation will consist on the analysis of consumers' interactions on H&M OBCs before this campaign's launch (teaser phase and partnership announcement), during its launch and then post-launch phase.

5.2. Facebook

H&M's Facebook Online Brand Community was examined according to the research method defined – netnography-, considering the Massclusivity collaboration between this fashion mass market brand with the luxury brand Erdem. As previously explained, the period analyzed was July 2017 to March 2018. During this period, 1,789 users interacted with the brand on this OBC, accounting for a total of 2,150 interactions published (Table 26).

Table 26- Number of Interactions at H&M's Facebook Page by users.

Number of Interactions	Users
Between 1 and 10	1,784
Between 11 and 20	3
Between 21 and 30	0
Between 31 and 40	2
Total	1,789

Source: Own Elaboration.

On the Table 27, it is represented the timely distribution of H&M Facebook OBC members' interactions during the defined research period. The official launch of H&M x Erdem Collaboration was on November 2017, which was the month of 2017 with a higher number of consumers' interactions - 351 interactions that correspond to 16% of

the comments analyzed - on this OBC (Table 27). It induces that this launch generated buzz and achieved a high engagement level between users' and the brand itself, especially since the number of interactions on November 2017 was 234% higher than October 2017. Only January 2018 demonstrates a better result with 20% of the interactions (Table 27).

Table 27 - Timely Distribution of Interactions on H&M's Facebook OBC.

Year	Month	Interactions	%	Year Distribution %
2017	July 2017	187	9%	63%
2017	August 2017	191	9%	
2017	September 2017	269	13%	
2017	October 2017	105	5%	
2017	November 2017	351	16%	
2017	December 2017	253	12%	
2018	January 2018	434	20%	37%
2018	February 2018	290	13%	
2018	March 2018	70	3%	
Total		2,150	100%	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

After collecting the 2,150 interactions on H&M Facebook OBC, a sentiment analysis was performed with the aim of perceiving the feelings, i.e. the polarity, associated with each user comment. It is evident that most of the interactions' have a neutral sentiment attached (Table 28) towards this brand's publications from July 2017 to March 2018. Despite that, the positive interactions are still represented on a highest number when compared to the negative ones – 25% and 19% respectively.

Table 28 – H&M Facebook OBC's Interactions Polarity Scale.

Interactions' Polarity scale				
	Scale	Sum	%	P-N%
P+	5	147	7%	25%
P	4	395	18%	
NEU/NONE	3	1,205	56%	56%
N	2	336	16%	19%
N+	1	67	3%	
TOTAL		2,150	100%	100%

Note: P-N % aims to divide positive and negative interactions into groups.

Source: Own Elaboration.

These polarity values' that were meant to classify the consumers' interactions were also evaluated according to their confidence levels - between 0 and 100. As demonstrated on the Table 29, the average confidence attributed to the polarity associated to each interaction is considerable, 98.41. The standard deviation of this Confidence analysis was 3.88, and its variance induces that these outcomes are spread from the average since its value was 15.03. When observing this Confidence Analysis by Polarity Level (Table 29), it is clear that the confidence mean is high in all of them, especially on the neutral feelings – rated 3 on the Polarity Scale.

Table 29 – Confidence Analysis of H&M's Facebook OBC Polarity Interactions.

Confidence Analysis			
Polarity	Confidence Mean	Confidence Standard Deviation {SD}	Confidence Variance {Var [x]}
Total	98.41	3.88	15.03

Source: Own Elaboration.

Besides identifying the Polarity of each user interaction, the sentiment analysis executed allowed the classification of those comments according to their irony, subjectivity and agreement level. On this specific community, only 1% of the users adopted the irony when making their interventions on this OBC (Table 30), and they proved being mostly objective on their attitudes (69%). The agreement level was high (88%) on users' interactions towards H&M's content posts at its Facebook OBC.

Table 30- General Sentiment Analysis at Gucci's OBC Interactions

Sentiment analysis								
Metric	Value	%	Metric	Value	%	Metric	Value	%
Irony	22	1%	Agreement	1,892	88%	Objective	1,483	69%
Nonironic	2,128	99%	Disagreement	258	12%	Subjective	667	31%
Total	2,150	100%	Total	2,150	100%	Total	2,150	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

On this netnography investigation to H&M OBC, a Topic Sentiment Analysis was conducted to understand the main topics addressed by the users on their interventions and the respective polarity. From the 2,150 comments from H&M's Facebook page, there were 4,914 sentiment topics identified. Following the methodology defined, those

topics were grouped on 26 clusters, and the frequency of appearance of each topic on interactions analyzed is represented on Table 31.

Table 31 – Clusters' Frequency of H&M's Facebook OBC.

Topic Sentiment Analysis - Clusters Frequency		
Clusters Defined	SUM	%
Person	1,335	27%
Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)	434	9%
Store	377	8%
Other Products (food & beverages, electronic appliances, vehicles or others)	340	7%
Place (city, town, street or others)	241	5%
Entities (language, doctrine, religion, meanings or others)	239	5%
Vocation & Titles	147	3%
Group of People	138	3%
Contacts	117	2%
Cultural Product (music, picture, show or others)	95	2%
Companies	85	2%
Nature (outdoor spaces or others)	72	1%
Services	65	1%
Process	64	1%
Hashtags	61	1%
Social Events	46	1%
Currency	45	1%
Body (or body parts)	30	1%
Animals (design, texture or others)	30	1%
Public Organizations (Government, Military, Education or others)	29	1%
Time (period, date)	26	1%
Artistic & Sports Organizations	18	0%
Other Units (time, weight or others)	16	0%
Nature (design, texture or others)	14	0%
Natural Phenomena	7	0%
Other	843	17%
Total	4,914	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

When examining the data present on the Table 31, it is visible that the most frequent cluster is “Person” (27%), which comprises the following topics: Person’s first, last or full name. On this specific analysis, the interactions represented through this cluster consist on users’ identifying other users on H&M’s posts at this OBC. While on Instagram the users have to identify their friends or other community members with the symbol “@” followed by their nick names (part of the Cluster “Contact” - e-mail, id number, nickname, phone number, URL and postal code); on Facebook, the consumers

that want to identify other persons to a certain brand publication have to do it by writing the person's name instead of their nickname – and the names belong to the Cluster “Person”. The fact that this is the cluster with the highest frequency shows that H&M posts at Facebook generate interest among the community members that decide, by their own means, to share these contents with other Facebook users. Considering that some of these new users may not be part of the community, these identifications may lead to H&M Facebook OBC growth. The next cluster with a second higher frequency (9%) is “Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others), which is aligned with the core of this mass market brand: fashion apparel, accessories and shoes, demonstrating that the members of the OBC understand the brand and are commenting its products. “Store” is the following cluster more mentioned (8%), especially due to store locations and stock requests such as the following: “Can you tell me the code for the dress so I can try and find it in store since it's sold out online”, requested by Tracy Robinson at August, 2nd, 2017 at an H&M publication.

The polarity addressed to each cluster was also evaluated under this analysis and the outcomes are expressed on the Table 32, where it is noticeable that 65% of the topics are neutral, while 18% are positive and 17% negative – demonstrating an insignificant difference between the positive and the negative polarities. The situation under analysis may be poorer when noticing that Clusters Polarity associated with Strong Positive sentiments is inferior to the Clusters Polarity associated with Strong Negative sentiments - 4% and 5% respectively (Table 32).

Table 32 – H&M Facebook OBC's Clusters Polarity Scale.

Clusters' Polarity scale				
	Scale	Sum	%	P-N%
P+	5	186	4%	18%
P	4	719	15%	
NEU/NONE	3	3,191	65%	65%
N	2	591	12%	17%
N+	1	227	5%	
TOTAL		4,914	100%	100%

Note: P-N % aims to divide positive and negative interactions into groups.

Source: Own Elaboration.

The average polarity of the clusters under analysis was 3.01 (Table 33). The cluster with the highest average polarity score of 3.29 was “Nature (design, texture or others)” considering interactions focused on product materials and production resources or even clothes’ patterns. For instance, on February 4th, 2018, the user Rebekka Mueller made the following intervention on the OBC under investigation: “Thank you H& M Century City. I love that I always find such great deals with you and I appreciate that your clothes are so quality. So many clothes made of cotton and wool made to last instead of wearing synthetic materials that you have to throw away after a month. Please keep the quality up and improve it and keep the great prices. And please start carrying underwear and bras!!” Despite having the highest polarity mean, this cluster has a low frequency, being mentioned on 14 topics out of 4,914. (Table 33). “Time (period, date)” was the cluster with the second highest Polarity Mean of 3.23 (Table 35) which is also considered low, and it has a low frequency as well – 26 topics out of 4,914 (Table 31). It includes the references to specific seasons or occasions, e.g. summer, winter, Black Friday.

In different circumstances are other clusters with negative average polarity values, i.e., with negative sentiments addressed to them. 10 out of 26 clusters reveal a negative polarity mean and are below the general average of 3.01 (Table 33). The lower results were attributed to Services (Polarity mean = 2.69) – in especially to interventions related to the supposed poor customer service provided. For instance, the user Gina Wallace mentioned on November 15th, 2017, the following: “H&M has continued to fail in terms of customer service. I have been trying since the 9th to receive some sort of remedy in regard to H&M changing the return policy for designer collections that have been in place for probably TEN YEARS, making returns 6 days instead of 7. I received no notification of this change and it was NOT listed on my receipt. H&M has taken ZERO steps to rectify this, only saying «Sorry, we'll tell the store. » Not impressed with H&M's cheapness and disrespect to a loyal consumer”. Those lower results were also attributed to Natural Phenomena (Polarity mean = 2.43). Both of these clusters reveal a low frequency (Table 31), so the impact of these negative feelings associated is not crucial.

Table 33 - Topic Sentiment Analysis Polarity for each Cluster.

Clusters Defined	Polarity Mean	Polarity Standard Deviation {SD}	Polarity Variance {Var [x]}
Nature (design, texture or others)	3.29	0.47	0.22
Time (period, date)	3.23	0.71	0.50
Artistic & Sports Organizations	3.22	0.81	0.65
Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)	3.20	0.79	0.63
Other Units (time, weight or others)	3.19	0.91	0.83
Animals (design, texture or others)	3.17	0.65	0.42
Vocation & Titles	3.16	0.75	0.56
Other Products (food & beverages, electronic appliances, vehicles or others)	3.13	0.80	0.64
Store	3.12	0.83	0.69
Cultural Product (music, picture, show or others)	3.12	0.81	0.66
Nature (outdoor spaces or others)	3.11	0.43	0.18
Body (or body parts)	3.07	0.94	0.89
Contacts	3.06	0.53	0.28
Place (city, town, street or others)	3.04	0.61	0.37
Social Events	3.02	0.77	0.60
Person	3.01	0.68	0.46
Public Organizations (Government, Military, Education or others)	2.97	0.63	0.39
Hashtags	2.92	0.42	0.18
Entities (language, doctrine, religion, meanings or others)	2.92	0.90	0.82
Process	2.84	0.80	0.64
Currency	2.82	0.65	0.42
Group of People	2.76	0.83	0.69
Companies	2.73	0.68	0.46
Services	2.69	0.81	0.65
Natural Phenomena	2.43	0.53	0.29
Other	2.88	0.90	0.81
Total	3.01	0.78	0.60

Source: Own Elaboration.

5.3. Instagram

H&M's Instagram was the second OBC of this fashion mass market brand to be subject to a netnography analysis, considering the period between July 2017 and March 2018, with the aim of understanding the impact of a *Massclusivity* collection on the brand love of H&M consumers. This analysis comprised a total of 103,740 interactions from 55,791 unique users (Table 34).

Table 34 - Number of Interactions at H&M's Instagram Page by user.

Number of Interactions	Users
Between 1 and 20	55,548
Between 21 and 30	81
Between 31 and 40	48
Between 41 and 50	43
Between 51 and 60	17
Between 61 and 70	15
Between 71 and 80	4
More than 81	35
Total	55,791

Source: Own Elaboration.

While inspecting the data collected, it was perceptible that the number of consumers' interactions on this OBC was regular during the research period and the average number of interactions per month was 11,526.67. H&M's *Massclusivity* collaboration with the luxury brand Erdem happened on November 2017, which was the month with the highest number (14,825) of interactions between the community members and the brand – 14% of the total interactions (Table 35). At this point, without considering the data of the sentiment analysis and lacking the information about the character of the interactions itself, it is conceivable to mention that this campaign had an impact on the communication between the brand and its community members. Whether its impact was positive or negative on H&M and Erdem brand image, this campaign had a level of awareness capable of generating buzz around it and to enhance consumers' willingness to participate on brands' discussions on its Instagram posts.

Table 35 - Timely Distribution of Interactions on H&M's Instagram OBC.

Year	Month	Interactions	%	Year Distribution %
2017	July 2017	7,834	8%	67%
2017	August 2017	8,015	8%	
2017	September 2017	11,905	11%	
2017	October 2017	14,050	14%	
2017	November 2017	14,825	14%	
2017	December 2017	12,958	12%	
2018	January 2018	10,696	10%	33%
2018	February 2018	13,001	13%	
2018	March 2018	10,456	10%	
Total		103,740	100%	100%
Average number of interactions per month		11,526.67		

Source: Own Elaboration.

In order to understand if the outcomes expressed on the Table 368 about the number of interactions between H&M community members and the brand had a positive on the brand love of these users, a sentiment analysis was conducted to understand the feelings attached to each one of the 103,740 interventions with the brand on Instagram during the research period. While analyzing the polarity outputs of H&M's Instagram OBC, it is visible that 62% of its interactions have a neutral sentiment associated (Table 36). However, it is also clear that besides the neutral comments, the expression of the positive is higher than the negative ones. As detailed on the Table 38, 31% of the interactions displayed a positive feeling (9% represent strong positive feelings and 22% positive feelings), while only 6% represent negative interactions from H&M Instagram Community members towards the brand.

Table 36 - H&M OBC's Interactions Polarity Scale.

Interactions' Polarity scale				
	Scale	Sum	%	P-N%
P+	5	9,637	9%	31%
P	4	22,895	22%	
NEU/NONE	3	64,624	62%	62%
N	2	4,449	4%	6%
N+	1	2,135	2%	
TOTAL		103,740	100%	100%

Note: P-N % aims to divide positive and negative interactions into groups.

Source: Own Elaboration.

The confidence level of the polarity of H&M Instagram OBC members' interactions was evaluated through values ranging from 0 to 100. This evaluation is expressed on the Table 37, and it is clear that the average confidence degree is expressively high, 99.53, having a standard deviation of 2.15 and a variance of 4.63.

Table 37 – Confidence Analysis of H&M's Instagram OBC Polarity Interactions.

Confidence Analysis			
Polarity	Confidence Mean	Confidence Standard Deviation {SD}	Confidence Variance {Var [x]}
Total	99.53	2.15	4.63

Source: Own Elaboration.

The interactions from the users with the OBC under review were evaluated, as well, according to three different metrics: irony, subjectivity and level of agreement. On the Table 38 it is possible to observe the outcomes of this concrete investigation. According to these results, H&M community members did not apply irony on their interventions (around 100%), so it means that they really mean what they wrote on their comments at this OBC's Instagram page. The great majority of these users were objective on their opinions (74%) and also tend to agree (97%) on their interactions towards H&M's content posts at its Instagram OBC (Table 38).

Table 38 - General Sentiment Analysis at H&M Instagram OBC's Interactions.

Sentiment analysis								
Metric	Value	%	Metric	Value	%	Metric	Value	%
Ironic	230	0%	Agreement	100,288	97%	Objective	76,873	74%
Nonironic	103,510	100%	Disagreement	3,452	3%	Subjective	26,867	26%
Total	103,740	100%	Total	103,740	100%	Total	103740	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

The second stage of this netnography process was the detection of common topics addressed by this community's members and the polarity associated to them - Topic Sentiment Analysis -, with the support of the Meaning Cloud tool. While reviewing the 103,740 interactions gathered, there were 177,516 different topics identified that were aggregated on 26 homogenous clusters. According to the Clusters' Frequency Analysis detailed on Table 39. "Contacts" is the cluster with the highest frequency percentage (30%).

Table 39 – Clusters' Frequency of H&M's Instagram' OBC.

Topic Sentiment Analysis - Clusters Frequency		
Clusters Defined	SUM	%
Contacts	52,641	30%
Person	22,397	13%
Place (city, town, street or others)	16,240	9%
Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)	12,196	7%
Store	10,312	6%
Other Products (food & beverages, electronic appliances, vehicles or others)	7,798	4%
Entities (language, doctrine, religion, meanings or others)	4,833	3%
Hashtags	3,437	2%
Vocation & Titles	2,727	2%
Cultural Product (music, picture, show or others)	2,686	2%
Public Organizations (Government, Military, Education or others)	2,107	1%
Nature (outdoor spaces or others)	2,094	1%
Companies	1,648	1%
Group of People	1,117	1%
Process	858	0%
Animals (design, texture or others)	794	0%
Social Events	726	0%
Currency	614	0%
Artistic & Sports Organizations	580	0%
Body (or body parts)	558	0%
Other Units (time, weight or others)	500	0%
Services	460	0%
Time (period, date)	372	0%
Nature (design, texture or others)	337	0%
Natural Phenomena	50	0%
Other	29,434	17%
Total	177,516	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

“Contacts” includes the topics which belong to the elements present on the Table 40: E-mail, Id number, nickname, phone number, postal code, URL, cash tag and blank insertions. Bearing in mind that 86% of the topics identified among the “Contacts” cluster (Table 40) refer to “Nicknames”, it is possible to mention that the contents that H&M posts at its Instagram OBC are trending and promote word-of-mouth inside the community and externally. On this SNS, it is usual that users identify other users - by

using the symbol “@” followed by the nickname of the person they want to tag – in order to share contents, they find interesting or relatable. Thus, the 86% frequency attributed to this cluster are connected to the fact that the users from this OBC often identify and share posts with other Instagram users, which may generate a community expansion.

Table 40- Composition of Contacts’ Cluster.

Elements	Frequency	%
E-mail	190	0%
ID Number	49	0%
Nickname	45310	86%
Phone Number	4574	9%
Postal Code	6	0%
URL	2486	5%
(blank)	25	0%
Cash tag	1	0%
TOTAL	52.641	100%

Source: Own Elaboration.

The cluster classified as the second one with a higher frequency was “Person” which includes the references to a Person’s first, last or full name. On this specific analysis, the outputs showed that, on this category, most of the topics include (1) the names of other users without the symbol “@” that is mandatory to be considered a nickname on this SNS; (2) the names of the collections introduced (e.g. Erdem Collection); (3) influencers, celebrities or models’ names, which are usually present on H&M’s published contents due to their presence on brand events, campaigns, digital communication and other marketing activities. The third cluster with the highest representation was “Place (city, town, street or others)”, including interactions of this community’s members with stock availability questions according to a certain location.

In order to understand the impact of the campaign under analysis between H&M and Erdem, a deeper analysis was performed to the comments and members’ interactions to understand their feedback. Some users such as “@aliceroche100” mention on October 25th, 2017, the following “How do we know which stores will be stocking the Erdem collection?” and “@vanessagerbrandy” that said “” in November 1st 2017, “Will you restock any more Erdem? Seriously I checked the website in my lunchtime went back to

teach and then came back to it at 5pm and everything's gone!!!!" requesting stock and location information.

Despite being a mass market brand, this collection developed in association with a luxury brand makes H&M not capable of answering to the demand of these luxury products that are produced on low quantities when compared to fast fashion items usually produced by this brand. Also, it demonstrates the desire of the masses of acquiring these *Massclusivity* products for prices which are way more accessible than the traditional luxury goods, and for that reason, the result of the average polarity of this cluster may be linked with this positive craving. On the other hand, some users perceived this as a negative strategy since, due to the lower production capacity associated with a low stock; there are some illicit initiatives from consumers who acquire several collection items to resell them on other platforms. It makes the other consumers unsatisfied for not being able to acquire the products they wanted to. For instance, the member "@kennedyflair" mentioned the following "This collection should be renamed ERDEMxEbay! That's the only place you can buy any of it....." on November, 2nd, 2017, which happened to be H&M x Erdem's launch day.

The clusters defined were, just like the complete comments and interactions themselves, evaluated according to the polarity, i.e., the feelings associated to them. On the Table 41, it is evident that that 75% of the topics are neutral; while 17% are positive and only 7% reveal negative sentiments.

Table 41 – H&M Instagram OBC's Clusters Polarity Scale.

Clusters' Polarity scale				
	Scale	Sum	%	P-N%
P+	5	5,876	3%	17%
P	4	25,004	14%	
NEU/NONE	3	133,745	75%	75%
N	2	8,54	5%	7%
N+	1	4,351	2%	
TOTAL		177,516	100%	100%

Note: P-N % aims to divide positive and negative interactions into groups.

Source: Own Elaboration.

The topic sentiment analysis, as the name says, allowed the identification of the feelings/sentiments associated with each topic and the respective cluster (Table 42). On

this table, it is disclosed the average polarity for the clusters defined, 3.11. None of those clusters revealed a strong average positive or negative polarity; nevertheless, four out of 26 clusters were classified as being negative (Table 42).

Table 42 - Topic Sentiment Analysis Polarity for the Clusters defined.

Clusters Defined	Polarity Mean	Polarity Standard Deviation {SD}	Polarity Variance {Var [x]}
Time (period, date)	3.37	0.81	0.66
Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)	3.32	0.74	0.55
Cultural Product (music, picture, show or others)	3.26	0.67	0.45
Store	3.25	0.72	0.52
Other Products (food & beverages, electronic appliances, vehicles or others)	3.19	0.66	0.43
Nature (design, texture or others)	3.19	0.65	0.42
Place (city, town, street or others)	3.15	0.60	0.36
Other Units (time, weight or others)	3.14	0.56	0.32
Social Events	3.13	0.70	0.50
Group of People	3.12	0.66	0.43
Services	3.12	0.78	0.61
Body (or body parts)	3.11	0.64	0.41
Person	3.11	0.73	0.53
Vocation & Titles	3.11	0.72	0.51
Nature (outdoor spaces or others)	3.11	0.62	0.38
Animals (design, texture or others)	3.10	0.70	0.49
Contacts	3.07	0.48	0.23
Entities (language, doctrine, religion, meanings or others)	3.06	0.67	0.46
Process	3.04	0.68	0.47
Currency	3.03	0.60	0.37
Companies	3.01	0.69	0.47
Public Organizations (Government, Military, Education or others)	2.99	0.57	0.32
Hashtags	2.98	0.62	0.38
Artistic & Sports Organizations	2.93	0.78	0.60
Natural Phenomena	2.64	0.75	0.56
Other	3.02	0.69	0.47
Grand Total	3.11	0.64	0.41

Source: Own Elaboration.

When examining the information, the cluster with the highest Polarity Mean associated was “Time (period, date)” with an average polarity of 3.37 (Table 42). It means that this community’s users usually associate more positive feelings to specific seasons or

occasions (e.g. summer, winter, Black Friday), than to the other topics. However, since it is one of the clusters with a low frequency, it is not impactful (Table 39). The following cluster with a higher polarity associated was “Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)” with a polarity mean of 3.32 (Table 42). Hence, it is visible that users attach more positive sentiments to the comments they write about fashion products, which are the core of this mass market brand. Considering that this is also one of the clusters with a higher frequency (Table 39), it is possible to induce that the comments about fashion have a more positive impact – in quantity and quality – on the brand than the other clusters.

The clusters with negative average polarities – below 3 (three) - were (1) Public Organizations (Government, Military, Education or others), (2) Hashtags, (3) Artistic & Sports Organizations and (4) Natural Phenomena. A significant part of this output is related to a worldwide communication issue that H&M went through during the defined research period, specifically on January 2018 (H&M, 2018b). H&M developed a marketing campaign (Figure 10) that was accused of promoting racism and most of the interactions with topics which belong to these clusters are related to this campaign. For example, (1) the Instagram user “@themoneyboardteam” mentioned on January, 2nd, 2018, the following comment: “#BOYCOTTHM #BASICASSCLOTHES #RACISM #NOBLACKMODELS”. This intervention has contents that are part of the cluster “Hashtags” and states a digital trend from that period that was boycott H&M; (2) also, some community members that love the brand got disappointed at this situation, like the user “@iamdmason” who wrote on January, 16th, 2018 the following “Who approved the monkey shirt idea? That was a total miss on the part of @hm I love this store but as an African American man I was very offended at this ad”. This interaction comprises, as well, topics that belong to the clusters that were rated as having a low polarity mean.

Figure 10- H&M Campaign with Racism Accusations.



Source: BBC (2018).

6. Aggregate Results

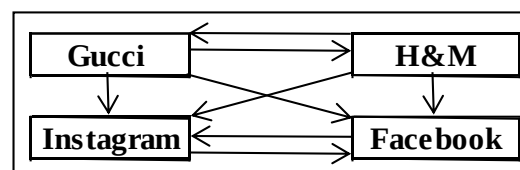
The present investigation and the outcomes provided by the netnography analysis allow the comparison between (1) the both brands selected – Gucci and H&M -, (2) social networks and OBCs – Facebook and Instagram and (3) campaigns - #TFWGucci and H&M x Erdem Collection (Table 43 and Figure 11).

Table 43 - Netnography Analysis: Comparison Fields.

Netnography Analysis				
Brand	Gucci		H&M	
OBC	Facebook	Instagram	Facebook	Instagram
Campaign	#TFWGucci		H&M x Erdem Collection	

Source: Own Elaboration.

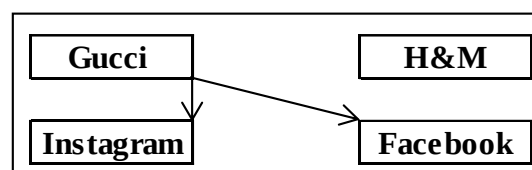
Figure 11 - Netnography Analysis: Comparison Fields.



Source: Own Elaboration.

In order to extract further outcomes, from the information previously analyzed, the interactions demonstrated on Figure 11 were examined. This process aims to generate a deeper understanding about the impact that each brand's *Massclusivity* communication has on its own online communities. Comparing the brands and the SNS is fundamental to identify trends and behaviors. The first step was the evaluation of Gucci's OBCs by comparing the data that was gathered from its Facebook and Instagram posts and the respective user comments (Figure 12).

Figure 12 - Gucci's OBCs comparison.



Source: Own Elaboration.

Table 44 – Gucci: Facebook OBC vs Instagram OBC.

Gucci			
Analysis		Facebook	Instagram
General Analysis	Number of interactions	10,689	219,925
	Period Analyzed	March 2017 to March 2018	March 2017 to March 2018
	Number of Users	7,034	124,962
Global Sentiment Analysis	Ironic	125 (1%)	373 (0%)
	Non-Ironic	10,564 (99%)	219,552 (100%)
	Agreement	10,064 (94%)	218,145 (99%)
	Disagreement	625 (6%)	1,780 (1%)
	Objective	6,547 (61%)	180,228 (82%)
	Subjective	4,142 (39%)	39,697 (18%)
	Polarity Average	3.16	3.33
	Polarity Scale 1	543 (5%)	1,642 (1%)
	Polarity Scale 2	1,625 (15%)	6,514 (3%)
	Polarity Scale 3	5,219 (49%)	153,638 (70%)
	Polarity Scale 4	2,181 (20%)	34,353 (16%)
	Polarity Scale 5	1,121 (10%)	23,778 (11%)
	Confidence Average	99.13	99.87
Topic Sentiment Analysis	Topics Identified	14,537	181,066
	Concept	7,589	42,423
	Entity	6,947	138,643
	Polarity Average among clusters	3.11	3.16
	Polarity Standard Deviation among clusters	0.76	0.58
	Polarity Variance among clusters	0.58	0.34
	Polarity Scale 1	395 (3%)	1,459 (1%)
	Polarity Scale 2	1,498 (10%)	5,577 (3%)
	Polarity Scale 3	9,518 (65%)	144,747 (80%)
	Polarity Scale 4	2,341 (16%)	20,662 (11%)
	Polarity Scale 5	784 (5%)	8,621 (5%)
	Top 3 Clusters with higher frequency	Person; Fashion Product; Vocation & Titles	Contacts, Person, Hashtags
	Top 3 Clusters with highest Polarity Average	Store; Time; Fashion Product	Fashion Product; Cultural Product; Other Products
	Top 3 Clusters with lowest Polarity Average	Group of People; Services; Natural Phenomena	Currency; Services; Natural Phenomena

Source: Own Elaboration.

As it is visible on Table 44, there is a substantial difference between the numbers of interactions retrieved from the same period of time from both Gucci's OBCs (Facebook: 10,689; Instagram: 219,925). The higher numbers of interactions from Instagram OBC reveals a higher engagement towards the brand on this SNS. Despite Gucci's Instagram community is bigger than its Facebook community (Table 5); the engagement rate remains higher. Also, it is noticeable that the interactions on Facebook display a slightly higher ironic character than Instagram interactions, as well as a higher disagreement and subjectivity percentage.

Concerning the polarity attributed to each interaction, the data reveals that, despite being both neutral, the average polarity of Gucci's Instagram interactions (3.33) is higher than the one associated to Facebook interactions (3.16), as it is visible on Table 44. Thus, it means that the Instagram community associates more positive sentiments on its interactions with Gucci, when compared to the Facebook OBC. However, when observing the frequency of interactions per polarity scale, it is possible to see that Instagram's interactions are mainly neutral (70%), while on Facebook only 49% are neutral (Table 44). It is also important to mention that, although the polarity mean is higher for Instagram, 30% of Facebook's interactions are associated with positive sentiments while Instagram's interactions account for 27% of positive or strong positive associations. The opposite is also verified, Facebook has more members interactions with negative sentiments attached (20%), while Instagram only has 4% negative or strong negative associations.

Due to the higher number of interactions analyzed on Instagram (Facebook: 10,689; Instagram: 219,925), this OBC also a substantial number of topics identified on the Topic Sentiment Analysis (Instagram: 187,066; Facebook: 14,537). When evaluating the polarity associated to these topics and to the respective clusters (Table 44), it is noticeable that the average polarity is slightly higher for Instagram than for Facebook (Instagram: 3.16; Facebook: 3.11), however they are both associated with neutral sentiments. On this analysis, it was verified that on both OBCs, Gucci community members mention other users and bring other persons into the community (see Top 3 Clusters with higher frequency on Table 44). Thus, it demonstrates that the content published by this brand generates conversation and word of mouth between users, making them think that their feedback and reference is valuable to their network and, as

so, the clusters “Contact” and “Person” display high frequencies. The clusters rated with a high polarity mean on Facebook (Store; Time; Fashion Product) can be considered more pragmatic and operational because they are mainly focused on community members’ requests about stock, seasonality, campaigns and specific products. While on Instagram, they are more aspirational (Fashion Product; Cultural Product; Other Products) and focused on more than practical requests, such as the scenario and the environment displayed on the publication (e.g.: the decoration, the music) but always associated to its fashion products. On both OBCs, the clusters with lowest polarity average are Services and Natural Phenomena. It demonstrates that customer service is really an issue to this brand and specifically for these OBCs.

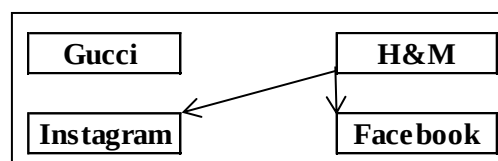
When analyzing the Facebook community members’ interactions during #TFWGucci’s campaign launch, there are distinct feelings associated. Some of the users were surprised by this *Massclusivity* campaign, considering that communicating through memes is associated with the young masses and not with a luxury brand. Some of them expressed astonishment, such as the member Rachel Nunziata who mentioned, ironically, the following: “I swear Gucci has been hacked!” on March 20th, 2017; and Sonia Wan, who said on March 17th, 2017, “Gucci doing memes now... I don't know how to feel about this!! Amy Johnson”. Others were positively surprise of Gucci’s attempt to diversify its communication and to become more disruptive while presenting its luxury products, just like Ana Yansi Alanis Hernandez said, “I love this new meme publicity campaign 🤔” (March 17th, 2017).

On Instagram OBC, the opinions are even more intense with some members being astonished and mentioning that it may affect the luxury brand’s image. Also, there is a common opinion that a luxury fashion brand should behave as a leader and create trends instead of following them – memes are an internet trend for the masses – just like what they are doing with #TFWGucci’s campaign. This analysis is reflecting on the interactions such as the ones of the following users: (1) @ the.mona.liza said “I like how your doing collaborations with different artists but these cringe worthy memes need to stop! Memes come from the people and happen on their own and shouldn't be used in advertising @gucci” (March 21st, 2017); (2) @siennavanhal mentioned “U guys just ruin ur reputation with these memes, stop it” (March 20th, 2017); (3) @nattamonlom made an intervention to say “You're destroying your brand's Luxury

image, much more better to stop” (March 20th, 2017); (4) @ lilwocket said “Gucci, a luxurious Italian fashion brand founded almost 100 years ago is now posting memes on Instagram... What a time to be alive” (March 20th, 2017); and (5) @raymondabdul90 stated the following “I dont get this , U guys (gucci people) are trying too hard to keep up with the latest trend (internet memes) its damaging your luxury brand!! U guys set the trend not follow the trend!!” (March 20th, 2017). There are, although, some positive associations towards this campaign, however they are less frequent such as @thenewcultur who said “I’m loving these advertisements in the form of memes - very clever 🤝” (March 17th, 2017) and @lu_vecchioni that was thrilled by this unexpected advertising strategy “Seriously, this is THE best marketing/social media EVER! Specially for a luxury brand!! Im crazy about it!! I wish i had the money to buy lots of @gucci watches cause you and i both deserve it! 🤞” (March 19th, 2017). Through this investigation, it is possible to see that for the community members that love the brand, this communication is not aligned to the perception they have from this luxury brand and some of them express disappointment. The members that revealed positive associations towards #TFWGucci’s campaign are usually focused on the attractiveness of the communication itself without analyzing the impact on the brand.

The same analysis was performed for H&M Online Brand Communities (Figure 13).

Figure 13 - H&M's OBCs comparison.



Source: Own Elaboration.

Considering the data resumed on Table 45 and on the Figure 13, there is a considerable difference between the numbers of interactions retrieved from the same period of time from both H&M’s OBCs (Facebook: 2,150; Instagram: 103,740). The higher numbers of interactions from Instagram OBC reveals a higher engagement towards the brand on this SNS, especially when observing that H&M’s Instagram has a smaller community when compared to H&M’s Facebook (Table 24), generating a higher engagement rate.

Table 45 - H&M: Facebook OBC vs Instagram OBC.

H&M			
Analysis		Facebook	Instagram
General Analysis	Number of interactions	2,150	103,740
	Period Analyzed	July 2017 to March 2018	July 2017 to March 2018
	Number of Users	1,789	55,794
Global Sentiment Analysis	Ironic	22 (1%)	230 (0%)
	Non-Ironic	2,128 (99%)	103,510 (100%)
	Agreement	1,892 (88%)	100,288 (97%)
	Disagreement	258 (12%)	3,452 (3%)
	Objective	1,483 (69%)	76,873 (74%)
	Subjective	667 (31%)	26,867 (26%)
	Polarity Average	3.10	3.32
	Polarity Scale 1	67 (3%)	2,135 (2%)
	Polarity Scale 2	336 (16%)	4,449 (4%)
	Polarity Scale 3	1,205 (56%)	64,624 (62%)
	Polarity Scale 4	395 (18%)	22,895 (22%)
	Polarity Scale 5	147 (7%)	9,637 (9%)
	Confidence Average	98.41	99.53
Topic Sentiment Analysis	Topics identified	4,914	177,516
	Concept	3,319	69,779
	Entity	1,595	107,737
	Polarity Average among clusters	3.01	3.11
	Polarity Standard Deviation among clusters	0.78	0.64
	Polarity Variance among clusters	0.60	0.41
	Polarity Scale 1	227 (5%)	4,351 (2%)
	Polarity Scale 2	591 (12%)	8,540 (5%)
	Polarity Scale 3	3,191 (65%)	133,745 (75%)
	Polarity Scale 4	719 (15%)	25,004 (14%)
	Polarity Scale 5	186 (4%)	5876 (3%)
	Top 3 Clusters with higher frequency	Person, Fashion Product; Store	Contacts, Person, Place
	Top 3 Clusters with highest Polarity Average	Nature; Time; Artistic & Sports Organizations	Time; Fashion Product; Cultural Product
	Top 3 Clusters with lowest Polarity Average	Companies; Services; Natural Phenomena	Hashtags; Artistic & Sports Organizations; Natural Phenomena

Source: Own Elaboration.

The interactions on Facebook display a slightly higher ironic character than Instagram comments, as well as a higher disagreement and subjectivity proportion (Table 45).

By observing the Table 45, it is noticeable that Instagram OBC has a high polarity average (3.32) than Facebook (3.10). However, just like Gucci's analysis, both OBCs have neutral polarities, demonstrating that consumers do not attach positive or negative sentiments to their interactions with the brand. When looking into these polarities in detail, it is also visible that H&M's Instagram has a higher positive polarity average than Facebook (31% vs 25% respectively), and a lower polarity average (Instagram – 6%; Facebook – 19%).

Relatively to the Topic Sentiment Analysis, the higher number of interactions analyzed on Instagram OBC also originated a higher number of identified topics (177,516) that were aggregated in 26 clusters; while among the 2,150 Facebook interactions studied, only 4,914 were retrieved. When evaluating the polarity associated to these topics and to the respective clusters (Table 45), it is perceived that Instagram OBC generated interactions with topics that have a high polarity mean (3.11), despite neutral, and Facebook topics have a slightly lower polarity average of 3.01. It was also verified that on both communities, members tend to share brand's content with other users, because when observing the Top 3 Clusters with higher frequency for both SNS, the clusters "Contact" and "Person" are always mentioned. Hence it is viable to say that the content created by this brand is sharable by its community members, promoting engagement and a community expansion. On the clusters' polarity evaluation, both OBC display diverse outcomes. The only common cluster with a highest polarity was Time (period, date), making a reference to campaigns and collections seasonality. Regarding the lowest polarity average, the cluster "Natural Phenomena" is present on both Topic Sentiment Analysis. It is important to highlight that the public relations issue that H&M had been through racism accusations had a worst impact on Instagram OBC than on Facebook, particularly due to the fact that the cluster "Hashtag" is one of the clusters with a lowest polarity average mainly because of the trend "#BOYCOTTHM" that emerged during the previously mentioned issue.

After analyzing Facebook community members' interactions during the *Massclusivity* campaign H&M x Erdem, it is seen that the impact of this campaign on this community

was very reduced, having a low representation. Most of the interactions were focused on stock and website access issues, just like it was stated by the user Camilla Hardyment on November 1st, 2017, “Cannot get into the online shop to buy Erdem! Anyone Else having this issue?”. In general, the users of this community on Facebook are not willing to intervene with brands’ post. However, on Instagram the situation is unreservedly different.

On H&M’s Instagram OBC, the community members have expressed their excitement towards H&M x Erdem collection launch. During this campaign’s teaser phase and the days that precede the launch, there were several members’ comments similar to this one from the user @fashionandfrappes, “I am desperately wanting to get my hands on some HMxErdem! Please let me know if I can get an insight to the preview! Cannot be more excited! @hm” on October 25th, 2017. Along with these enthusiastic interactions, there was a type of questions that stood out among the comments analyzed: stock and store locations requests because these collections usually sold out on the launch day. An example was the comment from the user @arwaaturk: “Is the erdem collection available in the leicester haymarket store? @hm” (November 2nd, 2017).

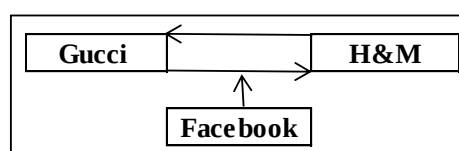
Until the launch itself, the opinions of this community were positive and eager. After the concrete unveiling, the interactions demonstrated diverse attitudes towards the brands that developed the collection. Some users appreciated the effort and the collection itself such as @iamhgc who mentioned “hm the Erdem collection was flawless 🍷” (November 19th, 2017) and @royamoo that said “Amazing collaboration with ERDEM! Assume” (November 1st, 2017).

On the other hand, since this is a partnership with a luxury brand that strives for quality and exclusivity, this collection also presented some stock limitations and was only present on most important stores on each market and with very limited quantities for each piece on the website. As so, the expectation and anxiety towards this launch generated some disappointment and it defrauds some expectations from consumers who were waiting to purchase a collection item. Although this initiative adds value to this mass market brand by being related to a luxury brand and by giving its customers the chance to acquire better and more sophisticated products for a lower price, this *Massclusivity* campaign revealed a bottleneck: communicating a collection to the

masses and generate expectancy and a considerable demand, and not being able to respond to it with a low stock and offer. For instance, some users related their experiences mentioning that their products sold out within minutes, such as the community member @tammykad that said “I’m mad at you @hm 😞 I waited 3 months to buy the Erdem collection, then waited online for 25 mins, put the dress I wanted in my cart, and after I was done putting all of my information and clicked “confirmed” I was told it was sold out. How was it virtually taken out of my cart! Literally felt true sadness. 😞” on November 3rd, 2017.

This high demand generates illicit activities, that already happened on previous collaborations, and they are already recognized by H&M consumers that know that some of the products end up being sold on parallel markets just like the user @kennedyflair mentioned “This collection should be renamed ERDEMxEbay! That’s the only place you can buy any of it.....” (November 2nd, 2017). This campaign’s communication has a strong layer of public relations and influencer marketing. As so, the selected influencers are usually the first ones to receive the collection pieces and to make reservations of their favorite items. Once again, considering the demand versus offer issue, this was also a topic discussed by some users such as @videowitch who said “dear h&m its such a frustrating fact that you give the pieces free to influencers, while "the rest" has barely the means to afford the cheapest item of the collection. i understand that by doing so, you generate reach way more cheaper than in classic Media, but still your customer is a different persona. it would be way cooler if you would give it to them and focus more on being a love Brand than Same as your competitors. #pitty #fashionforeveryone #erdem&hm” on November 1st, 2017.

Figure 14 – Facebook OBC: Gucci vs H&M.



Source: Own Elaboration.

After analyzing both brands, the first comparison was focused on the Facebook OBC (Figure 14).

Table 46 - Facebook OBC: Gucci vs H&M.

Facebook			
Analysis		Gucci	H&M
General Analysis	Number of interactions	10,689	2,150
	Period Analyzed	March 2017 to March 2018	July 2017 to March 2018
	Unique Users	7,034	1,789
Global Sentiment Analysis	Ironic	125 (1%)	22 (1%)
	Non-Ironic	10,564 (99%)	2,128 (99%)
	Agreement	10,064 (94%)	1,892 (88%)
	Disagreement	625 (6%)	258 (12%)
	Objective	6,547 (61%)	1,483 (69%)
	Subjective	4,142 (39%)	667 (31%)
	Polarity Average	3.16	3.10
	Polarity Scale 1	543 (5%)	67 (3%)
	Polarity Scale 2	1,625 (15%)	336 (16%)
	Polarity Scale 3	5,219 (49%)	1,205 (56%)
	Polarity Scale 4	2,181 (20%)	395 (18%)
	Polarity Scale 5	1,121 (10%)	147 (7%)
	Confidence Average	99.13	98.41
Topic Sentiment Analysis	Topics identified	14,537	4,914
	Concept	7,589	3,319
	Entity	6,947	1,595
	Polarity Average among clusters	3.11	3.01
	Polarity Standard Deviation among clusters	0.76	0.78
	Polarity Variance among clusters	0.58	0.60
	Polarity Scale 1	395 (3%)	227 (5%)
	Polarity Scale 2	1,498 (10%)	591 (12%)
	Polarity Scale 3	9,518 (65%)	3,191 (65%)
	Polarity Scale 4	2,341 (16%)	719 (15%)
	Polarity Scale 5	784 (5%)	186 (4%)
	Top 3 Clusters with higher frequency	Person; Fashion Product; Vocation & Titles	Person, Fashion Product, Store
	Top 3 Clusters with highest Polarity Average	Store; Time; Fashion Product	Nature (design, texture or others); Time; Artistic & Sports Organizations
	Top 3 Clusters with lowest Polarity Average	Group of People; Services; Natural Phenomena	Companies; Services; Natural Phenomena

Source: Own Elaboration.

Despite having different research periods – Gucci: 12 months; H&M: 9 months -, the analysis outcomes presented on the Table 46 reveal that Gucci has a higher number of members' interactions, whether it considers the total amount of interactions or the number per month. Taking into consideration the number of months accounted for each research and the number of interactions analyzed and expressed on the Table 46, it is perceived that the number of interactions per month is higher for Gucci (10,689 interactions / 12 months $\approx$ 891 average number of comments per month) than for H&M (2,150 interactions / 9 months $\approx$ 239 average number of comments per month). It reveals a higher engagement for Gucci's Facebook Online Community which is considerably smaller when compared to H&M's Facebook Community that is two times higher (see Table 1). After proceeding to a Global Sentiment Analysis, it was visible on Table 46 that both Facebook communities' members interact with each brand with a non-ironic character (99% for both brands). Regarding the agreement level, it is noticeable that Gucci consumers have a higher level of agreement on their interactions (94%) when compared to H&M consumers (88%), although both brands display high results. On this data, it is also seen that H&M community members are more objective than Gucci's, although there is only a slight difference.

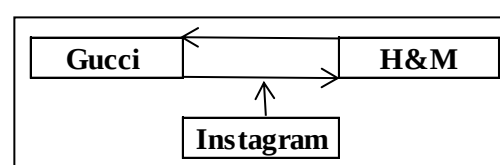
In regard to the sentiment analysis, it was concluded that both communities interact with each brand with neutral sentiments associated to their comments, i.e., the average polarity associated to the interactions of each community is neutral (around three). However, despite having a minor difference, it is important to state that Gucci OBC members' interactions have a higher polarity (3.16) than H&M's (3.10). When taking a closer look to the frequency of each polarity scale, it is visible that H&M accounts for more neutral interactions than Gucci, thus inducing that Gucci generates more intense sentiments from its members: there are more interactions with positive sentiments attached on Gucci's OBC (30%), when compared to H&M's (25%). Also, the opposite is verified. Gucci accounts for more negative interactions (20%) than H&M (19%).

The higher number of interactions on Gucci's Facebook OBC generated, as well, a higher number of topics identified when compared to the mass market brand under analysis (14,537 vs 4,914). These topics were also subjected to a topic sentiment analysis and, as it was previously mentioned, the polarities associated to the topics identified for both brands are neutral and higher for Gucci (Gucci: 3.11; H&M: 3.01).

The frequency of each polarity scale is very similar for each brand as it is stated on Table 46. When analyzing the most mentioned topics included on the respective clusters, it is visible for both OBCs, the cluster “Person” is the one with a highest frequency, inducing that both brands publish interaction appealing content on Facebook generating consumers’ willingness to share the posts with other users. The second cluster is “Fashion Product” for both brands, which is entirely aligned with the sector on each brand operates. Regarding the third cluster with the highest frequency, it is visible on Table 46 that for Gucci, it is “Vocation & Titles” which considers the interactions that mention a vocation of a person or even a job title (e.g. creative director, designer, model, monarch), demonstrating the aspirational character of this luxury brand. On the other hand, for H&M the cluster that is placed on the third place on the frequency ranking was “Store”, especially due to store locations and stock. As so, this dichotomy allows the perception that consumers who interact with Gucci have a tendency, on this OBC, to provide comments with an aspirational character while H&M users make interactions with operational and rational questions about the effective purchase fashions items of this mass market fashion brand.

However, when observing the inherent polarity, Gucci’s clusters with the more positive sentiments attached are the ones with less aspirational characteristics: Store, Time and Fashion Product. It reveals that, during the research period, this community members’ positive interactions were more focused on the products and their availability. When observing the same matter for H&M Facebook OBC, it is seen that the clusters with more positive feelings associated are related to the products composition and materials, and also with organizations that H&M usually supports on the artistic and sports fields. Also, as previously analyzed, the clusters with a lower polarity are services and natural phenomena for both brands, inducing that this may be related to the sector (fashion) which is subject to the taste of the consumers and not with the category of the band, i.e., whether it is a fashion mass market brand or a fashion luxury brand.

Figure 15 - Instagram OBC: Gucci vs. H&M.



Source: Own Elaboration.

The second comparison between Gucci and H&M's netnography outcomes was focused on the Instagram OBC (Figure 15). As mentioned on the previous comparison, despite having different research periods – Gucci: 12 months; H&M: 9 months -, the results exhibited on the Table 47 disclose that Gucci has a higher number of members' interactions, whether it considers the total amount of interactions or the number per month (Gucci: 219,925; H&M: 103,740). Considering the sum of months accounted for each research and the number of comments examined and stated on the Table 49, it is perceived that the number of interactions per month is higher for Gucci (219,925 interactions / 12 months $\approx$ 18,327 average number of comments per month) than for H&M (103,740 interactions / 9 months $\approx$ 11,526.7 average number of comments per month), which induces a higher engagement for the luxury brand under analysis.

On the Table 47, it is also possible to identify the results of the Global Sentiment Analysis and to see that both Instagram OBCs members interact with each brand with a non-ironic character ($\approx$ 100% for both brands). Even though each brand achieved great results on the agreement level of their consumers' comments, Gucci achieved a higher percentage (99%) than H&M (97%). Regarding the subjectivity, Gucci consumers were more objective (21%) than H&M's community members (74%). In order to perceive the sentiments associated on consumers' interactions with the selected brands, the sentiment analysis was conducted and both OBCs reflected a similar and neutral result (Gucci: 3.33; H&M: 3.32). When observing this data in detail, H&M proved to have more interactions classified with positive or strong positive sentiments attached (31% of its total accounted interactions) than Gucci (27%). Regarding the negative or strong negative classification, H&M also had a higher percentage (6%), although there is just a slight difference from Gucci, which had 4% of negative comments. As so, on the SNS under analysis, H&M is able to provoke, with the brand content published, more emotional interactions – positive or negative – than Gucci that has a higher fraction of neutral consumer feedback.

On the topic sentiment analysis, and proportional to the number of months included on each brand's investigation, it is seen that H&M users on Instagram made interactions with a higher number of different topics. For Gucci, the Topic sentiment Analysis developed with the support of Meaning Cloud encountered 181,066 different topics for Gucci and 177,516 for H&M, which were aggregated in 26 clusters and evaluated

regarding their polarity. As perceived during the present research, the polarity average for the topics identified on both brands' Instagram OBC was considered neutral and higher for the luxury brand (Gucci: 3.16; H&M: 3.11). On Table 47, it is also visible that each polarity scale expresses alike values for both brands.

When analyzing the frequency of each cluster, it was concluded that for both brands, "Contacts" and "Person" comprise the topics that are mentioned more frequently. Hence, Gucci and H&M are creating attractive contents that the users consider valuable and sharable to their friends and family, so it is possible to say that they are investing on this online brand community culture.

Concerning the average polarity of the represented clusters, both brands achieve better results for "Fashion Product" demonstrating the consumers are effectively providing a better feedback to the fashion products that both brands sell (despite having a neutral polarity), when compared to other clusters. Also, the cluster "Cultural Product (music, picture, show or others)" expressed a high, yet neutral, polarity mean, being especially associated with the partnerships that both brands develop frequently with fashion, musician and artist influencers. Thus, it is concluded that if these brands associate their communication with a cultural event or person, consumers' feedback will improve. For H&M, the topics with a better polarity average classification are the ones from the cluster "Time (period date)", thus meaning that its customers value seasonality contents and promotions such as Black Friday, Halloween, Summer, among others.

Table 47 - Instagram OBC: Gucci vs H&M.

Instagram			
Analysis		Gucci	H&M
General Analysis	Number of interactions	219,925	103,740
	Period Analyzed	March 2017 to March 2018	July 2017 to March 2018
	Unique Users	124,962	55,794
Global Sentiment Analysis	Ironic	373 (0%)	230 (0%)
	Non-Ironic	219,552 (100%)	103,510 (100%)
	Agreement	218,145 (99%)	100,288 (97%)
	Disagreement	1,780 (1%)	3,452 (3%)
	Objective	180,228 (82%)	76,873 (74%)
	Subjective	39,697 (18%)	26,867 (26%)
	Polarity Average	3.33	3.32
	Polarity Scale 1	1,642 (1%)	2,135 (2%)
	Polarity Scale 2	6,514 (3%)	4,449 (4%)
	Polarity Scale 3	153,638 (70%)	64,624 (62%)
	Polarity Scale 4	34,353 (16%)	22,895 (22%)
	Polarity Scale 5	23,778 (11%)	9,637 (9%)
	Confidence Average	99.87	99.53
Topic Sentiment Analysis	Topics identified	181,066	177,516
	Concept	42,423	69,779
	Entity	138,643	107,737
	Polarity Average among clusters	3.16	3.11
	Polarity Standard Deviation among clusters	0.58	0.64
	Polarity Variance among clusters	0.34	0.41
	Polarity Scale 1	1,459 (1%)	4,351 (2%)
	Polarity Scale 2	5,577 (3%)	8,540 (5%)
	Polarity Scale 3	144,747 (80%)	133,745 (75%)
	Polarity Scale 4	20,662 (11%)	25,004 (14%)
	Polarity Scale 5	8,621 (5%)	5,876 (3%)
	Top 3 Clusters with higher frequency	Contacts, Person, Hashtags	Contacts, Person, Place
	Top 3 Clusters with highest Polarity Average	Fashion Product; Cultural Product; Other Products	Time; Fashion Product; Cultural Product
	Top 3 Clusters with lowest Polarity Average	Currency; Services; Natural Phenomena	Hashtags; Artistic & Sports Organizations; Natural Phenomena

Source: Own Elaboration.

7. Conclusions

Luxury market is currently facing a major shift (Brun and Castelli, 2013) towards a luxury democratization, especially due to the development of the internet and technologies, which are considered a “mass medium of communication” (Baker *et al.*, 2018: 39); and also because LFB brands are required to grow and that cannot happen if they do not diversify their options outside of the privileged wealthy and powerful (Hanslin and Rindell, 2014; Chandon *et al.*, 2016). This environment “made luxury fashion more accessible to everyone” (Brogi *et al.*, 2013: 1) and, as so, new types of luxury have emerged, including *Massclusivity*, which stands for Massive and Exclusivity. This new concept aims of selling exclusive products for the masses by combining “a high perceived prestige with reasonable price premiums to attract middle-class consumers” (Truong *et al.*, 2009: 375), “who desire to follow the lifestyles of richer classes” (Mundel *et al.*, 2017: 68), through techniques such as limited editions, capsule collections or the creation of second line brands. Despite the benefits of this diversification, this research aims to understand the impact that these communications may have on consumers’ perception because it is unknown whether the traditional luxury consumer, who seeks for status and prestige (Ma *et al.*, 2012), would be interested on a product that is available to everyone. Also, some authors have already stated some risks, such as the brand dilution which may happens when a brand is not considered exclusive anymore and loses part of its value (Shin *et al.*, 2017) by having an excessive exposure and intensive distribution strategy.

In order to understand the practical implications of a *Massclusivity* strategy, two brands were selected within the fashion sector: a luxury brand – Gucci – and a mass market brand – H&M. Considering the methodological process defined, a netnography analysis was conducted and, during the research periods established, the sentiments expressed by Gucci and H&M consumers were mainly neutral, despite some punctual interventions with an emotional character – whether positive or negative -, but always more positive than negative, as perceived through a Global Sentiment Analysis. Afterwards, a Topic Sentiment Analysis was conducted in order to perceive the most dominant topics among consumers’ interactions with the brands during the launch of massclusivity campaigns.

7.1. Theoretical Contributions

The current dissertation goals are to understand the impact of the development of campaigns or products ranges, based on a new trend named *Massclusivity* which stands for providing luxury and exclusivity for the masses, on the brand love of online brand communities. As so, this research considered an examination of the meaning and perception of luxury; the investigation of the luxury market characteristics, being focused on the fashion consumption segment -; and the impact of the trends such as digital luxury and *Massclusivity*. With the aim of understanding the dynamics of the designated market, the following constructs of relationship marketing were studied: brand love, brand communities and consumer-brand relationship. The research questions defined were: (1) Does a *Massclusivity* campaign impacts consumers' brand love towards the brand?; (2) how does massive luxury affects the love or hate of the luxury fashion brands' online communities?; (3) How does consumers' perception towards luxury brands change after developing a *Massclusivity* campaign?

Regarding the first research question "Does a *Massclusivity* campaign impacts consumers' brand love towards the brand?", it was seen that according to customers' feedback gathered during the development of a netnography analysis, the interactions were mainly neutral, thus inducing that the impact of these communications did not affect the brand love of the majority of the consumers. Thus, the current dissertation did not find any suggestion or evidence that the *massclusivity* campaigns or products produce impactful reactions to the brand love or hate that consumers have towards the brands after the development of massive luxury campaigns, by the way they express their feelings on brand communities and SNS platforms. However, there were some impacts identified for both brands and the respective communities.

Concerning the second investigation question, "how does massive luxury affects the love or hate of the luxury fashion brands' online communities?", it was perceived that, despite the reduced effects on the brand love/hate, it is vital to consider the punctual and robust comments that both brands have received, because a negative rate has a propensity to disperse easily through word of mouth, when compared to the neutral interactions. This represents a challenge for LFB that need to find the balance between sustaining their prestigious image and diversifying their portfolio and communication to impact a new audience of possible customers. If this requirement is achieved by the

brands, the path to sustain a strong and long-lasting relationship will be easier and, consequently, the generation of brand love.

Also, during this thesis it was seen that consumers are more willing to express their feelings on Instagram OBC instead on Facebook, which is mainly use for stock, location or other information requests. It happens either on Gucci community members' as well as with H&M users. While reviewing the polarity average from Global Sentiment Analysis, it was seen that it is higher on both cases for Instagram, demonstrating that the most positive impacts are revealed on this OBC.

When comparing the brands, Gucci has the highest polarity average associated to its members' interactions. Thus, it is induced that the massive luxury campaigns under analysis had more positive outcomes for the luxury brand that promote a massclusivity collection (Gucci) and not for the mass market brand who tried to position itself with a high-end collection through the partnership with Erdem. As so, it is concluded that consumers appreciated the luxury brand's attempt of being closer to the masses despite the disruptive communication approach. H&M polarity average was lower than the luxury brand under analysis, indicating that, despite consumers' eagerness and excitement towards a luxury collection for accessible prices, the outcomes of this campaign did not exceed their expectations leading to a lower polarity average on their interactions with the brand. Likewise, it was not found any impact, either positive or negative, on Erdem, the luxury brand associated with H&M massclusivity communication.

At a first glance, this information induces that the development of a *Massclusivity* strategy did not have a major impact on the selected brands. As so, it was important to analyze other components such as the Topic Sentiment Analysis and member's interactions and detail. During the Topic Sentiment Analysis, it was perceived that on both brands and the respective Online Brand Communities, the members' interactions are frequently related with references to other users. It demonstrates that both brands, during their massclusivity strategies, have cultivated their engagement with their own customers by publishing contents able to generate conversation and word of mouth between users. This type of communication materials makes these OBCs' users to think that their feedback and reference is valuable to their network, which may lead

eventually to a community expansion. Also, this interaction shows that massclusivity campaigns generate interest and curiosity among these brands' audience, which may be due to the fact that this is a relatively recent marketing strategy that only the most innovative luxury brands are willing to adopt. Therefore, luxury brands who intend to diversify their audience and broaden their Online Brand Communities may consider the development of a massclusivity strategy, whether it is an individual approach like Gucci, or a co-branding campaign (e.g.: H&M yearly collaborations with luxury brands), capable of generating awareness and nosiness towards the brand, without damaging the premium image associated to it.

Besides that, the cluster "Fashion Product (cosmetic, accessory, clothes, footwear or others)" is one of the clusters with higher frequencies and polarity average, thus inducing that both brands' products are being commented and have a good feedback from their consumers. The high volume of interactions recording during the research period induced a high engagement between consumers and the brands. As so, if Fashion Product is one of the clusters with a better polarity average it induces that the acceptance of the core of this massclusivity campaigns, the fashion products (clothes and accessories) is very positive, revealing that, despite the opinions regarding the marketing campaign itself, consumers still value each brands' products.

Gucci developed a *Massclusivity* campaign named #TFWGucci, which was a risky strategy adopted by this luxury that selected several artists to develop this communication based on memes usually associated with the masses and with a younger audience, and not with the regular Gucci – or other luxury brand – buyers. When analyzing users' interactions on both Online Brand Communities – Facebook and Instagram - during this campaign launch, distinct sentiments were perceived. While some users were astonished and mentioning that it may affect the luxury brand's image with this new massive communication, others agreed and appreciated this attempt to diversify its communication and to become more disruptive. Considering the traditional luxury market, this was a chance for this brand to stand out among the crowd. However, those users considered that an LFB should act as a pioneer and create trends instead of following them (e.g.: following the memes trend). During this research, it was concluded that for brand lovers there was a higher number of interactions mentioning that this communication is not aligned to the perception they previously had regarding

this brand, than the number of interactions that revealed positive towards the attractiveness of the communication. However, as previously explained, the impacts of this interactions were not significant among the generality of the results.

The selected mass market brand, H&M, is recognized by co-creating *Massclusivity* campaigns with the collaboration of famous fashion designers from highly recognized LBF. It was concluded that on H&M's Instagram OBC, users were expressive on their eagerness towards H&M x Erdem collection launch, what did not happen on its Facebook OBC. Due to this excitement and to the most mentioned topics and clusters on this analysis, it was confirmed that there was a tendency for users to interact with the brand about stock and store locations requests, due to the fear of missing the opportunity of acquiring an exclusive item. When analyzing customers' feedback after the launch, the interactions demonstrated a dichotomy since some users appreciated the opportunity that H&M gave them to acquire luxury items for a lower price; while others criticized this mass market brand by having partnership with a luxury brand – mainly striving for quality and exclusivity – that by being exclusive cannot compete with a mass production, so this collection had some stock limitations and was only present on most important stores on each market and with very limited quantities for each piece on the website. It is not what H&M consumers are used to and expect from a brand from the mass fashion market, generating disappointment and defrauding expectations from consumers who were waiting to purchase a collection item. Yet, while analyzing the interactions in detail, it was perceived that these negative rates affected mainly H&M, which is the promoter of this collaboration, and not the luxury brand associated to this campaign: Erdem. Thus, this dissertation assumes that for the brand community analyzed, the *Massclusivity* partnership between H&M and Erdem only had negative outcomes for the mass market brand that was not able to meet consumers' requirements of a mass market fashion brand (quantity and stock for a reasonable price) and not for Erdem.

Finally, in response to the third research question “How does consumers' perception towards luxury brands change after developing a *Massclusivity* campaign?” it was concluded that the *massclusivity* campaigns under analysis promoted the emergence of several impacts for the luxury fashion brand and for the fashion mass market brand, however, those impacts did not have a significant influence on the brand love or hate of

the members of the OBCs of each brand. However, this strategy provided more positive outcomes to Gucci who achieved a high polarity average of its community members' interactions than H&M. To the generality of consumers, the ability of the selected luxury brand (Gucci) to become closer to the masses did not affect negatively the perception they had towards the brand, considering that the sentiments associated to the users' interactions was higher than the one attributed to the mass market brand. Despite some negative comments regarding Gucci's disruptive strategy, the differentiation from the other luxury brands with contents with topics usually adopted by the masses generated conversation among users, considering that the most relevant clusters on this analysis are based on consumers' identification of their peers. Thus, it induces that consumers' perception towards Gucci may have change to a more open brand which stands near its audience, since the tendency is to promote a community and the respective engagement increase, due to the evolution and growth of consumers' interactions during the months of the research period established, especially on the Facebook OBC.

Consumers perception towards H&M after the development of its massive luxury campaign did not suffer a significant modification, yet, when compared to Gucci, the consumers' feelings associated to their interactions were less positive on both OBCs studied. While reviewing its OBC members' interactions, it was perceived that H&M x Erdem campaign generated a high expectancy and interest among the crowds who value the opportunity of purchasing exclusive items for reasonable prices. However, the incapacity of meeting demand requirements and the habitual level of service generated bad reviews, making some users consider that H&M was not ready to pursue this approach, even though this strategy is being adopted since 2004, when H&M x Karl Lagerfeld collection was launched.

7.2. Managerial Implications

The current dissertation discloses practical implications for marketing managers on luxury fashion brands' segment and their community management. As analyzed, the communities on SNS are a strong channel to reinforce and sustain the relationships between customers and the brands. At the beginning of SNS development, luxury

brands were strictly avoiding being part of this online revolution in order to sustain their premium and exclusive image by not being part of this communication channels that attain the masses.

On this research, it was seen that both brands analyzed that developed *Massclusivity* campaigns displayed high levels of engagement although consumers' interactions and their identification of other users. Considering that luxury fashion brands are currently facing a major turnover due to the ever-changing environment of new forms of communication, this market is revealing a high competition since brands are trying to differentiate themselves from the competitors (e.g.: Gucci hiring a disruptive artist to assume the role of Creative director and to develop *Massclusivity* campaigns). As so, to overcome the obstacles of this competition, these brands have to attract new customers and expand their action to other type of public. Marketing managers may consider the findings of this dissertation to understand what type of topics they must be focused on when communicating with their communities and to comprehend the need of maintain an active brand community with valuable contents for its users. These findings aim to sustain an enduring relationship capable of generating brand love, specifically if managers promote the interaction between brands and its communities, to understand users' feedback and insights on the creation of *Massclusivity* campaigns. Only by listening consumers' feedback on brand communities, luxury brands will be able to understand what they value on these exclusive campaigns and products for the masses and where is the line that the brands itself should not cross to avoid brand dilution.

Also, as on the present study the effects of brand dilution had no visibility among the communities' interactions studied and the previous research did not find an outcome to relate *massclusivity* and brand dilution, it induces that luxury brands may reinforce their presence on their online, specifically on SNS, communities through exclusive campaigns developed on a mass media channel without affecting their image, while attaining new customers and engaging with the current brand lovers. Although, it is also important to consider the most traditional luxury consumers by maintaining, simultaneously, an exclusive aura associated with a high-end quality of their resources and products, despite the type of communication performed.

7.3. Limitations

Despite the conclusions of the present research and the contributions it provides, there are some limitations that have to be deliberated. First of all, the sample magnitude is relatively restricted, since this analysis considered the investigation of two brands among the fashion universe - luxury and mass-market. Therefore, to consider a representative part of the population and to allow easier generalizations of the results, we could consider including other brands – either from fashion market or from other luxury segment -, as well as other SNS besides Facebook and Instagram, such as YouTube. The same limitation is applied to the number of communication campaigns analyzed. Currently, the findings attained are based on the examination of two campaigns, one from Gucci and one from H&M in collaboration with Erdem. The analysis of different campaigns from each brand could provide us distinct type of results.

Secondly, the Netnography Analysis performed on this research considered specific periods which does not allow a longitudinal evaluation of the results. Hence, to provide broader conclusions of the impacts of *Massclusivity* on the brand love of the selected online brand communities for H&M and Gucci, an extended research period should be taken into consideration, to provide insights about the constancy, stability and strength of the results obtained.

Moreover, other external aspects were not addressed, such as culture, the level of membership and affiliation of the users of each community, as well as other demographic characteristics of the sample (e.g. education level, social class and age).

7.4. Future research

Acknowledging the limitations stated previously, future research should consider the analysis of more brands than the current dissertation, to allow a better comparison and a wider range of perspectives.

Including brands from different luxury and hedonic sectors – including services - may be, as well, an advantageous to gather insights applicable to the entire market. In

addition, each social network site and online brand community has its own particularities and potential, so the netnography analysis could be applied to different SNS (e.g. Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube) in order to reach and retrieve opinions from broader audiences, and to gather information from brand communities with different levels of online engagement.

Furthermore, upcoming studies should invest on longitudinal analysis to be able to compare results on a longer period of time and to analyze the evolution of consumers' responses towards *Massclusivity* campaigns and its impact on the brand love of the brands selected. Moreover, this netnography analysis was performed by using a certain text mining tool (Scraper Plug In) and a Sentiment Analysis program (Meaning Cloud). To enable more confident and reliable conclusions, future authors may test the same data on different platforms to compare the findings achieved and guarantee the performance of these tools.

As previously stated on the Literature Review, Luxury concept assumes different shapes and varies according to each author, market and culture. Nonetheless, a cross-cultural assessment may address different findings for luxury brands management, considering the impact that these masses communications and social media platforms have on luxury consumers from dissimilar cultures. It might also reveal and sustain different perspectives towards luxury concept. Likewise, online brand community users' segmentation by age, social class, income and education level will be fundamental on future investigations to provide deeper insights and answers towards the research questions established.

Finally, on forthcoming similar analysis, some complementary qualitative studies such as interviews with specialists of luxury fashion sector would be beneficial to understand both perspectives – brands and communities – and to perceive the impact of *Massclusivity* strategies on brands' revenues and perception.

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