A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Master's degree in Management from Nova School of Business and Economics.

The Role of Social Media Interaction in Shaping Perceptions of Exclusivity, Authenticity and Consumer Responses in Luxury Brands

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16/12/2024

Table of Contents

Abstract

This research investigates how social media interactions, such as likes, comments, and shares, influence consumers' perceptions of exclusivity and authenticity in the luxury brand sector. The study further explores the cascading effects of these perceptions on brand trust and consumer loyalty. Employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with a sample of 317 responses, the results demonstrate that social media engagement positively influences exclusivity and authenticity. As a result, exclusivity directly impacts consumer loyalty and brand trust, while authenticity emerges as a significant driver of brand trust. Ultimately, brand trust plays a pivotal role in building consumer loyalty. The findings highlight the need for a balance between exclusivity and authenticity in luxury branding strategies to strengthen trust and cultivate long-term loyalty. This research provides both theoretical contributions and managerial insights into leveraging digital interactions to improve brand-consumer relationships successfully.

Keywords

Consumer Behavior; Luxury Brands; Social Media Interactions; Brand Trust; Consumer Loyalty; Exclusivity; Authenticity; Digital Marketing; Structural Equation Modeling.

This work used infrastructure and resources funded by Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (UID/ECO/00124/2013, UID/ECO/00124/2019 and Social Sciences DataLab, Project 22209), POR Lisboa (LISBOA-01-0145-FEDER-007722 and Social Sciences DataLab, Project 22209) and POR Norte (Social Sciences DataLab, Project 22209)

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1. Introduction

The swift increase in global social media usage emphasizes the significance of this research (Statista, 2024). By 2024, social media is anticipated to be integral to daily life, boasting more than 5 billion users worldwide—a number expected to exceed 6 billion by 2028 (Statista, 2024). The increasing availability of mobile devices has driven this swift growth, particularly in evolving digital markets (Statista, 2024). Platforms such as Facebook, boasting almost 2.9 billion active users, have become crucial for engaging consumers, as users typically devote an average of 151 minutes each day to social networks (Statista, 2024). This ongoing involvement presents luxury brands with a significant chance to engage with varied markets around the world.

Concurrently, the luxury goods industry is witnessing significant expansion in online sales, with 12.3% of total revenue projected to originate from digital platforms by 2024 (Statista, 2024). Even though the total number of worldwide social media users rose by 7.81% in 2022, reaching 4.5 billion, the growth rate is projected to slow down to 3.59% annually by 2027 (Statista, 2024). This trend indicates that social media platforms might be nearing saturation, particularly in established markets. For luxury brands, this decelerating growth highlights the importance of enhancing consumer engagement to stay competitive in a densely populated digital environment (Statista, 2024).

Moreover, more than 45% of luxury buying decisions are swayed by online interactions, underscoring the significant impact of digital platforms on driving offline sales (McKinsey, n.d.). In addition, approximately 75% of luxury consumers own smartphones, with nearly half also owning tablets, highlighting the importance of mobile platforms for luxury brands as these devices are frequently used for information research (McKinsey, 2024). Interestingly, affluent consumers tend to share their thoughts on products less often on social media, but they hold others' opinions in high regard (McKinsey, 2015). Rather than

concentrating on individual posts, they are more impacted by "brand buzz"—the aggregate conversations, evaluations, and references regarding a brand on digital platforms (McKinsey, 2015).

Furthermore, well-designed digital experiences are crucial for upholding a brand's luxury image, since subpar online interactions can severely harm brand perception (McKinsey, 2015). This highlights the significance of strategically designed digital investments that genuinely embody and strengthen the brand's identity (McKinsey, 2015).

As luxury branding strategies evolve continuously due to digital innovations, important questions emerge concerning how social media interactions affect consumer perceptions and behaviors. Though previous studies have looked into luxury brand marketing, the influence of social media on essential results - such as exclusivity, authenticity, consumer loyalty and brand trust – remains insufficiently examined. To fill this gap, this thesis explores the subsequent research questions:

1. How does interaction on social networks (e.g., likes, comments, shares) influence perceptions of exclusivity and authenticity in luxury brands?
2. How does the perception of exclusivity impact brand trust and loyalty in the luxury sector?
3. How does the perception of authenticity influence brand trust in luxury brands?
4. How does brand trust influence consumer loyalty in luxury brands?

This study adds to the expanding body of literature on consumer behavior and social media marketing in the luxury industry. Additionally, this research offers practical recommendations for luxury brands to improve their digital approaches, strengthen relationships with consumers, and cultivate enduring loyalty and trust in a more competitive market.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The impact of social media on luxury brand perception

Social media platforms significantly impact consumer decision-making and enhance the connections between brands and their customers. (Godey et al., 2016). By allowing significant consumer involvement in discussions related to the brand, social media has shifted control over brand narratives from companies to consumers and other key stakeholders (Godey et al., 2016). The emerge of social media has introduced a new phase for businesses and brands, pushing them to adopt creative and engaging strategies to connect with their customers (Godey et al., 2016). Moreover, social media offers distinct advantages for managing brands (Godey et al., 2016). Nonetheless, assessing the impact of social media marketing on brand-related results continues to be a notable difficulty, even with its increasing emphasis in scholarly literature (Godey et al., 2016).

Recent studies highlight how luxury brands can effectively utilize social media to enhance their brand equity and influence consumer behavior (Godey et al., 2016). For instance, social media tactics centered on entertainment, engagement, trends, and personalization have demonstrated a beneficial effect on brand perception and visibility (Godey et al., 2016). These approaches ultimately boost brand loyalty, preference, and consumers' readiness to pay higher prices (Godey et al., 2016). As noted by Godey et al. (2016), engaging in social media activities boosts brand equity and strengthens consumer relationships, which can enhance feelings of exclusivity and raise the readiness to pay higher prices.

Additionally, these platforms allow instant consumer interaction and promote collaborative creation of brand experiences, which further enhances consumer engagement and boosts feelings of exclusivity (Godey et al., 2016). Although this research emphasizes the influence of interaction on exclusivity, insufficient focus has been placed on examining how

exclusivity mediate the development of brand trust and consumer loyalty. Moreover, interactions on social media, including direct communication between consumers and brands, tailored replies, and content created by users, foster a feeling of transparency and openness that enhances the perception of authenticity (Athwal et al., 2019).

Furthermore, luxury brands manage to maintain a sense of exclusivity while being accessible on social media, which is pivotal in sustaining brand perception among consumers (Athwal et al., 2019). Achieving a balance between exclusivity and accessibility allows luxury brands to maintain their allure and desirability (Athwal et al., 2019).

2.2 Exclusivity and Authenticity in luxury branding on social platforms

In the luxury branding landscape, exclusivity and authenticity act as dual foundations that influence consumer views and interaction on social media (Athwal et al., 2019).

Luxury brands intentionally uphold an air of exclusivity on social media by remaining somewhat detached and remote (Athwal et al., 2019). This method enables them to maintain their esteemed reputation while also interacting with users (Athwal et al., 2019). Moreover, cultural factors significantly influence how consumers perceive and value exclusivity and authenticity in luxury branding (Athwal et al., 2019).

Through these platforms, activities such as watching content, liking posts, and commenting, satisfy both emotional and intellectual needs (Athwal et al., 2019). Emotional needs are met through the visual allure and enjoyment offered by the high-quality, attractive content, while intellectual needs are fulfilled as users look for and obtain information regarding the brand's products (Athwal et al., 2019).

Simultaneously, evolving consumer habits, especially among millennials, underscore an increasing desire for authenticity. Millennials often withdraw from marketing strategies seen as untrustworthy (Athwal et al., 2019). This collective prioritizes honest and transparent

engagements, urging luxury brands to concentrate on approaches that emphasize authenticity and resonate with their aspiration for real connections (Athwal et al., 2019).

Building on this shift, premium buyers are shaped by two main behavioral drives described by functional attitude theories: the expression of value and the functions of social adjustment. The value expression function (authenticity) motivates consumers to buy luxury brands to express themselves, showcasing their individual values and identity (Athwal et al., 2019).

Conversely, the social adjustment function (exclusivity) motivates consumers to select luxury brands to project a certain social image and achieve acceptance in social settings (Athwal et al., 2019). This twofold aim – merging personal identity representation with social approval – is especially noticeable in social media engagements, where users leverage luxury brands for communication (Athwal et al., 2019).

2.3 Impact of social media engagement on consumer loyalty

Social media has emerged as a crucial platform for luxury brands to engage with consumers and encourage purchasing intentions (Hung et al., 2011). As emphasized by Hung et al. (2011), perception and social influence are key factors in shaping consumers' intentions to buy luxury goods. This impact is magnified on social media as consumers interact with luxury brands and watch the engagements of others with these brands (Hung et al., 2011).

This type of "social proof" can enhance purchase intention, as shoppers desire acceptance and social validation by connecting with well-regarded brands (Hung et al., 2011). This phenomenon is especially significant on platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, where consumer behaviors and choices are prominently displayed (Hung et al., 2011).

According to Berthon et al. (2009), luxury fashion brands are perceived by consumers through three key dimensions: symbolic, experiential, and functional. Brands on social media can effectively highlight these elements by presenting their functional value (representing the perceived quality of their products and services), experiential value (focusing on the brand's uniqueness, rarity, and the feelings it inspires), and symbolic value (stressing the brand's links to wealth, exclusivity, and conspicuousness) (Berthon et al., 2009). Content highlighting these values can improve brand perception, bolstering consumers' purchase intentions by fostering an image that aligns with their aspirations for exclusivity and status (Hung et al., 2011).

Additionally, the study conducted by Hung et al. (2011) indicates that although functional and experiential values have a strong link to purchase intention, symbolic value exerts a lesser influence. This discovery indicates that, on social media, posts emphasizing real advantages and unique experiences might be more impactful for luxury brands than those concentrated only on status (Hung et al., 2011). Therefore, strategies for luxury brands on social media must emphasize highlighting product quality and distinctive experiences to attract consumers' cravings for authenticity and exclusivity (Hung et al., 2011). Considering this, focusing on exclusivity and authenticity has proven to be more effective in drawing in consumers than merely stressing prestige, underscoring the importance of emphasizing these two aspects in this situation.

2.4 Brand trust

Brand trust is acknowledged as a key factor in comprehending the relationships between consumers and brands. It can be described as the readiness of consumers to trust a brand's capacity to reliably fulfill its commitments (Portal, Abratt & Bendixen, 2019). Also,

studies show that brand trust acts as a vital factor in consumer loyalty, lowering perceived risks and strengthening enduring connections with the brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

In recent times, decreasing consumer confidence has emerged as an increasing worry for brands. Nonetheless, studies emphasize that authenticity serves as a powerful remedy to this problem. Authenticity has demonstrated its ability to reduce consumer uncertainty and serve as the perfect basis for restoring trust between brands and consumers (Portal, Abratt & Bendixen, 2019).

Trust is intimately linked to perceived warmth and competence—two factors that impact consumers' assessments of brands. Warmth indicates a brand's aim to serve its consumers well, whereas competence assures them of the brand's capability to fulfill its commitments. Combined, these elements enhance trust and reinforce consumer loyalty (Portal, Abratt & Bendixen, 2019).

Ultimately, brand trust directly fosters emotional customer engagement, leading to enduring loyalty. This indicates that when customers trust a brand, they often develop a psychological connection with it, fostering loyalty in the long run (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2001). Moreover, trust in a brand plays a crucial role in boosting customer engagement, particularly in high-involvement circumstances, where its effect is more noticeable concerning overall satisfaction (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán, 2001).

3. Research model and hypotheses development

This study introduces a conceptual research model built upon relevant theories and an extensive review of the literature. The suggested model seeks to fill recognized gaps, especially in comprehending how digital engagements influence consumer perceptions and prompt behavioral reactions in the luxury branding industry.

Figure 1 illustrates the proposed research model, showcasing the connections between core variables, including interaction, exclusivity, authenticity, and consumer responses (consumer loyalty and brand trust). This model provides a structured framework to test the hypothesized relationships and explore the mechanisms driving consumer behavior in the context of luxury brands on social media.

This study therefore proposes the following hypotheses based on these theoretical foundations:

H1*: Interaction on social networks enhances consumers' perceptions of exclusivity in brands.*

H2*: Interaction on social networks enhances consumers' perceptions of authenticity in brands.*

H3*: The perception of brand exclusivity positively influences brand trust.*

H4*: The perception of brand exclusivity positively influences consumer loyalty.*

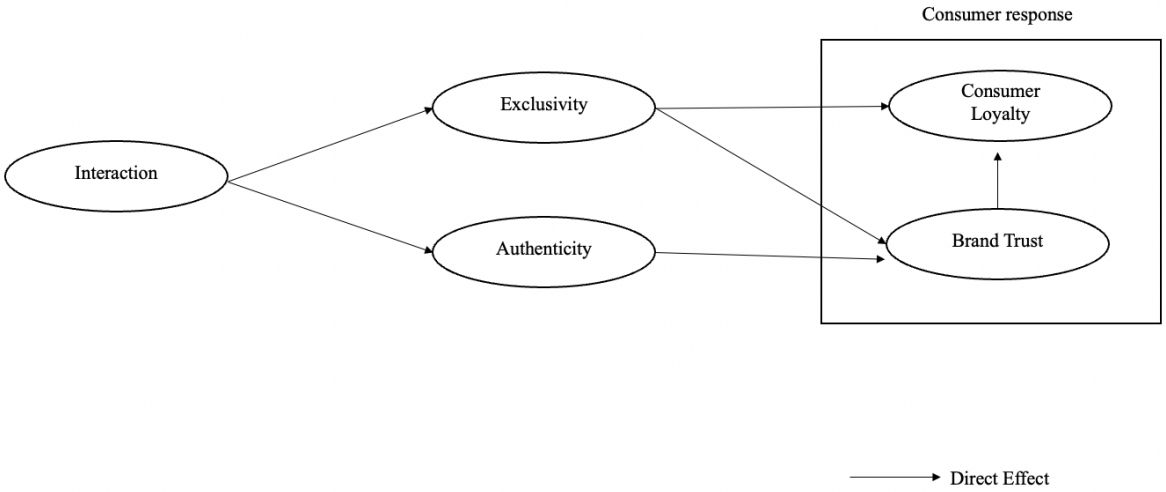
H5*: The perception of brand authenticity positively influences brand trust.*

H6*: The perception of brand trust positively influences consumer loyalty.*

Thus, this conceptual model proposes that interactions on social networks shape perceptions of exclusivity and authenticity. Though exclusivity affects both brand trust and consumer loyalty, authenticity solely affects brand trust, which in turn fosters consumer loyalty.

To validate these relationships and contribute to the understanding of marketing strategies for luxury brands, the model was empirically tested.

Figure 1 Conceptual model



Source(s): Research Literature

4. Methodology

This research examines the impact of luxury brands' engagement on social media on consumer behavior, emphasizing essential elements like interaction, exclusivity, authenticity, and consumer reactions, which include brand trust and consumer loyalty.

A structured questionnaire (see Appendix 13) was created and shared online to collect data from individuals familiar with high-end brands and who follow at least one prestigious label on social media. The participants were asked to consider their preferred luxury brand while responding. This method was chosen to prevent restricting the research to one brand, facilitating a more extensive assessment of consumer behavior in the luxury market. This method is especially effective for examining digital consumer behavior since it facilitates immediate responses from engaged social media users, which corresponds with the research's emphasis.

The survey was split into two parts. The opening part concentrated on high-end brands, featuring inquiries about the participants' awareness of and thoughts regarding their preferred luxury brands. The second section collected demographic data (e.g., age, gender, education, occupation, income) (see Table 2 and Appendix 1). Participation was optional and replies were gathered anonymously. This promoted ethical adherence and fostered truthful answers by reducing social desirability bias.

Participants were sourced from online forums and social media sites where luxury brands are frequently debated, ensuring that the sample included individuals with pertinent knowledge and expertise. The survey was shared via social media platforms like WhatsApp, Instagram, and LinkedIn, selected for their capacity to connect with luxury consumers who actively interact with and converse about luxury brands online. A **sum of 317 valid responses was gathered** (see Table 1). This sample size exceeds the generally accepted guideline of 10 times for structural equation modelling (SEM), which recommends at least 10 observations per observed variable (Wagner & Grimm, 2023). As this research includes five latent variables, each assessed by three observed indicators, the responses collected provide strong statistical power and guarantee the reliability of the analysis.

Furthermore, for this study, as highlighted before, only those respondents who stated they follow luxury brands on social media were included in the analysis, as they signify the target demographic for this research.

Table 1 Proportion of Respondents Following Luxury Brands on social media.

Category	N	(%)
Follow luxury brands (Yes)	317	78
Do not follow luxury brands (No)	90	22
Total	407	100

Table 2 Sample Demographics

Variable	Values	Frequency	(%)
Gender	Female	207	65.3
	Male	97	30.6
Age	Under 18	20	6.3
	18-24	118	37.2
	25-34	68	21.5
	35-44	42	13.2
	45-54	51	16.1
	55 or older	18	5.7
Education Level	Less than high school	16	5.0
	High school diploma or equivalent	47	14.8
	Some college or associate degree	32	10.1
	Bachelor´s degree	102	32.2
	Graduate degree	111	35.0
Occupation	Employed full-time	168	53.0
	Student	79	24.9

4.1 Revised Model and Justification for Adjustments

The original model consisted of 7 variables: interaction, exclusivity, authenticity, personalization, brand trust, purchase intention and consumer loyalty. However, during the analysis it was found that including all these variables resulted in a more complex model with fit indices outside the recommended thresholds. The decision to exclude personalization and purchase intention variables was based on a combination of theoretical and practical considerations.

According to the principle of parsimony, often referred to as Occam's razor, the simplest explanation is preferred when multiple interpretations of the observed data are available (Myung & Pitt, 1997). With this, it was important to focus on a simpler and more parsimonious model to enhance the interpretability and clarity of the results.

Furthermore, these adjustments also led to significant improvements in the model's fit indices (CFI, RMSEA, TLI, and SRMR), suggesting that the revised model is not only simpler but also offers a better fit to the observed data. Through these modifications, the model was not only simplified but also its predictive capacity was strengthened, as shown by the enhanced fit indices and results of hypothesis testing in the following section.

4.2 Measures

Every construct in this research was assessed using established scales from earlier studies. Interaction was assessed using items adapted from Godey et al. (2016), which measure the extent to which consumers engage in meaningful interactions and actively engage with brand-related content on social media platforms. Exclusivity was measured using items adapted from Kumar et al. (2022), which aim to assess perceptions of uniqueness and premium value associated with brands.

In addition, authenticity was measured using items adapted from Ghorbanzadeh et al. (2024), which focused on assessing brand experience and brand authenticity through validated scales. Moreover, brand trust was measured using items adapted from Martínez-Cevallos et al. (2024), which focused specifically on consumer trust and confidence in the brand. Finally, consumer loyalty was assessed using items adapted from Nyadzayo et al. (2019), which measure consumer willingness to maintain their relationship with the brand.

All items were evaluated using a seven-point Likert scale, with endpoints ranging from 1 = "Strongly Disagree" to 7 = "Strongly Agree". The survey was designed to assess the relationships between social media strategies, perceptions of exclusivity and authenticity, and subsequent consumer responses. Further details about the measures, including the specific questions and their respective sources, are provided in Appendix 13.

To conduct a more thorough analysis, Cronbach's alpha was assessed, acting as a gauge of test reliability, quantified through internal consistency or the homogeneity between test items' scores (Springer, 2011). Any alpha values above 0.7 are typically considered acceptable for internal consistency (Hair et al., 2010).

In this research, every construct showed sufficient reliability, with Brand Trust reaching the maximum reliability ($\alpha = 0.807$), whereas Consumer Loyalty exhibited the minimum yet acceptable reliability ($\alpha = 0.672$). Although the Cronbach's alpha for Consumer Loyalty ($\alpha = 0.672$) was marginally lower than the typical cutoff of 0.7, it is considered sufficient for exploratory studies (Hair et al., 2010). These values guarantee that the elements within each construct assess a unified underlying concept, yielding strong data for later analyses (see Appendix 12).

4.3 Common method bias check

To mitigate potential concerns regarding Common Method Bias (CMB) due to the use of a single data collection method, Harman's Single Factor Test was applied (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The results revealed that the first factor explained **39.531%** of the total variance, which is **below the acceptable threshold of 50%,** suggesting that CMB did not pose a significant issue in this study (see Appendix 2 and 3).

5. Results

The dataset was checked for missing values, normality, and multicollinearity among the measured variables. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to evaluate the normality of all observed variables. Results indicated significant deviations from normality ($p < 0.05$) for all variables (see Appendix 6 for regression analysis summary). However, considering the sample size (n=317) and the robustness of the Maximum Likelihood estimation method used

in SEM, the analysis was conducted without transforming the data, as SEM methods are known to handle moderate deviations from normality (see Appendix 5). As stated by Kline (2016), ML estimation ranks among the most utilized techniques in structural equation modeling (SEM) due to its ability to yield dependable parameter estimates, even when multivariate normality assumptions are not met, particularly with adequately large sample sizes.

Furthermore, to assess potential multicollinearity, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was calculated for all observed variables. Results indicated that VIF values ranged from 1.34 to 1.78, with a mean VIF of 1.56, well below the critical threshold of 10. This suggests no significant multicollinearity issues were present, ensuring the stability of parameter estimates in the SEM analysis (see Appendix 7).

The descriptive statistics for the observed variables are presented in Appendix 8. The mean values of the variables ranged between 4.17 (e.g., Var6_Q3) and 5.69 (e.g., Var7_Q1), suggesting that respondents generally provided positive ratings on the 7-point Likert scale. The standard deviations were all below 1.83, indicating a moderate level of agreement among the responses. The minimum and maximum values ranged from 1 to 7, as expected from the scale used in the survey.

Next, the measurement model was evaluated using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Model fit indices demonstrated acceptable results: Chi-square/degrees of freedom (χ^2/df) = **2.39**, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) = **0.914**, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = **0.932**, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = **0.066** (90% CI: 0.055–0.078), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = **0.053**, all within the thresholds recommended in the literature. These results support the reliability and validity of the measurement model (see Appendix 10).

The upcoming section offers an in-depth analysis of the hypothesis testing outcomes, reinforcing the connections in the suggested model.

5.1 Hypothesis Analysis

According to Table 3, all hypotheses were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and all of them were supported with significant results, demonstrating the robustness of the relationships between the variables.

Table 3 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Path Coefficients

Path	Standardized Coefficient (β)	Standard Error (SE)	z-value	p-value	Significance
Interaction→ Exclusivity	0.765	0.109	6.99	0.000	*** (p < 0.001)
Interaction→ Authenticity	0.617	0.092	6.68	0.000	*** (p < 0.001)
Exclusivity→ Consumer Loyalty	0.791	0.211	3.73	0.000	*** (p < 0.001)
Exclusivity→ Brand Trust	0.387	0.152	2.55	0.011	* (p < 0.05)
Authenticity→ Brand Trust	0.564	0.171	3.29	0.001	** (p < 0.01)
Brand Trust → Consumer Loyalty	0.457	0.160	2.85	0.004	** (p < 0.01)

Notes: *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

The analysis showed that the relationship between interaction and exclusivity (Hypothesis 1) is significant ($\beta = 0.765$, $t = 6.99$, $p < 0.001$). These results suggest that the interactions on the social media platforms positively interfere with the consumers' perception of exclusivity.

Likewise, hypothesis 2 (H2) showed that there is a significant relationship between interaction and authenticity ($\beta = 0.617$, $t = 6.68$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that social media interactions help to improve authenticity in the brand perception.

Additionally, hypothesis 3 (H3) indicates that exclusivity has a positive impact on consumer loyalty ($\beta = 0.791$, $t = 3.73$, $p < 0.001$), emphasizing the importance of exclusivity in fostering loyalty among consumers. Furthermore, the results of the fourth hypothesis reveal a significant connection between exclusivity and brand trust ($\beta = 0.387$, $t = 2.55$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that exclusivity helps build consumer trust in the brand.

Hypothesis 5 (H5) demonstrates that authenticity positively influences brand trust ($\beta = 0.563$, $t = 3.29$, $p < 0.01$), emphasizing the importance of authenticity in building trust. Lastly, Hypothesis 6 (H6) confirms that brand trust significantly enhances consumer loyalty ($\beta = 0.457$, $t = 2.85$, $p < 0.01$), showing how trust is essential for strengthening customer loyalty.

These findings collectively indicate that interactions on social media significantly influence perceptions of exclusivity and authenticity. It was discovered that exclusivity positively impact both consumer loyalty and brand trust. At the same time, authenticity is crucial as it builds a solid connection with brand trust, which in turn acts as a significant factor in fostering consumer loyalty, as illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4 Hypotheses testing

Hypothesized paths	β	t-value	Result
H1: Interaction → Exclusivity	0.765***	6.99	Accept
H2: Interaction → Authenticity	0.617***	6.68	Accept
H3: Exclusivity → Consumer Loyalty	0.791***	3.73	Accept
H4: Exclusivity → Brand Trust	0.387*	2.55	Accept
H5: Authenticity → Brand Trust	0.563***	3.29	Accept
H6: Brand Trust → Consumer Loyalty	0.457**	2.85	Accept
SMC (squared multiple correlations)			
Exclusivity	0.770		
Authenticity	0.566		
Consumer Loyalty	0.439		
Brand Trust	0.622		

Notes: β = standardized path coefficient; ***p < 0.001; **p < 0.01; *p < 0.05

6. Discussion

The primary goal of this research was to investigate the impact of social media interactions (such as likes, comments, shares, etc) on consumers' perceptions of exclusivity and authenticity of luxury brands. Furthermore, it aimed to explore how perceptions of exclusivity impact brand trust and consumer loyalty in the luxury brand sector, along with the influence of authenticity perceptions on brand trust. Lastly, the study investigated the influence of brand trust on consumer loyalty within the realm of luxury brand experiences.

The results of hypothesis testing indicated that all proposed pathways were significant. Specifically, social media interaction significantly influenced exclusivity and authenticity, and exclusivity was a strong predictor of consumer loyalty and also influenced brand trust. In addition, authenticity was positively related to brand trust, and brand trust directly influenced consumer loyalty.

To elaborate further, as seen in table 4 - about hypothesized paths, it is relevant that social media interactions significantly enhance consumer´s perceptions of exclusivity (β=0.765, $p < 0.001$). This corresponds with previous studies by Godey et al. (2016), which also emphasized the importance of interaction on social networks in shaping perceptions of exclusivity and luxury. As seen before, social media platforms allow for personalized and real-time consumer engagement, which leads to a stronger perception of a brand's exclusivity (Godey et al., 2016). This is important for luxury brands to maintain their high-end image while staying connected to their audience.

Similarly, this study also revealed that interaction has a positive effect on authenticity (β=0.617, $p < 0.001$), which is consistent with the findings on the literature review. Some researchers suggest that engaging actively on social media platforms can greatly improve how authentic a brand is perceived to be (Athwal et al., 2019). Social media interactions, such as direct consumer-brand communication, personalized responses, and sharing UGC, create a sense of transparency and openness that consumers link to authenticity (Athwal et al., 2019).

In terms of testing whether exclusivity is related to consumer loyalty and whether exclusivity is related to brand trust, both paths present significant results ($\beta = 0.791$, $p < 0.001$ for consumer loyalty, and $\beta = 0.387$, $p < 0.05$ for brand trust). This aligns with prior findings by Godey et al., (2016), emphasizing the critical role of exclusivity in building consumer loyalty to luxury brands. When consumers view a brand as exclusive, they are more inclined to trust it and stay loyal (Godey et al., 2016).

On the other hand, the significant path from authenticity to brand trust ($\beta = 0.564$, $p < 0.01$) reinforces this, as consumers prioritize both exclusivity and authenticity in their commitment to luxury brands. In addition, according to Portal, S., Abratt, R., & Bendixen, M. (2019) their results showed that brand authenticity does have a direct impact on brand trust,

and warmth and competence partially mediate the relationship between brand authenticity and brand trust.

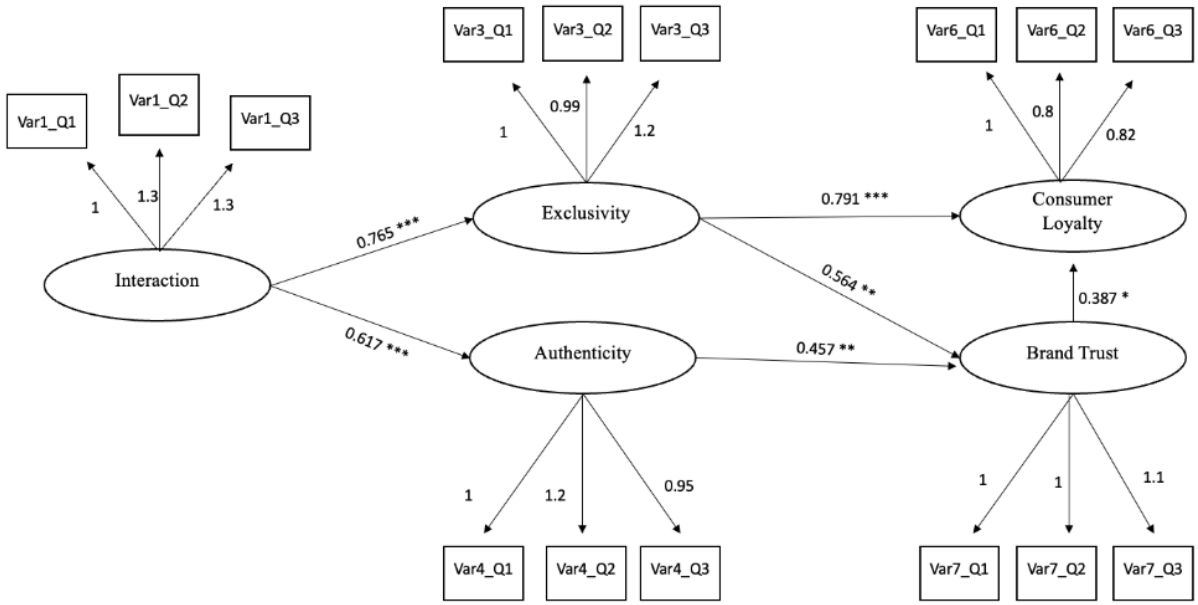
Finally, it was proposed that brand trust would have a direct impact on consumer loyalty, and this was also supported ($\beta = 0.457$, $p < 0.01$). This finding emphasises the fundamental role of trust in the luxury market, in line with Nyadzayo et al. (2020), who argued that trust promotes greater brand loyalty. The data demonstrates that consumers are more likely to maintain long-term loyalty when they trust a luxury brand (Nyadzayo et al., 2020).

One critical observation is the nuanced relationship between exclusivity, authenticity, and their respective impacts on trust and loyalty. While exclusivity strongly predicts loyalty, its influence on trust is comparatively weaker, suggesting that consumers might perceive exclusivity as more directly related to their brand commitment rather than as a measure of reliability. On the other hand, authenticity emerged as a stronger predictor of brand trust, emphasizing that consistent and transparent communication fosters confidence in luxury brands. Additionally, brand trust is vital for enhancing consumer loyalty, highlighting its significance as a mediator that bolsters enduring consumer connections.

These findings highlight the need for luxury brand managers to balance exclusivity and authenticity in their strategies, ensuring that both dimensions work cohesively to build trust and foster loyalty. Future studies could delve deeper into understanding how cultural or demographic factors mediate these dynamics, offering more granular insights into consumer behavior.

The structural model summarized in **Figure 2** clearly illustrates the significant relationships between the variables tested, providing strong empirical support for the hypotheses proposed.

Figure 2 Structural Model



Notes: *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$.

7. Implications

7.1 Theoretical Implications

This research makes a notable contribution to the expanding literature concerning the relationship between social media interaction and luxury brand management. This study offers empirical evidence for previously suggested connections in the luxury brand context by examining how interactions shape perceptions of exclusivity and authenticity, and their ensuing impact on brand trust and loyalty. The results confirm the significance of psychological factors - like exclusivity and authenticity - in influencing consumer views and emphasize brand trust as a key mediator that connects these views to loyalty results. This provides a nuanced perspective to current theories regarding digital consumer engagement, especially within the high-involvement sphere of luxury branding.

Moreover, to build consumer loyalty in the ever-changing digital environment, luxury brands might incorporate gamification aspects into their social media tactics. Gamification techniques like challenges, leaderboards, and incentives can greatly enhance consumer involvement, fostering competitive and gratifying experiences that build enduring loyalty (Gatautis, Banytė, & Vitkauskaitė, 2021). By integrating unique rewards and tailored experiences via gamification, brands can strengthen a feeling of exclusivity and advantage within their audience.

Finally, the research fills a significant void in the literature by exploring these relationships explicitly within the realm of luxury brands, an industry noted for its distinct focus on authenticity and exclusivity. In doing this, it provides a strong foundation that future research can build upon, particularly in cross-cultural and non-luxury settings.

7.2 Managerial Implications

This research provides numerous practical insights for managers of luxury brands:

1. Boosting Exclusivity: Luxury brands need to find a balance between accessibility and exclusivity on digital channels. This can be accomplished through strategies like exclusive digital events, limited-edition online product launches, and personalized content that reinforces the brand's rarity and premium value. Additionally, exclusivity can be improved by establishing restricted access to selective communities or memberships that offer special insights or deals.
2. Emphasizing Consumer Interactions: Social media platforms should be leveraged strategically to encourage significant consumer interactions. Managers need to emphasize generating opportunities for likes, comments, and shares that resonate emotionally and intellectually with their target audience, thereby enhancing perceptions of exclusivity and authenticity. Moreover, brands must emphasize

immediate reactions to consumer interactions, nurturing a feeling of connection and involvement.

3. Building Brand Authenticity: Consistent and transparent communication is essential for fostering authenticity. Brands should focus on sharing user-generated content (UGC), behind-the-scenes stories, and honest storytelling that match with their luxury image and connects with consumers' desire for genuineness. In this context, partnering with reliable influencers can effectively enhance authenticity while maintaining alignment with the brand's values.
4. Cultivating Trust: Establishing trust should be a core component of digital strategies. This entails providing high-quality content and experiences that consistently align with the brand's promises. By nurturing a solid emotional bond via consistent interactions, brands can enhance loyalty among costumers. Additionally, safeguarding data privacy and ethical marketing strategies can enhance brand trust even more, especially in a time of growing consumer consciousness.
5. Lasting Loyalty: The results highlight that trust plays a pivotal role in loyalty. Luxury brands should aim for long-term engagement strategies rather than short-term promotional tactics. Programs like loyalty schemes, tailored experiences, and smooth omnichannel connections can strengthen consumer dedication.

By integrating these strategies, luxury brands can effectively navigate the complexities of the digital landscape, fostering deeper consumer relationships and sustaining their competitive edge.

8. Limitations

This research does have several limitations. Firstly, although the survey was sent out without targeting a particular geographic area, the cultural and demographic variety of the

participants was not thoroughly examined. Variations in consumer behavior depending on cultural or regional contexts might affect how social media interactions relate to exclusivity, authenticity, brand trust and loyalty.

Secondly, the research concentrated solely on luxury brands, which possess distinct traits that might not be relevant to other market segments like mass-market or premium brands. The behavior of consumer trust and loyalty in these areas could vary greatly.

Third, depending on self-reported data can lead to social desirability bias, as respondents might give answers, they think are more socially acceptable instead of completely honest ones. This might have affected the precision of the results.

Ultimately, this study utilized a cross-sectional design, gathering data at one specific moment. Although this offers important insights, it constrains the capacity to monitor shifts in consumer perceptions and behaviors over time.

9. Suggestions for Future Research

Future research could tackle these limitations by examining the cultural and demographic variety of participants to gain deeper insights into how these elements shape consumer perceptions. A cross-cultural perspective might offer greater insight into the roles of exclusivity, authenticity, and trust across various geographical settings.

Moreover, studies could extend to non-luxury or mass-market brands to investigate if the identified relationships apply in other market sectors. This would assist in generalizing the results and provide wider managerial perspectives.

Longitudinal studies are advised to monitor shifts in consumer perceptions and behaviors over time, providing a more dynamic view on the development of trust and loyalty regarding social media interactions.

Ultimately, subsequent studies might include more factors, like emotional ties or perceived dangers, to deepen the comprehension of consumer-brand interactions.

By addressing these areas, future research can significantly enhance the understanding of consumer-brand dynamics in the evolving digital landscape.

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11. Appendix

11.1 Appendix 1. Sample Demographics Complete Table

Variable	Values	Frequency	(%)
Gender	Female	207	65.3
	Male	97	30.6
	Non-binary	5	1.6
	Other	2	0.6
	Prefer not to say	6	1.9
Age	Under 18	20	6.3
	18-24	118	37.2
	25-34	68	21.5
	35-44	42	13.2
	45-54	51	16.1
	55 or older	18	5.7
Education Level	Less than high school	16	5.0
	High school diploma or equivalent	47	14.8
	Some college or associate degree	32	10.1
	Bachelor´s degree	102	32.2
	Graduate degree	111	35.0
	Prefer not to say	9	2.8
Occupation	Employed full-time	168	53.0
	Employed part-time	23	7.3
	Student	79	24.9
	Self-employed	21	6.6
	Unemployed	10	3.2
	Retired	8	2.5
	Prefer not to say	8	2.5

11.2 Appendix 2. Results of Harman's Single Factor Test for Common Method Bias

The annex presents the results of the factor analysis to check for common method bias. As indicated, the variance explained by the first factor was less than 50 per cent, indicating the absence of significant CMB problems.

Total Variance Explained

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.930	39.531	39.531	5.398	35.988	35.988
2	1.330	8.865	48.396	.796	5.304	41.292
3	1.125	7.499	55.895	.596	3.976	45.269
4	.958	6.387	62.281			
5	.810	5.400	67.681			
6	.692	4.614	72.296			
7	.658	4.387	76.683			
8	.587	3.914	80.596			
9	.510	3.401	83.997			
10	.498	3.322	87.320			
11	.467	3.111	90.430			
12	.456	3.041	93.471			
13	.357	2.382	95.854			
14	.327	2.182	98.035			
15	.295	1.965	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

11.3 Appendix 3. Factor Matrix of the Exploratory Factor Analysis

Factor Matrix[a]

	Factor		
	1	2	3
Var3_Q1	.560	-.188	.232
Var3_Q2	.500	.064	.306
Var3_Q3	.610	.082	.144
Var4_Q1	.605	-.138	.092
Var4_Q2	.651	-.187	.066
Var4_Q3	.551	-.357	.198
Var1_Q1	.500	.146	.136

Var1_Q2	.590	.224	.182
Var1_Q3	.650	.163	.093
Var6_Q1	.595	.357	-.167
Var6_Q2	.593	.084	-.209
Var6_Q3	.457	.463	-.036
Var7_Q1	.696	-.294	-.179
Var7_Q2	.649	-.031	-.299
Var7_Q3	.727	-.183	-.350

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

a. 3 factors extracted. 9 iterations required.

11.4 Appendix 4. Reliability and Descriptive Statistics for Measurement Scales

Construct	Label	Mean	SD	λ	α
Interaction					0.720
"Your favorite luxury brand's social media enables users to share information with othe	Var1_Q1	5.088	1.538	0.523	
"The social media of your favorite luxury brand allows for conversations and opinion ex	Var1_Q2	5.148	1.421	0.721	
"My favorite luxury brand's social media makes it easy for me to share my opinion."	Var1_Q3	5.155	1.338	0.706	
Exclusivity					0.673
"My favorite luxury brand's social media content provides the most recent information	Var3_Q1	5.370	1.362	0.565	
"The social media content of your favorite luxury brand offers personalized search optic	Var3_Q2	5.038	1.409	0.630	
"The social media of your favorite luxury brand makes you feel included in an exclusive,	Var3_Q3	5.187	1.396	0.583	
Authenticity					0.734
"The philosophy of your favorite luxury brand is clear and guides its brand promise."	Var4_Q1	5.517	1.173	0.671	
"Your favorite luxury brand knows exactly what it stands for and does not promise anything that contradicts its essence and character."	Var4_Q2	5.416	1.340	0.721	
"Considering its brand promise, your favorite luxury brand does not pretend to be someone else."	Var4_Q3	5.676	1.304	0.579	
Consumer Loyalty					0.672
"I am willing to make small sacrifices in order to keep using products from my favorite lu	Var6_Q1	4.732	1.673	0.684	
"I would wait to make a purchase if my favorite luxury brand's product were temporari	Var6_Q2	5.309	1.484	0.556	
"I am so happy with my favorite luxury brand that I no longer feel the need to watch out for other alternative luxury brands."	Var6_Q3	4.170	1.830	0.581	
Brand Trust					0.807
"I trust in my favorite luxury brand."	Var7_Q1	5.691	1.285	0.745	
"I rely on my favorite luxury brand."	Var7_Q2	5.334	1.472	0.673	
"My favorite luxury brand conveys confidence to me."	Var7_Q3	5.505	1.321	0.790	

Notes: M = mean; SD = standard deviation; l = standardized loading; a = Cronbach's alpha CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracte

11.5 Appendix 5. Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk)

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var1_Q1	**317**	**0.95578**	**9.892**	**5.394**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var1_Q2	**317**	**0.95803**	**9.390**	**5.271**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var1_Q3	**317**	**0.96607**	**7.592**	**4.771**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var3_Q1	**317**	**0.93891**	**13.667**	**6.154**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var3_Q2	**317**	**0.95620**	**9.798**	**5.371**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var3_Q3	**317**	**0.96468**	**7.903**	**4.865**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var4_Q1	**317**	**0.92883**	**15.922**	**6.514**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var4_Q2	**317**	**0.94393**	**12.545**	**5.953**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var4_Q3	**317**	**0.91599**	**18.796**	**6.904**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var6_Q1	**317**	**0.98072**	**4.314**	**3.441**	**0.00029**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var6_Q2	**317**	**0.95136**	**10.881**	**5.618**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var6_Q3	**317**	**0.97595**	**5.381**	**3.961**	**0.00004**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var7_Q1	**317**	**0.91326**	**19.406**	**6.980**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var7_Q2	**317**	**0.92855**	**15.986**	**6.523**	**0.00000**

Shapiro–Wilk W test for normal data

Variable	Obs	W	V	z	Prob>z
Var7_Q3	**317**	**0.93089**	**15.462**	**6.445**	**0.00000**

11.6 Appendix 6. Regression Analysis Summary

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	317
				F(8, 308)	=	18.52
Model	190.289773	8	23.7862217	Prob > F	=	0.0000
Residual	395.527261	308	1.28417942	R-squared	=	0.3248
				Adj R-squared	=	0.3073
Total	585.817035	316	1.85385138	Root MSE	=	1.1332

Var3_Q1	Coefficient	Std. err.	t	P>|t|	[95% conf.	interval]
Var3_Q2	.22546	.0523086	4.31	0.000	.1225325	.3283875
Var3_Q3	.0875314	.0559293	1.57	0.119	-.0225205	.1975833
Var4_Q1	.0317171	.0699222	0.45	0.650	-.1058684	.1693027
Var4_Q2	.0519084	.063344	0.82	0.413	-.0727332	.1765501
Var4_Q3	.2643149	.0577574	4.58	0.000	.1506658	.3779639
Var1_Q1	.0210373	.0480773	0.44	0.662	-.0735643	.1156388
Var1_Q2	.1334382	.05886	2.27	0.024	.0176196	.2492567
Var1_Q3	.0101275	.0635586	0.16	0.874	-.1149365	.1351915
_cons	.9769202	.3902845	2.50	0.013	.2089589	1.744882

11.7 Appendix 7. Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) Results for Multicollinearity Test

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
Var1_Q3	1.78	0.562214
Var4_Q2	1.77	0.564424
Var1_Q2	1.72	0.580956
Var4_Q1	1.66	0.603604
Var3_Q3	1.50	0.666427
Var4_Q3	1.40	0.716152
Var1_Q1	1.35	0.743222
Var3_Q2	1.34	0.747883
Mean VIF	1.56	

11.8 Appendix 8. Descriptive Statistics for the observed variables

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Var1_Q1	317	5.088328	1.538048	1	7
Var1_Q2	317	5.148265	1.420946	1	7
Var1_Q3	317	5.154574	1.337656	1	7
Var3_Q1	317	5.369085	1.361562	1	7
Var3_Q2	317	5.037855	1.409221	1	7
Var3_Q3	317	5.18612	1.396219	1	7
Var4_Q1	317	5.51735	1.173487	1	7
Var4_Q2	317	5.416404	1.339557	1	7
Var4_Q3	317	5.675079	1.304245	1	7
Var6_Q1	317	4.731861	1.67276	1	7
Var6_Q2	317	5.309148	1.483777	1	7
Var6_Q3	317	4.170347	1.830475	1	7
Var7_Q1	317	5.690852	1.284897	1	7
Var7_Q2	317	5.334385	1.47184	1	7
Var7_Q3	317	5.504732	1.320772	1	7

11.9 Appendix 9. Detailed Results of the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) Analysis

```
Endogenous variables
  Measurement: Var1_Q1 Var1_Q2 Var1_Q3 Var3_Q1 Var3_Q2 Var3_Q3 Var4_Q1 Var4_Q2 Var4_Q3 Var6_Q1 Var6_Q2 Var6_Q3 Var7_Q1 Var7_Q2
               Var7_Q3
  Latent:      Exclusivity Authenticity ConsumerLoyalty BrandTrust

Exogenous variables
  Latent: Interaction

Fitting target model:
Iteration 0:  Log likelihood = -7619.7829
Iteration 1:  Log likelihood = -7600.3099
Iteration 2:  Log likelihood = -7590.0465
Iteration 3:  Log likelihood = -7589.3537
Iteration 4:  Log likelihood = -7589.3481
Iteration 5:  Log likelihood = -7589.3481

Structural equation model                       Number of obs = 317
Estimation method: ml

Log likelihood = -7589.3481

 ( 1)  [Var3_Q1]Exclusivity = 1
 ( 2)  [Var4_Q1]Authenticity = 1
 ( 3)  [Var6_Q1]ConsumerLoyalty = 1
 ( 4)  [Var7_Q1]BrandTrust = 1
 ( 5)  [Var1_Q1]Interaction = 1
```

11.9 Appendix 9. (continued)

		OIM				
	Coefficient	std. err.	z	P>|z|	[95% conf.	interval]
Structural						
Exclusivity						
Interaction	.7654288	.1095343	6.99	0.000	.5507455	.980112
Authenticity						
Interaction	.6173312	.0923625	6.68	0.000	.436304	.7983585
ConsumerLoyalty						
Exclusivity	.7906092	.2117112	3.73	0.000	.3756628	1.205555
BrandTrust	.3873033	.1521611	2.55	0.011	.089073	.6855335
BrandTrust						
Exclusivity	.563752	.1715029	3.29	0.001	.2276124	.8998915
Authenticity	.4572292	.160155	2.85	0.004	.1433312	.7711272
Measurement						
Var1_Q1						
Interaction	1	(constrained)				
_cons	5.088328	.086249	59.00	0.000	4.919283	5.257373
Var1_Q2						
Interaction	1.266102	.1475097	8.58	0.000	.976988	1.555216
_cons	5.148265	.0796823	64.61	0.000	4.992091	5.304439
Var1_Q3						
Interaction	1.25206	.1474154	8.49	0.000	.9631313	1.540989
_cons	5.154574	.0750116	68.72	0.000	5.007554	5.301594
Var3_Q1						
Exclusivity	1	(constrained)				
_cons	5.369085	.0763522	70.32	0.000	5.219438	5.518733
Var3_Q2						
Exclusivity	.9896696	.1254784	7.89	0.000	.7437364	1.235603
_cons	5.037855	.0790248	63.75	0.000	4.882969	5.192741
Var3_Q3						
Exclusivity	1.155669	.1340245	8.62	0.000	.8929858	1.418352
_cons	5.18612	.0782957	66.24	0.000	5.032663	5.339577
Var4_Q1						
Authenticity	1	(constrained)				
_cons	5.51735	.0658055	83.84	0.000	5.388374	5.646327
Var4_Q2						
Authenticity	1.237796	.1075926	11.50	0.000	1.026918	1.448674
_cons	5.416404	.0751183	72.11	0.000	5.269175	5.563633
Var4_Q3						
Authenticity	.9455589	.1022367	9.25	0.000	.7451787	1.145939
_cons	5.675079	.073138	77.59	0.000	5.531731	5.818427
Var6_Q1						
ConsumerLoyalty	1	(constrained)				
_cons	4.731861	.0938033	50.44	0.000	4.54801	4.915712
Var6_Q2						
ConsumerLoyalty	.8002963	.0906607	8.83	0.000	.6226046	.977988
_cons	5.309148	.0832057	63.81	0.000	5.146068	5.472228
Var6_Q3						
ConsumerLoyalty	.8199182	.0972139	8.43	0.000	.6293824	1.010454
_cons	4.170347	.1026474	40.63	0.000	3.969162	4.371532
Var7_Q1						
BrandTrust	1	(constrained)				
_cons	5.690852	.0720531	78.98	0.000	5.54963	5.832073
Var7_Q2						
BrandTrust	1.033585	.0867554	11.91	0.000	.863547	1.203622
_cons	5.334385	.0825363	64.63	0.000	5.172617	5.496153
Var7_Q3						
BrandTrust	1.094757	.0763521	14.34	0.000	.9451095	1.244404
_cons	5.504732	.0740649	74.32	0.000	5.359567	5.649896
var(e.Var1_Q1)	1.656125	.1474996			1.390857	1.971986
var(e.Var1_Q2)	.8873964	.1034292			.7061665	1.115137
var(e.Var1_Q3)	.6831787	.0903543			.5271789	.8853411
var(e.Var3_Q1)	1.207028	.110667			1.008497	1.444642
var(e.Var3_Q2)	1.351839	.1254476			1.12703	1.621491
var(e.Var3_Q3)	1.08721	.1099694			.8916938	1.325595
var(e.Var4_Q1)	.6715052	.0707643			.5461957	.8255634
var(e.Var4_Q2)	.7143831	.0894784			.5588766	.913159
var(e.Var4_Q3)	1.068738	.0984262			.8922352	1.280157
var(e.Var6_Q1)	1.309939	.1696298			1.016307	1.688406
var(e.Var6_Q2)	1.247155	.1322675			1.013085	1.535306
var(e.Var6_Q3)	2.345543	.2178351			1.955197	2.813818
var(e.Var7_Q1)	.6474135	.0708917			.5223665	.802395
var(e.Var7_Q2)	1.092958	.1053145			.9048654	1.320149
var(e.Var7_Q3)	.542435	.0703773			.4206394	.6994962
var(e.Exclusivity)	.2296844	.0656994			.1311149	.4023565
var(e.Authenticity)	.4336901	.0774057			.305672	.6153232
var(e.ConsumerLoyalty)	.5610108	.1431335			.3402513	.9250018
var(e.BrandTrust)	.3780316	.065847			.2686968	.5318554
var(Interaction)	.7020036	.1491007			.462967	1.064458
cov(e.Exclusivity,e.Authenticity)	.1920192	.0479015	4.01	0.000	.0981341	.2859044

LR test of model vs. saturated: chi2(**83**) = **198.42** Prob > chi2 = **0.0000**

.

.

11.10 Appendix 10. SEM Model Fit Indicators

Fit statistic	Value	Description
Likelihood ratio		
chi2_ms(**83**)	**198.417**	model vs. saturated
p > chi2	**0.000**	
chi2_bs(**105**)	**1798.890**	baseline vs. saturated
p > chi2	**0.000**	
Population error		
RMSEA	**0.066**	Root mean squared error of approximation
90% CI, lower bound	**0.055**	
upper bound	**0.078**	
pclose	**0.012**	Probability RMSEA <= 0.05
Information criteria		
AIC	**15282.696**	Akaike's information criterion
BIC	**15478.159**	Bayesian information criterion
Baseline comparison		
CFI	**0.932**	Comparative fit index
TLI	**0.914**	Tucker–Lewis index
Size of residuals		
SRMR	**0.053**	Standardized root mean squared residual
CD	**0.836**	Coefficient of determination

11.11 Appendix 11. Factor Analysis Results and Loadings

```
. factor Var1_Q1 Var1_Q2 Var1_Q3, factors(1)
(obs=317)

Factor analysis/correlation                      Number of obs    =        317
    Method: principal factors                    Retained factors =          1
    Rotation: (unrotated)                        Number of params =          3

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
      Factor | Eigenvalue   Difference        Proportion   Cumulative
-------------+----------------------------------------------------------------
    Factor1 |      1.29295      1.38483            1.3048       1.3048
    Factor2 |     -0.09188      0.11830           -0.0927       1.2121
    Factor3 |     -0.21017            .           -0.2121       1.0000
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
    LR test: independent vs. saturated:  chi2(3)  =  213.62 Prob>chi2 = 0.0000

Factor loadings (pattern matrix) and unique variances

-------------------------------------
    Variable | Factor1 | Uniqueness
-------------+---------+-------------
      Var1_Q1 |  0.5236 |     0.7258
      Var1_Q2 |  0.7211 |     0.4800
      Var1_Q3 |  0.7063 |     0.5012
-------------------------------------

. factor Var3_Q1 Var3_Q2 Var3_Q3, factors(1)
(obs=317)

Factor analysis/correlation                      Number of obs    =        317
    Method: principal factors                    Retained factors =          1
    Rotation: (unrotated)                        Number of params =          3

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
      Factor | Eigenvalue   Difference        Proportion   Cumulative
-------------+----------------------------------------------------------------
    Factor1 |      1.05359      1.19092            1.4719       1.4719
    Factor2 |     -0.13733      0.06315           -0.1919       1.2801
    Factor3 |     -0.20048            .           -0.2801       1.0000
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
    LR test: independent vs. saturated:  chi2(3)  =  143.48 Prob>chi2 = 0.0000

Factor loadings (pattern matrix) and unique variances

-------------------------------------
    Variable | Factor1 | Uniqueness
-------------+---------+-------------
      Var3_Q1 |  0.5646 |     0.6812
      Var3_Q2 |  0.6294 |     0.6039
      Var3_Q3 |  0.5820 |     0.6613
-------------------------------------

. factor Var4_Q1 Var4_Q2 Var4_Q3, factors(1)
(obs=317)

Factor analysis/correlation                      Number of obs    =        317
    Method: principal factors                    Retained factors =          1
    Rotation: (unrotated)                        Number of params =          3

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
      Factor | Eigenvalue   Difference        Proportion   Cumulative
-------------+----------------------------------------------------------------
    Factor1 |      1.30411      1.40761            1.3162       1.3162
    Factor2 |     -0.10349      0.10628           -0.1044       1.2117
    Factor3 |     -0.20978            .           -0.2117       1.0000
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
    LR test: independent vs. saturated:  chi2(3)  =  213.77 Prob>chi2 = 0.0000

Factor loadings (pattern matrix) and unique variances

-------------------------------------
    Variable | Factor1 | Uniqueness
-------------+---------+-------------
      Var4_Q1 |  0.6710 |     0.5498
      Var4_Q2 |  0.7206 |     0.4807
      Var4_Q3 |  0.5784 |     0.6654
-------------------------------------

. factor Var6_Q1 Var6_Q2 Var6_Q3, factors(1)
(obs=317)

Factor analysis/correlation                      Number of obs    =        317
    Method: principal factors                    Retained factors =          1
    Rotation: (unrotated)                        Number of params =          3

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
      Factor | Eigenvalue   Difference        Proportion   Cumulative
-------------+----------------------------------------------------------------
    Factor1 |      1.09154      1.16453            1.3959       1.3959
    Factor2 |     -0.07299      0.16359           -0.0933       1.3025
    Factor3 |     -0.23658            .           -0.3025       1.0000
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
    LR test: independent vs. saturated:  chi2(3)  =  156.83 Prob>chi2 = 0.0000

Factor loadings (pattern matrix) and unique variances

-------------------------------------
    Variable | Factor1 | Uniqueness
-------------+---------+-------------
      Var6_Q1 |  0.6842 |     0.5319
      Var6_Q2 |  0.5554 |     0.6916
      Var6_Q3 |  0.5613 |     0.6850
-------------------------------------

. factor Var7_Q1 Var7_Q2 Var7_Q3, factors(1)
(obs=317)

Factor analysis/correlation                      Number of obs    =        317
    Method: principal factors                    Retained factors =          1
    Rotation: (unrotated)                        Number of params =          3

------------------------------------------------------------------------------
      Factor | Eigenvalue   Difference        Proportion   Cumulative
-------------+----------------------------------------------------------------
    Factor1 |      1.63063      1.73346            1.2105       1.2105
    Factor2 |     -0.10283      0.07792           -0.0763       1.1342
    Factor3 |     -0.18075            .           -0.1342       1.0000
------------------------------------------------------------------------------
    LR test: independent vs. saturated:  chi2(3)  =  326.04 Prob>chi2 = 0.0000

Factor loadings (pattern matrix) and unique variances

-------------------------------------
    Variable | Factor1 | Uniqueness
-------------+---------+-------------
      Var7_Q1 |  0.7449 |     0.4451
      Var7_Q2 |  0.6726 |     0.5476
      Var7_Q3 |  0.7895 |     0.3767
-------------------------------------
```

11.12 Appendix 12. Cronbach's Alpha Results for Scale Reliability

```
. alpha Var3_Q1 Var3_Q2 Var3_Q3

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

Average interitem covariance:     .7843476
Number of items in the scale:            3
Scale reliability coefficient:      0.6726

. alpha Var1_Q1 Var1_Q2 Var1_Q3

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

Average interitem covariance:     .9496366
Number of items in the scale:            3
Scale reliability coefficient:      0.7199

.
. alpha Var4_Q1 Var4_Q2 Var4_Q3

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

Average interitem covariance:     .7783612
Number of items in the scale:            3
Scale reliability coefficient:      0.7341

.
. alpha Var6_Q1 Var6_Q2 Var6_Q3

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

Average interitem covariance:     1.128759
Number of items in the scale:            3
Scale reliability coefficient:      0.6718

.
. alpha Var7_Q1 Var7_Q2 Var7_Q3

Test scale = mean(unstandardized items)

Average interitem covariance:     1.077776
Number of items in the scale:            3
Scale reliability coefficient:      0.8064
```

11.13 Appendix 13. Questionnaire Items and Sources

Construct	Questions	Questões	Reference	Scale Type
Exclusivity	1. Content of X brand's social media is the newest information. 2. X brand's social media offers a customized information search. 3.Using X brand's social media makes me feel part of an exclusive, trendy community.	1. O conteúdo das redes sociais da marca X é a informação mais recente. 2. As redes sociais da marca X oferecem uma pesquisa de informação personalizada. 3. Utilizar as redes sociais da marca X faz-me sentir parte de uma comunidade exclusiva e na moda.	Kumar, V., Khan, I., Fatma, M., & Singh, A. (2022). Engaging luxury brand consumers on social media. Journal of Consumer Marketing, 39(1), 121–132. https://doi.org/10.1108/JCM-10-2020-4175	Likert 1-7
Authenticity	1. The brand possesses a clear philosophy that guides the brand's promise. 2. The brand knows exactly what it stands for and does not promise anything which contradicts its essence and character. 3. Considering its brand promise, the brand does not pretend to be someone else.	1. A marca possui uma filosofia clara que orienta a promessa da marca. 2. A marca sabe exatamente o que representa e não promete nada que contradiga a sua essência e o seu carácter. 3. Tendo em conta a sua promessa de marca, a marca não pretende ser outra pessoa.	Ghorbanzadeh, D., Abdullaev, D., Chandra, T., Abdelsamie Allam, E. A., & Abbas, M. (2024). Enhancing brand experience and brand authenticity through octomodal mental imagery: the moderating role of social presence. Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics. https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-04-2024-0456	Likert 1-7
Interaction	1. X brand's social media enable information-sharing with others. 2. Conversation or opinion exchange with others is possible through X brand's social media 3. It is easy to provide my opinion through X brand's social media.	1. As redes sociais da marca X permitem a partilha de informações com outros. 2. A conversa ou a troca de opiniões com outros é possível através das redes sociais da marca X 3. É fácil dar a minha opinião através das redes sociais da marca X.	Godey, B., Manthiou, A., Pederzoli, D., Rokka, J., Aiello, G., Donvito, R., & Singh, R. (2016). Social media marketing efforts of luxury brands: Influence on brand equity and consumer behavior. Journal of Business Research, 69(12), 5833–5841. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.04.181 S0148296316304325. (n.d.).	Likert 1-7
Purchase Intention	1. I have strong possibility to purchase Luxury Brand X's product 2. I'm likely to purchase Luxury Brand X's product 3. I have high intention to purchase Luxury Brand X's product	1. Tenho fortes possibilidades de comprar o produto da marca de luxo X 2. É provável que eu compre o produto da marca de luxo X 3. Tenho uma elevada intenção de comprar o produto da marca de luxo X	Hung, K. peng, Chen, A. H., Peng, N., Hackley, C., Tiwsakul, R. A., & Chou, C. lun. (2011). Antecedents of luxury brand purchase intention. Journal of Product and Brand Management, 20(6), 457–467. https://doi.org/10.1108/10610421111166603	Likert 1-7
Consumer Loyalty	1. I am willing to make small sacrifices in order to keep using the products of this brand 2. I would be willing to postpone my purchase if the product of this brand were temporarily unavailable 3. I am so happy with this brand that I no longer feel the need to watch out for other alternative luxury brands	1. Estou disposto a fazer pequenos sacrifícios para continuar a utilizar os produtos desta marca 2. Estaria disposto a adiar a minha compra se o produto desta marca estivesse temporariamente indisponível 3. Estou tão satisfeita com esta marca que já não sinto necessidade de estar atenta a outras marcas de luxo alternativas	Nyadzayo, M. W., Johnson, L. W., & Rossi, M. (2020). Drivers and outcomes of brand engagement in self-concept for luxury fashion brands. Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management, 24(4), 589–609. https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-05-2018-0070 S0148296316304325. (n.d.).	Likert 1-7
Customization	1. It is possible to search for customised information on brand X's social media 2. Brand X's social media provide customised services 3. Brand X's social media provide lively feed information I am interested in	1. É possível procurar informações personalizadas nas redes sociais da marca X 2. As redes sociais da marca X oferecem serviços personalizados 3. As redes sociais da marca X fornecem informações de feed animadas que me interessam	Cheung, M. L., Pires, G. D., Rosenberger, P. J., & de Oliveira, M. J. (2021). Driving COBRAs: the power of social media marketing. Marketing Intelligence and Planning, 39(3), 361–376. https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-11-2019-0583	Likert 1-7
Brand Trust	1. I trust in the [brand] 2. I rely on the [brand] 3. The [brand] conveys confidence to me	1. Confio na [marca] 2. Dependo da [marca] 3. A [marca] transmite-me confiança	Martínez-Cevallos, D., Alguacil, M., Calabuig, F., & Duclos-Bastías, D. (2024). Brand perception and its relationships to satisfaction with a virtual sporting event. International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSMS-09-2023-0186	Likert 1-7

Note: Customization and Purchase Intention were included in the initial questionnaire but excluded from the final analysis.