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WHEN CONSUMERS RESHAPE LUXURY BRANDING: THE MATCH OF  
LUXURY WITH SUSTAINABILITY AND STREETWEAR

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*To my beloved family and Andrea,  
who taught me to honour my commitments  
with passion, integrity, and kindness.*

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## **Abstract – Italiano**

Negli ultimi anni, nuove tendenze hanno impattato sul mercato dell'alto di gamma. Ad esempio, molte aziende del lusso hanno implementato pratiche di sostenibilità; il boom degli influencer ha cambiato le strategie pubblicitarie; il fenomeno della sharing economy ha influito sulla diffusione del second-hand e lo streetwear è diventato la nuova esclusività. Le tendenze sopra citate, sono in contrasto con la tradizionale concezione di marchio di lusso descritto come concetto statico e delimitato da attributi connessi con prestigio, bisogno superfluo, ricchezza ed elitarismo.

Tuttavia, l'incompatibilità del lusso con le tendenze emergenti sembra scomparire se il brand di lusso è definito in accordo con la prospettiva customer-centric che interpreta i marchi di lusso attraverso i consumatori e come questi lo sperimentano. Sfruttando la visione incentrata sul cliente, infatti, le nuove tendenze sono il frutto della concettualizzazione di lusso di Millennials e membri della Generazione Z. I consumatori più giovani sono diversi da quelli tradizionali per esigenze, gusti e comportamenti di consumo. Promuovono nuove strategie per la gestione del marchio di lusso che includono l'integrazione della sostenibilità e l'approccio allo streetwear come pratiche cruciali.

Così, questa raccolta di documenti si propone di analizzare le sfide emergenti per la gestione del marchio di lusso proponendo due articoli su lusso e sostenibilità e il terzo sul fenomeno streetwear.

Il primo articolo è una revisione strutturata della letteratura che ha l'obiettivo di studiare l'impatto della sostenibilità sulla letteratura della gestione del marchio di lusso. Lo studio consiste in un'analisi bibliometrica, seguita da una content analysis di 177 articoli peer-reviewed estratti da Web of Science e Scopus e pubblicati dal 2009 al 2022.

L'indagine ha dimostrato che il numero di articoli focalizzati su lusso e sostenibilità sta crescendo, specialmente dopo la pandemia, con molti autori che lavorano regolarmente sull'argomento.

Gli articoli di peer-reviewed sono principalmente studi quantitativi (sondaggi o esperimenti) che si focalizzano su beni di lusso personali e il settore del luxury hospitality.

Inoltre, attraverso l'applicazione del topic dendogram, l'articolo ha identificato tre cluster che rappresentano gli stream di ricerca relativi alla sostenibilità nel mercato del lusso: innovazione del modello di business, pratiche sostenibili per i dipendenti, consumo sostenibile nel mercato del lusso.

Il secondo studio, facendo leva sulle future linee di ricerca emerse dalla literature review, mira a studiare fino a che punto le imprese del lusso sia sostenibili, indagando come i marchi di lusso contribuiscano efficacemente al benessere della collettività integrando la sostenibilità nei modelli di business. Il framework di riferimento utilizzato è l'Integrated CSR framework, che basato sulla teoria degli stakeholder viene applicato per analizzare il bilancio di sostenibilità di 20 marchi di lusso.

I risultati suggeriscono quali pratiche di CSR le aziende del lusso dovrebbero impegnarsi a migliorare. Da un lato, i manager del lusso dovrebbero estendere l'utilizzo di materie prime e processi produttivi sostenibili a più di una singola capsule-collection. D'altra parte, le imprese del lusso dovrebbero migliorare la sostenibilità dell'intera supply chain per garantire che i fornitori rispettino i principi di sostenibilità sociale, ambientale ed economica.

Infine, il terzo articolo si concentra su una altra tendenza che ha fortemente plasmato il mercato del lusso: lo streetwear. Infatti, il numero di co-branding tra marchi di lusso e streetwear brand è aumentato vertiginosamente durante gli ultimi anni. La letteratura rivela che le collaborazioni non gestite in modo appropriato concorrono alla diluizione del marchio di lusso. Questo sembra essere il caso delle collaborazioni tra lusso e streetwear, considerando che i concetti di lusso e streetwear hanno radici diverse.

Tuttavia, la prospettiva customer-centric del lusso, ci permette di ipotizzare che i prodotti di co-branded tra lusso e streetwear abbiano un impatto positivo sul valore percepito dai consumatori. Tali collaborazioni sono, infatti, in linea con la concettualizzazione di lusso delle giovani generazioni di consumatori.

Pertanto, utilizzando PLS-SEM su 246 risposte di Millennials e membri della Generazione Z, la nostra analisi verifica l'impatto della collaborazione tra lusso e streetwear sulla customer-brand equity che rappresenta il valore del brand percepito dai consumatori.

I risultati dimostrano ad accademici e professionisti che lo streetwear è un'efficace strategia di marketing per attirare le più giovani generazioni di consumatori di lusso senza incorrere nel rischio della brand dilution.

*Keywords: luxury brand, sustainability, streetwear, customer-centric perspective*

## **Abstract – Inglese**

Recently, new trends have affected the luxury market. For example, many luxury companies are implementing sustainability practices; the boom in influencers has changed the ways of advertising; the sharing economy phenomenon has produced second-hand luxury, and streetwear has become the new exclusivity. The above trends seem to contrast with the traditional concept of luxury brands limited to static and predetermined attributes such as prestige, superfluous, wealth and elitism.

However, the incompatibility of luxury with the emerging trends seems to disappear if the luxury brand is defined under the customer-centric perspective that interprets luxury brands through consumers and how they experience them.

Taking advantage of the customer-centric vision, the new trends in the luxury market result from the luxury conceptualisation of Millennials and members of Generation Z.

The younger consumers are different from the traditional ones regarding needs, tastes and consumption behaviour. They promote new strategies for managing luxury branding that include the integration of sustainability and the approach to streetwear as crucial practices.

Thus, this collection of papers aims to deepen the emerging trends challenging luxury brand management by proposing two articles about luxury and sustainability and the third one about the streetwear phenomenon.

The first article is a structured review to explore the impact of sustainability on luxury brand management literature. In this endeavour, the author conducted a bibliometric and content analysis of 177 peer-reviewed articles extracted by Web of Science and Scopus and published from 2009 to 2022.

The investigation showed that the literature in this field is growing, especially after the pandemic, with many authors regularly working on the topic.

Peer review articles are mainly quantitative studies (surveys or experiments) that involve personal luxury goods and luxury hospitality markets.

The topic dendrogram has identified three clusters representing the stream of research about sustainability in the luxury market: sustainable practices for luxury

companies' employees, sustainable consumption in the luxury market, and business model innovation.

Then, leveraging on the future research agenda that emerged from the first paper, the second study aims to cover the gap in integrated sustainable practices by investigating how luxury brands effectively contribute to well-being by integrating sustainability into business models. In this endeavour, the integrated CSR framework developed on the stakeholder theory is applied to 20 luxury brand companies' non-financial disclosure to support our understanding of how companies incorporate sustainability into their strategy and goals at the corporate level.

The results suggest CSR practices that luxury companies need to improve. On the one hand, luxury brand managers must focus on using sustainable raw materials and production processes for more than a single capsule collection. On the other hand, another future challenge consists of improving the sustainability of the entire supply chain to ensure that suppliers respect social, environmental, and economic sustainability principles.

Finally, the third article focuses on streetwear, which has increased its relevance considering the number of co-brandings with streetwear and the growth of sales of streetwear products among luxury brand consumers. The literature reveals that collaborations not managed appropriately run into brand dilution that reduces consistency and favourable brand associations. This seems to be the case in collaborations between luxury and streetwear, considering that the concepts have different roots.

However, following the customer-centric perspective of luxury, we hypothesised that co-branded products between luxury and streetwear positively impact consumers' perceived value. Such collaborations are, in fact, in line with the luxury conceptualisation of the younger generations of consumers.

Thus, using PLS-SEM on 246 responses from Millennials and Generation Z members, our analysis tests the impact of collaboration between luxury and streetwear on customer-based brand equity.

The findings inform academics and practitioners that streetwear is an effective marketing strategy for appealing to the youngest generations of luxury consumers without diluting the brands in question.

*Keywords: luxury brand, sustainability, streetwear, customer-centric perspective*

# 1. The evolution of luxury: from unnecessary to customer-centric

*“Luxury is about pleasing yourself, not dressing  
for other people.”*

*- Marc Jacobs, designer*

## 1.1 Introduction

Two years after Covid 19, the revenue of luxury companies quickly returns to its pre-crisis level. After experiencing a collapse in profitability by 22% in 2020, the luxury market value reached the threshold of 1.14 billion euros in 2021, which means a growth of 15% compared to 2020 (D'Arpizio et al., 2020).

Although the pandemic did not hurt the long-term profitability of luxury companies, it acted as an accelerator for some key trends that were struggling to take off.

Most of these trends started years ago, driven by younger generations of luxury brand consumers, Millennials and Generation Z.

The new generations of consumers are profoundly different from the previous ones (Batat, 2019; Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau, 2020; Rolling et al., 2021). They do not interpret luxury brands according to the product-centric viewpoint using a static and predetermined series of attributes. On the contrary, they consider luxury a customer-centric and dynamic concept that changes over time to meet customers' individuality and personality (Seo and Buchanan-Oliver, 2019).

This paper collection explores the emerging trends apparently in contrast with traditional or "old" conceptualisation of the luxury brand (Miller and Mills, 2012),

but in line with young consumers' interpretation of the luxury brand concept This endeavour proposes two articles about sustainability in the luxury market and the third about streetwear co-branded collaborations with luxury brands.

The current chapter introduces the general topic area before going into detail with the free-standing articles.

First, this chapter discusses the temporal-spatial dependence of the concept of luxury and how it changes through the epochs. Second, the author deepens the definition of a luxury brand, comparing the product-centric perspective with the customer-centric one. Finally, by leveraging the customer-centric perspective, this chapter introduces the approach of luxury companies to sustainability and streetwear.

## **1.2 The definition of luxury: a timeline**

An ultimate and complete consensus on the definition of "luxury" does not exist (Dubois and Duquesne, 1993; Kapferer, 1997; Roberts, 2018; Kim, 2019; Rathi *et al.*, 2022).

The etymology of luxury itself reveals that the luxury concept has contradictory meanings. It derives from "**luxus**", a Latin word that embodies contrast connotations. On the one hand, *luxus* is related to negative terms such as "excess", "intemperance", and "debauchery". On the other hand, it means "pomp" and "magnificence", resulting in a positive connotation (Cristini *et al.*, 2017).

According to Kapferer (1995) the word luxury contains the Latin root "**lux**", which means light. In this case, the author connects the word luxury to "glitter", an attribute of materials like gold, gems and brilliants that refers to their visibility. Another author suggests luxury derives from the Greek word **λοξός** (*loxos*), which means "to grow in a non-straight way", and highlights how luxury is "askew" concerning the ordinary (Calefato, 2003). Thus, the etymology of luxury confirms its dual nature, ranging from a negative value of excessive sumptuousness, dissipation, superfluous and moral decay to a positive one related to its character of dream (Kapferer, 2015).

Moreover, the luxury's etymology, together with a deep analysis of the literature, reveals that luxury is not a modern age phenomenon as many people think. On the



contrary, the concept of luxury is ancient, and it has changed throughout historical epochs.

Going back to the **Magna Grecia**, condemnation of luxury frequently recurs as it was related to spending made to fill a need refined that exceeds the necessary and socially accepted consumption. Thus, spending on luxury considered unnecessary things were a symbol of corruption. Plato, a Greek philosopher, living during the classical period, is well known for condemning luxury in "The Republic" (380 – 370 B.C). The author considered luxury as all pleasures originating from those things that are not strictly necessary and move men away from virtues. Therefore, his work emerged that luxury was a source of laziness and political instability that led to a bloated and unhealthy state.

Even during the **Roman empire**, luxury was considered a matter of political morality that favoured incitement to individual desires and potentially threatened public order. Romans extended their influence throughout the world and carried in their homeland all kinds of new pleasures and delights such as gold, olive oil and honey from Spain, fresh figs and scented cedar wood from Africa, wines made from herbal infusions and woollen tunics from northern Gaul, dogs, and bathtubs from Britain. Abandonment to sensual pleasures was a debilitating regression that led to a general weakening and deprived Roman soldiers of their legendary prowess. The Romans were so concerned about the effects of excessive enjoyment in their society that they passed "sanctuary laws", such as Lex Oppia 215 B.C., Lex Orchia 181 B.C., and Lex Iulia 90 B.C to reduce the unnecessary expenses of the aristocracy. Seneca, Cicero, Juvenal, and Horace publicly condemned customs corruption and supported the favours of a frugal, simple, natural life. We can understand the idea of luxury supported in the Roman empire epoch from Trimalchio, the main character of "Satyricon" (I sec A.C), the famous novel of Petronio. He describes the concept of luxury with the following sentence: "Credite mihi: assem habeas, assem valeas; habes, habebis" (English translation: "Believe me: who has any money, worth a penny; what you have, so you will be considered.").

Then, in the **Middle Ages**, the Church influenced the meaning of luxury.

On the one hand, the ecclesiastics condemned using luxury goods such as apparel or spices because they were guilty pleasures. On the another, the Church became

the leading consumer of luxury. The opulence of gold inside the place of worship, like in the Vatican State, represented God's magnificence.

Starting from the **Renaissance**, the increasing trade across Europe and Asia let luxury be seen as an economic advantage. Thus, luxury lost its negative connotations and returned to its profane sphere, synonymous with beauty, pomp, and immense wealth. From the Renaissance and in the following centuries enjoying pleasures was not perceived as guilt.

On the contrary, the emerging lifestyles were characterized by hedonism, the search for pleasure and the joy of living. The court of King Louis XIV, best known as Sun King (le Roi Soleil), is a tangible example of luxury at that time. For its court, the French King transformed Versailles—a dilapidated royal hunting building 12 miles from Paris—into a showroom of the best in the French luxury industry. Luxury became the absolutist policy of the French king that weakened the aristocracy's political role.

During the Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century, luxury enforced its role as an element of distinction among social classes. In these epochs, the upper bourgeoisie aspired to possess luxury goods to manifest its social affirmation and emulate the aristocracy's lifestyle. As tensions between the classes increased, many philosophers, economists and sociologists entered the debate about the meaning of luxury with a different view. **John Locke** (1632-1704) expressed a negative view of luxury because it caused the “discomfort of the mind, due to the desire for an absent good”, while **David Hume** (1711-1776) asserted that “luxury is only pernicious when it ceases to benefit society”.

Then **Adam Smith** (1723 – 1790), considered the father of modern economics, intervened in the luxury debate. He agreed that opulence and freedom were two of the most important achievement and that happiness had to do with “comfort of body and peace of mind”.

Moreover, he highlighted that luxury aspiration is not harmful for the society because “the growth and improvement” experienced by everyone led to a good collective economic state, creating employment for many and a wealth state.

In his exploration of **late-nineteenth-century** American culture, **Thorstein Veblen** (1857- 1929) discovered that money had become the foundation of social regard

and self-respect. As a result, it is no longer enough for the leisure class to have wealth, but people belonging to the upper class must demonstrate their wealthier conditions through consumption and waste of goods. In other words, buying luxury goods became a symbol of ostentation that permitted the upper classes to be identified. In his book “The Theory of the Leisure Class”, Veblen first talked about the conspicuous consumption of purchasing goods or services to display one's wealth and social status (Veblen, 1899).

The debate about the luxury concept has not been over in the **Twenty-first Century**. *Jean Baudrillard* (1929 -2007), in his book titled “Pour Une critique de l'économie politique du signe”, published in 1979, explained that the driving force of capitalist society is the consumption. The French sociologist revealed that when people buy goods look for one of the following types of values: functional, economic, symbolic, and sign value. Among them, the sign value describes the luxury purchase as it indicates the importance accorded to goods due to the social status awarded by the owner, rather than functional value and utility derived from their primary use (Baudrillard Jean, 1979).

Even *Pierre Bourdieu* (1930-2002), a French philosopher and sociologist who focused on power dynamics in society, offered his vision of luxury. His work titled “Critique sociale du jugement” (1979) theorised that luxury consumption is driven by the need to show social status. Moreover, he agreed that people couldn't develop the “taste” of luxury because it is innate in those who belong to a higher class.

In the **Twenty-first Century**, starting from the mature market such as Europe and the US, the meaning of luxury takes on a new connotation. In a world where everyone can buy everything, luxury is more than the materialistic possession of goods that shows off people's wealthy condition. On the contrary, luxury became a means of self-expression (Lipovetsky and Roux, 2003). In recent times, most authors agree that luxury meaning depends on customers' individual and personalised perceptions (Armitage, Roberts and Bishop, 2016; Banister, Roper and Potavanich, 2020; Wang, 2021).

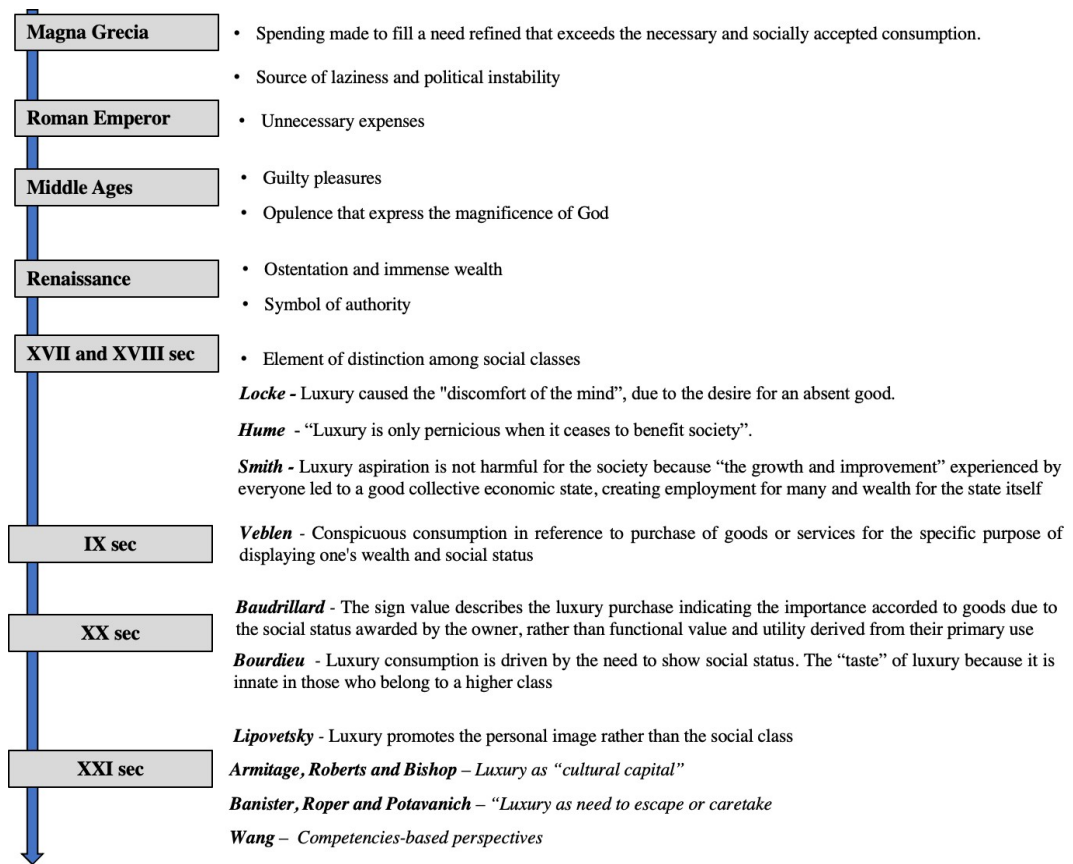
For example, Banister, Roper and Potavanich (2020) developed a framework to illustrate the practices for an everyday luxury moving from the product-centric perspective to consumers' interpretation of luxury.

Holmqvist, Diaz Ruiz and Peñaloza (2020) describe luxury as individuals' or groups' need to escape or caretake in rare, exciting moments that contrast with mundane life. Wang (2021) introduces an alternative framework of luxury consumption focused on the relevance of customer experience. The author explains that consumers who consume luxury in addition to status-seeking *"are also intrinsically motivated to spend resources and time learning and enjoying the unique features of luxury products (e.g., their exquisite design and workmanship, sensory appeal and distinct socio-cultural narratives)"*.

Moreover, in recent years Armitage, Roberts and Bishop (2016) have introduced a new stream of research called *Critical Luxury Studies*. They suggest that researchers draw on anthropological consumer-focused approaches to provide a more comprehensive conceptualisation of luxury perceptions and vicissitudes. According to Armitage and Roberts (2016), luxury avoids an objective definition since it depends on cultural, social and individual contexts and meanings. Hence, the concept of luxury varies through time and space and across economic, social, and cultural contexts.

Key points related to the luxury definition through the historical epochs are summarized in Figure 1.

Figure 1- The timeline of the luxury concept



Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)

### 1.3 The definition of luxury brands: from the product-centric to the consumer-centric perspective

Brands are vital resources for every company since, unlike tangible assets, brands cannot be copied, duplicated, or replaced. Thus, for a company to succeed in building strong brands, it needs to be clear how the strategy to manage the brand in the target market.

The role of brand management is even more crucial in the luxury brand market than in any other industry since, for luxury brands is easier to incur brand dilution that compromises their positioning in the market.

Thus, most authors attempt to put boundaries on the luxury brand definition aiming to support companies to implement a careful and well-developed luxury strategy in line with the luxury rules. What emerges is luxury brand's purpose is defined

according to two opposite points of view: the product-centric perspective of luxury brands and the customer-centric one. In the following sub-section, the chapter deepens the meaning of the luxury brand according to the above-mentioned opposed perspectives.

### ***1.3.1 Product-centric perspective: luxury brand as a pre-determined concept***

In the endeavour to deepen the definition of the luxury brand, most authors focused on the **product-centric perspective**, also called the "old luxury" (Miller and Mills, 2012), as it is the most traditional point of view about luxury branding. The product-perspective explains the luxury brand using a series of attributes that differentiate luxury brands from the "ordinary ones" (Seo and Buchanan-Oliver, 2019). These attributes that make the concept of luxury stable and pre-determined can be collected from different studies. According to Chevalier and Mazzalovo (2012), luxury brands have in common three main characteristics: artistic, international, and hand-craft dimensions. While the artistic dimension plays a key role "in the overall impression" of luxury brands, the international dimension refers to luxury brands' need to be globally recognisable. Then, the hand-craft dimension is related to the importance of human capacity in realizing a high-end product.

Fionda and Moore (2009) include marketing communications, luxury environment, and culture as essential brand luxury ingredients. Instead, Keller (2009) uses brand symbols, secondary associations, brand architecture, competition, and trademarks to refine the dimensions of luxury brands further.

However, Dubois, Laurent and Czellar (2001) are the authors who contribute to the literature with a more comprehensive definition of luxury brand attributes by sorting out six main traits of luxury brands that are: (1) high price, (2) excellent quality, (3) aesthetics and polysensuality, (4) scarcity and uniqueness, (5) heritage (6) superfluosity.

In conclusion, according to the product-centric perspective, functional and practical values affect consumers' decision-making when buying luxury brands (Dubois, Laurent and Czellar, 2001). Functional value is related to usability, quality, and uniqueness, while utilitarian value regards excellence and craftsmanship (Kapferer, 1997).

### ***1.3.2 Consumer-centric perspective: luxury brand as a dynamic concept***

The **product-centric perspective** is not the only way to define luxury brands.

According to other authors, luxury brands are defined by more than a limited number of attributes. They argue that in addition to a functional and utilitarian component, the definition of a luxury brand includes social and personalised meanings that consumers attach to it (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004).

Based on this emerging approach, luxury is better understood as a need for self-gratification and the pursuit of unique personal experiences, making individuality triumph over belonging (Lipovetsky and Roux, 2003; Kapferer and Bastien, 2009). The authors, in line with the conceptualisation mentioned above of the luxury brand, suggest it is necessary to consider defining luxury brands from the customer's perspective by considering the subjective and personal interpretation of luxury in addition to the product's perspective that emphasises the product's features (Berthon *et al.*, 2009; Tynan, McKechnie and Chhuon, 2010; Roper *et al.*, 2013; Seo and Buchanan-Oliver, 2019). Specifically, Berthon *et al.* (2009) argue that defining luxury involves going beyond material content. According to the author, the definition of luxury focuses on its holistic dimension adding collective and subjective spheres to the material one aiming at capturing connections among individuals, items, and brands. Even Roper *et al.* (2013), , in their examination of luxury brands, do not focus on product characteristics but on consumers' emotional and cultural dimensions, illustrating how consumers define the meaning of luxury for themselves. Finally Tynan, McKechnie and Chhuon (2010) demonstrated that luxury increasingly pertains to the consumer experience. Consequently, in line with the spatial-temporal dependence of the luxury concept (Armitage and Roberts; 2016), even luxury brand is a dynamic concept (Mortelmans; 2005) that takes on different roles depending on the era and consumer expectations.

Table I -At two opposite ends of the luxury brand perspective

Luxury perspective	Concepts, themes, and theoretical sources
Brand product-centric perspective	Functional value (Berthon et al., 2009); utilitarian value (Tynan et al., 2010); old luxe (Miller & Mills, 2012); brand DNA; craftsmanship; heritage; quality; high price, etc. (Dubois, Laurent, & Czellar, 2001; Fionda & Moore, 2009; Kapferer & Bastien, 2009; Keller, 2009).
Social meanings	Symbolic/expressive (Tynan et al., 2010); symbolic luxury (Berthon et al., 2009); social meaning (Miller & Mills, 2012); status symbol (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009); perfectionism effect and conspicuousness (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004); social construction of luxury (Roper et al., 2013).
Brand consumer-centric perspective	Personalised meanings
	Experiential/hedonic (Tynan et al., 2010); experiential luxury (Berthon et al., 2009); individual meaning (Miller & Mills, 2012); luxury experiences; personal pleasures, 'my luxury' (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009); consumer-centric and luxury brand value co-creation (Roper et al., 2013; Tynan et al., 2010).

Source: Seo & Buchanan-Oliver; 2019

#### 1.4 The Consumer-centric perspective to explain the emerging trends of the luxury market

As already anticipated in the incipit of this chapter, the luxury market has recently experienced new **trends** that seem opposed to traditional rules of luxury: streetwear collaborations became the new exclusivity; rental and second-hand consumption is growing among luxury consumers, and sustainability is now placed on luxury companies' agenda. Moreover, Rathi *et al.* (2022) underlined as “*themes like experiential luxury* (Batat, 2020), *hedonic escapism* (Holmqvist, Diaz Ruiz and Peñaloza, 2020), *liquid luxury* (Bardhi, Eckhardt and Samsioe, 2020) *have gained the spotlight*” ... and “*the attempts to capture new meanings and formulate definitions are ongoing*”.

All these new trends and themes related to luxury branding can be explained by dropping the idea that the luxury brand should be exclusively interpreted through static and pre-determined attributes according to the product-centric perspective.



On the contrary, a clear understanding of the luxury brand requests to go beyond the traditional luxury attributes by considering how consumers themselves reshape the luxury brand conceptualisation.

Thus, the interpretation of luxury brands as a tool to contribute to the collective well-being or to express customer value through co-branded streetwear products is in line with the concept of luxury brands indicated by the new luxury brand consumers, Millennials and Generation Z. These targets of consumers, that will represent 45% of luxury consumers in 2025, are profoundly different from traditional generations of buyers in terms of their needs, tastes and purchase behaviours (Karatzas, Kapoulas and Priporas, 2019; Arli, Gil and van Esch, 2020). Millennials are more visionary and interested in experiences rather than the possession of luxury (Gentina, Shrum and Lowrey, 2016; Mundel, Huddleston and Vodermeier, 2017). At the same time, Generation Z consumers look for products that fit their personalities. They ask luxury brands to evolve and innovate in terms of their product offerings, communication, distribution and online and offline engagement strategies (Karatzas, Kapoulas and Priporas, 2019; D'Arpizio *et al.*, 2020). The singular characteristics of Millennials and Generation Z, with their relevance in number and power of influence, pose a challenge to luxury companies, which must learn how to meet their new expectations by combining individual interpretation traits of luxury with the traditional luxury attributes. Millennials and Generation Z consumers promote new strategies for managing luxury branding that include the integration of sustainability and the approach to streetwear as crucial practices.

The following subsections offer a deep understating of sustainability and streetwear co-branding applied to luxury brand management.

#### ***1.4.1 Luxury and sustainability***

Sustainability has assumed increasing relevance since the twenty-first century when implementing more sustainable practices became one of the leading business organisation concerns. In fact, from being a generalised practice, CSR acts as a crucial source of competitive advantage in the increasingly competitive and globalised economic world. Porter and Kramer (2006) defined CSR as "*much more*

*than a cost, obligation, or charitable act – CSR can be a source of opportunity, innovation, and competitive advantage".*

When looking at the luxury market, companies and consumers first perceive a mismatch between luxury and sustainability (Kunz, May and Schmidt, 2020). Luxury was related to showing well-being, high price, hedonism, prestige, and status, while sustainability is linked to opposite concepts such as environmental protection and community well-being (Achabou and Dekhili, 2013).

However, in a few years, even luxury companies understood they could not ignore sustainability. First, luxury companies' commitment to sustainability increased to accomplish national standards concerning the environment, people, and governance. Then the approach to CSR is driven by younger luxury brand consumers' expectations. They request that luxury brand companies offer more sustainable products from recycled materials and sustainable processes.

Recently, the pandemic has accelerated consumers' awareness and concerns about the impact of goods and services on the environment (Internet Retailing, 2022). Notably, after the Covid 19, the need for sustainability spread wider into the general population of luxury, including the elderly generations of consumers. In fact, the "Millennials State of Mind" has pervaded the luxury market involving all consumers. Consequently, efforts of luxury brands toward sustainability increased. Internet Retailing (2022) reveals that in December 2020, 75% of the Top fashion luxury brands adopted sustainable materials, used recyclable packaging, and reduced carbon emissions and growing the use of renewable energy.

Moreover, the consumers' attention to pursuing sustainable practices drives the reusing and reselling of luxury items, especially apparel, jewellery, accessories, furniture, cars, and object d'art. As McKinsey (2021) shows, 28% of luxury consumers decided to buy pre-owned products instead of new items to contribute to sustainability.

Although the data mentioned above show the increasing companies' commitment to CSR, sustainability remains a thorny issue in the luxury market (D'Arpizio and Levato, 2021). In fact, matching the values of sustainability with luxury brand attributes is still a real challenge for luxury brand companies that request further investigation.

### 1.4.2 *Luxury and streetwear*

When thinking about the streetwear phenomenon in the luxury market, the first case that comes to our mind is the collaboration between Louis Vuitton and Supreme. The products resulting from the collaborations were presented for the Fall Winter 2017 fashion Show in Paris. On that occasion, Louis Vuitton brought on the catwalk items entirely in contrast with its traditional offerings. The collection comprised hoodies, t-shirt sneakers, and snapbacks, in addition to iconic products revised according to streetwear rules, such as the iconic Louis Vuitton trunks that were coloured red to recall the Supreme logo (Ostillio and Barberi, 2021).

*Figure 2-Co-branded products between Louis Vuitton e Supreme*



Besides being the first streetwear-luxury collaboration, the co-branded between Louis Vuitton and Supreme was probably the most important considering the media impact and the revenues generated. The launch of the co-branded collection produced more than 100,000 posts on Instagram in just one day. Moreover, the products available in limited-edition at Louis Vuitton stores became the object of desire of consumers (Tofanelli, 2018). In some cases, the scarcity of products generated a situation close to mass hysteria with long lines outside the shops, called in jargon "camp out", and resales carried out directly outside the store.

After Louis Vuitton, other luxury brands implemented collaborations with streetwear brands. Fendi-Fila, Tiffany-Supreme, Dior-Stüssy, Chanel-Pharrel Williams, and Prada-Adidas are some of the most famous collaborations. According to D'Arpizio and Levato (2018), the results of luxury and streetwear collaborations represented 30% of the luxury goods consumption in 2017. Sneakers were the best-seller generating 3.5 billion dollars in revenue. Nevertheless, the

luxury market registered a growth in sales of rubber slides (+50%), t-shirts (+25%) and down jackets (+15%). Then PricewaterhouseCoopers (2019) estimated that the value of the streetwear market was about \$185 billion in 2019, with consistent growth in the following five years.

In 2020 the pandemic had curb sales of luxury products, including streetwear (World, 2022). However, the fall in sales did not last long since streetwear returned to dominate wardrobes and the retailers of luxury brands in 2021.

Co-branding is not a new practice in the luxury market. For example, some “griffes” like Chanel, Versace, Balmain, and Kenzo collaborated with H&M to create a limited edition of products (Mrad, Farah and Haddad, 2019). Even Gucci managed a co-branded alliance with Fiat 500 (Alexander and Contreras, 2016) .

In some cases, collaborations between luxury and fast fashion brands diluted the brand when consumers do not perceive the fit among brands, negatively impacting the luxury brand value. This seems to be the case with co-branded products between luxury and streetwear. In fact, leveraging the product-centric perspective, luxury brands mean heritage, social status, and preciousness, while streetwear derives from hop-pop music and skateboarders' culture.

Considering the relevance of the topic, some authors have recently focused on it. For example McKelvey (2020) consider the collaborations between luxury and streetwear as a trend. Then Pedeliento *et al.* (2021) by discussing the Off-White case support that streetwear is the new luxury paradigm. Other generally talked about streetwear contamination of luxury affirming that partnerships with streetwear brands sometimes changed luxury DNA in favour of streetwear. However, a study that attempts to explain the impact of streetwear on luxury brand value still no exist. Thus, besides the excellent sales performance, what is the impact of collaboration between luxury and streetwear on luxury brand values? Can the collaborations lead to brand dilution?

### **1.5 Final remarks**

The exploration of the definition of luxury reveals as the concept of luxury is not static and explained by predetermined attributes.

On the contrary, moving from the product-centric perspective to the customer-centric one, the meaning of a luxury brand is dynamic and shaped by consumers and how they experience the brand itself.

Thus, leveraging this emerging perspective, it is possible to match the luxury brand with new themes and trends that seem entirely opposed to traditional luxury.

These new trends indeed respond to the emerging expectations of Millennials and Gen Z consumers that are different from the previous ones. The new generations of consumers ask luxury brands to innovate to include sustainability and streetwear in their business model.

Thus, this papers collection explores sustainability and the streetwear phenomenon in luxury to shed light on new strategies for marketing luxury brands.

## **2. Sustainability in the global luxury markets: a structured review**

*“Buy less. Choose well. Make it last.”*

- Vivienne Westwood, renowned luxury fashion designer

### **2.1 Background**

Nowadays, sustainability is experiencing a boost in relevance. The call for actions to fulfil the sustainable development goals (SDGs) has become a priority for companies within all business sectors (Latapí Agudelo, Jóhannsdóttir and Davídsdóttir, 2019).

On the one hand, national and international institutions such as United Nations, European Commission and EPA require global companies and small and medium competitive enterprises to comply with environmental, ethical, and governance regulations. On the other, all stakeholders encourage companies' efforts toward sustainable practices (Visser 2011; Freeman, Martin and Parmar 2020). Notably, consumers are more aware that their behaviour might affect the society they live in. Considering the luxury market, the approach to sustainability is more complex than in other industries since "luxury" and "sustainability" seem to have nothing in common (Janssen, Vanhamme and Leblanc, 2017; Costa Pinto et al., 2019). Some authors have found the "CSR-luxury paradox" expression to indicate the apparent

mismatch between luxury and sustainability. The idea of luxury has been traditionally linked to excess, hedonism, and ostentation. In contrast, sustainability is focused on opposite principles, such as altruism, sobriety, ethics, and moderation (Achabou and Dekhili, 2013).

However, in recent times luxury firms have realised they cannot ignore their social and environmental responsibilities (Winston, 2016). Moreover, in a few years, the relevance of sustainability has become evident in the luxury market. As emerged by D'Arpizio *et al.* (2020), luxury companies have enhanced their commitment to sustainability, performing social and environmental sustainability. At the same time, scientific research on the topic has also increased. Considering the large number of authors who contributed to the debate about sustainability in the luxury market, the need to organise the scientific production with a literature review emerged.

## **2.2 Related works and originality**

A literature review is the research methodology that aims to analyse and synthesise the extant literature on a specific field. By representing a summa of prior studies published about a particular topic, literature reviews allow scholars to enter with more awareness and effectiveness in the scientific debate (Huff, 1998) and advance the general knowledge of the explored topic (Kraus, Breier and Dasí-Rodríguez, 2020).

Three systematic literature reviews can be found considering the reviews already published in the luxury market's sustainability field (Table II).

Athwal *et al.* (2019) are the first authors to publish a systematic literature review to deepen the understanding of sustainable luxury. They logically and critically analyse and synthesise 46 peer-reviewed papers, 11 books and 13 proceedings by including studies collected from 2003 to 2018. Results update the framework of "The evolution of sustainable luxury" proposed by Gardetti and Torres (2017). Furthermore, the authors propose potential issues categorised in consumers, organisation, and internationalisation, as the future agenda for studies focused on sustainable luxury. Kunz *et al.* (2020) develop the second stand-alone literature review. The authors conduct a systematic literature review by focusing exclusively

on peer-reviewed articles. They consider 103 papers published from 2001 to 2019 and enrich the study of Athwal *et al.* (2019) with fifteen new documents. Papers are downloaded from diverse databases and then collected into three categories. The first group includes papers on sustainable practices applied to luxury products and brands that pertain to sustainable innovations, strategies to communicate sustainability, sustainable supply chain and harm chain, and the exploration of values connected to sustainability. The second category includes papers that analyse best practices of CSR among luxury brand companies. Then, the third category of papers addresses sustainability, considering its impact on stakeholders (consumers, institutions, and employees).

Finally, the body of research about luxury and sustainability includes the systematic literature review of Shashi *et al.* (2021).

They use bibliometric analysis to synthesise the peer-review articles about circular economy and supply chain in the luxury fashion market. Authors apply various mathematical and statistical techniques to documents such as articles, books, and conference proceedings to figure out future research directions (Paul and Criado, 2020). Looking at the study more in detail, the authors collected 747 papers published from 1987 to 2019 and extracted exclusively from Thomson Reuters Web of Science. Findings contribute to the luxury brand literature by offering the historical development of the sustainable supply chain and an overview of the principal authors and research networks.

Thus, their literature review is different from the previous ones due to the analysis (bibliometric analysis) and the field of application (circular economy and supply chain).

Given the existence of the previous studies, the reasons that support the applicability of a further literature review to explore the relationship between luxury and sustainability are different.

First, the documents collected from the previous literature review do not consider the articles written in recent times when the growing body of study about sustainability is expected.

The pressure exerted by regulation and the pandemic has renewed the sensitivity of people and companies regarding ethics and environmental sustainability by



requesting new studies aiming at analysing and interpreting the ongoing trends (Severo, De Guimarães and Dellarmelin, 2021).

Second, the extant literature provides just one bibliometric analysis about sustainable luxury that covers exclusively articles related to supply chain and circular economy practices in the fashion luxury market (Shashi et al., 2021). A bibliometric study that looks at the global luxury market must still be developed. Authors define the global luxury market as the sum of nine markets in line with the framework proposed by D’Arpizio and Levato (2018).

Finally, as Zupic & Čater (2015) suggest, using bibliometric analysis in management favours objectivity and mitigates researchers' bias. Thus, the authors value an additional literature review on the topic as an effective tool to deepen sustainability in the global luxury market.

Table 1 summarises the main aspects of the published literature reviews. Moreover, it compares previous literature reviews with the one developed in the current article.

*Table II - Systematic literature review about sustainability and luxury*

<b>Authors</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Type of analysis</b>	<b>Fields</b>	<b>Ranking ABS</b>
Athwal N., Wells V., Carrigan M., Henninger C.	2019	Qualitative analysis	Sustainability and luxury	3
Kunz J., May S., Schmidt H.	2020	Qualitative analysis	Sustainability and luxury	No abs
Shashi S., Centobelli P., Cerchione R., Mittal A.	2021	Bibliometric analysis	Supply chain management in luxury fashion market	3
<i>This study</i>	2022	<i>Bibliometric and qualitative analysis</i>	<i>Sustainability and luxury</i>	No abs

*Source: Author’s personal elaboration (2022)*

### 2.3 Methods

Given the above premises, this chapter intends to enrich the current knowledge by performing a bibliometric and content analysis that collects papers published until 2022 related to sustainability in the global luxury market.

In this endeavour, a structured review is performed. According to Massaro, Dumay and Guthrie (2016), a structured review is the research methodology that allows scholars to integrate the literature review with the bibliometric analysis. Some authors agree the structured review enhances the body of research in compliance with the scientific rigour, reliability and replicability of the steps conducted.

Managerial studies suggest five main steps to performing a structured review (Massaro, Dumay and Bagnoli, 2015; Secinaro, Calandra, *et al.*, 2021; Secundo, Del Vecchio and Mele, 2021):

- a) Determine the research questions;
- b) Define the protocol of research;
- c) Identify the articles to include in the analysis;
- d) Write codes to analyse the selected articles, and;
- e) Conduct a critical evaluation and discussion to identify future research and directions.

As this chapter follows all the authors' suggested steps, it starts from the **definition of the research questions**, which in the current study are expressed as follows:

*RQ.1 What is the impact of sustainability on luxury brand literature?*

*RQ.2 What's the focus of the literature on sustainability for luxury brand management?*

*RQ.3 What is the research implication of sustainability for luxury brand management?*

The first research question seeks to determine the "state of the art" of literature on sustainability and its impact upon research topics related to luxury brand management. The second question aims to highlight to what extent the role of sustainability has been studied with reference to the luxury brand management. The

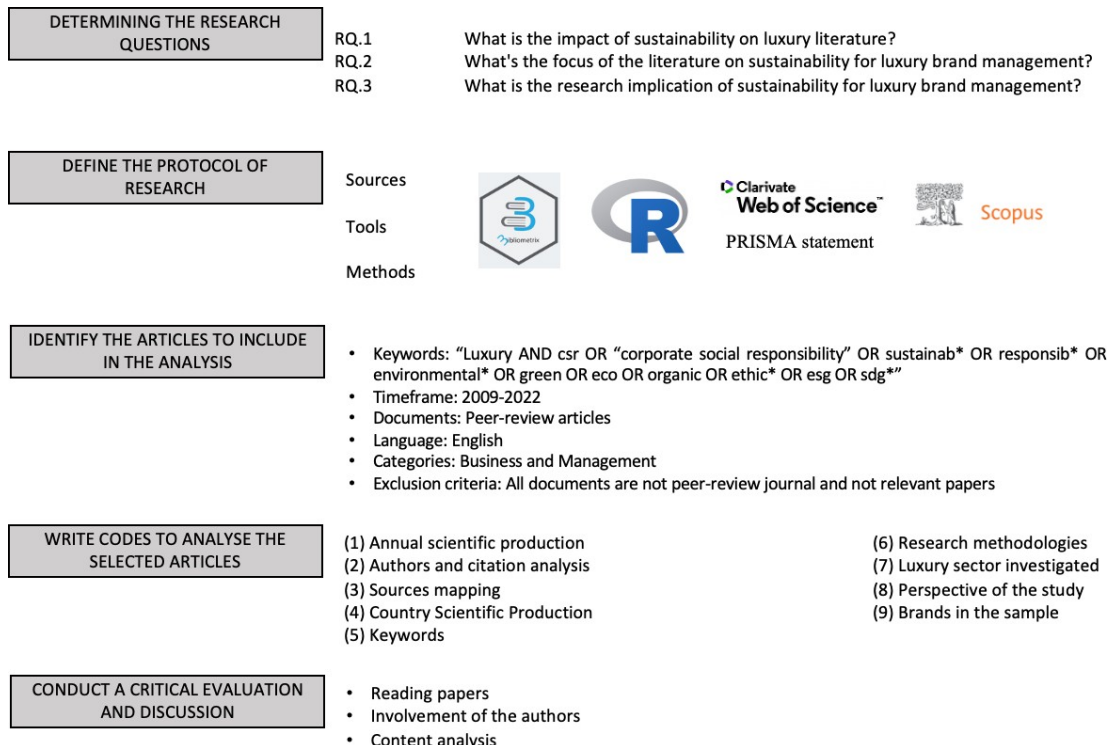
third research question allows researchers to share insights and offer implications in the areas of sustainability for luxury brand management.

As suggested by Kraus, Breier and Dasí-Rodríguez (2020) the research questions are formulated by an interdisciplinary team of the researcher following the opinion of industry experts to ensure a deep understanding of the topic to investigate.

Afterwards, the second phase of the structured review consists of **defining the research protocol**. In this phase, researchers identify the database used as information sources, the methods, and tools to analyse and synthesise the collected documents (Petticrew and Roberts, 2006). Figure 3 summarises and explains all the steps of the research protocol.

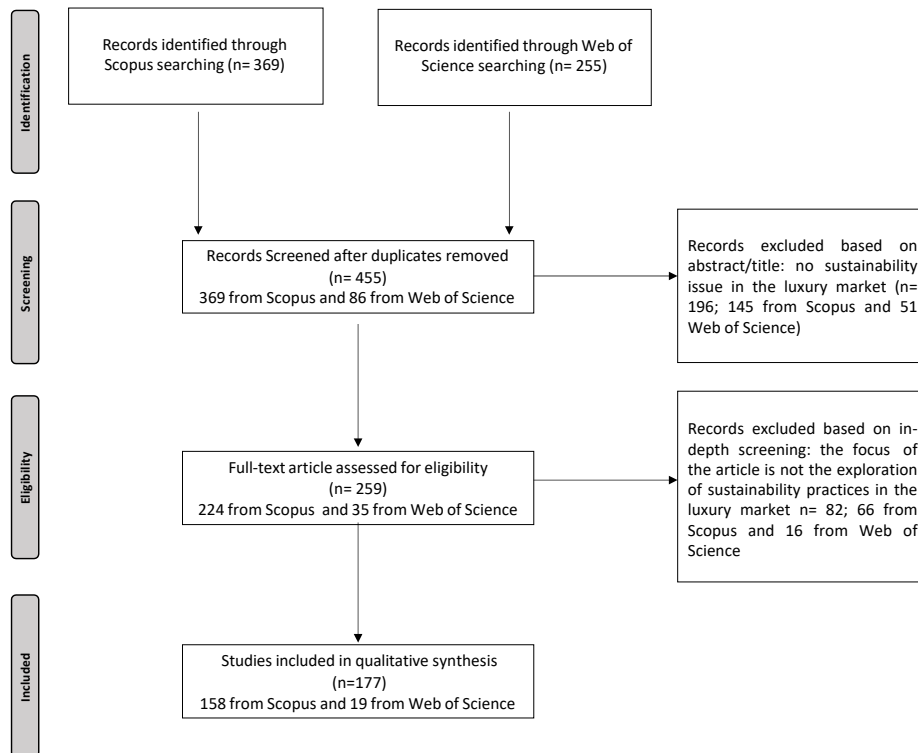
Transparent reporting in a structured review is essential to conduct a reproducible and transparent process. Thus, this study uses the PRISMA statement (Figure 4) to set and develop the reporting strategy as it offers guidelines to guarantee the replicability of the findings (Liberati *et al.*, 2009; Moher *et al.*, 2010).

Figure 3- Step of the research protocol



Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)

Figure 4- PRISMA workflow



Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)

Next, the **third phase** of the structured review aims to specify the articles to analyse in the review. This study formulates the following query for extracting the list of candidate articles that include the selected keyword in the title, summary, or keyword:

*“Luxury AND csr OR “corporate social responsibility” OR sustainab\* OR responsib\* OR environmental\* OR green OR eco OR organic OR “circular econom\*” OR ethic\* OR esg OR sdg\*”.*

The asterisk at the end of the keywords allows different suffixes (e.g., responsib\* means responsibility or responsible).

Following the suggestion of Kraus, Breier and Dasí-Rodríguez (2020) the choice of the keywords arise from the help of researchers who are from different

disciplines and varying degrees of knowledge about the topic. Moreover, the keywords research pays attention to the holistic view of sustainability Cervellon and Shamma (2013) by combining environmental sustainability with social and economic sustainability.

The articles are extracted from two databases: Scopus and Web of Science. While Scopus contains the higher number of papers from more than 20,000 journals, Web of Science is considered the most influential database. It includes papers published exclusively on a selection of prestigious journals that are indexed by the International Scientific Indexing (Vieira and Gomes, 2009). Generally, authors prefer choosing Scopus or Web of Science as their sole citations database due to the overlap among articles extracted (Waltman, 2016). According to Gavel and Iselid (2008) 84% of Web of Science articles are also indexed in Scopus. However, in the case of the current research query, the overlap between Scopus and Web of Science' articles is lower. After comparing the databases extracted by Web of Science and Scopus by using the exact keywords in both databases, the authors calculate an overlap of 68%. Therefore, the author agrees the collection of articles extracted from either database can offer a total number of papers to cover the field of sustainability in the luxury market.

Then the use of the Boolean Operats on the selected databases results in 3,729 entries. At this point the authors refine the research by limiting the results obtained in the specific field of business and management. This filter yields 975 records. Regarding the document type, the current review considers only the peer-reviewed articles by excluding other document types (i.e book chapters, peer reviews editorials). According to Kraus, Breier and Dasí-Rodríguez (2020) only peer-reviewed journals need to be included in the systematic review to maintain the principles of transparency and objectivity. As the same, Kelly et al. (2014) agree to analyse exclusively peer review articles to ensure the inclusion of documents that perform a scientific and well-developed methodology. After the inclusion of peer-review articles as a sole document type, the number of papers to analyse counts 633.

Then authors filter the result once again, considering the language. The authors make sure that all contributions were written in English considering the language

limitations of the authors (Vrontis and Christofi, 2021). At this step, the number of papers reaches the threshold of 624 to become 369 after removing the duplicates. As shown by the PRISMA statement represented in Figure 4, the list of extracted papers is filtered again to remove not relevant documents. Thus, the final papers list includes 177 peer-review articles to analyse. For transparency and replicability, all data were collected on 15 March 2022.

Then the **fourth step** of the structured review deals with writing the codes to analyse the selected articles. In this study, codes were settled as follows:

- (1) Annual scientific production
- (2) Authors and citation analysis
- (3) Analysis of sources
- (4) Country Scientific production
- (5) Luxury sector explored
- (6) Luxury brand involved
- (7) Research methodologies
- (8) Keywords and network analysis

The **last step** of the structured review consists of critically analysing and discussing the findings. The author analysed data with the tool R and its package Bibliometrix (Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017) to perform the quantitative analysis. Then at least two researchers analyse each paper independently in the dataset to find the logical units and enhance the reliability of the findings, as suggested by Secinaro *et al.*, (2020) and Massaro, Dumay and Guthrie (2016). Finally, the article offers the implications and the future research agenda at this phase.

## **2.4 Research finding**

Table III collects critical information on 177 peer-reviewed articles extracted from the Web of Science and Scopus databases and published between January 2009 and March 2022 in 78 different journals

*Table III - General overview of the collected articles*

Main Information	Description	Results
Period	The publication year of each manuscript	2009-2022
Peer-review Articles	The total number of manuscripts	177
Peer-review journal	The frequency distribution of sources as journals	78
Keywords Plus (ID)	The frequency distribution of keywords associated to the manuscript by databases	540
Arthors' Keywords (DE)	The frequency distribution of authors' keywords	576
Authors	The total number of authors	444
Author Appearances	The authors' frequency distribution	528
Authors of single-authored peer-review articles	The number of single authors per articles	11
Authors of multi-authored peer-review articles	The number of authors of multi-authored articles	433
Authors per peer-review articles	The average number of authors in each document	2,51
Co-Authors paper-review articles	The average number of co-authors in each document	2,98
Average citations per peer-review articles	The average number of quotes in each article	18,48

*Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)*

After giving a general overview of the collected articles (Table III), this study deepens the annual scientific production aiming to explore the connection between the annual distribution of papers and important events related to sustainability in the luxury market (Gardetti and Torres, 2017).

### **(1) The annual scientific production**

In the global luxury market, corporate efforts to promote sustainable activities date to the first years of the twenty-first century.

As stated by Gardetti and Torres (2017), since 2003, the commitment to sustainable practices has affected the jewellery companies that increased their efforts in carrying out a more ethical business. Furthermore, since 2006 a series of scandals involving fashion systems with companies accused of harmful behaviour towards employees or the environment, such as animal cruelty or a non-transparent supply chain. As a result, the exploration of sustainability immediately attracts practitioners' attention, enhancing their effort to implement more sustainable measures to meet stakeholders' expectations.

On the contrary, only years later, academics extended the debate of sustainability to the luxury goods market and its consumers by developing a new stream of research that deepens the phenomenon.

Thus, this research considers starting the analysis in 2009 when we find the growth in the number of peer-review articles about the topic. Moreover, as Patagonia and Walmart signed **the Sustainable apparel coalition**, 2009 was a crucial year for sustainability in the luxury market. The Sustainable apparel coalition is a multi-stakeholder non-profit alliance among the leading companies that operate in the apparel industry, aiming to implement an index to measure the environmental impact of their products (Radhakrishnan, 2015).

It represents the first significant effort of luxury companies towards a more sustainable way of conducting their business.

Then, as shown in Figure 5, the research about sustainability in the luxury market registered a peak in 2017. The growth of peer-reviewed publications starting in 2017 is a consequence of the **Modern Slavery Act's** approval on 26th March 2015. Subscribed by the UK Parliament, this law was signed with the aim of the fight against slavery in the UK. It requires all companies to manage a business – or part of their business – in the UK, including England and Wales, to publish an annual slavery and human trafficking statement, which must be approved by their board of directors and posted in a prominent place on their website (Hodkinson *et al.*, 2021). Moreover, in the same period, the research trend was affected by the release of "**The Sustainable Development Goals**" (officially known as 'Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development') by the United Nations organisation. This document includes an intergovernmental set of 17 goals with 169 targets covering a broad range of sustainable development issues. Even if these goals do not affect the companies' business immediately, as the Modern Slavery Act did, they should be a guideline for developing future strategies. Indeed, companies should use the SDGs as a source of inspiration to implement a sustainable marketing plan (Hepner, Chandon and Bakardzhieva, 2020).

Then the number of peer-review papers takes off from 2019 to reach almost 50 peer-review articles published in 2021. This growing trend is the result of many events. First, in 2018, the European Commission published a "**Sustainable Finance**



**Action Plan**" to promote a financial system capable of supporting genuinely sustainable development from an economic, social, and environmental point of view (Zetzsche and Anker-Sørensen, 2022). Then, in December 2019, the 27 member countries of the European Union signed the **Green Deal**, an agreement containing a series of proposals to lead the EU policies on climate, energy, transport, and taxation towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

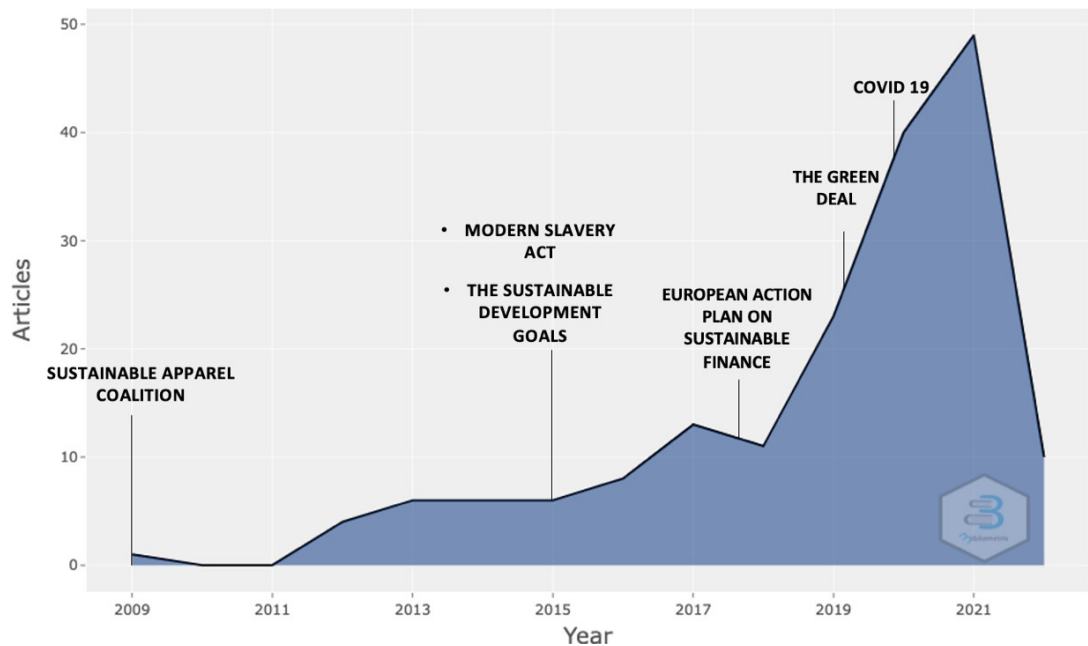
Finally, the current interest in sustainability is affected by Covid 19. The advent of the pandemic provokes a systemic crisis that once again proves the unsustainability of our economic model, which is struggling to restart due to the scarcity of resources.

Consequently, the attention on sustainability increased among institutions and companies that made significant efforts to convert the current business model into a more sustainable manner (D'Arpizio and Levato, 2021).

Looking at March 2022, the number of articles published stands at the same level reached in 2019. Thus, we expect that the growing trend of publications started in 2019 will continue in the following years, giving the researchers new opportunities for publications on luxury and sustainability.

Once the explanation about the annual scientific production is concluded, the study shifts the focus to the authors.

Figure 5 - Annual scientific production



Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)

## (2) Authors and citations analysis

As previously mentioned, this section focuses on the authors by analysing the authors' productivity, the author-level metrics, and the most local cited papers.

Table IV shows the top 20 authors who contributed to the topic. With eight publications, Amatulli C. from the University Aldo Moro in Italy and De Angelis M. from the Luiss University in Italy are the most productive authors. They generally co-authored papers that, through experiments, explore consumers' behaviour to shed light on factors that increase consumers' willingness to buy sustainable luxury products. Then Ko E. from the Yonsei University in Seoul has published six peer-reviewed articles. Her research focuses on sustainability in the luxury fashion market and consumption behaviours.

With five publications, the third most productive author is Septianto F. from the University of Queensland, Australia. The researcher deals with sustainable issues related to the way of advertising sustainability in the luxury market. Looking at other most productive authors including in Table IV, they published from four to five peer-review articles.

In the following subsection, the study identifies the authors' productivity by performing the Lotka's law and the authors' production over time.

*Table IV- Top-twenty authors*

<b>Articles</b>	<b>Author</b>
8	Amatulli C
	De Angelis M
6	Ko E
5	Septianto F
4	Carrigan M
	Cervellon Mc
	Dekhili S
	Jain S
3	Kapferer Jn
	Achabou Ma
	Ali A
	Batat W
	Henninger Ce
	Islam Ju
	Nazir O
	Pino G
	Seo Y
	Valette-Florence P
	Adgzal F
	Athwal N

*Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)*

Lotka (1926) proposed a mathematical law to describe the publication frequency by authors on a specific stream of research.

The mathematical equation for the **Lotka's law** is expressed as:

$$X_n * y_x = C$$

X indicates the number of articles on a specific research topic multiplied by the number of authors publishing (yx).

N and C represent constants estimated by performing the calculation.

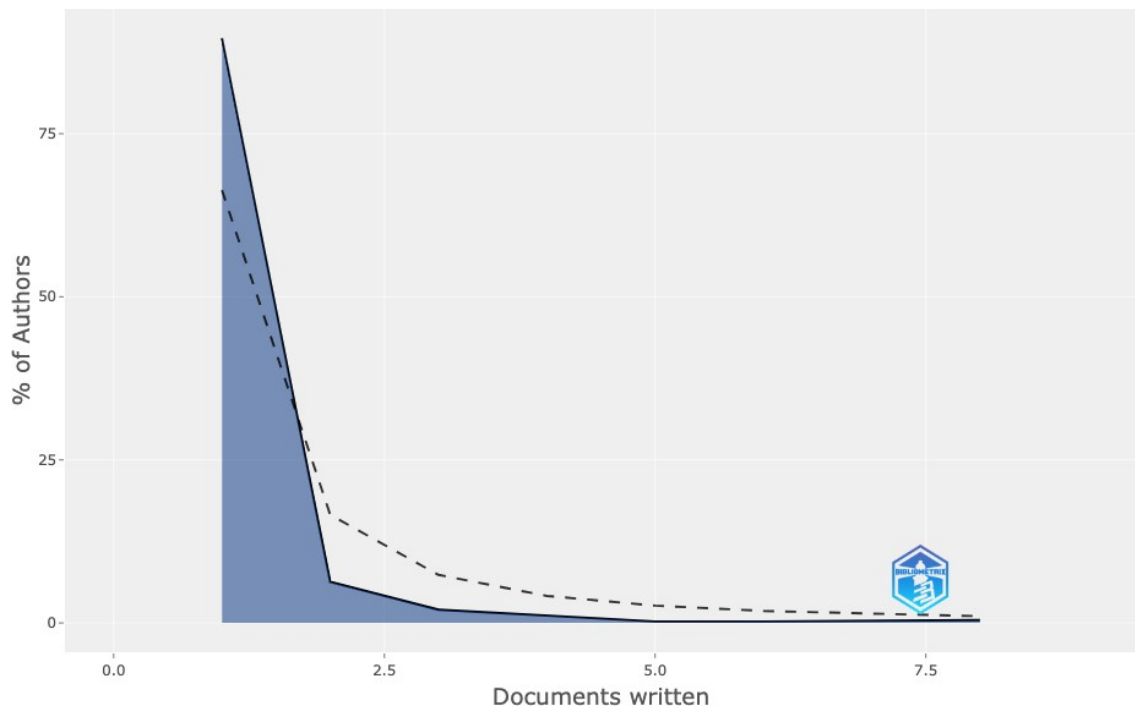
Thus, the Lotka law's equation affirms that the number of authors contributing to research in each period is a fraction of the number who make a single contribution.

Figure 6 shows the result of Lotka's Law calculation for our list of papers. It indicates that about 70% of the authors have contributed to the topic with only their first article.

In contrast, less than 25% of the authors have produced two or more scientific papers.

The many authors that have published a single article about the topic demonstrate that sustainability in the luxury market is attractive and that scientific debate is still open.

*Figure 6 - Lotika's Law*



*Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)*

In addition, to deepen the authors' productivity, this paper introduces Figure 7, which shows the most cited authors' production over time. The red lines represent the authors' timeline, while the bubble indicates the publications. The bubbles' size is proportional to each author's number of articles published, while the colour intensity is proportional to the articles' total citation per year.

The most cited authors found in Table IV, Amatulli C. and De Angelis M. started publishing about sustainability in luxury in 2017. However, they are not the first to

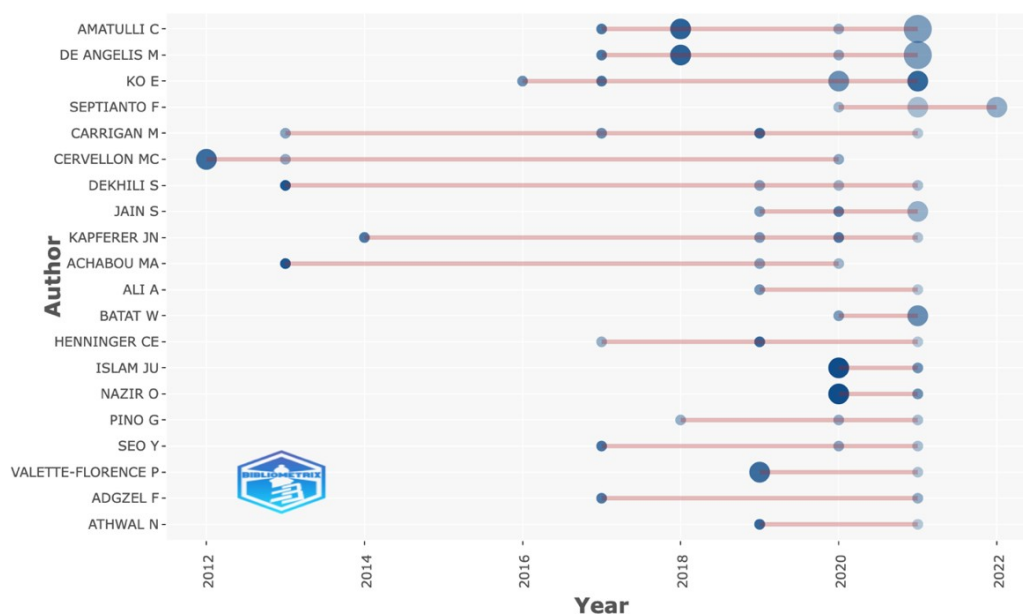
deal with the topic as Cervellon M.C is the first author who produced studies about sustainability and luxury. She started in 2012 with two papers that have collected 11.36 citations per year. Other authors focused on sustainability in the luxury market in the early investigation stage are Carrigan M., Dekhili S., Kapferer JN and Achabou Ma.

As shown by Figure 7 those authors who first dealt with the topic did not work regularly.

On the contrary, after publishing the first paper in 2012, they returned to publishing years later. Since 2018, most authors seem to focus on the topic more regularly, with at least one article per year confirming the increasing interest in sustainability applied to the luxury market.

Once the authors' productivity, the research focuses on the authors' level metrics.

Figure 7 - Top-twenty authors production over time



Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)

Table V collects author-level metrics, including h-index, g-index, m-index and total citations.

The h-index is the most common metric used to evaluate an author's impact on a research topic and compare different researchers' results more objectively. The index is calculated considering the set of the authors' most cited papers and the

number of citations that authors have received in other scientific publications (Saad, 2006). Leveraging the data published by the London School of Economics Secinaro, Dal Mas, *et al.*, (2021) suggests that mature researchers' average h-index on a social science topic value is around 7.6.

Findings display that the 20 most relevant authors dealing with sustainability in the luxury market have an h-index ranging between 2 and 5. Thus, Table 5 demonstrates that a few researchers can be considered mature scientists about the topic. Table IV also provide the new indicators the appear in alternative to the h-index to measure the authors' impact. Egghe (2006) calculated the m-Index by dividing the H-index by the number of years that a scientist has been active. While Schreiber (2008) introduced the g-index that calculates the citation distribution of authors' publications.

These new metrics, confirm the topic of luxury and sustainability authors are facing an expanding research stream.

Table V - Authors' Index

Authors	h_index	g_index	m_index	Total citations
Amatulli C	5	7	0,833	143
De Angelis M	5	7	0,833	143
Ko E	4	5	0,571	133
Cervellon Mc	4	4	0,364	167
Dekhili S	3	4	0,3	168
Jain S	3	4	0,75	53
Kapferer Jn	3	4	0,333	142
Septianto F	2	3	0,667	11
Achabou Ma	3	3	0,3	166
Carrigan M	3	3	0,3	133
Islam Ju	3	3	1	59
Nazir O	3	3	1	59
Pino G	2	3	0,4	26
Seo Y	2	3	0,333	76
Valette-Florence P	2	3	0,5	46
Adgzel F	2	2	0,333	65
Ali A	2	2	0,5	48
Batat W	2	2	0,667	30
Dhanesh Gs	2	2	0,333	22
Donato C	2	2	1	9

Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)

Finally, this section related to authors sorts out who published the most local cited papers to reveal the authors whose contribution is considered relevant by the other researchers (Table VI). Local citations measure the impact of documents in the dataset, in contrast with the global citations that analyse the effect of records in the bibliographic database. Aria and Cuccurullo (2017) suggest leveraging the local sources instead of the global ones because many global citations could come from other disciplines for many documents and, consequently, could be compromised. Achabou and Dekhili (2013) published the most local cited articles in the Journal of Business Research. The authors demonstrate that incorporating recycled materials in luxury goods affects consumer preferences negatively and reveals a specific incompatibility between recycling and luxury.

Then with 35 local citations, we find the article published in the *Journal of Brand Management* by Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau (2014). The peer-review paper reveals that luxury consumers still have ambivalent attitudes. They consider luxury and sustainability somewhat contradictory, especially concerning sustainable development's social and economic harmony.

Another relevant article that received 27 local citations is the one published by De Angelis, Adıgüzel and Amatulli (2017) in the *Journal of Cleaner Production*. The article states that luxury companies need to launch sustainable products that are more like traditional luxury products than models made by green companies. Then Torelli, Monga and Kaikati (2012), in the *Journal of Consumer Research*, stated that the perceived compatibility of luxury brand values with CSR communication is critical in how consumers respond to CSR activities. When consumers perceive something is wrong or a mismatch between actions and luxury brand value, they respond with lower evaluations than if the brand provides no CSR information.

Table V deepens other authors whose contributions received attention in the field of luxury brand management.

Once the authors' explanation is concluded, the study shifts the focus to the sources.



*Table VI - The most local cited papers*

<b>Document</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Local Citations</b>	<b>Global Citations</b>	<b>LC/GC Ratio (%)</b>	<b>Normalised Local Citations</b>	<b>Normalised Global Citations</b>
<b>Achabou Ma, 2013, J Bus Res</b>	2013	53	143	37,06	3,42	2,96
<b>Kapferer Jn, 2014, J Brand Manage</b>	2014	35	89	39,33	5,12	1,43
<b>De Angelis M, 2017, J Clean Prod</b>	2017	27	59	45,76	3,73	2,17
<b>Torelli Cj, 2012, J Consum Res</b>	2012	26	190	13,68	2,74	1,14
<b>Athwal N, 2019, Int J Manage Rev</b>	2019	24	48	50,00	7,56	3,25
<b>Steinhart Y, 2013, J Clean Prod</b>	2013	21	45	46,67	1,35	0,93
<b>Amatulli C, 2018, J Clean Prod</b>	2018	17	50	34,00	4,07	2,57
<b>Han J, 2017, J Bus Res</b>	2017	16	62	25,81	2,21	2,28
<b>Janssen C, 2017, J Bus Res</b>	2017	15	53	28,30	2,07	1,95
<b>Moraes C, 2017, J Bus Ethics</b>	2017	12	43	27,91	1,66	1,58
<b>Dekhili S, 2019, Eur Bus Rev</b>	2019	8	17	47,06	2,52	1,15
<b>Carrigan M, 2013, J Mark Manage</b>	2013	8	42	19,05	0,52	0,87
<b>Kang Kh, 2012, Int J Hosp Manage</b>	2012	8	349	2,29	0,84	2,10
<b>Kapferer Jn, 2020, J Brand Manage</b>	2020	7	30	23,33	6,22	2,96
<b>Arrigo E, 2018, J Retail Consum Serv</b>	2018	7	21	33,33	1,67	1,08
<b>Cervellon Mc, 2013, Int J Mark Res</b>	2013	7	31	22,58	0,45	0,64
<b>Kunz J, 2020, Bus Res</b>	2020	6	9	66,67	5,33	0,89
<b>Chang Dr, 2019, Psychol Mark</b>	2019	6	17	35,29	1,89	1,15
<b>Line Nd, 2016, J Sustainable Tour</b>	2016	6	65	9,23	2,40	1,69
<b>Costa Pinto D, 2019, J Clean Prod</b>	2019	5	11	45,45	1,58	0,74

### (3) Sources

Concerning the sources this article analyses, the top-twenty peer-review journal and the article distribution frequency.

Starting with Table VII, it shows the top 20 academic journals published peer-review papers about sustainability and luxury.

*Table VII - Main twenty peer-review journals on the topic of luxury and sustainability*

Sources	Peer-Review Articles	Abs Star
Journal Of Business Research	13	3
Journal Of Cleaner Production	13	2
Journal Of Global Fashion Marketing	7	1
Journal Of Sustainable Tourism	7	3
International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management	6	2
Journal Of Fashion Marketing and Management	6	1
Journal Of Consumer Marketing	5	1
Journal Of Product and Brand Management	5	1
Psychology And Marketing	5	3
Australasian Marketing Journal	4	1
Business Strategy and The Environment	4	3
Cornell Hospitality Quarterly	4	2
Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	4	1
Journal Of Brand Management	4	2
Journal Of Retailing and Consumer Services	4	2
Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics	3	1
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	3	3
International Journal of Hospitality Management	3	3
Journal Of Services Marketing	3	2
Marketing Intelligence And Planning	3	1

*Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)*

The **Journal of Business Research** and the **Journal of Cleaner production** are the most relevant sources, publishing thirteen articles each. Considering the other journals included in our list, the number of publications about luxury and sustainability ranges from three to seven. They are journals more focused on a specific sector, from fashion to luxury hospitality. For example, with seven peer-reviews articles published each, we find the **Journal of Global Fashion Marketing (JGFM)** and the **Journal of Sustainable Tourism**.

Moreover, Table VII reveals that most journals from 5 to 3 publications are marketing oriented. For example, we find **the Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management, Journal of Product and Brand Management, Psychology and Marketing, and Journal of Brand Management**. This reflects again to what extent sustainability represents a relevant challenge for marketing luxury brands and satisfying the current customer expectations.

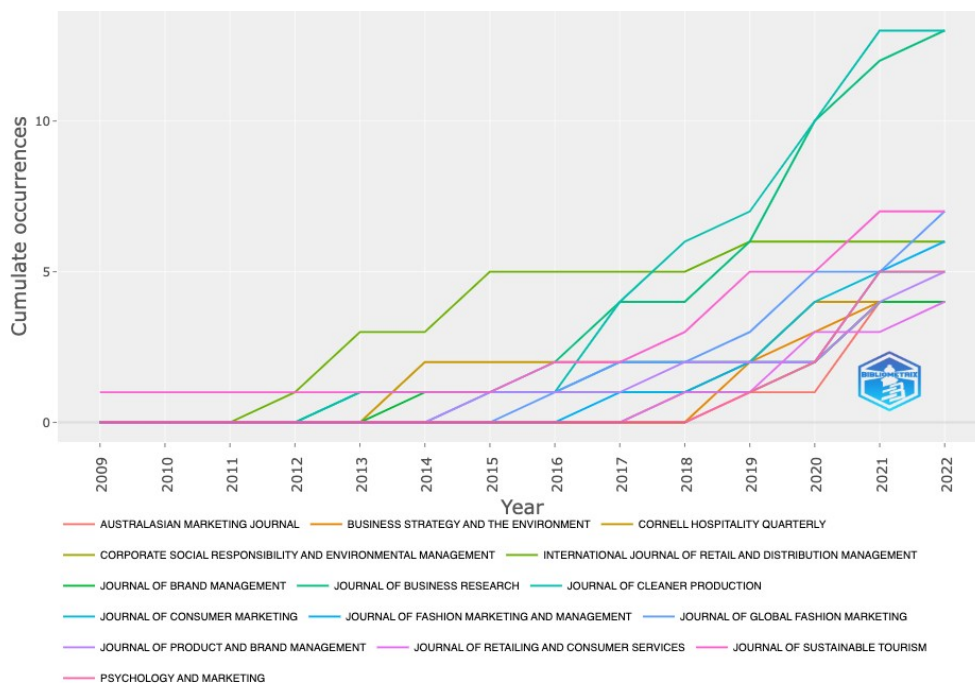
Then Figure 8 shows the articles' distribution in peer-review journals.

The journals show an increasing growth of publications on sustainability and luxury brand management in the last five years (2018-2022).

Thus, the article distribution frequency suggests that authors working on sustainability in the luxury market can find an increasing number of outlets to submit their papers. From those more comprehensive and management-oriented to others more focused on a specific sector or discipline.

The following section analyses the spreading of a research topic about sustainability in the luxury market worldwide.

*Figure 8 - Article distribution frequency*



*Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)*

#### **(4) Countries' scientific production**

This section aims to offer an overview of the countries to highlight the geographies of this research topic. It explores all published articles per country, the total number of citations of the top 20 countries, and the collaboration network. We start this subsection by analysing the total number of published articles.

Table VIII shows the countries that most contribute to exploring sustainability in the luxury market. With 71 peer-reviewed articles published, the US has produced more publications.

Other countries with a relevant number of publications are Italy (42), the UK (41), France (38), India (23), South Korea (20) and China (10). These countries are the most relevant when looking at the luxury brand market as they are the country of origin of most luxury brands.

In contrast, India, South Korea, and China are the new economies where luxury consumption has enormously increased in recent years (Mosca, 2017; D'Arpizio and Levato, 2021).

Moreover, the figure surprisingly displays that Russia, whose population counts a relevant number of luxury consumers, still does not work on sustainability for luxury.

On the contrary, Australia, traditionally a non-luxury-oriented country, has contributed to the issue with ten publications.

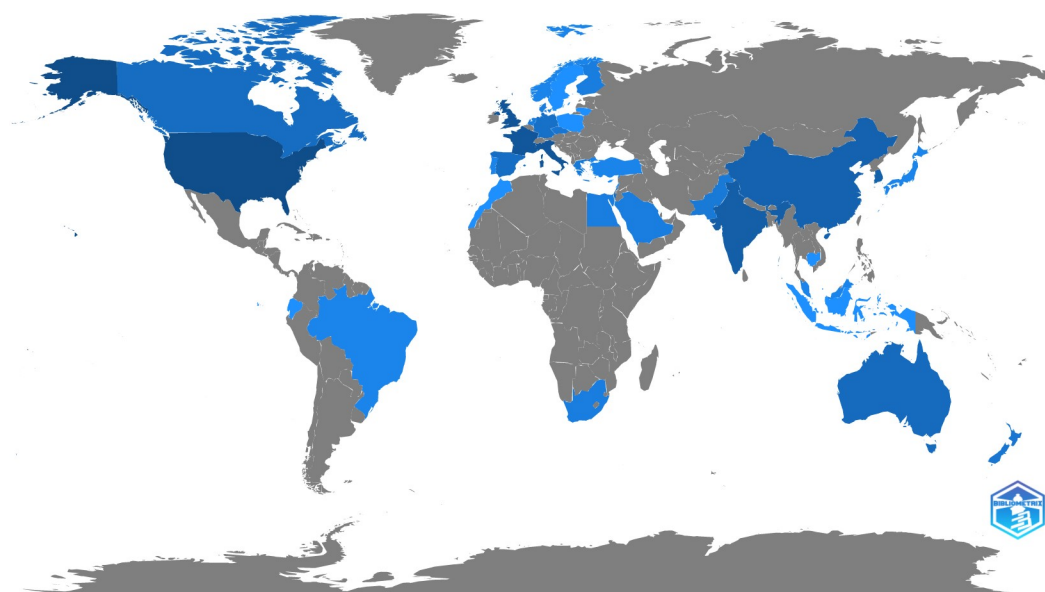
Figure 9 is the graphical representation of Table VIII. When the blue colour is most intense, we find a relevant number of peer-review articles published on sustainability in the luxury market.

*Table VIII - Article distribution frequency*

<b>Country</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<i>Usa</i>	<i>71</i>
<i>Italy</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Uk</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>France</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>India</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>South Korea</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>China</i>	<i>18</i>
Australia	10
Canada	9
Israel	8
Spain	8
Germany	7
Czech Republic	5
New Zealand	5
Greece	4
Monaco	4
Pakistan	4
Singapore	4
Denmark	3
Egypt	3

*Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)*

*Figure 9 - Total number of articles per country*



*Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)*

Then Table IX displays the average citations by countries and highlights that the Us, Korea, and the United Kingdom are the most cited countries, together with France, Italy, and China. This means that those countries with the highest number of articles are the same that registered the maximum number of citations.

*Table IX - Total number of articles per country*

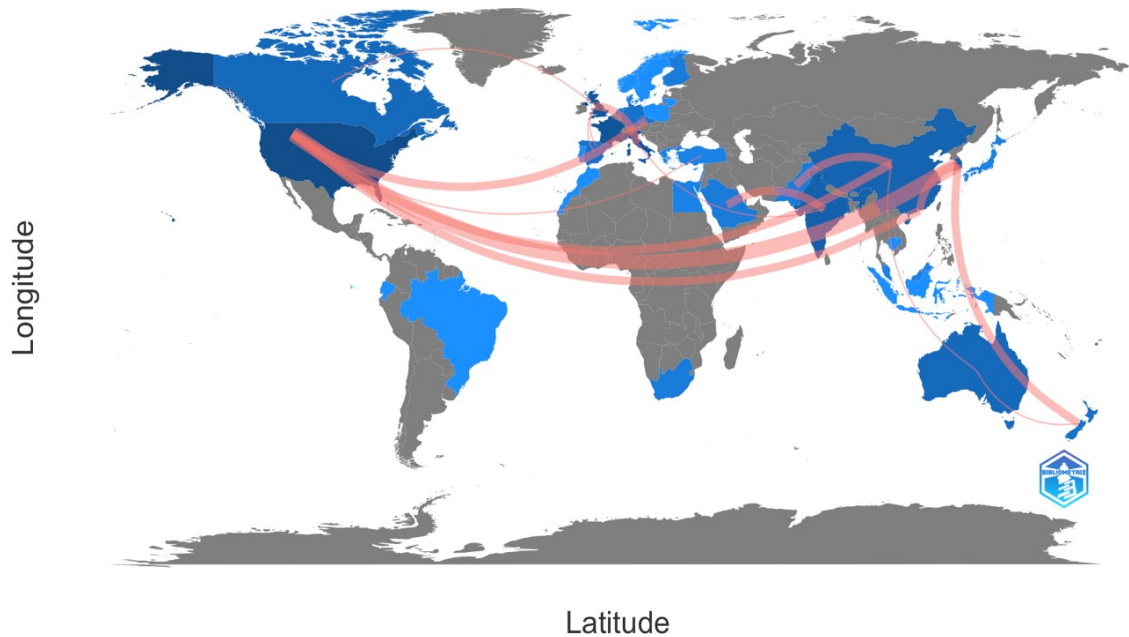
<b>Country</b>	<b>Total Citations</b>	<b>Average Articles Citations</b>
Usa	626	23,19
Korea	538	48,91
United Kingdom	515	25,75
France	405	31,15
Italy	203	14,50
China	142	17,75
Saudi Arabia	59	19,67
India	52	10,40
Israel	49	24,50
Finland	47	23,50
New Zealand	41	20,50
Monaco	33	16,50
Australia	29	9,67
Denmark	16	8,00
Lebanon	16	16,00
Netherlands	16	8,00
South Africa	12	12,00
Portugal	11	11,00
Canada	9	3,00
Egypt	9	9,00

*Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)*

Finally, Figure 10 deals with the network among countries worldwide. As said previously, the blue color on the map represents the nations that work more on sustainability in the luxury market. Additionally, the pink border connecting world areas indicates the strength of the link among the authors. The primary partnerships among countries involve US and Korea with six peer-review articles. In the other cases, the co-authorship between countries has involved no more than three countries. This is the case of co-authored papers between the Uk and Italy or the US and China.

In the next section, we move from the geographic articles' distribution to the luxury markets' analysis.

Figure 10 - Total number of articles per country (graphic representation)



Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)

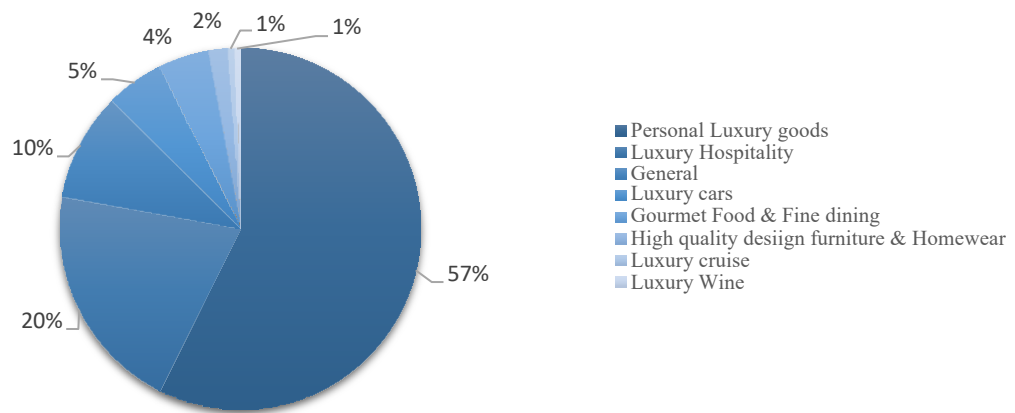
#### (5) **Luxury market involved**

D'Arpizio & Levanto (2021) explain the global luxury market as a summa of different markets. This subsection aims to deepen which luxury market is explored in the paper focused on luxury and sustainability.

Figure 11 shows that 57% of the papers in the dataset investigated the personal luxury goods market by focusing on luxury apparel, watches, accessories, eyewear, and Jewellery. Then 20% of publications conduct research in the context of luxury hospitality.

Another interesting insight reveals that new luxury markets never investigated before, have attracted the attention of researchers. In fact, Figure 11 shows the growth in research about emerging sectors such as high-quality design furniture and homeware, luxury cars, gourmet food and fine dining. Then, the following subsections deepen the sustainability topic for luxury brand management by analysing the methodologies, brands used to test the hypothesis or conduct interviews and the keywords.

Figure 11 - Luxury sectors investigated



#### (6) Research methodologies

In the endeavour to define the research methodologies used to investigate the topic of sustainability in the luxury market, we applied the framework proposed by Ricciardi and Rossignoli (2016). They classify methodologies according to the research design that considers how authors combine the research contribution and epistemology with data gathering and elaboration techniques.

Table X displays the distribution of papers' research design methodology.

The survey prevails over other methodologies as it is performed by 30% of the articles examined.

Moreover, we find a consistent number of articles performing experiments that allows the authors to control the factors governing the exposure of the subjects to a specific condition related to sustainability.



*Table X - Research methodologies for sustainability in the luxury market*

<b>Research design</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Survey	56	30%
Experiment	49	27%
Case Study	23	13%
Theory Building	13	7%
Conceptual	10	5%
Secondary Data analysis	9	5%
Grounded Theory	8	4%
Action Research	4	2%
Literature review	3	2%
Ethnography	3	2%
Construct development	3	2%
Text analysis	2	1%
QCA	1	1%

*Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)*

**(7) Luxury brand involved**

Concerning the luxury brands involved in the study, Table XI collects all luxury brands found in the papers.

Researchers employ these brands mainly when conducting experiments or surveys to explore consumers' responses. In the case of experiments, authors apply luxury brands with others born as sustainable or less familiar to identify differences in consumers' reactions to sustainable practices. While in the case of surveys, brands are inserted in the questionnaires delivered to test consumers' preferences of sustainable products.

*Table XI - Top 10 luxury brand included in the dataset*

<b>Brand</b>	<b>Number</b>
Gucci	10
Louis Vuitton	9
Rolex	8
Prada	7
Hèrmes	7
Burberry	6
Chanel	6
Armani	6
Stella McCartney	4
Dior	4

### ***(8) Keywords analysis***

This subsection dedicate to keywords determines the research trend and identifies research areas by analysing the keywords plus and topic dendrogram.

Table XII highlights the total number of keywords plus in the top 20 positions. The keywords plus are automatically generated by an algorithm leveraging words or phrases frequently appearing in the titles of an article's references. Even if they do not necessarily coincide with the authors' chosen keywords to represent the article's content, Garfield and Sher (1993) agree that the keyword plus can capture content better than the authors' keyword because of the greater depth and variety.

Moreover, as stated by Zhang, Lee and Xiong (2019) keywords plus are useful for investigating the knowledge structure of the scientific field. The top 20 keywords plus collected and summarised in Table XII confirms that the research field about sustainability in the luxury market deal with the following topic: green, consumption, corporate social responsibility, behaviour, fashion, and perception. Thus, it emerges how studies focused on customer consumption and behaviour have a central role in the sustainable luxury research.

Then the researchers show the relations of words in the publication set by performing the topic dendrogram (Figure 12) that applies the correspondence analysis to identify research subfields.

Table XII – Twenty most cited keywords plus

Terms	Frequency
green	23
consumption	21
corporate social-responsibility	19
behavior	17
fashion	17
perceptions	16
consumers	15
impact	15
sustainability	13
sustainable development	12
values	11
brand	10
attitudes	9
management	8
products	8
attitude	7
brands	7
csr	7
conspicuous consumption	6
materialism	6

Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)

## 2.5 Content analysis of the research area

After exploring the impact of sustainability on luxury brand literature to respond to the first research question, we conduct a content analysis of the research stream resulting in the topic dendrogram to answer the second research question, "*What's the focus of the literature on sustainability for luxury brand management?*".

As represented by Figure 12, the topic dendrogram, using hierarchical clustering, shows the order and relationships among keywords. Cuts and vertical lines in the figure enable the analysis and interpretation of clusters. According to Andrews (2003) the topic dendrogram does not provide a perfect account of cluster association, but it facilitates researchers to estimate the approximate number of clusters.

In this article, the topic dendrogram has identified three clusters representing the stream of research about sustainability in the luxury market:

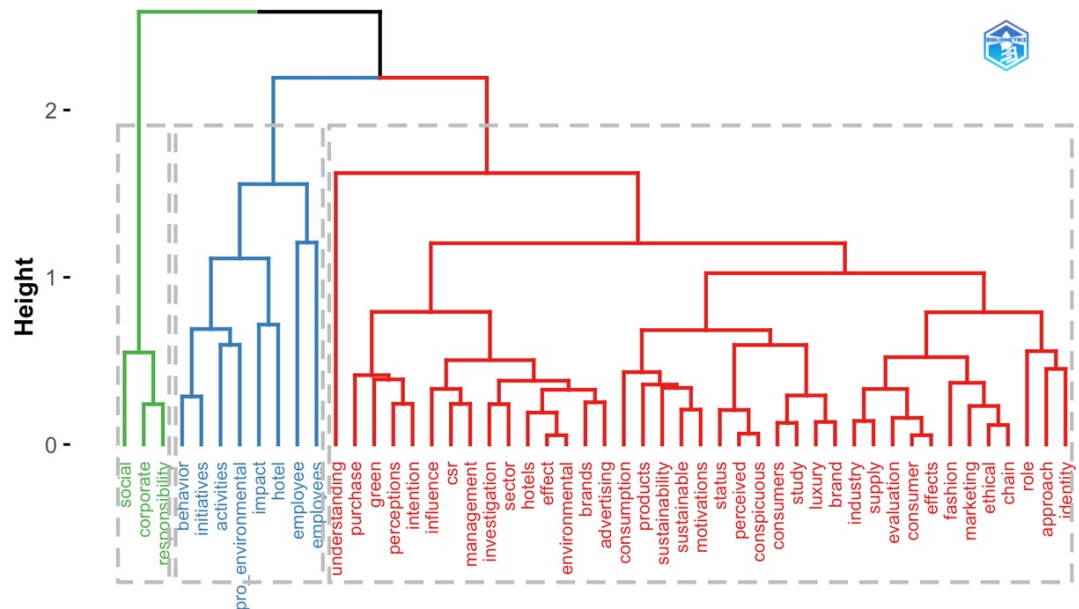
*Research stream 1: Sustainable business model innovation for luxury brand;*

*Research stream 2: Sustainable practices for luxury companies' employees;*

*Research stream 3: Sustainable consumption in the luxury market.*

Once they defined the research stream, the authors classified all the papers independently and cross-referenced the results at the end.

*Figure 12 - Topic Dendrogram*



*Source: Author's personal elaboration (2022)*

### **2.5.1 Sustainable business model innovation for luxury brand**

The first area of research resulting from the topic dendrogram includes **44 articles** focused on corporate social responsibility practices to provide long-term value without compromising the planet, people, and the economy. Although manufacturers and retailers initially have been reluctant to increase the production and sales of sustainable products (Di Benedetto, 2017), some real cases of CSR practices show that luxury and sustainability may coexist (Jaegler, 2016; Campos Franco, Hussain and McColl, 2019). Luxury *fashion companies* demonstrate sound knowledge and skills in sustainability. The fashion system developed a growing commitment to sustainability thanks to producers' movements such as the actions of individual brands, designers, big retailers, and institutions in favour of consumers' well-being (Ertekin and Atik, 2020).

Analyzing CSR reports of *luxury cosmetics* companies emerges the implementation of multiple objectives typical of a circular approach (eco-design, reuse, low energy

consumption, zero emissions) (Morea, Fortunati and Martiniello, 2021). During the pandemic, even *Michelin star restaurants* have implemented response strategies to contribute to collective well-being. We refer to philanthropic activities targeting the community's well-being, socially responsible business practices to support the food service actors and initiatives centered on consumers (Batat, 2020).

Some articles demonstrated that implementing sustainability affects the impact on the market positively. Bhattacharya, Good and Sardashti (2020) show CSR initiatives during recessions increased the perceptions of brand value, especially actions such as charitable contributions, which signal to customers of higher brand quality. Moreover according Faust, (2013) and Bernardi, Cantù and Cedrola (2022) companies can achieve a competitive advantage by being sustainable and innovative while pursuing corporate solid values, cultural heritage and stable relationships with the territory.

Other papers are focused on companies' efforts to communicate sustainability. Hepner, Chandon and Bakardzhieva (2020) demonstrates information can be an essential selling point for more environmentally friendly consumers, so it is necessary to provide this information efficiently. However, the literature reveals luxury brand companies still communicate sustainability in an ineffective way (Luo *et al.*, 2021). Most luxury companies do not use to provide any form of sustainability reports, nor do they have sustainability departments. Policies and governance information are prioritized for public release over any supply chain information (Jestratišević, Rudd and Uanhoro, 2020). For example, in the jewellery market, only 3% of print advertisements contain CSR messages (Pankiw, Phillips and Williams, 2021).

Another interesting theme is related to the stakeholders' empowerment. Nayak *et al.* (2021) demonstrate that by collaborating with the local artisans to create unique clothing lines, companies can promote the diversity of ethnic cultures. Regarding the hospitality industry, Sotomayor, Ventes and Gronau (2021) suggest activities such as education, training, health projects, and supporting local fair-trade suppliers and entrepreneurs positively contribute to local communities' well-being. While Zhang, Lee and Xiong (2019), conducting action research on residents' perceptions, reveal that the presence of luxury hotels is not always perceived as an opportunity

for local communities. Residents may perceive hotel chains as a threat to the survival of ethnic communities because the empowerment of the population could move local people away from traditions.

### ***2.5.2 Sustainable practices for luxury companies' employees***

The second area of research focuses on employees' sustainable practices and includes **11 articles**. All papers investigate sustainable human resource management practices, mainly in the hospitality industry. The empirical studies show that positive employees' perception of CSR activities increases employee engagement (Nazir and Islam, 2020b). As stated by Nazir and Islam (2020a) and Sharma *et al.* (2022) good CSR practices inside companies lead to increased employee motivation and job retention that positively affect business performance. Addressing employees' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relationship through CSR-specific activities motivates them to find their work engaging and carry out their activities innovatively (Farooq *et al.*, 2022). Also Sourvinou and Filimonau (2018) demonstrate that involving employees in a well-designed and perceived environmental management program can strengthen staff job satisfaction and organizational commitment. According to Peng and Lee (2019) and Raza *et al.* (2021), CSR practices directly affect voluntary pro-environmental employees' behaviour leading the staff to protective actions toward the environment. In contrast, occupational stress, such as unfair treatment, contributed significantly to turnover intention (Hwang *et al.*, 2014).

Finally, in recent years Han, Lee and Koo (2021) demonstrated that green indoor atmospherics in luxury hotels enhances behavioural intentions of both employees and guests.

### ***2.5.3 Sustainable consumption in the luxury market***

The third area of research, which includes **119 peer-review articles**, deals with sustainable luxury consumption.

The first articles focused on sustainability in the luxury market show sustainability was not among the foremost reasons for buying luxury products or services (Achabou and Dekhili, 2013). Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau, (2014) explained

that consumers agreed luxury and sustainability were incompatible, especially considering sustainability's economic and social dimensions (Cheah, Zainol and Phau, 2016). Moreover, Baker, Davis and Weaver (2014) suggested that products made from recycled materials discouraged consumption, and green practices were not considered essential to staying in a hotel

However, consumers' behaviour was contradictory. While they were unwilling to buy or pay more for ethical products or services (Baker et al., 2014), they required luxury companies to act ethically (Arrington, 2019) by showing a favourable attitude toward those firms that had adopted sustainable practices.

In recent years, the main issue remains how to combine luxury and sustainability. As stated by Torelli, Monga and Kaikati (2012) and Tofighi, Grohmann and Bodur, (2019), luxury brands gain from ethical attribute introductions only when these attributes are congruent with the brand concept. Thus, as consumers were sensitive about the match between luxury and sustainability, managers increased their commitment to rethinking the branding strategy carefully to affect consumers' evaluations of luxury brands when promoting responsible luxury (Janssen, Vanhamme and Leblanc, 2017).

From our analysis, it emerged that scholars opened the debate about sustainable luxury branding by exploring consumers' internal dynamics to understand antecedents, motives, perceptions, attitudes, and values related to luxury brands' consumption.

Notably, publications deal with three main topics: motives for sustainable consumption, reasons for rental consumption and motives for second-hand consumption.

#### 2.5.3.1 Motives for sustainable consumption

The literature review reveals several motives that lead to sustainable luxury consumption. First, environmental concerns play a crucial role in affecting luxury consumers' attitudes towards sustainability. Eco-friendly attributes influence positively consumers' evaluations of sustainable products (Rosenbaum and Wong, 2015; Perez *et al.*, 2020; Robinot *et al.*, 2021; Schill and Godefroit-Winkel, 2021) and their willingness to pay a premium price (Chia-Jung and Pei-Chun, 2014).

Similarly, more integrated sustainability practices such as sustainable product innovations that include recycling, upcycling, and sustainable alternatives, affect the product and service demand of luxury brand consumers positively (Adigüzel and Donato, 2021; Hemonnet-Goujot, Kessous and Magnoni, 2022).

Moreover, individuals give more importance to animal welfare, resulting in less reluctance to reduce the proportion of real fur in the clothes (Achabou, Dekhili and Codini, 2020). Consequently, luxury brands that incorporate sustainability into their business strategy by offering faux fur alternatives instead of animal fur significantly impact consumers' cognitive dissonance (Rolling *et al.*, 2021).

According to Amatulli, Angelis and Spataro (2021), companies should not be limited to environmental sustainability because generating benefits for customers, the community, or the employees increases consumers' willingness to buy sustainable products.

Moreover, the literature provides guidelines to engage consumers and avoid their scepticism or misunderstanding when communicating sustainability practices.

Communication focused on sustainable practices leads to a higher willingness to buy a product or book a room because sustainability enhances consumers' perceptions of companies' integrity (Amatulli, De Angelis and Stoppani, 2021; Kang and Sung, 2021). Firms' eco-friendly efforts in advertisements generate favourable consumer attitudes and increase their behavioural intentions towards both hospitality and personal luxury goods companies (Lim, Youn and Eom, 2021). According to Shashi *et al.* (2021) "*green text, green certification logo, green with visual cues, and green combination*" affects consumers' attitude toward luxury hospitality brands. In addition Vilasanti da Luz, Mantovani and Nepomuceno (2020) highlight that the combination of green message and luxury brand positioning positively influences brand evaluation in the personal luxury goods market. Even when luxury based its communication strategies on donations (Sengabira, Septianto and Northey, 2020), especially environmental ones such as planting trees or philanthropic deeds like donating to poverty, it benefits from its positive brand evaluations (Karatzas, Kapoulas and Priporas, 2019).

Considering consumers' scepticism toward sustainability, Sthapit, Jo and Hwang (2017) and Teah, Sung and Phau (2021) revealed that consumers are fewer sceptics



when emerging values-driven CSR motives rather than egoistic-driven ones. Companies' CSR activities, guided by binding foundations, indeed, lead to more favourable attitudes than CSR activities conducted by individualizing foundations (Hang, Rodrigo and Ghaffari, 2021). Furthermore, Kapferer and Valette-Florence (2021) suggest luxury brands need to implement guilt-reducing communication strategies. Notably, guilt plays a crucial role in the case of unsustainable luxury. A purchased luxury fashion product made in an unsustainable manner leads consumers to experience a higher sense of guilt over that product, generating negative word-of-mouth about the producer. Moreover, the risk of negative words of mouth spreading is more significant in countries characterized by a collectivistic and feminine orientation rather than where prevailing an individualistic and masculine orientation (Amatulli, De Angelis and Donato, 2021).

Thus, as Kong, Witmaier and Ko( 2021) indicate, luxury brand advertisers should consider cultural settings when providing sustainability information. For example, in China, the need for exclusivity in sustainable luxury items is negatively related to consumers' purchase intentions, while the demand for conformity is positively related. On the contrary, in the UK, the relationship among the variables is reversed (Wang, 2021). Similarly, sustainability information negatively impacts the perceived quality of luxury in Saudi Arabia, while in France, no significant effect was observed (Dekhili, Achabou and Alharbi, 2019).

Finally, according to Rolling and Sadachar (2018), Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau (2020) and Rolling *et al.* (2021) even age influences consumer perceptions e attitudes toward sustainable luxury products.

#### 2.5.3.2 Motives for rental consumption

Luxury consumers, especially Millennials, have shown an increasing interest in the emerging forms of consumption that promotes a more sustainable way of consuming products including the no-ownership model of consumption favoured by the rental platforms. We found several studies that deepen the motivations behind this new way of consuming luxury goods. From the analysis conducted by Vincent and Gaur (2021) fashion innovativeness, hedonic experience, economic, utilitarian, social, need for uniqueness, sustainability and no burden of ownership

emerged as the eight reasons for using closet sharing. Pantano and Stylos (2020) discovered that consumers increased their willingness to show their social status through renting rather than owning luxurious apparel based on five main motivations: the need to wear new clothes for a special event, inspirations created by the products/brands, possibility to explore a new way of consuming luxury goods, need to make more sustainable choices, and to increase the life cycle of each luxury product. Finally, according to Jain (2019) the social projection value is the most significant predictor of intention to consume luxury fashion on a sharing basis. However, as the overall attitude towards luxury fashion rental consumption differs significantly across markets (Mishra, Jain and Jham, 2021), motives for rental consumption request further investigation to identify the specificities of the market under investigation.

#### 2.5.3.3 Motives for second-hand consumption

Another emerging sustainable consumption practice that is rapidly growing is second-hand consumption. Some authors, aiming to define the motives that lead luxury consumers to favour second-hand products instead of buying new ones, found that sustainability, environmental concerns, and past sustainable behaviour affect second-hand consumption (Neerattiparambil and Belli, 2020).

However, Ramkumar, Woo and Kim (2021) discovered when consumers shop online for second-hand clothing, they need more motivation than environmental benefits. For example, Medalla *et al.* (2020) demonstrated that intrinsic characteristics and financial instability are the drivers of the second-hand consumption of Millennials. Moreover Turunen, Cervellon and Carey (2020) highlighted that social status can lead to a second hand-consumption choice. They demonstrated that social selling of second-online products generates an alteration to the symbolic value of the items stripped down to being objects of a transaction, giving consumers empowerment and a change in terms of their social role. Also included in this sub-section is the consumption of vintage items, products of a particular era that evoke memories of the past and represent the fashion trend of a specific historical period. Vintage products, therefore, are second-hand products with their purchase contribute to environmental well-being. However, these

products appeal to consumers for personal reasons like self-confidence, a sense of fulfilment (Amatulli *et al.*, 2018), fashion involvement and nostalgia proneness (Cervellon, 2013a) in addition to sustainable motives.

## **2.6 Discussion and implications**

The structured analysis of the literature reveals that luxury and sustainability are not perceived as incompatible concepts as in the past. On the one hand, luxury brand consumers increased their attitude towards more sustainable consumption practices, including rental and second-hand consumption. On the other hand, luxury brand companies enforced their efforts to manage a more sustainable business model that positively impacts collective well-being.

Academics contributed to the topic with some publications, whose number has doubled since 2019 (RQ1).

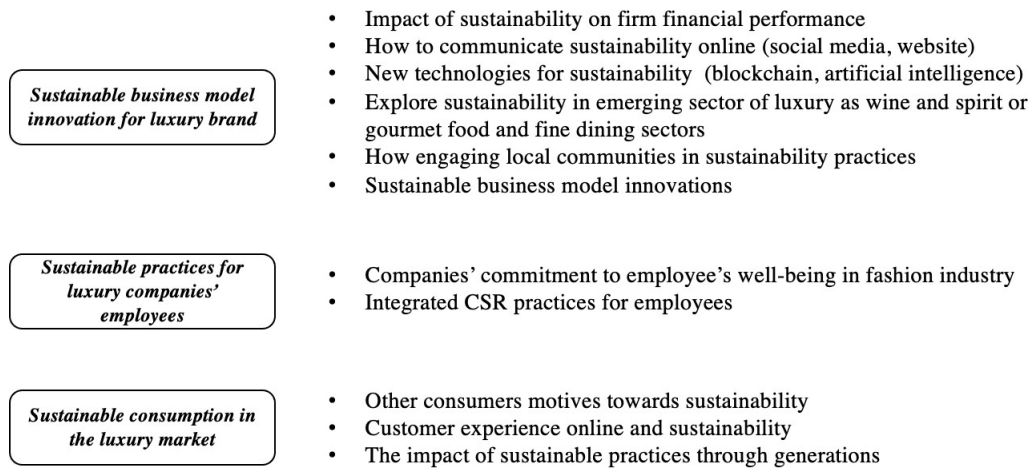
Articles deal with a wide range of topics, from papers mainly focused on sustainable consumer behaviour to others that analyse companies' practices and cover the issues proposed by Athwal *et al.* (2019)' future research agenda. In 2019, the authors highlighted gaps related to three main areas: consumer concerns and practices, organizational concerns and practices and international and cross-cultural issues.

Regarding consumers, recent papers provide information about motives, perceptions, and values that affect luxury brand consumption, the attitude to rental consumption and the consumption behaviour in the second-hand luxury industry.

In terms of organizational practices, some papers explore the positive effect of the sustainable programme on employees' performance, "deep" sustainability, which means integrating CSR into the business model, stakeholder empowerment and communicating sustainability. Finally, some papers test sustainable practices in different countries to understand how cultural settings affect sustainable behaviour (RQ2).

*Thus, the overarching question is... just what are the consequences for the future research agenda on sustainability in the luxury market (RQ3)?*

Figure 13- Future research agenda for sustainability in the luxury market



To answer this question, which is the third of our research frameworks, we consider the three research areas of the topic dendrogram.

Considering the stream about the sustainable business model and innovation, a deepened investigation is needed. First, only one paper investigates the impact of sustainability on luxury brand companies' financial and economic performance. Thus, a correlation between financial performance and ESG indexes requires further investigation. Even the topic of communication is not entirely covered. According to several authors, how to communicate sustainability, especially online (social media, websites), is another topic to explore more deeply.

Finally, the stream about sustainable development may be improved considering new technologies like blockchain or artificial intelligence applied to the supply chain.

Considering the area of research about employees, all the papers investigate employees' well-being in the hospitality industry. Further research may consider other sectors, maybe the personal luxury goods sector, where most brands firmly commit.

Finally, the stream of research dealing with luxury brand consumers and motives for sustainable consumption is undoubtedly the most covered during the last few years, as more than half of the papers are focused on it. However, some issues need further investigation.

Some papers analysed consumers' motives for sustainable consumption by focusing on environmental sustainability. According to Amatulli et al. (2021) a sustainability practice that benefits customers, the community, or the employees increases consumers' willingness to buy sustainable products. Thus, further investigating consumers' motives for sustainability may deal with other sustainable practices (women quota, stakeholders' empowerment, employees' well-being, etc.).

Another topic to cover deals with customer experience. Han, Seo and Ko (2017), demonstrated that managers who develop and stage memorable consumer-centred experiences orient consumers toward sustainable fashion consumption. Thus, creating and managing the customer-centred experience in the luxury market may deepen, especially considering online experiences.

In general, the literature review reveals that most studies focus on personal luxury goods and hospitality sectors. We encourage future studies exploring sustainability in emerging luxury sectors such as wine and spirit or gourmet food and fine dining. Furthermore, surveys and experiment results are more common when looking at the methodologies used. Considering the topic under investigation, we suggest analysing the case with emerging methods. For example, ethnography can explore the online community of luxury consumers and their approach to sustainability. At the same time, QCA (qualitative comparative analysis) may analyse the combination of sustainable practices that better impact the financial performance of luxury brands.

Figure 11 summarises all the topics we suggest for the future research agenda.

## **2.7 Conclusions**

The debate about sustainability in the luxury market has increased in a few years, especially after the Covid 19 pandemic, resulting in a need to systemize the scientific production with a literature review.

The value of this article derives from the attempt to organize the knowledge about sustainability management in the luxury market by enlarging the number of studies related to the global luxury market. The previous literature review limited the papers to 2020, and the most recent is focused on supply chain management.

Moreover, the combination of bibliometric and content analysis provides academics and managers with an in-depth and structured examination of the focus of the literature on sustainability for luxury brand management and the future research agenda.

*Appendix 1 - The most local cited papers*

Articles	Main topics	Author/s	Journal e Doi	ABS Ranking Journal	Research design	Sector	Key findings	Date
Luxury and sustainable development: is there a match?	conjoint analysis, consumer preference, luxury products, recycling, sustainable development, textile	Achabou Ma, Dekhili S	Journal Of Business Research 10.1016/j.jbusres.2013.02.011	3	Survey	Personal Luxury goods and luxury cars	Incorporating recycled materials in such goods affects consumer preferences negatively and reveals a certain incompatibility between recycling and the category of luxury products. Sustainability remains the second criterion for choosing luxury brands.	2013
Is luxury compatible with sustainability luxury consumers' viewpoint	csr, ecology, ethics, luxury, sustainable development	Kapferer Jn, Michaut-Denizeau A	Journal Of Brand Management 10.1057/bm.2013.19	2	Survey	General	Luxury buyers have ambivalent attitudes, such that they consider luxury and sustainability somewhat contradictory, especially about the social and economic harmony facet of sustainable development.	2014
The role of design similarity in consumers evaluation of new green products: an investigation of luxury fashion brands	design similarity, environmental sustainability, luxury fashion brand, new green product, sustainable consumption, sustainable design	De Angelis M, Adgzal F, Amatulli C	Journal Of Cleaner Production 10.1016/j.jclepro.2016.09.230	2	Experiment	Personal luxury goods	The design of the new green luxury products may crucially affect consumers' evaluation of the brand that introduces it. When launching a new green product, luxury brand companies need to create the new green luxury product like the luxury company's previous models rather than to models made by green companies. Especially for consumers who are knowledgeable about the brand and for products that are durable rather than ephemeral.	2017
Doing poorly by doing good: corporate social responsibility and brand concepts	corporate social responsibility, brand concept,	Torelli Cj, Monga Ab, Kaikati Am	Journal Of Consumer Research 10.1086/660851	4*	Experiments	Personal Luxury goods, Luxury Cars	Brand concept is a key factor in how consumers respond to csr activities.	2012
Sustainable luxury marketing: a synthesis and research agenda	luxury, review, sustainability, luxury marketing	Athwal N, Wells Vk, Carrigan M, Henninger Ce	International Journal of Management Reviews 10.1111/ijmr.12195	3	Literature review	Global luxury market	Sustainable luxury marketing: a synthesis and research agenda.	2019

Articles	Main topics	Author/s	Journal e Doi	ABS Ranking Journal	Research design	Sector	Key findings	Date
The effect of an environmental claim on consumers' perceptions about luxury and utilitarian products	eco-labels, environmental claim, luxury product, utilitarian product	Steinhart Y, Ayalon O, Puterman H	Journal Of Cleaner Production 10.1016/j.jclepro.2013.04.024	2	Experiment	Design and luxury furniture	Environmental claims improve consumers' evaluations of utilitarian products, especially when the content of the claim's stresses global-environmental benefits. Moreover, the environmental claim enhances evaluations of luxury products by providing available justification to indulge and use luxuries.	2013
Consumer's perceptions of luxury brands csr initiatives: an investigation of the role of status and conspicuous consumption	conspicuous consumption, corporate social responsibility (csr), luxury marketing, status consumption, sustainability	Amatulli C, De Angelis M, Korschun D, Romani S	Journal Of Cleaner Production 10.1016/j.jclepro.2018.05.111	2	Experiment	Personal Luxury goods	In the luxury market external csr initiatives increase consumers' willingness to buy more than the internal csr initiatives.	2018
Staging luxury experiences for understanding sustainable fashion consumption: a balance theory application	balance theory, eco-fashion, luxury experiences, sustainable fashion	Han J, Seo Y, Ko E	Journal Of Business Research 10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.10.029	3	Action Research	Personal luxury goods	Developing and staging memorable consumer-centered experiences that orient consumers toward sustainable fashion consumption behaviors encourages the consumers achieving balance states between concerns and actual consumption decisions and behaviors.	2017
Should luxury brands say it out loud? brand conspicuousness and consumer perceptions of responsible luxury	brand conspicuousness, consumer perceptions, corporate social responsibility, luxury, self-identity	Janssen C, Vanhamme J, Leblanc S	Journal Of Business Research 10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.12.009	3	Experiments	Personal luxury goods	It's important that luxury brand managers assess how luxury consumers perceive luxury brands when promoting responsible luxury. The research underlines that a specific luxury branding strategy and CSR shapes consumers' CSR beliefs and attitudes.	2017



Articles	Main topics	Author/s	Journal e Doi	ABS Ranking Journal	Research design	Sector	Key findings	Date
Understanding ethical luxury consumption through practice theories: a study of fine Jewellery purchases	consumer ethics; luxury consumption; marketing ethics; practice theory; qualitative research	Moraes C; Carrigan M; Bosangit C; Ferreira C; Mcgrath M	Journal Of Business Ethics 10.1007/S10551-015-2893-9	3	Theory building	Personal Luxury goods	our findings and discussion provide an analysis of intentional and less intentional ethical consumer performances within the interconnected nexus of activities of consumers fine Jewellery consumption practice, where meanings, understandings and intelligibility of social phenomena are worked through the various activities that shape such a practice.	2017
Could sustainability improve the promotion of luxury products?	Csr, developed countries, developing countries, luxury, perceived quality, sustainable consumption	Dekhili S, Achabou Ma, Alharbi F	European Business Review 10.1108/EBR-04-2018-0083	2	Experiment	General	Sustainability information negatively impacts the perceived quality of luxury products. This result varies regarding the consumers country of origin. While no significant effect was observed in the case of French respondents, Saudi consumers lower the evaluation of quality when social information is provided. In addition, the negative effect of sustainability information is moderated by the consumers degree of liking of luxury and by the brand corporate social responsibility image.	2019
From conspicuous to considered fashion: a harm-chain approach to the responsibilities of luxury-fashion businesses	corporate social responsibility, harm chain, institutional theory, luxury fashion, value co-creation	Carrigan M, Moraes C, Mceachern M	Journal Of Marketing Management 10.1080/0267257X.2013.798675	2	Conceptual	Personal Luxury goods and luxury cars	The paper urges luxury fashion businesses to embed social and environmental responsibilities within their core business, adopting a transformational approach to CSR that transcends self-interest and 'business as usual'.	2013
Consumers' willingness to pay for green initiatives of the hotel industry	environmental concern, green practice, hotel, hotel type, new ecological paradigm scale, willingness to pay	Kang Kh, Stein L, Heo Cy, Lee S	International Journal Of Hospitality Management 10.1016/j.ijhm.2011.08.001	3	Survey	Luxury Hospitality	The level of environmental concern, measured by the New Ecological Paradigm, (NEP) impacts positively on willingness to pay a premium for green practices.	2012

Articles	Main topics	Author/s	Journal e Doi	ABS Ranking Journal	Research design	Sector	Key findings	Date
Are millennials more sensitive to sustainable luxury? a cross-generational international comparison of sustainability consciousness when buying luxury	csr, ethics, luxury, millennials, social responsibility, sustainability	Kapferer Jn, Michaut-Denizeau A	Journal Of Brand Management 10.1057/s41262-019-00165-7	2	Survey	General	Millennials sensitivity to the sustainability of luxury brands when purchasing luxuries is not different from older generations. Millennials are those who consider the most that luxury and sustainability are contradictory.	2020
The flagship stores as sustainability communication channels for luxury fashion retailers	flagship store, in-store communication, luxury fashion brands, luxury sustainability, sustainable retailing	Arrigo E	Journal Of Retailing and Consumer Services 10.1016/j.jretconser.2018.06.011	2	Theory building	Personal Luxury goods	Flagship stores can be as effective environmental and social sustainability communication channel.	2018
Conspicuous conservation: using semiotics to understand sustainable luxury	conspicuous conservation, semiotics, sustainable luxury	Cervellon Mc	International Journal of Market Research 10.2501/ijmr-2013-030	2	Conceptual	Personal Luxury goods and luxury cars	Sustainable and philanthropic programme should not alter the authenticity of luxury brands.	2013
Sustainable luxury: status and perspectives for future research	csr, luxury, sustainability, sustainable luxury, systematic literature review	Kunz J, May S, Schmidt Hj	Business Research 10.1007/s40685-020-00111-3	x	Literature review	Global luxury market	State of the art of sustainable luxury at international level and relevant paths for future research.	2020
The effects of power on consumers evaluation of a luxury brand's corporate social responsibility	csr, fluency, luxury brands, psychological power	Chang Dr, Jang J, Lee H, Nam M	Psychology And Marketing 10.1002/mar.21158	3	Experiment	Personal Luxury goods	High-power individuals evaluated a luxury brand's csr campaign more positively than low-power individuals. high-power individuals viewed csr activities as being more fluent than low-power individuals.	2019

Articles	Main topics	Author/s	Journal e Doi	ABS Ranking Journal	Research design	Sector	Key findings	Date
The effects of environmental and luxury beliefs on intention to patronize green hotels: the moderating effect of destination image	consumer behavior, destination image, green hotels, nature-based tourism, urban tourism	Line Nd, Hanks L	Journal Of Sustainable Tourism 10.1080/09669582.2015.1091467	3	Survey	Luxury hospitality	The match between green management and luxury is influenced by the image of the destination. consumers are more willing to accept luxury-based trade-offs when the destination is perceived as nature-based than when it is perceived as urban.	2016
Can luxury brands be ethical? reducing the sophistication liability of luxury brands	brand ethicality, brand personality, consumer identity goals, corporate social responsibility, luxury brands	Costa Pinto D, Herter Mm, Goncalves D, Sayin E	Journal Of Cleaner Production 10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.06.094	2	Experiment	Personal Luxury goods	Across our studies, we demonstrate that sophisticated brands (e.g., luxury brands) are perceived to be less ethical than sincere brands (i.e., sophistication liability; pilot study).	2019

### **3. Be better, not just “less bad”: managing integrated CSR strategies in the luxury brand market**

“As consumers, we have so much power to change the world by just being careful in what we buy.”

*- Emma Watson, actor, and slow fashion advocate,  
supporter of Good on You*

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The concept of sustainability has been experiencing a boost in relevance over the last 20 years (Sirsly and Lvina, 2016). On the one hand, the pressure exerted by the regulations toward sustainability is growing day by day. On the other hand, sustainability practices are getting more and more attention from all stakeholders whose concern about environmental and social issues has reached new heights, resulting in growth expectations and more complex needs (Freeman and Velamuri, 2008). Notably, consumers are becoming more conscious of how their consumption choices impact society and the environment in which they live. Millennials and Generation Z (Gen Z), among all consumer groups, have shown a sensitivity to sustainable behaviors (Batat, 2019; Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau, 2020). When Millennials and Gen Z choose products, they look for companies that value equity, inclusion, diversity, and social impact. They believe brands need to do better, not just “less bad” (D’Arpizio and Levato, 2018).

In this context, a residual approach to corporate social responsibility (CSR), which involves companies implementing CSR standards or marketing activities

aimed exclusively at improving corporate reputation, is not enough. On the contrary, consumers expect firms to move from stand-alone CSR practices to CSR strategies that integrate sustainability into corporate strategy and goals (D'Arpizio and Levato, 2021). The integrated CSR approach causes a company to reshape the business model to link the company's values, methods, codes, and actions with the ethical, environmental, and social dimensions (Freeman *et al.*, 2010). By implementing an integrated CSR model, the company can perform authentic, credible, and fair activities that contribute to individual and collective well-being.

The interest in sustainability appeals to all companies, no matter their size and sector, including those that compete in the luxury market. However, in the luxury industry, the approach to sustainability is more challenging compared to others. When scholars have extended the debate of CSR to the luxury goods market and its consumers, luxury and sustainability have emerged as opposed concepts (Lundblad and Davies, 2016; D'Anolfo *et al.*, 2017).

Some authors have discussed the "CSR-luxury paradox" to emphasize the divergence between luxury goods and sustainable development (Torelli, Monga and Kaikati, 2012; Achabou and Dekhili, 2013; Cervellon and Shammass, 2013; Wong and Dhanesh, 2017).

A luxury brand's core values are linked to hedonism, ostentation, and excess, while sustainability with a focus on altruism, sobriety, ethics, and moderation is led by opposed principles (Achabou and Dekhili, 2013).

Despite their initial skepticism in considering sustainability, luxury firms have now understood that they can no longer ignore their environmental and social responsibilities. Over time, a more positive attitude toward environmental and social responsibility behavior in luxury brands has risen dramatically among all luxury industry stakeholders (Janssen, Vanhamme and Leblanc, 2017; BCG and Altgamma, 2021). Thus, an increasing number of luxury companies have started to show more commitment toward sustainable goals in their annual reports in their communications to the public (Mosca, 2017; Jestratijevic, Rudd and Uanhoro, 2020).

In this scenario, the number of studies researching sustainable luxury has grown in recent years. However, from current literature reviews, it is clear that sustainable

luxury research lacks studies that explain to what extent luxury brands effectively contribute to individual and collective well-being by integrating sustainability into their corporate strategies and business models (Athwal *et al.*, 2019; Kunz, May and Schmidt, 2020). We attempt to cover this gap with our research. *“We explore if and how luxury companies contribute concrete and effective actions to individual and collective well-being by moving from a mere execution of standards to integrated CSR”*.

With this endeavor in mind, we conducted a content analysis of sustainable reports on a sample of luxury brands listed in “Deloitte Global Powers of Luxury Goods 2020.” We used an adapted version of the integrated CSR strategy framework (Casalegno and Civera, 2016; Mosca and Civera, 2017) to analyze CSR actions pursued by the panel of companies selected. The framework of integrated CSR leveraged on the definition of residual and integrated CSR proposed by Freeman *et al.* (2010) is an effective tool that classifies sustainable practices from standard to the most integrated initiatives, and for this reason, it fits the scope of our research. The results contribute to the pool of research on sustainable luxury by providing insights into how luxury brands can improve their impact on consumers and community well-being by approaching integrated sustainable practices.

### **3.2 Towards an integrated CSR**

An ultimate and shared definition of CSR does not exist. Instead, the concept of CSR has undergone continuous redefinitions and adapted to social and economic challenges (Vallaster, Lindgreen and Maon, 2012; Mosca and Civera, 2017; Jin and Lee, 2019). Carroll (2015) stated that CSR is a product of the Second World War that caused many changes in social consciousness. The changes mainly resulted from movements dealing with human civil rights, environmental concerns, and women’s roles in society. During the following decades, the growing interest from institutions, governments, international organizations, consumers, and business managers dramatically increased CSR’s importance.

Consequently, CSR has become an essential focus among companies, resulting in a more concrete development of sustainability practices. However, most companies that are currently approaching CSR perform the so-called residual or

stand-alone CSR. Residual CSR includes activities limited to improving corporate reputation and responding to stakeholders' pressures more than sustaining a concrete business model that allows conversion toward CSR (Hoque et al., 2018). For example, when companies focus their CSR efforts on standards and norms rather than repositioning business models, they perform residual CSR.

Thus, the commitment to residual CSR activities has become recognized as an ineffective way to pursue sustainability within a company. According to Freeman *et al.* (2010), the contribution to concrete and positive CSR development necessitates an orientation toward integrated CSR. Unlike residual CSR, integrated CSR has its roots in stakeholder theory. Only by using the integrated CSR approach can a company simultaneously meet both stakeholders' interests and the company's financial goals. The integrated CSR approach drives companies to go beyond the logic of a mere response to what society requires. In integrated CSR, company efforts aim to integrate environmental and social issues into everyday business strategies (Silvestre and Fonseca, 2020).

The framework of integrated CSR (Figure 14), leveraged on the definition of residual and integrated CSR proposed by Freeman *et al.*(2010), can be used as a reference model to distinguish which activities are examples of integrated CSR and which are not. The framework structures the integration of CSR into a set of tools, activities, and actions divided into three dimensions: standards and norms, strategic philanthropy, and integrated output (Figure 14). While companies implement a more residual approach to CSR with standards and norms, CSR efforts grow when companies move toward strategic philanthropy and integrated outputs (Casalegno and Civera, 2016; Mosca and Civera, 2017).

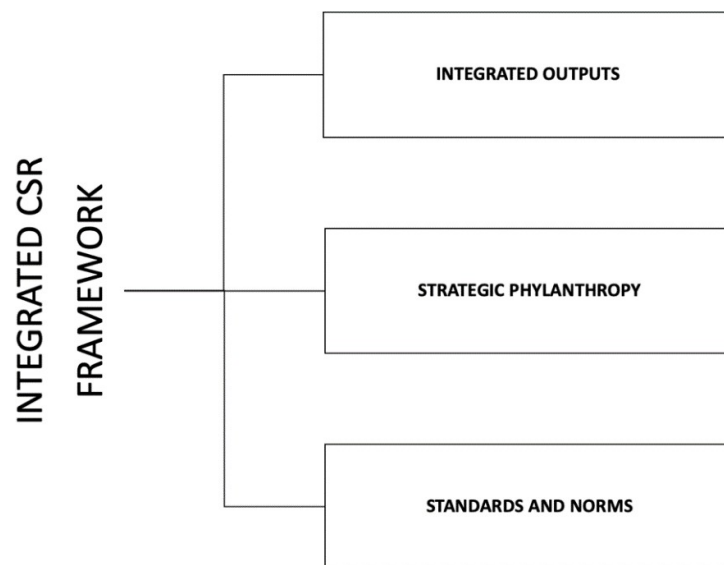
In the following paragraphs, we provide a deeper understanding of the three dimensions of the integrated CSR framework:

- *Standards* represent the company's alignment with the minimum requirements (both compulsory laws and voluntary standards' compliance) demanded by a specific industry or sector and adopted by most players.
- *Strategic philanthropy* dimension includes the efforts of a company to support causes of social interest pursued by Third Sector Organizations or any other

cause in the field of art, culture that are coherent to and relevant to the company's core business.

- *Integrated outputs* dimension constitutes a higher level of CSR integration into the company's core activities. The integrated outputs require a company to rethink strategies and develop policies, products, and services to ensure they are genuinely sustainable, responsible, and ethical. In other words, the integrated outputs go beyond the residual or stand-alone CSR practices; instead, this practice favors investments that make the entire value chain more sustainable. In integrated outputs, CSR is embedded in the organization at the core and the communication of actual performance.

Figure 14 - Integrated CSR framework



Source: Authors' elaboration based on Casalegno and Civera (2016)

### 3.3 Sustainability and luxury: The unexpected match

When extending the debate about sustainability to luxury, some scholars were skeptics at first. They emphasized the divergence between luxury and sustainability, citing the CSR-luxury paradox (Torelli, Monga and Kaikati, 2012; Achabou and Dekhili, 2013; Cervellon, 2013; Wong and Dhanesh, 2016).

According to some authors, luxury and sustainability are different by nature.



Achabou and Dekhili (2013) highlighted that helping the underprivileged versus purchasing expensive luxury goods is naturally conflicting. Even the study by Wong and Dhanesh (2016) underlined inconsistent characteristics between luxury and sustainability. Luxury recalls images of emotion, excess, social distinction, self-enhancement, and dreams. In contrast, sustainability is related to rationality, frugality, equality, self-transcendence, and reality. In addition, some scandals have increased the perception of there being inconsistency between luxury goods and sustainable development, such as greenwashing practices hidden behind luxury garments or fashion accessories.

However, other authors have agreed that luxury and sustainability can converge. For example, Kapferer (1997) in *“All that glitters is not green: the challenge of sustainable luxury”*, provided some reasons that link luxury and sustainability. First, both luxury and sustainability are focused on rarity and beauty. Secondly, the high price of luxury goods, whose primary intent is to guarantee scarcity and limit demand, safeguards resources. Therefore, the luxury market respects sustainable quality standards by nature since luxury companies prefer in-house production rather than production via outsourcing to maintain quality standards throughout all the supply chain phases. Joy *et al.* (2012) demonstrated the connection between luxury and sustainability by leveraging the durability and quality of luxury goods.

Nowadays, doubt about the potential mismatch between luxury and sustainable development seems to have faded. Most luxury companies, no matter their size and country of origin, have increased their commitment to social and environmental causes by engaging in CSR activities (Amatulli, Angelis and Spataro, 2021; Sánchez-Chaparro, Soler-Vicén and Gómez-Frías, 2022). Furthermore, luxury consumers have shown a positive attitude toward luxury companies' environmental and social responsibility behavior. The new generations of consumers, named Gen Z and Millennials, are focusing on more sustainable consumption practices, and expecting luxury brands to do the same (D'Arpizio *et al.*, 2020; D'Arpizio and Levato, 2021; Islam *et al.*, 2021; Rolling *et al.*, 2021) . In this scenario, many studies about sustainable luxury have grown to investigate the phenomenon more deeply.

However, as stated by literature reviews, the research on sustainable luxury results is still underdeveloped (Athwal *et al.*, 2019; Kunz, May and Schmidt, 2020). Notably, as shown by literature review conducted in the first Chapter, the literature needs a more profound investigation of luxury brands' sustainable practices and their promotion of well-being. Our research examines this gap by investigating if and how luxury companies contribute concrete and practical actions to individual and collective well-being.

*R.Q Do luxury companies contribute concrete and effective actions to individual and collective well-being by moving from a mere execution of standards to integrated CSR?*

### **3.4 Methodology**

Leveraging the aim of our chapter and the nature of the research question, we adopted a qualitative content analysis by employing the adapted integrated CSR framework. The content analysis is one of the most flexible methods for analyzing textual data from a naturalistic paradigm and is applicable when examining manifest or latent meanings, themes, and patterns in a particular text (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). We conducted a content analysis on the non-financial disclosure of luxury companies. Then, we performed a double-check on the CSR activities of companies by accessing the institutional companies' websites. According to Confetto and Covucci (2021), luxury companies' presence on websites can inform stakeholders about sustainable activities and goals by offering customer-centered ways of involvement and making more accessible and more attractive information (Chomvilailuk and Butcher, 2018; Lim, Youn and Eom, 2021). This means that information communicated on companies' websites can enrich what is found in non-financial disclosures.

In the following sub-paragraphs, the article defines the sample and the content analysis procedure.

### **3.4.1 Sample**

Our study collected a sample of luxury companies from the “Deloitte Global Powers of Luxury Goods 2020” list. The report grouped the 100 leading luxury companies by revenue and growth. We decided to consider report published in 2020 instead of the one published in 2021 because data collected in “Deloitte Global Powers of Luxury Goods 2021” are affected by Covid 19.

Our final sample did not comprise the entire list of luxury companies in the Deloitte report. On the contrary, we selected the first 20 companies in terms of revenue and removed three companies. We decided to remove Rolex and Lao Feng Xiang Co. Ltd, as they did not publish non-financial disclosures. Then, we excluded Tiffany & Co. due to it being acquired by LVMH in 2020. We replaced the three companies excluded with Moncler, Salvatore Ferragamo and Tod’s. These are Italian firms that have distinguished themselves for their commitment to sustainability. In this way, our final sample comprised 20 companies that represent an adequate approximation of the target industry.

As stated by Deloitte (2020) the market concentration in the luxury industry has grown in recent years, resulting in an increasing number of big conglomerates. For this reason, when analyzing the first 20 luxury companies in revenue according to Deloitte, we considered the largest conglomerates in the luxury market (e.g., LVMH, Kering, and Estée Lauder), and consequently, an extensive sample that includes all firms owned by the luxury conglomerate. For example, LVMH owns more than 60 luxury companies (Table XIII), most of which represent the leading brands in the luxury market.

Table XIII - Luxury brands Included in the study

Company name	Country of origin	Fy2019_Total Revenue (US\$m)	Non financial reporting
LVMH Moët Hennessy-Louis Vuitton SE	France	60,069	x
Kering SA	France	17,777	x
The Estée Lauder Companies Inc.	United States	14,863	x
Compagnie Financière Richemont SA	Switzerland	16,188	x
L'Oréal Luxe	France	12,334	No
Chanel Limited	United Kingdom	12,273	x
Essilor Luxottica SA	Italy	19,463	x
Chow Tai Fook Jewellery Group Limited	China/HKSAR	8,5	x
PVH Corp.	United States	9,657	x
The Swatch Group Ltd.	Switzerland	8,294	x
Hermès International SCA	France	7,704	x
Rolex SA	Switzerland	6,741	No
Ralph Lauren Corporation	United States	6,313	x
Tapestry, Inc	United States	6,027	x
Shiseido Prestige & Fragrance	Japan	5,812	x
Lao Feng Xiang Co. Ltd.	China	7,182	No
Capri Holdings Limited	United Kingdom	5,238	x
Tiffany & CO	United States	4,442	No
Prada Group	Italy	3,61	x
Burberry Group plc	United Kingdom	3,568	x
Moncler Spa	Italy	1,822	x
Salvatore Ferragamo	Italy	1,536	x
Tod's	Italy	1,038	x

Source: Authors' elaboration (2022).

### 3.4.2 Content analysis

Once selecting the companies to analyse, researchers conduct a content analysis to evaluate the extent to which companies integrated CSR practices in the luxury market.

The analysis was conducted in the period between September 2021 and December 2021 and followed the steps suggested by Neuendorf (2002):

(1) *Coding scheme*: We employed an adapted version of the integrated CSR framework (Figure 14), as it supports our understanding of to what extent luxury brand companies perform integrated CSR activities. While standards are considered an expression of more residual CSR practices, strategic philanthropy and mainly integrated outputs lead companies to a deeper integration of CSR. Researchers conducted a pilot study of five brands to assess framework applicability to the luxury market. Some factors of the original framework were confirmed since they match the online context, while others were deleted or revised.

Finally, to confirm the effectiveness of the given dimensions, the authors consulted a group of 40 luxury brand management experts. They evaluated each question using a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree". This process was done by publishing the proposed checklist on the internet via Google Moduli and contacting experts mainly through LinkedIn, the most internationally well-known social network to contact business experts.

Researchers use Cronbach's alpha and the Corrected Item–Total Correlation (CITC) to test the internal consistency.

For all 17 factors, Cronbach's alpha scored 0.967, indicating high internal consistency, following DeVellis (2012), who suggests 0.7 as the cut-off value for the internal consistency. Regarding CITC, which defines the degree of correlation of internal consistency within the scale factors, ranges from 0.664 and 0.861. Thus, the authors did not exclude elements in accordance with Nunnally and Bernstein, (1994), who suggest deleting only factors whose CITC scored below the cut-off value of 0.4.

All factors included in the checklist are summarized in (Table XIV).

(2) *Coders' training*: Two coders participated in a training session to improve reliability. Each coder performs a pilot analysis of five luxury brand. Then they discuss the differences between their results.

(3) *Coding process*: Coders check the evidence on the checklist elements indicating 1 (presence) or 0 (absence). They perform the analysis independently according to the factors on the checklist. Then, the two coders conduct the second round of coding together to achieve a greater degree of agreement. Researchers chose Excel as the primary tool to perform the analysis.

(4) *Descriptive analysis:* The researchers performed a descriptive analysis and calculated scores and averages for each factor.

*Table XIV - Dimensions of sustainability*

<b>DIMENSIONS</b>		<b>FACTORS</b>
<b>1.STANDARDS</b>	ST1	Environmental sustainability
	ST2	Quality standards
	ST3	Human resource standards
	ST4	Economic and social reporting
<b>2.STRATEGIC PHILANTROPY</b>	SP1	Sponsorships to artistic or cultural initiatives
	SP2	Active in donations and charity projects
	SP3	Managing a partnership with no profit organisation/cause relating marketing
	SP4	Community project
	SP5	Creating and managing foundations
	SP6	Employee volunteering time donations
<b>3.INTEGRATED OUTPUTS</b>	IN1	The use of new or recycled raw materials
	IN2	Traceability of the supply chain
	IN3	Capacity to reduce the use of materials, energy or water, and to find more eco-efficient solutions
	IN4	Reducing environmental emission
	IN 5	Employees' training and development policy
	IN6	Welfare policies to benefit employees
	IN7	Code of conduct of employees and suppliers

*Sources: Authors' personal elaboration (2022)*

### **3.5 Findings**

#### **3.5.1 Standards and norms**

The results of our analysis reveal that luxury brands seem to meet national and international sustainability standards and norms. Concern for sustainable development is now widespread among all luxury brands.

After the launch of Agenda 2030 by the United Nations for Sustainable Development in 2015, companies that operate in the luxury market began feeling compelled to contribute by reducing their negative impact and supporting social

and environmental well-being. Notably, luxury companies are increasing their commitment to environmental issues (*environmental sustainability quality standards 100%*) by working with top-quality raw materials produced responsibly and combining ethics with respect for the environment. They have adopted certified ecologically friendly production processes; reduced the usage of harmful chemicals; and promoted the reuse and recycling of raw materials, energy, water, and waste. For example, most companies have met ISO 14001 for an effective environmental management system (EMS) and ISO 50001 to develop policies aimed at more efficient energy use. If we focus on animal welfare, luxury brands are now aiming to create more sustainable processes when sourcing raw materials of animal origin. As part of Project Life, LVMH created the Animal-based Raw Materials Sourcing Charter in this endeavor.

This document attests that LVMH is carefully selecting animal raw materials according to three pillars: the traceability of origin, animal welfare protection in both farming and trapping conditions, and respect for biodiversity throughout all production phases. At the same time, another luxury conglomerate, Kering, introduced the Kering Animal Welfare Standards to ensure the best treatment conditions for animals throughout its supply chain. These animal well-being standards were shared internally with Kering's brands and externally with the public, resulting in a guide for suppliers and other stakeholders moving toward integrating fundamental environmental and social requirements. Finally, even Hermès, operating in line with the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES), has defined rules and guidelines to safeguard animal welfare.

Considering the *human research standards (100%)*, all luxury brands appear in line with the current primary legislations and all guiding principles regarding human rights proposed by the United Nations. For example, most companies are adhering to the United Nations Global Compact, which encourages human rights, controls the entire supply chain labor standards, protects the social environment, and fights against corruption. In favor of employees, most luxury companies are following the ISO 45001 and OHSAS 8000 standards, which promote attention toward health and safety issues in the working environment. Moreover, recently,

luxury companies have shown increasing effort to ensure gender equality and equal opportunities by eliminating all gender gaps within the company. Most companies, including LVMH, Estée Lauder, Capri Holdings, and Burberry, have adhered to the policies set out by the United Nations to promote standards to fight discrimination against gay, lesbian, trans, and intersex people.

Looking at **quality standards (90%)**, most luxury brands act according to ISO 9001 that means strong customer focus, motivation and implication of top management, the process approach and continual improvement.

In terms of **economic and social reporting (100%)**, many luxury companies that align with accounting matters are following the guidelines proposed by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) or the principles of the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB). In this way, companies are becoming more transparent and facilitating each stakeholder's understanding. Notably, Kering has developed control and audit tools named the EP&L methodology. It provides a system to identify environmental risks and opportunities for the company. By measuring environmental impact with the EP&L methodology, Kering tracks the impact and dependency of their brands on natural capital, such as raw materials or energy systems, clean water, clean air, and efficient waste management. This system enables Kering to make more informed decisions about how it interacts with and can better support natural capital.

Finally, a dedicated internal Steering Committee generally monitors the application of norms and standards, and its purpose is to drive a company toward a more integrated approach toward sustainability and to define increasingly challenging goals.

### **3.5.2 Strategic Philanthropy**

From our analysis, the most common strategic financial activities are **donations and charity projects (100%) and partnership with no profit organisation/cause relating marketing (100%)**. In the first case luxury companies are active in donations to projects related to culture, art, environmental protection and supporting of disadvantages communities.



Considering partnerships, all luxury companies are involved in collaborations with not profit organisations that support different social causes. The most common are partnerships with universities, and more generally, organisation within the world of In some cases, luxury companies offer scholarships or internship opportunities for university students. In other instances, they are engaged in strategic partnerships with universities to manage specific training programs. For example, Tod's developed a multi-year collaboration with Bocconi University to promote research and training activities in the luxury and fashion management sectors. Burberry has nurtured emerging creative talent through scholarships at the Royal College of Art in London for years. In 2020, it expanded the network of collaborations by providing scholarships to students enrolled in Parsons School of Design in New York, Institut Français de la Mode in Paris, and the Central Saint Martins in London.

In addition to partnerships with universities, luxury companies have begun collaborations with non-profit organizations engaged in social causes dear to the company. Partnerships can be initiated with organizations that protect the last wild places or animal species, such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), or with non-profit organizations that aim to provide education or meals to underserved communities, such as Save the Children or UNICEF. Moreover, luxury companies establish partnerships with non-profit organizations that support a specific industry. For example, most companies whose core business is fashion have signed alliances with the Fashion Chamber, Fashion for Good, and Global Fashion Agenda.

Then a good number of luxury companies are involved in *sponsorships to artistic and cultural initiatives (65%)* that usually results in co-branded products.

*Creating and managing the foundations (70%)* represent another concrete action conducted by luxury companies to contribute to the collective well-being. In most cases, a luxury brand's foundation is established to increase awareness or raise funds around a cause that is dear and in line with the brand's mission. The social causes supported by luxury brands are different and range from promoting culture and arts to humanitarian initiatives to improve the lives of people living in poor economic conditions. For example, the Louis Vuitton Foundation within the LVMH group supports contemporary art. The foundation contributes to fostering the

accessibility of art to a broader audience through the implementation of permanent collections and the organization of temporary exhibitions and events. As another example, the Prada Foundation in Milan supports cultural and artistic activities by creating exhibitions and architecture, funding cinema, and patronizing the performing arts.

In contrast, Chanel has leveraged the image of its founder Coco Chanel, the icon of female emancipation, and focused its foundation on women. The Chanel Foundation supports women and adolescent girls' economic and social conditions by promoting financial independence, entrepreneurship, leadership, education, and training programs. Finally, we found that the corporate foundations sponsored by luxury brands are also committed to preserving and transmitting handicrafts. For example, the Foundation d'entreprise Hermès supports a series of projects to develop craftsmanship skills useful for creating precious leather and wood accessories.

However, we can also find luxury companies that manage foundations whose scopes are unrelated to their mission or founder. This explains the case of the Ralph Lauren Corporate Foundation, which supports cancer care and prevention, education programs, and community building in underserved communities. In the United States, the Ralph Lauren Corporate Foundation has created "The Pink Pony Fund campaign," which focuses on implementing programs aimed at helping patients at every stage of the battle against cancer.

***Employees' volunteering (60%)*** is another activity among luxury brands' strategic philanthropy initiatives. Employees' volunteering includes anything from career inspiration events and employability workshops to long-term mentoring programs and community revitalization projects or fundraising. For example, Burberry encourages employees to devote about three working days a year to support local communities by organizing and performing activities, such as cooking, sports training, or re-evaluating waste through the practice of upcycling. In previous years, about 30% of Burberry's employees participated in employee volunteer activities and contributed to fundraising. In 2020, the Ralph Lauren Corporation's employees spent 14,000 working hours supporting social causes through the "Give Back" project. LVMH, The Estée Lauder Companies,

Compagnie Financière Richemont, PVH Corp., Hermès, Tapestry, Shiseido, and Capri Holdings support and encourage employees to volunteer their time to help the local community, non-profit organizations, and social causes.

*Community projects (35%)* results as the less common activities conducted by luxury brand companies.

### **3.5.3 Integrated outputs**

Concerning integrated outputs, the need for sustainable products and services requires luxury brands to constantly search for *new raw materials (100%)*. As demonstrated by our study, the innovation in materials concerns both the development of new fabrics and the improvement of traceability, traditional textile fibers, or leather materials. Regarding new materials, fabrics made by upcycling or recycling processes are playing an increasingly important role in some recent collections. For example, Prada proposed a re-Nylon capsule collection consisting of several regenerated nylon items. The collection includes products developed in collaboration with Acquafil, which manufactures nylon from plastic waste or textile fiber waste. Even Burberry has made garments using regenerated nylon named ECONYL® with the support of the pioneering technology REFIBRA, which uses recycled cotton scraps. Another interesting case study is Salvatore Ferragamo, who collaborated with Orange Fiber to create an exclusive capsule collection of clothing for women made using vitamin yarn obtained from citrus waste.

Moving from the apparel sector to eyewear, in 2019, Essilor Luxottica invested in research projects to recover and regenerate the polymeric materials of all their products being stored in their warehouses. Concerning traditional raw materials, luxury companies are striving to use only the ones that are certified. For example, Capri Holdings proved that 95% of its leather comes from responsible tanneries. Burberry has stated its products consist of 100% recyclable and sustainable cotton. The Ralph Lauren Corporation aims to use 100% sustainable raw materials by 2025. Finally, in the endeavor to search for new sustainable materials, LVMH and Kering have created a sort of repository available to all group brands. Since 2013, Kering has been operating the Kering Materials Innovation Lab (MIL) platform, which collects 3000 fabrics, and recently, it introduced an additional repository

dedicated to materials used in the watch and jewelry sectors. Similarly, LVMH has implemented a digital library named the Eco-Materials Handbook that lists more than 500 sustainable materials with high innovation content.

Regarding the use of fur, some companies like Burberry, Prada, Michael Kors, and Gucci have forbidden it, while others still use animal fur while demonstrating the fur's traceability through the supply chain. In terms of fragrances and cosmetics, most companies are striving to avoid animal testing processes. In the jewelry sector, luxury companies' precious materials have been observing strict requirements along their entire supply chain. In addition, companies ensure that none of the diamonds used come from regions criticized for their severe breaches of human rights.

Regarding packaging, luxury companies have aimed to reduce their impact on the environment by minimizing the usage of PVC for new bio alternatives and using recycled or FSC-certified paper. Burberry vows that 100% of its baseboards and paper come from accredited sources, ensuring that it does not contribute to deforestation and biodiversity loss. Beyond recycling and upcycling technologies used to experiment with new materials, innovation in processes concerns two other aspects: waste reduction and resource optimization. In terms of waste reduction, all luxury companies have shown efforts through a series of actions to minimize waste. For example, Prada has implemented a waste management system that allows the effective disposal of production waste by cataloguing the waste flow of each production process. In addition, the company has arranged the recycling of plastic, paper, glass, and printer cartridges both in its production plants and in its offices. Burberry is also carefully monitoring and controlling waste recycling operations along the group's supply chain. Recently, the company has been pursuing zero waste in landfills for the primary processes carried out in the UK and Italy.

***Energy resource optimization (100%)*** is another crucial aspect that luxury brand companies are carefully managing. Notably, luxury brands have been implementing several ***reduce the emission emissions (100%)*** in the near future. For this reason, they are investing in nature-powered renewable energy, i.e., wind, solar, or water. For example, the Swatch Group has invested in renewable energy, including solar and hydroelectric, after replacing old energy systems with new, more efficient ones.

Similarly, Richemont Group has increased the use of renewable energy sources,

such as hydropower, wind, or solar energy. In 2019, 60% of Richemont's energy supply was clean energy. The target is 100% renewable energy by 2030. However, luxury companies have been saving energy not only in production plants but also in stores. Indeed, several stores have gained Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification, one of the most recognized international standards for measuring the sustainability of buildings.

The integrated outputs also include policies that are procedures and guidelines transmitted by a business organization to direct employees, and more generally, stakeholders in business activities. These guidelines prevent stakeholders from acting in disagreement with its goals. Our research found *codes of conduct (75%)* and welfare policies to be the primary tools introduced by luxury brand companies. The code of conduct consists of norms, rules, and good practices that guide employees' behavior. It is generally based on internal protocols and international initiatives and standards, such as the Global Compact, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Companies.

In the case of conglomerates like LVMH, Kering, Capri Holdings, The Estée Lauder Companies, and Groupe Richemont, the rules established by the code of conduct constitute an essential reference point for all brands of the group. Moreover, in recent times, it has been common among luxury brands to deliver the code of conduct to suppliers to ensure good practices throughout the supply chain. The code of conduct urges suppliers to apply techniques and methods prohibiting forced labor practices, child labor, and discriminatory practices.

Companies ensure that employees and stakeholders meet the rules of the code of conduct by providing training courses focused on ethics, compliance, integrity, inclusion, and the development of soft skills. For example, in recent years, Burberry's suppliers have attended training programs that support their ethical business practices and help them improve employees' working conditions.

Regarding *welfare policies (90%)*, these include a series of initiatives for the benefit of employees and their families. These may consist of monetary benefits, such as tax breaks or additional services. Implementing such practices represents a strategic element in terms of performance since welfare policies positively affect

workers' performance. Essilor-Luxottica is a relevant example among companies with a high commitment to welfare policies. The group has integrated strategies at the corporate level to increase the well-being of employees, as the "tailor-made welfare" initiative allows employees to choose how to receive their annual agreed award.

Moreover, we can consider initiatives to promote welfare. For example, companies are providing *training courses to employees (90%)* to increase their knowledge and teach new skills. In 2020, despite the challenges of the pandemic, Moncler invested approximately 530,000 Euros in delivering 120,000 hours in training activities for its employees, of whom 73% were women; 80% of the training initiatives promoted personal and professional skills and knowledge, while the others were intended mainly to boost occupational health and safety.

Table XV - Results content analysis

DIMENSIONS	FACTORS		
1.STANDARDS	ST1	Environmental sustainability	100%
	ST2	Quality standards	80%
	ST3	Human resource standards	90%
	ST4	Economic and social reporting	90%
2.STRATEGIC PHILANTROPY	SP1	Sponsorships to artistic or cultural initiatives	65%
	SP2	Active in donations and charity projects	100%
	SP3	Managing a partnership with no profit organisation/cause relating marketing	100%
	SP4	Community project	35%
	SP5	Creating and managing foundations	70%
	SP6	Employee volunteering time donations	60%
3.INTEGRATED OUTPUTS	IN1	The use of new or recycled raw materials	100%
	IN2	Traceability of the supply chain	30%
	IN3	Capacity to reduce the use of materials, energy or water, and to find more eco-efficient solutions	100%
	IN4	Reducing environmental emission	100%
	IN 5	Employees' training and development policy	90%
	IN6	Welfare policies to benefit employees	90%
	IN7	Code of conduct of employees and suppliers	75%

Source: Authors' elaboration (2022)

### Discussion and implications

This chapter aimed to clarify to what extent luxury brands contribute to collective well-being by integrating CSR into their corporate strategies. The results confirmed that luxury brands are working extremely hard to create more sustainable businesses to improve general well-being.

Considering the first dimension of the framework (standards and norms), luxury

brands seem to be meeting all the rules promoted by national and international organizations. This applies to standards that provide practical tools to manage environmental and ethical responsibilities and those in human resources and reporting systems. It is interesting to note that many luxury companies have developed control and reporting tools to verify their sustainability and communicate results to stakeholders. However, as stated by the integrated CSR framework, standards and norms are mainly expressed via residual CSR (Mosca & Civera, 2017), resulting in stand-alone practices that improve corporate reputation and respond to stakeholders' pressure more than the sustaining of a process for continuous improvement (Civera et al., 2018; Hoque et al., 2018). Thus, the contribution of standards and norms application to general well-being is limited and requires that companies place more effort into the deeper integration of CSR into corporate strategy.

Then, our analysis revealed that there is an increasing amount of commitment to philanthropic activities. Notably, the crucial role of corporate foundations and strategic partnerships has emerged as tools that give companies a chance to take on the challenge of sustainability seriously. Regarding foundations, each luxury company is leading its foundation by performing several activities aimed at exploring sustainable ways to improve community well-being; these methods range from protecting the planet to empowering people.

Regarding partnerships, in the past, luxury companies used to support charitable events or social causes to push consumers to evaluate the brand as sustainable because it was socially engaged. Today, partnerships have turned into a solid relationship of cooperation with profit or non-profit organizations that allow luxury brands to respond to the Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs) call for concrete initiatives in education, social equality, and the environment. Thus, partnerships are

going beyond the logic of residual CSR to become a strategic asset linked to and consistent with the company's core business (Porter & Kramer, 2002). However, while recognizing that tools of strategic philanthropy are closer to integrated CSR practices than the mere application of standards (Freeman *et al.*, 2010), their fulfillment does not imply a fundamental change in the business model of luxury companies. On the contrary, strategic philanthropy initiatives still consist of additional activities that do not reside at the heart of corporate strategies.

Finally, we analyzed luxury companies' attempts to involve outputs that represent a concrete integration of social, ethical, and environmental practices into products/services, processes, and policies (Mosca & Civera, 2017). Regarding products and services, using materials that positively impact the environment and communities, including packaging that comes only from forests managed responsibly, has become a priority.

Luxury brands are focusing their efforts on creating collections made by sustainable raw materials from cruelty-free animal breeding or by recycled processes that reduce environmental impacts and the use of natural resources. Moreover, they are trying to be greener. Luxury brands are demonstrating that they care about the environment by adopting certified environmentally friendly production processes, promoting the reduction of toxic chemical usage, reusing or recycling energy and water, and reducing waste. In terms of policies, the subscription to the code of conduct by suppliers and commercial partners provides luxury companies with a valuable framework for spreading sustainable values and sharing the company's culture among stakeholders. However, while luxury brand's approach to integrating outputs demonstrates more outstanding efforts to engage in sustainable practices, there is still a great deal more to do.

First, when we consider products, the commitment to sustainability in most cases is still limited to capsule collections in collaboration with start-ups and does not involve the entire offering of products. Thus, we expect luxury companies to expand their portfolio of sustainable products to all items manufactured. This improvement requires reformulating the business model to involve an ethical and humanistic focus that combines the company's efficiency with its social mission. Second, another issue found concerns *traceability of the supply chain (35%)*. Some



companies have introduced a code of conduct to clarify the sourcing and traceability of raw materials regarding issues linked to nature, biodiversity, animal welfare, and local communities. However, this practice is a weak attempt to support suppliers' endeavors to become more sustainable. Luxury companies need to enforce their influence on supply chain sustainability by using more practical measures. For example, recently, Gucci proposed the program "Sviluppo Filiere" in partnership with Intesa Sanpaolo Bank. It engages small businesses belonging to the Gucci supply chain with local growth projects, global programs, and the renewal of production facilities using a wide range of loans and preferential rates.

### **3.6 Limitations and future research**

In recent times, interest in sustainability from both researchers and practitioners has increased. However, research on sustainability in the luxury industry lacks studies that investigate to what extent luxury brands are effectively contributing to well-being by integrating sustainability into their business models (Athwal et al., 2019; Kunz et al., 2020). We attempted to cover this gap with our research, and it is assumed that the results of this qualitative study provide a deeper understanding of strategies aimed at integrating sustainability while contributing to stakeholder well-being. Notably, the purpose of this study was to explain the shift from CSR as just a policy to meet international standards to CSR performed with the purpose of enhancing people and community well-being in the luxury market as suggested by Freeman (2010).

The results of this research open the path for future research on the topic of sustainability in the luxury industry. From an academic perspective, this study enriches the domain of research about sustainable luxury by applying the stakeholder's theory proposed by Freeman and Velamuri (2008) to sustainable actions implemented by luxury companies. In most cases, previous studies on sustainability and luxury brands did not consider the distinction between residual and integrated CSR when investigating how luxury companies engage in sustainable practices. This means that the impact of sustainable actions on people and community well-being has received little attention from researchers focused on the luxury industry. Thus, we expect future research on sustainable luxury to deal

more with actions related to strategic philanthropy and mainly integrated outputs. As we have demonstrated, only the activities included in the dimensions of strategic philanthropy and integrated outputs performed well regarding general well-being.

Moreover, as this was a qualitative study, it opens avenues for further quantitative and qualitative research to investigate to what extent the different tools proposed in our study can positively affect luxury brands' economic and financial performances. It may also be interesting to test how luxury brand consumers perceive the different sustainable tools. Are luxury consumers sensitive to actions more driven to community well-being or not?

Finally, as the topic of sustainability is rapidly evolving, this research needs to be updated in the future to extend upon the present state-of-the-art methods and collect the emerging tools used to integrate CSR into core business activities.

In addition to implications for future research, our study offers interesting insights for managing luxury brands in a more sustainable manner. From the managerial perspective, the study provides, for the first time, managers with an extensive overview of strategic tools for managing CSR strategies that can have a positive impact on society. As demonstrated by the literature, only when companies perform an integrated CSR can they contribute to people and community well-being. By following the CSR integrated framework proposed by Mosca and Civera (2017), this study suggests to managers which sustainable activities allow luxury companies to move from residual CSR to concrete action in favor of stakeholders' well-being. They include strategic philanthropy and mainly integrated outputs, which encompass different activities, including the use of sustainable raw materials, traceability in the supply chain, recycled packaging, minimizing waste, zero CO2 emissions, a code of conduct, and welfare policies. These activities need to be implemented, monitored, and improved by luxury brand managers in the future to lead luxury companies toward sustainable development that improves both companies' performance and stakeholders' well-being. In particular, our study has emphasized the lack of two main activities. On the one hand, luxury brand managers need to focus on the use of sustainable raw materials and sustainable production processes for more than a single capsule collection. On the other hand, another future challenge consists of improving the sustainability of the entire supply chain

to ensure that suppliers that operate in the luxury industry respect social, environmental, and economic sustainability principles.

### **3.7 Conclusions**

To sum up, our research highlighted that luxury companies have shown significant improvements toward a more integrated CSR. Year after year, each luxury brand has implemented more proper strategies in both the social and environmental fields. Furthermore, they have been setting new goals and long-term challenges, particularly in line with Agenda 2030. The growing awareness that a company has of the communities in which it operates and the vital contributions it can make through the responsible management of its activities have resulted in concrete commitments and measures to improve general and community well-being. Specifically, regarding the environment, luxury brands are committed to reducing the impact of their activities through the more efficient management of processes and resources or by minimizing waste, air pollution, and emissions. Efforts were also found when considering strategic philanthropy, such as creating foundations and partnerships with non-profit organizations. Concerning employees, luxury companies have increased their commitment to creating important plans and projects aimed at protecting all employees and human beings in general by organizing structured training programs and adopting various measures to ensure the well-being of all staff and their health and safety. Despite the progress in CSR, the road toward the integrated CSR approach is just beginning. First, we found some gaps when considering how luxury brands manage the sustainability of products. In most cases, they limit sustainable raw materials and production processes to capsule collections and do not apply sustainable practices to the entire offering of products. Second, supply chain sustainability is another relevant challenge luxury brand managers must face in the future. Luxury brands need to propose innovative actions to encourage their suppliers to practice integrated CSR.

Finally, as we expect further upheaval driven by national and international authorities responsible for sustainable development, our research opens avenues for further investigation, both qualitative and quantitative, on emerging strategies to improve luxury companies' contributions to consumer well-being.

## **2. Streetwear meets luxury: What are the consequences of luxury co-branding targeted at young luxury consumers?**

*“I just want to start a brand that inspires and is geared towards youth.”*  
– Virgil Abloh, pioneers of high-end street fashion

### **4.1 Introduction**

The relevance of streetwear is becoming increasingly evident in recent times. Reports from consultancy agencies foresee significant growth in the sales of streetwear products (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2019; D’Arpizio and Levato, 2021). At the same time, the luxury market has registered an increasing number of collaborations with streetwear brands that take shape through a set of co-branding partnerships (Table XVI).

The literature provides some clues that explain how inappropriate co-branding partnerships might impact negatively associated brands (Shen, Choi and Chow, 2017). This occurs when the level of fit among participating brands is inadequate or absent (Helmig, Huber and Leeflang, 2008). An inconsistent collaboration provokes not only a dismal failure in terms of co-branding but also has a negative impact on brand evaluation (Loken and John, 1993; Vogel, Cook and Watchravesringkan, 2019). At first sight, this seems to be the case of co-branding partnerships between streetwear and luxury brands. Luxury is traditionally linked

to attributes such as heritage, prestige, and exclusivity (Dubois and Duquesne, 1993; Kapferer, 1997; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004; Kapferer and Bastien, 2009; Ko, Costello and Taylor, 2019), while streetwear has its roots in the urban culture (Adz and Stone, 2018; DeLeon *et al.*, 2019). Recently the study of Yu, Rothenberg and Moore (2020) investigates co-branded alliances with streetwear brands in the luxury market. Results show that such collaborations appeal to younger luxury consumers who prefer co-branded products with streetwear instead of the traditional ones with mass-brands or fast-fashion brands. *But an overarching question is... just what are the consequences for the value of luxury brands from the customer perspective?*

In our paper we aim to deepen the streetwear phenomenon in the luxury market by investigating the impact of collaboration between luxury and streetwear brands on luxury brand value from the customer perspective, that is the customer-based brand equity.

In our work, we consider the model of customer-based brand equity theorised by Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) who agrees to use three components—brand loyalty, brand quality and brand awareness—for studying customer-based brand equity. Thus, in our study, we test the impact of streetwear on customer-based brand equity through the mediation of the above-mentioned components.

Hypotheses tested by using the PLS-SEM investigate the perceptions of 246 actual consumers belonging to the youngest generations of luxury consumers, categorised as Millennials and Generation Z. According to researchers' younger generations of consumers are the real growth engine of the luxury brand market, since, with their size, they have the power to reshape the market and to influence older generations (Mundel, Huddleston and Vodermeier, 2017; Batat, 2019).

Thus, our paper starting from the contribution of Yu, Rothenberg and Moore (2020) that have demonstrated the interest of young consumers in streetwear collaboration aims to investigate if co-branding partnerships with streetwear brands can lead to luxury brand dilutions.

Results provided luxury brand managers with a new direction for innovating their offerings without diluting their brands. Moreover, the study enriches the stream of luxury literature that uses the consumer-centric paradigm to explain the emerging

behaviour of luxury brand consumers (Tynan, McKechnie and Chhuon, 2010; Roper *et al.*, 2013; Seo and Buchanan-Oliver, 2019).

The paper is structured as follows. In the first section, the literature is reviewed. Then, based on sound conceptual foundations, hypotheses are developed. The methodology utilized is described and implemented, following which the results are presented. The article concludes by discussing the theoretical and managerial implications.

## **4.2 Literature review and hypotheses development**

### **4.2.1 *The definition of luxury brand***

An ultimate and complete consensus on the definition of "luxury" does not exist (Dubois and Duquesne, 1993; Kapferer, 1997; Ko, Costello and Taylor, 2019). On the contrary, the debate about luxury involving different disciplines that range from economics to psychology, from sociology to philosophy, contributes to making luxury meaning kaleidoscopic. The etymology of luxury itself reveals that the luxury concept has contradictory meanings. It derives from the Latin word "Luxus" that can be associated with negative implications such as "excess", "intemperance", "debauchery" but also with positive connotations like "pomp" and "magnificence" (Cristini *et al.*, 2017).

Despite the complexity of finding a shared definition of luxury, some studies attempt to identify some attributes that define what luxury brand is and what is not. In this case, we refer to the product-centric perspective that explains the luxury traits by using a series of features that make luxury brands different from the "ordinary one". The literature review collects corporate heritage, high quality, premium price, exclusivity, status, innovation as the main attributes that capture the dimensions of luxury (Kapferer, 1997; Fionda and Moore, 2009; Chevalier and Mazzalovo, 2012; Heine, 2012; Mosca, 2017). According to (Desai and Keller, 2002), these attributes demand to be managed appropriately to avoid running into brand dilution that reduce consistency and favourable brand associations.

However, other authors agree with using more than a limited attributes to define luxury brands. In fact, recently luxury is better identified with a need for self-

gratification and the search for unique personal experiences, helping to make individuality prevail over the social sphere of belonging (Armitage, Roberts and Bishop, 2016). This means that defining luxury brand requests to consider the customer-centric perspective where the subjective dimension plays a leading role in addition to the product-centric paradigm that emphasizes the product characteristics (Berthon *et al.*, 2009; Tynan, McKechnie and Chhuon, 2010; Roper *et al.*, 2013; Seo and Buchanan-Oliver, 2019).

Notably, Berthon *et al.* (2009) have argued that defining a luxury brand implies going beyond the material sphere. In fact, the definition of luxury requests to focus on the holistic dimension of luxury that adds collective and subjective spheres to the material one to capture the real essence of luxury consisting of connections among individuals, items, and brands. Even Roper *et al.* (2013), when exploring the concept of luxury, does not focus on product traits but considers consumers' emotional and cultural dimensions, demonstrating how consumers themselves give meaning to a particular version of luxury. Mainly, Tynan, McKechnie and Chhuon (2010) proved that luxury is a concept that increasingly relates to consumer's experience and that the criteria for understanding luxury brands need to be defined through consumers and how they experience luxury. To summarize, the luxury brand is a very dynamic concept (Mortelmans, 2005) that over time have had different roles depending upon the era's consumer expectations and experience (Okonkwo, 2010).

#### ***4.2.2 The definition of streetwear brand***

Streetwear was born in 1972 when the first store, "Trash and Vaudeville," inspired by punk and rock style, was opened in Jersey City in the US (Adz and Stone, 2018). Defining streetwear is not easy as it is by no means a comprehensive concept. According to Virgil Abloh, founder of Off-White and one of the most famous creative director of Louis Vuitton Men: "Streetwear is an art movement. It's a way of making things." In other words, streetwear is not only a fashion or stylistic trend but a sort of artistic movement that ranges from music to painting to fashion (DeLeon *et al.*, 2019).

Originally, streetwear was an eye-catching phenomenon that mainly involved a niche of young people who shared unconventional dress codes and lifestyles inspired by sub-cultures of the 1980s and 1990s. Streetwear remained a niche product for unconventional young people and a by-product of surf or skateboard companies until 1994 when Supreme opened its first store in New York. Since then, Supreme has raised the profile of streetwear style, exporting it from the US to the rest of the world, whilst preserving its position as the top streetwear brand worldwide (Ostillio and Barberi, 2021). Thus, from being a niche, the streetwear market has grown to become a multi-billion-dollar industry, whose global size is estimated at \$185 billion in terms of sales in 2019 (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2019). In 2020 the pandemic has just slowed streetwear sales as the streetwear phenomenon remains relevant. Today, the streetwear market is dominated by streetwear brands in the strict sense and sports brands. In the first case, we refer to brands, like Supreme, Off-White, Palace, Bape, Huf, Obey, Carhartt and SHUT, and all those brands created and managed by visionary artists. In the case of sports brands, we intend brands like Addidas or Nike that have focus some products line on vintage sneakers or streetwear garments made with technical textiles.

All these brands have achieved success through becoming popular with the youngest generations, categorised as Millennials and Generation Z. These consumers look for products that meets their unconventional personalities, and they pay attention to the experiential dimension (Mundel, Huddleston and Vodermeier, 2017; Batat, 2019).

Given the appreciation of streetwear among young people, streetwear brands have caught the attention of luxury companies. As a result, luxury brands started to approach streetwear companies with the intention of implementing co-branding partnerships (Pedeliento *et al.*, 2021).

#### **4.2.3 Co-branding in the luxury market**

The literature on co-branding is profuse because this concept has been around for a long time. Most authors agree on defining co-branding as a strategic partnership that involves two or more brands whose aim is to collaborate to launch a new product in a new or existing market (Besharat, 2010). Many studies attest the



benefits of co-branding for partnering brands (Paydas Turan, 2021). Some authors theorised that successful co-branding alliances are powerful because they increase not only the brands' revenue but also consumer awareness and brand loyalty (Desai and Keller, 2002; Xiao and Lee, 2014). Washburn, Till and Priluck (2004) highlight how positive brand evaluations of the partner brands enhance the brand evaluation of the co-branded product, generating positive spill-over effects. Other authors argue how co-branding alliances not only improve brand awareness but also increase sales since they open new market opportunities (Rollet *et al.*, 2013).

However, other studies point out how co-branding has adverse effects when the level of fit between the associated brands is inadequate or absent or when consumers have a negative perception of the partnering brands (Helmig, Huber and Leeflang, 2008). The consequences of ineffective co-branding partnerships should not be underestimated as they incur not only a dismal failure of the partnership but also a negative impact in terms of brand evaluation (Loken and John, 1993; Vogel, Cook and Watchravesringkan, 2019).

Co-branding is not a new practice for luxury companies as, in the last decades, they have entered co-branding partnerships with companies belonging to diverse industries. In the Era of the so called "Democratization of luxury", the purpose of such alliances was to encourage affordable consumer purchases (Okonkwo, 2010). Examples are strategic alliances between Gucci and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles to produce the Fiat 500 or collaborations between Versace or Jean Paul Gaultier and Evian to design creative bottles of water (Ho *et al.*, 2019).

Most of co-branding partnerships have involved luxury and fast-fashion brands. For example, H&M has implemented a considerable number of co-branding partnerships with leading luxury companies and designers, including Karl Lagerfeld, the creative director of Chanel, in 2004, and Gian Battista Valli in 2019 (Shen, Choi and Chow, 2017; Mrad, Farah and Haddad, 2019).

In recent times luxury brands have increased co-branding partnerships with streetwear brands. The outputs of such alliances are products strongly linked to the streetwear world as they are garments with oversized shapes and that are made using technical fabrics (Figure 15). As shown by Table XVII, co-branding

partnerships involve different kinds of products, among which sneakers play a crucial role.

Another interesting aspect emerged from Table XVI is all levels of the luxury pyramid are involved in collaborations with streetwear brands, including griffes. According to Kapferer (1997), griffes are luxury brands at the top of the luxury pyramid since they offer “pure creation, unique work, materialized perfection”. Examples of griffes are Dior, Chanel, Gucci, Prada, and Louis Vuitton. Griffes demand to be managed appropriately to maintain consistency and favourable brand associations to avoid running into brand dilution (Desai and Keller, 2002). Previous studies highlight dilution as being more common among luxury brands, especially griffes, than non-luxury brands (Hagtvedt and Patrick, 2009), when consumers perceive the luxury brand as not being unique, exclusive, and prestigious, and it provokes a decrease in the value of the brand.

It seems the case of luxury and streetwear partnership. “Luxury” and “streetwear” apparently have nothing in common. The idea of luxury has traditionally been associated with heritage, prestige, and exclusivity (Dubois and Duquesne, 1993; Kapferer, 1997; Vigneron and Johnson, 2004; Kapferer and Bastien, 2009; Ko, Costello and Taylor, 2019; ).

On the contrary, streetwear was grounded in the cultures of skateboarding and surfing and later influenced by street and underground scenes (Adz ad Stone, 2018; DeLeon et al., 2019).

So far, what emerges about the relationship between luxury and streetwear are the results of some recent studies. McKelvey(2020) supported the co-branded partnership between luxury and streetwear just as a trend, while Pedeliento *et al.*, (2021) by discussing the Off-White case agreed that streetwear is the new luxury paradigm.

Finally, Yu, Rothenberg and Moore (2020) explored the decision-making of younger luxury consumers preferences of luxury co-branding products by using the signaling theory. Their study reveals how luxury consumers prefer luxury co-branding partnerships with premium streetwear or sportswear brands instead of the traditional ones with mass-market or fast-fashion brands.

However, from previous research, nothing emerges about the impact of such collaborations on brand value.

Our study aims to cover this gap by examining the impact of the co-branded partnership between luxury and streetwear brands on luxury brand value from customer perspectives by developing the hypotheses developed in the following section.

*Table XVI - Co-branding partnership between streetwear and luxury brands*

<b>Luxury Brands</b>	<b>Streetwear Brands</b>	<b>Co-Branded Products</b>	<b>Collaboration Year</b>
<b>Louis Vuitton</b>	Supreme	apparel, sneakers, leather goods	2017
<b>Alexandra Wang</b>	Adidas	apparel	2017
<b>Gucci</b>	Coco Capitàn	apparel, leather goods, sneakers	2017
<b>Ralph Laurent</b>	Palace	apparel, sneakers	2018
<b>Fendi</b>	Fila	apparel, sneakers, leather goods	2018
<b>Burberry</b>	Rubchinskiy	apparel	2018
<b>Dior</b>	Matthew M. Williams	apparel, leather goods	2018
<b>Balenciaga</b>	Off White	sneakers	2018
<b>Chanel</b>	Pharrel Williams	sneakers	2019
<b>Gucci</b>	Dapper Dan	apparel, sneakers, leather goods	2019
<b>Prada</b>	Adidas	sneakers	2019
<b>Stone Island</b>	Supreme	apparel	2019
<b>Dior</b>	Stüssy	apparel, sneakers	2020
<b>Dior</b>	Nike	sneakers	2020
<b>Coach</b>	Bape	leather goods	2020
<b>Hublot</b>	Shepard	hard luxury (watches)	2021
<b>Gucci</b>	North Face	apparel	2021
<b>Louis Vuitton</b>	Fisher	apparel	2021
<b>Tiffany</b>	Supreme	Jewelry	2021
<b>Prada</b>	Adidas	apparel, shoes	2022
<b>Burberry</b>	Supreme	apparel	2022

*Sources: Authors' personal elaboration (2022)*

Figure 15 – Products of collaborations among luxury and streetwear brands

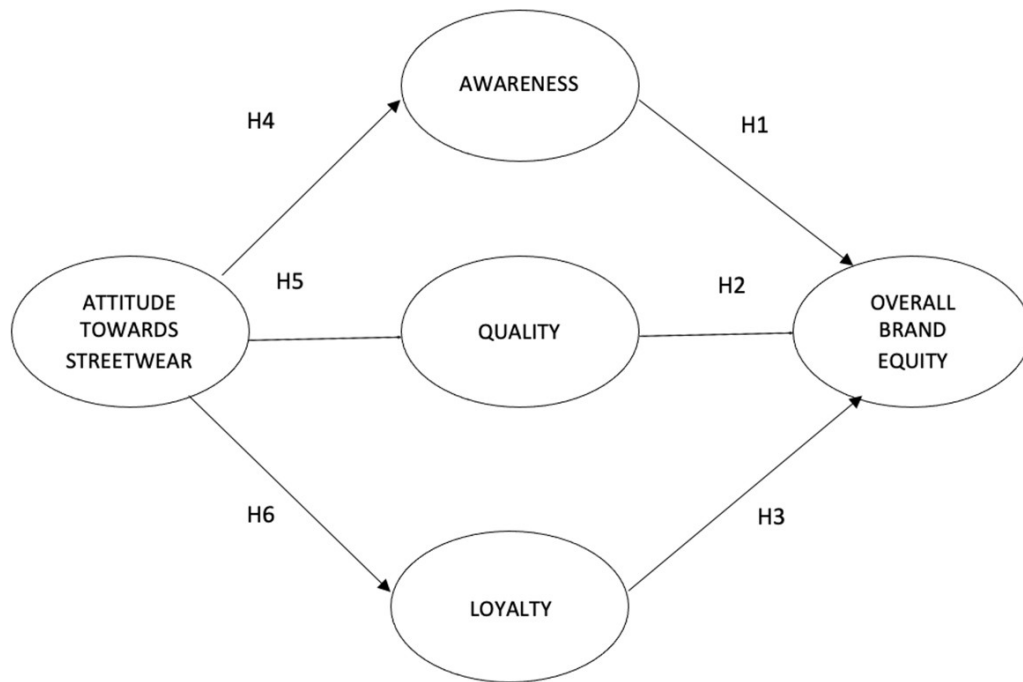


#### 4.2.4 Streetwear co-branding in the luxury market and brand equity

As previously mentioned, luxury brands, therefore, approach streetwear in the form of co-branded alliances. According to the literature, the effects of co-branding partnerships with streetwear brands on brand evaluations of luxury brands from customers' perspectives are not investigated. So, we aim to address this lacuna via

the impact of co-branded collaborations with streetwear on customer-based brand equity.

Figure 16 - Research model (Hypotheses)



The Customer-based brand equity represents the idea that the knowledge of a specific brand determines consumer responses to a brand's marketing initiatives (Aaker, 1991).

Aaker (2010) conceptualized consumer-based brand equity as a multidimensional construct of five dimensions: brand awareness and association, quality, loyalty, and other proprietary brand assets. However, in our study, we consider the models theorised by Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000), who agree as to using only three components for studying customer-based brand equity (Figure 16). Their conceptualization of brand equity considers brand loyalty, brand quality and brand awareness, as well as brand association. Even though brand awareness and brand association seem to be different concepts, some authors suggest combining them into a single dimension and propose empirical evidence to support their thesis (Yoo, Donthu and Lee, 2000; Yoo and Donthu, 2001; Washburn, Till and Priluck, 2004).

To study the links between customer based-brand equity and its dimensions, we consider what has emerged from the literature.

For example, a high brand value depends on the positive and strong associations of consumers with the brand, on a high level of perceived quality and, finally, on brand loyalty. Consequently, by strengthening brand equity, the value of the brand increases (Aaker, 1991). In more detail, brand awareness, together with brand associations, defines brand image, which depends on the touchpoints and consequent relationships between a brand and consumers (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 2010). Furthermore, when associations with the brand are positively related to brand equity, they can be an indicator of the company's commitment to offering quality goods and services. Besides, brand awareness and brand associations support consumers in the purchasing decision process. Considering the factors set out above, we formulate the following research hypotheses:

*H1: Brand awareness has a positive impact on customer-based brand equity.*

Perceived quality represents the subjective judgment of consumers regarding the product. A high level of perceived quality means that after a long-term experience with the brand, consumers perceive it as being better than other brands. Consequently, quality represents a very important factor in the purchasing decision-making process. As the level of perceived quality increases, the value of the brand also increases:

*H2: Brand quality has a positive impact on customer-based brand equity.*

Brand loyalty represents a consumer's willingness to repeat purchase, despite offers from competing products or services that could lead to a change in the consumer's purchasing decisions. The literature shows that loyal customers demonstrate a greater response to marketing and communication actions than non-loyal customers (Srinivasan, Jain and Sikand, 2004). Brand loyalty, therefore, ensures that consumers buy a certain offering over time because they never decide to turn to

competitors. Therefore, brand equity will increase as consumers are loyal to the brand:

H3: Brand loyalty has a positive impact on customer-based brand equity.

A brand is a fundamental resource for every company because unlike tangible assets such as plant, stores or furniture, a brand cannot be replicated, copied, or replaced. It is a distinctive feature of the company that needs to stand the test of time (Jin & Cedrola, 2017). This is even more crucial in the luxury brand market than in any other industry since luxury brands need to preserve their core luxury attributes as they strive to innovate for the new younger generations (Kapferer and Michaut-Denizeau, 2020).

In the case co-branded collaborations with streetwear, luxury brand managers generally engage with streetwear not to stimulate affordable purchases but to renovate their traditional image in contrast to the collaborations with fast-fashion brands where the partnerships were based on affordable prices. Co-branded luxury and streetwear products preserve high prices and exclusivity. For example, a pair of sneakers created by Prada in collaboration with Adidas has a price tag of about 450 euro, while a bag designed by Louis Vuitton with Supreme costs as much as 6,000 euros (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2019). Moreover, the co-branded products of luxury and streetwear brands are, in some cases, limited editions that transmit consumers' perceptions of exclusivity and scarcity.

Evidently, therefore, luxury and streetwear brands may have different roots or heritages, but some principles can act favorably in juxtaposing them.

As mentioned before, in addition to the product-centric perspective, some authors have introduced a definition of luxury based on a customer-centric viewpoint. The consumer-centric perspective explains the meaning of luxury by investigating how consumers decipher the luxury concept (Tynan, McKechnie and Chhuon, 2010; Roper *et al.*, 2013; Seo and Buchanan-Oliver, 2019; Banister, Roper and Potavanich, 2020).

In other words, the customer-centric viewpoint affirms that the definition of luxury is driven by consumers and not necessarily by permanent and stable attributes, as the traditional definition of luxury repetitively affirms (Roper *et al.*, 2013).

This new approach argues that luxury is a concept strongly influenced by the social and cultural situation over time (Cristini *et al.*, 2017; Ko, Costello and Taylor, 2019) and social and personal perceptions of luxury consumers (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004; Seo and Buchanan-Oliver, 2019). For this reason, what constitutes a luxury brand depends on consumer assessments and is not permanent (Ko, Costello and Taylor, 2019).

From the consumer-centric perspective, it can be assumed that the collaboration of a luxury with a streetwear brand does not imply the dilution of the luxury brand image. The co-branding of luxury and streetwear products responds to the luxury meanings of the new luxury consumers, who perceive luxury differently from the previous generations.

Since the literature affirms that consumers' attitudes towards a co-branding partnership influence their subsequent attitudes towards each brand after the alliance (Helmig, Huber and Leeflang, 2008), our hypothesis is that a positive consumer attitude towards such a brand collaboration positively impacts luxury brand value from the customer perspective. In other words, we assume that partnerships between streetwear and luxury brands positively impact the customer-based brand equity of the luxury brand involved. According to the literature, customer-based brand equity can be studied through the mediation of its components (Yoo, Donthu and Lee, 2000), so we assume that a positive attitude towards streetwear results in a positive attitude towards each component of brand equity. These considerations lead directly to the next three hypotheses:

*H4: A positive attitude towards streetwear has a positive impact on brand awareness.*

*H5: A positive attitude towards streetwear has a positive impact on brand quality.*

*H6: A positive attitude towards streetwear has a positive impact on brand loyalty.*



### **4.3 Methodology: sample, measures, and analysis**

#### **4.3.1 *Sample***

Data were gathered from March 2021 to June 2021 via a web-based survey created using Google Module. The online questionnaire was accessible via a link that was posted on Facebook communities of fashion luxury addicts or sent to Instagram users whose personal profiles showed a real interest in luxury. Initially, we collected a sample of 291 respondents, both men and women. However, the data of 45 participants were removed because they did not satisfy the requirements described below, and thus we ended up with a sample of 246 statistical units. In our study, we have only included data from Millennials and members of Generation Z who are actual consumers of luxury brands. Millennials and Generation Z are the most crucial segments of the market; they are the engine for the future growth of the luxury market, and with their vast size, they have the power to influence older generations of luxury consumers (Mundel, Huddleston and Vodermeier, 2017; Batat, 2019).

Considering the provenance of our sample, we did not focus our study on a specific country. The literature reveals that the luxury sector is one of the most global in terms of its branding and marketing, such that it allows no local promotions (Kapferer and Bastien, 2009; Mosca, 2017). Collaborations with streetwear brands are examples of marketing practice used by the luxury brands to attract the youngest generations of luxury consumers. So, we suppose that purchase behaviour towards luxury streetwear products is the same regardless of consumers' provenance. Table XVII shows more details about the relevant traits of the sample.

*Table XVII - Sample*

<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>COUNTS</b>	<b>% TOTAL</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	118	0,48
Female	128	0,52
<b>Education</b>		
High School	81	0,33
Bachelor's degree	102	0,41
Master's degree	63	0,26
<b>Age</b>		
Millennials	105	0,43
Gen Z	141	0,57
<b>Gender</b>		
Employee	156	0,63
Student	95	0,39

To identify real luxury consumers, we relied on respondents' self-declared purchases of luxury products, at a price above a threshold that would categorize them as "luxury", from a list of hedonic products. According to the literature, luxury goods include products whose price is higher than the average category price (Kapferer, Klippert and Leproux, 2014). These products appealed to both genders and referred to griffes that are brands at the top of the luxury pyramid. Specifically, we decided to consider only who has bought griffes and with a relevant background of collaborations with streetwear brands—Louis Vuitton, Gucci, Prada, Chanel, Fendi and Dior.

Moreover, to ensure that they were actual consumers of luxury products, we also decided to focus on respondents who had bought luxury products recently, in the previous 12 months.

All constructs used in this study were drawn up or adapted from the existing measures of Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) and Aaker (2010) The constructs for streetwear, brand awareness, quality and loyalty use five items whilst the construct for overall brand equity uses only four items. However, unlike Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) we used a 7-point Likert scale for all the items to offer more significant variability between the higher perceptions of value and lower ones. The items and

scales used to measure brand quality, loyalty, awareness and association and overall brand equity are listed in Table XVIII. We performed an exploratory principal component analysis with promax rotation to remove all the items with loadings smaller than 0.5. By doing so, we only removed item AW5 (see Table XVIII), and the remaining 23 items were kept.

*Table XVIII - Measurement scales*

Measurement scales		Items	Authors
<b>Attitude towards streetwear</b>	ST 1	Very bad/Very good	(Yoo & Donthu, 2001)
	ST 2	Awful/Very nice	
	ST 3	Very undesirable/Very desirable	
	ST 4	Very unattractive/Very attractive	
	ST 5	Extremely unlikable/Extremely likable	
<b>Brand awareness/association</b>	AW 1	I can recognise X among other competing brands	(Yoo et al., 2000)
	AW 2	I am aware of X	
	AW 3	Some characteristics of X come to mind quickly	
	AW 4	I can quickly recall the symbol or logo of X	
	AW 5	I have difficulty in imagining X in my mind	
<b>Brand quality</b>	QL 1	Brand X offers products of very good quality	(Aaker, 1991, 1996; Yoo et al., 2000)
	QL 2	Brand X offers products of consistent quality	
	QL 3	Brand X offers very durable products	
	QL 4	Brand X offers very reliable products	
	QL 5	Brand X offers products with excellent features	
<b>Brand loyalty</b>	LO 1	Brand X would be my preferred choice	(Yoo et al., 2000; Yoo & Donthu, 2001)
	LO 2	I consider myself loyal to brand X	
	LO 3	Brand X would be my first choice	
	LO 4	I intend to buy other products from this brand	
	LO 5	I recommend this brand to those who ask for my advice	
<b>Overall Brand Equity</b>	OBE 1	It makes sense to buy X instead of any other brand, even	(Yoo et al., 2000)
	OBE 2	if they are the same	
	OBE 3	Even if another brand has the same features as X, I prefer	
	OBE 4	to buy X	
	OBE 5	If there is another brand as good as X, I prefer to buy X If another brand is not different from X in any way, it seems smarter to purchase X	

*Table XIX - Latent variables, items, loadings, and cross-loadings*

Concepts		Items	Attitude Towards Streetwear	Awareness	Quality	Loyalty	Overall Brand Equity
Attitude towards streetwear	Very bad/Very good		0.905	0.340	0.543	0.503	0.368
	Awful/Very nice		0.898	0.388	0.446	0.546	0.385
	Very undesirable/Very desirable		0.861	0.379	0.441	0.507	0.391
	Very unattractive/Very attractive		0.804	0.346	0.395	0.494	0.380
	Extremely unlikable/Extremely likable		0.865	0.348	0.441	0.533	0.394
Awareness	I can recognise X among other competing brands		0.370	0.925	0.600	0.471	0.337
	I am aware of X		0.385	0.903	0.536	0.464	0.301
	Some characteristics of X come to mind quickly		0.347	0.836	0.472	0.381	0.290
	I can quickly recall the symbol or logo of X		0.380	0.902	0.584	0.453	0.305
Quality	Brand X offers products of very good quality		0.492	0.595	0.957	0.516	0.449
	Brand X offers products of consistent quality		0.514	0.605	0.950	0.523	0.417
	Brand X offers very durable products		0.450	0.539	0.889	0.515	0.426
	Brand X offers very reliable products		0.510	0.580	0.959	0.542	0.431
	Brand X offers products with excellent features		0.434	0.499	0.825	0.426	0.376
Loyalty	Brand X would be my preferred choice		0.579	0.446	0.474	0.931	0.317
	I consider myself loyal to brand X		0.565	0.483	0.511	0.939	0.349
	Brand X would be my first choice		0.533	0.456	0.516	0.926	0.382
	I intend to buy other products from this brand		0.554	0.481	0.547	0.931	0.356
	I recommend this brand to those who ask for my advice		0.516	0.425	0.495	0.884	0.355
Overall Brand Equity	It makes sense to buy X instead of any other brand, even if they are the same		0.419	0.303	0.432	0.355	0.933
	Even if another brand has the same features as X, I prefer to buy X		0.381	0.307	0.390	0.340	0.867
	If there is another brand as good as X, I prefer to buy X		0.398	0.295	0.392	0.329	0.857
	If another brand is not different from X in any way, it seems smarter to purchase X		0.357	0.315	0.399	0.317	0.865

### **4.3.2 Data analysis**

All the latent variables are measured at the first-order level, using reflective indicators. Moreover, we use a PLS-SEM estimator, which does not require any assumptions regarding the normality of the data, does not yield inflated loadings and generates consistent structural path coefficients. Specifically, the SEM calculator employs a consistent PLS algorithm (PLSc), as in Dijkstra and Henseler (2015), where standard errors are computed by bootstrapping with 5,000 replications (Hair et al., 2012; Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt, 2015). The standardised root mean residual (0.038) is smaller than the recommended threshold value suggested by Hu and Bentler (1999) and the goodness-of-fit value (0.475) is high, as recommended by Wetzels, Odekerken-Schröder and van Oppen (2009). This indicates an acceptable model fit.

Moreover, as suggested by Podsakoff, MacKenzie and Podsakoff (2012), we tested for common method bias by applying the collinearity approach proposed by Kock and Lynn, (2012) and Kock (2015). To achieve this aim, we consider a structural equation model in which the five latent variables, namely, attitude to streetwear, awareness, quality, loyalty and brand equity, point to a latent dummy variable with a single indicator. None of the computed VIFs exceeds the threshold value of 3.3, which indicates a lack of common method bias (Kock, 2015; Kock and Lynn, 2012).

Afterwards, we tested for internal consistency, reliability, and convergent and discriminant validity. As in Dijkstra and Henseler's (2015) study, we employed the  $\rho_A$  measure, which is a consistent reliability measure for PLS construct scores. As shown in Table XX, the convergent validity and reliability standards are met. In fact, Dijkstra and Henseler's (2015)  $\rho_A$  measures are above the 0.7 cut-off. Moreover, the average variance extracted (AVE) is higher than 0.5, as recommended by Hair et al. (2012). Moreover, as reported in Table XXI, the heterotrait-monotrait ratios are smaller than 0.85, as recommended by Henseler et al. (2015). Finally, in Table XIX, the loadings (which are all above 0.7) and the cross-loadings.

*Table XX - Reliability and convergent validity*

<b>Latent variables</b>	<b>Reliability <math>\rho_A</math></b>	<b>Convergent validity</b>
Attitude towards streetwear	0.939	0.752
Awareness	0.941	0.796
Quality	0.966	0.842
Loyalty	0.966	0.851
Overall brand equity	0.934	0.776

*Table XXI - Heterotrait-monotrait ratios*

	<b>Awareness</b>	<b>Loyalty</b>	<b>Overall brand equity</b>	<b>Quality</b>	<b>Streetwear</b>
Awareness					
Loyalty	0.496				
Overall brand equity	0.346	0.381			
Quality	0.614	0.551	0.457		
Streetwear	0.415	0.594	0.441	0.521	

### **4.3.3 Hypothesis Testing**

The PLS estimates, obtained using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 replications, allow us to assess the significance of the coefficients of the internal model. Specifically, the research model being tested is shown in Figure 17. The results of the PLS-SEM path analysis are reported in Table XXII.

As is observed, quality (H2) and loyalty (H3) significantly affect overall brand equity since the corresponding p-values in Table XXII are all smaller than 0.05, and the 95% confidence intervals do not contain zero.

By contrast, awareness (H1) does not significantly impact overall brand equity since the p-value in Table XXII is more significant than 0.05, and the 95% confidence interval contains zero.

This is consistent with the results of Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000), who document that loyalty and quality have a more significant impact on brand equity than brand awareness and association.

Streetwear impacts positively on all the customer-brand equity dimensions. It significantly influences brand awareness (H5), quality (H6) and loyalty (H7) since

the corresponding p-values in Table XXII are smaller than 0.05, and the 95% confidence intervals do not contain zero.

Figure 17- Research model (Results)

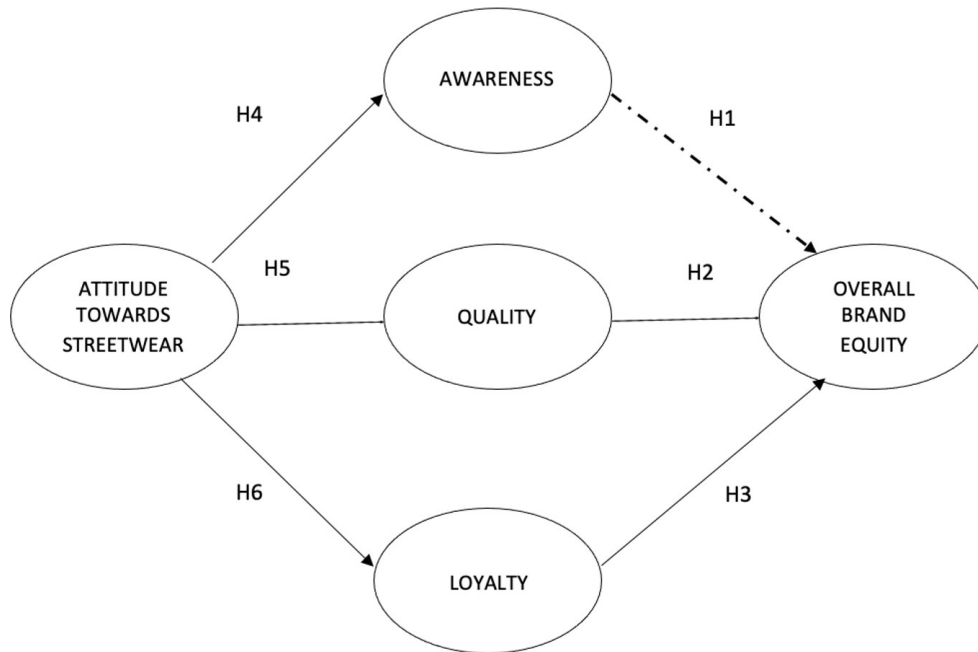


Table XXII- Structural path coefficient estimates

Latent predictors	Parameter estimates	Pr >  t	Low confidence intervals (95%)	High confidence intervals (95%)
<b>Dependent variable: awareness; R<sup>2</sup> = 0.173</b>				
Attitude towards streetwear	0.415	0.000	0.315	0.515
<b>Dependent variable: quality; R<sup>2</sup> = 0.275</b>				
Attitude towards streetwear	0.524	0.000	0.423	0.619
<b>Dependent variable: loyalty; R<sup>2</sup> = 0.355</b>				
Attitude towards streetwear	0.596	0.000	0.501	0.687
<b>Dependent variable: overall brand equity; R<sup>2</sup> = 0.236</b>				
Awareness	0.059	0.488	0.118	0.217
Quality	0.327	0.000	0.150	0.508
Loyalty	0.171	0.022	0.028	0.320

#### **4.4 Discussion and conclusion**

This study aims to contribute to the growing body of research about new trends affecting the luxury brand market by presenting an empirical model validating the impact of co-branded luxury and streetwear products on customer-based brand equity.

The study of Yu, Rothenberg and Moore (2020) is the first attempt to study the phenomenon of streetwear in the luxury market. Results demonstrate that co-branding between luxury and streetwear appeals to the young generations of luxury consumers. However, nothing emerged about the impact of streetwear on luxury brand value.

Thus, our research deepens the streetwear phenomenon in luxury by adopting the model of Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000), which captures key dimensions of brand equity. Then we empirically identify the impact of streetwear on these components. Most of the concepts used here are derived from existing tried-and-tested measures in the literature; however, they have not previously been used to investigate the streetwear phenomenon in the luxury market. Six hypotheses were tested, and the results support five of them. Overall, we can affirm that involving streetwear in co-branding alliances affects customer-based brand equity by improving loyalty and the perceived quality.

The literature affirms that one of the central purposes of luxury brand companies is to preserve their associated myths and dreams of luxury (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012). As previous studies show, co-branded partnerships can indeed threaten a brand's luxury status when the level of fit with the associated brands is inadequate or absent or when consumers have a negative perception of the partnering brands (Helmig et al., 2008). A risk of ineffective co-branding partnerships is brand dilution, which means a loss of value from a consumer perspective. The brand dilution risk can be verified in the alliances between luxury and streetwear brands. Luxury and streetwear are opposing concepts that cannot readily be juxtaposed. The idea of luxury has traditionally been associated with heritage, prestige, and exclusivity (Heine, 2012; Kapferer, 1997; Kapferer and Bastien, 2009; Ko et al., 2019; Roux et al., 2017; Vigneron & Johnson, 2004), whilst the concept of



streetwear grounded in skateboarding culture appears to be inconsistent with luxury (Adz and Stone, 2018; DeLeon et al., 2019).

However, our findings suggest that collaborations with streetwear brands are not a threat to luxury brands but can be seen as an opportunity to engage with consumers and markets. We demonstrate that co-branded products increase customer-based brand equity.

The positive impact of streetwear on customer-based brand equity is mediated by brand loyalty and brand quality.

As H5 shows, streetwear impacts positively on brand quality, which means that co-branded luxury and streetwear products improve the subjective judgment of luxury consumers regarding luxury brands. Since quality represents a central factor in the purchasing decision process, this affects consumer-based brand equity.

H6 also shows that streetwear positively impacts brand loyalty, representing a consumer's willingness to repeat purchase. Since brand loyalty ensures that consumers buy a particular offering over time because they never decide to turn to competitors, brand equity will increase as consumers are loyal to the brand.

To sum up, the research results confirm that collaborating with streetwear is an effective innovation strategy for luxury brands without necessarily diluting them. Luxury brand companies may do well to take advantage of the opportunities that co-branded partnerships with streetwear brands present.

The alliances between luxury and streetwear brands have the power to capture the meaning of luxury of the younger generations of consumers that, according to literature, do not use the traditional attributes to define what luxury is and what not is.

Thus, as the previous studies relayed on the consumer-centric paradigm, this research demonstrates that managing luxury brands requires managers to think outside the box. Instead of blindly following traditional rules and rituals, luxury brand managers should understand the new tastes and needs of luxury consumers. However, this does not prevent the need for careful, in-depth market analysis, excellent planning, and monitoring implementation to ensure objectives are achieved. We strongly urge a cautious approach rather than a free-for-all wholesale adoption of rapprochement between luxury and streetwise brands.

#### **4.5 Limitations and further research**

Future research that focuses on the streetwear phenomenon in the luxury industry can attempt to analyse the different generations of luxury brand consumers. This research is concentrated on the new generations of consumers—Millennials and Generation Z. As explained in the sample explanation, we chose to focus on the youngest generations because they are the engine of the luxury market for two main reasons. First, they can influence other generations, and second, they will represent most global luxury consumers by 2025 (Batat, 2019; Mundel et al., 2017). Despite the youngest generations' relevance, Generation X remains an important segment. Most of them belong to the high-spending genuine luxury consumers who remain anchored to traditional concepts and characteristics of luxury. So, in contrast to the youngest generations, Generation X could perceive collaborations between luxury brands and streetwear ones as the wrong strategic choice, hence our note of caution earlier,

Besides, future research can also enlarge the analysis of the streetwear phenomenon. Our study only considers co-branding partnerships between luxury and streetwear brands. However, in some cases, the link between luxury and streetwear is strong enough to result in potential contamination. Brand contamination refers to lower luxury brand evaluations as the luxury brand has not only been involved in partnerships with streetwear brands but has also changed its DNA in favour of streetwear. We refer to luxury brands like Balenciaga or Gucci, icons of elegance with a strong heritage, changing their distinctive features and style towards streetwear and hype culture. This may be a factor that negatively impacts perceptions of luxury brand consumption.

### **3. Conclusion and implication for further research**

*Luxury to me is not about buying expensive things.  
it's about living in a way where you appreciate things.*

*– Oscar de la Renta, fashion designer*

#### **5.1 Introduction**

Giving a final definition of luxury is not easy for two main reasons. First, as demonstrated by the luxury timeline proposed in Chapter 1, the meaning of luxury varies with time. Something considered a luxury might no longer have the same connotation or vice versa (Armitage, Roberts, and Bishop, 2016). For example, at the beginning of the 1900s, having a car was considered a luxury, while nowadays car has become a commodity.

Then, luxury can be attributed to different categories of products and services. A dress, a masterpiece of art, a bottle of wine, or other items that are not generally direct competitors may find themselves in the same competitive arena as they address their product to the same category of high-end consumers (Mosca, 2017). For example, a Patek Philippe watch might be a direct competitor for Domaine de la Romanée-Conti's wine. At the same time, an iconic dress Chanel may compete with a dinner in Michelin star Restaurant.

Similarly, defining luxury brands is not an easy task. Some authors, driven from the product-centric perspective, attempted to clarify the luxury brand with pre-determined attributes that make the luxury brand a static concept (Dubois, Laurent and Czellar, 2001; Lipovetsky and Roux, 2003).

However, in line with the definition of luxury reshaped through the epochs, even the luxury brand is a dynamic notion that requests interpretation through time and space (Armitage, Roberts, and Bishop, 2016).

Trends like sustainability, second-hand luxury and co-branded products with streetwear are opposed to the traditional definition of luxury brands. Thus, the product-centric perspective of the luxury brand focused on conventional attributes cannot explain them. On the contrary, the customer-centric view that describes luxury from the customers' point of view can enhance the understanding of the emerging issues of the luxury market (Tynan, McKechnie and Chhuon, 2010; Roper et al., 2013).

New trends align with the luxury conceptualisation suggested by younger generations. They reshape luxury brand meanings to meet their individual and personalised definition of luxury (Mundel, Huddleston and Vodermeier, 2017; Batat and Manika, 2020). Notably, they ask luxury brands to include sustainability principles and manage luxury branding innovatively by collaborating with streetwear brands.

In the following subsections, the paper collection contributions to the luxury brand management are analysed.

## **5.2 Final Remarks about sustainability in the luxury market**

The interest in becoming more sustainable is climbing the agenda of all companies, no matter the sector or the country of origin. However, approaching sustainability is more complex for luxury firms than for other companies. The matching between luxury and sustainability seems, at the first time, almost impossible if we consider the opposed roots of luxury and sustainability. Leveraging the product-centric perspective, the luxury brand is related to wealth, elitism, and magnificence. On the contrary, sustainability leads to opposed values (Achabou and Dekhili, 2013). However, the customer-centric view opens new ways for luxury brand

management. According to this perspective, luxury brands embrace new practices distant from the traditional way of managing luxury brands to meet young consumers' expectations. Integrating sustainability into luxury brand strategies is one of these emerging practices.

First this “three paper” thesis provides academics and managers with an in-depth and structured examination of research field on sustainability for luxury brand management and the future research agenda.

By analysing the body of research in compliance with the scientific rigour, reliability and replicability of the steps conducted (Massaro, Dumay and Bagnoli, 2015), the bibliometric analysis shows the increasing scientific production about sustainability for luxury brand management, especially after the pandemic. Although some authors have analysed the topic since 2009, most have started to work regularly on it by publishing one paper a year only recently.

Moreover, in accordance with the Lotka's Law graph, the high number of authors that have published a single article about sustainable luxury attests that the topic is attractive, and that the scientific debate is still open (Lotka, 1926).

Notably, in the last five years (2018-2022), an increasing number of outlets collected papers on the topic, from the ones more comprehensive and management-oriented (Journal of Business Research and the Journal of Cleaner production) to others more focused on a specific sector or discipline (Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management, Journal of Product and Brand Management, Journal of Sustainable Tourism). About the authors, the local citations analysis deepens authors whose contributions received more attention in the field of luxury brand management. From the analysis emerges that the papers that provide suggestions for balancing luxury and sustainability without compromising the luxury brand perceptions are the most cited by representing the hard core of literature about luxury and sustainability.

Finally, the analysis of the keyword through the topic dendrogram provides three research lines on the field of sustainability in the luxury brand market that are:

- (1) Sustainable business model innovation for the luxury brand.
- (2) Sustainable practices for luxury companies' employees.
- (3) Sustainable consumption in the luxury market.

The first area of research deepens scholars' and managers' understanding of sustainable business model innovation.

The second area of research about sustainable practices for luxury employees shows that sustainability impacts positively on employees by motivating them to find their work engaging and carry out innovations.

Finally, the third area of research explores the motives which lead to consuming sustainable products. Environmental concerns represented the most relevant reason to buy sustainable products in the luxury market. However, our literature review discovers other factors to influence consumers attitude towards CSR.

For example, companies' CSR activities guided by binding foundations lead to more favourable attitudes than CSR activities conducted by individualizing foundations. Moreover, guilt plays a crucial role when consumers decide to consume sustainably, suggesting that leveraging emotions can influence sustainable consumption.

Furthermore, luxury brand companies should carefully consider cultural settings when providing sustainability information because the reaction to sustainable practices is different according to the country examined.

Then, this study contributes to the research stream of sustainable business model innovation for the luxury brand by analysing the topic through the lens of stakeholder theory proposed by Freeman (2010).

The adapted version of the integrated CSR framework sheds light on sustainable practices declared by luxury brand companies in their non-financial disclosure. Notably, the framework enhances managers' and scholars' understanding of to what extent luxury brand companies move from the mere applications of standards to the implementations of integrated CSR practices.

As we expected, all luxury companies comply with rules imposed by the national and international institutions. This means luxury brand companies meet environmental, ethical, and reporting standards. Moreover, luxury brand companies have increased their commitment to strategic philanthropy actions such as managing foundations, donations, and partnership or sponsorship in collaboration with no profit organisation. Even in the case of integrated outputs, luxury brand

companies' commitment has increased. Most companies employ welfare practices to employees as well as new processes for reducing waste and emissions.

Although their increasing efforts to perform sustainable business models, the integration of CSR is still a long way. Among the strategic philanthropy activities, the community involvement practices represent a lack that companies need to improve. As shown by Nayak et al. (2021) and Sotomayor, Ventas and Gronau (2021), the efforts of companies to support local fair-trade and entrepreneurs positively contribute to local communities' well-being. Thus, from our research, luxury companies need to improve their commitment to local communities.

Then most companies limit using sustainable raw materials and production methods for the capsule. Consequently, the improvement in extending sustainable CSR processes to all items proposed represents a future challenge for luxury brand companies. Additionally, the traceability of supply chains is still underdeveloped. We expect luxury brand managers and scholars to offer innovative actions to encourage actors of the luxury supply chain to practice integrated CSR in the future.

### **5.3 Final Remarks about streetwear and luxury**

Since 2017 when Supreme appeared on the red carpet, streetwear brands have hit the scene and many luxury companies, including the "griffes", started collaborating with streetwear. At first sight, the singular mix between luxury and streetwear seemed risky considering the opposed characteristics of luxury and streetwear.

However, by leveraging the customer-centric perspective of luxury, our study supports that co-branding products between luxury and streetwear generate a positive effect on consumers since they meet the tastes and expectations of the younger consumers. As emerged from the literature, Millennials and Generation Z consumers ask luxury brands to innovate their product offerings to modernise the traditional luxury items.

The analysis confirms our hypothesis that co-branded products between luxury and streetwear increase customer-based brand equity through brand quality and brand loyalty.

In fact, the limited-edition that promotes scarcity can increase brand loyalty. While the use of technical fabrics and new materials can influence the quality.

In conclusion, our study suggests luxury brand managers that collaboration between luxury and streetwear is a strategic tool to innovate the brand while avoiding brand dilution.



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